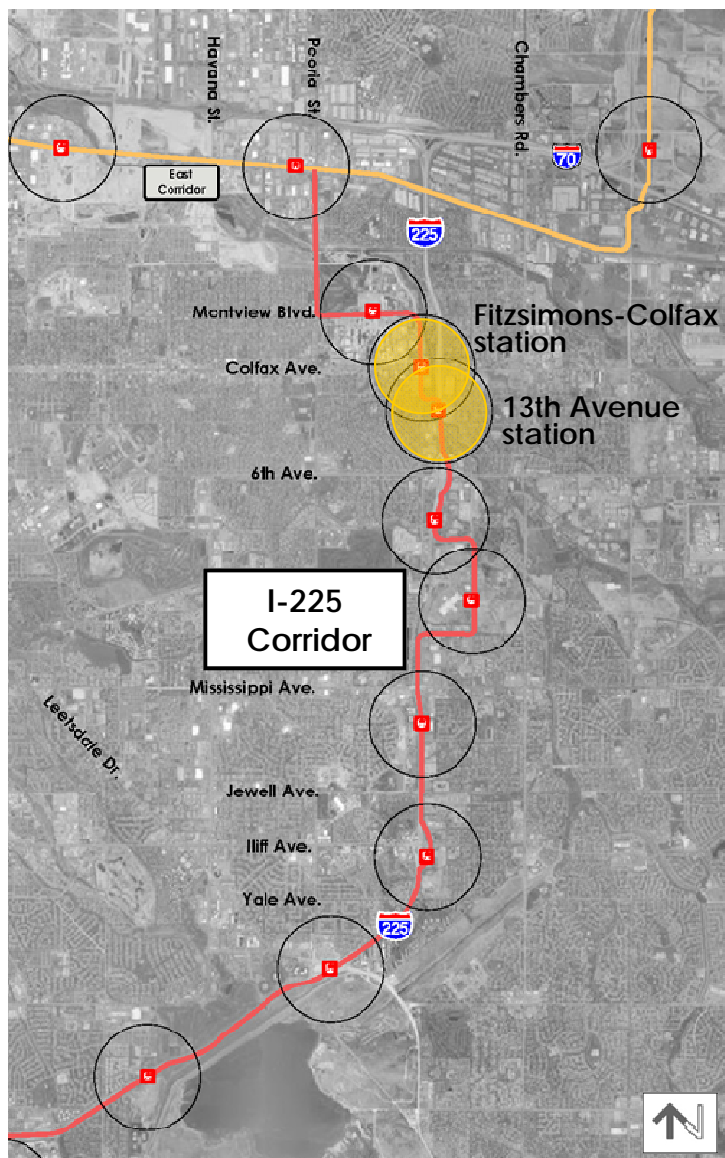


Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan

A Framework for Transit-Oriented Development



City of Aurora
Final Draft, September, 2009

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Preface

In 2008, the City of Aurora and RTD collaborated on the environmental evaluation process that refined the location of the I-225 light rail line and stations. During this time, the city conducted planning studies at several of the stations. The city retained a design team led by Crandall Arambula to prepare a station area plan for an area approximately one-half mile around the proposed Fitzsimons-Colfax station area. During the I-225 Corridor Environmental Evaluation process, the concept of a new station at 13th Avenue arose, and this was added to the scope for the Fitzsimons-Colfax station area plan. This planning document presents the long-term vision for the area around these two stations with input from the members of the Steering Committee, property owners, RTD, and neighboring residents in three public meetings and workshops.

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) is funding station area planning efforts throughout the region by administering federal funds. Funding is awarded to jurisdictions on a competitive basis and the funding amount is eighty percent of the study's cost. The remaining amount for this study was contributed by the City of Aurora.

This document is one in a series of station area plans prepared by the city to promote transit-oriented development (TOD) around the transit stations. Policy directions are derived from the **2003 Aurora Comprehensive Plan**. The intent of this plan is to identify opportunities for compact, mixed-use development that is transit-supportive, and to develop strategies to implement a common vision. Bringing property owners, residents and the design team together to discuss challenges and opportunities and to create the vision for this area has been the over-riding goal of this plan.

This plan provides a vision for this station area. The fundamental concepts and land use framework are intended to be flexible. Property owners and developers can provide site plans that vary from the fundamental concepts and framework visions without necessitating amendments to this plan. Such alternatives must conform to the key principles for transit-oriented development as outlined in the **Aurora Comprehensive Plan** and must provide alternatives to the fundamental concepts and framework described in this plan in a manner that conforms to those key principles. Such alternatives should conform to the general design guidance and guidelines described in this plan.

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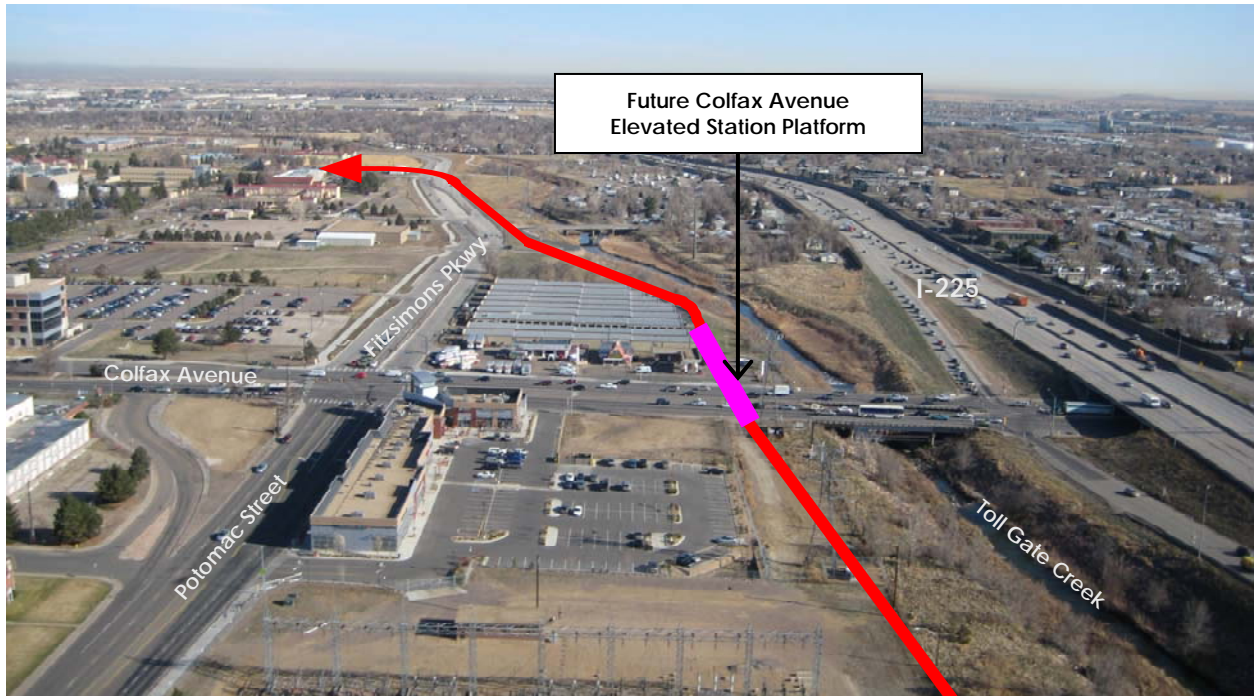


Figure 1. Aerial view looking north towards Colfax Avenue and the Fitzsimons-Colfax station area.



Figure 2. Aerial view looking north over the 13th Avenue station area

1. Background Information

The planning, construction and opening of the I-225 light rail transit corridor is eagerly anticipated by businesses and residents in Aurora. The introduction of light rail stations can provide opportunities for changes in land use, creation of employment districts and new residential neighborhoods.

The light rail station at Colfax near the Anschutz-Fitzsimons campus and the 13th Avenue station are two of eight new stations planned along the I-225 corridor. The Fitzsimons-Colfax station is to be an elevated station that spans Colfax Avenue with stair and elevator access on the north and south sides of Colfax Avenue. This station will serve the eastern portion of the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical campus, new developments south of Colfax Avenue, and transit patrons transferring from the Colfax bus lines. The 13th Avenue station will provide commuter parking as well as serve the existing residential areas to the east and south.

The purpose of the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan is to proactively plan for development rather than reactively respond to development pressures. The plan is not intended to mandate redevelopment for property owners who do not wish to redevelop. It provides a framework for future development, should existing property owners choose to redevelop, sell or relocate.

The Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan reflects the preferred light rail alignment, station locations and commuter parking facility identified during the I-225 Corridor Environmental Evaluation process. Through the station area planning process, the City of Aurora worked closely with the Regional Transportation District (RTD), property owners, neighborhood associations and residents to identify the planning principles that guided this plan, and the framework plan that is the result. This plan presents the vision developed with the public and RTD.

The plan is based on comments collected for both station areas at three public meetings and workshops. As identified through this process and with RTD, the objectives of this plan are to:

- refine the location of each station by considering the optimal transportation access and potential development opportunities;
- identify direct, convenient and attractive bicycle and pedestrian connections to the stations;
- provide adequate commuter parking to serve the 13th Avenue station;
- create a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment at the stations;
- Identify long-term development concepts of undeveloped land adjacent to the 13th Avenue station and redevelopment by the Fitzsimons-Colfax station, and
- project potential traffic circulation patterns, devise an appropriate street system around the 13th Avenue station, and develop strategies to mitigate any negative transportation impacts to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The project study area comprises the one-half mile surrounding both stations, with a total area of approximately 700 acres. Existing land uses within the study area include medically oriented facilities, commercial and retail uses, and low density housing. The major employment center is the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical campus and the Colorado Science and Technology Park, which at build-out is projected to have 45,000 employees. This will be the City of Aurora's primary employment center. The medical complex will also be served by the Montview Station, located on Montview Boulevard. The RTD bus maintenance facility is located north of the planned 13th Avenue station. The study area extends

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from approximately Montview Boulevard on the north, the Anschutz-Fitzsimons campus on the west, the commercial area surrounding Billings Street on the south (the area north of 6th Avenue), and Sable Boulevard on the east.

The Toll Gate Creek is a major open space amenity that is planned to have a pedestrian and bicycle trail. This trail will be the north-south link connecting the 14-mile Sand Creek Regional Greenway Trail to the High Line Canal Trail, the Aurora Municipal Center, and other destinations further south.

The land surrounding these two stations has several unique attributes. The 13th Avenue station will be located on approximately 17 acres of undeveloped land owned by RTD. South of this parcel is an undeveloped parcel approximately 16 acres in size owned by the David J. Erb company. Both of these development sites can benefit from proximity to the future 13th Avenue station as well as good visibility from I-225. These parcels are shown in the Existing Conditions Map (Figure 3). There are also several planned developments adjacent to the Fitzsimons-Colfax station, specifically the Hilton Garden Inn, the Veterans Affairs Hospital, and the mixed-use Fitzsimons Promenade development.

It is expected that the Fitzsimons-Colfax station will be a major destination station to serve commuters travelling to medical facilities located on the eastern section of the medical campus. These will include the new Veterans Affairs hospital, the University buildings as well as Children's Hospital. The Fitzsimons-Colfax station will also function as a transfer station as transit patrons use the bus lines on Colfax to access the station. The 13th Avenue station is expected to function as an origination station for transit patrons that commute and park at the station, or live close to it.

Several challenges were addressed through the public workshops and stakeholder meetings. One major challenge was to determine the optimal location for the Fitzsimons-Colfax elevated station. Various alternative locations were analyzed and the implications for pedestrian access and development opportunities were balanced as the final location was selected.

For the 13th Avenue station, the opportunity to locate the station where it could be surrounded by new development provided the basis for this plan's concept. A concern identified by the residents of the single family residential neighborhoods east of the 13th Avenue station was the increased neighborhood traffic resulting from commuters. To disperse commuter traffic, it is proposed that there will be two major access roads to the station. RTD will build a connecting road from Sable Boulevard to the station. A connection from Potomac Street via 13th Avenue and a new bridge over Toll Gate Creek is recommended as a City of Aurora capital project. A third access to the station also may be built as new development occurs. This access would be a road crossing Toll Gate Creek to extend Dillon Way and connect to 6th Avenue to the south. This access would be important to provide another vehicular route to access the commuter parking facility.

The Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan offers a long term vision for the station area identifying the station locations and a framework for land use, road layouts, and pedestrian and bicycle connections to the station. The development opportunities are centered on the undeveloped lands, but the long-term opportunities for redevelopment are also identified. This plan strives to create a unique identity for these two stations. The elevated Fitzsimons-Colfax station, through its design, will create a gateway to the new development north and south of Colfax Avenue. New development directly adjacent to this elevated station is encouraged. The 13th Avenue station will provide commuter parking and will provide an access point for Aurora citizens to the regional rail system. This plan identifies street layouts to access the 13th Avenue station, the form and density of new development adjacent to both stations, and identifies locations for public spaces that can enhance the station area character.

This plan condenses information from a source document that contains details such as roadway cross-sections, detailed site plan illustrations, comments from the public process, etc. The reader should contact the Planning Department for further information on this document.

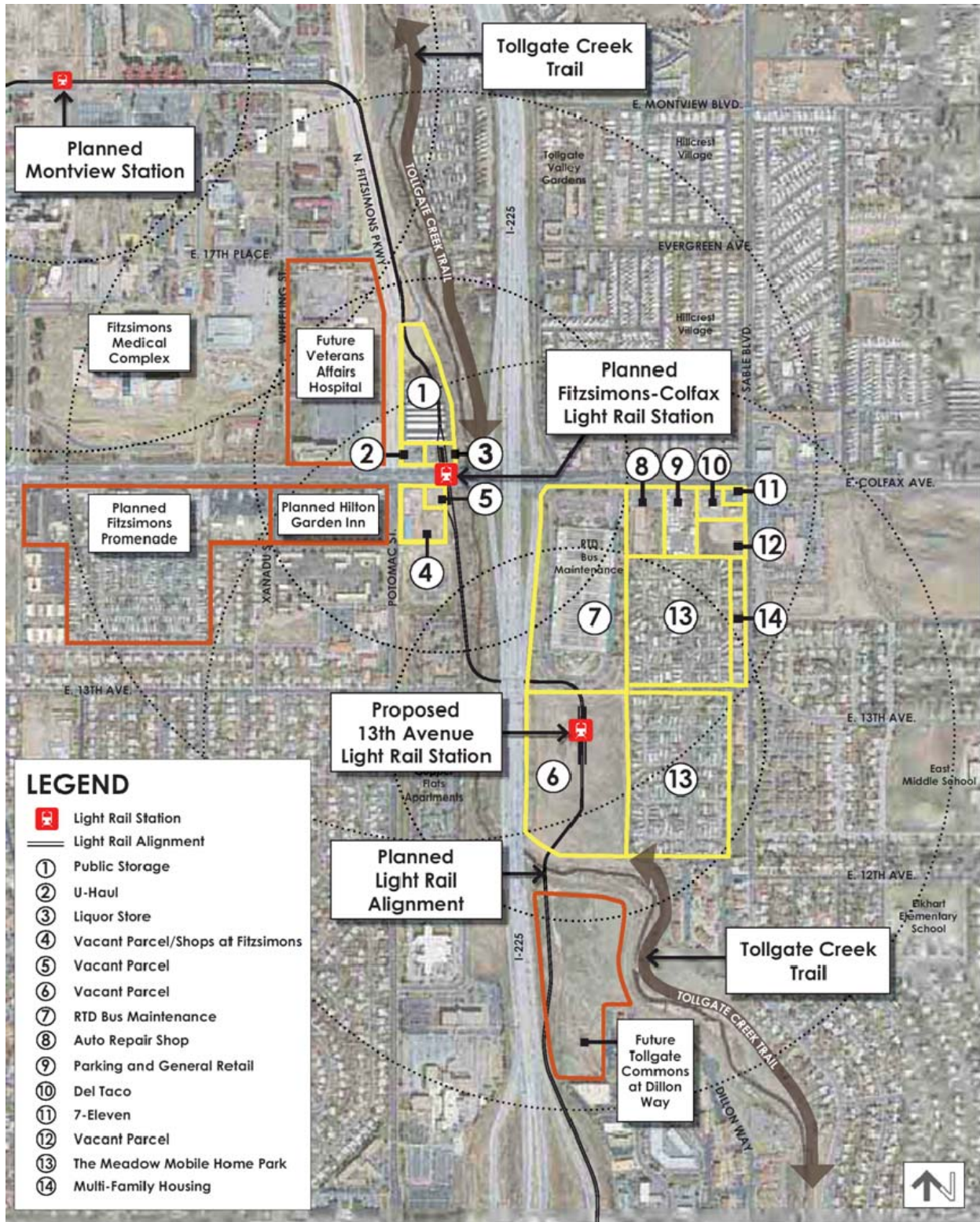


Figure 3. Existing Conditions Map

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2. The Plan

The following documents and studies have informed and guided the development of this station area plan:

- 2003 Aurora Comprehensive Plan;
- I-225 Corridor Environmental Evaluation (RTD); and
- Aurora Strategic Parking Study.

The planning process has also included an assessment of infrastructure needs. There are no significant limitations due to infrastructure capability that will reduce the medium and high density building forms recommended in this plan.

Through the planning process, the following key principles from the Aurora Comprehensive Plan shaped the development of the concepts.

1. TOD works as a “district”. The one-half mile area around the transit station is the minimum area of influence from the transit station. These areas can become new neighborhoods where development draws value from the transit stations, parks and plazas are gathering places, and the mix of uses allows pedestrians to easily reach their destinations.
2. TODs must be walkable. TODs are to create an urban scale where the pedestrian is important. Attractive and safe pedestrian connections are a priority in TODs.
3. Central spaces give identity to TODs. Public spaces are very important in TODs, and parks, plazas and main streets that are beautiful and useful can become important identifying elements.
4. TODs connect to the surrounding neighborhoods. The pedestrian network of the TOD should allow easy pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods. The relatively small size of the blocks should allow for an attractive and convenient pedestrian experience.
5. Density is important. TOD should have density sufficient to create an active center for an existing or new neighborhood. Higher densities take advantage of the massive public investment in transit. Density also creates the potential for diversity of housing types, a range of land uses, and the possibility of neighborhood-serving retail. Density should transition from the highest densities in the core of the TOD around the transit station to lower densities next to existing residential neighborhoods.
6. Design matters. The quality of building architecture and the design of streets, parks and plazas are important elements that create the identity of a station area.
7. Promoting sustainability. Compact development promotes efficiency in infrastructure, and may require innovative approaches to detention and water quality.

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The Fitzsimons-Colfax Station Area Vision

The character of the station area is an employment center. New development is expected to be medical office with ground floor retail. The station will function as a bus transfer station for transit patrons accessing the regional rail system, and as a destination station for employees and visitors to the various hospitals, medical offices, and university buildings.

13th Avenue Station Area Vision

The character of this station area is to be primarily a residential neighborhood with some office uses. This station has an important transportation function because it will serve commuters by providing an RTD park-n-Ride facility with a minimum of 250 parking spaces. The primary land use recommended is medium density residential with some retail and office uses. Public space amenities are important to provide the new residents with active and passive recreational opportunities. The station is to be accessed from the west by an extension of 13th Avenue under I-225 and from the south by an extension of Dillon Way over Toll Gate Creek.

Fundamental Concept

The Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan identifies new transit-oriented office and housing land uses that support the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical complex and the planned light rail stations. The fundamental concept provides a quick visual summary of the essential concepts of the station area plan. These are:

Transit-Supportive Office

- Office development located adjacent to light rail stations encourages employees to commute by transit. Medium and high density office development supports higher levels of potential ridership.
- Office sites next to the Fitzsimons-Colfax light rail station can accommodate a tall building with high density to take advantage of proximity to the light rail line and capitalize on visibility from I-225. Building access and frontage would be from Fitzsimons Parkway.
- Office uses are recommended for the site between the 13th Avenue station and I-225 since this site provides good visibility from I-225 and good transportation access.
- Structured parking is recommended for these office areas.

Transit-Supportive Housing

- Housing located adjacent to light rail stations encourages residents to use transit.
- Transit-supportive housing is recommended east of the planned 13th Avenue station to create a higher-density housing option in this area that benefits from proximity to the light rail station and the medical uses north of Colfax Avenue.
- Transit-supportive housing at medium to high densities are also recommended for the undeveloped land south of Toll Gate Creek.

Commuter Parking

- A planned RTD park-n-Ride facility at the 13th Avenue station will provide 250 surface parking spaces for rail transit patrons on opening day of the line.

Bus-to-Light Rail Transfers

- The location of the Fitzsimons-Colfax station on Colfax Avenue creates a bus-to-light rail transfer opportunity.

New Public Space Amenity

- New public spaces south of 13th Avenue create a visual and physical connection to the planned

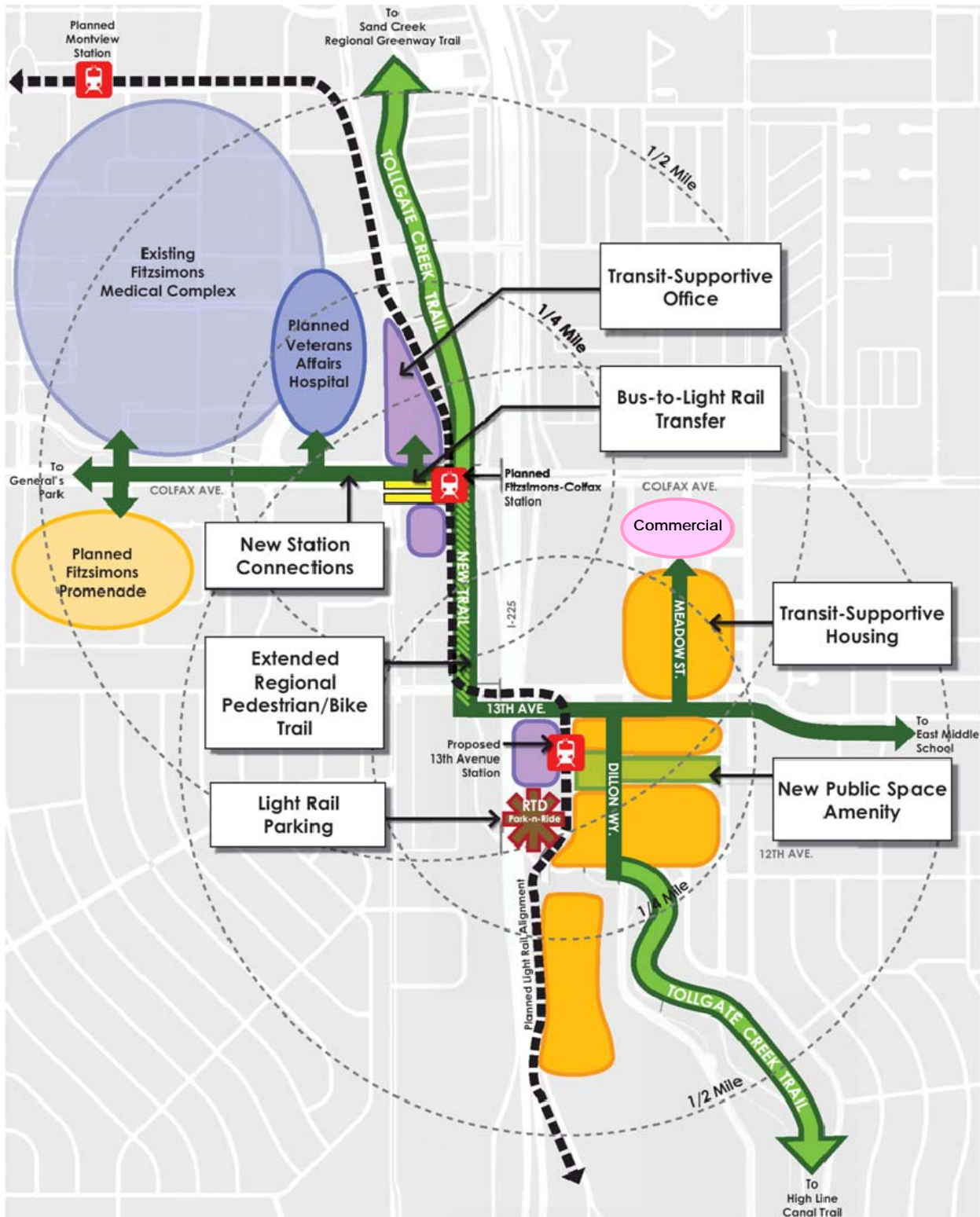


Figure 4. Fundamental Concept Diagram

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13th Avenue station and provide a central amenity for new residential land uses.

The Land Use Framework

To create a vision for long-term development, a number of concepts were developed to determine the form and type of complementary uses. The proposed Land Use Framework (Figure 5) supports the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical complex by providing complementary commercial and office uses at both the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue stations. The concept presented in the Land Use Framework was developed using new street layouts, block sizes at the appropriate size for expected buildings, and transit-oriented development parking requirements. Parks were identified as important amenities for new neighborhood residents. A build-out scenario was developed as a tool to identify any issues due to higher density that could arise.

The Land Use Framework illustrates the new development patterns that can occur and identifies the types and locations of transit-supportive uses. On the mixed-use parcels, particularly those fronting onto the 13th Avenue station, a mix of vertical uses is recommended. Where parcels contain a vertical mix of uses, the most likely predominant land use is indicated. The land use framework is intended to encourage flexibility. Where office is designated, housing may be built in its place as the primary use, depending on market directions.

Mixed-Use Office

Proposed office uses adjacent to the light rail stations support the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical complex by providing adjacent office space suitable for medical office and related uses. The office uses are located:

- Adjacent to desirable amenities, including the Toll Gate Creek trail system, and planned light rail stations, and opposite the proposed park blocks at the 13th Avenue station;
- Along transportation corridors that provide good drive-by visibility from I-225, and convenient access from either Fitzsimons Parkway or from 13th Avenue;
- On parcels that are sized to accommodate a Class A office building footprint and the associated on-site structured parking required to meet transit-oriented development parking standards.

Mixed-use Housing

Residential uses at the 13th Avenue station can be expected to provide housing for employees at the Anschutz-Fitzsimons due to proximity to the campus, as well as provide housing for residents working throughout the metro region. Living adjacent to light rail transit provides residents mobility options. These housing uses will:

- Provide mixed-income and market rate housing options, including rental and ownership units;
- Provide a mix of housing types including apartments and townhouses;
- Be located adjacent to desirable residential amenities, including proposed parks and the planned Toll Gate Creek trail; and
- Establish a desirable neighborhood composed of buildings with concealed on-site parking that meet accepted real estate market requirements.

There are three single-ownership properties in the station area that, if redeveloped, would provide opportunities for higher-density housing. These properties are:

- **Existing Rental Apartments.** This site west of Potomac Street is one of the few currently unplanned sites with redevelopment potential west of I-225. This site is a prime opportunity for high-density housing development due to its proximity to the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical campus, the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue light rail stations, and the Toll Gate Creek trail system.

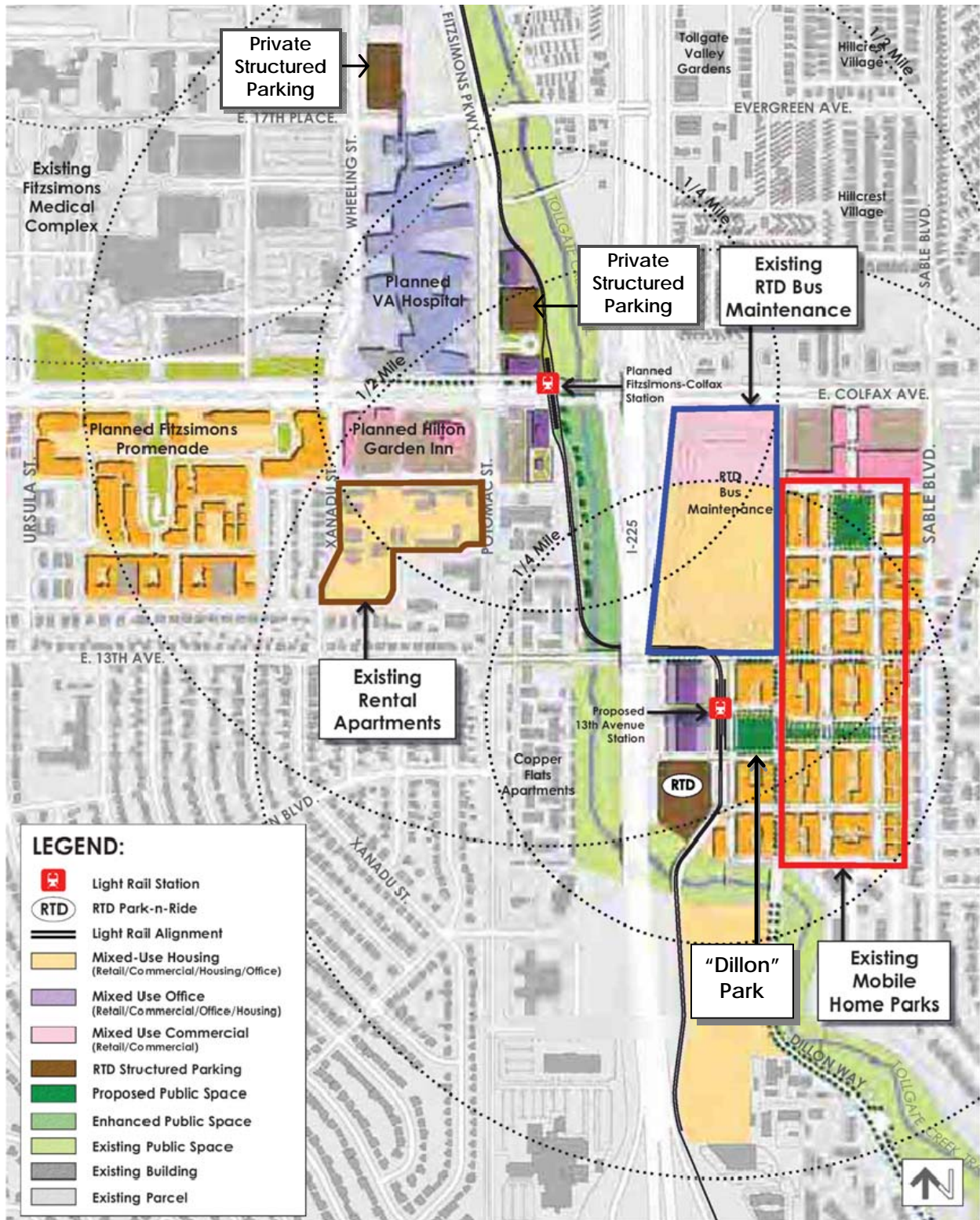


Figure 5. Land Use Framework Diagram

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- **Existing Mobile Home Park.** This site is currently viable affordable housing. However, due to its proximity to the planned 13th Avenue light station, the value of this site is likely to increase, presenting an opportunity for redevelopment. Redevelopment on this site should include medium to higher-density housing that includes a mix of affordable and market-rate housing.
- **Existing RTD Bus Maintenance Facility.** As redevelopment occurs on adjacent properties, this site may face increasing redevelopment pressure. Due to its location on Colfax Avenue within one-half mile from the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical campus, this site is a viable location for redevelopment to commercial and residential uses.

Mixed-Use Commercial

Commercial uses will provide goods and services for the station area's residential, office and medical uses. These commercial uses along Colfax Avenue will benefit from drive-by visibility and easy accessibility. Primary permitted commercial uses should include: financial, real estate and insurance services; lodging; and retail uses.

Commercial uses are recommended as ground-floor uses for new developments that front onto Fitzsimons Parkway.

RTD Parking

An RTD parking structure serving commuters is recommended to be built on the southern portion of the vacant RTD parcel, located east of I-225 and south of 13th Avenue. For opening day of the transit line, RTD will provide 250 surface parking spaces. According to the City of Aurora's **Strategic Parking Plan**, the demand may be for at least 460 commuter parking spaces. The goal is to provide a parking structure for commuter parking so as to reduce the likelihood of overflow transit parking in adjacent neighborhoods. This structured parking may be added by the city and developers, in cooperation with RTD. The amount of commuter parking at the station on opening day may be increased beyond that provided by RTD. This additional parking may be provided to meet the projected parking demand identified in the City of Aurora's **Strategic Parking Plan**.

Public Spaces

Public spaces in the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue station areas will provide locations for passive recreation and an attractive landscaped amenity for the adjacent residential and commercial developments. The proposed public spaces are:

- **Toll Gate Creek.** The planned trail extension from the north will serve as an off-street pedestrian and bicycle connection between Colfax and 13th Avenues, and south towards 6th Avenue. In combination with an on-street pedestrian/bike route on 13th Avenue, the trail will serve as an important connection between the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical campus and the 13th Avenue residential neighborhood.
- **"Dillon" Park.** This important park area is recommended to be located just east of the 13th Avenue station. It will serve as a passive recreation and gathering space, a landscaped amenity for adjacent residential development, and an important park link to Sable Boulevard. This park setting will frame a view of the station from Sable Boulevard, and is an important character-enhancing element for the station area and new residential development.
- **Proposed park and park blocks in new development.** Should the mobile home park redevelop, parks are required to provide opportunities for informal passive recreation and active recreation. These park spaces are also important amenities that will attract market-rate housing. The locations identified on the Land Use Framework include a two acre park and approximately two acres of park blocks.

3. Zoning Guidance and Design Guidelines

Transit Oriented Development Zoning District

A Transit-Oriented Development Zoning District is available for use in Aurora around the light rail and commuter transit stations. The TOD zoning district references the station area plan to provide guidance concerning boundaries, building form and intensity. This station area plan is to be used by applicants in conjunction with the city's TOD zoning district. Specific sections of the TOD zoning district are modified by this station area plan.

A. Fitzsimons-Colfax Station Area Sub-Districts and Land Use

Existing zoning around the Fitzsimons-Colfax station currently consists of a wide range of commercial zoning districts. The existing Fitzsimons Boundary Area District (FBAD) on north and south sides of Colfax Avenue permits a wide range of land uses with no maximum height. However, there are parcels north and south of the FBAD with existing industrial and low-density residential zoning that do not permit the mixed-use and high density building form that is desirable. TOD zoning will be essential to take full advantage of the development potential of this area. The city anticipates that TOD zoning will be applied at the request of property owners.

Two sub-districts can be defined for the Fitzsimons-Colfax Station area, each with its own land use characteristics:

1. Core Sub-District.

- a. *Location.* This sub-district includes all land west of I-225, north and east of Toll Gate Creek, and south of E. Fitzsimons Way.
- b. *Uses.* This zone includes medium to high intensity commercial, residential, hotel, civic and entertainment uses. Public and private parking structures are also permitted.

2. General Sub-District.

- a. *Location.* This sub-district includes the residential lands between Potomac Street and N. Xanadu Street, and bounded by E. 14th Avenue on the north and E. 13th Place, N. Yost Street and E. 14th Place on the south. This is an area which can transition from the existing multi-family residential to higher density land uses. This area is south of planned new development in the Fitzsimons Boundary Area District.
- b. *Uses.* With a density less than the Core, the uses in this area will be primarily residential, however mixed-use and commercial uses would be permitted.

There is no Transition Sub-District identified at the Fitzsimons-Colfax station area.

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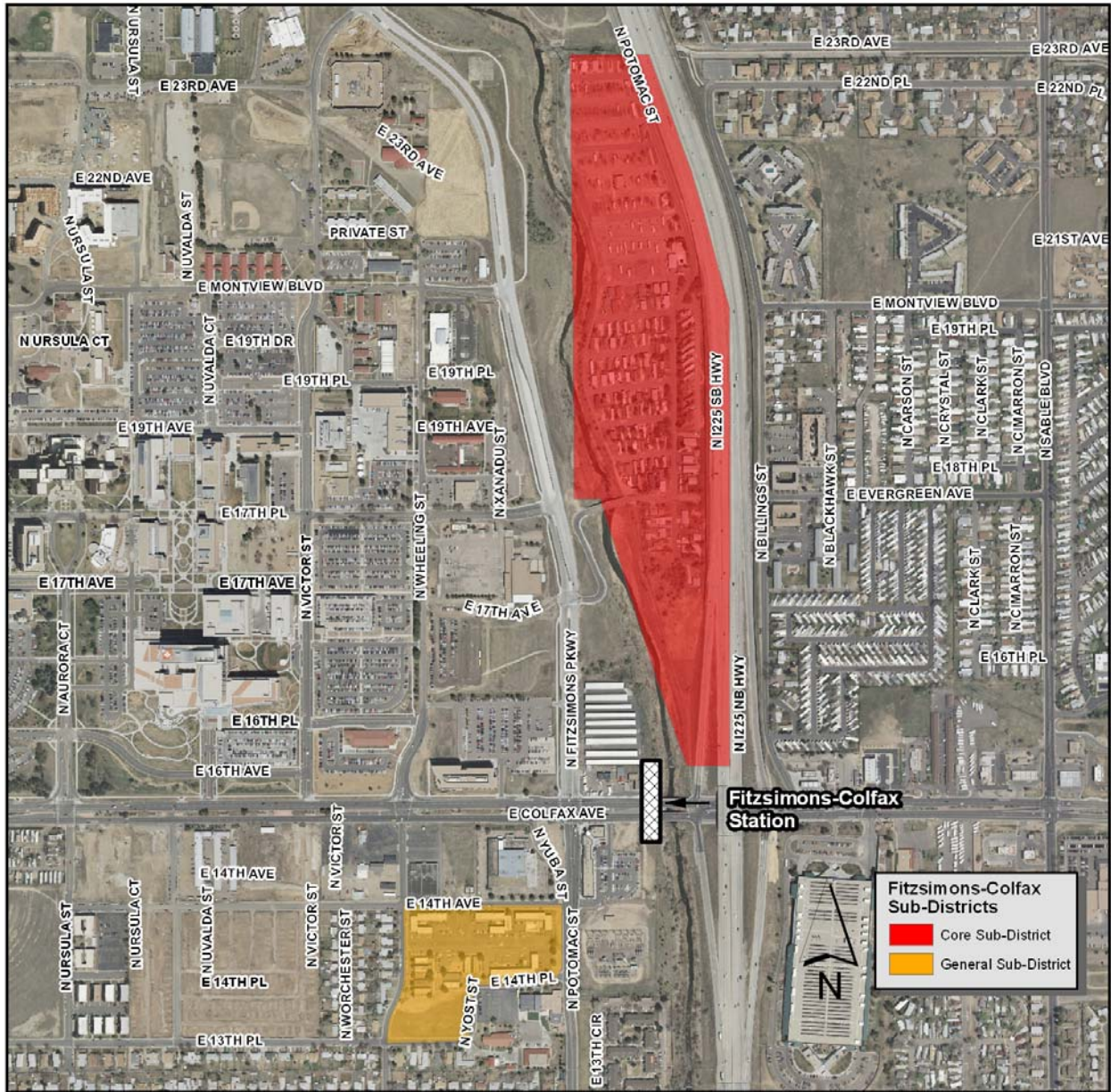


Figure 5. Fitzsimons-Colfax Avenue Area Sub-Districts

Development Standards

This section provides modifications to Sec. 146-728. Development Standards of the City of Aurora Zoning Code:

Block Size and Street Grid. Blocks shall typically be no longer than 500 feet in length and no more than 1,600 feet around the perimeter.

Residential Density. Minimum residential densities for the sub-districts are:

- Core Area: 40 units per acre
- General Area: 30 units per acre

Building Heights. There is no height limit in the Core Area. Building heights should shade the sidewalks on the south and west sides of streets in hot weather but allow sun exposure on the north side of streets during cold weather. Building heights for the sub-districts are:

1. Core Sub-District:

Minimum height of three stories. No maximum height, except for buildings adjacent to the existing residential neighborhoods. Buildings that front or back onto the open space south of E. Fitzsimons Way shall have a maximum building height of five stories. This height limit shall apply for a property depth of fifty (50) feet from the north property line .

2. General Sub-District:

Minimum height of two stories. Maximum height of five stories.

Urban Form. Building forms should be related to the width and activity on the street that fronts them, so that a sense of enclosure is created. Ground floor uses shall consist of active commercial uses, restaurants and entertainment venues in areas that will be frequented by pedestrians. The active space shall be organized in relation to a logical pedestrian flow, without isolating retail activities from public spaces and streets. Landscape and streetscape shall be urban in character, allowing for pedestrian traffic and seating, and for visual relief from the urban environment. In the Core Sub-District, buildings shall be built to the property line, defined as the back of sidewalk, with allowances made for shallow setbacks, consistent with a uniform street frontage.

Desired Building Setbacks. The setbacks for the sub-districts in the TOD Zoning District shall apply. In addition, the following development standards shall apply.

- a. Front. Setback not more than ten (10) feet in the Core and General sub-district. The ten (10) foot setback is permitted in the Core and General sub-districts for outdoor cafes and overhanging balconies, but shall not exceed forty (40) percent of the building frontage. Steps, stoops, balconies, awnings, chimneys, bay windows, etc. may encroach into the setback.

Desired Building Forms. The following additional development standards shall apply.

- a. Continuous building frontage is required on Sable Boulevard and Potomac Street.
- b. Clear windows at grade are required for a minimum of sixty (60) percent of the façade length except for residential uses.
- c. Quality materials on the ground floor façade are required on all buildings on major streets.
- d. Sixty (60) percent of the building façade facing a public park or plaza must be brick, stone

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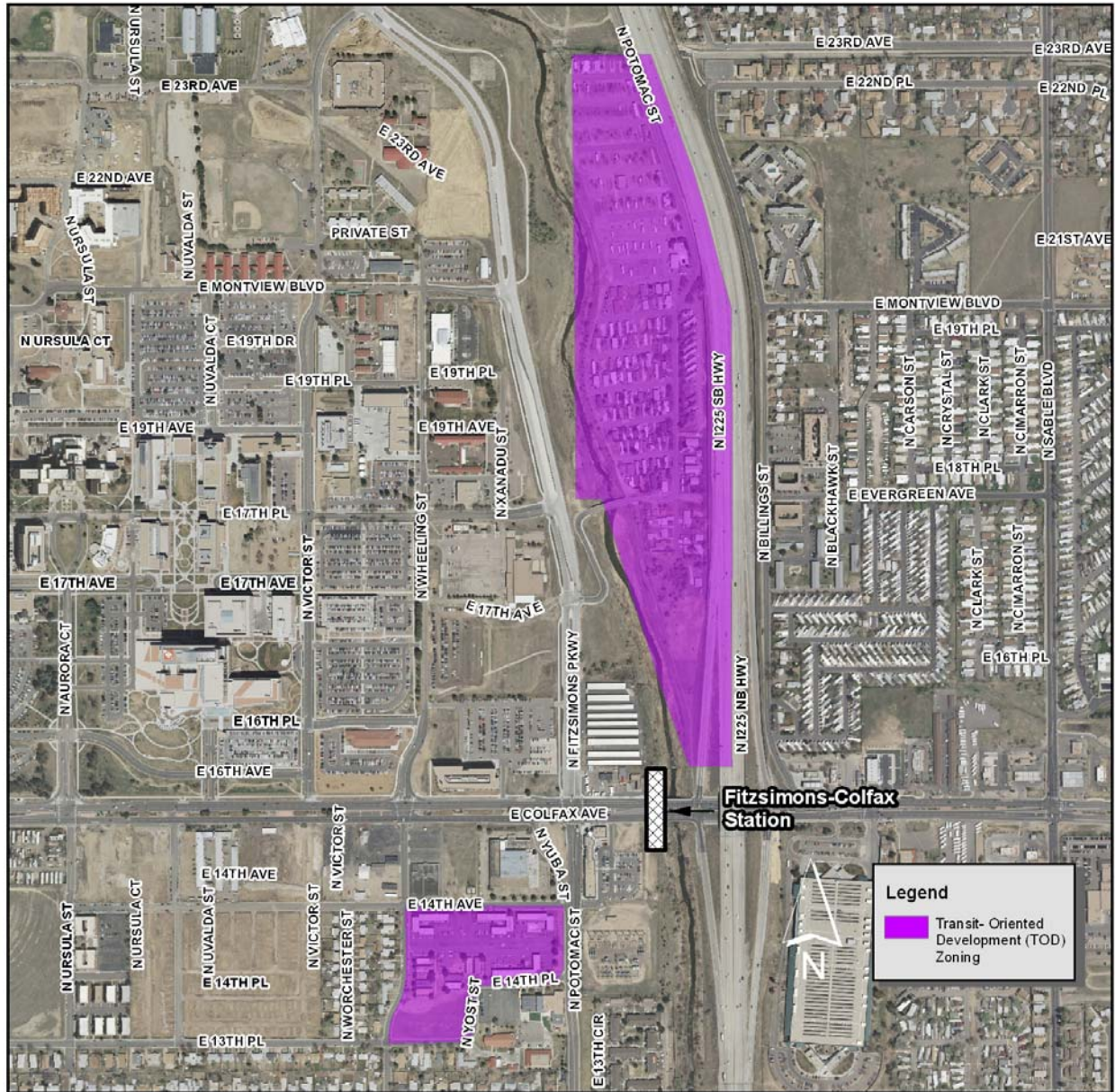


Figure 6. Fitzsimons-Colfax Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Map

- or cultured stone.
- e. Entries shall front on the major streets and shall be generously proportioned and defined with architectural features. Awning and structural canopies for weather protection at building entrances are desirable.
- f. Drive-through windows of any kind shall not be permitted in the Core sub-district.
- g. Blank walls are not permitted on any façade. All façades shall have architectural details that add visual interest.
- h. Loading docks and entrances shall not be located on the major pedestrian streets.
- i. Alternative uses for building roofs such as terraces, roof gardens and green roofs are encouraged.

B. 13th Avenue Area Sub-Districts and Land Use

Existing zoning around the 13th Avenue station currently consists of low density residential and commercial districts. TOD zoning will be essential to take full advantage of the development potential of this area. The city anticipates that TOD zoning will be applied at the request of property owners.

Two sub-districts can be defined for the 13th Avenue Station area, each with its own land use characteristics:

1. Core Sub-District.

- a. *Location.* This sub-district includes all lands east of I-225, south of Colfax Avenue, north of Toll Gate Creek, and west of the existing mobile home residential district.
- b. *Uses.* This zone includes medium to high intensity commercial, residential, hotel, civic and entertainment uses. Public and private parking structures are also permitted. Ground-floor commercial uses are required to occur along the Colfax Avenue frontage.

2. General Sub-District.

- a. *Location.* This sub-district includes the lands east of I-225, south of Colfax Avenue, west of Sable Boulevard and north of the existing commercial area north of 6th Avenue.
- b. *Uses.* With a density less than the Core, the uses in this area will be primarily residential, however mixed-use and commercial uses would be permitted.

There is no Transition Sub-District identified at the 13th Avenue station area. However, new development that would front on Sable Boulevard shall have a height limit.

Development Standards

This section provides modifications to Sec. 146-728. Development Standards of the City of Aurora Zoning Code:

Block Size and Street Grid. Blocks shall typically be no longer than 500 feet in length and no more than 1,600 feet around the perimeter.

Residential Density. Minimum residential densities for the sub-districts are:

Core Area:	40 units per acre
General Area:	30 units per acre

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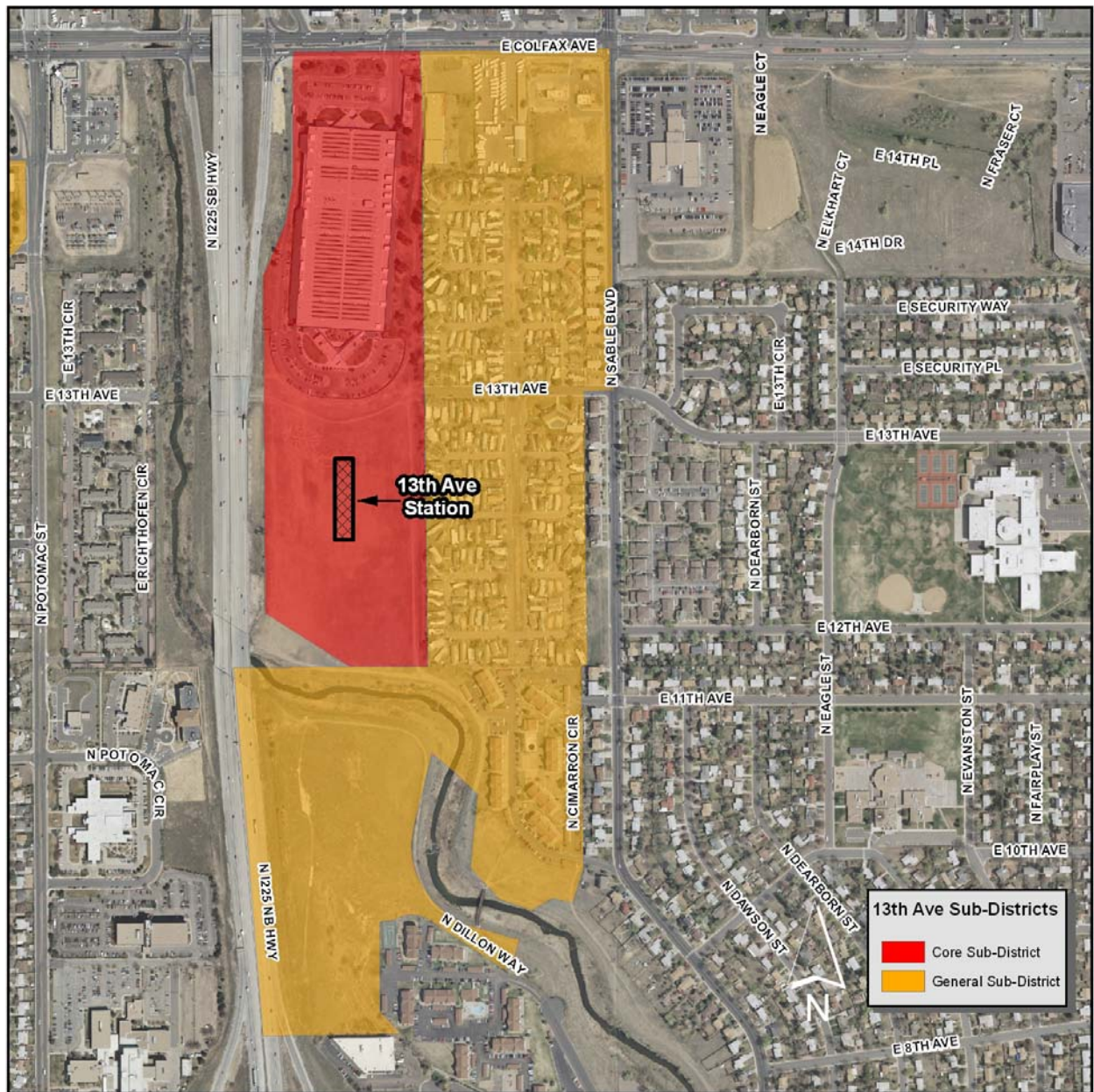


Figure 7. 13th Avenue Area Sub-Districts

Building Heights. There is no height limit in the Core Area. Building heights should shade the sidewalks on the south and west sides of streets in hot weather but allow sun exposure on the north side of streets during cold weather. Building heights for the sub-districts are:

1. Core Sub-District:

Minimum height of three stories. No maximum height.

2. General Sub-District:

Minimum height of two stories. Maximum height of six stories. Maximum height of four stories for buildings that front onto Sable Boulevard.

Urban Form. Building forms should be related to the width and activity on the street that fronts them, so that a sense of enclosure is created. Ground floor uses shall consist of active commercial uses, restaurants and entertainment venues in areas that will be frequented by pedestrians. The active space shall be organized in relation to a logical pedestrian flow, without isolating retail activities from public spaces and streets. Landscape and streetscape shall be urban in character, allowing for pedestrian traffic and seating, and for visual relief from the urban environment. In the Core Sub-District, buildings shall be built to the property line, defined as the back of sidewalk, with allowances made for shallow setbacks, consistent with a uniform street frontage.

Desired Building Setbacks. The setbacks for the sub-districts in the TOD Zoning District shall apply. In addition, the following development standards shall apply.

- a. Front. Setback not more than ten (10) feet in the Core and General sub-district. The ten (10) foot setback is permitted in the Core and General sub-districts for outdoor cafes and overhanging balconies, but shall not exceed forty (40) percent of the building frontage. Steps, stoops, balconies, awnings, chimneys, bay windows, etc. may encroach into the setback.

Desired Building Forms. The following additional development standards shall apply.

- a. Continuous building frontage is required on 13th Avenue within the Core Sub-District and on the streets adjacent to the 13th Avenue light rail station.
- b. Along 13th Avenue within the Core Sub-District and the streets adjacent to the 13th Avenue light rail station, the building façades shall occupy a minimum of eighty (80) percent of the property's street-facing frontage.
- c. Commercial uses at-grade on main streets and surrounding any public spaces are required to support pedestrian activity.
- d. Clear windows at grade are required for a minimum of sixty (60) percent of the façade length except for residential uses.
- e. Quality materials on the ground floor façade are required on all buildings on major streets.
- f. Sixty (60) percent of the building façade facing a public park or plaza must be brick, stone or cultured stone.
- g. Entries shall front on the major streets and shall be generously proportioned and defined with architectural features. Awning and structural canopies for weather protection at building entrances are desirable.
- h. Drive-through windows of any kind shall not be permitted in the Core sub-district.
- i. Blank walls are not permitted on any façade. All façades shall have architectural details that add visual interest.
- j. Loading docks and entrances shall not be located on Colfax Avenue, 13th Avenue, or the major pedestrian streets.

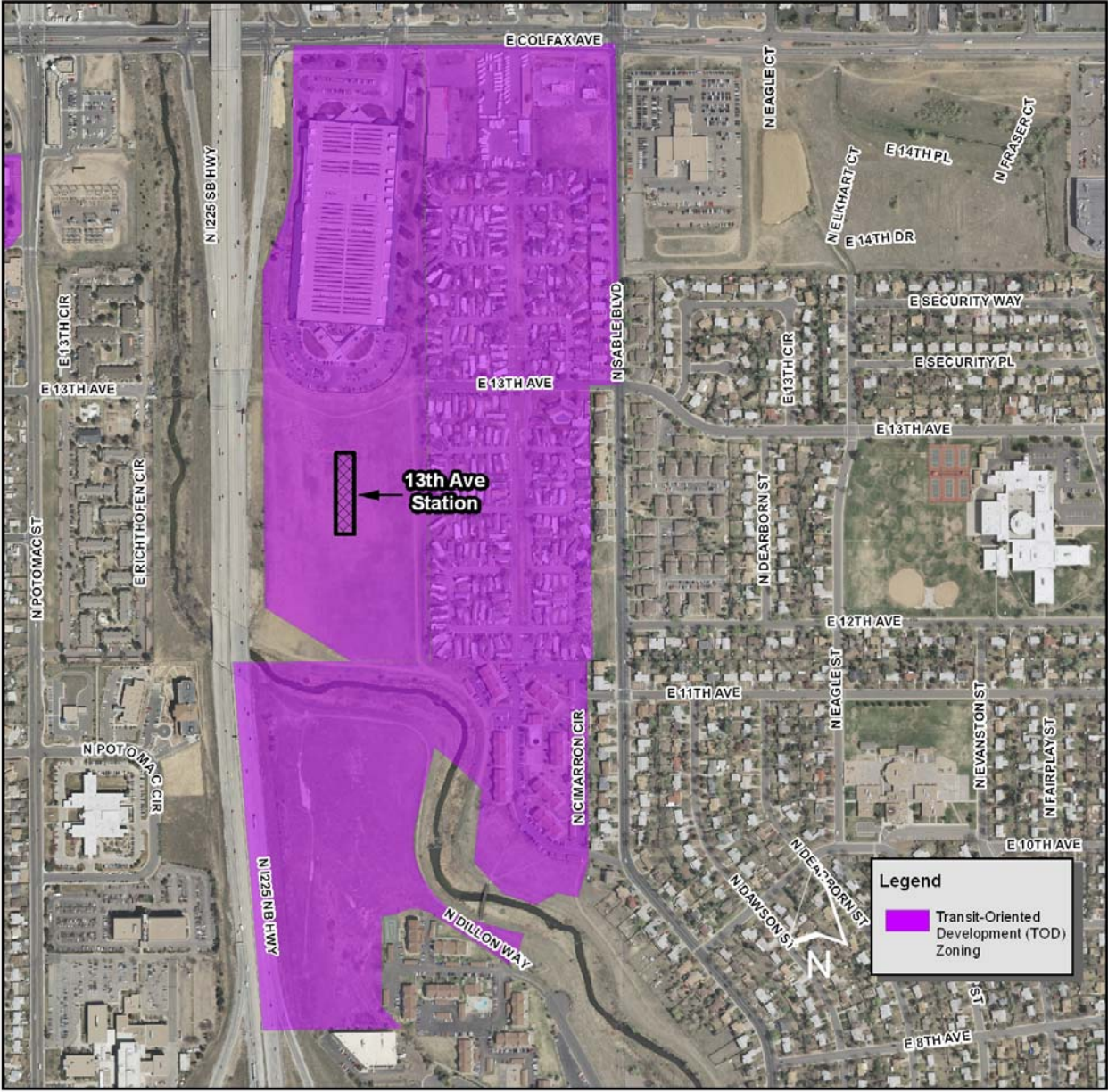


Figure 8. 13th Avenue Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Map

- k. Alternative uses for building roofs such as terraces, roof gardens and green roofs are encouraged.

Design Guidelines and Standards

The following design guidelines standards have been developed to establish high quality requirements for design of all projects within the station area.

Sustainability:

Sustainability of the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Core Sub-Districts should be encouraged by promoting the use of the well-established Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system, established by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). Buildings in the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue station areas are encouraged to achieve a minimum of LEED-NC Certified rating (NC refers to New Construction). Refer to the USGBC web site for a full description of the LEED ratings that are available. Certified is the lowest of all ratings, which progress upward to Silver, Gold and Platinum.

Pedestrian Connections:

- Walkways, bridges and pedestrian crossings shall constitute a network that interconnects all transit, commercial and residential buildings.
- Hidden areas and blind corners shall be avoided in favor of open, visible gathering places and unobstructed paths with clear visual connections to destinations beyond.
- Pedestrian walkways should avoid doubling back or acute changes in the travel path, and should have good visual connection with the surroundings at all times. Active uses should be located along the pedestrian paths.

Public Spaces:

There should be a central open space as a focus in the Core Sub-District. This space should be a focal point and public gathering space, containing pedestrian amenities that make it comfortable and aesthetically pleasing. Street trees should provide shade in summer, and elements such as public art should provide winter interest. The space should be located so that it is not overshadowed by adjacent buildings.

Landscape and Streetscape:

Streetscape and open space areas should add a distinctive identity to the area, using planting, paving, lighting, signage and street furnishings as cohesive elements. Features should be coordinated throughout the development. The landscape treatment on each development parcel shall be coordinated with the public space streetscape design.

The station area should contain a hierarchy of streets which reflect different streetscape treatments, according to the Aurora Urban Street Standards.

Site Furnishings and Lighting Fixtures: Site furnishings and public lighting should:

- be incorporated as part of the building design and architectural style;
- express a hierarchy from the TOD core to outlying areas;
- be durable and appropriate for the climate;
- illuminate all sidewalks and pedestrian pathways with uniform light levels;
- not cast light directly into residential windows

PLANNING FOR TOD

Roof Landscaping: Building roofs should be developed as open space resources, amenity decks and green roofs where possible.

Landscape Materials: Materials should be provided based on the following considerations:

- safety – avoid visual obstructions especially at circulation intersections;
- local microclimate – provide summer shade and open canopies for warmth in winter;
- low watering requirements – 75% of plant material should be drought resistant;
- ease of maintenance – minimize litter from plant materials and trees;
- attractiveness – intensify in key locations with seasonal color, texture, scale;
- screening – screen service areas, parking lots, meters and garbage dumpsters.

Parking:

- Surface parking lots are discouraged in the Core Sub-District.
- The entire Core Sub-District should be self-sufficient in terms of parking; shared parking should be utilized and may be shared from parcel to parcel.
- Parking structures should be wrapped with residential or commercial buildings to minimize visual impact on public streets and spaces.
- Vehicle access to parking should be avoided on high-traffic pedestrian frontages.
- Parking access shall be well-identified by a way-finding signage system.
- Parking structures shall not be exposed to streets or public areas in the interior of the TOD block.

Architecture

Architectural design should be of a high quality to complement the styles established in the Anschutz-Fitzsimons medical campus. Architectural design should be timeless with attention to detailing and the streetscape character. Long building profiles shall be broken up with relief in the façades and rooflines to minimize apparent bulk and mass.

360 Degree Architecture: To create an urban environment that is visually pleasing from all points of view, all sides of a building shall exhibit design continuity, with no unimproved sides being visible from public rights-of-way. Early phase buildings which will have buildings abutting them may have building faces that are without fenestration or other façade design features.

Solar Orientation, Shading and Solar Access: Building façades shall be environmentally responsible by adapting fenestration, shading and materials individually to respond to the environmental conditions of each façade's orientation. Buildings shall minimize the negative impact of winter shade on public open spaces and sidewalks. Buildings shall not contain gold glass coating or other first surface coatings that are highly reflective or mirrored.

Fenestration: Clear glass storefronts on ground floor façades should be provided to ensure visibility of active uses. On upper levels, façades should respond to their orientation by individualized treatment of façades to accommodate sun shading and solar gain as appropriate. Clear, low E or slightly tinted glazing should be used. Clear glass shall not have a reflectance rating of greater than .20.

Awnings and Canopies: Awnings and canopies shall be an integral part of the architectural design. Canopies shall not extend more than ten feet beyond the faces of buildings, and no less than six feet. Awnings shall be solid colors. Awnings or canopies shall not be supported from the sidewalk.

Materials and Finishes: Materials, finishes and detailing shall enrich the Station Area's visual and tactile qualities. Regionally-appropriate and compatible materials shall be used, carefully detailed and combined. The building materials shall establish a consistent and high level of quality that is durable and appropriate to pedestrian contact at the street level. Materials used shall convey a high level of visual

amenity that is commensurate with the urban character of the station area.

Storefront Design: Storefront entry thresholds shall be at the adjacent sidewalk level. Storefronts shall be scaled and detailed to break down large façades of buildings into small units. A variety of small scale storefront designs shall predominate over a uniform series of longer storefronts. A high proportion of clear glass shall be used in storefronts, consistent with energy conservation requirements and to increase visibility.

Equipment and Service: All rooftop equipment and ground floor equipment, trash storage and utilities shall be screened from view from public rights-of-way.

Building Signage: Signage shall comply with Aurora codes and ordinances. Signs directly related to a business shall be allowed to extend over the sidewalk, at a height of no less than 9'-0" above the sidewalk.

External Building and Site Lighting:

- External lighting of buildings shall be minimized, except for accent lighting of building entries or features.
- The impact of lighting on the night sky shall be minimized by cutoff fixtures, downward projecting fixtures and minimizing light energy.
- Exterior light fixtures shall confine direct light rays to the premises, and the light source shall not be directly visible from any adjacent property or beyond two mounting heights distance from the fixture.
- Power consumption for external building lighting shall be minimized.
- Minimum light levels at building entries shall be 5.0 foot-candles and at loading docks 15.0 foot-candles. Levels elsewhere shall comply with Aurora code and ordinances, and shall be as uniform as possible on pedestrian sidewalks.

4. Implementation

The Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan presents the vision developed through a collaborative process between government agencies, property owners and residents.

Policy Changes

The specific implementation steps are:

- Adoption of the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue Station Area Plan as an amendment to the 2003 Aurora Comprehensive Plan;
- Adoption of the Transit-Oriented Development Zoning District for the currently zoned commercial properties in the Fitzsimons-Colfax and 13th Avenue area. This may be implemented in phases, depending on a property owner's development plan and schedule.

Infrastructure Improvements

To provide additional transportation access to the station, the City of Aurora should plan for the extension of 13th Avenue from Potomac Street east to the 13th Avenue station. The financing of this improvement may be added to the city's capital improvements budget.



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