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# East Seventh Avenue Historic District – Steele Street Extension

Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee

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# 1967 Landmark Preservation Ordinance Chapter 30 DRMC

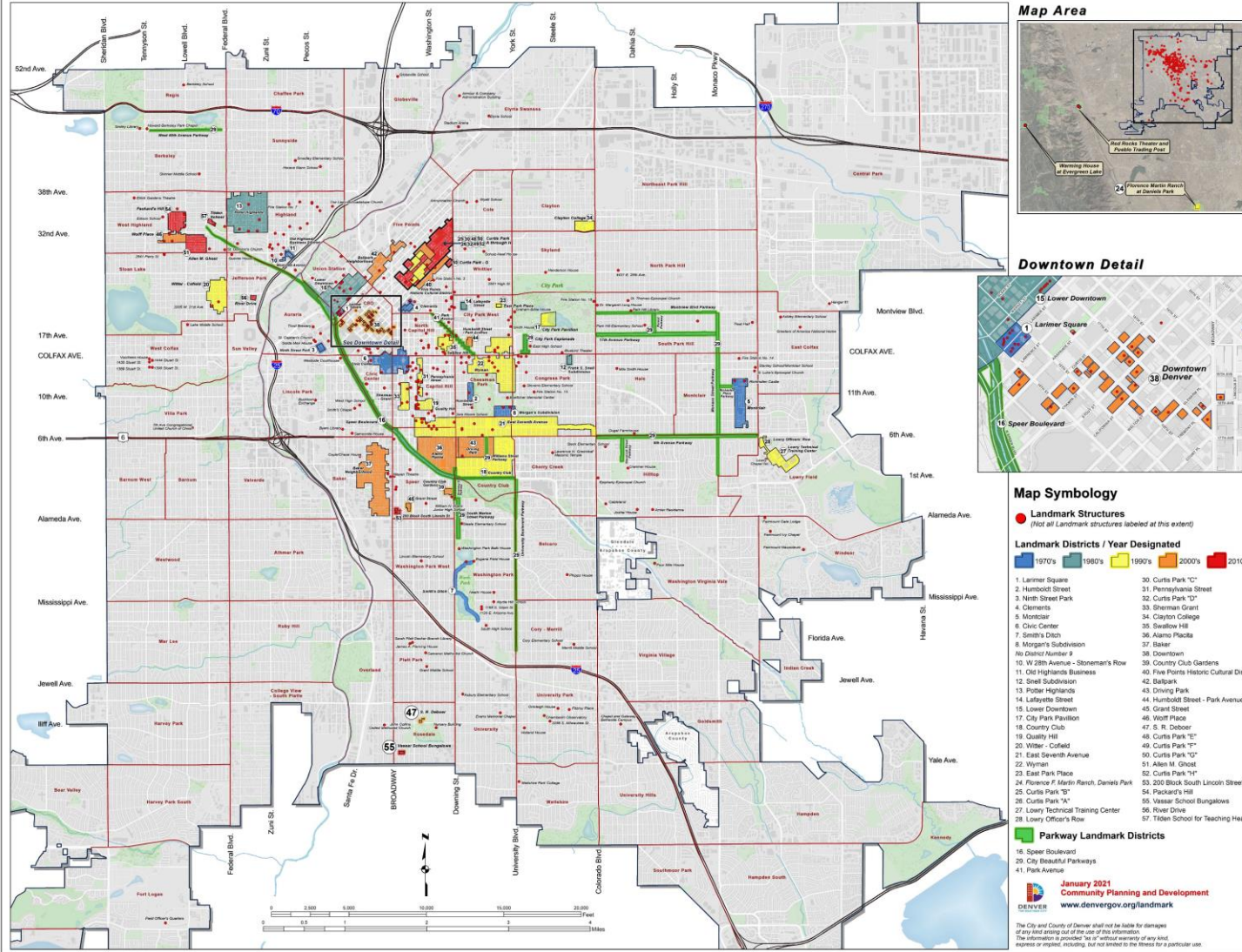
Purpose:

- Designate, preserve, and protect
- Foster civic pride
- Stabilize and improve aesthetic and economic vitality
- Promote good urban design

“It is the sense of the council that the economic, cultural and aesthetic standing of this city cannot be maintained or enhanced by disregarding the historical, architectural and geographic heritage of the city and ignoring the destruction or defacement of such cultural assets.”



## Denver Historic Districts and Landmark Structures



# Individual Landmarks and Historic Districts

- 352 Individual Landmarks
- 57 Historic Districts
  - Primarily residential districts
  - Five commercial or downtown districts
  - Two Historic Cultural Districts
- Roughly 7,200 total designated structures of 160,000 structures citywide

# Designation Applications



Community-driven process

Applicants can be:

- Owner(s) of the property
- Community Planning and Development Executive Director
- Member(s) of City Council
- Three people who are residents of the City and County of Denver

# Design Review

- Properties designated “as is”
  - No required improvements
- Design Guidelines
  - Preserve historic character of the property
  - Provide clear and predictable regulations for owners, applicants, and staff
- Demolition highly discouraged
  - Requires Landmark Preservation Commission review

## Landmark **does** review:

- ✓ *Exterior work that requires a building or zoning permit*
- ✓ New construction
- ✓ Additions
- ✓ Garages and ADUs
- ✓ Egress windows
- ✓ Window and door replacement
- ✓ Roofing
- ✓ Exterior alterations
- ✓ Electric & mechanical
- ✓ Fences and Retaining Walls
- ✓ Curb cuts
- ✓ Solar
- ✓ Signage



## Landmark **doesn't** review:

- x Interior alterations
- x Paint colors
- x Repairs and maintenance (painting, minor replacement in kind, etc.)
- x Storm windows
- x Plants or trees
- x Work below grade



# East Seventh Avenue Historic District – Steele Street Extension

## Location

- Congress Park Neighborhood

## # of Properties

- 19 (18 contributing primary structures)

## Council District

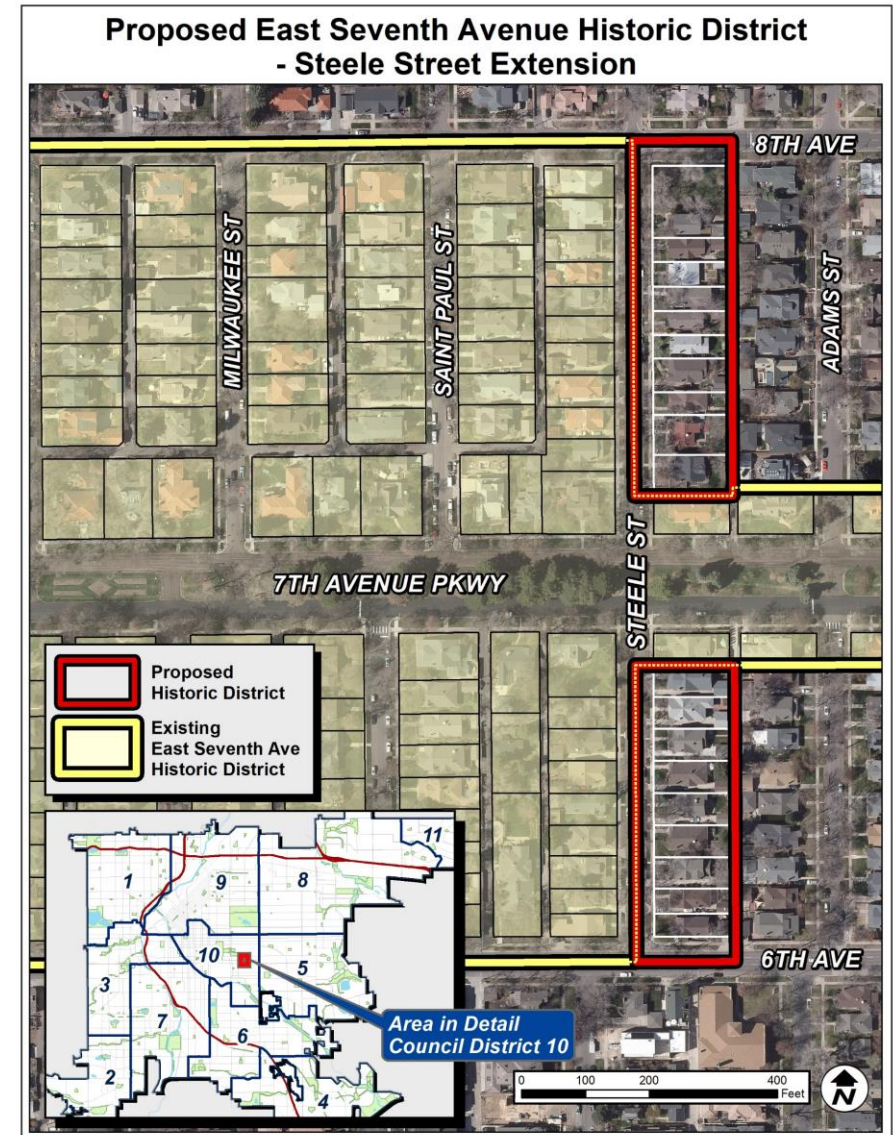
- #10, Chris Hinds

## Blueprint Denver

- Urban Neighborhood Context
- Low Residential Area Future Place

## Current Zoning

- U-SU-C





# Landmark Designation Eligibility

The structure or district must meet the following criteria \*:

1. The district maintains its integrity,
2. The district is more than 30 years old, or is of exceptional importance,
3. The district meets at least three of ten significance criteria, and
4. The Landmark Preservation Commission considers the district's historic context

\*Per Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30, DRMC)



# Landmark Significance Criteria

- A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;**
- B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;**
- C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;**
- D. It is a significant example of the work of a recognized architect or master builder;
- E. It contains elements of design, engineering, materials, craftsmanship, or artistic merit which represent a significant innovation or technical achievement;
- F. It represents an established and familiar feature of the neighborhood, community or contemporary city, due to its prominent location or physical characteristics;
- G. It promotes understanding and appreciation of the urban environment by means of distinctive physical characteristics or rarity;
- H. It represents an era of culture or heritage that allows an understanding of how the site was used by past generations;
- I. It is a physical attribute of a neighborhood, community, or the city that is a source of pride or cultural understanding;
- J. It is associated with social movements, institutions, or patterns of growth or change that contributed significantly to the culture of the neighborhood, community, city, state, or nation.

- A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;

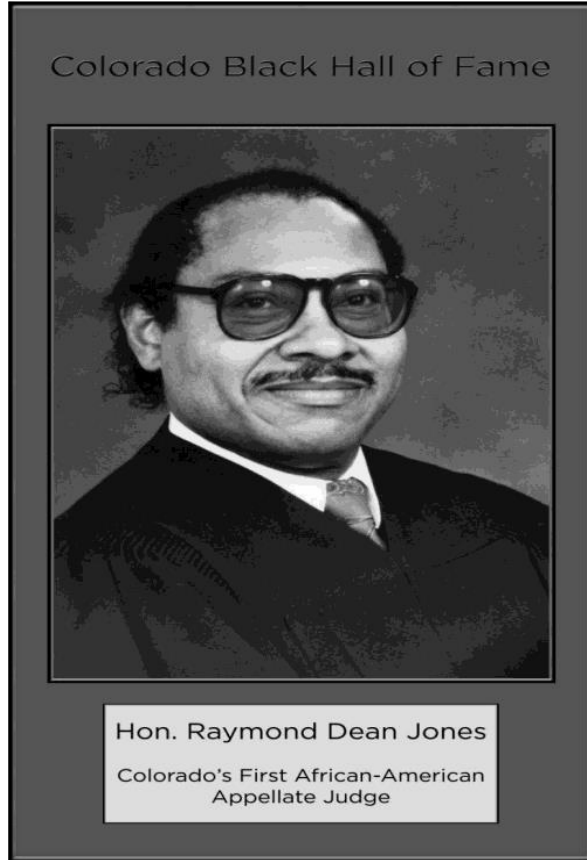


Mayor Robert Speer, champion of “City Beautiful” Movement.  
Photo: Western History Department, Rh-862



The upper portion of the East 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue Parkway was planned by Saco R. DeBoer, and marked a less formal part of the parkway, featuring naturalistic forest plantings.

**B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;**



C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;



# Integrity

## Retains integrity

- Location
- Design
- Workmanship
- Materials
- Setting
- Feeling
- Association

## Minimal Alterations

- Window replacement
- Retaining walls

Proposed district retains the identity for which it is significant.



# Historic Context

Period of significance: 1912-1990

- City Beautiful Movement - Housing near Denver's parks and parkways
- Evolution of streetcar neighborhoods
- Changing demographics of Congress Park



# Landmark Preservation Commission Review

- ✓ Meets at least three of ten significance criteria
  - A. It has a direct association with a significant historic event or with the historical development of the city, state, or nation;
  - B. It has direct and substantial association with a recognized person or group of persons who had influence on society;
  - C. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style or type;
- ✓ Maintains historic and physical integrity
- ✓ Relates to a historic context or theme

LPC Vote: 9-0-0

*To recommend approval and forwarding  
to City Council.*

# Planning Board Review

## Per Chapter 30-4(6), DRMC:

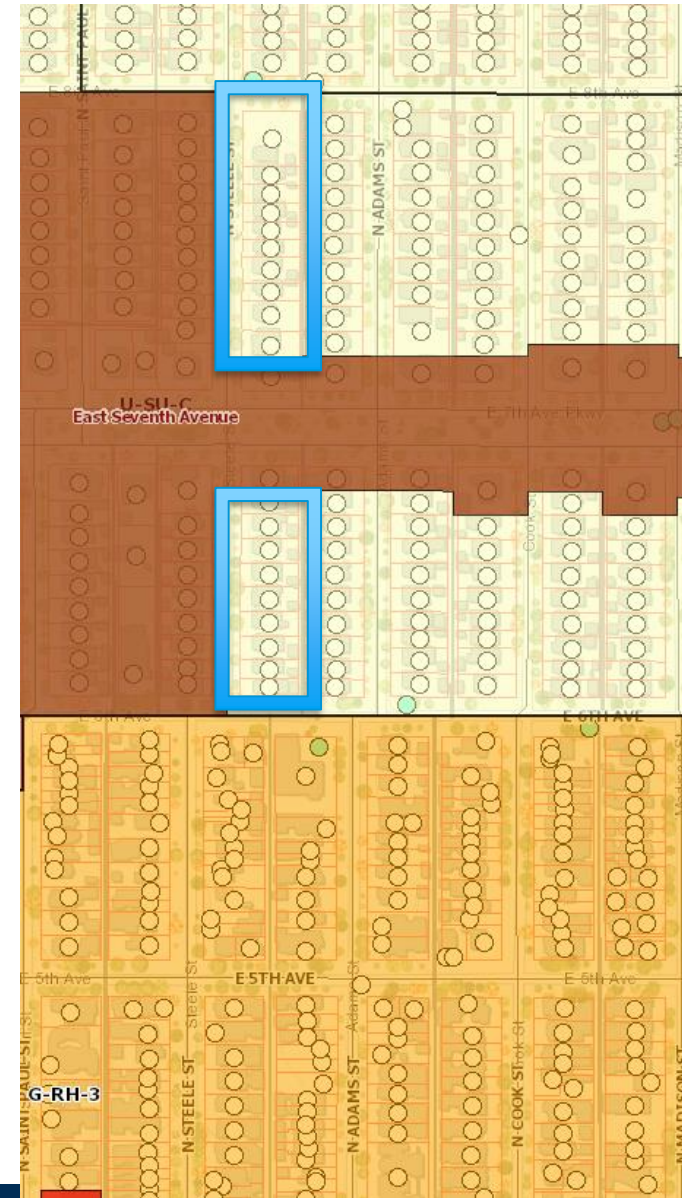
- Ordinance provides opportunity for Planning Board to make a recommendation to City Council regarding designation of districts
- Planning Board may review a proposed district designation with respect to:
  - a) Its relationship to the Denver Comprehensive Plan;
  - b) The effect of the designation upon the surrounding neighborhood; and
  - c) Such other planning considerations as may be relevant to the proposed designation



# Zoning Context

## U-SU-C

- Urban, Single Unit, 5,500 sq ft minimum lot side
- Urban House form
- Lots are typically 50 ft wide



# Comprehensive Plan 2040

## Vision Element: Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods

### Goal 1: Create a city of complete neighborhoods

Strategy D: Encourage quality infill development that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and offers opportunities for increased amenities.

### Goal 2: Enhance Denver's neighborhoods through high-quality urban design

Strategy B: Establish a scalable, predictable and adaptable approach to improve design quality across the city.

Strategy C: Create people-oriented places that embrace community character with thoughtful transitions, aspirational design and an engaging public realm.

### Goal 3: Preserve the authenticity of Denver's neighborhoods and celebrate our history, architecture and culture

Strategy B: Continue the city's commitment to existing historic districts and landmarks and increase public awareness of the benefits of historic preservation through education and outreach.

Strategy C: Ensure city policies and regulations support historic preservation and eliminate barriers in city processes to help all neighborhoods preserve what matters most.

### Goal 6: Empower Denverites to be involved and collaborative in city government

Strategy A: Continue to strengthen trust and communication between the city and all neighborhoods.

# Blueprint Denver

- Urban Neighborhood Context and Low Residential Future Place Type
- Development in this context should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood character
- Historic designation:
  - Helps ensure compatible infill and building alterations to maintain character-defining features
  - Preserves and creates authentic places



# East Central Area Plan

**Policy L9 - Use Discover Denver citywide building survey to preserve historic buildings and neighborhood character.**

- A. For areas identified as an “Area of Historic Significance,” partner with Historic Denver to engage residents on the creation of a historic district.
- C. Identify additional incentives to encourage property owners to designate, such as:
  1. Technical assistance writing designation applications.
  2. Additional financial incentives, such as development fee and tax reductions.
  3. Guidance on community engagement.

**Policy L6: Retain the character of High, High-Medium, and Low-Medium Residential Places and facilitate compatible infill development.**

- A. Promote preservation of historic and character defining single-unit, multi-unit, and mixed-use buildings. Consider individual landmarks, historic districts, or other tools as appropriate

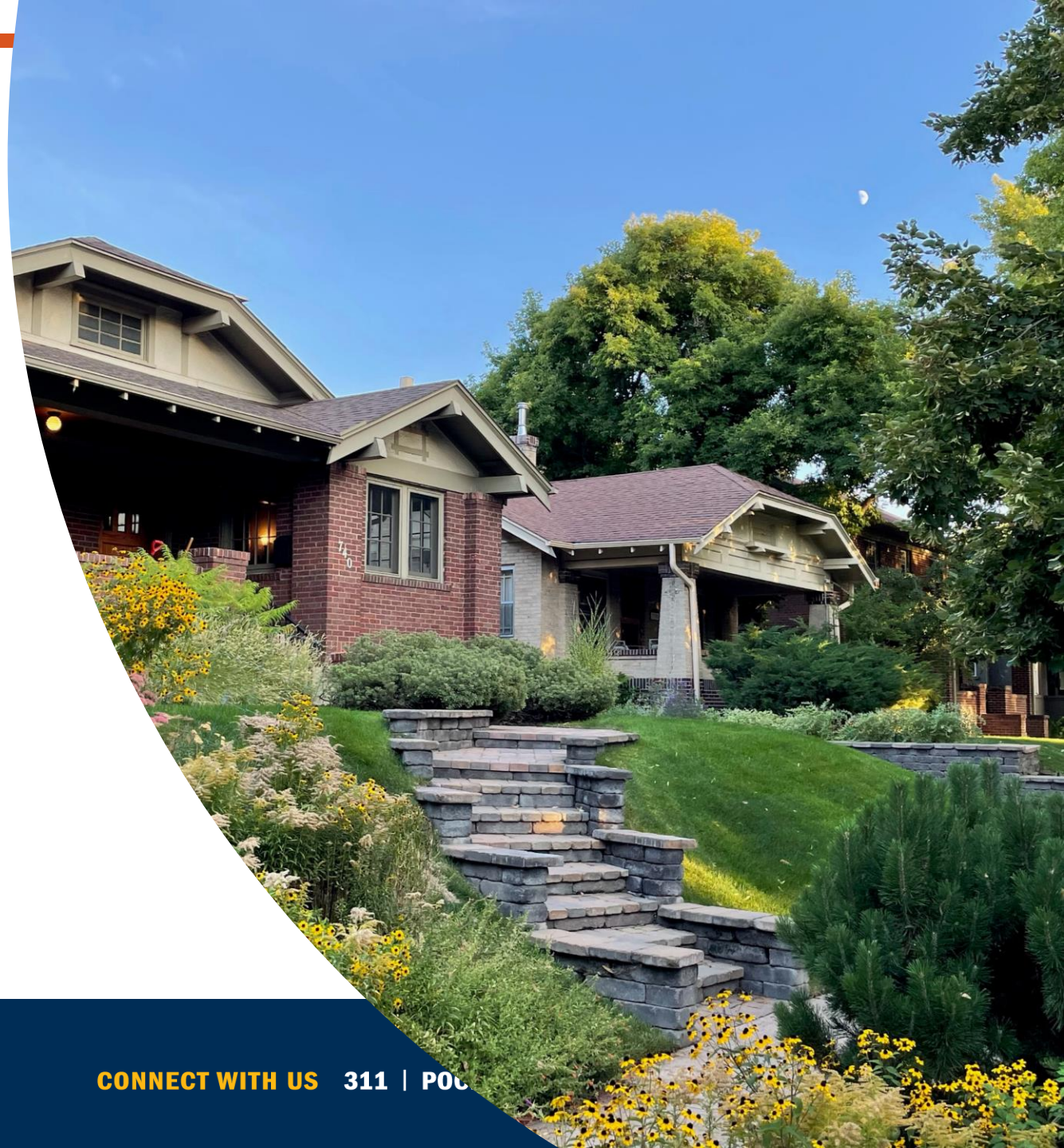
**Policy COP-L1: Prioritize land use policies that aim to maintain character in Congress Park**

- F. Consider Landmark designations where appropriate (see Policy L9)



# Effect on Surrounding Neighborhood

- The Proposed East Seventh Avenue Historic District – Steele Street Extension designation would help preserve the character defining features of the district
- No direct impact on the surrounding neighborhood
- Intent of the designation is to recognize this unique district, the buildings that define it, and their contribution to the historic fabric of the city



# Planning Board Review

- ✓ Meets the goals of
  - ✓ Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040
  - ✓ Blueprint Denver
  - ✓ East Central Area Plan
- ✓ Will have no direct effect to surrounding neighborhood

Planning Board Vote: 8-0-0  
*To recommend approval to City Council.*

# Public Comment Received by CPD

## RNO Comment

- Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods – Support
- Congress Park Neighbors – Neutral

## Individual Comment by online survey or email (Fourteen property owners and 11 Denver residents)

- 21 in support
- 1 neutral
- 3 in opposition

## LPC Public Hearing (Seven property owners, five Denver residents, one RNO and one Interested Party)

- 9 in support
- 1 neutral
- 4 in opposition

## Planning Board Meeting (Three property owners and one Interested Party)

- 3 in support
- 0 neutral
- 1 in opposition

# LUTI Review and Recommendation

Based on Landmark Ordinance designation criteria, the findings of the Landmark Preservation Commission that the application meets the criteria for designation of a district, and the recommendation of approval by the Denver Planning Board, staff recommends approval of the application.

