

# **Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan**

City of Littleton, Colorado

# Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan

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# Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan

City of Littleton, Colorado

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Preface

This Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (the “Plan” or the “Amended Urban Renewal Plan”) has been prepared for the City of Littleton (“City”). It will be carried out by Littleton Invests for Tomorrow (the “Authority” or LIFT), pursuant to the provisions of the Urban Renewal Law of the State of Colorado, Part 1 of Article 25 of Title 31, Colorado Revised Statutes, 1973, as amended (the “Act”). The administration and implementation of this Amended Plan, including the preparation and execution of any documents implementing it, shall be performed by LIFT.

### 1.2 Blight Findings

Under the Act, an urban renewal area is a blighted area, which has been designated as appropriate for one or more Urban Renewal Projects. In each urban renewal area, conditions of blight, as defined by the Act, must be present, and in order for LIFT to exercise its powers, the City Council must find that the presence of those conditions of blight, “substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality or constitutes an economic or social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.”

The Columbine Square Area Conditions Survey, prepared by Ricker|Cunningham, dated June, 2014, and presented to the LIFT Board under separate cover, demonstrates that the Columbine Square Area (“Study Area”), as defined in the Survey, is a blighted area under the Act.



### **1.3 Other Findings**

The Area, as defined in Section 1.4 below, is appropriate for one or more urban renewal activities and undertakings authorized by the Act to be advanced by LIFT.

It is the intent of the City Council in adopting this Amended Plan that LIFT has available to it powers authorized in the Act which are necessary and appropriate to accomplish the objectives stated herein. Further, it is the intent of this Amended Plan that LIFT exercise these powers for the elimination of qualifying conditions in the Area and furtherance of the goals and objectives of the community's general plan.

The powers conferred by the Act are for public uses and purposes for which public money may be expended. This Amended Plan is in the public interest and necessity -- such finding being a matter of legislative determination by the City Council.

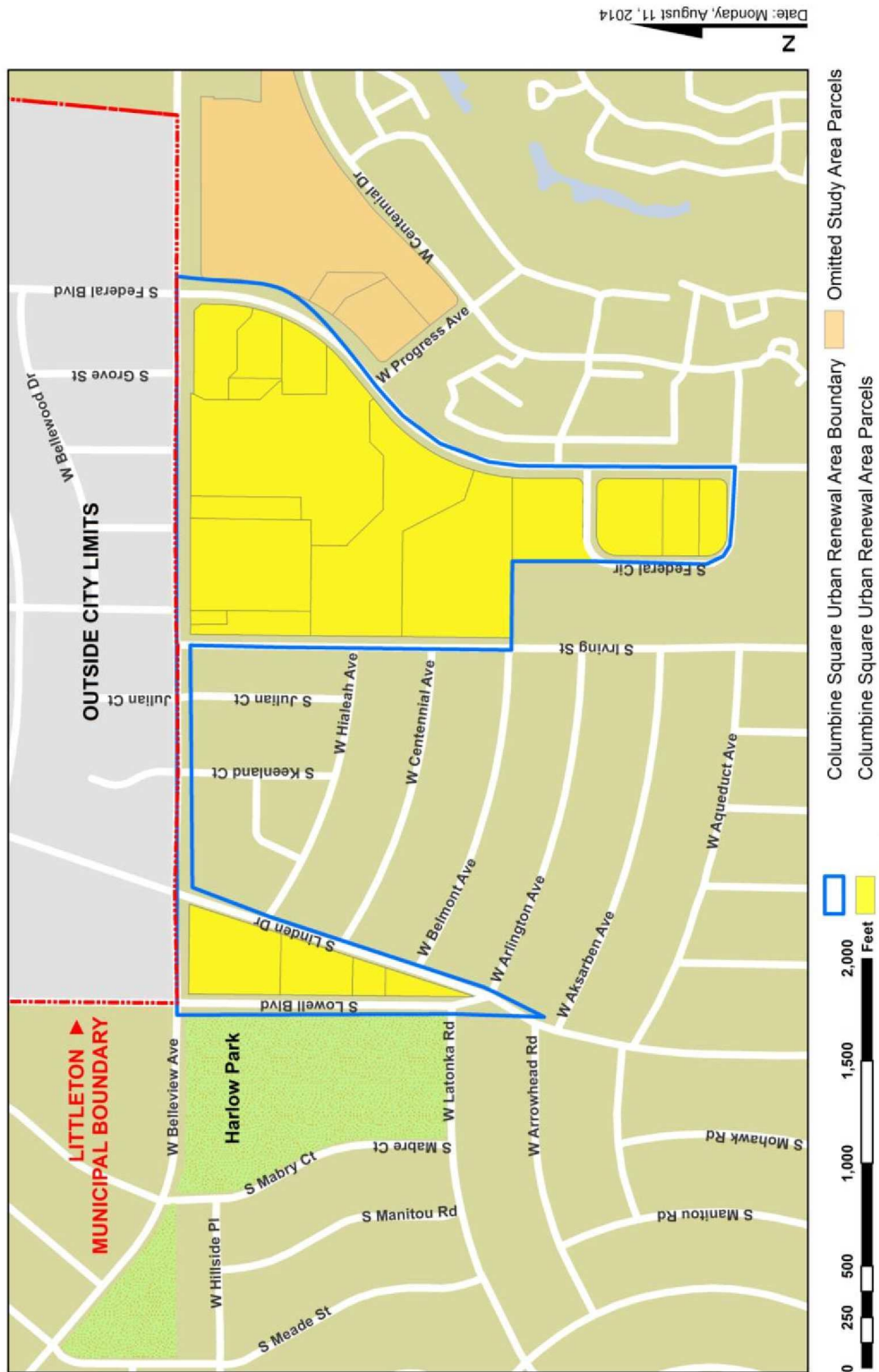
### **1.4 Urban Renewal Area Boundaries**

The Area includes all properties within the City limits as delineated in Figure No. 1 and described in the legal description presented in Appendix B. The boundaries of the Area include approximately 35 acres of land generally defined to include 19 legal parcels and adjacent rights-of-way. Geographically, it is situated in the western portion of the city, south of West Bellevue Avenue between South Lowell and South Federal Boulevards. It includes the now vacant Columbine Square Shopping Center, as well as several commercial parcels located south of the Center between South Lowell Boulevard and South Linden Drive. In case of a conflict, the legal description presented in Appendix B shall prevail.

#### **1.4.1 Map of Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan Area (Figure No. 1)**

The Urban Renewal Area map is presented as Figure No. 1 on the following page.

Figure No. 1: Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan Area



Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (1.2015)

## 1.5 Public Participation

The Original Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan's content was presented to business and property owners located within the Plan boundaries (which will not change as a result of this amendment), as well as the community at-large. The LIFT Board approved the Original Plan on Monday, August 18, 2014 and this Amended Plan on Monday, December 15, 2014, at regular meetings of the Authority. Notification of the public hearing **will be** provided to property owners, residents and owners of business concerns at their last known address of record within the Area as required by the Act. Notice of the public hearing to consider the Plan **will be** published in the Littleton Independent.

The Planning Board reviewed the Original Plan on Monday, August 25, 2014, and Thursday, September 4, 2014, and recommended adoption of that Plan by the Littleton City Council whereas it was consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Citywide Plan, a Section of the City of Littleton Comprehensive Plan, adopted 2014, as amended. Whereas it is the intent of LIFT and City Council to provide for public participation in proposed developments and planning efforts, which advance the intent of this Amended Plan; development proposals submitted for approval by LIFT will continue to be made available to the public in an open meeting format.

## 2.0 Definitions

**Act** – means the Urban Renewal Law of the State of Colorado, Part 1 of Article 25 of Title 31, Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended. Unless otherwise stated, all capitalized terms herein shall have the same meaning as set forth in the Act.

**Activity Area** – means targeted areas that have the potential to develop or redevelop and usually within the study area of a Corridor Plan or Neighborhood Plan. They can serve as catalyst areas for economic development efforts, public / private joint ventures or special districts, and otherwise innovative developments (as defined in the Citywide Plan, Adopted 2014).

**Amended Area or Urban Renewal Area** – means the Original and this Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan Area (both of which are the same and will not be altered as a result of this amendment) as depicted in Figure No. 1 and legally described in Appendix B.

**Amended Plan or Amended Urban Renewal Plan** – means the Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (this Amended Plan).

**Area or Urban Renewal Area** – means the Original and this Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan Area (both of which are the same and will not be altered as a result of this amendment) as depicted in Figure No. 1 and legally described in Appendix B.

**Authority** – means Littleton Invests for Tomorrow (LIFT).

**Base Amount** – means that portion of property taxes which are produced by the levy at the rate fixed each year by or for each public body upon the valuation for assessment of taxable property in a Tax Increment Area last certified prior to the effective date of approval of the Amended Plan; and, that portion of municipal sales taxes collected within the boundaries of the Tax Increment Area in the twelve-month period ending on the last day of the month prior to the effective date of approval of the Amended Plan.

**City Council** – means the City Council of the City of Littleton.

**Comprehensive Plan** – means the Citywide Plan, a Section of the City of Littleton Comprehensive Plan, adopted 2014.

**Cooperation Agreement** – means any agreement between LIFT and the City, or any public body (the term “public body” being used in this Amended Plan as defined by the Act) respecting action to be taken pursuant to any of the powers set forth in the Act or in any other provision of Colorado law, for the purpose of facilitating public undertakings deemed necessary or appropriate by LIFT under this Amended Plan.

**Corridor** – generally represents linear areas along major arterial streets and including commercial corridors (as defined in the Citywide Plan, adopted 2014).

**C.R.S.** – means the Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended from time to time.

**Economic Plan** – means the City of Littleton Economic Plan, adopted 2013.

**Impact Report** – means the Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan - Arapahoe County Impact Report prepared by Ricker|Cunningham, dated August 2014 and presented to the LIFT Board under separate cover.

**Original Plan or Original Urban Renewal Plan** – means the Original Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (the Plan).

**Redevelopment / Development Agreement** – means one or more agreements between LIFT and developer(s) and / or property owners or such other individuals or entities as may be determined by LIFT to be necessary or desirable to carry out the purposes of this Amended Plan.

**Study Area** – means the geographic area defined for the Survey.

**Survey** – means the Columbine Square Area Conditions Survey, prepared by Ricker|Cunningham, dated June, 2014 and presented to the LIFT Board under separate cover.

**Tax Increment** – means that portion of property and / or municipal sales taxes in excess of the base amount set forth in Section 7.3.2 of this Amended Plan allocated to and, when collected paid into LIFT's Tax Increment Revenue Fund.

**Tax Increment Area** – means that area designated as a Tax Increment Area, as defined and pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 6.12 of this Amended Plan.

**Tax Increment Finance (or Financing) (TIF)** - means a financing mechanism which uses future revenues resulting from private investment within an established area (Tax Increment Area) to fund improvements for the public benefit.

**Tax Increment Revenue Fund** - means a fund supervised by the Authority, the resources of which include incremental ad valorem property and / or municipal sales tax revenue resulting from investment and reinvestment in an established urban renewal area.

**Urban Renewal Project** – as defined in the Act.

### **3.0 Amended Plan Purpose and Vision**

The purpose of this Amended Plan is to reduce, eliminate and prevent the spread of blight and to stimulate growth and investment within the Area boundaries. To accomplish this purpose, this Amended Plan is intended to promote local objectives expressed in adopted community plans and advance the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan. The City of Littleton's Comprehensive Plan, known as the Citywide Plan, a Section of the City of Littleton Comprehensive Plan, was adopted in 2014. Presented below is an excerpt (taken verbatim) from that document that describes its content and intentions for advancing *A Vision for the Future of Littleton*. Additional excerpts are presented in Appendix A of this Amended Plan and referenced in Section 5.0 below.

#### **3.1 Amended Plan Vision**

The community Comprehensive Plan, the Citywide Plan, is comprised of two sections, both of which are intended to inform future land-use-related actions. The first – Part I: Goals and Policies – is based on values that were articulated through Inspire Littleton's two-year process of gathering community ideas and feedback. As explained, "These values reflect themes that resonated throughout citizen comments on why this community is special and what they would like Littleton to become." Further, "These core values formed the foundation for the Neighborhood, Corridor, and Activity Area Plans that *once completed* will guide development and decision- making tailored to the community's needs." Finally, "In this combination, future planning, development, land



use, and zoning decisions should reflect the overarching Goals and Vision outlined here."

The second section – Part II: Transformative Actions – describes strategic actions in areas of primary importance necessary to achieve the citywide Goals and Policies outlined in Part I. As explained, "These actions will guide all underlying plan and policy documents, as well as zoning code changes, budget decisions, and capital investments. To achieve the citizens' vision for Littleton, there must be a collaborative, long-term commitment to these strategic actions."

### **Vision for the Future of Littleton**

Littleton is a community that embraces its authentic small-town qualities while enjoying the advantages of a metropolitan area. The city should continue to exemplify and promote a sustainable economy, environment, and society. Littleton will:

- Respect and build upon its history
- **Foster its small-town, family-friendly character**
- Be home to people of all ages and backgrounds
- Value livability, diversity, and progress
- Promote a vibrant economy for individuals, businesses, and the city as a whole
- Value the importance of its citizens and its natural resources
- **Manage and direct change**
- Strive for sustainability in economic, environmental, and social decisions
- **Raise the bar to increase the quality of community and economic development**

### **3.2. Amended Plan Objective**

The objective of this Amended Plan is to alleviate conditions of blight by actively promoting investment and reinvestment within its commercial corridors and to make financial resources available to assist its partners (private, public, non-profit and others)

with addressing those conditions of blight identified herein, especially those that render projects within its boundaries infeasible.

### **3.3 Amended Plan Development and Design Objectives**

All development in the Area shall conform to the zoning code and any site-specific zoning regulations or policies which might impact properties, all as are in effect and as may be amended from time to time. Although the Act authorizes LIFT to: undertake zoning and planning activities to regulate land use, establish maximum or minimum densities, and institute other building requirements in an urban renewal area, for the purpose of this Amended Plan, LIFT anticipates that the City will regulate land use and building requirements through existing municipal codes and ordinances.

General objectives include redevelopment of properties within the Area for the purpose of generating revenue sufficient to fund public improvements that address conditions of blight and facilitate investment. Specific objectives expressed by property owners, residents and business owners who participated in meetings held in association with development of the Original Plan include the following:

1. Eliminate and prevent blight by facilitating redevelopment.
2. Implement elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Support and advance actions identified in existing plans related to development of vacant and under-utilized parcels that are consistent with the vision of the (Original) Plan and this Amended Plan.
4. Provide public infrastructure and make more efficient use of existing land.
5. Promote sustainability - development, fiscal, resource, etc.
6. Advance product types that can leverage public investment in planned improvements including multiple modes of transportation (vehicular and non-vehicular).
7. Improve pedestrian realm improvements in a manner consistent with the existing community character.
8. Encourage economic sustainability throughout the community and growth in appropriate locations.



9. Provide a range of financing mechanisms for improvements.
10. Provide additional opportunities for residential development to support commercial uses in the Area.
11. Support existing industry by encouraging a stronger jobs-housing balance.
12. Encourage growth and stability in local businesses.
13. Facilitate public-private partnerships.

### **3.4 Amended Plan Implementation**

As the plan administrator, LIFT will seek to advance the objectives listed above through the following if deemed necessary:

- Financing of redevelopment projects and critical infrastructure; and
- Agreements with private, public and other partners to undertake redevelopment projects.

LIFT will work in cooperation with the City to advance objectives through:

- Investment in the public realm (roadway, parks, open space);
- Encouragement of development consistent with or exceeding existing standards;
- Provision of supportive programs to existing area businesses; and
- Judicious use of limited resources.

## **4.0 Blight Conditions**

Before an urban renewal plan can be adopted by the City, the urban renewal area must be determined to be a “blighted area” as defined in Section 31-25-103(2) of the Act, which means that, in its present condition and use, the presence of at least four (or five in cases where the use of eminent domain is anticipated), of the following factors (see below) in the area, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality, retards the provision of

housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare:

- (a) Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures;
- (b) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- (f) Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities;
- (g) Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title nonmarketable;
- (h) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
- (i) Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities;
- (j) Environmental contamination of buildings or property;
- (k.5) The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements; or
- (l) If there is no objection by the property owner or owners and the tenant or tenants of such owner or owners, if any, to the inclusion of such property in an urban renewal area, "blighted area" also means an area that, in its present condition and use and, by reason of the presence of any one of the factors specified in paragraphs (a) to (k.5) of Section 31-25-103(2), substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare.

The general methodology for conducting the Survey is to: (i) define the Study Area; (ii) gather information about properties, infrastructure and other improvements within that Study Area; (iii) evaluate evidence of blight through field reconnaissance, review of aerial photography, discussions with representatives of various City departments; and, (iv) record observed and documented conditions listed as blight factors in the Act.

Among the 11 qualifying factors identified in the Act, the Survey describes the presence of the following 10 blight factors in both the Study Area and Area which is the subject of this Amended Plan.

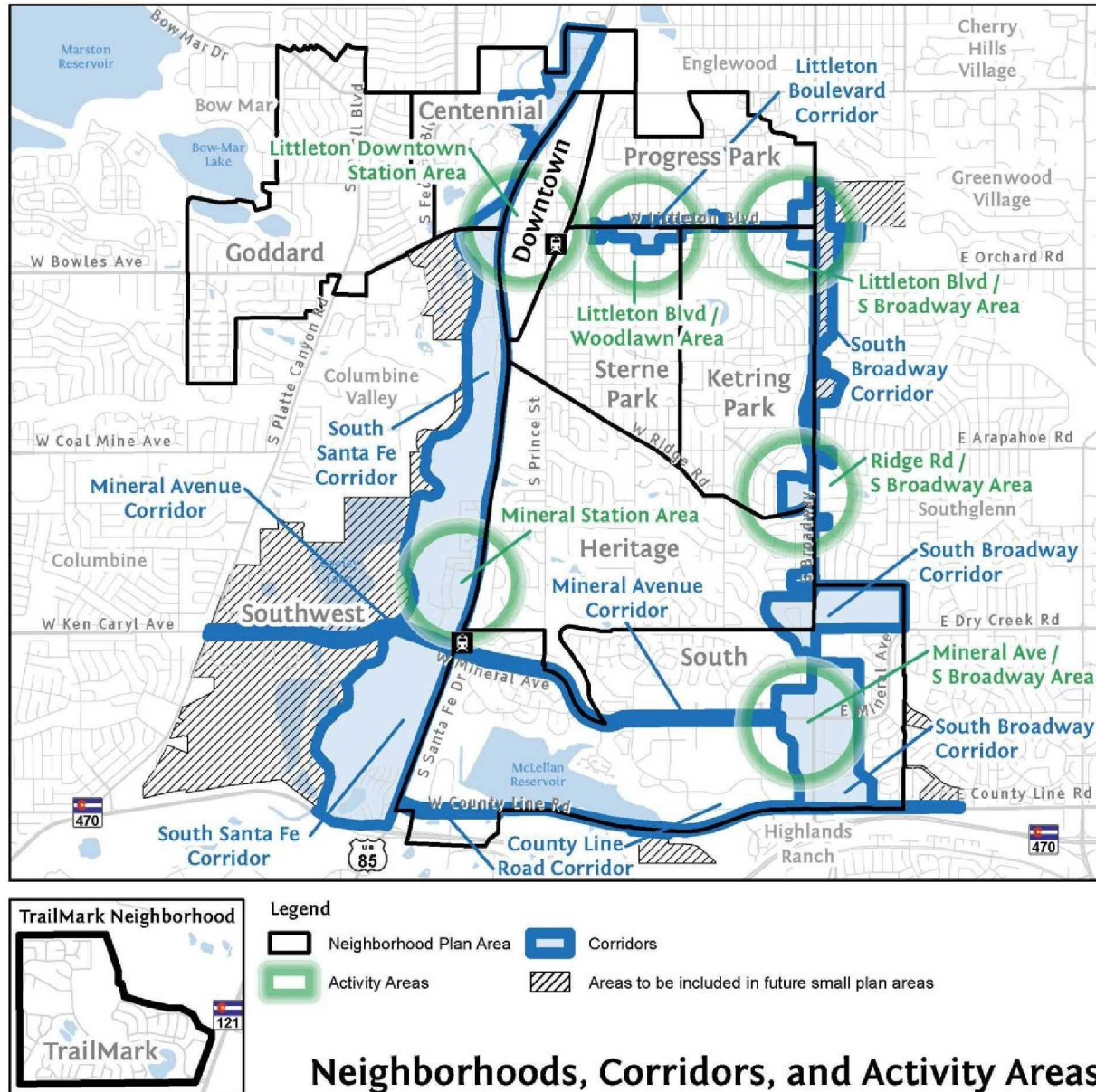
- (a) Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures;
- (b) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements;
- (f) Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities;
- (h) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
- (i) Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities;
- (j) Environmental contamination of buildings or property;
- (k5) The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements.

## **5.0 Amended Plan Relationship to Other Community Documents**

### **5.1 Amended Plan Conformity**

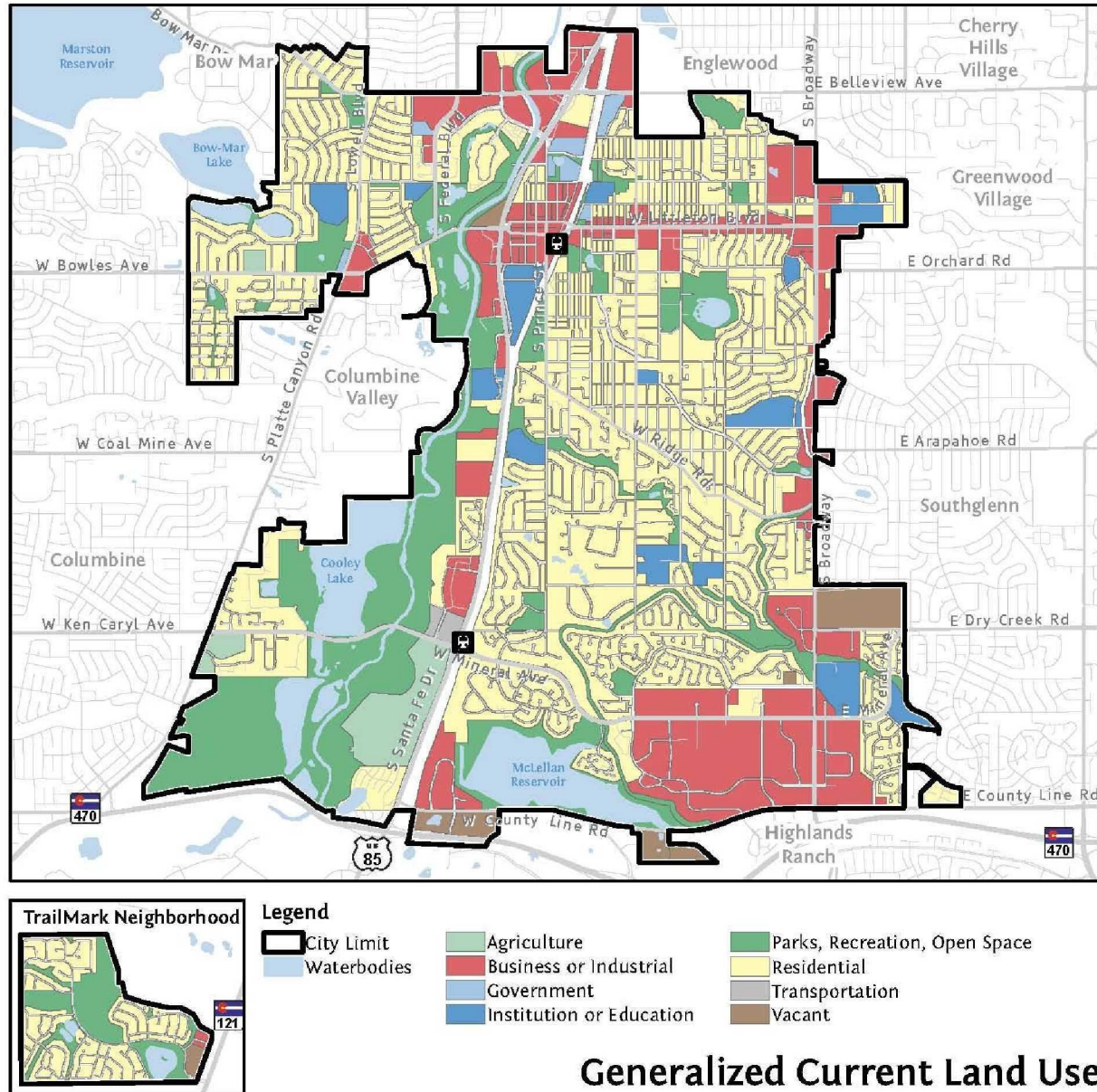
As supported by specific references presented herein, implementation of this Amended Plan will further the objectives and requirements of the Comprehensive Plan with respect to development and redevelopment, particularly within targeted locations of the community. In addition, as development occurs in the Area, it shall conform to the Comprehensive Plan and any subsequent updates, as well as any regulating documents including the current building code or other rules, regulations, and policies promulgated pursuant thereto. Any site-specific planning documents that might impact properties in the Area including, but not limited to City-approved site, drainage, and public improvement plans; and, any applicable City design standards, all as may be in effect

Figure No. 2: Neighborhoods, Corridors and Activity Areas Map





**Figure No. 3: Generalized Current Land Use Map**



and amended from time to time, will also be adhered to. Finally, conditions of blight within the Area will be remedied by this Amended Plan and redevelopment by private enterprise to the extent possible, but will need to first be identified as a priority investment by LIFT in consultation with the City and affected property owners. It is this Amended Plan's intent that public improvements will be phased as the market allows and funded in part by tax increment revenues.

## **5.2 Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan**

As explained earlier, a general plan for the City, known as the Citywide Plan, a Section of the City of Littleton Comprehensive Plan, was adopted in 2014. LIFT, with the cooperation of the City, private enterprise and other public bodies, will undertake projects and activities described herein in order to eliminate the identified conditions of blight while also implementing the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and all other City adopted plans which impact properties within the Area. Key goals and policies of that plan which this Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan will advance are described in detail Appendix A.

### **5.2.1 Neighborhoods, Corridors and Activity Areas Map (Figure No. 2)**

The location of the area that is the subject of this Amended Plan is generally referenced in the Citywide Plan as an under-performing commercial center. It is also located within the influence area of the South Santa Fe Drive corridor, as reflected on the Neighborhoods, Corridors and Activity Areas Map which appears in the Citywide Plan and here as Figure No. 2. A definition of this geography (corridor) is presented in Section 2.0.

### **5.2.2 Generalized Current Land Use Map (Figure No. 3)**

The Area, in relation to the city at-large, is reflected in its Generalized Current Land Use Map which appears in the Citywide Plan and here as Figure No. 3.

### **5.3 Correlation with Other Community Plans**

Implementation of this Amended Plan will be consistent with development objectives expressed in all City-adopted and accepted plans that speak specifically to properties in the Area. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, this Amended Plan will advance the priorities of the community's Economic Plan, as also identified in Appendix A.

## **6.0 Authorized Authority Undertakings and Activities**

Whereas the Act allows for a wide range of activities to be used in the implementation of an urban renewal plan, it is LIFT's intent to provide both financial assistance and public improvements in partnership with property owners and other affected parties in order to accomplish the objectives stated herein. Public-private partnerships and other forms of cooperative development will be essential to LIFT's strategy for preventing the spread of blight and eliminating existing blighting conditions. Specific undertakings of the Authority in the furtherance of this Amended Plan are described as follows.

### **6.1 Complete Public Improvements and Facilities**

LIFT may, or cooperate with others to, finance, install, construct, and reconstruct any public improvements. Additionally, LIFT may, or cooperate with others to, demolish and clear existing improvements for the purpose of promoting the objectives of this Amended Plan and the Act.

While public projects should, whenever possible, stimulate (directly and indirectly) desired private sector investment, it is the intent of this Amended Plan that the combination of public and private investment that occurs in the Area will contribute to the overall economic well-being of the community at-large.

As described in Section 4.0 of this Amended Plan, 10 qualifying conditions of blight, as defined in Section 31-25-103(2) of the Act, are evident in the Area. This Amended Plan proposes to remedy those conditions by providing certain public improvements and facilities, including, but not limited to the following:

- (a) Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures: improvements to buildings and other structures including fascias, fences and retaining walls;
- (b) Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout: road and parking area repairs; paving; gateway and driveway construction; and, safety improvements;
- (c) Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness: improved access; and, property assemblage (if necessary);
- (d) Unsanitary or unsafe conditions: enhanced lighting on public rights-of-way; parking lot construction; completion of pedestrian improvements; and, any required off-site improvements deemed reasonable and for the public benefit including drainage;
- (e) Deterioration of site or other improvements: signage repairs and construction; landscaping; and, roadway surface improvements;
- (f) Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities: on-site and off-site infrastructure improvements as approved by LIFT; sidewalk and complete street construction projects; and, improved curbs and gutters;
- (h) The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes: fire protection improvements to buildings;
- (i) Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidation, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities: structural improvements; and items listed under (h) above;
- (j) Environmental contamination of buildings or property: items listed under (h and i) above; and
- (k5) The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements: financial support for property development and redevelopment.

## **6.2 Complete Other Improvements and Facilities**

Whereas there could be non-public improvements in the Area that may be required to accommodate development and redevelopment and still benefit the public, LIFT may



assist in the financing or construction of these improvements to the extent authorized by the Act.

### **6.3 Promote Development and Redevelopment**

A key concept associated with implementation of this Amended Plan is targeted investment that will serve to catalyze development throughout the Area and fund future public improvements. The potential impact of this investment to Arapahoe County is quantified in the Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan – Arapahoe County Impact Report presented to the LIFT Board under separate cover.

### **6.4 Adopt Standards**

As stated earlier, all development in the Area shall conform to applicable rules, regulations, policies, other requirements, and standards of the City, along with any other governmental entity which has jurisdiction within its boundaries. While the Act allows for the adoption of standards and requirements applicable to projects undertaken in an urban renewal area, in the context of this Amended Plan, it is LIFT's intention that investment in the Area conform to City-approved documents.

### **6.5 Modify this Amended Plan**

LIFT may propose, and the City Council may make, modifications to this Amended Plan as may be necessary provided they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and any subsequent updates. Additionally, any such amendments made in accordance with this Amended Plan and as otherwise contemplated, must also be compliant with the Act. Finally, LIFT may, in specific cases, allow non-substantive variations from the provisions of this Amended Plan if it determines that a literal enforcement of the provision would constitute an unreasonable limitation beyond the intent and purpose stated herein.

## **6.6 Review this Amended Plan**

The ongoing review process for this Amended Plan is intended to provide a mechanism to allow those parties responsible for administering and implementing key projects within its boundaries to periodically evaluate its effectiveness and make adjustments to ensure efficiency in implementing these activities. To this end, the following steps are presented to serve as a guide for its future review:

- (a) LIFT may propose modifications, and the City Council may make such modifications as may be necessary provided they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and any subsequent updates, as well as the Act.
- (b) Modifications may be developed from suggestions by LIFT, property and business owners, and City staff operating in support of LIFT and advancement of this Amended Plan.

## **6.7 Provide Relocation Assistance**

While it is not anticipated as of the date of this Amended Plan that acquisition of real property will result in the relocation of any individuals, families, or business concerns; if such relocation becomes necessary, LIFT will adopt a relocation plan in conformance with the Act.

## **6.8 Demolish, Clear and Prepare Improvements**

While not anticipated as of the date of this Amended Plan, LIFT may, on a case-by-case basis, elect to demolish or cooperate with others to clear buildings, structures and other improvements within the Area in an effort to advance projects deemed consistent with the vision stated herein. Additionally, existing Development or Cooperation Agreements may require such demolition or site clearance to -- eliminate unhealthy, unsanitary, and unsafe conditions; or, obsolete uses deemed detrimental to the public welfare; and / or remove and prevent the spread of deterioration.

## **6.9 Acquire and Dispose of Property**

While the Act allows for the acquisition of property by negotiation or any other method, it is not the intent of this Amended Plan that LIFT uses its resources to acquire property by eminent domain. Further, while the urban renewal law permits acquisition by eminent domain, in the context of this Amended Plan the LIFT Board will confer decisions of eminent domain to the Littleton City Council.

Properties acquired by entities other than the Authority may temporarily be operated, managed and maintained by the Authority if requested to do so by the acquiring entity and deemed in the best interest of an Urban Renewal Project and this Amended Plan. Such property under the management and control of the Authority may be rented or leased pending its disposition for redevelopment.

LIFT may sell, lease, or otherwise transfer real property or any interest in real property subject to existing covenants, conditions and restrictions, including architectural and design controls, time restrictions on development, and building requirements in accordance with the Act and this Amended Plan.

## **6.10 Enter Into Redevelopment / Development Agreements**

LIFT may enter into Redevelopment / Development Agreements or other contracts with developer(s) or property owners or such other individuals or entities determined to be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Amended Plan. Further, such Agreements, or other contracts, may contain terms and provisions deemed necessary or appropriate for the purpose of undertaking the activities contemplated by this Amended Plan and the Act. Any existing agreements between the City and private parties that are consistent with this Amended Plan are intended to remain in full force and effect, unless all parties to such agreements agree otherwise.

#### **6.11 Enter Into Cooperation Agreements**

For the purpose of this Amended Plan, LIFT may enter into one or more Cooperation Agreements pursuant to the Act. Whereas the City and LIFT recognize the need to cooperate in the implementation of this Amended Plan, these Cooperation Agreements may include without limitation the planning, financing, installation, construction and / or reconstruction of public or other eligible improvements. This paragraph shall not be construed to require any particular form of cooperation.

#### **6.12 Create Tax Increment Area**

The boundaries of the Area shall be as set forth in Section 1.5 and more fully described in Appendix B. It is the intent of the City Council in approving this Amended Plan that upon its adoption the Authority is authorizing the use of TIF resources as part of its efforts to advance the vision, objectives and projects described herein, all in accordance with C.R.S. § 31-25-107(9), and to do so within the entirety of the Area as set forth in Appendix B. The Authority is further specifically authorized to expend both property and sales tax incremental revenues to the extent authorized by the Act and this Amended Plan. However, improvements which enhance the financial viability of existing businesses and / or redevelopment of these businesses will be a priority use for these resources, not the acquisition of real property by eminent domain. See Section 6.9 above.

While this Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan contemplates that the primary method of assisting with financing eligible expenses in the Area will be through the use of property tax increment revenue, City Council hereby determines to allocate municipal sales tax increment upon adoption of this Amended Plan. Such municipal sales tax increment shall be used for a particular Urban Renewal Project upon approval of a Cooperative Agreement (sales tax sharing agreement) between the Authority and City, whereas the sharing of municipal sales tax incremental revenues is specifically authorized by this Amended Plan without the need for further modification or amendment of the same. Such agreements shall be authorized after receipt of a financing plan outlining the proposed amounts and purpose for which the municipal sales tax increment is to be used. Upon City Council approval of said Cooperative Agreement, the municipal sales tax increment will be allocated and distributed in

accordance with the tax increment financing provisions of Section 31-25-107 (9), C.R.S., which is by this reference incorporated herein as if set forth in its entirety.

Unless specifically provided for to the contrary, upon adoption of this Amended Plan, incremental tax revenues, if any, levied and collected upon taxable property in the Tax Increment Area, shall be allocated to the Authority as set forth for a period not to exceed the statutory limitation of twenty-five years, and preferably for a lesser period as provided in any Cooperation Agreement and / or Redevelopment / Development Agreement.

## **7.0 Project Financing**

### **7.1 Public Investment Objective**

A critical component to the success of any urban renewal strategy is participation by both the public and private sectors whereas no one entity, either public or private, has sufficient resources alone to sustain a long-term improvement effort. Possible public infrastructure investments may include, but will not be limited to completing: pedestrian improvements including construction of sidewalks, street lights and other design enhancements intended to improve safety for vehicular and non-vehicular movement; roadway improvements including curbs, gutters, and drainage infrastructure; and, utilities under the authority of the City; as well as, providing financial assistance for expenses considered eligible under the Act.

### **7.2 Financial Mechanisms**

LIFT may finance undertakings pursuant to this Amended Plan by any method authorized under the Act or any other applicable law, including without limitation of the following: issuance of notes, bonds and other obligations as defined in the Act in an amount sufficient to finance all or part of this Amended Plan; borrowing of funds and creation of indebtedness; reimbursement agreements; and / or utilization of the following: federal or state loans or grants, interest income, annual appropriation agreements, agreements with public or private entities; and loans, advances and grants

from any other available sources. The principal, interest, costs and fees on any indebtedness are to be paid for with any lawfully available funds of LIFT.

Debt may include bonds, refunding bonds, notes, interim certificates or receipts, temporary bonds, certificates of indebtedness, or any other obligation lawfully created.

### **7.3 Tax Increment Financing**

Activities may be financed by LIFT under the TIF provisions of the Act. Such incremental revenues may be used for a period not to exceed the statutory requirement, which is presently twenty-five years as set forth in Section 6.12 above.

#### **7.3.1 Special Fund**

In accordance with the requirements of the law, LIFT shall establish a Tax Increment Revenue Fund for the deposit of all funds generated pursuant to the division of ad valorem property and municipal sales tax revenue described in this Amended Plan.

#### **7.3.2 Base Amount**

The Base Amount includes that portion of the property taxes which are produced by the levy at the rate fixed each year by or for each public body upon the assessed valuation of taxable property in the Tax Increment Area last certified prior to the effective date of approval of this Amended Plan (or future amendments); and, that portion of municipal sales taxes collected within the boundaries of the Tax Increment Area in the twelve-month period ending on the last day of the month prior to the effective date of approval of this Amended Plan and paid to the public body, as are all other taxes collected by or for said public body.

### **7.3.3 Incremental Revenues**

Incremental revenues including that portion of said property, and if authorized by City Council, municipal sales taxes in excess of the base amount set forth in Section 7.3.2 above shall be allocated to and, when collected, paid into LIFT's Tax Increment Revenue Fund. The Authority may use these funds to pay the principal of, the interest on, and any other premiums due in connection with the bonds of, loans or advances to, or indebtedness incurred (whether funded, refunded, assumed, or otherwise) by the Authority, for financing or refinancing, in whole or in part, any portion of an Urban Renewal Project considered eligible under the Act. Unless and until the total valuation for assessment of the taxable property in any Tax Increment Area exceeds the base valuation, all of the taxes levied upon taxable property in the Tax Increment Area shall be paid into the funds of the respective public bodies. Also, when such bonds, loans, advances and indebtedness, including interest thereon and any premiums due in connection therewith, have been paid, all taxes upon the same taxable property shall be paid to the respective public bodies.

Further, the incremental portion of said taxes, as described in this subsection 7.3.3, may be irrevocably pledged by the Authority for the payment of, principal and interest on, and any premiums due in connection with such bonds, loans, advances and / or indebtedness incurred by Authority to finance an Urban Renewal Project (as defined in the Act); except:

- (a) Any offsets collected by the County Treasurer for return of overpayments or any funds reserved by the Authority for such purposes in accordance with Section 31-25-107(9)(a)(III) and (b), C.R.S.
- (b) Any reasonable (as determined by the Authority) set-asides or reserves of incremental taxes paid to the Authority for payment of expenses associated with administering this Amended Plan.

If there is any conflict between the Act and this Amended Plan, the provisions of the Act shall prevail, and the language in this Amended Plan automatically deemed to conform to the statute.

#### **7.4 Other Financing Mechanisms / Structures**

This Amended Plan is designed to provide for the use of TIF as one tool to facilitate investment and reinvestment within the Area. However, in addition to tax increment financing, LIFT shall be authorized to finance implementation of this Amended Plan by any method authorized by the Act. Given the obstacles associated with redevelopment, LIFT recognizes that it is imperative that solutions and available resources are comprehensive, flexible and creative. To this end, LIFT is committed to making a variety of strategies and mechanisms available which are financial, physical, market and organizational in nature, since it is the intent of this Amended Plan to use the tools either independently or in various combinations. If not available through LIFT, the Authority LIFT may contract with the City to administer specific incentives.

#### **8.0 Severability**

If any portion of this Amended Plan is held to be invalid or unenforceable, such invalidity will not affect the remaining portions of the same.



# Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan

City of Littleton, Colorado

## **Appendix A:**

Citywide Plan, a Section of the City of Littleton Comprehensive Plan, adopted 2014 (taken verbatim)

City of Littleton Economic Plan, adopted 2013 (excerpts taken verbatim)

## **Introduction**

### Purpose

The Comprehensive Plan provides a broad vision for the city's future. It offers a framework for decisions affecting private and public development. It is the mission statement and guide for the city's land use-related regulatory tools and programs, including zoning and the capital improvements program. The Comprehensive Plan includes both a Citywide Plan, provided herein, and more detailed Small Area Plans for Neighborhoods, transportation-based Corridors, and Activity Areas, provided separately. While the Citywide Plan addresses larger issues, the Small Area Plans address more detailed issues and provide more detailed recommendations. All Small Area Plans are consistent with, and help advance the implementation of, the Citywide Plan.

### Use

Citizens, property owners, developers, city staff, and appointed and elected city officials use the Comprehensive Plan according to their respective roles in the decision-making process.

Because the plan cannot anticipate all issues and questions, it does not include policies that will address every situation. In those cases where it does not address a situation or issue, but the issue has citywide ramifications and needs a citywide perspective, users should base their interpretation on the Vision, Goals, Policies, and Transformative Actions. In these cases, users should also rely on more specific direction provided in the relevant Neighborhood, Corridor, and Small Area plans. Similarly, the complexity of land use-related issues may result in a conflict between Policies. Again, users should base their analysis and interpretation on other elements of the plan.

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidelines for development decisions through the Vision, Goals, and Policies in the Citywide Plan and the more specific Goals and Policies in Small Area Plans for Neighborhoods, Corridors, and Activity Areas.

## **Demographics**

The Vision, Goals, Policies, and Actions in the Comprehensive Plan reflect the city's demographic trends. Figures B and C on the following page represent two of the most significant changes in Littleton's population between 1980 and 2010. The average household size, as represented by Figure B, has decreased from 2.65 persons per household to 2.25. That reduction is paralleled by the trend illustrated

in Figure C, which demonstrates that both the largest and the second largest population groups have progressively shifted to older age categories, as residents who were parents of young children, and their children, have both aged. The land use implications of these two trends include a reduction in school age populations, a resulting decline in school enrollments, and a reprogramming of schools in order to maximize efficiencies and reduce costs. As a result, there is a desire to attract young residents to enjoy the city's family-friendly neighborhoods and amenities and to help the school district retain its high standards. The same trends have resulted in an increasing desire for housing, services, and infrastructure that meet the needs of older residents.

## **Implementation**

Strategic implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will occur over time. The plan will guide the majority of implementation through its use as a framework for development-related decisions and capital improvements. Business cycles, competing needs, unanticipated opportunities, and available resources will influence implementation schedules. Detailed work programs will reflect those factors and facilitate implementation.

## **Planning Process**

Following its launch in May 2012, Inspire Littleton, the city's public outreach element of the comprehensive planning process, generated great enthusiasm, garnered an enviable rate of public participation, and did an excellent job marketing the process and the plan. Early in the process, more than 100 people participated in planning forums across the city.

InspireLittleton.org, the city's interactive website, ran throughout the planning and review process and welcomed more than 600 individuals as they registered and participated in the ongoing community discussion. As part of the outreach at public forums, parades, and other community events, nearly 1,000 people wrote ideas on sticky notes and posted them on the Inspire Littleton idea boards. Some drew pictures representing what they love about Littleton or what they think would make Littleton an even better place to live. As of November 2013, the 608 active participants on the website, 7,106 visitors, and 51,752 page views generated 557 ideas and provided 857 comments on those ideas.

## **Updating**

A snapshot in time, the Comprehensive Plan should be monitored for its effectiveness and regularly updated to better reflect current conditions, issues, and opportunities. At a minimum, the planning

board should initiate a Comprehensive Plan review every five years and, if deemed necessary, update the plan.

## **Related Plans**

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan has two sections: the Citywide Plan and the small area plans. Whereas the Citywide Plan provides the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan, the small area plans provide specific objectives, strategies, and metrics for each of the targeted small areas. The small area plans are divided into three categories: neighborhood plans, corridor plans, and activity area plans, as shown on the following page in Figure D.

- Neighborhood plans address a specific residential area within the city. There are nine neighborhoods defined within the city boundaries. Each neighborhood plan will be updated as deemed necessary by the planning board and city council. A list of all neighborhood plans is listed in Figure D. As neighborhood plans are updated or created (where no plan exists currently), public outreach will be conducted to solicit input from residents in the neighborhood. As plans are updated, neighborhood boundaries may be revised to better represent the current and anticipated conditions.
- Corridors generally represent linear areas along major arterial streets and commercial corridors. Figure E illustrates the preliminary configuration of the corridors. The boundaries of neighborhood plans and corridor plans will not overlap to avoid conflicting objectives. Each corridor plan will define specific objectives, strategies, guidelines, and metrics for achieving its goals and policies.
- Activity Areas are targeted areas that have a potential for new development or redevelopment and are usually within the study area of a corridor plan or neighborhood plan. These can serve as catalyst areas for economic development efforts, public / private joint ventures, or special districts to encourage innovative development. Each activity area plan will define specific objectives, strategies, guidelines, and metrics for encouraging, designing, and implementing development that stimulates the area and complements the underlying corridor plan and/or neighborhood plan(s). Preliminary activity areas have been identified in figure d, but the planning board and city council may add or delete activity areas as market conditions change. Activity area plans may be contained within corridor plans or neighborhood plans.

Other reports and documents used to draft the 2014 Citywide Plan are regional land use plans; state, regional, and city transportation plans; and park plans. These documents complement the Comprehensive Plan and are considered to be advisory to it, even though they may not be referenced individually by the plan or adopted as elements of the plan.



## **A. Citywide Plan**

The Citywide Plan is comprised of two sections that guide the city's future land-use-related actions. The first – **Part I: Goals and Policies** – is based on values that were articulated through Inspire Littleton's two year process of gathering community ideas and feedback. These values reflect themes that resonated throughout citizen comments on why this community is special and what they would like Littleton to become. These core values form the foundation for the Neighborhood, Corridor, and Activity Area Plans that will guide development and decision-making tailored to each community's needs. In this combination, future planning, development, land use, and zoning decisions should reflect the overarching Goals and Vision outlined here.

The second section – **Part II: Transformative Actions** – describes strategic actions in areas of primary importance necessary to achieve the citywide Goals and Policies outlined in Part I. These actions will guide all underlying plan and policy documents, as well as zoning code changes, budget decisions, and capital investments. To achieve the citizens' vision for Littleton, there must be a collaborative, long-term commitment to these strategic actions.

### **Vision for the Future of Littleton**

Littleton is a community that embraces its authentic small-town qualities while enjoying the advantages of a metropolitan area. The city should continue to exemplify and promote a sustainable economy, environment, and society. Littleton will:

- Respect and build upon its history
- Foster its small-town, family-friendly character
- Be home to people of all ages and backgrounds
- Value livability, diversity, and progress
- Promote a vibrant economy for individuals, businesses, and the city as a whole
- Value the importance of its citizens and its natural resources
- Manage and direct change
- Strive for sustainability in economic, environmental, and social decisions
- Raise the bar to increase the quality of community and economic development

## **Part 1: Goals and Policies**

### **Goal 1: A Dynamic Littleton**

Foster a vibrant and evolving community.

#### **A Dynamic Littleton – Policies**

- 1.1 Generate more opportunities for residents to live, shop, and play where they work and to work, shop, and play where they live.
- 1.5 Identify the Activity Areas, such as those around the light rail stations, that might benefit from public/private investment.  
  
Partner with private-sector individuals and entities to explore, promote, and follow-through with the best prospects.
- 1.6 Encourage housing that responds to changing demands in the local housing market, allows every generation and income group to call Littleton home, and is otherwise consistent with this plan.
- 1.7 Evaluate the redevelopment potential of blighted properties. Work with owners throughout the redevelopment process to encourage sustainable uses and design to optimize mitigation of possible negative effects on adjacent uses.
- 1.8 Require that new commercial development be appropriately buffered from adjacent uses.

### **Goal 2: An Outdoor Littleton**

Capitalize and expand upon Littleton's most valuable outdoor resources, including the South Platte River and its tributaries; the High Line Canal; and the city's parks, open space, trails, panoramic views, landscape, wildlife, recreational facilities, and public gathering places. Make these resources as available to the public as possible while protecting and enhancing them.

#### **An Outdoor Littleton - Policies**

- 2.1 Treat the South Platte River and its tributaries as one of the city's most important assets.
  - a. Inventory, protect, and enhance the river's primary natural areas and wildlife habitat.
  - b. Beyond the areas categorized as the most important natural areas and wildlife habitats, identify locations adjacent to the river that are appropriate for enlivening urban land uses. For example, consider restaurants with outside dining, multiple-unit housing, outdoor-related retailers, bicycle and rollerblade rentals, and other activities for people of all ages and with a diversity of interests.
- 2.3 Encourage inviting outdoor activity and gathering places in new developments.

### **Goal 3: A Connected Littleton**

Enhance local, regional, and global linkages - physical, social, and technological.

#### **A Connected Littleton - Policies**

- 3.1 Incorporate the concept of complete streets into the city's efforts to better accommodate and reduce conflicts among multiple modes of traffic and to help make the city more pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle- friendly.
- 3.4 Provide inviting connections between commercial development and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- 3.6 Generate a creative and comprehensive way- finding system that reinforces Littleton's sense of place, while providing directions within the city.
- 3.7 Remain technologically current while integrating information and communication technology throughout the city.

### **Goal 4: A Distinctive Littleton**

Maintain and expand upon the characteristics that make Littleton an authentic and distinctive community.

#### **A Distinctive Littleton - Policies**

- 4.2. Encourage preservation of historic structures, districts, and places that are significant to Littleton history.
- 4.4. Encourage "architecture of place" and small, independent businesses that differentiate Littleton from nearby municipalities.
- 4.5. Create distinctive gateways to the city, its downtown, and other points of interest.

## **Part II: Transformative Actions**

The three actions described below are the most critical steps for achieving the city's Vision, Goals, and Policies. Successful completion of these actions requires a comprehensive and long-term commitment; concerted effort; collaboration between local, regional, and governing agencies; and private-sector investment.

### **Transformative Action 1: Highlight the River**

- 1.4 Set the stage for new development or redevelopment at the identified locations. Use tools such as zoning and capital improvements to accomplish this.
- 1.5 Attract the best possible development and redevelopment to the identified areas. Employ economic and procedural instruments to realize this.
- 1.6 Focus public and private investments along the river.
- 1.7 Locate and design public investments so that they optimize their potential to leverage private investments.

### **Transformative Action 2: Focus on Activity Areas and Corridors**

- 2.1 Identify and designate as Activity Areas or Corridors those locations or street corridors, respectively, where additional new development or redevelopment is desired and either occurring or anticipated. Designated areas should be those that will have the most transformative impacts on achieving the city's Vision.
- 2.2 Use tools such as small area plans, zoning, capital improvements, and other incentives to set the stage for redevelopment and new development in designated activity areas and corridors.
- 2.3 Encourage desired development and redevelopment in designated activity areas and corridors.

### **Transformative Action 3: Direct Littleton's Growth**

- 3.5 Implement the city's economic plan; review and revise it as necessary in order to remain current. See the city's website, [littletongov.org](http://littletongov.org), for a link to the plan.

*The Comprehensive Plan is the foundation of both quasi-judicial land-use decisions and administrative decision-making. The Citywide Plan provides an overall decision making framework and the neighborhood, corridor, and activity area plans provide more detailed guidance.*



## **City of Littleton Economic Plan, adopted 2013 (excerpts taken verbatim)**

### **Introduction**

Littleton is a city with many assets. It is a great community in which to live, work and play. It possesses an attractive hometown feeling, an extensive system of parks and interconnected trails, a historic Main Street, light rail access and superior public schools. These attributes are a strong foundation on which to build ongoing economic vitality and a proactive plan for strategic development. Other states and neighboring communities have outlined plans and identified tools that help attract and retain businesses and guide the development of vacant land, underutilized corridors, infill improvements, and the revitalization of residential areas. To remain competitive, Littleton must do more.

### **Risk**

The risk of failing to act is a decline in retail sales. The city cannot afford any measureable reduction in sales tax revenue. A proactive plan calls for an analysis of the current and future retail market as well as a long-term plan for additional revenue streams.

### **Opportunity Cost**

The cost of doing nothing or failing to act is lost opportunity. With retail trends shifting, the city must evaluate the potential impacts on existing and incoming retailers. The plan should encourage attraction of retail operations on the upswing, help mitigate decline of existing operations and minimize leakage to other jurisdictions.

### **Overview**

The City of Littleton is home to approximately 2,493 businesses employing more than 28,510 workers. These two figures indicate success in retaining and attracting dynamic businesses offering a wide variety of employment opportunities. Jobs are important to the city for a variety of reasons, but primarily because people working in the community spend money here and often desire to live here, both of which result in sales tax revenue. While tax revenue is important, it is the vibrant and vital interplay between residential, business, and retail uses that help define the city's unique draw. With its structural reliance on sales tax revenue for operations, the city needs to be particularly supportive of retail businesses. Additionally, employees who commute to Littleton for work may decide to purchase a residence or shop in the city, which means more people and activity helping to expand the retail, residential, and employment market.

Challenging economic conditions and competition from other cities requires a thoughtful and flexible Economic Plan. The city needs to approach the business and community development process with a “yes” first attitude, an open mind and new tools that allow it to foster vitality. The city needs a plan that provides resources to retain and grow existing business and addresses the requirements for attracting new business. By implementing the Comprehensive Plan and Economic Plan, the city can achieve the following results. **Note: Those bolded in red below are particularly relevant as they relate to the objectives stated in this Plan.**

- \* **Retain and strengthen existing businesses**
- \* **Attract new businesses that offer new employment opportunities and new sources of revenue**
- \* **Promote new growth and development located along major transit lines and proximate to retail and service hubs in order to increase the customer base for Littleton businesses**
- \* Improve the quality and availability of single-family housing through encouraging reinvestment in existing housing stock, an affordable senior housing rehab incentive program and expanded housing and graduated care options within or proximate to Littleton
- \* Encourage new housing development to complement existing housing stock and bolster local property values
- \* Improve or redevelop distressed and underperforming shopping areas
- \* Identify and improve undeveloped and underdeveloped properties along major corridors to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Plan
- \* Increase employment opportunities
- \* Expand the availability of products and services in Littleton
- \* Make strategic investments in expanding Littleton’s parks and open space system in order to strengthen connections while stimulating high-quality development/redevelopment
- \* Develop, recognize and capitalize on strategic relationships and partnerships that make Littleton a great community

## **Assets, Priorities & Opportunities**

### Assets

Source: Citizen Survey, Business Survey, Inspire Littleton and Staff

*Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (1.2015)*

1. Hometown Feel
2. Schools
3. Light Rail
4. Historic Main Street
5. Diverse Residential Areas
6. City Support of Business
7. Open Space and Interconnected Bike Paths and Trails
8. Health Care and Technology Business Clusters in South Park
9. Museum, Library, Buck Center, Hudson Gardens
10. South Platte River, Carson Nature Center, South Platte Park
11. Community Events
12. Educated Workforce
13. Developable Land with Great Visibility and Access
14. Developable Sites with Entitlements in Place

#### Priorities

Source: Citizen Survey, Business Survey, Inspire Littleton and Staff

1. Create Incentive for Business Investment (Meeting Site Selector Requirements)
2. Engage Property Owners and Developers
3. Inventory Existing Parking and Additional Options for the Downtown Area
- 4. Strategic Revitalization Along Major Corridors (Littleton Boulevard, Santa Fe, Broadway)**
5. Update Aging Shopping Centers
6. Restore Underperforming Shopping Centers
7. Strategically Expand Retail Options
8. Diversification of Revenue Streams
9. Expand Employment Opportunities
10. Revitalize Northeast Neighborhood
11. Update and Increase Available Housing with Revitalization Programs

*Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (1.2015)*

12. Increase Senior Housing Options

13. Attract More Students for K-12

#### Opportunities

**1. Infill Development**

**2. Redevelopment**

**3. Transit Oriented Development**

**4. Health and Wellness**

**5. Technology and Information**

**6. Creative Industries**

**7. Tourism and Outdoor Recreation**

**8. Downtown as an Economic Engine**

#### **Immediate Priorities**

##### **Priority #1 Create Incentives for Business Investment (Meeting Site Selector Requirements)**

**Issue:** Site selectors are looking for properties that meet specific functional/location requirements as well as overall cost profiles including public incentives and finance mechanisms. Competitor cities offer a variety of incentives and many have more diverse property offerings. The right incentives can help when site selector goals can't be completely accommodated by the private sector alone.

**Solution(s):** To remain competitive with other cities, Littleton needs to offer the tools required to attract and complete developments (TIF's, PIF's, Sales Tax Sharing Agreements, Use Tax Rebates, and Permit Fee Abatement).

##### **Priority #2 Engage Property Owners and Developers**

Being landlocked with limited vacant land for development in private ownership requires several things.

**Issue:** Communication and positive rapport with land owners and developers.

**Solution(s):** Identify land owners and developers. Engage them in an ongoing communication to include access to the city manager and department representatives empowered to expedite the development process.



**Issue:** Partner with owners, developers and the affected community to gain expeditious approval of projects that further the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Solution(s):** Expedite projects that meet economic and land use goals whenever possible. Continue to amend development codes to ensure all steps in process add value to the outcome. Provide feasible alternatives when necessary. Identify specific uses and desired types of development.

**Issue:** Strategies for a proactive approach to infill development.

**Solution(s):** Engage property owners in regular communications. Hold commercial property owner roundtables to discuss issues and describe city resources, including the “Revitalization Incentive Grant.” Identify specific uses and desired development. Provide the tools required for strategic infill improvements such as making limited property acquisitions through typical arm’s length transactions that facilitate assemblage; or a land exchange with current city owned parcels. Use public tools to guide higher quality development that implements the city’s goals that would otherwise not be viable.

**Priority #4 Strategic Revitalization along Major Corridors (Littleton Boulevard, Santa Fe and Broadway)**

**Issue:** The city has three major corridors that need improvement and strategies for sustainable development as identified by the Comprehensive Plan. The city needs to identify the major assets and issues and mechanisms for new development and redevelopment. Sub-area plans for each of these areas should be a high priority and those plans should include a strategic relationship to one another. A variety of development tools should be considered to implement the plans.

**Solution(s):** The reformation of an Urban Renewal Authority to identify districts and projects and implement improvements. Focusing revitalization along Littleton Boulevard and Broadway will have several positive impacts. Littleton Boulevard is the gateway to downtown Main Street and strategic redevelopment would benefit both areas. The Broadway corridor is improving one or two parcels at a time. A more comprehensive strategy would help create a more cohesive appearance and feel. Many experts recommend planned developments that border and face onto as opposed to away from the river. Various city plans have recognized the Santa Fe corridor as a premier location for mixed-use development. These plans should be reviewed to determine if what currently exists will help encourage connections to the South Platte River.

**Medium to Long-Term Priorities**

**Priority #5 Update Aging Shopping Centers**

*Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan (1.2015)*

**Issue:** Many of the area shopping centers suffer from deferred maintenance and outdated appearance.

**Solution(s):** Provide grant programs that incentivize improvements that benefit and enhance the public realm for existing tenants and make the center more appealing for new tenants. The city offers a matching grant for this purpose known as the “Revitalization Incentive Grant Program.” Improvements would help attract more viable merchants and an increased customer base. Additional tools, where appropriate and legally permissible, should include PIF’s, Sales Tax Sharing Agreements, and Use Tax Rebates.

**Priority #6 Restore or Redevelop Underperforming Shopping Centers to Meet Market Demands**

**Issue:** Many of the area shopping centers are experiencing vacancies as well as underperforming merchants. This may be due to physical issues or an eroded market area.

**Solution(s):** The city should explore opportunities to restore underperforming or obsolete commercial properties to an economically efficient condition. This may include strategic property acquisition or land use changes that allow mixed-use opportunities.

**Priority #7 Strategically Expand Retail Options**

**Issue:** The largest source of revenue for the city is retail sales tax. One or two larger retailers can produce as much sales tax as all smaller retailers combined. For a variety of reasons, some residents and small business owners oppose big box retailers, while others prefer larger retailers.

**Solution(s):** More desirable larger retailers need to be identified and courted in order for the city to sustain its fiscal health. The Economic Development Department will research site requirements, corporate contacts and public response to companies such as Whole Foods, Trader Joes, Cabelas, etc. Once good candidates are identified and vetted, staff will establish communication and proactively seek a location in the city through an incentive package. Incentives should include TIF’s, PIF’s, GID’s, Sales Tax Sharing Agreements, Use Tax Rebates, and Permit Fee Abatement.

**Priority #10 Revitalize the Northeast Neighborhood**

**Issue:** Although many issues related to the Northeast Neighborhood have been improved with code enforcement and some renovation and scrape and rebuild, and aging multi-family apartments remain a concern.

**Solution(s):** The city should encourage improvements in residential areas and engagement of the community. Continued use of the city CDBG allocation for infrastructure improvements is advised. The city should further explore development of a Northeast Neighborhood Community Group that would include residents, property owners, community service providers and city representatives. A properly facilitated, ongoing interaction could

provide valuable insights from the participants regarding their impressions about their community and what the city does to care for the area. A sub-area plan for commercial properties along Littleton Boulevard should recommend land use changes and improvements that would be supported by the neighborhood and bring new people to the area as well.

## **Opportunities**

There are a number of opportunities within the city that will require city investment in order to “harvest” true potential. These opportunities may involve areas where current zoning is not reflective of development potential under current and future market conditions. This potential may include changing or broadening uses, or may also include significant density increases over what is currently allowed by zoning. Encouragement of sustainable development includes a proactive approach with the city working with property owners and developers to achieve the optimum use of property consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

By definition, these opportunities will require sufficient direct economic return to justify the city’s investment. Results should be far greater than pure direct economic return, however: by engaging in thoughtful planning and strategy, the city investment will generate a virtuous circle of benefits that extend far beyond direct economic return, and position the city for a sustainable renaissance.

### **1. Infill Development**

There are opportunities related to the remaining, first-generation development parcels. With proactive city engagement, there is the opportunity to raise the bar: different or mixed uses, higher density, and higher quality developments. The city can choose to become a stakeholder and partner in transformative change have far-reaching consequences. Becoming a proactive partner in meeting the challenges of the future will signal a return to the strong and mixed-use community fabric that historically defined the City of Littleton.

### **2. Redevelopment**

The city has a number of aging commercial districts that may no longer be viable in today’s economy. These districts are characterized by large land assemblages and define significant potential opportunity by virtue of their location and size. The city can be instrumental in reversing a downward spiral of deterioration and tenant strength by encouraging re-investment that will transform and help redefine the future of these properties and surrounding areas within the city.



Redevelopment in some cases might mean demolition and rebuilding while in other cases it might mean increasing density to re-energize uses which are not otherwise viable.

# **Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan**

City of Littleton, Colorado

Appendix B:

**Original and Amended Columbine Square Urban Renewal Plan Area - Legal Description**

## **LEGAL DESCRIPTION – COLUMBINE SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL AREA #1 BOUNDARY**

### **AREA 1-1**

A TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTION 17 , TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 68 WEST OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, CITY OF LITTLETON, COUNTY OF ARAPAHOE, STATE OF COLORADO, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH LOWELL BOULEVARD AND THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WEST BELLEVIEW AVENUE. SAID POINT BEING THE NORTHWEST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-00-001;

THENCE EASTERLY 345 FEET TO A POINT ON THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH LINDEN DRIVE;

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY 1136 FEET TO A POINT ON THE SOUTH PROPERTY CORNER OR ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-22-001;

THENCE NORTHERLY 1080 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING;

CONTAINING A CALCULATED AREA OF 4.2 ACRES.

THE ABOVE DESCRIPTION INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING ASSESSOR PARCELS

PARCEL #2077-17-2-00-001, 2077-17-2-00-002, 2077-17-2-00-003 AND 2077-17-2-22-001

### **AREA 1-2**

TOGETHER WITH

A TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTION 17 , TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 68 WEST OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, CITY OF LITTLETON, COUNTY OF ARAPAHOE, STATE OF COLORADO, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH IRVING STREET AND THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WEST BELLEVIEW AVENUE. SAID POINT BEING THE NORTHWEST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-15-019;

THENCE EASTERLY 1240 FEET TO A POINT ON THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH FEDERAL BOULEVARD;

THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY 55 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY THROUGH A CURVE TO THE RIGHT 550 FEET;

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY 206 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE;

THENCE SOUTHEASTERLY THROUGH A CURVE TO THE LEFT 565 FEET TO A COMMON PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-15-012 AND 2077-17-2-16-001;

THENCE CONTINUING SOUTHWESTERLY ALONG SAID CURVE TO THE RIGHT 70 FEET;

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY 177 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE;

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY THROUGH A CURVE TO THE RIGHT 47 FEET TO A POINT ON THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH FEDERAL CIRCLE AND THE SOUTHEAST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-16-001;

THENCE WESTERLY 180 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE;

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY THROUGH A CURVE TO THE LEFT 116 FEET TO THE SOUTHWEST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-16-001;

THENCE NORTHEASTERLY 323 FEET TO THE NORTHWEST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-16-001;

THENCE WESTERLY 289 FEET TO A POINT ON THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH IRVING STREET AND THE SOUTHWEST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-15-012;

THENCE NORTHERLY 1200 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

CONTAINING A CALCULATED AREA OF 28 ACRES.

THE ABOVE DESCRIPTION INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING ASSESSOR PARCELS

PARCEL #2077-17-2-15-019, 2077-17-2-15-015, 2077-17-2-15-001, 2077-17-2-15-002, 2077-17-2-15-018, 2077-17-2-15-010, 2077-17-2-15-013, 2077-17-2-15-014, 2077-17-2-15-017, 2077-17-2-15-020, 2077-17-2-15-012 AND 2077-17-2-16-001

### **AREA 1-3**

TOGETHER WITH

A TRACT OF LAND LOCATED IN SECTION 17 , TOWNSHIP 5 SOUTH, RANGE 68 WEST OF THE 6<sup>TH</sup> PRINCIPAL MERIDIAN, CITY OF LITTLETON, COUNTY OF ARAPAHOE, STATE OF COLORADO, BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE WEST RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH FEDERAL BOULEVARD. SAID POINT BEING THE NORTHEAST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-17-001;

THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY 430 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE, SAID POINT BEING THE SOUTHEAST PROPERTY CORNER OF ASSESSOR PARCEL NO. 2077-17-2-17-004;

THENCE THROUGH A CURVE TO THE RIGHT 47 FEET TO A POINT ON THE NORTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF SOUTH FEDERAL CIRCLE;

THENCE NORTHWESTERLY 180 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE;

THENCE NORTHWESTERLY THROUGH A CURVE TO THE RIGHT 126 FEET;

THENCE NORTHERLY 330 FEET TO A POINT OF CURVATURE;

THENCE NORTHEASTERLY THROUGH A CURVE TO THE RIGHT 126 FEET;

THENCE EASTERLY 180 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING.

CONTAINING A CALCULATED AREA OF 3.2 ACRES.

THE ABOVE DESCRIPTION INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING ASSESSOR PARCELS

PARCEL #2077-17-2-17-001, 2077-17-2-17-003 AND 2077-17-2-17-004

AREA 1-1: 4.2 ACRES

AREA 1-2: 28 ACRES

AREA 1-3: 3.2 ACRES

TOTAL ACREAGE FOR AREA 1 DESCRIPTIONS 35.4 ACRES