# CITY OF WESTMINSTER
# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MARCH 27, 2023

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# 1.0 Introduction and Vision

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is an official policy document of the City of Westminster. The Comprehensive Plan establishes a consistent statement of the city's plans and policies for future development, and is meant to be a living document that is updated over time to respond to changing conditions and the evolving needs of the community. All parts of the Plan, in conjunction with partner plans, work together towards the realization of the city's vision for the future.

This chapter provides information about development of the Plan, the legal foundation and relationship to other city planning efforts, establishes plan cornerstones for the Plan document, and highlights planning influences critical to Plan formation and its 2040 planning horizon.

*Photo: Anton Mayer*

# 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan outline's the community's vision for the future through a framework of goals and policies that support a thriving and healthy community comprised of great neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Plan (referred to as the Plan through the remainder of this document) establishes guidance to help move closer to the community's vision. The long-range policies of the Plan provide a basis for evaluating specific development opportunities and public projects, with coordination among all city departments. Plan policies also provide the basis for establishing and setting priorities for more detailed plans and implementation programs including specific and area plans, the Capital Improvement Program, and the Unified Development Code. The achievement of the vision and goals of the Plan relies on guidance and decision-making of the city Council and implementation by city staff and many other local and regional partners.

## WATER SUPPLY INFLUENCES GROWTH

Westminster's water supply is finite and all decisions related to the physical development of the city are grounded in water supply. Remaining opportunities to increase water supply yield of the system are primarily centered on increasing operational efficiency and expanding reservoir storage. To be truly sustainable, the city must live within available resources, which may be further constrained by drought and the extent of conservation activities. To meet this Vision a variety of factors, including water supply and infrastructure, is weighed and thoughtfully balanced in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

## A LIVING PLAN

The Plan is intended to be a living document that city staff, elected officials, and community partners use to drive the city towards its vision. As a living document the Plan should be flexible to incorporate changes as the community evolves over time and, as needed, updated over time to remain relevant to changing conditions and evolving needs of the community. Chapter 9 establishes a biennial reporting process to facilitate this review process.

# 1.2 A COMMUNITY–DRIVEN PLAN

The Plan update process kicked off in Summer 2018, with the Imagine Westminster event, stakeholder and agency interviews, and the first online survey. This initial phase focused on understanding key issues, opportunities, and challenges that would influence policy direction in the Plan. The most common themes that were initially brought up centered on sustainably managing resources, balancing urban and suburban environments, and being an inclusive community. Responses showed that the Westminster community values the parks, recreation, open space, trail network, and mountain views in Westminster, while indicating that improvements could be made in regard to transit service, walkability, and support for local businesses. Input from the public and city staff helped articulate the key components of the city vision, which were then translated into the Plan's Plan Cornerstones.

Online questionnaires, public event activities, and city staff workshops helped identify areas in the city that had the most opportunity for new development, infill or redevelopment. These areas were analyzed based on quantitative and qualitative data and were referenced consistently throughout the planning process to understand future desired character and how city policies and strategies might influence these areas. This analysis and process updated the Focus Areas and highlighted additional Transition Areas that merit special considerations for future planning.

Going into 2019, city staff continued the process to actively engage Westminster's residents, business owners, and local and regional partners to assist with the development of city policies. With the preliminary visioning priorities and opportunities identified, the outreach activities were constructed to dive deeper into each issue. Questionnaire results, written comments, and in-person discussions were synthesized and insights translated into the Plan's goals, policies, and potential strategic actions. This process took an iterative approach with multiple city staff workshops focusing on each section of the Plan and revisions to the Future Land Use Diagram. Ultimately, these draft goals and policies were presented for public review in 2021.

Direct involvement with city officials was also an essential element of this planning process. At major milestones of Plan development, City Council and Planning Commission provided input and direction. All documents, presentations, and analysis produced during the planning process, including presentations to the Council, were posted on the city's Comprehensive Plan webpage.

### PLANNING PROCESS BY THE NUMBERS

**12** Public Events

**10** Small Community Meetings

**8** Online Activities

**54** Interviews

**9** Study Sessions with City Council

**20,000+** Unique Website Views

**9** City Edition Articles

**4** Meeting-In-A-Box Events

# 1.3 VISION & PLAN CORNERSTONES

### CITY OF WESTMINSTER VISION

The Westminster City Council has established a vision for the future. This vision provides a foundation for this Comprehensive Plan.

*Westminster is a city of beautiful, safe, well-maintained neighborhoods and destinations with a vibrant, diverse economy, rich and resilient environment, and a strong sense of community and belonging.*

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan is to guide decisions to support a thriving and healthy community, manage growth, and foster great neighborhoods. The following Plan Cornerstones, in alignment with the City of Westminster Vision, serve as the platform for the goals and policies of this Plan. They express a community vision for an active, diverse, and livable city.

## THRIVING CITY

**Westminster has a strong identity that values being bold, innovative, and different. We promote diversity and inclusiveness, and celebrate cultural and artistic expression.**

Westminster is a community recognized along the Front Range for its extensive open space network, well-designed infrastructure, and high-quality built environment. The Plan will continue to emphasize the community's identity and presence both locally and regionally. The continuation of small business support throughout the city and programming of arts and cultural activities, as well as the infusion of private investment and new development in Focus Areas, will enhance the community's image and establish it as a desirable place to live, conduct business, recreate, and visit. The Plan also emphasizes the city's natural amenities and views to the mountains and Downtown Denver as distinctive qualities to be preserved and celebrated. Finally, Westminster will continue to develop and strengthen its identity through special events, embracing diversity, and a sense of belonging for all voices within the community.

**Westminster cultivates a diverse, healthy, and resilient economy with an emphasis on financial sustainability, leveraging the city's role in the region and adapting to changing trends and technologies.**

With its central location between Denver and Boulder, the City of Westminster is strategically positioned to capitalize on economic growth opportunities along the US 36 technology corridor, as well as the northern I-25 corridor linking Denver to Fort Collins and beyond. The Denver metro region is growing and attracting new talent, presenting opportunities for Westminster to expand and diversify the city's unique neighborhoods, open space and recreational amenities, and access to transit. This contributes to making Westminster a desirable place in which to live, work, and visit. Furthermore, the proximity to Denver and Boulder provides an ideal location for employers wishing to attract and retain a high-quality labor force. Building on the city's assets, the Plan will focus on growth and diversification of the city's employment and

commercial bases to create a resilient local economy. Employment development efforts will focus on establishing and reinforcing business and industry clusters, allowing for flexibility to adapt to the next generation of jobs, workspace, and technologies.

## HEALTHY PLACES

### Westminster has a built environment that embraces the outdoors through a comprehensive, integrated parks and open space system.

Westminster's pattern of development protects the network of open space, trails and high-quality parks, and defines the physical character and image of the community. The extensive network of trails, open space corridors, and conservation areas weaves through the fabric of the city, connecting with parks, neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, employment centers, and activity districts. Residents, workers, and visitors have access to a range of recreation opportunities and benefit from the protection of sensitive environmental habitats, water quality, and view corridors. The network also connects residents to regional trails, on-street pedestrian and bicycle routes, neighboring jurisdictions, and transit stations in support of air quality. The Comprehensive Plan supports active living through both recreational and multimodal travel opportunities.

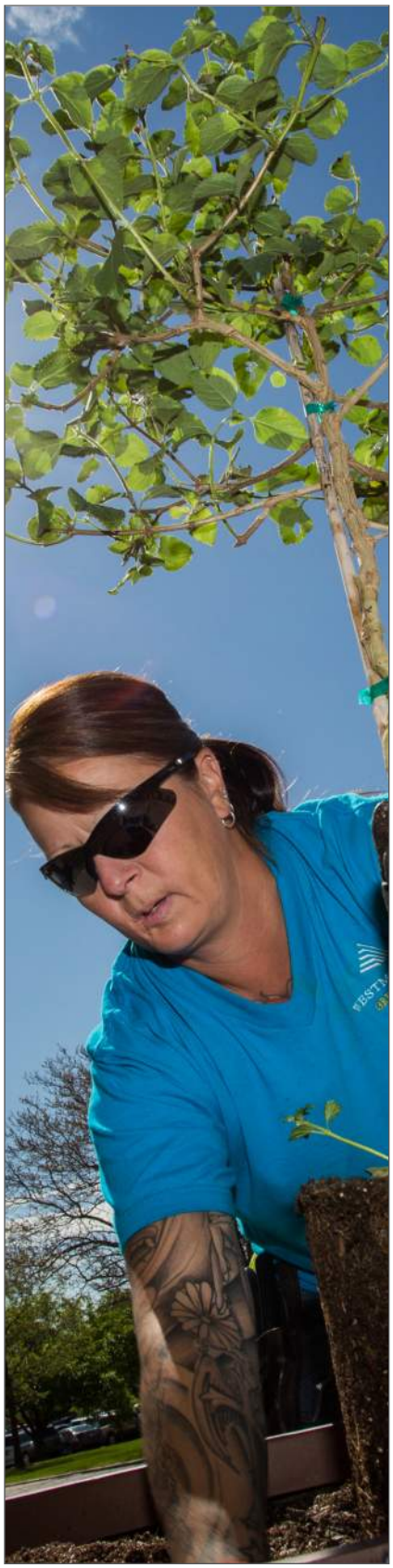
### Westminster strives to be one of the most sustainable, safe, and healthy cities in America.

Westminster enjoys a high quality of life that is supported by a sense of safety and confidence throughout the community. The ability to enjoy the city's natural amenities, residential neighborhoods, employment and activity centers, and transit connections in a safe, secure environment is a key priority. Being a sustainable community means ensuring that Westminster is a desirable place in which to live, work, visit, and play for current and future generations. Additionally, the Plan supports the ability of police and fire departments to maintain high standards for service response and emergency preparedness. The Plan will promote access to a healthy lifestyle by promoting connectivity to and use of the city's open space, trail, and park network; a wide range of recreation and library facilities for all ages and abilities; and ensuring residents and workers have access to health and human services and nutritious foods.

## GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

### Westminster has a strong sense of local pride in our well-designed and attractive neighborhoods.

Westminster is defined by its distinctive and varied neighborhoods and integrated network of parks and trails. The city's range of choices and character in neighborhoods provides a diverse mix of



## NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT

One of the strategies to ensure the Plan Cornerstones are followed through in future investments by the city and private parties is the "Neighborhood Unit." Through public engagement there was a preference for mixed-use development patterns, but in strategic locations and composition. Diversity of housing types—supported by nearby activities such as restaurants, retail and a park for community gathering—was identified as an element of the ideal neighborhood. This involves incorporating parks as social spaces and civic hubs. There was also an interest in walkable, well-connected environments with smaller, neighborhood services closer to housing. Westminster neighborhoods should also plan to address changing demographics and associated housing needs for households with various compositions and multiple generations.

For more details about how to implement the Neighborhood Unit concept, see chapter 3: Land Use & Development.

settings and environments. The Plan will continue to foster a range of high-quality living options that support the city's active lifestyle. Parks, recreation facilities, libraries, neighborhood shopping and services, schools, and other community facilities will serve the needs of residents, reinforcing neighborhood character and cultural identity. Connections from residential neighborhoods to employment centers, transit, commercial centers, and the city's open space and trails system will be emphasized. Where new neighborhoods are planned, a mix of uses, and interconnected street network will further foster an active, walkable environment throughout the city.

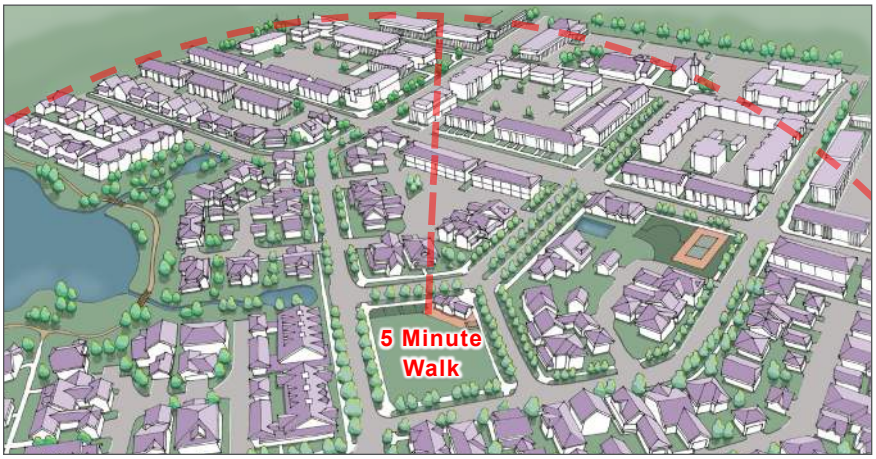
### Westminster provides a balanced mix of housing opportunities for a range of incomes, age groups, and lifestyle choices.

Providing a balanced mix of housing opportunities in the city will continue to be a focus of planning efforts. Accommodating a wide range of age groups and lifestyle choices will reinforce the city's identity as a diverse, attractive place in which to live and work. The Plan will focus on maintaining the quality of the existing housing inventory, support opportunities for home ownership, as well as locating complementary land uses and infrastructure to serve the needs of all community members. Policies that integrate housing with economic opportunity, a sense of belonging, and attention to the physical and mental health of residents will be supported throughout the Plan.

## MANAGED GROWTH

### Westminster is a mature city that will continue to evolve and thrive through further employment development and vision-aligned infill and redevelopment.

The city is quickly approaching its physical build out of existing vacant land. As Westminster continues to evolve and grow, much of the future development will focus on employment development. The Plan provides a framework for balancing economic




*Neighborhood Unit conceptual illustration*

development with preservation of established neighborhoods. New mixed-use development will be limited to key locations with access to a supporting transportation system and transit. Attention will be paid to fostering an active public realm with blocks sized for walkability, building design that shapes and activates the pedestrian environment, and parks and public spaces that reinforce and foster community identity. Supporting policies and implementation efforts will ensure future neighborhoods are vibrant and viable.

### Westminster supports a multimodal transportation network that provides safe and well-connected transportation and mobility choices to connect people to local and regional destinations.

The City of Westminster supports a comprehensive transportation system that allows for safe and efficient travel for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The Westminster Transportation & Mobility Plan provides a framework for travel through the city with a network of streets, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and trails. The Comprehensive Plan integrates land use and transportation planning efforts to ensure mobility options throughout the city. The existing street network will be maintained and improved for safety and comfort of users. New street and trail connections and alignments will ensure the city's employment and activity centers are easy to access both locally and regionally. "First Mile, Final Mile" concepts will be supported by bicycle and pedestrian connections to transit stations, as well as development adjacent to stations, which will support and encourage transit ridership within the city.

### Westminster responsibly manages water and natural resources, prioritizing environmental stewardship and understanding feasibility of infrastructure and resource availability.

The city's integration of land use with water supply and ongoing stewardship of resources, including water, energy, habitat, and natural areas, provide the framework for a sustainable environment that will continue to impact all aspects of physical planning in the city. The Plan emphasizes management of the city's water supply, with policies and land use planning that will maintain water availability at citywide buildout. Because Westminster is largely built out, the sustainability and resiliency of existing neighborhoods will become a more central focus as development of the few remaining vacant lands becomes less critical with time. In the few locations where new development is anticipated the city will encourage the efficient use of land and resources. These measures will all contribute to environmental resilience and public health.

# 1.4 PLAN THEMES & CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

In alignment with the Plan Cornerstones and Vision, the Plan is organized by six themes. Each of these themes is encompassed in a chapter of the Plan, which includes context and background and set of goals and policies. Through community engagement and the planning process, six additional topics were identified that impact each of the Comprehensive Plan themes. These cross-cutting topics are integrated within each theme chapter.

## CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

### Education

The City of Westminster is committed to equitable access to education in a number of ways, even as the city does not have direct authority over school districts or educational institutions. Many municipal facilities, departments, and programs are dedicated to supporting literacy, community engagement and empowerment, and public outreach and education. This includes the Westminster library system but also the city's recreation programs for educational enrichment, interpretive and educational signs in natural areas, and even public education campaigns related to recycling, water conservation, and hazard mitigation. The city also supports workforce training through partnerships and scholarships for employees of small businesses. This Plan supports opportunities for lifelong learning, workforce training, and personal growth, as well as the technology, infrastructure, and built environment necessary to support these opportunities.

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The 2022 update to the city's vision statement values a sense of community and belonging. As part of the Welcoming America's *Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative*, the City of Westminster strives to be more than merely diverse—it strives for inclusion. With the formation of the Inclusivity Board in 2015, a dedication to ensuring that all people can take part in economic, civic, and social life became a standard to embed in planning efforts. The city's pursuit of equitable processes is grounded in providing opportunity for all voices to be heard and drawing upon community diversity in decision-making.

As Westminster's population grows, the city is gaining greater diversity in its residents. This includes residents born in another country or whose parents were born in another country, speak a language other than English at home, or identify as Hispanic/ Latinx. To address the future needs of the city, preferences and specific challenges for various populations need to be considered. Westminster is making strides in the right direction with Equity, Diversity & Inclusion initiatives throughout the organization as well as extensive cultural programming that celebrates the diverse communities of Westminster and opportunities for cross-cultural connections. Considerations such as cultural expectations, age, and physical and mental ability are necessary in order to create a sense of community and belonging.

*Photo credit: Gena Bloemendaal*

## Health

The City of Westminster is committed to the health, safety, and wellbeing of its residents. Public health is closely linked to the intentional design practices and land use planning that increase public safety and opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating. Specifically, this Plan emphasizes the interrelationship between the built environment and public health by focusing on policy questions such as how land use supports active transportation; how neighborhood design and development patterns improve walkability and safe, convenient pedestrian access to services like schools, parks, healthcare, and fresh food; how parks, open space and trails can connect to bicycle and pedestrian systems; and how land use can improve transit access, especially for those most in need.

The 2019 American Community Survey shows that 10.5%—11,865 persons—of the city's population have at least one disability. An even higher percentage of those over age 65 report some type of a disability, with 34% or 5,053 seniors living with a disability that requires planning for access to essential services and amenities. Not all disabilities are visible or related to mobility impairments, so while it is important to consider physical mobility and accessibility, it is also critical to make allowances for sensory impairments and cognitive disabilities.

This Plan integrates health language and policies that resonate locally, creating opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to make choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life. An improved built environment leads to improved public health at the community level. The Plan also provides support for factors that influence health like aging in place, walkable/bikeable neighborhoods, and easy access to daily goods and services, all of which ultimately contribute to reduced healthcare costs.

*Parking Lot Bioswale*

## Resilience

Residents all along the Front Range are accustomed to change. A booming population, shifting demographics, economic cycles, and the threats of natural disasters are among the myriad factors to which residents must continually anticipate and adapt to regionally. While community resilience is typically defined as the ability to bounce back and adapt to shocks and stresses, these disruptive events can be felt in the physical environment as well as in the pocketbook. As an institution, Westminster strives to maintain its fiscal resilience despite the low points in economic cycles. Westminster also pro-actively plans for natural hazards, primarily through the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), which identifies the range of hazards and prioritizes strategies to mitigate those risks.

In the context of city's infrastructure, including utilities, streets, and drainage, resiliency refers to the ability of the systems (including their interconnected natural processes and social systems) to absorb disturbance and still retain functionality and structural capacity. Essential maintenance of the system must be maintained to ensure public safety and resiliency from hazards and disruptions.

Westminster is currently at a crossroads: most of the city was developed in the 1970s and 1980s, and the infrastructure established at that time is nearing the end of its useful life and will be less reliable without extensive repair and replacement work to ensure safe operations in future years  As the city nears buildout, there will be less opportunity to collect tap fees from new development  As Westminster transitions from this development-driven system to that of rate payers contributing the bulk of revenue, financial challenges will need to be reconciled to ensure reliability of essential infrastructure in future years.

Planning for community resiliency is a dynamic cycle that must build on past experiences, while also preparing the community to respond and adapt to future opportunities, changes, and threats. Not only is community resiliency the ability to recover after a change such as a disaster event, but it is also enhancing the ability of Westminster's people, places, and economy to prepare for and thrive when change occurs. It involves activities such as supporting the health of natural systems like watersheds and air; managing and reinforcing elements of the built environment such as utility infrastructure, mobility, and buildings; and strengthening the economic and social fabric of the community.

## Safety

Working to ensure a safe and secure living and working environment is a priority for Westminster, as "safe neighborhoods" are a component of the city's

vision statement. This is reflected in the support and partnerships with the municipal police and fire departments, but extends also to Westminster's built environment—how we build transportation connections and our public spaces, and where we locate critical infrastructure.

A multimodal transportation network includes all the ways people move around the city. It is important to provide a transportation system that is safe and comfortable for all users, focusing on minimizing conflicts between cars, transit, bikes, and pedestrians. This understanding is introduced in the Comprehensive Plan and further articulated in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

The practice of ensuring a safe community also extends to disaster preparedness and the resiliency of critical infrastructure. Assessment and mitigation of risks are key roles for the city in land use and emergency management planning, whether that means locating municipal facilities out of the floodplain, or regulating building codes for fire protection.

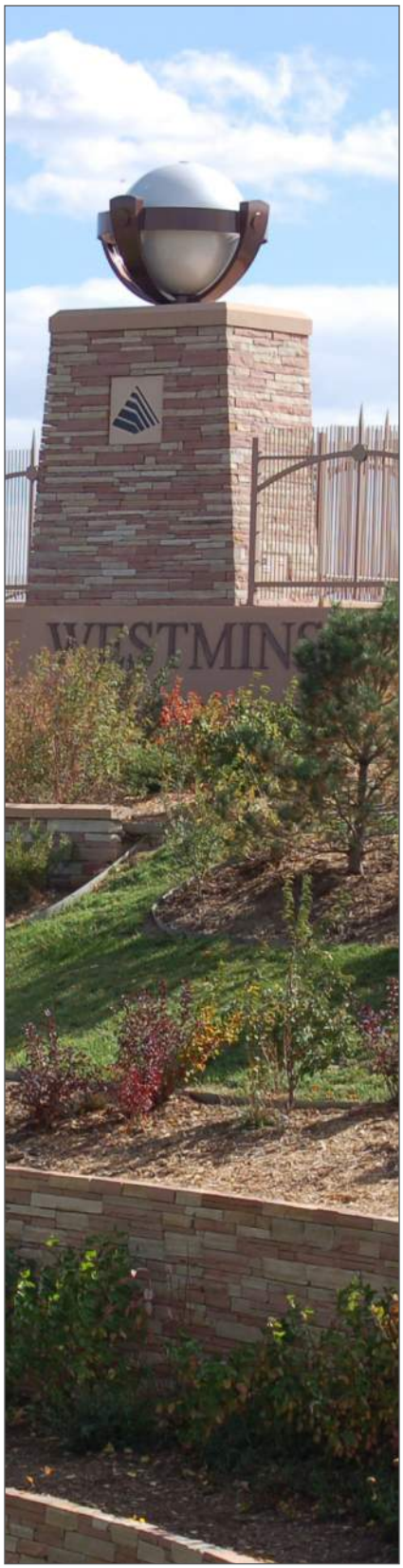
*Westminster Firefighter*

## Climate

The City of Westminster is committed to being an environmentally responsible city and in 2019 completed its first ever greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory as part of the planning process for the Sustainability Plan. Increasing GHG emissions lead to climate change that may significantly affect human and environmental health, along with economic and social well-being. Warmer temperatures lead to heat waves and increased concentrations of air and water pollutants, and can exacerbate demand impacts on water supply. Given the city's proximity to the foothills and extensive open space, portions of the city are at risk for wildfires from steadily rising temperatures and a drier climate.

The city's residents are also affected by increasing air pollution from vehicle emissions and other sources. Key findings from the GHG inventory indicate that emissions from on-road transportation (emissions from gasoline and diesel vehicles), building electricity (burning fossil fuels to produce electricity) and natural gas consumption are the three largest sources of emissions. Together these sources comprise 86% of total emissions. Most of the remaining emission sources are from aviation (estimated air travel for Westminster residents from Denver International Airport). Managing air pollution and developing climate change resilience is critical to the human, economic, and environmental health of communities.

By understanding how the community contributes to GHG emissions and poor air quality, changes can be made in daily activities that can positively impact the climate and reduce air




*Gateway Feature*

pollutants. Air quality may be enhanced using multiple techniques, such as expanding the urban tree canopy, providing convenient multimodal transportation options and alternative vehicle fueling infrastructure, reducing traffic congestion, and incorporating green building practices and green infrastructure (e.g., natural stormwater features) throughout the community. The strategies and actions identified in the Sustainability Plan can lead to reduction in GHG emissions. These are complemented throughout the Comprehensive Plan with goals and policies that support a mix of land uses serviced by multimodal transportation, sustainable development practices that reduce carbon footprints in businesses, access to health resources and recreation opportunities, and convenient access to places of employment and services to fulfill the daily needs of residents.

# 1.5 HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

## ORGANIZATION

The Plan Cornerstones introduced in Section 1.3 establish the long-term aspirations for what the Comprehensive Plan is intended to accomplish. In any instance where an aspect of the Plan is unclear, the Plan Cornerstones should be liberally interpreted to inform the desired action. The chapters of the Plan organize content around common topic areas. Chapters 3 through 8 reflect goals and policies related to the themes introduced in Section 1.4. Each chapter is organized around a series of goals and policies. While the narrative provides context, the goals and policies have priority in interpreting and applying the Plan over other content. Goals are broad statements to help realize the Plan Cornerstones. Policies define subcomponents of each goal with more specific recommendations to achieve the goals.

Two separate documents accompany this Comprehensive Plan: an Existing Conditions & Planning Challenges Report and an Implementation Action Plan. The Existing Conditions & Planning Challenges Report highlights trends and data analysis that established the foundation and starting point for this Plan.

The Implementation Action Plan was developed to complement this document. It identifies future actions the city and non-city partners may undertake to carry out Plan concepts. Because of the frequency of updates to the action plan based on budgets, workplan priorities, staff capacity, and external variables, that document is maintained outside of this Plan.

**Chapter 1: Introduction & Vision** includes the purpose and overall planning context for the Plan, as well as the Plan Cornerstones that provide the framework for the goals and policies in the following chapters.

**Chapter 2: Utilities & Resources** outlines policies to support the sustainability and resiliency of existing and future neighborhoods with the provision and availability of city utilities, infrastructure systems and public service. Functional plans that supplement these policies include the Sustainability Plan, Water Efficiency Plan, and Water Supply Plan.

**Chapter 3: Land Use & Development** provides direction for a balanced mix of land uses, sustainable design, development standards, and regional collaboration. This chapter includes high-level direction for this element, with more detailed standards for development included with Code Forward.

**Chapter 4: Transportation, Mobility & Connections** includes direction for all modes of travel in the city, ensuring that vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit movement is balanced and coordinated. This chapter includes high-level direction for this element, with more detailed goals, actions, and policies included within the city's Transportation & Mobility Plan.

**Chapter 5: Health, Wellness & Community Services** outlines the framework for provision, creation, and maintenance of parks, open space, recreation and library facilities, and arts and culture in the city. This chapter also identifies considerations for education, health, human services, and public safety. Chapter 5 includes high-level direction for this element, with more detailed goals, actions, and policies included within the Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan.

**Chapter 6: Economic & Financial Resilience** establishes high-level economic goals and introduces financial policies to promote economic health, opportunity and diversity in the community that are necessary to generate the revenue to maintain a stable fiscal base at the municipal level, ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

**Chapter 7: Housing & Neighborhoods** supplements policies in the Sustainability Plan relative to neighborhood services and addressing housing needs with additional context on city identity and heritage.

**Chapter 8: Community Places** provides a planning framework for key areas in the city, and references specific area plans that include more specific goals and policies to guide future planning and development in these areas.

**Chapter 9: Plan Administration** delineates the applicability, administration and toolkit of city programs that are interrelated with the Comprehensive Plan.

## WHO CAN USE THIS PLAN?

A wide range of users will find meaning in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Westminster residents and property owners, businesses and developers, and city staff, leaders, and partners all use the Comprehensive Plan to guide and realize the future success of our city.

**Residents and Property Owners:** To document values and vision for the future of Westminster, in a way that allows them to participate as informed and active citizens in the overall physical development of the city, including decisions about land use that impact them most directly.

**Businesses and Developers:** To provide guidance on how to best achieve the community's vision in ways that allow them to grow, adapt, and implement their development and business plans.

**City Staff:** To work with applicants and stakeholders to review development proposals and to provide decision-makers with information about how the proposals align with the intention, vision, and policies of the Plan.

- To create and implement city initiatives including Code changes and process improvements that advance the goals and recommendations of this Plan.
- To work collaboratively with stakeholders on the more detailed plans and projects necessary to implement and achieve the goals of this Plan.

**City Leaders:** To position Westminster for the future by establishing annual work plan priorities, developing partnerships, ensuring accountability of city departments, and making thoughtful and informed decisions in harmony with the goals of this Plan.

**City Partners:** To provide information to governmental, non-profit, and private sector partners on the city's future development and infrastructure, including surrounding communities, transportation providers, regional planning groups, and other key regional players.

# 2.0 Utilities and Resources

Public utilities and resources are an essential element of a city's quality of life and livability. Water quality and availability, the efficient removal and treatment of waste and waste water, and stormwater management are all essential to the function and quality of service in the city. These elements provide the foundation upon which the community is built and are critical to maintaining quality of services and emergency response. This chapter provides direction for continued high-quality public utility provision and resource use and management. Additional services not provided by the city are also addressed here, such as solid waste collection, electricity, gas, and telecommunications.

## OVERVIEW

A key focus of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that the city is able to continue to provide adequate water supply and delivery to the Westminster community as it continues to grow in population and development intensity. This is embodied in both the ***Healthy Places*** and ***Managed Growth*** plan cornerstones. Water availability and utility infrastructure are essential considerations of future land use choices moving forward. Utility sizing and availability will also be important for higher-intensity redevelopment areas.

As a full service community, Westminster owns and maintains its own water, wastewater and, stormwater utilities. The associated infrastructure system is valued at over $4 billion, plus a water supply portfolio valued at $1 billion. This system includes water treatment plants, wastewater treatment, a reclaimed water system, hundreds of stormwater treatment ponds, thousands of miles of pipes, fire hydrants, pumps, tanks, valves, and other critical infrastructure to ensure exceptional water, wastewater, and stormwater service for the entire city.

Provision of utilities and services outside of the city's purview, such as solid waste, energy, and telecommunications, will be evaluated for adequacy and potential improvements as new development is proposed.

Through recent and ongoing utility planning efforts, Westminster hopes to harness momentum to promote water smart principles and increase sustainable planning. These goals will be balanced with the need to address current market challenges while allowing enough flexibility to accommodate future market trends. The Comprehensive Plan and companion plans, such as the Water Supply Plan, Sustainability Plan, and Unified Development Code (UDC), should continue to be evaluated and updated as needed to ensure alignment.

# 2.1 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision-making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in chapter 9, Plan Compliance & Implementation. They are not inclusive of all actions and options.

## WATER SUPPLY

**Goal UR-1 Ensure current customers and new development maintain a balance between water demand and supply.**

1.1 Appropriately coordinate the Comprehensive Plan and Water Supply Plan to ensure existing and future customers have a safe and reliable water supply.

1.2 Responsibly manage and conserve the city's limited water resources in both existing and new development.

1.3 Continue implementation of water conservation strategies identified in the Sustainability Plan and Water Conservation & Efficiency Plan.

1.4 Monitor demographic, development, water supply, and usage trends with regular reporting to City Council and proactively identify where adjustments to the Comprehensive Plan may be needed should water use increase.

1.5 Continue to strengthen the integration of land use and water planning and policies to meet the needs of future growth and development.

### RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Drought Management Plan
- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- Water Supply Plan
- Water Conservation & Efficiency Plan

### CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

- Education
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Health
- Resilience
- Safety
- Climate

### LANDSCAPE ORDINANCE

The landscape ordinance balances the need for aesthetic enhancement, promoting plant diversity, and tree canopy with the need to conserve water resources and minimize costs of long-term maintenance.

## RECLAIMED WATER SYSTEM

Reclaimed water is wastewater that has been further treated and disinfected to provide a supply that is safe and suitable for landscape irrigation. Use of reclaimed water allows a sustainable water supply for parks and golf courses. Some additional advantages of this system include:

- Reduced demand on drinking water and scarce raw water supplies.
- Efficient use of existing facilities and city employees.
- City growth can be maintained in a responsible manner.

## WATER AND WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal UR-2 Plan, budget, operate and maintain, and construct our infrastructure to protect public health and safety.**

2.1 Provide service consistent with established Levels of Service referencing the 2017 FOCUS Project Results or successor and applicable requirements of state regulations, Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act.

2.2 Monitor the Utility Condition Index (UCI) as a measurement of the amount of useful life remaining in the utility system and use the UCI to guide the Minimally Responsible Capital Improvements Project (CIP) package.

2.3 Prioritize public health and safety through strategic and proactive efforts to protect water quality and the environment.

2.4 Support coordination between city departments to maintain a link between infrastructure and various planning efforts.

2.5 Incorporate equity considerations, including location and costs, into infrastructure and service improvements.

## COST OF SERVICE

**Goal UR-3 Ensure the long-term financial viability and sustainability of water and wastewater utilities.**

3.1 Maintain a tap fee and rate structure sufficient for future utility-related needs as determined by City Council.

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

**Goal UR-4 Protect the community from adverse flooding and pollution impacts of runoff with efficient and progressive stormwater management practices.**

4.1 Encourage development of regional stormwater management facilities for higher intensity land uses.

4.2 Encourage green stormwater infrastructure measures to reduce pollutants from development and redevelopment.

4.3 Coordinate storm drainage and flood management with appropriate agencies, including the Mile High Flood District (MHFD) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

4.4 Ensure that development and redevelopment activities are compliant with the city's Storm Drainage Design and Technical Criteria and the State's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) requirements.

4.5 Establish and maintain floodplain buffers to ensure compliance with FEMA required floodplain regulations, to promote water quality and to improve riparian habitat.

4.6 Ensure the long-term financial viability and sustainability of the stormwater utility.

## SOLID WASTE

**Goal UR-5 Cultivate improved waste and materials management that supports source reduction, sustainable diversion, and regulatory compliance through accessible services and programs for residential and commercial land uses. Also refer to the Sustainability Plan for additional and more specific policies.**

5.1 Incorporate the Sustainability Plan's goal to increase reduction and recycling efforts within the city to divert solid waste from landfills.

5.2 Promote the importance of recycling industrial and construction waste.

### LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT / GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Low impact development (LID), also commonly referred to as "green stormwater infrastructure" is an approach to surface water runoff treatment and management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle.

### SUSTAINABLE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

In Front Range communities like Westminster, reducing waste at the source and increasing diversion efforts have the potential to produce substantial environmental and economic benefits. By recycling and composting, communities can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and energy associated with the extraction and production of new materials and the decomposition of organic waste in landfills. Material reuse and waste diversion also have the potential to boost Westminster's economic resilience by creating new jobs. (2020 Sustainability Plan)

## UTILITIES AND SERVICES FROM OTHER PROVIDERS (NON-CITY)

**Goal UR-6 Ensure all residents and businesses have access to high-quality and resilient utility systems.**

6.1 Coordinate development review with all utility providers to ensure site improvements accommodate current and future needs for residents and businesses.

6.2 Continue efforts to underground electric utilities as new development occurs throughout the city.

6.3 Provide low-cost, effective, secure, and resilient information and communication technologies citywide.

6.4 Minimize surface telecommunications infrastructure site proliferation and visual impacts.

6.5 Expand right of way management policies to incorporate power and broadband to support evolving transportation technologies.

# 3.0 Land Use and Development

As a long range plan to *Manage Growth* and development of Westminster with a year 2040 outlook, the goal of this Plan is to support *Great Neighborhoods* and to build a sense of place in neighborhoods and commercial districts. One of the methods in this Plan for helping to achieve this goal is to focus the "land use" discussion on the creation and maintenance of recognizable places throughout the city. This chapter establishes goals and polices as well as locational considerations through the Land Use Diagram for a balanced mix of development, redevelopment, and neighborhood stabilization that anticipates future needs. These goals and policies express the intents and actions necessary to guide planning for neighborhoods of all types as the city approaches buildout.

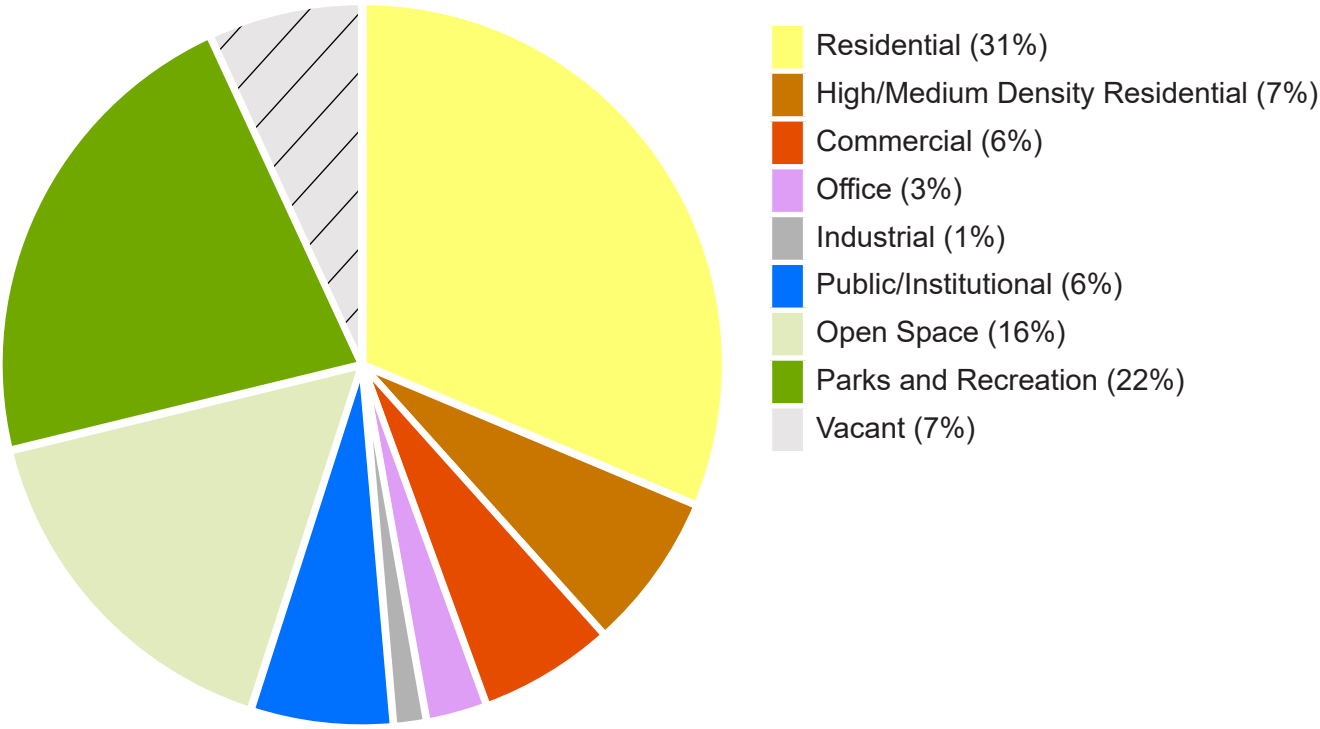
*Big Dry Creek Trail*

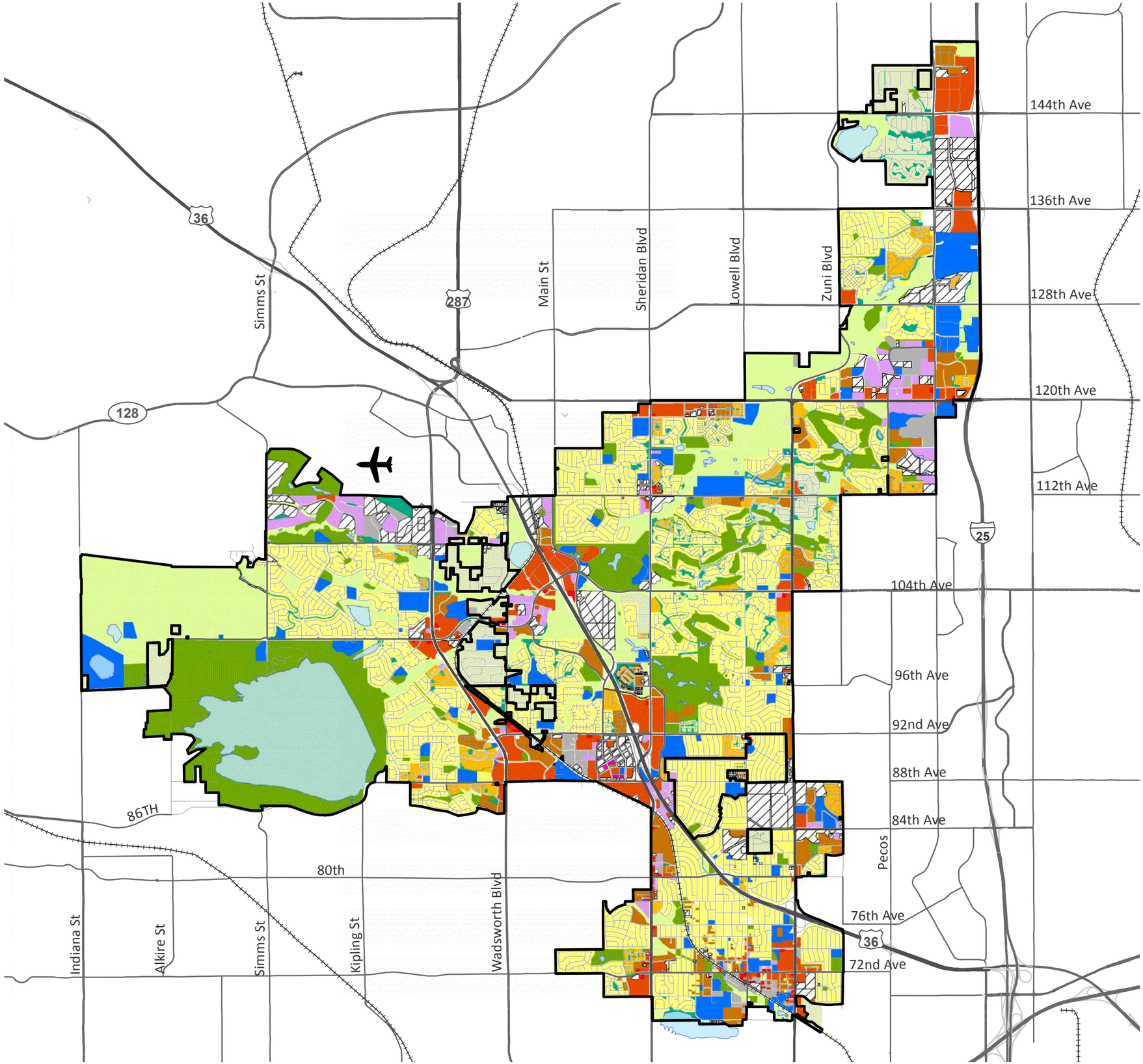
## OVERVIEW

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan update builds on the planning paradigm from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan to identify strategic growth on remaining vacant land and redevelopment areas, and provides guidance on anticipated uses and building forms. Emphasis is placed on connecting residential areas with a range of employment opportunities in support of a ***Thriving City*** and convenient access to activities and services that fulfill the daily needs of a household in support of ***Healthy Places***.

Rather than focusing on individual land uses, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan focuses on the character of development in different areas. Whereas land use focuses on the type of use on a given parcel, the land use framework described in this chapter focuses on the overall look and feel of an area such as low density or high density, urban or suburban, auto-oriented or mixed-use, and illustrates this through the Land Use Diagram as a companion to the goals and policies. The overall land use framework combines concepts of land use with building form and intensity to describe the character of the area. Collectively, these elements function to guide the location and amount of development and inform programming of infrastructure, resources, and public services to support quality of life. This chapter of the Plan defines these character types envisioned for the city and illustrates their locations.

### Chart 3-1. Existing Distribution of Land Uses by Area (2020)






## Map 3-1. Existing Land Use Map

*For future land use see Map 3-2, p. 43*

### Legend

- Very Low Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Office
- Retail Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Industrial
- Public / Institutional
- Open Space
- Parks and Recreation
- Private Park / Private Open Space
- Vacant
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Westminster

N

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

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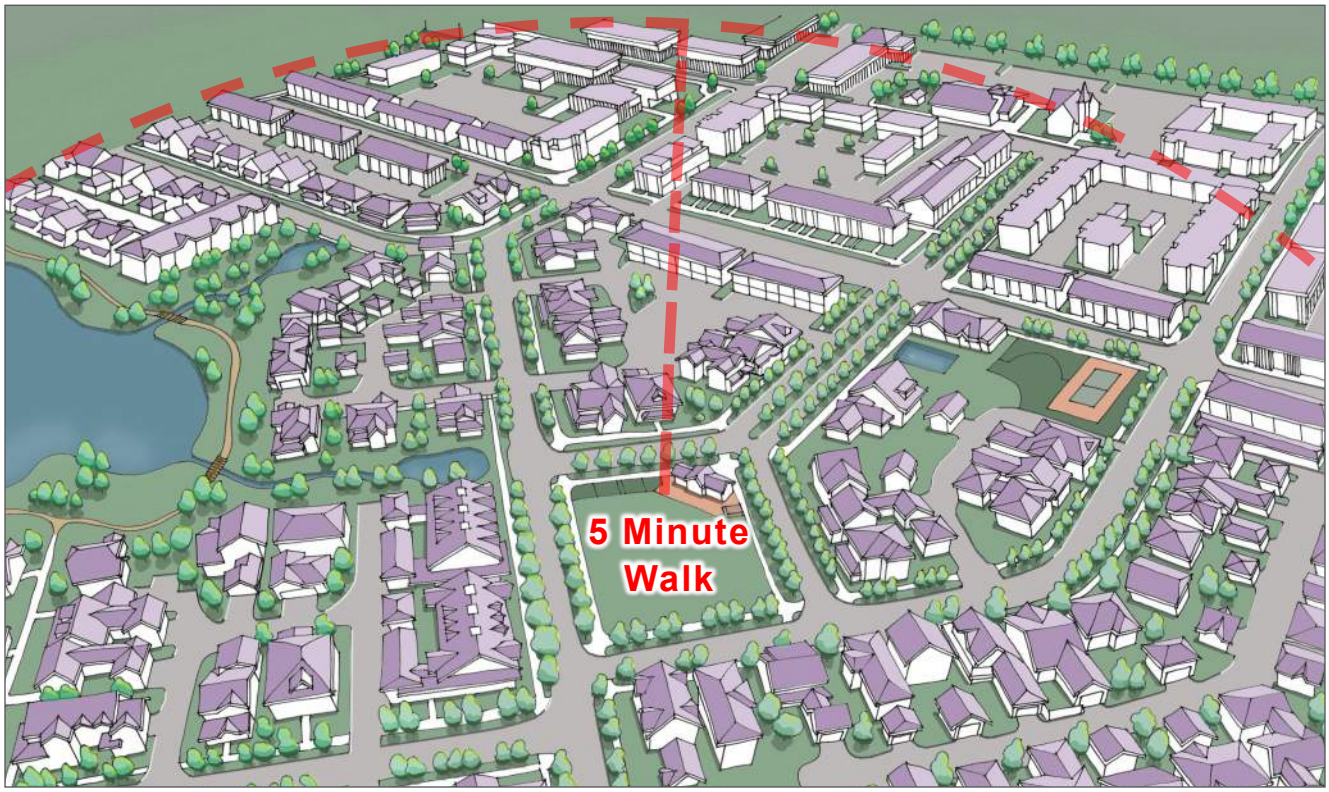
# 3.1 NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT

Through public engagement a preference for mixed-use development patterns was identified, but in strategic locations and composition. Diversity of housing types, supported by nearby activities such as restaurants, retail, and a park for community gathering were identified as elements of the ideal neighborhood. This included the desire to incorporate parks as social spaces and civic hubs. There was also an interest in walkable, well-connected environments with smaller, neighborhood services closer to housing. Other feedback indicated the need to address changing demographics and associated housing needs such as housing formats for varying household types and ages.

*Bradburn Village*

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan responds to the interest in neighborhood planning with a “Neighborhood Unit” concept. Rather than a geographical designation, the Neighborhood Unit is a framework for evaluating uses and activities in a context beyond a particular parcel or development site.

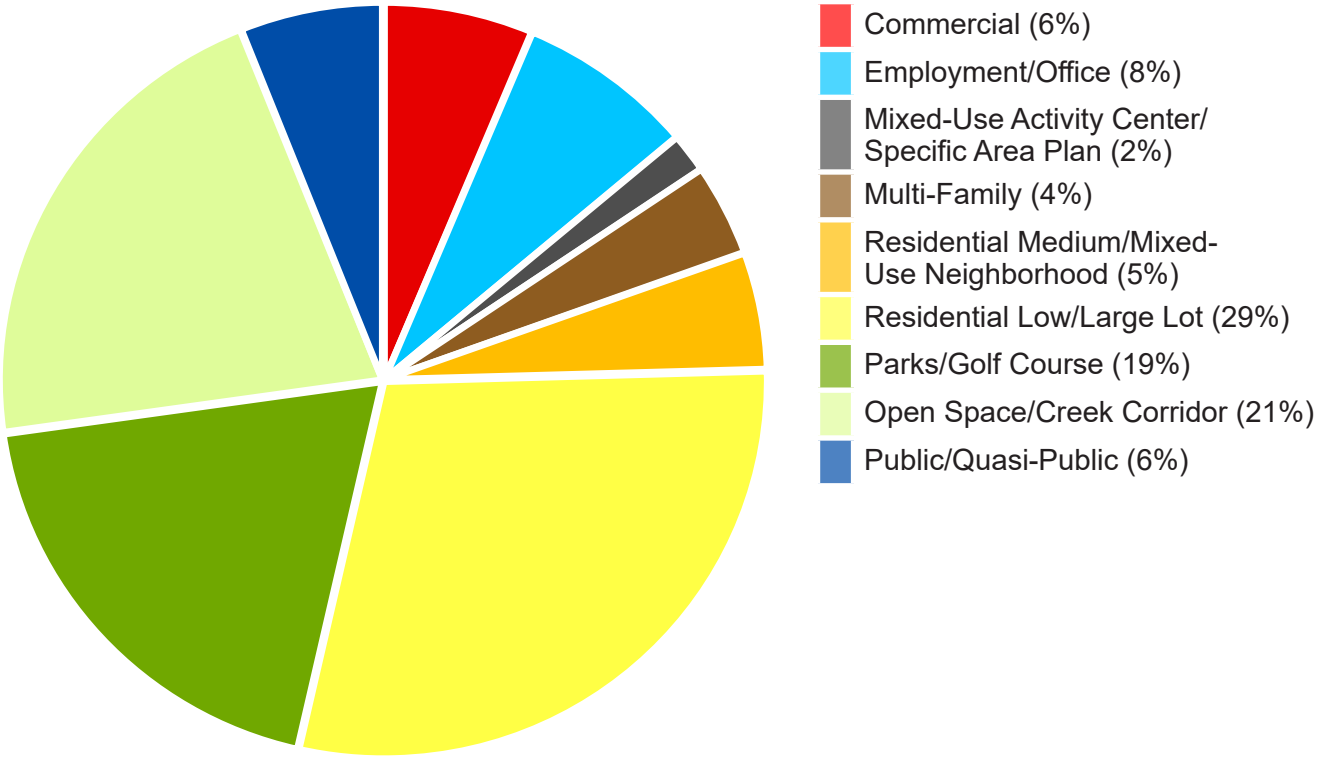
Neighborhood Units are generally defined by a quarter-mile or five minute walk, though in very low density areas this may extend up to one mile. A neighborhood unit may extend beyond a particular subdivision or development boundary to incorporate uses and activities to fulfill daily needs of residents. While primarily



composed of low density housing, Neighborhood Units may feature mixed-use areas along the edges or at key access points where transportation hubs support higher densities and commercial uses. An interconnected street pattern minimizes distances for pedestrians, cyclists, seniors, children, and those with disabilities to access amenities and services in and around the neighborhood. Access to parks, open spaces, and other areas to gather and play are key attributes, typically with a focal point located near the center of the Neighborhood Unit. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and access to outdoors also promote public health in support of the Health & Wellness element (Chapter 5) of the Comprehensive Plan.

The components within a Neighborhood Unit may be developed on different timelines, therefore the Neighborhood Unit concept may be used to evaluate future development and the degree to which development proposals complement the area with missing services, commerce, amenities or housing types in support of the ***Thriving City*** and ***Great Neighborhoods*** plan cornerstones. The Neighborhood Unit concept will provide a lens for evaluating future development proposals as further detailed in Chapter 9, Plan Administration.

### Chart 3-2. Distribution of Future Land Uses by Area



# 3.2 LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The land use framework embodies the community's vision of how Westminster should evolve over the next 20 years and support the city's financial resiliency. The intent of the framework is to establish the direction and tools with which to realize this vision. Key elements of the framework include character patterns to support existing neighborhoods with locations for new housing and centers with complementary non-residential uses. The location and description of different land use character types is based on existing uses and development patterns, community discussions, data analysis, and coordination with other city planning efforts. Generally, the most intensive types of land uses occur in clusters or nodes, adjacent to supporting transportation infrastructure.

## LAND USE DIAGRAM

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Diagram (Map 3-2) identifies where retention of existing uses is desired, where existing neighborhoods are identified for stabilization, and locations of opportunities for new types of uses in the future. The diagram does this through designation of the location, type and distribution of land uses throughout the city. Land use character types —shown as colors and graphic patterns on the diagram—allow for a range of activities within each type. The diagram is a graphic representation of policies contained in this Comprehensive Plan and is to be used and interpreted in conjunction with goals and policies throughout the Plan. Focus and Transition Areas identified in Chapter 8, Community Places, each feature a framework graphic to further guide development in these locations beyond the more general designation on the Land Use Diagram.

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

A key consideration with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan is the interrelationship of land use and the city's financial sustainability. Because land uses have different impacts on municipal finances, a balanced mix of land use types is needed to ensure future resiliency. An analysis of the Land Use Diagram was conducted to model net revenues or deficits resulting from build out. This analysis identified a positive revenue position for the city. The model separately considered a "stress test" scenario with only residential development occurring with no new commercial development; this scenario was roughly neutral with neither a positive nor negative fiscal outcome. For this reason, the Land Use Diagram balances both residential and commercial character types in support of greater future resiliency.

### DENSITY AND FLOOR AREA RATIOS (FAR)

**Calculation**

Calculation of both density (expressed as dwelling units per gross acre) and FAR (expressed as gross building square footage to land square footage) is based on the gross site. See graphic on next page.

The calculation of FAR only includes gross building area; basements and parking structures area are excluded. FAR may be calculated using the total of all lots within the development of a PDP or ODP.

**Minimums**

A development plan must demonstrate compliance with the minimum FAR throughout all phases, as applicable.

**Maximums**

The maximum density or FAR may not be achievable on all sites due to site constraints such as topography or site area.

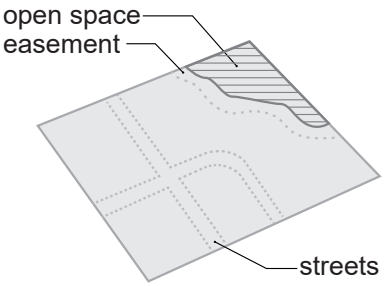
## DENSITY AND INTENSITY

The Comprehensive Plan establishes density and intensity expectations for each land use character type. Residential densities are expressed as dwelling units (DU) per gross acre (DU/AC), including land for public streets, storm drainage, and other rights of way or dedications. This does not include land located within a designated 100-year floodplain. It is noted that while consideration has been given to general known constraints in the Land Use Diagram, the particular uses and densities on a site may be limited due to specific site constraints such as topography, drainage patterns, floodplains, required rights-of-way, water supply, sewer impact, the city's adopted design standards, public land dedication, or other public improvements.

To address the city's varied housing needs, three avenues are provided that modify provisions of the land use character types.

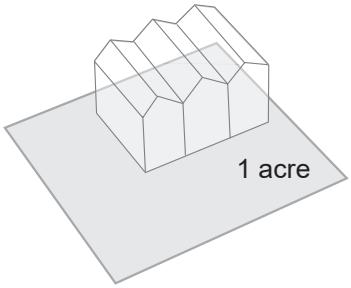
1. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) may be permitted on single-family lots, subject to applicable provisions of the Development Code and PUD for a given location. The ADU shall be considered accessory to the primary dwelling unit and, therefore, will not add to the number of units tabulated for purposes of maximum density.
2. Special needs or congregate senior housing facilities with beds rather than individual housekeeping units with kitchens may calculate density at a ratio of 2.5 beds per one dwelling unit. For example a 4-acre site with a character type that allows 18.0 units per acre could be allowed a congregate care facility with 180 beds or 72 individual housekeeping units.
3. Employment land uses may include an internally housed caretaker unit when subordinate to the primary employment use.

A maximum permitted floor area ratio (FAR) is specified for mixed-use and non-residential uses. FAR expresses the ratio of total building square footage to land square footage. For example, an FAR of 2.0 means that for every square foot of land, a developer may build two square feet of building space. Where an FAR is specified for mixed-use classifications, the FAR applies to both residential and non-residential building space, excluding basements, structured or surface parking. Similar to residential densities, maximum FARs may not be achievable due to site constraints. Basement level space is not included in FAR calculations.




### Gross Site Acreage/Area

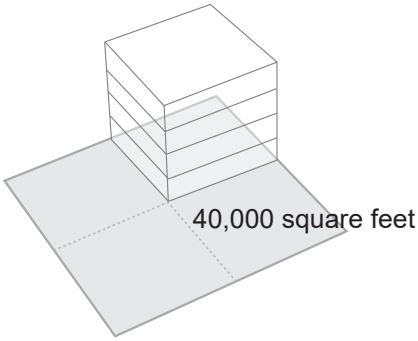
The gross site acreage (or area) encompasses the entire site, including area dedicated for open space, streets, and public easements, as illustrated above. The full acreage of the site (gray area above) is used in the calculation of density or FAR.




### Density

$$\frac{\text{Dwelling Units}}{\text{Total Site Acres}} = \frac{3\text{ DU}}{1\text{ acre}}$$

Shown above, 3.0 DU/AC, where 3 dwelling units (DU) sit on one acre of gross site acreage.

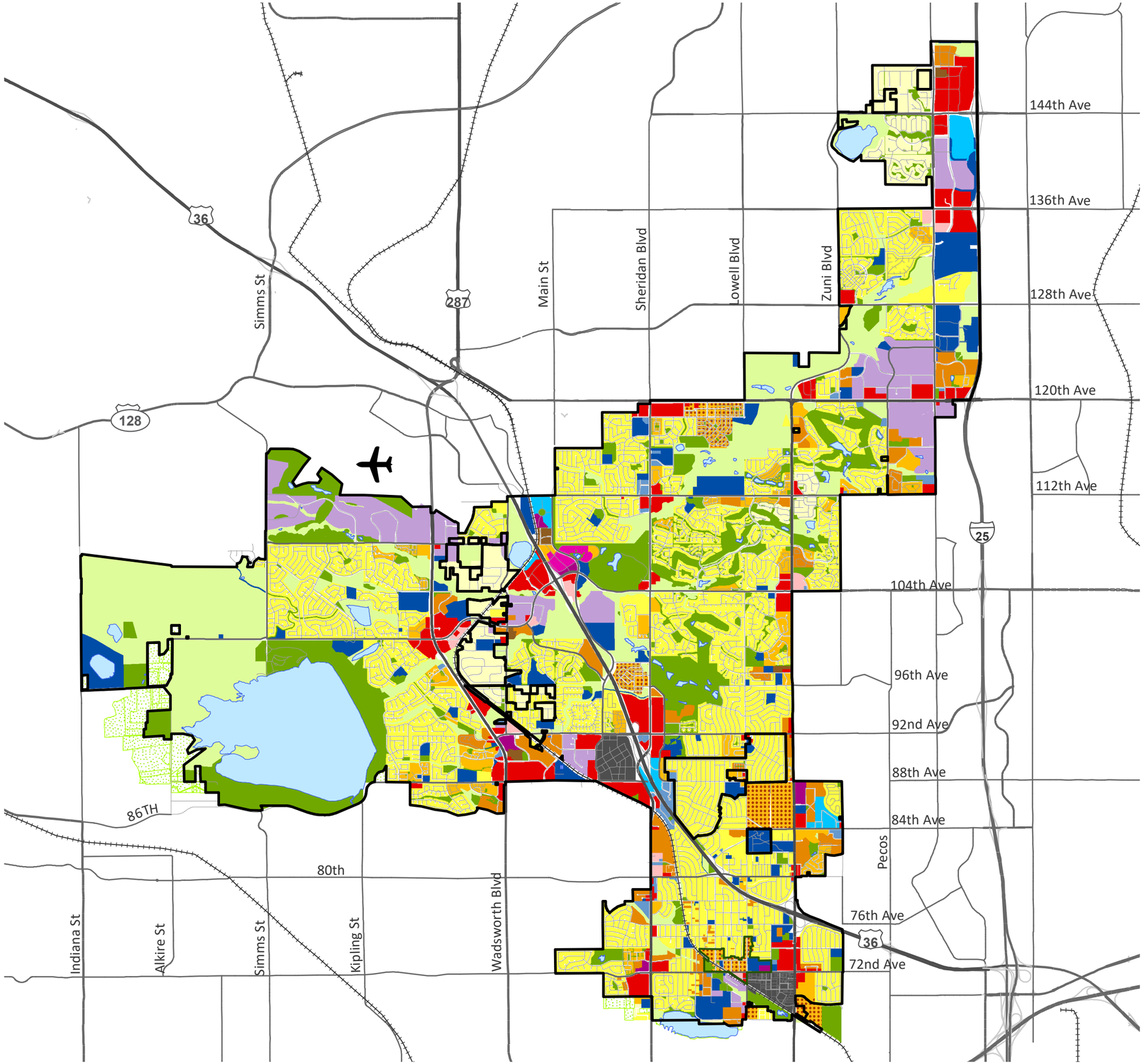



### Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

$$\frac{\text{Total Building Area}}{\text{Total Site Area}} = \frac{40{,}000\text{ square feet}}{40{,}000\text{ square feet}}$$

Shown above, an FAR of 1.0 where a building with 4 floors of 10,000 square feet each (40,000 square feet total) sits on a parcel of 40,000 square feet gross site area.

## Map 3-2. Land Use Diagram




### Legend

- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity Center
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area
- Harris Park Community Vision Plan
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Westminster

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## LAND USE CHARACTER TYPES

Land use character types are the tools used to define the city's vision and intent for development citywide. They provide overarching direction for land use on a specific site. For the majority of the city's established development, more specific uses are delineated on a property's approved Planned Unit Development (PUD), which must be consistent with the property's Comprehensive Plan land use designation. For properties that are conventionally zoned (such as Commercial C-1, Business B-1, etc.), the Westminster Municipal Code provides greater detail on specific uses permitted within each zoning district.

This section describes each of the land use character types shown in Map 3-2: Land Use Diagram. Each type is described by representative images and text, with a "Development Standards" table that addresses land use and development characteristics. Within the table, land uses are listed as:

- **Primary.** Primary Uses are intended to be predominant and reflect either existing or anticipated land uses. These uses define the character of an area and support fiscal resilience as the city nears buildout. In residential character types, a listing of housing product types is provided to assist in interpretation of the classification. These product types are based on typical building patterns within Westminster relative to format and scale but do not distinguish housing tenure.
- **Secondary.** Upon substantial establishment of primary uses within a given character type, secondary uses may be considered. Secondary Uses are not intended to be dominant within a character type and are evaluated on a case by case basis to determine appropriateness. These uses may be limited based on the location and compatibility with adjacent land uses. Limitations may include building area or proportion of a project, recommended format or placement on a property. In general, secondary uses shall not exceed 25% of the land area of the character type. Secondary Uses may not be viable or appropriate on a given property but rather considered within the intent of the land use character type as it is applied across the city, the degree to which they will strengthen the viability of primary uses in the immediate area, and not overwhelm any one location with a preponderance of secondary uses.

Development characteristics in the table include maximum and minimum densities and/or floor area ratios (FARs), minimum lot size (for residential uses), and distribution of uses.

In addition to the uses described in each character type to follow, public/quasi-public uses—including government offices, police and fire stations, public and state-chartered schools, non-commercial agriculture, and places of worship—are permitted in all land use types except for park and open space classifications, subject to the development review process. Private schools and child care facilities are permitted in all residential land use types. Individual land uses may also be subject to additional review or permitting processes as required by the Westminster Municipal Code.

### Potentially Prohibited Uses

A number of uses that rarely occur in Westminster are identified as potentially prohibited within any land use character type because such uses may have negative economic, social or physical impacts on existing and planned neighborhoods or community gathering locations. These uses include pawn shops, tattoo parlors, video and other arcades, night clubs, off-track betting, auction houses, thrift stores, massage parlors, used merchandise sales, day labor services, billiard/pool halls, gun shops, adult businesses, check cashing facilities, payday lending, dollar stores, and day labor services. These businesses generally are not permitted, but may be considered on commercial and mixed-use sites in select circumstances. Size of the proposed use, visibility of the use, and its proximity to economic growth areas (identified in Chapter 8), residential uses, parks and open spaces, and public or quasi-public uses are key considerations for such uses.

## RESIDENTIAL LARGE LOT

This character type provides for single-family detached residences developed at densities lower than typically found in urban areas Residential Large Lot is generally appropriate in areas distant from activity centers where development characteristics feature large lots. This designation may serve as a transition between rural and more urban areas. The prevailing lot size on adjacent lots shall inform the allowable density on a given site.

*Examples: Lexington, Quail Hill, Wadsworth Estates*

### Table 3-1. Residential Large Lot Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Single-Family Detached Residences; Non-Commercial Agriculture |
| Secondary Uses | Non-Commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Group Homes |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 2 stories (not including basements);<br>Large setbacks;<br>Large block pattern |
| Density | Typically 1.0 DU/AC but allowed up to 2.5 DU/AC where the adjacent established prevailing lot sizes are compatible. |
| Minimum Lot Size | 17,500 square feet; may be reduced to 10,000 square feet where the adjacent prevailing lot pattern is compatible. |

## RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY

This character type provides primarily for single-family detached residences and paired homes. Residential Low Density is generally appropriate in locations outside of activity centers in areas where development characteristics are suburban. The prevailing lot size and densities on adjacent lots shall inform the allowable density on a given site.

*Examples: Countryside, Harmony Park, Sheridan Green*

### Table 3-2. Residential Low Density Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Single-Family Detached Residences; Paired Homes |
| Secondary Uses | Duplexes; Patio Homes; Townhomes; Group Homes; Non-Commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Senior Housing |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 2 stories (not including basements);<br>Front and rear setbacks sufficient to provide recreation/leisure space;<br>Access to community parks, trails and/open space;<br>Interconnected street system with alleys |
| Density | Typically up to 3.5 DU/AC; allowed up to 5.0 DU/AC upon City Council approval where the adjacent established prevailing lot sizes and densities are greater than 3.5 per gross acre. |

## RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY

This character type accommodates a mix of housing types from single-family residences (attached and detached) and duplexes to townhomes. This designation is appropriate for bypassed parcels surrounded by existing development within one half-mile of activity centers and transit. Single-family homes are expected to be in alley-loaded format. This designation may be used as a transitional buffer between lower density residential uses and nonresidential uses, major roadways, or parks and open spaces. Sites 10 acres or greater are expected to incorporate a mix of different product types and reflect the spirit of a Mixed-Use Neighborhood. The prevailing lot size on adjacent lots as well as access to transit, employment and services shall inform the allowable density on a given site.

*Examples: Connections, Gallery at the Ranch, Legacy Ridge Patio Villas*

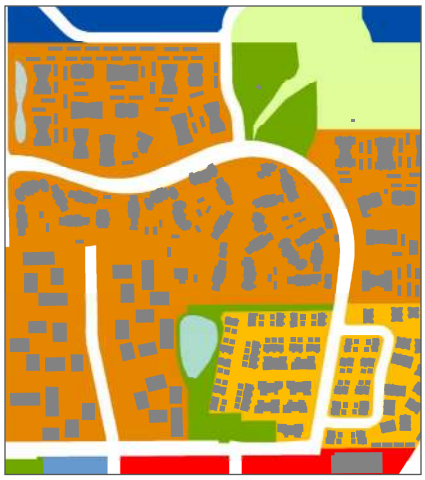
### Table 3-3. Residential Medium Density Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Single-Family Detached; Single-Family Attached; Paired Homes; Duplexes; Triplexes; Fourplexes; Patio Homes; Townhomes |
| Secondary Uses | Non-Commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Congregate Care Facilities; Senior Housing |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 2 stories (not including basements), but allowed up to 3 stories where the existing established context is supportive;<br>Setbacks sufficient for a degree of private open space on each lot, or for townhomes aggregated into a neighborhood scale park;<br>Interconnected street system with alleys |
| Density | Typically up to 8.0 DU/AC; upon City Council approval allowed up to 12.0 DU/AC: (1) where located within a Focus Area identified in Chapter 8; or (2) within one-half mile of a transit station shown in Map 7-1; or (3) where the existing adjacent residential land uses are greater than 8.0 DU/AC. The analysis of compatibility for increased density shall include, but is not limited to the following factors: the presence of residential densities in the surrounding area greater than 8.0 DU/AC, the presence of commercial or mixed-use areas, or access to parks, trails, and open space. |

## SUBURBAN MULTI-FAMILY

This character type accommodates a mix of moderate density housing types including townhomes and multi-family housing. Suburban Multi-Family shall be located along arterial streets, adjacent to transit, and within or near activity centers with a mix of supportive uses. Suburban Multi-Family may function as an edge treatment around Focus Areas to provide a transition to lower density development. Suburban Multi-Family shall incorporate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure with connectivity to adjacent commercial services, parks, open spaces, and trail systems.

*Examples: Arbor Square, Keystone Place, Westcliff Apartments*



### Table 3-4. Suburban Multi-Family Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Multi-Family; Townhomes; Single-Family Attached |
| Secondary Uses | Non-Commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Congregate Care Facilities; Senior Housing |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 3 stories but allowed higher along arterial streets or within Focus Areas;<br>Access to community parks, trails and/open space;<br>Engaged street orientation;<br>Network of connected streets |
| Density | Maximum 18.0 DU/AC |
| Minimum Lot Size | 2.5 gross acres for multi-family uses |

## URBAN MULTI-FAMILY

This character type accommodates a range of higher density housing types from townhomes to apartments, condominiums and similar higher density typologies. Urban Multi-Family shall be located along arterial streets, adjacent to high capacity transit (commuter rail, express bus), and activity centers, where supportive neighborhood-serving uses and employment opportunities are available. Parking areas should primarily be contained in structured parking or located underneath housing. Urban Multi-Family shall be located with pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure with connectivity to adjacent commercial services, parks, open spaces, and trail system.

*Examples: Curate Orchard Town Center, MAA Promenade, Westglenn*

### Table 3-5. Urban Multi-Family Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Multi-Family; Townhomes; Senior Housing |
| Secondary Uses | Non-Commercial Recreational Uses; Child Care Facilities; Group Homes; Live/Work Units |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 4 stories but allowed higher along arterial streets or within Focus Areas and, in all cases, lower heights on edge locations abutting lower density residential uses;<br>Access to community parks, trails and/open space;<br>Gridded street system;<br>Engaged street orientation;<br>Structured or tuck-under parking, with some on-street or surface parking |
| Density | Maximum 36.0 DU/AC |
| Minimum Lot Size | 5.0 gross acres for multi-family |

## MIXED-USE NEIGHBORHOOD

This character type is intended for inclusive neighborhoods with a mix of residential and supportive non-residential uses in a walkable, pedestrian-oriented, village development pattern. Housing types range from medium and small-lot single-family homes to multi-family housing. Mixed or non-residential uses shall be blended with residential development to include offices, personal/business services, retail, and live/work development. An interconnected grid of streets, pedestrian connections and public parks is emphasized. Mixed-Use Neighborhoods incorporate high quality architecture and design elements such as enhanced streetscapes, parks and plaza spaces, and buildings featuring a street orientation. Single-family homes are expected to be in alley-loaded format. The maximum density and intensity for this designation may be applied to an entire master planned development on contiguous parcels with the Mixed-Use Neighborhood designation as opposed to specific sites.

*Examples: Bradburn Village, Hyland Village*

### Table 3-6. Mixed-Use Neighborhood Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Single-Family Detached; Single-Family Attached; Townhomes; Professional Offices; Personal Services; Retail Commercial; Live/Work Units |
| Secondary Uses | Multi-Family; Non-Commercial Recreational Uses; Senior Housing; Child Care Facilities; Live Entertainment; Assembly Uses |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Predominantly 1 to 2 stories but up to 4 stories at key edge locations where higher density is compatible;<br>Civic, park and recreation spaces located throughout the neighborhood;<br>Limited use of boundary walls, and internal fencing is predominantly open;<br>Engaged street orientation, including at entrances;<br>Alley-loaded format within a gridded street network;<br>Blocks feature a mix of housing types |
| Density | Maximum 18.0 DU/AC |

## MIXED-USE ACTIVITY CENTER

This character type establishes future activity centers in the city with access to transit and amenities. Uses may include a mix of residential, retail, office and hotel uses. Along pedestrian-oriented street frontages, ground floor uses should be active, such as retail stores, restaurants, and cafes. A vertical mix of uses is encouraged with retail at the ground level and office, hotel and/or residential on upper floors. Parking is typically structured or below grade, with minimal surface parking and which should be located away from public view. Auto-oriented uses and new standalone uses with drive-throughs are not permitted.

*Examples: Downtown Westminster, The Promenade*

### Table 3-7. Mixed-Use Activity Center Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses[1] | Multi-Family; Townhomes; Professional Offices; Personal Services; Retail Commercial; Live/Work Units; Eating Establishments; Hotels |
| Secondary Uses | Senior Housing; Medical Facilities; Child Care Facilities; Microbreweries; Live Entertainment |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 4 stories where abutting lower density residential, but allowed higher along arterial streets, adjacent to major transit centers, or within Focus Areas;<br>Parking at rear, below grade or in structures;<br>Direct linkages between residential and commercial uses;<br>Gridded street network;<br>Engaged street orientation |
| Density | Maximum 36.0 DU/AC[2] |
| Floor Area Ratio | Minimum 0.75 FAR Residential and Commercial;<br>Maximum 2.5 FAR Residential and Commercial[3] |

*[1] Auto-oriented uses and stand-alone uses with vehicle drive-throughs are prohibited, however, formerly established drive-through uses may be permitted within a larger new development where buildings engage the street and the drive-through use is screened from view.*

*[2] Greater density may be allowed pursuant to adoption of a Specific Plan, see Chapter 9, Section 9.6.*

*[3] Greater maximum FAR may be permitted if otherwise determined by Specific Plan.*

## COMMERCIAL

This character type serves a variety of neighborhood and regional commercial needs and can be comprised of retail stores, eating establishments, banks, supermarkets, and business and professional offices. This character type is primarily intended for retail commercial uses, however, two sub-types of Commercial exist: Service Commercial and Commercial Mixed-use, which are further described below. This section describes the predominant Commercial character type.

Retail uses shall be located within walking distances of residential neighborhoods or in areas where retail uses are already established. Smaller-scale neighborhood commercial development is allowed on collector streets.

Auto service stations, convenience stores, drive-through facilities, and other similar uses may be permitted when incorporated into a larger commercial development but may be limited in quantity and scale and may be prohibited in locations that directly abut residential uses, public/quasi-public or institutional uses, or parks and open spaces if their impacts cannot be sufficiently mitigated. Where allowed, such facilities shall use contextual architectural design and be compatible with surrounding uses. Additionally, the site design shall orient outdoor activities such as gas pumps, lighting, outdoor menu boards and speakers, and vacuums away from residences. Such uses shall incorporate provisions on-site for changing vehicle technologies.

*Examples: Country Club Village, Walnut Creek, Westminster Plaza*

### Table 3-8. Commercial Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Retail Stores; Eating Establishments; Banks; Supermarkets; Professional Offices |
| Secondary Uses | Auto-Oriented Uses; Stand-alone uses with vehicle drive-throughs; Hotels; Child Care Facilities; Microbreweries; Live Entertainment; Medical Facilities |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 3 stories depending on context, however, certain secondary uses may allow greater height;<br>Parking preferred at rear, though some parking in front is typical;<br>Direct linkages between residential and commercial uses;<br>Employee and customer amenity spaces |
| Floor Area Ratio | Maximum 0.45 FAR |

## SERVICE COMMERCIAL

Locations identified for Service Commercial on the Land Use Diagram, allow the Commercial character type uses but also accommodate stand-alone auto-oriented and general commercial uses including auto sales and service, self-storage, nurseries, and wholesale establishments with a lesser degree of limitations as compared to the Commercial character type. High standards for architecture apply to such uses to ensure compatibility with other types of development. Development is generally limited to arterial streets away from gateway locations and major intersections.

*Examples: Church Ranch Crossing, Quail Crossing*

### Table 3-9. Service Commercial Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Auto-oriented uses including sales and services; Convenience Stores; Wholesale; Nurseries; Retail Stores; Eating Establishments; Banks |
| Secondary Uses | Rental Car Facilities; Automotive paint/body repair facilities; Self-Storage; Child Care Facilities; Live Entertainment |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 2 stories, however, certain secondary uses may allow greater height;<br>Loading, service or storage areas screened from view;<br>Employee and customer amenity spaces |
| Floor Area Ratio | Maximum 0.35 FAR |

## COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE

This is a commercial character type, however, the Land Use Diagram has designated locations where a commercial property may support the concepts of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan by adding residential uses to activate commercial areas and contribute to revitalization of commercial corridors. Stand-alone commercial use or a combination of residential with commercial use is permitted. Where residential development is proposed, a mix of uses is required to achieve the maximum allowed density with a minimum 0.10 FAR of commercial use (retail, offices or personal/business services). Vertical mixed-use is preferred; however, where not feasible, residential development may be horizontally integrated with commercial uses up to 24 units per acre within an ODP. Parking should be located behind buildings, below grade or in structures to ensure active uses face onto public streets. New auto-oriented uses and drive-throughs are not permitted when a mixed-use project includes residential uses.

*Examples: Orchard Town Center, Shoenberg Farm*

### Table 3-10. Commercial Mixed-Use Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Multi-Family; Townhomes; Single-Family Attached; Professional Offices; Personal Services; Retail Commercial; Live/Work Units; Eating Establishments |
| Secondary Uses | Hotels; Senior Housing; Medical Facilities; Auto-Oriented Uses[1]; Child Care Facilities; Microbreweries; Live Entertainment |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 3 story depending on context where abutting lower density residential but allowed higher along arterial streets or in Focus Areas;<br>Parking at rear, below grade or in structures;<br>Direct linkages between residential and commercial uses;<br>Engaged street orientation;<br>Employee and customer amenity spaces |
| Density | Maximum 24.0 DU/AC (horizontal mixed-use);<br>36.0 DU/AC (vertical mixed-use) |
| Floor Area Ratio | Minimum 0.10 FAR Commercial with Residential<br>Maximum 2.0 FAR |

[1] *New auto-oriented uses are not permitted as part of a mixed-use project that includes residential uses.*

## NEIGHBORHOOD OFFICE

This character type accommodates offices for medical, legal, banking, insurance, and similar professional office uses. This designation is intended to be compatible with abutting residential and other sensitive uses. A limited amount of retail uses integrated into the office building is permitted as a portion of the project gross floor area, or GFA.

*Examples: Sheridan Park, Westpark Center*

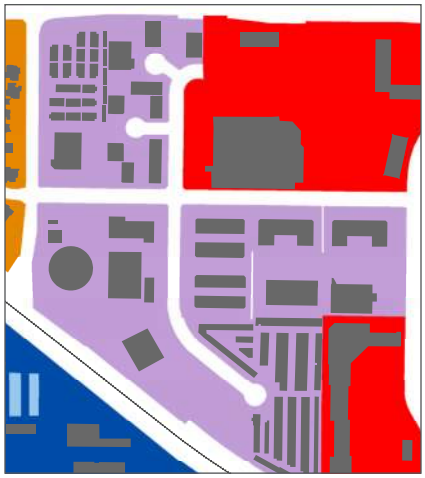
### Table 3-11. Neighborhood Office Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Professional Offices |
| Secondary Uses[1] | Support Commercial (eating establishments; pharmacies, personal and business services, office supply); Medical Facilities |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 3 story however certain primary uses may be allowed greater height;<br>Maximum 15% of GFA support commercial uses or 10,000 square feet, whichever is less;<br>Employee and customer amenity spaces |
| Floor Area Ratio | Maximum 0.35 FAR |

*[1] May be allowed through the city's development review process when developed in conjunction with, and accessory to, office buildings.*

## EMPLOYMENT - FLEX

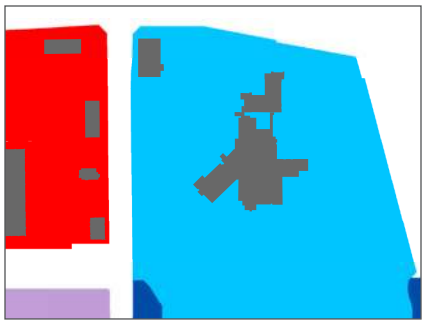
This character type provides and protects land for flexible employment uses including offices, research and development facilities, and supportive uses. In general, office uses predominate this category. Light industrial uses (including warehouses, distribution, and wholesalers) may be allowed when located away from residential areas and adequately buffered from sensitive land uses, as shown in Map 3-2, or Flex/Light Industrial designated locations in the prior Comprehensive Plan. Manufacturing and assembly space is permitted when inclusive of storefront/showroom space for offices, sales or customer service. Uses that create objectionable levels of noise, vibration, odor, glare or hazards are not permitted. Outdoor storage must be screened from view. Hotel uses that support employment uses may be permitted through a master planned development. Support commercial uses integrated into employment buildings are permitted up to 10% of GFA. The city may impose stricter design standards for more intense uses.



*Examples: Church Ranch Corporate Center, Park Centre, Westmoor*

### Table 3-12. Employment - Flex Development Standards

| Land Use | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Professional Offices; Research and Development Labs; Flex Office; Incubator Space |
| Secondary Uses | Manufacturing; Warehousing; Fabrication; Repair Shops; Wholesale Distributors; Production; Medical Facilities; Hotels; Support Commercial (eating establishments, pharmacies, business services, office supply) |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 1 to 4 stories but may be allowed higher in Focus or Transition Areas or where adjacent to expressways;<br>Employee and customer amenity spaces;<br>Loading, service or storage areas screened from view;<br>Architectural detailing for elevations within public view;<br>Maximum 10% of GFA for support commercial or 15,000 square feet, whichever is less |
| Floor Area Ratio | Maximum 1.0 FAR (primary uses)<br>Maximum 0.5 FAR (standalone secondary uses) |



## EMPLOYMENT - OFFICE/INSTITUTIONAL CAMPUS

This character type identifies areas where destination employment and institutional uses are appropriate. These areas are located along major transportation corridors with high visibility and accessibility. Employment uses are emphasized, including high-rise or campus-like office developments, medical centers, and supportive research and development uses. Accessory or small-scale supporting retail or personal/business service uses integrated into office buildings are permitted up to 10% of GFA. Hotel uses that support employment uses may be permitted through a master planned development. Strategically located assisted living/long term care facilities may be permitted through a master planned development where a full-service community hospital is established, subject to resource and infrastructure availability, and such residential uses may be limited in consideration of the composition of the employment area and sensitivity of adjacent uses. The desired type of development is multistory buildings served by a mix of structured and surface parking.

*Examples: Circle Point, St. Anthony North*

### Table 3-13. Employment - Office/Institutional Campus Development Standards

| **Land Use** | |
|---|---|
| Primary Uses | Professional Offices; Research and Development Labs; Hospitals; Medical Facilities |
| Secondary Uses | Hotel; Manufacturing[1]; Warehouse[1]; Production[1]; Support Commercial (eating establishments, pharmacies, business services, office supply); Overnight Stays; Rehabilitation Facilities; Hospice; Long-Term Nursing/Care Facilities (up to 18.0 DU/AC) |
| **Development Characteristics** | |
| Form and Guidelines | Buildings 2 to 6 stories but may be allowed higher in Focus Areas or adjacent to expressways;<br>Maximum 10% of GFA for support commercial or 15,000 square feet whichever is less;<br>Buildings arranged to create a walkable environment;<br>Limited surface parking;<br>Employee and customer amenity spaces;<br>Loading, service or storage areas screened from view |
| Floor Area Ratio | Minimum 0.3 FAR<br>Maximum 2.0 FAR |

[1] *Max 10% of GFA for manufacturing, warehouse, and/or production uses unless otherwise authorized by City Council*

## OPEN SPACE/MAJOR CREEK CORRIDOR

This character type identifies publicly-owned and managed areas preserved for passive recreational use and protection of natural habitat. Passive public use includes hiking, biking, nature study, and photography. Open spaces may include scenic vistas, floodplains, trail corridors, farmlands, and highly visible natural areas. These lands are preserved and managed in a natural condition. Major Creek Corridors are locations within the 100-year floodplain located on private land. Flood corridor areas remain undeveloped to protect property from flood damage, and to preserve the riparian habitat and wildlife associated with the area.

## PARKS/GOLF COURSES

This character type applies to public or private parks, golf courses or greenbelts. These lands serve both active and passive recreation needs of the community with play areas, fields, trails and natural features, and amenities.

## PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC

This character type is intended for uses related to general community services, such as public safety facilities, schools and institutions of higher learning, child care facilities, places of worship, community centers, hospitals, municipal facilities, and cemeteries. Future public and quasi-public uses such as private schools, places of worship and recreation facilities, although not shown specifically on the Land Use Diagram, are generally allowed in all residential character types subject to city review and approval.

## AGRICULTURE/CONSERVATION AREA

This character type is identified only in locations outside of municipal boundaries to inform consideration of future annexation requests. These areas provide for preservation of crop agriculture, ranching and related agri-business practices. Where residential uses are permitted, densities should be sufficiently low to allow continuation of agricultural uses. Limited commercial uses directly serving agricultural uses such as farmers markets, feed stores, nurseries, and agri-tourism facilities may be permitted.

# 3.3 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan. They are not inclusive of all actions and options.

### RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- Specific Area Plans

*See complete list of plans and policy documents in Ch. 9.*

### CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

- Education
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Health
- Resilience
- Safety
- Climate

## BALANCED LAND USES

**Goal LU-1 Achieve a balance of uses in the city, including employment, residential, cultural, destination attractions, and retail, as well as a full range of amenities necessary to support a vibrant and resilient community.**

1.1 Ensure land uses and zoning districts are consistent with the Land Use Diagram in Map 3-2 and land use character types in Section 3.2.

1.2 Evaluate the impact of new development to the city's future water supply and infrastructure system, considering land use, intensity, and proposed conservation measures.

**Goal LU-2 Support a broad range of employment, service, and office land uses to strengthen the city's economic base and opportunities for economic growth.**

2.1 Continue to diversify commercial, light industrial, and institutional uses in the city to insulate the city's fiscal base from downturns in individual markets.

2.2 Promote the development of employment uses in areas with convenient access to commercial and business services, employee housing opportunities, transit, and mixed-use-activity centers with an emphasis on Focus Areas and employment-oriented Transition Areas.

2.3 Provide opportunities for greater use of flex employment spaces through appropriately mapped land use character types.

2.4 Support options for home-based work activities including accessory dwelling units and live/work units through updates to codes and design standards.

**Goal LU-3 Foster a sustainable mix of commercial and institutional uses accessible to neighborhoods and business districts.**

3.1 Establish and support community and neighborhood activity centers that provide access to commercial and professional services, dining and shopping options, and an identifiable center (public space, intensification or focus of activity within a defined area).

3.2 Attract experiential retail uses to the city that draw additional businesses, development investment, employers, and visitors.

3.3 Support the Neighborhood Unit concept through characteristics of a 20-minute neighborhood, where residents have access to retail services, schools, and other services.

## FOCUS AREAS AND ACTIVITY CENTERS

**Goal LU-4 Create and foster unique districts and internally cohesive employment and activity areas throughout the city.**

4.1 Ensure that commercial and business centers have a distinct identity and character, and are generally compatible through cohesive site planning, landscaping, and architectural design.

4.2 Encourage local, unique shopping and dining options, particularly in Focus and Transition Areas and smaller, mixed-use neighborhood centers like those in Bradburn Village.

4.3 Encourage the establishment and intensification of activity centers that provide a mix of uses, transit, and attractive, walkable environments.

**Goal LU-5 Cultivate activity centers that create a sense of place and concentrated nodes to support transit per the Transportation and Mobility Plan.**

5.1 Integrate a range of housing types, supportive commercial uses, and ample public amenities and spaces to create and reinforce neighborhood units.

5.2 Encourage a mix of uses in the heart of activity centers. Providing an active frontage along major pedestrian connections and corridors should be a priority.

5.3 Create a sense of place both through placement of active uses and through the design of frontages, plazas and the public realm.

### 20-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD

20-minute neighborhoods are places where residents have easy, convenient access to many of the places and services they use daily including grocery stores, restaurants, schools, and parks. They are characterized by an accessible mix of commercial, recreational, civic, and residential uses that are generally within a one-mile walking distance.

### LEED (LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN)

"LEED" is a rating system that integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building into a national system for neighborhood design. LEED certification provides independent, third-party verification that a development's location and design meet accepted high levels of environmentally responsible, sustainable development.

## SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

**Goal LU-6 Encourage sustainable design practices and construction in all aspects of physical planning in the city, with a focus on site, landscape, and building design. (Also see conservation and sustainability goals in Ch. 2: Utilities and Resources)**

6.1 Promote development that is walkable, accessible to transit, and supportive of the locational concepts of LEED-ND (Neighborhood Development) through the Neighborhood Unit concept and 20-minute communities.

6.2 Encourage a resilient, equitable, and reliable energy future powered by renewable energy as described in the Westminster Sustainability Plan.

6.3 Perpetuate the legacy of Westminster's natural resources by conserving and maintaining thriving natural systems and enhancing city infrastructure.

6.4 Integrate and implement sustainable design principles throughout the Westminster Municipal Code, Sustainability Plan, and future planning efforts to include waste management, building safety, energy efficiency, universal design, and access for pedestrians and bicyclists.

6.5 Encourage green building practices to the extent practicable and financially feasible, including elements such as green infrastructure, energy efficiency, solar access, and construction techniques to ensure resistance to moisture, wind, and fire damage.

**Goal LU-7 Develop a built environment that is integrated with open spaces and allows for the preservation of natural areas and creek corridors.**

7.1 Pursue development patterns that can preserve open space lands and natural areas.

7.2 Limit impact to water quality and natural habitat through land acquisition, watershed protection, and annexations adjacent to Standley Lake and other water resources.

7.3 Integrate the parks, open space, and trails network into new development, infill, and redevelopment areas to encourage walkable neighborhoods with access to parks and trails.

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

**Goal LU-8 Support a consistent and predictable development process with a high level of clarity in standards, combined with innovative development practices.**

8.1 Maintain land development regulations and processes that result in quality development and address needs and concerns of the community.

8.2 Increase transparency to the greater community through opportunities to learn about new development at an early stage and codify design standards in an accessible format.

8.3 Incorporate concern for long-term costs of maintenance for owners and/or tenants in the development of new standards relative to sustainability, resiliency, and energy.

**Goal LU-9 Maintain the city's high-quality design and development character.**

9.1 Promote excellence in site planning, architecture, and the design of landscaping, lighting and signage in all types of development by means of design standards for each type of use.

9.2 Use development standards and guidelines to promote development of neighborhood units with access to amenities and services, and ensure high quality of design.

9.3 Encourage development that maintains the enhanced public realm and architectural character of the community while considering limited natural resources and issues of diversity, equity, and inclusivity.

9.4 Provide pedestrian-oriented and accessible amenities and design in new development, such as outdoor seating, plazas, public art, ground-floor retail, shade facilities, and enhanced transit shelters and amenities.

## REGIONAL COLLABORATION

**Goal LU-10 Coordinate planning efforts with surrounding communities, counties, regional agencies, and special districts to support regional needs.**

10.1 Ensure new development and land uses are consistent with applicable area and regional plans and regulations.

10.2 Work with Jefferson County to ensure existing development and proposed development is compatible with Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport operations.

10.3 Continue to work with partnering communities in the Denver Regional Council of Governments Mile High Compact to plan for the long-term growth vision established by the Metro Vision 2040.

10.4 Consider strategic annexations on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration alignment with city objectives, fiscal impacts, viability of municipal services within accepted standards, availability of infrastructure and utilities to serve the area, connectivity between new developments, economic diversity, and compatibility of land uses with contiguous development. See Appendix A Annexation Analysis.

10.5 Actively participate in regional efforts to address issues of housing affordability and homelessness through initiatives that integrate land use and transportation planning, as well as access to employment, education, and health services in a comprehensive manner.

10.6 Work with Adams County and/or Hyland Hills Parks and Recreation District to identify potential park and recreation sites for areas south of 92nd Avenue.

# 4.0 Transportation, Mobility, and Connections

This chapter provides an overview of Westminster's transportation network including services and infrastructure, with a more detailed evaluation of the current and future conditions of Westminster's transportation network included in the Transportation & Mobility Plan (TMP). This chapter also includes transportation-supportive goals and policies relevant to the Comprehensive Plan; additional goals policies, and strategies are established in related plans including the TMP, Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan, and Sustainability Plan. The most current transportation-related data, goals and actions included in the Comprehensive Plan will be reflected in the TMP, superseding those listed in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan will be updated periodically to reflect the current TMP.

# 4.1 GOALS & POLICIES

The following seven goals were created through the development of the TMP, using elements of existing transportation plans, Westminster's Strategic Plan, community and staff input, and transportation industry best practices.

The goals will help guide the development of policies, recommendations, and implementation. The goals will also be used to inform the prioritization of projects and resources.

- **Connect:** Develop a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that includes convenient, safe, and accessible transportation options for all and integrates land use.
- **Thrive:** Support the community's economic resilience, environment, public health, and quality of life for all community members.
- **Protect:** Reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries by improving the safety and comfort for all modes of transportation.
- **Maintain:** Maintain the city's transportation assets and optimize the use of the transportation network.
- **Fund:** Pursue revenue resources to build, maintain, and operate new and existing transportation infrastructure and services.
- **Collaborate:** Identify and utilize opportunities to coordinate projects and funding with local, regional, state, and private partners.
- **Innovate:** Apply creative, sustainable, and cost-effective solutions to address transportation and mobility needs.

The Comprehensive Plan will be updated periodically to mirror any revisions to the goals or policies in the TMP.

This section provides comprehensive planning policies to move each TMP goal forward, in addition to the policies, strategies, and actions established in the TMP. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies in this Comprehensive Plan articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how to achieve the goals and how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan, a companion document to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

### WESTMINSTER'S TRANSPORTATION VISION

*Westminster is supported by an inclusive and equitable multimodal transportation network that provides safe and well-connected transportation and mobility choices to connect all people to local and regional destinations.*

This transportation vision was developed as part of the Transportation & Mobility Plan.

### CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

- Education
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Health
- Resilience
- Safety
- Climate

## CONNECT

**Goal TM-1 Develop a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that includes convenient, safe, and accessible transportation options for all and integrates land use.**

1.1 Implement safe and connected access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel, as described in the Complete Streets policy in the TMP.

1.2 Continue development of a multimodal transportation network that supports the movement of people, goods, and services.

1.3 Develop a safe, comprehensive, and connected on- and off-street bicycle network consistent with the TMP recommendations.

1.4 Create and enhance a safe and accessible pedestrian network that ensures walkability and connectivity within the city and to adjacent communities.

1.5 Build new development and retrofit existing infrastructure and services to accommodate all modes of transportation to ensure accessibility, connectivity, and safety.

1.6 Recognize the importance of regional and local partnerships to connect adjacent communities.

1.7 Ensure private partners support access to transit, sidewalk and trails through implementation of first and last mile connections and services.

1.8 Continue corridor planning efforts to correlate existing community needs, future development and the functional integrity of the key travel corridors.

## THRIVE

**Goal TM-2 Support the community's economic resilience, environment, public health, and quality of life for all community members.**

2.1 Link new development to safe and accessible sidewalks that connect to adjacent bus stops and community destinations and amenities.

2.2 Provide a transportation network that supports the reliable movement of goods and services.

2.3 Incorporate transit stops into the design and function of adjacent land uses and through other placemaking opportunities.

### NORTHWEST RAIL

The first section of the Northwest Rail, known as the B Line, currently operates between Denver and Westminster Station. RTD continues to identify options to extend Northwest Rail up to 35 miles through Broomfield, Louisville, and Boulder to Longmont. A station is planned at 88th Avenue adjacent to Downtown Westminster and a station has been studied in the vicinity of Church Ranch. The timing to establish this service as well as the frequency of operations will determine when and what types of land use changes may be appropriate around these stations to support the goals of this and other chapters of the Plan.

### FIRST AND LAST MILE

Travel to/from a transit stop or station is just as important as the transit trip. If potential transit riders are unable to access a stop or station due to poor infrastructure quality or missing pedestrian or bicycle connections, transit becomes ineffective. More communities, including Westminster, are focusing on ways to improve the first and final mile transportation options for transit users to ensure they can easily access stops and stations. RTD, in coordination with agencies and jurisdictions, including Westminster, developed a First and Last Mile Strategic Plan which identifies way to improve first and final mile trips.

2.4 Create a strong sense of entry into and passage through the city at key locations and along key corridors identified on Map 7-1.

2.5 Develop and maintain enhanced, cohesive streetscaping along major corridors, with consideration of the visual and physical character.

2.6 Provide and improve transportation options that protect the environment, support public health, and enhance the quality of life for residents and businesses.

2.7 Explore and identify partnerships to implement strategies that ensure socially equitable transportation.

## PROTECT

**Goal TM-3 Reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries by improving the safety and comfort for all modes of transportation.**

3.1 Implement street design and improvements that enhance safety and comfort for all users.

3.2 Ensure existing and future transportation improvements support accessibility for all users by meeting or exceeding standards including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

3.3 Coordinate within the city and with other agencies to reduce and eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries across all modes, as identified in the TMP and Vision Zero plans, goals, and initiatives.

## MAINTAIN

**Goal TM-4 Maintain the city's transportation assets and optimize the use of the transportation network.**

4.1 Invest in the maintenance of the city's transportation system and supporting infrastructure and technology.

4.2 Incorporate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs and strategies that maximize existing transportation infrastructure (including the power and broadband utilities within rights of way), as part of development plan review and implementation, capital improvements programming, and preparation of specific and area plans and corridor plans.

4.3 Ensure development is supported by appropriate vehicle and bicycle parking requirements as defined in city plans and standards.

## FUND

**Goal TM-5 Pursue revenue resources to build, maintain, and operate new and existing transportation infrastructure and services.**

5.1 Leverage existing partnerships and pursue new opportunities to maximize funding to improve transportation infrastructure, programs, and services.

5.2 Pursue new, sustainable, and innovative revenue resources for transportation infrastructure, programs, and services.

5.3 Require new development to provide multimodal transportation improvements necessary to accommodate trips generated by the project.

## COLLABORATE

**Goal TM-6 Identify and utilize opportunities to coordinate projects and funding with local, regional, state, and private partners.**

6.1 Coordinate with other agencies, such as CDOT, RTD, DRCOG, and adjacent communities, to implement a seamless and safe multimodal transportation network and reduce congestion, as identified in the TMP.

6.2 Coordinate with public and private partners to support access to transit through implementation of first and last mile connections and services.

6.3 Pursue partnership and funding opportunities to expand and improve the transit network and service.

## INNOVATE

**Goal TM-7 Apply creative, sustainable, and cost-effective solutions to address transportation and mobility needs.**

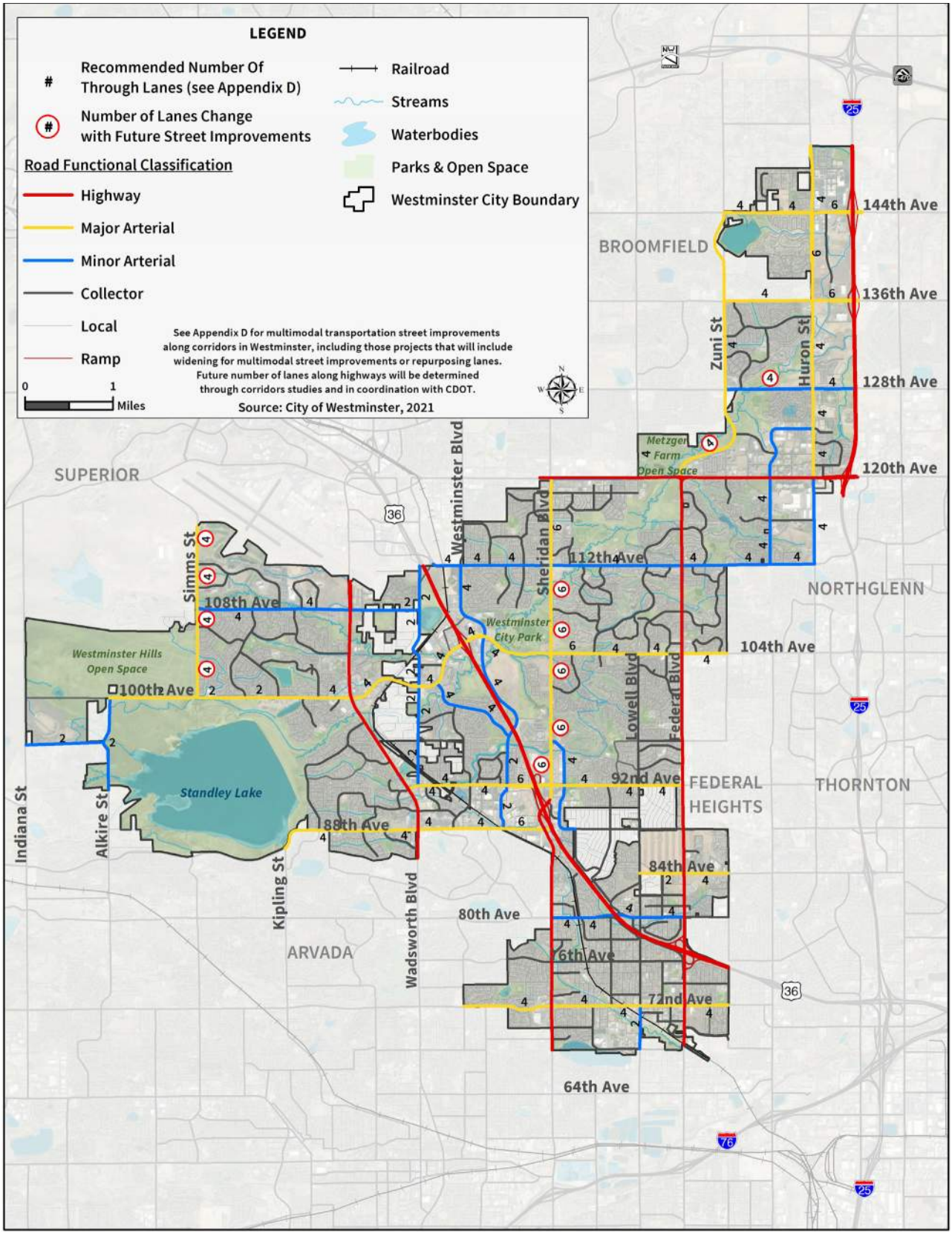
7.1 Explore and evaluate emerging technologies and their potential role in advancing Westminster's transportation system and maintenance of assets.

7.2 Pursue creative partnerships and funding sources to implement innovative transportation technologies.

### TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)

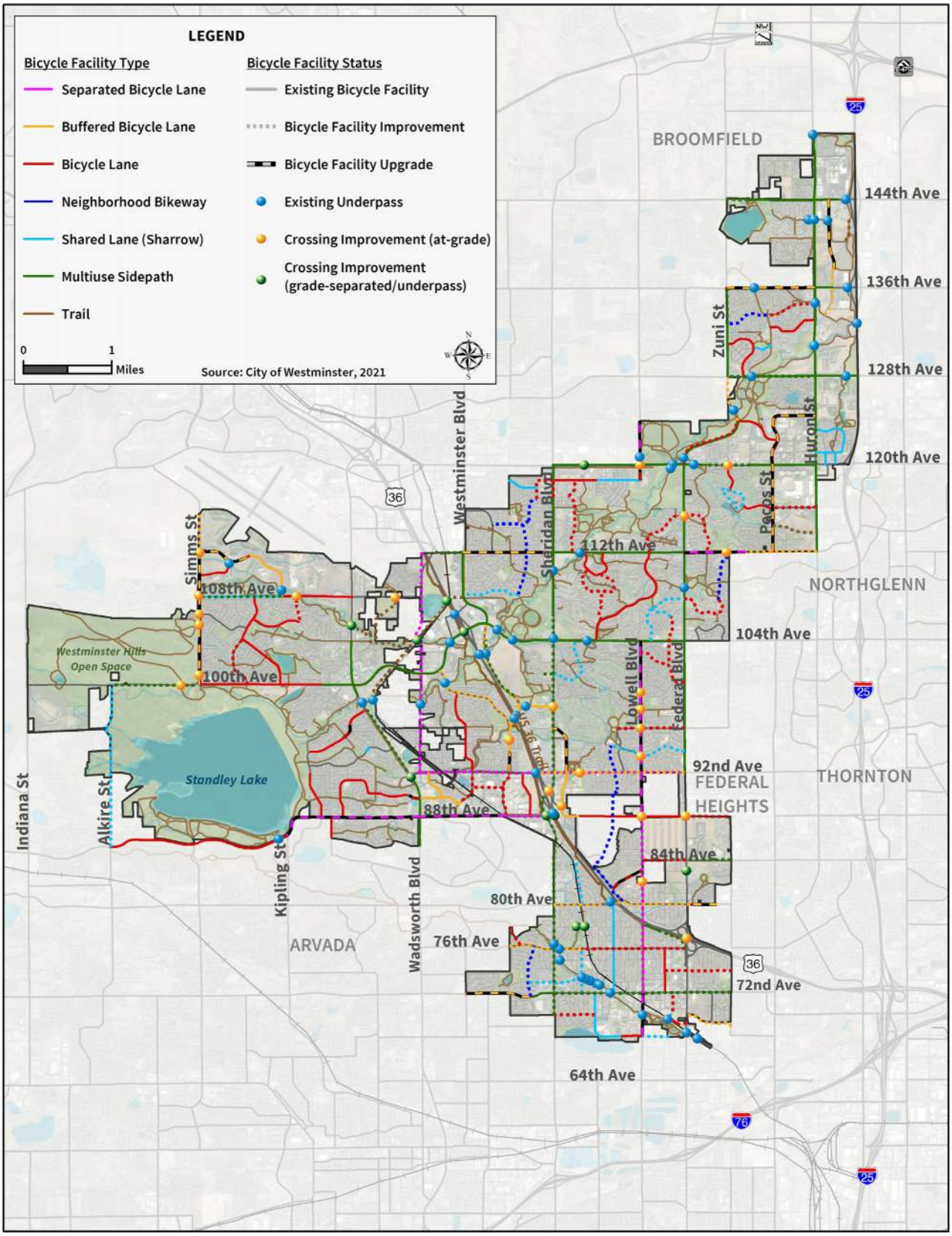
Transportation Demand Management (TDM) refers to strategies, policies, and programs that help people use the transportation system more efficiently, while reducing traffic congestion, vehicle emissions, and fuel consumption. By providing transportation options and amenities, TDM can encourage the use of modes of transportation other than single-occupant vehicles.

## Map 4-1. Westminster's Master Street Network



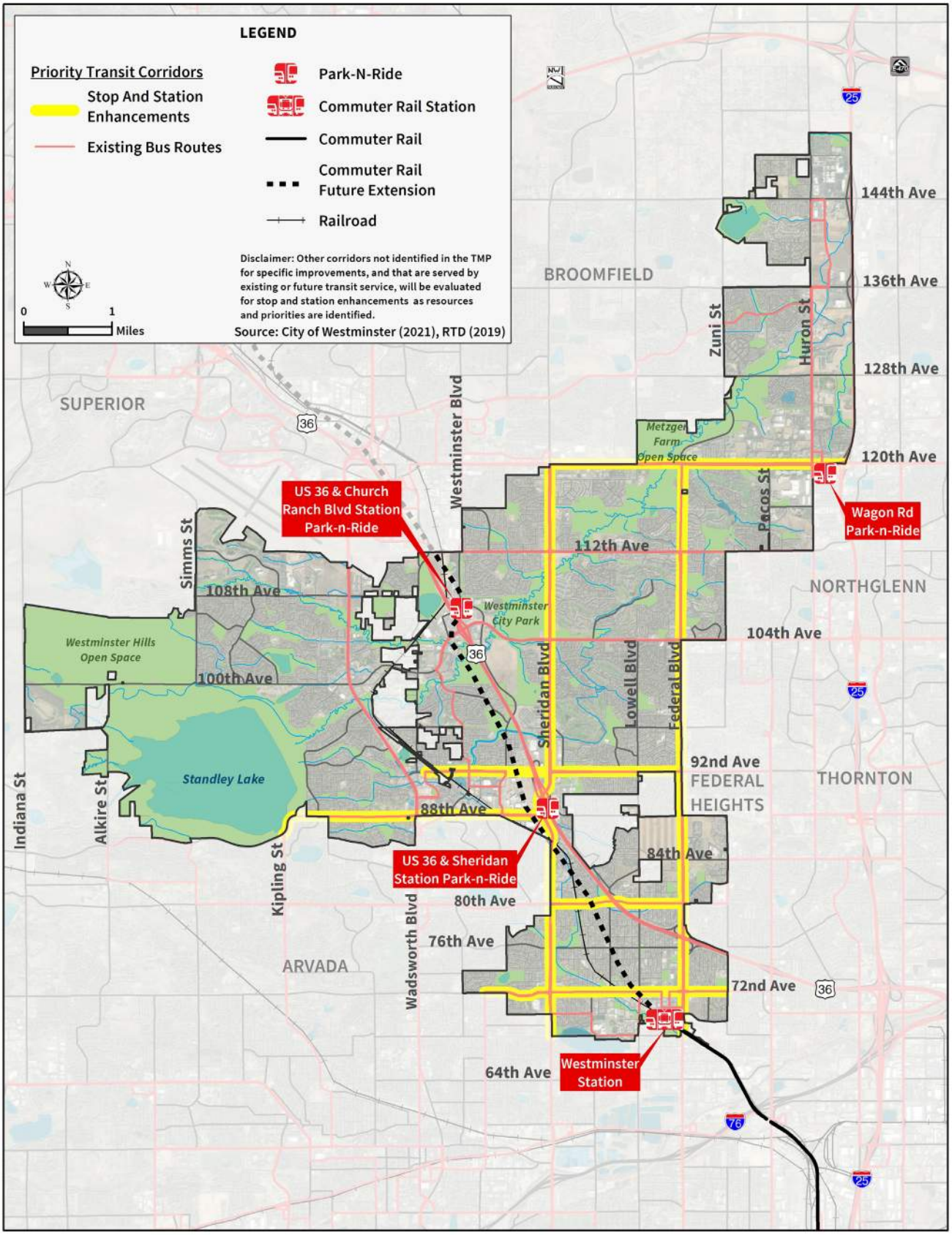

*Transit, bicycle and pedestrian, other as well as additional details such as lane counts and street cross sections are found in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.*

## Map 4-2. Bicycle Network and Improvements




*Lane counts and street cross sections will be found in the Transportation & Mobility Plan.*

## Map 4-3. Priority Transit Corridors for Stop and Station Enhancements



# 5.0 Health, Wellness, and Community Services

Westminster promotes a high quality of life and fosters a safe, inclusive, and healthy community. Key elements of this include opportunities for residents, visitors and employees to improve their personal wellness—physically, emotionally and intellectually—as well as public safety services to support the city's neighborhoods and activity centers. Promoting arts and culture is also part of the city's overall strategy to create a unique sense of place. Poverty, food insecurity, affordable housing, and homelessness continue to be a challenge to overall quality of life, resilience, and sense of community in Westminster and this Plan, as well as the Sustainability Plan and various city programs, identify strategies to support vulnerable populations. Many of these objectives are achieved through collaborative partnerships with public, private or nonprofit entities. This chapter supports the *Healthy Places* plan cornerstone and establishes a policy framework for the management of Westminster's parks, open space, recreation and libraries, arts and culture, and public safety to ensure the city's core services continue to support the needs of the community.

# 5.1 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan.

## RECREATION AND LITERACY

**Goal HWS-1 Provide convenient recreational, wellness and literacy opportunities for all Westminster residents.**

1.1 As new development occurs, evaluate opportunities to contribute to the provision and maintenance of adequate parks, recreation facilities, libraries, and open spaces to meet the needs of its new residents and minimize level of service impacts to existing parks, recreation and library facilities.

1.2 Encourage design options that allow community gathering spaces in central locations in support of the Neighborhood Unit concept that are capable of supporting cultural and recreational activities appropriate to the area.

1.3 Ensure equitable access to recreation, wellness, and literacy through partnerships with Apex Parks & Recreation District, Adams County, Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District, Jefferson County, and Anythink Libraries.

## PARK LAND

**Goal HWS-2 Provide new smaller, high quality parks that address the need of high-density and mixed-use developments.**

2.1 Promote the development of park facilities that encourage pedestrian and bicycle access, provide a range of services and meet the needs of a variety of all ages and abilities.

2.2 Plan for new parks and civic spaces in Focus Areas as build out continues that support redevelopment efforts and add to the image of the city.

## WELLNESS AND HEALTHY LIVING

**Goal HWS-3 Support access to healthy and culturally relevant food and other support services.**

3.1 Encourage local food production and other supportive actions identified in the Sustainability Plan.

3.2 Encourage improved access to healthy foods.

3.3 Incentivize community agricultural production, green space, gardening, and healthy food outlets in housing developments.

## OPEN SPACE AND TRAILS

**Goal HWS-4 Ensure access to and maintenance of the city's open space and trails network and preservation of sensitive habitats and environments.**

4.1 Provide easy and safe access to the city's open space and trail network.

4.2 Ensure the city's open space and trails network is well-maintained and continues to preserve sensitive habitats and environments.

## ARTS AND CULTURE

**Goal HWS-5 Reflect the diversity of the community through public art and cultural programming.**

5.1 Encourage the appropriate placement of public art, in key public locations, including plazas, gateways into the city, streetscapes, and individual developments.

5.2 Integrate public art and visually distinct designs into infrastructure that visually connect with nearby districts or neighborhoods.

5.3 Promote arts and cultural districts and amenities as destinations.

## SCHOOLS

**Goal HWS-6 Support access to high quality educational resources and programs for all community members.**

6.1 Work cooperatively with the local school districts to ensure that sufficient facilities are available to accommodate projected school enrollment in the community and that beneficial reuse options are available where facilities are planned for closure due to falling enrollment.

6.2 Continue to work with the school districts to optimize community use of school facilities, including school playgrounds and sports facilities as well as auditoriums or cafeterias to host community meetings.

6.3 Encourage collaboration between the city and school districts to support enrichment activities and mentorship/internship programs for students.

6.4 Support alternative funding mechanisms for local school districts due to decreasing opportunities to collect School Land Dedication fees as the city nears buildout.

### RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan
- Library Master Plan
- Open Space Stewardship Plan
- Individual park master plans
- Public Safety plans
- Arts & Culture Plan
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- American with Disabilities Act Transition Plan

*See complete list of plans and policy documents in Ch. 9.*

### CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

- Education
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Health
- Resilience
- Safety
- Climate

## ISO RATING

WFD has achieved the best possible fire protection class rating issued by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) - an ISO 1 rating. The Class 1 rating is important to property owners who may now see a reduction in their insurance premiums. The new rating is a prestigious designation that few fire protection districts in the nation have achieved. The ISO rating is evaluated approximately every five years. Moving to a "Class 1" places WFD in the prestigious group of only 240 departments throughout the country with an ISO rating of 1.

## CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

A chronically homeless individual or family has a head of household who has been living outdoors, in a shelter or area not intended for human habitation for at least a year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years. To be chronically homeless, the person must also have a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental health illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or a chronic physical illness or disability.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

**Goal HWS-7 Maintain a safe, secure community with high quality police, fire, and emergency services.**

7.1 Continue to provide response to all emergencies and achieve response time goals set by each department.

7.2 Support community involvement in emergency preparation and response through business and resident outreach efforts.

7.3 Ensure current and future residential, employment and visitor populations are adequately served.

7.4 Coordinate with Police during development reviews to ensure the environmental and structural design is advantageous for crime prevention and not a hindrance to police response.

7.5 Continue working to improve efficiency and interoperability for police and fire services with other local jurisdictions.

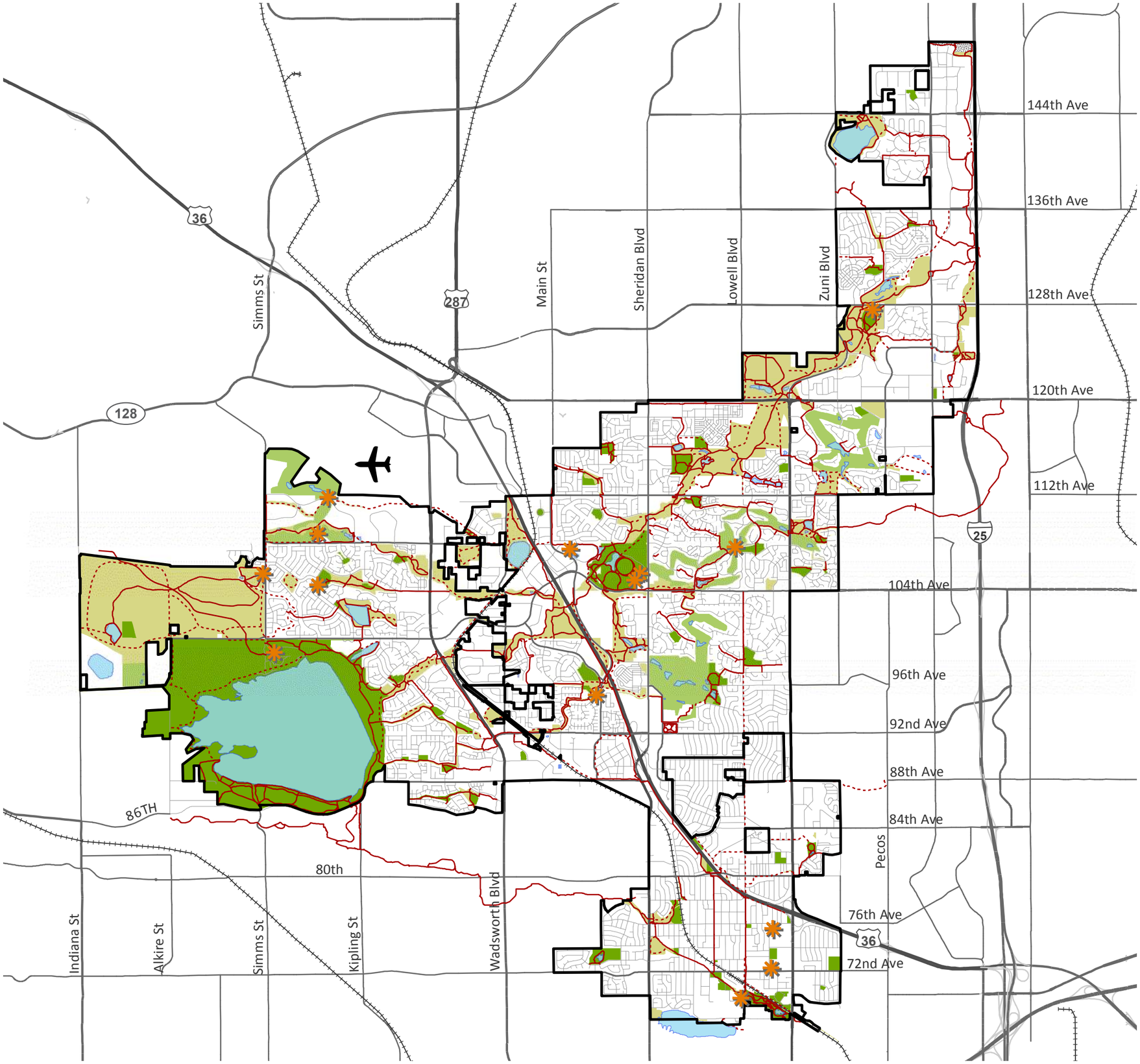
## PUBLIC HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**Goal HWS-8 Promote exceptional public health and assistance programs to support residents with financial, social, physical, and wellness needs.**

8.1 Coordinate across city departments, programs, and facilities for efficiency and effectiveness of community services.

8.2 Connect community members with city and external resources through information distribution, especially focused on minority populations with cultural or language barriers.

8.3 Maintain and expand access to homeless services through partnerships with other governmental entities and non-profits that provide access to supportive services as well as temporary sheltering and permanent housing.



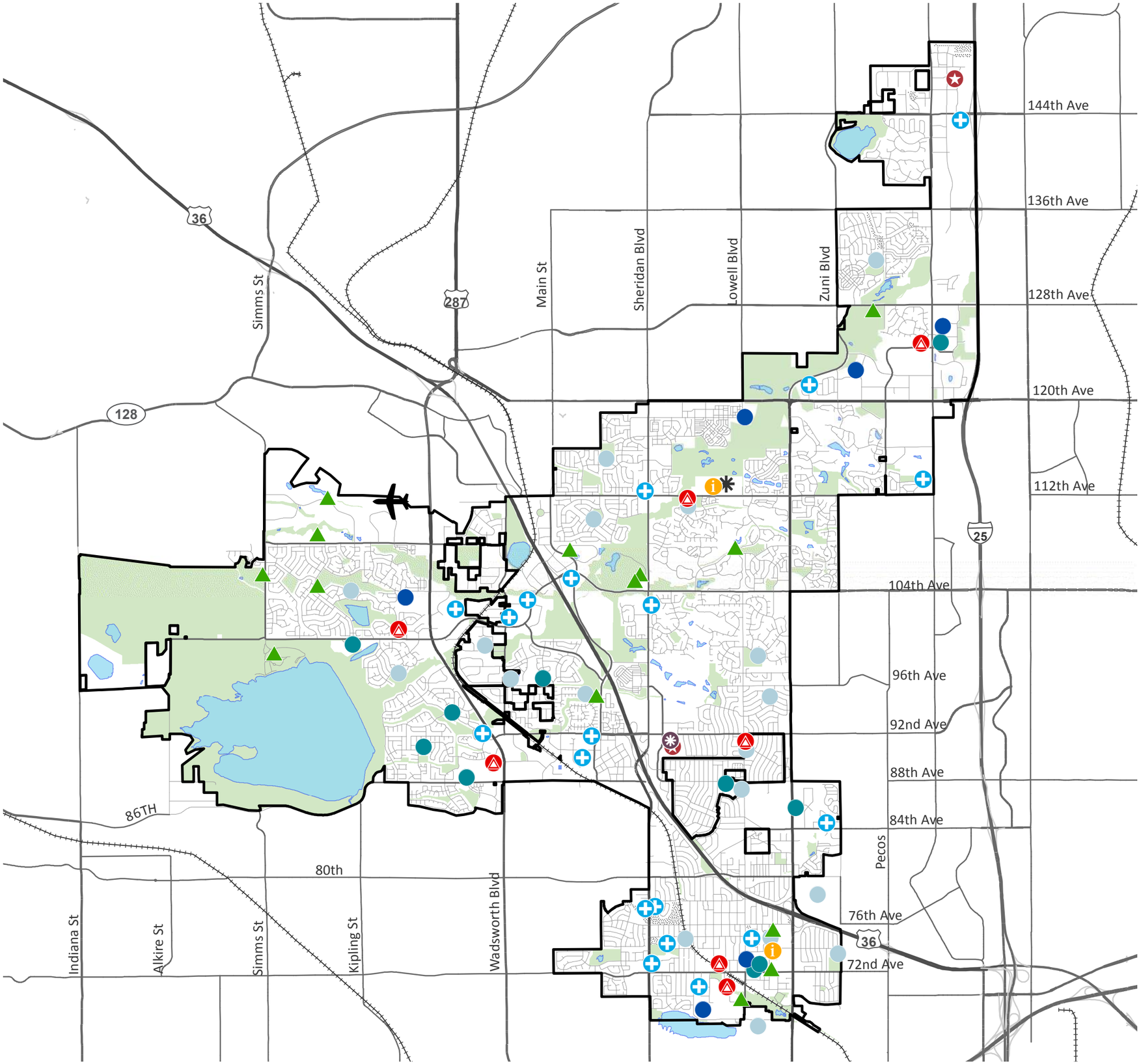

## Map 5-1. Parks, Open Space, and Trails System

**Legend**

- Parks
- Open Space
- Golf Courses
- Recreation Facilities
- Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Westminster

N

0 0.5 1 2 Miles




## Map 5-2. Community Facilities

**Legend**

- City Hall
- FireStations
- Police Facilities
- Libraries
- Recreation Facilities
- Health Facilities

**Public Schools**

- Elementary
- Middle
- High
- College
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Parks and Open Space
- Westminster

N

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

# 6.0 Economic Resilience

The land use designations and allowable densities reflected in the Comprehensive Plan play a direct role in the current and long-term economic and fiscal health of the city. Without a balanced and diversified mix of land uses and densities, the city cannot facilitate the type of activities necessary to accommodate continued economic growth and fiscal sustainability.

The chapter includes identification of planning issues related to economic growth and fiscal sustainability, leading to specific Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that can be used in establishing direction for land use planning consistent with the city's vision and goals.

# 6.1 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan.

## BALANCED ECONOMY

**Goal ER-1 Foster and maintain a balanced local economy with a range of employment types.**

1.1 Focus on primary employers and businesses that provide jobs that pay higher than the counties' average annual wages.

1.2 Leverage Westminster's economic advantages in targeted key industries by incorporating industry-specific development characteristics into land use and infrastructure planning.

1.3 Maintain strong business relationships through retention efforts.

1.4 Continue to provide business assistance, information, and support.

1.5 Explore opportunities for partnerships with the private sector, counties, and other regional partners.

1.6 Encourage business programs focused on renewable energy, water conservation, clean technology, waste reduction, and recycling in accordance with Sustainability Plan policies and where consistent with the city's industry and employment composition.

### RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Citywide Retail Strategy
- Industry Base Study
- Leeds School of Business Tax Projections Report
- Leeds School of Business Employment Study
- Housing Needs Assessment
- Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- Transportation and Mobility Plan
- Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Urban Renewal Plans

*See complete list of plans and policy documents in Ch. 9.*

### CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

- Education
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Health
- Resilience
- Safety
- Climate

## FOCUS AREA PLACEMAKING

**Goal ER-2 Support vibrant mixed-use centers in Focus Areas with a range of uses and walkable street patterns with an engaging public realm.**

2.1 Continue to promote Downtown Westminster and Westminster Station as regional and community-wide destinations.

2.2 Ensure a range of uses are provided to support transit ridership. Typically, the highest intensity of use should be located within a quarter mile, or five-minute walk from major transit stations.

2.3 Balance intensification of uses within Focus Areas with available services and infrastructure.

## INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

**Goal ER-3 Promote redevelopment of targeted areas as catalysts for revitalization and improved conditions throughout the community.**

3.1 Create design standards for redevelopment that are specific to geography and type of use such as through Specific Plans or other types of area plans.

3.2 Focus improvements and intensification of activity in existing regional shopping centers by evaluating surplus parking and allowing mixed-use development along major commercial corridors where identified in Map 3-2, ensuring that these centers are integrated into surrounding development, promote walkability, orient toward the corridor, and improve access to transit.

3.3 Encourage the redevelopment and improvement of older commercial areas by investing in public infrastructure, offering incentives, and facilitating environmental mitigation as necessary and appropriate.

3.4 Support planning and redevelopment objectives in areas designated as Urban Renewal Areas, consistent with the respective adopted Urban Renewal Plans.

3.5 Allow creative design solutions for infill development that are compatible with and enhance surrounding existing development.

### INDUSTRY BASE

Six industry clusters are of primary importance to Westminster due to their relative concentration compared to the nine-county region and the nation as a whole, their employment bases, and their growth. These clusters are:

- Aerospace
- Business Support Services
- Financial Services
- Healthcare and Life Sciences
- Retail, Hospitality, and Entertainment
- Technology and Information

3.6 Promote public and private partnerships to enable proactive investments and strategies implemented to support the long-term vibrancy and viability of commercial centers and corridors.

3.7 Encourage the location of specialty retail in areas of the city where there is a focus and investment on placemaking.

**Goal ER-4 Promote a balance of land uses, revitalization, and redevelopment opportunities that support a diverse economy.**

4.1 Continue to support investment and reinvestment in aging and under-performing retail centers by diversifying land uses and repurposing obsolete buildings.

4.2 Support adaptive reuse, renovation, and redevelopment of older commercial centers that are no longer viable due to changing market conditions, demographics, or retail trends.

4.3 Promote a balance of differing development types and locations.

4.4 Align city land use policies to support the sustainability of the economic base.

## LOCAL WORKFORCE

**Goal ER-5 Support the connection between residents and jobs in Westminster.**

5.1 Provide greater employment options for residents and provide housing options for employers within the regional context.

5.2 Partner to support equitable access to quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning throughout Westminster.

5.3 Partner with the K-12 school system and technical and community colleges to prepare the workforce and support workforce training opportunities for local job placement.

5.4 Use placemaking approaches in Focus Areas to attract skilled labor, which, in turn, will attract quality employers.

## LOCATION

**Goal ER-6 Promote Westminster's regional location between Denver and Boulder to attract targeted industries.**

6.1 Support key economic sectors with appropriate land use regulation and access to sufficient infrastructure.

6.2 Capitalize on access to US 36, I-25, and access to transportation options, including transit, to locate primary employment centers and retail opportunities.

6.3 Leverage the city's advantageous location to attract a talented workforce.

## FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

**Goal ER-7 Promote fiscal sustainability and resilience within local government.**

7.1 Maintain and monitor economic and financial policies to strengthen Westminster's fiscal conditions, while supporting excellence in community services, facilities, and amenities.

7.2 Study revenue diversification opportunities to support fiscal sustainability.

7.3 Continue to pursue and refine the mechanism for retail sales tax collection resulting from online purchases.

7.4 Develop a model to evaluate fiscal impacts of land use categories.

**Goal ER-8 Support planning processes that are responsive and adaptable to changing industry trends.**

8.1 Develop complete design standards and code modifications to reflect current best practices and trends in industries.

8.2 Evaluate regulatory and administrative processes to provide consistency and certainty in the development process that respond to changing industry standards.

**Goal ER-9 Optimize municipal facilities and plan for replacement and/or reprogramming of services responsive to changing community needs.**

9.1 Locate municipal facilities in alignment with civic needs across the city.

9.2 Monitor and evaluate existing facilities based on best practices to incorporate replacement need and location realignment.

9.3 Continue to utilize debt, paid for with ongoing revenue streams, to fund asset replacement to ensure that future generations will continue to offset the costs of facilities and amenities.

# 7.0 Housing and Neighborhoods

The City of Westminster seeks to maintain the integrity and variety of existing neighborhoods; create high caliber, cohesive, new neighborhoods; and emphasize connectivity of existing and new neighborhoods to amenities, services, and multimodal transportation options. This focus on neighborhoods supports not only the *Great Neighborhoods* guiding principle, but also the plan cornerstones of *Managed Growth*, *Thriving City*, and *Healthy Places*.

These plan cornerstones are supported by thoughtful design enhancements to the public realm, integrated planning for capital investments, and a focus on balancing varied community needs. Well-designed and constructed physical elements contribute to a safe, attractive, and engaging environment that residents, workers, and visitors can all enjoy. Neighborhood design that is sensitive to social and cultural contexts also contributes to establishing a sense of place and identity. Established gateways and vibrant streetscapes can provide a clear and welcoming entry into the community by reflecting shared values and civic pride. The preservation of scenic views, as well as cultural and historical landmarks, add to a community's collective sense of history and character. This chapter provides policy direction for maintaining and improving the city's physical and visual composition, with emphasis on maintaining high-quality and diverse neighborhoods, nurturing a strong community identity, and highlighting views and amenities.

### GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS

***Great Neighborhoods*** typically have a multitude of characteristics such as:

- Identity shaped by its physical setting, streets, architecture, history, and residents;
- Housing types to support different needs, preferences, and lifestyles;
- Gathering places that may take the form of parks, plazas, sidewalks, shops, or dining establishments;
- Access to services including recreation, education, public safety, and other amenities that support quality of life;
- Proximity to opportunities for retail, personal services, and employment to fulfill daily needs; and
- Mobility options that may include travel by foot, bicycle, transit, or automobile.

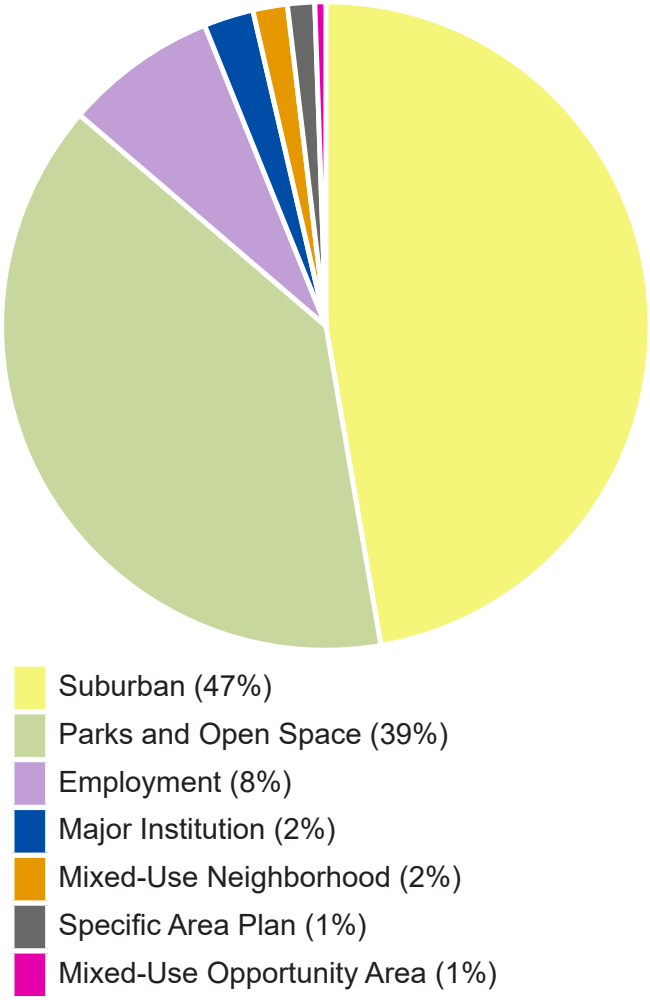
*Bradburn Village*

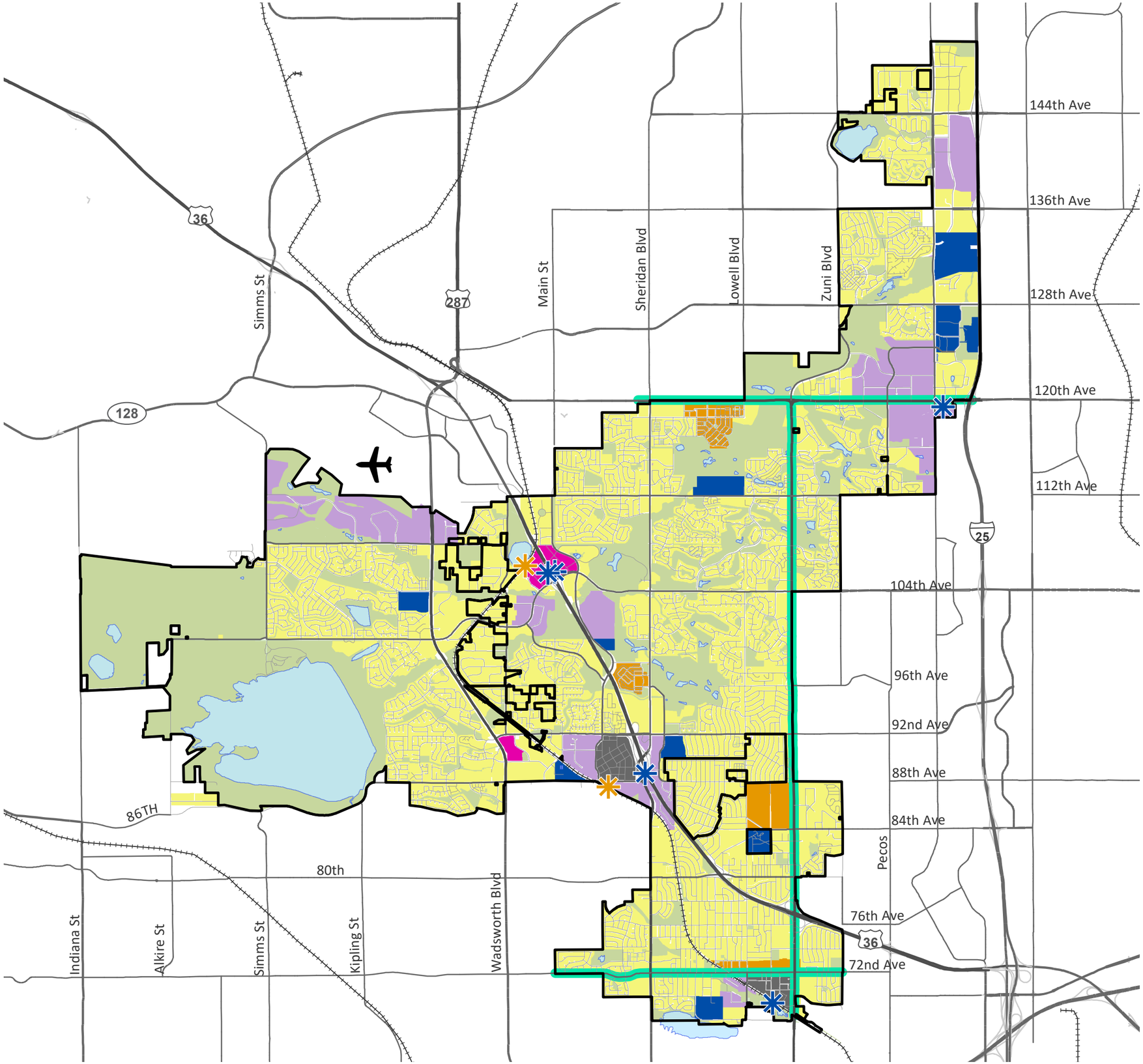
## OVERVIEW

For the purposes of this Plan and its goals, the term neighborhood refers to geographic areas tied together by community-identifying elements such as schools, churches, shopping areas, parks, cultures, and/or identifiable boundaries. Within Westminster there are a range of neighborhood types and scales that offer a variety of living environments, housing types, and levels of affordability.

Reflecting broader changes in society, an increasing proportion of housing will need to meet the changing demands for multigenerational, or specialized units, and to provide options for affordable and workforce housing. Contextual and integrated architectural and site design can weave together different uses and housing types to promote diversity and variety to build ***Great Neighborhoods***.

**Chart 7-1. Distribution of Generalized Development Character from City Structure Map 7-1**





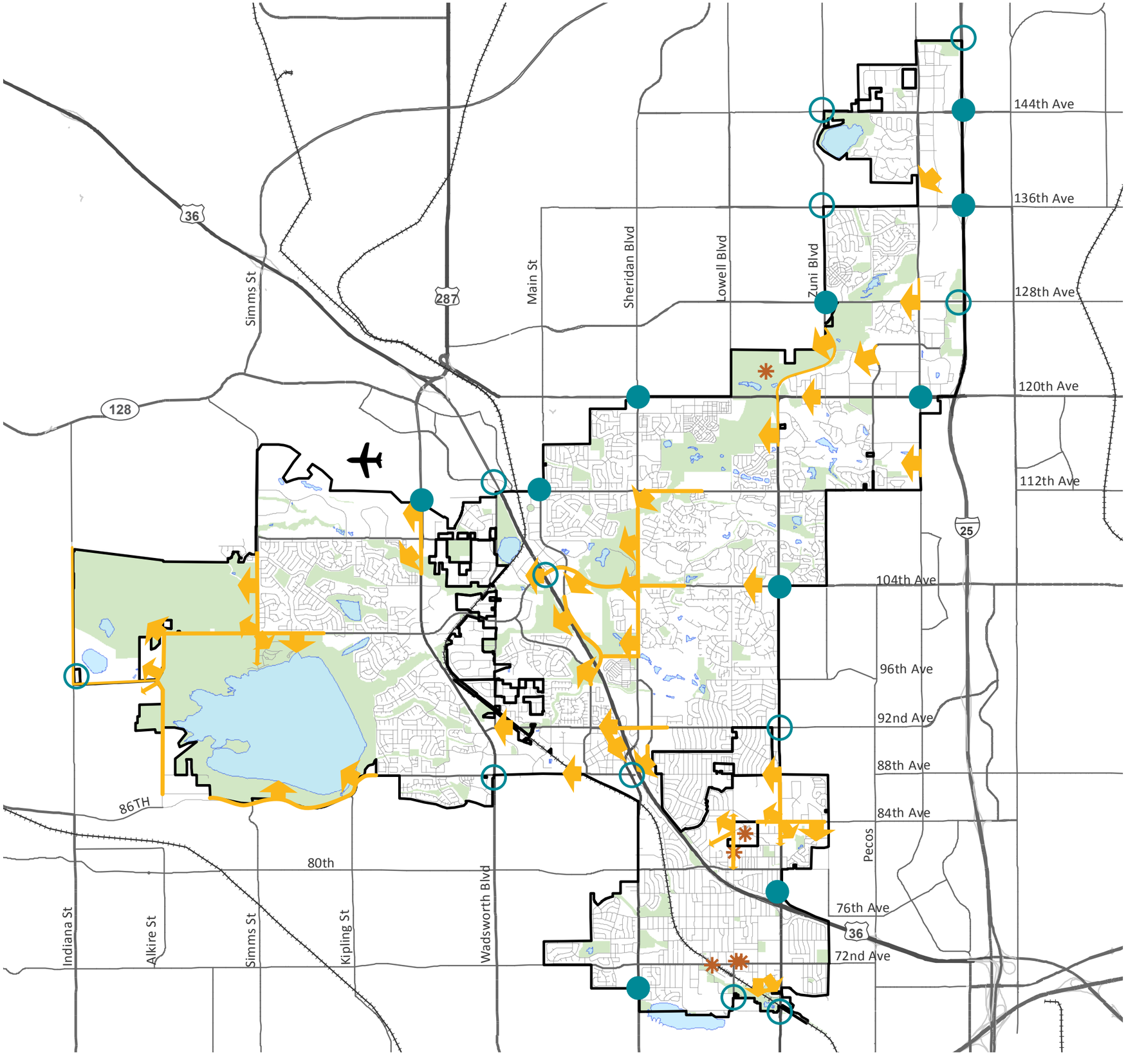

## Map 7-1. City Structure

**Legend**

- Suburban
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Mixed-Use Opportunity Area
- Major Institution
- Employment
- Parks and Open Space
- Specific Area Plan
- Future Transit Stations
- Transit Stations
- Highway
- Major Roads
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Multimodal Corridor
- Water
- Westminster

N

0 0.5 1 2 Miles




## Map 7-2. Viewshed, Gateways, and Historic Context

### Legend

- National Register of Historic Places
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Parks and Open Space
- Westminster
- Primary View
- Secondary View
- Tertiary View
- View Corridor
- Existing Gateway
- Gateway Opportunity

N

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

# 7.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN & BUILT FORM

This section provides direction for overall design of the city's built environment in the context of neighborhoods. The goals and policies provide a framework for community design and are further delineated by the design guidelines and standards found in the Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.), which may be updated from time to time. General design direction for specific mixed-use and activity centers in the city is provided in chapter 8, Community Places, with further detail provided in specific plans for those areas.

The remaining inventory of vacant land in Westminster is dominated by smaller parcels bypassed by previous developments for various reasons including ownership, limited infrastructure, or other site constraints. Neighborhood planning in Westminster historically involved large subdivisions consisting of hundreds of acres and identified locations for housing, parks, and civic uses, as well as potentially non-residential uses such as neighborhood-serving retail or office sites. With the exception of the 235-acre Pillar of Fire property, there are no remaining opportunities for such large-scale neighborhood planning in Westminster. Therefore, consideration needs to shift to the remaining infill and redevelopment sites and how these locations may connect to the existing fabric in complementary ways. Similarly, with review of proposed future developments, the evaluation will need to shift from considerations of the parcel in question to consideration of the broader surrounding neighborhood context. A general framework for this is the Neighborhood Unit concept introduced in Chapter 3, Land Use & Growth.

The unique parts that collectively form a Neighborhood Unit may be established on different timelines; therefore, the Neighborhood Unit concept can be used to evaluate infill development and the degree to which proposals complement the area in support of the ***Thriving City*** and ***Great Neighborhoods*** plan cornerstones. Bringing smaller neighborhood elements together is what creates a distinct sense of place that gives a community an identity. It is often found that residents in vibrant, active neighborhoods are more likely to support local businesses, work together to solve neighborhood issues, and contribute more to the local community.

Implicit in the Neighborhood Unit concept is a community that works for all. The concept of 8/80 cities are becoming increasingly popular around the world. The 8/80 paradigm espouses that if communities are designed to work well for an 8-year old and an 80-year old, then wellbeing for the greater population can be achieved. 8/80 cities improve the quality of life for people in cities by bringing different populations together to enhance the built environment, resulting in more vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities.

### 8/80 PARADIGM

8/80 cities prioritize people's well-being. It is grounded in the belief that if everything we do in our public spaces is great for an 8-year-old and an 80-year-old, then it will be great for all people. 8/80 cities strive to improve the quality of life by bringing residents together to enhance mobility and public space resulting in vibrant, healthy, and equitable communities.

*Westminster Station Facilities*

# 7.2 GOALS & POLICIES

The following goals and policies provide direction for all aspects of physical planning. Goals are defined as desired ideals and a value to be sought. Policies articulate a course of action that guides governmental decision making to meet the goal. To further define how policies can be implemented in the short- and long-term, specific strategies can be found in the Implementation Action Plan. They are not inclusive of all actions and options.

## NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

**Goal HN-1 Ensure new residential neighborhoods, redevelopment, and infill areas support the neighborhood unit concept with multimodal transportation options and access to meet the everyday educational, recreational, civic, employment, and service needs of its residents.**

1.1 Design new neighborhoods with an easily accessible focal point, such as a park or civic space that provides a unique identity and opportunities for community gathering.

1.2 Focus residential development greater than 5 units per gross acre in areas within walking distance of neighborhood services and shopping, employment, parks or open space, and multimodal transportation options—including transit. Typically, this distance should be no more than a quarter mile, or five-minute walk along safe, direct pedestrian paths, and streets.

1.3 For lower density residential areas, focus neighborhood design that allows fulfillment of residents' daily needs within a 20-minute walk from each home (also see Ch. 3, Land Use & Development, Goal 3, Policy 3).

1.4 Plan for impacts of changing technologies in the areas of transportation, shopping, and employment.

**Goal HN-2 Enhance and maintain the character of the city's existing residential neighborhoods, balancing the need to accommodate infill development.**

2.1 To ensure compatibility between different scales of development provide a transition in building height and massing where higher intensity development is located adjacent to low-scale development.

2.2 Support enhancement programs and efforts to strengthen existing or aging residential neighborhoods throughout the city.

### RELEVANT PLANS

The following plans are incorporated by reference and are not repeated in detail:

- Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan
- Sustainability Plan
- Westminster Community Enhancement Plan
- Arts & Culture Plan
- Harris Park Community Vision Plan
- Transportation & Mobility Plan
- Neighborhood Plans
- CDBG Consolidated Plan

*See complete list of plans and policy documents in Ch. 9.*

### CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

- Education
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Health
- Resilience
- Safety
- Climate

2.3 Support flexibility in building design and type to allow neighborhoods to continue meeting the needs of the community such as senior housing, intergenerational families, and special needs housing.

2.4 Support the organization of Home Owners Associations (HOA) and Neighborhood Associations to advocate for the needs and improvements of existing neighborhoods.

## HOUSING DIVERSITY

**Goal HN-3 Provide opportunities for a range of housing types and affordability to accommodate all incomes, lifestyles, and age groups within the city.**

3.1 Continue to provide a variety of neighborhood types with a diversity of housing choices.

3.2 Blend "missing middle" housing types within other types of development to ensure neighborhoods that are resilient over time to demographic changes.

3.3 Support diverse housing opportunities to serve a range of household sizes, compositions, and needs.

3.4 Strive to preserve and maintain existing affordable rental and ownership housing.

3.5 Maintain and improve the affordable housing options throughout the city, as detailed in the Affordable and Workforce Housing Strategic Plan.

3.6 Pair supportive community and neighborhood resources with affordable housing.

**Goal HN-4 Continue Westminster's tradition as a caring community by ensuring housing options for seniors and residents with special needs.**

4.1 Support housing options that meet the accessibility and functional needs of households with seniors and residents with special needs.

4.2 Expand housing options for the aging population to facilitate aging in place such as ADUs and intergenerational households and housing products for downsizing households.

4.3 Support a continuum of care from independent living to assisted living to transitional facilities.

4.4 Locate senior housing within residential areas to provide proximity to generations to support seniors and at locations with close proximity to senior services, medical facilities, and public facilities such as libraries.

### RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTIONS

The objective of the program is to eliminate deteriorating conditions resulting in blight and to improve the level of safety, stability and appearance of neighborhoods, as well as promote an increased pride in Westminster. Rental properties are systematically inspected if:

- They are six-years-old or older
- They contain four or more units
- Four or more rental dwellings within any townhome or condominium community owned by a single owner

Individual townhomes and condominiums (up to three units under a single ownership within any townhome or condominium community), duplexes, and single-family units are inspected on a complaint-only basis, or can be inspected on a proactive basis.

## STREETSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM

**Goal HN-5 Maintain and enhance Westminster's positive image and character through attractive streetscapes. (Also see TM Goal 2 and associated policies)**

5.1 Continue to develop and support enhanced streetscape, development continuity, and revitalization of key commercial corridors.

5.2 Improve the visual and physical character of residential corridors throughout the city, to include provisions to support multimodal transportation.

5.3 Create a strong sense of entry into and passage through the city at key locations, identified on Map 7-2, through gateway elements, streetscape enhancements, development scale and orientation, lighting, signage, and public art.

## VIEWS

**Goal HN-6 Preserve views to the mountains, natural amenities and scenic skylines from the public realm.**

6.1 Maintain scenic vistas from rights of way, public facilities and public lands to Open Space, the mountains, Downtown Denver, and the Front Range area, as shown on Map 7-2.

6.2 Ensure views designated on Map 7-2 are integrated into planning for new development. This may include dedication of land, setbacks, height restrictions, modified building orientation or placement on a lot.

## COMMUNITY HERITAGE

**Goal HN-7 Identify, recognize, and protect Westminster's unique and irreplaceable historic and cultural heritage and diversity.**

7.1 Protect historic and cultural resources for the aesthetic, cultural, educational, environmental, and economic contribution they make to maintaining and building Westminster's identity and quality of life.

7.2 Acknowledge and support Westminster's multi-cultural heritage and community diversity in planning city facilities, programs, events, and resources.

# 8.0 Community Places

**The 2040 Comprehensive Plan identifies key locations where more detailed information and guidance is necessary beyond the citywide goals and policies identified through the other chapters of the Plan. Planning for vibrant centers of activity and new land uses, as well as identifying locations for parks, open spaces, and other amenities supports the *Great Neighborhoods* plan cornerstone. This is done by maintaining existing neighborhoods, preserving open spaces, and focusing investments in locations where infrastructure currently supports or is planned to support anticipated development, such as adjacent to transit stations or in redevelopment areas. This chapter establishes a framework for three different community place types – Focus Areas and Transition Areas.**

# 8.1 FOCUS & TRANSITION AREAS

While the 2040 Comprehensive Plan describes the city's overall intent and vision for the Community Places, more geographic-specific policy and design concepts for each area are needed to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas, respond to future change, and support the vision for a sense of community and belonging.

## Focus Areas

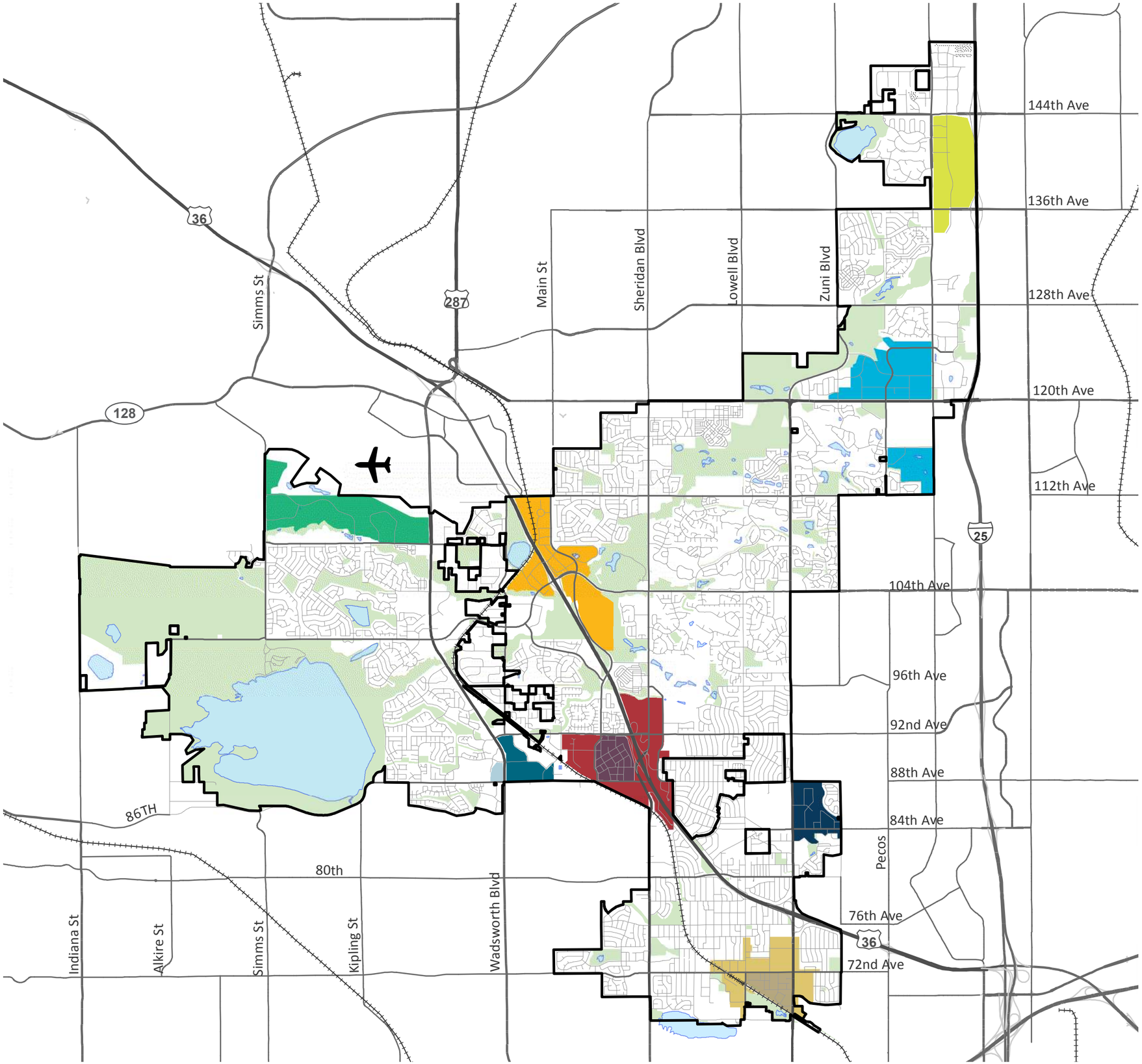
Five Focus Areas are identified as areas that have the greatest potential for growth and change in Westminster over the next 20 years and are near major crossroads and transit stations where new development can support placemaking and economic vitality. Since the identification of the Focus Areas in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, two Specific Area Plans have been adopted. Once a Specific Area Plan is adopted by City Council, it will be incorporated by reference in the Comprehensive Plan and will serve as the primary land use regulation for the area. Until a Specific Area Plan is adopted, the vision and intent described in this chapter will serve as a guide for new development. Goals and policies are established in these separate supporting documents or in other chapters of this Plan.

## Transition Areas

Since the majority of the city is anticipated to remain stable with incremental development generally in context with the surrounding area, this update to the Comprehensive Plan further identified five Transition Areas where some degree of growth and change is expected from existing conditions, but not at the scale or intensity of the Focus Areas. The Transition Areas are considered important sub-areas that require unique considerations relative to use, site planning, amenities, and preservation of views.

## Framework Graphics

This chapter supplements the Land Use Diagram found in Chapter 3 with framework graphics to elaborate upon the goals and policies of other chapters of this Plan. Each framework identifies gateways into the area, key view opportunities, and catalytic sites where future redevelopment may occur due to either vacancies, large amounts of surface parking or land uses that are not anticipated to remain over the 20-year Plan horizon. Major destinations are identified to show uses or buildings that attract visitors from outside of the Focus or Transition Area. The frameworks also identify features in the public realm such as park amenities, transit facilities, and mobility considerations such as street connections and bicycle and pedestrian routes to support circulation within the area and to adjacent neighborhoods. These include existing connections anticipated within existing plans and potential connections to designate additional connections to facilitate the vision of each Focus or Transition Area. A 500-foot buffer is also provided around each framework graphic so as to include consideration for surrounding neighborhoods and the need to ensure appropriate transitions.




## Map 8-1. Focus Areas and Transition Areas

### Legend

**Focus Areas**

- Brookhill
- Church Ranch
- Downtown Westminster
- North I-25
- Westminster Station

**Transition Areas**

- Brookhill Vicinity
- Downtown Westminster Vicinity
- Westminster Station Area Vicinity
- West 120th Avenue Activity Centers
- Westminster Heights
- Westmoor & Vicinity
- Highway
- Major roads
- Local roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Parks and Open Space
- Westminster

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# 8.2 MIXED-USE PLACES

Most of the Focus Areas and several of the Transition Areas are anticipated to incorporate mixed-use elements through infill and redevelopment, with some opportunities for new development on vacant land. The mixed-use elements will vary but may incorporate various types of housing, employment, opportunities for retail and services, civic functions, and other uses that support for the vision for each area.

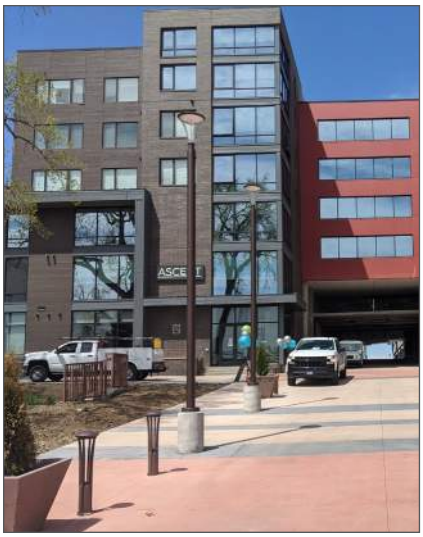
## DOWNTOWN FOCUS AREA

The vision for the Downtown Focus Area is detailed in the Downtown Specific Plan.

## DOWNTOWN VICINITY TRANSITION AREA

***Now:*** Development is primarily retail, with some office and industrial flex space to the west. A future commuter rail station is planned to the south, across West 88th Avenue. Stable residential development borders the area to the north and east and is not included within either the Focus or Transition Areas. City Hall is less than half a mile to the east of Downtown Westminster on West 92nd Avenue, as is the Westminster Center Park. This convenient access and proximity within the center of the city reinforces the potential of Downtown as the heart of Westminster and primary destination for the surrounding region.

***Vision:*** Downtown Westminster and the timing of the RTD commuter rail extension to West 88th Avenue will be determining factors for land use changes in the area. Premature land use changes could undermine the integrity of the immense public investments in Downtown Westminster, while thoughtful extensions of Downtown Westminster to the south and west would complement Downtown buildout and support the planned commuter rail with transit-oriented development. The Transition Area east of US 36, particularly north of West 92nd Avenue, should be significantly reduced in scale to match the suburban context of adjacent areas east of US 36. Where retail centers are redeveloped, a gridded circulation pattern should be incorporated to support multimodal transportation options by building from existing circulation patterns and facilitating bicycle and pedestrian access. The RTD Sheridan Park-n-Ride—one of the busiest stations within the entire Denver Metro area—is situated immediately to the east of Downtown Westminster at Sheridan Boulevard and West 88th Avenue and is connected directly by a newly constructed bicycle/pedestrian underpass. This supports continued office development in the Sheridan Park area, as well as supporting hospitality uses.



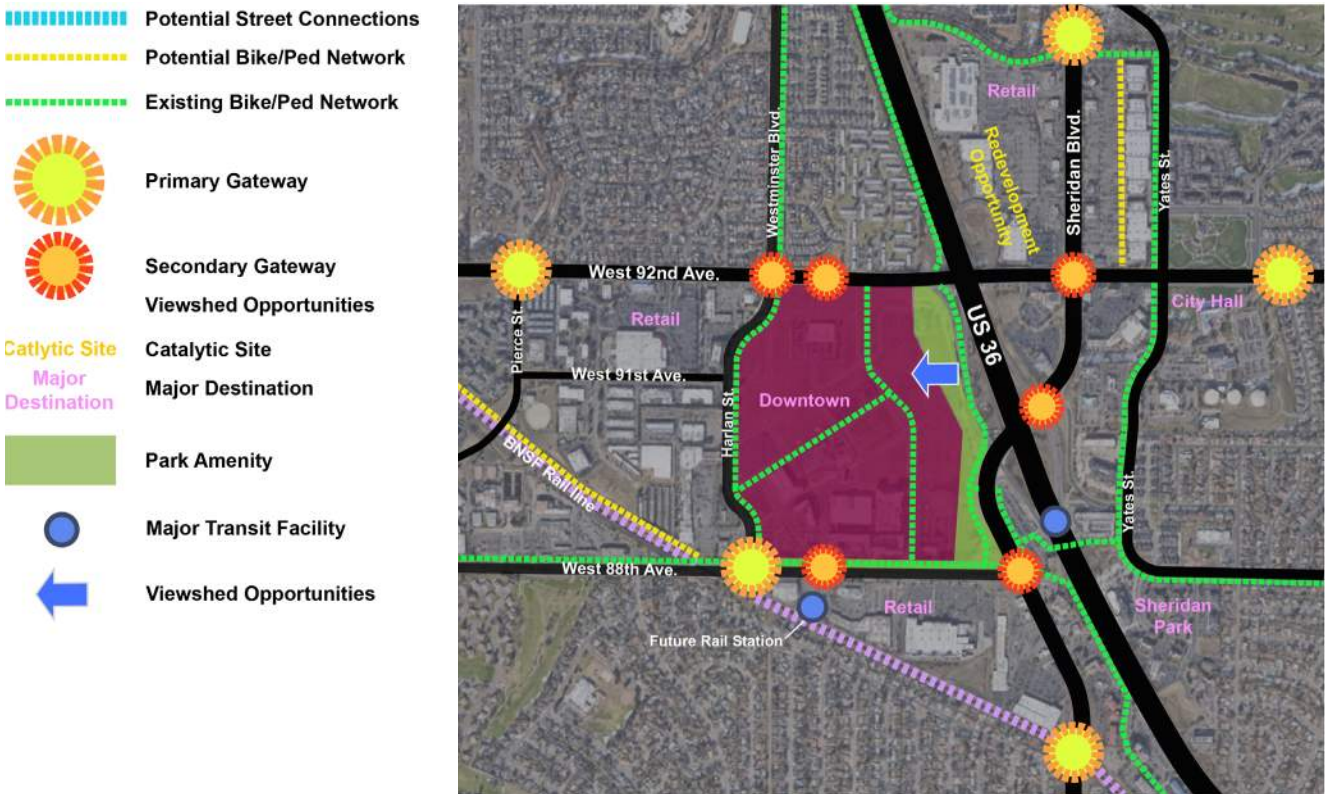



**Figure 8-1. Downtown Westminster & Vicinity Framework**
*Consult the Downtown Westminster Specific Plan for details within its boundary.*

## WESTMINSTER STATION FOCUS AREA

The vision for this Focus Area is detailed in the Westminster Station Area Specific Plan.

## WESTMINSTER STATION TRANSITION AREA

***Now:*** Westminster's historic neighborhoods surround the Westminster Station Focus Area, including the southern areas of the Harris Park neighborhood. The proximity to US 36 and multimodal connectivity with the B Line/Westminster Station and the Little Dry Creek Trail makes this area attractive for redevelopment. There are substantial amounts of retail along Federal Boulevard, including the Westminster Square and Westminster Plaza shopping centers. There are also a number of unique local businesses in the area that cater to Westminster's growing Asian and Latinx populations. The demographics of this area skew toward a higher percentage of residents age 65 and older, specifically for the census tract located between West 72nd and 76th Avenues. The 37.5-acre Westminster Station Park was established as a companion to the Westminster Station development and includes significant flood control measures to benefit surrounding properties. A continuous park and trail system is planned to extend along Little Dry Creek as identified in the England Park Corridor Plan. South of the BNSF railroad, the Lowell Boulevard corridor contains a mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses. Some capacity for light industrial uses should be maintained to provide opportunities for these uses to relocate within the immediate area if desired. Additionally, some senior and public housing exists in the vicinity of West 68th Avenue and Lowell Boulevard and any redevelopment needs to be sensitive to displacement issues.

***Vision:*** Recent commercial infill along the east side of Federal Boulevard between West 72nd and 74th Avenues exhibits the anticipated building form with greater attention toward the streetscape and pedestrian environment to support the evolution of Federal Boulevard from a state highway into a multimodal corridor that better supports revitalization of the area and improves safety. To the north of the Westminster Station Area is the Harris Park neighborhood. To ensure a compatible transition, the Harris Park Community Vision Plan (HPCVP) supports a unique mix of historic buildings, restaurants, shops, and small businesses. The HPCVP identifies infill development, but at a scale and intensity that is much less than the Westminster Station Area. "Gentle infill" characterizes development adjacent to West 72nd Avenue from Irving Street to Lowell Boulevard and along Lowell Boulevard south of West 73rd Avenue. South of the BNSF railroad, the Lowell Corridor, could include offices, microbreweries, laboratories, fabrication facilities, repair shops, and light manufacturing.

*Westminster Station*
*Photo (middle): Ron Booth*
*Photo (bottom): City of Westminster*

**Figure 8-2. Harris Park Community Vision Plan**

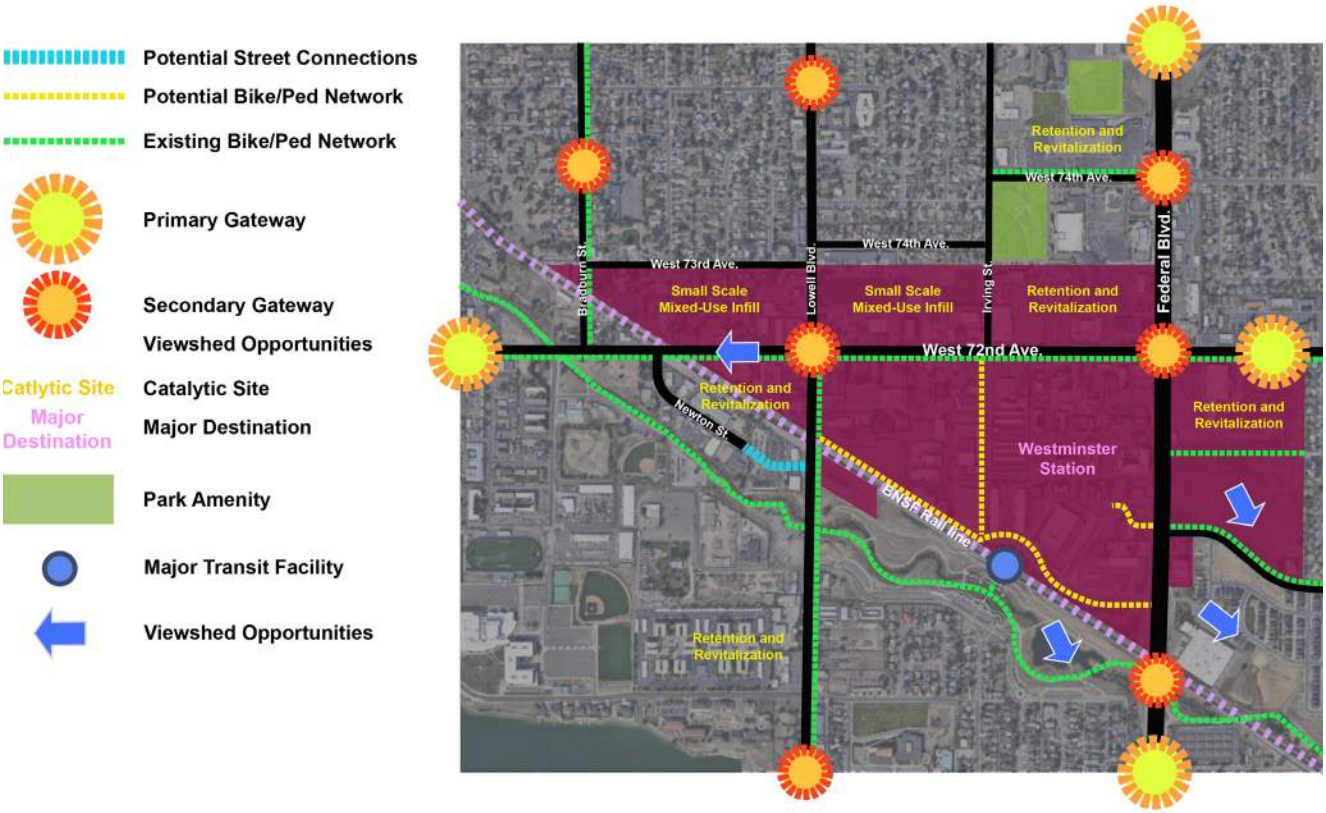



**Figure 8-3. Westminster Station Transition Area Framework**
*Consult the Westminster Station Area Specific Plan for specific items within the boundary.*

## CHURCH RANCH FOCUS AREA

***Now:*** The Church Ranch Focus Area has one of the most strategic locations in Westminster. Straddling US 36 at Church Ranch Boulevard/West 104th Avenue, this area extends over 350 acres, including the Westminster Promenade and Circle Point developments, the vacant 103-acre Hawn property along Westminster Boulevard, and the Walnut Creek Town Center commercial area. The US 36 corridor is the preferred location for office space, regionally, north of I-70 in Metro Denver. Just 12 miles north of Denver's central business district and 13 miles south of Boulder, the area is home to an RTD Park-n-Ride facility and adjacent to a future planned RTD FasTracks commuter rail station. The area is also located adjacent to significant community assets—in particular, the City Park Recreation and Fitness Center within City Park and the Big Dry Creek trail and open space. Additionally, the area is a major hospitality hub, with almost 1,000 hotel rooms in six hotels located on both sides of US 36.

Circle Point is one of the premier office developments in Westminster. The campus is only partially completed, and there is significant land capacity for additional office development as well as opportunities to infill the underutilized parking fields. At the heart of this area is the 77-acre Westminster Promenade district, where major entertainment uses include a theater, restaurants, hotel, and ice center. Access to the Flatiron Flyer bus and potential future access to a commuter rail station make this area particularly attractive for new development.

South of the Westminster Promenade and West 104th Avenue, is the Hawn property, which has extensive visibility from US 36 and is well buffered from existing neighborhoods by virtue of park and open space lands west of the Waverly Acres neighborhood and north of West 98th Avenue.

***Vision:*** The Church Ranch Focus Area will build on its established role as a regional and citywide destination, acting as a gateway into Westminster from US 36 and Broomfield. A mix of land uses will further activate the Church Ranch Focus Area with both day and night populations, supporting a wide range of shopping, dining, and entertainment uses. This area can attract both employers and workers due to the access to transit and amenities, major hotels, and nearby variety of housing types. An economic and market study commissioned by the city indicates that the vicinity of US 36 and Church Ranch Boulevard is one of the best opportunities to support further office and hotel development. Further development within Circle Point should take access and circulation into account—including potential trail routes to the future RTD B rail line Church Ranch station—as well as companion development to the property located west of the BNSF railroad alignment. Employment generating land uses at the Hawn property with a degree of local-serving retail would further support the vision of the Focus Area.

*Huron Street Bridge and 142nd Avenue Circle Bridge over McKay Creek*

*St. Anthony North Health Campus Community Garden*

*Circle Point*

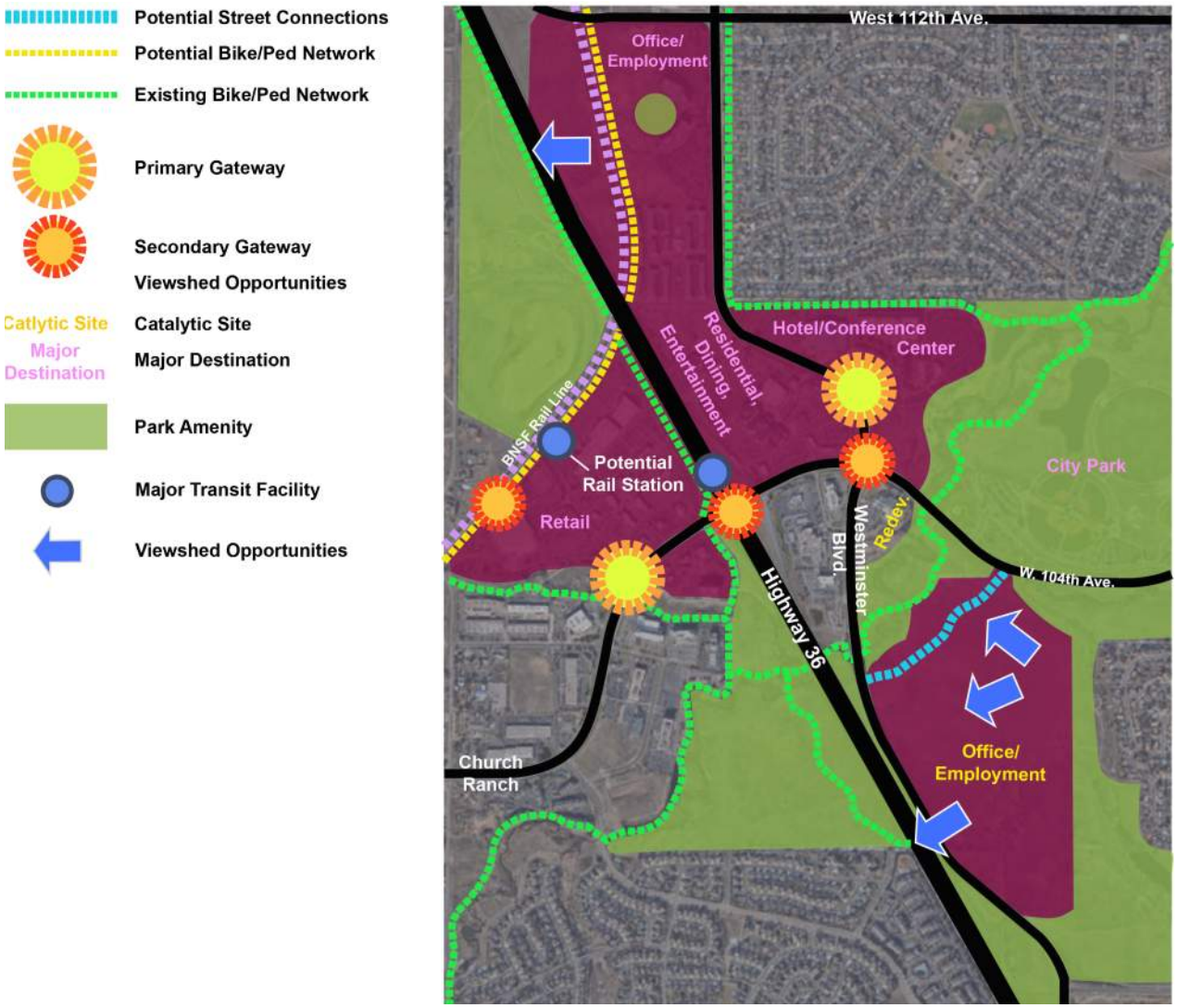



**Figure 8-4. Church Ranch Focus Area Framework**

## BROOKHILL FOCUS AREA

***Now:*** The Brookhill Focus Area encompasses just over 80 acres of retail development at Wadsworth Boulevard and West 88th Avenue. The area is bounded by West 92nd Avenue to the north, West 88th Avenue to the south, and multi-family residential development to the east. The 3.2-acre Westglenn Park acts as an anchor on the eastern side of the site, adjacent to the residential development. The Towne Center at Brookhill retail shopping center is primarily comprised of mid- and large-box retail storefronts, several of which are anticipated to face challenges from changing retail trends and competing retail areas within Westminster, Broomfield, and Arvada. The recent addition of higher density multi-family development changed the nature the Brookhill Focus Area and further multi-family development should be limited to maintain a balance of uses.

***Vision:*** Building on proximity to Downtown Westminster located less than a mile to the east and potential future RTD B Line Station at West 88th Avenue, the area could transition in the future subject

*Towne Center at Brookhill*

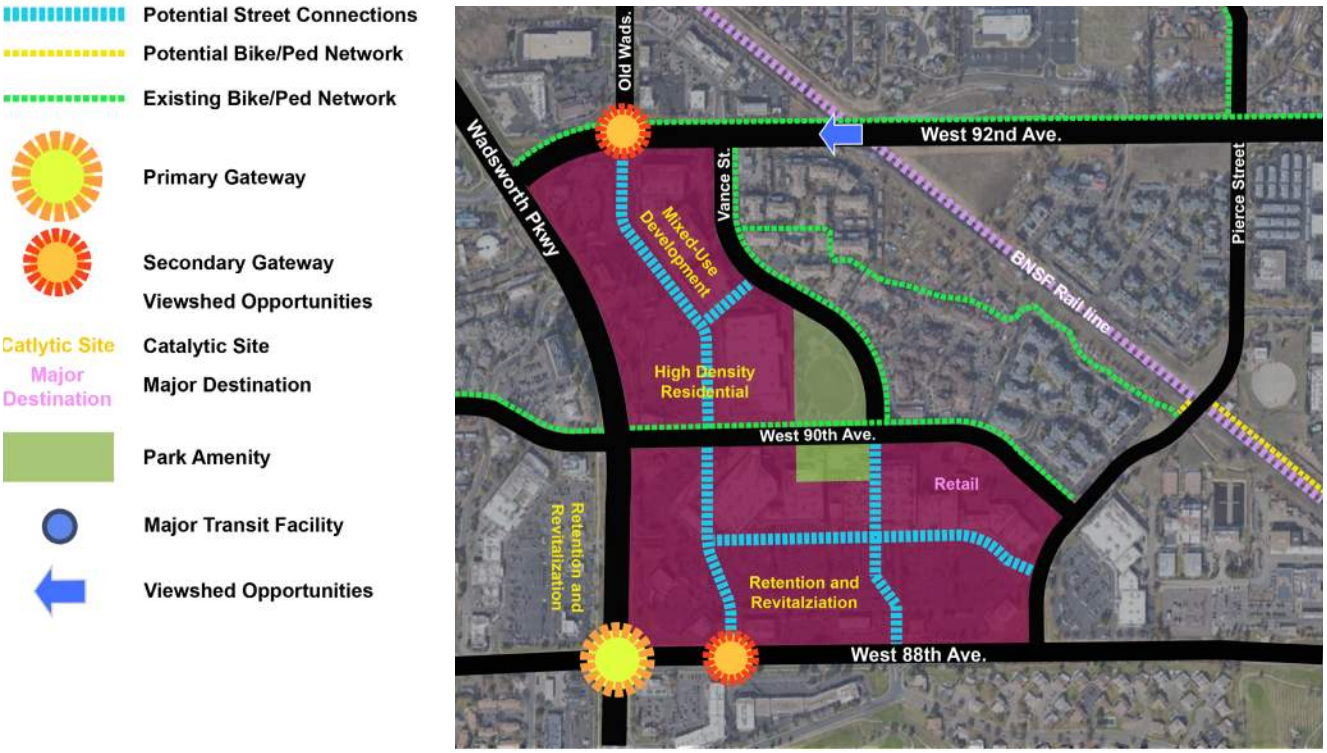



**Figure 8-5. Brookhill Focus Area Framework**

to further land use and resource impact analysis. Upon buildout of Downtown, completion of the B Line to 88th Avenue and improved local connectivity higher land use intensities will be considered within Brookhill. Improvements to the area should focus on a gridded street network with walkable block sizes and a pedestrian-oriented public realm centered on Westglenn Park and along West 90th Avenue. Additionally, connectivity to the neighboring residential development, as well as to Downtown Westminster and the Sheridan Park-n-Ride and future commuter rail station should be emphasized for all modes of travel. Extension of the Allen Ditch Trail along the BNSF rail corridor would help facilitate these connections.

*Westglenn Park*

*Village Creek Apartments, Altitude Westminster Apartments, and Brookhill commercial area*

## WESTMINSTER HEIGHTS TRANSITION AREA

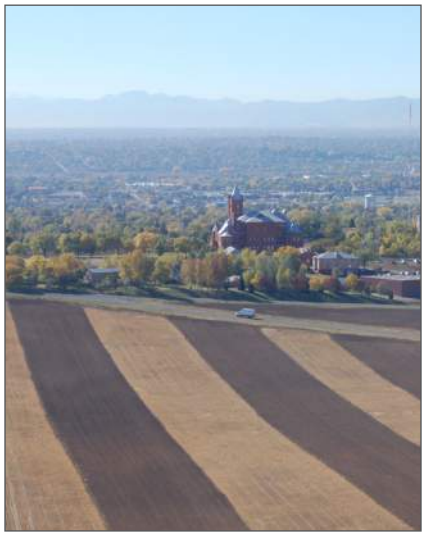
***Now:*** Westminster Heights has dramatic views both to the west overlooking the Front Range and to the south with a view of the Downtown Denver skyline and even Pikes Peak far to the south. There is redevelopment potential within the St. Anthony property since transitioning many programs and services to the 144th Avenue "North" campus, leaving the 84th Avenue campus with an emergency room and services focused on senior needs. Some of the existing buildings are underutilized, and the expansive parking fields are no longer necessary to support the activities at the site. This creates opportunities for infill and redevelopment centered on access to healthy living. However, significant infrastructure improvements on- and off-site are necessary for future development of the area, including streets, drainage, water, and wastewater infrastructure. Convenient access along Federal Boulevard connects this Transition Area to US 36.

***Vision:*** As with Westminster Station, this location will be informed by the Federal Boulevard Multimodal Transportation Study Development and form a built environment that creates a sense of place, connectivity, safety, and economic vitality. The Westminster Heights area is envisioned to locate residential densities along the east side of Federal Boulevard to help support transit lines and employment development at the St. Anthony campus. Behind the St. Anthony medical campus, potential extensions of Bryant, Clay, and Decatur Streets could connect future infill north to West 88th Avenue, and west to West 86th Avenue. New housing south of West 84th Avenue should take care in siting structures so as to both maximize view opportunities for residents, and also to minimize obstructions to the views from West 84th Avenue and Federal Boulevard.

*Pillar of Fire*

### AGRIHOOD

Agrihoods are a type of neighborhood that enables farm-to-table living in a cooperative environment. Instead of being built around a pool or tennis court, these developments are centered around a significantly sized farm, often using the sweat-equity of residents to create a sustainable food system for the entire community. The Urban Land Institute has identified over 90 such developments in the U.S.



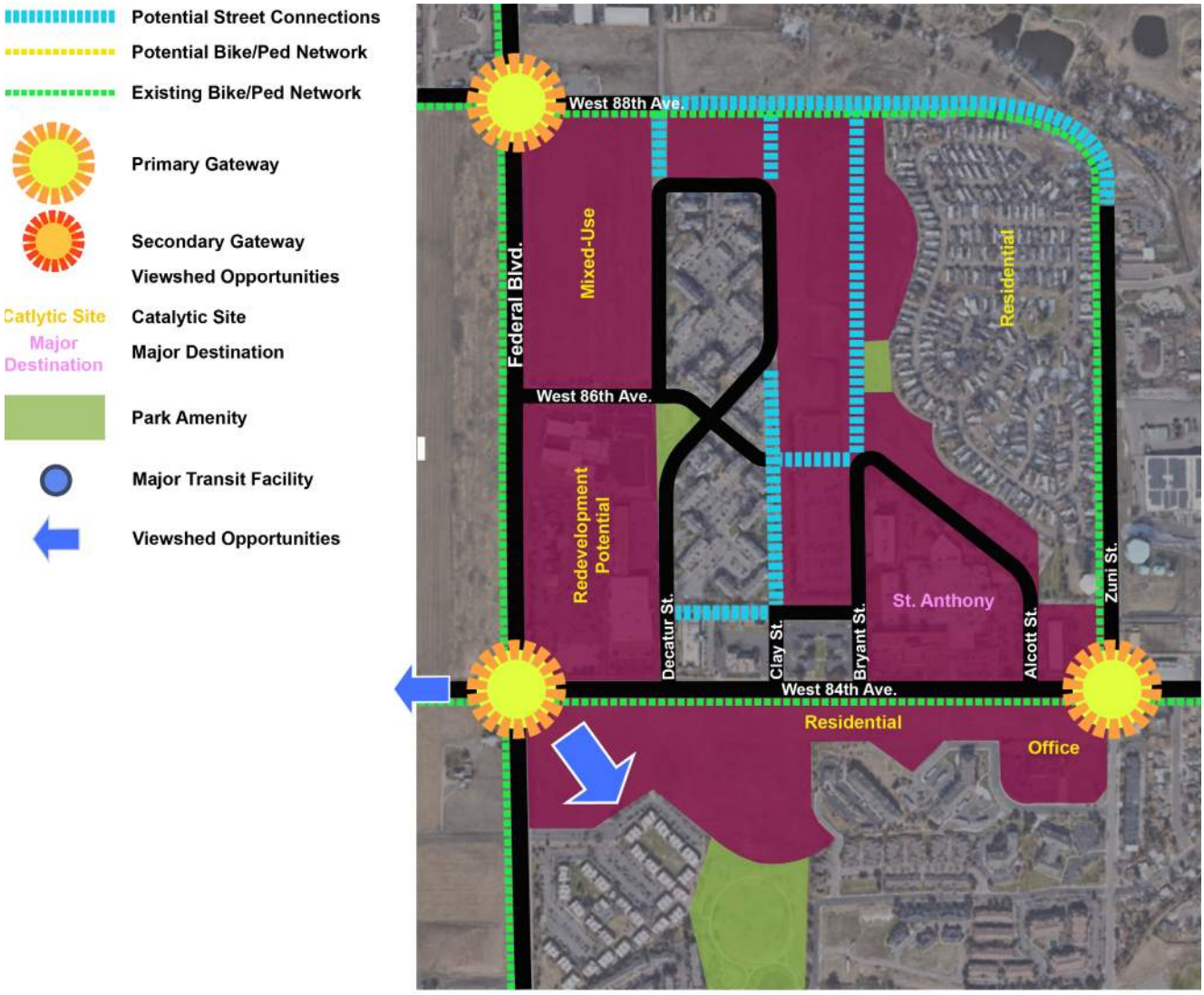



**Figure 8-6. Westminster Heights Transition Area Framework**

# 8.3 EMPLOYMENT PLACES

Two transition areas are identified to focus entirely on employment to support further development of the city's economic base in the fields of aerospace; business support services; financial services, healthcare and life sciences; retail, hospitality, and entertainment; and technology in information. A limited amount of residential development may further support the employment development in these areas, and incorporation of retail services and amenities is critical to meeting workforce and employer needs in these areas.

## WEST 120TH AVENUE ACTIVITY CENTER TRANSITION AREA

Several large employment campuses are located on West 120th Avenue, most notably Maxar Technologies and Park 12 Hundred. In recent years, Maxar consolidated its operations and headquarters in Westminster and is a world leader in commercial satellites, space robotics, and digital imaging; Park 12 Hundred completed some of the city's only sizable industrial spaces, filling in three underutilized parking areas within the former Avaya campus with 325,000 square feet of industrial space. These employment sites are expected to remain stable into the future, however planning for adjacent areas is needed to ensure compatibility. This transition area, located between West 112th and West 124th Avenues west of Huron Street has potential for redevelopment and infill opportunities for commercial, light/flex industrial uses, and a limited degree of residential uses on peripheral sites.

### Park 1200 Transition Area

***Now:*** The southern portion, south of Park 12 Hundred, encompasses about 108 acres, with over 50 acres currently vacant. The area is bisected by public open space and the Ranch Creek corridor. Huron Street is generally not residential in character, as it is dominated by businesses and services, including the current medical and office uses, and light industrial uses north of West 116th Avenue. Similarly, on the east side of Huron Street, the City of Northglenn anticipates primarily non-residential uses through the Northglenn Comprehensive Plan.

***Vision:*** Development in the Transition Area will benefit from close proximity and access to I-25, as well as the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride—the third largest facility in the RTD system with nonstop express bus service to both Downtown Denver and Denver International Airport. The area is envisioned to add a small neighborhood center at the northwest corner of Huron Street and West 112th Avenue, as well as to expand office and research and development (R&D) uses in the vacant areas along Huron Street. Some medium-density residential development providing workforce housing opportunities could support employment development if resources allow. The T-ball Complex Park could also expand to include the adjacent open space and creek corridor, creating a neighborhood park.

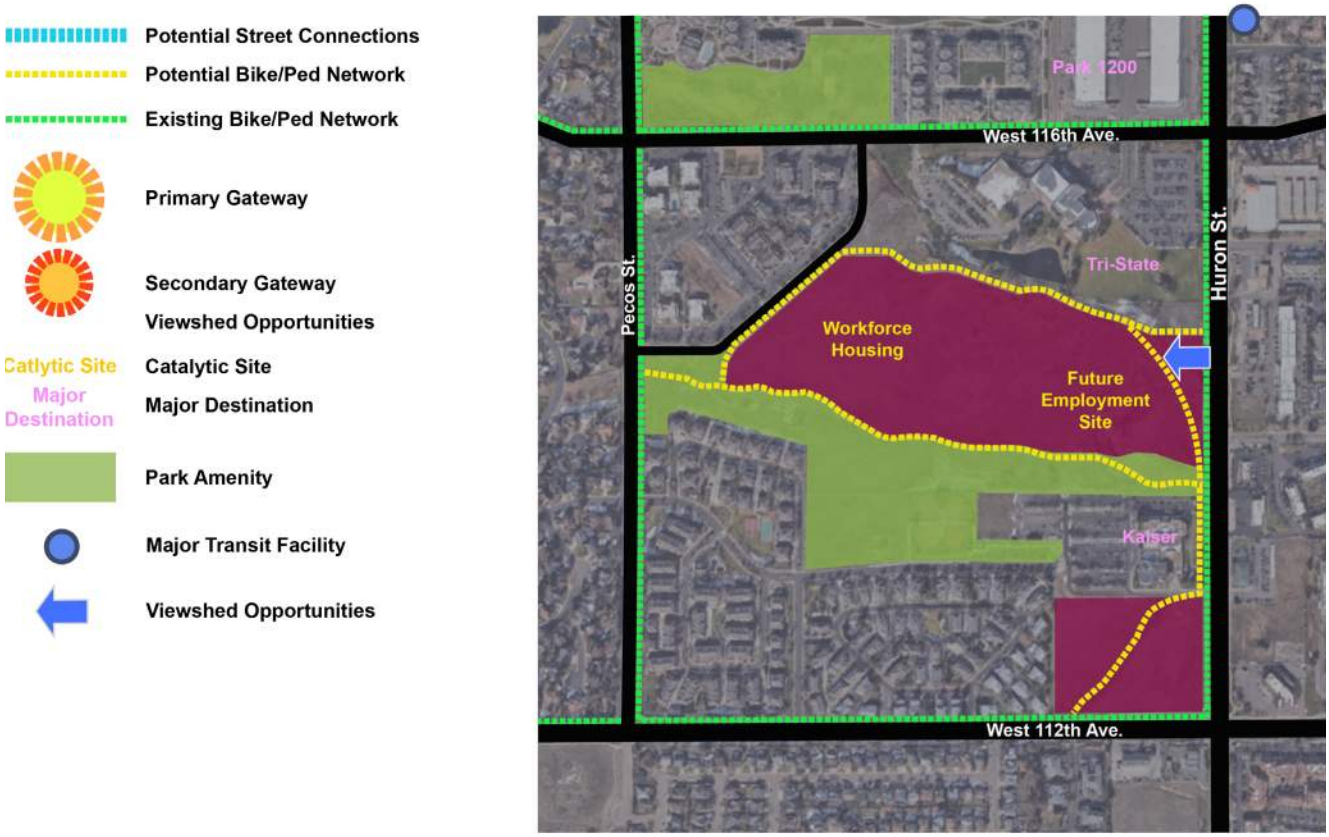



Figure 8-7. Park 1200 Transition Area Framework

Figure 8-8. Park Centre Transition Area Framework

## Park Centre Transition Area

***Now:*** North of Park 12 Hundred, across West 120th Avenue is the 311-acre Park Centre area, characterized by small- to medium-sized employers. There are fewer vacant parcels in this area, and fractured ownership limits opportunity for large scale development without parcel consolidation. Adams County maintains a presence and could partner with the City of Westminster on economic development activities in this area.

***Vision:*** This area is envisioned to maintain a mix of office buildings with light industrial, flex-spaces and R&D uses. Expansion of existing institutional uses or new institutional uses, such as schools or religious assemblies, are strongly discouraged within this area. Similarly, highway-oriented hotel or commercial uses should be limited to existing retail properties and not further encroach into potential office and light industrial areas. Siting of future buildings should maximize the incredible view opportunities west of Pecos Drive and also west of Park Centre Drive and trail connections could facilitate access from 124th Avenue to the Big Dry Creek trail system.

*Park Centre Offices*

## WESTMOOR & VICINITY EMPLOYMENT AREA

***Now:*** Westmoor features Westminster's largest office campuses, attracting major employers with room to expand and regional access to US 36. Abutting the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport to the north, and the Walnut Creek Golf Preserve to the south, this Transition Area north of West 108th Avenue and west of Wadsworth Parkway is characterized by meandering roads and integrated green space, and features dramatic views of the Front Range. The Transition Area does not include retail, commercial, or residential developments at present. However, employers have expressed a desire for restaurants and services, as well as an interest in opportunities to provide nearby workforce housing. Similarly, to compete with office locations in the US 36 corridor, a greater mix of amenities will be necessary such as a walkable form, dining, support services, and lodging. One potential approach may be formation of an "aerotropolis" to complement work planned in Jefferson County at the Verve development site and the existing aerospace sector in Westminster. With a 9,000-foot runway, the airport already functions as a reliever for Denver International Airport.

***Vision:*** The future development and buildout of this area is envisioned to introduce flex spaces and more research and development (R&D) facilities. Site design should anticipate a more walkable form with trails through and between development sites and connectivity to workforce housing opportunities across Simms Street in Broomfield. Connections to the adjacent 420-acre Westminster Hills Off-Leash Dog Park and its network of trails is

### AEROTROPOLIS

Aerotropolis developments consist of clusters of aerospace businesses and associated development that complement each other and their accessibility to an airport. Such clusters typically include time-sensitive manufacturing and distribution facilities, such as aerospace, biopharma, electronics, and e-commerce; hotel, trade and exhibition complexes; and office space for air-travel intensive executives.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN METROPOLITAN AIRPORT AND AIRPORT ZONES

The Airports Environs Land Use Plan establishes guidance on compatible development around Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport. The Airport Influence Area is that property within the environs of the Airport, where particular land uses either are influenced by or will influence the operation of the airport, in either a positive or negative manner. This area considers Runway Protection Zones, Approach Zones, Traffic Pattern Areas, and Airport noise contours down to 65 Day/Night Level (DNL) and then establishes a buffer around those features that extends to prominent geographic features and roads.

a potential amenity for Westmoor. Strategies should also be identified to encourage heavy truck traffic to use Simms Street to access the proposed future Jefferson Parkway to minimize cut-through traffic from industrial uses in Broomfield. Workforce housing in this area could be supported with thoughtful development of the land southwest of West 108th Avenue and Wadsworth Parkway and would further support provision of retail and restaurant uses in Westmoor. All uses in this area should incorporate appropriate noise attenuation measures due to the presence of Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, whose crosswind runway establishes an approach zone over Westmoor and whose operations for the primary runway form a looped racetrack pattern with the downwind leg over Westmoor.

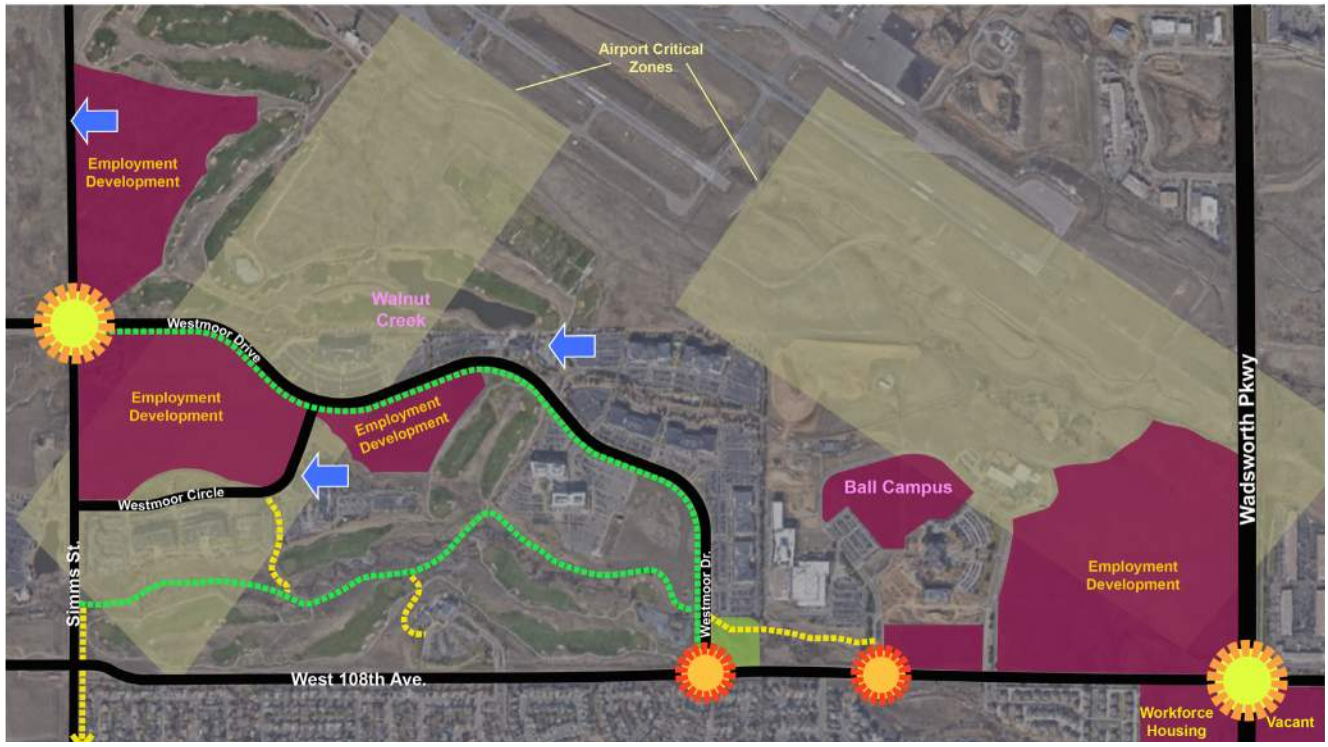



**Figure 8-9. Westmoor & Vicinity Employment Area Framework**

## NORTH I-25 FOCUS AREA

***Now:*** The North I-25 Focus Area comprises approximately 282 acres of land between West 144th and West 134th Avenues, with I-25 and Huron Street bordering the east and west, respectively. Adjacent development includes the Orchard Town Center—a mixed-use development just to the north. To the east of I-25 in Thornton, there is a mix of large-format retail commercial uses. The City of Westminster has a sales tax sharing agreement with the City of Thornton that covers a large portion of this area. This Focus Area is the only remaining site in Westminster with I-25 visibility, which is beneficial for office and commercial development. Additionally, the convenient access from I-25—with two major interchanges at West 136th and 144th Avenues—provides opportunity for expanded retail commercial uses adjacent to these streets. The McKay Drainageway project addressed stormwater management for the area by removing several properties from the floodplain, thereby facilitating opportunities for development. This project also established a trail facility that connects this area to McKay Lake to the west, providing access to recreation. Realignment of the Bull Canal within the Foster Farm properties would also enhance development opportunities by addressing the irregular parcel configurations. An additional infrastructure improvement is a new North Huron Interceptor Sewer to address limitations of wastewater service in this area. This improvement will enable continued build out of Orchard Town Center and other land uses compatible with the Comprehensive Plan.

***Vision:*** The city has long envisioned the North I-25 Focus Area as a key employment hub and major gateway into the city. This area is anticipated as a district of office, research and development, and medical-related uses that maximizes employment opportunities in the area, brings daytime populations to further energize the Orchard Town Center, and complements the growing medical uses already established with the St. Anthony North Health Campus. The city anticipates future hospital expansion and, therefore, will take measures to ensure adjacent properties are developed in a compatible manner; for example, limiting uses that may object to noise from ambulances and helicopters. Additional retail should focus on experiential uses such as complexes of dining and entertainment, as well as those that complement employment uses. Buildings should be designed to create a strong presence along I-25. There is limited public transportation to or within this area, but design standards can help establish a walkable and bikeable environment. In consideration of Thornton identifying the area across I-25 as a Regional Mixed-Use Center, the long-range transportation planning for the area should identify opportunities to provide transit access to the existing express bus services that travel from West 120th Avenue along I-25 to State Highway

*St. Anthony North Health Campus*

7. Should available resources or planned infrastructure support housing within this area, it should prioritize the opportunity for a continuum of care approach that provides supportive living environments for seniors in proximity to the St. Anthony North Health Campus. Housing development in this area should also provide Public Land Dedication on-site due to the lack of existing parks and recreation facilities in the area. As a transition measure the significant landscape edge along the east side of Huron Street should be maintained.

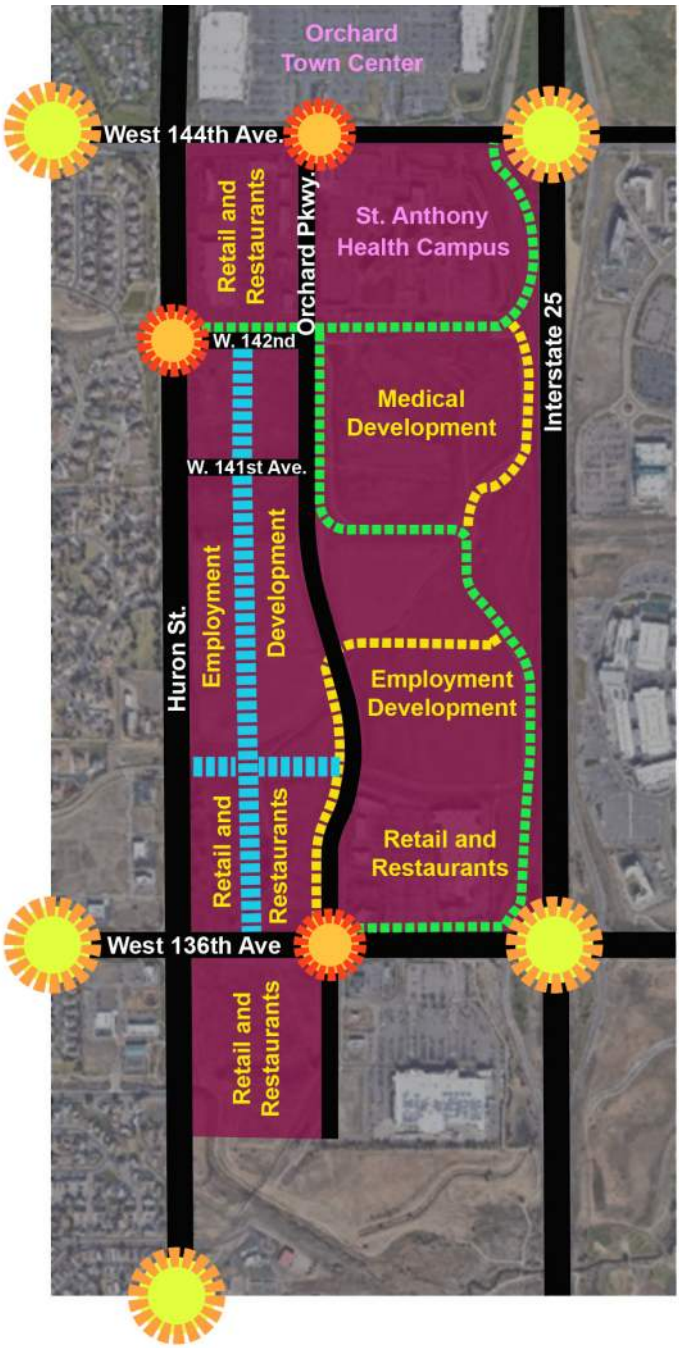



**Figure 8-10. North I-25 Focus Area Framework**

# 9.0 Plan Administration

**This chapter provides an overview of plan compliance, management, reporting mechanisms, and update protocols. Specific topics include guidance for development regulations and review, growth management and planning for future focus areas. Additionally, this section summarizes city planning efforts that will continue to influence the implementation of and future updates to the Comprehensive Plan.**

*Restored Savery Savory Mushroom Water Tank*

# 9.1 LEGAL EFFECT OF PLAN ADOPTION

Westminster City Charter Section 4.16 authorizes planning for the use, division, and development of land for the general purpose of protecting the public health, safety, and welfare. Furthermore, the city is authorized by Part Two of Title 31, Chapter 23, C.R.S., to make, adopt, amend, extend, add to, or carry out a master plan for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the municipality.

By setting goals and policies, the Plan establishes a vision and identifies actions needed to reach those goals. The Plan organizes the community's ideas into a single document that can be shared with residents, community partners, businesses, and future leaders. There is no specific financial commitment for implementation of the Plan but will be regularly consulted as a guide for decision-making.

Land uses shown in the Land Use Diagram may be affected by pre-existing vested rights or contractual commitments. The applicability and scope of such rights or commitments, if any, will be reviewed and determined at the time of development plan approval.

# 9.2 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMPLIANCE

## DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Development of property within the city shall continue to be subject to all procedures and regulations established for development pursuant to the Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C). This shall include such considerations as site planning, architecture, parking, landscaping, and other design criteria. The city conducts design review for new projects with design standards that correspond to different development typologies. These standards generally establish neighborhood-scale considerations for design, site, and building design elements. Additional guidelines may be developed for particular areas of the community with special conditions or unique opportunities.

## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

One of the primary intents of the Plan is to provide information, guidance, and direction for future development. The Planning Manager is authorized by W.M.C. to interpret the Plan in specific cases and determine compliance.

Implementation of and alignment with the Plan's four Plan Cornerstones and the other goals and policies will be key considerations during review of future development proposals. While there is a desire for flexibility and the ability to respond quickly to high-quality projects and changing market demands, there is also a responsibility to focus on creating and maintaining a variety of great neighborhoods; supporting a stable and diverse job base; and providing green spaces and opportunities for arts and culture. As projects are reviewed and competing issues arise, it will be the responsibility of the approving authority to balance these needs to meet all four Plan Cornerstones of the Plan.

Determining compliance with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan requires a review of the proposal against the land use character types and the other goals and policies of the Plan. The following criteria have been developed for use during the review process to determine whether or not a proposed development is achieving the vision and goals established in this Plan and thus meeting W.M.C. requirements.

1. Does the proposed development generally advance the four Plan Cornerstones contained in the Comprehensive Plan?
2. Is the proposed development supportive of the form and use requirements established for the applicable land use character type?
3. Will the proposed development strengthen the character of the area by:
   a. Providing appropriate infill development and, if applicable, removing obsolete development that does not contribute to the quality of the surrounding area;
   b. Adding to the mix of uses to support a neighborhood unit and/or contribute to the vitality of an activity center;
   c. Improving the streetscape and connectivity within and adjacent to the area; and
   d. Meeting or exceeding the development quality of the surrounding area?
4. Does the proposed development provide appropriate transitions between uses? In more urban locations these transitions should generally be accomplished by design elements that allow adjacent buildings to be in close proximity to one another. In suburban locations these transitions should be addressed through separation of uses and/or buffering, such as decreased heights, increased setbacks, and landscape screening.

# 9.3 PLAN MANAGEMENT

To keep implementation of the Comprehensive Plan on track and demonstrate progress towards desired community outcomes, it is the responsibility of the Planning Manager, in coordination with the City Council and Planning Commission, to periodically review and report out on the Plan's status. This includes a cycle of reflecting on the implementation status and achievements, and also making periodic adjustments to the Plan to ensure that it remains relevant and applicable.

On a regular basis, the Planning Division should meet to discuss plan implementation progress and challenges, gather ideas to inform the development of the Biennial Report, and identify issues to be considered for potential plan amendments.

## AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City Council and Planning Commission may review, identify, and adopt amendments to the Comprehensive Plan throughout its planning horizon so that current issues continue to be addressed and to ensure that the Plan provides a realistic guide for the community's future growth. Amendments could include periodic updates to major functional (system) plans and area plan elements that serve to support the Plan. Citywide development potential is not fixed or finalized in the Plan. As time passes new opportunities for redevelopment and infill will arise, beyond sites identified in the Plan. These will be reviewed based on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment criteria in Municipal Code.

## BIENNIAL REPORTS

Preparation of a Biennial Report to summarize implementation, issues, and next steps will help provide organization to the implementation process. The Planning Manager will oversee the development of the Biennial Report to review actions taken within the reporting period in support of the Comprehensive Plan. The report will identify projects in progress or completed, supporting plans developed, updated, or amended, enhancements or additions to city programs or services, new partnerships or intergovernmental agreements, and proposed regulatory updates adopted to help Westminster realize attainment of the Plan's four Plan Cornerstones. The Biennial Report will also identify plan amendments adopted during the reporting period, upcoming amendments for future consideration, new or revised City Council budgeting or strategic planning priorities, and a summary of key development review activities. Future reports may also include the latest status of indicators identified in the performance monitoring section of this chapter. The report does not constitute a plan amendment, but may be considered when making future plan updates.

# 9.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

A preliminary list of major initiatives to further the vision and policies of the Comprehensive Plan was developed as part of the engagement and plan development process. A review of the projects will occur biennially, and in conjunction with budgeting and capital planning, at which point adjustments and additions may be made. The initiatives are identified in the Implementation Action Plan and are intended to provide guidance in the development of strategic and capital improvement plans, and in the budget development process.

## RESOURCING IMPLEMENTATION

The city's budget reflects careful preparation according to City Council goals, the Strategic Plan and citywide objectives. The budget process emphasizes long-range planning, budgeting for results, effective program management and fiscal responsibility. It is the city's policy to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to preserve existing assets and programs before targeting resources toward additional assets and programs, especially those that have ongoing maintenance obligations.

Successful implementation of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan may require making some incremental shifts in city existing staffing and current resource commitments, exploring new revenue streams and funding mechanisms, pursing outside resources like community partnerships, and allocating future staffing and resources to support strategy implementation actions. These shifts and adjustments must happen within the larger context of the city's overall budget process. Some preliminary ideas about resource opportunities and needs for each of these categories are summarized below.

### Examples of Incremental Shifts with Existing Staff and Resources

- Educational and awareness campaigns
- Integration of Comprehensive Plan policies into Development Code updates
- Incorporate tracking and monitoring activities into existing roles

### Examples of New Revenue Streams and Funding Mechanisms

- Identifying revenue diversification
- Utility revenue strategies

### Examples of Outside Resources

- Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)
- Adams and Jefferson Counties

# 9.5 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The city's Growth Management Program was originally established in 1978 to aid the city in balancing growth with the ability to provide and expand services including water, water treatment, sewer, police, fire, and parks and recreation. Since the adoption of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, the Growth Management Program has been updated to remove the residential service competition, relying instead on Comprehensive Plan compliance, codified design standards, and criteria for amendments to the Plan. Currently, all city departments are invited to participate in the development process to ensure that appropriate infrastructure and services are available. Additionally, the city has a number of tools to manage growth and may consider new and/or alternative tools in future years. The existing toolkit is listed below.

## LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

**Annexation.** The city's policy is to annex strategic locations that support vision attainment and financial sustainability. Official land use designation for these areas will either occur at time of annexation or as part of a development plan for proposed annexation areas.

**Development Agreements.** A voluntary contract between the city and a person who owns or controls property, detailing the obligations of both parties and specifying the standards and conditions that will govern development of the property.

**Zoning.** Zoning requirements work in tandem with the recommendations made within the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Diagram. Zoning is the regulatory tool of which development will comply with. Any changes to zoning should be in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

*Photo credit: Ron Booth, Westminster Station*

**Specific Plan Districts (SPD).** A zoning scheme available for Focus Areas to define land uses, building forms, street typologies, amenities, and other elements to contribute to a cohesive identity for the district. As a regulatory incentive, having a SPD in place allows projects to bypass typical zoning procedures and proceed to development plans. See also Section 9.6.

**Subdivision.** A group of regulations to ensure that proposed division of property into lots for development are buildable; can be accessed safely by residents and/or occupants; are designed to be serviced by emergency responders and solid waste collection; and provide adequate environmental controls that are formalized through a "plat" recorded with the County Clerk and Recorder. This public record in the form of a plat ensures buyers a property is eligible for building permits and connections to utilities. The plat also formalizes facilities that the city or other entity may be accepting for ownership and/or maintenance such as a street, stormwater facility, or park site.

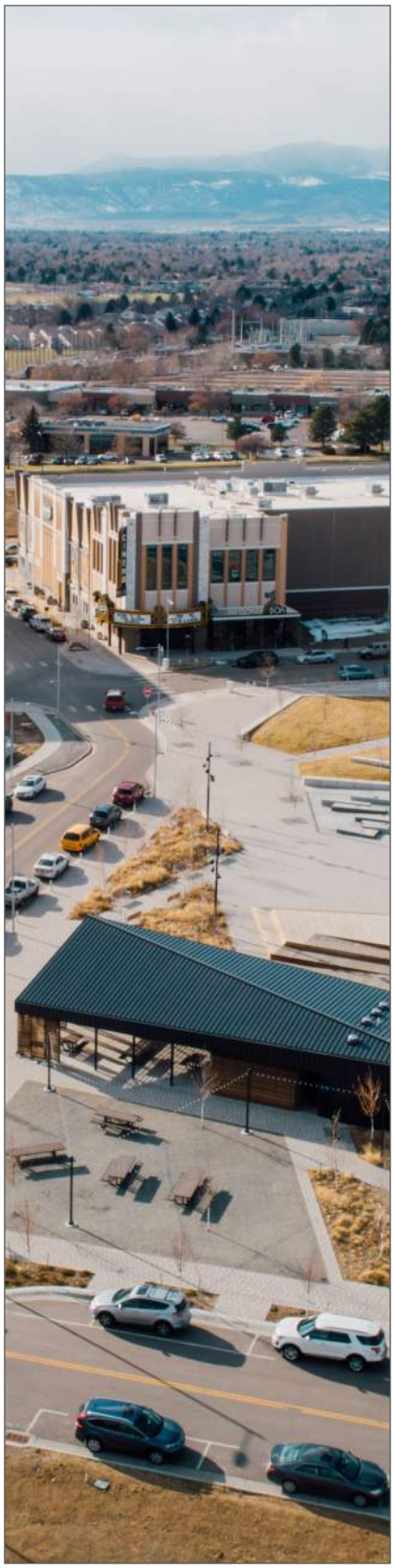
**Historic Landmark Designation.** In conjunction with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, and under guidance from the Historic Landmark Board, this type of designation can assist in recognizing and preserving the city's past as a significant part of the community.

**Exactions (Public Land Dedication (PLD), Park Development Fee, and School Land Dedication).** Exactions are land and/or fees collected by the city for residential development or redevelopment, and used to fund community infrastructure, service improvements, and maintenance. Generally, low densities cover a higher acreage of land, and generate less money for PLD versus higher densities occupying less land area, but generating more units and therefore result in greater value. PLD is often used for park purposes but may be used for other municipal facility needs such as utilities, fire, or libraries. The Park Development Fee supplements PLD with funds to ensure public parks in or near a development may be improved with facilities to meet the needs of future residents. School Land Dedication provides the local school district the option of either accepting land for a school site or funds to improve existing schools that will serve a development. Non-residential development is not subject to these exactions.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

**Economic Development Agreements (EDA).** Economic development agreements provide assistance from government entities in exchange for meeting economic development goals. This assistance may be in the form of cash, loans, tax exemptions, or other benefits, and may be conditioned on the achievement of hiring targets or other milestones.

*Water Main Replacement*



**Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** Tax increment financing is a public financing method intended to stimulate private investment within a geographic zone designated in need of economic revitalization. This type of financing tool can leverage funds for public improvement within the boundaries of the zone.

**Opportunity Zones (OZ).** Opportunity zones are economically-distressed areas where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment. Designation as an Opportunity Zone may be initiated by a locality, but requires sign off at the state and federal level.

**Enterprise Zones (EZ).** The Colorado Enterprise Zone Program was created by the Colorado Legislature to promote a business-friendly environment in economically distressed areas by offering state income tax credits that incentivize businesses to locate and develop in—and non-profit organizations to assist with the needs of these communities.

**Jobs-Housing Balance.** A jobs-housing ratio of 1:1 is widely considered a good indicator of a healthy, balanced community, with one job per employed resident within a municipality. This balance indicates availability of both jobs and housing within an area, limiting commute-shed, allowing for a range of housing, and access to jobs. In consideration of Westminster's geographical boundaries and location within the US 36 Corridor, a jobs-housing balance must be considered in the context of available housing and employment opportunities within the larger region.

**Management of City-Owned Properties.** The City of Westminster owns and maintains many properties throughout the city. While facilities such as parks, fire stations, or libraries may be most visible there are a number of properties owned and intended for future development in the support of the city's Vision. Downtown Westminster is one prominent example of which city-owned property has been used to partner with private development. City ownership provides the opportunity to partner with private developers to create unique projects that support needs such as affordable housing, employment opportunities or experiential uses that contribute to quality of life.

**Small Business Assistance.** The city offers a variety of programs and resources for small businesses in Westminster. The Capital Projects Grant Program and Scholarship Program both provide reimbursement to qualifying small businesses for property improvements, training expenses, and more. The city also partners with the North Metro Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to offer resources to new and existing small businesses.

## 9.6 SPECIFIC PLANS

Specific plans are specific programs of zoning, capital improvements, and programming for Focus Areas identified in this Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of these plans is to ensure that development is planned and designed cohesively with a synergistic mix of uses; connected, multimodal circulation system; access to transit and public amenities; and adequate provision of public utilities and services. The location and boundaries of each focus area are identified in Map 8-1 in Chapter 8.

The City of Westminster will coordinate planning efforts for each focus area and determine the appropriate time for plan preparation. The plans typically include a cohesive vision for land use, architectural design, design and development standards, multimodal circulation, public amenities, and adequate utilities and services. Upon completion, each specific plan with associated rezoning or updates to the Comprehensive Plan, if applicable, will be adopted by City Council and incorporated by reference into the Comprehensive Plan. Existing, adopted specific plans include the Downtown Specific Plan and Westminster Station Area Specific Plan.

## 9.7 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS & POLICY DOCUMENTS

The City of Westminster has an extensive history of planning for the future, and local and regional planning efforts—both existing and upcoming—guide various aspects of the city's growth and development. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan is one of the city's highest-level policy documents, used to guide city leaders and staff in making long-range decisions. Even though this Plan covers a range of topics, it does not provide specific level of detail for all topics or all geographic areas within the city. The Plan is long-term in nature and separate from routine and/or immediate business needs; therefore, it may be used in conjunction with other city plans and documents. Generally, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan should be consulted when considering decisions that have long-term planning considerations. Other city plans generally provide more detail on short- and mid-term priorities and site-specific standards.

In all cases, these plans should consider the overall direction and intent outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Where conflicts arise, a very general rule of thumb is that the more current or specific the plan is, the more they should be relied upon, especially when balancing sometimes competing policy and priority directions.

Chapter 8 provides more detail on relevant special area plans for the Focus and Transition Areas. Additionally, Chapters 2 through 7 include callouts of relevant plans. These callouts help direct the reader to find more information on the topics addressed.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

| | CITY PLANS | EXTERNAL PARTNER PLANS |
|---|---|---|
| **Land Use & Development** | • Specific Area Plans<br>  • Westminster Station<br>  • Downtown Westminster<br>• Unified Development Code<br>• Preliminary & Official Development Plans<br>• Sustainability Plan | • DRCOG Metro Vision<br>• Adams & Jefferson County Comprehensive Plans<br>• North Plains Area Plan<br>• Rocky Mountain Metro Airport Environs Land Use Plan<br>• Arvada, Broomfield, Federal Heights, Northglenn, and Thornton Comprehensive Plans |
| **Transportation, Mobility & Connections** | • Transportation & Mobility Plan<br>• Bicycle Master Plan<br>• Roadway Master Plan<br>• Mobility Action Plan<br>• Trail Master Plan | • RTD plans<br>• CDOT plans |
| **Health, Wellness & Community Services** | • Parks, Recreation & Libraries Plan<br>• Library Master Plan<br>• Open Space Stewardship Plan<br>• Arts & Culture Plan<br>• Individual park master plans<br>• Hazard Mitigation Plan<br>• Public Safety plans | • Hyland Hills Parks & Rec District Master Plan |
| **Economic & Financial Resilience** | • Economic Development Strategic Plan<br>• Urban Renewal Plans<br>• Economic Base & Industry Opportunities report<br>• Retail Strategy | |
| **Housing & Neighborhoods** | • Neighborhood Plans<br>• Harris Park<br>• Affordable & Workforce Housing Strategic Plan<br>• CDBG Consolidated Plan | • Foothills Regional Housing plans<br>• Maiker Housing Partner plans |
| **Utilities & Resources** | • Sustainability Plan<br>• Water Supply Plan<br>• Water Efficiency Plan<br>• Drought Management Plan<br>• Other Utility Plans<br>• Stormwater Program/MS4 Permit | • Colorado Water Plan<br>• Mile High Flood District plans |
| **Supporting Documents** | • Strategic Plan<br>• Capital Improvement Plan<br>• Municipal Budget<br>• Westminster Municipal Code<br>• Individual department strategic plans<br>• Intergovernmental Agreements | |

# 9.8 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Comprehensive Plan is shaped by the vision and a set of plan cornerstones that state the community's aspirations for the future. Indicators are established to help monitor the Plan's performance and progress towards achieving the vision, plan cornerstones, and goals. Indicators help track and communicate progress, and can also serve as alerts to emerging problems or challenges. The Indicators below focus on community conditions in future years. National examples of indicators include the consumer price index, the number of traffic fatalities, or the unemployment rate. Indicators used by people every day include bank account balances or vehicle fuel gauges. Indicators are used to raise awareness of community issues, inform decision-making, and identify trends. The results of indicator tracking may be used to publicize good works or identify work that needs to be done. A Biennial Report indicating progress shown on plan implementation will be prepared and will include these community indicators. The report may also call for resources or policy changes needed where indicators are unfavorable. Indicator tracking will depend upon staffing, budget resources, and availability of updated data.

**LEGEND:**

**COW:** City of Westminster

**CD:** Community Development

**CMO:** City Manager's Office

**ED:** Economic Development

**PRL:** Parks, Recreation & Libraries

**PWU:** Public Works & Utilities

**USGBC:** United Stated Green Building Council

| Indicator | Baseline Value | Target | Data Source | Tracking Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Utilities & Resources** | | | | |
| Water usage per capita (gallons per capita per day) | 126 gpcd | Decrease | COW, PWU | COW, PWU |
| Water demand from Standley Lake (rolling average) | 4-year historical average | Maintain or decrease | COW, PWU | COW, PWU |
| Utility Condition Index (UCI) | 41.5 | Maintain or increase | COW, PWU | COW, PWU |
| Total number of green infrastructure projects | 3 in service and 8 under design/ construction | Increase | COW, CD, Stormwater | COW, CD, Stormwater |

| Indicator | Baseline Value | Target | Data Source | Tracking Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Land Use & Development** | | | | |
| Current population | June 2020 Population, PEPP | Monitor | COW, CD, GIS | COW, CD |
| Balanced mix of land uses | 2022, See Ch. 3, Map 3-1 land uses | Maintain | COW, CD, GIS | COW, CD |
| Coverage of Specific Plans | 2 Specific Plans in place | Complete Specific Plans for remaining Focus Areas | COW, CD, Planning | COW, CD |
| Number of third-party rated development projects (LEED, Green Globes, etc.) | 74 | Increase | USGBC | COW, CD |
| Number of adopted municipal code amendments identified in the Implementation Action Plan | N/A | Increase | COW, CD, Planning | COW, CD |
| Acreage of strategic annexations to support the city Vision | N/A | Monitor | COW, CD, Planning | COW, CD |
| **Transportation & Mobility** | | | | |
| Number of TDM programs within Westminster | 2 | Increase | COW, CD, Transp. | COW, CD |
| Drive alone modal split | See Existing Conditions report, Chart 3-1 | Reduce | US Census Bureau ACS | COW, CD |
| Inflow/outflow commuter balance | See Existing Conditions Report, Figure 3-1 | Improve balance | US Census Bureau ACS | COW, CD |
| Miles of bike lanes, buffered bike lanes or shared lanes | 40 miles | Increase | COW, CD, Transp. | COW, CD |
| Total crashes | 2,485 (2017 last year of data available) | Decrease | COW, Police | COW, CD |

| Indicator | Baseline Value | Target | Data Source | Tracking Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Health, Wellness, & Community Services** | | | | |
| Acres of park land | 3,179 | Increase | COW, PRL | COW, PRL |
| Trail usage (annual) | 1,133,688 (2019) | Maintain or increase | COW, PRL | COW, PRL |
| Number of public art installations | 170 | Increase | COW, PRL | COW, PRL |
| Quality of local public schools per citizen survey results of as “good” or “very good” (combined) | 54% in 2020; question not included in 2022 | Increase | COW Comm. Survey | CMO |
| Safety - overall feeling of safety in city, results from “very satisfied” and “satisfied” | 55% in 2022 (combined) | Increase | COW Comm. Survey | CMO |
| ISO rating | ISO Class 1 achieved in 2019 | Maintain Class 1 certification | COW, Fire | COW, Fire |
| Number of census tracts with low income and low food access | 4 | Decrease | USDA | COW, PRL |
| **Economic & Financial Resilience** | | | | |
| Total employment within the city | 51,089 (pre-pandemic) | Increase | COW, ED | COW, ED |
| Job opportunities that match skills (percentage selecting “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree”) | 36% in 2022 (combined) | Maintain or increase | COW Comm. Survey | COW, CMO |
| Revenue diversification in sources of revenue (sales tax, property tax, fees, etc.) | 2022 Budget revenue sources | Monitor | COW, CMO, Policy & Budget | COW, CMO, Policy & Budget |
| Population with bachelor’s degree or higher | 40.6% (2017-2021) | Increase | Census, ACS | TBD |

| Indicator | Baseline Value | Target | Data Source | Tracking Responsibility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Housing & Neighborhoods** | | | | |
| Quality of life per citizen survey (percentage of respondents selecting “good” or “excellent”) | 83% in 2022 (combined) | Maintain or Increase | COW Comm. Survey | COW-CMO |
| Percent of code cases achieving voluntary compliance | 90% | Maintain or increase | COW, CD, Comm. Pres. | COW, CD |
| Number of registered homeowner and neighborhood associations | 114 | Maintain or increase | COW, CD, Admin. | COW, CD, Admin. |
| Total number of affordable housing units | Housing Needs Assessment (TBD) | Increase | COW, ED | COW, ED |
| Owner-occupied housing unit rate | 64.5% (2017-2021) | Increase | Census, ACS | COW, ED |
| Housing cost burdened households | Housing Needs Assessment (TBD) | Decrease | COW, ED | COW, ED |

# A.

# Annexation Analysis

**Annexation is the legal process by which a city adds land to its jurisdiction and is one of the most dramatic and lasting actions a municipality can take. The primary purpose of annexation is to provide public services to residents and businesses in the extraterritorial locations. This Appendix to the Comprehensive Plan establishes the framework for decisions concerning annexation of land into the City of Westminster. In tandem with the Comprehensive Plan's plan cornerstones, goals and policies—including the Land Use Diagram—and the city's Strategic Plan, this document will guide considerations for potential future annexation of lands into the city.**

## INTRODUCTION

There are two basic types of annexations: extraterritorial annexations that extend the municipal boundaries, and enclave annexations that consolidate municipal boundaries. The most common type of annexation is voluntary annexation where 50% of the record property owners representing 50% or more of the land area petition for municipal annexation. There are limited circumstances when the city may annex territory by unilateral action. Generally, this only occurs for city-owned properties or for "enclaves," which are small pockets of territory within the unincorporated county completely surrounded by the city.

The Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) establish the basic rules for the annexation of territory into a municipality. In 1987, the Colorado Governor signed legislation (Senate Bill 45) into law requiring that municipalities have a "three-mile plan" in place before they could extend their territory by annexation. Furthermore, municipalities in Colorado are required to prepare and adopt a three-mile plan prior to annexing property into their territorial boundaries per C.R.S. 31-12-105.

The three-mile plan is a long-range plan that outlines where municipalities intend to annex property and describes how they will ensure the adequate provision of services within the newly annexed territory and the remainder of the existing municipality. This document satisfies the statutory requirements of the Colorado Revised Statutes, which require a three-mile plan to be in place prior to extraterritorial annexation. This plan functions as the city's official "three mile plan "as required by Section 31-12-105 C.R.S.

This annexation appendix is not regulatory and does not commit to annexation of any of the identified locations. Rather this is a general framework to guide future consideration of annexations on a case-by-case basis.

## PURPOSE AND NEED

Without advance planning, properties in Adams and Jefferson Counties may intensify with haphazard patterns of development, greater increases in traffic congestion, duplication of services, fiscal inequalities, and uneven standards for infrastructure and essential public services. These conditions could negatively impact the quality of life, economic development program, and ability of the City of Westminster to provide services efficiently throughout the city. Coordinating the city's actions with other governments and agencies in the North Metro area is a step toward more effective regional planning.

Benefits of annexation for owners of land within the annexed area include access to Westminster public safety response including police, fire, emergency medical service, and animal control. City

street maintenance and snow removal also facilitates access by public safety responders as well as safety and convenience for lands within annexed territory. In-city utility rates, roughly 20% lower than out-of-city rates are an additional benefit of annexation. Extension of municipal ordinances also provides for city zoning, permitting, inspections, and code enforcement to ensure safe development, sanitary living conditions, and protection of property values. In-city utility rates, access to the city's portfolio of parks, recreation, libraries, arts, and cultural programming are also benefits of annexation. Finally, annexation provides residents of annexed territory the opportunity to participate in municipal governance through elections, the ability to petition the City Council and participate on city boards and commissions.

This Annexation Analysis establishes guidance to city staff when reviewing petitions for annexation and annexation of enclave areas. The Analysis identifies criteria that should be considered when a parcel of land is proposed for municipal annexation. The city has identified unincorporated parcels within three miles of the current boundaries that should be further evaluated for future annexation into the city.

## CRITERIA FOR ANNEXATION

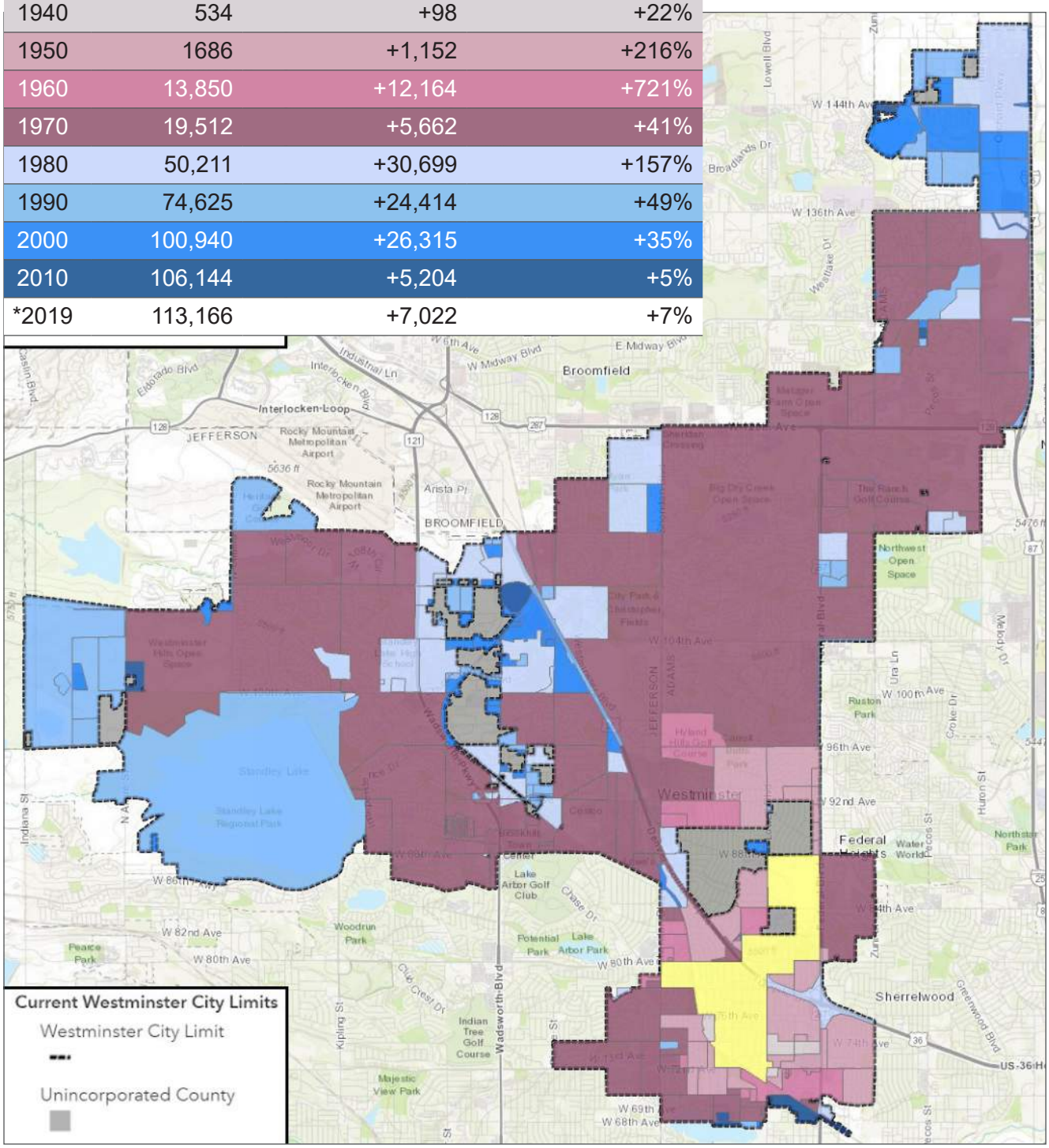
Considerations for determining feasibility of future annexation of identified parcels adjacent to the City of Westminster are outlined in the following:

1. Contribution to goal attainment of the city's Strategic Plan, Comprehensive Plan or similar municipal plan.
2. Adjacency to a Focus Area designated in the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Status as part or all of an enclave, i.e. a geographic area is completely surrounded by the City of Westminster.
4. Contribution to protecting vital municipal resources such as water supply.
5. Desirability as an open space area or park asset, or the location supports compatibility with an existing or planned open space or park.
6. Opportunities to enhance trail connections for the City of Westminster.
7. Location relative to the city's water service area.
8. Ability to be served within acceptable standards of Westminster Police, Fire, and EMS Services.
9. Amount of lane miles that would require maintenance by the City of Westminster.
10. Impacts on Westminster code enforcement resources.
11. Ability to accommodate uses and be developed or redeveloped in a manner consistent with the city's development standards resulting in higher quality development than if developed under applicable County standards.

No one criteria are controlling and each will be factored on a case-by-case basis for the geographic location in question and the greater or lesser relevance of each criteria.

| Year | City Population | Growth Added in Decade | % Growth Since Previous Decade |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1911- | - | INCORPORATION | - |
| 1920 | 235 | - | - |
| 1930 | 436 | +201 | +85% |
| 1940 | 534 | +98 | +22% |
| 1950 | 1686 | +1,152 | +216% |
| 1960 | 13,850 | +12,164 | +721% |
| 1970 | 19,512 | +5,662 | +41% |
| 1980 | 50,211 | +30,699 | +157% |
| 1990 | 74,625 | +24,414 | +49% |
| 2000 | 100,940 | +26,315 | +35% |
| 2010 | 106,144 | +5,204 | +5% |
| *2019 | 113,166 | +7,022 | +7% |

## Figure A-1. Historic Development Pattern



## GEOGRAPHY

Westminster features somewhat unusual geography as a result of the city's historic pattern of development from south to north, construction of the Boulder Turnpike in 1952 and the desire to proactively plan quality development on lands formerly within unincorporated Adams and Jefferson Counties. Roughly 80% of the city's land area is defined by annexations that occurred in 1970 through 1971. Noteworthy annexations in subsequent decades include the land for Standley Lake, Westmoor, the Church Ranch area, and North I-25. The locations described are critical sites in modern Westminster and serve as example of the importance of planning ahead for future needs, areas of housing and employment and resource protection.

## EVALUATION AREAS

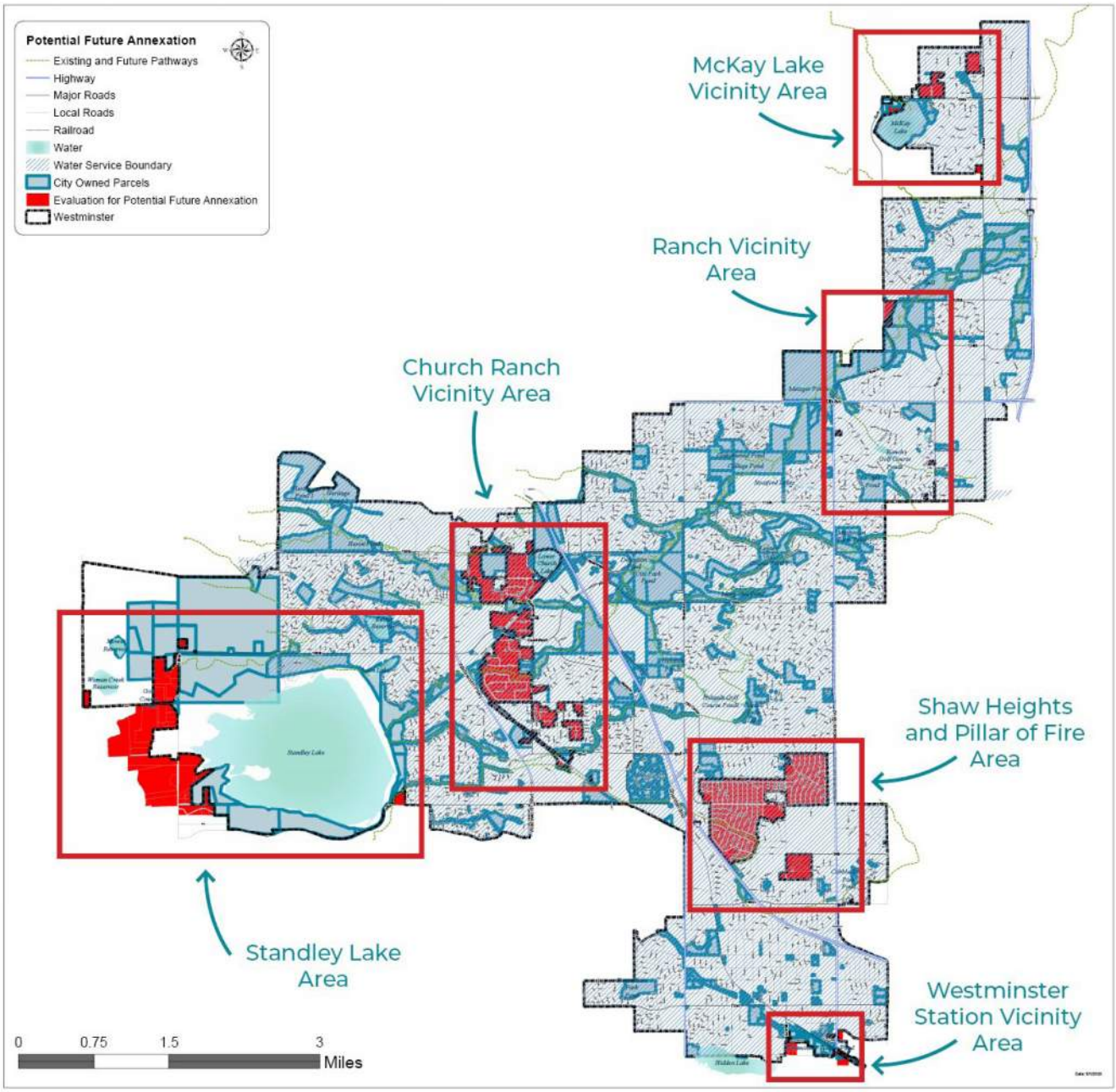
On the following page, Figure 1 groups the identified unincorporated parcels for potential future annexation into six areas:

- McKay Lake Vicinity Area
- Ranch Vicinity Area
- Church Ranch Vicinity Area
- Standley Lake Area
- Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire Area
- Westminster Station Vicinity Area

With each area, a future land use diagram is included to guide planned uses upon annexation.

Table D-1 provides an overview of the analysis of each area as it compares to the identified annexation criteria.

## Figure A-2. Potential Future Annexation Areas



### Table A-1. Evaluation Analysis with Annexation Criteria

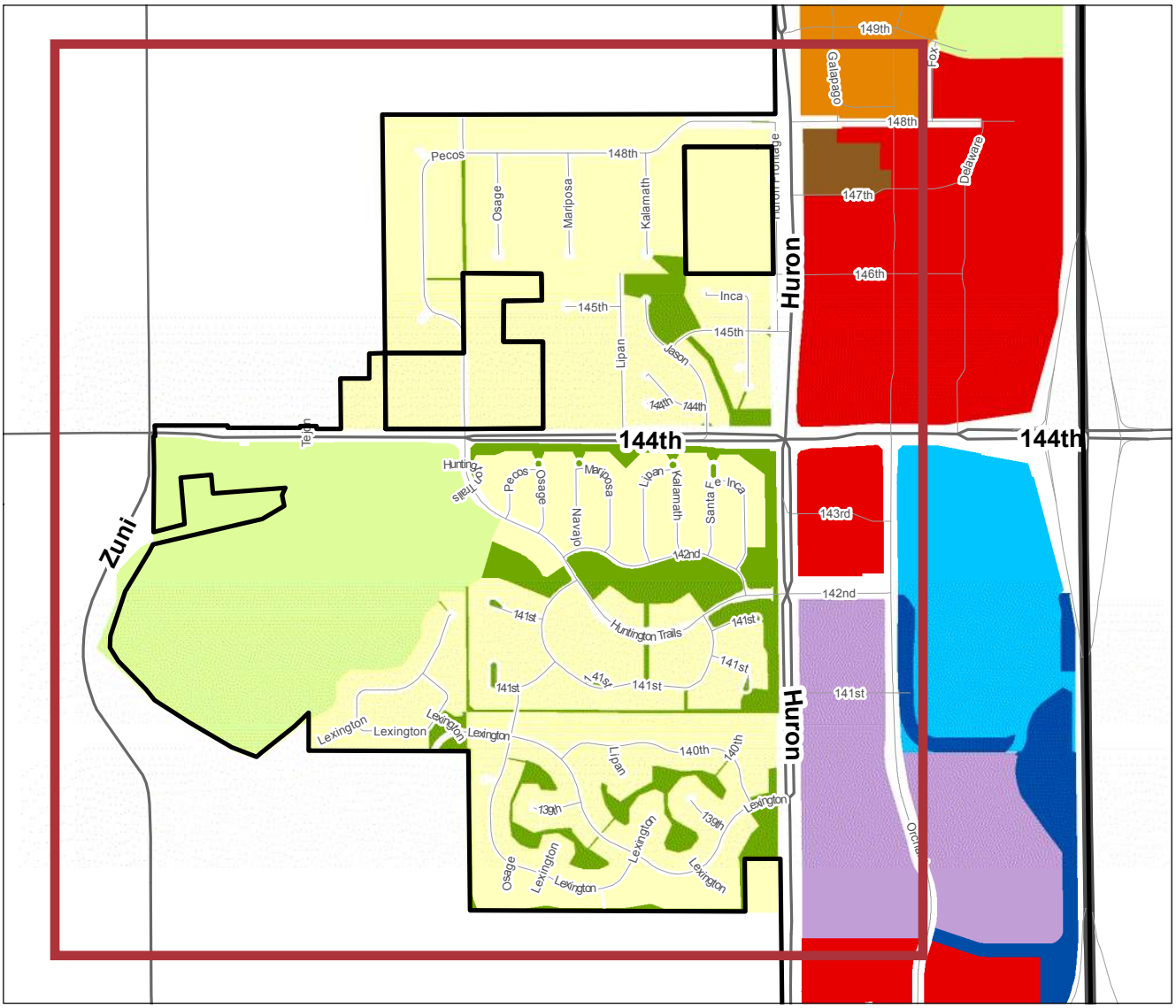
| Criteria | McKay Lake Area | Ranch Area | Church Ranch Area | Standley Lake Area | Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire Area | Westminster Station Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contributes to goal attainment of the city's Strategic Plan and/or Comprehensive Plan | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Focus Area adjacency | ✓ | | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Enclave condition | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Protection of vital municipal resources | | | | ✓ | | |
| Desirability as open space or parks, or supports compatibility | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | |
| Trail connections | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Westminster water service area | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Serviceable by Westminster Police, Fire and EMS | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Minimal addition of lane miles | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Minimal impact on code enforcement | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Can be used and developed consistent with the city's development standards | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| **Criteria Met:** | **9** | **8** | **6** | **7** | **4** | **5** |

## MCKAY LAKE VICINITY AREA

### Figure A-3. McKay Lake Vicinity Area

**Legend**

- Industrial
- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/ Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area



### Description:

The McKay Lake Area is a grouping of 16 parcels consisting of 52.3 acres that are located amongst the northernmost portion of the City of Westminster. The area is bounded by Huron Street on the east, Zuni Street on the west, West 136th Avenue on the south, and West 148th Avenue on the north. The parcels are surrounded by either the City of Westminster or the City and County of Broomfield. The area is adjacent to the North I-25 Focus Area.

### Land Use:

All of the parcels in this area are used for residential purposes, generally on small acreages. The parcels are all located within Adams County and included zoning designations of A-1, A-2, and A-3. Some of the properties include horse stables as accessory uses. The anticipated future uses are lower density residential to balance with the large amount of entitled Retail Commercial, Mixed-use, Multi-family, and Office lands situated east of North Huron.

### Transportation:

These parcels have convenient access to I-25 as the major transportation corridor in this area and connections to E470/ Northwest Parkway to access regional employment areas and the Denver International Airport. The arterial streets in this area include North Huron Street, West 144th Avenue, and West 136th Avenue. The City of Westminster maintains a large portion of the local and collector streets in and adjacent to this area.

### Utility Provisions:

Many of the parcels are served either by wells and septic systems or by the Mile High Water Company. All of the parcels are located within the Westminster Water Service Area.

### Community Services:

This area includes parcels within the North Metro Fire Rescue District and is served police services by the Adams County Sheriff's Office. As these properties are completely surrounded by the City of Westminster and the City and County of Broomfield, 911 calls are fielded by both dispatch centers and it is common for either jurisdiction to respond to calls in theses unincorporated areas.

Annexation of sites within this area is anticipated to have a minimal resource impact on municipal code enforcement due to the relatively small geography and the anticipated large lots residential development pattern.

### Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area is named for the large open space property owned by the City of Westminster, McKay Lake Open Space. Along with this open space, there are a number of public and private parks in this

area and immediate vicinity. The trails at McKay Lake Open Space connect to the I-25 Trail and eventually to the Big Dry Creek Trail, which is the main artery of Westminster's trail system. The nearest city recreation center is the City Park facilities. The nearest city library is the College Hill Library. As with adjacent areas within the city limits through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public library cardholder can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents in this area have access to the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Public Library in Broomfield and the Anythink Library Wright Farms in Adams County. Residential development in these areas should provide full Public Land Dedication under the Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.) to provide opportunities for resident-serving municipal uses.

### Summary:

This area has value for future annexation into the City of Westminster limits. Most of the parcels are enclaves of the city. The city already maintains the majority of the streets in this area and provides police, fire, and EMS service when needed. It is unlikely that the city would pursue any redevelopment and densification of the area, as significant development capacity exists within the established North I-25 Focus Area and sewer capacity is limited within this portion of the city.

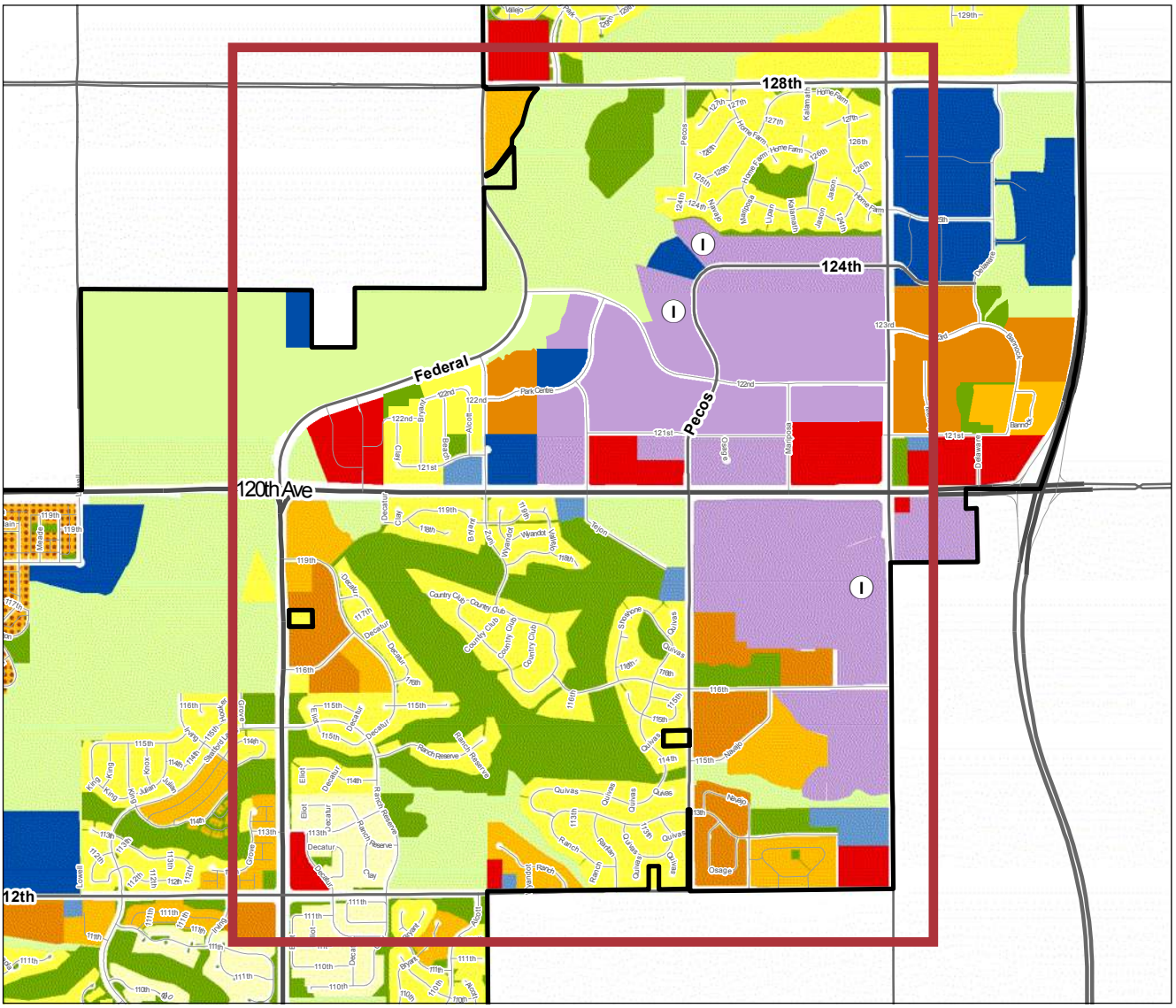
If annexation is pursued, additional fiscal impact analysis would occur. However, it has been identified that the area does not include any commercial properties, so it would not bring additional sales tax revenue into the city. The property taxes from large-lot residential properties are unlikely sufficient to pay for the cost of extending municipal services.

## RANCH VICINITY AREA

### Figure A-4. Ranch Vicinity Area

**Legend**

- Industrial
- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/ Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area



## Description:

The Ranch Vicinity Area includes only five unincorporated parcels consisting of 16 acres. The area is bounded by Pecos Street on the east, Federal Boulevard on the west, West 112th Avenue on the south, and West 128th Avenue on the north. The parcels are either enclaves within the city or they are surrounded by the City of Westminster and the City and County of Broomfield. These areas are convenient to employment opportunities in the Park Centre and Park 1200 area, as well as the Wagon Road Park-n-Ride that has express bus service to Downtown Denver. For these reasons, it is expected there will be a desire for these parcels to develop in the future.

## Land Use:

The three parcels south of West 120th Avenue are all residential properties with occupied residences. Of the two properties located near the intersection of West 128th Avenue and Zuni Street, the south property is owned by the City of Westminster and an annexation application was filed in 2015. The north parcel is privately owned and has a vacant house on the property. All of the properties are zoned A-3. If annexed, the anticipated development pattern is low to medium density residential use compatible with adjacent residential development and which can provide housing opportunities for employers in the vicinity such as in Park Centre and Park 1200.

## Transportation:

The parcels in this evaluation area have convenient access to I-25 and are served by arterials including West 120th Avenue, West 128th Avenue, West 112th Avenue, Federal Boulevard, and Pecos Street. The nearby local and collector streets are either maintained by the City of Westminster, the City of Northglenn, or the City and County of Broomfield. The Wagon Road Park-n-Ride is nearby and provides express bus service to Downtown Denver and service to Denver International Airport.

## Utility Provisions:

The parcels are all located within the Westminster Water Service area.

## Community Services:

The parcels are served by the North Metro Fire Rescue District and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. Due to their location, the city would likely be the first responder to any 911 calls. The unincorporated parcels are small in size and population, and likely will not generate a significant amount of service calls unless there were significant changes in use and intensification.

Annexation of sites within this area is anticipated to have a minimal resource impact on municipal code enforcement due to the relatively small geography and the anticipated residential development scheme.

### Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

The Big Dry Creek Open Space bisects this area and provides some direct connections to the parcels. The Big Dry Creek Park, Stratford Lakes Park, and Ranch Park are near these properties. On-street and off-street trails and trail connections in this area are numerous. The closest city recreation center is the City Park facilities. The closest city library is the College Hill Library.

### Summary:

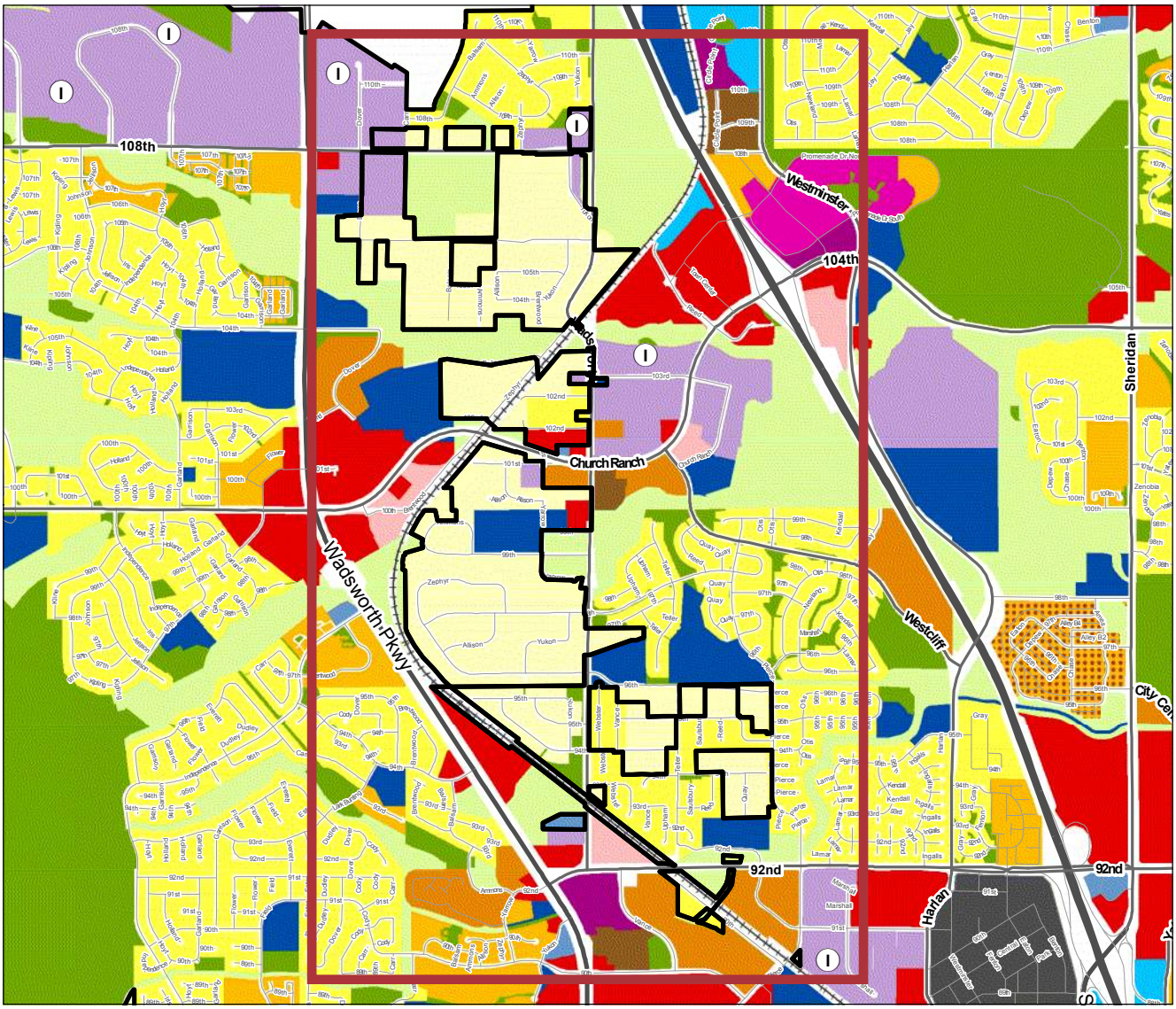
The three parcels south of West 120th Avenue are good candidates to consider for future annexation. They are already developed residences that currently use city roads and services. Given that these parcels feature no commercial uses, they would likely not provide substantial tax revenue. The large vacant property located at the intersection of West 128th Avenue and Zuni Street presents the greatest opportunity for annexation. The property could be developed for residential purposes that could further the city's goals on housing and the city could regulate the type and quality of development to ensure compatibility with the adjacent Big Dry Creek Open Space. As the property could not be annexed into Broomfield without the action of the State Legislature, it is unlikely that this property could develop without the City of Westminster agreeing to provide water and sewer services.

## CHURCH RANCH VICINITY AREA

### Figure A-5. Church Ranch Vicinity Area

**Legend**

- Industrial
- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/ Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area



## Description:

The Church Ranch Vicinity Area is a large grouping of 336 parcels consisting of 400.3 acres located in the central portion of the city. The area is bounded by US 36 on the east, Wadsworth Parkway on the west, West 88th Avenue on the south, and West 112th Avenue on the north. The parcels are all enclaves within the city. This area is in close proximity to the Church Ranch Focus Area and has convenient access to both the Brookhill and Downtown Focus Areas. These parcels also have proximity to employment opportunities in the Westmoor area and others along the US 36 corridor. For these reasons it is appropriate to evaluate the potential for future annexation of this area.

## Land Use:

The majority of the parcels are small residential acreages, however some commercial uses can be found in the area. The properties are all located within Jefferson County and include a wide range of zoning. Zoning in this area includes P-D, A-1, A-2, MR-1, R-1, R-2, SR-1, SR-2, and C-1. Jefferson County's North Plains Plan identifies a number of uses within these zoning categories that are discourage or prohibited, for example non-residential uses that may results in nuisances.

Should the city annex these locations, it would seek to honor the development pattern identified in the North Plains Plan. The city would also be cognizant of the presence of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport and, where appropriate, ensure uses that are compatible with the existing and planned air space activities. Figure D-5 more particularly identifies planned land uses if annexed into Westminster.

Consolidation of smaller parcels into larger development sites is essential to developing and/or redeveloping many of these sites, particularly in the area along Wadsworth Boulevard between Church Ranch Boulevard and the BNSF underpass.

## Transportation:

This area has access to US 36 and arterials including Wadsworth Parkway, West 92nd Avenue, and Church Ranch Boulevard. Many of the local streets are maintained by Jefferson County and are not compliant with City of Westminster specifications. US 36 features express bus service from Downtown Denver to Boulder with a station at Church Ranch Boulevard, however connectivity from these parcels to the RTD station is circuitous and not well supported by "first mile, final mile" connections. The recent increase in population in the surrounding area, including within Broomfield, has created traffic issues on many of the collector and local streets in the area due to cut through traffic between the locations of housing and employers.

## Utility Provisions:

These parcels are generally served by a well and septic system or were part of the former Standley Lake Water and Sanitation District. The district was absorbed into the city's water and sanitary system. All of the parcels are within the city's Water Service Area. One very small site, roughly 0.28 acres, located on Pierce next to the BNSF railroad, should be further evaluated due to its immediate proximity to the city's Semper Treatment Plan and Clear Well.

## Community Services:

The parcels are all served by the North Metro Fire Rescue District and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Given the proximity to Westminster Fire and Police Stations, the city regularly responds to calls in this area.

Annexation of sites within this area could potentially have significant impact on municipal code enforcement due to the number of existing developed uses not in compliance with city ordinances and activities such as outdoor storage, unpaved surfaces, and varying levels of maintenance and upkeep.

## Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

The Church Ranch Vicinity Area includes several city owned open spaces and parks that can provide some limited services to the residents. The large unincorporated areas do not feature any parks, but they are located within the Apex Park and Recreation District whose Lake Arbor Center is the nearest facility. A missing gap in the city's Big Dry Creek Open Space, and only stretch of on-street trail for the Big Dry Creek Trail, cuts through the middle of this area. This area is located between the West View Recreation Center and the City Park Recreation facilities. The nearest city library is College Hill Library. Through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public library cardholder can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents use Jefferson County's Standley Lake Branch located adjacent to 88th Avenue and Kipling Street.

## Summary:

This area presents a strategic annexation opportunity given its adjacency to three Focus Areas, areas of employment and its central location, however staffing and resource impacts to the city are a consideration. Municipal impacts include a burden in road maintenance, fire and police calls, and code enforcement activities. The area includes some large vacant and underutilized properties that, when future development occurs the city, could ensure that the future development complies with city Development Standards, preserves the mission of the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, and provides opportunities for housing and employment supportive of the city's goals.

When the city took control of the Standley Lake Water and Sanitation District, it signed an agreement that allowed the city to require annexation on the property owners before it would provide any new connections to the water and sewer system. This has proven to be a useful tool to ensure quality development and thoughtful extension of municipal utilities.

In addition to the expected impact on code enforcement resources, many of the residents care for livestock on their properties and that will increase the workload on the city's Animal Control Officers. Some commercial uses already exist in this area; however, revenue generation is unlikely to provide sufficient funds for activities such as street maintenance, let alone improvement costs.

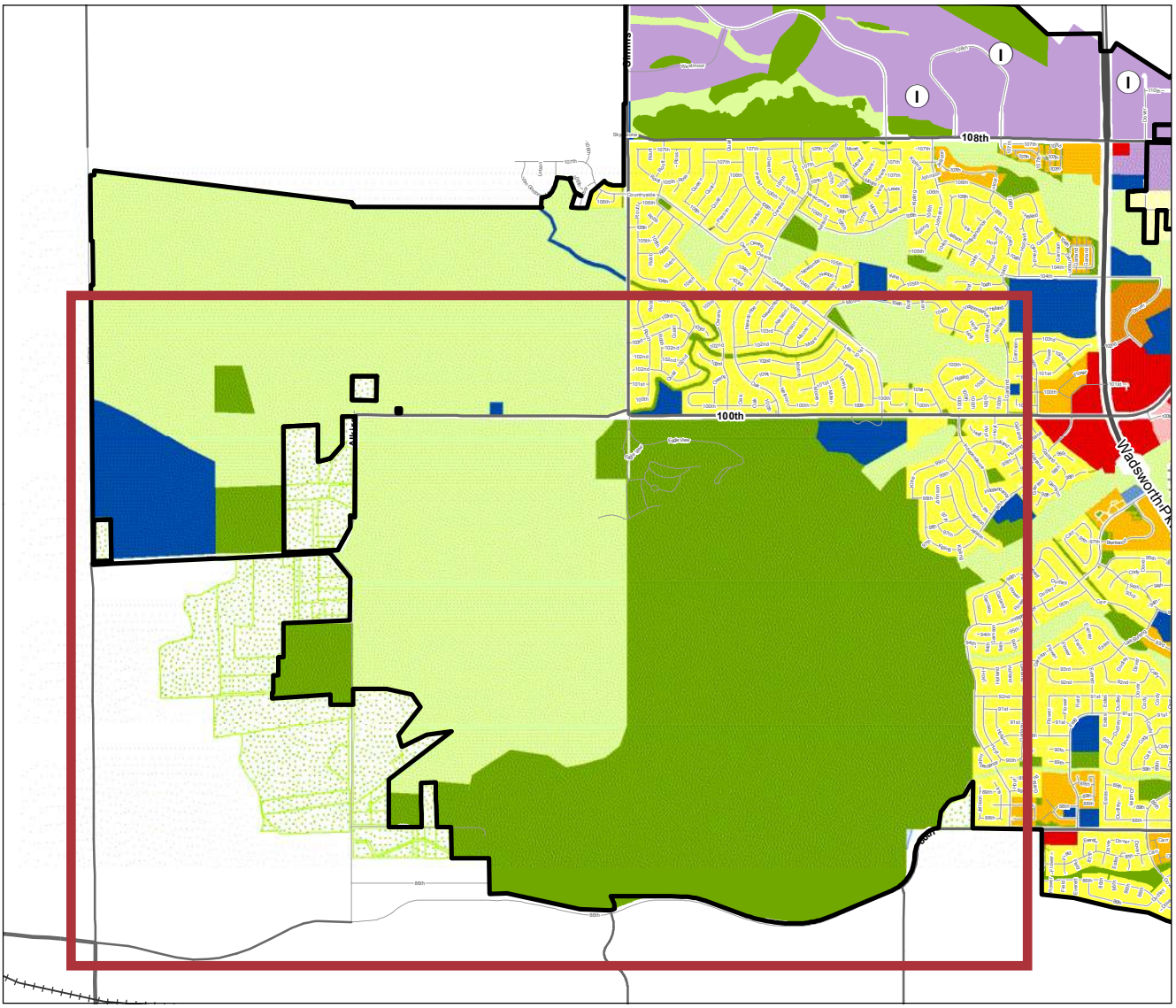
Many residents of this area have engaged with Westminster City Council on growth related concerns, but municipal authority is generally limited to locations within the city limits. Should there be a desire to further manage growth, then annexation is necessary to accomplish this. It is recognized that some property owners in the area have identified a preference to retain the large lot semi-agricultural character of the area. Where development may occur, opportunities to maintain farm and ranch characteristics should be preserved, such as has been accomplished with the Heritage at Church Ranch senior housing.

## STANDLEY LAKE AREA

### Figure A-6. Standley Lake Area

**Legend**

- Industrial
- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/ Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area



## Description:

The Standley Lake Area is a large grouping of 52 parcels covering 439.7 acres that are located in the western portion of the city. The area is bounded by Independence Street on the east, Indiana Street on the west, West 87th Avenue on the south, and West 100th Avenue on the north. The parcels north of West 96th Avenue are enclaves within the city.

## Land Use:

The parcels located in this area are primarily large residential acreages with a few agricultural and industrial uses. The largest non-residential uses are horse boarding. The parcels are all located within Jefferson County and are zoned P-D, A-1, A-2, and SR-2.

## Transportation:

This area does not feature convenient access to a highway or any major arterial roads. The smaller arterials and local streets in this area include West 100th Avenue, West 96th Avenue, West 86th Parkway, West 88th Avenue, Simms Street, Alkire Street, and Indiana Street. A large portion of the streets are maintained by either the City of Westminster or the City of Arvada. Some of the streets and small roads are maintained by Jefferson County, but they are likely not constructed in accordance with City of Westminster specifications. The future Jefferson Parkway, if constructed, would run parallel to Indiana Street and potentially result in significant development interest in the area.

## Utility Provisions:

None of the parcels in this area are within the city's Water Service Area. The city would only likely be able to extend water service to the parcel at the south east corner of Standley Lake. The rest of the parcels are served by wells and septic systems. The primary interest in annexation of these lands is to ensure adequate protection of Standley Lake, which provides drinking water to over 300,000 residents in Adams and Jefferson Counties.

## Community Services:

The Standley Lake Area is served by the Arvada Fire Department and Jefferson County Sheriff's office. The city responds to service calls in this area as a large part of this area is within the city limits. Despite the extreme geographic reach of some of these sites, the code enforcement impacts are anticipated to be minimal since the properties would remain large acreages with minimal additional development, if any.

## Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area contains the Standley Lake Regional Park and the Westminster Hills Open Space, however smaller neighborhood parks are only found in neighboring Arvada. Many of these properties could serve as valuable additions to the city's Open Space. The closest city recreation center is Westview Recreation Center and the nearest city library is College Hill Library. Through the Colorado Libraries Collaborate! Program, any Colorado public library cardholder can check out materials from any participating library in the state. Many residents use Jefferson County's Standley Lake Branch located adjacent to 88th Avenue and Kipling Street.

## Summary:

Parcels within this area are sensible for annexation into the city for environmental factors. The parcels are primarily located upstream of Standley Lake and if developed could pose additional risk to the city's water supply. When the Jefferson Parkway is constructed, the interest in developing these parcels would increase. Additionally, if the parcels were under city jurisdiction, other potential hazards such as oil and gas extraction activities could be mitigated or eliminated.

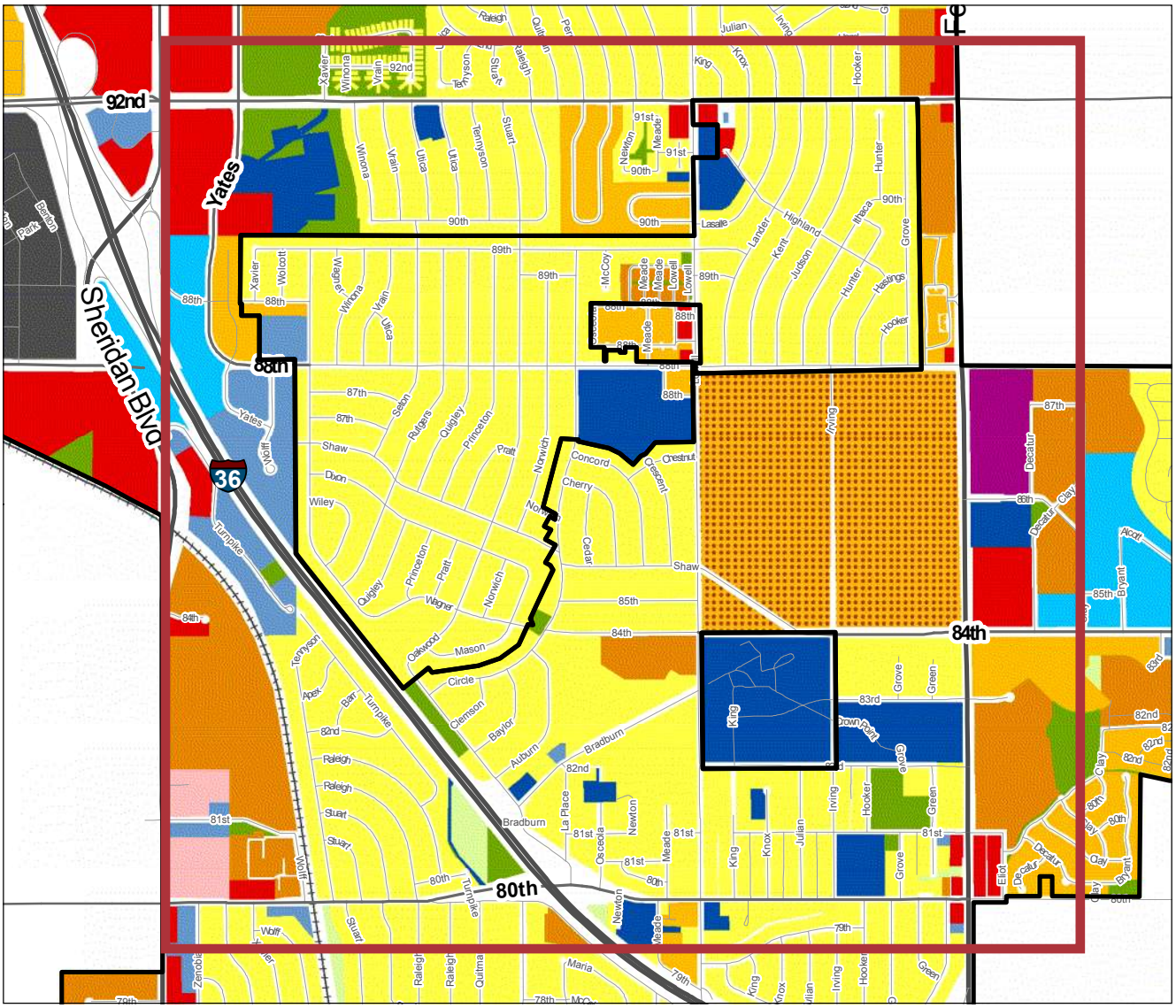
Due to the distance from the city's Water Service Area and police and fire services, it would be unlikely that the city could adequately support intensification of development within this area without expending a large amount of capital to construct additional infrastructure. In 2016 the city also signed an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Arvada that put a boundary of annexation in place to ensure that Arvada would not annex and develop these parcels.

## SHAW HEIGHTS AND WESTMINSTER HEIGHTS AREA

### Figure A-7. Shaw Heights and Westminster Heights Area

**Legend**

- I Industrial
- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/ Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area



## Description:

The Shaw Heights and Westminster Heights Area is a grouping of contiguous parcels of the Shaw Heights Subdivision, the remaining unincorporated land owned by the Pillar of Fire and a small parcel on West 80th Avenue. Collectively this evaluation area include 1,687 parcels consisting of 378.6 acres. The area is bounded by Clay Street on the east, Yates Street on the west, West 80th Avenue on the south, and West 92nd Avenue on the north. The Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire parcels are enclaves within the city. The western portions of this area are convenient to the Downtown Westminster Focus Area and Sheridan Park-n-Ride facility.

## Land Use:

A vast majority of the parcels in this area are developed as detached single-family homes. Within the Shaw Heights subdivisions, duplexes, townhomes, and some limited multi-family can be found. The Pillar of Fire parcel contains the remaining land owned by the church that was not previously annexed into the city boundary. That parcel has several residences, the historic "Westminster Castle," and the private Belleview Christian School. Within this area, there are several commercial parcels. All of these parcels are located within Adams County and the zoning designations include P-U-D, A-2, C-1, C-2, C-4, R-1-C, R-2, R-3, and R-4. The area is expected to remain primarily low and medium residential densities as shown in Figure D-7.

## Transportation:

These parcels have access to US 36 and arterial streets including Federal Boulevard, West 92nd Avenue, and West 80th Avenue. Within the Shaw Heights subdivision, many of the local and collector streets are maintained by Adams County. These roads account for a sizeable amount of lane miles that if annexed would become the city's responsibility for maintenance. The Sheridan Park-n-Ride provides express bus service to Downtown Denver and Boulder, providing regional connections to areas of employment for residents of this area.

## Utility Provisions:

The parcels in this area are all within the city's Water Service Area and they are connected or can connect to the city's water and sewer system as "out of city" users. If the city were to consider annexing these out of city accounts, a financial analysis should be done to determine the impact to fee revenue as out of city users pay a higher fee for water than in city users.

## Community Services:

These unincorporated parcels are served by the Adams County Fire Protection District and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. The local

Adams County Fire Protection District station is currently shutdown and is not in active service. The city frequently responds to calls for police, fire, and EMS service in this area due to the distance from the fire stations and Adams County Sheriff's Office.

Code enforcement would be significantly impacted if these areas were annexed due to conditions such as varying degrees of maintenance and upkeep, a large number of home-based businesses that would not typically be authorized within the city, and inconsistent standards under which construction was completed. Furthermore, the sheer volume of potential requests for service resulting from the addition of over 5,000 residents from this area to the city who could file nuisance complaints and push for abatement is beyond the current available resources of the Community Preservation Division. Additional staffing would likely be necessary if there was a desire to maintain the current level of service for code enforcement across the city, as the annexation of this area would consume a notable portion of overall existing code enforcement capacity.

### Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area lacks access to open space and trail facilities and has very few parks available. The community has a need for neighborhood and community parks. City Center Park, Oakwood Park and Westminster Swim and Fitness facilities are near this area. The Irving Street Library is the nearest city library. Some area residents use the 15-acre Rotary Park maintained by the Hyland Hills Park & Recreation District.

### Summary:

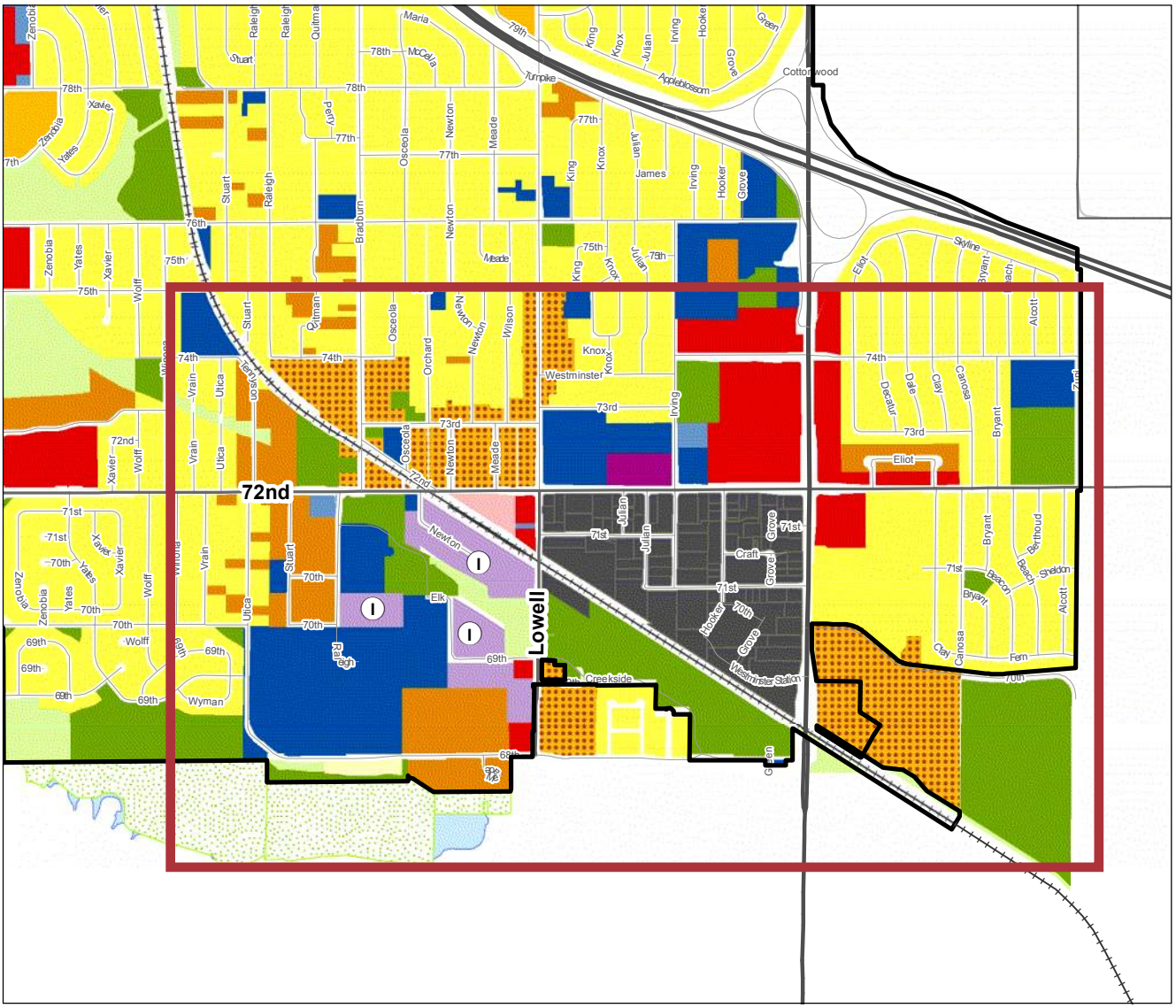
While the city does provide some Fire, EMS, and Police services for this area, the large amount of County maintained streets would be an added burden to the city's streets maintenance responsibilities. The small amount of commercial properties in this area would likely not generate sufficient revenue to pay for the additional street maintenance costs. Given the position of these homes within the city, it is likely the city is realizing a large portion of the sales tax from these residents already. As discussed above, code enforcement impacts are expected to be considerable. Annexing the Shaw Heights and Pillar of Fire Area would likely represent a high cost of service for the city. However, it is recognized that some residents have expressed a need and desire for municipal services that are beyond the capacity of Adams County.

## WESTMINSTER STATION VICINITY AREA

### Figure A-8. Westminster Station Vicinity Area

**Legend**

- Industrial
- Residential Large Lot
- Residential Low Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Suburban Multi-Family
- Urban Multi-Family
- Mixed-Use Neighborhood
- Specific Area Plan
- Employment-Flex
- Neighborhood Office
- Employment-Office/ Institutional Campus
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Commercial Mixed-Use
- Mixed-Use Activity
- Parks/Golf Courses
- Open Space/Creek Corridor
- Agricultural/Conservation Area



## Description:

The Westminster Station Vicinity Area is a grouping of 16 parcels near the city's Commuter Rail Station totaling 22.5 acres. The area is bounded by Decatur Street on the east, Lowell Boulevard on the west, West 67th Place on the south, and West 71st Avenue on the north. Only one parcel is an enclave within the city. These sites are adjacent to the Westminster Station Focus Area.

Within the context of the Denver Metro region, this is a very central location within short commute time to multiple areas of employment, places of higher education and a variety of community institutions. Areas of Adams County to the south have already witnessed a northward creep of higher density urban infill development radiating out from the Highlands and Berkeley neighborhoods of Denver.

## Land Use:

These parcels include some residential uses, but the majority are commercial uses. The current uses include self-storage, auto parts stores, and a gas station and convenience store. All of these parcels are located within Adams County and the zoning designations include P-U-D, C-1, C-5, R-2, and I-1. The parcel owned by the city that is within the Little Dry Creek Open Space and trail system had an application for annexation filed in 2015. Redevelopment of these sites should be considered in context with the Westminster Station Specific Plan, objectives identified for Historic Westminster and the Federal Boulevard Corridor Plan currently underway. Future annexation of key commercial properties on the east side of Federal Boulevard adjacent to West 70th Avenue would provide greater assurance that redevelopment is done in a manner that supports the public and private investments at Westminster Station. Additional annexations further south along Federal Boulevard are cautioned due to small parcel size with fractured ownership and a number of land uses and business types that would be non-conforming to the W.M.C.

## Transportation:

These parcels have good access to US 36 and arterial streets including Federal Boulevard, Lowell Boulevard, and West 72nd Avenue. The area includes many streets that are already maintained by the City of Westminster. Federal Boulevard is maintained by the State of Colorado. Streets that would be included in an annexation would not result in a significant amount of lane miles that would become the city's responsibility for maintenance. The area is also easily accessible to Westminster Station, featuring 15-minute commuter rail service to Downtown Denver.

## Utility Provisions:

Only a few of the parcels in this area are within the city's Water Service Area. Most of these parcels are connected to the Crestview Water and Sanitation District, which receives water from Denver Water. Infrastructure in this area is generally very old and, as it nears the end of its useful service life, will be an expensive endeavor to repair and/or replace while continuing to ensure safe and reliable water and wastewater service.

## Community Services:

These unincorporated parcels are served by the Adams County Fire Protection District and the Adams County Sheriff's Office. The local Adams County Fire Protection District station is currently shutdown and not in active service. The city does not often respond to calls for police, fire, and EMS service in this area, however Westminster Fire Station No. 1 is located within a mile or less of each parcel. Given the relatively few numbers of parcels in this area, impacts to code enforcement activities are anticipated to be minimal.

## Open Space, Parks & Recreation:

This area has convenient access to the new Westminster Station Area park and the connecting trails. The southern portion of the city does not have a sizeable amount of open space or trails, but the Little Dry Creek trail does provide some access and eventually will be the backbone of a regional trail system, as described in Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan. The small number of residences are not likely to generate a huge demand for parks and recreation needs. The MAC and Westminster Swim and Fitness facility are near this area. The Irving Street Library is the nearest city library. Hyland Hills Parks & Recreation District maintains the Donald Critchfield Sports Complex at Hidden Lakes that is also a recreational amenity for this area.

## Summary:

The parcels that are enclaves within the city and the parcels that are within the Westminster Water Service area would be good candidates for a future annexation. The other remaining parcels should be further studied to determine if the city can equitably serve the properties. The parcels adjacent to Lowell and 69th Avenue used for self-storage parcels offer a good opportunity for redevelopment, and when such parcels do redevelop, it is desirable that they redevelop under the city's Development Standards and form a southern gateway into Westminster Station.

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# B.

## Glossary of Terms

## ACRONYMS

| | |
|---|---|
| ADU | Accessory Dwelling Unit |
| ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act |
| CDOT | Colorado Department of Transportation |
| CIP | Capital Improvement Program |
| DRCOG | Denver Regional Council of Governments |
| EMS | Emergency Medical Service |
| FAR | Floor Area Ratio |
| FEMA | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| GMA | Growth Management Area |
| HUD | United States Department of Housing and Urban Development |
| IGA | Intergovernmental Agreement |
| LEED | Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design |
| ODP | Official Development Plan |
| PDP | Preliminary Development Plan |
| PUD | Planned Unit Development |
| RTD | Regional Transportation District |
| SPD | Specific Plan District |
| TOD | Transit-Oriented Development |
| TDM | Transportation Demand Management |
| TIF | Tax Increment Finance |
| TMP | Transportation and Mobility Plan |
| UDC | Unified Development Code |
| URA | Urban Renewal Area |
| W.M.C. | Westminster Municipal Code |

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Where not defined here, please consult Westminster Municipal Code for a definition.*

**Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)**: a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family home. ADUs go by many different names throughout the U.S., including accessory apartments, secondary suites, and granny flats. ADUs can be converted portions of existing homes (i.e., internal ADUs), additions to new or existing homes (i.e., attached ADUs), or new stand-alone accessory structures or converted portions of existing stand-alone accessory structures (i.e., detached ADUs).

**Active Living**: A way of life in which physical, social, mental, emotional and spiritual activities are valued and are integrated into daily living (Source: World Health Organization). In planning terms, active living communities are communities that facilitate opportunities for active living.

**Activity Centers**: A general term for established higher density mixed-use or employment centers that integrate a range of uses and activities which complement and support each other. A small grouping of commercial uses is not an activity center.

**Adaptive Management**: A structured, iterative process of robust decision making in the face of uncertainty, with an aim to reducing uncertainty over time via system monitoring.

**Adjacent**: Adjacency occurs when properties abut, or where they are nearby and are separated by a dissimilar type of man-made or geologic feature including but not limited to a roadway or street, right-of-way, or railroad line, or any stream, river, canal, lake, or other body of water. Adjacent may or may not imply contact but always implies absence of anything of the same kind in between.

**Affordable Housing**: shall mean a new proposed residential development consisting of any combination of single-family attached, single-family detached, and multi-family dwelling units, regardless of the age of occupants, provided that 50% or more of the units serve households earning from zero to 80% of the regional Area Median Income (AMI) as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

**Airport Influence Area**: An area that recognizes the benefits and potentially adverse impacts that occur within certain distances from public aviation facilities and that provides a policy framework to minimize these impacts as well as protect the safety and efficiency of aircraft operations.

**Amendment**: A formal City Council change or revision to the Comprehensive Plan, including either the Plan's text or its maps.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**: Federal legislation specifying provisions to be made in the design (or redesign) of buildings, parking, and outdoor areas to remove barriers for persons with disabilities and guaranteeing equal opportunity in public accommodations, transportation and government services.

**Annexation**: The process by which land is added to the city in accordance with the provisions of the Colorado Revised Statutes and code.

**Arterial**: A street classification. Arterials are usually high-volume streets that travel through the community, connecting smaller streets to highways. Arterials include:

- **Major Arterials**: Streets that provide a high degree of mobility and serve corridor movements with longer trip lengths. Access to adjacent properties along major arterials is limited to emphasize mobility of vehicles.
- **Minor Arterials**: Streets that provide for trips of moderate length and offer connectivity to streets of higher function classification. Minor arterials provide intra-community continuity

See also "Collector"

**Auto-Oriented Uses**: Functional activities of two types: 1) those that are auto-related such as gas stations and vehicle service and repair shops; and 2) those which by their design attract primarily customers and employees arriving by automobile such as uses with drive-through lanes.

**Basement**: That portion of a structure between the floor and ceiling which is wholly or partly below grade and having more than one-half of its height below grade

**Bicycle Facilities**: Improvements and provisions to accommodate or encourage bicycling including bike parking infrastructure and bike lanes.

**Buildout**: The point at which a community's land has been fully developed exclusive of land preserved for parks, open space, rights of way, and other public property..

**Buildable Area**: The remaining area of land after the area for roads, detention ponds, parking lots, easements, dedications (i.e., schools, open space) is deducted.

**Business services**: Activities that assist business but which do not deliver a physical commodity. Examples include accounting, consulting, graphic design, insurance, legal, marketing, printing, technical support, and translation services.

**Capital Improvement Programs (CIP)**: A mechanism within government for identifying, financing, scheduling and constructing significant public improvements.

**Chronic Homelessness**: A chronically homeless individual or family has a head of household who has been living outdoors, in a shelter or area not intended for human habitation for at least a year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years. To be chronically homeless, the person must also have a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental health illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, cognitive impairments resulting from a brain injury, or a chronic physical illness or disability.

**City Council**: A seven member elected body including the Mayor, who represent the citizens of Westminster. City Council is the final approval authority for many types of development and land use related matters.

**Collector**: a street that carries traffic from minor streets to the arterial street system, including the principal entrance streets of residential developments and the primary circulating streets within such developments. Collectors provide a balance between access and mobility and retain continuity through neighborhoods.

**Community**: Within this document, "community" or "Westminster community" refers to all people, businesses, organizations, etc. within the City of Westminster limits or those who are directly affected by the affairs of the City of Westminster.

**Community Hospital**: A hospital that is accessible to the general public and provides general and specific medical care which is short-term and which also focuses on preventing illnesses and not only treating them.

**Complete Streets**: Complete Streets are streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or transit riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient.

**Comprehensive Plan**: A citywide long-range plan intended to guide the growth and development of a community that includes analysis, recommendations and proposals for such topics as the community's population, economy, land use, housing, transportation and community facilities.

**Commuter Rail**: A rail system that carries passengers within urban areas, or between urban areas and their suburbs, but differs from light rail transit in that the passenger cars are heavier, the average trip lengths are longer, and the operations can be carried out over tracks that are part of the railroad system. In Westminster, the B Line is an example of commuter rail.

**Density**: The ratio of residential units on an acre of land. Thus, a permitted density of eight (8) dwelling units per acre for a property that has an area of two (2) acres would allow up to 16 dwelling units.

**Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG)**: A nonprofit organization of 52 cities and nine counties around the Denver region. DRCOG functions as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Denver region, among other planning responsibilities.

**Design Guidelines**: Written statements, explanatory material, graphic renderings and/or photographs intended to inform property owners and the public of specific examples of techniques and materials appropriate to achieve identified design goals and objectives.

**Design Standards**: Written requirements adopted by the city that set forth criteria, the design of particular areas, buildings or elements related to the physical development of the city.

**Development**: Any man-made change in improved and unimproved real estate outside of public rights-of-way, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials.

**DRCOG 2040 Metro Vision Plan**: The Metro Vision Plan is the Denver region's plan for future growth and development that integrates growth, development, transportation, and water quality management.

**Dwelling Unit**: A single residential unit providing complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

**Dwelling Units per Acre (DU/AC)**: A unit of measurement commonly used to determine the density of a residential development.

**Employment Uses**: Land uses intended to support the six industry clusters that make up Westminster's Industry Base as described in Chapter 6, Economic Resilience. As a place of employment such uses are dominated by professional offices, research and development facilities, laboratories and on a more limited basis manufacturing, fabrication and production facilities. Warehousing and distribution are space intensive and therefore should be very limited within areas designated for employment land uses.

**Enclaves**: Unincorporated areas entirely surrounded by property within the municipal boundaries of the city, as further defined in the Colorado Revised Statutes.

**Experiential Retail**: a type of retail marketing whereby customers coming into a physical retail space are offered experiences beyond the traditional ones (such as in a clothing store: browsing merchandise, advice from live human salespeople, dressing rooms and cashiers). Amenities provided may include art (often interactive art), live music, virtual reality, cafés and lounges, and large video display walls.

**FasTracks**: A voter-approved plan by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) for expanded rail and bus transit throughout the Denver region.

**First and Last Mile Options/Connections**: How a transit user travels to/from transit stops and stations. Travel to/from a transit stop or station is just as important as the transit trip. If transit riders are unable to access a stop or station due to poor infrastructure quality or a missing connection, transit becomes ineffective.

**Flex Space**: Short for flexible space, is space that is typically leased in a commercial or industrial building that offers a multi-purpose work space, typically with separate manufacturing, warehouse and office areas. Flex space provides the opportunity for a tenant to customize the space to meet their particular business needs.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**: The ratio of floor area permitted on a zoned lot to the size of the lot. Thus, a permitted floor area ratio of 0.5 on a lot that has an area of 10,000 square feet would allow a building whose total floor area equals 5,000 square feet.

**Floodplain**: The channel and relatively flat area adjoining the channel of a natural stream or river that has been or may be covered by water during times of flood.

**Front Range**: Refers to the populated region of Colorado and Wyoming just east of the Rocky Mountains and extending from Cheyenne, Wyoming south to Pueblo, Colorado. This urban corridor benefits from the weather-moderating effect of the Front Range Mountains, which helps mitigate the impacts of storm events.

**Gateway**: A point along a roadway at which a traveler gains a sense of having entered the city or a particular part of the city. This impression can be imparted through such things as signs, monuments, landscaping, a change in development character, or a natural feature such as a creek.

**General Fund**: The primary fund used by a government entity. This fund is used to record all resource inflows and outflows that are not associated with special purpose funds. The activities paid for through the general fund constitute the core administrative and operational tasks of the government entity. Since the bulk of all resources flow through the General Fund, it is most critical to maintain control over the expenditures from it.

**Goal**: A statement about an end toward which efforts are directed, and that provides the community with direction. A goal is a desired ideal and a value to be sought.

**Green Infrastructure**: The interconnected system of parks, open space, trails, waterways and other natural areas that connect the city to its natural environment and which provides environmental functions. Low impact development (LID), also commonly referred to as “green stormwater infrastructure” is an approach to surface water runoff management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle.

**Gross Acre**: An acre inclusive of areas for streets, open lands or other uses.

**Growth Management Area (GMA)**: An area where urban-level services are planned to be provided within the next twenty years, and which a municipality intends to annex within twenty years. Within these areas, the county agrees to approve only urban-level development according to the city’s adopted plan.

**Homeowner and Neighborhood Associations**: Home owners associations (HOAs) ordinarily have dues and enforceable covenants, whereas, a neighborhood association may or may not have dues and generally cannot not enforce covenants.

**Incubator**: A facility used by startup companies that provides affordable workspace, shared equipment, training and mentors, and access to financing, to help these new businesses grow.

**Indicator**: Indicators are quantitative information about what has often been considered a qualitative subject: the wellbeing of communities. They can be measured and compared over time to find trends that tell communities where they have been and where they are likely headed.

**Infill Development**: Development of vacant, bypassed parcels of land in otherwise built-up areas.

**Infrastructure**: Facilities and services need to sustain any type of development. Infrastructure includes but is not limited to streets, drainage, water, wastewater, transportation, power, telecommunications and fire and police facilities.

**Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)**: A cooperative agreement between two or more governmental jurisdictions.

**Land Use**: The manner in which land is used.

**Land Use Diagram**: A plan that geographically depicts future land use types. The land use diagram is a guide in preparing zoning documents for individual properties and to coordinate planning for infrastructure and service delivery.

**Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)**: A voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings.

**Live Entertainment**: A use that includes any or all of the following activities, either principal or accessory: performance by musicians, dancers, stand-up comedians or other performance artists; karaoke; live bands or musical acts; the amplification of recorded music/entertainment by disc jockeys; or the use of a cover charge for admission.

**Live/Work**: a residential dwelling unit in which a residence is combined with an office, studio or other commercial use. As compared to a home office, a live/work unit is open to customers with a public entrance to a street.

**Master Plan**: (see Comprehensive Plan)

**Master Planned Development**: a development typically over 10 acres in size coordinated within one development plan through Planned Unit Development or Specific Plan District.

**Medical Facilities**: Uses concerned with the diagnosis, treatment, and care of human beings. These include hospitals; dental services; physician offices or clinics; counseling; short term rehabilitation or skilled nursing facilities with stays of 100 days or less; laboratories; behavioral health and substance abuse facilities. Warehousing of medical products and long term residential care facilities are not medical facilities.

**Microbrewery**: A limited production brewery open to the general public with tasting rooms or tap rooms typically producing specialty beers and primarily serving its products locally.

**Missing Middle (Housing)**: A range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-family homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. These building types, such as duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and courtyard buildings, provide diverse housing options and support locally-serving retail and transit options. Referred to as “Missing” because these housing formats have typically been prohibited in many places by zoning ordinances since the mid-twentieth century and “Middle” because they sit in the middle of a spectrum between detached single-family homes and larger apartment buildings, in terms of form and scale, as well as number of units and often, affordability.

**Mixed-Use**: A development type in which various uses, such as office, retail, and residential, are combined to encourage efficiency of development and synergies between uses..

**Multi-Family**: A classification of housing where five or more separate housing units for residential inhabitants are contained within one building. Units can be arranged side-by-side units or stacked on top of each other. A common form is an apartment or condominium building.

**Multimodal Transportation Network**: A multimodal transportation network includes all the ways people move around their community: walking, biking, using a wheelchair, riding the bus or train, driving, or carpooling. It also includes new transportation modes like electric scooters and ride-hailing, as well as future technologies. It is important that modes of transportation within the network are well-connected, accessible, and interact safely. The network not only includes infrastructure and vehicles, but is also supported by education, safety, and maintenance programs.

**Municipal Code**: See Westminster Municipal Code.

**Neighborhood Unit**: A concept generated through the process, as a response to the preference for access from residential areas to amenities, services and transportation. Generally, 40 to 250 acres in size and may extend beyond a particular subdivision or development boundary to incorporate uses and activities to fulfill daily needs of residents, typically within a quarter-mile or 5-minute walk. While primarily composed of lower density housing, neighborhood units may feature mixed-use areas along the edges or at key access points where transportation facilities support higher densities or commercial uses. An interconnected street pattern minimizes distances for pedestrians, cyclists, seniors, and children to access amenities and services in the neighborhood. Access to parks, open spaces, and other areas to gather and play are key attributes, typically with a focal point located near the center of the Neighborhood Unit.

**Neighborhoods**: Geographic sub-areas within the city that contain and derive at least some of their identity from residential land uses, but which also encompass and incorporate a variety of other land uses and facilities. The extent of a neighborhood is variable and may be defined by tradition, period of building and development, subdivision patterns, or formally adopted boundaries.

**Node**: A center of activity or development, often located at a major intersection or transit station.

**Open Space**: Public lands acquired or preserved in the public interest to provide for the conservation and protection of natural resources, physical and aesthetic enjoyment of the out-of-doors and protection of prominent geographical, geological, and cultural features and resources. Vacant private property is not considered open space.

**Opportunity Zones**: A tool enabled as part of the 2017 tax reform package (Tax Cuts and Jobs Act), which is designed to encourage private capital investment in targeted areas of a community.

**Paired Home**: Two homes that share a wall and have opposite side entries. The structure is designed to look like one single larger home. Unlike a front to front duplex, the paired home helps provide more privacy for the homeowners. Unlike a duplex each unit in a paired home has its own lot with associated responsibilities.

**Patio Home**: A single-story home  attached to a row of other homes. While townhouses and are typically at least two stories high, patio homes are one-story, though a basement may be included.

**Pedestrian-Oriented**: Form of development that makes the street environment inviting for pedestrians; for commercial areas may be characterized by special sidewalk pavement, zero front and side yard setbacks, buildings of varied architectural styles, street-facing window displays, an absence of front yard parking, benches and other amenities; for residential areas may be characterized by sidewalks, parkways, front porches, low fences, lighting and other amenities.

**Personal Services**: Establishments providing services related to individual needs such as hair salons, laundries, massage studios, and travel agencies.

**Placemaking**: A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of shared spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on the assets of a particular location and its potential, with the intention of creating shared spaces that promote health, happiness, and well-being.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)**: A zoning classification to accommodate master planned development that typically include a mix of uses and/or building types or unconventional uses or designs.

**Planning Commission**: A board created to conduct public hearings and provide recommendations to City Council on the following: review of the city's Comprehensive Plan, proposed development plans, review of proposed annexations, zoning and rezoning requests, and zoning regulations related to development controls. The commission has final approval authority on official development plans and recommends action to City Council regarding annexations, rezonings, Comprehensive Plan amendments, preliminary development plans and zoning regulation amendments.

**Policy**: A specific statement of principle that articulates a course of action that guides decision making to meet a goal.

**Professional Offices**: Professional or government offices including accounting, auditing and bookkeeping services; advertising; architectural, engineering, and surveying services; attorneys; data processing and computer services; educational, scientific, and research organizations; employment, secretarial, and word processing services; insurance agencies; government offices including agency and administrative facilities; physicians, dentists, counseling services; public relations and consulting services; photography and commercial art studios; writers and artists offices outside the home. Does not include offices that are incidental and accessory to another business or sales activity that is the principal use.

**Program**: An action, activity, or strategy carried out in response to an adopted policy to achieve a specific goal or objective. Programs establish the “who,” “how” and “where” of goals and objectives.

**Public Realm**: The public and private, primarily outdoor areas of the city, with high levels of open public access, including street rights-of-way extending from building face to building face, plazas, publicly accessible parking lots, and public parks.

**Quality of Life**: The personal perception of the physical, economic, and emotional well-being that exists in the community.

**Redevelop**: To improve and re-use existing buildings; to demolish existing buildings (often in poor condition) and create new ones; or to increase the overall floor area existing on a property, irrespective of whether a change occurs in land use.

**Registered Homeowner Association**: A homeowner’s association or neighborhood association that has registered with the City of Westminster Community Development Department to receive notification of city programs, services and development projects.

**Resiliency**: The capacity for the city, and its residents and businesses to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.

**Revitalization**: Restoring new life or vigor to an economically depressed area, sometimes through public improvements that spark private investment.

**Riparian**: Refers to living or located on the bank of a natural watercourse such as a creek or lake.

**Senior Housing**: A facility for housing residents more than 100 days consisting of three or more dwelling units or congregated care, the occupancy of which is age-restricted. Senior Housing may consist of attached or detached dwellings and may include services to support the individual needs of residents on-site but which remains a primarily residential facility.

**Setback**: An area on a lot establishing a yard between the property lines and the structures and uses on the lot.

**Single-Family**: A development consisting of a lot or lots containing only one dwelling unit and which may take the form of detached or attached, small lot, or manufactured home. In some cases, a single-family use may include an accessory dwelling unit.

**Special Districts**: Districts authorized by the city and created under Colorado Revised Statutes or City Code for the purposes of financing and/or maintaining public improvements for particular areas of the city. Special districts include but are not necessarily limited to metropolitan districts, business improvement districts (BIDs), and general improvement districts (GIDs), special improvement districts (SIDs), and city special assessment districts.

**Specific Plan District (SPD)**: A zoning district, with a corresponding Specific Plan, for establishing a more fluid and accessible form of classifying and regulating land uses and development within Focus Areas.

**Stormwater**: Surface runoff and drainage, induced by precipitation events, and conveyed, treated and managed in pipes, channels, creeks, ponds and other public and private facilities.

**Strategies**: Plans of action intended to support a specific policy.

**Streetscape**: Pedestrian and landscape improvements in the right-of-way, generally occurring between the curb and the right-of-way line. Streetscape generally includes sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, fencing, furnishings, and landscaped areas, including medians and irrigation.

**Sustainability and Sustainable Development**: Strategic initiatives and policies that provide both short and long-term solutions to benefit the people, environment, and economic welfare of our community.

**Tax Increment Financing (TIF)**: A funding mechanism authorized at the state level and administered by local governments. The local government designates an area it wants to target for redevelopment as a tax increment district. State law defines the criteria for creating a TIF district.

**Townhome**: A building that has two or more dwelling units erected in a row as a single building (either as a single building on its own lot, or with each dwelling separated by a lot line), and with each unit separated from the adjoining unit(s) by a fire wall along the dividing lot line. All dwelling units in a townhome are attached.

**Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)**: Form of development that maximizes investment in transit infrastructure by concentrating the most intense types of development around transit stations and along transit lines; development in such areas is designed to make transit use as convenient as possible.

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM)**: Strategies, policies, and programs that help people use the transportation system more efficiently, while reducing traffic congestion, vehicle emissions, fuel consumption and increasing safety.

**Unified Development Code (UDC)**: A Title of Westminster Municipal Code establishing standards and procedures for new development.

**Universal Design**: Universal Design is the implementation and design of built environments meant to be usable by all people and of all abilities, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation.

**Urban Renewal Areas (URA)**: Urban renewal is a state-authorized, redevelopment and finance program designed to help communities improve and redevelop areas that are physically deteriorated, suffering economic stagnation, unsafe or poorly planned.

**Vision**: A shared dream of the future characterized by long-term idealistic thinking. Provides the foundation for the development of the goals, policies and programs. A vision is not binding and may not be achievable in the lifetime of this Comprehensive Plan.

**Viewshed**: The geographical area that is visible from a location. It includes all surrounding points that are in line-of-sight with that location and excludes points that are beyond the horizon or obstructed by terrain and other features (e.g., buildings, trees). Conversely, it can also refer to area from which an object can be seen.

**Walkable Neighborhood**: An area designed and constructed to provide and encourage a comfortable, easy and efficient pedestrian movement. Features of a walkable neighborhood may include: sidewalks separated from the street by a planted buffer; continuous sidewalks; safe and well-marked street crossings; short blocks and/or mid-block pedestrian connections; street trees and pleasant streetscapes; windows oriented to the street; lighting; and connections between destinations (parks; shops; gathering places; schools; places of worship) within walking distance.

**Westminster Municipal Code (W.M.C.)**: A compendium of codes and ordinances that governs the City of Westminster adopted through the city's home rule authority.

**Workforce Housing**: Refers to housing affordable to households earning between 60 and 120% of the area median income (AMI). Workforce housing targets middle-income workers which includes professions such as police officers, firefighters, teachers, health care and retail clerks. Households who need workforce housing may not always qualify for housing subsidized by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program or the Housing Choice Vouchers program (formerly known as Section 8), which are two major programs in place for addressing affordable housing needs.

**Zoning**: regulations pertaining to building size, bulk, density and the way land is used.

**Zoning Map**: Map that depicts the division of the city into districts or "zones" in which different uses are allowed and different building and lot size restrictions apply. The zoning map is regulatory in nature and applies to currently permitted uses; it should not be confused with the Land Use Diagram, which guides formation of future zoning.

**Zoning Ordinance**: A set of land use regulations adopted by the City Council to create districts that permit certain land uses and prohibit others. Land uses in each district are regulated according to type, density, height, and the coverage of buildings.

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