



TO: Neighborhoods and Planning Committee
FROM: Steve Nalley, Senior City Planner
DATE: May 13, 2015
RE: Denver Zoning Code – Text Amendment to create Campus-National Western Center (CMP-NWC) Zone District. (Case# 2015I-00066)

I. CPD Recommendation

Based on the review criteria for a text amendment stated in the Denver Zoning Code (DZC), Section 12.4.11 (Text Amendment), CPD staff recommends approval of the Campus-National Western Center (CMP-NWC) Denver Zoning Code Text Amendment.

II. Summary and Purpose

Brad Buchanan, Executive Director of Community Planning and Development and Kelly Leid, Executive Director of the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative initiated a text amendment to the Denver Zoning Code to create the new Campus-National Western Center (CMP-NWC) Zone District.

The proposed Campus-National Western Center (CMP-NWC) Denver Zoning Code text amendment, if approved by City Council, will introduce a new zone district in the Denver Zoning Code that will allow for the development of the National Western Center consistent with the National Western Center Master Plan. (See proposed text amendment enclosed)

III. Public Process

Below is a summary of the public process for this amendment.

- January-March 2015** Preliminary discussions about zoning and best approach to implementing the Master Plan.
- March 9, 2015** Adoption of the National Western Center Master Plan
- February 28, 2015** CPD presented a summary of the proposed text amendment to Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation Zoning and Planning committee.
- March 5 – April 16** CPD and NDCC met with the National Western Center Citizen’s Advisory Committee seven times to discuss all aspects of the text amendment.
- March 30, 2015** Draft of DZC text and map amendment posted to CPD website for public and City agency review; Email notice to all Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs) of scheduled Planning Board public hearing, with link to updated draft and summary.
- April 14, 2015** Public Notification sent for April 29, 2015 Planning Board Public hearing. Notice emailed to all RNOs and signs were posted throughout subject map amendment area.
- April 29, 2015** Planning Board public hearing (see below)
- May 13, 2015** Neighborhoods and Planning Committee

June 1, 2015 City Council First Reading
June 22, 2015 City Council Public Hearing

As of the date of this staff report, CPD received one letter from Vernon Hill and one from Mickey Zeppelin indicating hesitation on the zoning for the NWC. The concern is related to timing of an implementation step for the National Western Center compared to timing of implementation steps recommended by the Globeville Neighborhood Plan. Additional discussions are taking place related to implementation actions throughout the North Denver Cornerstone Collaborative.

Planning Board unanimously recommended approval with the following conditions:

- 1) That the Planning Board Review Draft be edited for clarity, correctness, illustrative graphics, section references, and other non-substantive matters as well as any other changes to the Planning Board Review Draft made necessary by such edits.
- 2) That the City Council acknowledges and addresses the concerns expressed by the neighborhood stakeholders with regards to neighborhood involvement in governance and community equity.

Six members, including Vernon Hill and Mickey Zeppelin spoke at Planning Board. All public testimony was in support of the proposed text amendment. There were concerns about the speed of the public process. There were also concerns about assurances for the surrounding neighborhoods regarding continued involvement in decision making for the implementation of the National Western Center.

IV. Criteria for Review and CPD Staff Evaluation

Zoning text amendments are subject to the review criteria found in Section 12.4.11. Accordingly, CPD analyzed the proposed Campus-National Western Center (CMP-NWC) Denver Zoning Code text amendment for compliance with the review criteria (restated below) and finds that the proposed text amendment meets each of the criteria.

1. Text Amendment is Consistent with the City's Adopted Plans

The Text Amendment is consistent with the City's following adopted plans:

- Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000
- Blueprint Denver (2002)
- Globeville Neighborhood Plan (2014)
- Elyria-Swansea Neighborhood Plan (2015)
- National Western Center Master Plan (2015)

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000

The Campus - National Western Center text amendment is consistent with many objectives and strategies found in Comprehensive Plan 2000, including the following:

- Encourage redevelopment of vacant, underutilized and environmentally compromised land known as brownfields.
- Conserve land by:
 - Promoting infill development within Denver at sites where services and infrastructure are already in place.
 - Designing mixed-use communities and reducing sprawl, so that residents can live, work and play within their own neighborhoods.
 - Creating more density at transit nodes.

- Sharing parking at activity centers.
- Encourage quality infill development that is consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, that offers opportunities for increased density and more amenities, and that broadens the variety of compatible uses.
- Identify and enhance existing focal points in neighborhoods, and encourage the development of such focal points where none exist.
- Encourage mixed-use, transit-oriented development that makes effective use of existing transportation infrastructure, supports transit stations, increases transit patronage, reduces impact on the environment, and encourages vibrant urban centers and neighborhoods.
- Ensure that land-use policies and decisions support a variety of mobility choices including light rail, buses, paratransit, walking and bicycling, as well as convenient access for people with disabilities.
- Support the creation and growth of neighborhood businesses that enhance the vitality and quality of life in their communities.
 - Strengthen Denver as a destination for business, leisure and convention visitors.

Blueprint Denver – 2002

The Campus - National Western Center text amendment is consistent with many objectives and strategies found in Comprehensive Plan 2000, including the following:

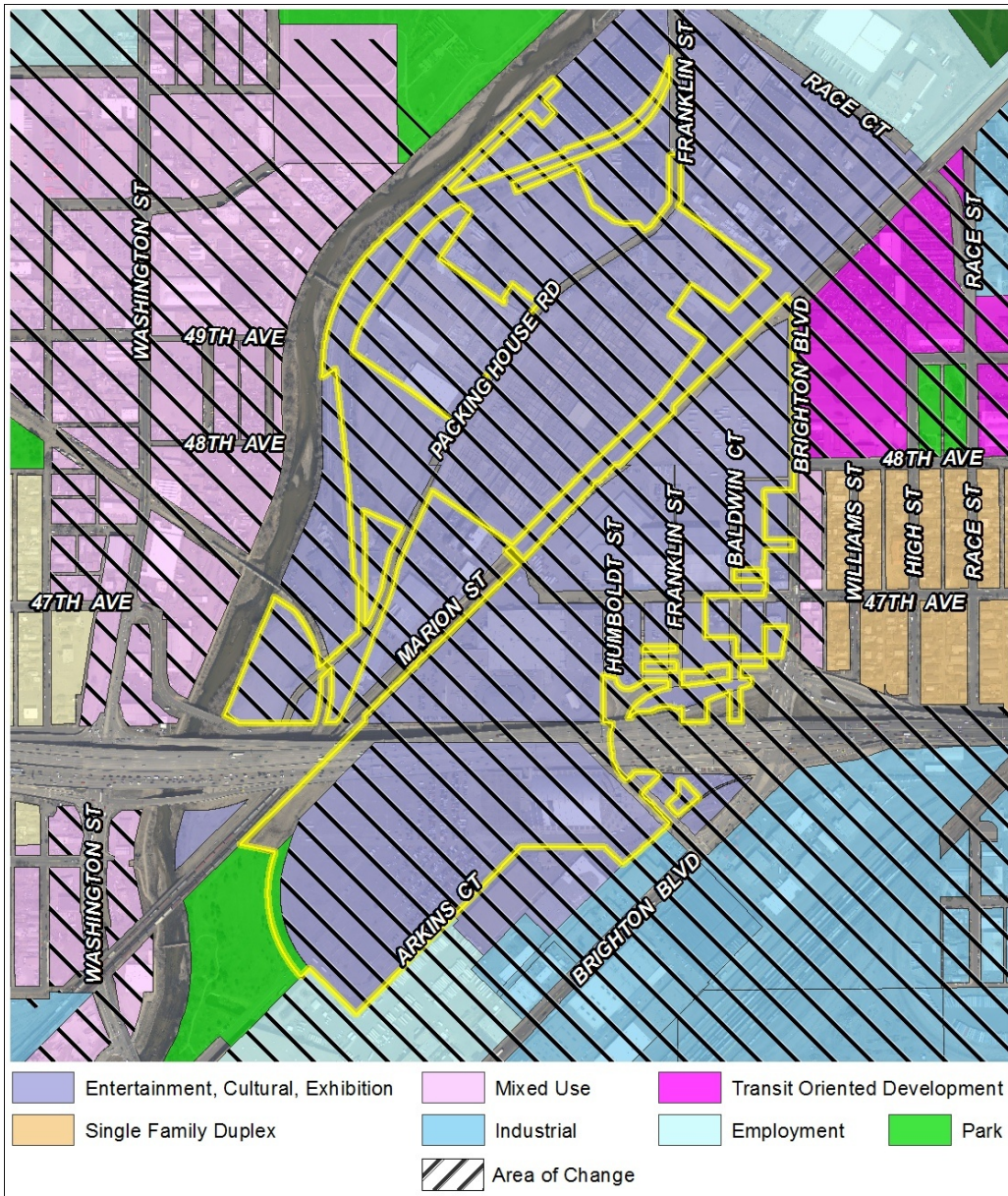
The area for which the proposed CMP-NWC text amendment was written is designated by Blueprint Denver as Entertainment, Culture, Exhibition and is an Area of Change.

Entertainment/Cultural/Exhibition is defined by Blueprint as:

“These specialized districts include regional event-oriented, civic or cultural attractions. Sometimes a few additional uses are included in each district. Such a district can blossom into a more vital and well rounded area, blending cultural or sporting events with entertainment, civic uses, restaurants and even office uses. Often a single large facility dominates, but sometimes (as in a theater district) a group of large and small facilities make up the district. Adequate parking is essential, but many districts thrive with substantial transit use, shared parking with an adjacent business district and pedestrian access. Examples include the Performing Arts Center and the National Western Stock Show.” (pg. 40)

The goal for Areas of Change is “to channel growth where it will be beneficial and can best improve access to jobs, housing and services with fewer and shorter auto trips. Areas of Change are parts of the city where most people agree that development or redevelopment would be beneficial”

Blueprint Denver Map



Globeville Neighborhood Plan – 2014

The Campus - National Western Center text amendment is consistent with and progresses the implementation of many concepts and strategies found in the Globeville Neighborhood Plan. Many of the strategies of the Globeville Neighborhood Plan rely on the implementation of the National Western Center. Most of the following strategies are related to infrastructure inherent in the build-out of the National Western Center.

In the Strong Globeville chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

B10. Embrace the South Platte River

- **B10B:** An Activated Waterfront Plaza. Consider creating a waterfront plaza amenity close to the South Platte River for year-round activities with opportunities for synergy with the proposed National Western Center. Ensure that the plaza is well-connected to nearby green space, the South Platte River Trail, and the local street network.

B15. Improve Neighborhood Services

- **B15C:** Provide Better Access to Community Resources in Surrounding Neighborhoods. Ensure that there is safe, accessible, all-age, multi-modal access to the following key facilities in surrounding neighborhoods, including the National Western Center

B16. Improve Educational Opportunities

- **B16C:** Partner with National Western Center and Colorado State University. Take advantage of National Western's partnership with Colorado State University to collaborate with Denver Public Schools on new approaches to education, including the possible creation of a magnet school or other new educational facility.

In the Connected Globeville chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

C5. Introduce a Street Grid between Washington Street and the South Platte River

C6. Introduce New Multi-modal Connections Over the River to the National Western Center

- Introduce new multi-modal connections over the river and into the National Western Center (NWC) to enhance the catalytic impact potential on the Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea Neighborhoods and to stitch the neighborhoods together. In identifying specific alignment and design for the new connections across the river, important considerations include:
 - Accommodate vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles.
 - Locate the multi-modal connections along existing street alignments in Globeville. This Plan identifies 49th and 51st Avenues as the preferred locations for these connections.
 - Provide more direct access from Globeville to the future NWC commuter rail station than exists today.
 - Design and locate the bridges so as to facilitate riverfront development opportunities on the Globeville side of the river (see Connecting to the National Western Stock Show Transformative Project for more details).
 - Maximize efficiencies that improve water quality and stormwater conveyance as well as connectivity
- 49th and 51st are identified as the first and second priorities as options to connect over the South Platte River and to the National Western Center.

In the Healthy Globeville chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

D15. Connect to the National Western Center. Improve access and connectivity to and through residential neighborhoods and the redeveloped National Western Center.

D18. Increase Food Access at the National Western Center. Promote new sources of healthy foods within the redeveloped National Western Center, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, and community gardens.

In the Character Area Strategies and Transformative Projects chapter, Connect to National Western Center is a Transformative Project in order to capitalize on the economic development opportunities to enhance the waterfront and the Washington Street corridor by connecting over the South Platte River to a revitalized National Western Center.

In the Moving Forward chapter, public investment implementation priorities for Globeville include pursuing implementation of the two recommended connections across the South Platte River to the National Western Center.

Elyria and Swansea Neighborhood Plan – 2015

The Campus - National Western Center text amendment is consistent with and progresses the implementation of many concepts and strategies found in the Elyria and Swansea Neighborhoods Plan. Many of the strategies rely on the implementation of the National Western Center.

In the Unique Elyria and Swansea chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

A.2 Promote Heritage Tourism and historic integration

A.5 Establish National Western Center's Identity

In the Strong Elyria and Swansea chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

B.8 Establish maximum building heights to support a variety of land uses and community places and to accommodate the redevelopment of the National Western Center. The building heights map on the following page indicates up to 8 stories transitioning height down to Brighton Blvd. The CMP-NWC allows up to 150 feet in height but does not limit the number of stories, similar to other Campus zone districts in the Denver Zoning Code. The proposed zoning does require a transition in height to 70 feet along Brighton Blvd.

B.12 Encourage development of key opportunity sites, including the Denver Public Schools site directly across the street from the National Western Center Station, sites in closest proximity to the NWC station, and calls for redeveloping the National Western Center.

The future land use recommendation for the subject site is Entertainment, Cultural, Exhibition as defined by Blueprint Denver.

In the Connected Elyria and Swansea chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

C.4 Rebuild the Marion St. and BNSF Underpass

C.5 Explore relocation and/or consolidation of the Denver Rock Island Railroad (DRI)

C.8 Connect 49th Ave. from High St. to Brighton Blvd.

C.9 Introduce new street connections between Elyria and Globeville

C.10 Realign National Western Dr. between 46th Ave and Race Ct.

C.17 Re-build Brighton Boulevard

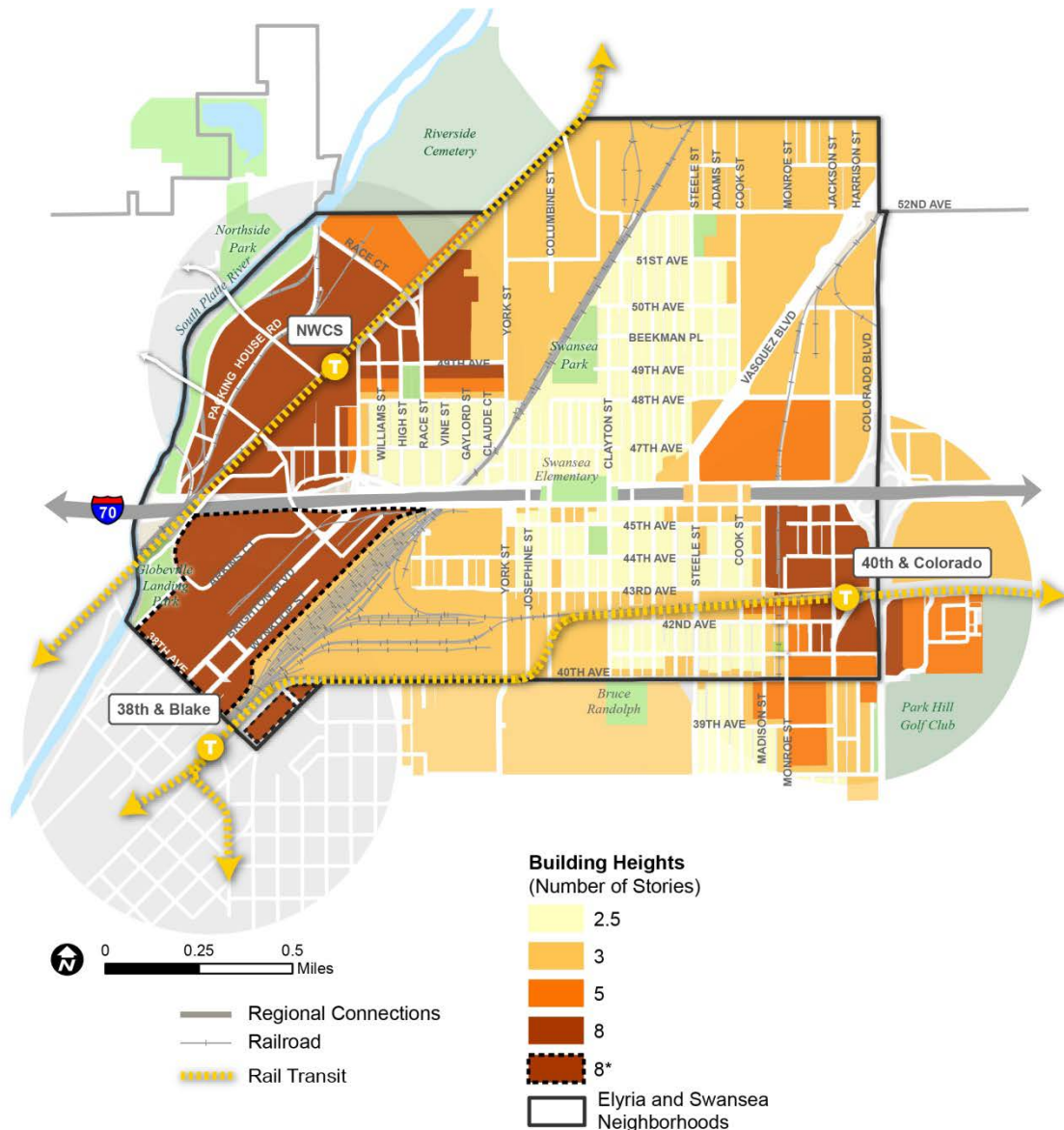
C.38 Evaluate Parking Patterns

In the Healthy Elyria and Swansea chapter the following strategies apply to the National Western:

D18. Increase Food Access at the NWC

In the Character Area Strategies and Transformative Projects chapter, one of the Character Areas is the National Western Center and Station Area. From that section the following strategies apply to the National Western:

E.29 Target TOD Opportunities Adjacent to the Station



National Western Center Master Plan – 2015

The Campus - National Western Center text amendment is consistent with and progresses the implementation of the National Western Center Master Plan, including the following:

“Flexible, Year-Round Programs to Drive New Tourism - Create flexible, efficient, vibrant indoor and outdoor spaces that allow various uses throughout the year, including markets, offices, restaurants, retail, festivals, and the Stock Show.

Provide a variety of programs—educational, recreational, commercial, competitions, entertainment, visual and performing arts—for neighbors and local to global visitors.

Provide hands-on, informal and formal educational programs for families, students, and life-long learners.

Build off the history and heritage of the site, while highlighting innovation, particularly in food, energy, and water use.

Pursue long-term opportunities to create new programs, spaces, and partnerships.”

“Foster Regeneration · Create a center to respond to global challenges around food, water, energy and the environment - Improve, restore and enhance the site and its surroundings ecologically, economically and socially.

Create long term work spaces and job opportunities”

2. Text Amendment Furthers the Public Health, Safety and Welfare

This text amendment furthers the public health, safety, and general welfare of Denver residents as they provide for implementation and revitalization of the National Western Center as identified in the City’s Adopted Plans.

3. Text Amendment Results in Regulations that are Uniform Across the District

This text amendment will result in uniform regulations applicable to all new buildings within land mapped CMP-NWC.

V. CPD Recommendation

Based on the review criteria for a text amendment stated in the Denver Zoning Code (DZC), Section 12.4.11 (Text Amendment), CPD staff recommends approval of the Campus-National Western Center (CMP-NWC) Denver Zoning Code Text Amendment.

VI. Attachments

1. Proposed Campus-National Western Center Text Amendment (CMP-NWC)