

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FUTURE CITY

DRAFT
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

[To be inserted later] CITY COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMISSION

COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEE (CCC)

CITY MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

CONSULTANT TEAM

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INTRODUCTION

The Envision Littleton Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) will guide future development, redevelopment, and community enhancement efforts over the next 20 years through 2040. It serves as a framework for thoughtful community discussion on the real and perceived challenges currently facing Littleton, and opportunities that will shape its future. Through long-range planning efforts, the community can accommodate its projected growth and revitalization in a manner that preserves its history, culture, and overall quality of life for current and future residents.

The Plan resulted from an 18-month planning and community engagement process. The process began with the Envision Littleton Vision Report, adopted unanimously by City Council on December 18, 2018. The Vision Report established a unifying vision and identified Littleton's core values, guiding principles, shared priorities, and concerns. The Plan's findings and recommendations focus on the physical and economic aspects of the community's projected growth and development in the coming years. It provides goals, policies, and actions that will help City officials, appointees, and staff in determining the location, financing, and sequencing of public improvements; administering development regulations; and guiding reinvestment efforts. The Plan also provides a basis for coordinating the actions of many different functions and interests within and outside of municipal government.

PLAN PURPOSE

A comprehensive plan is the most important policy document a municipal government prepares and maintains. This is because the Plan:

- Lays out a long-range vision regarding the growth and enhancement of the community;
- Considers at once the city's regional context, and the entire geographic area of the community, including areas where new development and redevelopment may occur;
- Assesses near- and longer-term needs and desires across a variety of inter-related topics that represent the key "building blocks" of a community (e.g., land use, transportation, urban design, economic development, housing, neighborhoods, parks and recreation, heritage and tourism, utility infrastructure, public facilities and services, cultural facilities, etc.); and
- Serves as a guideline for measuring success, and is amended from time to time to remain a "living document" that is able to address changing circumstances.

Through a comprehensive plan, a community determines how best to accommodate and manage its projected growth, and the revitalization of older neighborhoods and commercial areas. The Plan aims to ensure that ongoing development will proceed in an orderly, well-planned manner so that public facilities and services can keep pace with development, and so that residents' quality of life will be enhanced.

Significantly, by clarifying and stating the City's intentions regarding the area's physical development and infrastructure investment, the Plan also creates a greater level of predictability for residents, land owners, developers, potential investors, and partner agencies and organizations.

USE OF THE PLAN

This Plan will take our community to a new level in terms of livability and tangible accomplishments. The Plan is ultimately a guidance document for City officials and staff, who must make decisions on a daily basis that will determine the future direction, financial health, and "look and feel" of the community. These decisions are carried out through:

- Targeted programs and expenditures prioritized through the City's annual budget process, including routine essential functions such as code compliance.
- Major public improvements and land acquisitions financed through the City's budgeting efforts.
- New and amended City ordinances and regulations that implement Plan objectives.
- Departmental work plans and resources in key areas.
- Support for ongoing planning and studies that will further clarify needs, costs, benefits, and strategies.

- Pursuit of external grant funding to supplement local budgets and/or expedite certain planning and infrastructure projects.
- Initiatives pursued in conjunction with other public and private partners to leverage resources and achieve successes neither could accomplish on their own.

Despite these many avenues for action, the Plan should not be considered the solution for every tough problem Littleton faces. The Plan focuses primarily on the responsibilities of City government in the physical planning arena, where municipalities have a more direct and extensive role than in other areas that residents value such as education and social services. Of necessity, long-range plans, as vision and policy documents, also must remain relatively general.

The resulting Plan may not touch on every challenge before the community, but it is meant to set a tone and motivate concerted efforts to move the community forward in coming years.

CITY AUTHORITY TO PREPARE AND ADOPT PLAN

Through Title 31, Government – Municipal Powers and Functions of Cities and Town, of the Colorado Revised Statutes, the State of Colorado puts community planning among the core duties of a local planning commission. As stated in C.R.S. 31-23-206: "It is the duty of the commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside its boundaries, subject to the approval of the governmental body having jurisdiction thereof, which in the commission's judgment bear relation to the planning of such municipality."

As in most states, the State of Colorado also identifies a municipality's comprehensive plan as a key source of guidance for local development regulations. As stated in C.R.S. 31-23-206, elements in the plan may include recreation and tourism (required by the state statute), transportation, land use, housing, economic development, parks and open space, capital improvements, and water supply, among others.

Along with state statutes, the City of Littleton operates under an adopted City Charter and City Code. Title 2, Boards and Commissions, Chapter 9 of the adopted City Code establishes the Planning Commission. Among the duties itemized, the Charter requires that the Commission "shall recommend to the city council comprehensive plans to guide future growth and development within the city which includes, for example, land use, streets and transportation, parks and open space, pedestrian circulation, and urban design."

Littleton's longstanding commitment to planning and community dialogue is exemplified by the many past plans and studies cited within this Plan. As the newest adopted statement of a unifying community vision and associated guiding principles, goals, and policies, this Plan: (1) replaces any and all Comprehensive Plans previously adopted by the City, and (2) will prevail in case of any conflicts with statements in other prior plans adopted by the City. As warranted, City Council may also direct the Planning Commission to deliberate and provide recommendations in cases where any identified or perceived discrepancies between the Plan and previous special area or special purpose plans are especially pertinent to upcoming decisions involving City policies, priorities, and actions.

PLAN CONTENT OVERVIEW

While the Existing City Data Book provides background and insights about Littleton as it is today, the Plan focuses on Littleton as it intends to be in the years ahead. These aspirations are presented in topic areas central to Littleton's physical growth and development. Each Plan section contains several common components:

- Legacy of Past Planning. Plans and studies previously developed for Littleton and vicinity offer insights from the time they were prepared, and provide an essential foundation for this Plan.
- **Key Issues and Considerations.** These reflect input and discussions from varied Envision Littleton community engagement activities, workshops with City Council and Planning Commission, and interaction with other City boards/commissions, City departments, and partner agencies and organizations.

Comprehensive Plan Topic Areas

- Land Use and Community Character (L&C)
- Housing and Neighborhoods (H&N)
- Transportation (TRA)
- Infrastructure and Services (I&S)
- Economy and Tax Base (E&T)
- Recreation, Heritage, and Tourism (RHT)
- Environment (ENV)
- Special Areas and Design (S&D)
- Framework for Action. The framework is organized in three tiers: (1) Goals, (2) Policies, and (3) Actions.

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- A **Goal** is a statement of a desired outcome ("end") toward which efforts are directed as expressed by more specific objectives and action steps ("means").
- A **Policy** expresses a basic value or operating philosophy that will apply regardless of the course of action ultimately chosen.
- A strategic **Action** priority is aimed at seizing a special opportunity or addressing a particular challenge one faces, given limited resources, financial and otherwise and recognizing that a broader agenda of new or ongoing activities will also be pursued in the meantime.

The actions in each section convey tangible steps that will lead to achievement of the goals in line with the stated policies. A final section with considerations and procedures for implementation and periodic updates rounds out the Plan.

PATHWAYS TO ACTION

The actions under each plan topic are presented in five categories that represent the major ways that Plan goals and initiatives are typically advanced and accomplished:

Capital Investments

Littleton uses a multi-year Capital Improvement Program, or "CIP," to identify and budget for "big ticket" projects, especially those that must be phased and/or coordinated with other initiatives. This may include street infrastructure; water, sanitary sewer, and storm drainage improvements; parks, trails, and recreation facility construction and upgrades; construction and renovation of public buildings; and purchase of land, vehicles, or major equipment. With a typical five-year outlook, a CIP provides predictability regarding the City's capital investment plans and priorities for the benefit and awareness of private interests and residents. Anticipating and adequately budgeting for major capital projects will be essential to implementing the Plan. Likewise, decisions regarding the prioritization of proposed capital improvements should reflect the direction and priorities of the Plan.

Programs and Initiatives

Programs involve the routine activities of City departments and staff, and special projects and initiatives they may undertake. As part of Plan implementation, this method may include initiating new, or adjusting existing, City programs and activities; expanding community outreach efforts; or providing specialized training to accomplish a priority objective more promptly and effectively.

Regulations and Standards

Because private investment decisions account for a vast majority of the City's physical form, land development regulations and engineering standards are fundamental for Plan implementation.

PLAN ASSUMPTIONS

The Future City portion of the Plan was prepared assuming the following, as discussed with City Council and Planning Commission:

Jurisdiction

The city limits will not change or expand significantly over the Plan horizon through 2040 (through annexation or interaction with adjacent cities).

Population

Littleton's population could increase from almost 48,000 in 2017 to the 60,000 range by 2040, as projected by the Plan consultant (Kendig Keast Collaborative) based on newest available U.S. Census Bureau estimates and recent trend data.

Metro Position

Littleton will be even less of a Denver Metro Area "edge city" with Sterling Ranch emerging as a next major growth area south of Highlands Ranch.

Asset Management

The City will likely devote more attention and capital investment to maintaining and upgrading aging municipal infrastructure and facilities in the years ahead.

Municipal Services

S As now, the City will not have direct operational responsibility for some typical municipal activities:

- Water supply and treatment (Denver Water)
- Fire service (South Metro Fire Rescue)
- Parks and trails (South Suburban Parks and Recreation District)

As a lead partner along with the City of Englewood, Littleton will continue to operate a regional wastewater treatment plant that serves various other jurisdictions through South Platte Water Renewal Partners.

Water Supply and Conservation

➢ Long-term water supply and efficient use/re-use will be a core focus for the entire metro area through 2040 and beyond.

Zoning, subdivision regulations, and associated development criteria and technical engineering standards are key to ensuring that the form, character, and quality of development reflect the City's planning objectives. These codes should

advance the community's desire for quality development outcomes while recognizing economic and community character factors. They should not delay or interfere unnecessarily with development deemed consistent with Plan principles and directives.

Partnerships and Coordination

Some community initiatives identified in the Plan cannot be accomplished by City government alone. They may require direct coordination, intergovernmental agreements, or funding support from other public entities or levels of government. Additionally, the unique role of potential private and non-profit partners to advance the community's action agenda should not be underestimated. This may occur through cooperative efforts, volunteer activities, and in-kind services (which can count toward the local match requirements for various grant opportunities), and from public/private financing of community improvements.

More Targeted Planning / Study

Various areas of City governance require more detailed study and planning, especially as required to qualify for external funding opportunities. These studies involve targeted planning work at a "finer grain" level of detail than is appropriate for comprehensive planning purposes (e.g., utility master plans, roadway alignment studies, etc.). As such, some parts of the Plan will be implemented only after additional planning or special studies that clarify next steps and associated costs and considerations, including clarification of roles and potential cost-sharing when partnering is involved.

COMMUNITY LOCATION AND FEATURES

The City of Littleton is located in central Colorado, within the Front Range of the Southern Rocky Mountains. The South Platte River flows from south to north through Littleton, with additional tributaries also running through the city.

Littleton is the county seat of Arapahoe County, with the majority of the city located within Arapahoe County and small portions located in Douglas and Jefferson counties. Littleton is part of the greater Denver metropolitan region and is approximately nine miles south of Downtown Denver.

Littleton is accessible via two Regional Transportation District (RTD) light rail stations, Downtown and at Mineral Avenue, and is home to the main campus of Arapahoe Community College. The city limits encompass a total area of approximately 13.8 square miles. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Littleton had a 2010 population of 41,737 and an estimated 2017 population of 47,734.

Littleton lies 5,351 feet above sea level and has an average temperature range of 35-64 degrees, an average rainfall of 16.3 inches per year, and an average of 65.7 inches of snowfall per year. Given its location along the South Platte River and extensive open space, parks, and trails, Littleton is home to a range of recreation activities. Littleton also retains its original and historic downtown. The recreational and historical aspects of the community continue to attract tourists to Littleton.

POPULATION GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Population projections are an important component of a long-range planning process. They help determine and quantify the demands that will be placed on public facilities and services based on the potential pace and scale of the community's physical growth. Projections reflect local, regional, national and international trends and offer a basis to prepare for the future. However, forecasting population changes can be challenging, particularly for the long term, because it is often difficult to account for all circumstances that may arise. Therefore, it will be important for the City to monitor population and economic growth continually to account for both short- and longer-term shifts that can influence development activity and trends in the community and larger region.

ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS

Demographers caution that population projections become trickier as the geographic area gets smaller, making city-level population the most difficult to forecast. This is because local population change is strongly influenced by less predictable factors such as housing prices, availability of vacant land to develop, and annexation of additional territory, which may already have existing residents and results in an instant increase in the citywide total.

Given this context, this section provides a comparison of several potential scenarios for future population change in Littleton. The projections build on the latest U.S. Census estimate of 47,734 for 2017 and identify potential population levels in five-year increments out to 2040. The four projection alternatives displayed in **Figure 1**, below, reflect:

- If Littleton continued to experience an increase in population at a Steady Growth Rate of 1.9 percent per year as has
 occurred most recently in the years from 2010 through 2017. Similar to how interest compounds in a savings account,
 this is an "exponential growth" scenario because the numerical change gets larger each year as the same rate of
 increase 1.9 percent in this case is applied to an expanding total population.
- If Littleton maintained its respective 2010 shares of the total populations in Arapahoe and Jefferson counties (Douglas County was not included as Littleton is such a tiny share of the Douglas total). The portion of Littleton within Arapahoe County accounted for 7.3 percent of the countywide population in 2010, and the Jefferson County portion of Littleton was 7.8 percent of the Jefferson total population. This is known as the **Fixed County Step Down** scenario.
- If Littleton's respective 2010 shares of the total populations in Arapahoe and Jefferson counties decreased over time rather than remain constant as above. This is known as the **Trending County Step Down** scenario and assumes that, by 2040, Littleton's share of the Arapahoe County population would decrease from 7.3 to 6.3 percent. Likewise, Littleton's share of the Jefferson County population would drop from 7.8 to 6.5 percent.
- If Littleton continued to experience an increase in population involving **Steady Numeric Growth** of 8,567 persons per decade through the current decade and then also in the 2020s and 2030s. In contrast to the exponential growth scenario above, this is a "linear growth" scenario as the numeric growth remains fixed rather than the growth rate. The assumption of fixed numeric growth means that the 1.9 percent annual growth rate experienced recently from 2010 through 2017 would drop to 1.6 percent during the 2020s, then to 1.4 percent during the 2030s.

Bottom Line

Littleton should consider a range of potential growth rather than an absolute number given the uncertainty of any smallarea forecast that extends beyond a few years. It is assumed for this Plan that Littleton's 2040 population will fall within a forecast range of 51,289 to 74,200 persons, which yields a midpoint of 62,745 residents.

The midpoint of a potential growth range to assume for this Plan would mean **nearly 15,000 additional residents over 20 years.** This suggests that Littleton could add the equivalent of 31 percent of its 2017 base-year population by 2040. For perspective, Census 2010 reported an average household size in Littleton of 2.29 persons, meaning that **6,550 additional housing units would be needed to accommodate 15,000 added residents**.



80,000 70,000 60,000 50,000 Population 40,000 30,000 20,000 10,000 0 1970 1980 1990 2000 2010 2017 2020 2025 2030 2035 2040 Historical Data 26,466 28,631 40,340 41,737 47,734 33,685 -Steady Growth Rate (1.9%) 47,734 50,561 55,650 61,251 67,415 74,200 Fixed County Step Down 47,734 47,979 51,174 54,217 57,024 59,101 Trending County Step Down 47,734 47,796 49,087 50,355 51,225 51,289 Steady Numeric Growth (8,567 per decade) 47,734 50,304 54,419 58,871 63,009 67,438

FIGURE 1: Littleton Population Projection Scenarios, 2017-2040

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative based on U.S. Census Bureau historical data and 2017 estimates.

EXISTING CITY HIGHLIGHTS FROM DATA BOOK

The Existing City Data Book, included as an appendix to the Plan, highlights key indicators and background information about Littleton as it is today. Compiling this data was step one in the 2019 Envision Littleton efforts to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan and create a first-ever Transportation Master Plan (TMP).

The Data Book content for the Comprehensive Plan is based on initial background studies by the City's community planning consultant, Kendig Keast Collaborative. The intent was to avoid duplication of available, more extensive profiles of Littleton. Instead, the booklet focuses on selected data points that speak to community values and priorities expressed by residents and other stakeholders as input to the Vision Report adopted by City Council in December 2018. Narrative within each section notes how a data point further validates aspects of the Vision Report and/or highlights essential planning considerations for the years ahead.

[Specific highlights to be inserted after pending Data Book updates.]

REGIONAL FACTORS AND CONSIDERATIONS

[To be inserted later after pending Data Book updates.]

UNIFYING VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

From What We Treasure Today ...

Littleton will continue to be a hometown community that is widely known and envied as a city with "strong bones." Among the features that earn Littleton this reputation are its historic and vibrant downtown, its light rail transit link to the Denver region, and its distinguishing yet often unseen natural asset, the South Platte River. Along with the highly utilized greenway, trails, and preserves that frame the Platte, residents and visitors also prize the High Line Canal Trail that weaves through the city. A **Vision** is a broad statement of what a community hopes and intends to be in the future. With words and images, it offers a picture of that future to provide inspiration, motivation, and a framework for more detailed planning and decision-making.

Littleton will especially be held up as the "real thing" when it comes to maintaining a sense of community among its residents and managing the essential physical traits that define community character, neighborhood by distinct neighborhood.

It will remain a place where nature and city living intersect, can both be enjoyed, and are guarded with a fierce sense of stewardship.

... To What We Strive For Going Forward

We recognize that our vision for Littleton's future is framed differently than many communities as we are a largely built-out city. As we focus on managing change amid this reality, we envision a Littleton in 2040 that has:

- Maintained the integrity of its established neighborhoods and historic areas.
- · Protected its cherished natural setting in harmony with new development and redevelopment.
- Ensured that reinvestment in the community, whether in Littleton's legacy housing stock or along its commercial corridors, has met local expectations for quality and compatibility with its surroundings.
- Made itself even safer and more accessible for all the ways that people navigate through and within Littleton.
- Achieved a higher standard for cleanliness and burnished its appeal as a place with strikingly beautiful vistas.
- Secured the long-term sustainability of city finances to continue providing its citizens the best in public services.

VALUES

In listening to stories and memories about Littleton, along with residents' desires and concerns for its future, the following values came through consistently. The bulleted items under each are examples of how those expressing such values related them to their own experience of or pride in Littleton. Many communities share common values, issues, and priorities (e.g., to be a safe place). Littleton's core values include a passion for and/or commitment to:

Local History

- Preserve and celebrate it
- · Highlight and tie it to our identity and events
- Origin as own town, rural and later suburban heritage
- · Build on accomplishments of past eras and leaders

Values identify what matters most to the community and how it wishes to be viewed by others. Our shared values inform the vision.

The Outdoors

- Health and fitness focus
- Front Range proximity
- Stewardship of river and open space assets

Being Inclusive

- Age, race, income, and faith diversity
- Housing options
- Neighbors knowing neighbors
- Caring for those in need
- · Welcoming to families, newcomers, and visitors

Being a Model Community

- Leader among metro and Colorado cities
- · High in livability, family-friendly, and other rankings
- Partnerships with other public agencies

Civic Involvement

- Being informed citizens
- Having a voice in city government
- Volunteer service

Integrity

- Of community and neighborhood character
- Of natural resources and open space endowment
- Of architectural heritage and landmarks
- Of governance and open, inclusive processes

Quality

- Schools
- Built environment
- Air and water
- Open space
- Public services

Safety

- Pedestrian/cyclist/driver safety
- Security from crime
- Child protection

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Even in the face of potentially significant demographic change ahead, Littleton will remain ANCHORED by a firm belief among its residents and leaders of what makes this a truly special place. These features include Littleton's traditional downtown, established neighborhoods, and the literal "river that runs through it" in the South Platte. Littleton also has a longstanding reputation as a community of choice for quality schools and is home to the Arapahoe Community College main campus. Serving as the Arapahoe County seat, a destination for health care, and a hub for cultural and lifestyle amenities also keeps a consistent conception of Littleton in the minds of residents and

visitors. Although stable in these various ways today, Littleton will approach its future with a sense of dynamism, looking to draw upon a culture of innovation and boldness inherited from earlier generations.



Littleton will continue to be AUTHENTIC and comfortable for both residents and guests. The often-cited "small town feel" and sense of community dates to our origin as a "Little Town" separate and apart from Denver. Littleton will continue to stand out in the region for its distinctive identity. Its genuine sense of place will always be contrasted with the look and feel of cities that came along much later or were master planned from scratch. The essential threads that will continue to sustain this community fabric include Littleton's historic character and architectural heritage, its varied neighborhoods and residential options, a robust and service-oriented faith community, and an inviting

Littleton will be an increasingly CONNECTED and accessible place. From a physical and mobility standpoint, it will continue to have regional ties via highways and arterials, transit services, long-distance trails, and the Mary Carter Greenway. Evolving technology and network speeds will link it even more to the nation and world. It will be an inclusive and neighborly community that provides opportunities for youth, seniors, and residents in need to thrive, including through more mobility options. Littleton will also remain a fun and eventful locale throughout the year, bringing residents

and safe atmosphere.



from near and far.



Littleton will always be a community of ACTIVE people who make the most of their city's cultural and natural resource abundance. It will support its residents' efforts to be fit and maintain a healthy lifestyle. It will embrace their desire to gather for live performances and other local happenings. And it will appreciate and build on the value of a lively downtown. Littleton will always seek to elevate its position as a dream community for

together for leisure and volunteer activities, and drawing visitors

outdoor recreation and nature enthusiasts – and a destination for visitors wishing to share in these local amenities.



Littleton will remain ENGAGED and civic-minded in all matters affecting the direction and priorities of city government and the community. Stakeholders will participate in transparent processes and take responsibility for maintaining a respectful and productive dialogue. Meaningful interactions must **Guiding Principles** describe the values identified by the community and serve as the foundation for the Vision. The Guiding Principles provide a reference point for Littleton to consider when making decisions. The guiding principles reflect major themes, or areas of focus, for achieving the desired vision that emerged based on analysis of input by stakeholders.

involve committed elected officials, informed residents, and other partner organizations and agencies interested in Littleton as it is today and will be tomorrow.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The City of Littleton must plan effectively for future development and redevelopment. Sound land use planning is essential to ensuring that the City is prepared not only to serve anticipated public infrastructure and service needs, but also to create and maintain a desired community character.

Land use considerations are integrated with all other Plan components. For instance, the transportation network provides access to land, which, along with real estate market factors, influences the type and intensity of development that may occur. The capacity and condition of public utilities can dictate the location, amount, and timing of development, as can economic development efforts by the City and other partners. Similarly, proximity to parks and public facilities promotes public health and safety and affects the development potential of an area. Development character and site design shape community aesthetics and the perceptions held by area residents, tourists, and those considering investment in Littleton.

FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER

The **Future Land Use and Character Map** shows the general pattern of uses anticipated and/or desired in the years ahead, and the character contexts in which uses occur. The map, along with the text descriptions in this section, indicate the use that is expected to predominate in areas where land is undeveloped or, in previously developed areas, based on what is already on the ground and will likely remain or possibly evolve. Such transitions in use can occur through redevelopment of previously built sites, "infill" construction on a vacant parcel amid existing built sites, or repurposing of an existing structure for another use without significant site changes.

Along with the predominant use types, other complementary uses will also remain or may emerge in particular areas of the city (e.g., small-scale, neighborhood-oriented retail and service uses near the edges of largely residential areas). Certain uses can be located amid other predominant use types, such as public facilities and places of worship within predominantly residential areas. Mixing uses on sites is common in downtowns (e.g., upper floor office or residential above ground-floor retail) and may occur elsewhere in a community as the market accommodates and zoning allows.

Some uses are highly market-driven, with their timing and particular location dictated by the extent and pace of other types of development. This includes the typical pattern of retail uses locating near new residential "rooftops" and often at key roadway intersections. The location and extent of various forms of residential development can also be difficult to predict amid broader housing market cycles and regional needs, combined with developer areas of expertise and interest in bringing single-family or multi-family products to market.

Future Land Use Map Zoning Map Aspect Outlook for future use of land and Basis for applying different land use character of particular areas of the regulations and development standards in community. different areas of the community ("zones"). PURPOSE Macro level, showing generalized Micro level, with an area- and site-specific development patterns. focus. Guidance for City's zoning map and Regulating development as it is proposed, related decisions (zone change requests, or as sites are positioned for the future variance applications, etc.) with appropriate zoning (by the property USE owner or the City). Baseline for monitoring consistency of actions and decisions with the Comprehensive Plan. Comprehensive Plan and future land use Existing land use in the city. map for general guidance. The locational aspects of community Zoning decisions that differ substantially planning priorities involving housing, **INPUTS AND** from the general development pattern economic development, infrastructure, CONSIDERATIONS depicted on the future land use map will parks and recreation, public facilities, etc. indicate the need for some map adjustments during the next plan update.

Future Land Use Map versus Zoning Map

LAND USE PLANNING VERSUS ZONING

The side-by-side comparison above highlights the distinct purposes and uses of a future land use map relative to a zoning map. The City's development regulations are among the primary tools for implementing the Plan. The zoning and subdivision regulations, in particular, can play a significant role in establishing and protecting the physical character of the community. These regulations delineate land use districts and the uses permitted within them, together with standards for buildings and site improvements. As a result, the zoning and subdivision regulations largely direct development outcomes. Although the Plan and future land use map provide only general planning guidance, they become the bases for updates of the zoning and subdivision regulations and the Zoning Map.

LAND USE PLANNING WITH CHARACTER

The accompanying **Future Land Use and Character Map** shows areas within Littleton designated in 16 categories that address both use and character:

- Estate Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Residential Attached
- Suburban Residential Multi-Family
- Auto-Oriented Residential
- Auto-Oriented Residential Attached
- Auto-Oriented Residential Multi-Family
- Residential Mix
- Mixed Character Core Neighborhood
- Suburban Commercial
- Suburban Business Park
- Auto-Oriented Commercial
- Corridor Mixed Use
- Urban Downtown Transition
- Urban Downtown Mixed Use
- Urban Downtown Main Street

COMMUNITY CHARACTER PRIMER

The **community character** approach to evaluating and planning for land use emphasizes the variation in physical conditions experienced along a spectrum from natural and rural landscapes at the edges of a community to its most urbanized environments. Looking beyond land use alone, a character-based approach focuses on development intensity, which encompasses:

- > The density and layout of residential development;
- > The scale and form of non-residential development; and
- The building and pavement coverage relative to the extent of open space and natural vegetation or landscaping.

How the automobile is accommodated is a key factor in distinguishing character types including how public streets are designed, how parking is provided, and how buildings and paved areas are arranged on sites. Among the three major character classes:

- ▶ **Rural** character areas have wide open spaces where structures and paved surfaces occupy only a minimal portion of the landscape.
- Suburban character areas have noticeably less intensive use of land, with open and green spaces balancing – or, in Estate areas, exceeding – the extent of land covered by structures and paved surfaces.
- Urban character areas exhibit the greatest pedestrian orientation, through a more compact scale and "architectural enclosure" of streets by buildings situated close to front property lines and sidewalks.

Within the Urban class, **Auto Urban** character areas are a particular planning challenge as they are designed mainly to accommodate automobile circulation and parking. Land cover by buildings and paved surfaces is similar to **Urban** areas, but without the walkability emphasis.



For context, the map also shows locations of preserved open space, public parkland, and private recreation sites (e.g., swimming pools, tennis courts, playgrounds and other amenities maintained by homeowner associations).

The following descriptions indicate the anticipated principal uses in each category, plus the intended character of the areas in which the land uses occur, abut, or mix. Public and institutional uses commonly occur in all of these areas and should match the character. Specific standards for land development based on these designations are articulated through the City's implementing regulations (zoning and subdivision) as they currently exist and may be further amended over time based on this planning guidance.

WORKING DRAFT Future Land Use and Character in Littleton, CO (August 7, 2019)





Legend

Future Land Use and Character

- Estate Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Residential Attached
- Suburban Residential Multi-Family
- Auto-Oriented Residential
- Auto-Oriented Residential Attached
- Auto-Oriented Residential Multi-Family
- **Residential Mix**



- City Limits
 - Parcel Boundary
 - South Metro Fire Rescue Station Ē





RENAMED Mixed Character Core Neighborhood







ESTATE RESIDENTIAL

This designation is for areas that should have limited development activity other than large-lot residential. Such areas provide a transition between a city's rural fringe and more urbanized in-city development patterns and intensities. Lots in this category ideally should be one acre or larger, which provides substantial openness and separation between individual dwellings, and can incorporate agricultural uses.



Estate character area along and south of Rangeview Drive in south Littleton. Source: Google Earth (all aerial views in this section).

Primary Land Use Types

• Detached residential dwellings.

Characteristics

- Transition from the Rural portion of the character spectrum where the landscape is visually dominant over structures to Estate areas where most of the land surface is still in unbuilt open space (green on the accompanying pie chart) but with more land now occupied by buildings (brown) and paved surfaces (gray).
- In the Suburban range of the character spectrum but with larger lots (typically one acre or larger), especially where required by public health regulations to allow for both individual water wells and on-site septic systems on properties where centralized water and/or wastewater service may not be available or feasible.
- One-acre lots are usually adequate in wooded areas to achieve visual screening of homes from streets and adjacent dwellings. Three-to five-acre lots may be needed to achieve and maintain true Estate character in more open areas with less vegetation and/or topographic changes.

Paving Buildings Open Space

Where on Map

• Estate Residential is shown in south Littleton near Heritage High School, and also near the western city limits in the vicinity of Mineral Avenue.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL

This designation is for residential areas where Suburban character is established and preserved by achieving a balance between buildings and other site improvements relative to the degree of open space maintained within the neighborhood. The openness may be found in relatively large yard areas on individual lots and between homes and/or in common green spaces or water features. This distinguishes Suburban character areas from more auto-oriented residential areas where site coverage in the form of dwellings, driveways and other paved surfaces predominates relative to undeveloped space.



Primary Land Use Types

Suburban Residential character area around S. Coventry Lane in west Littleton.

- Detached residential dwellings.
- Planned developments that may integrate other housing types (e.g., attached residential such as patio homes or townhomes), with increased open space to preserve an overall Suburban character.

Characteristics

- Less noticeable accommodation of the automobile compared to more intensive autooriented areas, especially where residential driveways are on the side of homes rather than occupying a portion of the front yard space and where garages are situated to the side or rear of the dwelling.
- A larger baseline minimum lot size in a Suburban Residential zoning district allows for deeper front yards and building setbacks and greater side separation between homes. Character-based zoning and development standards can also:
 - Promote land planning approaches that discourage overly standardized subdivision designs and allow for varied lot sizes, with lots smaller than the baseline requiring greater set-aside of common open space (with the additional open space devoted to maintaining the Suburban character and buffering adjacent properties and roads).



- Include a cluster development option that further concentrates the overall development footprint on the site while providing the developer the same lot yield or even a density bonus to incentivize conservation designs with an even higher level of open space set-aside than results from standard development.
- Preservation of mature trees or other natural site features, along with generous landscaping, can offset auto-oriented design elements that detract from Suburban character.
- More opportunity for natural and/or swale drainage (and storm water retention/absorption) relative to concentrated storm water conveyance in Auto Urban character areas.

Where on Map

 Suburban Residential is shown in large swaths across the city, especially south of Littleton Boulevard to the Mineral Avenue vicinity, and west of Santa Fe Drive.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL ATTACHED

This designation is a subset of Suburban Residential above, for areas and properties that offer various forms of attached housing (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, attached patio homes, etc.). Through careful land planning, the additional residential density within such developments is offset by green and open areas that yield a Suburban character. This designation sometimes provides a transition between residential areas entirely comprised of single-family detached dwellings and properties with larger-scale multi-family residential development. As needed, some of the planned open space and/or preserved vegetation should be along site boundaries to provide buffering between other character types or land use intensities.



Primary Land Use Types

- Duplexes (two-family dwellings).
- Townhomes.
- Patio homes or other small-lot housing types with common walls.
- Detached residential dwellings.
- Planned developments that may integrate a mix of detached and attached housing types, with sufficient open space to preserve an overall Suburban character.

Where on Map

 Suburban Residential Attached is shown in multiple locations, most prominently in the Riverwalk area northwest of Downtown and in the SouthPark and Peninsula areas in south Littleton (plus the unique Highline Crossing cohousing community), along with several small areas north and south of Littleton Boulevard and an area of attached housing within Trailmark.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY

This designation is also a subset of Suburban Residential above, for areas and properties where multi-family residential development achieves – and blends in with – a Suburban character. Some such developments may strive for this character outcome on their own or due to the terrain and pre-existing vegetation in the vicinity and on-site. To ensure this outcome for multi-family residential uses, development standards and associated buffering requirements should be set appropriately within the context of nearby residential and/or nonresidential uses that also reflect Suburban character.



Suburban Residential character of multi-family housing north of Belleview Avenue and along the South Platte River.

Primary Land Use Types

- Multi-unit residential buildings in concentrated development, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums).
- Other attached residential forms (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, patio homes, etc.) as permitted in zoning districts intended primarily for multi-family residential uses.
- Planned developments that may integrate a mix of detached, attached and multi-family housing types, with sufficient open space to preserve an overall Suburban character.

Where on Map

• Suburban Residential Multi-Family is shown in multiple locations including scattered within the widespread Suburban Residential areas south of Littleton Boulevard to Mineral, in the vicinities of Federal and Lowell boulevards west of Downtown, at the north end of the city adjacent to the South Platte River, and adjacent to Aspen Grove.

AUTO-ORIENTED RESIDENTIAL

This designation covers areas of single-family detached residential use where accommodation of the automobile is more visually dominant relative to more prominent green space in Suburban Residential character areas, typically due to relatively smaller and narrower lots, and often with limited open space set-asides or amenities for residents.



Auto-Oriented Residential character area north of Mineral Avenue.

Primary Land Use Types

• Detached residential dwellings.

Characteristics

- Residential neighborhoods with less openness and separation between dwellings compared to Suburban Residential areas.
- Auto Urban character, especially where driveways and front-loading garages dominate the front yards and front facades of homes. This can be offset by landscaping, "anti-monotony" architectural standards, and limitations on "cookie cutter" subdivision layouts characterized by straight streets and uniform lot sizes and arrangement.

Where on Map

 Auto-Oriented Residential is shown in two locations, the neighborhood around Windermere Circle in south Littleton, and the Kensington Ridge neighborhood at the southeast corner of the city.



AUTO-ORIENTED RESIDENTIAL ATTACHED

This designation is a subset of Auto-Oriented Residential above, for areas and properties with this character that offer various forms of attached housing (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, attached patio homes, etc.). This designation sometimes provides a transition between residential areas entirely comprised of single-family detached dwellings and properties with larger-scale multi-family residential development.

Primary Land Use Types

- Duplexes (two-family dwellings).
- Townhomes.
- Patio homes or other small-lot housing types with common walls.
- Detached residential dwellings.
- Planned developments that may integrate a mix of detached and attached housing types, but with insufficient green and open space to achieve an overall Suburban character.

Where on Map

• Auto-Oriented Residential Attached is shown in just one location, the Jamison Villas development just west of Broadway on Jamison Avenue.

[No aerial image available as the only example in Littleton, along Jamison Avenue just west of Broadway, was under construction at the time of this Plan.]

AUTO-ORIENTED RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY

This designation is also a subset of Auto-Oriented Residential. Areas and properties with this character are devoted primarily to structures with multiple residential units, at a greater intensity (i.e., units per building or acre) than typically found in developments with other attached residential housing types. The auto-oriented character is usually due to the extent of off-street parking needed. The auto-oriented appearance can be softened by perimeter and on-site landscaping, minimum spacing between buildings, site coverage limits, and on-site recreation or open space criteria. This designation can also provide a transition from primarily residential to mainly nonresidential areas. Multi-family uses designed primarily for senior residents are especially appropriate near medical facilities, parks, public services, shopping, and transit stops.



Auto-Oriented Residential character of multi-family housing along Belleview Avenue.

Primary Land Use Types

- Multi-unit residential buildings in concentrated development, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums).
- Other attached residential forms (e.g., duplexes, townhomes, patio homes, etc.) as permitted in zoning districts intended primarily for multi-family residential uses.
- Planned developments that may integrate a mix of detached, attached and multi-family housing types, but with insufficient green and open space to achieve an overall Suburban character.

Where on Map

• Auto-Oriented Residential Multi-Family is shown in multiple locations including along County Line Road just east of Santa Fe Drive, at the west end of the city near Mineral Avenue, and at the north end along Belleview Avenue near Progress Park.

RESIDENTIAL MIX

This designation encompasses areas of north Littleton near Littleton Boulevard and Broadway. Northeast Littleton has long had a mix of housing types in close proximity, from single-family detached to duplexes, other attached housing types, and multi-family apartment buildings. To live up to its core value of remaining an inclusive community, Littleton needs more areas with varied attainable housing for people at or below the median income range. Maintaining this area with residential variety meshes well with a revitalized and more walkable Littleton Boulevard corridor, and with the potential for future mixed-use redevelopment and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on the Broadway corridor.



Residential Mix area of varied housing types and character in northeast Littleton, in the vicinity of Berry Avenue.

Primary Land Use Types

- Detached residential dwellings.
- Duplexes (two-family dwellings).
- Townhomes.
- Patio homes or other small-lot housing types with common walls.
- Multi-unit residential buildings in concentrated development, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums).
- Planned developments that may integrate a mix of detached, attached and multi-family housing types.

Characteristics

• As with the diversity of housing types, character also varies across the area and may tend toward Auto Urban character where surface parking is especially needed (i.e., multi-family housing).

Where on Map

• Residential Mix is shown primarily north of Littleton Boulevard, plus a few pockets to the south.

MIXED CHARACTER CORE NEIGHBORHOOD

This designation is for residential areas relatively close to Downtown and Littleton Boulevard that, of all areas in Littleton, are the most conducive for pedestrian, bicycle, and wheelchair circulation within the neighborhood and to nearby shopping, parks, schools, and other destinations. Most of these blocks also have rear alley access to properties, at least decreasing the possibility of an Auto Urban street scene where rear garages or parking are still widely used versus front driveways. These are also some of Littleton's oldest neighborhoods, including the locally designated Louthan Heights Historic District.



Mixed Character Core Neighborhood area just north of Littleton Boulevard, east of Downtown.

Primary Land Use Types

- Detached residential dwellings.
- Other attached residential forms as permitted by zoning.

Characteristics

• A more Urban residential character prevails where lots with relatively shallow front yards bring single-family detached homes closer to the street, and especially where no front driveways or garages are visible due to property access from rear alleys. However, a transition toward Auto Urban character can occur on blocks where front driveways are introduced over time, especially on lots where new homes are built after removal of older dwellings.

Where on Map

• Mixed Character Core Neighborhood is shown for various residential areas north and south of Littleton Boulevard, to the east of Downtown and the railroad corridor.

SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL

This designation involves commercial developments, whether at a neighborhood-focused or larger scale, that stand apart from most auto-oriented contemporary development. The Suburban character is achieved through lesser coverage of the site with buildings and especially paved areas. Preservation of trees or other natural site features, along with generous landscaping, can also move a site into the Suburban range of the community character spectrum relative to sites where "gray" spaces predominate over "green" and open spaces.



Primary Land Use Types

Nursery business use with Suburban Commercial character adjacent to a Suburban Residential area along East County Line Road in south Littleton.

Paving

Buildings

Open Space

- Commercial retail and service uses, at varying scales and development intensities depending on the site.
- Office (involving large and/or multi-story buildings or small-scale office uses depending on the site), which may involve a
 medical or technology/research focus.
- Planned development to accommodate custom site designs or mixing of uses in a Suburban character setting.

Characteristics

- Suburban character primarily from reduced site coverage relative to most autooriented commercial development.
- Encouraged at key community entries and along high-profile roadway corridors, may also involve other criteria to yield less intensive and more attractive development outcomes relative to auto-oriented areas, including higher standards for landscaping (along street frontages and within parking areas), signs, and building design.
- May exclude some auto-oriented uses that cannot achieve a Suburban character (e.g., car washes).
- Near residential properties and areas, the permitted scale and intensity of nonresidential uses should be limited to ensure compatibility (including adequate buffering/screening, criteria for placement and orientation of buildings and parking areas, height limits, and residentialin-appearance architectural standards).
- More opportunity for natural and/or swale drainage (and storm water retention/absorption) versus concentrated storm water conveyance in auto-oriented areas.

Where on Map

• Suburban Commercial is shown in multiple areas, most prominently near Lowell and Federal boulevards in northwest Littleton, a few western locations along South Platte Canyon Road, along Mineral Avenue and Broadway in southeast Littleton, in the hotel and commercial area along County Line Road near Santa Fe Drive, and several properties in Trailmark along or near Wadsworth Boulevard.

SUBURBAN BUSINESS PARK

This designation is often a subset of Suburban Commercial in communities that aim to promote high-quality office development as an economic development magnet or as part of overall efforts to set a high bar for nonresidential development. Some cities also aim for master-planned, campus-style office developments through a Business Park zoning district.



Section of SouthPark business park in south Littleton, with office uses and parking areas nestled amid generous landscaping and buffers, and with the High Line Canal Trail adding to the Suburban character.

Primary Land Use Types

- Primarily office uses.
- Light industrial uses (including warehousing/distribution), well screened and in buildings with enhanced architectural design.
- Research and technology.
- Commercial retail and service uses secondary to the primary office focus, to serve local workers and visitors.

Characteristics

- Suburban character, typically in a campus-style setting featuring reduced site coverage and increased open space, together with enhanced building design.
- Typically a minimum open space ratio of 30 percent, which allows for a sizable cumulative building footprint since most such developments involve large sites.
- Extensive landscaping of the business park perimeter, and special streetscaping and design treatments at entries, key intersections, and internal focal points.
- Development outcomes often controlled by private covenants and restrictions that exceed City ordinances and development standards.
- Intended to create a highly attractive business investment environment.

Where on Map

 Suburban Business Park is shown for the extensive SouthPark business park area in south Littleton, along with the Southpark Circle area just east of Santa Fe Drive.

AUTO-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL

This designation is for properties in commercial retail, office and service uses, primarily along portions of major roadway corridors within the community for high visibility and accessibility, but also in other locations to accommodate smaller-scale and neighborhood-focused businesses.



Auto-Oriented Commercial character area along Broadway near Mineral Drive (looking west) in southeast Littleton.

Primary Land Use Types

- "Strip" commercial centers along major roadways, with a range of uses including those on high-profile "pad" sites along the roadway frontage.
- "Big-box" commercial stores (e.g., grocery, appliances, clothing, etc.).
- Restaurant chains including various "fast food" and casual dining establishments.
- Automobile service related enterprises (e.g., gas stations, automobile service/repair, car washes).
- Offices.
- Hotels and motels.
- Mixed-use developments.

Characteristics

- Commercial areas with significant portions of development sites devoted to vehicular access drives, circulation routes, surface parking, and loading/delivery areas, making pavement the most prominent visual feature. This can be offset by reduced site coverage and enhanced landscaping, building design, and well-designed signage.
- Buildings typically set back toward rear of site to accommodate expansive parking areas in front, closest to passing traffic, resulting in less emphasis on architectural design in many cases.
- Development desire to maximize signage (number, size) to capitalize on site visibility to passing traffic.
- Often not conducive for access or on-site circulation by pedestrians or cyclists.



Where on Map

 Auto-Oriented Commercial is shown primarily at the north end of the city centered around Belleview Avenue and the railroad corridor, also along Broadway in southeast Littleton, plus several auto dealership properties near County Line Road.

CORRIDOR MIXED USE

This designation is for properties in commercial retail, office and service uses along and near a high-profile roadway corridor where mixed-use development outcomes are desired and encouraged. The mix of uses includes residential, especially to provide additional housing options within the community. Major public and/or institutional facilities may also serve as development anchors within the area.

Not all properties within this designation will be viable for or result in mixed-use outcomes given their size, location and/or market position. Therefore, a range of typical stand-alone uses is anticipated as in the Suburban Commercial and Auto-Oriented Commercial designations that are also shown along portions of Littleton's major roadway network. Relative to these other designations, however, Corridor Mixed Use is particularly intended to recognize fundamental paradigm shifts occurring in the development models for residential, retail, office and hospitality uses, leading to even greater focus on "destination" developments that creatively mix uses, integrate amenities and emphasize quality design. Whatever the approach for a particular property in Corridor Mixed Use, the design of the site and its use(s) should match the character of adjacent properties or provide adequate protections and buffering for character transitions.



Segment of Littleton Boulevard, east of Windemere Street, with existing use variety and the potential for better integrated, more pedestrian- and bike-oriented mixed-use outcomes through redevelopment.

Primary Land Use Types

- Commercial retail and service uses, at varying scales and development intensities depending on the site and adjacent uses.
- Offices (involving large and/or multi-story buildings or small-scale office uses depending on the site and adjacent uses).
- Live/work units.
- Multi-unit attached residential, whether for rent (apartments) or ownership (condominiums, townhomes, row houses, etc.), and whether permitted by zoning as a stand-alone use or only as a component of mixed-use development.
- Planned development to accommodate custom site designs and/or mixing of uses.

Characteristics

As elaborated on further in the Special Areas and Design section (where the Special Corridor Planning Areas on the map are also discussed), the nature of Corridor Mixed Use will vary across the different roadway environments where it appears on the Future Land Use and Character Map. Along Littleton Boulevard, an atmosphere more amenable to walking and biking may emerge through ongoing redevelopment and transition in uses. Such evolution would be more toward the Urban end of the character spectrum, but the potential scale of new or reconfigured uses would be tempered by the relatively smaller, shallower properties along this corridor. Additionally, Littleton Boulevard is framed by residential neighborhoods and also requires sensitivity to its unique collection of post-World War II commercial buildings designed in a Modernist style. Along Santa Fe Drive, Broadway and Belleview Avenue, various sites are of adequate size to be
conducive for master-planned, mixed-use development that also strives for a relatively Urban character by de-emphasizing large-scale surface parking and designing more for walkability. The core area of Littleton Village is a contemporary example of this approach.

However, in any of these corridor settings where most business patrons, employees, and visitors will still reach their destinations by private vehicle, it will be difficult to avoid an Auto Urban character outcome where significant surface parking must be provided. The potential for future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on Broadway, linking south into Highlands Ranch and north into Denver, could change the equation and lead to less auto-oriented development at least in some locations along and near this corridor. Yet some stretches of Broadway today have existing low-intensity commercial activity fronting on this busy roadway. These small and shallow properties will continue to be a challenge to redevelopment and may result in the current uses continuing indefinitely.

Where a site's immediate vicinity has a greener Suburban character – for example, near Suburban Residential neighborhoods or abutting Mary Carter Greenway and the river corridor – site design and development criteria can minimize auto-oriented development outcomes (e.g., site coverage limits, more intensive landscaping and buffering, etc.). Littleton especially has opportunities for more river- and trail-oriented development, where new or redeveloped sites are carefully designed to embrace rather than turn their back on the South Platte and greenway corridors, particularly if the future of Santa Fe Drive is even greater restriction of direct vehicular access to properties from that busy roadway.

Finally, consensus on potential land uses and intensities in the vicinity of the Santa Fe/Mineral Avenue intersection has been so elusive precisely because so many character considerations come into play at this premier location. Extensive undeveloped land and surface parking near a busy light rail station offers obvious opportunity for transit-oriented development with a more Urban character. Yet proximity to the river/greenway corridor typically points to site designs with Suburban character in mind. At the same time, Santa Fe's vehicular volumes and the high-profile nature of this busiest of Littleton intersections introduces auto-oriented development pressures. The Corridor Mixed Use designation provides the flexibility to weigh all of these character factors when designing and vetting specific development concepts in such a unique location.

Where on Map

• Corridor Mixed Use is shown along portions of multiple key roadway corridors in Littleton including along Belleview Avenue west of the railroad, along Littleton Boulevard, along Broadway as far south as Littleton Village, and along Santa Fe Drive from Hudson Gardens south, and an area between Santa Fe and the railroad north of Downtown.

URBAN DOWNTOWN TRANSITION

This designation is for areas near an Urban downtown core that still accommodate a mix of uses but at a lesser intensity than in the core area. The mixed-use area typically provides a transition from the downtown core to other nearby neighborhoods and roadway corridors that are more uniform as areas primarily for single-family detached residential uses and commercial uses, respectively. The transition area is often supportive of the downtown core by accommodating complementary uses (e.g., professional offices, restaurants, art galleries and other cultural venues, varied residential options, etc.) and by retaining a walkability exemplified in Urban character areas more often than auto-oriented areas. The vicinity around a core downtown usually also contains some of the community's most historic sites and districts, with historic homes still in residential use and others converted to shops, cafes, offices and other uses.

Primary Land Use Types

- Mixed uses, on single sites and within individual structures.
- Commercial retail and services.
- Offices.
- Live/work units.
- Attached residential types (e.g., townhomes, brownstones).
- Detached residential, often on relatively small and/or narrow lots in older neighborhood settings.

Characteristics

• Where a more Urban and walkable character is desired, may require development and design standards to avoid encroachment of uses designed with an auto-oriented character more suited to other areas of the community. While relatively small areas of parking may be permitted



Urban Downtown Transition area encompassing several blocks along Littleton Boulevard (looking west toward Downtown from Crocker Street).

in front and to the side of buildings, the intent is usually to limit any sizable surface parking areas along property frontages while also avoiding deep building setbacks.

 Often a focus area for infill and redevelopment activity within the community, which may require customized development and design standards to ensure compatibility with the established area character. This may include controlling the scale of development where larger sites have been created through assembly of smaller parcels.

Where on Map

 Urban Downtown Transition is shown in all directions around the fringes of Downtown including on the west side of Santa Fe Drive from Hudson Gardens north to Bowles Avenue, the neighborhood on the north side of Downtown (including Littleton Center), several blocks east of the railroad along Littleton Boulevard (including the historic Courthouse, Buck Recreation Center and Vita development), and the Arapahoe Community College campus south of downtown.

URBAN DOWNTOWN MIXED USE

This designation involves the most intensively developed area of a community in terms of the greatest coverage of sites with building footprints and the least amount of private development area devoted to off-street surface parking and landscaped open space. Instead, most parking is accommodated on-street and/or within public parking areas or structures. This enables most streets and other public spaces to be framed by buildings with zero or minimal front setbacks, creating "architectural enclosure" versus the progressively more open feel in other character areas (Auto Urban, Suburban, etc.). These elements, along with a predominance of mixed uses, make the Urban downtown area the most conducive for pedestrian activity and interaction. Public plazas and pocket parks provide green space amid the Urban environment and a place to gather and host community events, along with periodic street closures. Adding to the appeal of Downtown Littleton are two historic district designations (national and local) and numerous designated sites, including Town Hall and the recently designated Post Office on the National Register of Historic Places.



Primarily Urban character in Downtown Littleton (looking southwest), along with pockets of surface parking.

Primary Land Use Types

- Mixed uses, on single sites and within individual buildings.
- Residential space above commercial or office uses.
- Detached residential dwellings on relatively small lots.
- Attached residential types (e.g., townhomes, brownstones, apartments, condos, etc.).
- Live/work units.
- · Commercial retail and services.
- Offices.
- Entertainment (e.g., restaurants, pubs, live music venues, theater, cinema, etc.).
- Parking structures and limited public or commercial surface parking areas.

Characteristics

- Multi-story structures encouraged (or required) to bolster Urban character, encourage vertical mixed use, promote retail viability, support transit ridership, etc.
- Mostly on-street parking and minimal off-street surface parking (until transition areas around the downtown core give way to auto-oriented site design).
- Streetscape enhancements in public ways given limited area for private on-site landscaping relative to other character areas.
- May exclude some auto-oriented uses that cannot achieve an Urban character (e.g., gas stations, auto repair, drive-in and drive-through uses, etc.).
- Public/institutional uses designed to match the Urban character.
- Alleys and rear-access garages can reinforce Urban character on blocks with attached or detached residential dwellings.
- Often the only place in a community where multi-level parking structures may make sense and be financially viable.

Where on Map

• Urban Downtown Mixed Use encompasses the main area of Downtown Littleton, between Santa Fe Drive and the railroad, and from Church Avenue on the south to the vicinities of Powers and Berry avenues on the north.



URBAN DOWNTOWN MAIN STREET

This designation is a subset of Urban Downtown Mixed Use above, focused on the Main Street core area of Downtown. Nearly all buildings have zero front setbacks and abut the public sidewalk, multi-story buildings frame the street on most blocks, and the walkable street scene is "activated" by varied retail storefronts, restaurants and pubs, cultural venues (e.g., Town Hall Arts Center), historic architecture and properties, coffee and confections, open-air sidewalk seating areas for dining, and streetscape and design treatments in the public realm.

Primary Land Use Types

Same use range as Urban Downtown Mixed Use above, but with a principal commercial focus and residential uses more likely to occur on upper floors of mixed-used buildings rather than as stand-alone uses.

Where on Map

• Urban Downtown Main Street is shown primarily for the frontage properties along Main Street, from Santa Fe Drive to the Sycamore Street and Bega Park vicinity.



Urban Downtown Main Street area (looking east).

LAND USE QUANTITIES ON MAP

Tallied in **Table 1**, *Future Land Use and Character Allocation*, are the estimated acres within each designation shown on the Future Land Use and Character Map. In more general terms, the map reflects this approximate use split:

- Residential: 45.8%
- Commercial: 11.0%
- Mixed Use: 12.7%
- Park / Open Space / Private Recreation: 30.5%

Then, in terms of major character classes, the split is:

- Estate: 4.7%
- Suburban: 63.5%
- Auto Oriented: 9.3%
- Urban: 3.2%
- Mixed Character: 19.3%

CATEGORY	ACRES	SHARE OF TOTAL
ESTATE RESIDENTIAL	247.0	3.4%
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL	2,474.5	33.7%
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL ATTACHED	158.7	2.2%
SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY	151.3	2.1%
AUTO-ORIENTED RESIDENTIAL	22.2	0.3%
AUTO-ORIENTED RESIDENTIAL ATTACHED	3.0	0.0%
AUTO-ORIENTED RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY	61.0	0.8%
RESIDENTIAL MIX	120.7	1.6%
MIXED CHARACTER CORE NEIGHBORHOOD	121.1	1.6%
SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL	232.9	3.2%
SUBURBAN BUSINESS PARK	298.3	4.1%
AUTO-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL	276.5	3.8%
CORRIDOR MIXED USE	767.0	10.4%
URBAN DOWNTOWN TRANSITION	110.9	1.5%
URBAN DOWNTOWN MIXED USE	46.9	0.6%
URBAN DOWNTOWN MAIN STREET	9.2	0.1%
PARK	1,527.1	20.8%
OPEN SPACE	684.1	9.3%
PRIVATE RECREATION	28.0	0.4%
TOTAL	7,340.4	100%

TABLE 1: Future Land Use and Character Allocation

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- Citywide Plan, 2014
- Three Mile Plan, 2015

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Housing needs (options, cost relative to buyer/renter financial capacity, at different life-cycle stages, age of housing stock and needed upgrades).
- Ongoing parks/trails/open space stewardship.
- Land, water and air quality implications of land use and development choices.
- Transportation network overloads from a largely vehicle-dependent land use pattern.
- Importance of a quality school system to Littleton's success as a community.
- · Long-term fiscal outlook for Littleton City government and its link to land use.
- How ongoing change in Littleton may affect the character of neighborhoods, commercial areas, Downtown, high-profile corridors, and parks and open space areas, especially as it relates to a desire to maintain Littleton's "small town" feel.
- · Prospects for Littleton's few remaining areas of undeveloped land, and areas prime for redevelopment.
- Littleton's image and beautification needs, and concern for loss of mountain views.
- · Residents' interest in, and the need to promote, healthy lifestyles.
- Littleton's heritage focus and the need to protect historical and cultural assets.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- **GOAL L&C 1:** A land use allocation and pattern that supports and promotes Littleton's pride in, and reputation for, quality neighborhoods and an abundance of parks and preserved open space.
- **GOAL L&C 2:** A sustained focus on the long-term fiscal sustainability of Littleton City government while recognizing the direct connection to the community's land use mix, especially for sales tax revenue needs.
- **GOAL L&C 3:** Ongoing and effective collaboration between land use and transportation planning and implementation to ensure compatibility among decisions and actions taken with respect to each.
- **GOAL L&C 4:** A more attractive community, based on quality design and character of both private development and the public realm.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy L&C 1: Emphasize compatible intensities and character when evaluating applications involving more intensive and/or nonresidential development near homes and neighborhoods.

Policy L&C 2: Plan for and take actions to ensure the ongoing integrity of its residential neighborhoods, from the oldest established to the newly developed.

Policy L&C 3: During development and building permit review processes, focus on the land use context around school campuses to promote a safe and conducive environment for learning and other on-campus activities.

Policy L&C 4: Create a regulatory framework for residential development that minimizes obstacles to developing diverse and attainable housing options in Littleton in terms of type, size, and cost to buyers and renters.

Policy L&C 5: Create a regulatory framework for nonresidential development that signals the City's interest in attracting target business sectors, needed and compatible revenue-generating uses, and lifestyle and leisure uses that support Littleton's livability and residents' quality of life.

Policy L&C 6: Manage land use patterns near Littleton's many parks, trails, greenways, and open spaces to: protect their ecological functions; prevent physical and other impactful encroachments; maintain public access; and preserve their overall quality and value – especially where public green spaces contribute to neighborhood character and enhance business park and other commercial settings.

Policy L&C 7: Recognize and promote land use and development decisions that further community objectives for reduced traffic congestion, enhanced walkability and biking opportunities, and expanded and viable public transit options.

Policy L&C 8: Promote the aesthetic appeal and beautification of the community through the quality expectations set within the City's Code.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

Action L&C 1: Add criteria to the City's capital improvements planning process to ensure that potential interaction between public investments and land use outcomes or evolution is considered when identifying and prioritizing candidate capital projects.

Action L&C 2: Explore opportunities to link the design and construction of specific capital projects to community beautification objectives.

Programs and Initiatives

Action L&C 3: Maintain fiscal impact analysis tools, customized to Littleton, for evaluating the potential net benefits to City government of specific land use scenarios and as an essential input to related decision-making.

Regulations and Standards

Action L&C 4: Complete an all-encompassing and thorough review and update of the City's zoning and related development regulations and standards, particularly to consider ways to address key issues and gaps illuminated by Plan discussions.

Action L&C 5: As part of the City's zoning and code update initiative:

- Add new or amend current provisions that are directly linked to actions in other plan sections related to housing attainability, neighborhood conservation, business retention and attraction, leisure and lifestyle related land uses, transit support, a more pedestrian- and cycling-friendly community, and park and open space protection and considering incentive-based techniques for guiding development applicants toward desired outcomes.
- Pursue a character-based zoning approach, which factors into the stated purposes and design of zoning districts along with various specific regulating elements (e.g., residential densities and nonresidential intensities; minimum lot and site areas; building setback, placement and orientation on sites and associated front/side/rear yard depths; building heights, including in relation to adjacent buildings and uses; lot and site coverage by buildings and other physical improvements; off-street parking quantities, design and screening; etc.).
- Incorporate more effective provisions for buffering between differing character types and land use intensities, and integrate such provisions with overall landscaping, screening and site design standards.
- Consider alternative methods and provisions for promoting and achieving creative land development and redevelopment approaches other than through the traditional "Planned Development" mechanism, which can be excessively time-consuming, costly and unpredictable for the City, development applicants, and neighbors and interested residents.
- Incorporate new or refreshed ways for addressing context-sensitive site planning and subdivision layout, quality site
 and building design, and community aesthetics during development review processes.

Partnerships and Coordination

Action L&C 6: Maintain Littleton's leadership and active participation in regional growth and land use planning, through the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and other public/private forums, given the implications for all other aspects of this Plan and the Transportation Master Plan.

Action L&C 7: Continue close coordination with Littleton Public Schools as one of the City's essential partners for community building and maintaining neighborhood integrity.

More Targeted Planning / Study

Action L&C 8: As was done through Envision Littleton, continue to coordinate updates of the Comprehensive and Transportation Master plans to ensure ongoing integration of land use and transportation analysis and decision-making.

Action L&C 9: Continue to pursue neighborhood planning within the framework of the City's new Plan.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners for implementation of plan priorities related to Land Use and Community Character include:

- Neighboring jurisdictions and Arapahoe, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties
- S Area real estate and development community
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Nigh Line Canal Conservancy
- Regional Transportation District
- South Metro Housing Options
- SouthPark Owners Association
- South Platte Working Group
- South Suburban Parks and Recreation District
- S Tri-County Health Department

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Housing needs, gaps, and challenges in Littleton are central to this Plan. A key component of a city's livability is whether its residents can find suitable and affordable housing options at all stages of life to remain in the community they love. Littleton also must offer quality and sustainable neighborhoods, the elements of which – safe streets, great schools, nearby shopping, and parks and trails, among others – cut across all parts of this Plan.

While the development of new residences and the rehabilitation of older housing occurs primarily through the private sector, municipal government and other public and non-profit partners have essential roles to play. The City and other partners protect residential investments over time, and strong neighborhoods support the local economy and tax base. Having a diverse stock of housing – new and old, big and small, ownership and rental – is crucial for offering choice and providing for the individual needs of all households, regardless of economic conditions.

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- City of Littleton Neighborhood and Corridor Plans, 2016
- Downtown Neighborhood Plan, 2011
- Littleton Housing Overview, 2013
- City of Littleton Housing Study, 2017
- South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) Annual Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan, 2017

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Affordability challenges for existing and potential new residents with rising home values and rents relative to income within Littleton and across the Denver region.
- Difficulty of aging in place due to the cost of staying in an existing residence, dispersed support systems, or inability to find other available, affordable housing options to transition into within Littleton, especially for those with assisted living or special care needs.
- Age of housing stock and opportunities for its revitalization, but also challenges for those who cannot afford to maintain or upgrade their homes.
- Concerns over residential density and effects on area character as neighborhoods evolve with new or more intensive housing forms.
- Concern for a potential loss of demographic diversity (by age, race/ethnicity, income level, etc.) driven by unattainable housing choices and/or neighborhood gentrification in Littleton.
- Needed and viable options to reduce homelessness in Littleton and surrounding communities.
- Need for ongoing code compliance in older areas of Littleton.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- **GOAL H&N 1:** A quantity and diversity of housing options that makes living in Littleton attainable for a wide range of age groups and income levels.
- **GOAL H&N 2:** Appealing and affordable housing choices for young families wishing to access Littleton's reputable public school system.
- GOAL H&N 3: Neighborhoods that are safe and comfortable for both new and long-term residents.
- **GOAL H&N 4:** Neighborhoods that maintain their character and integrity even as residents come and go over time and as owners reinvest in and upgrade their properties.

GOAL H&N 5: Housing that supports choice in mobility and investments in transportation infrastructure.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy H&N 1: Encourage an array of residential options within the city, through both new development and redevelopment, to respond to the need for varied housing types, sizes, and price points that are attainable for prospective owners and renters at all levels of income.

Policy H&N 2: In cooperation with public and private partners, consider the entire spectrum of tools for assisting people in attaining their ownership or rental goals, and methods for spurring and guiding the supply side of the market to pursue projects that will address local needs.

Policy H&N 3: Ensure that local development regulations and standards, and related permitting processes, do not unreasonably limit desired and compatible housing construction and renovation within the city.

Policy H&N 4: Be receptive to mixed-use development proposals that include a residential component, especially where this will support retail viability and transit ridership, place residents near education and local employment options, and provide affordable living options for seniors close to transit, parks, and shopping, medical, and other services.

Policy H&N 5: Support development of more assisted living and higher-level care facilities and other affordable residential options intended specifically for those hoping to age in place rather than leave Littleton during life transitions.

Policy H&N 6: Consider ways to extend the viable continuation of Littleton's two existing mobile/manufactured home parks along Santa Fe Drive (Wolhurst near County Line Road and Meadowood Village near Brewery Lane) as they provide a valuable and needed housing option.

Policy H&N 7: Adopt and apply development regulations and standards to ensure that new and redeveloped residential properties are consistent with the character of their surrounding area.

Policy H&N 8: Support the quality and integrity of City neighborhoods by using public investments in streets, infrastructure, parks and trails, pedestrian/bicycle safety measures, regular maintenance practices, and effective code compliance.

Policy H&N 9: Ensure that residential developments near parks, trails, and preserved open spaces capitalize on this proximity in terms of access and views, while not overwhelming such resources with excessive or poorly designed access or other detrimental impacts.

Policy H&N 10: Monitor both background market trends and direct actions that could cause people to be "priced out" from areas where they have long lived, to determine whether the City should consider actions to mitigate this effect.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

Action H&N 1: Add criteria to the City's capital improvements planning process to include consideration of neighborhood integrity and enhancement when identifying and prioritizing candidate capital projects.

Programs and Initiatives

Action H&N 2: Convene a Housing Advisory Committee, comprised of residents, real estate and development professionals, and South Metro Housing Options (SMHO) representatives, to focus on the details and logistics of implementing the 2017 Housing Study recommendations, focusing first on the 1-2 year action steps recommended in the study and incorporating the City's anticipated Economic Impact Model in 2020.

Action H&N 3: Continue support of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and examine the potential for leveraging additional financial resources for preservation and development of affordable/mixed-income housing.

Action H&N 4: Maintain an inventory of vacant and/or underutilized residential parcels and assess the potential for specific housing types that further Plan goals and Housing Study recommendations.

Action H&N 5: Examine the potential for acquiring vacant land for future affordable/mixed-income housing, utilizing a land trust model.

Action H&N 6: Explore the potential for developing a rental rehabilitation program to help maintain rental unit affordability and sound physical conditions.

Action H&N 7: In coordination with SMHO, conduct public engagement efforts to improve perceptions of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit developments.

Action H&N 8: Place greater focus on home ownership resources and on advertising home ownership programs with information about available resources and loan programs for first-time home buyers.

Action H&N 9: Continue active code compliance efforts with a focus on measurable results, including producing an annual report on the status of substandard buildings through the Building Board of Appeals.

- Produce educational materials detailing maintenance responsibilities of home owners, and identify resources for those who need assistance in meeting their responsibilities.
- Ensure home owners, tenants and landlords are aware of resources available through various state and federal programs, such as weatherization programs to improve energy efficiency.

Action H&N 10: Pursue opportunities to advance Littleton as a lifelong community, including Age-Friendly certification from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

Regulations and Standards

Action H&N 11: As part of the City's zoning and code update initiative:

- Incorporate a "housing palette" that promotes more diverse housing forms, particularly housing types identified in the 2017 Housing Study as needed in Littleton (e.g., affordable rental units, starter homes, and dwelling types/sizes attractive to seniors and people with disabilities).
- Develop character-based zoning districts and provisions to accommodate more diverse housing forms that are compatible within Suburban Residential character areas.
- Incorporate incentives for affordable housing development.
- Add floodplain areas to the Zoning Map to increase awareness of building restrictions and risk.

Action H&N 12: Seek input from SMHO and real estate/development representatives to ensure that the City's development regulations, standards, and review processes do not unnecessarily or unreasonably hinder affordable housing development.

Partnerships and Coordination

Action H&N 13: Continue active dialogue and coordination with SMHO, particularly as the agency adjusts its housing portfolio within Littleton.

Action H&N 14: Maintain relationships with local and regional real estate/development representatives, and with economic development entities that recognize housing attainability as critical to community success, public school system viability, and the fiscal sustainability of local government.

Action H&N 15: Work with local and regional not-for-profit groups, such as Habitat for Humanity Metro Denver, to increase the supply of affordable housing.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners for implementation of plan priorities related to Housing and Neighborhoods include: Neighboring jurisdictions and Arapahoe,

- Douglas, and Jefferson Counties
- Area real estate and development community
- Scolorado Center for the Blind
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Nabitat for Humanity Metro Denver
- Nigh Line Canal Conservancy
- Littleton Public Schools
- Regional Transportation District
- South Metro Denver Realtors Association
- South Metro Housing Options
- South Platte Working Group
- South Suburban Parks and Recreation District
- Tri-County Health Department

More Targeted Planning / Study

Action H&N 16: Periodically update the 2017 Housing Study, particularly to incorporate newer data on demographic and housing market trends, locally and across the region, and to revisit recommended strategies and their relative priority and timing.

TRANSPORTATION



TRANSPORTATION

Envision Littleton involved concurrent preparation of a new Comprehensive Plan and the City's first-ever Transportation Master Plan (TMP). The two plans were synchronized through joint community and leadership engagement processes involving City Council, Planning Commission, other City boards/commissions, a Project Management Team with City staff and consultant representatives for both plans, and extensive interaction with residents and other stakeholders across the city. During each Envision Littleton phase, inputs to the Comprehensive Plan and the Transportation Master Plan were coordinated to ensure an integrated set of policies and priorities, along with ongoing discussion of the evolving draft Future Land Use and Character map.

As of August 2019, this coordination continues as initial drafts of both plans are released for community review and comment. As the plans are finalized over the next few months, summaries and pertinent information from each plan will be incorporated into the other, as appropriate, to complete the plan integration effort. In the meantime, the policy statements below from the draft TMP are included in this Comprehensive Plan review draft:

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy TMP 1: Focus on developing safe, well-connected, and comfortable networks to serve all travel modes.

Policy TMP 2: Advance regional partnerships to build consensus and leverage funding toward significant transportation projects.

Policy TMP 3: Provide automobile Level of Service E or better on all streets.

Policy TMP 4: Prioritize transportation projects that lead to operations and safety improvements.

Policy TMP 5: Prioritize pedestrians throughout the city.

Policy TMP 6: Prioritize the safety of vulnerable user groups on streets and trails.

Policy TMP 7: Support connections to employment, retail, and entertainment/recreation opportunities via transit.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Littleton must prepare for, and have the capacity to meet, the service demands of current residents plus future new development and redevelopment. As with other mature cities, Littleton has a full slate of aging infrastructure and public facility needs to address. Infrastructure and services are essential to secure investor interest and assurance to undertake private projects in Littleton. Likewise, the City depends on an adequate tax base from business activity and private property improvements to fund essential capital projects and ongoing maintenance.

Capital investments in public infrastructure such as utilities and streets can signal desired locations for growth, help maintain a high quality of life for residents, and create a framework for desired land development and revitalization. Meanwhile, local development regulations govern subdivision and re-platting activity, provide for the appropriate use of land through zoning, and set minimum standards for the nature and quality of development. The City can employ financing and special district mechanisms that advance the community's economic development and growth management objectives while supporting beneficial private development and reinvestment. Finally, effective oversight and management of ongoing growth and revitalization depends on solid partnerships with other key public agencies, including County government, Littleton Public Schools, South Platte Water Renewal Partners, and South Metro Fire Rescue, among others.

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- Arapahoe County, CO Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan 2015-2022
- Various Floodplain Hazard Area Delineation Studies (Mile High Flood District, formerly known as Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, and City of Littleton), various years.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Studies and Flood Insurance Maps, various dates
- Collections Division Tactical Action Plan (Brown and Caldwell), 2016

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Capacity of City government to maintain levels of service and support needed for economic development and revitalization.
- Financial implications for the City given its streets, utility infrastructure, and City-owned public facilities that are in need of repair and ongoing maintenance.
- Water pressure in older areas of the city.
- Extent of existing homes and businesses located within floodplains (as many areas of Littleton were developed prior to federal floodplain mapping), which can complicate redevelopment and building upgrades.
- Ensuring effective partnerships with other entities that provide public services essential to Littleton's livability and resident satisfaction (e.g., schools, parks/trails, fire, etc.).
- Crime trends and adequate levels of community policing.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- **GOAL I&S 1:** Well-maintained water, wastewater, and storm drainage infrastructure that serves the needs of Littleton residents and businesses while minimizing adverse impacts on the environment.
- **GOAL I&S 2:** Consistent budget and community support of a well-staffed, trained, and equipped police force to ensure a safe and secure city.
- **GOAL I&S 3:** A continuing commitment to periodic assessment, and ongoing maintenance, of public facilities that are essential to Littleton's livability and accommodation of visitors.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy I&S 1: Commit to a robust program of capital improvements year to year, as its financial means allow, while avoiding a deferred maintenance approach when resources are limited.

• Avoid unmet needs accumulating and becoming more costly.

Policy I&S 2: Remain an active and reliable partner in interlocal and interagency approaches to oversight and operation of essential infrastructure, and public facilities and services, including with South Platte Water Renewal Partners, Denver Water, and South Metro Fire Rescue, among others.

Policy I&S 3: Link capital improvements planning and project prioritization to the City's economic development agenda and tax base needs, especially where public infrastructure investments will leverage complementary private investment in support of this Plan and other adopted City plans.

Policy I&S 4: Be a prepared and resilient community.

- Ensure that City infrastructure, City-owned buildings, and public safety services can withstand and recover quickly from the effects of severe weather and natural hazards.
- Ensure that growth and development are managed to reduce risk and recover from natural disasters.

Policy I&S 5: Pursue multi-objective drainage design solutions, where appropriate, that integrate open space, recreational, and aesthetic considerations while maintaining public safety.

Policy I&S 6: Be a leader among Colorado cities in managing and maintaining public infrastructure and facilities, and in learning about and adopting best practices, green infrastructure, and new technologies.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

Action I&S 1: Continue ongoing infrastructure maintenance, rehabilitation efforts, and upgrades through the City's capital projects planning and budgeting process.

Action I&S 2: Utilize the results of recent asset management planning efforts and the Impact Fee Update study to refine facility maintenance and improvement priorities, determine funding needs, and identify potential sources of funding.

Programs and Initiatives

Action I&S 3: Continue adequate funding to maintain high-quality police services in line with continued population growth and development and other indicators of policing coverage, response time, and service level.

Action I&S 4: Continue the City's participation in the Community Rating System under the National Flood Insurance Program, particularly for the potential benefits for resident and business insurance premium costs.

Action I&S 5: Expand outreach to owners of residential and commercial properties who may not be aware of their property's floodplain mapping status and flooding risk, and of their flood insurance options.

- Raise awareness and provide educational resources on how a property's flood zone classification can limit renovation and improvements to existing structures, and after a damaging storm, could restrict reconstruction of structures deemed substantially damaged or otherwise limit redevelopment in such areas.
- This is especially crucial for some of the city's oldest and currently most affordable neighborhoods (e.g., northeast Littleton), where property improvements and public or private redevelopment efforts could be hindered.

Regulations and Standards

Action I&S 6: As part of the City's zoning and code update initiative, evaluate the potential for integrating any new or adjusted hazard mitigation considerations related to development in floodplains or other hazard areas.

Partnerships and Coordination

Action I&S 7: Develop a collaborative process for emergency responders to review plans, new or updated regulations, and significant development proposals for any impacts to emergency response.

Action I&S 8: Continue partnership with Mile High Flood District (formerly known as Urban Drainage and Flood Control District) to leverage funds for major drainageway improvements and maintenance.

Action I&S 9: Participate in and support High Line Canal Conservancy efforts to convert the canal to storm water infrastructure.

Action I&S 10: Continue to demonstrate municipal leadership in partnerships with South Platte Water Renewal Partners, Denver Water, and South Metro Fire Rescue, among others.

More Targeted Planning / Study

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners for implementation of plan priorities related to Infrastructure and Services include: Neighboring jurisdictions and Arapahoe.

- Douglas, and Jefferson Counties
- Denver Water
- Mile High Flood District (formerly known as Urban Drainage and Flood Control District)
- South Metro Fire Rescue
- South Platte Water Renewal Partners
- Urban Drainage and Flood Control District
 Xcel Energy

Action I&S 11: Continue asset management planning on all components of City infrastructure.

Action I&S 12: Prepare and regularly update master plans for City infrastructure systems, the findings and recommendations of which are an essential input to capital improvements planning and any related grant pursuits to leverage local dollars.

Action I&S 13: Study the storm and sewer fee structure to determine if any changes are needed to support infrastructure investment.

Action I&S 14: Assess potential priority areas for purchasing flood-prone properties as opportunities arise, and the estimated costs to the City for such acquisitions.

Action I&S 15: Continue to participate in updates to the county-level Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans.

Action I&S 16: Create updated master plans for Bemis Library and Littleton Museum collaboratively with the Library Advisory and Museum Boards.

ECONOMY AND TAX BASE

ECONOMY AND TAX BASE

Continued economic opportunity and prosperity in Littleton will bolster the community's tax base to support quality public services and amenities. The City's development strategies and implementation tools must be nimble and flexible enough to respond to a dynamic economic climate at the local, regional, and national levels. Successful economic development also requires a focus on quality of place, capitalizing on Littleton's special character and unique identity to attract and retain businesses and draw visitors to the community.

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- City of Littleton Economic Plan, 2013
- City of Littleton Annual Economic Development Report, 2018

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- The long-term fiscal sustainability of the City of Littleton.
- The tax base implications from conversion of existing commercial properties to residential use.
- Increased cost of living and tax implications for residents, and return on residential and business investments in Littleton.
- Vacant and inadequately maintained retail centers and spaces and the adverse effect on Littleton's image and investor interest.
- Concern about loss of small, independent businesses.
- Challenges to redevelopment in Littleton, especially involving older vacant and underutilized commercial sites.
- Whether Littleton is positioned for and can attract "Class A" (high quality) office development, which is a minimal share of its current land use pattern.
- Desire for additional visitor lodging options.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- **GOAL E&T 1:** A focus on the tax base enhancement needs of Littleton City government to continue meeting the public service expectations of its residents, businesses, and institutions.
- **GOAL E&T 2:** Continued nurturing of key employment sectors and target industries that expand local job opportunities and contribute to better incomes for those who live and/or work in Littleton.
- **GOAL E&T 3:** Revitalized commercial centers and areas that alleviate obsolete conditions and vacant sites and that meet the contemporary shopping and service needs of Littleton residents and visitors.
- GOAL E&T 4: Continued provision of resources and services that help businesses develop and grow.
- **GOAL E&T 5:** A commitment to education at all levels that meets the workforce needs of area businesses and ensures lifelong learning and skills acquisition opportunities for residents and visitors.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy E&T 1: Maintain City official and public awareness of the financial challenges the City faces in meeting the high, and increasingly costly, public service expectations of a largely residential community.

Policy E&T 2: Seek opportunities to enhance the City's tax base and diversify revenue sources in ways that are compatible and consistent with Littleton's unique character while also providing relief from the tax burden residents bear.

Policy E&T 3: Assess the fiscal implications, property by property, when existing nonresidential sites are proposed for residential use.

• Recognize that some properties are no longer viable for commercial use and/or may provide more net benefit to the community by converting to residential development that brings added disposable income to support Littleton's retail sector.

Policy E&T 4: Support and complete planning to better understand Littleton's economic position in the Denver region (as both city and region evolve).

Identify the strengths the City should capitalize on and which liabilities it needs to overcome, which industry sectors
offer the best prospects for attracting new businesses, and what strategies will be most impactful as Littleton
pursues its economic development objectives.

Policy E&T 5: Continue to promote, and work to retain, its existing and distinctive local businesses.

• Remain cognizant of how they can be affected by larger chain and franchise establishments and the changing retail environment.

Policy E&T 6: Consider all tools and strategies for reviving vacant and underutilized commercial properties before they deteriorate while building public consensus for determining which methods Littleton should pursue.

Policy E&T 7: Periodically re-assess the array of economic development tools, techniques, and financing methods available through federal agencies and State of Colorado legislation and programs.

 Determine which tools and techniques are appropriate for Littleton and are supported by City officials and the public.

Policy E&T 8: Monitor and adjust local government processes and activities that hinder desired development and redevelopment.

• Ensure that development proposals are consistent with adopted City policies and regulations and can be accommodated with adequate public infrastructure and services.

Policy E&T 9: Foster a "community of learning" in which quality primary and secondary education, vocational and higher education, and lifelong continuing education are valued and accessible to Littleton residents.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

Action E&T 1: Continue funding for the revitalization incentive grant program.

Programs and Initiatives

Action E&T 2: Continue successful business resource services provided by the Economic Development and Business Services Department including support for entrepreneurs and start-ups.

Action E&T 3: Pursue ways to diversify City revenue sources to decrease reliance on sales tax revenue.

Action E&T 4: Monitor the changing retail environment, and support the revitalization of underperforming retail centers to meet market demands and address City revenue needs.

Action E&T 5: Explore further ways to promote the creative economy and innovation within Littleton.

Action E&T 6: Examine potential adoption of incentives for business investments that would advance community goals expressed in the Plan and other adopted City plans (e.g., tax increment financing, sales tax sharing, permit fee abatement, etc.).

Action E&T 7: Continue to pursue fiber/broadband technology investments and upgrades with public and private partners.

Action E&T 8: Continue to monitor state legislation affecting economic development best practices and tools for Colorado municipalities.

Regulations and Standards

Action E&T 9: As part of the City's zoning and code update initiative, create a new zoning district and associated standards for accommodating mixed-use development.

Partnerships and Coordination

Action E&T 10: Continue active participation in regional economic development organizations to advance Littleton's interests.

Action E&T 11: Continue to foster relationships with and support local economic development organizations including the recently established Littleton Business Chamber.

Action E&T 12: Continue to strengthen and grow partnerships with education and workforce training providers, including Littleton Public Schools, Arapahoe Community College, medical institutions and others.

Action E&T 13: Continue to engage property owners and developers, keeping abreast of their plans and desires for their property.

Action E&T 14: Utilize the City's newly established Next Generation Advisory Committee as a sounding board for economic development priorities and potential strategies amid Littleton's evolving demographic and economic environment.

More Targeted Planning / Study

Action E&T 15: Prepare a full Economic Development Plan, building upon the 2013 Economic Plan, to identify tools and strategies that will attract, retain and grow businesses in Littleton and guide the development of vacant land, infill development and redevelopment, and revitalization of key roadway corridors.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners for implementation of plan priorities related to Economy and Tax Base include: Neighboring jurisdictions and Arapahoe,

- Douglas, and Jefferson Counties
- Arapahoe Community College
- Arapahoe/Douglas WORKS!
- S Aspen Grove
- S Area real estate and development community
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Denver South Economic Development Partnership
- Historic Downtown Littleton Merchants Association
- Littleton Business Chamber
- Littleton Optimists Club
- S Littleton Public Schools
- Littleton Rotary Club
- Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation
- Regional Transportation District
- South Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce
- SouthPark Owners Association

Action E&T 16: Pursue a strategic marketing plan based on identified assets to help attract targeted new businesses to Littleton.

RECREATION, HERITAGE, AND TOURISM

RECREATION, HERITAGE, AND TOURISM

Parks, open space, and recreation facilities are an essential part of a healthy and sustainable community. They offer relaxation and exercise outside of the home, work, and school. Much like streets, utilities, and police and fire protection, parks, greenways, and trails are integral parts of municipalities – and often among the public services most valued by residents. With its unique history and architectural heritage, appreciation for the arts, abundant green and open spaces, and many community events year-round, Littleton offers an array of amenities that appeal to residents and visitors. All aspects of the Plan shape the livability of Littleton, but this section especially reinforces the quality of life its residents enjoy.

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- City of Littleton Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, 2016
- South Platte Park Management Plan, 2017
- South Platte River Corridor Vision, Arapahoe County, 2013
- South Suburban Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2017
- High Line Canal Vision Plan, 2017
- High Line Canal Framework Plan, 2019

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Threats to Littleton's historic legacy and architectural heritage, whether due to economic development pressure or the extent to which Littleton uses preservation methods and tools.
- Concern over development encroachment, both physical and visual, on Littleton's preserved green and open spaces, and desire for greater emphasis on the continuity and potential enlargement of linear greenway segments within the community.
- The need for more effective collaboration with partner entities that have responsibility for managing and enhancing elements of Littleton's park and open space inventory (e.g., South Suburban Parks and Recreation District, High Line Canal Conservancy, etc.), and with the volunteers and entities that make Littleton's event-filled calendar possible.
- Convenient and safe public access to parks, trails, and greenways within the city, especially where potential users are separated from these resources by major roadways and other physical barriers.
- Ongoing appreciation and promotion of Littleton Museum and Bemis Library as special public assets.
- Littleton's tourism appeal and its approach to accommodating visitors for leisure and business.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- **GOAL RHT 1:** Preserved and enhanced public green spaces that provide access to nature, widespread opportunities for recreation and play close to home, and continuous greenway connections within and through the city.
- **GOAL RHT 2:** Continued protection and promotion of Littleton's heritage, especially where it is tangibly visible in historic architecture, designated districts and landmarks, and distinctive neighborhoods and buildings.
- **GOAL RHT 3:** A healthy community with convenient access to recreational facilities and programming, outdoor fitness activities, and quality nutrition options.
- **GOAL RHT 4:** A vibrant city for both residents and visitors, enlivened by an active downtown, an array of cultural and entertainment options both indoor and outdoor, and popular community events and festivals throughout the year.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy RHT 1: Maintain close and mutually beneficial relationships with the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District, High Line Canal Conservancy, Hudson Gardens, and other key partners that enable Littleton residents and visitors to enjoy a large quantity of high quality recreational assets and public open space.

Policy RHT 2: Continue to build consensus on measures the City should consider and implement to:

- · Preserve more areas and structures with historic character, and
- Protect designated and potential new historic districts and landmarks.

Policy RHT 3: Prioritize public safety, including safe access to and from parks and other public spaces, and personal security while enjoying parks, trails, and community events.

Policy RHT 4: Incorporate guidance and incentives into the City's zoning and subdivision regulations that will achieve better design and integration of green and open spaces on private development sites with those nearby on public lands, and sensitive design approaches on sites with, or adjacent to, historic structures and areas.

Policy RHT 5: Continue to plan for, and budget, adequate resources to maintain Bemis Library and Littleton Museum as premier public facilities for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors.

Policy RHT 6: Regularly evaluate the appropriate and most effective methods the City can use for devoting resources and support to cultural arts and community events programming.

Policy RHT 7: Be sensitive to the perspective and needs of visitors to Littleton.

• Develop awareness of the various ways visitors travel to and move about the community; how they experience popular locations and events; what they tell others about their experience; and what factors determine how much time and money they spend locally.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

Action RHT 1: Utilize the project funding prioritization methodology recommended by the Open Space and Parks Task Force to maximize the leveraging of available funding and advance park, trail and open space projects that address objectives of the City and its multiple partners (e.g., South Suburban Parks and Recreation District, Arapahoe County, High Line Canal Conservancy, Hudson Gardens, South Platte Working Group, Trust for Public Land, etc.).

Programs and Initiatives

Action RHT 2: Develop an organizational structure within the City for handling park-related issues, collaboration, public inquiries and funding pursuits as detailed in the 2016 Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan.

Action RHT 3: Improve access to parks and recreation information and increase City communication (website, social media, etc.) to promote awareness of plans, policies, facilities and programming at recreational sites, including those of South Suburban Parks and Recreation, Hudson Gardens, and others.

Action RHT 4: Track visitor utilization of recreation facilities, sites, and other types of Littleton amenities, and monitor changing local, state, and national tourism trends.

Action RHT 5: Continue to promote awareness and appreciation of Littleton's cultural heritage and historic assets through Historic Preservation Board activities and events, together with local, regional, and state partners.

Regulations and Standards

Action RHT 6: Evaluate the potential for dedicated park and recreation funding through impact fees, in lieu of land contributions or other fees, as detailed in the 2016 Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan.

Action RHT 7: Through the Historic Preservation Board and other forums, continue to build consensus on measures the City should consider and implement – regulatory and/or otherwise – for preserving more areas and structures with distinctive historic value and character, along with ongoing protection of previously designated places and identification of potential new historic districts and landmarks.

Partnerships and Coordination

Action RHT 8: Continue and enhance collaboration and partnerships with the many agencies, organizations and non-profits that provide and/or advocate for recreation, open space and other amenities in Littleton.

Action RHT 9: Promote the wellness of residents by collaborating with the Tri-County Health Department, other health advocacy and resource organizations and non-profits, Littleton Public Schools, and other partners, and market Littleton's many parks and recreation offerings as essential elements of an active lifestyle.

Action RHT 10: Continue to identify and collaboratively pursue methods to address missing links in the existing local and regional trail systems to improve access and connectivity to jobs, education, fresh food, and health care, among others.

• Improving High Line Canal Trail connections at Broadway is identified as one of seven transformation projects in the High Line Canal Conservancy Framework Plan.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners for implementation of plan priorities related to Recreation, Heritage, and Tourism include:

- Neighboring jurisdictions and Arapahoe, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties
- S Aspen Grove
- Scolorado Tourism Office
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- S High Line Canal Conservancy
- Nudson Gardens
- ▶ Littleton Public Schools
- Scientific and Cultural Facilities District
- South Platte Working Group
- South Suburban Parks and Recreation District
- Tri-County Health Department

Action RHT 11: Work with partners to promote multi-use trail etiquette, safety and education.

Action RHT 12: Engage volunteers and leverage their involvement to increase awareness, education, and use of park and recreation amenities.

Action RHT 13: Improve coordination of signage and wayfinding at parks, recreation sites, trails, and open space areas, and also within residential neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Action RHT 14: Continue to emphasize regional collaboration as the best means for enhancing the South Platte River corridor as both an environmental and community amenity.

More Targeted Planning / Study

Action RHT 15: Build on planning efforts for the South Platte River Corridor to clarify and integrate goals for this key community asset involving economics, aesthetics, recreation, and the environment.

Action RHT 16: Complete regular updates to the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan, highlight implementation progress and successes – especially through partnership efforts, and continue to communicate Littleton's park, recreation and open space priorities to funding partners.

Action RHT 17: Lay the groundwork for preparing a holistic historic preservation plan and strategy for ongoing preservation efforts in Littleton, involving broad community engagement to gauge resident, property owner and stakeholder sentiment on the methods and extent to which the City should utilize available preservation tools.

• Use the City's initiatives to update its zoning and development regulations and pursue further downtown-focused planning as precursors to a historic preservation plan.

ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT

The quality of land, water, and air resources is essential to the character and livability of a community, especially within a highly populated, and relatively intensively developed, metropolitan area. Environmental systems and ecological functions operate at regional and even global scales beyond the control or influence of just one city. Individuals, groups, and governments have a responsibility to appreciate and assess their respective contributions, both positive and negative, to a shared natural environment. To be responsible stewards they must determine how best to integrate such considerations into their planning and decision-making processes.

All the other Plan elements tie to the environment, whether in terms of how land is managed through municipal planning and development regulation; how residents are housed and the design of their neighborhoods; how people travel; how basic water, sanitation, waste disposal, and storm drainage needs are met; how residents and visitors access and enjoy the outdoors and other leisure activities; and how certain areas of the community are given particular planning attention, because of the natural resources they depend on. Consideration of prudent resource conservation practices requires a holistic view of the community and how it interacts with, benefits from, and manages the integrity of its natural "infrastructure."

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- City of Littleton Renewal Municipal Separate Storm Sewer (MS4) State of Colorado Permit #090055 Program Description Document (PDD), 2018
- Water Quality Report, Denver Water, 2018
- Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) CO and PM10 Conformity Determination, 2017 Amendments
- DRCOG Denver Southern Subarea 8-Hour Ozone Conformity Determination, 2017 Amendments

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Long-term sustainability of land, water, and air resources.
- Concern for water quantity and quality within the South Platte River and other local waterbodies and waterways.
- Challenges to maintaining the look and feel of the High Line Canal corridor given changes in area water management, loss of trees along the canal, and other adverse factors.
- Accommodating wildlife within a city of Littleton's size and human footprint on the landscape.
- Maintaining Littleton's mature tree canopy over time, on both public and private lands.
- Concern over loss of open and green spaces that have preserved a semi-rural atmosphere, maintained mountain views, and contributed to a Suburban character across portions of the community.
- More noticeable noise levels.
- Desire for an improved and integrated approach to solid waste management and waste reduction, including enhanced recycling and composting.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- GOAL ENV 1: Appreciation of, and respect for, the land, air, and water resources within Littleton's jurisdiction.
- **GOAL ENV 2:** Recognition of Littleton's role in contributing to clean water and healthy air across the Denver metropolitan region.
- **GOAL ENV 3:** Public education and tangible actions to ensure efficient use and conservation of Littleton's water resources.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

Policy ENV 1: Maintain as a core community priority the protection and enhancement of the South Platte River within Littleton.

• This includes its water quality, the greenways and trails that frame and buffer it, the type and sensitive design of development that occurs in close proximity, and well-managed access for public enjoyment.

Policy ENV 2: Be a committed partner, with state and regional agencies, organizations, and other area cities, in planning and executing programs and public education that will improve regional air quality and satisfy Clean Air Act targets and requirements.

Policy ENV 3: Continue to be a leader in promoting and incentivizing wise water use, water-saving measures, and water conservation and re-use.

• Monitor Colorado's long-term water outlook together with the entire metropolitan area.

Policy ENV 4: Apply its stewardship ethic enthusiastically in collaboration with other public agencies, private interests, and the non-profit sector, to ensure that the City's public open space inventory remains a defining and well-managed facet of Littleton.

Policy ENV 5: Include habitat protection among its community planning considerations, recognizing that wildlife presence and movement within the city is a continuing reality and part of its appeal.

Policy ENV 6: Monitor all forms of noise pollution, and ensure responsive methods for limiting and abating excessive noise levels, especially where it affects enjoyment of parks, trails, and public open space areas.

Policy ENV 7: Continue to explore viable and cost-effective ways to assist Littleton residents and businesses in reducing their solid waste generation, and to offer expanded recycling options.

Policy ENV 8: Consider reasonable and equitable means for protecting Front Range views when evaluating proposals for new development and redevelopment.

Policy ENV 9: Encourage energy efficiency and other "green" building practices, including adaptive reuse whenever possible.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

Action ENV 1: As recommended by the Open Space and Parks Task Force, budget funds for land purchase opportunities and respond to new opportunities that may arise for open space preservation in service of preserving floodplains and drainage lands.

Programs and Initiatives

Action ENV 2: Utilize best management practices for City-maintained open spaces and facilities, such as efficient mowing, xeriscape (i.e., low-water, low-maintenance, and native plantings), reduced pesticide use, and energy and water conservation.

Action ENV 3: Keep abreast of water conservation best management practices and promote wise water use throughout the community, including through related grant opportunities.

Action ENV 4: Evaluate the potential to expand recycling and composting availability for Littleton residents, businesses and institutions.

Action ENV 5: Leverage the South Platte Volunteer program to advance environmental stewardship education.

Action ENV 6: Evaluate opportunities to manage storm water through green infrastructure methods on all City-owned properties.

• The High Line Canal Conservancy's "Canal Stormwater Transformation and Enhancement Project" seeks to manage storm water naturally, providing multiple benefits.

Regulations and Standards

Action ENV 7: Continue to refine and update the City's municipal code, zoning, subdivision regulations, and engineering standards to ensure that storm water management, grading and erosion control, and post-construction pollution prevention measures reflect best management practices.

Action ENV 8: Update the City's zoning and subdivision regulations so that landscaping requirements reflect best management practices for plant and tree selection, irrigation design, and xeriscaping.

Action ENV 9: As part of the City's zoning and code update initiative, evaluate the potential for:

- Integrating view protections more prominently within the development regulations.
- Promoting and potentially incentivizing Low Impact Development (LID) strategies, tools and techniques.
- Developing tree canopy protection provisions and updated landscaping standards.

Partnerships and Coordination

Action ENV 10: Continue and enhance partnerships with local and regional organizations advancing air quality objectives and actions.

Action ENV 11: Collaborate with the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District and other partners to continue to prioritize active habitat, vegetation, wildlife, water resource, and visitor management measures for South Platte Park as detailed in the South Platte Park Management Plan.

More Targeted Planning / Study

Action ENV 12: As recommended in the 2013 South Platte River Corridor Vision, work with partners to pursue the following studies:

- South Platte corridor water quality opportunities study.
- South Platte corridor-wide habitat study.
- South Platte fishing management plan.

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Partners for implementation of plan priorities related to the Environment include:

- Neighboring jurisdictions and Arapahoe, Douglas, and Jefferson Counties
- Schatfield Watershed Authority
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Colorado Stormwater Council
- Colorado Open Lands
- Scolorado Parks and Wildlife
- Scolorado Preservation, Inc.
- S Colorado Water Conservation Board
- Denver Regional Air Quality Council
- Denver Regional Council of Governments
- Denver Water
- Nigh Line Canal Conservancy
- Nistoric Littleton, Inc.
- Nudson Gardens
- S Littleton Public Schools
- South Metro Land Conservancy
- South Platte River Metro Roundtable
- South Platte Working Group
- South Suburban Parks and Recreation District
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Tri-County Health Department
- SUS Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

SPECIAL AREAS AND DESIGN

SPECIAL AREAS AND DESIGN

Through the initial 2018 vision phase of Envision Littleton, specific areas of the city were confirmed as highly valued by both residents and visitors. In particular, these include Downtown and the South Platte River corridor and its associated greenways. Other areas have received special attention for many years, especially Littleton Boulevard because of its emergence as a community gathering place during a period when Downtown was less of a draw. The Boulevard's collection of post-World War II commercial buildings designed in a Modernist style also sets Littleton apart among Front Range cities (with Colorado Preservation, Inc., adding the 1949-1967 Mid-Century Buildings of Littleton Boulevard to its Most Endangered Places list in 2014, citing potential threats from development and demolition, and stating, "These buildings are integral to interpreting the automobile movement of the 1950s in Littleton.").

Additionally, this Plan and the concurrent Transportation Master Plan have placed significant focus on other major roadway corridors that help to define Littleton's physical layout. These corridors are crucial to future land use and traffic circulation within the community, and to its economic development and housing needs. These key corridors are delineated on the Future Land Use and Character Map and include Belleview Avenue, Santa Fe Drive, Broadway, and Mineral Avenue.

This section builds on issues, goals, policies, and actions in earlier Plan sections that are relevant to the areas mentioned above, while adding further specifics within this section. As illustrated by the Legacy of Past Planning listing below, Littleton has other areas that have also merited special planning attention over the years, involving considerations such as historic preservation, transit-oriented development potential, commercial area and corridor revitalization, urban design, and neighborhood-focused planning, among others.

LEGACY OF PAST PLANNING

- Belleview Avenue Corridor Vision, 2018
- Neighborhood and Corridor Plans, 2016
- Broadway Corridor Study, 1998
- Littleton Boulevard Corridor Study, 2002
- Commercial Modernism in the Greater West Littleton Boulevard Corridor 1950-1980, 2018
- Historic Context of Littleton, Colorado 1949-1967, 2008
- Mineral Station Framework, 2018
- Mineral Station Area Urban Land Institute Technical Advisory Final, 2014
- Mineral Station Urban Land Institute Advisory Services Report, 2006
- Arapaho Hills National Historic District Voluntary Design Guidelines, 2016
- Downtown Littleton Design Standards, 2018
- Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, 2011
- Louthan Heights Historic District Design Guidelines, 2017
- South Platte River Corridor Development Design Guidelines, 2000
- South Platte River Corridor Vision Plan, 1999

KEY ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

• What is next for a renewed and active Downtown Littleton given real and perceived challenges involving parking, housing turnover and affordability, retail mix and viability, and concerns about the scale and intensity of some recent redevelopment activity.

- Opportunity for a more vibrant and walkable Littleton Boulevard corridor without sacrificing its "hometown" appeal and historic assets.
- Desire to move beyond multiple South Platte River planning initiatives of the past, with limited implementation results to show, to establish a consensus vision that leads to tangible actions involving both resource protection and future riveroriented development.
- The urgent need to document community preferences and expectations for the future function, design and appearance
 of Santa Fe Drive as an essential framework for pending Colorado Department of Transportation studies that will delve
 into these very roadway corridor considerations.
- Spurring revitalization at and around the former Columbine Square retail site.
- The land use/transportation outlook for Broadway, especially if it continues to advance as a priority corridor in the Regional Transportation District's Regional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Feasibility Study.
- The importance of Mineral Avenue as a gateway to the distinctive SouthPark area, which is both a leading economic asset and a location for varied, attractive housing options all within a Suburban character setting, and near rail transit.

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

GOALS

- **GOAL 1:** A downtown that continues to serve the entire community as a civic, historic, cultural, and economic focal point while becoming even more welcoming and accessible for residents and visitors.
- **GOAL 2:** A future Littleton Boulevard that accommodates more community-serving businesses and nearby attainable housing options amid a walkable setting of authentic neighborhoods and historic architecture.
- **GOAL 3:** An ecologically sound and exceptionally attractive South Platte River corridor, framed by sensitively planned land uses, that continues to anchor the entire community's trail and open space networks.
- **GOAL 4:** Roadway corridors that fulfill their primary transportation functions for drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit while advancing the community's economic development, housing, and aesthetic interests.

POLICIES

In making decisions that involve public resource allocation, regulatory matters, and physical improvements, among others, Littleton will:

- 1. Amid the many competing priorities of municipal government, pursue new special area planning efforts only where there is commitment, including committed funding and other resources, to follow through on the resulting action agenda.
- 2. Evaluate investment and revitalization opportunities in special planning areas always with an eye toward Littleton's guiding principles of being Anchored, Authentic, Connected, Active, and Engaged, and the community character framework established in the Land Use and Community Character section.
- 3. Emphasize quality urban design and cultivation of a positive community image for Littleton in all special area investments involving both the public and private realms.
- 4. Foster continuing community dialogue when special area planning efforts highlight divergence between market factors that drive private real estate decisions relative to community desires for influencing land use outcomes and development design.
- 5. For areas within one-half mile of a rail transit station, promote development designs that prioritize the pedestrian and include transit-supporting uses and intensities.
- 6. Seek opportunities to engage public, private and non-profit partners in special area planning and implementation efforts, as appropriate, to leverage local funds with other resources and to explore ways to advance shared interests and multiple objectives through joint initiatives.
- 7. Stay active in regional planning processes and decision-making forums with implications for special planning areas identified within Littleton.

ACTIONS

Capital Investments

- 1. Add criteria to the City's capital improvements planning process to prioritize capital projects that will respond to and capitalize on unique opportunities in a targeted special planning area but will also result in much broader community benefits.
- 2. Continue to expand wayfinding and community identity/branding investments in more areas of the city.

Programs and Initiatives

- 3. Adapt the City's fiscal impact analysis tools and methods for use in evaluating potential policies or actions in particular sub-areas of the community.
- 4. Explore the potential for a more formal and systematic program for expanding and prioritizing Littleton's public art installations.

Regulations and Standards

- 5. As part of the City's zoning and code update initiative, evaluate the potential for:
 - Creating additional zoning districts and/or provisions customized for specific areas of the city, especially for maintaining or achieving certain community character conditions.
 - Creating a new zoning district and associated standards specifically for mixed-use development proposals, with built-in parameters and flexibility to accommodate the varied settings encompassed by the Corridor Mixed Use designation on the Future Land Use and Character Map (i.e., Belleview Avenue, Broadway, Littleton Boulevard and Santa Fe Drive).
 - Adjusting the zoning districts and/or strategy for Downtown Littleton, where multiple districts currently apply and where this may allow for character discrepancies (e.g., the current "CA" Central Area Multiple Use District allowing auto-oriented uses in Downtown).
 - Especially for Downtown, revisiting the overall zoning approach to parking management given the many changes in this area of planning practice in recent years.

Partnerships and Coordination

6. Draw upon the many potential public, private and non-profit partners itemized in earlier plan sections, as appropriate to a particular geographic area of focus within the city.

More Targeted Planning / Study

- 7. As first and second priorities for further special area planning following adoption of the Plan:
 - Pursue a corridor planning effort focused on both Santa Fe Drive and the parallel South Platte River corridor, especially to get ahead of the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study to be initiated soon by the Colorado Department of Transportation as a first step toward any future substantial design changes to Santa Fe.
 - Pursue a Downtown Master Plan, especially to explore potential funding and administrative mechanisms for capitalizing on opportunities and overcoming challenges in an active, successful downtown setting (e.g., parking, traffic management, aesthetic enhancements, security, ongoing programming and event management, etc.).
IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION

With Envision Littleton (the Plan), the City of Littleton and other partner agencies and organizations have an essential new document that should be frequently referred to for guidance in community decision-making. The Plan should be a "living document" that responds to change. Its key planning considerations, goals, policies, and action strategies must be revisited periodically to ensure that the Plan is providing clear and reliable direction on a range of matters, including land development issues and public investments in infrastructure and services.

Implementation is not just a list of action items. It is a challenging process that requires the commitment of the City's elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, major institutions, other levels of government, and other organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the Plan and its particular direction and strategies. Among its purposes, this final Plan section highlights specific roles, responsibilities and methods of implementation to execute plan recommendations. Equally important are formalized procedures for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of successes achieved, difficulties encountered, and new opportunities and challenges that emerge after Plan adoption. This is in addition to any other change in circumstances, which may require rethinking of plan priorities. Scheduled plan evaluations and updates, as described later in this section, will help maintain its relevance and credibility as the policy and action guide for the City.

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

During the development of this Plan, representatives of government, business, community groups, and others came together to inform the visioning and planning processes. These community leaders – and new ones that will emerge over the horizon of this Plan – must maintain their commitment to the ongoing implementation and updating of the plan's goals, policies and action strategies.

ENGAGEMENT

While long-range plans such as Envision Littleton are relatively general they are still complex policy documents that attempt to balance various policy objectives. Engaging decision-makers and administrators about plan implementation is an important first step after plan adoption. As the principal groups that will implement the Plan, City management and department heads, the City Council, and Planning Commission should all be in agreement with regard to priorities, responsibilities, and interpretations.

Consequently, an engagement initiative should be undertaken immediately after Plan adoption, including:

- A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the Council, Planning Commission (and other advisory bodies), City departments and staff;
- A thorough overview of the entire Envision Littleton Plan, with emphasis on the parts of the Plan that relate to each individual group;
- Implementation tasking and priority setting, which should establish a one-year and three-year implementation agenda; and
- An in-depth question and answer session, with support from the City Attorney and other key staff.

DEFINITION OF ROLES

As the community's elected officials, the City Council should assume the lead role in the implementing the Plan. The key responsibilities of the City Council are to decide and establish priorities, set timeframes by which actions will be initiated and completed, and determine the budget to be made available for implementation efforts. Based on this City Council direction, the City Manager and staff must help to ensure effective coordination among the groups that are responsible for carrying out the plan's action strategies.

City Council

The City Council should take the lead in the following general areas:

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- Adopting and amending the Plan, when necessary and appropriate, after recommendation by the Planning Commission.
- Acting as a champion of the Plan.
- Establishing the overall implementation priorities and timeframes by which action strategies in the Plan will be initiated and completed.
- Considering and approving necessary funding commitments.
- Directing staff to draft new or amended zoning and subdivision regulations.
- Adopting the new or amended zoning and subdivision regulations.
- Approving intergovernmental and development agreements that implement the Plan.
- Approving projects, activities, and budgets that are consistent with the Plan, during the City's annual budget process.
- Providing policy direction to the Planning Commission, other appointed City boards and commissions, and City staff.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission should take the lead in the following general areas:

- Ensuring that recommendations forwarded to the City Council are reflective of Plan goals, policies and priority action strategies.
- After holding one or more public hearings to discuss new or evolving community issues and needs, making
 recommendations to the City Council regarding plan updates and plan amendments.

City Staff

City staff should take the lead in the following general areas:

- Managing day-to-day implementation of the Plan, including coordination through an interdepartmental plan implementation committee.
- Supporting and carrying out capital improvement planning efforts.
- Managing the drafting of new or amended zoning and subdivision regulations.
- Conducting studies and developing additional special-purpose and/or special area plans.
- Reviewing land development applications for consistency with Envision Littleton.
- Providing an economic analysis for any proposed rezoning.
- Negotiating the specifics of intergovernmental and development agreements.
- Administering collaborative programs and ensuring open channels of communication with various private, public, and non-profit partners.
- Maintaining an inventory of potential plan amendments, as suggested by City staff and others, for consideration during annual and periodic plan review and update processes.
- Generating and presenting an annual report to the Planning Commission and City Council concerning progress toward implementation of Envision Littleton.
- Periodically obtaining public input to keep the Plan up to date, using a variety of community outreach methods.

ACTION AGENDA

The Plan goals will ultimately be attained through a multitude of actions as itemized in each Plan section. The action strategies are categorized as to whether they involve: (1) capital investments, (2) programs and initiatives, (3) regulations and standards, (4) partnerships and coordination, or (5) more targeted planning/study. These actions must be prioritized by the City to establish a shorter "to do" list of strategic priorities, their potential timing, and who initiates, administers, and participates in the implementation process.

Determining a near-term action agenda relative to longer-term tasks is an important first step toward Plan implementation. This is done through direction set by City Council in alignment with the Priority Based Budgeting Process. Action priorities are also set during Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) preparation and through departmental work planning. Once the necessary funding is committed and roles are defined, a lead City staff member should initiate a first-year work program in conjunction with City management, other departments, and other public and private implementation partners.

The near-term action priorities should be revisited by City officials and staff annually to recognize accomplishments, highlight areas where further attention and effort are needed, and determine whether items have moved up or down on the priority list given emerging needs and changing circumstances, including funding and resources. It should be kept in mind that early implementation of certain items, while perhaps not the uppermost Plan priorities, may be expedited by the availability of related grant funds, by a state or federal mandate, or by the eagerness of one or more partners to pursue an initiative with the City. At the same time, some high-priority items may prove difficult to tackle in the near term due to budget constraints, the lack of a lead entity or individual to carry the initiative forward, or by the community's hesitation to take on a potentially controversial new program.

Progress on the near-term items should be the focus of the first annual review and report a year after adoption of the Plan, as described later in this section. Then, similar to multi-year capital improvements programming, the entire near-term action agenda – and all other action strategies dispersed throughout the Plan sections – should be revisited annually to decide if any additional items are ready to move into the next near-term action timeframe, and what the priority should be.

ENVISION LITTLETON AMENDMENT PROCESS

Envision Littleton is a flexible document allowing for adjustment to changing conditions. Shifts in political, economic, physical, technological, and social conditions, and other unforeseen circumstances, may influence and change the priorities and fiscal outlook of the community. As Littleton evolves, new issues will emerge while others will no longer be as relevant. Some action items will be found impractical or outdated while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it continues to reflect the overall goals of the community and remains relevant over time, the Plan must be revisited regularly.

Revisions to Envision Littleton are two-fold, with *minor plan amendments* occurring at least every other year and *more significant updates and modifications* occurring every five years. As an example, a minor amendment could include revisions to certain elements of the Plan as a result of the adoption of another specialized plan. Major updates will involve: reviewing the community's base conditions and anticipated population trends; re-evaluating the plan findings and formulating new ones as necessary; and adding, revising, or removing action strategies in the Plan based on implementation progress.

Annual Progress Report

City staff should prepare an annual progress report for presentation to the Planning Commission, Mayor, and City Council. This ensures that the Plan is consistently reviewed and that any needed modifications or clarifications are identified for the biennial minor plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of consistency between the Plan and the City's regulations should be an essential part of this effort.

The Annual Progress Report should include and highlight:

- Significant actions and accomplishments during the last year, including the implementation status of each programmed task.
- Obstacles or problems in implementing the Plan.
- Proposed content amendments that have come forward during the year.

- Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the coming year.
- Priority coordination needs with public and private implementation partners.

Biennial Amendment Process

Plan amendments should occur on at least a biennial basis (every two years), allowing for proposed changes to be considered concurrently so the cumulative effects may be understood. Factors that should be considered in deciding on a proposed plan amendment include:

- Consistency with the goals, policies, and action strategies in the Plan.
- Potential effects on infrastructure provision including water, wastewater, storm water drainage, and the transportation network.
- Potential effects on the City's ability to provide, fund, and maintain services.
- · Potential effects on environmentally sensitive and natural areas.
- Whether the proposed amendment contributes to the overall direction and character of the community as captured in the Plan vision and goals, and reflected in public input.

Five-Year Update / Evaluation and Appraisal Report

An evaluation and appraisal report to City Council should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by City staff with input from City departments, the Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. The report process involves evaluating the existing Plan and assessing how successful it has been in achieving the community's goals. The report identifies the successes and shortcomings of the Plan, looks at what has changed over the last five years, and makes recommendations on how the Plan should be modified.

The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators. It should also evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unaddressed major action strategies. The evaluation report and process should result in a strategy to amend the Plan, including identification of new or revised information that may lead to updated goals and action strategies.

The report should identify and evaluate:

- 1. Summary of major actions and interim plan amendments undertaken over the last five years.
- 2. Current significant issues in the community and how these issues have changed.
- 3. Changes in the assumptions, trends, and base data in the Existing City Data Book, including:
- The rate at which growth and development is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the Plan.
- · Shifts in demographics and other growth trends.
- City-wide attitudes, and whether apparent shifts, if significant, necessitate amendments to the stated goals or action strategies of the Plan.
- Other changes in political, social, economic, technological, or environmental conditions that indicate a need for Plan amendments.
- 4. Ability of the Plan to continue to support progress toward achieving the community's goals. The following should be evaluated and revised as needed:
- Individual sections and statements within the Plan must be reviewed and revised, as necessary, to ensure that the Plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
- Conflicts between goals and action strategies that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the Plan must be pointed out and resolved.

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- The list of priority actions must be reviewed and major accomplishments highlighted. Those not completed by the specified timeframe should be re-evaluated to ensure their continued relevance and/or to revise them appropriately.
- Lessons learned by the City in the case of mistakes, missed opportunities, or other barriers to achieving goals should be discussed.
- As conditions change, the timeframes for implementing major actions in the Plan should be re-evaluated where necessary. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances while others may become less important to achieving the goals and development objectives of the community.
- Based upon organizational and procedural factors, and the status of assigned tasks, the implementation of task
 assignments must be reviewed and altered, as needed, to ensure timely accomplishment of the Plan's action strategies.
- Changes in laws, procedures and missions may affect the community's ability to achieve its goals. The Plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.

Ongoing Community Outreach and Engagement

All review processes and updates related to the Plan should emphasize and incorporate ongoing public input. The annual and continual plan evaluation and reporting processes should also incorporate specific performance measures and quantitative indicators that can be compiled and communicated both internally and to elected officials and residents in a "report card" fashion.

Examples might include:

- Acres of new development and redevelopment (plus number of residential units by type and square footage of nonresidential space) approved and constructed in conformance with the Plan and Littleton's development regulations.
- Measures of service capacity added to the City's utility infrastructure systems and the number of dollars allocated to fund the capital projects.
- New and expanded businesses, added jobs, and associated tax revenue gains through economic development initiatives.
- Lane miles of new or rehabilitated road, plus bike, pedestrian, transit, and other improvements added to Littleton's transportation system that increase mobility options.
- Dollar value of park and recreation improvement projects, and miles of trail developed or improved.
- Indicators of the benefits from redeveloped sites and structures (appraised value, increased property and/or sales tax revenue, new residential units, retail and office spaces in mixed-use settings, etc.).
- The numbers of residents and other stakeholders engaged through City-sponsored education and outreach events related to Envision Littleton implementation and periodic review and updating, as outlined in this section.

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[Revisions pending]

APPENDIX 1: EXISTING CITY DATA BOOK

DRAFT

Existing Land Use and Character in Littleton, CO (As of Summer 2018)





Legend

City Limits **Character Class**

Suburban

/////// Auto Urban Urban

Mixed Character





[Analysis proceeding and report pending]

APPENDIX 2: FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS REPORT

[Pending]

APPENDIX 3: ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

APPENDIX 4: GLOSSARY



GLOSSARY

Below are definitions for certain unusual or technical terms, as used in the Comprehensive Plan.

[To be completed later, and expanded as needed]

Adaptive Reuse. X.

Aging in Place. X.

Best Management Practice. X.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). X.

Clean Air Act. X.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). X.

Fiscal Impact Analysis. X.

Fiscal Sustainability. X.

Green Infrastructure. X.

Housing Stock. X.

Impact Fee. X.

Infill Construction. X.

Intergovernmental Agreement. X.

Lifelong Community. X.

Low-Impact Development (LID). X.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. X.

Mixed-Use Development. X.

Multi-Use Trail. X.

Planned Development. X.

Redevelopment. X.

Revitalization. X.

Streetscape. X.

Subdivision Regulations. X.

Tree Canopy. X.

View Protection. X.

Wayfinding. X.

Xeriscape. X.

Zoning. X.