# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Introduction (p. 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Plan Area Overview (p. 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2 Planning Process (p. 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.3 Planning Context (p. 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.4 How to Use this Plan (p. 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Executive Summary (p. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.1 Vision &amp; Community Priorities (p. 9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2 Plan on a Page (p. 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Planning for an Equitable East Central Denver (p. 12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1 Access to Opportunity (p. 16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.2 Vulnerability to Displacement (p. 16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.3 Expanding Jobs and Housing Diversity (p. 18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 02

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Land Use and Built Form (p. 21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Introduction (p. 22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Neighborhood Contexts (p. 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Places (p. 27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4 Growth Strategy (p. 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.5 Zoning and Other Regulations (p. 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Economy (p. 43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Introduction (p. 44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.2 Housing (p. 49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.3 Social Services (p. 53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.4 Jobs and Education (p. 57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.5 Small Business (p. 65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Mobility (p. 73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Introduction (p. 68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Recommendations Overview (p. 73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 Transformative Streets (p. 83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 High Comfort Bikeways (p. 95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.5 Intersection Safety and New Crossings (p. 103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.6 Transit and Mobility Hubs (p. 111)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.7 Neighborhood Traffic Calming (p. 115)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.8 Parking and Curbside Management Strategies (p. 120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.9 TDM Strategies (p. 124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Quality of Life Infrastructure (p. 121)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Introduction (p. 122)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Parks, Recreation and Open Space (p. 125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 Environmental Quality and Climate Resilience (p. 133)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 Access to Healthy Food (p. 143)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.5 Access to Health Care (p. 151)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.6 Community Safety and Well-being (p. 153)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 INTRODUCTION

IN THIS SECTION:

1.1 INTRODUCTION (P. 2)
  1.1.1 - PLAN AREA OVERVIEW
  1.1.2 - PLANNING PROCESS
  1.1.3 - PLANNING CONTEXT
  1.1.4 - HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (P. 9)
  1.2.1 VISION & COMMUNITY PRIORITIES
  1.2.2 PLAN ON A PAGE

1.3 PLANNING FOR AN EQUITABLE EAST CENTRAL DENVER (P. 12)
  1.3.1 IMPROVING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY
  1.3.2 REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO DISPLACEMENT
  1.3.3 EXPANDING HOUSING AND JOBS DIVERSITY
1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 PLAN AREA OVERVIEW

The East Central Area Plan is the neighborhood plan for the neighborhoods of Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park, City Park, City Park West, Congress Park, and North Capitol Hill, providing a vision and policy guidance for land use, urban design, housing, mobility, parks, and the local economy for the next 20 years. The plan covers the area roughly between Broadway and Colorado Boulevard and between 6th Avenue and 23rd Avenue in central Denver.

These neighborhoods extend from the edge of downtown in the west to single-unit neighborhoods in the east, incorporating all types of buildings, houses, and businesses in between, and all connected by Colfax Avenue running through the center. The area includes some of the most beloved features in Denver: great parks like City Park and Cheesman Park; cultural attractions like the Botanic Gardens, Zoo, and Museum of Nature and Science; theaters like the Fillmore, Ogden, Bluebird, and Sie Film Center; and many shops, restaurants, and historic landmarks. The people of East Central value the diversity and inclusiveness of their community that is open to all and represents the unique character of their neighborhoods.
1.1.2 PLANNING PROCESS

The East Central Area Plan planning process began in July 2017 and over the period of 34 months created a shared community vision for the area and identified policies and strategies to achieve that vision. The process included extensive public engagement that brought together local organizations, business owners, residents and City planners and staff from relevant agencies and departments, who shared their perspectives, knowledge, and expertise on crafting the plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A steering committee of local stakeholders guided the development of the plan. Members represented residents, local organizations, and business owners. They helped develop the plan’s guiding principles and recommendations, reviewed and refined the plan content, and served as a liaison to the East Central community.

ONLINE OUTREACH

Online materials and activities were created to give people who could not attend the public meetings more opportunities to participate. Through a series of mapping and survey exercises, online participants helped to identify and analyze existing conditions, shared their ideas and priorities, and provided feedback on recommendations and plan content.

The COVID-19 Pandemic raised several challenges for community outreach during the planning process. Unfortunately, with emergency Stay at Home Order and social distancing guidelines in place, physical meetings were temporarily placed on hold and formatted to virtual platforms. However, this transition has opened a new set of opportunities for engaging the public. Virtual meetings enabled individuals who could not attend meetings to engage at the comfort of their own homes. Anecdotally, there was a noticeable increase in participation in these virtual online public meetings.

ENGAGEMENT EQUITY ANALYSIS AND TARGETED OUTREACH

To create a more equitable planning process, community input was analyzed by comparing the demographics of plan participants to East Central residents. Gaps in participation were identified and additional targeted outreach was focused on underrepresented residents. This engagement ranged from building partnerships with local organizations, doing additional outreach throughout the area, and holding additional meetings on topics important to under-represented groups, such as social services.

- 135 participants in a targeted renter survey
- 7 “Pop-up” events
- Local businesses
- Focus groups with service providers for persons experiencing homelessness

Additional outreach was undertaken to engage individuals with disabilities and limited technology access. In collaboration with City and local organization partners – a “Plan Binder” with a copy of the First Public Draft Plan, along with a comment survey forms and a comment box were placed at public locations (Central Public Library, Open Door Ministries, The Center on Colfax, and Carla Madison Recreation Center) to facilitate access to plan materials.
**THE COMMUNITY’S PLAN**

**Summer 2017 - Winter 2018**

- **July 2017** – East Central area plan Kick-off and Steering Committee established

**Spring - Fall 2018**

- **Fall 2017** – Staff develops the East Central Area Briefing Book, a comprehensive resource detailing historical background, existing conditions, benchmark comparisons and summaries of existing plans and studies

**Winter - Spring 2019**

- **August 2018** – Steering Committee identifies common themes from input and drafts vision statements and priority topics

**Spring - Summer 2019**

- **February 2019** – Targeted outreach is done to address gaps in participation

**Summer - Fall 2019**

- **November 2019** – June 2020
  - Extended period of public engagement allows public to engage and comment on the First Public Draft.

**Spring - Summer 2020**

- **Fall 2019 - Spring 2020**
  - Extended period of public engagement allows public to engage and comment on the First Public Draft.

**Community Review of Draft Plan and Adoption Process**

- **11 Focus Group meetings**
- **235 Attendees at February workshops**
- **135 Online respondents**

**8 Steering Committee meetings**
- **5,386 Online Kick-off Survey Comments**
- **12 In-person meetings**

**10 Steering Committee meetings**
- **3 Steering Committee meetings**
- **2 Steering Committee meetings**
- **2 Focus Group meetings**
- **40 Attendees at May workshop**
- **596 Online Survey comments**

**Community Input Analysis and Draft Vision Statements & Community Priorities**

- **3 Steering Committee meetings**
- **11 Focus Group meetings**
- **235 Attendees at February workshops**
- **135 Online respondents**

**Confirm Community Vision & Priorities and Develop Draft Recommendations**

- **2 Steering Committee meetings**
- **3 Focus Group meetings**
- **5 In-person meetings**

**Share and Gather Community Input on Draft Recommendations to Achieve Vision & Priorities**

- **Updates to Draft Recommendations Based on Community Input**

**East Central Area Plan  |  Part 1 Introduction**
1.1.3 PLANNING CONTEXT

To advance the vision and core values of Comprehensive Plan 2040, the City and County of Denver and its departments rely on a series of plans (including Blueprint Denver: A Blueprint for an Inclusive City and Game Plan for a Healthy City) to provide high-level policy direction and guide decision making.

The East Central area plan serves as a supplement to Comprehensive Plan 2040 and advances citywide visions and core values by providing important and specific guidance for the Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park, City Park, City Park West, Congress Park and North Capitol Hill neighborhoods.

NPI OVERVIEW

The East Central Area Plan is a part of the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI). NPI is a long-term commitment by the city and Community Planning and Development (CPD) to ensure every neighborhood in the city can enjoy the benefits of planning and the implementation of community recommendations and investment priorities. NPI provides a framework for neighborhood planning that is intentional, equitable, and measurable, and is flexible enough to allow each plan to address the specific circumstances and concerns of each neighborhood.

EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS

The East Central Area Plan replaces the previous neighborhood plans in the area. Through the development of the East Central Area Plan, previous plans were evaluated and relevant recommendations from those plans identified. Those relevant recommendations were then vetted with the community to ensure they were still appropriate, updated as needed, and incorporated in the East Central Area Plan. The following plans are superseded by this East Central Area Plan:

- Uptown Neighborhood Plan (1986)
- Capitol Hill/Cheesman Park Neighborhood Plan (1993)
- Congress Park Neighborhood Plan (1995)

The plan also overlaps portions of several neighborhood and small-area plans that cover areas outside of East Central. In the locations where this plan overlaps another plan, the East Central Area Plan supersedes the other plan for those locations, but the other plan remains in effect for the areas not covered by this plan. As with the plans listed above, relevant recommendations for these areas have been incorporated into this plan. This applies to the following plans:

- Colorado Boulevard Healthcare District Plan (1997)
- Civic Center District Plan (2005)
- Uptown Healthcare District Plan (2007)
- Downtown Area Plan (2007)
- Golden Triangle Neighborhood Plan (2014)

CONSISTENCY WITH CITYWIDE PLANS

Citywide plans offer a high-level framework to guide and influence decisions that affect the future of the city. They are used as a foundation for the more specific vision, recommendations and strategies contained in the East Central Area Plan. Comprehensive Plan 2040 provides the vision for the entire city. All small-area plans and some citywide plans are adopted as supplements to Comprehensive Plan 2040 to provide additional direction for certain topics or areas. Blueprint Denver is the citywide land use and transportation plan, adopted as a supplement to Comprehensive Plan 2040.

The East Central Area Plan is consistent with and furthers the policies and recommendations of Comprehensive Plan 2040 and Blueprint Denver, refining the citywide guidance for a smaller area. Adoption of the East Central Area Plan by Denver City Council updates the Comprehensive Plan 2040 and Blueprint Denver recommendations for this part of the city. Any future updates to citywide plans should incorporate and refine recommendations for East Central based on this plan.
The recommendations identified in this plan provide direction to guide day-to-day decision making related to land use, public investment, private development, and partnerships. The plan gives the latitude needed to pursue unforeseen opportunities that will arise and to respond to new challenges over the coming years. The East Central Area Plan is divided into five main sections.

**Introduction**
This section provides an overview of the East Central Area and the planning process, lays out the vision and high-level recommendations for the area in the Executive Summary, and describes how the plan advances the city’s goals for equity.

**Area-wide Recommendations**
This section provides the recommendations that are applicable across the entire East Central area, divided into four topics:

- Land Use and Built Form
- Economy and Housing
- Mobility
- Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

Within each topic, the plan describes the community’s vision, how success will be measured in achieving that vision, key existing conditions, and recommendations. The recommendations are formatted as follows: policies, which are the key recommendations to advance the vision; background, which illustrates the context for the policies; and strategies, which are more detailed actions to advance the policies. Topic sections also include opportunity maps, showing where relevant concepts could be located in the area.

**Neighborhoods of East Central**
Each neighborhood in East Central has its own section summarizing conditions and providing recommendations and transformative projects specific to that neighborhood. The neighborhoods are:

- North Capitol Hill
- Capitol Hill
- City Park West
- City Park
- Cheesman Park
- Congress Park

**Colfax Corridor**
This section provides specific recommendations for Colfax Avenue and for commercial and mixed-use development adjacent to it.

**Implementation**
The implementation section describes the tools and partnerships that will be used in achieving the vision, identifies priority recommendations, and describes how implementation progress will be measured.

**APPLYING THE EAST CENTRAL AREA PLAN TO REZONINGS**
The East Central Area Plan is a policy document that does not rezone any property. All rezonings must follow the standard rezoning process including Planning Board and City Council public hearings. However, the East Central Area Plan, as an adopted city plan, will play an important role in guiding rezoning decisions. Future rezonings must be consistent with the neighborhood context, place, height, and street type designations in this plan, along with the equity considerations and other recommendations.

However, many of the zoning recommendations in this plan are intended to be implemented legislatively, either through citywide processes or area-specific text amendments, instead of through applicant-driven rezonings. In addition, many of the zoning recommendations anticipate public investments in infrastructure improvements, such as Colfax Bus Rapid Transit.

Therefore, requests for one-off applicant-driven rezonings should be evaluated to determine if they are better suited for a legislative rezoning or should be delayed until after additional infrastructure is in place before being found to be consistent with this plan.
1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Connecting some of Denver’s most iconic parks and downtown, the East Central Area is already one of Denver’s most walkable, accessible neighborhoods. It is full of active streets, local businesses and colorful historic landmarks and districts.

Home to newcomers and longtime residents as well as major regional employers, the neighborhoods of Capitol Hill, North Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park, City Park West, City Park and Congress Park have grown and changed with the city. With bus rapid transit planned along Colfax and ongoing redevelopment throughout the area, East Central will remain a welcoming, dynamic cornerstone of Denver’s central core through 2040 and beyond.

To put community voices at the forefront of guiding change, the City launched the East Central Planning effort in 2017. Thousands of residents, local business owners and community groups shared their hopes and ideas for the future of these neighborhoods.

Through community workshops, neighborhood meetings, and online surveys, neighbors spoke out about what mattered to them about their neighborhoods. We found that they cared deeply about:

- Preserving local businesses
- Creating quality jobs
- Living in a diverse community
- Getting around safely
- Maintaining the look and feel of their neighborhoods
- Preserving the existing tree canopy and adding more trees and open space

The East Central area plan provides a guide for how these neighborhoods should evolve over the next 20 years. The following six themes summarize the recommended approach to making the area an even better place to live, preserving the elements that residents love, and contributing to the vision of an inclusive Denver.

1. **Strengthen the local economy by providing training for jobs in local industries, improving access to employment, and supporting locally-owned, independent businesses.**
   Priority recommendations include:
   - a. Partnering with East Central hospitals to provide job training to residents and affordable housing for healthcare employees (See Policies E1 & E10)
   - b. Preserving the independent culture of Colfax by proactively helping small, independent businesses survive and thrive during and after Colfax Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) construction by providing financial and technical assistance (see Policies C-E3 and C-E4).

2. **Make housing more affordable and make more options available to a wide range of families and individuals.**
   Priority recommendations include:
   - a. Providing a more diverse range of housing options in neighborhoods (See Policies L5, & E11)
   - b. Using every tool in the tool box, including zoning, to address the housing shortage by adding new affordable housing close to convenient public transit. (see Policies L3, E10 & E11)

3. **Improve services for residents experiencing homelessness and take steps to prevent more people from losing their homes.**
   Priority recommendations include:
   - a. Reducing involuntary displacement by preserving existing affordable housing (see Policy E9)
   - b. Enhancing social services to residents experiencing homelessness (see Policies E12, E13, & E14)

4. **Make streets safer and more comfortable for everybody by improving walking, bicycling and public transit infrastructure.**
   Priority recommendations include:
   - a. Building high-quality sidewalks and safe crossings on Colfax (see Policy M1-A)
   - b. Making 13th (see Policy M1-L), 14th (see Policy M1-M), 16th (see Policy M1-N), and 17th (see Policy M1-O) avenues much safer to cross and travel along.

5. **Increase historic preservation by making it easier to reuse existing buildings, creating more historic districts, and ensuring new buildings fit in with surrounding neighborhoods.**
   Priority recommendations include:
   - a. Creating an adaptive reuse ordinance that addresses barriers across multiple codes. (see Policies L4 & C-L1).
   - b. Incentivizing preservation of historically significant and character-providing buildings (see Policies L5, L6, & L9).
   - c. Adopting new standards for quality design and compatibility with adjacent homes (see Policies L6, L7, & L8).

6. **Reduce carbon pollution and create more climate-resilient neighborhoods by providing more opportunities for people to live and work near transit, adding shade trees, and taking a green approach to stormwater management.**
   Priority recommendations include:
   - a. Directing growth near high quality transit (see Policies L3, E2, E10).
   - b. Protecting mature trees (see Policy Q6) and focusing tree planting efforts in strategic areas (see Policy Q5).
1.3 PLANNING FOR AN EQUITABLE EAST CENTRAL DENVER

EQUITABLE PLANNING FOR EAST CENTRAL

Equity means everyone, regardless of who they are or where they are from, has the opportunity to thrive. A primary goal of Blueprint Denver is to guide change to improve equity across the city. To advance this goal, the plan evaluates equity through the lens of three core concepts: Access to Opportunity, Vulnerability to Displacement, and Housing & Jobs Diversity. Incorporating these three concepts into the planning process helps to define and prioritize recommendations to promote a more equitable Denver by highlighting equity-based needs in particular areas.

For the East Central Area Plan, the three equity concepts have influenced the strategies and recommendations in the plan and their prioritization by highlighting areas with particular equity concerns. This approach enables East Central to work towards a vision that prioritizes equity within the plan area and also contributes to a more equitable Denver.

The data and analyses that inform the core concepts on the following pages are intended to provide a high-level overview of the plan area rather than parcel-by-parcel direction. The specific measures of Access to Opportunity, Vulnerability to Displacement, and Housing & Jobs Diversity should be used as indicators that highlight the need for further investigation.
IMPROVING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

1. Neighborhood Equity Index:
   a. Social determinants of health
      - Percent of high school graduates or the equivalent for those 25 years of age or older
      - Percent of families below 100% of the federal poverty line
   b. Access to fresh food: percent of residents within 1/4 mile (10 minute walk) to a full-service grocery store
   c. Access to parks: percent of living units within 1/4 mile (10 minute walk) to a quality park or open space
   d. Access to health care: percent of pregnancies without first trimester prenatal care
   e. Children at a healthy weight: percent of children that are overweight or obese
   f. Average life expectancy

2. Access by walkshed (1/2 mile), bikeshed (2-mile) and driveshed (5-mile) to each local center, local corridor, community corridor and regional center from the future places map.

3. Access to quality transit: households within 1/2 mile of high-capacity transit or 1/4 mile from the frequent transit network

Access to Opportunity
creating more equitable access to quality-of-life amenities, health and education.
1.3.1 IMPROVING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Access to opportunity reflects the Blueprint Denver goal for all neighborhoods to be complete with equitable access to a high quality of life. It is evaluated based on the measures listed on the previous page, which reveal some of the highest inequities in the city. This measure includes the Neighborhood Equity Index, which is a measure of barriers to opportunity. Although the entire study area has relatively high access to transit as well as community corridors and centers, North Capitol Hill is ranked 60 out of 78 statistical neighborhoods, according to the composite Neighborhood Equity Index. City Park West is also below the citywide average, ranking 50 out of 78, according to barriers to opportunity. Poverty, access to healthcare, and morbidity were key drivers of the lower scores in these two neighborhoods. These specific measures are discussed more fully in the Quality-of-Life Infrastructure and Economy and Housing sections of the Areawide Recommendations chapter. However, when considered alongside measures of access to transit and other amenities, they highlight the need for a focus on these neighborhoods to meet city equity goals.

There are several policies and strategies in this plan that can improve access to opportunity with a focus on North Capitol Hill and City Park West:

- Policy M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- Policy M1 Recommendation F: Park Avenue between Colfax and 20th Avenues
  » Short-Term
  • Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances and operational improvements. Priority location is 16th Ave.
  • Study the feasibility of closing turn lanes and re-appropriating the space for pedestrians. Partner with Public Works’ Adaptive Streets initiative.

- Policy M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs.
- Policy Q1: Examine the potential for Historic Park Avenue to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.
- Policy Q4, Strategy A: Create new community open space, parks, and recreation facilities… [Consider the] District 6 Police Station redevelopment [as a potential location].
- Policy Q16: Increase access to low-cost healthcare in East Central.
VULNERABILITY TO DISPLACEMENT

VULNERABILITY TO DISPLACEMENT

Where are populations most vulnerable to displacement?

1. Median household income
2. Percent of renters
3. Percent of population with less than college degree
1.3.2 REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO DISPLACEMENT

Denver residents value diversity, inclusiveness and opportunity for all. These values are threatened by involuntary displacement, which occurs when residents or businesses can no longer afford to stay in an area due to increasing property values and rents. This can also include displacement caused by a loss of culture, family, and other factors. Vulnerability to Displacement is measured by several factors shown on the previous page that have been linked to involuntary displacement, which occurs when residents or businesses can no longer afford to stay in an area due to increasing property values and rents. According to the percent of renters, portions of every neighborhood in East Central are vulnerable. According to median household income, portions of every neighborhood except City Park are vulnerable. Considering the spread of Vulnerability to Displacement across the entire East Central area, it is important to focus on this issue to meet citywide equity goals.

Several policies and strategies in this plan, which are explained in greater detail in their respective chapters, can reduce vulnerability to displacement:

- Policy L3, Strategy A: Consistent with citywide policies in Blueprint Denver, develop a robust incentive system near major transit corridors through a community process that provides additional height in exchange for significant community benefits. Affordable (income-restricted) housing should be the primary community benefit achieved.
- Policy E3: Partner with Denver Public Schools, the Downtown Denver Partnership, and other major area employers/projects in connecting East Central residents to job opportunities.
- Policy E7: Support and develop new community-minded ownership models that have a goal of maintaining East Central’s variety of small, local businesses.
- Policy E8: Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement
- Policy E9: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality
- Policy E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities
- Policy E11: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes in all neighborhoods
HOUSING DIVERSITY

1. Housing Diversity
   1. Percent of middle-density housing (housing with 2-19 units)
   2. Home size diversity
   3. Ownership vs. rental
   4. Housing costs
   5. Amount of affordable (income-restricted) housing units

2. Jobs Diversity
   1. Jobs density
   2. Jobs diversity
1.3.3 EXPANDING HOUSING AND JOBS DIVERSITY

Diversity of housing and jobs captures the city’s vision for complete neighborhoods with equitable access to quality employment options and housing choices that accommodate households of different ages, sizes, and incomes. It is evaluated based on the measures listed on the previous page. Overall, East Central is considered diverse in measures of middle-density housing, income-restricted units, and housing costs. The area is less diverse in housing tenure and number of bedrooms, skewing heavily towards more rental units and units with two or fewer bedrooms.

While East Central neighborhoods generally have a lot of jobs, many are overly concentrated in one sector – often the retail sector. This indicates a need to expand the types of jobs available to improve access to quality employment and achieve the equity goals described in Blueprint Denver.

Several policies and strategies in this plan can expand housing and jobs diversity:

- Policy E1: Bolster the healthcare and wellness sector as the foundation for economic growth in the East Central Area.
- Policy E2: Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.
- Policy E9, Strategy C: Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing, particularly in areas vulnerable to displacement and close to transit through new tools such as:
  1. An incentive program for small landlords that provides for rehabilitation of small multi-unit properties in exchange for affordability commitments.
  2. Partnering with existing cooperatives and other organizations to assist tenants with acquiring and transforming housing into cooperative housing (Encouraging cooperatives also require reducing barriers to shared living. See Policy E11).
- Policy E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.
- Policy E10, Strategy B: Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.
- Policy E10, Strategy C: Encourage more family-friendly development, including larger unit sizes and family-supportive amenities
- Policy E10, Strategy E: Integrate missing-middle housing types into low and low medium residential areas, with a focus on discouraging demolition and encouraging affordability.
Areas with a mix of jobs similar to the city’s overall mix of job types

Areas with a predominate type of job

Less jobs per acre

More jobs per acre

Census block group with less than 100 jobs.
Not included in analysis of types of jobs

Street names and geographic areas are approximate and for reference only.

Plan area boundary

Retail

Innovation

0 0.2 0.4 Miles
2.1 AREA WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS: LAND USE AND BUILT FORM

IN THIS SECTION:

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION (P. 22)
2.1.2 NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXTS (P. 25)
2.1.3 PLACES (P. 27)
2.1.4 GROWTH STRATEGY (P. 37)
2.1.5 ZONING AND OTHER REGULATIONS (P. 38)
2.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Land Use and Built Form topic covers the basic elements necessary for creating equitable and complete neighborhoods as the East Central area grows and changes over the next 20 years. Land use recommendations describe appropriate locations and intensities for housing, shopping, employment, and entertainment. Built form recommendations describe how new buildings and renovations can promote the desired neighborhood character. These elements set the foundation upon which the other topics in this plan – Mobility, Quality-of-Life Infrastructure, Economy and Housing – build. The appropriate mix of uses and character-enhancing buildings help residents have access to the goods, services, and amenities necessary to thrive.

Future land use and built form guidance is proposed using two organizational systems: Neighborhood Contexts and Future Places. Neighborhood Contexts describe the desired general characteristics of an area, including street and block patterns and intensity of development. Future Places describe more specifically what new uses and building scales are appropriate. Together, these systems articulate how the area is envisioned to look and feel in 2040. East Central currently has a rich mix of places: mixed-use centers and corridors, diverse residential areas, and special-purpose districts, like hospital campuses. However, not all of these places fulfill the community's aspirations. There are underutilized properties and others with unappealing designs. Some buildings and uses that community members value are being replaced by those that may not contribute to desired neighborhood character. With significant changes expected from increased population and employment growth, to the re-imagining of Colfax Avenue as a bus rapid transit corridor, the recommendations of this section are vital for guiding changes to advance the community's vision.

Community input throughout the planning process has highlighted the importance of land use and built form. When asked what they are most concerned about, a top issue from participants was the negative impacts of some development and the resulting loss of neighborhood character. When asked what big ideas they had to improve the area, one of the most common themes was to reinvigorate and beautify Colfax Avenue. The community's vision for land use and built form in the East Central area reflects these concerns and desires.

LONG TERM VISION FOR LAND USE & BUILT FORM

In 2040, East Central is one of the most walkable places in the city. New buildings have pedestrian-friendly designs, such as front porches and balconies, ground floor windows, and have incorporated quality, durable materials that help maintain the area’s distinctive character. Historic streetcar stops are still within a short walk of most homes, providing shops, restaurants, and plazas that make it easy for people to meet their neighbors and join the area’s well-connected community. Each neighborhood has a rich diversity of young people, seniors, and families of a variety of ethnicities and income levels. Neighborhood schools are thriving, as dense areas that once contained few children now have many more families due to the construction of more multi-bedroom units. Older residents have been able to stay in the neighborhoods they love through the addition of smaller duplexes and backyard cottage houses. Historic buildings, including several with mid-20th century designs, are well-preserved, with some renovations facilitated by adaptive reuse as popular shops, cafés and co-working offices. Colfax Avenue, Colorado Boulevard, 17th Avenue, and the other commercial areas have a bustling main street feel with eclectic, engaging buildings and benches, lighting, and public art that create a welcoming and exciting environment. During the day, the sidewalks are filled with residents shopping for daily needs while evenings bring restaurant, bar, and concert goers. More multi-story, mixed use buildings have been woven into Colfax, Broadway, Colorado, and other major transit corridors, which has eased vehicle traffic and development pressure on surrounding neighborhoods by allowing more residents to conveniently access quality, reliable transit.

MEASURABLE GOALS

To determine whether the vision is being achieved, the city will track three measures related to walkability, strategic growth, and historic preservation.

INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITHIN WALKING OR ROLLING DISTANCE OF JOBS, RETAIL, AND QUALITY TRANSIT TO AT LEAST 50% IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD

3/6 NEIGHBORHOODS CURRENTLY MEET TARGET

DIRECT 75% OF NEW JOBS AND HOUSEHOLDS THAT LOCATE IN EAST CENTRAL BY 2040 TO CENTERS AND CORRIDORS

75%

AVOID FULL DEMOLITION OF ANY HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT BUILDING

100%
LAND USE AND BUILT FORM OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Legend:
- Enhanced Residential Design Quality Area
- Areas of Historic Preservation
- Existing Historic Landmark/District
- Area of Historic Interest / Commercial Character Preservation
- Active Ground Floor Use Area
- Enhanced Mixed-Use Design Quality Area

Map showing land use and built form opportunity areas in the East Central Area Plan.
**Enhanced Residential Design Quality Area**

Standards to preserve traditional neighborhood character by adjusting design standards to be more consistent with the existing architecture in the neighborhood, and encouraging context-sensitive additions instead of demolition. See Policies L4 & L7. (Photo: Home in Congress Park)

**Area of Historic Significance**

A collection of structures and features identified by the citywide building survey Discover Denver that is significant for its history, architecture and culture, and is potentially eligible for local historic designation and application of other tools that will maintain its character. See Policy L9. (The Lafayette, City Park West (photo credit: Discover Denver))

**Historic Preservation Incentive Area**

Historic Preservation Incentive Areas allow for one additional dwelling unit in exchange for the preservation of an existing residential building. The additional unit would be interior to the home, such as an upper floor, basement, or split main floor. If a homeowner decides to add a unit, the entire home must be protected, with demolition restricted and specific rules for modifications. See Policies L5, L7, & L9. (Photo: Duplex plus ADU, City Park)

**Commercial Character Building Preservation**

A concept to preserve buildings that are not protected by a landmark designation, but contribute to the character of mixed use areas and are desired to be preserved. See Policies L3, L6, & L8. (Photo: The Fillmore, North Capitol Hill)

**Active Ground Floor Use Area**

An area where uses that bring activity to the sidewalk should be required on the ground floor. Areas include existing pedestrian-friendly neighborhood destinations, such as historic streetcar stops, or areas directly adjacent to a transit station. Activity can include retail, patio seating, plazas where people can sit, play or gather, or other activity that enlivens the sidewalk. See Policy L8. (Photo: 12th & Madison, Congress Park)

**Enhanced Mixed-Use Design Quality Area**

An area where additional standards are recommended in order to better align new construction with community goals. Requirements can include guidelines for bulk, massing, building materials, signage, streetscape, open space, landscaping, improved transitions between commercial and residential, or other elements specific to the vision for an area. See Policies L6 & L8. (Photo: Row houses in City Park)
2.1.2 NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXTS

Neighborhood Contexts reflect established land patterns such as lot and block sizes, era of construction, and existing building heights and density. Neighborhood contexts also reflect future expectations for how new development is expected to occur and how it should respond to existing patterns. The assigned contexts are reflected in the Denver Zoning Code as well. For complete context descriptions, please refer to Blueprint Denver, Chapters 4 and 5.

- **Downtown** – These areas feature tall buildings close to the street, high pedestrian activity and active uses along the ground floor with a mix of uses on upper floors and excellent transit access and mobility options. This context has the tallest buildings and most dense form (i.e. large footprints, buildings take up majority of blocks).

- **Urban Center** – a transition to the urban neighborhoods from the Downtown context. It includes a high mix of uses with buildings close to the street, but the scale of buildings transition down in height from the Downtown context. It also has excellent transit access and mobility options.

- **General Urban** – a mix of residential and office uses and commercial areas, but with higher densities than the Urban contexts. Buildings are generally multi-unit residential or office, although some single and two unit buildings may be mixed in. There is also a high concentration of historic buildings in this context in the East Central area.

- **Urban** – primarily single and two-unit residential areas and mixed-use nodes, although there are many small, multi-unit buildings, especially closer to Colfax Avenue. Vehicle access is provided by alleys, so streets are lined with front porches and yards.

- **Districts** – large schools, hospitals, large parks and civic spaces. They may require special rules for building form and height and contrast with the surrounding character. In the East Central area, examples include: the State Capitol grounds, City Park, Cheesman Park, East High School, Morey Middle School, St. John’s Cathedral, Carla Madison Recreation Center and the Uptown Medical District.
As Denver continues to evolve as an inclusive city, we must strive to create complete neighborhoods for everyone. Access to vital community amenities should not be limited to only certain neighborhoods in our city. Although Denver aspires to be a city of complete neighborhoods, this does not mean all neighborhoods should be the same or remain static. Even complete neighborhoods continue to evolve. The completeness of each neighborhood is defined by its distinct and authentic history, culture and character, as well as its access to a variety of housing types, services, green spaces and employment opportunities. The context-appropriate integration of utility infrastructure is also part of a complete neighborhood.

Blueprint Denver establishes a framework to plan and implement complete neighborhoods. Three interrelated elements form the foundation of a complete neighborhood: land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure. How the complete neighborhood elements vary and come together result in the different places and streets found in our city’s many neighborhoods. How places and streets interact in turn results in the various neighborhood contexts found across the city.

The ability to calibrate the different elements of a complete neighborhood by neighborhood context, place and street type provides a considerable amount of nuance when mapping our unique and evolving neighborhoods. The East Central Area Plan refines and updates the context, place, and street type designations of Blueprint Denver. This plan also advances the land use and built form, mobility, and quality-of-life infrastructure recommendations of Blueprint Denver and adds a new element of economy and housing. Together, these tools can be used to create the complete neighborhoods necessary to achieve the vision of Blueprint Denver for an equitable and inclusive city.
2.1.3 PLACES

Places are an organizational system that describes the desired character of an area. Places work together to promote complete neighborhoods for the residents living within or near each of them. Each place expresses itself differently depending on the neighborhood context where it is located. The East Central Area Plan refines place descriptions, provides more specific building height guidance, and, in some cases, updates the Blueprint Denver place designations.

PLACES IN EAST CENTRAL

East Central’s mix of places is one of the most diverse in the city. Each of the six neighborhoods has a center or corridor, a mix of residential areas, and districts. Below are brief descriptions of each context and place combination found in East Central. For complete place descriptions, please refer to Chapters 4 and 5 of Blueprint Denver. For details of place subcategories not defined in Blueprint Denver, see sidebar on Page 28.

DOWNTOWN

Regional Center
- Office, retail, eating and drinking establishments, commercial services and multi-unit residential uses are found mixed throughout
- High degree of urbanism paired with a strong pedestrian realm

Community Corridor
- Provides a mix of office, commercial and residential uses
- Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street
- Building footprints are typically larger and exhibit a significant degree of street activation that provides an active public-private interface

High Residential
- A high mix of uses throughout, including high density multi-unit residential, commercial, civic and institutional uses
- The downtown residential areas are distinguished from the downtown regional center by their land use mix being slightly more multi-unit residential in nature

URBAN CENTER

Community Center
- Provides a mix of office, commercial and residential uses
- Strong degree of urbanism with mostly continuous building frontages and distinct streetscape elements that define the public realm

Community Corridor
- Typically provides a mix of office, commercial and residential uses
- Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street

High Residential
- A high mix of uses throughout, including many large scale multi-unit residential uses
- Commercial uses are prevalent

High-Medium Residential
- A mix of uses, including multi-unit residential, but at a slightly lower intensity compared to the high residential areas

See Blueprint Denver for full place descriptions
The East Central Area Plan refines Blueprint Denver’s guidance on future places and updates the Blueprint Denver future places map. For a few residential places, the East Central Area Plan provides more detailed guidance by applying subcategories as summarized below.

**Residential Low**
- These areas are predominantly single- and two-unit uses. Accessory dwelling units are appropriate and should be thoughtfully integrated throughout.
  - **Residential Low: Single-Unit**: This subcategory is recommended in areas that have single-unit homes, but where two-unit homes would not be appropriate except in locations identified where an additional unit is allowed if the house is preserved (see Policy L5).
  - **Residential Low: Two-Unit**: This subcategory is recommended in areas where both single- and two-unit homes are appropriate.
- Some civic and institutional uses, such as schools and churches, are compatibility integrated throughout Residential Low areas. When these uses relocate or close, these sites may be appropriate locations to introduce additional residential intensity and neighborhood-serving commercial uses if buildings are preserved and reused.
  - Limited mixed-use is appropriate where commercial uses have already been established and along arterial and collector streets, ideally on corners at intersections with streets that are transit-served, or connect to other destinations such as parks and commercial areas.

**Residential Low-Medium**
- These places include a mix of low- to mid-scale multi-unit residential options and some single- and two-unit homes.
  - **Residential Low-Medium: Row House**: includes single-unit and two-unit residential in a limited capacity as well as denser housing types such as row houses and small multi-unit buildings. The East Central Area Plan applies the “residential low-medium: row house” subcategory in areas where single-unit, two-unit, row house buildings and accessory dwelling units would be appropriate, but where small multi-unit buildings would not.
  - Limited neighborhood serving commercial can be found, particularly at intersections.
  - In the General Urban context, office uses may be mixed throughout Residential Low-Medium areas.

In addition to the above, the East Central Area Plan also provides building height guidance. This height guidance may be greater or less than the ranges identified by Blueprint’s place descriptions. Building heights are also further restricted by existing view planes in some locations.

For more detailed information on these places, and on the future place descriptions not modified by this plan, please refer to Blueprint Denver, Chapters 4 and 5.
GENERAL URBAN

Community Center
- Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses
- Strong degree of urbanism with mostly continuous building frontages to define the public realm

Local Center
- Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping
- May also include some residential and employment uses
- Provides a more intimate, pedestrian scale

Community Corridor
- Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses
- Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street

Local Corridor
- Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping
- May also include some residential and employment uses
- Buildings have distinctly linear orientation along the street with very shallow setbacks

High Residential
- Predominately multi-unit residential, though compatible commercial uses should be interspersed throughout

High-Medium Residential
- A mix of low- to medium-scale multi-unit residential uses with some neighborhood-serving mixed use distributed throughout

Low-Medium Residential
- Primarily residential, with a mix of unit types
- Single- and two-unit homes are interspersed with lower scale multi-unit buildings
- Limited neighborhood serving commercial can be found, particularly at intersections

Low-Medium Residential – Row House
- Primarily residential, with a mix of unit types
- Single- and two-unit homes are interspersed with row houses
- Limited neighborhood serving commercial can be found, particularly at intersections

See Blueprint Denver for full place descriptions
Local Center
- Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping
- May also include some residential and employment uses
- Public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages providing a more intimate, pedestrian scale

Community Corridor
- Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses
- Have a distinctly linear orientation along the street
- Lot coverage is typically higher, with open spaces that are often accommodated by spaces between buildings rather than along the street

Local Corridor
- Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping
- May also include some residential and employment uses
- Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street with very shallow setbacks

High-Medium Residential
- A mix of mid-scale multi-unit residential options
- Some neighborhood-serving mixed-use may be appropriate, especially along arterial streets or at non-local street intersections

Low-Medium Residential
- Mix of low- to mid-scale multi-unit residential options
- Small-scale multi-unit buildings are interspersed between single- and two-unit residential
- Limited mixed-use along some arterial and collector streets and at intersections

Low Medium Residential – Row House
- Row houses are interspersed between single- and two-unit homes
- Limited mixed-use along some arterial and collector streets and at intersections

Low Residential
- Predominately two-unit uses on smaller lots
- Some civic and institutional uses are compatibly integrated throughout and limited mixed-use can occur along arterial and collector streets, as well as where commercial uses have been already established

Low Residential – Single Unit
- Predominately single-unit uses on smaller lots, with 2-4 unit missing middle housing integrated
- Some civic and institutional uses are compatibly integrated throughout and limited mixed-use can occur along arterial and collector streets, as well as where commercial uses have been already established

See Blueprint Denver for full place descriptions
COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Generally, people love the diverse mix of land uses that these neighborhoods offer. People expressed wanting more local, neighborhood serving businesses and fewer chain establishments.

“The amenities most important to me are…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dining</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Shopping</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Activities</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of responses (2,441)
Source: 2017 East Central Kick-off Survey

“Other types of housing I would like to see in the East Central Area are…”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live + Work</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessory Dwelling Units</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townhomes/Rowhomes</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of responses (200)
Source: February 2019 Workshops

RECOMMENDATIONS

L1
Ensure compatible development on institutional sites within neighborhoods.

Institutional uses, such as schools and places of worship, are typically embedded within residential areas and provide key services to surrounding residents. When these uses leave a neighborhood, it can leave a vacant site that has the potential to provide additional neighborhood services and more diverse housing options without displacing existing residents. In addition, new development on existing large campuses should be designed to complement the surrounding neighborhood.

A. Consider zoning code revisions to ensure compatible redevelopment of former institutional sites embedded in low and low-medium residential areas. These sites are appropriate for low-medium residential and neighborhood-serving uses, such as childcare, cafes, community meeting space, and other low impact uses.
   1. Preserving and reusing vacant institutional buildings should be required unless a community-informed process is conducted to make an exception.

B. When new development occurs on large campuses, require Large Development Review with compatible design to adjacent residential areas, pedestrian connections, open space, and activate building frontages on major corridors.
   (See Policies L7 and E1 for additional detail)
   1. Building heights should include sensitive transitions to adjacent residential places (see Policy L8 for more detail)

L2
Encourage shared use and activation of institutional and quasi-public buildings and open space during off-peak times.

Some neighborhoods in East Central lack smaller, neighborhood-scaled open space and community facilities. Additionally, children often have limited places to go after school to be active. Allowing shared use of facilities like churches and schools during off-peak hours could provide these community amenities to the neighborhoods without having to build new facilities.

A. Encourage shared use of space at these types of facilities by creating shared use agreements between schools or churches and the city. Some examples could include:
   1. Using playgrounds, gymnasiums, and sports facilities for public use during non-school hours.
   2. Using rooms for community uses, such as book clubs, arts and crafts, presentations, and adult learning (see Policy E3 for additional detail).
   3. Using church parking to accommodate nearby parking needs for adjacent uses.
   4. Using school parking lots for neighborhood events, mobile community gardens or farmer’s markets.
   5. Using dedicated areas on school grounds for community gardens.
PLACES

LEGEND
- Regional Center
- Community Center
- Local Center
- Community Corridor
- Local Corridor
- High Residential
- High-Medium Residential
- Low-Medium Residential
- Low-Medium Residential - Row House
- Low Residential
- Low Residential - Single Unit
- Civic
- Campus
- Regional Park
- Parks and Open Space
- Refinements from Blueprint Map

East Central Area Plan | 2.1 Land Use and Built Form

0 0.2 0.4 Miles
MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS IN EAST CENTRAL

While Blueprint Denver place categories provide general guidance on building heights, this plan provides detailed height guidance for specific areas. The Maximum Building Heights map depicts the recommended building heights within East Central. These heights may or may not be achievable on specific sites subject to a variety of factors including but not limited to: existing zoning, view plane restrictions, and where achieving maximum heights is linked to the provision of community benefits (such as affordable housing) as recommended in this plan. These height recommendations are to be used along with the place designations above to determine appropriate zone districts and development patterns in East Central.

Building heights in East Central vary, with the tallest buildings concentrated in the neighborhoods within the western portion of the plan area. Taller buildings are also located adjacent to Cheesman and City Parks, in the hospital campuses, and along some of the major streets. A mix of heights is envisioned along Colfax Avenue. Less variation occurs in the eastern portion of the plan area, with most buildings in Congress Park and City Park being 35 feet or less in height.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Neighborhood workshops included an exercise that asked which elements of new construction in single- and two-unit areas were most important to address. In order of priority, the results concluded:

1. BUILDING HEIGHT 15%
2. MASS AND SCALE 13%
3. MATERIALS 13%
4. ARTICULATION 11%

Percent of responses rating each element very or somewhat important (271)
Source: February 2019 workshops
COMMUNITY BENEFITS

“Community benefit” is a term used throughout this plan. It is most often associated with Land Use Policy L3 which seeks to attain certain valuable community needs when new development occurs while simultaneously directing growth in a responsible manner. These are elements that intend to benefit the community at-large but are less likely to be provided by or implemented by the city, mainly because they need to occur on private property. Some examples of community benefits for this purpose are listed below:

- **Affordable Housing** – Comprehensive Plan 2040, Blueprint Denver, and Housing an Inclusive Denver all identify affordable housing as a vital need throughout the city. As described in the Economy and Housing section of this plan, the East Central area is in need of 3,100 affordable units for the lowest income residents. Without additional affordable housing, the East Central area cannot be a complete and inclusive neighborhood. Creating affordable housing through incentives is only one of many tools that will be needed to achieve the city’s housing goals.

- **Preserving a Commercial Character Building** – are those that contribute to the character of a neighborhood or corridor. They may or may not be eligible for historic designation, but they are desired to remain in the community because they contribute to the character and history of an area. They also often times provide affordable commercial or residential space because they are older.

- **Affordable Commercial Space or Community-Serving Use** – new buildings are often more expensive to rent. According to community feedback, offering subsidies to community-based nonprofits, local artists, existing local tenants that might otherwise be displaced or other community-serving commercial enterprises is desired. Other examples of community-serving uses include grocery stores, childcare, health clinics, senior care, and social services. All community-serving uses should include affordability programs for low income residents.

- **Publicly Accessible Open Space and Parks** – incorporating publicly accessible open space (which may be privately-owned and maintained), such as small pocket parks, courtyards, pedestrian passages or plazas – beyond what is required by code – helps achieve plan goals for increasing tree canopy and improving access to parks and open space. All publicly accessible open space must be designed and located to be fully accessible to the public and operated with the same rules as city-owned parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

**Building Heights**

**Allow taller buildings when significant community benefits are provided**

The vision for East Central includes pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, a variety of affordable housing options, vibrant activity near major transit stops, quality jobs, community gathering spaces, and thriving locally owned businesses. The vision calls for directing more intense development to centers and corridors, while also encouraging preservation of commercial character buildings along Colfax Avenue. Requiring community benefits ensures new development contributes positively to the area.

**A.** Consistent with citywide policies in Blueprint Denver, develop a robust incentive system near major transit corridors through a community process that provides additional height in exchange for significant community benefits. On-site affordable (income-restricted) housing should be the primary community benefit achieved.

1. The incentive system should promote a range of income levels ranging from low-income to workforce.
2. Coordinate with other tools to implement priority housing for very low income households (see Policy E10).
3. The incentive system should promote permanent affordability.
4. The incentive system should provide a range of unit sizes to accommodate individuals and families.
5. In the development of an incentive system, include targeted outreach to historically underrepresented communities such as renters, immigrant refugee, young persons, people currently living in or in need of affordable housing; and residents within or near the proposed incentive.
6. Coordinate allowances for additional height with improved transitions to residential places. The priority should be adjustments to setbacks and upper-story step-backs adjacent to residential places. (See Policy L8.C)
7. Strategic locations for additional building height in exchange for community benefits area shown on Maximum Building Heights map on page 33.
8. Until a citywide system is adopted by City Council, no height increases should be allowed unless specific benefit requirements, including number of income restricted units and level of affordability, for an individual project are approved by City Council. Targeted outreach for individual projects should occur as recommended in L3.A.5 above.

**B.** Additional community benefits identified include:

1. Publicly accessible open space especially in low access areas (see open space access map in Section 2.4 Quality-of-Life Infrastructure).
2. Inclusion of affordable commercial space or community-serving uses (see sidebar for definition and Policy E6 for more detail).
3. Preservation of an existing commercial character building.
4. Providing transportation amenities and infrastructure to encourage mode shift (see TDM strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility).
The height strategy for East Central takes several factors into account, including heights of existing buildings, maximum heights allowed by existing zoning, and community input on desired development patterns and areas to direct growth. The height incentive areas in the map below show the locations where additional height is allowed if community benefits are provided, in accordance with Policy L3. The map colors and legend indicate maximum heights achievable through incentives. No additional building heights beyond what is currently allowed are recommended without providing a commensurate community benefit. Maximum heights may not be achievable in some locations due to view planes or other restrictions.
Affordable Childcare provides an easily accessible Community-Serving Use.

Healthcare and wellness job training center connects residents to quality employment opportunities.

Increased tree canopy and integrated stormwater planters.

New affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

Proposed Colfax BRT and center stations.

Mobility Hub provides transit information, bikes, scooters, and lockers.

High capacity transit service on Colorado Blvd.

Improved public open space at transit stops.

Hospital partnerships create affordable housing for healthcare workers while preserving existing historic hospital.
2.1.4 GROWTH STRATEGY

Blueprint Denver provides a growth strategy where the majority of new jobs and housing is directed to centers, corridors and districts. A growth strategy helps manage the physical evolution of neighborhoods by informing goals for affordable housing, character preservation, and infrastructure improvements while helping make changes more predictable for residents.

PROJECTED GROWTH IN EAST CENTRAL

As of 2018, there were 34,400 households and 54,400 jobs in the East Central area. The area is expected to grow by 7,500 additional housing units (22% increase) and 12,300 additional jobs (23% increase) over the next 20 years. This translates to approximately 7.23 million square feet of new development.

For East Central, the goal is to direct 75% of housing and jobs to centers, corridors and districts.

GROWTH STRATEGY

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

At neighborhood workshops, community members were asked “Where Should New Growth Be Directed?” The following are themes from this exercise, in order of popularity:

1. Direct growth along Colfax Avenue to help more residents benefit from future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
2. Accommodate growth by encouraging “gentle infill” and “missing middle” housing types, such as ADUs, two, three and fourplexes, and townhouses.
3. Direct growth to existing parking lots and underutilized sites with uses like drive-thrus, gas stations, used car dealers, or abandoned or poorly maintained structures.
4. Add more small-scale mixed use and live/work uses within neighborhood commercial areas at historic streetcar stops.

Source: February 2019 Workshops

PROJECTED GROWTH

Number of additional households

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34,400</td>
<td>41,900</td>
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</table>

Number of additional jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2040</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54,400</td>
<td>66,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DRCOG, Denver CPD, and ARLAND
2.1.5 ZONING AND OTHER REGULATIONS

The Denver Zoning Code (DZC), adopted in 2010, sets regulations for development of private property, including uses, building placement, height, design, and parking, by neighborhood context. These regulations do not always result in development that contributes positively to the neighborhood. To implement the East Central Area Plan vision, some modifications to the existing zoning are necessary.

CURRENT ZONING IN EAST CENTRAL

Through the East Central planning process, several issues with current zoning and regulations have been identified. These include:

**Bulk Plane** - In Single Unit and Two Unit areas, the bulk plane standard allows three-story, flat-roofed “wedding cake” buildings, which can be out of character with the rest of the neighborhood. The bulk plane also restricts some traditional roof forms. For example, cross gables and dormers would penetrate the bulk plane, so they cannot be replicated.

**Character-Specific Standards** - Some neighborhoods have unique character-defining features that are not being reflected in new development. Examples include: asymmetrical side setbacks, raised front porches, and pitched roofs. Where these features are consistent, new development that does not include these features can look out of character.

**Residential Renovations and Additions** - Some regulations, such as rear yard setbacks, building coverage, and bulk plane make it difficult to renovate and add on to existing buildings, unintentionally encouraging demolition.

**Commercial Adaptive Reuse** - When converting an existing building to a new use, e.g. retail to a restaurant, regulations require coming into full compliance with existing standards, which may be expensive or physically difficult to accomplish. The adaptive reuse of existing buildings are often desired over new construction as they can simultaneously add vitality to neighborhoods and maintain character.

**Residential / Commercial Transitions** - In mixed use areas, particularly along the Colfax corridor, current zoning permits mid-rise structures adjacent to lower scale residential homes. Additional zoning standards are needed to achieve better solutions for character-sensitive transitions to historic or lower scale contexts. (See Chapter 4: Colfax Corridor for more.)

EXISTING OVERLAYS AND HISTORIC DISTRICTS

**Use Overlay 3 (UO-3)** - is the predominant overlay in East Central. It exists primarily in multi-unit and row house districts as well as some two-unit areas. It expands allowable uses within designated historic structures as an incentive to save and designate those structures as landmarks. Other use overlays include UO-1 (Adult Use) and UO-2 (Billboard).

**Design Overlays** - The Uptown Design Overlay (DO-1) and the Capitol Hill/Uptown – R-4/OD-1 and Uptown – R-4-X Design Standards and Guidelines apply to parts of Capitol Hill, North Capitol Hill, and City Park West. These standards apply additional design consideration to new construction and modifications to existing buildings.

**Historic Districts** - Several parkways are designated historic landmarks, including Park Avenue and its adjacent triangle parks, E. 7th Avenue and City Park Esplanade. Other historic districts include: Civic Center, Sherman – Grant, Pennsylvania Street, Quality Hill, East 7th Avenue, Humboldt Street, Humboldt Street-Park Avenue, Wyman, Swallow Hill, and Frank S. Snell Subdivision historic districts.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**L4**

Encourage renovations and additions instead of demolition in residential areas.

Renovations and additions help preserve neighborhood character by keeping most of the building intact and retaining character-defining features such as brick facades, raised front porches, and other period architectural features. Avoiding demolition can also help preserve mature trees and landscaping and results in less waste.

A. Update regulations in residential zone districts to remove barriers to additions and renovations. The following should be considered:
   1. Clarify regulations to ensure that the existing house is substantially preserved in exchange for greater flexibility (see Policy L5.B.2).
   2. Allow penetrations to the bulk plane standard for dormers and cross gables.
   3. Reduce the required separation between a garage and the main house to better enable rear additions.
   4. Reduce rear building setbacks to allow flexibility for rear additions.
   5. Allow building coverage exemptions for the full footprint of an accessory dwelling unit.
   6. Encourage energy efficient upgrades, such as better insulation techniques, energy-efficient appliances, and higher-performing mechanical systems.
   7. Encourage green stormwater management techniques, such as green roofs, increasing pervious surfaces, bioswales, and rain barrels.

B. Consider fees and new regulations that require the salvaging or reuse of building materials when homes of certain age are demolished.

**L5**

Encourage preserving buildings in Low Residential Places and expand missing middle housing options in neighborhoods.

Residents are concerned about losing the great neighborhood character that could change due to new construction. Many existing homes are large enough to accommodate multiple units or contain elements that facilitate multiple units. With affordability and neighborhood preservation concerns, allowing additional units in existing homes can help preserve neighborhood character while expanding housing options.

A. Consistent with adopted citywide policies in Blueprint Denver, integrate missing middle housing (see following page for definition) in Low Residential Places with rules to preserve valued neighborhood characteristics and address unique issues in the East Central area as follows:
   1. Design requirements to ensure that new construction is compatible with unique setback, height and massing characteristics of East Central neighborhoods (see Policy L7).
   2. Discouraging replacement of smaller homes with larger homes that may be less affordable.
   4. Stormwater management, particularly in flood prone areas.
   5. Home ownership of units should be encouraged to help build equity and investment in the neighborhood.
   6. Tools, such as financial and technical assistance, that help existing East Central area residents remain and invest in their properties
   7. Impacts to street parking should be addressed
   8. Long term affordability for low income residents.

B. In Low Residential Single Unit Places, create an incentive for preserving historically significant homes by allowing an additional primary dwelling unit if the existing home is preserved, as follows:
   1. Prepare criteria for eligibility for an additional unit, considering the age of the home, architecture, and how much of the structure must be preserved.
   2. Engage Historic Denver and the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission in creating preservation criteria, rules for restricting demolitions, and appropriate modifications to structures.

C. Implement adopted citywide policies in Blueprint Denver to diversify housing choice through expansion of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) throughout all residential areas while also addressing context-sensitive ADU design and removing barriers to ADU construction.
   1. ADUs should be allowed in all low residential forms, including duplex and rowhouse.
   2. Until a citywide ADU approach is complete, consider neighborhood-wide rezonings to allow ADUs.
WHAT IS MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING?

Missing middle refers to 2 to 4 unit homes such as duplexes, triplexes, row houses and similar neighborhood housing options that fall “in the middle” between single unit and small apartment buildings. Missing middle also refers to units that are attainable to middle-income households. These housing types can help provide more affordable options for middle-income households and homeownership opportunities for residents who rent.

Missing middle is an important strategy to help ease Denver’s housing shortage and make neighborhoods more inclusive. In particular, missing middle options have helped seniors remain in neighborhoods they love when family sizes are reduced from children moving out or when incomes become fixed from retirement (often referred to as “aging in place”).

Missing middle homes can also make neighborhoods more family-friendly, as households with children often desire yards and locations within residential areas as opposed to apartments on commercial streets like Colfax Avenue. Missing middle housing can provide these options to families at more affordable prices compared to single unit homes.
Case Study: Portland’s Residential Infill Project

Portland, Oregon is expected to adopt a number of zoning code amendments to their single-dwelling zoning rules that seek to limit the scale of new homes and increase housing choices. Many of the scale issues they are addressing are similar to Denver’s. Below is a list of amendments they are considering:

- New floor area ratio (FAR) standards for primary and accessory structures to establish a house size by zone that is proportional to the lot size.
- Revising the way height is measured (from lowest point as opposed to highest).
- Allowing exceptions to overall height, such as dormers.
- Increasing setbacks.
- Allowing up to 4 dwelling units per lot.

Case Study: Vancouver’s Character Home Retention Program

In 2018, Vancouver, British Columbia amended rules and added guidelines that incentivize saving a “character house.” A character house is generally defined as a typical one family dwelling constructed prior to January 1, 1940 that has original massing and roof form plus another original feature(s) such as: original porch, cladding, window openings, period details or streetscape content. In exchange for preserving the house, property owners can receive increased floor area and/or additional units on the same lot.
Retain the character of High, High-Medium, and Low-Medium Residential Places and facilitate compatible infill development.

Large portions of the East Central area are zoned for multi-unit and mixed-use development. These areas have unique neighborhood character, consisting of single-unit residential, multi-unit residential, and commercial buildings forms, that is valued by the community. But they also have many undeveloped or underdeveloped properties that could provide housing near jobs, services, transit, and other amenities. The existing design standards and overlays that are intended to ensure changes in the area are consistent with the valued character are out of date.

A. Promote preservation of historic and character-defining single-unit, multi-unit, and mixed-use buildings. Consider individual landmarks, historic districts, or other tools as appropriate.
   1. Facilitate adaptive reuse of historic structures by allowing a broader range of uses, including compatible commercial uses, and appropriate additions.
   2. Facilitate the preservation of large single-unit structures by ensuring regulations do not prevent creating multiple units within the structure.

B. Update the Capitol Hill/Uptown – R-4/OD-1 and Uptown – R-4-X Design Standards and Guidelines for new construction and modification to existing buildings. Updated design standards should address the following:
   1. Materials: Improve the durability, craftsmanship, and sustainability of construction materials.
   2. Setbacks: Calibrate setback requirements by street type and context.
   3. Residential ground floor design: Address the location and design of individual unit entries, stoops, weather protection, landscaping, and the size of and access to internal common spaces.
   4. Commercial ground floor design: Address transparency requirements, glazing treatments, corner entries, and activation and outdoor seating.
   5. Transitions: Refine transitions from more intense districts to single-unit, two-unit, and historic properties.
   6. Massing: Provide variation by requiring material and scale transitions on larger developments to create the appearance of a series of smaller, urban buildings.
   7. Streetscape/public realm: Improve landscaping requirements to create more useable open space, provide more tree canopy coverage, improve stormwater treatment, and appropriately address surrounding streets and public spaces.

C. Apply the revised design standards to all multi-unit and mixed-use zoning outside centers and corridors.

D. Encourage more larger units (2+ bedrooms) in multi-unit and mixed-use developments to accommodate a variety of household types and sizes.

E. Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes in all neighborhoods. (See E11 for more detail.)
Work with neighborhoods to modify zoning standards for new construction to be more consistent with neighborhood character in Low Residential Places.

New construction in single-unit and two-unit areas is sometimes out of context due to the mass and scale of new buildings in contrast to older buildings. Modifying zoning requirements such as setbacks and building coverage standards can help ensure new buildings and additions make good neighbors that fit in with the established character of the surrounding neighborhood.

A. Update zoning regulations to create more contextual standards for massing, scale, and height, such as:

1. Reduce building coverage standards, including exemptions for garages if inconsistent with the established pattern in the neighborhood.
2. Increase side setbacks to reduce looming effects and encourage side yards. Consider a combined minimum for both sides and a one side minimum to allow greater flexibility.
3. Reduce the length of two-story side walls. Consider a maximum dimension for two-story walls before a change in plane is required or limit the percentage of wall plane that can be at the minimum side setback.

4. Reduce the appearance of building scale and promote compatible roof forms by considering the following:
   a. Set a maximum dimension for a flat or low-sloping roof to discourage out of character 3-story houses
   b. Evaluate height, bulk plane, and other standards necessary to discourage “wedding cake” house forms.
   c. Modify bulk plane standards to encourage pitched roofs in neighborhoods where it is the traditional roof form.
   d. Modify bulk plane standards to provide exceptions for cross gables and dormers. This would provide an alternative to flat roofs and accommodate more floor area in a sloped roof form.
   e. Ensure building height is measured so that the final finished grade is taken into account to help preserve the “Denver Hill” in new construction.
   f. Modify the bulk plane standard to maintain a 1-1.5 story height in the front portion of lots in areas where these heights are prevalent. In exchange, taller building heights in the rear portion of the lot would allow additions while helping to preserve the established scale of the neighborhood at the street.
Encourage high-quality design and character preservation in Centers and Corridors

With most of the growth directed to Centers and Corridors, new development should help advance the vision for quality design, a diversity of small, locally owned businesses, compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods, and preservation of unique existing commercial buildings that contribute to East Central's character.

A. Modify regulations to improve design quality in Centers and Corridors. Primary elements to consider include:
   1. Ground floor design treatment and activation standards
   2. Parking locations and design
   3. Building materials
   4. Transitions to lower scale residential and historic districts
   5. Streetscape and open space design
   6. Creative design solutions and flexibility

B. Strengthen standards for active ground floor use areas. Primary elements to consider include:
   1. Limiting residential units on the ground floor.
   2. Discouraging visible parking garages on upper levels of buildings fronting primary streets.
   3. Encouraging publicly-accessible open space, such as plazas and pocket parks.
   4. Incorporating enhanced streetscape amenities such as café seating, benches, trees, lighting, bike/scooter parking, curbside management, etc.
   5. Evaluating build-to alternative standards for barriers to providing open space, patios, and streetscape improvements and update standards as needed.

C. Prepare guidelines for sensitive transitions to residential districts and historic buildings. Primary elements to consider include:
   1. Increasing side setbacks to be more compatible with front setbacks of buildings on side streets.
   2. Increasing upper story stepbacks.
   3. Four-sided façade treatments and contextual building materials.
   4. Parking and loading location and design.
   5. Ventilation and refuse container location.
   7. Enhanced landscape buffers, including an option to create agreements with adjacent property owners to install enhanced landscaping on their property.
   8. Access to sunlight and solar energy.
   9. Balcony and window design to enhance privacy.
   10. Landscaped facades, such as climbing vines, ‘green screens’, and balcony planters.

Case Study: Colfax & Franklin Transitions

Well-designed transitions between commercial corridors and residential areas are vital to ensure compatibility and the continued success of both areas. As new transition standards are implemented, one precedent to consider is the proposed Pando Holdings development at the southeast corner of Franklin Street and Colfax Avenue, designed by Shears Adkins + Rockmore. The design, which incorporated significant input from the community, fits the context by relating its massing and location to those of surrounding buildings. Articulation and stepbacks create the feel of a smaller building adjacent to the homes while allowing an intensity of development that facilitates the adaptive reuse of the buildings along the Colfax corridor.
RECOMMENDATIONS

L9
Use Discover Denver citywide building survey to preserve historic buildings and neighborhood character.

Disc over Denver citywide building survey is inventorying every building in the city to create a comprehensive survey of the significant historic places that tell Denver’s diverse story through history, architecture and culture. Much of the East Central study area has already been surveyed by Discover Denver and some concentrations of buildings identified as “Areas of Historic Significance.” These areas, as well as individual buildings identified through the survey, are potentially eligible for local historic designation. Other buildings and areas may not meet local historic designation criteria but still contribute to the character of a neighborhood and could benefit from protection through application of other tools like a Conservation Overlay district.

A. For areas identified as an “Area of Historic Significance,” partner with Historic Denver to engage residents on the creation of a historic district.
B. Promote the use of other preservation tools like conservation easements, historic covenants and conservation overlay districts.
C. Identify additional incentives to encourage property owners to designate, such as:
   1. Technical assistance writing designation applications.
   2. Additional financial incentives, such as development fee and tax reductions.

L10
Continue Improving out of date zoning regulations

Properties that have retained Former Chapter 59 zoning (Denver’s old zoning, prior to the 2010 code update) or the Billboard Use Overlay allow development that is no longer consistent with the vision for East Central.

A. Rezone Former Chapter 59 properties into the Denver Zoning Code (DZC).
   1. Ensure that fees are structured as to promote rezoning out of Former Chapter 59 zone districts and into the DZC and reflect the true cost of administration.
B. Review use and applicability of UO-2 (Billboard Overlay). When a rezoning occurs, recommend eliminating this overlay.

L11
Empower underrepresented residents to be more involved and collaborative in city government

Oftentimes residents with the most barriers to participation are disproportionately affected by plan recommendations. Efforts to empower under-represented residents, including black, brown, indigenous, and lower income residents at risk of displacement are important for enabling communities to clearly and equitably articulate their priorities and values.

A. Continue to strengthen trust and communication between the city and all neighborhoods.
B. Provide proactive communication and transparency about city policies, public safety, processes and plans.
C. Build the capacity of underrepresented citizens, including black, brown, and indigenous residents, and provide resources to increase their involvement in decision-making.
D. Evaluate city planning community engagement processes for structural racism and eliminate as needed.
E. Support City Council led efforts to reform the RNO ordinance to make all RNOs in Denver more inclusive and representative of their neighborhoods.
   1. Consider rules requiring membership from residents at risk of involuntary displacement and demographics representative of the neighborhood.
   2. Review and adopt best practice RNO policies in cities that have increased equitable representation.
   3. Innovate and pursue pilot projects that may reduce barriers to participation for underrepresented residents.
2.2 AREA WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS: ECONOMY AND HOUSING

IN THIS SECTION:

2.2.1 ECONOMY AND HOUSING INTRODUCTION (P. 48)
2.2.2 JOBS AND EDUCATION (P. 53)
2.2.3 COMMUNITY-SERVING RETAIL (P. 57)
2.2.4 AFFORDABLE HOUSING (P. 61)
2.2.5 SOCIAL SERVICES (P. 69)
In early 2018, the City adopted Housing An Inclusive Denver, a five-year housing plan to guide housing policy, strategy, and investment priorities. The housing plan has four key goals:

- Create affordable housing in vulnerable areas and in areas of opportunity.
- Preserve affordability and housing quality.
- Promote equitable and accessible housing options.
- Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.

Blueprint Denver advanced the housing plan’s policies and strategies by incorporating land use strategies that expanded affordable and mixed-income housing options throughout the city. It also has specific recommendations to advance the four key goals, including many strategies related to preserving affordability and mitigating involuntary displacement. The East Central Area Plan builds upon the strategies and goals of Housing an Inclusive Denver and Blueprint Denver.
LONG TERM VISION FOR THE LOCAL ECONOMY

ECONOMICALLY DIVERSE AND VIBRANT

In 2040, East Central has a strong economy and successful businesses that have helped residents achieve financial security. Colfax Avenue and the other mixed-use centers and corridors are welcoming to all and thriving with diverse, locally-owned retail and service businesses that complement the surrounding residential neighborhoods and where residents conveniently fulfill their day-to-day shopping needs. Residents have access to quality jobs within East Central, the adjacent Downtown, and elsewhere in the city and region, resulting in low rates of unemployment, poverty, and homelessness, and innovative businesses have resources and flexibility to start and grow in the area. Everyone can receive an excellent education, from daycare and early childhood education to adult education and job training through strong partnerships with local businesses, hospitals, and schools. The major cultural institutions in East Central, from the Botanic Gardens to the Colfax theaters, support a vibrant local arts community with galleries and local and regional events that make the area a great place to spend time, enhancing the quality of life for residents and strengthening local businesses.

MEASURABLE GOALS

REDUCE THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN EACH NEIGHBORHOOD TO BELOW THE CITYWIDE AVERAGE

MAINTAIN 75% OF BUSINESSES AS LOCALLY OWNED

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF JOBS IN THE HEALTH, PROFESSIONAL, AND MANAGEMENT SECTORS BY 12%
LONG TERM VISION FOR HOUSING

EQUITABLE, AFFORDABLE AND INCLUSIVE

In 2040, East Central is home to an active, diverse, and inclusive community in the heart of the City. Households of all incomes and sizes can comfortably afford safe and desirable housing without straining their monthly budget or worrying about displacement. Many residents live along Colfax Avenue and the area’s major corridors, enlivening the sidewalks and offering residents access to transit and everyday amenities. East Central is home to innovative affordable housing models and a comprehensive and well-designed network of supportive services, fostering a strong sense of community, reducing homelessness, and providing the most vulnerable with equitable access to opportunity and the support they need to succeed. The area’s diverse mix of housing types blends seamlessly into its historic neighborhoods, making it easy to find a home that fits a household’s needs, whether it’s an apartment in a reused mansion, a duplex for empty-nesters looking to downsize, a bungalow for a young family, or transitional housing for vulnerable populations. The variety of home sizes, rental and ownership opportunities, and access to services makes East Central a place where all residents truly have the opportunity to put down their roots and stay long-term.

MEASURABLE GOALS

EXPAND EAST CENTRAL’S HOUSING DIVERSITY

![Graph showing housing diversity](image)

Blueprint Denver measures housing diversity in 5 categories. Overall, East Central is currently diverse in 3 categories. Diversity varies by neighborhood (see Chapter 3):

- ✓ Middle-Density Housing (2-19 units/building)
- ✓ Home Sizes (number of bedrooms)
- ✓ Housing Tenure (owner/renter)
- ✓ Housing Cost
- ✓ Affordable (income-restricted) housing units

MAINTAIN AND INCREASE HOUSING & TRANSPORTATION AFFORDABILITY

![Graph showing affordability](image)

The Center for Neighborhood Technology’s Housing + Transportation index factors in transportation costs when considering affordability. The index rates the affordability of an area based on how much a typical regional household would spend on both housing and transportation costs. 85% of census tracts in East Central are currently rated as affordable.
ECONOMY CONCEPTS

Community-serving retail
Retail and services that serve the day-to-day needs of nearby residents and workers, including everything from grocery stores and restaurants, to personal care businesses such as salons, and professional services such as banks. The community has prioritized preserving and enhancing community-serving, locally-owned retail throughout the planning process. See Policy E6. (Photo: Sprouts, City Park, Denver)

Small business incubator/support center
Organizations that offer small businesses and entrepreneurs shared work space, mentoring, business development training, funding support, and shared equipment. These centers often focus on a specific type of industry or people with similar cultural backgrounds. Mi Casa Resource Center is a successful example in West Denver that primarily serves people of color, low-income, and females. In 2018, over $60 million in revenue was generated by businesses served by the Center. See Policy E7. (Photo: Mi Casa Resource Center, Denver)

Co-working
The use of an office or other working environment by people who are self-employed or working for different employers, typically so as to share equipment, ideas, and knowledge. The community has established a vision where innovative businesses have resources and flexibility to start and grow in East Central. More and more, co-working spaces provide an important jumping off point for new businesses and entrepreneurs. See Policy E2. (Photo: co-work space, Denver)

Community learning center
Non-profit organizations that offer free services to help families increase their financial stability and academic success. Services and classes often include literacy classes, parenting workshops, computer skills training, and financial coaching, along with others. These centers are directly focused on helping East Central achieve its vision of being an area where “everyone can receive an excellent education, from daycare and early childhood education to adult education and job training.” See Policy E3. (Photo: Denver Public Schools, Family and Community Engagement Center)

Flex/innovation space
Manufacturing places that serve the purpose of craft/maker space, technology, design and manufacturing. Flex and innovation spaces have multiple benefits – they support creative industries, provide opportunities for economic development, and take the burden off retail by providing other ways to activate streets and spaces. See Policy E2. (Photo: Art Gym, Montclair, Denver)

Community resource center
A diverse range of service centers for people experiencing homelessness, ranging from hygiene centers that provide a place to use the restroom, shower, or do laundry, to navigation centers that offer case management, housing navigation, health services, and more. Nationally, these types of centers have been proven to help their guests end their experience of homelessness. See Policy E13. (Photo: Division Circle Navigation Center, San Francisco)
2.2.2 JOBS AND EDUCATION

Access to jobs and education is key to achieving Blueprint Denver’s vision for a more inclusive city where all residents have equitable access to a quality education, jobs and services, are not vulnerable to displacement, and have a greater number and more types of job opportunities.

Education and training are critical to ensure East Central can accommodate forecast jobs growth and residents have access to higher-wage jobs. Educating the future workforce by supporting neighborhood Denver Public Schools and providing job training for growing sectors in partnership with DPS, the local medical establishments, and others will help ensure that area residents benefit from future jobs.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Participants in workshops and surveys supported the jobs and education recommendations:

- 72% of participants support partnering with the healthcare sector to drive economic development in the area
- 75% of participants support improving the environment for small professional offices in the area
- 73% of participants support utilizing the area’s adjacency to downtown to spur economic development in the area

EMPLOYMENT IN EAST CENTRAL

East Central benefits from proximity to downtown and the State Capitol as employment continues to expand in the North Capitol Hill and Capitol Hill neighborhoods. Other areas of job concentration include the hospitals in Uptown and National Jewish Health.

- 55,000 TOTAL JOBS
- 2,700 SMALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BUSINESSES

PROJECTED GROWTH IN TOP 3 EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Forecasts point to an additional 10,000 to 15,000 jobs in East Central by 2040. The most growth will be in the healthcare, professional services, and government sectors.

- Healthcare: 12,000 (2018) to 13,000 (2023)
- Professional Services: 12,000 (2018) to 13,000 (2023)
- Government: 10,000 (2018) to 11,000 (2023)

Source: May/June 2019 community workshop and online survey

Source: Infogroup, Emsi, City of Denver, Arland
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**E1**

Bolster the healthcare and wellness sector as the foundation for economic growth in East Central.

The Uptown Medical District is an important employment hub that is slated for growth. The major medical facilities within the District have a variety of concerns related to future development, the availability of nearby services, the need for training, and affordable housing for their workforce. While the location of the medical facilities in an existing mixed-use urban neighborhood is an asset, managing the relationship between the neighborhoods and the Medical District should be an ongoing effort.

A. Convene a working group of the Uptown district facilities, National Jewish Health, Rose Medical Center, Denver Health, and appropriate City staff.
   1. Explore a new staff position, potentially co-funded with the hospitals, to convene and lead the working group, with the goal of addressing issues identified in Strategy C below.
   2. The working group should evaluate the need to formalize the Uptown District hospitals into a legal nonprofit entity. Through a non-profit, geographically concentrated hospitals can work to directly address challenges such as workforce and affordable housing, workforce development, security, District marketing, and neighborhood engagement.

B. Through the working group, address common issues, such as:
   1. Future growth and facility needs and potential locations for medical offices and service providers.
   2. Partnering with nonprofit housing providers and others in order to develop workforce housing for medical staff (see Policy E10). *(See sidebar for examples of how hospitals can invest in housing.)*
   3. Access to an appropriate labor force and workforce training programs at Denver Public Schools, local universities, the City of Denver, and other resources.
   4. Access to and provision of area commercial services.
   5. Connectivity to area amenities including transit, parks, and services.
   6. Creation of gateways for the district.
   7. Measures that can be undertaken in order to promote healthy eating and active living among employees and surrounding residents.

C. Work with National Jewish Health on their long-term plans for their remaining undeveloped properties in and adjacent to East Central (on both sides of Colorado Boulevard) to ensure development integrates well with the community and advances the vision for the area.

**HOSPITALS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Hospitals have many assets such as financial resources, land, and expertise, that make them valuable in community development efforts. Nationally, hospitals are gradually getting more involved in a range of community development strategies, including efforts to advance healthy and affordable housing options. Efforts include locating health clinics in public housing, building and operating supportive housing, designing programs that provide in-home care and treatment, among others. However, a majority of efforts to date have focused on financing affordable and workforce housing development.

According to research conducted by the Urban Institute, the top five investment strategies used by hospitals that have invested in affordable housing development are:

1. Utilize real estate holdings to support creation of affordable housing.
2. Allocate funds to financial intermediaries, including Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and other investment managers, that aggregate and deploy funds to multiple affordable housing projects.
3. Make direct equity investments in affordable housing development projects.
4. Designate a portion of investable reserves for affordable housing development.
5. Provide secured or unsecured direct loans to affordable housing developers.

*Sources: Research to Action Lab, Urban Institute; Center for Community Investment; Change Lab Solutions*
RECOMMENDATIONS

E2

Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.

Future development on Colfax and other mixed use corridors will likely not be able to support retail on the street level on every parcel, but accommodating small professional offices at the ground floor levels (as well in the more common upper levels) can help activate the street. These businesses bring in new employees that help keep the corridor active during the workday and support neighborhood retail and restaurants. There has been little recent office development in East Central and most existing small offices are embedded within neighborhoods. As office space in neighborhoods like RiNo and Cherry Creek is built out, and as BRT and other high capacity transit improvements help move residents and employees more easily through the area, office space development accommodating a range of professional services (such as law firms or architectural offices) becomes a growing opportunity.

A. Coordinate with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) on work plans to provide services that help property owners to better utilize existing real estate along Colfax Avenue for small professional services.
   1. Provide matchmaking services between displaced or growing small businesses and landlords.
   2. With area developers and landlords, identify and market appropriate buildings as locations for small professional services.
      a. Inventory available office spaces and identify missing space types.
      b. Inventory upper floors in existing buildings for small office opportunities.
   3. Reach out to co-working space managers/developers to identify and develop co-working spaces to help incubate small businesses and provide a gathering space for entrepreneurs.

B. Where retail or restaurants might be difficult to accommodate and/or in areas outside of anticipated retail nodes near BRT stations, encourage and allow ground floor activation (beyond retail and restaurant uses) with office uses, services, or flex/innovation spaces.

C. Continue to support small office uses where they are currently allowed in mixed-use areas off of Colfax and in Residential Office (RO) zone districts while ensuring they are compatible with existing neighborhood character.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**E3**

Partner with Denver Public Schools, the Downtown Denver Partnership, BIDs, and other major area employers/projects in connecting East Central residents to job opportunities.

There are pockets of poverty in East Central such as City Park West, which has a poverty rate of 34%. At the same time, Denver’s growth has resulted in a low unemployment rate (less than 5% in 2019) and a general labor shortage, illustrating the disconnect between area residents and high-quality jobs nearby. The Uptown Medical District facilities have identified the need for job training to meet growing medical demand. Furthermore, East Central is adjacent to Downtown Denver – the largest concentration of jobs in Colorado.

**A.** Through the medical facilities working group (see Policy E1), identify training needs and potential partnerships with DPS and other higher education institutions to help provide the training.
   1. Identify potential facilities to house the training, including any underused DPS facilities in the area.
   2. Develop public-private partnerships for training with local non-profits.

**B.** Work with DPS in identifying opportunities, such as US Department of Education and foundation grants to further support students and their families from cradle to career.

**C.** Connect area job seekers to BRT construction job opportunities (see Policy C-E3).

**D.** Work with the Downtown Denver Partnership and area BIDs to develop a program to identify workforce training needs among downtown businesses, and ultimately connect the businesses to job trainees and seekers in the area.

**BACKGROUND POLICY STRATEGIES**

**JOBS AND EDUCATION**

Top: East Central should leverage its proximity to Downtown Denver – the largest concentration of jobs in the state – to connect area residents to quality job opportunities. Bottom: Area hospitals are challenged by labor shortages and need for more job training.
2.2.3 COMMUNITY-SERVING RETAIL

A strong retail environment is diverse and unique and an essential component of a complete neighborhood. It will serve a variety of people, provide neighborhood residents with convenient access to daily goods and services, and attract people from near and far who are seeking unique shopping, dining, or entertaining experiences. As used below, the term "retail" includes not just stores, but also restaurants and bars, personal care businesses such as salons and tattoo shops, and professional services such as banks and copy shops.

While retail nationally is being disrupted and challenged by e-commerce, the majority of retail sales still occur in a physical store and retailers are adapting with success, especially in urban environments such as East Central. Small, independently owned retail that offers a unique experience and an emotional connection with the consumer has proven successful. However, as demand for urban environments increases, real estate prices threaten to displace some small independent businesses that have made these neighborhoods attractive to so many.

RETAIL IN EAST CENTRAL

East Central’s retail environment is predominately locally owned and offers a wide variety of goods and services. The centerpiece of East Central’s retail environment is the Colfax Corridor. Colfax is buoyed by regional destinations for live music (Fillmore Auditorium, Ogden Theater, and the Bluebird Theater) and other businesses that pull from beyond East Central (Tattered Cover Book Store, Twist & Shout, Wax Trax, Sie Film Center, Natural Grocers, Sprouts Farmers Market, Argonaut Wine & Liquor). Other retail corridors in East Central include 17th/18th Avenues, Broadway/Lincoln, and Colorado Boulevard. Finally, there are a variety of small, neighborhood retail nodes – concentrated south of Colfax – such as those at 9th & Corona, 12th & Madison, or 22nd & Lafayette.
RECOMMENDATIONS

**E4**

**Improve the regulatory process to provide additional support for existing and new small businesses in the area.**

Small business and commercial property owners in East Central identified challenges they face when trying to open and grow their business or improve their property. The time it takes to work through code and permitting processes is lengthy and can quickly become costly. Some of these processes, such as change-of-use, are complicated. Other processes and requirements, such as sign regulations, can be overly restrictive.

- **A.** Identify opportunities to provide flexibility in change-of-use requirements for small businesses and analyze the costs of public realm improvements to be more proportional to private investment (see Policy C-L1).
- **B.** Revise signage requirements to ensure businesses have the ability to advertise to a variety of passing customers, including pedestrians and transit riders. Areas of focus should be allowing certain forms of blade signage, neon signage, and energy efficient options while maintaining character (see Policy C-L4).
- **C.** Continually improve the online Toolkit for Startups and Small Businesses based on user feedback from small businesses.
- **D.** Continue to expand the number of applications available for submittal and review online to reduce trips to the city permitting counter and further expedite the process.
- **E.** Assess the feasibility of application fee waivers or deferrals to support new and existing small businesses.
- **F.** Develop a handbook for adaptive reuse projects to promote predictability and reduce variations in case-by-case decisions.
- **G.** Improve design quality in mixed-use areas to attract and retain visitors (see Policy L8).
- **H.** Ensure on-street parking is effectively managed to support local businesses (see Policies M10 & M11).
- **I.** Evaluate the impacts of construction on local businesses and develop strategies to mitigate those impacts.

**E5**

**Work in tandem with Business Improvement Districts to provide technical assistance to existing small independent businesses to help them succeed and prevent involuntary displacement.**

In East Central, retail vacancy rates have been dropping and lease rates rising since 2009. At last measure, just 2% of the area’s retail space sat empty and asking rents were higher than citywide averages. While this creates a vibrant retail environment for customers and property owners, it also creates a larger risk of displacement for independent businesses.

- **A.** Work with each BID to develop a marketing package for small independent businesses in the Colfax Avenue and Bluebird BIDs to help attract customers to individual businesses, and to help locally-owned businesses locate and remain in the districts and provide living wages and benefits to staff such as transit passes.
- **B.** Ensure all small business technical assistance is available to English-as-a-second-language business owners.
- **C.** Offer matchmaking services to connect small independent businesses with landlords. Provide relocation assistance to displaced small businesses to help them remain as close to their prior location as possible.
- **D.** Develop and maintain lists of pre-qualified tenant leads that can be provided to property owners and leasing professionals as alternatives to large national brands, while also making a case to developers and landlords for a broader and more strategic approach to retail tenanting.
- **E.** Encourage BIDs and other appropriate organizations to provide technical assistance with succession or transition planning, lease negotiations, and other highly technical challenges faced by small business owners.
RECOMMENDATIONS

E6

Broaden the range of financial incentives for small independent businesses and landlords to strengthen the area’s tenant mix and help prevent displacement.

East Central's local independent retailers are highly valued by neighborhood residents, and financial stability is key to helping small businesses thrive. With rapidly changing real estate conditions, technical and regulatory assistance is sometimes not enough to prevent displacement. Financial incentives can help strengthen businesses and the ability of property owners to accommodate them.

A. Assist interested small businesses in buying their building or condo space, by utilizing programs such as the Small Business Administration's 504 Loan Program and mobilizing community development organizations, such as Community Development Corporations (CDCs), to acquire commercial property.

B. Offer new forms of financial support for upgrading or expanding retail space, storefront improvements, business signage upgrades, and unexpected repairs and building rehab. Support can come in varied forms including fee waivers or deferral, low-interest loans, or small grants.

C. Offer financial incentives to landlords that are willing to sign long-term leases with small businesses. (See profile of San Francisco’s Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund.)

D. Incentivize new projects that offer smaller retail spaces and/or provide below-market commercial space with incentives such as height bonuses, low-interest financing, and direct subsidies.

BACKGROUND

In San Francisco, where intense development pressures threaten the livelihoods of longtime small businesses and “community touchstones” across the fabric of the city, residents in 2015 approved Proposition J authorizing the creation of a “Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund” which, established by the city in 2016, includes rent subsidies of $4.50 per sq. ft. (capped at $22,500 per year) as an incentive to landlords willing to sign leases of ten years or more with tenants already on its Legacy Business Registry. To qualify for the Registry, a business must have been in operation for at least 30 years (20 years if in immediate danger of displacement), contribute to the history or identity of its neighborhood and commit to maintaining the physical features or traditions which define it. In the first year, the Fund awarded $34,000 in such Rent Stabilization Grants to property owners for this purpose.

Case Study: San Francisco’s Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund

In San Francisco, where intense development pressures threaten the livelihoods of longtime small businesses and “community touchstones” across the fabric of the city, residents in 2015 approved Proposition J authorizing the creation of a “Legacy Business Historic Preservation Fund” which, established by the city in 2016, includes rent subsidies of $4.50 per sq. ft. (capped at $22,500 per year) as an incentive to landlords willing to sign leases of ten years or more with tenants already on its Legacy Business Registry. To qualify for the Registry, a business must have been in operation for at least 30 years (20 years if in immediate danger of displacement), contribute to the history or identity of its neighborhood and commit to maintaining the physical features or traditions which define it. In the first year, the Fund awarded $34,000 in such Rent Stabilization Grants to property owners for this purpose.

Photo Source: Roxie Theater
Support and develop new community-minded ownership models that have a goal of maintaining East Central’s variety of small, local businesses.

Community-minded ownership models, such as cooperatives and community land trusts, offer multiple benefits. They can help preserve and retain small independent businesses by insulating these businesses from rising rents and other market forces that may create displacement. They build upon the sense of ownership that East Central residents feel for their neighboring local businesses. Community-minded ownership could also help in the Colfax corridor’s evolution from an old highway to a neighborhood-serving main street.

A. Help local community groups to assume ownership of small businesses through a variety of ownership models that could include cooperatives, CDCs, and innovative crowdsourcing models (see profile of United Kingdom’s More Than A Pub program).

B. Provide support for existing and/or new BIDs, CDCs, Community Land Trusts, and/or commercial real estate investment cooperatives purchasing buildings or master-leaseing ground floors as below-market space for small businesses.

C. Work with property owners and BIDs to develop small business incubators and/or accelerators to test market new neighborhood serving retail and services. Successful incubator tenants should then be encouraged to move to permanent storefront locations within East Central with matchmaking assistance from BIDs.

1. Establish a working group with BIDs and the city to develop strategies for how BIDs can help new businesses move into permanent locations.

Case Study:
United Kingdom’s “More Than A Pub” Program

In the United Kingdom, the traditional pub has long served as the “Third Place” for small rural towns, large inner-city neighborhoods and everywhere in between. For a variety of reasons, however, their numbers have been dwindling in recent decades. With the “More Than A Pub” program that it launched in 2016, the central government, under the auspices of its “Community Pubs Minister,” offers various forms of financial and technical assistance – grants and loans as well as workshops, peer site-visits and advice phone-lines – to community organizations that want to assume ownership of these important local institutions and keep them in business. In just its first year, the initiative played a role in the preservation of fifty pubs.

Photo Source: Plunkett Foundation
2.2.4 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The most common measure of housing affordability assesses the “burden” housing costs put on a household. If a household pays more than 30% of their gross income in rent or mortgage payment, taxes, and basic utilities, they are considered to be “cost-burdened” and have a housing need. The higher the cost burden, the greater the need. Stretching income on housing leaves residents with less to spend on other needs, such as health care, child care, transportation and groceries. Affordable housing often refers to income-restricted housing that is required by covenant to keep costs affordable, but there are a number of strategies that can help to ensure a household’s costs are reasonable and do not put them at risk for displacement. In addition to those outlined in this section, improving access to multimodal transportation can also help reduce a household’s costs (See Mobility recommendations in Section 2.3).

Affordability does not just refer to subsidized housing and options for people at extremely low income levels; it also affects an increasingly wide spectrum of working people in the city. East Central and Denver’s workforce includes critically important occupations that struggle to find affordable housing given their annual incomes which are all below current medians.

The East Central Area has good housing options for...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Populations</th>
<th>Percent of Responses (732)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young Professionals</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income residents</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents with a disability</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey

What are your top 3 priorities for advancing housing affordability?

1. Encourage more affordable apartments near transit 18%
2. Providing housing for a variety of household types, such as shared living, family-sized units, or multi-generational living 15%
3. Encourage more accessory dwelling units 14%

Source: February 2019 East Central Community Workshops

Many occupations pay wages less than Denver’s median income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Median Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten teachers</td>
<td>$54,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency &amp; medical techs &amp; paramedics</td>
<td>$46,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus drivers</td>
<td>$39,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home health aides</td>
<td>$27,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019 Denver Area Median Income (for Single-Person Household)</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: City and County of Denver 2019; Bureau of Labor Statistics 2018 wage estimates
HOUSING IN EAST CENTRAL

SIGNIFICANT HOUSING NEED

11,314 COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS
36% of East Central’s households pay more than 30% of their income towards housing costs.

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3,100 AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS NEEDED
East Central currently is short 3,100 units renting at less than $625 per month for low-income households in the area.


MOST EAST CENTRAL RESIDENTS RENT THEIR HOMES

East Central

70% VS. City of Denver

51%
Percent of units that are renter-occupied;
Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

MOST HOMES ARE STUDIOS & 1-BEDROOMS

East Central

59% VS. City of Denver

28%
Percent of units that are studios or one-bedrooms;
Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

AFFORDABILITY COVENANTS AT RISK OF EXPIRING WITHIN NEXT 20 YEARS

46%
Percent of covenant-restricted units in East Central that have covenants at risk of expiration; Source: City and County of Denver, 2018

PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN AREAS VULNERABLE TO DISPLACEMENT

65%
Percent of East Central households located in vulnerable census tracts; Source: City and County of Denver; 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

65% of East Central households, including 72% of renter households, live in areas that are considered vulnerable to displacement (See Vulnerability to Displacement map in Section 1.3)
**Income-restricted housing**
Income-restricted housing is housing that has a covenant that requires rents to be affordable for residents. The requirements are typically tied to specific Area Median Income levels, and many income-restricted units involve a subsidy to help maintain lower rents. See Policy E9 & E10. (Photo: Income-Restricted Housing, North Capitol Hill, Denver)

**Co-housing**
Co-housing is an intentional community of private homes clustered around shared space. Shared spaces and amenities may include community kitchens, dining areas, laundry, and courtyards. Co-housing provides opportunities for community-focused living environments that increase connection, for gently boosting density in neighborhoods since amenities such as yard space are often shared, and for giving seniors a viable option to age in their community. See Policy E11. (Photo: Aria Cohousing, Denver)

**Cooperative housing**
Housing that is owned or rented by members who intentionally and equitably share resources, governance, rights, and responsibilities. Cooperative housing can help expand access to housing for all, and increases opportunities for home ownership and wealth building for middle-income earners living in increasingly expensive areas. See Policy E9. (Photo: Chrysalis Cooperative, Boulder)

**Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**
An ADU is a second unit located on the same zone lot as a primary single unit. An ADU may be “attached” (e.g. a basement unit) or “detached” (e.g. a unit over the garage or a smaller house in the backyard). ADUs provide sensitive ways to integrate attainable living into low residential neighborhoods; they allow empty-nesters to age in place by moving into a smaller unit and renting their home; or they accommodate residents that want to live in the neighborhood but cannot afford a larger home. See Policy E11. (Photo: ADU, Denver)

**Missing middle housing**
Missing middle refers to duplexes, fourplexes, rowhouses and similar housing options that fall between large single unit homes and apartment or condo buildings. Missing middle also refers to units that are attainable to middle-income households. These housing types can help provide more attainable options for middle-income households and homeownership opportunities for households that currently rent. See Policy E11. (Photo: Left: City Park, Denver, Right: Highlands Garden Village, Denver)

**Preservation of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH)**
NOAH refers to affordable housing that operates without subsidy or covenant requirements. A majority of affordable housing falls into this category, and NOAH is an important housing option for low-income families or individuals who do not qualify for subsidized housing. See Policy E9. (Photo: NOAH, Denver)

**Supportive housing**
Housing that combines apartments where residents pay rent based on what is affordable for their income, along with on-site and community-based services to help individuals and families transition out of long-term homelessness, back to having a safe place to call home. Research shows that this form of housing is an effective way to end homelessness because it provides safe, stable homes with access to support from professionals who coordinate individualized services such as mental and physical health services, addiction treatment, job training and more. See Policy E11. (Photo: Sanderson Apartments, Denver)

**Campus employee/student housing**
Multi-unit buildings dedicated to housing employees and/or students of large institutions. The housing is often owned or subsidized by the institution, and is located either on or adjacent to campus. Saint Joseph Hospital in City Park West is currently converting the historic Tammen Hall on its campus to income-restricted senior housing, an example of how large institutions can utilize their capital and property holdings to help address housing affordability challenges. See Policy E10. (Photo: Tammen Hall, St. Joseph Hospital, Five Points, Denver)

**Family-friendly housing**
Housing designed to serve households of more than one generation, usually including children. This includes housing units with more than one bedroom and amenities, such as daycares and playgrounds that serve a variety of ages. See Policy E11. (Photo: Mariposa, Denver)

**Senior housing**
Senior housing serves an aging population, ranging from independent living to 24/7 assisted care. There is a stronger emphasis on safety, accessibility, adaptability, and longevity that many conventional housing choices lack. See Policy E11. (Photo: City Park West, Denver)

**Live-work**
Live-work provides a combination of a primary residential and commercial uses located within the same unit. Live-work units reduce commuting, often provide more affordable office space than stand-alone office space, and can play an important role in the incubation cycle for small businesses. Live-work units can help to reduce housing costs for small businesses owners who can combine office space and living costs. See Policy E11. (Photo: live-work units, Denver)
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**E8**

**Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.**

East Central’s strong housing market is becoming increasingly costly for residents. The area is currently short 3,100 units for the area’s lowest income households. These renters are often extremely cost-burdened by their rents and don’t have any affordable options to buy a home in East Central. Consistent with the goals of Comprehensive Plan 2040, this plan recommends targeting resources to serve residents, both renters and homeowners, who are at risk of involuntary displacement. (Source: City and County of Denver, U.S. Census, and Root Policy Research)

A. Connect residents with programs to help them stay in their homes, including temporary rental and utility assistance, property tax rebates, homeowner preservation initiatives, ownership programs, eviction legal defense, tenant rights counseling, financial empowerment training, home rehabilitation assistance, energy and accessibility assistance, foreclosure prevention, and emergency relief funds.
   1. In areas vulnerable to displacement, use door-to-door engagement and promotion through neighborhood organizations and providers to reach residents.

B. Conduct outreach to understand the needs of older adults and explore additional assistance options to mitigate their involuntary displacement.

C. Support citywide efforts to explore a preference policy that would give preference in income-restricted units to existing residents that have been or are at risk of being displaced.

D. Integrate resources and strategies to mitigate involuntary displacement of residents with the implementation of major City investments and projects, including regulatory changes, legislative rezonings, and transportation infrastructure improvements. Strategies include incentives or requirements for affordable housing and targeted engagement to connect vulnerable residents with resources.

E. Work with partners to increase access to programs that help residents stay in their homes, increase utilization of public housing programs (including City, State and nonprofit programs), increase home-ownership and explore housing land trust programs.

**E9**

**Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.**

Nearly half of East Central’s existing income-restricted units could be at jeopardy of expiring over the next 20 years. Additionally, there are many aging multi-unit buildings in the area that are at risk of losing their natural affordability as rents and sale prices continue to quickly rise. In targeted outreach, participants also expressed a need for more accessible housing for people with disabilities. (Source: City and County of Denver)

A. Preserve the affordability of existing income-restricted properties by:
   1. Extending expiring affordability covenants through strategies such as extending notice requirements, working with potential purchasers to extend affordability commitments, and enhancing support for tenants.
   2. Exploring partnerships with non-profits and foundations to work with owners of existing income-restricted properties to inform them about their covenant requirements and, where needed, to encourage resale to qualified buyers.
   3. Working with nonprofit housing providers to address challenges, such as rising property taxes.
   4. Exploring a no net loss policy with strategies to ensure that existing income-restricted housing is maintained through preservation and/or replacement.

B. Preserve the affordability of naturally occurring affordable housing, particularly in areas vulnerable to displacement and close to transit, through existing tools and new tools such as:
   1. An incentive program for landlords that provides rehabilitation of small multi-unit properties and homes in exchange for affordability commitments.
   2. Partnering with existing cooperatives and other organizations to assist tenants with acquiring and transforming housing into cooperative housing (Encouraging cooperatives also requires reducing barriers to shared living. See Policy E11).

C. Retain and improve the quality of older housing through programs that help with upgrades to improve accessibility, energy efficiency, and rehabilitation.

D. Connect landlords to programs that offer tenant assistance and help with rehabilitation.
E10

Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

While the prior two policies focus on stabilizing residents and preserving affordability, there is also a need to create new affordable housing in the area, as demonstrated by significant shortages in units available for low-income households. In accordance with Blueprint Denver and Housing an Inclusive Denver, a majority of new affordable housing should be located near transit corridors to give residents convenient access to jobs, education, services, and amenities (See Blueprint Denver Policy LU-H 06). Improving access to multimodal options, as outlined in the Mobility recommendations (Section 2.3), can also help reduce a household’s transportation costs.

A. Ensure affordable housing is provided when large city-owned property, particularly the District 6 police station, is redeveloped.
B. Ensure that the value of increased development potential is shared with the community through the provision of on-site affordable housing or other community benefits (see Policy L3).

Appropriate tools include:
1. Zoning and other incentives that require the construction of income-restricted housing as part of new development.
2. Development agreements, affordable housing plans, or other agreements that provide affordable housing as part of a rezoning or Large Development Review. These tools should be considered prior to the implementation of an incentive tool or other citywide affordable housing regulations for large development sites.

C. Support acquisition of land by the city and/or its partners, such as Denver Housing Authority, community land trust entities, and non-profit housing developers, for future affordable housing, particularly along major transit corridors and in Corridors, Centers, and High, High-Medium, and Low-Medium Residential Places.

D. Promote the use and expansion of tools, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Tax Increment Financing, and the Affordable Housing Fund, to help fund development of affordable housing.
E. Partner with area hospitals, Denver Public Schools, and other major employers to create and/or fund affordable workforce housing (see Policy E1).

F. Ensure new affordable housing is
   1. Affordable to households earning very low, low, and moderate incomes, consistent with adopted city policy.
   2. Helping to address the shortage of units affordable to very low-income households in the plan area.
   3. Designed to accommodate a range of households, including families, multi-generational living, aging in place, residents with disabilities, and residents needing supportive services.
   4. Providing long-term affordability by being dedicated for a period of time consistent with or greater than adopted city policy.
   5. Of similar types to market-rate housing built within the plan area.

G. Work with affordable housing developers and managers on transportation demand strategies that help ensure residents have access to multimodal transportation options (see Policy M12).
H. Enhance park and recreation access in proximity to affordable housing to help improve health outcomes for low-income households (see Policies Q3 and Q4).
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**E11**

Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.

Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this plan aims to provide housing choice throughout East Central by diversifying housing options across the spectrum of housing needs. The area’s housing types should reflect the diverse population that lives here currently and those that seek to live in East Central, and should include quality options for vulnerable populations, aging in place, non-traditional living arrangements, and families. When community members were asked about housing options in the area, a majority felt that the East Central neighborhoods do not have good options for seniors, low-income residents, and residents with disabilities, illustrating the need to expand diversity of housing types. When asked about “missing middle” housing types – a variety of multi-unit or clustered housing types that are compatible in scale with detached, single-unit homes – the most desired types were live-work units, detached ADUs, and townhouses. Existing housing diversity varies between East Central’s neighborhoods; see Chapter 3 for neighborhood priorities.

**BACKGROUND POLICY STRATEGIES**

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

A. Develop more permanent and supportive housing, combining low-barrier affordable housing, health care, and other supportive services to help create stability for vulnerable residents.

B. Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.
   1. Encourage the creation of ownership options that are affordable to moderate-income residents among the diverse range of housing types being promoted in strategies C-G below.
   2. Encourage community land trusts and cooperatives.
   3. Support existing and explore new programs intended to help make homeownership more attainable for residents of income-restricted rental housing.
   4. Help residents prepare to become homeowners by offering targeted home-buyer counseling courses that integrate financial coaching and education with down payment assistance.
   5. Explore the creation of a homeownership catalyst pilot program that provides technical assistance and financial incentives.

C. Encourage more family-friendly development, including larger unit sizes and family-supportive amenities (see Blueprint Denver Policy LU-H 07).

D. Expand housing options for non-traditional households, aging-in-place, co-housing, cooperatives, and group living.
   1. Support citywide efforts to revise city regulations to respond to the demands of Denver’s unique and modern housing needs (see Blueprint Denver Policy LU-H 01).
   2. Make it easier for households to age within their neighborhoods by encouraging senior/assisted living, home-sharing, and co-housing (See Sunshine Home Care case study).
   3. Encourage subletting of extra rooms in large homes by communicating opportunities through neighborhood organizations.
   4. In addition to removing zoning barriers, explore financial and technical assistance to encourage more cooperative living where residents can reduce costs through shared living or ownership.

**Case Study:**

**Sunshine Home Share Colorado**

Sunshine Home Care Colorado is a non-profit organization that was established in 2015 with the mission of promoting aging in place through a safe, care-managed, home-sharing model. It offers the dual benefit of generating income, assistance, and companionship for older adults (55 and over), while accessing untapped affordable housing for home seekers. Sunshine, staffed by geriatric care managers, provides an in-depth screen and matching program that includes an application, reference check, interview, trial period, and formalized Match Agreement.

Photo Source: Sunshine Home Share
RECOMMENDATIONS

E11 continued from prior page

Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes in all neighborhoods. (continued from prior page)

E. Integrate accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and missing middle housing in appropriate locations (See Policy L5) with strategies for affordability and wealth-building for low- and moderate-income residents, such as:

1. Providing technical assistance and reducing barriers in permitting and construction for existing homeowners.

2. Exploring an adaptation of the WDSF+ ADU pilot program (see sidebar) that provides technical assistance and financial incentives to help existing homeowners build ADUs. An East Central pilot program should offer forgivable loans or grants in exchange for a long-term affordability commitment, pre-approved prototype designs (with universal design features), and streamlined access to lenders and builders.

3. Partnering with local organizations to create and administer programs to advance this policy.

F. Conduct an evaluation of city regulations and standards in comparison to best practice accessibility standards, including Universal Design research, to encourage more housing that meets the needs of residents with disabilities.

G. Expand live-work opportunities in a manner that is compatible with surrounding neighborhood character to reduce housing costs for small business owners and entrepreneurs.
In late 2018, the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative, in partnership with the City of Denver, launched a forgivable loan pilot program to finance ADUs in nine west Denver neighborhoods. The program provides moderate- and low-income qualified homeowners (those earning up to 120% of the area median income) with development, financing, and construction resources to develop a detached ADU. Additionally, some homeowners may be eligible for a forgivable loan of up to $25,000 to cover costs of building an ADU. ADUs created through the program are designated as affordable housing for 25 years, to be occupied or rented at a rate no higher than the 80% area median income maximum rent. As part of the program, Denver Community Planning and Development is working to streamline permitting for prototype ADU designs offered by WDRC. Habitat for Humanity has also been brought on board to build an estimated 40 homes during the two-year pilot period.
2.2.5 SOCIAL SERVICES

To support thriving communities, vulnerable individuals must be connected to social services that directly support their physical, economic, and mental well-being. This is particularly important for those persons who may be susceptible to housing insecurity or who are experiencing homelessness. By providing a robust social service network with programs such as eviction prevention, legal services, mental health, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence programs, and financial literacy, an environment that is inclusive and accessible to all residents of East Central can be created.

SOCIAL SERVICES IN EAST CENTRAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homelessness in the City and County — Everyone Counts - 2019 Point in Time Survey by Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (Citywide Numbers)</th>
<th>Household without Children</th>
<th>Household with at Least 1 Adult and 1 Child</th>
<th>Households with Only Children under 18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons Staying in Emergency Shelters</strong></td>
<td>1,966</td>
<td>92.8%</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OF 2,119 PERSONS, OR 53.7% OF THE TOTAL HOMELESS POPULATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons Staying in Transitional Housing</strong></td>
<td>589</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OF 1,235 PERSONS, OR 31.3% OF TOTAL HOMELESS POPULATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons Staying in Safe Haven</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OF 35 PERSONS, OR 0.9% OF TOTAL HOMELESS POPULATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Persons Unsheltered</strong></td>
<td>547</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL OF 554 PERSONS, OR 14.1% OF TOTAL HOMELESS POPULATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the City and County of Denver, there are approximately 4,000 individuals who are experiencing homelessness. Some of these individuals frequent Colfax Avenue and East Central because of the existing resources and services that are provided, including several shelters and residential care facilities (six day, overnight, and domestic violent shelters and 15 residential care facilities that include special care homes and transitional housing). Moreover, with increasing cost of living and stagnating incomes, some vulnerable Denverites are becoming at risk of homelessness. In the East Central area alone, there are approximately 4,800 renter-occupied units that are considered severely cost-burdened (those who pay more than 50% of their income on housing costs) and 16% of households live below the poverty rate, both factors which may place many of these East Central residents at-risk of homelessness as defined by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.
RECOMMENDATIONS

**E12**
Improve the existing social service system through collaboration, co-location and coordination between providers, and between providers and city agencies.

There are currently hundreds of providers and volunteers working across Denver to address the issue of homelessness. Ensuring the strength and resiliency of the system means building stronger partnerships between existing services providers across the board, and doing so can help reduce duplication, inefficiency, and increase accountability to meet shared goals.

- **A.** Identify existing homelessness prevention and rapid-rehousing resources in the community and bring in additional partners for more local collaboration.
- **B.** Identify existing drug and alcohol rehabilitation resources and promote collaboration between providers, and between providers and city agencies.
- **C.** Support workforce training and education programs that connect workers to employers (see Policy E3).
- **D.** Explore models that promote co-location of services (e.g. Dahlia campus for mental health and well-being and the Rose Andom Center).

**E13**
Promote innovative service delivery models, and expand pool of service provider partners—to address gaps in existing social service system.

Homelessness is a multi-faceted issue requiring many-sided solutions. Coordinated, efficient, and creative work across system care will be required to effectively meet the needs of those at risk of and experiencing homelessness. The strategies below aim to encourage innovative solutions and models that integrate homeless service provisions into other mainstream services to address existing gaps in the system.

- **A.** Conduct gap analysis with homeless service partners, school and early childhood partners, and human services partners.
- **B.** Create models to address gaps of services, such as resource navigation, hygiene, and rest centers (referred to in this plan as community resource centers).
- **C.** Increase funding for substance treatment services, including training and implementation of cross-sector teams to address needs of people experiencing homelessness, school children, immigrants or refugees, or other special populations.
- **D.** Increase funding for homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing resources in the community.
- **E.** Invest in new partnerships for service provision, including mini-grants to fund innovative work from local community partners.
- **F.** Explore partnerships to expand innovative delivery models to address homelessness, such as tiny home villages, bridge housing, rapid resolution, and residential shelter locations.

**E14**
Build access to, awareness of, and support for social services for residents in East Central.

Successfully addressing the issue of homelessness requires the commitment and sustained advocacy of all partners involved, from city agencies to service providers and especially local communities. The strategies below aim to strengthen the social service system by proactively engaging residents around the issues related to homelessness to increase knowledge of available resources.

- **A.** Encourage stronger relationships between service providers and their neighbors through strategies such as:
  1. Assisting service providers with the creation of good neighbor agreements.
  2. Staff a dedicated community organizer to serve as a liaison between the broader community and service providers.
- **B.** Integrate supportive services with housing and connect private landlords to existing social services in their neighborhood.

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**Case Study:**
Rose Andom Center

The Rose Andom Center is a place for domestic violence victims to find the safety, support, and services needed to rebuild their lives by facilitating access to services and staff of community organizations and city agencies in a single, safe location.

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**Case Study:**
Rose Andom Center

The Rose Andom Center is a place for domestic violence victims to find the safety, support, and services needed to rebuild their lives by facilitating access to services and staff of community organizations and city agencies in a single, safe location.
2.3 AREA WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS: MOBILITY

IN THIS SECTION:

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION (P. 72)
2.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW (P. 77)
2.3.3 TRANSFORMATIVE STREETS (P. 81)
2.3.4 HIGH COMFORT BIKEWAYS (P. 95)
2.3.5 INTERSECTION SAFETY & NEW CROSSINGS (P. 103)
2.3.6 TRANSIT AND MOBILITY HUBS (P. 111)
2.3.7 NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING (P. 115)
2.3.8 PARKING AND CURBSIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES (P. 120)
2.3.9 TDM STRATEGIES (P. 124)
2.3.1 INTRODUCTION

East Central residents rely on mobility infrastructure to reach their destinations and demand a transportation network that prioritizes pedestrians in alignment with the community vision. Everyone uses the transportation network to get around the city on nearly a daily basis, whether they are walking, biking, taking the bus, driving, or using a mobility device. East Central neighborhoods exhibit transportation, density, and land use conditions that support a car-optional lifestyle (see Land Use & Built Form Section 2.1). East Central’s transportation and mobility networks will continue to improve with projects such as the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Colfax Avenue and will serve a central role in accomplishing the city’s Mobility Action Plan goals.

Mobility is closely tied to Land Use & Built Form, Economy & Housing, and Quality-of-Life Infrastructure. Transportation options influence neighborhood affordability and health outcomes, and prioritized future networks with increased connectivity, safety, and accessibility. East Central contains a disproportionately large number of Denver’s High Injury Network (HIN) street segments. The High Injury Network was identified in Denver’s Vision Zero Action Plan as 5% of Denver’s total roadways, but the location of 50% of crashes. Targeted improvements to the HIN streets will improve local and citywide safety.

CITYWIDE PLANS

The vision and recommendations outlined in this plan are consistent with other recent citywide planning efforts, including:

**Comprehensive Plan 2040 & Blueprint Denver** – The 20-year vision for Denver and its people reflects the voices of thousands of Denverites who have shared their hopes, concerns, and dreams about the city’s future. The plans aim to:
- Maximize the public right of way to create great places.
- Deliver a multimodal network.
- Strengthen multimodal connections and focus growth near transit.

**Mobility Action Plan (MAP)** – Denver’s plan to reinvent its transportation system with a focus on mobility, safety, equity, sustainability and smart technology to improve connectivity, economic opportunity and quality of life for everyone.

**Vision Zero** – Denver’s action plan to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2030 and focus safety improvements along the city’s High Injury Network (HIN).

**Denver Moves** – Mobility Plans by transportation mode or neighborhood that develop near and long-term strategies for moving more people through the city.

**Game Plan** – Citywide Parks Plan with recommendations to improve parkways and trails, including:
- Ensuring all Denver residents are within a 10 minute walk of a park.
- Encouraging the creation of new “Contemporary Parkways” and providing guidance for updating existing and future parkways to reflect today’s needs.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan** – Citywide planning effort to integrate strategies that improve transportation options in Denver’s new and existing buildings. (*currently underway at writing*)

### HOW EAST CENTRAL RESIDENTS COMMUTE (BY NEIGHBORHOOD)

[Graph showing commute modes by neighborhood]

*Source: 2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates (Census)*
LONG TERM VISION FOR MOBILITY IN EAST CENTRAL

The East Central Area NPI planning process began with Blueprint Denver’s Vision Statements and crafted area-specific vision statements with significant neighborhood and steering committee input. The following 2040 East Central Community Vision Statements will guide future efforts and trade-off discussions:

WELL CONNECTED, SAFE, AND ACCESSIBLE PLACES

In 2040, streets in East Central are bustling with those who walk, bike, and use transit and most residents can meet their daily needs without needing to rely on a car. For those who drive, parking is limited, but technology and efficient management has minimized traffic and spill-over issues in residential areas. A well-connected pedestrian network that includes wide, accessible, and well-maintained sidewalks and street crossings allows pedestrians of all ages and abilities to safely and comfortably move around the area on foot or using an assistive device year-round. East Central’s highly visible protected bicycle lanes allow everyone to safely ride throughout the area, including young children, who love riding to school and exploring other neighborhood destinations. During rush hour, there is a steady flow of bicycles and the numerous bike parking areas along Colfax and within neighborhood destinations are always well used. Transit in East Central is reliable, frequent, and affordable with quality, well-maintained shelters at all stops. Residents and businesses love the high-capacity transit along Colfax Avenue, Colorado Boulevard, and Broadway, which, combined with new and innovative mobility technologies, make it fast and easy to reach destinations throughout East Central.

MEASURABLE GOALS

The following metrics evaluate current conditions and set future targets to accomplish the walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly vision for the East Central Area, while supporting citywide mobility and safety goals.

MODE SHARE

Mode share, measured by the US Census, is the percentage of travelers using a particular transportation type (e.g. walking, biking, taking transit, driving, etc.) to get to a destination. US cities aim to reduce drive-alone rates in single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) to balance their transportation systems.

In 2017, Denver’s Mobility Action Plan (MAP) set citywide mode share goals for 2030. This plan’s 2040 transportation mode targets will improve upon the MAP 2030 goals, with East Central neighborhoods significantly exceeding the 2030 MAP targets in 2040. The East Central Area Plan will rely on a citywide effort to define mode share goals by neighborhood in order to include important regional context and analysis. Denver’s Department of Transportation and Infrastructure (DOTI) is currently in the process of updating the Strategic Transportation Plan (STP) for specific mode share targets at the neighborhood level. These targets will be more aggressive than the goals outlined in MAP.
KILLED AND SERIOUS INJURIES (KSI)

Denver’s Vision Zero Program aims to eliminate all traffic deaths and serious injuries on Denver’s roads by 2030 and tracks statistics on those killed and seriously injured (KSI) in roadway crashes annually. The program focuses on reducing serious crash types on Denver’s roadways and educating about other issues like speeding, distracted, or intoxicated driving. Vision Zero tracks 3-year KSI averages. The 3-year KSI average for all East Central Area neighborhoods combined is 59 people who die or are seriously injured within the area (see graph below for 3 year averages by neighborhood). The 2040 target for all Denver neighborhoods is to have a KSI 3-yr average trending towards zero.

VISION ZERO ACTION PLAN

Created in 2017, the Vision Zero Action Plan outlines a path towards eliminating all traffic-related deaths and serious injuries on Denver’s roads. The Action Plan identifies that 50% of Denver’s traffic fatalities occur on just 5% of the city’s streets - these 5% of streets are called the High Injury Network (HIN). Creating safer streets through design is an essential part of Vision Zero, as well as reducing speeds. Higher speeds not only increase the risk of a crash, but also increase the risk for serious injury or death, regardless of mode.

The East Central area contains 11 out of 27 High Injury Network corridors, and recommendations in this plan directly support the following Vision Zero goals:

- Implement safety treatments along the HIN
- Reconfigure streets and intersections to improve safety and operations
- Reduce vehicle speeds along the HIN
- Create slow zones in priority areas

HIGHER SPEEDS INCREASE RISK OF SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH

Source: Tefft, B.C. Impact speed and a pedestrian’s risk of severe injury or death. Accident Analysis & Prevention. 50. 2013.
## STREET TYPES

Denver uses a system for classifying different types of streets, called the “functional classification system.” Blueprint Denver updated this system to include how surrounding character and context might affect the street’s design or operation.

The East Central Area Plan does not propose to change any future street types as identified in Blueprint but includes bold strategies to prioritize multimodal transportation along key corridors to make it easier and safer for people to walk, roll, bike, or take transit.

### STREET CLASSIFICATIONS

#### LOCAL

Streets designed for highest amount of property access and lowest amount of through movement.

#### COLLECTOR

Streets that are in between local and arterial streets whose main function is to collect movement from local streets and convey it to arterial streets.

#### ARTERIAL

Streets designed for the highest amount of through movement and lowest amount of property access.

#### DOWNTOWN

- **LAND USE:** Surrounded by the most intense land uses, including hotels, retail, office, and residential and mixed-use towers.
- **FUNCTION:** High focus on pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.
- **BUFFER:** Street trees and other placemaking infrastructure make for a vibrant place.

#### MAIN STREET

- **LAND USE:** Characterized by a mix of uses, such as retail, services and restaurants, and residential.
- **FUNCTION:** Wide sidewalks with fewer driveways to prioritize people walking and rolling.
- **BUFFER:** Consistent trees and/or amenity zones provide a buffer between people walking or rolling and traffic.

#### MIXED USE

- **LAND USE:** Varied mix of uses including retail, office, residential, and restaurants.
- **FUNCTION:** Driveways are more frequent than main streets, but still limited to provide a friendly environment for people walking, rolling, or riding bicycles.
- **BUFFER:** Fairly consistent buffer between people walking or rolling and traffic.

#### RESIDENTIAL

- **LAND USE:** Characterized by primarily residential uses, but may also include parks, schools, civic uses, or small retail nodes.
- **FUNCTION:** Traffic calming encourages slower speeds and promotes safety for all users. Signalized cross walks with high visibility markings provide ample crossing opportunities.
- **BUFFER:** Street trees or a lawn provide a buffer between people walking or rolling and traffic.
2.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

This chapter summarizes key strategies and recommendations for the East Central Area Plan developed through stakeholder and public feedback, a multimodal existing conditions analysis, and a review of Denver’s plans, reports and current projects.

The multimodal existing conditions analysis included a detailed study of crashes by mode to determine areas of highest need. As shown in the maps to the right, most crashes are concentrated along segments of the High Injury Network identified in Denver’s Vision Zero Action Plan. The East Central Area has a disproportionately high crash rate on its HIN streets versus the citywide crash rate on HIN streets (see graph below). Targeted improvements for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike on the HIN streets will improve local and citywide safety.

A detailed origin/destination analysis was completed to better understand travel patterns and inform recommendations. Most trips were found to be local, with an average of 37.5% trips beginning in East Central neighborhoods staying in East Central neighborhoods. Other major destinations include downtown, Cherry Creek, and Lincoln Park Baker.

Recommendations in this plan will require additional analysis, including traffic studies, before significant improvements are installed.

Unlike other sections within this report which involve public-private-partnerships and may require more innovative implementation strategies, transportation infrastructure is primarily owned by Denver’s DOTI which has the authority to improve conditions that meet standards as funding and resources allow.

Key exceptions include funding for sidewalk improvements as those are often the responsibility of the adjacent property owner. Denver’s Neighborhood Sidewalk Repair Program is addressing sidewalks citywide, and to help with the repairs, the City and County of Denver will offer extended repayment assistance and affordability discounts for property owners who qualify. The City is also authorizing less expensive repair methods not previously allowed, such as grinding and crack filling.

Additional opportunities include engaging partners who can add additional funding, such as Regional Transportation District (RTD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and local business districts.
CRASHES INVOLVING SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH

VIBRATION ZERO HIGH INJURY NETWORK

Source: 2013 - 2019 City Crash Data

RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS PLAN

Mobility is closely tied to other topic areas and recommendations in this plan. As the City anticipates significant growth in the next 20 years, our transportation system must accommodate all modes to effectively, reliably, and safely move more people through the limited space in our right of ways.

This chapter focuses on transportation improvements and calls out opportunities within those improvements to coordinate across disciplines. Related recommendations in other topic areas of this plan include:

L3  Allow taller buildings close to Downtown and along major transit corridors when significant community benefits are provided.

L8  Encourage high-quality design and character preservation in Centers and Corridors.

E10  Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

Q1  Examine the potential for Historic Park Avenue to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.

Q2  Develop new Contemporary Parkways that serve multiple community functions, including connecting the community to open space, parks and recreational assets.

Q7  Increase the pervious surface coverage through the design and implementation of green infrastructure systems.

Q8  Create a system of green streets and alleys to complement the network of existing Historic Parkways and new Contemporary Parkways and encourage sustainable water management.

Q10  Improve the physical connections to grocery stores and other locations with healthy food options.
MOBILITY CONCEPTS

Transformative streets
Streets that improve safety and comfort and prioritize walking, biking, and transit. See Section 2.3.3.
- Improved transit frequency, capacity, and enhanced stops.
- Safe, accessible, and comfortable walking and rolling environment.
- Improved facilities and safety enhancements for people biking or riding.

Intersection safety improvements
Safety improvements at intersections to create a safe, comfortable, and accessible crossing for pedestrians and cyclists. See Section 2.3.5.

High comfort bikeways
Bikeways that improve safety and comfort for cyclists. High comfort bikeways include a spectrum of design options. See Section 2.3.4.

Neighborhood traffic calming
Designs that limit and/or slow traffic in largely residential areas. This can include physical improvements as well as operational improvements. See Section 2.3.7.

Mobility hubs
Transit stops with enhanced amenities that allow for seamless transition between modes. Mobility hubs vary in scale and context. See Section 2.3.6.

Improved sidewalks
Safe, comfortable, and accessible walking environments. See Section 2.3.5.
2.3.3 TRANSFORMATIVE STREETS

Transformative streets are the central priority of this area plan because they represent bold changes to the mobility system improving safe multimodal transportation options. These corridors represent the best opportunity to provide people with more transportation choices, while improving regional and neighborhood connections. Examples of potential improvements include repurposing street space to address safety via road diets (see sidebar to left), flexible bus and parking lanes, additional pedestrian crossings, reduced crossing distances, increased comfort for people riding bikes, wider sidewalks, operational improvements for all users, green stormwater infrastructure and more usable green spaces along streets. Recommendations are context-sensitive and vary by street classification, land use character, place and neighborhood context.

Transformative streets prioritize multimodal transportation along key corridors and make it easier and safer for people to walk, bike, roll and take transit, and represent the best opportunity to increase mobility choice and reduce the use of single occupancy vehicles. Rolling refers to folks using mobility devices such as wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and other forms of transportation to assist their movement, and require considerations beyond ADA standards to protect these vulnerable populations. Denver’s current road network prioritizes the personal automobile, and the transformative street recommendations suggest how to best reallocate space to meet citywide goals. While space will be reallocated for other modes, Denver expects 50% of work trips to be made by personal automobile in 2030 and a representative portion of the road network will remain focused on moving automobiles. Denver’s Vision Zero program found that driver safety greatly improves following the safety treatments recommended in this section.

ROAD DIETS

A road diet refers to when space within the right of way is reallocated for uses other than space for vehicles. This effectively shortens the width of the road and crossing distance.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommends the use of proven safety countermeasures such as road diets that “can improve safety, calm traffic, provide better mobility and access for all road users, and enhance overall quality of life.” Road diets are proven to reduce crashes up to 47%.

CHANGING A ROAD FROM

4 LANES

TO

3 LANES

LEADS TO

19-47%

REDUCTION IN TOTAL CRASHES

Source: Evaluation of Lane Reduction “Road Diet” Measures on Crashes, FHWA-HRT-10-053.
STREETS IN EAST CENTRAL TODAY

The East Central Area represents one of the best opportunities within Denver to make significant progress towards city mobility goals of 30% of people walking, biking, or taking transit and zero traffic fatalities by 2030. East Central neighborhoods exhibit lower drive alone mode shares than Denver’s citywide average and are generally well-served by high-capacity and local transit service with strong ridership. However, there are many challenges within the study area that need to be addressed to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicle trips and eliminate traffic deaths area-wide.

Several major one-way arterial couplets designed to move vehicular traffic in and out of the area create barriers that bisect the neighborhood and make it uncomfortable to walk, bike, or roll and are confusing to navigate for transit riders. These streets also represent key neighborhood destinations and places people want to connect to or travel along. The area’s HIN streets account for a higher percentage of crashes with people walking and biking than HIN streets citywide. This highlights a need to improve safety for all users in these neighborhoods and to focus on increasing the number of high comfort bikeways, dedicated transit lanes, and customer amenities at stops.

One concept created from community feedback for this plan and supported by recommendations in Denver Parks and Recreation Game Plan is the idea of retrofitting parkways and creating new contemporary parkways to better serve today’s community needs.

CONTEMPORARY PARKWAY: POTENTIAL DESIGN CONCEPT

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community members expressed concerns regarding high-speed one-way arterial couplets and providing better connections to parks, employment centers, schools, retail destinations, and major transit stops. Community members overall also expressed a preference to avoid reducing on-street parking compared to reducing vehicular traffic flow when making necessary safety improvements. Providing safe and high-quality mobility options including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit service is a top priority of residents.

Top 6 Mobility Topics

- **WALKABILITY** 32%
- **BIKE LINES** 28%
- **PARKING** 20%
- **PEDESTRIAN SAFETY** 18%
- **COLFAK AVENUE** 16%
- **TRAFFIC** 16%

Percent of Responses (1,991)

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey
TRANSFORMATIVE STREET CONCEPTS

Transit priority
Streets designed to improve transit frequency, transit capacity, and provide enhanced stop amenities. Pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from transit are also included.
(Photo: Transit Priority, Source: Nacto.org)

Pedestrian priority
Streets that provide a safe, accessible, comfortable, and interesting walking and rolling experience through additional pedestrian crossings and reduced crossing distances, wider sidewalks, and safer crossings.
(Photo: Pedestrian Priority, Source: Denverpost.com)

Bike priority
Streets designed to provide a safe, convenient, and comfortable experience for people riding bicycles or micromobility devices with intersections that reduce conflicts with vehicles.
(Photo: Bike Priority, Source: Denver.streetsblog.org)

DENVER MOVES: TRANSIT

Denver Moves: Transit is the City’s first transit plan and recommends building out capital investment corridors, enhancing multimodal access to transit, and identifying first and last mile solutions. The plan organizes corridor recommendations into the following categories:

- **High-Capacity Transit: Corridors (HCT)** with high levels of passenger capacity, very frequent services, and high-quality design. These include features to make transit more reliable and rapid, such as BRT or rail infrastructure, and additional improvements including dedicated transit lanes and enhanced stops and stations.

- **Medium-Capacity Transit: Corridors (MCT)** with slightly lower levels of passenger capacity, service frequency, and design, than HCT. MCT corridors are served by rapid bus with bus-only lanes and other transit-priority treatments throughout the corridor. Full BRT may be possible on some MCT corridors.

- **Speed and Reliability: Corridors (S+R)** with slightly lower levels of passenger capacity, service frequency, and design than HCT and MCT corridors. S+R corridors benefit from investments such as transit priority signals, improved stop amenities, and can include dedicated transit lanes at key locations to help buses move faster and reliably. All capital investment corridors begin as S+R corridors until funding is identified to build out the full HCT or MCT vision identified in the plan.
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

A disproportionately high number of streets identified as part of Denver’s High Injury Network (HIN) are located within East Central compared to other neighborhood planning areas. Community members expressed concerns regarding safety and comfort, high-speed one-way arterial couplets, and the need for access to high quality-mobility options.

Short-term strategies are generally defined as projects that can be implemented within 0-5 years and costs less than $500,000. Long-term strategies are generally defined as projects that take at least 5 years and cost at least $500,000. Long-term projects are recommended to occur after Colfax BRT implementation, while short-term projects can occur before. All high and medium capacity transit corridors qualify for speed & reliability improvements before funding to implement the full vision of the corridor is identified. Recommendations prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists should coordinate with Quality of Life Policy Q8.B to prioritize tree canopy in these areas.

A. Colfax Avenue
Also see Colfax Corridor Chapter 3

1. Interim
   a. Improve intersections and crossings at high crash and high community priority intersections along Colfax through the Vision Zero Program to improve pedestrian safety and comfort. Consider pedestrian improvements at Civic Center Station.

2. Short-Term
   a. Conduct next phase of study and design to advance the vision of center-running bus rapid transit (BRT) and a high-quality pedestrian environment from Colfax Corridor Connections 10% design project.
   b. Identify funding opportunities to build the full center-running BRT vision for the corridor.
   c. Implement locally preferred alternative for Colfax corridor, including center-running bus rapid transit (BRT), improved pedestrian, cyclist, and driver safety at intersections and transit stations, and a beautified corridor featuring a high-quality pedestrian space and placemaking opportunities.
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

B. Broadway
1. Short-Term
   a. Create a high-quality pedestrian and bike space with reduced crossing distances and operational improvements, such as longer pedestrian signal crossing times. Priority locations include: Civic Center Station, 17th, 16th, Colfax, 12th, 11th, and 10th Avenues.
   b. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   c. Build out northern segment of protected bike lane between 16th Ave. and 7th Ave., where phase 1 currently stops.
2. Long-Term
   a. Provide high-capacity transit service, increased frequency and expanded hours of service, and rider amenities at stops.
   b. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

C. Colorado Boulevard
Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4
1. Short-Term
   a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   b. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: 8th, 9th, 12th, 13th, 14th, Colfax, 17th, Montview Blvd, and 23rd Avenues.
   c. Conduct a corridor study to determine the multimodal vision for the corridor, including pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements such as BRT.
2. Long-Term
   a. Implement findings of corridor study.

WHY IS BROADWAY IMPORTANT?
- Transit Capital Investment Corridor with high ridership transit stops
- Planned transit and bikeway improvements
- Supported by Denver Moves: Transit and Denver Moves: Bikes

WHY IS COLORADO IMPORTANT?
- Street segments with greater than ¼ mile between traffic signals
- Transit Capital Investment Corridor
- Supported by Denver Moves: Transit, Blueprint Denver, Denver Strategic Transportation Plan and City Park Master Plan
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

b. Provide high-capacity transit service via speed/reliability, increased frequency and expanded hours of service, dedicated travel lanes, and rider amenities at stops.

c. Create a greater separation between the sidewalk and the roadway.

D. Corona Street
   1. Short-Term
      a. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: 10th Ave and Colfax Ave.
      b. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   
   2. Long-Term
      a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and traffic calming measures.

E. Downing Street
   1. Short-Term
      a. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: 10th Ave, 12th Ave, and Colfax Ave.
      b. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   
   2. Long-Term
      a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and traffic calming measures.
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

F. Josephine Street
   1. Short-Term
      a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
      b. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: 9th, 12th, and 17th, and 18th Avenues.
      c. Install missing sidewalks between 16th and 17th Avenues near East High School and Carla Madison Recreation Center.
   2. Long-Term
      a. Provide medium-capacity transit service via speed/reliability improvements at key locations, increased frequency and expanded hours of service, rider amenities at stops, and potential bus lanes.
      b. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

G. Lincoln Street
   1. Short-Term
      a. Create a high-quality pedestrian and bike space with reduced crossing distances and operational improvements, such as longer pedestrian signal crossing times. Priority locations include: Civic Center Station, 11th, 12th, Colfax, 16th, 17th, and 18th Avenues.
      b. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   2. Long-Term
      a. Provide high-capacity transit service, increased frequency and expanded hours of service, and rider amenities at stops.
      b. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

WHY IS JOSEPHINE IMPORTANT?
- Transit Capital Investment Corridor
- Supported by Denver Moves: Transit, Blueprint Denver and City Park Master Plan

WHY IS LINCOLN IMPORTANT?
- Transit Capital Investment Corridor with high ridership transit stops
- Planned transit improvements
- Supported by Denver Moves: Transit
RECOMMENDATIONS

Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

POLICY

H. Park Avenue between Colfax and 20th Avenues
   Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure improvements Policy Q1 in section 2.4
   1. Short-Term
      a. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances and operational improvements. Priority location is 16th Ave.
      b. Study the feasibility of closing turn lanes and re-appropriating the space for pedestrians. Partner with DOTI’s Adaptive Streets initiative.
      c. Conduct a corridor study to determine the multimodal vision for the corridor, including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and green infrastructure improvements (see Policy Q1).
   2. Long-Term
      a. Provide high-capacity transit service via speed and reliability improvements, increased frequency and expanded hours of service, and rider amenities at stops.
      b. Study the feasibility of reconfiguring the Colfax/Franklin/Park and 16th/ Lafayette/Park intersections to accomplish city and East Central Area Plan safety and multimodal goals.

I. York Street
   1. Short-Term
      a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
      b. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: 23rd, 21st, 18th, 17th, 12th, and 9th Avenues.
   2. Long-Term
      a. Provide medium-capacity transit service via speed and reliability improvements at key locations, increased frequency and expanded hours of service, rider amenities at stops, and potential bus lanes.
      b. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

TRANSFORMATIVE STREETS

WHY IS PARK IMPORTANT?
• Transit Capital Investment Corridor
• Supported by Denver Moves: Transit and Blueprint Denver

WHY IS YORK IMPORTANT?
• Transit Capital Investment Corridor
• Supported by Denver Moves: Transit, Blueprint Denver and City Park Master Plan
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. *(continued from prior page)*

**J.** 6th Avenue

1. **Short-Term**
   a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements at key locations and rider amenities at stops.
   b. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings, and operational improvements. Priority locations include: Detroit and Steele Streets.

2. **Long-Term**
   a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets, addressing mid-block signals, and exploring the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

**K.** 7th Avenue Parkway between Colorado and Williams Street

1. **Short-Term**
   a. Comply with Design Guidelines for Historic Parkways and Boulevards unless updates are needed to implement pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements. Updates should balance multi-modal convenience and safety with historic integrity, cultural heritage, and open space values
   b. Consider establishing an Historic Parkways Advisory Committee with historic preservation and multi-modal transportation advocates to provide recommendations on designs for Historic Parkway improvements and potential updates to design guidelines.
   c. Study feasibility of installing a protected bike lane.
   d. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances and operational improvements.

2. **Long-Term**
   a. Study the feasibility of installing a natural and ADA accessible (e.g. crushed refined granite) multi-use path within the parkway and limiting access for vehicle cross-traffic at certain intersections (see Policy Q2).
   b. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets and traffic calming.

### Case Study: Seattle Department of Transportation

*East Central Area Plan | 2.3 Mobility*

During a scheduled resurfacing project of 1.5 miles of Dexter Avenue, the Seattle Department of Transportation re-imagined the street to improve transit and bike safety and operations. Key features included installation of buffered bike lanes, 10 dedicated transit islands, enhanced customer amenities at stops and improved street crossings and full ADA accessibility. Since implementation, bus boardings have increased 23% with no change in vehicular travel time. A 19% drop in collisions has occurred.

*Source: Seattle DOT*
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

L. 8th Avenue
   1. Short-Term
      a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements at key locations and rider amenities at stops.
      b. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings, and operational improvements. Priority locations include: Grant St., Washington St., Clarkson St., Detroit St., Steele St., and Colorado Boulevard.
   2. Long-Term
      a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets, addressing mid-block signals, and exploring the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

M. 12th Avenue Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4
   1. Short-Term
      a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and customer amenities at stops.
      b. Improve bike and pedestrian crossing and operational improvements at Colorado Blvd, Josephine St, York St, Lincoln St, and Broadway.
      c. Improve bicycle safety and reduce high crash numbers.
   2. Long-Term
      a. Consider contemporary parkway elements to serve multiple community functions (see Policy Q2).
      b. Conduct corridor study that includes 11th Avenue and 12th Avenue to determine community preference and best placement for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements. Consider the recent success of COVID-19 Shared Street on 11th Ave.
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. *(continued from prior page)*

**N. 13th Avenue**

1. **Short-Term**
   a. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings, alley crossing safety enhancements, and geometric and operational improvements for all users. Priority locations include: Washington St., Clarkson St., Vine St., Detroit St., Steele St., Madison St., and Colorado Blvd.

2. **Long-Term**
   a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets, addressing mid-block signals, and exploring the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.
   b. Explore removal of sidewalk barrier on the south side 13th Avenue between Washington St and Grant St and improve pedestrian environment.

**O. 14th Avenue**

1. **Short-Term**
   a. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings, alley crossing safety enhancements, and geometric and operational improvements for all users. Priority Locations include: Colorado Blvd, Garfield St, Steele St, Detroit St, Clarkson St, and Washington St.

2. **Long-Term**
   a. Study feasibility of installing a protected bike lane to connect to improvements west of Broadway.
   b. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, road diets, addressing mid-block signals, and exploring the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

**POLICY**

P. 16th Avenue between Broadway and City Park Esplanade  
Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4

1. **Short-Term**
   a. Study corridor and upgrade Denver Moves: Bikes buffered bike lane recommendation to protected bike lane or neighborhood bikeway pending findings. Partner with DOTI Community Networks to advance safety improvements.
   b. Improve bicycle safety and reduce high crash numbers.
   c. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: Civic Center Station, Lincoln St., Pennsylvania St., and Park Ave.
   d. Recognizing success and community support for the 16th Ave Shared Street implemented in 2020 due to COVID-19, explore near-term implementation of pedestrian and bicycle priority improvements.

2. **Long-Term**
   a. Study the feasibility of limiting access for vehicular through-traffic and prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety improvements.
   b. Consider contemporary parkway elements to serve multiple community functions (see Policy Q2).

**STRAATEGIES**

WHY IS 16TH AVE IMPORTANT?

- 58 Crashes (Pedestrian:8 / Bike:50) Between Lincoln St. and High St. – only Colfax Ave. has higher bike crashes (52)
- Supported by Colfax Multimodal Access Study
Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit. (continued from prior page)

Q. 17th Avenue
1. Short-Term
   a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   b. Improved bike and pedestrian crossing and operational improvements at Colorado Boulevard.
   c. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: Broadway, Lincoln St., Grant St., Pennsylvania St., Humboldt St., York St., Josephine St., City Park Esplanade, Steele St., and Colorado Blvd.
2. Long-Term
   a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way (Broadway to City Park Esplanade) as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

R. 18th Avenue
1. Short-Term
   a. Provide transit speed and reliability improvements and rider amenities at stops.
   b. Improve pedestrian and bike safety and comfort with reduced crossing distances, new crossings and operational improvements. Priority locations include: Lincoln and York Streets.
2. Long-Term
   a. Study permanent safety improvements along the corridor including, but not limited to, the feasibility of converting from one-way to two-way as part of a citywide one-way couplet study.

WHY IS 17TH AVE IMPORTANT?
- Street segments with greater than ¼ mile between traffic signals
- Transit Capital Investment Corridor with several high ridership transit stops
- Supported by Denver Moves: Transit, Blueprint Denver, Colfax Multimodal Access Study and City Park Master Plan

WHY IS 18TH AVE IMPORTANT?
- Street segments with greater than ¼ mile between traffic signals
- Transit Capital Investment Corridor with several high ridership transit stops
- Supported by Denver Moves: Transit, Blueprint Denver and City Park Master Plan

COVID-19
In the spring of 2020, Denver, along with other communities across the world, faced major changes in daily life due to a global pandemic. In response to COVID-19 and the Stay at Home Order, DOTI closed select streets to through traffic on a temporary basis to create more space for Denver residents to walk, bike, and run while complying with physical distancing requirements. These closures still allowed local vehicular access and parking.

The initiative has received overwhelming support from residents and businesses in surveys conducted by Denver Streets Partnership, and DOTI worked to expand this initiative across the city.

Early data shows bicycle and pedestrian activity is much higher than typical numbers on these streets. Many of these streets provide connections to parks in dense neighborhoods and are identified in recommendations in this plan.

RTD was also impacted by the Stay at Home Order, and implemented rear door boarding, suspended fares, limited occupancy of buses and trains, provided protections for operators, and began running extra buses to meet demand when others were full due to occupancy limitations.
2.3.4 HIGH COMFORT BIKEWAYS

Streets that provide safe and comfortable bikeways allow people of all ages and abilities to bike for transportation, exercise, and enjoyment. In Denver, a variety of bikeways currently exist throughout the city. Many plans call to expand the number of streets with high comfort bikeways and to upgrade current routes with safer, more comfortable infrastructure. High comfort bikeways include, neighborhood bikeways, protected bike lanes, and trails/shared use paths. Bikeways come in many forms to match the mobility needs of each street, and their safety treatments provide an opportunity to add space for placemaking, green infrastructure, and pedestrian improvements.

A recent study conducted in Denver and published in the Journal of Transport and Health concludes that bike infrastructure doubles as traffic calming mechanisms, which reduce fatalities and improve safety for all modes. Lower-traffic streets improve safety and provide more opportunities for interactions with neighbors. Increasing the number of people riding bikes reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, wear and tear on roads, and the need for additional travel lanes and parking.

Denver is committed to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) commuters to 50% and increase the percentage of bicycle and pedestrian commuters to 15%. To make progress toward the citywide mode shift goal, dense neighborhoods like those in East Central will need to exceed the 50% goal. Investing in high comfort bikeways and bicycle infrastructure is essential to encouraging this mode shift, as “interested but concerned” bicyclists will be more likely to choose ride if the infrastructure feels safe.

EAST CENTRAL 2040 GOALS

PEOPLE WALKING, BIKING, OR TAKING TRANSIT

TRAFFIC FATALITIES

30%

0

Source: Downtown Denver Partnership
BIKING IN EAST CENTRAL TODAY

In East Central, the bike network consists of bike lanes and shared roadways but contains connectivity gaps and safety challenges. Recommendations in this plan build upon those of Denver Moves: Bikes, adding neighborhood context and detail to planned bicycle improvements with the goal of providing a complete, comfortable, convenient, and safe bicycle network.

East Central currently has eight miles of bike lanes with plans to add over eight miles of additional separated bikeways and over three miles of protected bikeways. Current north-south bike routes are limited and should be expanded especially when streets have segments without signals greater than a 1/4 mile. There are a disproportionately large number of bike-related crashes in East Central with the top five HIN streets for bike crashes being Colfax Ave., 16th Ave., Lincoln St., 17th Ave., and Broadway. People walking and biking were involved in only 8% of crashes but people biking disproportionately represent 18% of all injury crashes. East Central's HIN streets also have higher percentages of bike-related crashes than HIN streets citywide which indicates HIN streets in East Central require more immediate pedestrian safety improvements.

Case Study:
Denver Department of Public Works
Broadway Bike Lane Evaluation

Denver Public Works performed a before and after evaluation of crash data to evaluate safety and see how crashes changed after the bikeway was installed. From August to November 2015, before the bikeway was in place, there were 40 crashes across all modes in the study area. From August through November 2016, while the Bikeway evaluation was in place, there were 13 reported crashes across all modes of travel which represents a 67.5% reduction in crashes after the bikeway was installed.

Three crashes involving a bicycle were reported in the study area between January 2015 and November 2016. All three bicycle crashes occurred in 2015, none occurred in 2016 while the bikeway was in place. Overall, these findings show a reduction in the number and severity of crashes following the installation of the bikeway.

Source: Denver Moves Broadway/Lincoln Corridor Study

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The highest mobility priority in East Central based on total number of public comments received during the planning process was better bike lanes and connections. Public comments addressed specific locations of bicycle safety concerns and gaps in the bicycle network. The most frequently cited concern was the need for north to south connectivity on the bike network.

Biking in the East Central Area is:

<table>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>29%</td>
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Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey
BIKE NETWORK: EXISTING, PLANNED, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Legend
- Parks and Open Space
- Plan Area Boundary
- Existing / Planned
- Bike Lane
- Buffered Bike Lane
- Protected Bike Lane
- Neighborhood Bikeway
- Trail
- Shared Roadway
- Recommended High Comfort Bikeway (Neighborhood Bikeway, Buffered or Protected Bikeway, Trail)
- Recommended Neighborhood Bikeway (type of high comfort bikeway)

*Future study and outreach will determine and confirm bikeway types.*
HIGH COMFORT BIKEWAYS CONCEPTS

High comfort bikeways are safe and comfortable spaces designated for bicyclists through pavement markings and/or a separated path. Intersections are designed to reduce conflict between bicyclists and vehicles by improving visibility and marking space in the right-of-way for cyclists. See Policies M2 & M3.

**Neighborhood bikeway**
Low-volume, low-speed streets modified to enhance bicycle safety and comfort and act as shared streets. Include intersection safety improvements such as signage, pavement markings, speed and/or volume reduction features, and intersection safety improvements. (Photo: Shared Neighborhood Bikeway, NACTO.org)

**Buffered bike lane**
Traditional bike lane separated by a painted buffer from vehicle traffic lanes and/or parking. Intersections are designed for safety.

**Protected bikeway**
An exclusive bike facility with a path physically separated from motor traffic and distinct from the sidewalk. Intersections are designed for safety and facilitate turning movements for bicyclists. (Photo: Protected Bike Lane, Source: www.kimley-horn.com)

**Trail/shared use path**
Completely separated from the roadway and typically shared with pedestrians.

**Bike lane**
Exclusive space for bicycles noted by pavement markings and signage (without buffers or barriers to separate from traffic).
RECOMMENDATIONS

Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikes bikeways.

Denver Moves: Bikes outlines plans for over eight miles of separated bikeways and over three miles of protected bikeways in East Central. East Central neighborhood residents prioritize investments in new high comfort bikeways and provided a clear direction to enhance and expand the current bicycle network. This plan provides greater detail to the bikeway routing and infrastructure and upgrades previously identified routes. Below are key strategies including modifications to Denver Moves: Bikes recommendations in East Central to respond to the community’s concerns and key findings. Recommendations prioritizing cyclists should coordinate with Quality of Life Policy Q8.B to prioritize tree canopy in these areas.

A. Upgrade planned conventional bike lanes on Washington St. and Clarkson St. to a protected bike lane, due to safety benefits of greater separation from auto traffic, and install new crossings.

B. Upgrade existing Denver Moves: Bikes shared roadway to a high comfort bikeway on Franklin St. due to connection between 16th Ave., Cheeseman Park, and the medical campus to the north.

C. Upgrade entrance to Cheeseman Park at Williams St. and 13th Ave., install new signals on Williams St. at 13th and 18th Aves., upgrade progression signal at 14th Ave., upgrade bicycle crossing at Colfax Ave. intersection.

D. Reroute planned St Paul St. neighborhood bikeway to Steele St., due to signal at Colfax Ave. and Steele St., and extend Steele St. neighborhood bikeway between 6th and 17th Aves.

E. Upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikes buffered bike lanes recommendation to a neighborhood bikeway or protected bike lane on 16th Ave. between Broadway and City Park Esplanade in the short-term and study the feasibility of significantly limiting vehicular access to create a bicycle and pedestrian priority street in the long-term.

F. Upgrade Denver Moves: Bikes shared roadway to bike lanes on 12th Ave. between Broadway and Cheesman Park.

G. Install Denver Moves: Bikes recommendation of a neighborhood bikeway on 7th Ave. between Lincoln St and Williams St.

H. Upgrade Denver Moves: Bikes recommendation of a buffered bike lane to a protected bike lane on 7th Ave. Parkway between Williams St. and Colorado Blvd.

I. Install planned Garfield St. neighborhood bikeway connecting City Park to the Cherry Creek Trail. See concept sketch at right.

J. Upgrade 23rd Ave. from bike lane and sharrows to high comfort bikeway such as buffered or protected bike lanes, and focus on transition to 22nd Ave. bike lane.

K. Extend proposed Grant St. protected bike lane, currently planned from 20th Ave. to 11th Ave., several blocks further south to 7th Ave. to ensure the project ties into the Cherry Creek Trail and Broadway multimodal project improvements.

L. Upgrade shared roadway to neighborhood bikeway on Sherman St. between Colfax & 20th Aves. to complete this leg of the 5280 Trail. Install Denver Moves: Bikes neighborhood bikeway on Sherman St from 14th Ave to 6th Ave, considering crossing improvements at 6th Ave, 7th Ave, and 8th Ave.
17TH AVE & GARFIELD ST NEIGHBORHOOD BIKEWAY CONCEPTUAL SKETCH

- Shared multi-use path (existing)
- Proposed bike path connecting in with City Park’s street and path system.
- Potential for green infrastructure and pedestrian refuge.
- Dedicated bike crossing
- Parking Maintained
- Neighborhood Bikeway
- New signalized intersection with pedestrian crossings and median with refuge area.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Based on a review of network gaps and possible enhancements to current bikeways, this plan builds upon recommendations in Denver Moves: Bikes to provide greater detail to the plans for bikeway routing and infrastructure. Below are key strategies to providing safe, comfortable and equitable bikeways for all ages and abilities that connect people to regional and neighborhood destinations. Recommendations prioritizing cyclists should coordinate with Quality of Life Policy Q8.B to prioritize tree canopy in these areas.

**A.** Conduct corridor study that includes 11th Ave and 12th Ave to determine community preference and best placement for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements, with consideration for the success and community support for the COVID-19 Shared Street implemented on 11th Ave. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4.

1. Address the narrow conditions between Logan St and Grant St to create a continuous facility and consider protective elements at busy intersections, such as Broadway.
2. Consider destinations and connections, particularly at Cherry Creek Trail to the west and Cheesman Park to the east.

**B.** Improve crossing at 17th Ave. and Colorado Blvd. See concept sketch at right.

**C.** Study the feasibility of adding a neighborhood bikeway on Detroit St between 6th and 17th Aves. Study should consider parallel route opportunities to leverage existing infrastructure and topography.

**D.** Study the feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on 9th Ave between Broadway and Colorado Blvd. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4.

**E.** Study feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on Lafayette and Gaylord Sts. between 12th and 16th Aves. Study should consider parallel route opportunities, such as Race St, to leverage existing infrastructure.

**F.** Study feasibility of adding a protected bike lane on 14th Ave between Broadway and Colorado Blvd.

**G.** Study feasibility of connecting 16th Ave bike lane to proposed 16th Ave neighborhood bikeway through East High School. Also consider a strong southern connection across Colfax Ave to Esplanade. East High School will be a major stakeholder in this effort.

**H.** Study the feasibility of adding a high comfort bike lane on Pennsylvania St between 9th and 20th Aves.

**Background Policy Strategies**

**High Comfort Bikeways**

Lack of bicycle facilities along major thoroughfares presents a challenge in East Central.

**Case Study:**

City and County of Denver 14th Street Protected Bike Lane

In April 2015, City and County of Denver Public Works installed a parking protected bike lane on 14th Street between Market Street and Colfax Avenue. In order to provide a greater level of separation from vehicles, concrete curbs were installed. This high comfort bikeway filled a gap in the bikeway network while providing access and connections to key destinations.

Source: Denver DOTI
Provide better pedestrian and bicycle connections to resources and community amenities.

Upgrade bikeways previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Expand diversity of housing types.

High capacity transit along Colorado Blvd.

Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

Increase pervious surface coverage with natural green infrastructure systems.

Increase tree canopy in right-of-way.

Upgrade bikeways previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Expand diversity of housing types.

High capacity transit along Colorado Blvd.

Increase tree canopy in right-of-way.

17TH AVE & COLORADO BLVD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT CONCEPT SKETCH

Upgrade bikeways previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Expand diversity of housing types.

High capacity transit along Colorado Blvd.

Increase tree canopy in right-of-way.

Provide better pedestrian and bicycle connections to resources and community amenities.

Upgrade bikeways previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Expand diversity of housing types.

High capacity transit along Colorado Blvd.

Increase tree canopy in right-of-way.

Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

Increase pervious surface coverage with natural green infrastructure systems.
2.3.5 INTERSECTION SAFETY AND NEW CROSSINGS

Pedestrian safety is critical as everyone walks or rolls at some point in their day. Sidewalks should ideally be detached from the curb and provide a safe, accessible, and comfortable walking environment with amenities like benches, landscaping, and pedestrian-scale lighting. Denver requires sidewalks to be a minimum of 4 feet as required by American Disabilities Act accessibility standards, though the City strives to meet even higher standards. Denver’s Transportation Standards and Details for the Engineering Division requires a 5-foot sidewalk and 8-foot tree lawn on local and collector streets, and an 8-foot sidewalk and 12-foot tree lawn or amenity zone on arterial streets; infill arterials which are typically more constrained require at least an 8-foot sidewalk and 8-foot tree lawn or amenity zone. An amenity zone is a portion of the public right-of-way that falls between the sidewalk and the curb, and typically includes landscaping, green, infrastructure, street trees, or other streetscape elements.

In 2019, Denver passed Denver Moves: Pedestrians and Trails, a citywide plan to achieve a vision for walkability across the city, which included sidewalk and trail design guidelines and prioritized projects. As a result of the community-driven prioritization established through this plan, Denver intends to complete missing sidewalks before widening sidewalks that are too narrow. The prioritization follows a tier system and the highest priority are projects along the High Injury Network (see graphic at right). Denver set a goal in the Vision Zero Action Plan to build 14 miles of sidewalks per year in 2018-2019, and 20 miles of sidewalks per year in 2020-2023.

EXISTING PEDESTRIAN CHALLENGES

Source: 2019 City and County of Denver data

DENVER PRIORITY TIERS FOR SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

01 Projects along the Vision Zero High Injury Network (HIIN)

02 High frequency transit access projects
   • Projects that are within 600 feet of a rail station, bike share station, or high-frequency bus stop or station (15 minute or better frequencies throughout the day)
   • Projects with a high-priority destination (school, park, grocery store, or health care center) within 600 feet

03 Remaining high-frequency transit access projects

04 Remaining transit access projects (bus stops and stations not on the high-frequency bus network)

05 Remaining high-priority destination (school, park, grocery store, or health care center) access projects

06 All remaining projects

Source: Denver Moves Pedestrians & Trails 2018
WALKING AND ROLLING IN EAST CENTRAL TODAY

The sidewalk network in the East Central Area is nearly complete. Sidewalks are missing on fewer than 2% of streets in City Park and Congress Park and all of the other neighborhoods have complete sidewalk networks. 85% of sidewalks are detached across the East Central Area neighborhoods. However, not all sidewalks in the East Central Area meet Denver’s standards or best practices. Narrow sidewalks, or sidewalks less than 4 feet wide, range from 3% in North Capitol Hill and Capitol Hill to 12% in Congress Park.

People walking and biking were involved in only 8% of crashes in East Central but people walking disproportionately represent 31% of all injury crashes. In the East Central Area, a higher than average number of pedestrian and bicycle related crashes occur on streets that are part of the High-Injury Network. The East Central Area has a higher proportion of HIN streets than any other area of Denver, and therefore has the most urgent safety concerns. In addition to a disproportionate share of HIN streets, there are 19 sections of streets that have segments where the distance between signals is greater than a quarter mile, thus encouraging unsafe crossings.

A key part of building safe streets is ensuring safety at intersections by installing proven countermeasures for reducing pedestrian, bicyclist, and driver exposure to crashes. Signalized crossings provide a safe pedestrian experience, especially on streets where vehicle speeds and volumes are high. If the distance between signals is perceived as too far to walk, pedestrians may opt to cross the street at less safe locations.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

East Central Area community members demonstrated a strong desire to prioritize pedestrians in the public right of way. The public feedback reconfirmed the vision for the East Central Area Plan with pedestrian safety a top priority for this area. An analysis of public comments received during the four East Central neighborhood workshops, showed that improvements to pedestrian infrastructure was the second most frequent comment type received, after bicycle infrastructure/connections.

Public comments addressed substandard sidewalks and safety concerns at crossings, as well as barriers caused by the many one-way streets in East Central that are difficult for pedestrians to cross. Many comments cited the frequent closures of sidewalks during construction as a barrier to walking in the neighborhood. New city guidelines passed in February 2019 will partially address this concern, as companies building more than a one-story building will have to provide a pedestrian canopy rather than closing the sidewalk. East Central residents also recommended that several streets have limited vehicular access to create pedestrian and bicycle priority streets.

EAST CENTRAL 2040 GOALS

PEOPLE WALKING, BIKING, OR TAKING TRANSIT

TRAFFIC FATALITIES

SIDEWALK CHALLENGES

Walking in the East Central Area is:

- VERY EASY 38%
- FAIRLY EASY 53%
- NOT EASY 9%

Percent of Responses (792)
Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey
**INTERSECTION SAFETY CONCEPTS**

Intersection safety improvements are proven to reduce pedestrian, bicyclist, and driver exposure to crashes. They include physical and operational improvements to increase visibility and safety at intersections. See Policies M5 & M6.

**PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS**

**Bulbouts**
Extensions of the curb at intersections to improve visibility for pedestrians and drivers, reduce crossing distances, and slow vehicle traffic.

**Medians/pedestrian refuges**
Raised islands in the center of a street separating opposing lanes of traffic with curb ramps and cutouts at pedestrian access points. Medians slow vehicle traffic while providing safe refuge for pedestrians while crossing busier streets.

**Lane width reductions**
10 foot lanes are appropriate in urban East Central neighborhoods. Narrower lane widths help to reduce speed and shorten crossing distances for pedestrians.

**Raised crosswalks**
Marked crosswalks that are raised to slow driver turning speed and increase yielding compliance.

**Lighting**
Improved lighting along sidewalks and at intersections helps increase visibility for all users/modes (see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure policy Q17).

**Pavement markings**
Marked crossings or bike boxes at intersections help to denote space for all modes and improve safety.
INTERSECTION SAFETY CONCEPTS

OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

Protected turn phasing
Protected right or left turn traffic signal phasing creates a separate phase for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the street vs vehicles turning. This eliminates conflicts between turning vehicles and people walking or biking.

Leading pedestrian intervals
Traffic signal timing that provides pedestrians and cyclists with a head start to cross the street before vehicles are given a green light. This increases visibility and reduces conflict of turning vehicles with people walking or biking.

Restricted turns
Signs that prohibit vehicular left and/or right turns eliminate conflicts between turning vehicles and people walking, rolling, or biking – one of the most common types of crashes.

New crossing infrastructure
New installation of signs, markings, rapid flashing beacons, bike signals, pedestrian countdown signals, or traffic signals in locations that do not currently have a controlled crossing.

Automatic crossing infrastructure
Signals that automatically phase pedestrian crossing time or bicycle detection technology create easier crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.

Signal coordination (progression) or “green wave”
Traffic signals aligned to biking speeds reduce start and stop delay for cyclists and drivers traveling at slower, safer speeds.
ONE-WAY/LOCAL STREET INTERSECTION SAFETY IMPROVEMENT

- Potential for placemaking opportunities like parklets
- Potential for green infrastructure
- Bulbouts to shorten crossing distance
- Potential new crossings
- Bike parking

LOCAL STREET

ONE-WAY
RECOMMENDATIONS

INSTALL NEW SIDEWALKS

While the sidewalk network in East Central is nearly complete, missing sidewalk connections and substandard sidewalks pose a barrier to walkability in areas. The feedback received through this planning process emphasized pedestrian infrastructure as a priority to enable pedestrians to safely access their destinations, sidewalks must be installed in areas where they are missing and upgraded in areas where they are deficient.

**A.** Install new sidewalks where they are missing in the City Park and Congress Park neighborhoods.

**B.** Bring sidewalks up to standard in all East Central neighborhoods.

1. **Short-term**
   a. Interim sidewalk extensions and ADA facilities.

2. **Long-term**
   a. Permanent sidewalks and ADA facilities.

**C.** Coordinate with Denver’s Neighborhood Sidewalk Repair Program to determine implementation and funding for sidewalk installation and widening.

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

- There are 899 feet of missing sidewalks in the City Park neighborhood and 2,545 feet of missing sidewalks in the Congress Park neighborhood.
- On average, 7% of sidewalks are too narrow (under four feet) throughout the six neighborhoods in East Central.

**Case Study:**
City and County of Denver
Walnut Street Corridor Improvements

*Installed in 2017, quick and low cost improvements along Walnut Street between Broadway and 36th Street has helped define space for people to walk and prevent cars from entering areas designated for pedestrians. Using posts and curb stops, the interim approach has helped make the street safer and more walkable for people before a longer-term building of curb, gutter and sidewalks can be installed.*

*Source: Denver DOTI*
RECOMMENDATIONS

M5

Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

Many intersections in East Central have a repeated pattern of crashes, including those that involve bicyclists and pedestrians. The safety at these intersections must be addressed to achieve Denver’s Vision Zero goal to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries on Denver’s streets. East Central residents prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements, especially at intersections that are difficult to cross and where crashes frequently occur. Prioritized intersections for study to guide geometric and operational improvements to increase pedestrian safety and visibility at intersections are listed in the Neighborhoods chapter.

M6

Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

There are 19 street segments in East Central where the distance between signalized crossings is so great that it could encourage unsafe crossing behavior. East Central residents underlined pedestrian safety and comfort as one of their top priorities and cited the need for new bicycle and pedestrian crossings. Highlighting areas where the distance between signalized intersections is greater than ¼ mile helps identify gaps and recommend locations for new pedestrian and bicycle crossings. See Colfax Corridor Chapter 4 for new safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle crossings across Colfax Ave.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- These locations were based on the highest crash intersections for bike and pedestrian-related crashes or locations with known issues
Case Study:
City and County of Denver
Colfax/Franklin/Park Intersection

As part of the Vision Zero: Intersection Improvement Design Project, in October 2017 Denver installed, the low-cost, rapid implementation project included closing left turn lanes along Colfax Avenue and implementing pedestrian safety islands and curb extensions utilizing interim treatments. These treatments reduced pedestrian exposure at the large complex intersection in order to improve safety.

Source: Denver DOTI
2.3.6 TRANSIT AND MOBILITY HUBS

Transit is the most space-efficient form of transportation, with the ability to move 6-15 times as many people in the same space as private vehicles (NACTO 2016). This is especially relevant in Denver as population increases and there is a limited amount of space on Denver’s roads.

The primary transit service provider is RTD, which provides bus, rail, Access-a-Ride, and FlexRide (formerly Call-n-Ride) services that connect people between neighborhoods and cities around the Denver Region. RTD served approximately 340,000 trips per day on weekdays. Denver Moves: Transit, a near- and long-term transit vision and guiding framework for the city, was completed in January 2019 and sets the priorities for making transit enhancements in Denver and taking increased accountability for improvements within the ROW that benefit transit.

Denver Moves: Transit supports local and regional transit systems by identifying Denver-focused transit improvements through capital investment corridors, enhancing multimodal access to transit, and identifying first and last mile solutions. The recommendations for the Transit Capital Investment Corridors are organized into three tiers: High Capacity Transit, Medium-Capacity Transit, and Speed and Reliability. High and Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors are served by higher capacity modes, such as BRT, and include improvements such as dedicated transit lanes and enhanced stop and stations. Speed and Reliability Corridors include improvements such as transit signal priority to help transit move through the corridor faster and more reliably. Denver Moves Transit provides a citywide lens for transit improvements and the corridors referenced in this neighborhood plan often extend beyond the boundaries of the East Central Area. Improving transit benefits Denver’s economic, health, environmental, and accessibility outcomes. Denver Moves: Transit also supports the Mayor’s Mobility Action Plan and its mode shift goal of increasing the percentage of transit commuters to 15%.

CAPACITY BY MODE

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Source: NACTO
TRANSIT IN EAST CENTRAL TODAY

Transit service in the East Central Area is characterized by a grid network of local buses that connect neighborhood destinations and carry heavy loads between neighborhoods and downtown. While the area has nearly complete transit coverage, the transit network emphasizes connections to the Central Business District (CBD) and does not provide as many connections to other key local and regional destinations. Gaps in the network include connections to the southeast rail corridor, the Cherry Creek area, and to regional and statewide destinations.

The only dedicated transit lanes citywide are located on the Broadway/Lincoln corridor, and there aren’t currently any mobility hubs in East Central. The City is working on a pilot to showcase several types of mobility hubs, with some planned in the East Central Area. The lack of defined space for transit on the other transit routes causes delays and affects reliability. However, of the 21 Transit Capital Investment Corridors identified in Denver Moves: Transit, 11 lie within the East Central area a present an opportunity for significant transit improvements in the area. More than 99 percent of households are within a half-mile (10 minute walk) of high-capacity transit stops and within a quarter-mile (5 minute walk) of local transit stops.

TRANSIT EXISTING CONDITIONS

Source: 2016 - 2018 Averages for RTD Boarding Data

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Public comments were largely supportive of the planned Colfax BRT, with some concerns about how the project would address traffic moving to other streets in the area. Public comments prioritized increasing the frequency of service on current transit routes, such as Colfax (route 15), 12th (route 10) and 6th Avenues (route 6), and improving bus infrastructure such as adding bus lanes, shelters and providing real-time transit arrival information at stops. Community members identified concerns including network gaps, high transit fares, transit speed and reliability, and tradeoffs between current road uses.

I use public transit in the East Central Area:

- NEVER 17%
- RARELY 30%
- OCCASIONALLY 28%
- FREQUENTLY 25%

Percent of Responses (786)
Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey
M7

Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central.

Current bus routes in the area are on a grid network, providing the opportunity for predictable, rapid service and convenient transfers. This strong foundation for transit provides an opportunity to increase the transit ridership to exceed the mode shift goal outlined in the Mobility Action Plan. The community cited network gaps, high transit fares, and transit speed and reliability as areas where the transit system needs improvements in East Central. While RTD manages operations of public transit in Denver, there are many strategies the city can employ in the right-of-way to improve transit speeds and reliability while reducing delay, such as boarding islands and bus bulbs, dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, and queue jumps. Denver Moves: Transit establishes the city’s Frequent Transit Network (FTN) program to prioritize and implement the FTN, in coordination with RTD. In addition, Denver can coordinate with RTD to recommend operational improvements, such as bus frequency and stop placement. A study identifying potential treatments at each of the priority locations listed below is recommended.

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Ave.
   2. Park Avenue between Colfax/Franklin/Park and 20th Ave.
   3. Colorado Blvd. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4.
   4. Broadway
   5. Lincoln St.

B. Advance implementation of Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. York St. (within the University Corridor in Denver Moves: Transit).
   2. Josephine St.
   3. 12th Ave. between Broadway and Cheesman Park. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4.

C. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 6th Ave. between York St. and Colorado Blvd.
   2. 8th Ave.
   3. 17th Ave.
   4. 18th Ave. between Broadway and York St.
   5. Corona Street
   6. Downing Street

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

• These corridors were identified by Denver Moves: Transit or by the community members as corridors where improved transit should be prioritized
Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs.

Almost every household in East Central is within a ¼ mile of a transit station, but ridership must increase to achieve the mode shift outlined in the Mobility Action Plan. Community members in East Central support transit improvements, and stated concerns about the current transit system. This policy will seamlessly integrate various transportation modes and enhance the transit rider experience to boost ridership. Transit will become even more convenient and user-friendly through transit stops that maximize first-mile and last-mile connections. Improving customer amenities leads to comfortable and equitable transit stops that increase the convenience of transit service. A study identifying potential treatments at each of the priority locations listed below is recommended. DOTI is in the process of creating a transit program that will consider and prioritize improvements at all transit stops citywide. Coordination with key partners including RTD is necessary.

A. Rider amenities to install at priority locations include:
   1. Real time transit information.
   2. Ticketing kiosks.
   3. Multimodal resources, such as bike and micromobility parking, rideshare drop-off/pickup zones, etc.
   4. Placemaking components, such as street furniture, weather shelters, programmed space, etc.
   5. Charging kiosks.
   6. Public restrooms.

B. Priority transit stop locations:
   1. Colfax Ave. at Broadway, Downing St., Park Ave., York St., Josephine St., and Colorado Blvd.
   2. Broadway at 9th Ave., 13th Ave., and Cleveland St.
   3. Lincoln St. at 7th and 17th Aves.
   4. 12th Ave. at Washington and Downing Sts. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4.
   5. 17th Ave. at Esplanade Parkway.

Why is it important?

- These locations were chosen based on an analysis of transit stops with the highest ridership and locations of key multimodal network connections and neighborhood destinations.
Neighborhood traffic calming includes infrastructure upgrades and operational improvements to neighborhood streets that are intended to address safety concerns such as insufficient pedestrian crossings, speeding on local streets, and difficult sight lines for pedestrians, people riding bikes, or vehicles approaching intersections. Currently, Denver’s Neighborhood Transportation Management Program (NTMP) takes a neighborhood-scale approach to quickly implement traffic calming and small-scale transportation improvements. These efforts help to improve safety and calm traffic in Denver’s neighborhoods by working with residents to quickly install relatively low-cost safety improvements such as stop signs, daylighting intersections, and new and improved crossings. By taking a zone based approach, traffic calming efforts can target areas where safety is of utmost concern, such as schools, parks or commercial nodes. The traffic calming elements are intended to provide visual and physical cues to slow drivers speed, and can sometimes be quick, low-cost improvements such as signage, pavement markings, and physical barriers to reduce vehicle access.

TRAFFIC IN EAST CENTRAL TODAY

The East Central Area has many parks, schools, commercial nodes and other community amenities, that are destinations for community members. Many of the community members in the East Central Area walk, bike, or roll to these destinations, therefore, it is important that vehicles are traveling a safe speed to prevent crashes. Denver’s community amenities are frequented by vulnerable populations, such as children or people with disabilities. Conversely, the East Central Area has many one-way couplets, which are favored by travelers who are passing through the neighborhoods. In the East Central Area, 8th Avenue, 13th Avenue, and 14th Avenue are streets where high-speed traffic is a community concern.

Community Feedback

Public comments identified four main priorities for neighborhood traffic calming:

- Reducing speeds within neighborhoods
- Reducing speeds around schools, parks, hospitals, commercial nodes, and recreation centers
- Addressing traffic and safety concerns on arterial streets
- Preventing unsafe behavior on neighborhood streets

Community members ranked their priorities for locating pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and routes to parks and routes that improve safety were tied for the top choice, followed by routes to employment.

Top Mobility Priorities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved Bike Connections</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize Pedestrians</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Calming</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Transit</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Enforcement</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2019 East Central Public Meetings
POTENTIAL DESIGN CONCEPT FOR 16TH AVE AT PARK AVE

- Bicycle and Pedestrian priority street
- Activated and improved existing park spaces
- Increased tree canopy
- Potential to limit vehicular traffic on 16th
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist crossings
- High Capacity Transit with dedicated lanes
- Activate and improve existing park spaces
- Increased tree canopy

PARK AVE | LAFFAYETTE ST | HUMBOLDT ST

MARION ST | 16TH AVE
NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING CONCEPTS

Includes infrastructure upgrades and operational improvements to neighborhood streets and intersections to address insufficient pedestrian crossings, speeding on local streets, and visibility issues. See Policy M9.

**Daylighting intersections**
Removing parking spaces immediately adjacent to intersections to improve sight lines and visibility.

**Physical barriers**
Roundabouts, traffic diverters, stormwater planters, bulbouts, or other physical cues that slow or limit traffic on local streets. Further coordinate with Quality of Life Infrastructure recommendations to include green infrastructure where appropriate.

**Lane reduction/chicanes**
Reducing lane widths and/or forcing new travel patterns that require driver attention help to slow traffic and increase awareness for all modes.

**Intersection improvements**
Bulb-outs, medians, lighting, and raised crosswalks are some examples of intersection improvements (see Section 2.3.6).

**Limit vehicular traffic**
In certain situations, half or full closures of streets to vehicles can create a vibrant and safe neighborhood space.
NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC CALMING OPPORTUNITIES
RECOMMENDATIONS

**M9**

**Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial areas, and recreation centers.**

East Central has many community amenities where traffic safety is a concern with regards to pedestrian and bicycle-related crashes. Residents in East Central have identified speeding and traffic as a major concern and ranked routes to parks and routes that improve safety as their top priorities. A zone-based approach to neighborhood traffic calming along local residential streets can add safety measures in select areas to alert drivers to sensitive land uses (such as parks, schools, and hospitals). Neighborhood slow zones could reduce traffic speeds and improve safety in neighborhoods. Priority zones are determined based on the local street network but in general are bounded by arterials and/or collector streets.

**A.** Explore the feasibility of limiting speeds on roads and disallowing turns on red lights.

Specific locations for traffic calming priorities are shown on the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Opportunities map and detailed by neighborhood in the Chapter 3 Neighborhoods of East Central. For more information on food access, see Policy Q10.

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

- These destinations are frequented by sensitive users such as children and seniors. In addition, the areas around these destinations need a high level of safety due to the number of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders accessing the site.

**Case Study:**

*City of Boston Neighborhood Slow Streets*

The City of Boston’s Neighborhood Slow Streets Program implements a smaller zone-based approach to traffic calming. The program aims to further limit vehicular traffic within neighborhoods and surrounding key community places such as libraries, schools and parks, and to reduce the number and severity of crashes on residential streets. Key tactics include lowering speed limits to 20 mph via signage and pavement markings and traffic calming gateways at the entrances to slow zone areas to provide consistent, recognizable entrances to traffic-calmed zones. Similar to the NTMP neighborhood methodology, Boston’s program focuses on neighborhoods with homes with a higher percentages of youth, older adults, and people with disabilities, areas that experience higher numbers of traffic crashes per mile that result in an EMS response, areas that include or border, community places such as public libraries, community centers, schools, and parks, areas that support existing and planned opportunities for walking, bicycling, and access to transit, and areas are feasible for the City of Boston to implement improvements.

Source: Boston Transportation Department

*Case Study:*

*City and County of Denver Neighborhood Transportation Management Program*

Denver’s Neighborhood Transportation Management Program (NTMP) identifies and delivers quick solutions to address transportation priorities and challenges within neighborhoods including vehicular speeding issues along local residential streets. Traffic calming projects that are developed through the NTMP include pedestrian, bicycle operational, multimodal operational, volume management, speed management and street grid management treatments. Several neighborhoods within the East Central Area will be addressed through the NTMP program in the coming years.

Source: Denver DOT
2.3.8 PARKING AND CURBSIDE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Space near the curb on urban streets is increasingly being recognized for its high value for a variety of purposes. Curbside space provides access to residences and businesses and can be programmed for many different uses, including travel lanes, transit-only lanes, bicycle lanes, on-street parking, bicycle parking, freight loading zones, passenger pick-up and drop-off areas, and parklets. A variety of context sensitive curbside management strategies exist that focus on optimizing curb lane resources.

The Denver Strategic Parking Plan describes the city’s vision and approach to parking and curbside management and introduces the area management plan program.

The Curbside Area Management Plan process works with neighborhoods to develop comprehensive parking and curbside plans that address the curb lane needs of all user groups, activities, and land uses. The vision for this plan aims for the efficient use of curb lane resources while providing access and promoting walking, biking, and transit.
Curbside management optimizes, prioritizes, and manages the curb lane to provide designated space for critical curbside uses. Primary uses include, but are not limited to:

- Motor and electrical vehicle parking,
- Loading (passenger and freight)
- ADA accommodations
- Car share zones
- Transit lanes and infrastructure
- Bicycle lanes, parking, and infrastructure

**PARKING IN EAST CENTRAL TODAY**

Demand for parking and curbside space varies widely across the East Central Area, with the widest variety of curbside uses existing in the Capitol Hill, North Capitol Hill, and City Park West neighborhoods. In the Cheesman Park, City Park, and Congress Park neighborhoods, fewer curbside uses exist. Colfax Avenue is the unifying street with similar curbside space needs across all six neighborhoods. As a result of the planned Colfax BRT, the City will need to identify curb lane priorities along, and adjacent to, Colfax Avenue to accommodate parking and curbside activities that support fast and reliable transit service, access for residents and patrons, time-sensitive loading, and emerging transportation technology.

Because curbside space is limited, managing parking and loading needs and the need for enhanced multimodal infrastructure can be challenging. At times, it may be necessary to decrease the on-street-parking supply to accommodate multimodal improvements or to expand the sidewalk, and residents provided their perspectives during a prioritization exercise at public meetings.
### PARKING STUDY KEY FINDINGS

As part of the analysis conducted during the NPI process, City parking studies for each neighborhood were evaluated. Neighborhoods in the East Central area are consistently parked, with occupancy levels increasing in neighborhoods on the western end of the plan area boundary near downtown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Neighborhood</th>
<th>AM Occupancy</th>
<th>PM Occupancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capitol Hill</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Capitol Hill</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheesman Park</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Park West</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Park</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress Park</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: 2015 - 2018 parking inventories*

### AUTOMATED VEHICLES

The rapid development of self-driving, autonomous vehicle technology is leading the way to a transportation revolution with three major components: self-driving cars, shared mobility, and electrification. Companies are eager to deploy these new technologies and causing cities to envision the future of automated, shared, and electrified transportation. Optimistic scenarios suggest less traffic, cleaner air, cheaper transit, and less space wasted on parking, while less-optimistic scenarios highlight safety concerns, increased traffic and the potential to create an inequitable mobility divide between haves and have-nots.history suggests that the actual impact of automation will fall somewhere between these scenarios, and that Denver must build flexible frameworks to encourage desired and equitable deployment of these new technologies in accordance with citywide goals. The City should enact policies that ensure automated vehicles are electric, shared, and allow flexibility to reassess these policies as technology advances. Automation poses many challenges and opportunities, that leaders must consider as they aim to create an equitable mobility future for all of Denver’s residents.
Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources.

As curbside space is limited, it must be managed and efficiently programed to accommodate prioritized needs in the neighborhoods. Curbside and parking demand varies widely throughout the neighborhoods in East Central, with the areas closest to downtown experiencing consistent and significant demand. Priorities for curbside space vary throughout the neighborhoods, from those who are concerned with replacing on-street parking with other uses to those who would like to see more bike lanes, transit, and pedestrian amenities. Through these strategies, priorities can be identified to define best use of the curb or flex zone.

A. Identify alternative parking management strategies and improved safety opportunities.

B. Ensure that strategies are flexible and can adapt to evolving curbside needs, trends, and transportation technology.

C. Pilot converting on-street parking spaces in key locations to alternative curbside uses such as public parklets, bicycle and micromobility parking, shared parking, electric vehicle charging stations, and mobility hub/ transit stop infrastructure.

D. Emphasize the use of alleys for business loading and unloading and explore opportunities for on-street loading zones in neighborhoods where appropriate and according to DOTI standards.

E. Develop additional Curbside Area Management Plans (CAMPs) to address neighborhood parking and curbside challenges.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Pilots allow the city to test ideas on a small scale to evaluate feasibility, cost, and adverse effects, and to improve upon the program or design before implementing the final project
- CAMPs ensure that parking and curbside challenges are addressed comprehensively
2.3.9 TDM STRATEGIES

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is the practice of applying various strategies, programs and policies to shift the how, when, and where of people’s travel behavior to use the transportation network more efficiently. The desired outcome of TDM is improved quality of life, reduced traffic congestion, vehicle emissions, and fuel consumption. Employer-based programs can also be TDM strategies, including tactics such as alternative work schedules or teleworking.

Denver urges project developers and building owners to adopt TDM strategies to improve mobility for residents, visitors, and workers in accordance with the TDM Plan’s guidance, which is nearing completion as this plan is underway. Denver is developing a TDM Program with a set of cost-effective recommendations and is building an interactive calculator to help developers pick the best programs and amenities for their projects to foster win-wins for developers, residents, and accomplish citywide goals. In addition, Denver encourages participation in the programs available through the DRCOG Way to Go program, and the network of transportation management associations (TMAs) that help employers, building owners and activity centers meet their multi-modal goals. TMAs often serve specific regions, central business districts, suburban business parks, residential areas, transportation corridors and tourist venues by helping their members improve transportation and air quality conditions more than any one entity could alone.

TDM TOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVICES</th>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th>PARKING MANAGEMENT</th>
<th>SUBSIDIES</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transit (RTD)</td>
<td>Curb Management</td>
<td>Paid Parking</td>
<td>Transit Pass Discounts</td>
<td>New Resident/ Employee Welcome Kits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microtransit (RTD FlexRide)</td>
<td>Bicycle Parking</td>
<td>Unbundled Parking</td>
<td>Car-Share Membership Discounts</td>
<td>Information Kiosks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Share (ZipCar, EGo Car Share)</td>
<td>Transit Stop Enhancements</td>
<td>Preferential Parking</td>
<td>Bike-Share Membership Discounts</td>
<td>General Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuttles</td>
<td>Bicycle Repair Stations</td>
<td>Discounted Car-Pool Parking</td>
<td>TNC Discounts</td>
<td>Bicycle Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNCs (Lyft, Uber)</td>
<td>Wayfinding</td>
<td>Car-Share Parking</td>
<td>Micromobility Credits</td>
<td>Websites/Apps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micromobility (scooters, bikeshare)</td>
<td>Showers/Changing Facilities</td>
<td>Transit Pass Discounts</td>
<td>Direct Payment to Service Providers</td>
<td>Trip Planning Assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPACE PER TRAVELER BY MODE

Source: Cycling Promotion Fund
COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Neighborhood residents in the East Central area demonstrated an overwhelming desire for improved multimodal transportation options, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit connections, especially those that provide access to employment and local destinations.

- Partnerships between employers, BIDs, TMAs, neighborhoods and local businesses that encourage multimodal transportation.
- Reduced cost transit passes improve affordability.
- Financial incentives encourage multimodal transportation.
- Improved multimodal options balance the transportation system.
- Mobile technology provides real-time transportation information and incentive monitoring.

TDM IN EAST CENTRAL

The majority of residents in East Central Area drive alone to work. The average rate of single occupancy vehicle trips for the East Central Area is 60% with a low of 51% in North Capitol Hill and a high of 69% in City Park. This is lower than the citywide average of 70%, and TDM can provide opportunities for East Central Area residents to use the system even more efficiently and accomplish citywide goals, especially after the BRT is in operation.

There are two transportation management associations (TMAs) serving sections of the East Central Area. Transportation Solutions Foundation was established in 1997 and serves central Denver, including Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park, and Hale neighborhoods. In 2016, Transportation Solutions efforts reduced 260,000 single-occupancy vehicle trips. Downtown Denver Partnership is a TMA which serves several blocks of North Capitol Hill and downtown Denver.

AVERAGE RATE OF SINGLE OCCUPANCY VEHICLE TRIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Central</th>
<th>City of Denver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION BOUNDARIES IN EAST CENTRAL

Source: 2019 TMA Boundaries (City dataset)
RECOMMENDATIONS

**M12**

**POLICY**

**STRATEGIES**

Adopt Transportation Demand Management strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals.

As Denver invests in multimodal options in East Central, it is important to provide opportunities for residents to access these options and shift their travel behavior. Currently, most East Central residents drive alone to work and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies can help residents choose other modes and contribute toward the Mobility Action Plan mode shift goals. The residents of East Central were supportive of TDM measures, and many even suggested specific TDM strategies, demonstrating an open-mindedness to the concept. These strategies align with Denver’s TDM Program and Plan, and generally follow the program’s primary goal of shifting people’s travel behavior to increase system efficiency, reduce single occupancy vehicle trips, and achieve specific planning goals.

**A.** Require new development strategies in coordination with Denver’s TDM Plan guidance such as parking maximums, shared car services and allocated parking, private bike share programs, secure bike parking, car/bike share memberships for tenants, transit passes for tenants, ride hailing/taxi drop off parking or pull out, deliveries scheduled during non-rush hours, and potential on/offsite mobility infrastructure improvements.

**B.** Encourage businesses and BIDs to join a regional TMA to have access to services and funds to administer, promote, and implement TDM programs.

**C.** Provide a one-time bus pass or other transit incentive to ticket holders to local entertainment and cultural destinations, and/or new fare options such as weekend passes.

**D.** Work with TMAs, employers, residences, RNOs, and BIDs to provide reduced or free RTD fares for residents and employees.

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?**

- Many people visiting East Central are traveling to the area’s rich entertainment and cultural destinations, therefore, encouraging transit for these visitors could minimize parking demand and decrease congestion
- As new development projects are built in East Central, this strategy will promote multimodal transportation options for residents and employees
- Many people travel daily to East Central for jobs and employment, therefore, encouraging transit for those travelers, in addition to residents, could minimize parking demand and decrease congestion

**BACKGROUND**

**Case Study:**

City of Santa Monica Parking Cash-Out

The City of Santa Monica was the first in the State of California to implement a TDM program where large employers must submit an emissions reduction plan, with one of the required strategies being offering employees the cash value of a subsidized parking space rather than providing the parking space.

http://www.smartgrowthamerica.us/documents/Parking_Cash_Out_Santa_Monica_Ordinance.pdf

Source: ParkMe
2.4 AREA WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS: QUALITY-OF-LIFE INFRASTRUCTURE

IN THIS SECTION:

2.4.1 INTRODUCTION (P. 128)
2.4.2 PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE (P. 131)
2.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE (P. 139)
2.4.4 ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD (P. 149)
2.4.5 ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE (P. 157)
2.4.6 COMMUNITY SAFETY & WELL-BEING (P. 159)
2.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Quality-of-life infrastructure refers to the places, amenities, trees, plants, parks and outdoor spaces that contribute to health, needs, comfort, environmental resiliency and social connectedness. These elements of a complete neighborhood support the need for individuals to connect with nature, access healthy food, feel safe, and enjoy a clean environment. Extensive research demonstrates that the way we design and build our neighborhoods impacts how we live, work, learn, and play. Our surroundings shape how physically active we are, how we eat, and whether we have access to schools, jobs, transportation, health care, and opportunities to prosper. Well-designed neighborhoods can improve health, while environments that lack amenities and services to support healthy lifestyles can contribute to chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity.

Similarly, conditions in the natural environment impact residents’ health and comfort. Air and water quality, as well as other climate impacts such as increases in flooding and surface temperature, can have lasting social, political and economic consequences. One method many communities have been adopting to help address environmental resiliency in complete neighborhoods is green infrastructure. Green infrastructure can provide environmental, economic and quality of life benefits, as well as help improve water and air quality, reduce flood risks and heat island effects, absorb local carbon emissions, increase physical activity, improve mental wellbeing, reduce stress, lower traffic speeds, and improve property values.

The community developed a vision for what environmentally resilient and what healthy and active mean for East Central. The following statements capture the community’s values and aspirations when it comes to these topics.

LONG TERM VISION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCY

In 2040, East Central has a thriving and healthy natural ecosystem. A robust tree canopy complements the lush, low water-use landscaping found along the area’s major corridors and within neighborhood destinations. Multi-purpose green infrastructure landscaping that provides storm water management, beautification, and improved water quality has been seamlessly integrated into neighborhood streets and open spaces. East Central has experienced a significant reduction in impervious surfaces, which has helped keep neighborhoods on hot summer evenings and further improved flood control both within and outside of the area. Many of the neighborhoods use composting and recycling services that are part of a cycle of reuse that minimizes the amount of waste going to landfills. Energy-efficient construction and advanced renewable energy technologies are abundant, which has lowered costs for residents and businesses and helped lower Denver’s carbon pollution that causes climate change.

LONG TERM VISION FOR HEALTH

In 2040, indicators like obesity rates and life expectancy have greatly improved and residents enjoy a healthy lifestyle and strong sense of community. The area is a place with low crime where residents and business owners know their local police officer and all residents can safely and easily walk to a connected network of open spaces that link outstanding parks. All households have convenient access to affordable, healthy, and culturally relevant food, including diverse grocery and restaurant options, farmers’ markets and community gardens. Storefronts, streets, sidewalks, and parks are clean, and there is minimal air, water, soil, and noise pollution. East Central has a wide range of accessible healthcare, including small clinics, supportive services such as addiction treatment and mental health care, emergency care, and pharmacies. Those most in need receive help to avoid becoming homeless or to be safely rehoused with comprehensive support that improves the health of the individual and the community.

RELEVANT PLANS

Game Plan for a Healthy City is a citywide and long-range parks and recreation plan to help the city respond to challenges including growth, limited water resources, and changes in our climate. The plan proclaims easy access to parks and open space as a basic right for all residents, and it establishes our city’s parks, facilities and recreational programs as essential for a healthy environment, healthy residents, and a high quality of life for everyone.

Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy defines Denver’s urban watershed and the water quality impairments that exist within each basin. It identifies green infrastructure projects that target multiple pollutants while also providing additional city benefits such as increased open space, climate resiliency, improved air quality, urban heat island mitigation, better connectivity, and enhanced community livability.

Denver Food Vision is Denver’s first long term strategic plan for food to guide the way food makes Denver a more inclusive, healthy, vibrant and resilient place. It sets forth an ambitious, comprehensive approach to further develop Denver’s food system.

City Park Master Plan was updated by Denver Parks and Recreation in 2018, and it provides a vision to guide the preservation and improvement of City Park. The plan identifies needs including repair and improvement to facilities, access, circulation, and infrastructure in balance with the continuity of park character.

Cheesman Park Master Plan was completed by Denver Parks and Recreation in 2008. It establishes strategies to achieve the goals of restoring the park’s historic legacy and improving safety and accessibility.
This chapter will discuss the importance of physical access to elements of a complete neighborhood that support health such as parks, grocery options, recreational opportunities, and healthcare. While providing these amenities and services is essential, the ability to access them without a car is also critical. Additionally, the quality of transportation infrastructure impacts physical activity, which is a key factor in maintaining good health. Providing a complete, safe, and comfortable transportation network improves connections to key amenities, increases physical activity, and improves safety. The design and function of streets also can provide green infrastructure, including trees and water quality improvement. The transportation network is a key factor in a community’s access to health and green infrastructure, and recommendations specific to transportation are in Section 2.3: Mobility.

MEASURABLE GOALS

To determine whether the Environmentally Resilient and Healthy and Active visions are being achieved, the city will track certain performance measures. The following metrics are intended to evaluate current conditions and set future targets that relate to the Environmentally Resilient and Healthy and Active vision for this area.

ENVIRONMENTALLY RESILIENT

Impervious Surface

Throughout Denver’s development history, the city’s permeable surfaces have been replaced with impervious surfaces. Impervious surfaces can have many lasting negative effects including the absorption of the sun’s energy and increases in the surface temperature. High concentrations of impervious surfaces prohibit stormwater from permeating into the ground, resulting in more stormwater runoff and, in some cases, increased flooding throughout urban neighborhoods. Much of this runoff contains harmful pollutants and chemicals which discharge directly into our urban waterways, significantly reducing the water quality throughout the city.

East Central today has a 68 percent impervious surface, higher than Denver’s average of 44 percent. The goal of this metric is to reduce this percentage by at least 20 percent to a maximum impervious surface coverage for each equal to or less than 48% impervious surface coverage for each neighborhood.

Tree Canopy

Tree canopy is a critical green asset within East Central and the community values a robust and diverse tree canopy. The environmental and health benefits of a strong tree canopy are profound as a healthy tree canopy produces oxygen, prevents soil erosion, and reduces the overall concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. In addition to the contribution of these ecosystem services, trees provide other health, social, economic and aesthetic benefits. Access to trees, green spaces, and parks promotes greater physical activity and social interaction, and reduces stress, while improving the quality of life in our urban areas. The citywide goal for this metric is for each Denver neighborhood to have a tree canopy coverage of at least 20%.

The East Central area has an 18% tree canopy coverage, which is slightly higher than the Denver average of 13% tree canopy coverage. The goal of this metric is to improve the percent tree canopy coverage in these areas by 10 percent so every neighborhood has a tree canopy coverage of at least 20%.

HEALTHY AND ACTIVE

Access to Care

Many factors impact whether people can see a doctor when they need medical attention, including cost, time, and physical proximity. One indicator to represent whether residents have access to the care they need is the percent of women receiving prenatal care during the first trimester of pregnancy. The target for this metric is to have at least 82% of women who are pregnant receiving prenatal care during the first trimester, which was the rate for the neighborhood receiving the highest rate of care as of the adoption of Comprehensive Plan 2040.
Children at a Healthy Weight

Children and youth can be greatly influenced by their physical environment because they are generally less mobile than adults and often spend more time at home, school, and in nearby parks. These local surroundings can have a positive impact on early lifestyle behaviors when they include access to parks, adequate sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, healthy food, clean air, and a social network. Neighborhoods lacking these amenities contribute to childhood obesity, and obese children can experience early onset adult obesity complications such as Type 2 Diabetes. The target for children at a healthy weight is to meet the Comprehensive Plan 2040 target of at least 86% of children at a healthy weight in every neighborhood.

Access to Parks

Living within walking or biking distance of outdoor recreation opportunities can impact overall health by encouraging physical activity, time in nature, and a place to interact with neighbors. This plan measures park access by the percent of households within a half mile (approximately a ten-minute walk) of a park according to a Community Planning and Development walkshed analysis. The target for this metric is to reinforce the Game Plan for a Healthy City goal of 100% of residents within a 10-minute walk of a park.

Access to Food

‘Healthy food access’ is having sufficient resources, both economic and physical, to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Living closer to healthy food is associated with better eating habits, and healthy eating is associated with lower risk for Type 2 Diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, certain cancers, and obesity. Food insecurity, which is defined as lacking consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life, affects households in the East Central area. Living within walking distance of affordable, healthy, culturally-relevant food can impact overall health by providing convenient, safe, and comfortable access to healthy grocery options. This plan measures food access by the percent of households within a half mile (approximately a ten-minute walk) of a grocery store. The target for this metric is to reinforce the Denver Food Vision goal to have at least 76% of residents in each neighborhood within a 10-minute walk of a grocery store.

Life Expectancy

Opportunities to lead a long and healthy life can vary dramatically by neighborhood. For example, life expectancy ranges from 70 years in North Capitol Hill to 79 years a few miles away in Congress Park. Gaps in life expectancy across neighborhoods can stem from multiple factors related to the built environment, including education and income, quality of housing, opportunities to exercise and eat healthy foods, proximity to highways, access to doctors and hospitals, access to public transit, and residential segregation. The target for this metric is 79 years, which was the average for the neighborhood with the highest life expectancy as of the adoption of Comprehensive Plan 2040.
Parks, open space, and recreation centers are often key neighborhood resources, serving to bring communities together and provide critical amenities that support recreation, leisure, physical activity, social activities, and quality of life. Utilization of these spaces and subsequent community benefit is dependent on where they are located and the community’s ability to safely and comfortably access them. As noted in Game Plan for a Healthy City, “studies show that residents—both youth and adults—who live near a park are more likely to exercise more frequently than residents without a park near their home.”

For example, when parks are closer to home, children’s use of parks increases by 400%, and all age groups have a reduced risk of obesity.

Passive space like an open lawn can foster informal recreational, leisure, and social activities, while active spaces, such as basketball courts, tennis courts or a community garden can create distinct destinations within the neighborhood. Passive or programmed spaces all have a positive impact on the overall health of the neighborhood residents.

Recreation centers complement parks and open spaces by providing year-round recreation activities and community space in an indoor environment.

2.4.2 PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

Community members consistently expressed their interest in parks, open space and recreation amenities through online surveys, community workshops and outreach events.

Resident enjoy the parks and amenities but would like to see better maintenance of existing facilities, additional amenities, and activation of underused park spaces such as Governors Park, the parks along Park Avenue, and Quality Hill Park. To better connect to existing park spaces, the majority of participants wanted to explore:

- Re-thinking Historic as well as new, contemporary parkways to provide safe and convenient pedestrian/bike connections and accomplish Game Plan’s goal of making sure all residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park, while retaining their historic character
- Re-thinking street right-of-way for parks/open space/vegetation
- Converting existing vacant lots or underutilized parking lots into future park space.

When asked if the City should explore the possibility of closing Park Avenue from Colfax Avenue to Humboldt Street to allow for a pedestrian plaza along Colfax, attendees were divided. Some noted the need for the vehicular connection to Park Avenue, and others noted the need for a dedicated pedestrian environment not only at Colfax but the length of Park Avenue toward Downtown.

“2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey”

“The top three things I like most about East Central are…”

1. PARKS & GREEN SPACE 16%
2. MIX OF SHOPS 15%
3. WALKABILITY 14%

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey

“The amenities most important to me are…”

1. DINING 68%
2. GROCERY SHOPPING 67%
3. RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES 40%
4. CULTURAL AMENITIES
5. OTHER RETAIL/ENTERTAINMENT

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey
The East Central area has some of the largest, most iconic parks within the City of Denver, including City Park, Cheesman Park, Congress Park, and Governors Park. City Park and Cheesman Park are large and have extensive passive green space. This includes a mix of natural areas, which is one of the open space goals articulated by the City Park Master Plan Update (September 2018). Some parks, such as Congress Park, are fully programmed with specific uses and recreational amenities.

Approximately 86% of the households within the study area are within a 10-minute walk of a park. Because East Central has lower need for additional park space than many parts of Denver, the community’s primary focus is ensuring safe and comfortable access to existing parks. The existing sidewalk network is essentially complete; however, the pedestrian environment along many neighborhood or collector streets can be uncomfortable due to vehicle speeds, congestion, parking and sidewalk widths. Pedestrian access to existing parks is impeded by the lack of improved pedestrian crossings of 13th Avenue, 14th Avenue, Colfax Avenue, 17th Avenue, York St., Colorado Blvd., and Park Avenue. Improving the connections to existing parks is discussed in the Mobility section.

Park Avenue is a key Historic Parkway in the study area, linking the Colfax corridor and surrounding neighborhoods to Downtown. Denver’s Parkways contribute to a framework of interconnected park-like streets that knit the city into a cohesive whole, linking neighborhoods, parks and civic spaces while providing an enriching experience. Today this parkway is auto-centric with minimal dedicated pedestrian environment or usable park space.

Recreation centers complement parks and open spaces by providing year-round recreation activities and community space in an indoor environment. The newly opened Carla Madison Recreation Center is located within the East Central area. While the recreation center provides good recreation coverage to the community, it is a fee-based recreation space, which could be a financial barrier for some community members.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Examine the potential for Historic Park Avenue to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.

Historic Park Avenue provides a direct connection from Colfax Avenue to neighborhoods to the northwest and Interstate 25. Past road expansions resulted in a Park Avenue that is predominantly auto-centric and does not easily accommodate other modes of travel due to vehicle speeds, congestion, and lane and sidewalk widths. Members of the community suggested that the parkway could also play a key role in connecting people to open space, parks, and recreational assets. Community input was divided on a preferred outcome; some noted a desire to maintain the existing vehicle connections while others noted a desire for a dedicated, improved pedestrian environment, not only at the intersection of Colfax but along the length of Park Avenue towards Downtown.

A. Strengthen the pedestrian environment at the intersection of Park Avenue and Colfax Avenue.
   1. Address the pedestrian safety concerns at the intersection of Colfax Avenue and Park Avenue, including adding treatments such as crosswalks and crossing signals as well as reassigning space to pedestrian infrastructure with wider sidewalks.
   2. Consider the future implementation of a dedicated pedestrian plaza in coordination with future Bus Rapid Transit along Colfax Avenue.

B. Study the opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment and park experience along the length of Park Avenue, from Colfax Avenue to 20th Avenue.
   1. Link the existing triangle parks through a more significant linear park within the street right-of-way to re-establish a more significant tree-lined pedestrian facility along Park Avenue.
   2. Provide adequate transit capacity in future designs of Park Avenue to reflect the road’s designation as a High Capacity Transit corridor in Blueprint Denver and Denver Moves: Transit.
   3. Coordinate with the Vision Zero Park Avenue improvements from 20th Avenue to Lawrence Street, which include repaving, restriping, and the installation of pedestrian refuge islands.

C. Comply with Design Guidelines for Historic Parkways and Boulevards and the Park Avenue Ordinance unless updates are needed to implement pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements. Updates should balance multi-modal convenience and safety with the historic integrity, cultural heritage and open space values of the community.
   1. Identify opportunities to improve coordination between Parks and Recreation, Transportation and Infrastructure, Planning, and Landmark Preservation during design review of parkway improvements.
   2. Consider establishing an Historic Parkways Advisory Committee with historic preservation and multi-modal transportation advocates to provide recommendations on designs for Historic Parkway improvements and potential updates to design guidelines.
Develop new Contemporary Parkways that serve multiple community functions, including connecting the community to open space, parks and recreational assets.

Game Plan for a Healthy City identifies a goal of ensuring that all residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park. In a developed neighborhood with minimal vacant land, new Contemporary Parkways could provide a park-like amenity that also connects bicyclists and pedestrians to the existing parks. While the existing historic parkways are already a community asset, Game Plan for a Healthy City recommends considering contemporary standards for parkways that more effectively leverage our parkway assets. Elements of contemporary standards include the integration of stormwater infrastructure, native or drought-tolerant landscaping, high-efficiency lighting, varied paving systems, and bicycle and transit connections. Additionally, providing other park amenities enable these spaces to serve as an extension of the park and open space network.

A. Leverage transportation network improvements (see Mobility section) to create Contemporary Parkways that connect the existing and future elements of the park system with increased mobility options and park-like conditions.
   1. Where feasible given recommended mobility improvements, reassign portions of the public right-of-way to the function of bike, pedestrian or transit mobility, diverse green infrastructure including tree canopy, native vegetation and stormwater management, improved lighting, and other amenities on Contemporary Parkways.
   2. Develop design standards that enable bicycle and pedestrian movement, stormwater management and infiltration and the showcase of native vegetation and that also provide flexibility for Contemporary Parkways to range in size and role within the transportation and park and open space networks. Projects can range from a multi-faceted redesign of existing arterial right-of-way to the reallocation of right-of-way for tree-lined, shared local streets.
   3. Consider the following roadways for further study as Contemporary Parkways:
      a. 16th Avenue (Downtown to Colorado Boulevard: connection east of Colorado Boulevard is along 17th Avenue)
      b. 11th Avenue/12th Avenue (Downtown to Westerly Creek Trail and Park: 11th Avenue from Downtown to Cheesman Park and 12th Avenue from Cheesman Park east beyond Colorado Boulevard)
      c. 9th Avenue (Downtown to Cheesman Park)
      d. 22nd Avenue (Downtown to City Park)

B. Work with Denver Public Works, Denver Landmarks, Historic Denver and Denver Parks and Recreation to consider Contemporary Parkway standards in the retrofit of historic parkways, where allowable.

Example of a contemporary parkway from Allen and Pike Streets in New York City
SHARED USE AGREEMENTS

Enhance existing community open space, parks and recreation facilities

The East Central area hosts some of the largest and most visited parks within the City of Denver, including Cheesman Park, Congress Park, and City Park. Some parks are fully programmed with specific uses and recreational amenities, while others include extensive passive green space. Community members would like to see activation of underused parks and some of the passive green spaces as well as better maintenance and additional amenities for existing facilities.

A. Strengthen partnerships with private property owners and develop shared-use agreements (SUAs) (similar to the agreements already established with the Denver Botanic Gardens, the Denver Zoo, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science) with schools, institutions and hospitals to create shared open spaces within the community. Potential locations include the following:
   1. Uptown Health Care District (Uptown Hospitals)
   2. Morey Middle School
   3. Dora Moore School
   4. East High School
   5. DC 21 School
   6. REACH School
   7. Teller Elementary School
   8. National Jewish Health

B. Increase recreational programming for all ages and interests, particularly children and youth, at parks, open spaces, school, community centers and recreation centers, including:
   1. City Park
   2. Cheesman Park
   3. Congress Park
   4. Governor’s Park
   5. Park Avenue Parks

C. Continue to advertise the Parks & Recreation Looking to Assist You (PLAY) program, which offers affordable memberships and programming rates to low income Denver residents, prioritizing areas with high health disparities.

Q3

BACKGROUND POLICY

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIES

More than 150 school districts around the nation participate in shared use agreements. They can be formal or informal, but formal written agreements offer increased protections for both the entity providing the facility and the community group using the facility. A formal agreement can also help prevent problems related to maintenance, operations, liability, and/or ownership.

BACKGROUND POLICY

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRATEGIES

More than 150 school districts around the nation participate in shared use agreements. They can be formal or informal, but formal written agreements offer increased protections for both the entity providing the facility and the community group using the facility. A formal agreement can also help prevent problems related to maintenance, operations, liability, and/or ownership.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Q4

Create new community open space, parks, and recreation facilities

Community members prioritized “shared green spaces” as a step toward resilience. By evaluating public right-of-way and existing land use, there may be opportunities to increase the amount of open and shared spaces in the East Central area. The community also supported converting vacant or underutilized properties into future park space.

A. Prioritize future locations that align with the City’s Game Plan for a Healthy City priority areas for new parks and areas prone to flooding according to the City’s Storm Drainage Master Plan or the best available data. Additional future locations include the District 6 Police Station redevelopment and redevelopment within the National Jewish Health campus.

B. Incentivize and/or require publicly-accessible outdoor spaces, particularly in centers and corridors, as part of high-quality design. These publicly-accessible amenities can be a community benefit in exchange for taller heights, particularly along major corridors and near Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations. Establish standards and guidelines that ensure public accessibility, design, and features that respond to the community context. See Policies L3, L10, and C-L2.
OPEN SPACE AND CONNECTIONS CONCEPTS

**ENHANCED PARK AVENUE**

Members of the community suggested that Park Avenue could play a key role in connecting people to open space, parks, and recreational assets. Suggestions included strengthening the pedestrian environment at the intersection of Park Avenue and Colfax Avenue as well as up Park Avenue to connect the triangle parks along the existing corridor. See Policy Q1.

(Photo: Historic parkway in Montclair, Denver)

**CONTEMPORARY PARKWAYS**

A system of contemporary parkways can complement the transportation network and the existing park network. Rethinking the right-of-way in certain streets can improve bicycle and pedestrian connections while also providing integrated stormwater infrastructure, drought-tolerant landscaping, high-efficiency lighting, and varied paving systems. See Policy Q2.

**SHARED OPEN SPACE**

Green or open space owned by an institution or organization such as a school or a hospital, that is open to the surrounding community for their use. Institutions like schools can open their schoolyards to the surrounding community during the evenings, weekends, and summers and increase the availability of open spaces within the neighborhood. See Policy Q3.

(Photo: San Francisco Schoolyard Project)

**NEW COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE**

Public green space supports social interaction, physical activity, and connection to nature. Additionally, urban green spaces, even small ones, can lead to improved mental and physical health outcomes. Game Plan for a Healthy City categorized which areas are priorities for new parks based on a list of criteria. East Central contains both Second and Lower Priority locations for new parks. See Policy Q4.

(Photo: community park in Stapleton, Denver)

**ENHANCED OPEN SPACE**

Increased activation of existing parks through new amenities or improved maintenance can make these assets more useful to the community. See Policy Q3.
Climate resilience refers to the ability of a community to respond, adapt, and recover in a sustainable way in response to the impacts of climate change. There are two main categories of these challenges: shocks and stresses. Shocks are sudden risks or events that threaten the community such as extreme heat, drought, severe storms, and urban flooding. Stresses are the daily or chronic challenges that weaken natural, built, and human systems, such as urban heat island effect, impervious surface coverage, lack of tree canopy or vegetation, aging infrastructure, poor air and water quality, water availability, and social and economic vulnerabilities. Some of the stresses of East Central are a result of the high coverage of impervious surfaces and the lack of green infrastructure systems. The environmental quality and climate resilience of East Central neighborhoods can profoundly impact the quality of life of its residents and is a key consideration in planning for a safe and healthy future.

Tree Canopy

Tree canopy coverage in East Central is concentrated within and around the parks and parkways, as well as along residential streets, especially in the southeast portion of the study area. Tree canopy is notably missing along major transportation and commercial corridors such as Colorado Boulevard and Colfax Avenue and residential streets within Capitol Hill and North Capitol Hill. These areas with minimal tree canopy coverage are areas where the development pattern includes larger building footprints and more surface parking lots, more closely resembling downtown.

The North Capitol Hill neighborhood is one of the neighborhoods with lower tree canopy coverage and a high level of redevelopment. Property redevelopment, coupled with street right-of-way improvements, present a great opportunity to increase tree canopy in older communities. Conversely, property and right-of-way redevelopment may also negatively impact this area in that current city codes and practices may allow for the removal of significant existing, mature canopy.
Green Infrastructure Systems

Green infrastructure reflects a broad definition that includes both natural systems like trees, plants, parks, forests, and greenways, as well as engineered systems like rain gardens, constructed wetlands, and streetside stormwater planters. These man-made systems mimic natural systems to provide stormwater management by improving water quality and reducing local flooding risks. Both natural and engineered systems are multi-beneficial and also mitigate the impacts of the urban heat island, improve resiliency to climate change, and enhance community livability.

Recently, Denver has completed a handful of green infrastructure projects within or near East Central, including both small and large-scale examples. A large-scale example is the redesign of City Park Golf Course which includes a detention pond, sediment forebay, and constructed wetland that captures and treats stormwater runoff during rain events. The streetside stormwater planters on Josephine Street outside of the Carla Madison Recreation Center are an example of a site-scale system and treat street runoff from Josephine Street.

Parks and Open Space

Parks and open spaces provide many environmental and climate resiliency benefits to a community in addition to the well-known recreational health and social benefits. Parks and open space include some of the natural elements that contribute to a comprehensive green infrastructure system. The pervious surfaces, vegetation, roots, and soils that compose these spaces help manage, capture, and infiltrate stormwater, which will also improve water quality and air quality and help reduce air temperature through shade and evapotranspiration.

The East Central area contains significant park and open space coverage with City Park, Cheesman Park, and Congress Park.

For a more detailed look at the parks and open space from a recreational perspective see Section 2.4.2.

Impervious Cover

Development patterns have increased both the quantity and intensity of stormwater runoff and the amount of impervious surface in East Central. High concentrations of impervious surface can be seen on the west side of the study area within the Capitol Hill and North Capitol Hill neighborhoods where the development pattern consists of larger building footprints and surface parking lots. Other areas with high concentrations of impervious surface include Colfax Avenue and the medical campuses within the City Park West neighborhood.
Surface Temperature

Surface temperature is directly correlated to the amount of impervious surface and the lack of tree canopy. Areas with high concentrations of impervious surfaces and a lack of tree canopy result in areas with higher surface temperatures. A 2014 study by Climate Central, based on data from 2004-2013, indicated that Denver has the third most intense heat island effect in the United States, with a 4.9-degree Fahrenheit increase in average urban temperatures.

The heat released from the warmer impervious surfaces prevents air from cooling as rapidly as it normally would when day transitions into night. The cumulative effect is an increase in temperatures that create discomfort, increased energy and water consumption for cooling and irrigation, and decreased overall air quality due to emissions. Trees and landscape can help reduce these impacts by creating cooling effects through shading of impervious roads and buildings and reducing absorption and reflection of heat.

Areas with warm surface temperatures within East Central are concentrated in North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill along Colfax Avenue, City Park West near the medical campus, eastern Cheesman Park neighborhood, and scattered areas within the neighborhoods.

Water Quality and Stormwater Management

The study of water quality refers to the understanding of the pollutants within a drainage basin that can be collected, conveyed, and discharged into urban waterways. By quantifying the pollutants within each basin and evaluating the levels of each pollutant, strategies for green infrastructure can be evaluated and implemented that can treat the water before it reaches urban waterways. The Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy from the City and County of Denver identified thirty-one water quality basins, including eleven priority basins, based on several criteria. Primary criteria focused on stormwater concerns, like water quality and flooding, and secondary concerns included criteria like park density, urban heat islands, and equity.

Portions of four water quality basins fall within the East Central area: the Central Platte Valley Water Quality Basin, the City Park/Park Hill Water Quality Basin, the Cherry Creek Mall Water Quality Basin, and the Five Points/Capitol Hill Water Quality Basin. All four of these basins have been identified as mid-high priority basins due to poor water quality. For more information about the basin prioritization categories and criteria, see section four of the Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy.

The existing stormwater pipe system within East Central consists of pipes mostly 30 inches in width or smaller. Larger pipe systems within the area run along Grant Street, Park Avenue, and parts of City Park West. The largest pipe system that flows to the northwest runs along parts of the Congress Park and City Park neighborhoods along Jackson Street and through City Park. However, many pipes within the system are undersized and reach their capacity quickly during water events resulting in flooding in specific areas of the study area. Details of the existing stormwater infrastructure can be found in the Storm Drainage Master Plan.
Flood Prone Areas

Flood Prone Areas are a result of the natural terrain, undersized stormwater infrastructure system, increased impervious surface affecting stormwater runoff, and duration and intensity of a rain event. Potential inundation areas are the location where stormwater runoff can accumulate in depths greater than what the streets are designed to handle during a major flood event. Such an event is usually referred to as a 100-year event or an event that has a 1% chance of occurring in any year.

East Central has a few low-lying areas where stormwater can accumulate during rain events and cause flooding. Some potential inundation areas are found in the North Capitol Hill and City Park West neighborhoods with depths greater than 12 inches flowing from southeast to northwest. However, portions of City Park and Congress Park are most prone to flooding in East Central. The northeast corner of Congress Park and the center of City Park show flood depths ranging from 1.5 feet to greater than 6 feet, with waters flowing from southeast to northwest. These low-lying areas represent the bed of the historic Montclair Creek that ran from Montclair and Hale to the South Platte River flowing from southeast to northwest.

Community Feedback

Community members are increasingly more conscious of the climate resilience challenges and the relationship between their quality-of-life and the quality of the environmental factors within their communities. Community members continuously expressed their interests, concerns, and ideas through online surveys, community workshops, and outreach events.

Trees/landscaping comprised 47% of the comments in the East Central area and was the most common subtopic under the Environmentally Resilient category in the 2017 Kick-Off Survey. Comments under the Environmentally Resilient category were related to the increase and presence of impervious surfaces.

The top priorities to make the East Central area more resilient include:

- Tree canopy and tree lawn
- Native vegetation
- Shared green spaces

The majority of participants wanted to explore street right-of-way, existing vacant land, and parking lots for parks and open space.

Community members expressed their interest in incentivizing flood prone areas to better accommodate flood waters and the implementation of green infrastructure systems, such as permeable pavers, bulb-outs, and bioswales.

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey

Source: February 2018 Community Workshops
RECOMMENDATIONS

Q5

Strengthen the existing tree canopy and increase tree canopy coverage within the public right-of-way.

Trees and landscaping comprised 47% of the comments and was the most common subtopic under the Environmentally Resilient category in the 2017 Kick-Off Survey, and the increase in/expansion of tree canopy and tree lawn was the community’s top priority for making East Central more resilient. There are opportunities to increase the resiliency and coverage of the existing tree canopy through efforts such as educational programming, property redevelopment, and street right-of-way improvements.

A. Coordinate with the City and County of Denver Office of the City Forester to continue to support removal and replacement of deficient existing trees within the public right-of-way to ensure a healthy and sustainable tree canopy and unique community asset.

B. Increase coverage of the tree canopy through a City-sponsored community replacement program utilizing Denver-appropriate trees.

C. Prioritize preservation of tree canopy in right-of-way design and other city projects.

D. Develop educational programming and partnerships within the community to increase understanding of maintenance and care of the tree canopy.

E. Support the development of an Urban Forest Plan to meet city-wide canopy goals for preservation, maintenance, implementation and funding.

Q6

Protect and preserve the existing tree canopy in all redevelopment efforts.

Property redevelopment may impact the tree canopy coverage in the East Central area. Many of the neighborhoods in the East Central area have a lower tree canopy and have also witnessed a high level of redevelopment. Current codes and practices may need to be revised to protect existing tree assets.

A. Strengthen development standards to protect existing tree assets and increase requirements to mitigate tree loss in redevelopment or new plans.

1. Seek opportunities to preserve the tree canopy in large-scale residential developments, redevelopment along the Colfax Avenue and the expansion of institutions or hospital campuses.

2. Provide incentives or code changes that encourage retention of existing, mature canopy, and the planting of new trees beyond code minimums.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Q7

Increase the pervious surface coverage through the design and implementation of green infrastructure systems to increase environmental performance (infiltration, evaporation, evapotranspiration, carbon sequestration, shade, and urban heat).

East Central’s impervious surface coverage is higher than the City’s average. High impervious surface coverage results from historical development patterns in which permeable surfaces are replaced with roads, parking lots, sidewalks, and rooftops. These patterns have impacted the quality of life for East Central community members by increasing stormwater runoff, reducing rainfall absorption, and increasing air temperature. Native vegetation was the community’s second highest priority for making East Central more resilient, and 20% of the comments under the Environmentally Resilient category were related to the increase and presence of impervious surfaces in the 2017 Kick-Off Survey.

A. Explore opportunities to convert existing impervious surface within public right-of-way to pervious surface through the addition of green infrastructure, planters, street trees, tree lawn or bulb-outs, permeable pavers, trails, parkland or native vegetation.
   1. Coordinate with the design of future Contemporary Parkways (see Policy Q2).
   2. Integrate with BRT design along Colfax Avenue and redesign of public right-of-way streetscape and remnant parcels to improve infiltration and reduce runoff.

B. Develop design guidelines for a contemporary tree lawn.
   1. Remove and replace impervious areas between the sidewalk and street with 4”-6” depressed lawn or streetscape that improves infiltration and reduces runoff.
   2. Coordinate implementation through roadway, stormwater and sanitary projects within the right-of-way.

C. Increase the requirements for pervious acreage, water conservation in landscaping and inclusion of natural vegetation for redevelopment and new development.

D. Work with private property owners, business improvement districts and other neighborhood organizations to transition underutilized paved lots to pervious surfaces.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

BACKGROUND POLICY

STRATEGIES

Green infrastructure precedent on Brighton Boulevard in Denver
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN STREETS AND ALLEYS FOR WATER QUALITY CAPTURE

Legend:
- New Green Street Opportunity
- Previous Green Street Opportunity (GI Implementation Strategy)
- Water Quality Basin Boundaries
- Green Alley Opportunity

Plan area boundary

*Refer to Mobility chapter for transformative street recommendations on 7th Ave., 12th Ave., and 16th Ave.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a system of green streets and alleys to complement the network of existing Historic Parkways and new Contemporary Parkways and encourage sustainable water management practices including stormwater management, flood protection, water quality, runoff reduction, and water use.

Green infrastructure is a critical tool that supports several East Central community goals, such as enhanced community livability and improved resiliency. The community expressed interest in exploring allocating street right-of-way to various forms of greening as well as incentivizing flood prone areas to better accommodate flood waters and the implementation of green infrastructure systems, such as permeable pavers, bulb-outs, and bioswales. Green infrastructure can be employed to develop green streets and alleys in the area to increase pervious surfaces, improve air quality, increase access to green and open space, and reduce human health hazards related to poor water quality and flooding.

A. Implement a system of green streets and green alleys to improve water quality and reduce nuisance flooding, prioritizing streets based on the City’s Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy (see map on the following page).

B. Prioritize the implementation of green streets that coincide with priority bicycle corridors and connections to key neighborhood destinations like parks, religious institutions, schools, and other institutions and centers (see recommendations M1, M2 and M3 in the Mobility chapter).

Example of a green alley in downtown Fort Collins, CO
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCY OPPORTUNITIES

CENTRAL PLATTE VALLEY WATER QUALITY BASIN

FIVE POINTS/CAPITOL HILL WATER QUALITY BASIN

CHERRY CREEK MALL WATER QUALITY BASIN

- - - - - Water Quality Basin Boundaries

*Refer to Mobility chapter for transformative street recommendations on 7th Ave., 12th Ave., and 16th Ave.,
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCY CONCEPTS

GREEN STREETS
Roadways that integrate stormwater management and water quality treatments. Elements include engineered systems such as stormwater planters and permeable paving, as well as natural tree lawns and tree canopy. Green streets can work in conjunction with streets that prioritize multimodal mobility by providing a more comfortable environment. Brighton Boulevard is a local example of a green street working in conjunction with a bicycle facility. Priority areas include those identified by the Green Infrastructure Implementation Strategy. See Policy Q8. (Photo: Brighton Boulevard in Denver).

GREEN ALLEYS
Alleys with increased pervious surface coverage and vegetation to aid in infiltration and water quality treatment. As a result of the increased vegetation and pervious surfaces, these alleys become comfortable places for pedestrians to walk and function as key multimodal mobility corridors. A local example is the Westwood Via Verde which includes enhanced alleys and green infrastructure as part of its network that will connect existing and potential new spaces. Priority areas include alleys within 50 feet of a storm drain. See Policy Q8. (Photo: Green Alley in Detroit).

GREEN ROOFS
Building roofs that are covered or contain vegetation. Green roofs serve several purposes, such as absorbing stormwater, providing insulation, creating habitat and reducing urban heat island effect by reducing the coverage of surfaces like concrete which absorb sunlight and therefore increase surface temperatures. Priority areas include buildings 25,000 square feet or larger as specified in the Green Buildings Ordinance within the following Places: Civic, Campus, Community Center, Regional Center, Community Corridor, and High Residential Areas. See Policy Q7. (Photo: Community College of Denver building green roof. Source: Green Roofs of Colorado).

PRIVATE PROPERTY PRACTICES
Small interventions in private property will not have a significant impact in reducing the stormwater flooding in the area. However, the cumulative effects of small interventions such as rain gardens, rain barrels, and permeable pavers in areas like driveways, can improve infiltration and water quality treatment of stormwater and provide multiple benefits to the community. Priority areas include within Low and Low-Medium Residential Places. See Policy Q7.

STORMWATER DETENTION/PARKS
Parks provide important stormwater management benefits. If properly designed, open space can be used to capture stormwater during intense rain events while providing recreational and social uses during dry times.

Woodbriar Park in Greeley Colorado (shown in photo) is another example of a neighborhood park redesigned to allow for stormwater detention during intense rain events. Priority areas include all flood prone areas. See Policy Q7.
COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Through public meetings and online engagement, East Central stakeholders provided feedback on what was needed to make the East Central area a complete food environment.

During the public meetings, participants were asked to vote on the three most important elements needed for a complete food environment in the East Central area. The top responses were:

- **HEALTHIER CORNER AND CONVENIENCE STORES**
- **IMPROVED BIKE, PEDESTRIAN AND TRANSIT ACCESS**
- **FOOD GROWN IN PUBLIC SPACES**

Additionally, participants expressed a desire for more specialty markets, farmers markets and fresh food stands, and healthier meal options.

Results of a public online survey with over 1,000 responses conducted between 2018 and 2019, were generally consistent with the public meeting feedback. When asked what neighborhood amenities are important (either that already exist or that they would like to see in the future), the top responses from East Central participants were dining and grocery shopping.

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey; February 2018 Community Workshops

### 2.4.4 ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

The 2017 Denver Food Vision envisions a city where every neighborhood is a complete food environment, where residents have access to a full range of food amenities and supporting infrastructure. A complete food environment is inclusive of the cultural, commercial, and agricultural aspects of food and community.

According to the 2016 Denver Food System Baseline Report, one in five children and one in six adults in Denver suffer from food insecurity, which means they lack consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. Unequal access to healthy, affordable foods has been shown to contribute to nutritional inequalities, a risk factor for diet related health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity. This means that communities of color, immigrants, seniors, single parent households and rural communities are more likely to experience diet-related health problems. These same communities also experience more chronic stress due to poverty, systemic racism and lack of health care resources, which among many inequitable outcomes, include lower life expectancies.

Healthy food access can vary considerably by location. For example, full-service grocery stores are less likely to locate in lower income areas due to perceptions of low profitability. In some communities, corner or convenience stores may be the only points of food access. Many smaller stores face challenges in stocking fresh food inventory due to issues such as minimum order requirements by distributors or limited refrigeration.

While food access depends on physical proximity, another key factor is the ability to afford food and the availability of food that is culturally relevant. Food access also depends on the physical capacity and knowledge to prepare and eat healthy food.

Cost is often the main barrier to accessing healthy food for families with limited food budgets. Typically, high processed foods are less expensive, meaning that families can acquire more food with less money when they purchase processed foods.

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### HEALTHY FOOD IN EAST CENTRAL

Fewer than 60% of East Central households reside within a half mile (roughly a ten-minute walk) of a full-service grocery store according to a CPD walkshed analysis. However, even residents living within walking distance often chose to drive because, among other reasons, walking or biking doesn’t feel safe due to traffic speeds and volume or lack of adequate walking, biking, and transit connections. City Park West, northern Cheesman Park, and sections of North Capitol Hill are considered low food access areas, where a lack of physical access is compounded by limited incomes and lower rates of vehicle ownership.

There are relatively high concentrations of convenience stores in East Central, particularly along the Colfax corridor in Capitol Hill and North Capitol Hill. While those stores can provide an important source for food, they often carry limited fresh food ingredients. There are a number of emergency food assistance providers in East Central, but it is unclear how East Central residents are served by those providers as providers such as Metro Caring have a regional client base. Additionally, within the 80203 zip code, which encompasses most of Capitol Hill and North Capitol Hill, only 24% of eligible households are enrolled in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is below the Denver average.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Q9**

**Improve and maintain healthy options at existing East Central food retailers.**

Introducing more healthy and affordable foods in corner and convenience stores, which the most people rated as a top priority for a complete food environment in community meetings, can create additional healthy food retail locations within East Central. Rising commercial rents may necessitate assistance to help preserve existing food retailers.

A. Encourage and incentivize more corner and convenience stores in East Central to sell a greater variety of healthy food items.
   1. Continue to engage with East Central convenience stores through Denver’s Healthy Corner Store Initiative or similar program to provide incentives, financial support, and technical assistance.
   2. Remove barriers faced by smaller stores to carry fresh produce, such as working to launch or fund value chain coordination and small-scale distribution projects and social enterprises that connect agricultural producers and other healthy food suppliers to retailers.
   3. Support the expansion of nutrition incentive programs such as Double Up Food Bucks or create a new city-wide incentive program that reaches people unable to access Double Up Food Bucks.

B. Retain existing grocery stores and small food retail businesses, particularly those already selling healthy food, in areas where commercial rents or property costs have become burdensome (See Economy & Housing Section 2.2.3).
   1. Prioritize support for businesses in low food access areas (City Park West, and portions of Cheesman Park, Congress Park, and North Capitol Hill) that demonstrate financial assistance needs.
   2. Connect food retail businesses with financial support from city or statewide programs such as the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F).

**Q10**

**Improve the physical connections to grocery stores and other locations with healthy food options.**

East Central area stakeholders identified improved bike, pedestrian, and transit access to grocery stores as one of their top priorities. Providing pedestrian, bike, and transit routes to grocery stores that are universally accessible, well-marked, safe, comfortable, and convenient is an important component to food access.

A. Install missing sidewalks and make crosswalk safety upgrades near food providers, prioritizing improvements near major grocery stores (See Policy M9).

B. Support build-out of a complete transportation network that provides adequate bicycle infrastructure (See Policies M2 & M3), transit access (See Policies M7 & M8), and traffic calming (See Policy M9) to provide safe, comfortable access to grocery stores, food pantries, and community gardens.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Q11
Support food growing and production in East Central neighborhoods.

East Central stakeholders identified food grown in public spaces as an important priority to promote healthy food access.

A. Work with Denver Urban Gardens to provide funding and identify locations to develop new community gardens, such as at existing community centers with available open space including parks, schools, hospitals, and religious institutions.

1. Assess community support for new gardens in the existing parks and open spaces in East Central.

B. Analyze the barriers and constraints to food growing on public and private properties in East Central, including land use, zoning, permitting, maintenance, or building regulations.

Q12
Expand healthy meal options available in East Central.

On average, households spend approximately half of their food budget on prepared foods, and East Central stakeholders expressed the desire for additional healthy, fast casual restaurant options. In an online survey with over 1,000 respondents, dining was listed as the most important neighborhood amenity. Access to healthy prepared foods is an important part of a complete food environment.

A. Recruit healthy, fast-casual restaurants to Colfax.

1. Coordinate with BIDs on recruitment efforts to attract new healthy, fast casual restaurants.

B. Incentivize existing restaurants to offer healthier options.

1. Work with local organizations like the BIDs to incentivize restaurants to offer healthier options. Consider expanding on the work done by the Rethink Your Drink project lead by Denver Department of Public Health and Environment and the American Heart Association and Colorado Smart Meal Program to pilot an incentive program that could include free publicity, consultations with trained dietitians and chefs, and free nutrition analysis of menu items. (See profile of Somerville, Massachusetts’ Shape Up program).

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

Case Study:
Healthy Restaurant Incentives: Shape Up Somerville, Massachusetts

Shape Up Somerville recognizes and promotes healthy restaurants throughout the city. Shape Up “approved” meals at participating restaurants are considered healthy because they contain lean proteins, heart-healthy fats, whole grains, and items that are not deep fried. Participating restaurants receive free publicity, and often are preferred caterers for city events/meetings. Approved meals are reviewed by a certified nutritionist. The program periodically does a promotion highlighting immigrant-run restaurants.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recruit new small- to mid-sized grocery retailers and specialty stores.

East Central stakeholders expressed a desire for smaller grocery outlets and specialty food stores that carry healthy products. In an online survey with over 1,000 respondents, grocery options were listed as the second most important neighborhood amenity. These smaller stores provide an opportunity to access a variety of healthy food, even in areas where there may not be market demand for a full-service grocery store.

A. Attract small- or medium-sized grocery outlets and specialty stores to serve low food access areas, such as City Park West, and portions of Cheesman Park, Congress Park, and North Capitol Hill.

1. Utilize existing financial resources, such as the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F), and other public-private partnerships to offer financial incentives.

2. Provide fast-track permitting, increased translation/interpretation services and fee/fine waivers for grocery stores, small markets, mobile markets, and other fresh food retailers that choose to locate in or serve under-served areas with East Central.

3. Work with BIDs to identify and recruit niche specialty food businesses, such as butcher or bakery shops.
Support innovative community food access projects.

Non-traditional models can increase access to fresh, healthy foods, particularly for populations that may not otherwise have access to fresh food. Additionally, affordable housing developers and institutions like schools and hospitals are increasingly incorporating amenities related to food access.

A. Work with developers and community-driven investors to incorporate food access in new developments.
   1. Consider incentives such as density bonuses or subsidies for housing developments that incorporate food growing, production, or other food access amenities. (See profile on Aria Denver’s “Agrihood”).
   2. Leverage funds such as CHFA’s Healthy Housing Loan Program and/or Denver Housing Authority’s Healthy Living Initiative to incorporate food access and programming (e.g. pop-up food pantries; nutrition or cooking classes) into affordable housing developments.
   3. Prioritize funding or incentives for projects that offer additional community benefits, such as community ownership structures or local hiring opportunities.

B. Through the proposed Hospital Working Group (see Policy E1), encourage hospital campuses to dedicate portions of their properties to community food gardens.

C. Support innovative grocery models, like grocery on wheels (see profile on Any Street Grocery), particularly in areas of limited healthy food access.
   1. Provide business assistance, including increased translation/interpretation services, streamlined permitting, and connections to resources and grant funding.

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Case Study: Affordable Grocery on Wheels: Any Street Grocery, Denver

Any Street Grocery is a bus-turned-market that sells healthy, affordable food basics in some of Denver’s underserved neighborhoods. The non-profit enterprise initially launched in 2018 with a limited schedule, making weekly stops at community facilities like recreation centers. To cover costs, Any Street Grocery also visits citywide events like Taste of Colorado where they can charge a higher premium for products. To make an affordable, mobile grocery operational and successful, substantial grant funding and community partnerships are crucial.

Case Study: Aria Denver’s “Agrihood”, Denver

Aria Denver is a recently developed mixed income community at Federal Boulevard and 52nd Avenue that prominently features food production and wellness. The community has a one-acre farm, designated residential plots, and an 1,800 square foot greenhouse. These amenities provide food growing spaces for all residents, while also encouraging intergenerational social interaction and physical activity. Through a partnership with nearby Regis University, Aria Denver is able to offer gardening and nutrition classes for residents, and job-training for low-income youth.
Along with meat and dairy, fresh produce is one of the more difficult items for food banks to supply consistently. Metro Caring, a prominent food bank in City Park West, recently received a donated train car from neighboring Saint Joseph Hospital to pilot an innovative indoor food growing system. The retrofitted 40-foot long freight train car sits in the organization’s parking lot, where it can grow up to 600 plants every week. Food grown in this self-sustaining, soil-free, controlled environment will help supplement fresh produce available for food bank clients.
HEALTHY FOOD OPPORTUNITIES

[Map of healthy food opportunities in the East Central Area Plan]
HEALTHY FOOD CONCEPTS

COMMUNITY GARDEN
Public or private land can be used by community members to grow and cultivate fruit and vegetables. Gardens can be shared plots on private or public land, or they can be auxiliary uses for organizations like schools and religious institutions. Stakeholders have identified “growing more food on public and private land” as a top priority. Priority areas for community gardens include what the Land Use & Built Form section maps as a Center, Corridor, Civic, Campus, Park or select residential places (High, High-medium, or Low-medium Residential) that are not within a quarter mile of an existing community garden. See Policy Q11.

(SHOTO: New Freedom Park Community Center, Denver).

HEALTHY RESTAURANTS
Fast-casual restaurants or grab-and-go vendors can specialize in meals that are both quick and healthy. Some models also provide affordable fast-casual meals to communities with limited food access. Priority areas for healthy restaurants include what the Land Use & Built Form section maps as a Community Corridor, Local Corridor, Regional Center, Community Center, Local Center, Civic, or Campus places. See Policy Q12.

(SHOOTO: Superfruit Republic, Stapleton, Denver).

SMALL- TO MID-SIZED GROCERY RETAILERS AND SPECIALTY STORES
A smaller footprint retail establishment can sell healthy food ingredients such as fresh fruits and vegetables, dry groceries, or meat/poultry/seafood, or it can specialize in one type of food product (such as a butcher). This model can help meet the food access needs of neighborhoods that don’t need a full grocery store but that still have a significant number of residents who can’t walk to a grocery store. Priority areas for limited scale grocery stores include what the Land Use & Built Form section maps as a Community Corridor, Local Corridor, or Local Center that is also within a limited food access area. See Policy Q13.

(SHOTO: Choice Market, Broadway, Denver).
2.4.5 ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Access to health care, including preventative and mental health care, is one of several factors that impacts health. One calculation estimates that clinical care influences about 15 percent of a person’s health.\textsuperscript{14} While physical access to health facilities impacts access, another critical factor is the ability to pay for medical care. (See Section 2.2.5 for more information on social services.)

HEALTH CARE IN EAST CENTRAL

East Central contains several large-scale medical campus facilities, including Presbyterian/St. Luke’s Medical Center, Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children, Kaiser Permanente, Saint Joseph Hospital, and National Jewish Health.

However, income and other factors also impact whether residents have access to medical care. For example, while City Park West has the highest concentration of medical facilities in East Central—nearly all households within a 10-minute walk of a hospital—the neighborhood has a higher percentage of residents who have needed medical care but have been unable to see a medical professional due to cost than the other neighborhoods in East Central. Almost a quarter of pregnant women in North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill, and City Park West do not receive prenatal care during their first trimester.

Similarly, limited access to preventative care can result in increased use of emergency services. Rates of youth emergency department utilization for asthma are more than 50 visits per 1,000 residents in both City Park West and North Capitol Hill, compared to an average of approximately 18 visits per 1,000 residents in Denver.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase access to low-cost healthcare in East Central.

Physical and financial access to medical resources, including mental health care, are both critical to ensuring that communities have adequate access to health care.

A. Partner with Denver Health to deploy more free or reduced cost mobile clinics to East Central area neighborhoods with higher rates of Delayed Medical Care Due to Cost, including City Park West, North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill, and Congress Park.

B. Increase awareness and utilization of new and existing public health resources by East Central residents, particularly preventative care and mental health services.
   1. Work with Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE), social service providers, and other medical providers to promote free or reduced cost healthcare programs.

C. Integrate preventative health care with other services and programs, such as housing and food access initiatives. For example, pursue partnerships with East Central hospitals to offer basic healthcare services at food retail locations.
   1. Facilitate a pilot project with area hospitals, farmers markets, and healthy corner stores to create “one-stop-shops” for health that integrate healthy eating with preventative health care. Elements of the pilot could include: healthy food prescription programs, free health screenings, and nutrition or cooking classes all offered within the store. (See profile on the Lankenau Medical Center and the Food Trust partnership in Philadelphia).

Case Study:
Lankenau Medical Center and the Food Trust – West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

In Philadelphia, the Food Trust (a food-access advocacy organization) and a local hospital network teamed together to bring healthy food and preventative healthcare to the community.

The hospital started a program that encouraged doctors to “prescribe” nutritious food to patients. Eligible participants received “Philly Food Bucks” that were redeemable to buy fruits and vegetables at farmers markets and participating food stores. In addition to their healthy food prescription, patients received nutrition education, as well as information on other community resources. Health screenings at the farmer’s market helped connect vulnerable populations to resources and follow-up care. The “one stop shop” approach brought a new level of convenience, trust, and accessibility to healthcare.


Photo Source: The Food Trust

BACKGROUND POLICY

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Q16

STRATEGIES

158
2.4.6 COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

The built environment can have a significant impact on safety, the perception of safety, and mental well-being. The World Health Organization defines well-being as being achieved when “every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

Neighborhoods that are walkable and have active public spaces tend to provide environments where people feel safe and socially connected. Proximity to parks and trees has been linked to improved mental and physical well-being.\(^{15}\) In contrast, areas that are perceived to be unsafe have been shown to reduce residents’ likelihood to participate in outdoor activities, which diminishes opportunities for social interaction and physical activities that promote well-being.\(^{16}\) Additionally, external stressors such as poverty and displacement can have a negative impact on well-being.\(^{17,18}\) While this section focuses on recommendations to improve safety and well-being through the built environment, recommendations in the Economy & Housing section that address poverty and displacement are critical to mental well-being.

SAFETY IN EAST CENTRAL

Improving safety and reducing crime was a priority for many residents in East Central. While the average violent crime rate in East Central is comparable to the citywide average, a concentration of incidents along Colfax Avenue on the west side of the study area result in crime rates that are slightly higher than the Denver average in North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill, and City Park West. Non-violent crimes, which include drug and alcohol offenses as well as public disorder offenses such as disturbing the peace, loitering, and prostitution, are also more prevalent along this stretch of Colfax Avenue.

One impact of higher crime rates can be mental distress, which the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment defines as experiencing health conditions such as stress, depression, and problems with emotions. In a survey measuring mental distress, the northern portion of City Park West had a slightly higher rate of adults experiencing frequent mental distress compared to the Denver average.\(^{19}\)

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

At neighborhood meetings in February 2019, participants were asked, “what would make you feel safer and more comfortable in East Central?" The top priorities based on 3 votes per participant were:

- **MORE ACTIVITY ON THE STREET**
- **PUBLIC ART**
- **MORE SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

Better lighting and public restrooms were also among the top priorities.

Source: February 2018 Community Workshops

“...I feel safe in the East Central area...”

- **“Rarely”** 6%
- **“Always”** 17%
- **“Usually”** 77%

Source: 2017 East Central Kick-Off Survey
Incorporate design elements that create welcoming and inclusive environments in public spaces.

Participants in the public process cited crime as a major issue in the area, and active public spaces and public art were identified as the top priorities for addressing crime. Many cities have implemented the practice of reducing crime through urban and environmental design. While such strategies have been embraced by practitioners and many law enforcement agencies, including the Denver Police Department, they often result in the exclusion and/or endangerment of segments of the community, including people of color and people experiencing homelessness. These strategies, which include street lighting, maintenance, public art, and street level activation, must be community-led to ensure they are implemented in a manner that is culturally appropriate and respectful of existing communities and residents. The goal of these strategies is to foster social interaction, create a sense of community, and improve safety and well-being.

A. Establish a process to ensure that implementation of the following strategies is led by the community, including identifying which spaces they want to transform and how.

B. Provide pedestrian-scale lighting, prioritizing areas along the High Injury Network (HIN) designated in Denver’s Vision Zero Action Plan and along streets designated as pedestrian priority in this plan.
   1. Prioritize installation and upgrades to pedestrian and street-pedestrian combination light fixtures. These upgrades should be in coordination with other mobility improvements, including those recommended by this plan, including in alleys (See Mobility Section 2.3). (See the City and County of Denver Street Lighting Design Guidelines)
   2. Encourage and fund maintenance or clean-up of derelict private and public properties.
   3. Work with the BIDs and the Harm Reduction Action Center to identify areas where safe needle deposit boxes are needed and supported.

D. Encourage public art.
   1. Coordinate with local BIDs, Registered Neighborhood Organizations, and other community groups to:
      a. Increase awareness of existing arts-specific funding opportunities, such as the “P.S. You Are Here” grant, which can be used to beautify elements of infrastructure such as utility boxes, bus stops, and dumpsters.
      b. Engage community members in public art projects and gather feedback for priority topics and areas, such as intersections or underutilized lots.

E. Partner with BIDs, RTD, and other organizations to construct and maintain public restrooms at appropriate locations, including mobility hubs (see Policy M8).

Case Study: Juxtaposition Arts in Minneapolis

Juxtaposition Arts is a nonprofit that empowers historically marginalized populations by creating pathways for youth interested in the creative workforce. The organization has been hired to produce art around Minneapolis to transform places from bland and unsafe to colorful, safe, and functional. Juxtaposition is known for its colorful murals and tactical urbanism projects that renovate community spaces with creative lighting, seating, and glow-in-the-dark materials.
STREET ACTIVATION THROUGH DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES
PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING
Adequate street lighting, including pedestrian-scale lighting, can help address two of the community’s top concerns: pedestrian safety and crime prevention. Improvements and maintenance should be prioritized in areas along the High Injury Network (HIN) designated in Denver’s Vision Zero Action Plan, and along streets designated as pedestrian priority in this plan. See Policy Q17.

Photo: Creative lighting in Stapleton, Denver.

STREET LEVEL ACTIVATION AND PUBLIC ART PRIORITY AREAS
Street-level improvements such as public art can foster social activity and a sense of safety. Areas prioritized for these improvements include areas along primary commercial corridors within walking distance to transit hubs, particularly in areas where more activity is needed to increase community safety. See Policy Q17.

Photo: Westword
Support community-building initiatives in East Central neighborhoods.

Social interaction and a sense of community belonging have been shown to improve individual well-being. Ongoing changes in the neighborhood can erode knowledge of the area’s history and sense of place. The physical and social fabric of East Central neighborhoods should lend themselves to a culture of neighborliness, engagement, and social interaction. To the extent possible, the City should support civic organizations and informal networks that make people feel connected to their neighbors and to the history of their neighborhood.

A. Provide and advertise meeting and event space within City facilities, such as libraries or recreation centers, including at reduced or no cost for community organizations with limited resources.

B. Encourage RNOs and other community organizations to offer programming that connects residents including:
   1. Developing and distributing materials such as Neighborhood Guides that include information about local organizations, existing and ongoing city plans and initiatives, and the neighborhood’s history and culture.
   2. Develop a guidebook with community-building ideas such as neighborhood walks, gatherings, grant funding opportunities, social media competitions, and neighborhood pop-up events.
   3. Promote existing programs such as Denver Days and the Denver Public Works Community Streets Program.
QUALITY OF LIFE CITATIONS

1 VCU Center on Society and Health
3 The Trust for Public Land, NRPA, and ULI, 10minutewalk.org, [https://www.10minutewalk.org](https://www.10minutewalk.org)
4 Design Guidelines: Denver’s Designated Parkways and Boulevards, City and County of Denver, November 2005, page 8
6 [https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/690/Healthy%20Food/COD_2016_Food_Baseline.pdf](https://www.denvergov.org/content/dam/denvergov/Portals/690/Healthy%20Food/COD_2016_Food_Baseline.pdf)
7 [https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/](https://hungerandhealth.feedingamerica.org/understand-food-insecurity/)
9 The City of Denver’s “low food access” indicator quantifies a residential block’s proximity to a full-service grocery store, average household incomes, and %age of households without a vehicle
10 Strengthening Denver’s Food Rescue Ecosystem (October 2018). Brock, Adam & Reuben Gregory. Commissioned by the Natural Resources Defense Council
11 Human Services Gap Map, SNAP Enrollment Rate 2016. Gapmap.org
13 Human Services Gap Map, SNAP Enrollment Rate 2016. Gapmap.org
17 High housing costs make it harder for families to invest in other important areas such as healthcare, healthy foods, childcare, and transportation, leading to chronic stress. Matsuoka, Martha and Jennifer Lucky. Power, Place, and Public Health: A Review of the Literature on the Health Impacts of Displacement & Promise of Inclusive Community Development. The California Endowment, 2017
19 Mental Health: % of Adults with Frequent Mental Distress (2014-2017 Estimates), Colorado Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Data, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
20 City of Denver Police Department District 6, Citizen Advisory Board meeting, March 21, 2019
3 NEIGHBORHOODS OF EAST CENTRAL

IN THIS SECTION:

3.1 INTRODUCTION (P. 166)
3.2 NORTH CAPITOL HILL (P. 167)
3.3 CAPITOL HILL (P. 183)
3.4 CITY PARK WEST (P. 197)
3.5 CITY PARK (P. 211)
3.6 CHEESMAN PARK (P. 224)
3.7 CONGRESS PARK (P. 237)
3.1 INTRODUCTION

The East Central Area is made up of six distinct neighborhoods. While there are some issues that affect all the neighborhoods, there are many that impact individual neighborhoods differently, and require unique recommendations. This section will address each neighborhood separately and provide more detailed guidance than the area-wide recommendations.

• The plan on a page provides an overview of the area-wide recommendations and where they apply in each neighborhood.
• The overview provides an analysis of the existing character in each neighborhood, the distinctive features of typical structures in the neighborhood, a summary of the community input received from that neighborhood, and descriptions of the previously adopted plans in the neighborhood.
• The recommendations include policies and strategies that apply only to that neighborhood, as well as references to area-wide policies that are particularly important to that neighborhood.
• The transformative projects illustrate how the recommendations overlap to make significant neighborhood improvements in specific locations.

This section will give neighborhood residents and organizations, and anyone else interested in a neighborhood, a better understanding of how the East Central Area Plan impacts them. However, each neighborhood’s individual recommendations still work together to achieve the community’s overall vision for the East Central Area.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL (UQT)

The Urban Quality Tool is an interactive scoring exercise that evaluates specific aspects of the built form to understand where improvements are needed. There are three categories for scoring:

• **Bustling with Activity** – neighborhood destinations with an active street and variety of uses that draw people to visit and stay score higher in this category.
• **Memorable Environment** – places that leave memories that remind us to return there again and again score higher in this category.
• **Pedestrian Comfort** – places that provide the desire to walk longer distances due to the comfort and connectivity provided in the surrounding environment score higher in this category.

Over 100 volunteers participated in on-site scoring of specific commercial nodes within the study area. The results from this exercise were displayed at community workshops and participants voted on priorities for each node. Responses for commercial nodes from the Urban Quality Tool assessment recommendations can be found in each Neighborhood chapter, including Colfax.
3.2 NORTH CAPITOL HILL

3.2.1 PLAN ON A PAGE

**KEY OPPORTUNITIES**

**Park Avenue** – Turn Park Avenue into a community asset by enhancing its function as a parkway while maintaining its historic nature. See Policy NCH-Q1.

**5280 Trail** – Advance the vision for the 5280 Trail by working with the Downtown Denver Partnership and property owners along Sherman Street. See Policy NCH-L3 and Policy NCH-E1.

**Tree Canopy** – Improve the quality of life and reduce heat island effects by adding trees where the tree canopy is insufficient. See Policy NCH-Q4.

**16th Avenue** – Improve the bike lanes along 16th Avenue and explore limiting vehicle traffic on the street to create a bicycle priority street. See Policy NCH-M2.

**Social Services** – Improve the provision of social services for populations in need while ensuring service providers are good neighbors. See Policy NCH-E9.

**District 6 Police Station** – Take advantage of the redevelopment of the station to achieve community goals including providing affordable housing, social services, and publicly accessible open space. See Policy NCH-L1.
3.2.2 OVERVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALS

Era of construction - North Capitol Hill is the East Central Area’s most diverse neighborhood in terms of building construction dates. 21% of the neighborhood is still vacant or parking lots, which opens up lots of opportunity for new construction. 22% of all buildings were built prior to 1900 and 22% were built since 1966, so it’s a pretty eclectic mix of Denver’s development patterns.

Land use – Similar to construction era, the land-use is one of the most diverse mixes in the East Central Area. With 17% of the area being used for parking, the remainder of the neighborhood roughly breaks down to 25% residential, 25% mixed-use and commercial-retail, and 25% office.

Zoning - Most of the neighborhood (63%) is zoned Mixed-Use (MX, D, or MS) with 23% being zoned for residential only (Multi-Unit). This lends the neighborhood to be a diverse mix of live-work-play and to continue to grow into an extension of downtown. 17th Avenue is a mix of retail, restaurants and residential. With its popular restaurants, 17th Avenue is as much of a center to the neighborhood as Colfax.
3.2.3 PRESERVING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

STREET PATTERN

In addition to the major east-west one-way pair of 17th and 18th Avenues, North Capitol Hill has several continuous north-south one-way pairs: Grant and Logan Streets, Washington and Clarkson Streets, and Corona and Downing Streets. 19th and 20th Avenues were once a one-way pair but converted to two-way in 2018. Of the 15 north-south streets, eight are one-way streets (over 50%). Consequently, there are fewer quiet streets in North Capitol Hill. The less trafficked streets like 16th, 19th, Sherman, Pennsylvania, Pearl, Emerson, Marion and Lafayette are more valuable as streets to live on and walk along.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE

Civic Center Park and Benedict Fountain Park lie just outside of the neighborhood study boundary. The small triangular parks along Park Ave have potential to be usable pocket parks, which could be of great value to the neighborhood, but are presently little more than leftover spaces.

OVERLAYS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

City Park Mountain View Ordinance, which establishes a rising height cap from the west face of the Museum of Nature and Science to the edge of downtown along Lincoln Street. It has a few other design and use overlays: DO-1 (Uptown Design Overlay), UO-1 (Adult Use Overlay) and UO-2 (Billboard Overlay). Historic Districts include: Swallow Hill, part of Civic Center, Park Avenue, and numerous individual landmarked structures.

VISUAL LANDMARKS

Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, Central Presbyterian Church, Trinity Methodist Church, the Masonic Temple, and Temple Emmanuel.
3.2.4 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & URBAN QUALITY TOOL

PREVIOUS PLANS

The Uptown Neighborhood Plan from 1986 covers the North Capitol Hill and City Park West neighborhoods. The plan recommended encouraging mixed-use development, improving the urban design in the neighborhood, providing a range of housing types, facilitating multimodal transportation, strengthening local businesses, and better connecting the neighborhood to parks. These recommendations continue to be relevant and are consistent with the policies in this East Central Area Plan.

The Downtown Area Plan from 2007 covers the portion of North Capitol Hill west of Grant Street. The plan recommends better connecting surrounding neighborhoods to Downtown, while providing for a transitional “stepping down” in height and intensity from Downtown to North Capitol Hill. These recommendations continue to be advanced in this East Central Area Plan.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL RESULTS

Traffic speeding and blocks of surface parking right at the sidewalk make the node less pedestrian friendly than other nodes in the planning area, scoring a 4/10 in pedestrian comfort. The overall node score improves as you move east, with a better mix of uses, greater tree canopy, and more cafe seating. The smaller scale and historic buildings add to the charm of the area, scoring 6/10 in memorable environment. This area is quite bustling with activity in the evenings, with many food and beverage options, but could use more day-time community serving options, scoring it a 6/10 in bustling with activity.

TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Keep existing and support new local business
- Replace vacant/parking lots with new buildings

- Promote windows and visibility at the ground floor
- Provide more trees and shade

- Make crossing the street easier
- Slow down vehicular traffic
NORTH CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

Redevelop former District 6 Police Station and vacant site on southern portion of the Civic Center Transit Station

Funding was approved to replace the District 6 Police Station as part of the Elevate Denver bond program. The redevelopment of the station property provides an opportunity to meet many community needs using land the city already owns. The parcel south of Civic Center Station is controlled by RTD and provides an opportunity to provide a community asset.

A. District 6 Police Station falls within the identified “incentive area” where additional height (above existing allowable zoning of MS-8) may be available in exchange for community benefit.
   1. Consider incorporating affordable housing, public open space, and social services in the new development as top priorities for community benefits.

B. Work with RTD and the Downtown Denver Partnership to redevelop the vacant lot at Civic Center Station, using the Civic Center Transit District Plan recommendations as a guide.
   1. Consider an improved open space if access constraints make near term development impractical.
   2. Consider public or quasi-public uses for long term development, such as museums, schools, or government offices.

See POLICY L6: Update standards and guidelines for the mixed use areas of North Capitol Hill.

The Design Guidelines for Capitol Hill/Uptown – R-4/OD-1 and for Uptown – R-4-X were adopted before the Denver Zoning Code and need modernization to meet the community’s goals for urban design.

   1. These need to align better with the 2010 Denver Zoning Code and current trends and issues.
   2. Many guidelines may be applicable and able to be carried forward.
   3. Use new development (past 10 years) as a way to critique the standards and update as necessary.
   4. Consider whether the recommended Design Standards and Guidelines for Centers and Corridors (see Policy L8) could be a replacement or if this area still warrants their own document and process.
   5. Particular concerns with multi-unit and mixed use construction from the neighborhood workshop included: materials, ground floor design, variation in massing and variation in details.

Ensure high-quality development along Sherman Street that benefits the community.

The Sherman Street corridor serves as the transition between Downtown and Uptown and presents an opportunity to create a distinctive place that meets many community goals.

A. Consider more intense zoning and modifications to the City Park view plane in exchange for significant community benefits, such as:
   1. Additional housing units, with a significant percentage of affordable units.
   2. Implementation of the 5280 Loop design along this stretch of Sherman Street (Colfax to 20th Ave.).
   3. Improved streetscape and activation of the ground floor level.
   4. High quality design and creation of 100 year buildings (or more) that can stand the test of time and contribute positively to the downtown for generations to come.

Improve transitions to historic districts and properties.

The historic integrity of landmarked properties can be negatively impacted by nearby development that does not transition appropriately.

A. Modify the Denver Zoning Code to include transition requirements for landmarked properties in mixed-use zone districts.
   1. Consider treating landmark buildings and districts as “Protected Districts” in the DZC (see Policy L8).
**NORTH CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**NCH-E1**

Work with the Downtown Denver Partnership to prioritize and implement improvements and determine funding.

The boundaries of the Downtown Denver BID and the Downtown Denver Partnership include the area west of Grant Street in North Capitol Hill. The Partnership helps coordinate the activities of businesses and property owners to implement improvements within its boundaries, and this plan provides an opportunity to leverage that support to achieve mutual goals.

A. Implementation of the 5280 Loop and streetscape improvements along Sherman Street is a priority.

B. Coordinate recommendations of this plan with the Upper Downtown Plan being led by DDP.

**NCH-E2**

See POLICY E2: Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.

North Capitol Hill’s location between Downtown Denver and the hospitals in City Park West, combined with its abundance of Mixed Use, Main Street, and Residential Office zoning, makes it an ideal location for small professional services offices.

A. Continue to support small office uses where they are currently allowed in Residential Office (RO) zone districts while ensuring they are compatible with existing neighborhood character.

**NCH-E3**

See POLICY E3: Partner with Denver Public Schools, the Downtown Denver Partnership, and other major area employers/projects in connecting East Central residents to job opportunities.

North Capitol Hill has higher poverty rates (27% in the western portion, 15% in the eastern portion) and higher unemployment rates (7.5% in the western portion) than the averages for the East Central Area or Denver as a whole. In addition, the presence of the DPS Emily Griffith Campus in the neighborhood provides an opportunity, along with proximity to Downtown Denver and the Uptown Hospitals, to find unique partnerships to provide training and access to high-quality jobs.

A. Through the medical facilities working group (discussed in Policy E1), identify training needs and potential partnerships with DPS and other higher education institutions to help provide the training.
   1. Identify potential facilities to house the training, including any underused DPS facilities in the area.

B. Work with Downtown Denver Partnership to develop a program to identify workforce training needs among downtown businesses, and ultimately connect the businesses to job trainees and seekers in the area.
NORTH CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide additional support to community-serving retail businesses in North Capitol Hill.

Between 2012 and 2016, sales tax receipts in North Capitol Hill declined by about one third. North Capitol Hill was the only neighborhood in East Central that had declining sales tax during that period. Additional support is needed to stabilize and grow retail businesses in the neighborhood.

A. See Policy E4: Improve the regulatory process to provide additional support for existing and new small businesses in the area.

B. See Policy E5: Work in tandem with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to provide technical assistance to existing small independent businesses to help them succeed and prevent involuntary displacement.

C. See Policy E6: Broaden the range of financial incentives for small independent businesses and landlords to strengthen the area’s tenant mix and help prevent displacement.

D. See Policy E7: Support and develop new community-minded ownership models that have a goal of maintaining East Central’s variety of small, local businesses.

See POLICY E8: Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.

In North Capitol Hill, 40% of renter households and 13% of owner households are cost-burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. Further, 86% of North Capitol Hill households are renters. According to Blueprint Denver’s Vulnerability to Displacement measure, the western portion of North Capitol Hill is considered vulnerable to displacement due to the high percentage of renters and median income below Denver’s median.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

See POLICY E9: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.

North Capitol Hill has approximately 850 subsidized units, many of which could be at jeopardy of expiring over the next 20 years.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.
NORTH CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

North Capitol Hill is home to the District 6 Police Station, which is anticipated to relocate. The site provides an opportunity to integrate new income-restricted housing with redevelopment.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

A. Ensure affordable housing is provided when large City-owned property, particularly the District 6 police station, is redeveloped.

See POLICY E11: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.

While North Capitol Hill has a diverse range of housing costs and high percentage of middle- and high-density housing (98% of units are attached or multi-unit), the neighborhood is lacking in larger unit sizes (70% of units are studios and one-bedrooms) and homeownership opportunities (14% of households are owner-occupied). Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

A. Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.

B. Encourage more family-friendly development.

See POLICY E12: Improve the existing social service system through collaboration, co-location and coordination between providers, and between providers and city agencies.

Although in the 2017 kick-off survey, 26% of North Capitol Hill residents expressed concern for persons experiencing homelessness, many have also voiced concern over the high concentration of shelters and service providers facilities in North Capitol Hill. Attempts to address the social service system in this neighborhood should prioritize the support, collaboration, and increase efficiency between existing service providers in the area.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

A. Identify existing homelessness prevention and rapid-rehousing resources in the community and bring in additional partners for more local collaboration between providers, and between providers and city agencies.

B. Explore models that promote co-location of services (i.e., Dahlia campus for mental health and well-being and the Rose Andorn Center).
NORTH CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS

**POLICY M1:** See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

North Capitol Hill contains many High Injury Network streets and wide, high-speed roads that have been identified as key corridors for prioritizing walking, biking, and taking transit. Repurposing space for people traveling without a car helps to provide more options and a safer environment for all. An average of 49% of commuters in North Capitol Hill drive alone to work, representing one of the best opportunities to further the City’s Mobility Action Plan goal of 50% or less SOV trips citywide by 2030.

Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
   Also see Colfax Ave chapter.

B. Broadway – Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Priority

C. Downing Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

D. Lincoln Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

E. Park Avenue between Colfax Avenue and 20th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

F. 16th Avenue between Broadway and City Park Esplanade – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority

G. 17th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

H. 18th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

**POLICY M2:** See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

Less than 10% of North Capitol Hill survey respondents noted the area as being very easy for biking. Relative to other East Central neighborhoods, there is a concentration of crashes with bicycles in the North Capitol Hill neighborhood. Prioritizing space and designing safer intersections for cyclists helps improve safety for all modes while allowing people of all ages and abilities to bike.

Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Upgrade planned conventional bike lanes on Washington and Clarkson between 7th and 20th to a protected bike lane and install new crossings

B. Upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikes buffered bike lanes recommendation to a neighborhood bikeway or protected bike lane on 16th Ave. between Broadway and City Park Esplanade in the short-term and study the feasibility of significantly limiting vehicular access in the long-term.

C. Study feasibility of connecting 16th Ave bike lane to proposed 16th Ave neighborhood bikeway. Also consider a strong southern connection across Colfax Ave to Esplanade. East High School will be a major stakeholder in this effort.

D. Study the feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on Pennsylvania St between 9th and 20th Aves.
**NORTH CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**See POLICY M4: Install new sidewalks**

While the majority of North Capitol Hill survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy or fairly easy to walk in, about 8% of sidewalks in the area are substandard, at less than 4 feet in width. Currently the City is focused on gaps in the sidewalk network and there is no program to widen substandard sidewalks.

**A.** Bring sidewalks up to standard in the North Capitol Hill neighborhood

1. **Short-term**
   a. Interim sidewalk extensions and ADA facilities

2. **Long-term**
   a. Permanent sidewalks and ADA facilities

**See POLICY M5: Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings**

A concentration of crashes involving pedestrians occur in North Capitol Hill, specifically near Colfax and Broadway/Lincoln.

**Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):**

**A.** Lincoln Street at 16th, 17th, and 18th Avenues

**B.** Broadway at 17th Avenue

**C.** Colfax Avenue at Broadway, Lincoln, Pennsylvania, and Downing Streets

**D.** Downing Street at 16th, 17th, and Park Avenues

**See POLICY M6: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings**

A concentration of crashes involving pedestrians occur in North Capitol Hill, specifically near Colfax and Broadway/Lincoln.

**Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):**

**A.** Pennsylvania Street at 16th and 17th Avenues
NORTH CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

The North Capitol Hill neighborhood has both a high transit score and transit propensity – in other words, investing in transit frequency and infrastructure in this area would likely yield significant increases in ridership. 92% of sidewalks in the neighborhood are greater than 4 feet wide, providing a nearly complete network that facilitates easy access across different ways of travel.

Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Park Avenue between Colfax/Franklin/Park and 20th
   3. Broadway
   4. Lincoln Street

B. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 17th Avenue
   2. 18th Avenue between Broadway and York

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install customer amenities at priority locations:
   1. Colfax Avenue at Downing, Park and Broadway
   2. Lincoln Street at 17th Ave
   3. Broadway at Cleveland Place
NORTH CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

MOBILITY

See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes and recreation centers

Within the East Central area, North Capitol Hill has the highest concentration of vehicular crashes; the area as a whole has nearly double the citywide rate of crashes per resident. Crashes involving bikes and pedestrians similarly are concentrated in the neighborhood. This neighborhood also has some of the highest volume arterial streets in the area, with Broadway, Lincoln, Colfax, and Park all carrying over 20,000 vehicles per day.

Priority Locations for North Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Clarkson Street from Colfax to 16th Ave
   3. 17th Avenue from Pennsylvania to Emerson Streets

B. Schools
   1. Downtown Denver Expeditionary School/Emily NCH-M8

C. Parks
   1. Park Avenue Parks Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

See POLICY M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources

An average of 27% of households in North Capitol Hill do not have a vehicle, more than double the citywide average of 11%. However, curb space is in high demand in this area and many residents are concerned about on-street parking availability.

A. See Policy M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources

B. See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the City’s strategic parking goals

See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals

Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, and sidewalks in the North Capitol Hill neighborhood, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility.
NORTH CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY Q1: Examine the potential for Historic Park Avenue to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.

Members of the community suggested that the parkway, which forms a border of North Capitol Hill, could play a key role in connecting people to open space, parks, and recreational assets.

See POLICY Q2: Develop new Contemporary Parkways that connect the community to open space, parks and recreational assets, as well as serve multiple community functions.

Several corridors in North Capitol Hill, including 16th Avenue, 20th Avenue, and Sherman Street, are opportunities to implement the Contemporary Parkway Concept.

See POLICY Q6: Protect and preserve the existing tree assets in all redevelopment efforts

North Capitol Hill is a neighborhood with a lower than average tree canopy percentage. The neighborhood has also witnessed a high level of redevelopment in recent years which often results in the damage or destruction of the existing tree canopy on private property.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life
See POLICY Q5: Strengthen the existing tree canopy and increase tree canopy coverage within the public right-of-way.

Tree canopy in the East Central area is notably missing along major transportation and commercial corridors and residential streets within the North Capitol Hill neighborhood. A healthy tree canopy along sidewalks and within the public right-of-way reduces the discomfort for pedestrians.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

POLICY

See POLICY Q5: Strengthen the existing tree canopy and increase tree canopy coverage within the public right-of-way.

Create new community open space, parks, and recreation facilities.

Approximately 10 percent of North Park Hill households are not within a 10-minute walk from a park, and the area has historically seen higher rates of crime than other parts of East Central

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

A. Create additional community park, recreation and cultural spaces as part of the District 6 Police Station redevelopment

B. Incentivize and/or require publicly-accessible outdoor spaces, particularly in centers and corridors, as part of high-quality design. These publicly-accessible amenities can be a community benefit in exchange for taller heights, particularly along major corridors and near Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations. Establish standards and guidelines that ensure public accessibility, design, and features that respond to the community context. See Land Use Policy 3, Policy 10, and Colfax Corridor Policy 2.
3.2.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: DISTRICT 6 POLICE STATION

- Community-serving retail
- Affordable housing
- Improved tree canopy
- Social services
- Shared parking facility
- New publically accessible open space
- Office space for small professional businesses
- Affordable housing
- New publically accessible open space
3.2.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: DISTRICT 6 POLICE STATION
3.3 CAPITOL HILL

3.3.1 PLAN ON A PAGE

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

5280 Trail – Advance the vision for the 5280 Trail by working with the Downtown Denver Partnership and property owners along Sherman Street and 12th Avenue. See Policy CH-M2.

Housing Diversity – Preserve the existing affordability and diversity of housing in Capitol Hill while seeking opportunities to add new types of housing. See Policy CH-E3 and Policy CH-E4.

12th Avenue – Improve landscaping, water quality, transit, and biking along a transformative street and contemporary parkway. See Policy CH-M1 and Policy CH-Q1.

Quality Infill – Direct growth to appropriate areas and redevelop vacant or underutilized properties with improved design guidelines. See Policy CH-L1 and Policy CH-L2.

Broadway/Lincoln Corridor – Ensure growth along the corridor serves as an effective transition to Capitol Hill while benefiting from mobility improvements. See Policy CH-L3 and Policy CH-M1.

Governors Park – Improve the utilization of the park through programming, new amenities, and better maintenance. See Policy CH-Q3.
3.3.2 OVERVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALS

Era of construction - 54% of all buildings in Capitol Hill were built prior to 1925 and 24% of buildings were built prior to 1900, making this the oldest neighborhood in East Central. 32% of all construction has occurred since 1956. Most of the new construction has occurred along the Lincoln/Broadway couplet and along Colfax Avenue.

Land use - Majority of the neighborhood (56%) is residential use when combined (SU-9%, TU-3%, and MU-45%). 9% of the neighborhood is still vacant or surface parking. The remaining approximately 20% is Mixed-Use.

Zoning - Most of the neighborhood (55%) is zoned Multi-Unit (MU) with most of the rest (42%) being zoned Mixed-Use (MX, MS, and D). This lends the neighborhood to remain one of the densest neighborhoods in Denver and to continue to house much of the workforce for downtown.
3.3.3 PRESERVING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

CAPITOL HILL’S BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Capitol Hill is predominately (60%) Multi-Unit (apartment buildings) built between 1873 – 1925, the average number of units per building is 23 dwelling units.

STREET PATTERN

While it has a regular Denver street grid creating rectangular blocks and narrow north-south streets, Capitol Hill is crisscrossed with one-way pairs that make it less comfortable to walk along. Of the 13 north-south streets in the Capitol Hill, only five are more quiet two-way streets. Of the eight east-west streets in the neighborhood (not including Colfax), five are more quiet two-way streets. The majority of the residences are on north-south streets.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE

Capitol Hill has two small parks: Governor’s Park, which is difficult to use due to the topography, and Quality Hill Park.

OVERLAYS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

City Park Mountain View Ordinance (small portion) and the Cheesman Park Mountain View ordinance which establish rising height caps from their points of origin at City Park’s Museum of Nature and Science and at Cheesman Park’s Cheesman Pavilion. Other overlays include a small portion of DO-1 (Uptown Design Overlay) and the eastern portion is included in the UO-3 Historic Structure Use Overlay, which allows some commercial uses in residential structures if they are landmarked. Historic districts include Civic Center, Pennsylvania Street, Sherman-Grant, and Quality Hill.

VISUAL LANDMARKS

The State Capitol, St John’s Cathedral, and the First Baptist Church.
3.3.4 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & URBAN QUALITY TOOL

13TH AVE NODE - 13th feels like a high-speed one-way corridor. The uses lining the street are essential to Capitol Hill’s vitality, yet the pedestrian comfort is sub-par and must be addressed.

11TH & OGDEN NODE - This node has more of a neighborhood main-street corner feel, but many of the buildings are separated from the sidewalk by parking lots.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL RESULTS

This area does not have a shared public space, like a plaza, leading to fewer visitors lingering and less activity during the day. The buildings in the area do not have distinctive architecture, so visitors are less likely to remember and return to the area. The sidewalks in the area are narrow and do not have many trees or other plantings, which makes them feel unpleasant and uninviting. 13th Avenue’s overall node score is 3/10 and 11th & Ogden’s node score is 5/10.

13TH AVE TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide places to sit and eat outside
- Keep existing and support new local business
- Prioritize building edges and memorable buildings
- Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor
- Slow down vehicular traffic
- Widen sidewalks and reduce driveways

11TH & OGDEN TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Replace vacant/parking lots with new buildings
- Encourage a variety of retail, business, and housing
- Provide more trees and shade
- Promote windows and visibility at the ground floor
- Widen sidewalks and reduce driveways
- Slow down vehicular traffic

PREVIOUS PLANS

The Capitol Hill/Cheesman Park Neighborhood Plan from 1993 covers the Capitol Hill and Cheesman Park neighborhoods. The plan recommended continuing to provide diverse housing options, maintaining the historic character while promoting the distinct nature of different subareas, and improving the retail areas, mobility systems, and public spaces in the neighborhoods. These recommendations continue to be relevant and are consistent with the policies in this East Central Area Plan.

The Golden Triangle Neighborhood Plan from 2014 covers the Civic Center neighborhood and the surrounding blocks, including the area between Broadway and the alley between Lincoln Street and Sherman Street in Capitol Hill. The plan recommends improving the urban design and multi-modal transportation along Broadway and Lincoln Street, and strengthening the connection between Golden Triangle and Capitol Hill. These recommendations continue to be advanced in this East Central Area Plan.

The Civic Center District Plan from 2005 covers the Civic Center area, including the State Capitol grounds and its immediate surroundings. The plan recommends improving urban design and pedestrian and bike safety in the area. These recommendations still apply and are advanced in this East Central Area Plan.
See POLICY L6: Update standards and guidelines for the mixed use areas of Capitol Hill.

The Design Guidelines for Capitol Hill/Uptown – R-4/OD-1 were adopted before the Denver Zoning Code and need modernization to meet the community’s goals for urban design.

   1. These need to align better with the 2010 Denver Zoning Code and current trends and issues.
   2. Many guidelines may be applicable and able to be carried forward.
   3. Use new development (past 10 years) as a way to critique the standards and update as necessary.
   4. Consider whether the recommended Design Standards and Guidelines for Centers and Corridors (see Policy L8) could be a replacement or if this area still warrants their own document and process.
   5. Particular concerns with multi-unit and mixed use construction from the neighborhood workshop included: materials, ground floor design, variation in massing and variation in details.

Direct growth to specific areas including Colfax Avenue, Sherman Street and neighborhood nodes, in exchange for community benefits.

Proximity to Downtown and transit makes the northern and western portions of Capitol Hill appropriate locations for growth, consistent with the vision of this plan.

A. For Colfax Avenue-related properties, see Part 4.
   B. Consider the following priorities for community benefits:
      1. Implementation of the 5280 Trail design along this stretch of Sherman Street.
      2. Improved streetscape and activation of the ground floor level.
      3. Preservation of existing community-serving uses, such as grocery stores, in new development.
      4. Additional housing units, with a percentage of affordable units.

Advance recommendations from the Golden Triangle Neighborhood Plan for the Broadway/Lincoln corridor.

This plan replaces the Golden Triangle Neighborhood Plan of 2014 within Capitol Hill. Recommendations from that plan that are still relevant to the area west of the alley between Lincoln Street and Sherman Street are carried forward by this plan, creating an opportunity to capitalize on the cultural facilities and creative uses within the Golden Triangle neighborhood when transitioning to Capitol Hill.

A. Update the D-GT zone district and Golden Triangle design guidelines to ensure that the height and overall mass of new development preserves the neighborhood’s design context and is compatible with adjacent, smaller-scale buildings and promotes a high-quality pedestrian experience.
   1. Continue to allow a maximum building height of 16 stories along Broadway and Lincoln Street.

B. Allow for and promote a range of arts-related land uses, to preserve the distinctive artistic character and cultivate a new “creative class” of artists to enrich the neighborhood

C. Enhance the current configuration of the Broadway/ Lincoln couplet by introducing new streetscapes, “parklet” spaces, enhancements and mobility improvements that create a unified Grand Boulevard.
CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS

CH-L4

Improve transitions to historic districts and properties.

The historic integrity of landmarked properties can be negatively impacted by nearby development that does not transition appropriately.

A. Modify the Denver Zoning Code to include transition requirements for landmarked properties in mixed-use zone districts.
   1. Consider treating landmark buildings and districts as “Protected Districts” in the DZC (see Policy L8).

CH-L5

Promote the character of the Civic Center area through appropriate uses and quality design.

This plan replaces the Civic Center District Plan of 2005 within (North) Capitol Hill. However, some recommendations from that plan remain relevant and should be advanced to enhance the unique civic and cultural character of the Civic Center area located west of Grant Street between 13th Avenue and 16th Avenue.

A. Maintain the strong presence of government uses in the area mixed with some private uses.
B. Update the D-CV zone district and adopt design standards and guidelines to promote development consistent with the area’s historic character.
   1. Orient development to the axis connecting the Capitol and the City and County Building.
   2. Maintain the integrity of the Civic Center landmark district.
C. Maintain the Civic Center Height Restrictions and State Capitol and City Park – Natural History Museum view planes.
D. Enhance the Sherman Street streetscape to promote views of the Capitol and provide a more pleasant approach to the Capitol for pedestrians and cyclists.
E. Require parking structures to have active ground floor uses and high-quality design.
**CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**See POLICY E3: Partner with Denver Public Schools, the Downtown Denver Partnership, and other major area employers/projects in connecting East Central residents to job opportunities.**

Capitol Hill has lower education rates (68% with a college degree) than the average for the East Central Area, and lower average wages ($38,000) than East Central or Denver as a whole. In addition, the presence of the multiple DPS properties in the neighborhood provides an opportunity, along with proximity to Downtown Denver and the Uptown Hospitals, to find unique partnerships to provide training and access to high-quality jobs.

A. Through the medical facilities working group (discussed in Policy ED 1), identify training needs and potential partnerships with DPS and other higher education institutions to help provide the training.
   1. Identify potential facilities to house the training, including any underused DPS facilities in the area.

B. Work with Downtown Denver Partnership to develop a program to identify workforce training needs among downtown businesses, and ultimately connect the businesses to job trainees and seekers in the area.

**See POLICY E2: Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.**

In Capitol Hill, 44% of renter households and 29% of owner households are cost-burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. 79% of Capitol Hill households are renters. According to Blueprint Denver’s Vulnerability to Displacement measure, all areas of Capitol Hill are considered vulnerable to displacement due to the high percentage of renters and median income below Denver’s median.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

**See POLICY E4: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.**

While Capitol Hill has a high percentage of middle- and high-density housing (97% of units are attached or multi-unit), the neighborhood is lacking in larger unit sizes (74% of units are studios and one-bedrooms) and homeownership opportunities (21% of households are owner-occupied). Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this Plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

A. Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.

B. Encourage more family-friendly development.

**See POLICY E9: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.**

Capitol Hill has approximately 840 subsidized units, many of which could be at jeopardy of expiring over the next 20 years. Further, Capitol Hill has many aging, small multi-unit buildings that provide an opportunity for conversion to income-restricted housing or ownership.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.
CAPITOL HILL
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

Capitol Hill contains many wide, high-speed roads that residents called out as difficult to cross, including Colfax Ave, 13th Ave, 14th Ave, Broadway, and Lincoln St. Repurposing space for people traveling without a car helps to provide more options and a safer environment for all. An average of 54% of commuters in Capitol Hill drive alone to work, representing one of the best opportunities to further the City’s Mobility Action Plan goal of 50% or less SOV trips citywide by 2030.

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority. Also see Colfax Ave chapter.
B. Broadway – Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Priority
C. Corona Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
D. Downing Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
E. Lincoln Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
F. 6th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
G. 8th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
H. 12th Avenue – Transit and Bike Priority. Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
I. 13th Avenue – Pedestrian Priority
J. 14th Avenue – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority

See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

Less than 10% of Capitol Hill survey respondents noted the area as being very easy for biking, with a number stating current conditions make biking fairly easy. Bike crashes are concentrated in Capitol Hill relative to other East Central neighborhoods, primarily near Colfax and Broadway/Lincoln, as well as east/west routes throughout the neighborhood. Prioritizing space and designing safer intersections for cyclists helps improve safety for all modes while allowing people of all ages and abilities to bike.

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Upgrade planned conventional bike lanes on Washington St. and Clarkson St. to a protected bike lane, due to safety benefits of greater separation from auto traffic, and install new crossings.
B. Upgrade Denver Moves: Bikes shared roadway to bike lanes on 12th Ave. between Broadway and Cheesman Park
C. Install Denver Moves: Bikes recommendation of a neighborhood bikeway on 7th Avenue between Broadway and Williams St.
D. Extend proposed Grant St. protected bike lane, currently planned from 20th Ave. to 11th Ave., several blocks further south to 7th Ave. to ensure the project ties into the Cherry Creek Trail and Broadway multimodal project improvements.
E. Upgrade shared roadway to neighborhood bikeway on Sherman St. between Colfax and 20th Ave. to complete this leg of the 5280 Loop.

See POLICY M3: Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Conduct corridor study that includes 11th Ave. and 12th Ave. to determine community preference and best placement for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements, with consideration for the success and community support for the COVID-19 Shared Street implemented on 11th Ave. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Section 2.4.
1. Address the narrow conditions between Logan St and Grant St to create a continuous facility and consider protective elements at busy intersections, such as Broadway.
2. Consider destinations and connections, particularly at Cherry Creek Trail to the west and Cheesman Park to the east.
B. Study the feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on 9th between Broadway and Colorado Blvd. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure improvements
C. Study feasibility of adding a protected bike lane on 14th between Broadway and Colorado
D. Study the feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on Pennsylvania St between 9th and 20th Aves.
CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS

CH-M4

See POLICY M4: Install new sidewalks

While the majority of Capitol Hill survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy or fairly easy to walk in, several sections of sidewalk in the neighborhood are substandard width (below 4 ft).

A. Bring sidewalks up to standard in the Capitol Hill neighborhood.

CH-M5

See POLICY M5: Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings

A concentration of crashes involving pedestrians occur in the area, specifically near Colfax and Broadway/Lincoln, and 13th Ave.

A. Lincoln Street at 11th and 12th Avenues
B. Broadway at 10th, 11th, and 12th Avenues
C. Colfax Avenue at Lincoln, Pennsylvania, and Downing Streets
D. 8th Avenue at Grant, Washington, and Clarkson Streets
E. 11th Avenue at Grant, Washington, and Clarkson Streets
F. 13th Avenue at Washington and Clarkson Streets
G. 14th Avenue at Washington and Clarkson Streets

CH-M6

See POLICY M6: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Washington Street between 8th and 11th Avenues (bike crossing priority)
   1. Priority intersection: 9th Avenue due to grocery and other businesses along 9th Avenue and existing signals at 9th Avenue, Corona, and Downing Streets
B. Sherman Street at 7th, 8th, and 10th Avenues.
C. 10th Avenue at Corona and Downing Streets.

For a complete list of strategies, refer to Section 2.3 Mobility.

BACKGROUND

While the majority of Capitol Hill survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy or fairly easy to walk in, several sections of sidewalk in the neighborhood are substandard width (below 4 ft).
CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS

MOBILITY

See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

The Capitol Hill neighborhood has a medium high transit score and high transit propensity — in other words, investing in transit frequency and infrastructure in this area would likely yield significant increases in ridership. Approximately 90% of sidewalks in the neighborhood are greater than 4 feet wide, providing a complete network that facilitates easy access across different ways of travel.

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Broadway
   3. Lincoln Street

B. Advance implementation of Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. 12th Avenue Between Broadway and Cheesman Park

C. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 8th Avenue

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a full list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install customer amenities at priority locations:
   1. Colfax Avenue at Broadway and Downing St
   2. Lincoln Street at 7th Ave
   3. Broadway at 9th and 13th Ave
   4. 12th Avenue at Washington and Downing Streets

Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the East Central area, Capitol Hill has the second highest concentration of vehicular crashes; the area as a whole has nearly double the citywide rate of crashes per resident. Crashes involving bikes and pedestrians similarly are concentrated in the neighborhood. This neighborhood also has some of the highest volume arterial streets in the area, with Broadway, Lincoln, and Colfax all carrying over 20,000 vehicles per day, and 13th, 14th, and 8th Avenues carrying over 17,000 vehicles per day.

Priority Locations for Capitol Hill (see a full list of strategies in Chapter 2.3 Mobility):

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Washington Street from Colfax to 14th
   3. Ogden Street from Colfax to 14th
   4. 13th Avenue from Broadway to Grant Street, Pennsylvania to Clarkson Streets, and Ogden to Marion Streets
   5. Lincoln Street from 12th to 13th Avenues
   6. 11th Avenue from Emerson to Corona Streets
   7. 9th Avenue from Ogden to Marion Streets
   8. Corona Street from 10th to 8th Avenues

B. Schools
   1. Dora Moore ECE-8 School
   2. Morey MS/Denver School of Innovation and Sustainable Design
   3. Denver Justice High School
   4. Contemporary Learning Academy

C. Grocery Stores
   1. King Soopers
   2. Trader Joe’s

D. Parks
   1. Governors Park
   2. Quality Hill Park

CH-M9
See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes and recreation centers

CH-M10
Improve curbside management strategies in Capitol Hill

An average of 22% of households in Capitol Hill do not have a vehicle, double the citywide average of 11%. However, curb space is in high demand in this area and many residents are concerned about on-street parking availability.

A. See Policy M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources
B. See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the City’s strategic parking goals

CH-M11
See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 (Mobility).

CH-M12
See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals

Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, and sidewalks in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 (Mobility).
CAPITOL HILL RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY CH-Q1
See POLICY Q2: Develop new Contemporary Parkways that connect the community to open space, parks and recreational assets, as well as serve multiple community functions.

Several corridors in Capitol Hill, including 9th Avenue, 12th Avenue, and Sherman Street, are opportunities to implement the Contemporary Parkway Concept.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

POLICY CH-Q2
See POLICY Q5: Strengthen the existing tree canopy and increase tree canopy coverage within the public right-of-way.

Tree canopy in the East Central area is notably missing along major transportation and commercial corridors and residential streets within the Capitol Hill neighborhood. A healthy tree canopy along sidewalks and within the public right-of-way reduces the discomfort for pedestrians.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

POLICY CH-Q3
Increase recreational programming for all ages and interests, particularly children and youth, in Governors Park.

Residents enjoy the parks and amenities but would like to see activation of underused park spaces such as Governors Park.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

POLICY CH-Q4
See POLICY Q6: Protect and preserve the existing tree canopy in all redevelopment efforts

Capitol Hill is a neighborhood with a lower than average tree canopy percentage. The neighborhood has also witnessed a high level of redevelopment in recent years which often results in the damage or destruction of the existing tree canopy on private property.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

BACKGROUND
Residents enjoy the parks and amenities but would like to see activation of underused park spaces such as Governors Park.

Several corridors in Capitol Hill, including 9th Avenue, 12th Avenue, and Sherman Street, are opportunities to implement the Contemporary Parkway Concept.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

BACKGROUND
Tree canopy in the East Central area is notably missing along major transportation and commercial corridors and residential streets within the Capitol Hill neighborhood. A healthy tree canopy along sidewalks and within the public right-of-way reduces the discomfort for pedestrians.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

BACKGROUND
Capitol Hill is a neighborhood with a lower than average tree canopy percentage. The neighborhood has also witnessed a high level of redevelopment in recent years which often results in the damage or destruction of the existing tree canopy on private property.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life
3.3.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: 11TH & OGDEN
INFILL AND INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

- Improved intersections with bulb-outs
- Increased tree canopy and pedestrian amenity
- Mixed-Use infill with active ground floor uses
- Incentive Areas - height shown only available if community benefit provided
- Mixed-Use infill on former Whole Foods site with active ground floor uses
- Mixed-Use infill on Snarf’s parking lot with active ground floor uses

East Central Area Plan | Part 3 Neighborhoods of East Central

195
3.4 CITY PARK WEST

3.4.1 PLAN ON A PAGE

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

22nd Avenue – Make 22nd Avenue into a contemporary parkway with improved landscaping and water quality treatments. See Policy CPW-Q3.

Stabilize Residents – Reduce the risk of involuntary displacement for residents of City Park West. See Policy CPW-E4.

Uptown Healthcare District – Work with the hospitals to bring new jobs and housing while ensuring they continue to be good neighbors. See Policy CPW-L1 and Policy CPW-E1.

17th Avenue – Improve safety and make 17th Avenue a better place to walk and take transit by transforming the street. See Policy CPW-M1.

16th Avenue and Park Avenue – Make crossing Park Avenue safer for bikes and pedestrians while enhancing the small triangle parks. See Policy CPW-M2.

Historic Architecture – Ensure existing landmarks are protected and deploy new tools to preserve valuable buildings. See Policy CPW-L2 and Policy CPW-L3.
3.4.2 OVERVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALS

Era of construction - City Park West is one of East Central's more diverse neighborhoods in terms of building construction dates. 9% of the neighborhood is still vacant or parking lots, which opens up some opportunity for new construction. 60% of all buildings were built prior to 1925, but 10% of all new buildings have occurred since 2001.

Land use - 50% of the neighborhood is currently being occupied by residential uses, 25% of which is multi-unit housing, 21% single-unit and only 3% two-unit. The hospital campuses makeup 23% of the neighborhood’s uses and 20% is occupied by commercial/office and retail mixes.

Zoning - Most of the neighborhood (58%) is zoned residentially when combined (MU-34%, SU-14%, and TU-10%), 20% is zoned for campus/hospital, and 20% is zoned for a mix of uses. The remaining 2% is zoned open space for the triangle parks located along Park Ave.
3.4.3 PRESERVING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

STREET PATTERN
City Park West has only one one-way pair – the east-west pair of 17th and 18th Avenues. It does have the significant two-way five lane arterial of York St, which is a barrier between the neighborhood and City Park. It also has three two-way collectors: Downing Street, Franklin Street and 23rd Avenue. Of the 12 north-south streets in the neighborhood, nine are quiet, discontinuous or local streets. Of the seven east-west streets, four are quiet, discontinuous streets. Consequently, the neighborhood has a large proportion of livable streets.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE
The neighborhood has no real parks within it other than City Park which lies just outside of the neighborhood study boundary. The small triangular parks along Park Ave have potential to be usable pocket parks, which could be of great value to the neighborhood, but are presently little more than left-over spaces.

OVERLAYS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS
City Park Mountain View Ordinance which establishes a rising height cap from the west face of the Museum of Nature and Science to the edge of downtown along Broadway. Other overlays include pockets of UO-3 (Historic Structure Use Overlay), UO-1 (Adult Use Overlay), and UO-2 (Billboard Overlay). Historic districts include Wyman, a couple blocks surrounding Lafayette Street, and between Race and Vine Streets north of 21st Avenue. There are three “Areas of Significance” determined by the Discover Denver team that should be studied further.

VISUAL LANDMARKS
St. Joseph’s Hospital, Kaiser’s Franklin Clinic, Presbyterian/Saint Luke’s Hospital, and Saint Ignatius Loyola church just outside of the neighborhood study boundary and at the neighborhood’s northeast gateway.
3.4.4 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & URBAN QUALITY TOOL

PREVIOUS PLANS

The Uptown Neighborhood Plan from 1986 covers the North Capitol Hill and City Park West neighborhoods. The plan recommended encouraging mixed-use development, improving the urban design in the neighborhood, providing a range of housing types, facilitating multimodal transportation, strengthening local businesses, and better connecting the neighborhood to parks. These recommendations continue to be relevant and are consistent with the policies in this East Central Area Plan.

The Uptown Healthcare District Plan Update from 2007 covers the hospital campus and surrounding areas in City Park West. The plan includes recommendations for the redevelopment of the former Children’s Hospital site and for how to ensure future hospital development is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. While the Children’s Hospital redevelopment has been largely completed, the other recommendations continue to be relevant and advanced in this East Central Area Plan.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL RESULTS

Traffic speeding and some areas of surface parking right at the sidewalk make the node less pedestrian friendly than other nodes in the planning area, scoring a 5/10 in pedestrian comfort. The overall node score is average with the rest of the planning area, having a good mix of uses, greater tree canopy, and more cafe seating. The smaller scale and historic buildings add to the charm of the area, scoring 6/10 in memorable environment. This area is quite bustling with activity in the evenings, with many food and beverage options, but could use more day-time community serving options, scoring it a 6/10 in bustling with activity.

TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Keep existing and support new local business
- Provide places to sit and eat outside
- Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor
- Promote windows and visibility at the ground floor
- Make crossing the street easier
- Slow down vehicular traffic

17TH AVE NODE - City Park West’s primary commercial node is the 17th Ave corridor, also known as “Restaurant Row.” This corridor has bountiful options for retail and dining but could use a greater mix of residential/office to diversify its active hours. The UQT survey results showed that pedestrian crossing of 17th is difficult due to high traffic speed and volume.
CITY PARK WEST
RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure development in the Uptown Healthcare District promotes the success of the medical uses and maintains compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

This plan replaces the Uptown Healthcare District Plan Update of 2007 within City Park West. While much of the plan deals with the redevelopment of the former Children’s Hospital site which has been largely completed, some recommendations are still relevant for the area between Downing and High Streets and between 18th and 21st Avenues.

A. Promote hospital zoning that provides clarity and predictability for future healthcare development and ensures that appropriate transitions between the hospital districts and adjacent residential districts are respected.
   1. Rezone hospital zone districts to appropriate non-hospital zone districts if hospital uses are no longer present.

B. Develop circulation patterns for the healthcare uses that do not adversely impact the surrounding residential communities

C. Identify shared open space and programs with overarching theme of health and wellness:
   1. Small pockets of open space with workout equipment for all to use.
   2. Community garden plots and/or container gardens.
   3. Offer free health and wellness clinics.
   4. Sponsor neighborhood fitness and wellness classes, such as yoga, tai chi, meditation, etc.

Improve transitions to historic districts and properties.

The historic integrity of landmarked properties can be negatively impacted by nearby development that does not transition appropriately.

A. Modify the Denver Zoning Code to include transition requirements for landmarked properties in mixed-use zone districts.
   1. Consider treating landmark buildings and districts as “Protected Districts” in the DZC (see Policy L8).
   2. Consider updating and expanding the DO-3 (Design Overlay 3 for Lafayette Street), which was developed in concert with developers and neighbors and provides specific language with regards to how new development should transition sensitively to the Humboldt Street Historic District.
CITY PARK WEST RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Consider additional protection for buildings that have architectural merit, but are not landmarked in Residential Office zone districts.

City Park West includes significant architecture that should be protected, such as Victorians and Denver Squares. Some of these do not currently fall within an historic district and therefore, additional tools should be considered.

A. Consider a program, like the Historic Structure Use Overlay (UO-3), that encourages protection of significant architecture that contributes to the neighborhood (Victorians, Denver Squares, etc.) by allowing additional uses.

B. Consider conservation overlays or other tools to discourage demolition and ensure additions and new construction are compatible with the neighborhood character (see Policy L9).

B. Consider conservation overlays or other tools to discourage demolition and ensure additions and new construction are compatible with the neighborhood character (see Policy L9).

C. Expansion of existing mixed-use areas should be discouraged, however there are several institutional uses in this part of City Park West that may be appropriate for expanded uses if they become vacant and historic buildings are preserved (See Policy L2).

D. Provide support for community-serving businesses at these locations (See Policies ED 4, 5, 6, & 7).

Promote and protect the existing small commercial areas north of 21st Avenue.

There are several small multi-tenant retail buildings in City Park West north of 21st Avenue (22nd Ave. and Lafayette St., 22nd Ave. and Humboldt St., 21st Ave. and York St.). These buildings provide space for community-serving retail uses but are too small to be designated as Local Centers on the place map. The continued success of these areas and businesses is important for providing access to services, preserving neighborhood character, and achieving the community’s vision for the area.

A. Maintain appropriate, small-scale, compatible mixed-use zoning on these sites. Consider requirements for maintaining retail uses on the ground floors of buildings.

B. Ensure allowed building forms, uses, and other regulations promote compatibility with the surrounding residential areas, while providing for desired uses to locate and be successful in these locations.

C. Provide support for community-serving businesses at these locations (See Policies ED 4, 5, 6, & 7).
CITY PARK WEST RECOMMENDATIONS

**POLICY E1**

See POLICY E1: Bolster the healthcare and wellness sector as the foundation for economic growth in the East Central Area.

City Park West is the home to St. Joseph’s Hospital and Presbyterian/St. Luke’s Hospital, along with many other providers of medical and related services. The continued strength of the medical sector provides an opportunity to support the growth and prosperity of the entire East Central area while limiting the detrimental impacts on surrounding residential areas.

**A.** Convene a working group of the Uptown district facilities, National Jewish Health, Rose Medical Center, Denver Health, and appropriate City staff.

**B.** Through the working group, address common issues.

**POLICY E2**

See POLICY E2: Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.

The hospitals in City Park West, combined with the abundance of Mixed Use, Main Street, and Residential Office zoning, make the neighborhood an ideal location for small professional services offices, especially medical.

**A.** Continue to support small office uses where they are currently allowed in Residential Office (RO) zone districts while ensuring they are compatible with existing neighborhood character.

**POLICY E3**

See POLICY E3: Partner with Denver Public Schools, the Downtown Denver Partnership, and other major area employers/projects in connecting East Central residents to job opportunities.

City Park West has higher poverty rates (34% in the southern portion, 15% in the northern portion) and higher unemployment rates (7% in the southern portion, 10% in the northern portion) than the averages for the East Central Area or Denver as a whole. In addition, the presence of the hospitals in the neighborhood provides an opportunity to find unique partnerships to provide training and access to high-quality jobs.

**A.** Through the medical facilities working group (discussed in Policy ED 1), identify training needs and potential partnerships with DPS and other higher education institutions to help provide the training.

1. Identify potential facilities to house the training, including any underused DPS facilities in the area.
In City Park West, 39% of renter households and 19% of owner households are cost-burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. Further, 71% of City Park West households are renters. According to Blueprint Denver’s Vulnerability to Displacement measure, the southern portion of City Park West is considered vulnerable to displacement due to the high percentage of renters and median income below Denver’s median.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

A. Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.

B. Integrate accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and missing middle housing in appropriate locations.

City Park West has a diverse range of housing costs and a high percentage of middle- and high-density housing (81% of units are attached or multi-unit). The neighborhood could benefit from more ownership opportunities (29% of households are owner-occupied). The northern part of the neighborhood that is predominantly single and two-unit residential is considered unaffordable according to the Housing + Transportation Index. In this area, the housing and transportation costs for a typical household in the region would exceed 45% of its income. This plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

Congress Park currently has approximately 880 income-restricted units. Increasing the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood provides the opportunity to give residents easy access to transit, services, and amenities. In addition, the hospitals in City Park West present a partnership opportunity to provide workforce housing that would be beneficial for both the hospitals and neighborhood residents.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

A. Partner with area hospitals, Denver Public Schools, and other major employers to create and/or fund affordable, workforce housing.

City Park West has approximately 700 subsidized units, many of which could be at jeopardy of expiring over the next 20 years. City Park West also has many smaller multi-unit buildings that provide an opportunity for conversion to income-restricted housing or ownership.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

See POLICY E9: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.

See POLICY E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

See POLICY E11: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.
CITY PARK WEST
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

City Park West contains three High Injury Network segments along Colfax, Park, and 17th Ave. The York/Josephine couplet was identified by the community as wide, high-speed, and difficult to cross. Repurposing space for people traveling without a car helps to provide more options and a safer environment for all. An average of 57.5% of commuters in City Park West drive alone to work, representing one of the best opportunities to further the City's Mobility Action Plan goal of 50% or less SOV trips citywide by 2030.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority Also see Colfax Ave chapter.
B. Downing Street - Transit and Pedestrian Priority
C. Josephine Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
D. York Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
E. 16th Avenue between Broadway and City Park Esplanade – Bicycle Priority
F. 17th – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
G. 18th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

Less than 10% of City Park West survey respondents noted the area as being very easy for biking. Bike crashes are concentrated in the neighborhood along Colfax Ave and High Injury Network segments on York Street and 16th and 17th Avenues. Prioritizing space and designing safer intersections for cyclists helps improve safety for all modes while allowing people of all ages and abilities to bike.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Upgrade existing Denver Moves: Bikes shared roadway to a high comfort bikeway on Franklin St. between 12th and 23rd Ave. due to connection between 16th Ave., Cheeseman Park, and the medical campus to the north.
B. Upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikes buffered bike lanes recommendation to a neighborhood bikeway or protected bike lane on 16th Ave. between Broadway and City Park Esplanade in the short-term and study the feasibility of significantly limiting vehicular access in the long-term
C. Upgrade 23rd Ave. from bike lane and sharrows to high comfort bikeway such as buffered or protected bike lanes, and focus on transition to 22nd Ave. Bike Lane

See POLICY M3: Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Study feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on Lafayette and Gaylord Streets between 12th and 16th Avenues.
Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Bring sidewalks up to standard in the City Park West neighborhood.

See POLICY M4: Install new sidewalks

About 25% of City Park West survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy to walk in, with most sidewalks at or above 4 feet in width. Pedestrian and bike crashes occur throughout the neighborhood, but are concentrated on wider, busier streets with faster traffic.

See POLICY M5: Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings

City Park West contains three High Injury Network segments along Colfax, Park, and 17th Ave. The York/Josephine couplet was identified by the community as wide, high-speed, and difficult to cross.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. 16th Avenue at Park Avenue
B. Colfax Avenue at Downing and York Streets
C. 17th Avenue at York Street
D. York Street at 23rd, 21st, and 18th Avenues

See POLICY M6: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings

There are two segments of road along 17th and 18th Ave with greater than 1/4 mile between crossings, which can create conditions that encourage unsafe crossings. City Park West contains three High Injury Network segments along Colfax, Park, and 17th Ave. The York/Josephine couplet was identified by the community as wide, high-speed, and difficult to cross.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a full list of strategies in Chapter 2.3 Mobility):

A. 17th Avenue between Williams and York Streets (pedestrian crossing priority)
   1. Priority intersection: Humboldt Street and Vine Street due to adjacent bus stop and proposed signal at Colfax Avenue and Vine Street in planned Colfax BRT
B. 23rd Avenue at Gaylord Street
CITY PARK WEST
RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY

See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

The City Park West neighborhood has a medium transit score and high transit propensity – by investing in transit frequency and infrastructure, transit could become a more attractive travel option for many residents. Approximately 85% of sidewalks in the neighborhood are greater than 4 feet wide, providing a fairly complete network that facilitates easy access across different ways of travel.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Park Avenue between Colfax/Franklin/Park and 20th Ave.

B. Advance implementation of Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. York Street Between 6th and 23rd (within the University Corridor in Denver Moves: Transit)

C. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 17th Avenue
   2. 18th Avenue between Broadway and York

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install customer amenities at priority locations
   1. Colfax Avenue at Franklin, Downing, and York Streets

BACKGROUND

CITY PARK WEST
MOBILITY

The City Park West neighborhood has a medium transit score and high transit propensity – by investing in transit frequency and infrastructure, transit could become a more attractive travel option for many residents. Approximately 85% of sidewalks in the neighborhood are greater than 4 feet wide, providing a fairly complete network that facilitates easy access across different ways of travel.
CITY PARK WEST
RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the East Central area, City Park West has the third highest concentration of vehicular crashes; the area as a whole has nearly double the citywide rate of crashes per resident. Crashes involving bicycles are particularly concentrated in this neighborhood, especially near the 16th Ave/Park and Colfax/Park intersections. High volume streets in this area include York Street, Colfax Avenue, and 17th Avenue with 19,000, 37,000, and 16,000 average daily trips, respectively.

Priority Locations for City Park West (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Humboldt Street from Colfax to 16th Avenue
   3. Park Avenue from Humboldt Street to Colfax
   4. 17th Avenue from Lafayette to Franklin Streets, Gilpin to Williams Streets, and Race to Gaylord Streets
   5. York Street from 17th Ave to Colfax

B. Primary and Secondary Schools
   1. Denver Center for 21st Century Learning at Wyman Middle School/High School

C. Hospitals and Recreation Centers
   1. Saint Joseph Hospital
   2. Presbyterian St Luke's Medical Center/Spalding Rehabilitation Hospital At PSLMC/Kindred Hospital-Denver

D. Parks
   1. City Park: Follow recommendations from City Park Master Plan to improve safety along the park’s internal roadways for people biking, walking, and rolling, and strategically pilot car free days for parts of the loop, like what is proposed for Cheeseman Park.
   2. Park Avenue Parks Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes and recreation centers

An average of 28.5% of households in City Park West do not have a vehicle, more than double the citywide average of 11%. Residents, workshop participants, and survey respondents noted the need for flexible and efficient curb use space to address current and future needs.

A. See Policy M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources
B. See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the City's strategic parking goals

See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals

Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, and sidewalks in the City Park West neighborhood, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 (Mobility).
CITY PARK WEST
RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY CPW-Q1
See POLICY Q1: Examine the role of Historic Park Avenue in the transportation network to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.

BACKGROUND Members of the community suggested that the parkway, which forms a border of City Park West, could play a key role in connecting people to open space, parks, and recreational assets.

POLICY CPW-Q2
See POLICY Q17: Incorporate design elements that activate public spaces and improve safety, particularly in areas that have historically seen higher rates of crime.

BACKGROUND One impact of higher crime can be mental distress, and a survey measuring mental distress showed higher rates in City Park West compared to the Denver average. City Park West also sees slightly higher rates of violent crime.

POLICY CPW-Q3
See POLICY Q2: Develop new Contemporary Parkways that connect the community to open space, parks and recreational assets, as well as serve multiple community functions.

BACKGROUND Several corridors in City Park West, including 16th Avenue and 22nd Avenue, are opportunities to implement the Contemporary Parkway concept.
3.4.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: PARK AVE

Activate and improve existing park spaces

Traffic diverters on 16th Ave

Dedicated pedestrian / bikeway crossing of park ave

Increased tree canopy

Activate and improve existing park spaces

Denver Fire Station 8
3.5 CITY PARK
3.5.1 PLAN ON A PAGE

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

City Park – Encourage continued utilization of park amenities while managing the impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. See Policy CIP-E1 and Policy CIP-Q1.

Calm Traffic – Improve safety by slowing cars and prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists. See Policy CIP-M9.

17th Avenue and Garfield Street – Connect the Garfield Street neighborhood bikeway into City Park with a safe crossing across 17th Avenue. See Policy CIP-M5.

Preserve Character – Ensure additions and new development are compatible while incorporating new types of housing into the neighborhoods. See Policy CIP-L1 and Policy CIP-E2.

Colfax Avenue and Colorado Boulevard – Incentivize new affordable housing by directing growth to the planned intersection of two BRT lines. See Policy CIP-E3 and Policy CIP-M7.
3.5.2 OVERVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALS

Era of construction - One of the most uniform neighborhoods in East Central, 88% of all buildings were built before 1945, and 67% were built between 1926 - 1945. Most of the new construction has occurred on Colfax Ave. and Colorado Blvd.

Land use – East High School makes up 11% of the neighborhood’s land-use, the Park is 56%, and residential uses make up 39%. Single-unit use is the predominate residential land-use at 20% but followed closely by multi-unit uses at 16%. Two-unit uses only make up 3% of the area.

Zoning - Most of the neighborhood (69%) is zoned Open Space, for the Park, Denver Zoo and Nature and Science Museum complexes. Only 24% is zoned for residential only uses (TU at 13% and MU at 11%). The remaining 5% is zoned for Mixed-Use (MS and MX) and is concentrated along Colfax Ave.
3.5.3 PRESERVING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

STREET PATTERN
Because of City Park, East High, and shifts in the street grid, only Colfax and 17th Avenues continue east-west beyond the neighborhood. Similarly, the only north-south streets that continue beyond the neighborhood are its bounding streets of Colorado Boulevard and York Street. This leaves virtually all of the neighborhood’s streets quiet and discontinuous. The Colfax corridor and popular Bluebird District is the neighborhood’s retail, entertainment, restaurant, and services center.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE
The neighborhood has only one park: City Park, a large regional park separated from the neighborhood by the barrier of the 5-lane 17th Avenue. Only a few interior cross streets have signalized pedestrian crossings into the Park: the Esplanade, Fillmore and Steele Streets. Along with City Park’s running paths and children’s play area, the newly built Carla Madison Recreation Center provides the neighborhood with excellent recreation facilities.

OVERLAYS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS
City Park View Plane Ordinance, and many blocks and individual properties are included in the UO-3 historic overlay. Historic districts include the City Park Esplanade and East High School. The core area of City Park neighborhood is identified as an “Area of Interest” that should be studied further for historic significance.

VISUAL LANDMARKS
East High School, City Park Pavilion, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver Zoo.
3.5.4 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & URBAN QUALITY TOOL

PREVIOUS PLANS

The East Colfax Plan from 2004 covers the blocks north and south of Colfax Avenue between Sherman Street and Colorado Boulevard. The plan recommended commercial and residential development and multi-modal transportation along Colfax Avenue with high-quality urban design that complements the surrounding neighborhoods. These recommendations continue to be relevant and are consistent with the policies in this East Central Area Plan.

BLUEBIRD DISTRICT - City Park’s primary commercial node is the Bluebird District along Colfax Avenue. This corridor has bountiful options for retail, dining and entertainment, but could use a greater mix of office or residential to diversify its active hours. The UQT survey results showed that pedestrian crossing of Colfax is difficult due to high traffic speed and volume.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL RESULTS

The area has some unscreened parking lots, which feel empty and uninviting at certain hours, scoring a 7/10 in bustling with activity. The buildings in the area do have distinctive architecture, which should be prioritized and added to, so that visitors are more likely to be reminded of their experience and continue to return to the area. The Bluebird district scored a 8/10 in memorable environment. The sidewalks in the area are close to the street and not well separated by greenery or plantings, which make them less pleasant and uninviting, scoring a 5/10 in pedestrian comfort.

TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Keep existing and support new local business
- Provide places to sit and eat outside
- Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor
- Provide more trees and shade
- Make crossing the street easier
- Add benches and greenery along the sidewalk
CITY PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY

CPL-L1

Prioritize land use policies that aim to maintain character in City Park.

BACKGROUND

City Park includes significant architecture that should be protected. Multiple tools should be considered to ensure additions and new development is compatible and the neighborhood character is retained.

A. Update regulations in residential zone districts to remove barriers to additions and renovations (see Policy L4).
B. Modify zoning regulations to create an incentive for preserving existing houses by allowing an additional unit if the existing house is preserved (see Policy L5).
C. Preserve existing multi-unit and mixed-use buildings that contribute to neighborhood character and ensure new buildings are designed to be compatible (see Policy L6).
D. Manage the scale and improve design quality of new construction in Low Residential Places (see Policy L7).
E. Update transition standards for Protected Districts (see Policy L8).
F. Consider Landmark designations where appropriate (see Policy L9).
CITY PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

CIP-E1

Promote the continued success of cultural institutions while managing the impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and park land.

The City Park neighborhood is home to several cultural institutions, including the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and the Denver Zoo, as well as events like Jazz in the Park. These institutions add to the cultural richness and quality of life in the neighborhood, the East Central area, and Denver as a whole. Their continued success is vital for achieving the vision for East Central, as long as that success does not negatively impact nearby residents.

A. Work with cultural institutions to identify their long-term goals for continued success and growth and develop plans with the community to achieve them.
B. Promote partnerships between cultural institutions and local businesses where there are opportunities for mutual benefit.
C. Encourage walking, biking, and transit to access cultural institutions to limit the impacts on neighborhoods from traffic and parking.

CIP-E2

See POLICY E11: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.

City Park would benefit from more ownership opportunities (40% of households are owner-occupied), and integration of more housing types would help to provide more attainable housing options than are currently available in the neighborhood today. Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

A. Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.
B. Integrate accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and missing middle housing in appropriate locations.

CIP-E3

See POLICY E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

City Park currently has approximately 150 income-restricted units. Increasing the number of income-restricted housing units in the neighborhood provides the opportunity to give residents easy access to transit, services, and amenities.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing
CITY PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

City Park contains High Injury Network segments near the periphery of the neighborhood along Colfax, Josephine, 17th Ave, and Colorado Boulevard. Repurposing space for people traveling without a car helps to provide more options and a safer environment for all. An average of 71% of commuters in City Park West drive alone to work; the citywide average is 70%. In order to meet City goals of fewer single occupancy vehicle trips and a safer environment for all, bold changes must be made to the current network.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
   Also see Colfax Ave chapter.
B. York Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
C. Josephine Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
D. Colorado Boulevard – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
   Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
E. 16th Avenue between Broadway and City Park Esplanade – Bicycle Priority
   Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
F. 17th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
G. 18th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

About 60% of survey respondents noted the City Park neighborhood as being very easy or fairly easy to bike. Bike crashes are concentrated in the neighborhood along Colfax Ave and other High Injury Network segments on 17th Ave, Josephine Street, and Colorado Boulevard. Prioritizing space and designing safer intersections for cyclists helps improve safety for all modes while allowing people of all ages and abilities to bike.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Reroute planned St Paul St. neighborhood bikeway to Steele St., due to signal at Colfax Ave. and Steele St., and extend Steele St. neighborhood bikeway between 6th and 17th Avenues
B. Upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikes buffered bike lanes recommendation to a neighborhood bikeway or protected bike lane on 16th Ave. between Broadway and City Park Esplanade in the short-term and study the feasibility of significantly limiting vehicular access in the long-term
C. Install planned Garfield St. Neighborhood Bikeway connecting City Park to the Cherry Creek Trail.
D. Upgrade 23rd Ave. from bike lane and sharrows to high comfort bikeway such as buffered or protected bike lanes, and focus on transition to 22nd Ave. Bike Lane

See POLICY M3: Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Improve crossing at 17th Ave and Colorado Blvd.
B. Study the feasibility of adding a neighborhood bikeway on Detroit between 6th and 17th
See POLICY M4: Install new sidewalks

About 25% of City Park survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy to walk in, however, a significant amount of sidewalks are below 4 feet in width, specifically between Colfax and 16th Avenues near Colorado Boulevard.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):
A. Install new sidewalks where they are missing in the City Park neighborhood
B. Bring sidewalks up to standard in the City Park neighborhood.

See POLICY M6: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings

City Park is bounded to the east by Colorado Boulevard, a wide, heavily trafficked street that creates a barrier for bicycle and pedestrian crossings. While crashes involving bikes in the neighborhood are concentrated along Colfax Ave, crashes involving pedestrians increase along Colorado Blvd and Colfax Ave.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):
A. Colfax Avenue at Detroit Street
B. Colorado Boulevard between Colfax and 23rd Avenues (bike and pedestrian crossing priority) Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
   1. Priority intersections: 17th Ave. due to City Park connections, speeding concerns, planned protected bike lane on 17th Ave., and “One Build” opportunity to coordinate with other projects in the area. 12th Ave. due to current bike volumes and crash statistics.
CITY PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

CIP-M7

POLICY

See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

BACKGROUND

The City Park neighborhood has a medium transit score and low transit propensity. Approximately 70% of sidewalks in the neighborhood are greater than 4 feet wide, though many sidewalks are completely missing along roads in City Park. This creates an unreliable network for connections to/from transit.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Colorado Boulevard Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

B. Advance implementation of Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. York Street (within the University Corridor in Denver Moves: Transit)
   2. Josephine Street

C. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 17th Avenue

CIP-M8

POLICY

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install customer amenities at priority locations
   1. Colfax Avenue at York Street, Josephine Street, and Colorado Boulevard
   2. 17th Avenue at City Park Esplanade Parkway
CITY PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes and recreation centers

Vehicular crashes in the City Park neighborhood concentrate at Colorado Boulevard/Colfax Ave and York St/Colfax Ave. Crashes involving bicycles are concentrated along Colfax and on approaches to City Park entrances. High volume streets in this area include York Street, Colfax Avenue, Colorado Boulevard, and 17th Avenue with 19,000, 32,000, 60,000, and 32,000 average daily trips, respectively.

Priority Locations for City Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. York Street from 17th Ave to Colfax
   3. Josephine Street from Colfax to 17th Ave
   4. Colorado Boulevard from 17th to 14th Avenues

B. Recreation Centers
   1. Carla Madison Recreation Center

C. Schools
   1. East High School

D. Grocery Stores
   1. Sprouts

E. Parks
   1. City Park: Follow recommendations from City Park Master Plan to improve safety along the park’s internal roadways for people biking, walking, and rolling. Consider piloting car free days where all, or part, of the City Park loop is closed to through traffic and open for people to walk, bike, and roll in. These pilots will inform a potential longer-term closure of the park loop, similar to Washington Park.

CIP-M10

Improve curbside management strategies in City Park

An average of 12% of households in City Park do not have a vehicle, almost equal to the citywide average of 11%. Residents, workshop participants, and survey respondents noted the need for flexible and efficient curb use space to address current and future needs.

A. See Policy M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources

B. See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the City’s strategic parking goals

CIP-M11

See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals

Transportation Demand Strategies can help to support necessary network and design changes in the City Park neighborhood to encourage mode shift towards walking, biking, rolling or taking transit versus driving a vehicle.

See a complete list of strategies in Chapter 2.3 Mobility.
CITY PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

CIP-Q1

**POLICY**

Increase recreational programming for all ages and interests, particularly children and youth, in City Park.

**BACKGROUND**

Residents enjoy the parks and amenities but would like to see better maintenance of existing facilities, additional amenities, and activation of underused park spaces.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

CIP-Q2

See POLICY Q8: Create a system of green streets and alleys to complement the network of existing Historic Parkways and new Contemporary Parkways and encourage sustainable water management practices including stormwater management, flood protection, water quality, runoff reduction, and water use.

The City Park neighborhood contains several low-lying areas where stormwater can accumulate during rain events and cause flooding with depths ranging from 12 inches to six feet.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

City Park Master Plan was updated by Denver Parks and Recreation in 2018, and it provides a vision to guide the preservation and improvement of City Park. The plan identifies repair and improvement to facilities, access, circulation, and infrastructure in balance with the continuity of park character. It addresses recreational and facility needs, and provides policy and implementation strategies to address short- and long-term priorities.
5.5.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: COLFAX AVE & COLORADO BLVD

- Promote development of small office space.
- Support creation of small businesses.
- Improved public space at transit stops.
- Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.
- Bolster the healthcare and wellness sector as the foundation for economic growth.
- Proposed Colfax BRT and center stations.
- Implement a height incentive program that allows additional height in specific areas in exchange for community benefit.
- Increase tree canopy.
- High capacity transit service on Colorado Blvd.
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: 17TH & GARFIELD

- Shared multi-use path (existing)
- Proposed bike path connecting in with City Park’s street and path system.
- Dedicated bike crossing
- Neighborhood Bikeway
- New signalized intersection with pedestrian crossings and median with pedestrian refuge area.
3.6 CHEESEMAN PARK

3.6.1 PLAN ON A PAGE

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

Transitions – Protect the historic character of the neighborhood by promoting appropriate transitions from mixed-use areas. See Policy CHP-L1.

14th Avenue – Provide an east-west bicycle route and improve pedestrian safety by transforming the street. See Policy CHP-M1.

13th Avenue and Vine Street – Improve the crossing to protect pedestrians visiting the shops at this intersection. See Policy CHP-M5.


Cheesman Park and Botanic Gardens – Promote access and utilization of the park and gardens while managing the impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. See Policy CHP-E1 and Policy CHP-Q1.

8th Avenue – Enhance pedestrian safety and transit function while making the street easier to cross. See Policy CHP-M1.
3.6.2 OVERVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALS

Era of construction - 72% of all buildings were built prior to 1925, and only 18% of buildings have been built since 2001. 4% of the neighborhood is still vacant, or is reserved for parking only, providing some space for newer infill to occur.

Land use – With 40% of the neighborhood being dedicated to Park and Cultural uses (Denver Botanic Gardens) the remainder of the neighborhood is primarily residential in use (54%), with the remaining 16% being a mix of uses mostly along Colfax Ave.

Zoning - Most of the neighborhood (53%) is zoned Multi-Unit with only a few small pockets (11%) being zoned for Single Unit Residential.
3.6.3 PRESERVING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

STREET PATTERN

This neighborhood, due to the large Cheesman Park and Denver Botanic Gardens at its center, has a number of quiet, discontinuous streets with only two one-way pairs as well as 8th Ave one-way - the half of a one-way pair on the neighborhood’s southern border. Of the seven east-west streets (not counting Colfax), four are quiet discontinuous two-way streets. Of the 12 north-south streets, 10 are quiet, two-way discontinuous streets.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE

Cheesman Park has one large park and the Denver Botanic Gardens – two major city attractions. The neighborhood has a small neighborhood node at 13th and Vine and the 9th and Downing node is on the border. Colfax Avenue and 6th Avenue (out of the neighborhood study area) serve as its other retail/entertainment centers.

OVERLAYS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

The area is overlaid by a small piece of the City Park Mountain View Ordinance and the Cheesman Park Mountain View ordinance which establish rising height caps from their points of origin at City Park’s Museum of Nature and Science and at Cheesman Park’s Cheesman Pavilion. Other overlays include UO-3 (Historic Structure Use Overlay), which encompasses most of the neighborhood and protects its historic assets by allowing some commercial uses in landmarked structures. Historic districts include Wyman, Humboldt Street, and East 7th Avenue.

VISUAL LANDMARKS

Cheesman Park pavilion, Boettcher Memorial Center, and the residential towers around Cheesman Park.
3.6.4 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & URBAN QUALITY TOOL

PREVIOUS PLANS

The Capitol Hill/Cheesman Park Neighborhood Plan from 1993 covers the Capitol Hill and Cheesman Park neighborhoods. The plan recommended continuing to provide diverse housing options, maintaining the historic character while promoting the distinct nature of different subareas, and improving the retail areas, mobility systems, and public spaces in the neighborhoods. These recommendations continue to be relevant and are consistent with the policies in this East Central Area Plan.

13TH AVE NODES - Cheesman Park’s primary commercial nodes are located along 13th Ave. and are fairly small in nature, only spanning one to two blocks each. The UQT proved out that 13th Ave. is a difficult pedestrian crossing, due to high speed traffic and volume.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL RESULTS

This area does not have enough local businesses that draw visitors, so it feels a bit empty and uninviting. The restaurants in the area do not have outdoor seating, which contributes to a lack of activity and excitement on the sidewalk, scoring a 2/10 in bustling with activity. This area is not well-lit at night and feels poorly maintained, leading to the area feeling unwelcoming, particularly to families with small children, scoring a 3/10 in memorable environment. There is a busy one-way street that makes the sidewalk feel uncomfortable, discouraging pedestrians from spending time there, scoring a 5/10 in pedestrian comfort.

13TH AVE TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide places to sit and eat outside
- Keep existing and support new local business
- Prioritize building edges and memorable buildings
- Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor
- Slow down vehicular traffic
- Widen sidewalks and reduce driveways
CHEESMAN PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve transitions to historic districts and properties.

The historic integrity of landmarked properties can be negatively impacted by nearby development that does not transition appropriately.

A. Modify the Denver Zoning Code to include transition requirements for landmarked properties in mixed-use zone districts.
   1. Consider treating landmark buildings and districts as “Protected Districts” in the DZC (see Policy L8).

B. Update regulations in residential zone districts to remove barriers to additions and renovations (see Policy L4).

C. Modify zoning regulations to create an incentive for preserving existing houses by allowing an additional unit if the existing house is preserved (see Policy L5).

D. Preserve existing multi-unit and mixed-use buildings that contribute to neighborhood character and ensure new buildings are designed to be compatible (see Policy L6).

E. Update transition standards for Protected Districts (see Policy L8).

F. Consider Landmark designations where appropriate (see Policy L9).

Prioritize land use policies that aim to maintain character in Cheesman Park.

Cheesman Park includes significant architecture that should be protected. Multiple tools should be considered to ensure additions and new development is compatible and the neighborhood character is retained.

A. Update regulations in residential zone districts to remove barriers to additions and renovations (see Policy L4).

B. Modify zoning regulations to create an incentive for preserving existing houses by allowing an additional unit if the existing house is preserved (see Policy L5).

C. Preserve existing multi-unit and mixed-use buildings that contribute to neighborhood character and ensure new buildings are designed to be compatible (see Policy L6).

D. Update transition standards for Protected Districts (see Policy L8).

E. Consider Landmark designations where appropriate (see Policy L9).
CHEESMAN PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

CHP-E1

Promote the continued success of cultural institutions while managing the impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and park land.

A. Work with cultural institutions to identify their long-term goals for continued success and growth and develop plans with the community to achieve them.

B. Promote partnerships between cultural institutions and local businesses where there are opportunities for mutual benefit.

C. Encourage walking, biking, and transit to access cultural institutions to limit the impacts on neighborhoods from traffic and parking.

CHP-E2

See POLICY E8: Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.

The Cheesman Park neighborhood is home to several cultural institutions, including the Denver Botanic Gardens, as well as popular events in Cheesman Park. These institutions add to the cultural richness and quality of life in the neighborhood, the East Central area, and Denver as a whole. Their continued success is vital for achieving the vision for East Central, as long as that success does not negatively impact nearby residents.

In Cheesman Park, 39% of renter households and 21% of owner households are cost-burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. Further, 64% of Cheesman Park households are renters. According to Blueprint Denver’s Vulnerability to Displacement measure, the eastern portion of Cheesman Park is considered vulnerable to displacement due to the high percentage of renters and median income below Denver’s median.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.
CHEESMAN PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY E9: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.

Eighty-eight percent of Cheesman Park’s housing units are in attached or multi-unit structures. These may provide an opportunity for conversion to income-restricted housing or ownership.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

See POLICY E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

Cheesman Park currently has approximately 250 income-restricted units. Increasing the number of income-restricted housing units in the neighborhood provides the opportunity to give residents easy access to transit, services, and amenities.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

See POLICY E11: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.

Cheesman Park has a diverse range of housing costs and a high percentage of middle- and high-density housing (88% of units are in attached or multi-unit structures). The neighborhood is skewed slightly towards smaller unit sizes (55% are studios and one-bedrooms) and could benefit from more ownership opportunities (36% of households are owner-occupied). Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this Plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

A. Increase access to homeownership for low- and moderate-income renters by implementing citywide programs and working with partners to create new pilot programs.

B. Encourage more family-friendly development.
See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

Cheesman Park contains many wide, high-speed roads that residents called out as difficult to cross, including Colfax Ave, 13th Ave, 14th Ave, and York St. Repurposing space for people traveling without a car helps to provide more options and a safer environment for all. An average of 64% of commuters in Cheesman Park drive alone to work, representing one of the city’s better opportunities to further the City’s Mobility Action Plan goal of 50% or less SOV trips citywide by 2030.

See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

About 60% of Cheesman Park survey respondents noted the area as being very easy or fairly easy for biking. Bike crashes are concentrated in Cheesman Park near Colfax and entrances to Cheesman Park, especially along 12th Ave. Prioritizing space and designing safer intersections for cyclists helps improve safety for all modes while allowing people of all ages and abilities to bike.

See POLICY M3: Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
   Also see Colfax Ave chapter.
B. Downing Street - Transit and Pedestrian Priority
C. Josephine Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
D. York Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
E. 6th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
F. 7th Avenue Parkway between Colorado Boulevard and Williams Street – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority
   Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
G. 8th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority
H. 12th Avenue – Transit and Bicycle Priority
   Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements
I. 13th Avenue – Pedestrian Priority
J. 14th Avenue – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Upgrade existing Denver Moves: Bikes shared roadway to a high comfort bikeway on Franklin St. between 12th and 23rd Ave. due to connection between 16th Ave., Cheeseman Park, and the medical campus to the north.
B. Upgrade entrance to Cheesman Park at Williams and 13th Ave., install new signals on Williams at 13th and 18th Aves., upgrade progression signal at 14th Ave., upgrade bicycle crossing at Colfax Ave. intersection
C. Upgrade Denver Moves: Bikes shared roadway to bike lanes on 12th Ave. between Broadway and Cheesman Park
D. Upgrade Denver Moves: Bikes recommendation of a neighborhood bikeway to a protected bike lane on 7th Ave. Parkway between Colorado Boulevard and Williams St.
**CHEESMAN PARK RECOMMENDATIONS**

**MOBILITY**

See **POLICY M4**: Install new sidewalks.

Cheesman Park has a complete network of sidewalks, save for some missing in Cheesman Park, but there are areas of substandard sidewalk with narrow widths or long distances between signalized crossings.

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Bring sidewalks up to standard in the Cheesman Park neighborhood.

See **POLICY M5**: Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings

While the majority of Cheesman Park survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy or fairly easy to walk in, a concentration of crashes involving pedestrians occur in the area, specifically near Colfax Ave, 14th Ave, 13th Ave, and 12th Ave.

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue at Downing and York Streets
B. York Street at 12th Avenue

See **POLICY M6**: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings

Cheesman Park has several areas with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic and lacking intersection safety infrastructure. While these locations are concentrated along 13th and 14th Ave, 8th Ave was identified by the community as a particularly difficult street to cross.

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. York Street at 9th Avenue
B. 8th Avenue between York and Downing Streets (bike and pedestrian crossing priority).
   1. Priority intersection: Williams Street due to neighborhood bikeway and entrance to Cheesman Park.
C. 10th Avenue at Downing Street
D. 14th Avenue between High St. and Colorado Blvd. (Alley) (short term: pedestrian crossing priority, long term: bike crossing priority).
   1. Priority intersections: Race Street due to existing signal at Colfax Avenue and recommended crossing at 17th Avenue.
E. 13th Avenue at Vine Street
CHEESMAN PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cheesman Park neighborhood has a medium transit score and high transit propensity – in other words, investing in transit frequency and infrastructure in this area would likely yield significant increases in ridership. Approximately 70% of sidewalks in the neighborhood are greater than 4 feet wide, with significant gaps of missing sidewalk along roads in Cheesman Park. This provides a fairly well-connected network to travel between transportation choices.

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Avenue

B. Advance implementation of Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. York Street (within the University Corridor in Denver Moves: Transit)
   2. Josephine Street between 6th and 17th
   3. 12th Avenue Between Broadway and Cheesman Park Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

C. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 8th Avenue

See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install customer amenities at priority locations
   1. Colfax Avenue at Downing, Franklin, and York Streets
   2. 12th Avenue at Downing Street Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

CHP-M7

CHP-M8
CHEESMAN PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes and recreation centers.

Vehicular crashes in Cheesman park are concentrated in the northern section of the neighborhood, near Colfax Ave. Crashes involving pedestrians and bikes are similarly grouped along Colfax, but are also distributed throughout the neighborhood, particularly near entrances to Cheesman Park. This neighborhood also has high traffic arterials, including Colfax, Downing, 13th Ave, 14th Ave, 12th Ave, 8th Ave and York St with 37,000, 10,000, 14,000, 17,000, 15,000, 15,000, 15,000 average daily trips, respectively.

Priority Locations for Cheesman Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. 13th Avenue from Corona to Marion Streets and High to Vine Streets
   3. 9th Avenue from Ogden to Marion Streets

B. Parks
   1. Cheesman Park: Consider piloting car free days where all, or part, of the Cheeseman Park loop is closed to through traffic and open for people to walk, bike, and roll in. These pilots will inform a potential longer-term closure of the park loop, similar to Washington Park. Denver Parks and Rec and RTD are key stakeholders for this recommendation as they manage the park and operate the Route 10 on park roads, respectively.

Improve curbside management strategies in Cheesman Park

An average of 15% of households in Cheesman Park do not have a vehicle, just over the citywide average of 11%. However, curb space is in high demand in this area and many residents are concerned about on-street parking availability.

A. See Policy M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources

B. See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the City’s strategic parking goals

See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals

Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, and sidewalks in the Cheesman Park neighborhood, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See a complete list of strategies in Chapter 2.3 Mobility.
CHEESMAN PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Increase recreational programming for all ages and interests, particularly children and youth, in Cheesman Park.

Residents enjoy the parks and amenities but would like to see better maintenance of existing facilities, additional amenities, and activation of underused park spaces.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life
3.6.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: 13TH AND VINE

- Curb extensions
- New signal
- Parklet
- Stormwater Retention
- Additional bike parking
KEY OPPORTUNITIES

National Jewish Health – Work with the hospital to ensure future growth is compatible with the neighborhood while allowing the hospital to thrive. See Policy COP-E1.

Neighborhood Park – Create a new neighborhood park with a community garden to meet park access goals. See Policy COP-Q2.

Colfax Avenue and Colorado Boulevard – Provide enhanced transit facilities and improved crossings at the junction of two future transit lines. See Policy COP-M7 and Policy COP-M8.

Character Preservation – Incentivize preservation of existing houses while sensitively integrating new units to achieve affordability goals. See Policy COP-L1 and Policy COP-E5.

Josephine and York Streets – Transform the streets to provide safer crossings and access to the park and gardens while improving transit. See Policy COP-M1.

7th Avenue – Preserve the historic character of the parkway while making walking and biking easier and safer. See Policy COP-M1.
3.7.2 OVERVIEW

NEIGHBORHOOD VITALS

Era of construction - The most uniform neighborhood in East Central, 88% of all buildings were built before 1945, and 70% were built between 1926 - 1945. Most of the new construction has occurred on the edges of the neighborhood, along Colfax Ave and Colorado Blvd.

Land use – The neighborhood is predominately made up of residential uses, 82% when combined, and 61% is single-unit use exclusively. The remainder of the neighborhood consists of quasi-public uses, institutional, open space, and commercial/retail.

Zoning - Most of the neighborhood (84%) is zoned residential (SU at 46%, TU at 15%, or RH at 23%) with only 6% being zoned for Mixed-Use (MX and MS). With the exception of the commercial nodes at 12th & Madison and 12th & Clayton, most of the mixed-use zoning is concentrated along Colfax Ave. and Colorado Blvd.
3.7.3 PRESERVING & ENHANCING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

STREET PATTERN

Because of Congress Park/Reservoir, Botanic Gardens/Cheesman Park, 7th Ave Parkway medians, and shifts in the street grid, only Colfax, 14th Ave., 13th Ave., 8th Ave., and 6th Ave continue east-west beyond the neighborhood. Similarly, the only north-south streets that continue far beyond the neighborhood are its bounding streets of Colorado Blvd., and Josephine St. This leaves a large number of quiet, generally discontinuous streets.

PARKS/OPEN SPACE

The neighborhood has one park: Congress Park - a well-proportioned flexible space with a set of distinctive stone steps providing bleacher seating. It is adjoined by the covered reservoir which provides open space to the neighborhood, but dogs are not allowed. Teller Elementary School provides a children’s play area.

OVERLAYS AND SPECIAL DISTRICTS

North and west portions of the neighborhood are included in UO-3 (Historic Structure Use Overlay) which allows some commercial uses within landmarked structures. Historic districts include East 7th Avenue and Frank S. Snell Subdivision along Colfax A and B Places. The core of the neighborhood is identified as an “Area of Interest” and should be studied further for historic significance.

VISUAL LANDMARKS

Congress Park radio tower, National Jewish Health, Lowenstein Theater.
3.7.4 COMMUNITY FEEDBACK & URBAN QUALITY TOOL

PREVIOUS PLANS

The Congress Park Neighborhood Plan from 1995 covers the Congress Park neighborhood. The plan recommended maintaining the historic character and tree coverage, supporting a diverse community, encouraging safe multi-modal mobility, and managing the transitions between commercial and residential areas. These recommendations continue to be relevant and are consistent with the policies in this East Central Area Plan.

The Colorado Boulevard Healthcare District Plan from 2007 covers the National Jewish Hospital campus and the block between Colorado Boulevard and Harrison Street and 9th Avenue and 10th Avenue. The plan recommends supporting the continued success of the hospitals while minimizing impacts on surrounding neighborhoods, improving bike and pedestrian safety, and enhancing urban design. These recommendations continue to be advanced in this East Central Area Plan.

URBAN QUALITY TOOL RESULTS

The 12th Ave. nodes are well-loved by the neighborhood. Yet, a lack of plaza space, public art, or truly unique urban design elements limit the nodes sense of character and gathering spaces, averaging 5/10 in bustling with activity. The buildings do have distinctive architecture, which should be prioritized, so visitors are more likely to be reminded of their experiences and return to the area. The 12th Ave. nodes average a 7/10 in memorable environments. Traffic speeding and some surface parking between the sidewalk and building entrances make the nodes less pedestrian friendly, averaging a 7/10 in pedestrian comfort.

12TH & MADISON - Located at a four-way stop, this neighborhood scale intersection is one of the highest scoring nodes in East Central at 8/10. People enjoy the small-scale corner shops, but the parking lot on the corner could use a facelift of landscaping and screening.

12TH & ELIZABETH - Traffic speeding down 12th Ave. is the biggest issue with this node, scoring a less pedestrian friendly range, due to difficult intersection crossings. Overall this node scores well, at 7/10.

12TH & MADISON TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide places to sit and eat outside
- Keep existing and support new local businesses
- Prioritize building edges and memorable buildings
- Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor
- Add benches and greenery along the sidewalk
- Slow down vehicular traffic

12TH & ELIZABETH TOP IMPROVEMENTS

- Provide places to sit and eat outside
- Keep existing and support new local businesses
- Provide more trees and shade
- Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor
- Add benches and greenery along the sidewalk
- Make crossing the street easier
CONGRESS PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Prioritize land use policies that aim to maintain character in Congress Park.

Congress Park includes significant architecture that should be protected. Multiple tools should be considered to ensure additions and new development is compatible and the neighborhood character is retained.

A. Update regulations in residential zone districts to remove barriers to additions and renovations (see Policy L4).
B. Modify zoning regulations to create an incentive for preserving existing houses by allowing an additional unit if the existing house is preserved (see Policy L5).
C. Preserve existing multi-unit and mixed-use buildings that contribute to neighborhood character and ensure new buildings are designed to be compatible (see Policy L6).
D. Manage the scale and improve design quality of new construction in Low Residential Places (see Policy L7).
E. Update transition standards for Protected Districts (see Policy L8).
F. Consider Landmark designations where appropriate (see Policy L9).
CONGRESS PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

See POLICY E1: Bolster the healthcare and wellness sector as the foundation for economic growth in the East Central Area.

Congress Park is the home to National Jewish Hospital, along with several other providers of medical and related services. The continued strength of the medical sector provides an opportunity to support the growth and prosperity of the entire East Central area while limiting the detrimental impacts on surrounding residential areas.

POLICY BACKGROUND

A. Work with National Jewish Health on their long-term plans for their remaining undeveloped properties in and adjacent to East Central (on both sides of Colorado Boulevard) to ensure development integrates well with the community and advances the vision for the area.

See POLICY E2: Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.

In Congress Park, 40% of renter households and 23% of owner households are cost-burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30% of their income towards housing costs. According to Blueprint Denver's Vulnerability to Displacement measure, the northwest portion of Congress Park is considered vulnerable to displacement due to the high percentage of renters and median income below Denver's median.

See POLICY E3: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.

Sixty-one percent of Congress Park’s housing units are in attached or multi-unit structures. Some of the smaller, aging multi-unit buildings provide an opportunity for conversion to income-restricted housing or ownership.

See POLICY E9: Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.
COP-E4

**CONGRESS PARK**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**BACKGROUND**

Congress Park currently has approximately 270 income-restricted units. Increasing the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood provides the opportunity to give residents easy access to transit, services, and amenities. In addition, the presence of National Jewish Hospital offers an opportunity to provide workforce housing that would be beneficial for both the hospitals and neighborhood residents.

The southern part of Congress Park, which is predominantly single-unit residential, is considered unaffordable according to the Housing + Transportation Index. In this area, the housing and transportation costs for a typical household in the region would exceed 45% of its income. Integrating new, compatible housing types would help to provide more attainable options in the neighborhood. During neighborhood workshops, Congress Park participants identified encouraging more ADUs and housing for a variety of household types as their top housing priority. ADUs, secondary detached single-family homes, and live-work units were the top housing types that participants would like to see. Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this Plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

**POLICY**

See POLICY E10: Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

A. Partner with area hospitals, Denver Public Schools, and other major employers to create and/or fund affordable, workforce housing.

See POLICY E11: Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes throughout East Central.

The southern part of Congress Park, which is predominantly single-unit residential, is considered unaffordable according to the Housing + Transportation Index. In this area, the housing and transportation costs for a typical household in the region would exceed 45% of its income. Integrating new, compatible housing types would help to provide more attainable options in the neighborhood. During neighborhood workshops, Congress Park participants identified encouraging more ADUs and housing for a variety of household types as their top housing priority. ADUs, secondary detached single-family homes, and live-work units were the top housing types that participants would like to see. Consistent with Blueprint Denver, this Plan aims to provide housing choice by diversifying housing options in all neighborhoods.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing

A. Integrate accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and missing middle housing in appropriate locations

B. Partner with area hospitals, Denver Public Schools, and other major employers to create and/or fund affordable, workforce housing.
**CONGRESS PARK RECOMMENDATIONS**

**COP-M1**

See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

Congress Park contains many wide, high-speed roads that residents called out as difficult to cross, including Colfax Ave, 6th, 8th, 13th Ave, 14th Ave, and York/Josephine St. Repurposing space for people traveling without a car helps to provide more options and a safer environment for all. An average of 68% of commuters in Cheesman Park drive alone to work, representing one of the city’s better opportunities to further the City’s Mobility Action Plan goal of 50% or less SOV trips citywide by 2030.

**COP-M2**

See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority Also see Colfax Ave chapter.

B. Colorado Boulevard – Transit and Pedestrian Priority Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

C. Josephine Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

D. York Street – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

E. 6th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

F. 7th Avenue Parkway between Colorado Boulevard and Williams Street – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

G. 8th Avenue – Transit and Pedestrian Priority

H. 12th Avenue – Transit and Bicycle Priority Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

I. 13th Avenue – Pedestrian Priority

J. 14th Avenue – Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority

About 60% of Congress Park survey respondents noted the area as being very easy or fairly easy for biking. Bike crashes are concentrated in Congress Park near Colfax Ave, Colorado Boulevard, and 12th Ave approaching an entrance to Cheesman Park. Prioritizing space and designing safer intersections for cyclists helps improve safety for all modes while allowing people of all ages and abilities to bike.

**COP-M3**

See POLICY M3: Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Conduct corridor study that includes 11th Avenue and 12th Avenue to determine community preference and best placement for transit and bicycle improvements. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure improvements

B. Study the feasibility of adding a high comfort bikeway on 9th between Broadway and Colorado Blvd. Also see Quality-of-Life Infrastructure improvements

C. Study feasibility of adding a protected bike lane on 14th between Broadway and Colorado

D. Study the feasibility of adding a neighborhood bikeway on Detroit between 6th and 17th

**BACKGROUND**

See POLICY M2: Implement and upgrade planned Denver Moves: Bikeways.

See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

See POLICY M3: Install new bikeways not previously identified in Denver Moves: Bikes.
CONGRESS PARK

RECOMMENDATIONS

COP-M4

See POLICY M4: Install new sidewalks

Several areas of sidewalk are substandard width (less than 4ft) in Congress Park, and some sections are missing entirely, largely around Congress Park.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install new sidewalks where they are missing in the Congress Park neighborhood.
B. Bring sidewalks up to standard in the Congress Park neighborhood.

COP-M5

See POLICY M5: Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings

While the majority of Capitol Hill survey respondents felt the neighborhood was very easy or fairly easy to walk in, a concentration of crashes involving pedestrians occur in the area, specifically near Colfax and Broadway/Lincoln, and 13th Ave.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue at York Street, Steele Street, Garfield Street, and Colorado Boulevard
B. Colorado Boulevard at 8th, 9th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and Colfax Avenues

COP-M6

See POLICY M6: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings

Several segments of streets in the Congress Park neighborhood - including 13th Ave, 14th Ave, Josephine St, Colorado Blvd, and 8th Ave - have distances greater than 1/4 mile between signalized crossings. This can encourage unsafe crossing behavior. Community input also called for improved crossings along Josephine St to connect to Congress Park and the soon-to-be renovated pool.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Colfax Avenue at Detroit Street
B. 6th Avenue at Detroit and Steele Streets
C. 8th Avenue at Detroit, Josephine, Madison, and Steele Streets
D. 9th Avenue at Madison, York and Josephine Streets to connect to new congress park pool
E. 10th Avenue at Madison St
F. 13th Avenue between Garfield and Josephine

(bike and pedestrian crossing priority)

1. Priority intersections: Detroit Street. Steele Street due to planned neighborhood bikeway and planned BRT stop at Colfax Avenue and Steele Street. Madison due to connectivity to commercial nodes on 12th Ave.

G. 14th Avenue between High St. and Colorado Blvd. (Alley) (short term: pedestrian crossing priority, long term: bike crossing priority)

1. Priority intersections: Detroit Street. Steele Street. Jackson St. due to pedestrian traffic to and from
CONGRESS PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

MOBILITY

See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

The Congress Park neighborhood has a medium transit score and medium transit propensity – in other words, investing in transit frequency and infrastructure in this area would likely yield significant increases in ridership. Significant portions of sidewalks in the neighborhood are below 4 feet in width, and sidewalks are missing on the periphery of Congress Park, as well as along sections of 7th Ave. This creates difficulties in making connections between transportation options.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Advance implementation of High Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Colorado Boulevard  Also see Quality of Life Infrastructure improvements

B. Advance implementation of Medium-Capacity Transit Corridors
   1. York Street (within the University Corridor in Denver Moves: Transit)
   2. Josephine Street

C. Advance implementation of Speed and Reliability Transit Corridors
   1. 6th Avenue
   2. 8th Avenue

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Install customer amenities at priority locations
   1. Colfax Avenue at York Street, Josephine Street, and Colorado Boulevard
CONGRESS PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

Vehicular crashes in Cheesman park are concentrated along the periphery of the neighborhood, near High Injury Network streets. Crashes involving pedestrians and bikes are similarly grouped along the northern and eastern borders, though some occur along wide, higher speed corridors including 13th and 14th Avenues. Colfax Ave and Colorado Boulevard are by far the busiest streets in the neighborhood, with 32,000 and 55,000 average daily trips, respectively. Other east/west collector and arterial streets average at or slightly about 15,000 average daily trips. The Congress Park Safe Streets Committee conducted a neighborhood traffic study with recommendations that have been incorporated into this plan.

Priority Locations for Congress Park (see a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility):

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue
   2. Colorado Boulevard from 6th to 9th Ave and 14th to 17th Ave
   3. 12th Avenue from Columbine to Clayton Streets and Cook to Monroe Streets

B. Schools
   1. Teller Elementary
   2. REACH Charter School
   3. St. John School

C. Health Facilities
   1. National Jewish Health

D. Parks
   1. Congress Park

E. Other
   1. Detroit St alley between 8th and 10th Aves

See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes and recreation centers

Improve curbside management strategies in Congress Park

An average of 9% of households in Congress Park do not have a vehicle, just under the citywide average of 11%. Residents prioritize efficiently using curb space to meet various needs, including on-street parking.

A. See Policy M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources
B. See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the City’s strategic parking goals

See POLICY M10: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals

Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, and sidewalks in the Congress Park neighborhood, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility.
CONGRESS PARK
RECOMMENDATIONS

COP-Q1

Create new community open space, parks, and recreation facilities.

Residents identified a need for more parks and open space, such as community gathering places, dog parks, and community gardens. Redevelopment of a parking lot at National Jewish Health was identified as a priority location because of potential land availability and its location in a park access gap identified in Game Plan for a Healthy City.

A. Create additional community park, recreation and cultural spaces as part of the redevelopment within the National Jewish Health campus.
   1. A new park in this location should be the size of a neighborhood park or larger. While there is no clear minimum size for a neighborhood park, Denver Parks and Recreation generally considers neighborhood parks to be at least 1.5 acres.
   2. A new park should also be publicly accessible with usable community space that supports a community garden as well as gatherings and active use.
   3. The negative impacts of surrounding arterial streets, such as Colorado Boulevard, should be mitigated.

B. Explore partnership opportunities between City agencies (Community Planning and Development, Denver Parks and Recreation) and National Jewish Health to complement and augment the existing Large Development Review (LDR) requirements to develop open space as part of large redevelopments. Partnerships should consider acquisition, funding, and maintenance structures for a new community open space. (See Policy L2)

C. Incentivize and/or require publicly-accessible outdoor spaces, particularly in centers and corridors, as part of high-quality design. These publicly-accessible amenities can be a community benefit in exchange for taller heights, particularly along major corridors and near Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations. Establish standards and guidelines that ensure public accessibility, design, and features that respond to the community context. See Land Use Policy 3, Policy 10, and Colfax Corridor Policy 2.

COP-Q2

Increase recreational programming for all ages and interests, particularly children and youth, in Congress Park.

Residents enjoy the parks and amenities but would like to see better maintenance of existing facilities, additional amenities, and activation of underused park spaces.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life

COP-Q3

See POLICY Q2: Develop new Contemporary Parkways that connect the community to open space, parks and recreational assets, as well as serve multiple community functions.

Several corridors in Congress Park, including 12th Avenue, are opportunities to implement the Contemporary Parkway concept.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life
3.7.5 TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: COMMUNITY GARDENS & NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Support more widespread food growing production and innovative community food access projects with new development.

Create new community open space, parks and recreation facilities.

Increase impervious surface coverage.

Increase tree canopy coverage in the public right-of-way.
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT: COLFAX AVE & COLORADO BLVD

- Promote development of small office space.
- Support creation of small businesses.
- Implement a height incentive program that allows additional height in specific areas in exchange for community benefit.
- Increase tree canopy.
- Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.
- Bolster the healthcare and wellness sector as the foundation for economic growth.
- Improved public space at transit stops.
- High capacity transit service on Colorado Blvd.
- Proposed Colfax BRT and center stations.

East Central Area Plan | Part 3 Neighborhoods of East Central
4 COLFAAX CORRIDOR

IN THIS SECTION:

4.1 INTRODUCTION (P. 252)
4.2 CHARACTER ANALYSIS (P. 252)
4.3 TOD ANALYSIS (P. 254)
4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS (P. 257)
4.1 INTRODUCTION

Colfax Avenue touches all six neighborhoods in East Central, both uniting and dividing them. The corridor has its own unique history and character and is constantly evolving. Additional change is coming with the advent of Bus Rapid Transit and significant public investments in the streetscape. Given all this, the Colfax corridor requires special attention. This chapter will analyze the character development potential of the corridor and give specific recommendations for achieving the community’s vision across all topics on Colfax.

4.2 CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Character is hard to define on a street that has been defined by change. Due to this, “Colfax character” takes on many forms. From its beginning, Colfax has served as a path to opportunity – carrying hopeful people westward on horseback in the late 1800s during the Gold Rush. Remnants of its turn-of-the-century days as a residential corridor can still be found in East Central, some hiding behind added-on storefronts from when the corridor transitioned from residential to commercial uses following the age of the streetcar. After the automobile was invented and Denver’s streetcar system came to a halt, the corridor once again transformed, taking out tree lawns and wide sidewalks to make way for a wider road and parking.

Colfax Avenue has long been a key east-west transportation route for Downtown Denver, Auraria Campus, Anschutz Medical Campus and nearly 50 schools — it is also a thriving community, with retail, nightlife and residential development creating a “Main Street” feel along one of the area’s oldest, most historic streets. With population and business growth in the area expected to increase significantly in the next 20 years, it is time to re-imagine how Colfax functions, looks and feels while accommodating an increasing need for enhanced mobility and safety along the corridor through Colfax Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) implementation.

This rich history provides a backdrop to the “stage” of Colfax. Although the places may continue to change and evolve, the storyline shall not be lost.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND PUBLIC SPACE

The layout of blocks is quite consistent. Most blocks along Colfax include 275 feet of frontage with a 15-20 foot alley dividing the block in half. Therefore, most properties fronting onto Colfax have about 125–130 feet of frontage. However, lot depths are less consistent. Some, albeit extreme cases, are as little as 25 feet deep whereas others go back a half block and can be around 300 feet deep. Most lots are between 100-125 feet deep.

The right-of-way along Colfax also varies. Closer to downtown, there is about 80 feet, which, with four travel lanes, a turn lane and occasional on-street parking, leaves very narrow sidewalks. Further east, some areas are 100 feet wide and sidewalks are asymmetrical – with more space on the north side than south. Streetscape amenities are few – due to the lack of space and ability to maintain them. In the past few years, the Business Improvement Districts have stepped up to help beautify the sidewalks by adding amenities like colorful banners, pedestrian lights, custom bike racks and trash cans. General obligation bonds passed in 2017 will contribute to upgrades in intersection safety improvements, streetscaping in certain locations, and construction of the BRT system.
MAINTAINING CHARACTER

Throughout the plan process, the community agreed that the character on Colfax should be maintained, to the extent feasible. Generally speaking, there are two types of character: architectural and cultural.

- **ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER** – this is portrayed through the physical form of prominent buildings. There are generally two types of architecture that contribute to the character of Colfax:
  - Landmarked and historic or contributing buildings. These buildings have architectural integrity that have already been identified and protected (historic landmark or district).
  - Potentially historic, character-contributing and storefront buildings. These buildings contribute to the character of Colfax. Many of these buildings may be applicable for historic status, which should be explored. Many of them are home to iconic businesses while others provide affordable rents for small businesses. These buildings are desired to remain and be reused to the extent feasible.

- **CULTURAL CHARACTER** – this is portrayed through people and events. Colfax has a rich cultural history, from the edgy adult nightclubs of the 60s and 70s to today’s abundant LGBTQ businesses and pride. Colfax has its own marathon and is the epicenter for the Pridefest parade. It boasts local businesses and has a reputation for attracting and welcoming all walks of life. These cultural aspects are less tangible – cannot be “mapped” – but are desired to remain.

Another factor to consider when looking at which areas may redevelop, and which ones might remain for the next 20 years is taking into account buildings of substantial size that are fairly new. Examples include the Carla Madison Recreation Center, Sprouts, The Tattered Cover, and the Renaissance Uptown Lofts at Pearl and Colfax.

These properties are highlighted on the map below. More research is necessary to define historic or contributing status.

**HISTORIC, ADAPTIVE REUSE AND NEW BUILDINGS**

### 4.3 TOD Analysis

In the East Central area, within the “community corridor” designation (or MS-zoned properties) for Colfax Avenue, the next 20 years could see up to 2,200 additional households and 3,300 more jobs based on city forecasts. This translates to approximately 2 million square feet of potential new development. The vision calls for concentrating this growth in appropriate areas around BRT stations in what is known as transit-oriented development (TOD).

In preparing for TOD and expected growth around BRT, it is important to first understand what the existing entitlements and compare that with the growth projections. The map below shows the allowed maximum heights (colored bars) versus the scale of on-the-ground buildings in 2019 (white line). This shows graphically that there appears to be quite a bit of available space to grow up.

However, recent examples of redevelopment are not maximizing available space. Instead, many new developments have been one-story commercial chains (7-11, Starbucks, McDonald’s, Chic-Fil-A).

**Maximum Allowed Heights Versus What is Built**

![Map showing maximum allowed heights versus what is built.](image)
BARRIERS TO DEVELOPMENT

There are multiple barriers to vertical development on Colfax today. High priority issues are listed below:

ADAPTIVE REUSE CHALLENGES

As identified in the character analysis, a lot of the buildings along the corridor contribute to the unique character of Colfax and are desired to remain. However, the process of reusing a building – specifically when changing the use from how the building functions today – is very challenging. This “change in use” qualifier triggers a slew of necessary upgrades – both inside the building and on the property. Additionally, required parking is often hard to meet for the new uses. The costs associated with bringing these elements up to current standards can be prohibitive.

SMALL AND NARROW LOT CHALLENGES

What the maximum allowed heights map does not show is the unique challenges of narrow and small lots that can make vertical development challenging. Therefore, lot sizes and depths were examined for their potential to redevelop. There are a few depth dimensions that are critical to be able to accommodate vertical development:

- **75’ depth.** This depth is critical for rear parking with a building fronting Colfax. It provides a five foot buffer in the rear (required when adjacent to a residential zone without an alley, which is very common) and then 40 feet for a drive aisle and 90-degree parking on one side, leaving 30 feet for ground floor uses. Upper floors can be built over the parking creating more space above. With existing parking rules, on a standard width lot of 100-125 feet, this type of lot would likely result in a 2-story building.
- **100’ depth.** This allows the same construction as 75’ lot depth but adds an additional bay of parking. This could result in a 3-4 story building on a standard width lot.
- **125’-150’ depth.** This is critical for buildings to go taller than 5 stories when adjacent to a protected district. This only applies to a couple properties currently zoned for 8 stories but should be considered for any rezoning assumptions. This dimension is also critical for getting any type of above-grade structure for parking taller buildings. Going underground is preferred, but on smaller individual lots will not be likely.

Other challenges for small lots are primarily concerned with parking requirements and return on investment. There is an existing parking exemption for lots that are 6,250 square feet or less that helps feasibility, but sometimes is still not enough, as it does not take into consideration the lot depth challenges. The other factor is the cost of construction. While there is entitlement to go taller on many lots, the challenges of doing so on small lots make it unlikely. Therefore, some of the smaller lots are over-zoned and could be overvaluing their land and development potential.

By eliminating lots with historic, potentially historic and character contributing structures, and structures of substantial size and recent construction, the following parcels are left as “developable”. Small and narrow lots (yellow) have more challenges to redeveloping.

DEVELOPABLE PARCELS AND DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Realistically, these lots would probably be assembled to create larger parcels. The orange and blue lots are most developable. Through detailed zoning analysis and conceptual lot testing, realistic floor area ratios (FARs), i.e. the amount of square footage of development on a given lot size, were assigned based on existing zoning rules to all of these lots. It was determined through this analysis that at their maximum development potential under existing zoning, these lots can handle approximately 7 million square feet of development. That is more than 3 times the expected growth for Colfax in the East Central area.

Given this analysis, yet knowing the common challenges to developing on Colfax in addition with much-desired community benefits (affordable housing, open space, preservation of existing buildings, preserving existing businesses) it was determined that a targeted, incentive-based approach to upzoning, along with other tools described below, would be the best way to achieve multiple goals for the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods.
COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Throughout the planning process, the community has emphasized the importance of character preservation and quality development along Colfax Avenue.

The Urban Quality Tool (UQT) diagnostic results and community feedback for three of the Colfax Avenue nodes are as follows:

**NODE 2 COLFAIX FROM PEARL TO OGDEN**
- When surveyed, it scored a 3/10 in “Bustling with Activity” and 4/10 in “Pedestrian Comfort” and “Memorable Environment”

**NODE 2 TOP IMPROVEMENTS**
- Replace vacant/parking lots with new buildings
- Keep existing and support new local business
- Encourage a variety of retail, business, and housing

**NODE 3 COLFAIX FROM LAFAYETTE TO GILPIN**
- When surveyed, it scored a 3/10 in “Bustling with Activity” and 3.5/10 in “Pedestrian Comfort” and 4/10 in “Memorable Environment”

**NODE 3 TOP IMPROVEMENTS**
- Replace vacant/parking lots with new buildings
- Keep existing and support new local business
- Provide places to sit and eat outside

**NODE 6 COLFAIX AROUND YORK AND JOSEPHINE**
- When surveyed, it scored a 3.5/10 in “Bustling with Activity” and 4.5/10 in “Pedestrian Comfort” and 4/10 in “Memorable Environment”

**NODE 6 TOP IMPROVEMENTS**
- Keep existing and support new local business
- Replace vacant/parking lots with new buildings
- Provide places to sit and eat outside

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“What are the priorities for new development on Colfax?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preserving Existing Buildings</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Review</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Businesses</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of Responses (227)
Source: February 2018 Community Workshops

**Replace vacant/parking lots with new buildings**
- Keep existing and support new local business
- Provide places to sit and eat outside

**Add/keep iconic elements with local flavor**
- Promote windows and ground floor visibility

**Make crossing the street easier**
- Slow down vehicular traffic

**Provide more trees and shade**
- Add benches and greenery along the sidewalk

**Promote windows and ground floor visibility**
- Make crossing the street easier
4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

C-L1

Reduce regulatory barriers to make it easier to build affordable housing, reuse existing building, and develop lower-scale buildings on small lots

The community’s vision emphasizes incorporating existing buildings as new development occurs on the corridor. However, as described above, current requirements can make reusing an existing structure difficult. The community also values recognizing the history of Colfax beyond preserving buildings. Creating a historic district, which was also recommended in previous Colfax plans, would offer a higher level of protection for some of the more significant buildings on the corridor and ensure that new development responds to and reflects the unique history.

A. Modify standards to be more proportional to the proposed project and site conditions while ensuring consistency with the vision for a pedestrian-friendly Colfax, consideration include:

1. Balance the needs for streetscape, amenity space, landscaping, and on-street parking with development impacts of right-of-way dedications. In particular, try to avoid land dedication requirement for Colfax right-of-way when it would result in a lot being less than 75-feet deep.
2. Alley access rules.
3. Adopting International Existing Building Code or certain provisions, including health, fire, and change of use.
4. An adaptive reuse ordinance as a tool to simultaneously address barriers across multiple departments and codes.

B. Provide financial assistance or design alternatives for required streetscape improvements for lots less than 75 feet deep or if preserving a character building

C. Eliminate parking requirements for older structures more than 50 years old.

D. Evaluate parking requirements and reduce or eliminate if found to be restricting equitable development, affordable housing, historic preservation, are requiring more than needed due to changing mobility trends, or are contributing to unsafe pedestrian and bicycle conditions. Coordinate street parking management program with any parking reduction to mitigate impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.

E. Provide dedicated staff for technical assistance to adaptive reuse and small scale development to help small businesses navigate the permitting process in an efficient, predictable, and timely manner.

1. Evaluate health and fire code standards to make development more feasible while maintaining safety.
2. Adopt and abide by the International Existing Building Code (IEBC). Adjust definition of buildings of historic value in the IEBC to address Colfax-specific situations and ease changes in use.

F. Create a Local Historic or Cultural District.

1. Consider application of a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program as an incentive to encourage property owners to participate in a historic district.
2. Consider additional incentives, such as tax rebates, to encourage property owners to participate in a historic district.
3. Work with Historic Denver, Landmark Preservation staff and the Business Improvement Districts to establish criteria and goals, as well as operational aspects of the TDR program.
Encourage new development to provide community benefits adjacent to transit stations. Create a program that links potential increases in building heights or flexibility in zoning in specified areas in exchange for public benefits.

Affordable housing is overwhelmingly desired and needed in the East Central neighborhoods and it was expressed by the community that Colfax, with future BRT, is a preferred location for adding affordable units. Many tools will be needed to meet affordable housing goals. Incentive programs offer one way to contribute to affordable housing goals, as well as other desired community benefits.

A. Refer to Land Use and Built Form chapter for height and community benefit recommendations and also consider the following Colfax-specific community benefits refinements:

   1. On-site affordable housing targets will be a priority for the program. Other Colfax-specific community benefits that this program could help implement include:
      a. Providing publicly accessible open space around transit stations, such as small plazas, that provide places to sit outside and socialize. These areas should have a high degree of programming to activate them as well as be surrounded by active ground floor uses and lighting to provide eyes on the spaces and keep them safe.
      b. Linking the TDR program to the incentive program by encouraging a developer to purchase additional development rights from an existing property that is desired to remain or to incorporate existing buildings in new development.
      c. Offering in-lieu fees to go toward a small business retention fund to help existing small businesses locally owned independent businesses remain in a changing corridor and economy or incorporate existing small business space into new development.

B. Modify building form and transition standards to take into account the challenging size of lots on Colfax and to encourage better outcomes. This zoning flexibility could be offered through design guidelines and/or by modifying base zoning standards. Consider the following:

   1. Reducing the front step-back of 20’ after 5-stories to be a lesser dimension and for only a portion of the façade.
   2. Allow increased setbacks on the ground floor when they contribute to a desired goal, such as café seating along the sidewalk or small open spaces such as courtyards and pedestrian passages.
   3. Modify required rear step-backs to achieve specific goals. For example, on the north side of the street where shading of neighbors is a concern, allow modifications of the required step backs so long as a sun study can determine an equal or greater amount of sun access. On the south side, consider relaxing step-back requirements while still considering privacy of neighboring properties (i.e. limit placement of balconies and upper level outdoor space).
   4. Require the side street ground floor setbacks adjacent to neighboring properties to match the rest of that street’s front setbacks for a percentage of the side street frontage.
   5. Modify building forms and standards so that ground floor residential in areas not directly adjacent to BRT stations is more feasible. Adding “General” or “Apartment” forms with modified build-to and transparency requirements could help.
CITY PARK TRANSITION

Establish side street setback rule next to historic and protected districts where new development matches the neighboring property’s setback for a portion of the facade.

Increase upper story rear setbacks above 51-feet to help with concerns about mass and scale, privacy and sun access.

Decrease upper story front setbacks on Colfax to achieve the intent of establishing a pedestrian-scaled street but allow for upper stories to come closer to the street.

Modify build-to requirements to facilitate cafe seating.
Encourage redevelopment along and activation of alleys.

Alleys are underutilized public spaces that have the potential to be improved as shared or pedestrian-only spaces and can function as much-needed public open space. They can be activated by adjacent buildings with windows, doors, lighting, benches, café seating and public art. If opened up, they may provide more affordable “back door” commercial spaces for new small businesses.

A. Work with Business Improvement Districts and Arts and Venues to create an “Activate Alleys” program that provides financial or technical assistance to property owners for public art and public realm enhancements.
   1. Find a willing property owner to pilot an alley activation project for a summer.
   2. Provide financial assistance to property owners who wish to relocate utilities.
   3. Allow building over the alley on upper floors and creating enhanced alleys with utility easements. Modify standards so that improvements over utility easements for amenities like seating, lighting, and public art are not prohibited.

B. Where redevelopment occurs along an alley, encourage enhanced design solutions and small commercial spaces to help activate these spaces and make them feel safer.
   1. Include design guidelines for alleys in the guidelines for centers and corridors. See Policy L8.
Amend sign regulations to allow creative solutions to signs that fit the character of Colfax.

Signage along Colfax is part of its history. Allowing more flexibility for signs can help preserve the corridor's character while also benefiting its businesses.

A. Allow neon and chasing neon light signs and encourage the preservation of existing signs of this nature.
B. Allow creative and artistic signs, such as signs fused with art and signs integrated with iconic distinctive features, that reflect the history or character of Colfax.
C. Allow blade signs.
D. Amend square footage rules to encourage more creativity and artistic expression.
E. Allow roof signs.
F. Revise rules about murals and the amount that can contribute to advertising/allowable sign square footage.
G. Ensure signage does not negatively impact surrounding residential areas.

Discourage low utilization of land and auto-oriented uses along Colfax.

Drive-thrus and other small buildings with large parking lots are incompatible with this plan’s vision for a vibrant and walkable Colfax corridor. Restricting these types of development will encourage more efficient use of land, ensuring more residents, employees, and business patrons can enjoy the area.

A. Consider modifications to regulations to discourage drive-thrus and encourage multi-story, mixed-use development, such as:
   1. Updating limitations on the drive through building form to include the Colfax corridor.
   2. Changing the current minimum height in MS-5 or higher from 24 feet to two stories.
See POLICY E2: Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.

A. Coordinate with BIDs on work plans to provide services that help property owners to better utilize existing real estate along Colfax for small professional services.

B. Where retail or restaurants might be difficult to accommodate and/or in areas outside of anticipated retail nodes near BRT stations, encourage and allow ground floor activation (beyond retail and restaurant uses) with office uses, services, or innovation/flex spaces.

Provide additional support to community-serving retail businesses and improve the development environment along Colfax.

Colfax is the primary retail corridor in East Central, with 51% of the area’s retail businesses located along the street. While the corridor currently performs fairly well, with just 4.5% of storefronts vacant, rising rents threaten to displace existing businesses cherished by the community, while the barriers to development described above make it difficult to add new space or adaptively reuse existing spaces for retail.

A. See Policy E4: Improve the regulatory process to provide additional support for existing and new small businesses in the area.

B. See Policy E5: Work in tandem with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to provide technical assistance to existing small independent businesses to help them succeed and prevent involuntary displacement.

C. See Policy E6: Broaden the range of financial incentives for small independent businesses and landlords to strengthen the area’s tenant mix and help prevent displacement.

D. See Policy E7: Support and develop new community-minded ownership models that have a goal of maintaining East Central’s variety of small, local businesses.
Create a multi-faceted BRT construction mitigation program for small businesses along the Colfax corridor to help them thrive during the period of construction.

While the BRT will create an improved Colfax corridor, it will require significant construction that will potentially disrupt businesses near future stops. A range of strategies are recommended to help mitigate this disruption and ensure businesses have an opportunity to thrive once BRT is complete.

A. For the BRT construction period, dedicate a City staff position that assists small business owners within the BRT impact area to carry out the mitigation initiatives listed as strategies B-H below.

B. Expand and adapt the pilot Business Impact Opportunity (BIO) Fund to the Colfax corridor, using city general funds, a portion of the BRT project budget, and other available sources.
   1. Offer grants to small businesses to make up portions of a documented revenue gap experienced during construction months. (See profile of the BIO Fund.)
   2. Make funds available for extra marketing and special events during periods of construction.
   3. Pursue additional funding opportunities, such as federal grants, to bolster resources for BRT small business mitigation.

C. Encourage station-by-station construction patterns that minimize the disruption to businesses around individual BRT station areas. Coordinate construction scheduling to account for seasonality, time of day, loading/unloading, and other concerns, acknowledging that this may differ by station area depending on the makeup of businesses.

D. Create temporary wayfinding and signage on key routes, including 13th, 14th, 17th, and 18th Avenues to account for reduced visibility and access to Colfax businesses during construction.

E. Evaluate and implement innovative ways to maintain pedestrian connectivity and access (across Colfax and crossing streets) during road closures.

F. Require the BRT construction contractors to hire local subcontractors, use local services from within East Central during the planning and construction periods, and encourage construction employees to patronize Colfax businesses.

G. Leverage Transportation Management Association's (TMA) in the area to offer transit passes for corridor employees (Eco-Passes) to help mitigate BRT construction impacts and free up parking spaces for customers (see Policy C-E4).

H. Ensure the public art projects required by the Denver Public Art program enhance the pedestrian environment and contribute to the unique character of Colfax.
Help businesses prepare for a future BRT multi-modal retail environment that is more neighborhood oriented and pedestrian friendly.

With the introduction of BRT, the Colfax corridor will evolve from an auto-oriented thoroughfare into a neighborhood-serving, multimodal main street. Businesses prepared for this improvement will reap the benefits of a more appealing retail environment and an expanded customer base.

A. Evaluate the best option for the Colfax corridor to join an existing regional Transportation Management Association (TMA) to encourage a variety of transportation modes in the East Central Area. The TMA will help implement strategies B-F below (see Policy M12).

B. Work with BIDs and TMAs to offer Transportation Demand Management (TDM) services and training that help businesses and could include:
   1. Online ordering and delivery services
   2. Online sales via business websites
   3. Large-item delivery services, for goods such as home décor and gardening supplies

C. Work with BIDs and TMAs to find solutions for parking and loading challenges.
   1. Encourage shared parking arrangements for neighboring businesses. Greatest opportunities may exist for businesses with different hours and ones with large existing lots such as grocery stores.
   2. Ensure residential parking permit programs consider the impacts to neighborhood businesses.
   3. Formally allow use of alleys for business loading/unloading.
   4. Work with businesses to schedule merchandise deliveries during off-peak hours.

D. Ensure pedestrian safety enhancements are incorporated into BRT implementation. Priority improvements should include:
   1. Enhanced crosswalks at lighted intersections
   2. Pedestrian crossings at median gaps
   3. Pedestrian-scale lighting
   4. Improved sidewalks, landscaping, and street furniture
   5. Street trees and stormwater planters

E. Conduct outreach to large employers to promote employee carpool, rideshare, and teleworking programs.

F. Offer transit passes for corridor employees (Eco-Passes) to help kickstart BRT, support citywide TDM goals, and free up parking spaces for customers.

G. Provide technical assistance for small independent businesses to attract more customers from the surrounding neighborhoods through marketing and other tools.

H. Partner with BIDs, RTD, and other organizations for streetscape improvements that enhance safety and well-being of visitors, including public restrooms (see Policy Q17).

**Case Study:**
Stabilizing and Preserving Local Businesses: Carniceria Sanchez

At Carniceria Sanchez, one can find such items as asada and chicken adobo. Located in Elyria-Swansea, Maria Montoya owns the business and property and operates with the help of one full-time and three part-time employees. Maria’s business was assisted with Denver’s Business Impact Opportunity Fund (BIO Fund) in 2019. A program offering financial and technical assistance to small businesses impacted by changing neighborhood conditions and public infrastructure projects, the BIO Fund has assisted eight businesses with cash grants, and marketing and back-office support. All are minority- and/or woman-owned and half have been operating in their neighborhoods for more than 15 years. The program is offered through a partnership of Denver’s Economic Development & Opportunity, North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative and Mile High United Way.

Photo Source: North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative
COLFAK CORRIDOR
RECOMMENDATIONS

Create new affordable housing along Colfax Avenue, providing residents access to transit and amenities.

With access to great transit service and the planned BRT improvements, Colfax Avenue provides a significant opportunity for new affordable housing development. Locating housing along the corridor will give residents convenient access to jobs, education, services, and amenities.

See complete list of strategies in Section 2.2 Economy and Housing.

A. Ensure that the value of increased development potential is shared with the community through the provision of affordable housing or other community benefits (See Policy E10 and C-L2).

B. Support acquisition of land by the City and/or its partners, such as Denver Housing Authority and community land trust entities, for future affordable housing.

C. Promote the use and expansion of tools, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Tax Increment Financing, and the Affordable Housing Fund, to fund development of affordable housing development.

D. Ensure new affordable housing is 1. Affordable to households earning very low, low, and moderate incomes, consistent with adopted city policy. 2. Helping to address the shortage of units affordable to very low-income households in the plan area. 3. Designed to accommodate a range of households, including families, multi-generational living, aging in place, residents with disabilities, and residents needing supportive services. 4. Dedicated as affordable for a period of time consistent with or greater than adopted city policy. 5. Of similar types to market-rate housing built within the plan area.

E. Work with affordable housing developers and managers on transportation demand strategies that help ensure residents have access to multimodal transportation options (Also see Policy C-M9).

F. Enhance park and recreation access in proximity to affordable housing to help improve health outcomes for low-income households (see Policies Q3 and Q4).

G. Partner with area hospitals, Denver Public Schools, and other major employers to create and/or fund affordable workforce housing (See Policy E3).
COLFAX CORRIDOR RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY

See POLICY M1: Create bold changes to the mobility system by repurposing street space along key corridors to prioritize safe and accessible walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

MOBILITY

A. Colfax Avenue - Transit and Pedestrian Priority
   1. Interim
      a. Improve intersections and crossings at high crash and high community priority intersections along Colfax through the Vision Zero Program to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.
   2. Short-Term
      a. Conduct next phase of study and design to advance the vision of center-running bus rapid transit (BRT) and a high-quality pedestrian environment from Colfax Corridor Connections 10% design project.
      b. During next phase of study and design, consider potential station changes and/or additions. Any additional station placements will require appropriate land use changes.
         i. Study moving proposed Williams Station to Franklin St
         ii. Study adding an additional stop between Steele St and Colorado Blvd
      c. Identify funding opportunities to build full center-running BRT vision for corridor.
      d. Implement locally preferred alternative for Colfax corridor, including center-running bus rapid transit (BRT), improved pedestrian, cyclist, and driver safety at intersections and transit stations, and a beautified corridor featuring a high-quality pedestrian space and placemaking opportunities.
EAST COLFAX BRT

Colfax Avenue has long been a key east-west transportation route for Downtown Denver, Auraria Campus, Anschutz Medical Campus and nearly 50 schools - it is also a thriving community, with retail, nightlife, and residential development creating a "Main Street" feel along one of the area's oldest streets. With current population and business growth in the area, as well as significant expected increases over the next 20 years, there is an opportunity to reimagine how Colfax functions, looks, and feels, while accommodating an increasing need for enhanced mobility and safety along the corridor.

BUS RAPID TRANSIT

After years of studying East Colfax Avenue and gathering significant community input, the City and County of Denver is looking to implement center-running bus rapid transit (BRT) along the corridor, with a dedicated transit lane in each direction from Broadway to Yosemite. The study began in 2012 with an analysis of current and future needs for the corridor. The recommendation for center-running bus rapid transit was presented in 2018, after six years of outreach and community input. Implementing BRT along one of Denver's busiest corridor to move more people, more efficiently as Denver continues to grow is a key component of City goals to increase mobility choice and safety, while reducing single occupancy vehicle commuter rates.

Goals of the East Colfax BRT project include:

- Improving mobility, connectivity, safety, accessibility, and economic vitality
- Meeting current and future person-trip demand
- Encouraging a shift of auto trips to alternative modes
- Interacting seamlessly, efficiently, and safely with other transportation corridors, systems, and modes in a fiscally sustainable manner

FUNDING

$55 million in funding for Colfax BRT is included in the Elevate Denver Bond Program approved by voters in 2017. Given that preliminary cost estimates for the full vision of East Colfax BRT are greater than $55M, the City's path forward is to leverage the bond funding - and additional dollars from other sources - as match dollars for upcoming grant opportunities. This aligns with nationwide best practices of how other projects of a similar size and scope are funded.

Voters also approved $20M for pedestrian improvements on Colfax Avenue in the Elevate Denver Bond program. These funds will provide permanent improvements including medians, curb extensions, and enhanced crosswalks at key intersections, and deliver streetscape improvements such as furniture, trees, and lighting in certain business improvement districts (BIDs). The BIDs include West Colfax, Colfax BID, Bluebird BID, and Colfax-Mayfair BID. Construction of permanent civil and safety improvements on East Colfax will be linked to BRT project implementation. Because pedestrian improvements on West Colfax are not tied to the East Colfax BRT project, the City is moving forward with improvements prioritizing safety needs from Sheridan to Irving.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Referring to typical timelines for large-scale, federally-funded projects in Denver, it is anticipated that the project could be completed as early as 5-8 years after a contractor is procured for the next step of environmental and preliminary design process. At the time of writing this plan, the City and County of Denver is in the process of procuring a contractor to conduct this next phase of work on the project.

PROJECT MAP

![Project Map Diagram]
The goal of the project is to improve transit, overall mobility, safety, and livability within the corridor now and for generations to come.

Benefits of BRT on Colfax include, but are not limited to:

- Significant shift from vehicles to transit due to improved bus travel times, reliability, and convenience
- Bus ridership more than doubles - from 22,000 daily riders today to 50,000 daily riders by 2035
- Transit trips could take up to 15 minutes less during peak hours across the corridor by 2035
- Improved safety, connectivity, accessibility, and mobility options for all travelers
- Increased streetscaping and economic development opportunities
- Improved access to 280,000 jobs and nearly 50 schools along and near Colfax Avenue

The City is moving forward with BRT on Colfax because doing nothing is not an option. Over the next 20 years, the corridor is expected to experience 25% growth in the number of travelers, 67% growth in employment, and 25% growth in population. Denver cannot continue to grow and create people-friendly spaces without safely and efficiently moving more people through the East Colfax corridor.
COLFAK CORRIDOR RECOMMENDATIONS

C-M2: See POLICY M4: Install new sidewalks.

Colfax Avenue has the highest number of crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists in the city. Bus rapid transit improvements to more efficiently accommodate more people traveling in the corridor furthers City goals of decreasing single occupancy vehicle trips to 50% of all trips by 2030 and creates a safer environment for all, especially through providing safe crossings for people walking, rolling, or biking.

Priority locations for Colfax are listed below. For all strategies, see Section 2.3 Mobility.

A. Bring sidewalks up to standard along the Colfax corridor.

C-M3: See POLICY M5: Install safety and accessibility improvements at existing pedestrian and bicycle crossings

Priority locations for Colfax are listed below. For all strategies, see Section 2.3 Mobility.

A. Colfax Avenue at Broadway, Lincoln, Pennsylvania, Downing, York, Steele, and Garfield Streets and Colorado Boulevard

C-M4: See POLICY M6: Install new safe, comfortable, and accessible pedestrian and bicycle crossings

Colfax Avenue has the highest number of crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists in the city. New crossings are prioritized in areas with high volumes of pedestrians and cyclists.

Priority locations for Colfax are listed below. For all strategies, see Section 2.3 Mobility.

A. Colfax Avenue at Detroit Street

C-M5: See POLICY M7: Prioritize implementing transit along corridors in East Central

Colfax Avenue currently supports the region’s highest bus ridership routes (15, 15L) with over 22,000 average daily riders. Providing transit infrastructure improvements that increase transit reliability and frequency can help to improve the transit experience.

Priority locations for Colfax are listed below. For all strategies, see Section 2.3 Mobility.

A. Implement high capacity transit (full BRT to rail).
   1. Colfax Avenue
Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, sidewalks, and businesses along the Colfax corridor, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals.

Most transit trips begin with walking, and the high ridership transit corridor on Colfax generates significant pedestrian trips. Calming traffic around commercial nodes and destinations on Colfax can help to create a safe, comfortable, and accessible street for everyone.

Priority locations for Colfax are listed below. For all strategies, see Section 2.3 Mobility.

A. Commercial Nodes
   1. Colfax Avenue from Broadway to Colorado
   2. Washington Street from Colfax to 14th Ave
   3. Clarkson Street from Colfax to 16th Ave
   4. Ogden Street from Colfax to 14th Ave
   5. Humboldt Street from Colfax to 16th
   6. Park Avenue from Humboldt to Colfax
   7. York Street from 17th Ave to Colfax

B. Recreation Centers
   1. Carla Madison Recreation Center

C. Schools
   1. East High School

D. Grocery Stores
   1. Sprouts

E. Health Facilities
   1. National Jewish Health

See POLICY M10: Manage and more efficiently use curbside resources

See Policy M11: Strengthen parking management tools that reflect the city’s strategic parking goals.

C-M6

See POLICY M8: Install rider amenities at transit stops and better connect transportation modes via mobility hubs

Colfax Avenue is the highest ridership corridor in the region and has high ridership stops. Creating hubs of access to key mobility connections and alternate modes along the corridor can help to improve mode shift and the overall transit experience.

Priority locations for Colfax are listed below. For all strategies, see Section 2.3 Mobility.

A. Install customer amenities are priority locations.
   1. Colfax Avenue at Broadway, Downing Street, Park Ave, York Street, Josephine Street, and Colorado Boulevard.

C-M7

See POLICY M9: Study measures to slow traffic along neighborhood streets directly surrounding schools, parks, hospitals, libraries, commercial nodes, and recreation centers

Colfax Avenue has a wide variety of demands on curbside space, ranging from parking to passenger and freight loading to placemaking opportunities.

C-M8

Improve curbside management on Colfax Ave.

Because there is easy access to transit, bike routes, sidewalks, and businesses along the Colfax corridor, transportation demand management strategies are likely to succeed in increasing the number of people using transit, biking, or walking as their primary mode of travel.

See a complete list of strategies in Section 2.3 Mobility.

C-M9

See POLICY M12: Adopt TDM strategies and policies to shift people’s travel behavior and meet City goals.
See POLICY Q1: Examine the potential for Historic Park Avenue to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.

Members of the community suggested that the parkway, which intersects with Colfax Avenue, could play a key role in connecting people to open space, parks, and recreational assets.

See POLICY Q4: Create new community open space, parks, and recreation facilities.

New development along Colfax Avenue provides an opportunity to add open space to the corridor.

See POLICY Q17: Incorporate design elements that activate public spaces and improve safety, particularly in areas that have historically seen higher rates of crime.

Members of the community cited crime and feeling unsafe as barriers to enjoying Colfax Avenue. Additionally, there is a higher concentration of violent crime along the corridor compared to the rest of East Central.

See Section 2.4 Quality of Life
COLFAX CORRIDOR RECOMMENDATIONS

C-Q4

Strengthen the existing tree canopy and increase tree canopy coverage within the public right-of-way.

Tree canopy coverage is notably missing along Colfax Avenue where the development pattern includes larger building footprints and more surface parking lots. The community values a robust tree canopy along Colfax Avenue and, as improvements along Colfax Avenue begin to take place, tree canopy coverage will continue to be a critical green asset.

A. Coordinate with the City and County of Denver Office of the City Forester to continue to support removal and replacement of deficient existing trees within the public right-of-way to ensure a healthy and sustainable tree canopy and unique community asset.

B. Increase coverage of the tree canopy through a city-sponsored community replacement program utilizing Denver-appropriate trees.

C. Prioritize preservation of tree canopy in right-of-way design and other city projects.

D. Develop educational programming and partnerships within the community to increase understanding around maintenance and care of the tree canopy.

E. Support the development of an Urban Forest Plan to meet citywide canopy goals for preservation, maintenance, implementation and funding.

C-Q5

Increase the pervious surface coverage through the design and implementation of green infrastructure systems to increase environmental performance (infiltration, evaporation, evapotranspiration, carbon sequestration, shade, and urban heat).

High impervious surface coverage along Colfax Avenue results from historical development patterns in which permeable surfaces were replaced with parking lots, sidewalks, and rooftops.

A. Explore opportunities to convert existing impervious surface within public right-of-way to pervious surface through the addition of street trees, tree lawn or bulb-outs, trails, parkland or native vegetation.

1. Coordinate with the design of future contemporary parkways (see Policy Q2).

2. Integrate with BRT design along Colfax Avenue and the redesign of public right-of-way streetscape and remnant parcels to improve infiltration and reduce runoff.

B. Develop design guidelines for a contemporary tree lawn.

1. Remove and replace impervious areas between the sidewalk and street with 4”-6” depressed lawn or streetscape that improves infiltration and reduces runoff.

2. Coordinate implementation through city roadway, stormwater and sanitary projects within the right-of-way.

3. Increase the requirements for pervious acreage, water conservation in landscaping and inclusion of natural vegetation for redevelopment and new development.

4. Work with private property owners, Business Improvement Districts and other neighborhood organizations to transition underutilized paved lots to pervious surfaces.
5 IMPLEMENTATION

IN THIS SECTION:

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION (P. 274)
5.1 IMPLEMENTATION

The East Central Area Plan sets forth the community’s vision for the area and includes many recommendations for achieving that vision. To make that vision reality, the plan recommendations must be implemented. This section will describe the types of implementation tools available, identify the recommendations that are priorities for implementation, and explain how implementation efforts will be monitored and tracked. Successfully implementing this plan will require the combined efforts of the city, external organizations, and the community.

5.1.1 TYPES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation activities generally fall into three categories: regulatory changes, public infrastructure, and partnerships. Each fills a different role, but all are necessary to successfully achieve the vision.

REGULATORY

Most community development comes from private investment. The city can ensure private investment advances city goals by adopting or amending appropriate regulations. These regulations may include rules, requirements, procedures, fees, or laws. Typical examples include Denver Zoning Code text and map amendments, Department of Transportation and Infrastructure requirements for infrastructure improvements associated with development projects, and Parks and Recreation requirements regarding the provision of publicly accessible parks and open space. Developing these regulations based on the guidance of this plan will involve additional community engagement. Regulatory and policy implementation priorities for East Central include the following:

- Strategies for incentivizing historic preservation (see Policies L5, L6, & L9).
- Creating an adaptive reuse ordinance (see Policies L4 & C-L1).
- New standards for quality design (see Policies L6, L7, & L8).
- Targeted financial and technical assistance to small businesses along Colfax (see Policies C-E3 & C-E4) in preparation of BRT.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

To ensure community members have access to all the amenities that make a complete neighborhood, the city must provide infrastructure and public facilities that complement the private investment. Examples include public investment in street reconstruction, bicycle lane installations, new transit routes, park improvements, or new or expanded recreation centers. 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 partnerships with the private sector. New streets, utilities, open space and other major public infrastructure associated with new development are typically led and funded by private developers or through public-private partnerships (see Partnerships below). Some strategies may require detailed studies and further assessment to identify appropriate solutions that must consider existing and projected mobility demands. These studies will inform future needs and capacities and also determine project costs and funding eligibility. Public infrastructure implementation priorities for East Central include the following:

- Building high quality sidewalks and safe crossings on Colfax (see Policy M1-A).
- Making 13th (see Policy M1-L), 14th (see Policy M1-M), 16th (see Policy M1-N), and 17th (see Policy M1-O) streets much safer to cross and travel down.

PARTNERSHIPS

Where neither the city nor the private sector can alone achieve the vision, partnerships offer an opportunity to work together to advance community goals. Many partnerships focus on services, with the city working alongside an outside organization to provide for community needs. Other partnerships can provide infrastructure through public-private financing arrangements. There are many different potential partners identified for specific recommendations throughout the plan to accomplish many different goals. Partnership implementation priorities for East Central include the following:

- Enhanced social services to residents experiencing homelessness (see Policies E12, E13, & E14).
- Permanently preserving current affordable housing and units with expiring income restrictions (see Policy E9).
- Targeted areas to focus tree planting efforts (see Policy Q5).
5.1.2 PRIORITIES
Over the 20-year life of this plan, the city will evolve, recommendations will be implemented, and circumstances will change. All of these will impact which recommendations are the highest priorities for the city to focus on. An appendix will identify the current top priorities and will be updated regularly to reflect the changing situation.

5.1.3 SUMMARY OF UPDATES TO BLUEPRINT DENVER
The East Central Area Plan is adopted as a supplement to Comprehensive Plan 2040 and updates Blueprint Denver. This plan advances the vision of Comprehensive Plan 2040 and is consistent with Blueprint’s overall approach including topics, maps, legend categories, and system hierarchies. This plan takes a closer and more detailed look at East Central and is intended to refine Blueprint Denver’s guidance for this part of the city. Where this plan addresses topics also addressed by Blueprint, Blueprint’s maps should be updated to be consistent with this plan, including the following maps:

- Neighborhood Context (Section 2.1.2)
- Future Places (Section 2.1.3)
- Growth Strategy (Section 2.1.4)
- Street Types (Section 2.3.1)
- Transformative Streets (Modal Priority) (Section 2.3.3)
5.1.4 PROGRESS METRICS

Each topic within the Area Wide Recommendations section has associated performance measures to evaluate whether this plan is having the desired impact in achieving the community’s vision. However, in addition to measuring the outcomes from the plan, it is also important to track how the recommendations of this plan are implemented. To determine how much progress the city is making in implementing this plan, the number of individual projects the plan calls for under each topic that have been completed will be tracked. See the numbers to the right for the implementation targets.

18
LAND USE & BUILT FORM PROJECTS

35
ECONOMY & HOUSING PROJECTS

142
MOBILITY PROJECTS

9
QUALITY-OF-LIFE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS