

May 26, 2026

**Re: Curtis Park Neighbors Supports Amending the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Plan to add the Rossonian Project & Creating the Rossonian Project Tax Increment Area**

Denver City Council,

Curtis Park Neighbors (CPN), a Registered Neighborhood Organization representing homes and businesses on adjacent to Welton Street, is in strong support of amending the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Plan to add the Rossonian Project and to create the Rossonian Project Tax Increment Area.

CPN has long been in support of the Urban Redevelopment Plan for the Welton Corridor, as expressed in our neighborhood plan (*Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan, 2011*), and in our letter of support and testimony in favor of creating the Welton Corridor URA at City Council in 2012 (see attached). We were joined with letters of support for the Urban Redevelopment Plan by RNOs representing Whittier and Old San Rafael, as the whole community had spent time with DURA to understand the importance of adding these tools to the community toolbox for revitalizing our historic main street.

The Rossonian is the essential and iconic building of the Five Points Historic Cultural District. Whenever the corridor is shown in news stories or other coverage, whether regarding events or breaking news, the Rossonian is sure to be in the picture. It is the beloved anchor of the corridor, forming one corner of the namesake Five Points intersection. It is one of the very few buildings protected in the Denver Landmark district for the corridor — a district created in 2002 to preserve a select few buildings, while allowing reuse or redevelopment of all other buildings in the district, guided by Landmark design review for compatibility.

But historic designation and protection alone do not ensure activation. The Rossonian has been sadly vacant for decades, waiting for the right project and support to enable its rehabilitation and activation. Finally, there is such a project, and it is fully appropriate — and long anticipated — for tax-increment financing to play one part in making the project possible.

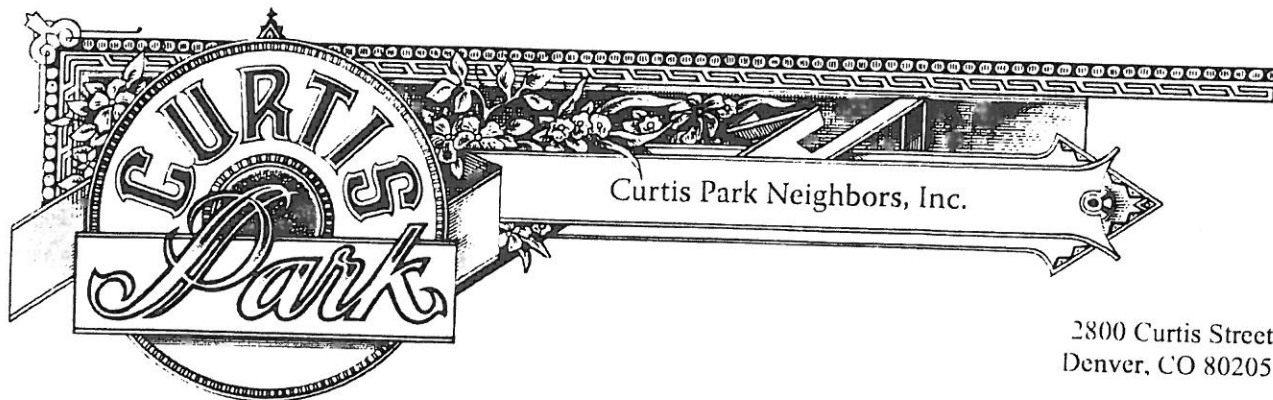
Revitalizing this truly iconic building honors the legacy of the Five Points community, creates employment opportunities for neighbors, activates the key center of the historic corridor, and will catalyze more reinvestment along and around Welton Street as it becomes, once again, truly our main street.

Curtis Park Neighbors enthusiastically supports amending the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Plan to add the Rossonian Project and to create the Rossonian Project Tax Increment Area.

*This position was approved by the Curtis Park Neighbors Board of Directors at our regularly scheduled and noticed March 16, 2026 meeting by unanimous vote.*

*Stephen M Bennett*

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August 20, 2012

Denver City Council  
1437 Bannock St., Rm. 451  
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### **Curtis Park Neighbors Support for the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Plan & URA**

**Curtis Park Neighbors (CPN), a registered neighborhood organization in the City of Denver, supports the creation of the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Plan, setting the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Area,** which implements a key community-supported strategy expressed in “strategy N.24” from the *Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan* and as “critical next step 3.b” in the earlier *Five Points Sustainable Main Streets Initiative Vision Plan & Final Report*.

#### **Excellent Community Involvement Process**

The proposed Welton Corridor Urban Renewal Area (URA) significantly overlaps the Curtis Park Neighbors registered neighborhood boundaries, along nearly the entire length of the corridor. Following close on the heels of the Arapahoe Square URA, which also had study boundaries overlapping Curtis Park, and the lengthy community involvement in developing the *Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan*, Curtis Park has been very actively involved in understanding and supporting the use of tools to foster revitalization in our area.

DURA has been a guest at Curtis Park Neighbors meetings on several occasions throughout the study and proposal for both nearby URAs. Each time, they have provided open, complete, and comprehensive information not only in their presentations but also in their responses to questions. DURA has also participated in many sessions focused on gathering input from and providing information to property owners in the study boundaries, which property owners with ties to Curtis Park also attended. Again, enough cannot be said about the thorough, open, and honest conversations led by Tracy Huggins and her staff regarding the new Tax Increment Financing tool that can be used (with City Council vote each time) to provide gap financing for transformative projects, as well as the rarely-used and tightly-controlled eminent domain powers (again, with City Council vote each time).

DURA was also responsive to two written questions submitted by Curtis Park Neighbors, based on the concerns of our membership. CPN, founded in part to pursue education about and action towards historic preservation, asked for and received clear written assurance that nothing in DURA’s potential support of projects would over-rule or lessen Denver Landmark protection for designated and contributing structures, or Denver Landmark Preservation Commission’s design review, which both Welton and Curtis Park preservationists worked hard to secure. We learned that not only do DURA’s powers not over-rule or in any way lessen those protections and processes, but that DURA has a strong track record over the past few decades of supporting re-use of historic structures, such as the Denver Dry Building. In fact, while the allowable uses of TIF funds are limited to a few specific categories, the sometimes-high costs associated with renovating historic structures is one of the public-benefiting purposes towards which such funds may be employed.

The second question reflected the neighborhood's active and committed participation in the recent *Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan*. Given that the community's vision is well-articulated in that plan (and, before it, in the *Curtis Park Neighborhood Plan*), but that the community vision is not always reflected in current zoning's land use and building form regulations, our members wanted to know if projects supported by DURA would take strong guidance from adopted area plans. In DURA's written response, we were assured that this is in fact exactly how the Welton Corridor's Urban Redevelopment Plan would be used, and that with each future DURA-supported project, the community and City Council will be able to ensure that the proposed project stays true to the community vision adopted in area plans.

### **Welton Corridor URA Has The Right Boundaries**

As with the previous Arapahoe Square process, the Welton Corridor process involved a conditions study ("blight study") area that was wider than the final boundaries set for the URA. Per Colorado law, a URA's boundaries must be set as narrowly as possible to achieve the goals of the plan. Wisely, the proposed boundaries include all of the contiguous properties where Deep Rock operates – not just those directly on Welton Street – which means that the redevelopment-supporting tools DURA can bring to bear could be employed for any or all of those properties, should a redevelopment opportunity with a financing gap arise in the future. This directly addresses one of Curtis Park's long-felt concerns: that Deep Rock operations might cease one day, leaving empty and abandoned buildings not only along Welton but also into the residential core of Curtis Park. As with the Washington Street and Glenarm Place portions of the proposed area, there are well-considered reasons why these inclusions are needed to achieve the redevelopment goals of the plan.

### **Conditions Study Was Conclusive**

The required Conditions Study (sometimes called a "Blight Study") identified nine of the eleven possible factors of blight, far in excess of the four that would be required for setting an URA. And these factors were shown to be present throughout the area, further recognizing what the residents and property owners have long known about the challenges on the corridor. In short, *any different finding would have been a surprise*.

In fact, the *only* controversy around the conditions findings at community meetings were not factual disagreements but rather fear that the word "blight" implies blame or a branding of a community as a punishment. DURA, and their consultant for the Conditions Study, regularly reassured meeting attendees that this is not a process of blame or punishment, but rather a snapshot in time capturing the factual conditions in light of state-set guidelines. As with other once-"blighted" Denver Urban Redevelopment Areas, such as downtown with its remarkable turnaround, this finding recognizes certain current factors holding back market-driven redevelopment which, as they begin to be addressed, will enable the area to prosper as it should given its excellent location, high-quality transportation, cultural history, and strong community.

### **Perfectly Aligned With Area Plan**

As was summarized in the opening paragraph, the *Northeast Downtown Neighborhoods Plan*, adopted by City Council in May 2011, specifically recommended the creation of a Welton Urban Renewal area as a key strategy for implementation as soon as possible. This plan reflects the input of hundreds of participants, and the consensus of the community at large: we are ready for redevelopment tools that will help us move into a new era for this important corridor.

Curtis Park Neighbors arrived at the above position after significant discussion with interested neighbors, and voted to adopt this position at our regularly scheduled and noticed CPN Board meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, by unanimous vote, conditional on receiving answers to the questions described above, which DURA has done thoroughly. **We recommend that City Council approve the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Plan, setting the Welton Corridor Urban Redevelopment Area, without delay.**

