The 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments, as adopted under Ordinance 2016-0760, refines and updates the building height recommendations of this plan as applied to the area near the 38th and Blake commuter rail station; recommends a new regulatory approach to achieve greater building design standards; and recommends the integration of affordable housing and mixed income development within the 38th and Blake station area. Where there is conflict between the plan amendments and this plan, the plan amendments supersedes this plan.
Dear Elyria and Swansea neighbors,

This neighborhood plan, adopted by City Council, gives a new active vision and a foundation for future regulations to: make Elyria and Swansea a healthier place for people, control safe and responsible development, protect the character of the neighborhood and help stabilize the community. The Elyria Swansea (ES) neighborhood plan gives direction and restrictions according to what you, the neighborhood, have said in the planning process. The long needed connectivity improvements in your neighborhood are officially outlined in this plan including roads that connect, missing sidewalks, and safe passages around train tracks. The heart of the neighborhood is you, your aspirations and concerns created this plan to maintain cultural and historical relevancy, address affordability and health, and bring needed services to the neighborhood. This plan is meant to empower you and the Elyria Swansea community moving forward.

The formations of these historic neighborhoods are highlighted as part of the ES neighborhood plan including the environmental justice issues the neighborhood has faced. As you know, Elyria and Swansea long had “unknowns” like the I-70 viaduct that needs to be replaced, and the National Western’s future. These undecided large-scale projects have had an enormous presence, and its time they started to bring benefits instead of burden to the neighborhoods. Heavy manufacturing has had a lasting impact on the quality of life in Elyria and Swansea. The neighborhood plan recommends a buffer between residential and industrial areas and addressing issues like odor, noise and truck traffic. The environmental quality issues affecting the health of the residents, from the history of smelters and other polluting factors, need to be addressed; moving forward air, soil and water sustainable practices will be essential.

During this neighborhood planning process we have had simultaneous processes about the I-70 project and the National Western project, and it is important to me that you have a neighborhood plan first to guide these projects. Cultural relevance has been important during this process of neighborhood planning, and is also important in moving forward with implementation. The neighborhoods of Elyria and Swansea have been a safe place for Latino immigrants for the last 25 years and have a distinct urban-Latino spirit where brightly painted homes, altars to Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe, water fountains and garden patios fill the yards of your homes. It is important to me that this culture is recognized and that current residents feel comfortable in the neighborhoods.

At one time, Elyria and Swansea had all the services to sustain its people, like markets, creameries, butchers and entertainment. Residents were employed and profited from the surrounding factories and were able to walk to work. I see this in the future of the neighborhoods as well. I also want to address the fears around gentrification we have heard through the process. Incoming development must not displace current residents. It’s imperative that after centuries of living with minimal city services, finally when the neighborhood is getting investment, the current residents must not be pushed out. Diverse resident involvement in implementation of this plan is critical.

Thank you to all who have been involved and guided this process,

Judy H. Montero
Councilwoman, District Nine
Queridos vecinos de Elyria y Swansea:

Este plan de vecindario aprobado por el Concejo de la Ciudad, da una nueva visión activa y una base para futuras regulaciones para: hacer de Elyria y Swansea un lugar más saludable para la gente, controlar el desarrollo seguro y responsable, proteger aquellas características distintivas del vecindario y ayudar a estabilizar la comunidad. El plan del vecindario Elyria Swansea (ES) suministra dirección y restricciones de acuerdo a lo que ustedes, el vecindario, han dicho en el proceso de planificación. Las mejoras de conectividad que se han necesitado por tanto tiempo en su vecindario se esbozan oficialmente en este plan que incluye carreteras que conectan, banquetas que faltan, y pasajes seguros alrededor de las vías del tren. Ustedes son el corazón del vecindario, sus aspiraciones y preocupaciones crearon este plan para mantener relevancia cultural e histórica, abordar los asuntos de asequibilidad y salud, y traer los servicios que se necesitan en el vecindario. Este plan está destinado a habilitarle a ustedes y a la comunidad de Elyria Swansea en su avance.

La formación de estos vecindarios históricos es resaltada como parte del plan de vecindario ES que incluye los asuntos de justicia ambiental que el vecindario ha enfrentado. Como ustedes saben, Elyria y Swansea han experimentado por mucho tiempo situaciones inciertas tales como el viaducto de la I-70 que necesita ser reemplazado, y el futuro del National Western. Estos proyectos a gran escala que han estado en proceso de decidirse, han tenido una presencia enorme, y es tiempo de que empiecen a traer beneficios en lugar de ser una carga para los vecindarios. La industria pesada ha tenido un impacto duradero en la calidad de vida en Elyria y Swansea. El plan de vecindario recomienda establecer una zona de amortiguación entre las zonas residenciales e industriales y abordar cuestiones como el olor, el ruido y el tráfico de camiones. Los problemas de calidad del medio ambiente que afectan a la salud de los residentes en esta zona, desde el establecimiento de las fundidoras y otros factores contaminantes, deben ser resueltos. A medida que avanzamos necesitamos prácticas sostenibles en cuanto al aire, el suelo y el agua.

Durante este proceso de planificación del vecindario, hemos tenido procesos simultáneos para el proyecto I-70 y el proyecto Nacional Western, y es importante para mí que ustedes tengan primero un plan de vecindario que guíe estos proyectos. La relevancia cultural ha sido importante durante este proceso de planificación del vecindario, y también es importante para avanzar con la ejecución. Los vecindarios de Elyria y Swansea han sido un lugar seguro para los inmigrantes latinos en los últimos 25 años y tienen un espíritu urbano con casas pintadas de vivos colores, altares a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, y patios llenos de jardines con fuentes de agua. Es importante para mí que esta cultura se reconozca y que los residentes actuales se sientan cómodos en los vecindarios.

Hace un tiempo, Elyria y Swansea tenían todos los servicios necesarios para sus pobladores tales como mercados, lecherías, carnicerías y entretenimiento. Los residentes tenían empleos y se beneficiaban de las fábricas de los alrededores y podían caminar al trabajo. Veo esto de nuevo en el futuro de los vecindarios. También quiero referirme a los temores en torno a la invasión de la clase adinerada que hemos escuchado a través del proceso. El desarrollo que está por comenzar no debe desplazar a los residentes actuales. Es imprescindible que después de vivir por siglos con servicios municipales mínimos, finalmente, cuando el vecindario esté recibiendo inversión, los residentes actuales no sean desplazados. La participación de una diversidad de residentes en la implementación de este plan es fundamental.

¡Gracias a todos aquellos que han participado y guiado este proceso!

Judy H. Montero
Councilwoman, District Nine

Concejera Municipal Judy H. Montero, Presidenta Temporal del Concejo de Denver
Dear Elyria & Swansea Residents:

Congratulations on the completion of the Elyria Swansea Neighborhood Plan! Your dedication and commitment have paved the way toward creating a neighborhood vision that supports a strong, connected, healthy and unique community.

Elyria and Swansea are historically rich neighborhoods that have made fundamental contributions to our city. From its beginning of smelting and meat-packing industries to a now diverse and family friendly community, your pride and culture make this part of the city a unique neighborhood. The Elyria Swansea neighborhood plan is a significant accomplishment that will build on this history and continue to make Elyria and Swansea strong and vibrant.

The City & County of Denver has already begun working with community partners to address challenges you have identified. Through RTD’s Fastracks project, the North Metro Line and the East Rail Line will provide new connections to Elyria and Swansea residents increasing access to other parts of the city. The Brighton Boulevard Redevelopment project will create a safe multi-modal corridor stretching all the way to the county line. In addition, the National Western Center master plan will provide access to new green spaces, the river, new connections and other amenities highlighted in the plan. And lastly, we continue to work with the Colorado Department of Transportation to address your concerns outlined in this plan regarding the I-70 East project.

In 2013, the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative (NDCC) was formed to strategically align six key planning efforts including the Globeville and Elyria Swansea neighborhood plans and the National Western Center. These catalytic projects will transform a gateway into our city and uplift this cornerstone of our community. The vision you’ve laid out for Elyria Swansea plays a key role in advancing Denver and the NDCC.

Thank you to the many neighbors, community organizations and business representatives who took part in the planning process. In addition, we appreciate the partnership with Councilwoman Judy Montero who has been at the forefront of this and all projects in North Denver. Together, we share a commitment to strengthen Elyria and Swansea.

Respectfully,

Michael B. Hancock
Mayor
Acknowledgements

MAYOR MICHAEL B. HANCOCK

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Artwork used on the Cover and on select pages in this document is from a mural by Joshua Mayson on the GrowHaus building along Claude Ct. between 47th Ave. and 48th Ave. in Elyria.
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

PLANNING PROCESS

PLANNING CONTEXT

PLANNING AREA OVERVIEW AND NDCC

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HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
Denver’s Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods are located along the eastern bank of the South Platte River. In addition to the river, major physical landmarks in the neighborhood include the Denver Coliseum, the National Western Complex, I-70, the Purina plant, and the Swansea Elementary School. In the mid 19th century, the area was highly valued by industry and commerce because of the flat terrain and proximity to the South Platte River. With industry, especially smelting and meat-packing, came settlement and housing. Industry, railroads, and housing grew together over the years. Although the smelters are now gone and the meat-packing industry is much-diminished, a strong industrial presence remains today, as does an established residential community with a significant supply of workforce housing. Strong community cohesion and civic pride bolster the neighborhoods even when presented with issues that cause major challenges for quality of life. Many important changes are on the neighborhoods’ immediate horizon, including new commuter rail transit stations, Interstate 70 improvements and a new vision for the National Western Center. As residents anticipate neighborhood improvements, there is a common hope and desire that progress will not result in displacement, and that affordable housing will continue to be within reach in the future.
MULTI-LAYERED COLLABORATION

The planning process for the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods Plan kicked off in January, 2013. Over the course of the next two years, community members, stakeholders and City staff collaborated to identify neighborhood opportunities and challenges, articulate a vision for the future, and develop objectives and strategies for achieving the vision.

The following inclusive and collaborative process was established to ensure that all perspectives were considered, and that this Plan sets forth a vision desired by the community:

- **Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee** - a dedicated group of individuals representing local businesses, residents, schools and neighborhood organizations met to discuss neighborhood issues and provide leadership in developing the contents and process of this Plan.

- **Joint Globeville, Elyria and Swansea Plan Steering Committee Meetings** - the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods Plan Steering Committee met with the Globeville Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee throughout the planning process to discuss topics affecting both neighborhoods.

- **Residents Engaging Other Residents** - Multiple dedicated residents of Elyria, Swansea and Globeville distributed flyers, plan materials, and worked to raise awareness of the neighborhood planning process.

- **Community Asset Mapping** - Councilwoman Judy Montero led a detailed effort to identify community assets in Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea. This effort included work sessions with City staff, local non-profits, faith-based institutions, and the general public.

- **Health Impact Assessment** - Denver Environmental Health conducted a detailed Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea neighborhoods parallel to and as a component of the neighborhood planning process. The resulting HIA recommendations have been integrated directly into this Plan.

- **Oral History Project** - As a parallel effort to the ongoing planning effort in the neighborhoods, Councilwoman Judy Montero led an oral history project. This effort resulted in a DVD feature entitled “Globeville Elyria Swansea Then and Now,” and a photo exhibit at the Denver Public Library that was on display in the spring and summer of 2014.
■ **Targeted Discussion Group Meetings** - meetings were held on an as-needed basis to engage specific stakeholder groups:
  - Spanish Language Meetings - multiple meetings were held in Spanish and were interpreted into English instead of all other meetings that were held in English and interpreted into Spanish. Additionally, voice broadcast phone calls were made to Spanish speaking residents.
  - Business Stakeholders - multiple meetings were held with business groups to discuss trucking needs and to explore ways to minimize impacts on surrounding residential areas.
  - Market Lead Stakeholders - a meeting was held with residents and businesses immediately adjacent to the disused Market Lead south of 42nd Ave. to identify issues and opportunities.

■ **Neighborhood Events** - the planning process was showcased at events already taking place in the neighborhood, including:
  - Our Lady of Grace Bazaar, July 2013
  - Muffins with Muñoz at Swansea Elementary School
  - Zumba classes

■ **Public Meetings** - the planning process featured a series of meetings to seek input and guidance from the general public for this Plan:
  - Kickoff meeting and issue and opportunity identification session - January 9, 2013
  - Guiding principles, vision and land use discussion - May 2, 2013
  - Connectivity and mobility discussion - June 23, 2013
  - Joint meetings with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to explore options for the reconstruction of I-70 - September & November, 2013
  - A Healthy Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea (Health Impact Assessment Joint Neighborhood Meeting) - January 8, 2014
  - An Urban Land Institute - Building Healthy Places Panel focused on the 40th and Colorado Station area on July 29, 2014. This day-long effort concluded with a public presentation to residents and stakeholders.
  - 40th and Colorado Station Area discussion - August 13, 2014
  - 40th and Colorado Station Area follow up discussion - September 17, 2014

■ **Coordination with Concurrent Planning Efforts** - In addition to the meetings above, there were several related efforts underway within or adjacent to the neighborhoods. The planning team coordinated with each of these efforts to help ensure consistency:
  - Globeville Neighborhood Plan
  - Globeville, Elyria and Swansea Health Impact Assessment
  - National Western Center Master Plan and its Community Advisory Committee
  - Brighton Boulevard Corridor Study
  - I-70 East Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement
  - North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative Town Hall Meetings
  - Urban Land Conservancy public meetings

■ **Coordination with Non-profit and Other Initiatives**
  Groundwork Denver and GES LiveWell provided valuable resident input related to specific neighborhood concerns and desired improvements.

■ **Plan Website** - A plan website was established at the beginning of the planning process to provide updates and important plan resources to the general public.

■ **North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative Newsletter**
  A monthly e-mail newsletter sent to a growing contact list, including latest NDCC information and project updates.

■ **Denver Foundation Grant** - The Elyria and Swansea Steering Committee was awarded a grant by the Denver Foundation to fund additional meetings, food, Spanish interpretation and translation of materials.

■ **Denver Planning Board** - City staff briefed Planning Board throughout the planning process. After a public hearing, Planning Board will be responsible for approving the Plan and recommending it to City Council.

■ **Denver City Council** - City Council President Pro Tem Judy Montero (District 9) provided critical leadership and guidance regarding the planning process. A City Council public hearing and vote will culminate the planning process.
The Denver Comprehensive Plan provides the vision for the entire city. Citywide and small area plans are adopted as supplements to the Comprehensive Plan to provide additional direction for a certain topic or area. This small area plan supersedes the previously adopted Swansea/Elyria Neighborhood Plan (1983).

**Denver Comprehensive Plan and Supplements.** The Denver Comprehensive Plan is established in the Denver City Charter and Revised Municipal Code to “…provide an expression of the city’s vision for the future with a listing of goals and objectives. Once prepared and adopted, the plan will guide and influence decisions that affect the future of the city.”

The Comprehensive Plan and its supplements are by ordinance approved by the planning board, and then transmitted by the manager to the mayor and the council for acceptance, modification or rejection (DRMC 12-61).

The following list of adopted plans were referenced to understand existing policy context for this planning process:

- Swansea/Elyria Neighborhood Plan (1983- readopted in 2000)
- Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000
- Park Hill Neighborhood Plan (2000)
- Bicycle Master Plan (2001)
- Denver Parks and Recreation Game Plan (2002)
- River North Plan (2003)
- Pedestrian Master Plan (2004)
- 38th and Blake Station Area Plan (2009)

**Implementation Plans.** City agencies prepare implementation plans to guide their policies and work programs. Although these plans are not adopted as supplements to the Comprehensive Plan, they provide important guidance to the City and its agencies for implementing the Comprehensive Plan and its supplements:

- Greenprint Denver (2006)
- Strategic Transportation Plan (2008)
- Sanitary Sewer Master Plan (2009)
- Strategic Parking Plan (2010)
- Denver Moves (2011)
- Transit Oriented Development Strategic Plan (2014)
- Storm Drainage Master Plan (2014)
- River North Greenway Master Plan (2008)
THE NORTH DENVER CORNERSTONE COLLABORATIVE

Denver has several major redevelopment and infrastructure projects taking place that will serve to strengthen the connection from Denver Union Station to Denver International Airport. Named the “Corridor of Opportunity,” the nearly 23-mile stretch is an extensive commercial investment opportunity with thousands of undeveloped acres near the airport, and numerous potential mixed use infill and redevelopment sites near Denver’s core.

Within the Corridor of Opportunity are the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods that have a rich history of making considerable cultural and economic contributions to the city. Currently, there are six different redevelopment projects in this cornerstone area where reinvestment in the corridor could significantly improve neighborhood conditions.

In early 2013, Councilwoman Montero and Mayor Michael B. Hancock recognized the need to align all of these efforts as part of creating a world class city. The resulting North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative (NDCC) is a coordinated effort to ensure integrated planning and deliberate connections among the converging projects taking place. Each of the following six projects is unique and plays a significant role in revitalizing these neighborhoods:

- Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea Neighborhood Plans
- National Western Center
- Brighton Boulevard Corridor Redevelopment Project
- River North
- Interstate 70 Reconstruction
- Transit Oriented Development at the four RTD Stations

Of these NDCC projects, careful coordination was especially critical between this planning process, the Globeville Neighborhood Plan, and the National Western Center Master Planning processes. All three planning efforts share a boundary along the South Platte River, and recommend improvements to the river corridor and connections between their respective planning areas in order to realize shared goals that apply to each specific planning effort.

The role of the neighborhood plans is to establish a vision and to identify recommended next steps and strategies to achieve their respective visions. The neighborhood plans have been coordinated to ensure that they are complimentary and do not provide conflicting or contradictory guidance. The National Western Center Master Plan is more detailed than the neighborhood plans, and its role is to help implement the vision that is set by this Plan and the Globeville Neighborhood Plan.
Elyria and Swansea neighborhood meet Commerce City and Adams County at Denver’s north boundary (about 54th Ave.). Elyria and Swansea are statistically part of the same neighborhood, but were founded as two separate settlements in the 1870’s near Denver’s expanding rail and industrial growth. The neighborhood boundary to the west is South Platte River, Colorado Blvd. to the west, and 40th Ave. to the south, encompassing over 1,600 acres. Slightly more than 500 acres of the area is currently industrial, with some limited commercial retail uses. More than 200 acres consists of railways, parking and vacant properties.

The study area includes additional acreage lying beyond the statistical boundaries of Elyria and Swansea within a half mile radius of the 38th and Blake Station and the 40th and Colorado Station. This plan provides a vision and policy guidance for the entire 40th and Colorado Station Area which encompasses portions of the Northeast Park Hill and Clayton neighborhoods. The plan reinforces recommendations from the adopted 38th and Blake Station Area plan (2010) while updating recommendations related to land use and building heights area within the statistical Elyria and Swansea neighborhood. Also captured in the study area is a slight extension south of 40th Ave. to 38th Ave. in the Clayton and Cole neighborhoods, where connectivity and land use considerations are significant to the neighborhoods fronting 40th Ave.
How to Use this Plan

This Plan establishes a long range vision with guiding principles, recommendations and implementation strategies for improving the future of the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods.

Plan recommendations provide guidance for day-to-day decision making related to land use, public investment, private development and partnerships. It will guide future implementation actions such as zoning map or text amendments, capital improvements and public-private partnerships.

Public agencies and private entities will use this Plan as a guide to bring desired changes to the neighborhood character and livability. These include partnerships and projects that require multiple steps over several years by a variety of participants. Plan recommendations are intended to give the latitude needed to address unforeseen opportunities and challenges that may arise.

The Plan is organized within the following structure:

■ The Vision defines the future that this Plan is striving to create and introduces the four guiding principles that are viewed as key to achieving the vision.

■ Four Guiding Principle chapters provide content and background information in support of recommendations and strategies that apply to the entire Plan area, including Unique, Strong, Connected, and Healthy. These guiding principles were derived from the public engagement process as described in the following pages.

■ Six Character Area chapters provide greater detail and more specific recommendations for specific character areas in Elyria and Swansea as outlined on the previous page. Some of the recommended projects are identified as “Transformative,” meaning that their implementation is essential to achieving the Plan Vision over the next 20 years. These projects are associated with recommendations that apply to two or more guiding principles.

■ The Moving Forward chapter identifies specific priorities for implementation of this Plan. This chapter also highlights multiple steps that may facilitate implementation of the transformative recommendations.
Neighborhood Input

This plan responds to neighborhood input that was collected throughout the entire planning process, beginning with a public kick-off meeting held in January of 2013. Feedback related to existing conditions in the neighborhoods and future desires was gathered from residents, business owners and neighborhood supporters. Similar community feedback was echoed in subsequent public meetings, steering committee meetings, community surveys, and other neighborhood outreach efforts.

NEIGHBORHOOD LIKES:

- **People & Neighborhood.** Sense of community with unique character, friendly neighbors, longtime residents, families and kids, declining crime, diverse demographics
- **Parks, Recreation & Unique Features.** Platte River & trail, access to recreation center and library, parks, Riverside Cemetery, unique identity, Old Elyria School
- **Services.** Library, schools, the GrowHaus, the Focus Points Resource Center, established businesses with loyal following, churches
- **Housing.** Affordable rent and housing prices, high rate of home ownership, housing development opportunity at TOD sites
- **Business Growth and Transportation.** Access to I-70 and I-25 serves businesses, Stock Show activity supports businesses, business growth opportunities in neighborhood, I-70 convenience despite pollution
- **Future Public Investments.** Stock Show, RTD rail service, I-70 improvements
- **Downtown Proximity.** Close to downtown with RTD bus service

DESIRED CHANGES:

- **Disjointed Connectivity.** Better connectivity and accessibility is desired with safer connections and more sidewalks. Problem areas include RR tracks that disrupt connections and crossings (such as York and 47th - especially unsafe for kids), and the Market Lead Ditch near the future 40th & Colorado Station. Improved access is desired to the river, the area surrounding the Stock Show site, commerce and services and east / west connections between Swansea, Elyria and Globeville. Roads are not friendly for cycling and more bike lanes are desired. Better bus stop facilities are desired, including more stops closer to employers, and a possible bus connector between future rail stations.
- **Missing Services.** More affordable and culturally relevant retail is desired including better access to daily necessities such as pharmacy, market, banks, fresh foods and health care such as emergency hospital and clinics. Services such as a workforce center, job incubator and job training, resource centers and other service providers are desired. Community gathering places are desired, which could be associated with existing social gathering places such as churches. A better relationship and more involvement is desired with the Stock Show, and a strong neighborhood organization to create a more unified voice when addressing neighborhood concerns.
- **Environmental Issues.** Overall environmental contamination/pollution concerns expressed by residents include undesirable smells from industries such as Purina, marijuana grow facilities and Suncor, air quality concerns from I-70 and industries, the elementary school's close proximity to I-70, and properties that have not been environmentally remediated (mostly non-residential).
- **Nuisances and Crime.** Programs or services are desired to address graffiti problems, stormwater drainage problems, stray cats / animal control, railroad train horns during sleep hours, control of junk trees and weeds, crime and illicit activity near the Market Lead, some areas with suspicious activities and theft. Desired changes include the addition of more lighting and a neighborhood watch program.
- **Property Neglect.** Parts of the neighborhood are neglected, with some unsightly properties that are neglected by tenants and absentee landlords. Clean up of run-down business and homes, junk yards and industrial areas north of 52nd Ave. is desired, with cleaner tech or commercial flex industries replacing blighted industrial and salvage yard conditions. Better neighborhood inspection services could support efforts to improve property conditions.
- **Improve Parks and Recreation.** Identified opportunities include improving existing parks, adding more trees, improving recreation center facilities, providing more activities for kids, and providing more green space or parks for underserved areas.
The themes identified in neighborhood conversations are organized into four Guiding Principles, which were established with input from the steering committee (see below). The Guiding Principles represent in broad categories the goals and aspirations of the neighborhoods, and provide a framework for organizing Plan recommendations and strategies (see the next page).

### Unique

**HISTORY & CULTURE**
Diverse demographics, Stock Show and economic opportunities, Riverside Cemetery and old Elyria school contribute to unique identity.

**PROXIMITY**
To the South Platte River & Downtown

### Strong

**COMMUNITY**
Existing social networks need gathering places, safety programs and improved access to government services.

**PARKS & RECREATION**
Important to daily life, opportunities for enhancements / improvements.

**SERVICES**
Need job training, recreation center enhancements, youth programs and stronger neighborhood organization.

**HOUSING**
Affordable housing and a high home ownership rate are assets, but encouraging property cleanup and attracting new residents are priorities.

**BUSINESS**
Support tax base and employment in Denver. More culturally relevant retail is needed to serve residents and employees.

### Connected

**MAJOR CORRIDORS**
I-70, Vasquez, Colorado provide convenient access to region, but also impact parts of the neighborhood. Some freight rail corridors will include new rail transit service, but railways disrupt street connectivity and create sound impacts.

**MOBILITY NETWORK**
Streets should provide for car, pedestrian and cycling needs. Truck routes should be well defined to access major roads and highways. Pedestrian and cycling safety is needed to access neighborhood services, trails and bus and future commuter rail facilities.

### Healthy

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**
Air quality related to freeway / highway congestion, odors from surrounding manufacturing and storm water drainage concerns.

**ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD AND HEALTH CARE**
Improved access to fresh foods and daily needs, including health care.

**WALKABLE STREETS AND SIDEWALKS**
Improving walking conditions between housing, parks, trails and neighborhood services can encourage more active living and improved health.
A UNIQUE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

1. SHOWCASE THE HISTORY OF ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
2. CULTIVATE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S IDENTITY
3. EMBRACE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S CULTURE

A STRONG ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

1. ESTABLISH A BALANCED LAND USE STRATEGY
2. COMPOSE AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY
3. MANAGE STORM DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY
4. INTEGRATE A COMPLETE AND DIVERSE PARK SYSTEM
5. IMPROVE ACCESS TO HOUSING, JOBS, SERVICES & EDUCATION

VISION ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECTS:
47TH AVE. AND YORK ST.

INDUSTRIAL AREAS
CONNECT 52ND AVE.

I-70 RECONSTRUCTION
SWANSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COVER, THE SECOND COVER, FRONTAGUE ROADS
A CONNECTED ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

1. REDUCE RAILROAD CONFLICTS
2. BUILD A COMPLETE STREET NETWORK
3. IMPROVE EXISTING STREET CONNECTIONS
4. CREATE A WALKABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
5. CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
6. ENRICH TRANSIT IN ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
7. UPDATE KEY TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

A HEALTHY ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

1. IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
2. IMPROVE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIVITY
3. INCREASE ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES
4. ENHANCE COMMUNITY SAFETY
5. IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING
6. IMPLEMENT ALL REMAINING HIA STRATEGIES

ELYRIA AND SWANSEA IS A UNIQUE, STRONG, CONNECTED, AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD

40TH • COLORADO STATION AREA
MARKET LEAD

NATIONAL WESTER CENTER AND STATION AREA
DEVELOP THE DPS SITE

38TH • BLAKE STATION AREA
A. UNIQUE

UNIQUE ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. SHOWCASE THE HISTORY OF ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
2. CULTIVATE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S IDENTITY
3. EMBRACE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S CULTURE
WHY IS UNIQUENESS IMPORTANT TO ELYRIA AND SWANSEA?

The Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods have unique features and characteristics that result from their rich history, and from the efforts of the people who live and work in the community. There are opportunities to build upon these features, and to address unique challenges to enrich identity, enhance quality of life, and create a more cohesive and healthy community.

Throughout the planning process, residents often asked why their neighborhoods are impacted more by the presence of industrial, rail and highways than other neighborhoods in Denver. They also questioned why streets, sidewalks, and transit infrastructure are lacking. Issues related to environmental quality were also voiced as a concern, including the presence of brownfield sites, exposure to air pollution, and offensive odors. These challenges are unique to north Denver neighborhoods, and particularly Elyria and Swansea given the presence of heavy industrial uses and dominance of the I-70 freeway and highways in the neighborhoods.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

Elyria and Swansea - The Birthplace of Rail and Industry in Colorado

In 1868, construction began on the Denver Pacific Railway where the Denver Coliseum now stands. The rail line was built by 1870 along the South Platte River towards Cheyenne, WY and the recently-completed transcontinental railway. The Kansas Pacific railway from the east was completed that same year, and intersected with the Denver Pacific line at 40th Ave. and Williams St. This site is still in use today by the Union Pacific Railroad as an intermodal freight transfer facility, often referred to as the TOFC or the Trailer On Flat Car site. Today, Elyria and Swansea has more operating rail infrastructure than any other neighborhood in Denver.

Although this rail dominance creates issues and disruptions to the neighborhoods, it has also presented opportunities to introduce commuter rail lines along side and within the existing freight rail right-of-way.

Growth and Industry

Regional railroad networks expanded to the mountains and brought ore to smelter sites along the river corridor. Denver’s second smelter, The Omaha-Grant Smelting Company was located at the present-day Coliseum site, which operated from 1882 to 1903. Rail also supported agriculture and the
UNIQUE Issues and Opportunities

Omaha-Grant Smelting smokestack demolition (February 20, 1950) courtesy of the Western History/Genealogy Dept., Denver Public Library

shipping of livestock starting in the late 1880’s. By the turn of the century, packing houses such as Armour, Swift and Wilson were established.

The National Western Stock Show
The Denver Union Stockyards were established to support buying, selling and breeding of livestock in the region. In 1906, the National Western Stock Show put the livestock industry on the map for the West and became a major competitor to larger livestock shows and meat packing industries in Chicago and Kansas City. For the first time, people in the Western livestock industry could get a fair price for their cattle, sheep and hogs. Attendance at the National Western Stock Show was high, attracting visitors from Denver and beyond. The show continued to expand over the years and today is considered, by many, the most prestigious stock show event in North America. The tradition of the National Western Stock Show with programs featuring Denver’s Western heritage is unique not only to Elyria and Swansea, but to the entire Intermountain West. The demolition of the Omaha-Grant smokestack, pictured above, made way for the Denver Coliseum.

Elyria and Swansea Mixed Use Settlements
Elyria and Swansea are part of the same statistical neighborhood. However, Elyria and Swansea were founded as two separate settlements near Denver’s expanding rail and industrial growth. To this day they are considered by most residents as distinct neighborhoods although they share the same schools, recreation, library, churches and other important facilities.

Swansea is named for a town in Wales and was founded in 1870. The growth of industry along the river attracted Slavic immigrants who moved into new settlements within walking distance to jobs along the railways. Named after a town in Ohio, Elyria was platted in 1881 on the west side of York St., and incorporated in 1890. The villages of Elyria and Swansea were consolidated into Denver in 1902. Irrigation ditches were established and many settlers grew crops and gardens. Small schools, churches and neighborhood stores sprouted up to serve the growing population. These communities were largely isolated from the core of Denver, and by necessity were self-reliant communities with access to jobs, neighborhood services and rich culture. Some of the residents today are the descendents of these original settlers.

Modern Growth of Manufacturing and Freight Industries
In the early-to mid-20th Century, other industries developed including Eaton Metals, Colorado Serum, and the site of Ralston Purina. Post-World War II economic growth led to investment in commercial industries and increased use of truck transport. New workforce housing was built nearby for young families. This era of urban growth is visible in Swansea, where the residential neighborhood quickly expanded to the northeast,
limited only by the growth of surrounding commercial industries. In the 1970s and 1980s, much of the packing house industry left the neighborhood, replaced by other rail-served industries.

Slightly more than 500 acres of the area are currently industrial, with an additional 200 acres consisting of railways, highways, parking and vacant properties that collectively represent over 60% of the neighborhood study area. Just 16% of the neighborhood is made up of residences, parks, recreation facilities and schools. There are about 10,500 jobs with an average wage of $33,000 and workers who commute from throughout the region.

The Riverside Cemetery

The Riverside Cemetery was founded in 1876 by the Riverside Cemetery Association. Although the majority of the Cemetery is in Adams County, the gateway to this important historic and natural landscape is in Elyria near Brighton Blvd. and Race Ct. Burials at the cemetery reflect the diversity of early pioneers and even include many Civil War veterans.

Elyria, Swansea and I-70

After two decades of planning and design engineering, Interstate 70 was constructed directly through the neighborhoods in 1964 despite concerns about impacts to the
neighborhoods expressed by residents and business owners. The freeway is an elevated highway viaduct that runs from Colorado to Brighton Blvd. Opposition to the freeway was based on the contention that it would be a significant visual detractive and would decrease neighborhood property values.

**Culture and Commerce.** Elyria and Swansea's culture has evolved significantly since the first neighborhood settlements were built up in the late 1800's. The community's central proximity, employment opportunities, accessibility and affordability has attracted a diverse population that continues to change over time. Since the 1970's the Latino population has grown significantly, most significantly the Mexican community. Also prevalent in the neighborhood are Anglo and African American residents, including some who are descendents of the original settlers. The customs, traditions, architecture and food of past generations has enriched the neighborhood and contributes to its unique identity.

**Socioeconomic.** Residential settlements in Elyria and Swansea were founded as working-class neighborhoods. The average household income at $38,400 compared to Denver's average of $55,000. The residential population is 84 percent Latino, with 92 percent of births associated with Latino households. Many households are multi-generational, which contribute to a 48 percent home ownership rate compared to 50 percent citywide. The average home sale price is $149,000 compared to Denver's overall average of $278,000.

The neighborhood population is 6,400, including over 36 percent of the population under the age of 18 (compared to 21 percent in Denver as a whole). The majority of the neighborhood's 1,700 households are located in Swansea, with only about 10 percent of the area's households in Elyria.

More than 60 percent of adults over the age of 25 have less than a 12th grade education (21% in Denver). More than 1,760 students attend school, including Swansea Elementary and Bruce Randolph School (Middle and High School). Over 94 percent of the children receive free school lunch (compared to 73 percent in Denver Public Schools).

**KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Historical Assets.** Many structures and sites from the early days of Elyria and Swansea still exist today. Original homes and commercial structures contribute to the unique character of the neighborhoods. Elyria School is the only officially landmarked structure in Elyria and Swansea and Riverside Cemetery is the only district listed on the National Register. There is an opportunity to explore additional historic designations throughout the neighborhoods, especially with respect to the National Western Center.

- **The National Western Stock Show.** The Stock Show has outgrown its current buildings and desires to expand into a year-round regional entertainment and educational destination in Denver, coined the “National Western Center.” The new National Western Center is envisioned as one of the top visitor attractions in Colorado. It is anticipated that this destination center will increase tax revenues and bring renewed investment, amenities, visitors and economic development to the neighborhoods. Attendance at the Denver Coliseum and the National Western Stock Show venues draws visitors from around the nation and internationally, and is estimated at over 1 million visitors - the bulk of which (visitors) attend during the 16 day Stock Show every January. The annual visitor base and diversity of interests are anticipated to increase drastically with redevelopment and expansion of the National Western Center.

- **Identity.** Elyria and Swansea are largely known for industrial their uses and major transportation corridors, yet the community is seldom referred to as a significant contributor to Denver’s economy. Industrial uses generate jobs, products and tax revenues that play an important role in local and regional economies.

- **Community Voice.** Elyria and Swansea residents do not have a unified voice and lack the structure of a unified registered neighborhood organization (RNO). There are numerous organizations representing various causes that engage in the neighborhood, which can create some overlap and duplication in efforts to involve residents.

- **Local Economy.** There is community interest to engage in farmers markets and entrepreneurial activities at new public spaces created at investment areas such as the National Western Center, the I-70 covers, and the rail stations. Adaptable community spaces can provide for social meeting and economic exchange where, for example, vendors could sell culturally-relevant items such as food, handcrafts, gifts and business services. This type of informal engagement could provide affordable items that make shopping accessible for people across income levels, and could create a market exchange that gives opportunity to both the buyer and seller.
RECOMMENDATION 1  SHOWCASE THE HISTORY OF ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

A.1 BUILD ON THE GLOBEVILLE, ELYRIA, SWANSEA ORAL HISTORY PROJECT AND THE “NATIONAL WESTERN HISTORIC PRESERVATION STUDY”

- Work with local communities and neighborhoods, and other partners, to document and interpret the rich heritage of the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods. This includes researching and recording community history, supporting historical interpretation efforts such as historical markers and integration of historic interpretation into public facilities, and historic property surveys to identify physical structures that are significant to the community’s history.

- Pursue opportunities to survey and identify important historic properties in the neighborhoods, such as through the Discover Denver citywide historic property identification program.

- A future survey should identify character-defining buildings throughout the neighborhoods and use the results to evaluate character-defining buildings for their suitability for designation as landmark structures or as part of a larger landmark historic district.

- Find a permanent home for the Globeville, Elyria and Swansea oral history project, which was on display at the Denver Public Library in 2014. These items should be available for display at a unique public location in the neighborhood, such as the National Western Center.

A.2 PROMOTE HERITAGE TOURISM AND HISTORIC INTEGRATION

Feature the unique history of Elyria and Swansea as new public investment and development occur, and explore opportunities to integrate history into visitor destinations:

- As redevelopment occurs, especially at the National Western Center, use the cleanup of sites and adaptive reuse of buildings as opportunities to provide signage telling the story of the property, including its uses, the people who worked the factories and utilities, and the overall economic contribution to Denver and Colorado.

- Integrate plaques, historical markers, and educational signage as appropriate ways to convey this information.

- Explore partnerships to feature and cross-reference historic and unique places in Elyria and Swansea through interpretive displays, maps and way-finding signage. Key locations to feature include transit stations, the river corridor, the Riverside Cemetery, the National Western Center, schools, churches and parks.
RECOMMENDATION 2  CULTIVATE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S IDENTITY

A.3 ENCOURAGE THE FORMATION OF A UNIFIED NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

- Encourage community leaders to form a registered neighborhood organization (RNO) that represents the neighborhoods, including English and Spanish speaking residents. The RNO could provide the neighborhoods with a process to create unity, identify priorities, and provide neighborhood statements to the City, CDOT, RTD and other agencies.
- Build on the planning process to explore resources and partnerships to provide ongoing staffing resources for bilingual outreach and engagement.
- Strengthen coordination between nonprofit organizations, government agencies, community and religious organizations to raise awareness of neighborhood issues, outreach efforts, assets and resources that could be leveraged, and avoid redundancies including excessive and uncoordinated neighborhood outreach efforts.
- Support safety watch programs, communication with police departments, tree planting programs, property improvements and other programs that build upon the neighborhoods’ assets and strengthen the its identity.

A.4 CELEBRATE THE ENTERPRISING IDENTITY

- Work with Elyria Swansea Globeville Business Association to coordinate manufacturing interests with city agencies, registered neighborhood organization(s), non-profit groups, community-based organizations and initiatives focused on the community to implement recommendations provided in this plan.
- Encourage business / manufacturing interests to work with residential groups to further establish good neighbor agreements and reduce conflicts between residential and industrial uses, including trucking routes, odor emissions and visual transitions.
- Coordinate efforts to attract new businesses with desirable manufacturing profiles that contribute to the quality of life in the neighborhood, including the transition between existing residential and manufacturing uses.

A.5 ESTABLISH NATIONAL WESTERN CENTER’S IDENTITY

- The National Western Center should reflect the history and tradition of the Stock Show and the diverse mix of uses and evolving culture of Elyria and Swansea, while expanding its focus on agricultural research and related industries. Visitors, residents, and employees throughout the community should know they are in a place that is unique to the national and international community.
RECOMMENDATION 3  EMBRACE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S CULTURE

A.6 INVOLVE RESIDENTS IN CIVIC DESIGN

Engage residents during planning and design phases of public projects such as rail station plazas, the National Western Center, and the I-70 covers and sound walls to provide input in shaping public spaces that will serve their needs and be well used on a regular basis.

A.7 CREATE COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES

Create unique places with diverse uses, activities, services and gathering spaces that help to draw people together and create desirable destinations in the community. These opportunities include locations near the rail stations, the proposed I-70 covers, and the future National Western Center.

A.8 DESIGN PUBLIC SPACES TO BE VERSATILE, ACCESSIBLE AND ADAPTABLE

- Public spaces should be versatile, accessible and adaptable to appeal to a broad range of groups and interests including, among others, resident groups, families, clubs, sports teams and religious groups.
- Ensure that public spaces are available for residents’ use for temporary transformation to give personal and cultural meaning to the spaces and to make them socially significant to the users. Reservation of spaces should be simple and straightforward, with one entity that coordinates multiple community spaces. Amenities to consider for versatile and adaptable spaces include:
  - Conveniences such as power supply, shade trees and/or canopies to allow for transformation of visuals, lighting, sounds and other sensory experiences.
  - Post holes for creative placement of vertical posts to create canopies, lighting, art, decoration, backdrops, games etc.
  - Food and eating amenities such as an enclosable kitchen, covered seating areas and movable seating for birthday celebrations, wedding receptions, quincenera receptions, and other banquet purposes.
  - Walls for temporary art, murals, architectural and landscaping elements, street furniture, statuary.
  - Multi-generational considerations, such as play ground areas for children, seating for adults, interactive play features for all ages, including games, dancing, art, learning and, theatre.
  - Spaces for temporary vendor booths, music and small theatre and small truck access
RECOMMENDATION 3  
EMBRACE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S CULTURE

A.9 PROMOTE POP-UP ECONOMY

Encourage social gathering by providing spaces for swap meets, flea markets, and open-air public markets as a community and economic development model for low-income and under-served neighborhoods.

- Create public spaces with market-place activities in mind to maximize use and activity.
- Streamline permitting of events and vendor permits to improve accessibility, affordability and straightforwardness.
  - The permitting process should be affordable and should provide for bartering/trading opportunities to take place in informal spaces.
  - Permits should be administered within the neighborhood at an accessible location, with simple paper work written in English and Spanish.

A.10 ENCOURAGE SAFETY THROUGH VISIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

- Consider best practices in environmental design to create public places that feel safe, and to encourage intended use and enjoyment of spaces (see D.36). Design principles for safety largely revolve around visibility, including the following:
  - Location with street frontage, limiting the height of surrounding fencing, shrubs or walls, and lighting during the evening hours.
  - Convenient, safe and direct pedestrian access, and secondary vehicle access for maintenance, emergency and other needs.
EMBRACE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA’S CULTURE

A.11 PROMOTE CULTURAL RELEVANCE IN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE

Neighborhood culture and identity can be defined and expressed visually through forms, colors, textures and symbology.

- Engage the neighborhood and document desired architectural forms, design elements, art motifs and landscaping features.
- Explore design opportunities to express culture and enhance the public realm with wayfinding signage, interpretive displays, benches, bus stops, or information posting areas along existing public streets and public buildings.
- Share preferred neighborhood design elements and cultural identity with developers for consideration and voluntary application into private development projects.
B. STRONG

STRONG ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. ESTABLISH A BALANCED LAND USE STRATEGY
2. DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY
3. MANAGE STORM DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY
4. INTEGRATE A COMPLETE AND DIVERSE PARKS SYSTEM
5. IMPROVE ACCESS TO JOBS, HOUSING, AND SERVICES
WHY IS A STRONG COMMUNITY IMPORTANT TO ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

A Strong community provides quality of life through a well-organized layout of housing, employment and retail uses. These should be joined together by a system of streets and walkways to provide access to parks, open spaces and public gathering spaces. A Strong community provides an anchor for conducting successful business, and a place to enjoy everyday life for residents with diverse needs and income levels.

KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Population decline.** According to Census data, in 2000 the population for Elyria and Swansea was 6,708 people. In 2010, the population was 6,401 people. Elyria and Swansea’s population decreased by 4.8% while during the same period the City of Denver’s population increased by 8.2%. This decline in population exacerbates many issues in the neighborhood, such as the lack of service providers and access to healthy foods.

- **Residential Population.** The limited Traditional Residential Areas have a population of 6,400 residents. Without additional housing, the demand in the market area is insufficient to support many of the services desired by the neighborhood.

- **Missing Services.** There are a number of well-established community-serving institutions within the neighborhood, including churches, schools, the Valdez-Perry Branch Library, GrowHaus, recreation centers, and the Focus Points Family Resource Center. However, the neighborhood lacks access to many basic neighborhood services such as a grocery store, health clinic, banking, etc. Limited mobility options make it difficult for residents to access existing services which contributes to their underutilization. Also, the median household income in Elyria and Swansea is 43% less than the Denver average, limiting discretionary spending which limits the attractiveness for traditional retail services.

- **Residents desire to remain in the neighborhood and enjoy improvements.** Residents want their community to improve and want to stay in place so they can enjoy the improvements. The housing stock in Elyria and Swansea is relatively affordable compared to many other Denver neighborhoods and to the City as a whole. This lower price point means that home ownership is attainable for lower income households, and as a result Elyria and Swansea’s home ownership rate is comparable to the rest of Denver. The variety of housing options and housing types are limited within the neighborhood, with single family and duplex homes being the most prominent and other housing types being relatively uncommon.
**Strong Issues and Opportunities**

- **Urban Design** directly influences how livable, memorable and vital a place is and is a critical element in achieving Elyria and Swansea’s vision of being Unique, Strong, Connected and Healthy. Proposed infrastructure investments and potential new development create an opportunity to improve the visual and aesthetic qualities of the neighborhoods as well as the functionality, form and built fabric of the community.

- **Building height, siting, and design elements** can define and contain the street space, concentrate and reinforce pedestrian activity, create a sense of the street as a place, make streets feel inhabited, and enhance the perception of a vital, secure environment.

- **Education and Schools.** According to the Denver Public Schools Stoplight Summary Scorecard which measures school performance, Swansea Elementary School and Bruce Randolph School achievement levels are below their overall district average. There is a unique opportunity related to the National Western Center for Denver Public Schools and Colorado State University to collaborate on a new approach to education.

- **Parks.** The community acknowledges its parks as a great amenity and asset. However, the community desires improvements to all parks to make them safer, more usable and accessible to become even greater assets. Also, a new park space is desired in close proximity to the future 40th and Colorado Station area.

- **Streets and Streetscapes Connecting the Parks System.** Elyria and Swansea have some of the most disconnected streets and streetscapes in Denver. Streets that connect parks such as Clayton St. (between Dunham Park and Swansea Park) lack high quality streetscapes and public spaces. The condition of connecting streets contributes to a discontinuous and less accessible park system throughout the neighborhood.

- **Recreation centers** are major assets to the community, but the community desires better programs for all ages especially for teenagers. The recreation centers are outdated and lack services and facilities found in newer recreation centers in Denver.

- **Storm drainage and water quality infrastructure.** Many streets lack curb and gutter to effectively deliver storm runoff to the storm drain inlets and underground pipe system. Local pooling after storm events occurs in multiple locations in the neighborhood. During large storm events, storm water

- **Industrial Land.** There are large industrial uses that consume multiple acres of land, but are marginal in terms of providing jobs and tax revenue, and have negative impacts on adjacent residential uses. The community has expressed a desire for improved conditions and access to local employment opportunities.

- **Incompatibility between high intensity industrial and low density residential.** As described in the history section in the Unique chapter of this Plan, industry and housing developed alongside each other. The result is a harsh relationship and edge between established industrial and established residential areas. While this relationship is not unique to Elyria and Swansea, the extent and scale is unprecedented, extending for 6 miles along the edge of the residential areas. This results in undesired impacts on residential areas including noise, truck traffic, safety, odors and reduced visual quality.

- **RTD Commuter Rail Service and Transit Oriented Development.** The advent of three commuter rail stations serving the neighborhood is a unique opportunity for neighborhood residents, employers and destinations such as the National Western Center. New investment and development are likely to bring change to station areas, including National Western Center, 40th and Colorado, and 38th and Blake stations where new residents and services could be added. However, some residents are concerned that increases in property values will result in less affordable housing prices and rent. Others hope for property values to stabilize and even increase for future resale advantage.

- **Limited employment opportunities.** There are many jobs located in Elyria and Swansea, yet residents report that they lack the necessary skills, resources, or education to compete for these jobs.

- **Locational Advantage.** Elyria and Swansea is only two to three miles from Downtown, connected by regional bus routes and the South Platte River trail. I-70 and multiple interchanges provide convenient interstate access to businesses that rely on truck freight, and for commuters that travel to or from the neighborhoods. Convenient access to the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods in the future via commuter rail will connect the neighborhoods to northern suburbs, DIA, Downtown, Denver Union Station, and the regional rail network. This locational advantage presents an opportunity to bring more people and jobs to Elyria and Swansea. Properties have been in a holding pattern for investment given some of the past uncertainty related to the National Western Center redevelopment and I-70 corridor reinvestment. However, the momentum behind public projects improves the potential for new development investment in the area.
RECOMMENDATION 1  
ESTABLISH A BALANCED LAND USE STRATEGY  
AREAS OF CHANGE MAP
B.1 REFINING AREAS OF CHANGE AND AREAS OF STABILITY

Blueprint Denver, the City’s integrated land use and transportation plan, designates Areas of Change and Areas of Stability to guide decisions on where growth should be targeted within the City of Denver. See the Areas of Change Map on the previous page for designated Areas of Change in hatched areas and Areas of stability without hatching. Blueprint Denver Areas of Stability are intended to maintain the character of an area while accommodating some new development and redevelopment. Areas of stability are defined as belonging to one of two categories, Committed Areas or Reinvestment Areas. The Areas of Stability within the study area of this Plan should be considered reinvestment areas where the character is desirable to maintain, but would benefit from reinvestment through modest infill. Reinvestment areas are intended to encourage investment but in a more limited and targeted way than Areas of Change.

For Elyria and Swansea to be strong neighborhoods in the future, growth and change should occur in Areas of Change while enhancing Areas of Stability, including Traditional Residential Areas. By encouraging strategic growth, the quality of life in the Traditional Residential Areas will be enhanced while promoting a re-imagination of the Areas of Change within Elyria and Swansea.

B.2 ESTABLISH A STRONG COMPILATION OF LAND USES THAT BALANCES THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS, COMMERCE, AND INDUSTRY

Blueprint Denver establishes land use categories that describe the particular character and scale that is desired in the future. This Plan uses these categories as the foundation for its recommended Concept Land Use Map. An additional land use category, Industrial Mixed Use, has been added to reflect land use strategies that are specific to Elyria and Swansea. The Blueprint Denver concept land use map will be amended to reflect the changes recommended in this Plan. The following list of land uses are mapped on the Concept Land Use Map.

- **Single Family Duplex**: Single Family Duplex residential areas are moderately dense areas that are primarily residential. There is a mixture of housing types, including single-family houses, duplexes, rowhouses, and small apartment buildings (see E.2).

- **Town Center**: Town Centers meet a large variety of shopping, entertainment, service and employment needs and are large enough to serve several neighborhoods. They usually contain shopping and commercial uses and often have specialty shops for ethnic products, baked goods, apparel, toys and the like. Entertainment and other types of unique services that attract people from across the city are also found in Town Centers. Unlike many shopping centers and malls, Town Centers should be pedestrian-friendly places that are focal points of nearby neighborhoods, and may include a substantial residential component. Urban design features such as plazas, landscaping, small parks and civic features contribute to making these places focal points of community activity. Town Centers may take on Mixed Use or Industrial Mixed Use characteristics and uses.

- **Mixed Use**: These areas have both a sizable employment base as well as a variety of mid-to high-density housing options. Intensity is higher in mixed-use areas than in predominantly residential areas. Land uses can be, but are not necessarily, mixed in each building, development, or block. Pedestrian access
is important within the areas, with residential and non-residential uses always within short walking distance of one another.

- **Industrial Mixed Use**: Similar to Mixed Use and Employment uses, but with recognition that light industrial uses, such as light manufacturing with smaller warehouses can be compatible with a variety of housing types. These areas have both a sizable employment base as well as a variety of single family duplex, and mid-to-high density housing options. Land uses can be, but are not necessarily, mixed in each building, development, or block. Pedestrian access is important within the area, with residential and non-residential uses always within walking distance of one another (see E.8).

- **Transit Oriented Development (TOD)**: Transit-Oriented Developments have land uses with a direct correlation to the function of a mass transit system. These development sites are located at stations or stops along mass transit lines, especially rail lines. Transit-Oriented Developments provide housing, services, and employment opportunities for a diverse population in a configuration that facilitates pedestrian and transit access. Transit Oriented Development may take on Mixed Use or Industrial Mixed Use characteristics and uses.

- **Entertainment, Cultural, Exhibition**: Entertainment, Cultural, Exhibition areas are specialized areas that include regional event-oriented or cultural attractions, such as the National Western Center. Sometimes a few additional uses are included in each area, but they can blossom into a more vital and well rounded area, blending cultural or sporting events with entertainment, restaurants, office, mixed use, and even residential uses. Often a single large facility dominates, but sometimes a group of large and small facilities make up the area. Each has auto facilities such as parking, but many thrive as a result of excellent pedestrian access, substantial transit use, and shared parking with adjacent areas.

- **Employment**: Employment areas contain office, warehousing, light manufacturing and high tech uses such as clean manufacturing or information technology. These areas have few residences and typically have more extensive commercial and some industrial activity. Employment areas require access to major arterials or interstates. Due to these special transportation requirements, attention to design, screening and buffering is necessary when Employment areas are near other areas that include residential use.

- **Industrial**: These are active industrial areas that typically require access to major arterials or interstates. Heavy rail facilities are often adjacent to industrial areas. Streets in these areas must accommodate heavy trucks. Special attention to design, screening and buffering is necessary where industrial areas abut other areas that include residential uses.

- **Park/Open Space**: Parks and natural open space range from historic, traditional parks to private and publicly owned natural areas along the river. These green spaces provide a welcome respite from the intensity of urban living, with programming that can range from active parks with recreation fields and centers to larger preserves of natural open areas that provide space for wildlife habitat.

- All other uses depicted on the Concept Land Use Map that are not defined above are described in Blueprint Denver.

*Concept Land Uses that support retail include Town Center, Mixed Use, Industrial Mixed Use, Transit Oriented Development, Entertainment -Cultural-Exhibition, Employment and Industrial.*
RECOMMENDATION 1  ESTABLISH A BALANCED LAND USE STRATEGY

CONCEPT LAND USE MAP

Public utility upgrades may be necessary to meet the needs of future development recommended by this Plan. Substations and other potentially necessary infrastructure should be sited and designed to fit within the neighborhood context defined by this Plan, and should work to minimize visual impacts, subject to operational and other constraints.

See the Character Areas section for more detailed land use recommendations specific to Residential Areas, Industrial Areas, the I-70 Corridor, the 40th and Colorado Station Area, the National Western Center and Station Area, and the 38th and Blake Station Area.
RECOMMENDATION 1

ESTABLISH A BALANCED LAND USE STRATEGY

B.3 INCREASE HOUSING CHOICES

Encourage investment in new housing to expand the total number of residences and to provide for a diversity of housing types to bring more people of all ages and income levels into the neighborhood (see Future Land Use descriptions under Recommendation B.1, and Character Areas (including Residential, the 40th and Colorado Station Area, the National Western Center and Station Area, and the 38th and Blake Station Area).

B.4 DIVERSIFY AND INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN MIXED USE AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Future commuter rail stations, the National Western Center and I-70 investments will likely attract a variety of commercial and mixed use development to Elyria and Swansea. New industrial users should be cleaner and more productive in terms of offering more employment, broadening the tax base and increasing the number of exportable goods and services.

B.5 IMPROVE TRANSITION BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES.

To improve compatibility between residential and more intensive industrial areas, development between these uses should be consistent with the Industrial Mixed-Use land use designation (see E.3, E.8 and E.22).

B.6 BUILD TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

- Encourage investment in higher density housing, services, and employment opportunities near rail stations to provide for a diverse population with safe and convenient pedestrian access to rail transit.
- Integrate the National Western Center as an integral part of the adjacent station area and transit oriented development.

B.7 STRATEGICALLY USE CITY COUNCIL OR COUNCILMEMBER-INITIATED REZONDING TO IMPLEMENT THE LAND USE VISION.

City Council or Councilmember-initiated rezoning is a tool by which City Council or a member of City Council can propose a zone map amendment for a specific area at no cost to landowners. Specific situations where this strategy may be appropriate include:

- Where industrial properties are adjacent to stable residential uses and are proposed by this Plan to transition to Industrial Mixed Use, Transit Oriented Development, Mixed Use, Urban Residential or Single Family Duplex Concept Land Uses.
- The proposed National Western Center Complex area between Brighton Blvd. and the River that is proposed by this plan to transition to the Entertainment, Cultural and Exhibition Concept Land Use.
- All areas designated on the Concept Land Use Map as Single Family Duplex that currently have residential zoning that does not allow residential building forms identified under Strategy E.2.

HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:

- D1. Improve Industrial and Residential Compatibility.
- D5. Address the Odor Impacts of the Marijuana Industry.
B.8 ESTABLISH MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS TO SUPPORT A VARIETY OF LAND USES AND COMMUNITY PLACES

Establish maximum building heights consistent with the Future Maximum Building Heights Map to accomplish the following objectives:

- Preserve the low-rise building heights characteristic of the Single Family Duplex character in Elyria and Swansea’s Traditional Residential Areas.
- Accommodate infill development in vacant or underutilized areas
- Accommodate redevelopment of the National Western Center
- Encourage height transition between stable residential areas (Areas of Stability) and mid rise infill or redevelopment areas (Areas of Change).
- Encourage a height transition from the potential Town Center redevelopment area at 46th Ave. and Steele St. to be compatible in scale and character near existing residential areas.
- For blocks in the 40th • Colorado and National Western Center station areas that recommend a 5 story maximum building height with a 3 story edge, explore use of regulatory tools such as upper story setbacks, upper story setbacks, design overlays or multiple zone districts to address lower-scale residential located on the opposing side of the street.
- Accommodate mid-rise redevelopment of up to 8 stories near the National Western Center, and 40th and Colorado commuter rail stations.
- During the planning process there was acknowledgment that up to 12 stories could be appropriate in strategic locations within the 8* area on the Maximum Building Heights Map. Those strategic locations should be determined through discussion and collaboration with the community and applicable neighborhood organizations (see A.3).

B.9 ENCOURAGE BUILDING FORMS THAT ACTIVATE STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES

In areas designated on the Concept Land Use Map as Entertainment, Cultural, Exhibition, Transit Oriented Development, Mixed Use, Industrial Mixed Use, and Town Center:

- **Siting** - Promote urban character by minimizing setbacks to provide a consistent street edge and to support pedestrian activity.
  - Reinforce the character and quality of public streets with buildings that provide consistent siting, pedestrian orientation, and access to the street.
  - Minimize the visual impacts of parking by structuring it within the development, or by locating surface lots to the rear or side of buildings.
  - Locate commercial, mixed use and multi-family residential buildings with frontages at or near the public right-of-way

- **Design Elements** - Give prominence to the pedestrian realm as a defining element of the Elyria and Swansea character.
  - Locate uses other than parking on the ground floors to activate buildings and the street. Provide transparency and street facing entries to help activate and improve safety on the street.
  - Create open and inviting building facades with street-facing entries to activate uses on the ground-floor.
  - Encourage visually interesting and human-scaled facades and variation in building form.
RECOMMENDATION 2  DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

FUTURE Maximum BUILDING HEIGHTS MAP

**RECOMMENDATION 2**

**Develop and Implement an Urban Design Strategy**

**Future Maximum Building Heights Map**

During the planning process, there was acknowledgment that up to 12 stories could be appropriate in strategic locations within the 8* area on the Maximum Building Heights Map. Those strategic locations should be determined through discussion and collaboration with the community and applicable neighborhood organizations (see A.3).

38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments, as adopted under Ordinance 2016-0760, refines and updates the building height recommendations of this plan as applied to the area near the 38th and Blake commuter rail station. The future building heights map included in 38th & Blake Station Area Height Amendments supersedes building height maps and recommendations included in this plan.

**Building Heights**
(Number of Stories)

- 2.5
- 3
- 5
- 8
- 8*

* During the planning process there was acknowledgment that up to 12 stories could be appropriate in strategic locations within the 8* area on the Maximum Building Heights Map. Those strategic locations should be determined through discussion and collaboration with the community and applicable neighborhood organizations (see A.3).
**RECOMMENDATION 2  DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY**

**B.10 INTRODUCE GATEWAYS AND KEY VISTAS**

**Gateways** are high profile and heavily traveled entrances into areas or places that are subject to wide public exposure and influence. Gateways present an opportunity to generate interest, curiosity and memory of a place where travelers might want to visit, shop or recreate.

- Encourage the establishment of neighborhood gateways where appropriate as part of redevelopment of private property, public facilities or freeway interchange design (see Gateways and Key Vistas Map).
- Explore the potential of developing gateway design guidelines to establish a visible symbol of design excellence and expression of neighborhood culture and identity.
- Encourage gateway features to be integrated into highly visible and signature buildings.
- Gateways may be formed by vertical elements, landscape forms, walls, pylons, special lighting and public art.
- Potential gateways, as indicted, but not limited to the Gateways and Key Vistas Map, include:
  - I-70 interchanges
  - Major neighborhood entries
  - Highway covers, public plazas
  - Parks / open space
  - River crossings

**Key vistas** are buildings or monuments that become a focal point at the end of a street or other directional view. The view along a street that terminates at a building or monument is called a “terminating vista.”

- Treat key vistas with design excellence to orient users of the street, to create identity and to establish a sense of place that is unique to Elyria and Swansea.
- Coordinate building forms and orientation to frame views along important streets (such as Brighton Blvd., 40th Ave, frontage roads, Colorado Blvd.) and across parks, into commuter rail stations, and specific locations across the interstate.
- Encourage the enhancement of key vistas to help unite various areas within Elyria and Swansea to beckon pedestrians to keep walking with an interesting and observable destination that lies ahead (see Gateways and Key Vistas Map). The following design elements may help create visual interest at a key vista:
  - Highly detailed building facades
  - Increased mass or scale
  - Active public spaces
  - Public art
  - Primary building entries
  - Interesting signage
  - Unique building materials.
  - Enhanced landscaping
RECOMMENDATION 2
DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

GATEWAYS AND KEY VISTAS MAP
RECOMMENDATION 2 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

B.11 IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CHARACTER WITH ENHANCED STREETSCAPES

Streets are public spaces for people as well as arteries for the mobility system. Well designed streets act as a catalyst for neighborhood transformations and can generate higher revenue for businesses and higher value for homeowners. Well designed streets are memorable, civic places by which we orient ourselves that create a sense of community and neighborhood. Well designed streets are safe, comfortable, have beginnings and endings, and include reference points and places where people can walk in leisure. Enhanced streetscapes, part of a well designed street, are an important consideration beyond a building’s aesthetic for improving neighborhood quality and encouraging positive use and activity along a street.

To provide visual interest and enhanced street character for pedestrians, the following strategies are targeted to improving the experience of the public realm including but not limited to the streets indicated on the Enhanced Streetscape Map:

- Conduct street assessments to understand existing street conditions, and develop a priority list of needs and potential enhancements.
- Consider future development opportunities that could result in new or enhanced streets, where significant pedestrian activity is likely to be generated. Street cross sections and details should be especially considered for development in Transit Oriented Development, Town Center Industrial Mixed Use and Mixed Use future land use areas.

- Establish priority walking routes to schools and appropriate safety enhancements to improve safety for children and youth who regularly walk to school.
- Identify needs and opportunities to introduce lighting, landscaping, street trees, tree lawns between street curbs and sidewalks. Along public and civic spaces, explore additional opportunities for amenities such as fountains, benches, trash receptacles, sidewalk cafes and plazas.
- Design and install streetscape elements that promote high levels of pedestrian activity including pedestrian lighting, shade, seating, landscaping, trash receptacles, and bike racks as appropriate to the area’s character.
- Where applicable, consider transit stop shelters, signage, landing pads and other enhancements as integral streetscape elements (see C.27).
- Encourage consistent building setbacks with some offset for patio seating or public plazas to help create active and vibrant streets.
RECOMMENDATION 2

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

ENHANCED STREETSCAPE MAP

- Enhanced Streetscape
- Regional Connections
- Railroad
- Transit Rail
- Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods

0 0.25 0.5 Miles
B.12 ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF KEY OPPORTUNITY SITES

The land use and urban design strategies in this Plan are intended to create places that attract residents, employees, and visitors to Areas of Change, especially around future rail transit stations. A wide array of development opportunities exist including small residential infill, repurposing outdated buildings, and redevelopment of underdeveloped parcels. The Key Development Opportunity Sites Map highlights a number of redevelopment opportunities throughout the neighborhoods including:

- Transit Oriented Development opportunities:
  1. Denver Public Schools site directly across the street from the National Western Center Station and sites in closest proximity to the NWC station
  2. The Market Lead in the 40th and Colorado Station Area and sites near 40th Ave. and Colorado Blvd.
  3. The Urban Land Conservancy Site

- Corridor development Opportunities
  4. Brighton Blvd. north of I-70
  5. Brighton Blvd. south of I-70

- Second Cover Development Opportunities
  6. Develop around on top of the second cover

- National Western Center
  7. Redevelopment and re-imagination of the National Western Center

- Infill Development Opportunities

B.13 ENCOURAGE CLEANUP AND REUSE OF POTENTIAL BROWNFIELD SITES

Redevelopment presents an opportunity to cleanup and reuse property that may be environmentally impaired. Brownfields are real property where the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or perceived presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant. Examples of brownfield sites include former industrial sites, gas stations, dry cleaners, junk yards and landfills.

- Refer to the Denver South Platte Corridor Study (2013) as a reference for cleanup and reuse of property that may be environmentally impaired as a result of historical industrial and commercial land use.

- Work with the City of Denver Brownfields Program to identify federal, state and other public funding sources, and informational resources to support property owners and developers in conducting environmental assessment of properties. Assessments are conducted to determine if properties are environmentally impacted, and if so, to what extent.

- Encourage property owners and developers to work with the City of Denver Brownfields Program to identify public funding sources and low interest rate loans to cleanup contamination through risk-based environmental remediation.

Site work and excavation underway at a Denver Urban Renewal Authority project site (Image Source, DURA).
RECOMMENDATION 2  DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

KEY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES MAP

- **TOD Development Opportunity (1, 2, 3)**
- **Corridor Development Opportunity (4, 5)**
- **Second Cover Opportunity (6)**
- **National Western Center Opportunity (7)**
- **Infill Development Opportunity (8, 9)**
- **Regional Connections**
- **Railroad**
- **Transit Rail**

Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods
The Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood is located within the I-70 and Colorado Boulevard Basin (006-01), and the I-70 and York Basin (006-02). These basins are situated next to several other major drainage basins, with all storm drains draining into the South Platte River. During major storm events, the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods can potentially receive runoff from other uphill basins, including the Park Hill (4400-02) and Montclair (4500-01) basins. Several overland flows or “pass through” drainage points have been identified during major storm events.

The standard level of service for storm drainage in Denver is to plan, design and construct storm drains in order to collect and convey storm runoff during small, frequent, short-duration storms. To achieve this, streets with curb and gutter collect the runoff from adjoining properties and direct the runoff via the gutter and streets until it can be collected in a storm drain pipe. Runoff in larger storm events is conveyed overland in the streets. The City’s design criteria is to allow runoff in the streets to flow up to 12 inches deep in the gutter in these larger storm events (e.g. 6 inches deep at the curb plus 6" above the curb on adjacent right-of-way).

Constructing storm drains to collect and convey all runoff in all storms would be prohibitively expensive, so the City’s streets and right-of-way are utilized as a part of the drainage network; recognizing that while tree-lawns or attached sidewalks may be temporarily inundated with water in large storms, homes and businesses that have been properly constructed and elevated above the adjacent streets are protected from flood damages. When homes and businesses are not well-elevated above the adjacent street, and/or if there is no curb and gutter, storm runoff can exceed the street right-of-way and cause flooding. Additionally, without curb and gutter, poor drainage conveyance exists in dirt shoulder areas creating nuisance problems.

Storm drainage improvements constructed north of 48th Ave. in Swansea between 2002 and 2010 at a cost of $9.4 Million include 2 miles of underground pipe that range in size from 54-inch to 96-inch diameter. Also constructed was an 8-acre detention and water quality basin at 53rd Ave. and Milwaukee.
RECOMMENDATION 3

MANAGE STORM DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY
B.14 EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FLOOD PROTECTION

Additional storm drain improvements to collect and convey the 5-year (minor) storm in underground pipes are identified in the City’s 2014 Storm Drainage Master Plan. These would provide improved storm drainage for the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods consistent with the City’s level of service discussed above. Additionally, storm drainage improvements to protect the I-70 lowering project in a 100-year (major) storm event are currently being evaluated. These proposed improvements would intercept all runoff in the 100-year (major) storm event before it can reach the proposed lowered portion of I-70, thereby providing additional flood protection for areas downstream/north of the proposed drainage improvements.

- Evaluate the feasibility to intercept flows from adjacent basins to reduce trans-basin flows from the Montclair and Park Hill basins, to reduce urban flooding of the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods and to prevent flooding of the I-70 corridor.

- Work with CDOT, the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, RTD and the community to explore opportunities to leverage the drainage component of the I-70 project and implement concepts from this Plan, including recommendations from the Connected Chapter and the 40th and Colorado Character Area. Further evaluation of an integrated drainage approach should consider the following goals:
  - Maximize property flooding protection
  - Maximize opportunities for water quality by filtering out pollutants such as sediment, heavy metals, automotive fluids, brake dust, nutrients and litter.
  - Reduce soil erosion and damage to private property, public infrastructure and parks during storm events
  - Integrate the location of new drainage facilities with proposed new connections recommended by this Plan in the Connected chapter.
  - Reduce the reliance of pipes to convey storm runoff and explore open channel opportunities

HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:
- D8. Incorporate Water Quality in Open Space Design.
RECOMMENDATION 3  MANAGE STORM DRAINAGE AND WATER QUALITY

B.15 PROMOTE WATER QUALITY THROUGH BEST PRACTICES

Water quality can be addressed via an array of sustainable technologies. Some of these can be implemented in public right-of-way, park or open space areas, while others can be integrated with individual projects or developments. Impervious surfaces, and streets in particular, are one of the largest contributors of pollutants in Denver’s urban streams. However, streets also represent one of the greatest opportunities for the use of green infrastructure.

- Explore opportunities to employ green infrastructure on public open space.
  - Balance open space and park programming needs with water quality opportunities
  - Explore opportunities for green infrastructure within the open space along the South Platte River (see the Parks recommendations in this section and the National Western Center Character Area).
  - As new street connections are made, or existing streets are reconstructed, look for opportunities to incorporate green street strategies in the street design. Green street strategies include permeable pavers, streetside stormwater planters, curb extensions, tree trenches, and/or green gutters.

- Possible green streets recommended in this Plan include the following possible street improvements:
  - A realigned National Western Drive through the NWC (see NWC Character Area)
  - A new Monroe St. along the Market Lead (see 40th and Colorado Character Areas)
  - 39th Ave. from Monroe to York St. (see Connected Chapter)
  - Street improvements along Garfield and Jackson Streets, between 43rd Ave. and 46th Ave. (see 40th and Colorado Character Areas).

- Promote the use of low impact design strategies on private property. Wherever possible, green infrastructure and low impact design strategies should be incorporated into private redevelopment projects in Elyria and Swansea. This includes minimizing directly connected impervious areas and use of rain gardens, filter strips, grass swales, and permeable pavers.
RECOMMENDATION 4  INTEGRATE A COMPLETE AND DIVERSE PARK SYSTEM

Elyria and Swansea residents value the neighborhood parks that are located within convenient walking distance from their homes, although convenience and safe access is a concern. Residents would like to see improved access to open space areas, and programming improvements to add more recreational value, convenience and enjoyment of parks and open spaces. This Plan highlights new park, plaza and open space opportunities, including significant additions planned for the National Western Center (A.6, A.8, B.16 and E.34), as well as a 4 acre cover over I-70 next to the Swansea Elementary School (A.6, E.19), a possible pocket park near Monroe and 41st Ave., and potential shared use of the open Space at Bruce Randolph School (B.19, E.26).

B.16 EMBRACE THE SOUTH PLATTE RIVER

The redevelopment of the NWC creates an enormous opportunity to connect to, enjoy and embrace the South Platte River. The following recommendations should be incorporated within the National Western Center Master Plan:

- Encourage a variety of riverside conditions and experiences that further activate and attract visitors to the riverfront and existing parks. These include passive and active recreation experiences, natural and developed edges, public gathering spaces, and destinations to attract regional visitors.

- Encourage the design of a new street along the east bank of the river that will improve visual and physical access with sufficient set back from the river bank to allow for vegetated areas and parks. These may include rain gardens that would infiltrate pollutants from the street and new development to enhance water quality before it flows into the river.

- Create public access between the river and new development with lighting to promote extended hour use and increase the perception of safety and security along the river corridor.

- Encourage new buildings to be oriented to the river with public access provided between building entrances and a public realm along the river. Building facades should contribute to a quality interface between private development, and the public realm and the river.

- Explore funding opportunities to bury the Delgany Interceptor, a large sewer line, that is currently visible as an above-grade pipe along the river.

B.17 STRENGTHEN EXISTING PARK AND RECREATIONAL ASSETS.

Residents identified potential improvements to existing parks during the neighborhood planning process. In all parks, increased lighting is desired to extend the usable park hours during the day and to improve safety and surveillance of park activity. These recommendations may be considered by Denver Parks and Recreation for funding from the 6-year Capitol Improvements Program (CIP).

- Swansea Park is extensively used in conjunction with the recreation center and outdoor pool area. There are weekend evening hours after the recreation center closes when park activity is limited, and illicit activity takes place. This issue is more prevalent here compared to other park...
locations due to the lack of residential uses fronting the park. The park experience can be improved through enhancement of features and programming, such as the recent $61,000 conversion of the unused tennis courts into Futsal courts in September 2014. Additional improvement opportunities include:

- Establishing a better park entrance
- Updating the playground equipment
- Updating / replacing the outdoor pool
- Upgrading exercise equipment and expanding facilities in the Swansea Recreation Center

**Dunham Park** is a valued asset in the neighborhood; however the park could become more actively used by adding some improvements and slightly adjusting the programming, such as:

- Installing a perimeter sidewalk to improve circulation around the park and to contribute to the sidewalk network.
- Converting or adapting the baseball/softball area to become more usable for informal soccer play or other activities.
- Improving the children's playground area with updated and expanded play areas, adding shade elements and bench seating for parents

**Swansea Neighborhood Park** (located at 51st Ave. and Steele St.) provides a buffer between established residential uses and industrial uses in north Swansea. Opportunities for improving the park experience include:

- Updating the playground equipment
- Providing shade structures for the outdoor tables

**Elyria Park** has the benefit of being located next to the Colorado Miners community recreation center and residential uses to the south despite being located next to industrial areas to the west, north, and east. As transit oriented development occurs, the park will become increasingly important as a neighborhood focal point and activity space. Identified improvements for a better park experience include:

- Expanding the playground area. The existing playground is highly used and kids often wait for a free swing.
- The baseball/softball field is not well defined and is often in conflict with soccer, the more popular sport in the neighborhood.

**Globeville Landing Park** lies to the south of the Coliseum parking area, and provides a respite along the South Platte River Trail for cyclists, walkers and joggers. With its adjacency to industrial uses such as the Pepsi manufacturing facility, the park can be used by employees during work breaks. The park could be improved for more active use and better relate to the Coliseum site and future mixed use redevelopment in the surrounding area. The following elements and improvement should be considered:

- Improve overall visual and physical access through coordination with potential redevelopment of the Coliseum parking area.
RECOMMENDATION 4  INTEGRATE A COMPLETE AND DIVERSE PARK SYSTEM

Swansea Park with Purina and the Denver skyline in the background

- Install lighting to improve safety, especially along the trail.
- Create a public park entrance / access point from the NWC.
- Signage should be installed close to the 38th St./Washington St. and Arkins Ct. intersection.
- Explore opportunities to integrate planned amenities taking place south of 38th St. in RiNo into Globeville Landing Park.

B.18 EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDIBLE LANDSCAPING OF OPEN SPACES.

- Some open spaces may be appropriate places to introduce edible landscaping as part of a more broadly-focused food innovation district (see B.24). Water sources should be secured to assure sufficient irrigation and maintenance of landscaping. Open spaces to be considered for edible landscaping may include natural open space areas, open space for water quality / detention purposes, open channels, or open space along green trail or pathway corridors.

B.19 EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INTEGRATE NEW COMMUNITY SPACES AND PARKS INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

- There are opportunities to introduce new community space associated with I-70 reconstruction, and new park spaces in southeast Swansea where residents near the 40th and Colorado Station area lack convenient access to existing parks (see references in the Character Areas section of this Plan).
  - The Swansea Elementary School Cover over I-70 (E.19)
  - A second cover over I-70 at Steele / Vasquez (E.20)
  - A pocket park at Monroe and 41st Ave. (E.26, E.28)
  - Potential for sharing school and community open space and recreational spaces at Bruce Randolph School (E.26)

B.20 STRENGTHEN EXISTING PARK AND RECREATIONAL ASSETS.

- Explore public or private opportunities to introduce an off leash dog park into the neighborhood.

B.21 EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE A REGIONAL RECREATION CENTER IN NORTH DENVER.

- Consider locations for a possible regional recreation center that would be readily accessible to residents in Elyria, Swansea, Globeville, Cole and River North neighborhoods, and that could also be accessible through transit connectivity. For example, the 38th and Blake Station area could serve the immediate neighborhoods and also create convenient access and reduced parking demand by drawing visitors from nearby station areas, including DUS and 40th and Colorado rail stations.

B.22 IMPROVE WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES BETWEEN PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES.

- Identify funding and partnerships to improve walking routes with sidewalks, street crossings and landscaping (such as enhanced green streets and street trees) as a way to offer safe and comfortable pedestrian-friendly connections between neighborhood parks, schools, recreation centers, and waterways.
RECOMMENDATION 4  INTEGRATE A COMPLETE AND DIVERSE PARK SYSTEM

PARKS SYSTEM MAP

HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:

- D8. Incorporate Water Quality in Open Space Design.
- D13. Connect to Greenspace.
RECOMMENDATION 5  IMPROVE ACCESS TO HOUSING, JOBS, SERVICES & EDUCATION

Residents desire to maintain housing affordability as neighborhood investments and new development projects create greater diversity in housing, services and employment. They also would like to gain the necessary training and skills required to work for local employers.

B.23 INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING

- Work with property owners near transit stations to explore development options, and to identify funding sources to support income restricted residential development and, if necessary, environmental assessment and remediation.

- Identify funding sources, such as the Mile High TOD Fund and the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority’s Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, to acquire and develop property for workforce housing and mixed income projects near transit stations and other neighborhood amenities.

- Help acquire, rehabilitate and covenant restrict existing residential properties that are at risk of becoming unaffordable to workforce populations.

- Connect residents to existing programs that assist low-income households with maintaining, repairing and environmentally remediating their homes, such as the Denver Urban Renewal Authority’s Single Family Rehabilitation and Emergency Home Repair programs, and Northeast Denver Housing Center’s Healthy Homes Initiative.

- Identify vacant and distressed parcels, blocks and potential redevelopment sites with a priority to develop those sites for new residential housing. Regularly check the status of government or quasi-government owned properties, such as the City and County of Denver, the Denver Housing Authority, the Colorado State Land Board, Colorado Department of Transportation and the Regional Transportation District, to see if suitable parcels become available for development.

- Support the creation of family appropriate affordable housing projects that include more bedrooms and offer proximate and safe access to educational facilities, recreational opportunities and fresh food.

- Provide a broad range of housing types by allowing for moderate increases in density and household economic stabilization by allowing options that supplement an existing single family home, including accessory dwelling units, duplexes and tandem houses (see the Concept Land Use Map).

B.24 ESTABLISH AFFORDABLE AND MIXED INCOME HOUSING STRATEGIES AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Encourage reference to, and implementation of Housing Denver, the 2015-2019 City of Denver housing plan.

- Increase housing development resources available to the City and, by extension, to the Elyria Swansea Neighborhood. Prioritize potential Elyria Swansea residential projects that could be funded by the City’s recently established Revolving Affordable Housing Loan Fund.

- Work with non-profit housing partners, Denver Office of Economic Development, CDOT and other financing entities to explore a replacement housing strategy associated with the CDOT I-70 acquisitions. New affordable housing units should be built in the neighborhood that will exceed the number of units acquired for I-70 expansion, in addition to the number of homes acquired for the original I-70 project construction.

HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:

- D17. Attract Key Retail and Services.
- D18. Increase Food Access at the National Western Center.
- D19. Improve Healthy Food Access at Existing Retailers.
- D21. Create Neighborhood-Focused Flex Space.
Identify properties owned by Denver Housing Authority and explore opportunities to rehabilitate existing housing, create infill development on vacant land or redevelop properties that could be updated to accommodate more residents with limited incomes in the neighborhood.

Promote a mix of income-diverse residential units that serve critical needs individuals (those requiring services in addition to housing), workforce populations in the rental market, and workforce populations ready to pursue home ownership.

Support initiatives and disseminate information on programs that facilitate home ownership, such as down payment assistance and counseling, mortgage credit certificate programs and others that help low and moderate income households achieve the goal of purchasing a home.

Encourage sustainable residential development that offers savings to renters and homeowners in the form of reduced utility and transportation costs.

B.25 IMPROVE ACCESS TO JOBS AND SERVICES

Focus on business recruitment to invest in employment, industrial, light industrial flex and mixed use areas throughout the neighborhood.

Identify partnerships to promote more affordable and culturally relevant retail, including access to basic daily necessities such as pharmacy, food market, banking and other desired services.

Work with the Denver Office of Economic Development and non-profit partners to expand job training through workforce center training, language training, job incubator centers, and to coordinate existing job training programs.

Work with area businesses to identify job recruitment needs and develop job training programs that help local residents to qualify for jobs in the neighborhood, or along the rail transit corridors.

Encourage continued coordination between non-profit service organizations that focus on the neighborhood, and government agencies to identify gaps in service needs, and to avoid potential redundancies in service or neighborhood outreach efforts.

Encourage residents to participate in traditional banking services to avoid excessive fees for check cashing, and to consider participating in free financial literacy and counseling programs for low-income residents. These programs are supported by the Denver Office of Economic Development, the Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships and local non-profit organizations.

Explore opportunities to build on neighborhood food-growing and healthy food access programs and establish a food innovation district or cooperative where residents can benefit financially from growing, producing, exchanging and selling foods.

B.26 IMPROVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Work with Denver Public Schools to track growth in the neighborhoods and the potential for an increase in the school-age population. DPS solution options for accommodating increased student enrollment (from lowest cost to highest cost) include the following:

- 1) Shared Campus (utilizing capacity at existing schools),
- 2) modular / temporary buildings,
- 3) addition of ‘cottage’ classrooms (interior access with plumbing),
- 4) building additions, and
- 5) a new school.

Educate Elyria and Swansea youth on “Safe Routes to School” by ensuring that Sun Valley youth and parents have up-to-date information on existing transportation options for getting to schools safely. This should be coordinated with maps and other bilingual information through neighborhood organization(s), schools and agencies, particularly during and after construction of I-70.

Encourage resident participation in educational programs such as school readiness, adult education and health and wellness programs offered by the Focus Points Resource Center in Swansea, and the food education and cultivation programs offered by organizations such as the GrowHaus in Elyria.

Cultivate Partnerships to broaden educational opportunities, such as continued collaboration between the neighborhood, the National Western Center, and its partners, including Colorado State University to access potential educational programs focused on healthy food, gardening, and agriculture.

B.27 IMPROVE PHYSICAL ACCESS TO JOBS, HOUSING AND SERVICES THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW STREETS

Promote development where new street connections are recommended to improve access throughout the neighborhood for all modes of transportation (see CONNECTED C-20).

New street connections recommended by this Plan are intended provide improved physical access to new housing, jobs and services from existing residential and employment areas.
C. CONNECTED

CONNECTED ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. REDUCE RAILROAD CONFLICTS
2. BUILD A COMPLETE STREET NETWORK
3. CREATE A WALKABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
4. CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
5. ENRICH TRANSIT IN ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
6. UPDATE KEY TRANSPORTATION POLICIES
WHY IS CONNECTIVITY IMPORTANT TO ELYRIA AND SWANSEA?

Elyria and Swansea’s future economic prosperity and improved quality of life rely to a great degree on a transformed mobility network. New and improved connections within Elyria and Swansea and to the greater Denver area are vital to residents and businesses to access jobs, shopping, schools, and services. Intuitive, safe and convenient connections by car, truck, bus, rail transit, biking and walking will benefit businesses and residents in the neighborhood and improve connections to the surrounding area in Denver and Adams County.

KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- **Safety.** Throughout the planning process, connectivity-related issues and suggestions for improvement were raised as the most common theme and greatest area of concern. These comments focused largely on safety concerns for walking or biking along streets lacking sidewalks, pedestrian-automobile accidents, at-grade rail crossings and truck traffic wandering into residential areas.

- **Convenience and Access.** Also concerning to residents and business representatives is the difficulty getting to and from the neighborhood by foot, bike, car, bus, truck or other mode. This lack of connectivity not only degrades the quality of life for the community, it also exacerbates other neighborhood issues, such as safe routes to school, perceived safety, health and wellbeing, and the success of neighborhood-serving retail and commerce.

- **Interstate-70.** Interstate I-70 viaduct was built over 46th Ave. in 1964 which created a significant impact of the sound and sight of overhead traffic through the neighborhoods. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are leading a project to reconstruct I-70 (see C.21-2, C.21-3, and the Interstate -70 Character Area section of this Plan.

- **Railroad Connectivity Conflicts** occur at various points throughout the neighborhoods, with each location presenting unique challenges. There are three established railroad companies in the neighborhood, including the Union Pacific (UPRR), Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF), and the Denver Rock Island (DRI) railways. While these rail networks are nationally significant and critical to the economic prosperity of Colorado’s Front Range, they greatly impact connectivity in Denver both locally and regionally. East-west local movement is especially interrupted as the majority of rail corridors are oriented north-south. Pedestrian safety, train horns, travel delay regardless of mode choice, and lack of alternative routes...
highlight the major connectivity conflicts.

- **47th and York Rail Crossing.** Residents, business representatives, and elected officials have been vocal for decades in expressing the desire to improve the 47th Ave. and York St. intersection. In 2012, sidewalks, fences, and benches were installed and 47th Ave. between Claude Ct. and Steele St. was converted into a one-way street. These improvements added some safety provisions for pedestrians, but did not address the need for improved east-west pedestrian and bicycle travel, major travel delays, train horns at all hours, and safety hazards associated with an at-grade crossing of a UPRR mainline.

- **RTD’s East and North Metro Commuter Rail Corridors.** Introducing commuter rail service in 2016 and 2018 will provide a new transportation choice to connect the neighborhoods to the Denver Metro region. The 38th & Blake and the 40th & Colorado stations (located on the East Corridor) and the National Western Center Station (located on the North Metro line) may be difficult to access the new stations if local connectivity is not improved.

- **RTD Bus Routes and Future Access to Rail Stations** Bus Routes 24, 40, 44, and 48 serve the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods. An existing condition inventory of bus stops revealed that many bus stops throughout the neighborhoods are missing basic amenities, such as a bench and trash receptacle. Also, sidewalks are missing along key pedestrian routes to the bus stops. The residential areas are well served by existing bus routes, but many of the employment areas are not within walking distance of a bus stop.

- **Alleys** provide vehicular access to residences and businesses for parking, loading and garbage pickup. Alleys can also serve as a convenient walking or cycling route between neighborhood streets. Some of the alleys are in poor condition due to poor drainage, and overall lack of maintenance and reinvestment.

- **Lighting** is important for safe travel and improved neighborhood security during evening hours. Some streets and alleys are missing lighting, or the lighting voltage is lower by today’s new development standards.

- **Missing Sidewalks.** Most neighborhood development occurred prior to the 1970’s in commercial areas and even earlier in residential areas. Sidewalks do not meet current standards or they are missing along numerous streets throughout the community. Missing sidewalk segments are especially concerning to residents in areas where new public services have or will soon be constructed, such as along 40th Ave. between Bruce Randolph School and the future 40th and Colorado Commuter Rail Station. Where there are no sidewalks, basic drainage infrastructure, like curb, gutter, and tree lawns are also missing. The majority of existing sidewalks are less than five feet in width and do not include accessible curb ramps, requiring wheelchair users to travel along the street instead of the sidewalk.

- **Difficult and non-intuitive entry points to the South Platte River trail.** The South Platte River Trail is a regional amenity that borders Elyria and Swansea, yet entry points to the trail can be hard to find and difficult to access. The existing trail access points do not correspond with an intuitive network within the neighborhoods.

- **Bicycle Network.** Cycling in Elyria and Swansea is used primarily as a means to access parks, schools and other neighborhood services. Some residents bike to bus stations and use bus bike racks to access employment or services throughout the Denver region. The neighborhood is within easy cycling distance to Downtown with direct access along the river trail. With a better cycling network and more destinations in the neighborhood, regular use of cycling as a viable transportation option is likely to grow.

- **Superblocks.** Unplanned blocks that are much larger than traditional Denver blocks surround residential areas in Elyria and Swansea industrial areas. Superblocks are a result of large industrial operations, railroads, I-70, and other large ownership parcels like the Denver Coliseum and the National Western Center. These mega blocks create discontinuity in the street network, adding distance and increased travel times while also isolating large portions of the community. As a result, car dependency increases because walking and cycling is less convenient.

- **Truck traffic on local residential streets** occurs due to the close proximity of residential and industrial uses and the lack of continuous and intuitive neighborhood circulation. This can result in trucks that wander onto local residential streets and school zones, and introduce greater traffic volumes on a few well-connected streets instead of dispersing traffic volumes through a continuous grid network.

- **Arterial Streets** such as York St., Brighton Blvd., Colorado Blvd., Vasquez Blvd., 46th Ave. and 40th Ave. run through or adjacent to Elyria and Swansea, and are impediments to cyclist and pedestrians. Very few local streets enter and exit the community, but tend to be narrow and do not comfortably accommodate vehicles, cycling and pedestrian modes of travel.
RECOMMENDATION 1 REDUCE RAILROAD CONFLICTS

The following strategies address conflict points as highlighted in the Railroad Conflicts Map where vehicle, bike or pedestrian travel along streets is impacted:

C.1 EXPAND THE 2004 47TH AVE. AND YORK ST. - PEDESTRIAN - TRAIN CROSSING STUDY
   ■ See the 47th and York Transformative Project.

C.2 REBUILD THE BRIGHTON BLVD. AND BNSF UNDERPASS
   ■ Explore opportunities to improve the underpass by increasing the height clearance. The rebuilt underpass should accommodate pedestrians and bicycles in the design of the cross section.
   ■ Address the sharp turning movement as Brighton approaches this underpass.
   ■ Encourage truck travel from industrial areas by connecting 52nd Ave. to the improved underpass as an additional truck connection to I-25 (see the Industrial Character section of this Plan).

C.3 REBUILD THE RACE CT., BNSF, AND BRIGHTON UNDERPASS
   ■ Explore opportunities to improve the Race Ct. underpass by increasing the current height clearance. The width of the underpasses should accommodate pedestrians and bicycles.

C.4 REBUILD THE MARION ST. AND BNSF UNDERPASS
   ■ In coordination with the National Western Center redevelopment efforts, explore opportunities to improve the existing height clearance of this underpass. The width of the underpasses should accommodate pedestrians and bicycles (see National Western Center and Station Character Area section of this Plan).

C.5 EXPLORE RELOCATION AND/OR CONSOLIDATION OF THE DENVER ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD (DRI)
   ■ Remove rail from the eastern bank of the South Platte River to improve access to the river while creating opportunities for open space and redevelopment (see National Western Center and Station Character Area section of this Plan).
   ■ DRI’s rail service is critical to local businesses and Denver’s economy. Relocation efforts should be coordinated with DRI to minimize service impacts.

C.6 REDEVELOP PORTIONS OF THE BNSF MARKET LEAD.
   The Market Lead, referenced by its neighbors as “the ditch,” cuts off north-south connectivity between York St. and Steele St. and east-west connectivity between 39th Ave. and 52nd Ave. This rail corridor is inactive south of 43rd Ave., presenting a unique opportunity for redevelopment and improved street connectivity. This redevelopment recommendation is described in more detail (see 40th and Colorado Character Area section of this Plan).

HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:
■ D4. Mitigate the Health Impacts of Freight Rail.
RECOMMENDATION 1

REDUCE RAILROAD CONFLICTS

RAILROAD MAP

- Railroad Crossing
- Reduce Railroad Conflict
- Inactive BNSF Market Lead
- Denver Rock Island Railroad
- Regional Connections
- Railroad
- Rail Transit
- Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods
The following strategies relate to potential new street connections as shown in the Multimodal Concept Street Network Map:

C.7 CONNECT 52ND AVE. FROM BRIGHTON BLVD. TO COLORADO BLVD.
   ■ See the Industrial Character Area section of this Plan.

C.8 CONNECT 49TH AVE. FROM HIGH ST. TO BRIGHTON BLVD.
   ■ Encourage transit-oriented development near the future NWC commuter rail station that would create a 49th Ave. connection between High St. and Brighton Blvd. (see the National Western Center and Station Character Area section of this Plan).

C.9 INTRODUCE NEW STREET CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ELYRIA AND GLOBEVILLE

Improving connectivity between Elyria and Globeville would improve access to the river and amenities associated with the National Western Center, while also improving access for both neighborhoods to a greater variety of services in Globeville, Elyria and Swansea.

   ■ Coordinate with redevelopment of the NWC to create a connection from 47th Ave. in Elyria that passes under the BNSF and RTD tracks and over the South Platte River to tie into 49th Ave. in Globeville. This connection should accommodate vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.
   ■ Coordinate with redevelopment of the NWC to create a connection from the NWC station to 51st Ave. and across the South Platte River into Globeville. The connection should accommodate pedestrians and bicycle.

C.10 REALIGN NATIONAL WESTERN DR. BETWEEN 46TH AVE. AND RACE CT.

Improving circulation through the NWC as part of its redevelopment would provide access and circulation throughout the complex for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

   ■ Encourage consolidation of the Rock Island Railroad to allow for a continuous street that provides public access along the open space adjacent to the South Platte River (see reduce rail conflicts objective in this chapter)
   ■ The street bridge should accommodate pedestrians and bicycle crossing in support of the site programming and master planning goals between the River, the complex and the rail station.

C.11 IMPROVE EXISTING ALLEYS, AND CREATE NEW ALLEYS TO SERVE NEW DEVELOPMENT
   ■ Inventory existing alleys, assess the condition and prioritize the need for improvement(s).
   ■ Identify potential funding sources to improve existing alleys that require the most improvement.
   ■ Require alleys to be improved as infill development occurs (see Traditional Residential Areas, E.2).
   ■ Consider the potential need for new alleys associated with new development for improved access and circulation.

C.12 IMPROVE STREET LIGHTING
   ■ Document neighborhood inventories and established priorities for street lighting improvements
   ■ Identify potential funding sources to add or improve street lighting
   ■ Require new street lighting for new development, including redevelopment and infill development projects.

C.13 IMPROVE ACCESS TO THE AREA NORTH OF THE 40TH AND COLORADO RAIL STATION

Additional access to industrial and employment uses north of the UPRR tracks and west of Colorado Blvd. is needed to support businesses during (and after) CDOT construction of I-70. Improved access would also support infill development on underutilized properties, and potentially improve access to the 40th and Colorado rail station (see 40th and Colorado Station Character Area, E.25). New street connection opportunities include:

   ■ Study of extending 43rd Ave. from Madison St. to Garfield or Jackson St. which would provide an additional access point into this sub-area and improve truck and vehicle circulation. Continue study and coordination with CDOT to understand how a single point of access from 46th Ave. can be maintained during I-70 construction.
   ■ Exploring with property owners and other partners a potential ramp connection at 44th Ave. from Garfield St. to the elevated grade of Colorado Blvd. This connection could provide a right-in, right-out access from Colorado, and help to support higher density infill and redevelopment options.
   ■ Potential new street or access connections from 44th Ave. and 45th Ave. between Madison and Monroe Streets, should owners of industrial uses along Madison St. desire to redevelop or adaptive reuse properties.
C.14 IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESS TO THE 40TH AND COLORADO RAIL STATION

- An inactive stretch of BNSF rail line known as the Market Lead includes a 25 ft deep by 120 ft wide underpass along Monroe St., between 40th Ave. and the UP tracks. This barrier prevents convenient vehicle and pedestrian access to the future rail station at 42nd Ave. and Garfield St. (see page 108 and E.28).
- To accommodate new East Corridor tracks along the UPRR line, Smith Road no longer serves vehicular traffic between Albion St. and Jackson St. due to the limited span of the Colorado Blvd. bridge over the UPRR rail tracks. Further study of increasing the bridge span is needed to determine the feasibility and timing of restoring this connection as a multimodal street (see page 109 and E.27).

C.15 CONNECT 39TH AVE. FROM STEELE ST. TO YORK ST.

The Market Lead underpass reaches street grade at Monroe and 39th Ave. where it turns its course to the west. The Market Lead property includes a 100 ft-wide rail right-of-way that runs from Steele St. to York St., which creates another missing section of the area street network.

- Explore opportunities to acquire the Market Lead property from BNSF to complete a new segment of 39th Ave. from Steele to York St.
- Explore opportunities to create a green street edge to enhance water quality and to provide an amenity next to a bike/ped pathway.

C.16 ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN/BIKE ACCESS TO BRUCE RANDOLPH SCHOOL

Pursue funding to study potential improvements for enhanced pedestrian and cyclist (student) access between Swansea and Bruce Randolph School.

- A pedestrian-activated traffic signal and crosswalk at 40th Ave. and Milwaukee St.
- A grade separated pedestrian / bike connection at Milwaukee and the RTD / UPRR tracks, with careful consideration given to visibility, safety and future maintenance when studying below grade vs above grade separation.

The following strategies relate to enhancing existing street connections as identified in the Multimodal Concept Street Network Map:

C.17 RE-BUILD BRIGHTON BLVD.

Explore opportunities to improve Brighton Blvd. from 47th Ave. to the NWC Rail station at 49th Ave. as part of the NWC redevelopment effort. Improvements along this section of the Boulevard should result in a street with the following characteristics:

- A multi-modal street that serves as the ‘front door’ to the NWC
- A strong emphasis on pedestrian-friendly design, including ample sidewalk space on the west (NWC) side to accommodate visitors during major events
- No additional right-of-way acquired to the east to encourage reuse of existing properties or to provide sufficient depth for desired redevelopment.

Explore opportunities to improve Brighton Blvd. from 49th Ave. to York St.
- Improvements should support transit oriented development from 49th Ave. to
RECOMMENDATION 2  BUILD A COMPLETE STREET NETWORK

MULTIMODAL CONCEPT STREET NETWORK MAP

- **NWC Public Pedestrian / Bike Connection**
- **Potential Pedestrian Connection**
- **Potential Multimodal Connection**
- **Enhanced Multimodal Connection**

- **Regional Connections**
- **Railroad**
- **Transit Rail**
- **Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods**

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*Pedestrian / Bike Connection, see 47th and York Transformative Project*
RECOMMENDATION 2  BUILD A COMPLETE STREET NETWORK

Race Ct., and provide access to employment / industrial uses north of Race Ct.

- The intersection of York and Brighton is an acute angle that should be improved to support large truck turning movements.
- Consider making improvements to the York/Brighton BNSF underpass as part of Brighton Blvd. improvements to provide back-door access from Adams County to the National Western Center, and to encourage large trucks to travel north to access 58th Ave. / I-25 in Adams County.

C.18 STUDY TRAFFIC PATTERNS ALONG YORK ST. AND JOSEPHINE ST.
York and Josephine function today as a one-way couplet, a condition which creates significant truck and traffic impacts along Josephine. Residences predominately front Josephine north of 43rd Ave., with mixed use industrial uses that predominately front between 40th Ave. and 43rd Ave.

- As part of a travel shed analysis, conduct additional travel pattern study and conduct neighborhood outreach to explore the desire for, and trade-offs associated with consolidation of York and Josephine into two-way streets (see C.35).
- Explore opportunities to keep trucks on York St. to minimize negative impacts on residents along Josephine St. (see C.23).

C.19 IMPROVE 40TH AVE
40th Ave. forms the southern edge of Elyria and Swansea, and provides regional access between Colorado Blvd. and Downtown Denver, and it is an established truck route. The street is increasingly being used by pedestrians to access Bruce Randolph School, bus transit stops, and it will provide convenient access to commuter rail at 40th and Colorado (42nd Ave. and Garfield) and 38th and Blake.

- Explore reconfiguring E 40th Ave. to maximize the 80’ City-owned right-of-way for all modes, which could include a protected bicycle lane (Option 1 graphic on page 64 of this Plan) or on-street parking (Option 2 graphic on page 65 of this Plan). The reconfigured street should examine the network of multi-modal connections on parallel facilities such as 39th, 41st, 42nd and 43rd.
- Prioritize funding and implementation of improved sidewalks along 40th Ave. (see E.27).
- Encourage redevelopment of the Market Lead underpass, and explore opportunities to remove grade changes and the aging 40th Ave. bridge (see Transformative Project, E.28)
- Explore opportunities to create pedestrian priority intersections along 40th Ave. at Milwaukee, Monroe and Jackson Streets.

C.20 VASQUEZ – NORTH OF I-70
Vasquez Blvd. is an arterial street that provides one of the limited north / south regional connectivity routes between Commerce City / Adams County and Denver. Vasquez also provides truck trailer access to a number of larger industries that rely on convenient access to I-70 and I-270.

- Study the potential to vacate frontage roads on east and west sides of Vasquez in exchange for improved shoulders and right-turn lanes to access adjacent businesses.
- Frontage road vacation could provide infill development opportunities along the corridor for more efficient use of existing industrial and commercial properties.

C.21 IMPROVE 48TH AVE. FROM VASQUEZ TO COLORADO BLVD.
Industrial uses along Vasquez Blvd. require access to Colorado Blvd. and I-70, and residents also rely on 48th Ave. to access these major highways. The PCL I-70 alternative proposes a split interchange with a 1/2 interchange at Steele / Vasquez, and the other 1/2 interchange at Colorado. This will place greater demand on 48th Ave. between Vasquez and Colorado...
RECOMMENDATION 2  BUILD A COMPLETE STREET NETWORK

where conflicts occur between motorists and trucks that load into adjacent industrial buildings from the street.

- Explore opportunities to improve 48th Ave. from Vasquez to Colorado to accommodate truck trailer movements and better facilitate access for businesses and residences to I-70 and Colorado Blvd.

C.21-2 46TH AVE. FRONTAGE ROAD SYSTEM

The PCL I-70 alternative proposes a frontage road system that is intended to improve local connectivity, discourage truck traffic on local residential streets, enhance aesthetics and reduce overall impacts of the freeway (see Multimodal Concept Street Network Map on page 55. C.37/Blueprint Denver Street Classifications Map), and E.21.

C.21-3 NORTH / SOUTH CONNECTIONS OVER I-70

The Multimodal Concept Street Network Map on page 55 shows bridges to connect between north and south sides of the neighborhoods over the lowered I-70 freeway (see E.19 E.20).

C.22 IMPROVE COLORADO BLVD.

Colorado Blvd. forms the eastern edge of Swansea, and provides access north into Adams County and south to numerous other neighborhoods in Denver. A comprehensive study of this important roadway is recommended to improve its function for all modes and enhance the user experience. A study should address the following possibilities, at a minimum:

- Partner with CDOT to study pedestrian and bicycle movements along and across Colorado Blvd. for additional improvements to facilitate better connections and access to destinations and transit service.

- Enhanced transit service connecting urban centers along Colorado Blvd. to rail service on the East Corridor and on the Southeast Corridor.

- Since Colorado Blvd. is a state highway, work with CDOT to study multi-modal improvements to Colorado Blvd. As a major arterial and enhanced transit corridor, Colorado Blvd. needs to serve many functions and could be improved to accommodate more modes more effectively.

- Consider alternatives for accommodating the increasing trip demand on Colorado and recommend modal priorities for accommodating those trips.

- Consider transitioning the parkway designation to a Complete Street with added sidewalks and landscaping between the street and walkways. Green infrastructure features such as water quality planters could also be integrated into landscaping areas. Existing trees should be preserved along the edge of the Park Hill Golf Course.

- Streetscape improvements should include the addition of street trees, and may include a planted median to help the street look, feel and function as a better gateway to the Elyria, Swansea, Clayton, and Northeast Park Hill Area.

- Work with CDOT to improve maintenance of road-side weeds to improve visibility and safety

- Pedestrian crossings at existing traffic signals can be evaluated for enhancements that could better facilitate connections within the 40th and Colorado Station Area.

- Work with Park Hill Golf Course to explore building a sidewalk on the east side of Colorado Blvd.

C.23 TRUCK ROUTES & MULTI-MODAL STREET CONNECTIONS

Arterial streets that provide direct connection between industrial districts and interstate highways are appropriate for use by large trucks (see the Existing and Proposed Truck Route Map).

- Implement recommended street network improvements to create a more intuitive and connected network of streets that serve the needs of industrial and employment users, and residential districts throughout the neighborhood.

- Truck routes should be clearly marked with way-finding with consistent graphics and branding to avoid driving onto local streets in residential areas.

C.24 COORDINATE STREET MAINTENANCE AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

- Encourage neighborhood engagement of residents and stakeholders to identify street maintenance priorities, and communication of priorities with responsible agencies including the City of Denver Public Works Department, CDOT and RTD.

- Traffic calming measures such as signage, street paint or other modifications may be explored where speeding or other traffic violations are observed, such as 47th and Vine near the Valdez-Perry Library. Additional coordination with the local Police precinct should also take place to raise awareness and encourage enforcement of traffic safety controls (see A.3 and E.5).
RECOMMENDATION 2  
BUILD A COMPLETE STREET NETWORK

EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRUCK ROUTES MAP

[Map of Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods showing existing and proposed truck routes]
**RECOMMENDATION 3**

**CREATE A WALKABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA**

The community prioritized walking routes that connect residential areas to parks, schools, bus stops and future rail stations for sidewalk improvements. These streets include missing sidewalk sections, or existing narrow, attached sidewalks with a rollover curb that do not provide for two-way pedestrian travel. Many of the streets in the study area that are missing sidewalks are also missing curb and gutter and adequate drainage infrastructure (see page 38).

**C.25 BUILD SIDEWALKS ALONG PRIORITY WALKING ROUTES**

Pursue funding sources to build sidewalks and improve existing sidewalks in poor condition for the following locations. Improvements should include curb and gutter to improve local drainage, and a tree lawn that detaches the sidewalk from the street edge to create a safe and comfortable walking environment (see Existing Sidewalks Map and Proposed Pedestrian Improvements Map on pages 60 & 61):

- 40th Ave., between Clayton St. and Colorado Blvd.
- 48th Ave., between Brighton Blvd. and York St.
- Steele St., between 40th Ave. and 46th Ave.
- Clayton St., between 40th Ave. and 46th Ave.

**C.26 BUILD SIDEWALKS ASSOCIATED WITH NEW DEVELOPMENT**

New infill and redevelopment will provide detached sidewalks in areas of change where new street improvements could occur as a result of private investment. Required street improvements will be determined as part of the site plan review process prior to approval and construction of new development (see B.12).

**C.27 PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY INTERSECTIONS**

Because so few streets connect through Elyria and Swansea, the streets that do connect are in very high demand by all modes. These streets serve as the main connections for trucks and automobiles, host existing and future bicycle and pedestrian connections, and are routes for bus transit (see page 61).

- Explore opportunities to provide high-quality connections for pedestrians and cyclists at priority intersections on arterial streets where the pedestrian crossing movement should be enhanced to better balance the use among all modes of travel in the right-of-way.
- Consider multi-modal requirements for these streets to balance diverse demands and accessibility needs.

**HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:**

- D12. Improve Street Connectivity.
- D13. Connect to Greenspace.
- D15. Connect to the National Western Center.
RECOMMENDATION 3  CREATE A WALKABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

EXISTING SIDEWALKS

- Missing Sidewalk*
- Sidewalk*
- Regional Connections
- Railroad
- Rail Transit
- Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods

*Digitized to April 2012 Aerial Imagery
RECOMMENDATION 3 CREATE A WALKABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS MAP

* For recommended pedestrian improvements around the 38th and Blake station area, see the Mobility section of the adopted 38th and Blake Station Area Plan. Also see the 38th and Blake Station Area in the Character Area section of this plan.
RECOMMENDATION 4

CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

In 2011, Denver approved Denver Moves, a plan that recommends access to bicycle facilities within 1/4 mile of all Denver households. This Plan builds on the recommendations from Denver Moves and proposes significant improvements to the bicycle network in Elyria and Swansea. The proposed bike facilities will improve bike safety and establish intuitive connections between the South Platte River Trail and Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods, and improve connections within Elyria and Swansea and surrounding neighborhoods. The Proposed Bicycle Facilities Map indicates the location of the bike facilities.

The cross sections on the following pages are possible visions to illustrate how the community priority of a well-connected multi-modal network could be achieved to access and move throughout Elyria and Swansea. For future study, it will be imperative to consider local and regional importance as well as creating a legible network of movement for all modes. In addition, moving forward on cross sections which include enhancements such as pedestrian lighting and trees should explore districts or other mechanisms for maintenance. Any implementation of the modified street cross sections shown will require further study to ensure feasibility and integration with the multi-modal network in the area.

C.28 BUILD THE BICYCLE NETWORK

Build an integrated system of bicycle routes within the neighborhood that links intuitively to the citywide bicycle network and to major destinations, including rail transit stations, parks, recreation centers, and South Platte River Trail access points. The recommended bicycle facility network is shown in the Proposed Bicycle Facilities Map.

Conduct further study, and engage residents and the neighborhood to explore the following possible bike corridor improvements:

- Striping of buffered bike lanes along 47th Ave. from Clayton St. to Betty Cram Drive
- Options for Clayton Street, an important corridor for bicycle travel, from Swansea Park to a new 39th Ave.
  - Dedicated bike lanes as a trade-off to parking
  - A shared parking bike lane, or
  - Neighborhood bikeway/shared street
- Explore extending a bike connection along Clayton St. from 39th to 37th Ave. should redevelopment of surrounding properties occur.
- Reconfiguration of 46th Ave. between Washington St. and 44th St. and stripe buffered bike lanes, aligning with the bike lanes on 47th Ave in Globeville.
- Protected bike lanes along Brighton Blvd. These protected bike lanes should bypass the I-70 and Brighton interchange by connecting along 44th St., Humboldt St. and 47th Ave. or other streets that achieve continuity.
- A multi-use bike connection along a realigned National Western Drive.
- Design of the connection between the NWC station and 51st Ave. to the west should accommodate bikes without requiring bicyclist to dismount.
- striped bike lanes along Race St. and Race Ct. from 47th to the Franklin St. / South Platte River trail access point.
- Bike Lanes included as part of the new 39th Ave. connection
- Striped Bike Lanes along 43rd Ave. between York St. and Jackson St.
- A Ped /Bike connection from 43rd Ave. to the 40th and Colorado Station. The design of the connection between should accommodate bikes without requiring bicyclist to dismount.
- Striped bike lanes along Steele St. Park to 43rd Ave.
- Striped bike lanes along 48th Ave.
- Striped bike lanes along Smith Rd. and connect bikes under the Colorado Blvd. underpass to the 40th and Colorado Station.
- A Bike Boulevard between Swansea Neighborhood Park and Swansea Park.
- Consider bike connectivity when studying 52nd Ave. and Cook Street as future connections (see E.9 & E.20).

C.29 CONSIDER INSTALLING B-CYCLE STATIONS AT HUB LOCATIONS

As Denver’s B-cycle system continues to grow and the bike facility network is built, explore opportunities to include B-Cycle stations at the following locations:

- National Western Center and Station, and the 40th and Colorado Station
- The I-70 Swansea Elementary School Cover and the second cover and surrounding town center.
- Parks and recreation centers.
- Work with the B-Cycle organization to identify and overcome socioeconomic barriers of access to the program.
RECOMMENDATION 4  CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

PROPOSED BICYCLE FACILITIES MAP

Recommended Bike Facility
- Bike Blvd
- Bike Lane
- Protected Bike Lane
- Buffered Bike Lane
- Party Parking Bike Lane
- Shared Use Path
- Platte River Trail
- Existing Bike Lane
- NWC Public Ped / Bike Connection
- Needs Further Study
- Pedestrian / Bike Connection
RECOMMENDATION 4  CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

FUTURE 39TH AVE.

FUTURE 40TH AVE. (OPTION 1)
RECOMMENDATION 4
CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

FUTURE 40TH AVE. (OPTION 2)

FUTURE 47TH AVE.
RECOMMENDATION 4  CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

FUTURE 46TH AVE. BETWEEN 44TH ST. AND THE SOUTH PLATTE RIVER

The above Brighton Blvd. typical cross section is being proposed as a three lane cross section with on-street parking, which could be examined to find a multi-modal balance and converted to a travel lane as demand if needed. Further analysis will be needed to determine transition areas and contextual modifications based on turning movements, capacity and multi-modal considerations.

FUTURE BRIGHTON BLVD. NORTH OF I-70 NEXT TO THE NWC
RECOMMENDATION 4
CREATE A BIKEABLE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

FUTURE CLAYTON ST
Elyria and Swansea are served today by four bus routes that provide transit connections to downtown, Commerce City in Adams County, and to South Denver. As shown in the Transit Map, bus routes currently pass near stations planned along the East Corridor or the North Metro Line. Transit service provides an important alternative mode of transportation to access places of employment, shopping, education and entertainment within or outside of the neighborhood. With three new commuter rail stations to be built in the neighborhood, RTD transit service will be greatly augmented for residents, employees and visitors in the community.

C.30 IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO COMMUTER RAIL STATIONS

When rail stations open, many residents and employees and visitors may find it difficult to access the new stations if local connectivity is not improved. This Plan identifies opportunities for new street connections and sidewalk improvements on existing streets (see pages 60-61). Street improvements and sidewalks will be required of new development projects (see B.27).

The following 10 Minute Walk Map indicates a 1/2 mile or 10 minute walk from the station platforms before and after the implementation of recommendations from this Plan (see page 71).

C.31 IMPROVE BUS STOP FACILITIES

Work with RTD to identify and construct bus stop enhancements within Elyria and Swansea.

- Inventory existing bus stops to document the conditions of features for safety and convenience.
- All bus stops should be located on a paved surface and have direct and adequate sidewalk access.
- Identify funding for bus stop improvements such as landing pavement, benches, covered areas, trash receptacles, and other enhancements.
- Explore private partnerships to sponsor amenities such as benches, seating and trash receptacles and to provide ongoing maintenance of bus stop areas.
- Consider giving initial priority to bus stops with the following characteristics:
  - Transfer points where converging bus lines intersect.
  - Highest ridership numbers.
  - Most challenging existing streetscape conditions.
  - Located near public facilities, including library, schools, resource centers and rail stations.
**RECOMMENDATION 5  ENRICH TRANSIT IN ELYRIA AND SWANSEA**

C.32 CONNECT BUS ROUTES TO RAIL STATIONS AND MAJOR DESTINATIONS

- As redevelopment occurs and new streets segments are built, work with RTD to refine bus routes to optimize neighborhood service, route efficiency, and rail station access.
  - Coordinate bus headways, routes, stop locations with new transit stations.
  - Coordinate arrival times to facilitate bus-to-train transfers.
  - Explore a possible bus or shuttle route to connect Elyria and Swansea to Globeville.
- Encourage intuitive and consistent way-finding signage and other graphic communication to establish clear and comfortable connections between transfers and modes of travel.
  - A way-finding system should also feature nearby landmarks and destinations, including routes to neighborhoods, retail areas, parks and recreational facilities.
  - Signs should be geared towards pedestrians and possibly list walking times to destinations rather than distances to help encourage active transportation.
  - Way-finding signs should be universally legible and comprehensible to visitors and residents, with special consideration given to English and Spanish languages.
- Ensure that bus-to-train connections are safe and convenient, with clear lines-of-sight and signage directing people to the transit station and bus stops.
- As transit ridership grows, explore potential demand for shuttle service to connect rail stations to high demand locations. As a year-round destination with limited on-site parking, the NWC in particular could benefit from shuttle service or a loop bus to access the following locations (see C.34).
  - Remote event parking areas
  - The 38th and Blake East Corridor commuter rail station which connects to hotels located between Downtown and DIA.

C.33 IMPROVE RESIDENT ACCESS TO TRANSIT

- Conduct neighborhood outreach to provide new transit option updates, and to collect information related to potential transit route demand and access needs.
- Work with RTD and explore possible reduced fare programs based on income and potential group rate options.

C.34 ENHANCE FIRST/LAST MILE CONNECTIONS

- Encourage bike share and car share programs to improve access to transit.
- Where bus service is less accessible to major employers in the fringe industrial areas, encourage employers to explore the feasibility of van shuttle service that could serve one or more businesses.
- Consider adding Call-n-Ride to accommodate existing service needs.
- Encourage participation in rideshare programs that could increase transportation options and provide extra income for residents.
- Provide signage encouraging calls and inquiries for additional transit service options.
- Communicate transit options to established neighborhood groups that reach English speaking and Spanish speaking residents.
- Explore the opportunity for a loop bus either through RTD or other means to connect transit stations to key sites within Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea.
RECOMMENDATION 5  
ENRICH TRANSIT IN ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

TRANSIT MAP

- Existing Bus Stops
- Existing Local Bus Routes
- Stations
- Planned Rail Transit
- Regional Connections
- Railroad
- Rail Transit
- Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods
RECOMMENDATION 5  
ENRICH TRANSIT IN ELYRIA AND SWANSEA

10 MINUTE WALK TO/FROM RTD STATION PLATFORMS BEFORE AND AFTER PROPOSED NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS

[Map showing proposed pedestrian connections and half-mile walksheds and routes based on proposed and existing pedestrian networks.]
**RECOMMENDATION 6**

**UPDATE AND IMPLEMENT KEY TRANSPORTATION POLICIES**

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**BLUEPRINT DENVER STREET CLASSIFICATIONS**

**Functional Street Classifications:** Blueprint Denver provides functional street classifications that are intended to encompass both design characteristics of the streets and the character of service the streets are intended to provide. The functional classification system recognizes that individual streets do not act independently of one another but instead form a network that works together to serve travel needs on a local, citywide, and regional level.

Blueprint Denver recognized and retains the City’s existing classification system of arterials, collectors and local streets, but also presents criteria to better classify the function of the city’s streets. The four functional street categories identified in Blueprint Denver are Arterial Streets, Collector Streets, Local Streets, and Downtown Access Streets. The functional classification broadly defines its design and operational characteristics as they relate to the movement of motor vehicles.

**Multi-Modal Street Classifications:** The Multi-Modal Street Type define streets by relating them to the adjacent land use and their function for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. The street types attempt to strike a balance between functional classification, adjacent land use, and competing travel needs. There are five multi-modal street type categories that include Residential Street, Main Street, Mixed-Use Street, Commercial Street, and industrial street.

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**C.35 CONDUCT A TRAVELSHED ANALYSIS**

Update Denver’s Strategic Transportation Plan (STP) to include a Travelshed Analysis for this area. The STP identified that the travelshed in which Elyria and Swansea is located would be studied as part of the environmental impact process for the I-70 East reconstruction project. The analysis will need to be provided through other means as it is not included in the scope of the I-70 process. Any improvements recommended by a future Travelshed Analysis for this area should reference the connectivity recommendations in this plan.

**C.36 UPDATE DENVER MOVES**

Update the Denver Moves plan, which guides decision-making regarding bicycle and multi-use connections, to be consistent with the recommendations provided in this Plan.

**C.37 UPDATE BLUEPRINT DENVER STREET CLASSIFICATIONS**

Update the Future Street Classifications map in Blueprint Denver to be consistent with the street classifications presented on the following page. The hierarchy of the proposed transportation network balances mobility with access so that Elyria and Swansea streets are well-equipped to move people, on foot, bicycle, bus and car. Blueprint Denver street classifications are best used to describe not only the function of streets, but how their function relates to adjacent land uses.

**C.38 EVALUATE PARKING PATTERNS**

Evaluate parking patterns and needs within the rail station areas and the National Western Center as phased development occurs, beginning with the RTD Park-n-Ride facility and continuing throughout the build-out of the TOD areas. The evaluation will identify strategies that ensure a proper balance of supply and demand for different users with the goal of promoting proper use of RTD parking facilities from opening day onward while maintaining convenient parking to support adjacent business and residential uses. Parking strategies for this area should follow the Strategic Parking Plan’s (SPP) five-step process, which orders management approaches incrementally through demand, location, time, pricing, and supply opportunities. This process coupled with stakeholder involvement will help determine the most effective parking management strategies. Some strategies may include but are not limited to:

- Transportation Demand Management strategies including employer or community funded transit passes;
- Shared or Accessory parking agreements between RTD, nearby multi-family, commercial, or office uses. This includes opportunities to share off-street or structured parking inventory to reduce development costs, subject to zoning approval (see E.23 and E.35);
- On-street resident only restrictions;
- Residential Parking Benefit District (see the 2014 DRCOG East Corridor Parking Report, Parking Toolbox, Tool #14); and
- Other parking management tools as outlined in the Strategic Parking Plan (SPP).
RECOMMENDATION 6
UPDATE KEY TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

Blueprint Denver Street Classifications

- Main Street - Arterial
- Main Street - Collector
- Industrial - Arterial
- Industrial - Collector
- Mixed Use - Arterial
- Mixed Use - Collector
- Residential - Arterial
- Residential - Collector

Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods

Regional Connections
Railroad
Transit Rail

0 0.25 0.5
Miles

38th & Blake
Washingon St
Brighton Blvd
52nd Ave
D. HEALTHY

HEALTHY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
2. IMPROVE MULTIMODAL CONNECTIVITY
3. INCREASE ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES
4. ENHANCE COMMUNITY SAFETY
5. IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING
6. IMPLEMENT ALL REMAINING HIA STRATEGIES

Above: Art mural created by multiple contributors on the exterior of the Swansea Recreation Center
WHY IS HEALTH IMPORTANT TO ELYRIA AND SWANSEA?

Elyria and Swansea and Globeville are among Denver’s oldest neighborhoods, settled in the 1880s by Central and Eastern European ethnic communities who came for jobs in the railroad yards and heavy industries such as metals smelting. Over the decades, the neighborhoods continued to attract large industrial operations, which provided jobs but also produced decades of negative environmental impacts on air quality, water, and soil. Many industrial uses exist in the neighborhood to this day. The construction of Interstates 25 and 70 in the 1960s restricted physical access to the neighborhoods and produced more air pollution. At the time, little consideration was given to the health problems associated with such development.

In recent years there has been a growing understanding of the connection between how communities are designed and the impact on human health. Health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”¹ Research has revealed a strong relationship between our physical environment, and physical activity and nutrition. Environments that do not provide people with choices to support healthy lifestyles can lead to chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.² Well-designed neighborhoods can improve health, and poorly-designed communities can harm health.

As part of the neighborhood planning process, a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was conducted for Elyria, Swansea and Globeville. An HIA is a process to incorporate health considerations into a plan, project or policy. HIA provides a framework for collaboration among interdisciplinary partners to better understand how environmental, physical, economic, and social conditions determine health, in order to inform public policy and decision making. The Globeville, Elyria and Swansea (GES) HIA was developed in conjunction with the neighborhood planning process. The recommendations in the HIA were designed to inform and strengthen the recommendations of the GES neighborhood plans by adding community health as a consideration for the future vision, design and development of the neighborhoods. Most of the material in this section of the Plan, including all of the recommendations and strategies, was originally created by the GES HIA, and additional detail and supporting analysis on all of the health-related topics addressed here can be found in that document.

The neighborhoods of Elyria and Swansea regularly experiences noise, odors, and periodic poor air quality from industrial operations, heavy truck traffic, freight trains and highways. The residents, the majority of whom are Hispanic families with young children, suffer from some of the highest rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and asthma in the City. These chronic diseases are associated with poor diet and lack of exercise, among other factors, which are shaped by a deficient pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and a lack of sources for healthy and affordable food. Opportunities for outdoor physical activity are also limited in the neighborhoods due to disconnected streets and sidewalks, lack of nearby goods and services, and concerns about crime and safety.

HOW IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELYRIA AND SWANSEA NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN CAN IMPROVE HEALTH:

- Separating land uses or using other means to buffer existing and future impacts of industrial uses from residents can reduce many environmental health impacts including air quality, odors, and noise.
- Connecting streets, building and repairing sidewalks and creating connections to the new transit rail stations and other destinations can promote physical activity and a safe pedestrian environment.
- Adding neighborhood retail goods and services can increase walking, decrease driving, boost the local economy and increase social interaction with more ‘eyes on the street’. Strengthening the connections to parks and trails and the safety of those places can offer more opportunities for physical activity.
- Enhanced street lighting, increased crime reporting, and traffic intersection analysis to reduce the frequency of injury crashes can improve actual and perceived safety.
- Addressing environmental and physical challenges in the neighborhoods can lead to reductions in the chronic stress that residents now experience from existing conditions, and improve overall mental and physical wellbeing. Bilingual and culturally appropriate outreach to residents about the many upcoming infrastructure and redevelopment projects will also serve to reduce the uncertainty about the significant changes coming to the neighborhoods.

² NACCHO Statement of Policy, Healthy Community Design http://www.naccho.org/advocacy/positions/upload/03-02-Healthy-Community-Design-2.pdf
Healthy Issues and Opportunities

KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Environmental Impacts. Elyria and Swansea experience noise and odors on a regular basis and poor air quality periodically. These impacts are a result of a combination of factors including industrial operations, heavy truck traffic, freight trains, as well as I-70. The marijuana industry, which is relatively new, has a growing presence in the neighborhood and is an additional source of impacts.

Environmental Quality. There are four primary components that contribute to environmental quality:

- **Air Quality.** Air quality is affected by the presence of pollutants and nuisance odors. Pollutants are measurable concentrations of potentially harmful substances in the air, whereas nuisance odors do not necessarily cause direct toxic effects but may affect wellbeing by reducing the desire to go outdoors or by causing stress.

- **Noise.** Excessive noise can damage health depending on its intensity, duration, type, and source. Long-term exposure to moderate levels of noise can adversely affect sleep, school, and work performance, and increase risk of cardiovascular disease. Sources of noise in Elyria and Swansea include trains and train crossings, industrial operations, and traffic on roadways.

- **Water Quality.** Exposure to pollution in surface water occurs either by ingestion or through skin contact with the water. The South Platte River often has poor water quality.

- **Soil Quality.** Elyria and Swansea's industrial history resulted in soil contamination with potentially cancerous metals including arsenic, cadmium, and lead. The most common way that people are exposed to metals in soil is through incidental ingestion. To date, the residential areas of the community have had two large soil remediation efforts that have largely been completed.

Human Health Impacts. The residents of Elyria and Swansea, the majority of whom are Hispanic families with young children, suffer from some of the highest rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and asthma in the City. These chronic diseases are associated with poor diet and lack of exercise, among other factors.

Impacts to Daily Living. Deficient pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and a lack of sources of healthy, affordable food impact daily living.

Obstacles to Physical Activity. Opportunities for outdoor physical activity are limited in the neighborhood due to disconnected streets and sidewalks, lack of local retail goods and services, and concerns about crime and safety.

Opportunity for Improvements through Neighborhood Planning. The built environment has the potential to be improved through the implementation of this Plan’s recommendations, which are intended to be representative of the community’s desires for the future of the neighborhood.

Limited Connectivity. Connectivity within the neighborhood is limited due to multiple railroad tracks, disconnected roads, and limited sidewalks and bus stops, isolating Elyria and Swansea residents within their neighborhood and away from other places. This limited connectivity also hinders access to physical activity and recreation opportunities. Better overall connectivity and mobility through improved bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure could positively impact health in Elyria and Swansea by increasing physical exercise, reducing chronic disease rates and obesity, and increasing the likelihood that residents can access neighborhood retail and other services.

Key Retail and Services. Retail and services such as food stores, banks, pharmacies, and child care centers are important to meet residents’ daily needs. Civic resources such as churches, libraries, schools and parks are equally critical. Lack of access to goods and services may be contributing to negative impacts on Elyria and Swansea residents’ health. Limited access to healthy food can lead to diet-related chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity, which Elyria and Swansea residents suffer from disproportionately compared to residents of many other neighborhoods. The necessity of traveling outside of the neighborhood to find basic services increases driving, decreases walking, and results in fewer social interactions and “eyes on the street.” Prioritizing the development of more neighborhood goods and services and providing universal access, multi-modal transportation, and Complete Streets will likely increase walking and physical activity in the neighborhood. The ability of residents and workers to walk, bicycle, or use transit to shop, work, recreate, and gather as a community can also result in improved health.

Community Safety. Community safety includes traffic, pedestrian and cyclist safety, crime and fear of crime, and personal safety. Elements that impact community safety include street and pedestrian conditions, lighting, graffiti, and tolerance of illegal activities. Improvements in the physical environment to include street design and lighting, as well as increased crime reporting, can improve community safety.
RECOMMENDATION 1  IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

D1. IMPROVE INDUSTRIAL/RESIDENTIAL COMPATIBILITY
Minimize negative environmental impacts on residential neighborhoods from industrial uses through methods such as land use designation, zoning, buffering, or other means.

D2. MITIGATE NOISE IMPACTS TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS
Noise in residential areas and schools near major roadways and highways should be mitigated to no more than 55 decibels, where feasible.\(^1\)

D3. MITIGATE NOISE IMPACTS ALONG MAJOR ROADS
Sound walls or other noise mitigation measures are recommended along major roadways and highways where sound levels at schools\(^2\) and homes\(^3\) are expected to increase by 5 decibels or more, or exterior noise levels are expected to be 55 decibels or greater, or interior noise levels are expected to be 45 decibels or greater.\(^4\) Community preferences regarding aesthetic qualities of sound mitigation should be considered.

D4. MITIGATE THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF FREIGHT RAIL
Explore solutions to reduce the health impacts from trains. These could include “Quiet Zones” (intersections specifically designed so that trains do not have to sound horns), or grade separation of trains from other modes of transportation (i.e., roads constructed over or under tracks to eliminate the need for trains to sound horns at these crossings and to aid in the prevention of people and trains crossing paths).

D5. ADDRESS THE ODOR IMPACTS OF THE MARIJUANA INDUSTRY
Mitigate the odors and emissions from marijuana grow facilities on residential neighborhoods through methods such as land use designation, siting, buffering, good neighbor agreements, encouraging the addition of carbon filtering, or other means.

D6. INCREASE TREE COVER
Increase the tree canopy cover in the neighborhoods as prioritized in the Denver Urban Forestry Program and The Game Plan, including planting street trees, to provide an inviting and temperate outdoor environment for physical activity.

D7. INCREASE THE USE OF LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
Encourage developers to use low impact development and green infrastructure techniques in new development and redevelopment in the GES neighborhoods to enhance water quality in each basin. Examples include use of bioretention (rain gardens), bioswales, or vegetated buffer strips to minimize directly connected impervious areas. Roadway and alley projects should include ‘green street’ techniques such as stormwater planters, stormwater curb extensions, tree trenches, and permeable pavers.

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D8. INCORPORATE WATER QUALITY IN OPEN SPACE DESIGN

Implement recommendations from the River North Greenway Master Plan to improve water quality. Where possible, use existing park areas without affecting existing uses, to incorporate water quality treatment features such as wetlands, to restore wildlife habitat along the river.

D9. PROVIDE GARDENING EDUCATION

Work with community partners to provide education to residents about best practices for backyard gardening.

D10. INVOLVE THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH WITH MAJOR PROJECTS

DEH staff should continue to participate in public sector development projects in GES, including the I-70 reconstruction and the National Western Center, to help anticipate health and environmental conditions of concern such as those identified in this Plan and the HIA.
RECOMMENDATION 2

IMPROVE MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY

D11. IMPROVE STREET INFRASTRUCTURE
Prioritize street infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks, bike lanes, bus stop furnishings, and intersection crossings, to achieve the goals of the 2014 City Council Priorities, Denver Moves (2011) and the Strategic Transportation Plan (2008).

D12. IMPROVE STREET CONNECTIVITY
Implement new street connections as identified in this plan (see Connected and Character Area chapters).

D13. CONNECT TO GREENSPACE
Improve connectivity to parks, trails and recreation, especially to the South Platte River trails and parks.

D14. ADDRESS THE IMPACTS OF TRUCKS
Review truck routes in the neighborhoods to improve environmental quality, safety and connectivity. Examine current truck routes, particularly adjacent to schools; explore potential modifications as necessary; and make any needed changes to the City truck route ordinance for consistency with state regulations.

D15. CONNECT TO THE NATIONAL WESTERN CENTER
Improve access and connectivity to and through residential neighborhoods and the redeveloped National Western Center.

D16. CREATE COMPLETE STREETS
Implement “Complete Streets” including sidewalks for all new and redesigned streets, to provide safe and convenient access for all users (per existing City Policy #26, adopted May 2011).

OTHER HIA STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY:
- D22. Improve Key Intersections to Reduce Crashes.
- D23. Improve Connectivity and Safety in School Zones.
Block size is a metric for walkability, as smaller blocks are generally associated with a more highly connected street network. While some parts of Elyria and Swansea have high and moderately high walkability, much of the neighborhood ranks low and/or has an incomplete network of blocks.

Limited connectivity due to multiple railroad tracks, disconnected roads as well as limited sidewalks and bus stops isolates Elyria and Swansea residents within their neighborhood and away from other places. It also limits access to physical activity and recreation opportunities.

Better overall connectivity and mobility through improved bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure could positively impact health in Elyria and Swansea by increasing physical exercise, reducing chronic disease rates and obesity, and increasing the likelihood that residents can access neighborhood retail and other services.

Children walking along Columbine St. near 47th Ave.
RECOMMENDATION 3  INCREASE ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES

D17. ATTRACT KEY RETAIL AND SERVICES
Incentivize development of retail goods and services, including a grocery store.

D18. INCREASE FOOD ACCESS AT THE NWC
Promote new sources of healthy foods within the redeveloped National Western Center, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and community gardens.

D19. IMPROVE HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS AT EXISTING RETAILERS
Implement a “healthy corner store retail program” in the neighborhood, similar to the Philadelphia model, to add healthy foods to existing convenience and corner stores.1

D20. USE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES
Promote mixed use development to support a variety of commercial and retail businesses and services throughout the community and around new rail stations.

D21. CREATE NEIGHBORHOOD-FOCUSED FLEX SPACE
Develop a flexible market space that can support a variety of neighborhood goods and services and culturally relevant activities.

OTHER HIA STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS ACCESS TO GOODS AND SERVICES:

- D11. Improve Street Infrastructure.
- D13. Connect to Greenspace.

DISTANCE TO GROCERY STORES MAP

1 http://www.healthycornerstores.org/

Elyria and Swansea residents need to travel significant distances outside of the neighborhood to access a full service grocery store.
RECOMMENDATION 4

ENHANCE COMMUNITY SAFETY

OTHER HIA STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS COMMUNITY SAFETY:
- D4. Mitigate the Health Impacts of Freight Rail.

D22. IMPROVE KEY INTERSECTIONS TO REDUCE CRASHES
Explore measures to reduce the incidence of pedestrian and bicycle injury crashes at locations where multiple crashes have occurred. Such locations may include ‘gateway intersections’ such as 47th Ave. and York St. and 47th Ave. and Brighton Blvd.

D23. IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY AND SAFETY IN SCHOOL ZONES
Improvements could include analyzing current School Zones and making modifications as necessary, including Safe Routes to School best practices. Improve education and outreach about safety in School Zones to residents, drivers and schoolchildren, particularly in alignment with the I-70 reconstruction.

D24. IMPROVE STREET LIGHTING
Install new or upgraded street lighting per the recommendations of the Denver Police Department lighting survey, particularly along new sidewalks, to increase safety and reduce crime. Encourage residents’ use of porch lights at night with education and outreach efforts.

D25. ENFORCE EXISTING LAWS
Enforce regulations regarding graffiti, vandalism, public drug use, stray animals and property maintenance to increase safety.

D26. PROVIDE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY EDUCATION
Increase education and outreach to citizens about pedestrian safety, in anticipation of increased pedestrian activity with the redevelopment of the National Western Center and other projects.
RECOMMENDATION 5  IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

When a neighborhood seems unsafe due to physical conditions such as disconnectedness, pollution, vandalism, darkness or neglect, this can lead to feelings of irritability, anxiety, distress and mental fatigue. Improvements to street connectivity and sidewalks, increased lighting, crime prevention, the addition of retail goods and services, and mitigation of noise and odor pollution can lead to improvements in residents’ mental wellbeing.

HIA STRATEGIES THAT DIRECTLY ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING:

Mental health and wellbeing are affected by the sum total of many other factors. As such, furtherance of the recommendations in this chapter will also improve the mental health of residents and of the neighborhood as a whole.

OTHER HIA STRATEGIES THAT ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING:

- D1. Improve Industrial/Residential Compatibility.
- D4. Mitigate the Health Impacts of Freight Rail.
- D11. Improve Street Infrastructure.
- D12. Improve Street Connectivity.
- D24. Improve Street Lighting.
D27. MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF I-70 RECONSTRUCTION

In advance of the I-70 reconstruction project through Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea:

- DEH should work with CDOT and CDPHE to define types of air pollution monitoring that can be done to determine a community baseline.
- DEH should work with CDOT and other stakeholders to recommend air quality mitigation measures that may be required during the reconstruction of I-70, including upgrading the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system at Swansea Elementary School to improve indoor air quality.
- The City should work with CDOT to mitigate noise impacts of the I-70 reconstruction during the construction period.

D28. EXPLORE ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN REVIEW

Adjust the review process to allow the Department of Environmental Health to provide comments to Community Planning and Development for development applications in order to minimize potential conflicts between industrial and residential uses (i.e., noise, odor, soil impacts, air and water quality).

D29. IMPROVE AIR QUALITY

Continue to improve the City’s air quality through specific actions including:

- DEH should update its community air pollution modeling assessment to a 2011 baseline and make projections for a future year (such as 2025).
- DEH should work with CDPHE and EPA to establish an additional air quality monitoring station in Globeville, Elyria, or Swansea by 2015 with a goal of quantifying near-highway pollution separately from the I-70 project.

D30. STUDY THE ODOR IMPACTS OF MARIJUANA GROW FACILITIES

Analyze the distribution of current marijuana growing facilities and determine any excessive odor burdens generated by such facilities in Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea, and make recommendations to mitigate odor impacts as needed, including best management practices and technologies.

D31. STUDY THE HUMAN HEALTH IMPACTS OF MARIJUANA GROWING FACILITIES

Advocate for further research on the potential human health impacts from marijuana growing facilities, as such impacts are unknown. Concerns include emissions to air, odors, mold, and discharges to the water system.
**RECOMMENDATION 6  IMPLEMENT ALL REMAINING HIA STRATEGIES**

**D32. ADDRESS NUISANCE ODORS**

Address nuisance odors through specific actions including:

- DEH should work with City agencies, other government, non-profit, community, and industry partners to form a long-term steering committee to implement solutions to reduce odors, potentially including recommendations for local and state policy changes.

- DEH should create and lead a community partnership of interested organizations to pursue funding for research on manufacturing processes that produce odors and odor monitoring technologies to address nuisance odors in Globeville and Elyria Swansea.

- DEH should continue its work with the Northeast Metro Pollution Prevention Alliance (NEMPPA) to cooperate on potential solutions for odor reduction from industries located outside of City boundaries.

**D34. IMPROVE WATER QUALITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

DEH should partner with other agencies and organizations to improve education and outreach to businesses and residents related to water quality in Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea, including providing information to developers about City regulations for stormwater runoff and fugitive dust and dirt.

**D35. UPDATE SUPERFUND SITE STATUS**

DEH should work with the EPA to continue to take steps to remove the residential portion DEH/EPA (Operable Unit 1) of VB/I-70 from the Superfund site (i.e., de-list OU1) as the remedy has been completed.

**D36. USE ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE SAFETY**

The City and private developers should work together to encourage crime prevention and safety through the use of environmental design principles for new development, including large projects such as the National Western Center (see A.10).

**D37. STRENGTHEN OUTREACH ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

The City, private developers, and community partners should continue and strengthen bilingual and culturally-appropriate outreach and communication with residents about upcoming construction and development projects as these communities have historically experienced negative environmental impacts from previous decisions.
1. TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS
   CONNECT 47TH AVE. AND YORK ST.
2. INDUSTRIAL AREAS • MADE IN ELYRIA AND SWANSEA
   CONNECT 52ND AVE. FROM COLORADO TO BRIGHTON
3. I-70 RECONSTRUCTION
   SWANSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COVER
   THE SECOND COVER
   FRONTAGE ROAD DESIGN
4. 40TH • COLORADO STATION AREA
   MARKET LEAD
5. NATIONAL WESTER CENTER AND STATION AREA
   DEVELOP THE DPS SITE
6. 38TH • BLAKE STATION AREA
The Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods can be defined and summarized by individual character areas. These areas are characterized by their land use, history, locations, transformational significance, and distinct urban form. Issues and recommendations specific for each character area are documented in this chapter of the Plan to supplement the more general recommendations that apply to the entire planning area in the previous plan chapters. Each character area applies the vision already established in the Plan and goes into greater detail.

There are one or more transformative projects located within most of the character areas. It is anticipated that each of these projects, if implemented, would have a positive, catalytic and transformative effect on the neighborhood.
Traditional Residential Areas

Traditional Residential Areas are embedded within the core of the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods with heavier industrial uses, rail corridors and highways along the edges. The percentage of home ownership is 48% compared to 50% across Denver. Residents value the intimate quality of the quiet local streets with modest single family homes, duplexes and smaller apartment buildings. These structures range in height from 1 to 2 stories, with garages and small accessory buildings oriented to the alleys.

Elyria’s traditional residential area has reduced in size over the years due to the construction of I-70 and the expansion of the National Western Stock Show Complex. Although the recommendations in this section are specific to the existing residential areas, this Plan recommends reversing the trend of a declining population and recommends expanding housing throughout the neighborhood, especially near future commuter rail stations.

Traditional Residential Areas are generally built on a local street grid with buildings that are oriented to the street with vehicular access from the street and mid-block alley. Streets are narrow and where sidewalks exist, they are typically attached and vary in width from 2.5 feet to 5 feet. The type of sidewalk is an indicator of when the residential areas were developed. For example, the detached sidewalks in Elyria were commonly built in the late 1800s, whereas the attached narrow sidewalks in Swansea north of I-70 were common post WWII. On street parking is provided on most streets, except where collector streets such as York, Josephine or Steele Streets connect through the Traditional Residential Areas.

The specific strategies for the Traditional Residential Areas are as follows:

**E. 1 UPDATE THE NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT**

The Denver Zoning Code’s Urban Neighborhood Context, as opposed to the currently-mapped Urban Edge Context, better reflects the use of alleys, limiting or prohibiting curb cuts for street access, and the continuation of detached sidewalks where possible.

**E. 2 ENCOURAGE INVESTMENT IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF STABILITY**

The Strong chapter recommends Single Family Duplex for residential areas that are intended to remain as Areas of Stability. The following options could provide economic benefit to home owners by allowing a moderate level of infill development, and creating incentive to reinvest in existing homes to further stabilize the residential areas.

- Explore opportunities to introduce building forms, consistent with the single family duplex land designation, such as accessory dwelling units, duplex or tandem houses and rowhouses.
- Ensure that the form and scale of new development is complementary to the existing character of the traditional residential areas.
- The Denver Zoning Code provides minimum and maximum zone lot size standards, and building form standards for Single Unit (SU), Two Unit (TU) or Rowhouse (RH) building forms in the Urban Neighborhood context. These building forms are appropriate in Single Family Duplex areas provided that they are consistent with the maximum building heights map in this plan (Strategy B.7), and the minimum area and building form standards in the Denver Zoning Code.
Traditional Residential Areas

- New development in these areas should reinforce the established contextual front setbacks.
- Existing alleys should be used to provide access, improve vehicle circulation, and be supplemented by on-street parking.
- Increase the local supply of relatively affordable housing units in the neighborhood. A modest increase in housing density could add more people to the limited neighborhood population and support commercial retail and other desired services in the neighborhood.

E. 3 BUFFER THE EDGE BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES

Light Industrial transitions along neighborhood edges should be encouraged to provide a visual and noise buffers between residential and industrial areas (see Concept Land use Map).

- Encourage landscaping and streetscape improvements along streets shared by industrial uses and residential uses.
- Whenever possible, truck access and loading should be shared with other industrial uses, and oriented away from the residential side of the block.
- Encourage transition of industrial uses embedded in residential areas into lighter flex industrial uses, multi-

Potential tandem house infill development accessed from the alley (tan homes) behind a street-facing residential structure (grey homes).
Traditional Residential Areas

family residential or mixed uses that better relate to adjacent lower scale residential uses, and that could provide some complementary neighborhood services.

- Encourage pedestrian-friendly light industrial-flex infill development along the edges of industrial areas that abut residential areas. These transitional uses could also provide space for desired neighborhood services (see E.8).

E. 4 EXPLORE GOOD NEIGHBOR ODOR AND AIR QUALITY MITIGATION AGREEMENTS

- Work through a registered neighborhood organization to explore good neighbor agreements between odor-emitting industrial users and residents in Denver, Commerce City, and in Adams County. With the support of personnel from applicable agencies and neighborhood organizations, neighbors could request investments in off-site air quality monitoring near residential areas, as well as private on-site investments odor mitigation equipment and other best practices.

- Encourage Purina to continue investment in plasma scrubbers for each of its six emission vents. So far two plasma scrubbers have been installed, and this investment shows promise for greatly reducing the odor impact to the surrounding residential areas.

E.5 ENSURE A SAFE AND SECURE RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY

Use a combination of complementary strategies to increase safety and security for residential areas:

- Support the establishment of a registered neighborhood organization (see Strategy A.3).

- Continue to explore partnerships with neighborhood organizations focused on neighborhood improvement

- Explore the creation of a neighborhood watch program

- Implement the recommendations of the Denver Police Department’s 2014 lighting survey.

- Encourage neighborhood collaboration with the Denver Police Department and community organizations to work towards a community-based approach for strengthening ties between residents and local Police precinct personnel, and improving neighborhood awareness of safety concerns, crime and nuisance issues.

- Collaborate with the City’s 311 and Neighborhood Inspection Services with respect to private property and neighborhood maintenance issues, nuisance issues and other applicable zoning code violations.

- Increase efforts to communicate with absentee landlords to encourage improved maintenance of properties and effective management of building tenants.

- Work with the Safe Routes to School program to create safe routes to the Swansea Elementary and Bruce Randolph Schools.
Traditional Residential Areas

FUTURE CONCEPT LAND USE AND AREAS OF CHANGE MAP - TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Legend:
- Rail Transit
- Regional Connections
- Railroad

Area of Change:
- Single Family Duplex
- Mixed Use
- Town Center

Existing Park
Future Open Space
Single Family Residential
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT  CONNECT 47TH AVE. AND YORK ST.

E.6 EXPAND THE 2004 47TH AVE. AND YORK ST. - PEDESTRIAN - TRAIN CROSSING STUDY

Using the 2004 47th & York study as a starting point, a new study should analyze all modes of transportation, including pedestrians and cyclists, vehicles, trucking needs, transit and freight rail, and should address the following:

- East-west connectivity between Elyria and Swansea
- All east west streets between I-70 and 49th Ave.
- The York St. at-grade crossing of the UPRR tracks
- Reasonableness, feasibility, traffic and impacts to businesses and residences should be analyzed for multiple alternatives, including but not limited to:
  - Grade separating 46th, 47th, 48th, or 49 Avenues for multimodal (including vehicle) east/west connectivity.
  - A multimodal, below grade intersection of 47th Ave. and York St.
  - Bike and ped only grade separated connections between 46th and 49th Avenues, with careful consideration given to visibility, safety and future maintenance when studying below grade vs. above grade separation.
  - A multimodal, York St. UPRR underpass and multiple pedestrian and bicycle only grade separated connections between 46th and 49th.
- This study and any identified improvements should be coordinated with the reconstruction of I-70. If possible, improvements should be made to this intersection prior to or before the completion of I-70.
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT
CONNECT 47TH AVE. AND YORK ST.

MAP OF GENERAL STUDY AREA FOR FUTURE STUDY
Industrial Areas

Much of the industrial development in Elyria and Swansea occurred at a time when minimal standards for street construction and storm water management were required. As a result many of the streets are substandard compared to current standards, lacking full sidewalks, lighting and other utilities, as well as curb and gutter to efficiently deliver stormwater to the storm drain network.

Some of the industrial properties are used as outdoor storage for auto parts salvage yards, recycling, or truck trailer parking. Properties with buildings and other improvements tend to generate more jobs and higher tax revenues based on higher property values.

E7. ENCOURAGE INFILL DEVELOPMENT

- Encourage infill development to improve the quality of the built environment including streets, storm water drainage, sidewalks, lighting and utilities in industrial areas. Improved industrial sites can improve the visual quality, perception of safety, drainage, pedestrian circulation through added sidewalks, and reduce airborne dust through landscaping and other site improvements.

- Encourage industrial properties lying further away from the station areas and residential areas to redevelop into higher value employment and manufacturing facilities, especially as new streets such as 52nd Ave. and the York / Brighton rail underpass are implemented.

- Encourage industrial properties used for outdoor product storage to invest in vertical racking systems. This can free up space for new building sites, bringing more jobs and higher property utilization and value to the neighborhood.

E8. IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL USES

Improve the relationship between heavier industrial uses and adjacent residential by encouraging light industrial mixed use infill development to serve as a buffer, or transition between existing residential areas and heavier industrial uses.

- New development should orient pedestrian friendly buildings to the street, and locate parking and truck loading to the rear.

- Wherever possible, encourage shared truck loading areas and internal/private drives between light industrial flex and adjacent industrial uses.

- Light industrial flex buildings should be built to encourage pedestrian activity and in a manner that is compatible with residential development sharing the street frontage. Key elements including buildings with front windows and doors oriented to the street, sidewalks, treelawns and street trees and on street parking. Other architectural enhancements include awnings, punctuated corners and windows on the first and second levels.

- The section below, and opposing image show successful application of industrial

HIA STRATEGIES RELATED TO THIS RECOMMENDATION:

- D1. Improve Industrial and Residential Compatibility.
Industrial Areas

mixed use development with light industrial flex uses providing a transition between residential areas and larger scale industry.

- Where reuse of existing industrial buildings is desired, encourage new building facades with human scale detailing, wall plane articulation and addition of windows to enhance the character of the buildings and streetscape and to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Where existing residential and industrial uses are likely to remain as adjacent uses, explore voluntary agreements between property owners, public and nonprofit partners to improve streetscapes and landscaping between industrial properties that share streets with established residential use.

A light industrial flex building (B) is shown next to a residential building (A), which creates a buffer between residential uses and larger scale heavier industrial uses (C). Access to off-street parking (not visible) is shared between residential and light industrial uses, and truck access and loading is shared by light industrial flex and heavier industrial uses.
TRANSFORMATIVE PROJECT  CONNECT 52ND AVE.

E.9 CONNECT 52ND AVE. FROM BRIGHTON BLVD. TO COLORADO BLVD.

52nd Ave. is a local street that primarily serves industrial uses between the UPRR tracks / Milwaukee St. and Vasquez / Harrison St. The following improvements are recommended to connect industrial areas in north Elyria and Swansea to 58th Ave. / I-25 in Adams County, and to reduce pressure on I-70 interchanges at Brighton, Steele / Vasquez, and Colorado Blvd.:

- Improve 52nd St. by extending it from Vasquez west to York St./Brighton Blvd. with a grade-separated crossing under the UP tracks.
- Reconstruct the existing York / Brighton BNSF underpass to allow large trucks to safely pass under the tracks. This improvement would also provide back-door access from Adams County via Brighton Blvd. to the National Western Center.
- Consider bike connectivity as a possible component of the street design (see C.28).
- Address pedestrian needs in the cross section, including key crossing points and the potential need for pedestrian-activated signals where residential and park uses front 52nd Ave., such as at Steel St. and Adams St.
The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) in August of 2014 identifying multiple alternatives to replace the aging I-70 viaduct. One alternative identified in the SDEIS is the partial cover lowered (PCL).

The neighborhood planning process for this Plan started as the CDOT I-70 EIS process was introducing the PCL alternative. If the PCL is chosen through the EIS process, it will be a major departure from previous viaduct reconstruction options, and provide three major features that will reduce impacts and improve neighborhood conditions. These include:

- A lowered freeway that passes through the neighborhood below grade.
- Two covers over the freeway:
  - One cover near the Swansea Elementary school for recreation, leisure, and mitigation of impacts.
  - A potential second cover near Steele St. and Vasquez Blvd. for economic development, community building, long-term success of the neighborhood, and additional reduction of impacts
- A frontage road system designed to:
  - Improve local connectivity while discouraging truck traffic on local residential streets
  - Enhance aesthetics and reduce overall impacts of the freeway.

On April 7, 2014, Denver City Council adopted a proclamation, supporting the PCL alternative. This Plan also recommends the PCL alternative. Other alternatives identified in the SDEIS differ substantially from the PCL, especially as they relate to impacts to the overall neighborhood. Therefore, if the PCL alternative is not chosen as the preferred alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and subsequent Record of Decision, the planning process for this Plan may need to be re-established and this Plan may need to be amended.

The following recommendations intend to not only further mitigate the impacts of the PCL, but also build the community:

**E.10 MITIGATE NOISE WITHOUT INTRODUCING NEW NEIGHBORHOOD BARRIERS**

- The dominating visual presence of the current freeway will decrease with the PCL, but only where there are highway covers. Noise walls are proposed where there is not a highway cover, maintaining if not increasing the impact of a visual barrier. Community members have expressed great concern about the PCL and the inability to see across the highway as they can today. The community is also concerned about increased noise levels. CDOT should explore innovative noise mitigation measures that achieve the desires of the community. There are many innovative alternatives to noise abatement and mitigation that should be explored.
- Local residents and businesses should have the opportunity to assist with the design of noise wall alternatives, not just the artwork to go on the noise walls.
- In the SDEIS, CDOT acknowledges that standard noise walls create visual barriers,
The Interstate-70 viaduct was built over 46th Ave. in 1964, creating significant impacts to the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods such as the sound and sight of overhead traffic, and air pollution.
and that the impacts of these visual barriers will be borne predominantly by a low-income and minority community. Yet, the SDEIS does not consider alternatives to standard noise walls to mitigate noise—such as sound-absorbing materials, translucent panels (to lessen the visual barriers), angled or curved walls (to better direct the noise), earthen berms, and vegetation—which may be capable of providing similar or better noise reduction than standard concrete barrier walls with reduced fewer negative aesthetic impacts.

■ CDOT should explore design solutions to mitigate noise that are aesthetically pleasing and maintain views across the highway, particularly for areas facing or adjacent to residential properties, and make explicit any rationale that limits these design solutions. CDOT should present a variety of innovative solutions as options for community consideration through the benefited receptor survey process.

E.11 EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO REDUCE THE OVERALL WIDTH OF I-70

■ CDOT and FHWA should explore opportunities to reduce the overall width of the lowered portion of the PCL. The community is significantly concerned about the width of the highway, and would like to reduce the impact to the neighborhoods as much as possible. Variances in the dimensions and geometrics are reasonable to minimize the overall footprint of the highway. Items such as reduced shoulder width and less-than-full-standard geometries for accel/decel lanes should be thoroughly examined. These reductions in impact should be explored only if there is not a significant impact to the safety or operations of the highway and interchanges.

E.12 MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO SWANSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DURING CONSTRUCTION.

■ New windows, doors, and a new heating and ventilation system for the Swansea Elementary school should be installed. CDOT should conduct post-construction monitoring to ensure that new systems improve indoor air quality.

■ The Swansea Elementary School playground should be redesigned and reconstructed. It should be reconfigured and relocated in a location farthest away from the highway.

■ CDOT should address the needs of the school during construction phasing and identify options to minimize impacts, such as build additional classrooms and rebuild the school parking facilities.

E.13 BUILD PERMANENT EAST-WEST AND NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS BEFORE AND DURING CONSTRUCTION.

■ Alternate vehicle and truck access to I-70 and I-25 from the neighborhoods via Brighton, York, 48th Ave, 52nd Ave, and other major arterials is needed for residents and businesses to survive the construction period. Alternate routes for trucks are also needed to reduce neighborhood cut-through traffic.

■ With limited access to I-70 and the frontage roads during construction, neighborhoods will be cut off. Additionally, safety and emergency response during construction is also critical. With only limited information available in the SDEIS about construction phasing, detours, and road closures, it is difficult to assess the severity of impacts to residents, businesses, and emergency
responders during construction.

- Additional roadway improvements appear to be needed. Consideration should be given to improvements that will provide permanent improvements after construction. The I-70 project team should work directly with the community and the City on access and closure issues in a timely manner (biweekly planned schedules, weekly updates, bilingual communication, and 48 hour advance notice on closures/rerouting).

- The following local network improvements are recommended by this Plan to improve access and connectivity for all during and after construction of I-70. More detail can be found in the Connected Chapter.
  - 47th Ave. and York St.
  - 52nd Ave. between Colorado and Brighton Blvd.
  - BNSF and Brighton underpass
  - York St. and Josephine conversion to two-way
  - 43rd Ave. between Madison St. and Garfield St.
  - 48th Ave. between Vasquez Blvd. to Colorado Blvd.

E.14 BUILD FREEWAY INTERCHANGES AS ICONIC GATEWAYS.

Gateways are high profile and heavily traveled entrances to a place that are subject to wide public exposure and influence. Gateways should announce to people traveling through them that they are entering a special place - a place where they might want to stop and stay a while.

- All proposed in Elyria and Swansea interchanges should be designed to reflect the unique surrounding character.

- Including, but not limited to unique signage, lighting, and colored concrete should be offered to the community during CDOT’s proposed community meetings to discuss the design aesthetics of the project.

- Incorporate public art commemorating the history of the community into the design of the I-70 project. Local artists from the neighborhood should be included in the community discussion to develop guidelines for public art that is meaningful to the community.
E.15 MITIGATE AIR QUALITY.
- Conduct comprehensive air quality survey, including pre-construction baseline air quality to identify baseline pollutant levels and sources in the neighborhoods. Specialized air modeling is recommended to assess post-construction impacts near the covers. Longer term, discussion of post-construction operational monitoring to verify pollutant levels, particularly near the entrance/exit of the covers. If the post-construction pollutant levels violate any National Ambient Air Quality Standards or degrade existing condition, additional ventilation or other mitigation measures will be needed to reduce air pollutants.
- Reduce construction equipment engine activity; reduce emissions per operating time through pollution control technology. Require contractor to use a minimum percentage (33) of clean-fuel (i.e. EPA Nonroad Tier 4) vehicles to reduce diesel emissions and related odor from construction equipment.
- Perform additional air quality modeling and analysis for various pollutants, along with two localized “hotspot” analyses, utilizing the latest EPA computer modeling software (MOVES2010b Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulator model).
- Monitor and mitigate for air quality during construction, including utilizing dust control measures, neighborhood notification, and air quality monitoring. Recommended monitoring parameters, locations, and action thresholds will require further discussion.

E.16 MITIGATE STRESS DURING CONSTRUCTION
- Assist neighborhood serving non-profits providing public services and social support structures to enhance community stability and strength. Access to mental health services should be enhanced to address stress during construction, especially services and organizations serving non-English speaking residents.

E.17 REPLACE HOUSING UNITS ACQUIRED FOR I-70 EXPANSION
- The PCL alternative should result in no net loss of housing to the neighborhoods. The number of housing units which are taken as a result of I-70 construction or mitigation should be replaced in the neighborhood in the form of single or multi-family housing units, and the net number of housing units in the area should be expanded (consistent with the land use recommendations of this Plan).

E.18 PREVENT LOSS OF BUSINESSES AND JOBS.
- CDOT should facilitate opportunities to promote hiring
local citizens and procuring goods and services from local businesses during the construction phases, such as job fairs with contractors. CDOT should explore hiring a certain percentage of employees from the neighborhoods. CDOT should provide an internship program for youth in the neighborhood related to construction management and engineering.

- Prevent loss of the limited number of existing businesses that provide access to groceries or healthy food. These businesses especially need to be replaced in the neighborhood. CDOT should work with the City and the community to mitigate the loss of healthy food sources by identifying land of sufficient size to develop a full-service grocery store within the neighborhood. CDOT should also work with the Office of Economic Development to develop incentives to attract a grocer to the neighborhood.

- Provide excess CDOT-owned and remnant parcels for redevelopment, to assist in business relocation and retention (of direct and indirect impacted businesses). Design improvements to provide street access to remnant parcels and other potential development sites. Redevelopment sites should support community investment efforts and high-priority neighborhood needs, including grocery stores, food co-op, recreation or community center, recreational and green spaces, community gardens, new businesses that provide employment, and housing.

- Improve viability of businesses during and post-construction by working with businesses to understand the likely resulting disruptions on business-to-business (B2B), supply- and customer-chain relationships, access changes, and other business impacts. CDOT should identify and interview all affected businesses when developing phasing and outreach plans. CDOT should provide information about available assistance, and develop a communication protocol for providing information to businesses about construction activities and schedule. CDOT should work with OED to identify specific strategies to minimize impacts and business loss during construction. Further, in cooperation with local communities (within and adjacent) CDOT should inventory the businesses to identify and target existing businesses with either (1) a high concentration of local workforce employees or (2) those which match local neighborhood workforce opportunities – as a focus for retention and relocation to sites where business requirements are best met.
Interstate - 70

FUTURE CONCEPT LAND USE AND AREAS OF CHANGE MAP - INTERSTATE-70
E.19 CREATE A UNIQUE COMMUNITY PLACE AROUND THE SWANSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COVER.

CDOT proposes to build a cover, less than 1,000 feet in length, over I-70 between Columbine St. and Clayton St. This cover should be an extension of the Swansea Elementary School site providing a mix of amenities for the entire community, such as recreation on the cover and affordable housing and other services around the edges. Related to this cover, this Plan recommends the following:

- This cover should extend beyond the west side of Columbine St. and beyond the east side of Clayton St. to enhance the character and user experience of those residential streets and to further reduce the visual presence of the freeway.
- There should not be a frontage road in between Swansea Elementary School and the cover.
- The south edge of this cover, along 46th Ave. should be designed with enhanced pedestrian amenities. Where Elizabeth St. and Thompson Ct. terminate into 46th Ave, additional amenities should be considered, such as bulbouts, artwork, and iconic treatments to orient and attract the community to cross 46th Ave. and use the cover. The enhancements will help catalyze surrounding private development (see the Strong chapter), which will add eyes on the park.

- The community has expressed great concern about air quality throughout the area, and a heightened concern as it relates to this cover. CDOT must mitigate air quality to meet federal standards, but for purposes of this cover, CDOT should exceed those minimum mitigation standards during construction and for the long term.

- The community, CDOT, Denver Public Schools, parents of students at Swansea Elementary School, the City and other potential partners should collaborate on the design and long term management of this cover and consider the following:
  - Ensure this cover is an asset and amenity to the overall community
  - Accommodate the Swansea Elementary School needs and safety of students
  - Accommodate the playground needs of the Elementary school
  - Ensure students of Swansea Elementary School can safely enjoy the space
  - Upkeep, maintenance, and management are critical to the long term success of this cover.
E.20 BUILD A SECOND COVER BETWEEN STEELE ST. AND COOK ST.

In response to the community’s desire to improve connectivity, introduce services, such as a grocery store, to reduce the visual presence and associated impacts of the freeway, and to create a community focus and places where none exist today, this Plan recommends further study of building a second cover, less than 1,000 feet in length. This cover is critical to the redevelopment of the adjacent underutilized/vacant land. A public plaza on the cover becomes the focus for the town center providing community oriented consumer goods and services.

As documented in the SDEIS, a second cover would eliminate the need for noise walls in this location, further mitigating the impacts of the freeway. A re-configuration of the current Steele St./Vasquez Blvd. interchange would present an opportunity to connect north and south segments of the neighborhood and create a new focal point for commerce in the community.

The second cover is different than the cover adjacent to Swansea Elementary School. The first cover would provide an open space amenity near the school and adjacent existing residential. The second cover would provide an opportunity to completely re-imagine its immediate surroundings, opening up multiple acres of land for additional rooftops, and the type of development that the community has stated it is missing.

Related to this second cover, this Plan recommends the following:

- Study the cost and financial feasibility of designing the second cover to serve as a catalyst for future redevelopment opportunities along Steele St./Vasquez Blvd.
- Acquire and develop CDOT land surrounding the current Steele St./Vasquez Blvd. interchange consistent with the recommendations of this plan (see the Strong chapter).
- Design the cover to create a special neighborhood place and presence for Elyria and Swansea, uniting both sides of the neighborhood visually, physically and safely along Steele St./Vasquez Blvd., Cooke St. and across the cover. The community should have a seat at the table during the design discussions to ensure the cover and its surrounding area is an amenity and represents the desires of the neighborhood.
- Conduct a study to analyze development on top of the cover and its compliance with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) airspace requirements.
- CDOT should build a new north-south multimodal connection at Cook St. as mitigation for its proposed overall reduction in north-south connectivity. Cook St. can then be integrated into the design of the second cover and increase the desirability to develop surrounding land.

[Image: Conceptual rendering of the second cover over I-70.]
E.21 46TH AVE. MULTIMODAL FRONTAGE ROAD SYSTEM

46th Ave. is the only east / west street that connects entirely through Elyria and Swansea, and it is used regularly by local residents by car, foot or bicycle. Large trucks also use 46th Ave., however the balance of truck use vs local multi-modal use of the street is recommended to change in the PCL alternative for I-70 (see C.23 and Existing and Proposed Truck Routes Map on page 58).

CDOT should consider best practices of design, incorporate complete and green street concepts, multimodal safety and efficiency, and visual and environmental protection for the neighborhood. The frontage road design should incorporate measures to open the area up to natural light and air, landscaping, aesthetics to provide opportunities for mountain views across the lowered highway, and other features to improve quality of life and reduce noise from the highway.

- Successful streetscape design reinforces the pedestrian scale and character and enhances the quality, identity, physical function, and economic vitality of an area. In locations where it is possible within proposed right-of-way, design the frontage road with wider detached sidewalks and buffers to be more inviting.

- CDOT should address community cohesion and infrastructure needs that were disrupted by the location of I-70 through the community. Activities should include landscaping, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, road/alley paving, improved lighting, or other transportation-related projects that are affected by the new I-70, but are not included in the project-specific mitigation commitments in the SDEIS.

- Reducing the width of shoulders, for example, may allow for greater amenities along the frontage roads, such as detached sidewalks with tree lawns, other landscaping elements, and potentially innovative noise reduction measures recommended by this plan.

Potential south frontage road. Reducing the overall width of the highway could make room for landscape elements between the noise wall and the street.
Located just 3 miles from downtown Denver, the 40th and Colorado commuter rail station will open in 2016 as the second station on the East Corridor from Downtown to DIA. This station will establish an important regional connection for the surrounding ½ mile area which includes the southeast corner of Swansea, the northeast corner of Clayton, and a portion of the Northeast Park Hill neighborhood to the east. The RTD commuter rail station is being constructed along 42nd Ave. between Monroe and Jackson Streets, and will initially provide 200 surface parking spaces to serve commuters from outside the neighborhood.

Within the station area are industrial properties as well as residential areas. There is an opportunity to build on the strengths of the area by encouraging lighter and cleaner industries in an industrial mixed use setting. With improved connectivity and pedestrian-oriented development, this station area can accommodate more development for businesses, jobs and workforce housing along the East Corridor.

**TOD STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Denver TOD Strategic plan characterizes the 40th and Colorado Station as Urban, defined as serving existing residential neighborhoods, small-scale multi-unit residential, and embedded commercial areas. The Strategic Plan also suggests the application of an Innovation Overlay to the station area. The Innovation Overlay is defined as allowing a wide range and diversity of TOD land uses, activities and building forms to accommodate new types of development such as advanced manufacturing, research and development, creative design studios, and more. The strategic plan further evaluates the station area based on a number of indicators, and designates the station as “strategize,” meaning more planning needs to occur.

The Elyria and Swansea planning process provides new information, insight and recommendations that expand the vision for 40th and Colorado as having a wider range and diversity of uses, with the potential for increased density that supports 21st Century industrial and residential Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

**KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**The Market Lead** (the Lead) is a rail line extension owned by Burlington Northern Sante Fe (BNSF) that was originally built to extend service from the main line at 60th Ave. and Brighton Blvd. to Market St. in downtown Denver. The Lead is active today from 60th Ave. to 43rd Ave. in the North Sub-Area but is now disused south of the UP tracks that parallel 43rd Ave. The Lead tracks were built at the bottom of a 25 ft deep underpass to allow north/south bound BNSF trains to pass under the UP tracks that run east / west, and to pass under 40th Ave. The rebuilt culvert dimensions are too small for the passage of trains under the UP tracks. Although the stormwater culvert provides enough clearance for pedestrians and cyclists, the depth and steep slopes make it very difficult to access. The underpass, also referred to by residents as “the ditch,” extends approximately four blocks from 40th Ave. to 44th Ave. It is 115 feet wide from the edge of Monroe St. to the alley between Madison and Monroe St. The continuous steep embankments on both sides of the Market Lead create a barrier between the established residential area on the west side of the Lead and the future rail station to be built to the east.

**New Residential Mixed Use Development.** On the east side of Colorado Blvd. is an emerging 36-acre residential mixed use area between 40th Ave. and Smith Road at the north edge of the Park Hill Golf course. Since 2006, a variety of 3 to 4 story mixed income housing options have been constructed along Albion St., with retail uses that
front Colorado Blvd. from 40th Ave. to 42nd Ave. Townhomes and condominiums were first built in 2007, followed by 150 market rate apartments that were completed in 2014. A new phase of 150 affordable housing will follow in 2015. The Urban Land Conservancy is planning additional phases on 7 acres to provide additional housing, and the potential of shared commercial office with neighborhood retail services. A public plaza space is also being contemplated to create a neighborhood amenity.

**Connectivity and Access.** The street grid within the 40th and Colorado station area is discontinuous due to the surrounding rail edges, the elevated embankment along Colorado and the interchange at I-70 and Colorado.

- Internal streets are missing where vacant or underutilized land areas are underdeveloped.
  - The area north of the UP tracks and west of Colorado Blvd. is largely isolated with only one point of access from 46th Ave. at Garfield St.
  - The rail station platform in the South area can only be accessed from Jackson St. due primarily to the Colorado Blvd. embankment and the Market Lead underpass.

- In the East Station Area, Smith Road was converted from a street to a pathway and emergency access lane that passes under Colorado Blvd. to the rail station at Jackson St. Albion St. is the only public street to serve this 36 acre development area, and operates as a continuously flowing street with no traffic signals from 40th and Colorado to Smith Road and Dahlia (see C.14 and E.27).

**Missing Sidewalks.**

- In the South Station Area, missing sidewalk sections on both sides of 40th Ave. is of particular concern to residents, especially since the Bruce Randolph School was built at 40th and Steele in 2002. Students rely on RTD bus service or walk from over a mile away.

- A sidewalk does not exist on the east side of Colorado from 35th Ave. to 40th Ave. along the Park Hill Golf Course. There are two bus stops located at 36th and 38th Avenues where there is nothing more than a foot path. Much of the ground between the east curb of Colorado and the golf course fence is sloping, creating slippery walking conditions during wet weather.

**Industrial Uses Abutting Residential.** The urban fabric in the South Sub-Area is a rather unorganized mix of industrial and residential uses that range from heavy manufacturing, general and custom manufacturing, warehouse distribution and other commercial services. There are many viable businesses ranging from large scale manufacturing and warehousing to food and high tech services. Surrounding residential areas are more likely to be impacted by truck traffic, noise, odors and visual quality issues. In the North Sub-area some of the most intensive industrial uses in Denver front the east side of...
Madison St. These buildings tower 150 ft above the nearby residential homes fronting Cook St. These long standing businesses include the grain elevators (RSW Sand) and animal feed production plant (MannaPro) that are served by a rail spur (the Market Lead) and truck access to I-70 via Madison St. With well-established light industrial uses, there is an opportunity to accommodate growing demand for flexible work spaces as part of an industrial mixed-use neighborhood near rail transit and close to downtown. Light industrial flex buildings provide versatile space that can provide a variety of services, and create a buffer between residential and larger scale industrial uses.

Existing Light Industrial Areas with Convenient Access to Downtown. This station area is positioned close to customers and target service markets near Downtown Denver. There are opportunities to build on the strengths of this area by adding versatile work spaces where technically-skilled labor can research, manufacture, sell and warehouse products near downtown and the enhanced transit corridor. As technology advances, the line is blurring between office and industrial uses that can be compatible with residential areas and contribute to healthy and vibrant neighborhoods.

Limited Parking. Some of the existing industrial buildings in the North and South Sub Areas that were originally built for warehousing have since converted portions of the building area to office uses. This has resulted in more employees working in the building, and driving to the workplace. Other buildings have not increased space for workers, but may have relied on prior shared parking agreements that are no longer in place. Many of the parking areas were built as head-in parking across a continuously rolling curb from the adjacent street. As a result, off-street parking is in short supply for potential job densification in existing buildings, and some of the existing parking areas are not conducive to creating a walkable district near the rail station.

Underutilized Land. Some of the acreage within the study area is vacant, underutilized or used passively as truck trailer storage. As a result, the street grid is discontinuous and property is not used to its full productive potential for generating jobs, goods and services and property tax revenues.

Aging Infrastructure. Basic utilities such as sewer, water and power are in place to serve light industrial uses; however, street and drainage infrastructure are aging, substandard or missing altogether. As a result, streets are dimly lit, sidewalk networks are incomplete, and the area is poorly drained due to the lack of an adequately functioning storm drainage system. Despite the current condition and lack of walkability, businesses are thriving and provide diverse capabilities, quality products, services and high tech solutions.

A 100 year old vehicle bridge on 40th Ave. clears the Market Lead and is nearing the end of its useful lifespan. The grade of 40th Ave. slopes up to and over the Market Lead from both directions to clear the Market Lead which is at a depth of 15 to 20 feet at this point. The rising grade of 40th Ave. prevents a
street connection at Madison St., which limits the usable right-of-way width for adding sidewalks on 40th Ave. and further reduces area connectivity.

Urban Flooding. Regional stormwater drainage from the Park Hill Basin collects along the UP tracks south of 43rd Ave. and flows to the north near Monroe and the Market Lead. These concentrated flows create flooding north of 43rd Ave. along the Market Lead to 46th Ave. during major storm events. The water causes silting of the Market Lead and disrupts deliveries to the businesses served by the rail line. This results in economic loss to the companies both in terms of maintenance costs and loss of rail car delivery service. The unused portion of the Market Lead south of 43rd Ave. has historically served as an area of inadvertent detention in large storm events. Construction of the RTD FasTracks East Corridor necessitated constructing an 8-foot by 10-foot wide box culvert to balance flood detention and ensure no adverse impacts to historic drainage.

Inadequate Stormwater Infrastructure. Industrial uses were built prior to storm water management standards that enhance water quality and detain storm water flows to prevent downstream flooding. The North and South Sub-Areas have very limited local and regional outfall storm drain pipes that provide drainage, particularly in industrial areas. As a result, there are areas that pond and collect muddy water, in particular along streets that lack surface conveyance of a concrete gutter.

Property Neglect and Crime. Vacant or underutilized properties and industrial uses that operate during weekday business hours are more susceptible to graffiti or vandalism due to a drop in activity during non-business hours. Residential areas near these industrial and vacant property areas are more exposed and impacted by these conditions than contiguous residential uses that are buffered by more compatible and active land uses. The Market Lead is a safety concern to residents given its track record of illicit activities such as trash dumping, drug use, graffiti, and other signs of undesirable use.

Limited Access to Public Park or Gathering Space. Households located between Colorado Blvd. and Steele St., and between 40th Ave. and 42nd Ave. are located beyond a ½ mile walk to an existing neighborhood park. Residents would like to see the development of a new park or other amenity space as part of any possible new transit oriented development near the station platform. In the East Sub-Area, private developments provide clubhouse, pool and outdoor patio space amenities that are accessible only to onsite residents. The Park Hill golf course provides open space but is not accessible without a scheduled tee time and an admission fee. Public amenity space for gathering and recreation is needed to contribute to the sense of community and neighborhood for the growing population in this area.

E22. ENCOURAGE INFILL DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

- Encourage transit oriented development, including industrial mixed use development, and workforce and mixed income housing near the station for the following public and private benefits:
  - New commercial space for new or expanding businesses, jobs, retail and services
  - Increased use of transit
  - Increased property values and property tax revenues
  - New streets, stormwater drainage and utility upgrades, resulting in better circulation, access to the rail station and overall marketability of the area.
  - Potential workforce and mixed income housing near the station, increasing area residential population and demand for local amenities and services.

- Prioritize residential uses along Monroe St. north of 40th Ave. to complement the development of a new pocket park at 41st and Monroe on the Market Lead, and to transition from the existing lower scale traditional residential area to the west, to future transit oriented development to the east.

- For properties that choose to remain industrial, encourage infill development of light industrial flex buildings that are configured in a walkable urban setting with a fine-grained urban street network, while also serving as a buffer between residential and larger scale industrial uses (see Industrial Areas, Strategy E.8).

- Consider adopting design standards for a district near the station area to encourage building design that reflects characteristics of walkable transit oriented development.

E23. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARED AND JOINT VENTURE PARKING

- Encourage the study of shared parking strategies, including structured parking to maximize use of developable property.

- Explore opportunities for joint venture parking with RTD to meet 2035 parking demand along the East Corridor. Joint venture parking would provide public funding as capital for a private developer to build a shared-use parking garage (see the 2014 DRCOG East Corridor Parking Report, and Strategy E.25, Alt. 1).

- Study the potential for lower-cost, two level parking with double ramp scissor access that could support workforce housing or light industrial flex development.
40th • Colorado Station Area

Encourage shared truck loading and parking area(s) to serve multiple sites. This could increase efficiency of land use and allow for more development, jobs and productivity on limited developable land near the station.

Evaluate parking patterns and needs and explore additional parking strategies (see C.38).

**E24. IMPROVE STORMWATER DRAINAGE AND EXPLORE CONSOLIDATED GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES**

- Encourage property owners to consider forming a storm water service district, and to build a consolidated storm water drainage system that would allow for full development onsite.
- Explore fee-in-lieu or district fees to fund water quality planters in the right-of-way along street edges, and to fund the detention of excess runoff in large pipes beneath the street grade for more development to be built onsite. The costs of building a consolidated green infrastructure stormwater system could be less than a standard retrofit given the complete lack of streets or the need to rebuild streets to current standards.
- Encourage consolidation of required stormwater detention and water quality facilities into shared or consolidated facilities to result in more cost-efficient and effective maintenance of facilities.

**E25. EXPLORE A POSSIBLE CROSSING OVER THE UP TRACKS TO IMPROVE RAIL STATION ACCESS**

Continue study and coordination with RTD and the Union Pacific Railroad Company to explore a possible new connection from the north industrial area (north of the UP Tracks) to the station platform on the south side of the tracks. A direct pedestrian connection could attract higher density employment into the north industrial area, and also connect more Swansea residents living west of the industrial district above 43rd Ave. between Cook and Steele St.

Alternatives to further explore include:

- **Alternative 1.** A new pedestrian bridge associated with a possible new park-n-ride garage could be built on the north side of the tracks (see opposing image). This opportunity would depend upon future commuter demand at this station to be monitored and evaluated by RTD once the station opens in 2016. New street connections into the north industrial area would increase access to this location, including a 43rd Ave. from Madison St., and a possible ramp on 44th Ave. that could connect to the elevated street grade of Colorado Blvd.

- **Alternative 2.** Repurposing of the Market Lead corridor
as part of a drainage solution to the I-70 lowering project could also provide an opportunity to create improved pedestrian connectivity from north to south. A pedestrian underpass located near the Market Lead near Madison and Monroe Streets would require further study to better understand safety requirements, drainage issues and other considerations. New mixed use development adjacent to the underpass could bring new activity and improvements such as lighting to increase the safety and desirability of passing under-grade at this location.

- **E26. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE NEW RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE NEAR THE 40TH AND COLORADO STATION AREA**
  - A number of existing residences in the station lie within a distance greater than 1/2 mile from existing parks in Swansea and Clayton. The rail station could attract new residential mixed use development which would increase the demand for accessible park space that would ideally be located within a 1/4 mile walk of each household.
  - Work with Denver Public Schools to study the potential to shared open space at Bruce Randolph school to provide neighborhood park services for all ages and abilities
  - Explore opportunities to develop a public or private pocket park at 41st and Madison as part of the Market Lead redevelopment.
  - Work with the development team selected by the Urban Land Conservancy to design and build a successful recreational space that could be accessible to the public as part of the 7 acre transit oriented development area between Colorado Blvd. and Albion St.

- **E.27 ENHANCE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND SAFETY**
  - Prioritize funding and implementation of improved sidewalks along 40th Ave. for possible completion by the opening date of the East Corridor commuter rail (see Strategy C.21).
  - Work with CDOT, Park Hill Golf Course and Denver Parks and Recreation / Forestry to design and implement a sidewalk on the east side of Colorado Blvd., from 35th Ave. to 40th Ave.
  - Explore opportunities to provide clear and direct pedestrian / bicycle connectivity from the east side of Albion to new development on the west side of Albion St. and to the rail station
  - Study the need for, and feasibility of a pedestrian-activated signal to cross Albion St. where new residential mixed use development is occurring between 40th Ave. and 42nd Ave.

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**WATER QUALITY / DETENTION**

Infill development conducted on a site-by-site basis would typically require on-site water quality / detention areas that consume about 10% of a site. However, these are less sustainable for long-term operations and maintenance compared to more comprehensive stormwater management solutions that could be explored to free up more of the limited vacant land area for Transit Oriented Development.
**40th • Colorado Station Area**

**FUTURE CONCEPT LAND USE AND AREAS OF CHANGE MAP - 40TH AND COLORADO**

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Transit Oriented Development may be of an Industrial Mixed Use character with uses that include lighter manufacturing, office, retail and residential, provided that building forms provide for an active pedestrian environment in the public realm, and truck access and loading impacts are minimized (see E.8, E.22).
E.28 ENCOURAGE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE MARKET LEAD

The Market Lead could be filled with imported soils and repurposed for new development between the UP tracks and 39th Ave. New infill development would help to build new infrastructure, complete street connections and provide for neighborhood amenities that could attract more residents, jobs or services into the neighborhood (see illustrative concept on the following page).

Coordination between a development entity, the City and other applicable parties should occur to explore implementation of the following objectives:

- Acquisition of the Market Lead property from BNSF
- Filling the Market Lead, assuring that imported soils are sufficiently clean for residential development
- Removal of the grade changes and 40th Ave. bridge over the Market Lead, and replacement with an at-grade street from Garfield to Madison Streets
- Replacement of the dead-end street at Madison St. at 40th Ave. with an at-grade intersection
- Creation of 41st and 42nd Ave. street segments between Monroe and the alley east of Madison St.
- Prioritizing 41st Ave. for pedestrian foot travel from Steele St. to the station by introducing more stop / yield signs.
- Prioritizing 42nd Ave. for vehicle bicycle travel from Steele St. to the station by minimizing stop or yield signs. The street should be designed with bulb-outs, vertical elements (such as street trees, lighting) and varying pavement patterns to encourage slow driving speeds.
- Studying the feasibility of Monroe St. as a green street by creating wider right-of-way when filling and developing the Market Lead. A green street includes water quality planters with landscaping that can provide shade and aesthetic enhancement of a street to encourage walking and cycling. Monroe St. should be extended as a green street from 41st Ave. to 39th Ave.
- Coordinating new street construction with regional wastewater capital improvements planning for possible cost sharing opportunities.
- Creating residential development between Madison and Monroe Streets and support the creation of a new public or private pocket park space along Monroe St.
Market Lead underpass existing condition

Market Lead and Colorado Station Area Concept: Depicts hypothetical projects that could occur through voluntary actions by property owners and investors
UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY

The National Western Center (NWC) and Station Area poses a once in a lifetime opportunity to create not only the most premier stock show of its kind, but also a thriving, must-see, year-round education, entertainment, cultural, and exhibition destination that catalyzes development around the station area, and that physically and socially connects the surrounding neighborhoods to the center and the South Platte River.

NATIONAL WESTERN CENTER MASTER PLAN

Integral to the implementation of this Plan, the National Western Center Master Plan is underway and is anticipated for City Council adoption soon after adoption of this Plan. The following vision of the NWC was established through the master planning process:

*The National Western Center celebrates the pioneering spirit and promise of the West through year-round experiential lifelong learning, the arts, entertainment, competition, and commerce.*

In regard to the primary study area of the NWC, this Plan is intended to provide general guidance on land use, urban form, and mobility. The National Western Center Master Plan is intended to explore the recommendations of this Plan in greater detail and establish new recommendations that reinforce and that are consistent with this Plan.

TOD STRATEGIC PLAN

The Denver TOD Strategic plan characterizes the National Western Stock Show Station as General Urban with an Entertainment Overlay, defined as serving mid-to high density multi-family residential, grid and alley block pattern, main streets, and corner stores, while also accommodating major events. The strategic plan further evaluates the station area based on a number of indicators, and designates the station as “strategize,” meaning more planning needs to occur.

This Plan and more specifically this chapter not only recognizes the significance of the future NWC and its master plan, but also puts forth a number of strategies to represent the additional planning called for by the TOD Strategic Plan. The strategies are as follows:

**E.29 TARGET TOD OPPORTUNITIES ADJACENT TO THE STATION**

Where Transit Oriented Development land use is recommended:

- Create new street grid as properties redevelop to create a more walkable station area.
- Allow taller general shopfront and apartment building forms with higher densities.
- Site building forms at the street with parking and access in the rear/off the alley.
- Make use of design elements such as upper story setbacks, as necessary, at the street to maintain a comfortable pedestrian scale.
- Promote the use of design elements that link the building directly to the street environment, such as ground story activation, transparent window openings and doorways at the street.
National Western Center and Station Area

E.30 ENCOURAGE A MIX OF HOUSING

Throughout the station area where residential land use is recommended:

- Explore opportunities to structure development surrounding the station to be mixed income and mixed-product housing to accommodate a variety of family sizes, income levels, and age groups.
- Encourage higher density with 3-5 story development north of Elyria to help buffer the existing residential neighborhood from the industrial uses to the north and to help activate Elyria Park and the station.

E.31 ENCOURAGE “INDUSTRIAL” TO “INDUSTRIAL MIXED USE” TRANSITION IN AREAS CLOSEST TO THE STATION.

In areas designated as Industrial Mixed Use directly north and east of the station:

- Explore opportunities to transition land uses from Industrial to Industrial Mixed Use to better protect the neighborhood from heavy industrial uses and provide a buffer between non-compatible land uses.
- Within the Industrial Mixed Use land use, support zone districts that allow a broad mix of uses including office, retail and residential to provide more transit-supportive options.
- Focus employment within the 1/2 mile radius of the station area and require a more pedestrian-oriented development

E.32 ACTIVATE BRIGHTON BLVD. AS THE GATEWAY TO THE NWC AND ELYRIA

- Explore opportunities to celebrate the arrival to the NWC by siting buildings in a manner that indicates a sense of arrival to a special place.
- Scale buildings from 8 to 5 stories along the west side of Brighton Blvd. to transition height and scale of building to the established Elyria neighborhood.
- Develop the east side of Brighton to not only capitalize on the destination of the NWC, but to also buffer the established Elyria neighborhood from larger scale NWC buildings on the west side of Brighton Blvd.
- Allow a moderate and mixed scale of general, shopfront, apartment and rowhouse building forms.
- Site buildings in a context sensitive manner with emphasis on orienting to the street with parking and access in the rear/off alley.
- Promote the use of design elements that link the building directly to the street environment, such as ground story activation, transparent window openings and doorways at the street.
- Allow a mix of uses within the area and within buildings.
- Make use of streetscape elements that support and promote pedestrian use, such as wide sidewalks, public trash cans, pedestrian scale lighting, and tree wells or tree lawns.
E.33 LOW INTENSITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

In the historic Elyria neighborhood with established residential character, designated as Single Family Duplex:

- Maintain the current mix of low scale building forms such as urban house, duplex, tandem house and rowhouse.
- Explore opportunities to replicate existing development patterns, including small lots, shallow setbacks and high building coverage with parking and access in the rear/off alley.
- Encourage the use of streetscape elements that promote residential character and pedestrian and bicycle use, such as detached sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, and tree lawns.

E.34 IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS AND MOBILITY TO THE NWC AND TO THE RIVER

To better connect the Elyria, Swansea and Globeville neighborhoods to the NWC and Station Area.

- Explore the consolidation of the Denver Rock Island Rail, which will allow for feasible connection over the South Platte River and to and through the NWC site.
- Explore burying or relocating the Metro Wastewater Delgany Interceptor to improve visual and physical access to the South Platte River.
- Introduce direct connections to the station from Globeville.
- Provide publicly accessible open space and plaza areas throughout the complex for use by visitors and neighborhood residents (see page 42 Introduction & B.16).
National Western Center and Station Area

FUTURE CONCEPT LAND USE AND AREAS OF CHANGE MAP - NATIONAL WESTERN CENTER AND STATION AREA
E.35 DEVELOP THE DPS SITE

The Denver Public Schools site, directly across Brighton Blvd. from the station, is currently vacant and through redevelopment has great potential to catalyze other future transit-oriented development for the surrounding station area. As part of redevelopment, past contamination needs to be remediated. Redevelopment of this site would help bridge the void of non-neighborhood supporting land uses between the Elyria neighborhood and the station while contributing to the revitalization of Brighton Blvd.

Explore funding sources and public-private partnership opportunities to clean up the site and create transit oriented development.

As part of site redevelopment, extending 49th Ave. through the site would greatly enhance connectivity from the station to Elyria Park and the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods.

Explore opportunities to develop the site as Transit Oriented Development (TOD) through integration of a parking structure for the new National Western Center. The primary redevelopment priority should be for TOD and secondarily as a parking structure (see C.38).

The following should be considered when developing the DPS site:

- Add eyes on the adjacent Elyria Park
- Activate Brighton Blvd.
- Increase ridership of the North Metro line
- Explore development opportunities and associated cleanup costs for uses that are complimentary to the National Western Center and surrounding residential areas.
- Connect 49th from High St. to Brighton Blvd.

Potential 49th Ave. looking towards the future National Western Center Commuter Rail Station.
38th and Blake Station Area

The 38th and Blake Station Area completed a planning process in 2009 with the adoption of the 38th and Blake Station Area Plan. The plan provides a vision for a unique destination district that provides safe and comfortable multi-modal access from the surrounding communities to the rail station, the South Platte River, and between adjacent neighborhoods.

Under construction is RTD’s 38th and Blake station park-n-ride lot with 200 spaces and a bus loop that connects Wynkoop St. to a pedestrian bridge that will connect commuters from the park-n-ride over the UPRR tracks to the station platform on Blake St.

**TOD STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Denver TOD Strategic plan characterizes the 38th and Blake Station as General Urban, defined as serving mid-to high density multi-family residential, grid and alley block pattern, main streets, and corner stores. The Strategic Plan also suggests the application of an Innovation Overlay to the station area. The Innovation Overlay is defined as allowing a wide range and diversity of TOD land uses, activities and building forms to accommodate new types of development such as advanced manufacturing, research and development, creative design studios, and more. The strategic plan further evaluates the station area based on a number of indicators, and designates the station as “strategize,” meaning more planning needs to occur.

**UPDATES TO THE 38TH AND BLAKE STATION AREA PLAN**

The station area plan includes a small portion of the statistical Elyria and Swansea neighborhood between 38th St. and 43rd St., and between Brighton Blvd. and Blake St. The station area plan envisions the area fronting Brighton Blvd. as Mixed-Use Employment with heights up to 3 stories. The area fronting Blake St. is recommended as mixed use residential with building heights up to 5 stories.

This Plan reinforces all recommendations within the 38th and Blake Station Area Plan with the following exceptions and modifications. Within the statistical Elyria and Swansea neighborhood boundary this Plan recommends building height up to 8 stories, and recommends a future concept land use of Industrial Mixed Use along Brighton Blvd. and Transit Oriented Development from Blake St. to Walnut St. north of 38th St.
F. MOVING FORWARD
REALIZING THE VISION

This Plan sets forth a vision for the future of the Elyria and Swansea neighborhoods and contains numerous recommendations aimed at achieving that vision. Plan implementation takes place over many years and is the result of large and small actions by the public sector and the private sector, sometimes in partnership. It’s understood that the future will bring unforeseen opportunities and challenges. The recommendations in this Plan are intended to provide direction for future actions en route to achieving the plan vision.

TYPES OF IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Blueprint Denver identifies three types of implementation activities: regulatory/policy, public investment, and partnerships. These activities focus on public sector actions, many of which create a positive environment that enables actions by other groups, such as property owners, developers, neighborhood organizations, districts or homeowners. While public actions can help set the stage, in most cases it is private actions (such as constructing new buildings and houses, opening new businesses, and attracting new residents) that are the most critical elements to achieving a plan's vision.

F.1 REGULATORY AND POLICY STRATEGIES

Regulator and Policy Strategies change City codes or regulations to affect desired outcomes. Typical examples include Denver Zoning Code text and map amendments, Public Works requirements for infrastructure improvements associated with development projects, and Parks and Recreation requirements regarding open space and plantings.

Regulatory and Policy Implementation Priorities for Elyria and Swansea:

- Implement recommendations / strategies aimed at improving the transition between abutting residential and industrial uses (B.5, B.7, E3, E4, E7, E8, E32).
- Ensure that zoning regulations align with the plan vision, including strategies for increasing access to mixed income and affordable housing and establishing transit-oriented development near rail stations (B.3, B.21, B.22, E.2).

F.2 PUBLIC INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Public Investment Strategies are those involving public funding of public infrastructure. Examples include public investment in street reconstruction, bike lane installation, new transit lines, park improvements, or new or expanded recreation centers. The City takes the lead in designing, constructing, and funding these projects and may use a variety of public funding sources such as the annual Capital Improvements Program, bond funds, or state or federal grant programs.

In some cases this Plan identifies public transportation projects as studies because the impacts and consequences of a particular improvement on the transportation system are so complex that the broader system must be examined to determine the feasible options to meet the intent. Extensive study may also be needed to meet eligibility criteria to apply for federal funding.

Public Investment Implementation Priorities for Elyria and Swansea:

- Explore opportunities to leverage public investments in major infrastructure and facility improvements to implement the strategies and recommendations of this Plan.
- Conduct a follow-up study for east/west connectivity between I-70 and 49th Ave. (E.6).
- Pursue implementation of new street connections and improved access to the South Platte River through the National Western Center (B.16, C.4, C.5, C.9, C.10, C.26, E.34).
- Address traffic operations, roadway, alley, street light maintenance issues throughout the neighborhood (C.11, C.12, C.24).
- Improve high priority streets with sidewalks and pedestrian priority intersections (C.25, C.27).
- Encourage acquisition of the BNSF Market Lead property for infill redevelopment and improved connectivity opportunities (E.28).

F.3 PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Partnership Strategies represent the most diverse category of implementation activities. Public-private partnership (PPP or P3) activity has expanded greatly in recent years and has gone well beyond its roots of public subsidies of private development projects. Increasingly, public-private partnerships are being used to fund infrastructure projects. Denver Union Station and RTD's East and North Metro commuter rail lines are among the largest P3 projects in the country. Another local example is the reconstruction of 14th St. in Downtown Denver using a combination of City bond funds and a property-owner approved General Improvement District.
Partnership Implementation Priorities for Elyria and Swansea:

- Encourage the formation of a Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO) to continue resident and stakeholder engagement, and focus on building neighborhood unity, identity and establishing neighborhood priorities (A.3, A.4, A.5, A.6, A.7, A.8, A.9, A.10, A.11, E.4, E.5).

- Work with non-profit housing partners, Denver Office of Economic Development, and other potential financing entities to explore opportunities for new affordable and mixed income housing units in the neighborhoods (B.3, B.6, B.23, B.24, E.2, E.22, E.28, E.30).

- Encourage neighborhood engagement with residents, and collaboration with community organizations and the Denver Police, and Denver Neighborhood Inspection Services to increase safety and security for residential and business areas (E.5, E.7).

- Increase the neighborhood’s access to Jobs and services (A.4, A.9, B.4, B.5, B.6, B.25, B.26, B.27, E.7, E.8).

- Partner with NDCC to implement the plan vision for neighborhood integration and cultural expression at the rail stations, the National Western Center, I-70 and Brighton Blvd. (A.1 through A.11).

- Partner with zoning regulations align with the plan vision, including strategies for increasing access to mixed income and affordable housing and establishing transit-oriented development near rail stations (B.3, B.21, B.22, E.2).

F.4 CHAMPIONS AND ADVOCATES

Once a plan is adopted as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan, the City has the necessary direction to begin implementing the plan. Given the number of adopted plans, competing interests in the City, and the budget limitations at all levels of government, little plan implementation is undertaken without champions for certain actions and advocates for the neighborhood. Typically registered neighborhood organizations work with the Mayor and their City Council representatives to promote certain actions and outcomes. Membership organizations such as merchant associations, business partnerships, and nonprofits do the same for business areas.

F.5 PUBLIC FUNDING SOURCES AND STRATEGIES

Funding sources available to public and private entities are continually evolving based on economic, political, legal and neighborhood objectives. Though the names and purposes of specific funding sources can change over time, the following...
Moving Forward

This list represents potential funding opportunities:

- **Tax Base Support.** Tax base supported sources are characterized by the involvement of the local sales and property taxing authorities.

- **Annual Budget.** The most common tax base support is through the City’s annual budget, especially the annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Available CIP funds are typically limited to a few million dollars a year.

- **Bonds.** Periodically, the City requests its voters to approve a tax increase to pay for specific public improvements. For instance, the citizens of Denver voted in 2007 to raise their property taxes in a specific amount to support the issuance of over $500 million of Better Denver Bonds whose proceeds subsequently funded hundreds of specific public improvement projects. Future bond issuances could potentially provide an opportunity to secure funding for some Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood Plan recommendations.

- **Tax Increment Finance (TIF).** TIF is another means of tax-base support most typically associated with an Urban Renewal Area. Once created by the City Council and Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA), property and sales tax over and above the base year are paid to DURA to fund eligible public improvements or financing gaps for private development. To qualify for tax increment financing through urban renewal, an area must first meet certain criteria to establish the presence of “blight”, as defined in state statute.

- **Grants.** Grants funding opportunities come from public and private entities. Public entities are typically interested in encouraging a specific outcome and these grants typically include specific conditions and requirements as to how the funds may be deployed. For instance, a state or federal transportation grant will need to be used for street, mass transit, or regional mobility studies or projects. The Office of Economic Development receives federal funds to support housing and other types of projects. Additionally, private entities provide grants for projects aligned with the organization’s goals, such as green spaces, creative enterprises or social services.

- **Special Districts.** The city charter and state statute enable various types of districts to be created. Examples of special districts include business improvement districts, general improvement districts, metropolitan districts, and local improvement or maintenance districts. These districts are often created by a localized group of citizens who want to achieve specific outcomes in their locality and are willing to pool their economic resources in order to implement identified projects. For example, if a majority of business owners desire to improve the streetscape of the street in which they operate, the businesses could organize a business improvement district which would assess the participants an amount of money sufficient to pay for the project. Special districts are a useful tool when a local population both desires and is willing to pay for an enhanced level of public improvement. District revenues can be used to pay for improvements on a “pay-as-you-go” basis, for ongoing operations and maintenance, or to support repayment of bonds. In order to be established, special districts typically require the approval of Denver City Council and a vote of the electorate within the area.

**F.6 PARTNERSHIP TOOLS**

In addition to public funding sources, a variety of public-private partnerships or private organizations will be instrumental in plan implementation. As states and communities reduce the use of public funds for improvements, some of these other organizational types will come into broader, more innovative use. Some examples of these organizations include: community development corporations, membership organizations, nonprofits or foundations, and transportation management organizations. Implementation of the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood Plan will require the coordinated involvement of many different organizations in pursuing a variety of activities with existing and new funding sources.

North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative (NDCC). Mayor Hancock created the NDCC in 2013 in order to ensure alignment and effective coordination of the many inter-related plans and projects that are taking place in Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea. Part of this effort includes strategic thinking on the implementation and funding of projects, which presents the Elyria and Swansea community with a unique partnership opportunity to implement elements of this Plan.