



# **APPENDIX A: EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT**

May 19, 2018

**DRAFT**

**BELLEVUE AVENUE  
CORRIDOR PLAN**





**Community Development Department**

City of Littleton

2255 West Berry Avenue

Littleton, Colorado 80120



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# INTRODUCTION

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

In the fall of 2017, the City of Littleton, with support from a consultant team, embarked on a process to create a plan for the Belleview Avenue corridor. The boundaries of the study area are described on page 2. The plan will be used as a tool to guide public and private investment in the corridor over the next five to ten years.

This report was developed as a first step in the planning process to:

- Establish a baseline inventory of current conditions;
- Identify key issues and opportunities to be addressed;
- Serve as a foundation for discussions with property owners, businesses, residents, City officials, and other key stakeholders in the area; and
- Inform plan recommendations.

Information presented in this report draws from mapping and other data for the corridor, related plans and studies, and numerous site visits. It also reflects input received as part of the community and stakeholder engagement efforts described below. Specific sources are cited where applicable.

## COMMUNITY + STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Consultant team members conducted stakeholder interviews with representatives from South Suburban Parks and Recreation; the South Platte Working Group; the City of Englewood; the State of Colorado [South Platte River Program Coordinator]; several major property and business owners; current/former District 1 City Council members; City of Littleton staff from the Public Works, Economic Development, Planning, and Senior Services (Aging Well) departments, as well as the City Attorney.

As a companion to the stakeholder interviews, the City of Littleton conducted a series of community engagement activities to seek input

from study area residents about the future of the Belleview Avenue corridor. Activities included a community meeting on October 24, 2017 which was advertised specifically to area residents, and an online input opportunity hosted on the City's Open Littleton platform that was advertised more broadly to the community at large. The online input opportunity was live for three weeks following the community meeting. In all, nearly 90 people participated in these two initial events.

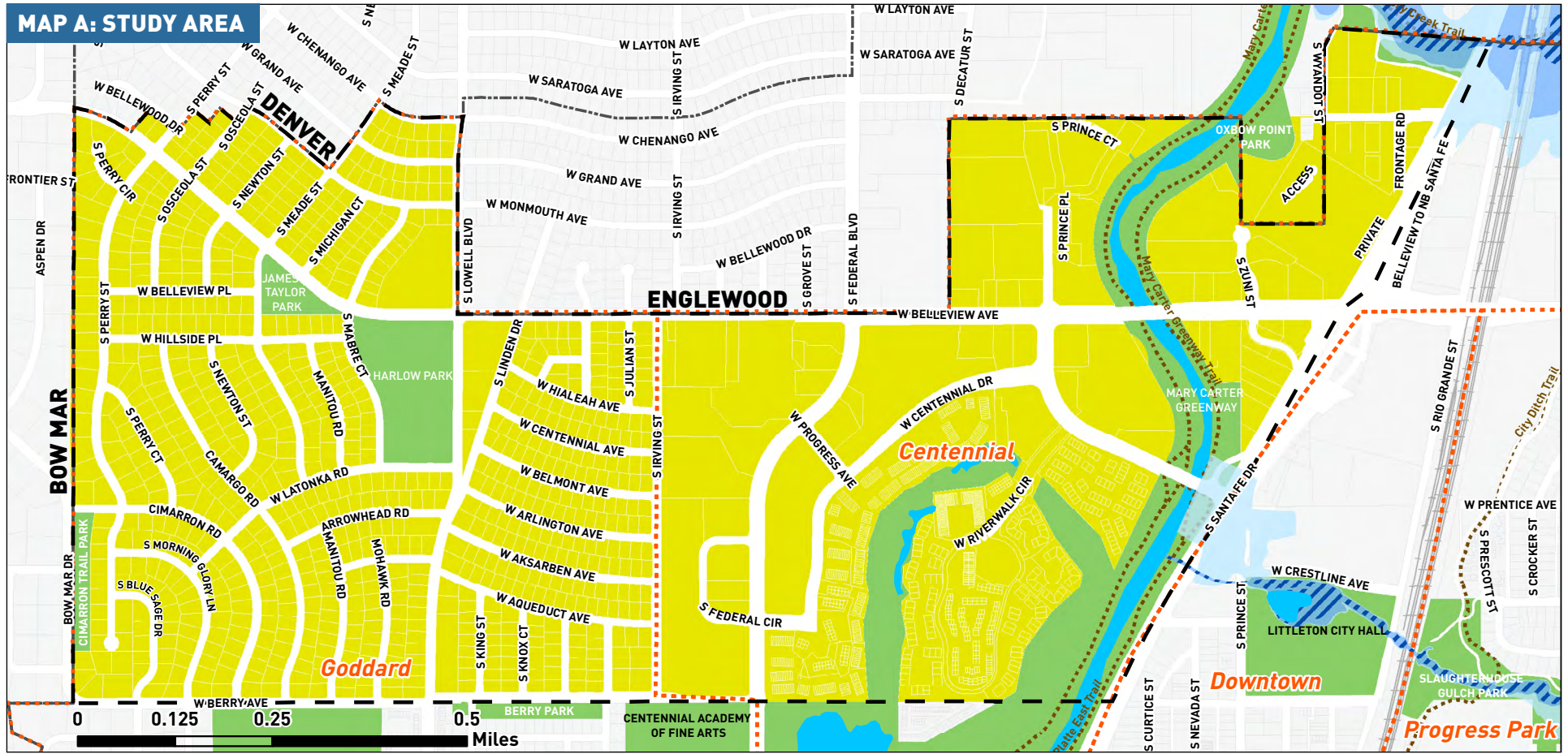
Input received as part of these activities is reflected in the issues and opportunities highlighted in each of the sections that follow and were used to inform recommendations for the study area as reflected in the draft plan. Recommendations will continue to be refined based on additional community and stakeholder engagement, and input from City of Littleton departments, the Planning Commission, and the City Council.



Community Meeting

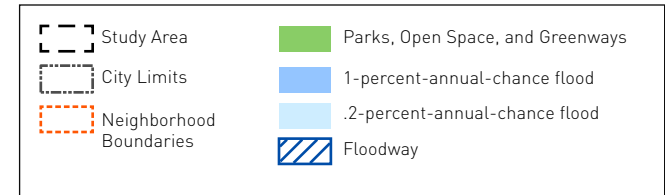
Source: Clarion Associates





## STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

The Bellevue Avenue corridor study area (“the study area”) is bounded to the east by Santa Fe Drive, to the west by the City of Littleton’s municipal limits, to the south by Berry Avenue, and to the north approximately one-quarter mile (Map A). The study area is located in the northwest part of the City of Littleton and is bordered by three neighboring municipalities: Bow Mar on the west, and Denver and Englewood on the north (along Bellevue Avenue from Lowell Boulevard to Federal Boulevard and onto the east side of King Soopers). The study area encompasses approximately one-square-mile, or seven percent of the City of Littleton.

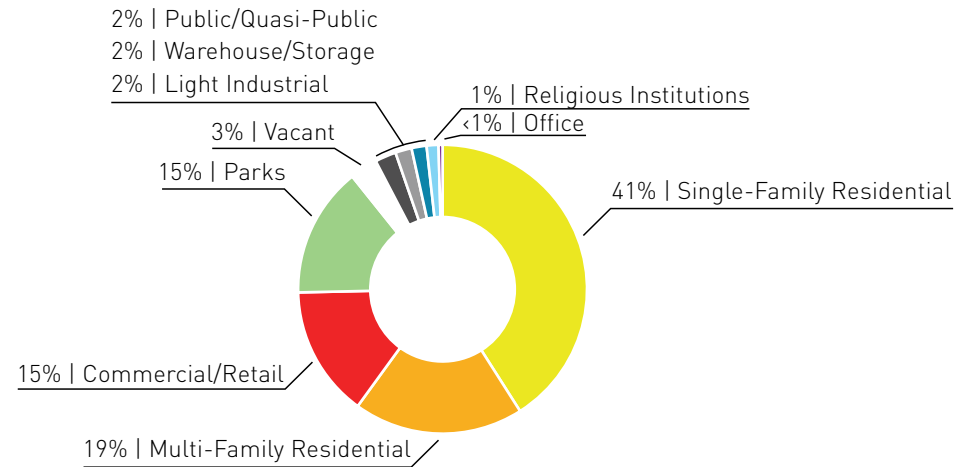


# LAND USE + DEVELOPMENT

## EXISTING LAND USE

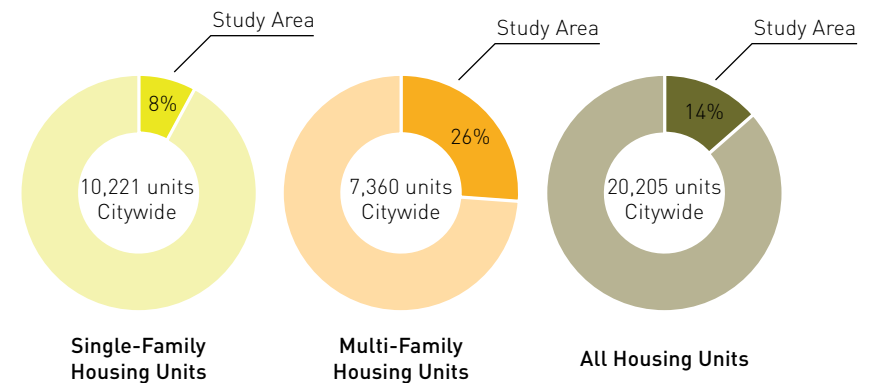
The Bellevue Avenue corridor hosts a range of land uses (Figure 1):

- **Residential Neighborhoods.** Single- and multi-family residential uses make up 60% of the study area. Single-family residential uses are concentrated west of Irving Street on the south side of Bellevue Avenue, and west of Federal Boulevard on the north side of Bellevue Avenue. Multi-family residential uses are concentrated east of Irving Street and Federal Boulevard.
- **Commercial Corridors.** Retail/commercial and office uses make up approximately 15% of the study area. Most of these uses are concentrated along the Bellevue Avenue or Federal Boulevard frontages.
- **Parks and Recreation.** Parks and recreational uses make up 15% of the study area, in large part due to the presence of the Mary Carter Greenway, Littleton Golf and Tennis Club, and Harlow Park.
- **Other Uses.** Other non-residential uses include warehouse/storage and light industrial uses (4%) and public/quasi-public uses (2%).



**Figure 1. Existing Land Use**

Source: Arapahoe County

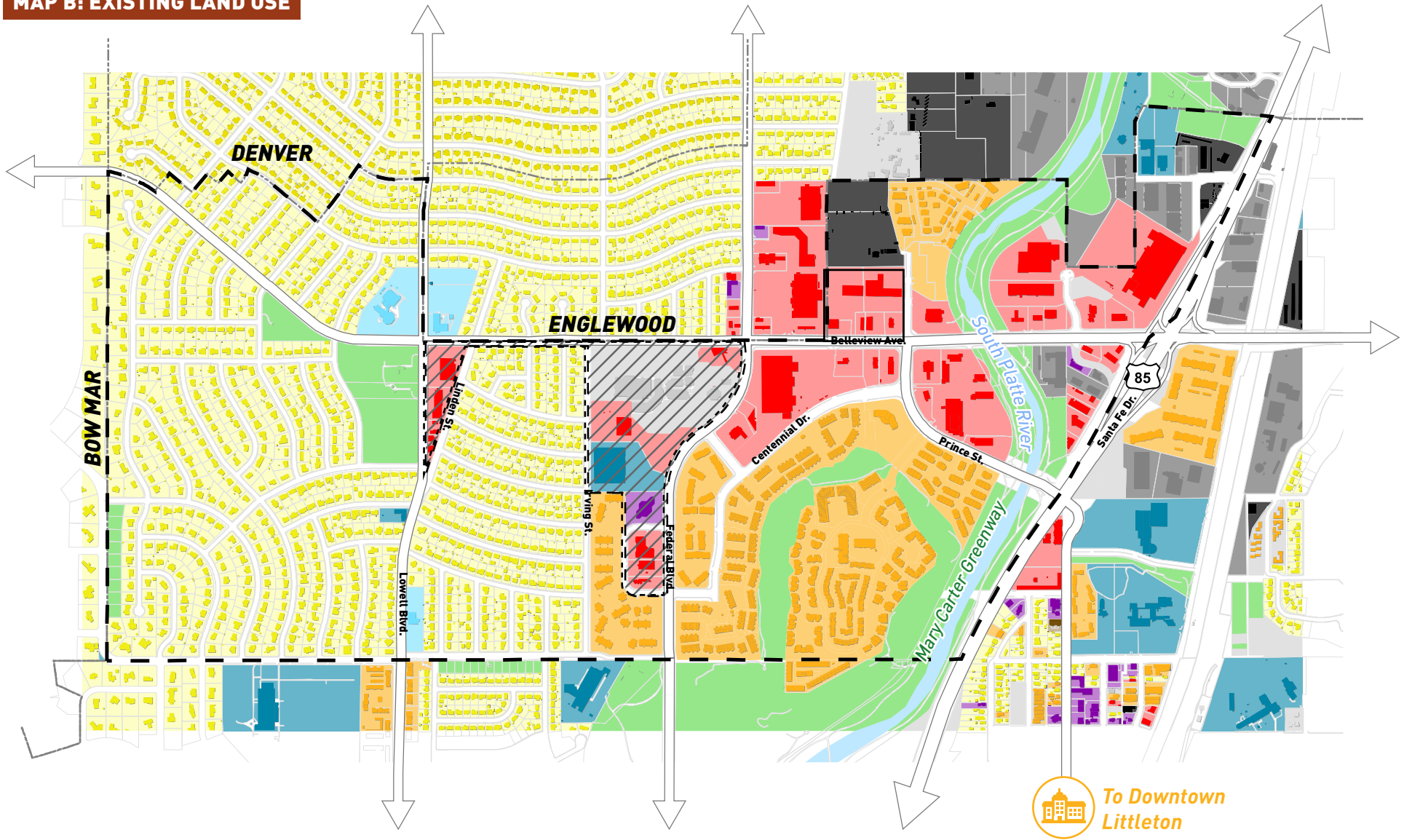


**Figure 2. Housing Composition**

Source: Arapahoe County



# MAP B: EXISTING LAND USE



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

## BOUNDARIES

- Study Area
- City Limits
- Columbine Square Renewal Area

## EXISTING LAND USE

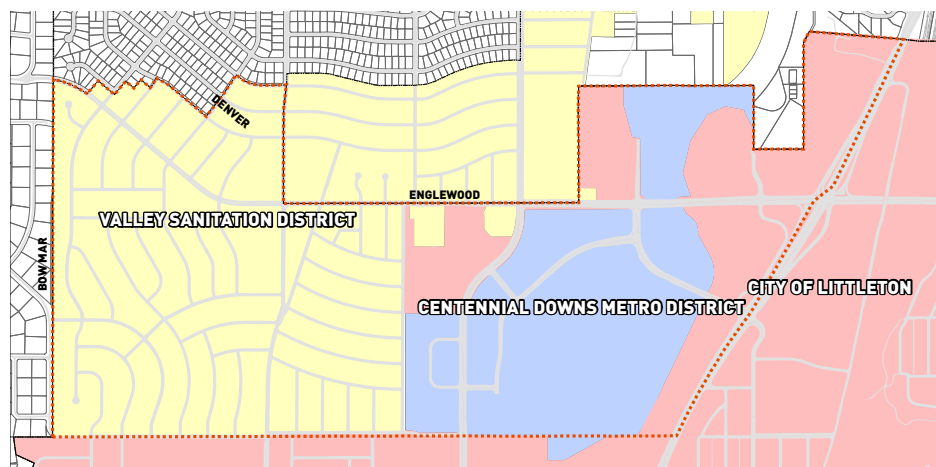
- |                           |                        |                   |        |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Single-Family Residential | Office                 | Light Industrial  | Vacant |
| Multi-Family Residential  | Public/Quasi-Public    | Warehouse/Storage |        |
| Commercial/Retail         | Religious Institutions | Parks             |        |



To Downtown Littleton

## DEVELOPMENT TRENDS + CAPACITY

- **Vacant Land.** Approximately 15 acres or 3% of the study area is vacant. However, based on an analysis of land to building value ratios, many of the non-residential sites in the study area are considered underutilized.
- **Infill/Redevelopment.** Future development in the study area will occur as these underutilized properties are repurposed through infill or adaptive reuse, or are redeveloped altogether.
- **Sewer Districts.** The study area is served by three separate sewer districts: Valley Sanitation District, the City of Littleton, and Centennial Downs Metro District. The Valley Sanitation District recently received approval for Ballot Issue #4a, which authorizes the District to proceed with plans to replace a deteriorating interceptor sewer line just south of the study area. This pipeline collects and transports wastewater from all Valley Sanitation District customers. No known capacity issues exist within the City's district or within the Centennial Downs Metro District. (Figure 3)

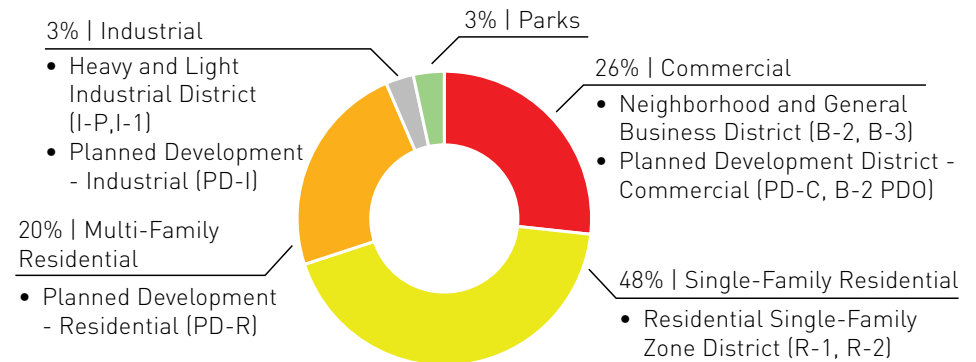


**Figure 3. Sewer + Special Districts**

Source: Arapahoe County

## CURRENT ZONING

- **Zoning + Land Uses.** Current zoning within the study area reflects existing land use patterns and uses (Figure 4 and Map C).
- **Planned Developments.** Most development that has occurred in the corridor over the past twenty years has made use of the Planned Development Overlay (PDO) district tool, which allows for more flexibility than what is allowed through the base zoning districts.



**Figure 4. Current Zoning**

Source: City of Littleton

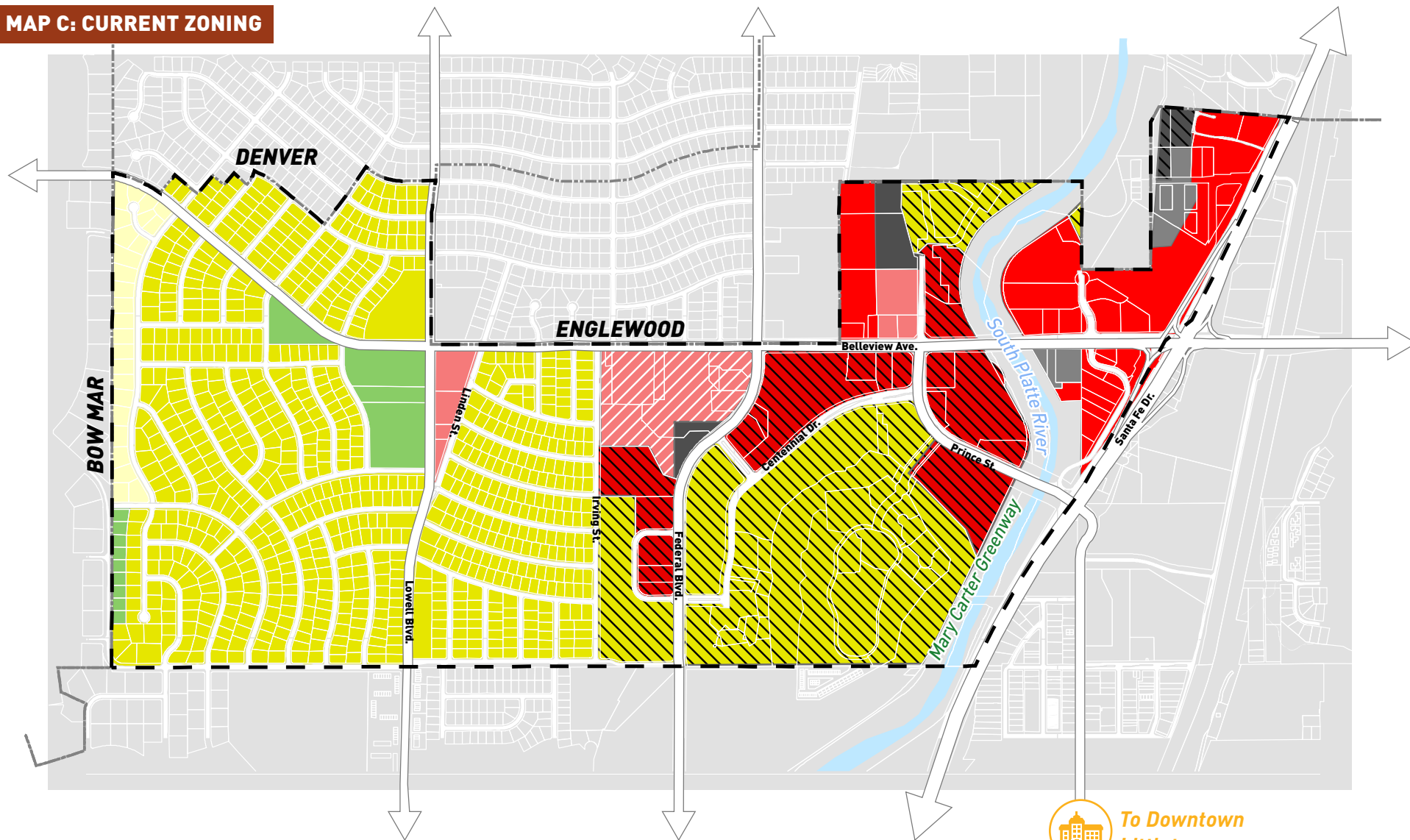
## RETAIL HEALTH + DEMAND

- **Retail Analysis.** An analysis of retail health and demand in the study area was prepared by Economic & Planning Systems as a supplement to this Existing Conditions Report. This analysis is provided in full in Appendix B. Key findings from this analysis are reflected in the Issues and Opportunities listed on page 7.



# MAP C: CURRENT ZONING

LAND USE + DEVELOPMENT



BOUNDARIES		EXISTING ZONING					
	Study Area		Residential Single-Family (R-1)		Neighborhood Business Planned Development Overlay (B-2 PDO)		Light Industrial (I-1)
	City Limits		Residential Single-Family (R-2)		General Business		Heavy Industrial (I-P)
			Neighborhood Business (B-2)		Planned Development - Commercial (PD-C)		Parks/Open Space (OS)
			Planned Development - Residential (PD-R)				
			Planned Development - Industrial (PD-I)				



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



To Downtown Littleton

## ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

### ISSUES

- **Land Supply.** There is little vacant land remaining within the study area. Future development will occur primarily through reinvestment in existing properties or through redevelopment.
- **Retail Anchors.** Most of the national retailers that could anchor or occupy larger spaces are already located close to the corridor, limiting opportunities for attracting additional retail anchors or big/mid-box retail.
- **Development Pattern.** The retail trade area around the corridor is largely built-out and there is limited potential for additional households to drive additional retail demand. The auto-dependent land use pattern makes small scale retail difficult and retail demand is driven to a large part by major big box retailers, such as King Soopers (in Englewood), Lowe's, and Home Depot.
- **Zoning.** Current zoning in the eastern-half of the corridor doesn't match with the current market or more recent development trends in corridor development, which tend to favor a mix of uses - commercial, residential, and office. In some locations, rezoning may be required for redevelopment to occur. However, the political and timing risks can make rezoning unattractive to the development community.
- **Housing Options.** Housing affordability is a growing concern in the City and opportunities for the construction of smaller, multi-generational housing options (i.e., accessory dwelling-units) are currently limited in the City's code.
- **Infrastructure.** Multiple sewer and other districts operate within the study area, in some cases on the same site, and serve as a barrier to redevelopment (see Figure 3).

### OPPORTUNITIES

- **River Frontage.** The South Platte River and Mary Carter Greenway are significant amenities for corridor residents that may also attract reinvestment along the corridor or retailers hoping to target users of the regional trail system.
- **Housing Demand.** There has been recent interest in multi-family housing types in the corridor, including apartments and townhomes which can help drive additional demand for smaller-scale, neighborhood-oriented retailers that the community desires.

- **Retail Demand.** Despite limitations associated with existing development patterns, new demand will increase the amount of retail space supportable in the area by approximately 209,000 square feet by 2027. There is likely current and future demand for neighborhood-oriented convenience retail, small or specialty food stores, furniture or home furnishing stores, sports and recreation stores, and local/neighborhood restaurants and bars.
- **Major Retail Anchors.** The Belleview Avenue corridor has a number of well-performing retailers such as Home Depot, Lowe's, O'Toole's Garden Center, Walgreens, and King Soopers (in Englewood). These retailers draw a significant amount of traffic to the area and make proximity and visibility along Belleview Avenue an attractive asset to other potential retailers.
- **Visibility + Access.** Belleview Avenue is the primary east-west connection to the Denver Tech Center, while Santa Fe Drive and Federal Boulevard are major north-south arterials connecting the Belleview Avenue corridor to Englewood and Denver. These connections make businesses located along the corridor highly visible and accessible to residents who live to the north, east, and south.
- **Revitalization of Underutilized Sites.** The recent redevelopment of the King Soopers Marketplace (located in the City of Englewood) is drawing new interest to the corridor. Reinvestment in the Centennial Square and Columbine Square Shopping Center is planned, presenting opportunities to capture new retailers to the corridor.
- **Urban Renewal District.** Littleton Invests for Tomorrow (LIFT) as authorized by state law, was created by the City to provide the community with a set of tools to foster community development. The Columbine Square Urban Renewal Area is one of the areas identified by LIFT. As a result, public financing tools are available to fund improvements to the properties within the area's boundary.

# PARKS, RECREATION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

## PARKS + RECREATION

There are five parks and recreational facilities located within the study area, all of which are managed by the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District (SSPRD). SSPRD is a regional body that provides park and recreation services to Littleton, in addition to the Town of Bow Mar, the Town of Columbine Valley, the City of Sheridan, portions of the City of Centennial and the City of Lone Tree, as well as unincorporated areas of Douglas, Jefferson, and Arapahoe Counties. The master plan for SSPRD classifies parks based on their size and intended uses. Park facilities found within the study area are listed in Table 1 by type.

TYPE	DEFINITIONS/AMENITIES	PARK/ FACILITY NAME
Neighborhood Park	Parks that provide both passive and active recreation and social opportunities geared towards those living within the service area (1/2 mile radius). Typically include multi-purpose areas for court games, multi-purpose fields, play equipment, pathways, programed sports practices, and shaded areas.	James A. Taylor Park Harlow Park and Pool
Open Space and Greenways	Parcels of land or areas that are reserved for the conservation of unique land, water, vegetative, wildlife habitat, historic, and other aesthetic features in their natural state. Low impact recreation activities (such as trails) can occur in locations that contain human impact and balance this with the conservation of natural elements.	Cimarron Trail Park Mary Carter Greenway
Golf Course	18-hole executive golf course; tennis center	Littleton Golf and Tennis Club

**Table 1. Parks + Recreational Facilities**

Source: South Suburban Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Additional park facilities are located adjacent to the study area (but not within it), including Bowles Grove Park, Berry Park, and Oxbow Point. Nearly all of the study area is located within one-quarter mile of a park, greenway, or recreational facility. This is consistent with SSPRD Master Plan guidelines for neighborhood park service areas, and typical walk distances. (Map D)

The City of Littleton and SSPRD recently installed new signage along the Mary Carter Greenway designed to facilitate exploration and learning. In addition to providing distances to destinations along the greenway, signs within the study area identify points of interest, as well as services and amenities, east and west of the river corridor.



Wayfinding signage along the Mary Carter Greenway Trail



## ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The South Platte River is a significant environmental resource for the study area and the entire region. The South Platte Working Group (SPWG), of which the City of Littleton is a partner, has been working since 2005 to acquire key parcels of land needed to protect and enhance the river's natural functions, and conduct a wide range of improvements. In 2013, the SPWG sponsored the development of a vision for the river corridor through Arapahoe County from Dartmouth Avenue to C-470 to help improve the quality of vegetative, aquatic, and water quality; maintain flood conveyance functions; promote a broader understanding of the river's health and tributaries; and encourage more consistent land use, economic development, and coordinated policies along the river. The SPWG has been actively working with its partners to implement the various recommendations.

Similar to other stretches of the river to the north and south, the quality of habitat along portions of the South Platte River within the study area varies. Native plantings have been installed in some areas, particularly along the east side of the Riverside Downs Shopping Center (located at Bellevue Avenue and Prince Street). The *South Platte River Corridor*

*Vision* notes that improving habitat quality is especially challenging in areas with exposed riprap bank protection. This condition is found along many stretches of the river's banks within the study area.

The 1965 flood of the South Platte River resulted in significant damage within the study area and throughout the region. Major regional flood control measures, including the construction of the Chatfield Dam, were completed in the years that followed. As a result, the South Platte River floodplain no longer extends beyond the Mary Carter Greenway.

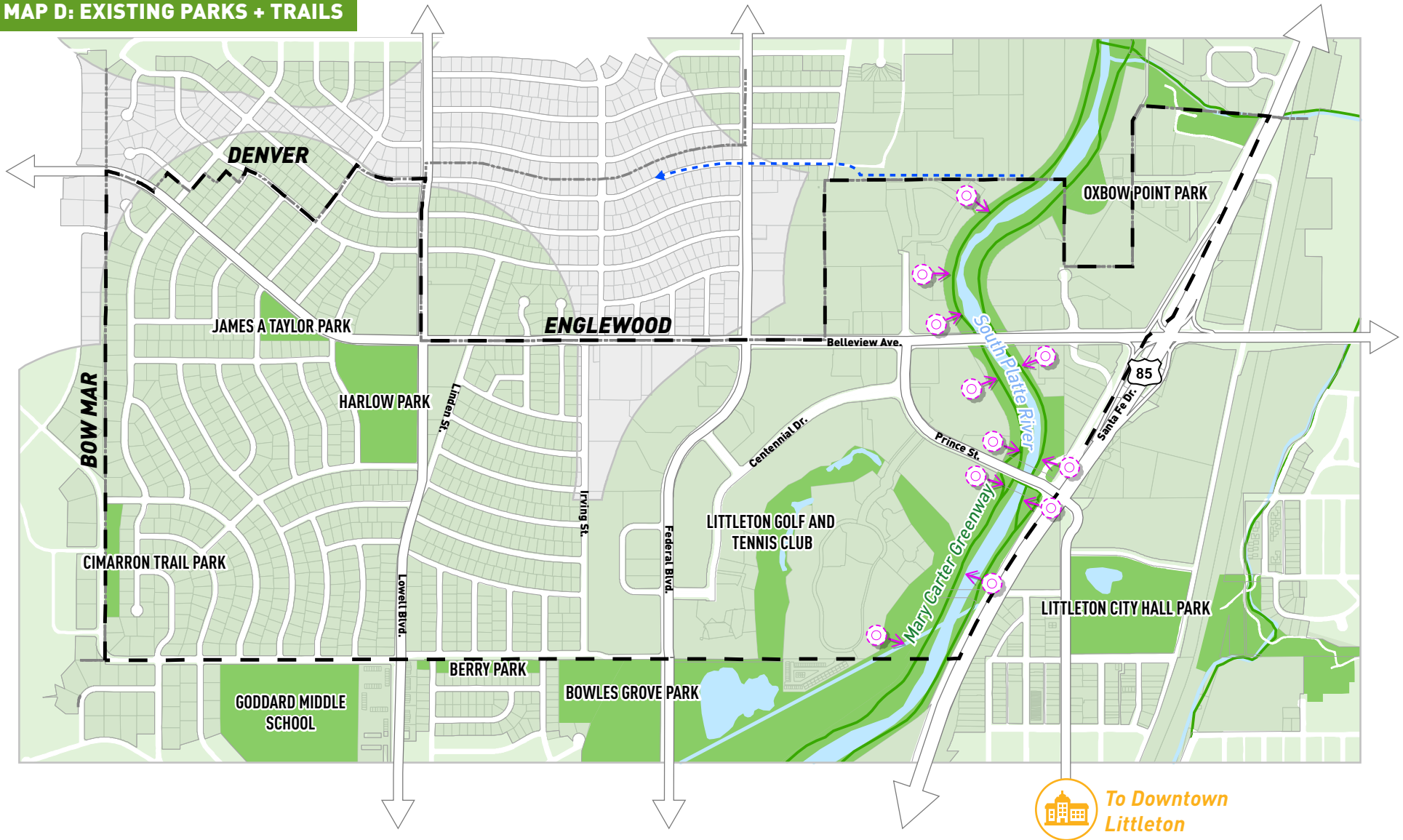


Mary Carter Greenway Trail looking north

Source: Clarion Associates



# MAP D: EXISTING PARKS + TRAILS



BOUNDARIES		PARKS/TRAILS	
	Study Area		Parks/Open Space
	City Limits		Parks/Open Space .25-mile buffer
			Trails
			Trail Access Points (public + private)
			Conceptual Trail/Bike Lane Connection (South Platte River Corridor Vision & City of Littleton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan)



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

## ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

### ISSUES

- **Accessibility.** Although sidewalks exist in most portions of the study area, gaps do exist in several key locations (Map G) along Belleview Avenue, Lowell and Federal Boulevards, and Irving Street. In addition, sidewalks along portions of these corridors are less than 5' in width in many locations.
- **Greenway Access from Private Properties.** Informal dirt pathways between the Mary Carter Greenway trail and adjacent private properties are visible in a number of locations. In addition to being unsightly, these pathways contribute to erosion and the degradation of vegetation along the river. Currently, the City does not have a requirement in place to ensure linkages between private properties and the greenway are accommodated as infill and redevelopment occurs.
- **Existing Uses and Development Patterns.** Many of the existing uses that line the Mary Carter Greenway "turn their backs" to the river, rather than take advantage of the views, connections to the regional trail system, and other benefits this amenity provides.
- **Industrial Uses/Surface Parking.** Industrial uses and surface parking that abut the greenway within the study area, as well as the Englewood Waste Transfer Facility just to the north of the study area, detract from the natural character of the greenway and may not reflect the highest and best use of these properties in the future. In addition, the impact of untreated or undertreated runoff on water quality in the river was identified as an issue of general concern as part of the *South Platte River Corridor Vision*.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- **Future Harlow Park Improvements.** SSPRD is exploring the need for upgrades to the fields and bathhouse at Harlow Park. Improvements are anticipated to occur within the next five years.
- **Enhanced Access to River Corridor.** SSPRD is kicking off a process in early 2018 focused on improving access to the river corridor from surrounding areas that will be useful in helping to inform future pedestrian and bicycle improvements within the study area and other parts of the City. SSPRD's 2013 vision for the river corridor proposes a new trail connection along Chenango Avenue, just north of the AMF Belleview Lanes property in Englewood (just west of the study area boundary) east to the river (on the north edge of Littleton's border with Englewood). The vision also recommends widening of all sidewalks along Belleview Avenue to a minimum of 5' in width, consistent with the City's 2011 *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan*.
- **Visibility.** In 2017, SSPRD estimated that more than 500,000 people use the Mary Carter Greenway Trail annually. Opportunities to draw trail users to existing study area businesses and encourage additional businesses and/or services that cater to active trail users to locate along the greenway should be explored.
- **Riverfront Properties.** As the adaptive reuse or redevelopment of existing uses occurs over time, building orientation and site planning techniques should maximize views and access to the Mary Carter Greenway Trail and the South Platte River for recreational purposes.



Mary Carter Greenway Trail

# TRANSPORTATION + MOBILITY

## MAJOR ROADWAYS

Major roadways within the study area and their functional classifications are listed in Table 2 and illustrated on Map E. Bellevue Avenue provides the only continuous east-west roadway connection within the study area and provides a direct connection to the Denver Tech Center 6 miles to the east. From the east, Bellevue Avenue serves as State Highway 88 until Federal Boulevard, from there, State Highway 88 continues north on Federal Boulevard. West of Federal Boulevard, Bellevue Avenue devolves into a minor arterial before becoming a major collector west of Lowell Boulevard. Portions of Bellevue Avenue and Federal Boulevard are part of State Highway 88, and are owned and maintained by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) not the City of Littleton (Table 2). Any changes within the right-of-way along this part of Bellevue Avenue must be planned and implemented in coordination with CDOT.

Traffic volumes on Bellevue Avenue drop dramatically west of Lowell Boulevard, reflecting the change in classification from a state highway to a collector street west of Federal Boulevard (Map E).

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION	ROADWAYS
US Highways	Santa Fe Drive (located just east of the study area)
State Highways	Bellevue Avenue (east of Federal); Federal Boulevard (north of Bellevue)
Arterials	Lowell and Federal Boulevards, and Prince Street (south of Bellevue Avenue); Bellevue Avenue between Lowell and Federal Boulevards
Collectors	Linden Street; Bellevue Avenue (west of Lowell); Lowell Boulevard (north of Bellevue); Irving Street; Berry, Prentice and Progress Avenues; Centennial Drive

**Table 2. Roadway Classifications**

Source: Colorado Department of Transportation and City of Littleton

## TRANSIT

Transit service in the region is provided by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) (Table 3). RTD bus routes that serve the study area, as well as RTD Light Rail routes accessible from Downtown Littleton, are illustrated on Map F. No east-west transit service exists within the study area.

ROUTE	FREQUENCY		CONNECTS TO
	WEEKDAY	WEEKEND	
RTD BUS (Lowell + Federal Boulevards)			
36	1 hr.; 30 min. (peak hours)	1 hr.	Abraham Lincoln and Mullen High Schools, Teikyo/Loretto Heights University; and Fort Logan Mental Health Center; Littleton Downtown Station
36L	30 min.	n/a	Same as 36 with limited service continuing north to Decatur-Federal and Colfax-Federal Stations
29	30 min.; 14 min. (peak hours)	1 hr.	Federal and Evans Hub; Littleton Downtown Station
RTD Light Rail (Downtown Littleton)			
C	30 min.	24 min. (4-8am) Northbound only	Union Station (Denver) to Littleton – Mineral Station
D	9 min. (peak hours); 20 min (off-peak)	1 hr.	30th and Downing to Littleton – Mineral Station

**Table 3. Transit Routes + Frequency**

Source: <http://www3.rtd-denver.com/schedules>

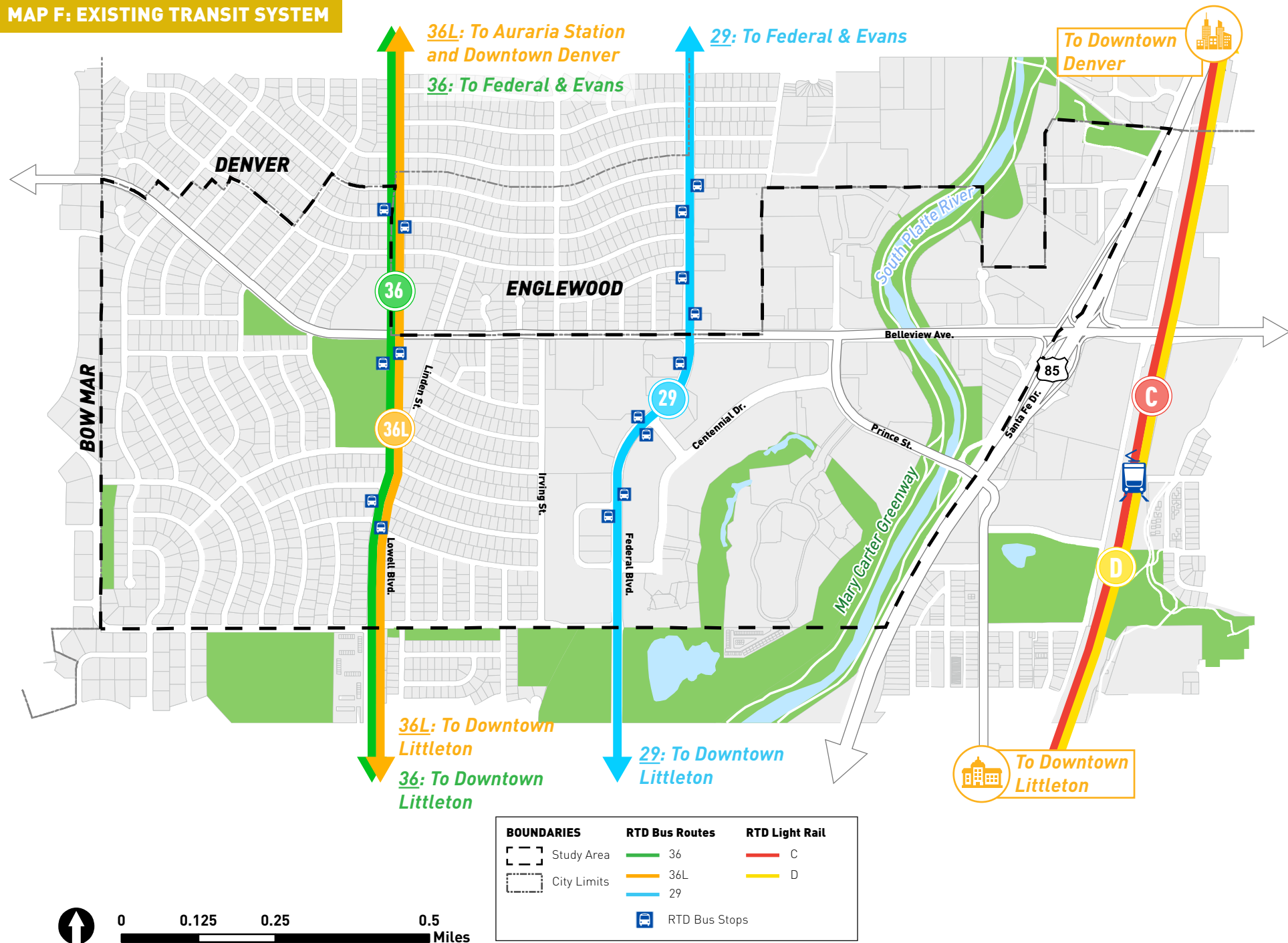


MAP E: MAJOR ROADWAYS + TRAFFIC





# MAP F: EXISTING TRANSIT SYSTEM



## PEDESTRIAN + BICYCLE FACILITIES

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the study area are illustrated on Map G. The City has a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan in place to guide future improvements to the pedestrian and bicycle system citywide.

**Sidewalks.** Sidewalks exist in most portions of the study area; however, gaps do exist in several key locations (Map G) along Bellevue Avenue, Lowell and Federal Boulevards, and Irving Street. In addition, sidewalks along portions of these corridors, are less than 5' in width in some locations.

**Crosswalks.** Signalized, marked crosswalks are in place at major intersections along Bellevue Avenue and Prince Street. However, few crosswalks are in place along Lowell and Federal Boulevard.

**Bicycle Facilities.** The Mary Carter Greenway Trail provides access to the Platte River corridor and bicycle trails throughout the region. The greenway is accessible where it intersects with Bellevue Avenue, Prince Street, as well as from the Santa Fe Drive frontage road east of the river (south of Prince Street). On-street bicycle lanes exist along Lowell Boulevard and Federal Boulevard within the study area, as well as along Bellevue Avenue west of Lowell Boulevard and Centennial Drive (west of Prince Street).

## ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

### ISSUES

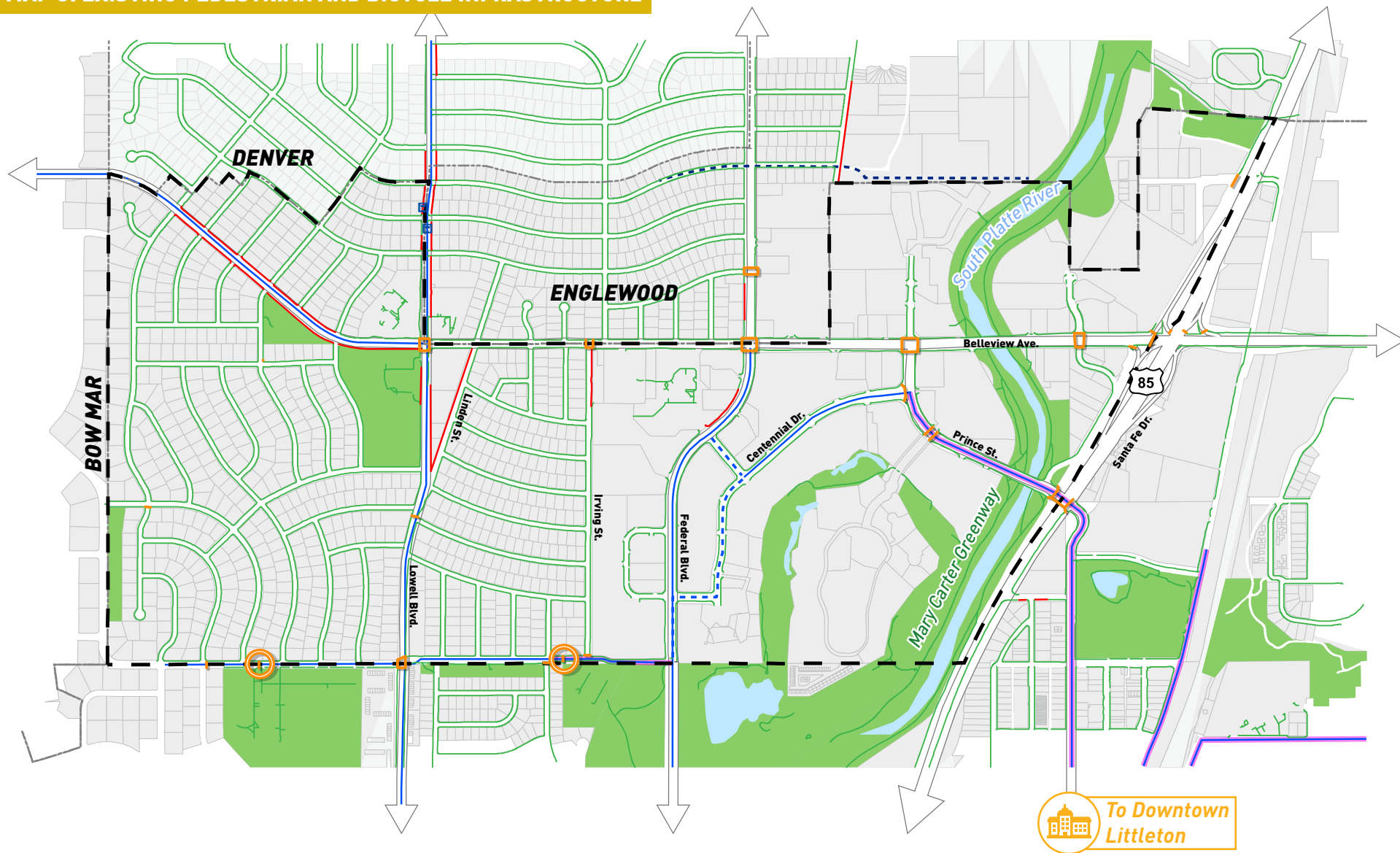
- **Traffic.** Managing high volumes of traffic on Bellevue Avenue as the corridor continues to grow is a concern for many residents.
- **Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety and Comfort.** Gaps in the sidewalk network; narrow, attached sidewalks; a lack of connections within and between uses along Bellevue Avenue; and the sheer volume of traffic along Bellevue Avenue all contribute to an uncomfortable environment for pedestrians and bicycles and the potential for conflicts with vehicles.
- **Pedestrian Crossings.** Although signalized, marked crossings exist at major intersections along Bellevue Avenue, pedestrians must cross 7 lanes of traffic (90' wide) in a single signal cycle at the corridor's widest points (Prince Street and Federal Boulevard), with no refuge island. Marked crossings are lacking altogether in other locations, such as at Federal Boulevard and Centennial Drive, Prince Street and Centennial Drive, and between Harlow Park and the shopping center at Bellevue and Lowell.

- **North-South Connectivity.** Prince Street dead-ends north of Bellevue Avenue, limiting access to properties in the area, as well as to the City of Englewood and Centennial Park to the north. This lack of connectivity also limits access to riverfront properties in the area, thereby limiting their redevelopment potential.
- **Access Management.** Many older shopping centers within the study area have multiple, stop-controlled access points, particularly along Bellevue Avenue east of Lowell Boulevard. This impacts traffic flow and creates more potential conflict points for pedestrians and vehicles.
- **Multimodal Transportation Policies and Regulations.** While the City has a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan used to guide short-term projects, there is no long-range multimodal transportation plan in place to address the system as a whole. Furthermore, current street standards provide limited guidance with regard to pedestrians and bicycle considerations.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- **Future Connection to Union Avenue.** Ownership or use transitions, and/or future redevelopment proposals may present an opportunity to extend Prince Street (or another street) through to West Union Avenue which would require close coordination with the City of Englewood.
- **Incremental Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvements.** Opportunities for incremental improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the study area (e.g., filling sidewalk gaps, addressing access issues, and formalizing bicycle routes) will arise as infill/redevelopment or the adaptive reuse of existing sites occurs, as part of routine street maintenance or improvement projects, and regional partnerships.
- **Multimodal Transportation Master Plan.** The City's Public Works and Traffic Department is seeking to initiate a Transportation Master Plan process within the next one to two years. This process will provide an opportunity for more detailed analysis of transportation systems and policies for the City as a whole, and consideration of how to prioritize needed improvements based on available resources.

# MAP G: EXISTING PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE



BOUNDARIES	PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE	BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE
Study Area	Sidewalks	Existing Bike Lane
City Limits	Marked Crosswalks	Existing Sharrow
	Sidewalk Gaps	Conceptual Trail/Bike Lane Connection (South Platte River Corridor Vision)
	Pedestrian Crossing Signal	Recommended Bike Lane (City of Littleton Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan)



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



# CHARACTER AND IDENTITY

## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER AREAS

The study area is comprised of three distinct character areas. Character areas are described below and illustrated on Map H.

### SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods west of Irving Street were largely developed between 1955 and 1975 and reflect the traditional patterns of development found in many post-World War II communities. This character area transitions from predominantly single-story ranch homes east of Lowell Boulevard (most built prior to 1960), to a mix of one-story, two-story, and split-level homes further to the west (most built between 1950 and 1975). These neighborhoods are characterized by their generous lots and curvilinear, tree-lined streets.



Single-family homes in the Goddard Neighborhood



Single-family homes in the Goddard Neighborhood

The **Arapaho Hills Historic District** is a National Historic Landmark District, located just west of Lowell Boulevard. The district is largely known for its Usonian and International style homes, but is also distinctive in that each home was designed and sited to fit within any grade changes on the site, rather than leveling the natural topography of each site as was the typical practice during the period. The City of Littleton adopted voluntary historic preservation guidelines for Arapaho Hills in 2016.



Single-family homes in the Arapaho Hills Historic District

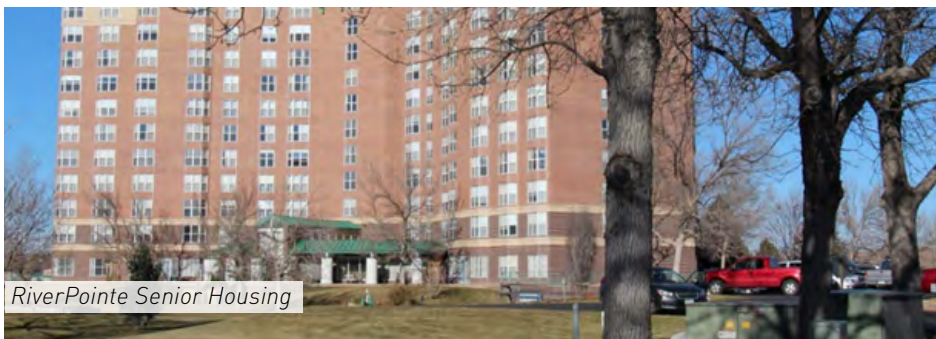


Single-family homes in the Arapaho Hills Historic District



## MULTI-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS

East of Irving Street, neighborhoods transition to include a variety of multi-family housing options—apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Most homes south of Centennial Drive and Prince Street are part of the Riverwalk Community, which was developed on the site of the former Centennial Racetrack in the mid-1980s. The area has a suburban neighborhood character with shared green spaces and surface parking. With the exception of the 13-story RiverPointe Senior Community (built in 1987), most buildings range from 2 to 4 stories in height. There are two multifamily developments north of Bellevue Avenue: the Green Leaf Riverside apartment community, located along the South Platte River at the terminus of Prince Street; and Platte 56, a for-sale townhome development, currently under construction just to the south. Both of these developments range from 3 to 4 stories in height.



*RiverPointe Senior Housing*



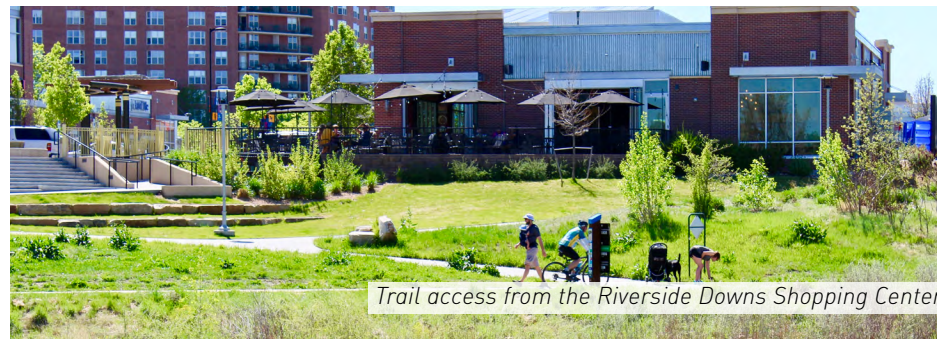
*Riverwalk Community*

## MIXED-USE CHARACTER AREA

The Bellevue Avenue frontage east of Irving Street includes a mix of retail, commercial, industrial and office uses. Most uses were built between 1960 and 2010 and reflect conventional suburban development patterns, such as single-story strip malls, big-box stores, drive-through restaurants and banks, and warehouses/outdoor storage, with prominent surface parking lots. Circulation and access between individual shopping centers is limited.

### URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

Urban design features in mixed-use portions of the study area are fairly nondescript. Most buildings feature tilt-up construction, flat rooflines, and pediment walls with minimal ornamentation. Retail uses incorporate varied roof lines, overhangs, and concentrations of glass for increased transparency at main entrances, and generally incorporate standard corporate brand elements (e.g., color, building signage).



*Trail access from the Riverside Downs Shopping Center*

*Source: Clarion Associates*

The Riverside Downs shopping center is distinct, in that it incorporates design elements intended to evoke aspects of the Centennial Downs Racetrack that operated in the area from 1950-1983. These elements include high sloped awnings and the use of corrugated metal accent materials (both reminiscent of the former grandstands), and equestrian-themed monument signs. Portions of Riverside Downs are sited to take advantage of its location adjacent to the South Platte River and the Mary Carter Greenway through strategic building and outdoor seating orientation, and enhanced pedestrian/bicycle connections.

## MATERIALS

Most buildings, as well as bridges in the area, are constructed of a combination of red/orange-toned brick and stucco. Stone and other masonry accents are also present, but in more limited quantities.



Riverside Downs Shopping Center

Source: Clarion Associates



Commercial building in Centennial Square



Overpass over the South Platte River along Bellevue Ave.

## LANDSCAPING + STREETScape

Landscaping and streetscape character within the study area varies by location. Developments built in the past 20 years include landscaped setbacks and larger street trees, as well as landscaped entry or street medians in some cases. Parking lot landscaping is also more typical in more recent developments. Older shopping centers in the corridor generally lack landscaping along the street frontage, as well as around and within surface parking lots. Sidewalks are generally attached versus detached, meaning that there are no landscape buffers or street trees between the sidewalk and the roadway. Landscaping is generally more formal in terms of the plant material used and the arrangement of that plant material; however, more naturalized plantings are used where Riverside Downs shopping center abuts the Mary Carter Greenway.

A center median runs along Bellevue Avenue except between Lowell Boulevard and Prince Street. The median varies in width and is constructed of a concrete curb with red masonry pavers. No landscaping is present within the center median until west of Lowell Boulevard.



Intersection of Santa Fe Dr. and Bellevue Ave.

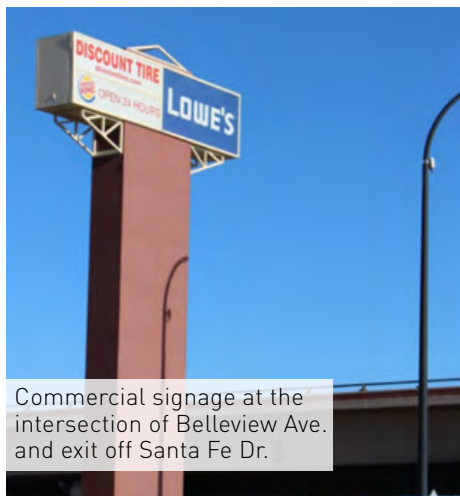


Bellevue Ave. Streetscape



## SIGNAGE

The use of monument signage is typical within the study area, particularly for developments built in the past 20 years. Larger shopping centers may include multiple monument signs, and typically include at least one sign that identifies individual tenants within the center.



Commercial signage at the intersection of Belleview Ave. and exit off Santa Fe Dr.



Retail signage for businesses located at Riverside Downs

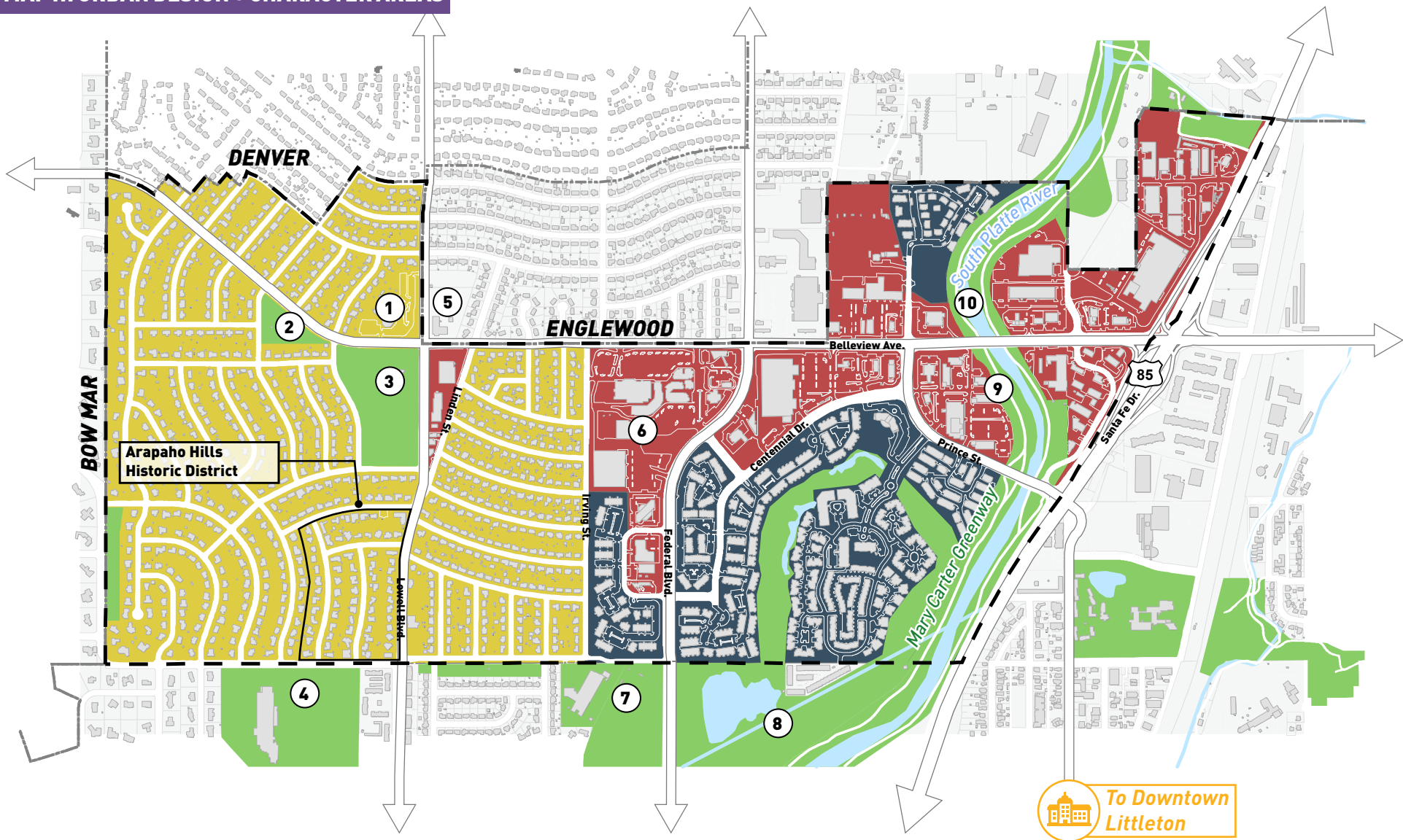
## COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES/DESTINATIONS

Map H identifies major community gathering places/destinations within or adjacent to the study area. Key characteristics of these community gathering places/destinations include:

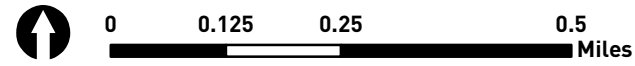
- **Places for People.** Churches and schools in and adjacent to the study area provide places for residents to congregate and connect on a regular basis, over an extended period of time. This regular interaction contributes to a sense of community or belonging. Opportunities for more informal interaction provided by outdoor gathering spaces (e.g., plazas or dining) and parks and recreational facilities can also provide a similar benefit.
- **Unique Destinations/Local Businesses.** There are numerous destinations in the study area that are frequented by study area residents (e.g., retail shops and restaurants) in their day-to-day lives. However, the places identified are unique in that they contribute to an overall identity and sense of place (e.g., O'Toole's Garden Center, Harlow Park, access to the Mary Carter Greenway). Other local businesses within the study area also play a contributing role, but are not called out specifically on the map. These include St. Nicks Christmas and Collectibles, Anglers All, Ackerman & Sons Furniture Workshop, the numerous neighborhood businesses found at Centennial Plaza across from Harlow Park, and the Pedal Bicycle Shop and Pint Room at Riverside Downs.



MAP H: URBAN DESIGN + CHARACTER AREAS



BOUNDARIES	CHARACTER AREAS	COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES/DESTINATIONS
Study Area	Single-Family Neighborhoods	1 St. James Presbyterian Church
City Limits	Multi-Family Neighborhoods	2 James A. Taylor Park
	Mixed-Use [commercial, office, industrial]	3 Harlow Pool and Park
		4 Goddard Middle School
		5 Centennial Lutheran Church
		6 Columbine Square Shopping Center
		7 Bowles Grove Park/Centennial Academy of Fine Arts
		8 Littleton Golf and Tennis Club
		9 Outdoor dining and plaza (Riverside Downs)
		10 Mary Carter Greenway



## ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

### ISSUES

- **Lack of Identity Along Corridor.** The Bellevue Avenue corridor streetscape lacks a distinctive character or brand (e.g. consistent urban design elements, signage), and most the design of commercial uses east of Federal Boulevard are typical of other commercial corridors in the region and throughout the country. The juxtaposition of jurisdictional boundaries in the study area vicinity (Littleton, Englewood, Bow Mar, and Denver) further reinforces the lack of identity in this area.
- **Regulatory Tools.** The City has limited regulatory tools in place to address the design and character of future development, and typically relies on the Planned Development (PD) process to address building and site design considerations. In addition, no standards or guidelines are in place for portions of the South Platte River frontage that lie within the study area, for infill development in residential neighborhoods (outside of Downtown Littleton), or for streetscape design.
- **Wayfinding.** Wayfinding signage that exists in the study area is geared toward the Mary Carter Greenway. Although some of this signage is located at street level, the size and placement of this signage is oriented toward pedestrians and bicyclists, making wayfinding for motorists seeking to access similar destinations from the study area (e.g., Downtown Littleton) less clear.
- **Single-Family Neighborhoods.** Residents value the distinct character of their single-family neighborhoods. Although the area has seen little, if any, pressure to date for residential “tear-downs,” neighborhoods to the west in Bow Mar are seeing significant redevelopment activity. The large lot sizes and older, smaller housing stock characteristic of study area neighborhoods may make them more susceptible to redevelopment pressure in the future.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- **New Unique Destinations/Gathering Places.** As underutilized properties within the study area are revitalized, opportunity exists to build on the area’s existing assets—such as O’Toole’s Garden Center, and the South Platte River—to create additional destinations/community gathering places that benefit area residents, and help draw people from outside the area to local businesses.
- **Residential Design Standards/Guidelines.** While guidelines for the Arapaho Hills Historic District were recently completed, an opportunity exists to explore whether residents would like to establish parameters for infill/redevelopment in other single-family neighborhoods within the study area.
- **Support for Local Businesses.** Ongoing efforts by the City’s Economic Development staff to provide support to local businesses within the study area, and actively seek to attract new local businesses to the corridor are essential.
- **Branding/Enhanced Wayfinding.** Opportunities exist to expand the use of wayfinding signage beyond the Mary Carter Greenway to other parts of the study area, and to define a distinct brand for Bellevue Avenue that can be reflected in future streetscape, gateway, or other improvements in the right-of-way. Signage could also be used to more clearly distinguish Littleton neighborhoods from adjacent neighborhoods in Englewood and Denver.
- **Business Signage.** Relatively consistent use of monument signage within the corridor distinguishes this portion of Bellevue Avenue from other commercial corridors and should be continued.



