East Central Area Plan

Steering Committee Meeting
March 8th, 2018

CHUN Tears McFarlane House
Vision Statement Development
Opportunities Analysis
Vision Elements

1. Equitable, Affordable and Inclusive
2. Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods
3. Well Connected, Safe and Accessible Places
4. Economically Diverse and Vibrant
5. Environmentally Resilient
6. Healthy and Active
Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods
Land Use
Land Use

2,723 Comments

43%
Dislikes

694 Comments
25%
Ideas
611 Comments
22%
Urban Design (42%)

**Like**
- Pedestrian orientation
- Unique characteristics of neighborhoods
- Authenticity of Colfax
- Quiet residential areas
- Diversity of buildings ages, sizes, designs

**Dislike**
- Design out of character with surrounding context
- Automobile oriented designs and lack of walkability
- Low quality design
- Buildings in disrepair or vacant

**Ideas**
- Park Avenue – enhance green spaces, make more pedestrian oriented
- Colfax Avenue streetscaping, and keep it feeling unique and authentic character
- Pedestrian, Bike, Transit friendly designs
- More plazas / pocket parks / green spaces
- Create pedestrian-only streets
- Improved design standards for new buildings
Community (38%)

Like

• Sense of community / neighborliness
• Demographic diversity

Dislike

• Loss of demographic diversity
• Exclusive feel

Ideas

• Better preserve culture
• More inclusive neighborhoods
Demographic Diversity

Race & Ethnicity

- White: 78.8%
- Hispanic or Latino: 9.5%
- Black or African American: 5.7%
- Asian: 2.7%
- Two or More Races: 2.5%
- American Indian or Alaskan Native: 0.5%
- Other Race: 0.2%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.1%

Age Breakdown

- Under 5: 6.15%
- 5-9: 6.44%
- 10-19: 8.49%
- 20-24: 9.96%
- 25-29: 16.64%
- 30-34: 11.16%
- 35-39: 11.63%
- 40-44: 9.43%
- 45-49: 8.05%
- 50-54: 9.05%
- 55-59: 4.87%
- 60-64: 2.86%
- 65-69: 0.82%

10% Speak a Language Other Than English At Home

- 1.2% Denver, Capital Hill
- 1.0% North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill
- 1.1% City Park West
- 1.0% Cheesman Park
- 1.0% City Park
- 0.7% Congress Park

7% Foreign Born

- 8% Denver, North Capitol Hill
- 8% Capital Hill
- 6% City Park West
- 5% Cheesman Park
- 5% City Park
- 5% Congress Park
Destinations (32%)

Like
• Colfax as a dining and nightlife destination
• Parks, Botanic Gardens, museums, zoo, entertainment
• Easy access to downtown
• Close proximity to a variety of neighborhood destinations.

Dislike
• Traffic and spill-over parking generated from destinations

Ideas
• More community events and activities, especially in City Park
• More daily living destinations
Land Use (11%)

Like

• Mix of uses / close proximity to retail, services, and employment
• Density / urban feel

Dislike

• Over-sized development compared to surrounding context
• Surface parking and vacant lots
• Parking and traffic impacts from dense development
• Loss of green space with development

Ideas

• Redevelop surface parking lots and other vacant / underutilized sites
• More intense development
• Reduce parking and traffic impacts from development.
Land Use / Zoning

Land Use Breakdown
- Residential - One- and Two-Unit: 5%
- Residential - Multi-Unit: 2%
- Park/Open Space: 15%
- Office, Industrial, Commercial: 27%
- Public/Entertainment: 19%
- Mixed Use: 10%
- Other: 11%

*Old Zoning: Civic, Downtown, Denver
Existing Building Heights vs. Maximum Allowed
Building Height
Property Values
Demographic Diversity

Race & Ethnicity

- WHITE (Not Hispanic or Latino): 78.8%
- HISPANIC OR LATINO: 9.5%
- BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN: 5.7%
- ASIAN: 2.7%
- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE: 2.5%
- TWO OR MORE RACES: 0.5%
- OTHER RACE: 0.2%
- NATIVE HAWAIIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER: 0.1%

- 10% Speak a Language Other Than English At Home

- 7% Foreign Born

Age Breakdown

- Under 5: 6.15%
- 5 to 14: 11.15%
- 15 to 24: 12.40%
- 25 to 34: 17.10%
- 35 to 44: 17.40%
- 45 to 54: 15.60%
- 55 to 64: 11.00%
- 65 and Over: 10.05%

Demographic Data for Different Neighborhoods:

- Denver: 19.1%
- Capitol Hill: 22.1%
- City Park West: 22.1%
- Cheesman Park: 22.1%
- City Park: 22.1%
- Congress Park: 22.1%
Historic Preservation (10%)

Like
• Old / historic buildings
• Vintage character of Colfax, signage, diversity of building ages

Dislike
• Demolition of old / historic buildings

Ideas
• Improved standards for conserving neighborhood character and old/ historic buildings
Historic Districts / Landmarks
History / Previous Plans
Historical Precedent
• Colfax, and streetcar nodes were originally designed to be pedestrian friendly
• Cap Hill was historically a mixed community – middle class family homes mixed in with mansions

Previous Plans
• Compatible high density and infill development
• Mixed use development
• Compatible building types and design
• Traffic and Parking management
• Out of scale/character of development
• Creative signage
• Reduce auto oriented designs, such as drive throughs
• Strengthen and expand Historic preservation
• Pedestrian orientation / pedestrian friendly atmosphere
• Create compatible edges or transitions between commercial and residential areas
• Cohesive urban design
• Multi-story mixed use buildings with active ground floor uses along Colfax at major transit nodes
• Colfax as a pedestrian friendly “main street”
• Welcoming and inclusive / demographic diversity
Key Opportunities

• Pleasant and convenient to walk, bike, use transit; car ownership is truly optional
• Citywide destination with numerous multi-cultural, inclusive, and affordable amenities and events
• Colfax Ave. is a destination main street with unique uses, creatively reused buildings, vintage signage, “grittiness”, and pedestrian orientation.
• Well preserved historic neighborhoods and structures
• High quality newer buildings that balance design innovation with neighborhood character
• Intense development located near downtown, on healthcare campuses, and along planned high capacity transit corridors: Colfax Ave., Broadway, Park Ave., Colorado Blvd.
• Popular small plazas and greens throughout area
• Park Avenue is a destination with lush landscaping, pedestrian friendly design, and high capacity transit.
• Cohesive sense of community, neighborly and friendly.
Economically Diverse and Vibrant

Economic Development
Dislikes
223 Comments
16%
Businesses (72%)

Like
• Variety and proximity (can walk to most needs)
• Small, local, community-serving
• Colfax, neighborhood nodes, Downtown
• Restaurants, bars, stores

Dislike
• Undeveloped or vacant stores or land
• Gentrification/loss of local businesses/chain stores
• Loss of history/character
• Too many bars
• Parking

Ideas
• Specific businesses (especially groceries)
• More/better shops/restaurants
• More/less parking
• Retail in/around parks
Arts & Culture (27%)

Like
• Diversity of cultures and businesses
• Amenities
• Authenticity/history
• Events

Dislike
• Impact of cultural facilities on neighborhoods (especially parking)

Idea
• Capitalize on parks
• More public art and events
Public facilities?

Cultural & Public Facilities
Jobs (13%)

**Like**
- Proximity to jobs (both in the area and Downtown)
- Diverse, mixed-use
- Easy to get around

**Dislike**
- Lack of access to quality jobs
- Homelessness

**Idea**
- Help homeless population
- More mixed-use/retail development
**Employment**

**Sectors**
- Health Care
- Public Administration
- Finance and Insurance

**Employers**
- Wells Fargo
- Presbyterian – St. Luke’s
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
- State of Colorado

**Jobs per Household**
- East Central: 1.96
- Denver: 1.56

**Jobs per Acre**
- East Central: 25
- Denver: 4.3
Job density

Unemployment

Sectors

Income/wages

Unemployment Rate

• East Central: 4.9%
• Denver: 5.5%
Poverty Rate

- East Central: 15.8%
- Denver: 15.7%
Education (10%)

Like
- Good schools (especially East High)
- Walkability/access to schools
- Other educational amenities

Dislike
- Lack or loss or access to quality schools and daycare

Idea
- Library branch
- Better elementary schools and daycares
- Community programs for children
School rankings

Daycare

Children per Spot

- East Central: 0.87
- Denver: 3.78

Population with college degree

- East Central: 71.3%
- Denver: 45.0%
Key Opportunities

• Thriving, locally-owned, community-serving businesses and commercial areas
• Access to quality jobs
• Access to quality education and daycare
• Excellent arts and cultural resources that enhance quality of life
• A diverse mix of commercial areas with unique businesses
• A healthy relationship between commercial/cultural areas and surrounding residential areas that benefits both
• Everyone feels comfortable and welcome
Environmentally Resilient
Green Infrastructure
Overview

- 490 Total Comments (8%)
- Top Five Topics
  - Park(s) – 58%
  - Tree(s) – 41%
  - Colfax – 23%
  - Impervious Surface – 20%
  - Green Space – 13%

Heat
- 2%

Energy
- 2%

Water
- 9%

Landscaping
- 87%

East Central – Green
• Likes
  ✓ Mature tree canopy
  ✓ Balance between historical architecture and innovative landscaping and garden use
  ✓ Botanic Gardens

• Dislikes
  ✓ Removal of older, mature trees to make way for new development
  ✓ Lack of trees and appealing landscape along Colfax Avenue

• Ideas
  ✓ Accessible community gardens
  ✓ Streetscape enhancement along Colfax Avenue
  ✓ Integrate new plaza and public space where appropriate
  ✓ More trees
Landscaping

- Tree canopy coverage - 18%
  - Denver average - 19%
  - High concentration in parks
  - Lower concentration in Capitol Hill neighborhoods

- Colfax Avenue BID
  - Streetscape enhancement
  - More trees!

- Capitol Hill/Cheesman Park Plan – 1993
  - Encourage community gardens
  - Replace and plant trees, shrubbery and flowers
  - Require street trees and landscaping
Water (9%)

- **Likes**
  - Recreation at Ferril Lake

- **Dislikes**
  - Increase of impervious area leads to more flooding
  - The removal of trees and other features that naturally absorb rainwater
  - Poor water quality
  - City Park Golf Course redesign

- **Ideas**
  - Improve storm water infrastructure
  - Increase natural greenways for drainage
  - More xeriscaping
Water

- 68 percent of the planning area is impervious
  - Denver average is 44%

- Uniform site-scaled green infrastructure best management practices (BMPs)
  - Denver Ultra Urban Green Infrastructure Guidelines
    - Storm water planters
    - Green gutters, alleys and tree trenches
Water

- Natural water flow NW to South Platte River
- Flooding concerns near Colfax Avenue and Colorado Boulevard
- Home to Central Platte Valley Basin and Upper Montclair Basins

✓ Priority Basins for storm drainage improvements and water quality improvements (Denver Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan)
Heat (2%)

- **Likes**
  - ✓ No common themes

- **Dislikes**
  - ✓ The removal of older homes and larger trees which increases the surface temperature

- **Ideas**
  - ✓ Plant more trees to prevent “heat island” effect
“Heat island” effect along Colfax Avenue, Broadway, and within Capitol Hill Neighborhoods.

Future summers in Denver are predicted to be hotter with an average high of 96°F (Game Plan Denver Existing Conditions Report).
Energy (2%)

- **Likes**
  - Close proximity allows for the ability to lower carbon footprint by using alternative modes of transportation

- **Dislikes**
  - No common themes

- **Ideas**
  - Incentivize environmentally friendly buildings
Green

- Likes
  - Parks
  - Botanic Gardens
  - Trees, trees, trees
Green

• Likes
  ✓ Parks
  ✓ Botanic Gardens
  ✓ Trees, trees, trees

• Dislikes
  ✓ Removal of older, mature trees
  ✓ Lack of appealing landscape along Colfax Avenue
  ✓ Increase of impervious surface
Summary

• Likes
  ✓ Parks
  ✓ Botanic Gardens
  ✓ Trees, trees, trees

• Dislikes
  ✓ Removal of older, mature trees
  ✓ Lack of appealing landscape along Colfax Avenue
  ✓ Increase of impervious surface

• Ideas
  ✓ Streetscape enhancement
  ✓ More community gardens
  ✓ Incentivize environmentally friendly buildings
Key Opportunities

- Abundant Tree Canopy
- Cool and shaded neighborhoods
- Lush landscaping along Colfax Avenue
- Thriving neighborhood treasures like Botanic Gardens
- Rich open space network with parks, community gardens and plazas
- Neighborhoods safe from flooding
- Green storm water infrastructure provides beautification and is seamlessly integrated into the community