

DENVER

Downtown Area Plan Amendment

Central Platte Valley - Auraria District

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT

2/13/2018

Prepared by:
City and County of Denver
Community Planning & Development Department



DENVER
COMMUNITY PLANNING
& DEVELOPMENT

In association with:
Downtown Denver Partnership



Downtown
Denver
Partnership

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City and County of Denver

Community Planning and Development

Public Works

Parks and Recreation

Department of Public Health & Environment

Office of Economic Development

Department of Finance

City Attorney's Office

Downtown Denver Partnership

Prepared under the direction of:

The Downtown Area Plan Amendment Steering Committee



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& DEVELOPMENT



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Acknowledgments

The Denver Downtown Area Plan Amendment for the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District is the result of extensive hard work and collaboration among a range of stakeholders, community and business leaders, elected officials, and members of the public who care deeply about the future of Downtown Denver. In particular, the following people are recognized for their contributions to this effort.

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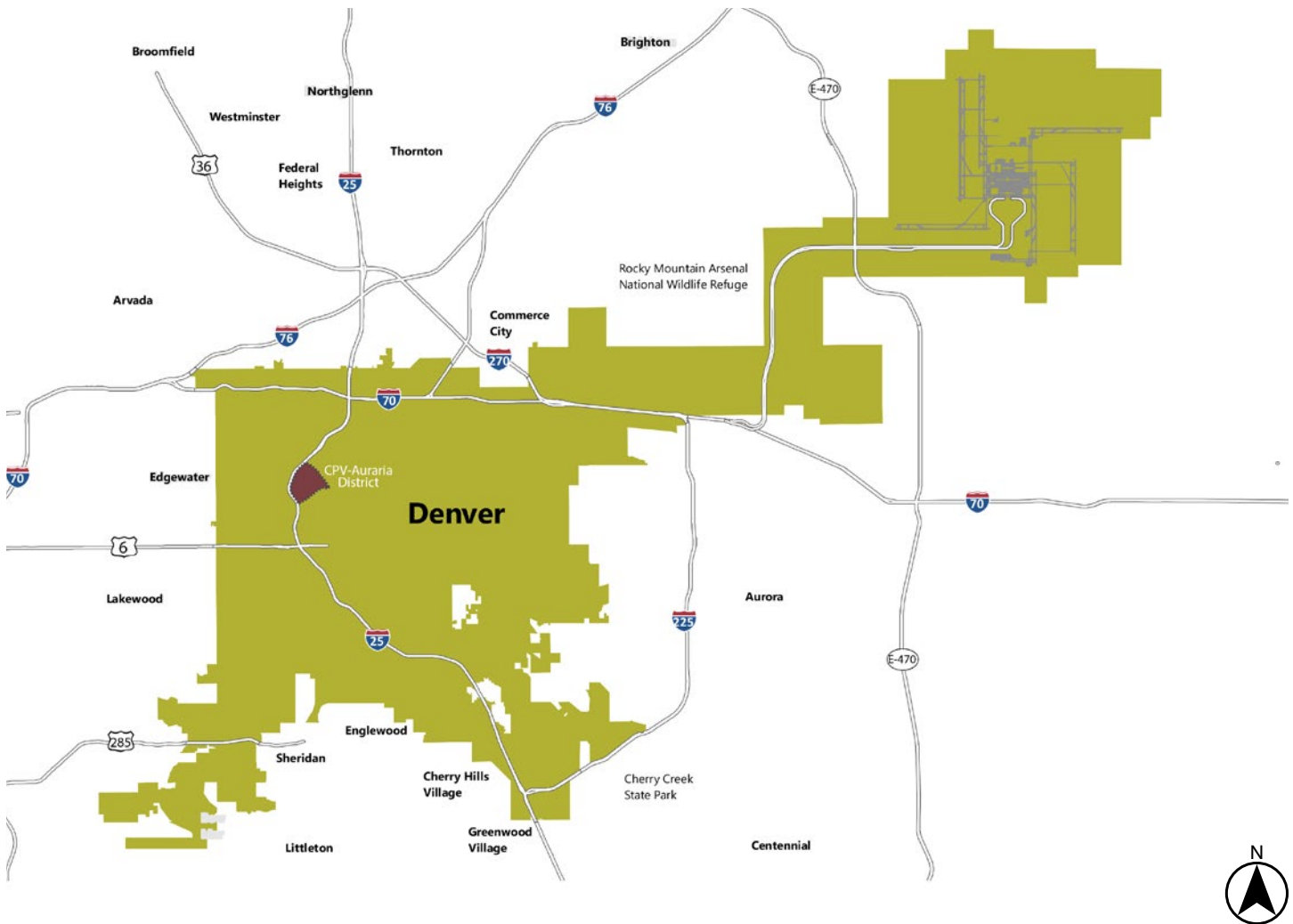
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i. Introduction

The goal of this Amendment to the Denver Downtown Area Plan (2007) is to guide future development in the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District, to build upon the area’s assets and to reflect the community’s vision of a Prosperous, Walkable, Distinctive, Diverse, and Green Downtown.

Plan Amendment Background

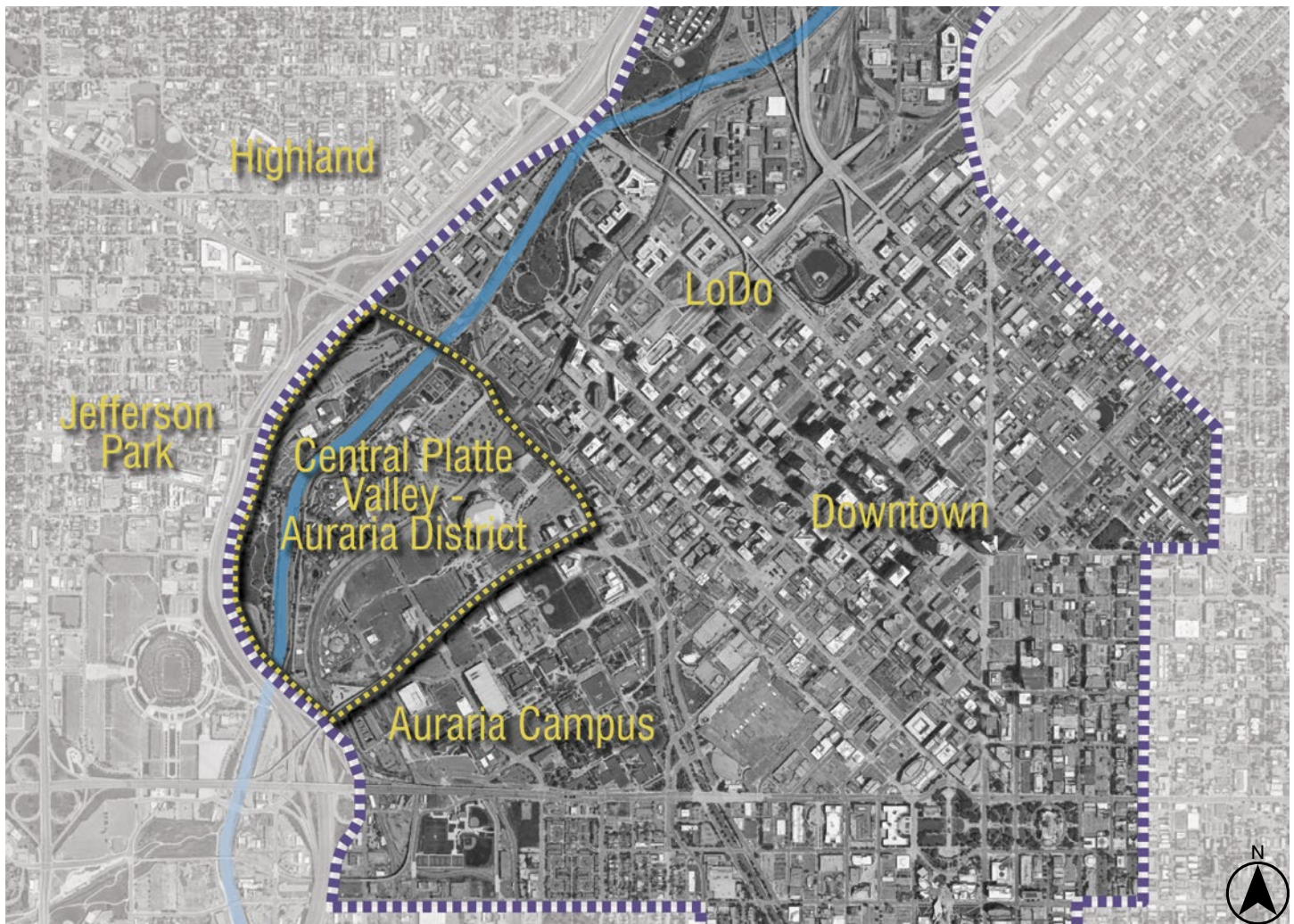


The location next to the confluence of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek features the opportunity for open space, recreational opportunities, healthy living, and bicycle infrastructure as defining characteristics and attributes for the whole neighborhood. The presence of several unique attractions – Elitch Gardens, Pepsi Center, Children’s Museum, Downtown Aquarium, Auraria Campus, REI Flagship store – provides the basis for celebrating and building cultural diversity and economic activity based on innovation, sports and recreation, and tourism. Current environmental issues of flooding, contamination, and water pollution set the stage for the need to remediate and transform this plan area into a highly resilient, sustainable, and carbon-neutral neighborhood. The proximity to Downtown and the presence of two light rail stops provides a once in a lifetime opportunity to strategically enhance key connections and put transit, walking, and biking as a priority by developing multimodal networks as a centerpiece of this plan. Technological innovations and shared mobility resources could be featured here to further enhance mobility options and efficiencies. The few existing iconic elements coupled with the unique internal and external vistas of Downtown, adjacent neighborhoods, mountains and waterfronts, set the framework for a distinctive urban form that takes advantage of and celebrates these elements, while also allowing an entirely unique set of building forms and guidelines.

City Context

Denver is the region’s main hub of commerce, transportation connections, government, and social and cultural amenities. People drive from throughout Colorado and nearby states to conduct business, shop, attend performances and sporting events, visit museums, or fly in or out of Denver International Airport. Downtown Denver is located in the heart of the city at the confluence of the South Platte River and Cherry Creek, with the Central Platte Valley - Auraria District creating a cornerstone of the Downtown area.

Plan Amendment Background



Downtown Area Plan and Growth in Denver

■ ■ ■ Downtown Area Plan (2007) Plan Area ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Downtown Area Plan Amendment Plan Area

The Denver Downtown Area Plan (2007) provided clear guidance for how to develop Downtown Denver, and it identified specific transformative projects that helped shape much of the recent development in Lower Downtown, Arapahoe Square, Golden Triangle, Auraria, and Ballpark. However, the plan provided limited recommendations on the vision and strategies for the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District, which is located between Speer Boulevard, Auraria Parkway, and Interstate 25.

Since 2007, Downtown Denver has experienced significant growth and Blueprint Denver (2018) projects that this growth will continue. The Central Platte Valley – Auraria District is part of the downtown core and it has 60 acres of prime downtown real estate that currently exists as surface parking lots. Given the likelihood of this area developing, the City and County of Denver identified a need for a community-driven vision to inform future development within the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District.

Plan Amendment Background

The Plan Amendment

Denver's Community Planning and Development Department began the planning process to amend the Downtown Area Plan in 2017. This document is the Downtown Area Plan Amendment and it aims to provide comprehensive, long-range guidance for the future of the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District over the next 20 years (see Figure 1.1 for the Downtown Area Plan Amendment area, which is referred to as the “plan area”) while allowing for the flexibility needed as the area develops and responds to new challenges.

The Amendment provides a community-driven policy basis to establish the plan area as the next downtown neighborhood while strengthening Downtown Denver's role as the heart of the region.

How to Use This Plan Amendment

This Amendment builds on the visions, strategies, and recommendations detailed in the Downtown Area Plan and the guidance provided will continue to apply to the plan area where applicable. Within the plan area, this Amendment supersedes the Downtown Area Plan where strategies and recommendations are conflicting. This Amendment also supersedes previous plans that cover portions of the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District: Auraria West Station Area Plan (2009) and the Jefferson Park Neighborhood Plan (2005).

The plan provides direction to guide development agreements, land use decisions, future zoning and density, connectivity and mobility, public investment, private development, and public-private partnerships.

The Amendment strategies and recommendations are organized according to the five vision elements established in the Downtown Area Plan: Prosperous, Walkable, Distinctive, Diverse, and Green. The Moving Forward chapter identifies specific priorities for implementation of this Amendment, and highlights multiple steps that may facilitate implementation of the strategies and recommendations.

Plan Area Setting

While many cities are constrained in their development by scarce urban real estate, Denver has a distinct competitive advantage in the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District. The plan area has a concentration of underutilized land in the form of surface parking lots. This area is under relatively consolidated ownership, is adjacent to downtown, and has a mile of the South Platte River running through it, which provides a unique opportunity for Denver's downtown core. This significant land resource allows the City to continue to evolve and prosper with new businesses, jobs, and residents in its core. It is a rare occasion for the City to create a bold and flexible vision for a new downtown neighborhood that supports broader goals for the city, including reinforcing Blueprint Denver's vision for increasing density and development intensity within Downtown and promoting Downtown as a major regional center.



Plan Area Context



Figure 1.1: Plan Area



The plan area is bound by Interstate 25 to the north and west, Speer Boulevard to the east, and Auraria Parkway to the south. It is located between Lower Downtown, the Auraria Campus, and Jefferson Park neighborhoods. The plan area contains two light rail stations: the Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens Station and the Mile High Station. The Consolidated Main Line (CML) for freight rail passes adjacent to the light rail and cuts through the center of the plan area. A single pedestrian bridge at the Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens Station connects Elitch Gardens to the Pepsi Center. A mile of the South Platte River passes through the plan area, separating Water Street from Elitch Gardens, and has three adjacent public parks: Centennial Gardens, Fishback Park, and Crescent Park. The South Platte River trail runs along both sides of the river's embankment and there is a seasonal open-air trolley parallel to the west bank.

The major uses within the study area are entertainment-related and include the Children's Museum, the Downtown Aquarium, Elitch Gardens Amusement Park, and the Pepsi Center Sports Arena. Most of the adjacent street grid does not extend into the plan area. Limited internal roads and circulation result in a pattern of very large blocks, or superblocks, containing primarily surface parking.

Historic Context



Figure 1.2: 1933 Aerial

The plan area's varied history includes a significant industrial era when its predominant use was industrial production and freight rail. Aerial imagery from 1933 (see Figure 1.2) shows multiple freight rail lines, a rail turntable, and a bridge that connected Colfax Avenue to Water Street at 7th Street.

By 1953, the Bears Stadium had been constructed west of the plan area. Construction of I-25 had begun, and the bridge across the river at 7th Street continued to span the river but no longer provided a connection over the rail tracks.



Figure 1.3: 1971 Aerial

By 1971, a flood had destroyed the 7th Street bridge over the river, and construction on I-25 was complete (see Figure 1.3).

Historic Context

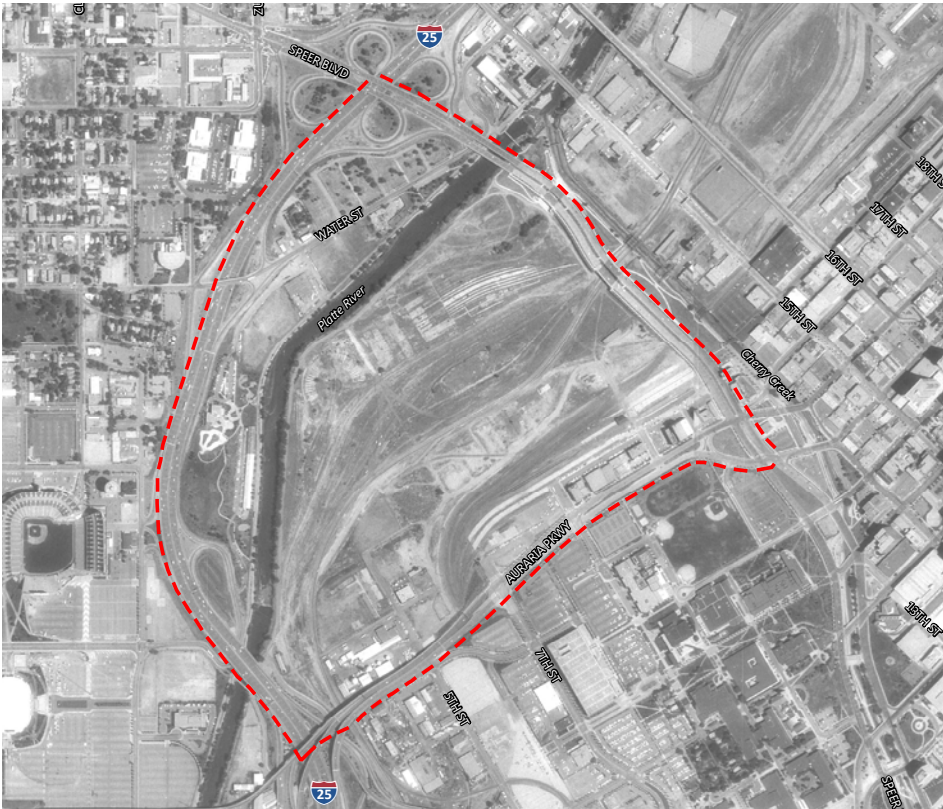


Figure 1.4: 1993 Aerial

The freight rail was consolidated in 1986, and by 1993, Mile High Stadium had been reconfigured, and the McNichols Sports Arena and the Children's Museum had been completed. The Auraria Campus had established a presence, and the viaducts at 15th Street and 16th Street had been removed (see Figure 1.4).



Figure 1.5: 2016 Aerial

In 2006 the new riverfront parks and the light rail tracks were built under the Regional Transportation District's FasTracks program. There were also a proliferation of new entertainment land uses: Coors Field, a relocated Elitch Gardens, the Pepsi Center, Mile High Stadium, and the Downtown Aquarium.

After another ten years, the 2016 aerial imagery (see Figure 1.5) shows a renovated Union Station and development in the Central Platte Valley.

Planning Process

This Amendment incorporates and responds to public input that was collected throughout the planning process; the process is detailed below, and the specific input is included in the Appendix.

The Downtown Area Plan Amendment was prepared over a 12-month period that spanned three planning phases: Existing conditions assessment and visioning; development of concept strategies; and implementation of final strategies and recommendations. The planning process collected public input to identify assets, issues and opportunities and to inform the Amendment.

Steering Committee Meetings

The project was guided by a steering committee comprised of stakeholders within the plan area and surrounding communities. Committee members were a broad and diverse group of representatives of council members, property and private business owners, educational institutions, cultural facilities, neighborhood organizations, and community activists. This committee served as the policy advisory group for the plan by discussing and approving the vision, strategies, and the final Plan Amendment.

The planning process included seven steering committee meetings:

1. April 26, 2017: Introduction to the plan area, context, and analysis
2. May 24, 2017: Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
3. June 28, 2017: Identifying the vision
4. July 26, 2017: Establishing strategies and recommendations within the Vision Elements
5. September 27, 2017: Review and approval of Amendment strategies
6. October 18, 2017: Review and approval of revised Amendment strategies
7. February 20, 2018: Review and approval of final Amendment draft

Public Outreach

The planning process featured three public meetings, two online surveys, and a public charrette to seek input and guidance from the public for this Amendment:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Public Meeting #1 | Kick off meeting and introduction to the plan area, public input on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and identifying the vision for the area |
| July 13, 2017 | |
| Online Survey #1 | An online public survey identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, and it prioritized community needs and desires; the survey was open for one month and received close to 500 participants. |
| August 1-30, 2017 | |
| Public Charrette | Public design charrette to identify strategic planning direction of mobility, land use, density, connectivity and community benefits |
| October 18, 2017 | |
| Public Meeting #2 | Reviewing and approving plan strategies based on input from previous public meeting and the steering committee |
| November 2, 2017 | |
| Online Survey #2 | Online survey of final Amendment Draft vision, strategies and recommendations |
| February 13-
March 13, 2018 | |
| Public Meeting #3 | Review, comment and approval of Amendment draft |
| February 22, 2018 | |

The City also established a website for the Amendment to provide updates and important plan resources as well as additional opportunities for participation to the general public.

Planning Process

Coordination with Local Groups

There were also several meetings with the Downtown Denver Partnership boards and neighborhood organizations that informed these groups of the Amendment overview and progress to date, answered questions, and received feedback that was incorporated into the final plan:

September 14, 2017 Downtown Denver Partnership's Denver Civic Ventures Board

September 14, 2017 Downtown Denver Partnership Board

October 10, 2017 Downtown Denver Partnership Board

November 1, 2017 Auraria Higher Education Center Board

November 30, 2017 Jefferson Park United Neighbors and Sloan's Lake Neighborhood Association

December 6, 2017 La Alma-Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association

December 12, 2017 Highland United Neighbors Inc

January 9, 2018 Federal Boulevard Partnership public meeting in collaboration with Jefferson Park United Neighbors

January 11, 2018 Downtown Denver Partnership's Denver Civic Ventures Board

Coordination with Concurrent and Future Planning Efforts

The planning team coordinated with related ongoing planning efforts within the City and County of Denver to help ensure consistency:

- Blueprint Denver (2018)
- 5280 Loop
- Colorado Department of Transportation Planning and Environmental Linkage Study
- Colorado Department of Transportation 23rd Street Bridge redevelopment
- Denver Urban Waterways Restoration Study
- 2019 Storm Drainage Master Plan Update

Public Input: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Throughout the process detailed above, the steering committee and the public identified the plan area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The feedback from this section informed the priorities and content of the plan. A high-level summary of this feedback is outlined on the next pages. The feedback received from each public meeting is included in the Appendix.

Public Feedback

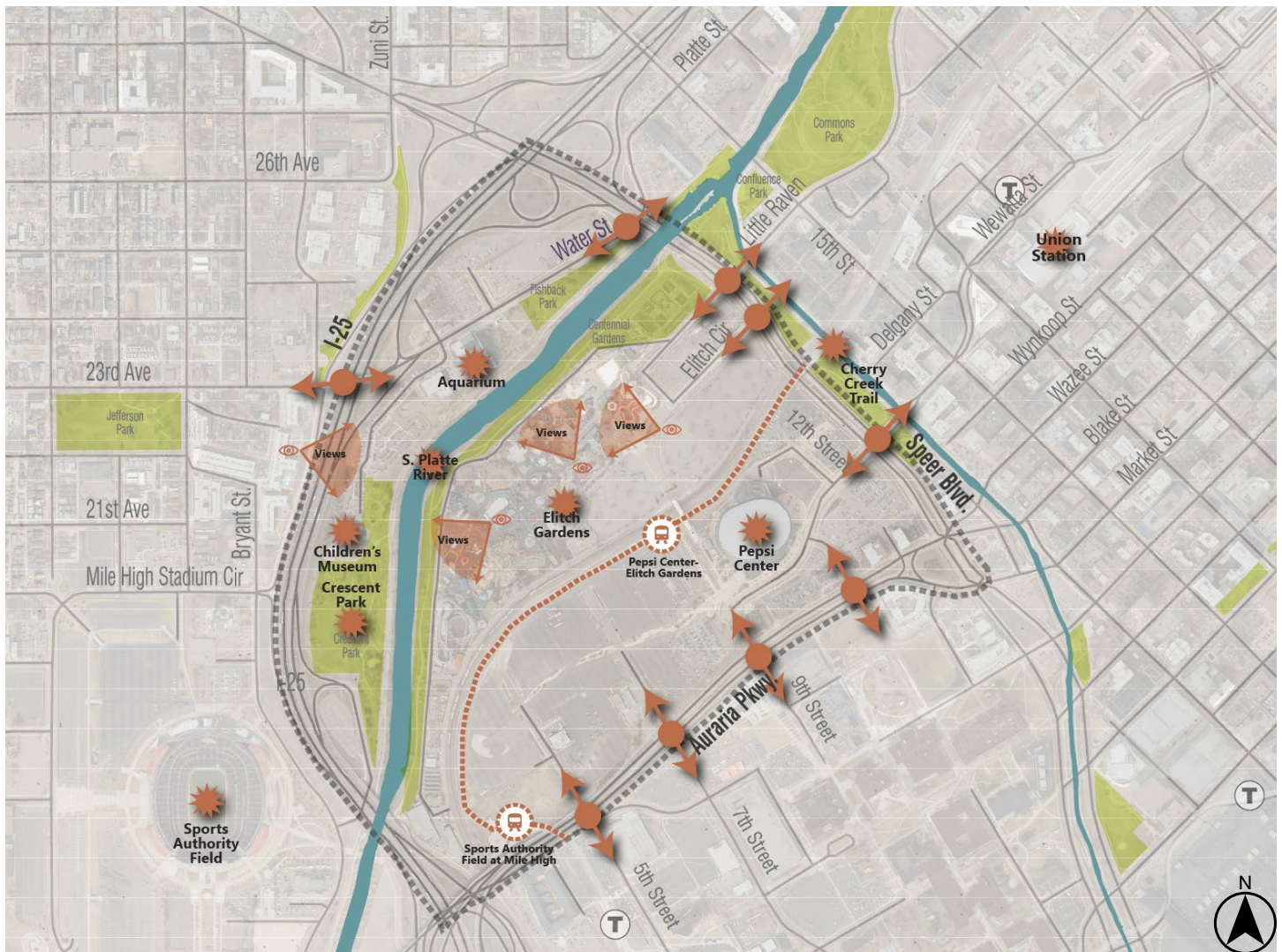


Figure 1.6: Strengths Diagram  **Street Entry Points**  **Light Rail Stop**  **Views**  **Unique Assets**

Strengths

Participants identified a list of strengths in the study area:

- The South Platte River.
- Proximity to the high density of office and commercial uses downtown, mixed uses downtown and in the Highland neighborhood, and educational uses on the Auraria campus.
- Current uses that attract visitors such as the Downtown Aquarium, the Children's Museum, the Pepsi Center, and Elitch Gardens.
- Good views, both into the plan area from surrounding neighborhoods and from the plan area towards downtown Denver and west towards the Rocky Mountains.
- Two light rail stations serving the area (Mile High and Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens stations), and Denver Moves: Transit identifies Speer Boulevard and Auraria Parkway as high priority bus transit corridors.

Public Feedback

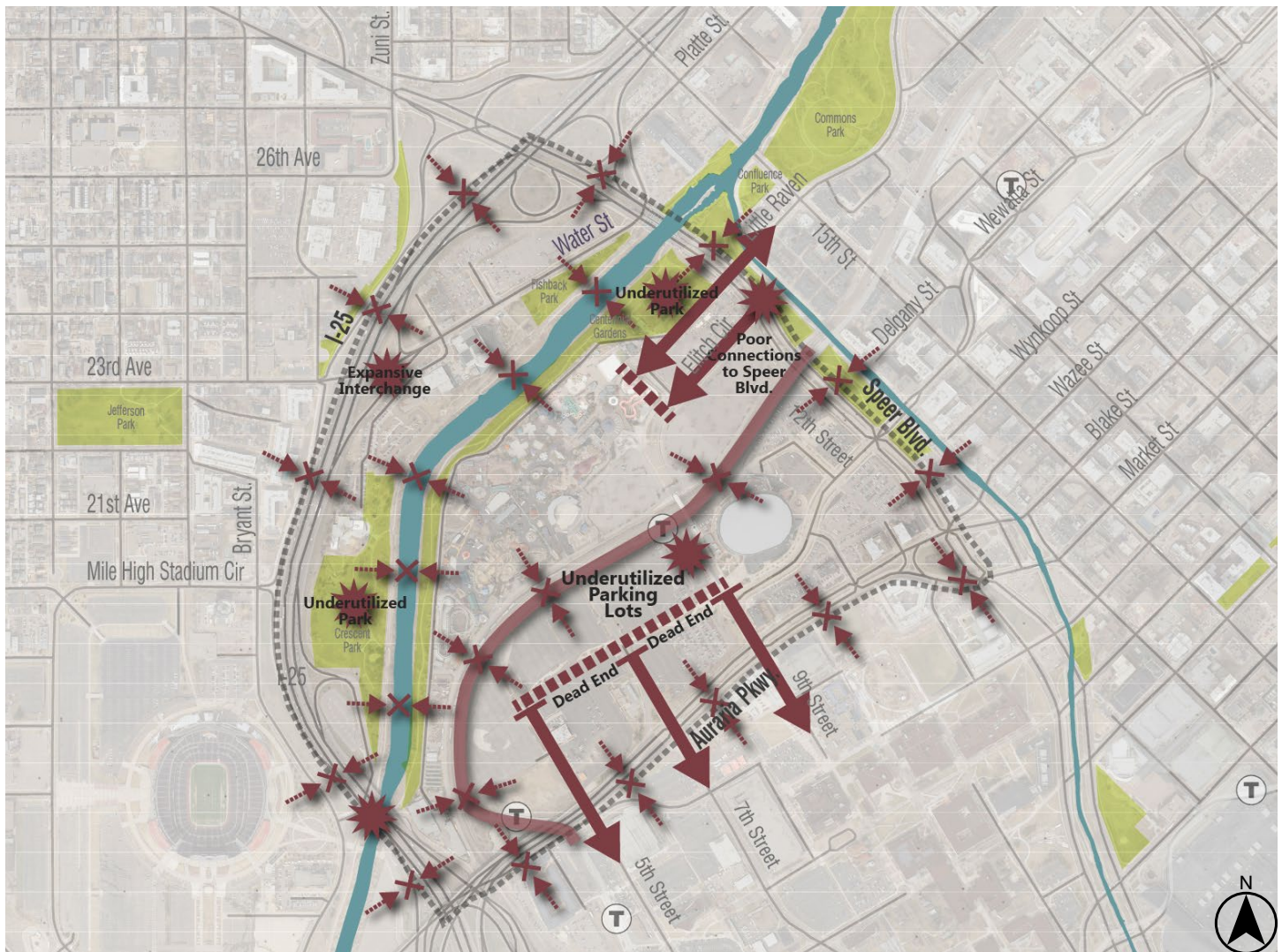
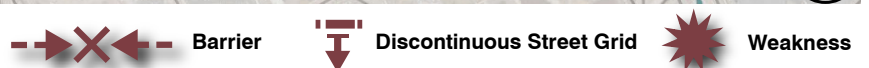


Figure 1.7: Weaknesses Diagram



Weaknesses

Participants also identified potential weaknesses to consider as the area redevelops:

- Lack of physical connectivity to surrounding areas due to natural barriers (the river) and structural barriers (Interstate 25, Auraria Parkway, and Speer Boulevard).
- Limited connectivity due to the discontinuous street grid.
- The I-25 highway that runs along the western boundary of the plan area, which contributes to noise and air pollution.
- The freight rail that runs through the plan area.
 - Though the Consolidated Main Line (CML) provides for light rail right-of-way, there are only two opportunities to safely cross the tracks in the plan area.
 - Freight rail activity contributes to noise and air pollution.
- Surface parking lots in the plan area create underutilized downtown-adjacent land; the surface parking results in an expanse of impervious surface that is void of activity and vegetation.

Public Feedback

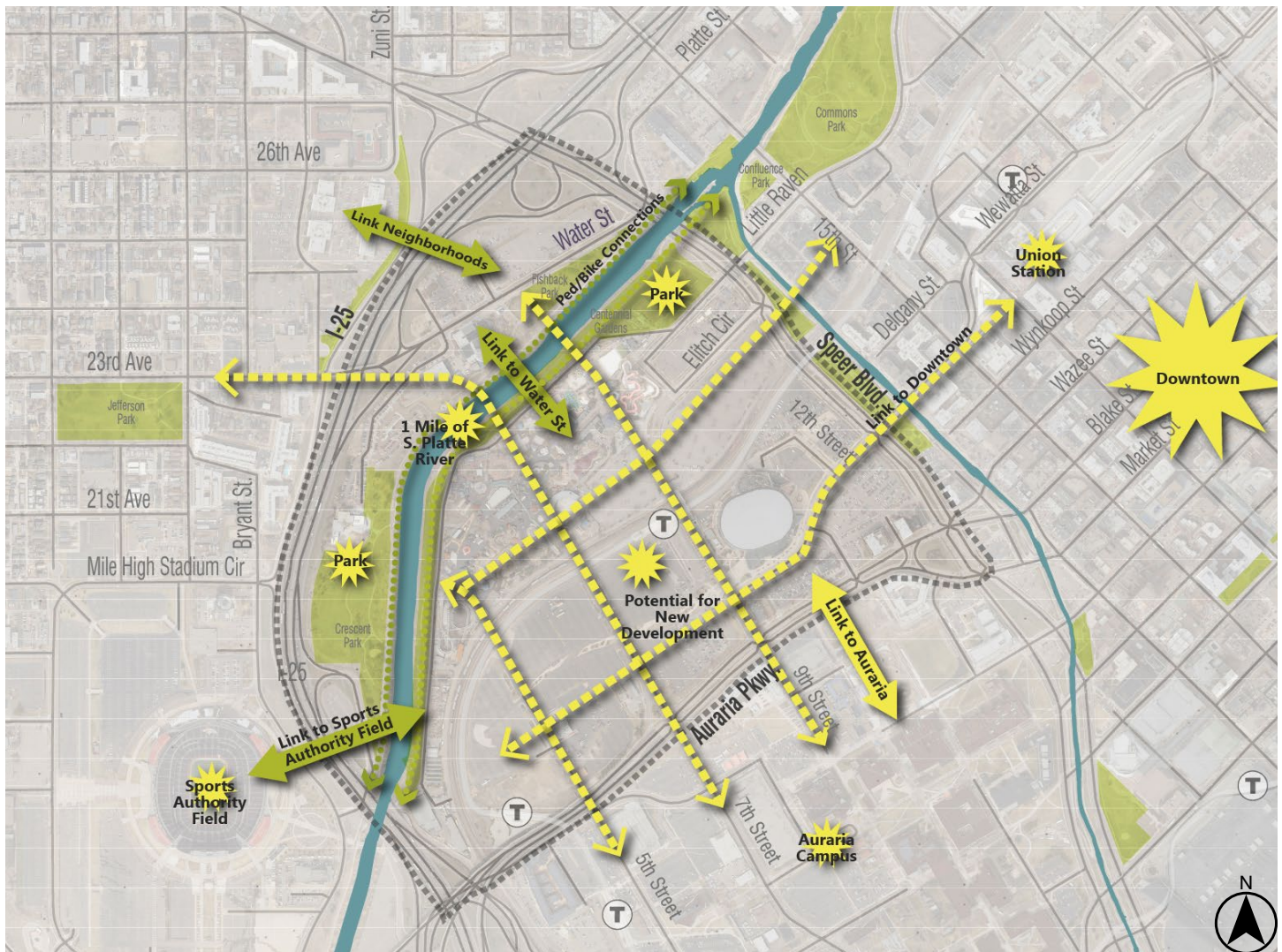
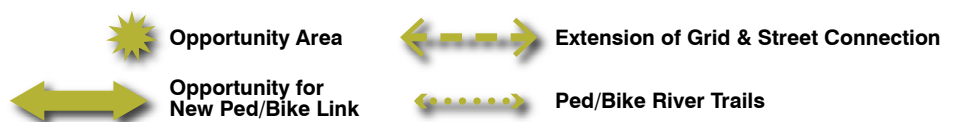


Figure 1.8: Opportunities Diagram



Opportunities

Participants identified many opportunities to leverage strengths and overcome weaknesses, including opportunities to:

- Create a new downtown neighborhood with active streets and new parks.
- Create an extension of the existing downtown with mobility options connecting to surrounding streets, across the river and railway, and to neighborhood attractions.
- Consolidate parking in surface parking lots into shared structured parking and create space for a variety of housing.
- Develop an active riverfront with uses that vary from hardscape edges with retail, food and beverage uses that spill over into the public realm to softscape edges that allow for natural riparian habitat to flourish.
- Connect to the Lincoln Park neighborhood and Sun Valley neighborhood.



Figure 1.9: Threats Diagram

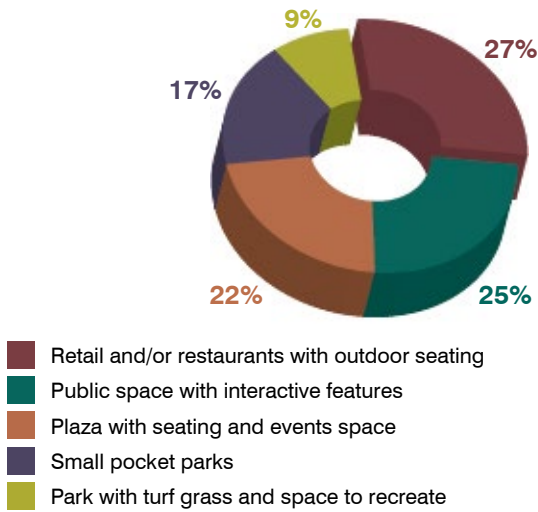
Threats

Participants identified several potential threats, including:

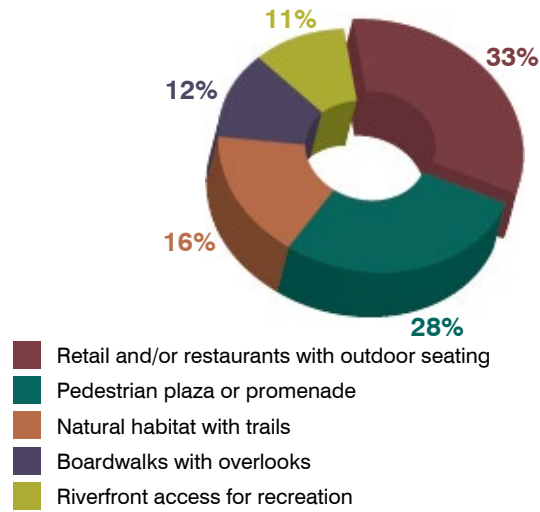
- Failing to realize the vision and the potential of the plan area to become a new downtown neighborhood of dense, high-quality, mixed-use development
- Failing to meet the city's demand for and this area's potential to provide new parkland
- Development logistical challenges, including identifying locations for and building rail crossings, competing with the 16th Street Mall and the Union Station area for retail, the development impacts of a potential future economic downturn, and protecting delicate riparian habitat
- Environmental threats, including flood risks due to several spills (or low points where overflow from the river is expected in the even of a flood) out of the river into the plan area, air and noise pollution from the CML and I-25, soil contamination from historic uses, and the danger of hazards from tanker cars on the freight rail

Public Feedback

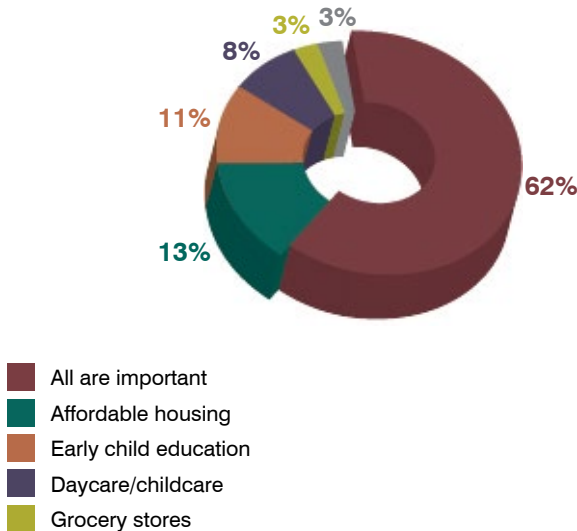
Which type of public space is most important to you to be incorporated across the study area?



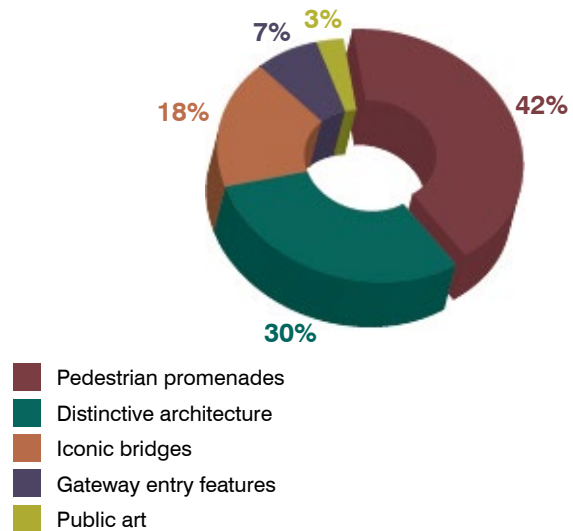
Which types of public space is most important to you to be incorporated along the river?



What would attract families to live here?



Of these assets, which are most important to incorporate into the study area so it is distinctive?



Live Survey

During the Public Meeting #2 there was a survey conducted with live results. The results that were captured from the public meeting are summarized above.

The questions focused on getting more detailed feedback about the public spaces, assets and amenities that could occur in the Plan Area. The survey results show a preference for public spaces that have active edges with retail and/or restaurants with outdoor seating. People also identified pedestrian promenades as an asset that should be incorporated into future development. Lastly, there was a recognition that attracting families to the Plan Area will require a combination of several different amenities.

Vision Element Overview	Downtown Area Plan (2007) Vision Elements and Topics
<p>Success of the Downtown Area Plan Amendment depends on the implementation of the vision elements through the supporting recommendations and strategies for the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District.</p> <p>Each vision element is comprised of topics that are supported by specific recommendations and strategies.</p> <p>The Vision Elements chapter provides planning direction through these recommendations and strategies for land use, economic development, a multimodal transportation network, diverse housing opportunities, building intensity and form, public spaces, and addressing environmental conditions.</p> <p>Use of the Vision Elements</p> <p>The Downtown Area Plan (2007) used five vision elements to shape the future of downtown Denver. Within each vision element, there were strategies and projects used to shape districts such as the Golden Triangle, Auraria, Lower Downtown (LoDo), Central Platte Valley (Union Station), Ballpark and Arapahoe Square.</p> <p>The Vision Elements from the Downtown Area Plan apply to this Amendment and are shown in the light gray boxes. In addition to the topics listed to the right, new topics were created for this Amendment that are listed on the next two pages.</p>	<p>A. A Prosperous City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A1. The Downtown of the Rocky Mountain Region A2. Energizing the Commercial Core A3. A Comprehensive Retail Strategy A4. Clean and Safe
	<p>B. A Walkable City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> B1. An Outstanding Pedestrian Environment B2. Building on Transit B3. Bicycle City B4. Park the Car Once B5. Grand Boulevards
	<p>C. A Diverse City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C1. Downtown Living C2. A Family-Friendly Place C3. Embracing Adjacent Neighborhoods C4. An International Downtown
	<p>D. A Distinctive City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> D1. District Evolution D2. Connecting Auraria D3. Downtown’s New Neighborhood: Arapahoe Square
	<p>D. A Green City</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E1. An Outdoor Downtown E2. A Rejuvenated Civic Center E3. Sustainable Use of Resources

Plan Amendment Vision Elements and Topics

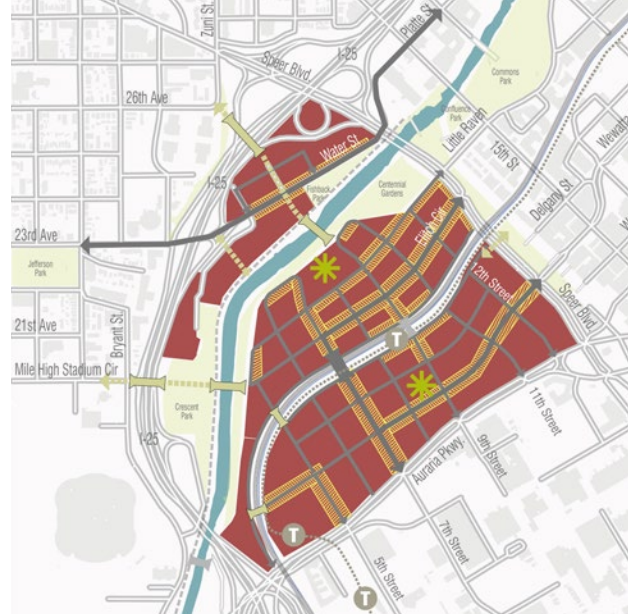
A. A Prosperous City

A5. Land Use

- Encourage a mix of uses.
- Promote a specific variety of uses that create an active, livable neighborhood.
- Locate active uses on the ground floor in strategic locations.
- Strategically use City Council-initiated rezoning to implement the land use vision.

A6. Access to Economic Opportunity

- Create a robust and diverse commercial neighborhood.
- Explore economically advantageous clustering of complementary uses that relate to existing uses in surrounding neighborhoods.



B. A Walkable City

B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

- Extend the existing street grid from surrounding neighborhoods to provide structure for a connected multimodal transportation network.
- Create Complete Streets by utilizing street design that promotes multimodal connectivity.
- Update existing facilities to reflect the desired character and function.
- Provide new connections to and within the plan area to complete the mobility network.

B7. A Place for Pedestrians

- Create a comprehensive pedestrian network with pedestrian facilities on all streets in the plan area.
- Designate and enhance priority pedestrian connections and intersections.
- Create an intimate block size to create a comfortable and safe walking environment.

B8. Robust Bicycle Network

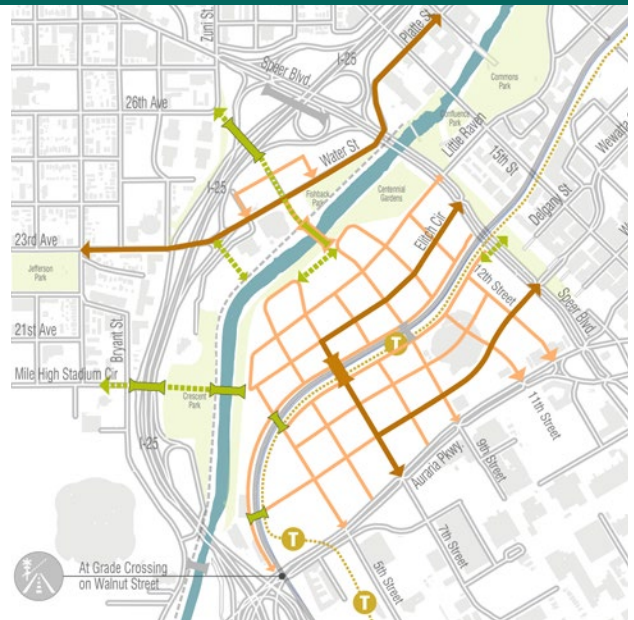
- Provide comprehensive bicycle facilities throughout the plan area.
- Connect to existing and planned bicycle facilities.

B9. Mobility Hub

- Establish protocol to transform Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens and Mile High light rail stations into Mobility Hubs.
- Provide additional transit services to and through the plan area.

B10. Transportation Demand Management

- Require Transportation Demand Management.



C..... A Diverse City

C5. Diverse Housing Options

- Pursue an effective affordable housing delivery mechanism that is appropriate for the scale and type of development expected in the plan area.
- Encourage new residential development to offer affordable housing units with a wide range of prices that accommodate a variety of income levels.
- Encourage a variety of housing types to attract a wide range of households.

- Encourage new residential development to offer affordable housing units with a wide range of prices that accommodate a variety of income levels.
- Encourage a variety of housing options throughout the plan area.

C6. Support a Diverse Community

- Offer services and opportunities that support families.
- Explore strategies to attract a diverse group of businesses, employees, and visitors.
- Encourage the formation of neighborhood partnerships.

Plan Amendment Vision Elements and Topics

D. A Distinctive City

D4. Variety of Building Intensity

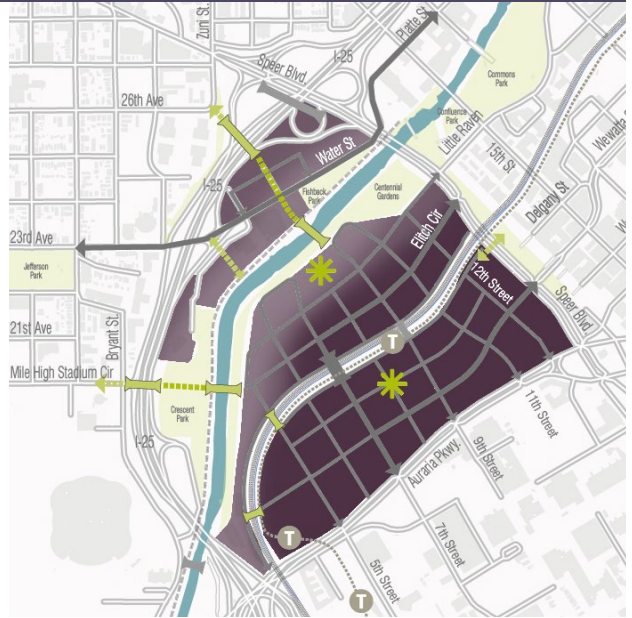
- Write new regulatory tools that limit the possibility for under-development.
- Adopt new Zoning and Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) that compel a variety of building heights and intensities.

D5. Extraordinary Design

- Adopt new Zoning and Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) that embrace a sense of human scale and promote a high-quality pedestrian experience.
- Future DSG should promote a high-level of design quality.
- Establish streetscape and public space standards to develop a recommended palette of features, elements, and treatments that contribute to the overall character and functionality of the plan area (reference A Green City).
- Establish a design review process.
- Adopt new Zoning or Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) that acknowledge, preserve, or enhance terminating vistas and key views of visually distinguishable promenades or architectural and natural features.
- Adopt new zoning and DSG to encourage future development along the river corridor, including adjacent parks and open spaces, to respect the river as a natural resource and a public amenity.

D6. Branding and Identity

- Encourage branding and marketing efforts to create awareness and attract people to live, work and play.
- Encourage a sense of neighborhood identity.
- Develop ways to create a sense of place and identity through public art and civic land uses.



D. A Green City

E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

- Explore opportunities to create new designated parks and open space.
- Encourage existing and new parks to accommodate a variety of activities and programs year-round.
- Re-envision Centennial Gardens as an accessible and active park with updated features and programmable space for activities.
- Promote a variety of amenities within parks, open spaces and public spaces.
- Contribute to a green public realm.
- Activate parks and open space edges.
- Promote healthy living.
- Promote guidelines and principles of the Outdoor Downtown Plan by incorporating its policies, projects, and programs.

E5. South Platte River

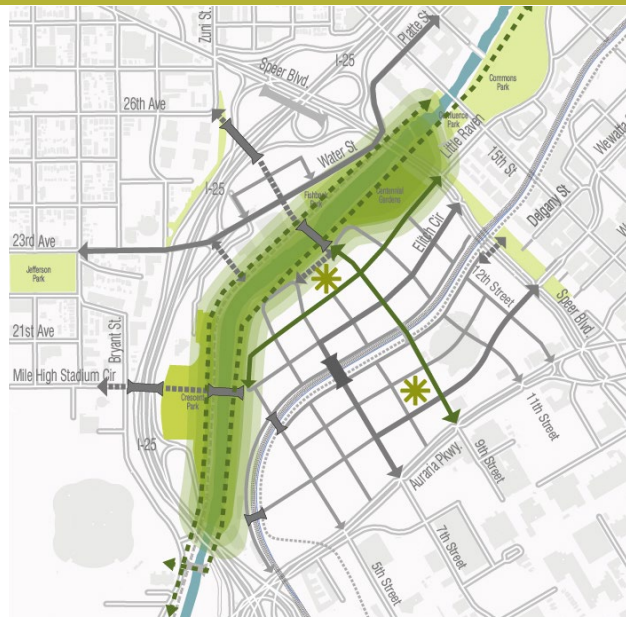
- Embrace the South Platte River as an amenity that can be explored and utilized by creating an enhanced river zone.
- Protect the river as a natural resource.
- Coordinate all river improvements and development near the river with ongoing studies from other departments or external entities.

E6. Resilient Infrastructure

- Embrace ways to efficiently use resources and reduce waste.
- Build development with an enduring life-cycle.
- Encourage green and sustainable communities.
- Future development should implement sustainable green infrastructure where possible.

E7. Environmental Conditions

- Address environmental contamination to allow for mixed-use development.
- Address the floodplain within the plan area.
- Address the health impacts of noise and air pollution for development adjacent to the CML and I-25.
- Create a disaster plan.



Plan Area Geographies

The plan area is naturally divided by several landmarks into distinct geographies, which are defined below and referenced throughout this document (see Figure 1.10).

Water Street Area

The Water Street area is the northwestern portion of the plan area containing Water Street. It is bound by I-25, the South Platte River, and Speer Boulevard.

West of the CML Area

The West of the CML area is the current Elitch Gardens site. It is bound by the river, the CML, and Speer Boulevard.

East of the CML Area

The East of the CML area is on the southeast portion of the plan area and contains the Pepsi Center. It is bound by the CML, Auraria Parkway, and Speer Boulevard.

River Area

The River area runs along the South Platte River and intersects with the West of the CML and East of the CML areas and Speer Boulevard.

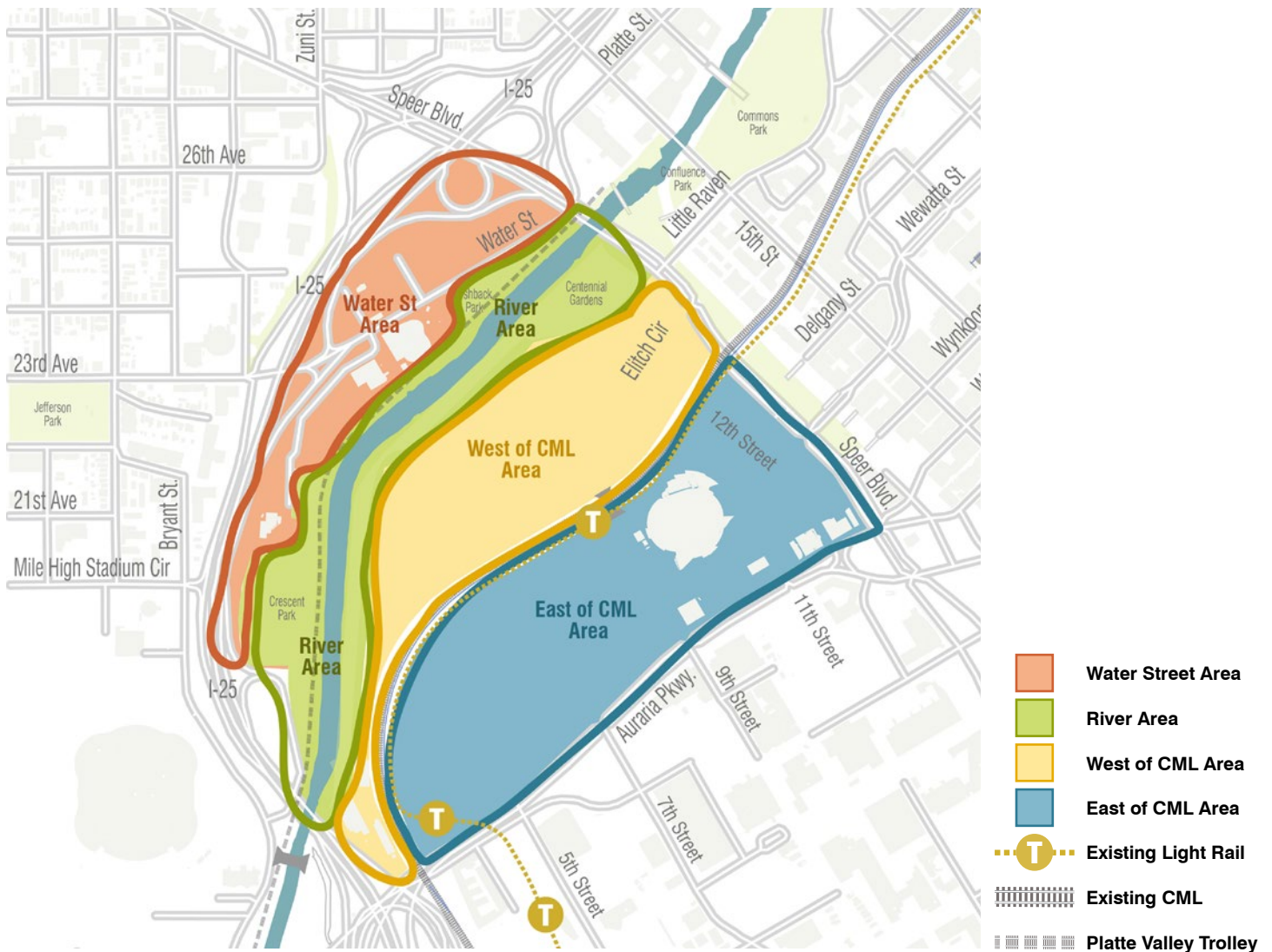


Figure 1.10: Geographies Map



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ii. Vision Elements

There are five Vision Elements supported by topics, which are then followed by specific recommendations and strategies for the plan area.

A PROSPEROUS CITY

Accommodating future growth

A prosperous city attracts jobs, growth, and investment. It can increase access to opportunity for residents, employees, and businesses by: fostering innovation; providing equitable access to capital, jobs and education; provide a variety of diverse social interactions; and promote a great quality of life. Thoughtful planning that encourages high density, high-quality, mixed-use development with ample public space can enable prosperity by creating a place where all residents share in economic, technological, and social progress.

As Denver works to attract and retain intellectual capital, the plan area provides a unique opportunity with its location adjacent to Downtown and the Auraria Campus to become an extension of the downtown in the form of an innovation district. It also has a mile of the South Platte River, which is a notable asset that lends itself to becoming an engaging and welcoming public place for people to interact and visit thriving businesses. Activity along both the river and key corridors through the plan area create a destination while supporting economic prosperity.

The 2007 Downtown Area Plan developed four topics to achieve the vision element of becoming A Prosperous City. In addition to A1 through A4 (listed below), two new recommendation topics apply to the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District:

Plan Topics

- A1. The Downtown of the Rocky Mountain Region
- A2. Energizing the Commercial Core
- A3. A Comprehensive Retail Strategy
- A4. Clean and Safe

Plan Amendment Topics

- A5. Land Use
- A6. Access to Economic Opportunity



A5. Land Use

Goal

Enable a deliberate mix of uses to create a prosperous neighborhood that is vibrant throughout the day and night.

Why It's Important

A mix of uses that provide a variety of everyday needs allows people to live, work, shop, relax, entertain, and dine all in one area. This results in a vibrant neighborhood that is active at all times of the day and all days of the week. This consistent activity supports a sense of place as well as prosperity for the people who live, work, or spend time in an area.

Recommendations and Strategies

A5a. Encourage a mix of uses.

- **Downtown Concept Land Use:** Update the Blueprint Concept Land Use to Downtown (see Figure 2.1).
 - The desired land use for the plan area is an extension of the land use in downtown Denver; it consists of a mix of residential, commercial, office, civic, institutional, and entertainment uses. Land uses can be mixed in each building, development, or even within each block, within the neighborhood, residential and non-residential uses are within walking distance of one another.
- **Regulations:** Update zoning regulations to encourage an appropriate mix of uses (as detailed further in A5b, A5c, and E7c) as well as flexibility to incentivize for a variety of uses in a concentrated area.



Public Input:

There is a desire for a vibrant neighborhood with a mix of uses that contributes to a complete neighborhood.

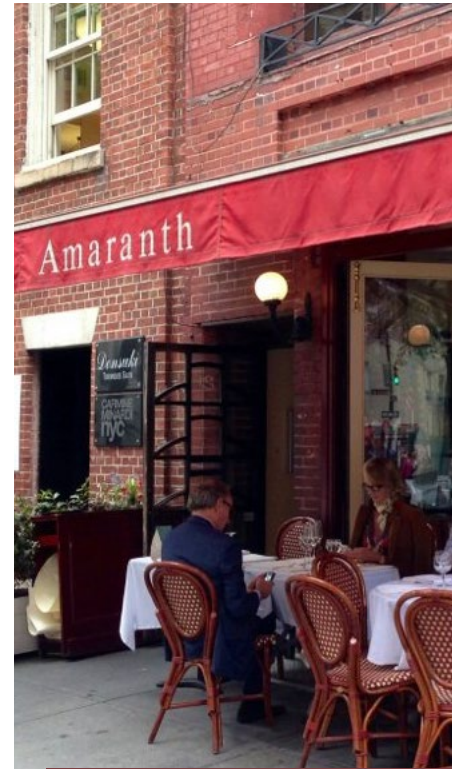


A5. Land Use

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

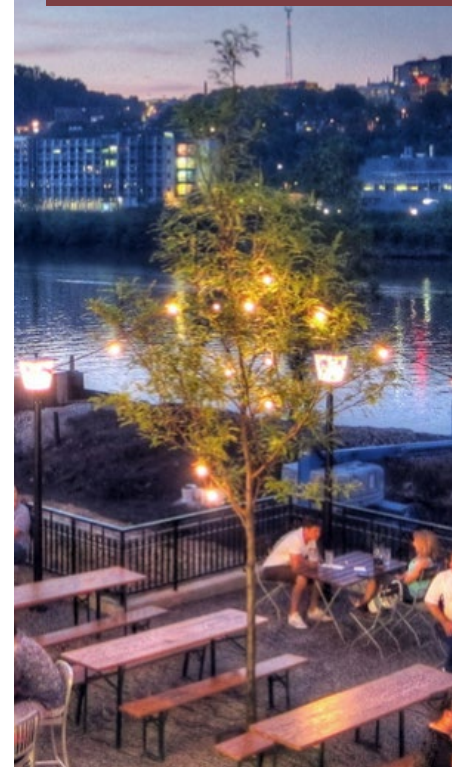
A5b. Promote a specific variety of uses that create an active, livable neighborhood, including:

- **Complete Neighborhood:** Explore regulatory tools that incentivize the private sector to provide uses that complement a variety of housing types (see A Diverse City), including uses to support downtown living that contributes to the quality of life in a neighborhood, which include a variety of housing types (see A Diverse City) as well as complementary uses such as grocery stores, laundromats, pharmacies, banks, medical services, coffee shops, schools and childcare, playgrounds, and dog parks.
- **Commercial Uses and Services:** Promote uses to support the development of an employment center, which include high-density commercial development and live/work opportunities as well as complementary uses such as office supplies, shipping services, hotels, and food and beverage establishments.
- **Civic and Community:** Promote civic and community uses such as libraries, community centers, schools, and recreational centers to provide complete neighborhoods and attract diverse residents, employees, and visitors.
- **Entertainment and Cultural Uses:** Leverage existing entertainment uses and support the growth of entertainment, cultural, and exhibition uses around the Pepsi Center, Downtown Aquarium, and the Children's Museum as well as any potential new complementary uses.
- **Public Spaces:** Ensure development of new multi-functioning public spaces that are accessible to all (see A Green City).



Public Input:

There should be restaurants and cafés with outdoor seating.



A5. Land Use

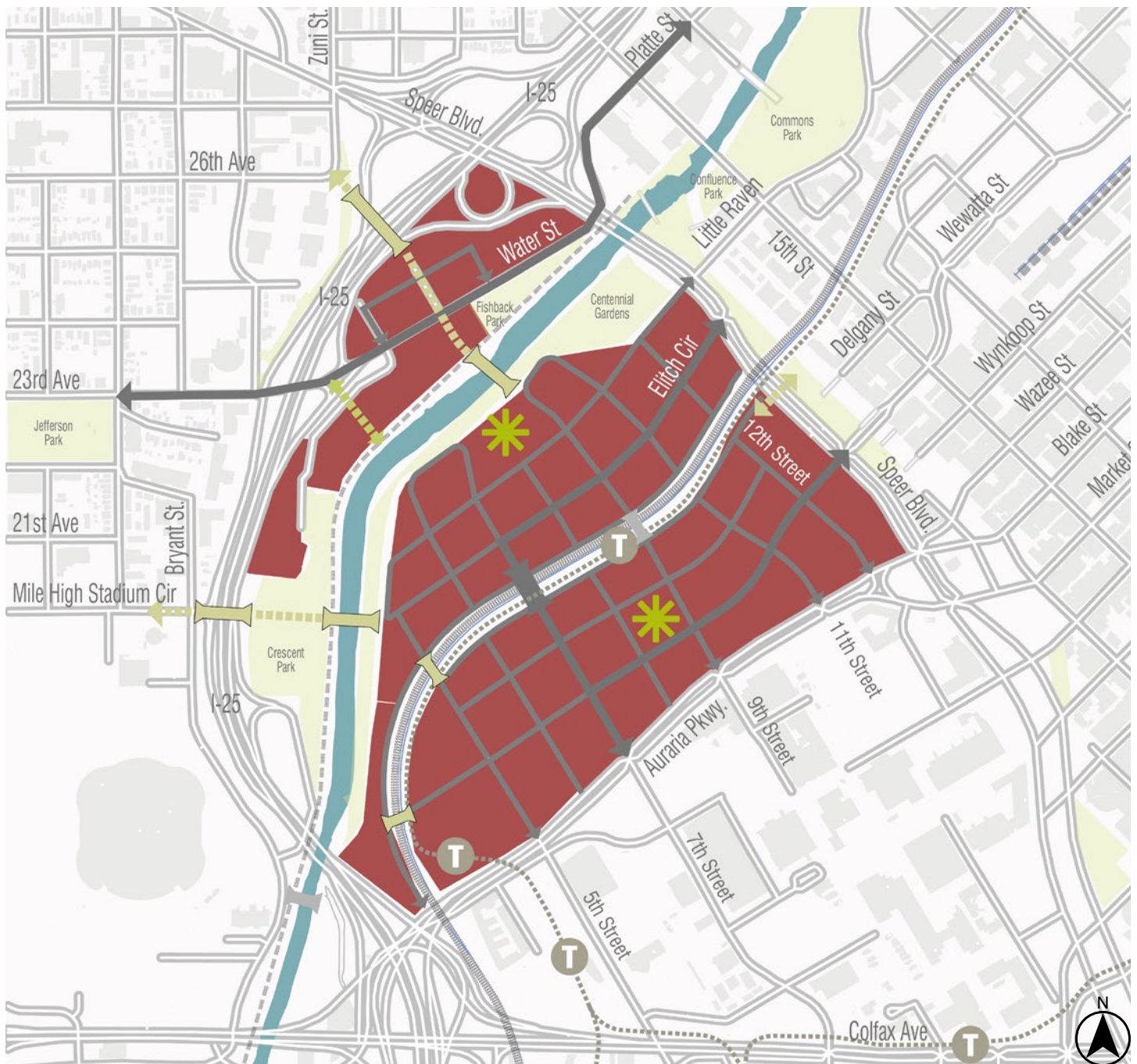


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Land Use Map

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Existing Light Rail | Existing Ped & Bike Bridge |
| Existing CML | Proposed Ped & Bike Bridge |
| Platte Valley Trolley | Proposed All Mode Bridge |
| Downtown Collectors | Proposed Ped & Bike Connection |
| Local Streets | Proposed Park/Open Space |
| | Downtown Mixed-Use |

A5. Land Use

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

A5c. Locate active uses on the ground floor in strategic locations.

- **Active Corridors:** Through the implementation process as development progresses, identify streets that should become active corridors (see Figure 2.2).
 - Active corridors should typically be located along streets with high expected pedestrian and bicycle volume; for example, streets around Mobility Hubs developed at the two light rail stations and other internal transit services, streets designated as Downtown Collectors, streets that converge with the river, and streets that are adjacent to public spaces (see B9 and A Walkable City).
 - Locations designated as active corridors should include adequate public space to accommodate spill over of ground floor uses into the public realm.
- **Active Riverfront:** Identify a substantial portion of the riverfront for active uses.
 - Prioritize active uses along public right-of-way parallel to the river to enliven the public realm along the riverfront.
 - Provide a balance of active urban and passive natural spaces to create an active riverfront with a variety of experiences along its length (see A Green City).
- **Active Uses:** Develop a tool to ensure active ground floor uses generate activity throughout the day and night in specific locations as defined above.
 - Incentivize the uses listed in A5b.
 - Encourage active uses, especially retail, food, and beverage, to spill out of buildings and into the public realm.
 - Limit residential uses on the ground floor.
 - Residential uses should have a minimal frontage along Active Corridors.
 - While the riverfront should be primarily active, there is a desire for distinct pockets of more passive uses. A limited amount of residential uses is desired along the Active Riverfront and within areas that are deliberately passive, they should maintain public access along the river; this recommendation is contingent on deliberate building design that defines public and private space (see A Distinctive City).
 - Exclude uses such as storage, visible parking, car washes, and automobile and drive-thru services (see A Distinctive City).

A5d. Strategically use City Council-initiated rezoning to implement the land use vision.

- **Rezoning:** City Council or an individual member of the City Council can propose an official map amendment for a specific area to encourage implementation of an adopted plan. Specific situations where this strategy may be appropriate include:
 - Underutilized properties that are currently Former Chapter 59 zone districts or Campus – Entertainment zone districts and are proposed for higher density and mixed use by this Amendment.
 - All areas that currently have height maximums and are proposed for taller heights by this plan.



A5. Land Use

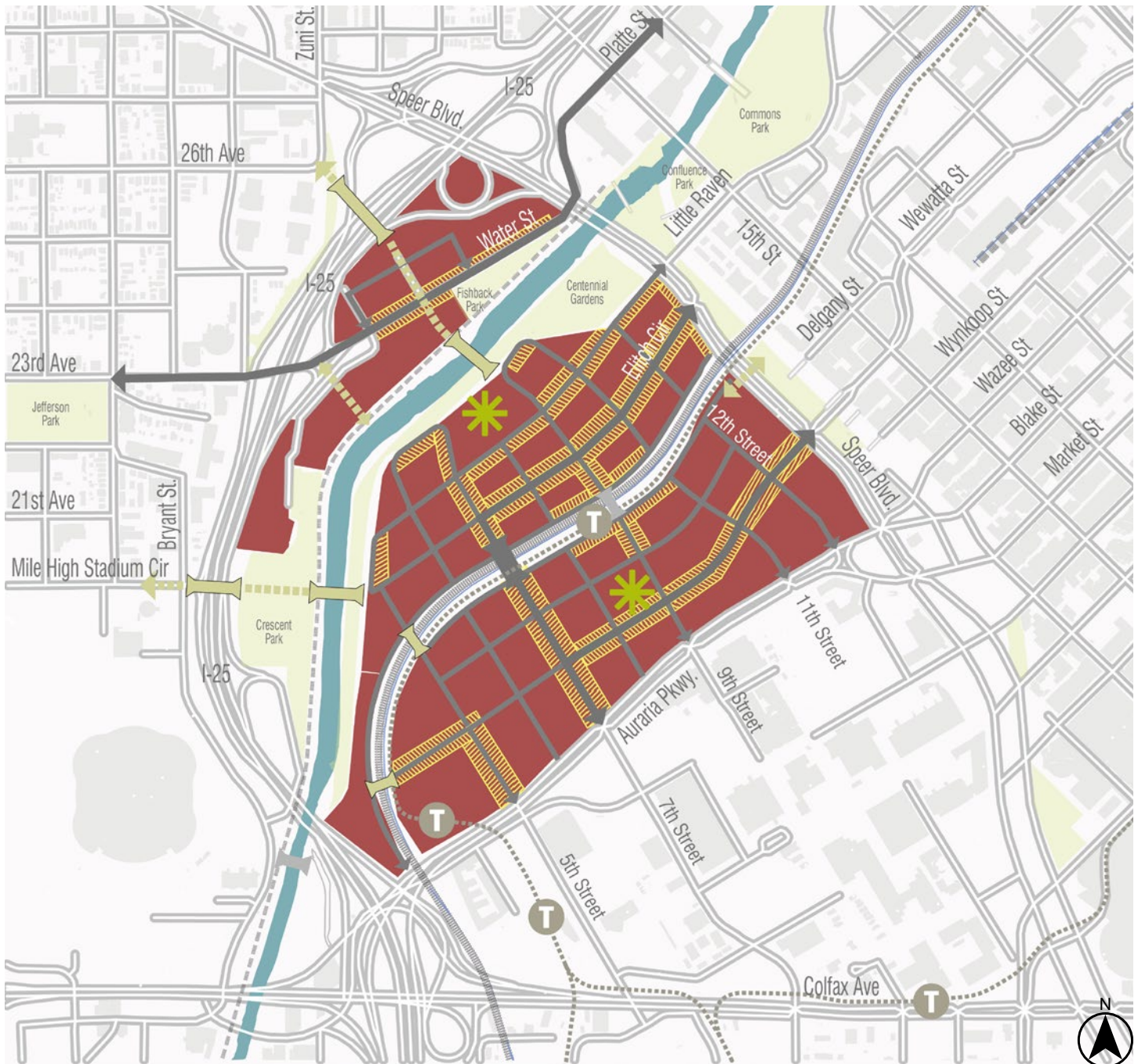
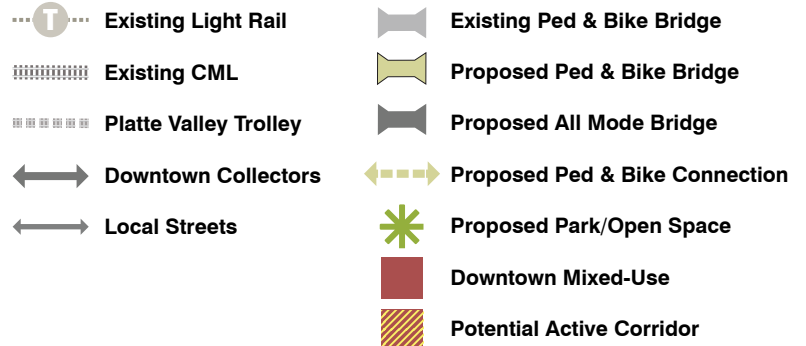


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Land Use Map with Potential Active Corridors

This is one potential scenario to implement this Plan Amendment's recommendations. There are multiple active corridor configurations that would implement this plan, dependent on the configuration of mobility connections and the road hierarchy.



A6. Access to Economic Opportunity

Goal

Create an environment that promotes innovation and encourages a range of businesses to flourish.

Why It's Important

Innovation and flourishing businesses are essential for attracting jobs, growth, and investment. Innovation attracts new ideas and people to a neighborhood and a city, and flourishing businesses provide both jobs and services to residents and visitors.

Recommendations and Strategies

A6a. Create a robust and diverse commercial neighborhood.

- **Business Creation:** Coordinate with the Office of Economic Development to explore economic development incentives or tools to recruit development that serves as an engine for economic growth by focusing on job creation and providing opportunities for a wide variety of employment.
 - Create opportunities that support local businesses and encourage use of locally produced goods to promote local entrepreneurship and investment in the community.
 - Provide opportunities that would complement local businesses and attract key retail tenants to draw residents and visitors to the neighborhood.
- **Downtown Denver Partnership:** Work with the Downtown Denver Partnership to coordinate commercial and business developments that build upon the plan area's assets and strengthen its identity.
- **Business Coordination:** Encourage the use of Good Neighbor Agreements to reduce potential conflicts between adjacent uses.



Public Input:

This area has great potential to offer new spaces for businesses



A6. Access to Economic Opportunity

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

A6b. Explore economically advantageous clustering of complementary uses that relate to existing uses in surrounding neighborhoods.

- **Auraria Campus:** Consider establishing an innovation district (defined by the Brookings Institution as a “geographic area where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect with start-ups, business incubators, and accelerators”) in close proximity to the Auraria Campus.
 - Promote private-sector sponsored opportunities for the Auraria Campus professors and students to research and develop new businesses within the plan area.
 - Provide incentives for collaboration between the Auraria Campus educational institutions, private sector businesses, and research and development industries.
 - Consider supportive development such as commercial spaces that can serve as research and innovation labs, student and faculty housing, and campus-supportive services.
- **Downtown:** Leverage the plan area’s adjacency to Downtown Denver by providing flexibility in development to meet demand for commercial space.
- **Sports Arenas:** Leverage the Mile High Stadium and the Pepsi Center with complementary sports-oriented businesses adjacent to the Pepsi Center and along the edge of the plan area across from the Mile High Stadium.
- **Downtown Aquarium and Children’s Museum:** Locate other community- and family-serving businesses, services, and recreation near the Downtown Aquarium and Children’s Museum.
- **Surrounding Residential Neighborhoods:** Promote businesses that provide goods and services that are not accommodated within surrounding neighborhoods to attract visitors from these residential areas.



Public Input:

The plan area should utilize the adjacency to Auraria Campus.



A WALKABLE CITY

A multimodal downtown

Walkability is a key ingredient to a successful urban environment, and creating a connected transportation network within the plan area connected as to the surrounding neighborhoods is a fundamental element of realizing the vision for the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District. Additionally, the plan area is located adjacent to downtown and has two light rail stations and high-frequency bus transit; therefore it is uniquely positioned to be a better-connected, multimodal neighborhood.

Prioritizing walking, bicycling, and transit supports Denver’s broader transportation goals articulated in the Mobility Action Plan. These goals include accelerating safety improvements and robustly pursuing the Denver Vision Zero Action Plan, to deliver a multimodal network that encourages mode shift and protecting the climate and improving public health. Additionally, Denver Moves: Pedestrians & Trails aims to create a pedestrian network that provides residents, employees, and visitors with a walkable environment that is comfortable for all users. Denver Moves: Making Bicycle and Multi-Use Connections also aims to create a bicycle network of facilities that are comfortable for all users.

Creating a transportation network that prioritizes pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users also supports placemaking; improving walkability means providing street-level experiences that invite and stimulate pedestrians, which fosters personal interactions, increases economic vitality, and reinforces the other vision elements in this plan.

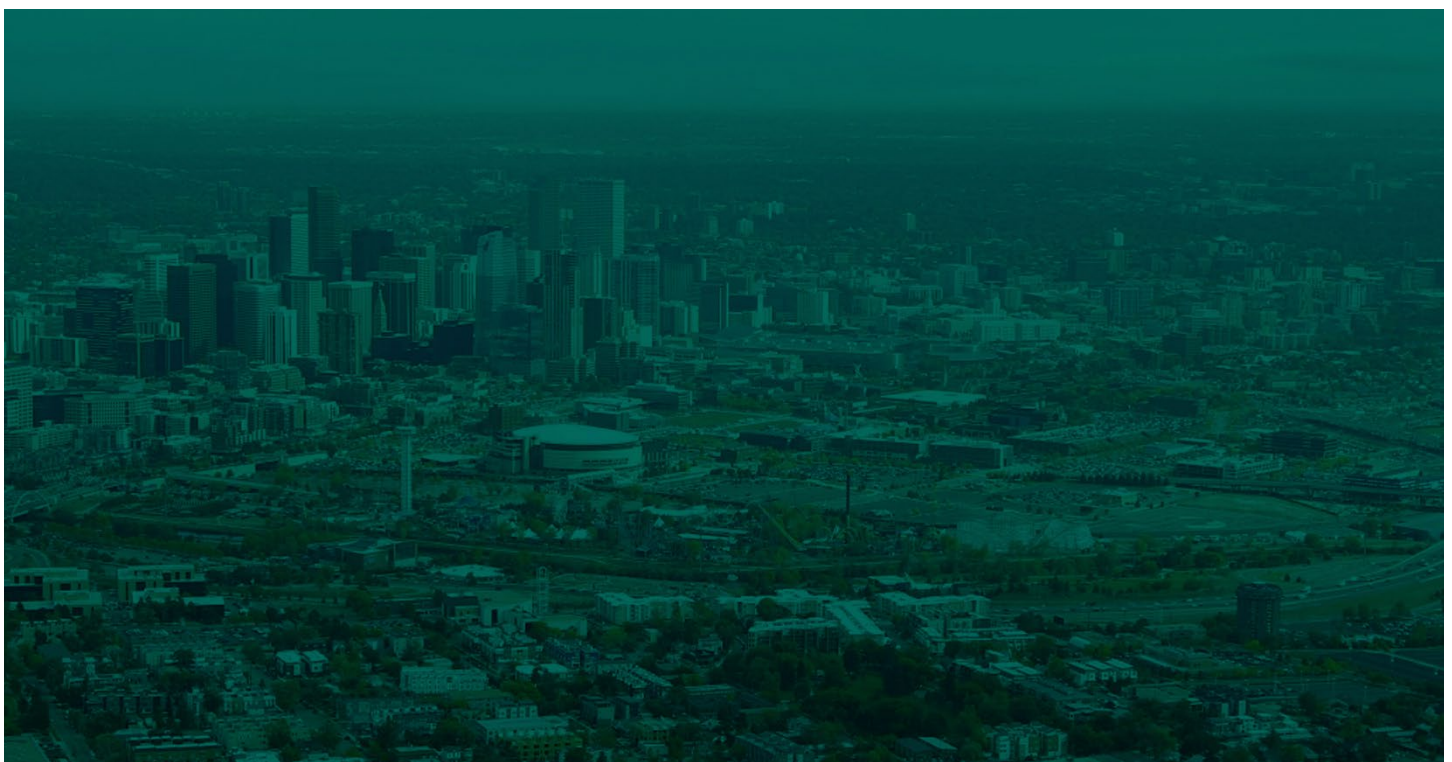
The Downtown Area Plan developed five topics to achieve the vision element of becoming A Walkable City. In addition to B1 through B5 (listed below), five new recommendation topics apply to the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District:

Plan Topics

- B1. An Outstanding Pedestrian Environment
- B2. Building on Transit
- B3. Bicycle City
- B4. Park the Car Once
- B5. Grand Boulevards

Plan Amendment Topics

- B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network
- B7. A Place for Pedestrians
- B8. Robust Bicycle Network
- B9. Mobility Hub
- B10. Transportation Demand Management (TDM)



B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Goal

Create a network that accommodates all modes of transportation and prioritizes active transportation (walking, bicycling, and transit) first and automobiles second.

Why It's Important

A mobility network that prioritizes active transportation creates safer streets for all users, encourages non-automobile travel, encourages activity, and fosters a sense of community. Prioritizing active transportation also reinforces Denver's Living Streets Initiative, which aims to combine context sensitive development with complete streets to promote active living, increase mobility, capitalize on infrastructure investments, and stimulate economic development on urban corridors. An integrated, multimodal transportation network would help the plan area become the next downtown neighborhood.

Recommendations and Strategies

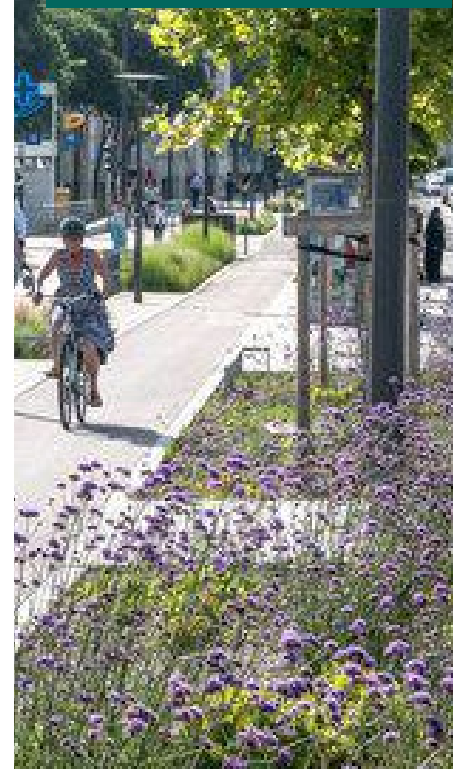
B6a. Extend the existing street grid from surrounding neighborhoods to provide structure for a connected multimodal transportation network.

The plan area currently has minimal road infrastructure; therefore future development will need to build a multimodal transportation network. Figure 3.1 illustrates one potential scenario to implement this recommendation and the following strategies. There are multiple network configuration scenarios that would accomplish these recommendations. The final design for the mobility network, including the connections detailed in B6c below, should include an evaluation of traffic demands of current uses in addition to increased future density, and it will need to adapt and respond through implementation and development. Additional infrastructure may be needed as a result of these complete transportation studies. Regional infrastructure improvement costs should be shared among development in the area; implementation may be phased. The final design should accomplish the following:

- **Extend Streets:** Extend the existing surrounding streets to create a connected street grid across the plan area.
 - Extend Little Raven Street, Elitch Circle, and Wewatta Street running parallel to the river; the extension of Little Raven Street should include a robust tree canopy as a continuation of the extensive canopy adjacent to Commons Park (see Figure 3.1 and 5.2).
 - Extend 5th Street, 7th Street, 9th Street, and 11th Street running perpendicular to the river (see Figure 3.1).



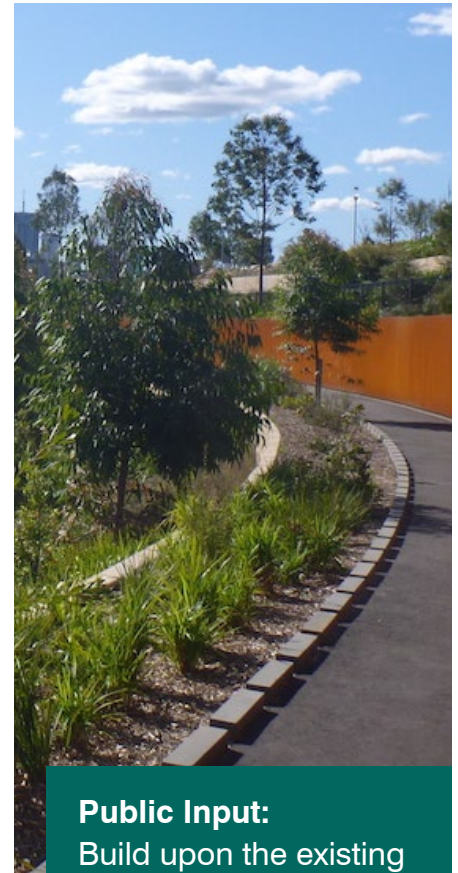
Public Input:
Future roads should respond to the existing road network.



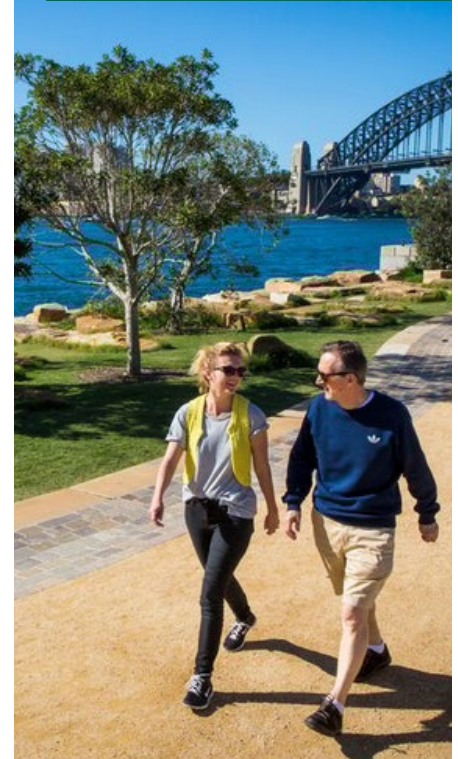
B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

- **Create a Street Grid:** Create a street grid based on block sizes that promote walkability (see B7c) and can accommodate alleys (see B6a) and the desired building form (see A Distinctive City).
 - Create small blocks; a potential range of block sizes would be 200 feet by 200 feet to 250 feet by 400 feet. Larger block sizes (250 feet by 400 feet) can be used to reflect the fabric of the existing downtown block grid.
 - Allow for flexibility in block sizes to accommodate development with a larger footprint East of the CML, particularly along Speer Boulevard and Auraria Parkway and for specific entertainment uses such as a potentially relocated Pepsi Center. Smaller block sizes are appropriate closer to the river.
 - If the clover leaf interchange at Speer Boulevard and I-25 is rebuilt in a more compressed interchange configuration, consider extending the street grid north of Water Street to complete a pedestrian-scale grid in the space vacated by the current interchange footprint.
- **Connect to Other Facilities:** Connect to existing and planned trails and pathways.
 - Integrate the 5280 Loop (an approximately five-mile multi-use path connecting major institutions and creating a loop through downtown Denver) into the plan area and provide clear and direct connections to it. The planned route connects to the eastern edge of the plan area through 11th Street and Wynkoop Street at Speer Boulevard.
 - Enhance existing trails and pathways along the South Platte River and implement new connections to them.
- **Enhance the River:** Design the mobility network to enhance the Riverfront by prioritizing non-motorized transportation along the river.
 - Provide bicycle, pedestrian, and recreation access along the riverfront; new connections over the river should connect to rather than interrupting this pedestrian and bicycle access along the river.
 - Streets that run adjacent to the river should not accommodate higher-capacity vehicular traffic; any vehicle access along these streets should be limited to low-speed access with a clear priority for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Public Input:
Build upon the existing trails along the South Platte River.



B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

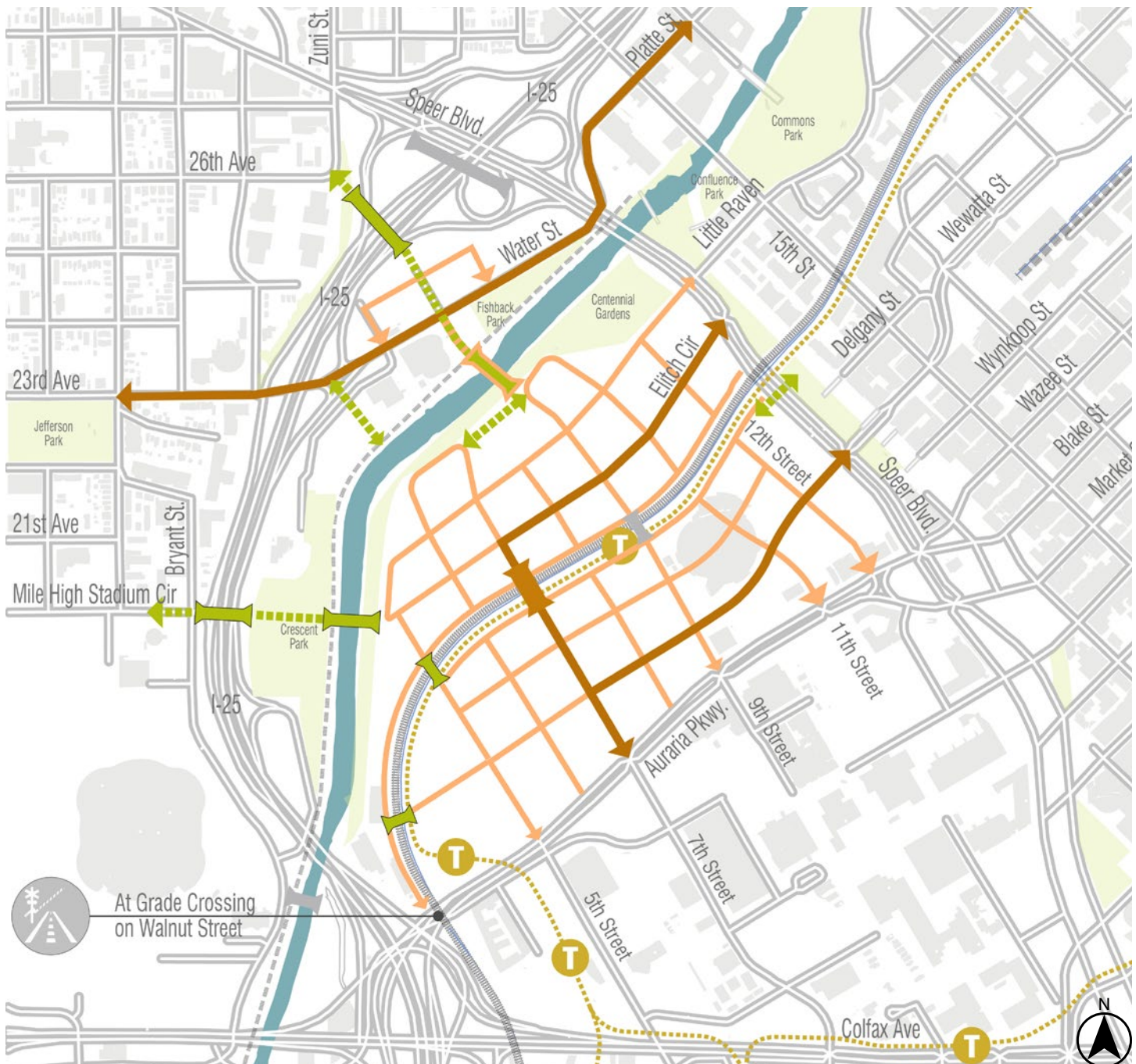
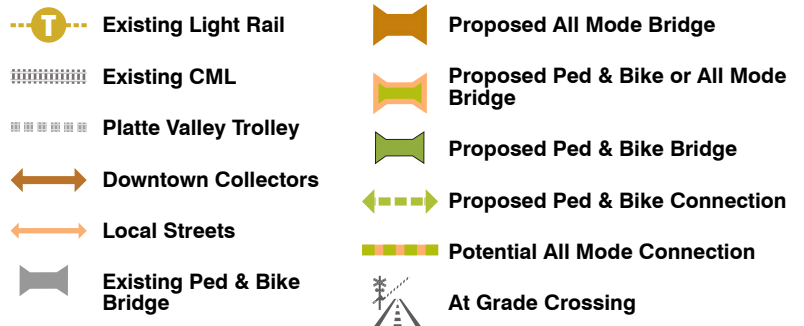


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Road Hierarchy

This is one potential scenario to implement this plan's recommendations. There are multiple network configurations that would implement this plan. This plan assumes flexibility in block sizes to accommodate a variety of uses that might require a larger footprint. Alleys are not shown in this diagram, but should be included in nearly all blocks. Shared streets are not shown on this diagram, but can be implemented on appropriate street segments.



B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

B6b. Create Complete Streets by utilizing street design that promotes multimodal connectivity.

The connected transportation network detailed in B6a above should be comprised of streets that prioritize active transportation and support placemaking goals for the plan area.

- **Street Typologies:** Consider the following street typologies that create a safe environment for all pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists through limiting the number of vehicle lanes and utilizing streetscape strategies to calm motor vehicle traffic:
 - **Downtown Collectors** provide the backbone of the plan area's street grid and are identified as the main streets to move vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians through the plan area (see Figure 3.2). Downtown Collectors efficiently connect through the plan area and to surrounding areas. Within the plan area, Downtown Collectors should typically have:
 - One vehicular lane in each direction, plus a turning lane where necessary with flexibility to accommodate transit if needed; if there are circumstances that warrant additional traffic demands, prioritize limiting the right-of-way dedicated to vehicles;
 - Separated or protected bicycle infrastructure, such as a protected bike lane, shared use path, buffered bike lane or bike lane;
 - Large sidewalks that accommodate a high volume of pedestrians; explore regulatory tools that ensure this pedestrian area is distinct from additional space for outdoor seating to accompany active retail uses. The sidewalk design may be further enhanced along Priority Pedestrian Connections (see B7);
 - Provide adequate space for an enhanced amenity zone that accommodates healthy trees on every street and can act as a buffer to protect the walkways from the travel lanes;
 - On-street parking where possible; in locations with limited right-of-way, on-street parking should be a lower priority than the uses listed above; and
 - Discourage curb cuts; instead, direct loading and access to alleys.
 - **Local Streets** primarily serve local trips, and they prioritize bicyclists and pedestrians over vehicles (see Figure 3.3). Within the plan area, local streets should typically have:
 - One vehicular lane in each direction, plus a turning lane where necessary with flexibility to accommodate transit if needed;
 - Bicycle infrastructure that varies from a protected bike lane to a bike lane to a shared roadway;
 - Medium to large sidewalks that accommodate a low to moderately high volume of pedestrians that also provide room for outdoor seating to accompany active uses where appropriate. The sidewalk design may be further enhanced along Priority Pedestrian Connections (see B7);
 - Provide adequate space for an enhanced amenity zone that accommodates healthy trees on every street and can be permeable yet act as a buffer;
 - On-street parking where appropriate; in locations with limited right-of-way, on street parking should be a lower priority than the uses listed above; and
 - Discourage curb cuts; instead, direct loading and access to alleys.
 - **Shared Streets** are shared by pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles at all times and typically feature little to no formal distinction between spaces dedicated to different modes (see Figure 3.4). Shared streets are most appropriate in deliberate locations where vehicle volumes and speeds are already low or expected to be sufficiently reduced with implementation of a shared street. Shared streets should have trees and planters where possible to provide shade. Shared streets are not shown on Figure 3.1, but can be implemented on appropriate street segments.
 - **Alleys** are where loading, garage access, waste pickup, and other back-of-house uses should occur. Alleys need to be wide enough to accommodate these activities. The characteristics of alleys will vary depending on the type and intensity of adjacent uses, but their primary function is to accommodate these activities on the blocks they serve and to keep these uses and curb cuts off the other street types. They may also serve as multi-functioning spaces and allow spillover from active ground floor uses. Alleys are not shown on Figure 3.1, but are expected to exist within nearly all blocks.

B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

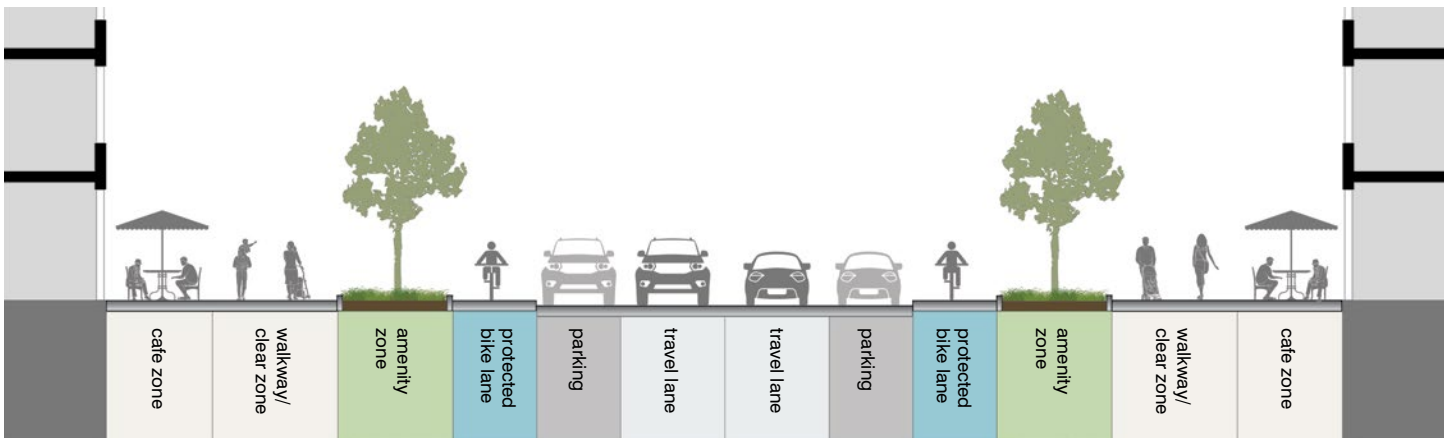


Figure 3.2: Downtown Collector Street

This is one potential way that these recommendations could be implemented, but there can be a variation in the street cross section as needed.

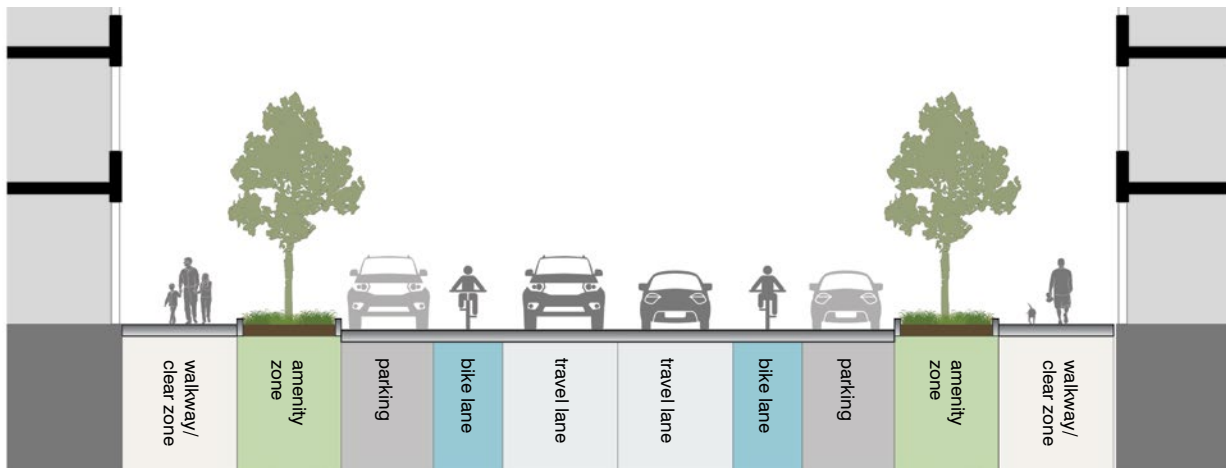


Figure 3.3: Local Street

This is one potential way that these recommendations could be implemented, but there can be a variation in the street cross section as needed.

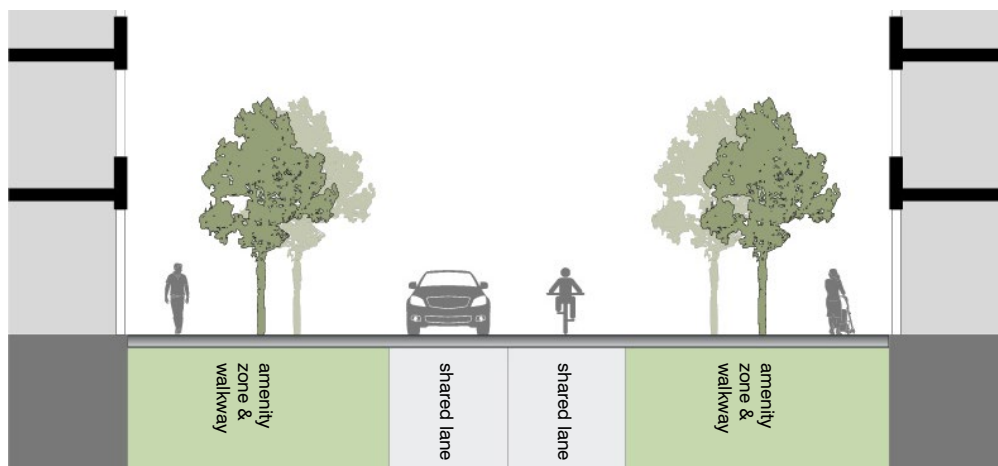


Figure 3.4: Shared Street

This is one potential way that these recommendations could be implemented, but there can be a variation in the street cross section as needed.

B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

B6c. Update existing facilities to reflect the desired character and function (see Figure 3.7).

- **23rd Avenue Improvements:** Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation to prioritize rebuilding the 23rd Avenue overpass over I-25 to Water Street to include robust pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure (illustrated in Figure 3.5).
 - Address conflicts between vehicles entering and exiting the freeway and pedestrians and bicyclists traveling along 23rd Avenue/Water Street where the on- and off-ramps intersect with 23rd Avenue and Water Street; in addition to long-term solutions, explore interim improvements such as adjusted signal timing and striping and signage updates that can be implemented quickly.
 - The outcome of these improvements is a safer, intuitive, and direct bicycle and pedestrian connection from the Jefferson Park neighborhood to Water Street and to the South Platte River trails.

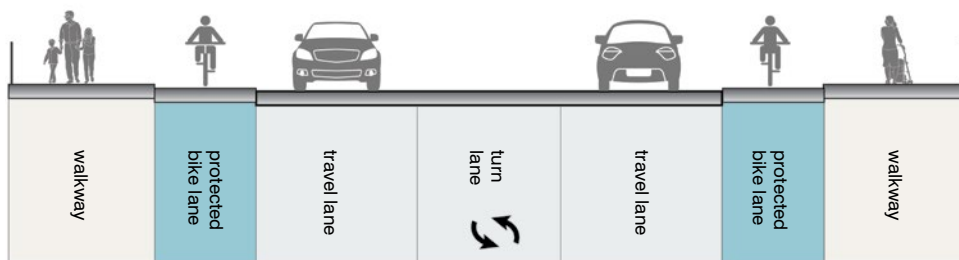


Figure 3.5: Potential 23rd Avenue Improvement

- **Water Street Improvements:** Improve Water Street so it provides multimodal connections through the plan area and to the Jefferson Park neighborhood and Platte Street (illustrated in Figure 3.6).
 - Water street should become a Downtown Collector Street (as defined in B6b) and should be improved accordingly. Because this is an existing road with a constrained right-of-way, Water Street would be an example of a Downtown Collector street without on-street parking in the short-term before redevelopment of adjacent parcels.

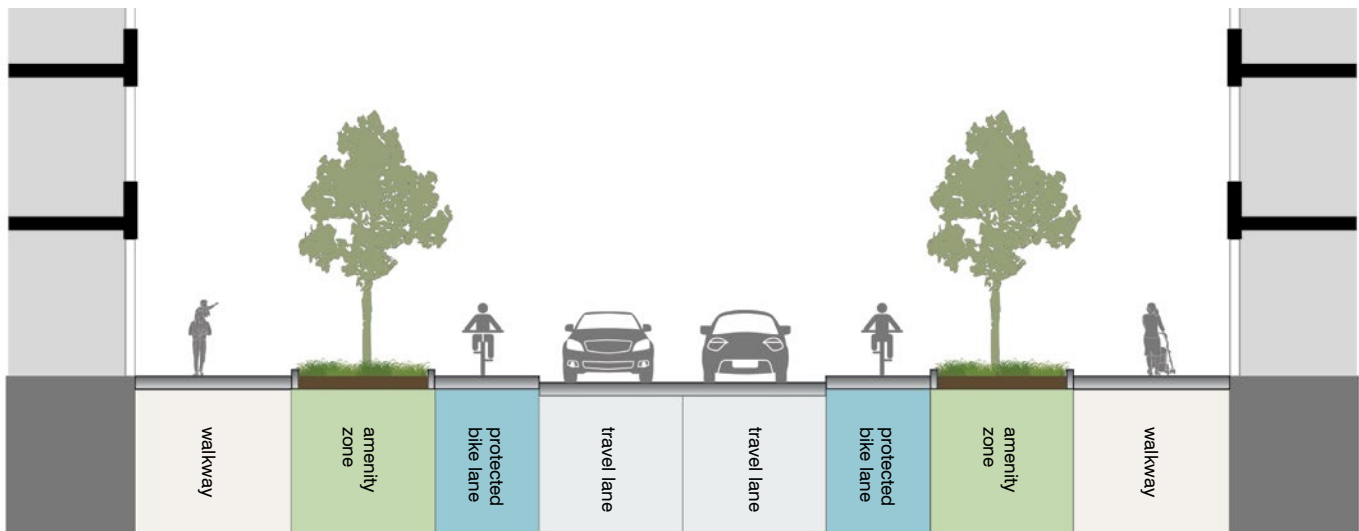


Figure 3.6: Potential Water Street Improvement

B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

- **Walnut Street Improvements:** Redesign the portion of Walnut Street within the plan area to provide multimodal connections through the plan area and to Mile High Stadium and surrounding areas (see B9).
 - Walnut street should become a Local Street or potentially a Shared Street (as defined in B6b) and should be improved accordingly.
 - Enhanced safety measures should be implemented at the at-grade rail crossing on Walnut Street to improve the safety of this crossing and the overall environment impacted by the overhead structures (additional bicycle and pedestrian connections would reduce the need for this at-grade crossing in the long-term).
 - Integrate clear signage and wayfinding.
 - Provide direct pedestrian and bicycle access from the Mile High Station and Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens stations to the at-grade crossing at Walnut Street.
- **CML Pedestrian Bridge Improvements:** Enhance the existing pedestrian bridge across the CML to ensure it is safe and convenient for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Speer Boulevard and Auraria Parkway Improvements:**
 - Improve all intersections of Speer Boulevard and Auraria Parkway in the plan area to meet City Standards and Guidelines for new downtown intersections to reflect the desired character and function for the plan area's future; implement strategies listed in the Denver Vision Zero Action Plan, which identifies Speer Boulevard as part of the High Injury Network, to improve safety along the corridor, and revisit recommendations detailed in Connecting Auraria for 9th Avenue and Auraria Parkway, including:
 - Enhance the connection under Speer Boulevard at Little Raven Street to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Restripe crosswalks to a high-visibility.
 - Reconfigure median and add landscaping.
 - Consider upgrades to Speer Boulevard and Auraria Parkway, including recommendations detailed in Connecting Auraria for Auraria Parkway, such as:
 - Acknowledge the importance of a corridor wide approach to slow vehicles and establish clear priority zones for pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Acknowledge the unique nature of the pedestrian and bicycle movement and flow as it relates to both special event activities at the Pepsi Center as well as campus activities.
- **CDOT Coordination:** Coordinate with the Colorado Department of Transportation on their Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study of I-25, and incorporate the following into future improvements of I-25 in this area.
 - Reduce the amount of land consumed by interchanges throughout the plan area (including the Speer Boulevard and I-25 interchange) by exploring more urban, compressed design alternatives appropriate for the downtown context.
 - Improve safety by reducing conflict points at interchanges, especially at 23rd Avenue (see 23rd Street improvements, above).
 - Explore the possibility of collector-distributor roads from 17th Avenue to Speer Blvd. to maintain critical access to I-25, and to minimize complicated, large footprint interchanges.
 - Reconnect the neighborhoods to the west by providing new pedestrian and bicyclist connections over I-25; Consider locations listed in B6d.
 - To minimize noise from I-25 along potential development sites north of Water Street, future design solutions should limit visual barriers, such as concrete walls, and as opposed to physical barriers, explore multiple layers of landscaping to mitigate noise pollution. If physical barriers become necessary, they should be screened with landscaping to limit visibility of them.

B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

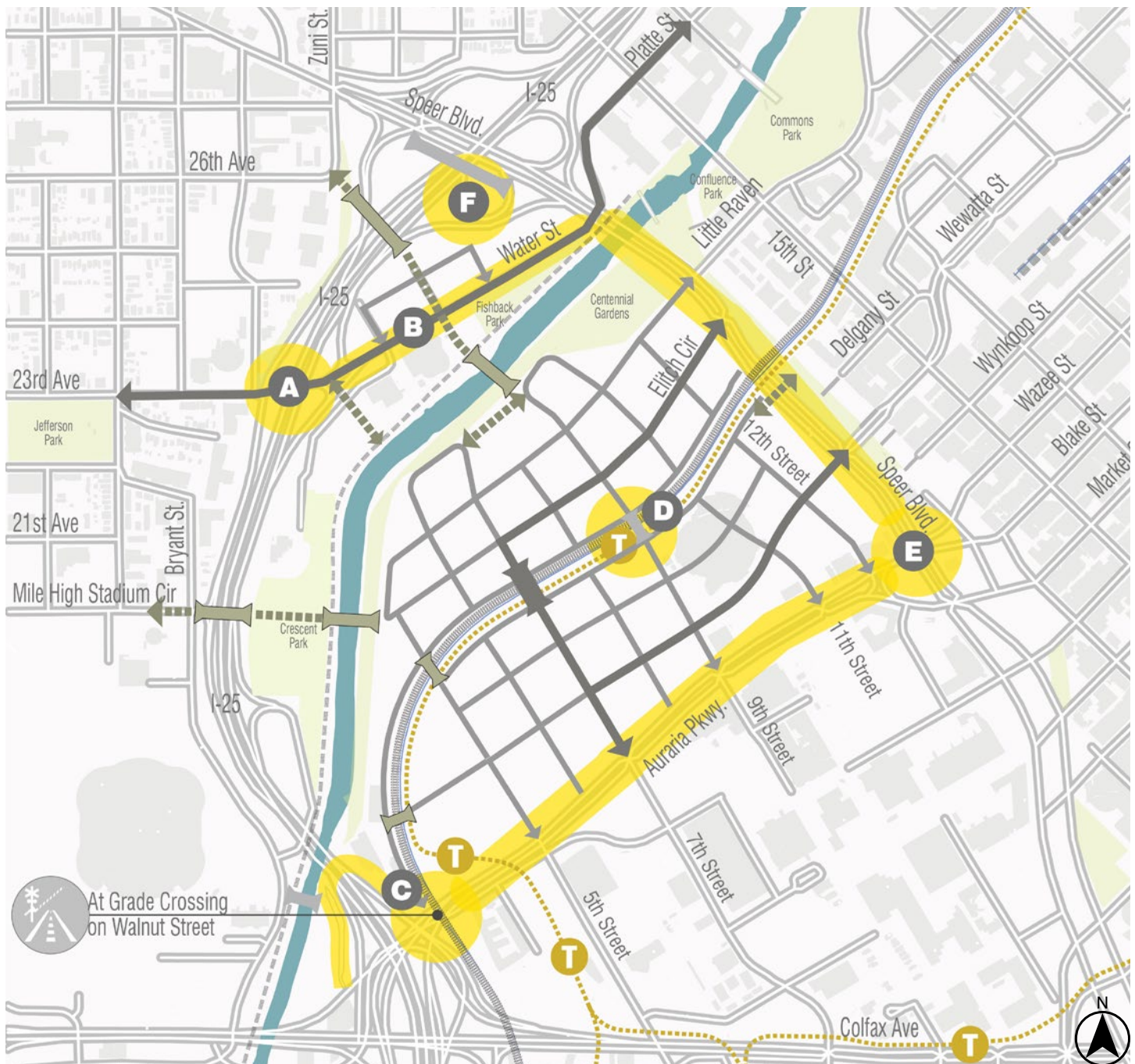


Figure 3.7: Proposed Improvements

- T** Existing Light Rail
- Existing CML**
- Platte Valley Trolley**
- Proposed Improvements to Existing Infrastructure**
- At Grade Crossing**
- A** 23rd Avenue Improvements
- B** Water Street Improvements
- C** Walnut Street Improvements
- D** CML Bridge Improvements
- E** Speer Boulevard and Auraria Parkway Improvements
- F** CDOT Coordination

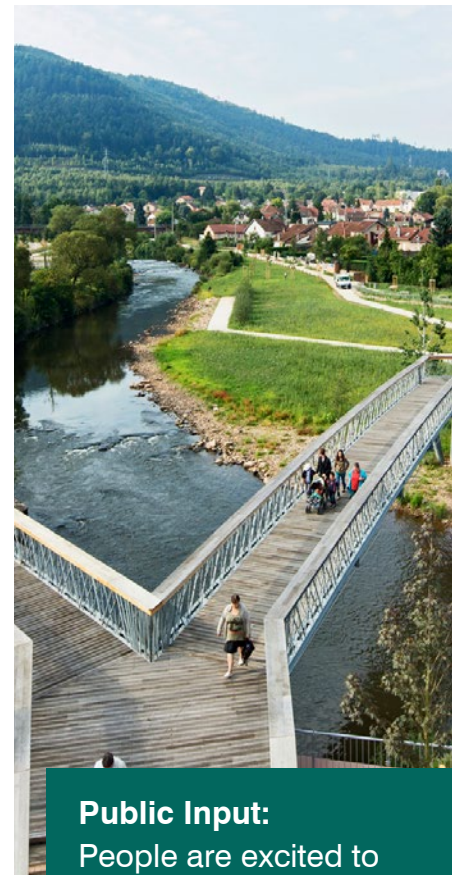
B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

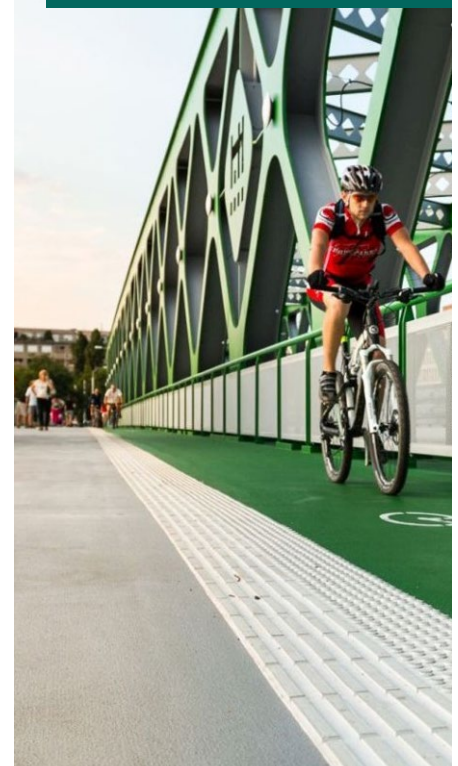
B6d. Provide new connections to and within the plan area to complete the mobility network.

Figure 3.8 illustrates one potential scenario to implement this recommendation and the following strategies. There are multiple network configurations that would accomplish these recommendations. Where possible, these new connections and improvements to existing connections should occur at ground level; flyover structures and new bridges should be limited to connections that cannot be accommodated at ground level. In cases where an elevated connection is required, such as over the river, connections should be safe and easy to use for pedestrians and bicyclists, and new infrastructure should be attractive and unique.

- **7th Street Connection:** Extend 7th Street across the consolidated main line (CML) to provide a multimodal connection across the railroad to serve as the main vehicular connection between the East of the CML and West of the CML areas.
 - Bring in fill to raise the grade adjacent to the CML; this enables an at-grade connection with seamless integration into the future surrounding development rather than requiring a bridge that would disrupt public spaces, development, and travel.
- **North/South Connections:** Provide a new North/South connection from the plan area to the surrounding neighborhoods as an extension of 9th Street; this connection should have an iconic design. The connection should meet the function and character of one of these options, and development and planning should not preclude either option:
 - **Scenario 1:** A bicycle- and pedestrian-only bridge would provide a high quality, convenient, safe, and attractive connection across the river. A bridge of this character should provide separate space for bicyclists and for pedestrians. If possible, placemaking elements such as planters and built-in seating can be incorporated. A pedestrian- and bicycle-only bridge would not be able to accommodate transit vehicles and would therefore eliminate this connection as a potential new transit route between the Jefferson Park neighborhood and the plan area.
 - **Scenario 2:** A bridge for all modes of transportation would provide access for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and other vehicles across the river. A bridge of this character and function, if feasible at this location, should:
 - Clearly prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists;
 - Be carefully designed to avoid attracting high volumes of private vehicles or becoming a short cut between the Jefferson Park neighborhood and Speer Boulevard; and
 - Prioritize transit vehicles, and potentially limit vehicular access to transit, emergency, and service vehicles only.



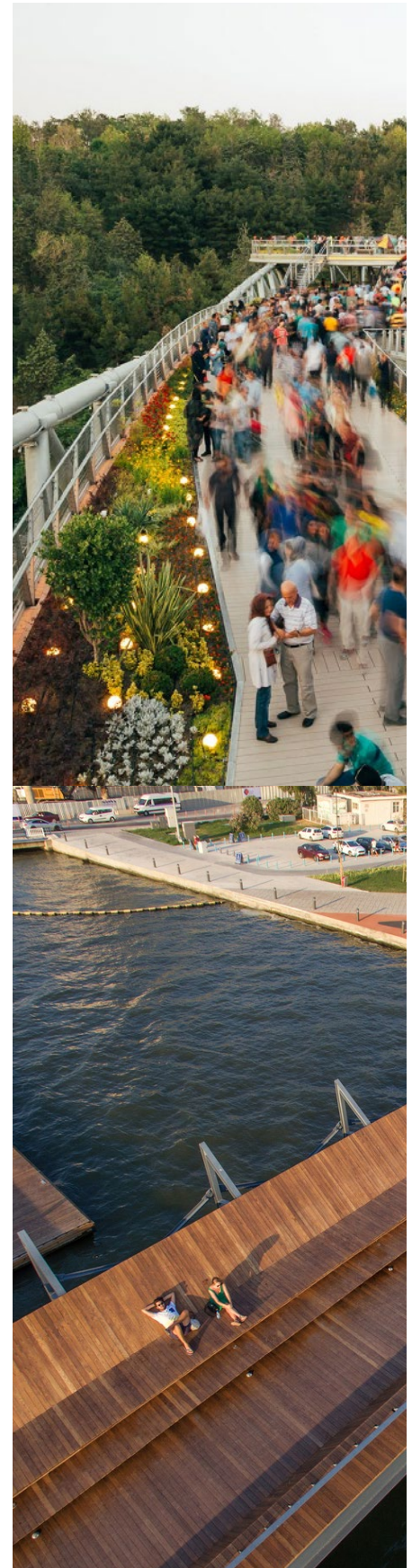
Public Input:
People are excited to see a variety of new connections.



B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

- Future studies in conjunction with development scenarios should be conducted to determine which bridge character and function might be needed for anticipated growth. Further study will also be required to determine the exact location of the connection, which should provide direct access to surrounding bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Additionally, a bridge at this location is not accounted for in the Army Corps UWR/South Platte River Study and will need to meet certain regulations, including freeboard and no-rise criteria. If more than one north/south connection from the plan area to the surrounding neighborhoods is developed over the river, then only one needs to allow for a bridge that accommodates all modes of transportation.
- **Connection to the Jefferson Park and Highland Neighborhoods:** To supplement the prioritized improvements to Water Street and the 23rd Avenue bridge over I-25 (see B6c), encourage a new connection over I-25 that connects the Jefferson Park and Highland Neighborhoods to the plan area.
 - The additional connection should align with the North/South connection over the South Platte River and continue to connect to the intersection of 26th Avenue and Zuni Street.
- **East/West Connections:** Provide new East/West connections from the study to the surrounding neighborhoods.
 - Prioritize a pedestrian and bicyclist connection over the South Platte River from the West of the CML area to Crescent Park (a bridge at this location is not accounted for in the Army Corps UWR/South Platte River Study and will need to meet certain regulations, including freeboard and no-rise criteria).
 - Encourage a connection over I-25 that connects Mile High Stadium Circle and Bryant Street to the plan area.
 - The connection should align with the prioritized East/West connection over the South Platte River and connect to Crescent Park.
- **Cherry Creek Connection:** Provide a pedestrian and bicyclist route from East of the CML to Cherry Creek via a connection under Speer Boulevard on the southeast side of the CML or some other configuration depending on the final buildout and topography of the adjacent land.



B6. Connected, Multimodal Street Network

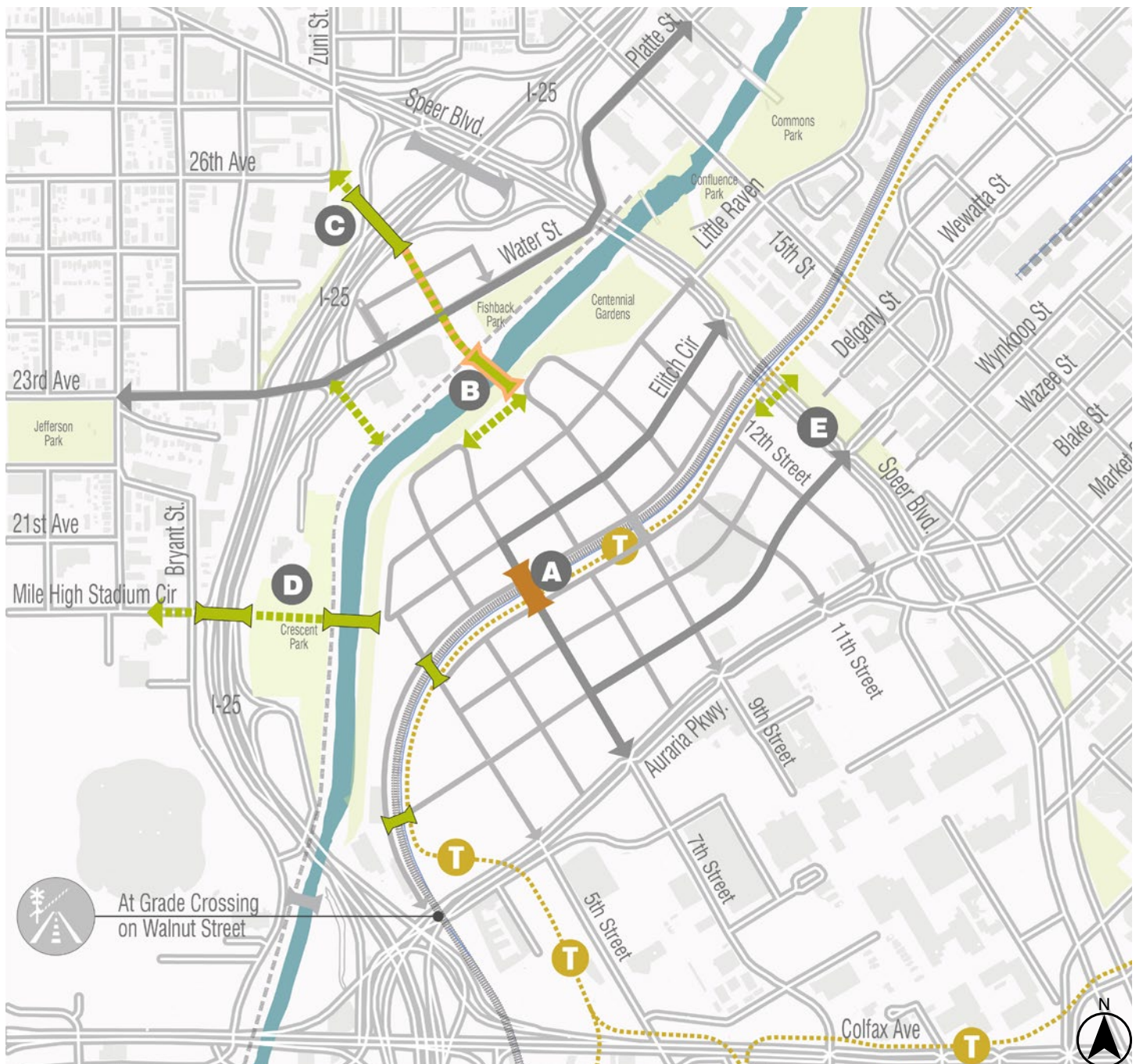


Figure 3.8: New Connections

This is one potential scenario of connections to implement this plan's recommendations. There are multiple connection configurations that can implement this plan.

B7. A Place for Pedestrians

Goal

Prioritize pedestrians by creating streets that are safe, comfortable, attractive, and appealing for walking so residents, employees, and visitors want to get around on foot.

Why It's Important

Walkability is a key ingredient to a successful urban environment—it enhances public safety, improves health, fosters more personal interactions, and increases economic vitality. Creating a comprehensive pedestrian network promotes an easy transition to adjacent neighborhoods, which supports the goal of creating an extension of downtown. Additionally, the mix of land uses detailed in A Prosperous City support walkability by locating daily necessities for commercial and residential tenants within walking distance and enabling shared parking.

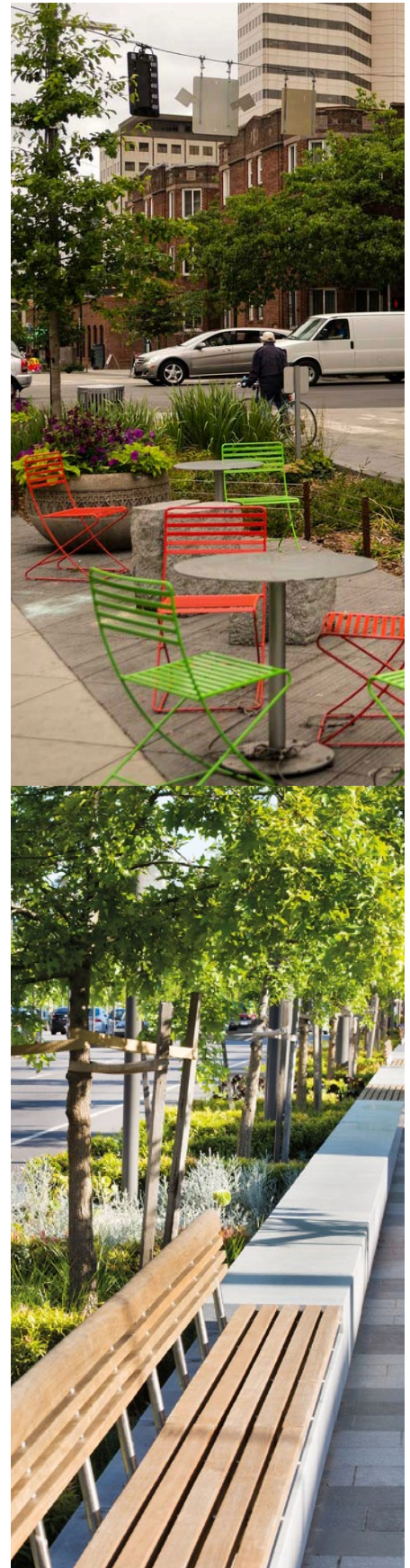
Recommendations and Strategies

B7a. Create a comprehensive pedestrian network with pedestrian facilities on all streets in the plan area.

- **Pedestrian Amenities:** Construct all new roads with pedestrian amenities that contribute to a quality built environment and encourages users to engage with their surroundings such as lighting, seating, wayfinding, and interactive elements such as public art or water features.
- **Pedestrian-Friendly Intersections:** Construct all intersections with best practice design elements; for example, all stop-controlled intersections should have well-marked and protected crossings, limit crossing distance with curb extensions, be ADA compliant, disallow right turn bypass, and include pedestrian signals.
- **Safe Routes to School:** Design pedestrian and bike networks to accommodate future schools as envisioned in the plan area. Construct new networks to protect vulnerable pedestrians while encouraging physical activity.

B7b. Designate and enhance priority pedestrian connections and intersections.

Priority pedestrian connections and intersections should meet the standards outlined in B7a, and they should also exceed these standards by providing excellent facilities for both safety and for aesthetics. Figure 3.9 illustrates one potential scenario to implement this recommendation. There are multiple network configuration scenarios that would accomplish this recommendation. The final design should accomplish the following:



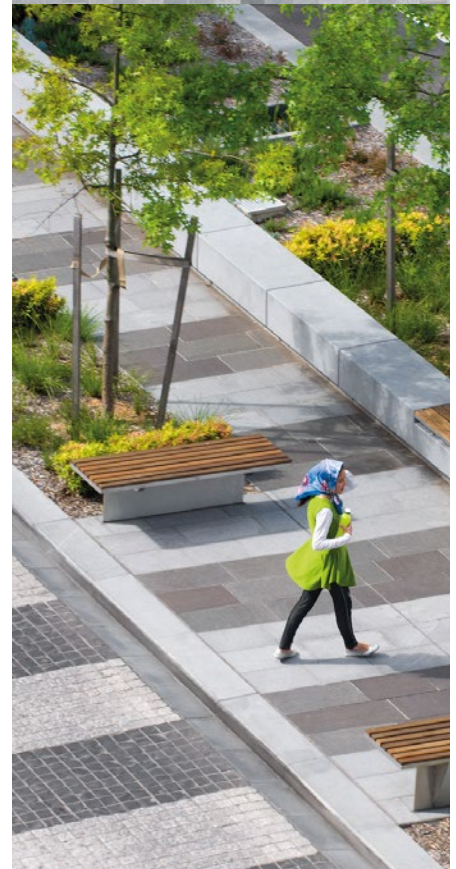
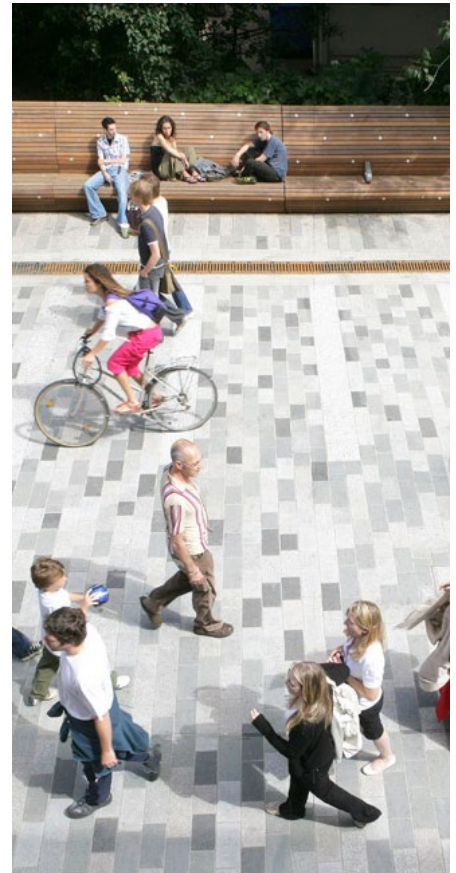
B7. A Place for Pedestrians

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

- **Identify Priority Connections:** Identify priority pedestrian connections in the plan area. Priority connections should extend to connecting facilities, such as proposed bridges. The priority pedestrian connections should include:
 - Potential pedestrian promenade extending from Auraria Parkway to the South Platte River (potential alignment would be along 9th Street).
 - Extension of Little Raven Street running parallel to the river.
 - New roads that run parallel and adjacent to the river.
 - All streets around the light rail stations (designated as Mobility Hubs).
 - Potential east/west connection from Mile High Stadium to Coors Field.
 - The connection between the Mile High Stadium Light Rail Station and the stadium.
- **Identify Priority Intersections:** Identify priority pedestrian intersections in the plan area; these should be the intersection of any priority pedestrian connections, and there should be a minimum of one priority pedestrian intersection along the streets closest to the river and adjacent to any significant public space. Priority pedestrian intersections should also include major connections from the plan area to the surrounding neighborhoods, such as Chopper Circle at Speer Boulevard and any major future streets that connect to Speer Boulevard or Auraria Parkway.
- **Design Elements:** At these priority pedestrian connections and intersections, dedicate enhanced right-of-way to pedestrian facilities, and prioritize design elements that enhance pedestrian safety, comfort, and convenience.
- **Existing Connections and Intersections:** Improve existing connections and intersections as needed as detailed in B6c.

B7c. Create an intimate block size to create a comfortable and safe walking environment.

- **Block Size:** Design blocks that are small enough to provide a pedestrian-friendly block rhythm (see B6), but large enough to accommodate both alleys (see B6) and efficient parking garage layout that allows for active uses to wrap the entire facade (see D4).



B7. A Place for Pedestrians

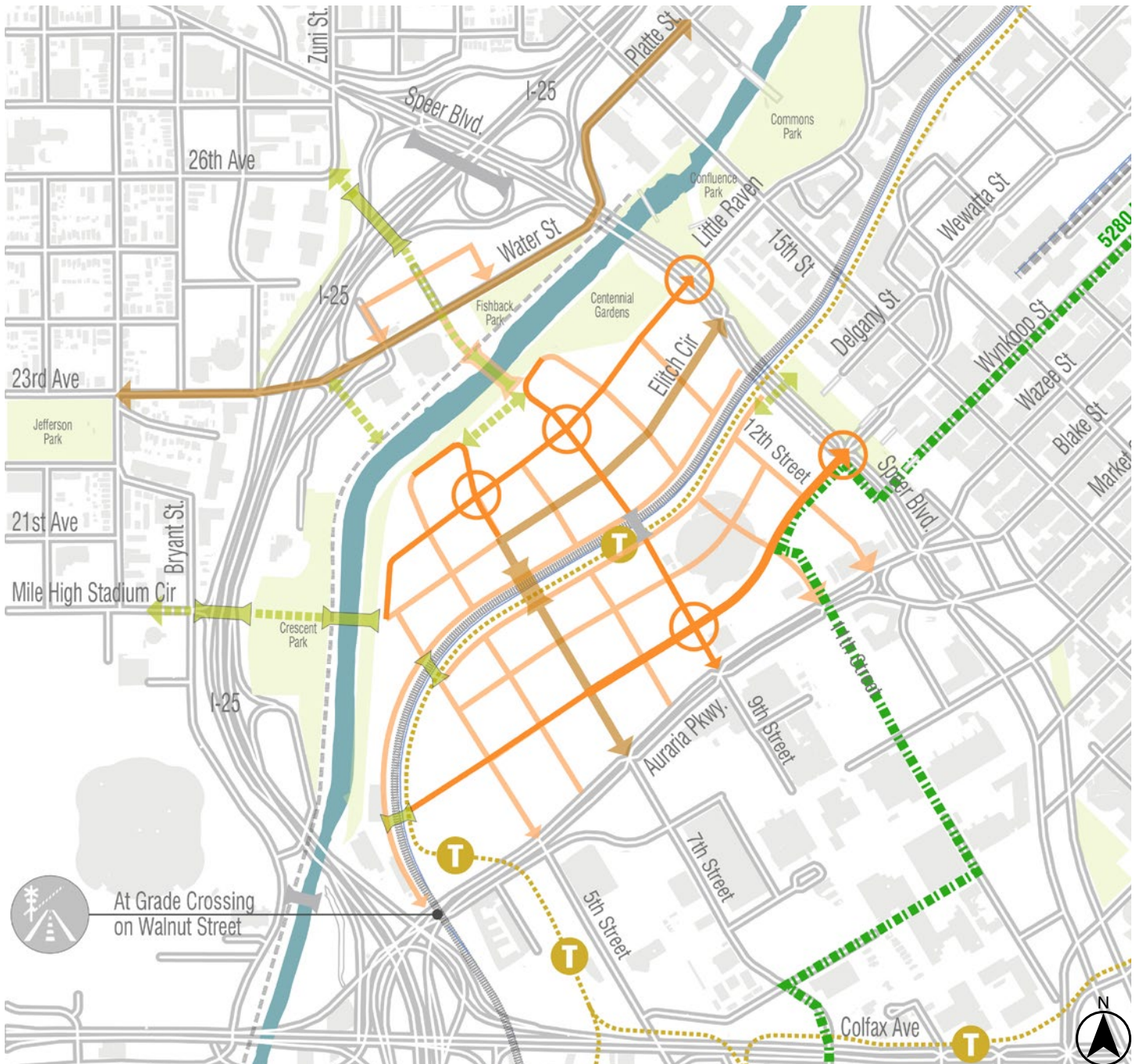
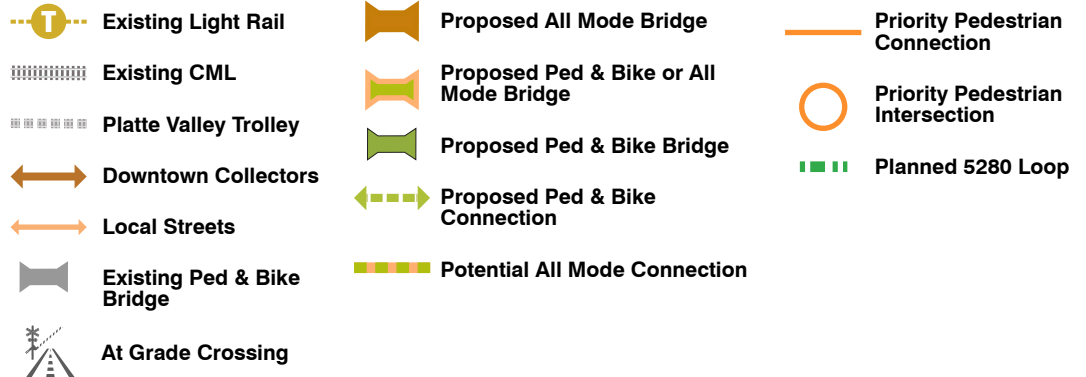


Figure 3.9: Potential Priority Pedestrian Connections and Intersections



B8. Robust Bicycle Network

Goal

Provide clear bicycle network connections via high-quality, on- and off-street facilities including parking and storage into and through the plan area.

Why It's Important

Increased bicycle use enhances the overall livability of Downtown, improves public health and air quality, and implements a key goal from the Denver Moves: Bicycles. Improved bicycle facilities also reinforce the goal of having a high ease of use bicycle facility within a quarter mile of every household.

Recommendations and Strategies

B8a. Provide comprehensive bicycle facilities throughout the plan area.

All streets in the plan that include bicycle facilities should ensure these facilities are safe and comfortable for bicycle riders of all ages and abilities. Facilities should range from protected bike lanes on higher capacity streets to shared roadways on quiet streets with low vehicle volumes. The specific design of the bicycle network is dependent on the final design of the street network; therefore, what is shown in Figure 3.10 is diagrammatic.

However, regardless of the final street design, the bicycle network should accomplish the following objectives:

- **Protected Facilities:** Protected bicycle facilities within the plan area should connect to existing or planned facilities in the surrounding neighborhoods; for example, a bike lane along Elitch Circle should extend and connect to the existing shared use path on Little Raven Street, rather than ending at Speer Boulevard, which does not have bicycle facilities.
- **Facility Design:** Bicycle lanes and routes should have clear wayfinding and be contiguous; while there is some flexibility in the specific design of bicycle facilities, variation in width and quality along a single route within the plan area should be minimized.
- **Determining Facility Type:** Particularly for new roads that are not limited by a constrained existing right-of-way, protected and conventional bicycle lanes can be applied where vehicle volumes are lower than where they might otherwise be recommended.
- **Intersections:** Intersections should be designed to provide safe, comfortable, and convenient crossings for bicyclists by prioritizing bicyclists through designated bicycle signals where appropriate based upon facility type. Specific intersection treatments should be determined with each design.
- **Parking:** Bicycle parking should be available and convenient throughout the plan area.

B8b. Connect to existing and planned bicycle facilities.

- **Existing Facilities:** The bicycle network within the plan area should provide a direct connection to the existing facilities, including bicycle infrastructure on 5th Street, 11th Street, the Platte River Trail, and along the Cherry Creek Trail.
- **Planned Facilities:** The bicycle network within the plan area should also connect to the planned facilities detailed in Denver Moves: Bicycles.
- **5280 Loop:** The network should connect to and leverage the planned 5280 Loop.

B8. Robust Bicycle Network

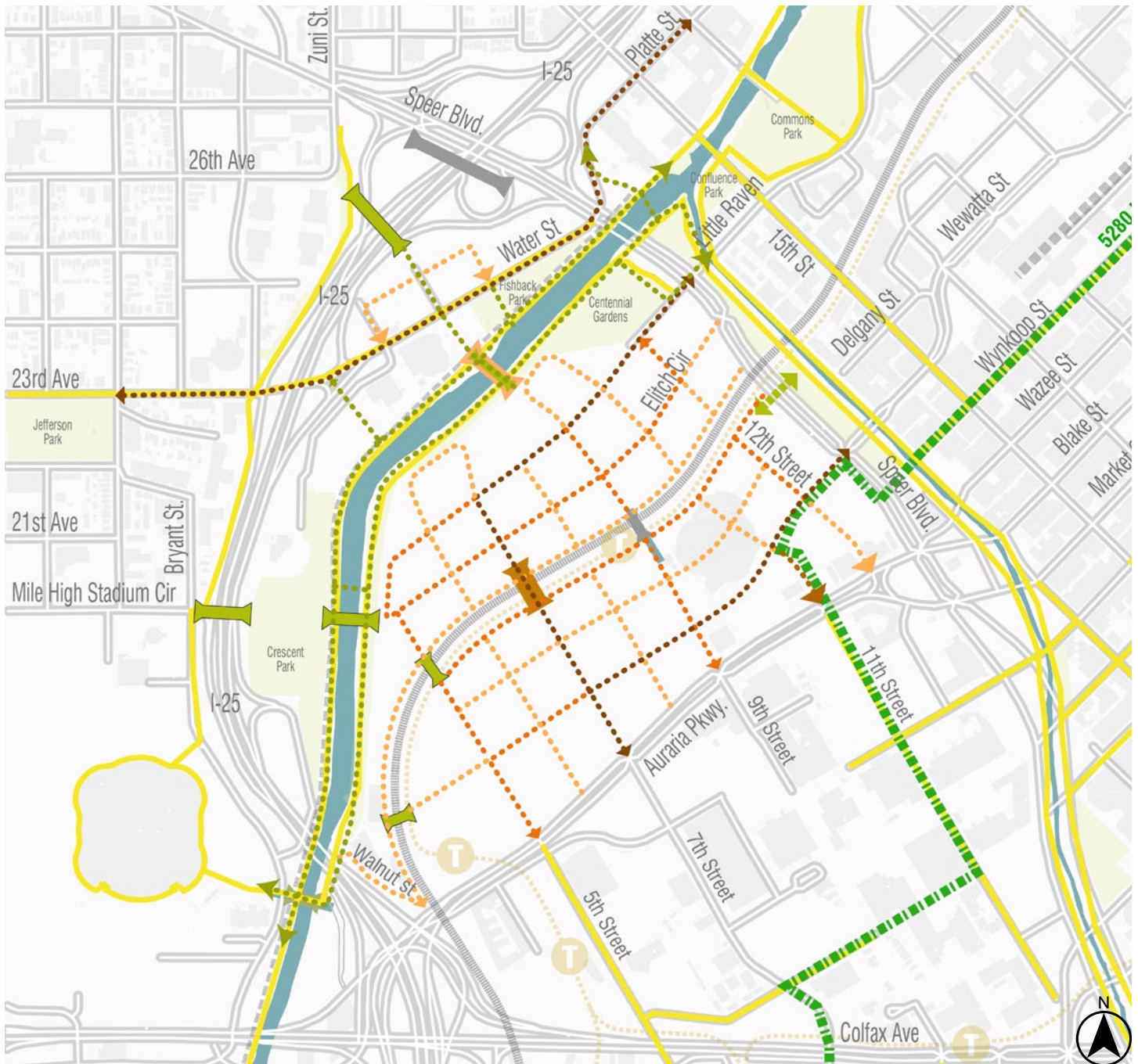
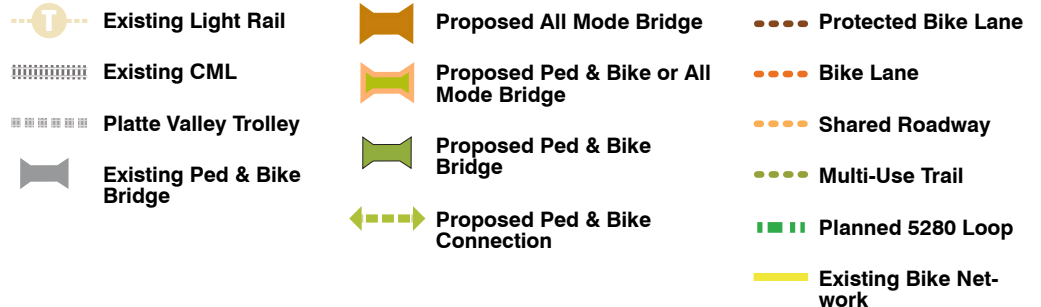


Figure 3.10: Bike Facilities



B9. Mobility Hub

Goal

Leverage the existing transit connections within the plan area and create a robust network connecting to local, regional, statewide, and national services to make traveling by transit safe and convenient.

Why It's Important

The two light rail stations within the plan area are an opportunity create a Mobility Hub by fully integrating the stations into the plan area and other transit services, to increase the viability of using transit, and to enhance first/last mile connections. Creating a Mobility Hub also would leverage the plan area's potential as the next downtown neighborhood.

Recommendations and Strategies

B9a. Establish protocol to transform Pepsi Center/Elitch Gardens and Mile High light rail stations into Mobility Hubs.

Mobility Hubs, which are a type of transit-oriented development, are locations served by transit that seamlessly integrate transit services into the surrounding transportation network, including other transit services, bicycle facilities, and walkable destinations.

- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections:** Provide excellent pedestrian and bicycle connections to the light rail stations; provide pedestrian and bicycle connections across Speer Boulevard to existing transit services on 15th Street.
- **Bicycle Parking:** Provide convenient and secure bicycle parking at the stations.
- **Bicycle Share:** Encourage bike share programs at station areas in locations that are visible and convenient to the stations.
- **Ride Share:** Provide ride share and transportation network company pick-up and drop-off.
- **Car Share:** Encourage car share programs at station areas.
- **Transit Facilities:** Provide bus shelters and ticketing kiosks for connecting services.
- **Transit Information:** Provide real-time transit information and schedules.
- **Wayfinding:** Include clear wayfinding for all modes of travel throughout the station area.
- **Emerging Technology:** Incorporate advanced technology solutions for transportation and mobility systems.
 - Explore how new mobility options such as autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, and sub-grade transit can address mobility needs while reducing the demand for dedicated space for private vehicles.
 - Address the projected effect of smart and autonomous vehicles on traffic management and parking solutions.



B9. Mobility Hub

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

B9b. Provide additional transit services to and through the plan area.

- **Extended Bus Service:** Consider extending bus services along a new street network to connect to the light rail stations, including transit connections to surrounding neighborhoods, especially the Jefferson Park neighborhood.
- **Existing Facilities:** Improve existing bus stops and provide amenities such as shelters, benches, waste receptacles, and schedule information to promote more efficient and equitable use.
- **Last-mile Service:** Consider implementing last-mile transit options such as a shuttle circulator system to provide a connection between the light rail stations, the riverfront, Union Station, and other surrounding neighborhoods; this system is an opportunity for potential innovations such as autonomous, electric vehicles.



B10. Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Goal

Reduce the need for vehicle infrastructure and to encourage residents, employees, and visitors to travel to and within the site by walking, biking, and taking transit rather than by driving alone.

Importance

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to a suite of strategies that aim to reduce automobile traffic congestion and vehicle emissions by helping people use the transportation system more efficiently; TDM strategies aim to reduce drive-alone automobile trips, particularly during peak traffic periods, by shifting those trips to other modes of travel or to other times of day. The City is preparing to launch a TDM planning effort that aims to create a tool and chart a path towards a citywide coordinated TDM plan for all new development. Implementation of a robust TDM strategy will be a critical element of the success of the plan area; it will enable the multi-modal transportation network detailed in previous sections to adequately serve the land uses and intensities envisioned for this area. Development of TDM strategies for the plan area should be coordinated with citywide efforts, but may need to proceed ahead of the City's process depending on the development schedule and completion of the City's TDM efforts.

Recommendations and Strategies

B10a. Require Transportation Demand Management.

- **TDM Plan:** New development should work with the City and County of Denver and the Downtown Denver Partnership, which is the local Transportation Management Association (TMA), to manage, implement, measure, and enforce a TDM plan.

TDM STRATEGIES

The suite of TDM strategies is evolving and expanding, and certain strategies are more effective in specific circumstances. Therefore any TDM plan should be measured by trip reduction outcomes and incorporate enough flexibility to incorporate new strategies and focus on strategies that are the most effective and appropriate in a specific location. The following list is a non-exhaustive selection of potential TDM strategies to consider for the plan area:

Programmatic Strategies

- Discounted (or free) EcoPasses for employees, residents
- Discounted (or free) passes for low-income residents
- Discounted car-share memberships
- Promotional campaigns such as Bike to Work Day, Walk to Work Day
- Leverage programs identified in the DRCOG Regional TDM Short Range Plan (2012-2016)
- Individualized marketing

Commute Trip Reduction Strategies

- Carpool, Vanpool, School-pool, and ride share
- Guaranteed ride home
- Showers and lockers
- Flexible work schedule, telecommuting

Design Strategies

- Information boards/kiosks
- Direct route to transit
- Bike parking
- Passenger loading zones for ride shares, autonomous vehicles, etc.
- Locate parking out-of-site with alley access
- Right-of-way improvements that encourage walking, biking, or ride sharing

Transit Strategies

- Shuttle service to/from transit
- Subsidized transit passes
- Bus shelters that are covered, well-lighted, and provide seating
- Informative and visible signs and maps
- Accommodations for bicycles on transit vehicles
- Wireless capabilities for riders

Parking Strategies

- Unbundle residential parking (sell or lease parking spaces separately from residential units)
- Parking cash-out options for on-site "free" employee parking
- Parking maximums instead of minimums (a lower volume of vehicles entering and exiting from garages will also enable garages access on alleys)
- Parking management: car share, electric vehicle sharing, public parking garages

A DIVERSE CITY

Being a socially and economically inclusive place

A diverse city is a place that welcomes and attracts people of all ages, races, religions, or incomes who wants to live, work or play downtown.

Neighborhoods support diversity by expanding availability of housing at a range of prices. Diverse communities tend to be safer, more vibrant, economically resilient, healthier, and more appealing.

The Downtown Area Plan developed four topics to achieve the vision element of becoming A Diverse City. In addition to C1 through C4 (listed below), two new recommendation topics apply to the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District.

Plan Topics

- C1. Downtown Living
- C2. A Family-Friendly Place
- C3. Embracing Adjacent Neighborhoods
- C4. An International Downtown

Plan Amendment Topics

- C5. Diverse Housing Options
- C6. Support a Diverse Community



C5. Diverse Housing Options

Goal

Provide a variety of affordable, family-sized, and live/work housing options to support a diverse community.

Why It's Important

Fostering an equitable, affordable, and inclusive community is an integral part of creating a thriving downtown neighborhood. A diverse range of housing that attracts a variety of households of different sizes, ages, and incomes is a fundamental requirement to enabling a dynamic, diverse, and active community. This also supports the core goals of Housing an Inclusive Denver, the Office of Economic Development's five-year policy, strategy, and investment document, including creating affordable housing in areas of opportunity, preserving affordability and housing quality, and promoting equitable and accessible housing options. Additionally, the plan area provides a significant opportunity to implement Housing an Inclusive Denver's strategy of leveraging new development as a tool to bring affordability to areas near transit, jobs centers, and schools.

Recommendations and Strategies

C5a. Pursue an effective affordable housing delivery mechanism that is appropriate for the scale and type of development expected in the plan area.

As of January 1, 2017, all commercial and residential development in Denver is charged a linkage fee based on the square footage of the project. These fees are used to help create or preserve affordable homes for low- to moderate-income families. The plan area is large and likely to develop over a relatively short period of time; therefore this linkage fee would generate funding for housing citywide, but it would not compel an outcome consistent with the goal of having a substantial number of affordable units integrated into the plan area.

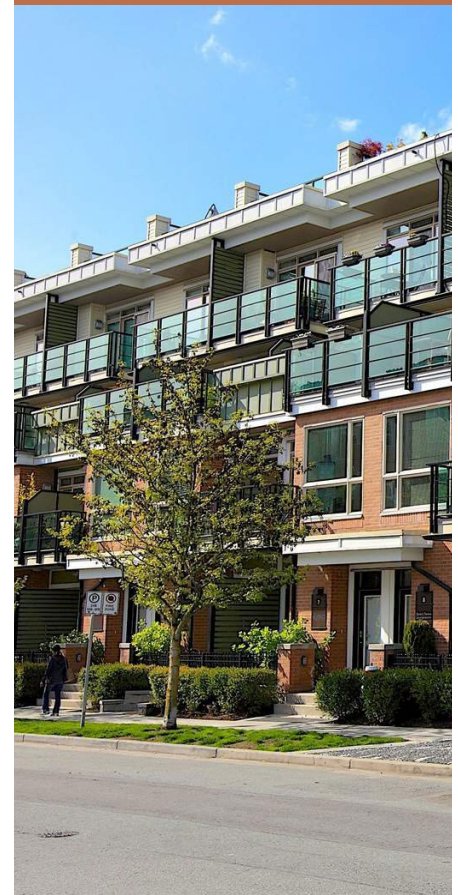
- **Provision of Units:** Develop a mechanism to require affordable units to be built as part of on-site development rather than only through the linkage fee.

C5b. Encourage new residential development to offer affordable housing units with a wide range of prices that accommodate a variety of income levels.

The Office of Economic Development defines its "housing continuum" as a range of users from critical need to workforce rental to workforce ownership. Income levels are defined according to what percent that a person or household's income is of the area mean income (AMI).

- **Mixed Income:** Encourage more attainably priced options across the housing continuum from low (people or households making less than 30 percent AMI) to moderate (people or households making up to 80 percent AMI). Provision of housing suitable for people or households making 80 to 120 percent of the AMI is encouraged, but would not be considered a contribution to affordable housing requirements.

A survey conducted by the Office of Economic Development found that living in areas with diverse neighbors—those of different races and ethnicities, economic statuses, or ages and lifestyles—is important for the majority of respondents. Specifically, 64% of respondents said it was "very important" or "important" to live in a diverse neighborhood with residents at a variety of ages and lifestyles. Additionally, 58% of respondents said it was "very important" or "important" to live in an economically diverse neighborhood.



C5. Diverse Housing Options

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

C5c. Encourage a variety of housing types to attract a wide range of households.

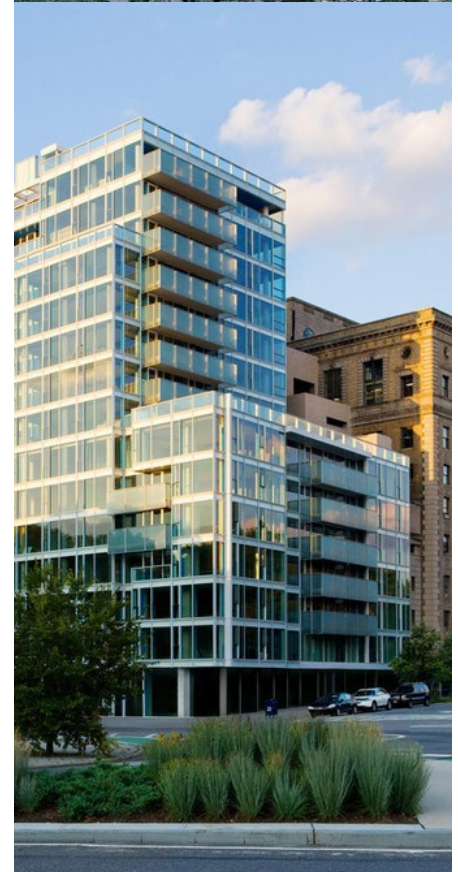
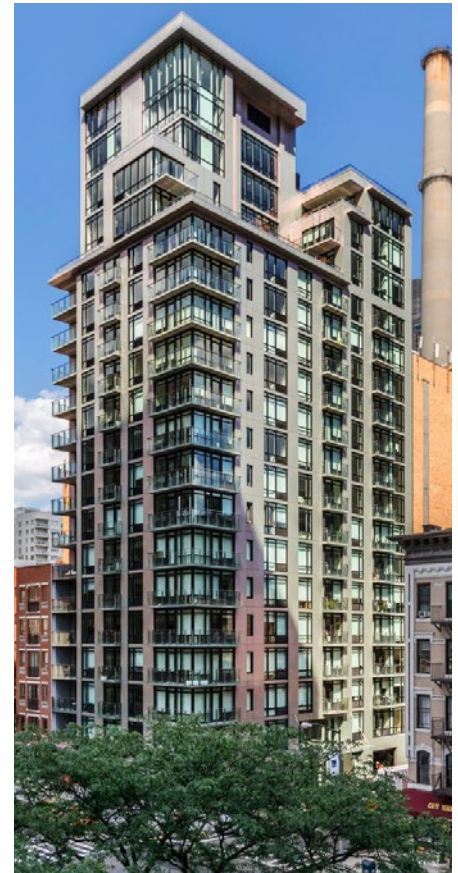
- **Building Types:** Promote a variety of building types that include, but are not limited to, apartments, condominiums, townhomes, and live/work units.
- **Unit Types:** Encourage a variety of unit types that accommodate a range of households and ages.
 - Promote a variety of unit sizes from studios and one-bedroom units to units with three or more bedrooms to accommodate larger households or families.
 - Consider amenities and design solutions that attract families with young children as well as elderly residents.

C5d. Encourage new residential development to offer affordable housing units with a wide range of prices that accommodate a variety of income levels.

- **Stability and Flexibility:** Promote both ownership and rental opportunities for a variety of housing types and unit sizes that also vary from market-rate to affordable prices.

C5e. Encourage a variety of housing options throughout the plan area.

- **Dispersed and Integrated Affordable Units:** Use an affordable housing plan or other affordable housing requirements to ensure that affordable units are dispersed.
- **Geographic Location:** Ensure affordable housing is appropriately located throughout the plan area.
 - Avoid a concentration of housing, specifically affordable housing, near I-25 or the CML (See Section 4: Environmental Remediation on strategies regarding residential uses adjacent to the CML or I-25).
 - Support the creation of family-appropriate affordable housing in proximate and safe access to educational facilities, recreational opportunities, and fresh food.



C6. Support a Diverse Community

Goal

Create a vibrant neighborhood by intentionally attracting a diverse range of residents (including families), employees, entrepreneurs, and visitors.

Why It's Important

Diversity is a measure of success in a community for a variety of reasons; diverse communities are vibrant, inclusive, and resilient to change. Metrics for diversity include income, race, employment, education and housing tenure. One metric of diversity is the number of children in a community. Supporting young families means that residents can continue to contribute to the vibrancy of downtown even as their family structure changes, and it means that fewer families have to move out of cities resulting in additional urban sprawl. Building a community that supports children results in a city that is inclusive and sustainable.

A diverse array of businesses enables more resilient and adaptable commercial activity, job markets, and visitor attractions, and it also supports a broader variety of residents' needs and desires.

Recommendations and Strategies

C6a. Offer services and opportunities that support families.

- **Childcare:** Explore funding opportunities or partnerships with developers and providers to introduce child care and day care services into the plan area.
- **Community Gathering Spaces:** Create unique places with diverse uses, activities, services and gathering spaces that help to draw people together and create desirable destinations in the community.
 - Design community gathering spaces to be versatile, accessible and adaptable to appeal to a broad range of groups and interests, including resident groups, families, clubs, sports teams and community groups.
 - Encourage recreational centers to have a combination of the following programs: gym, pool, community meeting rooms, after school activities, daycare, or activities for seniors.
 - Encourage new development to provide indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces such as shared or semi-private spaces (particularly located near a cluster of units that have three or more bedrooms to become spaces where children from different households can play independently, but supervised) or lobbies that promote lingering and casual social interaction.
- **In-Unit Amenities:** Promote amenities such as laundry facilities and additional storage space (such as space for strollers) within units that have three or more bedrooms.
- **Schools:** Collaborate with Denver Public Schools (DPS) to explore the opportunity for new primary and secondary schools to be integrated within the plan area as necessary.
- **Education Opportunities:** Partner with educational outreach programs through local primary and secondary schools to utilize public spaces for interactive, inclusive and diverse learning experiences.

In 2015, Toronto's City Planning Division conducted a study to determine how downtown development can better accommodate the needs of households with children. The study resulted in a set of guidelines, including the recommendations that 15 percent of new buildings' units include two bedrooms, and 10 percent include three bedrooms. The guidelines recommend locating these larger units near each other and on lower floors with adjoining outdoor spaces to foster observed yet independent play and interaction among families.



C6. Support a Diverse Community

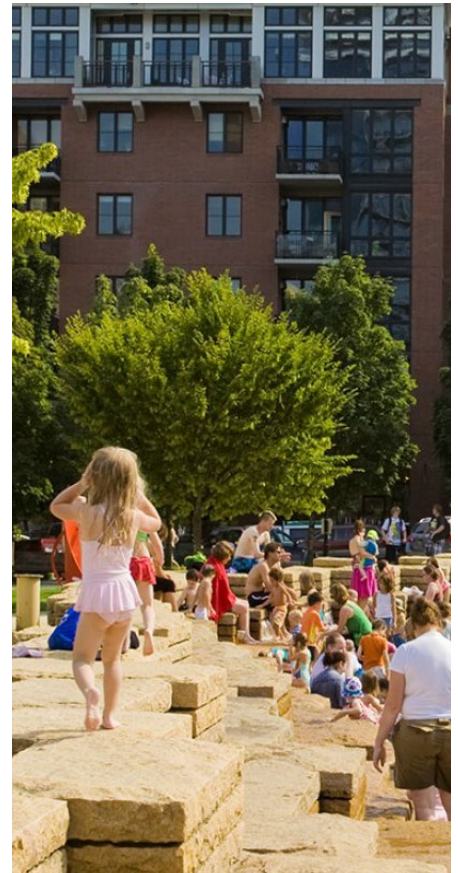
Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

C6b. Explore strategies to attract a diverse group of businesses, employees, and visitors.

- **Diverse Businesses:** Work with the Office of Economic Development (OED) and non-profits to identify organizations, businesses, or entrepreneurs that can leverage retail, office, lab, or other new spaces in future development.
- **Adult Education:** Cultivate partnerships to broaden adult educational and job placement opportunities, such as collaboration between neighborhoods and the institutions operating on Auraria Campus.

C6c. Encourage the formation of neighborhood partnerships.

- **Neighborhood Partnerships:** Encourage existing and future businesses and residents to coordinate projects with appropriate organizations such as nonprofits, government agencies, and community organizations. These partnerships could help raise awareness of neighborhood issues, outreach efforts, assets and resources that could be leveraged, and avoid redundancies including excessive and uncoordinated neighborhood outreach efforts.



A DISTINCTIVE CITY

Placing value on identity, people, and characteristics

Places with distinctive identity differentiate themselves from other places in the City, and signal to residents, visitors and the business community that this is a special place. A distinctive identity arises from unique characteristics and qualities that can be defined and expressed through streetscapes, architecture, public spaces, public art, and cultural amenities that improve our experience of the built environment. The mile of South Platte River is an invaluable resource that can define a distinct identity for the plan area. It connects multiple riverfront parks and open spaces, offers comprehensive urban and recreational experiences, and provides a unique central feature for the plan area.

The Downtown Area Plan developed three topics to achieve the vision element of becoming A Distinctive City. In addition to D1 through D3, three new recommendation topics apply to the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District.

Plan Topics

- D1. District Evolution
- D2. Connecting Auraria
- D3. Downtown's New Neighborhood: Arapahoe Square

Plan Amendment Topics

- D4. Variety of Building Intensity
- D5. Extraordinary Design
- D6. Branding and Identity



D4. Variety of Building Intensity

Goal

Promote new development that creates diverse places and activities through a variety of building densities and intensities within a mixture of building forms that reinforce a comfortable, human scale pedestrian experience.

Why It's Important

Compact mixed-use and high-density development around mass transit and adjacent to some of Denver's greatest downtown assets can bring social and economic vitality to both the plan area and the city. However, overly homogeneous high-density patterns or underdevelopment could detract from the vision of this Amendment. A variety of building forms and massing that allow the desired density, but preserve a welcoming human scale experience, will be paramount to the success of this area.

Recommendations and Strategies

D4a. Write new regulatory tools that limit the possibility for under-development.

- **Minimum Building Intensity Requirements:** If high density is not achieved, many of the community benefits envisioned by this Amendment (like affordable housing, open space, services, and retail) may not be feasible. Explore regulatory tools, such as minimum floor area ratios or building heights, to prevent under-development.
 - Establish a minimum level of intensity or height that ensures an appropriate level of development for the area.
 - Establish mechanisms that require community benefits commensurate with development intensity greater than the minimum.

D4b. Adopt new Zoning and Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) that compel a variety of building heights and intensities.

- **Building Height:** Encourage tall building heights appropriate to the downtown context (exceeding 30 stories), and use zoning and DSG to control the frequency and massing of tall buildings.
- **Regulate Tall Building Frequency and Massing:** Evaluate a range of regulatory tools that create the desired intensity (including the frequency and massing) of tall buildings, break down development scale, and ensure light and air access. Tools could include maximum floor area ratios, mass reduction, tower spacing minimums, building floor-plate maximums, and upper story setbacks.
- **Calibrate Building Intensities by Area:** Transition tall building intensity (including frequency and massing of tall buildings) from higher to lower according to the description below and as illustrated in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2.
 - Higher intensity of tall buildings:
 - Along the CML, Speer Boulevard, Auraria Parkway, and 7th Street
 - In closest proximity to mobility hubs at light rail stations
 - Lower intensity of tall buildings:
 - Along the river's edge
 - Water Street

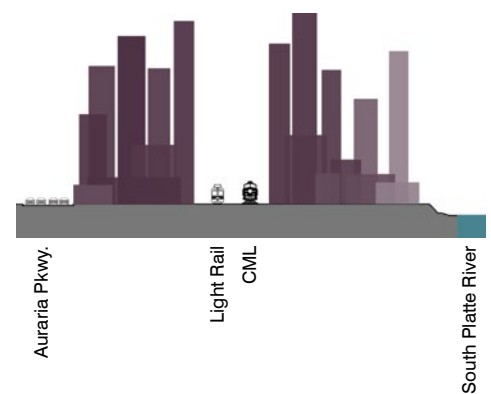


Figure 4.1: Conceptual Building Intensity Section

D4. Variety of Building Intensity

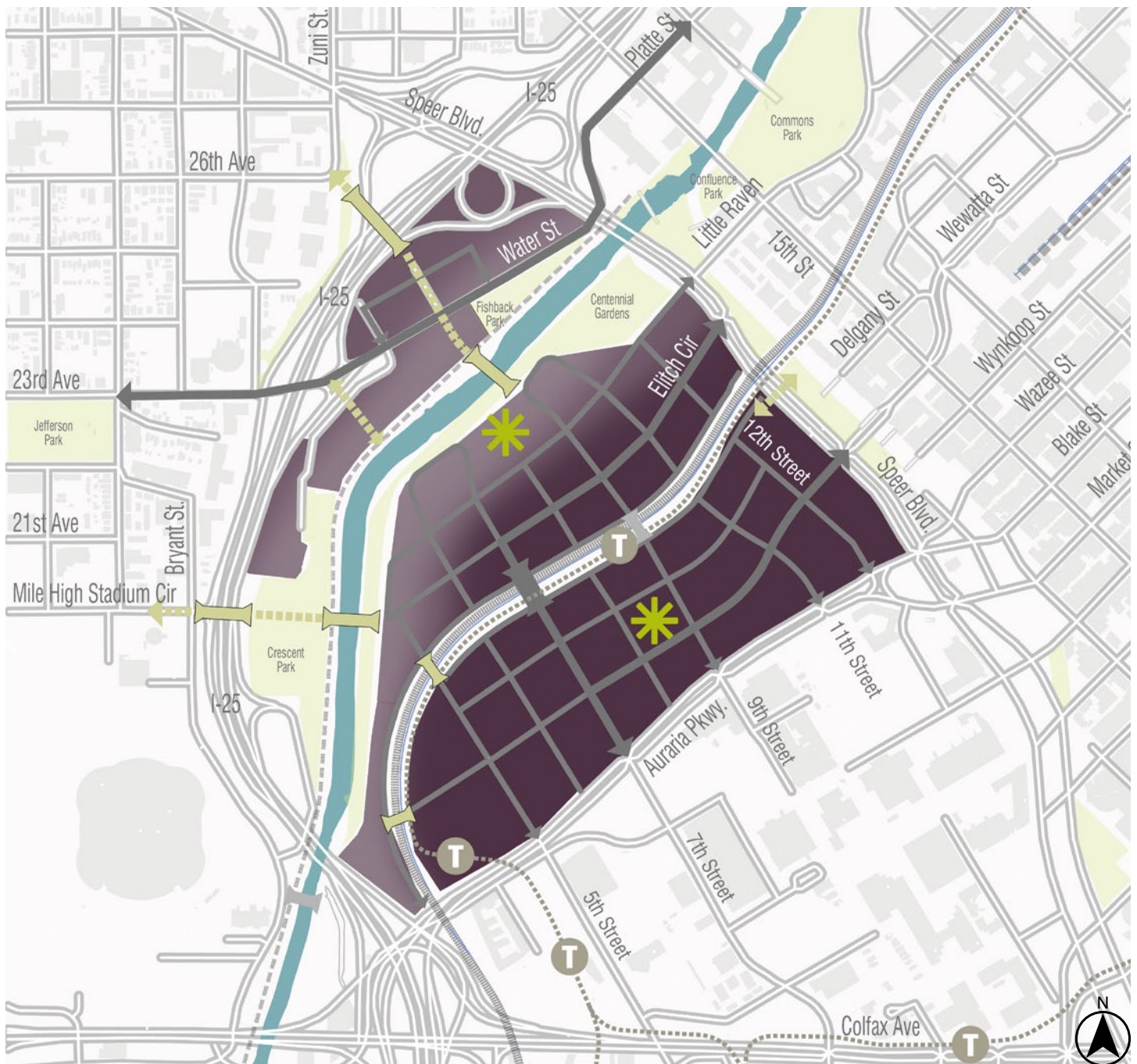
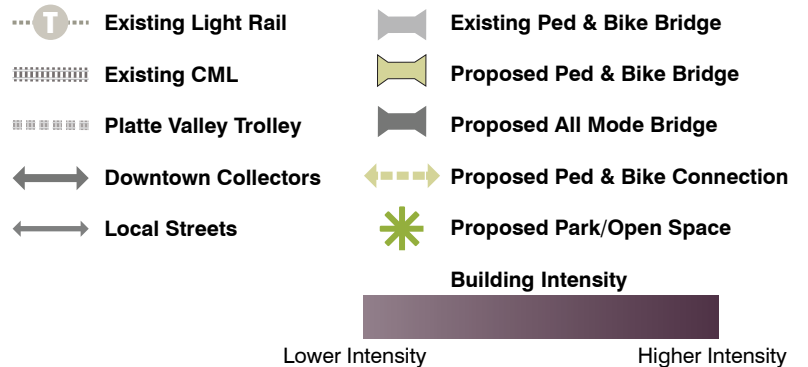


Figure 4.2: Conceptual Building Intensity



D5. Extraordinary Design

Goal

Prescribe high quality urban design, landscape and architectural principles, which inform building aesthetic, quality, longevity, and durability of the built environment. The urban design recommendations in these strategies are intended to inform future design standards and guidelines and zoning regulations.

Importance

A successful neighborhood where people enjoy walking, shopping, dining, living, and going to work depends on thoughtful planning, urban design and architecture. Whether it is a quiet residential street or a busy downtown intersection, many elements of the built environment impact the experience of a neighborhood; this experience affects our perception of comfort and safety.

Recommendations and Strategies

D5a. Adopt new Zoning and Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) that embrace a sense of human scale and promote a high-quality pedestrian experience.

- **Engaging Pedestrian Environment:** Implement a range of regulatory tools to achieve a high-quality pedestrian experience, including high levels of transparency, a deliberate build-to (the build-to refers to a zoning standard intended to define the public realm by requiring consistent building placement along street frontages), frequent entrances, facade articulation, and ground floor minimum heights. Develop attractive and flexible ground floor spaces to accommodate a wide range of active uses that will need small to large spaces to operate.
- **Wrapped Parking:** Use zoning and DSG to reduce visible structured parking above grade (on both the ground floor and upper stories) to create a vibrant and safe pedestrian experience (see Figure 4.4).
 - Develop standards that require street level structured parking to be wrapped by any primary use except parking spaces or parking aisles.
 - Develop regulations that at a minimum require wrapping upper-story parking with uses other than parking along active corridors and the river.
- **Inviting Public Realm:** Encourage form, massing and scale of future development to achieve a human scale and embrace a lively and inviting streetscape and public realm.
- **Distinctive Skyline:** Promote well-designed buildings that will contribute to a distinctive skyline that is recognizable for its unique and iconic architecture.
- **Comfortable Street and Public Realm Enclosure:** Explore ways to maintain the proportional sense of enclosure through building massing and height in relationship to block sizes and street widths.
 - Upper story setbacks should be established to ensure the street wall height maintains the sense of enclosure separate of the total building height (illustrated in Figure 4.3).



D5. Extraordinary Design



Figure 4.3: Conceptual Building Enclosure Ratios

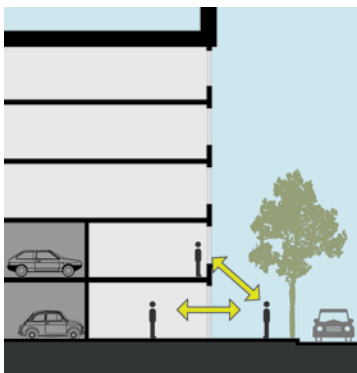


Figure 4.4: Diagram of Wrapped Parking

D5. Extraordinary Design

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

D5b. Future DSG should promote a high-level of design quality.

- **Variety of Designers:** Encourage future development to create a variety of building and landscape architecture styles.
- **Civic Design:** Engage residents during the planning and design phases of public projects, such as:
 - The reconfiguration of 23rd Avenue bridge (see A Walkable City).
 - New pedestrian and bike connections networks.
 - Park and trail design and amenities.
- **Timeless Design:** Promote future development that is innovative (using most advanced technological solutions in the building industry) and has a sense of permanence (using sustainable and enduring materials and finishes).
- **Adaptable:** Encourage future development to remain adaptable to accommodate potential future needs, such as minimum floor to ceiling heights for ground floors to enable ground story residential uses to adapt to usable storefronts over time, and parking structures that can easily convert to active uses.
- **Universal Design:** Encourage future development to use the Universal Design principles.
- **Materials and Finishes:** Encourage the use of high-quality, durable materials and finishes that contribute to the overall aesthetics and longevity of development.

D5c. Establish streetscape and public space standards to develop a recommended palette of features, elements, and treatments that contribute to the overall character and functionality of the plan area (reference A Green City).

D5d. Establish a design review process.

- **Design Review:** There are various design review processes that should be evaluated for the appropriate implementation of this Amendment, which may include the creation of a design review board.
 - If a board is created, it should include well-informed community members and professionals such as architects, urban designers, landscape architects, planners, engineers, or other professionals from construction and development related fields.



D5. Extraordinary Design

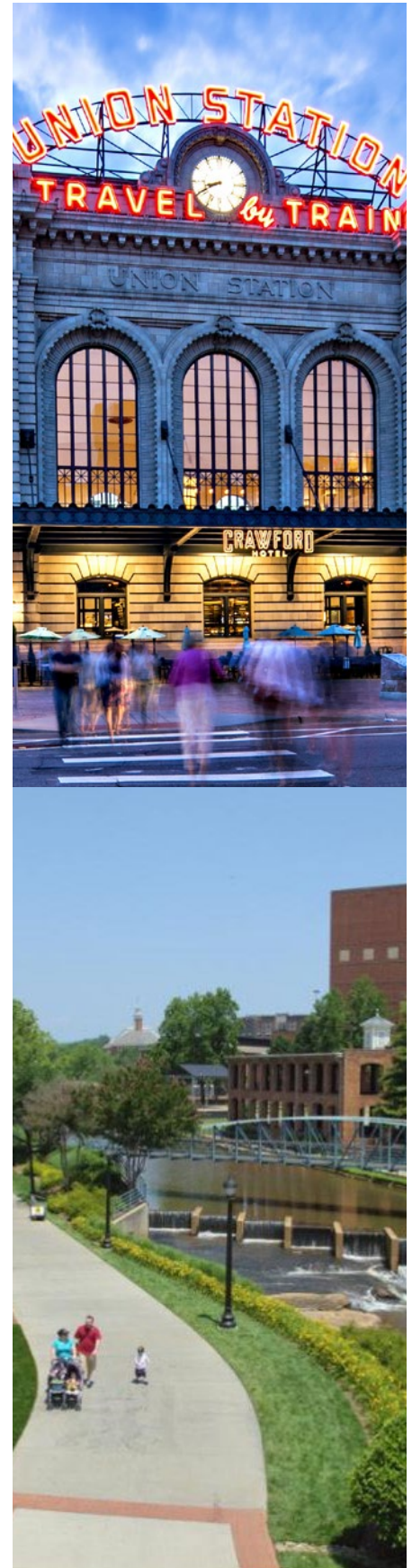
Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

D5e. Adopt new Zoning or Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG) that acknowledge, preserve, or enhance terminating vistas and key views of visually distinguishable promenades or architectural and natural features.

- **Identify View Corridors:** Conduct view studies concurrently with establishing future street layouts and developable lots. View studies should identify a street configuration and key sites that contribute to key views, including:
 - Sites with broad visibility that impact views from nearby locations into the plan area; this includes sites along Water Street that impact the view from the intersection of Zuni Street and 26th Avenue and sites along I-25 or the South Platte River.
 - Sites at key entry points into the plan area that impact views into, out of, and through the plan area.
 - Sites within the plan area that have potential views to the mountains and into Downtown Denver.
- **Special Design Consideration:** Apply special design consideration for key sites to preserve or enhance key views. The following design elements may help create visual interest at key views:
 - Highly detailed building facades
 - Increased mass or scale
 - Active public spaces
 - Public art
 - Primary building entries
 - Interesting signage
 - Unique building materials
 - Enhanced landscaping
- **Old City Hall Mountain View Plane:** Analyze the effectiveness of the Old City Hall Mountain View Plane once DSG's have been created and consider removing the view plane if the new tools more effectively enhance key views.

D5f. Adopt new zoning and DSG to encourage future development along the river corridor, including adjacent parks and open spaces, to respect the river as a natural resource and a public amenity.

- **Building Massing:** Encourage building height, massing, form and setbacks to be sensitive to the surrounding natural environment along the river's edge and adjacent parks and open spaces to ensure light and air access to these public amenities.
- **Sun/Shade:** Conduct sun/shade studies of future development to understand potential impacts of overshadowing the river and adjacent open space, as well as utilizing passive solar technologies to increase efficiency and climate resilience.
- **Building Orientation:** Encourage new buildings that are oriented to the river to promote public access from the buildings to the river and adjacent parks and open spaces.
- **Building Facade:** Promote building facades to contribute to a quality interface between private development, the public realm and the river.



D6. Branding and Identity

Goal

Encourage branding of the plan area to help generate visibility and a positive perception of future development. Utilize distinctive elements that can be implemented and built to create a sense of identity for the plan area.

Importance

A branding strategy and a distinctive identity will help create a sense of arrival in a unique place, which is important to attract people to visit an area and enjoy a space. Having an identity will create a distinction between the plan area and other neighborhoods and Downtown.

Recommendations and Strategies

D6a. Encourage branding and marketing efforts to create awareness and attract people to live, work and play.

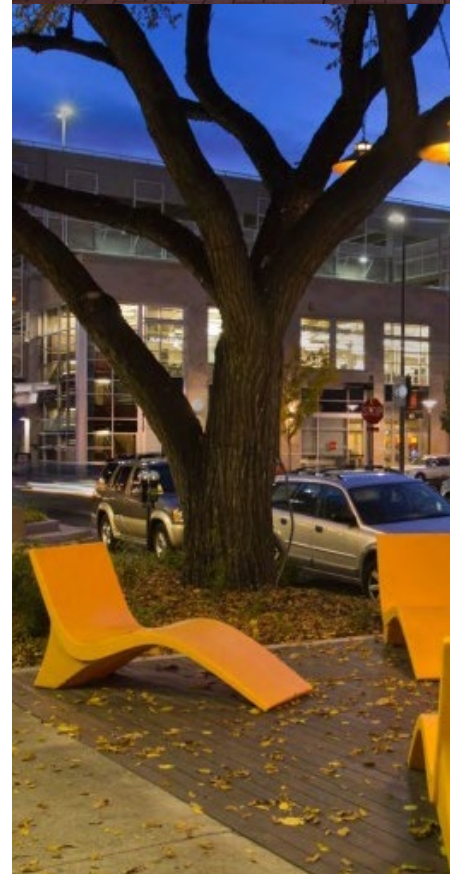
- **Downtown Neighborhood:** Create a branding and marketing strategy that will capture the identity of the plan area to become known as a unique downtown neighborhood.
- **Diverse Community:** Encourage branding efforts to promote Downtown living and working options that accommodate a diverse community of incomes, ages, race, and household sizes.

D6b. Encourage a sense of neighborhood identity.

- **Identifying Gateways & Entries:** Identify entries, intersections, or points within the mobility network that can become specific gateways or entry points into the plan area such as Auraria Parkway and 7th Street, Speer Boulevard and Wewatta, Speer Boulevard and Elitch Circle, Speer Boulevard and Little Raven, and the proposed new bridges into the plan area. These high profile and heavily traveled entries present an opportunity to generate interest, curiosity and memory of a place. Gateways features could be integrated into highly visible signature buildings, or formed by vertical elements, landscape forms, walls, pylons, special lighting and public art.
- **Signage:** Develop signage that creates a unique graphic identity and contributes to the sense of place (see E4d).

D6c. Develop ways to create a sense of place and identity through public art and civic land uses.

- **Public Art:** Encourage an arts and cultural strategy to create, reinforce and enhance a sense of place (see E4d).
 - Explore partnerships with the Office of Economic Development and Arts and Venues to identify economic incentives that encourage creative and arts-based uses such as galleries and public art installations.
- **Civic and Cultural Uses:** Explore unique land uses such as regional civic and cultural destinations that contribute to a distinct identity (see A5b).



A GREEN CITY

Building a greener downtown

The Central Platte Valley – Auraria District has a unique opportunity to be a leader in green practices; the mile of riverfront and large amounts of undeveloped space adjacent to downtown presents a rare opportunity for a precedent-setting public space network with parks, open space, plazas, and other community uses. The plan area's potential to be developed as part of a cohesive plan rather than parcel by parcel also provides an opportunity to explore innovative green infrastructure techniques and environmental sustainability that addresses environmental concerns and contributes to placemaking.

The Downtown Area Plan developed three topics to achieve the vision element of becoming A Green City. In addition to E1 through E3 (listed below), four new recommendation topics apply to the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District.

Plan Topics

- E1. An Outdoor Downtown
- E2. A Rejuvenated Civic Center
- E3. Sustainable Use of Resources

Plan Amendment Topics

- E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces
- E5. South Platte River
- E6. Resilient Infrastructure
- E7. Environmental Conditions



E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Goal

Incorporate new parks and public spaces and enhance existing parks that celebrate and activate the outdoor downtown that contribute to an economically thriving neighborhood. Foster a diverse and livable neighborhood that cultivate Denver's culture, identity, and provide environmentally and functionally sustainable outdoor spaces.

Why It's Important

Denver deserves a “frontyard” as vibrant and evocative as the collective “backyard”, the Rocky Mountains. Just as important to the quality of life are the outdoor spaces that people use on a daily basis. If the mountains are regarded as the “backyard”, the urban parks and public spaces represent the City's “frontyard”. As Denver continues to grow in size and reputation, the frontyard is not only a place to unwind, but the City's welcome mat where residents, workers, students and visitors can socialize, recreate and enjoy the distinctive culture. The “frontyard” bridges the gap between residents' private lives and the public realm. Where nearby Commons Park serves as a respite through passive recreation, the plan area provides a rare opportunity to implement an expansive network of quality parks and public open spaces that vary in size and character. With regular programming in well-maintained, safe and comfortable parks and public spaces, the plan area will be vibrant as adjacent residential, commercial and retail businesses thrive unlike any other neighborhood in the City.

Recommendations and Strategies

E4a. Explore opportunities to create new designated parks and open space.

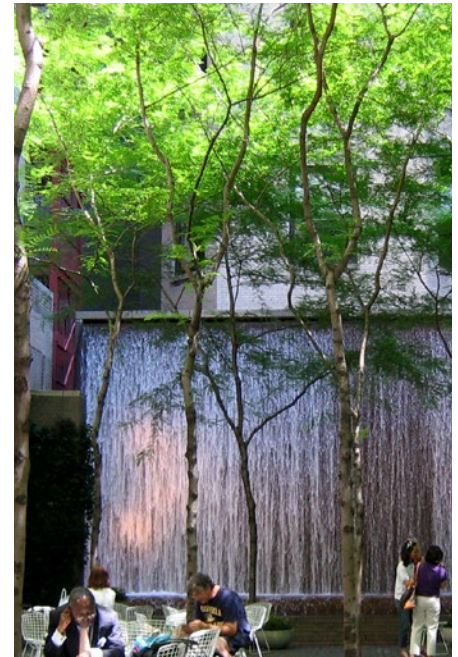
- **Retain Land for Accessible Parks and Open Space:** Retain land to provide equitable recreation space.
 - Per the Outdoor Downtown Plan, expand upon parks and public spaces with the aim that all Downtown residents are within a five-minute walk of a park (could be a neighborhood or special-use park, which is a pocket park with a themed or specialized space), and within a three-minute walking distance to a quality outdoor public space.
 - Amount of land dedicated for public and private parks and open space should be based upon density and population.
- **Variety of Spaces:** Encourage a variety of privately owned and operated public spaces integrated through private development, both in the right-of-way and in tract, that can include public spaces like parks, plazas and promenades that can vary from an urban plaza character to a natural park character.



E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

- **Types of Spaces:** Promote public spaces to include a variety of engaging uses that generate a sense of place. Spaces could include:
 - Large social gathering space that can support community events such as neighborhood parties, farmers' market, seasonal pop-up, and festivals
 - Programmable space for community events or concerts
 - Special-use parks (a pocket park with a themed or specialized space)
 - Recreational space (includes playgrounds)
 - Commercial space
 - Outdoor dining/retail/food-trucks
 - Dog Park
 - Informal seating space
 - Promenades
 - Natural habitat areas
- **Enhance Connectivity:** Public spaces should be accessible and usable to the general public, and they should be located strategically and designed to tie into and enhance the overall mobility network.
- **Designated Parks:** In addition to the new parks connected by the green spine, additional parks may be warranted based on the five-minute walk metric and the population density (see Figure 5.1). Great urban parks, old and new, vary in size from 5-10 acres. The parks are centrally located in neighborhoods surrounded by residential, commercial and retail similar to traditional town squares. These parks function as the “heart” of the neighborhood bringing life and vibrancy to the area, and defining the character of the neighborhood. Successful urban parks are accessible, inviting and comfortable with a variety of amenities and activities that create an enjoyable experience for daily use, year-round.
 - Examples of great urban parks, include: Washington Square Park (NYC), Klyde Warren Park (Dallas), Downtown East Commons Park (Minneapolis), Bryant Park (NYC), and Jamison Square (Portland). These public parks are managed and operated daily through successful public-private partnerships.
 - A green spine is considered a street with enhanced or wider pedestrian walkways and amenity zones with additional street trees (see Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2).



In the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan, the City of Vancouver set a goal of having all residents live within a five-minute walk of a park, greenway, or other green space; as of 2010, this was the case for more than 92 percent of residents.



E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces



Figure 5.1: Conceptual Green Network Diagram

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | Existing Light Rail | | Proposed All Mode Bridge |
| | Existing CML | | Proposed Ped & Bike Connection |
| | Platte Valley Trolley | | Existing Multi-Use Trail |
| | Downtown Collectors | | Proposed Park/Open Space |
| | Local Streets | | Existing Park |
| | Existing Ped & Bike Bridge | | Enhanced Green Zone |
| | Proposed Ped & Bike Bridge | | Green Spine |

E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

E4b. Encourage existing and new parks to accommodate a variety of activities and programs year-round.

- **Existing Parks:** Strengthen existing parks and open space through focusing on social, recreational, and cultural needs (see E4c).
 - Update the plaza adjacent to the Mile High Stadium light rail station to provide for efficient and convenient flow of pedestrian traffic while also connecting to future development.
 - Encourage the creation of public space at the Pepsi Center/ Elitch Gardens light rail station.
- **Adaptable Parks:** Encourage existing parks and new parks, open spaces, and public spaces to be programmatically adaptable to be able to host events, accommodate a variety of activities for all ages, and be enjoyed year-round.
 - Address multi-generational considerations, such as playground areas for children, seating for adults, and interactive play features for all ages including games, dancing, art, learning and theatre.
 - Encourage small-scale commercial activities, such as recreational equipment rentals, that further activate the park with uses.
- **Food and Beverage Services:** Establish opportunities for increased seasonal or temporary food and beverage services with outdoor seating to be near, adjacent to, or within parks or public spaces.
 - Allocate spaces for vendors, booths/kiosks and small truck access.
 - Streamline events and vendor permitting; the permitting process should be affordable and should provide for serving food and beverages.
- **Educational Programs:** Work with the Children's Museum, Denver Public Schools, and non-profits to promote educational and interactive programs to occur within parks and open space.

E4c. Re-envision Centennial Gardens as an accessible and active park with updated features and programmable space for activities.

- **Centennial Gardens:** Consider redesigning the park to be open, accessible, welcoming and integrated into future development and the river.



E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

E4d. Promote a variety of amenities within parks, open spaces and public spaces.

- **Lighting:** Encourage a lighting plan to be created that promotes the use of public spaces and provides safety for those spaces, but does not contribute to light pollution.
- **Seating:** Incorporate permanent and movable seating within existing and future public spaces.
- **Interactive Features:** Encourage interactive features and attractive elements within parks and open spaces such as water features.
- **Public Art:** Provide facilities, access and programs that support performing arts (dance, music, theatre) and promote the incorporation of iconic and noteworthy public art into public spaces (reference D6c).
 - Encourage integrated and interactive art installations that reflect the history and heritage of the area.
 - Consider continuous temporary installations of prominent artists that will draw visitors.
 - Fund public art for the study area through developer contributions and an art fee established within the owner association.
 - Establish a committee that oversees, selects, and manages public art installations.
- **Facilities:** Develop opportunities for integrating year-round programs and services by building functional and adaptable facilities.
 - Implement necessary amenities like shade, seating, and restroom facilities for people using parks and open space.
 - Designate space for vendors, booths/kiosks and possibly other commercial uses that serve the park and visitors' needs, such as farmer's markets, movies in the park, fitness classes, winter activities/temporary ice rink, cultural events, and public events.
- **Signage and wayfinding:** Develop and implement a signage and wayfinding master plan that provides meaningful and attractive tools to help users effectively navigate the plan area, surrounding neighborhoods, and the South Platte River trails (see D6b).
- **Safety:** Utilize the best practices in Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), including lighting and design and placement of fencing, walls, and landscaping.



E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

E4e. Contribute to a green public realm.

The public's highest priority in The Outdoor Downtown plan was to grow the urban forest and plant street trees. Tree plantings in the ROW create a comfortable and more enjoyable experience.

- **Tree Canopy and Streetscape:** Promote an active and vibrant green public realm through incorporating a multitude of trees and a diverse arrangement of vegetation within the amenity zones.
 - All streets should be tree-lined and the street trees should have varying widths and species for biodiversity and natural habitat.
 - Locate trees and vegetation appropriately and provide adequate room for the biological needs of the plants (soil, light, and water) so that urban vegetation can thrive.
- **Best Practices for Planting:** Coordinate with the City Forester and Parks and Recreation to identify standards that enhance the streetscape and prioritize people. Use best practices for tree design, installation, maintenance, and management of vegetation within the right-of-way to ensure it thrives and serves multi-functional needs.
- **Maintenance:** Explore opportunities for a district to provide maintenance of privately-owned public spaces (POPS) and streetscapes.
 - Designate land for a central maintenance facility for Downtown Parks Operations team.

E4f. Activate parks and open space edges.

- **Vibrant Active Edges:** Encourage vibrant active edges around parks and public spaces that may include residential or commercial uses (see A5).

E4g. Promote healthy living.

- **Physical Activity:** Offer opportunity for physical activity for all ages in public spaces.
- **Fitness Trail:** Develop a portion of an existing or new multi-use path as a fitness trail.
 - Incorporate the 5280 Loop within the plan area to be easily accessible as a potential extension of a fitness trail.
 - Identify segments of multi-use paths along the river that can create a fitness loop.
- **Adaptable Space:** Provide amenities and programs year-round to encourage multi-generational recreational and physical activity
 - Elements within public open space should be adaptable to have the ability to be used as fitness equipment.

E4h. Promote guidelines and principles of the Outdoor Downtown Plan by incorporating its policies, projects, and programs.



E4. Vibrant Parks and Public Spaces

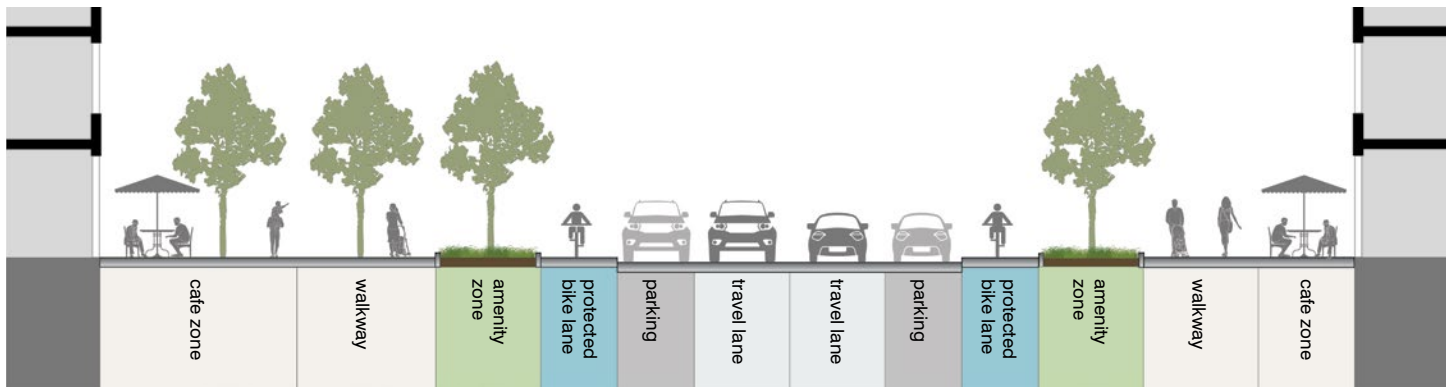


Figure 5.2: Potential Extension of Little Raven Street in the Plan Area

E5. South Platte River

Goal

Embrace the South Platte River as an asset and protect and leverage it as an amenity for future development.

Why It's Important

The South Platte River is a valuable natural resource and future development along the river should be respectful of its delicate nature and recognize the importance of the biodiversity it supports as well as its value for cooling the urban heat island effect and providing climate resiliency in a hotter atmosphere. The plan area is within the Central Platte Valley stormwater basin, which has been identified as a priority basin within Denver most in need of stormwater treatment. As detailed in the Ultra-Urban Green Infrastructure Guidelines, protecting and enhancing the river through design reinforces the City's aim to make green infrastructure a fundamental part of the long-term stormwater management strategy.

Recommendations and Strategies

E5a. Embrace the South Platte River as an amenity that can be explored and utilized by creating an enhanced river zone (see figure 5.1) that embraces the following strategies:

- **Access:** Encourage existing and future designated parks, open space, public space and development to foster an interactive relationship with the river by providing efficient, convenient and clearly marked access.
- **Greenway:** Explore opportunities to improve the river's function, including enhancing and widening the existing greenway to include trails and park spaces for active and passive recreation.
- **Activities:** Promote opportunities for activities for everyone such as fishing, kayaking, and eating and drinking on decks and patios.
- **Existing Parks:** Strengthen existing parks along the river by exploring ways to improve their connection and integration to the river and trails.
- **Riverside conditions:** Engage the river by encouraging focused and integrated riverside conditions that further activate and attract visitors to the riverfront, which may include a combination of public spaces such as:
 - Urban space, or active hardscaped spaces such as:
 - Plazas
 - Events space
 - Promenades
 - Destinations to attract visitors
 - Natural space, or passive native spaces such as:
 - Natural habitat
 - Boardwalks and trails
 - Access to the water
 - Seating



E5. South Platte River

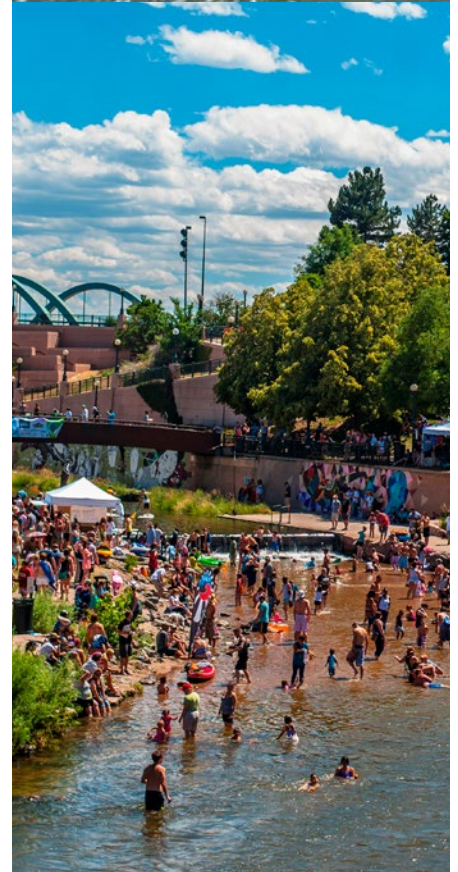
Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

E5b. Protect the river as a natural resource.

- **Natural Resource:** Recognize the river as a valuable natural resource that should be managed and protected.
- **Ecology:** Strengthen and maintain the river's presence as a native corridor by improving and creating natural habitat that increases biodiversity.

E5c. Coordinate all river improvements and development near the river with ongoing studies from other departments or external entities.

- **Green Infrastructure:** Reference and implement strategies detailed in the Ultra-Urban Green Infrastructure Guide.
- **River Restoration:** Ensure the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and their ongoing studies are coordinated.



E6. Resilient Infrastructure

Goal

Create infrastructure that enables flourishing ecosystems, restores natural habitat, promotes carbon neutrality and withstands and adapts to environmental stresses and changes created over time.

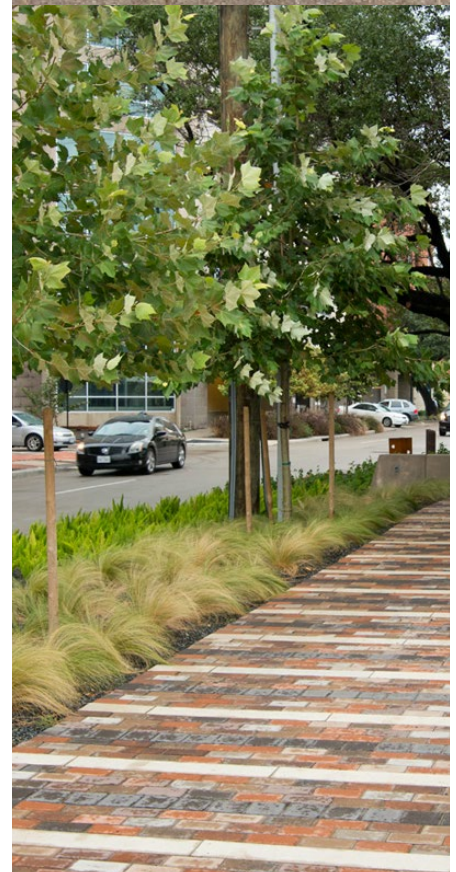
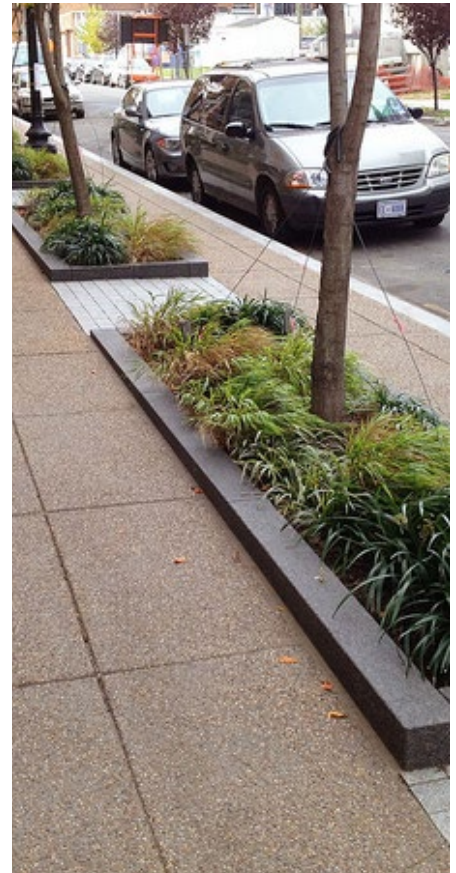
Why It's Important

Cities that are built to be resilient have the capacity to adapt to stresses and changes over time, in particular, environmental changes due to a changing climate. Resiliency also includes an inherent responsibility to build a pathway to carbon neutrality and create a flourishing environment for everyone.

Recommendations and Strategies

E6a. Embrace ways to efficiently use resources and reduce waste.

- **Waste Management:** Create and implement innovative waste management systems and incentives to reduce trash, increase recycling and reuse, and provide opportunities for composting.
- **Carbon Neutrality:** Create a district-wide strategy that will guide development towards achieving carbon neutrality, including:
 - Developing and implementing a strategy to incorporate a district-wide heating and cooling system to reduce resource consumption.
 - Encouraging the use of solar power or other renewable energy sources.
- **Net-Zero Water:** Encourage innovative and adaptable gray water treatment and efficient use of water within future development.
 - For larger projects capable of making a meaningful contribution to Denver Water's One Water strategy, the City should work with stakeholders to promote on-site treatment and delivery of raw water, including developing funding strategies that make the investment economically viable for the stakeholders involved.



E6. Resilient Infrastructure

Recommendations and Strategies

E6b. Build development with an enduring life-cycle.

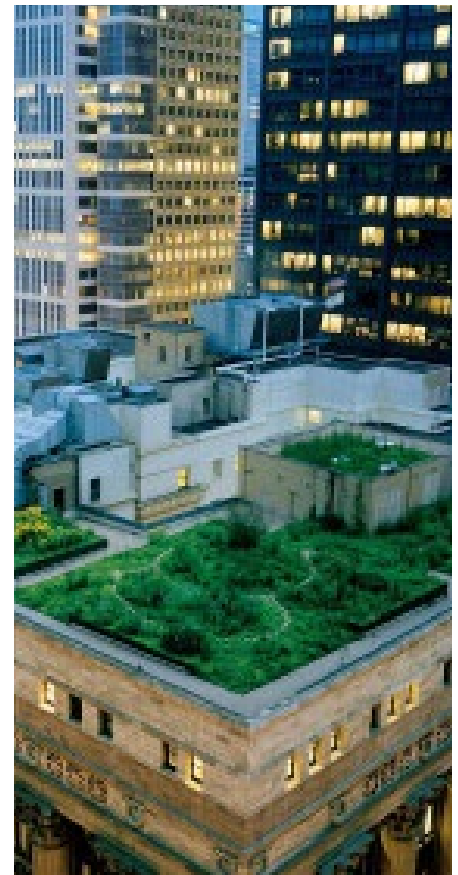
- **Resource-efficient Building Life-Cycle:** Encourage green buildings that embody a structure and promote application of processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout the building's life-cycle: planning to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation, and demolition.
- **Resilient Materials and Components:** Incorporate materials and components throughout the entire plan area that are resilient and require minimal maintenance or replacement over time and have an efficient life-cycle.

E6c. Encourage green and sustainable communities.

- **EcoDistrict:** Encourage the plan area to become an EcoDistrict, or a nationally certified area that prioritizes ecological and social sustainability, and follow its protocols that recognize the urgency of renewable energy, smart systems, and environmental sustainability.

E6d. Future development should implement sustainable green infrastructure where possible.

- **Natural water cycle:** Develop a sustainable green infrastructure system that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle, improves water quality, and enhances land resources and ecology.
- **Water quality:** Improve water quality by naturally treating all storm water runoff through green infrastructure systems before it reaches the river or a pipe.
- **Mitigate Flooding of River:** Utilize resilient design strategies that allow opportunities for green infrastructure to mitigate stormwater runoff volumes and provide water quality.
- **Best Practices:** Use best practices for design, installation, maintenance, and management of green infrastructure components to ensure it thrives, is functional, and remains effective.
 - Use best practices that are aligned with the goals of Denver's Ultra Urban Green Infrastructure Guide for future design and renovation of parks, public spaces, and streets.
- **Impervious Surfaces:** Work with City departments to establish regulations to minimize impervious surfaces and utilize materials and techniques that allow for natural water absorption and flow.
 - For denser urban areas, work with the City and the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District to develop new and improved methods for runoff volume reduction, such as the use of infiltration-based water quality methods rather than volume-based methods for stormwater management.
 - Work with the City, Department of Public Works, and agencies to develop green street details and requirements that would allow for permeable paving in the ROW, and within the roadway cross-section.



E7. Environmental Conditions

Goal

Create development that responds to environmental conditions to protect and enhance the health of both the river and the people who live, work, and visit the plan area.

Why It's Important

This Amendment provides direction for a new downtown neighborhood in the form of high-density, mixed-use development. However, the plan area has an industrial history that resulted in significant environmental contamination, is within a floodplain, and is adjacent to or contains two known air and noise pollution sources: I-25 and the Consolidated Main Line (CML). While these conditions should not preclude the development recommended in this plan, they do require careful assessment and mitigation throughout the development process.

Recommendations and Strategies

E7a. Address environmental contamination to allow for mixed-use development.

Portions of the plan area have a history of industrial uses spanning more than 100 years. Rail yard and railroad operations, manufactured gas and related coal tar industries encompassed most of the area east of the South Platte River, and urban fill operations took place in the area west of the South Platte River. Because of these industrial uses, environmental contaminants exist on portions of the plan area. Confirmed and suspected contaminants include petroleum-related constituents, coal tar derivatives, solvents, metals, and buried urban fill, among others.

Some of these contaminants have been partially remediated to address the exposure risks associated with the plan area's current land uses. Specifically, limited remediation took place on the property where Elitch Gardens Theme and Water Park is located pursuant to a 1992 Consent Agreement with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment ("CDPHE"), and on the property where the Pepsi Center is located pursuant to a voluntary cleanup plan approved by the CDPHE in 1997. Because remediation standards are tailored to specific land uses, any redevelopment of the plan area will likely trigger the need for additional investigation and remediation or mitigation measures to address the exposure risks associated with new land uses such as residential and mixed uses.

- **Mitigate Contamination:** Property owners should work with the City to execute a development agreement that will address environmental concerns to the City's satisfaction, which will include, but not be limited to, performing the following:
 - Investigate each site prior to redevelopment to characterize the nature and extent of contamination, the potential for human exposure and environmental harm, and suitability for the intended land use;
 - Develop an environmental management and cleanup plan tailored to the existing conditions and intended future use of the site; and



E7. Environmental Conditions

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

- Secure the approval of the state and local public health agencies for the environmental management and cleanup plan prior to authorization of the desired land use.

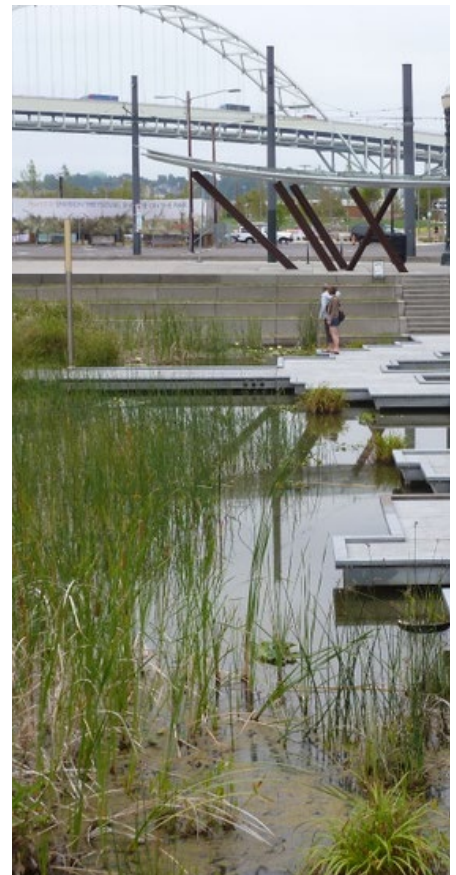
E7b. Address the floodplain within the plan area.

The Urban Drainage and Flood Control District (“UDFCD”) is currently in the process of updating the City’s South Platte River floodplain boundary. The preliminary results of this process indicate that, due to overland spills from the main channel of the South Platte River, certain properties within the plan area are at a higher risk for flooding than as indicated on FEMA’s Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) dated 11/20/2013. The City has partnered with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and UDFCD on an Urban Waterways Restoration Study to address flood risks and identify holistic and preemptive solutions to flooding.

- **Preemptive Flood Risk Management:** Property owners who are contemplating redevelopment should contact the City early in the process to understand the flood risk(s) associated with their properties. Developers in high risk areas are encouraged to analyze in-river improvements that reduce flood risk by lowering the water surface elevation of the South Platte River by widening and lowering the river to further the City’s goal to enhance the South Platte River.
- **Run-off and River Health:** With a large stretch of riverfront property, development in the plan area has the potential to substantially impact the quality of run-off water entering the South Platte River.
 - Address storm water run-off on-site in planning future development as required by D.R.M.C. § 56-111.
 - Filter and slow stormwater run-off on-site through green infrastructure and green roofs.
 - Use tools that improve the health of the river, expand wetland and riparian habitats, and enhance the recreational user experience adjacent to the river identified in the Urban Waterways Restoration Study.

E7c. Address the health impacts of noise and air pollution for development adjacent to the CML and I-25.

Current research links proximity to high traffic roads with adverse health effects in children and adults. Pollutants directly emitted from motor vehicles include particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxides, as well as other compounds that lead to the formation of ozone. People who live, work, or attend school near high-volume roadways (over 100,000 vehicles per day in urban areas) show increased risk for a variety of short- and long-term health effects, including asthma, reduced lung function, impaired lung development in children, and cardiovascular effects in adults, such as heart attacks. Children are particularly susceptible to health problems from air pollution exposure because their respiratory systems are not fully developed, and they are more active and breathe more rapidly than adults. Motor vehicle pollutant concentrations tend to be higher closer to roads, with the highest levels generally within the first 500 feet from a high-volume roadway.



E7. Environmental Conditions

Recommendations and Strategies (continued)

Noise pollution has also been linked to increased risk of cardiovascular disease in people chronically exposed to high levels of road noise. Noise can damage health depending on its intensity, duration, type, and source. Long-term exposure to moderate levels of noise can adversely affect sleep, school, and work performance, and increase risk of cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, and heart attacks. The U.S. EPA considers noise exceeding 55 decibels outdoors and 45 decibels indoors as an annoyance that can interfere with daily activities. Highway noise along I-25 has been measured at 57 to 75 decibels, and train horn noise at 90 to 100 decibels. Like air pollution, noise pollution from vehicles is typically highest within 500 feet of high-traffic roadways.

- **Implement Best Practices:** Development within the plan area should consider utilizing the following best practices to mitigate the impacts of air and noise pollution within close proximity to I-25 and the CML:
 - Use construction techniques for buildings such as design elements and siting to avoid subjecting adjacent new development to noise/vibration and air pollution. Solutions should allow for design innovation and may include:
 - Locating building air intake systems to minimize intake of automobile exhaust;
 - Including mitigation measures such as insulation and air filtration systems designed to filter pollutants that are known asthma triggers; and
 - Consulting best practice resources such as International Well Building Institute™ “WELL Building Standard” recommendations or the California Air Resources Board “Strategies to Reduce Air Pollution Exposure Near High-Volume Roadways”.
 - Evaluate additional mitigation measures for sensitive uses such as residential, school, elder care, and childcare uses (See C5e).
- **Explore Citywide Tools:** While I-25 and the CML are known air and noise pollution sources within the plan area, many other parts of the City are also affected by these and other sources of air and noise pollution. Therefore, the City should explore the creation of citywide tools to ensure that development incorporates best practices to mitigate the impacts of air and noise pollution.

E7d. Create a disaster plan.

- **Create a Disaster Plan:** Create an evacuation plan for emergencies related to potential toxic releases from freight accidents or other disasters, consistent with the 2016 Mayor’s Railroad Safety Working Group Report, considering the type of development adjacent to freight activity along the CML.





iii. Moving Forward

In this chapter, there are strategies and priorities outlined to help streamline the implementation process to achieve the vision, recommendations and specific strategies of this Plan Amendment.

Implementation

The Denver Downtown Area Plan Amendment provides a Vision, Recommendations and Strategies that set the framework for the development of the Central Platte Valley – Auraria District for the next 20 years. This Amendment provides guidance and allows for flexibility to respond to unforeseen opportunities, challenges, market forces and public policies that would contribute to future development patterns within the plan area.

Realizing the Vision

Plan implementation takes place over the course of many years, and for large underdeveloped areas the plan may take shape in multiple phases. Because the goals, strategies, and recommendations detailed in this Amendment are interconnected and complex, the successful implementation of them will require coordination between multiple agencies and the private sector.

Types of Implementation Activities

Recommendations within the plan may require a public-private partnership to achieve optimal results. Implementation efforts often focus on public sector measures, many of which aim to create a positive environment that enables actions by other groups, such as property owners, developers, neighborhood organizations, districts or homeowners. However, while public actions can help set the stage, in many cases private actions (such as constructing new buildings, opening new businesses, and attracting new residents) are the critical elements to achieving a plan's vision. The following are the most important priorities to be accomplished by both public and private entities for the plan area. These have been organized in this section by implementation type: regulatory, public infrastructure, and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).

Regulatory Strategies

Regulatory strategies include text amendments to the Denver Zoning Code to introduce new or revised tools to implement Plan objectives and Denver Zoning Code map amendments to change the specific zoning regulations that apply to properties within the plan area. Regulatory strategies may also include new rules and regulations, such as development application or design review procedures. Note that changes to the Denver Zoning Code must be adopted by the City Council in a public hearing.

Regulatory Priorities:

- Adopt zoning tools to implement plan recommendations that encourage a mixed-use neighborhood with active streets and concentrated active corridors (see A5a, A5b, and A5c).
- Adopt zoning tools that provide incentives for integration of mixed-income and affordable housing that promotes equitable communities, and incorporate community benefits described in the plan (see C5a, C5b, C5d, C5e, C6a, and C6b).
- Adopt zoning tools that incentivize higher intensity transit-oriented development near light rail stations (see A5c and D4b).
- Adopt zoning tools that achieve the plan recommendations for a variety of building heights and densities throughout the plan area (see D4a and D4b).
- Implement Design Standards and Guidelines to create diverse and desired architectural building form and streetscapes (see D5a, D5b, D5c, and D5f).
- Establish a volunteer board to conduct design review using adopted design standards and guidelines. The board should consist primarily of professionals in the design, real estate development or planning fields, but may also include neighborhood representatives (see D5d).

Public Infrastructure Strategies

Public Infrastructure Strategies are improvements to existing bridges, roads, bike facilities, public parks, or construction of new utilities. The City, or other governmental entities, typically take the lead in designing, constructing and funding these projects and may use a variety of public funding mechanisms or partner with private developers. New streets, utilities, open space and other major public infrastructure associated with new development are typically led and funded by private developers or through PPP.

Some strategies may require detailed studies and further assessment to identify appropriate solutions, particularly improvements to road and bridge networks, that must consider existing and projected mobility demands. These studies will inform future needs and capacities and also determine project cost and funding eligibility.

Public Infrastructure Implementation Priorities:

Explore opportunities to leverage public investments for major infrastructure and facility improvements to implement the strategies and recommendations of this Amendment.

- Follow through with CDOT and Public Works regarding studies of the 23rd Avenue bridge and the I-25 on and off ramps that connect to Water Street (see B6c and B6d).
- Implement improvements for pedestrian and bike connectivity at all major intersections along Auraria Parkway and Speer Boulevard (see B6c, B7b, and B9a).
- Implement recommendations to reduce fatalities and injuries on Speer Boulevard as listed in the Denver Vision Zero Action Plan for 'High-Injury Network' (see B6c).
- Improve connectivity and safety for all existing modes of transportation (see B6c).
- Address floodplain controls within the South Platte River (see E5a, E5b, E5c, E6d, and E7b).
- Implement environmental remediation efforts to improve soil and water conditions (see E7a and E7b).
- Create a walkable urban fabric with intimate and varied block sizes that have human scale proportions (see B6a, B6b, and B7c).
- Achieve new transit connectivity to and from abutting streets and within the plan area (see B6b, B6d, B9a, and B9b).
- Establish new pedestrian and bicyclist connections to and from abutting neighborhoods and within the plan area (see B8a and B8b).
- Improve all existing parks and public spaces and create an extensive tree canopy throughout the plan area (see E4b, E4c, E4e, and E5a).
- Create new parks and public spaces (see E4a, E4f, and E5a).
- Create resilient infrastructure and utilities by utilizing tools in the Ultra Urban Green Infrastructure Guidelines and other sustainable innovative solutions recommended in this plan (see E4e, E6a, E6b, E6c, and E6d).

Partnership Strategies

Partnership strategies encourage a variety of ways to implement projects through PPP. These can be public subsidies for private development projects, shared cost of infrastructure funding, or funding for improvements to public uses and facilities.

Partnership Priorities:

- Work with the Office of Economic Development and other potential partners to explore opportunities for new affordable and mixed income housing (see C5a and C5b).
- Reinvigorate existing public parks and trails along the South Platte River (see E4c, E5a, E5b, and E5c).
- Investigate a future multimodal connection over the South Platte River connecting Water Street to Little Raven (see B6d).
- Implement a Transportation Demand Management program to minimize the use of individual private vehicles and reduce parking needs (see B10a).

Community Benefits

Community benefits are public amenities and/or mitigations that support a livable, economically viable, diverse, equitable, and family-oriented community in exchange for increased development intensity. These community benefits, which can include public, social, economic, infrastructure, or environmental benefits, are critical for the success of high-density development. The cost of some of these benefits may be shared between the private and public sectors. Several tools can be used to achieve community benefits, including land-use, zoning, Design Standards and Guidelines (DSG), infrastructure planning, the entitlement process and development agreements.

Community Benefits Priorities:

- Work with the Department of Public Health and Environment, Public Works, and US EPA to address environmental cleanup of contaminated land within the plan area (see E7a).
- Coordinate with Urban Drainage and Flood Control District and U.S. Army Corp of Engineers for environmental remediation of the South Platte River, while addressing flood control capabilities (see E7b).
- Partner with developers to create an equitable affordable housing plan that provides affordable housing on site (see C5a, C5b, C5c, C5d, and C5e).
- Improve upon existing mobility and connectivity networks (see B6c).
- Improve upon existing public parks, open spaces, and trail connectivity (see E4b, E4c, E4h, and E5a).
- Provide new mobility connections across the plan area (see B6a, B6b, B6d, and B7a).
- Provide new parks and public spaces throughout the plan area (see E4a, E4d, E4e, E4f, E4g, E4h, and E5a).
- Incentivize development of retail goods and services with concentration near light rail stations and active corridors (see A5c).
- Encourage development of uses that appeal to a variety of household types, including families and the elderly (see A5b, C5c, C5e, C6a, E4b, and E4g).

Implementation

Funding Alternatives

Plan implementation is typically championed by community leaders, Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNO's), property owners and developers. These entities may work with the Mayor and City Council representatives to promote and encourage development and improvement efforts. Implementation of the Downtown Area Plan Amendment will require the coordinated involvement of many different organizations in pursuing a variety of activities with existing and new funding sources.

A variety of funding resources may be utilized for this Plan Area:

- **Tax Base Support:** Tax base supported sources are characterized by the involvement of the local sales and property taxing authorities.
- **Annual Budget:** The most common tax base support is through the City's annual budget, especially the annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Available CIP funds are typically limited to a few million dollars a year.
- **Bonds:** Periodically, the City requests its voters to approve a tax increase to pay for specific public improvements. Future bond issuances could potentially provide an opportunity to secure funding for some existing infrastructure improvement projects.
- **Tax Increment Finance (TIF):** TIF is another means of tax base support, which is most typically associated with an Urban Renewal Area. Once created by the City Council and the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA), property and sales tax over and above the base year are paid to DURA to fund eligible public improvements or finance gaps for private development. To qualify for tax increment financing through urban renewal, an area must first meet certain criteria to establish the presence of "blight", as defined in the state statute.
- **Grants:** Grant funding opportunities come from public and private entities. Public entities are typically 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 housing and other types of projects. Additionally, private entities provide grants for projects aligned with the organization's goals, such as green spaces, creative enterprises 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, general improvement districts, metropolitan districts, and local improvement or maintenance districts. These districts are often created by a localized group of citizens who want to achieve specific outcomes in their locality and are willing to pool their economic resources to implement identified projects. Special districts are a useful tool when a local population desires and is 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 repayment of bonds. To be established, special districts typically require the approval of the Denver City Council and a vote of the electorate within the area.

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