PUTTING OUR BEST FOOT FORWARD

Enhancing Downtown Denver’s Pedestrian Environment

Presented by the 2008 Downtown Denver Leadership Program Class

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I. INTRODUCTION

“Ugly things do not please. It is much easier to love a thing of beauty – and this applies to cities. Fountains, statues, lights, music and parks make people love the place in which they live.”
- Robert Speer

In the late 1800s, Robert Speer inspired Denver by bringing the European “City Beautiful” concept to life. He had a vision to create a great city. Denver’s leaders and citizens have built on Speer’s vision over the years to create the city we know today. It is a city with great attributes, but also one with room for improvement.

To that end, in 2007 Denver City Council adopted the Downtown Area Plan (DAP) to serve as a 20 year visioning plan for leaders, developers and stakeholders in Downtown Denver. The plan identifies five overarching vision elements, seven transformative projects and a strategy framework to aid in creating the most livable, healthy, sustainable and vibrant Downtown. One of the vision elements identified was “Putting the Pedestrian First”. The 2008 Downtown Denver Leadership Program Class was challenged with making recommendations to the DAP 2027 Implementation Committee to define strategies to achieve this vision. The group studied best practices and benefits of a pedestrian-friendly environment, and came to the conclusion that the enhancement of experiences and change of cultural mindsets so that pedestrians, bicycles, and mass transit take priority over private vehicular transportation are what will make Denver the most pedestrian-friendly city in the nation.

The Leadership Class identified four factors that contribute to a successful pedestrian environment:

1. Safety
2. Design and Amenities
3. Parks and Open Space
4. Transportation and Parking

As you read through this report, you will see that many of the strategies and recommended projects in the DAP are expanded upon and supported by recommendations of the Leadership Class.

This proposal relates to the strategies and visions identified in the Downtown Area Plan, with recommendations most closely related to Transformative Project A.2 ‘Energizing the Commercial Core’, and Vision Element B ‘A Walkable City – Putting Pedestrians First.’

The report that follows discusses the benefits of a pedestrian-friendly environment; the design elements of such an environment; transportation and parking issues; and how best to utilize our existing parks and open spaces to better create pedestrian-friendly destinations. A pedestrian-friendly environment is defined in this report as one that is easily and safely navigable by people of all ages and abilities on foot, disabled individuals and bicyclists.
To begin, the Leadership Class discussed why Denver should pursue becoming the most pedestrian-friendly city in the country. The economic, environmental, health and social benefits to Denver’s citizens and visitors are reason enough.

Benefits
A walkable Downtown Denver is an asset to the community with significant economic, health, environmental and social benefits as outlined below.

Economic Benefit
The economic benefits of a pedestrian-oriented community are far reaching. Real estate values and sales tax revenue have increased in cities that have adopted a pedestrian-friendly plan.

Increased sales revenues:
- Downtown Portland showed an increase in retail sales over the 2006 holiday shopping season with 25 percent more pedestrians hitting the streets. Large and small retailers reported strong holiday sales. These strong sales figures can be attributed to the increase in pedestrian traffic.¹

- Valencia Street (Mission District, San Francisco) narrowed its traffic lanes to slow down cars and accommodate other users; 40 percent of merchants reported increased sales and 60 percent reported more area residents shopping locally due to reduced travel time and greater convenience. Two-thirds said it improved business and sales.²

Real Estate:
- Downtown real estate developers are already embracing the idea of walkability when planning their projects. Chris Crosby, Executive Vice President of The Nichols Partnership, says, “the ‘Life Within Footsteps’ premise of the Spire building is to make having a car completely optional while offering A++ lifestyle amenities.”

- According to a 1998 analysis of ERE Yarmouth and Real Estate Research Corporation, real estate values over the next 25 years will rise fastest in “smart communities” that incorporate the traditional characteristics of successful cities, including a mix of residential and commercial districts and a “pedestrian-friendly configuration.”³

¹ Source: Portland Business Alliance, news release January 2007
² Source: Complete Streets Report
³ Source: The Economic Benefits of Walkable Communities. Local Government Commission Center for Livable Communities
II. BENEFITS

Health Benefit
The health benefits of walking and cycling are indisputable. By creating an environment that encourages physical activity, Denver will promote a healthy lifestyle. A healthier population will likely result in lower health care costs.

• Regular walking and cycling are the only realistic ways that the population as a whole can get the daily half hour of moderate exercise that is the minimum level needed to keep reasonably fit.4

• A study in Washington State found that the average resident of a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood weighs seven pounds less than someone who lives in a sprawling neighborhood.5

Environmental Benefit
Removing cars from the roads, thus reducing carbon emissions, is an impactful way for Denver to help solve the global environmental crisis.

• In 1993, Portland became the first American city to adopt a plan to address global warming, with a goal to reduce emissions by 10 percent below 1990 levels by 2010. New transit investments and continued improvements to bike/walk have reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 12.5 percent, yielding a carbon savings worth between $28 million and $70 million annually.6

• The city of Boulder is working to create a “Complete Street” network with over 350 miles of dedicated bike facilities, paved shoulders and a comprehensive transit network. Between 1993 and 2003, few people in the city drove alone, more people bicycled and transit trips grew by a staggering 500 percent. The reduction in car trips has cut annual carbon dioxide emissions by half a million pounds.7

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4 Source: Physical Activity Task Force 1995
5 Source: Walk Score – Sightline Institute
6 Source: Complete Streets.org
7 Source: Modal shift in the Boulder Valley 1999 -2003; May 2004 for the City of Boulder by the National Research Center
II. BENEFITS

Social/Community and Safety Benefits
A pedestrian-oriented city would allow residents and visitors to forgo their cars, and their associated frustrations, to travel in the least expensive and most socially satisfying manner: walking. Aside from being inexpensive (to the pedestrian and the city), walking promotes social interaction. Additionally, active streets enhance residents’ and visitors’ sense of safety and security.

- The development of a more walkable community will position Denver as a city that provides the most affordable transportation system any community can plan, design, construct and maintain. Walkable communities . . . lead to more social interaction, physical fitness and diminished crime. Walkable communities are more livable and lead to whole, happy, healthy lives for the people who live in them.8

- Walking increases social capital by promoting face-to-face interaction with your neighbors. Studies have shown that for each 10 minutes a person spends in a daily car commute, time spent in community activities falls by 10 percent.9

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8 Source: Walkable.org
9 Source: Walk Score – Sightline Institute
III. DESIGN & AMENITIES

Design & Amenities
Once the Leadership Class determined why Denver should pursue becoming the most pedestrian-friendly city, we began to examine the details of how this could be accomplished.

In our research, we found that people often choose their routes based on aesthetically desirable, safe and welcoming environments. The most successful streets in the world, such as Barcelona’s Las Ramblas and Boston’s Newbury Street, have become destinations in and of themselves. Design plays a powerful role in making streets desirable. When considering improvements for Denver, the following five elements should be considered:

1. **Visual Interest:** Engage the pedestrian through elements such as interesting storefronts, landscape and art.

2. **Materiality:** The color and texture of paving, landscaping, buildings and other design elements affect the human experience.

3. **Human Scale:** Smaller modules and more delicate detailing provide aesthetic interest at the scale and pace of a pedestrian.

4. **Series of Zones:** A landscape buffer between pedestrian walkways and adjacent streets can mitigate traffic speed and noise. A building amenity zone, such as an outdoor dining area, can bridge the gap between the walkway and the building façade. Also, the creation of gathering places provides breaks in the street wall and gives pedestrians a chance to stop, eat or rest. The proportion of these zones and their relationship to one another is an important design consideration.

5. **Variety:** An array of design elements can provide day and night interest or seasonal diversity.

Design elements must relate to one another, creating a common design aesthetic and giving the street a cohesive character. This concept of identity is evident in the most successful pedestrian areas and will also be discussed as we describe recommendations for branding Downtown Denver’s neighborhoods and the suggested guidelines for streetscape design.
We have identified three areas of Downtown to be evaluated for focused pedestrian-friendly improvements. These areas, if improved, will have a significant impact on the pedestrian environment of Downtown Denver.

1. **Market Street from 17th to 21st Streets:** As one of the main connections between the Ballpark neighborhood and Downtown, Market Street neither provides a pedestrian friendly walk to/from the ballgames nor creates the best ambiance for an evening stroll to one of Lower Downtown’s (LoDo) restaurants/bars. There are multiple unsightly parking lots that create the illusion that this short distance is very difficult to achieve on foot.

2. **15th Street from Lawrence to Court Streets:** Because of the high speed one-way traffic and decrepit conditions of the streetscapes, this particular section of 15th Street has been unwelcoming to pedestrians. The expanded Convention Center and the Hyatt Regency Convention Center Hotel have certainly improved the streetscapes along this corridor, but more work needs to be done.

3. **Arapahoe Square:** This is one of the areas in the urban core that has not experienced any significant revitalization. From a pedestrian’s perspective, this district would only be covered on foot out of necessity. The improvement opportunities are many and will require a well thought-out, long-term plan to make this the “ultimate pedestrian zone.” This area is also identified in the Downtown Area Plan as a transformative project.

**Branding the Downtown Neighborhoods**

An exciting concept that was developed during our class discussions was to define and brand unique neighborhoods already identified in the DAP. These unique neighborhood destinations would draw pedestrians beyond the 16th Street Mall. Creating unique and distinctive neighborhoods within Downtown will assist with wayfinding and develop destination excitement and thus enhance the pedestrian environment.
III. DESIGN & AMENITIES

To make a significant impact, each Downtown neighborhood (e.g. Ballpark, Lodo, Central Platte Valley) should have specific branding and design elements that help to create a unique destination. Below are short-, mid- and long-term actions that address this concept.

**Short-Term Actions**
- In the short-term, each Downtown neighborhood would be "branded" through signage, banners and entryways.
- Adding the title of the neighborhood above street signs (as shown in the Pearl District image) is an easy, cost-effective way to brand a neighborhood. This concept can be taken a step further by adding unique signage and gateways near the entry points of neighborhoods. If this concept is effectively implemented, pedestrians will know when they are leaving one neighborhood and entering another, and each neighborhood will begin to develop a unique identity.

**Mid-Term Actions**
Adding the title of the neighborhood above street signs is the first step. The concept can then be taken a step further by adding gateways near the entry points of each neighborhood. These entryway landmarks will further reinforce the branding of each neighborhood, so it’s important that their design capture the unique character of the community. Additionally, unique signage and/or banners should be added along the main arterials of each neighborhood.

**Long-Term Actions**
Signage will be the first step toward branding Downtown’s neighborhoods. However, design is a crucial part in turning Denver’s neighborhoods into unique destinations. In the long-term, all design elements within each neighborhood should correspond to a specific theme. Every design element in a neighborhood, from the benches to the shelters to the lighting, should correspond to a common design concept, helping to create a cohesive and consistent streetscape for each neighborhood. Examples of design themes include “Victorian/Historic”, “Modern/Industrial”, “Contemporary Retail” and “Cultural/Artistic”. An extensive public involvement process would be required to help each neighborhood select their unique design concept. Over time, these themes would help create a unique sense of place within each of Denver’s Downtown neighborhoods, which in turn will improve the pedestrian environment.
Below are examples of how a design theme may play out — in this case a bench.

**Modern/Industrial**

**Artistic/Cultural**

**Contemporary Retail**

**Victorian/Historic**

**Streetscape Design Guidelines & Considerations**

In addition to branding our neighborhoods, we recommend creating design guidelines for all of Downtown Denver.

Our overarching goal is to create a pedestrian-friendly Downtown by enhancing the environment through improved design, amenities, streetscape and architecture. By creating an environment that is visually appealing, appropriate to the pedestrian scale and comfortable for pedestrians, we hope to encourage more users to leave their vehicles at home and start walking.

From enhancements to existing façades to the addition of smaller elements (seating, lighting, signage, etc.), the pedestrian experience will be enhanced and improved at all levels. Many of the items below require little time to implement, but will have lasting effects on the pedestrian environment. There are elements that may take decades to implement (such as architectural design guidelines), but our hope is that they make a lasting impression on Downtown Denver, creating a pedestrian-friendly environment that lasts a lifetime.

We recommend that Denver develop a set of required and recommended design guidelines. All new Downtown developments would have to adhere to the required guidelines. The recommended guidelines would be encouraged through an incentive program. Outlined below are our recommended guidelines and considerations for Denver’s design elements for architecture/buildings, façades, historic buildings, walkways, courtyards/plazas, seating, lighting, wayfinding, shelters, public restrooms, landscape and public art.
Architecture/Buildings
Utilize the built environment to encourage and enrich the pedestrian experience on the streets and pathways in Downtown Denver throughout the entire year. Design guidelines are established to provide direction for new buildings and help existing building owners enhance their property and businesses.

**Design Guidelines**

**For New Buildings:**

- Emphasize streets as outdoor rooms. Require buildings to be built on the setback and offset the loss of street level space with floor-area-ratio (F.A.R.) incentives for greater height.
- Offer incentives for building arcades on street frontages. The height of arcades should be 14 feet to 16 feet with a depth of two-thirds of the design height.
- Increase outdoor dining and gathering by providing incentives for intimate courtyard setbacks. Courtyards are not to exceed 68 feet in any direction, that being the distance at which one can no longer distinguish a person’s facial features.
- **Building Setbacks Policy Example:** This policy sets out the Terms of Reference for Outdoor Dining adjacent to property boundaries. It is used to control setbacks and make allowance for pedestrian movement between the footpath and the curb of the street. The policy also covers the extent of outdoor dining areas, both in front of the property of the proponent and adjacent properties, which may be used as outdoor dining by the proponent if not required by adjacent property tenants. *City of Holdfast Bay, Australia*
• Transparency is the key for Downtown design; street level retail façades should be 50 percent transparent with clearly evident street-level entrances. Solid walls should have relief and/or design elements (e.g. art, vegetation, multi-media).

• Require that ground floors be reserved for “active” uses, such as retail shops or restaurants.

• Encourage high-quality, visually pleasing façades and storefronts, which will create showcases for retail and a high level of shopping and other activities on the street. Façades should present a pattern of architectural variety through modulation of the wall plane, detailing, color, texture and materials.

• Attain a good mix of building materials. Most building materials are appropriate for the Colorado climate and the Downtown Denver vernacular. Local materials (from within a 500 mile radius) are encouraged to promote sustainable design considerations.

• Diverse and colorful awnings are encouraged.

• There are certain unattractive building materials that are not acceptable and should be strongly discouraged, including:
  - Smooth and rough faced concrete block
  - Exterior Insulation Finishing System (E.I.F.S)
  - Untreated wood siding

For Existing Buildings (Non Historic):
• Improve façade treatments in the Downtown core by providing incentives for owners to enhance their storefronts/ façades. Existing blank walls without relief should be updated with design elements (e.g. art, vegetation, multi-media) to invigorate the pedestrian experience.

• Diverse and colorful awnings are encouraged.
Parking Considerations

- The access point for below or above grade parking should be within the building arcade and designed not to conflict with pedestrian access to the building storefront.

- Parking Facilities:
  - Sloping floors of parking structure ramps should not be exposed to public view from outside the structure.
  - Minimize the impact of vehicle noise, headlights, lighting and mechanical systems associated with parking facilities.
  - Keep parking structures to the interior of blocks out of view of the public right of way.
  - Avoid direct light source views from the public right of way.
  - Screen all mechanical systems.
  - Screen all headlights of cars from the public right of way.

Façades

Façades of buildings, especially at the pedestrian level, need to be inviting and interesting. Good façade design will support a positive pedestrian experience. A major challenge to Denver’s existing pedestrian environment is the many blank building façades. These blank walls provide little or no visual interest and are often very tall, creating a hostile pedestrian environment.

In some locations, the lack of windows is reasonable because of adjacencies to undeveloped lots. In other instances, buildings are effectively turning their backs on adjacent streets. In both cases, various temporary installations can help mitigate their harshness on the pedestrian environment. As a long-term solution, design guidelines can enhance these façades in the future.
Design Guidelines

• Encourage art such as murals, electronic displays or creative advertising. Establish an art program that may consist of local competitions.

• Establish advertising guidelines and a review process to ensure high-quality designs and not just “buildings as billboards.”

• Prohibit monolithic blank façades for all future buildings. Require material changes and scaling elements even if windows are not appropriate due to the potential for adjacent property development.

• Façade Improvement Policy Example: Toronto has a Commercial Façade Improvement Program for Business Improvement Areas. The city offers grants to eligible commercial property owners for improvements to commercial building façades. This could include replacing or repairing windows, doors, lighting, awnings, brickwork, signage or making building entrances wheelchair accessible.

http://www.toronto.ca/bia/about.htm

Historic Buildings

In preserving the historic fabric of our city, we respect our past while creating a contemporary pedestrian-friendly environment. A majority of Downtown’s historic buildings were built at a time when cars were not the primary means of transportation, resulting in pedestrian-oriented designs. By revitalizing existing historic buildings, we make use of our resources and contribute to today’s pedestrian-friendly environment. Listed below are goals and guidelines for historic preservation.

• Perform an evaluation of existing historic buildings and determine whether additional buildings should be designated as historic landmarks or included in current districts.

• Expand upon current City and County of Denver guidelines for marking designated historic buildings, making them more recognizable throughout Downtown Denver.

• Identify potential restoration projects for buildings with the potential of being designated as Downtown Denver Landmarks.
Identify buildings that are currently not eligible for Landmark designation, but should be preserved now and designated once they reach the 50-year mark (buildings must be at least 50 years old to be designated as landmarks).

Utilize the buildings that are already on the list as a focal point of the pedestrian environment and the history of Denver by creating a historic walking tour of these buildings.

**Design Guidelines**

- Follow Design Guidelines prepared by the City and County of Denver for LoDo and Downtown.

- Continue to designate as historically significant buildings built between the 1920s and 1970s if they qualify as such and add to the fabric of Downtown Denver.

**Walkways**

Walkways are essential and common components to all pedestrian environments providing both functionality and character. Walkways serve as the primary mode of transportation for the pedestrian, and also help define the safety and aesthetics of the pedestrian experience. Walkways that are safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing attract pedestrians.

- Walkways must be wide enough to allow good flow, but not so wide they make a space look empty. Walkway widths should take into consideration window shopping zones; areas along curb, gutter and trees for seating; and protection from adjacent traffic.

- Clearly designate pedestrian areas with signage, striping or varying surface design/patterns.
Surfaces and materials should be selected for safety (non-slip), durability, cost, maintenance, etc. Color may be a consideration to delineate “special” pedestrian zones.

Consideration should be given to shade (trees, canopies, banners, awnings, etc.).

Walkways should connect key attractions, destinations and/or amenities throughout the Downtown core (e.g. D&F Clock Tower, Civic Center Park).

Crosswalks must be well marked. Lights should be timed for comfortable pedestrian flow, not vehicles. Consider different surface materials for crosswalks. Consider audio and visually enhanced signage.

Disabled access must be given significant consideration at all crossings, including appropriate curb cuts, ramps and textured surfaces for the visually impaired.

Design Guidelines

Minimum design widths should be eight feet to allow at least two people to walk together and for disability access. In shopping areas, walkway widths should be increased to 12, 20, 30 or even 40 feet depending on anticipated pedestrian flow and local attractions.

Grade should be kept to five percent or less and no greater than eight percent. When this is not possible, railings and other aids should be considered to help pedestrians.

Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street.

“Landscaping should be provided for aesthetic and erosion control purposes in keeping with the character of the street and its environment. Landscaping should be arranged to permit sufficiently wide, clear and safe pedestrian walkways. Combinations of turf, shrubs and trees are desirable in border areas along the roadway. However, care should be exercised to ensure that guidelines for sight distances and clearance to obstructions are observed, especially at intersections.”

- Bridge crossings are essential to pedestrians and bicyclists. Whenever possible, the sidewalks should be continued with their full width. Sidewalks on bridges should be placed to eliminate the possibility of falling into the roadway or over the bridge itself. Sidewalks should be placed on both sides of bridges. Under extreme conditions, sidewalks can be used on one side only, but only when safe crossings can be provided on both ends of the bridge. When sidewalks are placed on only one side, they should be wider to accommodate large volumes of pedestrian traffic.

Other Considerations
- Trees should be set back from the roadway four feet to allow for growth of the tree and space for plowed snow.
- Nature strips may be a good opportunity to use paver stones for easy and affordable access to underground utilities. In Downtown areas, nature strips are also a convenient location for the swing-width of a door, and for placement of parking meters, hydrants, lampposts and other furniture.
- Newspaper racks, mail boxes and other street furniture should not encroach into the walking space. These items should be placed either in the nature strip or in a separate storage area behind the sidewalk, in a corner or a mid-block bulb-out. In addition, these items need to be bolted in place and contained in decorative enclosures.

Courtyards and Plazas
Courtyards and plazas provide opportunities for pedestrian interaction and promote a sense of connectedness between the urban environment and visitors, workers and residents. Courtyards and plazas add to the artistic essence of an urban core and become key attractions that draw others in from outside the Downtown area.

- Identify and connect key public spaces (e.g. Writer’s Square, Union Station Plaza, Colorado Plaza, Courthouse Plaza). Create a sense that Downtown Denver is a series of connected places with “centers” of activity at these plazas and courtyards.
III. DESIGN & AMENITIES

• Energize courtyards and plazas with fountains – water features that light up at night and provide “oasis” quality with white noise.

• Consider adaptable outdoor spaces that are changed during the day and evening, and seasonally.

• Consider a children’s plaza with “dancing” water features. Provide other interactive play features and art or sculpture.

• Widths of courtyards should not exceed 68 feet in any direction. After 68 feet, a person loses intimacy with others because you can no longer detect their facial features. Promote views to these spaces from blocks away. Consider landmark features to identify these spaces as a pedestrian destination.

• Locate the top 10 places in Downtown with 10 things to do at each. Consider creating additional outdoor venues for concerts, farmer’s markets, city celebrations and holiday activities.

• Create new and enhanced courtyards as mechanisms to “link” pedestrian systems to destinations and amenities (i.e. Bistro Vendome’s courtyard in Larimer Square).

Design Guidelines

• Consider a rich array of low maintenance, durable, weather resistant materials (e.g. granite pavers, brick pavers, colored, stamped or scored concrete).

• Light these spaces effectively and allow for seasonal enhancements.

Seating

Used appropriately, Downtown seating can create useful and vibrant pedestrian gathering places, thus enhancing the pedestrian-friendly environment. It is important to think about several aspects of seating areas and designs to ensure their effectiveness. Below are a few guidelines to consider when introducing more or different seating into the Downtown area.
Design Guidelines

- Must be accessible, comfortable, well-maintained and located in appropriate areas.
- Functional seating is important for successful “placemaking” and to increase the pedestrian comfort level. Seating creates opportunities for social interactions that may not otherwise occur.
- Provide ample seating in a variety of types, styles and locations with consideration of both sun and shade.
- Provide both group and single seating.
- People prefer different types of seating; multiple options are preferable (benches with or without backs, chairs, walls, ledges, and steps).
- The backs of benches should be slightly sloped and have a slight curve. A 20 inch tall backrest provides good support for the back and shoulders.
- Place seating in relation to other activities or amenities (concessions, shelters, kiosks, waste receptacles, water fountains and restrooms).
- Ensure that seating does not impede circulation of walkways. Keep seating in view of the action and at least 24 inches removed from the flow of pedestrian traffic.
- People will often take advantage of seating that allows them the opportunity to people watch. As a result, pedestrian flow and seating are often complimentary to each other.
- Consider planters in combination with seating because they provide shade and colorful flowers to enjoy.
- Consider the sitting height and seat depths. Heights of 12 to 36 inches will most often be used, but 16 to 18 inches are most comfortable. If a ledge or wall is designed to be used for seating on both sides, a minimum depth of 30 inches should be used with a length of at least 24 inches per person.
- Because steps often offer a direct view of the streets and sidewalks, they can also be used for seating.
- When using benches, thought should be given to the layout. Placing benches in a manner that allows for group conversation increases the opportunity for social interaction.
III. DESIGN & AMENITIES

**Lighting**
Lighting is one of the most powerful ways to communicate a sense of safety and create a vibrant transformation of the Downtown environment from day to night. Lighting design can activate the city by illuminating buildings, plazas, artwork, fountains and entire streetscapes. Used effectively, lighting can artistically define pedestrian pathways, create holiday spirit and help establish design themes for neighborhoods and districts within the urban core. Lighting can also showcase Downtown Denver’s commitment to sustainability by utilizing solar powered and night-sky compliant fixtures.

*Design Guidelines*

- Use to strengthen the identity of particular areas and highlight specific activities, entrances or pathways.
- Increase safety. Lighting, especially of transit stops, makes people feel secure.
- Create a sense of drama:
  - Lighting on trees can create a magical feel even outside of the holiday season.
  - Lighting of window displays creates ambient light for the street and encourages window shopping, which increases the number of people on a street.
  - Drawing attention to unique architectural details or focal points and major elements in a district.
- Uplight banners and public art.
- Extend lighting across key streets and courtyards.
- Use consistent light coverage to avoid intervals of darkness. However, try to maintain “dark skies” with directed light cut-off shields that avoid spilling light into the sky.
- Keep the pedestrian scale in mind for light pole sizes.
- Light poles can also be used for decorations and to help create a “distinct neighborhood.”
- Use solar powered lamp posts – photovoltaic fixtures.
- Consider a variety of types, styles, scales, light level and color output.
Wayfinding
Wayfinding is one of the most important ways to improve the pedestrian environment; it is critical to creating a pedestrian-friendly experience. Good wayfinding allows for easier navigation of the city by providing effective information and direction, encouraging learning experiences, branding neighborhoods, communicating safety rules and incorporating historic or cultural details.

We recommend an improved wayfinding system for Downtown that is specifically aimed at the non-vehicular transportation system - pedestrians, bikes and public transit users.

**Design Guidelines**

- Signs should be mounted at pedestrian height.
- Wayfinding should include both the distances and the projected travel times by foot and bike to reach destinations (see example).
- Wayfinding should be used to direct pedestrians to:
  - Key transit and multi-modal routes
  - Sports arenas
  - Key landmarks
  - Different neighborhoods
- Interactive, computer-generated wayfinding could be implemented in key tourist areas, providing information in multiple languages.
- Maximize the potential for new wayfinding in special districts, such as 14th Street and the Theatre District.
- Mounted transit maps should be provided at major transit stops showing detailed route information for that stop.
- Improve signage to these Denver landmarks and attractions:
  - Denver Art Museum
  - Colorado State Capitol
  - Colorado Convention Center
  - Pepsi Center
  - Elitch Gardens
  - Museum of Contemporary Art
  - Coors Field
  - Union Station
  - 16th Street Pedestrian Bridges
Shelters
Shelters provide relief to pedestrians from outdoor elements; they also serve as rest stops during periods of extended walking. Shelter design should take into consideration the unique outdoor elements in a pedestrian environment and help define the distinctive architectural design of each neighborhood.

Design Guidelines
- Consider shelters for buses, bikes and scooters.
- Shelters should be low maintenance and vandal-resistant.
- Bus shelters should provide good visibility and accessibility, be comfortable, convenient and provide information. They should be located near way-finding signage and intersections, but set back from crosswalks.
- Increase the number of bike shelters.
- Locate bike shelters adjacent to key transit corridors and/or destinations.
- Encourage expressive elements in the design of shelters to add visual interest to the city.
- Shelters should have electronic information displays.
- Lighting can be used to provide safety and comfort while creating an inviting environment for pedestrians waiting for public transportation.
- Shelter design should be integrated into the overall branding of each district, thereby creating a “sense of place.”
Public Restrooms
As we move to a more pedestrian-friendly Downtown, there is an increased need to add more public restroom facilities. Below are some suggestions to consider when placing new restroom facilities:

- Locations should be convenient and accessible to activity areas.
- Ensure that there is seating available nearby.
- Create family restrooms.
- Make certain that they are well lit at night to promote a feeling of safety.
- Create high-quality facilities so that the public treats them well (a good example is the Skyline Park restroom facility).
- Restrooms should be located in highly visible areas to help create a sense of security.
- Consider appropriate surveillance.

Design Guidelines
- Use highly durable building products.
- Use building materials that are easy to replace.
- Ease of maintenance and cleaning should be the primary design driver:
  - Utilize multiple drains for ease of wash down.
  - Hang toilet partitions from the ceiling.
  - Install full height tile or other water-resistant material on walls.
- Consider materials and colors that are more inviting and less institutional looking.
- Natural lighting is preferred whenever possible.
- Provide adequate ventilation.
- Install automated faucets and hand-dryers.
III. DESIGN & AMENITIES

- Incorporate ADA guidelines throughout the design.
- Provide highly visible entrances.
- Provide adequate hooks or shelves within stalls to keep personal items off the floor and to prevent theft.

Other Considerations
- Hire a full-time attendant to help with public safety, monitor vandalism and clean the facilities.
- Allow advertising within the restroom to provide a funding source for the on-site attendants.

Landscapes
Landscapes can enhance the pedestrian environment by providing interesting color, texture and aroma. Landscapes often provide a soft contrast to surrounding hard surfaces of paving and buildings. Designs can range in size from potted plants to street trees and city parks. These elements can double as shelter from weather or create space defining boundaries. They can also provide environmental benefits such as stormwater drainage and reduced heat island effect. The palette of landscape is rich and can have a significant impact on the pedestrian friendly experience.

Design Guidelines
- A range of landscape elements such as groundcover, potted plants, window boxes and trees should be considered based on the space available.
- These landscape elements can be combined in a variety of ways to affect the pedestrian’s sense of scale.
- Landscape should be designed to provide year-round interest.

Other Considerations
- Landscape design can be used to enhance the branding of distinctive destination neighborhoods.
- Consider creating a landscape sponsorship program similar to the one initiated for the 2008 Democratic National Convention.
Public Art
Public art creates uniqueness for any city and helps promote an active pedestrian environment through public displays, exhibitions and performances. The permanent pieces of art create identity and a sense of place for frequent visitors to the urban core.

- Create an area for rotating public art exhibitions and performances to showcase local artists.
- Public art is a magnet for children, particularly when it’s interactive. Create age-appropriate displays in key locations (Children’s Museum, Commons Park, Civic Center Park, etc.).
- Incorporate public art as a design strategy in the planning of public spaces.
- Consideration should be given to functional art (such as public art seating, one example being on the 16th Street Mall), temporary art or permanent, site-specific art.
- Consider increasing the art requirement for public buildings by requiring that two percent of any capital improvement project over $1 million be set aside for the inclusion of art in the design and construction of those projects instead of the current one percent.
- Use rotating art displays, possibly having a space where a local artist’s work gets showcased once a month. Where space is limited, the size and placement of temporary or rotating art can be determined through the use of permanent plinths or pedestals.
- Consider digital art (interactive, changing, etc.).

Design Guidelines

- Public art may have a variety of configurations, but it should be sensitive to the human scale. Consideration should be given to the surrounding architectural features, street furniture and events.
• Art in the public environment can help to establish a stronger sense of place and a continuity between the past, present and future while also serving a functional purpose.

• Consider including a message of sustainability with public art projects (i.e. “New York City Waterfalls” by Olafur Eliasson).

Other Considerations

• Public art should provide visitors and residents with a visual landmark. Public art could serve as a marker to destinations and incorporate branding elements previously suggested. It can also help to create gateways and anchors for Downtown neighborhoods and places.

• Denver’s Public Art Program was established in 1988 by an Executive Order under Mayor Federicio Pena. Over the past 17 years, The Denver Office of Cultural Affairs has installed over 150 works of art under this Order. A Public Art Guide to Downtown Denver exists, but should be more prominently featured and better utilized.
Connect and Activate the Downtown Districts
There is great potential for the areas surrounding the Downtown core. With added landmarks, programming and other special area designations we believe the city can provide diverse pedestrian opportunities.

Connections and Landmarks
To create a stronger connection to Arapahoe Square and areas to the east, we suggest that new landmarks be constructed along the eastern boundary of Downtown. A landmark should be something visible from areas throughout Downtown, possibly including include a piece of sculpture or artwork tall enough to have a presence, or a distinctive, tall building. Either would create a new destination for pedestrians.

Broadway / Lincoln should be used as a connection to Five Points/Arapahoe Square. The intersections along this route are key locations for landmarks. We suggest landmarks at the following locations:

- Triangle of land at Lawrence Street, 24th Street and Broadway.
- Triangle of land at Champa Street, 22nd Street and Broadway.
- Triangle of land at Stout Street, 20th Street and Broadway.

Other landmarks currently in place along the eastern edge are:

- Northeast corner of 18th Avenue and Broadway.
- Southeast corner of 17th Avenue and Broadway.
- Southwest corner of 16th Street and Lincoln.

Programming
When programming Downtown Denver, consideration should be given to the different types of users.

- Include themes at the parks (e.g., mining, renewable energy, mountaineers/pioneers, sports, seasonal).
- Programming initiatives could include:
  - Increasing the number of farmers markets or creating a public market.
  - A street performers program.
  - Walking tours focusing on cultural itineraries or distinctive neighborhoods.
  - Art shows (e.g. First Fridays in the Golden Triangle and Santa Fe Arts District and other highly popular community events).
  - Concerts (e.g. Friday concerts in Skyline Park).
Alleys
Downtown’s alleys and surface parking lots make up a considerable portion of our urban core. They offer exciting opportunities for enhancement of the city and the pedestrian environment. Presently, though, the alleys are dark and uninviting, giving the perception of being unsafe. They have been relegated almost completely to service functions. We believe that can change, and the alleys can be remade to create active passageways and gathering places while still accommodating necessary service functions for adjoining properties. Transforming city alleys will also help connect Downtown Denver’s numbered streets. We propose launching an “alley initiative” in Denver that helps to convert alleyways into pedestrian-friendly zones.

San Francisco’s Belden Place is an excellent example of how a dark and dingy alley can be remade into an inviting and prosperous area. Belden Place is comprised of a number of small restaurants tucked into an alley. The restaurants have small internal dining spaces and larger outdoor seating areas extending into the alleyway with awnings overhead. The eateries are very busy during the workweek for lunch and dinner. During weekends and off hours, the awnings are retracted and the attractive street blockade is removed so that maintenance, garbage removal, cleaning and other services can be provided. Belden Place started as a result of the entrepreneurial spirit of one restaurateur and, due to the alley’s close proximity to the city’s financial district, others quickly followed. Moreover, given the relatively low expense of opening a restaurant in an alley, new businesses were attracted by the lower rental and start-up costs. Belden Place also was successful because it is not located next to a towering skyscraper, thereby allowing natural light to reach the ground level.

Another example of an alternative use of an alley which encourages pedestrian traffic is Art Alley in Rapid City, South Dakota. One owner began by painting a picture over some graffiti. The idea grew from there. The Alley became an outdoor art gallery attracting artists from Rapid City and beyond, including artists of all persuasions and abilities. Periodically, Art Alley is “redecorated” with new art. The Alley has become a destination for pedestrians, both residents and tourists, and has the support of the business community. A designated area for graffiti art could help mitigate some of Denver’s graffiti issues.
• There are about 5,000 public alleys and several hundred private alleys in Denver.

• There are currently three types of alleys in Denver:

  1. Approximately 2,500 concrete alleys maintained by the Public Works Transportation and Waste Water Division.

  2. About 1,400 asphalt overlay alleys (asphalt over concrete). The Street Maintenance Division maintains the city’s asphalt overlaid alleys. Maintenance is performed primarily in the spring and involves removing the old asphalt and laying down a new surface.

  3. Approximately 1,000 “black gold” alleys – unimproved alleys covered with recycled asphalt. Three to five unimproved alleys are rebuilt annually by the Street Maintenance Division. About 30 are graded each year.

• Denver’s current alley program involves paving unimproved alleys to reduce maintenance obligations.

• Any alley initiative may encounter difficulty because it could be seen as an imposition on the owners of private alleys.

• To transform alleys, planners must acknowledge and account for necessary maintenance and service functions that alleys serve:
  - Garbage/recycling removal; container storage.
  - Emergency vehicle access.
  - Vehicle access for residents, workers, property owners and business owners.
  - Maintenance and utility access.
  - Ingress/egress to buildings.
  - Fire exits.

• According to Denver ordinance, property owners, not the city or the Business Improvement District, are responsible for cleaning the alleys. However, the BID has elected to supplement the cleaning of alleys because of the amount of use they receive relative to the cleaning performed. All alleys in the BID area are cleaned from April to October, with about 20 hours a week dedicated to this task. Alleys adjacent to the 16th Street Mall are given higher priority. The initial cleaning each season takes substantial time, but as the summer progresses the alleys are cleaned a couple of times per month. The BID performs no maintenance.
• Once “transformed”, alleys will require additional maintenance; some or all might be done by the BID, including:
  - Snow removal
  - Litter removal
  - Graffiti removal
  - Lighting

While there are numerous Downtown alley locations that could serve as demonstration projects, we believe the alley located between Wazee and Wynkoop Streets, between 16th and 17th Streets, is well-suited for further revitalization. Indeed, Wines Off Wynkoop and First Community Bank are two existing businesses that have taken advantage of the alley between 16th and 15th Streets.

Further initiatives to consider in this area would be to restrict vehicle access, install additional lighting and landscaping, and repave the surface area with attractive brickwork.

Additional recommendations
In addition to revitalizing Downtown alleys, we also recommend that all alleys adhere to the following guidelines:

• Owners must maintain garbage receptacles of adequate size and mark each dumpster to identify ownership.

• Owners must identify each garbage receptacle as well as the name of the company that provides service.

• Owners must arrange a schedule of pickups to insure that dumpsters never overflow.

• Enclosures for waste and recycling receptacles must be contained within the property line rather than in the alley itself.

• Implement proactive rather than reactive enforcement of owner’s obligations and code violations. Presently there are no active enforcement efforts other than a response to a complaint.

• Require uniform standards of lighting.

• Require periodic resurfacing (like streets) of private alleys.
Currently 50 percent of Denver’s alley’s are concrete, 30 percent are asphalt and 20 percent are unimproved. A five year surface does not create a 25 year solution. Recently, Chicago has pioneered a “Green Alleys Initiative” in which alleys are being resurfaced using a form of porous concrete. The benefits include a surface that is more aesthetically pleasing, that absorbs rainwater rather than creating runoff and that reflects (rather than absorbs) heat in the summer.

- Require that alleys have adequate drainage (if the porous concrete is not used).
- Add a review of all plans submitted to the city in connection with permits for renovations or new construction for properties which abut an alley. Property owners must be required to maintain compliance with current alley initiatives.
- Encourage owners who share an alley to use the same service providers. This ensures that the alley will have one trash pick-up rather than five, and one company responsible for trash left after pick up.
- Encourage owners to jointly invest in a garbage compactor.

Note: Some of these recommendations have already been independently implemented by building owners.
III. DESIGN & AMENITIES

Parking Lots
Using simple design elements, such as landscaping and fencing, will dramatically improve the aesthetics of the city’s many unsightly surface-level parking lots. This is a great short-term solution that requires relatively little investment, yet it will significantly improve the pedestrian environment.

• Unique signage should be encouraged, which could be developed in conjunction with the branding of the neighborhoods.

• Encourage fences or walls to be made of high quality materials to provide enclosure. These elements provide an edge to the adjacent pedestrian experience by shielding the monotonous asphalt parking lot.

• Landscaping can similarly act as a barrier between parking lots and the pedestrian environment.

• Require that 15 percent of surface level parking lots be landscaped.

• Create incentives for developing “green” parking lots (similar to previously mentioned green alleys in Chicago):
  - Solar canopies in parking lots provide shade, safety and energy.
  - Perimeter landscaping can break up large expanses of asphalt, promote driver and pedestrian safety, and help define different lot areas, such as long-term versus visitor parking.
  - In addition to their positive contributions to parking lot appearances and safety, landscaped areas can help moderate dust, wind, heat, noise, glare and air pollution. They can also mitigate water pollution by controlling run-off.

Unattractive parking lots like the one shown above left can be transformed using simple elements such as the green fencing in the photo on the right.
“The right to access every building in the city by private motorcar in an age when everyone owns such a vehicle, is actually the right to destroy the city.” - Lewis Mumford, 1961

Transportation & Parking

In order to enhance the pedestrian environment, the priority currently given to private vehicular traffic must be significantly decreased. After evaluating best practices from around the world and across the country, multiple strategies were identified that will allow for pedestrians, bicycles and mass transit to take priority over private motor vehicles. If implemented, the footprint of private vehicular traffic will be decreased and the footprint dedicated to those on foot, bicycle or mass transit will increase. These recommendations are based on the following assumptions:

- Design should be based on future expectations and demand, not on past behavior.
- Consistently definitive and visionary leadership is required for success.
- A major shift in the manner that parking, transit and the pedestrian and bicycle environments are planned and implemented must occur. Therefore, decisive steps must be taken early on with the expectation that these recommendations will play out over many years.

Minimizing private vehicular traffic Downtown will best be achieved by implementing a three-pronged strategy:

1. Locate parking hubs at the periphery of the Central Business District (CBD). These parking hubs would cover the parking requirements of new developments they are in close proximity to. In addition, these parking hubs would address the increased parking demand generated by population growth, and would intercept commuter traffic prior to entrance into the CBD proper. These hubs could function as transportation oriented developments and be co-located at FasTracks and other existing and future major transit stations and public parks.

2. In conjunction with these parking hubs, build-out plans for the mass transit system must be diverse and robust. The future system should include a variety of transit options and technologies, possibly including CBD circulators, a citywide street car system and FasTracks, which includes providing regional rail service and expansion of traditional bus service.

3. The pedestrian, bicycling and mass transit environments must receive sufficient investment and space allocation to ensure their prominence as the preferred means of movement through and around the CBD.
These three ideas are explored in more depth below and are organized into the following arenas:

- Parking
- Mass Transit
- Traffic Management
- Bicycling
- Pedestrian Movement

Parking
Establishing a more pedestrian-friendly environment inherently involves reducing the number of private vehicles within that environment. Because many pedestrians may arrive Downtown as drivers prior to becoming pedestrians, complete eradication of private vehicles within the environment is impractical. Therefore, systematic parking is critical to establishing the most beneficial pedestrian environment. Such systems must be modified in order to ensure that they add to, rather than detract from, the pedestrian environment.

In order to ensure that parking systems improve the pedestrian environment, the Leadership Class’ recommendations are designed to achieve the following three objectives:

1. Reduce parking demand in Downtown Denver.
2. Centralize the majority of parking spaces in strategic areas.
3. Use the existing parking infrastructure more efficiently.

Short-term Recommendations

- Encourage the use of “shared parking” in new development within the CBD.
- Encourage developers to “unbundle” parking in new developments.
- Encourage businesses in the Central Business District to implement “commute trip reduction programs” for their employees.
- Decrease the maximum allowed time limits for on-street parking meters.
- Price on-street parking to achieve a 15 percent vacancy.
- Price on-street parking directly proportionate to the demand at any given time.
Mid-Term Recommendations

- Establish “Maximum Parking Requirements” as opposed to “Minimum Parking Requirements” within the zoning code for new development.
- Continue to provide and enhance parking information for visitors and users via the Downtown Denver Partnership websites (www.downtowndenver.com and www.ExperienceDowntownDenver.com).
- Provide real time information on the location of available spaces.

Long-Term Recommendations

- Create parking hubs in strategic locations on the outskirts of the CBD.

Downtown Denver currently has surface parking lots, garages and on street parking options. Westword magazine recently pointed out that “the majority [of the parking options] are grotesque wastelands of sun-baked, shattered concrete, besmirching downtown like festering sores.” While there may not be a shortage of parking options, the lack of current parking strategies creates a deficient system that is a detriment to a pedestrian-friendly environment.

The implementation of the parking recommendations within this report represents a paradigm shift. Embracing such a shift is absolutely necessary in support of the pedestrian environment.

11 Auditing the Asphalt Jungle; Denver Westword; Fri Jun 29, 2007.
Old Paradigm: Motorists are able to find convenient, inexpensive and plentiful parking. This is accomplished by providing generous minimum parking requirements and utilizing indirect payment methods (i.e. indirect payment through taxes and/or building rents).

New Paradigm: Motorists have multiple parking options, with convenience tied to cost. The more convenient to Downtown, the more expensive the parking is. The less convenient to Downtown, the less expensive it is. This paradigm promotes direct payment for parking infrastructure. Furthermore, parking facilities should be utilized as much as possible; incorporating parking requirements that provide sufficient parking based on market demand rather than plentiful parking regardless of demand. This paradigm shift will work if drivers are well informed about all of their parking options.12

Objective: Reduce Parking Demand in the Heart of the CBD

The most effective way to reduce parking demand is to provide incentives for reduced private vehicle use within the Downtown area. In order to provide such incentive, the city must re-examine its public parking pricing strategies within the CBD.

Currently, the average price to park in a private garage in the Central Business District is between $12 and $15 per day, with most garages offering only daily and monthly rates. Meanwhile, drivers who can find an on-street metered parking spot can park by the hour for only $1 per hour for a maximum of two hours. The pricing discrepancies illustrate the epitome of the old paradigm, and were designed to provide absolute convenience to drivers with no additional financial cost. After all, what is better than finding inexpensive parking right in front of your destination? In practice, however, the “inexpensive convenience” creates enormous demand for coveted on-street spaces. The result of this situation is more “parking cruisers” driving in circles until they find an on-street parking space as close to their destination as possible. The current paradigm encourages such behavior and adds significant vehicle congestion to Downtown. This behavior runs contrary to development of a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Numerous studies have been conducted over the last 80 years to analyze the effects of parking cruisers. While no data is available for Denver’s CBD, other cities, with on-street parking meters similar to Denver’s, have seen significant percentages of all traffic in the CBD

12 Victoria Transport Policy Institute – TDM Encyclopedia – Parking Solution
to be a result of parking cruisers. In 2006, for example, 28 percent of all drivers in Manhattan were reportedly cruising for cheap on-street parking. A similar study in Brooklyn found that 45 percent of all drivers were cruising.\textsuperscript{13} Moreover, other studies have found that parking cruisers spend on average between three and twelve minutes searching for parking.

Donald Shoup, a respected professor of Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles, draws a parallel between cheap rates for the most desirable few on-street parking spaces and rent-controlled apartments. He noted that, “once you find a space you’d be crazy to give it up.” “Like rent-controlled apartments,” he says, “curb spaces go to the lucky rather than to the deserving. One person might find a curb space and park there for [an entire day], while others are left to circle the block.”\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Strategies to Reduce Demand}

- \textbf{Price on-street parking so as to achieve a 15 percent vacancy.} By increasing the cost of on-street parking, parking cruisers in the CBD can be significantly reduced. Specifically, numerous studies have shown that the most efficient system is one in which on-street parking is priced to achieve a 15 percent vacancy. By increasing on-street parking demand; there will be a resulting decrease in on-street parking demand; there will be less vehicle traffic in the CBD and the pedestrian environment will be enhanced. Funds can be designated for further pedestrian improvements.

- \textbf{Price on-street parking directly proportionate to the demand at any given time.} By implementing pricing that is higher during peak driving periods, congestion in Denver’s CBD will be further relieved, providing for an even more pedestrian-friendly environment.

- \textbf{Decrease the maximum allowed time limits at on-street parking meters.} By decreasing the maximum allowed time at parking meters from two hours to one and a half hours, the city will further encourage drivers to utilize on-street parking for short-term needs only. This time limit will encourage longer-term parkers to park in other locations.

- \textbf{Break the cycle of automobile dependency through innovative parking requirements and recommendations.} Such policies include establishing Maximum Parking Requirements as opposed to Minimum Parking Requirements for new developments.

\textsuperscript{13} Shoup, Donald. Cruising for Parking; Access, Number 30, Spring 2007.

\textsuperscript{14} Shoup, Donald. Cruising for Parking; Access, Number 30, Spring 2007.
In a study comparing concert hall construction in San Francisco and Los Angeles, the following results were identified:

- Los Angeles required fifty times more parking as a minimum compared to San Francisco’s maximum. The San Francisco concert hall was actually built without a parking garage.

- The parking garage in Los Angeles delayed the opening of the concert hall by seven years due to funding issues associated with its $110 million cost.

- The Los Angeles concert hall’s lease mandates at least 128 concerts/events a year in order to cover parking expenses.

- The Los Angeles concert hall design was compromised in order to accommodate the parking structure and as a result is less pedestrian-friendly than initially envisioned.

- San Francisco’s concert hall parking is several blocks away from the venue, making a trip to the concert hall also a trip to experience downtown San Francisco.

• **Encourage the use of shared parking in new developments.** Such a strategy allows for minimal new parking requirements within the CBD. Maintaining minimal supply in the heart of the CBD continually increases pricing for such space, allowing for demand to be regulated.

• **Encourage developers to “unbundle” parking.** For example, parking spaces would be rented or purchased separately from building space. Case studies have shown that when parking is not included in general pricing, many people seriously consider giving up their car instead of paying the additional cost. Such a strategy typically reduces parking requirements by up to 20 percent.

• **Encourage businesses to implement “commute trip reduction programs” for their employees.** For example, employees could be offered $50 per month if they don’t use a Downtown parking space.
Objective: Centralize the Majority of Parking Spaces in Strategic Areas

- Create parking hubs in strategic locations on the outskirts of the CBD.
  - In an effort to further reduce congestion within the CBD, large parking structures should be built at strategic locations immediately outside of the CBD.
  - Such a strategy would ultimately decrease demand for private parking in the CBD and provide an incentive for development of private lots and garages; such development would in turn serve to enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment in Downtown Denver.

As part of the creation of parking hubs, sensitive and innovative design would be needed to offset the visual impacts of these larger structures. Some interesting examples of parking structures are depicted in the illustrations below. For more detailed design recommendations see the “Design and Amenities” section of this report.
Mass Transit

As recognized in Blueprint Denver and the recently released Denver Strategic Plan (October 2008), creating an efficient and effective urban mass transit network is necessary for the creation of a healthy pedestrian environment. In order for people to walk Downtown, they first need to be able to get Downtown, and then navigate once there. Although the specifics of a mass transit solution are malleable, the concepts are universal:

- The system must get people from where they live to Downtown in a timely, safe, clean and economic manner.
- The system must encourage walkability not only in Downtown, but at transit stops along the routes.
- The system must integrate with existing and future bus routes, FasTracks lines and the 16th Street Mall Free Shuttle.
- The system should circulate users around the periphery of Downtown.
- The system must be scaled properly to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Short-Term Recommendations

In the short-term, many of the recommendations echo those in Blueprint Denver. The immediate focus should be on maintaining the current success of the 16th Street Mall Free Shuttle. As the Urban Land Institute (ULI) study group determined, the shuttle needs to remain fast, free and frequent in order to compliment and assist pedestrian traffic.

- Existing mass transit bus and light rail stops within the CBD should be cleaned, beautified and adequately maintained.
- Bus stops should be shaded, visible and well-lit.
- Each major bus stop should have seating and waiting space set back from walkways.
- In high traffic areas, create bus bulbs to further separate the automobile and pedestrian traffic.
- Sidewalks should connect directly to transit station and platform entrances. Transit stations and bus stops should be added, as necessary, to ensure that there is no more than one-fourth mile walking distance between stops, and no more than one-half mile between transit routes.
- Create a fare-free zone for all transit within the Central Business District.
• Encourage the establishment of shared transport options such as Zip Car.
• Continue commuter education programs to market to and teach commuters about the benefits of alternative transportation.

Mid-Term Recommendations
• Increase Downtown transit circulation, including the 18th/19th Street Circulator and other high-frequency local lines (RTD operated or using other innovative solutions) that connect the surrounding neighborhoods with the Central Business District. Additionally, offer an express circulator route on the periphery boundary of the CBD to connect with the parking hubs. Coordinate the development of these new lines with the development and implementation of FasTracks. The local lines take the regional approach (lauded in Blueprint Denver) to the next logical step—Denver’s urban neighborhoods.
• In conjunction with the new lines, create properly scaled, medium-to-high density transit oriented developments (TODs). For example, create transit villages at existing and new central mass transit stops. Make each station a place—create a destination, build landmark-quality buildings and enhance sightlines and views in order to orient pedestrians to the stations, orient buildings to the street and orient the public to open spaces. Public-private partnerships might help get the new TODs off the ground. Finally, increase residential density Downtown. Just as a good pedestrian environment needs transit, a good transit system needs passengers.
• The parking hubs should interconnect with FasTracks, any additional local lines, major automobile thoroughfares, bicycle paths, taxis and bus systems in centralized locations on the four corners of the CBD periphery. The enhanced transportation system will carry large volumes of commuters during peak hours from the hubs and circulate those commuters to other key locations. Parking hubs should incorporate retail, dining and entertainment, and be built near parks to better utilize space. They should also be interesting and distinctive destinations.

Long-Term Recommendations
• Extend the local circulation system to the next closest residential neighborhoods, such as Park Hill, Washington Park, Congress Park, City Park, Berkeley and Sunnyside, and Sloans Lake.
• Create connections between local and regional lines to enhance interconnectivity.
• Depending on traffic counts and densities, explore alternative transit methods like bus rapid transit along existing roadways, as suggested in Blueprint Denver.
IV. TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Broader Theory and Context
Many of today’s international and national metropolitan cities are quickly becoming victims of urban sprawl. Since the invention of gasoline-powered transportation, existing transit systems have revolved around the automobile rather than pedestrians. Commuter issues exist in these metropolitan areas because the transit systems do not serve the entire commuting population and because the cities are growing faster than the existing transit systems can handle.

Denver has plans to expand existing commuting choices with new options to secure Denver’s future and reputation as a world-class sustainable metropolis. Because of the incorporations of new ideas, the implementation of FasTracks, the vision of the Downtown Area Plan and Blueprint Denver, Denver will live on as a vibrant, sustainable, attractive and growing city well into the future. Exploration and adoption of new transit technologies should be part and parcel of Denver’s approach to achieving its goals to be a sustainable, vibrant city.

Using gasoline-fueled vehicles responsibly and only when necessary will allow for a more pedestrian-friendly and sustainable society. Changing the way our society views and uses transportation is critical. Automobiles will not be eliminated, but achieving the correct automobile and mass transit balance will greatly enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment.

This multi-modal system will give commuters travel independence, choices and responsibility. Implement transit methods in the Central Business District that circulate and deliver dense volumes of pedestrians to parking hubs and key destination in the CBD. New rail technologies that can automatically adjust passenger delivery depending on peak travel hours and volume should be explored and integrated as warranted.

Traffic Management
Creating safe and convenient vehicle management solutions is a component of creating a healthy pedestrian environment. In order for people to walk safely and conveniently Downtown, they need to be able to interface with vehicular traffic in a non-threatening and safe environment. Although the specifics of traffic management solutions are malleable, the concepts are general:

- The traffic management system must get people from where they live to Downtown in a timely, safe, clean and economic manner.
• The system must encourage convenient access to Downtown that does not impede walkability.

• The traffic management system must integrate with existing and future modes of transportation, including transit, cycling and walking.

• The system must be scaled properly to enhance the pedestrian experience, while also serving motorists.

A pedestrian-friendly environment does not preclude vehicle-friendly streets. In fact, a well-balanced traffic management system will make streets more efficient for all modes of transit; while at the same time enhancing the pedestrian environment. “Traffic calming” measures and techniques are a tangible element of a well-balanced traffic management system. Traffic-calming measures fall into two general groups: one based on traffic management strategies and the other based on physical design techniques.

Traffic management strategies include:

• The issuance of center-city passes
• Truck restrictions
• Signalization systems (including intersection design and signal preemption)
• Transportation system management
• Parking management
• Traffic reduction ordinances
• Car and fuel taxation
• Speed limits

Pedestrian signals incorporated with traditional traffic signals manage traffic using a physical improvement.
Physical design techniques create physical impediments to speeding and other vehicle activities that detract from the pedestrian environment. Such impediments include:

- Road undulations
- Humps
- Rumble strips
- Speed tables
- Strong vertical elements to create pinch points or gateways
- Traffic circles
- Offset intersections
- Diagonal diverters
- Virtual speed bumps

**Short-Term Recommendations**

- Continue and enhance the education of potential Downtown visitors that parking Downtown is primarily a perceived issue of a lack of facilities rather than reality.
- Promote where to park safely and cost effectively for various activity centers.
- Add crosswalk improvements, such as striping and ADA compliant ramps and signals where they do not already exist.
- Traffic-calming physical design techniques should be implemented or enhanced in the most heavily used pedestrian areas.
- Begin policy discussions about traffic-calming traffic management strategies that could be implemented in the mid- and long-term.
- Change one-way streets wherever possible to two-way streets to improve pedestrian safety, slow traffic and make better use of the road network by distributing traffic more evenly throughout Downtown streets in the morning and evening peak hours.
Mid-Term and Long-term Recommendations

The recommendations for the mid- and long-term include more of the same enhancements mentioned for the short-term, only they would expand to the south and west to include the following Downtown districts: Auraria, Central Platte Valley Auraria, Central Platte Valley Commons and Central Platte Valley Prospect. The Denver Strategic Plan also contains recommendations for the 2015 and 2035 planning horizons that should be considered. In addition, as the Downtown streets get closer to meeting capacity, phasing in structured parking facilities at the periphery of the CBD is recommended to promote the success of a pedestrian zone.

Policymakers could begin to formulate policies and plans for implementing and executing traffic-calming traffic management strategies, including the continuation of converting one-way streets to two-way traffic.

Bicycling

A component of creating a walkable Downtown is to encourage transportation alternatives to the private vehicle. Because of Denver’s mild climate and outdoor-oriented population, bicycling should be encouraged equally with mass transit and walking as a means of personal transport, as well as a means to improve the quality of urban life. Critical to the success of a Downtown Denver bicycling initiative is implementing policies which foster awareness of bicycling benefits and supporting an enhanced commitment to a bike-friendly infrastructure. This section discusses the policy and physical improvements needed in order to make Denver a truly bike-friendly community.

A complete, continuous, interconnected network of named bicycle paths and routes is needed. Each route should be marked and lit, governed by traffic signs and equipped with signals of its own. This network should be interwoven with the transit system; the street grid for cars, trucks, and taxis; and the sidewalk grid for pedestrians. Although working in concert with these other networks, the bicycling network must be separated from them to ensure that it is safe and useful for everyone, from eight year olds to 80 year olds. Strong leadership and forward thinking policy is needed in order to achieve the necessary physical improvements and enhanced physical bicycling infrastructure.

Short-term Recommendations

- Although much of what is recommended in this section is already addressed in the Denver Bicycle Master Plan, the resulting bicycling network should continue to evolve. A city representative should be identified to ensure that recommendations for bike improvements on major transportation projects are integrated into design and budget processes, thereby more effectively promoting bicycling as an alternative form of transportation.
• Reinforcing good biking behavior and creating incentives to bicyclists are crucial if Denver is to meet its objective of being a bike-friendly city. Education of bicyclists is necessary, including widely distributed marketing materials and safety information, and maps of bike routes and trails in and around Denver.

• Appropriate new construction in Downtown could be required to provide bike storage, shower facilities and locker rooms.

• Secure bike storage should be provided at transit stations to better enable multi-modal commuting.

**Mid-term Recommendations**

• Inner-ring neighborhoods need to be connected to the CBD and to each other by quality, fully-connected and identified bike routes. Bike routes on large roads must be visible, physically curbed, fenced or graded away from both traffic and walkers. On smaller, neighborhood streets, where bikes and cars do mingle, the shared transport surface should be calmed with speed humps, traffic circles and curb bump-outs.

• Parking lanes adjacent to primary bike lanes should be eliminated to ensure bicyclist’s safety.

• In addition to an information campaign, incentives should be created for commuters who choose to bike to work independent of the intrinsic benefits such as fuel savings and health. Incentives offered to bicyclists should be in line with those offered in other cities such as Seattle, Washington, and Palo Alto, California, including cash vouchers which can be used at local businesses.

**Long-term Recommendations**

• Continue improving bike routes and creating designated bike lanes with physical separation from vehicle lanes and pedestrians on primary bike thoroughfares.
Pedestrian Movement
Downtown Denver’s 16th Street Mall is a very successful place for retail and businesses, as well as a great pedestrian environment. However, the areas in the Central Business District not directly on the 16th Street Mall are less hospitable to pedestrian traffic and receive correspondingly less of it. The goal of the recommendations in this section is to address the improvements needed to elevate the level of pedestrian traffic flows in the CBD to areas adjacent to the 16th Street Mall.

Short-term Recommendations
• Use of the Barnes Dance (all pedestrian-phase signals) at strategic crosswalk locations.
• Utilize more countdown clocks at pedestrian crossings and increase the walk time for pedestrians.

Mid-term Recommendations
• Improve pedestrian direction signage at areas off the 16th Street Mall. Install message centers and street signage similar to what is on the Mall.
• Provide incentives to promote walking and market items like pedometers, water bottles and backpacks (for a change of shoes).

Long-term Recommendations
• Improve lighting on pedestrian walkways. (Determine if pedestrian-activated lighting at intersections is a practical solution.)
• Work to implement the Downtown Strategic Plan recommendations related to improving the pedestrian environment.
• Increase ground-level retail and street-side dining.

The development of centralized parking areas is intended to reduce the amount of cars in the CBD and to provide safe, convenient and economical parking. The reduction in cars and some modest improvements will greatly enhance the Downtown pedestrian-friendly environment.
V. PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Parks and open spaces play a significant role in creating a pedestrian-friendly city. They offer an opportunity for people to escape the hectic pace of urban life by retreating to more natural, serene settings. As stated in Blueprint Denver, parks “Provide a welcome respite from the intensity of urban living.” Urban parks are necessary for the health of cities and their inhabitants.

Parks and open spaces provide physical, mental and economic benefits by:

- Offering diverse outdoor recreational and exercise opportunities for Downtown residents, visitors and workforce.
- Promoting social health by offering gathering areas for celebrating heritage, family and the expression of ideas.
- Containing facilities that offer instructional classes, exposure to arts and crafts, and organized community and sporting events.
- Creating a sense of community, civic pride and identity.
- Becoming the “lungs” of the city, where vast amounts of vegetation and trees can grow and assist in carbon monoxide mitigation.
- Improving the price of real estate serving both the residents and potential investors who desire to live and start businesses in a city that offers such amenities.

Parks should be highly visible, easily accessible and serve as desirable destinations. In doing so, parks and open spaces will further encourage pedestrian activity Downtown, and begin to shift the cultural mindset toward a more pedestrian-friendly Downtown.

Parks and Open Spaces Allure

Today, Denver’s Downtown parks contribute greatly to the city’s allure as a walkable city. More active and vibrant parks create destinations that draw pedestrians from one Downtown neighborhood to another. The key to creating community parks is to make them accessible and pedestrian-friendly. They also need to be linked by public transportation and accessible by foot, bike or private transportation.

In the early 1900s, George Kessler introduced a parkway plan for Denver. Inspired by the designs of renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead, the parkways were designed to extend the park experience throughout the city. Examples of Denver’s historic parkway system include Speer Boulevard and Monaco Parkway. Although implementing the original plan of making these parkways 200 feet in width may not be feasible for Downtown Denver, the concept of a pedestrian-friendly path that connects these parks is possible. This pedestrian path could be accomplished by using paving stones on the pathways to create bright, winding lanes to connect the parks of the Downtown area from Civic Center Park to Commons Park or Cuernavaca Park.
Activate the Parks

Downtown Denver already has a strong framework of parks and open spaces. However, these parks and plazas can better serve a pedestrian environment with the addition of key physical and programmatic improvements that cater to visitors, residents and the workforce. More active and vibrant parks create destinations that draw pedestrians from one Downtown neighborhood to another. Increased activation may be achieved by the following recommendations:

- Create more child-friendly environments and activities.
- Create programming for new and existing small and medium sized performance spaces.
- Create numerous short distance destinations that can be frequented often.
- Promote and organize events at public gathering spaces.
- Offer activities to populate parks year round.
- Offer free Wi-Fi access in all Downtown parks to attract non-traditional park users.
- Clean and maintain existing public restrooms and establish others.
- Dedicate funding for park programming.

Some of these improvements have already been adopted - the Downtown Denver Partnership and the Business Improvement District facilitate many events in Skyline Park during the summer season, including a family-oriented program called “Playin’ in the Park”; a summer concert series called “Mile High Movies in Skyline Park”; “Lunch Link & Learn” hosted by the University of Colorado Denver; and “Classes in the Park” hosted by Metropolitan State College of Denver. There are also a series of events hosted in Skyline Park during the holiday season. These are great examples of the vibrancy of programmed parks. This concept could be adopted more widely at other city parks, offering more people the opportunity to walk to, and participate in, community events.

Park facilities that would allow for events like these on a year-round basis would improve Downtown pedestrian traffic. Possible incentives might include reimbursement of transit fees for families attending these events. In addition, enticing people to utilize public transit to attend
a variety of events hosted at parks will help educate people about the ease of transit use and how accessible the city is by foot. In addition, children that harbor memories of riding public transit to such events will become adults who foster a pedestrian-focused culture.

Another way to enhance and brand existing parks, plazas and open spaces is through the recommendations identified in the Design and Amenities section. Architecture, signage, lighting, benches and shelters in these public spaces should reflect the character and identity of the distinctive neighborhoods.

Create temporary, pedestrian-only areas
Part of the magic of a vibrant urban area are the surprises one encounters while exploring. Temporary changes in the fabric and activities of the pedestrian environment help create these moments of discovery and delight. This approach is currently used in Denver during a number of special events, such as the Downtown Art Market, Piazza dell’Arte and Oktoberfest. The recommendation to add art galleries to Arapahoe Square would be a great opportunity to create a pedestrian-only setting. Other opportunities for excitement can be explored in the proposed Theatre District.

These events should be encouraged and coordinated throughout the year to create a network of spaces that activate different neighborhoods. Blocks adjacent to the 16th Street Mall should have scheduled “pedestrian only” days, weeks or months. The rationale behind this is to introduce the concept of a pedestrian-only Downtown core. People and businesses will then begin to see and feel the dynamics of entire city blocks without automobile traffic.

Realize the New Parks as Proposed in the Downtown Denver Area Plan

While Denver’s parks and open space system is strong, there are areas of Downtown that are currently underserved. The Downtown Area Plan identifies several key locations for additional parks and plazas. Before further development threatens prime park locations, we recommend that the land be secured. The focus of these parks should be on healthy living and family-friendly environments. The DAP calls for making Downtown a more “family-friendly” place; providing areas of activity like the Downtown Children’s Playground is a step in the right direction.

As with existing parks, all new parks and plazas should express the identities of the neighborhoods within which they exist. In fact, a new park in an emerging distinctive neighborhood can be the catalyst to set the tone, style and character for that place as it takes shape.
Create a Network of Complete Streets

Great destinations and districts are a fundamental part of creating a vibrant pedestrian environment. Just as important is a clearly navigable network of pedestrian connections between them.

The DAP identifies a framework of Green Streets as a means to enhance the public realm through street trees and landscaping. This concept should be expanded to include the concepts of Complete Streets. This is a multidisciplinary approach to designing streets to accommodate all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, mass transit, automobiles and adjacent property owners, while promoting an environmentally sustainable environment. Design criteria that should be considered include:

- Ample sidewalk widths that accommodate pedestrians, sidewalk cafes and vendors.
- Street tree placement that provides necessary balances of sun and shade during summer months.
- Reduced number and width of vehicular lanes.
- Two-way traffic where possible.
- Dedicated bike lanes with dedicated timed traffic signals that give bicyclists precedence over automobiles.
- Pedestrian priority crosswalks.
- Materials, furnishings and signage that clearly designate these as the primary pedestrian ways.
- Dedicated funds for capital improvements and maintenance for all Green Streets.
Create a Signature Downtown Park
Denver should invest in the creation of a 21st century signature open space that makes a bold statement and announces Denver’s intention to be a progressive, forward-looking city. Millennium Park in Chicago, Pioneer Square in Portland and Pike Place in Seattle suggest ways in which Denver can create a vibrant public space that will be a destination in itself and will create a major draw for visitors, as well as residents and the Downtown workforce. It may be possible to locate this signature destination in Civic Center Park or Commons Park. Specific components that could be included in this park are:

- A design and theme corresponding with the four seasons.
- Elements that are multi-functional in design to allow for concerts, recreation (ice-skating rink in winter like New York’s Rockefeller Center), speeches/meetings, indoor and outdoor events, and wildlife/landscaping.
- A multi-tier format, allowing for retrofitting of the facility for each season in a high-tech fashion (multi-layers that are interchangeable) with an expanding/retractable roof. This would be a one-of-a-kind, technologically-engineered facility.

It is possible to achieve this goal by examining the design, functions, accessibility and programming of Civic Center Park. As noted in the Downtown Area Plan, “Civic Center Park needs to be strengthened as an outdoor amenity to attract visitors, residents, workers and students to the park.” The DAP noted the following ideas for revitalizing the park:

- Restore and better activate Civic Center Park.
-Restore the Carnegie Library to accommodate new uses that help activate the park based on the recommendations of the Civic Center District Plan and Civic Center Park Master Plan.
- Create clear street-level pedestrian connections to link 14th Street and Colfax Avenue; 15th Street and Colfax to the Acoma Plaza; and Civic Center Station to the Art Museum.
- Provide enhanced safety and maintenance services to the park.
- Enhance the park’s function as the central Downtown location for community celebrations and festivals.
- Invest in the Civic Center area, including the station, park and cultural facilities.
- Implement street enhancements identified in the Civic Center
V. PARKS & OPEN SPACES

District Plan for West Colfax Avenue and West 14th Avenue between Speer Boulevard and Bannock Street.

• Encourage a mix of activities and vibrant, transparent ground-floor uses in buildings facing the park.

Ensure that Downtown’s Peripheral Parking Hubs are High Energy Activity Nodes

As discussed in the Parking and Transportation section of this report, parking should be concentrated on the periphery of the Downtown area, freeing up the core for mass transit and pedestrian-centered environments.

These nodes will be the primary gateways into Downtown, and rather than huge parking structures these transit hubs should be conceived as vibrant nodes of activity, with high-quality public open spaces that welcome workers, visitors and residents into the city. They should be carefully located in relation to transit and the Green Streets network, the connective tissue of Downtown’s pedestrian environment.
VI. MARKETING & SAFETY

Marketing & Safety
The recommendations concerning Design and Amenities, Transportation, and Parks and Open Space are all critical to reaching Denver’s goal of becoming the “most pedestrian-friendly city in the nation.” However, all of these efforts can be negated if safety does not play an underlying role and focus.

Physical Safety
Denver has come a long way in regard to pedestrian safety in the past several years, and made additional enhancements to improving pedestrian safety for the 2008 Democratic National Convention. Positive improvements, as mentioned in the previous sections, have included re-striping of pedestrian crosswalks, new bicycle lane striping along major bike routes and replacing old crosswalk signs with new “countdown” crossings. These were all important steps in improving overall pedestrian safety.

Further recommendations for improved pedestrian safety include:

- Installation of emergency phones in strategic areas of Downtown where there have been higher instances of crime. These phones should be in public places with a direct connection to the Denver Police Department. These types of phones are most often seen on college campuses, creating a sense of security and comfort, especially at night.

- “Re-flaming” the 16th Street Mall Surface. Over the past 25 years, the granite surface of the Mall has lost a lot of its texture and grip due to wear and tear and the natural elements. By a process known as “re-flaming”, the original texture and grip of the Mall surface can be restored. This will reduce the chances of slip and fall accidents for pedestrians visiting the 16th Street Mall.

Perception of Safety
Another area which is of primary concern to citizens is the perception of safety while walking around Downtown Denver. Per capita, Denver is one of the safest cities in the United States, ranked 6th safest among the 25 largest metropolitan areas.15

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However, when individuals are asked why they choose not to visit Downtown, safety is often cited as one of the reasons. This perception needs to be changed.

Our research found that the homeless population, loitering, and petty crimes such as graffiti affect people’s perception of safety. Again, Denver has done a great job of combating all of these issues, but we believe more can be done. In 2005, the Commission to End Homelessness, along with Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper, created a program called “Denver’s Road Home.” This is a 10-year plan to end homelessness in Denver, and includes a public education campaign to direct contributions toward longer-term solutions for the homeless, in part by reducing handouts to individual panhandlers. Since inception of the program, there has been an 11 percent decrease in overall homelessness and a 92 percent decrease in panhandling on the 16th Street Mall.

Denver also has a special program to combat graffiti called “Denver’s Partners Against Graffiti.” This program has recently stepped up efforts to quickly clean up graffiti, placing a 48-hour limit on cleaning graffiti for non-residential property and a 72-hour limit on cleaning graffiti on residential property. In most cases, this task force provides free clean up graffiti services. This service is consistent with the “Broken Windows” theory - if you respond quickly to broken windows and graffiti, overall crime in a given area is reduced.

Further recommendations for improving the perception of safety in Downtown Denver include:

- Implement the DAP recommendation to expand and enhance existing programs for the homeless, including establishing more 24-hour facilities for the homeless and ensuring a balanced distribution of service providers throughout metro Denver. Obtain local community involvement and share the available pool of resources.
- Reevaluate all guidelines and policies relating to homelessness and vagrancy.
- Implement a “Good Neighbor” program in each of the various Downtown districts, including a website and hotline for sharing information among business and residents and monthly or quarterly neighborhood meetings. The program would be useful in identifying specific trends in each neighborhood district, and could be used as an important tool in identifying and combating crime on a macro level.
- Create an Alcohol Impact Area which focuses on specific problem areas of Downtown where public intoxication issues are prevalent. The media coverage associated with these incidents creates a perception that areas of Downtown may be less safe than they actually are. (A similar program was implemented in the city of Tacoma, Washington where merchants in an established area were prohibited from selling certain types of alcohol during certain hours.)
Safety Education

A safe pedestrian environment is a friendly pedestrian environment. A fundamental part of pedestrian safety is ensuring that visitors, residents and the workforce in Downtown Denver are well-educated and informed of safety “best practices.” This education is proven to be an effective way to reduce pedestrian accidents. Safety Education Recommendations Include:

- Continue to place a prominent focus on the “Safe Routes to School” program in local schools. The Safe Routes to School program (SRTS) was established in May 2006, to assist communities in enabling and encouraging children to safely walk and bike to school. Federal funding for the State of Colorado is guaranteed through 2009. This program gets the whole community involved with pedestrian safety “best practices,” including neighborhood groups, schools, law enforcement officers, community leaders and transportation and public health officials.

- Educate Downtown Denver tourists on pedestrian safety “best practices.” Colorado has long been recognized as one of the premier destinations in North America for recreation and tourism. Tourism is a major economic generator for the state, and having an unsafe perception of Downtown Denver could have a significantly negative impact on this very important business. Therefore, it makes economic sense that the hospitality industry would want to educate tourists about safe practices while enjoying our city.

  Education for tourists could include developing safety brochures for hotels, restaurants and visitor information centers throughout Downtown. Rather than emphasizing the issue of safety, the brochure could be titled “How to Optimize your Pedestrian Experience in Downtown Denver” or something similar. This would be a subtle way to educate tourists about being safe without making them feel that Downtown Denver is unsafe.

- Educate Downtown Denver workers on pedestrian safety. There are 110,000 people who work Downtown, and not including this group in safety education would be missing out on a large segment of people who are experiencing Downtown every day. Possible means of creating greater safety awareness would be including a “Pedestrian Safety Tips” brochure to be included with all RTD Eco-Passes and with monthly bus passes. Another would be an annual “Safety Awareness Day” in a Downtown park, which could include displays on “safety best practices” and also include a forum or questionnaire for Downtown workers and citizens to provide recommendations or express specific safety concerns.
VI. MARKETING & SAFETY

Create a comprehensive marketing/branding campaign for Denver

Now that we have identified the “why” and “how” of making Downtown Denver the most pedestrian-friendly city in the nation, we need to spread the word. Currently, if you Google “pedestrian friendly,” Denver is not found in the search results. A comprehensive marketing campaign might include:

- Create a Downtown Denver guide about the pedestrian experience. This guide would outline safety “best practices;” user-friendly maps to different restaurant, housing and shopping districts; and easily accessible routes to and from major hotels and activity venues. Denver created a similar brochure outlining walking and biking paths for the DNC. That brochure could be expanded upon and integrated into the Partnership’s Downtown Map & Directory.

- Enhance existing, or create a new centralized events website. This website would include EVERYTHING that is happening Downtown, including park events, music venues, restaurants, movie times, sports events, lectures and more. This would support the notion that Downtown is a fun and vibrant place to be, with many options for recreational, sports and cultural activities.

- Utilize Business Improvement District Ambassadors to promote Downtown as a safe place. Currently there are five full-time Downtown Ambassadors who are available to answer questions and provide directions. They also work with the Denver Police to report any problems they observe. The number of Ambassadors could be increased, putting additional “eyes and ears” on Downtown streets to create a safer and more enjoyable environment for everyone.

- Use current marketing campaigns to promote Downtown Denver as a pedestrian-oriented community.
How does Denver begin?
The following matrix is provided as a quick reference, prioritizing recommendations into three time frames:

- Strategies found in the “Short Term” column are those which we believe may be implemented within a one to five year time frame with less cost and resources than the Mid and Long Term recommendations.
- The “Mid Term” column includes proposals which require somewhat greater funding and incentives, as well as a larger number of stakeholders. The time frame for Mid Term recommendations is six to 10 years.
- Strategies found in the “Long Term” column are those which we believe could require more significant resources and/or number of stakeholders and policy changes. Long Term recommendations are expected to take 11 to 20 years to implement.
### IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

**GOAL:** To make Denver the most pedestrian-friendly community in the nation by enhancing experiences and changing cultural mindsets such that pedestrians, bicycles and mass transit take priority over private vehicular transportation.

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<td>Evaluate current Barnes Dance crosswalks locations and determine if additional or different locations could benefit the pedestrian environment.</td>
<td>Improve pedestrian direction signage at areas off the 16th Street Mall.</td>
<td>Create parking hubs in strategic locations on the outskirts of the CBD.</td>
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<td>Provide opportunities to showcase public art pieces.</td>
<td>Create a transit fare-free zone within the CBD.</td>
<td>Determine if pedestrian-activated lighting at intersections is a practical solution.</td>
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<td>Consider a Free Day for transit users to explore routes to and from the CBD.</td>
<td>Launch the 18th Street / 19th Street Downtown Circulator.</td>
<td>Develop an integrated local transit system connected to existing and future bus, light-rail, and circulator lines.</td>
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<td>Resurface the 16th Street Mall granite.</td>
<td>Utilize interactive public art as a “magnet” for children.</td>
<td>Adopt Complete Streets guidelines for all streets.</td>
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<td>Establish ‘Branding’ boundaries for neighborhood districts.</td>
<td>Identify unique aspects of Downtown neighborhoods with signage, banners, and entryways</td>
<td>Extend a recurring design theme to lighting, benches, and shelters.</td>
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<td>Improve landscaping, seating, lighting, wayfinding, &amp; facades to enhance the pedestrian environment.</td>
<td>Increase ground level retail and street-side dining.</td>
<td>Implement architectural design guidelines for buildings and walkways.</td>
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<td>Install more countdown clocks at pedestrian crossings and increase the walk time for pedestrians.</td>
<td>Provide incentives to promote walking, and market items like pedometers, backpacks (for change of shoes) etc.</td>
<td>Implement the DMAP recommendations related to improving the pedestrian environment.</td>
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<td>Find funding for park programming.</td>
<td>Create small to medium size performance spaces</td>
<td>Create a signature Downtown park.</td>
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<td>Require buildings to be built on the setback and offset the loss of street level space with floor-area-ratio (F.A.R.) incentives for greater height.</td>
<td>Offer incentives for building arcades on street frontages.</td>
<td>Create incentives for developing “green” parking lots.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhance the existing Downtown Map &amp; Directory, adding safety and transportation tips.</td>
<td>Create new / enhanced courtyards as mechanism to connect pedestrian system to destinations and amenities.</td>
<td>Create landscaped medians.</td>
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<td>Provide secure &amp; sheltered bike storage at RTD stations (Market Street, Civic Center, and Union Station).</td>
<td>Create temporary, pedestrian-only areas Downtown.</td>
<td>Continue and enhance temporary, pedestrian-only areas downtown.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Install emergency Blue Light phones in strategic areas of Downtown where there have been higher instances of reported crime.</td>
<td>Install secure &amp; sheltered bike storage at all transit hubs to enable multi-model commuting.</td>
<td>Create policy requiring inclusion of bike storage, shower facilities, and locker rooms for new construction in Downtown.</td>
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### IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

**GOAL:** To make Denver the most pedestrian-friendly community in the nation by enhancing experiences and changing cultural mindsets such that pedestrians, bicycles and mass transit take priority over private vehicular transportation.

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<td>Encourage the use of shared parking in new developments.</td>
<td>Strengthen current initiatives of Denver’s Road Home, by enhancing and expanding additional programs for the homeless, including establishing more 24-hour facilities.</td>
<td>Create an Alcohol Impact Area to focus on specific problem areas of downtown where public intoxication issues are prevalent.</td>
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<td>Provide incentives for businesses implementing “commute trip reduction programs” for their employees.</td>
<td>Establish Maximum Parking Requirements as opposed to Minimum Requirements within the zoning code for new development.</td>
<td>Provide real-time information on the location of available parking spaces.</td>
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<td>Decrease the maximum allowed time limits at on-street parking meters from 2 hours to 1-1/2 hours.</td>
<td>Vary on-street parking costs directly proportionate to the demand at any given time.</td>
<td>Require enclosures for waste and recycling receptacles within the property line rather than in the alley itself.</td>
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<td>Install free Wi-Fi access in all downtown parks &amp; plazas</td>
<td>Improve existing and install additional public restrooms.</td>
<td>Physically curb, fence, or otherwise separate bike lanes from both traffic and walkers. On smaller, neighborhood streets, install traffic-calming measures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use Mayor’s Bicycle Advisory Committee, Denver Bike Initiative team, and City staff to improve bicycle infrastructure and implement Bicycle Master Plan.</td>
<td>Enhance and expand current wayfinding system: Include the distances and the projected travel times by foot and bike to reach destinations. Direct pedestrians to: transit hubs, sports arenas, key landmarks, attractions, and neighborhoods.</td>
<td>Eliminate parking lanes adjacent to primary bike lanes.</td>
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<td>Provide education for bicyclists, including marketing materials with safety information, bike etiquette, and maps of routes and trails in and around Downtown.</td>
<td>Ensure fully-connected and signed bike routes</td>
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<td>Increase number of bike racks.</td>
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*VII. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE*
Conclusion
Research shows that there are many benefits to a successful pedestrian environment. We know that the design of our streets plays a role in making them desirable and attractive. We know that pedestrians, mass transit and bicycles should take priority over private vehicles. We know that destination parks and open spaces provide economic, physical and mental benefits.

Considering all of these factors, the 2008 Downtown Denver Leadership Class worked together to create a number of recommendations that will improve the pedestrian experience in Downtown Denver. The recommendations in this report, if implemented, will enhance the pedestrian experience and change cultural mindsets, positioning Downtown Denver as the most pedestrian-friendly city in the nation. Enhancing the infrastructure by creating design destinations for our streets and amenities, decreasing the footprint of private vehicular traffic, and further developing our parks and open spaces, will create an environment that invites visitors, promotes safety and encourages all users to stay and enjoy the Downtown experience. Focusing on the importance of the pedestrian will create an energy in our city that will attract more people, more residents and more businesses, producing a stronger economy that benefits everyone.
2008 Downtown Denver Leadership Program Class Roster

Jay Accashian, Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.
Kari Anderson, Colorado Rockies Baseball Club
Steve Billigmeier,* Cushman & Wakefield of Colorado, Inc.
Greg Blanchard, U.S. Bank
Michael Bouchard,**◊ EDAW
Linda Olson Brooker,* University of Colorado – Denver
Daniel Burns,* Bank of the West
Michael Callahan, Opus Northwest, LLC
John Carter, Sage Hospitality Resources, LLC
Kathleen Collins,* URS Corporation
Mark Condon, The Denver Athletic Club
Tisha Corbett, Emily Griffith Opportunity School
Jennifer Cordes,** SlaterPaul Architects
Jeff Corn,* Fleisher Smyth Brokaw LLC
Shannon Csotty,**◊ The Kenney Group, Inc.
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Brad Elliott,* Vectra Bank Colorado
Britta Evans,* CoBiz Financial
Joshua Fine, Focus Property Group LLC
Erin Ganser,* Mercy Housing Colorado
Robert Goldstein,**◊ Shughart Thomson & Kilroy, P.C.
Bethany Gravell, CRL Associates, Inc.
Brent Grohman, United Western Bank
Kate Hafer, * Downtown Denver Partnership, Inc.
Aaron Hyatt, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck
Maggie Jancio, Tryba Architects
Brad Jeanneret, Hensen Phelps Construction Co.
Denise Jendrusch,* Denver Business Journal
Candice Jones, Denver Health Foundation
Wyatt Jones, Colorado Housing & Finance Authority
Greg Kalkwarf, BKD, LLP
Lynn Kornfeld, Faegre & Benson LLP
James Kratofil, Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center
Andrea Leider, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP
Wendy Lembreck,* AR7 Architects, P.C.
Dawn MacKinnon, Holme Roberts & Owen LLP
Jace Missler, MoeWhite, LLP
Carissa McCabe,* Groundfloor Media
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Sam Miller,* klipp
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Marisa Montoya,* Xcel Energy
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Sarah Murphy,* Humphries Poli Architects, P.C.
Sean Nesbitt,* Metropolitan State College of Denver
Blaine Nickeson,* Auraria Higher Education Center
Amy Noll, The Colorado Forum
Chris Parezo,* Civitas, Inc.
Anthony Paul, Merrill Lynch
Kevin Puccio, New Town Builders
Melanie Rice,* Molson Coors
Jamie Rouppe, Denver Urban Renewal Authority
Kristin Scott, Qwest Communications
David Specter, Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell LLP
Douglas Spuler, RNL
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Brandon Willis, Wells Fargo Bank
Kathryn Wilson,* Cigna Health Care
Paul Wise,* Gates Corporation
Derek Woodbury, Denver Office of Economic Development
Cleve Wortham, FirstBank of Denver

* Presentation/Report Committee
** Group Co-Chair
† 2008 DDLP Trustee
◊ Recipient of the John Parr Leadership Award