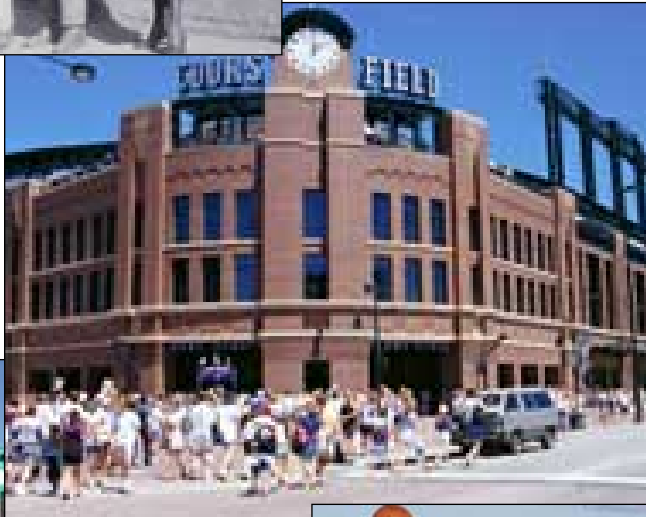




NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN PLAN





NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

PLAN ADOPTED OCTOBER 1995

PLAN PUBLISHED DECEMBER 2001

READERS ARE ADVISED THAT SOME OF THE INFORMATION IN THIS PLAN HAS CHANGED SINCE THE PLAN'S ADOPTION.

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INTRODUCTION





**Aerial view of downtown Denver
from the northeast**

PURPOSE AND USE OF THIS PLAN

Northeast Downtown Denver is a large area on the northeast fringe of downtown Denver. It has been an important area that had its heyday decades ago, has declined, and is now re-emerging — albeit in a different form — for many reasons that include but go well beyond the construction and opening of Coors Field. The *Northeast Downtown Plan* is intended to serve a number of purposes. As a joint planning effort between the City and County of Denver and the Northeast Downtown community, it is a collaborative approach to analyzing the area's problems, issues, and opportunities, and identifying both a long range vision for Northeast Downtown as well as short run and intermediate measures designed to achieve that vision.

Upon adoption, this City-approved plan will become part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. As such, it is the City's official guide to both the long-term and short-term physical redevelopment of Northeast Downtown. It serves as a guide for use by the Denver Planning and Community Development Office, the Denver Planning Board, the Mayor, City Council, and all City agencies and other government agencies in their decisions concerning Northeast Downtown. In addition, it functions as a means of direction and assistance to the residents, property owners, business people, neighborhood and business organizations, and others concerned with zoning, development, neighborhood improvement and a wide range of other public and private concerns.

Although this Plan contains a detailed treatment of zoning issues and makes specific zoning concept recommendations, this Plan is neither an official zone map nor does it imply or deny any implicit rights to a particular zone district. Zone changes, which are recommended in this plan, may be initiated by property owners or the City in a separate procedure established under the Denver Municipal Code. This Plan is intended to promote patterns of land use, circulation, and public services that contribute to the economic, social, and physical health, safety, and welfare of the people who live and work in Northeast Downtown.

BACKGROUND OF THE PLAN

This is the first City plan specifically prepared for Northeast Downtown although portions of it have been included in other planning efforts. The *Northeast Downtown Plan* was prepared as a result of a series of events. In March of 1991, the current location of Coors Field was officially selected as the site for Denver's new major league ballpark. Due to the anticipated fear that the stadium construction would result in the demolition of buildings, many of which were perceived to be of historic or architectural value, the City and County of Denver proposed a one-year moratorium on demolition. While the City intended the moratorium as a means to prevent demolition of buildings for parking to serve the new ballpark, property owners and neighborhood organizations affected by the proposed moratorium were very concerned about the nature and pace of changes occurring in their area without their participation in the decision-making process. They wanted the City — in return for their agreement to the moratorium — to commit to work with them to prepare a comprehensive plan for Northeast Downtown. As part of the agreement with area property owners, the Denver Planning and Community Development Office committed to develop a comprehensive plan when the City Council established a moratorium on demolition in the Fall of 1991 to last until the Fall of 1992. The original moratorium applied to much of the Northeast Downtown Plan study area. Subsequent to the expiration of the original moratorium, a second, six-month building demolition moratorium was enacted for a smaller area closer to the Coors Field site (which contained the majority of likely historic properties). This enabled the Planning and Community Development Office to complete a survey of historic properties in that area and prepare a proposed Ballpark Historic District for Denver Landmark Preservation Commission designation.

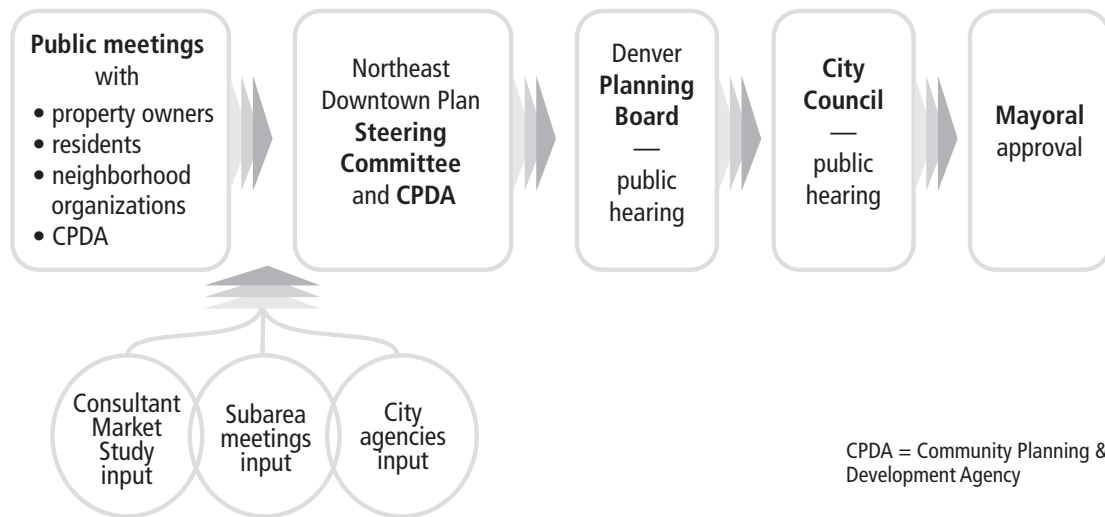


Coors Field opened in April 1995

PLANNING PROCESS

The Northeast Downtown planning process is illustrated below. The Denver Planning and Community Development Office initiated the comprehensive planning process for Northeast Downtown in late 1991/early 1992 by holding public organizational meetings. At these initial meetings, specifics about the plan — its purpose, scope, study area boundaries, etc. — were discussed and ultimately determined. In addition, those interested in becoming part of the neighborhood planning committee were identified.

Northeast Downtown Planning Process



Based upon the decisions made and citizen input received at the organizational meetings, the work to prepare a plan began. The Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee was formed and included representatives of all registered neighborhood organizations within the study area boundaries, and the

Denver Metro Baseball Stadium District. The City Council members of the affected districts served as ex-officio members. The Steering Committee more precisely defined the comprehensive nature of the plan that was envisioned for Northeast Downtown. An early priority for the Steering Committee was to develop a long-range vision for Northeast Downtown: a strategic task since it guided all subsequent planning work by the Committee.

Procedurally, the Steering Committee identified, for each overall element of the plan, the key issues, problems, opportunities, goals, recommended solutions, and implementation measures. To assist in this effort, Planning Office staff brought in substantial outside research information and resources, prepared the meeting minutes, and wrote the preliminary draft of the plan elements. After the Committee reviewed and commented upon several drafts, staff prepared the final draft.

The Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee also received specialized assistance and input on various portions of the plan. For example, as a reality check to the Committee's long-range, mixed land use vision, consultants were employed to study the market demand for a wide range of land uses in Northeast Downtown. The market study included community meetings in each of the three major subareas. Social Issues was another portion of the plan which received special study and outside resources. A small working group of social service professionals joined the Steering Committee to formulate the Social Issues element of the plan.

A wide range of data sources, including the reports, articles, and studies cited in the Bibliography, was consulted and utilized during this plan. Although standard materials, such as the U.S. Census publications, were used, four special surveys were conducted to fill gaps in the available data. First, a comprehensive land use survey was carried out as a foundation for the market study. Second, a survey of selected businesses was undertaken to identify attitudes of existing business people concerning doing business in Northeast Downtown. This survey also served as input to the market study. Third, an architectural/historic survey of buildings in the study area was prepared to provide essential background information and policy direction for the historic preservation element. Finally, a social services inventory was conducted to identify the major types of social services existing in Northeast Downtown.



"Progress" is the intent behind the efforts of the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee



21st Street entry to Coors field

SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The scope of the *Northeast Downtown Plan* is comprehensive for a number of reasons. Given its unique location in the center of a major metropolitan area, the issues impacting Northeast Downtown are very extensive and complex and go beyond the range of issues typically encountered in “neighborhood plans.” For example, Northeast Downtown is the most heavily impacted area in the Denver region by social service facilities, which affected virtually every other issue in the planning process. Therefore, social issues needed to be addressed in a much more detailed manner than is typically done in neighborhood planning studies. The mixed land use nature of the area, and its unique location, required a depth of attention, particularly in the land use and zoning element, also contributing to the plan’s comprehensive scope. Another consideration expanding the scope of the plan was its large geographic coverage. Northeast Downtown is, in reality, several distinct neighborhoods and subareas, and is a much larger geographic “neighborhood” area than is typically addressed in a single neighborhood plan.

Despite the broad scope of the plan, it is intended as a policy framework for the future development of Northeast Downtown. There are sections, referred to in the plan recommendations, that need to be refined and expanded as time and resources are available. The plan recommendations and refinements need to be given a high priority and carried out as outlined in the Plan Implementation chapter.

The plan begins with a brief description of Northeast Downtown’s history and the vision for its future, and continues with a demographic and socio-economic profile of its people and economic base. The key findings of the market study for Northeast Downtown, and implications for its three major subareas, are summarized. The main body of the plan — social issues, historic preservation, land use and zoning, urban design, transportation and parking, economic and housing development, and plan implementation — is then presented. Each substantive area includes a brief overview of the existing conditions and issues, the analysis of the issues in relation to relevant data, and the identification of goals and recommendations to address the problems. **The core of the *Northeast Downtown Plan* is the list of 84 recommendations (summarized in the Appendix) to undertake specific actions designed to bring Northeast Downtown closer to its ultimate mixed use vision.**

PLAN VISION AND HIGHLIGHTS

The vision of the *Northeast Downtown Plan* is to transform a primarily industrial area into an attractive mixed use, inner-city industrial, business, entertainment, and residential district. Major goals of the Plan are to develop a marketing plan to promote Northeast Downtown's commercial and residential redevelopment potential, to better meet the treatment and housing needs of the area's homeless population, to minimize the impact of existing social issues in Northeast Downtown, to establish a Ballpark Historic District and promote the adaptive reuse and preservation of historic buildings, to preserve Northeast Downtown's character and human scale, to blend the distinct Baseball Environs, Upper Larimer, and Arapahoe Square subareas into a single community, and to improve the area's parking, public transportation and infrastructure facilities.

Key plan recommendations include preparing three new mixed use zone districts (B-8A, I-OR, and I-2R) which will bring the outdated existing zoning into closer conformance with and support of the mixed use Plan vision, and with market realities. Economic and housing development strategies are recommended to build upon, and refine, the mixed-use redevelopment framework. A comprehensive social services plan is recommended to address the ongoing and diverse social issues in Northeast Downtown. Quality urban design is emphasized throughout to complement the other goals and upgrade Northeast Downtown's appearance, distinctiveness, and attractiveness for a wide range of uses and purposes.



The Plan's vision is to develop a mixed-use community accommodating a wide range of compatible uses



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





Hop Alley, circa 1920, was located between 20th and 21st Streets, Market to Blake Streets

INTRODUCTION

Northeast Downtown is a large, diverse, predominantly non-residential, and long overlooked area which is coming into public focus because of its most famous asset, Coors Field. In fact, the selection of the current site for Coors Field in March 1991 led to the preparation of the *Northeast Downtown Plan*. City officials, concerned that historic buildings might be demolished as a result of development activity drawn to the Coors Field area, proposed a one-year building demolition moratorium in a substantial part of Northeast Downtown. Property owners, concerned about a variety of development issues in Northeast Downtown, negotiated an agreement with the City that accepted the proposed moratorium in exchange for the joint preparation of a comprehensive plan which addressed their concerns and provided guidance to the long range redevelopment of their area. The Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee, comprised of property owners, neighborhood organization representatives, and social service provider representatives, was formed to work with the Denver Planning and Community Development Office in preparing the plan. The *Northeast Downtown Plan* is the end product of their intense work over the past several years.

The purpose of the *Northeast Downtown Plan* is to provide the policy direction and foundation for the long range vision of Northeast Downtown to be transformed from an area largely comprised of surface parking lots, abandoned and underutilized buildings, and industrial/warehouse uses into a mixed use area that accommodates a wide range of compatible uses. After a comprehensive analysis of issues and opportunities, the Plan's suggested solutions are summarized in 84 recommendations which provide a direct, tangible and step-by-step action program to achieve the mixed use community envisioned.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Northeast Downtown (NED) is bounded by 20th Street on the south, 38th Street on the north, the alley side of Blake Street on the west, and the eastern boundary, going from south to north, Stout/Park Avenue West/Broadway/alley between Lawrence and Larimer/Downing/and Walnut up to 38th. For planning purposes Northeast Downtown was divided into three subareas with Upper Larimer north of Broadway, Baseball Environs south of Broadway and closest to Coors Field, and Arapahoe Square between 20th, Park Avenue West, Stout, and Lawrence. A wide range of land use, zoning, socioeconomic and other data were collected and analyzed for NED, its planning subareas, and where necessary the Census Tract 16 which most closely matched the NED study area.

Northeast Downtown had long been an important and productive economic area, providing a good location for business, employment opportunities to residents, and tax receipts to the City. However, Northeast Downtown has been undergoing a shift and decline in its economic base over the past three to four decades. In Census Tract 16 — an area that includes NED and adjacent areas employment declined from just over 8000 in 1960 to about 6100 in 1993. The 1993 employment distribution was 50% industrial workers and 40% in retail trade and services, including government, so the employment stock has already diversified well beyond its industrial base.

The U.S. Census Bureau counted 1,374 people in the NED study area in 1990, of which several hundred people lived in various social service group facilities within NED. There were just over 300 housing units in 1990, as well as live/work studios, both of which were scattered throughout the area. The NED population is diverse, with 56% White, 27% Hispanic, 11% Black, 4% Native American, and 2% Asian counted in 1990.



Parking lots predominate in this part of Northeast Downtown



Shopping scene along old Larimer Street

MARKET ANALYSIS SUMMARY

In order to “reality check” the desired long-range mixed use vision for Northeast Downtown, a *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* was prepared by consultants. Key findings for the general NED area include the following: the need to improve its rough and unkempt image in order to expand the range of its market opportunities; the combination of substantial public sector investment in transportation infrastructure and the development of Coors Field has improved access/exposure to the area and helped create new market interest; several types of existing land use conflicts pervade Northeast Downtown including those between social service providers and many residential and industrial operations and those between traditional industrial uses and new residential and other uses; current zoning and building regulations are a constraint on development from a market perspective; and each subarea is unique, having a different relationship to adjacent neighborhoods, and different perspective regarding change.

The NED Market Analysis examined the market expectations and potential for each of the three subareas within Northeast Downtown: Baseball Environs, Upper Larimer, and Arapahoe Square. A summary of the NED Market Analysis findings is presented below.

The Baseball Environs Subarea is directly affected by such market related trends and events as the construction and operation of Coors Field, the major traffic corridors and improvements completed at 20th Street and the 23rd Street viaduct, sports bars, the planned Larimer Street revitalization, the wide array of streetscape improvements in several areas around Coors Field, and the continuing development in nearby Lower Downtown and the Central Platte Valley. Private market expectations for Baseball Environs in the near term includes:

- ▶ a demand for fast food restaurants and auto-related facilities
- ▶ additional pressures for surface parking
- ▶ demand for industrial distribution and light assembly

- ▶ increased re-use opportunities for suitable, existing buildings for residential, arts related or business showrooms, and professional offices
- ▶ opportunities for new commercial or residential construction may evolve if the area establishes a strong base of commercial and entertainment activity
- ▶ it is impossible to predict the optimal feasible number of sports bars and restaurants around Coors Field, as it is an open question if the area can sustain all these sports bars and grow as a recreation and entertainment district

Regarding Upper Larimer, several trends and events are important to its future market potential, namely the stability of its ownership and land uses, the numerous transportation uses in the area, and the development of Coors Field. Private market expectations for Upper Larimer in the next several years will likely include:

- ▶ no dramatic change in the current land use pattern is anticipated in the foreseeable future
- ▶ the predominant uses will continue to be warehousing and light manufacturing, with modest residential, commercial and industrial arts as supporting uses
- ▶ limited new construction is anticipated for the foreseeable future, given current and anticipated market rental rates, relative to land and construction costs
- ▶ the increased traffic and traffic/loading conflicts may cause the displacement of some of the existing industrial uses; at the same time, industrial uses displaced from the Baseball Environs Subarea near Coors Field may look for replacement facilities in Upper Larimer
- ▶ modest increases in residential, commercial, and industrial arts opportunities due to increased traffic and exposure and nearby development activity
- ▶ opportunities for additional residential, and live/work developments, if there are suitable existing buildings and financing is available
- ▶ additional opportunities for specific and unique uses, probably tied to the arts and craft trades

The Arapahoe Square Subarea's market potential is affected by such trends and events as the major transportation improvements and corridors described previously, the Larimer Street revitalization plans, the operation of Coors Field and the related streetscape improvements, land use conflicts from nearby social service providers, and the cost of land for development. Private market expectations in



Mixed use building at 2557 Walnut



Denver Rescue Mission is one of many social service facilities in Northeast Denver

the near term for Arapahoe Square include:

- ▶ fast food and automobile service operations, especially along high traffic corridors
- ▶ continued reuse of land as surface parking lots, as existing office buildings fill with employees
- ▶ a modest continuation of housing in renovated buildings, although there are very few buildings over 25,000 square feet which are not already used for housing
- ▶ business services, such as printing, copying, and messenger services, etc., that do not need a prestigious and highly visible address
- ▶ some mid-rise office construction in the 2000 blocks of Arapahoe Square as the office market demand improves and office rents increase
- ▶ additional bars and restaurants with nightly entertainment, given the proximity to Coors Field and Downtown
- ▶ with various forms of public sector intervention, the band of market opportunities may widen to include new construction housing and a variety of institutional uses

The NED Market Analysis includes a caveat that market demand in Northeast Demand is and will be affected by competition from nearby areas, such as Lower Downtown and the Central Platte Valley. These areas interest developers, business people, and citizens seeking an inner city setting for their project, business, or residence.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Northeast Downtown is impacted more than any other area in the Rocky Mountain region by the presence of the homeless and the array of social service provider facilities which have located within Northeast Downtown to assist the homeless. This was the primary social issue addressed, with bars, liquor stores and crime being related but secondary social issues. Social issues was the first substantive area that the Plan addressed, pervading every other dimension of planning.

The “problems of the homeless” have been long-standing in Northeast Downtown. There have been numerous efforts over the years to address the issues. While these efforts have done a very good job of identifying the basic issues and making a start on their resolution, the fundamental problems remain and have intensified. Previous studies identified “the homeless problem” as consisting of five distinct subpopulations: runaway/throwaway youth, the elderly (over age 55), alcohol or substance (drugs, toxic vapors) abusers, the chronically mentally ill, and the economically disadvantaged (poor people not fitting into the other categories). The number and range of problems and issues associated with the homeless and related problems in Northeast Downtown is extensive and summarized as follows:

- ▶ Public Safety
 - public drunkenness
 - selling and using of drugs
 - vandalism
 - prostitution
 - vacant and abandoned buildings
 - lack of police presence and code enforcement
- ▶ Public Health
 - garbage (from curbside feeding and human waste)
 - lack of access to/availability of public restroom facilities
 - lack of drinking fountains



The down and out in Northeast Downtown



A homeless refuge under the old Broadway Viaduct near Blake Street

- presence of the HIV virus
- lack of City response to aid fallen/stricken clients (detox)
- ▶ Public Nuisance and Welfare
 - loitering
 - curbside feeding
 - open fires and littering the area
 - negative impact on property owners and pedestrians

These factors have negative impacts on the neighborhood's existing business and residential property owners, business operators, and residents. Despite the excellent services being delivered to the homeless by the providers, the underlying causes of the homeless problem are not being addressed to the detriment of the homeless and the entire Northeast Downtown community.

In order to address these social issues, the key recommendations are: 1) to work to address the basic problems of the homeless by securing resources for alcohol and drug rehabilitation, transitional and recovery housing, mental health intervention, job counseling and placement, and case management services; 2) to prepare and implement a City led, comprehensive social services plan that identifies in a creative way the strategies, tactics, and implementation measures needed to address all issues surrounding the homeless problem in Denver; 3) to suspend "permitting" any additional emergency shelters, day shelters and food lines in Northeast Downtown until this comprehensive City social services plan is prepared and implemented; and, 4) to prepare and encourage the passage of State legislation to restrict the sale of fortified wines and associated liquors.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Northeast Downtown contains a number of buildings of architectural and historic value that are important to preserve and renovate in order to achieve such Plan goals as historic preservation, maintenance of neighborhood scale and character, and economic and housing development. In fact, historic preservation was instrumental in the preparation of this Plan as the fear of losing irreplaceable buildings near Coors Field led the City to propose a one year building demolition moratorium throughout much of Northeast Downtown. This led to negotiations with the various neighborhood interests, the resolution of which led to the establishment of a comprehensive planning process and this planning document.

While the historical importance of this area has long been recognized, little preservation activity has taken place. In the Fall of 1991 an architectural survey was conducted for this area as part of the historic preservation compliance for the 23rd Street viaduct. The survey identified a potential historic district which was declared eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This proposed district included the area generally bounded by 20th and 24th Streets and the Larimer-Market and Blake-Wazee alleys. From November, 1992 through April, 1993, the Denver Planning Office coordinated the efforts of four interns who conducted the architectural/historic survey of the study area. The architectural survey included approximately 120 buildings in an area bounded by 20th, 26th, Lawrence-Larimer alley, and the Blake-Wazee alley. The concentration of contributing buildings (so rated because of date and retention of historic character) was the basis of the boundary for the proposed district. A working name of Ballpark Historic District is used to connote a distinctive, recognizable area.

Historic preservation will continue to be a major factor in the Ballpark area. Denver Landmark Preservation Commission designation is a proven approach to preserving historic buildings and character. The experience of Lower Downtown and other historic commercial districts indicates the important role designation and design review can play in stabilizing development conditions and facilitating appropriate re-development.



The Shorthorn Building, built in 1889 at Larimer and 23rd Street/Park Avenue West, burned down and was demolished in the early 1990s



McPhee and McGinnity was a prominent building materials company in Northeast Downtown

The most important historic preservation recommendation is to designate the Ballpark area as a landmark district to preserve its historic character, create economic opportunity appropriate to the district, and prepare and use district design guidelines as a basis for design review. Because the resources, character, and culture in this district are unique and somewhat fragile, the recommendation of this Plan is to first prepare design guidelines through a participatory process. Once these guidelines are complete, the neighborhood must decide the degree and timing of design review in the area. Upon completion of the design guidelines, it is very important to then designate the Ballpark Historic District.

LAND USE AND ZONING

The Land Use and Zoning recommendations provide the policy foundation for the entire Plan. It is primarily through land use and zoning that the overall character, feel, and image of Northeast Downtown is created and achieved. Although Northeast Downtown has much in common with Lower Downtown, it is also different; and these differences need to be accentuated as Northeast Downtown separates itself in the public mind from LoDo and develops its own, distinctive image. In marketing terms, it needs to differentiate its product offerings from that of its famous neighbor. Northeast Downtown has the foundational elements in place to develop its own identity. Coors Field is an entertainment palace built into the neighborhood; and more entertainment uses are likely. The neighborhood has a “walk on the wild side” feel to it. While it wants to upgrade itself and remove its rougher elements, it desires to retain a certain “reverse chic” feel and character.

The long range vision for Northeast Downtown is to transition from a predominantly industrial area to a mixed use area of appropriate and compatible industrial, retail, offices and services, residential and entertainment uses. There is substantial vacant building square footage in Northeast Downtown due to shifting markets, obsolete buildings, etc. About 43% of the building square footage is in industrial use, with assembly/distribution having 22%, manufacturing 15%, and industrial arts 6%. Retail and service uses account for 25% of the building square footage. As expected, each of the three planning subareas varies by building square footage and by use. Industrial uses comprise over 51% of the building square footage in Upper Larimer and about 45% in Baseball Environs; and vacant square footage is about 51% in Arapahoe Square. Retail and service uses have the highest percentage in Baseball Environs (31%) with just over 411,000 square feet, while Upper Larimer has nearly as much retail and services with 392,000 square feet.

There is a strong rationale underlying the future land use and zoning recommendations for Northeast Downtown. The land use survey outlined above indicated that Northeast Downtown is already a mixed use area. An analysis of sales tax trends over the past six years indicates that the tax base is



The McMurry Manufacturing Building, built in 1917 at 2601 Blake Street, now used as an office building



2669 Larimer Street, built in 1928

broadening beyond its industrial foundations to a wider array of uses. The economic base of the area has changed in response to changing national and international trends and competitive forces; and the employment mix has shifted from overwhelmingly industrial to a balance of many types of employment. Previous planning studies have documented these trends and, in some cases, offered policy directions that suggest a change to the long-standing industrial dominance of the area. Achieving such public policy goals as historic preservation, employment growth, and economic and housing development all suggest a need to change the land use balance and outdated land use and zoning regulations. The previously summarized findings from the Northeast Downtown Market Analysis also support the land use and zoning recommendations since the market for many industrial uses has dramatically shrunk while expanding for other uses. Meetings with real estate experts in the areas of appraisal, brokerage, and development have confirmed these trends and findings, noting that Northeast Downtown's buildings no longer meet the requirements of today's industrial users. In summary, while Northeast Downtown has a vital industrial role to play, its industrial peak is past. It should prepare for a transition to a mixed use community and economic base.

The Plan's land use recommendations, while similar, vary for each of the three planning subareas. Baseball Environs' mixed use character is distinguished by an entertainment focus grounded by Coors Field, a retail core for the neighborhood on Larimer Street, and a variety of light industrial, residential, offices, and services. Arapahoe Square is to become a mixed use area to include a balance of residential, offices, neighborhood retail, and other support and service uses. The intent is for it to become predominantly residential, as market realities permit. Upper Larimer's distinguishing "brand mix" should be compatible industrial, industrial arts, studios, and a broad variety of live/work situations, offices, residential, neighborhood retail, and other support and service uses.

Given the mixed land use recommendations, major changes are needed in the antiquated zoning regulations currently in place. Their continuing presence is a major constraint to achieving the Plan's goals. Therefore, the top priority land use and zoning recommendations are to rezone each of the three planning subareas to coincide with the Plan vision for each subarea. The Plan recommends a detailed "zoning concept" that is intended to function as a policy guide until the actual zoning ordinance proposals for the new zone districts are prepared, reviewed, and adopted in concert with property owners and other interests. The intent of the zoning concept proposals is to delete or make conditional those current uses by right in the three main existing zone districts that are deemed incompatible or harmful to achieving the mixed use vision and to introduce desired uses that are currently prohibited by

zoning regulations. For Baseball Environs the recommended solution is to change the existing I-2, I-1, and B8 zoning to I-OR, I-2R, and B8A respectively. Arapahoe Square's current B-8 zoning is recommended for B-8A. Upper Larimer is proposed to change from I-2 to I-2R and from I-1 to I-OR. Examples of deleted uses would be junkyards, numerous heavy and dirty industrial uses for which there is no longer any market, and adult uses. Examples of new uses allowed (either conditionally or as a use by right) would be residential, neighborhood retail, and other uses that support a mixed use environment. It is acknowledged that mixing new uses into industrial areas will cause some tension and conflicts between uses, traffic and parking. These concerns will require creative land use controls to mediate between the differing uses. However, such a mix will also maximize market opportunities and, in time, create an exciting and distinctive part of Denver.



New development under way near Coors Field



Broadway slicing through Northeast Downtown

URBAN DESIGN

Urban Design addresses the physical character, street and pedestrian environment, open space, and urban form of Northeast Downtown. Its goals and recommendations address and resolve issues in such a way as to make Northeast Downtown a more attractive, workable, cohesive, and distinctive part of Denver.

From the perspective of the urban designer, there are a number of problems or issues that need attention, including Broadway's negative image, the introduction of new auto-oriented and fast food uses along Broadway, the isolation of Upper Larimer, the eroded character or "sense of place" in the area (especially Arapahoe Square), building height limits, setting land use densities, and sign and billboard regulations.

In response to these issues and the other Plan goals and vision, the urban design goals include:

- ▶ providing better physical and visual linkages between Upper Larimer and the subareas south of Broadway (Baseball Environs and Arapahoe Square)
- ▶ focusing on making the Larimer Retail Core between 20th and 23rd/Park Avenue West an exciting shopping and entertainment area and retail center of the area
- ▶ improving the visual characteristics of Broadway and transform Broadway from a divisive element to an attractive and functional street which provides a linkage between the subareas
- ▶ reinforcing 21st Street as the housing core of the neighborhood and support it as a consistent entry experience to Coors Field
- ▶ developing more bicycle and pedestrian connections to the South Platte River from the area
- ▶ preserving mountain views
- ▶ identifying and strengthening the basic distinguishing characteristics of the subareas
- ▶ improving the physical appearance of the area through design guidelines, streetscaping, sign and billboard controls and other appropriate means

Nineteen urban design recommendations are made to carry out these goals in specific locations with specific techniques. The recommendations rated most significant by the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee are:

- ▶ create building height limits for new development and major renovations in the three new proposed mixed use zone districts as follows:
 - 55' as of right height limit without design review in the proposed I-OR and I-2R districts; buildings may exceed the 55' limit up to a maximum height of 80' if approved by staff design review
 - 55' as of right height limit without design review in the designated Larimer Street Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) area (which is currently zoned B-8); buildings may exceed the 55' height limit up to a maximum of 80' if approved by staff design review
 - 200' maximum building height in the proposed B-8A zone district in Arapahoe Square
- ▶ set land use densities for new construction and major renovations as follows:
 - 2:1 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as a use of right density in the proposed I-OR and I-2R zone districts with an additional 1:1 allowed (to a maximum of 3:1 FAR) with bonuses earned for providing specified uses
 - 4:1 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as a use of right density in the proposed B-8A zone district with an additional 2:1 FAR (to a maximum of 6:1 FAR) with bonuses earned by providing specified uses; an additional 1:1 FAR (to an absolute maximum of 7:1) may be earned if the project is submitted for staff design review
- ▶ develop new bicycle and pedestrian linkages to the South Platte River through the new Broadway Viaduct and along 35th Street to a proposed bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the Union Pacific railroad tracks
- ▶ develop design guidelines and design review procedures



2100 block of Larimer Street



20th Street Viaduct adjacent to Coors Field

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Because of its central location, Northeast Downtown is heavily impacted by traffic and is the location of many major transportation projects. While a number of these projects have recently been completed, important new projects are in the planning stage. The Broadway Viaduct replacement project is well underway. Consultants have completed a design study identifying a preferred alignment as well as the required environmental assessment of the environmental impacts of the recommended underpass alternative. The underpass design is consistent with the recommendation of the *Northeast Downtown Plan* since it reduces the physical and visual barrier created by the existing viaduct, provides greater pedestrian circulation opportunities along and over the underpass, and provides opportunities for entryway/gateway treatments and urban design/art in the underpass. The Air Train is another project which borders Northeast Downtown. It is a Denver International Airport (DIA) corridor rail transit facility that is being evaluated to determine if it is an appropriate and cost-effective transportation mode. If implemented, the Air Train would provide heavy rail express service between downtown Denver, the Stapleton redevelopment area, Aurora, and DIA. It is endorsed as a project that is consistent with the long range vision and goals for Northeast Downtown and which will help attract people into Northeast Downtown while reducing vehicle impact in the area. Several new bike route projects will help link Northeast Downtown to other areas, particularly the Platte River Greenway. A later stage of the new 23rd Street Viaduct calls for providing a new linkage to the Platte River Greenway. The replacement Broadway Viaduct is designed to include bicycle and pedestrian access. Also proposed is construction of an off-street bicycle and pedestrian bridge linking the existing stubs of 35th Street by crossing over the railroad yards, thereby connecting Upper Larimer with the Platte River Greenway.

The key transportation issues addressed were 1) the impact of traffic and parking from baseball games at the Coors Field area, and 2) the laneage and parking on 22nd Street between Blake and Broadway. With regard to the first issue, a Transportation and Parking Management Program (TMP) has been prepared by the City and County of Denver, the Denver Metropolitan Baseball District with their transportation consultants, and RTD, in association with neighborhood and business organizations and affected property

owners. As background to the TMP, an extensive transportation and parking analysis of the Coors Field area under maximum traffic conditions was done. The existing and newly implemented improvements, and the seven TMP components (traffic access and circulation, traffic control, transit service/baseball bus operations, on-site parking, off-site parking, pedestrians, and bicycles) adequately handled the projected traffic and parking demands during a “worst case scenario” — at peak hours both before and after the game or event attended by 50,000 people, which is the capacity of Coors Field. It is recommended that the TMP be closely monitored, and changed if appropriate, to meet the circulation and parking goals and needs of the area, including minimizing the impact upon the area.

Regarding the second transportation issue, the City believes, based on traffic projections in the *23rd Street Environmental Assessment*, that 22nd Street traffic flow between Blake and Broadway requires four lanes of capacity. The neighborhood and affected property owners request that, initially, 22nd Street have three lanes of traffic, leaving one lane for on-street parking for customers. The City will monitor this situation and make revision, if justified, by observations and studies of maximum traffic demands, including the experience of baseball and any special event traffic.

The top priority transportation recommendations are 1) to design and construct the Broadway Viaduct to provide safe and improved traffic flow in a way that is not a physical or visual barrier between Upper Larimer and downtown Denver, and 2) to provide new pedestrian connections/bicycle routes to the South Platte River and adjacent areas.

Parking issues addressed included numerical parking requirements, the location/design and appearance of parking facilities, special event parking, commercial free-standing parking lots, and transportation organization and management. Given the complexity and importance of numerical parking requirements, it was decided not to make a recommendation on this issue and defer it to the separate zoning ordinance preparation processes where it will be studied more intensely and considered with related matters. Discussion of commercial free-standing parking lots was also complicated; and it was suggested that it should be allowed, but only as a conditional use. The remaining issues were resolved and selected as the top parking recommendations, namely, that 1) specific design criteria for the location, design, planning, and operation of all parking structures be imposed, and 2) a parking management organization and program be established and implemented, as and when appropriate, to creatively, jointly (with adjacent parking programs, especially the Downtown Transportation Management Organization), and efficiently plan and manage all existing and potential parking resources in the area.



Some of the off-street parking for Coors Field



The Burlington Hotel, at Larimer and 22nd, was built in 1891

ECONOMIC AND HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Economic and housing development is of fundamental importance to the City and County of Denver, as well as to Northeast Downtown's businesses (employers), citizens (employees), property owners, and neighborhood organizations. It was one of the primary motivations for preparing this Plan. Economic development was ranked by the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee as the second most important substantive part of the Plan after land use and zoning. Most of the Plan's recommendations support, directly or indirectly, the goal of economic and housing development. Recommendations dealing with social issues, historic preservation, urban design, land use and zoning, and transportation and parking are particularly important in creating the type of environment, conditions, and prerequisites for economic and housing development that the Northeast Downtown Market Analysis identified as being necessary (but not sufficient in all cases) to realize market opportunities.

Although the vision for Northeast Downtown is a mixed use community, it is predominantly non-residential and will probably remain so. Therefore, economic development will likely be the larger focus. Nevertheless, it is the conviction of this Plan that the mixed use vision must include residential uses since housing will offer many benefits to Northeast Downtown. Residential uses are included within each of the subarea's future land use concepts, albeit in a somewhat different context and role. Baseball Environs, with its comparatively large stock of historic buildings, is believed to have opportunities for rehab conversion to other uses, including housing. Upper Larimer has a substantial presence of live/work studio situations and has an opportunity of expand this type of housing, as well as additional multi-family residential and/or mixed use developments that would incorporate housing. The biggest emphasis in the plan for long range housing development is suggested for Arapahoe Square, particularly the 21st Street corridor since this area will likely continue to have relatively light traffic and will receive landscape improvements in the near future. It is also close to the new RTD light rail station which may enhance its attractiveness for housing. The Northeast Downtown Market Analysis pointed out, and the Plan acknowledges, the constraints on developing housing, particularly new construction, in the near term. Nonetheless, the Plan strongly supports housing as a very important component of the mixed land use vision.

Housing is a significant but subordinate land use. Non-residential uses will continue to predominate in Northeast Downtown as it has during the past half century or more. Its changing economic role and importance can be understood in part by reviewing employment and sales tax trends. Employment, by place of work in Census Tract 16 (the closest geographical match to Northeast Downtown for which data are available), declined from its peak of 10,439 in 1980 to 6,130 in 1990. This loss in employment is reflected in the substantial amount of vacant or under-utilized land and buildings and represents a loss of employment opportunities for nearby residents. Between 1980 and 1990 the largest numerical and percentage employment decreases were in transportation, communications, and utilities, manufacturing, and services, while only retail trade and government showed an increase.

Despite the employment decline, recent data show an increase in sales taxes being generated within Northeast Downtown over the past 5 years. Between 1989 and 1994, City and County of Denver sales tax receipts rose by nearly \$289,000 or nearly 30%. Upper Larimer, which is by far the largest subarea, is the largest generator of sales and use taxes, providing nearly half of Northeast Downtown's total. Baseball Environs, due to its strong gains in 1994, exhibited the largest percentage gain between 1989 and 1994, with an increase of 53%, followed by Upper Larimer's gain of 30% and Arapahoe Square's gain of 23%.

In order to stimulate economic and housing development, there are numerous resources available for small business people and developers. The City and County of Denver has financial and technical assistance resources to assist small businesses and neighborhood business areas. The Mayor's Office of Economic Development has loaned over \$4,000,000 in Northeast Downtown between 1983-1994 and recently established the Larimer Street Neighborhood Revitalization Program to concentrate efforts to revitalize the Larimer Street face blocks between 20th Street and Park Avenue West. Many other public, quasi-public and private lending programs and techniques are in place or could be established to facilitate economic and housing development in the area.

Top priority recommendations are to prepare economic development and housing development strategies, develop and implement a comprehensive marketing plan and program to promote the area's distinctive qualities, and explore and secure funding resources to carry out development opportunities and improve the area.



Denver Hardware is one of the many small businesses in Upper Larimer

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The heart of the Plan is its 84 Action Recommendations. They identify, in general terms, what needs to be done, by whom and how. Implementation of the Plan is vitally important and is the joint responsibility of the City and County of Denver and the Northeast Downtown community. Although various financial resources exist and must be developed to implement certain types of projects, the common denominator of all successful implementation is people working together effectively. Northeast Downtown needs to maintain an ongoing planning process to facilitate the implementation of this Plan over the next five to ten years and work with the City in refining/updating it when necessary. It is recommended that a permanent umbrella community organization be established that can speak and act in a unified voice for Northeast Downtown. A Northeast Downtown Plan Implementing Committee should be formed to oversee and manage, jointly with the City, the timely implementation of the Plan's recommendations. This work will include the preparation of an annual work program, and development of an annual capital improvements program with potential funding sources identified. The essential connection between Northeast Downtown today and its long range vision is the successful and timely execution of the *Northeast Downtown Plan*.



**BACKGROUND
INFORMATION**



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this element is to present relevant background information for the Northeast Downtown study area relating to its population, registered neighborhood organizations and the housing stock. Demographic information, including population, employment, household and per capita incomes, is summarized from a variety of sources. A data constraint encountered in this chapter is that the study area boundaries do not follow census tract lines or statistical neighborhood boundaries within which the federal, state, and city governments normally collect data. Consequently, data availability is limited and appropriate modifications were made to address this constraint.

NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN PLAN STUDY AREA

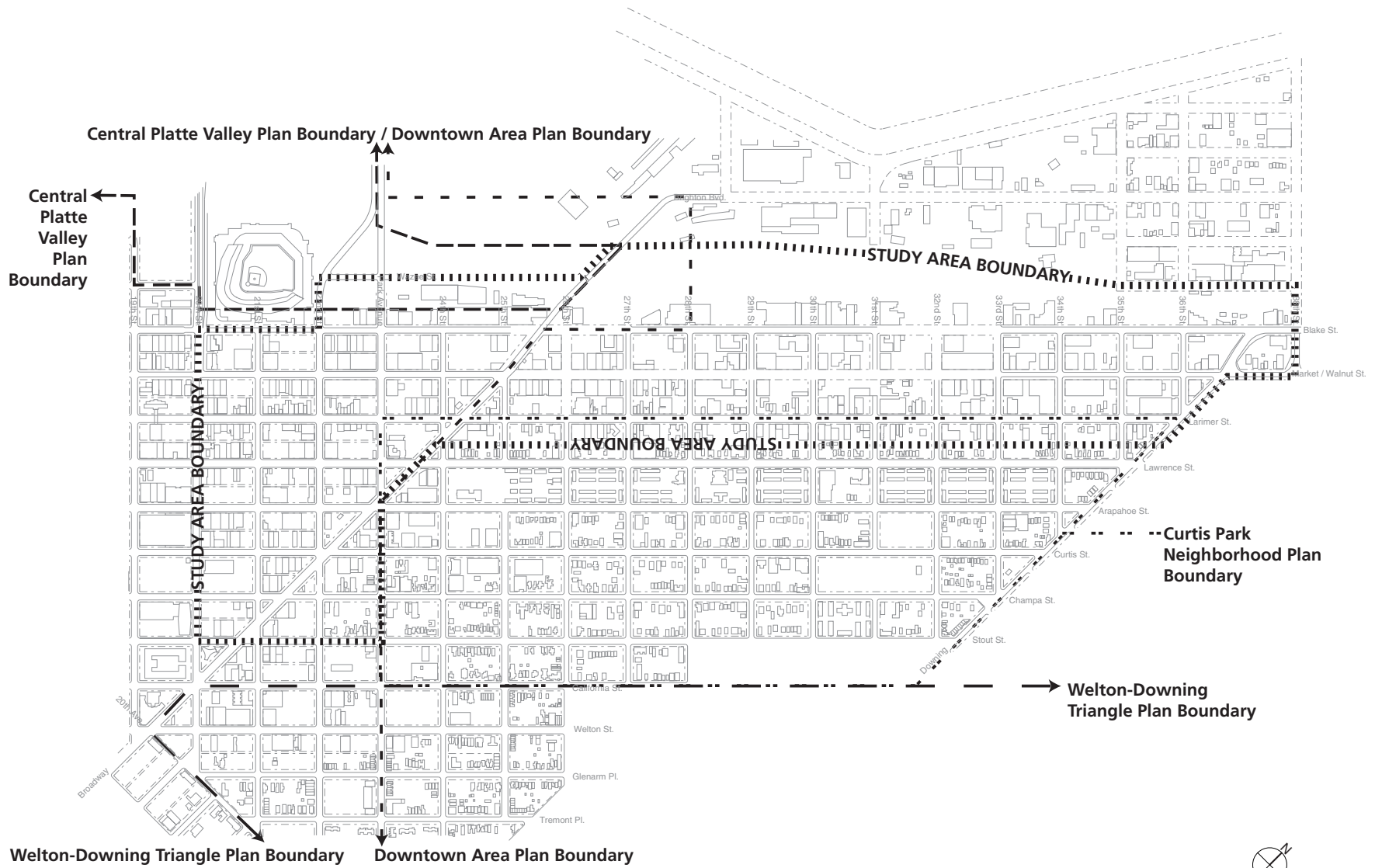
Study Area Boundaries

At the time the *Northeast Downtown Plan* and planning process were being defined and organized, the study area boundaries were determined at several public meetings of NED property owners and residents and city officials. The chosen boundaries encompassed the area of need and interest of those present and provided for some additional bordering areas impacted by the study area. These study area boundaries are identified on Map BI-1 on the following page, as are the boundaries of several adopted neighborhood/small area plans that are adjacent to or close to Northeast Downtown. This map is basic to this planning study and is used, with minor adjustments, throughout this report.

Subareas

Northeast Downtown is a very large and diverse area, much larger than typically organized for a neighborhood planning study. In fact, "Northeast Downtown" is a relatively new name born out of the need to name and identify (at least in a preliminary way) the study area selected. In reality, Northeast Downtown is a collection of different neighborhoods or special interest areas, with similar yet unique characteristics, goals, and interests. To a substantial extent, these different interests and subareas have manifested themselves by the different registered neighborhood and business organizations that have been established in Northeast Downtown within the past ten years.

For the purposes of this study, it was also necessary to "break down" Northeast Downtown into smaller geographical units so that they could be analyzed in more depth. Several types of subareas were defined and employed in this report for specific purposes. For example, the land use survey, a foundation for the market study, utilized one set of subareas that are identified in the Land Use and Zoning chapter. Those subareas were also a key organizing principle for the future land use and zoning recommendations, although they were modified somewhat for that purpose. Other subareas, such as the proposed Ballpark Historic District, the Larimer Street retail core, the Broadway corridor, and 21st Street, emerged during the planning process as an expression of specific needs or opportunities.



MAP BI-1 Study Area Boundaries

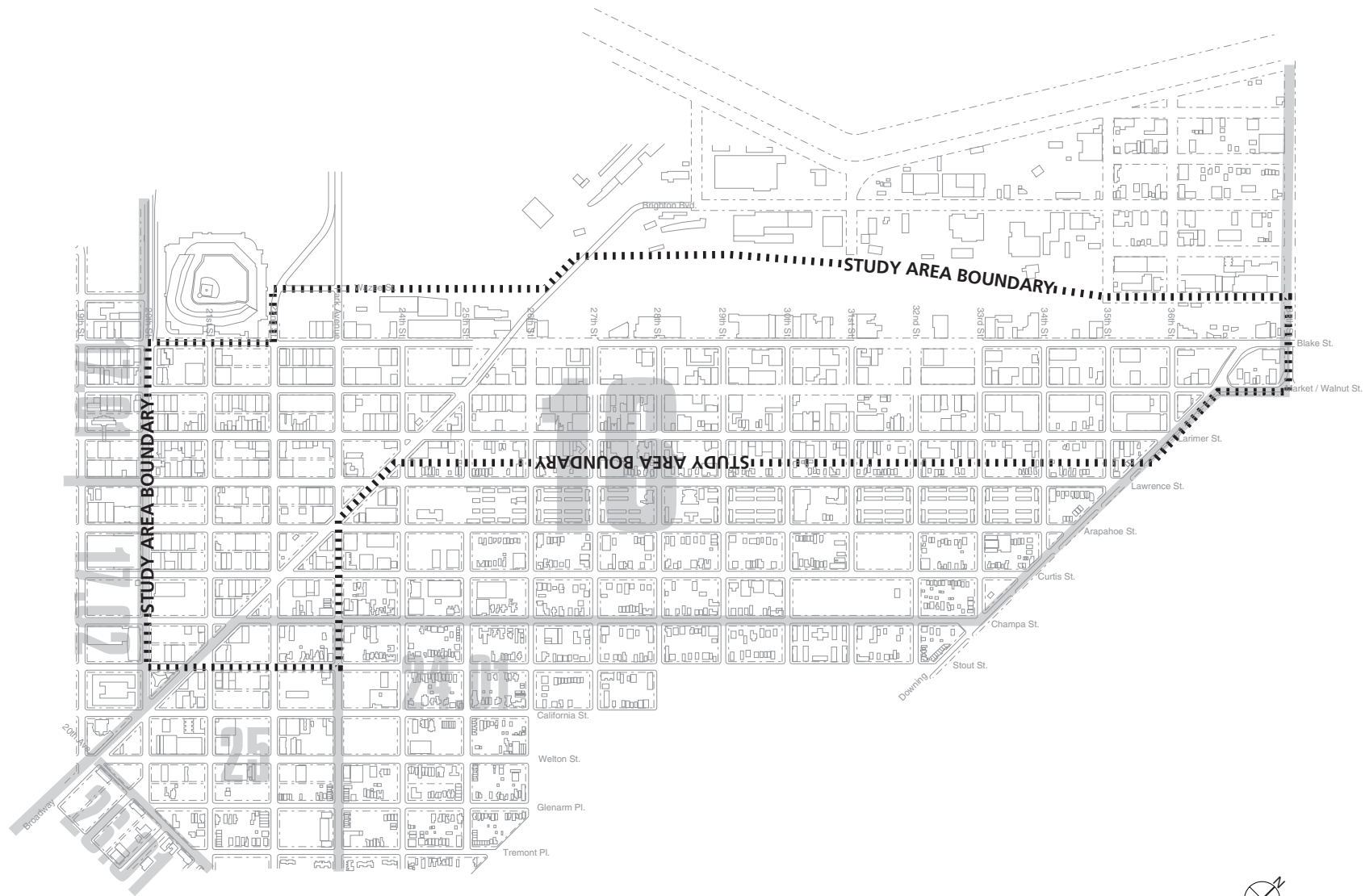

MAY 1995

NEIGHBORHOODS, CENSUS TRACTS, AND REGISTERED ORGANIZATIONS

A priority of this Plan is to help define and name Northeast Downtown so that its identity can be better understood, developed and promoted. Currently, there is a wide range of public perceptions (and misperceptions) about NED. Some think of NED as being part of Lower Downtown whose northern boundary (as seen on Map BI-3) is 19th Street, whereas 20th Street is NED's southern boundary. Although, with the excitement and anticipation generated by the opening of Coors Field in 1995, some are now referring to the area as the "Ballpark Neighborhood." The Arapahoe Triangle and Upper Larimer are distinctive areas within NED that have a long history.

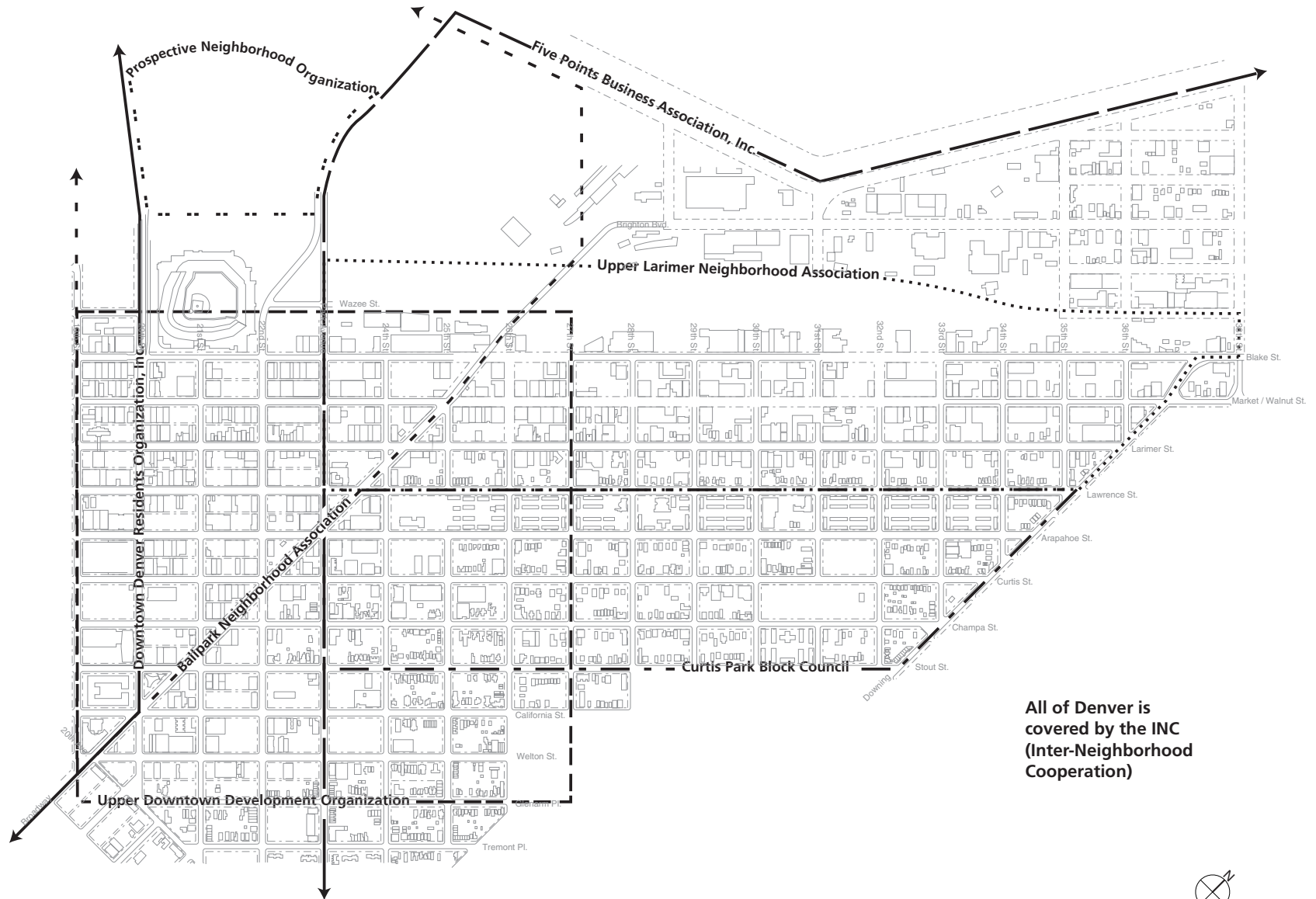
Government agencies also have identified NED for data classification purposes. As shown on Map BI-2, the U.S. Census Bureau's Census Tract 16 encompasses virtually all of NED (with two census blocks of Census Tract 25). The Denver Planning and Community Development Office's land use, zoning, and housing data files are organized by "statistical neighborhoods," which are closely matched to the federal census tracts and given names believed to be appropriate to the "neighborhood." Census Tract 16 is part of the Five Points statistical neighborhood, named for the well-known community that has grown up around the "points" (the location where five streets come together on Weston Street.)

Since the late 1960's, neighborhoods (initially and primarily residential areas but increasingly business areas) intensified the practice of organizing themselves into groups that spoke with one voice to express collective interests. Since 1978, the City and County of Denver has administered the Neighborhood Registration Program, by which qualified neighborhood organizations could receive information on proposals (zoning, etc.) that are within or adjacent to their boundaries. Map BI-3 identifies by name those neighborhood and business organizations that are within or adjacent to the NED study area and are currently registered with the City under this program.



MAP BI-2 1990 Census Tracts Boundaries





All of Denver is covered by the INC (Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation)



JUNE 1995

MAP BI-3 Registered Neighborhood Organizations



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN

Data Availability and Constraints

As mentioned earlier, there is minimal demographic data that exists specifically for the Northeast Downtown study area which creates an unfortunate but unavoidable constraint to the analysis that follows. In order to address this situation, several steps were taken. First, where available and statistically valid, data was pieced together at the census block level to obtain data that matched the NED study area boundaries. Second, where that was not possible, data are presented for the entire Census Tract 16 in the judgment that this information, while for an area somewhat larger than NED, includes NED and is preferable to having no data. However the reader is cautioned that the portions of Census Tract 16 that are within and outside the NED study area differ from each other.

1990 Population

Northeast Downtown Study Area

According to the U.S. Census, the total population in the NED Study Area in 1990 was 1374. This included 781 White (57%), 147 Black (11%), 52 Native American (4%), 30 Asian and Pacific Islander (2%), and 364 Other (27%). "Other" are mostly Hispanic or people of mixed race. In a separate classification not to be additive to the above breakout, the Census tallied 624 (45%) as Hispanic.

Census Tract 16

The total population in Census Tract 16 in 1990 was 3511. This compares to 3960 in 1980. The 1990 breakout was 1338 White (38%), 895 Black (26%), 83 Native American (2%), 46 Asian and Pacific Islander (1%), and 1149 Other (33%). In a separate classification not to be additive to the above breakout, 1834 Hispanics were tallied or 52%. The median age of residents in 1990 was 29.5 years of age, higher than the median age of 24.7 in 1980.

1989 Median Household and Family Income and Per Capita Income

The median household income in Census Tract 16 was \$11,522 in 1989, compared to \$33,983 for the City and County of Denver as a whole. Median family income was \$13,351, compared to \$32,028 for the City and County of Denver as a whole. In 1989, an estimated 1,760 persons, or about 49%, lived below the poverty level, compared to 17.1% for Denver as a whole; this is virtually unchanged from the 1979 poverty level. The per capita income in 1989 was \$6792, compared to \$15,590 in Denver as a whole.

Labor Force and Employment Characteristics

There are two ways in which employment data is collected. One way records and classifies the people who work in a particular area regardless of where they live. This method is important because it provides an indication of the employment character of an area. In the case of Northeast Downtown, the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)'s Small Area Employment Estimates for 1993 estimates that about 6,130 people were employed in Census Tract 16 in 1993. In 1990 the employee's average travel time to work rose to 24 minutes, compared to 19 minutes in 1980, as nearby employment opportunities for Census Tract 16 residents declined. The employment estimates, by key industry groups, are summarized in Table BI-1.

A second way by which employment is recorded is to identify the employment characteristics of the people who reside in a given area, regardless of where they may work. This is the way the Census Bureau collects and reports its employment data. In 1990, the Census Bureau reported that 1,884 residents were in the labor force, of which 1,493 (79.2%) were employed. Table BI-2 presents the 1990 occupational categories of Census Tract 16 residents.

Housing Units

Northeast Downtown Study Area

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, there were 301 housing units within the Northeast Downtown study area. Dividing this figure into the estimated 1374 people in the study area yields an average household size of 4.57. The average household size, much higher than normal, was accounted for by each social service provider facilities that housed hundreds of people yet were counted as one housing unit. When those census blocks were removed, the average household size for the study area was 2.72, still somewhat higher than the 2.17 citywide average household size in 1990, but a bit lower than the 2.91 average household size in Census Tract 16 in 1980.

**Table 1: 1993 Employment Estimates of Census Tract 16
(by place of work)**

Industry	Number	Percent
Agriculture	22	0.4
Mining	0	0.0
Construction	183	3.0
Manufacturing	1,404	22.9
Transportation, Communication & Public Utilities	309	5.0
Wholesale Trade	1,652	26.9
Retail Trade	971	15.8
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	23	0.4
Services	1,030	16.8
Government	419	6.8
Military	0	0
All Other	117	1.9
TOTAL	6,130	100.0

Source: *Small Area Employment Estimates, Denver Regional Council of Governments, 1993*

**Table 2: 1990 Occupational Profile of Census Tract 16 Residents
(regardless of where they may have worked)**

Occupational Category	Number	Percent
Service	365	24.4
Machine operators, assemblers and inspectors	225	15.0
Administrative support	207	13.9
Professional Specialty	143	9.6
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	128	8.5
Precision production, craft and repair	91	6.1
Executive, administrative, and managerial	87	5.8
Transportation and material moving	85	5.7
Sales	65	4.4
Farming, forestry, and fishing	55	3.7
Private Household	17	1.1
Protective Service	13	.9
Technicians and related services	12	.9
TOTAL	1,493	100.0

Source: *1990 U.S. Census*

Census Tract 16

The total housing units in Census Tract 16 in 1990 was 1,216, of which 963 or 79% were occupied. There were 315 (33%) owner-occupied units and 612 (67%) renter-occupied units. Sixty percent of the housing structures were built in or earlier than 1939. The median monthly rent for housing units in Census Tract 16 was \$243 in 1990. The total housing units in 1980 were 1467, of which 1289 (88%) were occupied. Of the occupied units in 1980, 301 (23%) were owner-occupied, and 988 (77%) were renter-occupied. The loss in housing units between 1980 and 1990 clearly came at the expense of renter-occupied units.



**MARKET ANALYSIS
SUMMARY**





Downtown meets Lower Downtown (south of 20th Street) and Northeast Downtown (north of 20th Street)

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the findings of the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* which was prepared by consultants Coley/Forrest Inc. and Ross Consulting Group. The market analysis was commissioned in order to provide a “reality check” to the Denver Planning Board, City staff, Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee and others. Given the high level of expectations associated with the Northeast Downtown study area, particularly the area around Coors Field (the new ballpark for the Colorado Rockies), it was important for the market study to take a fresh and discerning in-depth look at the market potentials and expectations. A key value of the market analysis is to provide an additional — and at times countervailing — perspective to the Plan’s long range vision and goals.

The content of this summary was taken directly from the consultants’ final report, dated August 1994. The full report contained substantial information and documentation, including a description of existing market conditions and existing land use conditions, not presented in this summary. The land use information, describing the volume and type of development by land survey subareas, is presented in the Land Use and Zoning chapter of this Plan. The existing market conditions includes information on Northeast Downtown businesses, external market influences, baseball stadium impacts around the country, the impact of social service providers on surrounding land uses, and retail sales activity. Much of the information in the full report has been incorporated into various chapters of this Plan.

Study Methodology

While the market analysis was prepared by the consultants, assistance was provided by the Denver Planning and Community Development Office staff who prepared the land use and business surveys and compiled maps. In addition, important input and assistance was provided by the citizens of the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee.

In preparing the market analysis, the consultants employed the techniques of:

Land Use Survey ▶ An inventory of the land uses and buildings square footage was conducted by the Denver Planning and Community Development Office staff to provide detailed background information of existing conditions in the study area. Summaries of this land use survey are included in the Land Use and Zoning chapter of this Plan.

Business Survey ▶ A telephone survey with businesses in Northeast Downtown was conducted to understand their reasons for selecting their site, the benefits and limitations of their site as a place to conduct business, and their future plans. This broadly based and direct communication tool with “users” was helpful in grounding the market analysis findings and conclusions.

Survey of Occupancy, Vacancy, and Lease Rates ▶ The Ross Consulting Group database was used to provide information on occupancy, vacancies, and lease rates for office, retail, and industrial uses in the Denver metropolitan area and especially in Northeast Downtown.

Communication with Property Owners, Businesses, Real Estate Brokers, City Staff, and Interested Individuals ▶ Throughout the course of their assignment, the consultant team talked with individual property owners, businesses, real estate brokers, City staff, and interested persons regarding their plans and their perspectives on Northeast Downtown.

The survey of Northeast Downtown businesses found:

- ▶ a substantial portion (64%) are owner occupants; only 35% are renters
- ▶ due to the nature of their operations, they occupy sizable space as 54% of the businesses each occupy 20,000 square feet or more
- ▶ more than one-half of the businesses have been at their current address for more than 20 years.



Renovated 1885 building on the 2000 block of Larimer Street



**Broadway is a defining thoroughfare
in Northeast Downtown**

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Northeast Downtown

Planning Subareas

Northeast Downtown contains three distinct planning subareas, as noted on Map LUZ-3. These subareas currently do not, and need not, work together as a cohesive area. Although the subareas share some common market conditions and pressures, each is unique.

Urban Environment Image

Northeast Downtown is an urban setting which many perceive as rough and unkempt. This narrows the range of market opportunities which currently can be attracted to the area. Clearly, the neighborhood will remain urban. The range of market opportunities will broaden to the extent that its image can be improved.

Subtle Past — Changing Future

Market conditions within each subarea have been relatively stable or stagnant over the past decade. There have been relatively few real estate transactions and a modest volume of private sector reinvestment. However, this is not indicative of the next decade.

The combination of substantial and unprecedented public sector investment in transportation infrastructure, the re-opening of the City's 20th Street Gym as a much needed community gathering spot, the construction of Coors Field and its related private sector impacts, will trigger substantial changes in the near term, particularly in the Baseball Environs/Larimer Retail Core and Arapahoe Square subareas.

Access

Historically, Northeast Downtown has functioned as a limited destination location; because of modest drive through traffic, the area has not been well-known even to Denver residents and business owners.



LUZ-1 Land Use Survey Summary Report Subareas



The are land use conflicts between the area's industrial uses and other types of uses

The combined impacts of 23rd, 22nd, 20th, and 19th Streets and the Broadway Viaduct replacement program, improvements to I-70, and the proposed vertiport, intermodal project, and Air Train will dramatically alter access to Northeast Downtown. Most streets in the Baseball Environs/Larimer Retail Core and Arapahoe Square subareas are designated arterials.

New Market Interest

With improved access and substantial additional traffic will come interest in fast food, auto services, and other related uses which are prepared to pay relatively high prices for the land they want. If property owners sell to these uses, it will be the neighborhood's and City's challenge to work with the developer and users to assimilate a design that meets the neighborhood's character and is consistent with the Plan's vision and goals.

Land Use Conflicts

There are numerous types of land use conflicts which pervade Northeast Downtown. The conflicts are between

- ▶ new business seeking a higher image and neighborhoods with a substandard physical setting
- ▶ existing industrial users being priced out of their neighborhood in favor of "higher and better uses"
- ▶ social service providers and the many business operations and residences
- ▶ anticipated future traffic flows and traditional industrial and parking patterns

New Market Exposure

Baseball fans walking to and from Coors Field will introduce an entirely new market to portions of each Northeast Downtown subarea. The opportunity to showcase these areas on a repeated basis at no cost to the subarea is a tremendous market opportunity if used creatively.

Zoning and Building Regulations

There are two major constraints of current zoning from a market perspective: the difficulties that current zoning and related building construction codes impose on mixed use developments, and the parking requirements associated with both renovation and new construction.

Relationship to Adjacent Neighborhoods

- ▶ Arapahoe Square has a land use relationship with the adjacent Central Business District (CBD) in that many Arapahoe Square uses (parking, business support) provide services to the CBD.

- ▶ Baseball Environs has a land use relationship with Lower Downtown in that Lower Downtown retail and service uses may be pushed out of Lower Downtown due to high rents and will seek a location in Baseball Environs or Upper Larimer.
- ▶ There is a long-standing relationship between rail service along Market/Walnut Street and a number of sizable industrial establishments. There is a relationship between the Northeast Downtown neighborhoods and redevelopment in the Central Platte Valley, in that a substantial reinvestment in a nearby neighborhood which removes an existing unsightly use may also encourage reinvestment in Northeast Downtown.

Desire and Commitment to Change

Each subarea has a different perspective regarding change:

- ▶ Baseball Environs is in the midst of substantial change, due to the recent construction of Coors Field and the extensive transportation improvements nearby.
- ▶ Property and business owners within the Larimer Street Retail Core are encouraged through a city-sponsored effort (the Neighborhood Business Revitalization Program, or NBR) to increase private investment in their structures, while retaining similar general land uses.
- ▶ While not tightly organized, Arapahoe Square is undergoing a modest amount of demolition and conversion of surface parking plus some rehabilitation and reuse of existing structures (Arapahoe Square and Baseball Environs are the two subareas likely to experience not only reinvestment but also substantial changes to existing land use).
- ▶ Property and business owners in Upper Larimer appear to be generally satisfied that their area contains a mix of uses; and they look forward to upgrading the uses consistent with its current character relative to change at its borders.

Baseball Environs Subarea: Existing Conditions and Market Opportunities

Introduction

This submarket includes three land use survey subareas: Baseball Environs, Larimer Street Retail, and the Broadway Triangle. While there are distinct uses and factors in each of these three small subareas, there are important relationships between them (especially between the Baseball Environs or Ballpark Area and the Larimer Street Retail district). It is helpful to deal with these three subareas as one submarket.



Some of the remaining railroad tracks, which formerly served the warehouses along Blake Street



The construction and operation of Coors Field created renewed interest in the Ballpark Neighborhood

Market Related Trends and Events

There are significant changes occurring within this submarket, primarily because of major public investments in the new ballpark, major transportation improvements, and in the Larimer Street NBR. Key factors to the future market potential of this submarket are:

Coors Field ▶ The \$160 million investment in Coors Field and the related streetscape improvements are already having a substantial impact on the image and activity in the surrounding neighborhoods. This increased image and activity is expected to continue with the opening of the ballpark in April, 1995 for the new season of the Colorado Rockies.

Major Traffic Corridors ▶ As the transportation improvements and public transit improvements on 20th, 22nd, and 23rd Streets are completed, substantial increases in neighborhood vehicular traffic is anticipated.

Sports Bars ▶ There are several new bars within this submarket, and many more in the adjacent neighborhood to the south. Several more are proposed, including the anticipated renovation of the Union Pacific Freighthouse to the south of Coors Field with restaurants, transportation oriented exhibits, and a pedestrian plaza.

Larimer Street Retail ▶ The potential upgrading and enhancement of the Larimer Street Retail Core through the NBR program could have a substantial impact on the image and activity in this submarket. Larimer Street is attempting to capitalize on pedestrian linkages and streetscape improvements between the new Coors Field and Larimer Street, as well as enhancing its own customer base. A discussion of the prospects for an international marketplace for North Larimer Street is presented in the next section of this chapter.

Streetscape Improvement ▶ There will be major pedestrian and streetscape improvements in several areas around the new ballpark including

- ▶ a year round pedestrian plaza to be created between the left field entrance on Wynkoop and the renovated Union Pacific Freighthouse
- ▶ there will be street improvements along 19th and 20th Streets, adjacent to the Wynkoop pedestrian plaza
- ▶ the 1900, 2000, 2100, and 2200 blocks of Blake Street will all have wider sidewalks, trees, and special lighting fixtures

- ▶ the 2000 and 2100 blocks of Market Street will have widened sidewalks and street lighting
- ▶ 21st and Blake is designed to frame views of the ballpark and views through the Ballpark to Long's Peak. This special ballpark entrance will connect the five block pedestrian corridor along 21st Street, extending from Blake to Arapahoe Street. Improvements will include underground power lines, widened sidewalks and street trees
- ▶ the Blake Street side of Coors Field will include year round corporate and ticket offices for the Colorado Rockies, a souvenir store and a baseball museum run as a non-profit benefit for youth activities
- ▶ Public Service Company of Colorado has assembled the north part of the block on the east side of Blake Street between 20th and 21st Streets. Public Service Company intends to build a substation, designed to fit into the neighborhood, at the corner of 21st and Market. Additional land around the substation is expected to be declared surplus and sold for private use.

Lower Downtown/Central Platte Valley ▶ The continued expansion of residential and commercial uses in Lower Downtown, as well as potential development in the Central Platte Valley, are expected to have a substantial impact on this submarket.

Private Market Expectations

1994-1996

- ▶ It is impossible to predict the level of success of sports bars and restaurants around the new Coors Field. Denver has already seen more sports bars opening than are typical for other ballparks around the country. It is an open question if this area can sustain this current number of sports bars and grow as a recreation and entertainment district.
- ▶ With the increased vehicular traffic on 20th, 22nd, and 23rd, as well as the increased traffic and attention related to the Ballpark, there will likely be a demand for fast food restaurants and auto service facilities over the next several years within this neighborhood. In the near term, these uses typically generate land values higher than most other potential uses.
- ▶ There will likely be additional pressure for surface parking, especially for vacant parcels and deficient buildings which are either unsuitable for alternative uses or would require a major reinvestment for any other economic use.
- ▶ There will likely continue to be a demand in the neighborhood for industrial distribution and light assembly. However, there may be conflicts in high traffic areas between industrial uses and



One of the many bars and entertainment venues in the Coors Field Area



The Stadium Lofts, at Blake and Park Avenue West, were an early conversion from warehouse to residential

potential higher value uses as well as potential traffic conflicts with the conventional parking/loading patterns for these industrial uses in the neighborhood.

- ▶ There are expected to be increased re-use opportunities for suitable, existing buildings within the neighborhood. Potential re-use opportunities include residential, arts related or business showrooms, and professional offices (especially for smaller, more entrepreneurial firms).

1997+

- ▶ In addition to a continuation of the market expectations listed above, the following additional market expectations are pertinent beyond 1996:
 - If the area establishes a strong base of commercial and entertainment activity, opportunities for new commercial or residential construction may evolve.
 - There is likely to be increasing pressure on displacement of the traditional industrial uses if the market achieves a higher level of activity for commercial and residential uses.
 - Also, there is likely to be increasing conflict between the social service agencies and private uses in the neighborhood, if the commercial/residential uses achieve a higher level of activity.

Community-Based Concerns and Conflicts

- ▶ The community is concerned about the future expansion and impact of social service providers.
- ▶ The community has expressed concern about the possible proliferation of surface parking lots and the potential demolition of existing structures in the neighborhood.
- ▶ There will be a challenge to locate and design new fast food and auto service oriented facilities to be compatible with the character and intentions for the neighborhood.
- ▶ There has been an expressed need for a defined community identity, a meeting place and support services (for example, grocery store, etc.) for the entire Northeast Downtown area.
- ▶ Any new residential construction will need to compete with at least the Golden Triangle and Central Platte Valley. Those neighborhoods represent a significant competition, given their character, amenities, perceived image, and potential public and private investment.
- ▶ There has been an expressed desire for trees and landscaping in the neighborhood, without creating meeting places as “hang outs” for people perceived to be physically threatening.

- There will likely be increasing conflicts between the uses and values for the evolving market relative to the existing social service and industrial uses.

Market With Potential Public Interventions

The recommended public interventions are primarily intended to enhance the long-term image (i.e., design guidelines for fast food, auto service and parking lots) as well as the real and perceived security (lighting and game days security patrols) of this neighborhood. These interventions would enhance the level of development potential and the future opportunities, rather than create different types of potentials.

Potential “market stimulating” interventions by the public, including the City and County of Denver, include:

- Creating and applying design guidelines for any new fast food and auto oriented facilities.
- Traffic controls and transportation/infrastructure plans for the increased traffic related to the 20th, 21st and 22nd Street improvements as well as ballpark-generated traffic.
- Design controls, at least, for any new potential surface parking lots in the neighborhood.
- Potential additional alley and street lighting, especially along new pedestrian routes tied to the Ballpark and the Larimer Retail Core.
- Coordinated security, especially for night baseball games and events, so that patrons have a positive experience and impression of the area.
- The same financing programs and support, especially in regard to housing, as given to other areas. However, the potential for newly constructed housing is expected to be limited over the next several years until this submarket achieves a stronger fabric of uses within existing structures.
- Continue the current effort by the City, working with the neighborhood, to develop new zoning provisions for the existing I-2, and B-8 zone districts. This would allow a broader range of live/work opportunities, as well as multi-family housing, recreation, and appropriate retail uses.

Upper Larimer Subarea: Existing Conditions and Market Opportunities

Market Related Trends and Events

The trends and events important to the future market potentials of the Upper Larimer submarket are:



2100 block of Larimer Street



Upper Larimer continues to have a strong presence of warehouses

Stable Ownership/Occupied Uses ▶ In general, ownership and uses within this subarea have been stable. There have been individual changes in tenancies, and scattered improvements, but no big changes in the area. This is anticipated to change over the next few years because of increased traffic (resulting from the Ballpark and road improvements both to the north and south of the neighborhood) and because of the decreasing average age of the landowners and tenants in the neighborhood. The most significant recent change in the area was Silver Square, which was redeveloped between 1986 and 1988.

Transportation Improvements ▶ Transportation linkages to the north, along Brighton Boulevard and Washington Street to I-70, are being enhanced. Also, the development of Coors Field and adjacent uses are expected to result in increased traffic through the neighborhood over the next several years.

Coors Field ▶ Coors Field is located to the south of this submarket, but it is expected to have secondary impacts on the neighborhood. Principal impacts will be the “dressing up” of the western edge of Upper Larimer with a Ballpark parking lot replacing previous rail uses, the increased traffic through the neighborhood to Coors Field, and the potential for attracting industrial uses which may be displaced from the Baseball Environs subarea immediately around Coors Field.

Private Market Expectations

1994-1996

- ▶ The predominant use patterns are expected to continue; that is, the predominant uses in the neighborhood will likely continue to be warehousing and light manufacturing, with modest residential, commercial, and industrial arts as supporting uses.
- ▶ Given current and anticipated market rental rates relative to land and construction costs, limited new construction is anticipated for the foreseeable future.
- ▶ The increased traffic and traffic/loading conflicts may cause the displacement of some of the existing industrial uses. At the same time, industrial uses displaced from the ballpark neighborhood may look for replacement facilities in Upper Larimer.
- ▶ There will likely be modest increases in residential, commercial and industrial arts opportunities resulting from the increased traffic and exposure, as well as increased activity in the ballpark area, Lower Downtown and the Central Platte Valley.
- ▶ There will likely be opportunities for additional residential and live/work developments, if there are suitable existing buildings and financing is available.

- There will also likely be additional opportunities for specific and unique uses, probably tied to the arts and craft trades.

1997+

- No dramatic change in the current use pattern is anticipated in the foreseeable future. There will be a continuing need for light industrial uses. With increased activity and investment to the south and west, as well as the enhanced image, services and amenities of this neighborhood, there will be increased opportunities for residential and commercial uses and industrial arts facilities.

Community-Based Concerns and Conflicts

- There is a desire to develop new zoning regulations and building requirements which would permit more flexibility for live/work opportunities, as well as better neighborhood retail, recreation and multifamily residential flexibility.
- As with all of Northeast Downtown there is a continual concern about the expansion of social service agencies and their impacts on the neighborhood.
- There is a concern relative to the traffic increases anticipated from improved connections to the north and south, as well as ballpark and event-generated traffic.
- There is a substantial concern about possible red-lining and the perceived lack of available private/public debt financing in this neighborhood.
- There is a desire for improved pedestrian and bicycle linkage to the downtown Central Platte Valley and Curtis Park, as well as for enhanced streetscape design throughout the neighborhood.
- There is a strong desire for a community meeting place and for community services and goods, such as groceries and sundries. However, the population base of the neighborhood is small relative to normal market requirements for restaurants and grocery stores. A supermarket typically requires a population base of about 6000 households. Upper Larimer presently has about 200 households, Baseball Environs another 50, and Lower Downtown about 500. Even adding Curtis Park to the population base of the area is still well below the threshold requirements for most commercial uses. Therefore, the prime commercial opportunities in this neighborhood will continue to be for smaller, more entrepreneurial types of facilities.



Walnut Street and a characteristic view of Upper Larimer



Broadway is a wide street that divides the Upper Larimer and Baseball Environs Subareas

Market With Potential Public Intervention

The proposed public interventions would make this a more desirable live/work industrial arts and residential community. In addition to enhancing the quality for current residents, they would likely facilitate more of this development activity over time.

Potential “market stimulating” interventions by the public, including the City and County of Denver, include:

- ▶ Preparing and implementing transportation plans to minimize the negative impacts of increased traffic volumes through the neighborhood and the conflicts with the existing industrial uses in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Giving support and assistance in documenting the case for private financing commitments for renovations and new industrial, live/work and industrial arts users in the neighborhood (as well as any potential new construction).
- ▶ Continued work on zoning, pedestrian and bicycle linkages, and social service conflicts within the neighborhood.

Arapahoe Square Subarea: Existing Conditions and Market Opportunities

Market Related Trends and Events

Major Traffic Corridors ▶ As the current viaduct replacement program is completed, the traffic patterns near and within Arapahoe Square will change. Some streets, such as Broadway and portions of 20th and 22nd Streets, will experience substantially heavier volumes of traffic and related redevelopment pressures.

Larimer Street Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) Program ▶ Among the most influential activities to impact Arapahoe Square will be the success of the North Larimer Street NBR. As the NBR succeeds and reinvestment revitalizes this commercial core, private investors will be more willing to invest in adjacent properties in Arapahoe Square.

Coors Field ▶ The substantial investment in Coors Field and related streetscape improvements may facilitate reinvestment in Arapahoe Square. Because of Coors Field and related development, 21st Street will become more pedestrian friendly and will continue to carry relatively low volumes of vehicular traffic.

Social Services ▶ There are approximately 5 locations in this submarket where social services for the homeless are provided plus a number of locations outside of Arapahoe Square. There are land use conflicts between some social service providers and nearby uses. Reinvestment in Arapahoe Square will likely occur in portions that are not as greatly impacted by social service providers.

Surface Parking and Land Prices ▶ There appears to be a strong relationship between land prices and the marketability of the land for surface parking. Revenues from surface parking relate directly to the walking distance from the CBD. Therefore, there is a marked drop in land prices between the 2000 blocks and the 2400 blocks in the NED study area.

Housing Development ▶ There are three existing and one proposed housing development within Arapahoe Square. All these projects involve substantial renovation of existing buildings. A complete discussion of housing is presented in a later section of this chapter.

Private Market Expectations

1994 -1996

- ▶ Fast food operations are now evaluating the merits of locations along high traffic corridors, including portions of both 23rd/Park Avenue West and Broadway. These operations are prepared to pay substantial prices for land that meets their criteria. Typically, they seek 30,000 to 40,000 square foot parcels. Fast food operations sometimes function as magnets for additional fast food outlets. Several fast food operations are anticipated to select locations along the high traffic corridors.
- ▶ Also, due to changing traffic patterns, it is anticipated that automobile services (similar to Goodyear and Firestone) will locate in Arapahoe Square. Downtown workers are attracted to locations where they can leave their car for services and walk to work.
- ▶ The current predominant re-use of land is conversion to surface parking lots. There may be a continuation of surface parking lots as existing office buildings fill with employees. As the price for parking increases, the price which land purchasers will pay will increase.
- ▶ It is reasonable to anticipate a modest continuation of housing in renovated buildings. However, there are very few buildings in Arapahoe Square over 25,000 square feet which are not already used for housing.
- ▶ New construction housing is not anticipated because land prices are too high, rents or for sale prices are too low, and other neighborhoods abutting downtown have more features and amenities



Offstreet parking lots are a common use in Arapahoe Square



**Amenities and housing in Arapahoe Square:
20th Street Gym, Bayly Lofts and Sky Lofts**

which attract those desiring center city residential living.

- ▶ Arapahoe Square continues to function well as a location for business services which do not need a prestige address. These include services such as printing and copying, messenger services, and surface parking. These uses are relatively low traffic generators and function primarily during the day. They can co-exist well with residential development.

1997+

- ▶ In addition to a continuation of market expectations listed above, the following additional market expectations are pertinent for Arapahoe Square:
 - If the Regional Air Quality Control Council (RAQCC) is successful in reducing reliance on the automobile for Downtown commutes, then parking lot dynamics will change. The demand for parking may stabilize or even decline. At the same time, parking rates may increase if the supply of parking is reduced or if a surcharge on parking is imposed.
 - As office market rents improve (from the developer's perspective), it is reasonable to anticipate some mid-rise office construction in the 2000 blocks of Arapahoe Square. However, Downtown can choose to expand to the south into the Silver Triangle or to the west into the Golden Triangle. Arapahoe Square will need to compete with these areas.
 - Proximity to the CBD and Coors Field, relatively dense housing nearby, the recent success of 17th Avenue establishments, and the availability of substantial surface parking suggest that portions of the subarea might be suitable for additional restaurants and bars with nightly entertainment.

Community-Based Concerns and Conflicts

- ▶ The community is concerned about the further proliferation of social service providers and their impact on land uses.
- ▶ The community has expressed concerns regarding the visual appearance (their predictable homogeneous look) of fast food operations and related uses.
- ▶ The community wants more housing in Arapahoe Square than is likely to occur without public support of some kind.

Market Potential With Public Intervention

With various forms of public-sector intervention, the band of market opportunities may widen.

New Construction Housing ► Three major types of prerequisites appear necessary to facilitate the new construction of housing in portions of Arapahoe Square: a) actions to make the area more conducive to residential living, including streetscaping, street lighting, green spaces, etc.; b) actions to minimize the negative impacts that social services for the homeless have on surrounding land uses; and, c) actions to place more affordable housing on the market.

Institutional Uses ► The substantial amount of underutilized land and the proximity to the CBD, the State Capitol Complex, the Federal Center and numerous hospitals suggests that this subarea could become a suitable location for substantial governmental, environmental, educational or health-related institutions. Unlike many neighborhoods which surround the CBD, Arapahoe Square may be able to assimilate a substantial structure, due to the many major traffic improvements enhancing access and to multi-block areas which are predominantly under-used.



The Skylofts, at 20th and Arapahoe, have residential units over structured parking

EVALUATION OF SPECIAL MARKET CONCEPTS

The market analysis included funding to focus upon two special market concepts. The consultants discussed with the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee and City staff which special market concepts should be addressed. The two concepts selected were the housing market in Arapahoe Square and the international marketplace concept for the Larimer Street Retail Core. The results of the special market concept analyses are outlined below.

The Housing Market in Arapahoe Square

The *Northeast Downtown Plan's* vision for Arapahoe Square is for this subarea to evolve into a mixed-use area with an emphasis on residential uses, live/work situations, offices and support services. There is interest in attracting housing to this area. This analysis focuses on two questions: 1) what types of housing could and should be attracted to Arapahoe Square, and 2) what conditions, incentives, programs, policies and physical improvements are critical to facilitate additional housing being developed in Arapahoe Square.

Arapahoe Square and the Competitive Housing Market

Introduction ▶ The primary uses currently in Arapahoe Square are surface parking lots and business services. There are about 30 buildings, very few of which are more than 25,000 square feet. There are four existing and one proposed housing developments:

- ▶ The Paris Hotel contains 17 rent-assisted residential units plus 5 commercial units in a renovated building on Arapahoe Street, completed in 1989.
- ▶ Grimm's Block Building was completed in 1992 and contains 16 rent-assisted residential units and one commercial unit in a renovated building on Curtis Street.
- ▶ The Bayly Lofts contains 27 condominium units in a structure converted from manufacturing to

residential use. The renovation project began in 1992 and is sold out.

- ▶ The Skylofts, at 2020 Arapahoe, will contain 37 residential units.
- ▶ The proposed project is the Burlington Hotel as part of the NBR program for the Larimer Street Retail Core, 38 units.

This market analysis examined the housing products within a broad market area which included downtown Denver and Lower Downtown that will be competitive to Arapahoe Square. While each neighborhood is different and distinct from Arapahoe Square, it is useful to consider this broad market context before narrowing the focus to Arapahoe Square.

Broader Market Area Housing Supply, by Product Type ▶ There is a substantial volume and remarkable variety of housing surrounding Arapahoe Square plus a few housing developments within Arapahoe Square. This analysis included an inventory of 77 housing developments containing approximately 6000 units. Most housing developments that have been introduced within the market area have been successful. The following is a summary of the existing housing stock inventoried, by product type, in Arapahoe Square and the surrounding area:

▶ ***Condominiums in Renovated Buildings***

During the last ten years, the predominant type of housing built in the area has been condominiums in renovated buildings; these units are typically referred to as loft housing. Twenty developments have been built and four more are proposed.

▶ ***Condominiums in New Constructions***

There are four high-rise and one mid-rise condominium developments in new buildings. All but one were built on land within the Skyline Urban Renewal Area at land prices subsidized by the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA).

▶ ***Rental Housing in Renovated Buildings***

There are 32 rental housing developments within renovated buildings plus two proposed developments. About one-half of these developments have some form of rent assistance.

▶ ***Rental Housing — Apartment Buildings***

While no new apartment developments have been built in the last ten years, three were built in the 1980's and one was built in the late 1960's. One development (Denver Place) was constructed



Storefronts in renovated Burlington Hotel building at 22nd and Larimer Streets



Some row houses remain in the Upper Larimer Subarea

on land assembled and packaged by DURA. One project (Uptown Village) was built on land assembled through the Denver Housing Authority (DHA). All developments had very low vacancy rates as of early 1994.

► ***Assisted-Rent Seniors Housing***

There are eight rent-assisted housing developments for seniors. Federal funds for these projects were far more available in the 1970's and early 1980's when all of these developments were built.

Findings from Prior and Current Residential Analyses

Over the last 14 years, four analyses of housing demand in the greater downtown area have been prepared for various public or quasi-public entities (the City and County of Denver, DURA, DHA and the Downtown Denver Partnership). These housing analyses are remarkably consistent, although each had a different purpose and focus. This subsection summarizes and consolidates the key findings from these prior studies and the current residential analysis for Arapahoe Square.

Housing Demand ► There is ample demand for a variety of rental and ownership housing in suitable locations adjacent to Downtown in a wide range of price and rent categories. The most recent housing analysis estimates that about 36,760 employees live or have considered living downtown in the past, plus an additional 22,440 would consider living downtown if personal circumstances or market conditions changed. The *Northeast Downtown Plan* has an expressed desire to focus on rental and for-sale, market-rate housing, but will consider rent-assisted housing if the subsidies are modest.

Preferred Housing Product Type ► The most recent downtown housing market analysis identified demand for loft housing (32%), “row” housing (26%), townhouses (25%) and other, including units in high-rise and mid-rise developments (17%). This is consistent with this Plan’s desired housing product mix.

Downtown Area Housing Locations ► There are a number of downtown area neighborhoods which can continue to accommodate housing. In addition to Arapahoe Square, these include the CBD, Lower Downtown, Upper Larimer, Uptown, the Silver Triangle and the Golden Triangle. Currently, Arapahoe Square is at a competitive disadvantage to other downtown area neighborhoods in that it has a smaller threshold of existing residential units, less open space and more uses that may be considered incompatible with residential living. However, there are improvements and activities underway in Arapahoe Square that can improve its competitive position for residential housing. These include the recent construction of Coors Field, streetscaping improvements, improvements to the Larimer Street Retail Core, viaduct

improvements which will channel traffic along certain roads, the recent renovation and re-opening of the City's 20th Street Gym, and the four housing developments previously mentioned.

Complementary Neighborhood Features ► Features and amenities that prior analyses identified which would complement the desirability of a neighborhood for residential living include

- a grocery store
- parks of various sizes
- bike/pedestrian trails
- bus stops
- medical facilities
- retail shops
- well-lighted streets
- secured parking
- private open space
- a feeling or sense of leaving work

Land Prices in Arapahoe Square ► Currently, the market for land in Arapahoe Square is relatively flat. The most prevalent reuse is surface parking lots. Based on this currently prevailing reuse, land in the 2000 blocks of Stout, Curtis, Arapahoe and Champa sell for an average of about \$30 per square foot; land in the 2100 blocks that are on the downtown side of Broadway sell for an average of about \$20 per square foot; land in the 2200 blocks that are on the downtown side of Broadway average about \$10 per square foot. Land on the far side of Broadway averages \$10 or less per square foot.

Market Conclusions With or Without Public Intervention

Arapahoe Square ► Arapahoe Square has several areas within it. Broadway is a major division within Arapahoe Square. The portion of Arapahoe Square most amenable for housing appears to be between the CBD and Broadway and especially land along the 21st Street corridor. This is because 21st Street will likely continue to have relatively light vehicle traffic and is one of several streets to benefit from Coors Field related streetscape improvements.

New Construction Housing ► Without public support, it appears unlikely that new construction housing will develop in Arapahoe Square in the near term because land prices are too high and rents are too low to justify the private investment, particularly if the residential market is confined to townhouse and mid-rise



**Ebert Elementary School is close to
Northeast Downtown**



Bayly Lofts at 20th and Arapahoe Streets, are typical of housing renovation projects in the area

units. In addition, urban housing developers may be more attracted to other neighborhoods surrounding the downtown which currently have more assets and fewer liabilities for housing compared to Arapahoe Square. There has been no new construction housing in downtown neighborhoods without some form of public support since construction of Brooks Towers in 1969.

Housing in Renovated Buildings ▶ Housing in renovated structures will likely continue to develop in Arapahoe Square as Coors Field develops and the Larimer Street NBR achieves success. However, there are relatively few additional structures large enough to accommodate housing.

Timing ▶ There are several, previously discussed, significant projects and events in and around Arapahoe Square that will make it more attractive for housing in the future. New construction housing may be a market-viable venture in three to five years.

Types of Possible Public Intervention

Two types of public intervention are discussed below. The first type of intervention relates to housing and the second relates to supporting improvements and actions.

The *Northeast Downtown Plan* supports limited types of public assistance, but strongly seeks to avoid deep subsidies or seniors housing. In view of this, there are several types of public financing assistance that may be appropriate to consider. To receive any public financing assistance, developers must commit to reserve some units for income-eligible occupants; the regulations vary among programs and change periodically. The relevant median incomes are currently \$37,000 for 1-person households, \$40,000 for 2-person households, \$43,000 for 3-person households, and \$46,000 for 4+-person households.

Multi-Family Revenue Bonds ▶ The City and County of Denver may issue annually up to about \$12,000,000 in multi-family mortgage revenue bonds. Developers using revenue bonds must commit to rent 20% of their units to households earning less than 50% of the median income or 40% to households earning less than 60% of the median income. From the developer’s perspective, the advantage is long-term financing at tax exempt interest rates. A recent application of multi-family revenue bonds is the Guaranty Bank Building.

HOME ▶ Denver receives an annual allocation of approximately \$3,000,000 from the federal government to re-allocate rental projects which will restrict units to income-eligible tenants. Denver uses this money for loans up to a 20- year term.

Community Development Block Grant ▶ Denver receives an annual allocation of about \$12,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to spend in income-eligible neighborhoods, which includes Arapahoe Square. Many types of community investment projects are eligible for CDBG funds and competition is stiff. When the funds are made available for housing projects, the requirements are that 51% of the units are rented to households earning 80% or less of the median household income. City staff suggest that CDBG funds might be appropriate for a capital investment that is related to a housing development, such as a pocket park or streetscape improvements.

Low Income Investment Tax Credit ▶ CHFA administers this program. The annual allocation of tax credits is directly proportional to statewide population. Eligible projects must commit to rent 40% of their units to households earning less than 60% of the median income. The credit is for 9% annually of the qualified basis (excluding land) and extends for 10 years. Developers receiving the tax credit award typically re-package and sell the tax credit advantage to individuals seeking tax advantages.

Mortgage Credit Certificates ▶ Under this program, a 20% tax credit on the interest of homeowner mortgages is available to purchasers earning less than \$50,000 for housing priced at less than \$100,000. Within targeted neighborhoods, such as Arapahoe Square, eligible purchasers are not restricted to first-time home buyers. Participating lenders administer this program.

Mortgage Revenue Bonds ▶ The City and County of Denver and CHFA may issue mortgage revenue bonds which are used directly by individual purchasers of housing. There are income and housing price limitations associated with each issuance of debt. Since mortgage revenue bonds are tax exempt, the reduced interest rate can be passed on to purchasers. This tool is used when there is a 1% or more spread between private market mortgages and bond financed mortgages.

Supporting Improvements ▶ Research and analysis over the past fourteen years have identified a number of physical improvements which would enhance Arapahoe Square as a residential neighborhood. These improvements include private open space, pedestrian and bike trails, neighborhood oriented retail shops, well-lighted streets, and parks of various sizes. Most of these improvements require some form of public intervention.



Renovation under way on Larimer Street



2000 block of Larimer Street

Larimer Street International Marketplace Retail Concept

An international marketplace should be located in a neighborhood that currently has some commercial momentum and in a logical location. There are potentially two primary commercial development area opportunities within Northeast Downtown over the next several years:

- ▶ Ballpark area, including sports bars, the proposed renovation of the Union Pacific Freight House (planned to include restaurants, railroad exhibits, and other entertainment attractions), the souvenir store and baseball museum at Coors Field and other related facilities.
- ▶ North Larimer Street Business District, including both sides of Larimer Street, from 20th to 23rd Street/Park Avenue West.

North Larimer Street History

This area of Larimer Street was extremely strong as a commercial center in the nineteenth century. A single block of Larimer Street boasted a Safeway grocery market, J.C. Penney, two drugstores and six small grocery stores. This neighborhood was long considered to be an “international marketplace” with a mix of Italian, Japanese, Mexican, Chinese and African-Americans living and shopping there. There are still several historically significant buildings in the commercial strip.

In recent years, while the surrounding residential population declined and industrial uses expanded, social service agencies moved into the area and there was increased commercial and restaurant activity in closer proximity to downtown employment centers. The area gradually lost its market, and physically deteriorated over time as pawn shops, bars and social service agencies replaced most of the previous commercial business. However, Johnnies Market has continued to operate in the neighborhood, celebrating 47 years in 1994!

North Larimer Street, between 20th and 23rd Streets, was designated as a Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) area in 1993 by the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development and an executive director was selected in early 1994. The NBR Program offers low interest business loans for property acquisition and rehabilitation, equipment purchases, and working capital.

The Burlington Hotel, an historic structure in the 2200 block of Larimer Street, is one of a number of redevelopment projects planned under the Larimer NBR Program. It is scheduled to house a new restaurant, architectural antiques and 27 residential units. In addition, the Larimer strip will be connected to the new Coors Field by 21st Street, which is undergoing extensive streetscape improvements.

International Marketplace Definition

An international commercial concept is generally considered to include the following uses:

- ▶ theme restaurant and bars
- ▶ entertainment and recreation facilities
- ▶ retail or packaged food
- ▶ ancillary specialty retail

International marketplaces generally consist of individual or entrepreneurial stores rather than national or regional chains. In addition, there is an overriding theme, common streetscape and amenities, a promotions program, organized events and street festivals, and an interest group to address and promote parking issues, financing availability and coordination with the City for police and other services.

Examples/Competition

There are several ethnic-oriented commercial areas or developments that would offer competition to a Larimer Street international marketplace:

Santa Fe Drive NBR ▶ With a Hispanic theme mercado on the 600 through 1400 blocks, Santa Fe Drive NBR is immediately south of downtown Denver. There is a major public investment in streetscape improvements in this area, along with small restaurants and retail food stores, a large King Soopers grocery store, a legitimate theater, and miscellaneous stores and businesses.

Sakura Square ▶ Immediately south of the Larimer Street NBR, Sakura Square is located on the east side of Larimer Street between 19th and 20th Streets. This development, with a Japanese orientation, was completed in 1973 and includes residential uses, a Buddhist temple and 36,500 square feet of commercial space. Commercial uses include Japanese restaurants and Japanese grocery and specialty goods.

Current Larimer Street NBR Activities

The Larimer Street NBR has recently applied to the City and County of Denver for funds under the Commercial Neighborhood Streetscape Program to make streetscape improvements, including wider sidewalks, trees, benches and pedestrian lighting. Other goals include addressing potholes, facade renovation, re-paving Larimer Street and new Public Service Company meters throughout the neighborhood, and working with property owners and prospective developers on new businesses,



Many people are attracted to the area by Coors Field and adjacent entertainment venues

primarily oriented to restaurants and clubs featuring jazz and rhythm and blues. (In October 1994, the 2000 block of Larimer Street was awarded a \$184,000 grant to make streetscape improvements. These improvements should be completed by 1996.)

Market Potentials

All of the NBR activities, new investment and new businesses are targeted toward establishing a new market base for this commercial area. The emerging theme appears to be a restaurant and entertainment orientation. A key challenge over the next several years will be for the area to establish its own customer base in competition with growing entertainment concentrations in Lower Downtown, the Baseball Environs, and the Central Platte Valley, among others.

The primary perceived market components for this international marketplace concept include the following:

Local residents ▶ A small but important component. The primary benefit of local residents is as a core business clientele (potentially representing 10% to 20% of total business activity) and more importantly, a desirable and secure image for other visitors to the area.

Ballpark/Tourists ▶ This, again, is a small but important component of business activity with 81 game days/nights per year. Ballpark patrons in other cities represent potentially 5% to 10% of restaurant and bar patronage.

Downtown Workers ▶ Probably the most important potential market base. 120,000 downtown workers represent an active and affluent potential customer base for lunch time and evening activity. However, North Larimer Street will be competing directly with emerging dining and entertainment concentrations in other neighborhoods.

Destination Visitors ▶ Representing evening and weekend activity by people traveling specifically to the neighborhood for dining and entertainment. Again, this is an important component of the overall customer base. Therefore, local residents, ballpark patrons and destination visitors may represent, in total, 30% to 40% of the total business activity at an international market on North Larimer Street. The predominant customer base will be Downtown employees and residents who travel into the neighborhood specifically for dining and entertainment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The keys to the success of the area include:

Image/Attraction ▶ The area must be physically attractive, with sufficiently interesting businesses to draw repeat business, especially of downtown workers. The attraction must include a solid, evolving business base and organized festivals and activities to draw new and repeat visitors to the area.

Safety ▶ For the area to grow, it must attract evening patronage. In addition, there is a limited amount of immediate parking. Therefore, remote parking and pedestrian linkages are critical. The area must have real and perceived safety for these visitors.

Convenience ▶ Access to parking must be convenient and in relatively close proximity to the businesses to attract sufficient activity and repeat traffic to allow the businesses in the neighborhood to prosper.

Investment ▶ There must be both public and private investment to improve the structural integrity, appearance and amenities in the neighborhood. There is substantial public investment in nearby Coors Field and streetscape programs both within and adjacent to this neighborhood. Private investment will probably be much more difficult, especially given the uncertainty of the level of success of this NBR program.

Cooperation ▶ Tied to the perceived attractiveness and security of the area are the potential conflicts between a revitalized restaurant and entertainment center with substantial evening traffic and the nearby social service agencies. There needs to be considerable sensitivity and cooperation relative to this issue in order for the market to achieve its broadest possible appeal.

Ultimately, all this is tied to establishing a new market base, primarily linked to downtown workers and residents. This will be a special challenge given the emerging competition from a number of other dining and entertainment centers surrounding downtown. It is recommended that this area establish its own identity and theme. In addition, it is important that capital investment and operating costs enable businesses to succeed with a limited share of the total market, given the substantial competition.



S O C I A L I S S U E S





One of the pawn shops on Larimer Street

INTRODUCTION

It is the goal of this Plan chapter to identify and address the existing social issues that require attention and/or an adjustment in the current priorities, in order to comply with the future plans for the Northeast Downtown area.

Geographically, for over a century, the Northeast Downtown area has had to deal with many, diverse social issues — no easy task from any aspect. It has been the source of much strife and conflict among property owners, businesses, service providers, and well-intended individuals and outsiders.

The primary purpose of this chapter is to focus on those social issues and areas that will enhance the quality of life for all and that will maintain an acceptable aesthetic and quality neighborhood, which produces positive property values and services. This Plan encourages the promotion of equality in zoning, appropriate balance in business, neighborhood residency and social services. Above all, this Plan encourages a cooperative relationship between all who reside and work together within its borders. It also tries to provide a perspective from which much of this Plan has been derived, taking into consideration the historical background, the research, the current conditions and presumed future.

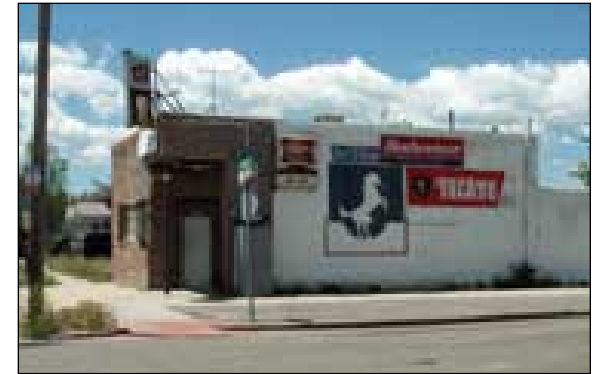
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The early settlers of Denver chose the banks of Cherry Creek — a river running diagonally from southeast to northwest — for the defining shape of their city. Today, the downtown area is a diagonal inset into the larger gridwork of the city, whose streets are aligned more properly to the north, south, east and west. Looking at a map, the upper lefthand corner of the diagonal grid is, oddly enough, referred to as Lower Downtown, or LoDo, echoing a trend in urban renewal that started with New York's SoHo (south of Houston Street). Such abbreviations have come to be synonymous with urban redevelopment transforming boweries into sparkling new communities.

The transient population of an earlier time — hoboes who rode the rails — often developed its own subculture and staked out territories in city centers near the railroad tracks. Cheap bars, liquor stores and houses of prostitution soon followed. An area known as the Larimer Street District along downtown's northwestern perimeter became Denver's bowery. The area was considered so undesirable and unsafe that even the military leaders at Lowry Air Force Base were forced to declare it “off limits” to its servicemen.

The Skyline Urban Renewal Project in 1967 and the development of Larimer Square in 1968 nudged the transient population and its associated blight slightly to the north. Service providers, soup kitchens and Single Room Occupancy hotels (SROs) moved in to meet the transients at their point of need. With the decline of SROs, transients have been served more recently by the homeless shelters in this section of the city. Where once the transients were mostly alcoholics, powerful societal forces and problems have greatly complicated and intensified the problems of these homeless people. A whole new slate of drugs is available to substance abusers; and many of the mentally ill have fallen — or been pushed — out of institutions and onto the streets.

With a largely powerless population, the area has received inadequate city services, such as garbage pick-up and law enforcement. The owners have had little incentive to improve their properties as long as customers have kept them in business.



One of many liquor stores along Larimer Street



Disinvestment is a problem in portions of Northeast Downtown

STUDIES / MYTHS / ATTITUDES

Many efforts and pleas by all residential elements such as task forces, neighborhood groups, town meetings, neighborhood clean-ups, improved buildings and programs by some service providers, have failed to achieve the desired results of upgrading the Northeast Downtown area.

Numerous attempts have been made to identify the social issues in Northeast Downtown and related areas over the years. Some of the issues have drawn much attention and energy, with few, if any, results.

Blight

The Gateway District is also known as the Arapahoe Triangle. Part of this area was the original Chinatown of Denver, always relying on railroad-related uses as the core of the economic base. The *Downtown Area Plan* (Spring 1986) characterized the district as the historic warehouse area of Denver and summarized the district's general conditions:

“The district has fallen into decline in recent years, losing businesses and housing. . . . There has been considerable land speculation in the Arapahoe Triangle due to its location next to Downtown and its zoning. The district is primarily zoned for industrial uses because of access, the size of parcels and existing structures. There is a high vacancy rate in this area. . . . The Arapahoe Triangle is the location of shelters and social service centers, local bars and pawn shops. Further concentration of shelters in this area would hinder redevelopment efforts.” (pg. 5 & 6)

As the *Downtown Area Plan* indicated, the Gateway area experienced significant economic disinvestment. Land speculation in the area during the early 1980's resulted in a high number of foreclosures and bank-owned properties as Denver's economy softened. The area also suffers from a negative public image as the primary location of Denver's homeless population. As a result of these problems, the area has seen virtually no new private investment over the past six years. In response to this economic stagnation, the Denver Planning Office and the Upper Downtown Development Organization (UDDO) sponsored a planning workshop for the area in March 1987. The workshop

identified seven major concerns.

- ▶ A highly fragmented land use pattern with the predominant land use being parking.
- ▶ Numerous vacant buildings and vacant lots.
- ▶ Red-lining the area by banks and insurance companies.
- ▶ Numerous homeless people utilizing the shelter facilities concentrated in the area.
- ▶ Daytime and nighttime security issues.
- ▶ The negative image of the area held by the public.
- ▶ Concern for present trends in the area which adversely affect Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

As these concerns indicate, the Gateway area is generally perceived as an unsafe neighborhood and as an economic liability to Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods. All of the concerns outlined by the Gateway workshop remain and are conditions which inhibit private investment in housing and economic development and impair the sound growth of the area.

Homelessness

In June 1986, the Homeless Action Group (HAG) was formed by the City and County of Denver, the Piton Foundation and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless to devise a comprehensive plan as the City's response to the homeless problem. HAG's Final Report, issued in February 1987, defined the homeless problem as consisting of five distinct subpopulations:

- ▶ runaway/throwaway youth (those under 18 who have left their homes voluntarily or were thrown out)
- ▶ elderly (over age 55)
- ▶ alcohol or substance (drugs, toxic vapors) abusers
- ▶ chronically mentally ill
- ▶ economically disadvantaged (poor persons not fitting into the other categories)

Furthermore, the HAG identified a number of social and economic factors contributing to homelessness:

- ▶ lack of income or support to pay for housing
- ▶ high cost of housing
- ▶ loss of affordable housing through demolition or gentrification
- ▶ structural changes in the job market rendering some workers' skills inadequate or unwanted



Cooper Drugstore in Arapahoe Square

- ▶ release from institutions of the chronically mentally ill without establishing community-based mental health systems
- ▶ domestic violence and abuse
- ▶ alcohol and substance abuse
- ▶ unique personal tragedies (e.g., fires, prolonged illness)
- ▶ radical shifts in public policy about social services, especially Federal cutbacks

The Final HAG Report, with its fifty recommendations, became the City's comprehensive plan to respond to the homeless situation. The recommendations were time defined to apply immediately, in the short term (eighteen months) or the longer term (three years). The Homeless Action Group Implementation Committee (HAGIC), fifteen members appointed by the Mayor of Denver in July 1987, was charged with the task of overseeing and assessing the implementation of the fifty recommendations. The HAGIC issued its Final Report in October 1988 and stated that just over half of the HAG recommendations had been fully implemented, seven partially implemented, nine had been formally referred to Governor Romer's Homeless Task Force for state level implementation, and several were unachievable within HAGIC's limited scope and authority.

Previous Studies

As noted above, the City and County of Denver and the Upper Downtown Development Organization held a two-day workshop in March 1987 with property owners and others interested in and knowledgeable about the Arapahoe Triangle area. Their final report, *The Gateway Gazette*, issued in August 1987, included eight goals and numerous recommendations to address the homeless problem. However, the follow-through of this report's recommendations was unsuccessful because of insufficient commitment by workshop participants.

In 1991, the Larimer Street Task Force was formed consisting of local businesses, service providers, Councilwoman Deborah Ortega's Office, and numerous City and County representatives. This Task Force was formed primarily to resolve the negative consequences of uncontrolled "curbside feeders" and an influx of outside "Good Samaritans" in the North Larimer Street area. While the "curbside feeder" issue was time consuming and difficult, some of the main problems were addressed through the efforts of the Task Force. During the quest to resolve the "curbside feeder" issue, the Larimer Street Task Force identified other, related area problems:

- D Public Safety
 - vacant and abandoned buildings
 - vandalism
 - selling and using of drugs
 - prostitution
 - public drunkenness
 - lack of police presence and code enforcement
- D Public Health
 - garbage (partially from uncontrolled curbside feeding and human waste)
 - lack of access to public restroom facilities
 - lack of drinking fountains
 - presence of the HIV virus
 - lack of response to aid fallen/stricken clients by the City and County (detox)
- D Public Nuisance and Welfare
 - loitering
 - curbside feeding
 - negative impact on neighborhood and pedestrians
 - open fires and litter

After a moderately successful effort to control the curbside feeder problem but unsuccessful effort to get an ordinance written to prohibit street feeding, the Larimer Street Task Force became inactive. It did prove to be a major success in getting the local groups working together on a common problem.

In May 1993 Residential Care Usage Ordinance #284 was enacted. This ordinance was developed by a Task Force established in April 1991 by the Denver City Council and the Zoning Office. The purpose of the Ordinance is: 1) to preserve and protect residential neighborhoods; 2) to provide increased locational opportunities for needed residential care uses (Group Homes); 3) to satisfy the requirements of the Federal Fair Housing Act; and, 4) to promote the dispersal of residential care (Group Home) facilities to other metro neighborhoods.

Homelessness, and all of the various issues surrounding it, is being addressed in various parts of the Denver metropolitan area and is increasingly being considered a regional, and not just a Denver inner-city concern. For example, in January 1993, the Denver Regional Council of Governments



One of the many social service agencies in the area



The homeless problem is open and visible in parts of Northeast Downtown

(DRCOG) adopted a resolution “recommending action on homelessness in the eight county region.” This resolution included an element which states that “the Denver Regional Council of Governments recognizes the intergovernmental nature of the problem of homelessness and the inherent responsibility of local governments to cooperatively seek solutions to alleviate this human need.” This cooperative regional approach to homelessness is being supported by the Denver regional office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI)

In December 1994, counties and municipalities from throughout the Denver metropolitan area with the encouragement and support from HUD and the Colorado Division of Housing joined together to form the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) to address the homeless problem. The goal of MDHI is to break the cycle of homelessness in the Denver metro area through the design and implementation of a Continuum of Care that includes prevention, outreach, intake and assessment, shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, and necessary support services. The MDHI developed in large part out of the Lowry Air Force Base Reuse planning process. This planning process has implications for the metro area beyond the number of homeless units agreed to in the Lowry Air Force Base Reuse Plan.

The MDHI calls for the development of 220 affordable transitional and permanent housing units as part of the Lowry Air Force Base Reuse Plan. Funding for these units includes \$5 million from HUD plus an estimated \$3.5 million from the Colorado Division of Housing, City and County of Denver, and the Lowry Air Force Base Economic Development Authority. The Colorado Division of Housing is the grant recipient of the HUD funds and will manage the grant for the development of the 220 housing units. Housing providers approved in the Lowry Reuse Plan, the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, the Aurora Housing Corporation, Aurora Mental Health Center, Empowerment Housing, Del Norte Neighborhood Development Corporation, Catholic Charities, and Denver Indian Center will play a key role in the Continuum of Care through their ownership and operation of 86 transitional housing units for families and 87 dormitory rooms for individuals at Lowry. Other housing agencies from the Denver metro area will also have the opportunity to compete for a portion of the funds and additional units will be developed off the Lowry reuse site.

MDHI also created a Stakeholders Group made up of representatives of public agencies, providers, businesses, neighborhoods, and consumers. Together with a Governing Board, they are developing a Continuum of Care model for the Denver metropolitan area.

MDHI has received funding and is currently developing a computerized system to link providers across the Denver metro area. It will allow a single comprehensive intake and assessment, information and referral, and communication between providers. This system will also expedite eligibility determination for public assistance benefits.

For the first time, providers submitted coordinated funding proposals in 1995 to HUD which resulted in over \$10 million in homeless grants for metro Denver. The Denver Department of Social Services was awarded \$3.5 million of this amount to address the needs of the homeless who are chronically mentally ill and/or substance abusers.

While Denver needs to be cooperative in all metropolitan homeless initiative planning and programming efforts, this does not replace the importance of follow-through on the comprehensive social issue recommendations contained in this *Northeast Downtown Plan*. Toward this end, the City and County of Denver created the Denver Homeless Planning Group in 1995.

An inventory of social service facilities within and near Northeast Downtown has been prepared and is presented at the end of this chapter.



Samaritan House, at Park Avenue West and Lawrence Street, assists the homeless



Some former warehouse areas lack sidewalks, presenting difficulties for pedestrians

CURRENT CONDITIONS

In addition to the issues cited above in the numerous studies and meetings, few of which have been realistically and effectively addressed over the years, the Northeast Downtown area has not seen the end of the difficulties with these issues.

The advent of Coors Field to this area has rekindled concerns for neighborhood quality of life. Although possibly being the answer to some of the problems, it has also created new aesthetic and socioeconomic challenges to the Northeast Downtown area. It has magnified the blight conditions and brought focus to and reopened many long standing issues:

- ▶ a concentration of transient population
- ▶ inconsistent or inappropriate response by some churches and service providers
- ▶ the lack of enforcement of existing regulations by the City
- ▶ poor coordination and communications between all populations of the area — businesses, neighborhood groups, service providers, churches, etc.
- ▶ inadequate or inappropriate response by City departments to the needs of the area, including but not limited to the Department of Public Works (Transportation Division, Building Inspection Division), the Police Department, the Department of Health and Hospitals, and the Zoning Administration Office
- ▶ mis-management of some commercial businesses and vacant property, trash
- ▶ the problem of lack of clientele control by some bars, liquor stores and service providers

POLICE PROTECTION AND CRIME

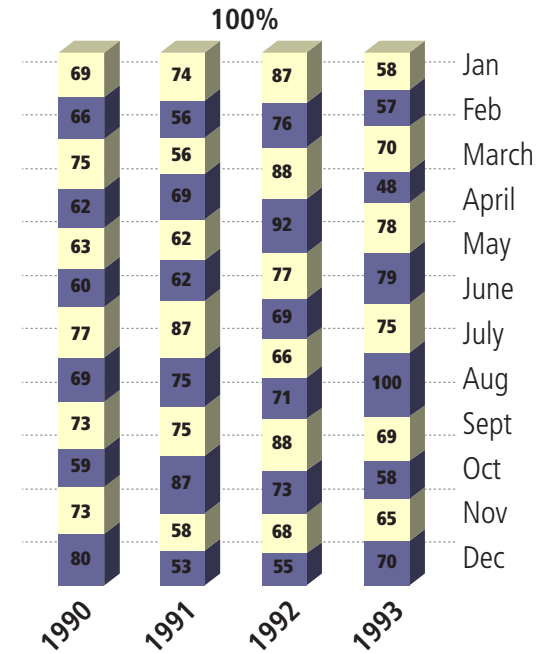
Another social problem and issue in Northeast Downtown is crime. Crime statistics for this area for 1990, 1991, 1992, and 1993 have been compiled from the Denver Department of Public Safety and are presented in the grid chart and following tables.

The crime rates from 1991 to 1992 increased in the Northeast Downtown area by 11.8% compared to a citywide crime rate increase of 7.8% during the same time period. Approximately seven out of every ten reported offenses in 1990, 1991, 1992 and 1993 in Northeast Downtown were crimes against property. About 80% of the reported 1992 offenses occurred between 20th and 23rd from Blake Street to Welton Street. Compared with 1992, reported offenses decreased by 9.1% in the Northeast Downtown area in 1993. By month, August recorded the highest number of offenses in 1993, accounting for 12.1% of the total. Map SI-1 and the two graphs on the following pages illustrate and enumerate the 1993 reported offenses in Northeast Downtown.

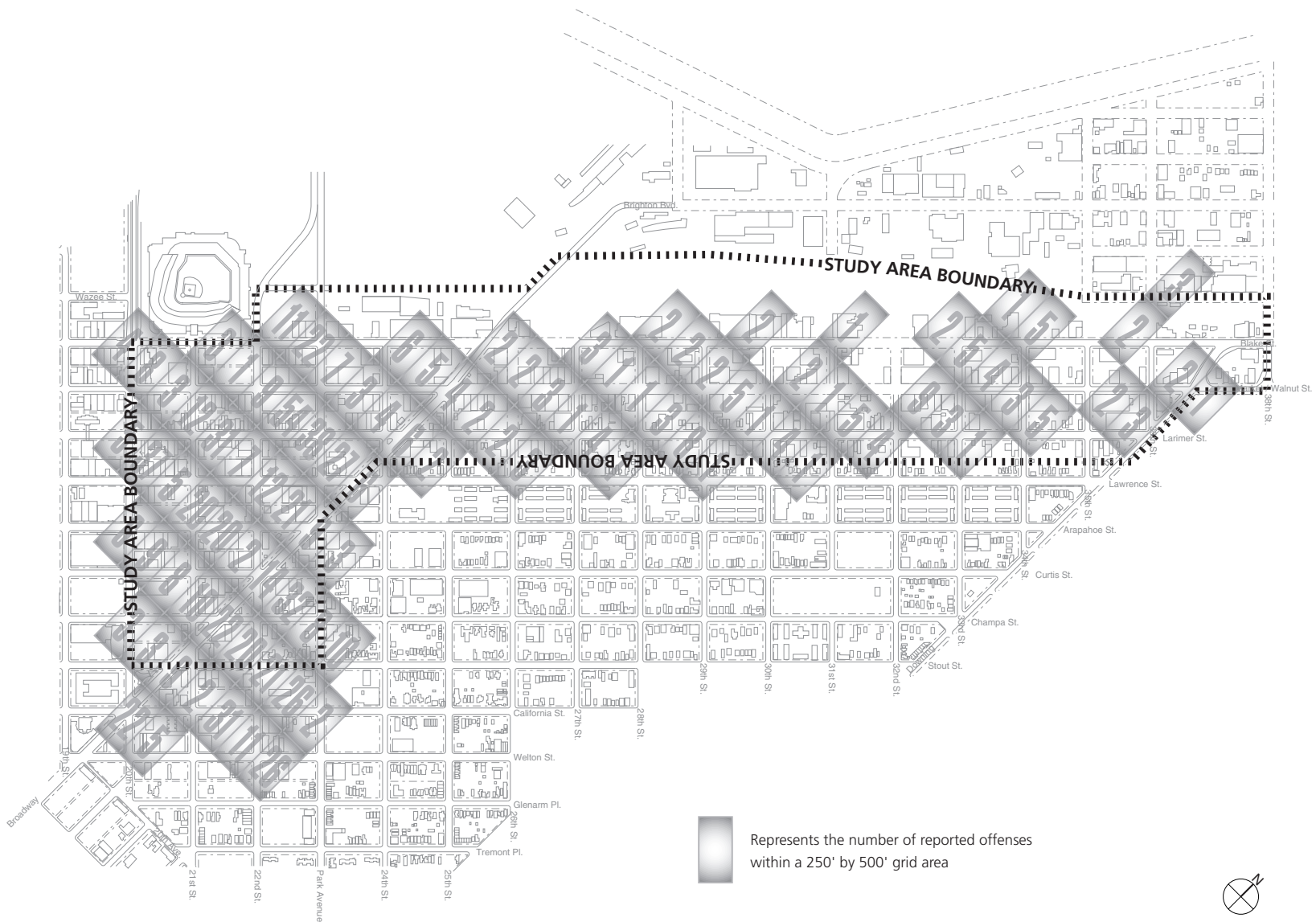
Northeast Downtown was formerly located in Police District #2 which had its station at 3555 Colorado Boulevard. Effective February 1, 1995 Northeast Downtown became part of a new Police District #6, created by the Denver Police Department to give new emphasis to community policing in and adjacent to the downtown area. Police District #6, whose station is located at 1331 Cherokee Street, covers all of Downtown and includes the neighborhoods of Northeast Downtown, Lower Downtown, Five Points, North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill, Auraria, Union Station, City Park West, Cheesman Park, Lincoln Park, and Civic Center.

The most effective curb of crime in Denver and throughout the nation has occurred when police/community relations are established, especially, Neighborhood Crime Watch Programs. Neighborhood and business groups, as well as individual companies and organizations, are urged to work with the Police Department to establish the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program for their area and address specific crime related issues, such as the inadequacy of law enforcement as perceived by the commercial property owners, neighborhood residents and social service providers.

Graph 1 — Number of Reported Offenses by Month as a percentage of all offenses reported in a year



*Source: Denver Police Department Offense Database
Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100%*



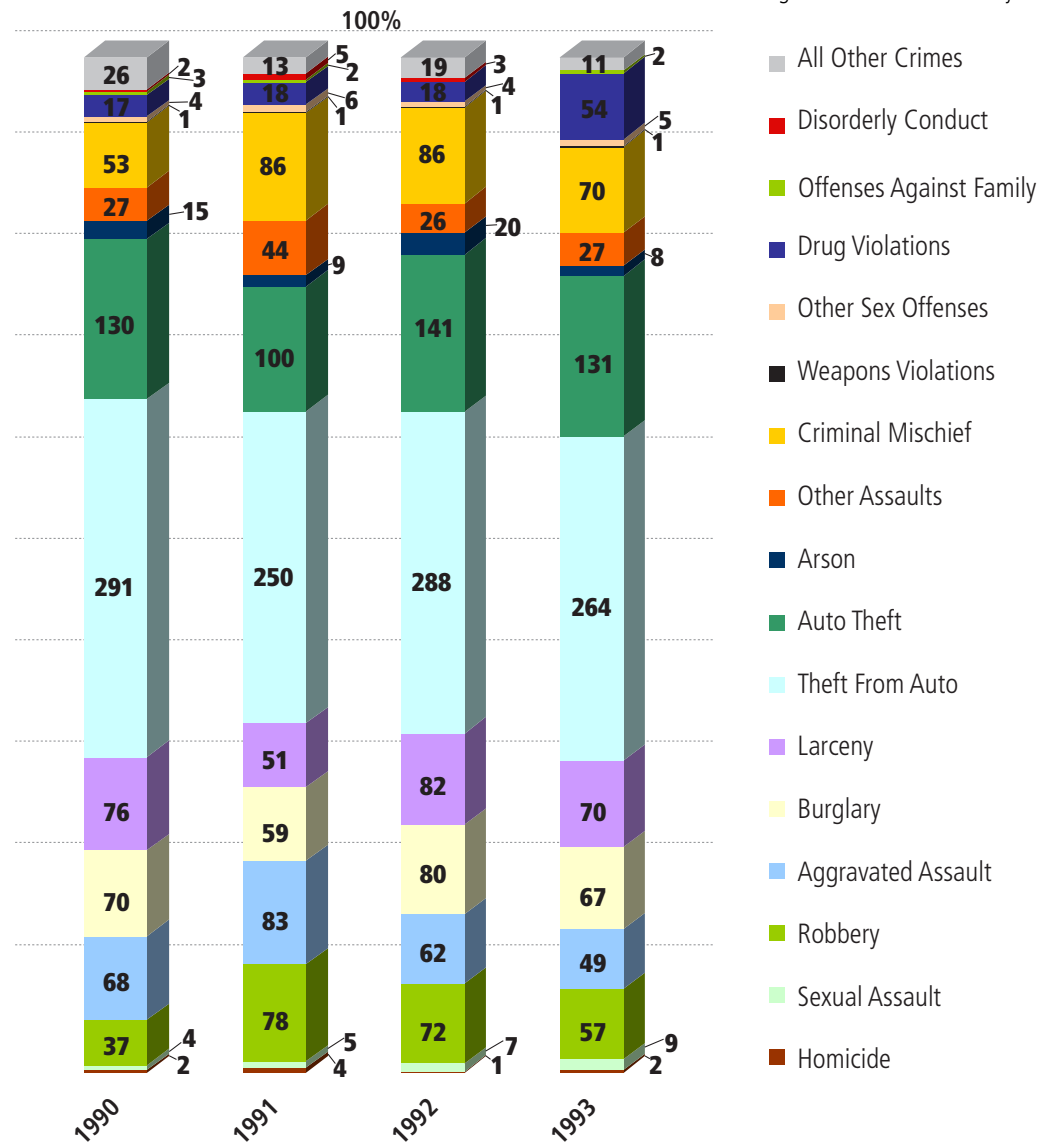
SI-1 Reported Offenses

Represents the number of reported offenses within a 250' by 500' grid area



1993

Graph 2 — Number of Reported Offenses by Offense Type as a percentage of all offenses reported*



*Legend entries roughly correspond to column segments located horizontally from entry

Source: Denver Police Department Offense Database

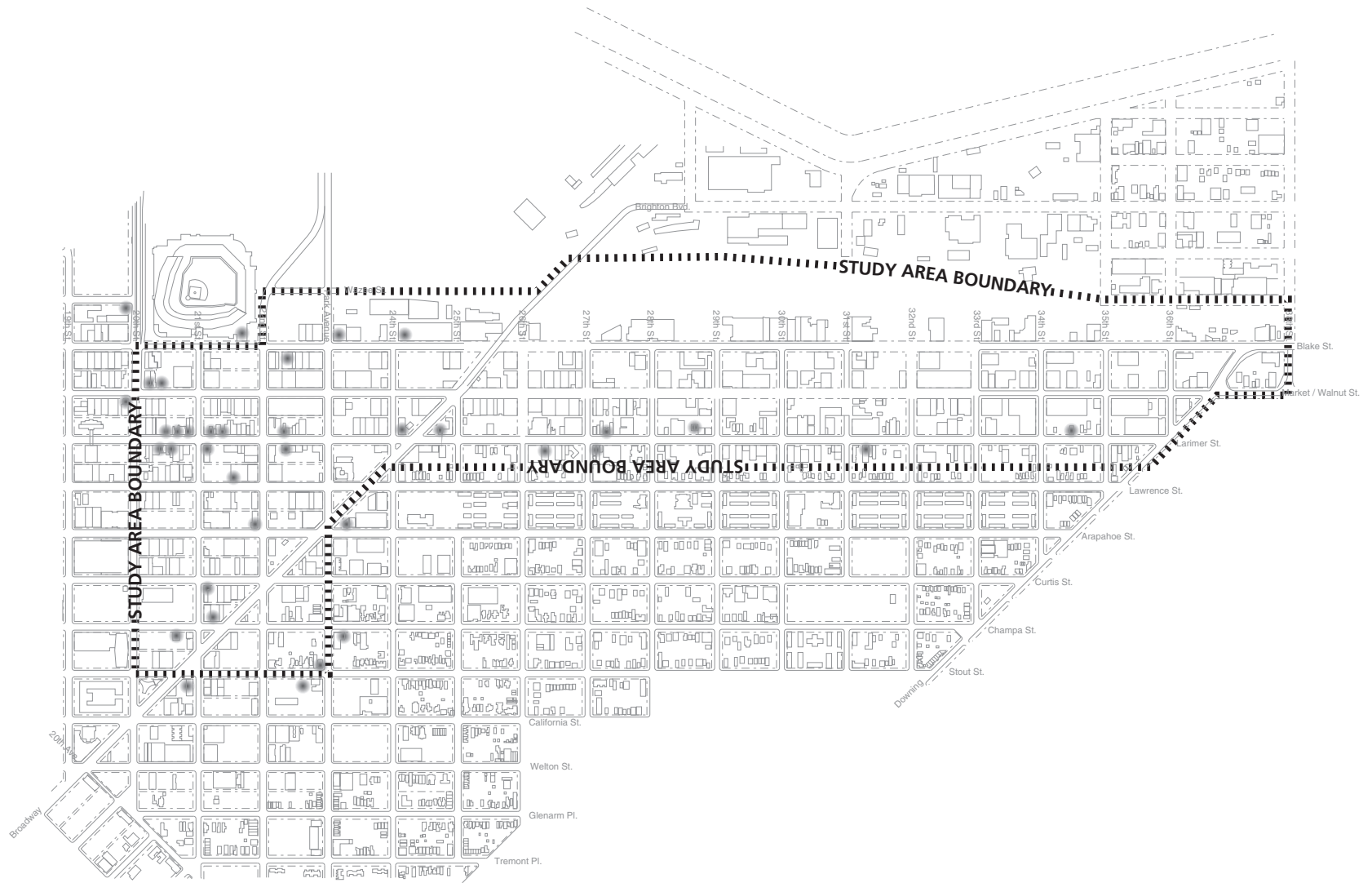
Because of rounding, percentages may not add to 100%



Another liquor store on Larimer Street

CONCENTRATION AND OPERATION OF LIQUOR STORES AND BARS

Another social problem and issue to commercial property owners, social service providers, and residents is the concentration and operation of some liquor stores and bars in Northeast Downtown (see map on page 81). With so many liquor stores and establishments selling liquor in the area, the concern and issue is with the negative impacts which some patrons of these liquor stores and establishments have on people and property. For example, some liquor stores sell cheap liquor to customers (many of which are homeless) who often loiter outside the store and around the neighborhood, also littering the area with bottles. A natural result is public drunkenness and disruption to employees, customers and residents. These conditions are not conducive to creating compatible neighbors nor are they compatible with the goals in this Plan.



SI-2 Liquor Licenses



JUNE 1995



Larimer Street in the Upper Larimer Subarea

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The *Northeast Downtown Plan* identifies the following goals and recommendations which are designed to enhance the environmental quality available to the residents, businesses and their customers and the public at large by improving the overall safety and visual attractiveness of the neighborhood and to better meet the needs of the homeless and service providers.

Goals

- SI-A** Improve the image of Northeast Downtown.
- SI-B** Successfully follow-through on the new Larimer Street Neighborhood Business Revitalization Program (NBR).

Recommendations

- SI-1** The City should take the lead in addressing the identified social service issues by establishing a broadly-based task force to prepare and implement a workable and equitable comprehensive social services plan for the City.

In order to maximize effectiveness, the following suggestions are made with regard to the detailed planning process:

- ▶ this task force should be led by the Mayor's Office in close conjunction with the City Council, and should also include representation from the affected social service providers, business community, mental health and substance abuse professionals, religious community, and all relevant City agencies and other organizations;
- ▶ all of the City's efforts toward homelessness, such as the preparation and implementation of this Plan, need to be coordinated to assure an appropriate collaborative, and comprehensive approach in effectively addressing homeless issues; this internal coordination of City technical

and professional resources should be assigned to the Department of Social Services, which would be responsible to the Mayor's Office for bringing together all City departments and agencies affected by homelessness, including but not limited to Health and Hospitals, General Services, City Attorney, Public Safety, Public Works, Planning, Parks and Recreation, Emergency Preparedness Office, Excise and License Office, Zoning Administration Office, and the Mayor's Office of Regulatory Reform;

- ▶ as part of the task force work, a city/metro-wide coordinating council of homeless providers should be assembled to share ideas, assist in preparing and implementing the plan, solve problems, maximize services and resources;
- ▶ the task force should thoroughly investigate successful models for dealing with homeless issues, especially the Portland, Oregon model, but also programs in Los Angeles, Buffalo, Miami and Cleveland;
- ▶ develop a reliable and efficient plan with which to gather and maintain accurate, citywide statistics on the homeless; and
- ▶ address the treatment needs of the homeless as part of the assessment and plan recommendations.

SI-2 Work with city/metro-wide social service interests to secure funding and space for alcohol and drug rehabilitation, transitional and recovery housing, mental health intervention, job counseling and placement, and case management services.

SI-3 Work with local police authorities, medical response teams and Denver CARES to decrease the time required for response to a "person down" request/need for help within Northeast Denver.

SI-4 Work with social service providers to eliminate waiting lines, litter and loitering around their facilities.

SI-5 Pass an ordinance that regulates and controls the curbside distribution of food, clothes, medicines and health care, and other items.

SI-6 Install and maintain public toilet facilities in the neighborhood.

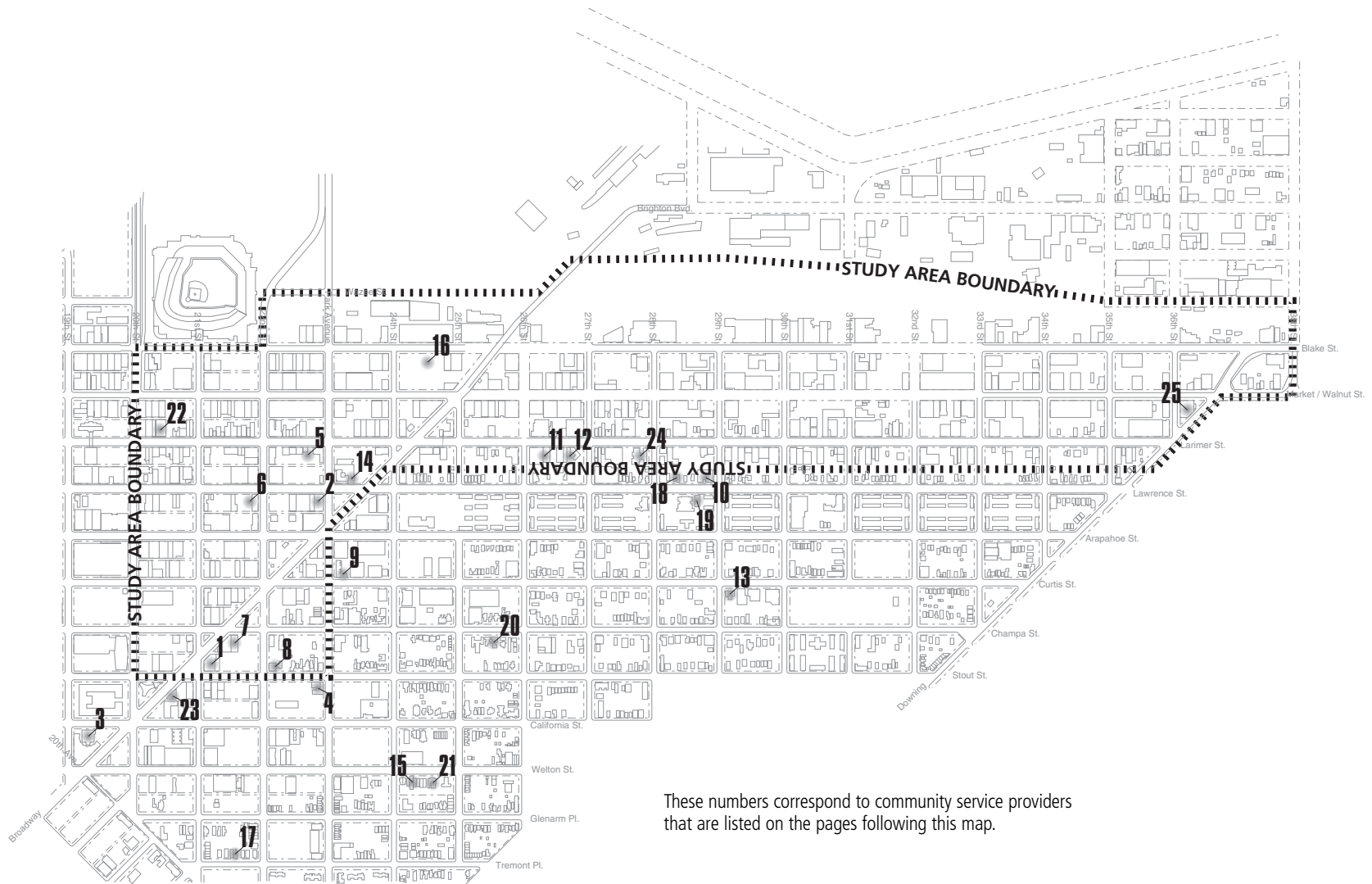


Many social service providers, like this one along Blake Street, are located in Upper Larimer



Samaritan House

- SI-7** Work with the Denver Police Department to establish effective police/community relations, establish Neighborhood Crime Watch Programs, secure increased patrolling for the protection of life and property (e.g., explore possibility of placing a police satellite facility in the area), and address crime related issues.
- SI-8** The City should suspend “permitting” any additional emergency shelters, day shelters and food lines in Northeast Downtown until a comprehensive social services plan is prepared and implemented that adequately addresses the above concerns and impacts, and the City enforces existing regulations.
- SI-9** Prepare and encourage the passage of legislation to restrict the sale of fortified wines and associated liquors. This legislation shall be sponsored by the City of Denver and brought before the Colorado Legislature by Denver.
- SI-10** Prepare a “bottle bill” ordinance, to require payment at the time of purchase of a deposit on bottled liquors and soft drinks to encourage the return of the empty bottles, for consideration of passage by the Denver Administration and Council.



These numbers correspond to community service providers that are listed on the pages following this map.

SI-3 Community Service Survey



MARCH 1994

Table 1 — Social Services Inventory for Northeast Downtown

Agency Name and Address (*Note: Asterisk indicates treatment service)	Program and Service Provided	Average Daily Number of People Served Summer/Winter	Building Sq Ft
<p>1 — Colorado Coalition for the Homeless • 2100 Broadway</p> <p><i>Sponsor: Colorado Coalition for Homeless</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless Family Project: Assists workers with deposits, lobbying, Section 8 Housing and Case Management • Family Community Center: Provides assistance referrals for low-income families • Stout Street Clinic: Provides medical assistance, dental Care, mental and drug abuse counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 165 families summer 1992 • 176 families winter 1992 • approximately 22 people daily are seen for medical purposes 	30,000
<p>2 — Denver Rescue Mission* 1130 Park Avenue West</p> <p><i>Sponsor: Denver Rescue Mission</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Thirty beds for women and 110 for men • Meals: Breakfast MF and SU; lunch and dinner served everyday • Medical: General, dental, optical, hearing and chiropractic • Rehab Program for 30 Men • Resource Assistance: Spiritual counseling, literacy program, referrals, rent and transportation assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 110 + 30 summer, 140 + 30 winter • MEALS: 75 breakfast 200 lunch 150 dinner • 30 of 110 men rehab program 	23,343 total 3,500 food 7,000 housing
<p>3 — Holy Ghost Church 1900 California Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource Assistance: Minimal assistance with rent; emergency bus fare as funds are available • Food: 775 Sandwiches Daily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 388 people served food daily each year by both programs 	26,485
<p>4 — Coffee and Counseling 2254 Stout Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Shelter between 5 – 8 am six days a week; provide coffee and donuts when available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 – 40 people 	Not available
<p>5 — Mile High Club 2260 Larimer Street</p> <p><i>Sponsor: Private Sources</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Provides housing for single men only; residents pay \$160 a month for bed and/or room; they must be sober to reside on premises or they are referred to Denver Cares for detox; no maximum limit for residing • Counseling: Consists of peer/support counseling • Food: Residents cook their own or eat out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46 men total year round 	5,704
<p>6 — The Phoenix Concept* 2162 Champa Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Twenty-five beds for men; they donate an unknown portion for rent • Rehab Program for men (six months) • Resource Assistance: Mental health and spiritual counseling, job counseling, and literacy program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 men year round 	12,490
<p>7 — Salvation Army 2136 Champa Street</p> <p><i>Sponsor: Salvation Army</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Harbor: Residential program for 41 men • Resource Assistance: Rent assistance and clothing bank 	No record available	8,153
<p>8 — Salvation Army 2201 Stout Street</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative offices from 2136 Champa Street • Resource Assistance: Rent assistance and clothing vouchers 	Case work services; no record available as to the number people served	5,868
<p>9 — St. Francis Chapel 2323 Curtis Street</p> <p><i>Sponsor: Episcopal Diocese of Colorado Trinity Methodist Church</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Shelter: Provides shelter during 8 am – 2 pm MF, and 9 am – noon SU • Episocopal Community Service: Provides showers, clothing bank, mail, telephone, storage, message service and chapel services • “Turn About”: Provides job placement • S.E.T. Ministry of Colorado: Provides nurse 1 day a week; office space for VA counselor 1 day a week; advocacy case worker via Denver Social Services to help process people for assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 450 people 	10,890

Table 1 — Social Services Inventory for Northeast Downtown (continued)

Agency Name and Address (*Note: Asterisk indicates treatment service)	Program and Service Provided	Average Daily Number of People Served Summer/Winter	Building Sq Ft
10 — Volunteers of America The Mission • 2877 Lawrence Street Sponsor: VOA/United Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner for the community M-TH • Resource Assistance: Clothing bank, emergency pantry and job counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250-300 meals • 28-56 items per day 	10,120
11 — Volunteers of America City Harvest Sponsor: VOA /United Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Harvest: Food distribution center for 150 food banks in the metro area 	No direct services	5,500
12 — Volunteers of America Nutrition Service 2636 Larimer Street Sponsor: VOA/DRCOG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals on Wheels: During the noon hour, 2000 meals are delivered to seniors throughout Denver • Sr Nutrition Program: Various centers receive 9800 meals for seniors 	No direct services	19,016
13 — Curtis Park Community Center 29th and Curtis Street Sponsor: Private Non-profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clothing and food bank • Senior Program each Monday for half-day potluck and outings • Recreation: Basketball, gym, weight room, organized leagues, frontiersmen and Girls Scouts • Education: Junior High Program, tutorial, adult career educational program and after school program • Day care for shelter children while parents find employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12-13 for clothing and food bank • 10 for Senior Program • 240 a month for recreation and education programs • 33 for day care 	12,263
14 — Samaritan House 2301 Lawrence Sponsor: Catholic Charities and Archdiocese of Denver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner for residents living in complex • Housing and shelter: Three hundred beds for families, single men and single women • Resource assistance: Transportation, medical referral and job placement 	• 250-300	41,804
15 — Catholic Worker Soup Kitchen 2412 Welton Street Sponsor: Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals: Up to 150 meals provided between 3:30 - 5:00 pm MF 	• 90	4,234
16 — Blake Street Shelter 2440 Blake Street Sponsor: Salvation Army	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Overnight shelter provided, with 150 beds; cots are provided for winter overflow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 summer • 300 winter 	6337
17 — Holy Spirit Center 2161 Tremont Street Sponsor: Holy Ghost Church/Parish support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Bank: Provide one bag of food per month per family 	• 24 families	6,518
18 — Sacred Heart House 2823 Lawrence Street Sponsor: Private Non-profit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Provides temporary shelter for 3-6 weeks for two families • Office Annex: Office space and storage for housing program • Residents cook their own food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 summer • 10 winter 	2,262
19 — Sacred Heart House 2844 Lawrence Street Sponsor: Denver Rescue Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Provides temporary shelter for 3-6 weeks for six families and four singles • Residents cook their own food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 summer • 30 winter 	6,600
20 — Champa House 2544 Champa Street Sponsor: Denver Rescue Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing: Ten family units for single women with children; long term residential facility up to two years 	• 35 year round	8,800

Table 1 — Social Services Inventory for Northeast Downtown (continued)

Agency Name and Address (*Note: Asterisk indicates treatment service)	Program and Service Provided	Average Daily Number of People Served Summer/Winter	Building Sq Ft
21 — Catholic Work House 2412 Welton Street <i>Sponsor: Private</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing: Provides up to 17 beds for people Meals: For house residents only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15, plus two full-time workers 	2,409
22 — Step 13 2029 Larimer Street <i>Sponsor: Private Non-Profit</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing: Boarding house for men only \$120/month for bed a/o room, 28 beds in dorm and 80 single rooms w/bed; 10:00 pm curfew SU-TH and midnight curfew F and S; no drugs, alcohol or counseling; residents need to be out by 7:30 am and are allowed back in by 4:00 pm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 year round 	25,663
23 — Metro CareRing 730 21 st Street <i>Sponsor: Private Non-profit Donations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food Bank: Provides emergency groceries to families on an as-needed basis; also provides diapers Resource assistance: Transportation, new jobs or medical appointments, payment for new prescriptions or utility bills, and referrals to other assistance programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 43 families 	4,000
24 — Sacred Heart Church 2760 Larimer Street <i>Sponsor: Parish donations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free clothing and bread 2 - 4 pm M-F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 people 	12,468
25 — Sharing and Caring Ministries 3703 Downing Street <i>Sponsor: Private</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church and resource center; use permit date 10/21/93 	Unknown	16,177



**HISTORIC
PRESERVATION**





The old McPhee and McGrinnity lumber yard at 24th Blake and Walnut Streets, circa 1920

INTRODUCTION

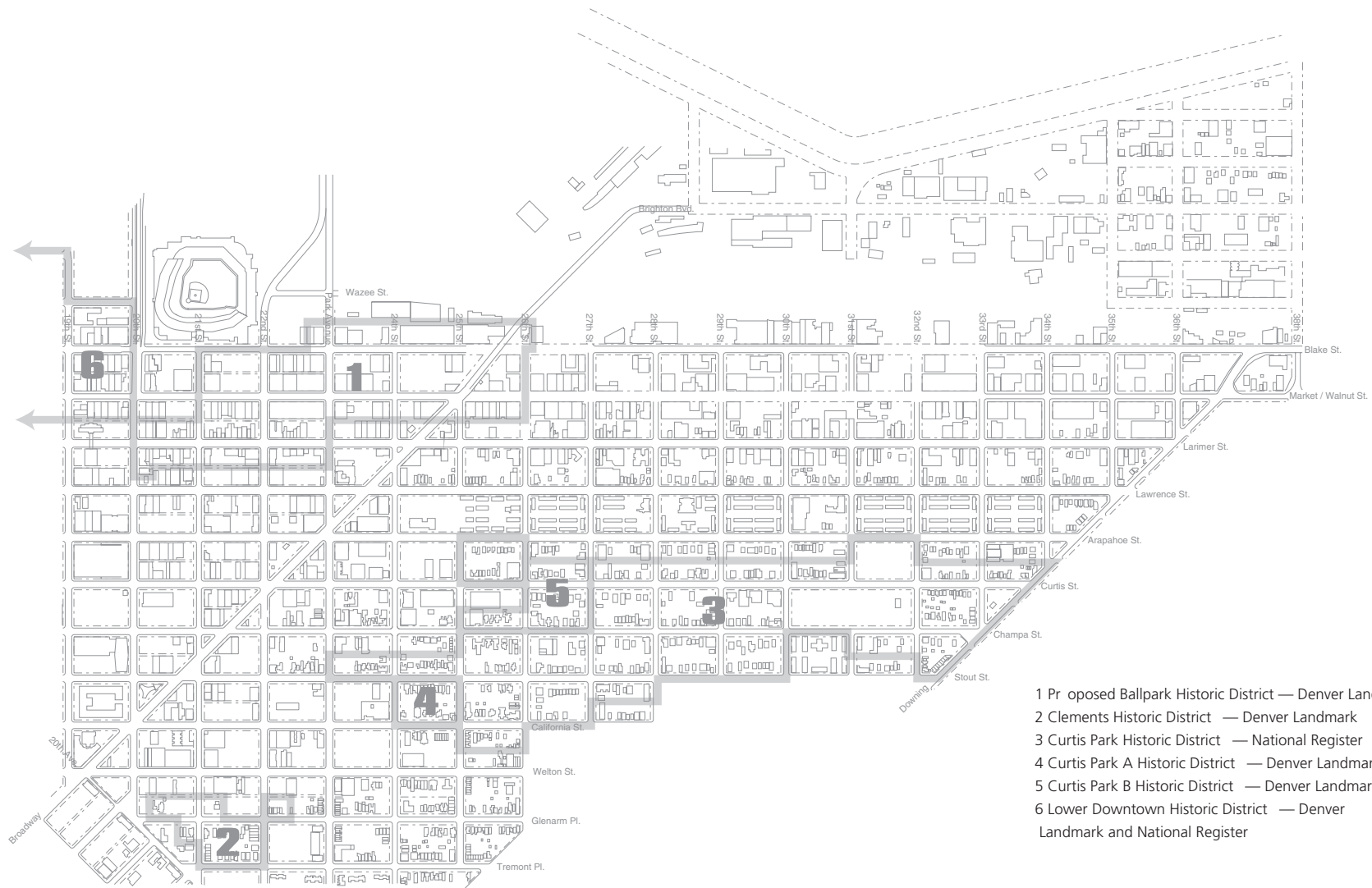
Northeast Downtown is part of the historic core of Denver and, as such, has buildings and historical associations important to understanding Denver's development. This Plan element focuses on existing historic structures and how their preservation can provide a framework for future revitalization and redevelopment. Included in this discussion are background and context as an introduction, a summary of the architectural/historical survey done for this Plan, and historic preservation goals and recommendations included in the Plan.

Historical Overview

In its early, pioneer years, Denver developed along the diagonal grid of streets that paralleled river and railroad tracks. Larimer Street, from the Cherry Creek northeast toward the South Platte River, was Denver's main street — 38 blocks lined with commercial, institutional, and residential structures — work, entertainment, and lodging for the rich and powerful as well as the down and out. As Denver's main commercial street, its businesses served both workers at the industrial uses to the northwest toward the river and railroad tracks and the residents of what are now some of Denver's oldest neighborhoods to the southeast.

Historically, Larimer Street beyond 20th was residential in use with retail establishments on the ground floor. Over the years, the ground floor retail increased as larger buildings were constructed. The upper level apartments and hotels were home to waves of immigrant groups: Italians, Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican. Larimer Street was a vital blue collar neighborhood until City ordinance changes in the 1960's forbade cooking without a properly ventilated kitchen. As a result, many of these upper floors remain vacant or relegated to storage space.

Market Street has its own place in history as Denver's red light district. The Chinese district, "Hop Alley," was located adjacent to Market Street. Blake Street was associated with the railroad and was lined with warehouse and industrial buildings. Denver's first railroad station was located at Wazee and 22nd Street. During the early 20th century, industrial (manufacturing and warehousing) buildings proliferated on Market and Blake.



- 1 Proposed Ballpark Historic District — Denver Landmark
- 2 Clements Historic District — Denver Landmark
- 3 Curtis Park Historic District — National Register
- 4 Curtis Park A Historic District — Denver Landmark
- 5 Curtis Park B Historic District — Denver Landmark
- 6 Lower Downtown Historic District — Denver Landmark and National Register



JULY 1995

MAP HP-1 Historic Districts in and around Northeast Downtown



**A thriving business area in
Northeast Downtown**

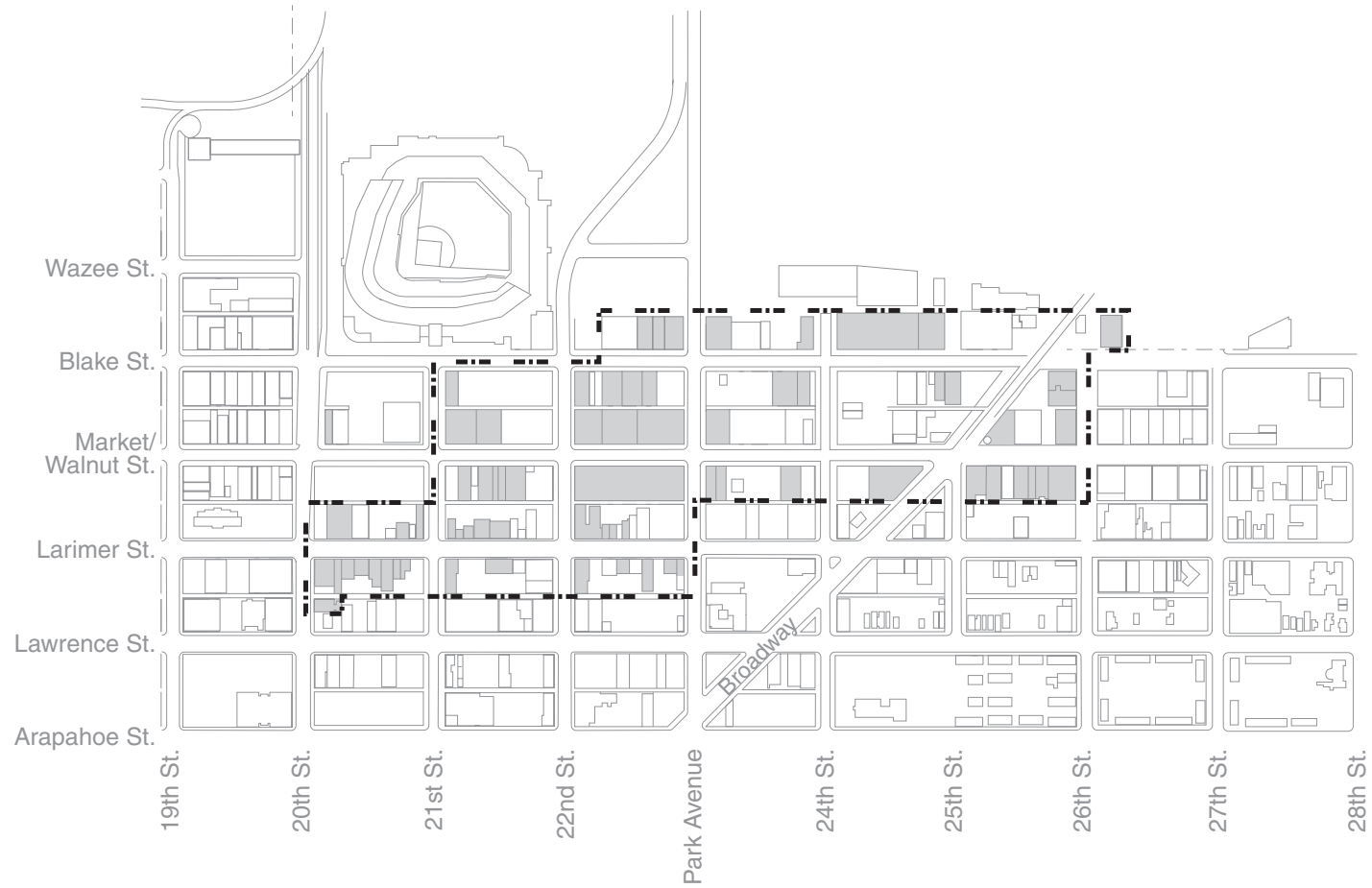
While rich historical associations remain throughout the Northeast Downtown area, the historical building fabric has eroded. Most of the designated historic resources are concentrated in and around the Curtis Park National Register District and the Clements Landmark District. Map HP-1, on the previous page, shows the boundaries of these two designated districts, the Lower Downtown Historic District, and the proposed Ballpark Historic District. It also shows two small landmark districts, both designated in 1995 to provide local protection to a few blocks within the larger Curtis Park National Register District. Map HP-2 shows the proposed Ballpark Historic District in more detail. Only a handful of buildings in the Ballpark area have been designated as Denver Landmarks or listed in the National Register:

- ▶ 1011 20th Street, 20th Street Gym, Denver Landmark #198
- ▶ 2301 Blake, McPhee-McGinnity Building, National Register
- ▶ 2363 Blake, Pacific Express Stables, National Register
- ▶ 2201 Larimer, Burlington Hotel, Denver Landmark #210
- ▶ 2760 Larimer, Sacred Heart Church, Denver Landmark #35
- ▶ 2009 Market, Mattie Silks House, Denver Landmark #124

Early in the development of this Plan, a windshield survey conducted by Planning Office staff identified the area near Coors Field as having the greatest concentration of historic buildings outside of the two designated districts; so this area was selected as the focus for the historic preservation element.

Preservation Activity

While the historical importance of this area has long been recognized, little preservation activity has taken place. *The Gateway Gazette*, published in August 1987 by the Denver Planning Office and Upper Downtown Development Organization, repeatedly recognized the importance of historic buildings to the character of the neighborhood and highlighted the opportunities for rehabilitation and reuse. The concept of a neighborhood plan grew out of a moratorium on demolition established in the fall of 1991 when the current site was selected for the Ballpark. The one-year moratorium was intended to prevent demolition for parking to serve the new ballpark. As part of the agreement with area property owners, the Denver Planning and Community Development Office committed to develop a neighborhood plan for Northeast Downtown.



MAP HP-2 Proposed Ballpark Historic District — Contributing Buildings



APRIL 1993



Burt Moritz drugstore on the corner of Larimer and 21st Streets, circa 1900

Also in the Fall of 1991, an architectural survey was conducted for this area as part of the historic preservation compliance for the 23rd Street Viaduct. The survey identified a potential historic district, which was declared eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This district included the area generally bounded by 21st and 24th streets and the Larimer-Market and Blake-Wazee alleys. Larimer Street was omitted because of the lack of integrity due to demolition and facade remodeling.

Subsequently, controversy erupted in the spring of 1992 related to historic preservation when several of the buildings in this eligible district were proposed for demolition to make way for the new ballpark. A compromise allowed for incorporation of the old Student Movers building into the ballpark, reuse of the historic gas station, and saving the facade of one other building for future reconstruction.

In the Fall of 1992, when the first moratorium was expiring, the Planning Office and Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee reiterated the importance of historic preservation to the area and agreed that consideration should be given to creating a Landmark District to permanently protect the character of the area. In mid October 1992, the Director of Planning and Development and district councilperson sent an invitation to area property owners to discuss continuing the moratorium for another six months in a smaller area. The reasons cited were the rapidly changing conditions in the area and the newly emerging market potentials, which in addition to the Ballpark, included improved access on 20th and 23rd Streets, the success of Lower Downtown, and additional zoning limitations on service providers.

Approximately 40 property owners attended the meeting. It was proposed that the moratorium be extended for six months during which time the Planning Office would conduct an architectural/historical survey and prepare an application for Landmark District designation. Those present unanimously agreed to continue the moratorium while the historic preservation studies were undertaken. The moratorium bill passed City Council on November 16, 1992.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

From November 1992 through April 1993, the Planning Office coordinated the efforts of four interns who conducted the architectural/historical survey of the study area. The architectural survey included approximately 120 buildings in an area bounded by 20th, 26th, Lawrence-Larimer alley, and the Blake-Wazee alley.

Once the survey was completed, the buildings were ranked as significant, contributing, or non-contributing. Non-contributing buildings were those built after the period of significance, 1880 to 1940, or remodeled beyond recognition. The remaining buildings were rated as contributing because of date and retention of historic character. A few buildings were noted as significant because of special architectural character that imparts distinction to the district. The concentration of contributing buildings was the basis of the boundary for the proposed district. A working name of Ballpark Historic District was used to connote a distinctive, recognizable area.

Historical Development Analysis

Historical research on the development of the area identified three general building types reflecting three phases of historical development, which correspond to three architectural styles described in *A Guide to Colorado Architecture*.

Storefront Buildings ▶ The most common type of 19th century commercial structures, storefront buildings are typically two or three stories tall with a variety of ornamental detailing at key locations including the cornice, window surrounds, and course lines. Details most commonly reflect the Italianate, Richardsonian Romanesque, and Neo-Classical styles. First floor features include large display windows with kick plates, transom windows, and inset entrances. Storefront buildings have one or more bays, and at corners, articulation is carried along both facades. Examples of the Storefront style date from the 1880s through the 1910s and range from simple, single-bay examples to elaborate, large corner buildings.



**Renovated buildings on Larimer Street
preserve the workmanship of the last century**



**20th Century Commercial style on
Larimer Street**

Most of these buildings had retail establishments on the first floor and residential apartments on the upper floors, and many of the buildings on Larimer Street are good examples of this type.

20th Century Commercial ▶ This is a transitional style found throughout the area that carries forward some of the first floor storefront characteristics of the Storefront style, but has simplified ornamentation of corbelled and patterned brick. While many of the buildings reflect a comparable range of sizes, some Commercial style buildings have only one story. Examples of this type were constructed between about 1910 through 1940 and reflect a transition, with some having more traditional retail and residential uses and others having industrial and warehouse uses. Some of the later examples are more likely to use light colored brick rather than the darker red brick, and more likely to have loading docks than storefronts.

Factory/Warehouse ▶ The third building type represented in the area is the Factory/Warehouse, which, as the name implies, is a utilitarian architecture intended for these uses. Factory/Warehouse buildings are constructed of brick, range from two to six stories in height, and generally reflect detailing popular at the time of construction. Window sizes and types reflect original use: factory buildings have large expanses of windows for light, while warehouse buildings have small high windows to maximize wall space. The ground floor has docks, awnings, freight doors, and entry doors. Sometimes small sections of storefront and office space are evident. Examples of this style date from the 1880s through the 1940s. Some of Denver's finest examples of this building type are found in this area.

Historically, the proposed Ballpark Historic District was solidly built with structures set at the sidewalk line, creating a very cohesive urban design character. This character has been eroded somewhat with demolition and new construction; however, its original character of 25-foot bays, related course lines, and storefronts and loading docks marching down the street remains basically intact. The three commercial architectural styles are combined in a way not found elsewhere in Denver, and whose historical connections are with the city's development as a commercial, entertainment, and industrial center and with its ethnic groups. Each of the three streets, Larimer, Market, and Blake, reflects this significance in a different combination of buildings and associations, all tied together by a cohesive architectural character. The area has gained prominence throughout the region with the opening of Coors Field in April 1995.

Landmark Designation Criteria

The application for Landmark designation demonstrated that the proposed Ballpark Historic District has importance in the areas of history, architecture, and geography. The period of significance for this district

extends from 1880, the date of the earliest remaining buildings, to the 1940s. Additionally, the district has associations with Denver's early decades of the 1860s and 1870s, although no structures remain from these decades. The following statements summarize the district's significance.

Historically, the district reflects the development and heritage of Denver through its unique collection of buildings, building uses, and associations. Three development trends are evident: early commercial and illicit activity, primarily along Market Street; active retail, residential, and entertainment uses primarily along Larimer Street; and, industrial development centered primarily on Blake Street. Other associations, which are much in evidence today, include such ethnic groups as the Chinese, Italians, Irish, Japanese, Hispanic and African American.

Architecturally, it is a continuation of recognized trends in central Denver's commercial development, the retail storefronts of Larimer Street and the mixed commercial and industrial character of Lower Downtown. Buildings in the district date from the 1880s to the present. The district contains individually significant examples of three styles: the Storefront, 20th Century Commercial, and Factory/Warehouse.

The geographic importance of the neighborhood is based on its relationship to one of Denver's newest landmarks, Coors Field. The Ballpark has been carefully designed to complement the neighborhood. The district also has geographic importance as a gateway to Denver. It has for many years been the immigrant gateway to the city, as evidenced by the international character of the businesses. It is also a transportation gateway to the city. The first railroad station was located at Wazee and 22nd. Larimer Street was both a streetcar route and a state highway; and Broadway was connected with the rail yards in 1922, creating more opportunities for industrial development.

Landmark Designation Process

Once the application for Landmark designation was completed by the Planning Office, two public meetings were held in May of 1993 to present the findings of the study and to request comment from area property owners and the public about sending the application to the Landmark Preservation Commission for consideration. Approximately 75 people attended the two meetings and were very supportive of the application and its positive effect on the area. Concerns raised included design review authority, design guidelines, and expanding the district to include vacant parcels. As a result of these meetings, the district application was forwarded to the Landmark Preservation Commission.

Property owners received notice of the public hearing for designation in late April, 1993. The Landmark Preservation Commission held a public hearing for designation of the district on June 1, 1993.



The Pawley Building, at 26th and Walnut Streets, was built in 1948



The McPhee and McGinnity Lumber Company Building (with the clock tower) at Broadway and Walnut Streets, circa 1923

Opponents to the designation cited concern about what entity would be responsible for design review and too much government control as the primary reasons for opposition. At the request of the Chair of the Commission, a committee of Commission members and property owners met to resolve the issues related to design review. The committee was unable to reach a consensus; so at its July 6, 1993 meeting, the Landmark Preservation Commission agreed to not send the application to City Council and thereby terminated the proceeding. Protection of buildings from demolition ceased with the expiration of the moratorium in May and termination of the Landmark designation procedure in July 1993.

Media Interest

The proposed Landmark designation generated considerable interest in the media. The February 28, 1993 edition of the Denver Post carried a feature story about Larimer Street's past, present, and future. The story gave some details of the street's colorful past, its changing circumstances, and its future potential, either as a historic district or a redeveloped area. In addition to local press, the story generated much interest nationally and was reported in numerous cities, including newspapers in Los Angeles, St. Louis, Albuquerque, and Rutland, Vermont. The story is a compelling one because most cities have historic skid rows and the same questions about their future.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation will continue to be a part of the baseball influence area. Proposals to convert two buildings, the Burlington Hotel and the Awalt Building, to affordable housing are currently pending. The Burlington Hotel project recently received a grant from the Colorado Historical Society toward the renovation of the ground floor for retail uses. Renovation of the Key Club in the 2000 block of Larimer Street is underway. Six shop owners along Larimer Street have remodeled their premises and facade renovation will be undertaken in the fall of 1995. Other new businesses, such as the Breckenridge and Broadway Breweries, have renovated historic buildings.

This renovation activity will continue with or without a district; but the experience of Lower Downtown is a constructive comparison about the intensity of that activity. Prior to the designation of the Lower Downtown Historic District in 1988, rehabilitation activity in Lower Downtown was piecemeal; and, despite some incentives (primarily density bonuses) for preservation, many buildings were demolished and many more threatened. As a result, the character of the district was in question — some owners planned rehabilitation and reuse, while others purchased buildings for the speculative value of the land. Designation assured the preservation approach for development, thereby creating a stable development climate. The Ballpark area has the same potential to benefit from Landmark District designation and the resulting certainty of the direction future development will take.

Goals

The two historic preservation goals are:

- HP-A** Preserve and enhance the architectural and historical character.
- HP-B** Celebrate the unique cultural heritage of the area.



The proposed Ballpark Historic District seeks to preserve the character of the neighborhood



Renovated building on Larimer Street

Preservation and reuse of these buildings have too many demonstrated benefits to the well-being of the neighborhood and the City to be ignored. These goals can only be achieved through a combination of public and private sector actions that form the basis of the recommendations.

Recommendations

Historic preservation will continue to be a major factor in the Ballpark area. Reinitiating the Landmark designation of the area is a proven approach to preserving historic buildings and character. The experience of Lower Downtown and other historic commercial districts indicates the important role design review can play in stabilizing development conditions. Coors Field, improved access, and the success of Lower Downtown, all represent new market potentials and changing development conditions.

Because the resources, character, and culture in this district are unique and somewhat fragile, the recommendation of this Plan is to first prepare design guidelines through a participatory process. The property owners, business owners, and residents have great insight into the complex combination of factors that have made this area what it is. The guidelines need to include a goal statement articulating the neighborhood's vision for itself, and a set of policies, standards, and recommendations about alterations, new construction, and demolition that define how that vision is to be achieved.

The design guidelines will contain substantive standards and procedures that specify the way in which design review is applied in this area.

- HP-1** Use a participatory process to prepare design guidelines that focus on preserving and reinforcing the unique character and quality of the Ballpark area, including:
 - ▶ human scale buildings
 - ▶ scale, mass, detailing, and organization conducive to small, family owned businesses
 - ▶ a “blue collar Larimer Square,” not a museum.

- HP-2** Designate the Ballpark area as a Landmark District to preserve historic character, create economic opportunity appropriate to the district, and use district design guidelines as a basis for design review.

Implementation Tools

HP-3 Establish and implement an effective design review process that complements the district's goals and responds to changing development conditions.

Design Review Design review is the primary tool available to protect existing character and assure a more cohesive character in the future. The design review process has two parts:

- ▮ design guidelines that establish goals, standards, policies, and recommendations about how existing buildings are to be altered and new buildings fit in; and
- ▮ formal review of whether specific projects meet the guidelines and are therefore compatible with historic character.

The greatest challenge for design guidelines is to define an acceptable degree of change in situations where the proposed use differs substantially from the historical use. Industrial/warehouse districts converting to retail, office, and residential use and residential structures converting to retail and office uses are examples. Another challenging situation is where considerable amounts of vacant land need to be developed in a manner that is compatible with and enhances historic character.

Design review includes the review itself and compliance with that review. Each of these can be either voluntary or mandatory. The weakest design review process has voluntary design review and voluntary compliance, which are typically encouraged through the use of incentives such as the Federal and State Rehabilitation Tax Credits or revolving loan funds. The strongest design review process has mandatory review and mandatory compliance, as is the case for designated Denver Landmarks and Landmark Districts, and is the only option that provides protection from demolition. Another option, used in downtown Boulder, is mandatory design review and voluntary compliance. Designation as a Landmark District creates mandatory design review and compliance; however, a more informal, voluntary approach may be implemented through the Neighborhood Business Revitalization district.

Whether design review is mandatory or voluntary depends on the threats to existing character and the vision for the appearance of the area. Serious threats such as demolition of buildings or substantial, incompatible alterations require mandatory compliance. More stable areas with minimal development pressure and existing appreciation of historic character can meet design review goals through voluntary compliance with clear, understandable design guidelines. However it is accomplished, a workable and effective design review process is essential to maintaining and enhancing the existing character of the area.



Design guidelines are an important tool for preserving the historic character of the area



**Minehart and Traylor built this building
in 1923 at 2500 Walnut Street**

HP-4 Encourage utilization of existing incentive programs and create new incentive programs as appropriate and feasible.

Incentives for Historic Preservation ► Incentives are a means for the public sector to encourage private investment in historic buildings and to assure that the rehabilitation activity is compatible with historic character. The most recognized incentives are the Federal and State Income Tax Credits for rehabilitation.

The Federal Investment Tax Credit is available to income producing properties and has two options: a 20-percent credit for buildings listed in the National Register and a 10-percent credit for buildings over 36 years old not listed in the National Register. To qualify for the 20 percent credit, the rehabilitation must be approved by the Colorado Historical Society and National Park Service; this credit has the additional benefit of applying to income-producing housing projects, so it can be paired with the Low Income Housing Tax Credit. The 10- percent credit has no administrative review, but is not available to housing projects.

The State Income Tax Credit is available to Denver Landmark and State and National Register properties. All property types, including owner occupied residential, can qualify for the tax credit. In Denver, the design review is done by the Landmark Preservation Commission. The amount of the credit is 20 percent, unless the Federal Investment Tax Credit is used, in which case the state credit is 10 percent of the Federal credit.

Other incentive programs are also available. Chapter 61 in Denver's Building Code, The Rehabilitation of Older Buildings, allows for a more flexible application of health and safety codes, and is essential to cost effective rehabilitation, especially if a substantial use change is involved. Revolving loan funds have been created for specific areas to encourage rehabilitation activity. Loan pools such as this are currently in place in Lower Downtown and Downtown. Typically, these funds are available only to designated Denver Landmarks or Landmark Districts. The Colorado State Historical Fund is an additional resource to assist in survey and planning, education, and rehabilitation projects.



LAND USE & ZONING





The Baseball Environs Subarea's street configuration needs modification

INTRODUCTION

The Land Use and Zoning element is perhaps the most important component of the *Northeast Downtown Plan*, since it provides an overall direction and foundation to the proposed land uses that should evolve and recommends the zoning concepts that will help to achieve that long range vision. Land use in its broadest sense is vital to determining an area's character. The land use and zoning recommendations are fundamental to all of the other elements of this Plan. Urban design and all of the other elements draw upon the policy direction set in this chapter. In fact, the Urban Design element and the Transportation and Parking element both contain zoning recommendations pertinent to their subject matter that need to be kept in mind while reviewing the zoning section of this chapter.

This chapter first analyzes the existing land use situation in Northeast Downtown and its subareas. Based on this analysis, future land use recommendations are suggested. Zoning, one of the most important determinants of land use, is then examined. Zoning recommendations are presented based on the preceding land use and zoning analyses. The chapter concludes with some concerns pertaining to the recommended mixed use zoning concepts that need to be acknowledged and then addressed when the recommendations are implemented.

EXISTING LAND USE

As noted in the Background Information chapter, the Northeast Downtown Study Area is located within Census Tract 16. The Denver Planning and Community Development Office maintains extensive land use, zoning and housing information files by census tracts. Because Census Tract 16 includes a sizable area outside of Northeast Downtown, it is impossible to use those information files to get an accurate indication of existing land use and zoning in Northeast Downtown. However, as explained below, a special land use survey was conducted in the Study Area to meet the needs of both the market study and this planning study.

Summary Report of the Northeast Downtown Land Use Survey

Introduction

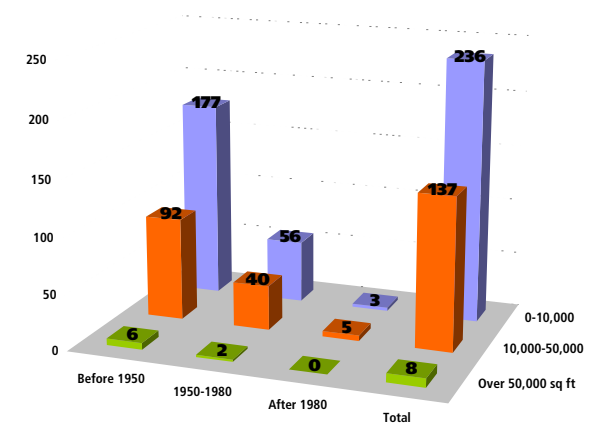
A special land use study was undertaken in the summer and fall of 1992 as a foundation to the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*. The Summary Report of the Northeast Downtown Plan Land Use Survey, is useful to understand the general breakout of land uses and zoning in Northeast Downtown and its five survey subareas. The information presented below is taken from that Summary Report.

Background and General Methodology

The information contained in the Summary Report was collected from several sources and entered into a computerized database. First, appropriate available information for all parcels in the study area was received from the Denver Assessor's Office and merged into a DBase IV computer file. This data was supplemented by additional information collected in a field survey of all study area properties during the summer of 1992. The field survey information was brought back to the Planning and Community Development Office; four digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes were assigned; and this data was then entered into the database.

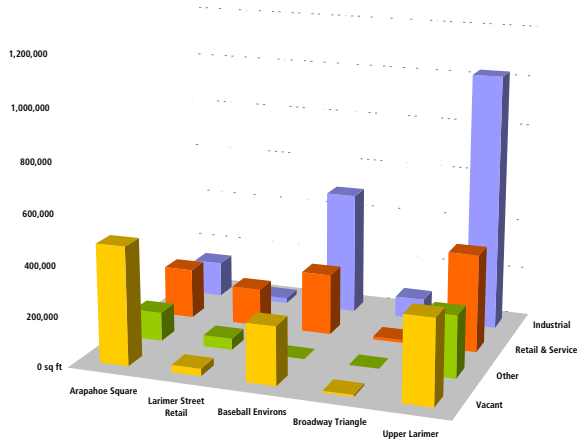
Both the Assessor's Office and the field survey data were checked for reliability; and changes were made as needed. Since the Assessor's Office data is collected for tax assessment purposes, it was necessary to manipulate it and in some cases modify it, for market study and land use planning purposes. Finally and

**Graph 1 — Chronology of Building Construction
(by square footage and year built)**

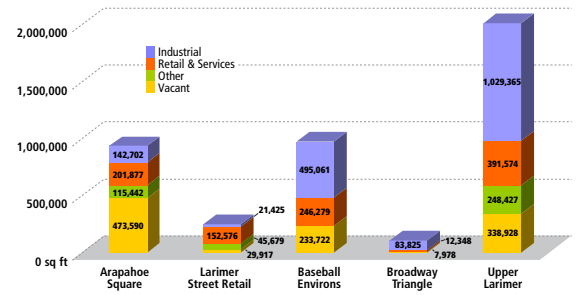


Source: *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis (August 1994)* by Coley/Forrest and Ross Consulting Group, based on information from the City and County of Denver Assessor's Office and the Denver Planning Office land use survey

Graph 2a — Building Square Footage (by business type and subarea)



Graph 2b — Square Footage Totals (by business type and subarea)



Source: Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis (August 1994) by Coley/Forrest and Ross Consulting Group, based on information from the City and County of Denver Assessor's Office and the Denver Planning Office land use survey

most importantly, the field survey data was verified with knowledgeable property owners and business people in the area; and changes were made in the database as appropriate.

Land Use Survey Subareas

The Land Use Survey Subareas Map (the attached Map LUZ-1) delineates the five subareas for which data was collected, coded, and summarized in a series of tables. These land use survey subareas are similar to, but different from, the general land use planning subareas that will be discussed later in this chapter. However, they give a good overview of the general land use character of the subareas within Northeast Downtown.

Summary of Existing Land Use in Northeast Downtown

The Summary Report included a number of tables providing helpful information to understanding the existing land use distribution in Northeast Downtown and in the five subareas depicted on Map LUZ-1. Table 1 presents a summary of building square footage by business type in Northeast Downtown. Tables 2-7 present a chronology of buildings constructed, by size and by age range, for Northeast Downtown and for each of the five land use survey subareas.

Table 1 — Northeast Downtown

	Subarea #1	Subarea #2	Subarea #3	Subarea #4	Subarea #5	Total	% of Total
Industrial Manufacturing	28,741	0	72,957	0	565,253	666,951	15.2
Industrial Distribution/Wholesale	53,810	9,025	349,229	83,825	464,112	960,001	21.8
Industrial Arts	60,151	12,400	72,875	0	131,881	277,307	6.3
Retail	75,056	119,308	107,312	6,118	175,855	483,649	11.0
Services	126,821	33,268	138,967	6,230	215,719	521,005	11.8
Residential (Conventional)	27,813	16,325	0	0	35,188	79,326	1.8
Live/Work	0	0	0	0	177,196	177,196	4.0
Social Services	56,679	29,354	0	0	23,009	109,042	2.5
Government/Exempt	30,950	0	0	0	13,034	43,984	1.0
Vacant	473,590	29,917	233,722	7,978	338,928	1,084,135	24.6
TOTAL	933,611	249,597	975,062	104,151	2,140,175	4,402,596	100.0
Occupied Square Feet	460,021	219,680	741,340	96,173	1,801,247	3,318,461	75.4

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor's Office: Denver Planning Office Survey, August, 1992

Industrial Manufacturing: SIC Codes 2000-3999
Services: SIC Codes 7000-8999

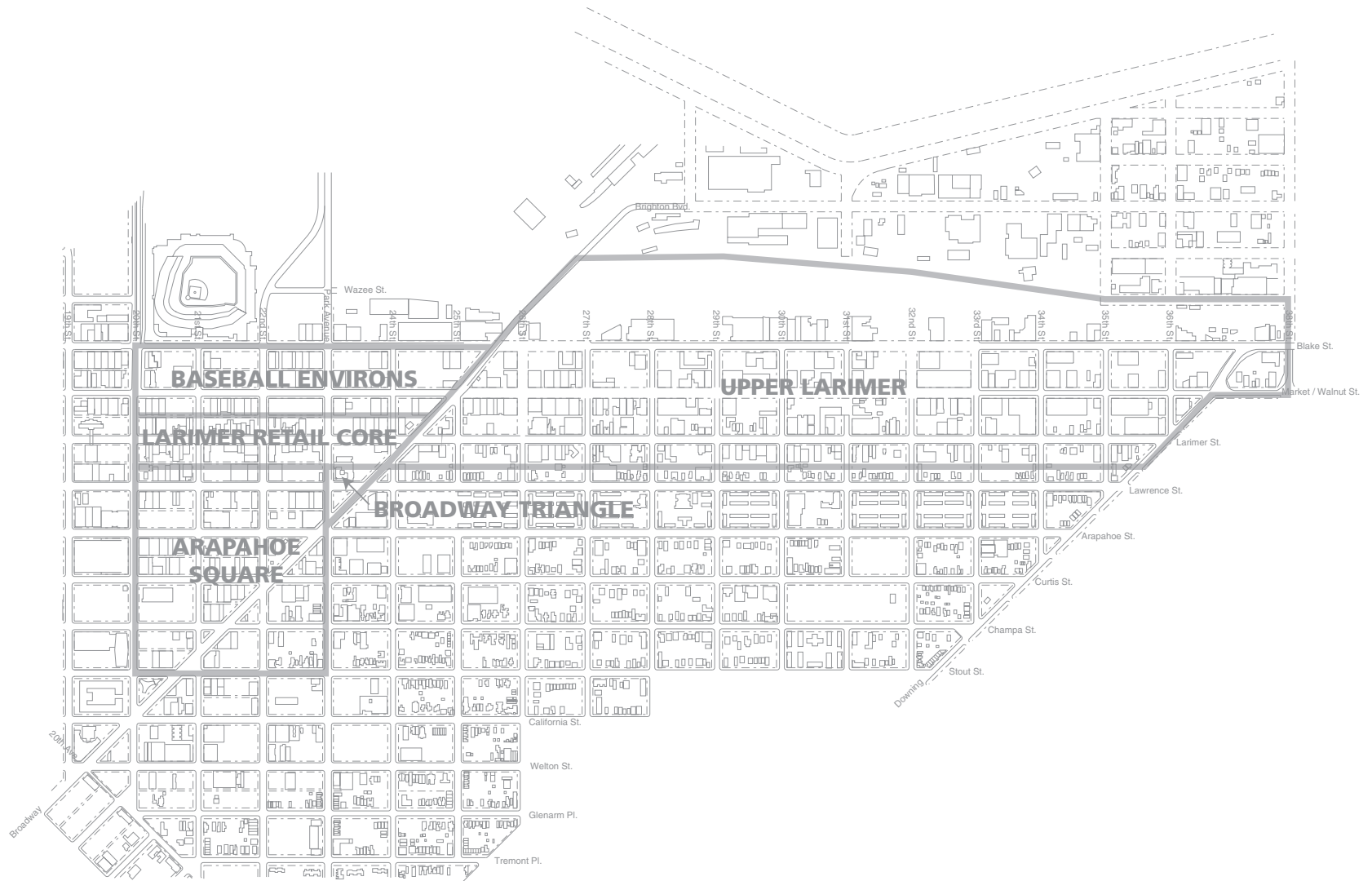
Industrial Distribution/Wholesale: SIC Codes 4000-5199
Services: SIC Codes 8322-8399

Retail: SIC Codes 5200-5999
Residential: Denver Class Codes 100-205

Subareas: Subarea #1 Arapahoe Square Industrial
 Subarea #4 Broadway Triangle Social

Subarea #2 Larimer St. Retail Core
 Subarea #5 Upper Larimer

Subarea #3 Baseball Environs



LUZ-1 Land Use Survey Summary Report Subareas



JUNE 1992

Table 2 — Chronology of Buildings Constructed in Northeast Downtown: Northeast Downtown Total number of buildings

Building Size (sq ft)	Built Before 1950	Built Between 1950 & 1980	Built After 1980	Total
0 – 2,500	54	11	3	68
2,501 – 5,000	53	19	0	72
5,001 – 10,000	70	26	0	96
10,001 - 25,000	64	30	3	97
25,001 – 50,000	28	10	2	40
50,000	6	2	0	8
TOTAL	275 (72.2%)	98 (25.7%)	8 (2.1%)	381
Avg. Year of Constr.	1913	1966	1985	

Table 3 — Chronology of Buildings Constructed in Northeast Downtown: Arapahoe Square Subarea number of buildings

Building Size (sq ft)	Built Before 1950	Built Between 1950 & 1980	Built After 1980	Total
0 – 2,500	13	5	0	18
2,501 – 5,000	9	4	0	13
5,001 – 10,000	18	6	0	24
10,001 – 25,000	16	6	0	22
25,001 – 50,000	0	1	1	2
50,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	56	22	1	79
Avg. Year of Constr.	1917	1958	1983	

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor's Office, August, 1992

Table 4 — Chronology of Buildings Constructed in Northeast Downtown: Baseball Environs Subarea
number of buildings

Building Size (sq ft)	Built Before 1950	Built Between 1950 & 1980	Built After 1980	Total
0 – 2,500	0	1	0	1
2,501 – 5,000	1	0	0	1
5,001 – 10,000	11	0	0	11
10,001- 25,000	10	1	0	11
25,001 – 50,000	11	1	0	12
50,000	6	1	0	7
TOTAL	39	4	0	43
Avg.Year of Constr.	1921	1975	N/A	

Table 5 — Chronology of Buildings Constructed in Northeast Downtown: Broadway Triangle Subarea
number of buildings

Building Size (sq ft)	Built Before 1950	Built Between 1950 & 1980	Built After 1980	Total
0 – 2,500	0	0	1	1
2,501 – 5,000	1	0	0	1
5,001 – 10,000	3	0	0	3
10,001 –25,000	0	0	0	0
25,001 – 50,000	2	0	1	3
50,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	6	0	2	8
Avg.Year of Constr.	1913	1967	1987	

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor's Office, August, 1992

Table 6 — Chronology of Buildings Constructed in Northeast Downtown: North Larimer Retail Core Subarea
number of buildings

Building Size (sq ft)	Built Before 1950	Built Between 1950 & 1980	Built After 1980	Total
0 – 2,500	8	0	0	8
2,501 – 5,000	7	0	0	7
5,001 – 10,000	13	1	0	14
10,001- 25,000	6	0	0	6
25,001 – 50,000	1	1	0	2
50,000	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	35	2	0	37
Avg. Year of Constr.	1900	1970	N/A	

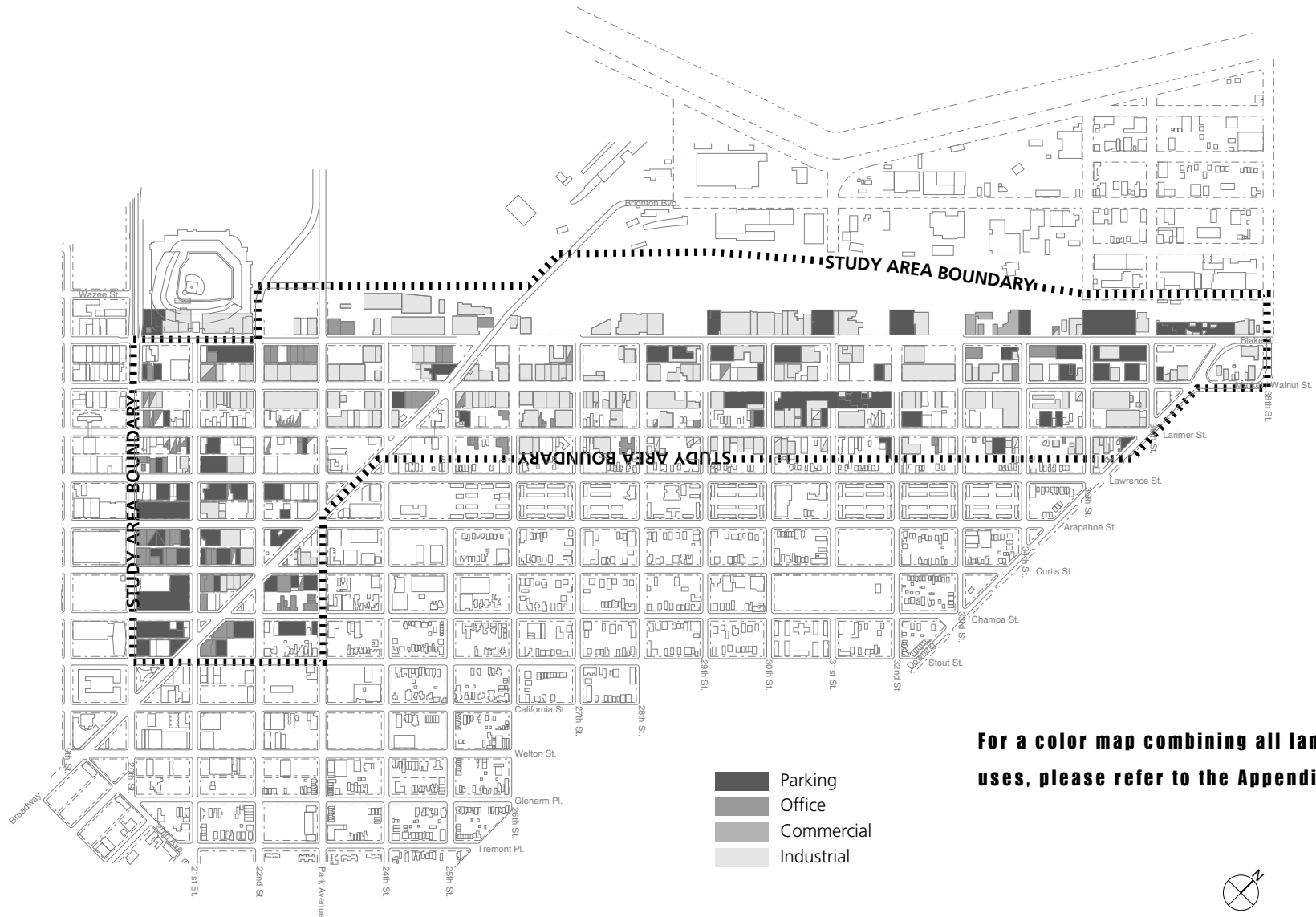
Table 7 — Chronology of Buildings Constructed in Northeast Downtown: Upper Larimer Subarea
number of buildings

Building Size (sq ft)	Built Before 1950	Built Between 1950 & 1980	Built After 1980	Total
0 – 2,500	33	5	2	40
2,501 – 5,000	35	15	0	50
5,001 – 10,000	25	19	0	39
10,001 – 25,000	32	23	3	58
25,001 – 50,000	14	7	0	21
50,000	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	139	70	5	209
Avg. Year of Constr.	1915	1962	1984	

Source: City and County of Denver Assessor's Office, August, 1992

Existing Land Use Map

Map LUZ-2 is a map of the generalized existing land uses in Northeast Downtown, illustrating the existing diversity of land uses in the area.

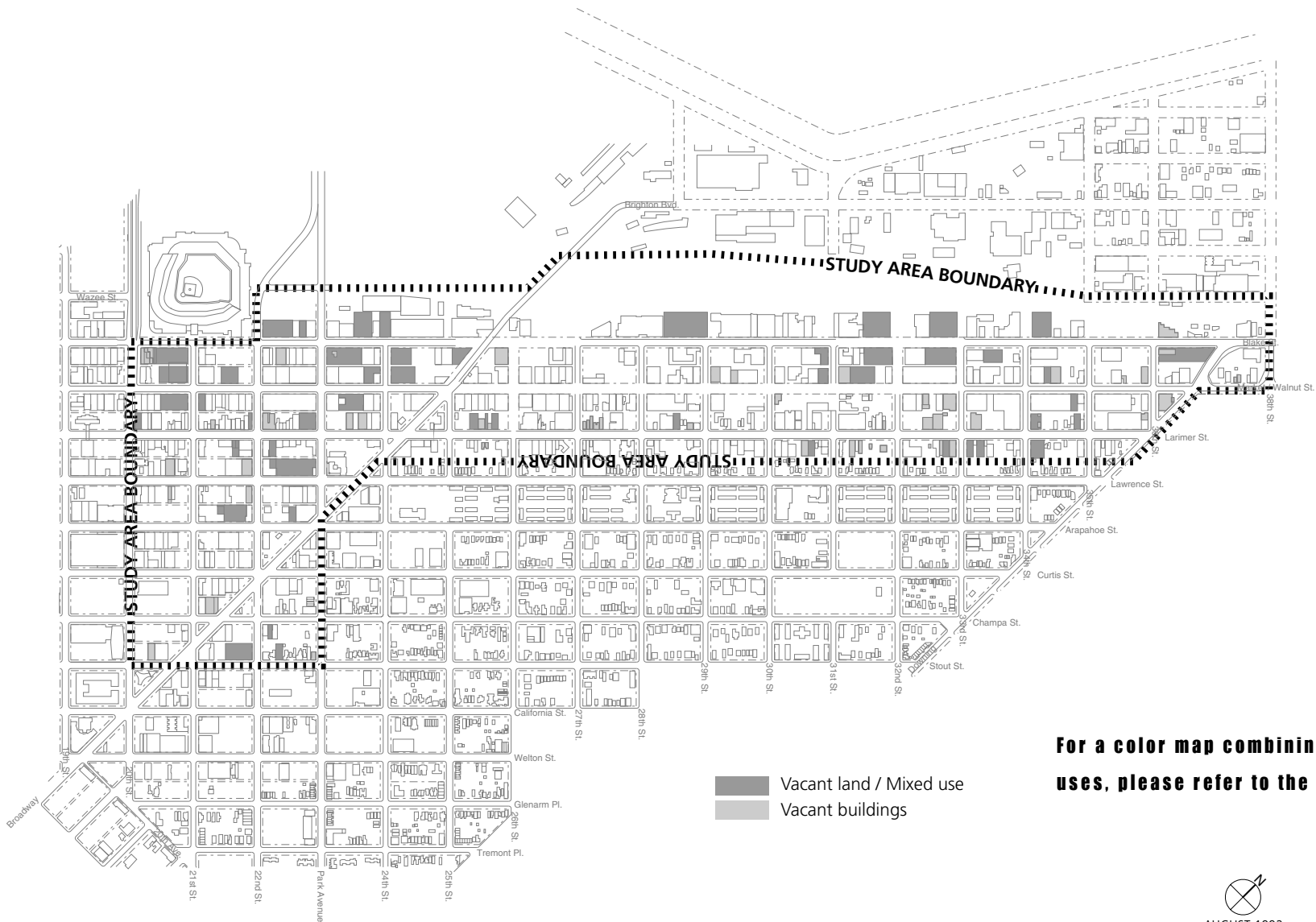


For a color map combining all land uses, please refer to the Appendix.

LUZ-2a Existing Land Uses – Parking, Office, Commercial and Industrial



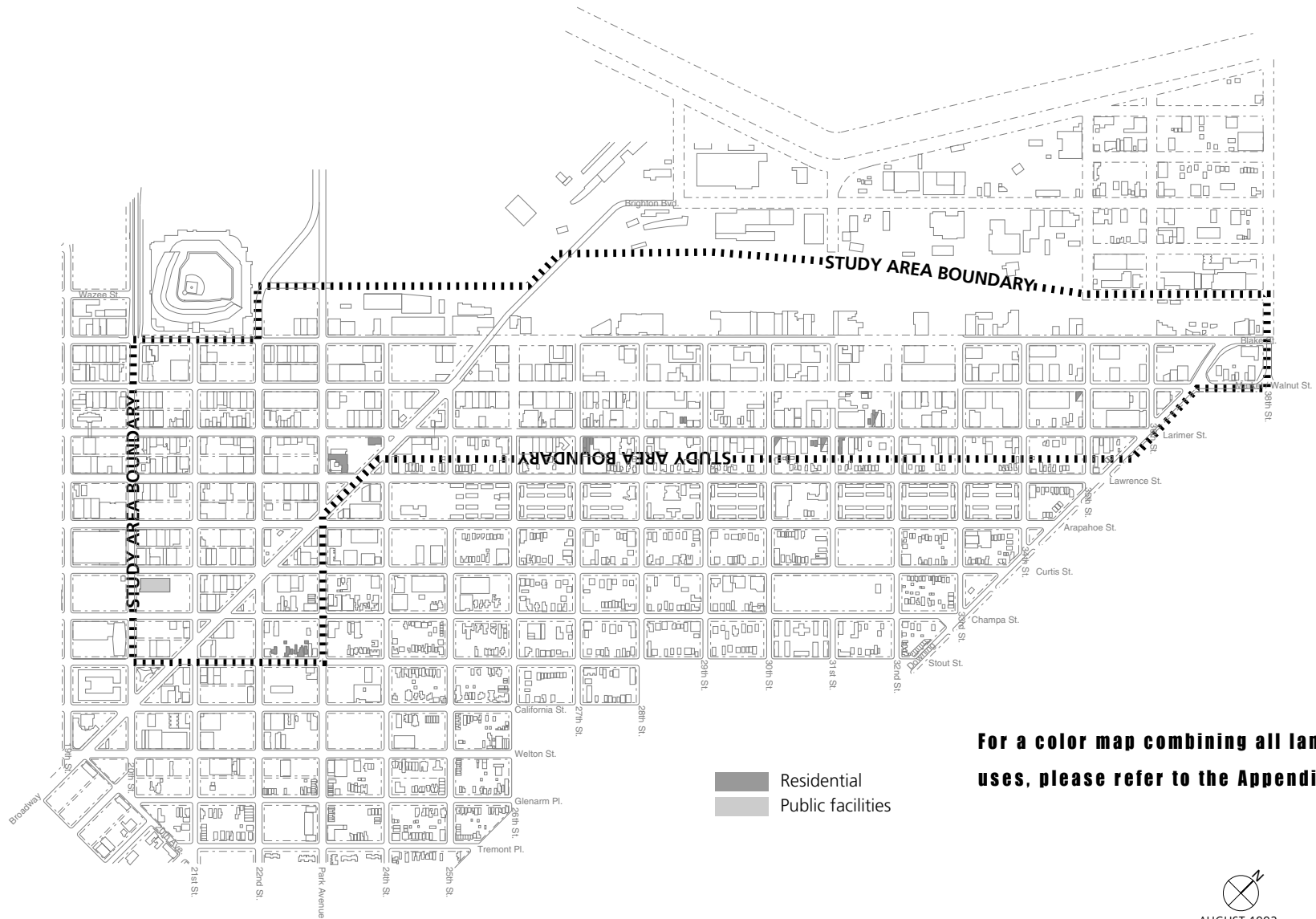
AUGUST 1992



For a color map combining all land uses, please refer to the Appendix.


AUGUST 1992

LUZ-2b Existing Land Uses – Vacant Land and Buildings, and Mixed Use



LUZ-2c Existing Land Uses – Residential and Public Facilities



The Piggy Wiggly Building, at 21st and Market Streets, was built in 1927

Existing Land Use Information and Issues by Planning Subareas

For the purposes of this Plan, the five land use survey subareas were grouped into three planning subareas as described below.

Baseball Environs Subarea

The Baseball Environs Subarea is bounded by 20th Street to Broadway, and from the railroad tracks/Wazee to Lawrence. The total area is approximately 30 acres and is zoned I-1, I-2, B-8 and PUD (for several sites). Signature uses and areas within this subarea are Coors Field, the North Larimer Street Retail Core (named in November 1993 to be one of the City’s designed Neighborhood Business Revitalization Areas), Breckenridge Brewery and Samaritan House. It also contains the majority of the area in the proposed Ballpark Historic District.

This subarea has a building coverage of about 90% with about 20% of the building space vacant. There are 283 residential units in the subarea, including Samaritan House. Occupied space of major uses are

industrial distribution/wholesale	442,000 square feet (42%)
retail	233,000 square feet (22%)
services	178,000 square feet (17%)
sub-total	853,000 square feet (81%)

Key land use and other issues within the Baseball Environs Subarea include

- ▶ maintaining/retaining/replacing the older industrial distribution and warehouse uses
- ▶ housing over the longer term, given the relatively few buildings suitable for housing conversion and the need for rental rates to increase in order to justify new residential construction
- ▶ disposition/use of the Public Service Company site, bounded by Blake, Market, 20th and 21st Streets
- ▶ traffic volumes (especially on 20th, 22nd Streets and Park Avenue West) and the Coors Field traffic having a potential conflict with industrial uses and a negative impact (with parking lots) on adjacent uses
- ▶ impacts of social services, surface parking, fast food, and auto service uses on market use potentials
- ▶ creating and promoting a positive neighborhood identity and distinctive name

The *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* identified the following as potential uses and development opportunities in the Baseball Environs Subarea:

- ▶ potential reuse for suitable buildings, including residential, arts related, business showrooms, professional offices, and possibly retail
- ▶ the North Larimer Retail Core for multi-ethnic grocery stores, restaurants, gift shops, etc.; issues surrounding the feasibility of a mercado (or international marketplace) for North Larimer include the definition of uses and themes, securing an anchor and critical mass, differentiation from other competitive “ethnic” markets, definition of its base market, and building renovation vs. new construction
- ▶ surface parking (baseball related)
- ▶ restaurants and entertainment uses (baseball related)
- ▶ fast food and auto service uses along 20th and 23rd Streets
- ▶ industrial distribution and light assembly

Arapahoe Square Subarea

The Arapahoe Square Subarea boundaries are Lawrence, Stout, 20th Streets, and 23rd/Park Avenue West. It covers about 13 square blocks which contain approximately 31.6 acres, including alleys and excluding streets. There are about 900,000 square feet of building space within about 79 buildings — all but two buildings are 25,000 square feet or less. The 1992 land use survey indicated that one-half of the buildings are vacant.

Predominate businesses are surface parking lots, business services, industrial distributors, wholesalers, manufacturers, industrial art shops and retailers. There are three private-sector residential projects in the neighborhood in renovated structures.

Key market-related trends/events/issues in (or affecting) the Arapahoe Square Subarea include

- ▶ changes in traffic patterns
- ▶ the North Larimer Street Neighborhood Business Revitalization Program (NBR)
- ▶ Coors Field and related improvements



Surface parking lots are a common land use in the Arapahoe Square Subarea



Current land use conditions in Upper Larimer Subarea may conflict with housing

- ▶ the presence of social service facilities and associated land use impacts
- ▶ the lack of feasibility for private market housing given current land use conditions, the lack of sufficient structures suitable for housing rehab, the high cost of land and new construction, and the presence of nearby competitive housing for the market segment seeking downtown area housing.

Market Analysis findings are that the private market expectations in the next several years are for

- ▶ fast food operations and auto service operations along high traffic corridors
- ▶ surface parking lots
- ▶ housing in renovated structures
- ▶ business services (which do not need a prestige location)

Market Analysis expectations for the private market for 1997 and beyond include continuation of the above markets and possibly mid-rise office construction in the 2000 blocks of Arapahoe Square, and perhaps additional restaurants and bars with nightly entertainment.

Upper Larimer Subarea

Upper Larimer is bounded by Broadway to 38th Street, and from the railroad tracks to the alley between Larimer and Lawrence Streets. This area contains approximately 100 acres and is zoned I-2, I-1, B-4 and one PUD (for Silver Square). Key signature uses and buildings in this subarea include Silver Square, the Styro and Benjamin Moore Buildings, and the “artist land” in the 2900-3100 blocks of Larimer. There is about a 45% building coverage in this area and only a 16% vacancy rate of the available building square footage. Upper Larimer’s profile of existing building square footage, by use is

industrial manufacturing	556,000 square feet (31%)
industrial distribution/wholesale	464,000 square feet (26%)
services	216,000 square feet (12%)
live/work	177,000 square feet (10%)
retail	176,000 square feet (10%)
industrial arts	132,000 square feet (7%)
sub-total	1,721,000 square feet (96%)

In addition, Upper Larimer includes 178 housing units, 52 of which are at Silver Square, which is currently undergoing conversion to 57 condominium housing units.

Land use, zoning and other issues in Upper Larimer include:

- ▶ functional obsolescence of many old industrial buildings and properties (the relatively low vacancy rate would be much higher if the reuse of outdated industrial buildings had not been so successful)
- ▶ zoning to permit a broader cross section of live/work situations, residential uses and supportive neighborhood retail uses
- ▶ traffic connections — north to I-70 and west to Brighton Boulevard
- ▶ the nearby Curtis Park housing project — image and impacts
- ▶ social services — land use impacts and compatibility with market use potentials
- ▶ use potentials for vacant parcels and large, vacant buildings
- ▶ redlining by lenders
- ▶ how to keep Upper Larimer transitioning to “higher and better uses” but still unique and not “slicked up”
- ▶ how to secure more neighborhood support uses and services (e.g., restaurants, grocery stores) when the current resident population and other markets are lacking to make them economically viable at the present time?

The *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* identified the following uses as viable opportunities in Upper Larimer:

- ▶ industrial (manufacturing and distribution) whether retained, replacement or new
- ▶ additional live/work situations, lofts, and multi-family housing
- ▶ additional industrial arts and commercial



One of the many employers in Upper Larimer



The Larimer Street retail scene

FUTURE LAND USE

Introduction

The future land use recommendations for Northeast Downtown and its three major subareas are listed in this section. The background and rationale for these goals and recommendations are outlined immediately below. The Plan's other goals and policy recommendations (especially those in historic preservation, urban design, economic and housing development and social issues) also affect land use and should be considered as part of the overall plan policies relating to future land use in Northeast Downtown.

Background and Rationale for Land Use Goals and Recommendations

There is a strong and persuasive rationale underlying the land use goals and recommendations in this Plan. Inputs include goals and policies from other elements (especially historic preservation, urban design, and economic and housing development) of this Plan, previous planning studies and recommendations, and findings from the land use survey and *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*.

Previous General Planning Studies

Although there have been numerous studies of various aspects (land use, housing, social services, etc.) of portions of Northeast Downtown over the last decade, the most relevant and authoritative general planning assessment was included in the 1986 *Downtown Area Plan*, which was adopted and is part of the *Denver Comprehensive Plan*. The Arapahoe Triangle district (whose boundaries closely coincide with the Baseball Environs and Arapahoe Square subareas) was characterized in the *Downtown Area Plan* as being a transitional area with important historic warehouses and a potential to become a special arts district. The following key issues and recommendations were taken directly from the *Downtown Area Plan*:

- ▶ The Arapahoe Triangle is no longer suitable for industrial uses because of access, the size or parcels, and condition of existing structures.

- ▶ The existing zoning should be revised to support a mixed-use zone. In the area north of Lower Downtown, a land use mix of artist and design studios, housing and commercial uses, should be encouraged. Among the areas that will support residential uses, high-rise housing should be concentrated on the west side of Broadway. Housing development in the Upper Larimer area and surrounding the Clements Historic District should be compatible with the historic scale and character of the area.
- ▶ Industrial buildings should be reused and reinforced by infill development which is compatible in height and massing. Improvement and renovation of existing buildings and contextual infill development of Larimer Street face blocks from 20th to 23rd Streets, and the historic character of the street should be reinforced. It should serve the area as a neighborhood commercial center.
- ▶ The Arapahoe Triangle is the location of shelters and social service centers, local bars, and pawn shops. Further concentration of shelters in this area would hinder redevelopment efforts.
- ▶ Discourage further concentration of incompatible land uses, including shelter facilities, which inhibit redevelopment efforts and new investments. Support programs such as Denver C.A.R.E.S. detoxification services.
- ▶ 23rd Street from Broadway to the southeast should be improved to reinforce its parkway designation. Preserve the Styro Clock Tower Building and establish it as a downtown gateway.

Building on this framework, in 1987 the “gateway planning charette” for Arapahoe Triangle — which was termed the Gateway District — included the following observations and land use/zoning recommendations that were published but never officially adopted by the City:

- ▶ The Blake Street Warehouse/Loft District can continue to expand as an “alternative” residential district for the arts community, similar to Upper Larimer. Small businesses are locating here, as well as those requiring central warehousing and downtown distribution facilities. As the population base expands, this historic mercantile area will attract more amenities such as restaurant and entertainment facilities; in due time, retailers catering to neighborhood needs will follow.
- ▶ The change in zoning along 20th Street develops a different building character and land use pattern. This discernable boundary to downtown growth should be reinforced and coupled with guidelines for parking structures in the Gateway district. Parking structures which serve downtown should include active uses at the ground floor, facade improvements and lighting/landscaping upgrades to create a stimulus to development.



The renovated Burlington Hotel Building supports mixed-use retail, offices and housing



Junk yard along Blake Street

- ▶ Upper Larimer (“Denver’s SoHo”) is a mixed use area containing industrial uses, artist studios and galleries. As a home to heavy industry, the neighborhood businesses provided a solid tax base for Denver until the 1960’s. By then, many of the larger plants became functionally obsolete and left central Denver to be replaced by small businesses, artist studios and renovated warehouses providing mixed-use living and working spaces.
- ▶ Junk processing impacts create major problems for redevelopment of the area. Although the area is zoned for industrial use, certain industrial uses are incompatible and inhibit redevelopment efforts.
- ▶ Language improvements are also needed to the existing B-8 zone. Revised provisions should require a better quality of development while removing uses deemed incompatible with current plans. Among the area that will support residential uses, higher density housing should be concentrated west of 23rd Street.

Northeast Downtown Market Analysis Findings

Findings from the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*, and the accompanying land use survey, also support the land use and zoning goals and recommendations in this Plan. The land use survey and recent sales tax trends (see the tables in the Economic Development chapter) indicate that Northeast Downtown is evolving from an industrial area to a mixed use area.

Several important facts from the land use survey are important to emphasize. First, Table 1 indicates that Northeast Downtown’s stock of building square footage has a 25% vacancy rate, with vacancy rates of 51% in Arapahoe Square, 12% in the Larimer Retail Core, 24% in Baseball Environs, 8% in the Broadway Triangle, and 16% in Upper Larimer. These rates would be much higher if non-industrial uses had not occupied many buildings that had become functionally obsolete for industrial purposes. Second, Table 1 also indicates that just over 43% of the building square footage in Northeast Downtown is actually being used for manufacturing, distribution, and industrial arts uses, suggesting that the area already has an established mixed land use pattern. Third, the land use survey found that just 31% of the businesses in Northeast Downtown were classified as manufacturing or wholesale trade. Fourth, the 1989-1994 sales tax trends for Northeast Downtown (see Economic Development chapter) noted a larger growth in several retail sales tax categories and that they are becoming more important-compared to more traditional industrially-oriented goods and services.

In summary, there is widespread and growing factual evidence that Northeast Downtown is already a mixed use area. The Planning Committee held several meetings with real estate experts in the areas of

appraisal, brokerage, and development who noted that Northeast Downtown no longer meets the requirements of today's industrial users because of its restricted access, the condition and layout of its aging buildings, and the size and shape of the parcels. This does not mean that there is no longer an important industrial role for Northeast Downtown, but that its industrial dominance is past. This is consistent with the findings of the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*.

The highlights of the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* were identified previously for each subarea and characterized Northeast Downtown as follows: Northeast Downtown is an area in transition and, while it still has a vital industrial role to play, its industrial peak is past.

Therefore, while a reasonable range of industrial uses should continue to be allowed, the most exciting prospect for the area is mixing industrial, industrial arts and live/work opportunities. In addition, Baseball Environs (including the Larimer Street Retail Core) has additional commercial and entertainment opportunities. While this mix will create conflicts between uses, traffic, and parking, it will also enhance and maximize market opportunities.



Live/work lofts on the 3000 block of Larimer Street in Upper Larimer



The Plan's vision is to develop a mixed-use community accommodating a wide range of compatible uses

VISION AND GOALS FOR NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN LAND USE

Vision

The long range Vision for Northeast Downtown is worth restating since it is very relevant to the future land use recommendations of this Plan. The vision for Northeast Downtown is **to improve the image and functioning of the area by:**

- ▶ retaining existing businesses and recruiting new businesses to relocate into the area
- ▶ retaining existing residences and encouraging additional residential uses in the area
- ▶ redeveloping vacant and under-utilized properties
- ▶ providing open space and recreation amenities to attract residents and visitors
- ▶ encouraging adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing buildings
- ▶ encouraging appropriately scaled infill development
- ▶ encouraging a mix of uses including residential, arts, light manufacturing, offices, retail, entertainment, etc.

Overall Land Use Goals

- LUZ-A** Maintain a desirable, workable, compatible, and equitable mix and balance of land uses in Northeast Downtown and encourage viable development to satisfy both the economic needs of property owners as well as such needs as housing and public facilities and services that are currently under-represented
- LUZ-B** Knit together the Northeast Downtwn subareas as well as Northeast Downtown with adjacent areas

LUZ-6 Encourage and support a mix of economic and housing development that will create new jobs, generate additional tax revenues, attract new residents, support additional neighborhood retail goods and services, and provide new amenities, such as open space and recreation opportunities

Northeast Downtown Plan Future Land Use Concepts Map

The overall *Northeast Downtown Plan* Future Land Use Concepts are illustrated on Map LUZ-3. This map shows the three major land use planning subareas within Northeast Downtown and the generalized land use recommendations for those subareas. It also highlights two additional recommendations: to improve the overall area image and to strengthen the residential edge along Lawrence Street, from Broadway to Downing. The Committee has prioritized the relative importance of these future land use concept recommendations in the following order from highest to lowest: 1) Larimer Street Retail Core; 2) Arapahoe Square mixed use area with an emphasis on housing; 3) Strengthening the residential edge along Lawrence Street; 4) Maintaining Northeast Downtown's mixed land use character (including its compatible industrial areas); and, 5) Improve the overall area image.

Future Land Use Recommendations by Subarea

Baseball Environs Subarea

The general land use recommendation for this subarea is mixed use and a balance of compatible uses. The range of "mixed uses" sought for this subarea is broad and would include light industrial, retail (particularly neighborhood oriented retail), entertainment uses, offices, housing (especially lofts), and social service (particularly treatment) uses. Neighborhood retail should be concentrated in the Larimer Street Retail Core, between 20th and 23rd Streets (renamed to Park Avenue West).

This area's history and identity, especially in the Larimer Retail Core, are closely associated with an evolution of different ethnic groups who want to preserve and expand that multi-cultural heritage in a marketplace of diverse ethnic stores and shops, such as restaurants, grocery stores and gift shops.

Industrial arts, including crafts and the creation/manufacturing of such products as sculpture and commercial art, are an important use in this area. Studios and offices, supporting a board range of live/work situations that are compatible with surrounding uses (including studios that might televise baseball games and make documentary films) and telecommunications are other appropriate uses for Upper Larimer.



New streetscaping improvements in the 2200 block of Larimer Street



Pockets of low density residential remain in portions of Upper Larimer

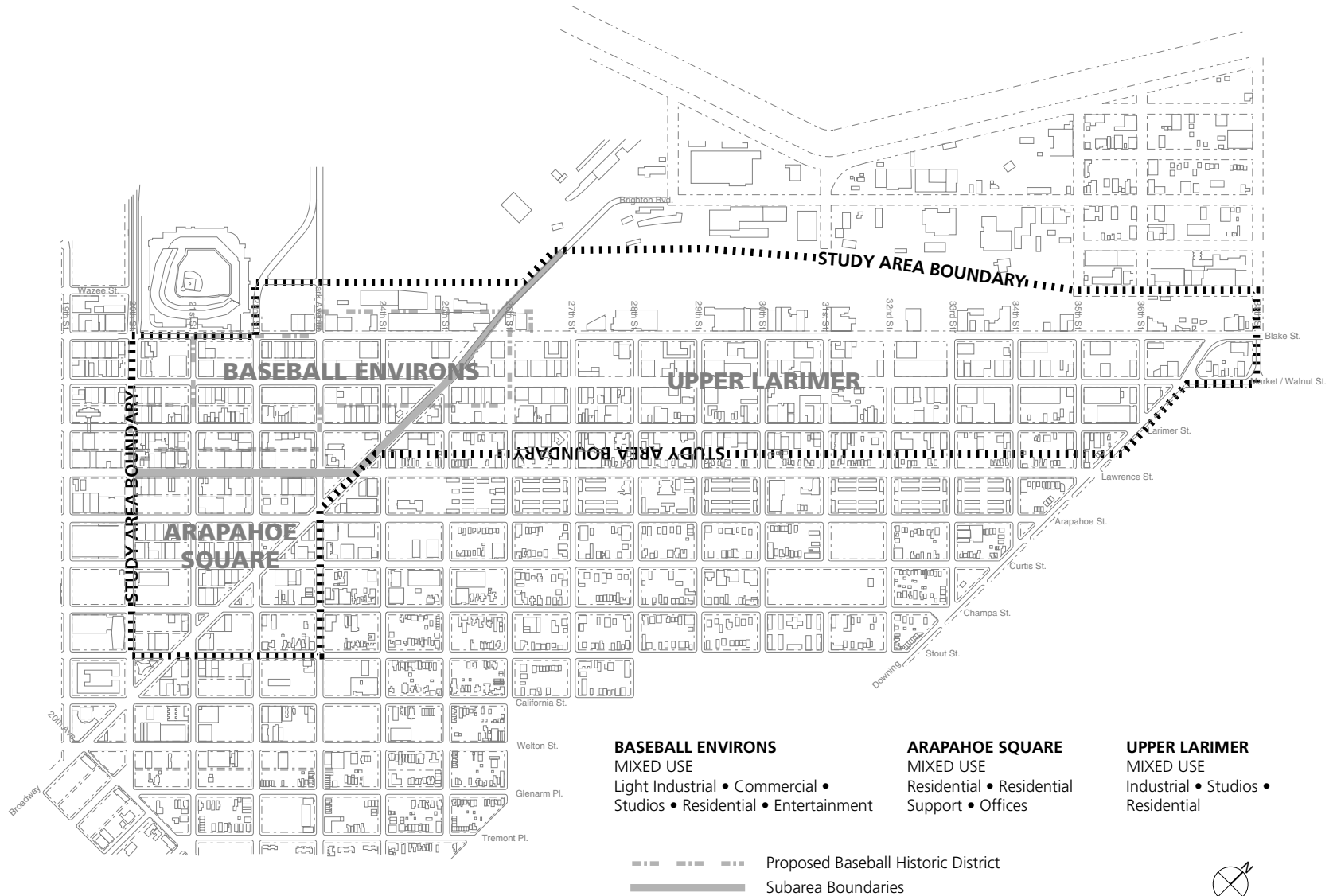
Arapahoe Square Subarea

The Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee's recommendation for this subarea is mixed use with an emphasis on multi-family residential, but with other compatible uses to include neighborhood support uses and services (grocery stores, etc.), retail, offices, and live/work situations. Other uses to be accommodated would be surface parking (a likely continuing interim use), social services, auto services, and restaurants.

The challenge to this subarea's long range vision, which is centered on establishing a dominant housing presence that would distinguish it from the other Northeast Downtown subareas, is that the private market has been and is presently unable to develop housing at a competitive and affordable price in this subarea. There are many reasons for this including the current land use conditions, the lack of suitable buildings to renovate for housing, the high cost of new construction (which, itself, is a function of the high cost of land, and the high cost of developing housing with underground parking and amenities that prospective buyers demand), and the competitive disadvantage the area has compared to other available central area housing neighborhoods including Lower Downtown and Curtis Park. The public sector needs to work with property owners, neighborhood organizations, and developers to fashion a feasible housing development strategy for Arapahoe Square.

Upper Larimer Subarea

The central land use recommendation for Upper Larimer is for continued mixed use, to include industrial (especially uses that do not negatively impact adjacent uses), industrial arts, art galleries, studios, a broad range of live/work uses, neighborhood retail (including restaurants and grocery stores, etc.), and support services, offices, residential and social service uses. Strengthening the residential edge along the Larimer/Lawrence corridor is also an important land use recommendation. A major rationale for this mixed use recommendation is to strengthen the economic and housing development opportunities, provide expanded employment opportunities, and increase the City's tax base.



LUZ-3 Future Land Use Concept Plan


 JANUARY 1995



Buildings on Larimer from the late 1800s renovated to provide for mixed uses

Land Use Recommendations for Northeast Downtown Subareas (as illustrated on Map LUZ-3)

- LUZ-1** The Baseball Environs Subarea spacing should be a mixed use area to include an appropriate balance of compatible retail, entertainment, light industrial, office, residential, and service uses.
- LUZ-2** The North Larimer Retail District, between 20th and 23rd Streets, should be redeveloped into the primary neighborhood retail center and revitalized to include a variety of neighborhood and destination retail uses, particularly “international marketplace” or ethnic oriented stores and shops.
- LUZ-3** The Arapahoe Square Subarea should be a mixed use area to include a balance of compatible residential, offices, neighborhood retail and support uses, and service uses. The intent is for this subarea to become predominantly residential as market realities permit.
- LUZ-4** The Upper Larimer Subarea should be a mixed use area to include a balance of compatible industrial, industrial arts, studios, and a broad variety of live/work situations, offices, residential, neighborhood retail and support uses, and service uses.

ZONING OVERVIEW

Introduction

One of the most important and powerful means of implementing Denver's vision for Northeast Downtown is by changing the zoning regulations of Northeast Downtown. Those existing regulations are contained in Chapter 59, Zoning, of the Revised Municipal Code of the City and County of Denver. The purpose of the Denver Zoning Ordinance is to preserve and promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of Denver and to encourage and facilitate the orderly growth and expansion of the city.

In order to fulfill the vision of Northeast Downtown, the City and County of Denver will work with the area property owners and citizens by drafting new comprehensive zoning regulations for the area to rezone the land in accord with the Plan. The new zoning regulations will contain specifically tailored development regulations that draw on experience in Denver and especially the goals, intents and recommendations contained in this Plan.

The proposed zoning approach for Northeast Downtown is primarily outlined in this section, although there are several zoning proposals included within the Urban Design and Transportation and Parking elements as well. The background, rationale and nature of the recommended zoning concepts for each planning subarea are identified as is the general zoning revision process that should be undertaken upon the completion and official adoption of this Plan. The recommendations embrace a comprehensive understanding of land use regulations in that they cover zoning, design guidelines and development review.

The *Northeast Downtown Plan* is not intended to create hardship for existing uses, structures, or design features that no longer conform with the guidelines established in this Plan. Uses, structures and design features that do not conform with development standards shall be allowed to continue as long as they are not changed in any manner that would increase their nonconformity. Denver Building Code provisions should be adopted to require fire exits and access for the elderly and physically disabled. Non-conforming uses shall not be permitted after they are discontinued for a period of 12 months. Maintenance and renovation of existing structures shall be allowed but major modifications shall not be allowed for structures unless the changes conform with these guidelines.



The mixed-use zoning around 21st and Larimer supports a lively neighborhood



**Industrial and residential uses co-exist
in Upper Larimer**

EXISTING ZONING

Introduction

The existing zoning in Northeast Downtown has been in place for approximately 40 to 50 years. The current Denver Zoning Ordinance is based on a comprehensive citywide revision in 1956 and has been amended many times since. In 1991 there was a citywide revision to the industrial zone districts and while this affected the I-2 and I-1 zone districts in Northeast Downtown, it did not take a comprehensive and in-depth look at the appropriateness of the aging industrial regulations in Northeast Downtown. This Plan has provided that opportunity.

Existing zoning rights are important. The recommended zoning changes must recognize, and deal with, those rights in an equitable and creative manner. Thus, this Plan makes a careful and rational linkage between the factual basis for the zoning goals and needs and the zoning concept recommendations.

Existing Zone Districts and Building Square Footage

Northeast Downtown is currently zoned I-1, I-2, and B-8. There are also four Planned Unit Development (PUD) zones in the study area and a small amount of B-4 zoning. The I-2 zone district allows heavy industrial uses (manufacturing which may impact adjacent properties), other industrial, services, minimal retail and minimal studios, and live/work situations. The I-1 zone district allows medium industrial uses (manufacturing which generally does not impact adjacent properties), and light industrial uses, service, minimal studios, very limited live/work situations, and minimal retail. The B-8 zone district currently permits a broad variety of business and semi-industrial uses. Because information on existing “land use by zoning” is maintained by census tracts in the Denver Planning and Community Development Office, it is impossible to breakout the zoning data for the Northeast Downtown study area from Census Tract 16.

The aforementioned land use survey, prepared for the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*, contains useful information on the amount of building square footage present by major land use

categories and tabulated by the zoning districts in which they are located. Tables 8-13 present a summary of this “land use by zoning” information for Northeast Downtown and for its five land survey subareas.

Table 8 shows that the majority (57%) of the building square footage in Northeast Downtown is located in buildings in the I-2 or heavy industrial zone district, followed by just over 24% in B-8 zoned buildings and nearly 17% in I-1 zoned buildings. In Upper Larimer (Table 9), nearly 53% of the building square footage is in I-2 zoned buildings and almost 44% is in I-1 zoned buildings. In Baseball Environs (Table 10), 73% of the building square footage is located in I-2 zoned buildings and about 26% in I-1 zoned buildings. All of Larimer Square Retail’s (Table 11) and Arapahoe Square’s (Table 12) is located in the B-8 zone district. In the Broadway Triangle (Table 13), the building square footage is located predominantly in the I-2 and B-8 zone districts.

Table 8 — Chronology of Building Square Footage by Business Type: Northeast Downtown

	Zoning Classification						Total
	B 8	I 1	I 2	PUD	B 4	B 3	
Industrial: Manufacturing	28,741	204,205	434,005	0	0	0	666,951
Industrial: Distribution/Wholesale	62,835	295,069	584,345	0	5,015	12,737	960,001
Industrial Arts	72,551	72,875	131,881	0	0	0	277,307
Retail	194,364	153,135	132,932	0	3,218	0	483,649
Services	160,089	115,735	238,951	0	0	0	514,775
Residential (Conventional)	50,368	20,300	12,535	0	2,353	9,571	95,127
Live/Work	0	54,764	86,539	35,893	0	0	177,196
Social Services	136,590	23,009	0	0	0	0	159,599
Government/Exempt	30,950	13,034	0	0	0	0	43,984
Vacant	514,918	244,143	305,835	0	19,239	0	1,084,135
TOTAL	1,251,406	1,196,269	1,927,023	35,893	29,825	22,308	4,462,724

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor’s Office; Denver Planning Office Survey; August, 1992

Industrial Arts: This category consists of a broad collection of business uses related to arts. Examples would include woodcrafts, ceramics and printing shops.

Industrial Manufacturing: SIC Codes 2000-3999

Industrial Distribution/Wholesale: SIC Codes 4000-5199

Retail: SIC Codes 5200-5999

Services: SIC Codes 7000-8999

Social Services: SIC Codes 8322-8399

Residential: Denver Class Codes 100-205

Government/Exempt: Denver Class Codes 800-990

Live/Work: This category includes businesses which are operated from the owner’s residence.

Table 9 — Chronology of Building Square Footage by Business Type: Upper Larimer

	Zoning Classification						Total
	B 8	I 1	I 2	PUD	B 4	R 3	
Industrial:Manufacturing	0	165,700	399,553	0	0		565,253
Industrial: Distribution/Wholesale	0	197,400	248,960	0	5,015	12737	464,112
Industrial Arts	0	0	131,881	0	0		131,881
Retail	0	110,370	62,267	0	3,218		175,855
Services	0	109,485	106,234	0	0		215,719
Residential (Conventional)	0	20,300	12,535	0	2,353	9571	35,188
Live/Work	0	54,764	86,539	35,893	0		177,196
Social Services	0	23,009	0	0	0		23,009
Government/Exempt	0	13,034	0	0	0		13,034
Vacant	0	236,165	83,524	0	19,239		338,928
TOTAL	0	930,227	1,131,493	35,893	29,825	22308	2,140,175

Table 10 — Chronology of Building Square Footage by Business Type: Baseball Environs

	Zoning Classification						Total
	B 8	I 1	I 2	PUD	B 4	R 3	
Industrial:Manufacturing	0	38,505	34,452	0	0	0	72,957
Industrial: Distribution/W	0	97,669	251,560	0	0	0	349,229
Industrial Arts	0	72,875	0	0	0	0	72,875
Retail	0	36,647	70,665	0	0	0	107,312
Services	0	6,250	132,717	0	0	0	138,967
Residential (Conventional)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Live/Work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Government/Exempt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant	11,411	0	222,311	0	0	0	233,722
TOTAL	11,411	251,946	711,705	0	0	0	975,062

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor's Office; Denver Planning Office Survey; August, 1992

Industrial Arts: This category consists of a broad collection of business uses related to arts. Examples would include woodcrafts, ceramics and printing shops.

Industrial Manufacturing: SIC Codes 2000-3999

Industrial Distribution/Wholesale: SIC Codes 4000-5199

Retail: SIC Codes 5200-5999

Services: SIC Codes 7000-8999

Social Services: SIC Codes 8322-8399

Residential: Denver Class Codes 100-205

Government/Exempt: Denver Class Codes 800-990

Live/Work: This category includes businesses which are operated from the owner's residence.

Table 11 — Chronology of Building Square Footage by Business Type: Larimer Retail Core

	Zoning Classification						Total
	B 8	I 1	I 2	PUD	B 4	B 3	
Industrial:Manufacturing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Industrial:Distribution/Wholesale	9,025	0	0	0	0	0	9,025
Industrial Arts	12,400	0	0	0	0	0	12,400
Retail	119,308	0	0	0	0	0	119,308
Services	33,268	0	0	0	0	0	33,268
Residential (Conventional)	16,325	0	0	0	0	0	16,325
Live/Work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Services	29,354	0	0	0	0	0	29,354
Government/Exempt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant	29,917	0	0	0	0	0	29,917
TOTAL	249,597	0	0	0	0	0	249,597

Table 12 — Chronology of Building Square Footage by Business Type: Arapahoe Square

	Zoning Classification						Total
	B 8	I 1	I 2	PUD	B 4	B 3	
Industrial:Manufacturing	28,741	0	0	0	0	0	28,741
Industrial:Distribution/Wholesale	53,810	0	0	0	0	0	53,810
Industrial Arts	60,151	0	0	0	0	0	60,151
Retail	75,056	0	0	0	0	0	75,056
Service	126,821	0	0	0	0	0	126,821
Residential (Conventions)	27,813	0	0	0	0	0	27,813
Live/Work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Services	56,679	0	0	0	0	0	56,679
Government/Exempt	30,950	0	0	0	0	0	30,950
Vacant	473,590	0	0	0	0	0	473,590
TOTAL	933,611	0	0	0	0	0	933,611

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor's Office; Denver Planning Office Survey; August, 1992

Industrial Arts: This category consists of a broad collection of business uses related to arts. Examples would include woodcrafts, ceramics and printing shops.

Industrial Manufacturing: SIC Codes 2000-3999

Industrial Distribution/Wholesale: SIC Codes 4000-5199

Retail: SIC Codes 5200-5999

Services: SIC Codes 7000-8999

Social Services: SIC Codes 8322-8399

Residential: Denver Class Codes 100-205

Government/Exempt: Denver Class Codes 800-990

Live/Work: This category includes businesses which are operated from the owner's residence.

Table 13 — Chronology of Building Square Footage by Business Type: Broadway Triangle

	Zoning Classification						Total
	B 8	I 1	I 2	PUD	B 4	R 3	
Industrial: Manufacturing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Industrial: Distribution/Wholesale	0	0	83,825	0	0	0	83,825
Industrial Arts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retail	0	6,118	0	0	0	0	6,118
Services	6,230	0	0	0	0	0	6,230
Residential (Conventional)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Live/Work	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Social Services	50,557	0	0	0	0	0	50,557
Government/Exempt	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vacant	0	7,978	0	0	0	0	7,978
TOTAL	56,787	14,096	83,825	0	0	0	154,708

Source: City & County of Denver Assessor's Office; Denver Planning Office Survey; August, 1992

Industrial Arts: This category consists of a broad collection of business uses related to arts. Examples would include woodcrafts, ceramics and printing shops.

Industrial Manufacturing: SIC Codes 2000-3999

Industrial Distribution/Wholesale: SIC Codes 4000-5199

Retail: SIC Codes 5200-5999

Services: SIC Codes 7000-8999

Social Services: SIC Codes 8322-8399

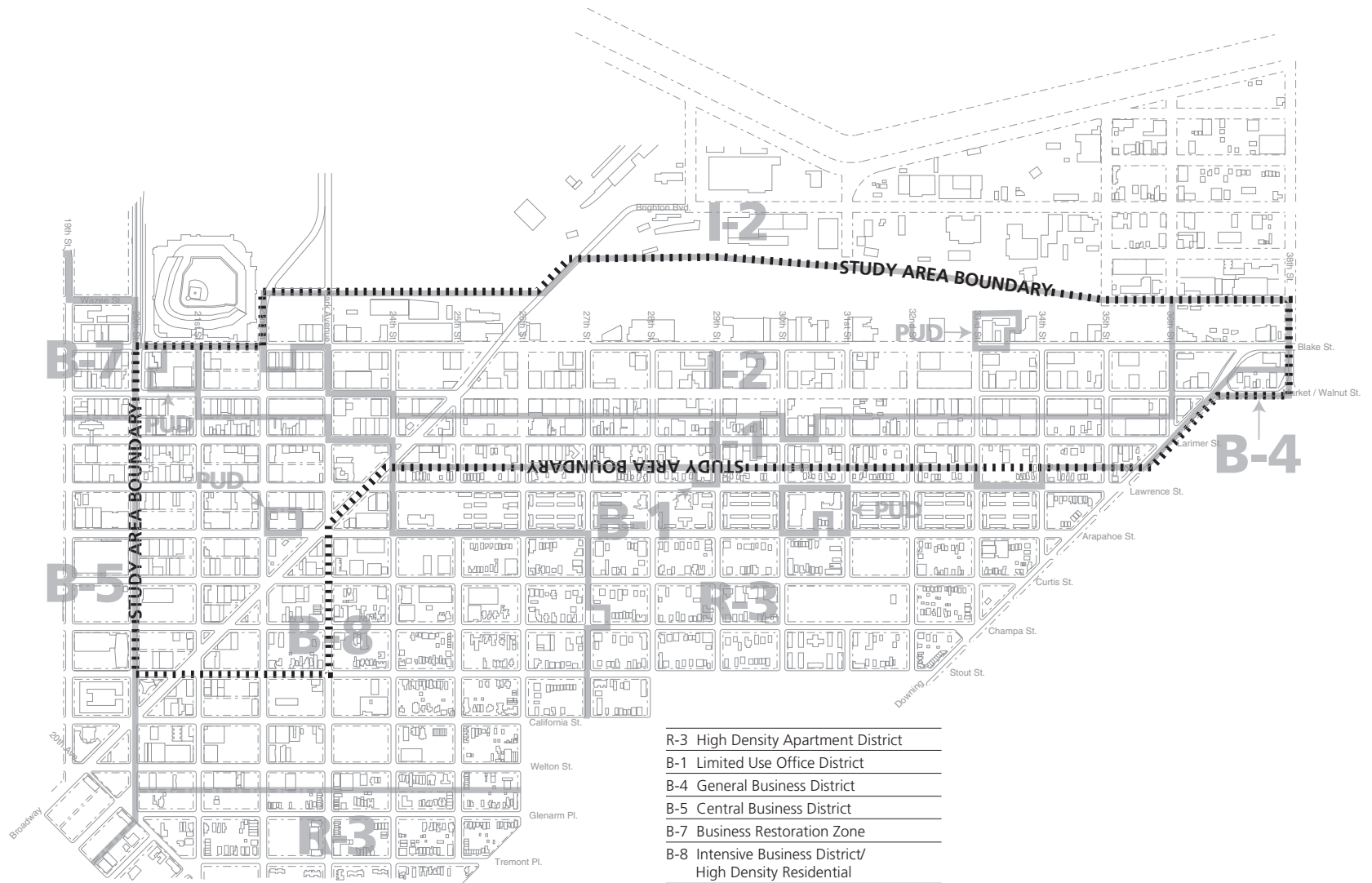
Residential: Denver Class Codes 100-205

Government/Exempt: Denver Class Codes 800-990

Live/Work: This category includes businesses which are operated from the owner's residence.

Existing Zoning Map

Map LUZ-4 illustrates the existing zoning in Northeast Downtown.



- R-3 High Density Apartment District
- B-1 Limited Use Office District
- B-4 General Business District
- B-5 Central Business District
- B-7 Business Restoration Zone
- B-8 Intensive Business District/
High Density Residential
- I-1 General Industrial District
- I-2 Heavy Industrial District
- PUD Planned Unit Development



JANUARY 1995

LUZ-4 Existing Zoning

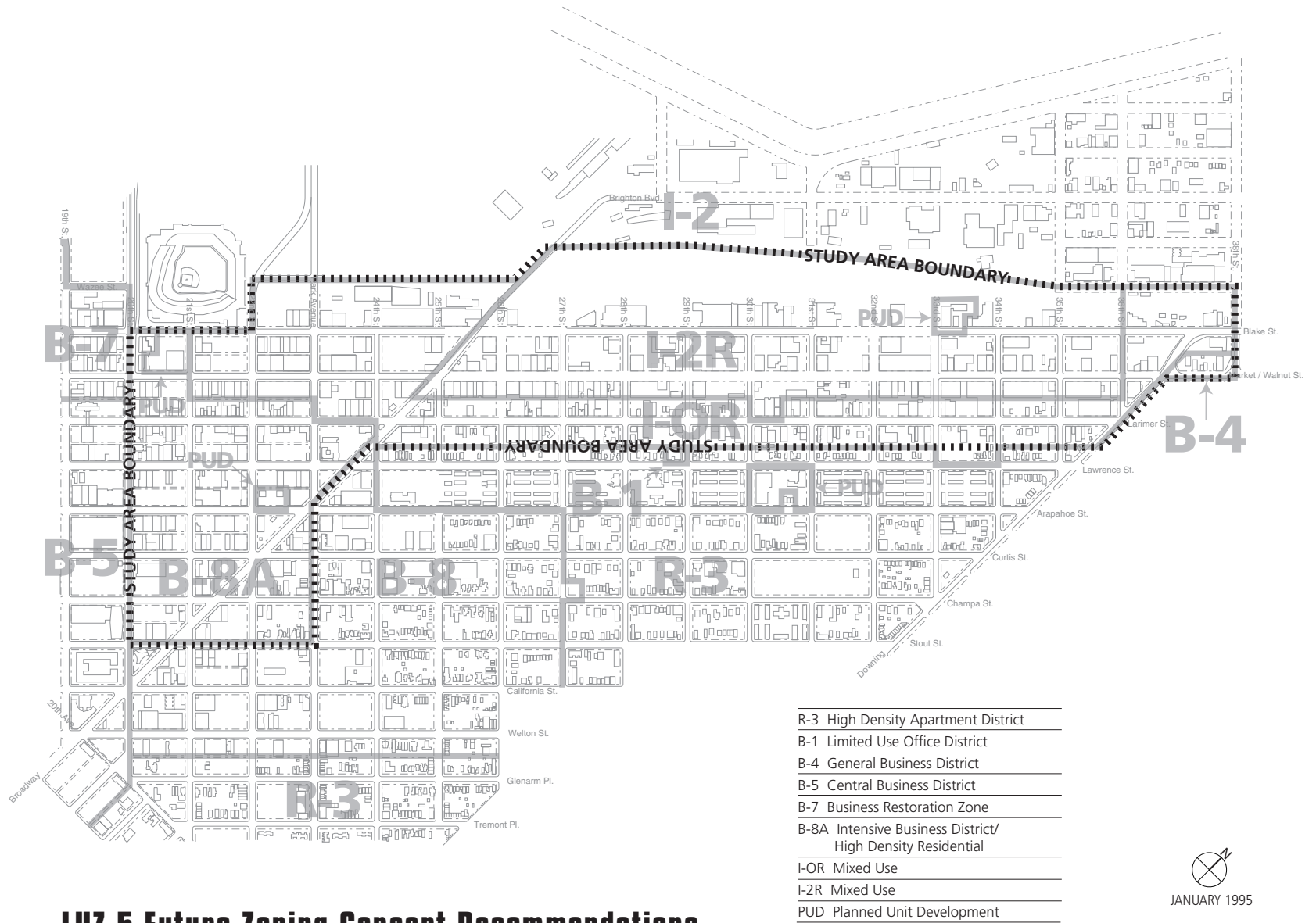
FUTURE ZONING

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to describe the recommended zoning changes that are needed to modify the existing zoning regulations in Northeast Downtown so as to bring them into closer conformity with the long range vision and goals of the Plan. The approach used here is to summarize, for each of the three subareas, the need for the zoning changes, the general zoning concept recommendation, and conclude with a brief elaboration on the intent of the zoning concept.

In order to be legally supportable in the courts, zoning ordinances must be based on and logically related to carefully prepared planning studies. Therefore, as is almost universally the case, this plan will establish a technical framework and policy direction for the much more specific zoning ordinance regulations that will be prepared after this Plan is adopted. Thus, this Plan defines the zoning conceptual framework that will provide the basis for the zoning ordinance revision work and detailed ordinance changes that will follow. A related purpose of this part of the Plan is to serve as an interim City zoning policy for Northeast Downtown until the actual zoning ordinance revisions recommended below can actually be prepared and adopted into the Denver Zoning Ordinance.

The zoning revisions that are recommended for Northeast Downtown must be comprehensive in scope and carefully address both substantive and procedural matters. Although the identification of which uses are prohibited or allowed as a use by right or a conditional use is of central importance, it is also important that the ordinances which are prepared also address regulations of such factors as density, permitted floor area (base and with bonuses), building height (including view corridors), building setbacks, parking and loading, signage, demolition of historic structures, limitations on the external effects of permitted uses, and the development review and approval process. With regard to the special review process for conditional uses, it is essential that neighborhood groups be given sufficient time to review and give input to the designated public officials who will make decisions on whether to approve or deny such uses.



LUZ-5 Future Zoning Concept Recommendations



**Public Storage Building across from
Coors Field at 21st and Blake Streets**

Future Zoning Concept Recommendations (Map LUZ-5)

All of the future zoning concept recommendations for Northeast Downtown are graphically depicted on Map LUZ-5. They are explained in detail below.

Zoning Concept Recommendations by Northeast Downtown Subarea (as illustrated on Map LUZ-5)

Baseball Environs Subarea

The current zoning in the Baseball Environs Subarea is mostly I-1 and I-2, with a small amount of B-8. There is a PUD in the square block bounded by 20th, 21st, Blake, and Market Streets, and a second PUD at 23rd Street and Blake for 71 housing units and ground level retail in the Awalt Building. In order to support the subarea's vision, its balanced land use and historic preservation goals and recommendations, the following zoning concept is recommended:

LUZ-5 Undertake an industrial zoning revision process to prepare and enact a draft Ordinance to modify the existing I-2 and I-1 zone district language in the Baseball Environs Subarea to I-OR and B-8 to B-8A.

While the definition of the proposed I-OR zone district remains to be prepared by a group representing all interests after this Plan is adopted, it is important to outline the intent and nature of the type of mixed use zoning that the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee believes is needed for the Baseball Environs Subarea. The existing I-0 zone district, on which the mixed use I-OR would be based, is a light industrial zone district that allows limited manufacturing uses (those which do not impact adjacent properties), offices, services, studios, live/work situations, and neighborhood retail. In terms of uses, two major types of changes are needed in the zoning whereby, first, some new uses are allowed that are not presently allowed and second, some uses are either prohibited or made conditional that are presently allowed as a use by right.

The first written policy direction for the I-OR zone is to allow for a much broader range of live/work situations than are presently permitted and to allow for residential uses that are now prohibited except for successful planned unit development (PUD) rezonings. Other new uses that should be allowed, as a use by right or as a conditional use, would be selected B-2 neighborhood retail uses that are compatible with the emerging land use mix in Baseball Environs. The second important policy direction for the I-OR zone is that some heavy and medium industrial uses that are currently allowed as a use by right be made either conditional or prohibited and some current conditional uses be prohibited. Examples of heavy

industrial uses currently allowed as a use by right in the I-2 zone district that are recommended for prohibition in the I-OR zone include an autoclave, scrap processor, utility pumping station and water reservoir. Examples of uses currently allowed as a conditional use in the I-2 zone district that are recommended for elimination in the I-OR zone include incinerator, junkyard, solid waste facility, and many manufacturing uses deemed to be “dirty” and incompatible with a broad range of desired industrial, artist, commercial, and residential uses. Illustrations of such dirty manufacturing uses are poultry slaughtering, sugar cane refining, pulp and paper mills, and tires and inner tubes — industrial uses of a prior historic era that have virtually lost their market in today’s urban economy. The ground level of parking structures should be eventually occupied by active pedestrian uses, including retail, to “humanize” the street life.

The envisioned mixed use I-OR zone would allow a large number and wide range of light industrial uses, along with a broad mix of live/work situations, office, selected neighborhood retail, entertainment, residential, and institutional/service uses. It is important that the neighborhood retail uses be concentrated on Larimer Street between 20th and 23rd Streets.

Arapahoe Square Subarea

The Arapahoe Square Subarea is currently zoned B-8, allowing a wide range of business and semi-industrial uses, some of which are incompatible with the subarea’s planning vision of a mixed use area with an emphasis on housing. Other zoning provisions in the B-8 zone district, besides permitted uses, are also not supportive of the vision and should be changed. Work on revisions to the existing B-8 zone district within Arapahoe Square have been going on as part of the Downtown Zoning Committee’s work to revise the zoning in the zone districts in central Denver (B-5, R-4, and B-8). Staff of the Downtown Zoning Committee has worked with the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee to identify a framework of zoning changes that should be part of the B-8A zone district to be recommended to the City Council for adoption in late 1995 or early 1996. The foundation for this proposed B-8A zone district is summarized below.

- LUZ-6** Complete the zoning revision process to prepare and enact a draft ordinance to modify the existing B-8 zone district in the Arapahoe Square Subarea (and a small portion of Baseball Environs Subarea) to B-8A.

The intent and nature of the Steering Committee’s proposed B-8A (the name of the zone district to replace B-8 in Arapahoe Square) zoning concept is to regulate the type and nature of development in



An older building on Stout Street in Arapahoe Square in the path of approaching downtown

Arapahoe Square to be more in line with the recommended Plan vision. Examples of recommended use changes include the deletion of some uses by right (e.g., all adult uses, liquor stores, tire recapping, blacksmithing, mirror silvering, and koshering of poultry sold at retail), the conversion to conditional use for some uses by right (e.g., gun shop, drug store, pawn shop, and tattoo studio), and the limitation on size of operation and hours of operation of certain uses (e.g., home building materials store, newspaper distribution station, fabrication of various goods, and crating service). In addition, some uses by right should be redefined to limit their current scope of activity so as to have a less negative impact on adjacent properties.

In addition, the suggested B-8A zoning concept 1) replaces existing floor area density premiums with new premiums (for the construction of housing, residential support facilities, child care facility, and the rehab of designated historic buildings), 2) limits the maximum height of structures to 200', requiring that the lower eighty (80) feet of buildings be designed to promote standards of human scale, to spatially define the street space to promote pedestrian activity, 3) requires building facades to respond to existing building types in the area, and 4) requires parking structures to have ground floor frontages on designated streets eventually occupied by pedestrian active uses.

Some of these B-8A zoning concepts may also be appropriate for the industrial zoning revisions in Upper Larimer and Baseball Environs.

Upper Larimer Subarea

The Upper Larimer Subarea is currently zoned I-1, I-2 and B-4, with one PUD. This zoning has allowed mixed uses, including limited residential uses. In order to support the subarea's vision, and its balanced land use goals and recommendations, the following mixed use zoning proposal is recommended:

- IUZ-7** Undertake an industrial zoning revision process to prepare and enact a draft ordinance to modify the existing I-2 zone district language to I-2R and the existing I-1 zone district language to I-OR in the Upper Larimer Subarea.

The general nature of the mixed use I-2R zone district that is recommended to replace the existing I-2 zoned areas is to expand/add some uses by right or as a conditional use that have market support and will assist in revitalizing the area, delete some heavy manufacturing uses that have negative impacts, and make conditional some potentially offensive manufacturing uses that are currently uses by right. Specifically, the intent is to add the following uses: live or work situations where a trade, craft or profession is allowed

within a residential dwelling, multi-family and single family residential, and selected neighborhood (B-2 type) uses that are compatible with other desired uses. The intent is also to preserve in the new zoning all of the industrial uses, including heavy uses, that do not have a negative impact on adjacent uses. Although many industrial uses would be maintained, new dirty uses would be prohibited. Examples of uses which are suggested for prohibition in the revised zoning ordinance (besides those illustrations mentioned in LUZ-8) include the manufacturing of industrial organic chemicals, agricultural chemicals, asphalt paving and roofing structural clay products, iron and steel forging, automotive stampings, and the manufacturing of motor vehicles, truck and bus bodies, motor homes, aircraft, and ship and boat building.

The general nature of the mixed use I-OR zone district that is intended to replace the existing I-1 zone district in Upper Larimer is very similar to the I-OR district described in the Baseball Environs Subarea. Accordingly, it would expand live/work situations to where a trade, craft or profession is allowed within a residential dwelling, allow residential uses, and permit selected neighborhood (B-2 type uses) retail. The suggested I-OR zoning concept would maintain most existing I-0 light industrial uses, although some uses would be deleted and other uses made conditional, depending upon their perceived negative impact on adjacent properties and compatibility of uses with the Plan's vision.



Silver State Laundry Building at Broadway and Walnut is prime for redevelopment



The Cook Building (old American Radiator Building) at Blake and 24th Streets, prior to its renovation

ISSUES RELATING TO THE RECOMMENDED MIXED USE ZONING CONCEPTS

Introduction

During the planning process, a number of issues were identified with the mixed use zoning concepts that were recommended above. The issues do not negate the validity of the concepts; however, they do raise legitimate concerns that need to be addressed when the concepts are applied to proposed zoning ordinance revisions and in other implementation activities.

Issues and Concerns

Concerns About Displacing Industrial Uses

The City and County of Denver places a high priority on retaining viable industrial areas because of their importance of generating employment, income and tax revenues. Thus, there is some concern about displacing any industrial uses because of the perceived negative economic impact. Northeast Downtown is perceived by some to represent a valuable and sizeable portion of Denver's traditional industrial base that is irreplaceable.

The *Denver Comprehensive Plan* also recognizes that some older industrial areas have become obsolete and need to be allowed/encouraged to adapt and transition into more productive areas. The Committee believes that this is the case with Northeast Downtown. Indeed, the factual analysis summarized earlier in this chapter makes a forceful case for the need to view this area anew in view of changing land use trends, economic and real estate patterns, and sales tax trends. The Plan's mixed use vision incorporates a substantial amount of compatible and market-supportable industrial uses which, in combination with a broader range of other uses, should actually increase employment and tax revenues beyond what is likely to occur without the recommended land use and zoning changes.

It is important to keep in mind this issue of balanced land uses when revising the industrial zoning provisions and when undertaking the other Plan recommendations.

Concerns Over Mixing Industrial and Residential Uses

Another concern of the City, and of some existing industrial property owners, is the conflict that will inevitably occur if and when residential uses are allowed/encouraged to expand into an area that has been predominantly heavy industrial for over a half century. Traditionally, cities such as Denver adopted zoning ordinances for most of this century that separated land uses into distinct zones in recognition of their inherent differences and the resulting impacts. The fear, based on years of experience, is that new residents of industrially zoned and used areas will complain to the City about such traffic matters as heavy baseball traffic and large trucks blocking their way. Residents are expected to complain about inadequate parking for adjacent commercial properties that are developed and about the noise and smells of nearby industrial neighbors. The City also expects to receive increasing complaints from industrial property owners about the residents who are getting in the way of industrial operations, which is the livelihood of the industrial property owners. In short, there are real challenges to address in making a mixed use area work physically and economically.

These concerns need to be confronted in a creative manner that respects all legitimate interests. Some possible directions include

- ▮ Determining, during the industrial zoning revision process, those areas in Northeast Downtown where there may be the largest conflict between industrial and residential uses, and possibly require that residential (other than live/work situations, owner/occupancy situations, and caretaker residential) be allowed only as a conditional use by special review.
- ▮ Mixed Use zoning and development has returned to Denver and other cities during the past several decades. The Central Platte Valley and the Gateway area near Denver International Airport have recently adopted plans and zoning ordinances that mix uses in a workable fashion. These ordinances have built-in mechanisms, such as the special review procedure, which should be employed extensively where necessary to help manage the mixture and impacts of uses.
- ▮ Parking is a legitimate concern having a far-reaching affect on any area. Parking must be adequate to prevent negative impacts but not to the point where historic buildings are demolished to meet parking requirements. This is an issue that is addressed in a preliminary manner in the Transportation and Parking chapter but needs further elaboration to address remaining concerns.
- ▮ Noise and odor are currently regulated by the Department of Health and Hospitals and should be enforced in Northeast Downtown regardless of whether the affected property owners are



Mixed uses in Upper Larimer – Sacret Heart Church, in the background, was built in 1886

industrial or residential. However, businesses that emit noises that are legally permissible should not be harassed by their neighbors. The recommended industrial zoning ordinance should have solid provisions limiting unreasonable external effects (noise, odor, glare, dust, etc.) of any uses-something that is included in the recent mixed use zoning ordinances in Denver.

- ▶ Residents need to acknowledge by some appropriate method that they are moving into a non-traditional environment that includes industrial uses and that they understand that those uses have a right to operate in a legal manner.



U R B A N D E S I G N





Design goals are important to implement in the renovation of historic buildings

INTRODUCTION

This Plan chapter focuses on the physical character, street and pedestrian environment, open space, and urban form of Northeast Downtown. Goals and recommendations are developed which will make Northeast Downtown a more attractive, workable, and distinctive part of Denver. Some of these urban design recommendations require zoning changes, and therefore are cross referenced in the Land Use and Zoning chapter of this Plan.

The subject of urban form is addressed by defining the physical character of the subareas within Northeast Downtown and understanding the relationships between them. For instance, subareas may have centers which focus activities and serve as the social “heart” of an area. Less active work and residential areas may ring these active centers. In order to define their identity, subareas may have or need clear boundaries and entry points. Specific linkages to other subareas, or the merging of edges (the perceived boundaries of areas, or the breaks in the continuity of the built environment) may be required to avoid the isolation of subareas. Altogether, these elements add a subtle but important structure to an area which establishes a sort of equilibrium where things are in their proper place, and the environment is predictable and attractive enough to invest in a specific type of development.

The physical character of an area includes such elements as building heights, bulk planes and setbacks, land use densities, streetscaping, building materials and design, and signage.

EXISTING CONTEXT

The Northeast Downtown study area boundaries encompass an area generally composed of older warehouses, industrial uses, large commercial structures and parking lots. Some residential structures exist in the area, but occur in scattered, separate buildings — not in perceived neighborhoods. Some retail, bars and restaurants are located along the three blocks of Larimer Street between 20th Street and Park Avenue West.

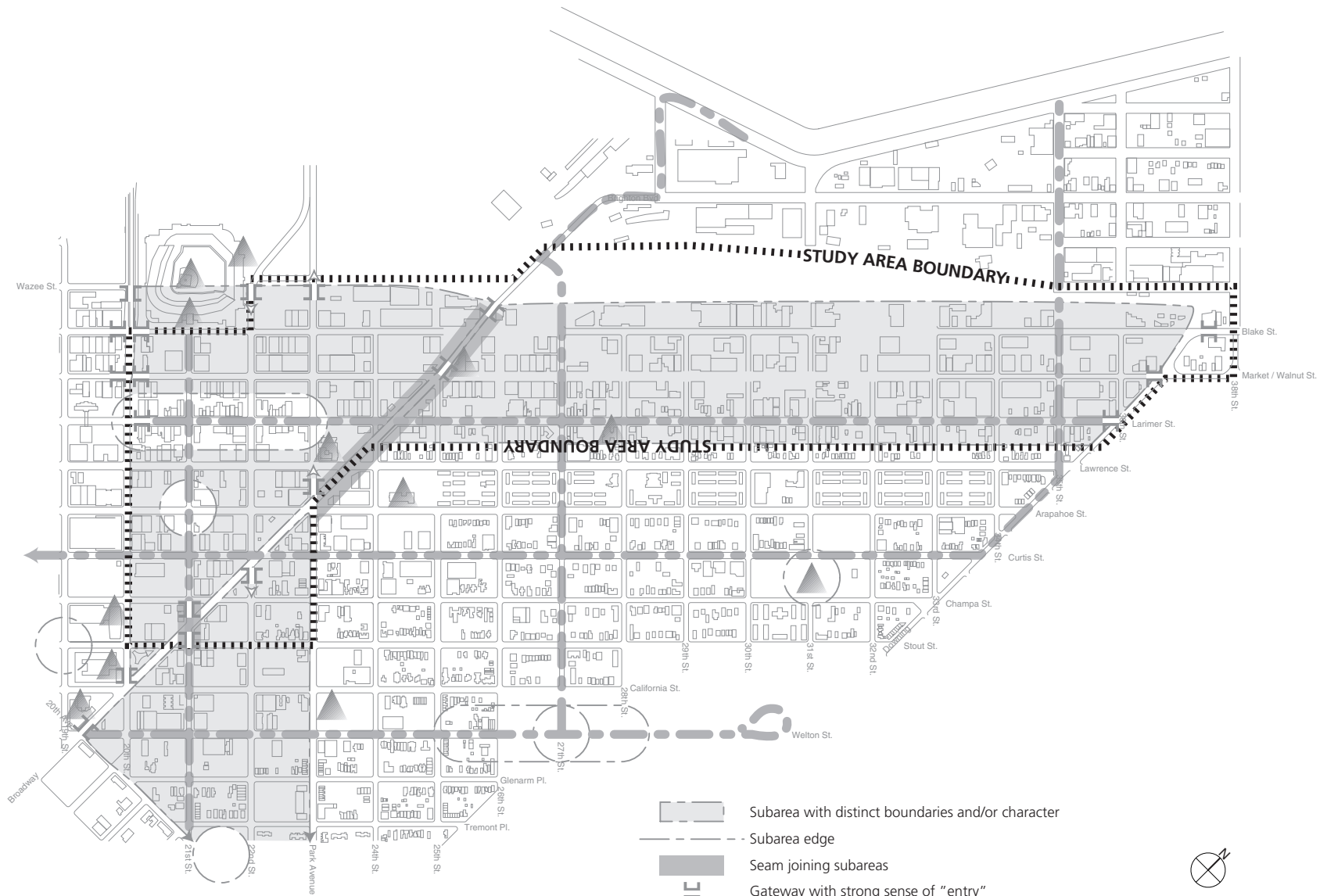
The fabric of older commercial and industrial buildings has been seriously eroded through demolition and using the land for parking lots which serve Downtown. Some areas have almost been completely erased. Broadway slices through the area on a diagonal, further exacerbating the voids in the urban fabric by its wide right-of-way, and the resultant hard-to-develop bits of vacant triangular property.

Only three subareas, which are illustrated on Map UD-1, have enough of their structures and uses left to possess an identity: Larimer Street retail from 20th Street to Park Avenue West; the proposed Ballpark Historic District which is centered along Blake and Market Streets from 21st Street to Broadway; and the Upper Larimer mixed use area. New development is going to change the character of the area, however. Coors Field, with its context-friendly design, will reinforce the proposed Ballpark Historic District while inevitably leading to the gradual reduction of industrial uses in its immediate area, and the increase of sports bars, restaurants and other entertainment uses. New residential may also occur through the renovation of some of the warehouses into lofts. North Larimer Street should benefit from Coors Field by its attraction of new bars and restaurants, and perhaps some retail uses.








The 20th Street, Park Avenue West and Broadway Viaduct replacement projects will add traffic to 20th, 22nd and Park Avenue West. The challenge is to overcome the negative impacts of the traffic and keeping those streets from becoming edges or barriers in the neighborhood. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that 20th Street, because of its increased width, will continue as defining edge to Northeast Downtown. Locating one of the Ballpark's main entrances on 21st Street has focused resources on upgrading the pedestrian character and quality of that street.



Scattered residential adjacent to blighted retail along Larimer Street



UD-1 Conceptual Illustration

-  Subarea with distinct boundaries and/or character
-  Subarea edge
-  Seam joining subareas
-  Gateway with strong sense of "entry"
-  Center and/or focal point
-  Linkage: special character and/or ped/bike emphasis
-  Landmark: physical not historical


MARCH 1995

The Upper Larimer subarea has the clearest edges: the abrupt drop in grade level (the escarpment) and the Union Pacific Railroad's main railroad line on the west, Downing Street on the north, Lawrence Street and Denver Housing Authority's (DHA) housing development on the east, and Broadway on the south. The character of this area is, in part, defined by the strength of its edges, giving it an isolated, off-the-beaten-track image. The proposed Ballpark Historic District, coupled with Larimer Street, also has reasonably clear edges: the escarpment along the west, Broadway on the north, and 20th Street on the south. The escarpment edge will be further reinforced by Coors Field parking lot which extends along the proposed Ballpark Historic District's full length.

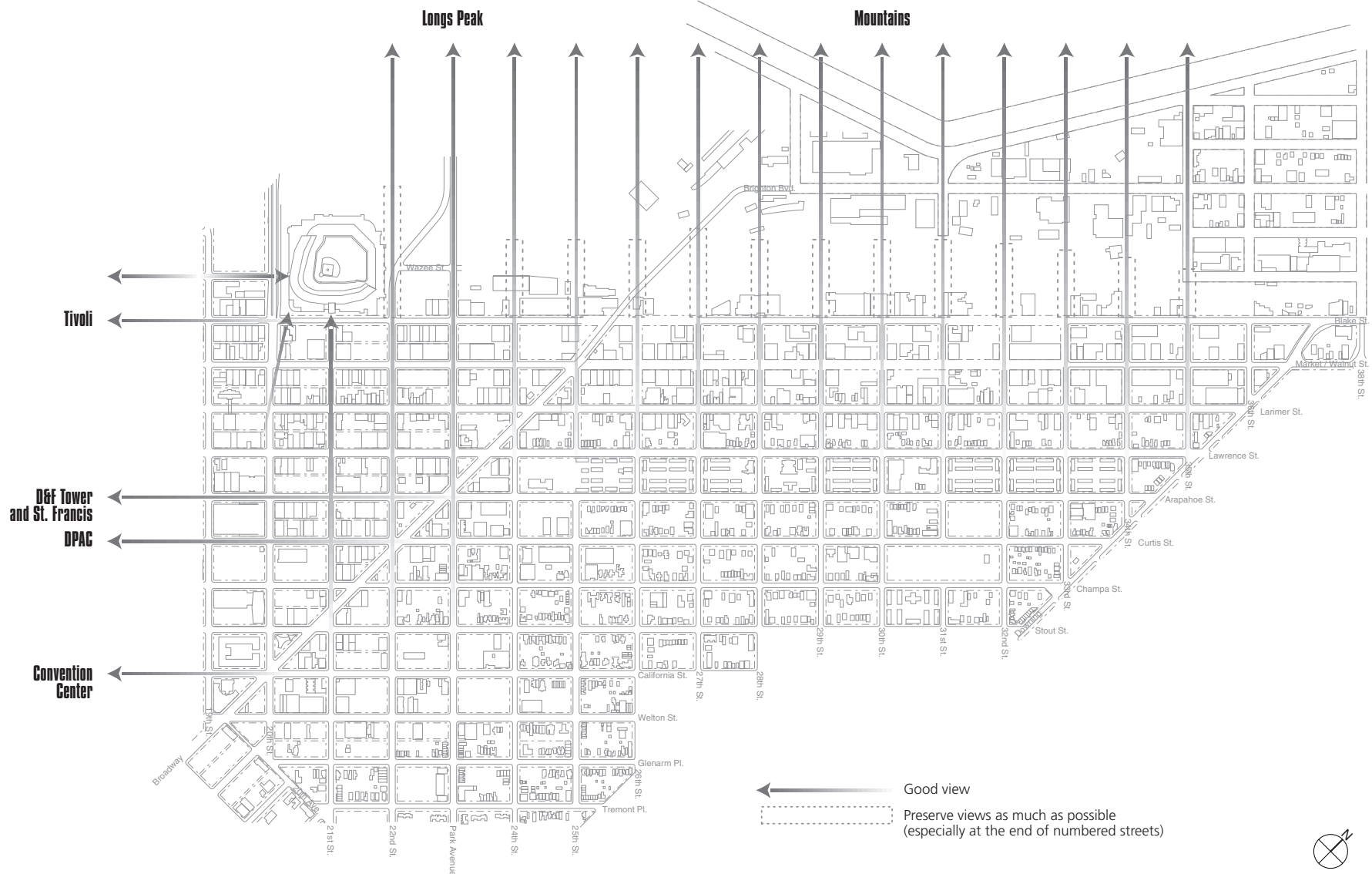
A few physical landmarks are scattered through the Northeast Downtown subareas. By far the strongest will be Coors Field, particularly as seen from the east on 21st Street and 20th Street. Others are the Styro Clock Tower Building, Benjamin Moore Building, Samaritan House and Sacred Heart Church, which is located just outside the study area.

Current natural gateways (perceived entries into a district or identifiable area) to Northeast Downtown occur at Broadway and Park Avenue West (where a physical landmark-Samaritan House-reinforces the gateway), at Broadway and Market Street where the Broadway Viaduct comes to grade (reinforced by the Styro Clock Tower Building landmark), 20th Street and Blake (reinforced by Coors Field), 20th Street and Larimer (reinforced by the abrupt change in character between the historic buildings and the Skyline Urban Renewal Area), and at Walnut and Larimer at Downing where the street grid shifts orientation. New gateways are being built at 22nd Street and at Park Avenue West where they enter the street grid at the escarpment.

Map UD-2 illustrates the excellent views of the mountains afforded the "numbered" streets because the topography of the area generally slopes down from east to west. Park Avenue West has a particularly good view of Longs Peak. Good urban views occur along some of the "named" streets, particularly Arapahoe Street looking south to both the historic Daniels and Fisher Tower on the 16th Street Mall and St. Francis Church on the Auraria campus.



Views of the mountains from a numbered street in Upper Larimer



← Good view
 - - - - - Preserve views as much as possible (especially at the end of numbered streets)



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UD-2 Views

ISSUES, GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the preceding analysis of the existing context, this section identifies some issues and goals — some of which relate to the entire Northeast Downtown area, and some of which apply to particular subareas.

Issues

Broadway's Negative Image

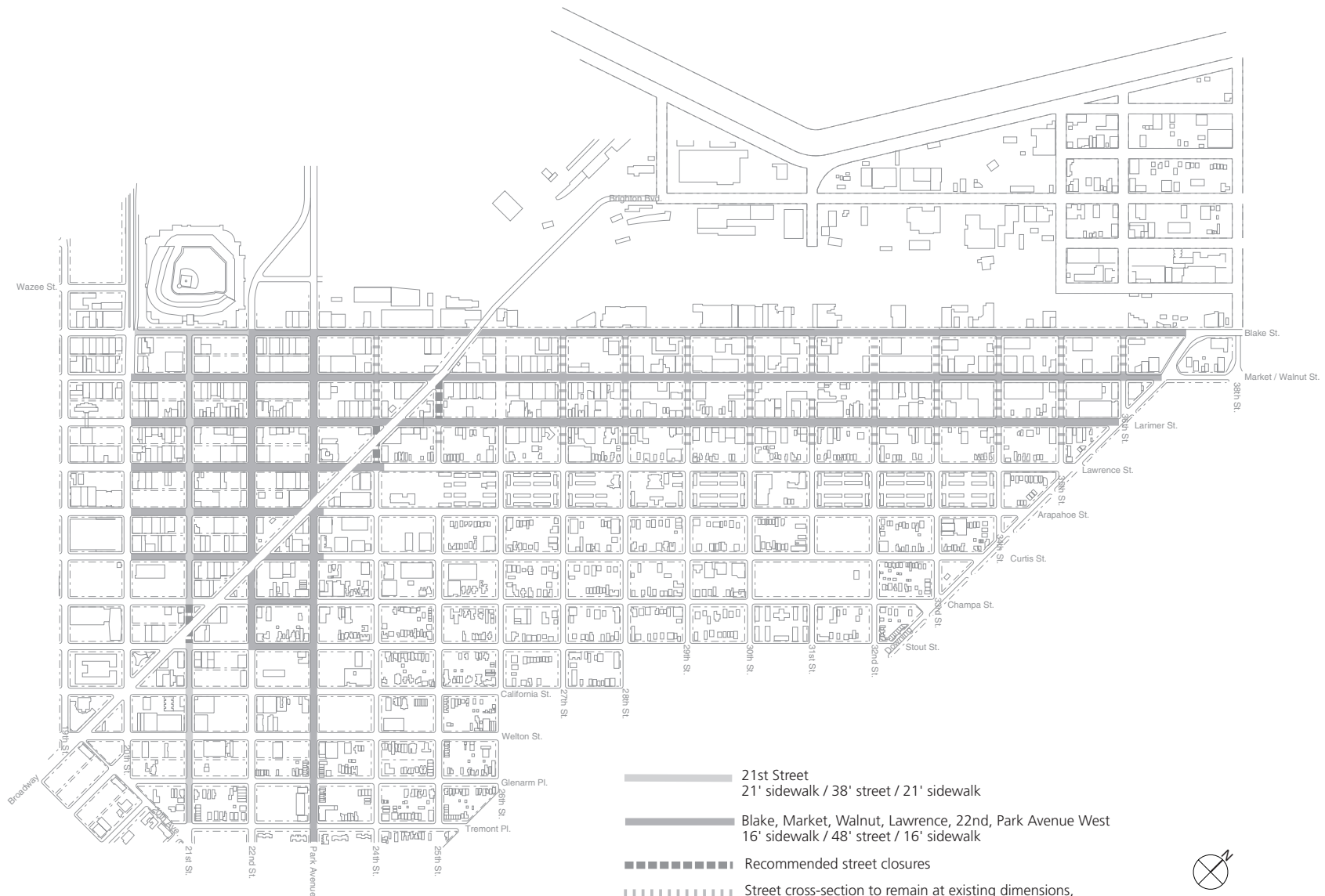
Broadway, from 20th Street to the existing Broadway Viaduct, has a poor visual image which affects all of the subareas in Northeast Downtown. This poor image is characterized by underutilized land (scruffy vacant lots and parking lots, and small buildings which do not create any definition of the street), a wide auto-dominated street, no landscaping — leaving the street dusty and barren, with few active uses (such as restaurants, shops, and food stores), and many homeless people (made even more obvious by the lack of anyone else on the street).

Broadway is more of a barrier than simply an edge to a district. It is difficult for the pedestrian to cross and walk along Broadway because: 1) the crossing distances are increased by being on the diagonal; 2) the intersections are confusing due to the multiple streets coming together; and, 3) the diagonal often creates crossing conditions where the pedestrian's back is to the traffic.

Because of the geometrical conditions formed when a street crosses a grid at a diagonal, the adjoining property is often cut up into small, triangular properties that are difficult to maintain and redevelop.

Introduction of New Auto-Oriented and Fast Food Uses Along Broadway

Because of the new exposure, increased access and volume of traffic that will occur at the intersections of 22nd Street and Broadway, and at Park Avenue West and Broadway, and along Broadway to Downtown, gas stations, fast food outlets, and other drive-in uses are likely to occur. Is this desirable? What is the appropriate character of buildings and uses along Broadway? Are they market supportable? Should policies along Broadway be uniform or differ north and south of the Park Avenue West intersection



UD-3 Street Cross-section

- 21st Street
 21' sidewalk / 38' street / 21' sidewalk
- Blake, Market, Walnut, Lawrence, 22nd, Park Avenue West
 16' sidewalk / 48' street / 16' sidewalk
- Recommended street closures
- Street cross-section to remain at existing dimensions,
 or with new construction, to be reviewed for possible
 16' / 48' / 16' cross-section



MARCH 1995

because of anticipated differences in traffic volumes? What land use regulations and design guidelines should be adopted to promote the “appropriate character” of buildings and uses?

Isolation of the Upper Larimer Subarea

While identity is derived from clear boundaries and uniqueness of character, sometimes strong edges can be too much of a good thing. Upper Larimer’s southern edge at Broadway is so strong that it separates the subarea from the improvements and new investment occurring in the Ballpark area.

Introduction of More Residential Into Older Industrial Areas

Old industrial buildings can often be renovated into excellent residential loft developments. However, there is a limited supply of such convertible structures, especially in the Arapahoe Square subarea. New residential construction is also needed to give the area a sufficient market population to attract other retail uses and services, but usually requires the supporting physical environment of an existing residential neighborhood or some other amenities.

Eroded Character/“Sense of Place”

Through demolition, the area (especially the Arapahoe Square subarea) lost many of the existing buildings, leaving parking lots, and isolated buildings rather than areas that have some built character. How can new construction be attracted to these areas? Should the focus be on those areas which have a greater supply of existing buildings, leaving the eroded areas alone?

Building Height Limits, Setbacks, and Bulk Planes

As with any area, Northeast Downtown’s built character and image will be strongly affected by the building heights, building setbacks and the bulk planes that are permitted throughout the community. As illustrated in Maps UD-4, 5 and 6, existing buildings are generally built next to the street without a setback. In order to preserve designated view corridors and particularly mountain views (especially of Longs Peak) and to retain a liveable and distinctive scale of development, the Plan has addressed building heights by recommending that they be limited. In addition, building setbacks and bulk planes are recommended that compliment the building height limits and also contribute to the desired neighborhood scale and character. What height limits, setbacks, and bulk planes are most consistent with the Plan’s vision and goals and how should they differ by subarea within Northeast Downtown? Currently there are no height limits in the B-8 zone district (the Arapahoe Square subarea) and height is limited by the front bulk planes in the I-1 and I-2 zone districts in Upper Larimer and Baseball Environs.



Silver Square Lofts introduced residential into the industrial area of Upper Larimer in the mid 1980s



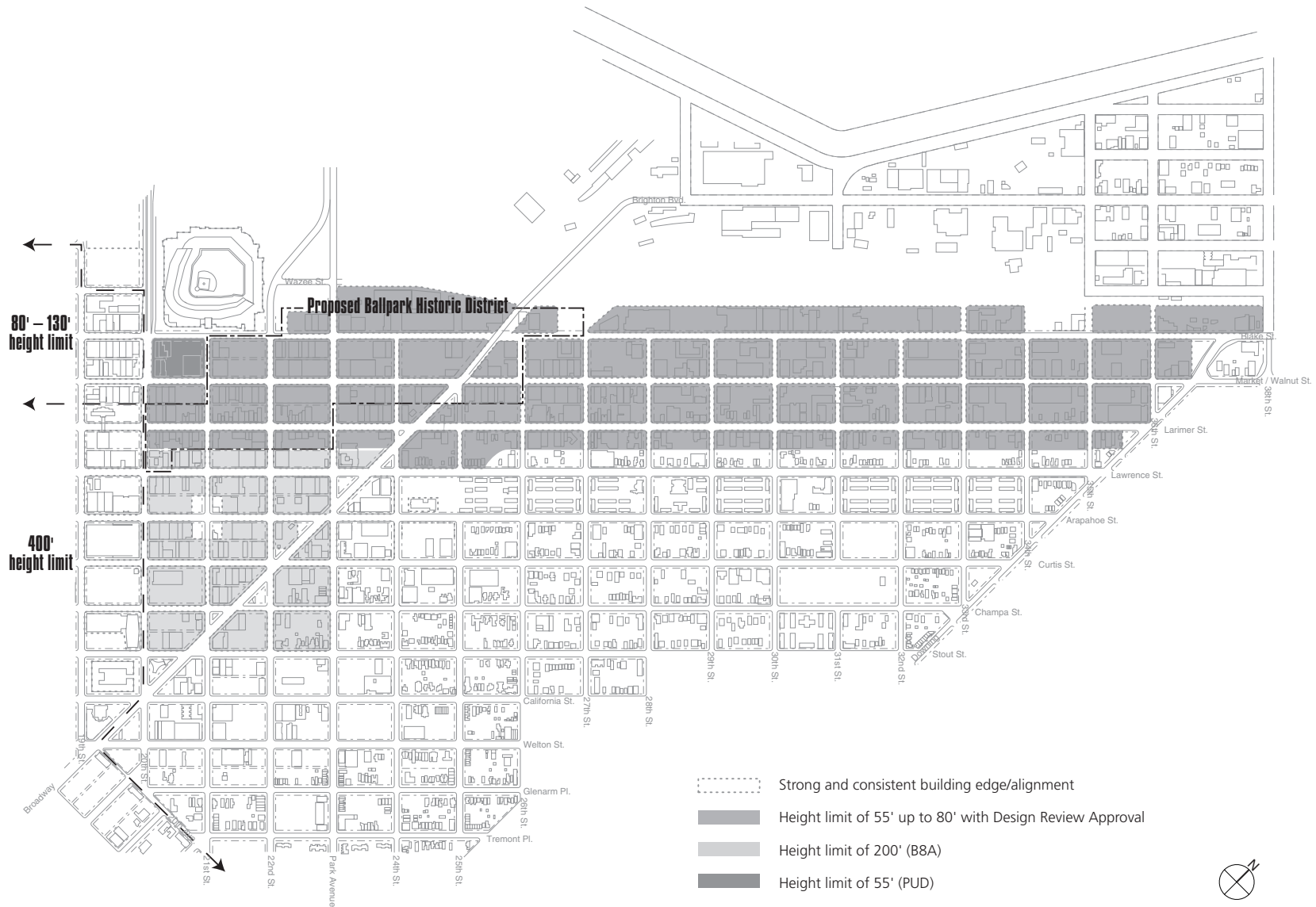
UD-4 Building Footprints with Infill



UD-5 Aerial



MAY 2001



MARCH 1995

UD-6 Recommended Building Height Limits and Forms

Land Use Density

The density at which land can be developed is another major consideration which strongly impacts and influences the character of an area: the visual “feel” of an area, the height and bulk of structures, the degree of lot coverage, the demand on public facilities and services, and traffic and parking impacts. Since density determines the amount of floor area square footage that can be developed on a site, it is one of many factors that determines land (and development) prices.

Currently, the allowable land use densities in Northeast Downtown vary within its three major zone districts, which is illustrated in Map UD-8. The current B-8 zoned property allows development at a maximum permitted land use density of 4:1 Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which is to say that a property owner can develop four square feet of floor area for every one square feet of land area. With bonuses designed to meet specific public interest goals, the B-8 zone district allows a FAR of approximately 7:1. The I-1 and I-2 zone districts allow development at a 2:1 FAR. Are these land use densities appropriate in view of the Northeast Downtown’s vision and other goals or should they be changed? If they should be changed, what should be the recommended use of right densities? What bonuses should be allowed to increase the use of right densities and to what upper density limit?

Sign and Billboard Regulations

Another element affecting an area’s image and character is the amount and type of signage (including billboards) allowed within its boundaries. Signs in Northeast Downtown are controlled by the sign code which is part of the Denver Zoning Ordinance. Are these existing sign code regulations contrary to or complementary to the plan’s vision and goals? Given the substantial public investment that has gone into the area, what restrictions, if any, are needed on signage and billboards in Northeast Downtown? In March 1995, the Denver City Council enacted an ordinance that bans billboards; 1) within 100' of 22nd Street, from Blake Street to Glenarm Place; 2) within 100' feet of 20th Street, from Broadway to Wewatta Street; and, 3) within 600' of 22nd Street and its intersection with Delgany and Blake Streets. How can signage be used to help make Northeast Downtown distinctive from other areas and interesting?

Goals

- UD-A** Provide better physical and visual linkages between the Upper Larimer subarea and the subareas south of Broadway (Arapahoe Square and Baseball Environs).



One of the billboards in Northeast Downtown



A schematic design of Larimer Street after renovation of historic buildings

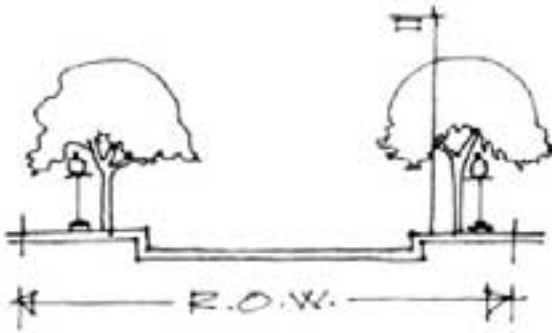
- UD-B** Focus on making Larimer Street an exciting shopping and entertainment area and reinforce Larimer Street from 20th Street to Park Avenue West as the center of the area through design guidelines for renovation and new construction, streetscaping, wider sidewalks, and gateways at either end.
- UD-C** Improve the visual characteristics of Broadway and transform Broadway from a strong ‘edge’ (an urban design element that separates areas) into a ‘seam’ (an urban design element that joins areas together) between the Upper Larimer subarea and the Arapahoe Square subarea in order to 1) improve the image of the entire area, and 2) improve the value of Broadway, helping to stimulate redevelopment and renovation. Require Broadway auto-oriented uses (gas stations, fast food pads, and convenience stores) to fit the character of the area by design controls and minimize pedestrian barriers along and across Broadway.
- UD-D** Through streetscape, building design guidelines and traffic management, create a physical continuity across 22nd Street and Park Avenue West within the Arapahoe Square subarea, minimizing these streets as potential edges within the Northeast Downtown area.
- UD-E** Reinforce 21st Street, both to the west and east of Broadway, as the housing core of the neighborhood and support 21st Street as a consistent entry experience to Coors Field. Use streetscape and open space to provide amenities attractive to residential development and pedestrian movement along the street.
- UD-F** Connect the Larimer Street retail focus area to the new Ballpark primarily along 21st Street, but also along 20th Street and 22nd Street through streetscape, and pedestrian active uses.
- UD-G** Develop more bicycle and pedestrian connections to the South Platte River from Northeast Downtown.
- UD-H** Identify and strengthen the basic distinguishing characteristics of the several subareas. Examples of such characteristics are street pattern, building orientation and location relative to the street, building height, exterior building materials, building coverage of the site, landscaping and streetscaping, building type and land use, land use density, signage, and lighting.
- UD-I** Preserve mountain view corridors, especially those on the west side of Blake Street aligned with 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32nd Streets.

Recommendations

- UD-1** Improve the character of Broadway through new streetscaping as part of the planned Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project.
- UD-2** Study the closure of some minor streets which intersect with Broadway (21st, 24th, and 25th Streets), consolidating some traffic islands with adjoining right-of-way and private property. This simplifies some intersections, making them easier for pedestrians to cross, and provides the opportunities for small landscaped open space amenities, and larger, better shaped parcels for development.
- UD-3** Conduct a Broadway Corridor Study (from 19th Street to Lawrence Street) to develop recommendations as to its role, and identify future transportation and urban design improvements — such as minor street closures, streetscaping, possible street width reductions through the elimination of on-street parking, intersection width reductions through sidewalk “bulb-outs” and minimizing pedestrian barriers across and along Broadway (see Map UD-1).
- UD-4** Develop new bicycle and pedestrian linkages to the South Platte River along 26th Street, connecting through the Ballpark parking lot to the planned Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project, and along 35th Street to a proposed bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the Union Pacific railroad tracks (see Map UD-1).
- UD-5** Complete the 25-foot wide sidewalk on the northeast side of 20th Street from the alley west of Larimer Street to Larimer Street.
- UD-6** Develop visual and pedestrian linkages between subareas by focusing streetscape improvements on 21st Street from Blake to Tremont, on Larimer Street from 20th Street to Downing, on 27th Street from Welton to Blake, and 35th Street to Downing and then along Downing to Curtis Street (see Map UD-1).
- UD-7** Develop Larimer Street between 20th Street and Park Avenue West into the center or focus of the subareas, through streetscaping and wider sidewalks, building design guidelines, and the attraction of new pedestrian active uses and residential support services (see Map UD-1).
- UD-8** Create landscaped open space amenities along 21st Street as focal points for residential development (see Map UD-6).



The Broadway Viaduct after its reconstruction



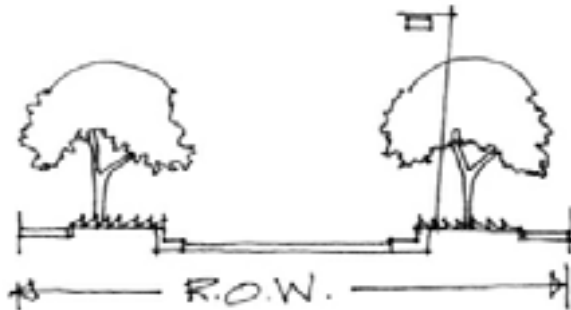
Streetscape Type A definition

- Minimum 16'+ wide concrete attached sidewalks
- Street trees in grates
- "Acorn" globe historic pedestrian lights and cylindrical, low cut-off street lights
- Light source is high pressure sodium

A1 • Same as A except pedestrian lights receive a round globe

A2 • Same as A except pedestrian lights are same as Baseball pedestrian lights, and special concrete paving treatment

A3 • Same as A except sidewalk paving receives special treatment and/or material



Streetscape Type B definition

- 5' minimum detached sidewalk
- 10' minimum tree lawn with live ground cover
- Street trees
- Cylindrical, low cut-off street lights
- Light source is high pressure sodium

B1 • Same as B with addition of "acorn" globe historic pedestrian lights

UD-9 Improve the sense of entry, orientation, and identity of the Upper Larimer subarea at the Downing, Walnut, Blake and 38th Street cluster of intersections, utilizing, among other options, streetscape elements, monuments, and/or signage (see Map UD-1).

UD-10 Reinforce the existing character of the area and preserve views by creating building height limits and bulk plane regulations for new development and major renovations in the subareas. As shown on Map UD-6, these building height limits are summarized as:

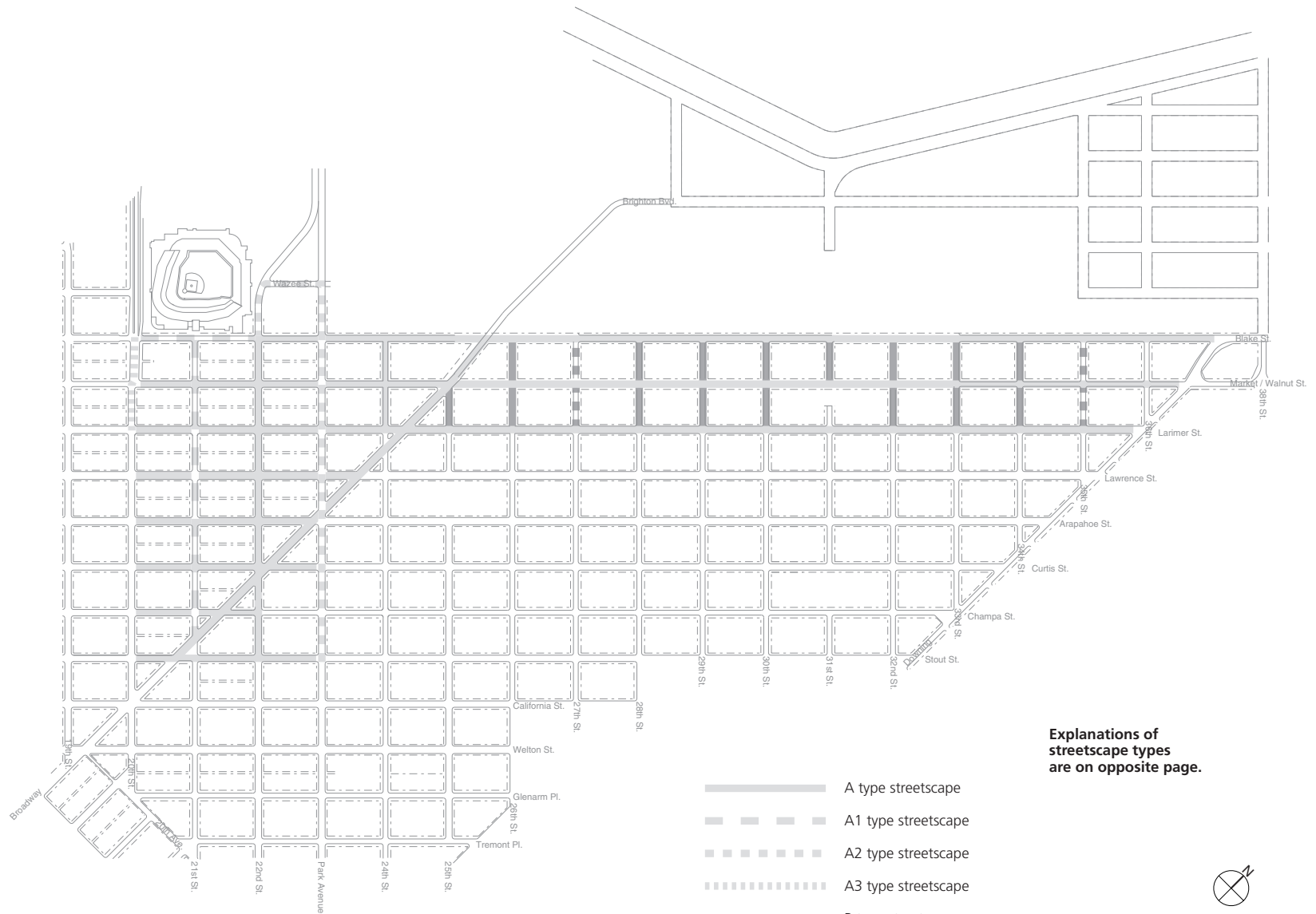
- ▶ 55' as of right height limit without design review in the proposed I-OR and I-2R zone districts. Buildings may exceed the 55' height limit, up to a maximum height of 80', if approved by staff design review.
- ▶ 55' as of right height limit without design review in the designated Larimer Street NBR area (which is currently zoned B-8). Buildings may exceed the 55' height limit, up to a maximum of 80', if approved by staff design review.
- ▶ 200' maximum height limit in the proposed B-8A zone district

UD-11 Encourage new development to build up to the street, creating spatial definition to the streets, and concentrating activity along the streets by revising setback requirements (see Map UD-4).

UD-12 Develop design guidelines and design review procedures for all of Northeast Downtown (excluding the proposed Ballpark Historic District, if it is enacted, from such design guidelines and review procedures) especially for key sub-areas and streets, such as Larimer Street from 20th Street to Broadway, 21st Street, from Blake Street to Broadway, Broadway, from 20th Street to Blake Street, or for the entire Baseball Environs and Arapahoe subareas from 20th Street to Broadway, and Blake Street to Broadway. Incorporate the Park Avenue Urban Design Guidelines (October 1993) into the development of overall building design guidelines for the area.

UD-13 Create sidewalk and streetscape development and maintenance policies for all streets in the Northeast Downtown area which are appropriate to the desired character of the subareas and roles of the streets. (see illustrations on the left, and Maps UD-3 and UD-7)

UD-14 Street lighting levels should equal those of Lower Downtown. In addition to street lighting, pedestrian lighting shall be provided on all streets designated in Map UD-7 by private development as it occurs, (including new and expanded commercial parking lots in addition to



Explanations of streetscape types are on opposite page.

- A type streetscape
- - - A1 type streetscape
- · · A2 type streetscape
- · - A3 type streetscape
- B type streetscape
- - - B1 type streetscape



UD-7 Streetscape Types



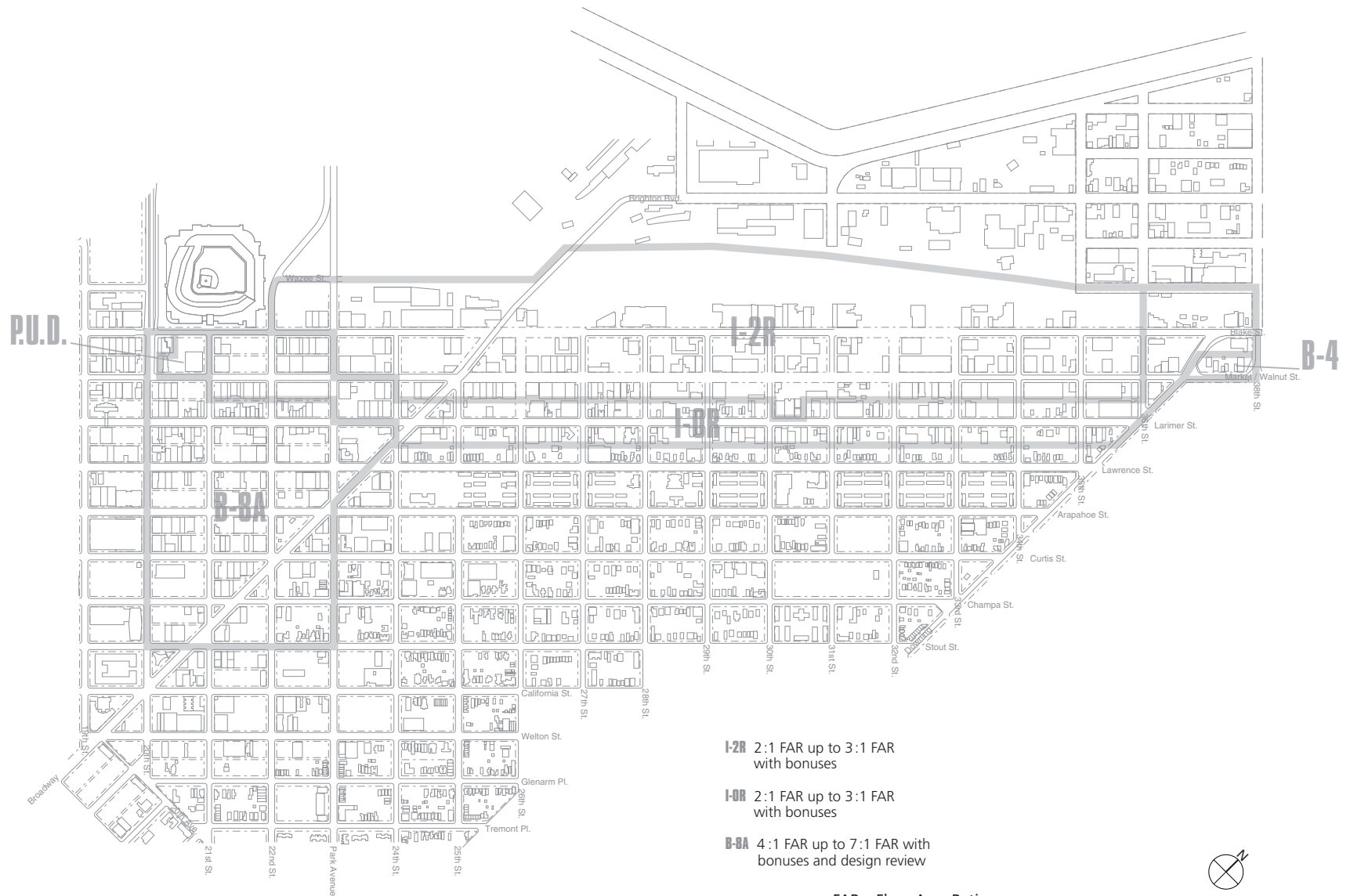
**A view of the mountains from Blake Street
in Upper Larimer**

their parking lot landscaping requirements), by the Baseball Stadium District's Development Agreement negotiated with the City, or by other public funding programs. Maintenance and power for the pedestrian lights shall be provided by the individual property owners or by an area-wide maintenance district. Private property owners should also provide on-site security lighting for loading docks, alleys, and existing parking lots. Parking lot lighting will be required for new and expanded lots as part of the existing parking lot landscaping ordinance.

- UD-15** Small amounts of publicly accessible open space developed for the purpose of creating localized amenities and changes in physical character should be provided through the targeted use of setbacks and open space required in the Zoning Ordinance, and through selective street closures. The Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project may also be utilized to renovate and integrate the small traffic/park islands along Broadway into a new streetscape environment.

Larger parks and open spaces are being acquired and developed along the South Platte River near the Northeast Downtown area. With new, connecting pedestrian and bicycle facilities, these parks can serve this area.

- UD-16** Preserve the views of the mountains down the right-of-ways of the numbered streets (excluding 21st Street), particularly from locations west of Lawrence Street. Pedestrian bridges, and sign bridges crossing the numbered streets are specifically discouraged.
- UD-17** Limit the land use densities for new construction and major renovation. As shown on Map UD-8, these land use density limits are summarized as:
- ▶ 2:1 Floor Area Ratio as a use of right density in the proposed I-0R and I-2R zone districts with an additional 1:1 FAR allowed (for a total up to of 3:1 FAR) with bonuses earned by providing one or more of the following uses: housing, residential support facility (to include public or private schools), the rehabilitation of a designated historic structure, underground parking, open space meeting Plan objectives, pedestrian active uses, child care facility, and transfer of development rights.
 - ▶ 4:1 Floor Area Ratio as a use of right density in the proposed B-8A zone district with an additional 2:1 FAR (for a total of up to 6:1 FAR) with bonuses earned by providing one or more of the following uses: housing, residential support facility (to include public or private



UD-8 Proposed Land Use Densities



Signage and wall art should reflect the historic character of the area

schools), child care facility, arts, entertainment, or cultural facility, the rehabilitation of a designated historic structure and transfer of development rights. An additional 1:1 FAR (up to an absolute maximum of 7:1) may be earned if the project is submitted for design review.

- UD-18** Limit the land use density and bulk of buildings in the proposed I-OR and I-2R zone districts by counting the excess retail and office parking space (that parking space provided in a project which exceeds the amount of parking that is required by the Zoning Ordinance to meet the proposed on-site development that is leased or sold to off-site uses) against the project's density or Floor Area Ratio. The property may be exempt from this policy if an individual developer of the parking garage agreed in writing to participate in an existing parking district.
- UD-19** Control signage in all Northeast Downtown zone districts by modifying the existing sign code's criteria and introduce design review for proposals not possible under the sign code criteria (Vital Signs criteria). Tighten up temporary sign requirements. The general outline of the sign recommendations, to be specified as part of the recommended B-8A, I-OR, and I-2R zone preparation and adoption work, is as follows:
- ▶ modify the allowable sign area, slightly reducing the sign area for conventional signs, but increasing the sign area (particularly for larger projects) if signs reflecting the historic character of the area are used
 - ▶ reduce the number of signs allowed
 - ▶ allow projecting signs and roof signs through staff design review following flexible guidelines, or by keeping design review to a minimum through the use of specific "cookbook" standards; use the Vital Signs' design standards and guidelines as starting points
 - ▶ redefine "wall" signs to include the extension, under specific design criteria, of the building's parapet to receive all or part of a sign
 - ▶ existing historic wall signs left or repaired in their "faded" condition, or other existing signs, considered by staff to be either historic or representative of the historic character of the area, are exempt from inclusion in the recommended sign code
 - ▶ tighten the temporary sign requirements, either generally, or as a trade-off for the ability to do an amount, or number of signs beyond the "as of right" allowances, and/or to provide sign types currently prohibited.



**T R A N S P O R T A T I O N &
P A R K I N G**





Northeast Downtown is located near major traffic arteries

INTRODUCTION

Because of its central location adjacent to downtown Denver, Northeast Downtown is heavily impacted by traffic and is the location of many major transportation projects. The construction of Coors Field and the redevelopment of vacant and underutilized land in the area will intensify these traffic impacts and create parking issues as well.

The transportation and parking element is a key chapter in the *Northeast Downtown Plan* since transportation and parking plans and facilities strongly influence most other elements of the plan, especially land use and urban design. The intent of this chapter is to provide a transportation and parking framework that adequately serves the overall transportation needs of the area while being supportive of the Plan vision and compatible with the entire set of goals and recommendations in the Plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Streets, Highways, and Viaducts

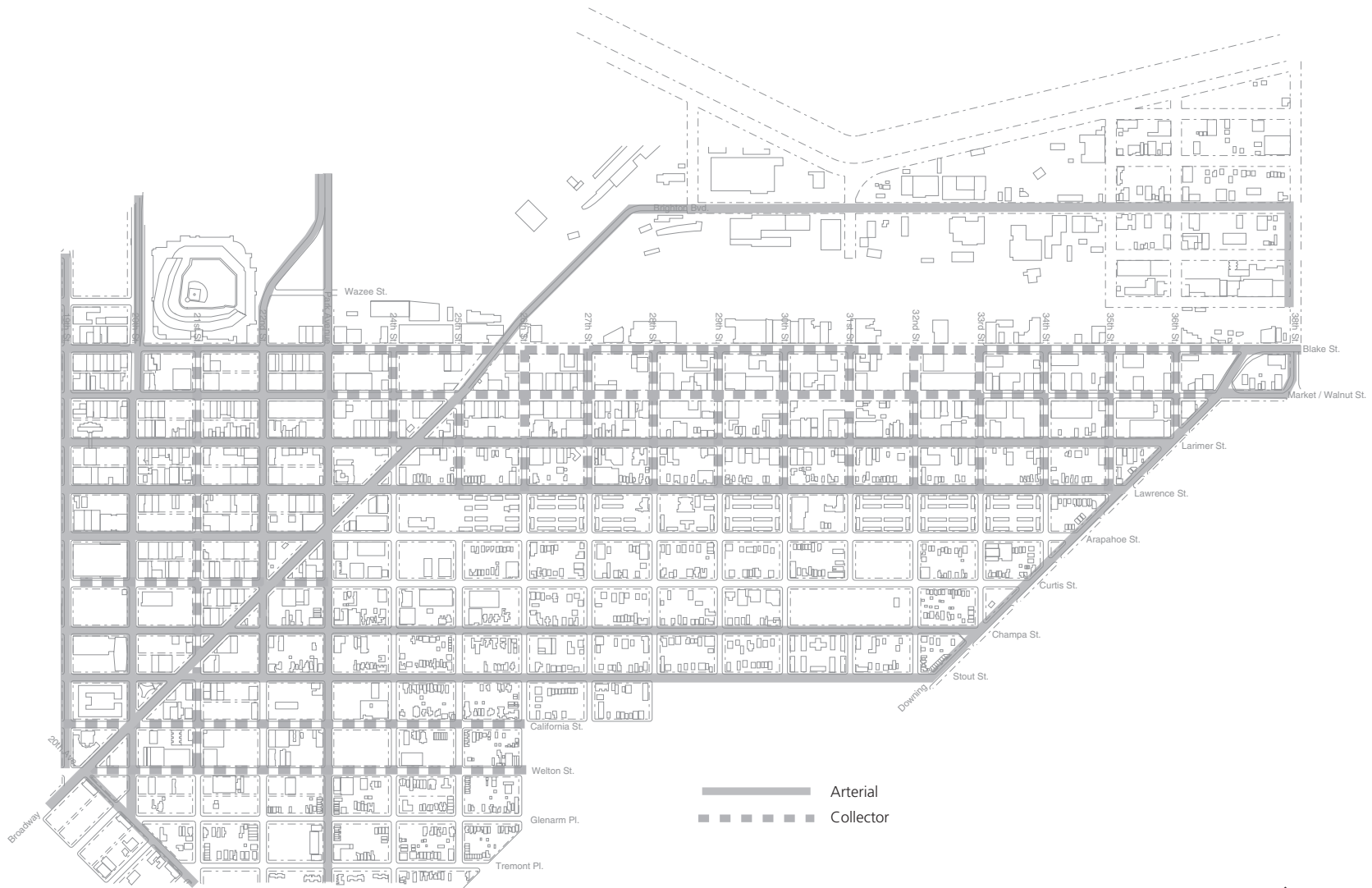
Existing Functional Classifications of Streets

The Traffic Engineering Section of the Transportation Division of the Department of Public Works defines four categories of streets for the purpose of describing and planning streets and highways. The criteria used for classification includes function, access, width, traffic volume and signalization. The street classifications for Northeast Downtown are depicted on Map T-1.

Local Streets ▶ These streets have the function of providing direct access to adjacent properties and of carrying low volumes of traffic (less than 4000 vehicles per day) with an origin or destination within the neighborhood; examples are 28th and 29th Streets.

Collector Streets ▶ These streets have the function of collecting and distributing traffic having an origin or destination between arterial and local streets within the community and linking neighborhood and residential areas with local and community shopping and service facilities and employment areas. Collectors may carry up to 15,000 vehicles per day. An example of a collector is 21st Street.

Arterials ▶ Arterials have the function of permitting rapid and relatively unimpeded traffic movement through the city and serving as a primary link between communities and major land use elements. Arterials can carry up to 50,000 vehicles per day. However, in Downtown Denver and immediately adjacent areas (including Northeast Downtown), Traffic Engineering considers virtually all streets as arterials because of the role and higher level of service they provide in the transportation system hierarchy. For example, they serve higher density and higher traffic generating land uses and provide connections to many higher volume arterials and freeways. Broadway, 20th Street, and Park Avenue West are major arterials in Northeast Downtown.



Map T-1 Street Classifications



April 1995

Source: Traffic Engineering Section, Department of Public Works

Freeways ▶ Freeways have the function of permitting traffic to flow rapidly and unimpeded through and around the metropolitan area. The range of traffic carried on a freeway varies widely depending on location and number of lanes. For example, I-25 near Downtown has four lanes in each direction and carries about 190,000 vehicles per day.

Existing Street Traffic Counts and Traffic Projections

Traffic counts are based on 24-hour periods in both directions. The existing daily traffic counts are depicted on Map T-2. For some streets on that map, “existing” daily traffic counts are as of February 1995 since they were prepared by Centennial Engineering for Carter & Burgess, consultants for the Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project. For other streets, the most recent daily traffic counts (also prepared by Centennial Engineering) were completed in 1991 and reported in their 23rd Street Viaduct replacement project report which was prepared for the City and County of Denver and the Colorado Department of Transportation. Traffic projections for selected streets for the years 2010 and 2015 are presented on Map T-3.

Accident Counts at Selected Intersections

Research into the accidents at selected intersections was conducted and findings are presented on Map T-4.

Existing Function of Streets from Neighborhood’s Viewpoint

From the neighborhood’s viewpoint, the Upper Larimer Neighborhood suffers from its many one way streets. The obvious street for retail development is Larimer (State Hwy 33), which is an artery into Lower Downtown from Brighton Boulevard, Washington Street and E. 40th Avenue. This street remains a route for through traffic rather than a destination between 24th Street and 37th Street. Lawrence Street carries substantial through traffic on a largely residential street with no natural or contrived entry point northwesterly into the Upper Larimer Neighborhood. BRW Consultants has suggested that baseball traffic will use Market/Walnut Street outbound and Blake Street inbound through the neighborhood to access the 27th Street parking lot entrance. Blake Street, however, is not an easy access from 38th and Walnut Streets and may be limited to only the E. 40th Avenue traffic, whereas the Washington Street and Brighton Boulevard traffic using 38th Street will more likely opt for Lawrence and Larimer Streets for their routes to and from parking and Coors Field. The poorly maintained rail crossings along Walnut Street provide a functional barrier from 23rd to 34th Streets and 90-degree truck loading results in the “slalom” driving condition in this area during the day.



Traffic flow on Walnut Street is sometimes impeded by trucks loading from businesses

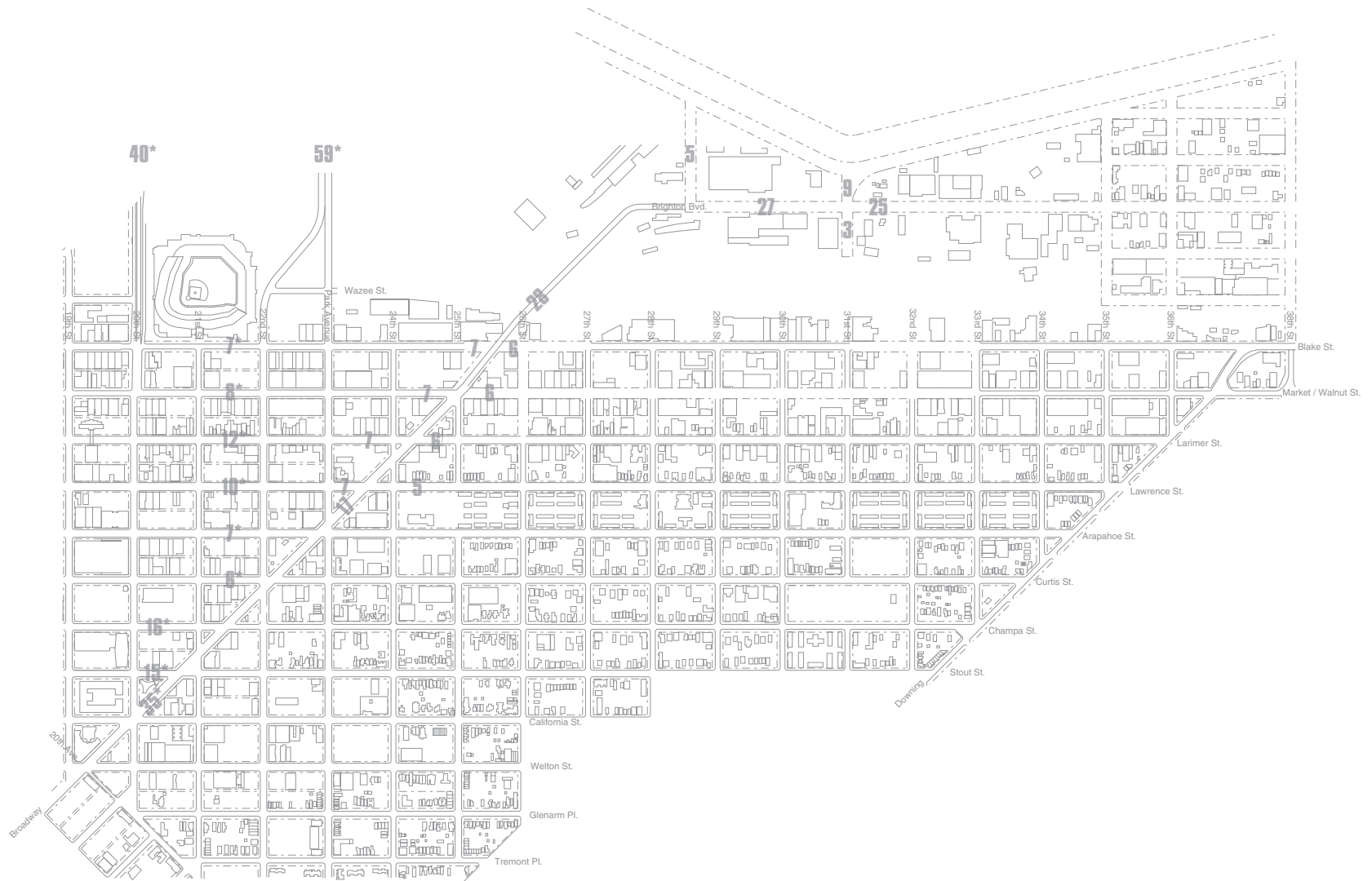


Map T-2 1995/1991 Average Daily Traffic/AM Peak/PM Peak



April 1995

Sources: Carter & Burgess, projected 2015 ADT, Broadway Viaduct Replacement Analysis, 1995; figures denoted with * are from Centennial Engineering, projected 2010 ADT, 23rd Street Viaduct Replacement Analysis, 1991

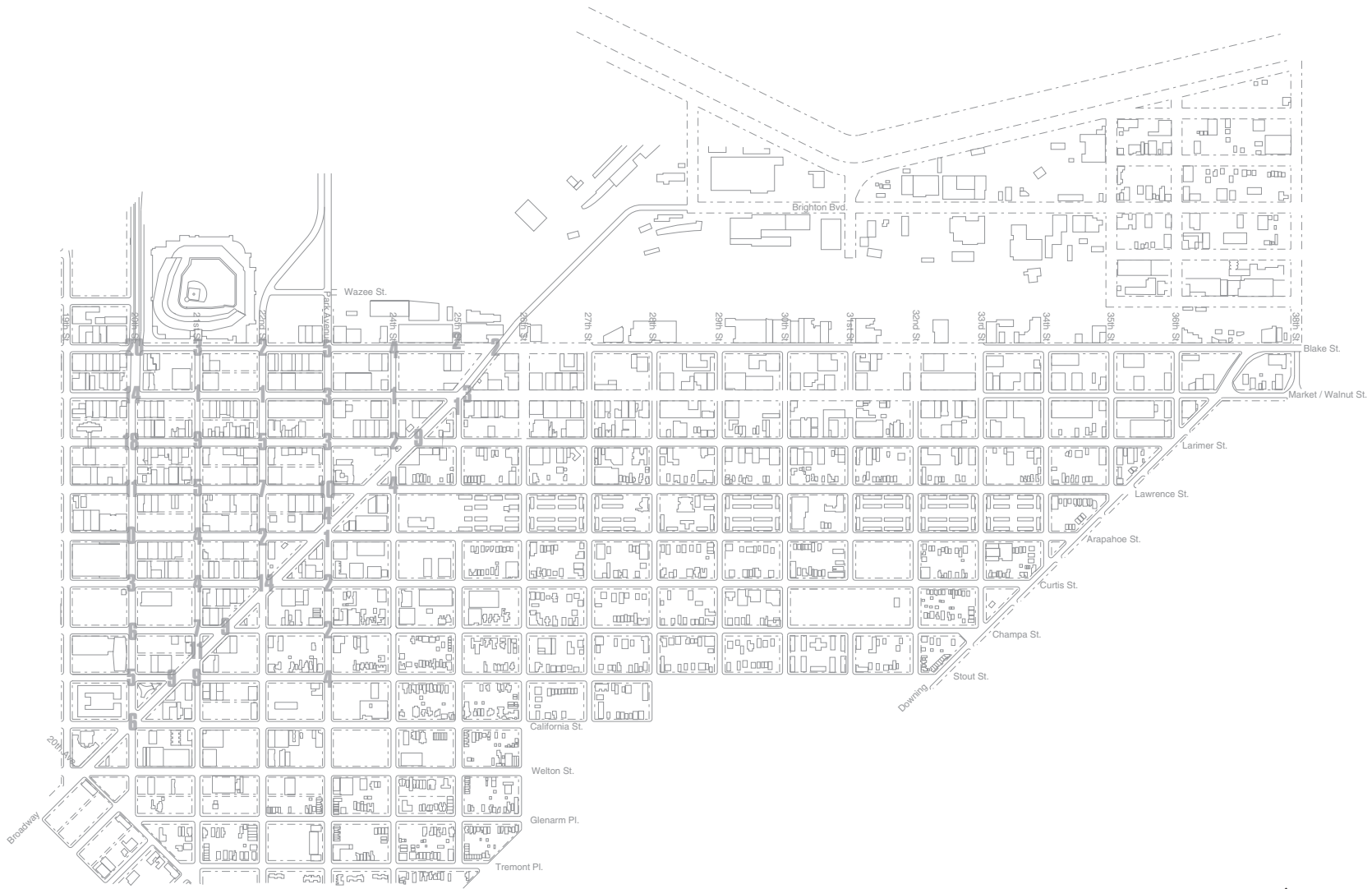


**Map T-3 Projected 2010 and 2015 Average Daily Traffic Volumes
(in thousands)**



April 1995

Sources: Carter & Burgess, projected 2015 ADT,
Broadway Viaduct Replacement Analysis, 1995; figures
denoted with * are from Centennial Engineering, projected
2010 ADT, 23rd Street Viaduct Replacement Analysis, 1991



Map T-4 Traffic Accidents at Selected Intersections



April 1995

Source: Traffic Engineering Section, Department of Public Works

Blake Street is the most appropriate street for residentially weighted mixed-use development from 26th to 35th Streets, since it is quiet and broad and the most potentially pedestrian friendly with the addition of sidewalks. Walnut Street is the gem for the gamut of mixed uses and the logical entry point and major gateway from Lower Downtown and the potential Ballpark Historic District to Upper Larimer at the Styro Building (the old Pittsburgh Plate Glass Building) and the Benjamin Moore Building at Broadway. In contrast to Blake, Lawrence Street is an inappropriate street on which to focus energy and resources.

The variables affecting this vision are the ultimate traffic configuration around 38th Street and Walnut Street: the Broadway Viaduct replacement (the neighborhood prefers an underpass rather than an overpass); the redevelopment of the recycling and disposal properties; and, the access points to the Ballpark parking lot. Another neighborhood concern is that there is no efficient way to access Upper Larimer from northbound Downing. The most logical connecting street is 34th; but the left-hand turn onto 34th from Downing is unclear because of the physical design of that intersection and inadequate signage. This sense of disorientation is actually a fairly widespread problem for drivers entering or leaving Upper Larimer to such destinations as I-70 and the Coliseum as well as to Downtown and the Coors Field area. These disorientation problems need to be studied and improved by signage and possibly other measures.

The North Larimer Business District believes that current traffic volumes necessitate only three lanes of traffic on 22nd Street, leaving one lane for on-street parking. It believes that traffic flows currently do not require four lanes, that the wider traffic artery disrupts the cohesiveness of the neighborhood, and wants the additional on-street parking to support local merchants and business people until traffic volumes warrant four lanes of traffic. The City's position and policy, based on traffic analysis, is that four lanes are required to handle the traffic flow between Blake and Lawrence on 22nd Street and Park Avenue West. Traffic volumes and patterns for these operations will be monitored, particularly as to how traffic to and from Coors Field is handled, resulting in changes to operations as permitted.

Mass Transit

Existing RTD Bus Routes

Prior to the Coors Field construction project, RTD buses staged for the Market Street Station in the vicinity of 21st and Blake Streets. This activity occurred from approximately 3:00 to 6:00 pm, with most movements concentrated from 3:30 to 5:25 pm. The staging function is now dispersed along upper Blake Street, due to the Coors Field construction activity.



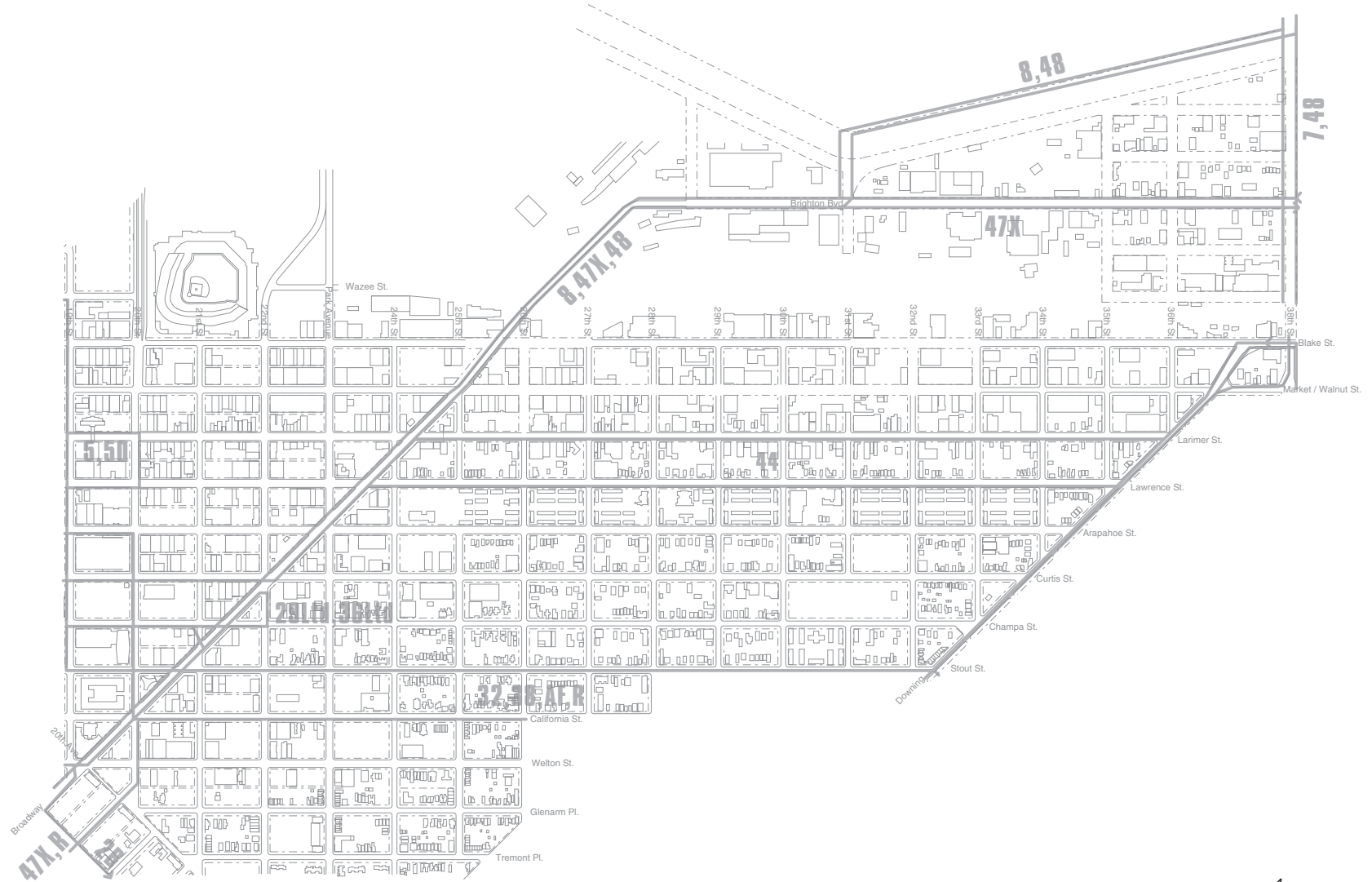
Biking is currently not accommodated well in Northeast Downtown

In the first hour of staging, almost all buses are coming from the garages, and staging is brief. In the last hour of staging, almost all buses are coming from earlier trips, and the duration of their time staging depends on traffic conditions. Staging allows on-time departures from the Market Street Station, even when road traffic is heavy. It also spaces out the bus movements into the Station, so that buses do not queue and block traffic lanes.

“Existing” RTD bus routes, as of the Denver International Airport (DIA) opening date on February 28, 1995, are shown on Map T-5.

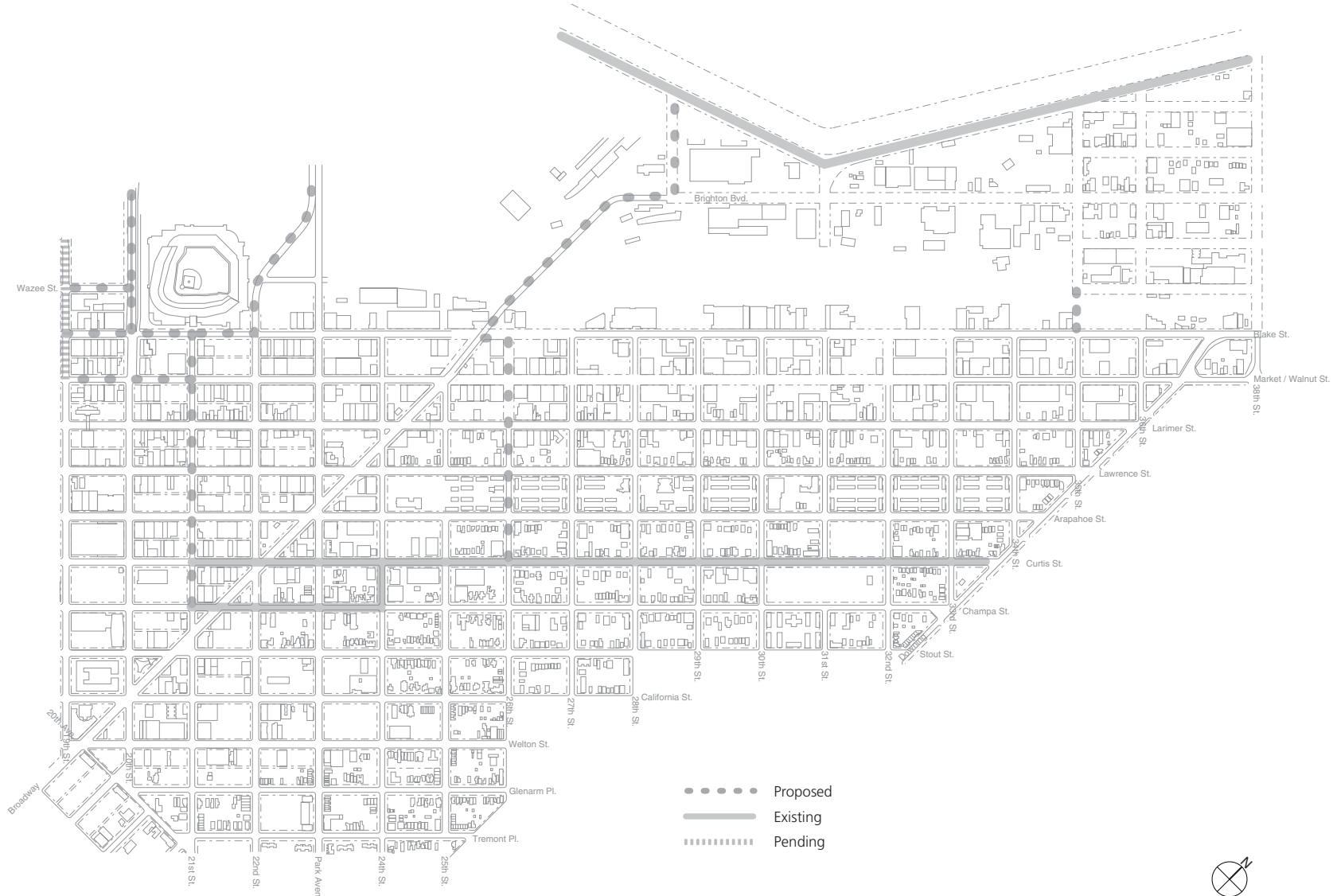
Existing Bike Routes

Presently, there are virtually no bicycle routes in Northeast Downtown. Although Curtis Street is designated as a bike route, only the portion between 22nd to 24th Streets is within the study area. It is shown on Map T-6.



Map T-5 Current RTD Route Services

April 1995



Map T-6 Bike Routes


July 1995

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Existing transportation projects will impact Northeast Downtown with new or reconstructed streets, viaducts, and a RTD light rail facility. These projects are outlined below and are shown on Map T-7.

Streets, Highways, and Viaducts

20th Street/High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)

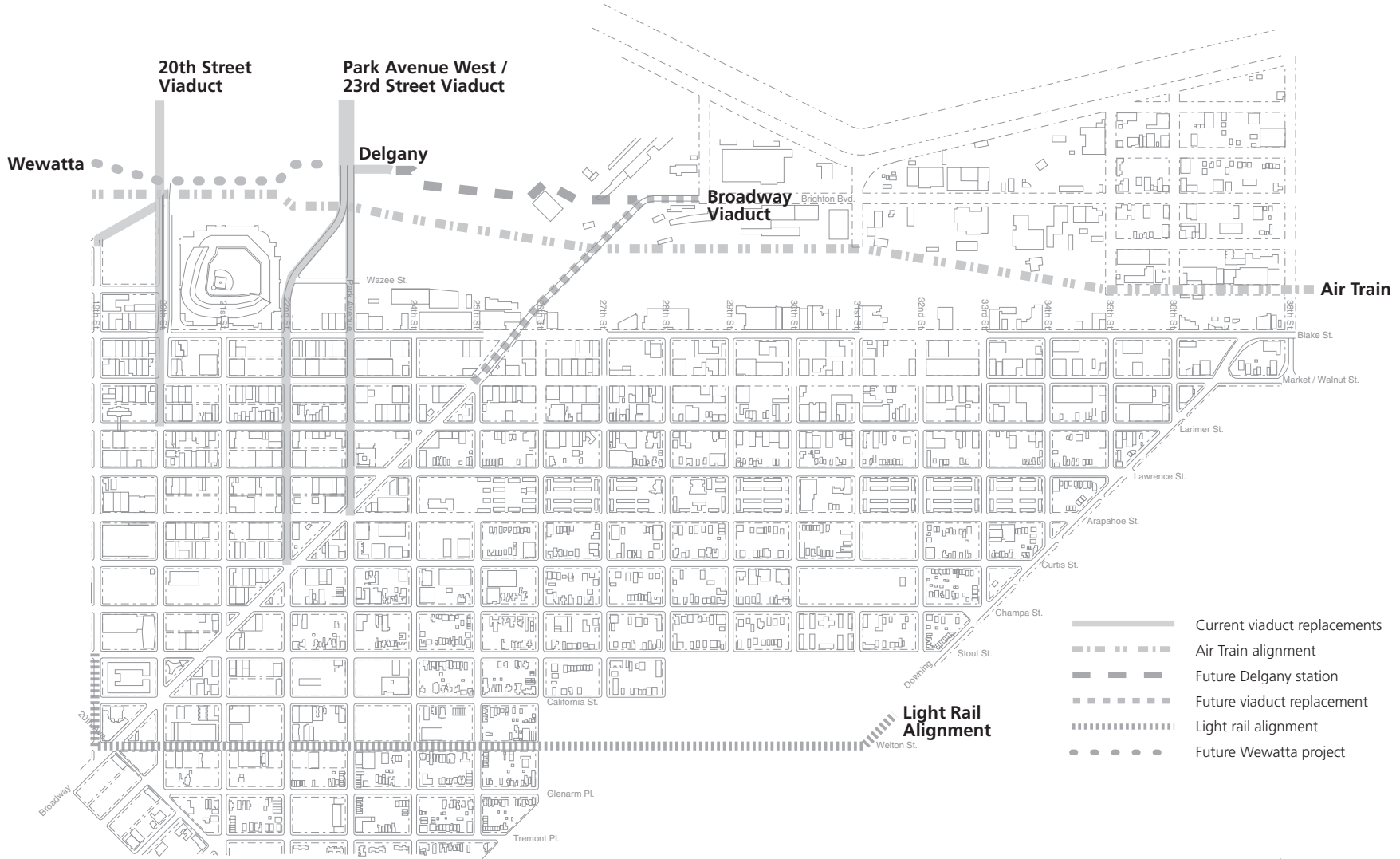
The 20th Street/HOV improvement is a joint project between the Regional Transportation District, the City and County of Denver and the Colorado Department of Transportation. In replacing the original 1907 viaduct, it provides two general vehicle lanes in each direction between I-25 and the Downtown area. This transportation corridor also includes a bus High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) elevated structure across the Central Platte Valley. It opened for bus traffic in September 1994 and opened for HOV's in September 1995.

Local bus service uses the new 20th Street general traffic lanes. Service operates in both directions on 20th Street from the underpass to Larimer Street, with inbound buses turning on Larimer to reach 17th Street. Outbound buses come from 15th Street via Lawrence to 20th Street.

HOV lane bus service operates inbound on 19th Street and outbound on 20th Street in the Northeast Downtown Study Area. A start-up service plan has only Route H operating in these lanes. The HOV lane design plans project that service increases will eventually lead to an equal balance in peak hour trips between the Market Street Station (16th Street) and the HOV lanes (19th/20th Streets), as the Market Street Station would become congested. An "Exception Stop" will be provided for these Express and Regional routes outbound at 20th/Larimer. This is a potential site for a passenger shelter and schedule/map display. Depending on public input, a second route may be added to the 19th/20th Street lanes.



20th Street Viaduct adjacent to Coors Field



- Current viaduct replacements
- Air Train alignment
- Future Delgany station
- Future viaduct replacement
- Light rail alignment
- Future Wewatta project

Map T-7 Existing and Future Transportation Projects

April 1995

22nd/23rd Street Viaduct

The 23rd Street Viaduct replacement improvement requires four lanes in each direction to meet projected traffic demands. It is being constructed in two phases. Phase I involved construction of an initial two lanes across the Central Platte Valley to the leg that goes to 22nd Street and was put into operation in May 1994. Phase II includes demolition of the 1890 viaduct and Park Avenue West reconstructed (ultimately to be an eight-lane facility) from Broadway to the South Platte River. Phase II is underway with completion scheduled by the end of 1995.

Local bus service was also restored to 23rd Street when the initial stage of that viaduct project was completed. Buses operate inbound over the 22nd Street ramp, then on Larimer to 17th Street. Outbound buses operate from 15th Street along Lawrence Street to Park Avenue West (23rd Street).

The RTD staff will work with community groups and property owners to identify potential shelter sites once ridership patterns are established at the new stops. This is an ongoing process.

Bus Staging

RTD staff has been working with Coors Field planners and the Colorado Rockies on the possibility of using the Coors Field bus parking lot for regular PM peak hours staging for the Market Street Station. This activity would have to be detoured on a few days of the year, but most baseball game traffic does not occur during the times when the space is needed for commuter bus staging.

Rail Transit***RTD's Metro Area Connection Light Rail***

RTD's Metro Area Connection (MAC) Light Rail project opened in October 1994. The MAC is a light rail system, powered by overhead electricity, running at ground level in or adjacent to City streets. In general, the alignment runs from a bus/rail transfer facility and small park-n-ride facility at 30th Avenue and Downing through the Five Points Business District, continuing along Welton Street across Broadway into downtown on 19th Street and going west to Auraria and then south along a railroad corridor to the end of the line bus/light rail transit station at Broadway and I-25.



Some of the street configurations in Baseball Environs Subarea make walking difficult and unlikely

Although a total of fourteen stations are planned, the Broadway/Welton Station near 21st Street is of major interest to Northeast Downtown, making the area and its attractions, particularly Coors Field, accessible to many people arriving by light rail. It is about a 12-15 minute walk from this light rail station to Coors Field. Special signage for pedestrians to and from Coors Field should be provided from the Broadway/Welton Light Rail Station, because the broken nature of the street grid at that point does not make the shortest (and signalized) walking route apparent.

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING ANALYSIS AND MANAGEMENT IN THE COORS FIELD AREA

Coors Field Area Transportation Analysis

Due to the anticipated impact of traffic in and around Coors Field, the Denver Metropolitan Baseball Stadium District contracted with the consulting firm BRW to conduct a transportation study of relevant traffic, parking, and pedestrian movement factors. BRW's report, dated October 1993, is the basis for the summary that follows.

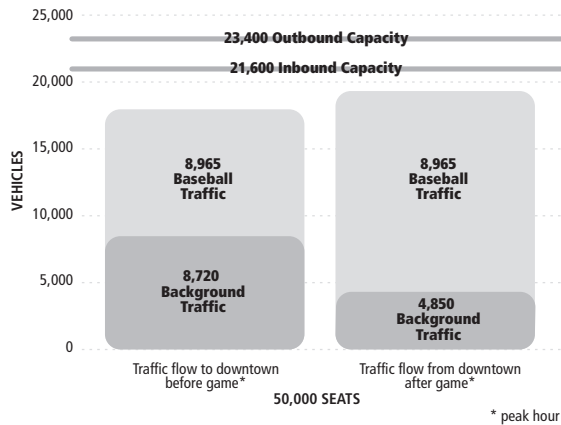
The analysis was undertaken to address the "worst case scenario" of 50,000 fans or spectators attending a game or event on a Friday at 7:00 pm. Assumptions are:

- ▶ 10% of the attendees will arrive by non-auto mode (bus, light rail, bicycle, etc.)
- ▶ auto occupancy will average 2.75 persons
- ▶ 50% of the people will arrive in the peak hour (6-7 pm) before the game; 90% of the people will depart during the peak hour after the game (10-11 pm)
- ▶ the transportation network will include the existing system and the following improvements:
 - Park/38th Interchange — complete except for inbound flyover ramp
 - 23rd Street Viaduct (abutment to Delgany) — 4 lanes
 - 23rd Street Viaduct (Delgany to Platte River) — 4 lanes
 - 22nd Street Viaduct (Delgany to abutment) — 4 lanes
 - Delgany Ramp — completed
 - 20th Street Interchange — complete and open to traffic
 - 20th Street — completed
 - Downtown Express — completed (bus operation)
 - Wazee Street (19th to 20th) — completed



Pedestrians near Coors Field on game day

Graph 1 — Projected Traffic Flow To/From Coors Field



Source: Coors Field Transportation Study, BRW, October 1993

- 22nd Street (abutment to Broadway) — 4 lanes
- 23rd Street (abutment to Broadway) — 4 lanes

The trip distribution of primary access to Coors Field is illustrated on Map T-8 and shown as:

Northwest	8%
North	7%
Northeast	3%
East	15%
South/Southeast	29%
Southwest	12%
West	26%

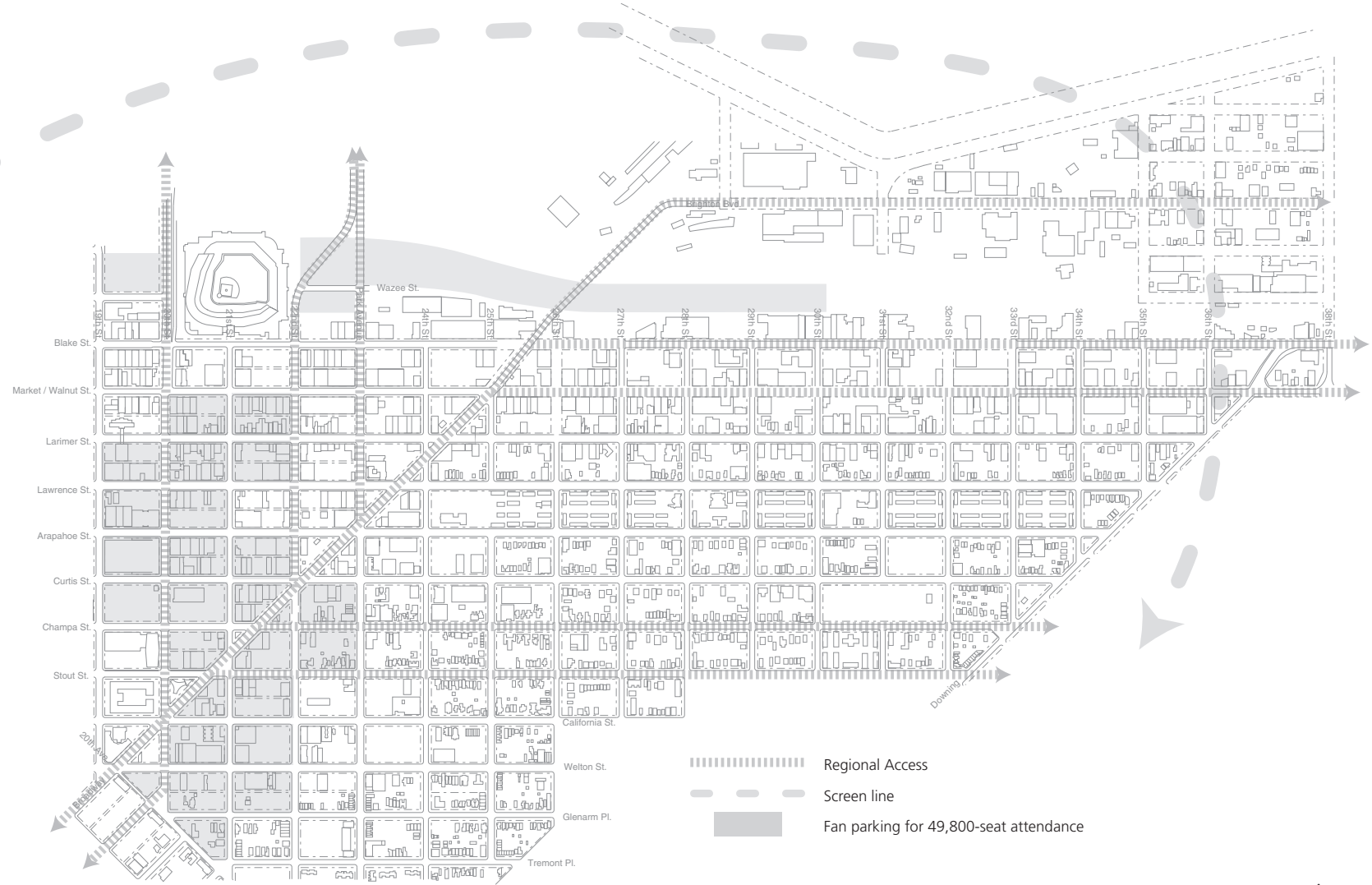
BRW also analyzed the peak hour traffic flow to Downtown before the game/event and from Downtown after the game/event. Table 1 compares these peak hour flows with the inbound and outbound capabilities of the transportation system. Maps T-9 and T-10 show, respectively, the estimated peak hour traffic flow before the game/event and after the game/event.

Coors Field Area Parking Analysis

As part of its impact analysis of 50,000 people attending games or events at Coors Field, BRW also conducted a parking needs assessment based on projected demand and the availability of parking spaces in the Ballpark Neighborhood Influence Area. The findings of that parking assessment are summarized below:

Parking Supply

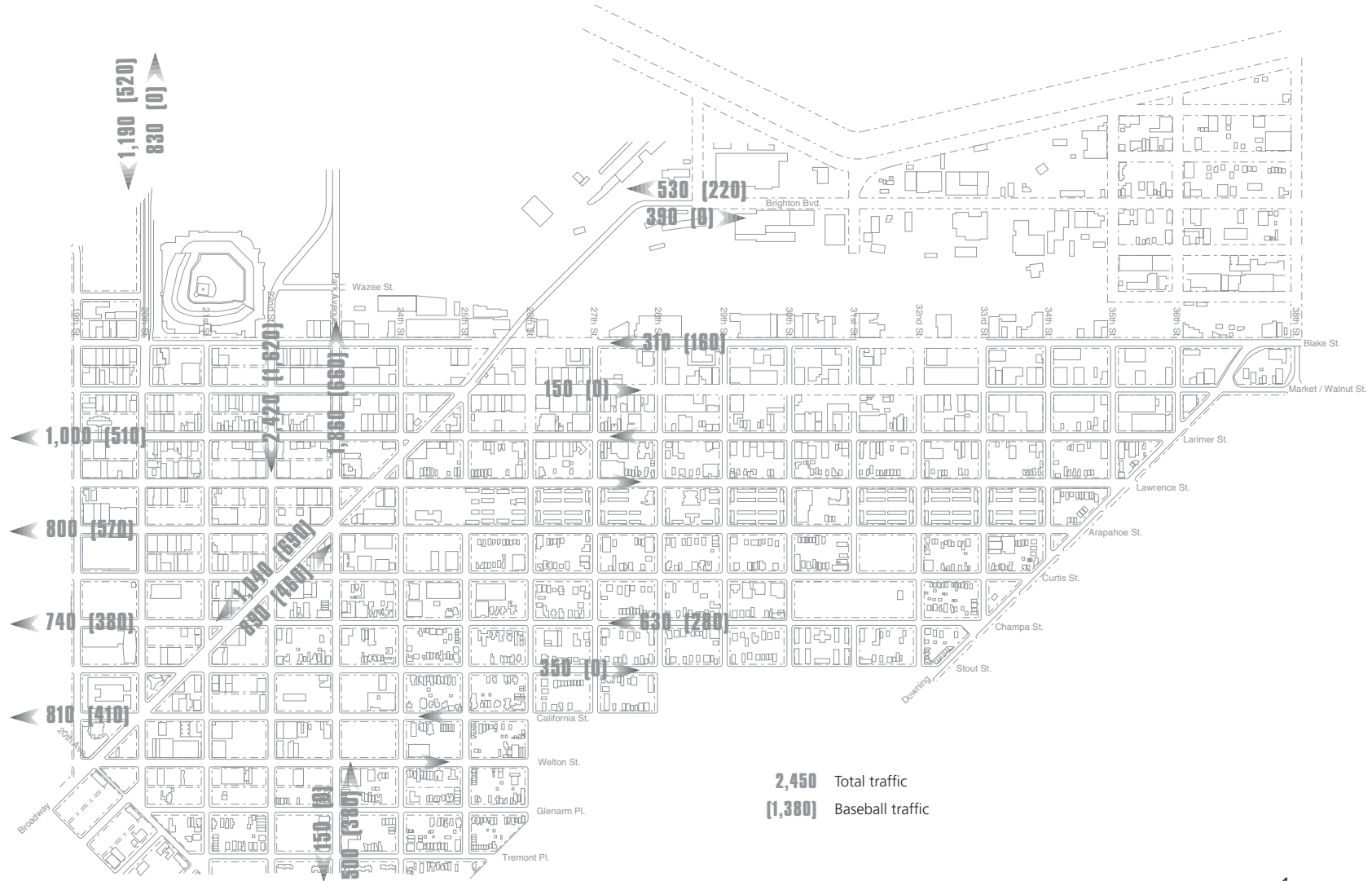
- Total Baseball District Parking Spaces (excluding buses) — 5,500
- Baseball District Parking available to fans — 4,600
- RTD Bus Parking — 66
- Charter Bus Parking — 40
- Disabled Parking — 147
- Spaces Available within 15 minute walk of the ballpark (in Ballpark Neighborhood Influence Study Area) — 18,000



Map T-8 Primary Access



Source: Coors Field Transportation Study, BRW, October 1993



1994

Source: Coors Field Transportation Study, BRW, October 1993



Mountain views are impressive from Park Avenue West, a key street in the Coors Field area

Parking Demand

	<i>Available</i>	<i>Used</i>
District Spaces	4,600	4,600
Neighborhood Influence Area Spaces	18,000	11,700
Total	22,600	16,300

Coors Field Area Transportation and Parking Management Program

In anticipation of the traffic and parking around Coors Field on baseball game and big event days, a Transportation and Parking Management Program (TMP) has been prepared by the City and County of Denver, the Denver Metropolitan Baseball District, RTD, and BRW consultants, in association with neighborhood and business organizations and affected property owners. This TMP consists of seven components:

- ▶ traffic access and circulation
- ▶ traffic control
- ▶ transit service/baseball bus operations
- ▶ on-site parking
- ▶ off-site parking
- ▶ pedestrians
- ▶ bicycles

Traffic Access and Circulation ▶ Map T-11 shows the key streets which will be used by fans and other Coors Field users.

Traffic Control ▶ Map T-11 also depicts the preliminary traffic control plan for the Coors Field area. Game and event day signage will be used to help the police officers direct traffic.

Transit Service/Baseball Bus Operations ▶ Based on presently projected Coors Field parking assignments, the RTD Rockies Ride passengers will disembark and board in a specially designated lot between 22nd Street and Park Avenue West, between Blake and (fronting on) Wazee. Buses from outlying locations would enter and leave the lot via the 22nd/23rd Street Viaduct. A Broadway Shuttle would run from the Civic Center area via the Broadway and Welton Light Rail Transit Station, entering the lot from Park Avenue West and exiting to Broadway via 22nd Street (see Map T-10).

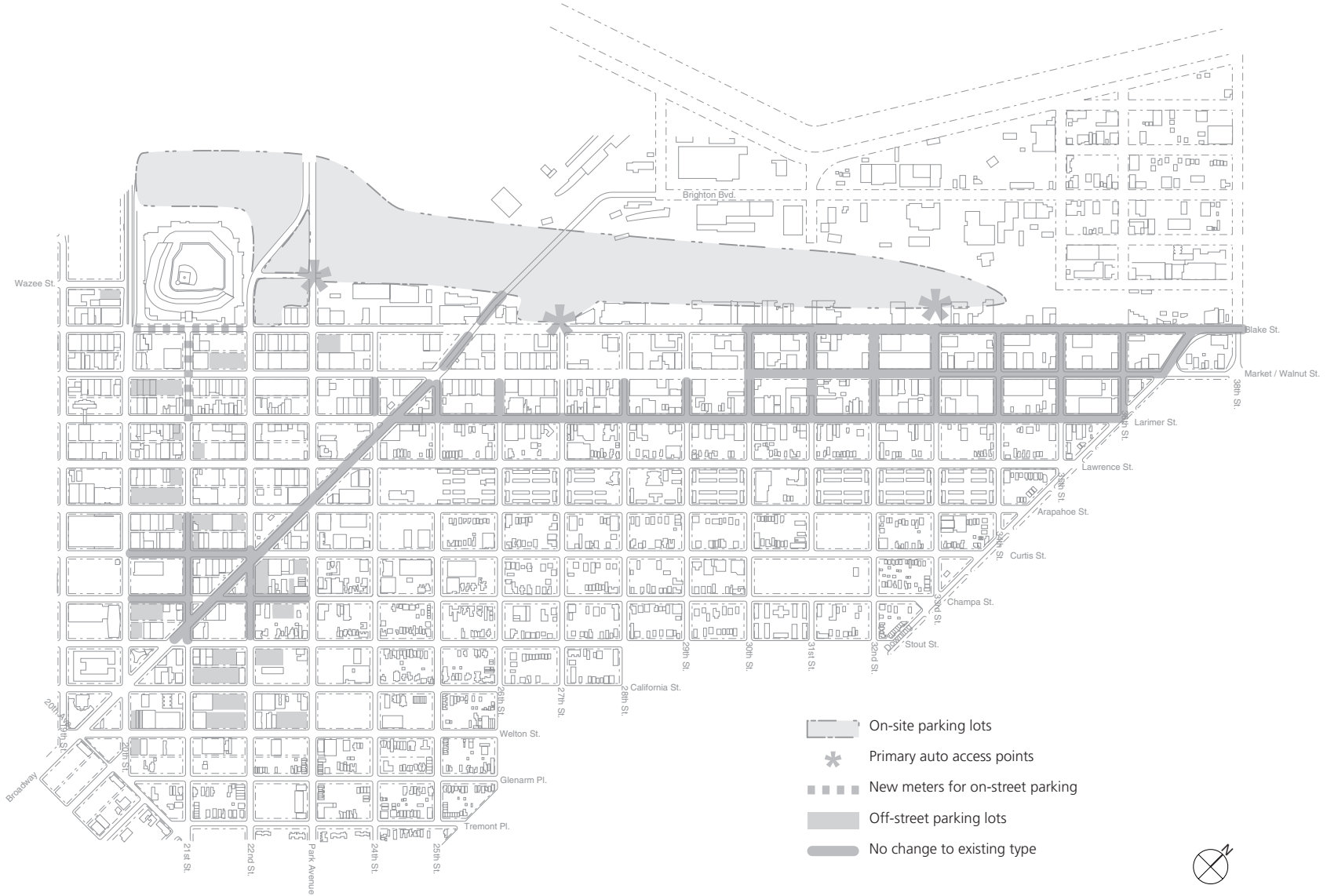
On-Site Parking ► Map T-12 shows the limits of the on-site parking. There are approximately 5500 parking spaces and slightly over 100 bus spaces in the Coors Field area. On-site parking will accommodate the following groups:

- management
- charter buses/bar buses
- players
- RTD buses
- staff (Rockies and ARA)
- limousines
- pre-sold permits
- disabled
- day of game fans

Off-Site Parking ► The off-site parking component consists of both on-street and off-street parking. Map T-12 also shows the types of on-street parking control and the locations of off-street lots. Generally, the types of parking control (e.g. signed parking) will not be changed within the area. However, the City has been requested to change the hours of restriction to 10:00 pm in order to discourage ballpark users from parking on the street, thus preventing parking by business customers. In addition, the City is working with individual businesses to make modifications in the truck loading and dock operations in the area. These changes should have little impact on the way the loading docks are currently operated.

Pedestrians ► The primary pedestrian routes to and from Coors Field are 21st Street and a pedestrian walkway serving the on-site parking. Blake Street, Park Avenue West and 22nd Street also are likely to be used by fans who park northeast of Coors Field.

Bicycles ► Proposed bike routes include 21st Street, Blake Street between 20th Street and 23rd Street/Park Avenue West, the 23rd Street Viaduct, and 20th Street through the Central Platte Valley. One hundred secured bicycle parking spaces will be provided on-site behind center field, with access via 19th Street.



Map T-12 Coors Field / Event Parking Control Plan

April 1995



The elevated Broadway/Brighton Viaduct before it was demolished and reconstructed

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Introduction

The future transportation projects outlined below are being studied and considered due to the increased growth and traffic that has been forecast for Northeast Downtown and the surrounding area. These future transportation projects are in the early stages of planning and design and will need input from various groups, including neighborhood organizations and property owners, before they are finalized. These future transportation projects are shown on Map T-7. All City and County of Denver agencies which are responsible for financing and maintaining street improvements and other public facilities usually require that property owners, who directly benefit from those improvements, assume the responsibility for financing the project's construction and/or maintenance. The Department of Public Works and the Department of Parks and Recreation, because of their extensive responsibilities in constructing and maintaining streets and parkways and other public improvements, have a citywide policy which requires maintenance agreements with benefiting entities before they will agree to undertake project construction.

Streets, Highways, and Viaducts

Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project

Increased traffic, future traffic projections, as well as the age and condition of the current Broadway Viaduct are reasons the Denver Department of Public Works is working on a replacement for this 1922 facility, which has an engineering sufficiency rating of 1 out of a possible 100. The Department is currently conducting a design study to answer questions such as to whether the new facility will go over or under the existing tracks, the number of lanes, the alignment and design. In late March 1995, the City's consultants completed their final technical analysis and initial public input process and made a preliminary recommendation for an underpass design. There were many considerations in supporting this recommendation, including:

- ▮ reduces the visual barrier effect created by the existing viaduct
- ▮ is consistent with neighborhood plans and future development plans
- ▮ provides greater pedestrian circulation opportunities along and over the underpass
- ▮ proves opportunities for entryway/gateway treatments and urban design/art to be included
- ▮ allows for a future Delgany extension to Broadway
- ▮ is preferred by area residents and business and property owners
- ▮ minimizes traffic detours during construction
- ▮ has opportunities for phased construction for funding purposes.

The next steps in the design study are for the consultants to prepare an Environmental Assessment, which documents the environmental impacts of the recommended underpass alternative and the no-build alternative. A public hearing will be held in May to describe the findings of the Environmental Assessment. Phase I (stormwater facility), anticipated to be utility work required for replacement of the viaduct, is funded for design and construction. Phase I work is scheduled to start by late 1995/early 1996. The City is requesting federal funding for fiscal year 1996/1997 for the remainder of this project. Phasing and construction schedules are dependent upon the success of receiving federal funding.

Wewatta/Delgany Street Extension Projects: Connecting Speer Boulevard to Brighton Boulevard

Wewatta Street is a proposed four-lane roadway in the Central Platte Valley from Speer Boulevard to Park Avenue West. The final design from Speer Boulevard to 21st Street is in progress. Per the adopted *Central Platte Valley Plan*, Wewatta provides important vehicular and pedestrian connections to downtown Denver through the Central Platte Valley at Speer Boulevard, 15th Street, 20th (via 19th Street), and Park Avenue West. It also provides access to and from the Central Platte Valley developments while bypassing Lower Downtown. The Wewatta extension actually involves various construction segments: Speer Boulevard to 15th Street, 15th to 20th Streets, and the bridge over the 20th Street depression (20th Street to Park Avenue West has been completed). The Department of Public Works has requested \$1.5 million for 1996 Capital Improvements Fund funds to construct half of Wewatta between Speer and 15th Street. The remaining portion of Wewatta, including the bridge over 20th Street, will be constructed when funds become available.

Closely related to the Wewatta Street extension outlined above, is the importance of extending Delgany north of the new 23rd Street Viaduct to the new Broadway Viaduct to provide the last link in the Speer



New highway construction near Coors Field

Boulevard to Brighton Boulevard connection in the Central Platte Valley. This will complete the connections through the Central Platte Valley and also help travelers bypass Northeast Downtown. It could also reduce traffic going into Northeast Downtown along Broadway by about 20% according to one informal city estimate, compared to traffic circulation without this connection.

The needed Delgany extension to connect Park Avenue West to Brighton Boulevard directly affects the planning for the new Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project discussed above. It is essential that the planning for the alignment for the new Broadway Viaduct preserves the opportunity for the Delgany extension. The preliminary recommendation for the underpass alignment for the new Broadway Viaduct indeed accomplishes this goal. While the Delgany extension is not part of the Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project and will have its own project funding and timetable, it is a vital link in the Speer Boulevard to Brighton Boulevard connection and brings benefits to the area far beyond its modest dimensions.

Rail and Bus Transit

Air Train

Airport corridor rail transit, the Air Train project, is being evaluated to determine if it is an appropriate and cost-effective transportation mode for service to the new Denver International Airport (DIA). If implemented, the Air Train would provide express heavy rail service between downtown Denver, the Stapleton redevelopment area, Aurora, and DIA. In April 1992, the City and County of Denver completed a study of the feasibility of implementing rail service to the new DIA, on a combination of existing and new track. This initial look at the feasibility of the project identified no major constraints or fatal flaws. However, the study raised major questions and issues associated with the project, including costs, ridership, and operating feasibility. In November, 1992, the City selected a consultant team headed by Centennial Engineering, Inc. to begin the conceptual design and service plan for rail service to the new airport. The team, which examined other modes of transit, completed its work in June 1994. Benefits of the Air Train are:

- provides reliable, express transportation service to users and employees of the new airport
- provides an environmentally acceptable alternative to auto access
- relieves demand for DIA parking expansion
- augments mass transit to downtown Denver for northeast commuters, tourists, and baseball fans
- helps to address regional air quality requirements by reducing automobile miles traveled.

Air Train system characteristics include:

- ▮ 24-mile length from DIA to Denver Union Station
- ▮ commuter rail technology
- ▮ uses corridor now owned by Union Pacific Railroad and would construct new track in exclusive right-of-way along Peña Boulevard
- ▮ convenient service all day
- ▮ intermodal facility and park-n-ride at Stapleton redevelopment area
- ▮ Park-n-Ride station in Aurora
- ▮ major intermodal facility at Denver Union Terminal
- ▮ would replace RTD highway coach service between Downtown and DIA.

The Air Train alignment is illustrated on Map T-7. It is very close to the Northeast Downtown Study Area. It is endorsed as a project that is consistent with the long range vision and goals for Northeast Downtown.

New or Expanded RTD Bus Routes

New and expanded bus routes, effective October 1994, are shown on Map T-13.

Bus Stops and Bus Shelters

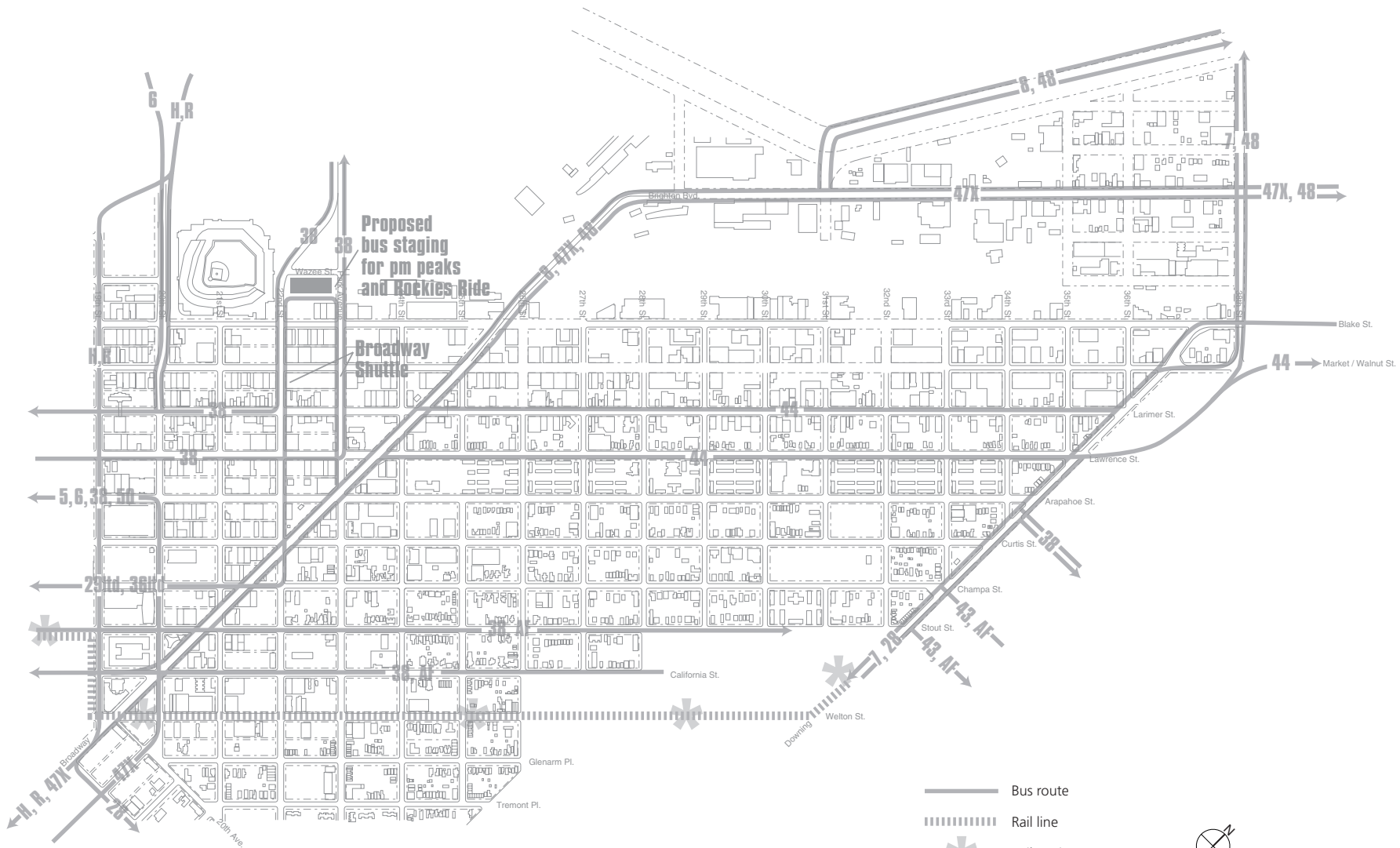
The RTD staff will work with community groups and property owners to identify potential bus shelter sites once ridership patterns are established at the new bus stops. This is an ongoing process.

New Bike Route Projects

Future bicycle access to Northeast Downtown will be provided via widened sidewalks on the 20th Street Viaduct and 23rd Street Viaduct presently under construction. A later stage of the 23rd Street Viaduct calls for providing a new connection to the Platte River Greenway via a ramp from the south sidewalk of the Viaduct connecting with a new access trail on the west bank of the Platte River connecting, by a new pedestrian bridge across the river, with the existing Greenway on the east bank. Adjacent programmed improvements include using Curtis Street and Champa Street from Five Points to 21st Street as a bike route. This would use 21st Street as a distributor street for cyclists entering Downtown as well as a connection to Coors Field. Blake and Market Streets would be used to connect 21st Street westerly to Auraria Parkway.



Establishing the location of bus shelters is an ongoing process between RTD and community property owners



Map T-13 RTD Bus and Rail Service

April 1995

One of the improvements called for in the officially adopted Denver Bicycle Master Plan is the construction of an off-street bicycle and pedestrian bridge linking up the existing stubs of 35th Street by crossing over the railroad yards. This potential linkage would connect Upper Larimer with the Platte River Greenway. Preliminary engineering work is underway to determine all of the design issues and likely construction costs. New and expanded bike routes are shown on Map T-6.



Coors Field traffic poses traffic challenges to the area because of the street configuration

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

There are several transportation issues that remain unresolved between the business and neighborhood organizations, the City and other entities that are responsible for planning, constructing and operating various transportation facilities. Additional information collection, analysis and discussion are necessary before these issues can be resolved.

Impact of Traffic and Parking on Baseball Game and Event Days

A concern of the neighborhood organizations and property owners is over the impact of the traffic (lights, traffic speed, etc.) and parking in the neighborhood. The City and Metropolitan Baseball Stadium District will be monitoring the impact of baseball game traffic and parking (and special event parking), and will make adjustments, as necessary, to resolve any identified problems.

Laneage and Parking on 22nd Street Between Blake and Broadway

Based on traffic projections in the 23rd Street Viaduct Environmental Assessment, 22nd Street traffic flows require four lanes of capacity. The neighborhood and affected property owners request that, initially, 22nd Street have three lanes for traffic, leaving one lane for on-street customer parking. The City will monitor this situation and make revisions, if justified, by observations and studies of maximum traffic demands, including the experience of baseball and special event traffic.

Goals

- F-A** Provide adequate transportation and facilities to provide safe and efficient traffic flow and access to properties.
- F-B** Minimize the negative impact of transportation and facilities upon the area's character, cohesiveness, and stability.

- T-6** Make all streets, transportation, and parking facilities attractive to motorists and pedestrians and build quality urban design into all transportation facilities that are constructed.
- T-7** Minimize the negative impact of vehicle traffic in the area and provide (and encourage the use of) improved local bus service and adequate facilities to encourage/enable bikers and pedestrians to move about the area.
- T-8** Provide attractive and workable transportation (streets, bike routes, and pedestrian connections) linkages within/between Northeast Downtown and the Platte River Greenway, Downtown Denver, and Lower Downtown.

Recommendations

- T-1** Monitor and change as necessary the new transportation (and parking) facilities and operations in Northeast Downtown to meet the transportation and other goals of this Plan and goals of other adopted City plans.
- T-2** Implement, monitor, and change as appropriate the Coors Field Area Transportation and Parking Management Program so as to meet the circulation and parking goals and the needs of the area, including minimizing the impact upon the area.
- T-3** Study the future function and needed improvements of Blake, Market/Walnut, Larimer and Lawrence, including the possibility of making Larimer/Lawrence, and Champa/Stout two way streets northeast of Broadway.
- T-4** Design and construct the Broadway Replacement Viaduct in association with neighborhood organizations and affected property owners, to improve traffic flow and to help provide bike and pedestrian connections to the South Platte River, in such a way that the Viaduct is not a physical or visual barrier between Upper Larimer and Downtown Denver.
- T-5** Support the proposed Air Train as a rail transit facility that will help attract people into Northeast Downtown while reducing vehicle impact on the area.
- T-6** Ensure that Northeast Downtown, including the adjacent area near the Denargo Market, will not be negatively impacted by any installation for a vertiport, heliport, or any other aircraft with comparable impacts.



On-street parking is important in the Larimer Street retail area



Some street improvements are needed

- I-7** Construct Wewatta/Delgany Street from Speer Boulevard to Brighton Boulevard to enhance vehicular and pedestrian connection to Downtown Denver throughout the Central Platte Valley and to provide improved access to and from the Central Platte Valley while bypassing Northeast Downtown and Lower Downtown.
- I-8** Construct the following new pedestrian connections/bicycle routes:
 - ▶ connecting Blake and 35th Street with an off-street bicycle and pedestrian bridge connection over the Union Pacific railroad tracks,
 - ▶ provide a new connection to the South Platte River as part of later phase of the 23rd Street Viaduct project, and
 - ▶ connect Broadway to the South Platte River through pedestrian and bicycle elements as part of the Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project.
- I-9** Study and diminish the driver disorientation problems connecting Upper Larimer with major streets and destinations (e.g. 34th and 38th Streets at Downing, etc.) through signage and other measures as necessary.
- I-10** The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) should resurface Larimer and Lawrence Streets (Colorado Highway 33), declassify these streets as a state highway, and transfer maintenance of the streets to the City and County of Denver.
- I-11** As part of the impact mitigation measures for the 20th Street Bus/HOV project, the Regional Transportation District should design and construct a Larimer Street bus transit station stop and implement a related “stopover program.”

PARKING

Introduction

Parking is a concern in any neighborhood; but given Northeast Downtown's central location, it is a complex issue needing attention in this Plan. Experience in virtually every neighborhood or development project indicates that parking can either be a blessing or a curse depending on whether or not it has been properly handled. Of particular relevance to Northeast Downtown is the experience of parking in adjacent Lower Downtown and the lessons that can be learned from that and other comparable areas. Parking is a policy-making challenge for many reasons. It is both a science and an art. Even when it is addressed in a quantitative manner, there are widely varying points of view as to what overall goals parking policies should support. Parking is intimately related to desirable — and at times incompatible — planning goals and policies. It has been the subject of comprehensive studies and proven to be a continuously challenging issue to various public and private interests.

This section of the Plan addresses the key parking issues in Northeast Downtown by briefly reviewing the implications for parking policy from other parts of this Plan, identifies key parking issues, and concludes with a set of goals and recommendations that serve as a policy direction upon which subsequent refinement and work can be built. Some of the recommendations pertain to the proposed new zone districts in Northeast Downtown (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) that have been described in the Land Use and Zoning chapter of this Plan.

Implied Parking Policy Direction from Other *Northeast Downtown Plan* Goals and Recommendations

In its broadest context, parking is closely tied to other broad areas, including urban design, historic preservation, land use, zoning, and housing and economic development. Goals and recommendations have been formulated in each of these areas within this Plan. Some of them suggest, directly or indirectly, a policy direction for parking within Northeast Downtown. For example, the Historic



An off-street parking lot at 21st and Larimer Streets



One of the many surface parking lots in Arapahoe Square

Preservation chapter suggested the goal to preserve and enhance the architectural and historic character of the area along with a recommendation to designate the area as the Ballpark Historic Landmark District. The Urban Design element included a number of recommendations pertaining to improving the physical appearance and continuity of the area and the need to have all buildings (including parking structures) subject to design guidelines. The Market Study Summary, aside from identifying the continuing strong market demand for surface parking, suggested that current parking requirements in the Denver Zoning Ordinance were a major constraint on new construction and renovation in all of Northeast Downtown and needed adjustment. In addition, analysis of the potential housing market in the Arapahoe Square subarea noted the importance of parking, especially secured parking, as a feature that would be necessary to attract buyers in that area. As a final example, the key vision statement for Northeast Downtown is to improve the image and functioning of the area. No parking policies should be adopted that are inconsistent with these or similar policies.

Current Parking Situation

No parking studies have been specifically prepared for Northeast Downtown. However, in 1992 the City and County of Denver hired Walker Parking Consultants to prepare a parking strategy for Downtown Denver. The study was geographically comprehensive and included areas adjacent to the Central Business District including Lower Downtown and a portion of Northeast Downtown. The study area included 7 core areas, one of which was Core Area F, known by many in the area as the Arapahoe Triangle, bounded by 20th Street, Broadway, and Wynkoop. This study did not include Upper Larimer. In 1990, the current parking supply in Core Area F was 870 on-street parking spaces + 1075 public off-street parking spaces + 676 private off-street parking spaces = 2621 spaces of total parking supply. The analysis suggested that Area F had very limited parking and its utilization patterns were assumed to be slightly lower than 70%. It noted that Area F currently had a parking adequacy (or surplus) of 749 parking spaces in 1990, given their “effective” parking supply of 2423 parking spaces compared to a short term demand of 314 parking spaces and a long term demand of 1360 parking spaces. Furthermore, it forecast in short and long range scenarios that a substantial parking adequacy (surplus) would exist.

While helpful, this study needs to be balanced against the dramatically changed conditions that have occurred since it was completed, notably the construction of Coors Field and the impacts it will have on the area. Another cautionary note is that when development occurs in the area where the study counted many present off-street spaces, those surface parking lots will be removed from the inventory of existing spaces and the development will generate demand for more parking spaces. Moreover, this

study indicated that Lower Downtown had a current parking surplus; but more recent and specialized parking studies commissioned by Lower Downtown Denver, Inc. indicate a current parking shortage and somewhat larger long-range parking shortage compared to the earlier study. Given the complexity of such studies and their varying assumptions, it is clear that Northeast Downtown is a specialized area and needs to eventually undertake parking studies and programs that focus upon its special circumstances and needs.

Parking Issues

In addition to the parking issues surrounding Coors Field which were addressed previously, parking presents an array of challenges which have wide-ranging considerations, including the amount of parking that should be required in the Denver Zoning Ordinance for development, policies to limit the amount of needed parking (such as shared parking with Coors Field), the location of parking structures, the design and physical appearance of parking lots and structures, whether or not special event parking should be permitted, and the overall organization and management of parking issues and programs.

Numerical Parking Requirements

The issue of how much parking should be required in Northeast Downtown for new developments, both new construction and conversions, is a complex one demanding the consideration of many different issues and competing goals. “New” construction, according to the Zoning Ordinance, would be an addition to an existing building (regardless of size), an existing building that was remodeled for a different use, and, of course, a new building. Numerical parking requirements for the existing Northeast Downtown subareas are contained in the existing B-8, I-1, and I-2 zone districts. What changes, if any, to existing numerical parking requirements should be included in the proposed new zoning districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) in Northeast Downtown?

There are various, weighty pro and con arguments made by proponents who would like to see existing parking requirements changed in Northeast Downtown. Those who argue for a reduction in numerical parking requirements cite the need to: reduce traffic and parking impacts on the neighborhood, achieve air quality and environmental goals and support mass transit as an alternative to vehicle travel, support historic preservation and urban design goals by reducing the need to demolish buildings for parking, and support economic and housing development initiatives in Northeast Downtown where land is substantially underutilized relative to its potential. On the other hand, those who argue for a maintenance or increase in numerical parking requirements cite the parking problems in surrounding



An off-street parking lot near Park Avenue West and Blake Street



Offstreet parking lots should blend in with the historic character of the area, such as through the provision of railings and fencing

neighborhoods which result when there is insufficient parking provided: parking spilling over into adjacent areas creating various types of negative impacts. Furthermore, insufficient parking has a negative bearing on the area's image, as well as its marketing and development success. Clearly, there are strong positions on both sides of the numerical parking requirement issue and finding the thin line between them will be very difficult.

In an attempt to identify a reasonable compromise on this issue, the Committee examined all parking ratios for existing zone districts in and around downtown and saw a wide range of parking requirements. For example, for new construction multi-family residential developments, parking requirements range from 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit in the B-8 zone district in Arapahoe Square to .75 parking spaces per dwelling unit in the Platte River Valley District and 1.0 parking spaces per dwelling unit in the B-7 zone district in Lower Downtown. In addition, the Committee examined the parking being provided in loft conversion projects in Northeast Downtown and discovered a range of 1.84 to 1.15 spaces per dwelling unit, with the average being about 1.5.

Given the complexity of identifying numerical parking requirements, the Committee decided to not make a recommendation on this issue. This is appropriate since the determination of zoning details is best handled (after the Northeast Downtown Plan is adopted) by the special group(s) that will be established to research and write the proposed language for the I-OR, I-2R, and B-8A zone districts. Such specially focused groups can consider numerical parking requirements in view of related matters and in a time frame conducive to issues of such importance to the well being of Northeast Downtown.

It is also strongly suggested that shared parking opportunities be explored with Coors Field and the Colorado Rockies to utilize existing parking facilities in the area when possible, thereby limiting the amount (and impact) of needed new parking facilities.

Location, Design and Appearance of Parking Facilities

Since both surface parking lots and parking structures have such a powerful visual and physical impact on the area, it is the intention of this Plan to establish policies that ensure that such facilities be located, designed and operated in such a manner as to make a positive influence on the area beyond the provision of parking itself. The location of destination shared parking facilities should be shaped according to major parking, access, and urban design guidelines. For example, parking garage access points should NOT be located on 21st Street given its pedestrian role or along Larimer and Lawrence Streets because of their retail functions and historic buildings. Also, of vital importance to the goal of

establishing a quality urban design environment is to require design review and landscape guidelines and policies for parking lots and structures.

Special Event Parking

Special event parking is another contentious issue. Where permitted by zoning, a property owner may apply to the Denver Zoning Office to apply for a special event parking permit and, if approved, may operate a parking lot for such designated special events for a period of a year, after which it may be reapplied for and may be renewed by Zoning on a year-to-year basis. Currently, parking lots are a temporary use by right in all industrial zone districts (I-1 and I-2 in Northeast Downtown) and, except for the B-7 (Lower Downtown) zone district, they are allowed in all business zone districts (B-8 in Northeast Downtown). They are also currently permitted in all residential zone districts. However, because of the negative impacts upon residential neighborhoods near Mile High Stadium attributed to special event parking, the Denver City Council passed an ordinance in May 1994, which eliminated special event parking from all residential zone districts (except if the primary user of the special event parking is a school or church) as of January 1, 1997.

As with all issues, there are arguments both for and against allowing special event parking in the new Northeast Downtown zone districts (I-0R, I-2R and B-8A). Individual property owners, who have held their property for years waiting for development opportunities, have used parking as an interim use with which to pay taxes and hopefully make a profit on their investment. They contend that special event parking is a fair return to them, that more parking is needed for special events, and that parking will only be a temporary use until their property is developed for a “higher and better use.” Opponents of special event parking point to the damages to the neighborhoods near Mile High Stadium and fear similar impacts will harm the fragile residential and retail uses getting underway in Northeast Downtown — even more so given the much higher number of events at Coors Field compared to Mile High Stadium. They note that Lower Downtown rejected special events parking, in part, because it was viewed as outsiders bringing unwelcome traffic, congestion and parking problems into their neighborhood. As stated in the Historic Preservation chapter, parking of any kind (including special event parking) is seen as an additional pressure to demolish historic buildings. Finally, opponents suggest that more parking is not needed given the high percentage of land already devoted to parking and the Coors Field Area Parking Plan. In short, opponents contend that special event parking will be a negative impact on the cohesiveness, appearance, safety and attractiveness of the area to residents, employees, and patrons and is therefore not compatible with the mixed land use vision in this Plan.



Game day parking for Coors Field



**Structured parking near Arapahoe and
20th Streets**

The Committee has taken all of these arguments and factors into consideration. They have rejected the alternatives of allowing special events parking as a temporary use by right as well as the option of prohibiting it altogether. They recommend that special event parking be allowed in the new zoning districts but as a conditional use. This will enable each proposal to be evaluated on its merits and recognizes the diversity of possibilities within Northeast Downtown on this issue.

Commercial Free-Standing Parking Lots

Another parking issue needing resolution is whether or not commercial free-standing parking lots should be eliminated or restricted in the new zoning districts in Northeast Downtown. Again, a rationale is offered by those on both sides of this issue; and the arguments are very similar to those outlined above for the special events parking issue. Again, the Committee resolved the issue by suggesting that, as in the new B-8G zone district in the Golden Triangle, free-standing parking lots should not be prohibited nor continued as a temporary use by right but allowed as a conditional use. There may be special circumstances where free-standing parking lots are acceptable and circumstances where they are not and the conditional review process is a reasonable method to make those distinctions. Proposed free-standing parking lots (and other parking structures for that matter) should be evaluated by such criteria or considerations as air quality/environment, development, historic preservation, urban design and land use, neighborhood impacts, and financing.

Transportation Organization and Management

Given the host of traffic and parking issues confronting Northeast Downtown presently and foreseen for the future, it is desirable that the community organize itself to address these and related issues in a cooperative, comprehensive, and structured manner. This is what other heavily impacted areas, and the organizations that represent them, (Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc. and Lower Downtown Denver, Inc.) are doing. As Northeast Downtown becomes organized to address the wide array of challenges and opportunities it faces, it should consider forming or joining a Transportation Management Organization (TMO) that can address these issues in close concert with the recently organized Downtown Transportation Management Organization. A transportation management organization is needed to develop workable parking strategies and to ensure that transportation needs and improvements are addressed in a manner that is compatible with, and supportive of, the vision for Northeast Downtown.

Goals

- P-A** Provide adequate parking facilities to residents, businesses, and patrons in Northeast Downtown.
- P-B** Minimize the negative impact of parking facilities upon the area's cohesiveness, stability, safety, appearance, and attractiveness.
- P-C** Give priority to parking for Northeast Downtown businesses and residents
- P-D** Ensure that parking lots and structures are located, designed, constructed, and operated to be consistent with the adopted vision and goals for the area and to be complementary with the area's character and scale.
- P-E** Take advantage of shared parking opportunities within or adjacent to Northeast Downtown.
- P-F** Give transit users, ride sharing, and bicycles a place in parking solutions.
- P-G** Ensure that parking users are well informed about the location and availability of parking in Northeast Downtown and adjacent areas.
- P-H** Organize and develop resources to identify and address parking issues, challenges, and opportunities in a way that cooperates with nearby transportation management organizations and programs.

Recommendations

- P-1** As is presently required in the existing zone districts, require in the new Northeast Downtown mixed use zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) that a certain number of bicycle parking spaces be provided in commercial parking facilities.
- P-2** Impose specific design criteria for the location, design, planning and operation of all parking structures, to include the following:
 - ▮ the design of the facility should be compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding area and the vision and goals of this Plan.
 - ▮ the external material should be brick-faced and with window openings in scale with those of other buildings in Northeast Downtown



Off-street parking lots often come at the expense of historic buildings that formerly occupied the site



Vacant lots become baseball parking lots near Coors Field on game days

- ▶ parking should not be located at ground level
 - ▶ parking entrances should be on numbered streets where possible
 - ▶ the standard lot depth of 125 feet should be taken into account in the design of the structure.
- P-3** As is currently required in the existing zone districts, require in the new zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) specific landscaping requirements on all surface parking lots.
- P-4** Special event parking should only be allowed as a conditional use in the proposed zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) in Northeast Downtown.
- P-5** Free-standing commercial parking lots should only be allowed as a conditional use in the proposed zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) in Northeast Downtown and should be regulated to minimize neighborhood impacts where allowed.
- P-6** Explore shared parking opportunities with the Colorado Rockies to optimize the use of existing parking resources and minimize the need for and impact of additional parking on the area.
- P-7** Establish and implement, as and when appropriate, a parking management organization and program to creatively and efficiently plan and manage all existing and potential parking resources in/adjacent to Northeast Downtown, and work cooperatively with, and consider joining such established parking programs as the Downtown Transportation Management Organization (TMO).

FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING PROJECTS

Depending upon the nature, scale, location, and functional classification/designation (e.g., collector, arterial, Interstate, National Highway System, etc.) of proposed transportation and parking improvements, there are different potential funding sources, both public and private.

Large projects usually require funding involving federal, state, or special local resources, such as ISTEA, federal discretionary funds, State Gas Tax funds, Baseball District funds, or the City general obligation bond. The City and County of Denver's last two general bond obligation elections were in 1982 and 1989.

The ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) provides federal funding to projects identified in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prepared by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Transportation, Regional Transportation District, and local jurisdictions. TIP includes major project types, such as capacity/accessibility, operational improvements, travel reduction/air quality improvement measures, bicycle/pedestrian and elderly/disabled studies, intermodal facilities, and transportation impacts. The draft 1995-2000 TIP is currently under air quality conformity review by the DRCOG. The next TIP process will be in 1996.

The City and County of Denver's Capital Improvements Fund (the all-important first year in its annual six year Capital Improvements Planning Program) can be used for projects of smaller scale and less cost, including studies. The Capital Improvements Fund (CIF) is also used to provide local match or supplement to federal, state, as well as private funds. In the past five years, the CIF in the Department of Public Works has averaged about \$8.5 million each year, a modest amount for citywide needs.

For implementation of a broad range of small scale public right-of-way related upgrades in short time periods (such as signing, striping, streetscape, paving, and curbs and sidewalks), financing can be sought from general operating funds, the Community Development Block Grant Program or the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, or special improvement districts might be established to provide funds for improvements.



A broad walkway connects Coors Field with its off-street parking lots



**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**





Streetscape improvements help enliven retail areas

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an economic development framework to the *Northeast Downtown Plan* and area. It is intended to define and outline the central importance of economic development, identify key trends, issues, goals, and resources, and conclude with recommendations to address needs and opportunities. Although the vision for Northeast Downtown is for mixed-use, the area is predominantly non-residential. Therefore, economic development is a major opportunity and focus of this study. Housing development is addressed in the following chapter. While many other elements of this Plan are of fundamental importance to creating the type of environment needed for economic development, it is the task of this element to pull together and summarize the various economic development resources and possibilities for Northeast Downtown.

Given the popular and universal promotion of “economic development” in planning and community development circles, it is important to start with a brief definition and place economic development within a broad context for planning purposes. According to Edward J. Blakely, author of *Planning Local Economic Development*, economic development is concerned both with substantive economic goals and with the process to achieve those goals. He suggests that “local economic development has one primary goal which is to increase the number and variety of job opportunities available to local people. In performing these activities, local governments and/or community groups must take on an initiating rather than a passive role. Local economic development is process oriented . . . involving the formation of new institutions, the development of alternative industries, the improvement of the capacity of existing employers to produce better products, the identification of new markets, the transfer of knowledge, and the nurturing of new firms and enterprises.” (p. 59)

Economic development is of fundamental importance to the City and County of Denver as well as to its businesses, citizens and neighborhoods. One of the 10 core goals of the current Denver Comprehensive Plan is “to stimulate the economy” to provide jobs, increased personal income, stable City revenues, successful businesses, and an enhanced quality of life. To assist in that goal, the City has six primary roles: 1) directing investment in planning, financing and implementing big ticket items; 2) improving permit procedures; 3) building community consensus; 4) marketing the City’s advantages; 5) providing a good business climate; and, 6) making sure it all happens. The Mayor’s Office of Economic Development (MOED) was created to design and implement strategies to retain and attract businesses and jobs for the City and County of Denver.



Vacant lot in Upper Larimer is one of many under-utilized parcels in Northeast Downtown



Redevelopment site along Broadway

PLAN SUPPORTS AND PREREQUISITES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Most of the Plan's recommendations support, directly or indirectly, the goals of economic development in Northeast Downtown. However, some recommendations are particularly important in creating the type of environment that is necessary to allow the economic development strategies, tools, and recommendations outlined in this chapter to have their optimum effect. This section highlights those supportive Plan recommendations that are especially vital to achieving the economic development transformation of Northeast Downtown.

Social and Other Issues ► The City should form a broadly-based task force to prepare a comprehensive social services plan that will address, in a longer range time frame and from a citywide and even regional perspective, the needs of the homeless and the negative impacts stemming from the concentration of social service providers and their clients. Of equal importance is the need to address the negative impacts on the area from the concentration of bars, liquor stores, and the operation of some businesses.

Historic Preservation ► The Ballpark Historic District should be designated as a landmark district to preserve the historic buildings; design guidelines should be prepared to preserve and reinforce the unique character of the Ballpark area. Given the high, and frequently prohibitive, cost of new construction, there is an important economic development rationale to preserve buildings that have the potential for rehabilitation into uses compatible to the area. A recent study on the economic impact of historic district designation in nearby Lower Downtown concluded that the district designation has certainly contributed to its successful level of economic activity. Although the amount of credit designation deserves for this can be disputed, the same level of success would not have been achieved without it.

Urban Design ► In order to improve the physical character and identity of Northeast Downtown, its individual subareas and properties and to make it more attractive for residents, businesses, and visitors, quality urban design is emphasized throughout the Plan. Recommendations to achieve these goals include preparing and enforcing design guidelines and design review procedures in the area, providing streetscaping and street lighting, preserving mountain views, improving pedestrian and bicycle access, and, where appropriate, closing streets.

Transportation and Parking ► New and proposed physical transportation and parking improvements and services — such as the new viaducts and parkways, the RTD bus and light rail services, Air Train, and bikeway/pedestrian connections — will provide better exposure and access to Northeast Downtown, while traffic and parking plans will monitor and regulate the impacts from increased traffic.

Market Study Summary ► The *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* identified market supportable uses which were summarized in the Market Analysis Summary chapter.

Land Use and Zoning ► The mixed land use recommendations and the recommendations to revise the existing B-8, I-1, and I-2 zone district provisions to make the zoning a closer match to the long range vision for Northeast Downtown are very important and powerful tool in the support of economic and housing development objectives.



Eastwood Printing is a long established, major business in Upper Larimer



Larimer Street is the retail core for Northeast Downtown

THE ECONOMIC ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN

Historically, Northeast Downtown has played an important economic role for the city by providing a wide range of employment opportunities and generating substantial tax revenues. North Larimer Street was a vital retail corridor that supported various waves of ethnic and other retail establishments. Upper Larimer and Baseball Environs are long-time industrial areas that provided economical, centrally located sites and facilities for a wide variety of light and heavy industrial businesses. Arapahoe Square was an important area for ancillary businesses that provided goods and services to the adjacent downtown market. Although Northeast Downtown has passed its industrial peak and is undergoing a transition to a mixed-use area, it remains a significant employment area. It functions very well as an “incubator area,” providing a relatively low cost, centrally located area to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Historic Employment Trends

Trends indicate that Northeast Downtown (or at least Census Tract 16 as identified on Map B-1 in the Background Information chapter) had a modest employment decline in recent years. In 1960 total employment, by place of work, was 8,042; by 1970 it was 7,987. Starting in 1976, employment estimates by industrial categories became available and they are presented for 1976-1990 in Table 1.

A review of Table 1 indicates that employment in Census Tract 16 has fallen from its peak of 10,439 in 1980 (which was also about the time of the employment peak of Denver’s last “oil boom”) to 6130 in 1990. This loss in employment is consistent with the land use survey data that identified a substantial amount of vacant or underutilized land and buildings. This loss in employment also represents a decline of employment opportunities for nearby residents and is consistent with recent studies that show that Denver lost jobs, including jobs for low and unskilled workers, to the suburbs. Table 1 also reveals a change in the number and distribution of employment by industrial category. For example, between 1980 and 1990 the largest numerical and percentage employment decreases were in transportation/communications/public utilities, manufacturing, and services, while only retail trade and government showed an increase.

Table 1 — Industry Employment Estimates, By Place of Work in Census Tract 16 (1976-1990)

Industry	1976	1980	% Total (1980)	1988	1990	% Total (1990)
Mining	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0
Contract Construction	251	228	2.2	269	183	3.0
Manufacturing	2,677	2,551	24.4	1,296	1,404	22.9
Trans., Comm., & Pub. Utilities	1,740	2,134	20.4	513	309	5.0
Wholesale Trade	1,735	1,838	17.6	1,658	1,652	26.9
Retail Trade	1,021	783	7.5	1,137	971	15.8
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	44	59	.6	123	23	.4
Services	1,134	2,456	23.5	1,097	1,030	16.8
Government	180	233	2.2	266	419	6.8
Agriculture, Military & other	124	157	1.5	115	139	2.3
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	8,906	10,439	99.9	6,474	6,130	100.0

Source: Denver Regional Council of Governments

City and County of Denver Tax Receipts

Another indication of the economic importance of Northeast Downtown is seen in the tax receipts received from that area by the City and County of Denver. The three major sources of tax revenues which Denver receives are the sales and use taxes, head (employment) taxes, and property taxes.

Sales and Use Tax Receipts, 1989-1994

Sales and use taxes are levied on all retail and wholesale items sold by businesses within Northeast Downtown. A study of sales and use tax trends between 1989 and 1994 was conducted by the Denver Department of Revenue for Northeast Downtown and its five land use subareas (see LUZ Map 1 for these subareas). Table 2 on the following page summarizes the sales and use tax totals from 1989 through 1994.

Table 2 reveals an increase of sales and use tax receipts of \$288,836 or nearly 30% between 1989 and 1994. Only the Broadway Triangle showed a decline during this time period. Upper Larimer, which is by far the largest subarea, is also the largest generator of sales and use taxes, providing nearly half of Northeast

Downtown's total. Baseball Environs, due to its strong gains in 1994, advanced past Upper Larimer as exhibiting the largest percentage gain between 1989 and 1994, with an increase of 53%, followed by Upper Larimer which had a gain of 30%, Arapahoe Square with a gain of 23% and the Larimer Retail Core with a gain of about 9%.

**Table 2 — Sales and Use Tax Receipts by Land Survey Subareas
(1989-2000 in unadjusted dollars)**

Year	NEDT 1 Baseball Environs	NEDT 2 Larimer Retail	NEDT 3 Arapahoe Square	NEDT 4 Broadway Triangle	NEDT 5 Upper Larimer	TOTAL
1989	214,205	116,446	176,248	24,630	447,903	979,432
1990	233,017	123,553	250,008	22,176	422,463	1,051,217
1991	218,403	128,573	220,105	12,263	430,318	1,009,662
1992	218,869	133,872	210,968	17,064	583,779	1,164,552
1993	287,575	127,561	226,732	15,757	634,341	1,291,966
1994	327,203	126,654	216,599	14,219	583,593	1,268,268
1995	1,505,597	130,737	324,673	35,402	574,963	2,571,372
1996	1,783,113	148,419	316,767	35,188	635,680	2,919,167
1997	1,535,545	176,318	339,412	38,931	600,931	2,691,137
1998	1,778,039	169,006	387,808	35,782	710,109	3,080,744
1999	1,633,377	175,097	606,788	33,022	765,562	3,213,848
2000	1,536,733	160,147	358,373	21,253	859,118	2,935,624

Source: Denver Treasury Division of the Denver Department of Revenue

*1995 through 2000 information added after Plan completion and adoption.

Another way to understand the changing nature of Northeast Downtown is to examine the types of businesses from which the sales and use taxes were collected between 1989 and 2000. This information is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 reflects the relative (and growing) importance of building and construction materials, miscellaneous stores (a catch-all category of over 30 specialized retail stores and stores supplying various types of goods to other businesses), and eating and drinking places. Such data is also suggestive of the types of employment and land use trends in Northeast Downtown.

Table 3 — Sales and Use Tax Receipts by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Types (1989-2000)

Year	5200	5300	5400	5500	5600	5700	5800	5900	TOTAL
1989	224,219	40,222	3,520	105,742	1,071	143,863	171,470	289,324	979,432
1990	236,323	43,953	2,949	86,122	0	146,858	217,589	317,424	1,051,217
1991	247,777	45,619	3,040	90,391	135	142,151	222,320	258,229	1,009,662
1992	388,979	53,850	2,217	95,154	1,272	128,255	212,310	282,516	1,164,555
1993	431,989	57,851	3,136	109,824	1,220	112,127	251,168	324,651	1,291,966
1994	368,369	64,399	2,623	103,411	280	65,505	335,447	327,203	1,268,268
1995	311,538	58,774	2,563	208,319	1,247	56,268	1,537,820	394,842	2,571,371
1996	372,805	61,480	67,464	105,300	3,256	68,543	1,857,090	383,229	2,919,167
1997	426,301	62,328	2,524	198,319	2,916	51,105	1,611,188	336,456	2,691,137
1998	584,118	100,768	4,358	132,810	3,007	70,352	1,812,819	372,512	3,080,744
1999	525,427	73,880	3,564	526,003	1,219	127,006	1,502,964	453,787	3,213,850
2000	566,393	75,751	3,834	165,995	1,397	58,712	1,587,694	475,848	2,935,624

Source: Denver Treasury Division of the Denver Department of Revenue

*1995 through 2000 information was added after Plan completion and adoption.

SIC Industry Categories

- 5200** Building and Construction Materials
- 5300** General Merchandise
- 5400** Grocery Stores, etc.
- 5500** Auto Dealers and Gas Stations
- 5600** Apparel and Accessory
- 5700** Furniture and Home Furnishings
- 5800** Eating/Drinking Places
- 5900** Miscellaneous Stores

Head Tax Receipts for 1993

The City and County of Denver collects head taxes on all employees who work in Denver. Table 4 summarizes the numbers of employees who have a sales tax account with the City (manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, and service firms such as lawyers, accountants, artists, etc.), service employees who

do not have a sales tax account but who do file, and the total head tax that was collected in 1993 (derived by multiplying the \$117 annual fee times each employee). “Employees” are defined to include employees, partners, and sole proprietors reported on occupational privilege tax returns. Persons earning less than \$500 per month are not reported as employees.

Table 4 provides the closest indication of current employment by subarea, although this method slightly undercounts actual employment. Upper Larimer, the largest subarea in Northeast Downtown, comprises nearly 60% of the head tax eligible employment.

Table 4 — Head Tax Receipts Received from Eligible Employees by Land Use Survey Subareas (1993)

Subarea	Employees with Sales Tax Account	Employees with No Sales Tax Account	Total Tax Eligible Employees	Total Head Tax Receipts Collected
Baseball Environs	393	37	430	50,310
Larimer Street Retail	208	10	218	25,506
Arapahoe Square	310	86	396	46,332
Broadway Triangle	54	87	141	16,497
Upper Larimer	1,467	243	1,710	200,070
TOTAL	2,432	463	2,895	388,715

Source: Denver Treasury Division of the Denver Department of Revenue

1993 and 1994 Property Tax Receipts

Property tax information for Northeast Downtown was requested from the Assessor’s Office but was not made available for this report.

ISSUES, ALTERNATIVES, CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The economic development goals of Northeast Downtown are straight forward and standard. They include the desire to improve and strengthen the economic base by increasing and diversifying employment (including job opportunities for nearby residents), expanding the tax base, making a more efficient use of underutilized land and buildings, and physically redeveloping the area. Although these are typical goals, they have a unique application in Northeast Downtown. Also, there are varying opinions on what strategies and tactics can best achieve these goals. To further complicate the issues and choices, these economic development goals must be balanced with the vision and other goals in the Plan for Northeast Downtown. In short, an economic development program and process can only be established after the more fundamental issues have been decided and after Northeast Downtown's constraints and opportunities have been assessed.

Issues and Alternatives

What is/should be the economic development future of Northeast Downtown? What are its comparative competitive advantages and disadvantages? Assuming that Northeast Downtown is transitioning toward a mixed-use community, what blend of land uses will best meet the economic (and housing) development goals? What land use and zoning policies will maximize the employment and tax benefits and minimize the costs? Should economic development be tilted toward continued industrial uses (and if so, should they be the "heavy" industry promoted by retaining the I-2 zone or the "light" industry accommodated in the I-1 or I-0 zones?) or should it evolve to become predominantly non-industrial in nature? Is a combination of these alternatives desirable — or would a different economic development focus be preferable? Depending upon the analysis and resolution of economic development issues and alternatives, economic development could proceed in a variety of directions.



**Current industrial uses adjacent to Coors
Field parking**



An old building occupied by a high-tech business in Arapahoe Square

Constraints and Opportunities

According to the 1986 *Downtown Area Plan*, the Arapahoe Triangle portion of Northeast Downtown is “no longer suitable for industrial uses because of access, the size of parcels, and existing structures.” It is suggested that north of Lower Downtown, the existing zoning should be revised to support a mixed-use zone, thereby encouraging a land use mix of artists and design studios, housing and commercial uses. It is recommended that the Larimer Street face blocks between 20th and 23rd serve as the neighborhood commercial center and that industrial buildings should be preserved and reused. This is consistent with the conclusions in the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* which also endorsed a mixed use economic development strategy that would accommodate such varied uses as manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, artists and design studios, entertainment, retail, office, live/work situations, and residential.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES IN NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN

Introduction

In order to achieve the economic development goals of providing quality jobs for the current population and building a diverse economic and employment base that will create economic growth and stability, it is essential to define a strategy that will match the identified goals and opportunities with the wide range of resources, tools, techniques and niche markets that are potentially available to Northeast Downtown. Given the complex nature of the economic development process, encompassing so many aspects and elements at varying levels of detail, it is first necessary to identify the key resources needed for development and the various approaches to development that can be undertaken. Once this is presented, specific resources are then identified that should be secured to carry out the economic development recommendations that are listed in the final section of this chapter. Although a comprehensive array of possible strategies, tools, and resources is included, it is not an exhaustive listing. The field of economic development has become very extensive and specialized. Those with a special interest should consult the Bibliography in the Appendix of this Plan document. It identifies reports that provide a more comprehensive catalogue and explanation of small business resources and programs in the Denver metropolitan area.

It is commonly agreed that the key resources for economic development (or for operating any organization for that matter) include money, labor (manpower), management, physical facilities (land, buildings, and equipment), and markets to sell goods and services. Regardless of the development approaches undertaken, the Northeast Downtown community and its business people must possess these basic resources to achieve their goals and opportunities. Numerous economic development approaches are also possible, including options that deal with physical development, business development, community development, and human resources development. These are not “either/or” decisions since a comprehensive economic development strategy for Northeast Downtown will



An in-fill development site along the 2200 block of Larimer Street



Renovation and renewal is a long and ongoing experience along Larimer Street

necessarily include several approaches combined with the available and appropriate resources, which are reviewed below.

While the following list of potential resources, particularly financial resources, appears impressive, there is very little available data on the amount, nature, and location of the money and resources that have been invested in Northeast Downtown from various organizations and programs. This suggests that part of whatever economic development strategy is put into place must include data and management information systems that enable all parties to monitor and evaluate the public and private investments made in the area.

At a general level, all economic development approaches need the same resources: financial, technical assistance, and organizational. Although these resources are described individually, in practice they are frequently packaged together for optimal effectiveness by the various economic development organizations.

Financial Resources for Small Businesses and Neighborhood Business Areas

All resources, including technical assistance and organizational support, require public and/or private funds. Most strategies require money. For example, the physical development approach usually requires funds to renovate physical facilities, address code violations, make the business attractive and functional, purchase equipment and inventory, and for other operating needs. Public funds are needed to provide necessary infrastructure, streetscaping, and community services. Business and community development approaches may involve small business assistance and incubation centers, technical assistance counseling, leadership and entrepreneurial activities, mobilizing local resources, and organizing/operating community institutions with program services. Lastly, human resources tools and techniques, such as customized training, require financial support.

As with the marshaling of all resources, the financial needs for economic development must be secured in a coordinated manner by the City and other public and quasi-public entities, the people of Northeast Downtown, and the private sector working closely together. The following are the major financial resources, techniques, and tools that should be explored, and applied as appropriate, in accomplishing this plan's economic goals and recommendations.

City and County of Denver

Mayor's Office of Economic Development ▶ The Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED) can help individuals to start, expand, or relocate their business to Northeast Downtown. They offer assistance to businesses of all sizes in the retailing, manufacturing, distribution, and service industries by providing or arranging for financing, technical assistance, securing necessary permits and zoning, and employee recruitment and training. MOED helps companies and business areas with the following types of financial and development assistance: 1) Revolving Loan Fund, 2) SBA Fixed Asset Financing, 3) Development Revenue Bonds, 4) Neighborhood Business Revitalization Program, and 5) Denver Enterprise Zone tax credits. Northeast Downtown is eligible for each of these programs.

Table 5 shows MOED loans to businesses in Northeast Downtown over the past 12 years. All disbursed funds were used for furniture, fixtures, equipment, inventory, building or land acquisition, or working capital.

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) ▶ Responding to the increasingly difficult task of securing capital to start a new company or expand an existing operation, MOED developed the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). This gap-financing program assists start-up ventures or business expansions by lending up to 25% of project costs, thereby inducing banks to provide the majority of the financing for small businesses. The RLF program also helps to stimulate job creation and assist revitalization of under-utilized or deteriorated commercial and industrial properties. MOED also assists companies that locate in Northeast Downtown with the permitting process and technical assistance.

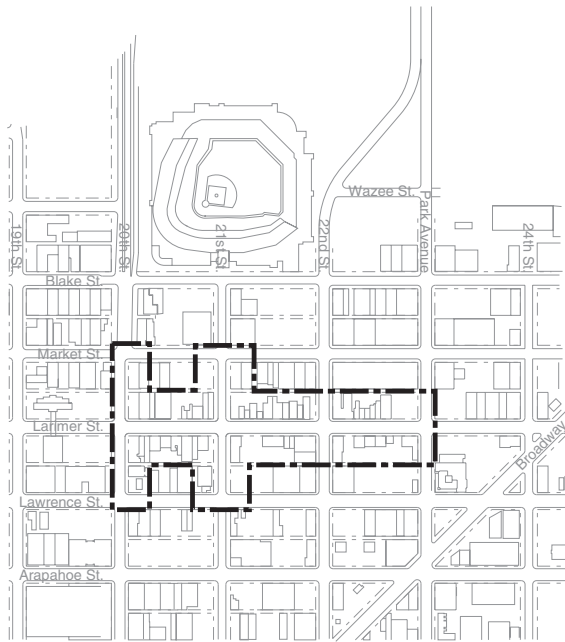
The following criteria are required for RLF loans:

- ▶ a majority of the new or retained jobs must be made available to low and moderate income Denver residents, offering adequate training for entry level employees and public transportation if needed
- ▶ create or retain at least one job per \$10,000 in RLF loan proceeds (funding available up to \$350,000 per project)
- ▶ commit new equity and new private financing to the project to account for at least 75% of the total project cost (private commitments for minority and women owned businesses must account for at least 70% of the total cost)
- ▶ provide sufficient evidence that the funds requested from MOED are necessary for the project to succeed due to a gap in financing, insufficient rate of return to investors, and non-competitive project costs

Table 5 — MOED Loans in Northeast Downtown (1983-1994)

Year	No. of Loans	Amount of Loans
1983	1	220,000
1984	2	55,000
1985	3	1,305,000
1986	4	965,000
1987	2	270,000
1988	4	585,000
1989	5	225,000
1990	2	325,000
1991	1	160,000
1992	1	10,000
1993	1	20,000
1994	4	115,000
TOTAL	30	\$4,255,000

Source: Mayor's Office of Economic Development



Larimer Street Business Revitalization Area

- ▶ demonstrate an ability to repay MOED's loan and provide adequate collateral to secure the loan
- ▶ use funds for eligible project costs (real estate acquisition, new construction, rehabilitation, equipment purchases, and working capital — refinancing of existing debt is not eligible), and
- ▶ pay prevailing wages for construction if MOED finances any portion of the construction.

Development Revenue Bonds ▶ Development revenue bonds allow companies to borrow at a tax-exempt rate for manufacturing projects of \$1 million or more through the issuance of private activity bonds. Companies must meet all the technical requirements of tax exempt financing as contained in the Tax Reform Act of 1986.

Neighborhood Business Revitalization Program ▶ Denver MOED's Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) program (NBR) encourages business development in targeted neighborhood business areas, including the North Larimer Business District (whose operations were assumed by the Ballpark Neighborhood Association in 1995) between 20th and 23rd Streets on Larimer. The boundaries of the North Larimer NBR are shown on the Larimer Street Business Revitalization Area map. MOED's NBR program not only lends money, but assists businesses in the development process from providing gap financing for start-up or expanding businesses, to offering technical and permitting assistance, to constructing public improvements that enhance the business environment. Many of the criteria within the Larimer Street NBR to receive financial assistance are similar to the RLF criteria but a major advantage is that the business person only has to commit new equity and new financing to the project of 50% of the total project costs. Loans in NBR areas also require approval from the local design review committee for signage and exterior storefront design.

A major distinction (and advantage) of the NBR program is that officially designated business areas, such as the North Larimer Street NBR designated in December, 1993, receive funds from MOED to hire a full-time director to work with existing businesses and prospective new businesses to pull together the various resources to expedite project approval and implementation. The Business Support Center designation for the North Larimer Street NBR also enables the director to organize the area's property owners to apply for other available City funds for neighborhood improvements.

Denver Urban Enterprise Zone Program ▶ The Enterprise Zone program was created by the Colorado State Legislature in 1986 as a way to spur job creation and retention. The City and County of Denver designated an eligibility zone, including Northeast Downtown, in September, 1986. Five State tax

incentives are available to businesses which expand or locate in the zone, including:

- ▶ *Three-Percent Investment Tax Credit* is available to businesses making investments in equipment used exclusively in an enterprise zone for at least one year. These businesses may claim a credit against their Colorado income taxes equal to 3% of the investment amount. Investments in land or structures, or expanding inventory, do not qualify.
- ▶ *New Business Facility Job Tax Credits (Refunds)* apply to businesses hiring new employees in connection with a new business facility. They may claim a State income tax credit or refund of \$500 for each new employee. Credits are awarded for creating new jobs, providing health insurance to employees and for businesses adding value to agricultural products.
- ▶ *State Sales Tax Exemption for Manufacturing Equipment* is a program in which purchases of machinery or machine tools in excess of \$500 by a person engaged in manufacturing to be used in Colorado directly and exclusively by the person in the manufacture of tangible personal property for sale or profit are exempt from the 3% state sales and use tax. Also, purchases that are expensed for accounting purposes will be exempt as well as those which are capitalized.
- ▶ *New Business Facility Agricultural Processing Credit* is a special tax credit given to any taxpayer who operates a business which adds value through manufacturing or processing agricultural commodities. The taxpayer is allowed an additional credit (or refund) of \$500 (for a total of \$1000) for each new business facility employee.
- ▶ *Research and Development Tax Credit* is an income tax credit for private expenditures on research and experimental activities. The credit equals 3% of the amount of increase in the taxpayer's research and development expenditures within the zone for the current tax year above the average of research and development expenditures within the zone in the previous two years.
- ▶ *State Tax Credit to Rehabilitate Vacant Buildings* is a credit of 25% of qualified expenditures up to \$50,000 to rehabilitate buildings returned to commercial use which are at least 20 years old and have been vacant for at least two years.

Community Development Block Grant Program ▶ Denver's Planning and Community Development Office (PCDO) administers Community Development Block Grant programs (CDBG) funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which addresses housing and neighborhood improvements and public facility needs for low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.



Warehouse reuse along Walnut in Upper Larimer



Streetscaping helps revitalizes older neighborhoods

Northeast Downtown is an eligible neighborhood for these CDBG programs that are outlined below:

- ▶ *Denver Commercial Streetscaping Program* is designated to revitalize and upgrade Denver's older neighborhood shopping areas through the construction of right-of-way improvements. Special focus for this program is on Neighborhood Revitalization areas, of which the North Larimer Street NBR is one. Benches, trees and ornamental pedestrian lighting, as well as curbs and gutters, are featured improvements in this program.
- ▶ *Alley and Street Paving* is accomplished through owner petitions and an assessment levied on property owners directly adjoining the improvement.
- ▶ *Non-Profit Facility Improvements* is a program established as a means of encouraging private/public partnerships in developing and maintaining needed community buildings. It gives challenge grants and low interest loans for the renovation, expansion, and construction of privately owned community centers, senior centers, child care units, and other special project facilities.

Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc.

Targeted Revolving Loan Fund ▶ The Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc. (DDP) has a long history of organizing Downtown businesses to actively promote the interests of downtown Denver and adjacent neighborhoods. DDP, working closely with the City and County of Denver, contributed to the revitalization of Lower Downtown, when in November, 1988, the Denver City Council established the Lower Downtown Revolving Loan Fund (LDRLF). The LDRLF was created to stimulate the revitalization of Lower Downtown by providing gap financing to renovate and preserve buildings designated as "contributing" to the Lower Downtown Historic District. The LDRLF was initially capitalized by the City and County of Denver, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Historic Denver, Inc. DDP's Lower Downtown Business Support Office was established to provide central coordination for the LDRLF program. This program has been a significant resource in preserving historic buildings in Lower Downtown and stimulating the revitalization for a wide range of retail, residential, and office uses. In recent years, the Lower Downtown property owners and developers have been finding conventional financing for their market driven projects, thus substantially reducing their need for and use of the LDRLF.

Given the similar circumstances between Lower Downtown in the 1980's and Northeast Downtown (NED) in the mid-1990's, it is reasonable to suggest that the targeted RLF and business support office resources which Lower Downtown enjoys could be directed toward Northeast Downtown, or at least that part of NED that is within the proposed Ballpark Historic District. If the proposed Ballpark

Historic District is officially designated, such a “Northeast Downtown Revolving Loan Fund” could emulate its predecessor in:

- ▶ statement of principle and purpose (to preserve contributing historic buildings by minimizing inequitable situations which may arise between the public goal of preserving historic buildings and the resulting hardship, if any, on property owners)
- ▶ investment strategy (requiring the prioritization of the most desirable types of projects due to limited funds)
- ▶ program requirements and loan criteria (eligible uses of the loans would be for fixed asset gap financing for acquisition and renovation, emergency rehab, facade renovation, and interest guaranty)
- ▶ the sources of funding (City and County of Denver, Private/Non-Profit RLF and participating program banks)
- ▶ the loan application and approval process, and loan administration.

To add to this proven and workable model, the Northeast Downtown area will have a comprehensive plan and market study that will be in place to provide a framework for prudent investment decisions. The creation of such a targeted fund for Northeast Downtown should be organizationally compatible with, and complementary to, the functions and operations of the North Larimer NBR

Denver Capital Corporation ▶ Denver Capital Corporation (DCC) is a for-profit, multi-bank community development corporation created to make loans to existing and small businesses that cannot qualify for conventional bank financing. Founded in late 1991 by First Interstate Bank of Denver and the Downtown Denver Partnership (DDP), DCC’s ownership now includes seven additional bank investors: Colorado National Bank, Norwest Bank, Bank One, FirstBank of Denver, Vetra Bank and Century Bank. These banks have all purchased stock in DCC providing for a capitalization of over \$500,000. In addition, the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development has agreed to provide matching loans for borrowers meeting certain requirements.

DCC makes loans to existing businesses located in or adjacent to Downtown that can demonstrate the ability to repay debt. The maximum loan is \$50,000 which includes a match from the City and County of Denver. Wide ranges of business enterprises are eligible for loans, including those in manufacturing, wholesaling, retail services and entertainment.



Small businesses serving Upper Larimer



Small businesses can help enliven blighted sections along Larimer Street

Greater Denver Local Development Corporation

The Greater Denver Local Development Corporation (GDLDC) provides capital to businesses not eligible for loans through the traditional banking sector. It supports development of low-income neighborhoods and loans to minority and women-owned businesses. It has been a recent recipient of a SBA micro-lending program and grant. The prospective loan applicant's business must be owner-managed. Loans are up to \$250,000, maturing in 1-5 years.

State of Colorado

Among the various State of Colorado economic and housing development programs, those most appropriate for Northeast Downtown are administered by the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA). CHFA commercial programs are very specialized loan or credit enhancement programs designed to supplement the SBA and private commercial lending. General eligibility requirements include a positive net worth, no larger than 500 employees, no more than \$750,000 in other SBA loans outstanding, and a for-profit corporate structure (another program, the Colorado Credit Reserve, is available to not-for-profits). Loan terms include amounts up to \$1,000,000 for a term of up to 25 years. The program is also restricted to owner occupants. Industrial, manufacturing, and wholesale distribution firms in the Denver Enterprise Zone (of which Northeast Downtown is a part) are eligible for lower rates. The financing package includes required equity, SBA loan and commercial lender participation.

Federal Government

Small Business Administration ► The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) administers financial resources via several mechanisms. The SBA's Fixed Asset Financing program provides project financing on a fixed-rate, long-term basis for the acquisition of land and buildings, building construction renovation and equipment purchases. The program is administered through the Denver Urban Economic Development Corporation (DUEDC), a certified development company in conjunction with the SBA. Projects are structured so that a private lending institution provides the first 50% of the financing, and DUEDC provides the next 40%. Equity financing must constitute a minimum of 10% of the financing. The most that DUEDC can loan is \$500,000. Buildings acquired under the program must be 50% owner-occupied and for every \$15,000 of DUEDC loans, one new job must be created. Loans must be approved by the SBA and DUEDC.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) also has two programs of particular value to prospective businesses in Northeast Downtown:

- 7 (a) Bank Loan Guarantee Program** — Section 7 (a) of the Small Business Act authorizes the SBA to guarantee and, under very limited circumstances, make loans to small businesses, where the necessary financing is unavailable on reasonable terms through normal lending channels. The SBA basic guaranty program is generally used to fund the varied long-term needs of small businesses. The program is designed to promote small business formation and growth by guaranteeing long-term loans to qualified firms.

Loans are available for many purposes, such as real estate, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital or inventory. SBA can guarantee up to \$750,000 — generally between 70%-90% of the loan value — at an interest rate not to exceed 2.75% over the prevailing prime lending rate. Maturities are up to 10 years for working capital and up to 25 years for fixed assets.

- 504 Certified Development Company Fixed Asset Loans** — The 504 Loan Program provides long-term, fixed-asset financing through certified development companies (CDCs), non-profit organization sponsored by private interests or by state or local governments. Typically, 504 loan proceeds are provided as follows: 50% by a non-guaranteed bank loan, 40% by an SBA guaranteed debenture, and 10% by the small business customer. The maximum SBA debenture is \$1 million.

Private and Quasi-Private Sector Financing Sources

As important as City and other public funding is, the reality is that the vast majority of development occurs with private financing arranged through conventional financial institutions. It is the nature of private sector institutions to evaluate loan requests with different criteria than are usually found in the public and quasi-public arena.

A survey was conducted in the fall of 1993 of about 40 businesses in Northeast Downtown to assess their experience with applying for financing with banks. As expected, those with the most success in receiving loans were older companies with an established relationship with their banks. In general, manufacturing companies had a higher acceptance rate than those in retail trade and services. Many of the companies who were denied loans were smaller companies. Some of the firms who had trouble obtaining loans had previous bank loans “called” when their banks merged with or were bought out by larger banks.



Warehouse reuse at 2540 Walnut Street

Interviews with the banks revealed insights about their lending practices:

- ▶ Applications are evaluated on a case by case basis but the preference is to lend to applicants that have an established track record with at least three years of positive cash flow; therefore, banks frequently do not lend money to new businesses since the failure rate is so high.
- ▶ Banks generally prefer to lend to businesses with more stability and which have accounts receivable. Consequently, they are tougher in evaluating loans to such “cash businesses” as retail trade and restaurants — businesses which are subject to people’s changing tastes and which have a relatively high failure rate.
- ▶ In order to receive a loan, businesses must demonstrate that there is a market for their business product or service. The availability of access is a related consideration.

Despite the different criteria employed by private financial institutions, it is very important for the public and non-profit sectors and Northeast Downtown to work closely with the private sector in financing development projects. Fortunately, there are a number of new and innovative financing programs offered by local firms and banks (usually in concert with public and non-profit organizations) which should be given careful consideration. The major programs applicable (or potentially applicable) to Northeast Downtown are summarized below.

Colorado Capital Initiatives ▶ Colorado Capital Initiatives (CCI) is a not-for-profit company in the business of promoting long-term economic growth and stability in under-invested areas. CCI’s primary strategy is the leveraging of money from a community’s business, public and philanthropic sectors to provide a guarantee for bank loans. CCI forms credit guarantee pools, technical assistance initiatives and local accountability systems that support a community’s efforts to develop its own economic base. The heart of the strategy offers financial incentives to local investors (called guarantors) and banks for participating in higher risk and longer term loans that are needed for business development. Participating businesses are provided with quality technical assistance for the life of their loans. Local accountability is established for the success of each community lending effort. In summary, CCI’s strategy:

- ▶ contains practical, self-sustaining business principles
- ▶ offers market-driven services which meet identified needs in local communities
- ▶ helps communities invest in themselves and hold themselves accountable for results
- ▶ encourages bank or other local financial institutional involvement

- ▶ builds collaborative investment partnerships
- ▶ leverages local and non-local funds to benefit individual communities
- ▶ uses the traditional banking sector as the delivery system for credit

The CCI program is designated to reduce the burden of government in supporting new and expanding businesses in under-invested areas. The program is a powerful tool which leverages public funds 12 times in providing debt financing to businesses working in under-invested areas, such as Northeast Downtown.

Bank One ▶ Bank One, Denver is a \$1.4 billion financial institution focused on serving retail and middle-market customers. Headquartered at 17th and Lawrence Streets, Bank One, Denver operates under a local board of directors and management team. The bank also benefits from a Community Advisory Council which provides guidance on local community issues, product offerings, and marketing initiatives. Among other products and services, the bank offers construction and rehabilitation loans, small business loans, and consumer loans. Bank One is actively involved in strong lending partnerships with CHFA, SBA, the Greater Denver Local Development Corporation, and the Denver Capital Corporation. Bank One has also been working with the Colorado Capital Initiatives team for the past two years to develop a private, market-driven small business-lending program. The bank offers a wide array of residential loan products through its affiliate, Bank One Mortgage Corporation.

Through its local Community Advisory Council, Bank One, Denver has access to the Bank One Community Development Corporation (CDC). This for-profit subsidiary is chartered to make investments for the public benefit, a broad designation that includes creating jobs, stabilizing neighborhoods and providing affordable housing. In addition to providing project equity, the CDC provides technical assistance for local community development lending, as was the case when Bank One, Denver and CHFA extended \$6.04 million for the restoration of the Denver Dry Building. The Bank One CDC also invested in the Rossonian Hotel in Five Points by purchasing historic tax credits associated with that redevelopment effort.

Norwest Bank ▶ Norwest Banks in Colorado want to help Denver's communities and neighborhoods become better places in which to live and work. Throughout the year, Norwest Banks contribute dollars and volunteer time, along with various other in-kind services, to many organizations. Additional funds were allocated in 1993 to a new grant program called the Norwest Neighborhood Assistance Fund. Grants were made to nonprofit organizations that applied and were selected by committees of Norwest



Prime retail areas along Larimer Street that are ripe for revitalization



Originally on Larimer Street, this "popular" business relocated to Lawrence Street, to a building built in 1929

Banks employees and board members. To qualify, an organization must have tax-exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code and an annual budget of \$250,000 or less. Grant requests had to identify a program or service that

- ▶ addresses a current and proven need
- ▶ offers an innovative approach to solving a problem
- ▶ shows a collaboration of community resources and
- ▶ contains a plan for measuring the success of the program/service.

Colorado National Bank ▶ Colorado National Bank is contributing in various ways to the success of the communities it serves. The financial products and services it provides help people buy homes, entrepreneurs build businesses, and public and community organizations deliver essential services. CNB's community outreach initiatives, such as grants to nonprofit organizations, volunteerism, youth-employment programs, and event sponsorships, add to the quality of life in their markets. CNB recognizes that thriving small businesses and innovative community development initiatives are key ingredients of the success of any community. They offer affordable banking products for small, emerging businesses, as well as for nonprofit organizations. CNB focuses heavily on extending credit to small businesses through the SBA and their own line of community and economic development lending products.

First Interstate Bank ▶ First Interstate Bank is a major commercial financial institution located in the heart of downtown Denver. Due to their commercial focus, they are especially interested in and committed to business and multi-family residential lending opportunities in all areas of the downtown area, including Northeast Downtown. First Interstate desires to be an active participant, along with the City and other financial institutions, in meeting the financing needs of the Northeast Downtown Plan.

Involvement by other local banks was acknowledged in the earlier discussion of the Denver Capital Corporation's lending activities.

Other Possible Financing Techniques for Northeast Downtown

In addition to the above financing resources, there are several additional techniques or tools that are worthy of consideration for Northeast Downtown. These techniques involve organizing Northeast Downtown, or those parts of it that are interested and appropriate, to take an area-wide approach to the need for financing public and private improvements. Such techniques as tax increment financing and a business improvement district do take substantial organizational work, require working through the

public sector, and ask more in the way of financial commitment from the individual property owners. For these reasons, these techniques are not used too often. However, they remain useful options for Northeast Downtown, especially when carefully integrated with other economic development resources and approaches.

Tax Increment Financing ▶ Due to the complexity of the tax increment financing (TIF) approach, and the misunderstanding of its use, it is an infrequently-used method of assisting with the funding of redevelopment. However, it is an important economic development tool. TIF is a vehicle for funding public improvements that support redevelopment projects by using the increase in property and/or sales tax collections in the designated TIF area. In the case of the sales tax increment, only the City's portion of the sales tax is committed. All or a portion of these funds may only be used by the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) for activities and monetary obligations which relate to a reconstruction of streets, utilities, parks, for other public infrastructure, or the removal of hazardous materials or conditions.

Within Denver, only an urban renewal authority is able to use the TIF tool. Because it does not possess the power to levy taxes, the urban renewal authority must enter into a cooperative agreement with the City and County of Denver. This agreement arranges for the taxing bodies to collect the incremental taxes and transfer them to the accounts of DURA to address obligations to carry out a plan

In order to implement this process, the Denver City Council approves and adopts an urban renewal plan after making certain legislative findings, including the determination that the urban renewal area, as a whole, is blighted. To determine the existence of blight, a survey is conducted which analyzes the structural, site, infrastructure, and economic and social conditions of the area.

Northeast Downtown, with its relatively low level of property values and tax receipts compared to their future potential, appears to be an appropriate area for consideration of the TIF financing technique. The justification for this financing mechanism is that without it, redevelopment of a depressed area would be substantially more difficult or impossible. There are two major benefits to establishing a tax increment area. First, redevelopment results in spin-off development adjacent to the area. This spin-off development raises tax revenues from which the taxing entities directly benefit. Second, after DURA has fulfilled all monetary obligations related to the TIF project, the taxing entities receive all tax increment revenues generated from higher property valuation and increases in sales attributed from the redevelopment.

Business Improvement District ► The City and County of Denver established the Business Improvement District (BID) option for neighborhood commercial areas to secure financing. It has been used in downtown Denver, Cherry Creek North and, most recently, 14th Avenue to 16th Avenue, mainly from Sherman to Josephine Streets.

As authorized by the City and County of Denver, the purposes of the Business Improvement District include designing, constructing and installing public improvements including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, pedestrian malls, streetlights, drainage facilities, landscaping, decorative structures, statues, fountains, identification signs, traffic safety devices, bicycle paths, off-street parking facilities, benches, rest rooms, information booths, public meeting facilities, the relocation and improvement of existing utility lines, and all necessary, incidental and appurtenant structures and improvements.

In addition, districts may also provide services, including consulting with respect to planning or managing development activities, maintenance of improvements, promotion or marketing of district activities, organization, promotion, marketing, and management of public events, activities in support of business recruitment, management and development, security for businesses and public areas located within the district, snow removal or refuse collection, and providing design assistance.

The Business Improvement District collects taxes from local property owners and business owners to make public improvements, to provide services, and in general to upgrade the area and stimulate business activity and economic development in the area of the district. It is governed by a board of directors.

Technical Assistance Resources for Small Businesses

Technical assistance is another essential tool in the economic development strategy for Northeast Downtown. Recall that the basic resources include both skilled labor and management. In reality, the successful operation of a business requires skills in preparing a business plan, financing, minimizing costs, marketing, merchandising, and accounting. While technical assistance has been part of the economic development tool kit for years, its importance as an integral component of economic and business development cannot be overemphasized. Although the technical assistance resources are listed below, in practice they need to be (and generally are) coordinated with organizations that also offer financial, organizational, and other types of assistance to small businesses.

City and County of Denver

The Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED) provides loan packaging assistance to applicants of its various loans. It also funds technical assistance to businesses in all of its Neighborhood Business Revitalization target areas, including the North Larimer Street NBR. MOED funds technical assistance programs offered through the Small Business Development Center at the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc., and the Denver Enterprise Center Business Incubator.

Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce is funded by the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the Community College of Denver to offer technical assistance to start-up companies and companies hoping to grow. Specific assistance is offered in the following areas: financing, retailing, merchandising, controlling inventory, business planning and development, marketing, and management. Special assistance is made available to minority and women entrepreneurs and to those seeking government procurement business. Counseling services are free and informative workshops are offered at a low cost. Although everyone in Denver is eligible for SBDC assistance, much of SBDC's work is with businesses that are involved with MOED, SBA, and DDP loans or economic development programs.

Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc.

The Downtown Denver Partnership (DDP), like MOED and SBDC, builds technical assistance into its financing programs described earlier. DDP works collaboratively with the SBDC to make technical assistance available to businesses that receive RLF or DCC loans. Similar technical assistance resources will supplement the proposed Northeast Downtown Revolving Loan Fund/Business Support Office. In addition, DDP's Professional Resource Committee, which provides pro-bono assistance from volunteer professionals to start-up developers and businesses, will be made available to Northeast Downtown businesses.

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) is sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration and is a non-profit organization providing free business counseling, business information, and franchising guidance and low cost business workshops on starting in business, business planning, marketing/advertising/sales and other topics.



The Ballpark Neighborhood Association is an important community resource



Design studio in Upper Larimer Subarea

Other Resources for Small Businesses

Denver Enterprise Center Business Incubator

The Denver Enterprise Center (DEC), established in 1987, is another important resource to new small businesses in Denver. Business incubators have become one of the fastest growing economic development tools in the United States. Incubators assist start-up companies during the difficult market entry years. Office and manufacturing space, consulting and support services — such as secretarial and receptionist help, and photocopying, etc. — are provided at rates much lower than found in the market. Once client companies become established in the market, they “graduate” to outside commercial space.

The DEC facility is operated by the non-profit Denver Urban Economic Development Corporation and was acquired and renovated with funds from the Mayor’s Office of Economic Development and the U.S. Department of Commerce. The 64,000 square foot business incubator houses 18 small manufacturing and service businesses. The majority of DEC client companies are owned by minorities and women.

DEC goals and objectives include fostering entrepreneurship, job creation, development of labor force skills, minority- and women-owned business development, economic development, and expansion of the tax base. DEC is planning to expand into the food service market with the development of a 5,000 square foot food production kitchen incubator. Another future possibility is to establish an incubator for artists, of whom there are many in the immediate area of DEC at 30th and Arapahoe.

Mayor’s Office of Employment and Training

The Mayor’s Office of Employment and Training (MOET) is a significant resource in the human resources approach to economic development. The goals of increasing the number of jobs in Northeast Downtown and jobs for people living in and adjacent to NED can only be achieved by upgrading employee skills and productivity to match employer needs. MOET’s goal is to help people learn needed job skills and then help them find and keep jobs. Most of the programs offered by MOET serve low-income residents of the City and County of Denver. They offer programs and services in adult basic education, on the job training, vocational skills training, dislocated worker services, job placement assistance, and summer youth employment.

Summary

As can be seen from the above review of economic development approaches, resources, programs and tools, there are many possibilities in fashioning and carrying out a structured economic development process in Northeast Downtown. A realistic assessment would also acknowledge that Northeast Downtown is in vigorous competition for development with many areas and has both comparative advantages and disadvantages. Given the wide range of options and the complexity and competition for economic development, it is very important that an economic development strategy be prepared for Northeast Downtown. This economic strategy would include, among other elements, an assessment of Northeast Downtown's comparative strengths and weaknesses, identification of realistic opportunities (e.g., target industries, etc.) and constraints, specific goals, recommendations, and priorities, and a coordinated management information system to undertake and monitor the achievement of the strategies.



There are many examples of reusing warehouses along Walnut Street for productive uses

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to crystallize the economic development activities of Northeast Downtown, the Plan has the following economic development goals and recommendations.

Goals

- ED-A** Improve the image of, and create a distinctive identity for, Northeast Downtown.
- ED-B** Increase the economic, employment and tax base, and its diversity.
- ED-C** Increase the employment opportunities for people living within and adjacent to Northeast Downtown.
- ED-D** Secure sufficient and appropriate financial, technical assistance, and organizational assistance from the City and County of Denver, other public and non-profit entities, and the Northeast Downtown community to implement the economic development recommendations and create a user-friendly business environment.

Recommendations

- ED-1** Revise the existing B-8, I-1, and I-2 zone districts to reflect the mixed use vision of this plan, optimize market opportunities, increase and diversify employment opportunities, and increase tax revenues.
- ED-2** Prepare an economic development strategy and program that identifies, carries out, and monitors (e.g., with an appropriate management information system able to measure progress) a coordinated, coherent, and focused set of priority goals and recommendations.

- ED-3** Continue to support the revitalization of the Larimer Street Retail Core through the operation of the North Larimer Street Neighborhood Business Revitalization Program, and other activities, such as streetscape improvements and design guidelines.
- ED-4** Simultaneous with the creation of the Ballpark Historic District, work with the City and County of Denver, Downtown Denver Partnership, non-profits, banks, and Northeast Downtown businesses to establish a Northeast Downtown Revolving Loan Fund and Business Support Office to spur economic and housing development.
- ED-5** Work with the City and County of Denver (e.g., Building Inspection Division and, if necessary, the Office of Regulatory Reform, etc.) and the Northeast Downtown business community to continue recent efforts to revise/streamline building code regulations and the overall permitting process to speed up the approval process for developers and businesses. The purpose of this is to minimize the costs for developers and businesses to enable them to remain/expand/be attracted to Denver as a competitively low-cost location to undertake development and do business.
- ED-6** Explore all funding possibilities and support innovative public/private economic and community development financing initiatives that leverage public funds, such as that offered by Colorado Capital Initiatives.
- ED-7** Study the possibility of establishing a tax increment finance program and/or a business improvement district in Northeast Downtown.
- ED-8** Study the possibility of tax abatement or relief in Northeast Downtown.
- ED-9** Prepare and carry out a comprehensive marketing plan and program for Northeast Downtown, and its distinctive subareas, that identifies and promotes the image, name, identity, comparative advantages and assets of Northeast Downtown for business, entertainment, and living. The marketing plan and program would include a research/marketing information system to identify and respond to appropriate target markets. It would also include strategies to market (through such marketing techniques as advertising, sales promotions, direct marketing, and public relations/publicity) Northeast Downtown's unique character and ambiance as well as its specific product and service offerings.



Commerical uses on the 2200 block of Larimer Street

- ED-10** Make technical assistance a mandatory component of all loan and other economic development activities to give greater assurance of success in the expenditure of public funds, and in economic and housing development revitalization efforts.

- ED-11** Focus retail economic development efforts in the Larimer Street Retail Core between 20th and 23rd Streets.

- ED-12** In order to help establish the distinct identity and image of Northeast Downtown, request that the City identifies Northeast Downtown on all official City maps by whatever name is ultimately chosen by the Northeast Downtown community.



HOUSING





Pockets of low-density residential remain in portions of Upper Larimer

INTRODUCTION

Although Northeast Downtown is predominantly non-residential, the Plan's vision for Northeast Downtown is for it to become an area of mixed land uses, including residential. While the composition of its three mixed use subareas differ, each part of Northeast Downtown is to be a balance of complementary uses. Housing is anticipated to play an important role in Upper Larimer, Baseball Environs, and Arapahoe Square. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the housing development framework for the *Northeast Downtown Plan* and area as the previous chapter provided for economic development.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PLAN VISION

As stated in the Plan Vision and the Land Use and Zoning Chapter, the *Northeast Downtown Plan* promotes a mixed land use community that includes a balance of commercial, industrial, institutional and residential uses. The Plan does not attempt to quantify this balance; but it is clear that the predominant use in Northeast Downtown will be non-residential for the foreseeable future. However, it is the conviction of this Plan that housing offers many benefits to the mixed-use character of the area. Residential is included in each subarea's vision, albeit in a different context and role. Baseball Environs, with its stock of historic buildings, is viewed to have opportunities for rehab conversion to other uses, including housing. Upper Larimer has a substantial presence of live/work situations and an opportunity to expand this type of housing as well as additional multi-family residential and/or mixed-use developments that would include housing. The biggest emphasis in the Plan for long-range housing development is recommended for Arapahoe Square, which is viewed to be a mixed-use area with housing, residential support uses, offices and other compatible uses. The Plan suggests that the portion of Arapahoe Square that has the most housing opportunity is the 21st Street corridor since this area will likely continue to have relatively light traffic and will receive landscape improvements in the near future. It is also close to the new light rail station, which may enhance its attractiveness for housing.



Reuse of industrial buildings to create premium housing along Broadway at Walnut

Table 1 — Housing Units in Census Tract 16* (1940-1990)

Housing Category	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Owner occupied	357	654	392	274	301	315
Renter occupied	2,720	2,078	1,803	1,244	988	612
Vacant	199	89	234	87	181	289
TOTAL	3,276	2,821	2,429	1,605	1,470	1,216

Source: 1940-1990 U.S. Censuses, U.S. Census Bureau

* For the 1940, 1950, and 1960 censuses, Census Tracts 16 and 22 were used; for the 1970, 1980, and 1990 censuses, Census Tract 16 was used; however, the area covered by all of these censuses was the same, so data are comparable.

EXISTING HOUSING IN NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN

The land use survey of Northeast Downtown (summarized in the Land Use and Zoning Chapter) indicated that only 79,326 building square feet is used for conventional residential use in Northeast Downtown. This is only 2.4% of the total occupied building square footage. The breakout by land survey subareas, was 27,813 square feet in Arapahoe Square, 16,325 in Larimer Retail Strip, and 35,188 in Upper Larimer. Upper Larimer also was counted to have 177,196 square feet of live/work space, or 5.3% of the total occupied building square footage in Northeast Downtown.

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, there were only 301 housing units within Northeast Downtown and 1216 housing units within Census Tract 16. What NED housing that exists is scattered throughout non-residential areas. Several multi-family developments exist but there is no discernible “housing area.” Many housing units are located in buildings that also contain other uses. The biggest “housing” developments in Northeast Downtown are actually shelters that house the homeless. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, of the 3511 persons residing in Census Tract 16, 2645 were in households and 866 were living in group quarters. Of the 866, 805 were recorded as living in “emergency housing for homeless persons” and 61 were living in other group quarters such as nursing homes, etc.

Historically, the number of housing units in Census Tract 16 (identified on Map BI-2 in the Background Information element), which includes virtually all of Northeast Downtown, has been declining for the past fifty years. Table 1 summarizes the housing unit data for Census Tract 16 from 1940 through 1990.

As can be seen from Table 1’s figures, Northeast Downtown has lost a lot of housing in the past fifty years. It is the primary housing development goal of this Plan to reverse these trends and again see a greater housing presence in the area.

THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF HOUSING IN NORTHEAST DOWNTOWN

There is a strong case to be made for housing development, despite the historic decline in housing units, the overwhelmingly non-residential nature of Northeast Downtown, and the many existing constraints, challenges and issues to making housing work. Residential land use was included in the Plan's vision because of a number of well-documented planning studies in Denver (some of which directly relate to portions of Northeast Downtown) and elsewhere. Denver's 1989 Comprehensive Plan includes many statements encouraging and supporting housing in and around Downtown in order to create a lively "24-hour activity center," to provide more convenient and nearby housing opportunities to downtown area employees thereby reducing traffic, air pollution and energy consumption, to help provide a market for downtown area retailers, and because it is a fundamental human and social need. Since 1980 there have been four housing analyses, undertaken by or for the City, DURA, and the Downtown Denver Partnership, of the greater Downtown area. Collectively they have demonstrated the strong interest among many organizations for downtown housing development. Most recently, the City and County of Denver's 1992 Downtown Denver Agenda stated the fundamental importance of housing: "An established and growing resident base is essential for a successful downtown. Without this, the remaining issues concerning a Downtown Denver Agenda will become largely irrelevant and result in deterioration and continued movement away from the core. Therefore, without impugning the importance of other Agenda efforts, we believe that downtown housing is the keystone around which the other issues should rally with support and coordination."

Housing is also needed in Downtown (including Northeast Downtown) because it helps to add stability to an area and make an area a neighborhood. The permanent "people presence" that comes with a housing component adds life and activity. An active populace results in a safer and more progressive urban environment. Also, there is a natural limit to the market demand for retail, office, industrial, institutional, and other nonresidential uses; so housing is a logical use to absorb some of the existing supply of land and buildings.



Northeast Downtown should see new multi-family residential developments, like this one located in Lower Downtown



Residential dwellings above commercial on Larimer Street

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS, ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Even though housing is a very worthwhile goal for Northeast Downtown, there are constraints that must be overcome, issues that must be confronted, and opportunities that must be recognized. This “reality check” for housing development acknowledges that these factors, while present to one degree or another throughout Northeast Downtown, do play out differently in the various subareas.

Constraints to Housing Development

There are many constraints impeding more housing in the study area. One way of classifying these factors is to group them into four categories: 1) negative/unsupportive neighborhood environment; 2) cost/affordability; 3) zoning and other City regulations affecting the development process; and, 4) lack of competitiveness of Northeast Downtown in securing housing compared to other areas in and around Downtown. While these constraints are interrelated and often reinforce each other, it is useful to consider how each acts to inhibit housing development.

Negative/Unsupportive Neighborhood Environment

Many parts of Northeast Downtown are not hospitable or inviting to prospective housing developers or residents. These problems have been documented in detail for the Arapahoe Square and Baseball Environs subareas (termed the Gateway District in DURA’s 1989 Blight Survey). Some of DURA’s Survey conclusions illustrate the nature of the applicable problems for this area:

- ▶ The area includes a high concentration of shelters and social service centers for the City’s homeless. The area is considered unsafe. These conditions have retarded housing and economic development.
- ▶ The businesses in the area include a high proportion of bars, liquor stores, pawn shops, and outdated industrial and warehouse enterprises. The marginal nature of the existing businesses constitute an economic liability to the City and impairs development.

- ▶ Given the high percentage of land that is vacant or used for surface parking and the large number of vacant structures, the lack of a critical mass of productive economic use is another deterrent to growth and investment.
- ▶ The area contains no public parks or landscaped open space. In addition, many vacant parcels are poorly maintained and have problems ranging from overgrown weeds to the accumulation of trash and debris. This creates an unsightly appearance and a fire hazard that is a public safety problem.
- ▶ A high percentage of the buildings are in substandard or poor condition. They exhibit substantial deterioration and are a safety hazard and economic liability.
- ▶ A majority of the parcels have signage deterioration and/or problems, which include unsafe mounting, inappropriate materials and breakage.
- ▶ Deteriorated streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks cause safety problems throughout the area.
- ▶ Street lighting in the area is inadequate as compared to the CBD.

Some of the above problems also relate to the Upper Larimer subarea. In addition, Upper Larimer is the most industrial of the Northeast Downtown subareas, is zoned almost totally industrial and, therefore, residential has been more difficult to develop there.

In summary, the negative physical environment includes both the presence of uses and conditions that are incompatible with housing and the lack of certain desired amenities that are important prerequisites to housing development and a sense of community.

Cost/Affordability

According to various downtown housing studies, and most recently an analysis of the feasibility of housing development in the Arapahoe Square in the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*, the high (and usually prohibitive) cost of developing housing is a major constraint that must be addressed.

There are a variety of factors behind the relatively high cost of new construction housing and rehabilitation housing, given the keen competition for the limited market of those seeking downtown area housing. Land costs are high, bid up due to various reasons including speculation, the commercial or industrial zoning, and the larger and higher valued nonresidential structures that have been dominant in Northeast Downtown. According to a 1993 study of land prices in Arapahoe Square, the market for land is relatively flat with the most prevalent reuse for land being surface parking lots. Based on this prevalent reuse, land in



Well-tended landscaping is rare in the Upper Larimer Subarea



Silver Square pioneered the reintroduction of residential into the Upper Larimer area in the mid-1980s

the 2000 blocks of Stout, Curtis, Arapahoe and Champa sell for an average of about \$30 per square foot; land in the 2100 blocks that are on the downtown side of Broadway sell for an average of about \$20 per square foot; land in the 2200 blocks that are on the downtown side of Broadway average about \$10 per square foot. Land on the non-downtown side of Broadway averages \$10 or less per square foot.

New construction costs are also higher due to the extra costs of developing housing in an environment that is perceived to be unsafe. For example, secured parking is a high cost component of such housing that developers must usually provide in the downtown area. Moreover, other design or construction features may be necessary to build housing in the difficult environment described above. No new housing construction has yet taken place in Northeast Downtown.

While it is generally somewhat less expensive for developers to acquire and rehabilitate a building for residential purposes, there is a limit in Northeast Downtown to the number of buildings that are suitable for such conversions. Criteria for such conversions include size, condition and location. Several conversions have included the Paris Hotel, Bayly Lofts, Grimm's Block Building, Skylofts and the Awalt Building. However, there are few remaining buildings suitable for conversion in the Arapahoe Square. The Baseball Environs, which contains the majority of the proposed Ballpark Historic District, has the best collection of buildings in Northeast Downtown that might be suitable for conversion to various uses, including residential. Upper Larimer also has a number of buildings that have been converted to live/work situations for artists and has additional buildings that are suitable for such conversions if land use and zoning issues can be overcome for that subarea.

Existing Zoning and Other City Regulations

A third constraint to housing development in Northeast Downtown is the existing zoning and other City regulations and procedures affecting building codes. The B-8, I-1 and I-2 zone districts are depicted on Map LUZ-4 in the Land Use and Zoning chapter. As seen from this map, the Arapahoe Square subarea is currently zoned B-8, which is an intensive commercial district that allows multi-family residential uses but also allows some commercial and semi-industrial uses that are incompatible with residential development and are effective deterrents to achieving the mixed use housing development vision for this subarea. Likewise, the I-1 and I-2 zone districts in the Baseball Environs and Upper Larimer subareas are inconsistent with the vision for these mixed use areas, that does include some expanded residential presence. Currently, these industrial zone districts prohibit residential development as a use by right. Therefore, housing developers must go through a rezoning process to secure zoning approval for housing

development. Silver Square, in Upper Larimer, successfully underwent the Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning process for its mixed use (including housing) project in the mid-1980's. The I-1 and I-2 zone districts do allow "live/work" situations, but only for artists.

Although existing zoning is the major change needed in City regulations to promote housing (and economic) development in Northeast Downtown, there are other City regulations and procedures pertaining to development that also need adjustment. According to the 1992 Downtown Denver Agenda, "the development process and related zoning and regulatory matters currently inhibit rather than prioritize housing in the downtown area." It recommended overcoming these stumbling blocks to downtown housing development by working with the City's new Office of Regulatory Reform to change the attitudes of the permitting agencies. As with any development in the City and County of Denver, special consideration needs to be given to redevelopment of existing buildings. This is especially true in Northeast Downtown where conversion is generally more economical than new construction. While new construction must also pass the review of multiple City agencies (e.g., Building, Zoning, Fire, Transportation, and Wastewater Management, among others), a change of Occupancy Classification in an existing building usually requires the entire building to be brought into compliance with the current codes. This is often difficult or impossible in older structures without special consideration through various appeals procedures in the Building Department.

Coordination between the City development and reviewing agencies has been deficient in many areas. Conflicting design standards, length of plan review times, fragmentation of responsibilities, over-specialization, unnecessary permits, and lack of project coordination have all been determined to increase development costs in Denver. A new approach to interagency development review and inspection is needed to bring relief in the near future to developers in Denver.

Lack of Competitiveness Given Current Conditions, Cost/Affordability and Zoning/Regulations Constraints

The "bottom line" problem is that, because of the negative physical environment, the cost/affordability problems and the zoning/regulations constraints, Northeast Downtown is currently not competitively attractive to prospective housing developers and residents. There are other areas in and around downtown, including the CBD and Lower Downtown, which do not have such severe constraints to housing development. Other areas, such as the Golden Triangle, are tailoring their zoning to support housing and making other improvements that will make them formidable competitors for downtown



Blake Street Lofts in Upper Larimer were converted from a furniture warehouse, originally built in 1903

area housing. Given the large amount of available land for housing and the relatively small demand for it, currently, it will take a long time for the designated Northeast housing areas to build out to their capacity.

Housing Development Issues

Given the Plan's goal of providing more housing in Northeast Downtown and the constraints to that objective, a number of issues must be addressed in the process of reconciling these factors. In addition, the goal for housing development must be weighed against other Plan recommendations, especially those pertaining to economic development and social issues. These issues are addressed at a general level in this Plan but need further clarification as part of the work necessary to prepare a detailed housing strategy.

Residential/Non-Residential Mix

To what extent should residential uses be permitted/encouraged within the various subareas of Northeast Downtown, all of which have been overwhelmingly non-residential for the greater part of Denver's history? This issue is a land use/zoning, economic development and housing development question all wrapped up together, which also has implications for other elements of this Plan. The answer to this complicated but fundamental question will provide direction to the recommendations in each of the affected Plan elements. This issue is most directly addressed in the Land Use and Zoning chapter; but there are aspects of it that will require continuing attention given the tension between residential and non-residential uses. This issue will need to be refined after the adoption of this Plan when the new proposed mixed use zone districts (I-OR and I-2R) are written.

Overcoming the Cost/Affordability Constraint

According to the *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis*, it is unlikely that new construction housing will develop in Arapahoe Square in the next three to five years without public support because land prices are too high and rents are too low to justify private investment, particularly if the residential market is confined to townhouse and mid-rise units. Compounding this problem is that developers may be more attracted to other areas surrounding the Downtown with more assets and fewer liabilities for housing than Northeast Downtown, particularly Arapahoe Square. To what extent could/should public subsidies make housing development feasible? Given the preference for a mixed-use environment and for private market development, there is a limit to the ability of public programs to overcome fundamental cost/affordability problems. The presence of public support does not create demand. Also, public support can only operate at the margin to fill small gaps needed to make a project work.

Transitional Housing Needs for the Homeless Undergoing Treatment

Given the recommended limit on accommodating additional shelters housing the homeless in Northeast Downtown and the recommendation that a comprehensive social services plan be prepared (that includes, among other things, additional transitional housing for those in treatment programs), there is an issue about how those recommendations can be implemented. These are regional problems; but this issue will impact Northeast Downtown and needs resolution as part of the long range comprehensive social services plan and the housing development strategy.

Housing Development Opportunities

While the emphasis of this section is that housing development, particularly new construction housing, is a major challenge in Northeast Downtown, there are opportunities for housing that must be noted. While few, there are housing development successes that have pioneered the way and proved that housing can be more than a dream and that it can be made to work in a non-traditional, mixed-use environment. Silver Square, which started development in 1986 as a mixed-use development, which included housing, has maintained high occupancy rates and is currently being converted into 57 condominium housing units. The Paris Hotel, renovated in 1989 with low interest loans, contains 17 housing units (and 5 commercial units) and has a long waiting list. Other housing rehab projects in Northeast Downtown include the Bayly Lofts (26 condominium units in a structure converted from manufacturing), Skylofts, and Grimm's Block Building (16 rent-assisted units and one commercial unit in a building that was renovated in 1992). The success of these ventures and the construction of Coors Field is prompting more developers to closely examine the opportunities for converting former non-residential uses to mixed use developments with sizable residential components.

Another indication of the downtown area housing development opportunities is the market demand that had been identified for housing from various studies in recent years. The *Northeast Downtown Denver Market Analysis* consolidated the findings of these studies to which the consultants added their own work. These findings are summarized on the following pages.

Demand ▶ There is ample demand for a variety of rental and ownership housing in suitable locations adjacent to Downtown within a relatively wide range of price and rent categories. The October 1993 housing demand analysis estimates that nearly 38,800 downtown employees live or have considered living Downtown in the past. ***An additional 22,400 employees would consider living downtown if personal circumstances or market conditions changed.***



The Phoenix House provides homeless and transitional housing services



Row houses in Upper Larimer

Housing Product Type ▶ The same housing demand analysis identified demand for loft housing (32%), “row” housing (26%), townhouses (25%), and other housing including units in high-rise and mid-rise development (17%). This is consistent with this Plan’s desired housing product mix.

Downtown Area Locations ▶ There are a number of areas in and around Downtown that can continue to accommodate housing. In addition to the Central Business District and Northeast Downtown, these include Lower Downtown, Uptown, the Silver Triangle, the Golden Triangle and the Central Platte Valley. Currently, Arapahoe Square is at a competitive disadvantage to most of these areas in that it has a smaller threshold of existing residential units, less open space and more uses that are considered incompatible with residential living.

Despite its constraints, Northeast Downtown has a number of advantages and assets for prospective housing developers and residents. It is close to major employment, shopping, services and entertainment. Portions of Northeast Downtown have attractive building stock that is adaptable to mixed use/housing reuse. There are improvements and activities underway in Northeast Downtown that can improve its competitive position for housing. These include Coors Field and related landscaping improvements, improvements to the Larimer Street retail core, and viaduct improvements that will channel traffic along certain streets, the recent re-opening of the City’s venerable 20th Street Recreation Center, and the recent housing developments mentioned above.

Complementary Neighborhood Features ▶ A composite list of features and amenities that prior housing analyses identified as features and amenities that would add to the desirability of a neighborhood or area for residential living includes:

- ▶ a grocery store
- ▶ parks of various sizes
- ▶ bike/pedestrian trails
- ▶ bus stops
- ▶ medical facilities
- ▶ retail shops
- ▶ well-lighted streets
- ▶ feeling of leaving work
- ▶ secured parking
- ▶ private open space

Several of these features (bike/pedestrian trails, bus stops and well-lighted streets) are recommended in other parts of this Plan.

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the similar nature of housing and economic development goals and processes, there is, not surprisingly, also a similarity between the substantive and procedural recommendations in the two development areas.

Goals

- HD-A** Improve the image of Northeast Downtown for housing development and residential living.
- HD-B** Increase the amount of all types of housing and living situations in Northeast Downtown that are compatible with the mixed land use vision and goals of the Plan.
- HD-C** Secure sufficient and appropriate financial, technical and organizational resources from the City and County of Denver, Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA), other public and private entities, and the Northeast Downtown community to implement the housing development recommendations and create an environment supportive of housing development and residential living.

Recommendations

- HD-1** Revise the existing B-8, I-1, and I-2 zone districts to reflect the mixed use vision of the Plan, to respond to changing housing development market opportunities, and to increase and diversify housing availability.
- HD-2** Develop, as part of the previously recommended comprehensive social services plan (SI-1), a plan for transitional housing for homeless people undergoing treatment in such a way that it does not increase the homeless/social services presence in Northeast Downtown.



Detached houses are rare in the Upper Larimer Subarea

- HD-3** Prepare a housing development strategy that identifies a coordinated and coherent set of priority goals, resources, programs, tools and housing focus areas to achieve the housing development goals.
- HD-4** Simultaneous with the creation of the Ballpark Historic District, work with the City and County of Denver, Downtown Denver Partnership, non-profits, banks and Northeast Downtown housing developers to establish a Northeast Downtown Revolving Loan Program and Business Support Office.
- HD-5** Work with the City and County of Denver development review agencies and the Northeast Downtown housing developers/contractors to continue recent efforts to overcome identified deficiencies and revise/streamline building code regulations and the review procedures involving the interaction of the various City review agencies, to help provide housing.
- HD-6** Explore all housing funding possibilities and support innovative public/private housing and community development financing initiatives such as that proposed by Colorado Capital Initiatives, which leverages public and private investor funds and results in additional housing compatible with the Plan's vision.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Many of the resources for housing development are similar to those described in the Economic Development Chapter. For example, the proposed extension of the Lower Downtown Revolving Loan Program into Northeast Downtown can serve housing development needs as well as other business development opportunities. The list of economic development resources should be considered applicable for housing development unless otherwise noted. Therefore, this section will only list those resources or programs that are particularly important or potentially relevant for existing and prospective Northeast Downtown housing/mixed use developers, landlords, and homeowners.

City and County of Denver

Multi-Family Revenue Bonds ▶ The City of Denver receives an annual allocation of about \$12,000,000 for private activity bonds. One of the uses is for multi-family revenue bonds. Developers using multi-family revenue bonds must commit to rent 20% of their units to households earning less than 50% of the median income or 40% to households earning less than 60% of the median income. From the developer's perspective, the advantage is long-term financing at tax exempt interest rates and a 47% tax credit for the low income units. A recent application of multi-family revenue bonds is the Guaranty Bank Building on 17th Street.

Mortgage Revenue Bonds ▶ The City of Denver and the Colorado Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) may issue mortgage revenue bonds which are used directly by individual purchasers of housing. There are income and housing price limitations associated with each issuance of debt. Since mortgage revenue bonds are tax-exempt, the reduced interest rate can be passed on to purchasers. This tool is used when there is a 1% or more spread between private market mortgages and bond financed mortgages. Another option is to provide mortgage credit certificates where home buyers receive a 20% tax credit on their housing interest.

Community Development Financing ▶ The City of Denver, through the Planning and Community Development Office, administers ongoing rehabilitation and development programs with the use of funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Northeast Downtown is eligible for these programs. All of the programs provide long term, below market interest rate loans and require some portion of units to remain affordable to households with incomes at or below 80% of the median family income. The City believes that the Community Development Block Grant funds might be especially appropriate for a capital investment that is related to a housing development, such as a small park or streetscape improvements.

Denver Housing Initiatives ▶ The City and County of Denver, along with other agencies, use its Housing Initiatives process to solicit projects primarily for special needs housing. This program gives real estate developers access to grants or low interest loans. It is designed for, but not limited to, non-profit organizations. Proposals may be funded by one or more of the following sources: City of Denver, the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, and the Colorado Division of Housing. Projects should be designed to provide affordable housing, meet the needs of special populations, and limit neighborhood deterioration.

Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA)

CHFA provides a variety of financing programs ranging from financing existing or new rental apartment buildings to home ownership. CHFA also allocates Low Income Housing Tax Credits on behalf of the State of Colorado.

Fannie Mae

On the private lending side, Fannie Mae will do a “forward commitment” for housing projects in the downtown area, including Northeast Downtown. If a developer has construction financing, Fannie Mae will consider providing long-term permanent financing or guaranteeing bonds. Some developers, however, believe that in practice Fannie Mae does not make many loans in Northeast Downtown.



**P L A N
I M P L E M E N T A T I O N**



INTRODUCTION

The principal purpose for preparing this Plan is to influence and guide the process of change in Northeast Downtown to better meet the needs and opportunities of its residents, business people, and property owners. This Plan represents the consensus of Northeast Downtown and the City and County of Denver in identifying and analyzing problems, needs, and opportunities and in the goals and recommendations to address them.

The heart of this Plan is in the specific policy implementation proposals that the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee, working with the City and County of Denver, has prepared to carry out the Plan. These proposals, termed “Action Recommendations,” are presented at the conclusion of each Plan chapter that involves substantive policy issues or opportunities. These implementation actions vary widely. Some are simple, require minimal or no financial or other resources, and can be accomplished rather easily and quickly. Other recommendations are complex, require substantial financial resources or major ordinance changes, and need further study and refinement/discussion/negotiation before they can be initiated and accomplished.

The purpose of this element of the Plan is to provide a framework for its implementation. The strength or weakness of previous planning efforts in Northeast Downtown (and generally of all planning efforts regardless of area) is the degree to which the planning study findings and recommendations were carried out. Many previous studies had valid recommendations that, for various reasons, were not carried out as proposed. The primary reason for this was that there was an insufficient definition of, and commitment to, the roles and responsibilities of the various parties to actually implement the study recommendations to the maximum extent possible and within a reasonable time frame. A contributing problem was that sufficient authority — and commensurate accountability — was **NOT** built into the recommendations of previous studies. These lessons from the past must be kept in mind as this part of the Plan is prepared. Therefore, this Plan element is vitally important and identifies, at a general but sufficient level of detail, the what, who, when and how of transforming this Plan into reality in Northeast Downtown over the next decade or so.

Overview of Plan Implementation Needs and Techniques

The 84 Action Recommendations in this Plan constitute an action agenda with which to begin and monitor the implementation of the *Northeast Downtown Plan*. They identify, in general terms, WHAT is to be done and WHO is responsible for working to carry out the recommendations. The major responsibility for managing the overall accomplishment of the recommendations is shared by the Northeast Downtown community (as represented in the proposed Northeast Downtown Plan Implementation Committee) and the City and County of Denver (as coordinated by Denver's Community Planning and Development Office). Under the direction of these two organizations, working groups are assigned the primary responsibility for initiating and shepherding that recommendation through the necessary steps until it is accomplished. As to WHEN the recommendations are scheduled for achievement, the suggested time frame for accomplishing each recommendation needs to be identified. Factors influencing the recommended time frame include its relative priority, its substantive and procedural complexity, cost, and the relationship between the need and availability of resources of the various implementing groups to carry out the recommendation. HOW recommendations get accomplished varies by recommendation but generally most become realized by one or more of several techniques, including the expenditure of public and private funds, the enactment and enforcement of public ordinances and regulations, the preparation of follow-up studies, and the application of Plan policies (e.g., Denver Planning Board, Denver City Council, Board of Zoning Adjustment, RTD, the Metropolitan Baseball Stadium District, etc.) and private firms in making decisions that impact Northeast Downtown.

Given the shortage of and consequent keen competition among many interests for the supply of resources relative to their demand/need, implementing plans is a challenging and demanding task. Therefore, it is essential that the Northeast Downtown community and the City and County of Denver be well-organized to ensure a smooth transition from the plan-making process to the plan-implementing process. This chapter of the *Northeast Downtown Plan* is designed to provide a blueprint for that transition and outlines the key elements of the plan implementation process.

One essential strategy for focusing limited resources is to identify the most important plan recommendations and design work programs and activities to carry out those priorities. The Steering Committee went through an initial priority-setting exercise and selected the most significant and far-reaching Action Recommendations within each substantive area of the Plan. These top priority recommendations are **bolded** in the list of Summary Recommendations in the Appendix.

While the Committee strongly believes that all substantive policy areas of the Plan are very important to the future of Northeast Downtown, they ranked Land Use and Zoning, Economic Development and Social Issues as being of paramount priority in laying the foundation toward the achievement of its long range vision. These planning priorities should continuously be refined to provide a strategic focus and direction to the overall implementation efforts.

HUMAN RESOURCES OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Regardless of the various plan implementation resources and techniques employed, the common denominator of all successful implementation work — of getting things done — is people working together effectively. Accompanying each Action Recommendation in the Summary of Plan Recommendation in the Appendix is a list of “Probable Key Implementing Groups” who, because of their expertise, authority and/or control over resources, are responsible for completing the recommendation. (Some recommendations are totally or partially open-ended; that is, by their inherent nature, they may never be totally completed. In these cases, a reasonable “maintenance of effort” should be insured each year or designated time frame.) Those groups with clear responsibilities must be granted authority equal to their responsibilities and then be held accountable.

The two groups that are ultimately responsible for implementing the plan recommendations are the City and County of Denver and the Northeast Downtown community itself. The Denver Planning and Community Development Office is responsible for leading on some recommendations and for securing and coordinating the needed input from other City agencies as appropriate. The residents, businesses, property owners and neighborhood/business organizations in Northeast Downtown are represented on the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee. These two groups are the major catalysts that must marshal together a wide range of other people in public, non-profit, and private organizations to focus all available resources appropriate to implementing each recommendation.

The City and County of Denver is a major participant in the Plan’s preparation, adoption, and execution. Once adopted by the Mayor and City Council, the *Northeast Downtown Plan* will become part of the official *Denver Comprehensive Plan*. As such, it will help influence City policies, programs, and decisions that will be necessary in carrying out the Action Recommendations. During the plan implementation process, the Denver Planning and Community Development Office will continue as the primary City agency responsible for coordinating the work of the City in working with the Northeast

Downtown community and other organizations and individuals. One important aspect of this work will involve articulating and promoting the plan proposals to the Denver Planning Board, City Council, Board of Zoning Adjustment, and all relevant City and other organizations that make policy decisions on zoning, regulatory ordinances, development proposals, and funding.

Although the City's expertise and resources are significant, the primary energy, motivation, and responsibility for implementing this Plan must be the citizens of Northeast Downtown. Strong and ongoing involvement by Northeast Downtown's residents, business people, and property owners will be necessary to assume the leadership in championing and carrying out the vision and recommendations. This will require, among other factors, management skills and organizational arrangements to prioritize recommendations, develop work programs, raise funds, gather and analyze information, and monitor progress and make necessary adjustments. Moreover, as time passes, the Plan may need to be refined to address new needs and opportunities. Eventually, these changes and incremental adjustments may accumulate to where a comprehensive revision to the *Northeast Downtown Plan* will be needed.

Northeast Downtown needs to maintain an ongoing planning and decision-making process to achieve these needs and to actively promote its general interests. While this may require organizing ad-hoc groups from time to time to oppose changes perceived to be undesirable, community leaders also need to inspire the community to be pro-active in securing decisions and changes that improve Northeast Downtown and bring it closer to its long range vision for itself.

One of the most significant recommendations in this plan is to establish a permanent umbrella community organization for Northeast Downtown that speaks and acts in a unified way to represent the collective interests of the entire community. One logical and workable possibility is for the Northeast Downtown Plan Steering Committee, the broad based community group that worked with the City in preparing the Plan, to transition into the Northeast Downtown Plan Implementation Committee to oversee, with the Denver Planning and Community Development Office, the overall implementation of the plan. This group should be open to, and represent, all interests of Northeast Downtown in a fair and equitable manner.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

One of the most common and important techniques for improving Northeast Downtown will be through the expenditure of public and private funds for various types of physical improvements and programs. Many improvements have already been made, some are presently underway, others have received funding commitments, and a number of Action Recommendations identify specific improvements to be completed when funds become available.

There are various public, quasi-public, and private funding programs and resources of which Northeast Downtown needs to be aware as it implements its Plan. In general, the public (City, state, and federal governments) and non-profit funding sources are very limited relative to need as there is extremely strong competition for these funds among the various applicants. This competition is particularly sharp among neighborhood and business organizations within Denver. Some specific Plan element recommendations, such as transportation, historic preservation, housing, and economic development, have specialized funding programs and resources and these have been identified in those Plan elements. Other portions of the Plan need to be funded through more general City funding programs and resources, which are outlined immediately below. In addition, a brief listing of state, federal, and non-profit resources are included. The funding resources listed in this Plan are believed to be the major relevant resources that are appropriate for Northeast Downtown. However, they are not intended to be a comprehensive catalogue of all such financing sources. This highlights the need for Northeast Downtown to include and maintain fund raising in its economic development strategy and implementation program.

General Public Funding Sources

City and County of Denver

Capital Improvements Program Plan ▶ The Capital Improvements Program Plan (CIPP) is one important possibility for funding some improvements recommended in the *Northeast Downtown Plan*. The CIPP is the City's annual listing of proposed capital improvements it intends to make. Although each CIPP covers six years (the current one is for 1995-2000), the only legally binding part of each CIPP is the first year's improvements which constitute the Capital Improvements Budget (CIB). The CIB is formally made a part of the City's annual budget which is typically approved by the City Council each November for the next calendar year. Each year the City staff undertakes a capital improvements planning process at which time specific funding proposals for inclusion into the next CIPP are prepared, evaluated, prioritized, and eventually submitted to the Denver Planning Board for formal consideration. The Denver Planning Board usually makes its CIPP/CIB recommendations to the Mayor by July of each year.

Northeast Downtown should prepare its proposed capital improvements projects and submit them to the appropriate City agencies each January in order to be competitive in this citywide funding process.

Community Development Block Grant Program ▶ The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) annually funds its Community Development and Block Grant Program (CDBG) for eligible projects in housing, economic development, and neighborhood improvements. CDBG program resources for housing and economic development are outlined in the Economic Development and Housing Development chapters. The other relevant CDBG program for Northeast Downtown is the Denver Commercial Streetscape Program (DCSP). DCSP utilizes CDBG funds and other City funds for design and construction of public right-of-way improvements on predominantly commercial blocks in neighborhoods where the majority of residents are of low or moderate income. Eligibility requirements must be met. Project requirements are twofold: 1) the applicant is responsible for applying and obtaining a revocable permit from the Denver Department of Public Works, and 2) business or property owners may be required to establish a formal maintenance district to maintain the improvements.

All project proposals will be evaluated competitively by the following criteria: leverage, linkage, consistency, design, impact, maintenance capabilities, and whether or not the applicant is in a designated Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) area or in an area that has an established merchants organization.

Historically, applications for DCSP projects are taken each April and are due by mid-May to the Denver Planning and Community Development Office. All eligible applications will be forwarded to the Neighborhood Facilities Improvements Committee of the Mayor's Advisory Committee (MAC) for review. Grants will be awarded on the basis of which projects most meet the eligibility and evaluation criteria. Applicants are advised to contact the Denver Planning and Community Development Office for detailed and current information with regard to eligibility, evaluation, schedules, and deadlines.

Despite the likely changes and possible cutbacks in federal funding for such programs in the future, CDBG programs are an important resource for Northeast Downtown to track on a continuous basis.

Mayor's Office of Economic Development ► The Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED) has a number of funding and technical assistance programs that are designed to assist small businesses. Please refer to the Economic Development chapter where they are described.

Mayor's Office of Employment Training ► The Mayor's Office of Employment Training (MOET) offers employment training assistance, as outlined in the Economic Development chapter.

State of Colorado

The State of Colorado has a variety of programs available to small businesses. Those believed to be most relevant (such as the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority) are identified in the resources section of the Economic Development chapter.

Federal Government

The federal government is being "reinvented" and is undergoing major re-engineering changes. Nonetheless, the federal government is the source of many resources and programs that are of benefit to business and economic development in Northeast Downtown. The major federal programs of interest, such as the Small Business Administration, are identified in the Economic Development chapter.

Commercial Banks

Commercial banks are an additional source of funds. All major banks maintain active community investment programs that finance projects in various parts of the metropolitan area, including Northeast Downtown. These banks and their programs are outlined in the Economic Development chapter.

Non-Profit Organizations

Denver is blessed with many active and sophisticated non-profit organizations that include economic and business development (defined in its broadest sense) as part of their mission. Non-profits cover an extremely wide range of interests, including business organizations, foundations, and organizations that have specialized geographical and/or topical interests.

Business Organizations

The Downtown Denver Partnership and the Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce are very active in supporting a wide range of economic and business development activities and projects, which they are outlined in the Economic and Development chapter.

Foundations

Foundations are another valuable resource for various types of community and human development. Denver has many foundations that have given assistance to neighborhoods and community-based organizations who in turn assist individuals. The Piton Foundation, an innovator and leader in providing such assistance to communities, recently published studies on poverty in Denver, and is working to address those and related problems with community based programs. Other Denver foundations that provide various types of assistance to communities include the Amoco Foundation, Boettcher Foundation, Coors Foundation, Denver Foundation, and the Hunt Alternatives Fund. Each foundation has a mission statement and supporting philosophy which defines its particular funding criteria interests and priorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- PI-1** Establish a Northeast Downtown Plan Implementation Committee to oversee and manage carrying out the Plan's Action Recommendations.
- PI-2** Identify the implementation time frame for each Plan recommendation
- PI-3** Prioritize the Plan's Action Recommendations and prepare an annual work program which identifies what is to be accomplished and who is responsible for its achievement.
- PI-4** As part of the annual work program, prepare a proposed annual capital improvements program, with potential funding sources identified, and work with the City staff and all potential funding sources to secure funds for the proposed projects and improvements in Northeast Downtown.
- PI-5** Monitor the current adequacy of this Plan and work with the City and Northeast Downtown community to refine/update it when necessary.



S U M M A R Y O F P L A N R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S



**The Plan's top priorities are in bold.
The order in which the recommendations
are listed do not indicate ranking.**

NEDPIC Northeast Downtown Plan
Implementation Committee

CPDA Community Planning and
Development Agency

H&NDS Housing & Neighborhood
Development Services

SOCIAL ISSUES

Action Recommendations

SI-1 The city should take the lead in addressing the identified social service issues by establishing a broadly based task force to prepare and implement a workable and equitable comprehensive social services plan for the City.

SI-2 Work with city/metro-wide social service interests to secure funding and space for alcohol and drug rehab, transitional and recovery housing, mental health intervention, job counseling and placement, and case management services.

SI-3 Work with local police authorities, medical response teams and Denver CARES to decrease the time required for response to a request/need for help within Northeast Downtown.

SI-4 Work with social service providers to eliminate waiting lines and litter and loitering around their facilities.

SI-5 Pass an ordinance that regulates and controls the curbside distribution of food, clothes, medicines and health care, and other items.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

Mayor's Office
City Council
Department of Human Services
Service Providers
Neighborhood Groups
Business Community

Groups in SI-1
Denver Regional Council of Governments
Suburban Govts
Denver Health Medical Center
Continuum of Care
Mental Health Corp of Denver

NEDPIC
Neighborhood Groups
Denver Police Dept
Denver CARES

Department of Human Services
Service Providers
NEDPIC
City Attorney
Denver Police Dept
Neighborhood Groups
Continuum of Care

Department of Human Services
Service Providers
NEDPIC
Denver Health Medical Center

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

SI-6 Work to provide 24 hour a day access to public and private toilets in the area.

City Council
 City Attorney
 Mayor's Office
 Neighborhood Groups

Service Providers
 Department of Parks & Recreation
 Denver Health Medical Center
 Dept of Public Works
 Neighborhood Groups

SI-7 Work with the Denver Police Department to establish effective police/community relations, establish Neighborhood Crime Watch Programs, secure increased patrolling for the protection of life and property (e.g. explore the possibility of placing a police satellite facility in the area), and address crime-related issues.

Neighborhood Groups
 Property Owners
 Denver Police Dept
 Mayor's Office
 City Council

SI-8 The City should immediately suspend “permitting” any additional emergency shelters, day shelters, and food lines in Northeast Downtown until a comprehensive social services plan is prepared and implemented that adequately addresses the above concerns and impacts, and the City enforces the existing regulations.

Mayor's Office
 Department of Human Services
 Zoning Office
 City Council
 Continuum of Care
 Neighborhood Groups

SI-9 Prepare and encourage the passage of legislation to restrict the sale of fortified wines and associated liquors. The City and County of Denver shall sponsor this legislation and bring it before the Colorado Legislature.

City Lobbyist
 Colorado Legislature
 City Council
 Neighborhood Groups

SI-10 Prepare a “bottle bill” ordinance, to require payment at the time of purchase of a deposit on bottled liquors and soft drinks to encourage the return of the empty bottles, for consideration of passage by the Denver City Administration and the Denver City Council.

City Council
 City Attorney
 Mayor's Office
 Denver Health Medical Center
 Department of Human Services
 Dept of Public Works
 Service Providers
 Neighborhood Groups

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Action Recommendations

- HP-1** Use a participatory process to prepare design guidelines that focus on preserving and reinforcing the unique character and quality of the ballpark area, including human scale buildings, the scale, mass, detailing, and organization conducive to small, familyowned businesses, and a blue collar Larimer Square, not a museum.
- HP-2** Designate the ballpark area as a landmark district to preserve historic character, create economic opportunity appropriate to the district, and use district design guidelines as a basis for design review.
- HP-3** Establish and implement an effective design review process that complements the district's goals and responds to changing development conditions.
- HP-4** Encourage utilization of existing incentive programs and create new incentive programs as appropriate and feasible.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

Neighborhood Groups
Property Owners
Preservation Groups

Neighborhood Groups
Property Owners

Landmark Preservation Commission
Property Owners

CPDA
Neighborhood Groups
Property Owners

LAND USE & ZONING

Action Recommendations

- LUZ-1** Maintain a desirable, workable, compatible, and equitable mix and balance of land uses in Northeast Downtown and encourage viable development to satisfy both the economic needs of property owners as well as such public needs as housing and public facilities and services.

- LUZ-2** Knit together the Northeast Downtown subareas as well as Northeast Downtown with adjacent areas.

- LUZ-3** Encourage and support a mix of economic and housing development that will create new jobs, generate additional tax revenues, attract new residents, support additional neighborhood retail goods and services, and provide new amenities.

- LUZ-4** **The Baseball Environs Subarea should be a mixed use area to include an appropriate balance of compatible retail, entertainment, light industrial, office, residential, and service uses.**

- LUZ-5** The North Larimer Retail District, between 20th and 23rd Streets, should be redeveloped into the primary neighborhood retail center and revitalized to include a variety of neighborhood and destination retail uses, particularly “international marketplace” or ethnic oriented stores or shops.

- LUZ-6** The Arapahoe Square Subarea should be a mixed use area to include a balance of compatible residential, offices, neighborhood retail and support uses, and service uses. The goal is for this subarea to become predominantly residential to the extent that market realities permit.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

- NEDPIC
CPDA

- NEDPIC
CPDA

- NEDPIC
CPDA

- NEDPIC
CPDA

- NEDPIC
CPDA

- NEDPIC
CPDA

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

LUZ-7	The Upper Larimer Subarea should be a mixed use area to include a balance of compatible industrial, industrial arts, studios, and a broad variety of live/ work situations.	NEDPIC CPDA
LUZ-8	Undertake an industrial zoning revision process to prepare and enact a draft ordinance to modify the existing I-2 and I-1 zone district language in the Baseball Environs Subarea to mixed use I-OR.	NEDPIC CPDA Zoning Office Property Owners
LUZ-9	Complete the zoning revision process to prepare and enact a draft ordinance to modify the existing B-8 zone district in the Arapahoe Square Subarea to mixed use B-8A.	NEDPIC CPDA Zoning Office Property Owners
LUZ-10	Undertake an industrial zoning revision process to prepare and enact a draft ordinance to modify the existing I-2 zone district language to I-2R and the existing I-1 zone district to mixed use I-OR in the Upper Larimer Subarea.	NEDPIC CPDA Zoning Office Property Owners

URBAN DESIGN

Action Recommendations

- UD-1 Improve the character of Broadway through new streetscaping as part of the Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project.

- UD-2 Close some minor streets which intersect with Broadway (21st, 24th, and 25th), consolidating some traffic islands with adjoining R.O.W. and private property.

- UD-3 Conduct a Broadway Corridor Study, from 19th Street to Blake Street, which develop recommendations as to its role, and identifies future transportation and urban design improvements — such as minor street closures, streetscaping, possible street width reductions through the elimination of on-street parking, intersection width reductions through sidewalk ‘bulkouts’ and minimizing pedestrian barriers across and along Broadway. (see illustration UD-1)

- UD-4 **Develop new bicycle and pedestrian linkages to the South Platte River from the planned Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project, and along 35th Street to a proposed bicycle/pedestrian bridge across the Union Pacific railroad tracks. (See illustration UD-1)**

- UD-5 Complete the 25 foot wide sidewalk on the northeast side of 20th Street from the alley west of Larimer Street to Larimer Street.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

- Department of Public Works-
Transportation Division
CPDA
Maintenance District
and/or agreements with private party

- Transportation Division
CPDA
Adjoining Property Owners

- Transportation Division
CPDA

- Department of Public Works-
Transportation Division
CPDA**

- Property Owners
Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

UD-6	Develop visual and pedestrian linkages between subareas by focusing streetscape improvements on 21st Street from Blake to Tremont; on Larimer Street from 20th to Downing; on 27th Street from Welton to Blake; and 35th Street to Downing and then along Downing to Curtis Street. (see illustration UD-1)	Metro Baseball Stadium District with off-site agreement Private Developers Local Improvement Districts H&NDS (Commercial/Residential Streetscaping)
UD-7	Develop Larimer Street between 20th Street and Park Avenue West into the center or focus of the subareas, through streetscaping and wider sidewalks, and the attraction of new pedestrian active uses and residential support services. (see illustration UD-1)	Local or Business Improvement Districts Larimer Street NBR H&NDS (Commercial Streetscaping) Private Developers
UD-8	Create a cluster of small open space amenities focused on the intersection of Arapahoe Street and 21st Street as a focal point for residential development. (see illustration UD-2)	Zoning Office (with ordinance revision) Property Owners Local Improvement District
UD-9	Improve the sense of entry, orientation, and the identity of the Upper Larimer subarea at the Downing, Walnut, Blake, and 38th Street cluster of intersections utilizing, among other options, streetscape elements, monuments, and/or signage. (see illustration UD-1)	Department of Public Works- Transportation Division CPDA
UD-10	Reinforce the existing character of the area by creating height limits for new development and major renovations in the subareas. As shown on illustration UD-2, these building height limits are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 55' use of right height limit in the proposed I-OR and I-2R zone districts with an additional height bonus of 25' to a maximum of 80' earned with staff design review b. 55' use of right height limit in the designated Larimer Street NBR area with an additional height bonus of 25' to a maximum of 80' earned with staff design review; c. 200' maximum height limit in the proposed B-8A zone district 	Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)
UD-11	Encourage new development to build up to the street, creating spatial definition to the streets, and concentrating activity along the streets. (see illustration UD-2)	Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

<p>UD-12 Develop design guidelines and design review procedures for all of Northeast Downtown (excluding the proposed Ball Park Historic District from such design guidelines and review procedures if it is enacted), especially for key subareas and streets, such as Larimer Street, from 20th Street to Broadway; 21st Street, from Blake Street to Broadway; Broadway, from 20th Street to Blake Street, or for the entire Baseball Environs and Arapahoe Square subareas from 20th Street to Broadway; and Blake Street to Broadway; incorporate the Park Avenue Urban Design Guidelines (October, 1993) into the development of overall building design guidelines for the area.</p>	<p>Zoning Office (with ordinance revision) CPDA</p>
<p>UD-13 Create sidewalk and streetscape development and maintenance policies for all streets in the Northeast Downtown area which are appropriate to the desired character of the subareas and the roles of the streets. Use these policies to guide the off-site street improvements provided by the Stadium District through its street development agreement with the City. (see illustrations UD-3, 4 and 5)</p>	<p>Transportation Division Maintenance District Private Developers</p>
<p>UD-14 Street lighting levels should equal that of Lower Downtown. In addition to street lighting, pedestrian lighting shall be provided on all streets designated in illustration UD-4 by private development as it occurs, (including new and expanded commercial parking lots in addition to their parking lot landscaping requirements), by the Metropolitan Baseball Stadium District's Development Agreement negotiated with the City or other public funding programs. Parking lot lighting will be required for new and expanded lots as part of the existing parking lot landscaping ordinance.</p>	<p>Transportation Division Xcel Energy Metro Baseball Stadium District</p>
<p>UD-15 Small amounts of publicly accessible open space developed for the purpose of creating localized amenities and changes in physical character should be provided through the targeted use of setbacks and open space required in the Zoning Ordinance, and through selective street closures. The Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project may also be utilized to renovate and integrate the small traffic/park islands along Broadway into a new streetscape environment.</p>	<p>Zoning Office (with ordinance revision) Local Improvement District Department of Parks & Recreation</p>

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

UD-16 Preserve the views of the mountains down the right-of-ways of the “numbered” streets (excluding 21st Street), particularly from locations west of Lawrence Street. Pedestrian bridges, and sign bridges crossing the numbered streets are specifically discouraged (see illustration UD-3)

Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)

UD-17 **Limit the land use densities for new construction and major renovation. As shown on illustration UD-7, these land use density/floor area ratio limits are:**

Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)

- a. **2:1 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) as a use of right density in the proposed I-OR and I-2R zone districts with an additional 1:1 FAR allowed (to a maximum of 3:1 FAR) with bonuses earned by providing one or more of the following uses: housing, residential support facility (to include public or private schools), the rehabilitation of a designated historic structure, underground parking, open space meeting plan objectives, pedestrian active uses, child care facility, and transfer of development rights.**
- b. **4:1 Floor Area Ratio as a use of right density in the proposed B-8A zone district with an additional 3:1 FAR (to a maximum of 7:1 FAR) with bonuses earned by providing one or more of the following uses: housing, residential support facility (to include public or private schools), child care facility, arts, entertainment, or cultural facility, the rehabilitation of a designated historic structure and transfer of development rights.**

UD-18 Limit the land use density and bulk of buildings in the proposed I-OR and I-2R zone districts by counting the excess parking space (that parking space provided in a project which exceeds the amount of parking that is required by the Zoning Ordinance) against the project’s density or Floor Area Ratio; this policy may be exempt if an individual developer of the excess parking space agreed in writing to participate in an existing parking district.

Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)

Action Recommendations

- UD-19 Control signage in all Northeast Downtown zone districts by modifying the existing sign code's criteria and introduce design review for proposals not possible under the sign code criteria (Vital Signs criteria). Tighten up temporary sign requirements. The general outline of sign recommendations, to be specified as part of the recommended B-8A, I-OR, and I-2R zone district preparation work:
- a. modify the allowable sign area, slightly reducing the sign area for conventional signs, but increasing the sign area (particularly for larger projects) if signs reflecting the historic character of the area are used;
 - b. reduce the number of signs allowed;
 - c. allow projecting signs and roof signs through staff design review following flexible guidelines, or by keeping design review to a minimum through the use of specific "cookbook" standards; use the Vital Signs' design standards and guidelines as starting points;
 - d. redefine "wall" signs to include the extension, under specific design criteria, of the building's parapet to receive all or part of a sign;
 - e. existing historic wall signs left or repaired in their "faded" condition, or other existing signs, considered by staff to be either historic or representative of the historic character of the area, are exempt from inclusion in the recommended sign code;
 - f. tighten up the temporary sign requirements, either generally, or as a trade-off for the ability to do an amount, or number of signs beyond the "as of right" allowances, and/or to provide sign types currently prohibited.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

Zoning Office (with ordinance revision)

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Action Recommendations

- T-1 Monitor, and change as necessary, the new transportation (and parking) facilities and operations in Northeast Downtown to meet the transportation and other goals of this plan, and goals of other adopted City plans.
- T-2 Implement, monitor, and change as appropriate the Coors Field Area Transportation and Parking Management Program, so as to meet the circulation and parking goals and the needs of the area, including minimizing the impact upon the area.
- T-3 Study the future function and needed improvements of Blake, Market/Walnut, Larimer and Lawrence, including studying the possibility of making Lawrence and Larimer, and Champa and Stout, two way streets northeast of Broadway.
- T-4 Design and construct the Broadway Replacement Viaduct in association with the neighborhood organizations and affected property owners, to improve traffic flow and to help provide bike and pedestrian connections to the South Platte River, in such a way that the Viaduct is not a barrier between Upper Larimer and downtown Denver.**
- T-5 Support the proposed Air Train as a rail transit facility that will help attract people into Northeast Downtown while reducing vehicle impact into the area.
- T-6 Ensure that Northeast Downtown, including the adjacent area near the Denargo Market, will not be negatively impacted by any installation for a vertiport, heliport, or any other aircraft with comparable impacts.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

Traffic Engineering
 Metro Baseball Stadium District
 Neighborhood Groups
 Regional Transit District

Traffic Engineering
 Metro Baseball Stadium District
 Neighborhood Groups
 Regional Transit District

Traffic Engineering
 Neighborhood Groups

**Transportation Division
 Neighborhood Groups**

Transportation Planning
 Neighborhood Groups

Transportation Planning
 Neighborhood Groups

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

T-7 Construct Wewatta/Delgany Street from Speer Boulevard to Brighton Boulevard to enhance vehicular and pedestrian connection to downtown Denver through the Central Platte Valley and to provide improved access to and from the Central Platte Valley while bypassing Northeast Downtown and Lower Downtown.

Transportation Division

T-8 Construct the following new pedestrian connections/ bicycle routes: a) connecting Blake and 35th Street with an off-street bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the Union Pacific railroad tracks; b) as a later stage of the 23rd Street Viaduct project, provide a new connection to the South Platte River, and c) connect Broadway to the South Platte River through pedestrian and bikeway elements as part of the Broadway Viaduct Replacement Project.

Transportation Planning
Design Engineering

T-9 Study and diminish the drive disorientation problems connecting Upper Larimer with major streets and destinations (e.g., 34th and 38th Streets at Downing, etc.) through signage and other measures as necessary.

Traffic Engineering
Neighborhood Groups

T-10 The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) should resurface Larimer and Lawrence Streets (Colorado Highway 33), de-classify these streets as a state highway, and transfer maintenance of the streets to to the City and County of Denver.

Colorado Department of Transportation
Transportation Division

T-11 As part of the impact mitigation measures for the 20th Street Bus/HOV project, the Regional Transportation District should design and construct a Larimer Street bus transit station stop and implement a related “stopover program.”

Regional Transit District
Traffic Engineering
Transportation Planning
Ballpark Neighborhood Association
Larimer Street NBR

P-1 As is presently required in the existing zone districts, require in the new zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) that a certain number of bicycle parking spaces be provided in commercial parking facilities.

NEDPIC
CPDA
Zoning Office
Property Owners

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

- P-2** Impose specific design criteria for the location, design, planning and operation of all parking structures, to include the following:
- a. the design of the facility should be compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding area and the vision and goals of this plan
 - b. the external material should be brick-faced and with window openings in scale with those of other buildings in Northeast Downtown
 - c. parking should not be located at ground level
 - d. parking entrances should be on numbered streets where possible
 - e. the standard lot depth of 125 feet should be taken into account in the design of the structure

NEDPIC
 CPDA
 Zoning Office
 Property Owners

- P-3** As is currently required in the existing zone districts, require in the new zone districts (B-8A, I-0R and I-2R) specific landscaping requirements on all surface parking lots.

NEDPIC
 CPDA
 Zoning Office
 Property Owners

- P-4** Special event parking should only be allowed as a conditional use in the proposed zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) in Northeast Downtown, and should be regulated to minimize neighborhood impacts where allowed.

NEDPIC
 CPDA
 Zoning Office
 Property Owners

- P-5** Free-standing commercial parking lots should only be allowed as a conditional use in the proposed zone districts (B-8A, I-0R, and I-2R) in Northeast Downtown.

NEDPIC
 Planning & Development and Zoning Offices
 Property Owners

- P-6** Explore shared parking opportunities with the Colorado Rockies to optimize the use of existing parking resources and minimize the need for and impact of additional parking on the area.

NEDPIC
 CPDA
 Transportation Planning
 Colorado Rockies

- P-7** Establish and implement, as and when appropriate, a parking management structure and program to creatively and efficiently plan and manage all existing and potential parking resources in/adjacent to Northeast Downtown, and work cooperatively with and consider joining such established parking programs as the Downtown Transportation Management Organization (TMO)

NEDPIC
 CPDA
 Transportation Planning
 Parking Management
 Downtown Denver Partnership

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Action Recommendations

- ED-1 Rezone the existing B-8, I-1 and I-2 zone districts to reflect the mixed use vision of this Plan, respond to changing market opportunities, and to increase and diversify employment opportunities.

- ED-2 **Prepare an economic development strategy that identifies a coordinated and coherent set of priority strategies, tactics, resources, programs, and tools to achieve the goals; this strategy should include a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating progress in accomplishing economic development goals.**

- ED-3 Continue to support the revitalization of the Larimer Street Retail Core through the operation of the North Larimer Street NBR Program, and such other activities and improvements as streetscape improvements and design guidelines.

- ED-4 Simultaneous with the creation of the Ballpark Historic District, work with the City and County of Denver, Downtown Denver Partnership, non-profits, banks and Northeast Downtown businesses to establish a Northeast Downtown Revolving Loan Fund and Business Support Office.

- ED-5 Work with the City and County of Denver to continue recent efforts to revise/ streamline building code regulations to enable businesses to remain/expand/ be attracted to Denver as a competitively low cost location to do business.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

- NEDPIC
- CPDA
- Property Owners
- Neighborhood Groups
- Denver City Council

- NEDPIC
- CPDA
- Mayor's Office of Economic Development**

- North Larimer NBR
- CPDA
- Property Owners

- Northeast Downtown property owners
- CPDA
- Downtown Denver Partnership
- Historic Denver, Inc
- Non-profits
- Banks

- Property owners

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

ED-6	Explore all funding possibilities and support innovative public/private economic and community development financing initiatives, such as that offered by Colorado Capital Initiatives that leverage public funds.	NEDPIC Property Owners CPDA Mayor's Office of Economic Development
ED-7	Study the possibility of establishing a tax increment finance program and/or a business improvement district in Northeast Downtown.	Property owners CPDA Denver Urban Renewal Authority
ED-8	Study the possibility of tax relief or abatement for businesses committing to the achievement of measurable economic development goals.	Property owners City and County of Denver
ED-9	Establish a marketing program for Northeast Downtown, and its distinctive subareas, that creates and promotes a positive image for the area by publicizing its assets and advantages as an attractive place to do business, be entertained, and reside.	NEDPIC North Larimer NBR Neighborhood Groups Property owners
ED-10	Make technical assistance a mandatory component of all loan and other economic development activities to give greater assurance of success in the expenditure of public and quasi-public funds and in revitalization efforts.	Loan providers
ED-11	Focus retail economic development in the Larimer Street Retail Core between 20th and 23rd Streets.	North Larimer NBR CPDA Mayor's Office of Economic Development
ED-12	To help distinguish Northeast Downtown and give it identity, rename the area within the Northeast Downtown study area, or the closest approximation of this area for which federal census data is collected (probably Census Tract 16) as Northeast Downtown (or whatever name is selected by the Northeast Downtown community) on all appropriate City maps.	CPDA

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Action Recommendations

- HD-1 Revise the existing B-8, I-1, and I-2 zone districts to reflect the mixed use vision of the Plan, respond to changing housing development market opportunities, and to increase and diversify housing availability.

- HD-2 Develop, as part of the previously recommended comprehensive social services plan (SI-1), a plan for transitional housing for homeless people undergoing treatment in such a way that it does not increase the homeless/social services presence in Northeast Downtown.

- HD-3 **Prepare a housing development strategy that identifies a coordinated and coherent set of priority goals, resources, programs, tools, and housing focus areas to achieve the housing development goals.**

- HD-4 Simultaneous with the creation of the ballpark historic district, work with the City and County of Denver, Downtown Denver Partnership, non-profits, banks, and Northeast Downtown housing developers to establish a Northeast Downtown Revolving Loan Program and Development Support Office.

- HD-5 Work with the City and County of Denver development review agencies and the Northeast Downtown housing developers/contractors to continue recent efforts to overcome identified deficiencies and revise/streamline building code regulations, and the review procedures involving the interaction of the various City review agencies, to help provide housing.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

- CPDA
- Property Owners
- Neighborhood Groups
- Denver City Council

- Mayor's Office
- Department of Human Services
- Service Providers
- Business Community

- NEDPIC**
- CPDA**
- Downtown Denver Partnership**

- Northeast Downtown property owners
- CPDA
- Downtown Denver Partnership
- Historic Denver, Inc
- Non-Profits
- Banks

- Property owners

Action Recommendations

Probable Key Implementing Groups

HD-6 Explore all housing funding possibilities and support innovative public/private housing and community development financing initiatives such as that proposed by the Colorado Capital Initiatives, that leverages public and private investor funds, and that results in additional housing that is compatible with the Plan's vision.

NEDPIC
Property Owners
CPDA

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Action Recommendations

- PI-1 Establish a Northeast Downtown Plan Implementation Committee to oversee and manage carrying out the Action Recommendations.

- PI-2 Identify the implementation timeframe of each Action Recommendation in the Northeast Downtown Plan.

- PI-3 **Prioritize the Action Recommendations and each year, prepare an annual work program which identifies what is to be accomplished each year and who is responsible for its achievement.**

- PI-4 As part of the annual work program, prepare a proposed annual capital improvements program, with funding sources identified, and work with the City and all potential funding sources to secure funds for these priority improvements.

- PI-5 Monitor the current adequacy of this plan and work with the City to refine/ update it when necessary.

Probable Key Implementing Groups

- Northeast Downtown Plan
Steering Committee
CPDA
Neighborhood Groups

- NEDPIC
CPDA
All identified implementing groups

- NEDPIC
CPDA

- NEDPIC
Budget and Management Office

- NEDPIC
CPDA



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MAP LUZ-2 Existing Land Uses