



East Area Plan

Response to Denver East Neighborhoods First (DENF) Recommendations & Fact Sheet

5/9/20

Thank you again for DENF's work to inform residents, provide comments, and host productive meetings with us to discuss improvements to the plan recommendations. We would be happy to set up another meeting with you to discuss your input on the draft plan.

As you know, we provided draft recommendations in May 2019 followed by a second draft of recommendations in October 2019. The majority of the recommendations have consistently received strong community support and were brought forward into the draft plan with minor updates to address comments. The major updates (which are also highlighted in this [summary](#)) include the following:

- p. 39, Policy L6 - Ensure East area neighborhoods are inclusive places by thoughtfully integrating compatibly-designed missing middle housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in appropriate locations.
 - This recommendation addresses neighborhood housing options feedback that we received through the community workshop, online and in-person comments, and meetings with organizations, including but not limited to DENF.
- p. 31-33, Policy L3 and Maximum Building Heights Map - Allow taller buildings in key locations along Colfax Avenue, within the Mayfair Town Center, and the 9th and Colorado area (see Maximum Building Height Map) when significant community benefits are provided.
 - This recommendation and the accompanying map address feedback received through the workshop, comments, and organization meetings. In the revised map, heights above 5 total stories along Colfax are limited to Colorado (already allowed), Krameria (up to 7 stories) and Yosemite (up to 7 stories). In addition, increased setbacks from single unit areas are included and there are no proposed additional height areas above 5 stories adjacent to single unit areas.
- Neighborhood Recommendations (East Colfax – p. 163-180; Hale – p. 181-194; Montclair – p. 195-208; South Park Hill – p. 209-220)
 - The new additions include detailed mobility recommendations for each neighborhood, and an expanded recommendation for a public park at Mayfair Town Center (p. 207, Policy MC-Q3).

For your reference, the DENF comments and petition are posted on the website under “Other Neighborhood Meetings and Events” linked [here](#) and [here](#).

The following is provided for your reference in navigating the plan as it relates to DENF's recommendations and fact sheet.

DENF Recommendations

The bolded statements below are from the DENF Recommendations Regarding East Area Plan (October 24, 2019).

1. Recommendation #1 – Residential Character Preservation

The plan should include a real Character and Preservation provision that actually addresses preservation of neighborhood character by calling for the implementation of a preservation overlay. At present, the “Character and Preservation” section of the plan is not about character and preservation at all – instead, it is a building height and density initiative, providing a means by which property owners may expand existing homes to add additional units. Residents of the affected neighborhoods do not support zoning changes that permit the addition of units to existing homes.

The draft plan includes several recommendations focused on character preservation in neighborhood areas, and the recommendation regarding additional housing options in neighborhoods was substantially updated to incorporate much of the feedback we heard from DENF and discussed in our meetings together in October and December.

- p. 37, Policy L4 - Encourage maintaining, rather than demolishing, existing older homes by revising design requirements to encourage renovations and additions.
- p. 38, Policy L5 - Work with neighborhoods to modify zoning standards for new construction to be more consistent with neighborhood character in residential areas.
- p. 39, Policy L6 - Ensure East area neighborhoods are inclusive places by thoughtfully integrating compatibly-designed missing middle housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in appropriate locations.
- p. 43, Policy L8 - Preserve historic buildings in residential areas.

2. Recommendation #2 – Build Capacity/Heights

The plan should work within the current built capacity and heights of 2010 Denver Zone Code throughout the East Area. We support working with the community before any height regulations are lifted to identify short- and long-term ‘Community Benefits’ that benefit neighbors of all cultures, socioeconomic classes, ages, and abilities.

The height recommendations in the draft plan are intended to help achieve goals that have been prioritized by community members. We continue to believe that zoning is an important tool in achieving community benefits, and therefore, have not removed this recommendation. We have clarified the language, prioritized affordable housing (except for in Mayfair Town Center where a public park is prioritized), and amended the height map based on community feedback we received to reduce height areas above 5 stories and increase setbacks from single unit residential areas. Please also note that Policy L7 (p. 41) addresses the design of these areas to ensure new buildings are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

- p. 31-33, Policy L3 and Maximum Building Heights Map - Allow taller buildings in key locations along Colfax Avenue, within the Mayfair Town Center, and the 9th and Colorado area (see Maximum Building Height Map) when significant community benefits are provided.

3. Recommendation #3 - Infrastructure

The plan should link all development with improving infrastructure, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and traffic mitigation measures within the neighborhoods and should delineate, in great detail, when and how this infrastructure improvement will occur.

The draft plan includes detailed recommendations for mobility improvements that have been prioritized based on data and community input and are intended to address both existing needs and

anticipated future development. These recommendations indicate which improvements should move forward in the near term (5 years or less) and long term. As a policy document, the plan will be used to inform future budgeting decisions and the engineering and design of infrastructure projects. Plans are not capital improvement budgets, but they can provide clear priorities.

- p. 67 – Areawide Mobility Recommendations
- p. 163 – East Colfax Key Opportunities
- p. 175-178 – East Colfax Mobility Recommendations
- p. 181 – Hale Key Opportunities
- p. 189-192 – Hale Mobility Recommendations
- p. 195 – Montclair Key Opportunities
- p. 203-206 – Montclair Mobility Recommendations
- p. 209 – South Park Hill Key Opportunities
- p. 215-217 – South Park Hill Mobility Recommendations
- p. 244 – Implementation Priorities

4. Recommendation #4 – Affordable Housing

Prioritize city-wide affordable housing throughout the metro area, through incentive programs such as tax breaks and land banking. We would like the city to use its extensive resources to try to achieve this goal without blanket upzoning in stable and historic neighborhoods.

We agree that affordable housing is a citywide issue and achieving an inclusive Denver is an effort that extends beyond the neighborhood plan. We continue to believe many tools are needed to help address affordable housing citywide and the shortage faced by existing residents in the East Area. Allowing more affordably-priced homes, such as duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes, is very important to many residents who struggle to afford the high costs of housing in Denver. In addition to enabling more of this “missing-middle” housing stock, CPD is also partnering with the Department of Housing Stability (HOST) to explore innovative ways to encourage the construction of more affordable housing.

There are a number of housing recommendations that were bolstered in the Housing & Economy section of the draft plan based on community input, DENF feedback, and meetings with East area organizations.

- p. 31-33, Policy L3 and Maximum Building Heights Map - Allow taller buildings in key locations along Colfax Avenue, within the Mayfair Town Center, and the 9th and Colorado area (see Maximum Building Height Map) when significant community benefits are provided.
- p. 52, Policy E1 - Stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement.
- p. 52, Policy E2 - Preserve existing affordability and housing quality.
- p. 53, Policy E3 - Create new affordable housing with access to transit and amenities.
- p. 54, Policy E4 - Expand diversity of housing types and affordability to support households of different sizes, ages, and incomes in all neighborhoods.

5. Recommendation #5 - BRT

This area plan was driven by Bus Rapid Transit, and with the delay or “death” of BRT, the recommendation for increased building height around BRT stops are not necessary.

Colfax Avenue has the highest bus ridership of any corridor in the region. The 15/15L routes combined see seven million annual boardings — over 22,000 per weekday — and weekday ridership is projected to increase to over 50,000 in 2035. The East Area Plan provides an opportunity to plan

for the long-term future of the area, ensuring that the community benefits both from its existing transit access and the improvements still forthcoming with BRT. The BRT project is moving forward as explained in the [FAQs](#). More information is available at www.colfaxbrt.org.

We agree that implementation of regulatory land use changes should be coordinated with transit investments, as recommended by Blueprint Denver (See [Blueprint Denver](#) Land Use & Built Form: General, Policy 1.B, p. 72).

6. Recommendation #6 – Environment

The plan's focus on environment should be equal to its focus on development. The Neighborhood Planning Initiative provide a framework for rezoning but do not provide requirements for green building design and public park space.

The draft plan includes areawide and neighborhood policies for open space, new parks, tree canopy, green infrastructure and sustainable water management practices.

- p. 129, Policy Q1 - Leverage the historic parkways to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.
- p. 130, Policy Q2 - Develop new Contemporary Parkway that connect the community to open space, parks, and recreational assets, as well as serve multiple community functions.
- p. 131, Policy Q3 - Create new community open space, parks and recreation facilities.
- p. 132, Policy Q4 - Enhance existing community open space, parks and recreation facilities.
- p. 138, Policy Q5 - Strengthen the existing tree canopy and increase tree canopy coverage within the public right-of-way
- p. 139, Policy Q6 - Protect and preserve existing tree assets in all development or redevelopment efforts.
- p. 141, Policy 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).
- p. 142, Policy Q8 - Encourage sustainable water management practices including stormwater management, flood protection, water quality, and water use.
- p. 29, Policy L1 - Ensure compatible development on institutional sites within neighborhoods. Strategy B recommends new open space.
- p. 185, Policy H-L1 - Ensure development on the hospital campuses promotes the success of the health care industry while ensuring compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Strategy B recommends new open space.
- p. 207, Policy MC-Q3 - Create a new neighborhood park in the Mayfair Town Center.
- p. 241-242, Policies C-Q1, C-Q3, and C-Q4 – Colfax-specific Quality of Life Recommendations

7. Recommendation #7 – Citywide Goals

We would like the city to provide greater detail about how the EAP will achieve overall city goals.

The relationship between Citywide plans and neighborhood plans was discussed extensively at the November 23 [workshop](#). This relationship is also addressed on p. 7 of the draft plan.

Implementation is discussed on p. 244.

DENF Fact Sheet Regarding East Area Plan

The bolded statements below are from the DENF Fact Sheet Regarding the East Area Plan (October 2019).

8. Significant Added Density and Effective Elimination of Single-Family Zoning

Please see the updates to the recommendation for additional neighborhood housing options on p.39, Policy L6.

9. No New Infrastructure to Support Proposed Density

- The draft plan has many recommendations addressing the need for new and improved infrastructure throughout the plan area.
- The draft plan recommends 110 transportation infrastructure projects with detailed recommendations for mobility improvements throughout the plan area, including traffic calming in neighborhoods (See mobility recommendations referenced in #3 above).
- The plan also includes recommendations for green infrastructure and addressing flood plain issues (see environment recommendations referenced in #6 above).
- p. 39, Policy L6 specifically states that street parking impacts and flood plain issues should be addressed during implementation of the policy to integrate additional housing units.
- The draft plan recommends evaluating parking requirements in order to reduce barriers for adaptive reuse and new, lower-scale buildings on small lots along Colfax. See p. 227, Policy C-L1.
- The draft plan also recommends developing strategies to make alternative travel options easier and reduce the need for car trips (See p. 122, Policy M12).
- Area plans are used to inform future infrastructure improvements in the city. Detailed evaluation of infrastructure improvements is integrated into permitting of new development. See p. 244, Implementation.

10. The Plan Adds More Cars to the Streets while Reducing Traffic Lanes

11. Bus Rapid Transit Will Not Offset Increased Density, and Density is Not Needed to Support Bus Rapid Transit

12. Bus Rapid Transit is Not a Solution to Existing Problems with Transit

This information addresses questions 10, 11, and 12. Denver is projected to add many more residents over the next 20 years, thus this plan includes detailed recommendations for mobility improvements throughout the plan area, including traffic calming in neighborhoods and making biking, walking, and taking transit easier (See mobility recommendations referenced in #3 above). Additionally, as discussed in #2 above, the recommendations for increased height and neighborhood housing options are intended to help meet community goals for affordable housing and other community priorities, not to support BRT.

It's also worth noting that the BRT and East Area Plan are separate projects. The relationship between BRT and the East Area Plan is addressed in the [FAQs](#).

13. Neighborhood character will be lost.

Please see the policy recommendations and updates referenced in #1 above.

14. Affordability is not required, and current affordable units could be lost.

Please see the policy recommendations and updates referenced in #1, 2 and 4 above. In particular, please note:

- p. 31, Policy L3 prioritizes affordable housing (except for in Mayfair Town Center where a public park is prioritized as the community benefit)
- p. 39, Policy L6 states that affordability and tools to help existing homeowners should be addressed in the implementation of additional housing options
- p. 52, Policy E2 recommends strategies to preserve existing affordability
- p. 53, Policy E3 recommends strategies to create new affordable housing
- [Blueprint Denver](#) Land Use & Built Form: Housing Policy 6 (p. 85) recommends continuing to advocate for changes to state law that remove barriers to access affordable housing options.

15. The Plan Does Nothing to Address the Lack of Park Access in the East Area.

The draft plan includes areawide and neighborhood policies for open space and parks.

- p. 129, Policy Q1 - Leverage the historic parkways to connect existing open space, parks and recreational assets.
- p. 130, Policy Q2 - Develop new Contemporary Parkway that connect the community to open space, parks, and recreational assets, as well as serve multiple community functions.
- p. 131, Policy Q3 - Create new community open space, parks and recreation facilities.
- p. 132, Policy Q4 - Enhance existing community open space, parks and recreation facilities.
- p. 146, Policy Q13 - Expand healthy meal options available in the East area. Support food growing and production included in community amenities. Strategy A recommends community gardens.
- p. 29, Policy L1 - Ensure compatible development on institutional sites within neighborhoods. Strategy B recommends new open space.
- p. 29, Policy L2 - Encourage shared use and activation of institutional and quasi-public facilities during off-peak times.
- p. 185, Policy H-L1 - Ensure development on the hospital campuses promotes the success of the health care industry while ensuring compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Strategy B recommends new open space.
- p. 207, Policy MC-Q3 - Create a new neighborhood park in the Mayfair Town Center.
- p. 241, Policy C-Q1 - Colfax-specific open space recommendation.