

# Blueprint Denver

A BLUEPRINT FOR  
AN INCLUSIVE CITY



**Denveright.**  
Your Voice. Our Future.



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY

# Acknowledgments

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Mayor Michael B. Hancock

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District 3- Paul D. López

District 4- Kendra Black

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Andrew Abrams

Heidi Aggeler

Jim Bershof

Erin Clark

Ignacio Correa-Ortiz

Don Elliott

Renee Martinez-Stone

Frank Schultz

Simon Tafoya

## Blueprint Denver Task Force

Joel Noble (Co-Chair)

Kimball Crangle (Co-Chair)

Andrew Abrams

Jesse Adkins

Paul Aldretti

Tim Baldwin

Brianna Borin

Brent Bowman

Norma Brambila

Leo Carosella

Mizraim Cordero

Parry Burnap

Chris Crosby

John Desmond

Angelle Foucher

Gabriel Guillaume

John Hayden

Councilman Christopher Herndon

Geneva Hooten

Annie Levinsky

Caitlin Quander

Heather Noyes

Trinidad Rodriguez

Andrew Sense

Councilwoman Mary Beth Susman

Ean Tafoya

Jerry Tinianow

Stewart Tucker Lundy

Julie Underdahl

Margie Valdez

KC Veio

Joe Vostrejs

Jeff Walker

## Denveright Community Think Tank

A special thanks to the thousands of Denver residents, employees and visitors who participated in the planning process.

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## City and County of Denver Staff

### Community Planning and Development

Jill Jennings Golich, Interim Executive Director

Caryn Champine

Sarah Showalter

David Gaspers

Andrea Burns

Brandon Shaver

Courtney Levingston

Courtland Hyser

Elizabeth Weigle

Jason Whitlock

Kara Hahn

Jennifer Buddenborg

Lizzie Friend

Rachel Cuccaro

Sara White

Sarah Cawrse

Scott Robinson

Steven Chester

### Public Works

Eulois Cleckley, Executive Director

Riley LaMie

Kristina Evanoff

Ryan Billings

### Parks and Recreation

Allegra "Happy" Haynes, Executive Director

Gordon Robertson

Dody Erickson

Mark Tabor

Rob Davis

### Public Health and Environment

Bob McDonald, Executive Director

Gretchen Armijo

### Economic Development and Opportunity

Eric Hiraga, Executive Director

Jeff Romine

Laura Brudzynski

Melissa Thate

Irene Aguilar

Turid Nagel-Casebolt

### Consultant Support

MIG

Economic & Planning Systems

Fehr & Peers

Calthrope Analytics

Peter Park Planning

Evan Semón Photography

# About Denveright

Denveright is a set of community-driven plans that shape Denver’s future land use, mobility, parks, recreational resources and more.



Citywide strategies from Comprehensive Plan 2000, the 2002 Blueprint Denver land use and transportation plan and the 2003 Game Plan for parks and recreation have served Denver well for the last decade and a half. They have guided our transportation choices; promoted new mixed-use development; created and enhanced parks, trails and recreation centers; and catalyzed areas of change while preserving the character of stable neighborhoods.

But a lot has changed since those plans were adopted.

RTD’s FasTracks system has added significant new transit options to the region. Our population has experienced rapid growth. We’ve learned smarter and more modern ways to plan for the future of our city with inclusivity and climate change in mind.

Denveright represents an unprecedented opportunity to align citywide plans to guide future investments so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Denveright strategies come straight from the community, and are designed to help the city prepare for and deliver a future that is responsive to their goals, visions and priorities.



## Your Vision for Denver

You helped planners create six “vision elements” that serve as the basis for Comprehensive Plan 2040 and drive each plan’s goals.

Equitable,  
Affordable and  
Inclusive



Strong and  
Authentic  
Neighborhoods



Connected,  
Safe and  
Accessible Places



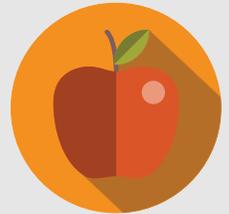
Economically  
Diverse and  
Vibrant



Environmentally  
Resilient



Healthy and  
Active



## Your Voice

Thousands of Denverites shared their unique perspectives on what makes Denver great and how it can evolve to be even better. You shared your voice in many ways — by attending meetings and workshops; taking online map-based surveys; talking with the Denverright street team at festivals, community events and transit stations; joining a Community Think Tank; and more. Through coordinated Denverright outreach and the individual plans’ efforts, there were limitless opportunities to help shape our city’s future.



# About this Plan

*Blueprint Denver* provides the foundation for citywide policies and recommendations related to land use, transportation, design and growth.

CHAPTER

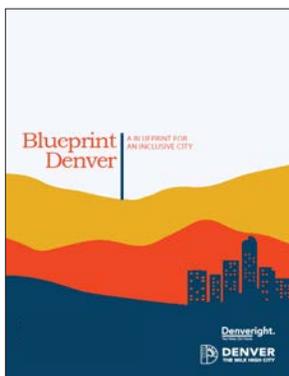
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*Blueprint Denver* explores the fundamental relationship between where we live, work and play and how we move throughout the city.

- 1.1 Why Now? (p. 10)
- 1.2 Comprehensive Plan 2040 (p. 14)
- 1.3 The Planning Process (p. 16)
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- 1.5 Goals (p. 22)
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### Vision for an Inclusive City

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*The Blueprint Denver Vision:*

- **An Equitable City**
- **A City of Complete Neighborhoods and Networks**
- **An Evolving City**

## 03

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*Recommendations*



This plan is an adopted supplement to *Comprehensive Plan 2040*. The comprehensive plan's six vision elements provide the basis for the goals, policies and strategies found within *Blueprint Denver*.

This plan guides where new jobs and homes should go, how our transportation system will improve, how to strengthen our neighborhoods and where and how we invest in our communities with new infrastructure and amenities. *Blueprint Denver* is the framework for the city's major land use and transportation decisions, establishing citywide policies and specific strategies to achieve the vision for an inclusive city in 2040.

*Blueprint Denver* supersedes 2002 *Blueprint Denver* and establishes a framework for adopted small area plans that provide more detailed guidance. *Blueprint Denver* works in conjunction of other citywide policy documents that provide direction on parks, transportation, housing and economic development, but is not regulatory in nature. Community members, property owners, city staff and decision makers use the plan to manage the evolving city that we have a collective responsibility to invest in, protect and care for.

# 04

# 05

# 06

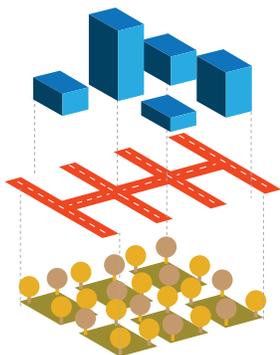
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*Elements of a Complete Neighborhood*



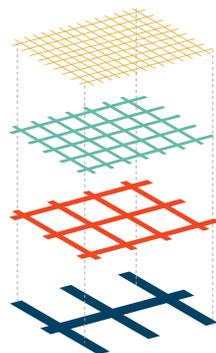
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*Neighborhood Contexts*



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- B Blueprint Denver 2002 Diagnostic\*
- C Key Equity Concepts Methodology\*
- C Industrial Land Use Study\*
- E Implementation Matrix\*

\*Appendices are for reference and are available online or by request from Community Planning and Development

*“What is the City if not  
the people”*

-William Shakespeare  
Author, *Coriolanus*

*Love this City*

DENVER

# 1. Introduction

*Blueprint Denver* explores the fundamental relationship between where we live, work and play and how we move throughout the city.

*Blueprint Denver* is a citywide land use and transportation plan for the next 20 years. It calls for an equitable city of complete neighborhoods and networks. The foundations of *Blueprint Denver* include *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and the broad, diverse voice of our community. Throughout the planning process, Denverites of all backgrounds from across the city shared their input. That input shapes every component of this plan, from the vision to the recommendations.

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How to Use Blueprint Denver

# Why Now?

To guide our growth and evolution as a city at the heart of the Rocky Mountain region.

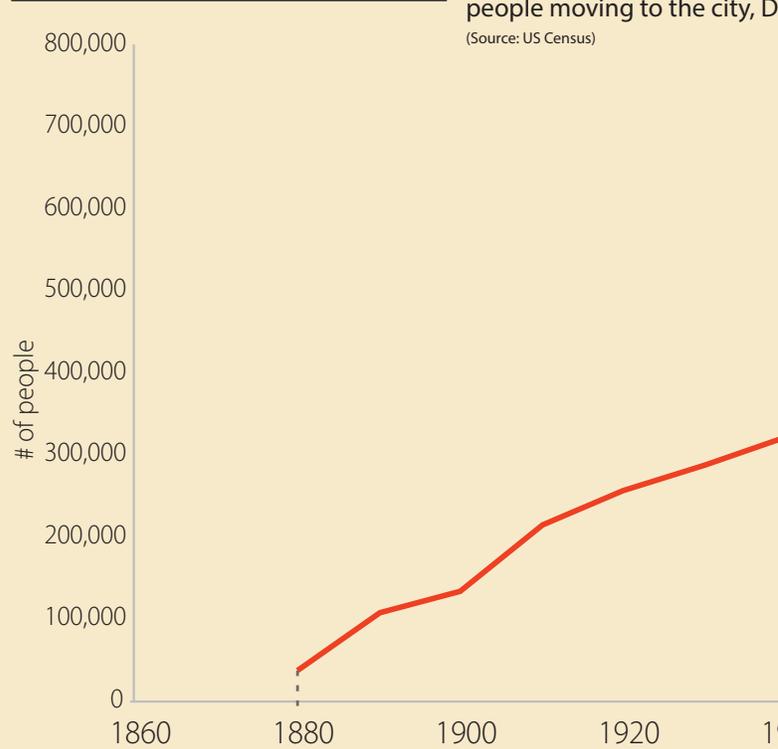
Written after the first decade of significant growth in a generation, *2002 Blueprint Denver* provided the city's first comprehensive approach to manage growth and development. Through the plan, Denver directed much of its development to areas of change and many neighborhoods have become stronger and more resilient. The adoption of a new, context-sensitive and form-based zoning code in 2010 achieved key goals from *2002 Blueprint Denver* (See *2002 Blueprint Denver Diagnostic*).

Since 2002, Denver has grown by 150,000 residents and many neighborhoods have returned to densities not seen since the 1950's. This recent growth has had both positive and negative impacts on our city. New and revitalized neighborhoods have brought improved access to shopping and entertainment options. Local makers have found new customers for their goods. At the same time, Denver's neighborhoods, have growing disparities. Housing opportunities and quality design are a citywide challenge. There is a need for all residents to have greater access to all of Denver's opportunities.

While the city's population boomed, Denver's transportation network struggled to keep up. *2002 Blueprint Denver's* transportation vision did establish a foundation for street planning and design to support multimodal travel, setting the stage to shift Denver's transportation paradigm from the continued widening of streets to increasing street capacity via multimodal travel options. But while walking and biking have been on the rise, those gains have been offset by decreases in transit use.

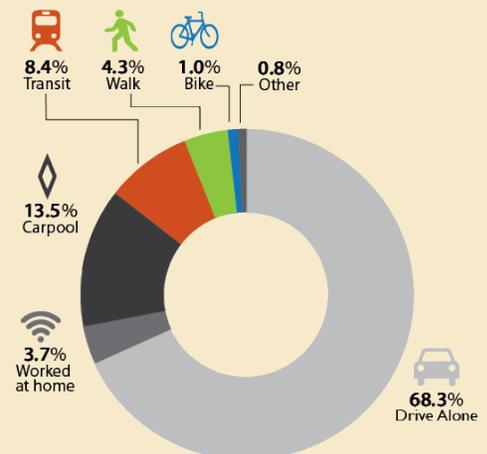
With the region continuing to grow and evolve, Denver must again look to the future with the collective vision of the community guiding a set of ambitious goals, policies and more nuanced strategies to address these challenges. Today, people have a wide latitude of choices in where to live. *Blueprint Denver's* vision supports current and future residents to choose Denver as a place to start and raise families, to continue their education and change careers and to grow old.

## Population Growth



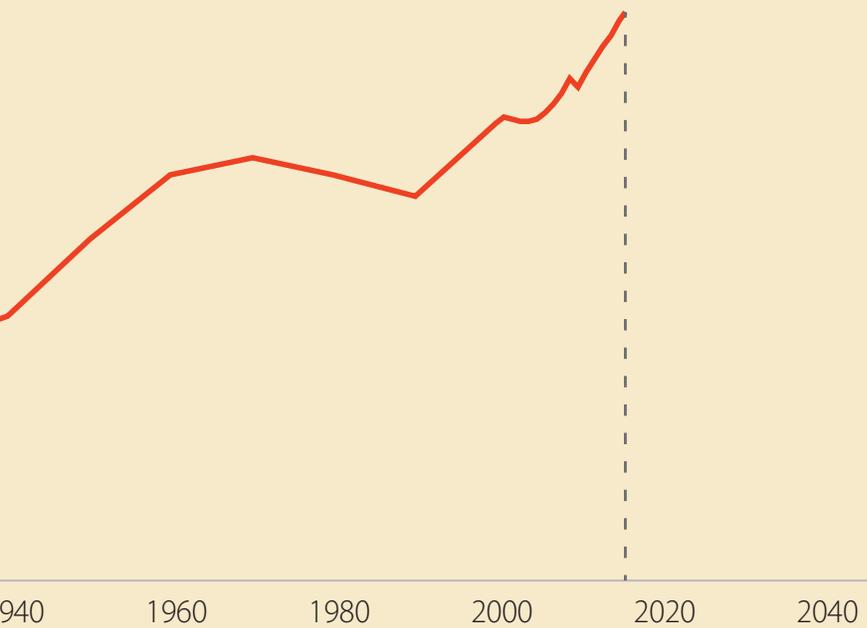
## Mode Share

### 2000 Mode Share

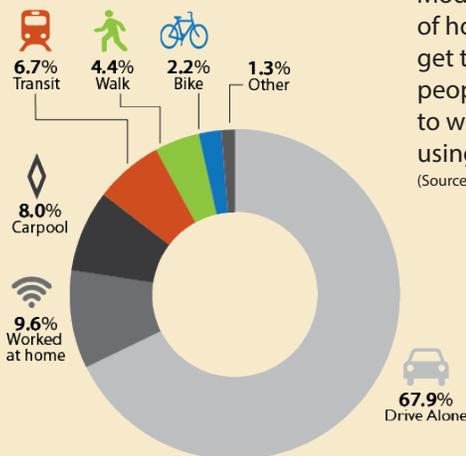


Source: US Census Bureau, 2000

significant growth over its history. Since 2002 *Blueprint Denver*, the city grew by over a decade will see the largest increase in raw population ever. Along with many Denverites are also living longer and continue to start families.



### 2017 Mode Share

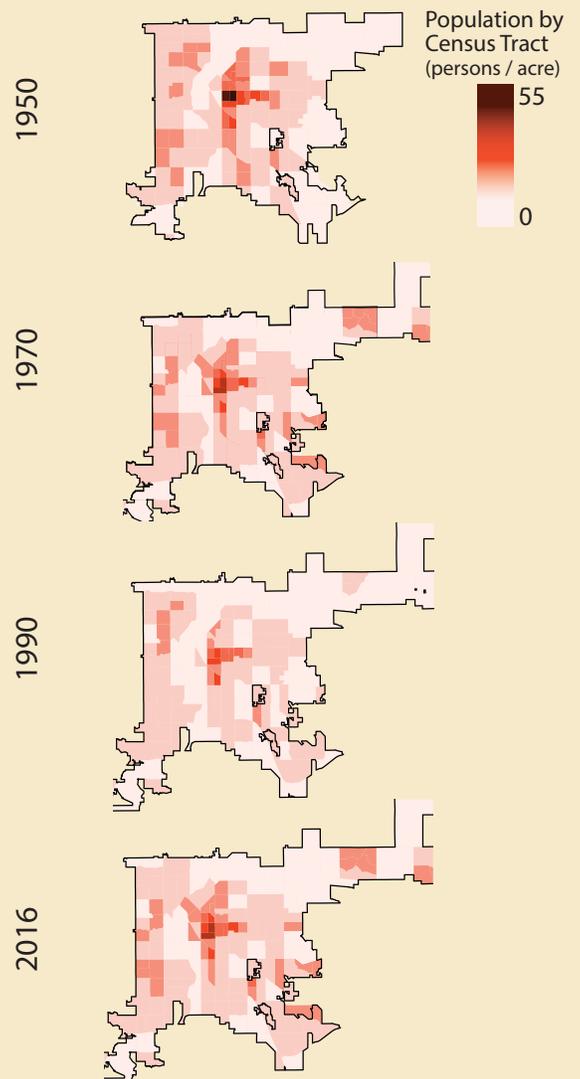


Mode share is a key measure of how people around the city get to work. Since 2002 more people are walking and biking to work, but fewer people are using local transit.

(Source: US Census)

Source: ACS 1-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau, 2017

### Population Density



In 1950 much of Denver's population was close to the city center, when the city had almost 10 persons per acre. As the region sprawled outward, Denver's population shrank and density declined. By 1990 many areas were half as dense as 40 years before. Now Denver neighborhoods are gaining in density and have returned to 1950 levels. (Source: US Census)

# Why Now?

A desire to remain a city of different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds.

Denver prides itself in its diversity and openness for all to take advantage of the city's dynamic opportunities. Those of us lucky enough to call Denver home appreciate the richness of experiences it offers—a vibrant downtown street, an active city park, a peaceful night in our neighborhood.

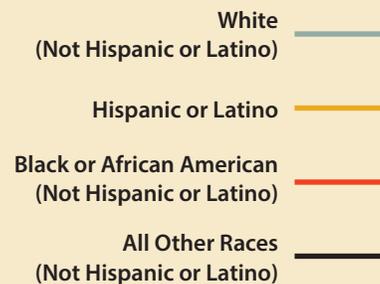
For much of our history, Denver grew in population and in diversity, becoming a city of people from different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds. Only recently has that historical trend begun to change. In the past decade the city has become less racially and ethnically diverse. Some historically black and Hispanic neighborhoods experienced large shifts in racial composition, with significantly more non-Hispanic white residents. These trends run counter to our vision for a diverse, inclusive city.

We must continue to foster all people's choice to live in Denver. As we exhibit a strong commitment to strengthen and nurture our neighborhoods for all to enjoy, the growth we experience must promote greater access to opportunity and remove barriers for people of color to live in Denver. These themes are directly reflected in the plan's key equity concepts (Chapter 2).

## Citywide Racial Composition

Denver's recent growth has begun to impact the overall racial and ethnic composition of the city. Historical trends show a more diverse population and by 2006, people of color had surpassed 50 percent of the total population. That long-running trend has now reversed. Denver is less diverse today than in 2006, with the majority white population increasing.

(Source: US Census)



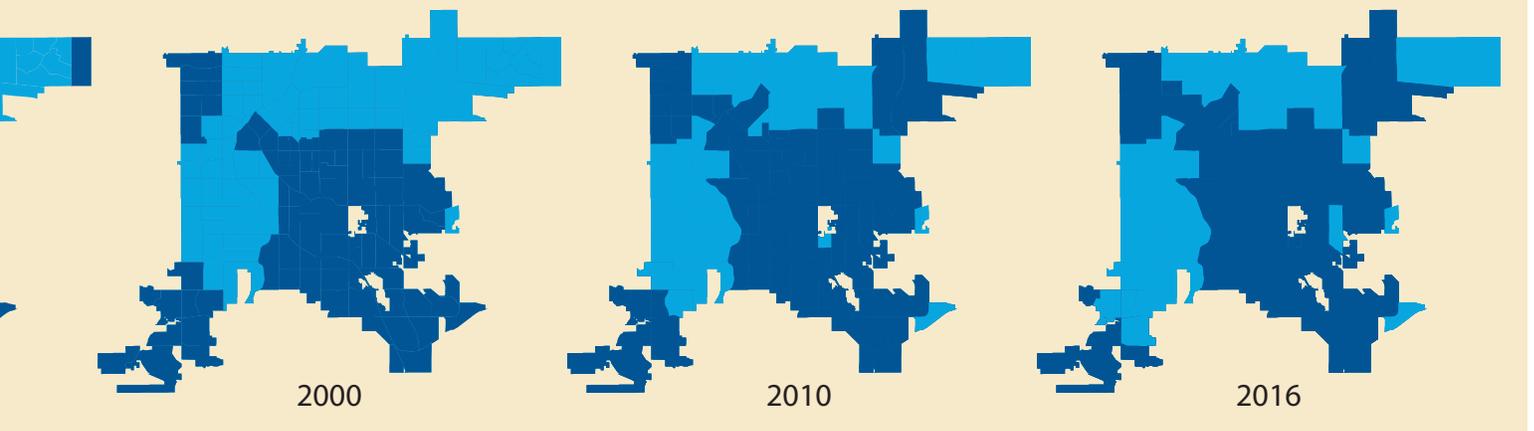
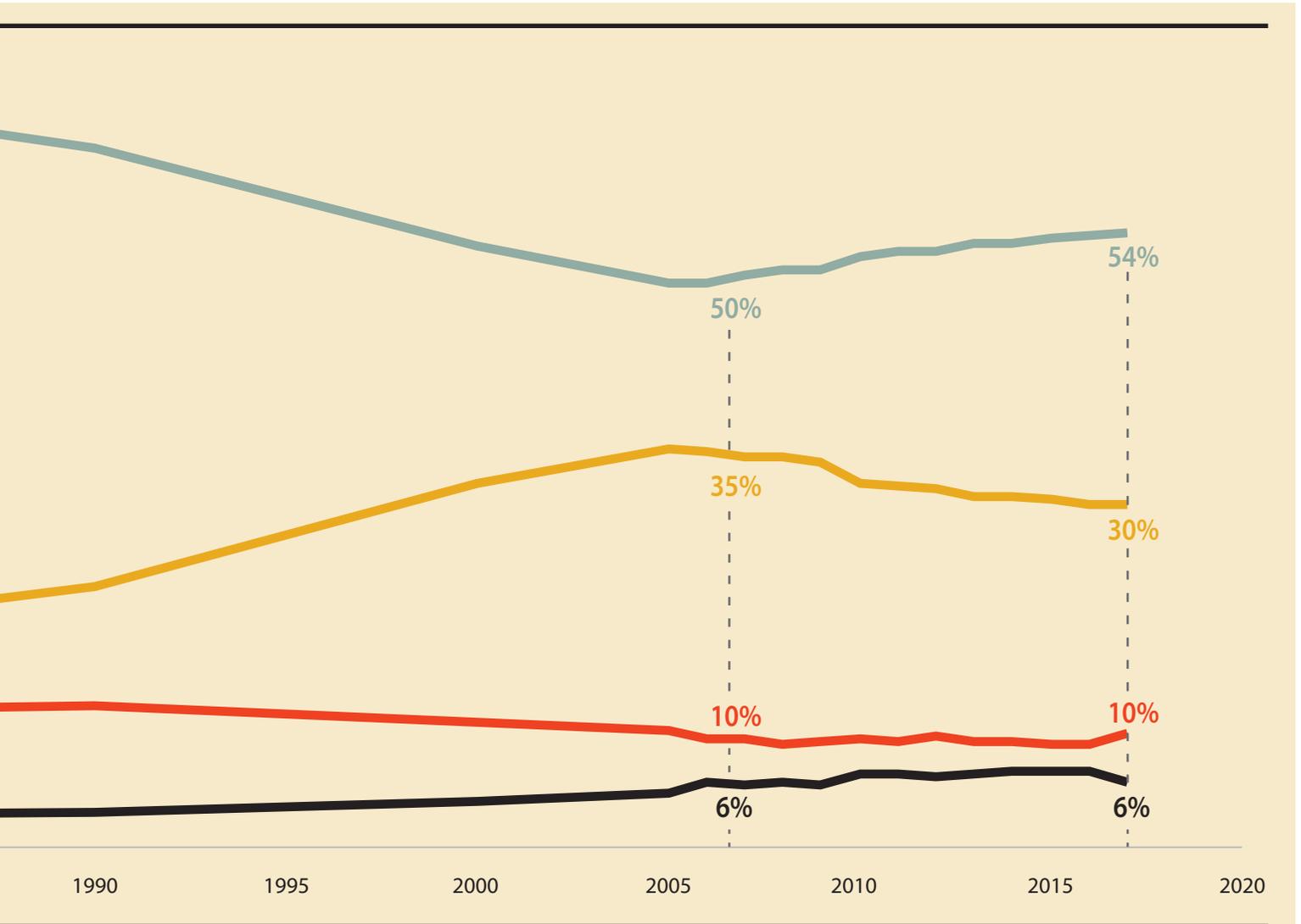
## Neighborhood Shifts in Racial Composition

Many neighborhoods have seen significant shifts in its racial composition, with historically black or Hispanic areas becoming more white. Less racial diversity can limit economic, educational, social, cultural and wealth-building opportunities for all and detracts from the cultural richness of our city.

(Source: US Census)



1990



# Comprehensive Plan 2040

*Blueprint Denver* is a supplement to the comprehensive plan. The community vision and values from *Comprehensive Plan 2040* are the foundation for *Blueprint Denver's* vision.

community values

Community values are the characteristics, aspirations and moral attributes cherished and desired by the community. The values inform the vision elements found in *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and *Blueprint Denver*.

*Access to Amenities, Services and Healthy Food*

*Environmental Stewardship*

*Access to Opportunity*

*Equity*

*Access to Quality Education, Training and Lifelong Learning*

*Great Parks and Open Spaces*

*Active and Vibrant*

*Outdoor Lifestyle with Connection to the Mountains*

*Affordable Housing and Transportation*

*Quality Design*

*Business-Friendly and Entrepreneurial*

*Safe and Inviting*

*Diverse Employment Options*

*Sense of History and Cultural Heritage*

*Diverse, Friendly and Open*

*Transportation Choices*

*Engaged Community*

*Walkable, Bikeable, Accessible and Transit-Friendly*

vision elements

The *Comprehensive Plan 2040* is guided by the six vision elements informed by the community values



**In 2040, Denver is an equitable, inclusive community with a high quality of life for all residents, regardless of income level, race, ethnicity, gender, ability or age.**



**In 2040, Denver's neighborhoods are complete, unique and reflective of our diverse history.**

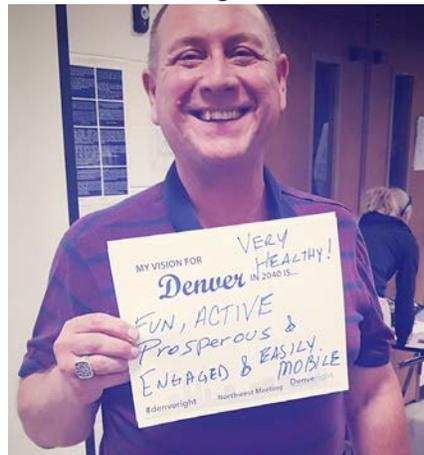


**In 2040, Denver is connected by safe, high-quality, multimodal transportation options.**



*"A well connected, diverse, friendly, pedestrian-scaled community"*

*"Very healthy...fun, active prosperous, engaged, and easily mobile"*



*"a robust transportation system"*



***In 2040, Denver is a global city with a robust economy that reflects the diversity of our community.***



***In 2040, Denver is a thriving, sustainable city connected to nature and resilient to climate change.***



***In 2040, Denver is a city of safe, accessible and healthy communities.***

# The Planning Process

*Blueprint Denver* is by and for the people of Denver. The planning process included voices from Denverites of all backgrounds from all corners of the city. Each community engagement window included in-person public workshops, street team events, focused outreach and online information and surveys to reflect the community's input and shape the plan's development.

## Denveright Kickoff Event

Spring 2016: All of the Denveright plans kick-off with an event called *City Visionaries: Shaping Denver's Next 20 Years*.



## The Growing a Better Denver Game

Spring 2017: A fun, in-depth way to provide input about how the city should handle growth including a discussion on the trade-offs of different land use and transportation decisions.



## Denveright Vision Workshops and Surveys

Summer/Fall 2016: A community conversation about what we love and value about Denver today and what we envision for the future.

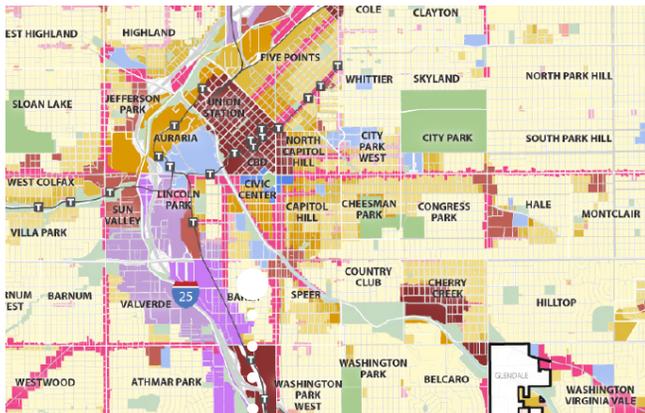


## Creating Great Places Workshops

Fall 2017: Denverites talked about what is unique about the places in our neighborhoods and how they make Denver great.

## Complete Neighborhoods and Networks Workshops

Winter 2018: Initial review of the neighborhood contexts, places and streets that make up the aspirational vision of Denver in 2040.



## Draft Plan Review

Fall 2018/Winter 2019: Staff hosts drop-in sessions in the community and comments are submitted over two review periods to inform changes to the final plan.



## Denveright Community Event and Draft Plan Release

Summer/Fall 2018: A Denveright Community Event celebrated the release of all of the Denveright plans for public review.



## Plan Adoption

Spring 2019: Planning Board approves and City Council adopts *Blueprint Denver*.

# The Community's Plan

A plan for all of Denver requires engaging the community in many different ways. The planning team focused on meeting Denverites on their time and engaged those who are not traditionally involved in planning.

## Meeting People on their own time

*Pounding the pavement to hear from all*



Rather than relying on people to come to the planning team, the Denveright street team went to the community. This included block parties, registered neighborhood organization meetings, city council district meetings and community celebrations. The team attended and participated in over 35 events in every corner of the city, engaging with community members and collecting feedback to help inform the future of Denver.

To reach all of these events, the team used a plan van, stocked with *Blueprint Denver* information, surveys and other engagement tools. The van also served as a mobile billboard for the planning process.

Planners gave extra attention to reach communities traditionally left out of the planning process in order to ensure that the plan represents all voices of Denver.

## Engaging Community Workshops

*Getting hands-on with the plan process*

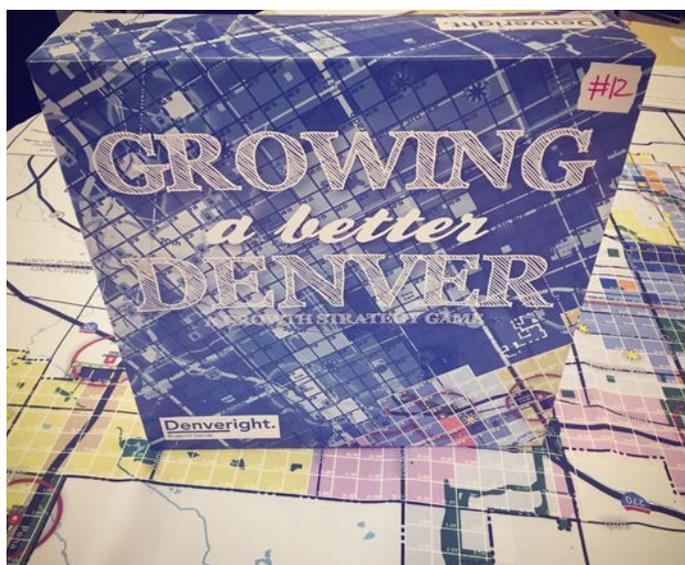


Throughout the planning process, the planning team hosted a number of workshops in the community. Each phase required a different approach, varying from one large citywide workshop to a meeting in each council district. Once public review drafts of the plan were released, the team held drop-in sessions all over the city to give one-on-one answers to community members with questions and comments.

The workshops provided an opportunity for community members to truly engage with the plan and the planning team to provide feedback on their vision for the future. These hands-on community meetings serve as the backbone of community engagement and informed every phase of the planning process. All community meetings included Spanish language interpretation and childcare services for participants.

## Innovative Outreach

*Using new technology to expand outreach*



Using new and emerging internet-based technologies, interactive surveys and tablet-equipped kiosks, the community was able to engage with the plan and let their voice be heard on their own time, in the comfort of their own home or at the local library.

One of the most fun activities was the “Growing a Better Denver” game, which asked Denverites to strategize how to handle future growth. Players were tasked with choosing their ideal growth scenario for the city, while discussing the trade-offs of different land use and transportation decisions with their neighborhoods and fellow community members.

Tablet-equipped kiosks were placed throughout the Denver community to give people—especially those without access to the internet at their home—the opportunity to answer surveys and engage with the plan.

This expansion of how the team could reach Denverites in new and innovative ways dramatically increased the amount of public input received, topping 25,000 unique interactions for all Denverright plans.

[www.denvergov.org/denverright](http://www.denvergov.org/denverright)

## A Focus on Equity

*Reaching out to all Denverites*



Equity was identified as a key community value early in the plan process. The Blueprint Denver Task Force, recognizing the vision for neighborhoods to remain economically, socially and racially diverse, formed an equity subcommittee to review key policies and to consider implementation of the plan’s recommendations through an equity lens.

Creating a more equitable planning process that engages all Denverites was a major goal of Denverright and *Blueprint Denver*. Demographic information collected during community meetings and online surveys highlighted the need for additional input from under-represented groups such as communities of color and youth. In response, the planning team engaged with focus groups from communities traditionally left out of the planning process.

Additional efforts to advance an equitable planning process include translating key documents into Spanish, providing interpreters and child care services at community meetings and holding community meetings in all parts of the city and at varied times of the day.

# The Community's Plan

## Task Force Themes

### EQUITY

*Blueprint Denver's* vision is for a more inclusive city. As neighborhoods and the city change, we must maintain economically, socially and racially diverse places. Equity is woven through the entire plan and reflects a strong commitment to give every Denverite the opportunity to access a high quality-of-life.



#### What is Equity?

Equity means everyone, regardless of who they are or where they are from, has the opportunity to thrive. Where there is equity, a person's identity does not determine their outcome. Equality means treating every person the same. Equity acknowledges that treating each person or place exactly the same may not result in fair outcomes. See more about the definition of equity and Denver's commitment to it in *Comprehensive Plan 2040*.

#### What we Heard

Equity and affordability are major concerns for Denverites. We want to create a city where everyone has the opportunity to succeed and historic barriers for marginalized populations are reversed. This means creating complete neighborhoods throughout the city, improving the diversity of housing options in all neighborhoods and mitigating the involuntary displacement of valued residents and businesses so our communities remain diverse.

### URBAN

Denverites want to live in a beautiful city about creating great places and better for the people that use them. Because of the spaces around them, urban design including streets, parks, plazas and



#### What is Urban Design?

Urban design is the creation of people-oriented places that prioritize an authentic community character with thoughtful transitions, aspirational design and an engaging public realm. Collectively, these design elements contribute to public health and safety, environmental well-being, economic viability and quality-of-life at a citywide, neighborhood, and site scale.

**Blueprint Denver Task Force**  
*A dedicated group of community leaders*

Throughout the planning process a group of dedicated neighborhood and community leaders met regularly to help guide the plan. Task force members provided constructive feedback, bringing personal, professional, and community expertise to twenty meetings. Members reported back to peer groups at regular intervals and became champions of the plan and the process. They identified three key cross-cutting themes that are fundamental to the plan’s vision and recommendations.

**DESIGN**

ful, vibrant city. Urban design is  
 ter connecting those places to  
 it impacts how people perceive  
 igh touches all aspects of the city  
 buildings.



**What we Heard**

Our community voiced a strong desire for high-quality urban design, from vibrant, people-oriented streets to attractive, inviting buildings. Simply put, Denverites want new development that honors the historic and cultural fabric of our city. They want a safe and attractive public realm that is human-scaled. They want a beautiful city with character. The urban design recommendations throughout this plan are intended to advance these values and achieve design excellence in Denver.

**WATER AND CLIMATE**

Climate change impacts are not just a coastal problem. Denver has already experienced hotter and harsher summers and extreme weather patterns such as drought, floods, and severe storms. Without intentional action, there will be devastating impacts to our environment, ecosystems, food systems, health, economy and quality of life. The plan helps to address water needs, mitigate climate-altering emissions and better prepares Denver for climate change, making the city more environmentally-friendly and livable.



**What is Water and Climate?**

Greenhouse gases from transportation and energy uses are a primary source of carbon emissions. These gases trapped in our atmosphere cause climate change, which results in major impacts on the environment and our quality of life.

Denver has various water-related issues—drought and water scarcity, flooding and ensuring the valuable water in our waterways remains clean and a viable part of our urban ecosystem.

**What we Heard**

Denverites want to see more trees and plants in more places while being conscientious about water use. By strengthening requirements for preserving and planting street trees, in addition to increasing the number of trees planted and preserved on redeveloped sites, we make Denver’s climate cleaner and healthier. The balance between increasing density yet decreasing impervious surface and increasing plants while being water-wise will be important during plan implementation.

# Goals

The goals reflect the voice of our community. They create a guiding framework for the plan vision and recommendations.

01

Serve all Denver residents with a diverse range of affordable housing options and quality employment opportunities throughout the city.

02

Ensure all Denver residents have safe, convenient and affordable access to basic services and a variety of amenities.

03

Develop safe, high-quality options that prioritize walking, rolling, biking and connecting people of all abilities to their destinations.



Enhance the overall character and sense of place of neighborhoods through all stages of development and reinvestment.

Foster great urban design and the creation of authentic places that thoughtfully integrate streets, public spaces and private property.

Promote enduring design that responds to the needs of the community while celebrating its assets and cultural heritage.

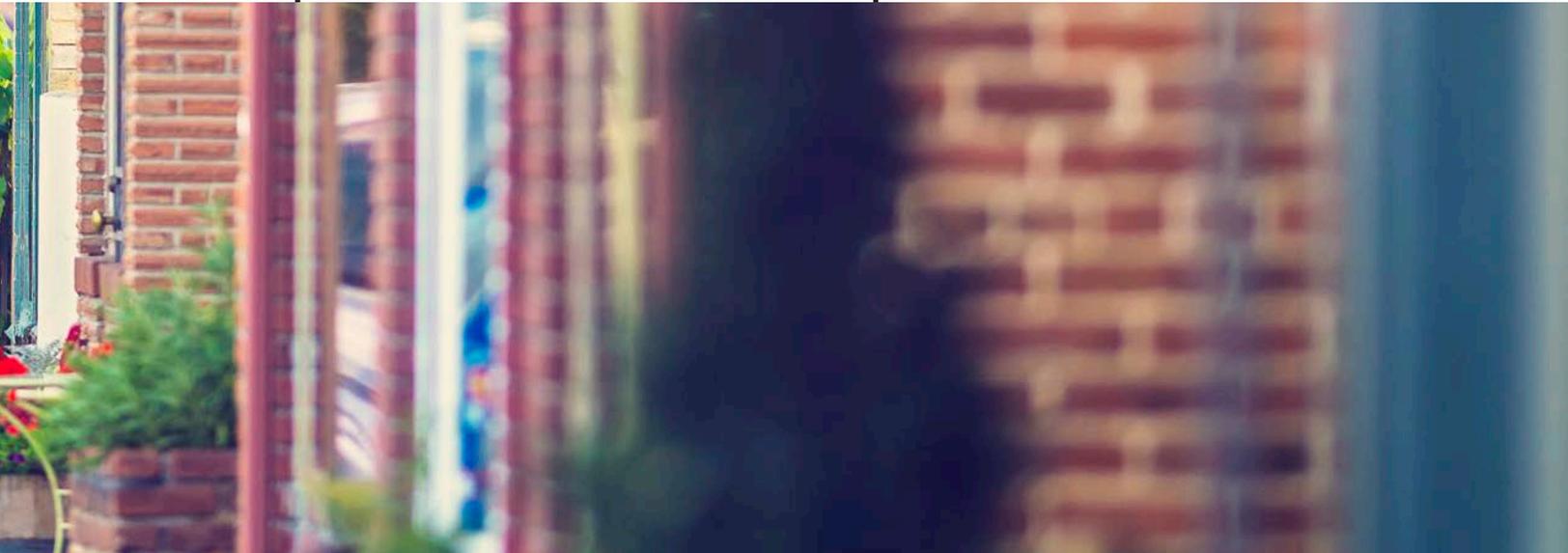
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|---|--|---|
| <p>Quality mobility<br/>             include walking,<br/>             transit and<br/>             all ages and<br/>             family needs.</p> | <p><b>04</b></p> <p>Support a welcoming business environment and the growth of employment centers around the city to promote work and educational opportunities for all residents.</p> | <p><b>05</b></p> <p>Focus higher intensity growth in walkable mixed-use centers and along transit priority streets.</p> |
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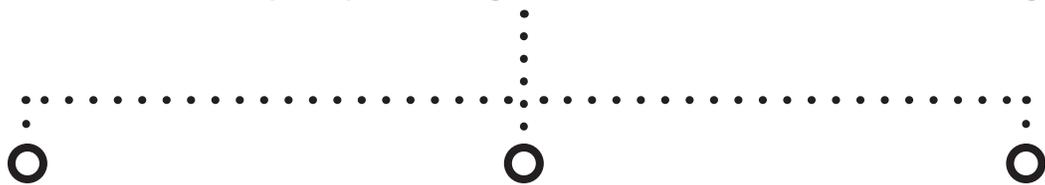
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| <p>and compatible<br/>             leads to an evolving<br/>             embracing historic<br/>             heritage.</p> | <p><b>09</b></p> <p>Guide growth to maintain connections to the outdoors, respond to climate change and protect our environment and natural resources.</p> | <p><b>10</b></p> <p>Promote a healthy community with equitable access to healthy living for all residents.</p> |
|--|--|--|

# How to Use Blueprint Denver

Everyone has a role in achieving the vision for Denver in 2040. *Blueprint Denver* provides the city’s land use and transportation vision for the next 20 years. It articulates how to achieve this vision equitably through the implementation of complete neighborhoods and transportation networks.



*Blueprint Denver* is a supplement to *Comprehensive Plan 2040*. It advances the comprehensive plan’s vision, with a focus on complete neighborhoods and complete networks. The plan provides guidance for all of Denver, including:



## Residents and Business Owners

Residents and business owners can use *Blueprint Denver* as a valuable source of information to make real estate decisions, start new businesses and be informed about policies and strategies to strengthen their neighborhoods.

## Developers and Property Owners

People building projects can use *Blueprint Denver* as a guide to the strategic and intentional location of new development that exhibits design quality and provides amenities to benefit residents, employees and visitors.

## Public Employees

Public employees can use *Blueprint Denver* to guide land use, built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure decisions, efficiently use public funds and prioritize programs and projects to help achieve citywide goals.

# Blueprint Denver will:

## Share Denver’s vision



The plan articulates the community’s vision for an inclusive city of complete neighborhoods and transportation networks in 2040.

*For more see page 28 in Chapter 2.*

## Inform neighborhood planning



The plan guides small area planning, including neighborhood plans, through the Neighborhood Planning Initiative.

*For more see page 62 in Chapter 3.*

## Set policy guidance



The plan sets policy to guide decision-making by city officials, staff, residents and property owners.

*For more see the recommendations, beginning on page 68 in Chapter 3.*

## Guide rezoning and regulations



The plan uses neighborhood contexts, places and street types to provide a framework to evaluate proposed rezonings (official zoning map amendments) and informs changes to regulations, including the Denver Zoning Code and Public Works’ street design rules and regulations.

*For more see page 66 in Chapter 3.*

## Inform budget and work program decisions



As a supplement to the comprehensive plan, *Blueprint Denver* will help to inform important budget decisions, including the annual city budget, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Community Planning and Development’s work program.

*For more see page 60 in Chapter 3.*

## Evaluate progress



The plan establishes metrics to measure progress. Community Planning and Development is committed to annually update the metrics and report progress on implementation to the community, city leaders and elected officials. Annual evaluations will include a status report on the implementation matrix (Appendix E) and inform potential changes to plan strategies, helping to keep the plan relevant over time.

*For more see page 52 in Chapter 2 and Appendix E.*

## Understanding Complete Neighborhoods

A key component of this plan is creating complete neighborhoods. The plan takes a step-by-step approach to express how the concept is applied to Denver’s unique neighborhoods. Below is a diagram that illustrates which parts of the plan describe the elements of a complete neighborhood.



*“What should a city accomplish after it meets our basic needs of food, shelter, and security? The city should strive to maximize joy and minimize hardship. It should lead us toward health rather than sickness. It should offer us real freedom to live, move, and build our lives as we wish. It should build resilience against economic or environmental shocks. It should be fair in the way it apportions space, services, mobility, joys, hardships, and costs. Most of all, it should enable us to build and strengthen the bonds between friends, families, and strangers that give life meaning”*

- Charles Montgomery  
Author, *Happy City*

# 2. Vision for an Inclusive City

*Blueprint Denver's* vision captures the voice of our community and guides every component of the plan.

.....

*Blueprint Denver's* vision weaves together the diverse input of thousands of Denverites to create a roadmap for our future. The vision guides every component of the plan.

This plan is not just about setting a strong vision. It also provides a framework to actively implement the holistic vision through an integrated set of policies and strategies. Measuring our progress in implementing the vision is essential. This chapter also includes a set of metrics that the city is committed to measure over time to guide implementation and to inform updates to the plan.



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# A Vision for an Inclusive City

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In 2040, Denver is an equitable city of complete neighborhoods and networks. It is an evolving city where growth complements existing neighborhoods and benefits everyone.

The *Blueprint Denver* vision calls for:

**An equitable city:** planning for equity and guiding change to benefit everyone

**A city of complete neighborhoods and complete networks:** connecting Denverites to all of their daily needs

**An evolving city:** a measured, common-sense approach to where growth should go and how it should fit in

Throughout the planning process, the community emphasized the importance of building a city where growth and development contribute to more equitable and inclusive places, rather than increasing disparities and amplifying gaps. Residents articulated a strong desire for diverse, mixed income neighborhoods with safe, convenient and affordable access to daily goods and services. Denver must leverage public and private sector investments to avoid becoming a city where some areas show increasing affluence and privilege, while others are

being displaced and not able to enjoy Denver's great quality of life.

Denver's strengths are rooted in its unique and lasting attributes. Our glorious sunny days, tree-lined streets and diverse network of neighborhoods are some of Denver's defining characteristics. A major challenge facing the city as it continues to experience growth and strives to be more equitable is to retain the diversity and authenticity of neighborhoods that made Denver attractive in the first place. Denver is an amazing city because of its existing neighborhoods. From areas rich in history and architecture, to parks, rivers and open space, to the diversity of culture found in different areas, it is our neighborhoods that define our city. At our best, these neighborhoods are seamlessly weaved together by our streets and transportation system. Improving those neighborhoods to be more complete and better connected—while retaining their unique character and history—is fundamental to the plan vision.

## An Equitable City

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## A City of Complete Neighborhoods and Networks

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## An Evolving City

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**Planning for equity and guiding change to benefit everyone**

*For more see page 30*

**Connecting Denverites to all of their daily needs**

*For more see page 46*

**A measured, common-sense approach to where growth should go and how it should fit in**

*For more see page 48*

# An Equitable City

A look at our changing city through the lens of equity.

While all of the vision elements are essential to *Blueprint Denver*, equity is especially important to the community. In recent years, Denver's economic strength and population growth have benefited many, but not all. Today *Blueprint Denver* is integrating equity into planning in ways that *Blueprint Denver 2002* did not. Without accounting and adjusting for important equity considerations, the forces of change acting on our city will prevent it from achieving its vision for inclusive, complete neighborhoods.

*Blueprint Denver* offers three major concepts to consider for future policies and investments. Integrating these concepts into planning and implementation will help to create a more equitable Denver.

Each type of change has a relevant measurement, which is mapped across the city on the following pages. The maps show a snapshot in time in order to inform decisions that will guide change in years to come.

See Chapter 3, *Plan in Action*, for plan recommendations that advance the three equity concepts.



## How Are the Equity Concepts Measured?

The inputs for each measurement range from parcel-level information to census-tract and neighborhood-wide data. To create a common geography for all of the maps (except for jobs diversity, which use census block groups), the data was aggregated to 50-acre grid squares. This makes analysis at the parcel level impossible, but allows us to include data not available at the parcel level and to see the larger patterns across the city. See Appendix C for detailed methodologies and more detailed mapping by each indicator for all of the equity measurements.

## EQUITY DEFINED

**Equity** is when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive. Where there is equity, a person's identity does not determine their outcome. As a city, we advance equity by serving individuals, families and communities in a manner that reduces or eliminates persistent institutional biases and barriers based on race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation, age and other factors. See more about what equity means for Denver in *Comprehensive Plan 2040*.

## How to Use the Key Equity Concepts

The city will use the equity concepts and their related measurements to:

- Tailor plan recommendations in Chapter 3, *Plan in Action*, to reflect the unique strategies and approaches needed for different areas and populations.
- Guide implementation actions, including regulatory changes, rezonings and major public investments

The city will update the measurements and maps every one to two years so that decisions are guided by current snapshots in time.

Using these concepts to guide implementation will require extensive coordination among city departments. For example, to ensure new city investments or regulatory changes address the needs of areas vulnerable to displacement, city departments leading capital projects must work in lockstep with city departments offering programs to mitigate involuntary displacement.

Community Planning and Development (CPD)'s primary tools for implementation are text amendments to the zoning code and map amendments (also known as rezonings). Large rezonings and/or text amendments that change the rules for one more zone districts will be the best way to implement strategies called for by the types of change. For example, a text amendment could create a zoning bonus for providing affordable housing in areas high for vulnerability to displacement or low in diversity of choice. Larger-scale rezonings, which cover many properties and may be paired with a text amendment, enable us to address the needs of an area more holistically, instead of the piecemeal approach of individual, applicant-driven rezonings.

Because all of the measurements include data not available at the parcel-level scale, and are intended to show patterns across large areas, they cannot be effectively applied to small-scale rezonings. Given the above, they are not intended to be applied to small-scale rezonings.

While the measurements cannot be effectively applied to individual rezonings, the city should consider adjustments to the applicant-driven rezoning process to better address important topics revealed by the equity concepts—including housing choice, affordability and mitigating involuntary displacement. This could include developing a predictable and consistent process for applicants to commit to certain outcomes at the time of rezoning, such as developing a certain number of income-restricted units. Implementing these changes may require changes in the process and procedures and/or a text amendment.



# Improving Access to Opportunity

Advancing the vision for all Denver’s neighborhoods to be complete, with more equitable access to amenities and quality-of-life infrastructure throughout the city.

## What is Access to Opportunity?

Access to opportunity reflects the goal for all neighborhoods to be complete with equitable access to a high quality of life. It is based on the vision for every Denver resident—regardless of income, race, ethnicity, age or ability—to live in a complete neighborhood of their choice with basic services and amenities. This includes equitable access to quality education.

Areas with low access to opportunity lack key components of a complete neighborhood and often exhibit low quality-of-life outcomes—including life expectancy, educational attainment and income level—compared to the city as a whole. Unfortunately, many areas with low access to opportunity are also areas where the majority of residents are people of color. This pattern illustrates the need to improve equity across neighborhoods and to remove barriers to opportunity that negatively impact many communities of color.

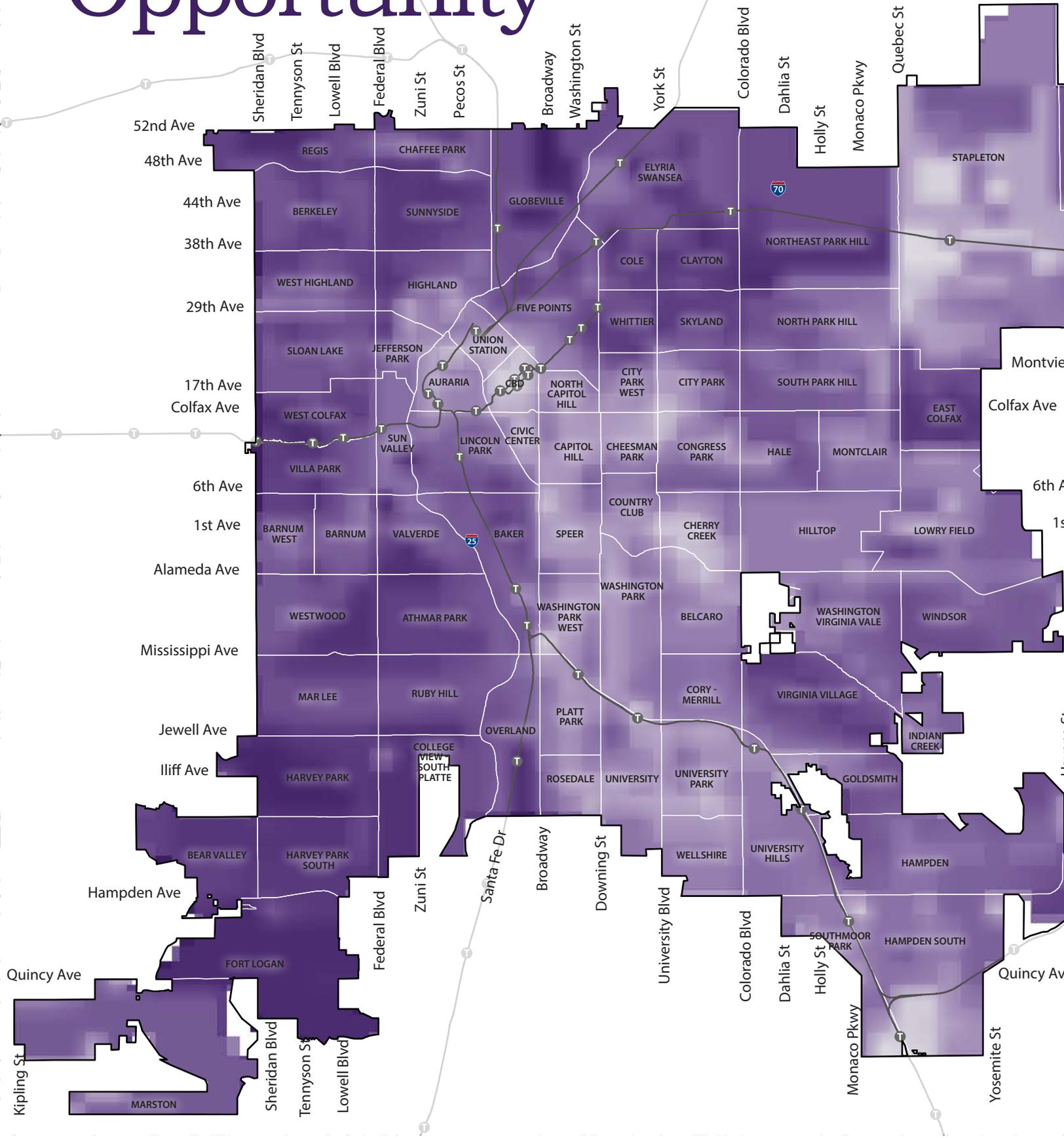
## The Importance of Access to Opportunity

The vision for an inclusive city means the growing disparities between neighborhoods are reversed and all Denver residents have access to their daily needs and a healthy quality of life. The proximity of an amenity (including quality jobs, schools, parks, health care services and healthy food), the affordability of that amenity, and the safety and ease of access to that amenity are important elements of access to opportunity. Equitable access to opportunity strengthens our collective prosperity and improves outcomes for all.

In areas with high access to opportunity, it is important to increase the range of affordable housing options so that residents of all income levels can live in these neighborhoods.



# Measuring Access to Opportunity





### Where do we need to improve access to opportunity?

This map provides a current snapshot of the areas in Denver with more and less access to opportunity. The darker areas have the lowest access to opportunity. In those areas it is important to guide change in ways that increases access to basic goods, services and amenities to improve quality-of-life. Using this measurement is a good way to assess whether we are achieving the vision for every neighborhood in Denver to be complete.



### How is Access to Opportunity Measured?

The basis for measuring access to opportunity is the neighborhood equity index developed by Denver’s Department of Public Health and Environment. This index contains the following indicators: social determinants of health (including educational attainment and income level); access to parks and full-service grocery stores; access to first trimester health care; childhood obesity; and life expectancy.

In addition to the equity index, access to opportunity measures proximity to high-capacity and frequent transit. Today rail lines (light rail and commuter rail) represent the only high-capacity transit in Denver. But access will grow as the high-capacity transit corridors planned in *Denver Moves: Transit* are implemented.

This measurement also includes access to centers and corridors (from the future places map in Chapter 4), where residents are most likely to access jobs, basic goods and services, entertainment and shopping. See Appendix C for a more detailed methodology and for individual maps for each measurement.

The darkest areas are those with the least access to opportunity. In these areas, it is important to guide change in ways that will improve access.

Note: this measurement does not include access to quality education, a key component of access to opportunity. This is because there is not a clear method to determine which schools provide “quality education.” It is also difficult to measure access since physical proximity to a school is just one aspect of access, especially with the school choice program run by Denver Public Schools (DPS). Even though education is not included in this measurement, equitable access to quality education is essential and Denver should work with DPS to advance this goal.

# Reducing Vulnerability to Displacement

Denver residents value diversity, inclusiveness and opportunity for all. These values are threatened by the involuntary displacement of current residents and businesses.

## What is Vulnerability to Displacement?

Denver's recent rapid population growth brings many forces of change. One is the changing demographics of the city and its individual neighborhoods. This includes historically underserved areas where dramatic swings in income, racial and ethnic composition occurred in just the last decade.

The term "gentrification" captures a complex group of neighborhood dynamics, some positive and some negative, that occur when an area experiences new investment and an influx of higher-income residents. Involuntary displacement, which occurs when residents or businesses can no longer afford to stay in an area due to increasing property values and rents, is a negative impact of gentrification that the city can take action to mitigate. Mitigating involuntary displacement means deliberate action to keep current residents and businesses in place and providing equitable access to the benefits of economic growth for all residents and business owners.

*Blueprint Denver* gives particular consideration to how land use and transportation policies and investments should work to mitigate involuntary displacement.

## The Importance of Mitigating Vulnerability to Displacement

Involuntary displacement means Denver neighborhoods, and often the city as a whole, loses its long-term residents and businesses. As families and local shops and restaurants leave neighborhoods where they've been for years, it often decreases the diversity of the population and employment opportunities, reduces local school enrollment, weakens the longstanding social networks in the area and pulls at the threads of the rich culture that helps to make Denver neighborhoods unique and authentic.

If involuntary displacement is left unchecked, it means too many people who live, work and own businesses in an area today will not have the opportunity to be part of the future of that place or to benefit from Denver's economic growth.

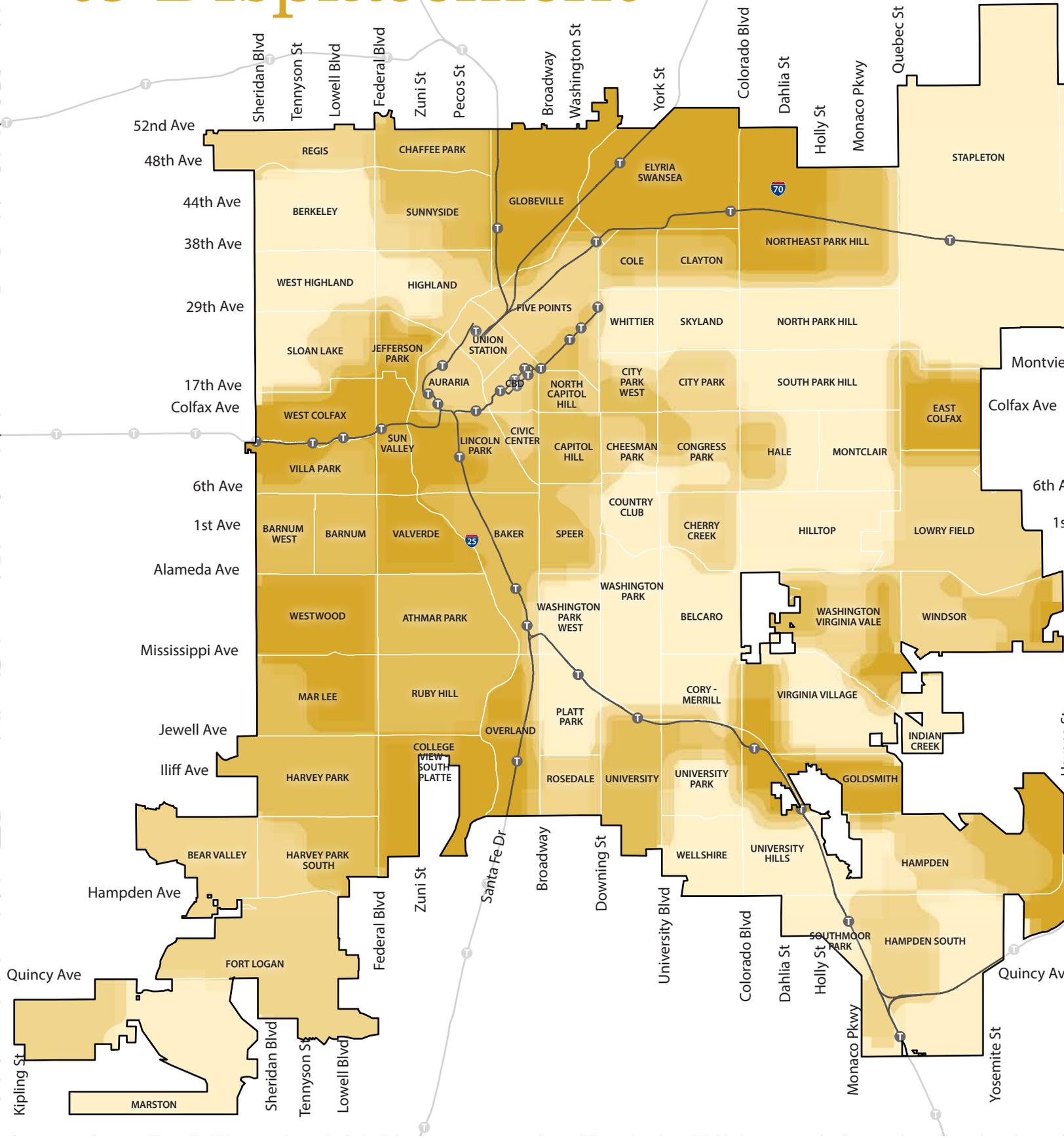
The topic of involuntary displacement is complex and incredibly important. Effectively addressing involuntary displacement requires a variety of strategies that cut across many disciplines, plans and partners. The recommendations in *Blueprint Denver* supplement many other city plans, studies and programs to address this topic. You can find more in:

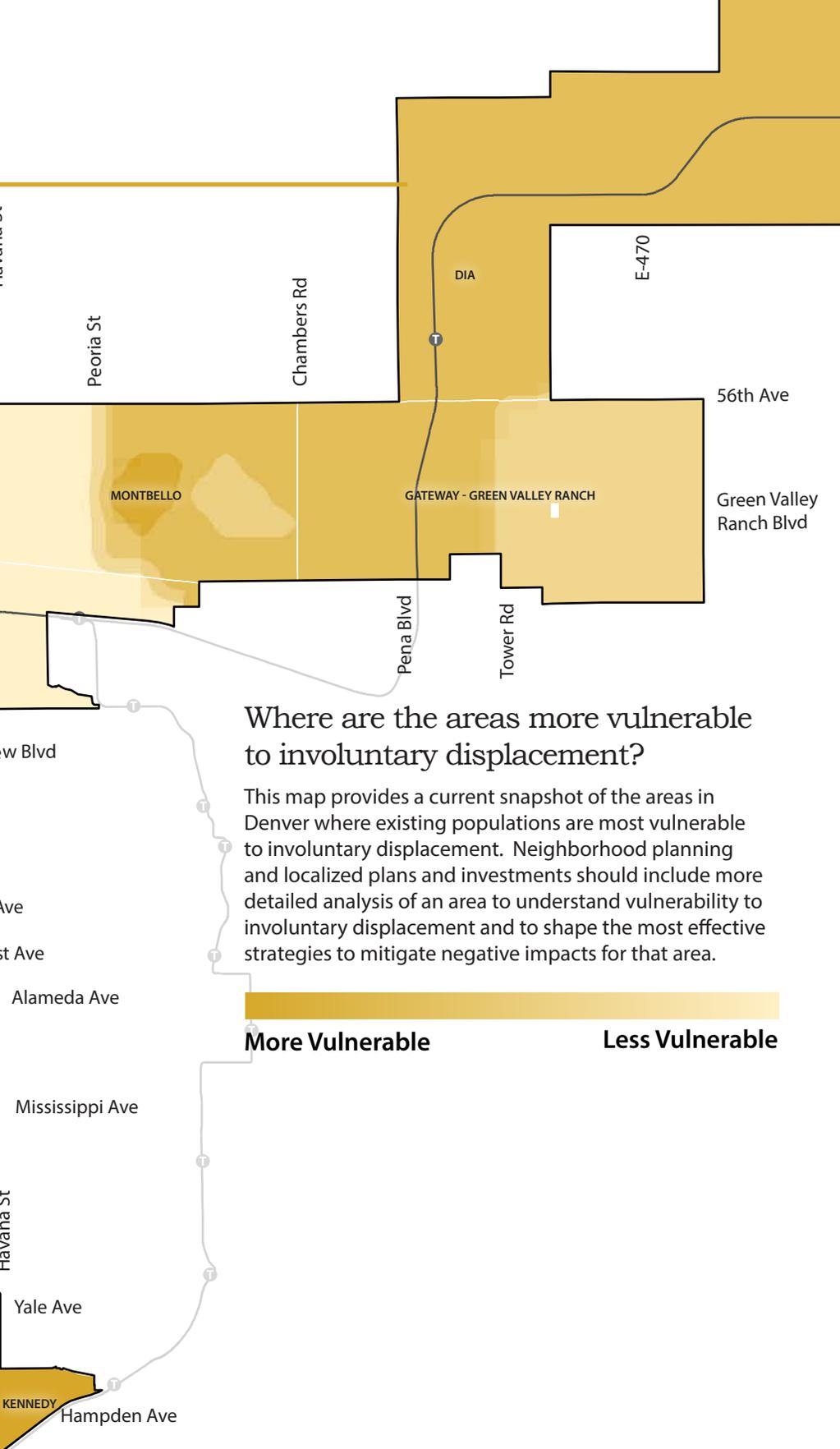
- *Comprehensive Plan 2040*
- *Housing an Inclusive Denver*, the city's five year housing plan (2018)
- *Gentrification Study: Mitigating Involuntary Displacement*, a study by the Office of Economic Development on gentrification and involuntary displacement (2016)





# Measuring Vulnerability to Displacement





### Where are the areas more vulnerable to involuntary displacement?

This map provides a current snapshot of the areas in Denver where existing populations are most vulnerable to involuntary displacement. Neighborhood planning and localized plans and investments should include more detailed analysis of an area to understand vulnerability to involuntary displacement and to shape the most effective strategies to mitigate negative impacts for that area.

**More Vulnerable** **Less Vulnerable**

### How is Vulnerability to Involuntary Displacement Measured?

We measured vulnerability of involuntary displacement with Denver’s Office of Economic Development’s vulnerability to displacement index, which combines three main data points:

- Median household income
- Percent of renters
- Percent of population with less than a college degree

See Appendix C for a more detailed methodology and for individual maps of each of the components above.

While the index is an appropriate tool to understand this type of change at a citywide scale, it will be important to customize the approach to combating involuntary displacement at a much more local scale through neighborhood planning and prior to other localized plans and investments.

The intent of this map is to show areas where larger populations are vulnerable to displacement, which should help to guide policy decisions and large investments. It is important to note there are also residents vulnerable to displacement who live in neighborhoods that are shown as “less vulnerable” on this map. Any cost burdened-household (one generally paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs) is vulnerable to increasing rents or rising property taxes. Effectively mitigating involuntary displacement requires attention to all cost-burdened households. See the city’s housing plan, *Housing an Inclusive Denver*, for more about policies and programs to help stabilize cost-burdened households.

# Expanding Housing and Jobs Diversity

Improving and diversifying housing and employment options in all Denver neighborhoods.

## What is Housing and Jobs Diversity?

Housing and jobs diversity captures the community's vision for a city of complete neighborhoods with equitable access to quality employment options and housing choices that accommodate households of different ages, sizes and incomes.

A diverse range of housing options—including different prices, sizes, types and a mix of rental and for-sale—is key to encouraging complete neighborhoods where families and households of all types and incomes can choose to live. Housing diversity includes the single-unit homes that are already found in many Denver neighborhoods, as well as units of different types and sizes that can complement the existing single-unit pattern of an area. The vision is for every neighborhood in Denver to offer affordable housing options.

Similarly, access to a range of quality jobs enables people of different incomes and education levels to find employment and wealth-building opportunities.

Although housing diversity and employment diversity are related, they are measured separately since the data and patterns for housing are very different than for jobs.

## The Importance of Housing and Jobs Diversity

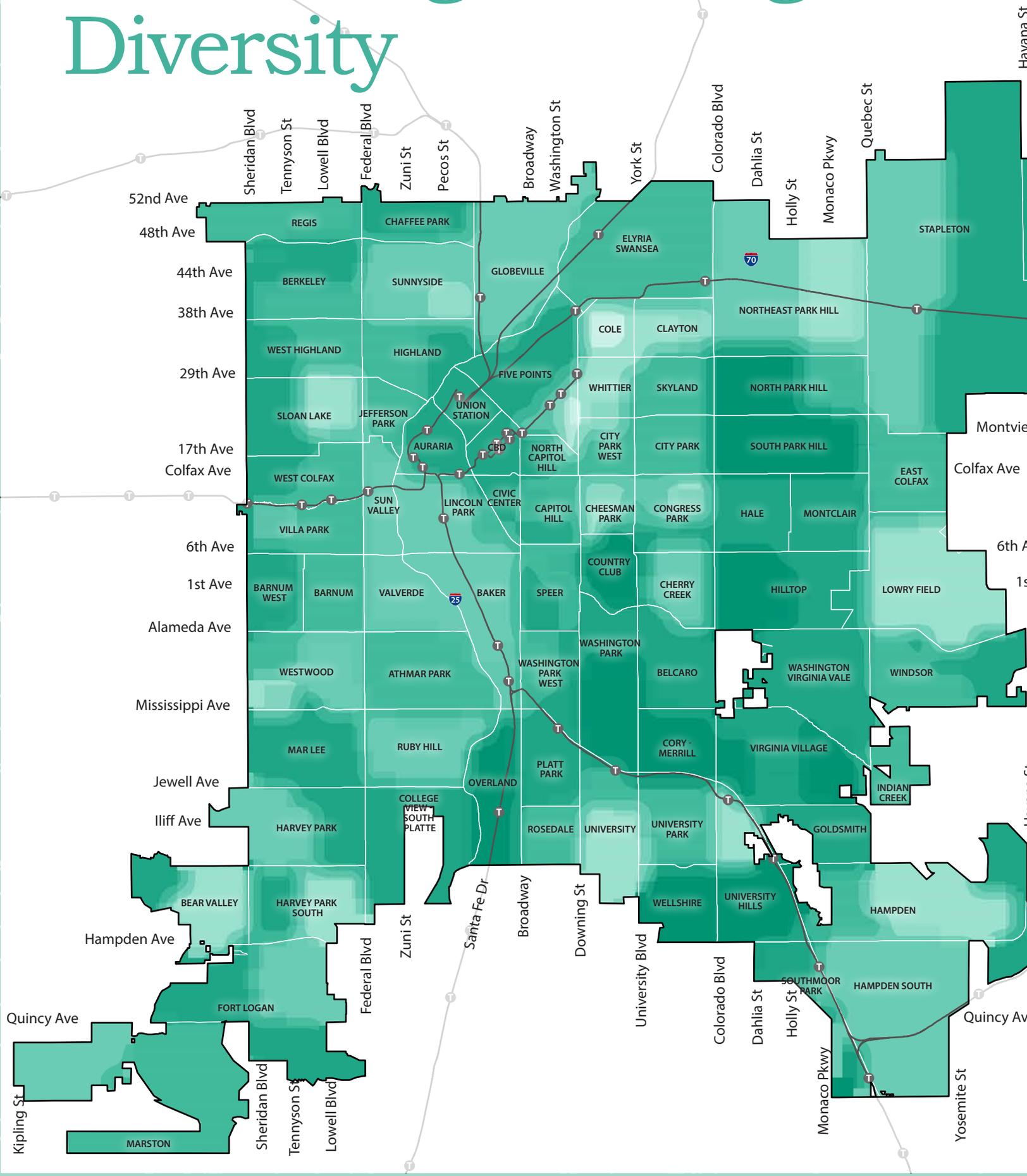
The vision of an inclusive Denver relies on a diverse range of residents, businesses and employees. Areas that become too homogeneous and exclusive threaten that vision by reducing or eliminating choice for anyone but the most affluent and privileged. A lack of housing options at various sizes and prices often means certain populations—including families, the elderly and people with disabilities—are not able to live in neighborhoods of their choice. Increasing the range of housing and job options will also advance the important goal to maintain and increase racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity in Denver's neighborhoods. Certain housing types, such as attainable homeownership, can help build wealth and improve economic mobility for Denver residents.

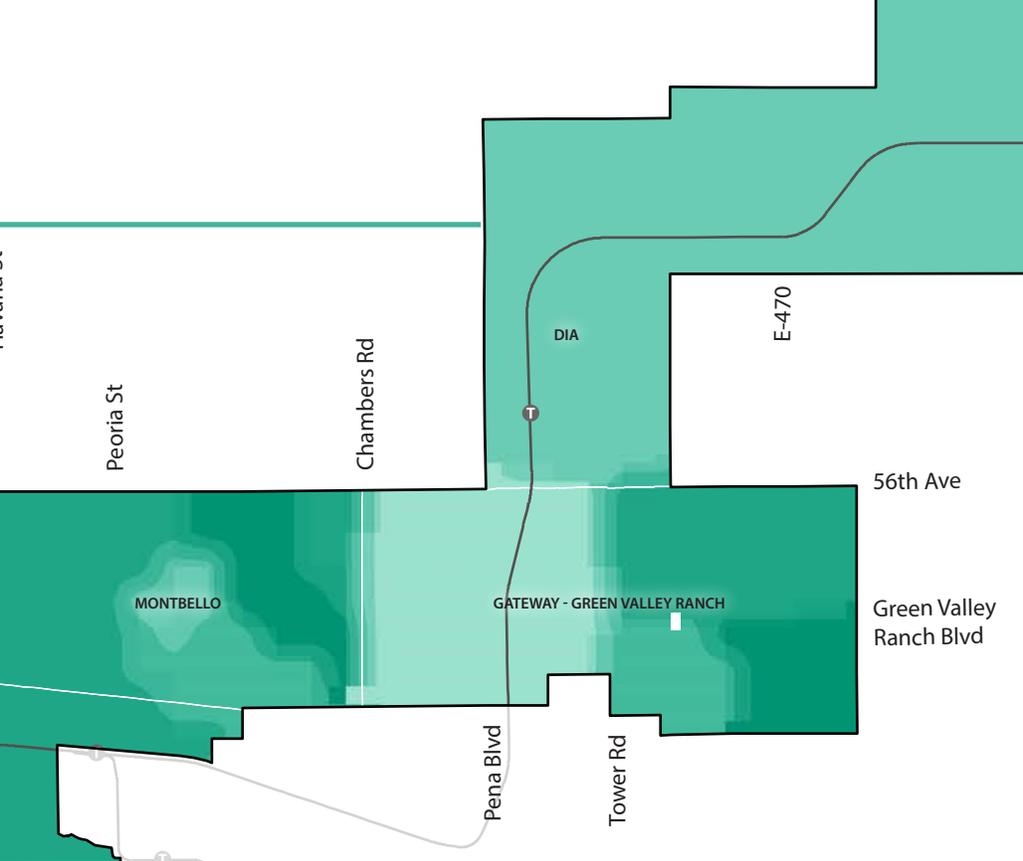
It is the desire of many residents and stakeholders for all neighborhoods to accommodate some level of growth and to incorporate a greater variety of housing and employment options. If done right, this can enable more inclusive and diverse communities.





# Measuring Housing Diversity





### Which areas in Denver need more housing options?

This map provides a current snapshot of the areas in Denver where greater diversity of housing is needed. In the darker areas, change should include efforts to increase the range of housing options while respecting the existing context of that area.



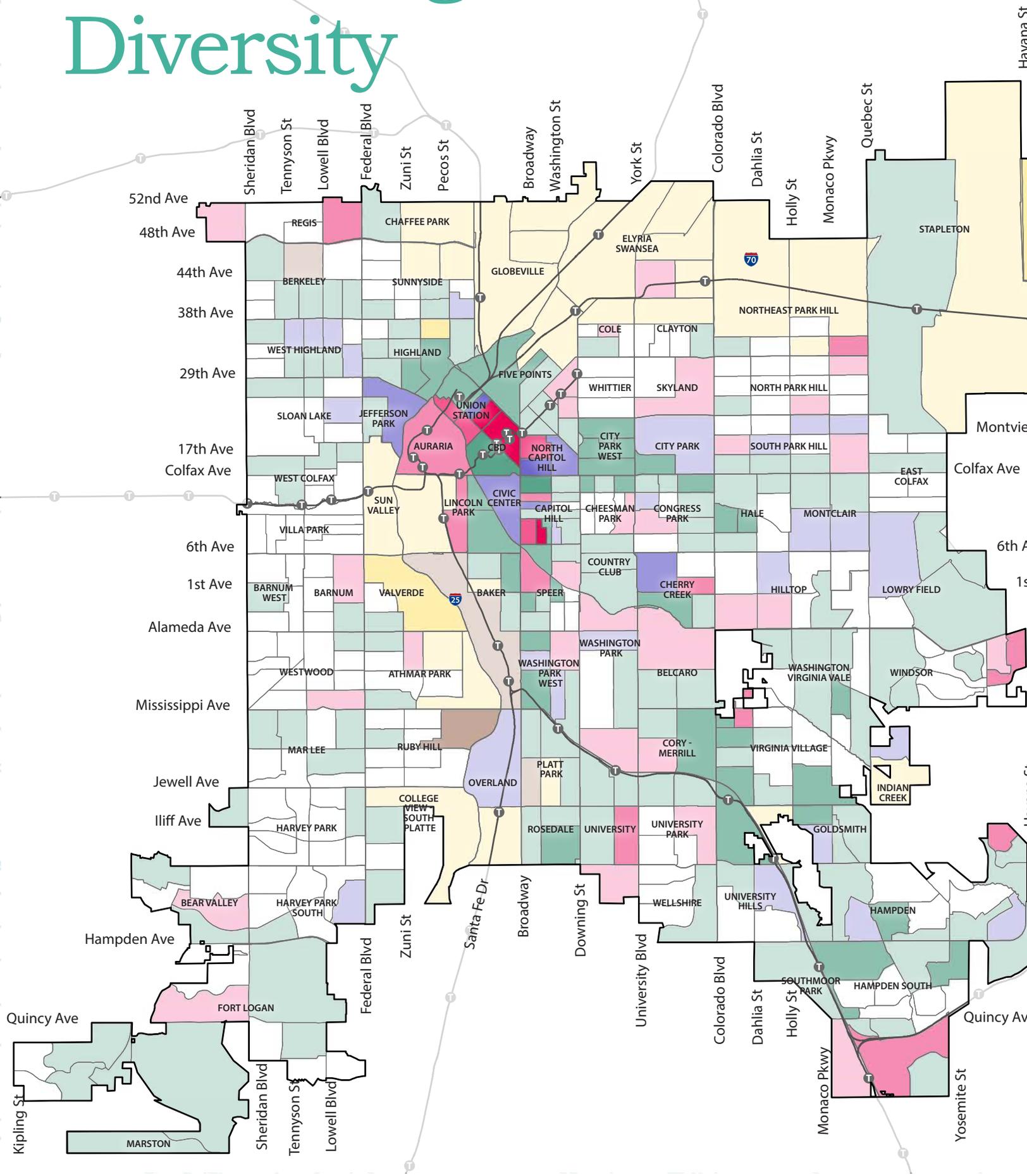
### How is Housing Diversity Measured?

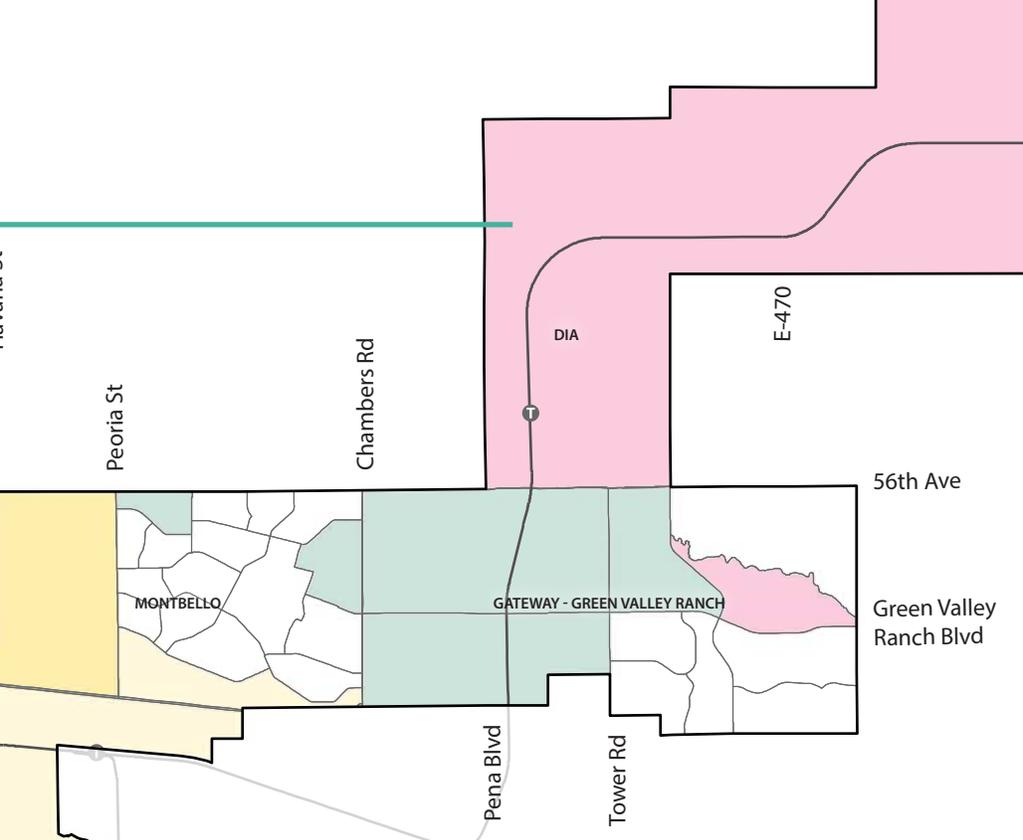
Housing diversity combines six measurements to capture the different components of housing diversity:

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

See Appendix C for a more detailed methodology and for maps of each of the above components..

# Measuring Jobs Diversity





### What is the pattern of jobs found throughout Denver?

This map shows two key measurements

1. Jobs density: the amount of jobs in different parts of the city, depicted by intensity of color and measured as jobs per acre. The darker the color, the more jobs.
2. Jobs diversity: the mix of jobs in different parts of the city, depicted by different colors. The purple areas contain a mix of jobs similar to the city's overall mix. Areas with a color other than purple have a predominate job type(s). For example, areas that are green contain a higher proportion of retail jobs.

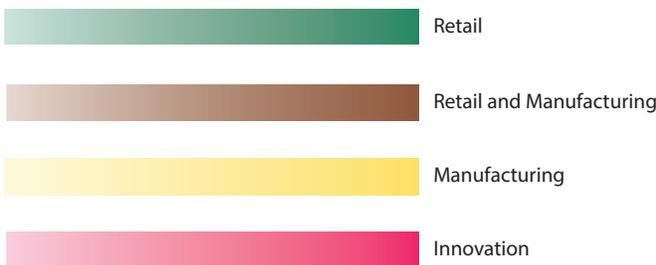
#### Areas with a mix of jobs similar to the city's overall mix of job types

Less jobs per acre More jobs per acre



#### Areas with a predominate type of job

Less jobs per acre More jobs per acre



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

### How is Jobs Diversity Measured?

Jobs diversity measures two key factors related to the availability and variety of employment options:

1. Jobs density, or the amount of jobs per acre in different parts of the city.

The color intensity indicates which neighborhoods have the highest number of all jobs. The darker the color, the more jobs in that area of the city. Some areas of Denver will always have more jobs than others. Regional centers, especially Downtown, have more employment options than residential areas and *Blueprint Denver's* growth strategy calls for directing more jobs to these areas. By comparing areas with similar aspirational place characteristic, the map helps indicate areas where increasing the number of employment opportunities is desirable.

2. Jobs diversity, or the mix of jobs in different parts of the city.

This component of the measurement is important for understanding the diversity of job types in different areas of the city. All job sectors were grouped into three main types: retail, manufacturing, and innovation. Areas that are purple contain a mix of jobs across those three types that is similar to the city's mix. The other colors show areas where a certain type is predominate. For example, any area colored green has a higher share of retail jobs.

While it is natural for some parts of the city to contain a more prevalent job type, patterns of predominate job types can inform policies and strategies to increase job diversity. For example, areas with a large share of retail jobs may benefit from other job types so that residents in that area are more likely to access a range of well-paying, quality employment options.

See Appendix C for a more detailed methodology and individual maps for each job type.

# A City of Complete Neighborhoods and Networks

The vision for a city of complete neighborhoods, connected by a complete transportation network, so that all Denverites can access their daily needs

## Complete Networks



### Pedestrian Network

Everyone in Denver can safely walk and roll on a complete network of streets designed to prioritize the pedestrian. Some streets are further enhanced to create vibrant public spaces.



### Bicycle Network

A citywide network of streets that prioritize comfort and convenience for people bicycling makes it easy and safe to travel by bike.



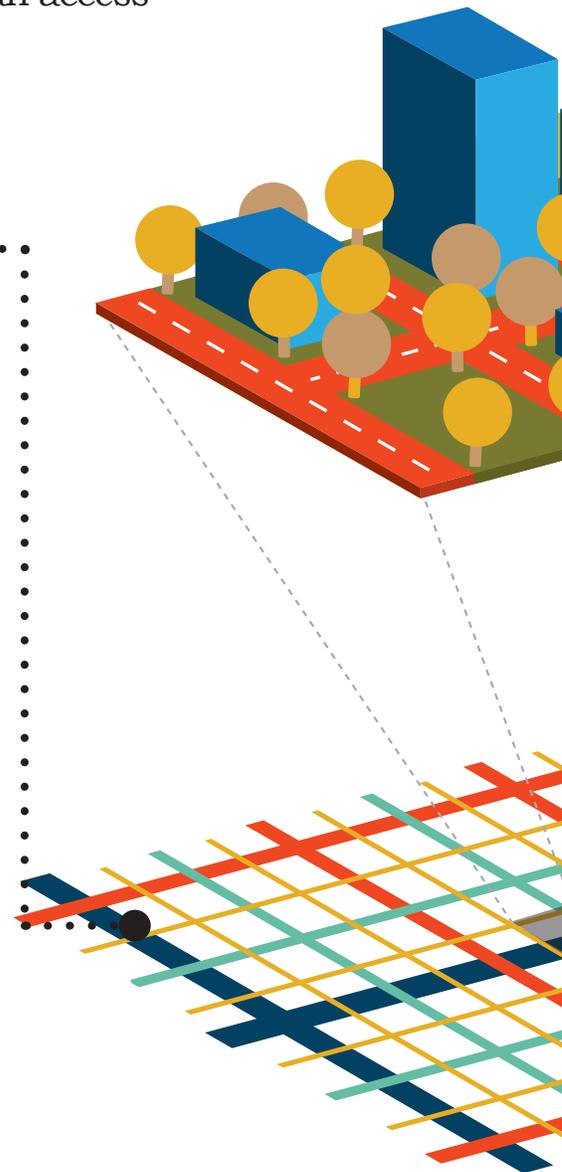
### Transit Network

The entire city is connected by a network of high-quality, convenient and reliable transit.



### Auto and Goods Movement

Movement of vehicles, goods and freight is an integral component of the street network.



## Complete Neighborhoods



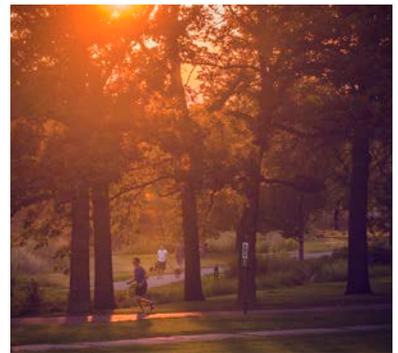
Enhance the character and quality of neighborhoods.



Connect people to the neighborhood places where they live, work and play.



Provide neighborhoods with parks, trees, natural features, recreation opportunities and civic and social spaces.



# An Evolving City

A strong regional economy paired with a high quality of life has led to decades of significant growth along the Front Range.



## Growth in Denver and the Region

As Denver has evolved over the last 150 years as the center of the Rocky Mountain West, growth and development has historically followed a boom or bust cycle. Booms such as the gold rush of 1859 and the oil and telecom booms of the late 1970s and 1980s were followed by periods of economic stagnation.

Since the 1990s, the Denver region has gradually diversified its economy away from a dependence on oil and gas, aerospace and military contractors. Today it attracts a wide range of technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing and financial services companies while maintaining the strength of traditional employment sectors. Bold investments in the regional transit system and cultural institutions created assets to attract skilled workers from around the country. Denver has strengthened its downtown into a vibrant walkable

urban center of jobs, housing, cultural destinations, parks and entertainment. The strong economy, a high quality of life, a friendly business environment and the area's natural beauty and amenities positioned the region as one of the most desirable destinations in the country. Denver experienced a similar growth trend as the region since 1990, exceeding projections by growing by almost 240,000 people and 120,000 jobs.

Looking forward, forecasts developed with the Denver Regional Council of Governments and the Colorado State Demographer's office suggest that Denver could approach 900,000 residents and be home to over 720,000 jobs in 2040. The region's growth will out pace Denver itself, adding almost 1.2 million people.

*Blueprint Denver* provides a nuanced way to handle growth and development, preserving our most cherished historic and cultural assets while directing growth to key centers,

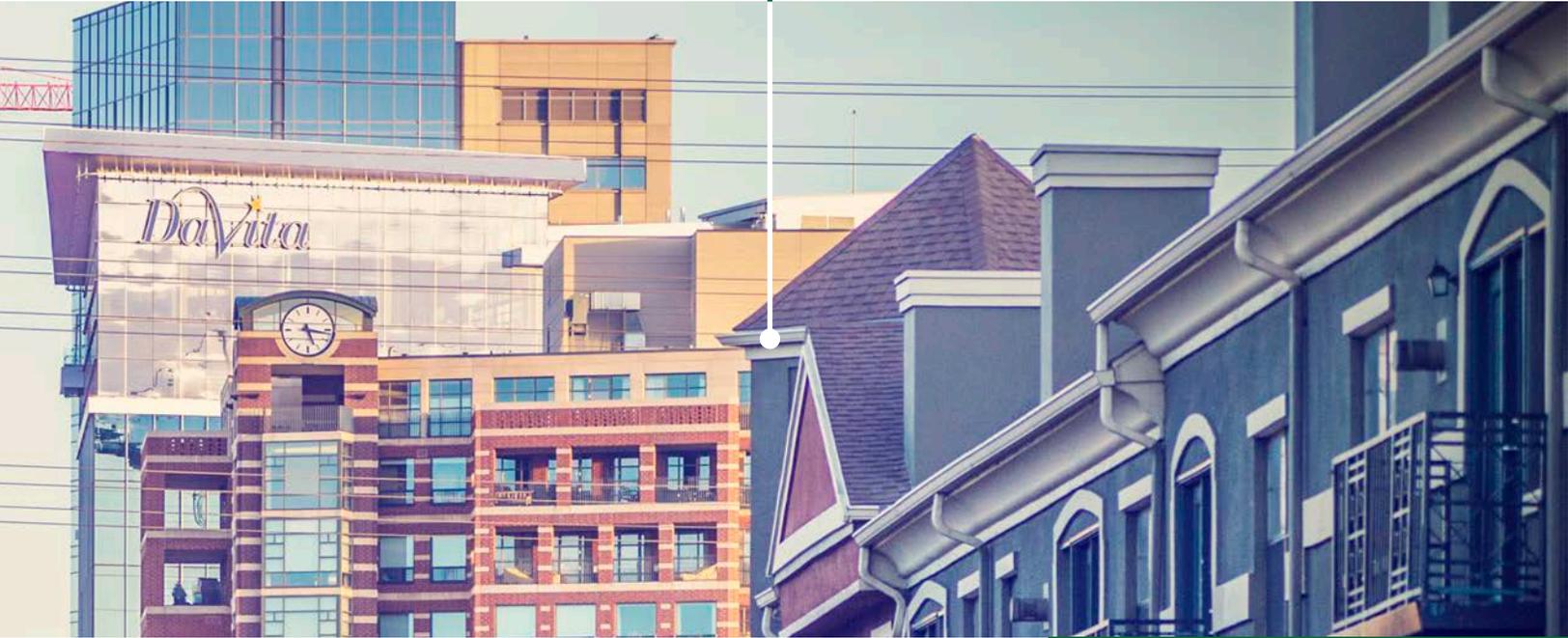
corridors and high density residential areas where there is underutilized land and strong transportation options. Responsibly handling Denver's share of the region's growth can bring positive economic benefits and placemaking opportunities that help the city achieve its vision and goals.

As the city continues to grow and evolve, Denverites will celebrate the legacy of the unique neighborhoods that make Denver special, while embracing the energy that comes with a growing world-class city.

## Denver's Aspirational Growth Strategy

A strategic and intentional approach to direct most of our growth to key centers and corridors helps to achieve citywide equity goals to benefit all residents. The core of the approach is guiding growth to vibrant, mixed-use regional centers, including downtown Denver. These regional centers are complemented by mid-sized community centers and

“Children are a kind of indicator species. If we can build a successful city for children, we will have a successful city for all people.” — Enrique Peñalosa, Mayor, Bogota, Colombia



corridors where underutilized infill redevelopment sites can be repurposed. Regional centers and community centers and corridors should attract almost two-thirds of all new jobs and half of new households. While many existing and future regional centers already have high quality, frequent transit service, a critical component of the growth strategy's success will be to coordinate the development of transit-supportive land uses in community centers and corridors as transit capital investment corridors identified in *Denver Moves: Transit* are implemented. Focusing growth in centers and corridors helps to provide a variety of housing, jobs and entertainment options within a comfortable distance to all Denverites and is a key element of building complete neighborhoods throughout Denver.

The remaining growth areas are smaller but still play a key role in meeting the diversity of new jobs and housing needed for our dynamic city. Higher

intensity residential areas near downtown, mid-scale housing in innovation/flex districts and low-scale greenfield residential all contribute to Denver's future housing stock. Districts, including university and hospital campuses, the airport and value manufacturing areas, add a broad range of job opportunities. The remaining parts of Denver, mostly residential areas with embedded local centers and corridors, take a smaller amount of growth intended to strengthen the existing character of our neighborhoods.

This compact development pattern is focused on strategic infill locations linked with strong transportation options. Housing needs are met with a wide range of options. The growth strategy will reduce water use, improve public health indicators such as air quality, and preserve more open space— making Denver better prepared to face the effects of climate change.

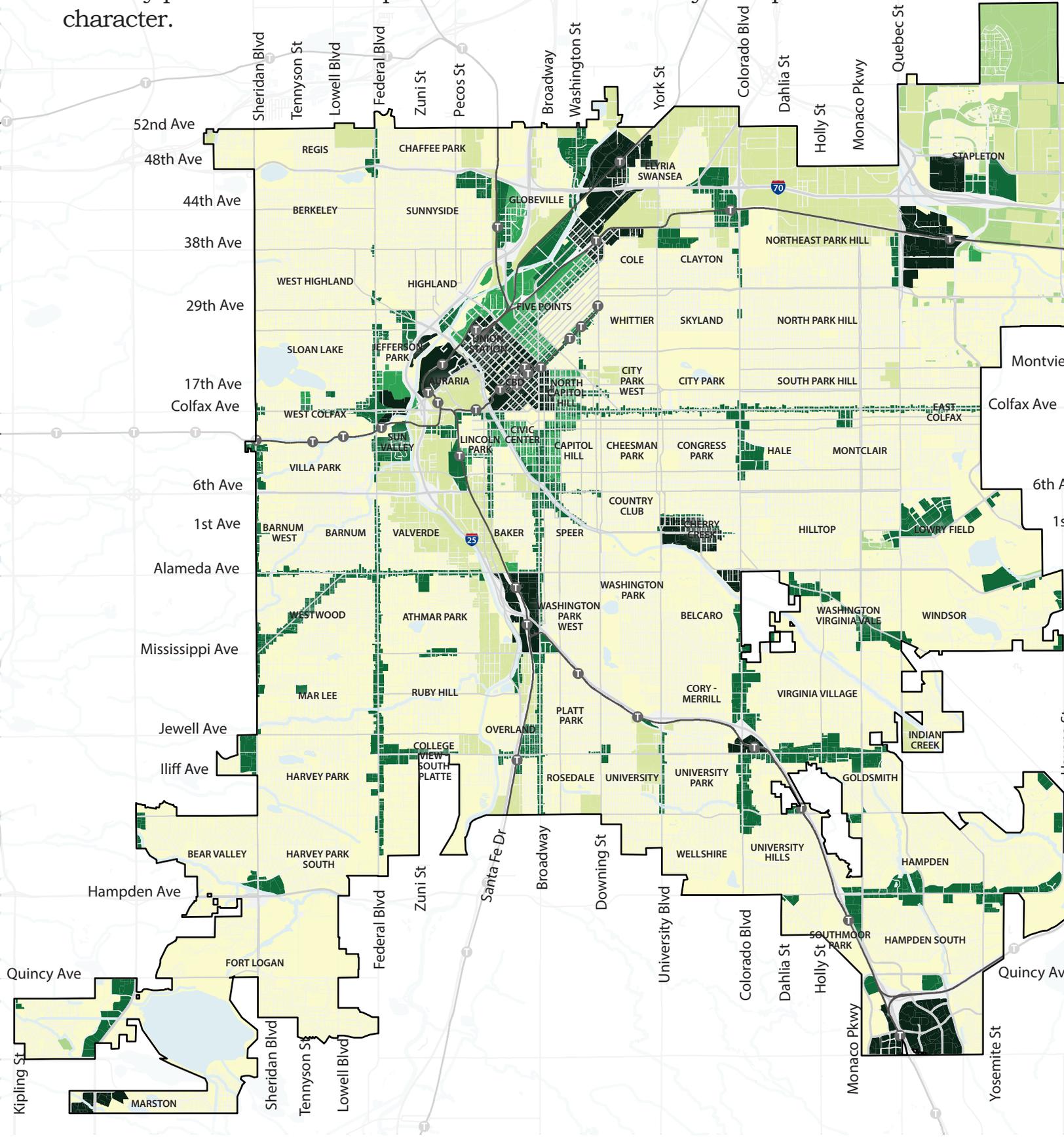
### Mile High Collaboration

The Mile High Compact is an intergovernmental agreement signed by 46 Denver area communities that affirms the commitment to a shared regional vision. Member communities agree to adopt a comprehensive land use plan with a common set of elements and to collaboratively guide regional growth. The Denver Regional Council of Government's (DRCOG's) *Metro Vision 2040* plan directs growth to the region's urban centers while limiting growth at the edges of the region. Reflecting the city's commitment to these goals, Denver has established an urban growth boundary limiting growth to areas appropriate for new development and worked with DRCOG to designate 32 urban centers to focus new housing and jobs.

Our city plays a critical role in the region's strategy to guide growth sustainably. As the region's primary city, Denver has the most urban neighborhoods, with some of the largest infill development sites. *Blueprint Denver* continues the city's commitment to compact development patterns and striving to create great places at strategic locations tied closely with reliable, frequent, high quality transit options.

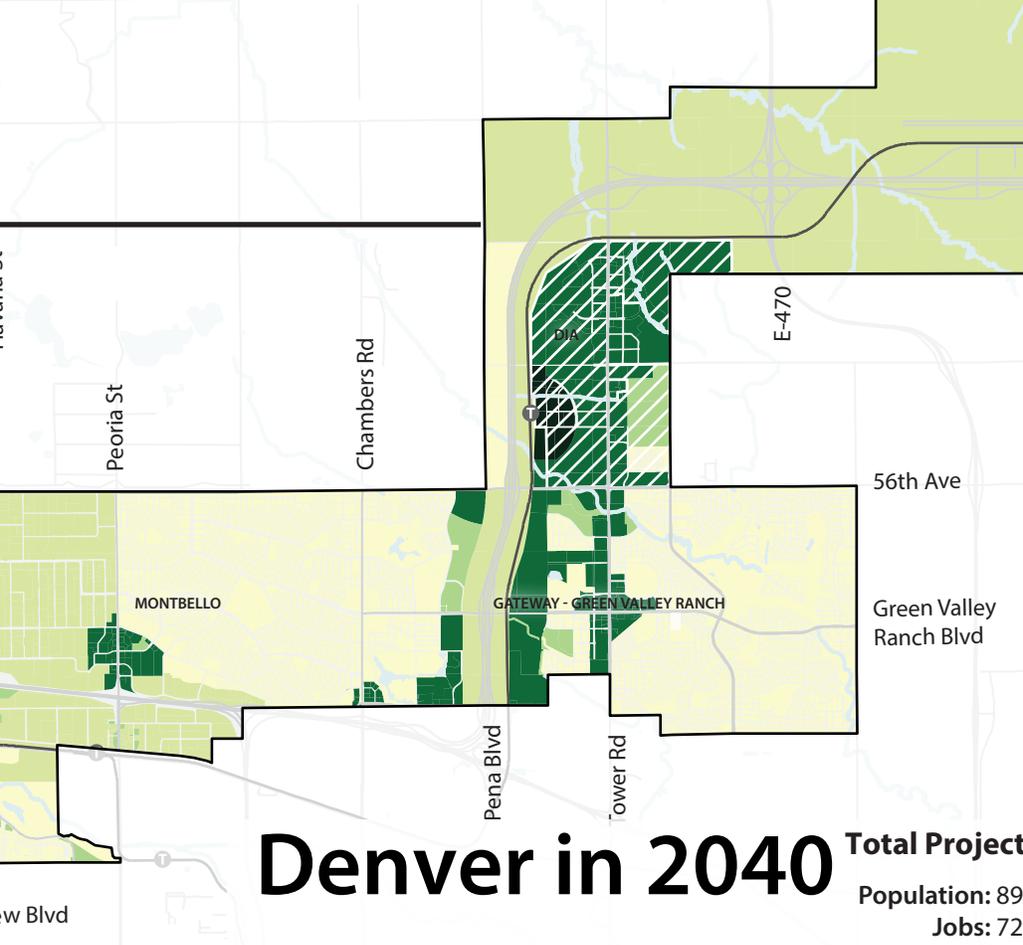
# Growth Strategy

Denver's next evolution will strengthen our existing neighborhoods through carefully planned infill development that enhances the city's unique character.



## 2.4 | VISION FOR AN INCLUSIVE CITY

The growth strategy map is version of the future places map. It shows the aspiration for distributing future growth in Denver. The map reflects community input on various growth scenarios received during the “Growing a Better Denver Game” workshop and online survey. City staff worked with the State Demographer’s Office and DRCOG to develop projections for population, households and employment in 2040. This included an analysis of vacant and underutilized land available through 2040 and the estimated development capacity of land based on the future place. The DRCOG UrbanSim modeling software performed multiple “runs” to test the future places map’s ability to accommodate the projected growth given a simulated real estate market. The final projections were then confirmed against the State Demographer’s regional projections. The city will continue to work with the state and DRCOG to periodically update these projections.



# Denver in 2040

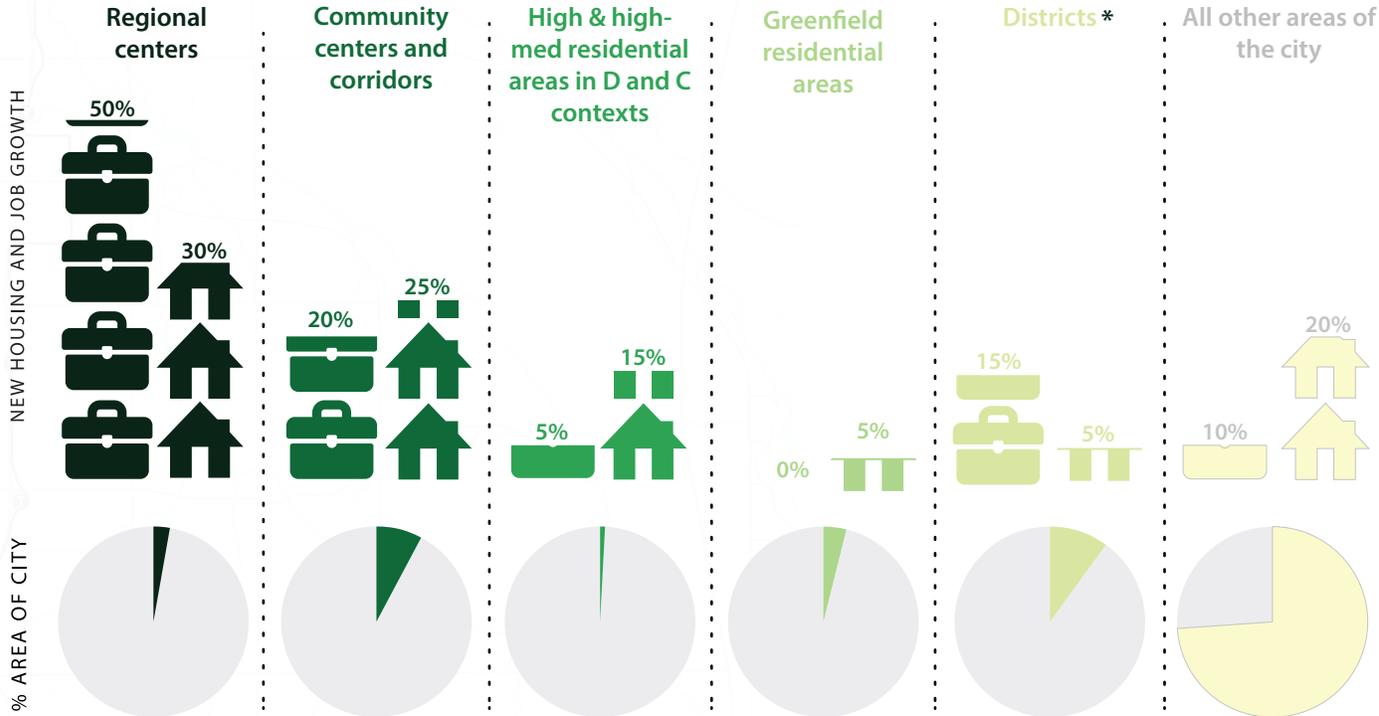
### Total Projections

Population: 894,000  
Jobs: 720,000

### 2017-2040 Growth Projections

Population: +189,000  
Households: +90,000  
Jobs: +136,000

### Future Growth Areas



% of new households by 2040  
 % of new jobs by 2040

DIA Influence Area  
Land use and other regulatory restrictions apply within the DIA Influence Area. Refer to page 290 for more details.

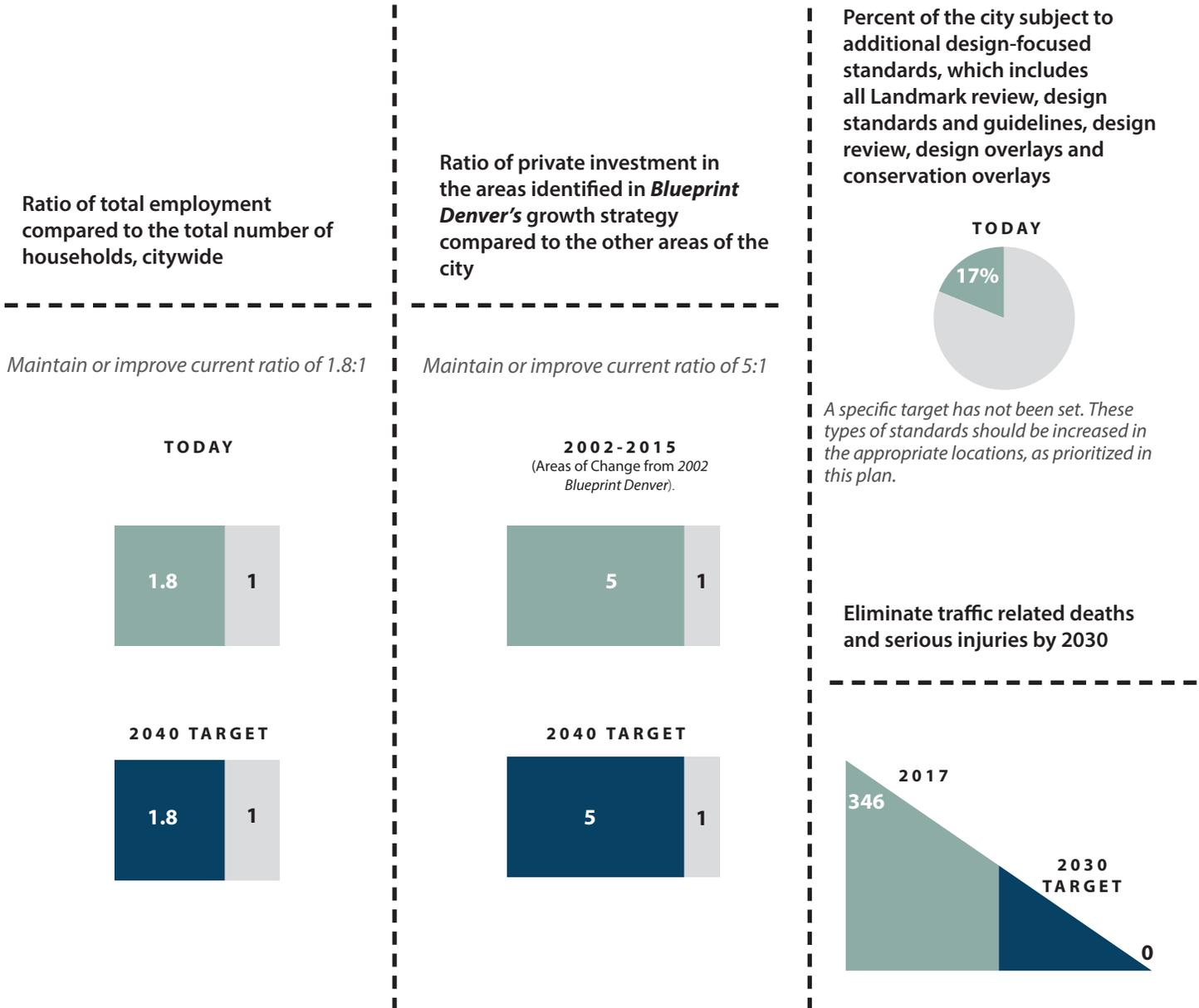
\*New jobs in Value Manufacturing, Innovation Flex, certain Campus (only university and hospitals), Airport Districts. New households in Innovation Flex and certain Campus (only universities) Districts. Excludes DEN land area.

The future growth area percentages indicate the projected amount of new jobs or new housing across all areas in the city with that place designation. Each place may have a unique ratio of new jobs and housing different than what the place designation captures across the entire city. For example, some centers or corridors may only have new jobs—and no new housing units—due to market conditions or existing land use regulations, such as the airport influence overlay zone near DEN. For more details on the future places that make up the growth strategy map, see descriptions starting on page 144 and by context in Chapter 5. New or amended neighborhood or small area plans adopted by City Council may update the map.

# Measuring Our Success

You can't track what you don't measure. To assess our progress implementing *Blueprint Denver*, measurable indicators are needed. Many aspects of the city that are important to measure and manage—like equity, resilience and sense of place—can be difficult to quantify. However, it is possible to measure these concepts indirectly through metrics. Community Planning and Development is committed to coordinate the annual process of calculating metrics and sharing progress with city leaders and the community.

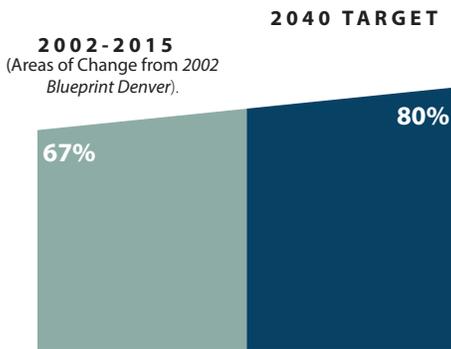
The metrics below include the current condition (where available) and the long-term target. Most have a target of 2040, to align with *Blueprint Denver's* planning timeline, though the Vision Zero metric uses 2030.



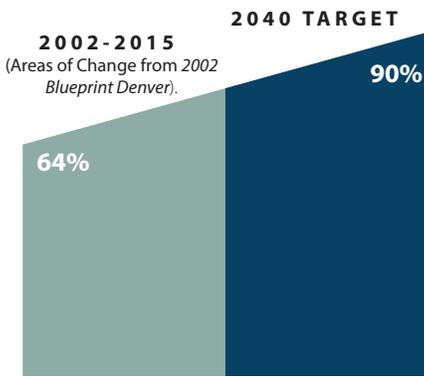
# Comprehensive Plan 2040 Metrics

The following metrics from *Comprehensive Plan 2040* will also be updated annually and help to measure the implementation of this plan's goals.

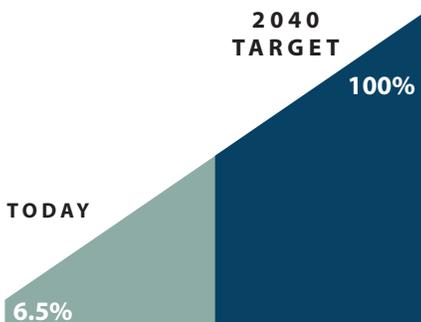
Percent of housing growth in the areas identified in *Blueprint Denver's* aspirational growth strategy



Percent of employment growth in the areas identified in *Blueprint Denver's* growth strategy



Percent of the city that has been surveyed by Discover Denver (or similar) and/or has an established pattern book



PERCENT OF DENVER HOUSEHOLDS WHO SPEND MORE THAN 45% OF THEIR INCOME ON HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS



NUMBER OF NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE AT LEAST 50% OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY TRANSIT AND JOBS AND RETAIL IN WALKING & ROLLING DISTANCE.



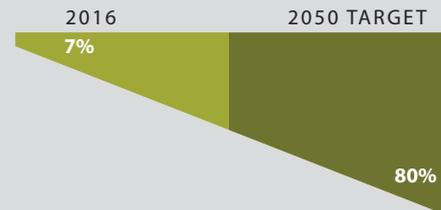
PERCENT OF DENVER COMMUTERS WHO DRIVE TO WORK IN SINGLE-OCCUPANCY VEHICLES



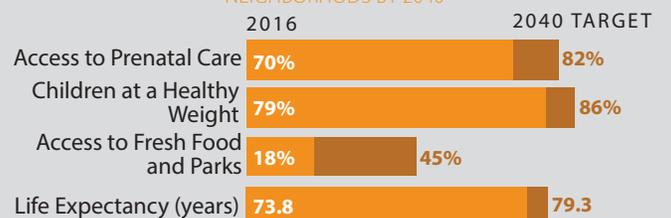
PERCENT OF LOCAL JOBS IN DIVERSE, INNOVATIVE ECONOMIC SECTORS



PERCENT BELOW DENVER'S 2005 CARBON EMISSIONS LEVELS



FOR EACH COMPONENT OF THE EQUITY INDEX, BRING THE LOWEST SCORING NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE LEVEL OF THE HIGHEST SCORING NEIGHBORHOODS BY 2040



# Measuring Equity

*Blueprint Denver* calls for three equity concepts that should guide future planning and implementation. Each equity concept includes a measurement that is mapped geographically across the city to understand disparities and patterns between neighborhoods. Community Planning and Development (CPD) is committed to coordinating annual updates to these maps (shown earlier in this chapter and in more detail in Appendix C) to measure our progress in improving equity. The metrics include the equity measurements/maps and a few other key equity metrics that the city is committed to measure.

## ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

### 1 Neighborhood Equity Index:

- a. Social determinants of health
  - Percent of high school graduates or the equivalent for those 25 years of age or older
  - Percent of families below 100% of the federal poverty line
- b. Access to fresh food: percent of residents within ¼ mile (10 minute walk) to a full-service grocery store
- c. Access to parks: percent of living units within ¼ mile (10 minute walk) to a quality park or open space
- d. Access to health care: percent of pregnancies without first trimester prenatal care
- e. Children at a healthy weight: percent of children that are overweight or obese
- f. Average life expectancy

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

**3** Access to quality transit: households within ½ mile of high-capacity transit or ¼ mile from the frequent transit network

## VULNERABILITY T

*Where are populations most v*

**1** Median household income

**2** Percent of renters

**3** Percent of population with a high school degree

*Other key factors related to disparities that the city is committed to measure (see page 55 for more details in the Introduction):*

- Citywide racial composition and whether the city's diversity is growing
- Neighborhood shifts in racial composition helps to assess whether neighborhoods are stabilizing or changing in terms of color

TO DISPLACEMENT

*vulnerable to displacement?*

come

with less than college

*displacement that we are  
pages 12-13 in Chapter 1,*

tion: this helps to assess  
se populations are stable and

racial/ethnic composition: this  
we are meeting our goals to  
s that are home to communities

HOUSING AND JOBS DIVERSITY

1 Housing Diversity

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

2 Jobs Diversity

1. Jobs density
2. Jobs diversity

*“I think it's important to  
move people beyond just  
dreaming into doing.”*

- Sonia Sotomayor  
Supreme Court Justice

# 3. Plan in Action

*Blueprint Denver* is about putting our vision into action. This includes holistic recommendations and a commitment to implementation.

Attaining our vision requires a road map for implementation. This includes recommended policies and actions that cut across multiple topics and require many partnerships. While strategies may evolve over time, the plan establishes recommended actions to achieve our vision. Implementing these recommendations will require time, dedication and the partnerships of many. The city is committed to advancing the strategies in this plan, to measure and report on the progress of achieving the plan's goals and to work with the community to keep *Blueprint Denver* relevant over time.

This chapter begins with an overview of implementation. The second half contains all of the plan recommendations, organized by topic: land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure.

58

3.1 Implementation

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3.2 Recommendations

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3.3 Land Use and Built Form

106

3.4 Mobility

116

3.5 Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

# Implementation

Realizing the recommendations in this chapter will require commitment and collaboration between multiple city departments and community partners.

*As the city works to implement the recommendations, it is helpful to think about three different types of actions:*

## Regulations

These initiatives result in changes to city rules and regulations. Examples of key regulatory actions to advance *Blueprint Denver*:

- Text amendments to the Denver Zoning Code and large area rezonings to implement equity goals and the land use and built form recommendations.
- A comprehensive update to the city's street design standards to implement street types, modal priorities and the vision for complete streets.

Changes to the city's zoning map, called rezonings or map amendments, will also help to implement the plan vision over time. Implementation will be most effective through holistic, city-led rezonings, rather than site-by-site applicant-driven rezonings. See more on how *Blueprint Denver* applies to rezonings on page 66.

## Investments

Implementing the plan means aligning city resources and investments, such as the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), with plan goals, policies and strategies. It also includes creative financing tools involving the private sector. Examples of investments important to implementing *Blueprint Denver*:

- As a supplement to the comprehensive plan, *Blueprint Denver* should inform important budget decisions and priorities, including CIP.
- Develop an implementation plan, including funding options, for transit priority streets—the transit capital investment corridors from the *Denver Moves: Transit* plan—which are vital for Denver's growth strategy.

## Partnerships

These are actions that rely on partnerships, often between the city and its partners such as employers, community groups and other governmental agencies. Partnerships to advance *Blueprint Denver* include:

- Coordination between multiple city agencies on priorities and resource decisions
- Partnership between the city, community nonprofits and employers to advance recommendations related to affordable housing and mitigating involuntary displacement.
- Working with RTD, CDOT and DRCOG to implement a complete multimodal transportation network for Denver.



## Our Commitment to Equity

Every implementation action recommended in this chapter—from writing new zoning to building more multimodal infrastructure—must better incorporate all Denverites, especially communities of color and others who have traditionally been underrepresented in the planning process. Successful implementation hinges on advancing recommendations to attain more equitable outcomes, but also creating more equitable processes that engage the most vulnerable populations and include considerations for race, social justice, geographic location, socio-economics and income disparity.

Although there are many recommendations in this chapter intended to advance equity, this list highlights some of the most important:

## A Living Plan

Implementation is most successful when it is guided by a living document and a data-driven evaluation of our progress. The following approaches will enable *Blueprint Denver* to evolve and remain relevant over time:

- **Annual evaluations and metrics reporting:**

Every year, Community Planning and Development (CPD) will measure outcomes related to the goals, policies, and strategies in the plan. For more on measurements, see the metrics in Chapter 2. CPD will report those findings and share information about progress and overall implementation of the plan. This includes working with other agencies to update the equity measurements and maps in Chapter 2 and to update the implementation matrix in Appendix E.

- **Updates to the neighborhood context map and future places map:** there are two major ways that these maps will evolve over time:

1. **NPI area plans and other small area plans:** during a small area planning process, the future places map may be revised. This would occur at the time that a new or amended small area plan is adopted by City Council as a supplement to the comprehensive plan. These planning efforts, which may include corridor plans, are the main process to link land use compatibility with future transit investments as transit corridors are implemented through *Denver Moves: Transit*.
2. **Consolidated updates:** CPD will explore and implement an approach for the future places map to be updated on a regular basis. This could entail a process, happening every one or two

years, in which staff identifies potential changes to the map based on inquiries or requests from property owners and the community. This process would need to include public input and result in an amendment to the map that is approved by Planning Board and adopted by City Council.

- **Updates to the future street type map and modal priority maps:** similar to the future places map, the future street type map may be updated through a new or amended neighborhood/small area plan, as adopted by City Council. CPD and Public Works will also explore the possibility to update the future street type map through a regular update process.

The modal priority maps may be updated to match future changes in the *Denver Moves* transportation plans.

- **Amendments to the text of the plan:** *Blueprint Denver's* vision is for 2040, but amendments to the plan will need to occur before then to reflect changes in our community. Detailed strategies may be updated, based on annual tracking of metrics and implementation progress, to keep the plan relevant. A more comprehensive update may be needed as early as 5-10 years after adoption. Amendments to the plan would be approved by the Denver Planning Board and adopted by City Council.

Ongoing resources to support small area planning and updates to *Blueprint Denver* will be essential to keep the plan relevant to the community over time.

- Ensure equitable planning processes and include underrepresented community members in plans and plan implementation (*Land Use and Built Form: General, Policy 4*)
- Integrate mitigation of involuntary displacement of residents and businesses into major city projects (*Land Use and Built Form: General, Policy 5*)
- Incentivize the preservation and reuse of existing smaller and affordable homes (*Land Use and Built Form: Housing, Policy 3*)
- Increase the development of affordable housing and mixed-income housing, particularly in areas near transit, services and amenities (*Land Use and Built Form: Housing, Policy 6*)

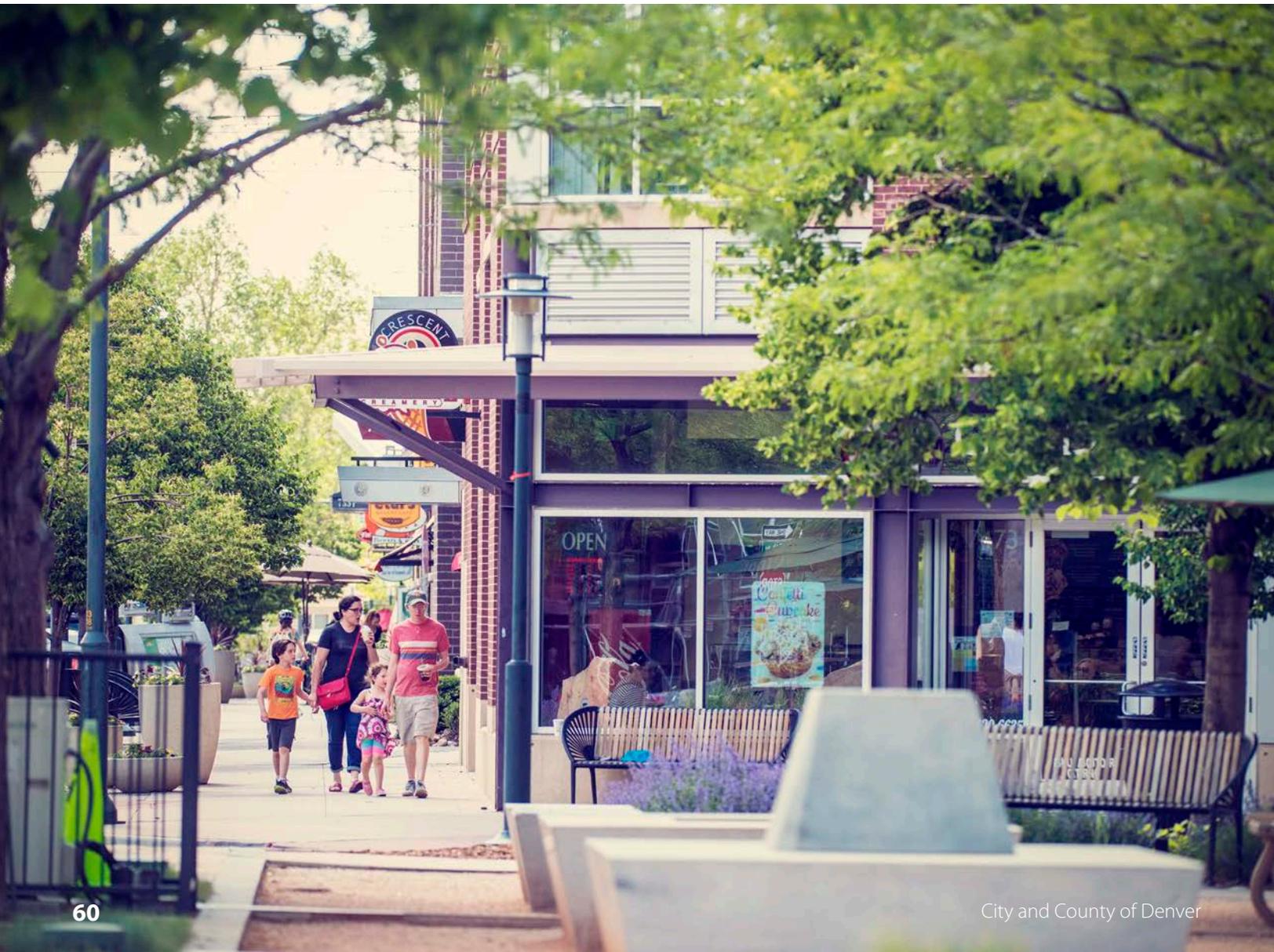
- Improve equitable access to employment areas throughout the city to ensure all residents can connect to employment opportunities (*Land Use and Built Form: Economics, Policy 2*)
- Make transit more affordable to Denver residents (*Mobility, Policy 7*)
- Develop tools to improve environmental health, especially in areas that score low for Access to Opportunity (*Quality-of-Life Infrastructure, Policy 9*)

# Implementation

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Realizing our citywide vision means applying the concepts of *Blueprint Denver* at the neighborhood scale through community-driven neighborhood planning.

Long-range planning in Denver occurs at two scales: citywide plans—such as the comprehensive plan and *Blueprint Denver*—and small area plans, which occur at any scale smaller than citywide. Denver is a large, complex city and not everything can be planned or figured out at the citywide scale. Small area plans are necessary for effective planning because they provide a level of analysis, detail and guidance on issues affecting local areas that citywide plans cannot. Moreover, they provide an opportunity for residents, employees and visitors to participate in creating a vision for the parts of Denver they care most about. As citywide policies and zoning code amendments are implemented, small area plans should be consulted for valuable, neighborhood-specific guidance. Without the more detailed planning provided by small area plans, many of the goals established by citywide plans would not be achievable. In this way, small area plans will be critical for implementing *Blueprint Denver* in the years ahead.



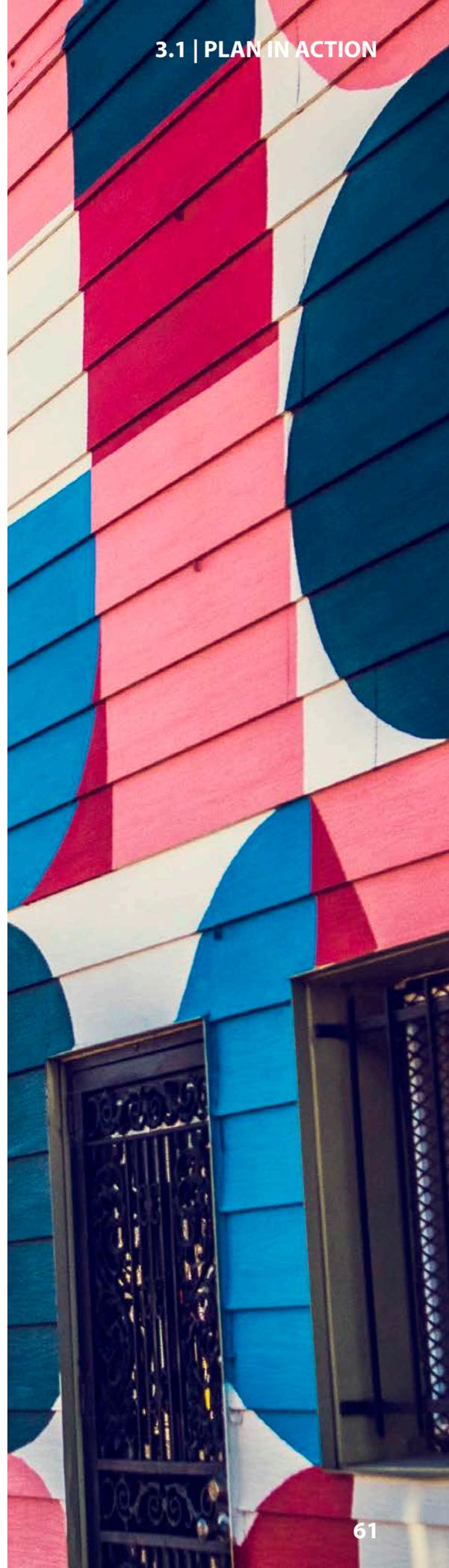
## Small Area Planning

As future small area plans are adopted, it is important to demonstrate their connection to the citywide vision in *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and *Blueprint Denver*. Small area plans provide the opportunity to refine *Blueprint Denver's* recommendations for an area, including changes to the future places, neighborhood context and street types maps. However it is important for small area plans not to contradict the larger, citywide goals in *Blueprint Denver*.

In 2019 there are many parts of the city without a small area plan, and some with outdated neighborhood plans. The city is committed to giving every neighborhood a current plan, and to keep updating plans so they remain current, through the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI), as described on the following pages. All small area plans will follow *Blueprint Denver's* commitment to equitable processes that engage underrepresented communities so that all voices are included.

Denver's small  
area plans  
include:

- 01 Neighborhood plans**  
These plans occur at the largest scale—one or more neighborhood. This includes plans through the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI), described in more detail on the following page.
- 02 Master plans**  
These plans typically address geographies that are smaller than neighborhoods, but still large and complex enough to require the comprehensive approach of a small area plan. Examples include large redevelopment areas, station areas, corridors, or districts.
- 03 Plan amendments**  
As part of a public process, all small area plans can be amended to update their vision and policy guidance.



# Implementation

The Neighborhood Planning Initiative provides the greatest opportunity for covering all of Denver with small area plans that provide more specific guidance than *Blueprint Denver*.

In 2016, Community Planning and Development created the *Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) Strategic Plan*, an ambitious commitment to produce community-driven area plans for all Denver neighborhoods within 10-14 years. NPI area plans (plans for groupings of Denver neighborhoods) should have sufficient freedom to create customized local strategies, but not so much freedom that they contradict broader citywide policies and goals.

Area plans apply only within their identified study areas, and they need to align with and help to implement citywide policy. Defining the appropriate role and scope of NPI area plans, as detailed in this section, is critical to the future implementation of *Blueprint Denver*.

## NPI Area Plans Update *Blueprint Denver*

Like *Blueprint Denver*, NPI area plans are adopted as a supplement to the comprehensive plan. Area plans must be consistent with the comprehensive plan's broad goals, as well as any citywide policies and guidance provided by *Blueprint Denver*. Because NPI area plans address specific areas in more detail than is possible in citywide plans, they are also intended to update *Blueprint Denver's* maps and to refine its strategies with respect to those areas.

Each area plan should be specific and intentional in how it updates *Blueprint Denver*. As NPI area plans are adopted, the referenced edits to *Blueprint Denver* are also adopted, and in this way NPI will play a key role in keeping *Blueprint Denver* current and relevant in the years ahead.

## Minimum Content for NPI Area Plans

NPI area plans will address a consistent set of topics. At a minimum, all NPI area plans should contain the following:

- A detailed vision for the future of the area that aligns with the comprehensive plan vision and the vision of *Blueprint Denver*.
- Strategies for achieving the vision, including recommendations for land use, built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure.
- An implementation section identifying strategies by type, responsible entities, timelines, and any metrics for tracking plan progress over time.
- A summary of intended updates to *Blueprint Denver*.

## Applying *Blueprint Denver* to NPI Area Plans

NPI plans will update and refine *Blueprint Denver* guidance in the following ways.

### Neighborhood Contexts

The neighborhood planning process will analyze the future neighborhood contexts mapped in *Blueprint Denver*. The NPI plan can update and change the future neighborhood context for an area. Changes to neighborhood context by an NPI plan should include consideration of the places and street types found in that context. Neighborhood context changes should be consistent with the *Blueprint Denver* vision, including the growth strategy.

## Places

For each planning area, NPI will analyze the future places map relative to the existing conditions and to the area plan's vision. This analysis will inform changes to the *Blueprint Denver* future places map. NPI will use the *Blueprint Denver* place categories. Changes to the future places should be consistent with the *Blueprint Denver* vision, including the growth strategy.

In addition to updating the future places map, NPI plans will also add refinements to the places. These refinements, which will work within the *Blueprint Denver* menu of places, provide key guidance that cannot be effectively achieved at a citywide scale. NPI plans will provide refinements in the following categories:

- **Building height:** this includes more detailed heights than the general height guidance provided by *Blueprint Denver*.
- **Building form:** where needed, NPI may add guidance about building form—such as setbacks or transparency.
- **Land use:** where needed, NPI may add more specific land use guidance within a place category. This could include guidance for single-unit vs. two-unit within a low residential area or guidance for where to integrate missing middle housing into low and low-medium residential areas.
- **Transition areas:** where needed, NPI may provide guidance on important transition areas and strategies to achieve successful transitions, such as centers or corridors abutting a residential area.

# Neighborhood Planning Initiative

## Street Types

Future street type mapping may be updated through the NPI plan in response to new information, the NPI area plan's vision, or new ideas that didn't exist at the time *Blueprint Denver* was adopted. NPI will update the future street types map using the *Blueprint Denver* menu of street types. The NPI plan may also add refinements to the street types. This could include conceptual street sections and/or streetscape design elements for streets or important portions of a street.

## Modal Priority

NPI plans will use the menu of modal priorities from *Blueprint Denver*. Although the modal priority networks come from the *Denver Moves* plans and focus on a citywide network, the NPI planning process may identify appropriate changes to one or more modal priorities within the planning area. In these cases, the NPI plan will update the *Blueprint Denver* modal priority map. Public Works will also be involved to make sure the relevant *Denver Moves* plan is updated.

## Equity Measurements & Maps

NPI plans will provide a more detailed analysis of the equity measurements for the entire planning area. This will help to reveal why a particular area is scoring high or low within a certain equity concept.

This analysis will inform recommendations within the NPI plan. For example, in areas that score high for Reducing Vulnerability to Displacement, neighborhood planning will need to address policies and strategies to mitigate involuntary displacement, especially since the plan may attract new investment to the area.

*Blueprint Denver's* recommendations, which emphasize different policies and strategies for the key equity concepts, will provide a helpful starting point for NPI plans. However, through more detailed analysis and understanding of a particular neighborhood, area plans should expand or refine the policies and strategies in *Blueprint Denver* to better address the unique needs of the area.

## Metrics and Implementation Tracking

Wherever possible, metrics used to track the citywide progress of *Blueprint Denver* implementation should also be used to track progress for individual neighborhoods and NPI plan areas. This will provide a consistent measuring stick to gauge implementation progress across all three geographic scales. NPI area plans may need to identify

additional metrics to track progress for area plan-specific goals.

## The Elements of Complete Neighborhoods

*Blueprint Denver* establishes three elements of integrated planning to create great places and complete neighborhoods:

1. Land Use and Built Form
2. Mobility
3. Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

NPI will provide more detail and guidance under each of the topics.

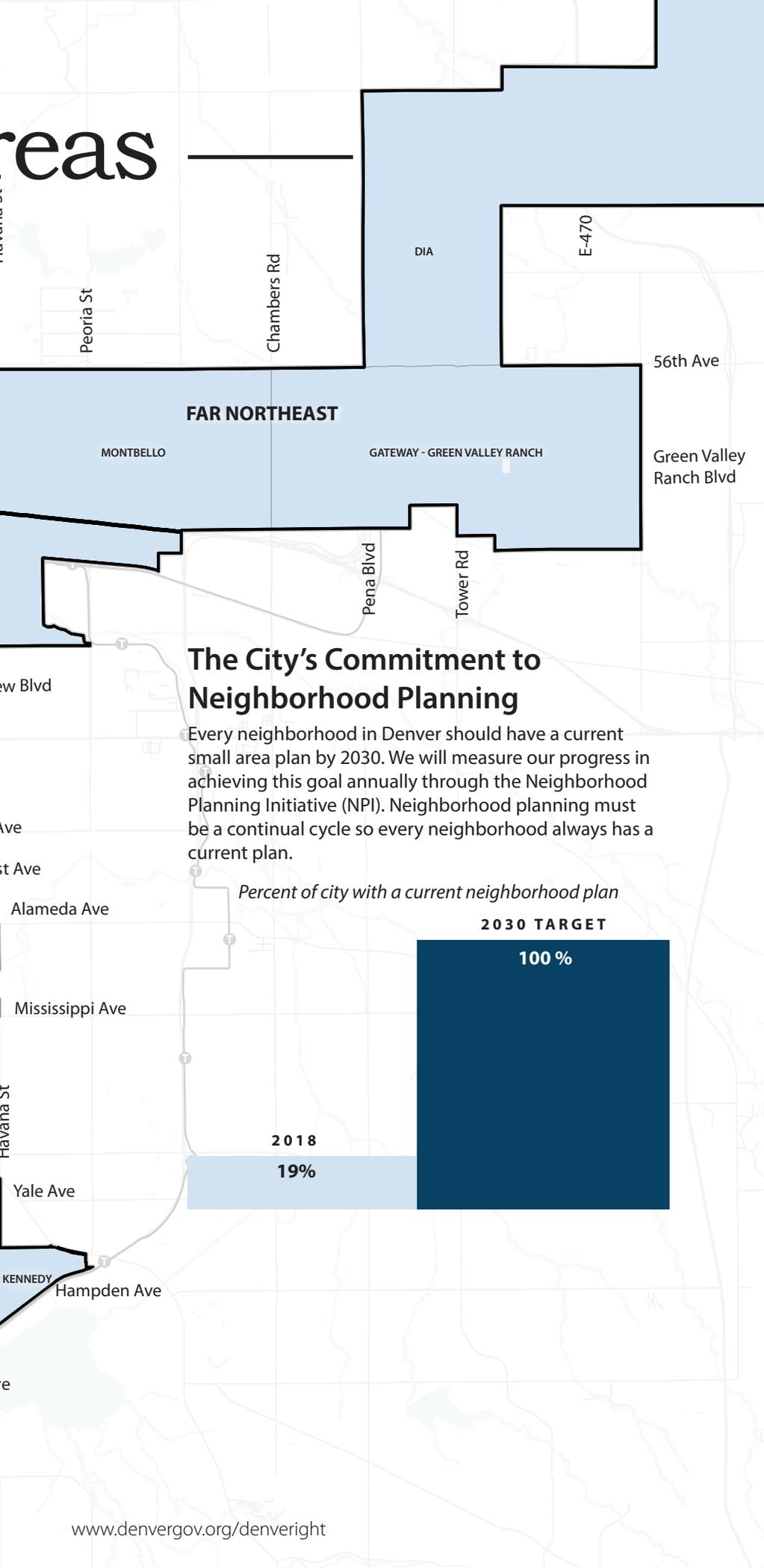
## Areas without a current Small Area Plan

Denver is committed to ongoing neighborhood planning so that all neighborhoods have a current small area plan. It will take many years for us to reach this goal. For those areas lacking the detailed guidance of a current small area plan, other tools are available to help refine the guidance of *Blueprint Denver* and to allow the neighborhood to evolve and respond to change. For example, neighborhoods can use a community-driven process such as a new design overlay, conservation overlay or landmark designation to achieve area-specific goals related to building form and design.





# Areas



The city is committed to ongoing neighborhood planning so that every neighborhood always has a current small area plan.

As described on the previous pages, small area plans play the important role of updating *Blueprint Denver* maps, as well as refining *Blueprint Denver* guidance for important topics including elements of places: building height, building form, land use and transition areas.

*The Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) Strategic Plan (2016)* establishes groupings and sequencing of planning areas. Neighborhoods were analyzed and then grouped together after carefully considering:

- Shared histories, issues, and aspirations
- Built environment and natural features
- Planning need
- Character, context, and development patterns
- Major destinations (institutions, amenities, shopping districts)
- Common infrastructure (major roads, drainage)
- Geographic size and population
- Councilmember and public input
- Avoid splitting Neighborhood Statistical Areas into different groupings to maintain ability to track data and trends over time.

This map of neighborhood groupings is not adopted as part of *Blueprint Denver* and may be updated through the *NPI Strategic Plan*.

# Applying Blueprint Denver to Rezoning

## Blueprint Denver components to consider in rezoning requests:

### Always Applicable

#### Neighborhood Context

When a new zone district is proposed for a site, the neighborhood contexts map and description should be used to guide which zone districts are appropriate. The mapping of neighborhood context is at the citywide scale, so the boundaries of the contexts may be interpreted with limited flexibility if the request furthers the goals of *Blueprint Denver* and is consistent with the overall intent of the neighborhood contexts map. However, neighborhood context should be consistent across an area and should generally not vary at the parcel level.

See the neighborhood contexts map in Chapter 4 and the neighborhood context descriptions in Chapter 5.

#### Place

The proposed zone district for a site should be consistent with *Blueprint Denver's* guidance for the future place. This includes:

##### Places map

The future places map shows which place description(s) should be used to evaluate the appropriateness of the proposed zone district. Since it is a citywide map, the boundaries of the mapped places should be interpreted with limited flexibility, especially at edges, if the request furthers the goals of *Blueprint Denver* and is consistent with the overall intent of the places map.

See the future places map in Chapter 4.

##### Places descriptions

The place descriptions include information about land use and built form that provide helpful guidance for evaluating a proposed new zone district.

See the places descriptions in Chapters 4 and 5.

##### Building Heights

*Blueprint Denver* is a citywide plan, and therefore cannot provide specific detailed guidance on all aspects of a place. Small area plans will provide more certain height guidance through maps of proposed building height.

The building heights identified in this plan provide a general sense of scale and are not intended to set exact minimums or

maximums. For example, there may be times when building heights taller than specified are appropriate, such as a site immediately adjacent to a transit station. Alternatively, the tallest building heights may not make sense where a site is providing a transition between a higher intensity area to a lower intensity area. Factors to consider when applying *Blueprint Denver* building height guidance may include:

- Guidance from a current small area plan
- Surrounding context, including existing and planned building height
- Transitions, including transitions from higher intensity to lower intensity areas
- Adjacency to transit, especially mobility hubs
- Achieving plan goals for community benefits, including affordable housing
- Furthering urban design goals

##### Growth strategy

Certain future places are anticipated to take on more jobs and housing than others, but all areas of Denver are expected to evolve. A rezoning in an area planned for less growth may still be appropriate, as smaller-scale growth and reinvestment should be occurring in these areas as well.

See the growth strategy and related map in Chapter 2.



Rezoning, also known as map amendments since they amend the city’s official zoning map, change the zoning (or zone district) for a property. Zoning sets the rules for what is allowed on the property including the permitted uses and the height and form of buildings. All rezoning applications must be approved by city council, who evaluate the request against required criteria, including whether the proposed rezoning is consistent with the city’s adopted plans. As an adopted plan, *Blueprint Denver* will play an important role in guiding rezoning decisions.

## Sometimes Applicable

### Street Type

Street types work in concert with the future place to evaluate the appropriateness of the intensity of the adjacent development. This includes:

#### Street types map

The street types map should be used to identify the street types that serve the site to be rezoned.

*See the street types map in Chapter 4.*

#### Street type descriptions

The street types descriptions convey key characteristics of different streets and can inform the types of zone districts that would best align with the desired land use and built form characteristics of the street.

*See the street types descriptions in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.*

### Plan Policies and Strategies

Most of the plan recommendations (organized into policies and strategies in Chapter 3) are intended to inform implementation through amendments to the zoning code and large area rezonings. These are effective tools for implementing plan recommendations at a large-scale with bigger impact. However, there may be recommendations that are relevant to a specific rezoning request. For example:

- Rezoning requests for sites that are former institutional uses, such as a school or church embedded in a residential neighborhood, may find helpful guidance in Land Use and Built Form: General, policy 6.
- Rezoning requests to enable an accessory dwelling unit may find helpful guidance in Land Use and Built Form: Housing, policy 4.

*See recommendations in Chapter 3.*

### Equity Concepts

Because the data available to measure the equity concepts is not available at the parcel-level scale, and they are intended to show patterns across large areas, they cannot be effectively applied to small-scale rezonings. Given the above, they are not intended to be part of the evaluation for smaller rezonings. However, they should be used to evaluate large area rezonings.

In addition, the city should consider adjustments to the applicant-driven rezoning process to better address important topics revealed by these concepts—including housing choice, affordability and mitigating involuntary displacement.

*See more in Chapter 2.*



# Recommendations

The recommendations form a comprehensive list of policies and strategies to guide implementation of the plan. They are organized by the three elements of complete neighborhoods:

## Land Use and Built Form



## Mobility



## Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



AN EQUITABLE CITY

Everyone in Denver deserves to live in a complete neighborhood with a range of housing and employment choices. Land use recommendations promote a more equitable distribution of diverse housing and employment options throughout the city.

All residents, especially those who are more dependent on transit and walking, should have access to quality, affordable multimodal options. Promoting affordable housing near transit helps advance equity and access to opportunity.

Building a more complete network of trees, parks and other green infrastructure will enhance quality-of-life for all neighborhoods. This is essential to improving health inequities between neighborhoods and advancing environmental justice.

A CITY OF COMPLETE NEIGHBORHOODS & NETWORKS

A complete neighborhood includes a mix of land uses accessible by different modes of transportation. The interaction and design of those uses and networks contribute to the unique character of places.

Complete neighborhoods where jobs, daily services and recreation are easily accessible encourages walking, rolling, biking and mass transit options. This enables residents to accomplish everyday tasks more efficiently while decreasing single-occupancy vehicle trips.

A system of complete neighborhoods and networks makes access to quality-of-life infrastructure and amenities easy and convenient for residents.

AN EVOLVING CITY

With the expected increase in population, neighborhoods will need to accommodate some growth. Balancing the preservation of neighborhood character with the demands for additional housing and jobs is a key focus of this plan's recommendations.

As Denver's population growth continues, the need for mobility options also grows. Encouraging trips to be made through walking, rolling, biking and mass transit can help to ease pressure on mobility infrastructure.

As the population increases, so does the need for parks, open space and other quality-of-life amenities. Green infrastructure—including green roofs, trees, rain gardens and bioswales—is important to integrate into development as growth occurs.

## How to Read the Recommendations:

**Policy**

A key recommendation advancing *Blueprint Denver's* vision and goals. Most policies advance multiple goals.

**Goals**

The plan goals (found in Chapter 1, Introduction) advanced by the policy.

**Background**

This text provides helpful context to improve understanding of the policy and related strategies.

**Strategies**

These are more detailed actions to help achieve the policy.

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# Recommendations



3.3 | PLAN IN ACTION

Land Use & Built Form:  
General



**01** Promote and anticipate planned growth in major centers and corridors and key residential areas connected by rail service and transit priority streets.

**GOALS:** 5

*Denver's growth strategy is to guide new housing units and jobs to areas with the infrastructure to support higher density, mixed-use development. This requires coordinated implementation of land use changes and transit investments.*

*For more information about Blueprint Denver's growth strategy, see Chapter 2.*

**A.** Use zoning and land use regulations to encourage higher-density, mixed-use development in transit-rich areas including:

- Regional centers and community centers
- Community corridors where transit priority streets are planned
- High and medium-high residential areas in the downtown and urban center contexts.

**B.** Implement regulatory land use changes in coordination with transit investments. For example, rezonings to support transit-oriented development should be closely timed with the implementation of transit priority streets.

**C.** Support the implementation of *Denver Moves: Transit*.

**D.** Develop a citywide strategic plan to address implementation needs, including infrastructure investments, in regional and/or community centers.

**02** Incentivize or require efficient development of land, especially in transit-rich areas.

**GOALS:** 3, 5

*Many areas of the city, often near transit, allow for greater density than what is being built. While the city plans and entitles certain areas to take on more growth, private development often does not take full advantage of those entitlements. Fulfilling the community vision for vibrant and walkable neighborhoods—as well as ensuring Denver can accommodate growth in areas where it is most appropriate—depends on maximizing development opportunities.*

**A.** In regional centers, urban center community centers and urban center community corridors, study and implement requirements or incentives for density. An example of a tool to implement this could include establishing minimum building heights.

**B.** In transit-rich areas, including downtown, revise the zoning code to limit auto-oriented commercial uses that do not contribute positively to activating the public realm, such as mini-storage, drive-throughs and car washes. This may also apply to other desired mixed-use areas of the city, such as transit priority streets.

**C.** Allow increased density in exchange for desired outcomes, such as affordable housing, especially in transit-rich areas.

**D.** Incentivize redevelopment of opportunity sites such as downtown surface parking lots.

**E.** In historic areas, balance efficiency with preservation through strategies that encourage the reuse of structures.

**03** Ensure the Denver Zoning Code continues to respond to the needs of the city, while remaining modern and flexible.

**GOALS:** 6

*The city adopted the Denver Zoning Code (DZC) in 2010. Although the majority of the city was rezoned in 2010 to be included in DZC, a significant portion of Denver is still covered by the old zoning code called Former Chapter 59. This presents challenges to consistent and efficient administration and means that many properties are not able to enjoy the benefits of a modern, flexible and context-based zoning code.*

**A.** Rezone properties from the Former Chapter 59 zoning code so that the entire city is covered by the DZC, including continuing to incentivize owners to come out of the old code.

**B.** Limit the use of site-specific, customized zoning tools—such as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and waivers/conditions—to unique and extraordinary circumstances. The zoning code offers a wide variety of zone districts that cover the diverse contexts and places of Denver. Custom zoning tools are most effective when a standard zone district does not exist to implement the adopted plans for an area.

**C.** Update the zoning code to reflect the contexts and places envisioned in this plan. Create new zone districts where appropriate.

**D.** Update the zoning code sign regulations to recognize changing technologies and best practices.

**E.** Modify DZC to limit the use of regulating plans to Master Planned zone districts, where they are required.

**Challenges of Custom Zoning**

**Custom Zoning**

These are 'non-standard' zone districts that go beyond the districts in the zoning code. Examples of this are Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and waivers or conditions on a 'standard' zone district.

**Lack of transparency and predictability**

Custom zoning can make it difficult for neighborhoods to understand what could be possible. It requires neighbors to review and analyze various custom zoning documents, which can be technical and cumbersome, to understand the zoning for a property.

**Not flexible over time**

Custom regulations tend to become outdated, sometimes very quickly, depending on shifting needs and desires of an area. The only way to change those regulations is to rezone, which can be lengthy and costly.

**Unpredictable and timely process to establish standards**

The wide use of custom zoning can result in inequitable outcomes since neighborhoods with more resources often are able to have a stronger voice in negotiations during the rezoning process. It is also a longer and more complicated process for applicants to navigate, with unknown outcomes.

**Difficult to administer over time**

It is more challenging to review and understand site-specific rules for multiple properties across a city. This results in more resources needed to review and enforce special standards.

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For a complete list of all recommendations, including anticipated timeframe and the city agencies and partners expected to lead each item, see the Implementation Matrix in Appendix E.

# Recommendations

## Land Use and Built Form

### *General*



The following policies and strategies provide guidance for implementing the *Blueprint Denver* vision through land use, planning and regulatory tools. This includes where and how to encourage growth and how to incentivize the preservation of historic character. There are important strategies for continuing to improve the Denver Zoning Code and creating a more inclusive public engagement process for planning.



*“We shape our  
buildings; thereafter  
they shape us.”*

-Winston Churchill  
Former British Prime Minister

# Recommendations



POLICY

01

Promote and anticipate planned growth in major centers and corridors and key residential areas connected by rail service and transit priority streets.

**GOALS: 5**

*Denver's growth strategy is to guide new housing units and jobs to areas with the infrastructure to support higher density, mixed-use development. This requires coordinated implementation of land use changes and transit investments.*

*For more information about Blueprint Denver's growth strategy, see Chapter 2.*

- A.** Use zoning and land use regulations to encourage higher-density, mixed-use development in transit-rich areas including:
  - Regional centers and community centers
  - Community corridors where transit priority streets are planned
  - High and medium-high residential areas in the downtown and urban center contexts.
- B.** Implement regulatory land use changes in coordination with transit investments. For example, rezonings to support transit-oriented development should be closely timed with the implementation of transit priority streets.
- C.** Support the implementation of *Denver Moves: Transit*.
- D.** Develop a citywide strategic plan to address implementation needs, including infrastructure investments, in regional and/or community centers.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

02

Incentivize or require efficient development of land, especially in transit-rich areas.

**GOALS: 3, 5**

*Many areas of the city, often near transit, allow for greater density than what is being built. While the city plans and entitles certain areas to take on more growth, private development often does not take full advantage of those entitlements. Fulfilling the community vision for vibrant and walkable neighborhoods—as well as ensuring Denver can accommodate growth in areas where it is most appropriate—depends on maximizing development opportunities.*

- A.** In regional centers, urban center community centers and urban center community corridors, study and implement requirements or incentives for density. An example of a tool to implement this could include establishing minimum building heights.
- B.** In transit-rich areas, including downtown, revise the zoning code to limit auto-oriented commercial uses that do not contribute positively to activating the public realm, such as mini-storage, drive-throughs and car washes. This may also apply to other desired mixed-use areas of the city, such as transit priority streets.
- C.** Allow increased density in exchange for desired outcomes, such as affordable housing, especially in transit-rich areas.
- D.** Incentivize redevelopment of opportunity sites such as downtown surface parking lots.
- E.** In historic areas, balance efficiency with preservation through strategies that encourage the reuse of structures.

## Land Use & Built Form: General



03

Ensure the Denver Zoning Code continues to respond to the needs of the city, while remaining modern and flexible.

### GOALS: 6

*The city adopted the Denver Zoning Code (DZC) in 2010. Although the majority of the city was rezoned in 2010 to be included in DZC, a significant portion of Denver is still covered by the old zoning code, called Former Chapter 59. This presents challenges to consistent and efficient administration and means that many properties are not able to enjoy the benefits of a modern, flexible and context-based zoning code.*

- A. Rezone properties from the Former Chapter 59 zoning code so that the entire city is covered by the DZC, including continuing to incentivize owners to come out of the old code.
- B. Limit the use of site-specific, customized zoning tools—such as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and waivers/conditions—to unique and extraordinary circumstances. The zoning code offers a wide variety of zone districts that cover the diverse contexts and places of Denver. Custom zoning tools are most effective when a standard zone district does not exist to implement the adopted plans for an area.
- C. Update the zoning code to reflect the contexts and places envisioned in this plan. Create new zone districts where appropriate.
- D. Update the zoning code sign regulations to recognize changing technologies and best practices.
- E. Modify DZC to limit the use of regulating plans to Master Planned zone districts, where they are required.

## Challenges of Custom Zoning

### Custom Zoning

These are 'non-standard' zone districts that go beyond the districts in the zoning code. Examples of this are Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and waivers or conditions on a 'standard' zone district.

### Lack of transparency and predictability

Custom zoning can make it difficult for neighborhoods to understand what could be possible. It requires neighbors to review and analyze various custom zoning documents, which can be technical and cumbersome, to understand the zoning for a property.

### Not flexible over time

Custom regulations tend to become outdated, sometimes very quickly, depending on shifting needs and desires of an area. The only way to change those regulations is to rezone, which can be lengthy and costly.

### Unpredictable and timely process to establish standards

The wide use of custom zoning can result in inequitable outcomes since neighborhoods with more resources often are able to have a stronger voice in negotiations during the rezoning process. It is also a longer and more complicated process for applicants to navigate, with unknown outcomes.

### Difficult to administer over time

It is more challenging to review and understand site-specific rules for multiple properties across a city. This results in more resources needed to review and enforce special standards.

# Recommendations



POLICY

04

Ensure equitable planning processes and include underrepresented residents in plans and plan implementation.

**GOALS: 1, 10**

*Planning processes are the mechanism by which neighborhoods set the vision for their future. All members of the neighborhood must be included and feel comfortable participating in planning for the future of their community. The same is true for the processes to implement plans, such as writing new zoning, building new infrastructure, or just rezoning a property. In order to preserve and promote diversity in neighborhoods, the processes for planning and plan implementation must also reflect the diversity of the neighborhood, including race, ethnicity, economic status and age.*

- A.** Include multilingual engagement in all public outreach.
- B.** Develop a guide to address equity in outreach and public engagement and planning.
- C.** Consider the creation of community engagement panels to build education resources about equitable planning.
- D.** Integrate equity and environmental justice considerations into plans and identify methods to measure and reduce inequities as part of the planning process.
- E.** Track the information necessary to understand disparities and to evaluate the equity impacts of public programs and projects.
- F.** Create tools to increase access to the rezoning process, especially for underrepresented communities.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

05

Integrate mitigation of involuntary displacement of residents and/or businesses into major city projects.

**GOALS: 1, 2, 6**

*Major public investment, changes to the zoning code and large, city-initiated legislative rezonings have the potential to attract private investment and increase property values. In turn, residents and businesses vulnerable to displacement may no longer be able to afford to stay in the area. The city must better understand how future city-led rezonings contribute to involuntary displacement and, where relevant, look for opportunities to mitigate displacement.*

- A.** For major city investments and projects—including regulatory changes and legislative rezonings—analyze the potential for the involuntary displacement of lower-income residents and local businesses. Use the Vulnerability to Displacement measure in Chapter 2 to help identify areas most in need of these strategies.
- B.** Where the potential for involuntary displacement is identified, evaluate and implement methods to mitigate displacement, such as incentives or requirements for on-site income-restricted housing and/or affordable commercial spaces.

Land Use & Built Form:  
General



POLICY

06

Implement zoning code revisions to facilitate compatible redevelopment of institutional sites within neighborhoods.

GOALS: 6, 7, 8

BACKGROUND

*Institutional uses, such as schools and places of worship, are typically embedded in residential areas and provide key services to surrounding residents. This also may include areas of privately-owned open space. When these uses leave a neighborhood, it leaves a site that previously housed a non-residential use in the middle of a residential neighborhood. These sites have the potential to provide additional neighborhood services and/or more diverse housing options without displacing existing residents.*

STRATEGIES

- A. Revise the zoning code to ensure compatible redevelopment of institutional sites (including private open space) embedded in low and low-medium residential areas. Examples of revisions may include more appropriate maximum building heights, revisions to bulk and massing and limitations on location of surface parking.
- B. Consider changes to the zoning code that would allow greater land use flexibility for these types of sites that vacate, such as appropriately scaled higher-density housing or limited neighborhood services. This approach could require adaptive re-use of existing structures in exchange for greater land use flexibility or requirements for providing community improvements such as affordable housing, open space or community-serving spaces.
- C. Until a citywide approach is implemented, individual rezonings of these sites may be an opportunity for more intense residential uses or limited neighborhood services to be provided if done in a way that minimizes impacts to surrounding character.
- D. Establish a process to plan for the re-use of large campus sites. Unlike the embedded sites, these typically are zoned within “campus” zone districts, which are typically very flexible to reflect the needs of campus functions. When those functions leave, often it is not appropriate to continue that level of flexibility. Study potential revisions to the campus zone districts to better reflect the intent of these districts to apply to true, actively functioning campuses.

# Recommendations



## Building Deconstruction



### Portland, OR

In 2016, to disincentive the demolition of existing structures, Portland's City Council adopted regulations requiring projects seeking a demolition permit of a house or duplex to fully deconstruct that structure if it was built before 1916 or is a designated historic resource. In Portland, more than 300 homes are demolished each year. This produces thousands of tons of waste—a majority of which could be salvaged for reuse. Prior to the ordinance, less than 10 percent of houses demolished used deconstruction. Now, about 25 percent of demolitions are subject to the deconstruction requirement. The deconstruction requirement has resulted in an estimated diversion of 2,500 tons of waste from landfills in the first year and created new jobs in deconstruction and salvaged material retail.

POLICY

07

Integrate infrastructure needed to support the community into more areas of the city.

GOALS: 2, 6, 7, 8

BACKGROUND

*As growth continues public infrastructure, such as utilities for water and electricity, will need to continue to expand to meet demand. As service delivery best practices and innovations change, flexibility in where services are located may be needed to accommodate growth in an increasing built-out environment. Such utilities need to be compatibly integrated into the neighborhoods that they serve.*

STRATEGIES

- A. Allow low-impact, publicly serving utilities to be located in a greater variety of areas, including residential areas, to strategically serve community.
- B. Update the zoning code to recognize shifts in best practices for screening and integration of utilities to minimize their impact on the built environment.

## Land Use & Built Form: General



POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

08

Promote environmentally responsible and resource-efficient practices for the design, construction and demolition of buildings.

**GOALS: 9, 10**

*Design and construction policies impact overall building performance and have effects (both positive and negative) on the environment, as well as the people who inhabit buildings. Buildings account for about one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions. Construction activities generate a significant amount of waste that can be recycled or reused. By incorporating more green building strategies into city policies and regulations, we can work toward meeting the community's sustainability goals.*

- A.** Develop a comprehensive green building program for horizontal and vertical development that includes both required and incentive elements. This could include passive solar access and other green building practices. Recruit expertise within the green building industry to help support this program.
- B.** Evaluate requiring electrical vehicle charging stations for new commercial/mixed use development.
- C.** Evaluate incentives such as permit rebates for existing projects to achieve net zero energy.
- D.** Develop regulations for new mid- and large-scale commercial and residential buildings requiring waste management plans that include recycling of concrete, wood, metal and cardboard.
- E.** Consider new regulations to require demolished structures of a certain threshold to salvage or reuse building materials.

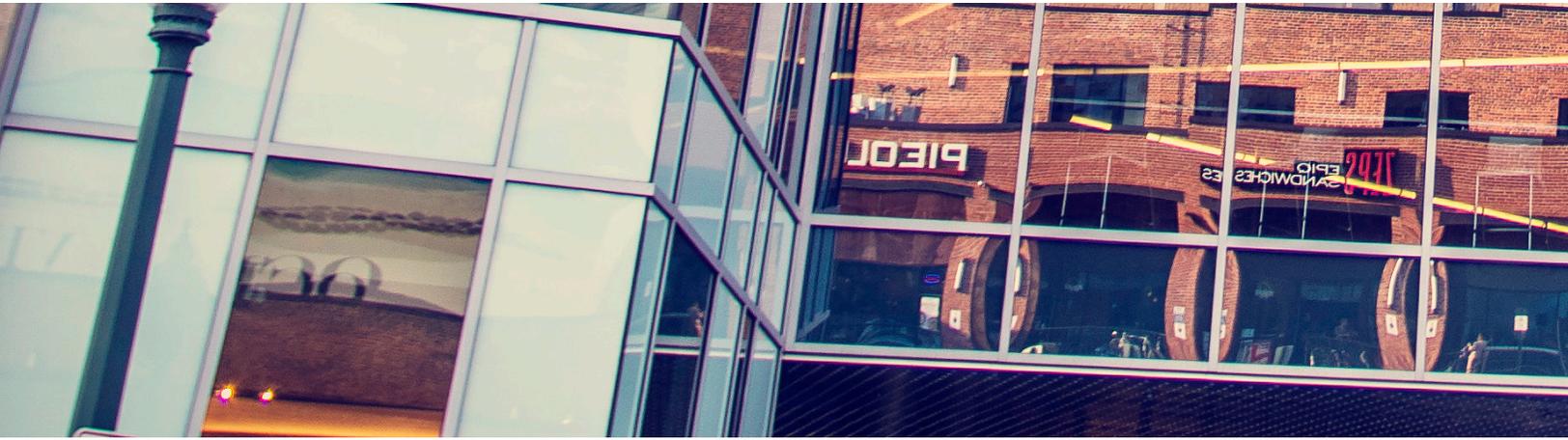
## Green Building Requirements & Incentives



All buildings constructed, renovated or maintained with city funds are required to be designed, constructed, operated and maintained according to the principles outlined in the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program and the EPA's ENERGY STAR program. All applicable new city building projects are required to achieve LEED Gold certification. The city recently adopted the 2016 Energy Conservation Code, which resulted in 30% energy savings over 2015.

In terms of private development, the city has made considerable progress with supporting and requiring green building practices. For example, some new residential projects are required to provide electric vehicle charging station wiring, and a rebate incentive is provided to projects that install and maintain solar panels. The implementation of the Green Buildings ordinance achieves environmental benefits geared towards reducing buildings' greenhouse gas emissions, energy use and heat absorption. These and other measures help reaffirm the city's commitment to sustainability.

# Recommendations



POLICY

09

Promote coordinated development on large infill sites to ensure new development integrates with its surroundings and provides appropriate community benefits.

**GOALS: 1, 6,**

*Denver has several large infill sites with underutilized land. These sites may be vacant or contain institutional campuses like hospitals and schools, suburban-style shopping areas or industrial businesses or large open spaces that vacate. They are a range of sizes, usually 5 acres and greater. Some of these sites also lack an adopted neighborhood plan to support integration with the area's pattern of streets, blocks or open space if the site redevelops.*

- A.** Consider zoning flexibility for redevelopment of large infill sites that lack a clear adopted neighborhood plan vision, yet may provide an opportunity for compatible development that integrates with the area's existing streets, blocks and/or open space.
- B.** Use large development review, or similar tools, to coordinate infrastructure and open space on large infill sites while minimizing and mitigating negative impacts on surrounding communities.
- C.** Implement regulatory tools to set clear and predictable requirements for large redevelopments to provide benefits to the community such as affordable housing and open space.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

10

Expand resources to empower Denverites to be involved and collaborative in city government.

**GOALS: 1, 10**

*By improving the understanding of diverse community needs and perspectives, and providing more opportunities and resources for underrepresented communities to participate, the city can more effectively meet the needs of Denverites. This will require a variety of improvements related to communications, employee recruitment, staff training and data collection.*

- A.** Recruit and hire staff to reflect Denver's ethnic and language diversity.
- B.** Improve internal and external collaboration and communication to better deliver services to a diverse population and to increase customer satisfaction.
- C.** Create resources to better engage communities who are traditionally underrepresented in planning and other government processes.
- D.** Improve research into community insights and other data gathering.
- E.** Explore creation of an equity committee, with diverse community representation, to guide implementation of *Blueprint Denver* from an equity lens.

## Land Use & Built Form: General



## POLICY

11

Implement plan recommendations through city-led legislative rezonings and text amendments.

**GOALS: 1, 2, 3, 5**

## BACKGROUND

*Proactive implementation by the city, rather than applicant-driven rezonings, is the most effective way to accomplish adopted plan goals and to ensure all community voices are included in the process. "Larger scale" rezonings may include a range of sizes from one or two block to an entire portion of a neighborhood. Text amendments and legislative rezonings, or map amendments, allow for a robust analysis at a holistic scale, such as a neighborhood, corridor or the whole city. As these types of rezonings and text amendments implement plan recommendations, the need for site-by-site rezonings to implement a plan should diminish.*

## STRATEGIES

- A.** Prioritize larger-scale, legislative rezonings over site-by-site rezonings to implement plan recommendations and to achieve citywide goals, including equity goals.
- B.** Use text amendments combined with map amendments to apply strategies recommended by *Blueprint Denver* at the effective, area-appropriate scale. Text amendments and large legislative rezonings should be guided by the equity concepts and maps in Chapter 2.
- C.** Use a robust and inclusive community input process to inform city-led rezonings and zoning code text amendments.

# Recommendations

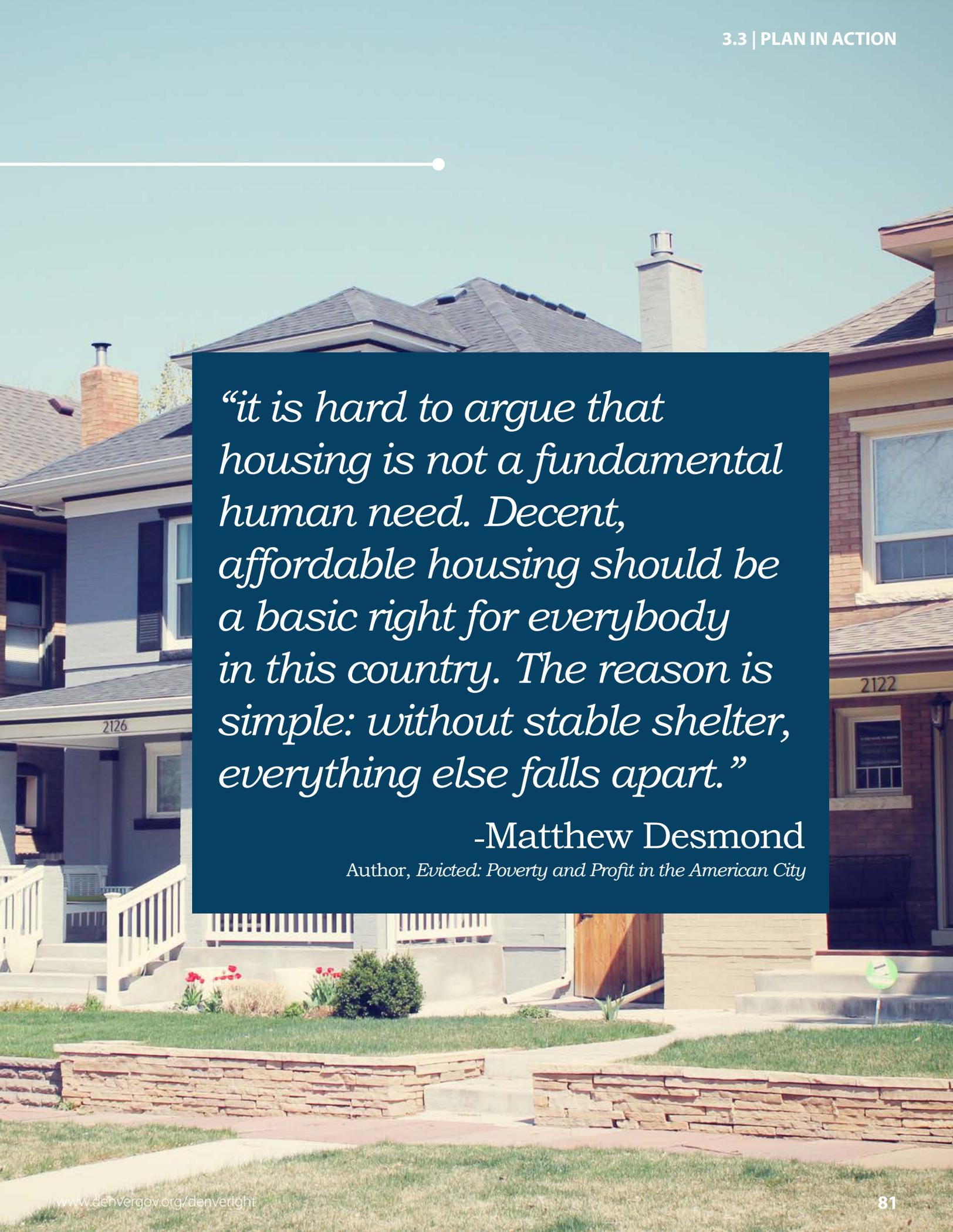
## Land Use and Built Form

### *Housing*



The following policies and strategies provide guidance on how land use and zoning regulations could provide more housing choice throughout the city. This includes diversifying housing options in new and existing neighborhoods as well as preserving and developing affordable housing. Denver is a diverse city and our housing types should accommodate the entire spectrum of housing needs, including quality options for vulnerable populations, attainable homeownership, non-traditional living arrangements, aging in place and intergenerational housing. These recommendations also direct growth to areas where new housing is closely linked to services and quality transportation.





*“it is hard to argue that housing is not a fundamental human need. Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart.”*

**-Matthew Desmond**

Author, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

# Recommendations



POLICY

01

.....  
 Revise city regulations to respond to the demands of Denver’s unique and modern housing needs.

**GOALS: 1, 10**

*As housing needs throughout Denver have changed, city regulations have not kept pace with innovations including tiny home villages, intergenerational living, flexible living arrangements, and the changing needs and composition of households.*

- A.** Update the zoning code to modernize permitted use categories related to group living and expand the allowance of flexible and affordable housing types.
- B.** Update the zoning code to provide a more inclusive definition of households. This should reflect the diverse needs of different types of household living arrangements, which may include increasing the number of unrelated people living together (such as co-housing living arrangements, which can provide an option to age in place) or other non-traditional families.
- C.** Ensure city codes and land use regulations support modern and equitable approaches to housing options for people experiencing homelessness and people in need of supportive housing.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

02

.....  
 Diversify housing options by exploring opportunities to integrate missing middle housing into low and low-medium residential areas.

**GOALS: 1, 6**

*The “missing middle” refers to housing types that fall between high-density and single-unit houses, including duplexes, fourplexes, row homes, townhomes and cottage housing. Missing middle is not just the type of housing—it captures units that are attainable to middle-income households who still struggle to afford housing in Denver.*

- A.** Integrate missing middle housing into low and low-medium residential areas, especially those that score low in Housing Diversity. This should be implemented through holistic revisions to the zoning code at a citywide scale, with a focus on discouraging demolition and encouraging affordability.

Zoning code revisions should be informed by an inclusive community input process and could include:

- Allowing 2- to 4-unit structures, tandem houses, and/or smaller minimum lot sizes in locations where slightly higher density may be appropriate. This might include lots on corners, near transit, and/or adjacent to centers or corridors. This allowance should advance goals for affordability, such as including a requirement to provide affordability in exchange for increased density.
- Encouraging the reuse, rather than demolition, of existing structures. This could be accomplished by allowing additional unit(s) to be added to an existing structure if the structure is preserved.

## Land Use & Built Form: Housing



## POLICY

03

.....  
Incentivize the preservation and reuse of existing smaller and affordable homes.

**GOALS: 1, 6, 8**

*The character of many older neighborhoods is defined by the older houses, which tend to be smaller than what would be built new today. These smaller houses tend to be a more attainable choice and, while not officially income-restricted, provide more affordable options than if a new home was built on the lot. Preserving these choices in neighborhoods is important for affordability and for maintaining character.*

- A.** Implement zoning tools to incentivize the preservation of smaller, more affordable housing options. An example would be to allow the owner of an existing house to add an additional unit or accessory dwelling unit if the original structure is preserved.
- B.** Consider increased incentives in transit-rich areas and in areas that score high for Vulnerability to Displacement.
- C.** Partner with public health to support upgrades to older homes to meet modern code, safety and quality of life standards.

## BACKGROUND

## STRATEGIES

## Housing an Inclusive Denver

In early 2018, the city adopted *Housing an Inclusive Denver*, a five-year housing plan to guide housing policy, strategy, and investment priorities. The housing plan has four key goals:

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

The housing plan calls for *Blueprint Denver* to advance land use strategies that will expand affordable and mixed-income housing options throughout the city. It also has specific recommendations to advance the four key goals, including many strategies related to preserving affordability and mitigating involuntary displacement.

*Housing an Inclusive Denver* contains recommendations on many topics not included in *Blueprint Denver*, such as housing quality, dedicated funding for affordable housing and programs to stabilize residents at risk of involuntary displacement. While *Blueprint Denver* does not directly address these topics, Community Planning and Development is committed to support all of the housing plan goals and to coordinate closely with Denver Economic Development & Opportunity and community partners in implementing the housing plan.

# Recommendations



POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

04

Diversify housing choice through the expansion of accessory dwelling units throughout all residential areas.

**GOALS: 1**

*Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) can add variety to the housing stock in low density residential neighborhoods without significantly changing the existing character. As Denver allows ADUs throughout the city, it is important to understand impacts in areas vulnerable to displacement.*

- A.** Study and implement allowances for ADUs—including those attached and detached from the primary home—in all neighborhood contexts and residential zone districts. Use an inclusive community input process to respond to unique considerations in different parts of the city.
- B.** Identify strategies to prevent involuntary displacement—especially in areas that score high for Vulnerability to Displacement—in conjunction with expanding the allowance for ADUs.
- C.** Study and implement a citywide program to expand access to ADUs as a wealth-building tool for low- and moderate-income homeowners.
- D.** Study and implement incentives or requirements for income-restricted ADUs, so they are more likely to provide affordable housing options, and tools to encourage the use of ADUs for long-term housing options, rather than short term rentals.
- E.** A citywide approach to enable ADUs is preferred. Until a holistic approach is in place, individual rezonings to enable ADUs in all residential areas, especially where proximate to transit, are appropriate. Unless there is a neighborhood plan supporting ADUs, rezonings should be small in area in order to minimize impacts to the surrounding residential area.

05

Remove barriers to constructing accessory dwelling units and create context-sensitive form standards.

**GOALS: 1, 6**

*The zoning code already allows ADUs in some areas of the city. ADUs can be attached to the main home, such as a basement unit, or detached. ADUs offer a housing option for residents looking for something smaller than a home, such as seniors who want to age in place. There are opportunities to remove barriers—especially since the cost of constructing a detached ADU is high—and to better calibrate form standards for detached ADUs by neighborhood context.*

- A.** Evaluate existing barriers to ADU permitting and construction and revise codes and/or fees to remove or lessen barriers for homeowners. Consider programs and resources to help reduce barriers to ADUs for homeowners, especially in neighborhoods that score high in Reducing Vulnerability to Displacement.
- B.** Revise the zoning code to allow ADUs as accessory to more uses than only single-unit homes.
- C.** Revise detached ADU form standards to be more context-sensitive, including standards for height, mass and setbacks.
- D.** Establish context-specific patterns or templates to facilitate the approval process of detached ADUs.

## Land Use & Built Form: Housing



POLICY

06

.....

Increase the development of affordable housing and mixed-income housing, particularly in areas near transit, services and amenities.

**GOALS: 1, 2, 3**

*Denver needs more affordable housing to serve residents across the full spectrum of housing need, from moderate-income homeowners to those without a home. Although Housing an Inclusive Denver provides many recommendations to achieve this, there are land use tools to make the development of affordable housing easier or more attractive.*

- A.** Incentivize affordable housing through zoning, especially in regional centers, community centers and community corridors adjacent to transit. This could include a process—informed by community input—to create citywide height bonuses in the zoning code, where additional height is allowed in exchange for income restricted units. Incentives for affordable housing are particularly important for areas that score high in Vulnerability to Displacement and score low in Housing Diversity.
- B.** Implement additional parking reductions for projects that provide income-restricted affordable units.
- C.** Implement other incentives for affordable housing, such as lower building permit fees for projects that commit to a certain percentage of income-restricted units onsite.
- D.** Continue to advocate for changes to state law that remove barriers to access affordable housing options.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

07

.....

Expand family-friendly housing throughout the city.

**GOALS: 1, 2, 10**

*A recent boom in the construction of studio and one-bedroom apartments and rapid increases in housing prices mean that many families, especially lower-income and moderate-income households, are not able to live in Denver. To build a diverse community of all ages and to compete with housing options in neighborhoods outside of Denver, we need to build communities supportive of families—including seniors who want to age in place and families of different religions and cultures. This includes higher-density areas, which can be family-friendly if the appropriate housing types and amenities are provided.*

- A.** Implement tools to require and/or incentivize the development of family-friendly housing. This could include bonuses for affordable large units (those with three or more bedrooms), especially in multifamily developments.
- B.** Implement tools to incentivize the construction of family-friendly services and amenities, including daycares, playgrounds and community centers, especially in large redevelopment areas.

# Recommendations



POLICY

08

Capture 80 percent of new housing growth in regional centers, community centers and corridors, high-intensity residential areas, greenfield residential areas, innovation flex districts and university campus districts.

GOALS: 1, 5

BACKGROUND

*To achieve citywide equity goals, build complete neighborhoods and improve multimodal transportation choices, the city needs to be strategic and intentional about where to direct growth. New housing will occur throughout Denver, with a particular emphasis on regional centers, community centers and corridors, and downtown and urban center high and high-medium intensity residential areas. Additional new housing will occur in innovation flex districts, university campus*

*districts and Denver's last remaining greenfield residential areas.*

*This includes focusing housing growth in Downtown Denver, the heart of the Rocky Mountain region. Downtown can accommodate significant compact growth and provide diverse, high-quality housing opportunities.*

*For more information about Blueprint Denver's growth strategy, see Chapter 2.*

STRATEGIES

- A.** Align high-density residential areas near regional centers to support housing growth near major job centers with access to transit priority streets.
- B.** Develop a strategic plan focused on implementation of regional centers, which should include strategies for integrating diverse housing options into these centers.
- C.** Ensure land use regulations, small area plans and major transit investments support desired growth areas.
- D.** Advance housing affordability recommendations from this plan and *Housing an Inclusive Denver* to ensure new units include units affordable to a range of income levels.
- E.** In order to capture 25 percent of housing growth within the downtown neighborhood context that contains the largest regional center and the highest intensity residential areas:
  - Study and implement zoning incentives and other tools to attract high-density mixed-use development downtown, especially for vacant and underutilized land.
  - Create incentives for a wide variety of housing options to be included in new developments.
  - Work with partners and the downtown community to build a livable city core with attractive amenities for residents and families.

*Land Use & Built Form:*  
*Housing*



# Recommendations

## Land Use and Built Form *Economics*



The following policies and strategies provide guidance for land use and zoning regulations to provide high-quality employment opportunities and job growth throughout the city. This includes directing growth to strategic locations, especially those with good access to transit. A diverse set of job opportunities available to all residents is needed for Denver's economy to see long-term, sustained success. The economic land use recommendations support industries with middle-skill jobs, foster the maker and craft movement and provide a welcoming environment for technology startups. With a commitment to deliver workforce training, educational opportunities and business support, Denver will continue to be at the forefront of the next generation economy.



*"...Our culture, our prosperity, and our freedom are all ultimately gifts of people living, working, and thinking together—the ultimate triumph of the city."*

- Edward L. Glaeser  
Author, *Triumph of the City*

# Recommendations

POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

01

Capture 90 percent of job growth in regional centers, community centers and corridors, certain districts and high-intensity residential areas in downtown and urban center contexts. Of the 90 percent job growth, focus 30 percent downtown.

**GOALS: 1, 4, 5**

*The employment-oriented growth areas contain the majority of Denver's jobs. New jobs should be directed to regional centers, community centers and corridors, downtown and urban center high and high-medium intensity residential areas and certain districts—value manufacturing, innovation/flex, university and hospital campuses, and the airport.*

*For more information about Blueprint Denver's growth strategy, see Chapter 2.*

- A.** Encourage and preserve opportunity for office development within regional centers by allowing high density employment. Study and implement requirements and/or incentives for high density development in regional centers including vacant and underutilized land in downtown.
- B.** Promote the development and redevelopment of regional centers, including downtown, to meet the land use and transportation needs of targeted industries. This means encouraging regional centers to have strong connections to transportation options, especially passenger rail and transit priority streets, and fostering the mix of uses needed to attract businesses with a wide variety of jobs.

02

Improve equitable access to employment areas throughout the city to ensure all residents can connect to employment opportunities.

**GOALS: 1, 4**

*The city's highly dense employment areas (including Downtown, Cherry Creek, and the Tech Center) attract housing development since residents enjoy proximity to employment and mixed-use areas. The housing costs around these major employment centers are often the highest, limiting access to lower- and middle-income households.*

- A.** Invest in transit priority streets to connect all Denver residents to the city's regional, community centers and community corridors.
- B.** Promote and incentivize the development of affordable and family-friendly housing, as well as a full range of job opportunities, in and near regional centers, community centers and community corridors.
- C.** Encourage entrepreneurship and provide opportunities for new locally-owned businesses, especially businesses owned by women and people of color, to locate in regional centers.
- D.** Align workforce training, career development and education programs with job opportunities in regional centers and create programs to connect workers with employers in regional centers.

## Land Use & Built Form: Economics



03

POLICY

Preserve high-value manufacturing areas and allow low-value manufacturing areas to transition to higher intensity uses.

**GOALS: 4**

BACKGROUND

*Manufacturing uses contribute to the fiscal health of the city and provide middle-skill jobs to residents. Manufacturing employers are generally more valuable than many retail employers as they provide higher wages and have a greater opportunity for value-added services. Portions of Denver's manufacturing areas are under threat for redevelopment into other uses. High-value manufacturing areas, especially with limited*

*threat for redevelopment, are critical assets needed to accommodate current and future industrial uses. These areas are captured in the manufacturing preservation areas identified in Chapter 5.*

STRATEGIES

- A.** Preserve the high-value manufacturing districts mapped as "manufacturing preservation areas" in Chapter 5. To help preserve these areas, residential uses should be prohibited in the heavy production and value manufacturing districts. Residential uses are appropriate in the innovation/flex districts.
- B.** Through small area planning, examine value manufacturing and heavy production districts that are considered highly valuable but are under a high threat of redevelopment to determine if potential uses outweigh the value of preserving industrial uses.
- C.** In value manufacturing areas, use zoning and other tools to encourage the retention and creation of employment capacity by increasing development capacity.
- D.** Within innovation/flex districts, enable housing and other uses to complement manufacturing. Promote urban, pedestrian-friendly building forms that are appropriate for vibrant, mixed-use districts.
- E.** Study and implement changes to the zoning code to ensure appropriate zone district(s) to implement the innovation/flex district desired uses and building forms.

# Recommendations

POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

04

Promote creative industries, maker spaces, artists and small businesses as vital components of Denver's innovation economy.

**GOALS: 4**

*Creative industries, maker spaces and the craft economy provide a range of jobs and robust opportunities for economic development and placemaking. It is vital to ensure Denver encourages and promotes these uses throughout the city.*

- A.** Evaluate commercial mixed use zone districts — typically found in regional centers and community centers and corridors— to identify opportunities to expand the allowance for hand-crafted manufacturing and maker spaces where it's compatible with other uses allowed in the district.
- B.** Support Denver's creative districts and align land use strategies to support the goals of *Imagine 2020*, the city's cultural plan.
- C.** Develop programs and identify potential incentives to maintain existing spaces, reduce rent costs and other business costs and help create new spaces for hand crafted manufacturing, maker spaces, artists and other small, locally-owned businesses, especially in areas that score high for Vulnerability to Displacement.

05

Support organizations and districts within the city's centers and corridors to aid in attraction and retention of employment and commerce.

**GOALS: 4, 6**

*Areas that are more successful at employment growth have organizations (e.g. business organizations, merchant associations, economic development partnerships) focused on business development support. The scale and formality of these organizations should vary with the local area needs.*

- A.** Develop an approach and strategy for supporting business development-oriented organizations for centers and corridors, especially regional centers, where they do not currently exist.
- B.** Provide information, technical assistance and support to commercial areas interested in creating a business organization, merchants' association or similar entity.
- C.** Actively foster interaction between Denver Economic Development & Opportunity and existing business development organizations and partnerships to align citywide economic development initiatives with needs of the local areas.
- D.** Partner with organizations that are actively supporting economic opportunity across Denver.

## Land Use & Built Form: Economics



POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

06

Ensure Denver and its neighborhoods have a vibrant and authentic retail and hospitality marketplace meeting the full range of experiences and goods demanded by residents and visitors.

**GOALS: 2, 4, 6**

*Denver is home to a number of large shopping areas (including Cherry Creek, Downtown, and Northfield) and hundreds of neighborhood shopping areas (from a local marketplace to a neighborhood commercial centers). The range of shopping, dining, and active options include the latest fashion from iconic global brand stores to the neighborhood corner grocery. Denver is noted to have one of the highest concentrations of chef-driven restaurants and brewpubs. Denver's retail scene helps our neighborhoods to provide the places where we love to meet friends and family or relax by reading or shopping. Supporting and retaining existing local businesses that reflect Denver's diversity is key.*

- A.** Support locally-owned businesses—new and old—to expand and evolve to meet the changing needs of residents and visitors. Support could include assisting businesses, especially in the most underserved or distressed neighborhoods, with regulatory processes, education, training, helping with marketing or increasing access to capital.
- B.** Attract the world's innovative retail brands to provide shopping experiences and options for both residents and visitors.
- C.** Promote Denver as a destination for healthy living and economic opportunity.
- D.** Build on Denver's national and regional entertainment options to continue to blend the arts, entertainment, shopping and hospitality into unique Denver experiences.

07

Protect and promote Denver International Airport as the primary economic engine for the state of Colorado.

**GOALS: 4, 5**

*Denver International Airport (DEN) is the largest airport in North America. The airport was moved in the early 1990s from Stapleton to its current location largely due to issues related to encroaching residential development and associated difficulties. Noise and safety concerns were paramount in finding a location away from residences. The ability for the airport to function at its highest capacity and expand as needed is critical to the economic viability of millions of Coloradans. DEN generates tens of billions of dollars for the region annually and employs over 35,000 individuals.*

- A.** Ensure Denver International Airport retains its ability to add additional runways and aviation facilities.
- B.** Encourage further commercial development near the airport and protect DEN's ability to grow and thrive for generations to come.
- C.** Maintain existing zoning regulations that limit the type and location of residential uses allowed north of 56th Avenue as needed. If any new or existing regulatory tools need consideration, a city-led process with community input should occur.

# Recommendations

## Land Use and Built Form

### *Design Quality & Preservation*



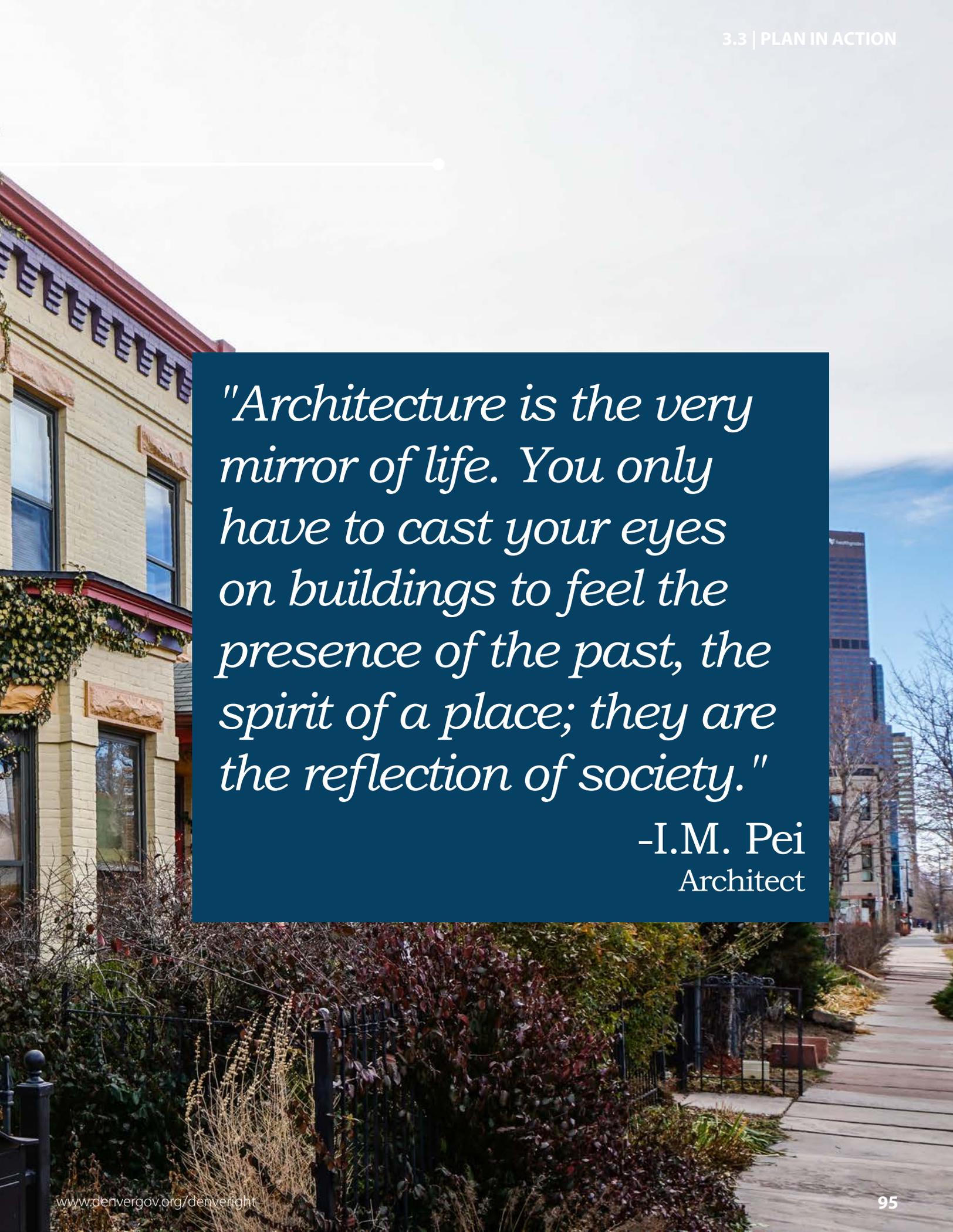
Design quality and historic preservation address the enhancement of neighborhood character through all stages of development and reinvestment. Although these recommendations are focused on private development, urban design is a common thread throughout all of *Blueprint Denver*.

Improving the quality of design for private development advances the broader goal to foster exceptional urban design and to preserve and create authentic places that thoughtfully integrate streets, public space and private property. The implementation of these strategies will promote enduring and compatible design and respond to an evolving community, while embracing existing character and cultural heritage. Denver's unique character derives from quality design embedded in historic districts and spaces found throughout the city.

Our community wants new construction to create great new places while respecting the existing character of our neighborhoods. Much of the recent infill in existing residential neighborhoods is out of context with older homes, particularly in massing and scale. Similarly, recent development in mixed-use areas often lacks street activation, public spaces, human scale or contextual design historically found in these places. There are many tools to create high-quality design outcomes and to encourage development sensitive to the existing or desired character of an area. Many of these design quality tools, including design standards and guidelines, will require additional staff resources to implement.

This section contains four key topics: equity and affordability; residential areas; mixed-use areas; and landscaping.





*"Architecture is the very mirror of life. You only have to cast your eyes on buildings to feel the presence of the past, the spirit of a place; they are the reflection of society."*

-I.M. Pei  
Architect

# Recommendations



## Design Quality Tools

A general overview of design quality tools referenced throughout this section.

### 01 Design Review

Qualitative, case-by-case review of proposed development guided by design standards and guidelines. Design review can be used to address things such as human-scaled elements, ground-floor activation, mass, scale, and architectural articulation. The following are the two most common types of design review:

- A. Board Administered** - An appointed board of design professionals, often including neighborhood representatives, review proposed development against the design standards and guidelines.
- B. Staff Administered** - Trained city staff review proposed development against the design standards and guidelines as part of administrative review process.

### 02 Historic Designation

Individual structures and districts designated through Denver’s landmark preservation ordinance for its historic, architectural and/or geographic significance. On these structures and in these districts, design review ensures a proposed project preserves key historic features and is compatible with the character

of the district. Proposals are reviewed against the applicable landmark design guidelines by Landmark staff and the Landmark Preservation Commission or Lower Downtown Design Review Board, depending on location. Demolition is limited in historic districts.

### 03 Conservation Overlay

A zoning code tool to conserve distinctive features worthy of retention and enhancement. The overlay adjusts specific zoning standards and does not include a design review process. There is no limitation on demolitions.

### 04 Design Overlay

A zoning code tool that reinforces the desired character for newly developing or redeveloping areas. The overlay adjusts specific zoning standards and does not include a design review process. There is no limitation on demolitions.

### 05 Zoning Code Form Standards

Standards found in the zoning code related to height, mass, bulk, and many other design features. These are administrative standards with no subjective review. These are also known as “by-right” standards.





# Recommendations



## Residential Areas

### Problem Identification

Many of Denver's residential neighborhoods are composed of older homes, typically one to two stories in height with sloping roofs. When the zoning code was adopted in 2010, the standards for one- and two-unit structures were written to be flexible to accommodate a range of options. As infill in these neighborhoods occurs, new development tends to "max out" the available building envelope, producing many buildings with incompatible bulk and scale and lot coverage very different from the previous generation of homes. In addition, new homes often include few street-facing windows and lack entry features like front porches, resulting in designs that do not respect the surrounding context or public realm.



*Residential infill often maxes out the available zoning entitlement, resulting in buildings that feel too large and out of context with the existing neighborhood.*

### Desired Outcomes

The strategies in this section set a path for better outcomes. Where appropriate, residential infill will be more context-sensitive and will better engage the public realm. These strategies retain flexibility, promote creativity of design and avoid the prescription of a particular architectural style.



*Residential infill can be better scaled to match the existing context and include features like front porches to engage the public realm.*

## Land Use & Built Form: Design Quality & Preservation



02

Ensure residential neighborhoods retain their unique character as infill development occurs.

**GOALS: 6, 7, 8**

*These strategies advance better, more context-sensitive design outcomes in residential neighborhoods, while retaining flexibility and promoting creative design.*

- A.** Continue the city's commitment to existing historic districts and landmarks and use historic designation to preserve the character of an individual structure or district or where there is historic, architectural, cultural, and/or geographic significance.
- B.** Use conservation overlays in areas where the key goal is to conserve distinctive features in order to enhance and retain existing character. Although these overlays can be area-specific, they can also be used for multiple areas of the city where common conservation outcomes are desired.
- C.** Use design overlays as targeted tools in developing or redeveloping areas that have a specific design vision, ideally one articulated through a planning process. Although these overlays tend to be specific to a particular area — such as a river corridor or newly developing neighborhood — it is also appropriate to create design overlays for multiple areas where common design outcomes are desired.
- D.** For residential places, revise the zoning code to create more contextual bulk and scale requirements for primary and accessory structures. This may include stricter bulk planes, limitations on height, changes to setback requirements, changes to maximum lot coverage, changes to transparency features and/or entry feature requirements. These changes should vary by neighborhood context to better reflect the built character. In creating new zoning standards, consideration should be given to light, air, privacy, engagement of the public realm and human-scaled design.
- E.** For all residential areas, study the feasibility of implementing design review for projects that meet a determined threshold.
- F.** Promote the use of pattern books to identify character defining features and/or desired design outcomes for an area. Pattern books can be developed during neighborhood planning and used to inform regulatory tools including, but not limited to, conservation overlays and design overlays. Discover Denver, the citywide building survey, can contribute valuable data on character defining features to be incorporated into pattern books.
- G.** For civic and public buildings embedded within residential areas, (such as libraries, recreation centers, and similar), ensure a high quality design and consider design review.
- H.** In the general urban low-medium residential places, study and implement tools to preserve the characteristic mix of uses and forms, with single and two-unit uses mixed within higher density residential.
- I.** Promote incentives to preserve the reuse of historic buildings and the unique historic features of Denver's neighborhoods.

# Recommendations



## Mixed-Use Areas

### Problem Identification

#### Transitions

Many mixed-use and commercial areas of the city abut low-density residential neighborhoods. Transitions between commercial development and lower-scale residential neighborhoods are important and do not always result in appropriate outcomes, especially in terms of lot-coverage, bulk and scale.



*Some commercial and mixed-use development does not have the appropriate setbacks or other features to create quality transitions to adjacent lower-scale residential.*

#### Active Uses

The Denver Zoning Code has numerous mixed-use and main street zone districts for each neighborhood context. As currently written, none of those zone districts mandate an actual mix of uses—whether at the individual lot, building, block or district scale. The result is a clear intent for mixed-use development in these districts, with very little teeth to ensure mixed-use on the ground. Many mixed-use and main street zone districts have seen new development that is exclusively residential, thus lacking the desired neighborhood services and amenities that typically come to mind with mixed-use zoning. The lack of non-residential uses can be particularly challenging at the street level since uses such as offices, retail and services help to create and support pedestrian activity.



*Residential uses fronting streets often do not provide the active, vibrant environment desired for mixed-use areas, especially on pedestrian-oriented main streets.*

## Land Use & Built Form: Design Quality & Preservation



### Overall Design

The design quality of mixed-use buildings was a topic of concern throughout the community outreach process. Current zoning standards were written to be flexible but have often resulted in a lack of façade articulation and little variation and durability of materials. Development also may not respect for the public realm, with large parking structures exposed to the street, inadequate landscaping, inappropriate sidewalk café configuration and lack of features that activate and enhance the sidewalk.



*Flat facades, few windows and failure to engage the pedestrian and public realm are challenges seen in some new development in mixed-use areas.*

### Desired Outcomes

The strategies in this section promote mixed-use buildings with engaging street levels supportive of pedestrian activity. The bulk and scale should be respectful of the surrounding character, especially in transitions to residential areas. These places should provide human-scaled design and engage the public realm through features including windows, enhanced sidewalks and outdoor eating areas.



*Active street-level uses with lots of windows and pedestrian-oriented features create an inviting street.*



*This is an example of a well-designed building containing affordable housing, illustrating how high-quality design outcomes are compatible with affordable development.*

# Recommendations



03

Create exceptional design outcomes in key centers and corridors.

**GOALS: 5, 6, 7, 8**

*Mixed-use buildings should engage the street level and support pedestrian activity. The bulk and scale should be respectful of the surrounding character, especially in transitions to residential areas. Historic buildings can exemplify desired design outcomes in a place.*

- A.** In high-profile areas of the city where a large share of growth is expected, such as downtown and regional centers, use a tool such as area-specific design standards and guidelines to be administered by a design review board.
- B.** In other centers and corridors citywide, especially those that anticipate significant growth, study and implement a design review process guided by design standards and guidelines. This could include administrative design review by city staff with the potential for projects of a certain threshold or type to be reviewed by a board.
- C.** Create a system of design tools, including standards and guidelines, that are scalable and repeatable to enable baseline design requirements that can be applied to a range of contexts and locations and be modified with a smaller subset of locally-applicable features.
- D.** Use design overlays in limited areas to direct new development towards a desired design character unique to that area that cannot be achieved through other tools. Design overlays are most effective where a design vision has been articulated through a planning process.
- E.** Revise the zoning code to provide standards for new mixed-use development that better responds to the surrounding context. Standards to examine for improvement include build-to ranges, transparency minimums, lot coverage, and entry features.
- F.** Implement additional zoning tools to create appropriate transitions between places, especially for areas where centers and corridors are close to residential places. This may include standards related to height, massing and uses.
- G.** Study and implement zoning code changes to create buildings with greater massing variability especially in more intense areas like the urban center context (e.g. Cherry Creek North and River North).
- H.** Use urban quality evaluation and metrics, often developed through small area planning and assessments, to help define design problems and to help identify possible solutions.
- I.** For civic and public buildings, (such as libraries, recreation centers, and similar) ensure high quality design and consider design review.
- J.** Implement tools to define appropriate building size and spacing requirements, particularly in areas where tall buildings are allowed.
- K.** Identify important mixed-use historic structures and encourage their continued use or adaptive reuse.

## Land Use & Built Form: Design Quality & Preservation



04

Ensure an active and pedestrian-friendly environment that provides a true mixed-use character in centers and corridors.

**GOALS: 5, 6, 7, 8**

*Pedestrian-friendly places rely on vibrant streets with active street-level uses. The zoning code added street-level active use requirements to most mixed-use zone districts in 2015. Those requirements prohibit a limited set of uses, such as parking and mini-storage, for a portion of the street level frontage. For some corridors and centers, stronger requirements for truly “active” uses may be desirable.*

- A.** Require strong street-level active use standards for local centers and corridors. This may include a prohibition on residential units for a portion of the street level building. Given the intent of these small-scale places to provide services embedded in the neighborhood, it is important for them to provide more than residential uses.
- B.** Study and implement stronger street-level active use requirement for community and regional centers and community corridors. Tools could include regulations on floor-to-floor heights for the first story to facilitate conversion to commercial uses and reconsideration of appropriate street-level uses.
- C.** In downtown and urban center contexts, consider extending active use and transparency requirements above the street level to additional street-facing stories to create a more active street frontage.

05

Create design outcomes in suburban and urban edge contexts that promote active, pedestrian-friendly places.

**GOALS: 6, 7, 8**

*The suburban and urban edge neighborhood contexts are part of an overall urban city. Residents in these communities expressed desire for more than the typical car-oriented suburban form. Neighborhoods in all contexts should be active, pedestrian-friendly places with good multimodal connectivity.*

- A.** Revise large build-to and setback ranges currently allowed in mixed use/commercial zone districts in the suburban and urban edge contexts. Although these contexts should have some flexibility beyond the more urban contexts, building placement in mixed-use areas should still provide an active, pedestrian-friendly environment that is accessible through all modes of transportation.
- B.** Revise zoning code to provide better site design requirements for pedestrians, particularly internal circulation within large, multi-building developments.

# Recommendations



06

Incentivize the preservation of structures and features that contribute to the established character of an area, even if they are not designated as landmarks or historic districts.

**GOALS: 6, 7, 8, 9**

*The preservation and reuse of existing buildings enhances neighborhood character and encourages smarter, more efficient use of building materials. Although landmark designation is the most effective tool for preserving historic areas and structures, there are other tools to incentivize the preservation and reuse of existing structures throughout the city.*

- A.** Integrate historic resources surveys, like Discover Denver, that identify and provide data on buildings into land use planning and regulations.
- B.** Develop a citywide preservation plan. The plan could provide guidance on methods to incentivize the adaptive reuse of existing historic buildings.
- C.** Create new regulations to encourage the reuse of existing buildings. This could include requirements to salvage or reuse building materials after a structure is demolished or allowing flexibility in uses or density when an existing structure is reused and maintained.
- D.** Study and implement additional financial incentives for historic structures, such as tax abatements or grants for listing properties on local and/or state and national historic registers.

## Landscaping

### Problem Identification

Most zone districts in the current zoning code have minimal to no landscaping requirements. This means that properties throughout the city lack the vegetation needed to contribute to the character of our neighborhoods. In mixed-use centers and corridors, as well as industrial areas, low landscaping and large surface parking lots detract from the quality of the area and contribute to high temperatures and other climate impacts.

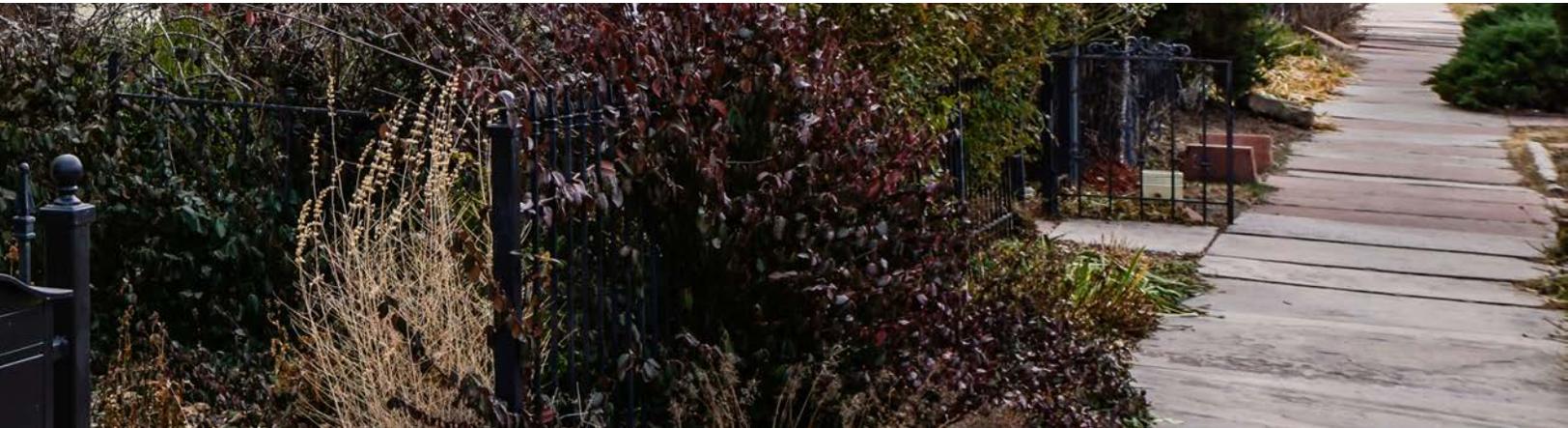
### Desired Outcomes

Water-wise landscaping should be incorporated into new development and added to existing areas, where feasible. Landscaping improves visual quality and continuity between buildings and also provides screening and shade. It advances goals for public health and environmental resiliency. Landscaping of sufficient quantity, variety, and size can also break up the mass of buildings.



*Carefully placed trees and landscaping can help screen unwanted views and provide transitions between uses.*

Land Use & Built Form:  
Design Quality & Preservation



POLICY

07

Improve requirements for landscaping, with a focus on climate-appropriate vegetation, for private property.

**GOALS: 6, 7, 8, 9**

BACKGROUND

*For low-intensity residential areas, the code does not contain minimum standards for landscaping on private property. In other areas, landscaping requirements are minimal. As a result, many new and redeveloped properties lack vegetation that contribute to neighborhood character and provide environmental, health and overall quality-of-life benefits. Enhanced landscaping requirements for new infill would improve compatibility and advance environmental goals such as reducing temperatures and improving air and water quality.*

STRATEGIES

- A.** Develop water-wise irrigation and landscaping standards for new infill in single- and two-unit residential districts. For new infill development, require trees, with adequate space to grow, to be planted on-site.
- B.** Study and implement revisions to landscaping standards to improve neighborhood character, support compatibility and to advance environmental goals.
  - Explore opportunities to calibrate landscape requirements by neighborhood context and/or place.
  - Revised standards could include requirements or incentives to improve and/or add landscaping for existing development, such as large surface parking lots.
  - Support better integration of private landscapes with historic parkways.



*Current regulations allow many residential properties to provide little or no live plant material, which detracts from the quality of the property and the public realm.*



*Selection and placement of climate appropriate trees and plants can help new residential infill fit into existing neighborhoods by framing buildings and softening edges.*

- C.** Limit the amount of impervious surface, such as paved areas, allowed on zone lots. This should be calibrated by context to reflect the differences between higher intensity areas, such as the urban center and downtown contexts, and lower-intensity residential areas (see more in quality-of-life policy 4).
- D.** Promote new development that integrates trees, vines, planters or other live plants into the building design and their outdoor spaces to soften architecture, frame spaces, minimize bulk and avoid harsh edges.

# Recommendations: Mobility



The following policies and strategies will help to create well-connected places throughout the city. The recommendations acknowledge the relationship between land use and transportation by considering context-sensitive street design and the role of the *Denver Moves: Transit* plan in achieving the city's growth strategy. Denver has a finite street network, but greater demands are being placed on the public right-of-way. These recommendations advance Denver's vision for a more complete multimodal transportation system, with an emphasis on safety, moving people, and creating attractive, sustainable public spaces.





*"Streets and their sidewalks—the main public places of a city—are its most vital organs."*

**-Jane Jacobs**

*Author, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities**

# Recommendations



POLICY

01

Encourage mode-shift — more trips by walking and rolling, biking and transit — through efficient land use and infrastructure improvements.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Denver streets are built out — in most areas of the city there is no room to build or widen streets, but the number of trips taken is increasing. Denver's streets can accommodate more trips by providing more efficient travel modes that move more people, especially transit. Additionally, providing space for services and amenities near the areas where people live reduces the distance needed to travel to access basic services.*

- A.** Implement the bicycle, pedestrian and transit networks in *Denver Moves* plans.
- B.** Improve multimodal access to downtown by implementing updates to the downtown multimodal access study (*Denver Moves: Downtown*).
- C.** Support safe routes to school programs.
- D.** Increase the number of services and amenities that are available by walking, rolling and biking by integrating more local centers and corridors into residential areas, especially for areas that score low in Access to Opportunity.
- E.** Promote mixed-use development in all centers and corridors.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

02

Align the impacts of private development with transportation infrastructure and promote development that creates walkable, transit-friendly communities.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Certain types of development, such as those that provide a high number of on-site parking spaces, can increase demands on the transportation network by generating more trips in single-occupancy vehicles. Developments can mitigate impacts to the overall transportation system by encouraging trips through more efficient modes.*

- A.** Adopt policies that require Transportation Demand Management programs for developments to maximize use of alternative modes and reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips on Denver's streets.
- B.** Work with city agencies to explore the feasibility and effectiveness of increased participation from new development to improve transportation infrastructure.
- C.** For centers and corridors downtown and in the urban center contexts, where access to transit is high, study and implement maximums for off-street parking in private development to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation.

# Mobility



## POLICY

03

On all streets, prioritize people walking and rolling over other modes of transportation.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*All streets in Denver should safely accommodate people walking and rolling by providing a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment.*

- A.** Ensure safe pedestrian crossings, especially along the High Injury Network identified by Vision Zero.
- B.** Develop access management policies — especially in centers and corridors in the downtown, urban center and general urban contexts — to reduce conflicts between driveways/ garages and pedestrians and cyclists.
- C.** Ensure that café seating in the public right-of-way provides ample and high-quality space for pedestrians and streetscaping, especially in areas with high pedestrian volumes.
- D.** Develop policies for shared spaces in appropriate locations to safely accommodate all users, flexible spaces and opportunities for events.
- E.** Eliminate any exemptions for people building projects to build sidewalks as part of the development review process.
- F.** Explore options to assist property owners when improvements required by redevelopment, such as sidewalks, is cost-prohibitive.

## BACKGROUND

## STRATEGIES

04

Implement the vision for street types and the layered multimodal network to create complete streets.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Streets can better accommodate the needs of all users when the design of the street takes into consideration the needs of the surrounding land-use character.*

- A.** Develop comprehensive street design guidelines based on *Blueprint Denver* street types to address components such as green infrastructure, street trees, bikeway design, amenity zones and sidewalks.
- B.** Create and adopt a citywide “Complete Streets” policy to support comprehensive street design guidelines.
- C.** Coordinate across city departments to revise street design standards, rules, and regulations to implement *Blueprint Denver* street types, modal priorities and a holistic vision for complete streets, including clearly defining roles and responsibilities for oversight, enforcement and maintenance of the public right-of-way.
- D.** Align street design guidelines, standards and rules and regulations to support Vision Zero goals and improve safety along the High Injury Network.
- E.** Ensure regulations promote design outcomes that prioritize pedestrians.
- F.** Establish freight efficiency corridors to consolidate freight traffic and reduce conflicts with other street users.

# Recommendations



POLICY

05

Embrace emerging technologies for mobility and transportation safety.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*New technologies are rapidly developing to improve safety for all modes. At the same time, technologies for driverless vehicles have been deployed. As this technology evolves over the next few decades, Denver should take steps to proactively address the impacts of driverless vehicles to its transportation infrastructure.*

- A.** Pilot technologies that improve safety and visibility of all roadway users such as Advanced Technology Congestion Management Deployment (ATCMTD), geofencing or adaptive signal control.
- B.** Implement innovative funding structures that address the infrastructure impact of future mobility technologies, such as autonomous or driverless vehicles.
- C.** As autonomous vehicles become more common, encourage pooled ownership and look for opportunities for new technology to reduce, rather than increase, the number of SOV trips, and disincentivize zero occupancy vehicle trips.
- D.** As infrastructure technology is adapted to incorporate autonomous vehicles ensure pedestrians are still prioritized, and encourage the use of “smart” technologies that enable the movement of the most number of people.
- E.** Promote equitable access to mobility technologies including dockless devices, on-demand services and bike sharing.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

06

Reduce impacts from development to pedestrian and bicycle mobility during construction.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Construction-related closures of sidewalks or bike lanes have adverse impacts on people walking or biking, especially those with impaired mobility. To address this, pedestrians and bicyclists should be accommodated during construction following national standards.*

- A.** Create policies to accommodate pedestrian and bicyclists through construction zones using for both private development and roadway construction.
- B.** Study and implement revised policies for construction detours so they include plans for when a bicycle facility is interrupted by a street closure.

# Mobility



## POLICY

07

Make transit more affordable to Denver residents.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Providing equitable access to transit will help to advance mobility and equity goals in Blueprint Denver. This means ensuring transit is an affordable transportation option, especially for those who are most dependent on it.*

- A.** Provide increased transit access for transit-dependent residents by increasing the amount of affordable housing near rail stations and along transit priority streets. This is especially important for areas that score low in Access to Opportunity.
- B.** Study and implement programs such as specialized fare structures or community-transit passes to improve the affordability of transit (including and Access-a-Ride) and to incentivize its use.

## BACKGROUND

## STRATEGIES

08

Connect centers and corridors across the city through a variety of modal choices.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Centers and corridors provide a higher concentration of employment, amenities and services including dining, shopping and entertainment. Since parking is a limited resource in many centers and corridors, the vitality of these areas can be strengthened by providing access through a variety of travel modes.*

- A.** Implement the sidewalk network in *Denver Moves: Pedestrians & Trails*.
- B.** Implement the bicycle network in *Denver Moves: Bicycles*.
- C.** Update the bicycle network from the *Denver Moves: Bicycles* plan to ensure low-stress bicycle connections to centers and corridors.
- D.** Continue developing citywide sidewalk maintenance and repair policies.
- E.** Implement the Transit Capital Investment Corridors in *Denver Moves: Transit*.

# Recommendations



## Vision Zero



In 2016, Denver announced its commitment to Vision Zero: to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and serious injuries on Denver's roadways by 2030. This transportation philosophy recognizes that no other goal is acceptable, and that everyone has the right to safely travel on our streets no matter where they are going and how they travel. As a result, Denver collaborated across many departments to develop the [Vision Zero Action Plan](#). This plan recognizes five primary needs that represent Denver's priorities for achieving Vision Zero.

1. Enhance City Processes and Collaboration
2. Build Safe Streets for Everyone
3. Create Safe Speeds
4. Promote a Culture of Safety
5. Improve Data and Be Transparent

The policies and strategies outlined in this section are intended to support these goals. As *Blueprint Denver* is implemented, it will be essential to consider the High Injury Network (HIN) from Vision Zero. Many of the HIN streets overlap with targeted growth areas, such as community corridors and transit priority streets, so it will be essential to improve safety in these areas.

09

POLICY

Improve safety on Denver's streets and collaborate with city departments on safety programs when developing small area plans.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

BACKGROUND

*Numerous plans, including the Vision Zero Action Plan, have been created to emphasize safety. To successfully implement, it is important that there is coordination at all levels. This includes coordinating implementation of Blueprint Denver and Vision Zero, especially where the Vision Zero high injury network (HIN) overlaps with high growth areas and modal priority streets.*

STRATEGIES

- A.** Build streets that are safe for everybody and implement the *Vision Zero Action Plan* to achieve zero traffic related fatalities by 2030.
- B.** Advance the goals of the *Vision Zero Action Plan* in the Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI).
- C.** Collaborate with Neighborhood Transportation Management Program in NPI.
- D.** Support the safe routes to school program.
- E.** Promote safety education and awareness and enforce safe speeds.
- F.** Create slow zones in priority areas such as school zones, major park zones and areas with a high concentration of seniors.

# Mobility



## POLICY

10

Provide equitable opportunities to improve streetscaping and placemaking along city streets.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

## BACKGROUND

*In many areas of the city, streetscaping is only possible if there is a self-taxing district, such as a business improvement district or general improvement district, to cover the cost of maintenance.*

## STRATEGIES

- A.** Study and implement funding programs to maintain improvements — including street trees, landscaping, stormwater planters and pedestrian lighting — to the public-right-of-way. This is especially important in corridors and centers.
- B.** Explore partnerships and programs for preserving and maintaining existing flagstone sidewalks where this is a valued part of the area's character.

11

Maximize the use of curb space — often used for on-street parking, loading and drop-offs — according to land use context.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*As more trips occur on Denver streets — including delivery services, transportation network companies (TNCs), transit and bicycles — there are competing needs for the curb-space or curb-lane. This space should be strategically used to benefit the most number of people.*

- A.** Develop policies that consider the highest and best use of the curb space based on context and what benefits the most number of people.
- B.** Study impacts to right-of-way and curb-space from emerging services such as shared mobility and on-demand services. This includes transportation network companies and storage of personal mobility vehicles such as dockless bike share, scooter share and personal bike corrals. Implement policies to provide the greatest and best use of the curb-space.

# Recommendations



12

POLICY

Implement transit priority streets as a strategy to direct growth.

GOALS: 1, 3, 4

BACKGROUND

*A foundation of the Blueprint Denver growth strategy is directing growth to regional centers, community centers and community corridors that are connected by transit priority streets. Positioning the city to implement these vital transit corridors, which will require coordination with neighboring communities, is critical to the success of this growth strategy.*

STRATEGIES

- A.** Evaluate and study the city's legislative, organizational and financial capacity to supplement, own and/or operate high quality transit service to support land use growth strategies.
- B.** Develop an implementation program to set priorities and a timeline for transit capital investment corridors from the *Denver Moves: Transit* plan.
- C.** Implement five of the high- or medium-capacity transit corridors in *Denver Moves: Transit* by 2040.
- D.** Implement the vision for future places on transit priority streets through regulatory changes, such as large rezonings, concurrent with decisions on transit investment.
- E.** Tie future transit investments to affordable housing development.
- F.** For areas that score high for Reducing Vulnerability to Displacement, integrate strategies to understand and mitigate the involuntary displacement of residents and local businesses into the planning and implementation of major transit investments. This includes integrating inclusive public outreach from the local community into project planning.

# Mobility



POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

13

Pursue funding mechanisms to raise revenue to fund multimodal infrastructure improvements and maintenance.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*While plans exist for each of the multimodal networks, a funding strategy must be in a place to ensure the networks are implemented.*

- A.** Evaluate increasing the price of metered parking to better capture value of on-street parking and fund transportation infrastructure.
- B.** Explore funding tools to enable increased investments and long-term funding for mobility projects and services.
- C.** Ensure transportation investments result in equitable access to multimodal infrastructure across the city.

14

Develop a comprehensive long-range transportation plan.

**GOALS: 1, 3, 4**

*Denver created the Strategic Transportation Plan in 2008. While this plan focused on moving people and recommended several projects, many of those projects have been completed. Further planning is needed to identify Denver's long-term transportation needs.*

- A.** Fund and create a long-range citywide transportation plan.
- B.** Involve the community in developing a comprehensive transportation vision that refines and relates to the vision of *Comprehensive Plan 2040*, *Blueprint Denver* and the *Denver Moves* plans.
- C.** As part of this plan, Identify additional projects to improve safety such as traffic calming, one-way to two-way conversions or crossing improvements.

# Recommendations:

## Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



Quality-of-life infrastructure refers to the places, trees, plants, waterways, parks and outdoor spaces that stitch together our communities and contribute to the health, needs, comfort, environmental resilience and social connectedness of Denver. Quality-of-life infrastructure helps ensure everyone has access to parks, trees, waterways, outdoor spaces, recreational amenities, healthy food and outdoor community gathering places. In some instances, quality-of-life infrastructure can incorporate important civic and institutional places, views, social services, libraries or schools. It also includes recognizing that trees and the natural environment are vital pieces of civic infrastructure and key features to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Quality-of-life infrastructure supports the need for individuals to connect with nature, community, history, access healthy food systems and enjoy a clean environment.

*"Everybody needs  
beauty as well as  
bread, places to play  
in...where nature may  
heal and give strength  
to body and soul"*

- John Muir  
conservationist, naturalist, writer

# Recommendations



01

Expand tools and regulations to ensure high-quality parks and outdoor public spaces keep pace with Denver's growth.

**GOALS: 2,7,9,10**

*Quality outdoor public spaces are essential to vibrant, complete neighborhoods. The demands of a growing population and evolving needs put increased pressure on the park system. Denver currently lacks tools to ensure the construction and maintenance of outdoor public spaces as the city continues to grow. The Game Plan for a Healthy City has implementation recommendations prioritizing high-need neighborhoods for improvements.*

- A.** Explore a variety of methods to provide permanent, sustainable funding options for park, trail and recreation needs. This could include working with city agencies to seek increased participation from new development to help meet increased demand for park and recreation services and facilities.
- B.** Evaluate the need to increase requirements and/or create incentives for publicly accessible outdoor space for mid- and large-scale developments in centers, corridors and districts.
- C.** Develop standards and guidelines around privately owned outdoor spaces to ensure public accessibility, great design and features to respond to culture of the local community. Examine the need to tailor standards and guidelines based on context and/or place.

02

Protect and expand Denver's tree canopy on both public and private property.

**GOALS: 7,9,10**

*The urban tree canopy provides critical environmental benefits; trees keep temperatures cooler by providing shade, contribute to clean air, and help to prevent water pollution by managing stormwater in their canopies and stabilizing soils. During the redevelopment design phase, too often trees are not seen as critical design and infrastructure elements and are frequently removed or not included in a project's design.*

- A.** Prioritize trees in green infrastructure facilities to improve urban tree canopy.
- B.** Support a robust street tree canopy by prioritizing trees in right-of-way design.
- C.** Develop tree planting and water-wise irrigation requirements for new development on private property.
- D.** Strengthen standards to protect trees and explore requirements and/or incentives to mitigate tree loss during redevelopment on both public and private property to help achieve Denver's tree canopy goal.
- E.** Incentivize technology to support healthy tree growth, such as structural cells, in centers and corridors, especially in the downtown, urban center and general urban neighborhood contexts. This will help to expand and maintain a healthy tree canopy in more urban areas.
- F.** Study and implement requirements and/or incentives for existing parking lots to provide landscaping improvements that include trees; giving priority to upgrading existing parking lots in centers and corridors.

POLICY

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

## Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



03

POLICY

Minimize flooding and effectively manage stormwater as part of a larger integrated ecological system.

**GOALS: 9, 10**

BACKGROUND

*Many neighborhoods experience flooding during major storms due to natural drainage flow and historic development patterns that did not incorporate stormwater management. Flooding can damage public and private property and public utilities. Untreated stormwater runoff releases pollutants into our urban waterways, which impacts overall water quality, harms wildlife and makes recreation areas less safe.*

STRATEGIES

- A.** Develop a citywide multi-disciplinary water plan that identifies and prioritizes high-need areas for stormwater improvements to treat and convey stormwater runoff. Utilize the plan to coordinate projected areas for growth with high-need areas for stormwater improvements.
- B.** Include a floodplain analysis and considerations in all plans and proactively seek to protect communities from future flood risk.
- C.** Encourage development to coordinate and consolidate stormwater outfalls along waterways.
- D.** Encourage adaptable, multi-functional stormwater facilities to support redevelopment and provide neighborhood recreational amenities.
- E.** Provide room for our waterways, where feasible, to help restore natural functionality that has been impaired due to increased urbanization and channelization.

## Green Infrastructure



Green Infrastructure commonly refers to a variety of ways to treat stormwater that protects, restores and/or mimics the natural water cycle, including bioswales, porous pavement and rain gardens.

Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not run through a formal treatment facility. Green Infrastructure is a way to filter stormwater using a more natural process. Our parks, natural areas and man-made facilities can mimic natural water systems by using plants and soils to slow and filter stormwater runoff on a larger scale.

Green Infrastructure can also be on a smaller scale, using engineered structures such as stormwater planters, green gutters, and green alleys that slow and clean stormwater runoff prior to reaching our river, creeks, and water bodies.

*Blueprint Denver* also uses the term "green infrastructure" more generally to refer to the larger network of trees, open spaces and parks that form a vital infrastructure component of our city.

# Recommendations

## Impervious Surfaces



As Denver develops, impervious surfaces—which are hard surfaces that repel water such as roads, buildings and parking lots—continue to cover more and of the city’s land area. This creates challenges to managing both the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff. Additionally, impervious surfaces lead to urban heat islands, which results in hotter temperatures. Impervious surfaces can also have negative effects on design quality, since paved surfaces are less inviting and attractive than green areas with trees and plants. Currently, about 45% of Denver’s land area is covered by impervious surfaces. This percentage is projected to significantly increase in future years based on current development and redevelopment patterns..

Limiting impervious surfaces on private property does not have to conflict with *Blueprint Denver’s* goals for compact development and context-sensitive density. For example, limitations on impervious surface could focus on the undeveloped portions of lots without restricting building coverage. Implementation of limits could also include incentives where more units or taller building heights are allowed in exchange for minimizing the footprint of the structure and providing permeable paving/landscaped areas on the lot.

Promote environmentally-friendly development strategies in the public and private realms.

**GOALS: 6, 9, 10**

*Environmentally-friendly development strategies contribute to water quality by reducing the amount of pollutants entering our water system. These strategies advance sustainability by utilizing the site’s natural features and reducing impacts on ecosystems and infrastructure. Urban outdoor water use is the largest demand on most municipal supplies. Outdoor water conservation is important as water resources become more scarce.*

- A.** Create incentives for private development to integrate green infrastructure — such as pervious surfaces, permeable pavement and plantings that provide water quality — into project design.
- B.** Study and implement requirements to preserve existing green infrastructure, including trees, within the right-of-way. This could include regulations to replace green infrastructure components when preservation is not feasible.
- C.** Develop street design standards that implement green infrastructure for new development.
- D.** Identify and remove policy or regulatory barriers that make it difficult for private development to build green infrastructure, such as permeable pavers, adjacent to and within the right-of-way.
- E.** Limit the amount of impervious surface on private property. Consider neighborhood context or places to calibrate impervious surface limits.
- F.** Include water conservation requirements for landscaping for new developments, such as irrigation standards that incorporate water budgeting and hydrozone analysis. Promote efficient water use for landscaping.

## Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



## POLICY

05

Ensure attractive streets and outdoor spaces in all centers and corridors, giving priority to pedestrian spaces and amenities.

**GOALS: 7, 9, 10**

*The pedestrian environment should create a comfortable walking experience and serve as an attractive, well-lit space that promotes activity and social interaction. Trees and plants between the street and sidewalk serve as a buffer for people walking, while providing cooling shade and an attractive transition from public to private space. Reclaiming streets as a space for pedestrians, special events and programing provides social spaces in dense urban environments.*

- A.** Encourage street design that minimizes impervious surfaces and look for opportunities to re-purpose parts of the street to enhance the pedestrian realm.
- B.** Evaluate and revise rules for use of the right-of-way by utilities, advertisers and telecommunications providers, balancing aesthetics and infrastructure necessities.
- C.** Identify public safety improvements to streets, including appropriate levels of lighting.
- D.** Update street design standards and guidelines to include landscape requirements for appropriate water-efficient and pollinator-friendly plants.
- E.** Identify opportunities to creatively use right-of-way as special shared streets that prioritize pedestrians, provide amenities and encourage gathering and socializing.
- F.** Prioritize pedestrian relationships in design such as building orientation, vehicular access points (minimize curb cuts) and public wayfinding.

## BACKGROUND

## STRATEGIES

06

Preserve and rehabilitate Denver's designated parkways and boulevards.

**GOALS: 7,8,9**

*Denver's legacy of 35 designated parkways and boulevards is a significant component of the city's identity and history. Designed as grand tree-lined avenues, these wide landscaped streets with park-like settings share certain unifying features but are individually distinct. These streets enhance Denver's unique sense of place and urban quality, providing tree-lined civic connections. Protected by ordinance, these streets (and the adjacent private property) have increased regulations.*

- A.** Consider updating the Parkway and Boulevards Design Guidelines to improve the integration of parkway requirements with other street standards. This could include how to integrate a complete sidewalk network into our parkways.
- B.** Create corridor plans to help refine the approach to some parkways where the vision for the character has not been fully implemented, such as Colorado Boulevard and Federal Boulevard.

# Recommendations



POLICY

07

Recognize greenways and trails as multimodal connections providing a variety of experiences and habitats for people, plants and wildlife.

**GOALS: 2, 9, 10**

*Most of Denver's trails follow urban waterways offering safe and scenic routes through various neighborhoods, serving both recreational and mobility needs. Trails are ecologically important to Denver since they provide plant biodiversity and critical urban habitat for pollinators and animals.*

- A.** Study and implement tools to incentivize environmentally-sensitive, trail-oriented development along river and creek corridors.
- B.** Explore opportunities for public and private development to enhance and expand Denver's trail network.
- C.** Evaluate opportunities to convert streets to greenways and/or trails for multimodal connections and ecosystem benefits.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

08

Develop tools to improve access to healthy foods to support community health outcomes.

**GOALS: 2, 3, 10**

*Access to healthy food is key to community health. Lack of access to healthy food, including affordable, culturally relevant healthy food, contributes to obesity and other chronic diseases.*

- A.** Evaluate city regulations to remove barriers to community-supported agriculture and to expand access to fresh food and produce.
- B.** During small area planning, identify opportunities to expand healthy, culturally-relevant food access and programming. In areas with limited food access, community gardens, greenhouses, edible landscaping and mobile produce markets are tools that can be calibrated to develop culturally relevant recommendations.
- C.** Explore ways to increase use of public spaces for non-permanent fresh food retail, including farmers markets and mobile vending.
- D.** Support recreation centers, schools and libraries as hubs for a healthy community and identify opportunities for them to provide spaces for community gardens, fresh food retail and health education.
- E.** Analyze areas with a saturation of unhealthy food uses and develop regulatory tools to address impacts, particularly on vulnerable populations.
- F.** Incentivize and support efforts to recruit and retain grocery stores in centers and corridors, with focus on areas of low food access.
- G.** Develop Healthy Food Systems Plans for under-served areas as identified in the *Denver Food Vision Plan* for inclusion in small area plans.

## Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



POLICY

09

Develop tools to improve environmental health, especially in areas that score low for Access to Opportunity.

**GOALS: 9, 10**

*Addressing environmental and physical challenges in neighborhoods can lead to reductions in chronic stress and improve overall mental and physical wellbeing.*

- A.** Study and implement tools to reduce or mitigate environmental pollution impacts on residents, with special consideration for sensitive uses and populations, including senior housing and care facilities, child care centers and schools.
- B.** Review how industrial uses are currently defined and categorized in order to better respond to a more nuanced and modernized industry.
- C.** Evaluate potential impacts of industrial uses on vulnerable populations. This could include studying the treatment of "nonconforming" industrial uses that may have continuing environmental impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.
- D.** Through small area planning, study potential land use approaches to mitigate environmental pollution impacts, particularly on vulnerable communities.
- E.** Through small area planning, consider regulatory tools or other strategies to reduce noise pollution, especially for communities located near highways and rail corridors.
- F.** Develop tools to better engage vulnerable communities when contemplating major public and private projects.

BACKGROUND

STRATEGIES

## Environmental Justice

Environmental justice refers to all people having the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, as well as equal access to decision-making processes for a healthy environment. It is an important part of improving and maintaining a clean and healthy environment, especially for those who have historically suffered from sources of pollution within their communities. The development, implementation and enforcement of laws, regulations and policies are only considered just if they include meaningful involvement and fair treatment of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin or income. Addressing environmental and physical challenges in Denver's neighborhoods can lead to reductions in chronic stress and improve overall mental and physical wellbeing.

# Recommendations



## Game Plan for a Healthy City



*Game Plan for a Healthy City* is an adopted supplement to *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and part of the larger Denveright coordinated planning efforts. It provides a roadmap for our public parks, recreation programs, urban forest and environment

*Game Plan* has an implementation recommendation to increase the percentage of residents who can walk to a park in 10 minutes or less, prioritizing high-need neighborhoods for improvements. This recommendation is essential to *Blueprint Denver's* vision for a city where every neighborhood is complete.

10

Work with public and private partners to improve access to shops, restaurants, entertainment, civic uses, services and a variety of daily needs for all Denver residents.

**GOALS: 2,7,10**

*A complete neighborhood is where people of all ages and abilities have safe and convenient access to places and things needed in daily life. This includes a variety of housing types, grocery stores, child care, schools, libraries, social services and other services, as well as active transportation options. The interconnectedness of places and creating complete neighborhoods and places supports community health and well-being.*

POLICY

BACKGROUND

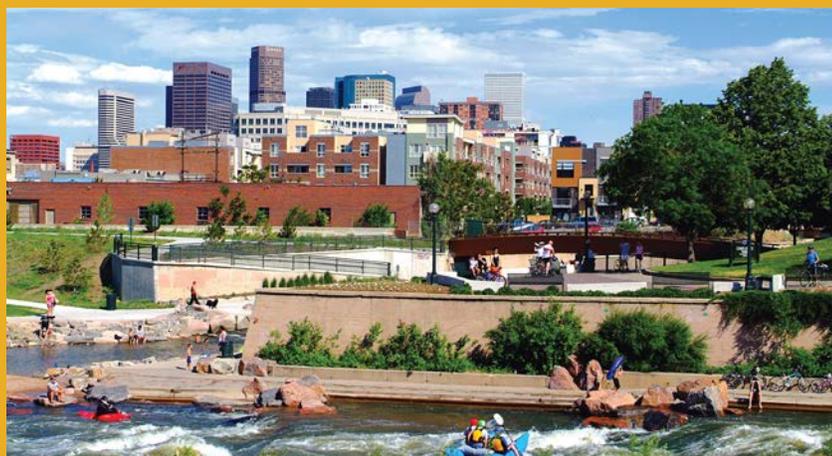
STRATEGIES

- A.** Prioritize street and trail improvements and connections leading to and through existing and future centers and corridors.
- B.** Develop incentives to promote human scaled, accessible and inclusive mixed-use centers and corridors.
- C.** Promote development that compatibly integrates and includes daily needs such as child care centers, grocery stores and community-serving retail.
- D.** Support safe and equitable access to daily needs including public restrooms and water bottle filling stations.

## Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



### Climate Change

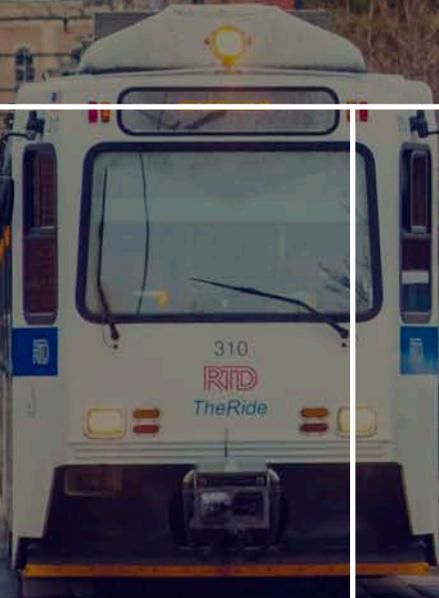


Climate change is not only the single greatest public health and environmental threat, it is one of the biggest challenges of our generation. Local impacts include continually worsening air quality and extreme heat, drought and catastrophic storms. The effects of climate change will continue to be felt in Denver without action. Climate change also threatens the city's vision for equity since its devastating effects have a disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable populations, including lower income residents and the elderly. Many mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change lead to direct reductions in the burden of health issues, enhance community resilience, help alleviate poverty and address inequity.

As outlined *80 x 50 Climate Action Plan* (2018), Denver is focusing on reducing green house gas emissions related to buildings, electricity generation and transportation sectors in order to make the largest impact and meet our carbon reduction goals. *Blueprint Denver's* policies and strategies support Denver's approach to meet the 80 x 50 Climate Goal. The city also as a plan for to prepare for the risks and impacts of climate change — see more in the *Climate Adaptation Plan* (2014).

*“I have an affection for a great city. I feel safe in the neighbourhood of man, and enjoy the sweet security of the streets.”*

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
Poet



# 4. Complete Neighborhoods and Networks

Planning and implementing a system of complete neighborhoods connected by a complete multimodal transportation network is critical to achieving *Blueprint Denver's* vision.

Denver's mosaic of distinct neighborhoods, built over the last 160 years, shows us that land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure need to be thought of holistically. The city's neighborhood development patterns follow the dominant transportation mode of that era—beginning as a town centered around the train station, then neighborhoods built by streetcars and bedroom communities served by freeways.

*Blueprint Denver* explores this fundamental relationship between where we live, work and play and how we move throughout the city. The plan's vision and goals are realized through the planning and implementation of complete neighborhoods connected by a complete multimodal transportation network.

Complete neighborhoods have three individual elements—land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure—that are interrelated and take different forms across the city through different places, street types and neighborhood contexts. These complete neighborhoods should be connected by a complete multimodal transportation network with more choices to get to our jobs, schools, homes and leisure activities. Building out complete networks for all modes—pedestrians, bicycles, transit, autos and goods movement—is essential to moving more people on our streets.

When successfully paired together, complete neighborhoods and complete networks ensure that all residents can expect consistent access to a diversity of choice in housing and jobs, a variety of shops, restaurants and cultural amenities, and an opportunity to engage in comfortable parks and social spaces. Strengthened connections between the places that make our neighborhoods unique leads to a Denver that is more equitable, accessible and livable.

130

4.1 Elements of a Complete Neighborhoods

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4.8 Transit Priority Network

180

4.9 Auto and Goods Movement Network

# Complete Neighborhoods and Networks

*Blueprint Denver's* vision and goals are realized through the planning and implementation of complete neighborhoods connected by a complete multimodal transportation network.

## Complete Networks

Denver will have a complete multimodal transportation network across the city to provide more choices to get to our jobs, schools, homes and leisure activities.

### Elements of a Complete Network

#### **Pedestrian Network**

All streets are designed to prioritize people walking, including those using mobility devices. Certain streets can be further enhanced to create vibrant public spaces.

#### **Bicycle Network**

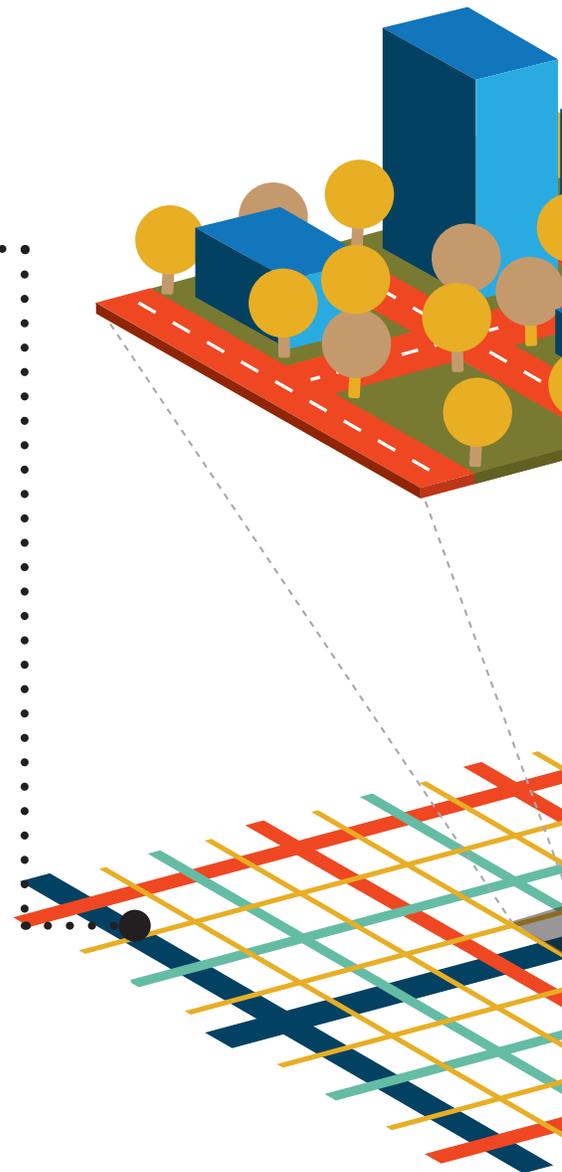
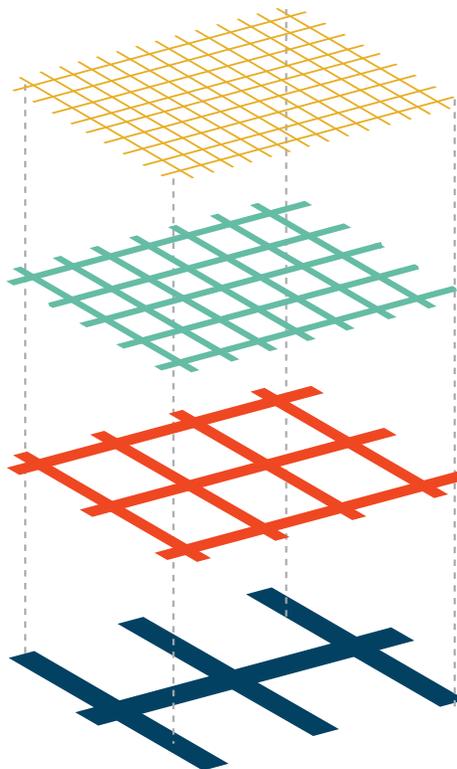
Bicycle priority streets prioritize comfort and convenience for people biking.

#### **Transit Network**

Transit priority streets create a complete local transit network that complements the regional rail network.

#### **Auto and Goods Movement**

The network that promotes efficient auto and goods movement. Vehicle technology and how goods are delivered and received are rapidly changing.



# Complete Neighborhoods

Denver will be composed of complete neighborhoods accessible to everyone, regardless of age, ability or income.

## Elements of a Complete Neighborhood



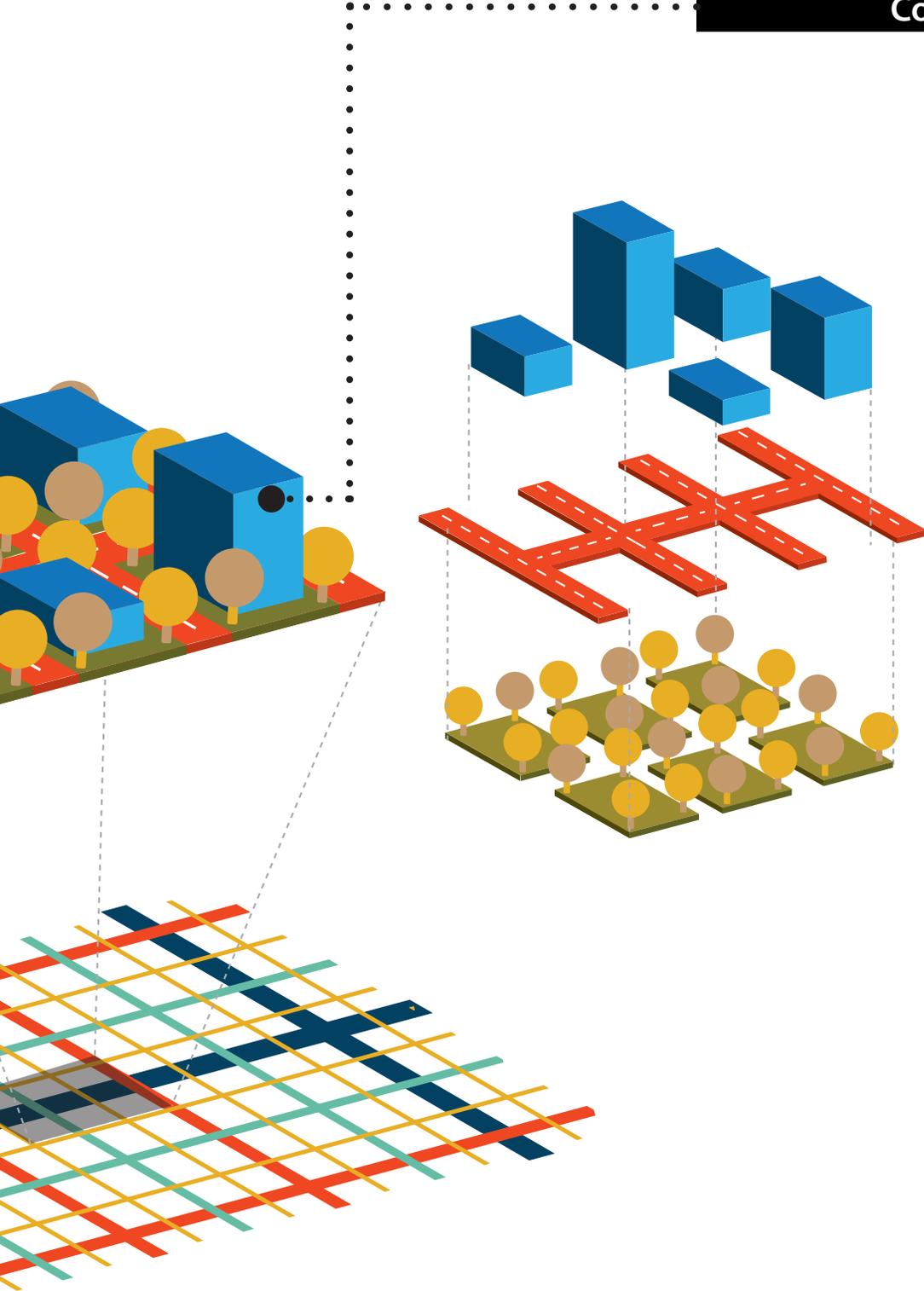
Enhance the character and quality of neighborhoods.



Connect people to the neighborhood places where they live, work and play.



Provide neighborhoods with parks, trees, natural features, recreation opportunities and civic and social spaces.



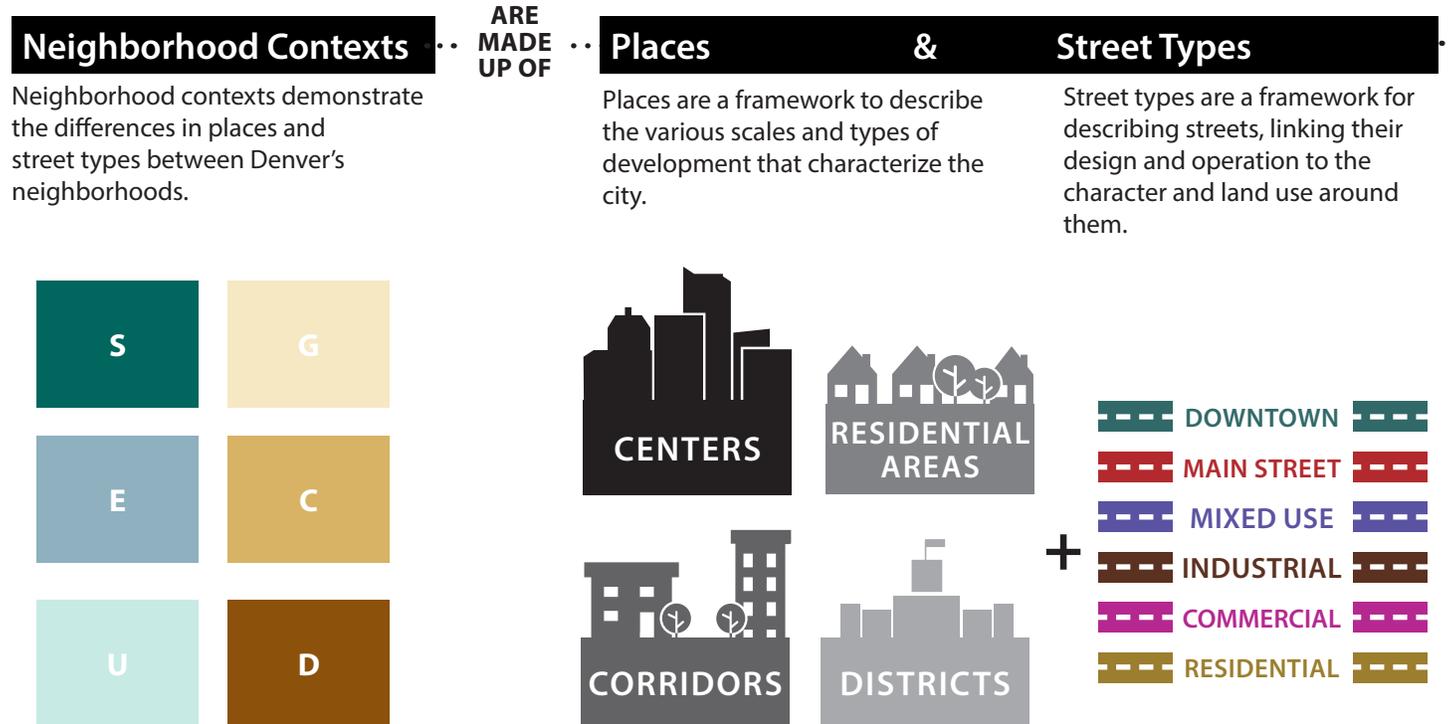
# Complete Neighborhoods

A truly inclusive city is composed of complete neighborhoods and great places accessible to everyone, regardless of age, ability or income.

As Denver continues to evolve as an inclusive city, we must strive to create complete neighborhoods for everyone. Access to vital community amenities should not be limited to only certain neighborhoods in our city. Although Denver aspires to be a city of complete neighborhoods, this does not mean all neighborhoods should be the same or static. Even complete neighborhoods continue to evolve. The completeness of each neighborhood is defined by its distinct and authentic history, culture and character, as well as its access to a variety of housing types, services, green spaces and employment opportunities. The context-appropriate integration of utility infrastructure is also part of a complete neighborhood.

*Blueprint Denver* establishes a framework to plan and implement complete neighborhoods. Three interrelated elements form the foundation of a complete neighborhood: land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure. Everything that makes a neighborhood complete—such as diverse housing options, great urban design, historic character, street trees, parks and open spaces, walkable streets and convenient services—falls within these three elements.

How the complete neighborhood elements vary and come together result in the different places and streets found in our city’s many neighborhoods. For example, a residential



area will have different attributes of land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure if it is in the suburban context versus the general urban context. In the suburban context, densities are lower, blocks do not have alleys and open space is more likely to be large parks with active recreation. In the general urban context, there are high densities, blocks are rectangular with alleys and open space often includes more urban plazas.

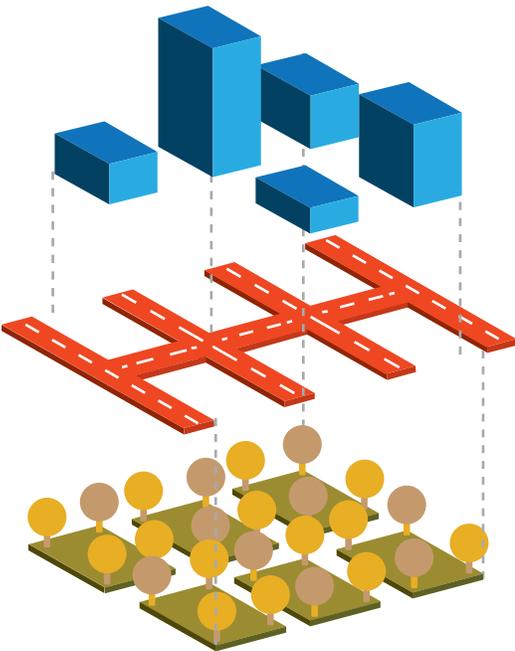
The complete neighborhood elements also vary by the places and streets within each neighborhood context. For example, the building scale, building siting and level of activity is less in a local center compared to a regional center.

The ability to calibrate the different elements of a complete neighborhood by neighborhood context, place and street type provides a considerable amount of nuance when mapping our unique and evolving neighborhoods.

A good way to measure many of these components, and whether we are advancing a city of complete neighborhoods, is the Access to Opportunity measurement in Chapter 2. The following pages show how land use and built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure make up the places and street types that make up our neighborhoods. More detail is provided for each neighborhood context in Chapter 5.

THAT ARE MADE UP OF . . . .

### The Elements of a Complete Neighborhood



Enhance the character and quality of neighborhoods.



Connect people to the neighborhood places where they live, work and play.



Provide neighborhoods with parks and open spaces, natural features, recreation opportunities and social spaces.

### Other Elements of a Complete Neighborhood

There are additional components of a complete neighborhood. Civic assets like schools, libraries and social services are important components of a complete neighborhood that foster inclusion, equity and opportunity

for all. These community anchors play an important role in our daily lives and make neighborhoods complete places where we can live, work and play.

# Land Use and Built Form



Elements contributing to the character and quality of places including block pattern, scale, the relationship between buildings and the street and the mix and intensity of uses.

## Block & Lot Pattern

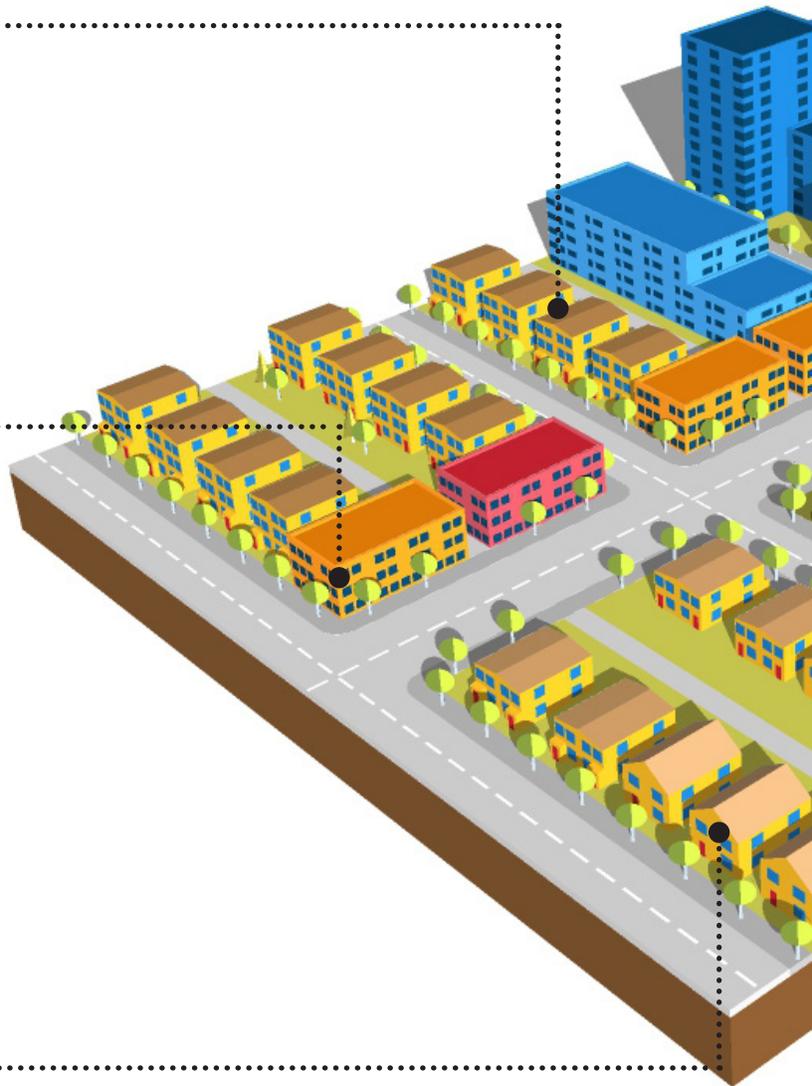
Streets and block patterns can vary due to many factors including the density and age of the area. Access to transit, walkability and overall connectivity can all be impacted by the shape and type of development pattern.

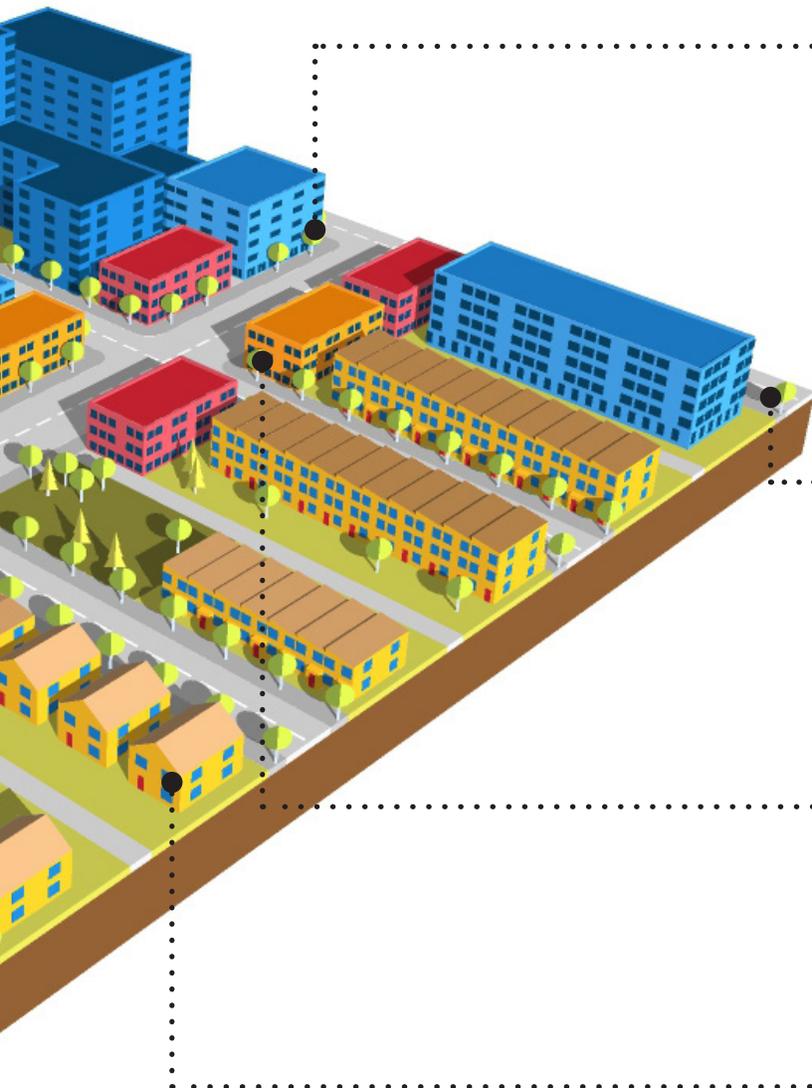
## Public-Private Interface

This is about the relationship between buildings and the street, or public realm. Buildings in more compact built environments, such as downtown, tend to orient linearly along the street and activate the street with windows, entries and engaging uses. In contrast, buildings in more dispersed residential neighborhoods tend to be set back further from the street, but still respond to the street and its character.

## Building Scale

Built form includes how tall a building is and how it relates to the street. Height and massing of buildings may vary depending on the scale and intensity of the place.





**Mix & Intensity of Uses**

This captures whether an area is primarily one use, such as residential or commercial, or a mix of uses. It also addresses the intensity of uses. For example, in a residential area, there could be primarily multi-unit buildings, or more single- and two-unit structures. The scale of a place will help to the intensity of uses. For example, regional centers are large in scale and offer the greatest intensity. In contrast, smaller local centers are least intense.

**Off-Street Parking**

This land use provides spaces for vehicles to park. Demand for off-street parking will vary by place type and the mix of uses prevalent as well as any transportation demand management programs.

**Draw**

The scale of a place impacts the draw to the area. For example, regional centers will attract people from all over Denver and the greater region, whereas local centers primarily serve residents from the adjacent neighborhood.

**Building Footprint**

Buildings in a more compact development pattern typically have a smaller footprint. In contrast, the more dispersed development pattern typical in suburban areas tends to support larger building footprints with more space devoted to parking.

# Mobility



The multimodal transportation elements to connect people to the places where they live, work and play.

## Walkways

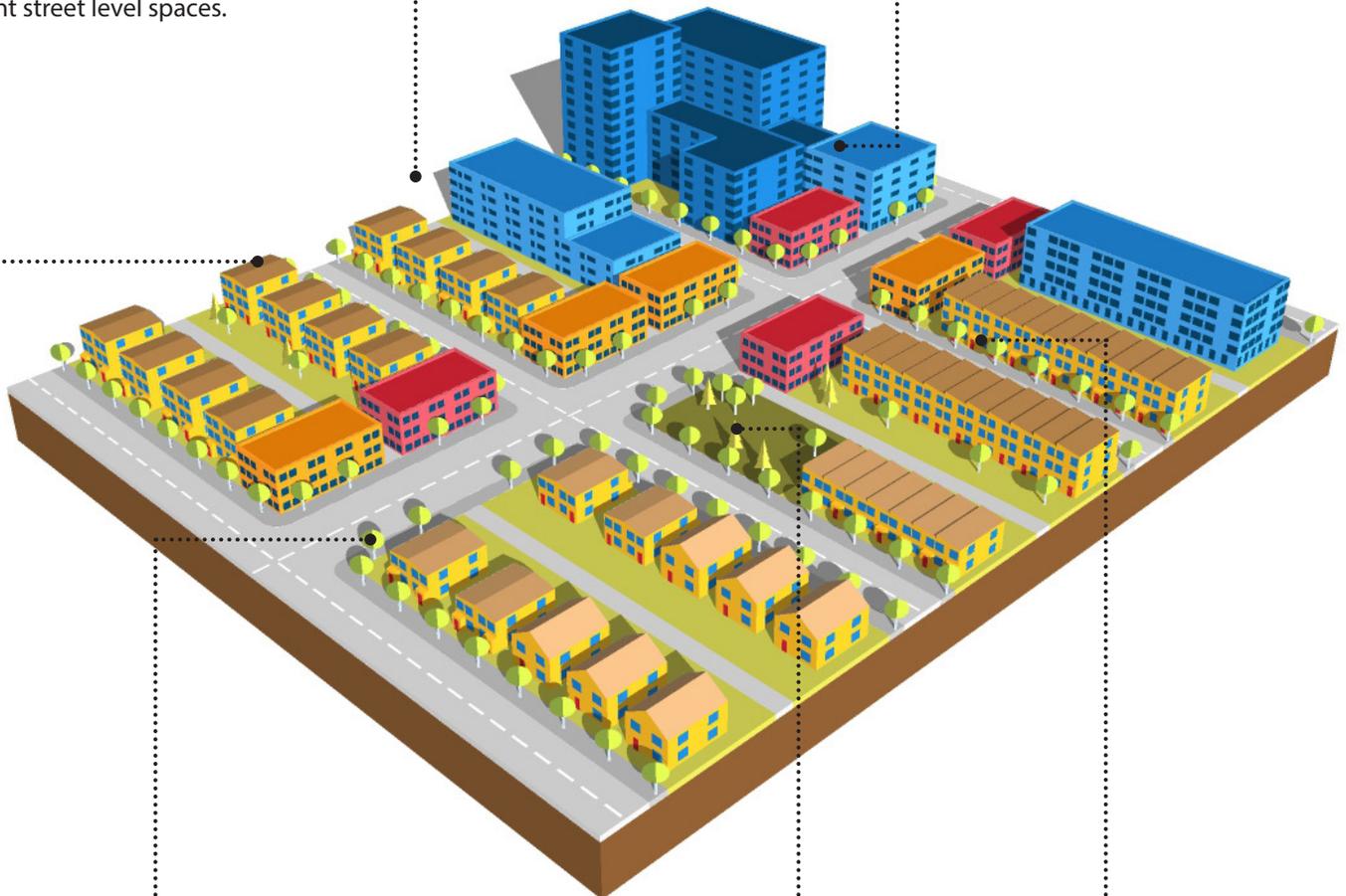
Walkways enable everyone, including those who use mobility devices, to access destinations. They include sidewalks and street crossings. As all persons will be a pedestrian at some point, walkways are a fundamental element of the transportation system. They are also critical to creating active, vibrant street level spaces.

## Bikeways

Bikeways make streets comfortable for people biking of all ages and abilities, reinforcing biking as an attractive transportation choice. They include bike lanes, protected bike lanes and neighborhood bikeways.

## Transit Facilities

Transit facilities ensure that transit in Denver is rapid and reliable. They include transit-only lanes, queue jump lanes, transit signal priority and a variety of stop and station enhancements that make transit an attractive transportation choice.



## Travel Lanes

Travel lanes move people in cars and buses or people biking.

## Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure includes a network of parks, open spaces, drainageways, floodplains and constructed facilities that use natural systems and processes to provide benefits including improved air and water quality, reduced flooding risk, urban heat mitigation and climate resiliency.

## Amenities

Several urban amenities contribute to a high-quality transportation system, including street trees, bike racks, furniture (such as benches), wayfinding signs and street lighting.

# Quality-of-Life Infrastructure



The parks, open spaces, trees, plants, natural features, recreation opportunities and centers, libraries, art and dynamic civic and social spaces that contribute to our quality-of- life.

### Parks and Recreational Spaces

Trails, parks, fields and recreation centers serve as multi-functional spaces for sports, leisure and activity. The scale and type of recreation available to residents may differ by neighborhood context and place and improves the health of Denver’s residents.

### Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure includes a network of parks, street trees, landscaped areas, open spaces, drainageways, floodplains and man-made facilities. This infrastructure helps to manage stormwater and provides a number of vital environmental, economic and social benefits.



### Social Spaces

Social spaces are places where people gather to interact and engage with each other and the natural environment. These places can vary in size from a small plaza downtown to a neighborhood park in a more residential setting.

### Natural Features

Natural features include trees, landscaping, plants, water bodies, topography and other non man-made elements.

# Neighborhood Contexts

*Blueprint Denver*, as well as the Denver Zoning Code, is organized by neighborhood contexts. A context-based approach sets guidelines for character-compatible development.

## suburban

## urban edge

## urban

## genera



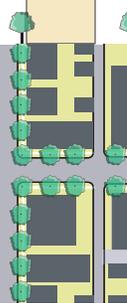
Range of uses from single-unit and multi-unit residential to commercial corridors and centers. Block patterns are generally irregular with curvilinear streets. Alleys are not commonly found. Buildings are typically set back from the street and range in scale.



Contains elements of the suburban and urban contexts. Small multi-unit residential and commercial areas are typically embedded in 1-unit and 2-unit residential areas. Block patterns are generally regular with a mix of alley access. Buildings are lower scale and generally set back farther from the street.



Small multi-unit residential and mixed-use areas are typically embedded in 1-unit and 2-unit residential areas. Block patterns are generally regular with a mix of alley access. Buildings are lower scale and closer to the street.



Predominant 1-unit and 2-unit residential areas with low scale buildings. Block patterns are generally consistent and buildings are medium scale and closer to the street.



Walkable and bikeable with access to transit but still mostly reliant on cars.

Walkable and bikeable with access to transit but still some reliance on cars.

High degree of walkability, bikeability, and good access to transit with less reliance on cars.

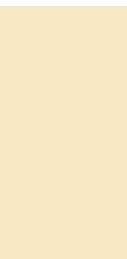
High degree of walkability, bikeability, and good access to transit with less reliance on cars.

Parks of various sizes, natural areas, open spaces, schools, civic and social spaces. A range of recreational amenities. Trees are found on private property but also on the street.

Parks of various sizes and scales. Various types of schools, civic and social spaces. Mixed occurrence of tree lawns/planting strips with higher percentage of tree canopy cover.

Parks of various sizes and scales. Schools, civic and social spaces. Generous tree lawns/planting strips with higher percentage of tree canopy cover. Designated parkways and boulevards are most common.

Parks of various sizes and scales. Schools, civic and social spaces. Generous tree lawns/planting strips with higher percentage of tree canopy cover. Designated parkways and boulevards are most common.

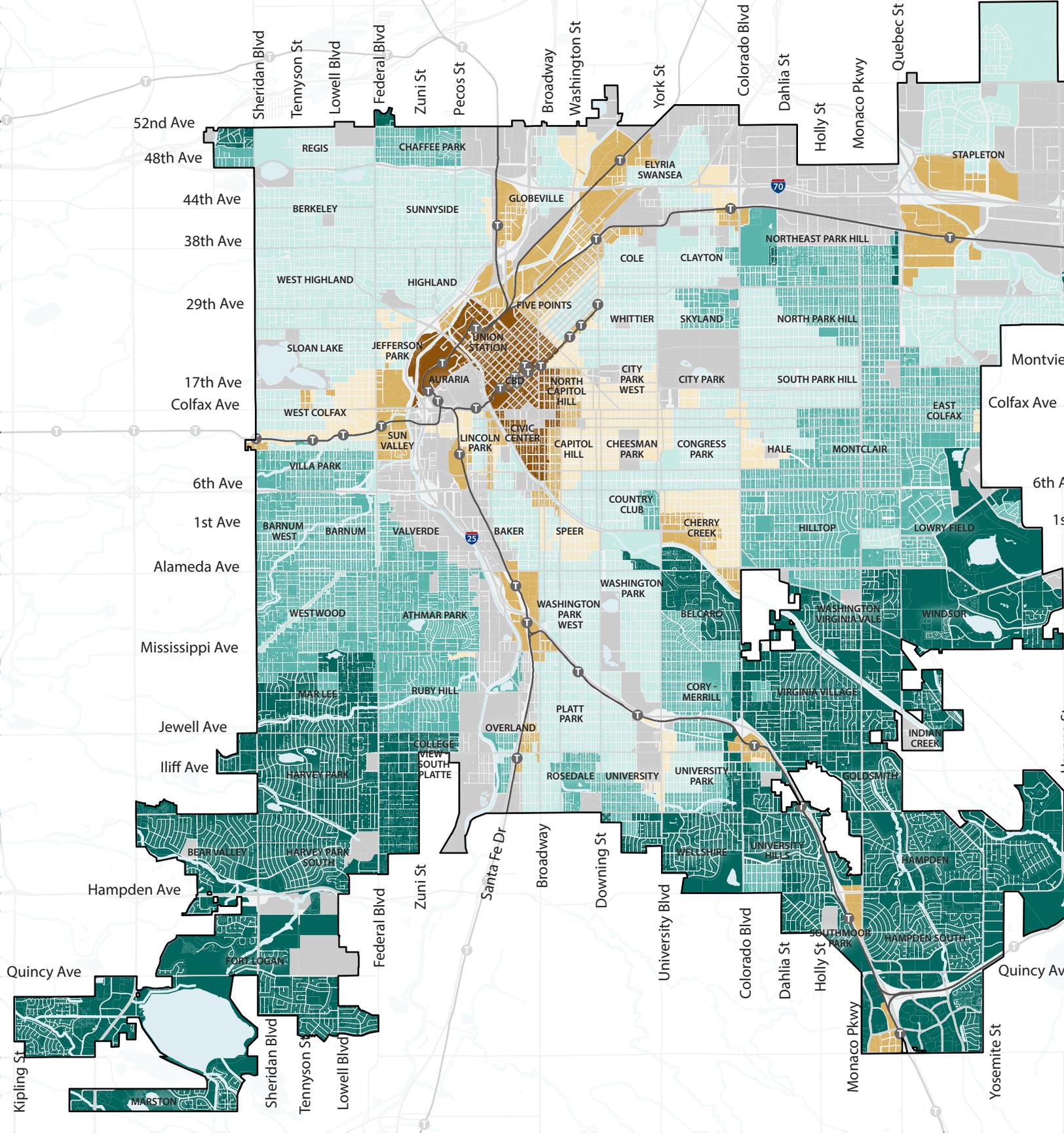


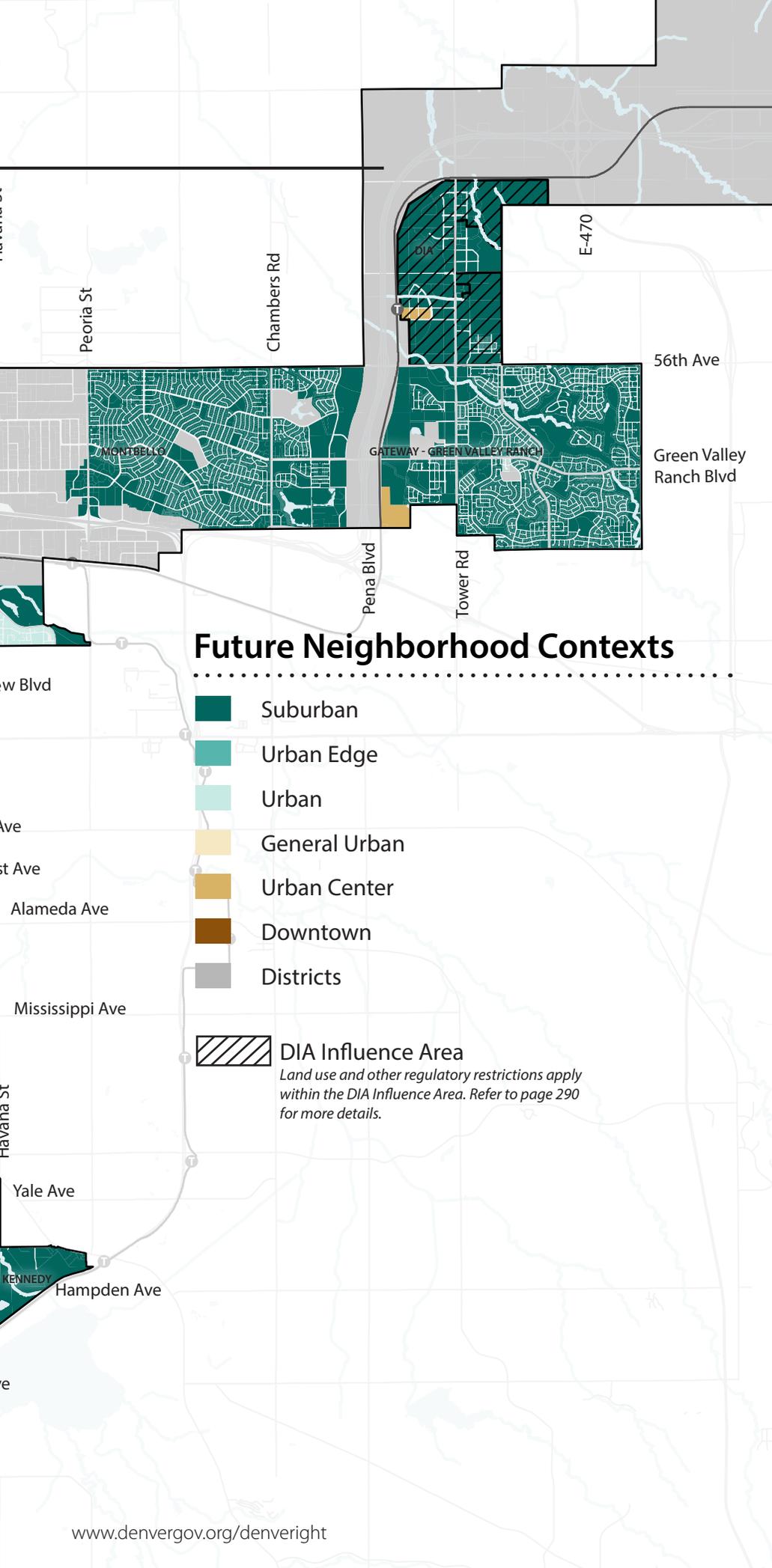
Denver’s neighborhoods typically reflect the era in which they were built. The intensity and mix of uses, density, scale of buildings, lot sizes, block pattern, parking and types of green space all vary by neighborhood largely due to the preferred transportation options available at the time of development. Neighborhood contexts are a way to understand the differences in land use and built form, mobility options, and quality-of-life infrastructure between different neighborhoods. This spread is intended as a short, high-level summary. For more detail, including aspirational characteristics and policy guidance by place, see Chapter 5.

| suburban  | urban center  | downtown  | districts  |
|---|---|---|--|
|   |   |   |  |
| <p>Primarily multi-unit structures. Single-unit residential and mixed-use are embedded in multi-unit areas. Block patterns are generally regular with consistent alley access. Buildings are close to the street.</p> | <p>A high mix of uses throughout the area, with multi-unit residential typically in multi-story, mixed-use building forms. Block patterns are generally regular with consistent alley access. Larger scale buildings close to the street.</p> | <p>The highest mix of uses in the city throughout the context including multi-unit residential, commercial, office, civic and institutional. Block patterns are generally regular with perpendicular and diagonal streets. Large mixed-use buildings close to the street.</p> | <p>Areas that serve a specific purpose, usually highly specific based on uses, such as education, industry or health care. Block patterns, urban design and mobility connections vary based on specific use.</p> |
| <p>High levels of walkability, and good access to transit. City streets with little reliance on cars.</p>   | <p>High levels of pedestrian and bicycle use and good access to high-capacity transit with minimal reliance on cars.</p>  | <p>The greatest level of multimodal connectivity with the greatest access to high-capacity transit.</p>   | <p>The transportation network varies by district, responding to specific conditions due to land use, built form and surrounding context.</p>   |
| <p>Various sizes and privately owned, publicly accessible outdoor spaces and plazas. Trees are within planting strips and expanded streetscape planting areas.</p>  | <p>Smaller public parks and privately owned, publicly accessible outdoor spaces and plazas. Trees are within planters and expanded streetscape planting areas.</p>  | <p>Special use parks. Features a range of flexible outdoor spaces and hardscaped plazas. Street trees are within planters and expanded streetscape planting areas.</p>  | <p>A range of parks and quasi-public outdoor spaces with flexible open space and hardscaped plazas. Varies greatly by place and use.</p>   |
| <p>G</p>  | <p>C</p>  | <p>D</p>  | <p>DC</p>  |

# Neighborhood Contexts

Future neighborhood contexts demonstrate the differences in the built environment between Denver's neighborhoods.





### Future Neighborhood Contexts

- Suburban
- Urban Edge
- Urban
- General Urban
- Urban Center
- Downtown
- Districts
- DIA Influence Area  
*Land use and other regulatory restrictions apply within the DIA Influence Area. Refer to page 290 for more details.*

#### PLANNING BY CONTEXT

This map is the aspirational future state of neighborhood contexts for Denver in 2040. Neighborhood contexts are a way to understand differences in land use and built form, mobility options, and quality-of-life infrastructure between different neighborhoods. Large redevelopment sites, such as some rail station areas, may establish an entirely new context. Alternatively, many established areas aspire to maintain the existing context that reflects their neighborhood character.

#### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Our highly walkable downtown, urban center and general urban context neighborhoods were built at a time when most people moved around the city on foot. Our close-in urban context neighborhoods were built around the extensive streetcar network of the early 20th century. Post-World War II urban edge and suburban context neighborhoods were influenced by the needs of the automobile. More recent large-scale redevelopment sites (e.g. Stapleton, Lowry) show an increased interest in returning to the walkable and bikeable urban context. Higher intensity infill areas, such as Cherry Creek and transit-oriented development around rail stations aspire to be urban centers. Although some contexts were developed with multimodal transit as the priority, every neighborhood context should be more walkable and bikeable with access to transit.

#### DISTRICTS

Alongside these neighborhood contexts are seven district places. These areas typically have a more singular use pattern and function, such as airport, campus, civic and value manufacturing. They are distributed more sporadically in strategic areas of the city.

*See Chapter 5 for a more detailed overview of each neighborhood context. New or amended neighborhood or small area plans adopted by City Council may update the map.*

# Future Places

Future places describe the various scales and types of development that will characterize our city in 2040.



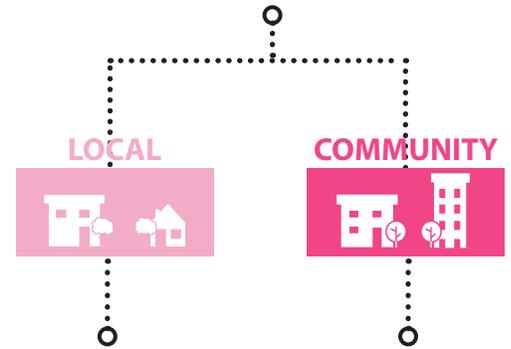
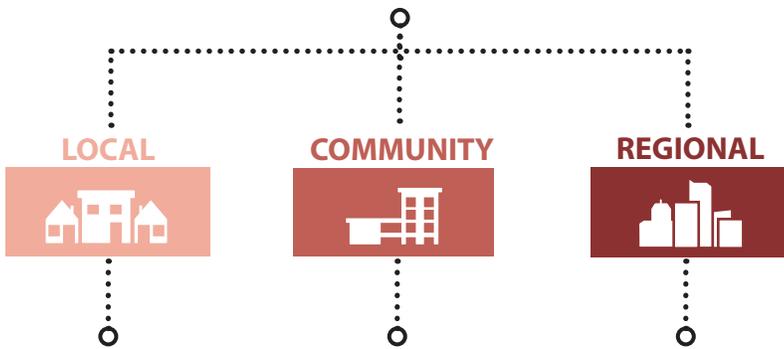
## CENTERS

Centers are mixed-use places of different scales. They are typically oriented around a shared space or set of spaces. People often go to centers to engage in social activities and entertainment, such as shopping, dining and cultural events. Some centers are well-connected to the local neighborhood and supported by neighborhood residents; other centers are larger, attracting people from a wide geographic area, and may require residents to take a bus, train or a car to visit them.



## CORRIDORS

Corridors are mixed-use places of different scales oriented along a street. They provide spaces for people to engage in social activities and entertainment, such as shopping and dining. Corridors are often embedded in neighborhoods and serve nearby residents.



Future places are an organizational system that describes the desired character of an area. Future places work together to promote complete neighborhoods for the residents living within or near each of them. Each place expresses itself differently depending on the neighborhood context where it is located. For more detail on the variety of aspirational characteristics for each place, see Chapter 5. The place descriptions in Chapter 5 provide general guidance at a citywide scale. There may be some variation based on the surrounding character or other plan guidance. For example, taller or shorter heights than described in *Blueprint Denver* may be appropriate based on surrounding context or the guidance of a small area plan.



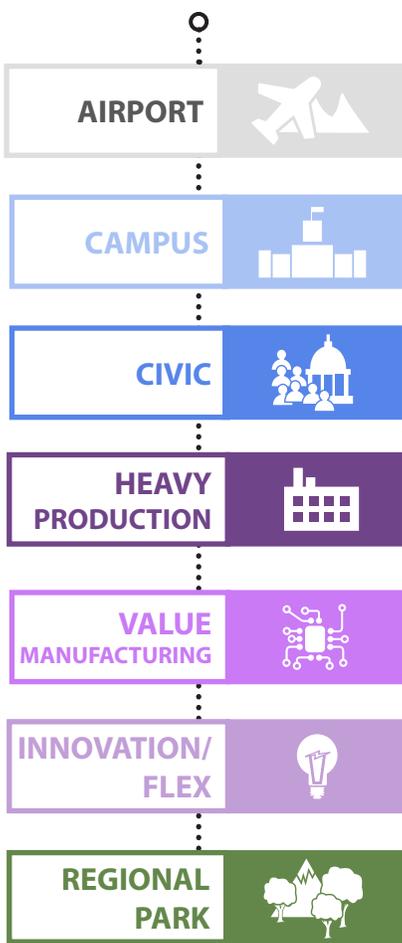
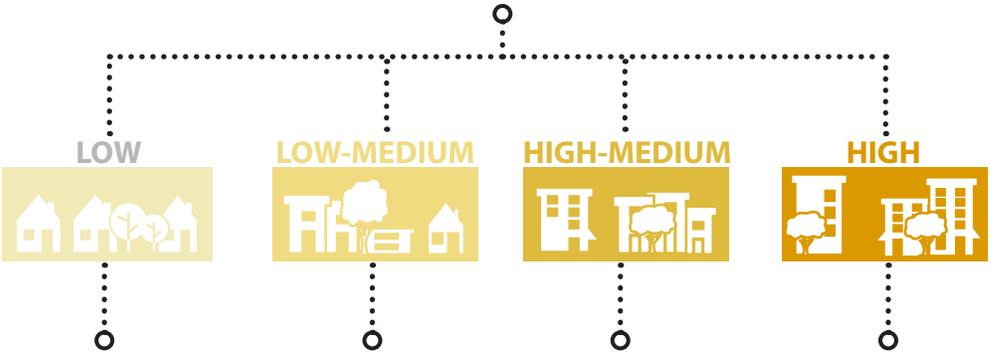
## RESIDENTIAL AREAS

These are areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood including schools, recreation and nodes of commercial/retail uses.



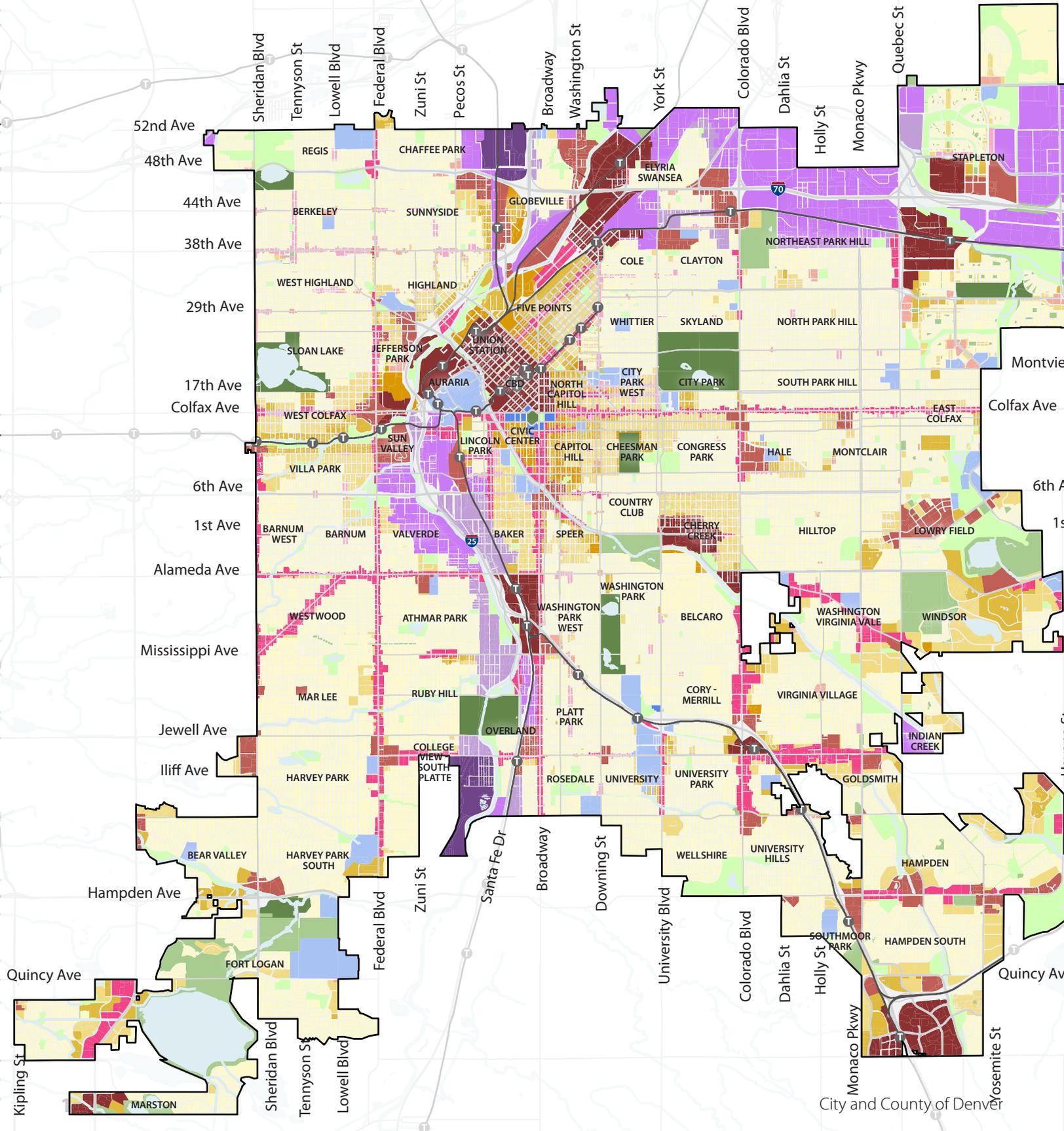
## DISTRICTS

Districts are places with a specifically designed purpose, such as educational campuses or industrial areas. Although they have a strong primary purpose, these places can also be mixed-use and offer a diverse range of amenities and complementary services to support the district's primary function.



# Future Places

The aspirational vision for the future places of Denver.



### About the Future Places

Local centers and corridors are typically embedded within residential areas. They are more frequent in neighborhoods closer to the city's core, but should become more common in all neighborhoods as Denver' continues to evolve. These types of centers and corridors are highly walkable and pedestrian friendly.

Community centers and corridors are found along major thoroughfares and are fairly evenly distributed across the city. Community centers and corridors vary in size, shape and orientation, though they are often more compact when located closer to the city's core.

Regional centers are typically found along and near major transit investments. They are strategically placed throughout the city to create high density mixed-use development in key areas. Regional centers are highly walkable, vibrant places with great access to passenger rail and transit priority streets.

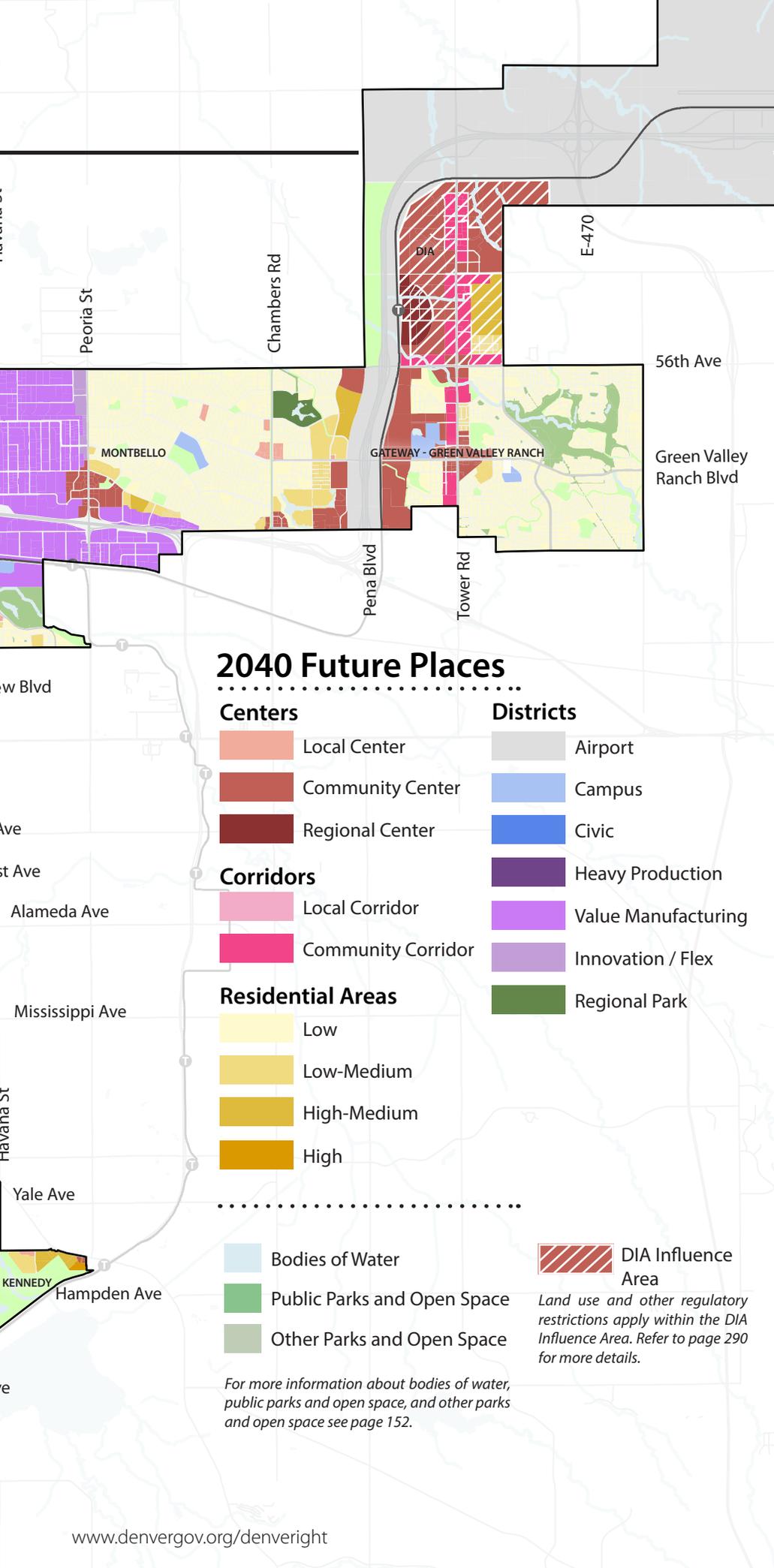
Residential areas range from low-intensity areas to high-intensity areas. Higher intensity areas are typically located in more compact areas with good access to transit and often contain a wide mix of uses.

The neighborhood context map helps inform the place map. Each place expresses itself differently depending on which neighborhood context it is located within.

### Considerations For Determining Future Places

The future places map is developed based on several inputs, including: current neighborhood plan vision, existing entitlement, existing land use, transit corridor proximity and public comments during the *Blueprint Denver* planning process.

*For more detail on places, see descriptions of centers, corridors, districts and residential areas starting on page 144 and more detail by context in Chapter 5. New or amended neighborhood or small area plans adopted by City Council may update the map.*



# Centers

*This spread is intended as a short, high-level summary. For more detail, including aspirational characteristics and policy guidance, see Chapter 5.*

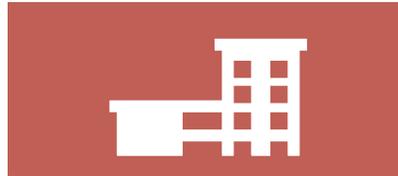
## Local



Provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. A more intimate, pedestrian scale. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages.



## Community



Typically a balance of either residential and employment; residential and dining/shopping; or employment and dining/shopping uses. Buildings are mid-scale, but vary by context and surrounding character. Buildings often orient to the street or other public spaces

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. Often connected through dedicated bike facilities, transit priority streets or rail service.

Open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Trees, plants and green infrastructure provide moments of relief from the more intense activity.



Most accessible to surrounding neighborhood users by walking or rolling or biking. Sometimes served by local transit.



Smaller scale plazas or open spaces promote social interaction. Trees, raised planters and green infrastructure are important features.

## Regional



Provides a dynamic environment of residential, dining, entertainment and shopping, while incorporating a diverse set of employment options. Larger-scale mixed-use buildings are common. Structures respond in form and mass to the streets and public spaces around them.

Multimodal areas well served by rail service or transit priority streets. Pedestrian and bicycle movement to, from and within these centers is essential.

Open spaces are often integrated into the streetscape. Plazas in various locations are common. Trees, plants and green infrastructure provide moments of relief from the more intense activity.



Centers are mixed-use places of varying scales. They are typically oriented around a shared space or set of spaces. People go to centers to engage in social activities and entertainment, such as shopping and dining. Some centers are well-connected to the local neighborhood and supported by neighborhood residents; other centers are larger, attracting people from a wide geographic area, and may require residents to take a bus or a car to visit them.

**Active Ground Floor**

Active ground floors in centers engage patrons with glass storefronts and other design details to provide interest and to advertise goods and services.

**Parking Location**

Parking needs in local centers are typically met with managed on-street parking. Larger centers, especially at the regional scale, use parking garages.

**Pedestrian Amenities**

Pedestrian amenities in centers include benches for rest, raised planters, lighting and covered transit shelters.



**Open Space**

Open space should be integrated into the center and be connected to public streets with activated edges where possible. These spaces should include trees, plants, and provide opportunities for social engagement and interaction.

**Major Circulation**

The circulation network in centers should offer people and vehicles multiple and varied paths to reach their destinations.

# Corridors

*This spread is intended as a short, high-level summary. For more detail, including aspirational characteristics and policy guidance, see Chapter 5.*

## Local



Provide options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May include some residential and employment uses. Buildings have distinctly linear orientation along the street with very shallow setbacks. The scale is intimate with a focus on the pedestrian. The public realm is typically defined by buildings with active frontages.



Circulation focuses on movement through or along the corridor. Residents have easy access by walking, rolling or biking. Many local corridors are also served by local transit.



Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks to engage the pedestrian area of the street. Street trees and plants are often integrated into the streetscape. Raised planters are common.



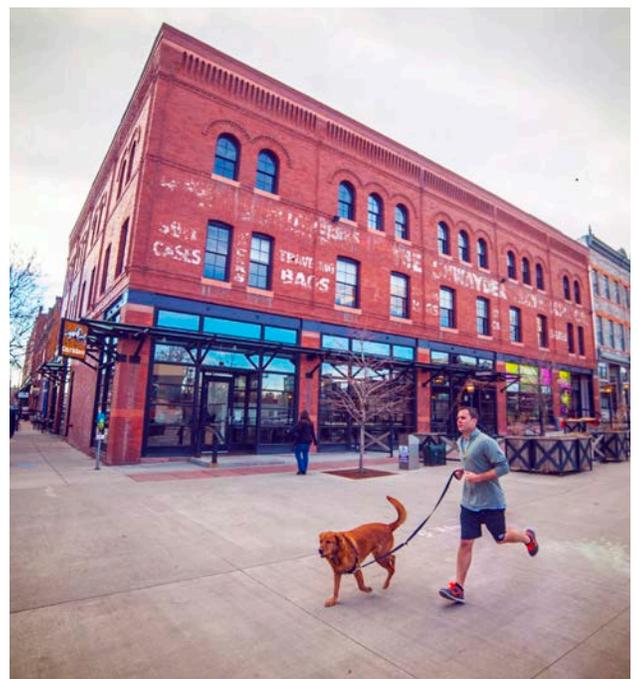
## Community



Typically a balance of either residential and employment; residential and dining/shopping; or employment and dining/shopping uses. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street with narrow setbacks. Building scale and footprints along community corridors are typically mid- to large-scale, with the highest intensity at mobility hubs. Scale will be dependent upon context and surrounding character.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. Most community corridors are found along transit priority streets.

Public spaces often occur between buildings and social spaces may be found in some setbacks along the street. Green infrastructure, street trees and planting areas are frequently integrated into the streetscape.



Corridors are mixed-use places oriented along a street. They provide spaces for people to shop, dine and access entertainment amenities. Corridors are often embedded in neighborhoods and serve both residents and visitors.

**Transitions**

Transitions between corridors and lower-scale residential neighborhoods are important due to shorter lot depths. Special attention may be needed in terms of lot coverage, bulk and scale.

**Active Ground Floor**

Active ground floors create interest and engage patrons as they walk by. Shops and restaurants may use the space in front of their establishment for sidewalk sales or café seating.

**Major Circulation**

The circulation network along corridors is more linear and directs vehicles from one side of the corridor to the other.



**Open Space**

Open spaces are typically adjacent to the street and located next to active uses such as restaurants and retail. These spaces provide opportunities for social engagement or a respite from the activity of the corridor.

**Parking Location**

Parking needs in corridors are typically met with a combination of managed on-street parking, off-street surface lots and structured lots.

**Pedestrian Amenities**

Pedestrian amenities include street trees, planted areas, public art, lighting, benches and enhanced transit stops.

# Residential Areas

*This spread is intended as a short, high-level summary. For more detail, including aspirational characteristics and policy guidance, see Chapter 5.*

## Low



Predominantly one- and two-unit, though many areas are mostly one-unit. Includes Accessory Dwelling Units. In some contexts, some higher-intensity residential uses may be mixed throughout. Neighborhood-serving retail may be found in some key locations. Buildings are predominantly low-scale houses and duplexes. Setbacks and lot coverage vary across neighborhood contexts.



Access is mostly from local streets, and there may be less choice of multimodal networks. Available walksheds and bikesheds vary based on neighborhood context.



A wide range of designated parks and recreational amenities are prevalent. Nature based, active and passive recreational opportunities are all common. Access to outdoor amenities varies depending on context.



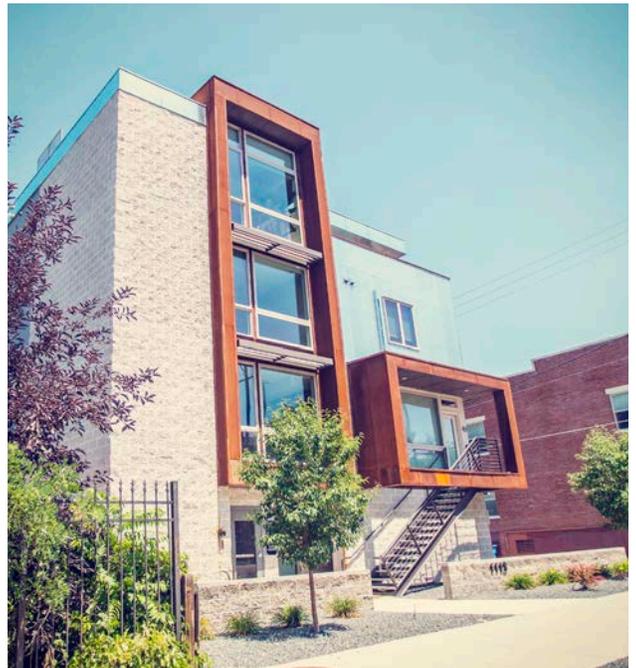
## Low-Medium



Predominantly low-scale multi-unit residential mixed with one- and two-unit residential uses. Some higher-intensity residential uses may be mixed throughout. Neighborhood-serving retail may be found in key locations. Buildings include rowhouses and smaller multi-unit buildings. Some contexts may also have a significant mix of houses and duplexes.

Access varies, but is generally from local streets or residential collectors. Multimodal networks will be more accessible than low residential areas. Available walksheds and bikesheds will vary based on neighborhood context.

A wide variety of parks and outdoor spaces occur, sometimes with greater activation than in low intensity areas. Nature based, active and passive recreational opportunities are all common. Access to outdoor amenities varies depending on context.



Areas where the predominant use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, these areas are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood including schools, libraries, recreation and nodes of commercial/retail uses.

### High-Medium



Predominantly multi-unit residential. A mix of neighborhood-serving retail may also be found in key locations. Mid-scale residential buildings, usually mixed with a variety of lower-scale residential types. Small mixed-use buildings may be found on corners and have a pedestrian orientation.

Access varies, but is generally from higher intensity street types. Multimodal networks are more accessible.

A range of parks and outdoor spaces occur, depending on context. Green infrastructure may occur in a variety of forms and scales on redeveloped sites. Street trees are found in lawns or planters, depending on context.



### High



Residential uses are high intensity. While the focus is residential, these are typically mixed-use areas with many commercial, retail and other complementary uses. A variety of building types may be found in these areas, depending on context. Taller mixed-use buildings are common. Fully residential multi-unit and commercial buildings may be mixed throughout.

Access varies, but is generally from higher intensity street types. Multimodal networks are most accessible.

Greater prevalence of privately owned, publicly accessible outdoor spaces such as parks, enhanced hardscaped plazas and pedestrian gathering spaces. A variety of green infrastructure best practices are found in these areas.



# Districts

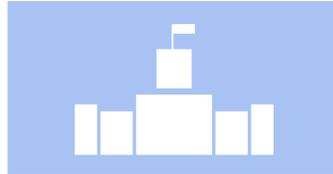
*This spread is intended as a short, high-level summary. For more detail, including aspirational characteristics and policy guidance, see Chapter 5.*

## Airport



Aviation, aviation related or non-aeronautical commercial activities ranging from warehousing, manufacturing, office, hotel and all aviation services. Buildings vary greatly in these areas, dependent on use and activity. Most are large, single use structures built for a specific use, but others may be mixed-use with prominent architecture.

## Campus



Typically dominated by a single, large institutional user. Universities, medical centers and large research facilities are examples. Supporting retail and residential uses also occur. Campus buildings vary greatly in size and form, but multi-story, single and mixed use buildings are typical.

## Civic



Primarily government services and administration, museums and public parks and open space. Large civic buildings designed with specific purposes and often with prominent architecture.



Streets designed to facilitate aviation related movement including arriving/departing passengers, freight and related businesses. Frequent bus and rail service is available.

A variety of qualified public spaces may be found in specific locations, especially areas visited by passengers and areas with a concentration of employees. Natural landscapes may also be integrated in to the area.

Internal circulation is typically multimodal, with emphasis on pedestrians and possibly people riding bicycles. The street grid may be interrupted with large blocks and parking is consolidated.

Open green spaces, enhanced hardscaped plazas and gathering places for public life. Abundant trees, gardens and plantings. Green infrastructure best practices are common.

High degree of multimodal access with some streets prioritizing specific modes. Streets are designed with maximum flexibility for use during special events.

Open spaces for large gatherings with a high activation. Formal gardens and plantings. Green spaces and hardscaped plazas accommodate daily activities and special events.



Districts are places with a specifically designed purpose, such as educational campuses or industrial areas. Although they have a strong primary purpose, these places can also be mixed-use and offer a diverse range of amenities and complementary services to support the district’s primary function.

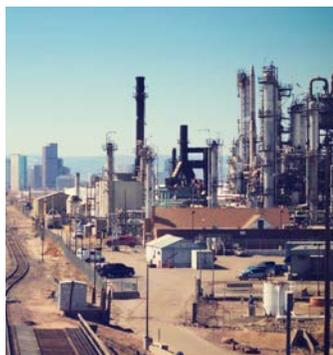
## Heavy Production



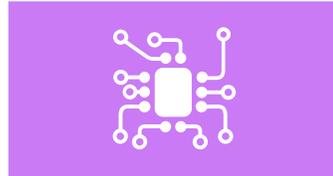
Heavy production and construction related activities, utility providers, major warehousing and storage (including chemical) facilities are found in these areas on large, multiple acre parcels. Residential uses are not compatible. Most buildings have very large footprints with significant land needs for equipment and material storage.

Streets and internal road systems designed for large truck movement and ease of access to the regional transportation system.

Little is found in the current condition, though future opportunities for green infrastructure, especially solar roofs and other innovative approaches, should be emphasized.



## Value Manufacturing



Advanced and larger craft manufacturing, research and design labs, robotics, technology and flex spaces are found in these areas. Often located in business parks or on extra large blocks. Residential uses are not compatible. These areas typically consist of single or multi-tenant buildings.

Streets are designed for safe movement of freight and goods often with a grid and on-street parking. Significant levels of employee, goods movement and customer traffic predominates.

A variety of green spaces may be found, typically on private property, with some areas having significant landscaping, green lawns and street trees.



## Innovation / Flex



Assembly facilities, labs, small logistics and warehousing, local food catering, tech firms, value manufacturing and related offices uses are found in these areas. Residential uses are compatible. Multi-tenant buildings are common. Buildings should orient to the street and contain pedestrian-friendly features. Building scale varies greatly.

Streets in these areas are typically on the standard grid system with on-street parking and multi-modal access.

A range of parks and outdoor spaces may occur, depending on context. Street trees are found and green infrastructure occur in a variety of forms.



## Regional Park



Provides large scale public open space, recreation and event locations. Other compatible institutional uses include zoos, museums, recreation centers and golf courses. Buildings in regional parks vary responding to unique needs and environments. Some locations have prominent architecture with significant civic importance.

Internal circulation is highly multimodal and curvilinear with emphasis on pedestrians and bicycles. The street grid may be interrupted with large blocks.

Various natural features and green infrastructure can occur. Provides active and passive recreation for all types of users. Performance spaces, public art and historic monuments are common.



# Parks and Open Space

Publicly and privately owned parks and open spaces are a vital component of quality-of-life infrastructure in all of Denver’s places.

The future places map on pages 142-143 shows “public parks and open space” or “other parks and open space.” These mapping categories represent areas that are open space/parks but are not a regional park (see the regional park place description on page 151). Unlike regional parks, these areas are not large or distinct enough to be their own place type. Instead, they represent vital quality-of-life infrastructure that is part of a place. There are many different examples, including parks and golf courses in residential areas, or a plazas/parks in centers and corridors.

## PUBLIC PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

These areas are city-owned parks and open spaces that are planned to become or remain a park and/or open space in the future.



*Not including regional parks, Denver’s public park and open space system includes 250 parks and open spaces across all neighborhood contexts.*



*Parks and open spaces that are publicly owned and accessible.*



*Open spaces with native landscapes serve many roles in Denver including the enhancement of our air and water quality.*

## OTHER PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

These are privately-owned parks and/or open spaces. Some are publicly accessible, while others—such as golf courses—are not. Since these areas are privately owned, it is possible their use could change in the future. When large private open spaces are planned to change, the community should be engaged in planning for the future vision of the site.



*Some golf courses in Denver are privately-owned and not publicly accessible, yet they provide multiple ecological benefits and contribute to the city's network of open spaces.*



*Many plazas are on private property, yet they are publicly accessible. Spaces like these contribute to pedestrian activity and active, well-designed places.*



*Many privately owned open spaces can be accessed by the public and provide recreational and ecological value.*

## BODIES OF WATER

Bodies of water include reservoirs, creeks, canals, gulches, lakes, ponds and the South Platte River. They form an important component of the city's natural ecosystem, provide connectivity, offer opportunities to recreate, and contribute to making great places.

# Street Types

Streets are the lifeblood of a city and one of its most important public assets. This section establishes a framework for describing streets, linking their design and operation to the character and land use around them.

Denver has long had a system in place for classifying different streets. This classification consists of a network of local, collector and arterial streets. The system is often referred to as the “functional classification system.” In this system, local streets are designed for the highest degree of property access and the lowest amount of through movement. Arterial streets are designed for the highest amount of through movement and the lowest degree of property access. Collector streets are in between a local street and an arterial street; they collect movement from local streets and convey it to arterial streets.

The stand alone arterial, collector and local system does not acknowledge how the surrounding character might affect the street’s design or operation. For example, an arterial street in a residential part of the city functions differently from an arterial street that is surrounded by pedestrian-oriented retail. Creating a high-quality multimodal transportation system that fosters a high quality-of-life and economic vitality for all Denverites requires a more refined street typology.

LAND USE I

## Downtown



Downtown Arterial

Downtown Collector

## Main Street



Main Street Arterial

Main Street Collector

## Mixed-Use



Mixed-Use Arterial

Mixed-Use Collector

ALL LOCAL ST

To accomplish this *Blueprint Denver* develops a typology for describing streets by their adjacent land use and character, in addition to the already established functional class. This typology is applied to arterials and collectors, which have the most variation depending on land use and neighborhood context. Local streets, which vary less and are often characterized by residential uses, are found in all neighborhood contexts.

*Blueprint Denver's* street typology is intended to serve as a framework to develop context-sensitive street design guidelines and to update regulations and standards for how streets are designed.

NTENSITY

**Industrial**



**Industrial Arterial**

**Industrial Collector**

**Commercial**



**Commercial Arterial**

**Commercial Collector**

**Residential**



**Residential Arterial**

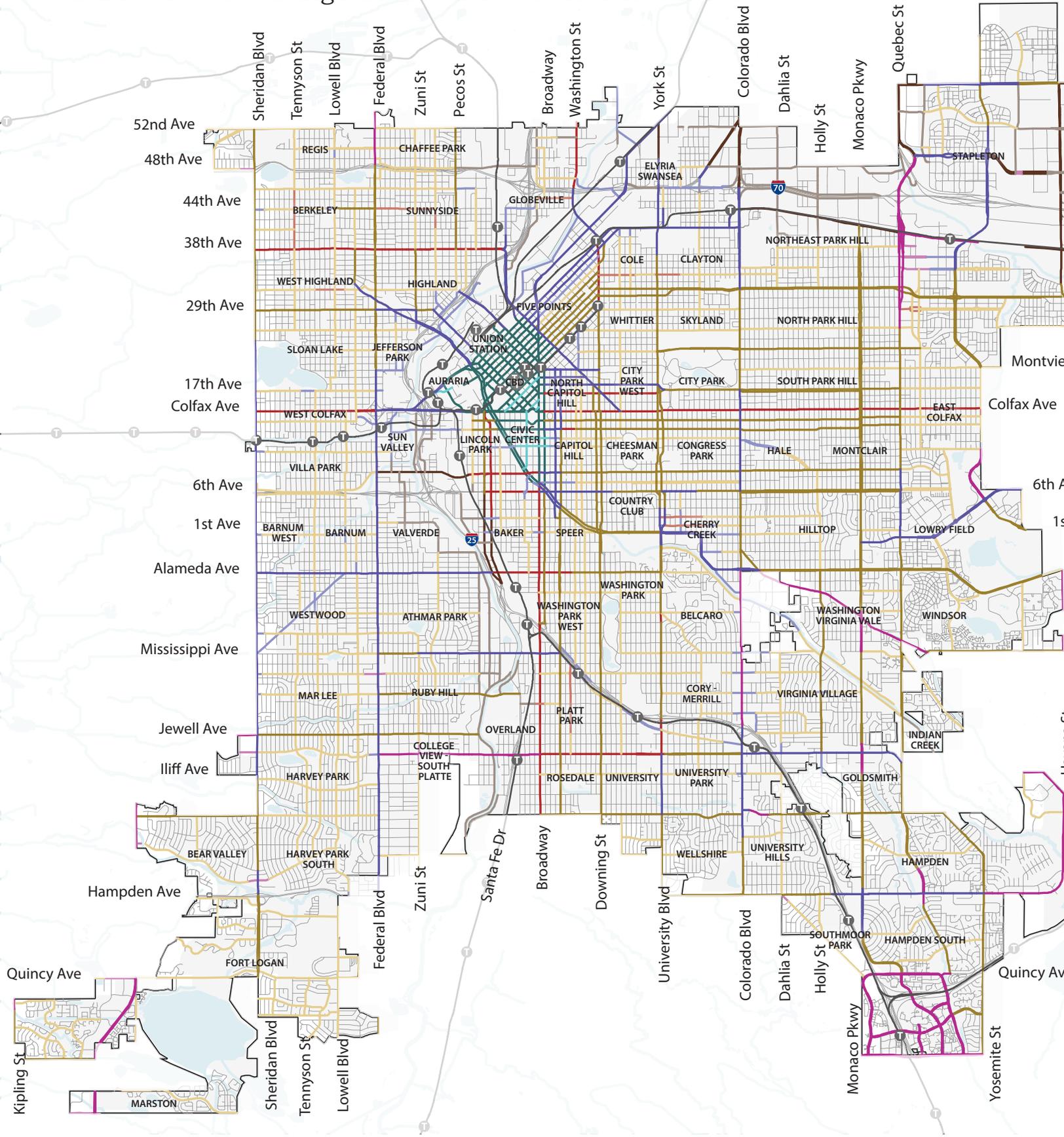
**Residential Collector**

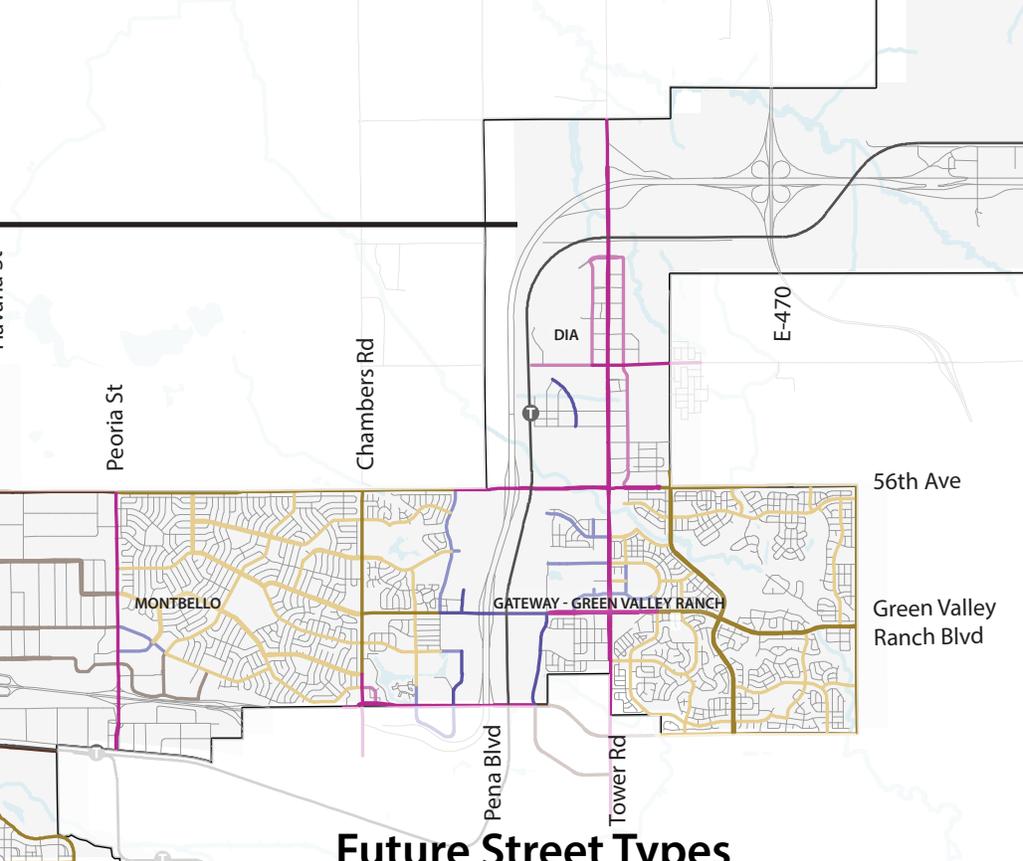
PERSON THROUGHPUT

TREETS

# Street Types

Blueprint Denver categorizes the aspirational nature of Denver's future streets by their future surrounding land use character and functional class.





## Future Street Types

### Downtown

- Arterial
- Collector

### Main Street

- Arterial
- Collector

### Mixed-Use

- Arterial
- Collector

### Commercial

- Arterial
- Collector

### Industrial

- Arterial
- Collector

### Residential

- Arterial
- Collector

For more information about bodies of water, public parks and open space, and other parks and open space see page 152.

The map to the left shows Denver’s aspirational street types. A street’s existing character might not match the street type shown on the map since it shows the vision for the street. The vision for each street was determined by a number of factors including current and future places, community input and the vision established by small area and neighborhood plans.

The street type is not always the same for the entire length of the street. This is because the land use character may change through the corridor. An example is a street where the uses change from residential to mixed use. The street type would then change to reflect the change in character.

To be effective, street types are not mapped at the block level and do not change parcel by parcel. Instead the street type may change by groups of blocks, reflecting more noticeable and consistent changes in the land use character.

## Relationship to the Complete Network

Denver’s street typology addresses how a street integrates with, and is sensitive to, its surrounding place. The priority networks for transit, pedestrians and bicycles must create continuous, unbroken networks and therefore will cross multiple places. Street types accommodate elements of the complete network, enabling a holistic multimodal network throughout the city. Street types also allow design elements and operational characteristics to vary by neighborhood context and place.

See descriptions of street types starting on page 158. The map depicts existing streets. New or amended neighborhood or small area plans adopted by City Council may update the map with planned streets or changes to an existing street type designation. Other new streets will be added when built.

# Street Types

The following pages describe each aspirational street type in Denver and how they vary by the three elements of complete neighborhoods.

**DOWNTOWN**



Surrounded by the most intense land uses including hotels, street level retail and office, residential and mixed-use towers. Pedestrian-oriented with maximum building coverage of the site. Narrow setbacks and strong engagement of the street.

Many trips are local or the first and last mile of regional trips begin or end downtown. Curb space is highly managed. High focus on pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.

Street trees within structural cells/open planters, cafe seating, enhanced hardscaping, pedestrian lighting, public plazas, streetside planters and green infrastructure make for a vibrant place on downtown streets.



**MAIN STREET**



Characterized by a mix of uses including retail, services and restaurants, as well as residential. Buildings are pedestrian-oriented, with little front setback, a continuous street wall, and high transparency. Street level uses are highly activated, including cafe seating in the right-of-way.

Sidewalks are generally wider with fewer driveways to prioritize people walking or rolling.

Consistent street trees, streetside planters, cafe seating (sometimes within the street), bump-out stormwater planters and ultra-urban green infrastructure facilities. This provides a buffer between people walking or rolling and traffic.

MIXED-USE



Varied mix of uses including retail, office, residential and restaurants. Buildings are pedestrian-oriented, typically multi-story, usually with high building coverage with a shallow front setback. A street wall is present, but may vary.

Driveways are more frequent than main streets but still limited to provide a friendly street for people walking or rolling and riding bicycles.

Street trees within planting areas and can include water quality features. Elevated planters contribute to streetscape. Some limited hardscaped areas with benches may occur. This area provides a buffer between people walking or rolling and traffic.



COMMERCIAL

Commercial streets typically contain commercial uses including shopping centers, auto services and offices. Buildings are often set back with on-site parking.

Commercial streets have more frequent driveways to provide auto access to properties, but still provide adequate sidewalk space for people to walk or roll.

Consistent street trees within lawns or planted areas. These areas may include water quality features, and provide a buffer between people walking or rolling and traffic.



# Street Types

**INDUSTRIAL**



Industrial streets are characterized by manufacturing but may contain other uses. Buildings are generally low-rise and may be setback to accommodate site specific needs.

Adequate sidewalk space is provided, but driveway access is provided more frequently and streets may be wider to accommodate the movement of goods.

Street trees within a lawn or stormwater planting area is used to separate people walking or rolling from vehicles and freight traffic. Green infrastructure is helpful to reduce pollutants.



**RESIDENTIAL**

Primarily residential uses, but may also include schools, civic uses, parks, small retail nodes and other similar uses. Buildings on residential streets usually have a modest setback. The depth of the setback varies by neighborhood context.

Traffic calming is used to encourage slower speeds and promote safety for all users of the roadway. This includes medians, traffic circles and bulb-outs. Signalized crosswalks with high visibility markings provide ample crossing opportunities.

Street trees within a lawn or planted area are used to separate people walking or rolling from traffic.



LOCAL



Local streets can vary in their land uses and are found in all neighborhood contexts. They are most often characterized by residential uses.

Local streets provide the lowest degree of through travel but the highest degree of property access.

Street trees within a lawn or planted area is generally used to separate people walking or rolling from traffic.



# Additional Streets

There are special streets in Denver that occur on a variety of street types. For example, a residential or mixed-use street can be designed as a shared street or as a parkway. These additional street types should play an important role in the design of the street.

## SHARED STREETS

Shared streets are an approach to street design where pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles share street space at all times, or at regularly scheduled times for special events. Shared streets in Denver include:

### Shared Street

Shared roadways are shared by pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles at all times and typically feature little to no formal distinction between spaces dedicated to these modes. These streets are most appropriate where vehicle volumes and speeds are already low or where they are expected to be sufficiently reduced through implementation of a shared street.

### Regular Closure Streets

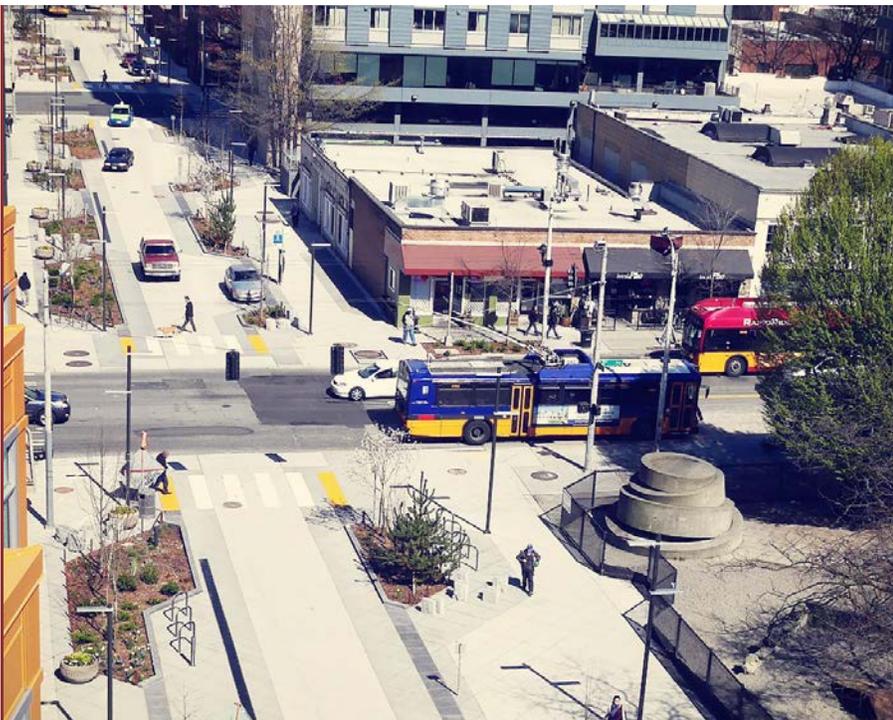
Regular closed streets may look like shared streets or normal streets, but they are closed to through vehicle traffic at regularly scheduled times or for special events. Since the purpose of closing the street to through traffic is to create an enhanced environment for walking and biking, regular closure streets may be appropriate on streets with low and high vehicle volumes and speeds.

### Festival Streets

Festival streets are shared streets or regular closure streets that are uniquely designed for special events or functions, such as markets, concerts or open-space programming.

### Further Study

*Blueprint Denver* does not designate specific streets as shared spaces. The decision to designate a street as a Shared Street, Regular Closure Street or Festival Street requires study on an individual basis. The typology described above however, establishes the types of shared spaces in Denver and the conditions needed for each type. Design parameters for these spaces should be defined by a future street design guidelines effort.



*Bell Street Park in Seattle is an example of a street designed to be shared by all users. The design elements of the street help to create a people oriented space that also functions as a linear park.*



*Festival streets are designed with the ability to be occasionally closed to vehicular traffic to host special events.*



*Shared streets do not formally designate space for a specific travel mode. Instead they are designed for slower speeds so that the roadway can be comfortably shared between all modes.*

## PARKWAYS

Denver has a legacy of 35 unique streets that are formally designated parkways and boulevards. Carefully designed by some of the country’s most established landscape architects of the time, these streets were intended to be grand tree-lined avenues .

These wide, landscaped streets with park-like settings share some common characteristics but are individually distinct. While setbacks vary among parkways depending on individual design characteristics, they typically are ample with residential parkways having

the deepest setbacks taken from the property line.

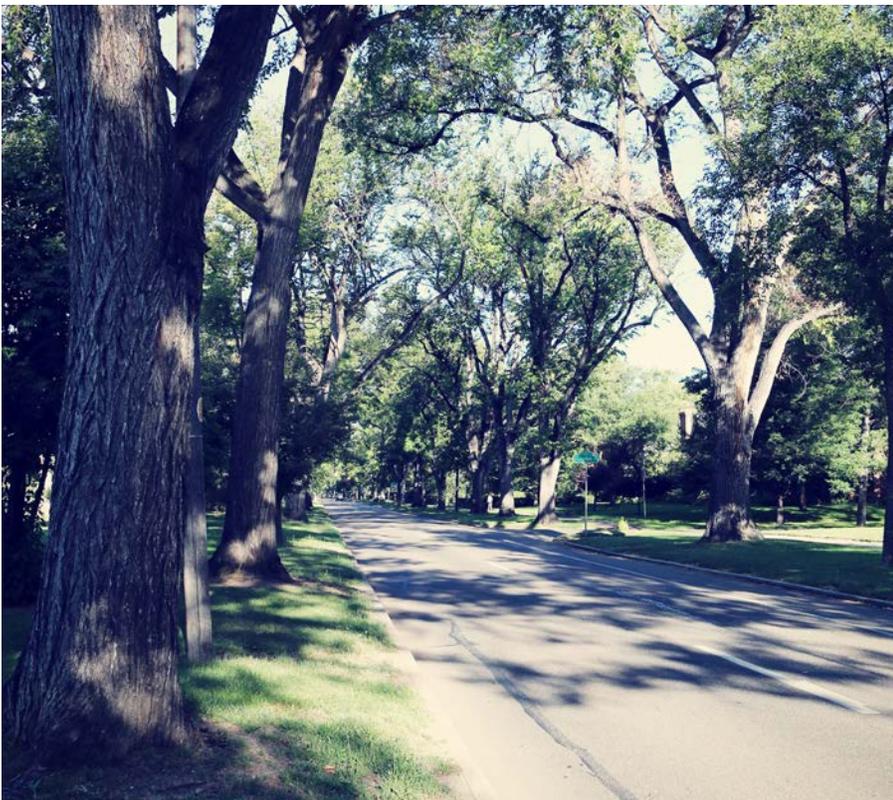
Parkways provide green connections by linking key civic, park and institutional uses throughout Denver’s neighborhoods. In addition to their functional duties, parkways—with their cadence of trees between the sidewalk and street—create a wide, green oasis.

The character of the parkways is defined by elements located in both the public and private realms. Spanning from building edge to building edge, they

provide visual beauty and character that help define Denver.

Many of Denver’s parkways were designed to allow for views and vistas to the mountains. The majority of these historic parkways are known for their generous setbacks, green, low-planted visual character.

To see a map of Denver’s parkways and more about them, see *Game Plan for a Healthy City*.



*With a broad right-of-way, large median and formal row of carefully-selected street trees, E. 17th Ave. exemplifies the classic design of one of Denver’s earliest parkways.*



*Designed in the classic French landscape design style, City Park Esplanade links City Park, East High School and Colfax Ave.*



*Parkways can accommodate multiple transportation modes while maintaining their historic integrity.*

# Street Types

The graphic below illustrates how aspects of street design and operation vary by street type.

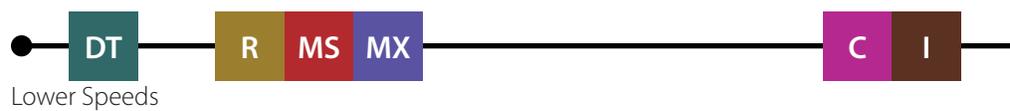
## Design Speed

Design features including lane widths, number of lanes and geometric features—such as medians and bulb-outs—influence travel speed on roadways. The lowest speeds are expected on downtown and local streets. Throughout the city and especially on the Vision Zero High Injury Network, reducing speeds is an important safety component.

### Arterial



### Collector



## Driveway Access

The frequency of driveways or curb cuts varies depending on context to reduce conflicts with pedestrians. Especially for downtown streets and main streets, it is important to minimize driveways wherever possible to prioritize people walking or rolling.



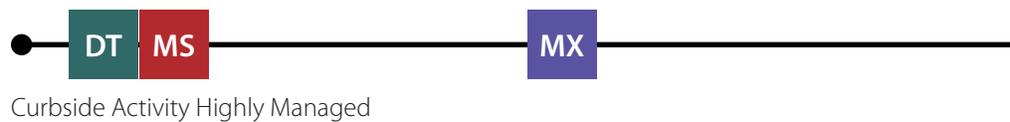
## Amenity Zone Type

An amenity zone provides a buffer between the sidewalk and the street. In the downtown and urban center contexts, the amenity zone generally includes a mix of trees, planters, green infrastructure and hardscaping, such as street furniture. In more residential places, the amenity zone includes trees in lawns or planted areas.



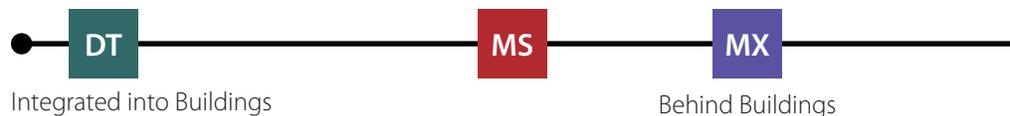
## Curb-Side Management

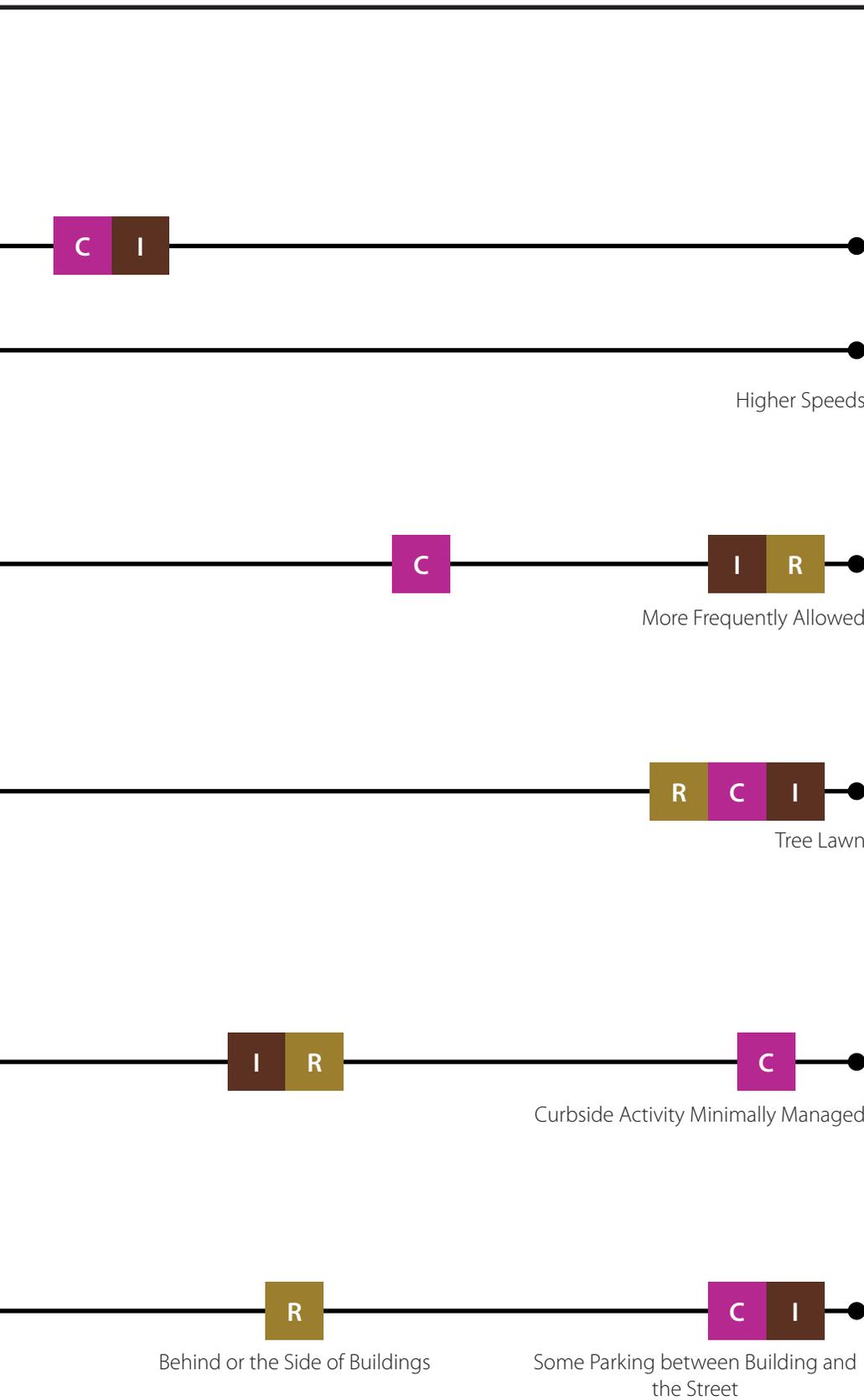
The curb space is a valuable resource. Its use must be optimized based on adjacent land use and transportation network priorities. In areas with higher demand for curbside activity, on-street parking, loading zones, valet service and other management techniques are more common.



## Parking Orientation

Parking orientation indicates where off-street parking may be provided in relationship to the building and the street. In main-street contexts, for example, off-street parking usually occurs behind the building as opposed to the front of the building to prioritize people walking or rolling.





A number of attributes make up the physical character and design of a street. This includes the sidewalk width, roadway width and presence of trees. There are also many factors that contribute to the operation of a street such as speed, access, signal timing and management of the curb lane.

*Blueprint Denver* gives guidance on how a street's characteristics vary by land use character, place and neighborhood context. While *Blueprint Denver* establishes a framework for street types, they will need to be implemented by fully developing street design guidelines for each of the street types as well as updated standards and regulations accordingly. This graphic is general and will be refined through the more detailed analysis of writing street design guidelines and regulations.

The variables shown here represent a sample of many elements that should be informed by the street typology system.

See Chapter 5 for more detail about how certain components of street types vary by neighborhood context. For example, the number of curb cuts on a residential street in a context with alleys (such as the urban context) will very low compared to the suburban context, where there are no alleys.

- DT Downtown Streets
- MS Main Streets
- MX Mixed-Use Streets
- C Commercial Streets
- I Industrial Streets
- R Residential Streets

# Complete Networks

A high-quality multimodal transportation system is made up of several networks, each of which serves a particular transportation mode that moves people and goods from place to place.

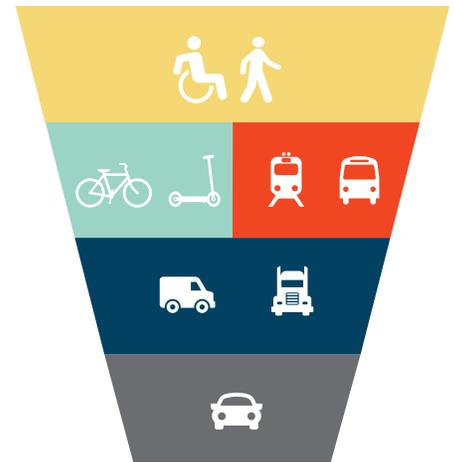


Denver must have a transportation system that safely and efficiently moves people to preserve its quality of life. Its network of roads is built out, which means new roads cannot be added to make more space to travel. However, Denver can move more people on its existing streets by offering multiple efficient travel modes.

Historically, a disproportionate amount of transportation investment focused on infrastructure for automobiles. This created an outcome of spending more time on congested roadways. To encourage a mode shift toward more efficient travel modes, investments must be made that support multimodal infrastructure. Identifying modal priority streets indicates where investment will occur to support people walking or rolling, biking or taking transit.

To make these modes convenient, a connected network of streets that prioritizes space for people walking or rolling, biking and taking transit must be built, with people walking and rolling considered as the priority on every street. Creating complete networks recognizes a complete streets philosophy: all streets should be designed safely for the most vulnerable users, especially those in our community who are the youngest and oldest and those with disabilities. If streets are designed to be safe for the most vulnerable users, they are safer for everyone.

The following pages describe where modal priorities will occur within the Denver street network and how a street's design and operations should differ if designated as a modal priority street. Implementing the multimodal network called for in this plan will require a high level of coordination with surrounding communities.



**Pedestrian Priority:** Complete multimodal networks prioritize the most efficient modes first. People walking and rolling are the heart of the transportation system as everyone is a pedestrian at some point during their trip.

**Pedestrian**

The pedestrian network includes all sidewalks and trails in the city. *Blueprint Denver* also identifies Pedestrian Enhanced areas. These are areas where there is a focus on creating vibrant, walkable places with wider, enhanced sidewalks.

**Bicycle**

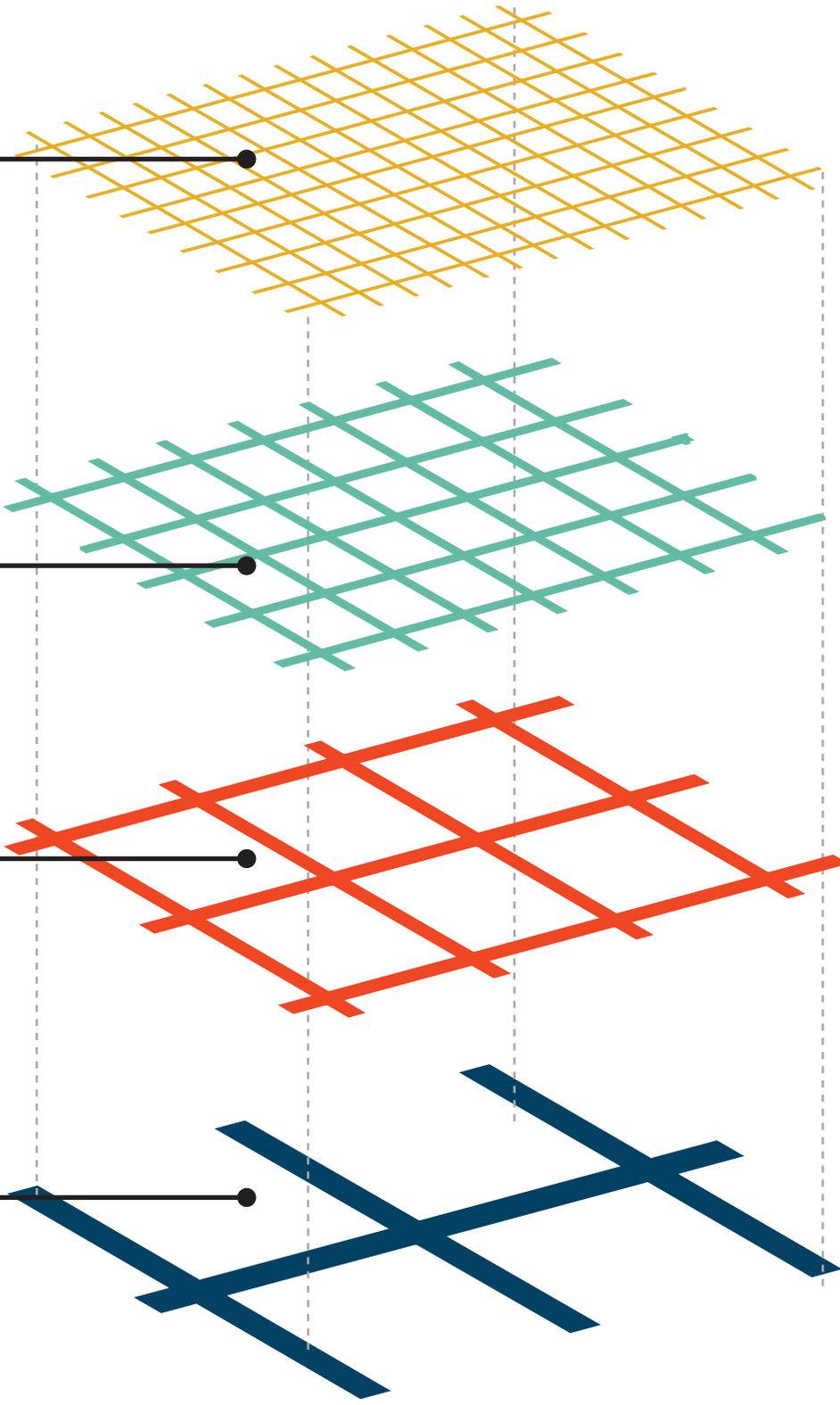
Bicycle priority streets will prioritize comfort and convenience for people biking.

**Transit**

Transit priority streets allow transit to be rapid and reliable with special attention to accessible, safe and enhanced transit stops and stations. This Denver network will complement the regional transit system.

**Auto and Goods**

Movement of vehicles remains an integral component of the street network. The movement of goods, including freight and deliveries, is a key part of the transportation system. A network for the movement of goods has been established regionally by DRCOG but will be refined for Denver in an update to the Strategic Transportation Plan.



# Pedestrian Enhanced

People walking (including those using mobility devices) are the priority in the design of all streets. Certain streets can be further enhanced to create vibrant public spaces and encourage walking.

## Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrians—people walking and rolling—must be prioritized on every street in Denver. This includes providing a safe crossing environment, adequate sidewalk space and good walking conditions.

The features highlighted in the yellow box to the right focus on design treatments to create areas that are truly enhanced for pedestrians, with a focus on placemaking.

There are other design features focused on pedestrian safety. Many of these features are appropriate on all streets, including pedestrian enhanced streets. These features include:

- High-visibility crosswalks
- Signalized crossings
- Signal timing that prioritizes pedestrians, such as leading pedestrian intervals or all-pedestrian phases
- Medians or pedestrian crossing refuge islands
- Curb bulb-outs, which shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians

Denver has policies for the installation of crosswalks and crossing devices to determine when and where the safety treatments above are best suited.

While pedestrians are a priority on every street, certain Denver streets are identified as “pedestrian enhanced areas.” These are areas where the surrounding land uses offer opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment to create walkable, vibrant public spaces. This includes creating a wider pedestrian realm (the combined tree lawn or amenity zone and sidewalk) and prioritizing people walking and rolling over other modes in both the design and operation of the street.



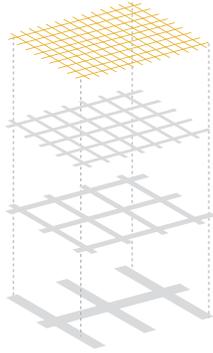
### 01 Amenities

Pedestrian enhanced areas provide amenities such as trees, attractive landscaping, café seating, benches, public art, trash/recycling receptacles and bicycle parking.

Pedestrian enhanced areas are not intended to inform safety countermeasures, including uncontrolled pedestrian crossings, since identifying appropriate locations for these measures requires location-specific engineering studies.

The following sections highlight some example features of pedestrian enhanced areas. These pedestrian-friendly amenities are not limited to pedestrian enhanced areas, but are often concentrated here.





**02** Lighting

In pedestrian enhanced areas, pedestrian-scaled lighting to improve the environment for people walking is common.

**03** Green infrastructure

Street trees, landscaping and water quality facilities improve the pedestrian experience by providing shade, lowering local temperatures and creating a buffer from traffic.

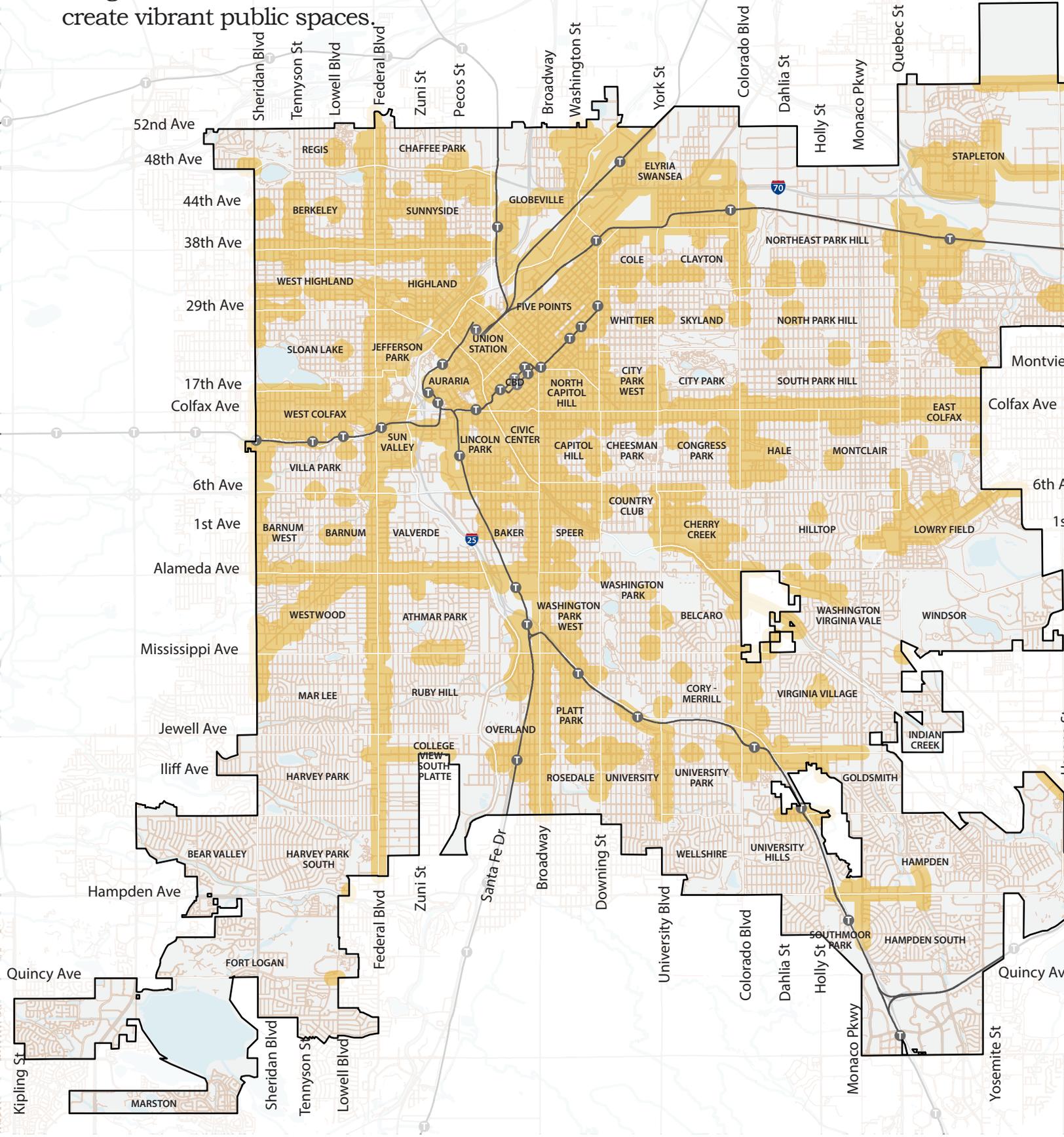


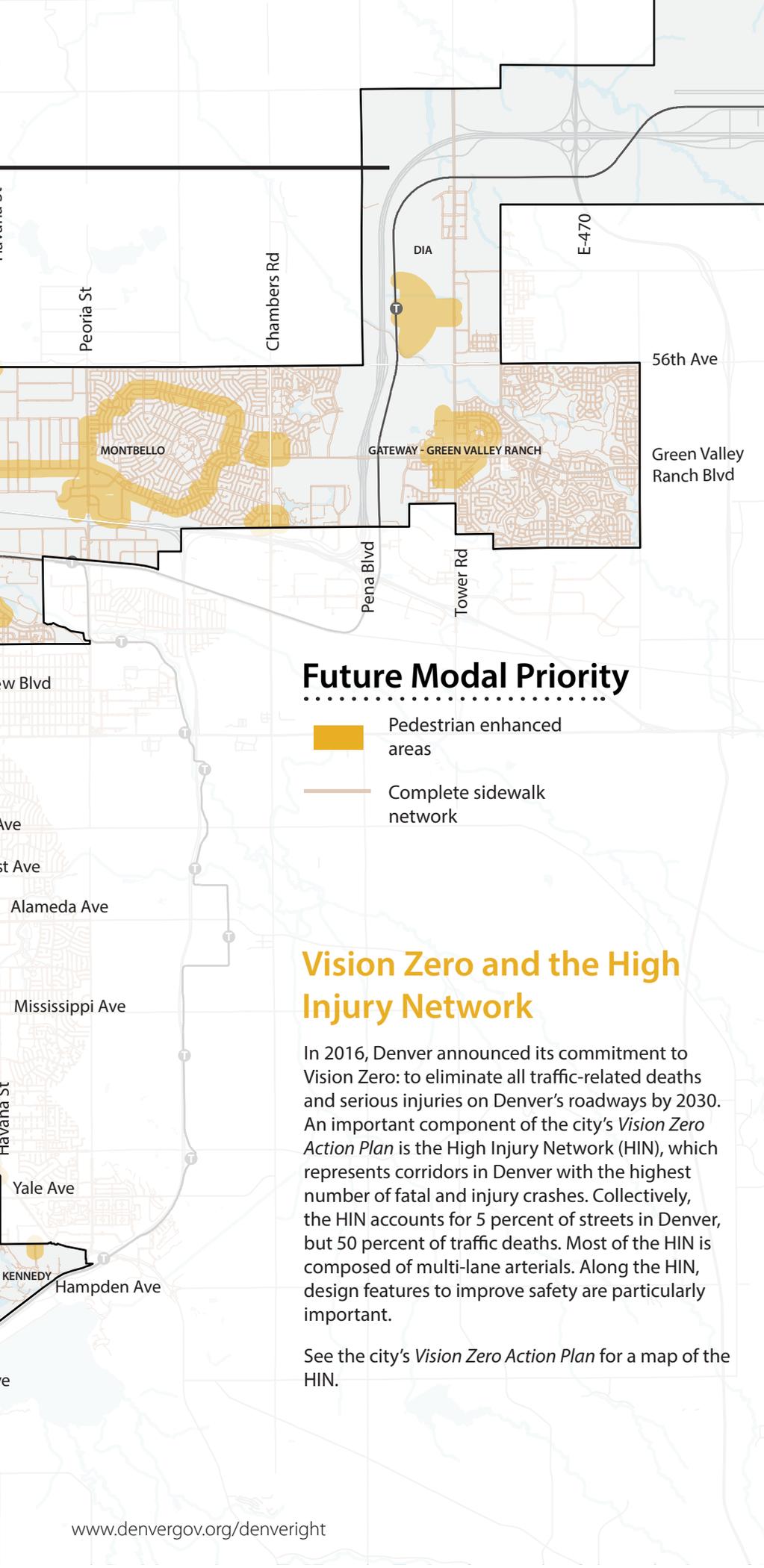
**04** Wider Sidewalks

In pedestrian enhanced areas, sidewalks are wider than the normal city standard. This allows more people to comfortably walk on the sidewalk. Wider sidewalks also provide room for placemaking features such as pedestrian amenities, lighting and green infrastructure.

# Pedestrian Enhanced

People walking (including those using mobility devices) are the priority in the design of all streets. Certain streets in the future can be further enhanced to create vibrant public spaces.





### Future Modal Priority

- Pedestrian enhanced areas
- Complete sidewalk network

## Vision Zero and the High Injury Network

In 2016, Denver announced its commitment to Vision Zero: to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and serious injuries on Denver’s roadways by 2030. An important component of the city’s *Vision Zero Action Plan* is the High Injury Network (HIN), which represents corridors in Denver with the highest number of fatal and injury crashes. Collectively, the HIN accounts for 5 percent of streets in Denver, but 50 percent of traffic deaths. Most of the HIN is composed of multi-lane arterials. Along the HIN, design features to improve safety are particularly important.

See the city’s *Vision Zero Action Plan* for a map of the HIN.

## Prioritizing Pedestrian Comfort

While people walking and rolling are a priority on every street, the maps shows areas where there are additional opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment. These are known as pedestrian enhanced areas. These areas come from the *Denver Moves: Pedestrians & Trails* plan. These streets align with the centers and corridors identified in the future places map. The streets are shown as areas, rather than lines, to encourage placemaking for pedestrians within an area, not just along one corridor.

Pedestrian enhanced areas will be further defined on this map and updated through small area plans.

## Safety

Consistent with Denver’s [Vision Zero Action Plan](#), which aims to eliminate traffic deaths, many pedestrian enhanced areas may receive improvements to intersections and roadways to increase safety. These improvements sometimes have trade-offs to other modes in order to prioritize safety.

## Making Trade-offs

To build wider sidewalks, improve crossings for people walking and rolling, or enhance the pedestrian environment, there will occasionally be trade-offs, especially for vehicular mobility. These might include reduced vehicle speeds, restricting turning movements or additional signals to improve safety. Widening sidewalks or improving intersections sometimes will result in a reduction of available on-street parking.

*The modal priority maps may be updated to match future changes in the Denver Moves transportation plans. The map depicts existing streets. Other new streets will be added when built.*

# Bicycle Priority

Bicycle priority streets prioritize comfort and convenience for people biking.

On bicycle priority streets, design and operation prioritizes people riding bicycles over other modes.

These bicycle priority streets are the high and medium ease-of-use bicycle facilities identified in the *Denver Moves: Bicycles* plan. Ease-of-use refers to the level of comfort experienced by the user of the bikeway. This includes bikeways where people riding bikes are separated from moving traffic by a physical barrier and busy intersections are designed to easily be crossed on a bike. These facilities encourage biking by increasing the comfortably for those who may not otherwise choose to ride a bicycle on a city street. Low ease-of-use facilities such as a shared roadway are not considered bicycle priority streets. Bikeway designations in Denver are typically selected based on a street's width, number of travel lanes, vehicle volume and speed.

## Intersections

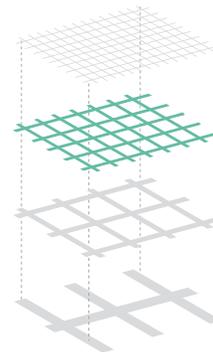
Maintaining the comfort of a bikeway along a street requires appropriate intersection treatments. These treatments, which occur at cross streets and driveways, can include features such as bike boxes, two-stage turn queue boxes, traffic signals, or exclusive signal phase. The selection of specific intersection treatments requires engineering study.

The following sections highlight some examples of how bicycles may be prioritized on bicycle priority streets:

### 01 Protected Bike Lane

A protected bike lane makes biking more comfortable and safe by providing a buffer between moving traffic and people on bikes. Sometimes physical barriers are used such as curbs, bollards or parked cars.





**02** Intersection Treatments

Green pavement markings can increase the ease and comfort of people riding bicycles by showing the safest path through the intersection. These markings also help increase drivers' awareness of people on bikes.



**03** Signage

Strategically placed signage helps people on bicycles navigate to popular destinations.

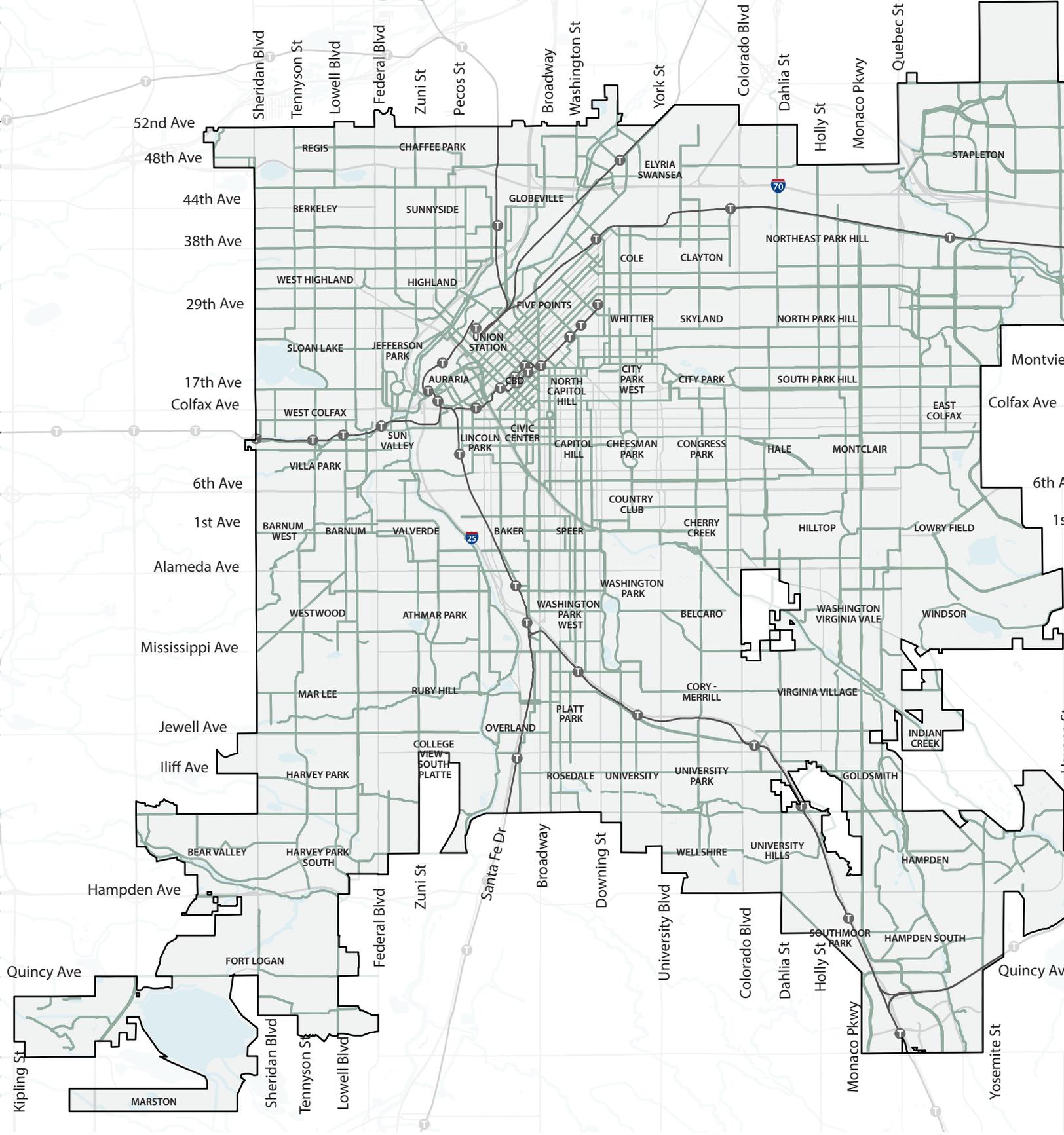


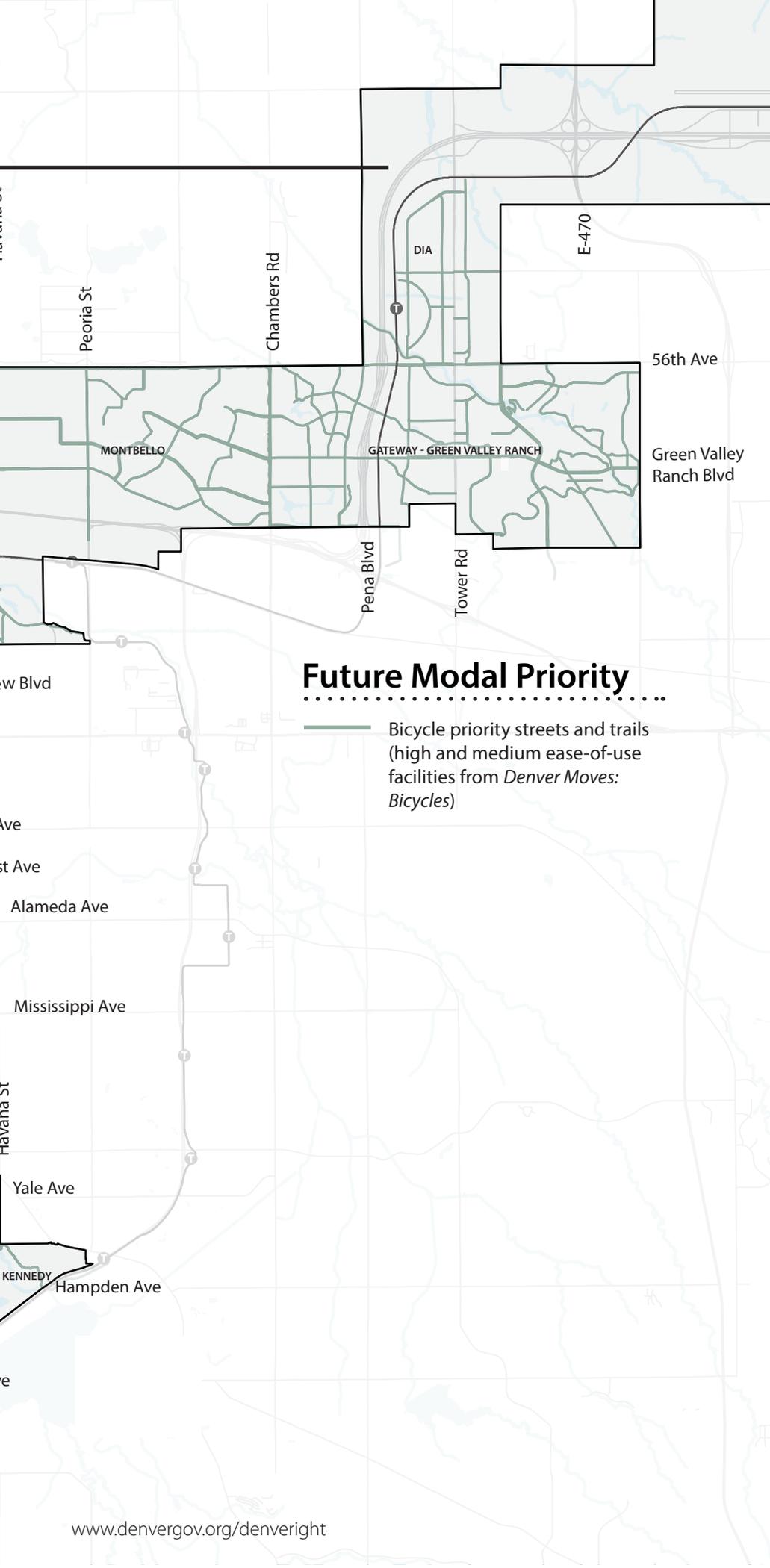
**04** Bike Signals/ Detection

Bike signals are special traffic lights that give bicyclists time to move across the intersection.

# Bicycle Priority

Future bicycle priority streets prioritize comfort and convenience for people biking.





### Future Modal Priority

.....  
 — Bicycle priority streets and trails (high and medium ease-of-use facilities from *Denver Moves: Bicycles*)

The bicycle priority streets and trails shown on this map will create a complete network for people riding bicycles.

The streets shown as a part of this network contain the high and medium-ease-of-use facilities in the *Denver Moves: Bicycles* plan.

Some of the streets indicated on this map have not yet been improved for bicycles, but are planned for bike facility improvements in the future. This map shows what the complete network will look like when those facilities are built-out.

### Safety

Consistent with Denver's *Vision Zero Action Plan*, which aims to eliminate traffic deaths, improvements are made to intersections and roadways to increase safety. These improvements can sometimes have trade-offs to other modes in order to prioritize safety.

### Making Trade-offs

To build a bikeway that makes riding a bike feel safe, comfortable and convenient, there will occasionally be trade-offs to vehicular mobility and on-street parking. These trade-offs may result in drivers more frequently having to stop at traffic signals, a slight increase of travel time for driving on certain corridors or a reduction of the availability of on-street parking.

*The modal priority maps may be updated to match future changes in the Denver Moves transportation plans. The map depicts existing streets. Other new streets will be added when built.*

# Transit Priority

Implementing the future transit priority streets will result in a complete high-quality transit network for Denver that complements the existing regional rail system.

Transit can move the most people rapidly through a corridor. Transit priority streets are those where transit will be prioritized over other modes when making decisions about how to design or operate the right-of-way. By prioritizing the design or operation of a particular street to benefit transit, it will help transit to reach its potential to transport more people rapidly and reliably.

*Blueprint Denver's* growth strategy (see Chapter 2) is founded on rapid, reliable and high-quality transit connecting Denver's centers and corridors to people to jobs, services and housing. Denver's transit plan, *Denver Moves: Transit*, identifies "Transit Capital Investment Corridors" where frequent service throughout the day and evening is supported by various levels of capital investments. Those capital investments ensure rapid, reliable and comfortable service that make transit a convenient choice. Transit capital investments take many forms, but they are direct expenditures by the city (and its partners) on corridors that are or aspire to be mixed-use, transit-supportive places and connect neighborhoods and community destinations.

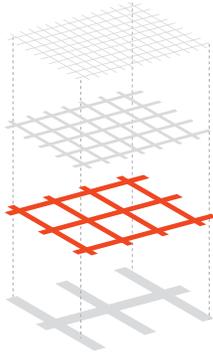
In *Blueprint Denver*, transit priority streets are defined as the transit capital investment corridors from *Denver Moves: Transit*. High-capacity transit may include rail or bus rapid transit (BRT). Medium-capacity corridors are those with either a rapid bus or full BRT. Speed and reliability corridors benefit from investments, such as transit-priority signals, that make transit faster and more reliable in mixed traffic lanes. Speed and reliability corridors can include dedicated transit lanes at key locations.

The following sections show how the design and operation of transit priority streets will prioritize transit.

## 01 Operational

Operational improvements, such as transit signal priority to prioritize transit at traffic signals, reduces travel time and improves reliability.





**02 Higher capacity vehicles**

Vehicles such as rail or rapid bus have the ability to increase the person-throughput of a corridor.



**03 Dedicated transit lanes or grade separation**

Transit runs in exclusive lanes or in dedicated guide-ways (such as rail). This helps transit to move the most amount of people reliably and efficiently.



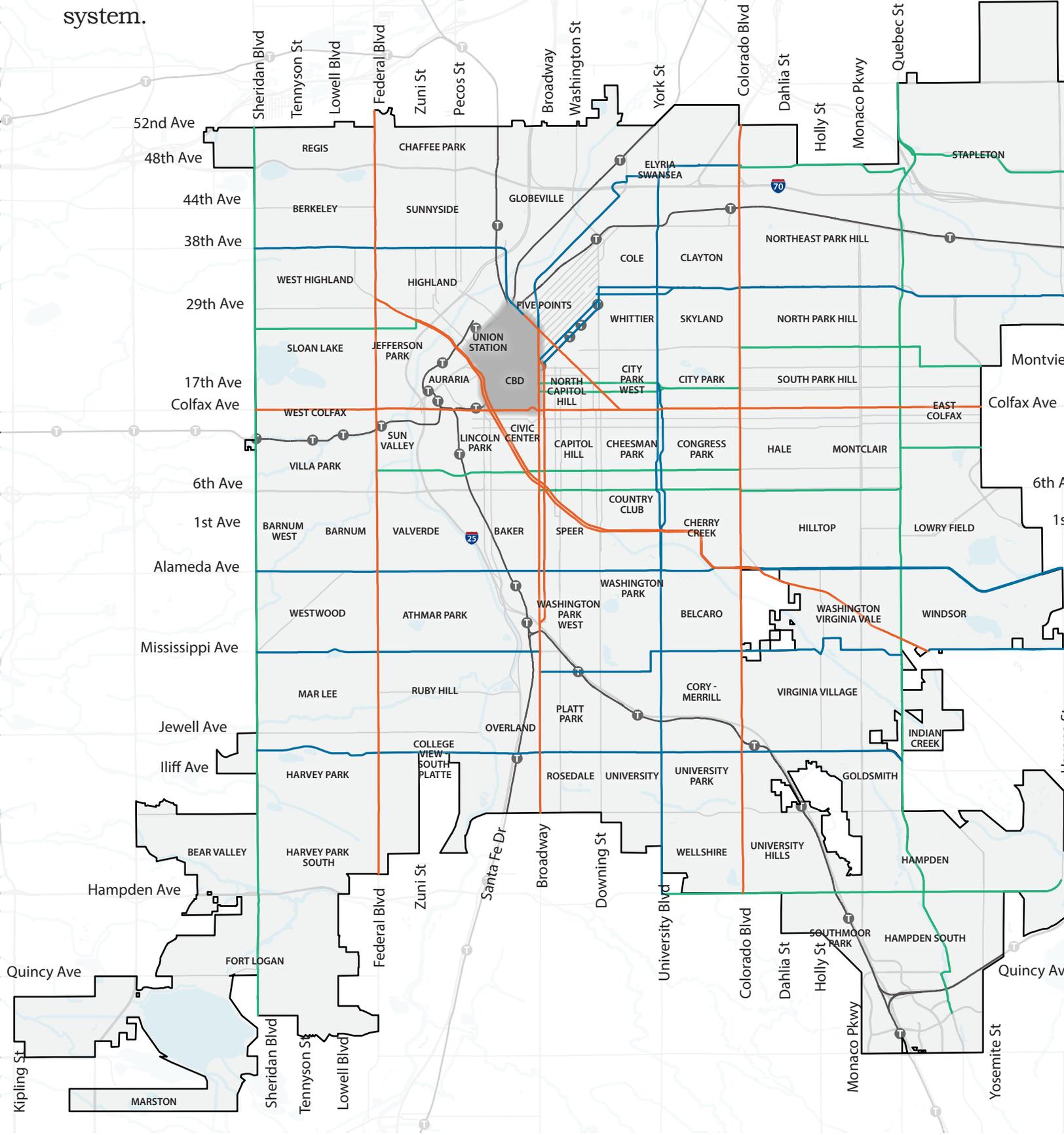
**04 Enhanced stops/ stations**

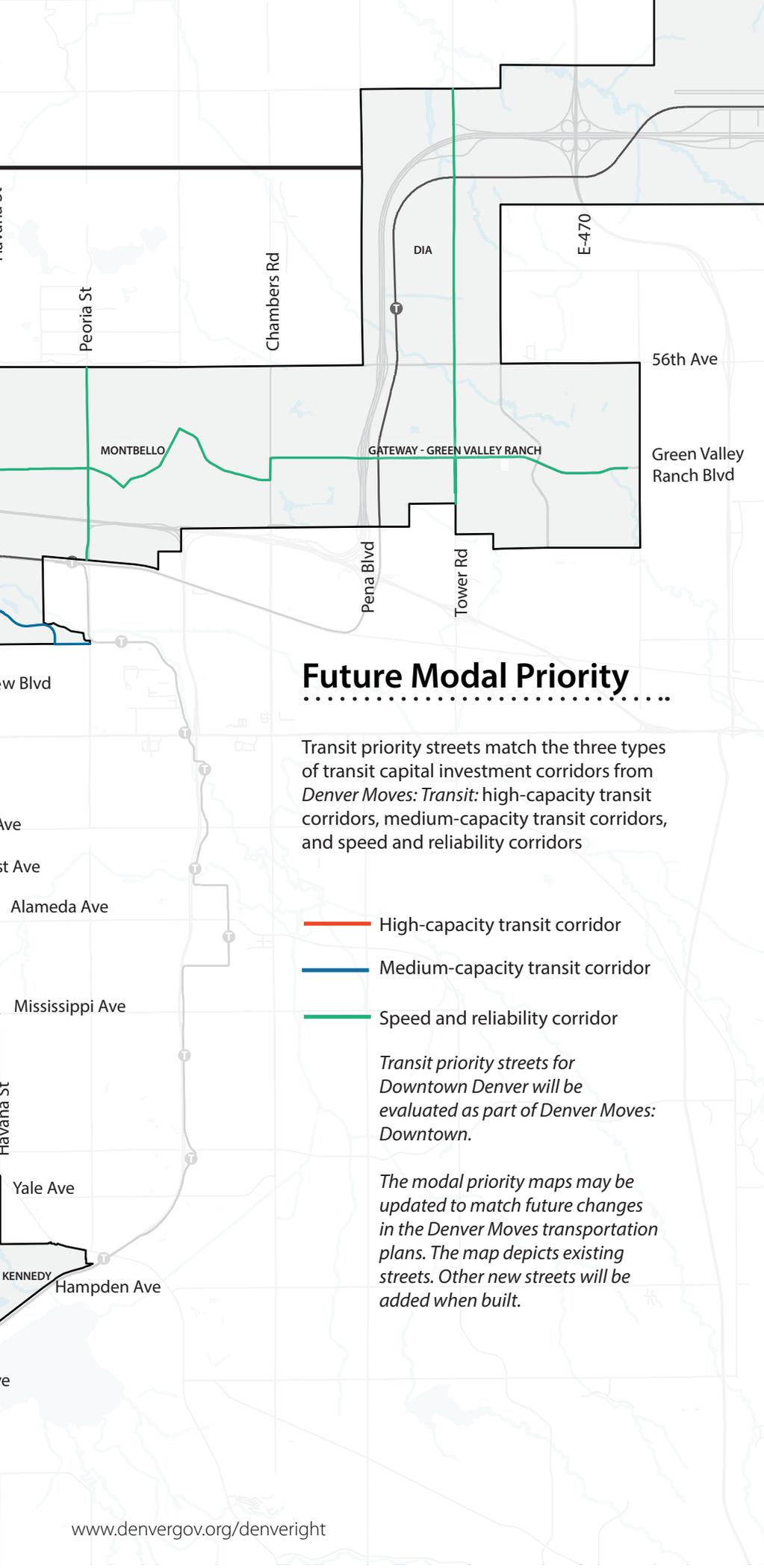
Stops with shelters that protect riders from the elements, real-time transit information and off-board ticket stations, are some of the amenities that will be expected on transit priority streets.



# Transit Priority

Implementing the future transit priority streets will result in a complete transit network for Denver that complements the existing regional rail system.





## Future Modal Priority

Transit priority streets match the three types of transit capital investment corridors from *Denver Moves: Transit*: high-capacity transit corridors, medium-capacity transit corridors, and speed and reliability corridors

- High-capacity transit corridor
- Medium-capacity transit corridor
- Speed and reliability corridor

*Transit priority streets for Downtown Denver will be evaluated as part of Denver Moves: Downtown.*

*The modal priority maps may be updated to match future changes in the Denver Moves transportation plans. The map depicts existing streets. Other new streets will be added when built.*

The streets shown in this map create a complete network for transit by prioritizing transit. This network, which matches the transit capital investment corridors in *Denver Moves: Transit*, complements the existing regional rail system. It is also complemented by a larger high frequency transit network within Denver, which is shown and described in *Denver Moves: Transit*.

### Making Trade-offs

To move more people on city streets, higher-capacity modes will be prioritized to provide reliable, rapid and high-quality service. Where design and operations trade-offs are needed, transit reliability and access will take precedence on transit priority streets. These trade-offs may include removal of a travel lane or on-street parking. This section describes some of the factors that will be considered when making a trade-off in order to prioritize transit on a particular corridor.

### Person Throughput

Transit-only lanes are justified if the shift from general-purpose travel lanes to transit lanes increases the total number of people that can be carried through a corridor.

### Bus Volume

Transit-only or business access transit lanes are justified by a combined flow of 30-40 in-service transit vehicles or more per hour during peak operations—typically representing a minimum of one bus per traffic signal cycle. This level of operation ensures a transit lane never looks “empty” and virtually guarantees the lane is moving more people during an hour than a general-purpose traffic lane.

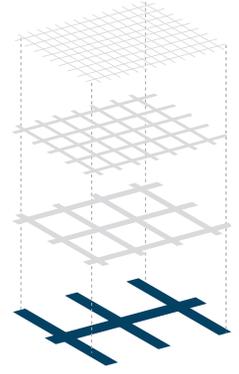
### Speed

The transit-only lane provides an increase in transit operating speed (for distance of the lane or in the overall corridor), improves the overall person speed through the corridor or improves service reliability.

### Increased Reliability

The transit-only or business access transit lane dramatically improves reliability and reduces travel time for consistently delayed bus services.

# Auto and Goods Movement



Vehicle technologies for personal vehicles and the ways goods are distributed and received are rapidly changing.

## Driverless Technology

Technology for vehicles is rapidly evolving. Denver is positioned to adapt to these changes as it implements new roadway technologies to improve safety for all modes. This includes signals that can detect pedestrians as well as communicate with vehicles. *Blueprint Denver* recommends to explore these technologies further while also addressing the impacts that autonomous vehicles are likely to have on transportation infrastructure. As infrastructure adapts, Denver must ensure that people walking and rolling remain a priority as everyone is a pedestrian at some point during their trip. While it is not certain when driverless vehicles will become commonplace on the roadway, Denver must still be prepared for their arrival.

*Blueprint Denver* acknowledges that while driverless vehicles may slightly improve roadway capacity, single occupancy and driverless vehicles are still least efficient in terms of the ability to move people in comparison to other modes. This is because, driverless or not, vehicles still take up the same amount of space on the roadway. *Blueprint Denver* also recognizes that as autonomous vehicles become more commonplace, Denver will need to study impacts to parking and curb space.

## Safety & Vision Zero

Denver has a goal to eliminate traffic deaths through the *Vision Zero Action Plan*. Achieving the *Vision Zero* goal will only happen through making our roadways safer. This includes traffic calming techniques such as diversion, road-diets, speed reductions and restrictions to turning movements to help avoid collisions.

## Goods Movement & Freight

Online shopping and services and evolving technologies have changed how people receive goods and how they are distributed. This has impacts to Denver's transportation infrastructure. The movement of freight is also moving beyond traditional commercial vehicles and delivery trucks. Denver's transportation network must address these changes by establishing clear networks for the movement of freight and updating policies accordingly.



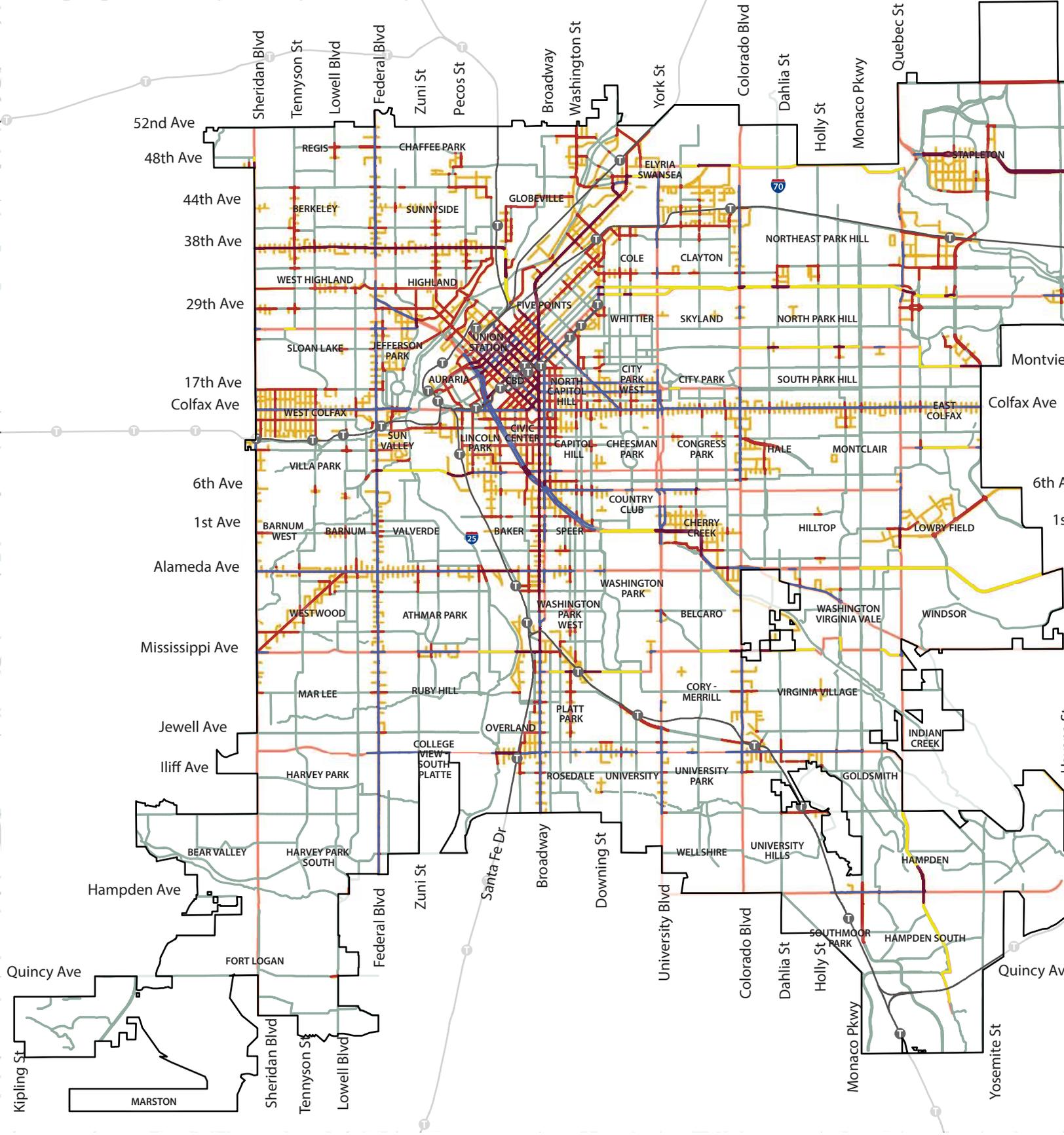
## Curb Lane Uses

Space along the curb is in high-demand in Denver, not just for parking, but for uses including vehicle loading, car share parking and bike parking. As emerging mobility technologies such as transportation network companies and carshare become more common, the uses for space next to the curb are becoming more diverse. As these demands increase, *Blueprint Denver* acknowledges that this should be based on the highest and best use that services the most number of people. This is consistent with Denver's goals of moving people, not just vehicles, on Denver's streets.

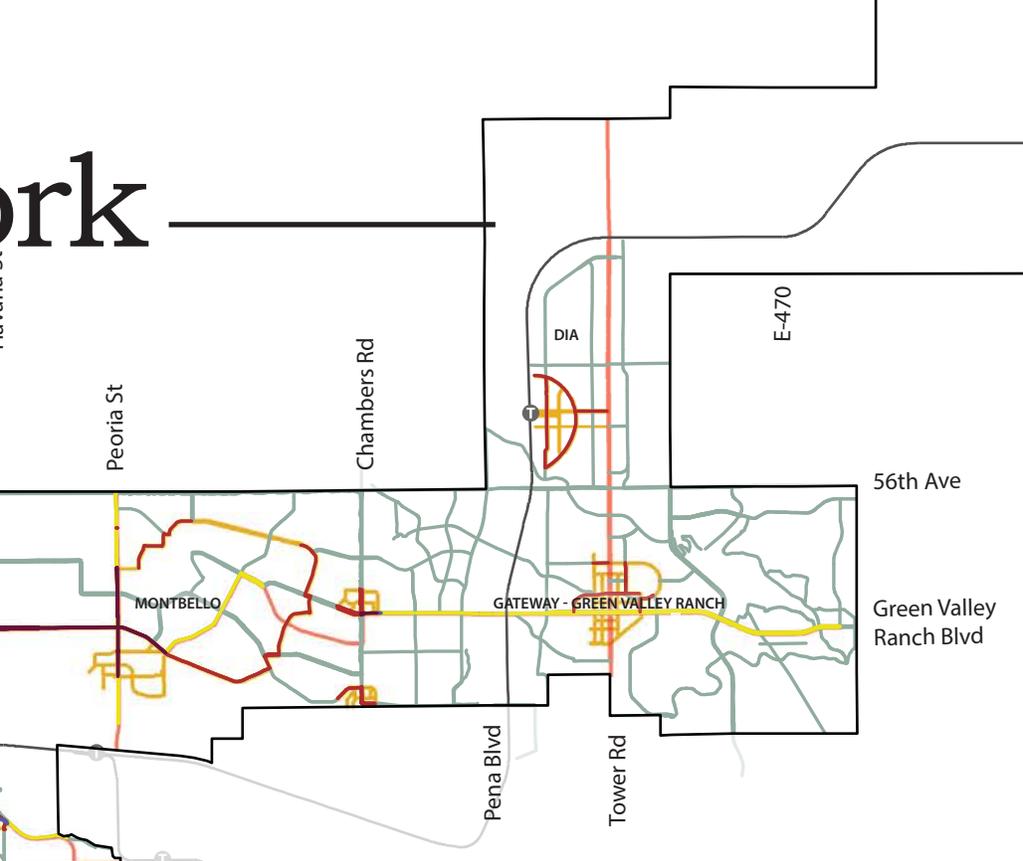


# Future Multimodal Network

Modal priority streets create a complete network for people walking, biking or taking transit.



ork



### Future Modal Priority

- Pedestrian, Bike & Transit
- Pedestrian & Transit
- Pedestrian & Bike
- Bike and Transit
- Transit
- Bike
- Pedestrian

Identifying modal priorities for streets is important because the right-of-way space is limited on each street. For this reason it is not always possible to prioritize every mode on every street. By defining the modal priorities it is possible to have multiple modes and complete networks for each mode. The map identifies the mode or modes that the design and operation of the street will favor.

The modal priority streets for walking and rolling, biking and transit were developed through the *Denver Moves suite of plans*. The pedestrian streets shown on this map are the pedestrian enhanced areas identified in *Denver Moves: Pedestrians & Trails*. The bike priority streets and trails are the medium to high ease-of-use bicycle facilities in *Denver Moves: Bicycles*. Transit priority streets are the transit capital investment corridors in *Denver Moves: Transit*.

For some streets, modal priorities may overlap. This will inform the overall design for these streets as projects are implemented. An example is South Broadway, where a transit only lane, protected bike-lane and enhanced pedestrian environment prioritize all three modes through the design of the street.

*For graphic legibility, the pedestrian priority streets shown on this map are lines. They align with the pedestrian enhanced areas shown on page 170.*

*The modal priority maps may be updated to match future changes in the Denver Moves transportation plans.*

*“The point of cities is multiplicity  
of choice.”*

**- Jane Jacobs**

*Author, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities**

# 5. Neighborhood Contexts

Neighborhood contexts demonstrate the differences in built environment between Denver’s neighborhoods.

.....

Neighborhood contexts help us understand the differences in the built environment between our neighborhoods. Many features—including the mix of uses, density, lot sizes, block pattern, street design, parking and the type of recreational opportunities—vary by neighborhood. These variations are often due to the era of development and the transportation options available at that time.

This chapter is intended to provide greater detail on the aspirational elements of a complete neighborhood—land use, built form, mobility and quality-of-life infrastructure—expressed through the places and street types found in each neighborhood context. This context-based approach sets guidelines for character-compatible development by explaining the varied expectations and aspirations for each unique neighborhood in Denver.

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5.7 Districts

# Neighborhood Contexts —

|                   | <b>S</b> UBURBAN<br>PAGE 189 | URBAN <b>E</b> DGE<br>PAGE 205 | URBAN <b>U</b><br>PAGE 221 | <b>G</b> ENERAL<br>PAGE |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| CENTERS           | LOCAL<br>                    | LOCAL<br>                      | LOCAL<br>                  | LOCAL<br>               |
|                   | COMMUNITY<br>                | COMMUNITY<br>                  | COMMUNITY<br>              | COMMUNITY<br>           |
|                   | REGIONAL<br>                 | REGIONAL<br>                   | REGIONAL<br>               | REGIONAL<br>            |
| CORRIDORS         | LOCAL<br>                    | LOCAL<br>                      | LOCAL<br>                  | LOCAL<br>               |
|                   | COMMUNITY<br>                | COMMUNITY<br>                  | COMMUNITY<br>              | COMMUNITY<br>           |
| RESIDENTIAL AREAS | LOW<br>                      | LOW<br>                        | LOW<br>                    | LOW<br>                 |
|                   | LOW-MEDIUM<br>               | LOW-MEDIUM<br>                 | LOW-MEDIUM<br>             | LOW-MEDIUM<br>          |
|                   | HIGH-MEDIUM<br>              | HIGH-MEDIUM<br>                | HIGH-MEDIUM<br>            | HIGH-MEDIUM<br>         |
|                   | HIGH<br>                     | HIGH<br>                       | HIGH<br>                   | HIGH<br>                |
| STREET TYPES      | DOWNTOWN                     | DOWNTOWN                       | DOWNTOWN                   | DOWNTOWN                |
|                   | MAIN STREET                  | MAIN STREET                    | MAIN STREET                | MAIN STREET             |
|                   | MIXED USE                    | MIXED USE                      | MIXED USE                  | MIXED USE               |
|                   | INDUSTRIAL                   | INDUSTRIAL                     | INDUSTRIAL                 | INDUSTRIAL              |
|                   | COMMERCIAL                   | COMMERCIAL                     | COMMERCIAL                 | COMMERCIAL              |
|                   | RESIDENTIAL                  | RESIDENTIAL                    | RESIDENTIAL                | RESIDENTIAL             |
|                   | LOCAL                        | LOCAL                          | LOCAL                      | LOCAL                   |

Places work together to promote complete neighborhoods. Each place expresses itself differently depending on the neighborhood context where it is located. The following table illustrates which places are found within each of the neighborhood contexts.

**GENERAL URBAN**  
PAGE 237

**LOCAL**

**COMMUNITY**

**REGIONAL**

**LOCAL**

**COMMUNITY**

**LOW-MEDIUM**

**HIGH**

**DOWNTOWN**

**MAIN STREET**

**MIXED USE**

**INDUSTRIAL**

**COMMERCIAL**

**RESIDENTIAL**

**LOCAL**

**URBAN CENTER**  
PAGE 251

**LOCAL**

**COMMUNITY**

**REGIONAL**

**LOCAL**

**COMMUNITY**

**LOW**

**LOW-MEDIUM**

**HIGH-MEDIUM**

**HIGH**

**DOWNTOWN**

**MAIN STREET**

**MIXED USE**

**INDUSTRIAL**

**COMMERCIAL**

**RESIDENTIAL**

**LOCAL**

**DOWNTOWN**  
PAGE 265

**LOCAL**

**COMMUNITY**

**REGIONAL**

**LOCAL**

**COMMUNITY**

**LOW**

**LOW-MEDIUM**

**HIGH-MEDIUM**

**HIGH**

**DOWNTOWN**

**MAIN STREET**

**MIXED USE**

**INDUSTRIAL**

**COMMERCIAL**

**RESIDENTIAL**

**LOCAL**

**DISTRICTS**  
PAGE 284

**AIRPORT**

**CAMPUS**

**CIVIC**

**HEAVY PRODUCTION**

**VALUE MANUFACTURING**

**INNOVATION/ FLEX**

**REGIONAL PARK**



# 5.1 Suburban

The suburban context encompasses the most varied development in Denver’s neighborhoods.

The suburban context represents the most varied development in Denver’s neighborhoods. Homes in this context are largely single-unit, but can also include higher intensity residential. Commercial development is focused along main corridors and centers bordering residential areas. Although this context is more auto-oriented than others, there should still be quality multimodal connectivity.

The aspiration of the suburban context in Denver is different than traditional suburban development of the past. Especially compared to other parts of the metro area, Denver’s suburban areas are still more urban in nature and suburban places should reflect that. Residents of this context should be able to walk and bike to neighborhood destinations safely, though the trips may be longer than in other contexts.

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5.2.5 Suburban Residential Areas

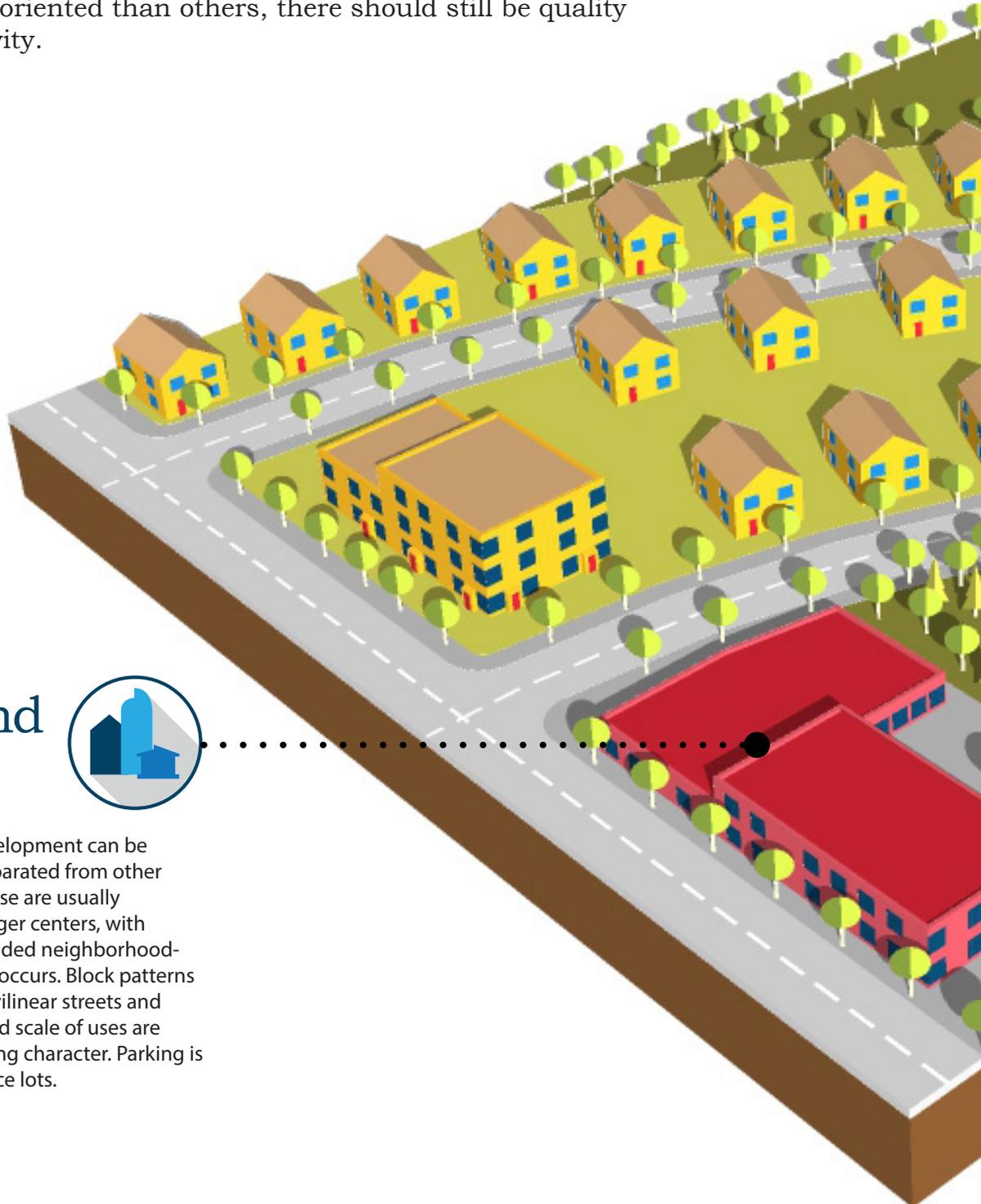
202

5.2.6 Suburban Street Types

# Suburban Context

## *at a glance*

Many suburban context areas are single-unit residential, but multi-unit also occurs. Commercial development is focused along main corridors and centers bordering residential areas. Although this context is more auto-oriented than others, there should still be quality multimodal connectivity.



## Land Use and Built Form



All intensities of residential development can be found, though generally are separated from other types. Commercial and mixed-use are usually located along corridors or in larger centers, with the opportunity for new embedded neighborhood-serving uses as redevelopment occurs. Block patterns are generally irregular with curvilinear streets and no alley access. The intensity and scale of uses are dependent upon the surrounding character. Parking is more likely to be found in surface lots.

## Suburban



### Mobility

More reliant on single-occupancy vehicles, but is still walkable and bikeable, particularly to local destinations, with access to transit.

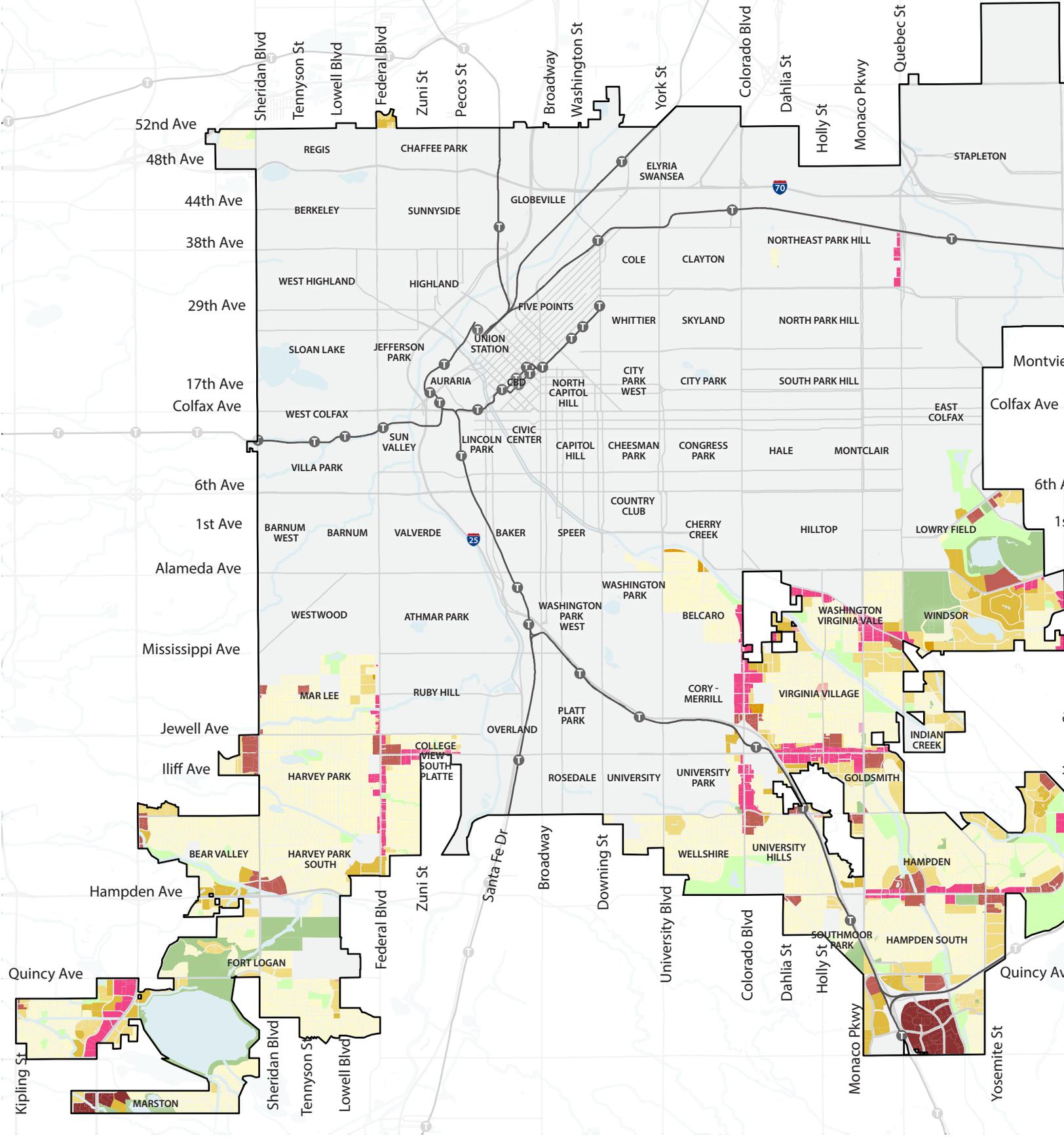


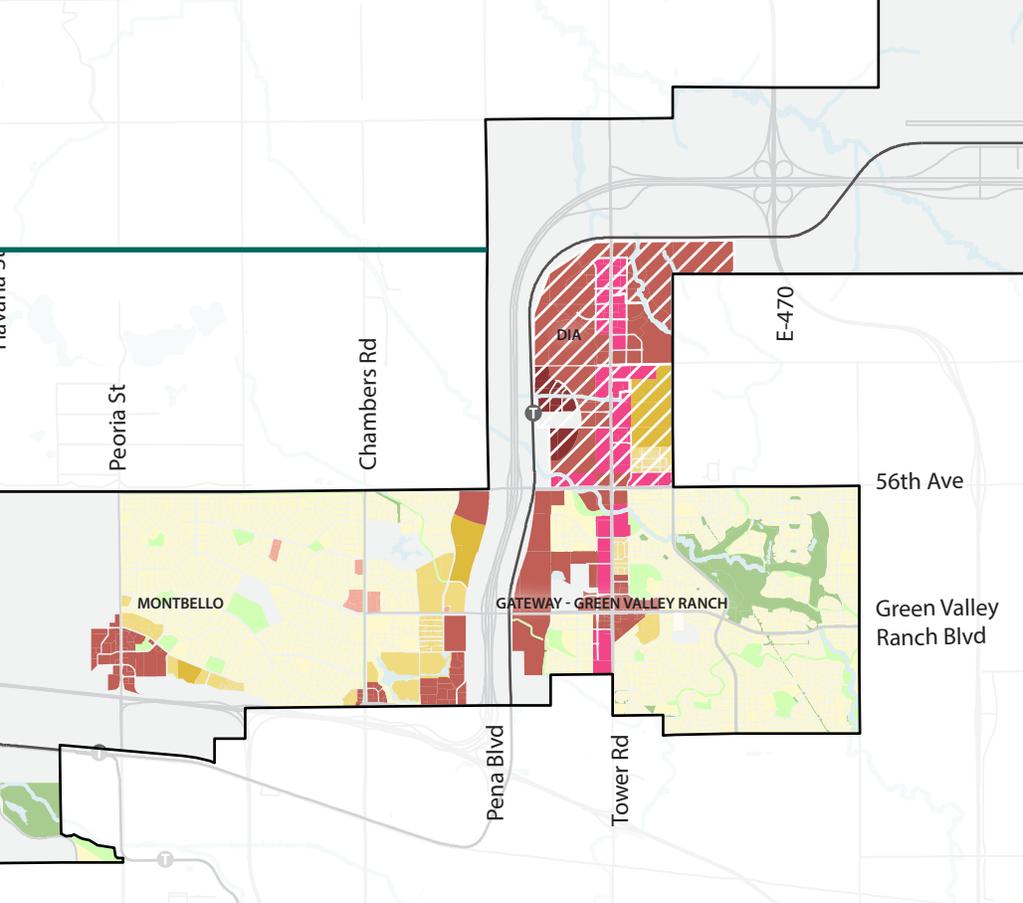
### Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

Parks of various sizes, designated natural areas and open spaces. A range of recreational amenities. Trees are primarily found on private property but also in public right-of-way along streets.

# Suburban Places

The future places found within the suburban context.

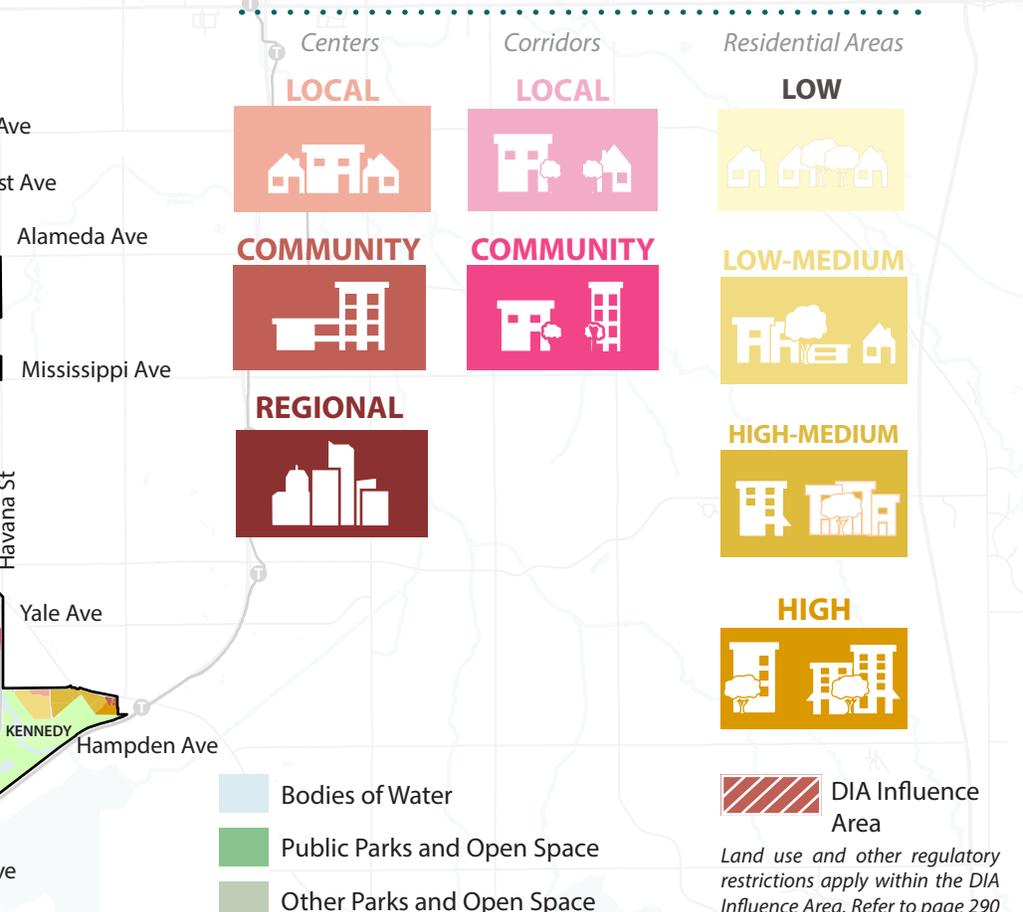




The suburban context is generally found at the edges of Denver, particularly in the southwest, southeast and northeast portions of the city. This context consists of large areas of residential, with mixed-use corridors along major roads and larger centers at key intersections.

Neighborhood examples in this context include Green Valley Ranch, Hampden, and Harvey Park.

## FUTURE PLACES



For more information about bodies of water, public parks and open space, and other parks and open space see page 152.

See descriptions of places and residential areas starting on page 194.

# Centers

Centers should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses, including retail and dining.

## Local

## Community

## Regional



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and office uses. Typically frequented by residents of the nearby neighborhood. Activity levels are lower than other center types. Pedestrian scale with a range of building setbacks, though closer to the street is preferred. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 3 stories and generally do not have a transition area as they are already integrated into the surrounding neighborhood.

Typically provides some medium mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels vary depending on the type and mix of uses. A mix of larger and smaller scale buildings, some setback from the street to accommodate parking. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Transitions gradually within the center out to the surrounding residential areas.

Provides a high mix of uses to create a dynamic environment of living, dining, entertainment and shopping, while incorporating a diverse set of employment options. Wide customer draw with a 24/7 live, work and play environment attractive to locals and visitors. Larger scale mixed-use buildings are common. High degree of urban elements with continuous human-scale building frontages to define the public realm. Heights are generally the tallest in the context and transition gradually within the center to the surrounding residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Most accessible to surrounding neighborhood users by walking or biking. A pedestrian priority area is typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease-of-use bicycle facilities or local streets. Most likely to be served by local transit.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options including transit priority streets. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease-of-use bicycle facilities.

Multimodal areas with very frequent service by high-capacity transit with access to major modal hubs. Typically contain more than one pedestrian priority area. Cyclists have access with high ease-of-use bicycle facilities.



Smaller-scale open spaces promote social interaction. Green infrastructure often serves the needs of a specific site. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Green infrastructure serves the needs of a site or the surrounding area. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

Open spaces are often integrated into the streetscape and respond to unique characteristics of the center. Social interaction is prioritized throughout the center. Green infrastructure, street trees and plantings provide moments of relief from the more intense activity. Spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and activities.



# Suburban

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of suburban centers. They show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of center, as described on the previous page.

## Local Center



## Community Center



## Regional Center



# Corridors

Corridors should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses.

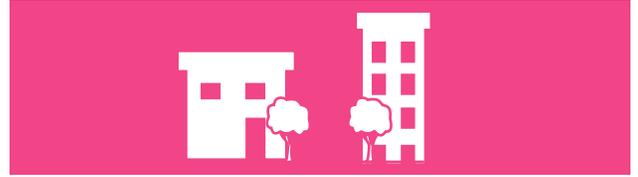
## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and office uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Highest activity levels during evenings and weekends. Pedestrian scale with a range of building setbacks, though closer to the street is preferred. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 3 stories. Although generally well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood, a limited transition may be needed.



## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation, but may provide an opportunity for infill in large setbacks that are a result of historic suburban development. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Due to shorter lot depths, special attention is needed for transitions to nearby residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.

Circulation focuses on movement through or along the corridor. Nearby residents have access by walking or biking, though new suburban development should be more “porous” for more direct neighborhood access. A pedestrian priority area may be present and cyclists have access either through high and medium ease of use bicycle facilities or multi-purpose trails. Typically served by local transit that may be part of the transit priority street network.



Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. The corridor is part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas along the corridor are typical and cyclists have access with high ease of use bicycle facilities.

Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green infrastructure serves the site or immediate area. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events and are publicly accessible.



Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green infrastructure serves the site or immediate area. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## Suburban

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of suburban corridors. They show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of corridor, as described on the previous page.

### Local Corridor



### Community Corridor



# Residential Areas

Although these areas are predominately residential, they are supported by a variety of compatible embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood such as schools, parks and commercial/retail uses.

## Low



Generally characterized by single-unit uses on larger lots. Accessory dwelling units and compatible two-unit uses are appropriate and can be thoughtfully integrated. Limited mixed-use along some arterial and collector streets and at intersections, as well as where commercial uses have been already established. Vacant institutional uses on corners or select sites may be appropriate locations to introduce additional suburban residential intensity. There is a mix of attached and detached garage forms. Buildings are typically up to 2.5 stories in height.



Curving streets are a predominant feature with access to residences taken from singular driveways. Alleys are not common. Cul-de-sacs are typical in historic suburban areas, however they limit overall connectivity and should be avoided. Adding new detached sidewalks or widening existing sidewalks to standard can help provide safety and comfort for people walking and rolling. Bicycle infrastructure is typically an on-street bike lane. Mobility choices are somewhat limited compared to other contexts.



Outdoor space is generally privatized in the form of larger yards in the front and rear. Public parks provide open space and recreation. Canopy trees should be appropriately spaced and abundant within the right-of-way and on private property.





## Suburban



### Applying Residential “Low” Guidance to Proposed Rezoning

This section provides guidance for evaluating potential rezoning, or map amendment requests, in low residential areas. Although the description of the low residential places includes both single-unit and two-unit uses, two-unit uses are not appropriate in all low areas.

#### Uses

When a rezoning request is made to change the zoning to allow two-unit uses, the appropriateness of the request depends upon adopted small area plan guidance, neighborhood input, and existing zoning patterns. A departure from the established zoning pattern may be appropriate if the intent is to set a new pattern for the area, as expressed by an adopted small area plan or significant neighborhood input.

#### Minimum Lot Size

In the Denver Zoning Code single-unit and two-unit zone districts are regulated based on minimum lot size. Different zone districts have different required minimums to build allowed building forms, such as the urban house or duplex forms. When a rezoning request is made to change the zoning to allow smaller lots for multiple properties in an area, the appropriateness of the request depends upon the existing character and applicable adopted small area plan guidance. For applicant-driven requests that are individual sites or small assemblages, typically it is only appropriate to allow smaller lot sizes than the existing zone district if there is an established pattern in the surrounding blocks of smaller lots with similar uses that would be consistent with the zone district request. A departure from the established lot pattern may be appropriate if the request includes a larger area, generally greater than one block, and the intent is to set a new pattern for the area, as expressed by an adopted small area plan or significant neighborhood input.

# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential in nature, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood including schools, parks and commercial/retail uses.

## Low-Medium



Mix of low- to mid-scale multi-unit residential options. Small-scale multi-unit buildings are interspersed between single- and two-unit residential. Limited mixed-use along some arterial and collector streets and some intersections. Vacant institutional uses at intersections or select sites along some residential arterial and collector streets may be appropriate locations to introduce additional residential intensity. A variety of lower scale residential forms including row houses and small multi-unit buildings are found. Buildings are generally 3 stories or less in height.



Vehicular access is typically from the street since alleys are not common. The sidewalk network is dispersed. Adding new detached sidewalks or widening existing sidewalks to standard can help provide safety and comfort for people walking. Bicycle infrastructure is typically an on-street bike lane. There is some access to transit in select locations.



Outdoor open space is often in the form of private yards or assembled in smaller common areas such as a courtyards. Trees are prevalent and spaced at regular intervals along street frontages and provided on private property.



## Suburban

### High-Medium



Contains a mix of medium-scale, multi-unit residential types and can accommodate compatible commercial/retail uses. Buildings are generally up to 5 stories in height. Building heights and scaling help provide transitions to adjacent places.

### High



Characterized by a high number of multi-unit residential buildings, typically on larger properties. Buildings are generally the tallest of the residential places in this context. A mix of non-residential uses should also be found in appropriate locations.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.

Typically served by residential arterial streets. Connections to private property are often provided by internal drives accessed from the street since alleys are not common. This intensity has some access to transit options. Detached sidewalks can provide pedestrian comfort and increase mobility options.

Larger lot sizes enable outdoor recreational spaces and social spaces. Green infrastructure is incorporated in appropriate areas. Trees occur in larger setback areas on private property and along streets, typically in tree lawns with regular spacing.



Irregular street grid with larger, inconsistent block shapes. Vehicular parking around buildings in surface lots and parking garages. Wide detached sidewalks and larger tree lawns/ planting areas provide pedestrian safety and comfort while increasing mobility options. Connections within larger blocks provided by internal drives accessed from the street. Typically, there is reasonable access to transit options.

Larger lots enable the integration of outdoor recreational space, community gardens and green infrastructure. Enhanced planting areas are typical at access points. Trees occur in larger setback areas on private property and along streets, typically in tree lawns with regular spacing.



# Street Types

The suburban context contains mixed-use, main street, residential, commercial and industrial streets.

On all streets in the suburban context, wide tree lawns or planted areas with trees should be used to provide a buffer between people walking and moving vehicles. Streets in this context generally require less curb space management than in other contexts. Residential streets often have more curb cuts compared to other contexts due to the lack of alleys. Parking between the street and building front commonly occurs on mixed-use, commercial, and industrial streets, but not on main streets. Industrial streets within suburban contexts are wider to accommodate freight traffic. Operating speeds may be higher on multi-lane arterial streets in suburban contexts, but measures are still taken to improve safety for all transportation modes.

MAIN STREET



MIXED-USE



COMMERCIAL



INDUSTRIAL



# Suburban

## STREET TYPES

- DOWNTOWN
- MAIN STREET**
- MIXED USE
- INDUSTRIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- RESIDENTIAL
- LOCAL

RESIDENTIAL





# 5.2 Urban Edge

The urban edge context areas are predominately residential and tend to act as a transition between urban and suburban areas.

.....

The urban edge context areas are predominately residential and tend to act as a transition between urban and suburban areas. Homes in this context are typically low-scale single- and two-unit residential with some small scale multi-unit residential. Commercial and mixed-use development in this context tends to be found along the main corridors bordering traditional residential areas, with some larger center development.

The urban edge context offers good walkability with short, predictable blocks. Many existing commercial developments in urban edge were established with the rise of the automobile and, as a result, are designed around single-occupancy vehicles. As these areas redevelop, they will be adapted to be more pedestrian-friendly, with buildings oriented to the public realm instead of parking lots.

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5.2.5 Urban Edge Residential Areas

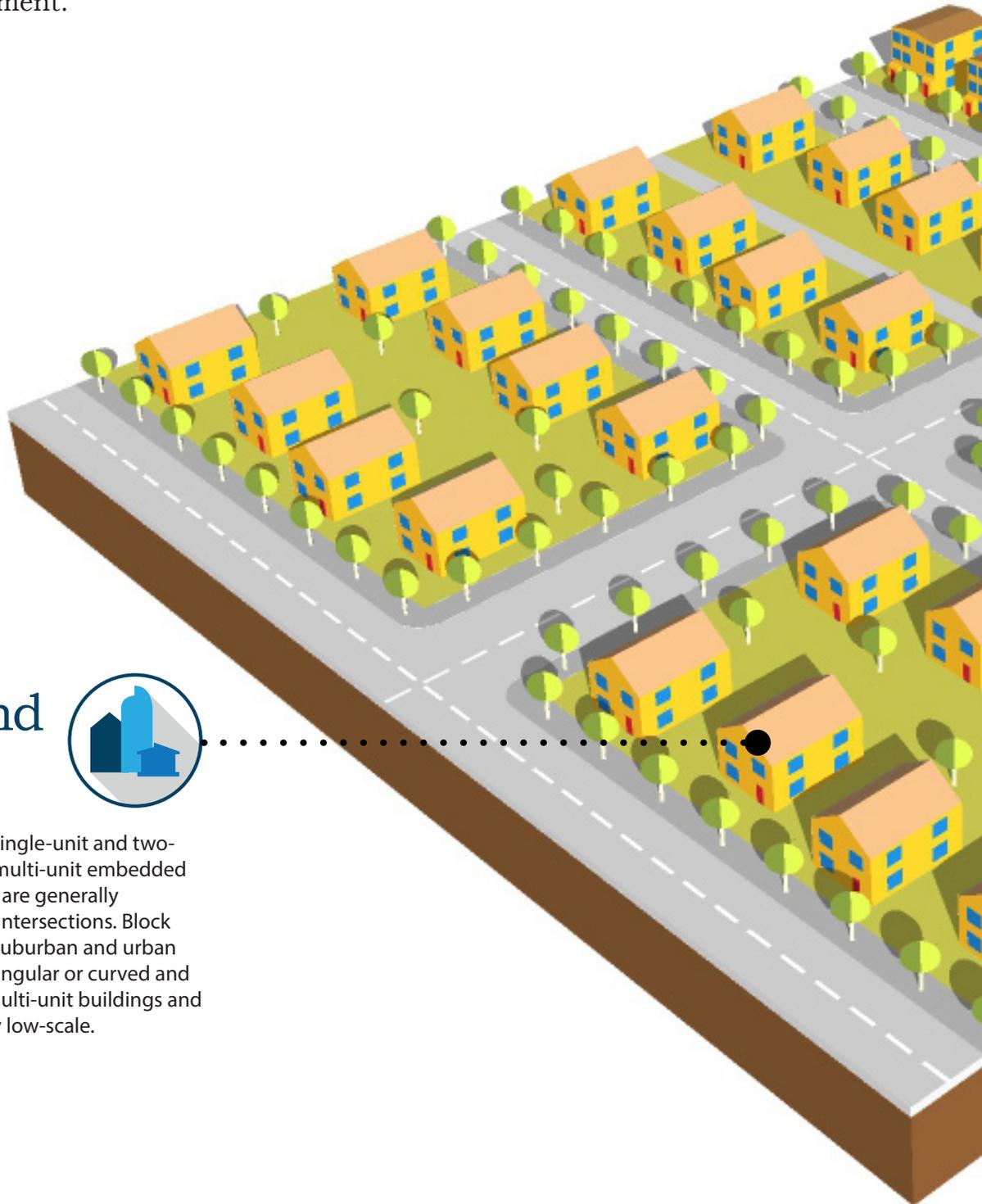
218

5.2.6 Urban Edge Street Types

# Urban Edge Context

## *at a glance*

The urban edge context contains many single- and two-unit residential areas. Commercial and mixed-use development tends to be found along the main corridors bordering traditional residential areas, with some larger center development.



## Land Use and Built Form



Residential areas generally are single-unit and two-unit uses, with some low-scale multi-unit embedded throughout. Commercial nodes are generally found along key corridors or at intersections. Block patterns are generally a mix of suburban and urban elements—streets may be rectangular or curved and alleys are sometimes present. Multi-unit buildings and commercial nodes are generally low-scale.

## Urban Edge



### Mobility

Some reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, but still walkable and bikeable with access to transit. Some parking may be located between the building and street.

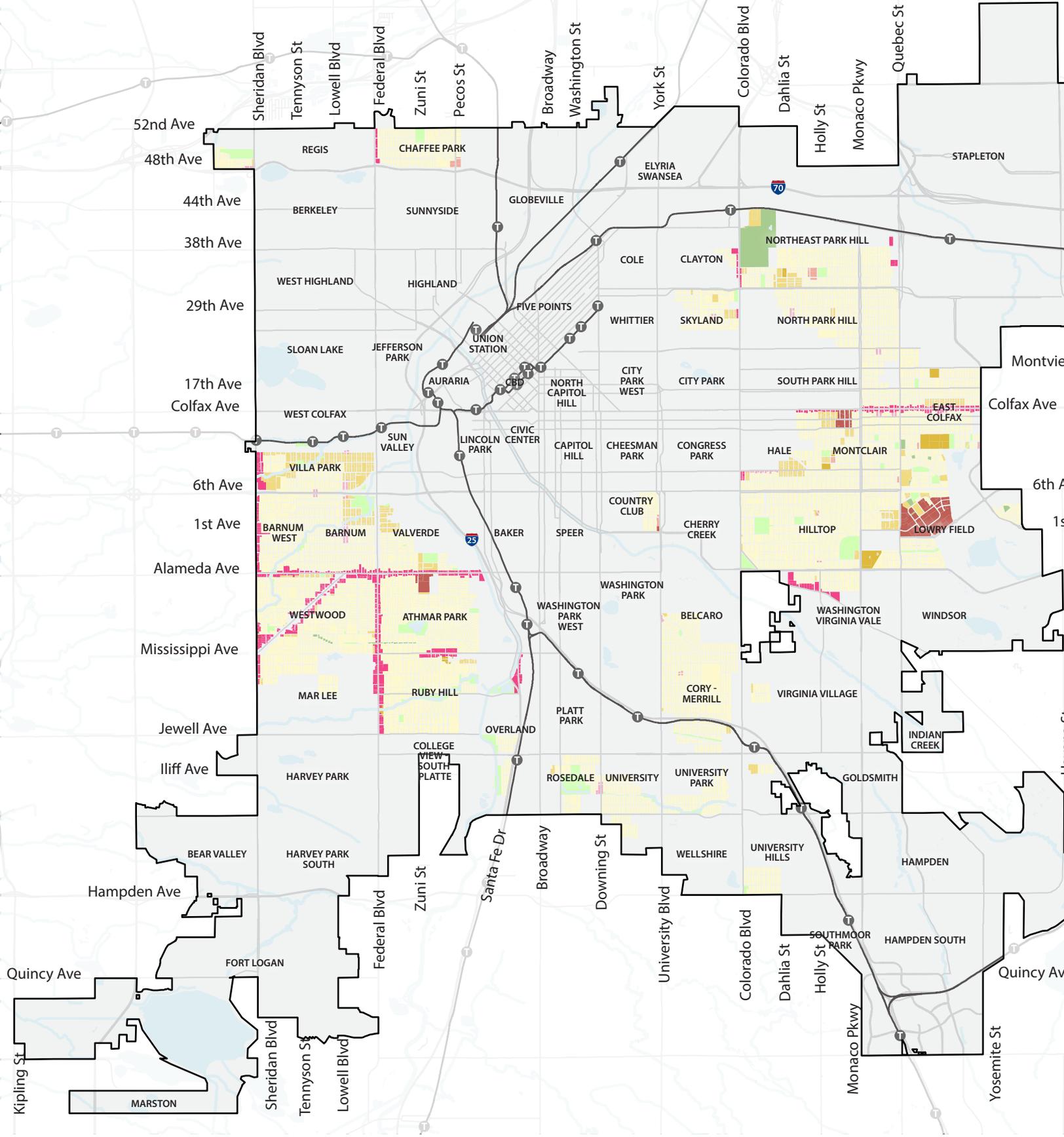


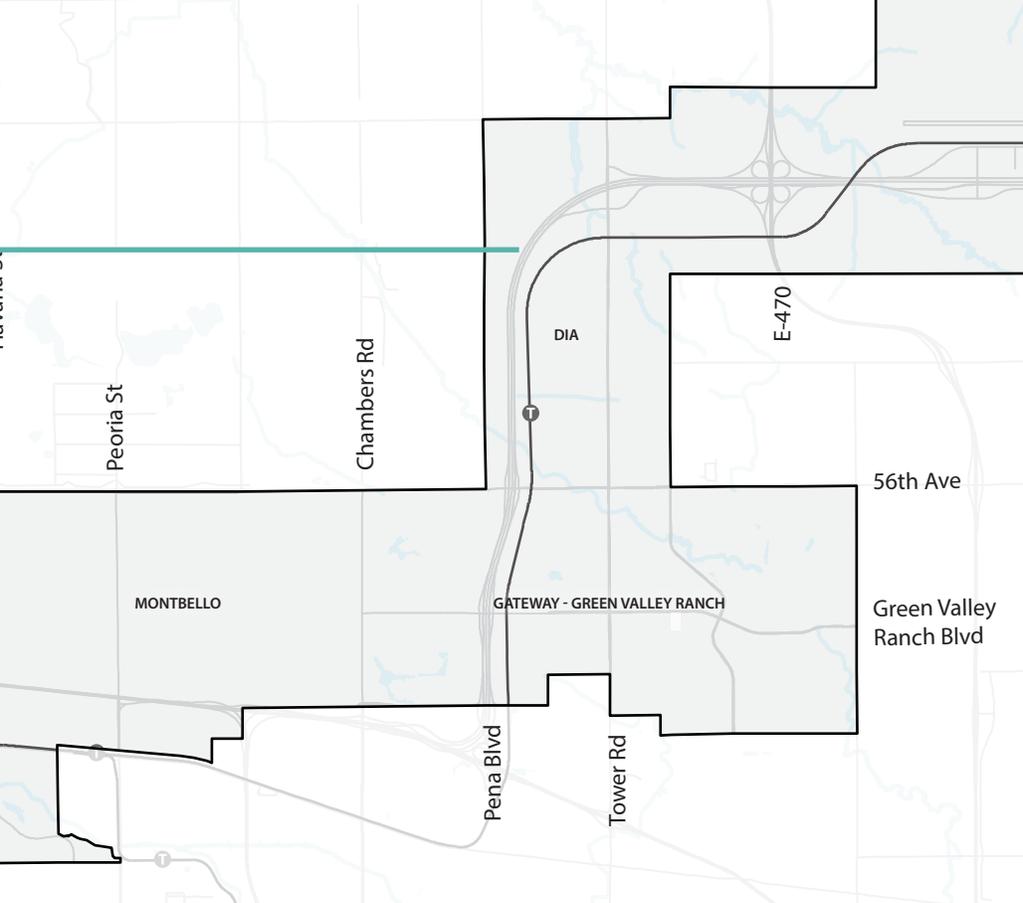
### Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

Community and local scale parks. Schools and civic uses. Mixed occurrence of tree lawns/planting areas with generally higher percentage of tree canopy cover. Green Infrastructure can be integrated thoughtfully.

# Urban Edge Places

The future places found within the urban edge context.

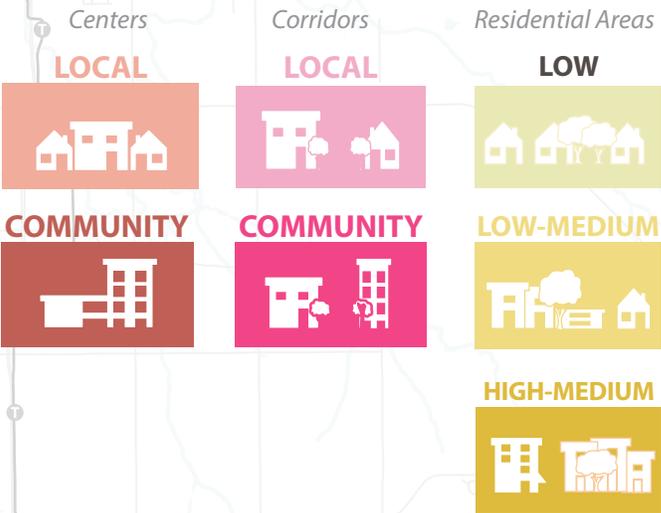




Urban edge areas generally contain a mix of elements from urban and suburban contexts. These areas of the city may have been developed prior to annexation and, as a result, have variation in the neighborhood patterns.

Example neighborhoods in this context include parts of Barnum, Hilltop and Athmar Park.

## FUTURE PLACES



- Bodies of Water
- Public Parks and Open Space
- Other Parks and Open Space

For more information about bodies of water, public parks and open space, and other parks and open space see page 152.

See descriptions of places and residential areas starting on page 210.

# Centers

Centers should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses, including retail and dining.

## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Activity levels are lower than other center types, with the highest activity during evenings and weekends. Pedestrian scale with buildings typically setback from the street to accommodate a limited amount of parking. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 3 stories and generally will not have a transition area as they are already well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood.



## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. A mix of larger and smaller scale buildings, some being set back from the street to accommodate parking. Heights are generally up to 5 stories and should transition gradually within the center to the surrounding lower intensity residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Most accessible to surrounding neighborhood users by walking or biking. A pedestrian priority area is typical and cyclists have access either through high and medium ease of use bicycle facilities or local streets. Typically served by local transit that may be part of the transit priority street network.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options including frequent transit service as part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease of use bicycle facilities.



Smaller-scale open spaces promote social interaction. Green infrastructure often serves the needs of a specific site. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Green infrastructure serves the needs of a site or the surrounding area. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

# Urban Edge

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of urban edge centers. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of center, as described on the previous page.

## Local Center



## Local Center



## Community Center



## Community Center



## Community Center



# Corridors

Corridors should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses.

## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Highest activity levels during evenings and weekends. When residential occurs, it should primarily be located to encourage active street frontages. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation and are often setback from the street to accommodate a limited amount of parking. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 3 stories. Although generally well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood, a limited transition may be needed.

## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential. AA wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels during different times of the day will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street. A mix of larger and smaller scale buildings, some being setback from the street to accommodate parking. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Due to shorter lot depths, special attention is needed for transitions to nearby residential areas.



For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Circulation focuses on movement through or along the corridor. Nearby residents have easy access by walking or biking. A pedestrian priority area is typical and cyclists have access either through high and medium ease of use bicycle facilities or local streets. Typically served by local transit that may be part of the transit priority street network.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. The corridor is part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas along the corridor are typical and cyclists have access with high ease of use bicycle facilities.



Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green infrastructure serves the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Street trees and planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green infrastructure serves the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Street trees and planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## Urban Edge

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of urban edge corridors. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of corridor, as described on the previous page.

### Local Corridor



### Local Corridor



### Community Corridor



### Community Corridor



# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential in nature, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood including schools, parks and commercial/retail uses.

## Low



Predominately single- and two-unit uses on small or medium lots. Accessory dwelling units and duplexes are appropriate and can be thoughtfully integrated where compatible. Some civic and institutional uses are compatibly integrated throughout and limited mixed-use can occur along arterial and collector streets, as well as where commercial uses have been already established. Vacant institutional uses on corners or select sites may be appropriate locations to introduce additional residential intensity. Low to medium buildings coverage. Building are generally up to 2.5 stories in height.



The sidewalk network has both attached and detached conditions. Where feasible, adding detached sidewalks can provide a more safe and comfortable pedestrian experience. Bicycle infrastructure is more typically integrated into an on-street bike lane. Access to transit options is limited.



Outdoor space is often privatized in the form of yards. There is also access to public parks. Trees should be abundant on both private property and along the street.





## Urban Edge

### Applying Residential “Low” Guidance to Proposed Rezoning

This section provides guidance for evaluating potential rezoning, or map amendment requests, in low residential areas. Although the description of the low residential places includes both single-unit and two-unit uses, two-unit uses are not appropriate in all low areas.

#### Uses

When a rezoning request is made to change the zoning to allow two-unit uses, the appropriateness of the request depends upon adopted small area plan guidance, neighborhood input, and existing zoning patterns. A departure from the established zoning pattern may be appropriate if the intent is to set a new pattern for the area, as expressed by an adopted small area plan or significant neighborhood input.

#### Minimum Lot Size

In the Denver Zoning Code single-unit and two-unit zone districts are regulated based on minimum lot size. Different zone districts have different required minimums to build allowed building forms, such as the urban house or duplex forms. When a rezoning request is made to change the zoning to allow smaller lots for multiple properties in an area, the appropriateness of the request depends upon the existing character and applicable adopted neighborhood plan guidance. For applicant-driven requests that are individual sites or small assemblages, typically it is only appropriate to allow smaller lot sizes than the existing zone district if there is an established pattern in the surrounding blocks of smaller lots with similar uses that would be consistent with the zone district request. A departure from the established lot pattern may be appropriate if the request includes a larger area, generally greater than one block, and the intent is to set a new pattern for the area, as expressed by an adopted small area plan or significant neighborhood input.

# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood including schools, parks and commercial/retail uses.

## Low-Medium



Mix of low- to mid-scale multi-unit residential options. Small-scale multi-unit buildings are interspersed between single- and two-unit residential. Limited mixed-use along arterial and collector streets and at some intersections. Vacant institutional uses on corners or select sites may be appropriate locations to introduce additional residential intensity. Buildings are generally 3 stories or less in height. When occurring, single- and two-unit residential uses are typically in the urban house form.



For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to r



The pedestrian sidewalk network is somewhat dispersed, and detached sidewalks provide a more safe and comfortable pedestrian experience. Vehicular access is taken from alleys or singular access points. There is some access to transit options.



Open space is often assembled in common areas such as courtyards or setback areas. Parks and drainage are frequently combined in gulches, neighborhood parks and other outdoor public spaces to provide a recreational amenity. Trees should be prevalent on private property and along streets, spaced at regular intervals.



## Urban Edge

### High-Medium



A mix of mid-scale multi-unit residential options. Some neighborhood-serving mixed-use may be appropriate, especially along arterial streets or at non-local street intersections. Buildings are generally up to 5 stories in height. Building heights and scaling help provide transitions to adjacent places.

zonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.

The pedestrian sidewalk network is less dispersed, and detached sidewalks provide a more safe and comfortable pedestrian experience. Vehicular access is taken from alleys or singular access points. There is a moderate level of access to transit options.

Open spaces are often assembled in common areas such as setbacks with the integration of courtyards. These outdoor common areas can be programmed with recreational amenities or community gardens. Trees should be prevalent on private property and along streets, spaced at regular intervals.



# Street Types

The urban edge context contains mixed-use, commercial and residential street types.

For mixed-use and commercial streets, surface parking is often between the street and building. Mixed-use streets strive to be walkable with pedestrian oriented buildings. They include an amenity zone with sidewalks, trees, lawns/landscaped areas and seating to provide a buffer between people walking and traffic. The amount of curb cuts on residential streets varies depending on the presence of an alley.

MIXED-USE



COMMERCIAL



RESIDENTIAL



# Urban Edge

## STREET TYPES

DOWNTOWN

MAIN STREET

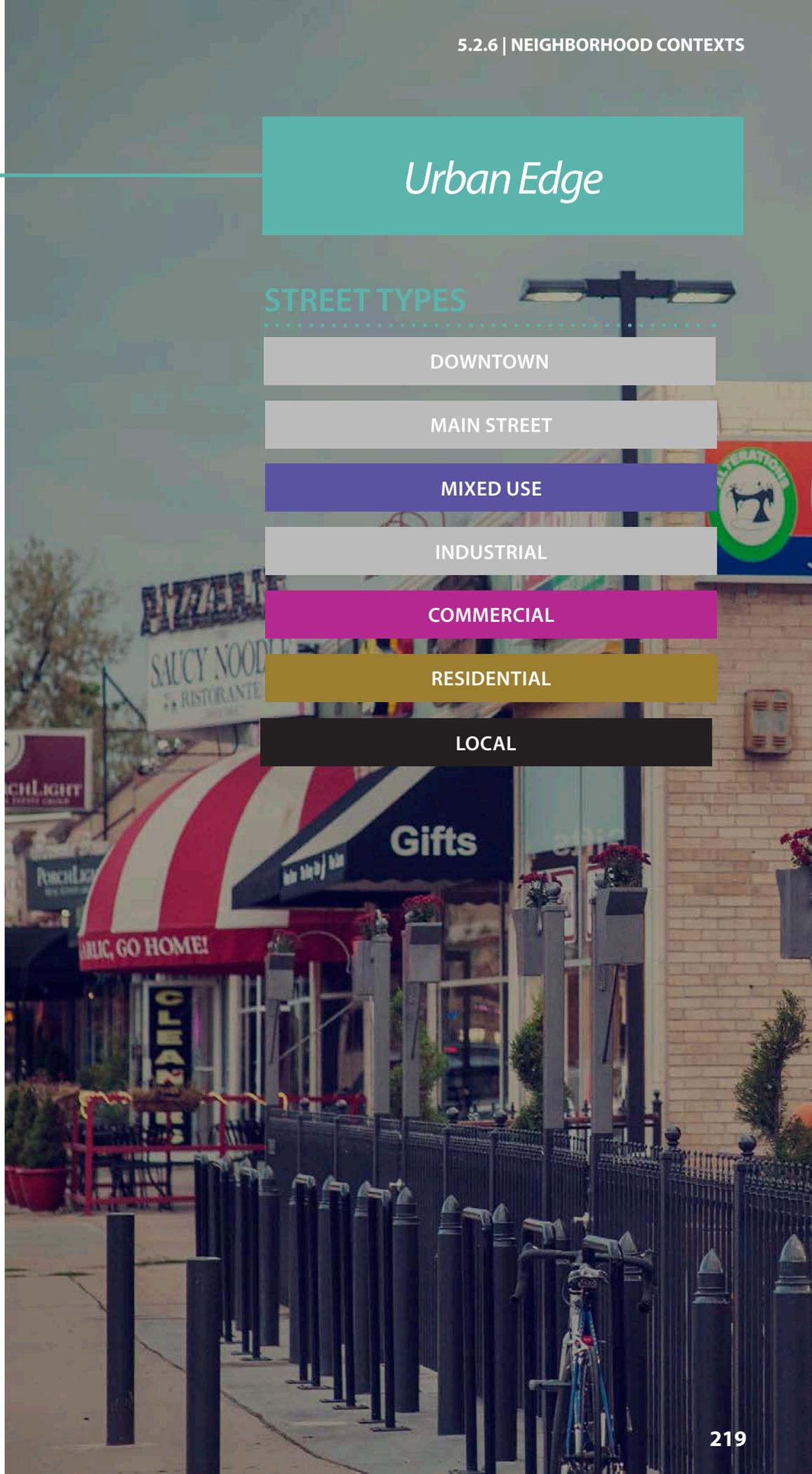
MIXED USE

INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

LOCAL





# 5.3 Urban

The urban neighborhood context is widely distributed throughout Denver.

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The urban neighborhood context is widely distributed throughout the city. Homes vary from multi-unit developments to compact single-unit homes. Development in this context should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood character and offer residents a mix of uses, with good street activation and connectivity. Residents living in this context have access to varied transit options and amenities.

The urban context is walkable due to a predictable street grid in residential areas and the availability of transit and dedicated bike lanes. These areas offer access to neighboring areas and commercial nodes, with some small mixed-use nodes within the neighborhood. Parking is predominately off-street complemented by managed on-street options.

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5.3.1 Urban At A Glance

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5.3.2 Urban Places

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5.3.3 Urban Centers

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5.3.4 Urban Corridors

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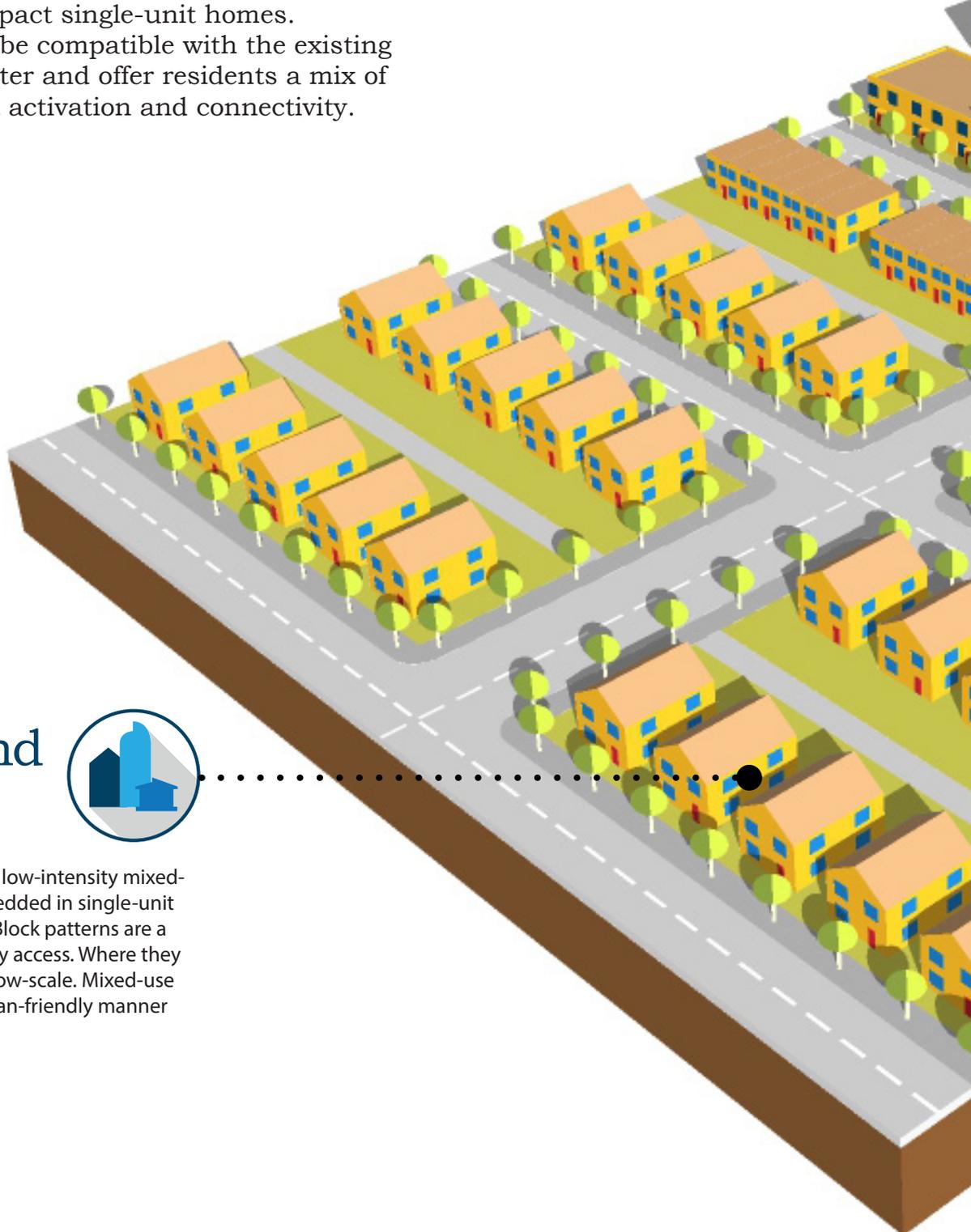
5.3.5 Urban Residential Areas

234

5.3.6 Urban Street Types

# Urban Context *at a glance*

Homes in this context vary from multi-unit developments to compact single-unit homes. Development should be compatible with the existing neighborhood character and offer residents a mix of uses with good street activation and connectivity.



## Land Use and Built Form



Small multi-unit residential and low-intensity mixed-use buildings are typically embedded in single-unit and two-unit residential areas. Block patterns are a regular grid with consistent alley access. Where they occur, multi-unit buildings are low-scale. Mixed-use buildings are sited in a pedestrian-friendly manner near the street.

## Urban



### Mobility

Little to some reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, with a strong degree of walkability, bikeability, and good access to transit. Parking is generally located behind buildings or on-street.

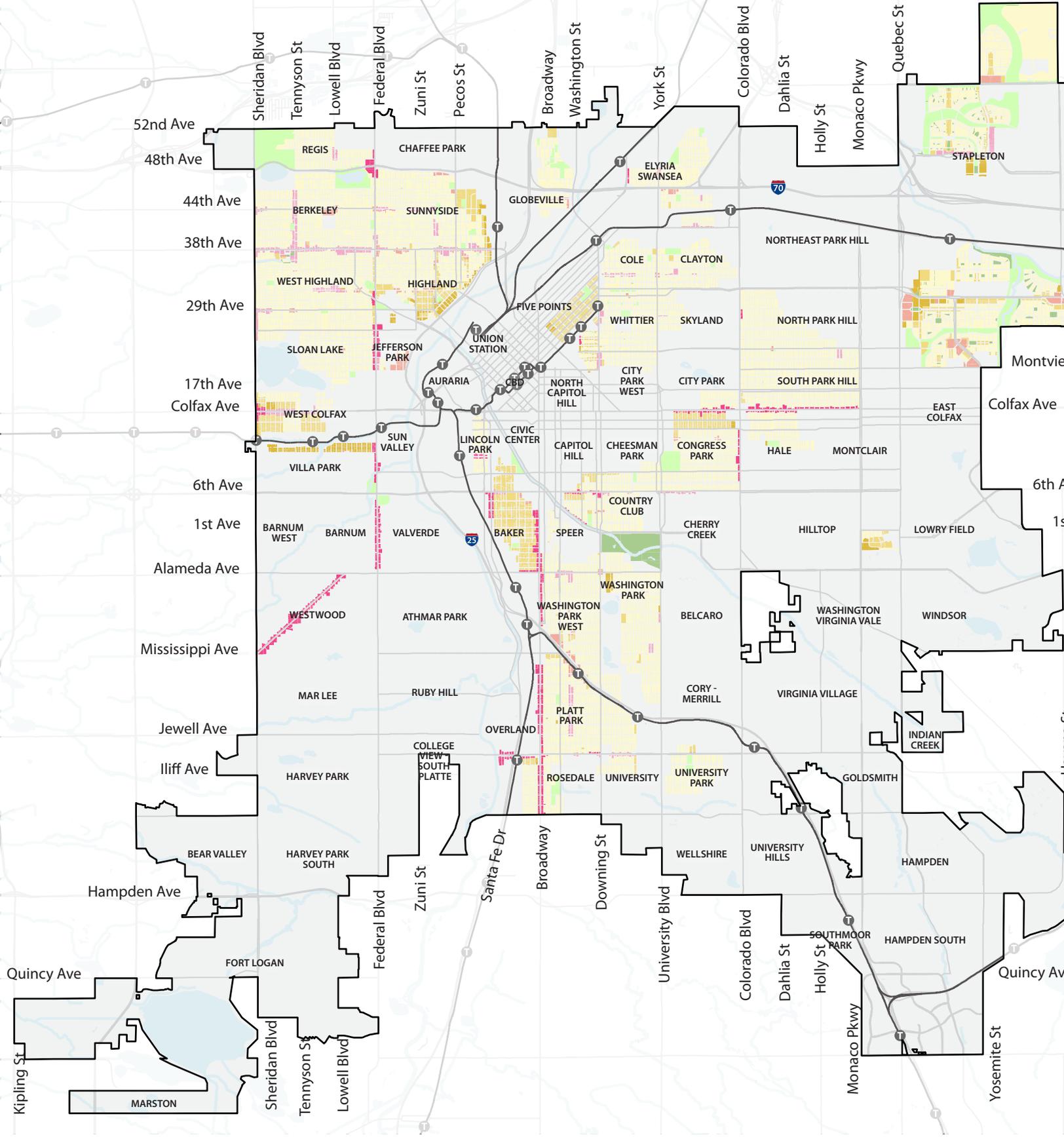


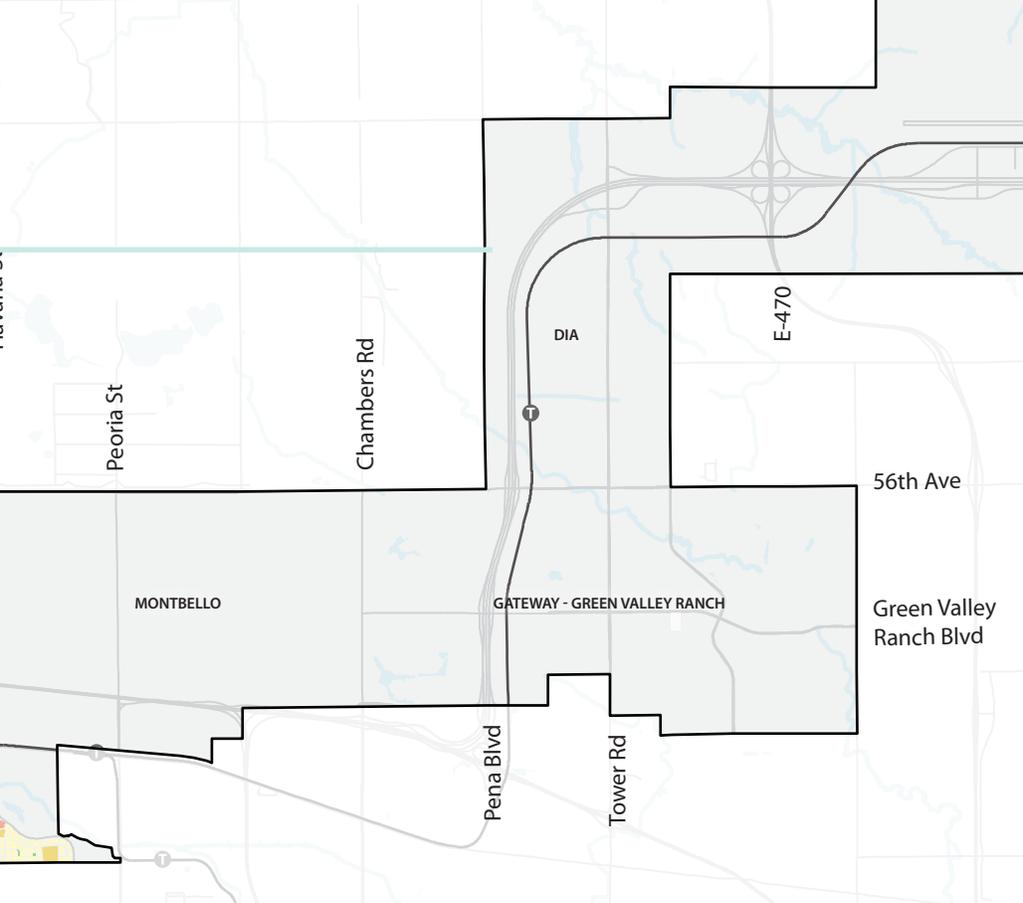
### Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

Parks of various sizes and scales. Schools and civic uses. Generous tree lawns with higher percentage of tree canopy cover. Parkways and boulevards most commonly found in this context.

# Urban Places

The future places found within in Denver's urban context.





Urban areas are largely residential, with low- and mid-scale mixed-use areas along community corridors. Small, embedded local centers are also common as a result of the development of many of urban neighborhoods during the street car era. Some newer neighborhoods, such as parts of Stapleton, have developed in a new urban form.

Example neighborhoods in this context include Platt Park and parts of the Highlands and Park Hill.

## FUTURE PLACES



- Bodies of Water
- Public Parks and Open Space
- Other Parks and Open Space

For more information about bodies of water, public parks and open space, and other parks and open space see page 152.

See descriptions of places and residential areas starting on page 226.

# Centers

Centers in the urban context should be compatible and consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses, including retail and dining.

## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Activity levels are lower than other center types, with the highest activity during evenings and weekends. Where residential occurs, it should primarily be located to encourage active street frontages. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages providing a more intimate, pedestrian scale. Heights are generally up to 3 stories and generally will not have a transition area as the low intensity easily integrates into the surrounding neighborhood.



## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings are larger in scale than local centers and orient to the street or other public spaces. Strong degree of urbanism with mostly continuous building frontages to define the public realm. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Intensity should transition within the center to the surrounding residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Most accessible to surrounding neighborhood users by walking or biking. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and cyclists have access either through high and medium ease-of-use bicycle facilities or local streets. Typically served by local transit.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options including medium- and high-capacity transit. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and cyclists have access with high ease-of-use bicycle facilities.



Smaller-scale open spaces promote social interaction. Green infrastructure often serves the needs of the specific site. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Green infrastructure can serve the needs of a site or the surrounding area. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## Urban

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of urban centers. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of center, as described on the previous page.

### Local Center



### Local Center



### Community Center



### Community Center



# Corridors

Corridors should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses.

## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Highest activity levels during evenings and weekends. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street with very shallow setbacks. The scale is intimate with a focus on the pedestrian. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 3 stories. Although generally well integrated into the surrounding neighborhood, a limited transition may be needed.



## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels during different times of the day will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Have a distinctly linear orientation along the street. Lot coverage is typically higher, with open spaces that are often accommodated by spaces between buildings rather than along the street. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Due to shorter lot depths, special attention is needed for transitions to nearby residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Circulation focuses on movement through or along the corridor. Nearby residents have easy access by walking or biking. A pedestrian priority area is typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease of use bicycle facilities or local streets. Typically served by local transit that may be part of the transit priority street network.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. The corridor is part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas along the corridor are typical and cyclists have access with high ease of use bicycle facilities.



Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green infrastructure may serve the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Regularly spaced street trees within planted areas. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green infrastructure serves the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Regularly spaced street trees within planted areas. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## Urban

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of urban corridors. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of corridor, as described on the previous page.

### Local Corridor



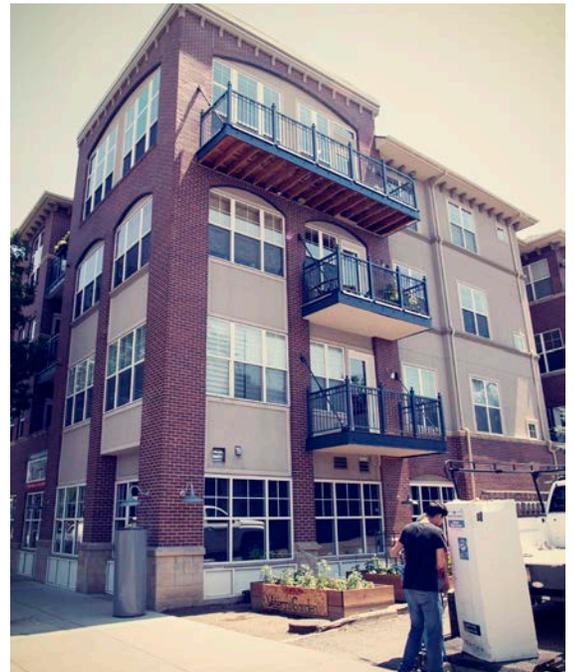
### Local Corridor



### Community Corridor



### Community Corridor



# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood such as schools, parks and commercial/retail uses.

## Low



Predominately single- and two-unit uses on smaller lots. Accessory dwelling units and duplexes are appropriate and can be thoughtfully integrated where compatible. Some civic and institutional uses are compatibly integrated throughout and limited mixed-use can occur along arterial and collector streets, as well as where commercial uses have been already established. Vacant institutional uses on corners or select sites may be appropriate locations to introduce additional residential intensity. Medium building coverage. Buildings are generally up to 2.5 stories in height.



Vehicular access is typically from an alley. Features a continuous pedestrian network with detached sidewalks. Bicycle network is in the form of protected lanes on arterial streets and integrated into the street on local streets.



There is good access to parks and outdoor spaces of various sizes. Private yard space is somewhat limited. Street trees should be regularly spaced within a wide tree lawn.





## Urban

### Applying Residential “Low” Guidance to Proposed Rezoning

This section provides guidance for evaluating potential rezoning, or map amendment requests, in low residential areas. Although the description of the low residential places includes both single-unit and two-unit uses, two-unit uses are not appropriate in all low areas.

#### Uses

When a rezoning request is made to change the zoning to allow two-unit uses, the appropriateness of the request depends upon adopted small area plan guidance, neighborhood input, and existing zoning patterns. A departure from the established zoning pattern may be appropriate if the intent is to set a new pattern for the area, as expressed by an adopted small area plan or significant neighborhood input.

#### Minimum Lot Size

In the Denver Zoning Code single-unit and two-unit zone districts are regulated based on minimum lot size. Different zone districts have different required minimums to build allowed building forms, such as the urban house or duplex forms. When a rezoning request is made to change the zoning to allow smaller lots for multiple properties in an area, the appropriateness of the request depends upon the existing character and applicable adopted neighborhood plan guidance. For applicant-driven requests that are individual sites or small assemblages, typically it is only appropriate to allow smaller lot sizes than the existing zone district if there is an established pattern in the surrounding blocks of smaller lots with similar uses that would be consistent with the zone district request. A departure from the established lot pattern may be appropriate if the request includes a larger area, generally greater than one block, and the intent is to set a new pattern for the area, as expressed by an adopted small area plan or significant neighborhood input.

# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood such as schools, parks and commercial/retail uses.

## Low-Medium



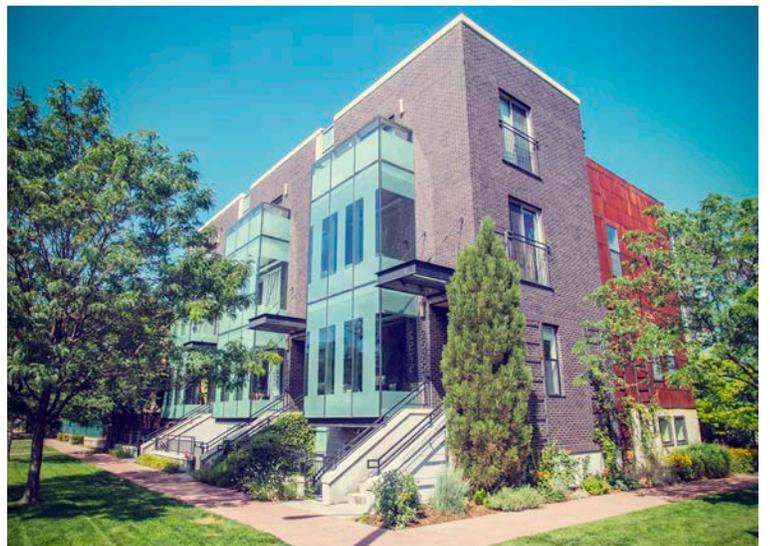
Mix of low- to mid-scale multi-unit residential options. Small-scale multi-unit buildings are interspersed between single- and two-unit residential. Limited mixed-use along some arterial and collector streets and at intersections. Vacant institutional uses on corners or at select sites may be appropriate locations to introduce additional residential intensity. Buildings are generally 3 stories or less in height. Higher-intensity buildings should be compatibly integrated.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to re



A more continuous pedestrian network with detached sidewalks. Bicycle network is typically protected on arterials and integrated into on street facilities when occurring on local streets.

Good access to parks and outdoor spaces of various sizes. Private yards are often smaller. Street trees should be prevalent and regularly spaced in generous tree lawns.



## Urban

### High-Medium



A mix of mid-scale multi-unit residential options. Some neighborhood-serving mixed-use may be appropriate, especially along arterial streets or at non-local street intersections. Buildings are generally up to 5 stories in height. Building heights and scaling help provide transitions to adjacent places.

zonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.

A more continuous pedestrian network with detached sidewalks. Bicycle network is typically protected on arterial streets and integrated into on-street on local streets.

A variety of opportunities for smaller scale social spaces integrated into the larger residential neighborhood. Good access to parks and outdoor spaces of various sizes. Private yard space is typically limited. Street trees should be prevalent and regularly spaced in generous tree lawns.



# Street Types

The urban context contains mixed-use, commercial, main street and residential street types.

Urban contexts contain main street, mixed-use and residential streets. Streets within the urban context usually have high degrees of pedestrian and bicycle activity. Main streets and mixed-use streets in the urban context provide an expanded sidewalk and amenity zone that includes items such as trees and plantings, providing a buffer between people walking and traffic. Residential streets provide a buffer via trees in a wide lawn or planted area and typically contain very few curb cuts since access can be achieved through alleys. Slower target operating speeds are encouraged to make travel safer on all modes. Curb lane uses are occasionally managed, especially on mixed-use and main streets. Utilizing on-street parking on residential or local streets to access nearby businesses on main street and mixed-use streets can be expected.

●  
—  
MAIN STREET



●  
—  
MIXED-USE



●  
—  
COMMERCIAL



●  
—  
RESIDENTIAL



# Urban

## STREET TYPES

DOWNTOWN

MAIN STREET

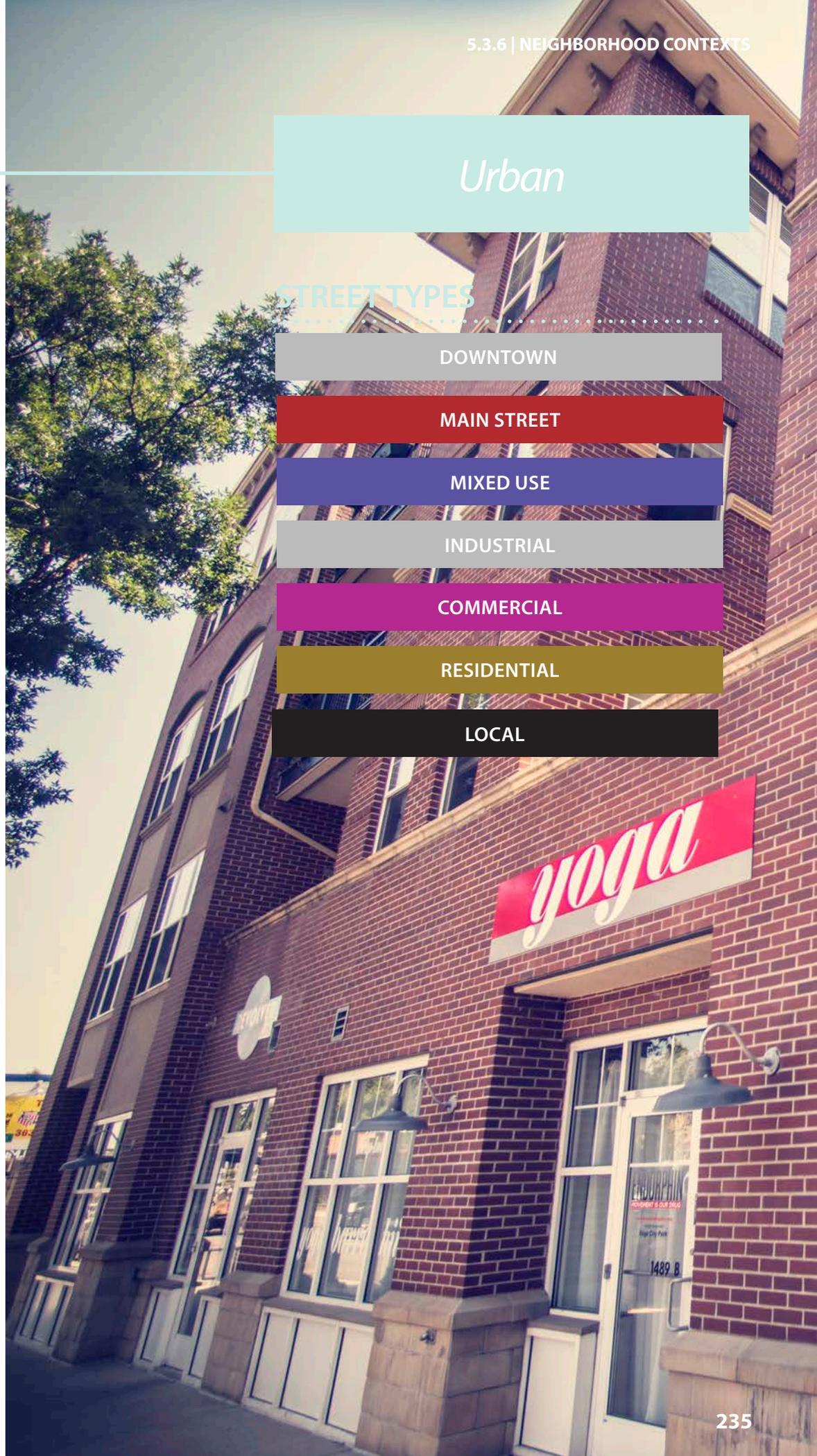
MIXED USE

INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

LOCAL





NO  
PARKING  
ANY  
TIME

2  
HR  
PARKING  
8AM-10PM  
MON & TUE. ETC.

# 5.4 General Urban

General urban neighborhoods are vibrant places with proximity to Denver's major centers like Downtown and Cherry Creek.

General urban neighborhoods are vibrant places with proximity to Denver's major centers like Downtown and Cherry Creek. Homes in this context vary from multi-unit complexes to compact single-unit homes. Development should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood character and offer residents a mix of uses, with good street activation and connectivity. Residents living in this context are well served by transit and enjoy access to abundant amenities and entertainment options.

The general urban context is navigable and accessible due to a predictable street grid in residential areas and the availability of dedicated transit options and bike lanes. These areas offer great walkability and access to neighboring areas and commercial nodes. Parking is a mix of off-street with managed on-street options.

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5.4.1 General Urban At A Glance

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5.4.2 General Urban Places

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5.4.3 General Urban Centers

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5.4.4 General Urban Corridors

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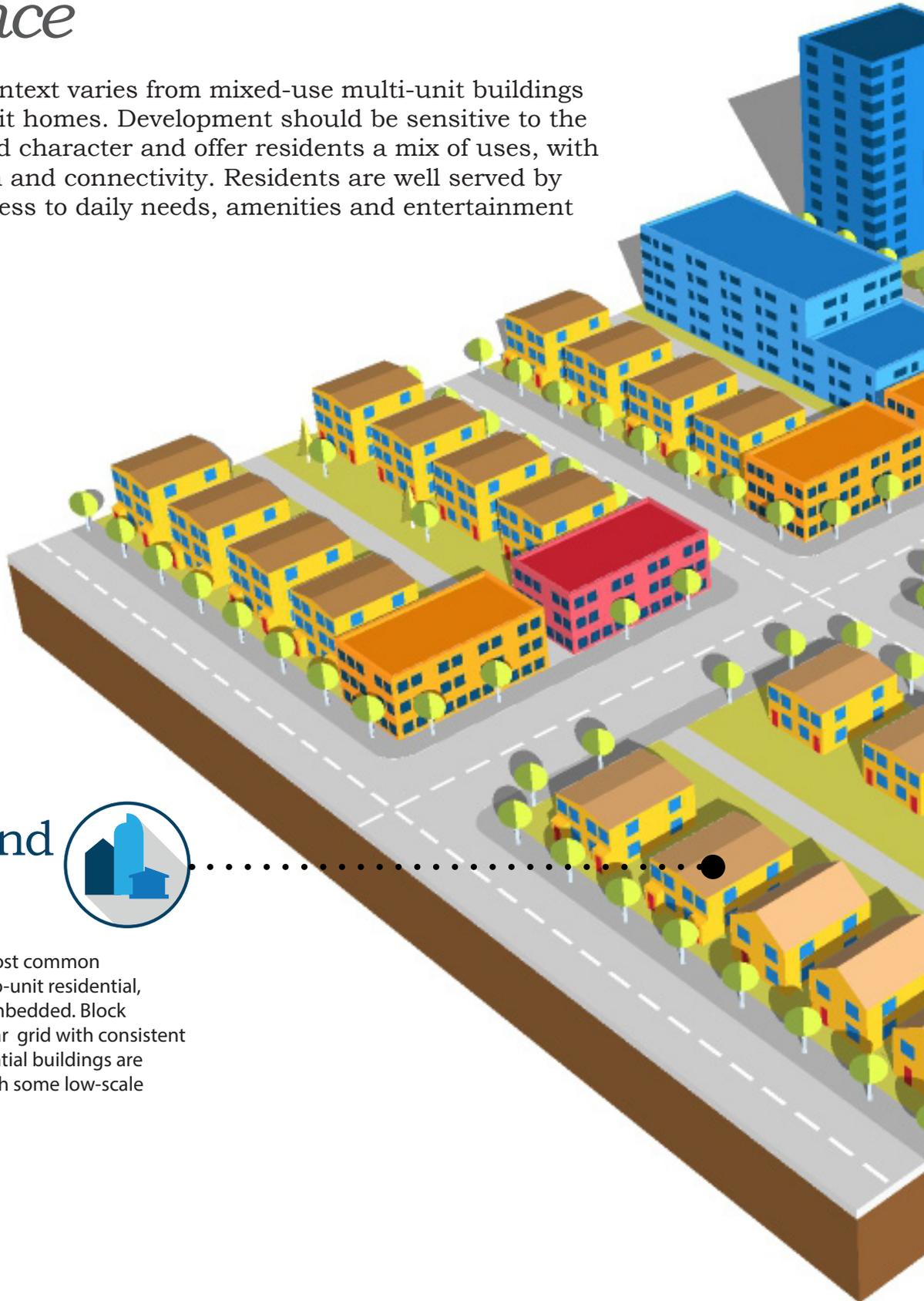
5.4.5 General Urban Residential Areas

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5.4.6 General Urban Street Types

# General Urban Context *at a glance*

Residential in this context varies from mixed-use multi-unit buildings to compact single-unit homes. Development should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood character and offer residents a mix of uses, with good street activation and connectivity. Residents are well served by transit and enjoy access to daily needs, amenities and entertainment options.



## Land Use and Built Form



Multi-unit residential is the most common with some single-unit and two-unit residential, commercial and mixed-use embedded. Block patterns are generally a regular grid with consistent alley access. Multi-unit residential buildings are low- to mid-scale mixed in with some low-scale residential uses.

## General Urban



### Mobility

There is less reliance on single-occupancy vehicles, with a high degree of walkability, bikeability, and good access to transit.

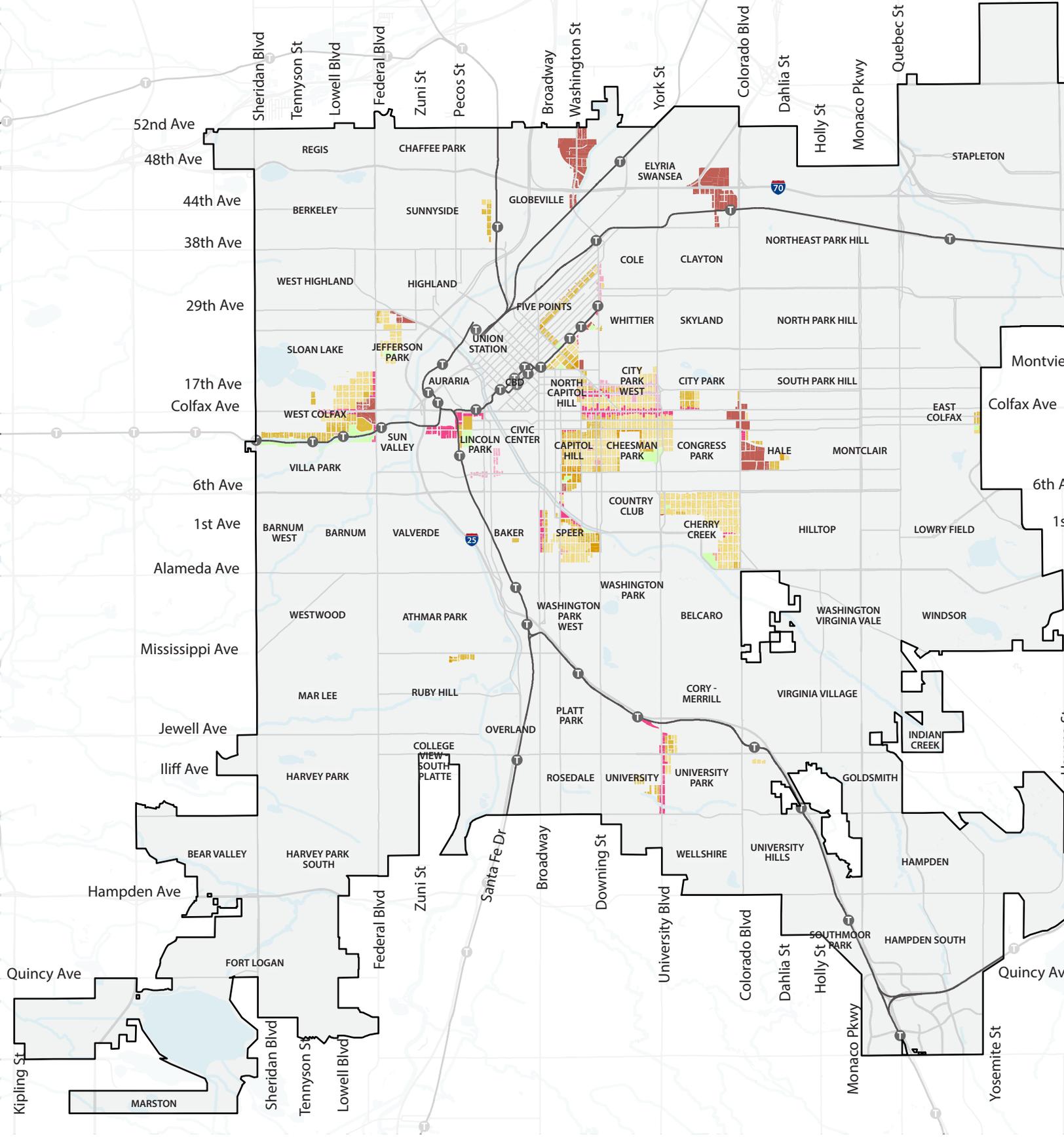


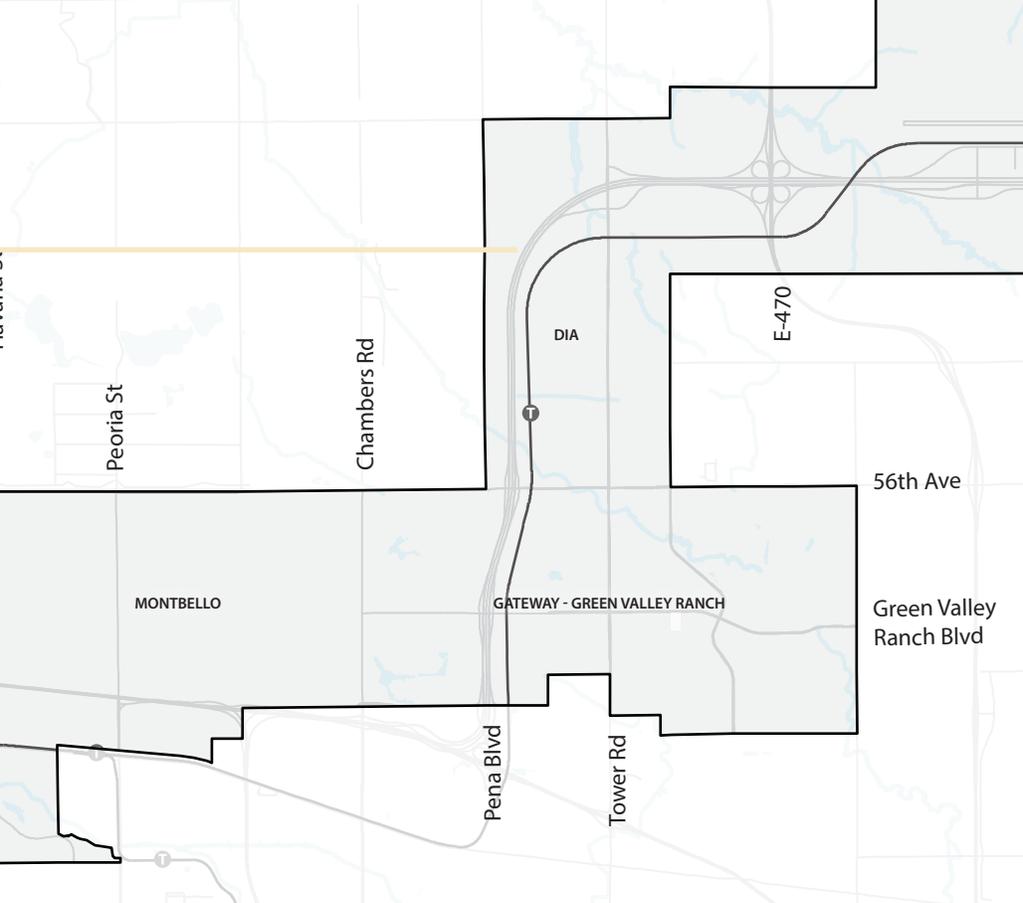
### Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

Parks of various sizes and privately owned, yet publicly accessible open space and plazas are common. Schools and civic uses. Trees are found in tree lawns and planting areas, and ultra-urban green Infrastructure is appropriate.

# General Urban Places

The future places within the general urban context.





General urban neighborhoods are typically located at the edge of higher intensity contexts like urban center and downtown. They are largely residential, with a significant amount of neighborhood services and office embedded within. Larger mixed-use areas are often located along key streets.

Example neighborhoods in this context include Cherry Creek and large portions of Capitol Hill, Speer and West Colfax neighborhoods.

## FUTURE PLACES



- Bodies of Water
- Public Parks and Open Space
- Other Parks and Open Space

For more information about bodies of water, public parks and open space, and other parks and open space see page 152.

See descriptions of places and residential areas starting on page 242.

# Centers

Centers should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses, including retail and dining.

## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Activity levels are lower than other center types, with the highest activity during evenings and weekends. When residential occurs, it should primarily be located to encourage active street frontages. Provides a more intimate, pedestrian scale. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Should transition gradually within the center to the surrounding residential areas.

## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings are larger in scale than local centers and orient to the street or other public spaces. Strong degree of urbanism with mostly continuous building frontages to define the public realm. Heights are generally up to 8 stories and should transition gradually within the center to the surrounding residential areas.



For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Most accessible to surrounding neighborhood users by walking or biking. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and cyclists have access through local streets and/or high and medium ease-of-use bicycle facilities. Typically served by local transit.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options including frequent transit service as part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease of use bicycle facilities.



Smaller-scale open spaces promote social interaction. Trees and green infrastructure often serves the needs of a specific site. Street trees in planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Green infrastructure can meet the needs of a site or larger area. Street trees in planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## General Urban

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of general urban centers. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of center, as described on the previous page.

### Local Center



### Local Center



### Community Center



### Community Center



# Corridors

Corridors should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses.

## Local



Primarily provides options for dining, entertainment and shopping. May also include some residential and employment uses. Typically frequented by residents of the neighborhood. Highest activity levels during evenings and weekends. Buildings have distinctly linear orientation along the street with very shallow setbacks. The scale is intimate with a focus on the pedestrian. The public realm is typically defined by lower-scale buildings with active frontages. Heights are generally up to 3 stories. Due to shorter lot depths, special attention may be needed for transitions to nearby residential areas.



## Community



Typically provides some mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels during different times of the day will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street. Building footprints are typically larger. Heights are generally up to 5 stories. Due to shorter lot depths, special attention may be needed for transitions to nearby residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Circulation focuses on movement through or along the corridor. Nearby residents have easy access by walking or biking. A pedestrian priority area is typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease of use bicycle facilities or local streets. Typically served by local transit that may be part of the transit priority street network.

Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. The corridor is part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas along the corridor are typical and cyclists have access with high or medium ease of use bicycle facilities.



Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green Infrastructure includes trees and serves the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Street trees in planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are utilized for neighborhood events.

Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green Infrastructure includes trees, serves the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Street trees in planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## General Urban

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of general urban corridors. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of corridor, as described on the previous page.

### Local Corridor



### Community Corridor



### Community Corridor



# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood such as schools, parks, and commercial/retail uses.

## Low-Medium



This area is primarily residential, with a mix of unit types. Single- and two-unit homes are interspersed with lower-scale multi-unit buildings. Limited neighborhood serving commercial can be found, particularly at intersections. Heights are generally up to 3 stories. Lot coverage may be high and setbacks should generally respect the existing character with buildings orienting to the street.

## High-Medium



There is a mix of low- to medium-scale multi-unit residential uses with some neighborhood-serving mixed-use distributed throughout. Buildings are generally up to 8 stories in height. Block patterns are consistent and pedestrian-scaled building forms clearly define and activate the street.



For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



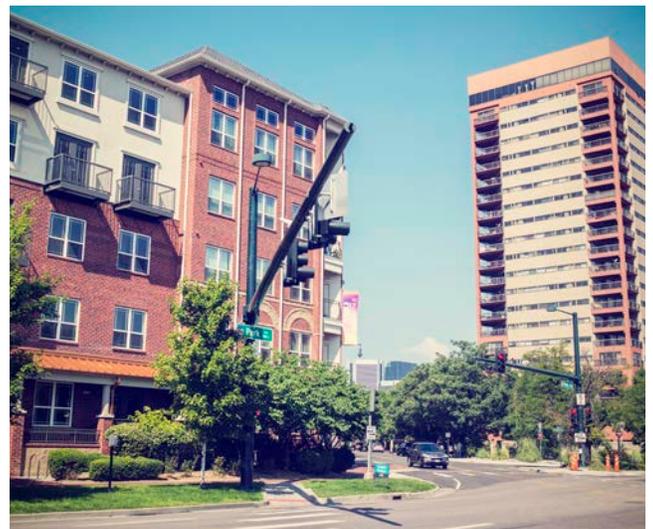
In most instances, vehicular access is taken from an alley. A continuous and connected pedestrian network with detached sidewalks. Bicycle network is sometimes protected as well as on-street.

A consistent pedestrian network with detached sidewalks. Bicycle network can be protected on key arterials and often integrated into on street facilities. Vehicular access is often taken from an alley but also from street.



Access to parks and outdoor spaces of various sizes. Street trees should be regularly spaced in tree lawns or planting areas. Trees and plantings should also occur on private property.

Good access to parks of various sizes and recreational amenities. Green infrastructure is often integrated into the streetscape or provided on-site. Regularly spaced street trees in planters or tree lawns. Trees and other plantings should be included on-site where space allows.



## General Urban

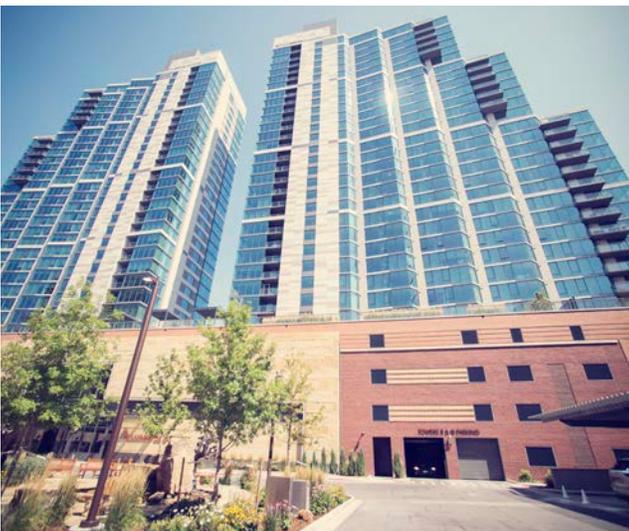
### High



Predominately multi-unit residential, though compatible commercial uses should be interspersed throughout. Buildings are generally the tallest of the residential places in this context.

Mobility options are abundant and a continuous pedestrian network with detached sidewalks. Bicycle network is integrated into on street facilities. There is a high level of access to transit and a mix of alley and street vehicular access.

Good access to both neighborhood and regional parks. Green infrastructure is often incorporated into the streetscape or provided on-site. Regularly spaced street trees in planters or structural cells. Trees and other plantings should be included on-site where space allows.



# Street Types

The general urban context contains main street, mixed-use and residential street types.

Streets within general urban contexts usually have high degrees of pedestrian activity. Main streets and mixed-use streets provide a sidewalk amenity zone with benches, trees and/or planters to provide a buffer between people walking and auto traffic. Residential streets typically provide a tree lawn. On residential streets, lower target operating speeds are encouraged to make travel safer for all modes. Driveway access is usually limited on all street types except local. Curb lane uses are managed to a mixed degree to ensure the highest and best use. Utilizing on-street parking on residential or local streets to access nearby businesses on main streets and mixed-use streets is expected.

MAIN STREET



MIXED-USE



RESIDENTIAL



# General Urban

## STREET TYPES

DOWNTOWN

MAIN STREET

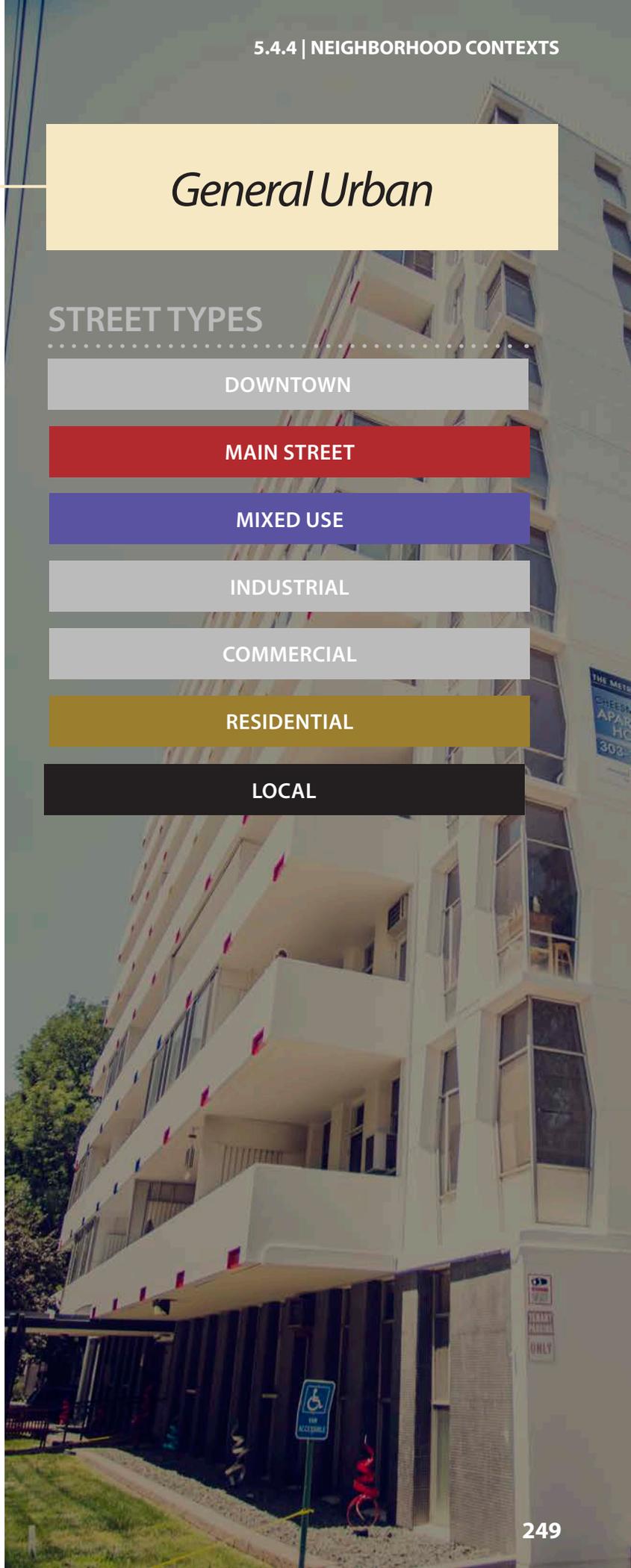
MIXED USE

INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

LOCAL





# 5.5 Urban Center

Urban Center neighborhoods are dense and vibrant areas that support residents and visitors.

.....

Urban center neighborhoods are dense and vibrant areas that support residents and visitors. This context contains high intensity residential and significant employment areas. Development typically contains a high mix of uses, with good street activation and connectivity. Residents living in this context are well served by high-capacity transit and have access to ample amenities and entertainment options.

Urban center areas are easily navigated and accessible due to predictable street grids, well-connected sidewalk networks, and strong connections to rail service and the transit priority street network. These areas offer good walkability and access to amenities. Parking is predominately managed on-street, with off-street demand met with parking garages.

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5.5.1 Urban Center At A Glance

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5.5.2 Urban Center Places

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5.5.3 Urban Center Centers

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5.5.4 Urban Center Corridors

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5.5.5 Urban Center Residential Areas

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5.5.6 Urban Center Street Types

# Urban Center Context

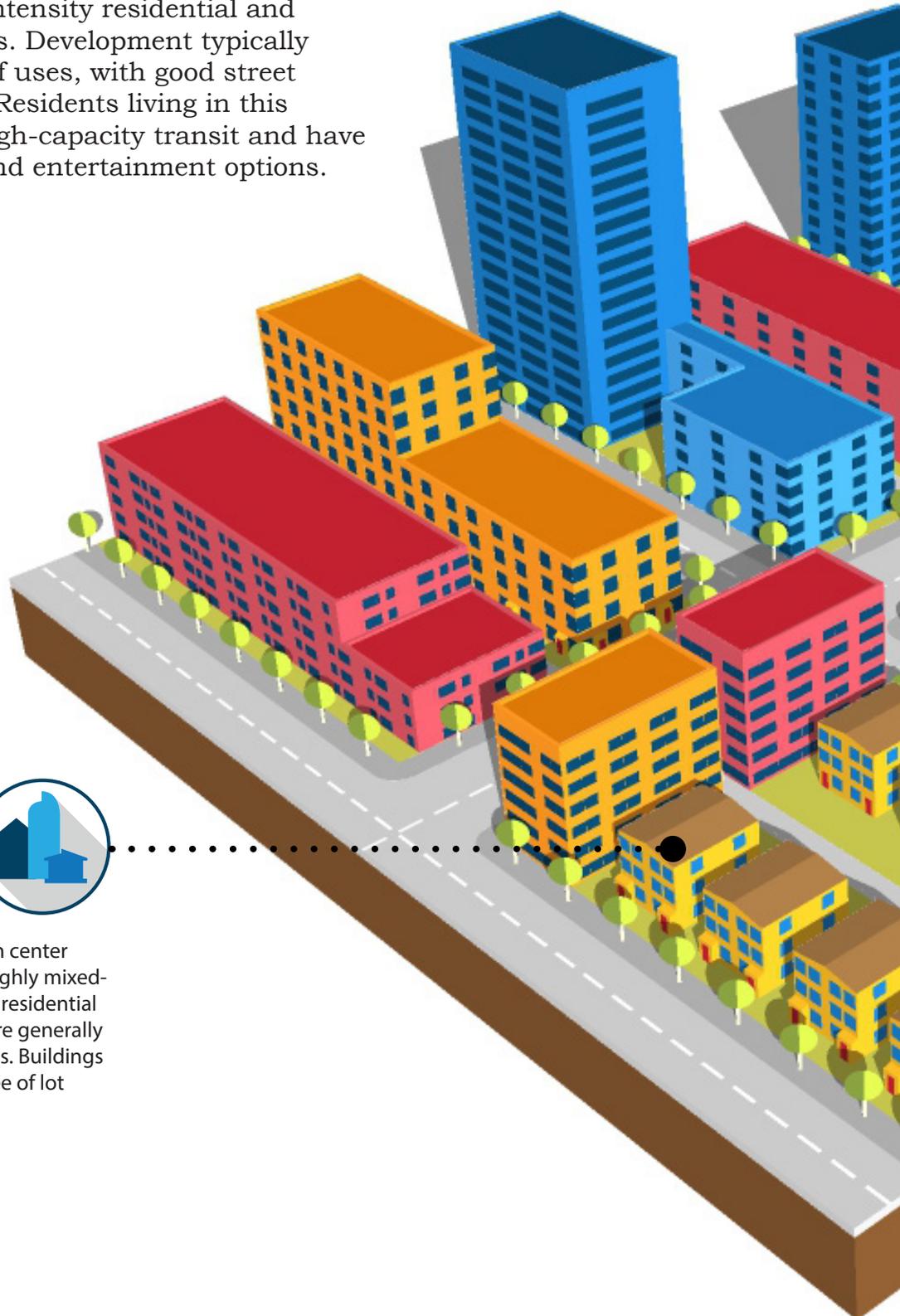
## *at a glance*

This context contains high intensity residential and significant employment areas. Development typically contains a substantial mix of uses, with good street activation and connectivity. Residents living in this context are well served by high-capacity transit and have access to ample amenities and entertainment options.

## Land Use and Built Form



A high mix of uses throughout the urban center context. Even the residential areas are highly mixed-use, often with high-intensity multi-unit residential in mixed-use buildings. Block patterns are generally a regular grid with consistent alley access. Buildings are usually multi-story with a high degree of lot coverage.



## Urban Center



### Mobility

Minimal reliance on single occupancy vehicles, with high levels of people walking and riding bicycles. Excellent access to transit, including high-capacity transit. Parking is generally structured with on-street availability.

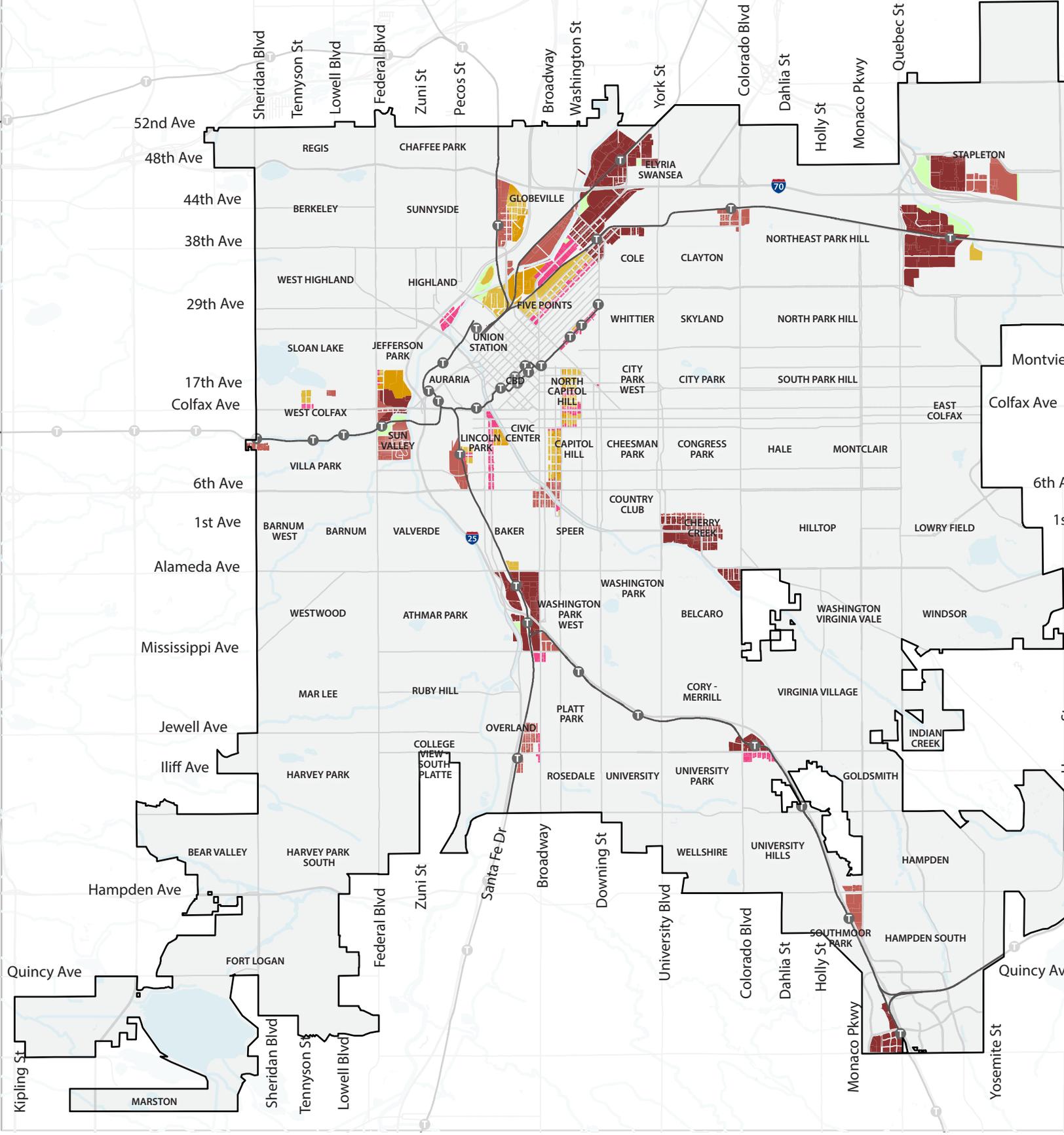


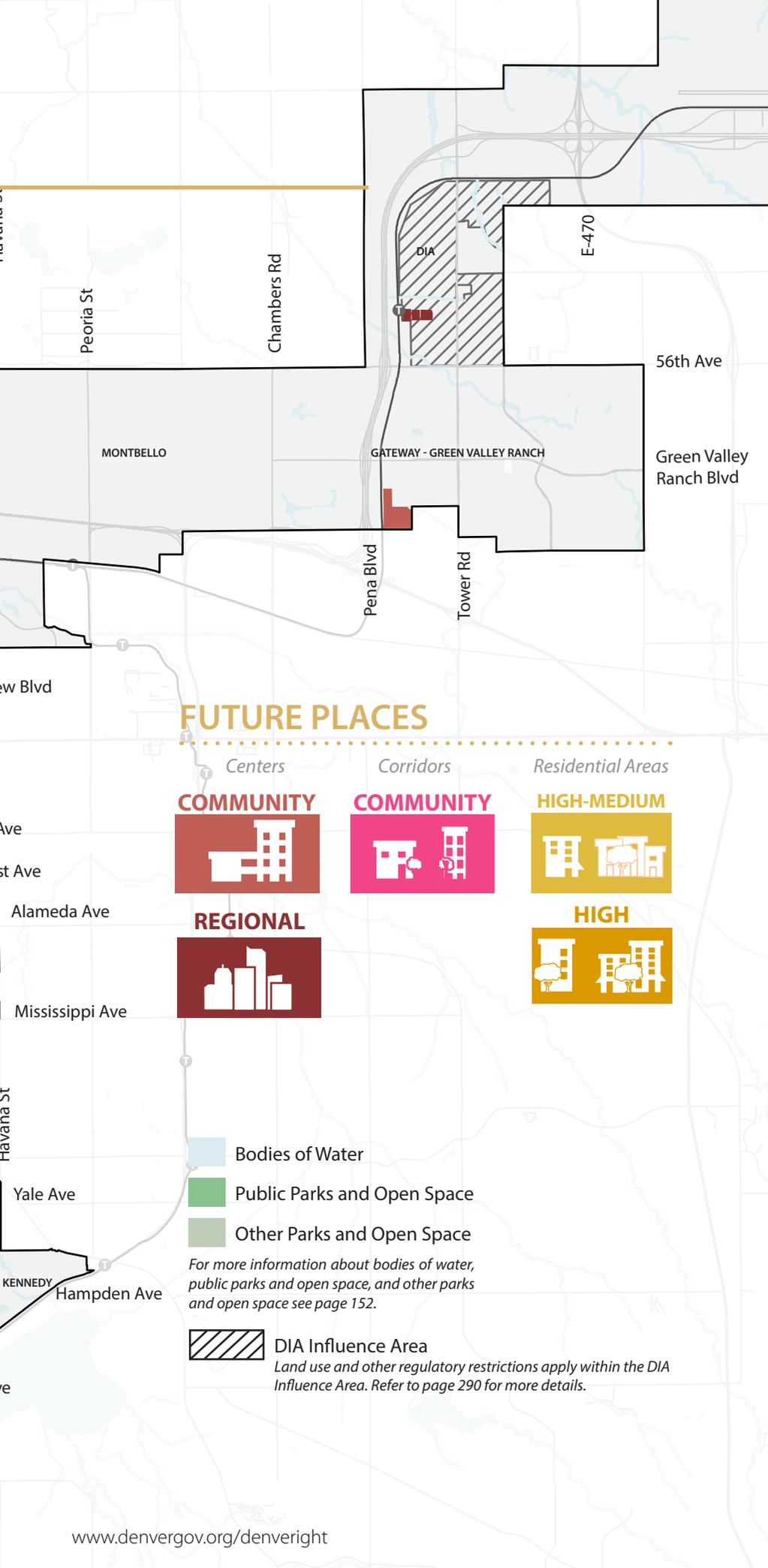
### Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

Smaller scale public parks and privately owned, publicly accessible outdoor spaces and plazas. Trees are within planters, planting areas or structural cells. Ultra-urban green infrastructure is common.

# Urban Center Places

The future places within the urban center context.





The urban center neighborhoods are the most intense areas of the city outside of downtown. Although many of these areas are located next to the downtown core, areas that are desired to be highly active and vibrant (such as rail transit stops and other regional centers) are also found in this context.

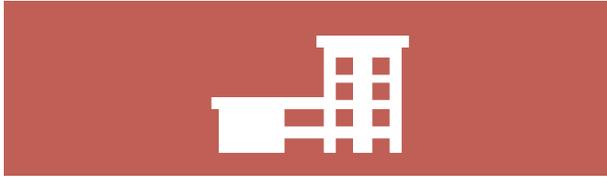
Notable places in this context include portions of Cherry Creek, Northfield in Stapleton, and South Broadway at I-25.

See descriptions of places and residential areas starting on page 256

# Centers

Centers should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and contain a good mix of commercial, retail, office and residential uses.

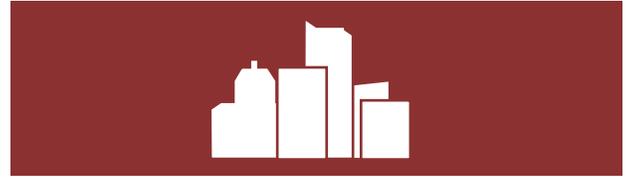
## Community



Provides a mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels during different times of the day will vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings are larger in scale than local centers and orient to the street or other public spaces. Strong degree of urbanism with mostly continuous building frontages and distinct streetscape elements that define the public realm. Heights can be generally up to 12 stories in the taller areas and should transition gradually within the center's footprint to the surrounding residential areas.



## Regional



Contains a high mix of uses— providing a dynamic environment of living, dining, entertainment and shopping, while incorporating a diverse set of employment options. Wide customer draw with a 24/7 live, work and play environment attractive to locals and visitors. Larger scale mixed-use buildings are common. Structures should respond in form and mass to the streets and public spaces around them. High degree of urbanism with continuous building frontages to define the public realm. Heights are generally the tallest in the context and transition gradually within the center to the surrounding residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options including high-capacity transit and the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas are typical and people riding bicycles have access with high ease of use bicycle facilities.

Multimodal areas with continual service by high-capacity transit. A large or several smaller pedestrian priority areas are typical and people riding bicycles have access to regional centers with high ease of use bicycle facilities.



Open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Green infrastructure includes trees and often serves the needs of the larger areas. Street trees in planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

Open spaces are often integrated into the streetscape and respond to unique characteristics of the center. Regularly spaced street trees in planters. Social interaction is prioritized throughout the center, especially in public plazas and privately owned, publicly accessible spaces that come in a variety of sizes. Green infrastructure takes on an ultra-urban characteristic and green spaces provides moments of relief from the more intense activity. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## Urban Center

*The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of urban center centers. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of center, as described on the previous page.*

### Community Center



### Community Center



### Regional Center



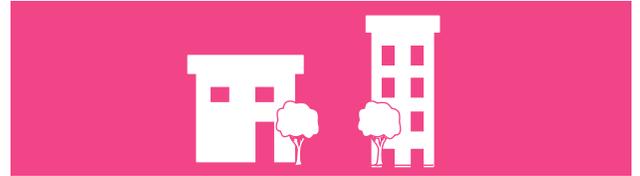
### Regional Center



# Corridors

Corridors should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and provide a mix of uses.

## Community



Typically provides a mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Activity levels vary depending on the type and mix of uses. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street. Building footprints are typically larger. Heights are generally up to 8 stories. Due to shorter lot depths, special attention may be needed for transitions to nearby residential areas.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.



Accessible to a larger area of surrounding neighborhood users by a variety of transportation options. The corridor is part of the transit priority street network. Pedestrian priority areas along the corridor are typical and people riding bicycles have access with high ease-of-use bicycle facilities.



Social spaces, such as patios and plazas, often occur along the street or within deeper building setbacks. Green Infrastructure includes trees, serves the site or immediate area and is often integrated into the streetscape. Street trees in planters at regular intervals. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year.

## Urban Center

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the different kind of urban center corridors. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics for each type of corridor, as described on the previous page.

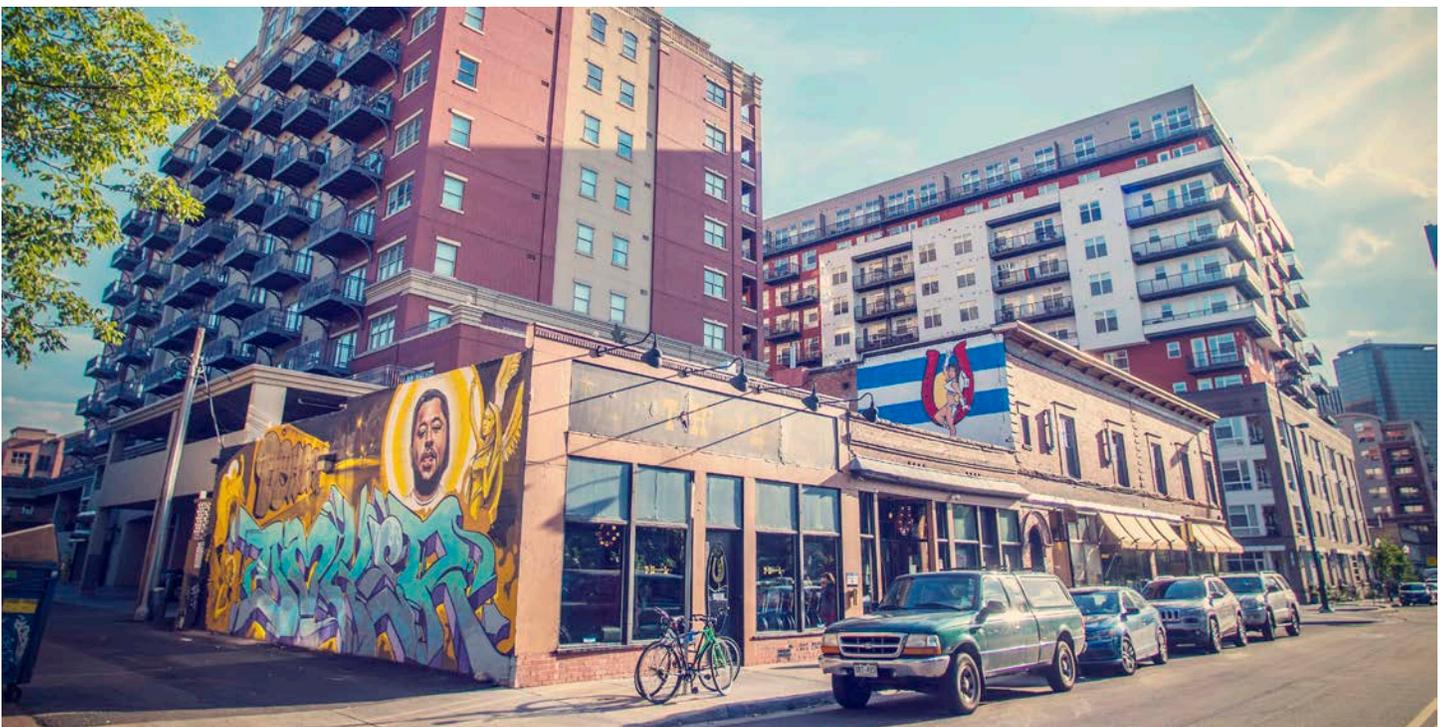
### Community Corridor



### Community Corridor



### Community Corridor



# Residential Areas

Areas where the predominate use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, they are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood such as schools, parks, and commercial/retail uses.

## High-Medium



A mix of uses, including multi-unit residential, but at a slightly lower intensity compared to the high residential areas. Heights are generally up to 8 stories. There is high lot coverage and shallow setbacks.

## High



A high mix of uses throughout, including many large scale multi-unit residential uses. Commercial uses are prevalent. Buildings are generally the tallest of the residential places in this context. There is high lot coverage and shallow setbacks.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, including building heights, see pages 66-67.

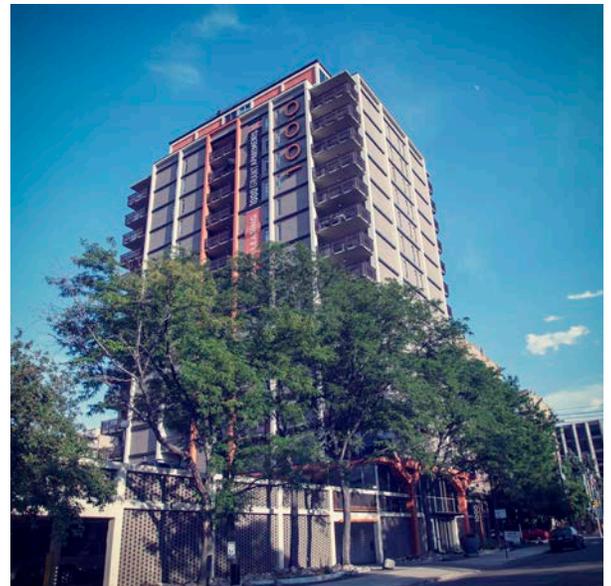


A high degree of walkability and a continuous pedestrian network. Bicycle facilities are often protected and there is good access to transit. Vehicular access is consolidated, and parking is managed on-street as well as in parking garages.

A continuous and well-connected pedestrian network and high levels of bicycle network connectivity. There is a high availability of diverse transit options. Vehicular access and parking is on street or within large parking garages.

Good access to parks and other open spaces. Social spaces are provided in setbacks and key areas. Green infrastructure is often integrated into the streetscape or provided on-site. Regularly spaced street trees in planters or tree lawns. Trees and other plantings should be included on-site where space allows.

Good access to parks and other open spaces. Plazas are common. Green infrastructure is often integrated into the streetscape or provided on-site. Regularly spaced street trees in planters or structural cells. Trees and other plantings should be included on-site where space allows.



## Urban Center

### Medium-High Residential Area



### High Residential Area



# Street Types

The urban center context contains main street, mixed-use, and residential street types.

Streets within general urban context usually have high degrees of pedestrian activity. Main streets and mixed-use streets provide a sidewalk amenity zone with benches, trees and/or planters to provide a buffer between people walking and auto traffic, while residential streets provide a tree lawn. Slower speeds are encouraged to make travel safer for all modes. Curb lane uses on urban center streets have a high degree of management to ensure the highest and best use. Utilizing on-street parking on residential or local streets to access nearby business on main-street and mix-use streets is expected.



# Urban Center

## STREET TYPES

DOWNTOWN

MAIN STREET

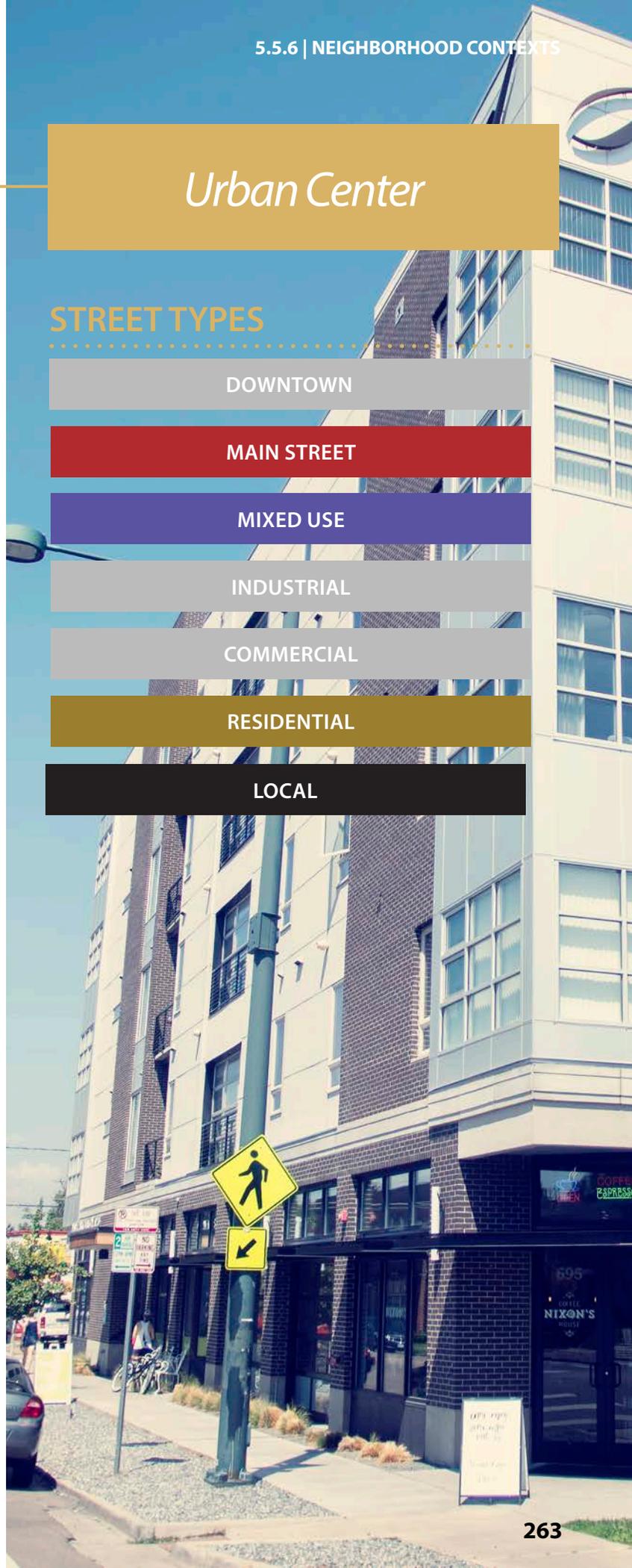
MIXED USE

INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

LOCAL





# 5.6 Downtown

Downtown neighborhoods are part the vibrant center of the Rocky Mountain region.

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The downtown context is the densest and most active. It contains the highest intensity residential and includes the largest employment center in Denver. Development in this context should contain a high mix of uses, with good street activation. Residents living in this context are well served by high-capacity transit.

In its ideal function, the downtown context is easily navigated and accessible due to its regular grid of streets and availability of diverse transit options. The area offers a grid of streets, a complete network of pedestrian and bicycle routes, transit and other mobility options. Parking is predominately managed on-street, with off-street demand met with parking garages. Access to the South Platte River and the Cherry Creek Trail provides recreational opportunities and serves as a natural element to break up the high building coverage typical in downtown.

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5.6.1 Downtown At A Glance

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5.6.2 Downtown Places

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5.6.3 Downtown Centers

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5.6.4 Downtown Corridors

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5.6.5 Downtown Residential Areas

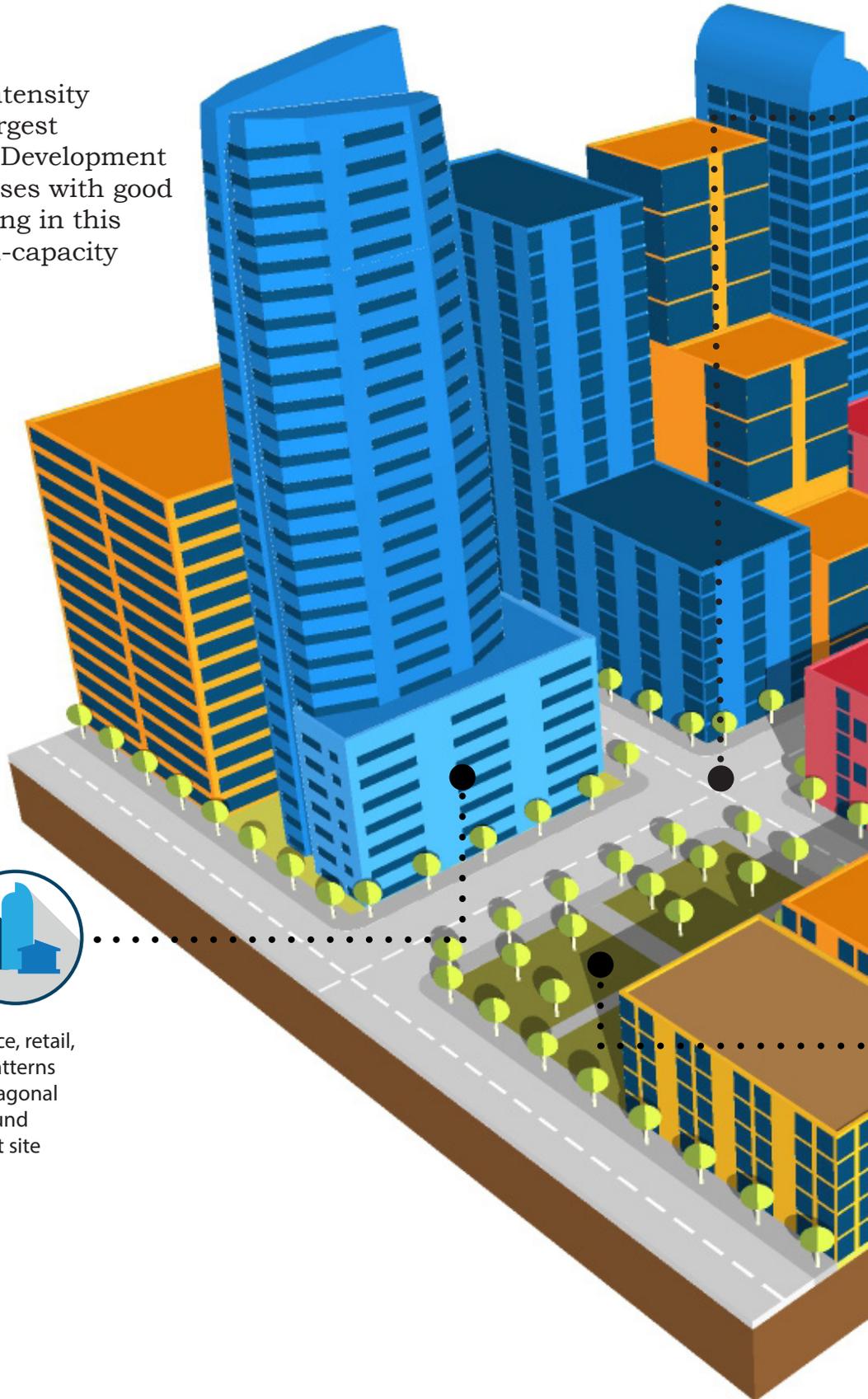
276

5.6.6 Downtown Street Types

# Downtown Context

## *at a glance*

This context has the highest intensity residential and includes the largest employment center in Denver. Development should contain a high mix of uses with good street activation. Residents living in this context are well served by high-capacity transit.



## Land Use and Built Form



A high mix of uses. Multi-unit residential, office, retail, eating and drinking are all common. Block patterns are generally regular with rectangular and diagonal streets. The tallest buildings in Denver are found in downtown and generally have the greatest site coverage.

## Downtown



### Mobility

The highest priority is given to pedestrians with the highest level of access to the multi-modal transportation network and high ease of use bicycle facilities. While parking demand is lower downtown due to the multimodal context, when parking occurs it is generally structured. On-street parking is highly managed.

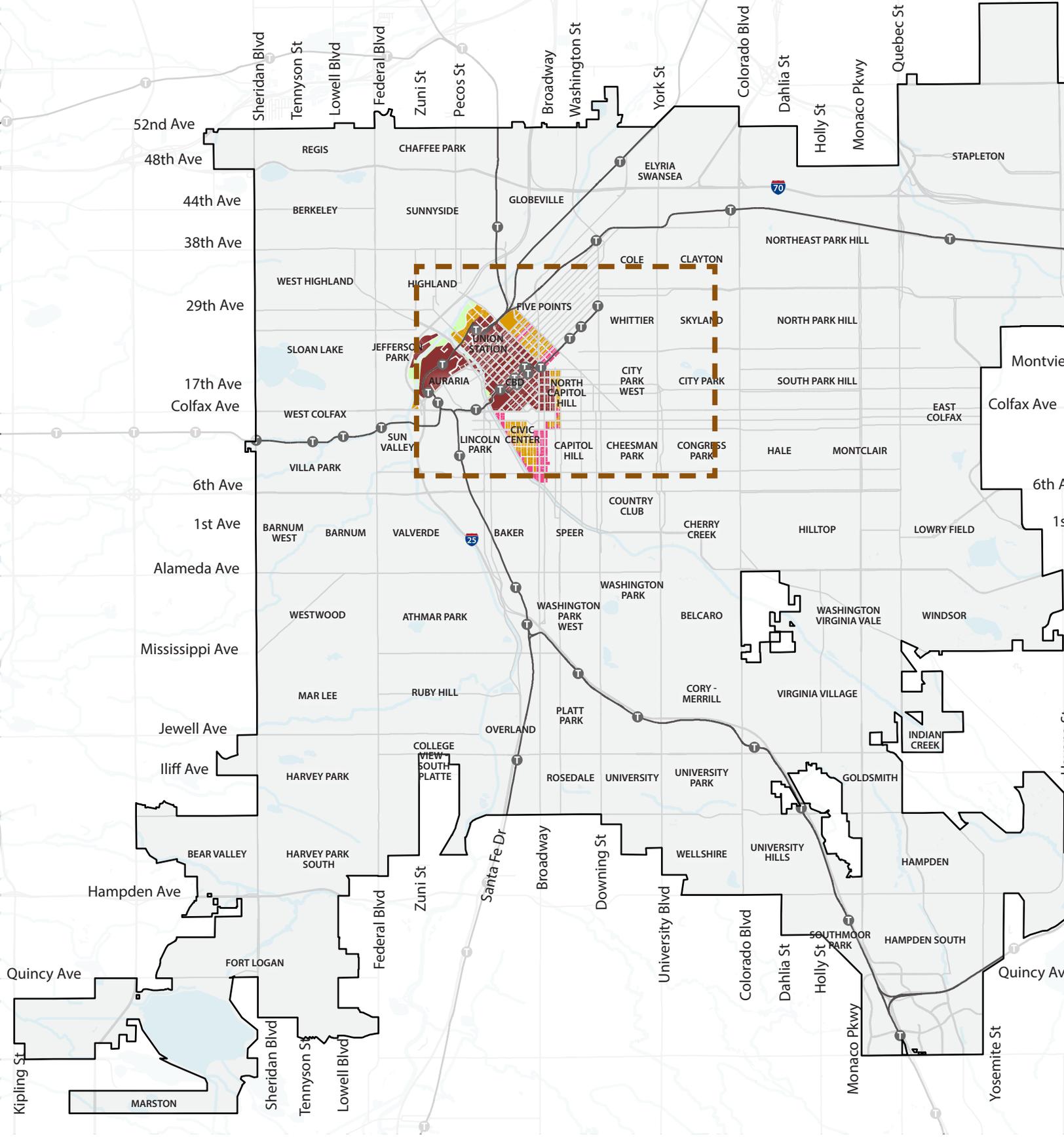


### Quality-of-Life Infrastructure

A high quality, well-maintained network of parks, flexible outdoor spaces, plazas and landscaped streets is essential in the intensely built-up Downtown context, in order to enhance the microclimate and pedestrian environment for all users. This is highlighted by a consistent canopy of street trees incorporated withingreen infrastructure, planters, or structural cells.

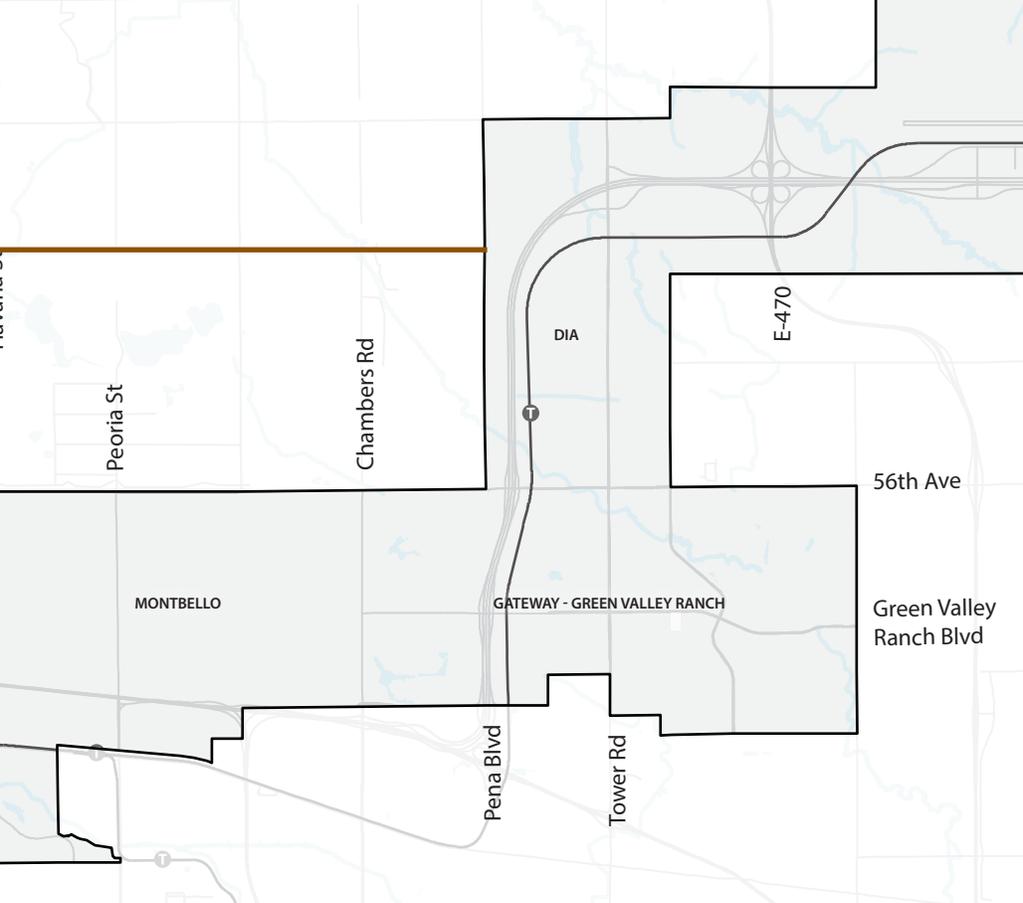
# Downtown Places

The future places within the downtown context.

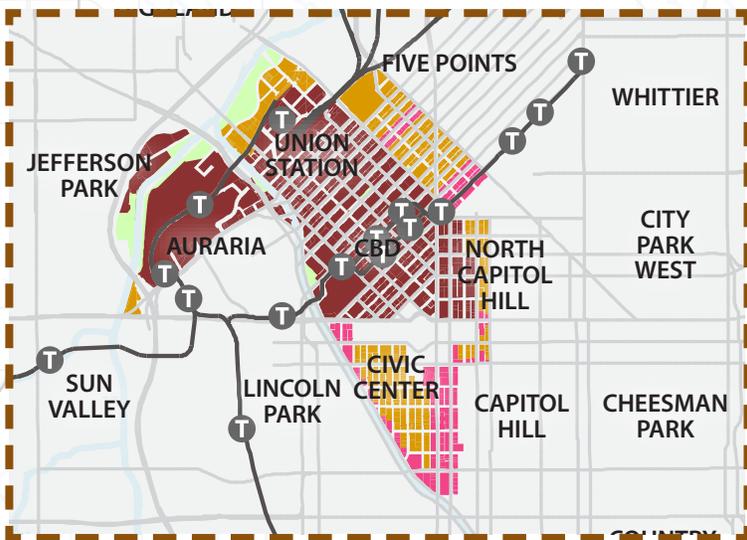


The downtown context is located in the heart of the city. It includes the core downtown business district and the immediately adjacent neighborhoods.

Examples of iconic places in this context include Union Station, Larimer Square and the 16th Street Mall. Residential areas located in the downtown context are highly mixed-use and include Golden Triangle, Arapahoe Square, Curtis Park, Five Points and portions of North Capitol Hill.



## FUTURE PLACES



- Bodies of Water
- Public Parks and Open Space
- Other Parks and Open Space

For more information about bodies of water, public parks and open space, and other parks and open space see page 152.

See descriptions of places and residential areas starting on page 270.

# Centers

Centers should be consistent with the character of the surrounding area in scale and design. They should have an active street level presence and contain a good mix of commercial, retail, office and residential uses.

## Regional



Office, retail, eating and drinking establishments, commercial services and multi-unit residential uses are found mixed throughout. Widest customer draw of all places with a 24/7 live, work and play environment attractive to locals and visitors. Large-scale mixed-use buildings are common. Structures should respond in form and mass to the streets and public spaces around them. High degree of urbanism paired with a strong pedestrian realm. Continuous building frontages and distinct streetscape elements that define the public realm. Tall building heights are common and transitions to adjacent places are minimal except when close to lower scale residential places.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, see pages 66-67.



The region's transit center provides robust access to multiple modes of transportation. A pedestrian priority area with a complete network of high ease-of-use bicycle facilities. The highest amount of frequent transit access in the region served by high-capacity transit.



Open spaces often integrate into the streetscape experience. Public plazas and private spaces are designed to encourage social interaction and come in a variety of sizes, offering smaller scale features such as fountains or green space. Green infrastructure provides moments of relief from the more intense activity. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year. Streets feature a consistent and robust street-tree canopy to improve the microclimate and walkability.

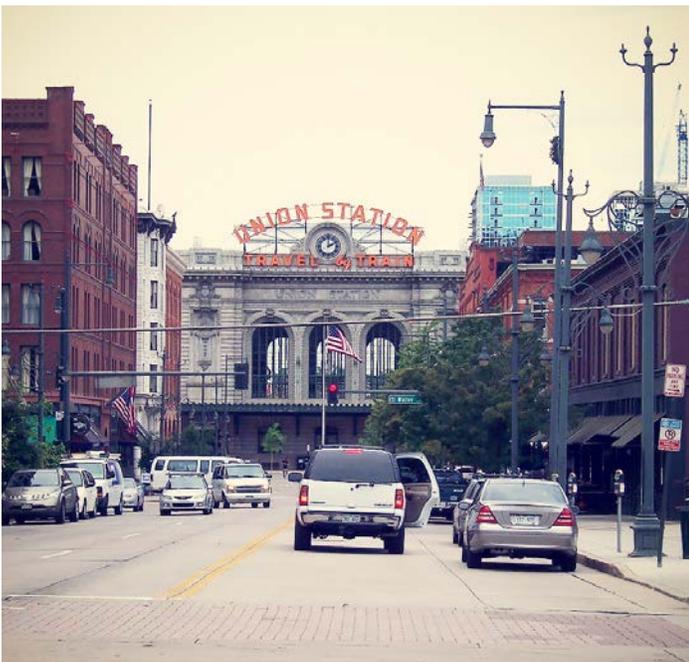
## Downtown

The photos on this page are illustrative examples of the downtown regional center. They are intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics described on the previous page.

### Regional Center



### Regional Center



### Regional Center



# Corridors

Community corridors in the downtown context provide retail and services oriented to a street, with a mix of employment and residential uses. These corridors are located near high intensity residential areas outside of the central business district.

## Community



Provides a mix of office, commercial and residential uses. A wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street. Building footprints are typically larger and exhibit a significant degree of street activation that provides an active public-private interface. Tall building heights are common and transitions to adjacent places are minimal except when close to lower scale residential places.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, see pages 66-67.



Robust access to multiple modes of transportation. A pedestrian priority area with the highest amount of frequent transit access in the region served by high-capacity transit. Cyclists have access with high ease-of-use bicycle facilities.



Public plazas and private gathering spaces are found throughout the corridor, offering smaller scale features such as gathering spaces, water features and tree lined streets. Public spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year. These spaces are connected by a consistent canopy of street trees incorporated within green infrastructure, planters or structural cells.

## Downtown

*The photo on this page is an illustrative example of a downtown community corridor. It is intended to show aspirational examples of the characteristics described on the previous page.*

### Community Corridor



# Residential Areas

Downtown residential areas are high-density, high-quality mixed-use residential areas with excellent multimodal access to employment, parks, daily needs and amenities.

## High



A high mix of uses throughout, including high density multi-unit residential, commercial, civic and institutional uses. The downtown residential areas are distinguished from the downtown regional center by their land use mix being slightly more multi-unit residential in nature. The most intense and greatest heights are found downtown with very high lot coverage and active uses. Regular block patterns create a rhythm for the built environment.

For guidance on how to apply these descriptions to rezonings, see pages 66-67.



The highest priority is given to pedestrians in the downtown residential areas with superior access to the multimodal transportation network. Vehicular access is consolidated. Parking is primarily structured with short-term on-street.



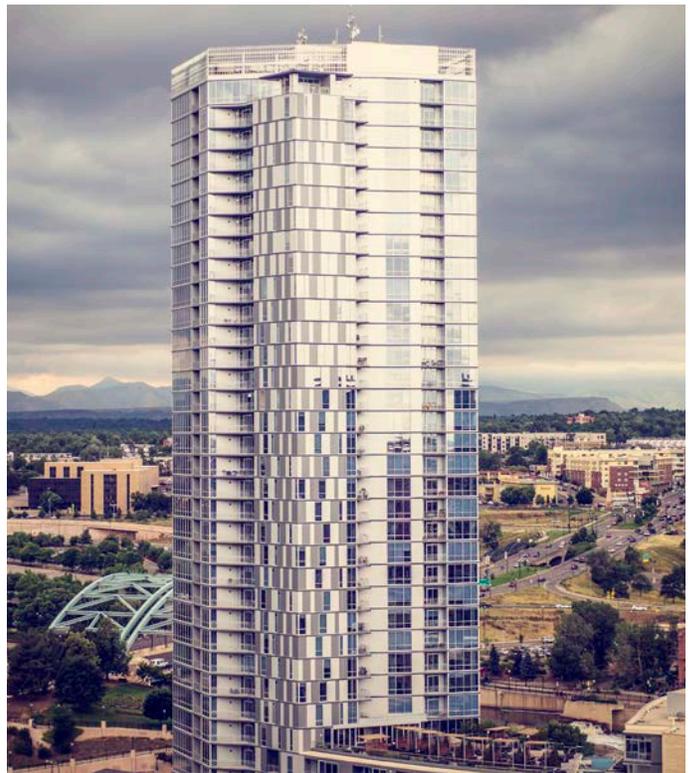
The downtown residential area features various scales of special use parks, flexible outdoor spaces and hardscaped plazas designed to be welcoming to all ages. These spaces are connected by a consistent canopy of street trees and landscaping incorporated within green infrastructure, planters or structural cells.

*Downtown*

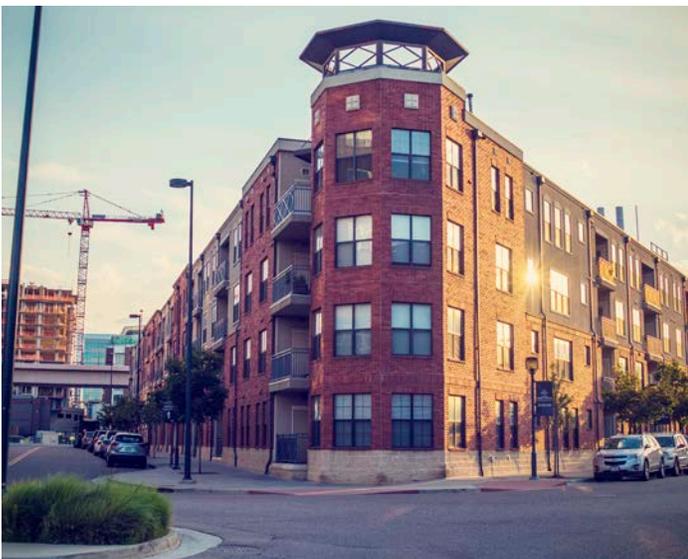
High Residential Area



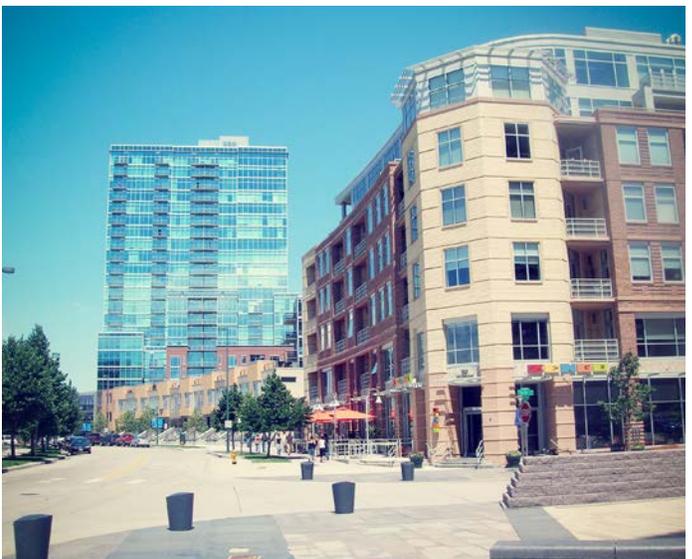
High Residential Area



High Residential Area



High Residential Area



# Street Types

The downtown context contains downtown street types.

Downtown streets include all of the streets located within the downtown context. Many trips in Denver start or end downtown, given its large regional draw, which means these streets have the highest degree of pedestrian volume. Sidewalks are wide with minimal driveway access to prioritize pedestrians. Curb lane uses on downtown streets generate the greatest demand and are highly managed to maximize the highest and best use of the curb space. Operating speeds are the lowest on downtown streets to improve safety for all modes. Intersections are well-designed to clearly protect pedestrian and bicycle users.



DOWNTOWN

# Downtown

## STREET TYPES

DOWNTOWN

MAIN STREET

MIXED USE

INDUSTRIAL

COMMERCIAL

RESIDENTIAL

LOCAL



# 5.7 Districts

Districts are unique contexts with an important role in how the city feels and functions.

.....

Districts are contexts with a specially designed purpose, such as educational campuses, civic centers or manufacturing areas. They can be mixed-use and offer a diverse range of amenities and complementary services to support the district's purpose.

Although very diverse in their physical composition, districts play a critical part in the how the city functions, often having a significant impact on nearby neighborhoods. The civic center and regional parks districts provide much needed open space and civic functions for both the city and the region. Campuses are often a defining part of a neighborhood while providing educational, health care and employment opportunities for a large portion of the city. The airport district functions as the gateway to the Rocky Mountain region and is a growing job center. The manufacturing districts play a major role in the city's economy, providing the space for innovative businesses to grow and expand.



280

5.7.1 Districts at a Glance

284

5.7.2 Manufacturing Districts

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5.7.3 Other Districts

# Districts

## *at a glance*

Districts are areas with a specially designed purpose, such as educational campuses, civic centers or manufacturing areas.

Denver's districts are geographically dispersed throughout the city. Some districts are well established places with while others are dynamic in nature with significant changes expected over the next 20 years. Districts are often developed with a specific use or purpose in mind but some are highly mixed-use. Many districts are important job centers providing a wide variety of middle and high skill employment opportunities. Others provide large scale public open space and community gathering areas. Due to their unique and specialized nature, many uses found in districts require significant amounts of land, typically dozens to thousands of acres. Residential uses are largely limited to the campus and innovation/flex districts. Other places in Denver benefit from districts containing uses that may not be generally compatible with less intense uses.

Notable districts include Civic Center, City Park, the Auraria and University of Denver educational campuses, Denver Health, South Platte Manufacturing Area and Denver International Airport.



# Districts

## Manufacturing Districts

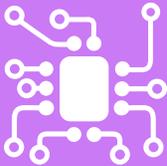
### HEAVY PRODUCTION



### AIRPORT



### VALUE MANUFACTURING



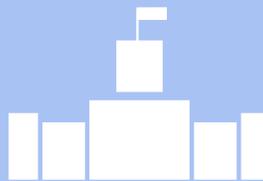
### CIVIC



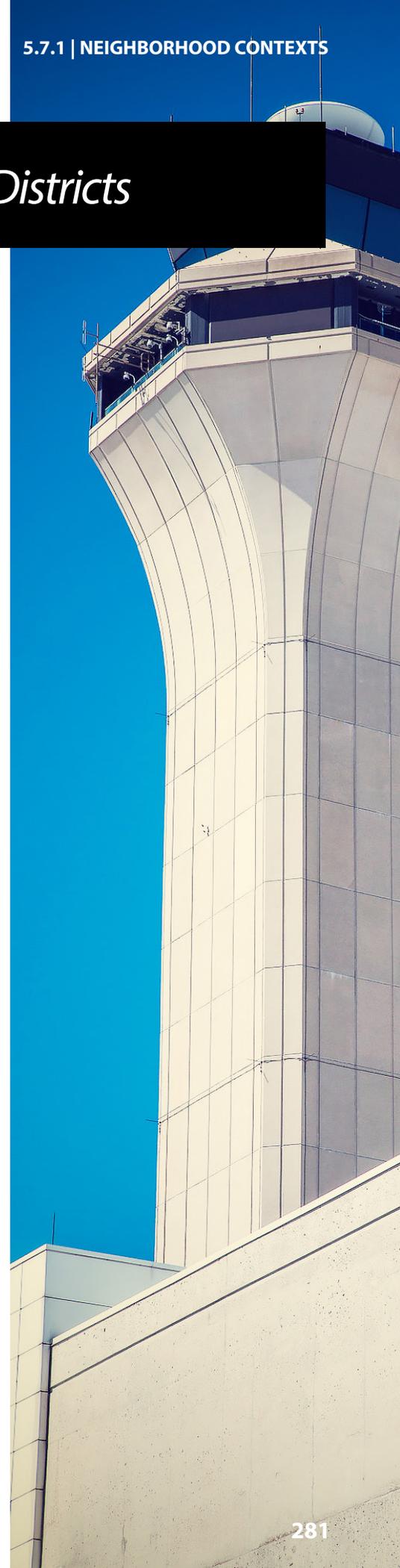
### INNOVATION/ FLEX



### CAMPUS

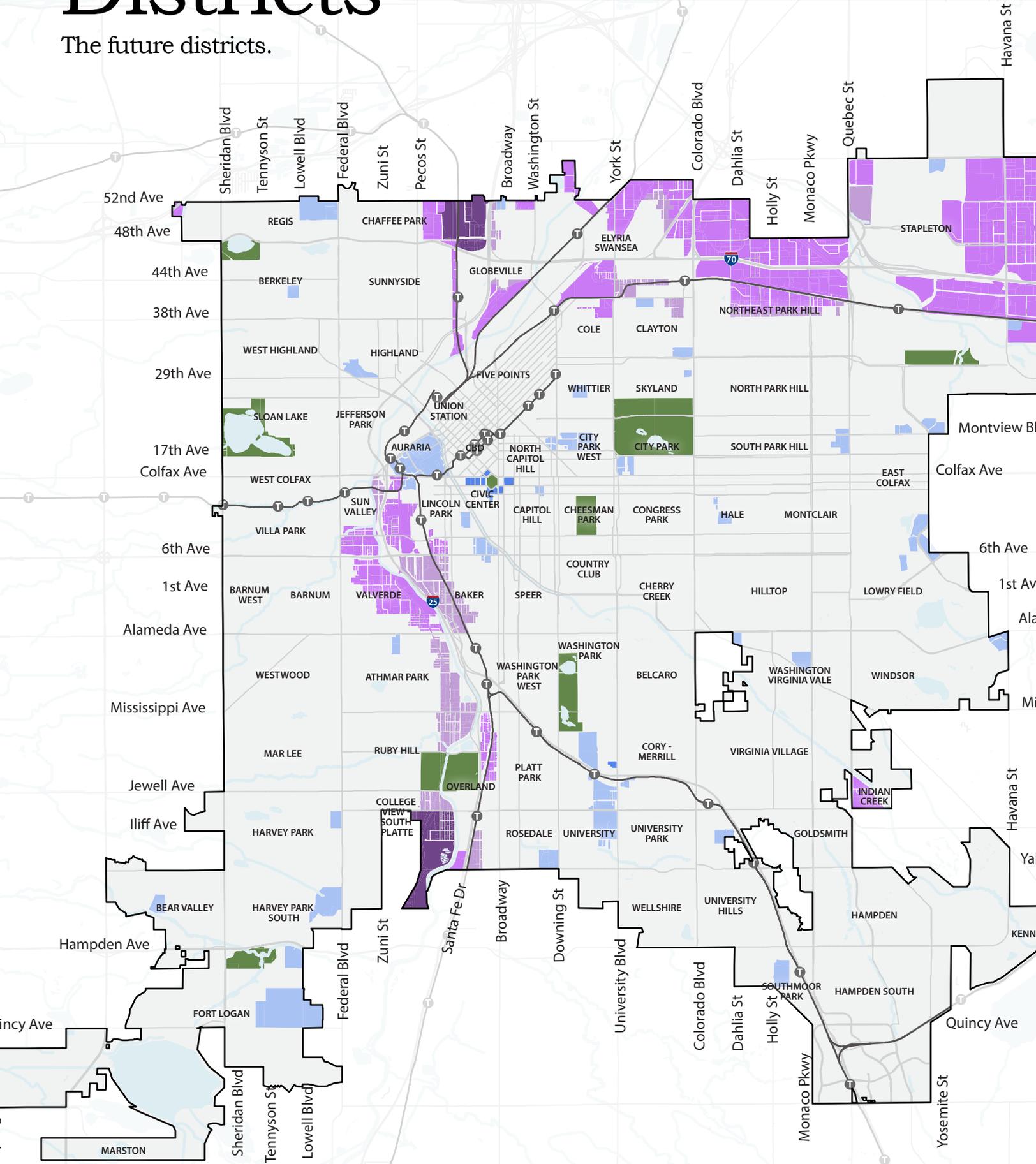


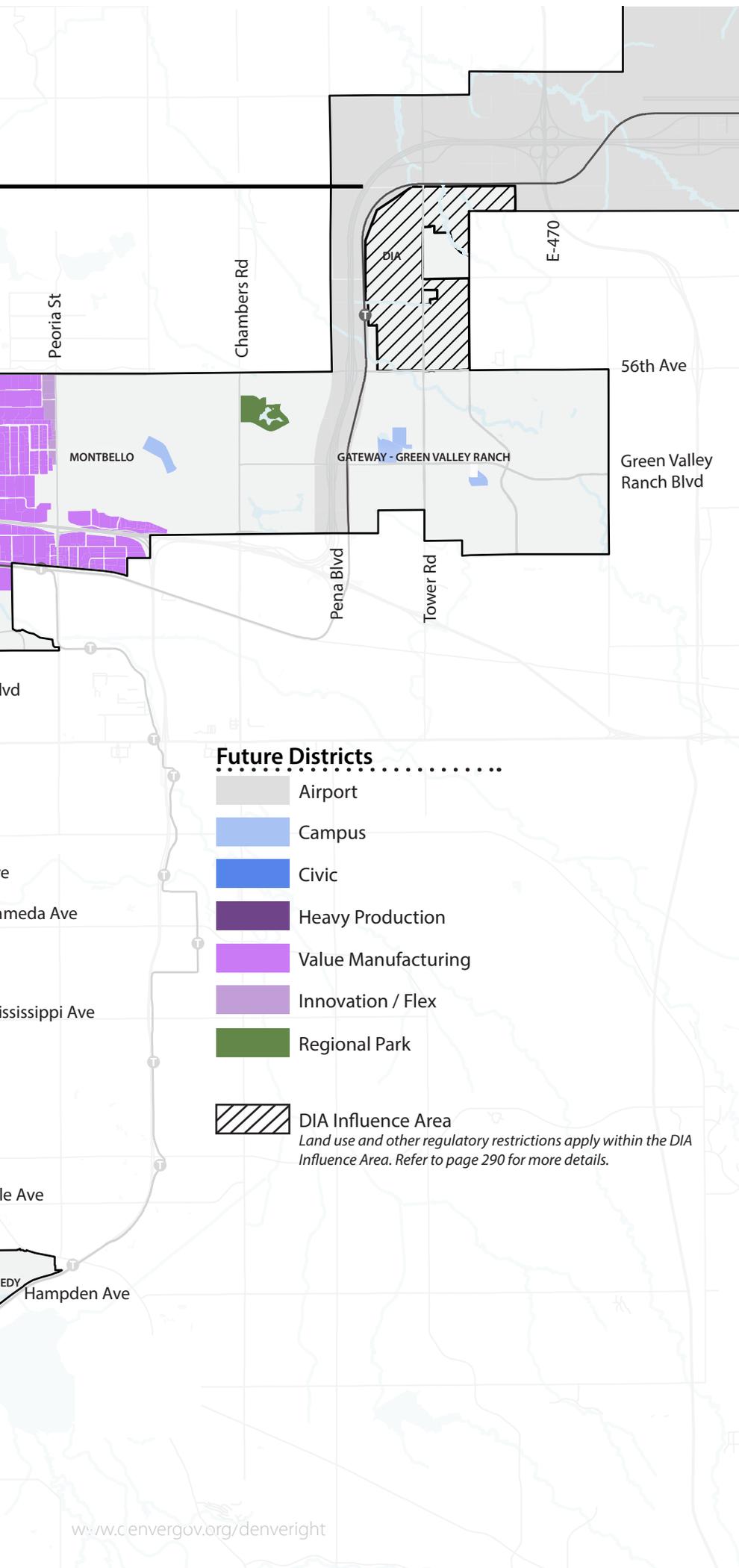
### REGIONAL PARK



# Districts

The future districts.





Districts are found throughout Denver and represent areas with a specially designed purpose, such as educational campuses, civic centers or manufacturing areas. The locations and occurrence of districts are sporadic due to their varied nature. Regional parks and campus districts are dispersed throughout the city. The manufacturing districts are generally clustered together along the South Platte River and the I-25 and I-70 corridors. The airport district is only applied to areas associated with Denver International Airport in Far Northeast Denver. The civic district is limited to civic buildings near Civic Center Park in Downtown.

See descriptions of districts starting on page 284.

# Manufacturing Districts

Manufacturing areas play a major role in the city's economy, serving as a primary place of employment and commerce in the Denver region.

There are eight existing manufacturing areas in Denver, all occupied by various concentrations of production, logistical operations, design and flex businesses. These manufacturing areas play a major role in the city's economy, serving as a primary place of employment and commerce in the Denver region. Even though manufacturing uses have continually evolved throughout Denver's history, they remain a defining element for the city's economy and many neighborhoods.

Denver's manufacturing districts generally fall into three types, each with a set of unique characteristics.

## Heavy Production

Heavy production districts are limited to two areas within Denver, the River Drive district in far south Denver and the Pecos district northwest of the I-25 and I-70 interchange. Traditional and heavy manufacturing has continuously relocated from Denver over the past 60 years, seeking more space and greater flexibility of land uses, but these areas are expected to maintain meeting specific needs for their current users and serve a vital role in the economy. Residential uses are not compatible and not desired due to their transformative nature.

## Value Manufacturing

Value manufacturing districts currently make up the most significant amount of manufacturing activity in Denver

## Industrial Street Type

Industrial streets are common in areas where the primary use is production and manufacturing. These streets often serve in and out traffic from large commercial vehicles. To accommodate this, it is acceptable for streets to be wider, have longer signal cycles and contain more turn lanes to accommodate the movement of commercial vehicles. Driveway

including advanced and larger craft manufacturing, research and design, labs, robotics and technology and flex-space. These areas, located primarily along the Platte River and in north Denver along freight rail lines and I-70, are generally healthy and thriving districts. These businesses are significant employers of middle skill, middle wage job holders and contribute greatly to the fiscal health of the city. Denver also serves as home for numerous logistic companies, due to being a "port and distribution hub" for the mountain west and western plains. Residential uses are not compatible and not desired due to their transformative nature.

## Innovation/Flex

Innovation/flex districts are an ideal location for businesses that need to mix research/design, manufacturing and logistics with an area that has more urban amenities, a greater mix of uses and strong transit connections. An increasing number of "craft" manufacturers — creating products serving local and global markets — have emerged in various Denver neighborhoods over the past decade. These manufacturers are attracted to Denver due to three primary characteristics: entrepreneurial spirit, innovation and design approaches, and an opportunity to combine technology in the manufacturing process. Due to the innovative nature of the businesses, reduced intensity of use and the desire to create more vibrant urban places in these districts, multi-unit residential is compatible.

access is also provided more frequently. Despite the industrial uses, street design should still encourage safety and access for all modes, especially as employees may access industrial sites by walking, transit or by bike. A detached sidewalk with a tree lawn is also used to provide a buffer between pedestrians and freight traffic.



# Districts

## Heavy Production

*Heavy production districts serve the primary purpose of heavy manufacturing and production, construction and utilities.*

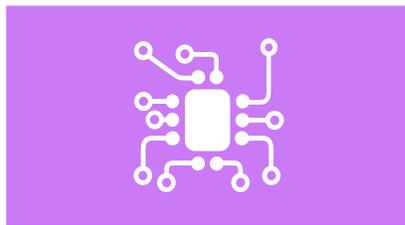


Heavy production and construction related activities, utility providers, major warehousing and storage (including chemical) facilities are found in these areas on large, multiple acre parcels. A mix of businesses in each district is common. Residential uses are not compatible. Most buildings have very large footprints with significant land needs for equipment and material storage.



## Value Manufacturing

*Value manufacturing districts serve the primary purpose of light manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing*



Advanced and larger craft manufacturing, research and design labs, robotics, technology and flex spaces are found in these areas. Often located in business parks or on extra large blocks. Residential uses are not compatible. These areas typically consist of single or multi-tenant buildings, that are designed for freight movement with some storage and typically do not provide pedestrian-oriented features such as street level transparency.



Streets and internal road systems designed for large truck movement and ease of access to the regional transportation system. Trucks are typically stored on site.



Little is found in the current condition, though future opportunities for green infrastructure, especially solar roofs and other innovative approaches, should be emphasized.



## Innovation/Flex

*Innovation/flex districts serve the purpose of craft/maker space, high-tech design and manufacturing with a mix of employment and residential.*



Assembly facilities, labs, small logistics and warehousing, local food catering, tech firms, value manufacturing and related offices uses are found in these areas. Residential uses are compatible. Multi-tenant buildings, often with office uses in the front and manufacturing in the back, are common. Buildings should orient to the street and contain pedestrian-friendly features such as street level transparency. Building scale varies greatly, and can be dependent upon the surrounding context and character.

Streets in these areas are typically on the standard grid system with on-street parking and multi-modal access.

A range of parks and outdoor spaces may occur, depending on context. Street trees are found and green infrastructure occur in a variety of forms.



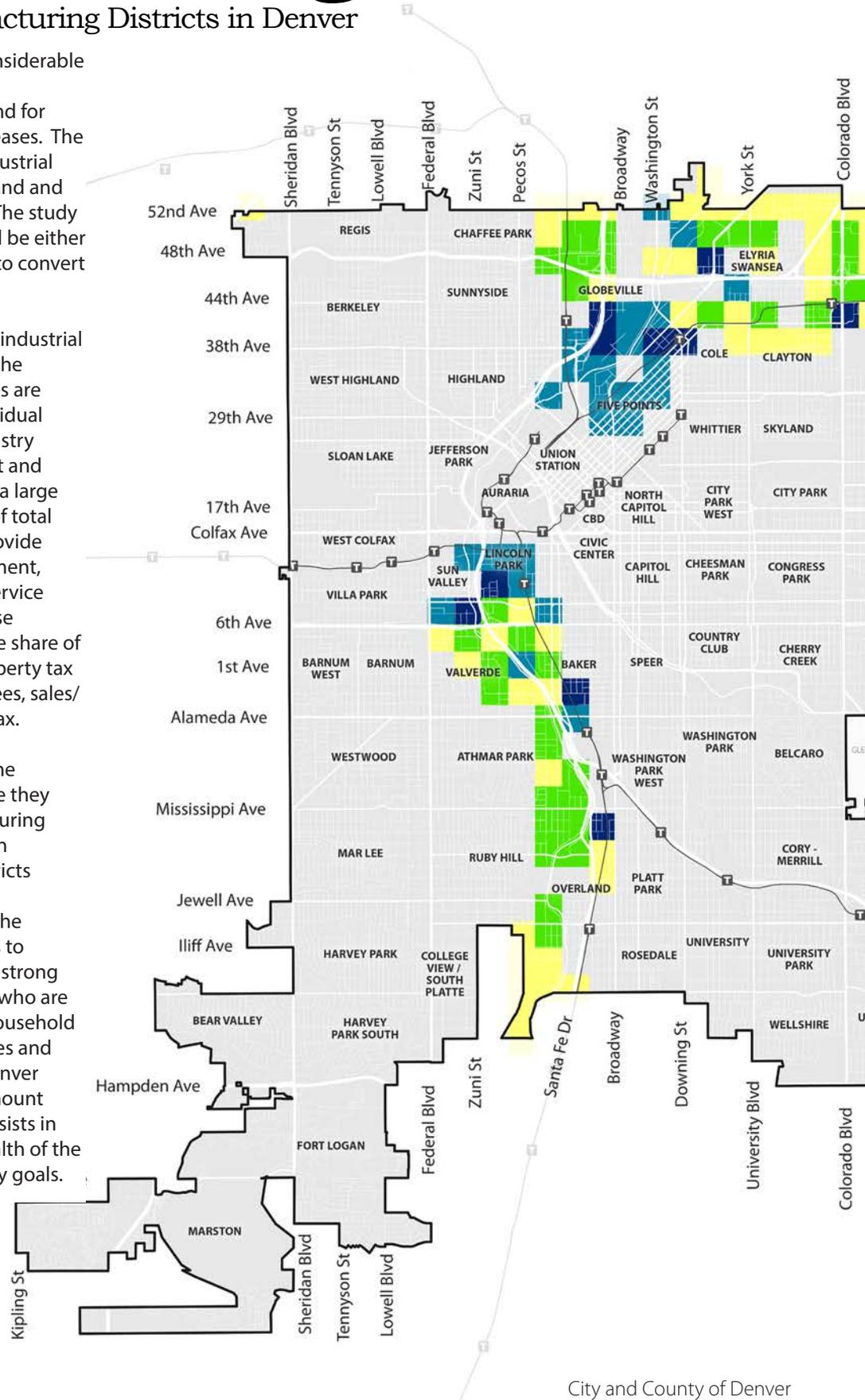
# Manufacturing Districts —

## The Importance of Manufacturing Districts in Denver

Some industrial areas of the city face considerable growth pressures as Denver's close-in neighborhoods revitalize and the demand for multi-unit residential development increases. The *Blueprint Denver* process included an industrial land use study to gauge the value, demand and market pressures of industrial districts. The study evaluated which existing districts should be either preserved for industrial uses or allowed to convert to other uses.

While the employment in total for these industrial businesses in Denver has declined over the past 20 years, many individual businesses are very successful and have increased individual employment. More generally, these industry groups, have increased their total output and contributions to Denver's economy. For a large share of Denver's residents (21 percent of total 2015 employment), these businesses provide a steady and valued location of employment, typically providing higher wages than service industry employment. Additionally, these businesses contribute a disproportionate share of the city's real and business personal property tax revenues and contributes through use fees, sales/use tax and the Occupational Privilege Tax.

There is a strong relationship between the location of these workers jobs and where they live — neighborhoods next to manufacturing areas have greater numbers of workers in these industries. Maintaining these districts improves access to middle skill jobs and reduces the transportation demand for the worker's commutes. If Denver continues to lose manufacturing districts that exhibit strong economic indicators, Denver's residents who are employed in manufacturing may shift household locations to be closer to job opportunities and add to the loss of character in certain Denver neighborhoods. Preserving the right amount of manufacturing and industrial areas assists in maintaining the economic and fiscal health of the city while helping the city meet its equity goals.

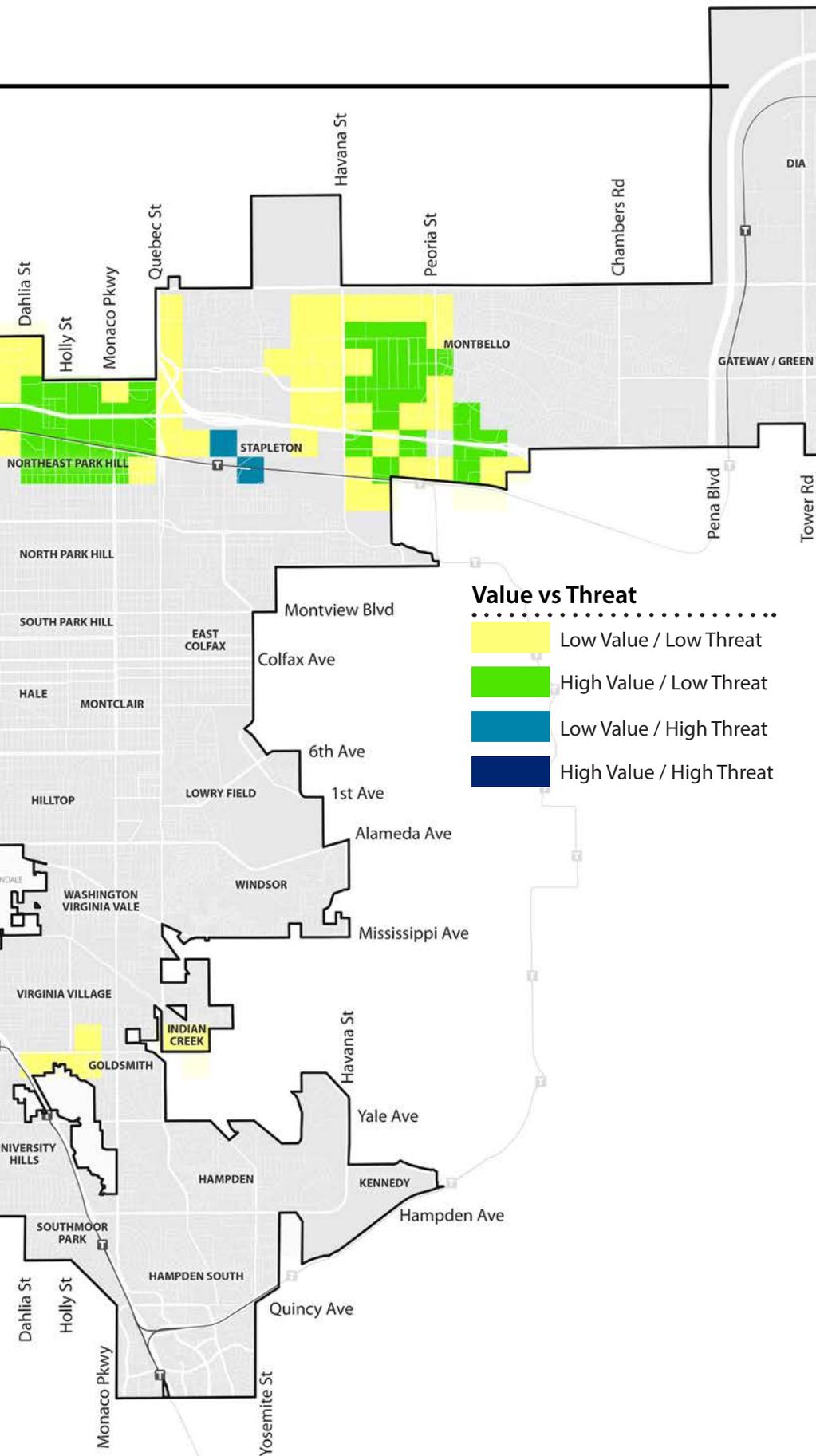


## Assessment of Manufacturing Values and Market Threats

Development of *Blueprint Denver* included an assessment of manufacturing land throughout the city. This assessment analyzed the value and threats to existing manufacturing areas to better understand what areas of the city should be preserved for manufacturing uses.

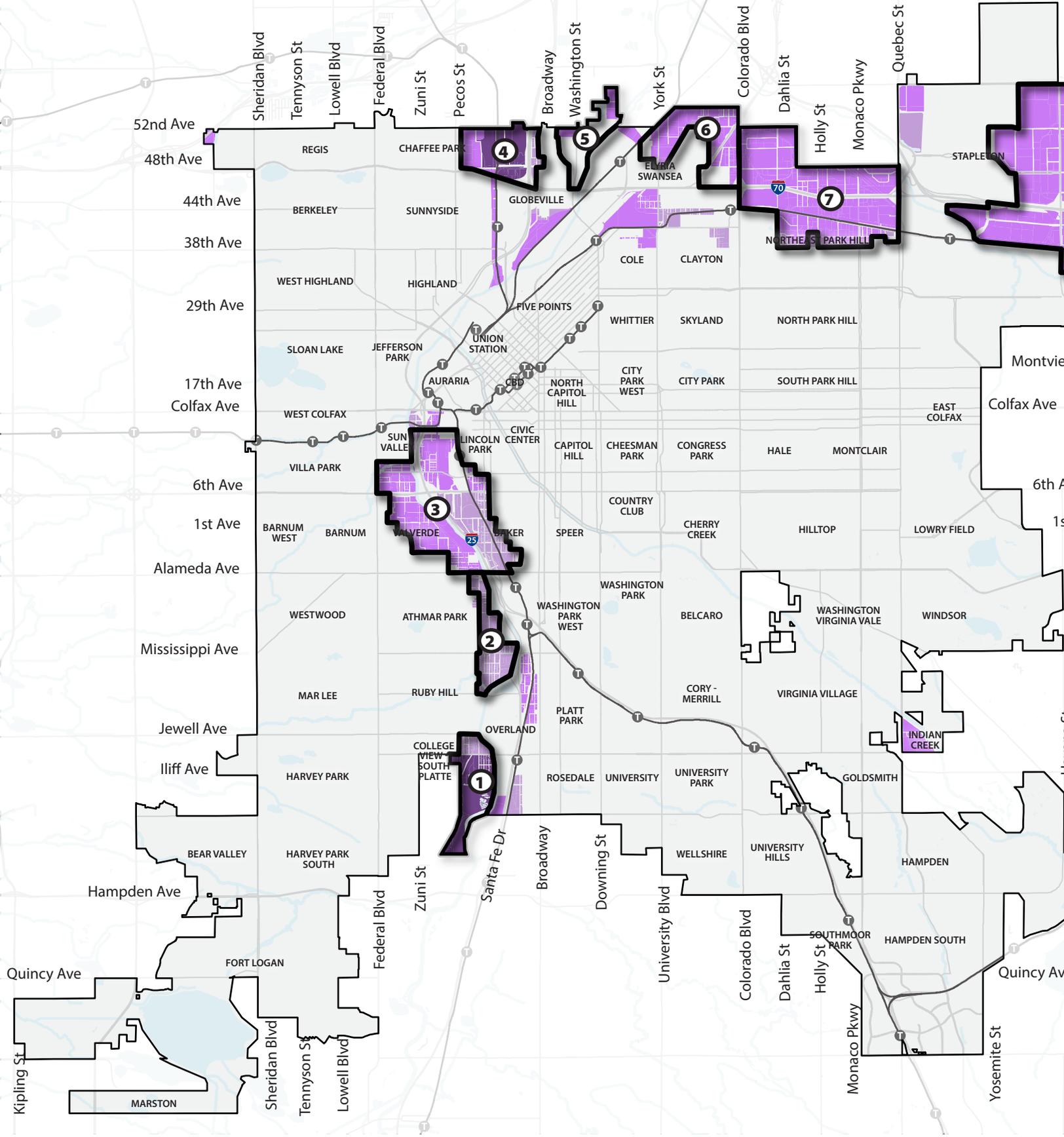
This framework weighs both the industrial values of the land and the market threats for redevelopment to inform the district places map, the manufacturing preservation areas (shown in the map on the following page) and overall policy. Areas that had either a low or high value but a low threat to redevelopment are “preserve” areas that should maintain manufacturing uses. Areas with low value and high threat are “convert” areas and can change to other uses. Areas with high value but also high threat are “hybrid” areas that should weigh other considerations on a case-by-case basis including adopted small area plan recommendations and community support.

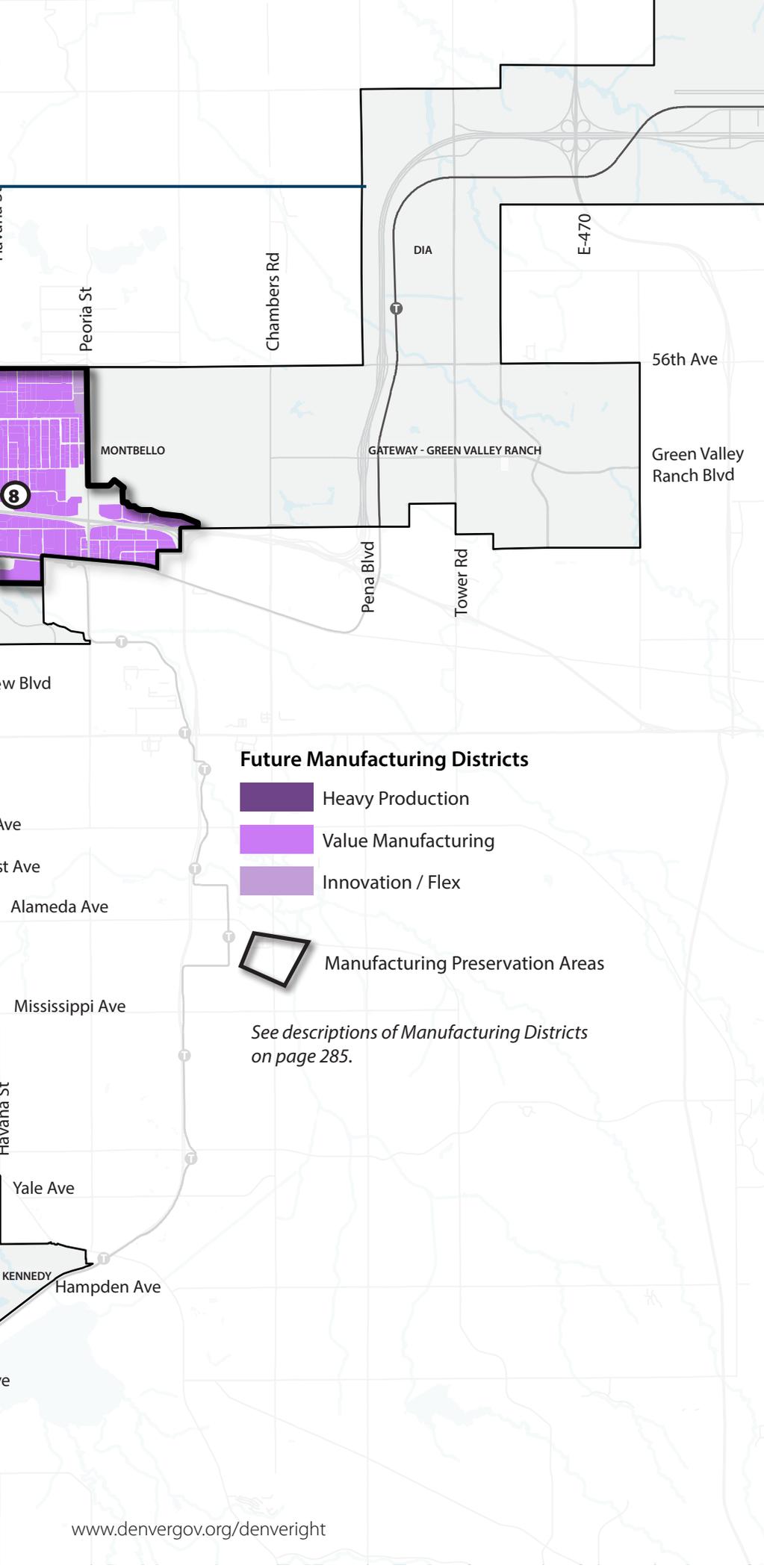
See more detail in the Industrial Land Use Study (Appendix D).



# Manufacturing Districts

The future manufacturing districts in Denver.





### Manufacturing Preservation Areas

*Blueprint Denver* identifies eight areas in the city to preserve the ability to continue and expand manufacturing uses, which are outlined on the map. Please see Chapter 3 for specific policies and strategies related to manufacturing.

- 1. River Drive:** A heavy production district in south Denver near the South Platte River with strong regional transportation connections including freight rail.
- 2. West Central:** Located in the Athmar Park and Ruby Hill neighborhoods, the West Central area is an innovation/flex district.
- 3. Sun Valley:** A district with both innovation/flex and value manufacturing bisected by the consolidated main line freight corridor and I-25 in the Sun Valley, Valverde, Lincoln Park and Baker neighborhoods.
- 4. Pecos:** A heavy production and value manufacturing district in the northwest quadrant of the I-25 and I-70 interchange in the Globeville and Chaffee Park neighborhoods.
- 5. National Western Center (NWC) West:** An innovation/flex district located west of Washington St and the National Western Center in the Globeville and Elyria Swansea neighborhoods.
- 6. National Western Center (NWC) East:** Largely a value manufacturing district east of NWC in the Elyria Swansea neighborhood.
- 7. North Park Hill:** A large value manufacturing district in northeast Denver.
- 8. Montbello Smith Road:** A large value manufacturing district in the Stapleton and Montbello.

A small amount of manufacturing areas with key employers (i.e. Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Geotech) are not within these contiguous preservation areas but are desirable to retain on a case-by-case basis.

# Airport

The airport district is unique as the context used only for Denver International Airport, which serves as the primary economic engine for the state of Colorado.



The airport district serves the primary purpose of air transportation, shipping and vehicle storage for travelers and employees of Denver International Airport (DIA) and other related airlines and businesses. Development in and around the airport district must support and enhance the ability for the airport to function at its highest capacity and expand as needed through land uses that are compatible with current and future airport operations.

Land uses found within the airport district are either aviation, aviation-related or non-aeronautical commercial activities ranging from warehousing, manufacturing, office, hotel, retail, commercial, car rental, air cargo transfer and all aviation services. Peña Boulevard is the focus of much of the non-aviation uses. Buildings vary greatly, dependent on use and activity. Most are large, single-use structures built for a specific aviation related or associated use but some buildings may be mixed-use with prominent architecture.

Due to the need for the airport to continue serving its role in Colorado's economy, nearby places outside of the airport district context are included within the DIA Influence Area. At some future time, if any new regulatory tools are considered for this area, or if any existing limitations are considered for revision, a process led by the City of Denver with public input should occur.



An integrated street network designed to facilitate aviation related movement including arriving/ departing passengers, freight and related businesses. Frequent bus and high-capacity transit is available to move passengers and employees into the terminal area. As non-aviation employment opportunities expand additional transit options, including a local circulator, could be added. Bicycle and pedestrian networks provide internal circulation and connect to the regional trail system providing access to regional open space.



Availability of qualified public spaces may be found in specific locations, especially areas visited by passengers and areas with a concentration of employees. The Jeppesen Terminal accommodates very high levels of pedestrian traffic for airport passengers. Nodes of non-aeronautical commercial related activity expand opportunities for qualified public gathering and invite visitors and employees to experience the airport's landscape features, natural resources and vistas.

## DIA Influence Area: Existing Regulatory Limitations for New Development in the DIA Neighborhood

Much of the existing zoning in the DIA area has additional regulations and limitations that apply only to this area. These regulations impose additional requirements and prohibit some uses that would otherwise be allowed under existing zoning. The additional regulations are intended to ensure that new development remains compatible with nearby airport operations.

- **DIA Influence Area Overlay Zone (AIO):** This overlay zone district is mapped in most areas north of 56th Ave and east of Peña Blvd (see map on page 283). The AIO is applied to properties within the identified DIA Influence Area when they rezone out of Former Chapter 59 districts and into the Denver Zoning Code. Basic provisions of the AIO include the following:
  - Single and two-unit residential uses are prohibited throughout the AIO
  - Multi-unit residential uses are prohibited north of 64th Ave
  - Avigation easements are required concurrent with rezoning and site development plans throughout the AIO
- **Former Chapter 59 Zone Districts:** Most properties north of 56th Ave with old code zoning also have waivers and conditions in place that impose limitations and requirements that are comparable to those of the AIO. In most cases the current waivers and conditions have been in place since the early 2000s.

# Campus

Campus districts each have a primary purpose such as education or medical services. These environments often provide retail, restaurants, offices and residential uses to support the primary use and serve the surrounding neighborhoods.



Campus buildings vary greatly in size and form. Multi-story single-use and mixed-use buildings are typical. Some campus buildings may exhibit prominent architecture. These areas are typically dominated by a single, large institutional user. Universities, medical centers and large research facilities are examples. Some supporting retail and residential uses may occur. When adjacent to lower intensity development, campuses should transition gradually to respect the surrounding neighborhood.

*See Land Use & Built Form: General policies 7 & 9 for more information about the reuse of existing campuses.*



Internal circulation is typically highly multi-modal, with emphasis on pedestrians and possibly bicycles. The street grid (especially vehicular) may be interrupted with large blocks and parking is consolidated.



There is a significant amount of green infrastructure found on campuses, with open greens, enhanced hardscaped plazas and gathering places for public life. Green infrastructure best practices are common.



# Civic

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Civic districts serve the primary purpose of government/municipal administration and also provide public space for all Denver's residents.



Large civic buildings designed with specific purposes. Buildings may have a variety of forms and often exhibit prominent architecture. Uses are often government services and administration, museums and public open space. Beyond typical government business cultural activities, civic districts are used to hold public events that have a citywide or regional draw and holds significance to the public.



High degree of multi-modal access with some streets prioritizing specific modes. Streets are designed and operated with maximum flexibility for use during special events.



Prominent use of open spaces for large civic gatherings with a high degree of activation. Green space and hardscaped plazas are designed for daily activities and special events.



# Regional Park

Regional park districts serve the primary purpose of providing large-scale public open space, recreation and event space. Regional park districts may also contain specialty uses such as zoos, museums, or water-related activities.



Provides large scale public open space, recreational space and event locations. Individual and group recreation activities occur on most days throughout the year. Specific uses include zoos, museums, golf courses recreation centers and water-related activities. Opportunities for some appropriate additional uses such as restaurants, performance spaces and sports facilities may occur on a site-by-site basis. Buildings in these areas are often built with the natural environment in mind. Some locations may have prominent architecture with significant civic importance.



Internal circulation is typically highly multi-modal, with emphasis on pedestrians and bicycles. The street grid (especially vehicular) may be interrupted with large blocks and parking is consolidated. The transit priority street network often serves regional parks.



Green infrastructure and natural elements such as abundant trees and water bodies are found in these areas, providing both active and passive recreational opportunities for all types of users.





# 6. Glossary and Appendices

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## Glossary

### A - Community Profile

*(document available online or by request from CPD)*

### B- Blueprint Denver 2002 Diagnostic

*(document available online or by request from CPD)*

### C- Key Equity Concepts Methodology

*(document available online or by request from CPD)*

### D- Industrial Land Use Study

*(document available online or by request from CPD)*

### E- Implementation Matrix

*(document available online or by request from CPD)*

**Access**

The ability to safely reach desired places, services and activities.

**Accessory dwelling unit (ADU)**

Also known as a “carriage house” or an “alley home”, ADU’s are a secondary residence with a separate entrance and living space on the property of a primary residential use. They can be attached to the home—such as a unit in the basement—or detached, such as a rental unit over the garage or a smaller house in the back yard.

**Affordable housing**

In general, housing for which the occupant(s) pay(s) no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities. For this plan, affordable housing is a general term that includes attaining housing. Affordable housing may be subsidized or naturally occurring affordable housing, which is not subsidized but still affordable compared to average market rents/prices.

**Air quality**

The degree to which the ambient air is pollution-free, assessed by measuring a number of indicators of pollution. Good air quality means that air pollution poses little or no risk and allows clear views of distant objects such as the mountains or downtown skyline.

**Amenity zone**

The portion of the public right-of-way adjacent to the back of the curb that contains elements of the streetscape such as trees, plantings, benches, lighting, trash and recycling receptacles, and public art outside of the walking area.

**Attainable Housing**

In general, housing for which the occupant(s) pay(s) no more than 30% of his or her net income for gross housing costs, including utilities. For this plan, affordable housing is a general term that includes attainable housing. Affordable housing may be subsidized or naturally occurring affordable housing, which is not subsidized but is still affordable compared to average market rents/prices.

**Authentic neighborhoods**

Neighborhoods reflecting the unique culture and history of the people who live there.

**Autonomous vehicle (AV)**

A vehicle that can operate without human assistance. Also called a driverless vehicle.

**Bump-outs**

Extensions of the sidewalk into the street usually used to shorten crossing distances and make it easier for people walking to cross the street safely.

**Built environment**

This term refers to the various “man made” elements of a city or neighborhood, or those not found in nature, such as buildings, roads, street lights, parks and infrastructure.

**Carbon emissions**

Carbon emissions refer to the amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) released into the atmosphere as a by-product of burning fossil fuels such as gas, coal or oil.

**Citywide plans**

Citywide planning incorporates input from all areas of the city and involves multiple city departments and initiatives. These plans encompass the entire city (rather than specific neighborhoods or areas), establish goals for the future of the city and provide policy guidance to achieve those goals.

**Climate change**

Climate change refers to any significant change in the measures of climate lasting for an extended period of time. Climate change includes major changes, occurring over several decades or longer, in temperature, precipitation or wind patterns. (Denver’s Climate Adaption Plan)

**Community Think Tank**

A forum created for the Denveright planning process for community leaders to share thoughts on important topics related to all Denveright plans. Composed of Denver community members who represent the diversity of our city, the think tank provided input on key items that cut across all Denveright plans.

### Community values

The core principles and concepts important to the Denver community. They must be acknowledged, honored and constantly defended to ensure change and development occur in accordance with these core principles.

### Commuter rail

Rail system that carries passengers within urban areas, or between urban areas and their suburbs, but differs from light rail transit in that the passenger cars are heavier, the average trip lengths are longer, there are few standing passengers, and the operations may be carried out over tracks that are part of the railroad system in the area. In RTD's system, the University of Colorado A line to Denver International Airport is an example of a commuter rail line. (*Denver Moves: Transit*)

### Complete neighborhood

A neighborhood where all residents have safe and convenient access to the goods and services needed in daily life. This includes a variety of housing options, fresh food and other commercial services, open spaces and recreational facilities, affordable active transportation options, high quality transit, and civic amenities. An important element of a complete neighborhood is to meet the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

### Cottage housing

Small single-unit homes built on small lots. These homes may be clustered around a common courtyard.

### Creative district

An area with a concentration of artistic and cultural activities/ facilities, arts and entertainment businesses or artistic/ cultural and creative sector production. The Colorado Creative District Program is a State funded program aimed at supporting the development of Creative Districts across the state.

### Curb lane

A curb lane is an outermost lane of a roadway that is wide enough to be safely shared side by side by a bicycle and a wider motor vehicle at the same time.

### Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) is a planning organization where local governments collaborate to establish guidelines, set policy and allocate funding in the areas of: transportation and personal mobility; growth and development; and aging and disability resources.

### Discover Denver

Denver's citywide building survey focused on identifying the buildings that help to tell Denver's story.

### Design speed

Design speed is a selected speed used to determine the various design and geometric features, such as lane widths, number of lanes, medians and bulb-outs of the roadway.

### Economic mobility

The ability of an individual, family or some other group to move along the economic spectrum in terms of wealth and income.

### Environment justice

Environmental justice refers to all people having the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards as well as equal access to decision-making processes for a healthy environment.

### Equity

Equity means everyone, regardless of who they are or where they are from, has the opportunity to thrive (Colorado Department of Public Health). Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible (Metro Denver Partnership for Health). Healthy equity practice intentionally supports policies, delivers public services and allocates resources to advance health equity and eliminate institutional biases and barriers. Equity acknowledges that treating every person or place exactly the same may not result in fair opportunities to succeed.

### Family-friendly housing

Housing design to serve households of more than one generation, usually including children. This includes housing units with more than one bedroom and

amenities that serve a variety of ages.

### FasTracks

The RTD FasTracks Program is a multi-billion dollar comprehensive transit expansion plan to build 122 miles of new commuter rail and light rail, 18 miles of bus rapid transit, 21,000 new parking spaces at light rail and bus stations, and enhance bus service for easy, convenient bus/rail connections across the eight-county district.

### Flex/ innovation

Manufacturing places that serve the purpose of craft/ maker space, technology, design and manufacturing. Flex/innovation places can have a mix of employment and residential land uses.

### Food systems

A food system is the process of how food gets from a farm or ranch to an individual and their family. The food system begins with the land, water, seeds and tools that farmers and ranchers convert into food. The food system also encompasses the cleaning, moving, processing, repacking, packaging, distributing, selling and coking that happens between the farm and the plate (*Denver Food Vision*).

### Goals

As they pertain to *Blueprint Denver*, broad, long-term aims that support the vision. The ten goals inform all of the plan recommendations.

### Greenhouse gas

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and make the planet warmer. Examples of greenhouse gases include: carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and fluorinated gases. The largest source of greenhouse gas emissions from human activities in the United States is from burning fossil fuels for electricity, heat and transportation (EPA).

### Green infrastructure

Public or private assets—including both natural and engineered facilities—that protect, support or mimic natural systems to provide stormwater management, water quality, reduced flooding risks, urban heat island effect mitigation, reduced energy demands,

climate change resiliency and enhanced community livability. Green infrastructure may also be used to reflect a broad definition including trees, plants, parks and greenways.

### Health inequities

Avoidable differences in health between groups of people that are closely linked with the unjust distribution of social, economic or environmental resources (*Promoting Health Equity*, US Department of Health and Human Services)

### Healthy food

Foods that contribute to personal or public health. Generally healthy foods emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat free or low fat dairy, lean meats and proteins (eggs, nuts), low saturated fats, low sodium, and less added sugar, staying within daily caloric needs (*Denver Food Vision*, 2017).

### High-capacity transit

From the *Denver Moves: Transit* plan, high-capacity transit includes any form of public transit that has an exclusive right-of-way, a non-exclusive right-of-way, or a combination of both. High-capacity transit vehicles make fewer stops, travel at higher speeds, have more frequent service, and carry more people than local service transit. High-capacity transit can include light rail, rapid streetcar, commuter rail, and bus rapid transit. See *Denver Moves: Transit* for a full description.

### High injury network (HIN)

The corridors in Denver with the highest number of fatal and injury crashes, as identified in *Denver's Vision Zero Action Plan*.

### Human scale

A sense of human scale is achieved when one can reasonably interpret buildings, streets, and spaces at a comfortable walking pace by comparing their elements, materials, and functions to the size of an individual.

### Impervious surface

Land surfaces that repel water and do not let rainwater infiltrate, or soak into, the ground. This includes roads, sidewalks, driveways and parking lots. More of these

surfaces contribute to the Urban Heat Island effect and exasperate flooding from stormwater issues.

### **Inclusive**

Inclusive of many cultures, perspectives, and experiences. Welcoming to all people. Covering or intended to cover all people, services, items, etc. (Denver Food Vision).

### **Infill development**

The process of developing vacant or under-used parcels within existing urban areas that are already largely developed.

### **Infrastructure**

Refers to the fundamental facilities and systems serving a country, city or other area, including the services and facilities necessary for its economy to function. Examples of infrastructure include roads, sidewalks, water and sewer systems, power and telecommunications lines.

### **Institutional (use)**

Institutional uses generally are the land uses which serve a communities social, spiritual, educational, health and/or cultural needs. They may include public or quasi-public facilities or be privately owned and operated.

### **Involuntary displacement**

When property values and/or rents in an area rise and residents and/or businesses are forced to relocate to neighborhoods where real estate is less costly.

### **Land use**

The different ways that people use or develop property. This includes residential, retail and commercial uses of the land.

### **Landmark (Historic Landmark)**

A building, site structure or object that meets Denver landmark designation criteria as specified in the Denver Revised Municipal Code, and has been designated as such by the Denver City Council. Landmark properties are subject to design review.

### **Medium-capacity transit**

From the *Denver Moves: Transit* plan, a type of transit capital investment corridor where capital investments are made to serve rapid bus to full bus rapid transit. These corridors have improvements such as dedicated lanes, transit signal priority and/or bypass/queue jump lanes. See *Denver Moves: Transit* for a full description.

### **Middle skill jobs**

Jobs that require more education and training than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree. These jobs provide an important opportunity for moderate-income households to build wealth.

### **Missing middle housing**

Housing types that fall between high-density and single-unit houses, such as duplexes, fourplexes, row homes and townhomes, and provide options affordable to moderate income residents. This type of housing serves people who live well above the poverty line, but still struggle to afford housing in Denver, such as teachers and firefighters.

### **Mixed-use**

Two or more different principal or primary uses such as residential, office, manufacturing, retail, public, etc. within the same building and/or districts.

### **Mode share**

The proportion of total person trips that use each mode of transportation. For example, the number of commuters taking transit versus the number driving alone, bicycling, or other possible travel modes.

### **Mobility hub**

Places of connectivity where different travel modes, including walking, biking and transit, come together. Typically mobility hubs are anchored around transit stations and are located in mixed-use areas with higher intensity development.

### **Multimodal streets**

Streets that accommodate multiple modes of travel including rapid transit (bus and rail options), bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles.

### Natural features

The term natural features includes trees, landscaping, plants, water bodies, topography and other non man-made elements.

### Natural environment

All living and non-living things that occur without human intervention in a particular area.

### Neighborhood character or “context”

The defining physical characteristics, such as lot size, setbacks and scale that identify an area.

### Neighborhood equity index

Produced by the Denver Department of Public Health and Environment, the Neighborhood Equity index is a representation of some of the socioeconomic, built environment, health care and health barriers that residents of Denver neighborhoods face in accessing opportunities to lead healthy, productive lives. The index helps to inform decision makers about where city investment and resources are needed most in order for those living in Denver’s underserved neighborhoods to reach their full potential.

### Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI)

Denver’s small area planning process that groups neighborhoods together and achieves the following benefits:

- Engages the community in identifying a future vision for the area and then provides strategies and recommendations for achieving that vision.
- Provides recommendations for land use and future investments to help ensure neighborhoods grow as envisioned by the plan.
- Provides a level of analysis, detail, and guidance on issues affecting local areas that citywide plans cannot.

### Other parks and open space

These are generally privately-owned parks and/or open spaces. Some are publicly accessible, while others- such as golf courses- are not.

### Pedestrian enhanced

While people walking and rolling (pedestrians) are a priority on every street, certain Denver streets are identified as “pedestrian enhanced areas.” These are areas

where the surrounding land uses offer opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment to create walkable, vibrant public spaces.

### Placemaking

Placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which community members can shape their public realm in order to maximize shared value. With community-based participation at its center, an effective placemaking process capitalizes on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, and results in the creation of quality public spaces that contribute to people’s health, happiness, and well-being. (Project for Public Spaces)

### Preservation (historic)

The practice of protecting and preserving, conserving and protection sites, structures or districts significant to cultural, social, political, archaeological or architectural history.

### Public realm

Any publicly owned streets, pathways, right-of-ways, parks and publicly owned and accessible open spaces.

### Public right-of-way

The public right-of-way is an area of land owned or controlled by the city for the purposes of constructing, operating and maintaining public facilities such as streets, alleys, sidewalks and bike paths for the needs of transportation, utilities and other public infrastructure.

### Quality-of-life infrastructure

Refers to the places, plants, waterways, parks and outdoor spaces that contribute to the health, needs, comfort, environmental resilience and social connectedness in Denver.

### Regulations

Rules that derive their authority from legislation (laws) and provide the specific ways in which those laws are interpreted and applied. Examples include the zoning code and rules and regulations adopted by city departments.

## Resiliency

The ability of a community to adapt to both internal and external social, economic and environmental challenges without adverse effect to its residents, essential functions and identity.

## Regional Transportation District (RTD)

The regional public transportation agency for the six County Denver metro areas.

## Single-occupancy vehicle (SOV)

A single-occupancy vehicle is a privately operated vehicle whose only occupant is the driver. SOV's generally exclude human-powered vehicles such as bicycles or e-bikes.

## Small area plans

Plans that occur at any scale smaller than citywide. This term is inclusive of plans such as Neighborhood Planning Initiative (NPI) area plans, neighborhood plans, master plans, corridor plans and station area plans.

## Strategies

As they relate to this plan, some of the most important actions that will help to achieve the plan's goals.

## Stormwater runoff

Stormwater runoff is generated when water from rain and snowmelt flows over land or impervious surfaces (like paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops) and is not absorbed into the ground. As the runoff flows over the land or impervious surfaces, it accumulates debris, chemicals, sediment or other pollutants.

## Sustainability

The long-term social, economic and environmental health of a community. A sustainable city survives today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

## Transit-oriented development (TOD)

Transit-oriented Development in Denver generally describes a development in an existing or planned transit community that adds to the walkable, vibrant, mixed-use environment and is oriented towards frequent, high-quality transit service that connects the

community to the rest of the region.

## Transit priority street

In *Blueprint Denver*, transit priority streets are the Transit Capital Investment Corridors in *Denver Moves: Transit*. This includes high-capacity transit corridors, medium-capacity transit corridors, and speed and reliability corridors. These are streets where transit is prioritized over other modes when making decisions about how to design or operate the right-of-way.

## Transit-rich areas

Areas with access to high-frequency transit including rail and/or transit priority streets.

## Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Strategies that shift travel behavior to increase the efficiency of the transportation network, reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips and achieve specific transportation outcomes.

## Transportation Network Company (TNC)

An organization that matches passengers with drivers on demand via websites and mobile apps.

## Tree canopy

The layer of tree leaves, branches and stems that provide tree coverage of the ground when viewed from above. In urban areas, the tree canopy provides an important stormwater management function by intercepting rainfall that would otherwise run off of paved surfaces and be transported into local waters through the storm drainage system. Tree canopy also reduces the temperature of an urban area caused by the paving and other modification of land, reduces heating/cooling costs, lowers air temperatures, reduces air pollution, increases property values, provides wildlife habitat, and provides aesthetic and community benefits such as improved quality-of-life.

## Ultra-Urban green infrastructure

Green Infrastructure facilities such as streetside stormwater planters, bumpout stormwater planters or green gutters that are suitable for constrained spaces such as road right-of-ways or other tight urban areas.

## Urban design

The process of designing and shaping the physical features of cities including streets, buildings, parks and public spaces.

## Value manufacturing

Designated by *Blueprint Denver*, these light industrial districts within Denver serve the primary purpose of light manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation, and warehousing.

## Vision

The vision is the backbone of the plan and guides all of the plan recommendations. It comes from the city's *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and is described in Chapter 1.

## Vision Zero

*Vision Zero* is a transportation safety philosophy that was developed in Sweden in the late 1990s to eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries in the transportation system. The City and County of Denver's *Vision Zero Action Plan (2017)* is a five-year approach to achieve the commitment to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and serious injuries on Denver's roadways by 2030 (*Denver Moves: Transit*).

## Vulnerable populations

Vulnerable populations typically include those with a larger percentage of elders, children, people with disabilities or lower incomes.

## Water quality

Water quality is the degree to which water is clean and whether it is suitable for drinking, for making plants grow, or for fish to live in, etc.

## Wayfinding

Signage or other methods that help orient people and make it easier to navigate between places (*Denver Moves: Transit*).

