

Moving Forward

Implementation of a plan for a large area such as the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods is accomplished incrementally over many years through the efforts of the City government, residents, business owners, property owners, and nonprofit organizations. The plan provides a picture into the future of what the community wants Northeast Downtown to become. As a result, the image of “what we want” is clear. The “how we are going to get there” will be the responsibility of the numerous studies and project planning that will be developed to forward specific objectives and projects within the context of city-wide priorities and resource availability.

Implementation Framework



Coors Field has been a catalyst for development in the Ballpark and LoDo neighborhoods.

IMPLEMENTATION OPPORTUNITIES AND PRIORITIES

An important, immediate implementation opportunity is the Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan Next Steps Study, a grant to the City from Denver Regional Council of Governments to further the public transportation recommendations of this plan. Potential components of this study include:

- 21st Street—bike boulevard, sustainable Best Management Practices (BMP), streetscape design, and 21st and Broadway crossing
- Downtown Travelshed Strategic Transportation Plan-Phase 1
- Welton Streetcar Service
- Pedestrian and bike improvements for crossing Broadway
- Two-way Blake Street (east of Broadway)
- Curtis Park two-way segments

Social Services Working Group to be convened by Denver's Road Home will develop and advance management strategies and housing options that reduce the impact of the homeless on public streets and parks. Participants may include City agencies (Parks & Recreation, Human Services, and Office of Economic Development), State Division of Housing, homeless service and shelter providers, Triangle Park Community Coordinating District, and nonprofit housing providers.

The goal of dedicated **Business Development Offices** for Arapahoe Square and Ballpark/River North would be to decrease the barriers to economic development. The BDOs would serve as an advocate for new and existing businesses, gather information regarding financing programs, properties for sale, contact information for building and property owners and serve as a one-stop shop for those interested in investing or locating in a particular area. The BDOs could develop marketing materials and serve as a facilitator to match property owners with prospective tenants and/or help with assemblages based on client needs.

Form-Based Zoning Approach for Arapahoe Square would address urban design based approaches to high-density development currently allowed in the D-AS zone district. Significant involvement from stakeholders and property owners would be the first step in developing a revised zoning approach.

Park Avenue Corridor Rezoning addresses the important transition from the high densities found in Arapahoe Square to the lower densities in Curtis Park. The area of focus should be Park Avenue to 24th Street between Arapahoe and California streets. Significant involvement from stakeholders, neighborhood residents, and property owners would be the first step in developing a revised zoning approach.

Arapahoe Square and Welton Street have been identified as potential urban renewal areas. Urban Renewal Areas (URA) are created to help effect the redevelopment of blighted areas and are created by the City through the adoption of Urban Redevelopment Plans which lay out the objectives of the plan (such as elimination of blight). An adopted Urban Redevelopment Plan authorizes the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) to carry out those objectives. DURA's primary tool for effecting redevelopment is tax increment financing (TIF). TIF can be used to assist in the financing of projects that are consistent with the Denver Comprehensive Plan and all relevant plan supplements. A Blight Study has been completed for Arapahoe Square confirming that blighting conditions exist. An early action should be to create the Urban Redevelopment Plan. A blight study for the Welton corridor is pending and once blighting conditions are confirmed, an Urban Redevelopment Plan will follow.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation matrix that concludes this chapter summarizes the recommended strategies, associated with the Plan Framework, Transformative Concepts, and Neighborhood Strategies. Each one is further defined by type, timeframe, funding source, and lead entity.

IMPLEMENTATION TYPES

Blueprint Denver identifies three types of implementation activities: regulatory or policy, public investment, and partnership. The NEDN plan also recognizes the importance of private development and business investment in realizing the plan.

- Regulatory and policy strategies change City codes or regulations to affect desired outcomes. Typical examples include Denver Zoning Code text and map amendments, Public Works requirements for infrastructure improvements associated with development projects, and Parks and Recreation requirements regarding open space and plantings.
- Public investment strategies are those involving public funding of public infrastructure. Examples include street reconstruction, bike lanes, new transit lines, park improvements, or new or expanded recreation centers. The City takes the lead in designing, constructing, and funding these projects and may use a variety of public funding sources such as the annual Capital Improvements Program, bond funds, or state or federal grant programs.
- Partnership strategies represent the most diverse category. Public-private partnership (PPP) activity has expanded exponentially and has gone well beyond public subsidy of a private development project. Increasingly public-private partnerships are being used to fund public infrastructure projects. Denver Union Station and RTD's East and Gold Lines are among the largest PPP projects in the country. Another example is reconstruction of 14th Street as the Ambassador Street using City Bond funds and a property-owner approved General Improvement District.
- In several cases, public transportation projects are identified as studies because the impacts and consequences of a particular improvement on the Downtown transportation system is so complex that the broader system must be examined to determine the feasible options to meet the intent.

Any successful project requires a champion: a developer will seek needed rezoning or subsidy from the public sector; a neighborhood will seek Landmark designation; a community organization such as the Downtown Denver Partnership or neighborhood association will convene property owners to fund specific public improvements; or, a public agency will seek private financing partners.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAMES

Timeframes recognize both the order in which certain strategies must be undertaken and the feasibility of undertaking them given known resources. As a result, the timeframes provide guidance for expectations and initial efforts. Every opportunity to advance a plan should be taken, regardless of the suggested timing.

This plan recognizes four time-frames:

- Short-term one to three years
- Medium-term four to ten years
- Long-term beyond ten years
- On-going continuing application/utilization



The Commons is the result of implementation of a long range vision for a neighborhood.



The RTD light rail program is an example of large-scale public investment with long-term benefits to the region.

FUNDING SOURCES

The Implementation Framework identifies possible funding sources for public improvements and studies. The Plan is a forward-looking document which contemplates a vision for future development. Funding sources available to public and private entities are continually evolving based on economic, political, legal and neighborhood objectives. Though the names and purposes of funding sources change over time, they fall into three distinct categories.

- **Tax Base Support:** Tax base supported sources are characterized by the involvement of the local sales and property taxing authorities. The most common tax base support is through the City’s annual budget, especially the annual Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Periodically, the City requests its voters to approve a tax increase to pay for specific public improvements. For instance, the citizens of Denver voted in 2007 to raise their property taxes in a specific amount to support the issuance of over \$500 million Better Denver Bonds whose proceeds funded 290 specific public improvements.

Tax Increment Finance is another means of tax-base support most typically associated with an Urban Renewal Area. Once created by the City Council and Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA), property and sales tax over and above the base year are paid to DURA to be used to pay for eligible public improvements or to fund financing gaps for private development.

- **Grants:** Grants come from public or private organizations that are interested in encouraging a specific outcome and these grants typically include specific conditions and requirements as to how the funds may be deployed. For instance, a state or federal transportation grant will need to be used for street, mass transit, or regional mobility studies or projects. The Office of Economic Development receives federal funds to support certain types of housing projects. Additionally, foundations provide grants for projects orientated with the organization’s goals, such as green spaces or social services.
- **Special Districts:** The City Charter and State Statute enable various types of districts to be created. Examples of special districts include Business Improvement Districts, Metropolitan Districts, Local Improvement or Maintenance Districts, and General Improvement Districts. The districts are classified as special because they are typically created by a localized group of citizens who want to achieve specific outcomes in their locality and are willing to pool their economic resources in order to implement identified projects. For example, if a majority of business owners desire to improve the streetscape of the street in which they operate, the businesses could organize a Business Improvement District which would assess the participants an amount of money sufficient to pay for the project. Special districts are a useful tool when a localized population desire and are willing to pay for an enhanced level of public improvement. District revenues can be used to pay for improvements on a “pay-as-you-go basis”, for ongoing operations and maintenance, or to support payment of bonds.

Quite a number of Local Maintenance Districts have been established in the plan area to maintain streetscape improvements installed as part of major infrastructure projects such as the Broadway Viaduct Replacement, 20th Street HOV, Park Avenue Viaduct, and Coors Field.

- **Lead Entity:** The implementation matrix identifies a lead entity that the plan recommends for having primary responsibility for undertaking the implementation recommendation. The entities are recommendations only. Other public and private entities may have roles to initiate, undertake, or participate in these efforts.

The implementation matrix identifies the recommended strategies, organized parallel with the plan itself: Framework strategies , Transformative Concept strategies and Neighborhood strategies . Each one is further defined by type and timeframe.	TIMING	TYPE	POTENTIAL FUNDING	LEAD
FRAMEWORK STRATEGIES				
NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS AND CHARACTER				
■ A.1 High intensity development near Downtown and transit stations	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ A.2 Moderate intensity development transitioning to residential neighborhoods	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ A.3 Low intensity development in residential neighborhoods	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ A.4 Adaptive reuse and historic preservation	On-going	Private	Private	Private
MOBILITY				
■ B.1 Undertake a Downtown Strategic Transportation Plan Travelshed Analysis	Short-Medium	Study	CIP, DRCOG	City
■ B.2 Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions				
▪ Larimer (east of Broadway)	Short	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Larimer (west of Broadway)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ 22nd (east of Champa)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Blake (east of Broadway)	Short-Medium	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Blake (west of Broadway)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Curtis (west of Broadway)	Long	Public Investment	CIP	City
▪ Welton (also see Welton Streetcar)	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP, FasTracks	City
▪ Walnut	Medium-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ California (between Broadway and Park Avenue)	Short-Medium	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Stout (east of Broadway)	Long	Public investment	CIP	City
▪ Champa (east of Broadway)	Long	Public investment	CIP	City
■ B.3 Consider New or Modified Transit Routes				
▪ Consolidate bus routes	Short-Medium	Study/Regulatory	RTD	RTD
▪ Establish transit service connecting Auraria West and 38th & Blake	Medium-Long	Study	CIP, DRCOG, RTD, Auraria	RTD
■ B.4 Consider an Arapahoe Square Rail Station on Welton	Medium-Long	Public investment	RTD, CIP, TIF	RTD
■ B.5 Undertake a Broadway Intersections Improvement Study	Short	Study	Next Steps	City
ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY				
■ C.1 Strengthen Retail Corridors	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ C.2 Promote Economic and Housing Diversity	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ C.3 Encourage Housing Density	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ C.4 Establish and Support Business Development Offices	Short-Medium	Private/partnership	Private, OED	City
■ C.5 Establish Urban Renewal Areas	Short	Private/partnership	Private, TIF	DURA
■ C.6 Utilize OED Lending Programs	On-going	Partnership	Private, OED	Private OED
LIVABILITY AND PUBLIC REALM				
■ D.1 Promote Access to Healthy Transportation	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ D.2 Promote Access to Healthy Foods	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ D.3 Invest in Park Improvements	On-going	Public investment	CIP	City
■ D.4 Study Connecting Parks to Destination Areas	Short-Medium	Study	CIP	City
■ D.5 Identify Funding for Stormwater Improvements and Promote Water Quality through Best Practices	Medium-Long	Public/private investment	CIP, grants, district	City

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TRANSFORMATIVE CONCEPT STRATEGIES				
21ST STREET				
■ Establish cross-section to accommodate bike boulevard	Short	Study	Next Steps	City
■ Design and construct festival street adjacent to Coors Field	Medium	Partnership	District, CIP	--
■ Explore the use of sustainable BMPs on 21st Street	Medium	Public/private investment	CIP, grants, district	City
■ Improve appearance of surface parking lots	Short-Medium	Private	Private	Private
CURTIS STREET				
■ Establish Curtis as a pedestrian connection between Curtis Park and Denver Performing Arts Center	Medium	Public investment	CIP, DDBID, district	--
■ Place visual element at terminus in Mestizo-Curtis Park	Long	Private	Private	Private
■ Redevelop Greyhound Facilities	Medium	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ Improve pedestrian conditions with improved crossings and wider sidewalks	Medium	Private/partnership	Private, district, CIP	--
BROADWAY				
■ Study the Broadway options between Arapahoe and Welton	Medium	Study	CIP	City
■ Explore opportunities to improve bike and pedestrian crossings	Short	Study	Next Steps	City
CONNECTING RIVER NORTH				
■ 31st Street ped/bike bridge	Long	Public investment	CIP, bonds	City
■ 33rd Street multimodal bridge	Long	Public investment	CIP, bonds	City
■ 36th Street ped/bike bridge	Short-Medium	Public investment	RTD	RTD
NEW PARK				
■ Establish new park space	Long	Public investment	CIP, bonds	City
■ Continue to improve and activate existing parks	On-going	Public investment	CIP	City
SOCIAL SERVICES				
■ Convene a working group to devise and forward homeless service strategies	Short	Study/Partnership	--	DRH
■ Develop courtyard-style housing	Medium	Private/partnership	Private, TIF	Private
■ Develop a pilot single room occupancy housing	Medium	Private/partnership	Private, TIF	Private
■ Study options for repurposing the Broadway Triangles	Medium	Study	CIP, district	City
STREETCAR				
■ Open Central Corridor Extension with East Line and 38th/Blake Station	Short-Medium	Public investment	RTD	RTD
■ Re-examine Central Corridor terminus, alignment, and vehicle type	Short	Study	RTD	RTD
■ Develop streetcar system concept plan	Medium-Long	Study	City, RTD	City
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT				
■ Develop neighborhood-serving, main street development on Welton and Downing	Medium	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ Anchor Central Corridor with TOD at 38th and Blake Station	Medium	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ Anchor Central Corridor with TOD at New Arapahoe Square Station	Medium-Long	Private/partnership	Private	Private

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NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIES				
ARAPAHOE SQUARE				
■ N.1 Encourage Development of Parking Lots	Short-Medium	Private	Private, district	Private
■ N.2 Enhance Urban Design	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.3 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.4 Land use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.5 Conduct Form-Based Zoning Study	Short	Regulatory	--	City
■ N.6 Promote Transit-Oriented Development	Long	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ N.7 Reuse existing buildings	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ N.8 Establish Business Development Office	Short	Partnership	OED, private	City
■ N.9 Improve Arapahoe Square's brand	Medium	Partnership	OED, private	--
■ N.10 Establish Urban Renewal Area	Short	Regulatory	--	DURA
RIVER NORTH AND BALLPARK				
■ N.11 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.12 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.13 Complete Sidewalk Network	On-going	Private/partnership	Private	Private
■ N.14 Evaluate Potential One-way to Two-way Conversions	Short-Long	Public investment	CIP	City
■ N.15 Consider Future of Coors Field Overflow Parking	Long	Private/partnership	Stadium District	Private
CURTIS PARK				
■ N.16 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	Short	Regulatory	--	City
■ N.17 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.18 Stout and Champa Reclassification	Short	Regulatory	--	City
■ N.19 Identify Traffic Calming Opportunities	Short	Study	CIP	City
■ N.20 Accommodate Adaptive Reuse	On-going	Private	Private	Private
DOWNING/WELTON CORRIDOR				
■ N.21 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.22 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.23 Support work of Five Points Business District Office	Medium	Private/partnership	Partnership	City
■ N.24 Establish Urban Renewal Area	Short	Regulatory	--	DURA
■ N.25 Evaluate Short One-way Street Segments	Short	Study	CIP	City
■ N.26 Orientation of Outdoor Active Uses	On-going	Private	Private	Private
ENTERPRISE HILL AND SAN RAFAEL				
■ N.27 Building Form: height, siting, design elements	On-going	Private	Private	Private
■ N.28 Land Use	On-going	Private	Private	Private

