

NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN



THIS PLAN AMENDED IN 2016

The 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments, as adopted under Ordinance 2016-0760, refines and updates the building height recommendations of this plan as applied to the area near the 38th and Blake commuter rail station; recommends a new regulatory approach to achieve greater building design standards; and recommends the integration of affordable housing and mixed income development within the 38th and Blake station area. Where there is conflict between the plan amendments and this plan, the plan amendments supersedes this plan.



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Adopted
May 23, 2011

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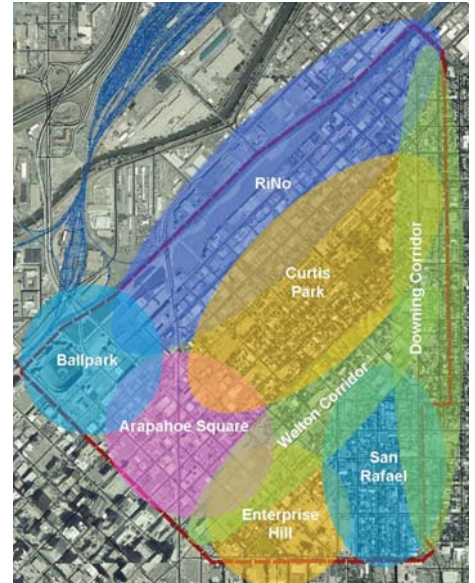
DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF CARLA MADISON IN RECOGNITION OF HER VISION, LEADERSHIP, AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONTENTS OF THIS PLAN.

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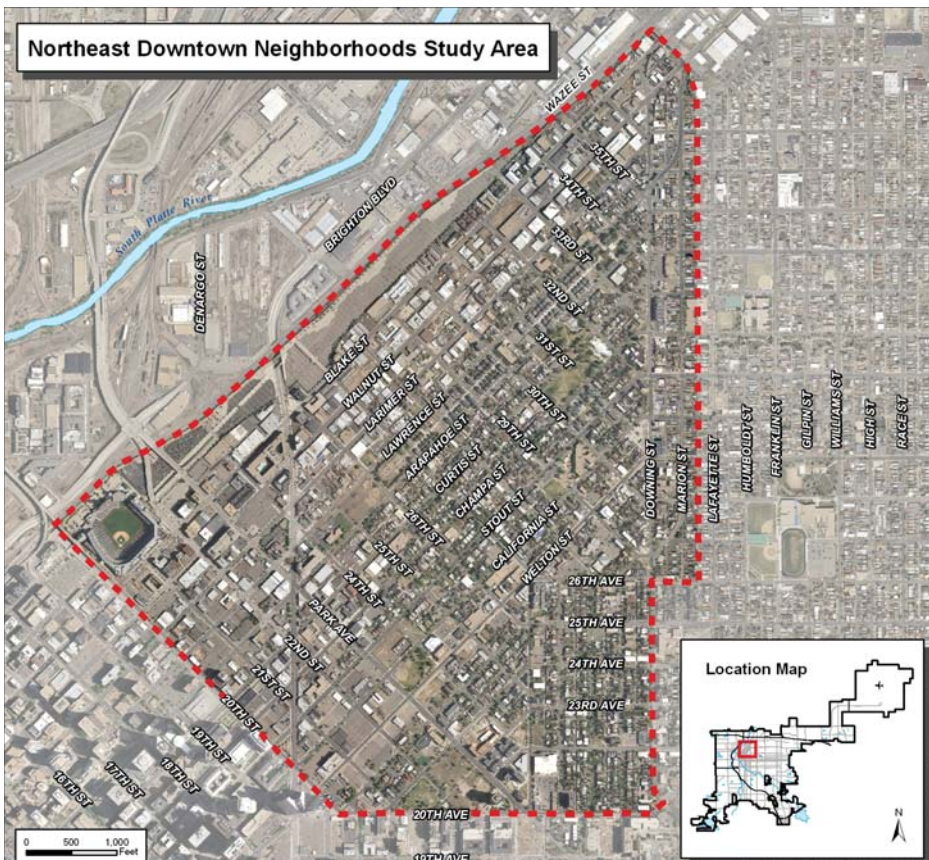
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Introduction

Northeast Downtown Denver is a diverse part of the greater Denver community, and is comprised of many unique neighborhoods. A majority of the study area is within the boundaries of the Five Points Statistical Neighborhood, and includes the neighborhoods of Arapahoe Square, Ballpark, Curtis Park, and San Rafael, as well as the Upper Larimer portion of the River North neighborhood, the Enterprise Hill area near Benedict Fountain Park, and the western most blocks of Cole and Whittier. The Welton and Downing corridors are also addressed in this plan. These neighborhoods, with a location near the Central Business District and Lower Downtown were some of the first areas of the City to be urbanized. This advantageous location still plays a major role in the future of this area. The abbreviation “NEDN” will be used throughout this plan to refer to the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods.



There are many different areas within the study area.



Planning Process



The public process for the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan (The Plan) kicked off in March, 2010. Over the course of the following year, community members worked together with City staff and the consultant team to articulate opportunities, develop a vision and craft strategies to achieve the vision. Regular public meetings and neighborhood working group meetings helped shape content throughout the process. Briefings and public hearings with City Council, Denver Planning Board and interagency City staff were also crucial to the process. In addition, the process involved collaboration between the City and County of Denver's Community Planning and Development Department, Public Works Department, the Department of Parks and Recreation, Finance and Treasury, the Office of Economic Development, the Five Points Business District Office, and the Denver Urban Renewal Authority. The Downtown Denver Partnership was a funding partner and equal contributor to the Arapahoe Square component of this plan.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS:

The planning process utilized a multi-tiered strategy for collecting public input to inform the identification of issues and resulting concepts and recommendations:

- **Focus Groups** – A series of small group discussions held neighborhood-by-neighborhood with stakeholders early in the planning process to learn about the study area and begin identifying issues for the plan to address.
- **Individual Stakeholder Meetings** – Held on an as-needed basis throughout the planning process.
- **Working Groups** – Groups of stakeholders, from the neighborhoods listed below, who convened at different times throughout the planning process to hold in-depth discussions on issues and inform plan content.
 - Arapahoe Square
 - Welton/Downing
 - Curtis Park
 - Ballpark/River North



- **Arapahoe Square Charrette** – A week-long intensive urban design workshop held for Arapahoe Square in January, 2011.
- **Public Meetings** – A series of four meetings held at key points in the planning process to solicit public input and guidance.
 - Kickoff- March 11, 2010
 - Visioning- July 20, 2010
 - Concept Review- February 10, 2011
 - Draft Plan Review- April 13, 2011



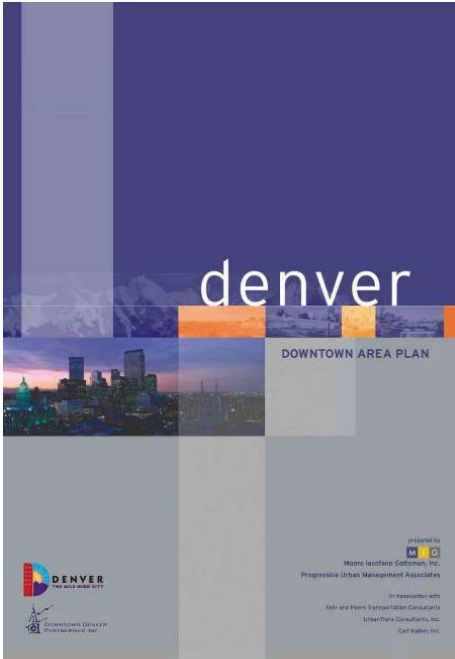
COORDINATION WITH CONCURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS:

Over the course of the planning process, there were several other efforts underway within the study area. The NEDN Team coordinated with each of these efforts to maximize resources and to help ensure consistency with each:

- New Zoning Code (Denver Community Planning and Development)
- Central Corridor Extension Environmental Evaluation (Regional Transportation District)
- 38th & Blake Next Steps Study (Denver Public Works)
- Arapahoe Square Blight Study (Denver Urban Renewal Authority)
- Welton/Five Points Sustainable Mainstreet Initiative (Five Points Business District Office)
- Denver Moves (Denver Public Works/Parks and Recreation)



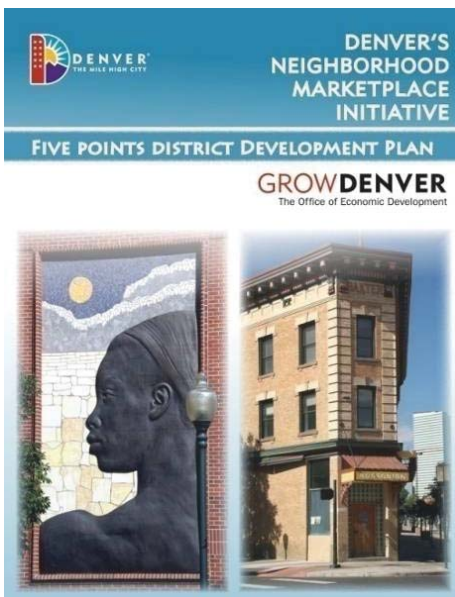
Planning Context



Downtown Area Plan, 2007

This plan represents the land use, urban form, and transportation vision for the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods area. It updates and incorporates recommendations of earlier plans. Planning documents that are relevant to this area include:

- Welton-Downing Triangle Plan (1986)
- Curtis Park Neighborhood Plan (1987)
- Ballpark Neighborhood Influence Study (1992)
- Northeast Downtown Plan (1995)
- Cole Planning Report (1998)
- Denver Comprehensive Plan (2000)
- Whittier Neighborhood Plan (2000)
- Bicycle Master Plan (2001)
- Blueprint Denver (2002)
- Denver Parks and Recreation Game Plan (2002)
- River North Plan (2003)
- Pedestrian Master Plan (2004)
- Water Quality Management Plan (2004)
- Downtown Multimodal Access Plan (2005)
- TOD Strategic Plan (2006)
- Greenprint Denver (2006)
- Downtown Area Plan (2007)
- Curtis Park Neighborhood Assessment (2007)
- Strategic Transportation Plan (2008)
- 38th & Blake Station Area Plan (2009)
- Denver Neighborhood Marketplace Initiative for Welton/ Five Points (2009)
- Storm Drainage Master Plan (2009)
- Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (2009)
- Strategic Parking Plan (2010)
- Five Points Sustainable Main Streets Initiative Vision Plan and Final Report (2010)



Five Points District Development Plan, 2009

These documents have been reviewed and relevant material has been incorporated in the development of this plan. This and all other neighborhood plans supplement the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan presents a citywide perspective, while each neighborhood plan provides more specific guidance both for the allocation of City resources and for the location and design of private development.

How to use this Plan

The Plan establishes a long range vision and guiding principles for the development and future of Northeast Downtown. The elements of this plan will direct the neighborhoods of Northeast Downtown towards a vision as a community where people live, work, play, and celebrate the neighborhood's diverse heritage.

Public and private agencies and organizations will use this plan in coming years for many purposes and actions that affect the form and function of Northeast Downtown. The Plan provides city-adopted policy direction to guide decision-making and prioritization related to development opportunities, transportation, partnerships, additional study and analysis, funding and public investments.

In some cases, as identified in this plan, recommendations will require multiple steps before moving forward with implementation. For example, transportation and infrastructure concepts will require further analysis. In addition, zone district changes may be necessary to implement development concepts.

The plan structure has four major components:

- **Strategy Framework:** This section presents content that generally applies to the plan area as a whole. Existing conditions, plan concepts, and recommendations are presented for the entire plan area and are organized into four categories:
 - Neighborhood Connections and Character
 - Mobility
 - Economic and Development Opportunity
 - Livability and the Public Realm
- **Transformative Concepts:** These are big ideas that, if implemented, could help to catalyze private investment.
- **Neighborhood Strategies:** This section summarizes the existing conditions within individual neighborhood subareas, and presents concepts and recommendations for land use, building form, and any additional recommendations specific to the neighborhood that aren't already covered in the Strategy Framework.
- **Moving Forward:** This section addresses the implementation framework for the plan. All of the plan recommendations from previous chapters are listed in the implementation matrix, which also categorizes each recommendation in terms of timing, type, and potential funding sources.

Efforts were made to eliminate redundancies in plan recommendations. Therefore, recommendations appear once in the plan and although they may be referenced in other chapters, they are not repeated as recommendations in multiple chapters. For example, each of the neighborhood chapters contains a list of recommendations from the strategy framework and the transformative concepts that are applicable to the neighborhood, but only recommendations that are unique to the neighborhood appear as new recommendations in those chapters.

Strategy Framework

Northeast Downtown is a complex collection of neighborhoods that possess their own unique qualities and opportunities. This plan chapter begins with identifying key Accomplishments, Challenges and Opportunities within this planning area. These were important considerations in understanding what needs protection, enhancement and transformation.

The Overall Plan Concept, Vision and Guiding Principles establish a concise snapshot of the Strategy Framework. As a method to evaluate the concepts of this plan, four evaluation criteria evolved from the Vision and Guiding Principles:

- Neighborhood Connections and Character
- Mobility
- Economic and Development Opportunity
- Livability and Public Realm

These four criteria are the keystones of this plan and ensure a certain synergy between all the recommendations of the plan. With each of the criteria, there are four to six detailed concepts that all work together to benefit the overall planning area.

The success of contributing to the overall vibrancy of the larger Downtown Area will depend on the city's ability to capitalize on the opportunities described in the following section and to implement the vision outlined in this chapter.

Accomplishments, Challenges, Opportunities



Coors Field is a regional attraction



RTD light rail

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Light rail service was introduced to this area in 1994 as part of RTD's original 5.3-mile long light rail system. That system has expanded greatly since then, and a much more ambitious multimodal future expansion is planned as part of the FasTracks program.
- Coors Field, which opened in 1995, is a regional amenity that is recognized as one of the best-designed ballparks in Major League Baseball. The stadium has helped to stimulate the redevelopment of many properties in the Ballpark Neighborhood.
- This area grew by 45% by adding approximately 4,000 residents between 2000 and 2010. This dramatic population growth followed on the heels of several decades of population decline.
- Many mobility improvements have occurred to the benefit of this area, including the conversion of Lawrence and California from one-way to two-way, and the addition of on-street bike lanes on sections of Larimer, Lawrence, Arapahoe, Champa, and Stout. In 2011, Larimer is scheduled to be converted from one-way to two-way, with existing bike lanes being maintained in both directions.
- Broadway improvements, including the replacement of the viaduct and reconstruction of the street north of Welton, improved the connection to Brighton Boulevard/I-70 and added targeted improvements at intersections, respectively.
- The Denver Housing Authority redeveloped East Village into Benedict Park Place.
- The Denver Housing Authority rebuilt several hundred housing units between Lawrence and Arapahoe as part of the Villages at Curtis Park redevelopment.
- Several Landmark Historic Districts have been established to protect the area's historic building stock: Clements (1975), Curtis Park (various districts 1995-2010), Ballpark (2002) and Welton Street (2002).
- The Denver Zoning Code was updated in 2010 to a new form and context based format replacing the outdated 1950's code that addressed many long standing zoning issues. In Northeast Downtown, this was especially applicable to Curtis Park.
- Significant private and public investment has occurred in and around the plan area. This investment has included capital investments for affordable housing and business development. The Five Points Business Development Office was established in 2010.



Parking lots are prominent in the study area and are considered a challenge.

CHALLENGES

- High concentration of social service providers impacts public spaces, especially in Arapahoe Square and Ballpark.
- High land prices affect the affordability of individual residential and commercial development; in Arapahoe Square where development prices are perceived to be higher than other neighborhoods surrounding Downtown, little new development has occurred.
- The area's public image has not kept pace with recent revitalization. Not all Denverites are aware that the area is rebounding; many still think of it as an area in decline.
- Surface parking lots, which are especially prominent in Arapahoe Square, contribute to blight, an inconsistent environment, and a lack of destinations and attractions. This increases the sense of isolation from the Downtown Core and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Abrupt transitions existing at some locations between neighborhoods.
- There are mobility challenges in this area including; irregular intersections, especially on Broadway, Downing, and Welton, an incomplete sidewalk network, one-way streets in residential areas, and significant barriers such as the Union Pacific right of way

OPPORTUNITIES

- Three FasTracks projects will directly benefit this area: the East Corridor, the Central Corridor Extension, and the Downtown Circulator.
- Locational advantage: this area is very close to downtown, regional transportation routes, and major amenities including the South Platte River and Coors Field.
- The neighborhoods in this area are among the oldest in Denver and have a collection of Victorian-era buildings dating back to the 1860's that is unmatched in the city.
- Main Street opportunities exist on Welton, Downing, and Larimer.
 - Welton Street is an historic main street with a rich history that could make it a regional cultural destination, especially north of 24th Street. South of 24th Street, a predominance of vacant lots presents significant redevelopment opportunity to create a dense, urban, mixed use area along Welton.
 - Downing has the opportunity to attract transit-oriented development between the existing 30th & Downing station and the future 38th and Blake station. Two new stations will be added on Downing at 33rd Avenue and 35th Avenue as part of the Central Corridor Extension.
 - Larimer is an emerging commercial corridor that has become increasingly vibrant in recent years, especially south of Park Avenue in the vicinity of Coors Field. North of Park Avenue, Larimer Street features an eclectic mix of bars, restaurants, office space, retail, and other uses.
- The RiNo Arts District has established itself as a major player in the Denver arts scene.
- Coors Field draws millions of visitors, both local and from outside Denver, to the area.
- The neighborhoods of Northeast Downtown have a wide array of redevelopment opportunities ranging from small residential infill to large undeveloped parcels and surface parking lots.
- Each neighborhood has a unique set of characteristics, which could be enhanced by appropriate transitions that strengthen the overall connectivity of the study area.



Parking lots located in Arapahoe Square add to the neighborhood's inconsistent environment.



One of many galleries in the RiNo Arts District



Northeast Downtown's historic Victorian-era building stock.

Vision, Guiding Principles



Northeast Downtown's proximity to the Central Business District emphasizes the need for successful transitions.



Rail transit is one component of a multimodal transportation system.

Early in the planning process, stakeholders participated in the development of a vision statement and guiding principles for the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods area. These two items were undertaken as early tasks so they could guide the remainder of the plan development process. The vision describes the area as it could be twenty to thirty years in the future (some plan concepts may potentially be even longer range), while the guiding principles establish specific elements that this plan should strive to achieve.

VISION STATEMENT

The Northeast Downtown area will remain a diverse collection of urban neighborhoods with unique and distinct character. Transitions between neighborhoods will be seamless and promote the unique character of each area. Excellent street connectivity, an enhanced public realm, and good access to transit will make this an area of choice for residents, businesses, and services.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Enhance multimodal connectivity
- Complete and enhance the public realm
- Enhance and support existing retail corridors
- Create a development-friendly atmosphere
- Protect neighborhood fabric
- Create appropriate transitions between neighborhoods
- Increase open space access
- Fill gaps in neighborhood services
- Capitalize on transit
- Promote diversity

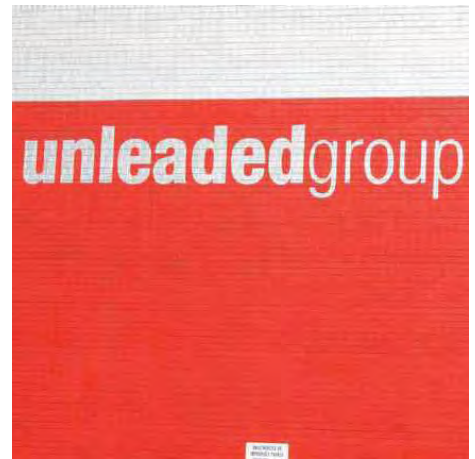
CONCEPT EVALUATION CRITERIA

In addition to the vision and guiding principles, this plan makes extensive use of four criteria for evaluating each of the concepts that are contained in this document. The four criteria are used as a measuring stick to assess the degree to which any given plan concept helps to promote or achieve a broad array of goals. In this way, the four evaluation criteria are both an organizing element for the plan and a means by which to evaluate its content.

- **Neighborhood Connections and Character:** Maintaining the unique character of each neighborhood in Northeast Downtown, and ensuring that new development on neigh-

neighborhood edges contributes to the successful transition between areas.

- **Mobility:** Enhancing the multimodal transportation system to balance the needs of all users and modes, including automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, freight, and delivery vehicles.
- **Economic and Development Opportunity:** Encouraging new investment by attracting new businesses, supporting the growth of existing businesses, encouraging the reuse of existing structures, attracting new development, and increasing employment opportunities. Housing development opportunities should expand the range of housing types and price ranges.
- **Livability and Public Realm:** Ensuring that the various elements comprising the public realm (streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas, transit stops/stations, landmarks, housing, open spaces) positively contribute to the quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.



New businesses are critical to Northeast Downtown's future.

HOW THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FIT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONCEPT EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- **Neighborhood Connections and Character**
 - Protect neighborhood fabric
 - Create appropriate transitions between neighborhoods
- **Mobility**
 - Enhance multimodal connectivity
- **Economic and Development Opportunity**
 - Enhance and support existing retail corridors
 - Establish a development-friendly atmosphere
 - Fill gaps in neighborhood services
 - Capitalize on transit
- **Livability and Public Realm**
 - Enhance the public realm
 - Increase open space access
 - Promote diversity



High quality public spaces are needed in a thriving urban environment.

Overall Plan Concept

The Northeast Downtown area will remain a diverse collection of urban neighborhoods with unique and distinct character. Transitions between neighborhoods will be seamless and promote the unique

character of each area. Excellent street connectivity, an enhanced public realm, and good access to transit will make this an area of choice for residents, businesses, and services.

Strategy Framework Recommendations that are generally applicable to area as a whole

A. NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER

- A.1 High Intensity Development Near Downtown, Transit Stations and Along Key Streets
- A.2 Moderate Intensity Development Transitioning to Neighborhoods
- A.3 Low Intensity Development in Residential Neighborhoods
- A.4 Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation

B. MOBILITY

- B.1 Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis
- B.2 Evaluate Potential One-Way to Two-Way Conversions
- B.3 Consider New or Modified Transit Routes
- B.4 Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton
- B.5 In Short-term, Undertake a Broadway Intersections Improvement Study

Transformative Concepts These concepts represent “big ideas” for positively transforming Northeast Downtown

21ST STREET

Make 21st Street a focal point for Northeast Downtown neighborhoods by promoting its role as an important pedestrian and bicycle route and community gathering place.

CURTIS STREET

Use Curtis Street to create a preferred pedestrian route connecting the Central Business District to Arapahoe Square and Curtis Park.

BROADWAY

Study Broadway and the intersecting street network to determine which Grand Boulevard concept that will advance as a long-range vision for the future.

CONNECTING RIVER NORTH

Improve connections in River North between Northeast Downtown and the South Platte River corridor.

Neighborhood Strategies Recommendations that are specific to individual neighborhoods

ARAPAHOE SQUARE

- N.1 Encourage Development of Parking Lots
- N.2 Enhance Urban Design
- N.3 Building Form
- N.4 Land Use
- N.5 Conduct Form Based Zoning Study
- N.6 Promote Transit Oriented Development
- N.7 Re-use Existing Buildings
- N.8 Establish Business Development Office
- N.9 Improve Arapahoe Square's Brand
- N.10 Establish Urban Renewal Area

BALLPARK, RIVER NORTH

- N.11 Building Form
- N.12 Land Use
- N.13 Complete Sidewalk Network
- N.14 Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions
- N.15 Consider Future of Coors Field Overflow Parking



C. ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

- C.1 Strengthen Retail Corridors
- C.2 Promote Economic and Housing Diversity
- C.3 Encourage Housing Density
- C.4 Establish and Support Business Development Offices
- C.5 Establish Urban Renewal Areas
- C.6 Utilize OED Lending programs

D. LIVABILITY AND PUBLIC REALM

- D.1 Promote Access to Healthy Transportation
- D.2 Promote Access to Healthy Foods
- D.3 Invest in Park Improvements
- D.4 Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas
- D.5 Identify Funding for Stormwater Improvements and Promote Water Quality Through Best Practices

NEW PARK

Establish a new park in the Northeast Downtown area that could provide valuable open space and recreation amenities for new and existing residents for years to come.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Better manage the provision of social services and provide more appropriate facilities in order to improve the development climate, connectivity, and safety.

STREETCAR

Enhance current transit service, economic development opportunities, and access to neighborhood businesses while improving the walkable character of the Welton/Downing Corridor and adjacent Northeast Downtown neighborhoods.

TOD

Promote Transit Oriented Development in Northeast Downtown at appropriate locations to encourage walkable, urban neighborhoods that have easy access to daily needs and amenities.

CURTIS PARK

- N.16 Building Form
- N.17 Land Use
- N.18 Stout and Champa Reclassification
- N.19 Identify Traffic Calming Opportunities
- N.20 Accommodate Adaptive Reuse

DOWNING/WELTON CORRIDOR

- N.21 Building Form
- N.22 Land Use
- N.23 Support Work of Five Points Business District Office
- N.24 Establish Urban Renewal Area
- N.25 Evaluate Short One-Way Street Segments
- N.26 Orientation of Outdoor Active Uses

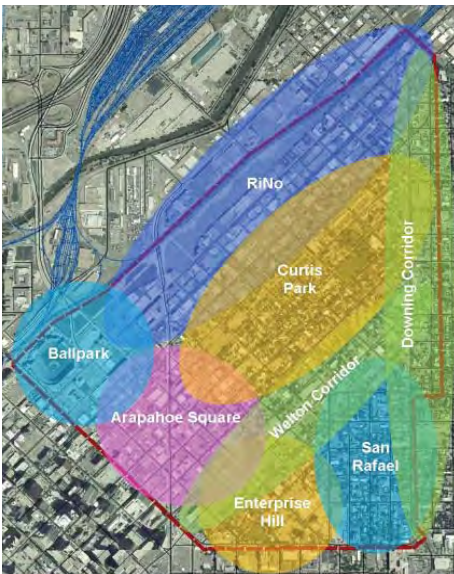
ENTERPRISE HILL, SAN RAFAEL

- N.27 Building Form
- N.28 Land Use

A. Neighborhood Connections and Character

GOAL STATEMENT

Reinforce the unique character of each neighborhood within Northeast Downtown while also successfully transitioning land use and building forms between neighborhoods.



Neighborhood Reference Map

WHY ARE NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER IMPORTANT TO NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN?

The study area is comprised of many neighborhoods, each with their own character. Maintaining the character that makes each neighborhood unique is of central importance to stakeholders and is reflected in the Vision Statement for this plan. A key aspect of maintaining and enhancing neighborhood character is ensuring that each neighborhood connects, or transitions, to adjacent neighborhoods in a way that benefits the community. It is a central urban design challenge for the Northeast Downtown area to successfully transition between each of these areas that range from higher intensity commercial and mixed-use districts to lower intensity and historic single-family neighborhoods while also acknowledging the area's significant transit connections to Downtown and the rest of the region.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Each neighborhood in Northeast Downtown has its own unique character. As a result, there is a wide variety of land uses and building forms present within the overall study area. A brief summary of the existing conditions in each neighborhood subarea is provided below:

- **Ballpark:** The opening of Coors Field in 1995 resulted in a considerable amount of investment in the Ballpark Neighborhood, which is now home to numerous residential loft developments, mixed use buildings, and trendy bars and restaurants. Larimer between 20th Street and Park Avenue serves as a main street for the neighborhood. The Ballpark Historic District was established in 2002 to protect the warehouse character of historic buildings in the neighborhood.
- **Arapahoe Square:** Arapahoe Square is an urban area along the edge of Downtown that is currently characterized by its lack of development. Over one-third of the land in Arapahoe Square consists of vacant lots or surface parking lots. Because of this underutilization of land, Arapahoe Square is considered to be a major redevelopment opportunity. There are many small businesses in Arapahoe Square, as well as examples of adaptive reuse of older structures, and a collection of buildings that may have historical significance. Arapahoe Square's existing building stock is concentrated in the blocks generally bounded by 21st, 24th, Stout, and Lawrence. Much of the remainder of the neighborhood is dominated by surface parking lots.
- **Curtis Park:** Curtis Park is Denver's oldest residential neighborhood. Curtis Park has a large collection of historic homes, and a variety of other uses distributed throughout the neighborhood. Beginning in 1995, Curtis Park began establishing historic districts to protect its historic building stock. To date, seven historic districts have been established, encompassing most of the neighborhood.
- **River North (RiNo):** RiNo, which comprises most of the western edge of the study area, was historically an industrial area and many industrial uses remain today, especially on Walnut Street. This industrial heritage is considered to be an asset, as is the eclectic mix

of land uses, building forms, and development patterns. RiNo is an emerging arts district that benefits from its long history of industrial uses. There are many examples within the neighborhood of adaptive reuse, innovative infill development projects, and business incubator activity. Blake Street has experienced a shift in land use patterns in recent years, as residential development has migrated north from the Ballpark Neighborhood. A station serving the East and Central corridors will be constructed at 38th and Blake, raising opportunities for future transit-oriented development at the northern end of the neighborhood.



Welton Street is a Main Street Corridor

- **Welton:** Welton Street has two different character areas within Northeast Downtown. North of 24th Street, Welton is a main street corridor at the heart of the Five Points community. The name “Five Points” comes from the five-pointed intersection of Welton, Washington, 26th Avenue, and 27th Street. The area is known for its history of jazz and African-American culture. The Welton Street Cultural Historic District was established in 2002 in recognition of the rich culture and history of Five Points. South of 24th Street, Welton Street flows through Arapahoe Square, and is characterized by a prevalence of vacant lots and surface parking. The D-Line (light rail) has operated on Welton Street since 1994.
- **Downing:** Downing Street forms the seam between the angular downtown street grid and the adjacent north/south east/west neighborhood grid. The western edges of the Cole and Whittier neighborhoods are located along Downing within the study area. Downing has some main street qualities, but also has several blocks of single family residential homes. As part of FasTracks, the Central Corridor, which currently ends at 30th and Downing, will be extended along Downing to the 38th and Blake Station on the East Corridor and two new stations will be added, introducing the potential for new transit-oriented development in the future. At the time of this writing, funding has not yet been identified for this extension, meaning that the timing of this project is also currently unknown.
- **San Rafael:** San Rafael is a residential neighborhood characterized by single family land use patterns, but with a variety of multifamily, institutional, and commercial uses also distributed throughout the neighborhood. San Rafael has a large collection of historic buildings and is on the National Register of Historic Places, although there is no local landmark historic district established for the neighborhood.
- **Enterprise Hill:** Enterprise Hill is a predominantly residential area with urban character. This area has long been the site of public housing, and is in the latter stages of being transformed by the Denver Housing Authority’s Benedict Place redevelopment, a mixed-income project with over 800 units of housing. The Clements Historic District, established in 1975 and located across the street from Benedict Fountain Park, is also located in this area. Enterprise Hill consists mostly of low-rise buildings immediately adjacent to the Downtown core, which gives it a unique character.



San Rafael is on the National Register of Historic Places



Mixed Use



Mixed Use / Industrial

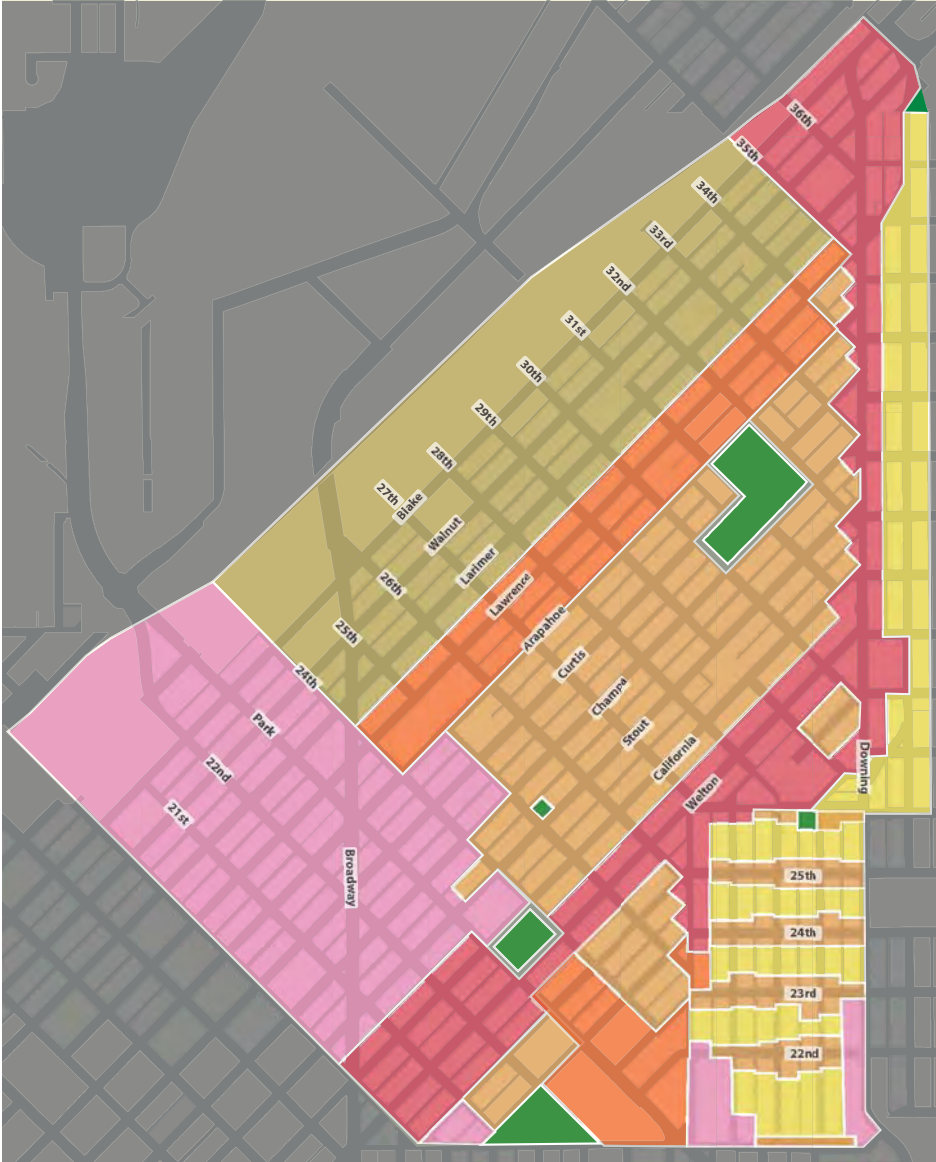


Transit Oriented Development

LAND USE CONCEPTS

Blueprint Denver established land use types based on a framework of “building blocks” – Districts, Residential Areas, Centers, and Corridors. Each category has individual land use types and describes a particular character and scale that is desired in the future but does not necessarily reflect existing conditions. The Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan uses this as the basis of its recommended land use map. One additional land use, Mixed Use – Industrial, has been added to reflect the specific conditions in Northeast Downtown. The Blueprint Denver Plan map will be amended as needed based on this plan.

- **Mixed Use:** These areas have both a sizable employment base as well as a variety of mid to high density housing options. Intensity is higher in mixed-use areas than in predominantly residential areas. Land uses can be, but are not necessarily, mixed in each building, development, or block. Pedestrian access is of importance within the area, with residential and non-residential uses always within short walking distance of one another.
- **Mixed Use / Industrial:** Similar to Mixed Use, but with recognition that light industrial uses, such as light manufacturing and smaller warehouses are compatible with urban residential housing types. These areas have both a sizable employment base as well as a variety of mid-to-high density housing options. Land uses can be, but are not necessarily, mixed in each building, development, or block. Pedestrian access is of importance within the area, with residential and non-residential uses always within walking distance of one another.
- **Transit Oriented Development:** Transit-oriented developments have land uses with a direct correlation to the function of a mass transit system. These development sites are located at stations or stops along mass transit lines, especially rail lines. Transit-oriented developments provide housing, services, and employment opportunities for a diverse population in a configuration that facilitates pedestrian and transit access. Within Northeast Downtown, TOD occurs at several different scales, reacting to the amount and type of transit service and the context of the existing adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Urban Residential:** Urban residential neighborhoods are higher density and primarily residential but may include a noteworthy number of complementary commercial uses. In Northeast Downtown, urban residential uses tend to be located in areas that transition from historic residential neighborhoods to more intense mixed use neighborhoods. A mixture of housing types is present, including historic single-family houses, townhouses, small multi-family apartments and sometimes mid to high-rise residential structures.
- **Single Family Rowhouse:** Single family rowhouse residential areas are moderately dense areas that are primarily residential but with some complementary, small-scale commercial uses. There is a mixture of housing types, including single-family houses, duplexes, rowhouses, and small apartment buildings. This land use concept is called Single Family/Duplex in BluePrint Denver, but is Single Family/Rowhouse in this plan to better represent the more diverse range of building forms found in Northeast Downtown.
- **Single Family Residential:** Neighborhoods of single family houses in Northeast Downtown represent older, residential neighborhoods that do not have a significant mix of housing types. Commercial uses are limited to small buildings providing neighborhood services.



Future Land Use Map

- Single Family**
- Single Family/Row House**
- Urban Residential**
- Mixed Use**
- TOD**
- Mixed Use - Industrial**
- Park**



Urban Residential



Single Family / Row house



Single Family Residential



High intensity development oriented towards transit

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

■ A.1 High Intensity Development Near Downtown, Transit Stations

In areas with existing urban character, along the edge of Downtown, within Arapahoe Square, and in the 38th & Blake station area:

- Allow taller general, shopfront and apartment building forms with higher densities.
- Site building forms at the street with parking and access in the rear/off the alley.
- Promote the use of design elements that link the building directly to the street environment, such as ground story activation, transparent window openings and doorways at the street.
- Make use of design elements such as upper story setbacks, as necessary, at the street to maintain a comfortable pedestrian scale.
- Allow a mix of uses within the area and within buildings.
- Make use of streetscape elements that reinforce urban character and promote high levels of pedestrian and bicycle use, such as wide sidewalks, bike racks, public trash cans, and tree wells.

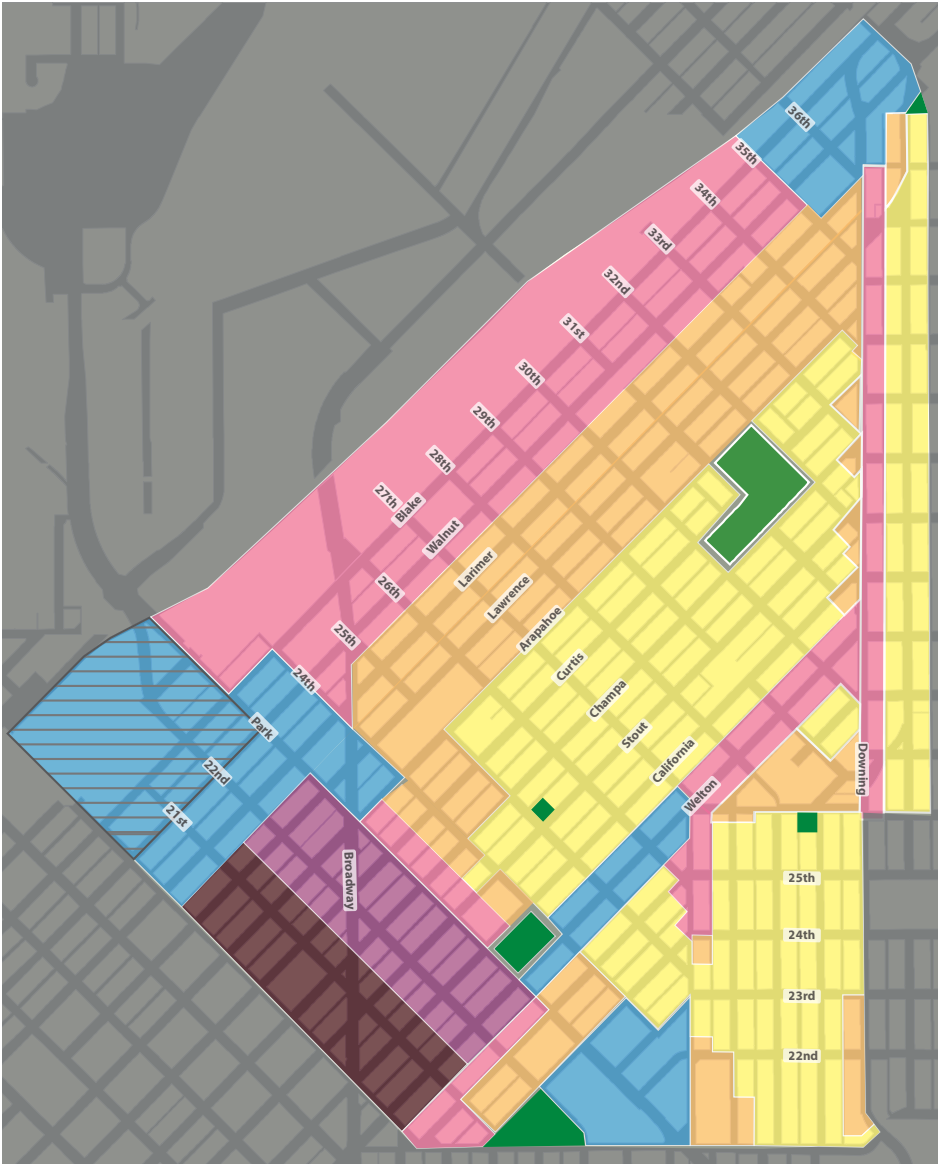
■ A.2 Moderate Intensity Development Transitioning to Residential Neighborhoods

Where higher intensity development transitions to residential neighborhoods, and along main street corridors (Welton, Downing, and Larimer):

- Allow a moderate and mixed scale of general, shopfront, apartment and rowhouse building forms.
- Site building forms in a context sensitive manner with emphasis on orienting to the street with parking and access in the rear/off the alley.
- Promote the use of design elements that link the building directly to the street environment, such as ground story activation, transparent window openings and doorways at the street.
- Make use of design elements, such as upper story setbacks, as necessary, to minimize massing adjacent to residential areas.
- Allow a mix of uses within the area and within buildings.
- Encourage TOD along transit corridors with sensible transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Make use of streetscape elements that support and promote pedestrian and bicycle use, such as wide sidewalks, bike racks, public trash cans, pedestrian scale lighting, and tree wells or tree lawns.



Live-work units assist in the transition between residential areas and commercial areas



Concept Height Map

CONCEPT BUILDING HEIGHTS AMENDED IN 2016
The 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments, as adopted under Ordinance 2016-0760, refines and updates the building height recommendations of this plan as applied to the area near the 38th and Blake commuter rail station. The future building heights map included in 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments supersedes building height maps and recommendations included in this plan.

- 2.5 Stories
- 3 Stories
- 5 Stories
- 8 Stories
- 12* Stories
- 20* Stories
- Coors Field Context Area

MAXIMUM HEIGHT RECOMMENDATIONS:
 For a detailed discussion and analysis of the recommended maximum heights, please see the individual neighborhood strategies section of the plan.

***POINT TOWERS:**
 To encourage higher density development where appropriate, specific areas have been identified as locations for a podium and point tower building form. The recommended maximum height of point towers in Arapahoe Square are as follows:

- Standard Building Height: 12 stories = Point Tower Height: 20 stories
- Standard Building Height: 20 stories = Point Tower Height: 30 stories

***HEIGHT DATUM LINE :**
 A five-story height datum line, or maximum street frontage height, for upper story setbacks and point towers is recommended to produce the effect that each new building reads as no more than five stories from street level. A height datum line is an urban design concept that allows taller buildings to relate to a pedestrian scale along the street and to smaller nearby buildings such as those in Arapahoe Square, Ballpark and Curtis Park. The five-story datum line applies to both standard and point tower buildings.

COORS FIELD CONTEXT AREA
 Within this area it is recommended that building heights not be allowed to exceed the height of the Coors Field stands.

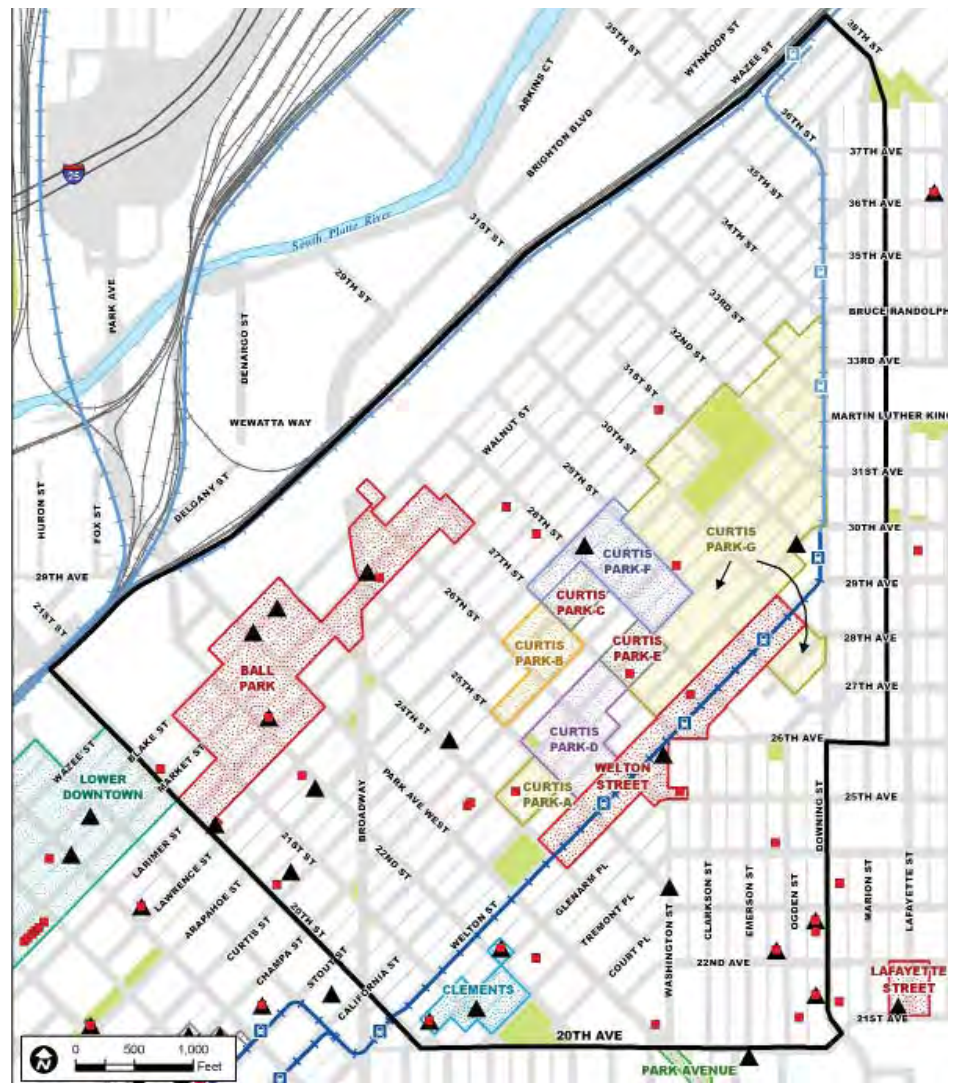


Infill development compatible with residential character

■ A.3 Low Intensity Development in Residential Neighborhoods

In areas with established residential neighborhood character, including Curtis Park, San Rafael, and the neighborhood edge east of Downing Street (Cole and Whittier):

- Maintain the current mix of low scale building forms such as urban house, duplex and rowhouse.
- Allow new development to replicate existing development patterns, including small lots, shallow setbacks and high building coverage with parking and access in the rear/off the alley.
- Make use of entry features that connect the building and front yards to the street.
- Allow a mix of land uses consisting primarily of residential uses with limited neighborhood-serving commercial.
- Encourage the use of streetscape elements that promote residential character and pedestrian and bicycle use, such as detached sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and tree lawns.

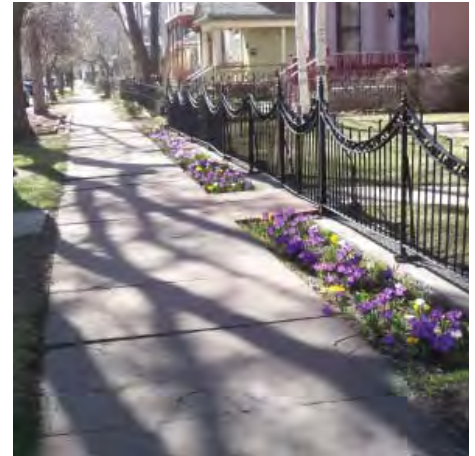


Historic Districts and Structures Map

A.4 Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation

Throughout the planning area, adaptive reuse of existing building stock and preservation of historic structures are critically important to maintaining and enhancing the unique character of each neighborhood.

- Promote the reuse of existing buildings. Existing buildings, whether historic or not, are important character-defining elements throughout the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods.
- Support historic preservation within existing historic districts and by identifying additional potential landmark structures and districts.
- Preserve sandstone sidewalks as a historic resource within Northeast Downtown.



Sandstone sidewalk



Existing Sidewalk Surface Material Map

- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Flagstone

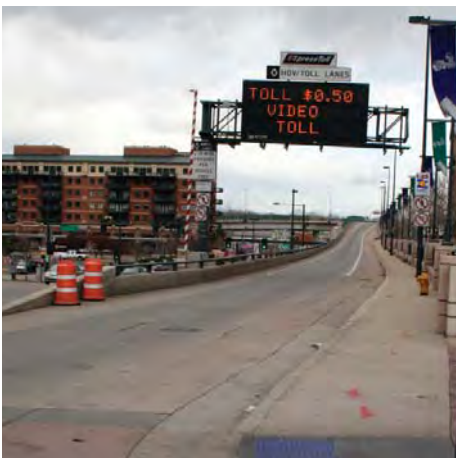
B. Mobility

GOAL STATEMENT

Promote walkability, biking, and transit while balancing local and regional vehicular transportation demand, deliveries and emergency response safely and efficiently throughout the study area.



Park Avenue West



The HOV lane on 20th Street is one available connection to Interstate 25.

WHY IS MOBILITY IMPORTANT TO NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN?

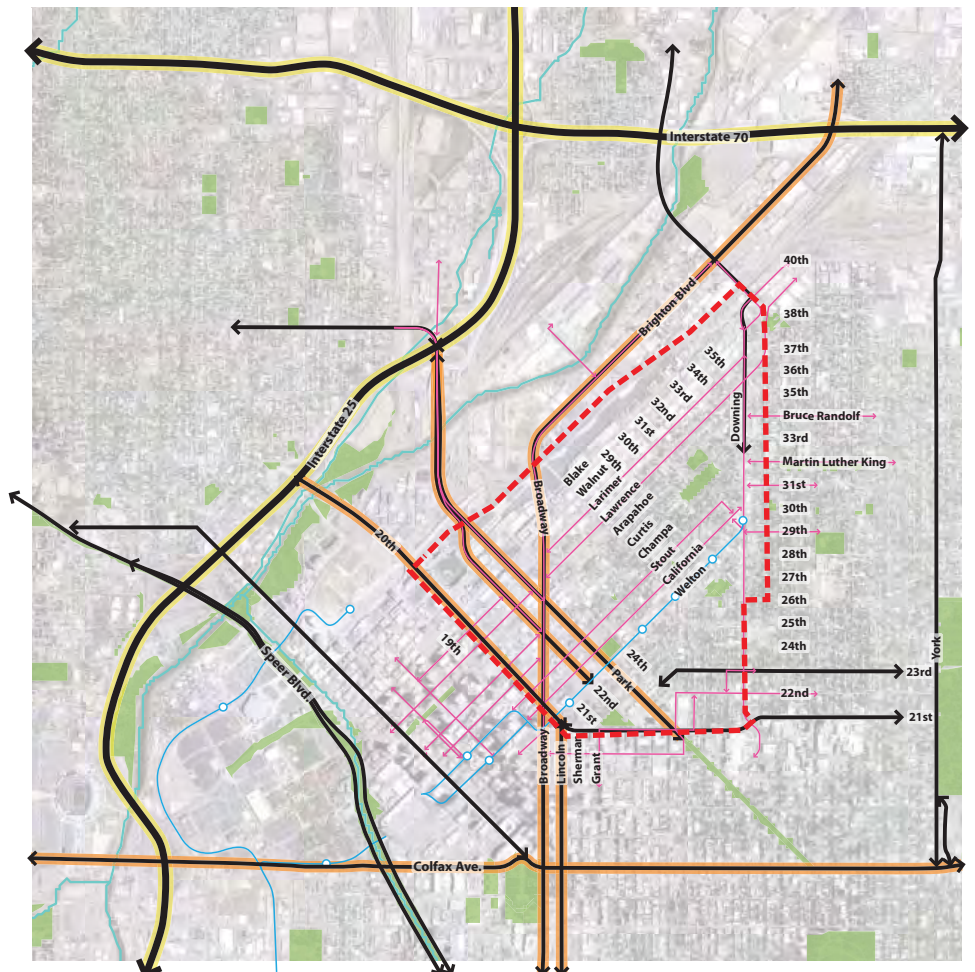
“Mobility” refers to the movement of people and goods. People use many modes of transportation to achieve their mobility: automobiles, public transit, walking, bicycling, and other means. How those different modes interact is a function of many things, including street connectivity, destination areas, and travel patterns. The mobility framework presented here articulates an overall strategy for accommodating all transportation modes within the Northeast Downtown area and balancing their needs so that people can navigate effectively and safely regardless of their modal choice. The strategy takes into account connections, destinations, and travel patterns within the planning area and its relation to the region.

Transportation has a vital connection to adjacent land uses. The type, amount, and quality of transportation modes affect how property owners choose to development and use their land. Conversely, the adjacent land uses and form of buildings impacts how transportation modes operate as a network at a local and regional scale. A high degree of mobility in the Northeast Downtown neighborhoods should help attract development projects that are looking to take advantage of exceptional multi-modal movement of people and goods.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

The road network in Northeast Downtown connects to a larger regional network of interstates and major arterials. 20th Street, 22nd Street, and Park Avenue provide direct connectivity to and from I-25. Broadway connects to Brighton Boulevard north of the study area to provide a

- Main Corridor
- Highway Corridor
- Existing Bus Route
- Existing Light Rail
- Park
- Study Area

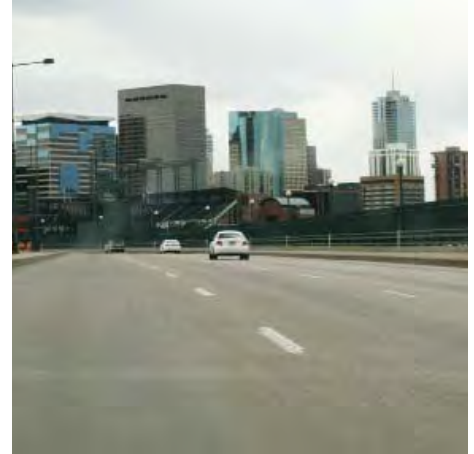


Existing Regional Mobility

direct route to and from I-70, and connects southward to Colfax Avenue, Civic Center, and the South Broadway commercial district.

Unlike most other neighborhoods in Denver, the local street network in the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods is built on an extension of the downtown grid. When the downtown streets were converted to one-way in the early 1950s, many of the streets in this area were also converted and remain one-way today. There are some streets where one-ways are necessary to accommodate traffic volumes or street-fronting loading docks associated with historic warehouse buildings. Over time, land use and travel patterns have changed on some streets in Northeast Downtown, resulting in an opportunity to re-evaluate cross sections and one-way street directions within the study area. In conducting this evaluation it is important to consider where the transition from one-way operations in the Central Business District to two-way operations in Northeast Downtown should occur. In most instances this plan does not prescribe the exact location of this transition from one-way to two-way, as this may vary from one street to the next depending on mobility and land use considerations at the time of conversion.

Broadway is an important arterial that serves both local and regional transportation needs, including local transit routes. The street was constructed in the early 1920's to connect North Denver to the Civic Center. The introduction of Broadway through this area resulted in the roadway bisecting the downtown street grid, creating unusual geometry at intersections that sometimes lengthens the crossing distance for pedestrians. Broadway's bisection of the grid



Important connections to the regional transportation network occur in or near Northeast Downtown.



Gaps in the sidewalk network exist in some areas where properties that have redeveloped are adjacent to properties that have not.



Existing Sidewalks



Sidewalk gaps contribute to a poor pedestrian experience.



Bike Sharrow on 21st Street



RTD Bus on Broadway

also means that intersections occur more frequently, resulting in some unsignalized intersections that add additional challenges for cross-traffic of all modes.

Although sidewalks are present on most streets in Northeast Downtown, network gaps exist in portions of RiNo and Ballpark, largely because of the long industrial history of those neighborhoods that continues to this day. Gaps in the sidewalk network are most pronounced along Blake and Walnut between 28th and 38th Streets where many industrial uses are located. Handicap accessibility of pedestrian facilities is also an issue, as Northeast Downtown is one of the oldest areas of the City. City ordinance requires the installation of sidewalks and ADA curb ramps in conjunction with development, redevelopment and major street construction or maintenance efforts. Additionally, the City has a curb ramp program that provides a small amount of annual funding in response to requests.

A good network of on-street bikeways currently exists, with bike routes providing service through much of the study area. Bikeway facilities are a mix of painted on-street bike lanes, designated routes (no physical bike lane), and painted shared lane arrows (“sharrows”). Major northwest and southeast routes converge on 21st St, which has sharrows, emphasizing the importance of that street for cyclists. Many of the routes in this area intersect with Broadway, but only Champa provides an on-street bike lane across Broadway. Denver Moves, a mobility plan sponsored by Denver Public Works and Parks and Recreation that is focused on bicycle and pedestrian connections, is in-process at the time of this writing.

The overall transportation network in Northeast Downtown currently has limited abilities to access the South Platte River greenway due to the Union Pacific right of way bisecting the River North neighborhood. There are no connections to Brighton Boulevard and the South Platte River from Northeast Downtown between Broadway and 38th Street. One of those two connections, the underpass at 38th Street, is very narrow. Other access points are 20th Street and Park Avenue.

Transit service in Northeast Downtown features RTD bus routes distributed evenly throughout the study area. The main bus routes serving this area include the 12 on Downing Street, the 38 on Stout/California, the 44 on Lawrence/Larimer, and the 48 on Broadway. Several other routes also run through portions of the study area. The D Line provides light rail service on Welton Street, beginning at the 30th/Downing station and continuing to the southern terminus in Littleton. The planned Central Corridor Extension, which is currently unfunded, would extend service along Downing Street to the future 38th and Blake commuter rail station (scheduled to open in 2016) and discontinue direct service to destinations beyond the Downtown transit loop, such as the Auraria campus and Denver Tech Center. Passengers traveling beyond Downtown loop would require a transfer.

Regional and long distance bus service is available via Greyhound, located just outside of the study area at 19th and Curtis, and several other bus lines offering service to destinations in Mexico. As the area redevelops and densifies, it is anticipated that regional bus services will relocate elsewhere to areas with fewer operational constraints and to take advantage of lower land prices. When this occurs, many large properties will become available for redevelopment.

MOBILITY FRAMEWORK **CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

■ **B.1 Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis**

Conduct a series of studies to analyze the complex transportation needs of Downtown Denver and adjacent neighborhoods:

- Traffic Modeling for local and regional movement, existing and future demand
- Pedestrian and bike network connectivity and functionality

- Transit Elements: Downtown Circulator operations on 18th/19th/Broadway/Lincoln, E. Colfax transit alternatives study and how that service could penetrate downtown and connect to the 16th Street Mall shuttle, the Downtown light rail system, possible 38th & Blake to Auraria transit service, Union Station, and Civic Center Station.
- As part of its scope, this study may also incorporate other mobility recommendations identified in this plan.

■ B.2 Evaluate Potential One-Way to Two-Way Conversions

Promote neighborhood connections through the evaluation of selective conversion of one-way streets to two-way when appropriate based on land uses and traffic patterns. When considering one-way to two-way conversions, an evaluation of the positives of two-way streets (improved pedestrian experience, additional access to store fronts) should be weighed against potential drawbacks (reduced on-street parking, loss of existing bike lanes, turning access).







- Larimer – Programmed for two-way conversion between Broadway and 35th Street in Summer, 2011. Larimer will have on-street bike lanes in both directions. It is anticipated that two-way operations will help support this emerging retail corridor.
- 22nd – Evaluate the potential to convert to two-way east of Champa. 22nd currently transitions from one-way to two-way traffic at Stout. Transitioning at Champa would promote a more cohesive neighborhood character east of Broadway.
- Blake – Blake Street has seen a significant amount of residential development and infill, but still also has some active industrial properties. Two-way operations could support the emerging residential character of the street. Evaluate conversion to two-way in the short-to-medium timeframe or at such time as land use changes along the corridor warrants.
- Curtis – Curtis Street is currently one-way west of Broadway and two-way east of Broadway. Converting the segment west of Broadway to two-way operations would help to reinforce a strong pedestrian connection to downtown. The intersection at Broadway is a major obstacle for implementing two way operations on Curtis. The geometry and traffic movements at this intersection are complicated, and would require a significant amount of study and analysis to determine a solution.
- Welton – Two-way operations may help support the main street character of this corridor. Conversion of Welton would be necessary to support any future two-way streetcar operations and is contingent on that project and the associated removal of the current light rail infrastructure.
- Walnut – Evaluate conversion of Walnut contingent on significant redevelopment along this street that eliminates most of the existing loading docks. This recommendation is long-term and reliant on land use changes.
- California – Evaluate conversion of California south of Park Avenue to reinforce the pedestrian connection to the Central Business District. Note: it may be preferable to keep this segment one-way under any scenario where future streetcar service utilizes California and Welton as a couplet.
- Stout/Champa couplet – Evaluate the conversion of both streets, as a couplet or separately, in the long-term. Because of its narrow cross section, which would likely mean losing the existing bike lane under a two-way scenario, Champa will need to remain one way for the foreseeable future. Stout is a wider street and it may be appropriate to consider two way operations after the RTD Central Corridor improvements are in place on Downing Street. In the short term, evaluate traffic calming measures for both streets as part of a Next Steps Transportation Operations Study for Northeast Downtown.

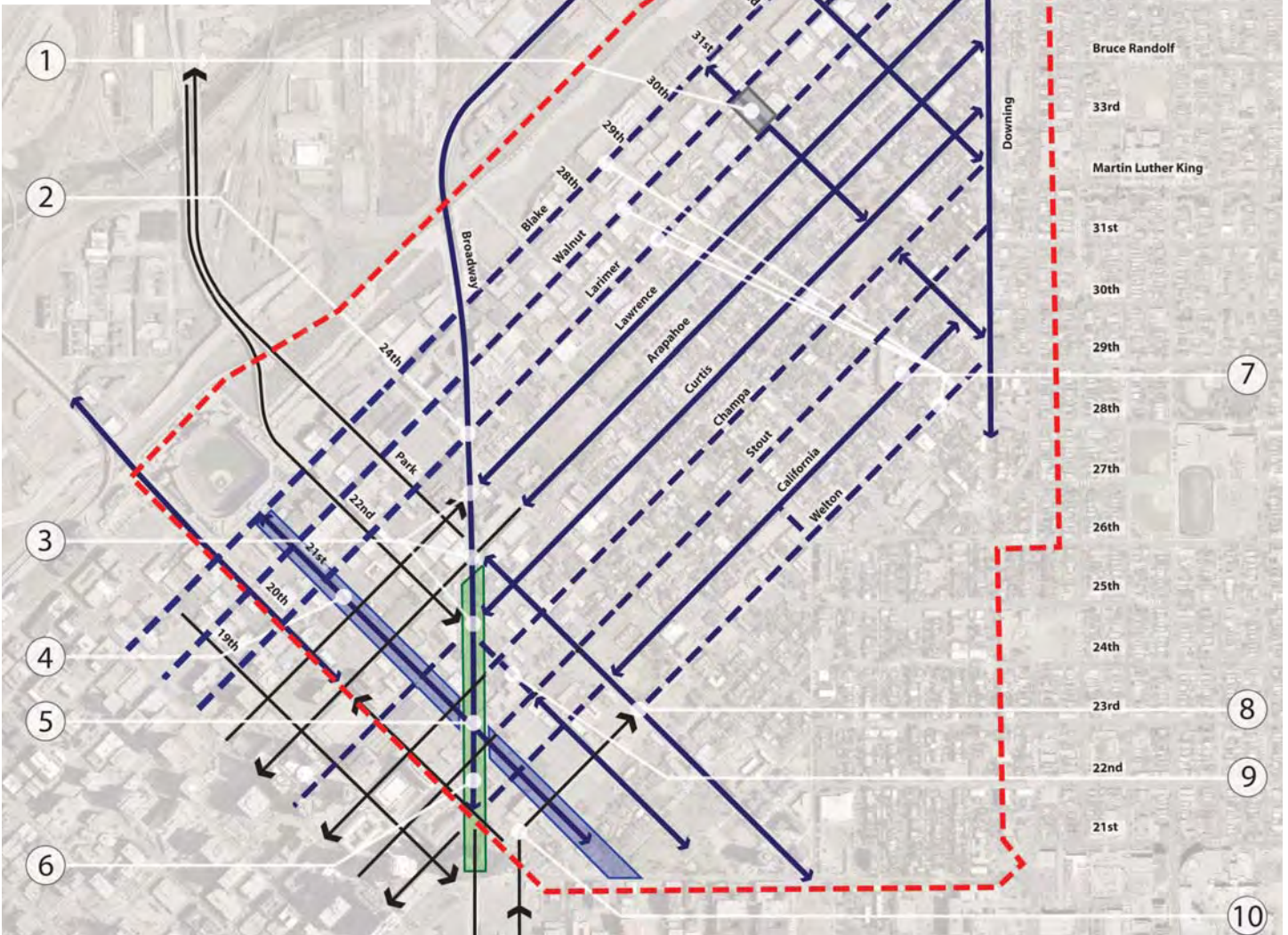


Welton and 22nd Street: Currently, there are no light rail stations between 20th and 25th streets on Welton

38TH AND BLAKE STATION AREA PLAN

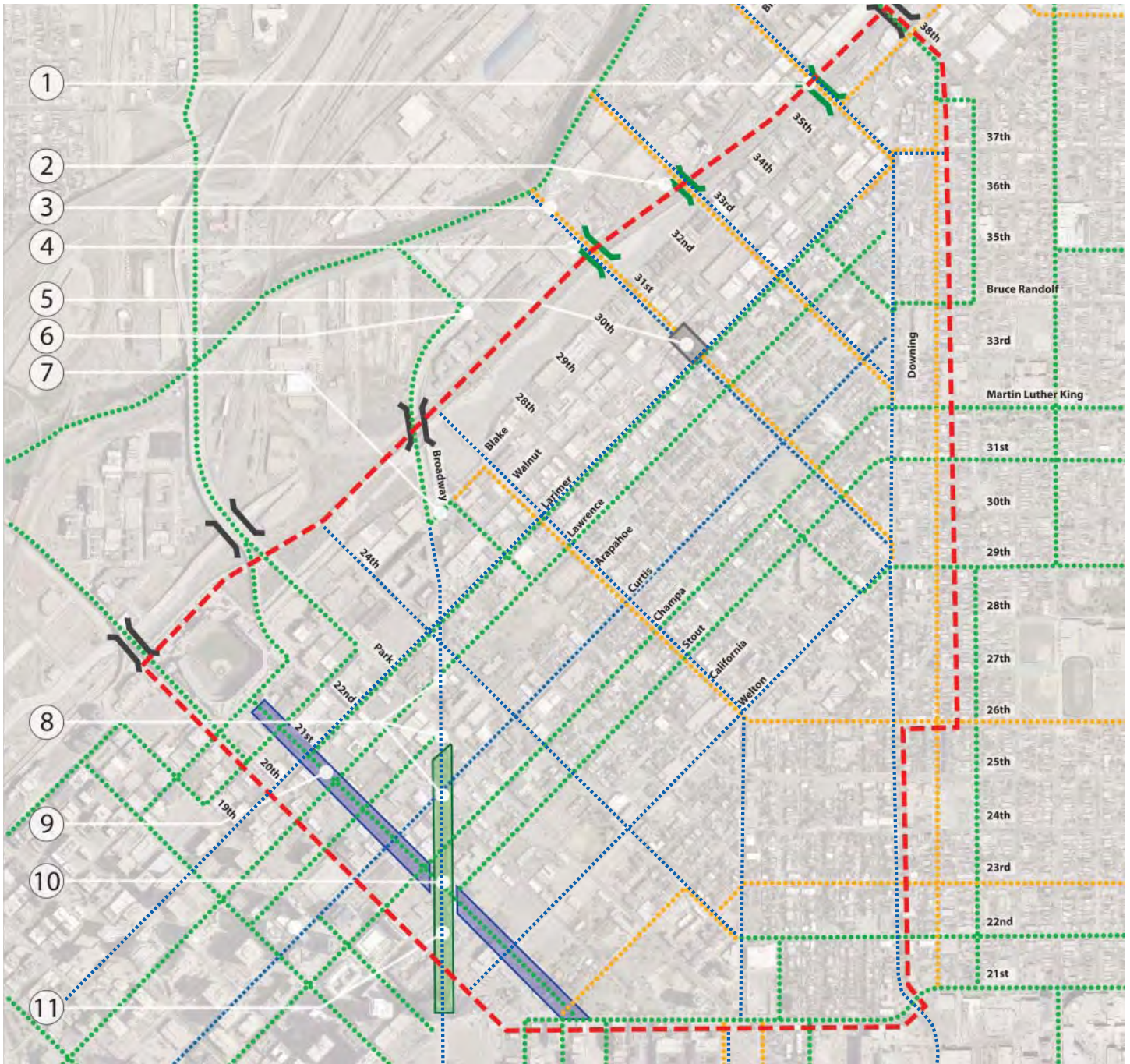
The 38th & Blake station area plan recommended many changes to the street network in the vicinity of the station. These recommendations were evaluated by the 38th & Blake Next Steps Traffic Operational Study, and most were deemed feasible. However, funding has not been programmed for these projects and many are in the long-range timeframe. Rather than assume that all of the roadway network changes from the station area plan will be realized, this plan presents the existing roadway network and defers to the 38th & Blake Station Area Plan and the Next Steps Study regarding the advisability and phasing of specific roadway network changes in the vicinity of the station.

-  Potential Alternative Broadway Modifications
-  Enhanced Street
-  One Way Street
-  Two Way Street
-  Two Way Street (Potential Convert)
-  Study Area



Recommended Framework Changes - Street Network

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>① Connect 31st Street</p> <p>② Broadway & Larimer organize intersection future intersection reconfiguration to improve multimodal operations</p> | <p>④ Enhanced Street - 21st from Blake to 20th Ave</p> <p>⑤ Broadway & 21st add median for pedestrian refuge / enhance pedestrian & bike crossing</p> | <p>⑦ Potential Future Street Conversion from 1 way to 2 way
Blake
Walnut
Larimer
Champa
Stout
California (south of Park)
Welton (north of Park)
Curtis</p> | <p>⑧ Lincoln/Welton Potential for future double left from Welton to Park</p> <p>⑨ 22nd from Champa to Stout change to 2 Way</p> <p>⑩ Lincoln potential future intersection reconfiguration to improve multimodal operations</p> |
| <p>③ Broadway & Lawrence/ Arapahoe/Curtis organize intersection to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity</p> | | | |











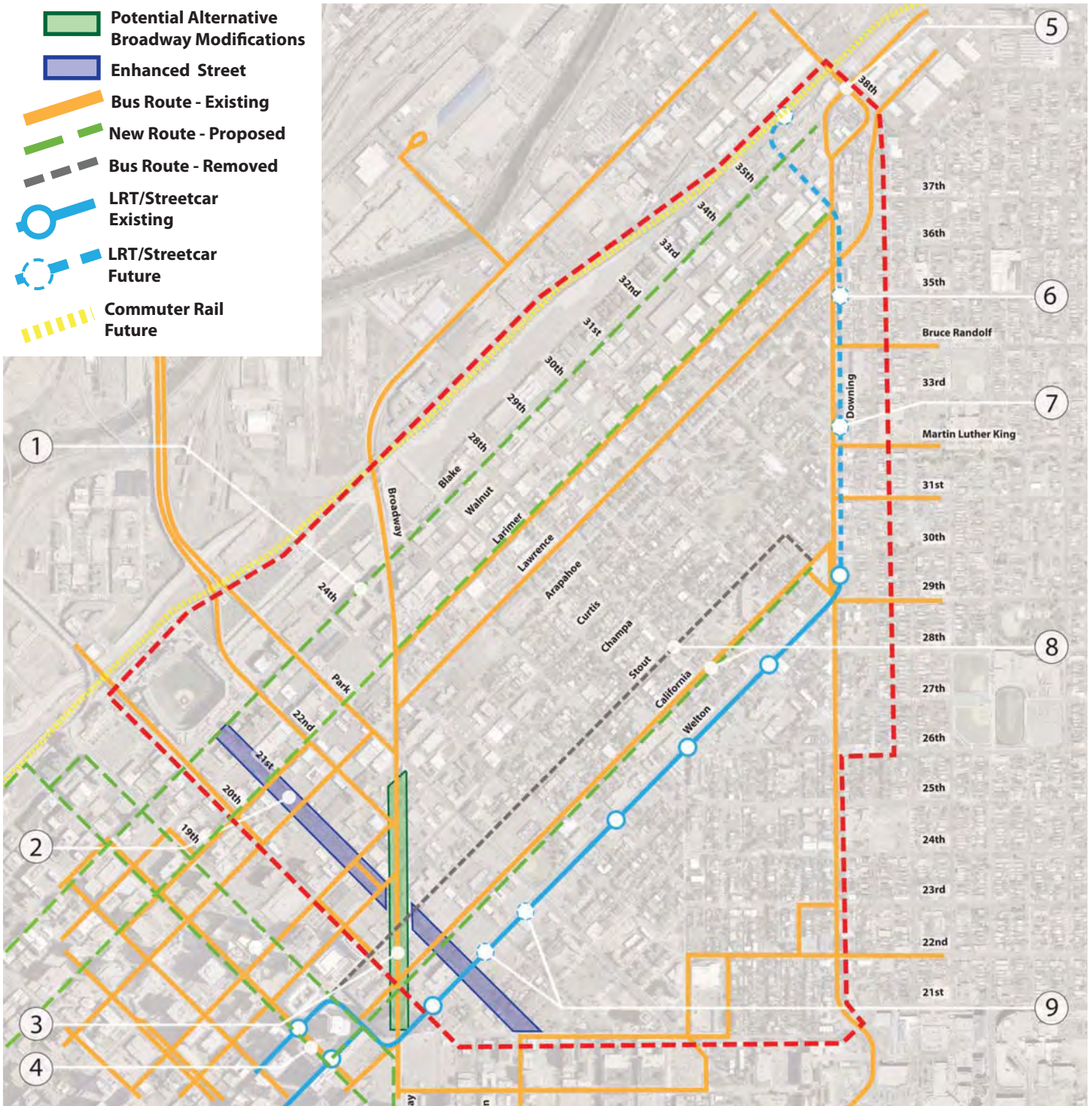
Recommended Framework Changes - Bicycle and Pedestrian

- ① Bridge over Railroad Ped and Bike only
- ② Bridge over Railroad All Modes
- ③ Bike path to River
- ④ Bridge over Railroad Ped and Bike only
- ⑤ Connect 31st Street

- ⑥ Add Crossing Signal
- ⑦ Extend Bike Lane
- ⑧ Broadway & Lawrence/ Arapahoe/Curtis organize intersection to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- ⑨ Enhanced Street - 21st from Blake to 20th Ave

- ⑩ Broadway & 21st add median for pedestrian refuge / pedestrian activated crossing signal
- ⑪ Potential Alternative Broadway Modifications

-  Potential Alternative Broadway Modifications
-  Enhanced Street
-  Existing Bike Lane/Sharrow
-  Proposed Bike Lane/Sharrow
-  Key Pedestrian Routes
-  Existing Bridge
-  Proposed Bridge
-  Study Area



Recommended Framework Changes - Public Transportation

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>① Blake or Larimer - New transit connection serving 38th & Blake Station, Auraria West Station, and points in between</p> | <p>② Enhanced Street - 21st from Blake to 20th</p> <p>③ Potential Alternative Broadway Modifications</p> | <p>⑤ New Station: 38th & Blake</p> <p>⑥ New Station: 35th & Downing</p> | <p>⑧ Relocate existing bus route to California</p> <p>⑨ Options for new Arapahoe Square LRT/Streetcar Station</p> |
| <p>④ Proposed Downtown Circulator</p> | <p>⑦ New Station: 33rd & Downing</p> | | |

■ B.3 Consider New or Modified Transit Routes

In tandem with already-executed or future two-way conversions, work with RTD to consolidate bus operations to a single street or a sole one-way couplet.

- On the west side of the study area, regional bus routes currently on Blake and Market/Walnut and originating/terminating at Market Street Station will be re-routed outside of the study area to the new Denver Union Station.
- Local buses will run on Blake, Larimer (inbound) and Lawrence (outbound).
 - On event days requiring Blake Street closures, such as Coors Field game days and the St Patrick's Day parade, Blake Street buses will be rerouted to Larimer via 19th and Park Avenue.
 - Consistent with recommendations in the Downtown Area Plan and the 38th & Blake Station Area Plan, a future transit route, mode to be determined, would run on Blake Street or parallel street from the 38th and Blake and potentially National Western Stock Show commuter rail stations and create shuttle-style connectivity between the study area and the Auraria Campus and Auraria West Station.
- On the east side of the study area, separate bicycle and bus routes by relocating inbound buses from Stout to California.
 - Splitting buses on Stout and California appears to be 'leftover' from when Stout and California formed a one-way couplet. With California already a two-way street, having both inbound and outbound buses on the same street creates a more intuitive system for bus riders, and decreases bus-bicycle conflict by removing buses from Stout (which has a striped bike lane).
- Provide a new transit route (Streetcar, BRT, enhanced bus) along a corridor that could connect 38th & Blake Station to Ballpark, LoDo, Auraria Campus, and Auraria West Station. The Downtown Area Plan identifies Larimer and Lawrence streets and the 38th and Blake Station Area Plan identifies Blake Street for this potential alignment. Either street may be a good choice depending on the circumstances and opportunities at the time of implementation. As a main street corridor, Larimer would benefit from this additional service, while streetcar serving the 38/Blake station could most easily be extended to Blake Street.

■ B.4 Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton

Evaluate a new rail station for Arapahoe Square located between 21st Street and Park Avenue. Current LRT station spacing along the Welton corridor locates stations approximately every 2 blocks, with the exception of the segment between 20th and 25th. A new stop in Arapahoe Square could provide improved connections to Park Avenue, the enhanced 21st Street, Welton businesses, Coors Field, and other destinations.

■ B.5 In Short-Term, Undertake a Broadway Intersections Improvements Study

Conduct further study to identify potential short-term improvements to Broadway intersections

- Evaluate potential improvements at the Broadway/Larimer intersection for increased multimodal connectivity.
- Evaluate the opportunity to enhance pedestrian connectivity and promote pedestrian priority at the intersections of Broadway and Lawrence/Arapahoe/Curtis/21st. Located in the center of the study area, these intersections play an important role in completing direct access across Broadway. Modifications should be studied to minimize required out-of-direction travel by pedestrians, and emphasize pedestrian priority through median island refuge areas in Broadway, closure of alleys and curb cut access to parking areas.

STRATEGIC PARKING PLAN

As the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods evolve over time, new parking conditions and opportunities may arise. As needed, parking and parking management should be evaluated in accordance with the vision and process set forth in the City's Strategic Parking Plan (SPP).

The SPP is a comprehensive, citywide framework that helps articulate and clarify the vision and approach for parking management in the City. The SPP explores innovative strategies and parking values from a variety of user perspectives so the implementation tools can achieve the best balance possible.

Specifically the Strategic Parking Plan Vision is to:

- Acknowledge a variety of land use patterns and contexts
- Manage parking as an asset
- Encourage an integrated approach to parking management

The plan recommends a comprehensive process to yield a customized set of management tools that allow parking to support healthy thriving communities. The process begins with defining the community, collecting data and identifying parking conditions and issues. The process also involves developing area specific parking goals and developing a management program best suited to the area. To ensure a comprehensive program, potential tools encompass strategies relative to demand, location, time and price.

C. Economic and Development Opportunity

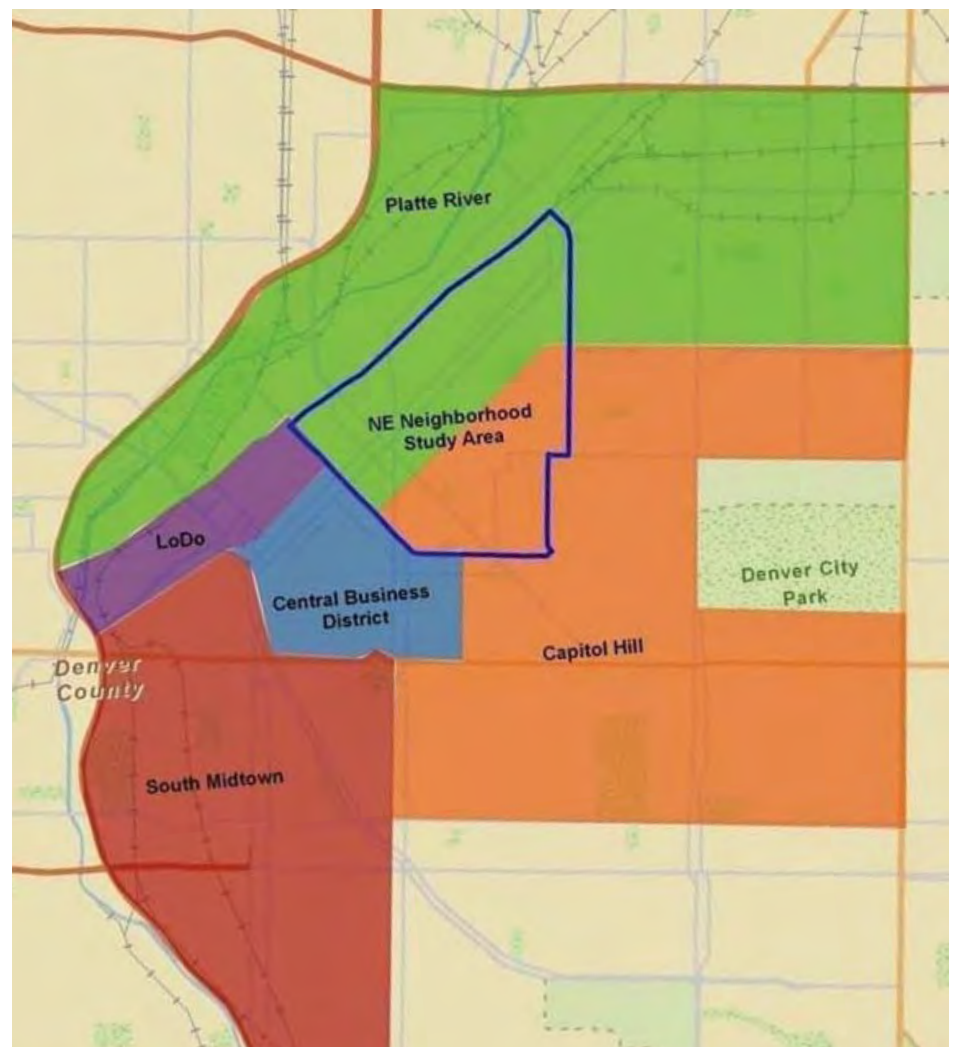
GOAL STATEMENT

Northeast Downtown will be a collection of visually interesting, diverse, and prosperous neighborhoods with increasing economic and development activity that includes small and creative businesses, a wide variety of housing types and prices, and vital retail corridors.

WHY IS ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY IMPORTANT TO NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN?

Northeast Downtown consists of both areas of change and areas of stability. Areas of change are those that are benefitting or will benefit from reinvestment, increased population and employment, and new, more intense development. The areas of change—Arapahoe Square, Ballpark/River North, Downing, Welton/Five Points—are at various stages of redevelopment and revitalization.

Economic development is typically defined as “the process of creating wealth through the mobilization of human, financial, capital, physical and natural resources to generate marketable goods and services” (American Economic Development Council). In many cases, the private sector, through an individual developer or business, amasses the necessary resources to advance a project. In other cases, the public sector has a responsibility to bring resources and leadership to generate the private sector interest. Private development has been leading the revitalization of Ballpark and RiNo. A Business Development Office is providing the leadership resources to spur desired development in Five Points. The Central Corridor Extension and Streetcar Transformative Concept will provide the public infrastructure investment to attract private development for the TOD areas. Taking advantage of the economic and development opportunities of Arapahoe Square will require a broader range of integrated strategies to overcome the present development conditions.



The Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Study Area is located in the Platte River and Capitol Hill commercial real estate markets

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Northeast Downtown has considerable commercial activity that includes office, industrial, warehouse, arts, and retail uses. The area has and will continue to benefit from proximity to Downtown, Coors Field, and public transportation investments. Each of the areas of change is developing distinctive character based in part on its historical uses and location.

Ballpark is a designated Landmark district that has also experienced extensive redevelopment since Coors Field opened in 1995. Much of the building reuse and new construction has been for housing with a variety of types, prices, and tenancy. Larimer Street, especially between 20th Street and Park Avenue, supports a variety of retail and small restaurants. Blake Street has a mix of residential, office and retail uses, as well as a few remaining industrial uses. Walnut retains many of its industrial uses.

RiNo has long served as a backbone of the industrial activities on the edge of Downtown Denver, with a large number of warehouse, industrial, and support businesses. The River North Art District reflects the growing community of artist studios and galleries. Recently, additional businesses (such as professional services, creative businesses, and others) and housing developments have “discovered” the locational advantage and affordability of RiNo.

Today the Downing/Welton Corridor is identified with the D-Line Light Rail and FasTracks Central Corridor Extension. The Five Points Business District Office and Five Points community are seeking to re-establish the historic Five Points neighborhood. Sometimes called the “Harlem of the West”, Five Points, which is Colorado’s only designated historic cultural landmark district, has a rich jazz history and has served as the heart of the African-American community in Denver since at least the 1930’s. After World War II, the corridor has continually struggled to maintain its previous vibrancy and economic success. Small-scale storefronts spread north and south from the Five Points intersection create a developing node of neighborhood-serving retail. Additional development opportunities exist related to existing and proposed transit stops along Downing and Welton.

Curtis Park, Enterprise Hill, and San Rafael are residential neighborhoods with scattered small lot infill opportunities. Large scale redevelopment opportunities also exist in the form of larger vacant lots, particularly in the southernmost blocks of Curtis Park approaching Arapahoe Square. Adaptive reuse of vacant historic structures, such as the Epworth Church, the Curtis Park Community Center, and Temple Emmanuel, present an additional set of opportunities.

Immediately adjacent to the Central Business District, Arapahoe Square has the potential to be the most urban of the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods. Bounded by Park Avenue, 20th Street, the alley between Welton and Glenarm, and the alley between Larimer and Lawrence, Arapahoe Square will set a critical character transition between Downtown and the residential neighborhoods. At present, Arapahoe Square is visually dominated by surface parking lots and a clustering of social service providers. The parking lots serve downtown employees and Coors Field patrons. A more hidden asset is the collection of existing buildings that house a variety of small businesses, both emerging and established. There are also a handful of residential units, mostly in newer buildings of apartment or rowhouse building forms.



One Lincoln Park (foreground): High density residential development adjacent to Northeast Downtown



Five Points Business District Office

FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

■ C.1 Strengthen Retail Corridors

The plan area has two emerging retail corridors, Welton Street and Larimer Street, as well as a potential future TOD corridor in Downing Street. Retail strategies should strengthen these corridors by developing viable retail clusters, tenant mix and product and service offerings for those who live, work and visit the area. The area has two full service grocery stores. Additional retail opportunities will emerge to meet the needs of the growing population. Retail strategies for the three areas should aim at reinforcing the distinctive character of each and serve complementary retail market niches.

■ C.2 Promote Economic and Housing Diversity

The concept is to maintain the characteristic household and economic diversity of the Plan Area. In areas of stability, retaining the existing housing stock and reinforcing existing character through appropriate new development should continue. In areas of change, a wider variety of multiple unit building forms should be encouraged as part of these mixed-use neighborhoods. Future zoning should support varied residential forms and remove barriers to promote products that serve households at different socioeconomic levels. Adding more housing is important to forwarding the plan vision; however, housing development is driven by private developers and investors. The public sector can assist with removing regulatory barriers and providing subsidy when warranted.

■ C.3 Encourage Housing Density

Higher density housing requires structured parking, which is a costly component of any building and is likely to be required given the densities proposed in the plan. Multi-unit developments are currently viable because of specially subsidized financing vehicles and favorable capital markets conditions. Market conditions will need to improve, subsidies provided, or alternative parking solutions identified in order to justify apartment or condominium development in the future.

■ C.4 Establish and Support Business Development Offices

The goal of dedicated Business Development Offices (BDO) located within the Study Area would be to decrease the barriers to economic development. The BDO would serve as an advocate for new and existing businesses, gather information regarding financing programs, properties for sale, contact information for building and property owners and serve as a one-stop shop for those interested in investing or locating in a particular area. The BDO could develop marketing materials and serve as a facilitator to match property owners with prospective tenants and/or help with assemblages based on client needs. Because of the different character and business mix of the three areas, it is recommended that each one — Arapahoe Square, Five Points/Welton, and Ballpark/RiNo — could be the focus for such an effort. A Business Development Office for Five Points was established in 2010.

■ **C.5 Establish Urban Renewal Areas**

Urban Renewal Areas (URA) are created to help effect the redevelopment of blighted areas. URAs are created by the City through the adoption of Urban Redevelopment Plans which lay out the objectives of the plan (such as elimination of blight) and authorize the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) to carry out those objectives. DURA’s primary tool for effecting redevelopment is tax increment financing (TIF). TIF can be used to assist in the financing of projects that are consistent with the Denver Comprehensive Plan and all relevant plan supplements. Elsewhere in Denver, TIF has been used in a wide variety of ways including public infrastructure projects, subsidizing private development, and resolving site constraints such as environmental remediation and fragmented ownership. A Blight Study has been completed for Arapahoe Square confirming that blighting conditions exist, and a study of the Welton corridor is expected to be undertaken. A recommended early action is the creation of urban renewal areas for Arapahoe Square and the Welton corridor.

■ **C.6 Utilize OED Lending programs**

An essential economic development concept is expanding the number and range of businesses within the Plan Area. The Office of Economic Development (OED) offers a wide variety of services and referrals to assist existing and new businesses with their financing, labor, space, and market needs. These services have proven to be essential components of financing for a number of successful businesses in the area. Existing and new businesses should take full advantage of OED’s existing and future lending programs and OED should encourage their clients to consider locations in the Northeast Downtown Plan Area.



Arapahoe Square has potential for an Urban Renewal Area

D. Livability and Public Realm

GOAL STATEMENT

Provide an appealing and safe physical environment, and increase the amount of appropriately programmed, maintained, and accessible public open space for the health, economic success, and livability of the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods.



16th Street Mall is lauded nation-wide for its high quality public realm.



Denver has many examples of neighborhood commercial districts, such as 32nd and Zuni in the Highland Neighborhood.

WHY ARE LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM IMPORTANT TO NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN?

In an urban neighborhood, life happens between buildings. The public realm, the space between buildings in an urban environment, such as the parks, plazas, sidewalks, and streets — and how we perceive that space — is critical to the livability of that environment. A thriving urban neighborhood needs streets that are safe, green space to let residents breathe, parks to play in, trees that provide shade, and squares and plazas to meet one another. A neighborhood should provide services, amenities, and a healthy environment to live, work, and play for people of all ages. The sense that you are somewhere, the sense that there is a “there” at all, evolves from how much importance people place on the shared public realm.

The quality of the public realm is essential to the health of any environment, but not all environments are the same. The public realm in an urban environment should provide places that feel safe, promote multiple modes of travel – especially walking – and support the overall vibrancy and sense of community of the neighborhood. A walkable, urban neighborhood is a place that realizes the importance of the common space that all people experience.

The neighborhoods of Northeast Downtown were developed early in Denver’s history, when walking was the primary mode of travel. This is true of many of Denver’s close-in neighborhoods such as Highlands, La Alma/Lincoln Park, and Capitol Hill. The streets, sidewalks, and public spaces were shared by the residents, business owners, employees, and customers that experienced the neighborhood with their feet.

SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Many of the attributes of Northeast Downtown that made it thrive as a livable community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had deteriorated in the latter half of the 20th century. The historic residential neighborhoods in the area, such as Curtis Park and San Rafael, have more recently rediscovered the many qualities of great places. Ballpark and River North have seen development and infrastructure improvements that have greatly improved the public realm. Elsewhere the quality of the public realm remains fragmented, and as a result, the livability of the entire Northeast Downtown Plan area is diminished. Real and perceived concerns about personal safety and crime are exacerbated with the presence of homelessness, fragmented building fabric, minimally maintained parking lots, and poorly maintained sidewalks and tree lawns. In addition to the quality of the public realm, other components of livable neighborhoods include public health and safety, access to parks and recreation facilities, access to healthy food, and sustainable infrastructure.

- **Public Health** – Key components of a healthy neighborhood are convenient access to active transportation (walking, biking, and public transportation), parks and recreation facilities, and healthy food. For the most part, Northeast Downtown has those fundamental elements; however, perceptions of crime, impact of homelessness, high-traffic streets, and spotty quality of the urban fabric may hinder use of these assets. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was conducted in the summer and fall of 2010 to provide a summary of existing conditions and recommendations for improving public health in the plan area. For purposes of the HIA, health is defined as both the promotion of healthy behaviors and the prevention of disease. The HIA conducted for a plan such as this is, by necessity, an overview of conditions that may contribute to improved health or the converse.

■ **Public Safety** – Concerns about safety pervade Northeast Downtown. This perception is related to a lack of “eyes on the street”, a high concentration of social service providers, and open-air drug deals and criminal activity. These real and perceived safety concerns affect potential development and residents’ willingness to walk and bike in high crime areas.

■ **Homelessness** – The impact and visibility of the homeless on public streets and parks is a detriment to promoting the area as a walkable, urban neighborhood. The impacts are most evident at Eddie Maestas Park and the streets adjoining the Denver Rescue Mission. The Denver community has focused its efforts to address the homeless issue through Denver’s Road Home (DRH), established in 2005. The 10-Year goal is to end homelessness in Denver as we know it. This means that our community will have provided adequate housing and services to the chronically homeless population. These efforts have already reduced the homelessness population by 66% over the first half of the 10-year plan. The 10-year Plan to End Homelessness has many components that have vastly improved the delivery of services, understanding of issues and quality of life for the residents, providers, consumers and businesses in the Northeast Downtown area.

- As part of Denver’s Road Home, a collaborative of outreach staff work daily to connect vulnerable and homeless individuals and families to critical services and housing. The Denver Police Department is part of this outreach team. In addition to dealing with criminal activity, Police District 6 officers respond to community issues.
- At the end of ten years, Denver will have in place a strong service delivery system that works to prevent homelessness in the first place, and very quickly works to get those who fall into homelessness back into stable lives. The need for emergency shelter should be reduced drastically, and resources should be readily available for those in need.
- Denver’s Road Home is a stakeholder in decisions around the use and programming at Eddie Maestas Park and other parcels in the area, and is committed to ongoing engagement towards solutions that create safe, positive spaces for the area.

■ **Parks** – The City and County of Denver is in the fortunate position of being a very desirable city in which to live, work and play, offering a quality of life that has resulted in a consistently growing population, even as other cities around the nation are declining. Denver’s continued success depends on its ability to continue providing the same or greater level of amenities and basic infrastructure to support a vibrant and economically healthy city. Some of the most visible elements of an urban area are the public spaces, such as parks, plazas and bikeways or trails. These elements provide numerous public health and environmental benefits for recreation, exercise, connectivity and transportation, air pollution removal, tourism, rainwater retention, and natural beauty. As with other infrastructure systems, the public park system must continue to evolve to meet the increasing expectations and demands of the growing population. The major park facilities in Northeast Downtown are Sonny Lawson Park (2.5 acres), Benedict Fountain Park (2.8 acres), and Mestizo-Curtis Park (8.5 acres).

The Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods study area has a 2010 estimated population of 12,710. Both Blueprint Denver and the Denver Regional Council of Governments expect a significant increase in the residential population of Northeast Downtown and the adjacent Downtown core in the next 15 to 20 years, triggering a need for additional park amenities that vary in character and scale. As described in the Game Plan, the Parks Department’s master plan, the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods themselves are dramatically under served by parks, even for the existing population. With only 1.26 acres of parks for every 1,000 residents compared to a citywide average of 7.14 acres per



Eddie Maestas Park



Homeless congregate in Eddie Maestas Park.



Benedict Fountain Park

1,000 people this low acreage is even lower than other dense urban neighborhoods in the city such as Union Station and Lincoln Park.

One of the primary determinants of the marketability and the livability of a vibrant urban area is access to parks, open spaces and trails for health, mobility, community and environmental benefits as well as property value enhancement. The lack of existing infrastructure and public amenities contribute to the area's blighted appearance, and is likely one of the most significant inhibitors to private investment and development. If the existing park deficiency is not addressed, the deficiency of amenities needed for a healthy, active, urban lifestyle will hamper its redevelopment potential. As the city is expecting and planning for dense, urban development in central areas, including this study area, the park system will need improvements to accommodate the increased population growth and park system use. In future years as this plan is implemented, the addition of new parks, investments in existing parks, and new and improved connectivity will be critical to this area's success.

- **Stormwater** – The standard level of storm protection in the City is to plan, design, and construct storm sewers to convey storm runoff from a 2-year storm event in residential areas, and a 5-year event in commercial and industrial areas in underground storm drains. For larger storm events, the public right-of-way conveys the excess runoff, up to one foot deep in the gutter. The City has required water quality detention for all new developments greater than one-half acre in size since the early 1990s and stormwater detention since at least the 1970s. Additionally, the finished ground floor or any point of stormwater entry to any new development is required to be at least one foot higher than the 100-year storm flood level. New development must accommodate on-site 10-year detention and water quality.

The City's Storm Drainage Master Plan (2009) identified areas of potential ponding or potential flooding greater than 18 inches deep in a major storm event at several locations within Northeast Downtown. These locations include:

- Broadway/Stout/20th/21st
- Blake Street from 29th Street to 31st Street
- Portions of the Coors Field players' parking lot adjacent to the UPRR railroad tracks
- The area generally bounded by 30th Street on the south, California Street on the east, and Arapahoe Street on the west
- The area north of 36th Street and 37th Avenue

Additional analysis being conducted as part of the FasTracks East Corridor project has identified ponding greater than 18 inches in a major storm event at 26th and Blake, and confirmed flow depths greater than 18 inches in a major storm in the area bounded by 35th Street, Larimer, Downing, and the UPRR railroad tracks.

FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Several of the plans concepts and recommendations will positively contribute to livability and the public realm directly and indirectly. The following specific concepts stand alone as important strategies for livability and an improved public realm in Northeast Downtown.

- **D.1 Promote Access to Healthy Transportation**
 - Expand opportunities for active transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities.

- Improve pedestrian crossings of major streets (Park Avenue, Broadway, and 20th) with bulb-outs and other improvements.
- Reinstall missing tree lawn or amenity zone segments as part of new development or public infrastructure projects.
- Use the 21st Street, Curtis Street, RiNo bridges, and Streetcar Transformative Concepts as the framework for implementation of healthy transportation strategies.

■ D.2. Promote Access to Healthy Foods

- Encourage healthy food choices by neighborhood residents through urban agriculture (Denver Urban Gardens) and other programs identified by the Sustainable Food Policy Council.

■ D.3 Invest in Park Improvements

Invest in park improvements and programming to encourage residents to use existing and new parks for active and passive recreation.

■ D.4 Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas

Study opportunities for improved connections to Downtown and existing parks such as Skyline Park, Riverfront Park, Sonny Lawson Park, Benedict Fountain Park, Mestizo-Curtis Park, City of Cuernavaca Park, and the South Platte River greenway.

■ D.5 Identify Funding for Stormwater Improvements and Promote Water Quality through Best Practices

The need for additional storm drainage improvements throughout the Northeast Downtown Area has been previously identified in the adopted 2009 Storm Drainage Master Plan. These improvements include four major storm drainage improvement projects that are currently not funded or programmed due to financial constraints and an identified \$1 billion city-wide need in storm drainage improvements:

- 27th Street improvements (includes the 27th and Welton intersection)
- 31st Street outfall
- 36th Street outfall
- Upper end of the Stout Street outfall

Sustainable stormwater technologies, that could be applicable in Northeast Downtown and should be considered whenever stormwater improvements are needed, include but are not limited to:

- Bio-swales
- Permeable Pavers
- Infiltration Tree Wells
- Sub-regional Detention Ponds (in conjunction with new open space)
- Low-Impact Development Techniques
- Regional water quality
- Incorporate sustainable stormwater improvements in 21st Street

THE PARKS GAME PLAN (2002)

identifies the following goals and recommendations for park space:

- Performance Goals:
 - Provide at least ½ acre of public open space within one-half mile of every resident's home that can be reached without crossing a major barrier.
 - Provide 8 to 10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents
- Parks Game Plan Recommendations for Equitable and Generous Park Land:
 - Bring areas of the city that are significantly below the desired acreage goal up to par within 10 years;
 - Plan for growth while addressing the uneven distribution of parkland;
 - Work with CPD to ensure that redevelopment, especially within areas of change, provides neighborhood parkland at the recommended level of service;
 - Strengthen partnerships with DPS, private colleges and schools, and other institutions to seek shared-use agreements and identify long-lead acquisition and redevelopment opportunities;
 - Strengthen partnerships with nonprofits working to increase types and availability of open space;
 - Strengthen relationships with potential funding partners, such as Great Outdoors Colorado and foundations.

Transformative Concepts

This chapter presents eight different development concepts that, if constructed, would likely have a catalytic effect on stimulating additional investment in the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods area. These concepts represent “big ideas” for positively transforming Northeast Downtown.

- 21st Street
- Curtis Street
- Broadway
- Connecting River North
- New Park
- Social Services
- Streetcar
- Transit Oriented Development

Each concept is presented and then evaluated against the four criteria that are the organizing element for this plan:

- Neighborhood Connections and Character
- Mobility
- Development Opportunity
- Livability and the Public Realm

In some cases concepts may not be implemented as shown in this plan because of the interrelationships between them. Opportunities may arise to implement some concepts earlier than others, which would then inform and refine the implementation of the remaining concepts.

21st Street

GOAL STATEMENT

Make 21st Street a focal point for the Northeast Downtown neighborhoods by promoting its role as an important pedestrian and bicycle route and community gathering place.



Bike boulevards devote large sections of the ROW for bicycles while also accommodating other modes.



Bioswales use vegetation to detain and purify stormwater.



The Right-of-way of Festival Streets can be designed for flexibility of use.

WHAT IS IT?

Early in the planning process, 21st Street was identified as a potential transformative location for the Northeast Downtown neighborhoods. Three major concepts — a Bike Boulevard, a Festival Street, and innovative stormwater management — evolved during the Arapahoe Square charrette in January, 2011. The street is a two-way, low traffic volume street that enjoys two neighborhood landmarks as bookends: Coors Field to the west and Benedict Fountain Park to the east. Coors Field in particular acts as a strong terminating vista for the street and is a valuable asset for any future development on 21st. The low-level of traffic when compared to other streets in the area makes 21st Street a favorite for pedestrians and bicyclists. Bike sharrows are already on 21st street and many people utilize the street as a primary walking route on game days to the first base entrance at Coors Field. This pedestrian friendly character of the street was recognized when planning for Coors Field occurred in the 1990's, resulting in enhanced streetscaping being installed between Blake and Arapahoe Streets.

Two major concepts for improvements on 21st Street, the Bike Boulevard and the Festival Street, if implemented, would respond to these initial ideas of the street being a place with an enhanced public realm and prioritizing pedestrians and bicyclists. Another opportunity for 21st Street, since it is located at the ridge of two stormwater basins, is for it to be a potential testing ground for innovative, environmentally friendly stormwater management techniques new to the Denver area. Finally, much of the land along 21st Street today is devoid of buildings and often used as surface parking, which is in high demand on Rockies game days. In the short-term, these parking lots will most likely remain, but in the long-term land assembly and proximity to Downtown make 21st in Ballpark and Arapahoe Square an excellent location for mixed-use and high density residential development. Any streetscape improvement may require the establishment of a local maintenance district and should be coordinated with the existing Consolidated Larimer Street Local Maintenance District.



The section of 21st Street nearest to Coors Field already has wide sidewalks and street trees. New development could help to activate the street and a redesign could transform it into a Festival Street.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?**

- Becomes a focal point for the entire Northeast Downtown area, connecting the activities near Coors Field to the redevelopment opportunities in Arapahoe Square and the named north-south streets that intersect it.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **MOBILITY?**

- Prioritizes the right of way for use by pedestrians and bicyclists, while still accommodating vehicular traffic.
- Provides bicyclists with enhanced connectivity to other bike routes.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?**

- The high quality multi-modal environment of a Bike Boulevard and Festival Street may act as a catalyst for the reuse of existing buildings and redevelopment of under-utilized or vacant parcels.
- The enhanced public realm along 21st Street may attract private investment to respond to the street.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?**

- Promotes active uses along the street
- Promotes potential new development that would begin to frame the street into a comfortable, human-scaled environment
- Improved multi-modal capacity increases access to neighborhood amenities for pedestrians and cyclists.



Bike Sharrows on 21st Street

21ST STREET RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Develop 21st Street as a Bike Boulevard: Evaluate cross section to prioritize bicycle movement as a bike boulevard as conceptualized in Denver Moves
- Develop 21st Street as “Festival Street”: Evaluate cross section to include improvements in support of potentially closing street for events and accommodating wide sidewalks, on street parking, one lane of travel in each direction, bike lanes, and streetscape improvements. This concept should be first considered on a short portion of the street, such as Blake to Larimer, before considering extending the treatment along the corridor. The term Festival Street is flexible and should include the Bike Boulevard concept identified previously.
- Identify 21st Street as a potential testing location for several of the sustainable stormwater technologies due to its location at the ridge of two stormwater basins. Explore integration of stormwater technologies into other projects on 21st street such as future development activity, streetscape improvements, Festival Street, Bike Boulevard, etc.
 - Bio-swales
 - Permeable Pavers
 - Infiltration Tree Wells
 - Sub-regional Detention Ponds (in conjunction with new open space)
 - Low-Impact Development Techniques
- Encourage the addition of standard railings along the 21st Street parking lots to improve the visual quality of the street and acknowledge its short term function for parking by promoting the Denver Public Works and Downtown Denver Partnership parking program to parking lot owners.

Curtis Street

GOAL STATEMENT

Use Curtis Street to create a preferred pedestrian route connecting the Central Business District to Arapahoe Square and Curtis Park.

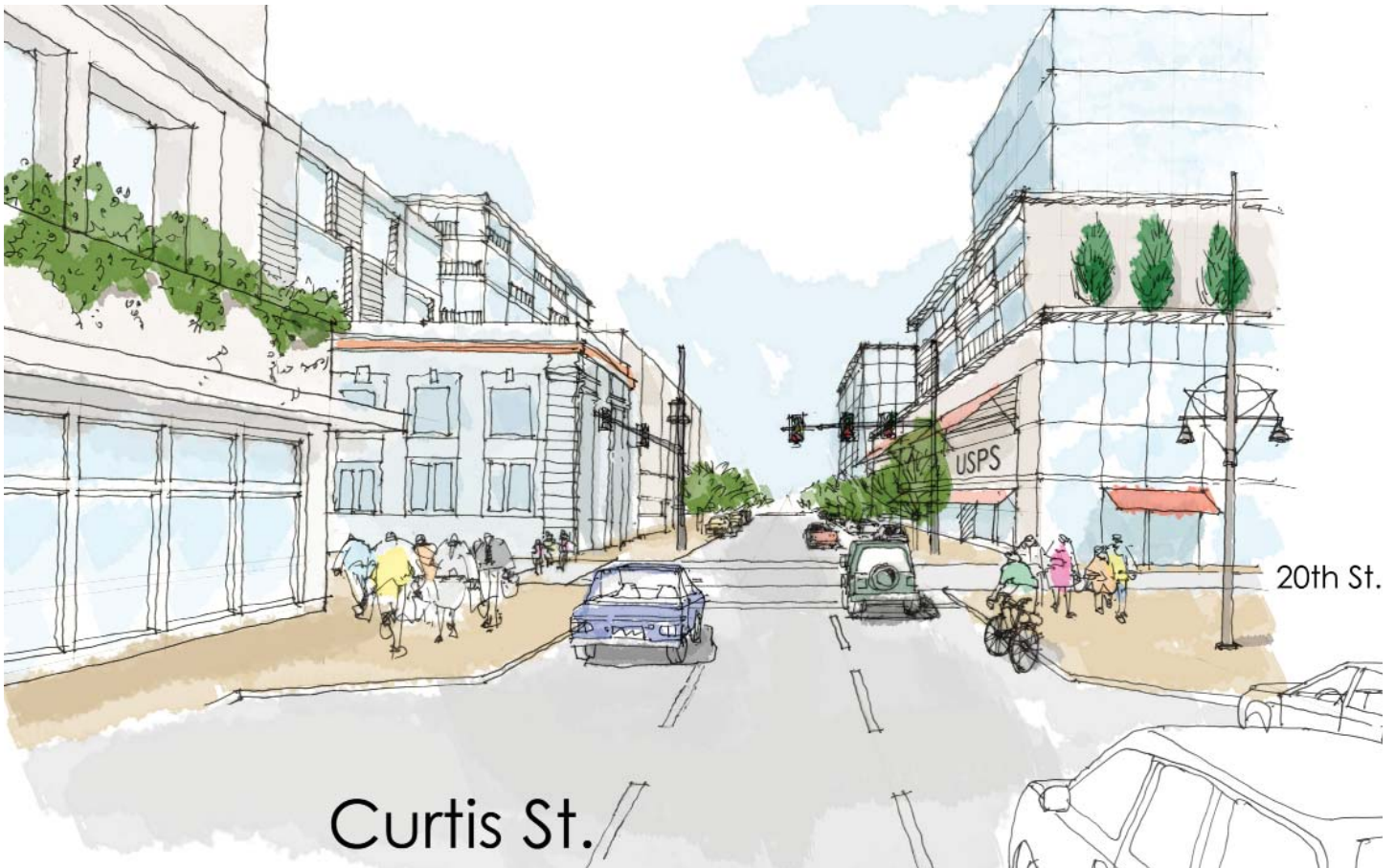
WHAT IS IT?

Curtis Street represents an opportunity to create a strong pedestrian linkage from the Commercial Core through Arapahoe Square, and into Curtis Park. This builds upon the Downtown Multimodal Access Plan, which identified Curtis as a street that could potentially be converted to two-way operations, and the Downtown Area Plan, which identified Curtis Street as a pedestrian-priority linkage. Curtis terminates at the south end at the Denver Performing Arts Center, and at the north end at Mestizo-Curtis Park, so it is not a major through route for automobile traffic.

Within the Central Business District, Curtis' curb-to-curb width is about 40 feet south of 16th, but widens to about 55 feet between 16th and 20th, presenting a good opportunity to narrow the street and widen the sidewalks to emphasize the pedestrian realm. One challenge is that the pedestrian environment on Curtis between 18th and 20th is particularly weak as a result of block-long blank walls and an absence of street-activating uses in that area. Redevelopment of the Greyhound Bus Station located on the block bounded by Curtis, 20th, Arapahoe and 19th would do much to improve the quality of the pedestrian experience.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?**

- Curtis Street would become a pedestrian spine connecting three neighborhoods: Downtown, Arapahoe Square, and Curtis Park.
- The intersection of 21st Street and Curtis gains importance, and becomes a place to focus on establishing an identity for Arapahoe Square.



Conceptual sketch of Curtis Street at 20th Street, enhanced for pedestrians.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS MOBILITY?

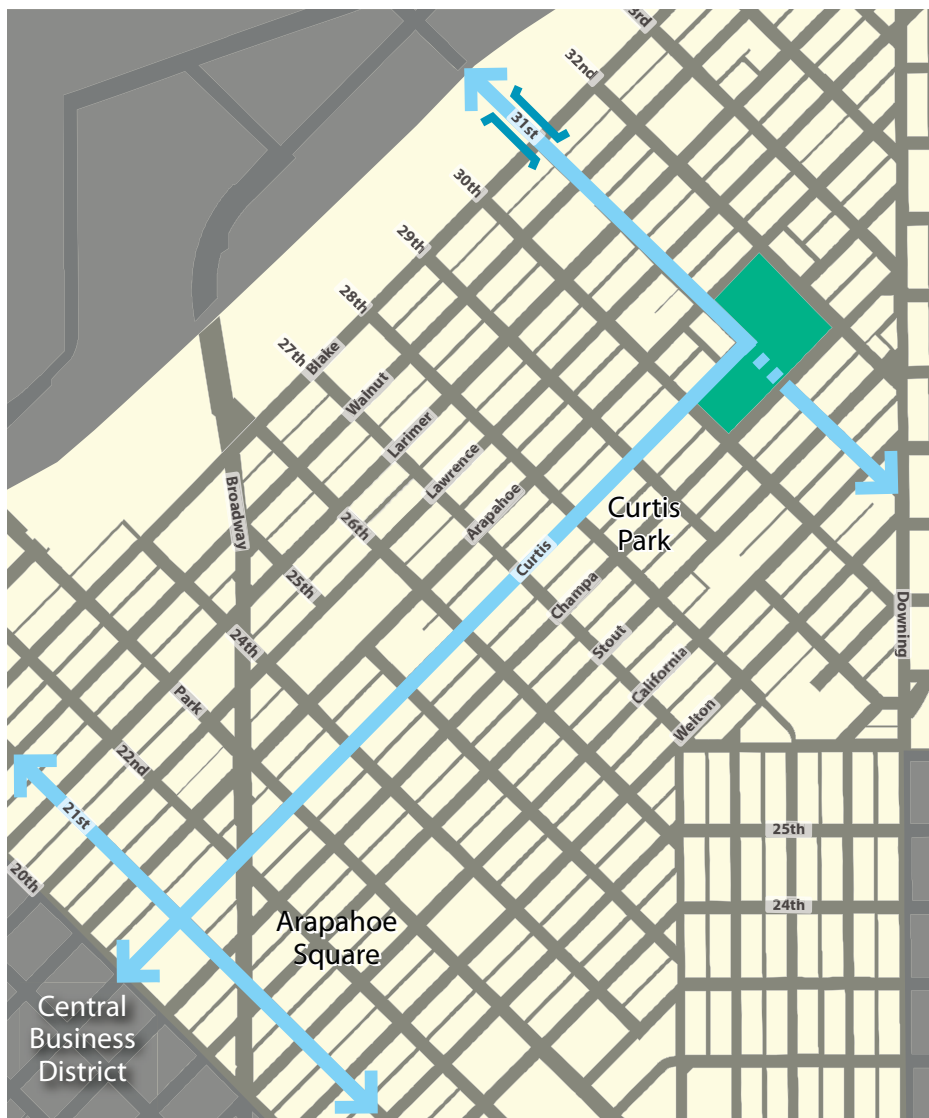
- Provides a preferred route for pedestrians through Arapahoe Square and connects the CBD and Curtis Park
- Provides a potential location for a strengthened pedestrian crossing of Broadway.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?

- Curtis connects directly into the middle of the portion of Arapahoe Square that currently has the most intact urban fabric. If Curtis were successful in attracting more pedestrian activity, additional redevelopment could follow.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?

- Expands the public realm within the Central Business District by repurposing a portion of the roadway for sidewalks.



Curtis Street serves pedestrian axis connecting Curtis Park, Arapahoe Square, and Downtown.

CURTIS STREET

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recognize the vision and concepts for Curtis Street identified in the Downtown Multimodal Access Plan (2005) and the Downtown Area Plan (DAP, 2007):

- The Downtown Multimodal Access Plan (2005) identified a handful of named streets, namely Curtis, Tremont, and Court, which potentially could be converted to two-way while maintaining the efficiency and effectiveness of the one-way street system for moving traffic.
- The Downtown Area Plan (2007) identifies "Putting Pedestrians First" and "An outstanding pedestrian environment" as key elements of the vision for Downtown. Specially, Larimer, Curtis, California and Tremont are identified as the start of the effort to improve the pedestrian environment on named streets. Furthermore, DAP identifies "Embracing Adjacent Neighborhoods" as a "Transformative Project" and identifies the streets that connect Downtown to its neighbors on all sides. Curtis is identified as one such street because it connects the Downtown districts of Auraria, Downtown, Arapahoe Square, and Curtis Park.

Maintain the existing two-way segment of Curtis north of 22nd Street.

Place a visual focal point, such as a statue or other landmark, where Curtis Street terminates at Mestizo-Curtis Park.

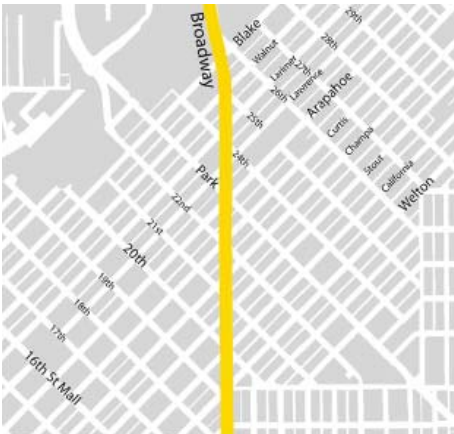
Evaluate opportunities to move the Greyhound bus terminal (located just outside of the study area) and associated vehicle maintenance facilities in Curtis Park and redevelop those properties.

Explore opportunities to widen sidewalks, improve pedestrian crossings at major intersections (20th Street, Broadway, and Park Avenue), and provide streetscape amenities and pedestrian-scale lighting throughout the corridor.

Broadway

GOAL STATEMENT

Implement the vision of Broadway as a “Grand Boulevard” in Northeast Downtown.



Preserving



Celebrating



Bridging

Each of the Broadway concepts would have different impacts on mobility.

WHAT IS IT?

Broadway is identified as a “Grand Boulevard” in the 2007 Downtown Area Plan. Cutting diagonally through the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan study area, Broadway was overlaid into this section of the City’s vehicular infrastructure in the 1920s, long after the establishment of the downtown grid. As one of three major vehicular entry points into downtown from the north, Broadway’s high traffic volumes and multi-legged intersections make this roadway a neighborhood divide that serves regional and local transportation needs. The Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan examines three conceptual approaches to the long-term future of Broadway as a Grand Boulevard. These concepts are meant to balance local and regional needs, supporting regional vehicular mobility while also providing for safe, efficient pedestrian and bicycle movement. Two of the concepts in particular, Celebrating Broadway and Bridging Broadway, would result in dramatic changes to the street and the way that it functions. A significant amount of study and analysis is required before either of those concepts could be deemed feasible.

Broadway Options:

- **“Preserving Broadway”** maintains the current street cross section while introducing short-term, targeted improvements to intersections to facilitate pedestrian and bike crossings. Additional improvements may be identified in the long-term to enhance the public realm within the existing right-of-way for multiple mode choices. A core feature of this option is that it retains Broadway as a direct vehicle and pedestrian link between North Denver and the Civic Center Area. This Grand Boulevard approach would maintain Broadway’s current role as a major regional arterial roadway while striving to improve the public realm and overall multi-modal functionality of the street.
- **“Celebrating Broadway”** proposes a ‘road diet’ for the segment of Broadway between Park Avenue and Welton Street. Within this section, Broadway would incur a lane reduction. Right-of-way width recaptured from the roadway would be used to create amenities that enhance the public realm, such as planted medians, wider sidewalks populated with street trees, street furnishings and even the potential for outdoor retail or restaurant areas. This Grand Boulevard approach would treat Broadway as an important functional and aesthetic gateway into the downtown core while emphasizing the pedestrian aspect of the public realm. The timeframe for implementing a Celebrating Broadway concept could be 30 years or more into the future.
- **“Bridging Broadway”** proposes the complete removal of Broadway between Park Avenue and Welton Street, with the vacated roadway right-of-way reverting to adjacent parcels and becoming developable or being maintained as a non-auto thoroughfare for pedestrians and bicyclists. Under this concept, the Downtown rectilinear street grid would be reinstated, with traffic redistributed throughout the grid. Arapahoe and Welton (south of Park) would be maintained as one-way streets to help accommodate traffic volumes. Arapahoe would redirect traffic to 19th or other downtown streets, while Welton could feature a double left at Park Avenue to help distribute traffic. Additional connections to the regional transportation network, including the possibility of new streets, may be necessary to avoid unintended impacts, such as reduced air quality, to the larger Denver area. This Grand Boulevard approach is the most dramatic interpretation of the Downtown Area Plan’s recommendation and may display the greatest ability to reconnect Northeast Downtown to the Downtown Core. The timeframe for implementing a Bridging Broadway concept could be 20 to 30 years or more into the future.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?**

- Preserving Broadway
 - Targeted improvements at intersections would facilitate pedestrian and bicycle crossings.
 - Provides direct connections to River North, Civic Center, and I-70.
- Celebrating Broadway
 - An enhanced public realm could establish a place for pedestrians and encourages use of Broadway as an integrated part of the neighborhood, rather than a barrier.
 - Decreased curb-to-curb width and lowered traffic volumes would promote pedestrian and bicycle movement between neighborhoods east and west of Broadway.
- Bridging Broadway
 - Reintroduction of a traditional grid would allow a high level of pedestrian and bike connectivity.
 - Reintroduction of a traditional grid offers the opportunity for adjacent neighborhoods to integrate as a single urban neighborhood, or to develop separate identities that transition into each other rather than being split by the roadway alignment.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **MOBILITY?**

- Preserving Broadway
 - Maintains current level of service and traffic patterns for vehicles.
 - Enhances pedestrian and bicycle movements by introducing targeted pedestrian/bike improvements at intersections.
 - Builds upon significant infrastructure improvements with the Broadway/Brighton underpass and Park Avenue viaduct.
 - Provides direct connection between River North and Downtown, Civic Center, and the freeway system.
- Celebrating Broadway
 - Redirects a significant portion of existing Broadway vehicular traffic between Park Avenue and 20th Street. Arapahoe (inbound traffic) and Welton (outbound traffic) as well as several other nearby roadways are designated as possible alternate routes into and out of the CBD. Additional study is needed to determine how this would affect overall traffic flows, congestion, air quality, and access to regional roadways.
 - Reducing the number of lanes on Broadway and expanding the pedestrian realm narrows the crossing distance for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Enhances pedestrian and bicycle crossing movements by reducing the number of lanes along Broadway at multi-legged intersections.
 - Provides opportunities for wider sidewalks for pedestrians.
- Bridging Broadway
 - Removes Broadway between Park Avenue and Welton Street. Vehicular traffic would be redirected and dispersed across remaining Downtown and Northeast Downtown street grid. Additional study is needed to determine how this would affect overall traffic flows, congestion, air quality, and access to regional roadways.
 - Arapahoe and Welton (south of Park Avenue) would be kept as higher-volume, one-

BROADWAY AS A “GRAND BOULEVARD”

The Downtown Area Plan (2007) articulates the goal for Grand Boulevards: “Transform Speer Boulevard, Colfax Avenue, Broadway, Park Avenue, and Auraria Parkway into celebrated, multimodal boulevards to overcome the physical and perceptual barriers of these major thoroughfares.” The Downtown Area Plan recommends that Broadway north of 20th be established as a green boulevard as recommended in the Downtown Multimodal Access Plan. The Downtown Area Plan also recognizes that each Grand Boulevard will need future study so that the design can respond to the unique context and environment of each street.



Pre-Broadway 1904



Broadway 2011

way roadways in order to facilitate inbound and outbound movement, respectively. Additional vehicular traffic on Arapahoe may affect the existing bike lane.

- Enhances pedestrian and bicycle movement by eliminating Broadway as a street to cross.
- Reverting to a traditional grid system allows an enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossing at 21st Street, supporting transformation of this street into a festival street and enhancing the utility of the street’s designation as an important bicycle route.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?**

- Preserving Broadway
 - Maintains access to parcels currently fronting Broadway.
 - Maintains direct vehicular connection to regional roadways including Brighton Boulevard, Park Avenue, Interstate 70, and Interstate 25.
 - Maintains direct vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the Civic Center area.
 - Intersection improvements and additional facilities for pedestrian and bicycle movement could increase foot traffic to businesses.
- Celebrating Broadway
 - Decreased curb-to-curb width promotes slower traffic speeds and a more pedestrian-friendly environment, an advantage for existing and future commercial, retail and residential uses.
 - Decreased curb-to-curb width allows a widened public realm, which could include spaces for outdoor retail or restaurant spaces.
 - Maintains access to parcels currently fronting Broadway.
 - Existing public and private utilities may require relocation.
- Bridging Broadway
 - Upon vacation, existing Broadway right-of-way would revert to adjacent parcels.
 - Increased parcel size and/or modified parcel geometry may allow for redevelopment, new development, or building re-use with different land uses.
 - In some cases (public parcels, triangle parks), enlarged parcels may enhance a park’s function as a public amenity or ability to act as a development catalyst.
 - Vacation of Broadway could encourage integration of neighborhoods to the east and west of Broadway’s existing alignment, creating opportunity for a more attractive, varied urban neighborhood in Arapahoe Square.
 - In the interim between now and when the concept could possibly be implemented,

BROADWAY HISTORY

The extension of Broadway was first proposed in 1907 as part of a series of civic improvements by Mayor Robert Speer. Broadway was finally extended from Welton Street to Blake Street in the 1920’s with the intention to increase access, improve mobility, spur economic development, and provide a direct connection to the Civic Center. Since Broadway is part of the city street grid and was extended into an area built on the downtown grid, blocks were split into triangular shapes, often leaving small, irregular parcels. Broadway’s orientation against the downtown grid also created intersections with more vehicular, bike, and pedestrian movements than a typical four-way intersection.

would cause uncertainty for existing and potential future development fronting Broadway.

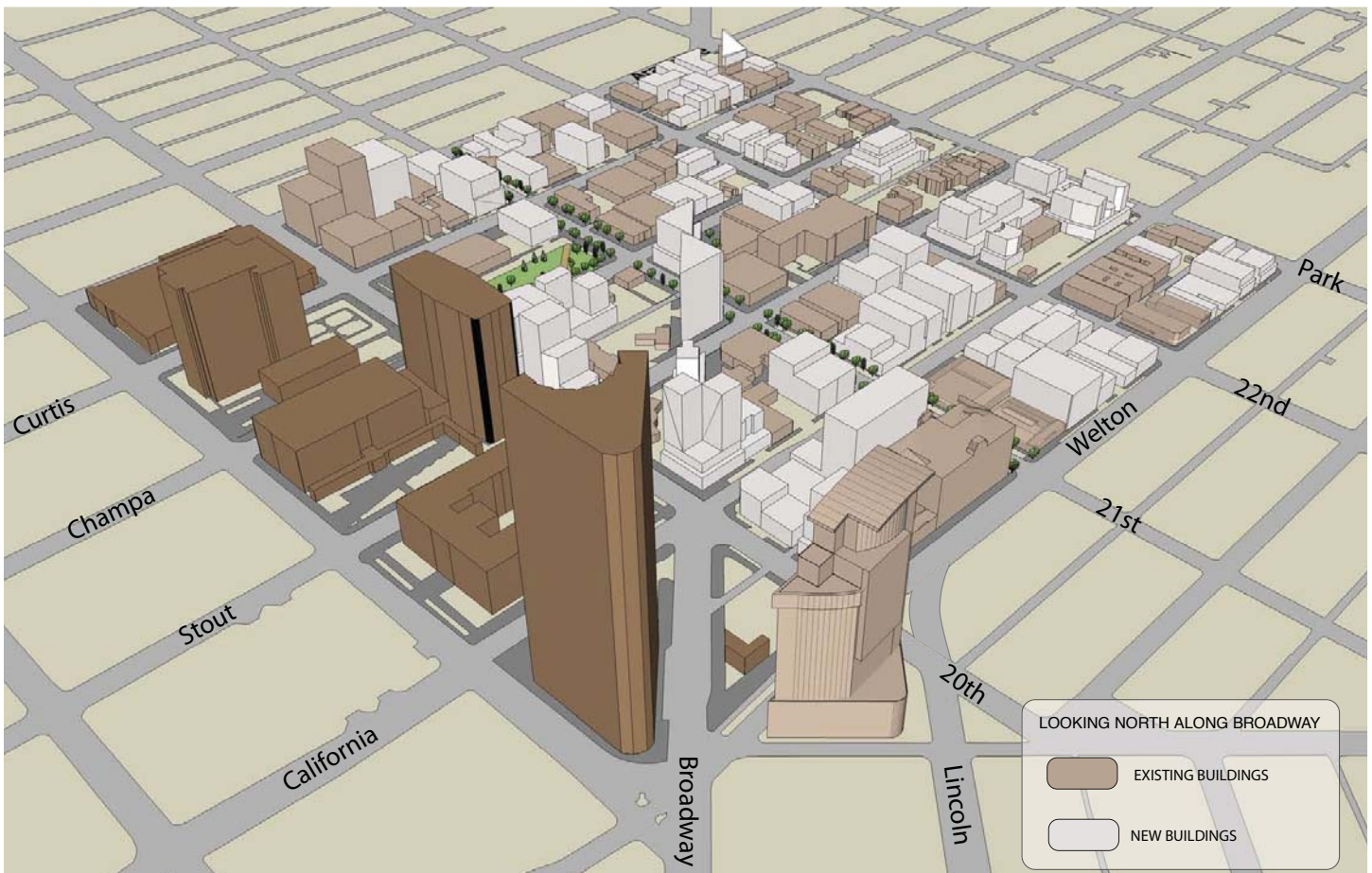
- Existing public and private utilities may require relocation.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?**

- Preserving Broadway
 - Preserves and enhances the public realm as it exists today.
 - Potential improvements to the triangle parks could enhance the public realm.
- Celebrating Broadway
 - Decreased curb-to-curb width could allow a widened public realm, with space for street trees, furnishings and other amenities such as outdoor retail or restaurant spaces.
 - Decreased curb-to-curb width and more consistent on-street parking could provide a traffic-calming effect, creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Bridging Broadway
 - Stakeholders have identified Broadway as a barrier that divides adjacent neighborhoods into two distinct areas. Removal of this divide could promote the natural evolution and development of a true urban neighborhood.

BROADWAY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Conduct a study of Broadway as part of the series of studies identified in the Mobility Framework as the Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis and the Northeast Downtown street network to determine the most appropriate and feasible way to advance the long-range vision for Broadway, including study of the three transformative concepts:
 - Preserving
 - Celebrating
 - Bridging
- Use the NEDN Next Steps Study to look at short-term improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross Broadway, especially at 21st Street.



The 'Bridging Broadway' concept illustrated looking north from the intersection of Broadway and 19th streets. New development occurs in the former Right-of-way to stitch the blocks back together. Image produced by the Urban Design Committee of the Colorado Chapter of AIA.

Connecting River North

GOAL STATEMENT

Improve connections in River North between Northeast Downtown and the South Platte River corridor.



A series of pedestrian bridges connecting Downtown to Highland have been crucial to the success of redevelopment efforts in the Central Platte Valley.



31st, 33rd, and 36th streets present the best opportunities to create new connections across the railroad tracks in River North.

WHAT IS IT?

Much of Northeast Downtown is in close proximity to the South Platte River, yet access to this natural amenity is challenging due to the Union Pacific railroad tracks stretching from southwest to northeast through the Ballpark and River North neighborhoods. This creates two distinct sides to River North, the portion north of the railroad tracks along Brighton Boulevard, and the portion south of the railroad tracks along Blake and Walnut streets. Presently there are only two routes connecting River North: the 38th Street underpass at the northern tip of the neighborhood, and the Broadway viaduct at the southern end. Three new connections — 31st Street, 33rd Street, and 36th/38th streets — would connect both sides of the River North neighborhood and provide invaluable access to the green space and trail system of the South Platte River corridor for all of Northeast Downtown. The bridges would potentially increase access to a possible enhanced transit service on Blake, Larimer, or Brighton that would provide connections to Lower Downtown, Auraria, and multiple transit stations. The bridges have the challenge of crossing two barriers: the Coors Field parking lot, and the railroad right of way, including the existing freight tracks and future East Corridor commuter rail tracks. One potential bridge location at 36th or 38th Street would provide access to the future commuter rail station at 38th and Blake. Further study is needed to understand how the proposed bridges and any necessary approaches would affect adjacent private property. The bridges would be a significant capital expense and the potential positive and negative impacts on adjacent properties should be considered.

- **36th/38th Street:** A pedestrian and bicycle bridge at either 36th or 38th Street will be constructed as part of the FasTracks 38th and Blake East Corridor Commuter Rail Station. The East Corridor EIS located the bridge at 38th Street, but the 38th & Blake Station Area Plan recommended relocating it to 36th Street to improve neighborhood connectivity and pedestrian access to the station. Moving the bridge to 36th Street creates a spine of activity in both directions from the station that connects with redevelopment efforts along Brighton Boulevard and Blake/Walnut/Larimer streets. The 38th & Blake Next Steps Study identified the relocation of the bridge to 36th as being highly important to the station area, but also acknowledged that it is a complicated issue that would require a high degree of cooperation between the City, RTD, and the Union Pacific Railroad. If the FasTracks bridge is constructed at 38th Street, an additional bridge should be constructed at 35th or 36th Street as it would best serve the River North, Curtis Park, Whittier, and Cole neighborhoods at that location.
- **31st Street:** A pedestrian and bicycle only bridge at 31st Street would provide the shortest route to the river. In combination with becoming a bicycle route and pedestrian priority path, this street would provide an excellent connection between Northeast Downtown neighborhood amenities, such as the 30th and Downing light rail station and Metizo-Curtis Park to the South Platte River corridor.
- **33rd Street:** A bridge accommodating all modes of traffic spanning the Union Pacific right of way at 33rd Street would not only improve access to the river, it would also increase overall mobility for the entire River North neighborhood.

BRIDGE TIMING AND PRIORITY

Funding opportunities should be pursued for planning, designing, and construction of any or all of the River North connections. The 36th Street connection does have the greatest urgency due to the planned 2016 opening date for the FasTracks East Corridor. The 31st Street connection, due to its designation as a pedestrian priority, and the 33rd Street connection as a multimodal connection, should follow in priority.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER**

The new bridges would create a stronger connection between the burgeoning eclectic arts scene in River North and the rest of Northeast Downtown while creating a larger and more diverse community.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **MOBILITY?**

The new bridges would increase access to the River North neighborhood on both sides of the railroad tracks and improve connections to the South Platte River Greenway.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?**

The increased mobility in River North, stronger connections to the river corridor and improved access to commuter rail transit would be seen as an amenity for new employers and residents throughout Northeast Downtown.

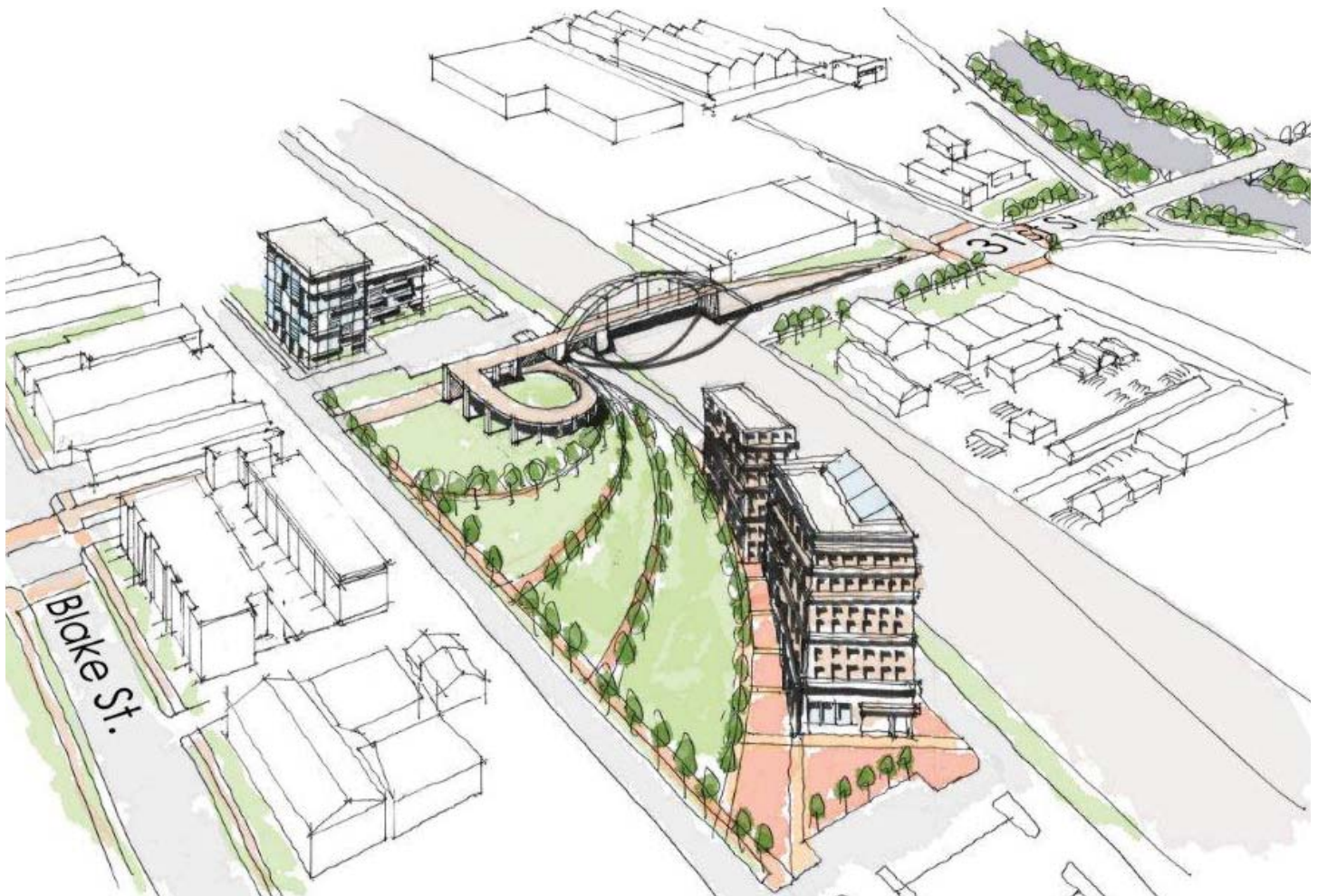
HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE **LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?**

Northeast Downtown neighborhoods would have greater access to community open space and natural amenities along the South Platte River corridor, as well as various arts and cultural destinations.

CONNECTING RIVER NORTH RECOMMENDATIONS:

Evaluate the potential to improve connections in the River North neighborhood and provide additional access to the South Platte River corridor via:

- Pedestrian and bicycle bridges or underpasses across the Union Pacific Railroad right of way at 31st Street and 36th Street
- Multi-modal bridge or underpass including bicycle, pedestrian, and automobile travel across the Union Pacific Railroad right of way at 33rd Street.



This sketch shows a potential pedestrian/bike bridge over the railroad tracks at 31st Street. If the Coors Field overflow parking ever became available for re-use in this area, new development and park space could be located on the site.

New Park

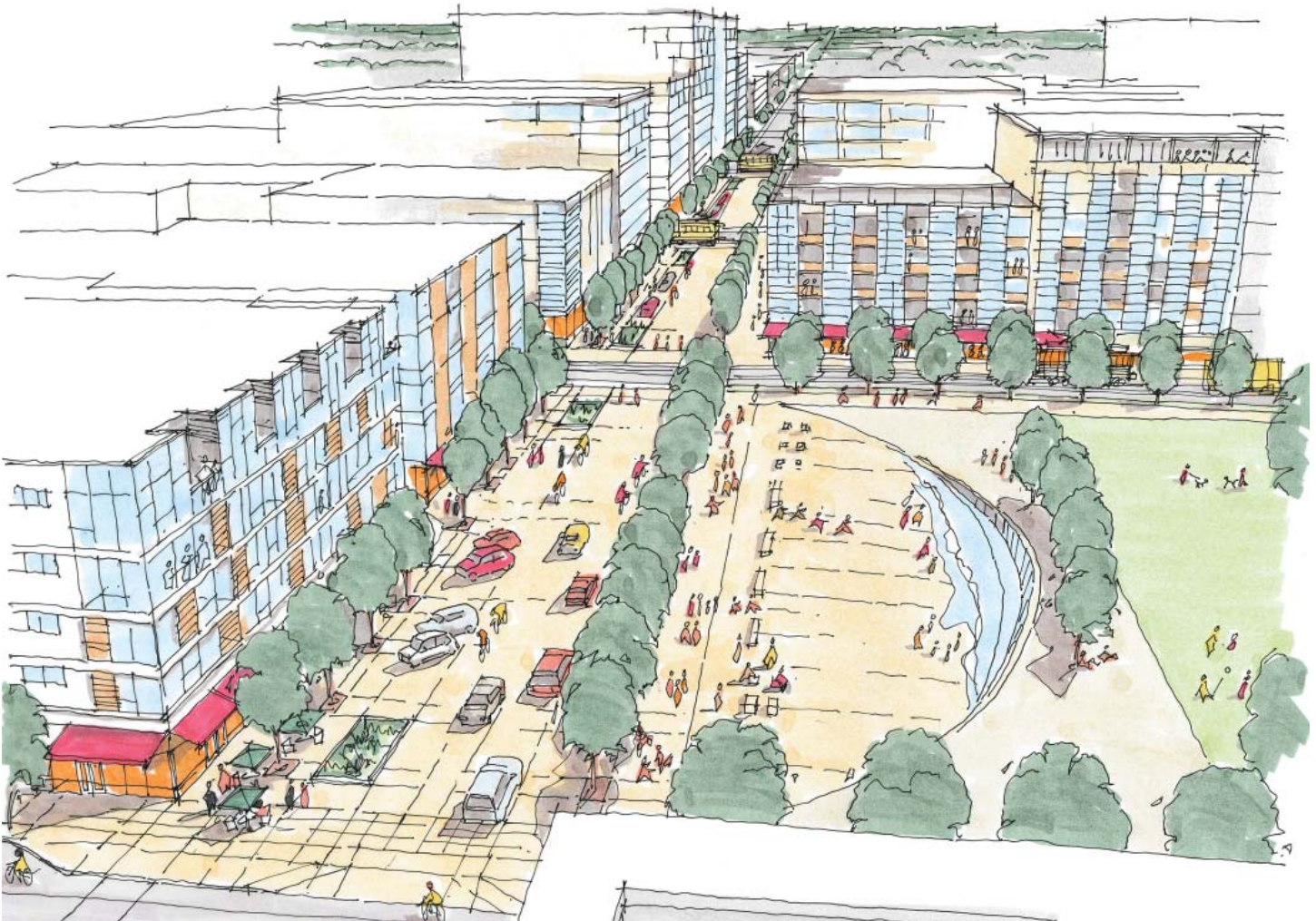
GOAL STATEMENT

Establish a new park in the Northeast Downtown area that could provide valuable open space and recreation amenities for new and existing residents for years to come.

WHAT IS IT?

Northeast Downtown is generally under served by parks compared to the city as a whole. There are currently 1.26 acres of park per 1000 residents, compared to the citywide average of 7.14. Expected population increases will further the need for more parks. If properly designed, located, and programmed, a new park would not only assist in meeting open space needs, but could also help to energize and attract activity to the surrounding area.

Although a desired amenity, parks can become areas where illegal activities occur. There is concern on the part of residents and other stakeholders that a new park could become overrun with nuisances and illegal activities, thereby negating the benefits. For this reason, if a new major park is pursued, a strategy to ensure that the park remains an amenity must be developed.



Conceptual sketch of a new park located along a revitalized "Festival Street" on 21st.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?

A new park, if properly designed and programmed, would be a major enhancement to the community character of the neighborhood in which it was located.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS MOBILITY?

Pedestrians and cyclists can make direct use of paths and sidewalks in and around parks, often walking through them as a short cut to another destination.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?

A new park would be a major amenity that could help attract development to nearby properties.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?

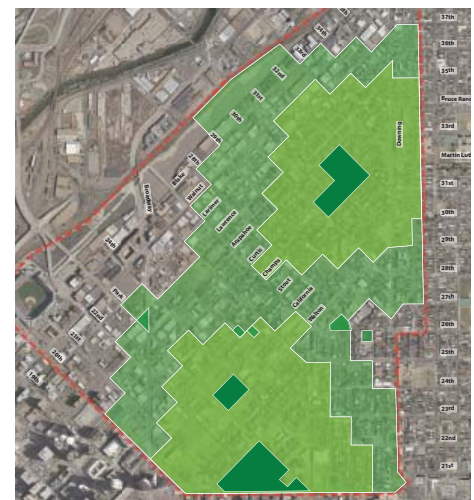
A new park directly enhances the public realm by providing new space for people to congregate, recreate, and engage in activities.

NEW PARK RECOMMENDATIONS:

- In the short-term, identify possible locations and funding sources to initially acquire land for a new park.
- Locate the park on land that is currently vacant or underutilized
- Locate the park close to existing residential development
- Locate the park in an under served area
- Provide the park in conjunction with new, adjacent development
- Provide programming, or dedicate the park to an active use
- Improve and activate existing parks in conjunction with the provision of a new park
- Incorporate stormwater detention and water quality features into the park design, if practicable.
- Seek partners for the financing, development, programming and maintenance of new park amenities



Commons Park: providing new park space in conjunction with redevelopment is a proven strategy in Denver.



This map shows properties that are within 3 and 6 blocks of a major Northeast Downtown park (Benedict Fountain, Sonny Lawson, or Mestizo-Curtis).

ditional housing to alleviate the burden on temporary shelters. This building should be of high quality that contributes to an improved built environment in Arapahoe Square.

- **Working Group:** Establish a working group to refine the concepts described above, identify the most appropriate entity or entities to pursue their implementation, identify potential funding and partners including foundations, and determine the roles for the Community Coordinating District. The following and likely others should be included in the working group; the Denver’s Road Home, Denver Office of Economic Development, the State Division of Housing, property owners, and housing and social service providers. New strategies related to effective and efficient management and development alternatives need to be explored. For example, further research is needed for the courtyards concept or other semi-private open space for social service queuing, feeding and congregating.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?**

Effective management of social services would promote movement between Northeast Downtown neighborhoods, including better access to Downtown Denver’s employment, cultural, and recreational amenities, and create a healthy, safe environment for all.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **MOBILITY?**

Providing courtyards or semi-private open spaces for queuing, feeding and congregating in a safe environment could significantly increase space and comfort in parks and on sidewalks thus increasing mobility in and through Northeast Downtown.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?**

Improving the operations of social service providers in Northeast Downtown would remove an impediment for development in Northeast Downtown.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE **LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?**

The overall health and safety of Northeast Downtown residents, business owners, and customers would be increased by improved management of social services. Improved management would also benefit the social service clients.

Northeast Downtown residents, business owners, and customers would enjoy more frequent use of safe and accommodating streets, sidewalks, plazas, and parks. Improved social services management extends the delivery of this important community service for residents.



Courtyard or semi-private open space concept

SOCIAL SERVICES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Establish a working group to refine concepts, identify the most appropriate entity or entities to pursue their implementation, identify potential funding and partners including foundations, and determine the roles for the Community Coordinating District.
- Encourage development of courtyards or semi-private open space for social service queuing, feeding and congregating to replace such activities currently occurring in the Triangle Parks and on sidewalks.
- Develop a pilot single-room occupancy (SRO) project to provide additional housing to alleviate the burden on temporary shelters. This building should be of high quality that contributes to an improved built environment in Arapahoe Square.
- Develop and study alternatives for repurposing of the Triangle Parks predicated on creating semi-private open space. Potential options may include using the Triangle Parks for water quality treatment or storm detention, re-designing and limiting access, or de-designating the parks which takes a vote of the people. The Denver Rescue Mission and the Community Coordinating Metropolitan District should be involved.

Denver’s Road Home is the principal citywide effort to address homelessness by providing services and housing. At the time of this writing, the City is mid-way through the Road Home effort, which has the goal of ending homelessness as we know it.

Streetcar

GOAL STATEMENT

Enhance current transit service, economic development opportunities, and access to neighborhood businesses while improving the walkable character of the Welton/Downing Corridor and adjacent Northeast Downtown neighborhoods.



Pearl District, Portland, Oregon - Low floor streetcar vehicles provide easy accessibility for all users and streetcar stops integrate well into the urban environment.



Streetcars operate in mixed traffic with other vehicles and are smaller and more nimble than light rail.

WHAT IS IT?

A transit rich neighborhood has long been a tradition in Northeast Denver. Curtis Park was Denver's first streetcar suburb when in 1871 a horse drawn streetcar was installed on Champa Street connecting the neighborhood to Downtown. Welton Street has hosted several incarnations of in-street rail service, including horse drawn, cable car, and electric streetcar. When urban rail passenger service returned to Denver in 1994, Northeast Downtown led the way again when the RTD Central Corridor light rail line reached 30th and Downing along Welton Street. This transit investment was expected to bring economic development to the corridor and assist in the revitalization of the Five Points neighborhood. Even though some development has occurred in response to the light rail stations on Welton, significant transformation has not occurred.

As part of the current RTD FasTracks expansion program, the Central Corridor is proposed to be extended along Downing Street to connect to the future East Corridor Commuter Rail station at 38th and Blake. The current RTD plan maintains the existing light rail infrastructure on Welton Street, which utilizes a separated right of way, while introducing streetcar-like service, with vehicles operating in mixed traffic lanes, on the new Downing Street segment. The route would connect to the downtown transit loop and return. This is different from the current service, which extends to the Mineral Station in Littleton.

The vision for the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan streetcar concept is a streetcar system featuring a modern streetcar vehicle operating on rails in mixed traffic for the length of the route. The conversion of Welton to two way operations between 24th Street and Downing Street is likely required, with the existing light rail infrastructure being removed or modified to allow streetcar vehicles to run in mixed traffic. This would include removal of the high platforms for boarding at existing stations and could provide more right of way for wider sidewalks. The streetcar could potentially utilize California Street as a couplet to Welton Street south of 24th Street, allowing Welton to remain one-way south for that portion of the alignment. Various options to connect to the regional rail transit system, such as connecting to Civic Center Station or Denver Union Station, require further exploration. The streetcar concept provides the opportunity to improve the pedestrian experience along Welton Street, potentially increase the level of service, and provide additional stops that could meet the vision of the neighborhood.

It is clear from the previous experience of introducing rail transit onto Welton in the 1990's that the investment of transit infrastructure alone will not result in development. Each corridor or station is unique in its opportunities and constraints for transit oriented development (TOD). Neighborhoods that have or appear ready to have a market for walkable, mixed use, urban style development are more likely to experience TOD. The characteristics of streetcar systems in the United States — mixed traffic operations, smaller vehicles, simple stations, short routes through redevelopment opportunity areas — may capitalize on a ready real estate market to promote walkable, urban neighborhoods more so than light rail systems. Streetcars have demonstrated success in being an organizing element for large scale urban redevelopment in U.S. cities such as Portland, Little Rock, and Seattle.

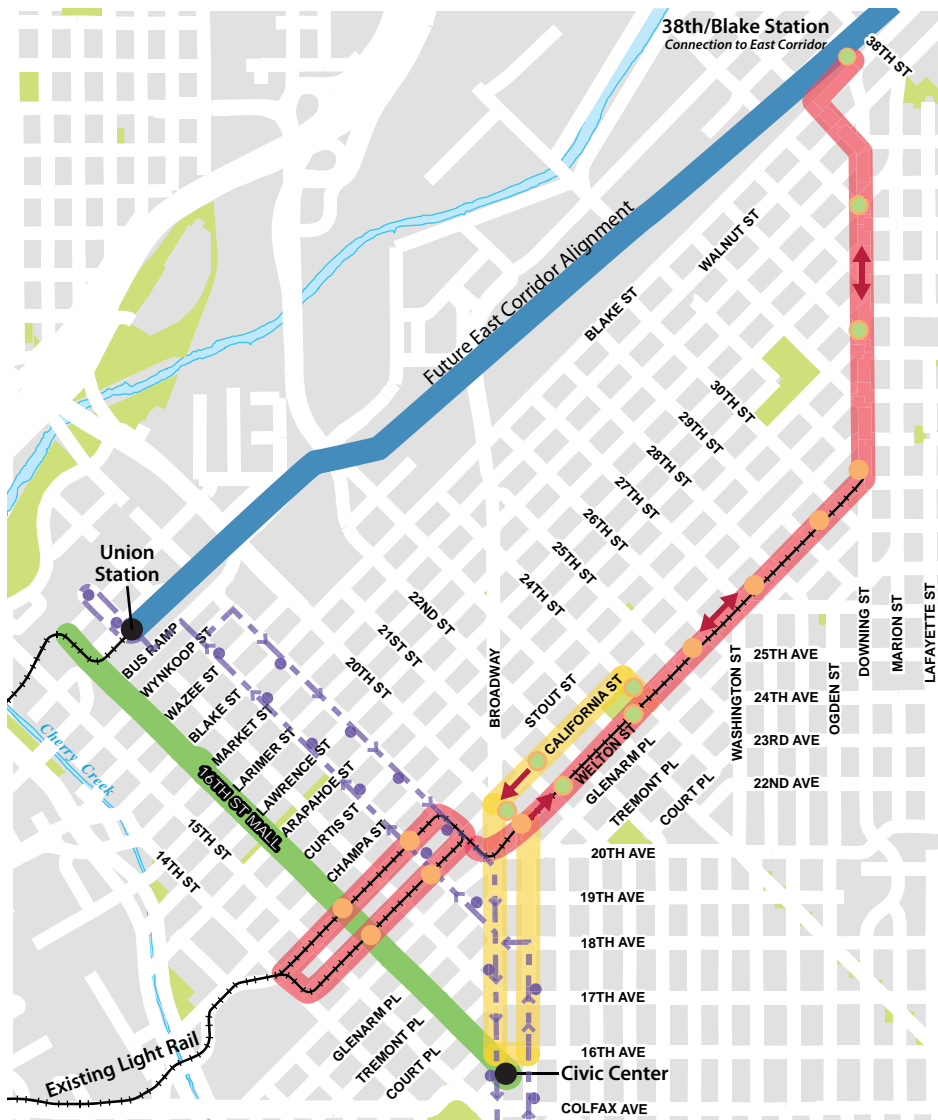
The opportunities for TOD on Welton and Downing Streets vary greatly depending on the location. Much of the corridor consists of existing main street shopfronts and is located in close

proximity to historic neighborhoods. Any reinvestment in these properties or development of appropriately scaled in-fill development may depend on the streetcar by-product of an improved pedestrian experience as much as the potential for improved transit service itself. The 38th and Blake commuter rail station area and large assembled parcels closer to Downtown, between 24th and 20th streets, have the greatest potential for significant redevelopment. These locations could support in-fill projects at much higher densities more typically associated with TOD than the rest of the corridor.

A thorough analysis of the streetcar concept, including an inclusive public engagement process, is necessary to understand the impact on adjacent neighborhoods and historic properties, city-wide transit services, pedestrian access, automobile traffic, and side street movements, as well as overall feasibility and cost. The options for a streetcar maintenance facility location, either in the corridor or elsewhere, would also need further exploration. The location would greatly depend on the potential streetcar vehicle compatibility with existing RTD light rail vehicles and future potential streetcar service in other urban corridors.



If streetcar replaced light rail on Welton, the dedicated right of way and high block platforms could be removed and used to enhance the pedestrian realm.



Concept Streetcar Map: This map shows a streetcar concept including a possible rerouting to the Civic Center. This should not be construed as a locally preferred alternative, but as an option for further study.



A modern streetcar operating in mixed traffic in Portland.



A streetcar stop in Portland's Pearl District.



A modern streetcar in Vienna, Austria.



Streetcars and streetcar stops work well in dense, urban environments, serving as a "pedestrian accelerator for neighborhood."

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?**

- Streetcars tend to encourage development in a more linear fashion, which could distribute infill development throughout the corridor.
- The streetcar could be a unifying element for the neighborhoods and return actual streetcar service to a historic area of Denver that was built when streetcars were a primary mode of travel and the population in adjacent neighborhoods was much greater than it is today.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **MOBILITY?**

- Connects to East Corridor Commuter Rail service at 38th and Blake Station with service to Denver International Airport and Denver Union Station, similar to the currently planned FasTracks Central Corridor Extension
- Potential opportunity to improve access to Downtown with increased service frequency due to introduction of two-way operations on Welton Street. A two way streetcar on Welton provides greater transit flexibility, as the current existing single track segment between 24th Street and 30th Street imposes an operational constraint that limits service frequency to one train every 15 minutes.
- Has the potential to connect to Civic Center Station to provide intermodal connections to local bus, mall shuttle, and potential future fixed guideway service on East Colfax and South Broadway
- Low floor vehicles improve access for all users and decrease the dwell time at each stop.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?**

- The combination of new stations, a potential increase in service frequency, and wider sidewalks/pedestrian amenity zone may act as a development catalyst.
 - Proposed new stations on Welton and California streets between 20th and 25th could provide better access to transit for large redevelopment parcels.
 - Frequent headways would be desired to shorten the perceived distance from Downtown and improve the access to Welton and Downing businesses for Downtown residents and workers.
 - Wider sidewalks on Welton Street could be possible with a comprehensive street redesign that makes use of the existing light rail right-of-way. Improving the pedestrian realm would enhance the main street character along Welton and encourage an increase in active uses that provide outdoor seating.
- Based on property records, there are eight acres of vacant land within a quarter-mile of the proposed 33rd and 35th Street stations and an additional 32 acres within a half-mile radius. These vacant parcels are primarily zoned for residential and industrial uses and many of them are currently used as parking lots.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE **LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?**

- Streetcars:
 - Use smaller, more nimble vehicles appropriate for use in urban environments.
 - Act as a “pedestrian accelerator” in a corridor, improving access to storefronts, parks and other destinations.
 - Operate in mixed traffic, providing the opportunity to reclaim the existing light rail right-of-way and repurpose it for wider sidewalks, an enhanced pedestrian realm, on street parking, or other amenities.
 - Can be designed to accommodate on-street parking between travel lanes and the sidewalk, buffering pedestrians from moving vehicles.



The South Waterfront, a new TOD neighborhood in Portland.

STREETCAR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Recommend the use of modern streetcar vehicles, in place of the existing RTD light rail transit (LRT) vehicles for the segment of the Central Corridor that is in Northeast Downtown. The streetcar vehicles should be shorter and narrower than the RTD LRT cars, provide for a shorter turning radius, and have a low floor for improved ADA access.
- Downing Corridor – Support RTD’s current plan to implement rail transit service on Downing in mixed-traffic. Recommend RTD consider terminating the Central Corridor at 36th and Blake to facilitate TOD and preserve the option for future streetcar service on Blake Street, as recommended in the 38th and Blake Station Area Plan.
- Welton Corridor – Recommend further study to examine feasibility of converting the existing LRT service to streetcar service operating in two-way, mixed traffic on Welton (between 30th and 24th or Park)
 - Specific items to study include the impact of converting Welton to a two-way street on turning movements, signal timing, on-street parking, side street traffic movements, and pedestrian safety.
- Welton/California Couplet – Recommend further study to examine whether a streetcar couplet on Welton and California between 24th and Broadway is feasible or advisable.
- Downtown Intermodal Connection – Recommend further study to examine feasibility of various alignment options for connections to existing and future downtown transit service at locations including, but not limited to: Civic Center Station, Auraria Campus, Auraria West Station, and Denver Union Station. This study should consider ease of transfer to other transit modes including the downtown circulator and the light rail transit loop on Stout and California.
- Denver Streetcar System Concept Plan – Consider, when appropriate, the development of a streetcar system concept plan that establishes a long range vision for streetcar service for Denver’s neighborhoods including but not limited to criteria for corridor selection, appropriate neighborhood form and context, and funding opportunities.



A modern streetcar in Melbourne, Australia.

Transit Oriented Development

GOAL STATEMENT

Promote Transit Oriented Development in Northeast Downtown at appropriate locations to encourage walkable, urban neighborhoods that have easy access to daily needs and amenities.



Union Station, Denver



The Point, Denver

WHAT IS IT?

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) is more than simply development near transit. Successful TOD creates vibrant, walkable neighborhoods that provide housing, shopping, and employment opportunities for a wide array of people. TOD has a mix of uses at various densities within a half-mile radius, or walking distance, of a transit stop, creating specific areas that integrate transit into neighborhoods and help support lively and vital communities. The TOD Strategic Plan defines TOD in Denver and establishes strategies for implementation. In order to succeed, TOD should address these guiding principles:

- **Place-making:** Create secure, comfortable, varied and attractive station areas with a distinct identity.
- **Rich Mix of Choices:** Provide housing, employment, transportation and shopping choices for people of all ages, household types, incomes and lifestyles.
- **Location Efficiency:** Place homes, jobs, shopping, entertainment, parks and other amenities close to the station to promote walking, biking and transit use.
- **Value Capture:** Encourage all stakeholders – residents, business owners, RTD and the City – to take full economic advantage of the amenity of enhanced transit services.
- **Portal to the Region:** Understand and maximize the station's role as an entry to the regional transit network and as a safe and pleasant place to live.

Northeast Downtown has a great opportunity for TOD at three specific scales that capitalize on the regional rail transit network:

- **38th & Blake:** The FasTracks East Corridor Commuter Rail line connecting Denver Union Station and Denver International Airport will have a stop at 38th and Blake Streets. This station, located on an important regional rail transit corridor, will act as a new gateway into Northeast Downtown and builds upon the momentum of recent mixed-use and residential development nearby.
- **Central Corridor Extension:** The FasTracks Central Corridor Extension will extend streetcar style light rail service along Downing Street. Two new stations, at 33rd and 35th streets will be located on this line that connects the existing 30th and Downing light rail station with the new 38th and Blake commuter rail station. Development near these two stations needs to promote a linear, main street environment on Downing that is sensitive to the adjacent neighborhoods and compliments the existing businesses and overall character of Welton Street.
- **New Arapahoe Square Station:** A concept for a new station located between 21st Street and Park Avenue in Arapahoe Square provides for yet another TOD opportunity. If streetcar service was established on a Welton and California couplet as proposed in the Streetcar Transformative Concept, this station would expand development opportunities for high density, mixed-use projects along the corridor and boost access to Arapahoe Square and destinations along a potentially improved 21st street that terminates at Coors Field.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER?**

TOD promotes a distinct area identity of a walkable, transit-rich community and serves as a unifying element for Northeast Downtown neighborhoods

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **MOBILITY?**

TOD promotes walkable, urban neighborhoods that provide residents easy access to many of their daily needs without the use of an automobile. This can have an impact on the traffic congestion of the regional transportation network and associated air quality issues.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS **DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY?**

Development potential of a property correlates with the transportation network's ability to provide adequate access to the site. An enhanced regional and local transit system increases the development potential in Northeast Downtown, encourages higher density development at transit-rich, urban in-fill locations, and impacts the region's growth pattern. A transit station serves as a portal to the region and allows property owners to capture the enhanced value of their land due to the proximity to transit service. TOD provides excellent opportunities for affordable housing by providing a lower cost transportation option and by connecting residents to employment centers.

HOW DOES IT ADDRESS THE **LIVABILITY AND THE PUBLIC REALM?**

TOD creates neighborhoods that:

- Become highly walkable and vibrant, with a mix of active uses on main street corridors and station area locations;
- Provide a mix of housing choices;
- Access daily amenities and services;
- Promote healthy, active lifestyle choices.



The East Corridor Commuter Rail project, as depicted here, will provide significant opportunities for TOD at the 38th and Blake Station.

TOD RECOMMENDATIONS:

Promote Transit Oriented Development of an appropriate scale at three locations:

- Mid-rise, high density, mixed-use – 38th and Blake Commuter Rail Station
- Neighborhood serving, main street retail and mixed use – Welton-Downing Corridor between 25th and Welton and 38th and Blake
- High density residential and mixed-use – between 20th Street and Park Avenue at Welton and California

Funding should be sought for the Central Corridor Extension and establish a goal to complete the extension as close to the completion of the East Corridor commuter rail line (projected completion in 2016) as possible.



South Waterfront, Portland

Neighborhood Strategies

Northeast Downtown has a strong mix of neighborhoods that possess their own unique characteristics. This plan chapter focuses on specific recommendations for each of the neighborhoods, while highlighting the key framework recommendations and transformative concepts applicable to each. Several neighborhoods, such as River North and Ballpark, are treated as one area to reduce duplication. Since many of the neighborhoods' individual boundaries overlap one another, the neighborhood maps intentionally include duplicate blocks. The neighborhoods are as follows:

- Arapahoe Square
- Ballpark/River North
- Curtis Park
- Downing/Welton Corridor
- Enterprise Hill/San Rafael

Arapahoe Square



Vacant parcels are common in Arapahoe Square.



Surface parking lots are a major land use in Arapahoe Square.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF **EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

Immediately adjacent to the Central Business District, Arapahoe Square has the potential to be the most urban of the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods. Bounded by Park Avenue, 20th Street, the alley between Welton and Glenarm, and the alley between Larimer and Lawrence, Arapahoe Square will set a critical character transition between ‘downtown’ and ‘neighborhood’.

At present, Arapahoe Square is visually dominated by surface parking lots and a clustering of social service providers. The most visible aspect of the service providers are the homeless individuals that congregate in public spaces. The parking lots serve downtown employees and events at Coors Field. A more hidden asset is the collection of existing buildings that house a variety of small businesses, both emerging and established. There are also a handful of residential units, mostly in newer buildings of apartment or rowhouse building forms. An additional challenge to the area is the diagonal alignment of Broadway; cutting through the grid at an angle. Broadway’s prime function as a regional access corridor into and out of the downtown core should be balanced with local multimodal transportation needs.

TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPTS AFFECTING ARAPAHOE SQUARE

Many of the transformative concepts identified in this plan have a direct impact on Arapahoe Square and are the core of the key recommendations for the area. A list of the transformative concepts that affect Arapahoe Square follows:

- **Streetcar** – A streetcar system featuring a true modern streetcar vehicle operating in mixed traffic for the length of the Downing/Welton Corridor. In Arapahoe Square, the streetcar could potentially utilize California Street as a couplet to Welton Street, increasing access and development opportunity between Park Avenue and 20th Street.
- **21st Street** – Three interconnected ideas — a Bike Boulevard, a Festival Street, and innovative stormwater management — develop this concept to make 21st an organizing element of Arapahoe Square. 21st provides opportunity to test various “Best Management Practices” because it is located on the ridge between the two drainage basins.
- **Curtis Street** – An opportunity to create a strong pedestrian linkage from the Central Business District through Arapahoe Square, and into Curtis Park.
- **Broadway** – Three conceptual approaches — Preserving, Celebrating, and Bridging — to the long-term future of Broadway that are meant to balance local and regional needs, supporting regional, vehicular mobility while also providing for safe, efficient pedestrian and bicycle movement.
- **New Park** – A new park, if properly designed, located, and programmed, would not only assist in meeting open space needs, but could also help to energize and attract activity to the surrounding area. Portions of Arapahoe Square meet the criteria for locating and developing a new park in Northeast Downtown as identified in the New Park Transformative Concept.
- **Social Services** – Multiple approaches to better manage the provision of social services and provide more appropriate facilities in order to improve the development climate, connectivity, and safety of Arapahoe Square and the greater Northeast Downtown neighborhood.
- **Transit Oriented Development** – Focusing appropriately scaled development that is oriented towards the transit investment on Welton Street that encourages walkable, urban neighborhoods that have easy access to daily needs and amenities.

The 2007 Downtown Area Plan (DAP) identified Arapahoe Square as one of seven transformative projects for Downtown Denver. The DAP envisions Arapahoe Square as a cutting edge, densely populated, mixed-use area that provides a range of housing types and a center for innovative businesses. Thus, the primary goal for Arapahoe Square is, quite simply, to catalyze development. A vibrant Arapahoe Square is a goal in its own right, and also one that will enhance neighborhoods on all sides by providing safe, attractive connectivity to the downtown core and other destinations. Particular issues that must be resolved include pedestrian and bicycle access across Broadway, investment risk of ‘pioneering’ in an under-developed area of the city, and negative perceptions associated with clustering of social services. Beyond these ‘big picture’ issues, finer grain details will need attention as well, including urban form, allowable height, neighborhood character, density, and open space.

ISSUES IN ARAPAHOE SQUARE

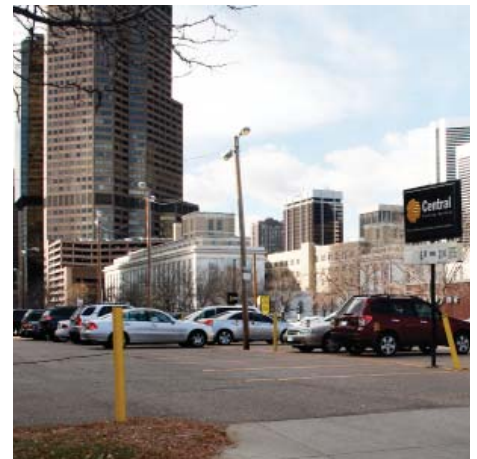
Arapahoe Square is not a homogenous area; it is comprised of several smaller areas that need to interact and support each other to overcome a set of shared issues. Central to this theme is the need to improve the safety and security (real and perceived) through improved design, increased amenities, and general beautification of the neighborhood. Several issues help define the opportunities and constraints to meeting the aspirations set out in the Downtown Area Plan and this plan.

- **Social Services** – As described in the Social Services Transformative Concept, the concentration of social service providers and their clients have a significant impact on Arapahoe Square. For example, they dominate the visible public spaces such as the sidewalks, streets, alleys, and parks, especially the Triangle Parks. The impacts of these social issues have real and perceived impacts on safety, walkability, and development potential. Public private partnerships will continue to be the most effective approach to marshalling the public and private resources necessary to deal with the homeless population and its impacts.

The zoning code sets spacing, density, site, and other limitations on homeless shelters to reduce their impact on surrounding neighborhoods. Specifically these include, but are not limited to, a 2,000 ft spacing requirement between shelters, a limitation that no more than 2 shelters be allowed within a 4,000 ft radius of a proposed new shelter, as well as a limitation that no more than 200 beds can be located in any one shelter (350 for shelters having a legal zoning permit as of January 1, 2005), and no more than 950 beds can be located in any one council district. There is also a spacing requirement of 500 feet from a school, meeting the compulsory education laws of the state.

Plan recommendations focus on addressing social services issues through public private partnerships and innovative housing concepts:

- Arapahoe Square Social Services Working Group
 - Courtyard Development Concept
 - Single Room Occupancy housing
 - Repurpose Broadway Triangles
- **Surface Parking Lots** – Surface parking lots and vacant parcels are a dominant land use and drive the economics of development in Arapahoe Square. Parking lots can have a blighting influence because they are often unimproved, poorly maintained, poorly lighted, and provide additional space for indigent individuals to congregate. They do represent an asset as a land bank for future development and provide an affordable parking reservoir to downtown employees and Rockies fans attending baseball games at Coors Field.



Surface parking in Arapahoe Square serves commuters working in the Downtown Core as well as ball games at Coors Field.



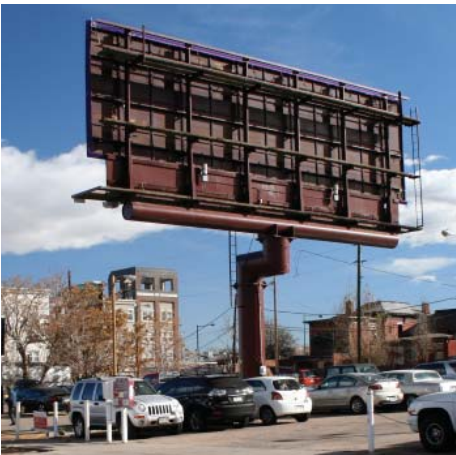
Arapahoe Square is home to a wide variety of unique businesses.



A parking lot near Welton Street.



Denver Rescue Mission



Alternative revenue streams, such as parking and billboards, partially drive the disconnect between asking land prices and what the actual real estate market will bear.

While there have been a number of land transactions in the area over the past several years; few new developments have proven financially feasible for a variety of reasons including high land costs, availability of investment capital, market conditions, and the risk/reward for Arapahoe Square compared to the development opportunities that are available in other neighborhoods near Downtown. There is a perception that parking lot owners are obstructing redevelopment because they are asking for above-market pricing for their land. Instead, potential alternative revenue streams (i.e. parking and billboards) that are available to land owners establish land values based on the revenue that can be generated.

Currently, parking lot managers provide a multi-year ground lease to parking lot owners, which provide a guaranteed income stream regardless of market conditions. These leases typically include all maintenance and operational expenses on the lot including snow removal, landscaping, enforcement, operating the payment machine, resurfacing and restriping. In calculating the appropriate ground lease rate, the parking lot managers charge between \$2 and \$6 per day on normal weekdays and can typically charge between \$3 and \$20 per day when the Rockies have a home game. Parking managers anticipate occupancy rates of 95% and above based on current rates and also generate revenue through citations and evening and weekend rates.

Based on current ground leases provided by parking management companies, net of property taxes, each parking space in Arapahoe Square can be worth between \$750 and \$1,750 annually to its owner. These ground leases are generally multi-year and are largely insensitive to the overall health of the macro real estate market. Assuming a standard parking space of 320 square feet (many in Arapahoe Square are smaller), that puts the annual net operating income from a parking space of between \$2.35 and \$5.50 per square foot. Assuming a 5% capitalization rate, the parking income stream is valued between \$50 and \$110 per land square foot based on today's revenue projections. This is consistent with both the appraised value of the land in Arapahoe Square and could be the basis for pricing expectations for land owners.

- **Lack of Demand** – A significant challenge facing Arapahoe Square and Downtown Denver as a whole is insufficient demand for commercial or residential development and competition from other areas in and around Downtown. There is a significant supply of developable land in and around Downtown Denver in areas such as the Central Platte Valley, Union Station, Golden Triangle, and the Highlands. These areas generally demand higher land prices given their location, buyer preferences, and the presence of amenities and neighborhood services. In order to encourage developers to invest in Arapahoe Square, there needs to be a sufficient discount to development to compensate for the risk of a pioneering development area.

Zoning and small area plans can create a public policy framework that is supportive of development, but the actual development will be driven by market demand and individual developer vision, access to capital and underlying fundamentals (i.e., the cost of development compared with the anticipated revenues) relative to the amount of risk associated with any project. Arapahoe Square is particularly challenged because, as mentioned earlier, parking revenues distort land values relative to development risk in a pioneering area such as Arapahoe Square.

- **Property Ownership** – Property ownership in Arapahoe Square is generally fragmented with few large parcels under single ownership. There are 273 different ownership parcels over a total of 42 blocks or partial blocks; several blocks have more than 15 individual parcels. The time required to assemble sufficient land area to construct market-viable

footprints for commercial or residential development and complexity involved in addressing the differing expectations of multiple parcel owners will affect the pace of redevelopment in the area. Assembled parcels tend to be located on the periphery of Arapahoe Square, especially along Welton, 20th, and Lawrence streets. Elsewhere, smaller parcels are interspersed with existing buildings. These parcels support smaller development projects which can be more compatible with existing buildings and more viable in a down economy.

- **Building Re-use** – Some serviceable building stock exists in Arapahoe Square, especially in the blocks bounded by 21st and 24th Streets and Stout and Lawrence streets. While many of these buildings have unimpressive exteriors, their interior warehouse space and low rental rate serve their tenants, who often need a combination of flexible industrial space with ancillary office spaces. The buildings are important assets to the community representing space that can be affordably retrofitted for companies looking for low overhead costs with proximity to Downtown Denver. Encouraging the re-use of existing buildings is an important business development and retention strategy for the area. It is important to note that a few of the existing buildings are of landmark quality, so preservation efforts are appropriate.

- **Economic and Business Development** – The prevalence of social services and lack of development creates perceived market risks that discourage development at current land prices. The success of small start-up businesses is generally unknown. The lack of a positive identity or “brand” exacerbates the negative perceptions. A rebranding of the area focusing on its affordability and “edgy” character could increase demand and decrease the perceived risk in the area.

Equally important to business development is housing development to expand the diversity of the neighborhood through a variety of housing types, prices, and tenancy. A considerable amount of housing development, mid-rise apartments and row houses, has occurred in Arapahoe Square; however, it is scattered through the area and not resulted in a sense of neighborhood.

- **Stormwater** – Arapahoe Square, along with other parts of Northeast Downtown, is subject to occasional flooding. Stormwater improvements are planned in and around Arapahoe Square, and conditions will improve with these investments. 21st Street divides two drainage basins. The part of the Arapahoe Square area northeast of 21st Street is in an area referred to by the adopted 2009 Storm Drainage Master Plan as the Lower Platte Valley (Basin 0062-01) that flows to the South Platte River. In this area, most of the drainage outfalls through a network of storm drains which ultimately discharge runoff into the South Platte River at 36th Street. In general, this storm drainage network has less than a 1-year storm capacity.

The Arapahoe Square area southwest of 21st Street is a part of the area referred to by the Stormwater Master Plan as the Central Business District (Basin 4600-01). Currently, drainage systems in 20th Street starting at Curtis Street flow to the South Platte River and the remaining drainage systems convey storm runoff to Cherry Creek and then to the South Platte River. The existing drainage system in 20th Street meets current City and County of Denver storm drainage criteria while the remaining drainage systems flowing towards Cherry Creek need to be enlarged to meet current City and County of Denver drainage criteria. Without these improvements, there is the threat of flooding for existing buildings and additional costs for new development.

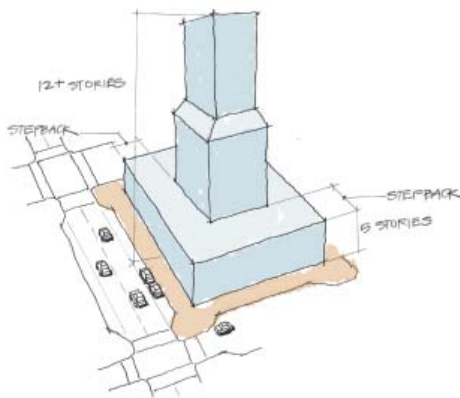
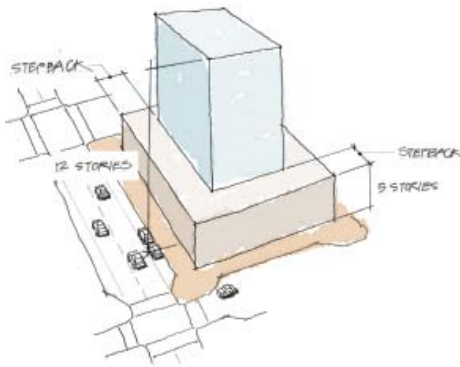
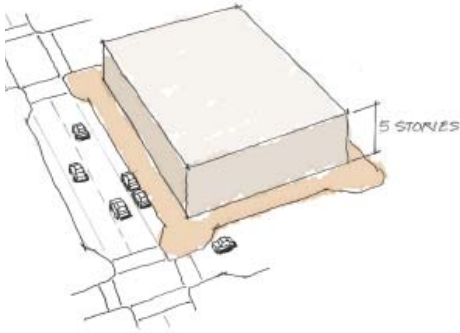


Sonny Lawson Park



Arapahoe Square faces stiff competition for urban development from nearby neighborhoods such as the Central Platte Valley.

This series of sketches illustrates how new development relates to the five story datum. Above the 5 story datum, all new structures would be required to step back. Point towers step back further in exchange for additional building height.



■ **Urban Design** – Arapahoe Square’s urban design needs to create an identifiable character and successfully transition between areas that range from high intensity commercial and mixed-use districts to lower intensity and historic single-family neighborhoods. Arapahoe Square is situated between several other neighborhoods and districts, each of which has its own unique character and development patterns.

- Downtown – 20th Street is the edge between Arapahoe Square and Downtown Denver.
- Ballpark – The transition between Arapahoe Square and the Ballpark neighborhood occurs at the alley between Larimer and Lawrence.
- Curtis Park – Park Avenue West forms the edge between Arapahoe Square and Curtis Park.
- Welton and Clements – The eastern edge of Arapahoe Square includes Welton Street, and the transition to the Clements Historic District on Glenarm.

Much of the area is zoned D-AS, based on the previous B-8-A zoning. Basically, this mixed-use zoning has a 4:1 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) with premiums for certain uses and design review allowing a maximum FAR of 7:1. The maximum height is 200 feet with transition areas reduced to 80 feet. All new buildings are subject to design review based on adopted design standards and guidelines that focus on design elements that activate street-facing elevations.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a number of strategies which could improve conditions and promote housing and business development. Arapahoe Square is a short walk away from Denver’s Central Business District, Ballpark and Lower Downtown. In the absence of a major, catalyzing public investment in the area such as a park, festival street, or Broadway reformatting, this section describes some strategies that can be pursued in the interim.

■ **N.1 Encourage Development of Parking Lots:** The economics of parking lots and lack of demand for real estate development indicate that parking lots may remain a significant land use for some time to come. Making interim improvements such as installing a standard railing and perimeter landscaping to screen and define the lots and encouraging operators to join the Denver Public Works/Downtown Denver Partnership’s “Park Now” program could reduce the negative visual impacts of this use.

The disconnect between asking land prices and what the real estate market will bear will change only when parking and other revenue streams become less viable, when market demand increases, or when sufficient community investment and economic development occurs. Changes to revenue streams will come only with citywide regulatory changes to parking lots or billboards or cultural and economic shifts in transportation choice. At some point in the future market conditions will make development the economical choice, as has happened in other downtown districts. Because property taxes are one of the major costs to parking lot owners, an increase or decrease in taxes changes the economics. A downzoning could have the unintended consequence of lowering property taxes, thereby increasing the net revenue to parking lot owners.

■ **N.2 Enhance Urban Design:** Arapahoe Square is an organic mix of existing and new buildings that are of strong urban character. A continuance of this mix will assure Arapahoe Square remains a visually interesting neighborhood. The mix of building forms in Arapahoe Square should include the podium and point tower, apartment, courtyard apartment and general building types. All buildings should add visual interest and

pedestrian scale to the public realm, especially streets and public spaces. The intersection of 21st and Curtis streets, two Transformative Concepts described previously, should serve as an early opportunity to implement plan recommendations.

- **N.3 Building Form:** The form recommendations support Arapahoe Square as an organically evolving district with a broad range of existing buildings and future mid to high-rise buildings. A wide variety of building forms are appropriate in the district.
 - **Height** – Building height will be highly varied depending on location, form and use of buildings.
 - A five-story height datum line, or maximum street frontage height, for upper story setbacks is recommended for all structures in Arapahoe Square over five stories to produce the effect that each new building reads as no more than five stories from street level. A height datum line is an urban design concept that allows taller buildings to relate to a pedestrian scale along the street and to smaller nearby buildings such as those in Arapahoe Square or Ballpark and Curtis Park. Five stories is a maximum for this datum line; two or three stories would also be appropriate. This urban design concept is most effective when uses in the lower stories are active and provide “eyes on the street”.
 - Height variations should be based on form alternatives rather than use premiums. For example a narrow point tower could be considerably taller than a more standard apartment or office building.

***POINT TOWERS:**

To encourage higher density development where appropriate, specific areas in Arapahoe Square have been identified as locations for a podium and point tower building form. The recommended maximum height of point towers in Arapahoe Square are as follows:

- Standard Building Height: 12 stories = Point Tower Height: 20 stories
- Standard Building Height: 20 stories = Point Tower Height: 30 stories

***HEIGHT DATUM LINE :**

A five-story height datum line, or maximum street frontage height, for upper story setbacks and point towers is recommended to produce the effect that each new building reads as no more than five stories from street level. A height datum line is an urban design concept that allows taller buildings to relate to a pedestrian scale along the street and to smaller nearby buildings such as those in Arapahoe Square, Ballpark and Curtis Park. The five-story datum line applies to both standard and point tower buildings.



Concept Building Heights Map



A possible building form in Arapahoe Square is the podium and point tower found in locations such as the South Waterfront District in Portland

- Where height transitions are mapped mid-block, such as between 21st and 22nd streets, the exact location of this step down (whether mid-block or otherwise) should be determined as part of a follow-up zoning study.
- **Siting** – Promote urban character by minimizing setbacks to provide a consistent street edge and to support pedestrian activity. Reinforce the character and quality of public streets with buildings that provide consistent siting, pedestrian orientation, and access to the street. Minimize the visual impacts of parking by structuring it within the development, or by locating surface lots to the rear or side of buildings.
- **Design Elements** – Give prominence to the pedestrian realm as a defining element of neighborhood character. Locate commercial uses on the ground floors to activate buildings and the street. Provide transparency and street facing entries to help activate and improve safety on the street. Create visually interesting and human-scaled facades, and encourage variation in building form to provide opportunities for architectural scale relationships. Along neighborhood edges, arrange the height and scale of buildings to provide transitions to adjoining areas.
- **N.4 Land Use:** Arapahoe Square is a mixed use neighborhood with a distinctly urban character. It is comprised of commercial and mixed-use buildings, multi-family residential, and some light industrial buildings. This is reflected in the future land use map by the “mixed use” land use category. Land uses can be, but are not necessarily, mixed in



Concept Land Use Map

each building, development, or block. Pedestrian access is of importance within Arapahoe Square, with residential and non-residential uses always within walking distance of one another.

- **N.5 Conduct Form-Based Zoning Study:** Conduct a follow-up study to determine the appropriate zoning districts to implement the vision for Arapahoe Square that is presented in this plan. Key elements to address in the study include: land use, building height, building form, necessary transitions to adjacent neighborhoods, implementation of the five story datum line, and whether or not to continue to require design review for new construction within Arapahoe Square. The concept building height map makes use of mid-block transitions between 21st and 22nd streets as well as Park Avenue and 24th Street to step down building heights. This is intended to depict that the height transition should occur somewhere in the block between the identified streets, but the exact location of this step down (whether mid-block or otherwise) should be determined as part of the scope of this follow-up zoning study.
- **N.6 Promote Transit-Oriented Development:** The Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Area has a number of opportunities for transit-oriented development in both the short and long term. In the short-term, the 38th and Blake Station Area on the East Line and the Central Corridor Extension on Downing will provide new transit service that can help stimulate new development. Longer-term, the proposal to convert the Welton light rail to streetcar, as described in the Transformative Concept, has the potential to stimulate Main Street type development in Five Points and higher intensity mixed-use development associated with a new station between 21st Street and Park Avenue.
- **N.7 Re-use Existing Buildings:** Unfortunately, most of Arapahoe Square's building stock was demolished in the 1960's and 70's; however, some serviceable buildings remain, especially in the blocks bounded by 21st and 24th streets and Stout and Lawrence



The Paris Hotel is an example of Arapahoe Square's historic building stock.



California and 22nd Street - Conceptual sketch of redevelopment in Arapahoe Square

streets (57% building coverage). A number of existing buildings house start-up businesses and design firms that value inexpensive rent and proximity to Downtown while enjoying the “edginess” of the neighborhood. While many of these buildings have unimpressive exteriors, their interior warehouse space suits their tenants, who often need a combination of flexible industrial space with ancillary office spaces. The buildings are important assets to the community representing space that can be affordably retrofitted for companies looking for low-overhead costs with proximity to Downtown Denver. Encouraging the re-use of existing buildings is an important business development and retention strategy for the area.

- **N.8 Establish Business Development Office:** The goal of a dedicated Business Development Office (BDO) located within the Arapahoe Square would be to decrease the

THE ARAPAHOE SQUARE COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED TEN MAJOR ISSUES:

1. Concentration of service providers and homelessness – The concentration of social service providers and congregating homeless individuals are factors, both real and perceived, that hinder new investment, degrade the pedestrian experience, and diminish personal safety and security.

2. Mobility – Arapahoe Square can be a difficult place to navigate, though the multimodal choices exist. Complicating factors include one-way streets, interface of the Downtown and neighborhood street systems and Broadway.

3. Predominance of surface parking – Over one-third of the land is surface parking or undeveloped. The uninviting character of these parking lots and vacant land discourages pedestrian activity.

4. Urban Design – Contributing to the lack of urban character are the lack of street definition with buildings and treelawns. Current zoning establishes dramatic height transitions from Downtown to Curtis Park. Historically, buildings have faced the named streets with few entries facing the numbered streets or Broadway.

5. Parks and Open Space – Parks and open space are notably deficient and located on the perimeter of Arapahoe Square. Park land in Arapahoe Square itself is limited to the Broadway Triangles.

6. Stormwater Infrastructure – Stormwater infrastructure is aging and inadequate. System improvements in and around Arapahoe Square have been identified, but not funded.

7. Building re-use – The stock of existing buildings provides opportunity for inexpensive space for small businesses and small scale infill development.

8. Property ownership patterns – Property is primarily held in small parcels, which adds the complexity of assembling property for larger scale, potentially catalytic projects. On the other hand, many assembled properties remain undeveloped.

9. Economic development opportunities – The area has a real or perceived lack of development. The major impediment for new development is lack of market.

10. Market competition – Other Downtown neighborhoods compete with Arapahoe Square for new development

barriers to economic and business development. The BDO would advocate for the area, gather information regarding financing programs, properties for sale, contact information for building and property owners and serve as a one-stop shop for those interested in investing or locating in a particular area. The BDO could develop marketing materials and serve as a facilitator to match property owners with prospective tenants and/or help with assemblages based on client needs. Initial efforts should focus on reuse of existing buildings.

- **N.9 Improve Arapahoe Square’s Brand:** One of the major issues facing Arapahoe Square is the overall brand of the area. The prevalence of social services and lack of development creates perceived market risks that prevent development at current land prices. A rebranding of the area, perhaps focusing on its affordability and “edgy” character, could increase demand and decreasing the perceived risk in the area. A central clearinghouse for information regarding business opportunities in the area, such as a BDO, could help to market the area and provide information on investment funding available for businesses and developers looking to invest in the area.
- **N.10 Establish Urban Renewal Area:** Tax Increment Financing (TIF) can be used towards projects that create a public benefit such as public improvements or certain development projects. The first step is to adopt an Urban Redevelopment Plan that incorporates recommendations of this plan.



Broadway, Stout, 21st Street - Conceptual sketch of redevelopment in Arapahoe Square

KEY FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ARAPAHOE SQUARE:

- A.1** High Intensity Development Near Downtown, Transit Stations and Along Key Streets
- A.2** Moderate Intensity Development Transitioning to Neighborhoods
- A.4** Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation
- B.1** Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis
- B.2** Evaluate Potential One-Way to Two-Way Conversions
- B.3** Consider New or Modified Transit Routes
- B.4** Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton
- B.5** In Short-Term, Undertake a Broadway Intersections Improvement Study
- C.2** Promote Economic and Housing Diversity
- C.3** Encourage Housing Density
- C.4** Establish and Support Business Development Offices
- C.5** Establish Urban Renewal Areas
- C.6** Utilize OED Lending Programs
- D.1** Promote Access to Healthy Transportation
- D.2** Promote Access to Healthy Foods
- D.3** Invest in Park Improvements
- D.4** Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas
- D.5** Identify Funding for Stormwater Improvements and Promote Water Quality through Best Practices

Ballpark, River North

TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPTS AFFECTING BALLPARK, RINO

- **21st Street** – The festival street concept would be a direct benefit to the Ballpark neighborhood. The concept would likely be implemented incrementally over time, and under that scenario it's very likely that the portion of 21st within the Ballpark neighborhood would be the site of the initial investment, since the concept of activating the street is based on proximity to Coors Field.
- **New Park** – No major city parks are located in either Ballpark or RiNo, meaning that either neighborhood is a good candidate for any future park space that may be developed within Northeast Downtown.
- **Social Services** – Although many of the large social service providers in this area are located in Arapahoe Square, adjacent neighborhoods like Ballpark bear many of the negative impacts.
- **Transit Oriented Development** – At the 38th & Blake station, transit oriented development is envisioned on the blocks that are adjacent to the station platform. TOD areas seek to promote pedestrian traffic and commercial activity. Realizing this vision will require the extensive redevelopment of properties in the TOD area, as the existing building stock is low-rise industrial, which is not well-suited for this change in use.
- **Connecting River North** – All of the connection points identified by this concept are in River North. Currently, the only routes across the tracks are the 38th Street underpass at one end of the neighborhood, and the Broadway viaduct at the other. This concept would add additional connections at 31st, 33rd, and 36th, greatly enhancing mobility.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The Ballpark and River North (RiNo) neighborhoods occupy the study area's western boundary. The Ballpark district, north of 20th Street, falls wholly within the study area, while RiNo continues outside the boundary to the Northwest and towards the South Platte River. Before becoming a part of River North, the portion of the RiNo neighborhood that lies within the study area was formerly referred to as the Upper Larimer neighborhood.

The Ballpark neighborhood is home to Coors Field, and sees high visitor traffic on Rockies' home game days. Successful retail, interspersed with surface parking, lines Larimer Street from 20th to Park Avenue, and supports game day and neighborhood functions, with additional small eateries and bars scattered throughout the neighborhood. Ballpark is a designated historic district, but has also experienced extensive redevelopment since Coors Field opened in 1995.

RiNo has long served as a backbone of the business activities on the edge of Downtown Denver, with a large number of warehouse, industrial, and support businesses. This is due to the close proximity to Downtown and has made RiNo integral to the City's economy. Recently, additional businesses (such as professional services, creative businesses, and others) have "discovered" the locational advantage and affordability of RiNo. This new market awareness, along with housing demand, is putting stress on the existing businesses in the area. RiNo represents a key opportunity for all of these uses to coexist in a true industrial mixed use community. RiNo is an emerging arts district that benefits from its long history of industrial uses. The eclectic mix of warehouses, loading dock store fronts, roadside businesses and historic industrial buildings provide for a unique character for the area that is perfect for its new identity. Blake Street has seen numerous lofts and apartments converted from former industrial buildings as well as infill projects that mimic that aesthetic. Walnut Street still has many buildings that have docks along the street and Larimer has recently been seen as an emerging retail corridor with new shops and restaurants in both Ballpark and RiNo.

Housing, both affordable and market-rate, is a relatively new element in the mix of land activities in Ballpark and River North. In recent years, a number of new or adaptive reuse projects have created significant amounts of new housing units in this area. Additional housing development is desired in the community, and care should be taken to ensure that the type



Within the Ballpark Neighborhood, 21st Street features pedestrian amenities including wide sidewalks and street trees. Low traffic counts on 21st also contribute to the pedestrian orientation of the street.

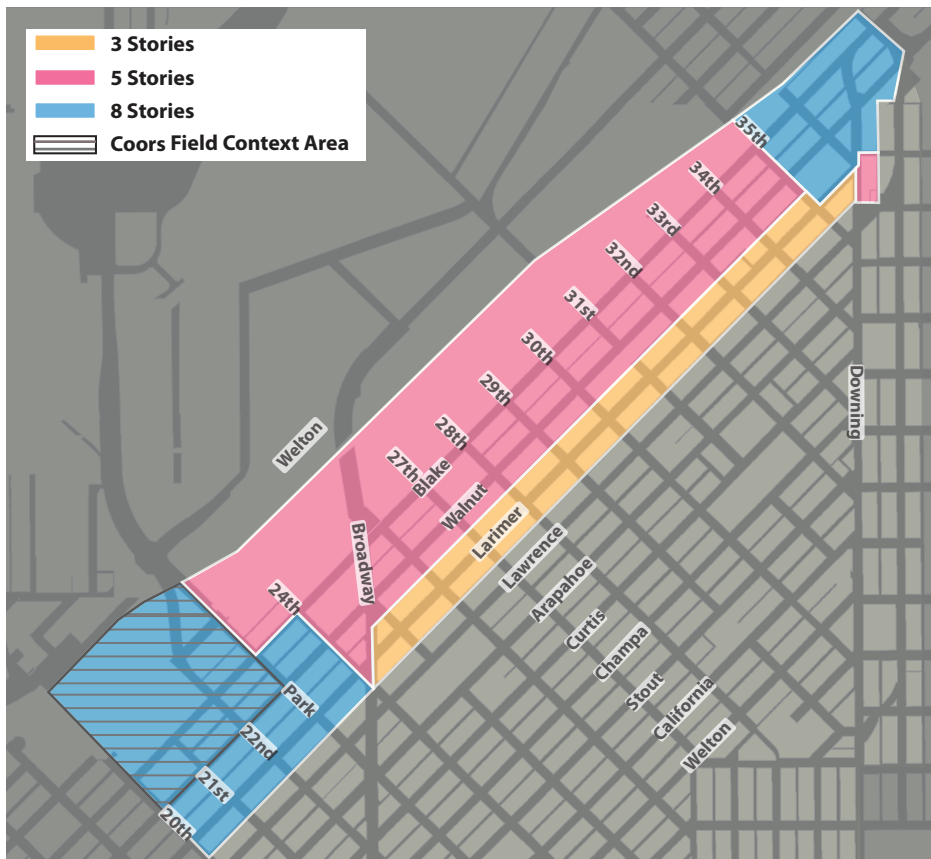
and intensity of future residential development compliments the many existing and emerging businesses, industrial uses, and arts-related activities that are also located in this area.

Architecture in these neighborhoods tends towards modern rowhouses and lofts, a style which coexist with active light industrial and class-B office space. RiNo stakeholders in particular are happy with this urban mix of uses, and like variety of uses, including artist spaces that this architectural mix allows.

In contrast to lower density, more family-oriented neighborhood like Curtis Park and San Rafael, Ballpark and RiNo are favored by young, urban singles and couples, as well as empty-nesters, and are seen as two of the city’s new, hip neighborhoods. The community’s primary concerns focus on multi-modal access across the existing freight rail tracks and to the Platte River, as well as streetscape on Brighton Boulevard. The community is also interested in potential structuring of Coors Field surface parking and potential uses on the land that would then become available for development.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **N.11 Building Form:** Building form types range between industrial, general and apartment.
 - **Height** – Maximum building heights in Ballpark and River North range from three to eight stories. The eight story heights are located in the area’s two nodes of density: in the Ballpark neighborhood between 20th and 24th, and at the future TOD area at the 38th & Blake station. The three and five story areas are located generally between 24th and 35th, with Blake and Walnut supporting 5 stories and Larimer supporting three to aid in the transition between RiNo and Curtis Park.



Concept Building Heights Map



Mixed use projects featuring apartments and ground floor retail bays have been constructed in the Ballpark Neighborhood.



RiNo has become known as a neighborhood where “funky”, “eclectic”, and “creative” businesses are welcome.

COORS FIELD CONTEXT AREA

Within this area it is recommended that building heights not be allowed to exceed the height of the Coors Field stands.

CONCEPT BUILDING HEIGHTS AMENDED IN 2016

The 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments, as adopted under Ordinance 2016-0760, refines and updates the building height recommendations of this plan as applied to the area near the 38th and Blake commuter rail station. The future building heights map included in 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments supersedes building height maps and recommendations included in this plan.

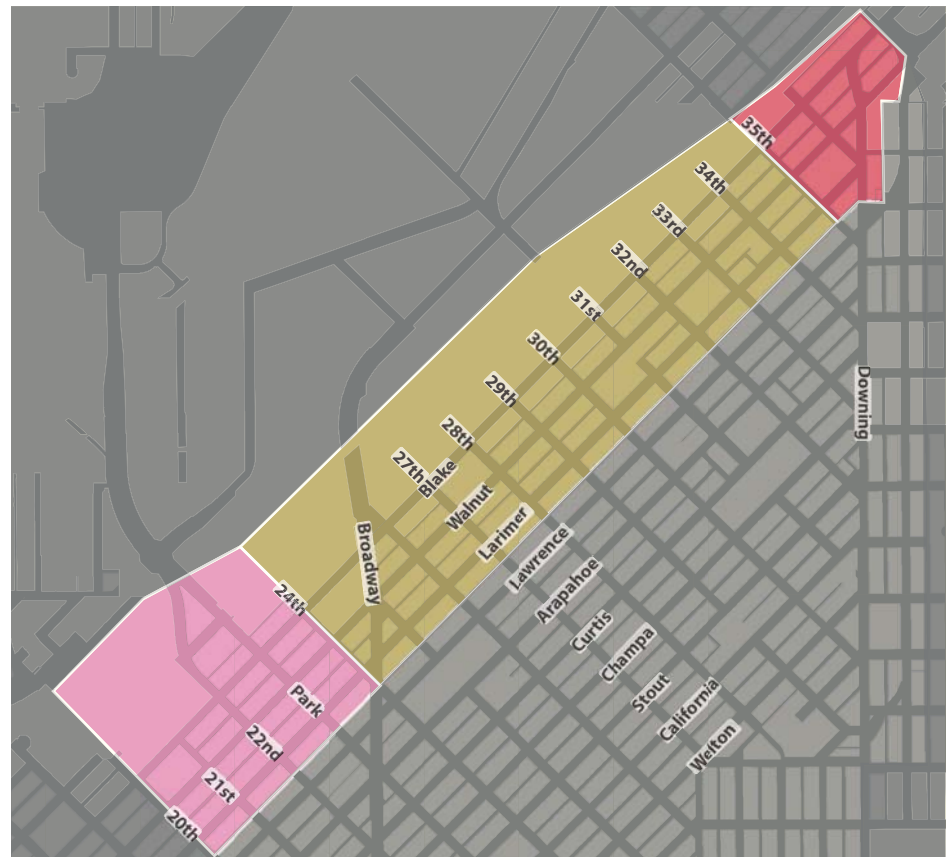


Historic commercial frontage on Larimer Street



Innovative residential infill development

- **Siting** – Promote urban character with a build-to line to provide a consistent street edge and to support pedestrian activity. Reinforce the character and quality of public streets with buildings that provide consistent siting, pedestrian orientation, and access to the street. Minimize the visual impacts of parking by structuring it within the development, or by locating surface lots to the rear or side of buildings with access to/from the alley.
- **Design Elements** – Give prominence to the pedestrian realm as a defining element of neighborhood character. Maintain required ground story activation such as window transparency and street facing entrances. Locate commercial uses on the ground floors to activate buildings and the street, especially in the Ballpark neighborhood and in the 38th/Blake TOD area. Create visually interesting and human-scaled facades, and encourage variation in building form to provide opportunities for architectural scale relationships.
- **Coors Field Context Area** – For Ballpark, reinforcing Coors Field as the neighborhood landmark is important. The scale and character of the neighborhood is set by this iconic structure, and as such any nearby buildings should respect the stadium’s prominence and work collectively to promote a cohesive urban experience. Special attention should be given to the public realm along Blake Street, where many Rockies fans initially experience the game day atmosphere. To accomplish these urban design objectives, the height map shows a Coors Field Context Area wherein it is recommended that building heights not be allowed to exceed the height of the Coors Field stands.



Concept Land Use Map

- Mixed Use - Industrial
- Mixed Use
- TOD

- **N.12 Land Use:** Ballpark is a mixed use neighborhood with a distinctly urban character. It is comprised of commercial and mixed-use buildings, multi-family residential, and a collection of historic warehouse buildings. This is reflected in the future land use map by the “mixed use” land use category. As one travels from Ballpark to the northeast into RiNo, the land use mix changes and becomes much more industrial and eclectic. This is especially true northeast of 24th Street. In this area, the future land use map shows “mixed use-industrial” as the predominant land use category for RiNo. Northeast of 35th Street, the future land use designation is “transit oriented development”, in support of the commuter and light rail station that is planned at 38th & Blake.
- **N.13 Complete Sidewalk Network:** Nearly all of the existing gaps in the Northeast Downtown sidewalk network are in RiNo. Blake and Walnut have the highest frequency of gaps, while some of the numbered streets intersecting Blake and Walnut also lack sidewalks. City regulations require that sidewalks be provided in conjunction with redevelopment. This is a strategy that is helping to gradually fill in the sidewalk network, but in a piecemeal way, as new sidewalks adjacent to a redeveloped property may have nothing to connect to until neighboring properties also redevelop. It is recommended that staff work to identify funding opportunities to fill in gaps in the sidewalk network.
- **N.14 Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions:** Several current one-way streets within this area should be considered for conversion to two-way. These include the sections of Blake, Walnut, and Larimer.
 - Larimer – Larimer Street, east of Broadway, is scheduled for two-way conversion in 2011, which should help support this emerging retail corridor.
 - Blake – Much of the multifamily residential construction and adaptive reuse that this area is known for has occurred on Blake Street. The land use mix continues to shift, and the street has become increasingly residential. Evaluate conversion to two-way in the short-to-medium timeframe or at such time as land use changes along the corridor warrants.
 - Walnut – Converting Walnut Street to two-way operations is a long-range proposal. Although land uses have gone through a transition on Blake and Larimer, Walnut remains a very industrial street. Conversion to two-way would only be advisable if, in the future, Walnut experiences significant amounts of redevelopment that eliminates most of the loading docks that are found along the street.
- **N. 15 Consider Future of Coors Field Overflow Parking:** In the future, if the footprint of the Coors Field overflow parking between the railroad right-of-way and Blake Street is reduced, consider a combination of redevelopment and park space on the site.

KEY FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RINO/ BALLPARK:

- A.1** High Intensity Development Near Downtown, Transit Stations and Along Key Streets
- A.4** Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation
- B.1** Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis
- B.2** Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-Way Conversions
- B.3** Consider New or Modified Transit Routes
- B.5** In Short-Term, undertake a Broadway Intersections Improvement Study
- C.1** Strengthen Retail Corridors
- C.2** Promote Economic and Housing Diversity
- C.3** Encourage Housing Density
- D.1** Promote Access to Healthy Transportation
- D.2** Promote Access to Healthy Foods
- D.3** Invest in Park Improvements
- D.4** Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas



Coors Field is an iconic building in the Ballpark Neighborhood.

Curtis Park

TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPTS AFFECTING CURTIS PARK

- **Connecting River North** – Currently, the only routes across the railroad tracks within Northeast Downtown are the 38th Street underpass and the Broadway viaduct. This concept would add additional connections at 31st, 33rd, and 36th, greatly enhancing mobility options to the west for Curtis Park.
- **Curtis Street** – Curtis Street is centrally located in the middle of the Curtis Park Neighborhood. Already a good street for walking within Curtis Park, enhancing Curtis Street as a pedestrian connection through Arapahoe Square and into Downtown would create a pedestrian-priority corridor that would improve connectivity for all three neighborhoods.
- **Transit Oriented Development** – Welton and Downing are identified in this plan as TOD corridors. Both of these streets are located on the edge of Curtis Park, and as such any TOD that occurs along these corridors would directly serve the neighborhood.
- **Streetcar** – As a neighborhood served by the streetcar, Curtis Park would benefit from the mobility and TOD advantages that are associated with streetcar service.
- **Social Services** – Although many of the large social service providers in this area are located in Arapahoe Square, adjacent neighborhoods like Curtis Park bear many of the negative impacts.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF **EXISTING CONDITIONS**:

Curtis Park is one of Denver's oldest residential neighborhoods, boasting some of the City's most historic homes as well as the City's first official park, Mestizo-Curtis Park. The majority of the neighborhood lies within designated historic districts, and offers urban design elements such as period lighting and sandstone sidewalks. Curtis Park is a true urban neighborhood both architecturally and demographically, with homes ranging from large Victorians to modern rowhouses, and long-time residents to new urban dwellers looking for a true neighborhood feel within walking distance of the downtown core.

Curtis Park residents are well-organized and take pride in their neighborhood. Their top priorities for neighborhood enhancement include conversion of one-way streets to two-way, connectivity to the river, connectivity to the downtown core, historic preservation, design review for new construction, and ensuring appropriate architectural and height transition between Curtis Park and adjacent neighborhoods. Residents are particularly interested in the north-south transition between their neighborhood and the yet-to-be-developed Arapahoe Square district which lies between Curtis Park and the downtown business core.

The vast majority of the Curtis Park neighborhood is an area of stability, as identified by Blueprint Denver. Development policies in areas of stability should promote the continuation of existing land use patterns, building forms, and development densities. Curtis Park is designated by several historic landmark districts, further reinforcing the importance of preserving the existing character elements of the neighborhood.

Throughout the planning process, the idea of converting Stout and Champa to two way was frequently raised. This plan recommends that Stout and Champa be maintained as a one-way couplet at least until after the RTD Central Corridor improvements are in place on Downing Street. At that time, it may be appropriate to consider two way operations on Stout Street, which is wide enough to accommodate a travel lane in each direction, on-street parking



Curtis park has some of the oldest residential structures in Denver, such as this 1880s Italianate-style home

on both sides of the street, and one bike lane. Two-way operations on Champa are more challenging because of the street's narrower cross section, which would likely mean losing the existing bike lane. For this reason, Champa will need to remain a one-way street for the foreseeable future, until such time that this issue can be sufficiently addressed. The long-range vision of this plan is for all streets within Curtis Park to be two-way, but in the interim it is recommended that the Stout/Champa couplet be maintained and that traffic calming measures to reduce travel speeds be identified and studied as part of a comprehensive Next Steps Transportation Operations Study for Northeast Downtown.

The emphasis of Curtis Street as a pedestrian priority street is identified as a transformative concept by this plan. Establishing a clear pedestrian connection from Curtis Park through Arapahoe Square and to the Central Business District will help to connect these neighborhoods together. The designation of 31st Street as another pedestrian priority street creates complimentary opportunities for the Curtis Park neighborhood. Both Curtis Street and 31st Street feed directly into Mestizo-Curtis Park, creating a "T-shaped" pedestrian priority area that bisects the Curtis Park neighborhood in two directions, providing connectivity that is anchored by destination areas in all directions. To the west, a proposed pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks at 31st provides connectivity to the River North neighborhood and the South Platte River. To the east, 31st Street terminates at the 30th & Downing transit station and the TOD areas along Welton and Downing. Meanwhile Curtis Street itself is interrupted at Mestizo-Curtis Park, and provides a pedestrian priority connection southward to Downtown.



Single family residence in Curtis Park.



The Denver Housing Authority has constructed multi-family residential homes compatible with the historic scale of Curtis Park.



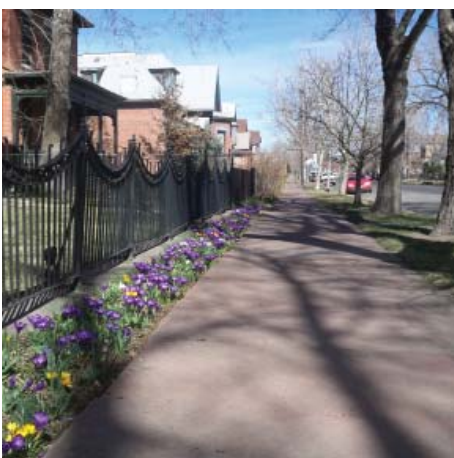
Denser housing types are also located within the neighborhood.

CURTIS PARK NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS:

- Continued mix of housing types and affordability
- Protection of neighborhood historic structures, and design review of infill for compatibility
- Installation of period street lighting and pedestrian lighting
- Reuse of vacant historic structures such as the Epworth church, the Curtis Park Community Center, Temple Emmanuel, and some individual residences
- Development of vacant land, including both large properties and interior neighborhood vacant lots
- Reuse or redevelopment of unoccupied non-historic structures such as the Denver Enterprise Center, the community center's mid-block buildings, and the former Nest Fresh factory on Lawrence Street
- Removal of unnecessary curb cuts and prohibition of additional curb cuts where alley access is available
- Achieve calm neighborhood traffic patterns
- Eventually convert all one-way streets within the neighborhood to two-way
- Preserve and foster increased pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to Downtown and the South Platte River
- Customize the zoning code's accessory dwelling unit form standards to work better with Curtis Park's narrow residential lots
- City assistance with abandoned and neglected properties and structures
- Remove all non-conforming billboards
- Improve and activate parks

HISTORIC SIDEWALKS:

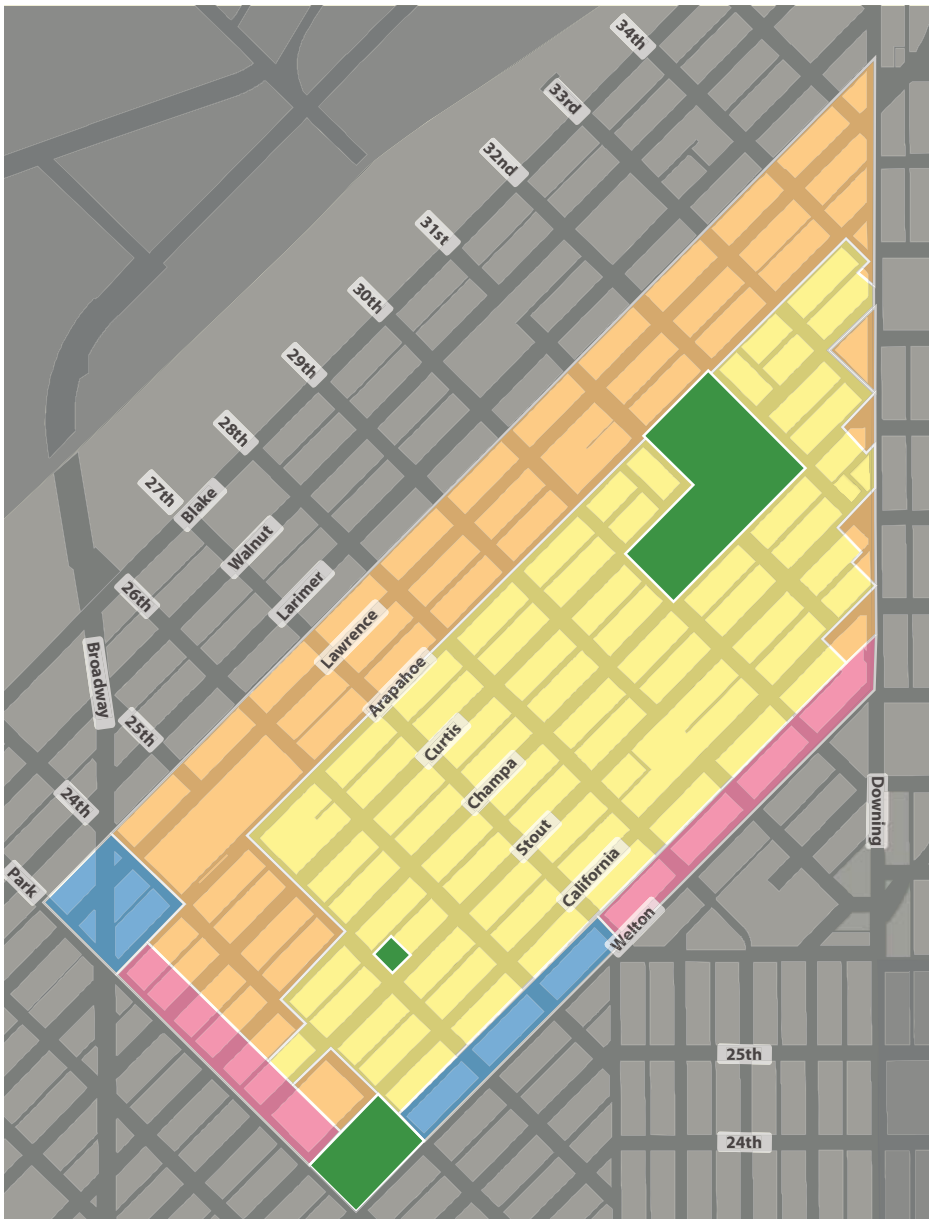
Curtis Park has a sizable collection of sandstone (sometimes referred to as “flagstone”) sidewalks and curbs. These facilities contribute greatly to the historic character of the neighborhood. Sandstone is a permissible sidewalk material that meets City standards, but the cost is much greater than standard concrete sidewalks, and so many property owners elect to replace sidewalks with concrete rather than pay the cost of repairing damaged sandstone. A strategy for preserving these resources needs to be identified. There currently is no regulatory mechanism to require the preservation of sandstone sidewalks and curbs.



Historic flagstone sidewalks in Curtis Park

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **N.16 Building Form:** The majority of the neighborhood should continue its tradition of urban house, duplex and row house building forms.
 - **Height** – The recommended height map shows a majority of the Curtis Park neighborhood at 2.5 stories, a maximum height that reinforces the existing zoning within the neighborhood. Of key importance is how the maximum heights of adjacent areas, which are generally higher, transition to the 2.5 stories found in Curtis Park.
 - Southern Edge – Curtis Park meets Arapahoe Square at Park Ave West. The strategy for transitioning from the much higher building heights in Arapahoe Square is to limit development to 5 stories along Park Ave, and then step down to a three story maximum approaching 24th Street.
 - Eastern Edge – Maximum building heights along Welton Street in Historic Five Points are proposed to be 8 stories between Park Ave and 27th Street, and 5 stories north of 27th Street. The presence of an alley between Welton and California helps to transition building heights downward to Curtis Park, as do protected district development standards within the zoning code that set maximum height limits and require building setbacks for properties located on Welton and adjacent to the Curtis Park neighborhood.
 - Northern Edge – Downing Street is the seam between the downtown street grid and the Denver neighborhood grid. This results in angled intersections along Downing and triangle-shaped parcels along the Curtis Park edge. Because alleys do not help to buffer commercial development along Downing from adjacent residential structures, the maximum height for main street development along Downing is proposed to be three stories.
 - Western Edge – Building heights transition upward to three stories at Arapahoe in recognition of the denser development patterns found in Denver Housing Authority’s Villages at Curtis Park, where apartment forms are permitted.
 - **Siting** – Siting of new residential forms should be consistent with the existing, historic development patterns within the neighborhood. These elements include consistent front yard setbacks, small zone lots, high lot coverage comparable to historic patterns, and locating garages and accessory dwelling units at the rear of the lot.
 - **Design Elements** – Give prominence to the pedestrian realm as a defining element of neighborhood character. Emphasize a positive relationship to the street by ensuring that building access, orientation, and placement are consistent with established patterns. Create visually interesting and human-scaled facades. Along the edges of the neighborhood, arrange the height and scale of buildings to provide transitions to adjoining areas.



Concept Building Heights Map



Many historic homes in Curtis Park are two and a half stories



An urban rowhouse in Curtis Park.

- 2.5 Stories
- 3 Stories
- 5 Stories
- 8 Stories



Urban Residential infill in Curtis Park

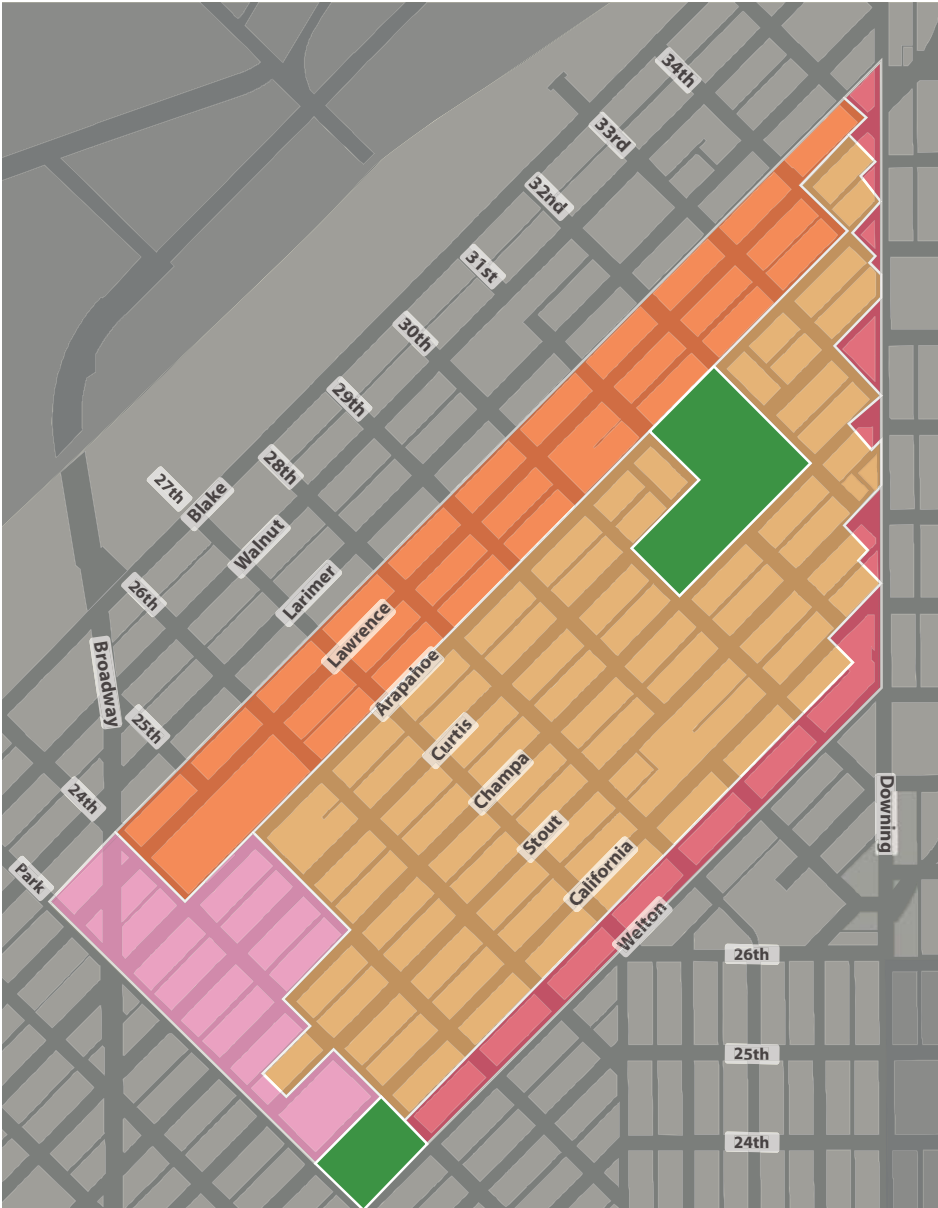


Apartment buildings are being retrofitted into for-sale condominiums

- **N.17 Land Use:** Single family residential is the predominant use within Curtis Park, but a mix of attached housing types are also present throughout the neighborhood. This mix of residential types is reflected in the future land use map by the single family/rowhouse designation that is used for most of the neighborhood. The blocks between Lawrence and Arapahoe have a designation of urban residential to reflect the more dense residential land uses that comprise the Villages at Curtis Park development.
- **N.18 Stout and Champa Reclassification:** Reclassify Stout and Champa in the Blueprint Denver transportation framework from “residential arterial” to “residential collector” streets to reflect how the streets are used today within the Curtis Park neighborhood.
- **N.19 Identify Traffic Calming Opportunities:** Study traffic calming opportunities for the neighborhood, but especially for Champa and Stout, as part of an overall Next Steps Transportation Study for Northeast Downtown.
- **N.20 Accommodate Adaptive Reuse:** Part of Curtis Park’s unique character comes from the presence of imbedded commercial structures within the neighborhood, typically located on corners. In some cases, these structures are in active commercial use, but in many other cases the buildings are vacant. More often than not, these properties have residential zoning and as such the establishment of new commercial uses would be precluded. Such a situation would not be in the best interest of the neighborhood. The reuse of existing commercial buildings for commercial purposes should be accommodated on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the neighborhood.



Mestizo-Curtis Park



Concept Land Use Map

KEY FRAMEWORK CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURTIS PARK:

- A.2** Moderate Intensity Development Transitioning to Neighborhoods
- A.3** Low Intensity Development in Residential Neighborhoods
- A.4** Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation
- B.1** Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis:
- B.2** Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions
- B.3** Consider New or Modified Transit Routes
- C.2** Promote Economic and Housing Diversity
- D.1** Promote Access to Healthy Transportation
- D.2** Promote Access to Healthy Foods
- D.3** Invest in Park Improvements
- D.4** Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas

- Single Family/Row House**
- Urban Residential**
- Mixed Use**
- TOD**
- Park**

Downing/Welton Corridor



The Rossonian Hotel is a historic landmark at the Five Points intersection.

TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPTS AFFECTING DOWNING/WELTON

- **Streetcar** – The NEDN Streetcar Concept features a true modern streetcar vehicle operating in mixed traffic for the length of the Downing/Welton Corridor. This would benefit the Welton corridor, in particular, because the right-of-way that is currently devoted to light rail operations could be repurposed for wider sidewalks and a pedestrian amenity zone.
- **21st Street** – The festival street concept intersects Welton at 21st Street. A new light rail/streetcar stop between 21st Street and Park Avenue would serve the festival street and cyclists/pedestrians utilizing that route to get to Coors Field.
- **Transit Oriented Development** – Focusing appropriately scaled development that is oriented towards the transit investment on Welton and Downing encourages walkable, urban neighborhoods that have easy access to daily needs and amenities.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS:

The Downing/Welton Corridor is essential to Denver's historic Five Points neighborhood. Sometimes called the 'Harlem of the West', Five Points, which is Colorado's only designated historic cultural landmark, has a rich jazz history and has served as the heart of the African-American community in Denver since at least the 1930's. Although many of these historic venues have since disappeared, the historic Rossonian Building situated at the actual 'five points' intersection (Welton, Washington, 26th Avenue, and 27th Street) remains an important anchor for the neighborhood and the corridor. After World War II, the corridor has continually struggled to maintain its previous vibrancy and economic success. Small-scale storefronts spread north and south from the Five Points intersection, creating a developing node of neighborhood-serving retail.

The Downing/Welton corridor is bordered closely by the Curtis Park, Enterprise Hill, Whittier, and Cole neighborhoods, which consist of predominately historic single family homes and townhouses. The Glenarm Recreation Center is located just to the southeast of Welton on 28th Street. Two parks serve the corridor; Quick Park, a small pocket park with picnic tables, a playground and a basketball court, and Sonny Lawson Park, a 2.5 acre neighborhood park with a softball field, basketball court, playground and restrooms. Also in the corridor is the Five Points Business Development Office, located on Washington Street, just south of Welton.

The neighborhood benefits from a high degree of connectivity to the downtown core, as well as future connections to points east due to the RTD FasTracks Central Corridor Extension. The project has identified Downing Street as the connection between the current end of line station at 30th Street and the new East Corridor Commuter Rail station at 38th and Blake, which is scheduled to open in 2016 and will connect Denver Union Station to Denver International Airport. Two new stations will open on Downing with light rail vehicles operating in mixed traffic between 30th Avenue and the commuter rail station as part of FasTracks, but funding is not currently available for this extension.

Five Points has attracted significant private and public investments over the past two decades. The City has supported and funded a number of public improvements and provided investment capital for business development. The most significant private investment has been made by hundreds of individual homeowners in the surrounding neighborhoods. These purchase and rehab investments have changed the character of the area into a multi-racial, multi-cultural, and mixed income area. The greatest opportunity for further renewal and revitalization rests with building on these past and present-day investments to sustain additional investment along Welton and Downing.

As part of the Colorado Sustainable Main Streets Initiative, the Five Points Business District developed the Five Points Sustainable Main Street Vision Plan and Final Report in December 2010. Many key ideas from that report informed the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan process for the Welton and Downing Corridors. Stakeholder interests center on enhancing the neighborhood's existing assets, particularly in rebuilding and strengthening retail along Welton and Downing Streets. The prominent concept from the Vision Plan is the desire to turn Five Points into a vibrant, mixed use marketplace that supports local businesses, capitalizes on cultural and educational opportunities, and encourages the health and wellness of residents.

Welton Street is envisioned as a neighborhood-serving commercial corridor that is an attraction with regional appeal. As a cultural destination, the corridor will achieve a balance of automobile, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit mobility with active ground-floor retail and a mix of

upper floor uses, including residential. Widened sidewalks will give businesses a visible street presence as well as places for art, social gatherings, and streetscape amenities. Health, wellness, sustainability, and tourism will be integral to the buildout and development of the area.

Enhancing the pedestrian experience of Welton Street is critical to achieving the goal of creating a “Five Points Marketplace”. An important step would be the adaptation of the existing light rail service to mixed traffic streetcar service, as identified in the Transformative Concepts chapter. A modern streetcar operating in mixed traffic on Downing and Welton; which would need to be converted to two way operations between 24th and 30th streets, would allow for a redistribution of the existing right of way. Under this streetcar concept, the existing light rail infrastructure, currently configured within a designated right-of-way would be removed or modified, freeing up valuable right-of-way for enhanced pedestrian amenities and on-street parking. In the current condition, retail interests have been shown to suffer, by some accounts, due to the rail location as little as ten feet from building facades in some places. An analysis of this concept is necessary to understand the impact on the neighborhood, city-wide transit services, and automobile traffic.

If accomplished, the streetcar would be a unifying element for the neighborhoods and act as a “pedestrian accelerator” in the corridor, improving access to storefronts and activating the street. Development on the alignment would be more equally distributed throughout the corridor and more easily fit into the community vision. Closer to Downtown, where large parcels have been assembled for redevelopment, the streetcar could encourage a walkable, high density neighborhood with a rich mix of uses including a range of housing types to promote a diverse population in the corridor.



Homes along commercial corridors can be reused as retail storefronts. Homes facing Downing Street could be utilized in a similar manner as these homes in the Nob Hill neighborhood of Portland.



The light rail on Welton Street operates in its own dedicated right of way.

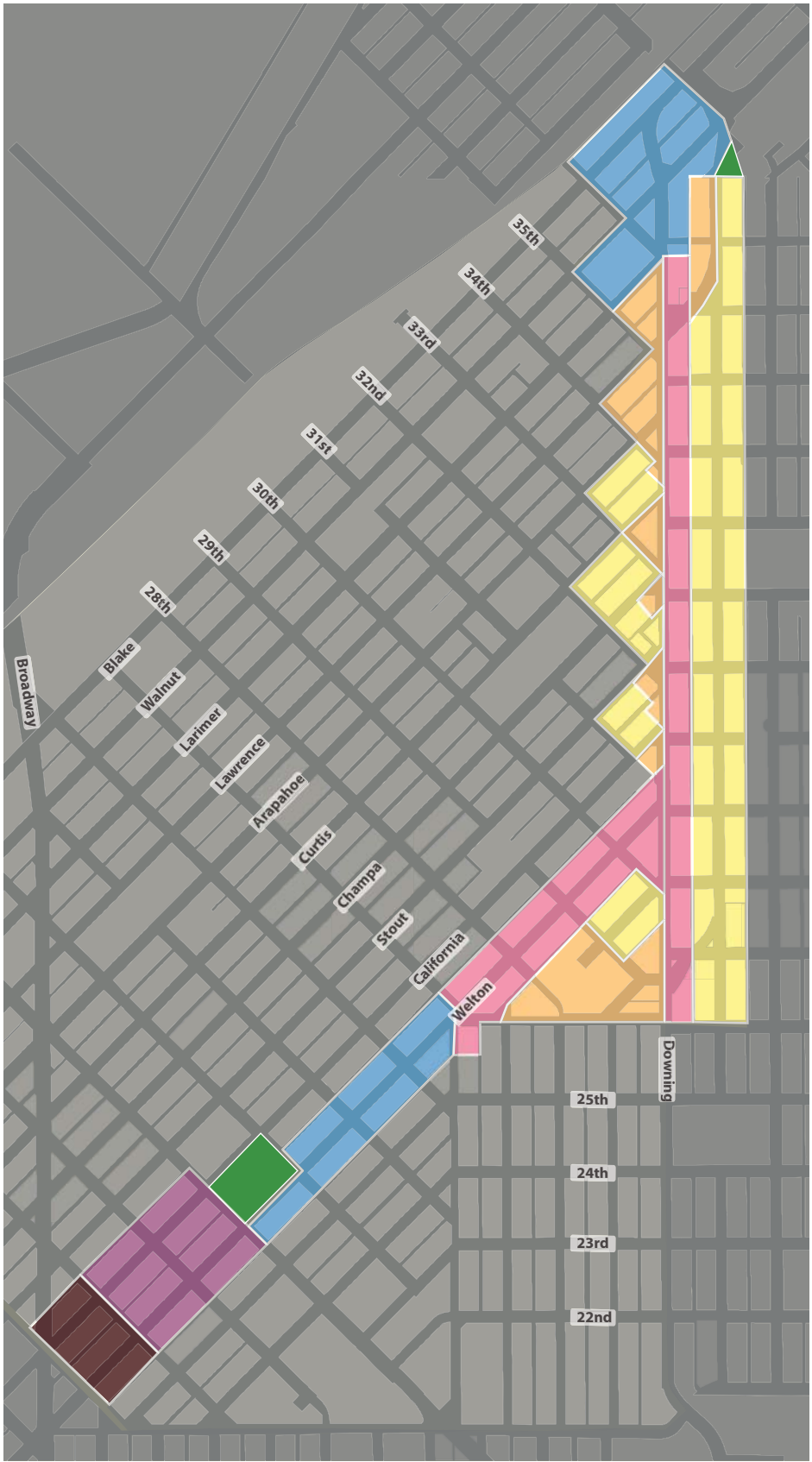


The Nob Hill District of Portland is an example of a neighborhood that has benefitted from the addition of streetcar service to its urban character.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

■ N.21 Building Form:

- **Height** – The recommended height map shows a range of heights for the corridor, generally promoting a main street feel for Downing and Welton Streets that capitalizes on transit service, while respecting nearby historic neighborhoods. An eight-story height maximum was utilized from Park Avenue to 27th Street as a step-down from the taller building heights that are proposed for Arapahoe Square. A five story maximum was then utilized north of 27th Street and along Downing where a parallel alley was available to provide a transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods. Where alleys are not parallel to the corridor, such as the western edge of Downing adjacent to Curtis Park, a three story height was applied. To the north and west ends of the corridor, greater heights are allowed in response to additional transit options; the commuter rail station at 38th and Blake and the multiple transit modes in Downtown. The combination of development opportunity near transit, desire for a main street character, and adjacency to historic neighborhoods makes appropriate transitions critical to the Downing/Welton Corridor.
- **Siting** – The desired street character of Welton and Downing is a main street feel that acknowledges the important presence of high quality transit service in the corridor. Buildings in the corridor should maintain the build-to line to provide a consistent street edge and promote pedestrian activity. Buildings should be placed to best assist with transitions to adjacent neighborhoods. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized by being located at the rear of the building.
- **Design Elements** – Building scale should promote a main street character and be oriented towards either Downing or Welton, with prominent main entrances situated for pedestrian access. A high level of transparency on the ground floor is desired.
- **Transition to Adjacent Residential Neighborhoods** – Within the study area, large segments of both Welton and Downing are adjacent to low-scale residential neighborhoods. Where this condition exists, it is recommended that zoning standards pertaining to height, setbacks, building sculpting and upper story setbacks, and other design elements, as appropriate, be utilized along the adjacent edge to create a transition between infill development along the main street corridor and the residential neighborhood.



Concept Building Heights Map

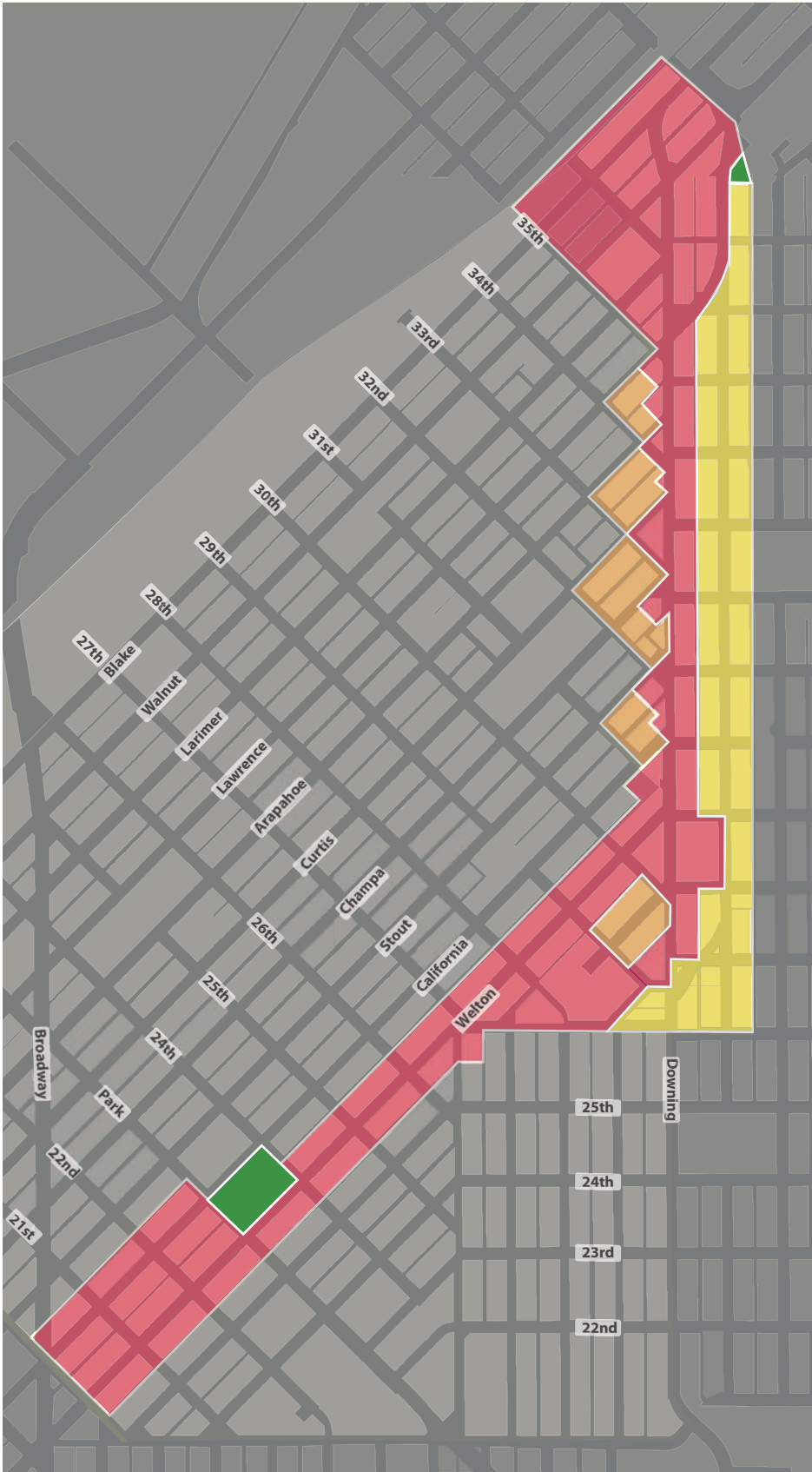


Vacant parcels and surface parking lots dominate the landscape along Welton near 22nd Street.

TOD ON WELTON – ARAPAHOE SQUARE STATION

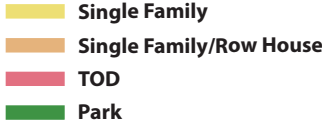
The most promising opportunity for development in the corridor is located between 20th and 24th streets on Welton, where multiple parcels have already been assembled for redevelopment. To help facilitate TOD at this location, a new station between 21st Street and Park Avenue is recommended to provide better access to these parcels. A new station, in combination with the conversion of light rail to a streetcar couplet on Welton and California would expand the area where TOD could occur.

- **N.22 Land Use:** The Downing/Welton Corridor is identified as transit-oriented development (TOD) in the concept land use map. Transit-oriented developments have land uses with a direct correlation to the function of a mass transit system. These development sites are located at stations or stops along bus or rail lines within a mass transit network. Transit-oriented developments provide housing, services, and employment opportunities for a diverse population in a configuration that facilitates pedestrian and transit access. Along the Welton/Downing corridor, TOD occurs at several different scales, reacting to the amount and type of transit service and the context of the existing neighborhood. Higher density development should be focused near Downtown and between 35th and 38th street at the Commuter Rail station. Lower density development should be focused adjacent to historic neighborhoods.
- **N.23 Support Work of Five Points Business District Office:** Continuation of marketing and business support activities are necessary to create a sustainable commercial district. The Five Points Business District Office, with key partners, should identify opportunities to focus on a key redevelopment project or major private investment that could serve as a catalyst for attracting more investment to the area.
- **N.24 Establish Urban Renewal Area:** To assist with this plan's implementation or to attract reinvestment in the corridor, it is recommended that an Urban Renewal Area for all or parts of the Welton/Downing Corridor be examined.
- **N.25 Evaluate Short One-way Street Segments:** As part of a Next Steps transportation operations study, evaluate the possible two-way conversion of several short one-way street segments that connect to Welton and Downing:
 - 27th St. between California and Welton
 - 28th St. between Welton and Glenarm
 - Glenarm between 29th St. and Downing
- **N.26 Orientation of Outdoor Active Uses:** So as to minimize negative impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods, orient outdoor dining and rooftop terraces of commercial structures such that they face Welton/Downing and not the alley.



Concept Land Use Map

- KEY CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WELTON/DOWNING CORRIDOR:**
- A.1** High Intensity Development Near Downtown, Transit Stations and Along Key Streets
 - A.2** Moderate Intensity Development Transitioning to Neighborhoods
 - A.4** Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation
 - B.1** Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis
 - B.2** Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-Way Conversions
 - B.3** Consider New or Modified Transit Routes
 - B.4** Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton
 - C.1** Strengthen Retail Corridors
 - C.2** Promote Economic and Housing Diversity
 - C.3** Encourage Housing Density
 - C.4** Establish and Support Business Development Offices
 - C.5** Establish Urban Renewal Areas
 - C.6** Utilize OED Lending Programs
 - D.1** Promote Access to Healthy Transportation
 - D.2** Promote Access to Healthy Foods



Enterprise Hill, San Rafael



The Clements Historic District



Benedict Fountain Park

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF **EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

Enterprise Hill and San Rafael are located in the southeast corner of the study area. Like Curtis Park and Five Points, Enterprise Hill and San Rafael are among Denver's oldest neighborhoods. They boast a rich collection of historic homes that are an architectural testament to the area's history. Residents characterize Enterprise Hill and San Rafael as family-oriented urban neighborhoods.

San Rafael has a large collection of historic homes dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Although the neighborhood would certainly be eligible for historic designation, the establishment of local historic districts is a community-driven activity, and to date no local landmark historic district has been established for San Rafael. Like Curtis Park, San Rafael has a large collection of sandstone sidewalks and curbs that contributes to the historic character of the neighborhood. San Rafael is notable within Northeast Downtown because it is the only neighborhood within the study area that is built on the north/south east/west grid rather than the angled downtown grid. The Safeway at 20th Avenue and Washington is the only modern full service grocery store in Northeast Downtown, and as such is a major destination for residents within the entire study area.

Enterprise Hill is an interesting mix of old and new. Many grand and historic homes are located along Glenarm and Tremont, including the Clements Historic District. Clements is located across the street from Benedict Fountain Park, a 2.8 acre passive recreation park that is a major amenity for the neighborhood. But Enterprise Hill has also long been the location of public housing, and a large portion of the neighborhood is in the process of being transformed by DHA's Park Avenue redevelopment project, a mixed-income development with over 800 units of housing.

Stakeholders' primary concerns center on supporting and enhancing the neighborhood's existing character. Residents are comfortable with the area's current mix of housing types, and are interested in the types of uses which will be allowed as vacant and underutilized parcels at the neighborhood's western edge near Downtown and Arapahoe Square begin to redevelop.

TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPTS

- **21st Street** – If fully realized, the bike boulevard/festival street concept for 21st Street could eventually extend from Coors Field all the way to Benedict Fountain Park, forming a strong pedestrian and bike connection serving Ballpark, Arapahoe Square, and Enterprise Hill.
- **Streetcar** – Locating a new transit stop between 21st Street and Park Avenue would build on the improved connectivity offered by the bike boulevard on 21st and greatly improve access to transit for Enterprise Hill.
- **Transit Oriented Development** – New transit-oriented development along the edges of the neighborhood would benefit residents and business owners alike.

NEIGHBORHOOD **CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **N.27 Building Form:** The mixed height and forms offer diversity ranging from urban houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, rowhouses, and apartment buildings.
 - **Height** – Proposed building heights in this area range from 2.5 to 8 stories. This is intended to reinforce existing development patterns by maintaining the scale of development that is found in the area currently. To reinforce the desired character along Washington Street and to mitigate the impact of more intensive uses adjacent to residential uses in the neighborhood, it is recommended that the existing DO-2 design overlay remain in place.
 - **Siting** – In historic areas, including San Rafael, Clements, and some portions of Enterprise Hill, the siting of new residential structures should be consistent with the existing, historic development patterns found within the neighborhood including consistent front yard setbacks, lot coverage comparable to historic patterns, and locating garages and accessory dwelling units at the rear of the lot. In non-historic areas, reinforce the character and quality of public streets with buildings that provide consistent siting, pedestrian orientation, and access to the street. Minimize the visual impacts of parking areas on streets and adjoining property.
 - **Design Elements** – Give prominence to the pedestrian realm as a defining element of neighborhood character. In historic areas, emphasize a positive relationship to the street by ensuring that building access, orientation, and placement are consistent with established patterns. In non-historic areas, create visually interesting and

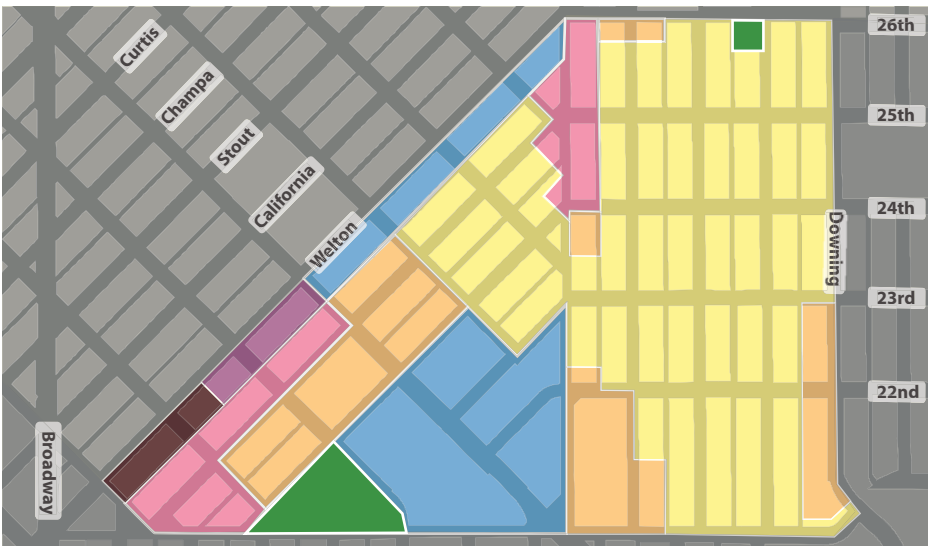
human-scaled facades, and encourage variation in building form to provide opportunities for architectural scale relationships. Along the edges of the neighborhood, arrange the height and scale of buildings to provide transitions to adjoining areas.

- **N.28 Land Use:** San Rafael is a residential neighborhood characterized by single family land use patterns, but with a variety of multifamily, institutional, and commercial uses distributed throughout the neighborhood. Single family residential tends to be located mid-block on the named streets, while attached housing types are more typical on the corners and facing the numbered streets. This results in the unique striping pattern shown in the future land use map.

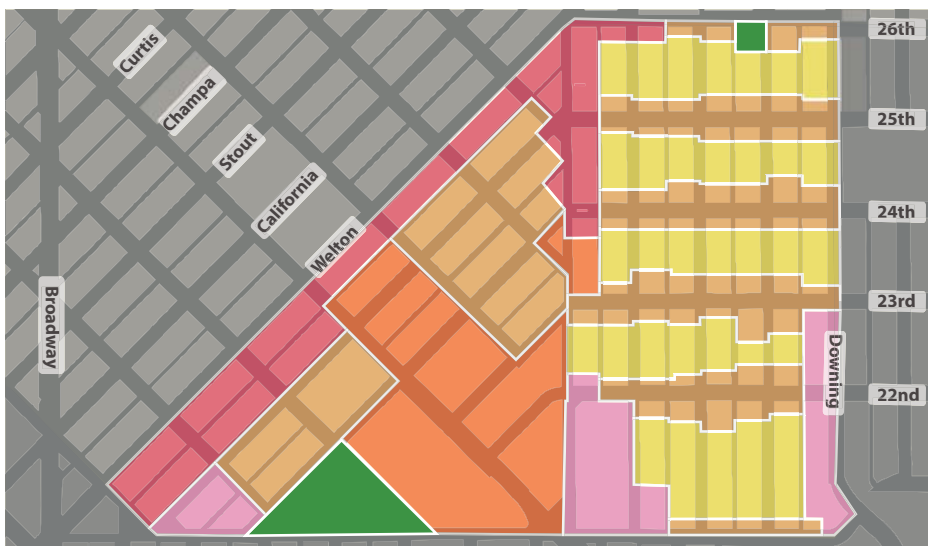
The future land use map for Enterprise Hill makes use of a variety of residential land use categories. The urban residential land use category is used on denser residential blocks characterized by multifamily and other attached residential housing types. This includes the land within the Denver Housing Authority's Park Avenue redevelopment. The Clements Historic District is mapped single family/row house. The neighborhood southeast of Welton Street, along Glenarm and Tremont, is also mapped single family/row house.

KEY CONCEPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENTERPRISE HILL/ SAN RAFAEL:

- A.3 Low Intensity Development in Residential Neighborhoods
- A.4 Adaptive Reuse and Historic Preservation
- B.4 Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton
- C.1 Strengthen Retail Corridors
- C.2 Promote Economic and Housing Diversity
- C.3 Encourage Housing Density
- D.1 Promote Access to Healthy Transportation
- D.2 Promote Access to Healthy Foods
- D.3 Invest in Park Improvements
- D.4 Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas



Concept Building Heights Map



Concept Land Use Map

Moving Forward

Implementation of a plan for a large area such as the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods is accomplished incrementally over many years through the efforts of the City government, residents, business owners, property owners, and nonprofit organizations. The plan provides a picture into the future of what the community wants Northeast Downtown to become. As a result, the image of “what we want” is clear. The “how we are going to get there” will be the responsibility of the numerous studies and project planning that will be developed to forward specific objectives and projects within the context of city-wide priorities and resource availability.

Implementation Framework



Coors Field has been a catalyst for development in the Ballpark and LoDo neighborhoods.

IMPLEMENTATION OPPORTUNITIES AND PRIORITIES

An important, immediate implementation opportunity is the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan Next Steps Study, a grant to the City from Denver Regional Council of Governments to further the public transportation recommendations of this plan. Potential components of this study include:

- 21st Street—bike boulevard, sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP), streetscape design, and 21st and Broadway crossing
- Downtown Travelshed Strategic Transportation Plan-Phase 1
- Welton Streetcar Service
- Pedestrian and bike improvements for crossing Broadway
- Two-way Blake Street (east of Broadway)
- Curtis Park two-way segments

Social Services Working Group to be convened by Denver's Road Home will develop and advance management strategies and housing options that reduce the impact of the homeless on public streets and parks. Participants may include City agencies (Parks & Recreation, Human Services, and Office of Economic Development), State Division of Housing, homeless service and shelter providers, Triangle Park Community Coordinating District, and nonprofit housing providers.

The goal of dedicated **Business Development Offices** for Arapahoe Square and Ballpark/River North would be to decrease the barriers to economic development. The BDOs would serve as an advocate for new and existing businesses, gather information regarding financing programs, properties for sale, contact information for building and property owners and serve as a one-stop shop for those interested in investing or locating in a particular area. The BDOs could develop marketing materials and serve as a facilitator to match property owners with prospective tenants and/or help with assemblages based on client needs.

Form-Based Zoning Approach for Arapahoe Square would address urban design based approaches to high-density development currently allowed in the D-AS zone district. Significant involvement from stakeholders and property owners would be the first step in developing a revised zoning approach.

Park Avenue Corridor Rezoning addresses the important transition from the high densities found in Arapahoe Square to the lower densities in Curtis Park. The area of focus should be Park Avenue to 24th Street between Arapahoe and California streets. Significant involvement from stakeholders, neighborhood residents, and property owners would be the first step in developing a revised zoning approach.

Arapahoe Square and Welton Street have been identified as potential urban renewal areas. Urban Renewal Areas (URA) are created to help effect the redevelopment of blighted areas and are created by the City through the adoption of Urban Redevelopment Plans which lay out the objectives of the plan (such as elimination of blight). An adopted Urban Redevelopment Plan authorizes the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) to carry out those objectives. DURA's primary tool for effecting redevelopment is tax increment financing (TIF). TIF can be used to assist in the financing of projects that are consistent with the Denver Comprehensive Plan and all relevant plan supplements. A Blight Study has been completed for Arapahoe Square confirming that blighting conditions exist. An early action should be to create the Urban Redevelopment Plan. A blight study for the Welton corridor is pending and once blighting conditions are confirmed, an Urban Redevelopment Plan will follow.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation matrix that concludes this chapter summarizes the recommended strategies, associated with the Plan Framework, Transformative Concepts, and Neighborhood Strategies. Each one is further defined by type, timeframe, funding source, and lead entity.

IMPLEMENTATION TYPES

Blueprint Denver identifies three types of implementation activities: regulatory or policy, public investment, and partnership. The NEDN plan also recognizes the importance of private development and business investment in realizing the plan.

- Regulatory and policy strategies change City codes or regulations to affect desired outcomes. Typical examples include Denver Zoning Code text and map amendments, Public Works requirements for infrastructure improvements associated with development projects, and Parks and Recreation requirements regarding open space and plantings.
- Public investment strategies are those involving public funding of public infrastructure. Examples include street reconstruction, bike lanes, new transit lines, park improvements, or new or expanded recreation centers. The City takes the lead in designing, constructing, and funding these projects and may use a variety of public funding sources such as the annual Capital Improvements Program, bond funds, or state or federal grant programs.
- Partnership strategies represent the most diverse category. Public-private partnership (PPP) activity has expanded exponentially and has gone well beyond public subsidy of a private development project. Increasingly public-private partnerships are being used to fund public infrastructure projects. Denver Union Station and RTD's East and Gold Lines are among the largest PPP projects in the country. Another example is reconstruction of 14th Street as the Ambassador Street using City Bond funds and a property-owner approved General Improvement District.
- In several cases, public transportation projects are identified as studies because the impacts and consequences of a particular improvement on the Downtown transportation system is so complex that the broader system must be examined to determine the feasible options to meet the intent.

Any successful project requires a champion: a developer will seek needed rezoning or subsidy from the public sector; a neighborhood will seek Landmark designation; a community organization such as the Downtown Denver Partnership or neighborhood association will convene property owners to fund specific public improvements; or, a public agency will seek private financing partners.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES

Timeframes recognize both the order in which certain strategies must be undertaken and the feasibility of undertaking them given known resources. As a result, the timeframes provide guidance for expectations and initial efforts. Every opportunity to advance a plan should be taken, regardless of the suggested timing.

This plan recognizes four time-frames:

- Short-term one to three years
- Medium-term four to ten years
- Long-term beyond ten years
- On-going continuing application/utilization



The Commons is the result of implementation of a long range vision for a neighborhood.



The RTD light rail program is an example of large-scale public investment with long-term benefits to the region.

FUNDING SOURCES

The Implementation Framework identifies possible funding sources for public improvements and studies. The Plan is a forward-looking document which contemplates a vision for future development. Funding sources available to public and private entities are continually evolving based on economic, political, legal and neighborhood objectives. Though the names and purposes of funding sources change over time, they fall into three distinct categories.

- **Tax Base Support:** Tax base supported sources are characterized by the involvement of the local sales and property taxing authorities. The most common tax base support is through the City’s annual budget, especially the annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Periodically, the City requests its voters to approve a tax increase to pay for specific public improvements. For instance, the citizens of Denver voted in 2007 to raise their property taxes in a specific amount to support the issuance of over \$500 million Better Denver Bonds whose proceeds funded 290 specific public improvements.

Tax Increment Finance is another means of tax-base support most typically associated with an Urban Renewal Area. Once created by the City Council and Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA), property and sales tax over and above the base year are paid to DURA to be used to pay for eligible public improvements or to fund financing gaps for private development.

- **Grants:** Grants come from public or private organizations that are interested in encouraging a specific outcome and these grants typically include specific conditions and requirements as to how the funds may be deployed. For instance, a state or federal transportation grant will need to be used for street, mass transit, or regional mobility studies or projects. The Office of Economic Development receives federal funds to support certain types of housing projects. Additionally, foundations provide grants for projects orientated with the organization’s goals, such as green spaces or social services.
- **Special Districts:** The City Charter and State Statute enable various types of districts to be created. Examples of special districts include Business Improvement Districts, Metropolitan Districts, Local Improvement or Maintenance Districts, and General Improvement Districts. The districts are classified as special because they are typically created by a localized group of citizens who want to achieve specific outcomes in their locality and are willing to pool their economic resources in order to implement identified projects. For example, if a majority of business owners desire to improve the streetscape of the street in which they operate, the businesses could organize a Business Improvement District which would assess the participants an amount of money sufficient to pay for the project. Special districts are a useful tool when a localized population desire and are willing to pay for an enhanced level of public improvement. District revenues can be used to pay for improvements on a “pay-as-you-go basis”, for ongoing operations and maintenance, or to support payment of bonds.

Quite a number of Local Maintenance Districts have been established in the plan area to maintain streetscape improvements installed as part of major infrastructure projects such as the Broadway Viaduct Replacement, 20th Street HOV, Park Avenue Viaduct, and Coors Field.

- **Lead Entity:** The implementation matrix identifies a lead entity that the plan recommends for having primary responsibility for undertaking the implementation recommendation. The entities are recommendations only. Other public and private entities may have roles to initiate, undertake, or participate in these efforts.

The implementation matrix identifies the recommended strategies, organized parallel with the plan itself: Framework strategies , Transformative Concept strategies and Neighborhood strategies . Each one is further defined by type and timeframe.	TIMING	TYPE	POTENTIAL FUNDING	LEAD
FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES				
NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER				
■ A.1 High intensity development near Downtown and transit stations	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ A.2 Moderate intensity development transitioning to residential neighborhoods	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ A.3 Low intensity development in residential neighborhoods	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ A.4 Adaptive reuse and historic preservation	On-going	Private	Private	Private
MOBILITY				
■ B.1 Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis	Short-Medium	Study	CIP, DRCOG	City
■ B.2 Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions				
▪ Larimer (east of Broadway)	Short	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Larimer (west of Broadway)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ 22nd (east of Champa)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Blake (east of Broadway)	Short-Medium	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Blake (west of Broadway)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Curtis (west of Broadway)	Long	Public Investment	CIP	City
▪ Welton (also see Welton Streetcar)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP, FasTracks	City
▪ Walnut	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ California (between Broadway and Park Avenue)	Short-Medium	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Stout (east of Broadway)	Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Champa (east of Broadway)	Long	Public investment	CIP	City
■ B.3 Consider New or Modified Transit Routes				
▪ Consolidate bus routes	Short-Medium	Study/Regulatory	RTD	RTD
▪ Establish transit service connecting Auraria West and 38th & Blake	Medium-Long	Study	CIP, DRCOG, RTD, Auraria	RTD
■ B.4 Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton	Medium-Long	Public investment	RTD, CIP, TIF	RTD
■ B.5 Undertake a Broadway Intersections Improvement Study	Short	Study	Next Steps	City
ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY				
■ C.1 Strengthen Retail Corridors	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ C.2 Promote Economic and Housing Diversity	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ C.3 Encourage Housing Density	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ C.4 Establish and Support Business Development Offices	Short-Medium	Private/partnership	Private, OED	City
■ C.5 Establish Urban Renewal Areas	Short	Private/partnership	Private, TIF	DURA
■ C.6 Utilize OED Lending Programs	On-going	Partnership	Private, OED	Private OED
LIVABILITY AND PUBLIC REALM				
■ D.1 Promote Access to Healthy Transportation	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ D.2 Promote Access to Healthy Foods	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ D.3 Invest in Park Improvements	On-going	Public investment	CIP	City
■ D.4 Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas	Short-Medium	Study	CIP	City
■ D.5 Identify Funding for Stormwater Improvements and Promote Water Quality through Best Practices	Medium-Long	Public/private investment	CIP, grants, district	City

The implementation matrix identifies the recommended strategies, organized parallel with the plan itself: Framework strategies , Transformative Concept strategies and Neighborhood strategies . Each one is further defined by type and timeframe.	TIMING	TYPE	POTENTIAL FUNDING	LEAD
TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPT STRATEGIES				
21ST STREET				
■ Establish cross-section to accommodate bike boulevard	Short	Study	Next Steps	City
■ Design and construct festival street adjacent to Coors Field	Medium	Partnership	District, CIP	--
■ Explore the use of sustainable BMPs on 21st Street	Medium	Public/private investment	CIP, grants, district	City
■ Improve appearance of surface parking lots	Short-Medium	Private	Private	Private
CURTIS STREET				
■ Establish Curtis as a pedestrian connection between Curtis Park and Denver Performing Arts Center	Medium	Public investment	CIP, DDBID, district	--
■ Place visual element at terminus in Mestizo-Curtis Park	Long	Private	Private	Private
■ Redevelop Greyhound Facilities	Medium	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ Improve pedestrian conditions with improved crossings and wider sidewalks	Medium	Private/partnership	Private, district, CIP	--
BROADWAY				
■ Study the Broadway options between Arapahoe and Welton	Medium	Study	CIP	City
■ Explore opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian crossings	Short	Study	Next Steps	City
CONNECTING RIVER NORTH				
■ 31st Street ped/bike bridge	Long	Public investment	CIP, bonds	City
■ 33rd Street multimodal bridge	Long	Public investment	CIP, bonds	City
■ 36th Street ped/bike bridge	Short-Medium	Public investment	RTD	RTD
NEW PARK				
■ Establish new park space	Long	Public investment	CIP, bonds	City
■ Continue to improve and activate existing parks	On-going	Public investment	CIP	City
SOCIAL SERVICES				
■ Convene a working group to devise and forward homeless service strategies	Short	Study/Partnership	--	DRH
■ Develop courtyard-style housing	Medium	Private/partnership	Private, TIF	Private
■ Develop a pilot single room occupancy housing	Medium	Private/partnership	Private, TIF	Private
■ Study options for repurposing the Broadway Triangles	Medium	Study	CIP, district	City
STREETCAR				
■ Open Central Corridor Extension with East Line and 38th/Blake Station	Short-Medium	Public investment	RTD	RTD
■ Re-examine Central Corridor terminus, alignment, and vehicle type	Short	Study	RTD	RTD
■ Develop streetcar system concept plan	Medium-Long	Study	City, RTD	City
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT				
■ Develop neighborhood-serving, main street development on Welton and Downing	Medium	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ Anchor Central Corridor with TOD at 38th and Blake Station	Medium	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ Anchor Central Corridor with TOD at New Arapahoe Square Station	Medium-Long	Private/partnership	Private	Private

The implementation matrix identifies the recommended strategies, organized parallel with the plan itself: Framework strategies , Transformative Concept strategies and Neighborhood strategies . Each one is further defined by type and timeframe.	TIMING	TYPE	POTENTIAL FUNDING	LEAD
NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIES				
ARAPAHOE SQUARE				
■ N.1 Encourage Development of Parking Lots	Short-Medium	Private	Private, district	Private
■ N.2 Enhance Urban Design	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.3 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.4 Land use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.5 Conduct Form-Based Zoning Study	Short	Regulatory	--	City
■ N.6 Promote Transit-Oriented Development	Long	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ N.7 Reuse existing buildings	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ N.8 Establish Business Development Office	Short	Partnership	OED, private	City
■ N.9 Improve Arapahoe Square's brand	Medium	Partnership	OED, private	--
■ N.10 Establish Urban Renewal Area	Short	Regulatory	--	DURA
RIVER NORTH AND BALLPARK				
■ N.11 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.12 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.13 Complete Sidewalk Network	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ N.14 Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions	Short-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
■ N.15 Consider Future of Coors Field Overflow Parking	Long	Private/partnership	Stadium District	Private
CURTIS PARK				
■ N.16 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	Short	Regulatory	--	City
■ N.17 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.18 Stout and Champa Reclassification	Short	Regulatory	--	City
■ N.19 Identify Traffic Calming Opportunities	Short	Study	CIP	City
■ N.20 Accommodate Adaptive Reuse	On-going	Private	Private	Private
DOWNING/WELTON CORRIDOR				
■ N.21 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.22 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.23 Support work of Five Points Business District Office	Medium	Private/partnership	Partnership	City
■ N.24 Establish Urban Renewal Area	Short	Regulatory	--	DURA
■ N.25 Evaluate Short One-way Street Segments	Short	Study	CIP	City
■ N.26 Orientation of Outdoor Active Uses	On-going	Private	Private	Private
ENTERPRISE HILL AND SAN RAFAEL				
■ N.27 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.28 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private

