

---

# UPPER DOWNTOWN A RENEWED FOCUS

---



Downtown  
Denver  
Partnership



**DENVER**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
& OPPORTUNITY



Downtown  
Denver  
Business  
Improvement  
District

# acknowledgments

The Upper Downtown Plan is the result of over one year of collaboration focused on this important district within Downtown Denver. Over 1,000 stakeholders – including local business and property owners, residents, employees within the district, students, and visitors to the area – were engaged to help shape this unique vision, and a renewed focus for Upper Downtown. Each participant in the process expressed enthusiasm for the promising future of this area and contributed their bold ideas for how best to implement the vision. In particular, the Sponsors and Upper Downtown Stakeholder Group participants are recognized for the time and dedication they contributed to this effort.



## Premier Sponsors:

- » Beacon Capital Partners
- » Brookfield Properties
- » Gart Properties
- » TIAA

## Supporting Sponsors:

- » JLL
- » Encana
- » HealthOne
- » Kittredge Ventures
- » NAI Shames Makovsky
- » Page Southerland Page
- » Gemini Rosemont
- » Unico Properties
- » Whiting-Turner

## Consultant Team:



## In conjunction with:

- » Economic & Planning Systems
- » ArtHouse Design
- » Fehr & Peers

Document design and production by MIG, Inc.

## Project Management Team

Tami Door  
President & CEO

Randy Thelen  
Senior Vice President,  
Economic  
Development

Emily Tucker  
Senior Manager,  
Economic  
Development

Emily Brett  
Senior Manager,  
Economic  
Development

Andrew Iltis  
Senior Manager,  
Transportation &  
Mobility

Adam Perkins  
Senior Manager,  
Urban Planning

## Upper Downtown Stakeholder Group:

» David Sternberg, Co-Chair  
Brookfield Properties

» Ray Bellucci, Co-Chair  
TIAA

» Austin Kane  
Unico Properties

» Bill Mosher  
Trammell Crow Company

» Bill Sirois  
RTD

» Caroline Kackley  
Wells Fargo

» David Myers  
Urban Renaissance Group

» David Tryba  
Tryba Architects

» Dawn Medina  
JLL - Civic Center Plaza

» Deborah Cameron  
Denver Economic Development & Opportunity

» Donna Blair  
Continuum Partners

» Dorit Fischer  
NAI Shames Makovsky

» Emily Gloeckner  
Denver Public Works

» Eric Hiraga  
Denver Economic Development & Opportunity

» Evelyn Baker  
Denver Community Planning & Development

» Gina Guarascio  
JLL - Wells Fargo Center

» John Littlejohn  
Page Southerland Page

» Kaia Nesbitt  
HDR

» Mark Bernstein  
Denver Parks and Recreation

» Mark Faul  
Whiting-Turner

» Mark Sidell  
Gart Properties

» Maureen Tarrant  
HealthONE

» Molly Summerhill  
WeWork

» Nathan Roberts  
Kittredge Ventures

» Paul Washington  
JLL

» Pete Schippits  
CBRE

» Rebecca Simons  
Encana

» Sarah Rockwell  
Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell

» Scott Perry  
LBA Realty

» Scott Robson  
Civic Center Conservancy

» Tom Lee  
Newmark Knight Frank

» Verna Pottle  
Gemini Rosemont - Denver Energy Center



# table of contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	vi
<b>Section 1: Background and Process</b>	
Introduction	1.2
Process	1.10
Areas of Emphasis	1.12
Market Opportunities	1.14
Current and Potential Audiences	1.16
<b>Section 2: Vision and Priorities</b>	
Vision for Upper Downtown	2.2
Key Components of Vision	2.3
<b>Section 3: Big Moves</b>	
Make a “There” There	3.2
Transform the Pedestrian Experience	3.18
Tame the Concrete Jungle	3.36
Reposition Towers	3.46
Break through Barriers	3.60
<b>Section 4: Implementation</b>	
Collective Impact	4.2
Phasing	4.2

# Executive Summary

## The Upper Downtown is at an exciting inflection point.

With nearly 19.5 million square feet of office floor area today, and a majority of that constructed in the 1970s and 1980s, it has long been viewed as the established core of the downtown office market and the major employment and government (local and state) center for the region. Upper Downtown is also home to the Colorado Convention Center, the largest concentration of hotels and hotel rooms in the entire region, and a large number of restaurants and retail to support the millions of visitors that come to stay and play in the area each year. The location of Upper Downtown is within a mile of many of the densest residential neighborhoods in the region.

Even the strongest of downtown districts must continue to evolve and position themselves for continued success. Increasing competition associated with the high performance of emerging downtown districts is making the need to reinvest in the Upper Downtown more urgent. Upper Downtown is anticipated to capture at least one-fifth of all downtown employment growth in the next 20 years. Numerous investment opportunities exist from reinvestment in existing holdings, acquisition of buildings ready for repositioning, and development of underutilized parcels and even blocks. A robust multimodal system in the district includes protected bikeways, bus and rail transit, and wide sidewalks. This system is being reconfigured to give more space to people at the ground level and to increase the flow of people through better access to transit and new mobility infrastructure.

There is no better time than now to invest in Upper Downtown. This plan for the Upper Downtown sets the benchmark for new trends in the district. Trends that build on the employment capacity of the district with new supportive services and employee amenities. Trends that amplify the cultural distinctiveness of a skyline-district in the midst of a Colorado playground. Trends that open the district to everyone, extending the attractiveness beyond business hours and neighborhood boundaries. **Upper Downtown is on the rise.**



## Vision

**The Upper Downtown is the thriving economic center of the Rocky Mountain West. Employees, residents and visitors come for the vibrant concentration of iconic architecture, jobs and retail and they stay for the elevated experiences and one of a kind views, restaurants, and nightlife. Colorado authenticity and Denver's most urban environment are fused together with a comfortable, walkable and memorable experience that cultivates exploration, collaboration and innovation.**

The vision is supported by three pillars:

### » Cosmopolitan Denver

Upper Downtown is anchored by the traditional Central Business District and continues to be home to the largest concentration of jobs in the entire region. High rise office buildings, grand lobbies and well-appointed plazas will set the stage for business lunches, high end cocktails or a night on the town.

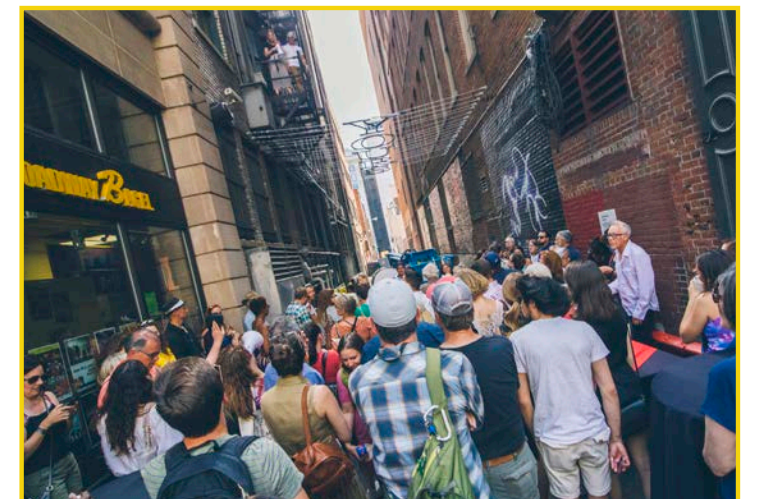
### » Colorado Outdoors

The Colorado Outdoors is a primary attraction for newcomers and unique piece of our culture and heritage. This will be reflected through interiors and exteriors of buildings, as well as in parks, plazas and streetscapes. Upper Downtown will showcase the best Colorado has to offer.

### » Extend the Day and Week

A critical component of the vision for Upper Downtown is to extend the day and week. Upper Downtown will be more vibrant and active after hours and on weekends. A diverse mix of uses and programming will help retain and attract employees, residents and visitors in Upper Downtown.

The transformation of Upper Downtown and the realization of the vision for the area will require growth in the number and quality of restaurants, shops and other ground floor uses. **This expansion of the experiential environment in Upper Downtown will be driven by tremendous growth in employment and housing in and adjacent to the district.**



## Big Moves

In order to capture this potential and position Upper Downtown for continued success, it will take a coordinated and concerted effort by public, private and non-profit partners. This Plan recommends five Big Moves intended to leverage existing assets, overcome challenges and align the time and money that will be invested by a diverse array of investors and stakeholders.

### 1. MAKE A “THERE” THERE

Upper Downtown can benefit from a stronger identity and sense of place. Making a “there” there will include a wide array of improvements to bolster placemaking, brand and identity. This Big Move is about creating a distinctive and memorable experience for employees, residents and visitors. Aesthetic design interventions will be targeted toward weaving an eclectic mix of architecture, ground floor uses, upper story tenants and people traveling to and through Upper Downtown into a cohesive place and identity.

#### Priority Projects

- » Create and Enhance Signature Streets (page 3.4)
- » Celebrate Colorado Outdoors in Central Gathering Spaces (page 3.10)
- » Attract/Grow Local Brewery, Urban Winery and/or Craft Distillery (page 3.12)
- » Programs and Events (page 3.14)

#### Supporting Strategies

- » Branding
- » Alley Activation
- » Art & Lighting

### 2. TRANSFORM THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

Many things contribute to the pedestrian experience, including aspects of the public and private realms. With few exceptions, streets in Upper Downtown currently prioritize vehicles over other modes of transportation. In addition, the majority of Upper Downtown’s structures were constructed between 1970 and 1990, a time when the ground floor experience took a back seat to corporate identity and augmenting the skyline. Revitalization of Upper Downtown requires a total transformation of the pedestrian experience.

#### Priority Projects

- » Major Streets Redesign (page 3.20)
- » Retrofit Ground Floor of Parking Garages (page 3.26)
- » Implement Artist Themed Transit Stops/Mobility Hubs (page 3.30)
- » Parking Strategy (page 3.32)

#### Supporting Strategies

- » 1-Way to 2-Way Conversions
- » Signage and Wayfinding
- » High-Quality Mixed Use Development
- » Updated Regulatory Tools



Create and Enhance Signature Streets



Celebrate Colorado Outdoors in Central Gathering Spaces

### 3. TAME THE CONCRETE JUNGLE

While the pedestrian experience will be enhanced with a combination of improvements that will contribute to the tree canopy of Upper Downtown, an overall greening of an urban environment that is notably harsh today deserves its own Big Move. A combination of temporary and permanent improvements can tame the concrete jungle that currently defines Upper Downtown. Truly greening the area will take a concerted and collaborative effort from public and private interests.

#### Priority Projects

- » Urban Forest Initiative (page 3.38)
- » ‘The 5280’ Design and Implementation (page 3.40)
- » Parklets (page 3.42)

#### Supporting Strategies

- » Privately Owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS)
- » Green Walls

### 4. REPOSITION TOWERS

As stated previously, the majority of buildings in Upper Downtown are single use office towers constructed between 1970 and 1990. Once the most sought-after office space in the entire region, new construction and more popular districts have begun to threaten Upper Downtown’s position in the market. It is critical that the towers of Upper Downtown continue to be repositioned through a variety of strategies that leverage the many assets that made the towers successful in the first place.

#### Priority Projects

- » Mile High Experiences (page 3.48)
- » Office Tower Updates (page 3.54)
- » Ground Floor Retrofits (page 3.56)

#### Supporting Strategies

- » Ground Floor Leasing Strategies

### 5. BREAK THROUGH BARRIERS

In order for Upper Downtown to be truly successful, the area must fully tap into the surrounding market of residents, employees and visitors in Capitol Hill, Uptown, Arapahoe Square, Five Points, Civic Center, the Golden Triangle, Auraria and the rest of Downtown. A Big Move for Upper Downtown will include priority projects and supporting strategies that make much stronger connections to these adjacent areas and break through the many barriers that exist today.

#### Priority Projects

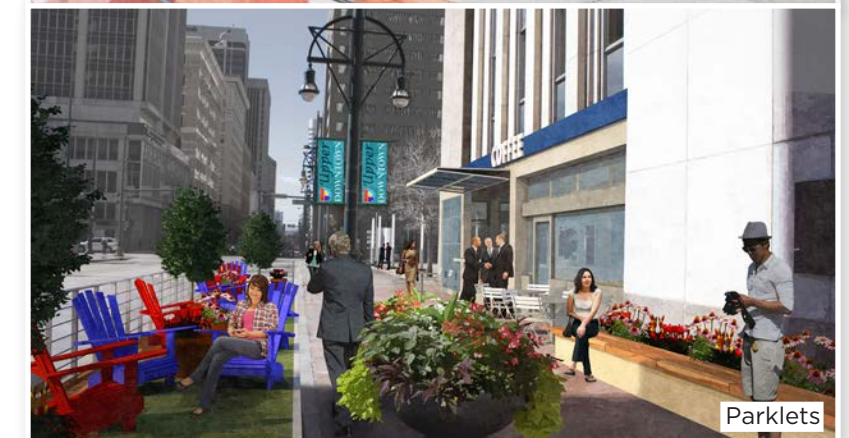
- » Construct Broadway and Lincoln Crossings (page 3.62)
- » Signature Bike Connection (page 3.66)
- » Adjacent Neighborhood and District Connections (page 3.68)

#### Supporting Strategies

- » Leverage Transit Stations
- » Create Mobility Hubs



Retrofit Ground Floor of Parking Garages



Parklets



## SECTION ONE

# Background and Process

In addition to providing a snapshot of the existing conditions and planning background of the study area, this section describes the outreach, engagement, and analysis process that informed the recommendations and strategies. The section is organized into five subsections:

- » Introduction
- » Process
- » Areas of Emphasis
- » Market Opportunities
- » Current and Potential Audiences

# Introduction

Upper Downtown, for the purposes of this Plan, is bounded by 20th Street, Sherman Street, Colfax Avenue, 14th Street, and Champa Street. The Upper Downtown Plan aims to foster enthusiasm and excitement for this critically important part of Denver’s downtown through a variety of urban design interventions and strategic programming coupled with economic analysis to demonstrate how implementing these physical and programmatic improvements can jump start reinvestment in the district. This Plan represents a public-private partnership, with funding provided by both public and private organizations that recognize the economic significance and critical importance of Upper Downtown to the larger downtown and all of Denver.

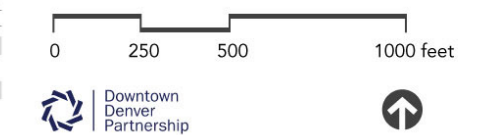


Denver Upper Downtown Plan

## STUDY AREA

### Legend

-  Upper Downtown Study Area
-  Park / Open Space
-  Creek
-  Buildings



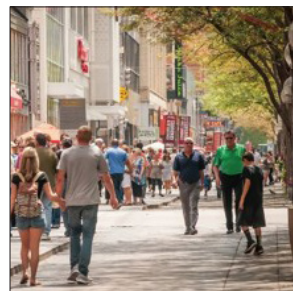
### Downtown Area Plan

Downtown Denver has been addressed on a broad scale by several Citywide Plans, Specific Area Plans and District Plans, and while all of those provide excellent sources of information and community input, the larger context for the Upper Downtown planning effort was established in the 2007 Denver Downtown Area Plan. Following an 18-month public process with extensive community engagement, the approved Plan set forth five overarching vision elements for Downtown, shown on the “Plan on a Page” excerpt below. At the ten-year anniversary of the Plan, the Downtown Denver Partnership and the City and County of Denver conducted a 9-month public process to re-examine the values laid out in the plan to reiterate the highest priorities for the next 10 years. That Midpoint Reflection and Priorities effort established the nine key priorities shown at right; one of which, Energize the Eastern Portion of the Commercial Core, specifically highlighted Upper Downtown as a high priority moving forward.

### VISION ELEMENTS FROM THE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN



prosperous



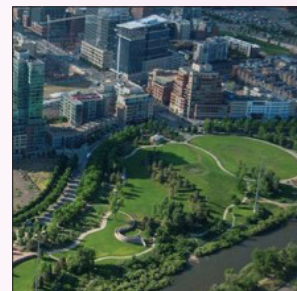
walkable



diverse



distinctive



green

### MOST RELEVANT PRIORITIES FROM THE MIDPOINT REFLECTION



Reconstruct the 16th Street Mall



Differentiate the Functions of Downtown Streets



Prioritize the Pedestrian



Implement the Next Evolution of Grand Boulevards



Implement the Outdoor Downtown Plan



Encourage and Cultivate the Experiential Downtown



Better Reflect and Celebrate the Unique Cultures and Identity of Downtown



Energize the Eastern Portion of the Commercial Core



Bolster Inclusive Economic Activity



### History of Upper Downtown

In its infancy, this portion of Downtown Denver was a much smaller and walkable urban core with a mix of neighborhood scale uses accommodating the needs of the more rural housing and farms that surrounded the immediate area.

As the State Capitol was built in this area in the 1890s, Upper Downtown began to establish itself as a type of commercial core, with a broader mix of uses, a robust streetcar network, and added residential density in nearby neighborhoods to support the up-and-coming Colorado capital.

The area still feels the effects – both positive and negative – of the considerable impact of the Denver Skyline Urban Renewal Project that continued from the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s. While the razing of properties in and around the study area cleared land to make it available to private development, only some of that land ended up being developed into the skyscrapers that occupy the area today. A large portion of the land remained surface parking lots until a resurgence of development in the late 20th century. Many surface parking lots still remain today, especially along 15th Street and near 19th Street and Broadway.



The Brown Palace Hotel with a horse and buggy on Broadway.



The art deco Paramount Theater.



The historic 16th Street Mall was part of the streetcar network.

### Current Local & Regional Position

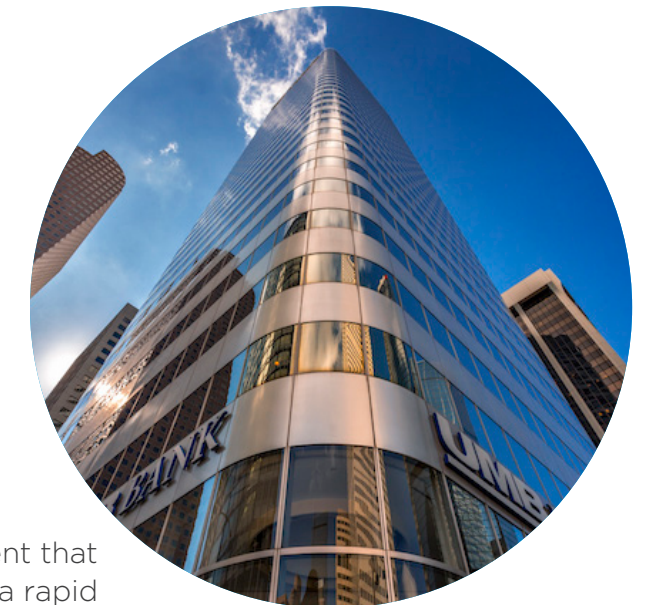
Upper Downtown remains today the area with the highest concentration of jobs and tax base in the Metro Denver region, featuring the city's tallest office towers, a strong set of mobility options, proximity to the Colorado Convention Center, and City and State government complexes. The area has not seen the same level of investments in the public and private realms as many other close-in districts and neighborhoods until very recently. The time is ripe to leverage recent investments in private assets, Civic Center Station, the planned projects involving the 16th Street Mall and several other Upper Downtown streets.



Along with the largest population in the Rocky Mountain Region, Denver also has the most iconic skyline in the region – defined primarily by the buildings in Upper Downtown.



Directly adjacent to the Colorado State Capitol, and home to many City and County facilities, Upper Downtown has been, and will continue to be, a home to a high percentage of public administration and government-supportive jobs.



With the development that has been occurring at a rapid pace around the periphery of Upper Downtown, this area is well-positioned to benefit from a wave of growth and development.

### Recent/Current Private Development Activity

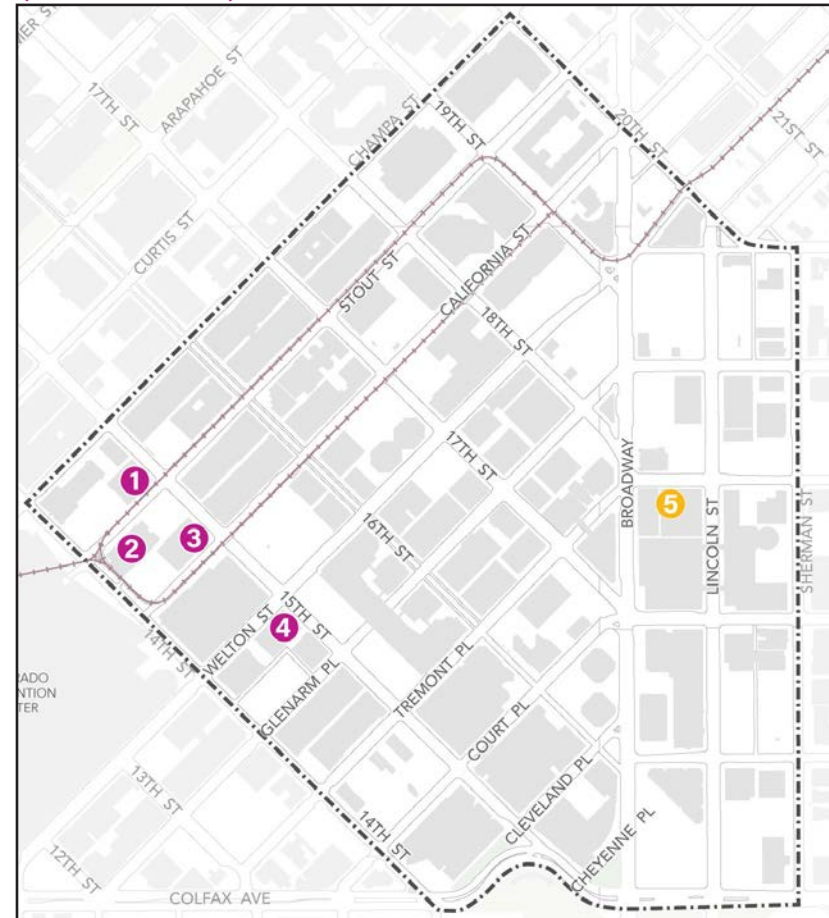
Since 2010, more than 1,000 hotel rooms and 350 residential units have been constructed within Upper Downtown, while office development in the area has primarily been renovations. The locations of recently completed development projects are shown in the map below on the left.

**Hotel Development:** Upper Downtown has become a magnet for major hotel development due to its proximity to the Colorado Convention Center and other gathering spaces in downtown, as evidenced by new hotels concentrated along 15th Street around the Colorado Convention Center.

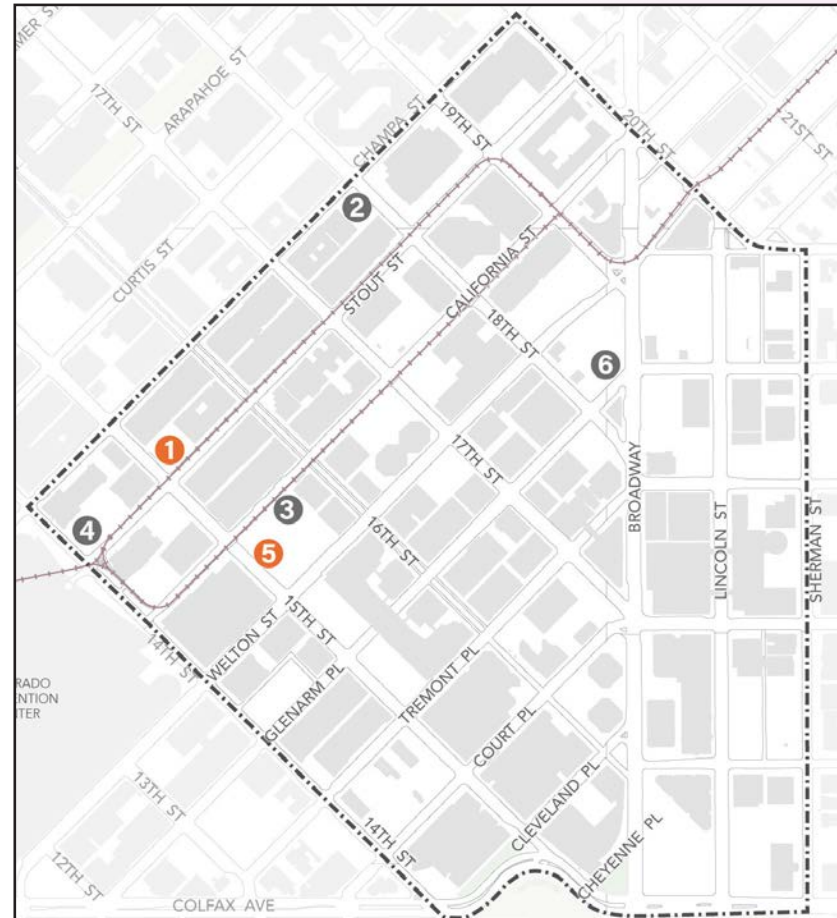
**Multifamily Development:** There has only been one multifamily project completed in Upper Downtown recently, the SkyHouse development, which delivered 354 residential units in 2016. This project took advantage of nearby market strength in locating near Uptown, in the northeast section of Upper Downtown.

**Office:** Though new office building development was slow for many years, the 600,000 square foot Block 162 project is bringing significant new space to the district. Prior office projects within Upper Downtown have been largely in the form of renovations to the existing inventory to attract and retain tenants.

#### RECENTLY COMPLETED DEVELOPMENT (2010-2019)



#### CURRENT UNDER CONSTRUCTION AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT



#### PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT KEY

Recently Built Hotels and Multi-Family Residential



ALoft Hotel



Embassy Suites



Le Meridian/AC Hotel



Hampton Inn/Homewood



SkyHouse Apartments

Under Construction and Proposed



15th & Stout Hotel



Magna Hospitality



Block 162 Hotel



14th & Stout Hotel



Block 162 Office



18th & Glenarm Condos

# Process



## Downtown Area Plan and Upper Downtown Plan

As stated previously, the Partnership identified a priority to ‘Energize the Eastern Portion of the Commercial Core’ during the recent Downtown Area Plan Midpoint Reflection and Priorities process. Acknowledging that this portion of the commercial core would continue to grow as the business center of the region, the Partnership wanted to ensure that it would also evolve into a more complete mixed-use district, connecting more strongly to the adjacent districts and neighborhoods while infusing new life and activity into Upper Downtown. Thus, the Partnership kicked off a six-month process – led by MIG, Inc., with support from Economic and Planning Systems (EPS), ArtHouse Design, and Fehr & Peers – to develop a plan to re-energize Upper Downtown with a renewed focus on pedestrian-oriented activities, housing and the residential population, multi-modal streets, attractive and distinctive ground-floor uses, and a thriving employment and tourism environment.

## Upper Downtown Stakeholder Group

Led by co-chairs Raymond Bellucci, TIAA, and David Sternberg, Brookfield Properties, and consisting of 30+ members, the Downtown Denver Partnership (Partnership) formed an Upper Downtown Stakeholder Group to help develop a strategy to accelerate the economic resurgence within this critical district of Downtown Denver.

Prior to selecting a consultant team to help create a Plan for the area, the group convened to establish and agree upon a project framework and timetable, brainstorm challenges and opportunities facing the District, and establish the Stakeholder Group’s goals for Upper Downtown, through the development of seven Areas of Emphasis (see pages 1.12-1.13). Additional meetings and walking tours were held to review market data from commercial brokers and the Partnership, build consensus on the key themes for an Upper Downtown strategy, and further analyze opportunities within the District to identify additional research needs and key community voices that should be included in the engagement process.

The Areas of Emphasis served as a foundation to direct the public outreach, analysis, and vision portions of this effort.



## Focus Groups

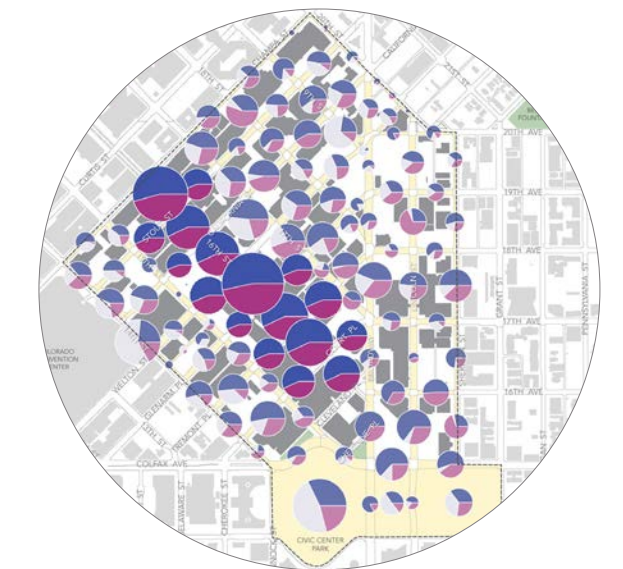
The consultant team met with and presented to a series of focus groups to ensure that the voices of key stakeholders within and adjacent to the Upper Downtown study area were well represented in the visioning process. In this way, the development of recommendations that would follow could be more responsive to the end users within the district. The following focus groups were organized and asked to participate in the process:

- » Hospitality – hotel owners and operators within Upper Downtown as well as other businesses that rely heavily on tourism and convention center users
- » Employers – a mix of employers within Upper Downtown ranging from office tenants, property managers, building owners, and coworking space operators
- » Residents – a pair of groups organized by the Downtown Denver Partnership focused on providing a platform for Denver enthusiasts who span different industries and communities and who are residents in and around downtown to come together and collaborate on big ideas that help shape and create a better Downtown Denver

## Data Collection/Surveys

To better understand the unique challenges and opportunities that the Upper Downtown area faces, the consultant team also collected a set of data inputs from the following sources, that were then analyzed to further inform or reinforce the Areas of Emphasis that were articulated by the Stakeholder Group:

- » Environmental and Behavioral (EB) Mapping: A process, developed by the Natural Learning Initiative at North Carolina State University, by which specific attributes of the built environment and the corresponding behaviors of the people using those spaces are mapped in GIS. In Upper Downtown, MIG, along with students in the University of Colorado Denver’s Master of Urban and Regional Planning program spent time mapping and collecting this data throughout the study area (see sample output map to right). The data and subsequent mapping was used to identify specific opportunity areas where physical interventions can have the greatest impact on perceptions and behavior.
- » Intercept Surveys: A survey conducted with passers-by on the street, aimed at providing background on why users were in Upper Downtown, how often they spend time in this area of Downtown Denver, what things they’d like to see improved, what they appreciate, etc.
- » Retail/Restaurant Survey: A survey distributed to both retail and restaurant businesses within Upper Downtown, to provide insight on when people are out spending money in Upper Downtown, what some of the opportunities and challenges of Upper Downtown are, and why those businesses have chosen to locate in this area of downtown as opposed to others.



EB Mapping of Upper Downtown

# Areas of Emphasis

Based on the data collection, existing conditions analysis, stakeholder conversations and public outreach conducted in the first few months of the process, a broad set of opportunities and constraints were identified for the study area.

## Development and Use

The seven Areas of Emphasis, and their corresponding definitions, were identified by the Upper Downtown Stakeholder Group over the course of several Downtown Denver Partnership led planning meetings and through a series of walking tours of the District. These areas served as a guide for the Existing Conditions analysis conducted by the consultant team and informed the identification of each of the Big Moves that follow. (See the Implementation Matrix in Section 4 to see which Areas of Emphasis apply to each of the Plan recommendations.)



*Street experience at all times of day, including evening and weekends for residents, employees, and visitors alike*

### Opportunities

- » Programming within the right-of-way and corporate plazas
- » Reactivating facades with ground-floor uses
- » Developing the “missing teeth” of surface parking lots

### Constraints

- » Low resident population in district to compensate for the departure of approximately 55,000 employees in the area after the typical workday
- » Current perception of underutilized spaces
- » Surplus of surface parking lots



*Quantified and perceived level of crime and cleanliness for all people living, working, and visiting the area*

### Opportunities

- » Potential for increased activation to instill a greater sense of pride in the public realm, fostering a greater emphasis on a clean and safe environment
- » Build upon the Partnership’s already strong Clean and Safe program by enhancing with more resilient streetscape amenities

### Constraints

- » Lack of consistent users of the public realm contributes to less “eyes on the street” to promote safety
- » Programming at present is concentrated primarily along 16th Street Mall and not along the entire study area
- » Civic Center Park is a common gathering place for people experiencing homelessness



*Brand awareness and the use of marketing along with strategic placemaking opportunities to generate excitement in the district*

### Opportunities

- » Using this planning effort as an opportunity to promote a name and brand for the Upper Downtown district
- » Allow businesses to reap the benefits of leveraging their association with the unique brand of the neighborhood
- » Better define the boundaries of this downtown district

### Constraints

- » Difficult to know where the district begins and ends
- » Existing mix of uses make it difficult to break the perception of a strictly employment center with a hospitality focus



*Upper Downtown’s capacity and competitive advantages to attract new business, investment, and uses in existing and new building stock*

### Opportunities

- » Repositioning of existing commercial spaces and office towers
- » Growing number of co-working spaces and tech-focused businesses moving into the area are helping to infuse new life into existing buildings
- » Lower lease rates can make the district competitive as new amenities come online

### Constraints

- » Varied property ownership may make a holistic approach challenging
- » Lack of existing amenities in older buildings require new tenants to trust the vision of the district will be realized
- » Office buildings built in 1970’s



*Human-scale experience of the district – walkability, engagement with street-level spaces in buildings, green space, tree canopy, public art*

### Opportunities

- » Potential to be deliberate about humanizing the ground floors of infill buildings within the district
- » Making a concerted effort to tie together some of the assets in the district in a cohesive, walkable manner
- » Infuse new investments with art and proper tree pits to allow canopies to mature

### Constraints

- » The existing scale of the built environment has an emphasis on high-rise office towers
- » Many of the ground floors of those buildings present a blank facade, devoid of opening or transparency, to their street frontage
- » Lack of existing tree canopy coverage



*Upper Downtown’s capacity for population growth, supported by development of residential uses in the creation of a vital neighborhood*

### Opportunities

- » Infill development could accommodate an increased emphasis on housing options
- » Connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and amenities is strong
- » Leveraging the growing desire to live closer to the workplace to lessen the burden of the commute on daily life

### Constraints

- » Difficult to attract families given the existing amenities
- » Building affordable and attainable housing in downtown is challenging economically
- » Perception that the district is not as close as it is to adjacent neighborhood amenities



*The movement of people to and through the district in terms of the transportation efficiency and mobility experience*

### Opportunities

- » Strengthening pedestrian, bicycle, and transit investments that have been made in and around the district to better connect to a citywide multi-modal network
- » Parking capacity in the district is high – especially on weekends – so it could be a destination for families within the region
- » Leverage the fact that the area is one of the best connected by transit in Denver

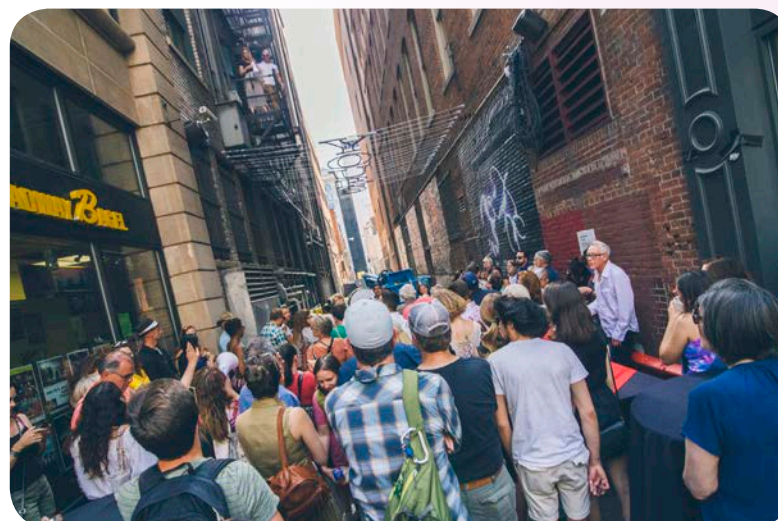
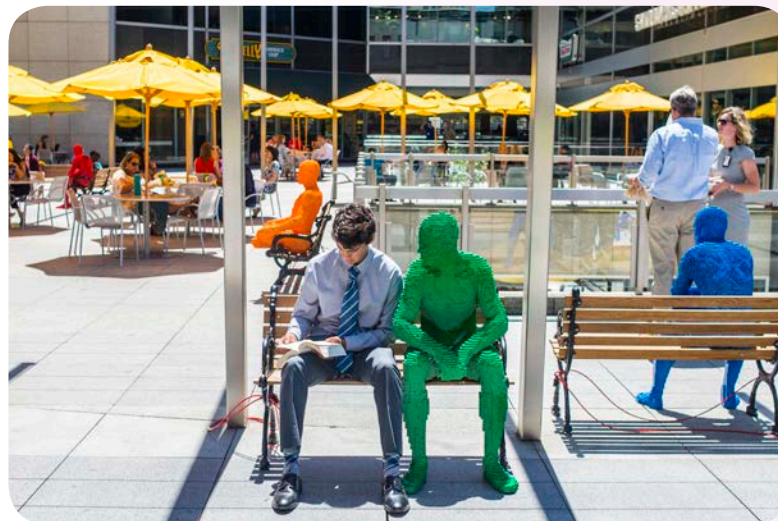
### Constraints

- » High number of surface parking lots make pedestrian experience feel hostile, even when well connected
- » One-way couplet network makes travel through the district and into adjacent neighborhoods and destinations less intuitive

## Market Opportunities

Upper Downtown has been the historic anchor for Downtown Denver for decades. With nearly 19.5 million square feet of office floor area today, with a majority of that constructed in the 1970s and 1980s, it has long been viewed as the established core of the metro region's market. In the recent past, though, the broader downtown market has reached new levels of capacity for employment, residents, and guests.

Over the past five years Downtown has generated over 500,000 square feet of office floor area annually, and multi-family development has grown by an average of over 1,500 units per year. The market demand for this development is the result of a variety of factors, primarily the ability of companies within downtown to recruit and retain talent and the ability to compete nationally for new staff. Residents seek the downtown location because of the vitality, diversity, and large-and-small-scale entertainment venues walkable to their homes. In addition, visitors are a critical element of the growth in the downtown landscape. Expansion of the hotel inventory has been strong, particularly in the recent past. The combined impact on the market, and the synergistic effect of all three sectors, has created momentum that is projected to continue and create a stronger market context moving forward.



### What is Upper Downtown's role within this growth trajectory?

Upper Downtown has a range of competitive advantages, along with some disadvantages. Overall market conditions in Upper Downtown continue to be strong, with a wide range of investors making acquisitions in the recent past. The strength of the downtown context, as well as the opportunities presented within Upper Downtown make it a compelling location to invest. Numerous redevelopment sites exist and will draw capital. The economic activity represented by the Convention Center is substantial, driving visitation and expenditure, which directly benefits Upper Downtown. The concentration of office is a continuing asset, given the ballast represented by the 19.5 million square feet of office floor area that exists today.

At the same time, there are challenges. For example, evidence for the market differential between Upper and Lower Downtown can be seen in rents for buildings of comparable sizes and age. Upper Downtown rents of \$25.20 are 26 percent lower than the average rent of \$33.90 in Lower Downtown. The differential reflects the discount the market applies to Upper Downtown locations. Dated buildings are a factor; however, recently, the lower rents, combined with large floor plates, found in the high-rise towers have become a competitive advantage – particularly with tech firms. Lower rents have drawn new tenants, including a concentration of tech, that benefit from the difference.

### What can Upper Downtown do to maintain its market position and continue to be an economically vibrant hub?

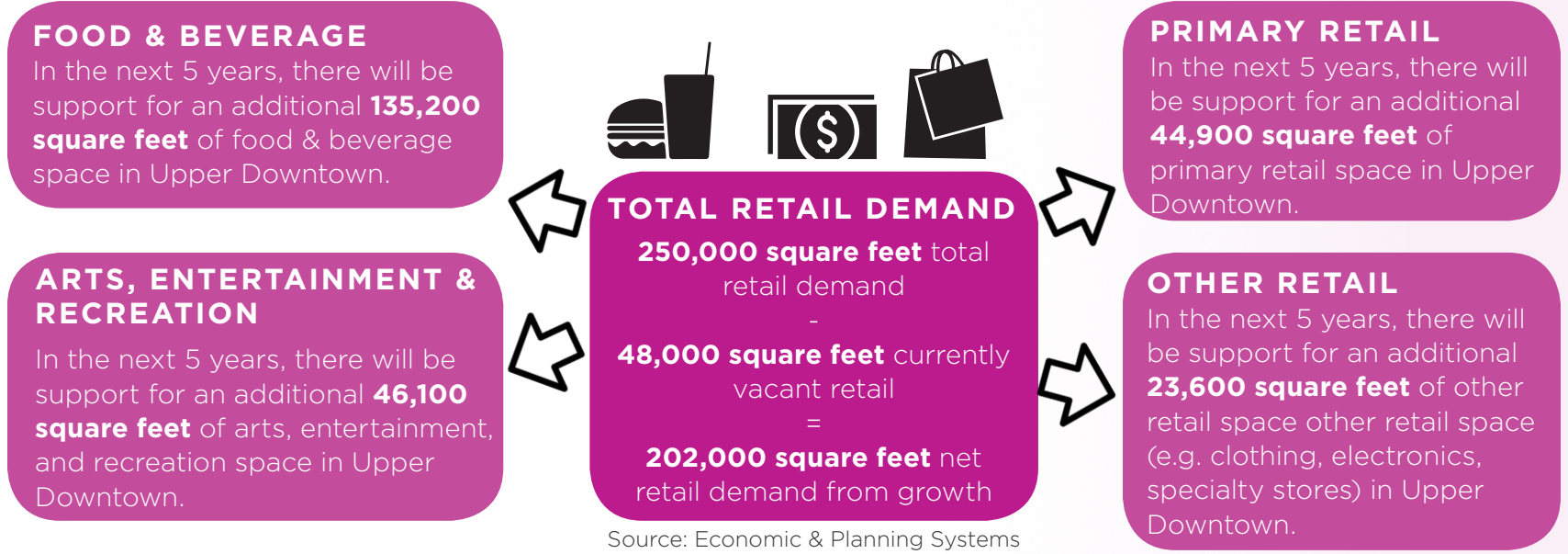
The following plan has been built around this question, and includes design concepts, best practices, and stakeholder input that advance the interests of Upper Downtown. One of the challenges, addressed in this study, is to align public and private investments so that they reinforce each other and create the civic amenity that is desired by all users – employers, employees, residents, and visitors. A key theme throughout is to identify the areas where unique nodes of activity can be introduced. A broad range of examples are included to provide ideas for ways to catalyze the larger area. As with all concepts included in the plan, the overarching goal is enhancing the economic and social value attributed to Upper Downtown by enhancing the experience of place.



# Current and Potential Audiences

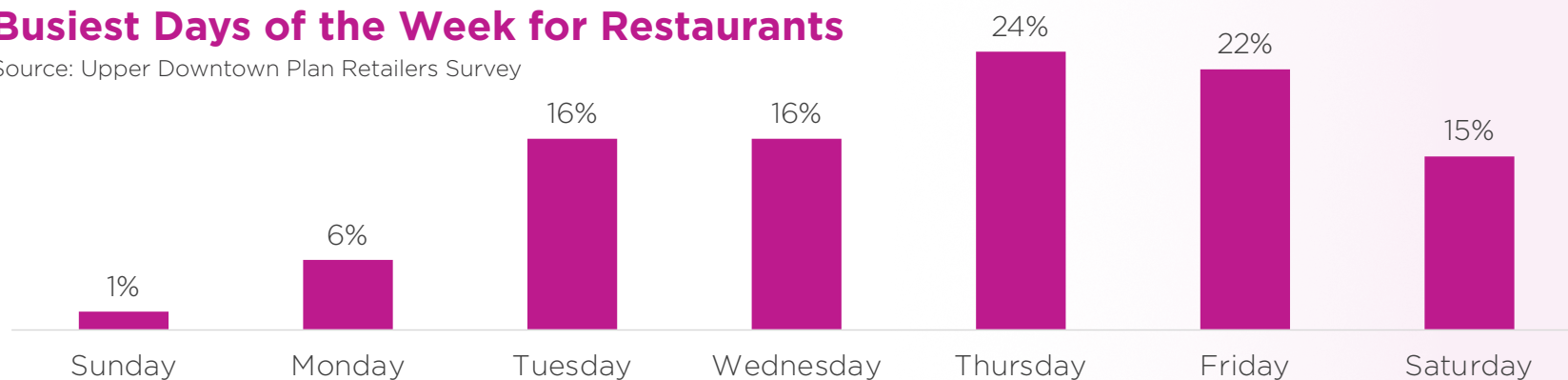
The Upper Downtown area attracts a variety of populations. Office employees are present throughout the day Monday through Friday, transit riders traveling through Civic Center station flow throughout the day and week, visitors to the City are staying in area hotels, and there are a large number of residents living in nearby neighborhoods. These groups create potential for activity in Upper Downtown at a variety of days and times, and their spending (and the increase in that spending as these groups grow) creates demand for new uses and services in the area.

## Retail Capture by Category



## Busiest Days of the Week for Restaurants

Source: Upper Downtown Plan Retailers Survey



## Profile of Daily and Occasional Users

Upper Downtown attracts a variety of groups who support retail and restaurant space. As new development takes place, these populations will grow. This growth in demand from new employees, residents, and visitors will help support new retail and restaurant space in Upper Downtown – this includes food & beverage space (restaurants, bars, breweries), primary retail space (convenience stores, drug stores, personal services, discount department stores), some other retail space (clothing stores, office supply stores), and arts & entertainment space.

### Employees

- » Employees from both Upper Downtown and other Downtown areas will support new space in the district.
- » In the next **5 years**, new development in Upper Downtown could result in close to **3,000 new jobs** – a total increase of **5%** from 2018.
- » In this same time, the rest of Downtown could see almost **13,000 new jobs** – growth of **16%** over 2018.
- » In addition to new development, there is an opportunity to capture **induced spending** from current Upper Downtown employees, currently not spending due to a lack of amenities in the area.
- » On average, these workers spend **\$20 per day** on retail that may be found in Upper Downtown – including **food & beverage, drug stores, personal services,** and other retail.

### Residents

- » Residents of Upper Downtown as well as surrounding neighborhoods (generally within a half mile of the area) will support new space in the district.
- » In the next **5 years**, Upper Downtown could see almost **675 new households** – a total increase of **27%** from 2018.
- » On average, these residents spend **26% of their income** on retail that may be found in Upper Downtown – including **food & beverage, drug stores, personal services,** and other retail.

### Visitors

- » Visitors to Denver staying in Upper Downtown will provide significant support for new retail and restaurant space.
- » With recent and planned development, Upper Downtown could see over **2,000 new hotel rooms** in the next 5 years.
- » On average, visitors to the City spend **\$160 per day** on **food & beverage, retail, and entertainment.**





SECTION TWO

# Vision and Priorities

This section provides an overview of the vision and priorities for Upper Downtown within the larger Downtown context. The section is organized into two subsections:

- » Vision for Upper Downtown
- » Key Components of Vision

## Vision for Upper Downtown

The vision for Upper Downtown is a synthesis of input from a diverse set of stakeholders. The vision builds on existing assets and positions the area to overcome the challenges and leverage the unique opportunities detailed in the previous section.

**Upper Downtown is the thriving economic center of the Rocky Mountain West. Employees, residents and visitors come for the vibrant concentration of iconic architecture, jobs and retail and they stay for the elevated experiences and one of a kind views, restaurants, and nightlife. Colorado authenticity and Denver's most urban environment are fused together with a comfortable, walkable and memorable experience that cultivates exploration, collaboration and innovation.**



### Cosmopolitan Denver

Upper Downtown is anchored by the traditional Central Business District and continues to be home to the largest concentration of jobs in the entire region. High rise office buildings, grand lobbies and well-appointed plazas will set the stage for business lunches, high end cocktails or a night on the town.

### Colorado Outdoors

The Colorado Outdoors is a primary attraction for newcomers and unique piece of our culture and heritage. This will be reflected in interiors and exterior of buildings, as well as parks, plazas and streetscapes. Upper Downtown will showcase the best Colorado has to offer.



### Extend the Day and Week

A critical component of the vision for Upper Downtown is to extend the day and week. Upper Downtown will be more vibrant and active after hours and on weekends. A diverse mix of uses and programming will help retain and attract employees, residents and visitors in Upper Downtown.



**Public and private spaces** will be better integrated to create a more seamless and inviting experience for Upper Downtown employees, residents, visitors and patrons.



Upper Downtown will be further activated with **unique programming and events celebrating diverse and inclusive cultures** and an eclectic set of audiences.



Upper Downtown will include an even **more diverse mix of uses** in existing and new development to help activate the area on nights and weekends.



Streetscapes in Upper Downtown will provide **safe, comfortable and shaded experiences** with a distinctive tree canopy, lighting, art and furnishings and better connections to a human-scale mobility system.

## Key Components of Vision

There are several key components of the vision for Upper Downtown related to physical design, the mix of uses that activate existing and future spaces, the public streets and open spaces connecting all the area has to offer, and the programming and events that will reflect and attract an increasingly diverse audience.





# 3

## SECTION THREE **Big Moves**

The third section of the Upper Downtown Plan provides an overview of five Big Moves. Each Big Move includes a set of Priority Projects and Supporting Strategies. The Big Moves are:

- » Make a “There” There
- » Transform the Pedestrian Experience
- » Tame the Concrete Jungle
- » Reposition Towers
- » Break Through the Barriers

# 1. Make a “There” There

Upper Downtown can benefit from a stronger identity and sense of place. Making a “there” there will include a wide array of improvements to bolster placemaking, brand and identity. This Big Move is about creating a distinctive and memorable experience for employees, residents and visitors. Aesthetic design interventions will be targeted toward weaving an eclectic mix of architecture, ground floor uses, upper story tenants and people traveling to and through Upper Downtown into a cohesive place and identity.

## Priority Projects

- » Create and Enhance Signature Streets (3.4)
- » Celebrate Colorado Outdoors in Central Gathering Spaces (3.10)
- » Attract/Grow Local Brewery, Urban Winery and/or Craft Distillery (3.12)
- » Programs and Events (3.14)

## Supporting Strategies

- » Branding
- » Alley Activation
- » Art & Lighting



## Denver Upper Downtown Plan PLAN FRAMEWORK

### Legend

- Upper Downtown Study Area
- Park / Open Space
- Creek
- Buildings
- Light Rail
- Existing Plaza/Open Space

### BIG MOVES ELEMENTS

- MAKE A THERE THERE**
- 16th Street Mall Improvements
  - Grand Boulevard Improvements
  - Priority Streetscape Improvements
  - Potential New/Improved Plaza/Open Space

0 250 500 1000 feet



### Priority Project: Create and Enhance Signature Streets



#### CLOSEABLE FESTIVAL STREET - GLENARM

Glenarm's location within Upper Downtown and existing configuration as a two-way street make it an ideal candidate to become a closeable festival street. Improvements should make Glenarm a distinctive and attractive complete street when it is open to traffic and a highly flexible and programmable space when it is closed for events. Key features of a redesigned Glenarm include:

- » A curbsless street for maximum flexibility
- » Special paving treatments and accents
- » Retractable and/or removable bollards
- » Integrated power, lighting and water for events
- » Facade improvements to adjacent ground floor spaces
- » Enhanced tree canopy and landscaping
- » Dedicated or shared bicycle facilities
- » Extension of adjacent businesses: restaurant patios, pop-up shopping, sidewalk sales, food/shopping carts, etc.

**Priority Project: Create and Enhance Signature Streets**

Design Alternative with Climbing Wall



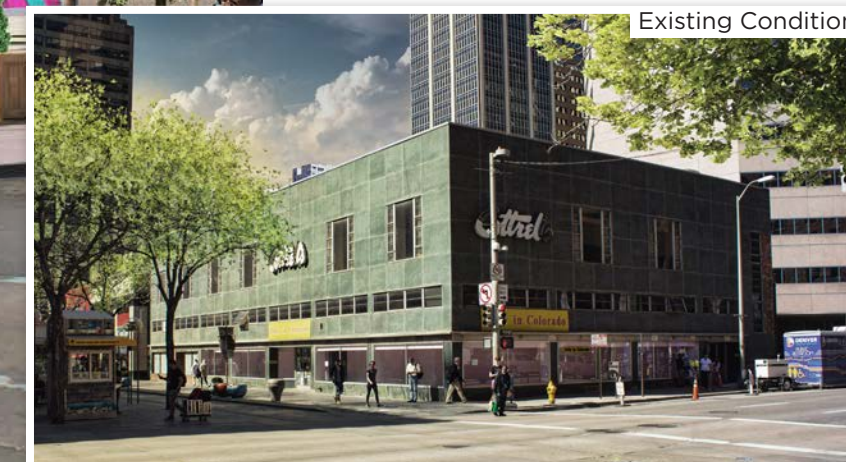
Plaza with play areas and pop-up retail.

**16TH STREET MALL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, DESIGN AND REBUILD**

The 16th Street Mall Experience project will result in a complete rebuild of Denver's main street connecting Civic Center Station and Union Station. The demolition of the Cottrell's building may provide an opportunity to create a new, albeit temporary destination along 16th Street and generate excitement for the future of the Mall.

- » Opportunity to activate lot until it is redeveloped
- » Provides needed play space on 16th Street with high visibility
- » Can be oriented to all ages
- » Flexible programming opportunities with pop-up shopping and eating
- » Central gathering space along the 16th Street Mall
- » High potential for nighttime activation

Existing Conditions



## Priority Project: Create and Enhance Signature Streets

Busy Urban Boulevard with Art on Facade



Boulevard with trees, transit and storefronts.

### GRAND BOULEVARD - BROADWAY

Broadway has been identified as a Grand Boulevard in multiple plans and studies. Segments of Broadway south of Downtown are undergoing redesign and will be reconstructed in the coming years. The portion of Broadway running through Upper Downtown must also be a high priority and be addressed in the next five years. The redesign of Broadway and the conversion of the roadway into a truly Grand Boulevard will require better balancing modes of travel with an emphasis on the pedestrian.

#### Design Intent for the Broadway Grand Boulevard:

- » Enhance paving and furnishings
- » Develop unique intersection treatments
- » Significantly increase the tree canopy
- » Integrate stormwater planters and other green infrastructure
- » Remove parking and promote ground floor activation
- » Provide a dedicated bus lane on Broadway
- » Expand the pedestrian realm on Broadway consistent with previous visions for a Grand Boulevard
- » Shorten pedestrian crossings and slow the speeds of turning vehicles
- » Provide dedicated bikeway on Broadway, connecting the 17th Street bikeway to the 16th Avenue bikeway east of Broadway

See pages 3.62-3.67 for Broadway intersection improvements.

## Priority Project: Celebrate Colorado Outdoors in Central Gathering Spaces

Existing Conditions



Plaza with Bouldering Park and Climbing Wall

### KENMARK PLAZA

The former site of the Kenmark Hotel is currently a void in Upper Downtown and represents an opportunity to create a central gathering space that celebrates the Colorado outdoors.

- » Bouldering park for varying ages/skill levels
- » Potential to pair with an indoor bouldering gym nearby
- » Climbing wall on side of adjacent building (could be enclosed with glass for year-round use)
- » Opportunities for events, competitions, learning, skill building, and exercise
- » Entertainment for passersby with seating for additional viewing
- » Enhancement of the tree canopy

### Case Study: Whitney Peak Hotel - Reno, NV

- » **Context:** The Fitzgerald Casino and Hotel, originally built in 1978, was remodeled in 2014. As part of this remodel the vision for the hotel shifted away from the type of hotel and casino traditionally seen in Reno toward a celebration of the outdoor recreational culture prevalent in Northern Nevada.
- » **Program:** 310 hotel rooms, Heritage restaurant, Cargo live entertainment venue, 164 foot outdoor climbing wall, 7,000 sq. ft. indoor bouldering park, 1,000 space parking garage
- » **Investment:** Phase 1 - \$10 million (2014)
- » **Outcomes:** Year 1 (2014): 160 employees, 72,300 guests, 350 climbing gym monthly memberships, 200 musicians/bands
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Many Upper Downtown properties offer the opportunity to create a dynamic local amenity that draws on Colorado's outdoor recreational culture through an outdoor climbing wall. The success of climbing gyms throughout the Denver Metro Area indicates a strong market for climbers, team building groups, and community exercise in both indoor and outdoor bouldering and rock climbing. Bringing this amenity to Upper Downtown would create a destination within the district, and an opportunity for a variety of users to become members and frequent the area, including employees and residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.

**Priority Project:** Attract/Grow Local Brewery, Urban Winery and/or Craft Distillery



Brewery Interior



**MAKERS SPACE (COLORADO STYLE)**

There are few things as Colorado as the beer, wine and spirits made right here in Denver and the surrounding region. A brewery, winery, distillery or tasting room can give Upper Downtown the authentic Colorado experience it currently lacks.

- » Consider mix of upscale and casual options to attract variety of customers
- » Activate Upper Downtown after working hours
- » Opportunity for beer hall with different stands for rent/pop-up for different breweries
- » Explore multi-use brew house with coffee shop function in morning and brewery function in evening
- » Integrate one or more outdoor beer/wine garden
- » Investigate opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing space

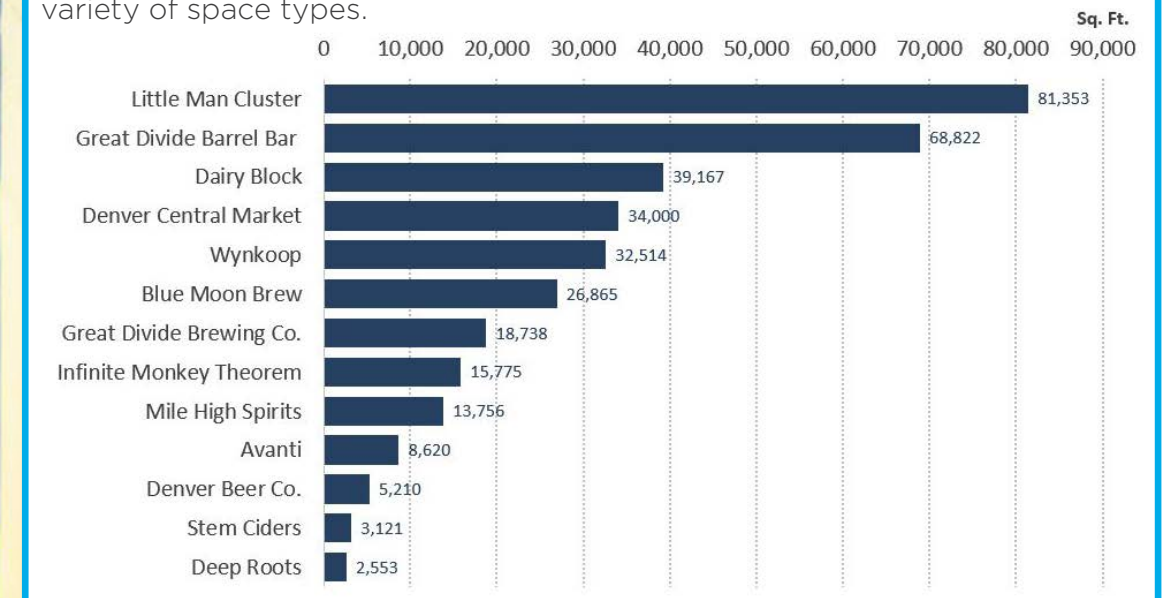
**EAST WEST BREWING CO.**



Craft Brewery

**Comparable Urban Brewery/Craft Distillery/Food Node Scale**

With potential for **135,000 square feet** of new demand for food & beverage space in the next 5 years, Upper Downtown has the potential to support a variety of space types.



Source: CoStar; Economic & Planning Systems

## Priority Project: Programs and Events



### PROGRAMMING IN PUBLIC SPACES

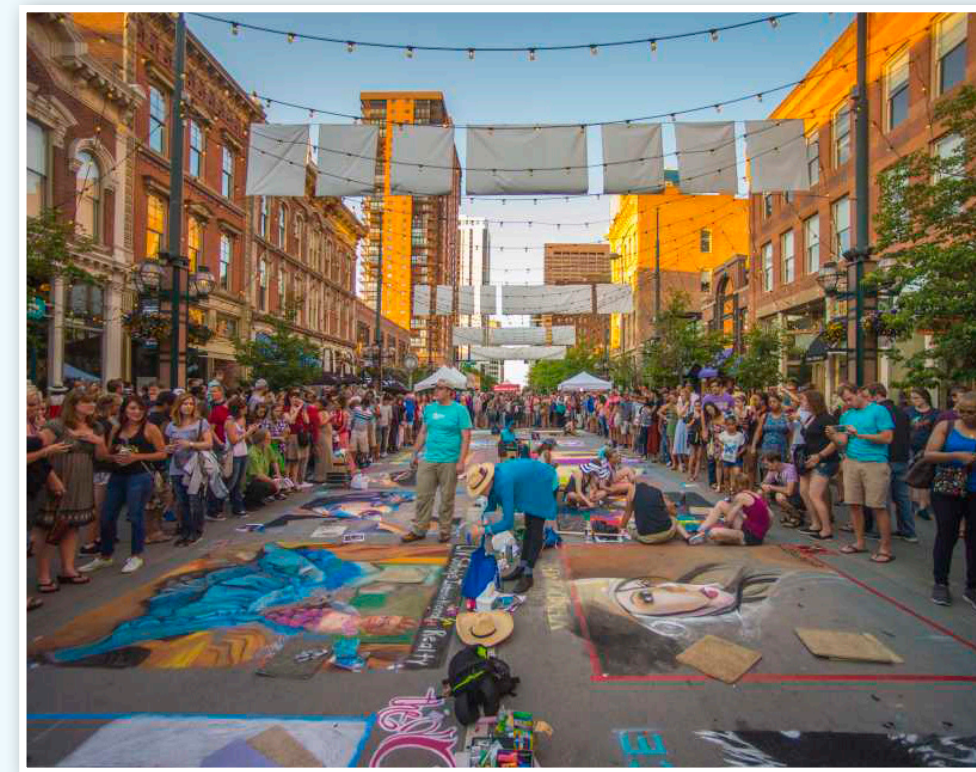
In Upper Downtown and the immediate vicinity, Civic Center Park is the only public space that is regularly programmed. The conversion of Glenarm to a closeable festival street will create another opportunity for a programmable space. Events should also be targeted for existing and future plazas throughout Upper Downtown. Examples of programming in public spaces include:

- » Large scale/regional events (has some permanent facilities)
- » Nighttime events: concerts, stargazing/astronomy, beer gardens
- » Art exhibitions
- » Holiday celebrations
- » Athletic competitions and exercise classes
- » Music performances
- » Cultural festivals

### ACTIVATING EXISTING VACANT SPACES

There are several surface parking lots and a handful of existing or soon-to-be vacant lots in Upper Downtown. Property owners are frequently hesitant to make changes to these spaces until they completely redevelop, but temporary activation can help to fill the missing teeth in Upper Downtown, while giving visibility to the property in question. The following is a list of ways to potentially activate existing vacant spaces in Upper Downtown.

- » Temporary retail space for local small business
- » Pop-up shops
- » Temporary concert/movie viewing space
- » Food trucks or carts
- » Beer/wine garden
- » Plaza or park with seating
- » Play space
- » Public art installation



### UTILIZING THE PUBLIC ROW

In a relatively constrained urban environment, there will likely be interest in hosting events that may require more open space than is available. The public right-of-way (ROW) can help to supplement public and private open space to host programs and events. While a goal of the Upper Downtown Plan is to create regular and sustainable evening and weekend activity, the streets in Upper Downtown are under-utilized during those times today. Events and programming in the ROW can help to attract more people to Upper Downtown outside the normal workday. Examples of programming within the public ROW include the following.

- » Parades
- » Art festivals (ie: Chalk Art Festival)
- » Food/drink festivals
- » Concerts
- » Parklets
- » Farmers markets
- » Craft/makers markets
- » International festivals





### Supporting Strategies: Alley Activation, Art, Lighting & Branding



The successful alley activation program will continue in Upper Downtown and may include select parking garages moving forward.



Simple and cost effective lighting can transform spaces and make them much more attractive for formal and informal programming in Upper Downtown.



Bold interventions of lighting and art can attract new audiences to Upper Downtown and often create the selfie moments sought after for social media.



Alley activation can expand beyond art and lighting to active uses in alleys, including outdoor dining, games and recreation.



Upper Downtown presents many opportunities for projecting artful light displays onto a variety of buildings throughout the area.

#### UPPER DOWNTOWN BRANDING

Throughout the planning process, naming and branding was a critical consideration. While a number of inspirations and aspirations were considered in conceiving a new name for the area, stakeholder outreach kept pointing back to Upper Downtown as the preferred name of the district. A logo concept was developed to balance the professional business and playful dining and entertainment sides of Upper Downtown. The name, logo and brand should be applied in the traditional CBD and then expanded to other areas of Upper Downtown as appropriate.

A strong name and brand should be authentic, organic and simple. Upper Downtown presents a tremendous opportunity for bolstering its identity and repositioning its brand. The name and brand for Upper Downtown can be expressed in a variety of formats, including banners and other streetscape elements.



## 2. Transform the Pedestrian Experience

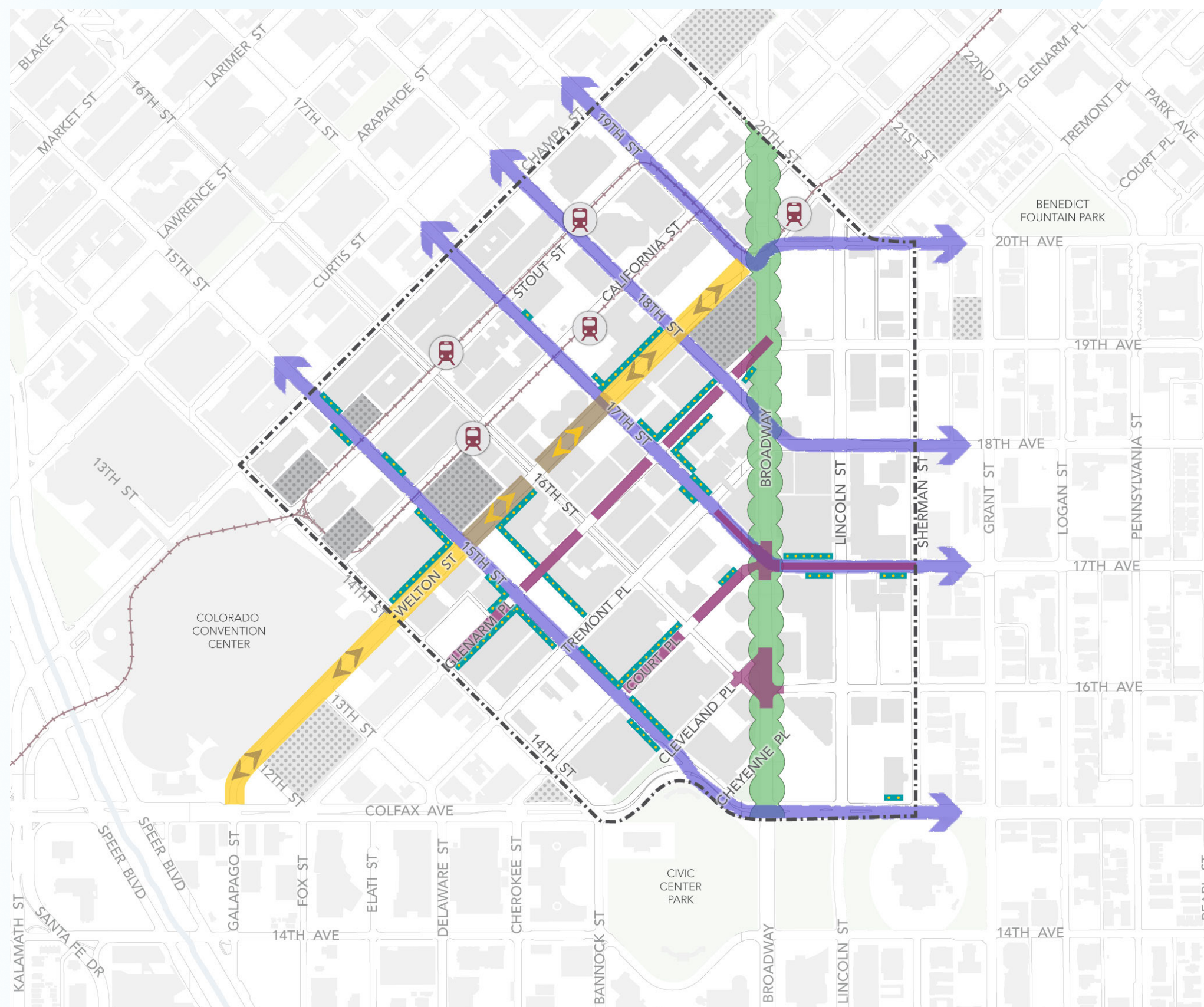
Many things contribute to the pedestrian experience, including aspects of the public and private realms. With few exceptions, streets in Upper Downtown currently prioritize vehicles over other modes of transportation. In addition, the majority of Upper Downtown's structures were constructed between 1970 and 1990, a time when the ground floor experience took a back seat to corporate identity and augmenting the skyline. Revitalization of Upper Downtown requires a total transformation of the pedestrian experience.

### Priority Projects

- » Major Streets Redesign (3.20)
- » Retrofit Ground Floor of Parking Garages (3.26)
- » Implement Artist Themed Transit Stops/Mobility Hubs (3.30)
- » Parking Strategy (3.32)

### Supporting Strategies

- » 1-Way to 2-Way Conversions
- » Signage and Wayfinding
- » High-Quality Mixed Use Development
- » Updated Regulatory Tools



### Denver Upper Downtown Plan PLAN FRAMEWORK

#### Legend

- Upper Downtown Study Area
- Park / Open Space
- Creek
- Buildings
- Light Rail

#### BIG MOVES ELEMENTS

##### TRANSFORM THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE

- Priority Streetscape Improvements
- Major Streets Redesign
- Light Rail Station Beautification
- Planned 1-Way to 2-Way Traffic Conversion
- Potential 1-Way to 2-Way Traffic Conversion
- Planned/Under Construction Development
- Facade Improvements
- Grand Boulevard Improvements

0 250 500 1000 feet



## Priority Project: Major Streets Redesign

### Economic Benefits of Walkability: Various Locations

**Context:** Numerous studies have revealed the economic benefits of walkability, connectivity, and general streetscape improvements even when improvements eliminate some on-street parking. While walkability within a district is important, creating connections to other walkable districts is vital for creating synergy and providing a larger trade area capture.

A study of shoppers in the South Bay area of Los Angeles, California found that compact and walkable shopping areas support three to four times the amount of retail otherwise supported by their local trade area, indicating a larger capture from surrounding areas and emphasizing the importance of accessibility. Multiple research efforts have quantified the economic benefits of walkability for office, multifamily, and retail.

**Office:** An RCLCo study of the Washington D.C. metro area found that highly walkable office properties experience a 27 percent rent premium. Another study by Brookings revealed office rent premiums for walkable areas in Washington D.C. of \$8.88 per square foot.

**Multifamily:** Brookings found that in Washington D.C. housing values and rent premiums increase in walkable areas. Rent premiums average \$301.76 per month and residential property values are an average of \$81.45 per square foot higher.

**Retail:** Brookings found a \$6.92 per square foot premium in retail rents and 80 percent increase in sales for walkable areas. In Seattle, WA, the Victoria Transportation Policy Institute found a substantial sales increase following the installation of bike lanes in a commercial district.

**Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Multi-modal streetscape improvements within Upper Downtown and connectivity improvements to surrounding districts can have a measurable economic benefit to property owners and businesses within the area. The density of Upper Downtown aides in the transformation of this area into a walkable, multi-modal district within the Downtown area.



Transit in Dedicated Lane

### MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS - 18TH & 19TH

Both 18th Street and 19th Street are workhorse streets in the downtown network. In Upper Downtown, the streets accommodate a combination of multiple lanes of vehicular traffic, the free Metroride, light rail, bicycles and pedestrians. While both streets provide options for multiple modes of travel, there is little differentiation of space for various users, a general lack of legibility and many opportunities for functional and aesthetic improvements.

#### Design Intent for 18th and 19th

- » Provide dedicated transit lane to improve travel time reliability for transit
- » Complete the network of protected bikeways on 18th and 19th and incorporate Metroride station interface similar to treatments on 18th in Lower Downtown
- » Enhance paving and furnishings
- » Plant trees and increase the tree canopy
- » Integrate stormwater planters and other green infrastructure
- » Shorten pedestrian crossings and slow the speeds of turning vehicles

## Priority Project: Major Streets Redesign

Design Alternative



Streetscape Improvements

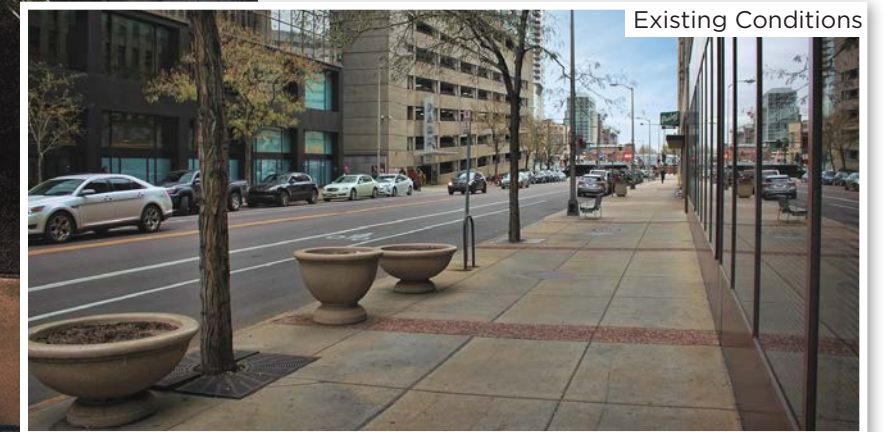
### PRIORITY PEDESTRIAN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS - WELTON & GLENARM

With so much attention on the 16th Street Mall, many other streets in Upper Downtown feel rather utilitarian in comparison. Through the Upper Downtown Plan process, Welton and Glenarm were identified as priorities for pedestrian streetscape improvements.

#### Design Intent for Welton and Glenarm Priority Pedestrian Improvements

- » Enhance paving and furnishings
- » Plant trees and increase the tree canopy
- » Integrate stormwater planters and other green infrastructure
- » Shorten pedestrian crossings and slow the speeds of turning vehicles
- » Enhance dedicated bikeways on Glenarm
- » Improve facades and create more storefront opportunities
- » Incorporate parklets where space allows
- » Integrate art, lighting and screening of blank walls and parking garages
- » Integrate mobility hubs, junctions of integrated private and public mobility services

Existing Conditions



## Priority Project: Major Streets Redesign



### PRIORITY PEDESTRIAN STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS - 15TH & 17TH

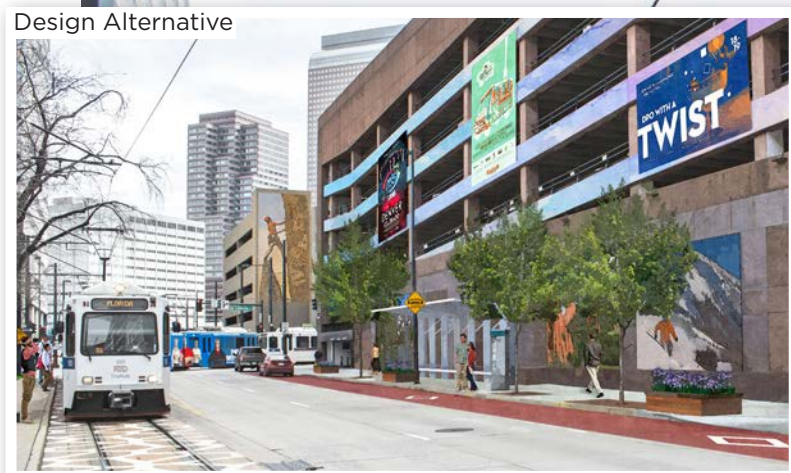
Through the Upper Downtown Plan process, 15th and 17th were also identified as priorities for pedestrian streetscape improvements.

#### Design Intent for 15th Street and 17th Street Priority Pedestrian Improvements

- » Enhance paving and furnishings
- » Plant trees and increase the tree canopy
- » Integrate stormwater planters and other green infrastructure
- » Explore a dedicated lane for buses on 15th and 17th Streets
- » Provide/improve dedicated bikeways on 15th and 17th Streets
- » Improve facades and create more storefront opportunities
- » Incorporate parklets where space allows

## Priority Project: Retrofit Ground Floor of Parking Garages

Design Alternative



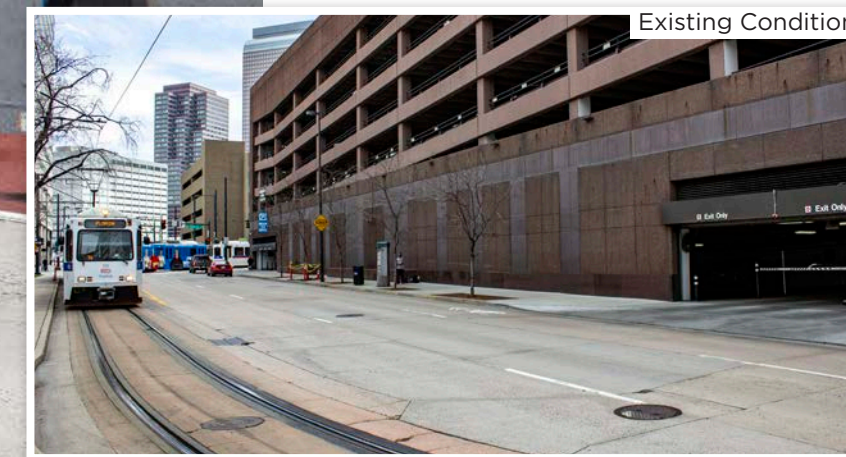
Facade and Streetscape Improvements

### RETROFIT GROUND FLOOR OF PARKING GARAGES

Many parking garages in Upper Downtown detract from the pedestrian experience. Potential treatments for this condition include:

- » Liner retail and pop-up retail opportunities
- » Artistic screening and green walls on upper floors of garage
- » Upgraded signage
- » Enhanced transit stops
- » Increased tree canopy and planters with integrated stormwater management

Existing Conditions



## Priority Project: Retrofit Ground Floor of Parking Garages

### Case Study: Arts District - Los Angeles, CA

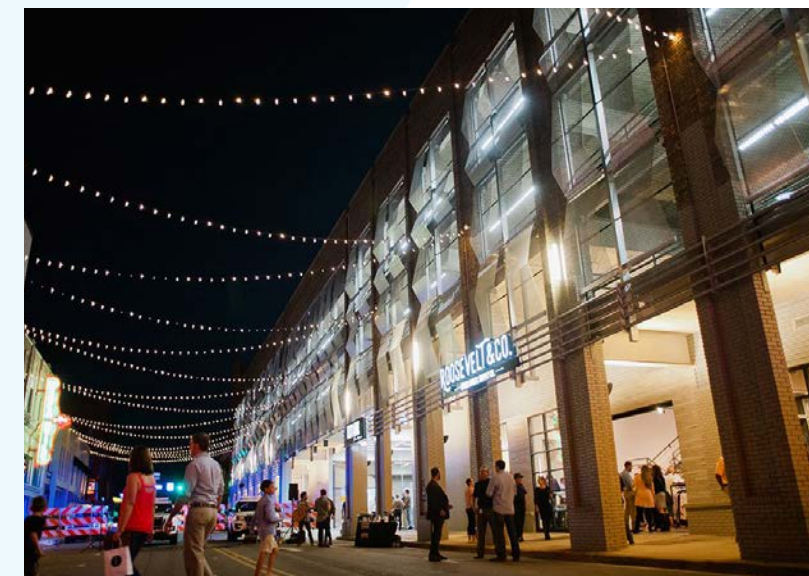
- » **Context:** AvalonBay Communities in Downtown LA is building the parking garage for a 475 unit apartment building to accommodate a future decrease in parking demand. The parking garage will be built with flat floors and higher ceilings instead of the standard design of slanted floors, allowing for easier redevelopment into a different use.
- » **Program:** Parking garage with flat floors, higher ceilings (up to 13 feet), elevators and stairs located in the center of garage, columns spaced farther apart, knock-out panels in the ceiling and floors for future light wells
- » **Investment:** The adaptable garage construction increased total project costs by 5 percent.
- » **Outcomes:** Future re-purpose and use of parking structures, easy and low cost transformation from a parking garage into commercial space
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** New development in Upper Downtown should incorporate parking structures that are constructed with the intention of being retrofitted at a later date when parking is no longer in high demand. Planning for the future retrofit of garage spaces adds around 5 percent to upfront construction costs. However, when retrofitted the spaces previously used for parking may be leased as additional office, apartments, or retail space within an existing structure.

### Case Study: Garage at Clinton Row - Huntsville, AL

- » **Context:** The Garage at Clinton Row was constructed in the first floor of a 30 year old municipal parking deck in the Huntsville, Alabama city center. The transformation of the space was executed through cooperation and coordination with the City.
- » **Program:** 5 to 6 commercial condominium units, 15,000 sq. ft. of retail space, 15 parking spaces removed, plus some drive aisles
- » **Investment:** \$200,000 committed by the City of Huntsville for the facade and sidewalk improvements, Clinton Row Partners paid the remainder of improvement costs, Developer pays escalating land lease
- » **Outcomes:** \$70,000 to \$100,000 in estimated annual sales tax revenue, developer generated net higher revenues relative to the removal of 15 spaces
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Adaptive reuse of parking garages and first floor lobby spaces presents a unique opportunity in Upper Downtown to create retail synergy in areas previously marked by blank facades.

*"...successful retail requires synergy. We cannot just spot place individual retailers throughout downtown and hope that they succeed on their own. If you want to get people out of their cars and on their feet, you have to create an experience for them."*  
 – Wesley Crunkerton, CPM, Lead Project Developer

*"We are designing it so in the future if demand for parking decreases dramatically, we have the flexibility to go back to the city and ask for additional entitlements to change uses from parking to whatever." – Mark Janda (Senior Vice President - Development at AvalonBay Communities)*



## Priority Project: Implement Artist Themed Transit Stops/Mobility Hubs



Transit Stop with Interactive Art

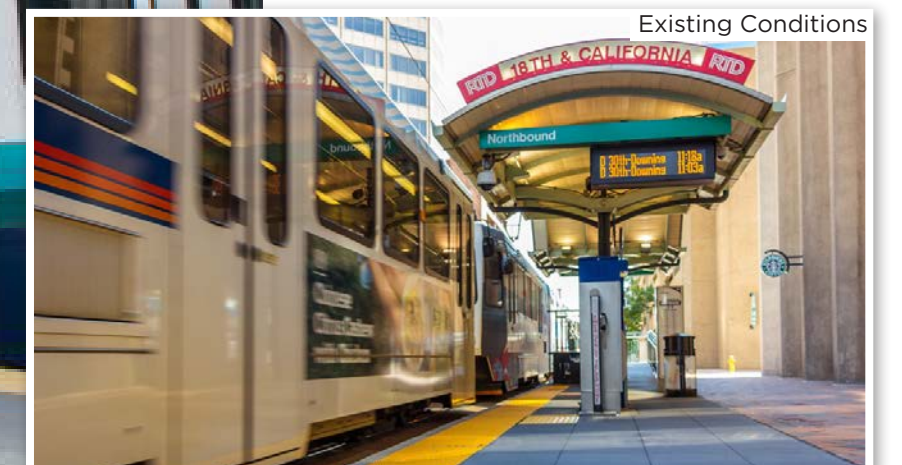


Transit Station with Overhead Art

### ARTIST THEMED TRANSIT STOPS

California, Stout and Welton all have light rail stops in Upper Downtown. The existing design treatment at these stops reflects a relatively standard RTD design and does little to differentiate Upper Downtown from other parts of Denver. Artist themed transit stops can be an exciting way to integrate art into the urban fabric and to differentiate Upper Downtown stops from those in other parts of Denver and from each other.

- » Give each stop its own memorable identity
- » Showcase local artists in creative ways, potentially with temporary and/or permanent installations
- » Consider interactive art that reacts to weather
- » Make stops more comfortable and convenient for commuter
- » Make stops more appealing/exciting to visitors with photo opportunities
- » Incorporate easy-to-read schedules and maps
- » Integrate real-time information about departures, delays, etc.



Existing Conditions



## Priority Project: Parking Strategy

### MANAGING THE CURB LANE

Although on-street parking in Upper Downtown is reaching the 85% utilization rate that is considered 'capacity', there are opportunities for increasing the use of off-street parking and improving access and turnover of on-street parking spaces. There are a large number of private off-street parking lots in Upper Downtown (surface and structured), that are often under-utilized. Use of these lots can be increased by providing additional information to users including price, lot location, and availability of spaces. This will help users better plan their trip, and determine which parking location is most appropriate for their needs and based on real-time availability. Private parking lots can also offer valet to decrease the time of finding a space in structured parking that may create a barrier for users.

In order to increase the circulation of vehicles parked in on-street spaces, time restrictions should be more strictly enforced and parking prices adjusted to increase the availability of short-term parking spaces on the street. It has been observed that the existing one and two-hour time restrictions are not strictly enforced. Enforcing this time limit would allow more users access to on-street spaces and encourage users with longer stays to park in off-street lots. Deliveries and freight access should also be considered and prioritized in strategic locations when managing the curb lane.

### COORDINATED PARKING STRATEGY

Privately managed structured and surface parking lots can maximize their utilization through better coordination with each other on inventory and monitoring of parking capacity and pricing. A coordinated parking strategy for the district will also help property owners and parking managers plan for and adapt to disruptive mobility services anticipated to impact traditional parking demand assumptions.



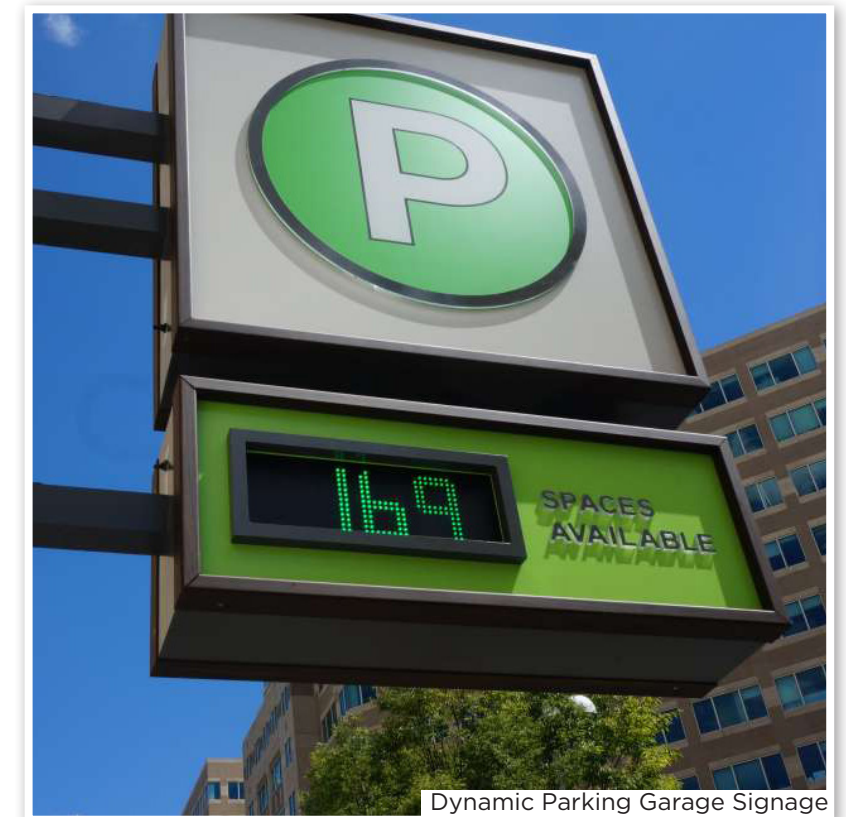
Denver Parking Garage Access



On-Street Parking Signage

### ADDITIONAL APPROACHES TO CURB LANES AND PARKING

- » Shared parking based on use is the best way to maximize utilization of existing parking. Office gets daytime, Residential and/or Downtown Visitor gets evening through early morning.
- » Explore a program to offer free parking on a week night and/or free or discounted valet on certain days.
- » Relocate some on-street parking and replace with parklets, expanded sidewalks, etc.



Dynamic Parking Garage Signage

**Supporting Strategies:** One-Way to Two-Way Conversions, Signage and Wayfinding, High-Quality Mixed Use Development, Updated Regulatory Tools



There has been discussion of converting Welton from a one-way to a two-way street for well over a decade. A two-way conversion on Welton Street will help to calm traffic and provide better local circulation of people and traffic.



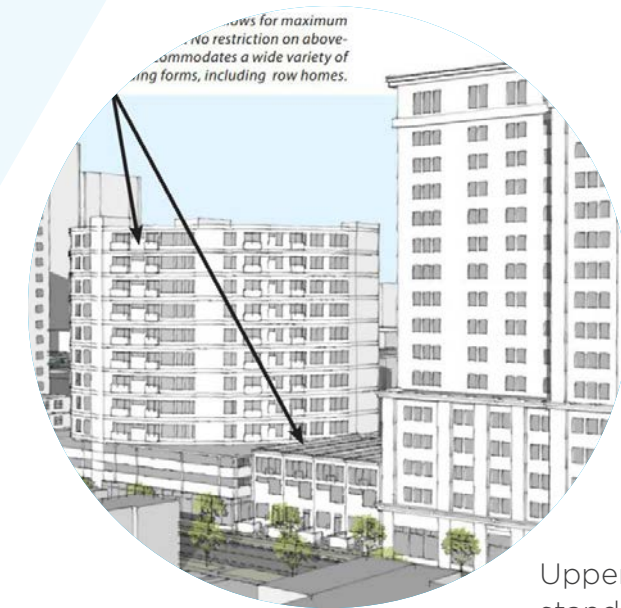
Wayfinding can come in many forms and does not need to be limited to traditional signs. Laminates can be applied directly to streets and sidewalks.



Signage is still a very effective means of communicating information and wayfinding. A signage palette and hierarchy should be developed for Upper Downtown.



New development and rehabilitation projects should prioritize use of high-quality materials and ample transparency on the ground floor.



...for maximum  
...no restriction on above-  
...accommodates a wide variety of  
...ing forms, including row homes.

Upper Downtown design standards and guidelines should be developed and can build on successful models for Arapahoe Square and Central Platte Valley-Auraria.



The design of upper floors should include articulation with fenestration, balconies, pronounced cornice lines and a variety of materials.



New buildings in Upper Downtown should generally be higher intensity and contribute to diversifying and updating the Denver skyline.

## 3. Tame the Concrete Jungle

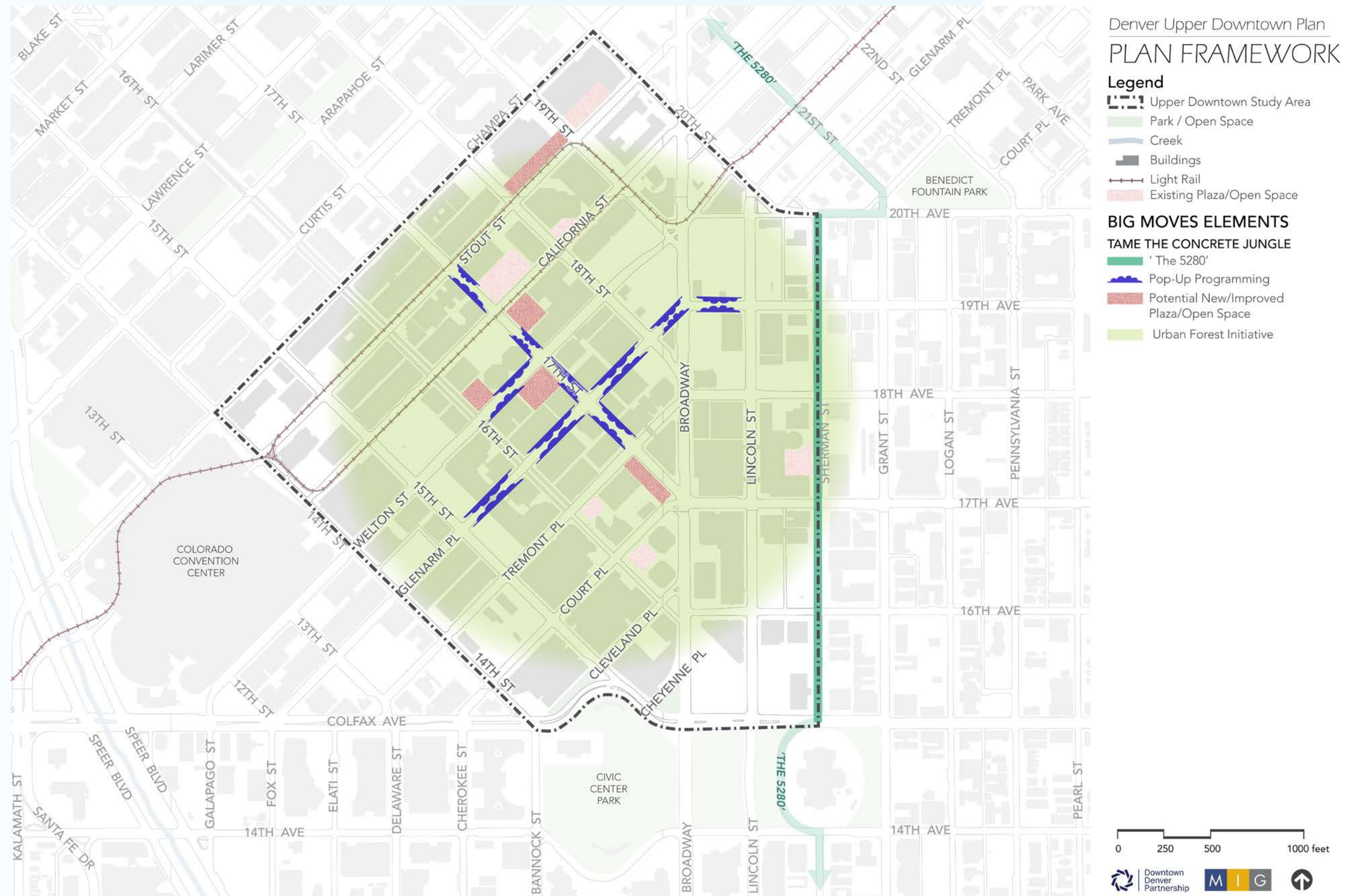
While the pedestrian experience will be enhanced with a combination of improvements that will contribute to the tree canopy of Upper Downtown, an overall greening of an urban environment that is notably harsh today deserves its own Big Move. A combination of temporary and permanent improvements can tame the concrete jungle that currently defines Upper Downtown. Truly greening the area will take a concerted and collaborative effort from public and private interests.

### Priority Projects

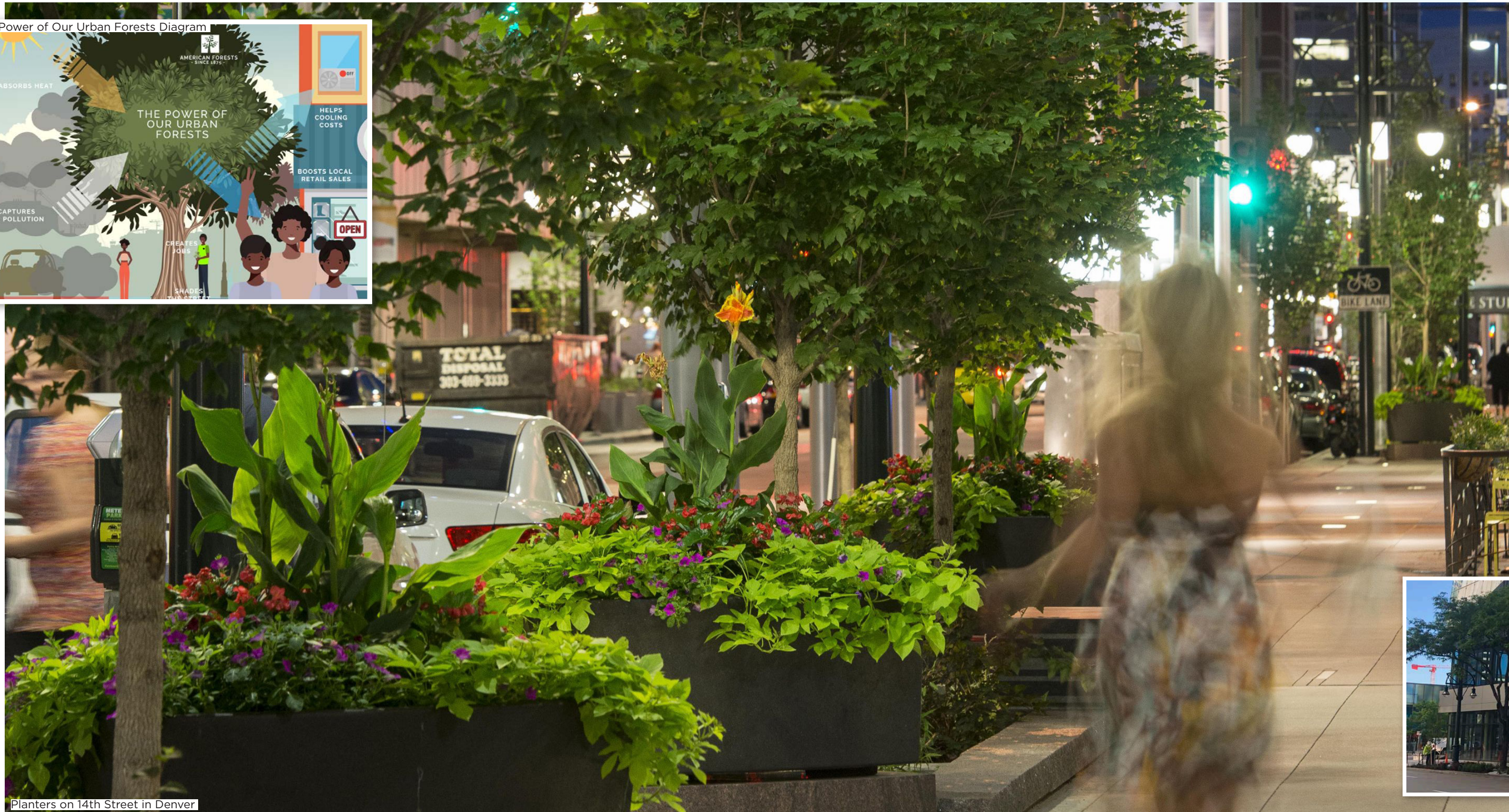
- » Urban Forest Initiative (3.38)
- » 'The 5280' Design and Implementation (3.40)
- » Parklets (3.42)

### Supporting Strategies

- » Privately Owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS)
- » Green Walls



### Priority Project: Urban Forest Initiative

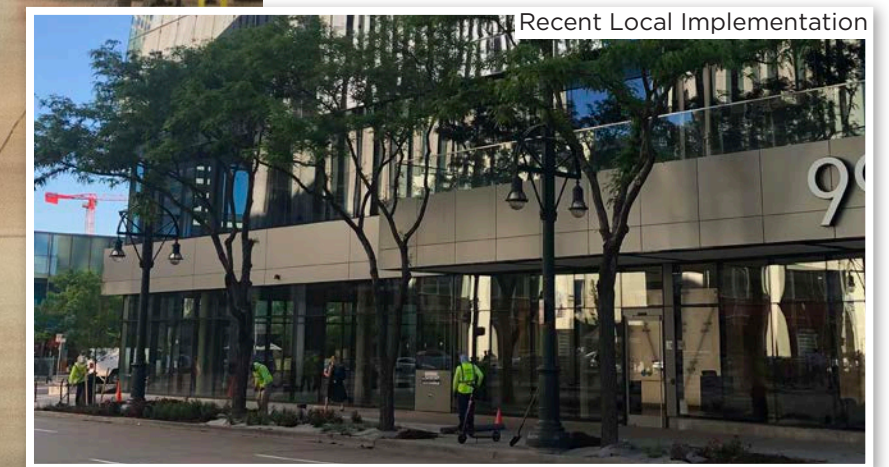


Planters on 14th Street in Denver

### ROOM TO GROW

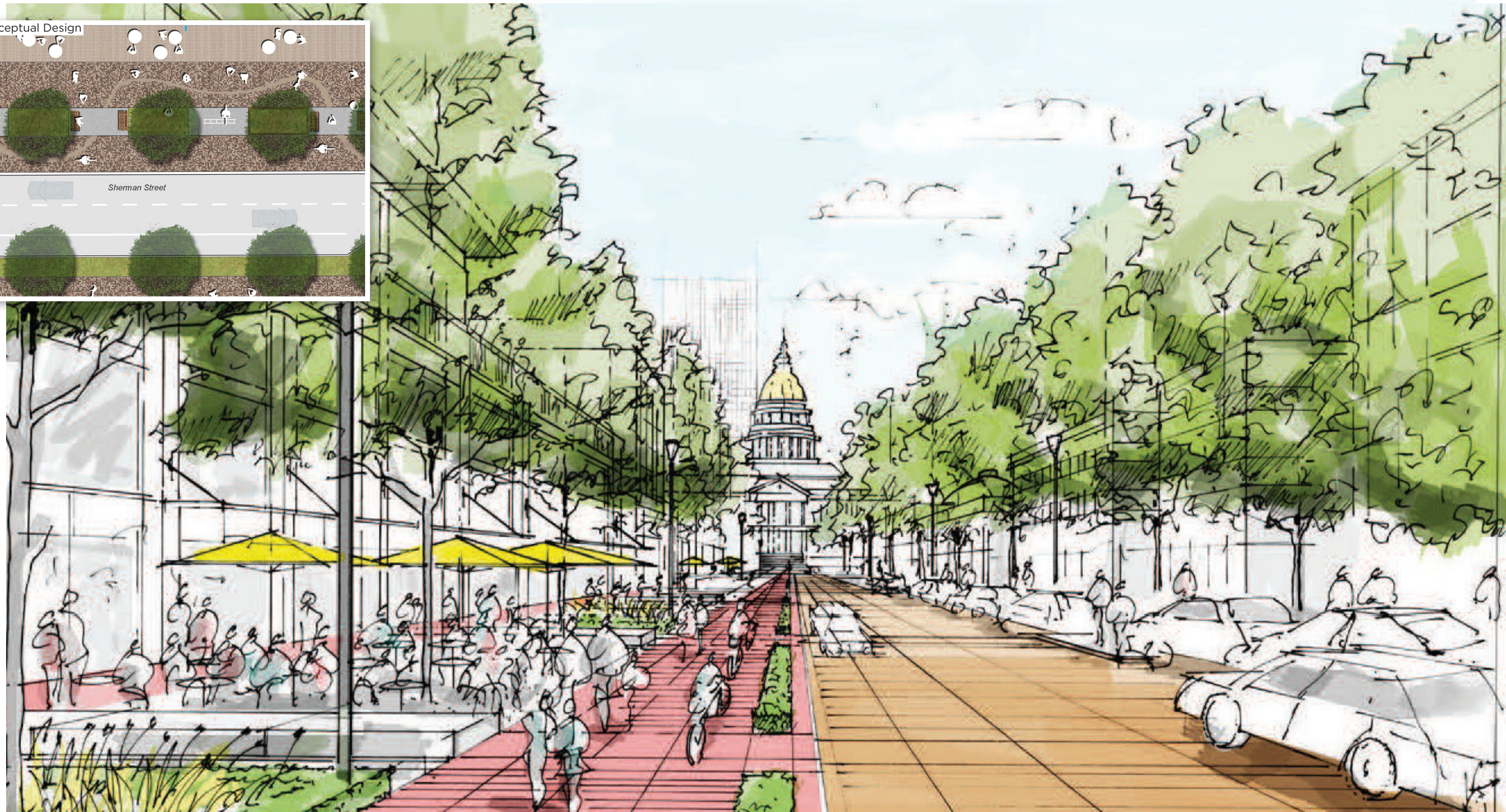
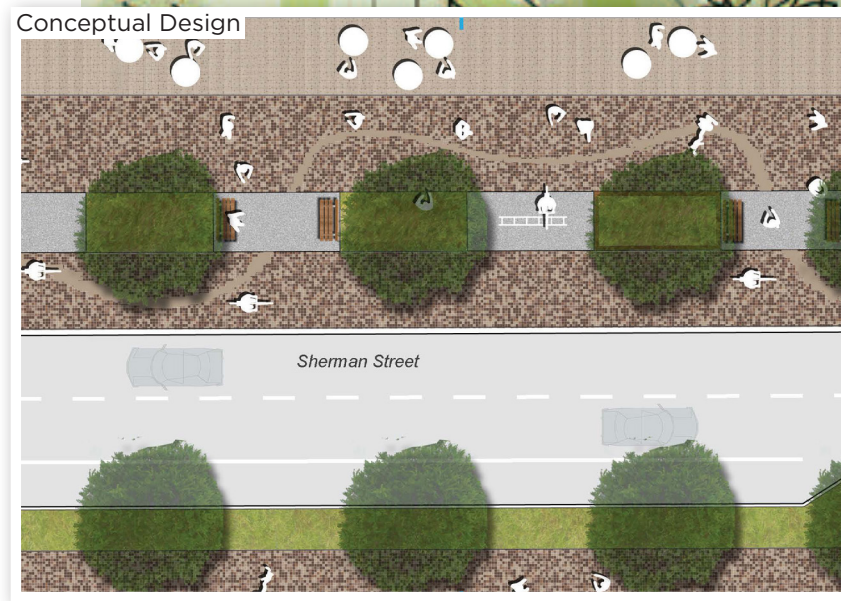
Downtown Denver lags behind most large urban centers when comparing tree canopies. Upper Downtown has the fewest trees and smallest tree canopy of any part of downtown. The Urban Forest Initiative is a collaborative effort between the Partnership, Denver Parks & Recreation, the Downtown Denver Business Improvement District, philanthropy, and property owners to grow downtown’s tree canopy from 4.5% to 10% land area through education, built infrastructure, and maintenance. The initiative includes a grant program that funds property owners to expand and/or install 500 tree planting areas over the next three years.

Upper Downtown will capitalize on the numerous benefits trees provide by promoting them on all streets throughout the district, with priority given to the Broadway Grand Boulevard and other key pedestrian streetscapes.



Recent Local Implementation

## Priority Project: 'The 5280' Design and Implementation



### AN URBAN TRAIL WITH A VIEW

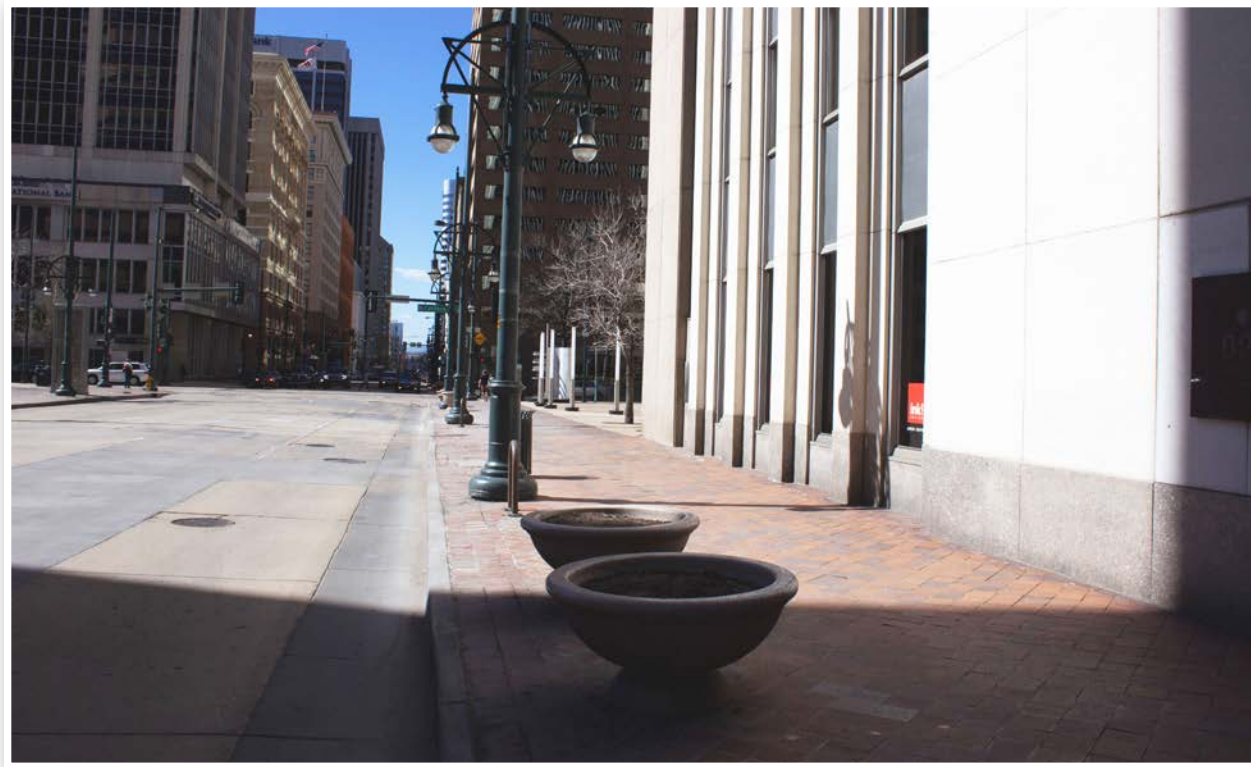
The 5280 is a bold and visionary project that turns underutilized streets into the essential downtown experience linking neighborhoods and connecting people. This 5.280 mile-long urban trail and linear park will unite urban life with Colorado's outdoor culture for the center city's rapidly growing population of residents, employees and visitors, encouraging them to use active modes of transportation while engaging in downtown's cultural and civic facilities. The 5280 will transform Sherman Street into a contemporary interpretation of a grand and ordered Capitol Mall connecting the Capitol Building to its neighbors and promoting civic engagement, participation, stewardship, and democracy.

Upper Downtown can prompt investment in the 5280 and capitalize on this catalytic project by:

- » Developing a demonstration project for the 5280 on Sherman Street and ensuring that the Upper Downtown segment is one of the first segments to be built
- » Improving streetscaping along the numbered avenues to connect Upper Downtown to the 5280
- » Installing public art in and around the 5280 to draw attention to the trail



## Priority Project: Parklets



### Existing Conditions

- » Facade has no transparency or permeability
- » No street trees or year-round vegetation
- » Signage with minimal visibility
- » No district branding or recognition
- » Minimal bike parking and undesirable shared lanes
- » No seating amenities
- » Lack of connection to adjacent plaza



### Alternative Two

- » Temporary parklet with connection to adjacent plaza
- » Increased vegetation and tree canopy
- » Branded banners on lamp posts
- » Additional public and private seating
- » More prominent signage
- » Facade enhancements with increased transparency, permeability and retractable doors/windows



### Alternative One

- » Dedicated buffered bike lane
- » Additional bike parking
- » Increased vegetation and tree canopy
- » Branded banners on lamp posts
- » Additional seating opportunities
- » Activation of and connection to plaza



### Alternative Three

- » Curb extension and expanded pedestrian realm
- » Improved connection to adjacent plaza
- » Increased vegetation and tree canopy
- » Branded banners on lamp posts
- » Additional public and private seating
- » More prominent signage
- » Facade enhancements with increased transparency, permeability and retractable doors/windows

### Supporting Strategies: Privately Owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS), Green Walls



San Francisco uses placards near Privately Owned Public Open Spaces (POPOS) to identify amenities and accessibility within the space as well as the personnel responsible for maintenance.

Upper Downtown should be part of a Privately Owned Public Open Space (POPOS) program to promote and incent investment in privately-owned plazas and open spaces.



Green walls can be used to screen otherwise blank walls associated with parking structures, service areas and larger meeting spaces.



In new construction, green wall infrastructure can be integrated into the building construction, increasing the likelihood of the planting's long-term success.

#### Case Study: The Lot - Oakland, CA

- » **Context:** The Downtown Oakland Association entered into a lease agreement with SKS Investments, the owner of a 0.28-acre lot on the corner of 12th Street and Broadway in Downtown Oakland. In exchange for a \$1 annual lease to SKS, the Downtown Oakland Association leveraged \$100,000 provided by SKS and partners to upgrade The Lot for a variety of pop-up events and committed to managing the day-to-day operations of the special event facility. The lease terminates 6 months from the date of notification of site development.
- » **Program:** 12,100 square foot lot at the corner of 12th Street and Broadway in Downtown Oakland. Site improvements included grading of the lot, weed management fabric, fencing improvements, art installations, furniture, and storage
- » **Investment:** SKS Investments Provided: \$1 annual lease for the Downtown Oakland CBD, \$100,000 in site improvements. Downtown Oakland Association Provided: All permits and insurance, staff to run the venue, all systems related to special event rental contracts, scheduling, and budgeting.
- » **Outcomes:** Downtown Oakland Association projected 60 annual events with a total income of \$312,000. The Lot hosts a weekly food market, concerts, aerial theatrical performances, and movie nights.
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Vacant lots within Upper Downtown under private ownership can be leased by the Partnership to create a similar pop-up event space. The success of The Lot is largely attributed to programming and collaboration on a shared vision.



The Lot - Oakland, CA



The Colorado climate can make establishing a green wall challenging, but there are a handful of recent examples of successful installations including at Fiddler's Green in Greenwood Village, the SCP hotel in Colorado Springs and the Peloton West condominiums in Boulder.



Many older buildings have blank walls where they once abutted another building. With the right exposure, these walls can be good candidates for green wall treatments.

## 4. Reposition Towers

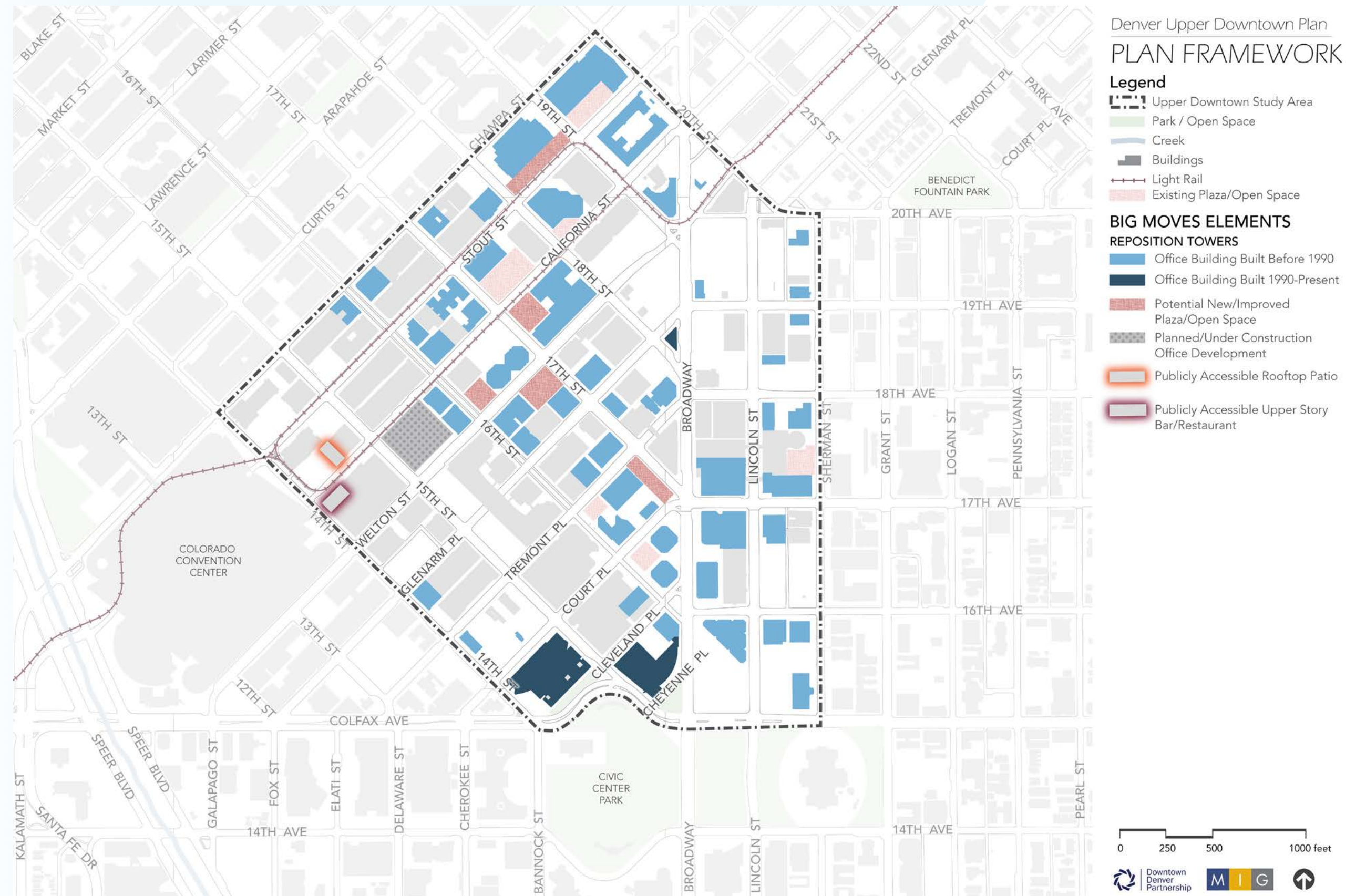
The majority of buildings in Upper Downtown are single use office towers constructed between 1970 and 1990. Once the most sought-after office space in the entire region, new construction and other popular and trendy districts have begun to threaten Upper Downtown's position in the market. It is critical that the towers of Upper Downtown continue to be repositioned through a variety of strategies that leverage the many assets that made them successful in the first place.

### Priority Projects

- » Mile High Experiences (3.48)
- » Office Tower Updates (3.54)
- » Office Ground Floor Retrofits (3.56)

### Supporting Strategies

- » Ground Floor Leasing Strategies





### Priority Project: Mile High Experiences



### HIGH RISE BARS AND RESTAURANTS

Many people visit Denver and have an expectation of a mile high experience with picturesque views of the Rocky Mountains and the foothills. There is only one publicly accessible upper story restaurant or bar in Upper Downtown today, despite having the largest concentration of high rise buildings in the entire region. Existing buildings and new construction should leverage opportunities to create a mile high experience with great views for tenants, residents and visitors.

As the number of high rise bars and restaurants increases, it will create an environment where people come to Upper Downtown for drinks or dinner with a view. They may simply head to the area and then decide what specific bar or restaurant they will visit. Care should be taken to create an atmosphere that is inclusive and provides a diversity of options for price and formality.



## Priority Project: Mile High Experiences

Rooftop Patio with Pool



Active Rooftop Patio

## ROOFTOP DECKS AND PATIOS

Upper Downtown has a general lack of rooftop decks and patios with the only publicly accessible rooftop patio available at Le Meridian hotel. The rooftop offerings pale in comparison to other nearby districts. Many people seek outdoor spaces to eat and drink so that they can take advantage of the Colorado climate.

New hotels tend to have the majority of publicly accessible rooftop decks and patios in other areas of Denver and other downtowns across the country. Upper Downtown should encourage the creation of additional publicly accessible rooftop decks and patios in office buildings and even a handful of residential projects. Buildings with more slender towers extending from a wider podium structure provide great opportunities for decks and patios atop the podium.

54thirty Rooftop Bar in Denver



## Priority Project: Mile High Experiences

Slide at Skyspace - Los Angeles, CA



Rooftop Observation Deck

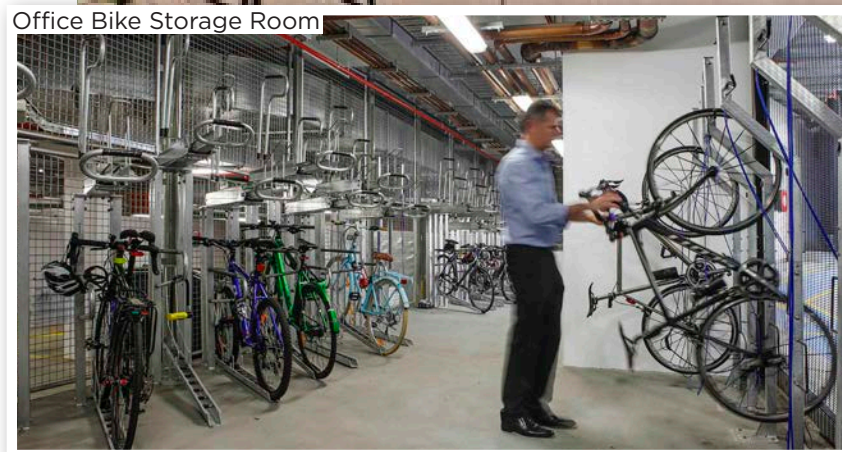
### OBSERVATION DECK

Many cities have one or more observation decks that are available to the public for a fee. Denver does not have a publicly accessible observation deck today, but has views unrivaled by most U.S. cities. An observation deck can serve as an attraction for visitors to downtown and can also attract people to Upper Downtown who may have never visited otherwise. The most successful models incorporate a staging area and some level of co-development catering to the visitor audience at the ground level.

#### Case Study: SkySpace - Los Angeles, CA

- » **Context:** In 2016 SkySpace LA observation deck opened on the 70th and 69th floors of the US Bank Tower in downtown Los Angeles, California. Overseas United Enterprises bought the office tower in 2013 for \$367.5 million. At the time of purchase, the building was around 60 percent occupied; since the remodel (completed in 2016), occupancy is approximately 83 percent. In addition to the SkySpace observation deck and Skyslide, the renovation to the 1989 tower included a new restaurant on the 71st floor, two renovated lobbies (one on the ground floor for tenants and one for SkySpace visitors), a café, and a high-resolution digital art wall in the ground floor lobby that is visible to the street.
- » **Program:** 1.4 million square feet of rentable building area, 65,392 square feet SkySpace observation deck and lobby, Skyslide attraction, 71st story restaurant, First floor lobby renovation, First floor café
- » **Investment:** \$50 million total renovation, \$31 million dedicated to the SkySpace observation deck and Skyslide
- » **Outcomes:** The building experienced an increase in occupancy rates from 62 percent to 83 percent from 2013 to 2019, as well as a 12 percent rent premium over other Class A office properties in Downtown LA
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Dated office structures in Upper Downtown offer the opportunity to utilize top floor space for building and community amenities that attract visitors, such as a top floor observatory or restaurant. With views of the Front Range, an observatory may do especially well in Upper Downtown offering views of the Capital, Downtown, and mountain ranges in one location. Additionally, observatories can activate bottom floor lobby space as guests purchase tickets and queue.

## Priority Project: Office Tower Updates



### MORE OPEN TO OPEN OFFICES

The era of most Upper Downtown office towers resulted in a now dated model of private offices along the window line with many common spaces and meeting rooms tucked in the tower interior. Many of today's tenants want an open office environment with minimal designated individual space and ample shared and collaborative space.

Several office buildings in Upper Downtown have made recent investments in converting the traditional private office layout to open offices. At the same time, property owners are investing significant capital in updating dated lobbies, common corridors, elevators and stair wells. The same buildings are often being augmented with other common amenities, such as fitness facilities, bike parking, restaurants, coffee shops and even speakeasies with bowling.

#### Case Study: 300 South Wacker - Chicago, IL

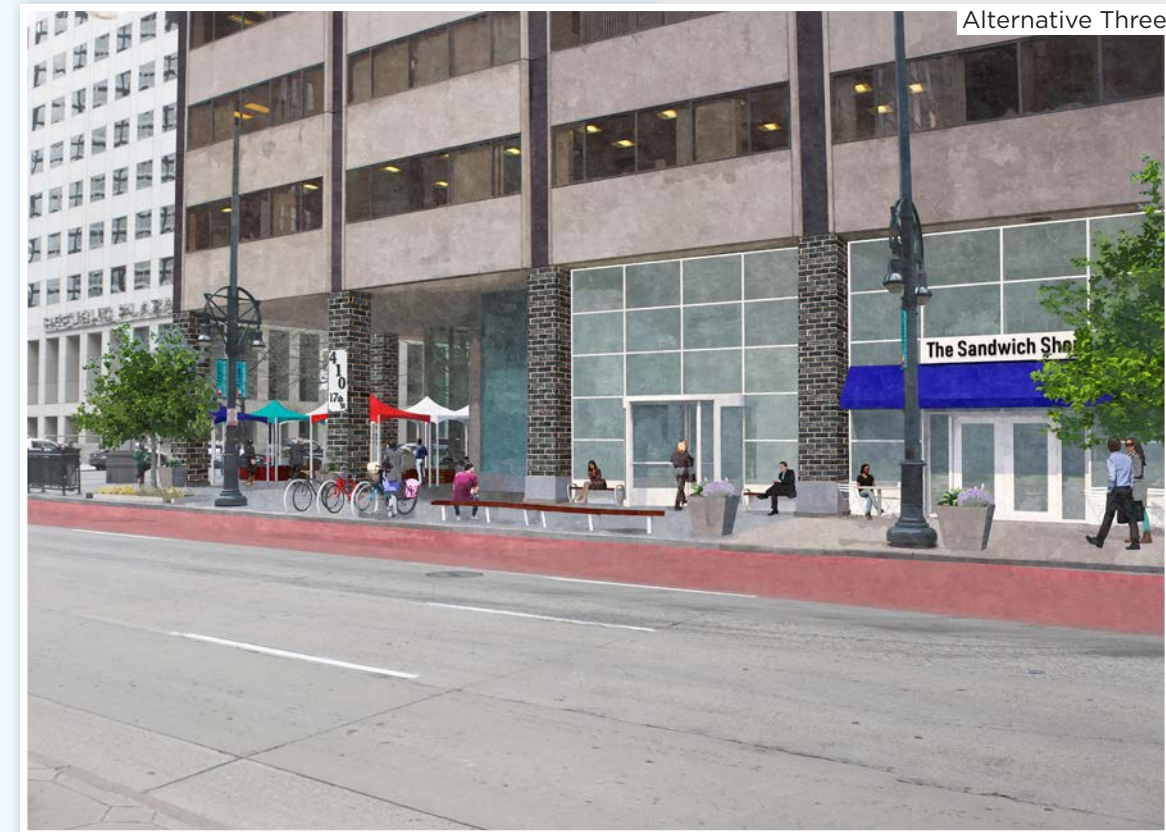
- » **Context:** Constructed in 1971, this dated 36-story office building in Chicago was purchased by Golub & Co. and Alcion Ventures in 2017. After investing \$10 million in renovations, rebranding, and additional ground floor amenities, the building is 95 percent occupied. The 300 also features a 440 foot tall mural facing the Chicago River that distinguishes the building and provides a "You are here" map of Downtown Chicago.
- » **Program:** New ground floor café and lounge, new ground floor restaurant, food truck, and bike storage room, upgraded operating system to LEED Gold certification, technological improvements building wide, new outdoor terrace, upgraded fitness room
- » **Investment:** \$10 million to renovate and rebrand
- » **Outcomes:** 95% occupancy rate, 22,000 sq. ft. in new leases, 50,000 sq. ft. in renewals
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Within Upper Downtown, 74 percent of office buildings were built in the 1970s and 80s. Many of these buildings have seen interior lobby renovations and updated office suites. However, there are opportunities to repurpose some ground floor lobby space for revenue generating amenities such as restaurants, as well as amenities such as an outdoor terrace that increase the attractiveness of the building to potential tenants. Additionally, murals and other public art aid the development of Upper Downtown as a distinct place within Denver.

## Priority Project: Office Ground Floor Retrofits

Many office towers in Upper Downtown were built for a single purpose and excluded any sort of ground floor activation other than the office lobby and a loading dock. Retrofitting the ground floor of an aging office building can make significant strides toward repositioning office towers. Ground floor retrofits can include some or all of the following.

- » Facade enhancements with increased transparency and permeability
- » Material augmentation and variations
- » Activation below building overhangs
- » Prominent signage
- » Visible storefronts
- » Café seating and other seating options
- » Bike parking
- » Increased tree canopy and planters with integrated stormwater management

### EXAMPLE: 17TH & TREMONT



### Case Study: 8th & Olive - Seattle, WA

- » **Context:** Originally constructed in 1981, the 20-story office tower in downtown Seattle, Washington was renovated in 2015. Prudential Real Estate Investors partnered with local Talon Private Capital to purchase the office tower in 2014 for \$101 million and renamed the property 8th & Olive. The \$10 million renovation of the tower included 12,000 square feet of capital improvements, common area upgrades, a new 3-story atrium, a new café with lounge seating and a great room, a new training and conference room, and a new fitness center. Prior to renovation, the dated tower was 84 percent occupied, but in 2017 when the property sold for \$186 million the tower was fully occupied with an array of tech companies.
- » **Program:** 304,751 square feet of rentable building area, renovated lobby space and 3-story atrium, new café that serves coffee and alcoholic beverages, training and conference room, fitness center
- » **Investment:** \$10 million invested in the building renovations
- » **Outcomes:** The property was sold for \$186 million in 2017 after being purchased for \$101 million in 2014. Over this time building occupancy increased from 84 to 98.5 percent.
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Improvements to the existing office inventory, including added amenities such as fitness centers, attractive atriums, eating and drinking amenities, and common spaces, have a proven impact on building occupancy, rent premiums, and higher property value on resale. Providing amenities within existing structures in Upper Downtown will add synergy to any new retail developments, improve the pedestrian experience, and increase the desirability for businesses to move into the district.

## Supporting Strategies: Ground Floor Leasing Strategies



Many property owners and property managers have decided to “curate” the ground floor of their retrofitted buildings to ensure the highest quality tenants.



With the right design, ground floor bars and restaurants can serve office tenants and their employees, as well as the general public.



Ground floor restaurants and bars can help to program and activate private plazas and provide a more engaging segue between the building frontage and public right-of-way.



Restaurant spaces can be flexed to serve as collaboration space during off-peak times. Many co-working spaces include coffee stations and lunch counters.



Fareground—a food hall in the ground floor of an older office building—is an example of lucrative office lease being contingent on the addition of attractive ground floor offerings.

### Case Study: One Eleven Congress - Austin, TX

- » **Context:** One Eleven Congress is a 30 story high rise in Downtown Austin, constructed in 1987 during the construction boom of the 1970s and 80s. The lobby, outdoor plaza, and lower level lobby were transformed into “Fareground” in 2017, featuring Austin food vendors.
- » **Program:** 518,385 sq. ft., 30 stories, 5,500 to 25,500 sq. ft. floor plates, lower level food hall
- » **Investment:** Private investment
- » **Outcomes:** Secured a major tech tenant as the “first mover”, new plaza and food hall were written into the lease of the “first mover” as a requirement of moving into the building
- » **Upper Downtown Opportunity:** Repositioning aging office towers in Upper Downtown has the potential to attract and retain a hub of tech tenants that would otherwise locate elsewhere in the downtown area. Innovative dining options such as food halls and food trucks both provide a cheaper start-up cost for vendors and offer an eclectic mix of options for patrons. Young talent seeks the authentic experience that flourishes in these environments. The Fareground food hall, paired with a community gathering space and the appeal of dated towers with unusual floor plates, led One Eleven Congress in Austin to become a magnet for tech companies.



Outdoor dining spaces can also be managed so that they serve as collaborative spaces (potentially open to the public) during non-mealtimes.

# 5. Break Through Barriers

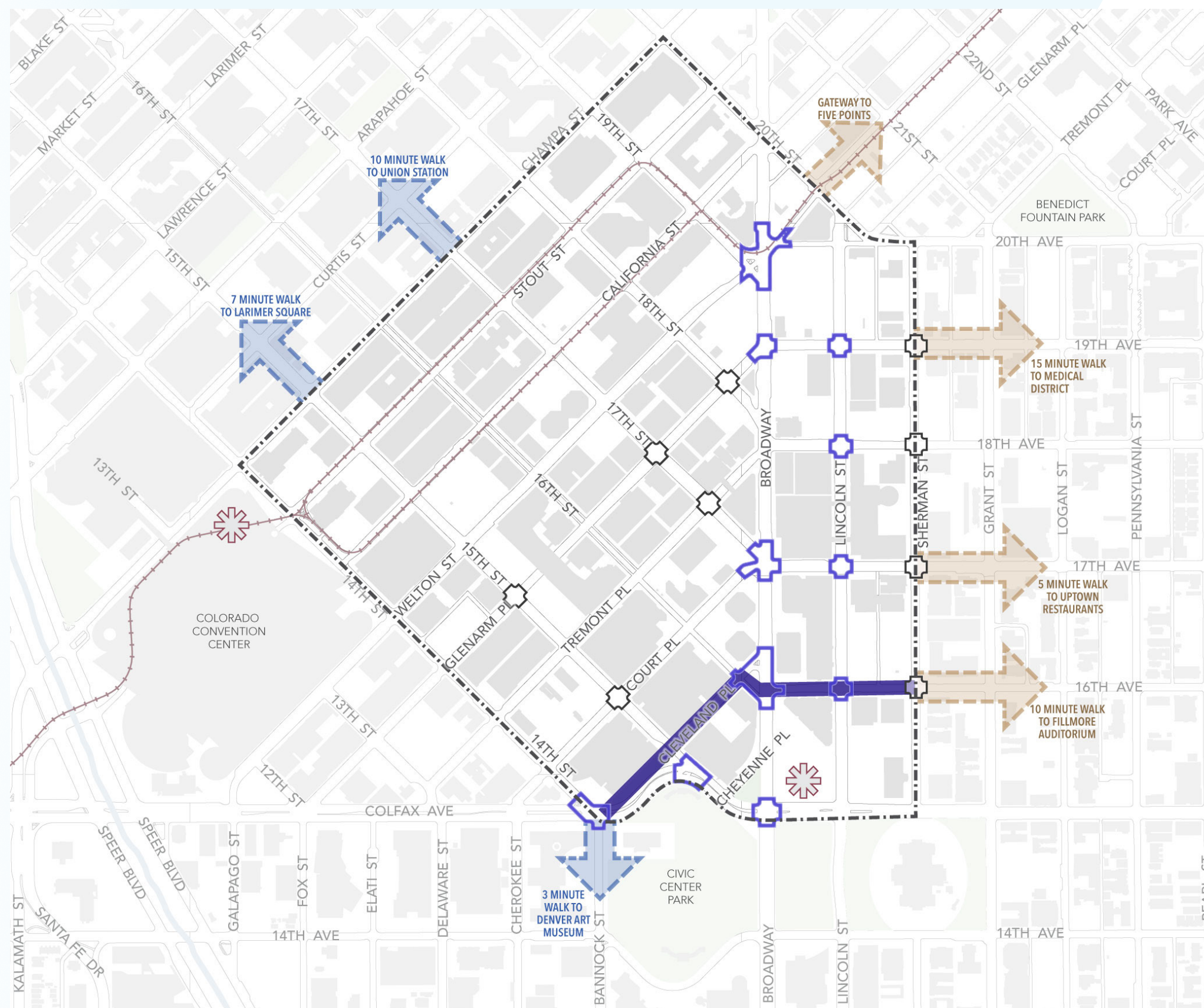
In order for Upper Downtown to be truly successful, the area must fully tap into the surrounding market of residents, employees and visitors in Capitol Hill, Uptown, Arapahoe Square, Five Points, Civic Center, the Golden Triangle, Auraria and the rest of downtown. A Big Move for Upper Downtown will include priority projects and supporting strategies that make much stronger connections to these adjacent areas and break through the many barriers that exist today.

### Priority Projects

- » Construct Broadway and Lincoln Crossings (3.62)
- » Signature Bike Connections (3.66)
- » Adjacent Neighborhood and District Connections (3.68)

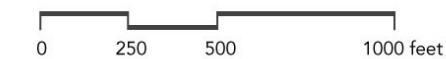
### Supporting Strategies

- » Leverage Transit Stations
- » Create Mobility Hubs

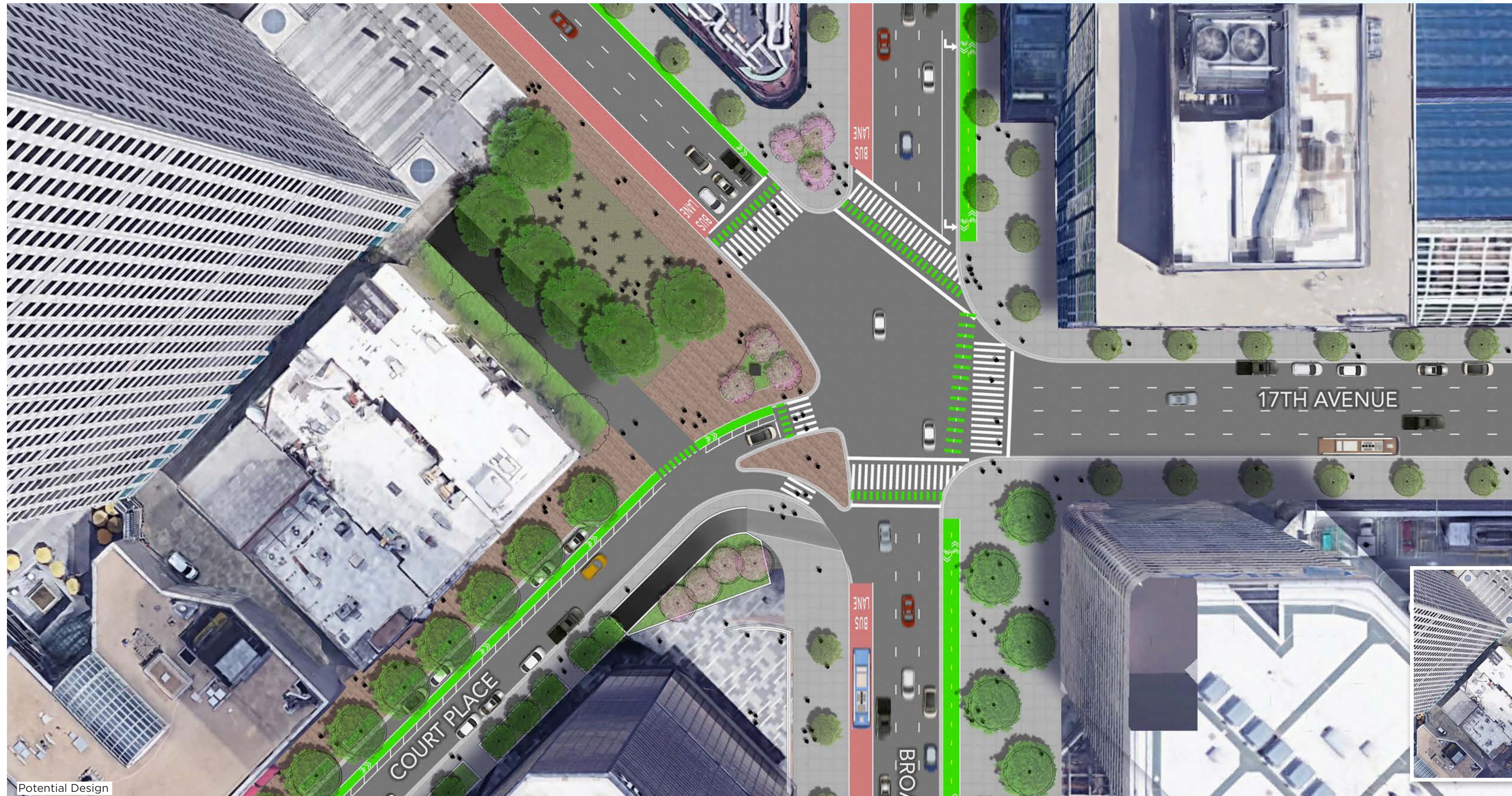


Denver Upper Downtown Plan  
PLAN FRAMEWORK

- Legend**
- Upper Downtown Study Area
  - Park / Open Space
  - Creek
  - Buildings
  - Light Rail
- BIG MOVES ELEMENTS**
- BREAK THROUGH THE BARRIERS**
- Priority Pedestrian Crossing Improvements
  - Priority Intersection Improvements
  - Priority Bike Connection
  - Key Neighborhood Connections
  - Key Downtown Destination Connections
  - Gateway Transit Stations



### Priority Project: Construct Broadway and Lincoln Crossings



Potential Design

### 17TH, COURT & BROADWAY

The intersection of 17th Street, Court Place and Broadway is relatively unsafe and uninviting today, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists. A priority project for Break Through Barriers is re-imagining this intersection and making improvements before the full Broadway Grand Boulevard reconstruction occurs.

#### Design Intent for 17th, Court and Broadway

- » Provide dedicated bus lanes on 17th Street and Broadway
- » Expand the pedestrian realm on Broadway consistent with previous visions for a Grand Boulevard and on Court Place, especially where sidewalks do not exist today
- » Shorten pedestrian crossings and slow the speeds of turning vehicles
- » Increase the tree canopy
- » Provide dedicated bikeways on Court Street, Broadway, and 17th Street west of Broadway; connect the 17th Street bikeway to the 16th Avenue bikeway east of Broadway



Existing Conditions



## Priority Project: Construct Broadway and Lincoln Crossings



Potential Design

### COURT PLACE

Court Place is an interesting connection in the Upper Downtown street network today. The number of lanes in the roadway cross section varies nearly every half block. Parking and garage access are prioritized over sufficient space and amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists. An investment in updating Court Place should be accompanied by reinvestments in privately-owned buildings fronting the street.

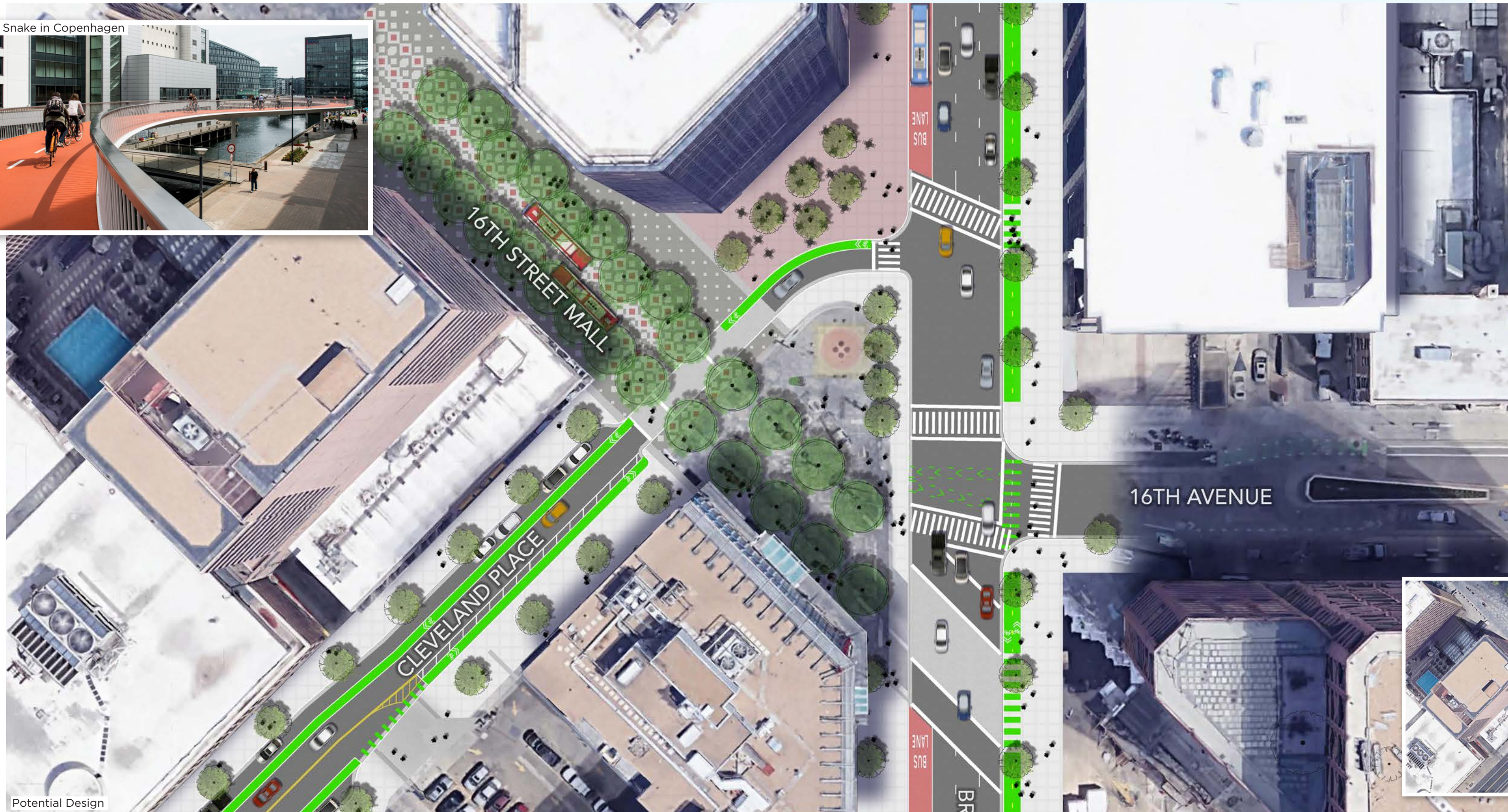
#### Improvements should include:

- » Expand the pedestrian realm, especially on the southeast side of the street
- » Shorten pedestrian crossings and slow the speeds of turning vehicles
- » Increase the tree canopy
- » Provide a dedicated bikeway
- » Create curb extensions and bulbouts for planting, light and art



Existing Conditions

Priority Project: Signature Bike Connections

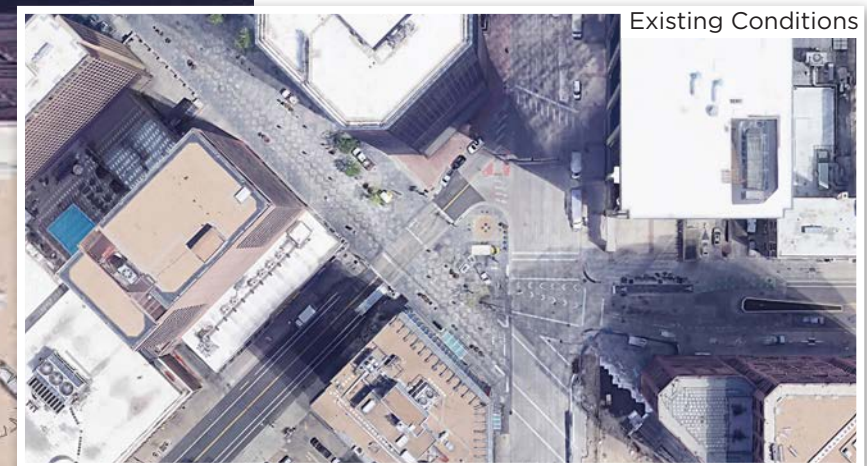


**16TH, CLEVELAND & BROADWAY**

The intersection of 16th Street, Cleveland Place and Broadway presents an opportunity for another signature intersection in Upper Downtown. With the convergence of the Broadway Grand Boulevard, the reconstructed 16th Street Mall and all modes of travel, demands on the intersection will only increase. This connection is important to the larger bicycle network and in showcasing Denver as a world-class city for people riding bikes.

**Design Intent for 16th, Cleveland and Broadway**

- » Shorten pedestrian crossings, slow the speeds of turning vehicles, and require vehicles to stop for pedestrians at all crossings
- » Expand the pedestrian realm on Broadway consistent with previous visions for a Grand Boulevard and on Cleveland Place
- » Increase the tree canopy
- » Provide dedicated bikeways on Cleveland Place, Broadway, and 16th Avenue east of Broadway; connect the 16th Avenue bikeway to a bikeway on Broadway and to the 15th Street and 14th Street bikeways via Cleveland Place



## Supporting Strategies: Adjacent Neighborhood and District Connections



While crossing Broadway is a perhaps the most significant challenge in breaking through the barriers around Upper Downtown and tapping into the large market potential nearby, there are several other high priority improvements necessary to connect to surrounding neighborhoods and districts. To fully break through the barriers, there should be multiple high-quality pedestrian and bicycle connections on all sides of Upper Downtown. Potential improvements should include:

- » Curb extensions and bulbouts at high traffic intersections
- » Improved signage and wayfinding
- » Enhanced pedestrian signals and potential pedestrian priority
- » Enhanced crossing treatments for pedestrians and bicyclists
- » Dedicated and continuous bikeways extending from Upper Downtown into surrounding areas
- » Widened pedestrian areas with enhanced tree canopy, lighting and furnishings

## 16TH & SHERMAN



The example above is located at 16th and Sherman and represents an opportunity to create a signature gateway into Upper Downtown and link two prominent pedestrian and bicycle routes simultaneously. The 5280 will cross the 16th Avenue bikeway at this intersection and this crossing is illustrative of similar opportunities that will exist at 19th and Sherman, 20th and Welton, and the intersection of Colfax, Bannock and 14th. As a signature gateway intersection, improvements should include some or all of the following:

- » 'The 5280' with ribbon link through crossings
- » Gateway signage and unique paving treatment
- » Green painted bike lanes
- » 'The 5280' route
- » Public art on retaining walls
- » Additional tree canopy
- » Branded banners on lamp posts
- » Signal adjustments to prioritize bicycles and pedestrians

### Supporting Strategies: Leverage Transit Stations & Create Mobility Hubs



Implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Colfax will make Civic Center Station and Upper Downtown an even more prominent gateway into downtown.



Upper Downtown has the potential to be an even more dynamic multi-modal hub with better integration of bikes, transit, car share and other personal mobility devices.



Car share and other emerging technologies may reduce the demand for parking, but it will be important to deploy a balanced parking management strategy for the district.



Union Station has become one of the premier destinations in downtown. A revitalized Upper Downtown can attract this potential audience with unique destinations and attractions.

#### Mobility Hubs

A mobility hub serves as key focal point for access by a variety of compatible mobility options/services by connecting bikes, transit and other services, such as on-demand/microtransit service. This area allows for seamless first last mile connections. Mobility hubs should be considered within Upper Downtown at light rail stations or bus stops with multiple lines or high frequency routes and are ideally located along low-stress bike routes. In particular, a mobility hub is recommended for Cleveland Place. The hub can include car share parking, bike share stations, dockless bike share and scooter parking, Transportation Network Company pick-up and drop-off zones, bike repair stations, electric vehicle charging stations, an information kiosk that's available in multiple languages, branding, and wayfinding.



The recently reconstructed Civic Center Station should be activated with new adjacent development, programming, events, and/or other pop-up activation.



Personal mobility devices like e-scooters are changing the complexion of mobility and access in Upper Downtown. Defining space for operation and parking within the street will help to reduce conflicts in active pedestrian environments.



Curb lane space is at a premium in Upper Downtown and the face of mobility is rapidly evolving to include Transportation Network Companies (TNC's) and on-demand transit services.

# 4

SECTION FOUR

## Implementation

This section addresses how to proceed forward in implementing the ideas presented in the Big Moves section of the Plan. The section is organized into the following two subsections:

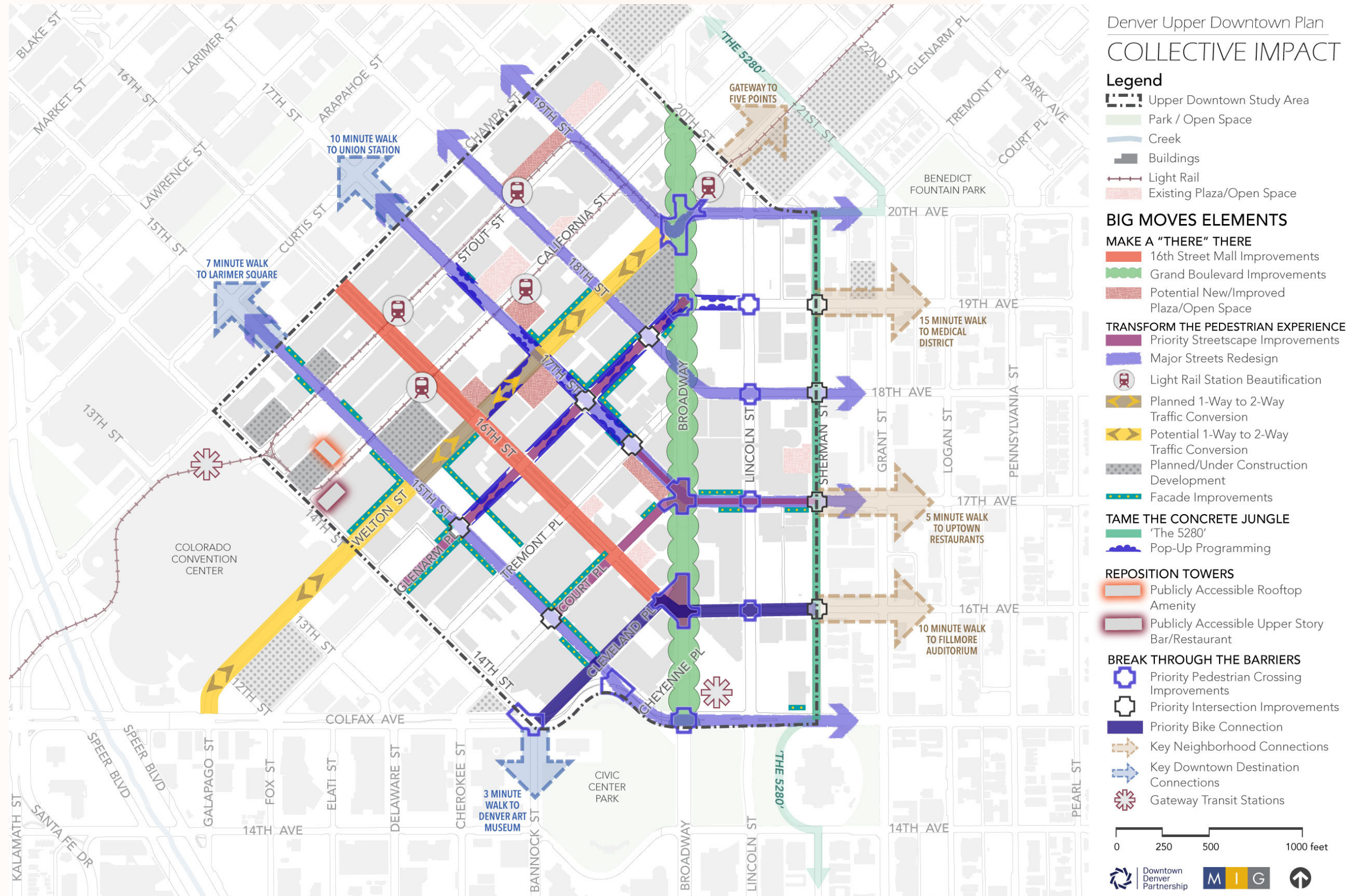
- » Collective Impact
- » Phasing

# Collective Impact

The Big Moves highlighted in the Upper Downtown Plan are a collection of large and small interventions. They are intended to be flexible and somewhat independent in the order in which they are implemented. When paired or grouped in a particular portion of Upper Downtown, the recommendations will have a significant impact on the experience and future success of the area.

# Phasing

The Upper Downtown Plan has no shortage of Priority Projects and Supporting Strategies. To effectively direct the implementation of those efforts, they have been organized into short-term (0-2 years), mid-term (3-5 years), and long-term (6-10 years) actions. This organizational structure should not prevent implementation actions from unexpectedly being completed “ahead of schedule”.



### Implementation Matrix

**Term Legend:**  
**Short** = 0-2 years  
**Mid** = 3-5 years  
**Long** = 6-10 years

**Area of Emphasis Legend:**  
**IM**=Identity & Marketing  
**VP**=Vertical Performance  
**N**=Neighborhood

**A**=Activation  
**TT**=To and Through  
**HE**=Human Environment  
**CS**=Clean and Safe

Term	Category/Key Action	Magnitude of Order Cost	Area of Emphasis						
			IM	VP	N	A	TT	HE	CS
<b>BIG MOVE 1: MAKE A "THERE" THERE</b>									
SHORT	Branding	\$	●		●	●			
	Local Brewery, Urban Winery and/or Craft Distillery	\$\$			●	●			
	Art and Lighting	\$	●		●	●		●	●
	Multi-Modal Improvements for 18th and 19th	\$\$\$					●	●	●
	16th Street EA/Design	\$\$\$+	●			●	●	●	●
	Leverage Transit Stations and Create Mobility Hubs	\$\$					●		●
	Alley Activation	\$	●			●		●	●
MID	Central Gathering Space(s)	\$\$	●		●	●		●	●
	Closeable Festival Street (Glenarm)	\$\$\$	●		●	●		●	
	16th Street Rebuild	\$\$\$+	●			●	●	●	●
LONG	Rebuild Broadway as a Grand Boulevard	\$\$\$+	●				●	●	●
<b>BIG MOVE 2: TRANSFORM THE PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE</b>									
SHORT	Signage and Wayfinding	\$	●		●		●	●	
	Parking Strategy	\$		●			●		
	Update Regulatory Tools	\$		●		●			●
MID	Priority Pedestrian Streetscape Improvements (15th, 17th, Welton, Glenarm)	\$\$\$+					●	●	●
	Implement Artist Themed Transit Stops/ Mobility Hubs	\$	●		●			●	
	Mixed-Use Development	\$\$\$		●	●	●			
LONG	Retrofit Ground Floor of Garages	\$\$		●	●	●		●	●
	1-Way to 2-Way Conversion(s)	\$\$\$+					●		
	Continue Mixed-Use Development	\$\$\$		●	●	●			

Term	Category/Key Action	Magnitude of Order Cost	Area of Emphasis						
			IM	VP	N	A	TT	HE	CS
<b>BIG MOVE 3: TAME THE CONCRETE JUNGLE</b>									
SHORT	Urban Forest Initiative	\$\$						●	●
	Parklets	\$				●		●	●
	Green Walls	\$						●	●
MID	Continue Urban Forest Initiative	\$\$						●	●
	'The 5280' Implementation	\$\$\$	●				●	●	●
	Privately Owned Public Open Spaces	\$	●			●		●	●
LONG	Continue 'The 5280' Implementation	\$\$\$	●				●	●	●
<b>BIG MOVE 4: REPOSITION TOWERS</b>									
SHORT	Observation Deck	\$-\$\$\$	●	●		●		●	
	Ground Floor Leasing Strategies	\$		●	●	●		●	
	Ground Floor Retrofits	\$\$		●	●	●		●	
MID	High Rise Bars and Restaurants	\$\$\$	●	●		●		●	
	Rooftop Decks and Patios	\$\$	●	●		●		●	
	Office Tower Updates	\$\$\$		●				●	
LONG	Continue Office Tower Updates	\$\$\$		●				●	
<b>BIG MOVE 5: BREAK THROUGH BARRIERS</b>									
SHORT	Programming and Events	\$	●		●	●		●	
	Parking Strategy	\$		●			●		
	Broadway Grand Boulevard Testing/ Conceptual Design	\$\$\$+	●				●	●	●
MID	Signature Bike Connection	\$\$\$	●				●	●	●
	Construct Broadway and Lincoln Crossings	\$\$			●		●	●	●
	Adjacent Neighborhood and District Connections	\$\$			●		●	●	
	Continue to Leverage Transit Stations and Create Mobility Hubs	\$					●		●

---

# UPPER DOWNTOWN

A RENEWED FOCUS

---



Downtown  
Denver  
Partnership



**DENVER**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
& OPPORTUNITY



Downtown  
Denver  
Business  
Improvement  
District