WYNKOOP STREET + 21ST STREET
DESIGN PLAN

EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT, JULY 2015
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As identified in the Northeast Downtown Neighborhood Plan, 21st Street from Benedict Fountain Park to the ‘Ballpark’ has the potential to become a transformative location for the Northeast Downtown neighborhoods, and the greater City of Denver, by promoting its role as a pedestrian and bicycle route, community gathering place/festival street, and innovative zone for stormwater management. 21st Street is currently a two-way, low traffic volume street that enjoys two neighborhood landmarks as bookends: Coors Field to the west and Benedict Fountain Park to the east. Coors Field in particular acts as a strong terminating vista for the street and is a valuable asset for any future development on 21st Street. The low-level of traffic makes 21st Street a favorite for pedestrians and bicyclists, while its location between two drainage basins make it ideal for the installation of urban green infrastructure.

Wynkoop Street from Cherry Creek Trail to the Ballpark serves as a valuable public space that could be improved to become more of a festival street. With the presence of Denver Union Station, Cherry Creek Trail, and vibrant retail environment, Wynkoop Street is a place for people and acts as a gateway for Coors Field and Lower Downtown. The pedestrian realm is currently stressed during game days, and a better user experience is needed to connect activities on both game days and non-game days. While streetscaping consistent with Lower Downtown exists along Wynkoop Street, consideration of destinations and 21st Street should be integrated into an overall unified design.
The purpose of this project is to develop a conceptual design for 21st Street (Benedict Fountain Park to Coors Field) and Wynkoop Street (Cherry Creek Trail to the Ballpark) that balances the needs of all users and enhances these streets as two of Denver’s premier destinations for residents and visitors alike. Specifically, this plan seeks to:

- Help create signature streets within the neighborhood(s)
- Pilot various innovative stormwater best management practices
- Improve the game day experience for guests to Coors Field
- Connect with other key destinations, and the overall public realm experience
- Facilitate reinvestment in underutilized properties
- Enhance the overall public realm experience

2) Implementation Plan, Cost Estimates and Phasing Strategy
3) Test a “festival street” concept
INTRODUCTION

PROJECT PARTNERS

Lead Agency:
City and County of Denver - Community Planning and Development Department

Partners:
Downtown Denver Partnership
the Colorado Rockies

STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Composed of corridor landowners, registered neighborhood organizations, pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups and business and professional associations, this group is intended to collect a diversity of perspectives to help guide this project. Many of the participants have been involved with recent plans and studies. Their role is critical to help communicate back to their respective organizations.

Meetings will take place at three project milestones:
1) Existing and future use and programming
2) Conceptual design
3) Detailed design for Festival Street section(s)
### PROJECT SCHEDULE

#### Stakeholder meeting dates (tentative):

1. Mid-June
2. Mid-August
3. Beginning to mid-October

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3-Jun-15 (DRAFT)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Task 1: Project Management and Public Outreach</td>
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<td>Task 2: Existing Conditions</td>
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<td>Task 3: Conceptual Design Plan</td>
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<td>Task 4: Implementation Plan</td>
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*Stakeholder meeting dates (tentative):

#1: mid-June
#2: mid-August
#3: beginning to mid-October
This effort acknowledges the previous studies to date. Recognizing these studies is critical and helps establish important concepts to help guide this study. The impetus of this project, however, is to move out of the planning stage and move toward implementation. Below are some related City and County of Denver planning efforts that have been considered:

- **Downtown Streetscape Plan (June 2004)**
- **Downtown Multi-Modal Access Plan (Dec 2005)**
- **Denver Moves (May 2011)**
- **Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan (May 2011)**
- **NEDN Next Steps (In Process)**
- **Downtown Area Plan (2007)**
INTRODUCTION

21st Street is a confluence of neighborhood entities. Areas that intersect the street include: Arapahoe Square, Ballpark, Five points, Old San Rafael, Enterprise Hill, Uptown, Welton Corridor, Curtis Park, Capitol Hill, and River North. It extends from the Ballpark to Benedict Fountain Park.

Wynkoop Street is situated in the heart of Denver’s Lower Downtown (LoDo) historic district and is partially encompassed within the boundaries of the Arapahoe Square and Ballpark neighborhoods. The street extends from the Cherry Creek Trail to the Ballpark.
The physical characteristics of Wynkoop street are:

- 265’ x 400’ blocks with 15’ longitudinal alley (most blocks)
- Grid diagonal to cardinal directions
- Axial terminations at Coors Field and Cherry Creek trail
- Total length of approximately 2900 ft
- Union Station made up of two city blocks
Existing major site features already begin to define character areas along the Wynkoop corridor. These areas include the plaza at the “Ballpark”, Wynkoop Plaza at Union Station, and the Cherry Creek multi-use trail.
Wynkoop St. is at the heart of the Lower Downtown Historic District. This district is the oldest in Denver and home to many historically significant buildings. Buildings with historic designation along Wynkoop St. are included here.
Because Union station, the most robust transit hub in the state, abuts Wynkoop street, direct connection to most areas within the city by bus or rail are directly available. Amtrak connects the street to intercity travel options with rail connections to Chicago and the Bay area of California.

With the addition of FasTracks ongoing improvements, connection to more of the region by light and heavy rail will be possible. The proposed “A line” to Denver International airport will more viably connect the street to international travel options.
STREET ANALYSIS

As a major gateway to Denver, it is ironic that the street itself lacks a cohesive mobility strategy. Many areas along the street are disjointed and as a result, the multi-modal nature of the space is awkward and lacks a sense of connection to the rest of Denver’s urban fabric.
Wynkoop Street consists primarily of two lanes for vehicular traffic and two striped bicycle lanes that extend from 15th to 19th street. On-street parking is included on both sides of the street with the exception of the north side of the block between 15th and 16th street. The tree canopy has many variations. Shown on one side here in section the section view below, other variations of the canopy include trees on both sides as well as triangular spacing.
While an overall theme is suggested, the materials, furnishings, and amenities along Wynkoop Street lack a sense of unity. Some of the challenges along the corridor include:

- Variations of paving patterns, without an overall design concept
- Elevated walkways that provide an awkward connection to buildings
- Many existing pavement systems are failing
- No consistent hierarchy of materials/patterning
- Many obstructions in walkway
- Lack of wayfinding
While the plaza at the Ballpark is heavily crowded during peak times surrounding games at the Rockies stadium and during periodic events, the pedestrian-only plaza remains largely empty outside of the programmed schedule.
STORMWATER STRATEGIES

With a relatively narrow right-of-way, potential stormwater strategies will have to recognize the limited space along the street. Two such strategies might include a curbless gutter system to slow infiltration and a tree trench to allow stormwater from the street and adjacent pedestrian zone to treat runoff before entering the stormwater sewer.
Building on the existing established districts, the proposed design should acknowledge the assets and character that is already present. Areas to strengthen include:

**Ballpark**: focused on event activities, but flexible to encourage everyday use.

**Union station**: extending revitalization into right-of-way

**Cherry Creek**: emphasizing the positive character of creek and historic character of industrial past
Without pointing to one specific element or project, these pictures begin to suggest the character of how Wynkoop Street might improve.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBSERVATIONS</th>
<th>DRAFT DESIGN PRINCIPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consistent street wall (except at ballpark plaza)</td>
<td>Build upon existing assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent building materials/Historic LoDo character</td>
<td>Acknowledge historic character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed opportunities for connections</td>
<td>Enhance way-finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruptions along sidewalk</td>
<td>Minimize pedestrian obtrusions, create a curbless environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly shaded</td>
<td>Infill missing trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wynkoop Plaza (union station) signature focus of the street/district</td>
<td>Acknowledge street as premier destination for residents and visitors alike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High traffic zone (parking, pick-up/drop off, loading, service, pedestrian, bicycles, freeway access)</td>
<td>Focus on access and multi-modal connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three distinct characters (Cherry Creek, Union Station, Ballpark)</td>
<td>Create and enforce latent character districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial urban character</td>
<td>Opportunity for bold, vibrant street design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Attributes

The physical characteristics of 21st Street are:

- 265’ x 400’ blocks with 15’ longitudinal alley (most blocks)
- Grid diagonal to cardinal directions
- Bisected by Broadway
- Axial terminations at Coors Field and Benedict Fountain Park
- The street is about 3800’ long (10-15 minute walk)
Similar to Wynkoop, 21st Street can be thought to have three distinct character areas defined by existing major site features. These areas include the plaza at the Ballpark, Wynkoop Plaza at Union Station, and the Cherry Creek multi-use trail.
Accompanying the two main book-ends of 21st are two historic landmark districts. Ballpark neighborhood buildings facing 21st include higher density mixed-use buildings, while those in the Clements historic district are largely single family and multi-family attached residences.
Recently, some of the sites along 21st Street have been redeveloped signaling a resurgent interest in the area as a prime opportunity for infill. It is noteworthy, however, that much of the recent development along 21st Street has chosen to take the address of intersecting streets.
Currently, 21st Street is well connected to the region with direct bus routes extending in many directions. The ‘D’ light-rail line also provides a conduit for regional mobility. Because there is little to no transit on the street itself, 21st is a great candidate for a more pedestrian and bike-focused environment.
Current land use along 21st Street is varied and consists mainly of office, commercial, and industrial.
The prevailing land use along 21st Street, however, is surface parking. About 65% of street frontage is unbuilt. This provides the feeling of a hollow street edge and suggests opportunities for infill development.
The prevalence of surface parking along 21st Street provides a street character focused on the automobile rather than the pedestrian.
Even with the infill of parks suggested by Greenprint Denver, 21st Street lacks dedicated adjacent park space.
The existing street edge along 21st Street from face of building to face of building suggests opportunities to think of the street such that it extends the public realm. The effective space for design currently ranges from 76’ to 624’ along 21st.
While some street-centric basic services lie within a short walking distance of 21st Street, availability to basic services is limited. Retail concentrations at the intersection of Larimer close to the Ballpark consist mainly of pawn shops while groceries are limited to convenience stores within a 5-minute walking radius. The Safeway on Washington and future King Soopers on 20th provide hope for a potentially walkable neighborhood.
The existing street tree canopy along 21st varies widely from newly planted to mature to removed entirely. Not all of the trees along the corridor are appropriate varieties for an urban setting and create a negative space.
The existing sidewalk/parkway varies widely from block to block. Major impediments such as utility boxes and mature street trees should be considered in the new design.
The current absence of ground-floor uses along 21st street inhibits street life and creates a hostile street wall.
Aside from a few areas near the ballpark, site furniture along 21st Street is nearly nonexistent. Furthermore, the lighting scheme varies along the corridor.
21ST STREET

STREET CONFIGURATION

Street consists of two lanes of traffic with on-street parking. ‘Sharrows’ designate sharing of the road with bicycle traffic in both directions. Existing street trees are spaced between 25 and 35’ on-center. The street tree canopy is inconsistent throughout the site and almost non-existent in some areas.
STORMWATER STRATEGIES

With a generous 80’ right-of-way, there is a great opportunity to include innovative stormwater management strategies while still acknowledging the transit needs of the street. The two examples shown here suggest more robust systems that may be incorporated in the design of this street.
Moving forward with the design process, it is important to acknowledge the changes that happen along the street and help to bring out positive attributes of changes along the corridor. The street can be characterized to have three districts that perhaps overlap:

**Benedict:**
- Residential character

**Broadway:**
- Commercial feel
- Mixed income
- Ground-floor uses

**Ballpark:**
- Mixed use
- Higher density
- Ground-floor uses
The idea of a festival street has been proposed for 21st in the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods plan. This could be thought of inclusively to recognize that, depending on their characterization, areas of proposed improvements could either be more festival-like or more like a linear park.

**PRECEDENTS: FESTIVAL**

YAWKEE WAY, BOSTON, MA

BELL STREET PARK, SEATTLE, WA
The potential multi-modality of 21st, particularly the integration of bicycle traffic is an exciting opportunity. These precedents speak to a range of possible delineative street treatments.
### Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Draft Design Principles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of consistent street wall</td>
<td>Recognize hollow street wall as opportunity to think differently about the space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of tree canopy/shade</td>
<td>Enhance tree canopy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of park space</td>
<td>Identify new parklet opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistency of materials</td>
<td>Establish identity-making design moves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimally traveled (dead ends to through traffic)</td>
<td>Build upon festival street concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few building frontages (most new buildings face intersecting streets)</td>
<td>Enhance street to encourage more ground-floor uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three distinct district characters (Benedict, Broadway, Ballpark)</td>
<td>Create and enforce latent character districts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential urban character</td>
<td>Build upon established character</td>
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</table>

*SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS*
### Observations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Draft Design Principles</th>
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<tr>
<td>Both terminate at ballpark</td>
<td>Reinforce the ballpark as an iconic visual anchor for the districts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve guest comfort (sun/rain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both terminate at park/greenway</td>
<td>Enhance overhead plane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both lack consistency of lighting/street furniture</td>
<td>Establish identity-making design moves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited/no wayfinding</td>
<td>Extend visually beyond the ends of the street</td>
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Because both streets terminate at the “Ballpark”, the area between the streets or the “apron” is a critical hinge that could better link the two streets. This apron may also help define potential areas for the festival street concept.
This graphic starts to define potential character areas that speak to larger concepts that change throughout the experience of the streets.
The results of the design process will be examined in a street event that will test proposed street improvements on 21st street through temporary street interventions. The geographic extent of the event will be determined in part by the types of improvements proposed, practical considerations, and the amount of material which can be borrowed or procured for the event. The following pages outline some temporary street strategies.
STREET EVENT: TEMPORARY PARKS
STREET EVENT: PLAY/ COLOR
PRECEDEMENTS: TEMPORARY STREET TREATMENT
STREET EVENT: OVERHEAD PLANE
STREET EVENT: SEATING/ SITE FURNISHINGS
BLOCK BY BLOCK: GLENARM
BLOCK BY BLOCK: BROADWAY
BLOCK BY BLOCK: 20th
BLOCK BY BLOCK: 19th
BLOCK BY BLOCK: 18th
BLOCK BY BLOCK: 17th
BLOCK BY BLOCK: 16th
BLOCK BY BLOCK: 15th
STREET WALL DIAGRAMS

21st STREET

WYNKOOP STREET

21ST STREET + WYNKOOP STREET DESIGN PLAN - EXISTING CONDITIONS - ANALYSIS