



TO: Neighborhoods and Planning Committee

FROM: Steven Chester, Senior City Planner, CPD Planning Services

DATE: June 16th, 2016

RE: **Westwood Neighborhood Plan**

Community Planning and Development is pleased to submit the final draft of the Westwood Neighborhood Plan to the Neighborhoods and Planning Committee of the Denver City Council. The Planning Board unanimously approved the plan as a supplement to the Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000 after holding the required public hearing at its regular meeting of June 15, 2016. This memorandum documents the overall plan contents and process based on the three criteria established in the Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000:

1. Consistency with the Denver Comprehensive Plan and applicable supplements
2. Inclusive public process
3. Long-term view

The memo concludes with the staff recommendation to the Denver City Council.

1 - Plan Consistency

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000

Environmental Sustainability Chapter

Objective 2: *Ensure environmental stewardship of natural resources, taking into account the entire ecosystem, not just human needs. Preventing pollution will be the action of first choice in accomplishing this objective.*

2-F – 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.
- Protecting natural corridors, wetlands and floodplains from the encroachment of development.
- Encouraging the redevelopment of brownfields.

Land Use Chapter

Objective 3: *Preserve and enhance the individuality, diversity and livability of Denver’s neighborhoods and expand the vitality of Denver’s business centers*

3-A – Complete neighborhood and area plans for parts of Denver where development or redevelopment is likely or desirable.

3-B – 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.

Objective 4: *Ensure that Denver’s [plans] and regulatory system support the development of a clean, efficient and innovative transportation system that meets Denver’s future economic and mobility needs.*

4-B—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.

Mobility Chapter

Objective 1: *Provide Denver’s diverse residents, workers and visitors with a choice of transportation modes that are safe and convenient.*

1-B - Promote public transit, both bus and rail, as a safe, attractive and convenient choice for people who might otherwise drive to employment, education, cultural, shopping or other destinations.

1-C - Identify areas throughout the city where transportation policies should reflect pedestrian priorities. These include areas such as schools, child-care centers, civic institutions, business centers, shopping districts and parks.

Objective 7: *Address neighborhood transportation issues in a manner that balances overall mobility with neighborhood integrity.*

Objective 8: *Provide safe and convenient facilities to encourage bicycling and walking for commuting, recreation and other trips.*

8-A—Ensure safe and convenient access and accommodation of bicycle riders, pedestrians and transit riders.

Denver’s Legacies Chapter

Objective 3: *Incorporate visionary urban design principles into new development patterns to achieve a higher concentration and more diverse mix of housing, employment and transportation options in identified areas of the city.*

Objective 5: *Preserve Denver’s historic resources.*

Objective 9: *Plan for the maintenance and expansion of Denver’s parks and recreation system.*

Objective 11: *Strengthen Denver’s system of “green” connections: trails, bicycle routes, parkways, greenways and watercourses.*

Economic Activity Chapter

Objective 5: *Support the creation and growth of neighborhood businesses that enhance the vitality and quality of life in their communities.*

Neighborhoods Chapter

Objective 1: *Strengthen the positive attributes and distinctive character of each neighborhood to help sustain Denver as a healthy, vital city.*

Objective 3: *Make neighborhoods clean and safe places that inspire community pride, where residents and visitors feel secure and comfortable.*

Arts and Culture Chapter

Objective 1: *Support and promote a flourishing artistic community.*

1-C—Support a full range of cultural and artistic opportunities within Denver’s neighborhoods and among its diverse communities, including festivals, performing and visual arts events, and cultural activities.

Blueprint Denver (2002)

Key Concepts

- All areas of Denver are either an Area of Stability or Change, or on a continuum from change to stability
- Direct growth to places that will benefit from an infusion of activity, population and investment
- Character preservation, reinvestment and limited growth are the primary concerns for stable residential neighborhoods
- Regulations should encourage development with standards for appropriately located density
- Public private partnerships create innovative projects
- Public infrastructure investments stimulate private investment and improve the physical environment
- Smart growth connects residents to transit, jobs and centers of activity, and increases housing and employment opportunities

Guiding Principles: Areas of Change

- Contribute to urban design vision
- Respect valued attributes of area
- Expand transportation choice
- Improve environmental quality

Civic Responsibilities of Small Area Plans

- Affordable housing
- Transportation system integrity
- Transit oriented development
- Community facilities
- Consistency with adopted plans

Strategic Transportation Plan (2008)

Vision

A great city is livable for all of its citizens now and in the future. The STP creates a multimodal transportation system to support a livable, connected and sustainable city.

- Multimodal
 - Safe pedestrian linkages
 - Comprehensive bicycle system
 - Dependable transit options
 - Efficient and well-maintained infrastructure
- Safe, Efficient, Reliable
 - Connected multimodal system
 - Safe transportation network
 - Manage congestion
 - Accessible to all

Innovation

- A transformative approach to transportation.
- Plans for travel sheds, not just travel corridors.
- Move people, not just vehicles.
- Does not grow Denver's road footprint.

Strategy

- Maintenance and efficiency are fundamental to our current transportation system, followed by improvements and planning for future transportation.
- A balance of behavioral, physical and operational recommendations are included.
- The result is a comprehensive plan for each travel shed.

Finding: The Westwood Neighborhood Plan is consistent with the Denver Comprehensive Plan and relevant amendments and supplements.

2 - Inclusive Public Process

The Westwood Neighborhood Plan is based on a robust 1.5-year public engagement process, as described below:

- **Westwood Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee.** The Steering Committee was developed at the start of the project and met six times throughout the planning process in 2015 and 2016. All meetings were open to the public. The Steering Committee included 30 representatives from constituencies including registered neighborhood organizations, property owners, affordable housing developers, advocates, and non-profits. The role of the Steering Committee was to represent their constituents' interests in the planning process, to ensure those constituents stayed informed of the plan's progress, and to guide the project team in the development of the framework concepts and recommendations. The project team met individually with many of the Steering Committee members and attended neighborhood association meetings when invited to gain a better understanding of the critical issues and needs of business owners and residents.
- **Public Meetings.** The City hosted four public workshops to garner insight and comments from the community.

- **Community Workshop #1** - At the first community meeting, participants were introduced to the neighborhood planning process, reviewed the draft guiding principles for the process, and engaged in small group discussions about the Westwood neighborhood. The primary purpose of the meeting was to introduce the neighborhood plan, collect feedback on the guiding principles, and listen to participants discuss their neighborhood. Roughly 45 community stakeholders were in attendance
 - **Community Workshop #2** - At the second community workshop, participants were reminded of the neighborhood planning process, reviewed the plan goals, and engaged in a small group activity of crafting their own individual visions for their neighborhood, tying together transportation, land use, and community amenities. The primary purpose of the community workshop was to gain consensus on the plan goals, along with starting the neighborhood visioning phase of the planning process. The entire community was invited to the meeting and roughly 60 community members were in attendance, including 20 children.
 - **Community Workshop #3** - At the third community workshop, participants were reminded of the neighborhood planning process, reviewed the plan framework, and engaged in keypad polling to answer questions in real time about some of the draft plan concepts and strategies. The primary purpose of the community workshop was to gauge support for some of the big ideas in the draft plan addressing the vision for the neighborhood and provide guidance to the planning team for drafting the plan. The entire community was invited to the meeting and roughly 30 community members were in attendance.
 - **Community Workshop #4** - At the fourth and final community workshop the draft plan will be presented and summarized, highlighting the major recommendations, vision elements, and transformative projects. Attendees will then be invited to review the plan concepts in an open house format and provide comments on the draft in a number of different ways, including surveys, comment cards, and in one on one interviews with the planning and technical team.
- **Other Outreach**
 - **Meeting in a Box** - The planning team created a “do-it-yourself” meeting kit in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese available to stakeholders who wished to hold their own meetings about the neighborhood plan with friends and family. The kit included facilitation instructions along with discussion questions and group activities. Once completed, the host set the kit back to the planning team with the results and participants were encouraged to stay engaged in the process. Throughout the process, 24 responses were received.
 - **Surveys**- Several surveys were created as a means to increase participation of individuals who could not attend specific community workshops. Surveys were posted on the Plan website and included all information presented at each of the

community meetings. Feedback from the online surveys was then combined with the feedback received at the community workshops. The surveys were translated into both Spanish and Vietnamese. Throughout the process, 70 survey responses were received.

- **Focus Groups-** Two meetings were held with special focus on major corridors in the neighborhood, Morrison Road and Federal Boulevard. Outreach was done to business owners and property owners in these areas to get specific input, as the majority of attendees at other community workshops were residents. The topics covered during the focus groups were the vision for each corridor’s roadway, pedestrian realm, and private realm. Vietnamese and Spanish interpretation was available for both meetings. There were 40 attendees between the two meetings.

Communication.

- Advertisement of these meetings and other outreach activities included email distribution, media/social media releases, website information, the Community Planning and Development newsletter, and further distribution by Steering Committee members.
- Project information, draft content, and announcements were posted to denvergov.org/Westwood

• **Denver Planning Board.**

- Information Item on planning process and existing conditions
- Information Item on draft plan concepts
- Information Item on Planning Board review draft
- Public Hearing

• **Comments Received Since May 18 Planning Board Information Item**

- Since May 18, a number of emails and letters have been received regarding the draft neighborhood plan. Some comments address multiple points, and they are generally summarized below, not inclusive of all individual points.
 - **Introduction:** A number of comments were submitted asking for additional clarity, along with additional elements for the introduction section of the plan. Those comments resulting to changes to the draft plan include:
 - Health recommendations added to the Plan on a Page
 - Additional items and added clarity to the to the Accomplishments, Challenges, Opportunity section
 - Additional clarity and detail in the introduction narrative
 - Added Spanish headings for the vision elements
 - **Connected:** A number of comments requested additional recommendations, or the enhancement of existing recommendations,

pertaining to creating a more connected neighborhood. Those comments resulting to changes to the draft plan include:

- Including additional recommendations for enhanced transit routes and stops
 - Enhancements to the Pedestrian Network Map
 - Including recommendations for increased pedestrian lighting in the neighborhood
 - Increasing tree canopy in the neighborhood
 - Increasing amenity recommendations for neighborhood parks and open spaces
 - Additional recommendations for Key Streets, particularly Morrison Road and Federal Boulevard
 - Changed reference of *enhanced crosswalks* to *decorative crosswalks*
 - Changed term *culturally appropriate* to *culturally influenced*
 - Added Urban Circulator as a potential transit enhancement for the neighborhood
 - Added recommendation to improve lighting in neighborhood
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- **Celebrated:** A number of comments requested additional recommendations, or the enhancement of existing recommendations, pertaining to creating a more celebrated neighborhood. Those comments resulting to changes to the draft plan include:
 - Additions to the section introduction to improve clarity
 - Additions and clarifications to the Culture Map
 - Increased recommendations pertaining to the design of public plazas
 - Additional language on how a diversity of housing types will be ensured
 - Added recommendation of a community created neighborhood resource guide
 - **Resilient:** A number of comments requested additional recommendations, or the enhancement of existing recommendations, pertaining to creating a more resilient neighborhood. Those comments resulting to changes to the draft plan include:
 - Expansion of single family/duplex future land use on Blueprint Denver Map along Irving, capturing irregularly large lots along the Residential Collector
 - Changes to building heights map and building heights text regarding concern over 5 story maximum along Morrison Road
 - Graphical enhancements to the Blueprint Denver map for clarity

- Improved definition of Pedestrian Shopping Corridor future land use to better fit the Westwood context
- Improved clarity for the Urban Residential future land use classification
- Improved clarity for the Single Family w/ ADU land use classification
- Added additional recommendations supporting the Little Saigon Business district
- **Transformative Projects:** A number of comments requested additional recommendations, or the enhancement of existing recommendations, pertaining to creating a more resilient neighborhood. Those comments resulting to changes to the draft plan include:
 - Strengthened and added language on the need of a recreation center in Westwood
 - Added additional plaza spaces and lighting along neighborhood greenway
 - Added existing community resources to the community resources section
 - Added how a redeveloped Morrison Road will contribute to housing affordability
- **Moving Forward:** A number of comments were received asking for additional clarity and detail on the implementation of the plan. Those comments resulting to changes to the draft plan include:
 - Added images clarifying how an ADU could look in Westwood
 - Added implementation guidance for the pedestrian network
 - Additional detail on the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative
 - Added additional implementation goal focused on contextual analysis of investments
 - Added language pertaining to the implementation of the vision of Morrison Road

Finding: The Westwood Neighborhood Plan was developed through an inclusive public process.

3. Long-Term View

The Westwood Neighborhood Plan establishes a vision framework that will guide change in the neighborhood for the next 20+ years. Many of the recommendations are based on a long-term vision that will take many years to achieve. The plan's implementation chapter calls for partnerships that will last well into the future to further plan implementation for years to come.

Finding: The Westwood Neighborhood Plan has an appropriate long-term perspective.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on the findings that the plan is consistent with the Denver Comprehensive Plan and applicable supplements, that an inclusive public process was utilized, and that the plan includes a long-term view, staff recommends **approval with the condition that the document be edited for clarity and correctness.**

May 27, 2016

Denver Planning Board
201 W. Colfax Avenue, Dept 205
Denver, CO 80202

*We can't wait!
Please let us know if
we can come support
in person!!*

Dear Planning Board Members,

On behalf of Mi Casa Resource, I am writing to express our support for the vision and goals of the Westwood Neighborhood Plan. Mi Casa's mission is to advance the economic success of Latino families, and we will be relocating our headquarters to the Westwood neighborhood in April 2017. We were honored to be a part of the Steering Committee for the Plan and are deeply invested in the future of Westwood and its residents.

We appreciate the time, community outreach, and consideration given in the development of the Neighborhood Plan. The public draft presents a visual reminder of the rich culture of the neighborhood while recognizing current strengths and needs of Westwood residents and business owners. The Westwood Neighborhood Plan provides a vision for the future and a clear path to attract much needed improvement and enhancement into the area.

The Plan outlines a vision for a connected, celebrated, resilient, and healthy community with thoughtful recommendations and strategies along with a prioritized list of truly transformational projects for the neighborhood. Mi Casa is particularly excited about and committed to helping move forward the Plan's recommendations regarding supporting local businesses, enhancing access to employment opportunities, enhancing access to neighborhood services, and the transformative project of strengthening community resources and spaces.

The widely accepted vision as presented in the Plan, the continued collaboration and leadership from the City and the dedicated neighborhood stakeholders, create an opportunity to greatly enhance the quality of life and health of Westwood residents, while providing new diverse opportunities for existing and future residents and business owners.

We look forward to continued collaboration with the City moving towards implementing the recommendations in the Westwood Neighborhood Plan.

Sincerely,



Monique Lovato
CEO/Executive Director

360 Acoma Street
Denver, CO 80223
P: 303-539-5600
F: 303-595-0422

www.MiCasaResourceCenter.org





SouthWest Improvement Council – SWIC

Health and Human Services for Everyone

SouthWest Neighborhood Housing Corporation

Quality Affordable Housing for Everyone



May 31, 2016

Denver Planning Board
201 W. Colfax Avenue, Dept. 205
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Planning Board Members,

On behalf of SouthWest Improvement Council, I am writing to express SWIC's support for the Westwood Neighborhood Plan. SouthWest Improvement Council appreciates the time, community outreach, and consideration given in the development of the Neighborhood Plan. The vision and goals that are provided by the Plan addresses the needed improvements of Westwood, while recognizing a neighborhood that thrives on diversity, strength of family, and sense of community.

As a member of the steering committee, I recognized firsthand the devotion that the residents and business owners have for Westwood, but also the need to build on that enthusiasm for a safer more economically vibrant community. The Plan provides a specific outline for Westwood with a vision of a connected, celebrated, resilient and healthy community while providing well thought out ideas and strategies for a walk-able, bike-able neighborhood with easy access to open spaces. Additionally, the Plan provides a vision for promoting responsible growth while strengthening the neighborhood's economy through sustainable strategies.

The continued collaboration and leadership from the City along with the dedication from the neighborhood stakeholders can create an opportunity for Westwood that will greatly enhance the quality of life and health of our residents.

SouthWest Improvement Council looks forward to the continued collaboration with the City moving towards implementing the recommendations in the Westwood Neighborhood Plan.

Sincerely,

Lance A. Guanella
Deputy Executive Director
SouthWest Improvement Council



May 23, 2016

Westwood Unidos
4200 Morrison Road, Unit 5
Denver, Colorado 80219

Steven Chester
Senior City Planner
City and County of Denver
201 W Colfax Ave
Denver, CO 80202

Mr. Chester:

Westwood Unidos is writing to submit our comments to the neighborhood plan, which are attached, and to urge the City to include stronger recreation center language in the Westwood Neighborhood Plan.

Westwood Unidos is a registered neighborhood organization as well as a non-profit organization. Our organization is partnership of Residents, LiveWell Westwood, Urban Land Conservancy, The Denver Foundation, BuCu West, Revision International, Extreme Community Makeover, 9to5, and many other partners. The mission of Westwood Unidos is to unify and organize resident leaders and community-based organizations to take positive action on the topics residents identify as most important.

One of the topics Westwood residents identify as most important is access to recreation, particularly youth recreation. Almost half of the population of Westwood is under 18 years old and the neighborhood has one of the highest obesity rates in the City. Denver has a responsibility to provide all of its citizens with equal opportunity to share in its livability. Westwood is a neighborhood that has been historically underserved and passed over as development and investment improve other areas of the City.

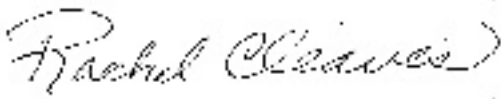
Neighborhood Plans guide the development of a community for decades. Therefore, the Westwood Neighborhood Plan should reflect all community development needs, even if those needs cannot be met immediately.

While we understand that the language should be somewhat flexible in order to account for the community's needs at a given time, we also believe that a recreation center is a current necessity. The language should be flexible in terms of how and when the recreation center comes about, but the language needs to be there.

Westwood Unidos believes that including this language in our Neighborhood Plan is not only important, but fully in line with the relevant adopted plans. In fact, Blueprint Denver states that the neighborhood planning process is the perfect opportunity to address the lack of a

recreation center. As such, Westwood Unidos urges the City to better address the need for a recreation center in Westwood within the Westwood Neighborhood Plan and would be happy to work with the City to come up with appropriate language.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel Cleaves". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Rachel Cleaves
Executive Director
Westwood Unidos

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Norma Brambila". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Norma Brambila
President
Westwood Unidos Registered Neighborhood Organization

Page 14 (Accomplishments)

If non-profits names are to be spelled out for some organizations, then please be accurate about the role that Westwood Unidos has played in so many of the following projects. The yellow highlighting below are the additions that should be made to properly credit the organizations involved in each project.

- *9to5 Colorado and Westwood Unidos* organizers worked with residents to reinstate RTD Route 4 providing bus service along Morrison Road and east toward the Alameda Light Rail Station
- “With much community support, Re:Vision has successfully opened the community owned and operated Westwood Food Cooperative. *(The Westwood Food Cooperative is not open. Perhaps the language could read, “Re:Vision is in the development phase to open the Westwood Food Cooperative in the next 2 – 5 years.”)*
- Denver Parks is planning improvements to Westwood Park including new playground equipment and other enhancements to improve visibility and increase usage, with *funding and planning support from Trust for Public Land and Westwood Healthy Places.*
- *Westwood Unidos and Extreme Community Makeover* successfully worked together to improve the alley adjacent to Munroe Elementary School to provide a safe and welcoming means to walk or bike to school
- *Community Connectors from Westwood Unidos and promotoras from Re:Vision*, neighborhood residents who work to turnout “hard-to-reach” populations, have made it possible to increase the participation of these residents. This model has been proven to be effective and should be duplicated in similar communities.
- *Westwood Unidos* opened La Casita Community House, a community and recreation space, on Morrison Road in early 2016.
- Please Add: *The Westwood Neighborhood was selected as a pilot grantee of Great Outdoors Colorado to increase youth access to the outdoors and nature.*

Challenges: Please add:

In the last few years there has been an increase in crime rates, especially violent crime and gang activity.

With the rise of rent and property taxes, there is considerable concern about gentrification leading to displacement.

Current language (page 14):

Under “Challenges”:

- Westwood is under served for parks, recreation facilities, and outdoor space, falling far short of the City’s per-capita standards both for parkland and for recreational facilities.
- There are limited places for residents to gather and celebrate cultural events

Suggested language:

Under “Challenges”:

- *Westwood is under served for parks, recreation facilities, and outdoor space, falling far short of the City’s per-capita standards both for parkland and for recreational facilities.*
- *Westwood lacks positive after-school and summer programming for youth, despite having one of the largest concentrations of youth in the City.*
- *There are limited places for residents to gather and celebrate cultural events*

Big Ideas:

The three Recommendations for “Resilient” are missing an aspect of health. Where is health? We are the most obese neighborhood in Denver. Promote sustainable development and enhance the local economy are so similar, could something like, “Support healthy lifestyle choices” replace one of those?

Page 21:

There needs to be more emphasis on the fact that the streets are too dark. Westwood Unidos has heard again and again that darkness is a major cause of crime at night; also, people are scared of leaving the house at night due to darkness. Many of our street lights are broken, too dim, or missing. The City could explore increasing the wattage and also replacing LED’s instead of the current bulbs.

Page 22: While pedestrian-oriented lighting described in the plan would be ideal, it is unlikely to happen neighborhood-wide. Can we add language that says that simply increasing the wattage and / or repairing street lights will also increase walkability.

Page 23: The map shows the sidewalks around Munroe as priorities for improvement. Please be aware that Westwood Unidos worked with Public Works in 2011 to apply for funds and ultimately led to widening the sidewalks along Virginia and Knox Court around Munroe. What is needed there is a Crosswalk on the southwest corner of Munroe (Knox and Custer). Please make that intersection a priority intersection.

Why is the sidewalk on Utica not a high priority, since that is Knapp Elementary’s front door?

Hazel and Irving street – youth who attend Kepner Middle walk to and from home on Irving and Hazel street. These sidewalks and intersections should be prioritized.

Virginia Avenue east of Knapp Elementary –this was identified by students at UC-Boulder as a potential street to connect across Westwood, from Munroe elementary all the way to Knapp. Perhaps prioritize this as a high priority for sidewalks.

Also, add the Exposition & Federal intersection as a priority intersection due to access to transit stations on Federal Boulevard.

A neighborhood circulator that goes on Perry and Knox Court up to the light rail at 13th is something that residents requested and which came out after the planning process led by 9to5 Colorado and Westwood Unidos. Please add this to the list of mobility options.

Why is there not a place for a new park called out? The neighborhood has 15% of Denver's recommended park land.

Typo on 2nd to last line (Pop-up transit)

Page 28: Additional amenities, such as water fountains, **should add bathrooms.** Community has asked for bathrooms again and again for years.

Page 33: We support the Federal Blvd transit focus and dedicated transit lane.

Page 64 – Page 65: We strongly support the idea of undergrounding the power lines at the utility easement and creating a usable open spaces. Has CPD already explored the burying of the power lines and have any info they can share as we work on our GOCO Inspire grant? Also, who owns the easement?

Page 68: The language for a recreation center really needs to be stronger. The only language for a new rec center states:

“There is currently no community or recreation center to house programming or recreation facilities. While the creation of a new recreation center is the long term goal of the neighborhood and the City, there are steps that can be taken to enhance current community assets and potentially open some up for wider neighborhood use. This series of smaller investments are a way to provide short term solutions for the lack of community space in the neighborhood. The ultimate goal is to locate a new recreation center in Westwood but these recommended enhancements are incremental steps to improve community space in the neighborhood in the short term.”

Once plans are adopted, they guide the investment and development of a community for 20 – 40 years. We need stronger language regarding the development of a rec center in Westwood.

Current language (page 68):

Westwood is home to many cultures, ages, and incomes levels. There is a strong desire for increased gathering places to celebrate this diversity and bring people together. There is currently no community or recreation center to house programming or recreation facilities. While the creation of a new recreation center is the long term goal of the neighborhood and the City, there are steps that can be taken to enhance current community assets and potentially open some up for wider neighborhood use. This series of smaller investments are a way to provide short term solutions for the lack of community space in the neighborhood. The ultimate goal is to locate a new recreation center in Westwood but these recommended enhancements are incremental steps to improve community space in the neighborhood in the short term.

Suggested language:

Westwood is home to many cultures, ages, and incomes levels. There is a strong desire for increased gathering places to celebrate this diversity and bring people together. There is currently no community or recreation center to house programming or recreation facilities. Ultimately, a Denver recreation center is needed to serve the Westwood community. In the meantime, there are steps that can be taken to enhance current community assets and potentially open some up for wider neighborhood use. This series of smaller investments are a way to provide short term solutions for the lack of community space in the neighborhood. The ultimate goal is to locate a new recreation center in Westwood but these recommended enhancements are incremental steps to improve community space in the neighborhood in the short term.

Current language (page 68):

Under “Recommendations”:

Identify and support existing resource enhancement opportunities

Existing community assets in Westwood are unique and will continue to evolve over time.

Additionally, new assets may locate in the neighborhood in the future. This plan identifies gaps and potential enhancements by resource. This list serves as a guide and may not be a full list of potential enhancements. Neighborhood advocates and partners should continue to seek funding opportunities to make enhancements to the existing spaces. Examples of these sources may include grants, city funding, or private development contributions. Goals for enhanced community assets include:

- Recreation- Expand and update existing equipment and facilities. Spaces should also have areas and technology for group exercise classes.

Suggested language:

- *Recreation- Expand and update existing equipment and facilities. Repurpose underutilized buildings to allow for recreation. Spaces should also have areas and technology for group exercise classes. Implementing incremental community spaces dispersed throughout the neighborhood is a short term solution to meet the needs and desires of the neighborhood. Long-term, a recreation center should be built in Westwood to serve the unmet need.*

Current language (page 69):

Under “Recommendations”:

Explore opportunities for new community space

The construction of a new recreation or community center in Westwood is the ultimate goal. Challenges include the land acquisition in an established neighborhood, along with capital construction costs. Implementing incremental community spaces dispersed throughout the neighborhood is a short term solution to meet the needs and desires of the neighborhood. If these enhanced spaces are successful, it may help to prove there is high demand for quality community space in the neighborhood and elevate the need of a new center. Additionally, residents and stakeholders and the City should continue to advocate and work for a new recreation and community center in the Westwood neighborhood.

Suggested language:

Build a West Denver recreation center

Westwood has one of the highest rates of obesity in the City. The neighborhood also has one of the largest concentration of youth under the age of 18. A Denver recreation center would not only provide opportunities for healthy living and positive after-school and summer activities for youth, but it would also serve as a much-needed community gathering space. While challenges include land acquisition and capital construction costs, residents and stakeholders and the City should continue to advocate and work for a new recreation and community center in the Westwood neighborhood.

Page 69: The School yards are already open to the community after school and on weekends (Learning Landscapes). Since so many people do not know this, there needs to be better outreach and education.

Under the map of resources, La Casita is listed, but under the table of resources, La Casita is not listed. Please add La Casita under the table. La Casita provides every one of the services: recreation, education, cultural events, supportive services, youth enrichment, and health and food. www.centrolacasita.com

Also under the table of resources, please substitute “Westwood Unidos” instead of LiveWell Westwood, and add Recreation (our summer camp at Westwood Park and place-making in alleys).

There is a typo in the header on the table of resources.

Page 73: typo under “Promote Vehicular Safety”

Page 82: Please add Westwood Unidos, Extreme Community Makeover, 9to5 Colorado, and Re:Vision as partners. Each organization is a member of Westwood Unidos, co-chairs a community action team, and is working actively to implement many of the strategies in the plan. You may remove Healthy Places as it is an initiative that ends in approximately 8 months. Please consider separating Colorado Health Foundation and LiveWell Colorado, as they are separate foundations.



May 25, 2016

Steven Chester
Senior City Planner
Community Planning and Development
City and County of Denver
201 W Colfax Ave
Denver, CO 80202

Mr. Chester:

We appreciate the commitment that you and your colleagues demonstrate to making Denver livable for all its residents. In order for Denver to be a sustainably healthy city, all neighborhoods should have systems in place in which each community member is able to afford and achieve healthy lifestyles. For the residents of Westwood, a city-managed recreation center could be transformative for the health of the community.

With that in mind, we urge strengthening the language for a recreational center in the Westwood Neighborhood Plan. The Plan would be improved by reflecting the needs of the community, even while recognizing those needs may be met with future rather than existing city resources.

At LiveWell Colorado, our aim is to provide every Coloradan with access to healthy food and opportunities for physical activity. The Westwood neighborhood of Denver lacks adequate access to physical activity, which is one of the reasons why our organization works to support that community. In Colorado, more than half of all adults and one out of four of our children are overweight or obese. Westwood is consistently ranked as one of the most obese neighborhoods in Colorado because of their lack of access to healthy foods, preventive care, and opportunities for safe and affordable recreation, as noted in the draft Neighborhood Plan.

In order to combat obesity, LiveWell has set forth Strategic Goals to be achieved by 2020. One goal is for all children in Colorado to have access to safe and affordable recreational spaces for physical activity outside of the school day. Because almost half of the population of Westwood is younger than 18 years old, this community is a priority for LiveWell in removing barriers to healthy living opportunities as well as in creating venues for physical activity. A recreation center in the Westwood neighborhood would be a major step toward achieving this 2020 Strategic Goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shepard Nevel".

Shepard Nevel
President and CEO
LiveWell Colorado

p. 5 'dynamic change' is identified in the first sentence and is currently taking on a lot of meaning for many neighborhoods. Since it makes an appearance in the first sentence, it might be worth referring to a concept raised later -- investing AND preserving.

Westwood is a destination where history, home, business, Spanish language, and Latino culture merge into a unique Denver neighborhood. Change and reinvestment should enhance the unique assets of Westwood while also anticipating and meeting the future needs of existing residents.

p. 13 (add a health bullet??) – The health sections provide ways that public or private investment can contribute to the overall health of the neighborhood.

p. 15 (6th bullet, A significant portion of Westwood residents) – “difficulties... **residents may have in accessing City services.**”...**creating the need for clear actions and resources to connect residents to neighborhood and public services. Bilingual and cultural assets differentiate Westwood creating character, events, and business services that make the neighborhood unique and a potential draw for visitors along Morrison Rd. and S. Federal Boulevard.**

p. 15 (last bullet) The neighborhood is a focus area of the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative (**WDRC**), a network of partners **providing West Denver advocacy and** working to facilitate equitable revitalization efforts.

p. 16 see bullet above. The bilingual community, celebrations, cultural public art, and cultural restaurants and businesses are ASSETS that make Westwood unique and serve as a regional draw.

p. 18 - How about adding Spanish headings? Connected/Conectado

p. 18 – Vision elements also include HEALTHY?

P. 18 – **POSSIBLE additional transformative projects** (if there was any semblance of community dialogue on the topic or related issue)...a) support Little Saigon District. We can talk more about this; but it is a unique district poised to either stay in Westwood or weaken over time moving to Aurora b/c of incentives; b) define a neighborhood based strategy for preserving and creating long term housing affordability in Westwood with community residents and leaders.

p. 23 – 4th bullet, extra t

p. 30 – culturally appropriate....do you mean culturally influenced?

p. 32 – 1st paragraph last sentence, “creating a pedestrian safe corridor.” Little Saigon district represents ___ businesses and can continue to strengthen its role as a regional destination with locations for special events, specialty lighting and signage to increase pedestrian safety within the Little Saigon District.

p. 32 –cultural influenced?

p. 32 – pedestrian Realm – add? Enhanced pedestrian crossings at key cross streets connecting to activity zones and pedestrian destination.

p. 32 – Alameda Ave, last sentence...“safety, while improving the person trip”

p. 34 – graphic emphasis of this page is on the plan strategies vs health. Consider creating a sidebar with highlighting the HIA goals to advance them as well as tie them to parts of the plan.

p. 37 – Part of celebrating Westwood is to identify the elements that residents thought made Westwood special (from early in your process)...pulling from the assets. ALSO BEGS THE QUESTION, IN THE gentrification study it says each neighborhood should have a displacement prevention plan/strategy. Identify what makes Westwood special and what is being preserved?

- is the affordability valued? That is worth having in policy to support many future endeavors.

- neighborhood schools, routes to school

p. 38 – added bullet under Morrison Rd and Little Saigon Business Dist?

- Increase district recognition, expand business base and increase draw for annual cultural celebrations.

p. 39 Little Saigon District – is on Alameda and extends south on Federal to Mississippi

p. 44 – first sentence is confusing.

p. 44 Encourage a Diversity of Housing (first sentence), Investments in housing should strive to include...“a diverse range of housing types creating”...seamless integration...

p. 44 Encourage a Diversity of Housing (second sentence), Housing projects should draw on assets and patterns throughout Westwood to foster preserve and promote creativity and unique design attributes of neighborhood character and identity. Residential character attributes found throughout the neighborhood include wrought iron and brick fencing, outdoor seating areas, the use of color, small scale public and cultural art and front yard gardens.

This section is about housing diversity, but dives into design characteristics? Is the design in the right section?

p. 44 Strengthen Inter-agency coord, Another example could be a neighborhood resource guide reviewed and distributed by active local organizations .

_____ (sending to Steven per request; final comments coming separately)

P. 47 2nd sentence...organized layout **and variety of housing types**, employment...

P. 47, 2nd paragraph...As Westwood grows (instead of grows) **draws additional residents, investments and businesses**, it is important....

P. 50 1st paragraph...proposed after 2nd sentence... An ADU can be used for extended family member or the unit can be rented. ADUs provide a homeowner an opportunity to invest and expand the capacity of their property. (provide an image of an ADU??)

P. 50 section urban residential - implied knowledge of what mid to high and what low density means, please reference with low density (1-2 stories) or mid to high density (2-5 stories). If necessary clarify a mid-rise is 5-8 stories.

P. 50 Pedestrian shopping ...2nd to last paragraph “boutique” shopping? - is this small, limited product stores? Boutique doesn't seem the right language.

P. 58 - love the sidebar linking to plan elements....add preserving housing affordability??? Add support of Little Saigon District.

P. 62 2nd paragraph - detriment? **Sections of the gulch do not have the intended capacity to prevent flooding to adjacent homes.**

P. 69 table - cultural events

P. 75

2. Attract private sector **and nongovernmental (NGO)** investment...

4. Public and private investments should include site and contextual evaluation to understand opportunities to contribute to a connected, celebrated, resilient and healthy Westwood.

P. 82

The West Denver Renaissance initiative is a **collaborative** of public agencies, non-profits, foundations and community members working to facilitate the revitalization of West Denver in an equitable fashion, **improve** the livelihood of existing residents, and **preserve/amplify** the rich multicultural character. The West Denver 'footprint' includes the neighborhoods of: Sun Valley, Auraria, Lincoln Park, West Colfax, Villa Park, Barnum, Barnum West, Valverde, Westwood and Athmar Park. WDRC will work with existing local leaders and agency partners to integrate, advocate, measure and identify opportunities to advance community priorities and needs. WDRC will provide strategy direction for West Denver, facilitate dialogue amongst existing partners, and will **work to identify investment opportunities** and projects that are: community based, driven by local leaders, and/or have positive impact on the sustainability and regeneration of West Denver. WDRC work is in the early stages of coalescing community, agency and other partners on the top West Denver and neighborhood priorities and possibilities with broad and lasting impact.

In Sidebar....West Denver Renaissance Collaborative (WDRC)



May 25, 2016

Steve Chester
Senior City Planner Community Planning and Development
201 W. Colfax Ave, Dept. 205
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Steve,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft **Westwood Neighborhood Plan**. Overall, we commend your staff for an outstanding job on this Plan. The Plan is thorough and encompasses the ideas, concerns and goals as voiced by Westwood residents and stakeholders over the last year.

In addition, we appreciate the consistent effort to incorporate the health concerns and goals of Westwood residents that are related to neighborhood planning into the Plan, as expressed in the Westwood Health Impact Assessment.

We sent you a pdf version of the draft Plan with specific edits. However, we would like to highlight a few key comments:

- Throughout the planning process, Westwood residents and stakeholders emphasized that **community health** is an urgent concern for families. The lack of parks, recreation and open space, few multimodal transportation choices and the lack of a full service grocery store all pose challenges to maintaining good health, particularly for Denver's youngest neighborhood and one with poorer health status than many other neighborhoods. We would ask that 'health' be emphasized more strongly as a community goal somewhere on the overall "Plan on a Page" (p. 18-19), to reflect the importance of this element to Westwood residents.
- We suggest more strongly emphasizing the pedestrian network recommendations throughout the Plan to match the level of the bicycle network recommendations:
 - On pages 22-24, Recommendation A.1.C states "complete the bicycle network" without any funding restrictions listed; yet A.1.A states "repair and enhance sidewalks and amenity zones...if funding becomes available...". This may result in an inequitable built environment, with a publicly-funded bicycle network in place but unattainable to many Westwood residents due to the numerous very real barriers listed on p. 24 (cost of bike ownership, helmets and locks; knowledge of bike riding skills and safety rules; reliance on nonprofits to provide workshops and training). Sidewalks and pedestrian crossings are universally accessible and equitable, without any equipment or training required.

- Also regarding A.1.C on page 22, "Repair and Enhance Sidewalks" talks primarily about amenities such as benches, cafe seating and tree lawns, and providing these in conjunction with redevelopment. It doesn't mention the most basic problem, that most of the sidewalks are narrow rollover curbs that aren't wide enough for people in wheelchairs or parents with strollers, or suggest that the City could be proactive in widening high priority sidewalks without waiting for redevelopment to happen (resulting in an inconsistent sidewalk network developed over a long period of time).
- On page 22, we appreciate the inclusion of *Safe Routes to School* as an evidence-based program that can achieve the Plan goals of multimodal transportation options and connectivity. Most of the Priority Intersection Improvements on p. 23 are consistent with the "Munroe Elementary School Walk Audit Report" from Walk Denver; however, please prioritize the other two intersections around the school (intersection of Custer with Knox and Irving). Also, the block of Irving near the school should be designated medium priority, rather than low priority.
- The summary "HIA" pages at the end of each chapter are very helpful to cross reference the Plan recommendations with the HIA recommendations.
- Finally, for Westwood, the HIA provides an in-depth analysis of how the Westwood Neighborhood Plan can improve community health. For future neighborhood plans that may not have an HIA conducted in tandem, we strongly recommend that CPD include a separate "Community Health" element or chapter, to explicitly document the connection between health and the built environment and include evidence-based recommendations that can improve health. Neighborhood plans have a unique role in advancing public health as a co-benefit of good planning, and we appreciate this opportunity to partner with CPD to improve the health of Denver residents.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Armijo, AICP

Built Environment Administrator

Denver Environmental Health

BuCu West Comments

General Comments

1. Street Classifications (Bottom of Page 50): There should be a recommendation to reclassify Morrison Road from an Mixed Use Arterial to a Mixed Use Collector. This is consistent with the current discussions of reclassifying Morrison Road to a Collector, based on the CCD Public Works functional classifications.
2. Public Land Dedications and Easements. In keeping with current Public Works policy of requesting land dedications to create a 13' pedestrian corridor (measured from back of curb to property line) that is consistent with a Function Collector Street, new development and redevelopment projects should be required to provide a land dedication that will result in a minimum of 13' – 8' for sidewalk and 5' for an amenity zone that meets CCD Forestry requirements for tree planters and Water Quality requirements for street side storm water planters.

Page 22: 5th bullet – Reference WalkDenver's Walk Audit Report for Safe Routes to school and the need to link Munroe Elementary with Morrison Road

Page 25: Morrison Road should be a Neighborhood Bikeway, which can be accommodated if WNP recommends Morrison Road as a Mixed Use Collector

Page 28: Pocket Parks / Plazas. Revise text to include and refer to plazas, add bullet that says: Plazas

Morrison Road

Page

- **Roadway Recommendations. When feasible, close dangerous intersections and create public plazas/gathering spaces to improve pedestrian safety along Morrison Road.**
- **Pedestrian Realm. Third bullet. Delete the word PARKLET.**
- **Private Realm Recommendations. Add a new bullet that states: Negotiate land dedication in support of Public Works policy for 13' pedestrian corridor (8' sidewalk, 5' amenity zone) adjacent to Mixed Use Collectors. If CPD does not want to reclassify Morrison Road as a Mixed Use Collector, and it remains a Mixed Use Arterial, then this dimension should be 16' from back of curb (8' sidewalk and 8' amenity zone).**

Page 31: Delete the roundabout. This is not conducive to implementing the primary goal of improving pedestrian safety along Morrison Road.

Page 32: Reference the current Federal Boulevard Corridor Study?

Page 40: 1st bullet, as streetscape improvements after gateway intersections

Page 42: Under Promote Flexible Public Spaces: add a new bullet Public Plazas

Page 48: Morrison Road Influence Area

- **Add text “Increase the width of the pedestrian corridor through land dedications consistent with a Collector to ensure 8’ sidewalk, 5’ minimum amenity zone, and additional width that can accommodate outdoor dining, outdoor vending/displays, flower pots – and other elements that contribute to Mercado Lineal vision for Morrison Road.**

Page 50: Street Classifications

- Confusing sentence. Shouldn’t this say update the Blueprint Denver Future Classifications Map to be consistent with the street classifications in the Neighborhood Plan?

Page 52: Suggest adding a paragraph that while the land uses that flank Morrison Road are intended to promote parcel assemblages, it is not the intent to allow 5 story buildings along the entire corridor.

Page 58:

- 5th sentence – add BuCu West Kitchen Network
- Improve mobility for all users: 5th Sentence. Change to Morrison Road Streetscape Implementation Plan
- 4th bullet: Revise to read “Study the demand for improved bicycle facilities and safe connections and crossings as cycling becomes more common in the neighborhood”.

Page 59:

- Delete the dedicated bike lane (green stripe) so that this now reads as a sharrow. There is not enough room for a dedicated bike lane with the section that this graphic illustrates.
- 2: add plazas (Parklets and Plazas) Parklets are not feasible for Morrison Road as it is temporary. It does not provide long term public right of way activation for the corridor.
- 8: Sign-age should be spelled signage (lots of misspellings throughout – spellcheck)

Page 60 Create a unique neighborhood commercial/cultural district.

- Revise second to last sentence in paragraph. A primary goal of the community is to redevelop Morrison Road into a Mercado Lineal.
- Add bullet: Gateways along Morrison Road based on ULI findings

Page 79: Public Realm Policies

- Negotiate land dedications necessary to implement public works policy for pedestrian’s corridors consistent with a Collector (or Arterial if they are not going to reclassify the street).

Steven,

Thank you for having (and tolerating) me at your meeting tonight. The work that you and your team are doing is VERY impressive. It is great to know that our neighborhood has you guys as our advocates. With your help, Westwood has a real shot at going in a great direction.

I very much would like to have you out to my property to get a “boots on the ground” view of what I spoke with you about tonight. This determination carries significant weight, not only for my family but potentially for my neighborhood. Making sure the correct decision is made based on what is best for the homeowners as well as the area is vital.

I think the ADU option is great and that is why visualizing my opinion on the survey was so difficult. My current thought process is that the duplex or ADU zoning would better suit the size of these parcels. It would also better address the housing inventory problem that we are currently experiencing.

I really don't think that generalizing the zoning based on where the land sits is as important as how big the plot of land is. We have a really unique block here @ 1000 south and figuring out what is ideal for this chunk of land may take a different approach to this process.

Some kind of exception to the plan based on total land size maybe?

Luke Lucero

Chester, Steven - Community Planning and Development

From: Moreland, Jennifer J MPH <Jennifer.Moreland@dhha.org>
Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2016 5:01 PM
To: Chester, Steven - Community Planning and Development
Cc: 'Cleaves, Rachel' (Rachel.Cleaves@ucdenver.edu); Armijo, Gretchen A. - EH Cmmnty Hlth; Bui, Chris
Subject: Denver Public Health comments on Westwood Neighborhood Plan

Hi Steven,

Please accept the following comments from Denver Public Health regarding the Westwood Neighborhood Plan.

Children are healthier when they have safe places to play including parks, recreation centers, and playgrounds. Denver Public Health supports strategies and community design that increase access to recreation environments and physical activity programming for all residents. We can prevent poor health now and in the future if we increase access and opportunities to recreation environments and physical activity programming so all children can be more active.

Please follow up with Chris.Bui@dhha.org, Policy and Partnership Coordinator for Denver Public Health, if you have any questions.

Jennifer W. Moreland, MPH
Chronic Disease Manager
Denver Public Health
605 Bannock St. MC 2600
Denver, CO 80204
O) 303-602-3711
M) 303-619-7512
Jennifer.Moreland@dhha.org **NEW**

****On Tuesdays I telework****

Visit [Denver Public Health online](#)
Join us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

Connect with Denver Health Medical Center



The Denver Health email system has made the following annotations

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June 15th, 2016

Denver Planning Board
201 W. Colfax Avenue, Dept 205
Denver, CO 80202

Dear Planning Board Members,

On behalf of BuCu West, Morrison Road business support office, I am writing to express our support for the vision and goals of the Westwood Neighborhood Plan. We appreciate the time, community outreach, and consideration given in the development of the Neighborhood Plan. The public draft presents a visual reminder of the rich culture of the neighborhood while recognizing current strengths and needs of Westwood residents and business owners. The Westwood Neighborhood Plan provides a vision for the future and a clear path to attract much needed improvement and enhancement into the area.

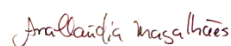
The Plan outlines a vision for a connected, celebrated, resilient, and healthy community with thoughtful recommendations and strategies along with a prioritized list of truly transformational projects for the neighborhood. The Plan sets the course for a walk-able, bike-able, and transit rich neighborhood with a connected system of open spaces, a celebrated and culturally rich neighborhood, all while promoting responsible growth, and enhancing the local economy.

The widely accepted vision as presented in the Plan, the continued collaboration and leadership from the City and the dedicated neighborhood stakeholders, create an opportunity greatly enhance the quality of life and health of Westwood residents, while providing new diverse opportunities for existing and future residents and business owners. BuCu West feels the vision and goals of the Westwood Neighborhood Plan gives this organization the right tools to implement the vision of Morrison Road corridor and further implement Morrison Road Streetscape Implementation Plan and Morrison Road Creative district! The Westwood Neighborhood Plan recommendations will support economic development along Morrison Road by creating a safer environment for multimodal transportation for local business and residents. BuCu West look forward to continued collaboration with the City moving towards implementing the recommendations in the Westwood Neighborhood Plan.

Sincerely,



Jose Esparza
Executive Director



AnaClaudia Magalhaes
Community Development Coordinator