

WESTERLY CREEK VILLAGE COMMUNITY PLAN

A Summary of Aurora's EPA Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Area Activities and Plans



City of Aurora
January 2013



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Westerly Creek Village Vision Statement

“Westerly Creek Village, a distinctive community defined by Westerly Creek and Montview Boulevard, is a strong residential neighborhood in close proximity to the region’s premier Fitzsimons medical employment center and Aurora Arts District, the city’s cultural heart. Westerly Creek Village is known for its many amenities: Westerly Creek, varied housing styles, proximity to Fitzsimons and family-oriented destinations, and its cultural and ethnic diversity. The neighborhood is a thriving, vibrant and safe community with a mix of shops, restaurants and businesses that serve not only the residents, but the adjacent developments of Lowry, Stapleton, and Fitzsimons. The citizens continually build on the village’s sense of place, making it an even better neighborhood in which to live, work and play. Enhanced parks, bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets, and open spaces are maintained and recreation is available for all age groups. The medical campus, religious institutions and schools provide opportunities for the community to grow and learn. This is a place where neighborhood events and activities bring people together.”



1. Introduction

Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program

In 2010, the City of Aurora was a grant recipient of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program. The grant program's purpose is to approach revitalization of brownfields impacted areas through community involvement in an area-wide planning process, resulting in a plan that informs the assessment, cleanup and reuse of brownfields properties. This Community Plan (the "Plan") for Westerly Creek Village (the "Plan Area" or WCV) in northwest Aurora is the outcome of that process.

Community Plan Objectives

This Community Plan summarizes and unifies past and current planning activities into a single document and outlines an action plan for implementation. It also describes the community planning effort that established an overall redevelopment vision for WCV with a particular focus on reuse strategies for key brownfield sites (the "Catalytic Sites"). In this sense, it serves as a development guide for Westerly Creek Village. This Community Plan has not and will not be formally adopted by resolution or ordinance as an independent plan by the Aurora City Council and instead reflects and represents a synthesis of the key elements and objectives from the following grant funded planning activities:

- Westerly Creek Village Visioning Process (January 2011 – July 2011)
- Westerly Creek Village & Montview Corridor Strategic Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment (Adopted by City Council in February 2012)*
- Westerly Creek Village Conditions Inventory (Approved by City Council August 2012)
- Westerly Creek Village Environmental Conditions Assessment (ECA) (April 2012)
- Westerly Creek Greenway Redevelopment Study (January 2013)
- Westerly Creek Village Urban Renewal Plan (Adopted by City Council in January 2013)*

** These plans provide an implementation means for brownfields reuse planning in the area and directly incorporate brownfield reuse needs and strategies resulting from the community planning process*

As a result of these planning activities, the primary goal of this Community Plan is represented best by the community adopted Westerly Creek Village Vision Statement shown on the previous page.



Plan Area (Westerly Creek Village)

Westerly Creek Village is located in northwest Aurora, roughly bounded by North Yosemite Street, East 25th Avenue, North Iola Street, and East 19th Avenue. The northern portion of the project area was part of the former Stapleton Airport and primarily contained the industries serving the airport. Redevelopment of the area has been hindered by known brownfield sites throughout the commercial and industrial parcels located along Montview Boulevard, North Clinton Street and East 25th Avenues.

Area Summary:

Location: Northwest Aurora

Size: 350 acres

Population: 4,403

Uses: Mix of industrial, commercial, multi-family and single family residential.



Figure 1: Plan Study Area



Planning Area Vicinity

Westerly Creek Village is located within what the City of Aurora identifies as the Opportunity Triangle. Surrounding WCV are three new and growing redevelopment projects: 1) Stapleton: Denver's growing mixed-use community redevelopment of the former Denver Airport; 2) Lowry: another mixed-use community located in both Denver and Aurora on the former Lowry Air Force Base; and 3) The Fitzsimons medical complex, consisting of three separate hospitals (Children's, University of Colorado, and the Veteran's Administration) and a life-sciences research and technology incubator campus. WCV also abuts the Westerly Creek Greenway and is close to other Aurora revitalization projects to the south.

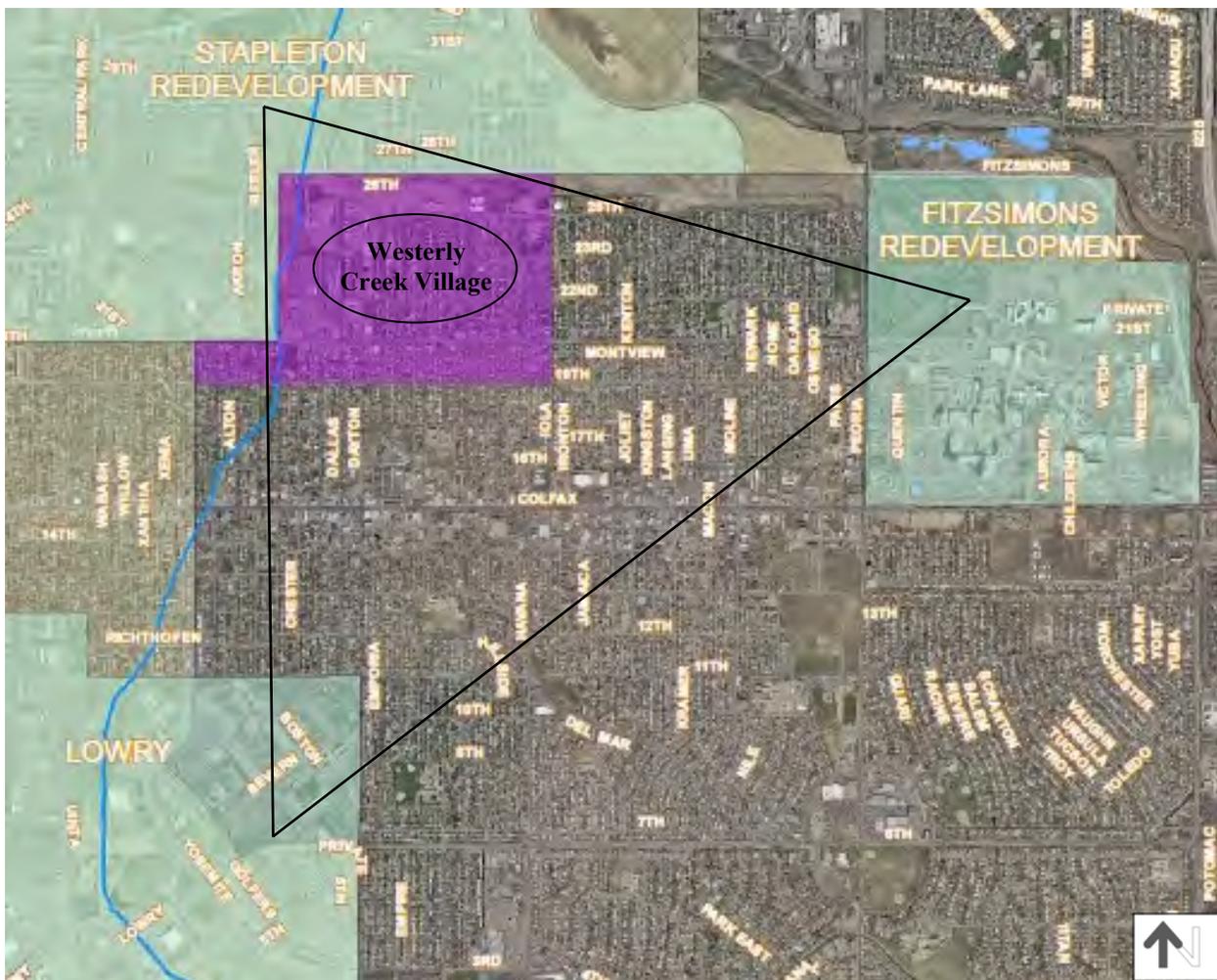


Figure 2: Opportunity Triangle



Figure 3: Surrounding Developments



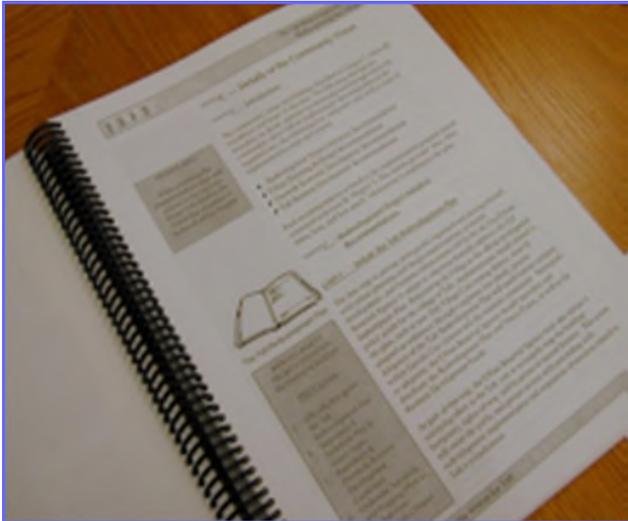
Past Planning Activity

Since the 1990s, the City of Aurora has recognized the need for redevelopment in northwest Aurora where no significant development activity had occurred since the 1950s. Several plans were developed during the 1990s to address perceived community needs and future vision. A Planned Development Zoning District was established along 25th Avenue adjacent to the Stapleton boundary. The Westerly Creek Corridor Revitalization Master Plan was developed as a conceptual guide for development along the creek, and the Montview Boulevard Corridor Design and Land-Use Study was prepared to assess traffic and streetscape issues. These initial plans were conceptually integrated into the city's 1998 Comprehensive Plan, which outlined the redevelopment opportunities and challenges and first articulated a comprehensive conceptual vision for the area. The themes continued and were updated within the 2003 and 2010 Comprehensive Plans, although no significant steps toward implementation have been undertaken.

- 1996 25th Avenue Planned Redevelopment Zoning District:** The 25th Avenue Planned Redevelopment Zoning District was adopted in 1996 to allow higher density, mixed use development along the Aurora/Stapleton boundary.
- 1997 Westerly Creek Corridor Revitalization Master Plan:** The Westerly Creek Corridor Revitalization Master Plan was completed in 1997 to guide future improvements along Westerly Creek.
- 1998 Montview Boulevard Corridor Design and Land-Use Study:** In 1998, Aurora's Planning Department carried out the Montview Boulevard Corridor Design and Land-Use Study which focused on traffic and streetscape improvements along Montview.
- 2003 Montview Corridor Strategic Area:** The 2003 Aurora Comprehensive Plan defines the "Montview Corridor" as a key "Strategic Area" of the city. A third of this corridor passes through WCV. The corridor remained a Strategic Area in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.
- 2005 Stapleton Aurora General Development Plan:** A portion of the Stapleton Community is located within the City of Aurora and includes housing and open space, part of which is located within WCV.
- 2005 Anschutz Medical Campus and Fitz Boundary Development:** With the establishment of two urban renewal areas, the former Fitzsimons Army Base is being transformed into one of the nations largest medical and research complexes. It is now home to the University of Colorado Hospital, Children's Hospital, an under construction Veteran's Administration Hospital, medical offices, and a Bio-Life Science Business Park.
- 2006 Street Connections Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA):** In 2006, Aurora entered into an agreement with the City and County of Denver and the Park Creek Metropolitan District (the primary development entity for Stapleton) to define and schedule future street connections between Aurora's northwest communities and Denver's Stapleton community.
- 2009 Neighborhood Stabilization Program:** Aurora's Neighborhood Services Department actively promotes neighborhood stabilization and revitalization with its many programs, including homeownership, foreclosure prevention, owner-occupied rehabilitation, multi-family rehabilitation, commercial renovation, and code enforcement programs in the area.



- 2010 Redevelopment Feasibility Analysis of the Montview Area:** In the first quarter of 2010, Aurora initiated a redevelopment feasibility analysis in the Montview Corridor and determined that an updated visioning/planning process was necessary to incorporate and integrate the past efforts and accomplishments in light of the new economic realities that will affect project implementation in the future. The analysis focused on the commercial/industrial section of Westerly Creek Village to identify key development issues, area conditions, and an initial assessment of “blight” conditions.
- 2010 Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Program (BAWPPP):** In 2010, Aurora was awarded this EPA grant to develop a community based plan for revitalization of Westerly Creek Village.





2. Area Conditions

The Plan Area is characterized by relatively low household incomes, high unemployment, older housing stock and lower housing values when compared to Aurora and the Metro-Denver area. Housing stock in the area continues to age with the median age of units being approximately 60 years. The area suffers from commercial property deterioration and vacancies and a high concentration of brownfields sites.

	2012	2012	2012
	Study Area	City of Aurora	Metro-Denver
Population	4,403	335,688	2,614,192
% Change from 2010	-15%	21%	20%
Median Age	28.7	33.3	35.8
Owner-Occupied HU	26.00%	53.00%	57.40%
% Change from 2000	-34%	-14%	-10%
Renter-Occupied HU	64.10%	40.60%	36.00%
% Change from 2000	11%	17%	14%
Vacant HU	9.90%	6.30%	6.60%
% Change from 2000	241%	91%	50%
High School Graduate or Greater	50.70%	83.70%	88.40%
% Change from 2000	0%	-1%	2%
Median Family Income	\$29,400	\$50,911	\$57,536
% Change from 2000	3%	9%	12%
Unemployment Rate	17.40%	10.10%	8.90%
% Change from 2000	87%	66%	345%
Average Household Size	3.03	2.65	2.5
White	44.00%	61.20%	77.80%
Black or African American	15.10%	15.30%	5.50%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Asian	2.30%	4.90%	3.70%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	0.40%	0.30%	0.10%
Some Other Race	36.30%	11.90%	11.80%
Total Hispanic Population	64.10%	29.20%	22.70%

Table 1: Comparative Demographics



Development Challenges

In contrast to many surrounding neighborhoods, the Plan Area suffers from significant lack of investment, commercial vacancy and building deterioration, aging residential structures and underdeveloped, vacant land. This area contains zoning for industrial uses, such as auto body and paint shops, outdoor storage and mini-storage that, while once compatible with the Stapleton Airport, are now obsolete and hindering successful redevelopment. Very few existing commercial properties have been updated, especially those not fronting Montview Boulevard, and the area could benefit from new investment opportunities. Attracting new commercial and retail businesses to the area is also hindered by a lack of connectivity to developed areas north of Westerly Creek Village. These development challenges along with the higher concentration of properties with potential and known environmental issues (see next page) act as a deterrent for future investment.





Environmental Challenges

Eighteen (18) Areas of Environmental Concern (AOCs) have been identified through the Conditions Inventory. The types of environmental contamination present or potentially present include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), leaking underground storage tanks, total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) and metals from the multitude of past and current dry cleaning sites, gas stations, automotive service stations and industrial uses. The Environmental Conditions Assessment (ECA) did not include any surface, subsurface or any other on-site testing or evaluation; therefore, these 18 AOCs have been identified based on past and current uses as well as records that are publicly available. This ECA does not meet the requirements of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment as defined by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM). Furthermore, sites with historic records showing remediation do not necessarily indicate that these sites are free from other sources of contamination or that past remediation efforts are suitable for the change of uses (i.e. residential mixed-use) anticipated in this Area Wide Plan. Any “no further action” (NFA) or “no action determinable” (NAD) decision issued is based on data available at the time and on continuation of the property’s use. Changes in use, missing or new data creates a potential change in the environmental assessment.

The concentration of these 18 AOCs within the western half of the Plan Area collectively act as one of the challenges to stimulating new investment in the area. The Conditions Inventory is included in Appendix 4.



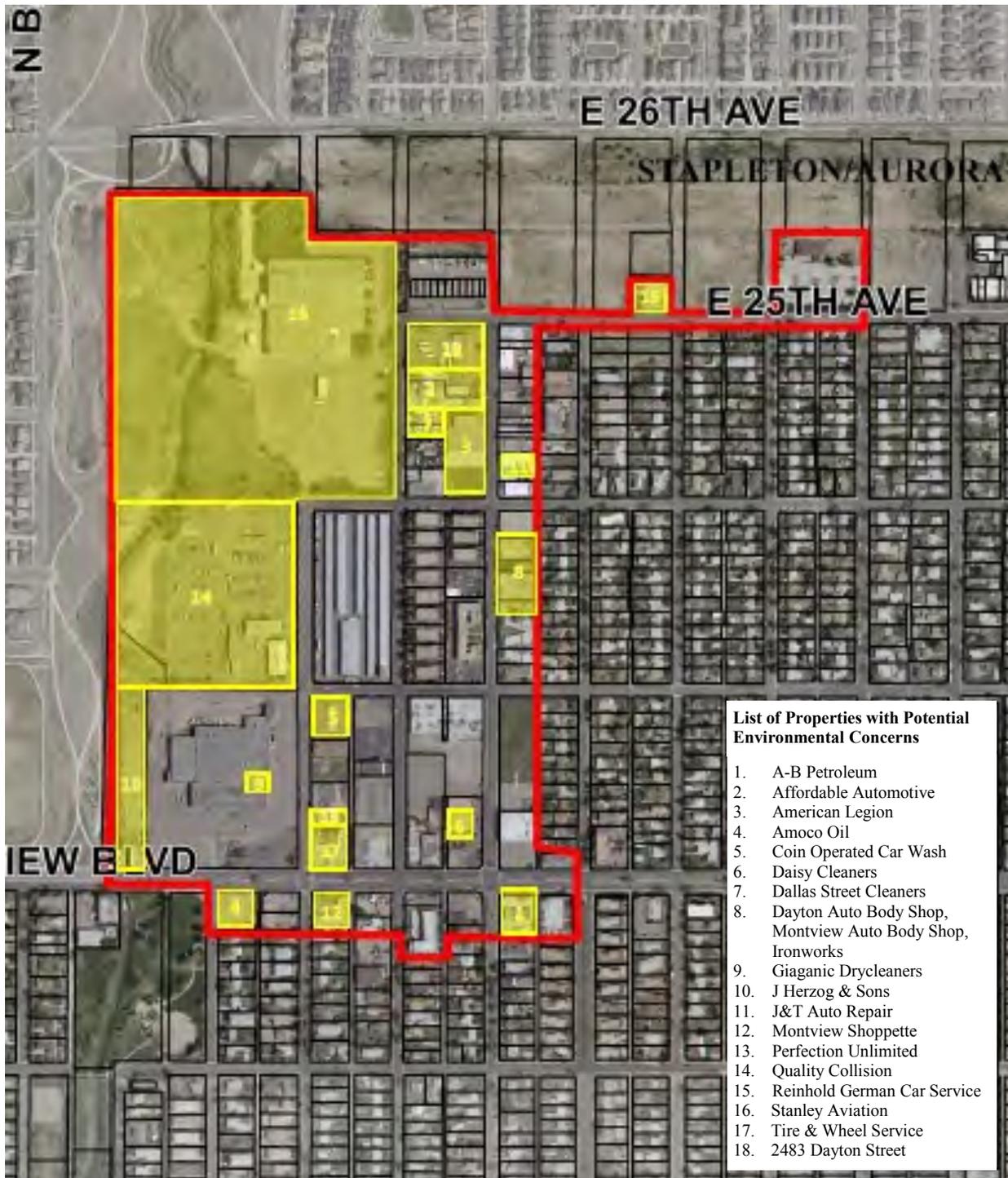


Figure 4: Areas of Environmental Concern (Source: Matrix Environmental)



Catalytic Sites

Of the 18 AOCs identified, four are considered catalytic redevelopment sites whose future redevelopment (or lack thereof) will have the greatest impact on revitalization efforts in the area. These four sites comprise approximately 48 acres of the Plan Area and their combined size, contiguity to one another, and proximity to Westerly Creek, make them the core sites for revitalization. The successful redevelopment of these “Catalytic Sites” will have a positive impact on the development potential of the remaining AOCs and improve the financial viability of their remediation, if necessary.

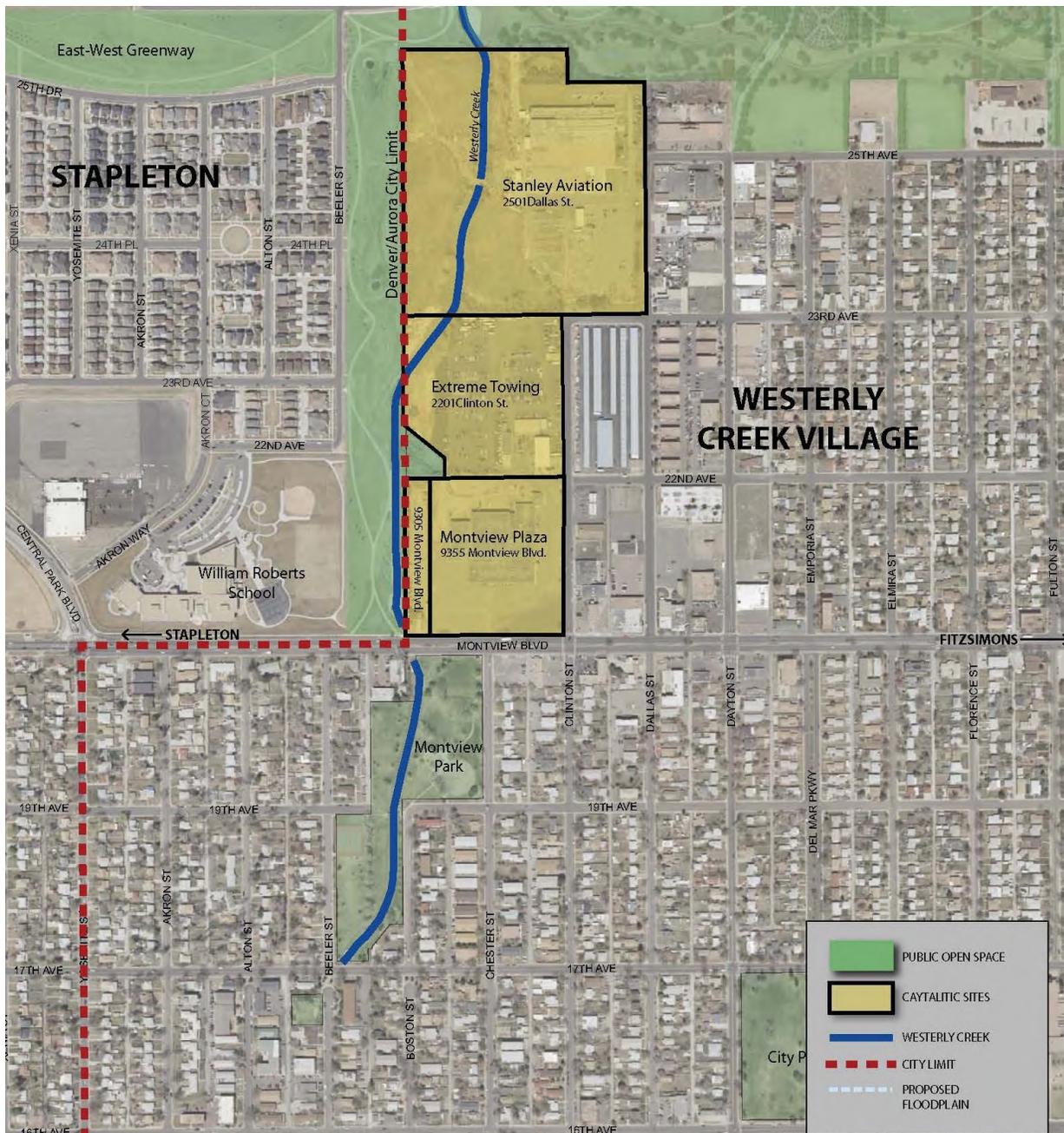


Figure 5: The Four “Catalytic Sites”



Stanley Aviation

2501 Dallas Street



Current Property Owner: Stanley Aviation Corporation

History: Stanley Aviation opened an aerospace parts manufacturing plant at the former Stapleton International Airport in 1954.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- VOCs and metals were detected at elevated concentrations at the Stanley Aviation property. The groundwater plume has migrated offsite towards the northwest. Contamination may still exist.
- Stanley Aviation remediated contaminated groundwater by injecting hydrogen releasing compound (HRC) in accordance with a plan approved by the CDPHE.
- On January 14, 2005, CDPHE issued a no action determination (NAD) for the Stanley Aviation site based on remediation of soil and groundwater.



Westerly Creek Village Study Area



Figure 5: Catalytic Site—Stanley Aviation



United Quality Collision

2201 Clinton Street



Current Property Owner: Faye Sam, LLC

History: Property was formerly a sewage treatment plant operating from the early 1950s until the late 1970s or early 1980s. Currently an auto body shop and tow yard.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- Leaking Underground Storage Tank (UST) identified onsite (two separate releases).
- Release 1: Confirmed in February 1992. Cleanup initiated in April 1993. NFA received in September 1993.
- Release 2: Confirmed in July 1993. Cleanup initiated in September 1993. NFA received in December 1995.
- Active auto repair facility with registered Above Ground Storage Tank (AST) . Potential contamination may exist from current operations.



Westerly Creek Village Study Area



Figure 6: Catalytic Site—2201 Clinton Street



Gigantic Cleaners

2005 Clinton Street



Current Property Owner: Address not currently listed in Adams County Assessor database

History: Gigantic Cleaners was a former drycleaner (listed in the 1969, 1974, and 1979 city directories). A groundwater plume extends from the site towards the northwest.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- Groundwater was impacted by VOCs and was operating under a remediation plan that included the use of a dual phase extraction system in accordance with a CDPHE-approved plan.
- Corrective Action began in 1995. However, concentrations of VOCs were observed to increase in downgradient wells in 2001, indicating that not all of the contaminated groundwater was being effectively captured by the extraction system.
- As a result, the extraction system was expanded to improve the capture of contaminants.
- Chlorinated solvents have impacted this property.



Westerly Creek Village Study Area



Figure 7: Catalytic Site—Montview Plaza



J Herzog & Sons

9305 Montview Boulevard



Current Property Owner: S & E Enterprises, LLC

History: Formerly an automobile fueling and service station, currently used as an auto detail shop and farmers market.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- In 1993, a confirmed release occurred in an underground storage tank.
- Cleanup of the leaking underground storage tank (LUST) was initiated in July 1994
- The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) Division of Oil and Public Safety (OPS) issued a decision of "no further action" (NFA) in February 1999
- The property has been remediated and has an NFA from the State, therefore the property is considered a Historic REC.



Westerly Creek Village Study Area

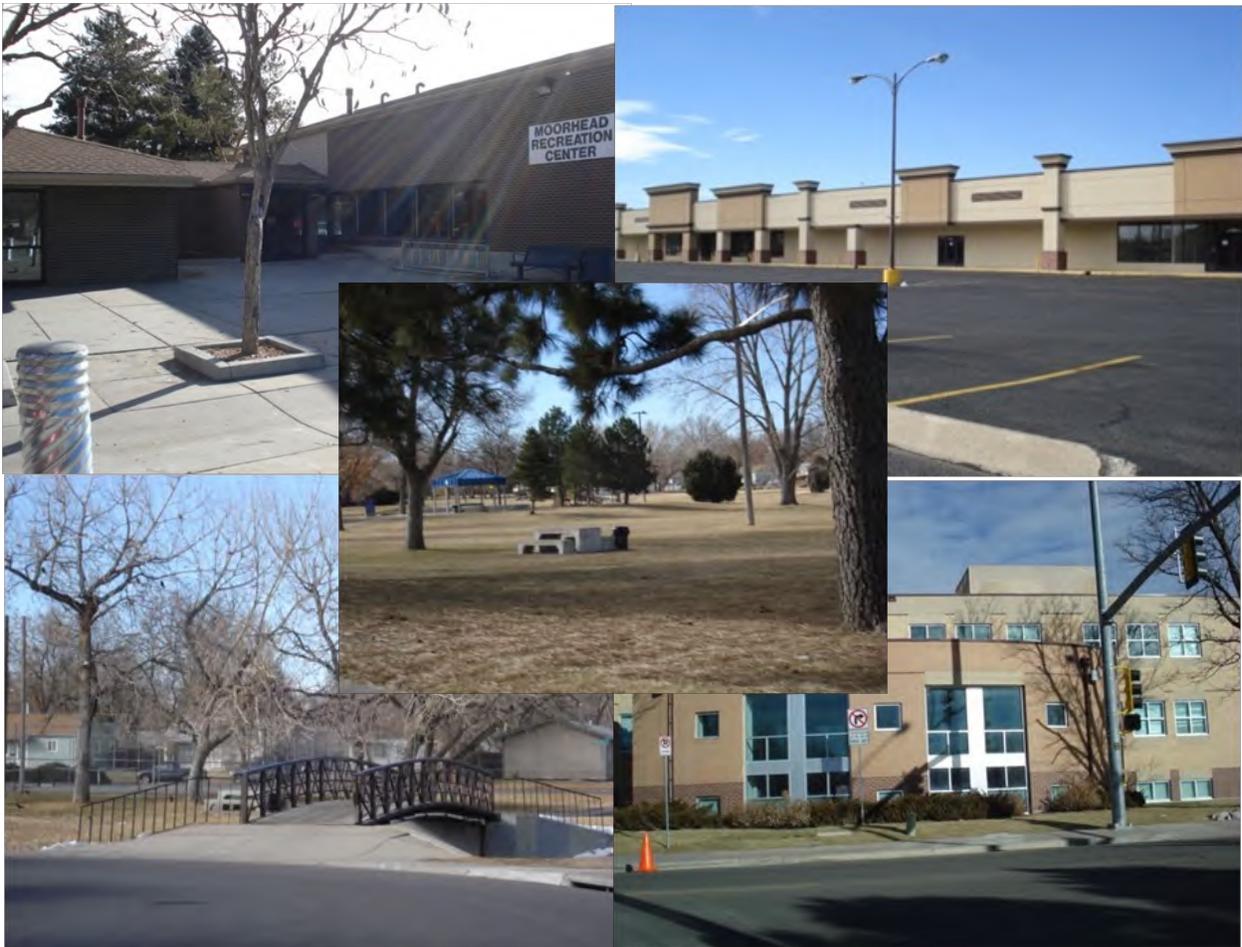


Figure 8: Catalytic Site—9305 Montview Boulevard



Area Amenities

Despite the economic, development and environmental challenges, there are existing neighborhood amenities and institutions from which the community can build on, including Fletcher Elementary School, Montview Park, and Moorhead Recreation Center.





3. Community Visioning/Planning Process

In order to accomplish the Community Plan objectives, in 2011 the city conducted an extensive public visioning and planning process to identify the community’s primary redevelopment goals and objectives for the plan area. The results of this visioning process are reflected in the subsequent studies and adopted plans which not only address broader development goals and strategies for the area, but also identify the Catalytic Sites as essential components for economic revitalization of the area. This section describes the visioning process, including community partnerships and public outreach that informed the subsequent planning activities and adopted plans.

Steering Committee Formation and Partnerships

In late 2010, the City of Aurora, in partnership with the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority (AURA), Forest City Development and the Northwest Aurora Neighborhood Organization (NANO), began the process of identifying key neighborhood stakeholders to serve on the project steering committee. The Westerly Creek Village Steering Committee (initially called the Montview Steering Committee) is made up of members of NANO, Plan Area residents, business and property owners, the president of the Stapleton United Neighbors Association, Forest City Development’s Vice President of Public Relations, representative employees at the nearby University of Colorado Hospital and the Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority, and City of Aurora employees representing different departments and divisions, including the Police Department’s District Commander. The Steering Committee was chaired by Aurora’s then City Councilmember, Melissa Miller, who represented Ward I, which includes the Plan Area. The purpose of the Steering Committee was (and continues to be) to: 1) assist with public outreach to their various constituencies or member organizations; 2) ensure the city and AURA staff accurately interpreted the results of each Visioning Workshop; and 3) provide direction and feedback on ongoing planning activity, plans and studies.

Public Outreach

To encourage participation at each visioning workshop, notification postcards (in English and Spanish) were mailed to every property and business owner and current single-family residents. Additional notices were provided in Aurora Water’s monthly billing newsletter and fliers and posters were placed at the three, community public anchors: Martin Luther King Library, Fletcher Elementary School, and the Moorhead Recreation Center. At the second and third workshops, the Aurora Police Department placed digital traffic signs along Montview Boulevard announcing the workshop for several days prior to each event. Other organizations, such as the Westerly Creek Connection advocacy group and the Stapleton Foundation, were encouraged to have their members participate and promote the meetings. Spanish language translators were available at each meeting. As a result of this outreach, public participation averaged between 65 and 85 attendees at each meeting.





Visioning Workshop 1: Treasures, Challenges and Visions

The first public meeting was held on February 23, 2011 at Aurora's Martin Luther King Library, just south of Westerly Creek Village. At this meeting, city staff provided background on the brownfields grant, described the purpose of the Visioning Workshops, and presented information on the neighborhood (demographics and area conditions) and past area planning activity. Following the presentations, the attendees were asked to participate in a "post-it note" visioning exercise with the goal of identifying community answers to the following questions:

What are Your Neighborhood Treasures? The participants were provided with these sub-questions to assist with their responses:

- What are your favorite things about your neighborhood?
- Why did you move here and why do you stay?
- What do you value most?
- What are important aspects of the neighborhood's culture and traditions?

What are the Challenges in Your Neighborhood? The participants were provided with these sub-questions to assist with their responses:

- What are the biggest challenges in the neighborhood today?
- What obstacles are currently facing the neighborhood?

What Are Your Visions for the Future of the Neighborhood? The participants were provided with these sub-questions to assist with their responses:

- What does the ideal or dream neighborhood look and feel like?
- Who lives, works, and plays there in the future?
- What is going on in the neighborhood?
- What do you hope stays the same?





Participants were provided post-it notes and asked to write one brief thought or response to each of the three, primary questions. They were then asked to place these notes on the wall for each question, clustering their ideas with similar ideas. At the same time, city staff members actively helped to sort and cluster the notes as they were added to the wall.

After the participants completed their responses to each question and placed them on the wall, they were asked to prioritize elements for the neighborhood vision. To do this, the participants were provided four (4) dot-stickers and asked to:

- Place one (1) sticky dot on the group of Treasures you believe is most important.
- Place one (1) sticky dot on the group of Challenges you believe is most important.
- Place the remaining two (2) sticky dots on those groups of Visions you feel are most important.

Based on input and community priorities from this workshop, city staff and the Steering Committee developed several neighborhood draft Vision Statements, focus areas and land use priorities for review at Workshop 2. The presentation from Workshop 1 is attached as Appendix 1.





Visioning Workshop 2 - Vision Statement

The second workshop was held on April 13, 2011 at the Reception at Kamsy Event Center located on Montview Boulevard within the Plan Area. The purpose of this meeting was to present and receive feedback on the various vision statements and land-use plan options. Each vision statement and land-use plan map was presented and participants were provided an opportunity to discuss each in breakout groups. Written and verbal feedback was provided for the Steering Committee to synthesize into a final vision statement and each land use option was voted and commented on for a final land use map to be prepared.

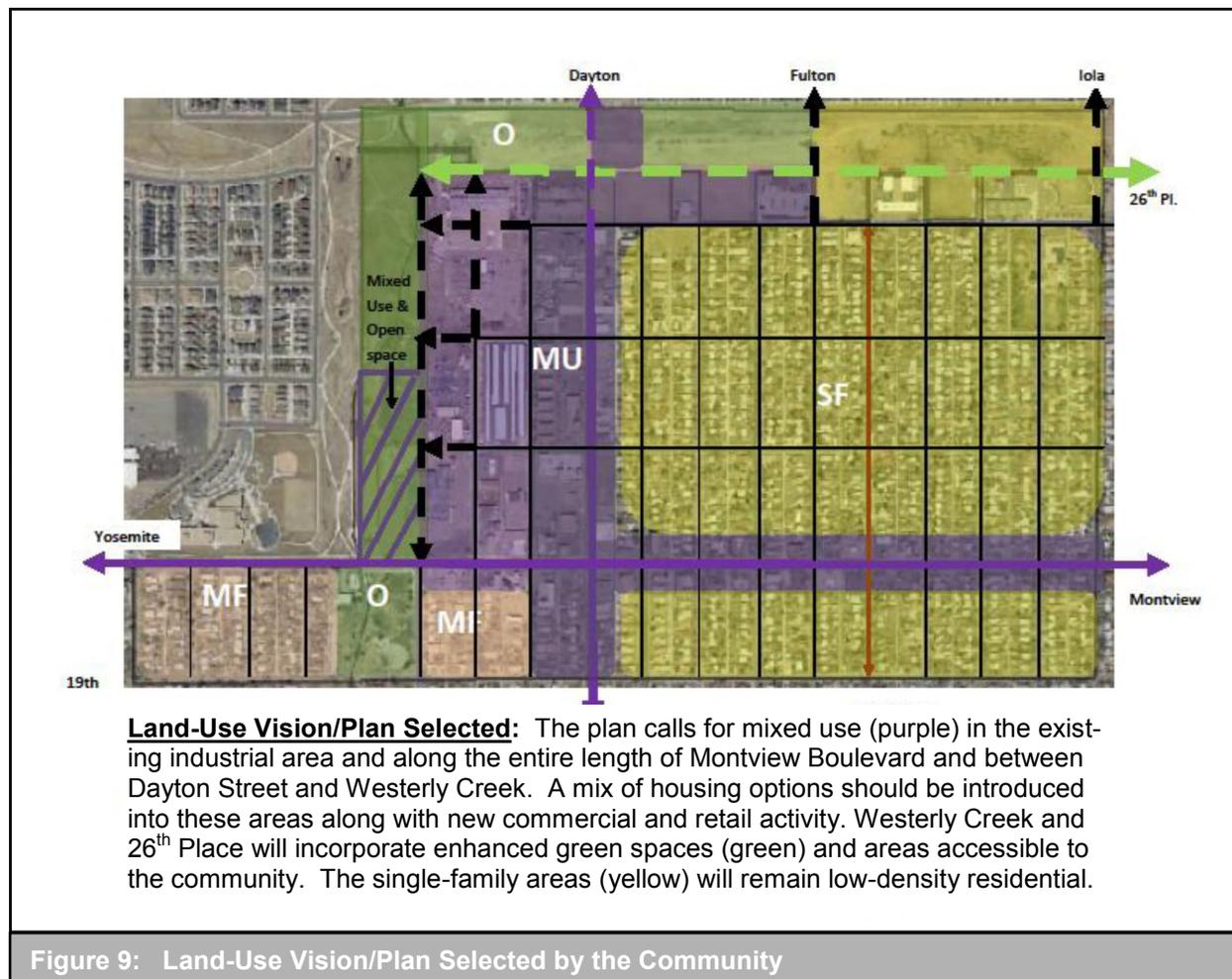




Visioning Workshop 3: Adoption of Vision Statement and Land-Use Vision

The final workshop was held on June 15, 2011, again at the Reception at Kamsy Event Center within the Plan Area. It was at this meeting that the community reached final consensus on the vision statement and land-use plan. It was also when the community decided to rebrand itself as “Westerly Creek Village” to more firmly establish its new vision and to counteract any possible preconceived notions of its identity.

Staff then discussed ongoing planning activity in the area that impacts Westerly Creek Village and offered ways for participants to stay involved. Presentations on the next steps of the process were provided, including updating the Comprehensive Plan, the benefits and process of Urban Renewal, and the establishment of a new Sustainable Infill Redevelopment Zoning District. The presentation from this workshop is attached as Appendix 2.







4. Current Plans and Studies

The following plans and studies reflect the community input obtained throughout the Visioning Process and address strategies for area-revitalization and brownfields reuse.

Westerly Creek Village & Montview Corridor Comprehensive Plan Amendment (the “Concept Plan”)

The primary outcome of the Public Visioning Workshop was the development of a Concept Plan for Westerly Creek Village in the form of an amendment to the “Montview Corridor” strategic area identified in the city’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The Montview Corridor was one of nine (9) strategic areas in the city that “are critical to the city’s economy and identity” with each requiring “its own set of strategies to affect the city’s vision for the area.” The objective of this comprehensive plan amendment was to formally recognize Westerly Creek Village as a “strategic area,” adopt the community’s vision statement, and to outline action steps and strategies to address the community’s goals, including brownfields reuse, identified through the Visioning Process.

In February 2012, the City Council formally amended Chapter V.C. of the Comprehensive Plan to create the “Westerly Creek Village & Montview Corridor Strategic Area” in January 2012 and is included as part of this Community Plan as Appendix 3.

Environmental Conditions Assessment (ECA)

The ECA was performed to identify and categorize environmental “Areas of Concerns” (AOCs) within the study area. The ECA was conducted under an EPA-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan and was based on a reconnaissance of the study area and a review of historical records; on-site assessments were not conducted and, therefore, the extent of environmental remediation needed is not known. The ECA identified 18 Potential Areas of Concern (AOC) and categorized properties as “Historic”, “Current”, or “Potential” sites of Recognized Environmental Concerns (REC). These identified AOCs are a contributing “Blight Factor” for Urban Renewal and has helped inform the Urban Renewal Plan. The summary report is included as part of this Community Plan as Appendix 4.

Conditions Inventory

The Westerly Creek Village & Montview Corridor recommends pursuing Urban Renewal in the area as tool to assist in the implementation of the Vision. Before an urban renewal plan can be adopted by the City, the area must be determined to be a “blighted area” as defined by Colorado’s Urban Renewal Law (Section 31-25-103(2) of Title 31, Colorado Revised Statutes, as amended).

A consultant hired by the city completed a Conditions Inventory in a defined portion of Westerly Creek Village to identify the presence of blight factors. The study area was generally limited to the commercial and industrial zones and undeveloped portions of Westerly Creek Village. A portion also extended past the Community Plan Area’s boundaries to include Stapleton’s undeveloped areas within Aurora due to the nexus between that development and the completion of the northern open space designation within Westerly Creek Village.



The general methodology for conducting the Blight Study by the consultants was to:

- Define the Study Area;
- Conduct a visual field survey for the property and evaluate current conditions;
- Review data provided by the City of Aurora and on the Adams County website; and,
- Evaluate conditions found in the context of statutory blight criteria and document the survey findings, as presented in the blight study.

Of the eleven qualifying factors identified in Colorado's Urban Renewal Law, the Conditions Inventory identified the presence of the following five blight factors in the Study Area:

1. Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures;
2. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
3. Inadequate public improvements or utilities;
4. Environmental contamination of buildings or property; and
5. Substantial underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements; site requires high level of municipal services.

On August 27, 2012, the City Council approved a Resolution designating the Westerly Creek Village Conditions Inventory Study Area as blighted and appropriate for Urban Renewal. The Conditions Inventory and Resolution are included as part of this Community Plan as Appendix 5.

Westerly Creek Village Urban Renewal Plan (Final Public Meeting)

From the beginning of this planning project, the city of Aurora anticipated the establishment of an Urban Renewal Area within Westerly Creek Village to serve as the primary redevelopment plan and implementation tool for the revitalization of the area and the Catalytic Sites. The fundamental purpose of an Urban Renewal Plan is to address, eliminate and prevent the recurrence of slum and blighting conditions identified in the related Conditions Inventory.

Following the August 2012 blight designation, the city drafted an Urban Renewal Plan to address those blight factors identified in Westerly Creek, including "Environmental Contamination". The Urban Renewal Plan incorporates the results of the visioning workshops conducted in 2011, the Westerly Creek Village Conditions Inventory, and it describes the relationship to the City of Aurora's Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans. The Urban Renewal Plan's purpose is to facilitate redevelopment as a means of eliminating the blight conditions and to stimulate economic growth and investment.

In the fall of 2012, the draft Urban Renewal Plan was reviewed by the City's Planning and Economic Development and Redevelopment Council Committee and the Westerly Creek Village Steering Committee for content. The Urban Renewal Plan was also reviewed to ensure its conformance with the Concept Plan and community Vision Statement. The city's Planning Commission also reviewed the Urban Renewal Plan to determine its conformity with the city's Comprehensive Plan.

On December 17, 2012, the City Council passed a resolution setting a public hearing to be held for the adoption of the Urban Renewal Plan. Notices of the hearing were mailed to all property owners, businesses and residents within the pending Urban Renewal Area, as well as to the Adams County Commissioners and Aurora Public Schools administrators. Copies of the plan were made available to the public, as well as posted online. On January 28, 2013, the City Council formally approved the Resolution to adopt the Westerly Creek Urban Renewal Plan, completing the creation of the Urban Renewal Area. The Urban Renewal Plan is included as part of this Community Plan as Appendix 6.



Westerly Creek Greenway Master Plan

The Greenway Master Plan was adopted by City Council in 2011 and seeks to mitigate flood hazards for abutting properties, to create a multiple-use corridor that integrates the surrounding neighborhoods, and provide recreation opportunities and alternative modes of transportation. While this plan was not part of the brownfields community planning process for WCV, the Greenway Master Plan includes a portion of WCV's greenway and is incorporated as part of the WCV Urban Renewal Plan.

Westerly Creek Village Greenway Redevelopment Study

The city engaged Wenk & Associates, a planning and landscape architecture firm, to develop a conceptual land-use plan based on the Concept Plan (i.e. the Westerly Creek Village & Montview Corridor Strategic Area) and the Urban Renewal Plan. In particular, it focused on the "greenway edge", the blocks and properties adjacent to Westerly Creek, for the following reasons:

1. All of the Catalytic Sites are adjacent to the creek and three of these four Catalytic Sites are the largest properties within the Plan Area.
2. Westerly Creek is the dominating, yet undeveloped amenity running the entire length of the Plan Area's western edge.
3. Greenway/open space development and access are essential parts of the city's Comprehensive Plan and the Westerly Creek Village Urban Renewal Plan.
4. The mixed-use goals identified in the Concept Plan and Urban Renewal Plan will be enhanced by incorporating the greenway expansion into the orientation and design of redevelopment projects.

The Study will serve as a development guide when evaluating future development projects along the greenway edge and therefore is included as part of this Community Plan as Appendix 7.







5. Redevelopment Concepts & Objectives

The Urban Renewal Plan and The Westerly Creek Village Greenway Redevelopment Study establish the basis for the redevelopment themes and development scenarios under which the Catalytic Sites could be redeveloped. Most of these concepts and objectives apply to the entire Plan Area. More details are provided in the Appendices.

Development Concepts

- **Brownfields:** The presence of brownfield sites throughout the Area serves as a deterrent to area redevelopment and investment. The goal of this plan is particularly targeted towards addressing the remediation and reuse of these existing brownfield sites.
- **Mixed-Uses:** The land-use element of the Plan designates most of the western portion of the Westerly Creek Village Urban Renewal Area as mixed-use and is intended to encourage a mix of neighborhood commercial, office, retail, public spaces, and residential uses. Expanded recreation opportunities within the greenway and at public facilities (i.e. Moorhead Recreation Center) needs to be accommodated.
- **Rezoning:** The existence of industrially zoned properties in the Area perpetuates uses incompatible with and detrimental to the redevelopment vision outlined in the Plan. Therefore, a proactive approach by the city to rezoning these properties is recommended.
- **Westerly Creek Greenway:** The Plan encourages the development and expansion of the Westerly Creek Greenway in a manner that integrates it with adjacent commercial and residential developments. Provide east-west “green fingers” to provide visual, pedestrian and stormwater treatment connections.
- **Housing Options:** The Plan encourages a wider variety of housing options and styles, serving a variety of household sizes and incomes, for existing apartment residents and employees of nearby job centers. New and varied housing will also help support new neighborhood retail and services.
- **Connectivity and Multi-Modal Transportation:** Future development will accommodate a variety of auto, pedestrian and bicycle access ways that improve connectivity within the Westerly Creek Village Urban Renewal Area and the surrounding developments. Improvements within the Area should also contribute to improving access to area projects. A high priority is implementing a “seamless” interface between Aurora and Stapleton through street connections, streetscape elements, development density, and design features.
- **Western/Creek Facing Building Orientation and Frontage Road:** Redevelopment of the Catalytic Sites should orientate towards the expanded open space along Westerly Creek. A frontage road for either vehicles and/or bicycle and pedestrian traffic should be developed along new commercial and residential creekside development.



Figure 10: Development Concepts



Design Concepts

Commercial and residential redevelopment should be compatible with existing development while at the same time including higher densities than currently exist. High quality design should follow the guidelines outlined in the city's Sustainable Infill and Redevelopment zoning and facilitate pedestrian and bicycle connectivity.

- Promote the highest and best use of land by promoting high density development.
- Provide high quality and sustainable building design with durable materials, building articulation and varying building form.
- Emphasize ground floor design by providing for active uses, building entrances and window fenestration on the street, and locating parking to the building's rear.
- Create an urban street grid which carries automobiles, transit, pedestrian and bicycle traffic safely, directly and efficiently.
- Minimize impacts of vehicular oriented buildings and uses on street.
- Encourage shared parking and minimize surface parking.
- Create public and open spaces that are integrated into the building development and established park systems.
- Provide access to and a presence along the Westerly Creek Greenway for any properties fronting the Greenway.
- Discourage back of house operations along this creek frontage.
- Eliminate brownfield conditions and promote energy and resource efficiency.





Development Scenarios and Possibilities

In the Westerly Creek Village Greenway Redevelopment Study, three development scenarios are explored which incorporate the development and design concepts. The particular scenarios are not city adopted plans, but rather they visually represent the various development possibilities that are in alignment with the Concept and Urban Renewal Plans. As a result, the Greenway Redevelopment Study serves as a development guide when evaluating future development projects adjacent to the greenway. The full study is included as part of this Community Plan as Appendix 7.

Scenario A: Maintains existing building sites at Montview Plaza and Stanley Aviation while encouraging infill redevelopment and how they might benefit from their proximity to Westerly Creek and the larger green space network.

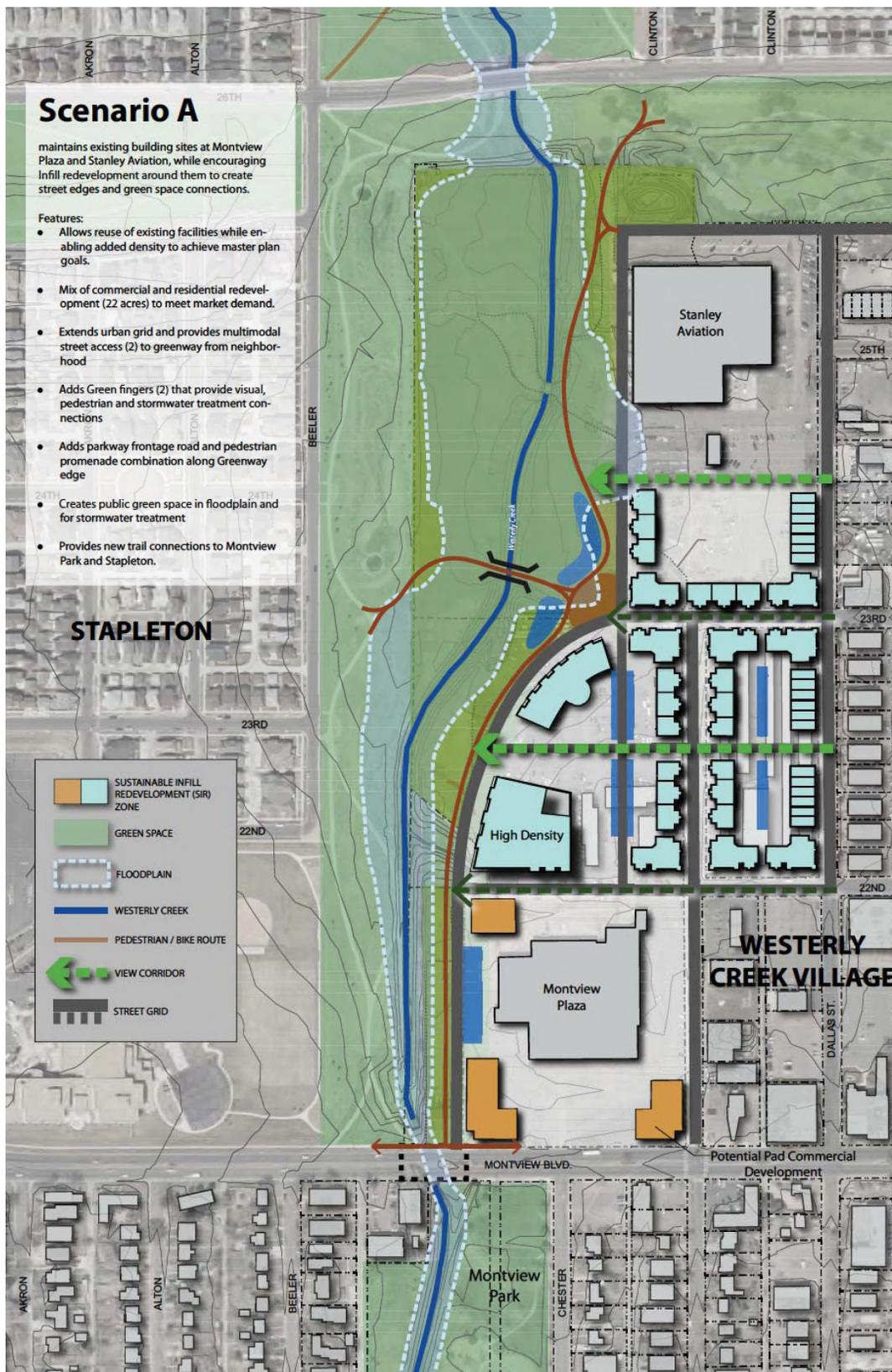
- Allows the reuse of existing facilities while enabling added density to achieve Concept Plan goals.
- Mix of commercial and residential development (22 acres) to meet market demand.
- Extends urban grid and provides multimodal street access (2) to greenway from neighborhood.
- Adds Green Fingers (2) that provide visual, pedestrian and stormwater treatment connections.
- Adds parkway frontage road and pedestrian promenade combination along Greenway edge.
- Creates public open space in floodplain and for stormwater treatment.
- Provides new trail connections to Montview Park and Stapleton.

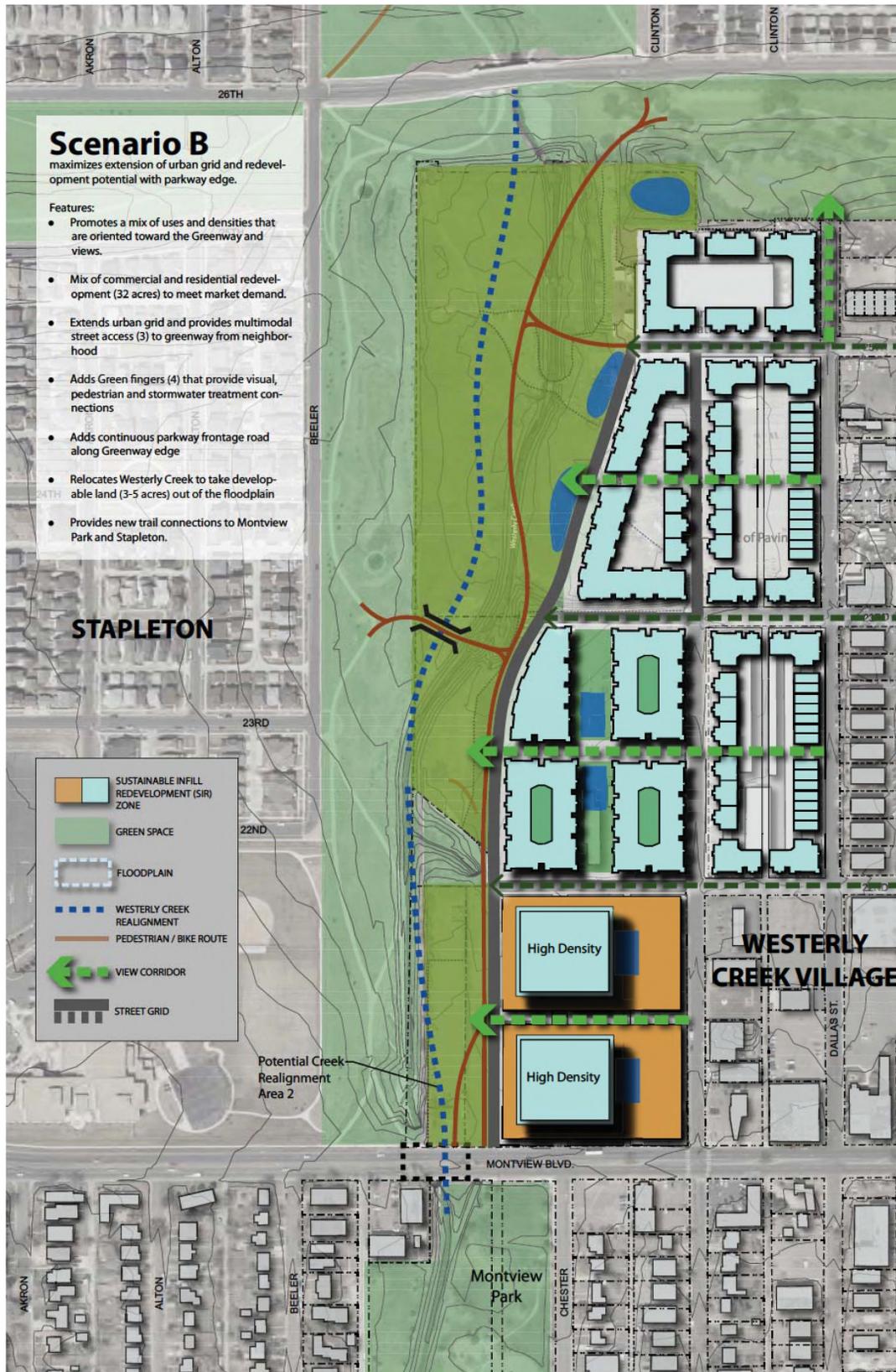
Scenario B: Maximizes extension of urban grid and redevelopment potential with parkway edge.

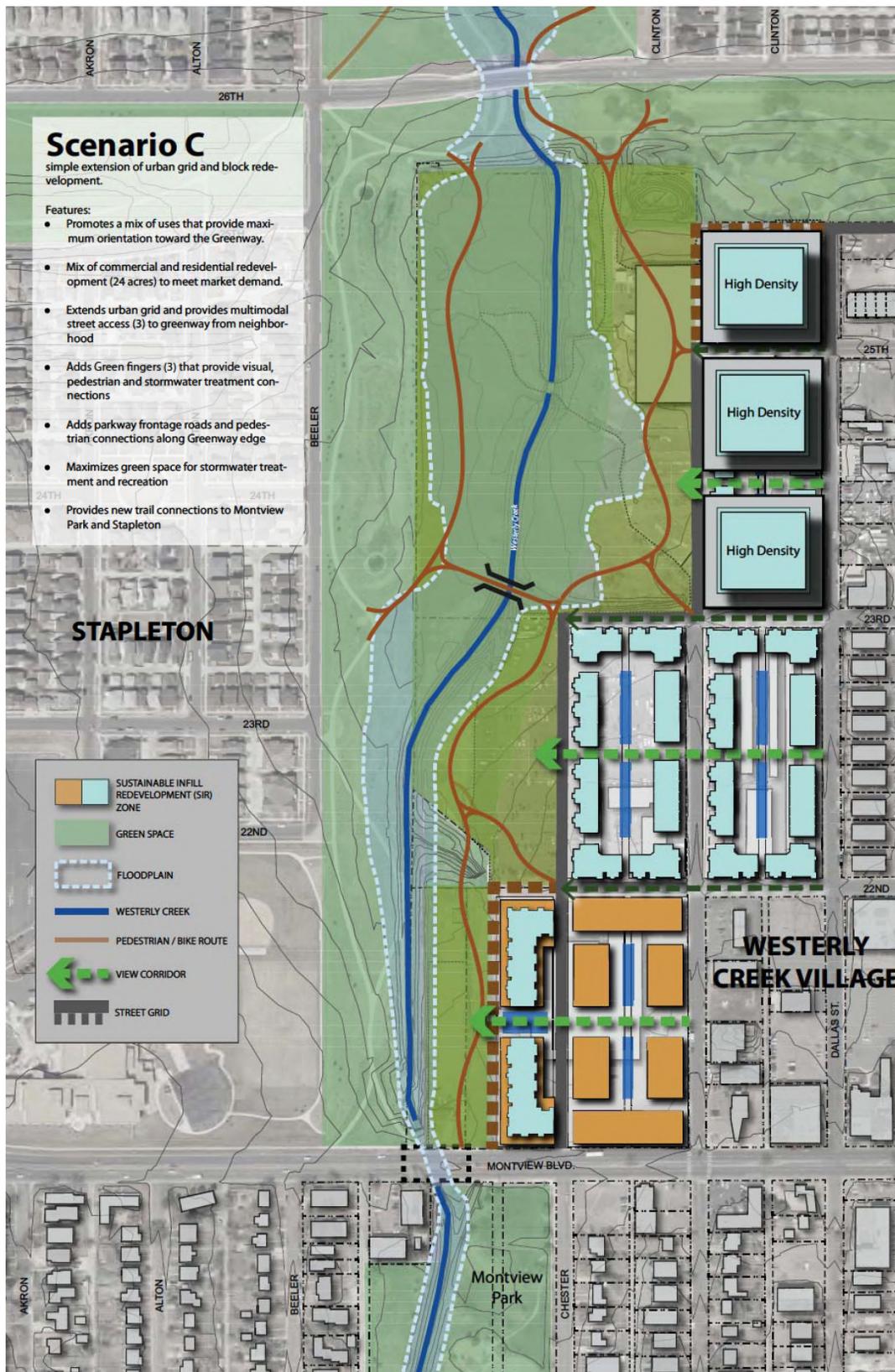
- Promotes a mix of uses and densities that are oriented toward the Greenway and views.
- Mix of commercial and residential redevelopment (32 acres) to meet market demand.
- Extends urban grid and provides multimodal street access (3) to greenway from neighborhood.
- Adds Green Fingers (3) that provide visual, pedestrian and stormwater treatment connections.
- Adds continuous parkway frontage road along Greenway edge.
- Relocates Westerly Creek to take developable land (3-5 acres) out of floodplain
- Provides new trail connections to Montview Park and Stapleton.

Scenario C: Simple extension of urban grid and block redevelopment

- Promotes a mix of uses that provide maximum orientation toward the Greenway.
- Mix of commercial and residential redevelopment (24 acres) to meet market demand.
- Extends urban grid and provides multimodal street access (3) to greenway from neighborhood.
- Adds Green Fingers (3) that provide visual, pedestrian and stormwater treatment connections.
- Adds parkway frontage road and pedestrian connections along Greenway edge.
- Maximizes open space for stormwater treatment and recreation.
- Provides new trail connections to Montview Park and Stapleton.











6. Implementation & Action Steps

Sections 1 & 2 described Westerly Creek Village, the economic and development challenges it faces, and past planning efforts for the area. Section 3 described the community planning process that established the redevelopment goals and vision for WCV. Section 4 described the subsequent plans and studies informed by the community planning process, including: 1) the Comprehensive Plan amendment that created the “Westerly Creek Village & Montview Corridor Strategic Area,” formally adopting the community’s vision statement with strategies for implementation. Section 5 described the development concepts outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and the WCV Urban Renewal Plan along with a presentation of three different development scenarios for the Catalytic Sites.

This section describes the action steps necessary to implement the Community Plan, including some which have recently been accomplished and others that are in progress. The strategies are primarily drawn from the recently adopted plans for Westerly Creek Village which can be found in the Appendix. Implementation will occur over time and be dependent on market conditions and resources available.

BROWNFIELDS REMEDIATION PLANNING AND CLEANUP

The goal of these action steps is to assist current owners and potential developers with understanding existing environmental site conditions and to assist with environmental remediation. The goal is to reduce the cost and risks associated with redevelopment either directly through the reduction of site assessment and remediation costs or indirectly by improving project value and market potential through area investments. Any past remediation efforts in the area were conducted prior to the completion of this plan and likely do not account for the mix of uses anticipated in the Plan.

Action Steps

- 1) **Conduct Phase I and II Environmental Assessments of Brownfield Sites**
Timeline: *1-4 Years for Catalytic Sites, 1+ years for remaining sites*
- 2) **Develop preliminary remediation plan based on reuses consistent with the Community Plan**
Timeline: *1-4 Years for Catalytic Sites, 1+ years for remaining sites*
- 3) **Fund/Finance site remediation**
Timeline: *1-10 Years for Catalytic Sites, 1+ years for remaining sites*

Responsible Party and/or Potential Partners

- Existing and/or Future Property Owners
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)
- Environmental Protection Agency
- City of Aurora (COA)
- Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Colorado Brownfields Foundation

Potential Resources

- EPA Technical Assistance Brownfields (TAB) Program
- EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessments (TBA)
- CDPHE Targeted Brownfields Assessments
- EPA Assessment Grants
- COA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund
- HUD Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) Grant
- Tax Increment Financing
- Colorado Land Redevelopment Tax Credits



PLANNING AND ZONING

City planning to support the community redevelopment vision must continue. First, the city must take legislative actions creating plans and ordinances that help promote the vision. This includes the adoption of the Urban Renewal Plan and rezoning of properties to the Sustainable Infill Redevelopment zone to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Second, in partnership with property owners and developers, the city will promote master planning of individual sites and the expanded Westerly Creek Greenway. Priority will be on the Catalytic Sites, either as independent projects or as assembled, consolidated projects.

Action Steps

- 1) **Designate Plan Area as an Urban Renewal Area**
Timeline: *Completed*
- 2) **Rezone properties to be in compliance with adopted plan**
Timeline: *1-3 Year for Catalytic Sites*
- 3) **Create one or more Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts to support redevelopment**
Timeline: *1-4 Years for Catalytic Sites*
- 4) **Master Planning of Catalytic Sites**
Timeline: *1-4 years*

Responsible Party and/or Potential Partners

- COA Planning & Development Services
- AURA
- Property Owners/Developers

Potential Resources

OUTREACH, BUSINESS SUPPORT AND MARKETING

The city will continue to recruit and attract businesses within the plan area while at the same time work to retain and grow plan compatible, existing businesses. These activities will range from developing marketing material to small-business counseling services to funding assistance for business expansion. Direct outreach to new and existing businesses will also occur, particularly to enhance the diversity of businesses in the area. Recently, the city awarded a Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant to help establish a new grocery store in the plan area, a community need identified during the Visioning Workshops.

Action Steps

- 1) **Create Marketing Material**
Timeline: *6-18 months*
- 2) **Business recruitment and retainage**
Timeline: *Immediate and ongoing*
- 3) **Developer recruitment**
Timeline: *Immediate and ongoing*

Responsible Party and/or Potential Partners

- COA
- AURA
- Property Owners/Developers
- Small Business Administration
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- Colorado Enterprise Fund

Potential Resources

- EDA Revolving Loan Fund
- Aurora Small Business Development Center
- Small business grants



INFRASTRUCTURE

There are a number of infrastructure deficiencies in the area. Some of these deficiencies were identified in the Conditions Inventory such as: narrow, deteriorating or missing sidewalks; missing curbs and gutters; insufficient utility systems to support new development; and drainage/flooding along the western portion of the area. Improved street connectivity and cross-sections, including new pedestrian and bike routes, will further integrate Westerly Creek Village with surrounding development. Addressing these deficiencies will contribute to making the community more livable and attractive to future residents, businesses and developers.

Action Steps

1) Construct Aurora-Stapleton Street Connections

Timeline: *1 year for first three connections, 4-5 years for Dayton Street connection*

2) Complete Montview Boulevard bridge & flood Improvements

Timeline: *Conceptual design and FEMA funding completed, engineering and construction 1-2 years*

3) Design and construct Montview Boulevard cross-section & streetscaping improvements

Timeline: *7-12 years*

Responsible Party and/or Potential Partners

- FEMA
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- COA Public Works & Water Depts
- Forest City Development
- AURA
- City of Denver

Potential Resources

- FEMA Grants
- Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant
- Tax Increment Financing
- COA

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Recreation and open space amenities need to be developed to support existing community needs and future residential projects. Improving and expanding Moorhead Recreation Center, enhancing Montview Park, and developing the surrounding greenways with improved access and amenities are all steps to enhance the character of Westerly Creek Village.

Action Steps

1) Complete Stapleton-Aurora Greenway on north side of WCV

Timeline: *3-6 years*

2) Master plan Westerly Creek Greenway expansion, including identifying potential property acquisitions

Timeline: *1-3 years*

3) Acquire any necessary rights-of-way for greenways

Timeline: *1-3 years*

4) Complete construction of Westerly Creek Greenway expansion

Timeline: *6-10 years*

5) Adopt Montview Park Master Plan and begin Construction

Timeline: *Plan adoption 6-12 months, construction start 1-2 years*

Responsible Party and/or Potential Partners

- City of Denver
- Forest City Development
- COA Parks, Recreation and Open Space Dept
- Adams County

Potential Resources

- Tax Increment Financing
- COA
- Park Creek Metropolitan District
- County open space grants



SITE REDEVELOPMENT AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

All previous action steps are building blocks for the physical redevelopment of the Catalytic Sites as well as the underutilized or dilapidated properties within Westerly Creek Village. The construction of new housing options, offices and retail will contribute to residential and commercial diversity called for in Westerly Creek Village's Vision Statement. Smaller incremental changes such as renovating deteriorated or dated structures and adapting them for a mix of new uses will add to the neighborhood's physical and economic vitality. Public-private partnerships will play a crucial role in this effort and the Aurora Urban Renewal Authority is anticipated to take the lead in ensuring that the development visions outlined in the plans are realized.

Action Steps

- 1) Demolish deteriorated or obsolete structures**
Timeline: *Ongoing*
- 2) Identify candidates for Storefront Renovation grant**
Timeline: *Ongoing*
- 3) Redevelop Catalytic Sites**
Timeline: *3-5 years for first site, 5-10 years for remaining*
- 4) Develop new housing options and commercial buildings**
Timeline: *3-5 years for first new housing project and/or new commercial building*

Responsible Party and/or Potential Partners

- COA
- AURA
- Property Owners/Developers
- HUD
- Aurora Housing Authority
- Urban Land Conservancy
- Colorado Housing and Finance Authority

Potential Resources

- Private Investment
- Tax Increment Financing
- New Market Tax Credits
- COA Commercial Storefront Renovation Grant (CDBG funded)
- HUD Grants
- Retail Redevelopment Sales Tax Rebates



Acknowledgements

Westerly Creek Village Steering Committee

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Sally Mounier, City of Aurora Council Ward I (current)
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Northwest Aurora Neighborhood Organization (NANO)
Forest City Stapleton
University of Colorado
Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority
Aurora Housing Authority
Stapleton Foundation

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