

SASAKI



AURARIA
HIGHER EDUCATION
CENTER™

Campus Master Plan



COMMUNITY
COLLEGE OF
DENVER



MSU™
DENVER



Denver

PREFERRED FRAMEWORK & DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURES

January, 2024

Introduction



SCHEDULE

Phase 1

Discovery & Analysis

Phase 2

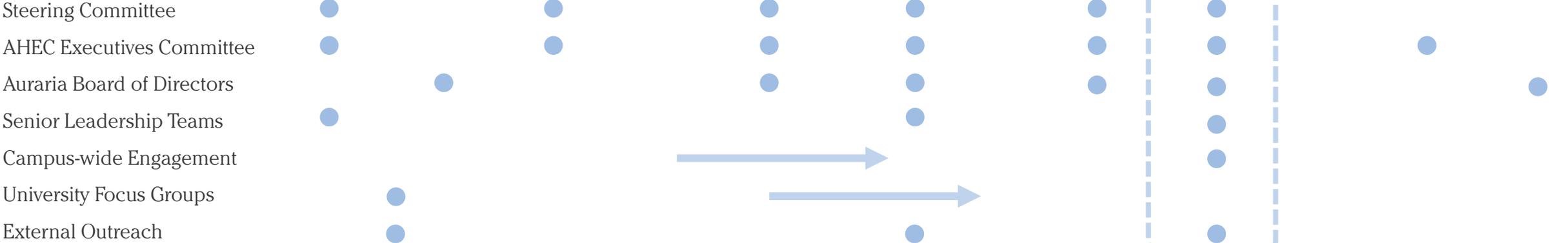
Concept Alternatives

Phase 3

Master Plan Development

2023

2024



Data gathering, organization & synthesis
 Site reconnaissance
 Leadership and stakeholder interviews
 Presentation / confirmation of findings

Develop design principles
 Develop concept alternatives
 Framework drawings
 Explore Public Private Partnership Opportunities

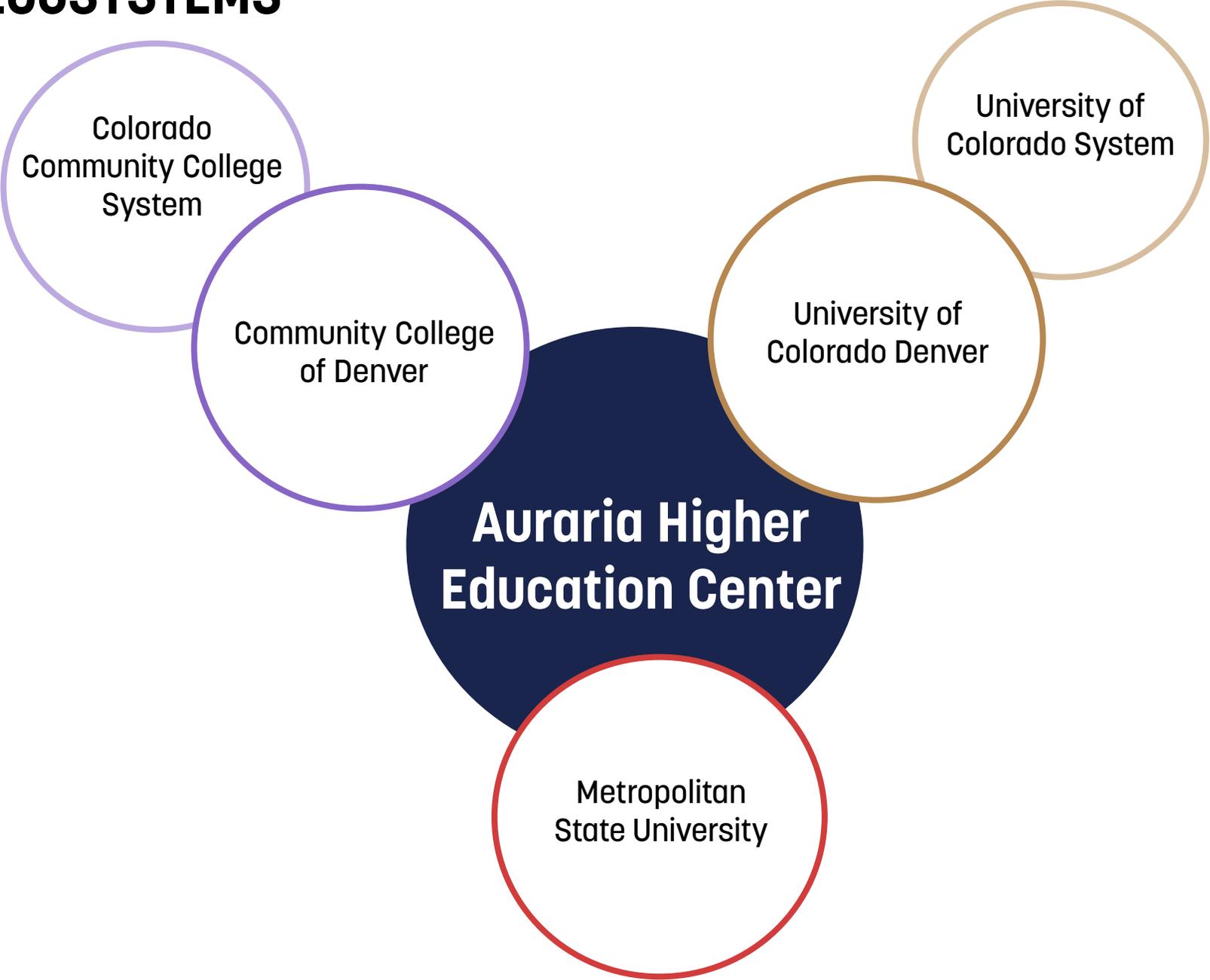
Preferred plan development
 Technical integration
 Implementation considerations
 Draft & Final Campus Plan

Review & Approval

Understanding the Institutions



INTERNAL ECOSYSTEMS



STRATEGIC ASPIRATIONS

AURARIA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

The Auraria Campus is a **dynamic academic environment** shared by three separate and distinct institutions of higher learning:

- Community College of Denver
- Metropolitan State University of Denver
- University of Colorado Denver

The Auraria Higher Education Center is a separate state entity whose role is to provide and manage shared services, facilities, and property to support these prominent institutions in achieving their goals.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER

Vision Statement

Every member of our community will attain the education they desire.

Mission Statement

CCD provides our diverse community an opportunity to gain **quality higher education** and achieve personal and professional success in a **supportive and inclusive environment**.

Values

- Involvement
- Student-Focus
- Integrity
- Lifelong Learning
- Excellence
- Healthy Work Environment

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Role & Mission

Metropolitan State University of Denver is a comprehensive, baccalaureate-degree granting, **urban university** that offers arts and sciences, professional, and business courses and programs to a **diverse** student population in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective.

The mission of MSU Denver is to provide a **high-quality, accessible, enriching education** that prepares students for successful careers, post-graduate education, and lifelong learning in a **multicultural, global, and technological society**. To fulfill its mission, MSU Denver's diverse university community engages the community at large in **scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and the application of knowledge**.

Values

- Community
- Access
- Diversity
- Respect
- Excellence

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

CU Purpose

Make a CU Denver education **work for all** — to transform lives, expand economies, and uplift communities.

CU Vision

At CU Denver, we are building a **radically inclusive** model for higher education based on the simple idea that everyone deserves access to an **excellent education** and a **fulfilled life** of their design.

Values

- We are learner-centered
- We strive for belonging and equity on our campus and in our community
- We are partnership-oriented, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and innovative
- We learn by doing and impact the world around us near and far
- We are an agile, adaptable, and aspirational organization
- We are committed to sustainability and building a better future

CAMPUS MASTER PLAN SHARED VISION & PRINCIPLES

Vision

Create a thriving and active campus to support student success and institutional identities in order to enrich our collective experiences, strengthen campus cohesion, and achieve financial sustainability.

Guiding Principles

- In order to support the educational objectives of the academic institutions create the development framework that transforms the Auraria Campus into a **complete community**
- Leverage existing and future campus opportunities to achieve a new **sustainable financial model**
- Enhance and **expand connections** to downtown Denver, surrounding communities, and new neighborhood development projects
- Design and define a **cohesive campus with a distinctive character** that complements the individual institutional identities
- Create a plan that that reflects the community we serve and **promotes diversity, equity and inclusion** throughout the Master Plan process
- **Honor and celebrate the history** of the campus to align with the AHEC Strategic Plan

Phase 1 Findings



URBAN CONTEXT

The Campus is adjacent to important Civic areas but is incredibly disconnected from these surrounding areas



EDGE CONDITIONS

Speer Blvd Ball Arena

Marriott Hotel & MSU Hospitality Learning Center

Student Wellness Center

Student Commons Building

City Heights

PE/Event Center

North Classroom

Market St

Walnut St

Larimer St

Lawrence St

Speer Blvd

Speer Blvd

Arapahoe St

CU Denver Buildings

CU Denver Lawrence Street Center

CU Denver Business School

Denver performing art complex



EDGE CONDITIONS

Speer Blvd & W Colfax Intersection



North Classroom

Science

Library

Clear Creek

Central

Cherry Creek

Pedestrian Entrance

Vehicular Entrance

Denver Performing Art Complex

Colorado Conventional Center

Arapahoe St

Speer Blvd

Champa St

Speer Blvd

Stour St

EDGE CONDITIONS

W Colfax Ave



Lipan Street

W Colfax Avenue

Colfax at Auraria
Rail Station

Pedestrian Entrance

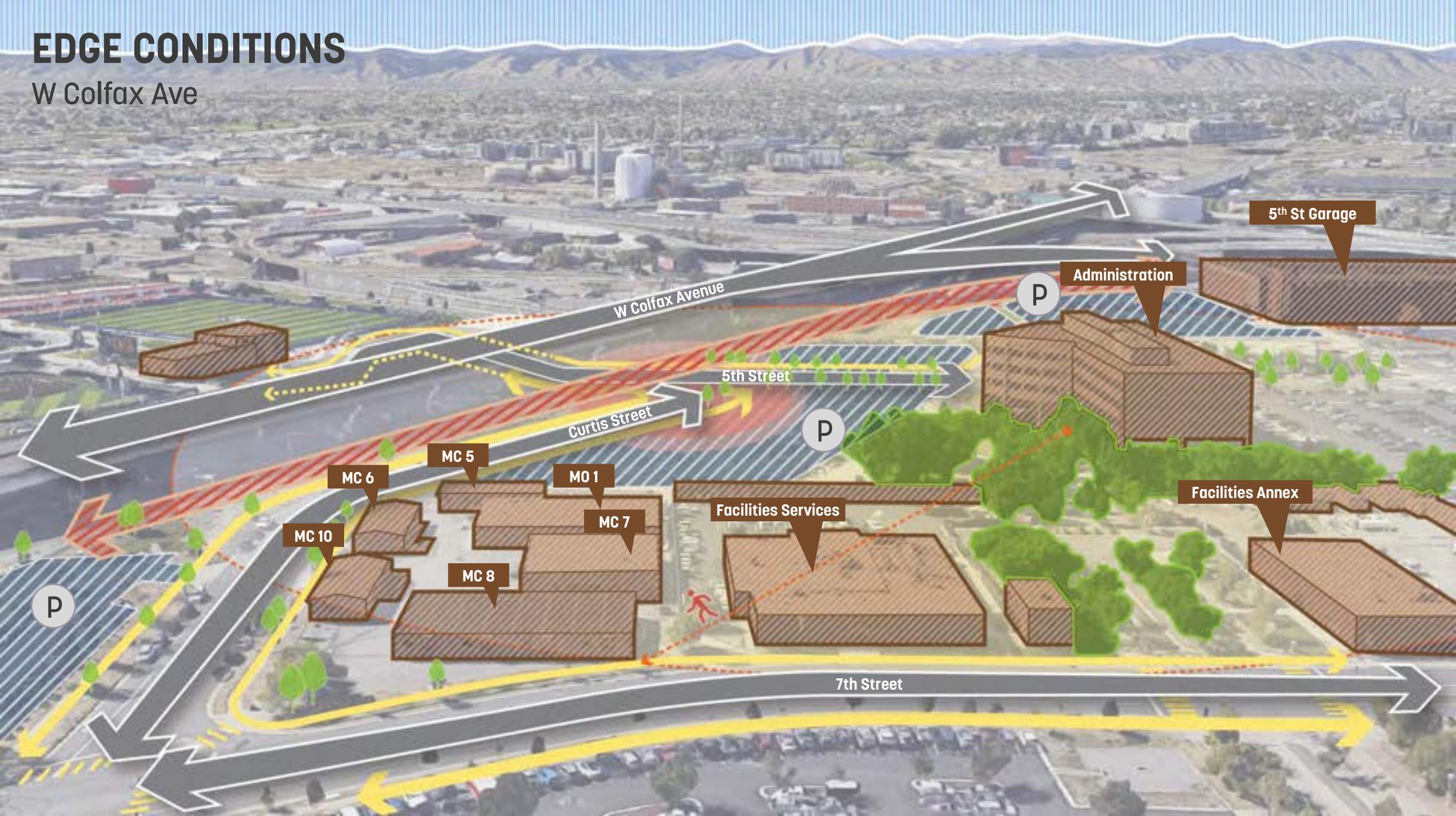
Boulder Creek

Cherry Creek

Kalamath Street

EDGE CONDITIONS

W Colfax Ave



5th St Garage

Administration

W Colfax Avenue

5th Street

Curtis Street

MC 6

MC 5

M01

MC 7

Facilities Services

Facilities Annex

MC 10

MC 8

7th Street

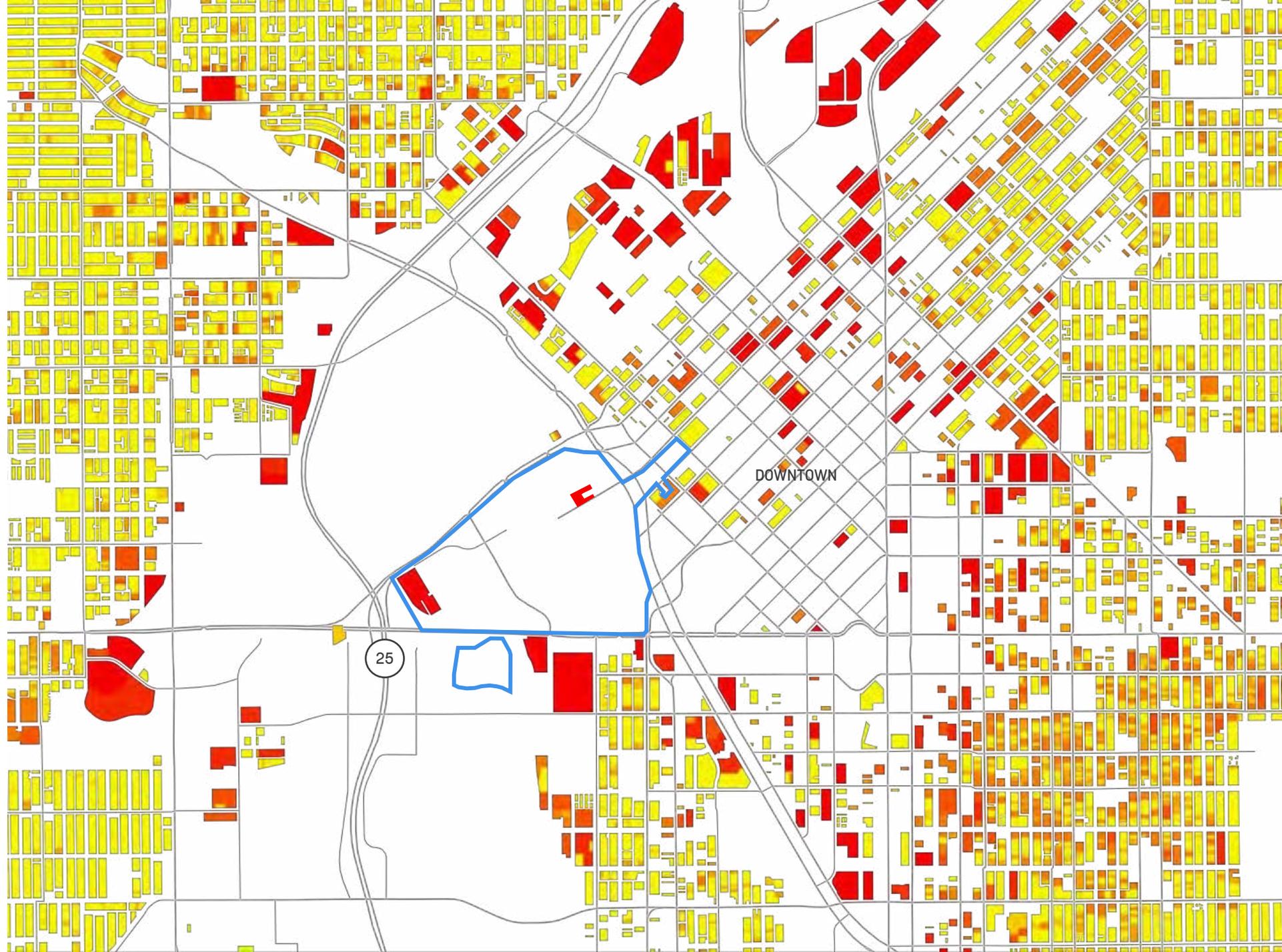
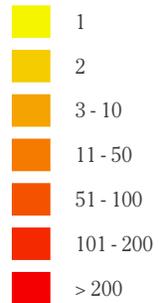
P

P

P

HOUSING UNITS

There is a housing desert on and around campus.



ADJACENT PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS

Planned developments to the north and west will further highlight the low density of Auraria. Opportunities for better connectivity to all sides surrounding Auraria.

THE RIVER MILE

BALL ARENA REDEVELOPMENT

STADIUM DISTRICT MASTERPLAN

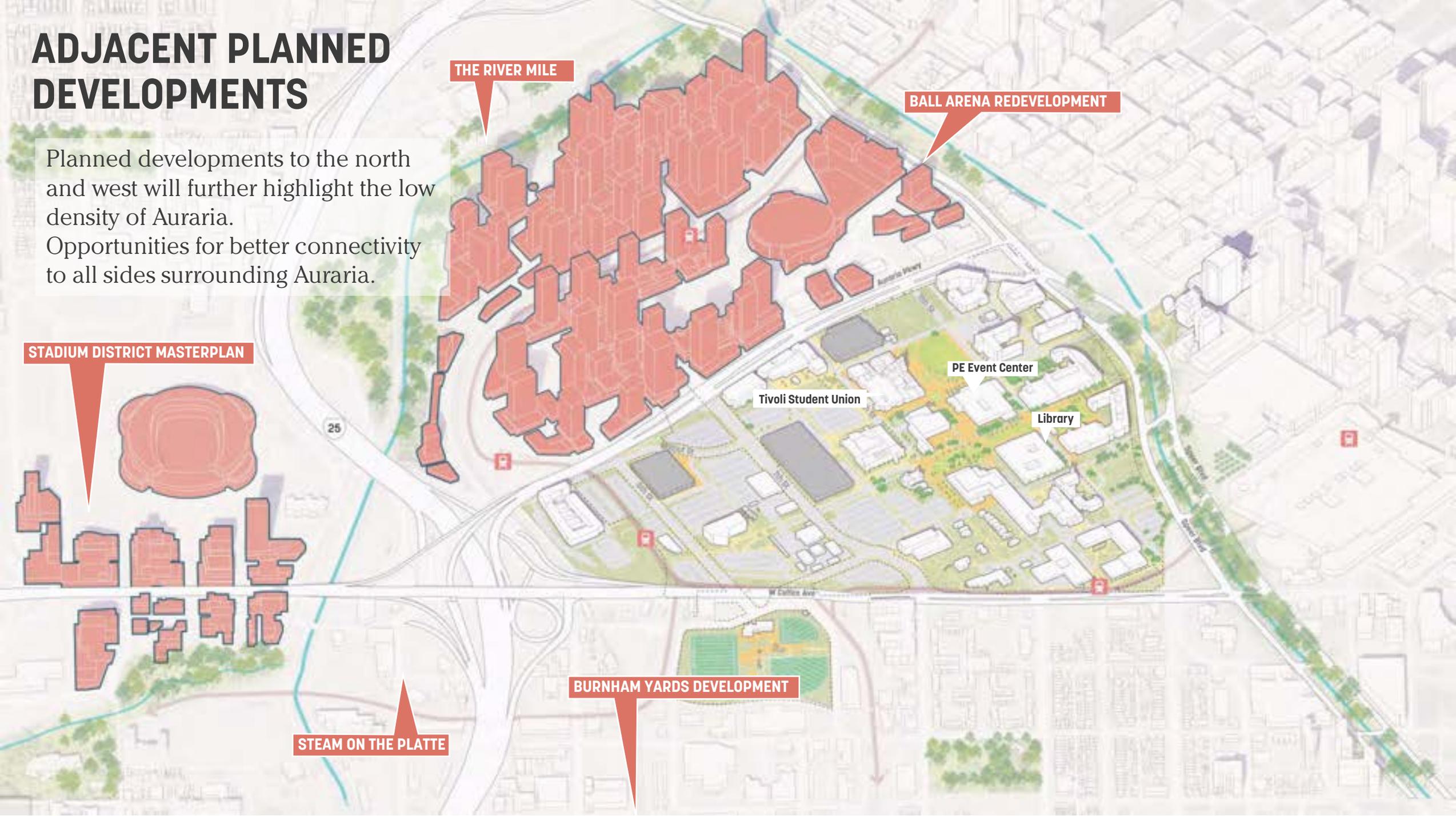
PE Event Center

Tivoli Student Union

Library

STEAM ON THE PLATTE

BURNHAM YARDS DEVELOPMENT



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunity sites include surface parking lots and various other underutilized parcels.

Other experience enhancement opportunities include gateways, connections and views

Improve pedestrian experience on 7th Street

Enhance Views to St Elizabeth of Hungary Church

Enhance gateway experience and the front door to the campus

-  Potential Dev Parcels
-  Gateway

125

South Platte River

W Colfax Ave

Potential to connect to proposed Ball Arena Denver

Auraria Pkwy

Tivoli

Larimer St

Strengthen Connection to Downtown

Stout St

Sper Blvd

Cherry Creek

Lynx Crossing

Administration

Facility Services

CCD Confluence

Arts

Library

West

Central

Boulder Creek

Cherry Creek

0 200 400 600 feet



LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES



Frame landscape by active and transparent building interface

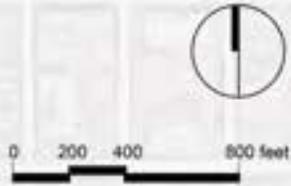
Add softscape and implement a stormwater management network to mitigate the flood risk

Enhance the connectivity of the pedestrian-oriented green space structure throughout the campus

Enhance the wayfinding system

Reveal the memory of the buried canal

Connect campus open space as a green network



Engagement Feedback



SCHEDULE

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Phase 3

Master Plan Development

2023

2024



Steering Committee	●		●		●	●		●	●					
AHEC Executives Committee	●		●		●	●		●	●				●	
Auraria Board of Directors			●		●	●		●	●					●
Senior Leadership Teams	●							●	●					
Campus-wide Engagement				→					●					
University Focus Groups		●			→									
External Outreach		●						●						

Data gathering, organization & synthesis
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Develop design principles
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ENGAGEMENT DURING DESIGN PROCESS

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2023

2024

APR

MAY

JUN

JUL

AUG

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

JAN

FEB

Design
Timeline

Existing conditions
analysis

Design alternatives

Develop preferred
alternative

Revise preferred
alternative

Document and present
final design

Engagement
Timeline

Discussions with
campus & institution
leaderships

Focus groups with
internal & external
stakeholders

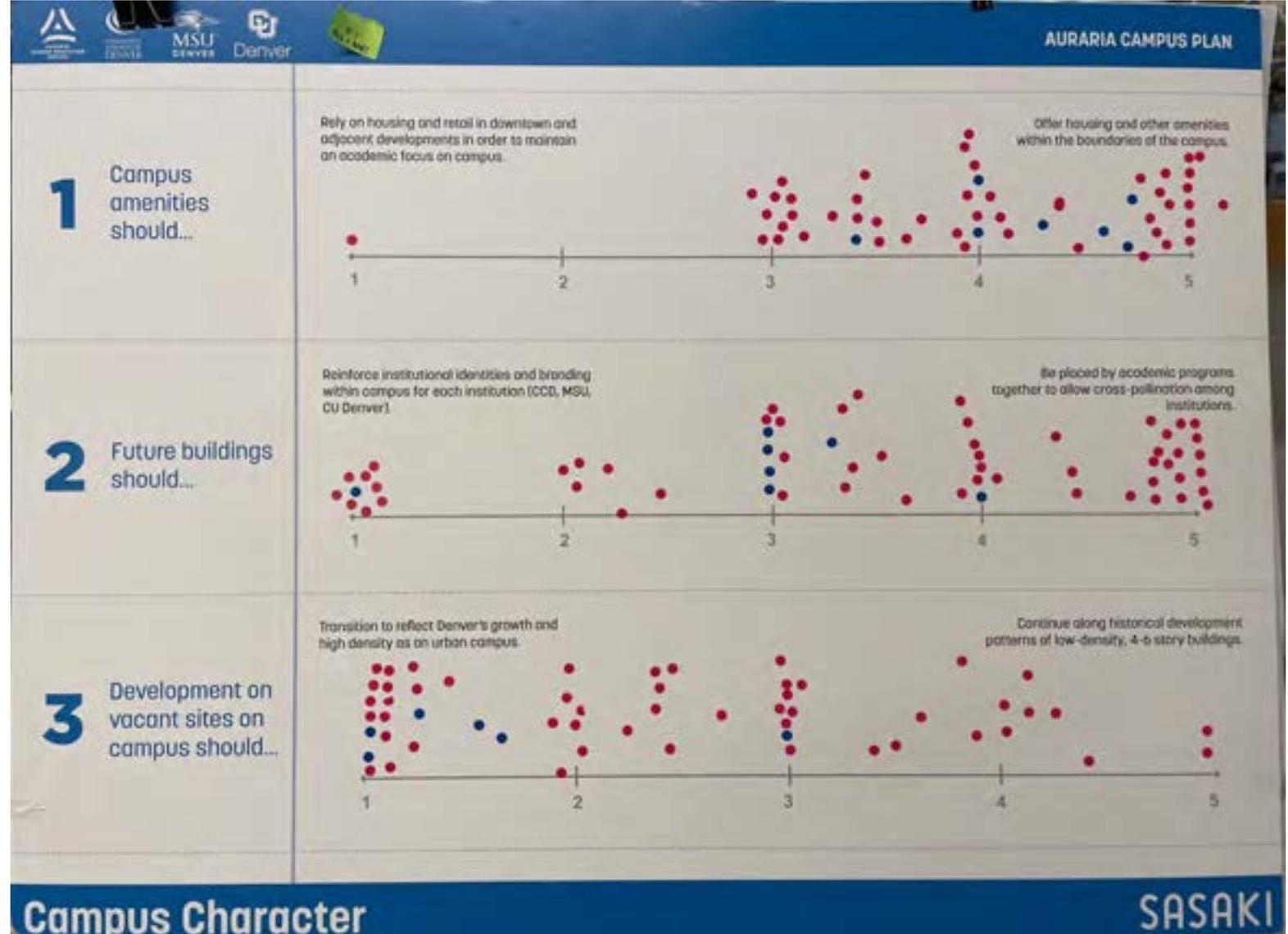
Community
Open House
feedback

Focus groups with
internal & external
stakeholders

Community
Open House
feedback

Community survey

Open House 1



Campus Character

26 sticky note
comments

"Missing the green
space, too many
parking lots."

"Revitalize St.
Cajetan's to
make use of
shared space."

"Ensure open spaces and
event spaces meet
institutional needs first."

"More branding and
wayfinding needed in
city."

"ADA compliance."

"Art walk and
student exhibit
areas along the
5280 trail."

"Skateboard
between classes."

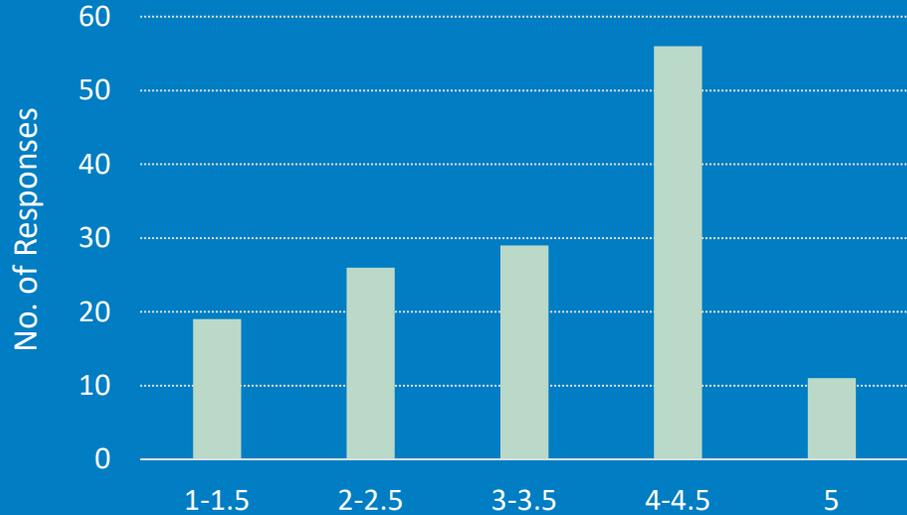


Open House Results

Campus Context

403 stickers

Experience entering the Campus



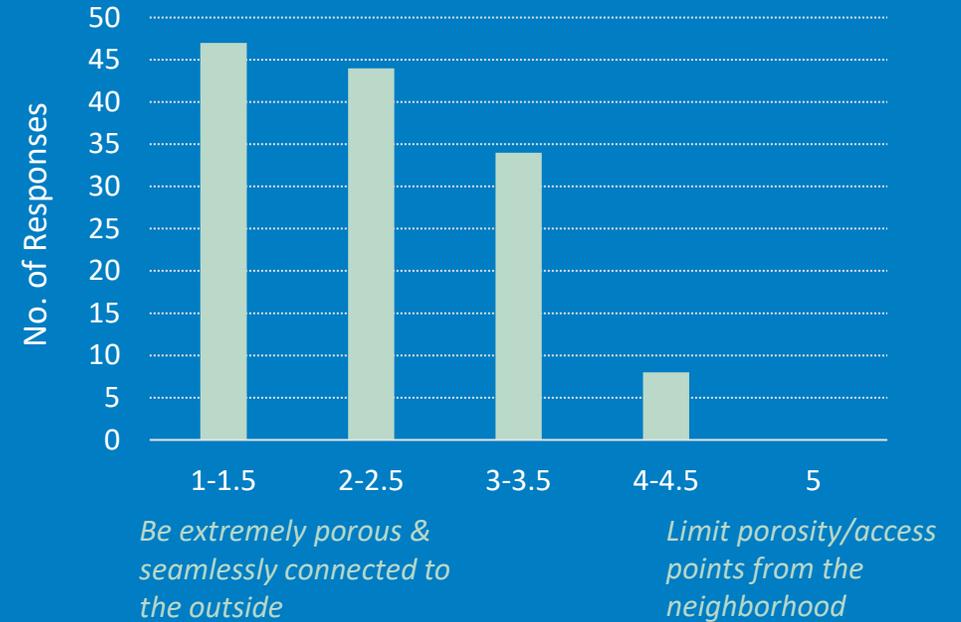
Like an oasis/park from the surrounding city when you enter

Fully integrated into the surrounding city

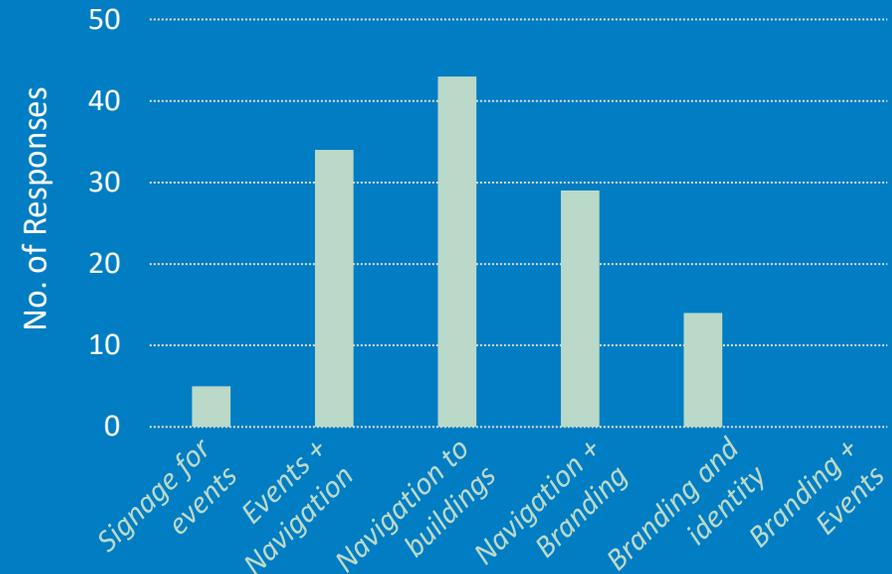
KEY Takeaways

- Strong support for **campus integration to the city** with **porous/seamless connections**.
- **Navigation to buildings** needs a lot of improvement in campus wayfinding and signage.

Campus edges should...



Priority issues with wayfinding & signage

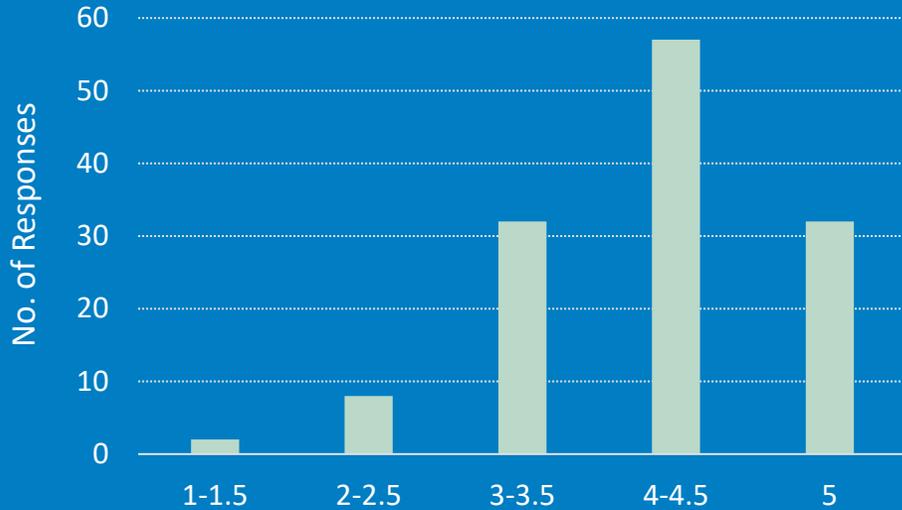


Open House Results

Campus Character

396 stickers

Campus amenities should...



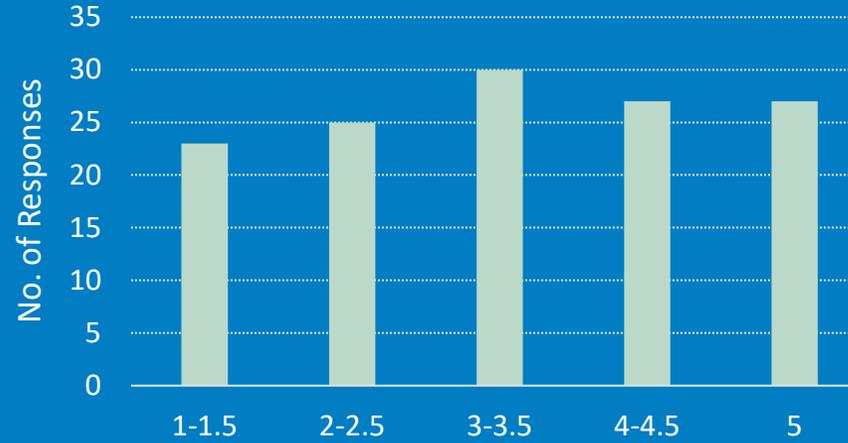
Rely on housing and retail in downtown and adjacent developments in order to maintain an academic focus on campus.

Offer housing and other amenities within the boundaries of the campus.

KEY Takeaways

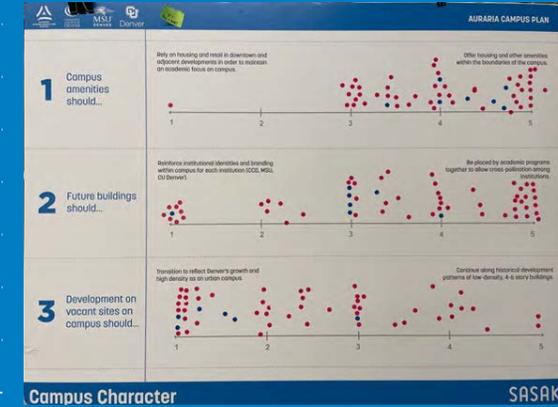
- Strong support for **housing and amenities ON campus.**
- No clear preference for organization of buildings on campus as a whole, but campus community has a greater preference for **increased cross pollination across institutions.**
- Clear preference for **higher density development on campus.**

Future buildings should...

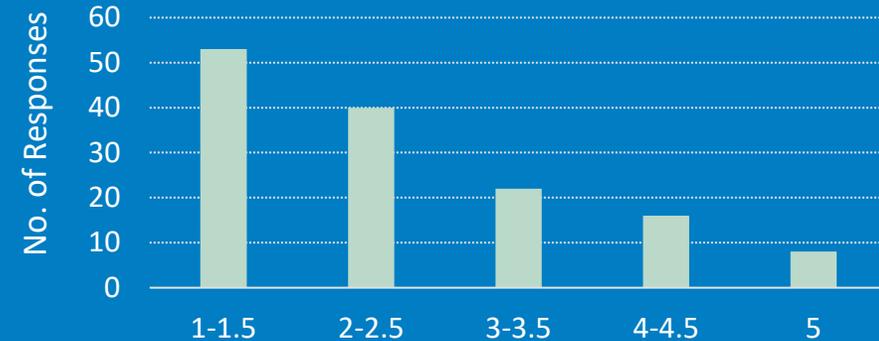


Reinforce institutional identities and branding within campus for each institution (CCD, MSU, CU Denver).

Be placed by academic programs together to allow cross-pollination among institutions.



Development on vacant sites on campus should...



Transition to reflect Denver's growth and high density as an urban campus.

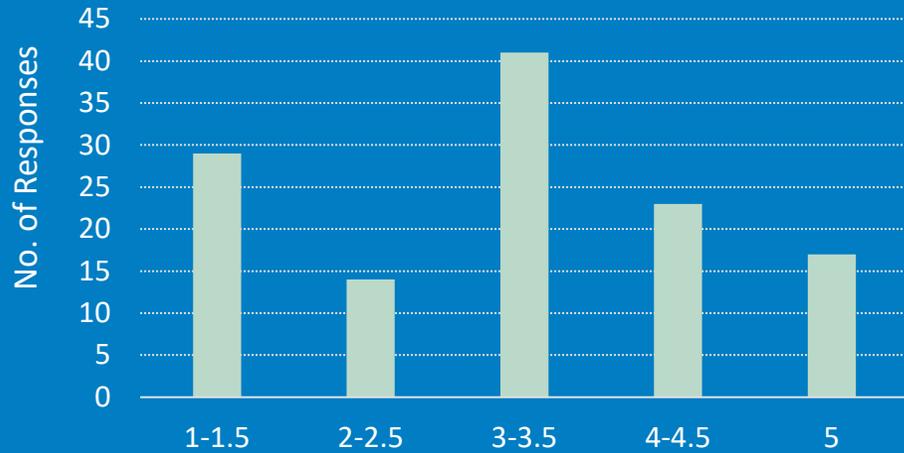
Continue along historical development patterns of low-density, 4-6 story buildings.

Open House Results

Campus Connectivity

350 stickers

If I were transitioning away from a car, I would want to see...



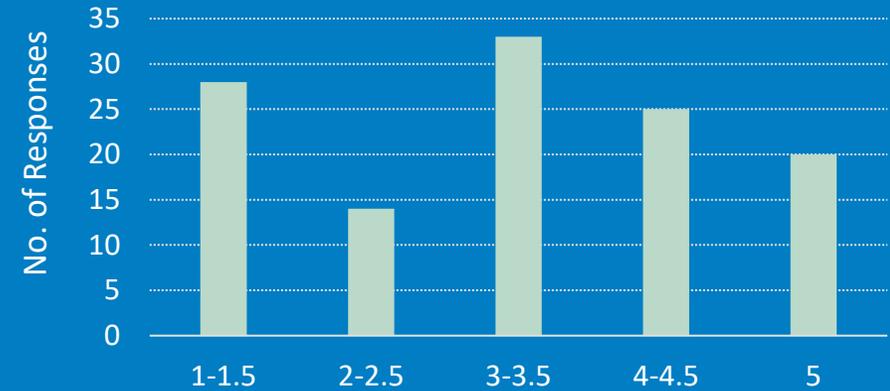
Greater public transit access to buildings on campus.

Improved infrastructure for active modes of transportation such as walking, scooter, and bicycle.

KEY Takeaways

- Mixed preferences with comparable support for **increasing transit access to campus** as well as **improved campus micromobility infrastructure**.
- **Affordability and availability** rank much higher than proximity with parking needs.

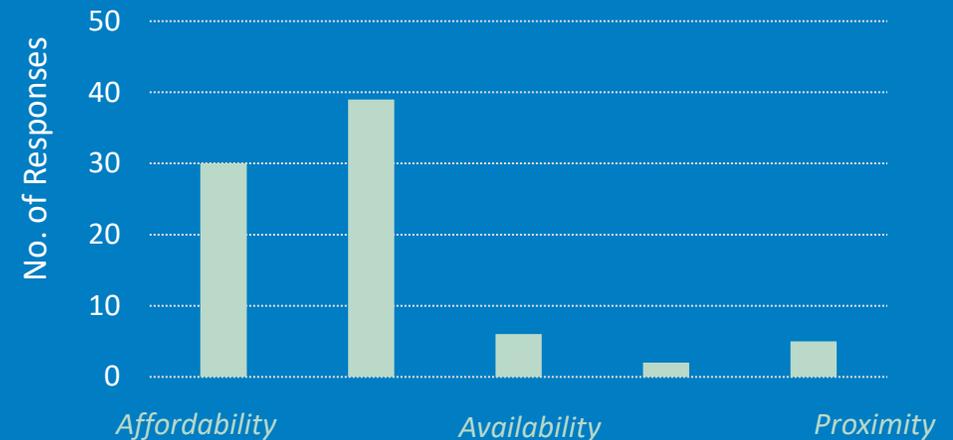
Campus transit would work better if the first and last mile were served by...



A frequent campus shuttle between transit stops and campus buildings.

Better first- and last-mile infrastructure for bikes and scooters from transit stops to campus buildings.

Parking cannot satisfy all 3, which would you prioritize?



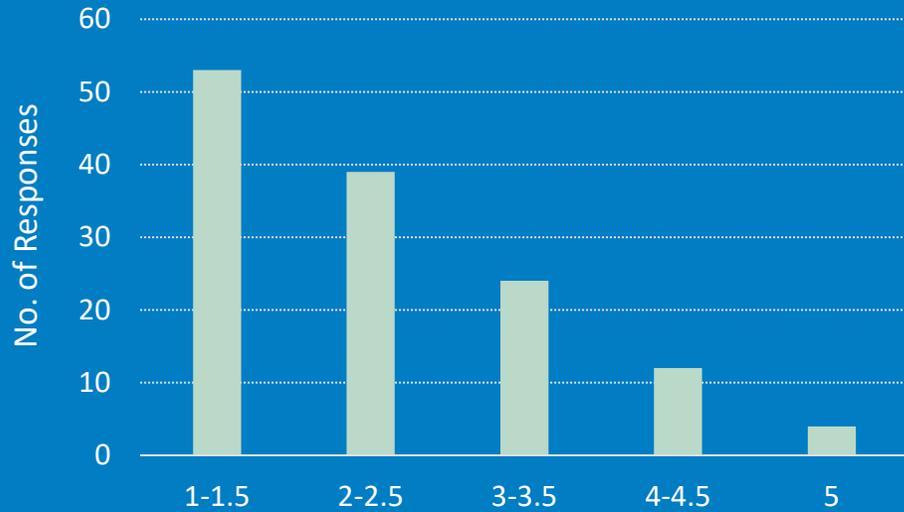
Open House Results

Campus Open Space

397

stickers

Campus landscape should...



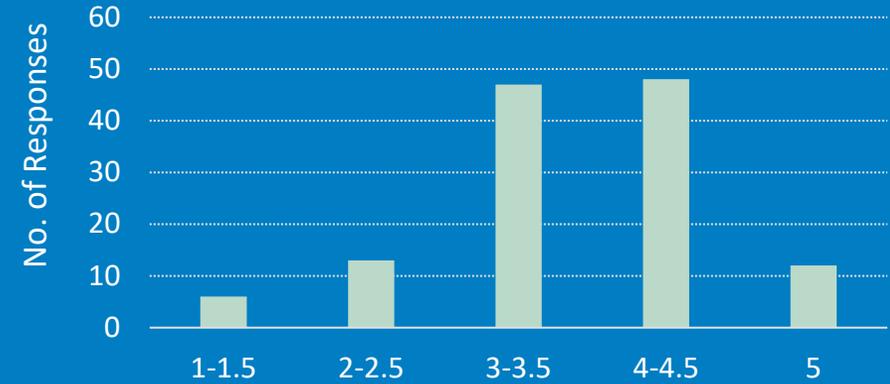
Offer more forested and vegetated areas that emphasize regionally appropriate and native plants.

Provide more traditional, formal campus design (quads, plazas, courtyards).

KEY Takeaways

- Much stronger support for **naturalized open spaces with native species** as compared to traditional formal campus open spaces.
- Slight preference for **programed and diverse open spaces** rather than flexible, multipurpose ones.
- Strong desire for **seamless links to Denver's trail networks**.

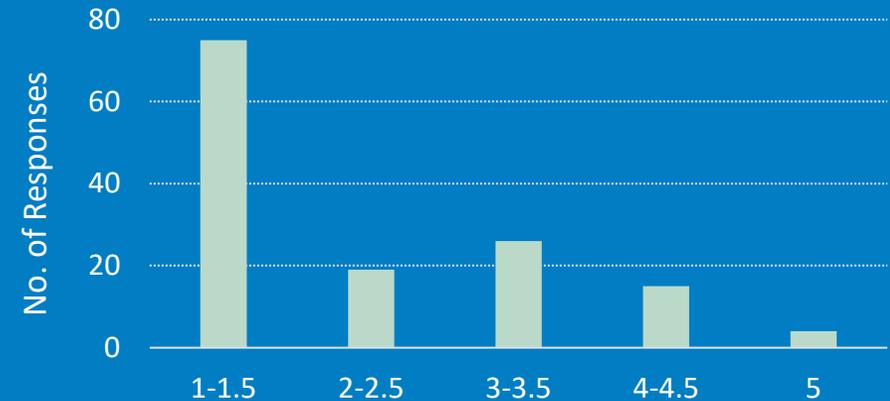
Design of campus open spaces should...



Remain open and flexible to cater to various needs.

Explore diverse functional and programmed spaces like outdoor classrooms, recreational fields, community gardens etc.

Campus circulation should...

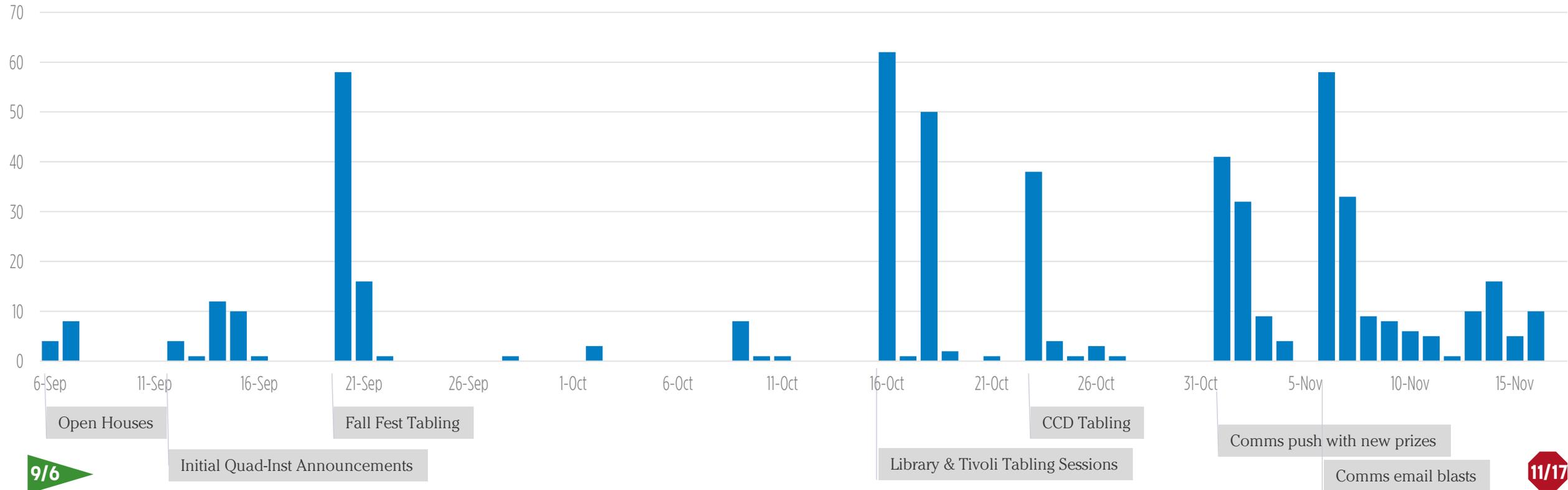
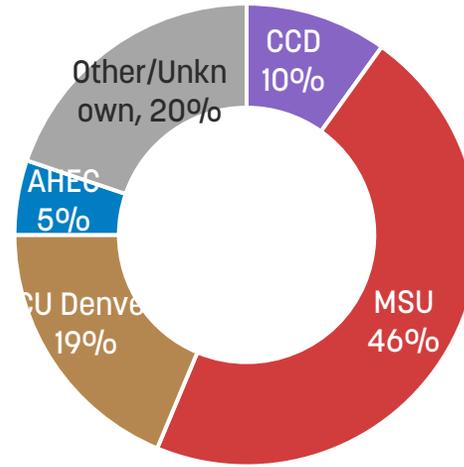


Link seamlessly with the broader trail network in Denver.

Focus on an internal circulation system connecting open spaces within campus.

CoMap Survey

559 respondents
3,501 icons
765 comments

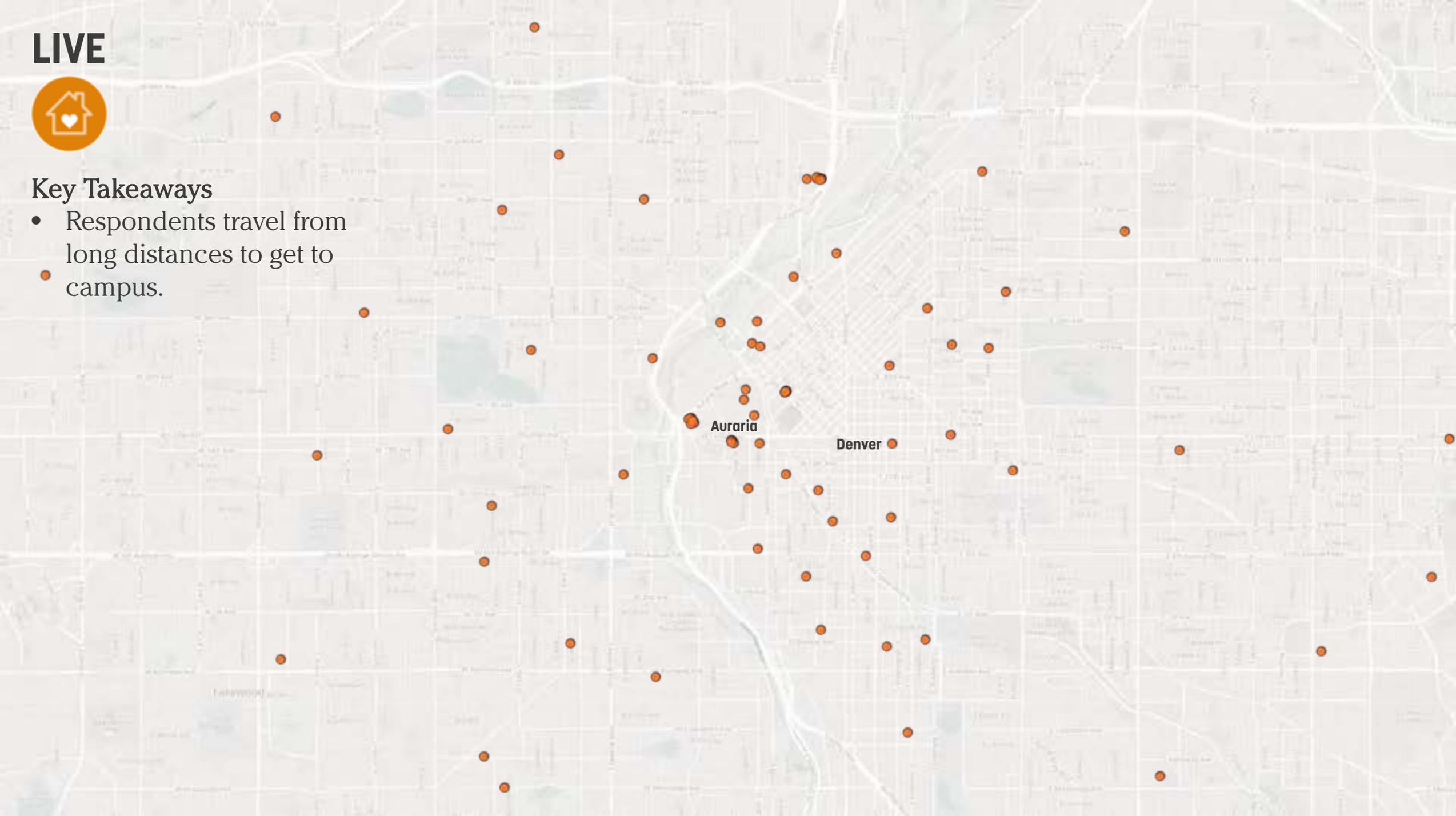


LIVE



Key Takeaways

- Respondents travel from long distances to get to campus.

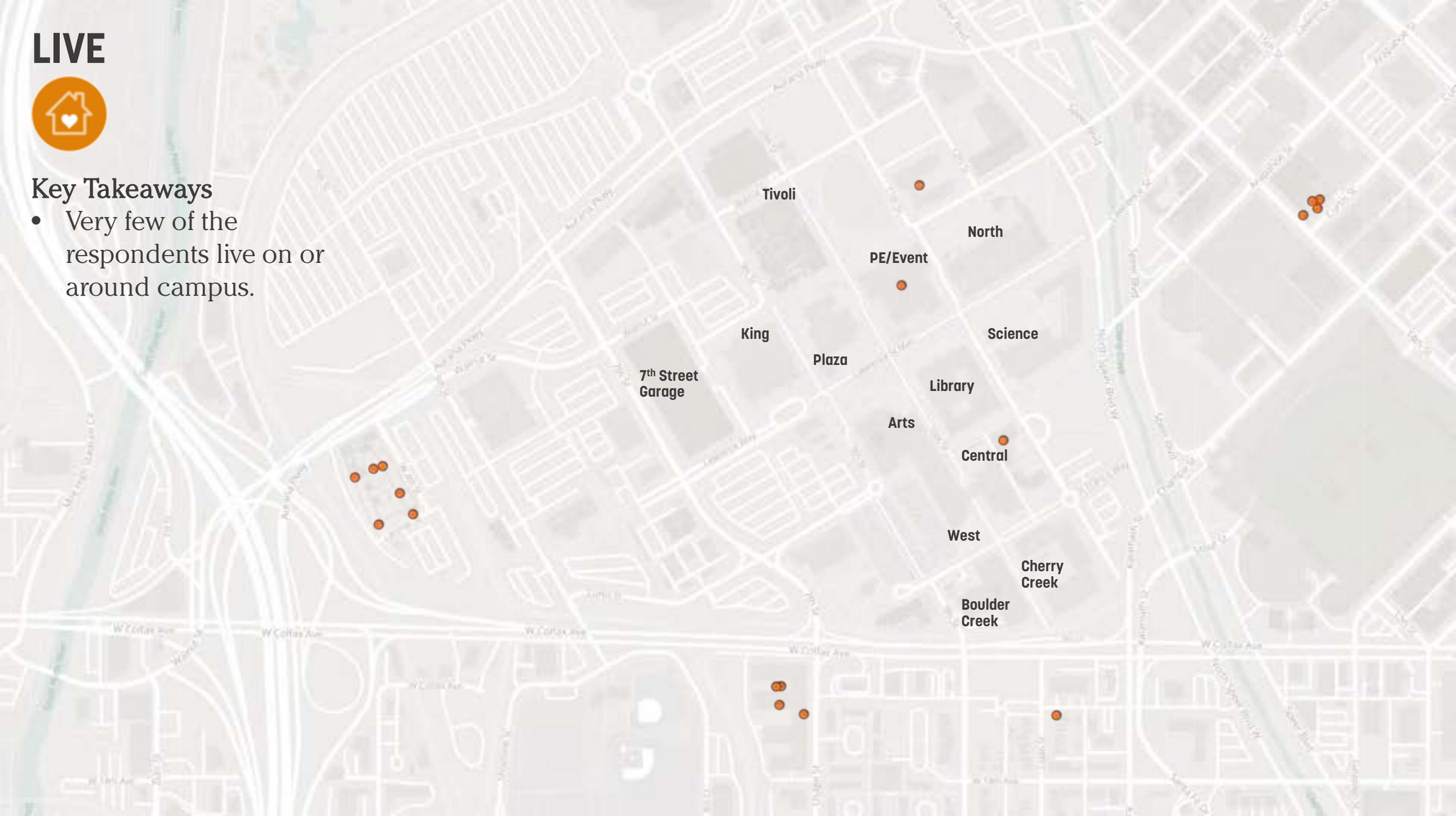


LIVE



Key Takeaways

- Very few of the respondents live on or around campus.

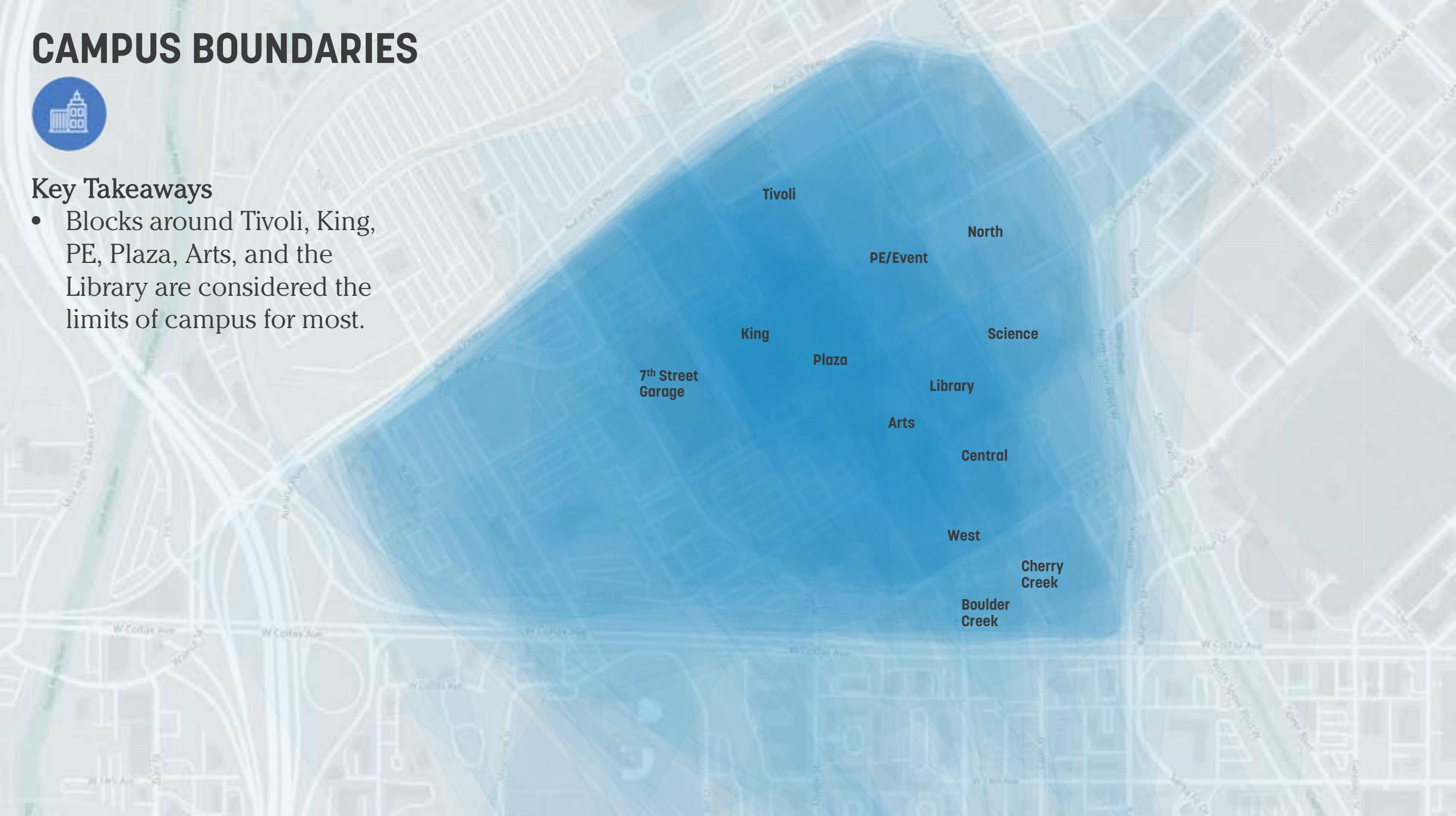


CAMPUS BOUNDARIES



Key Takeaways

- Blocks around Tivoli, King, PE, Plaza, Arts, and the Library are considered the limits of campus for most.



LEARN & STUDY



Key Takeaways

- Classroom spaces are well-distributed and positively reviewed.
- Study spaces are concentrated in the library, Tivoli, and more at the core of campus.

North

Most of my classes are in North Classroom, and this classroom is good.

CU Denver Building

This building has some wonderful features, there are great views ... we are disconnected from the campus amenities that we pay for in our fees...

King

Confusing.

Tivoli

King

Plaza

PE/Event

North

Science

Library

Arts

Central

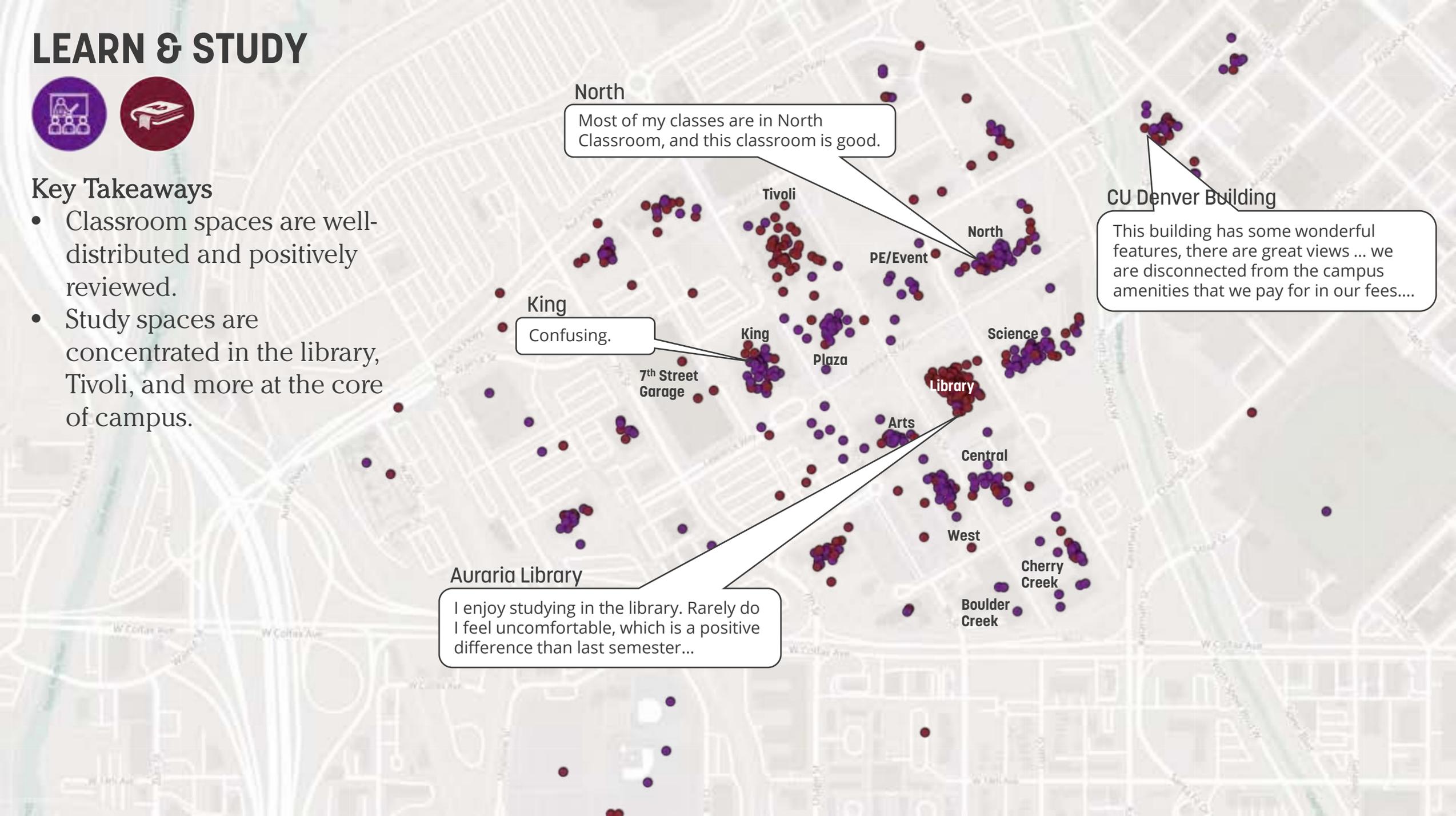
West

Cherry Creek

Boulder Creek

Auraria Library

I enjoy studying in the library. Rarely do I feel uncomfortable, which is a positive difference than last semester...



HANGOUT, RELAX, RECREATE



Key Takeaways

- Hangout, relaxation, and recreation spaces are primarily concentrated at the core of campus, up to 9th Street Park.
- Food is limited to Tivoli.
- Not many recreation spaces outside PE/Event Center.

Tivoli

The restaurants and events here make it the best place on campus to hang out.

PE/Event

The campus gym has all the equipment I need to work out

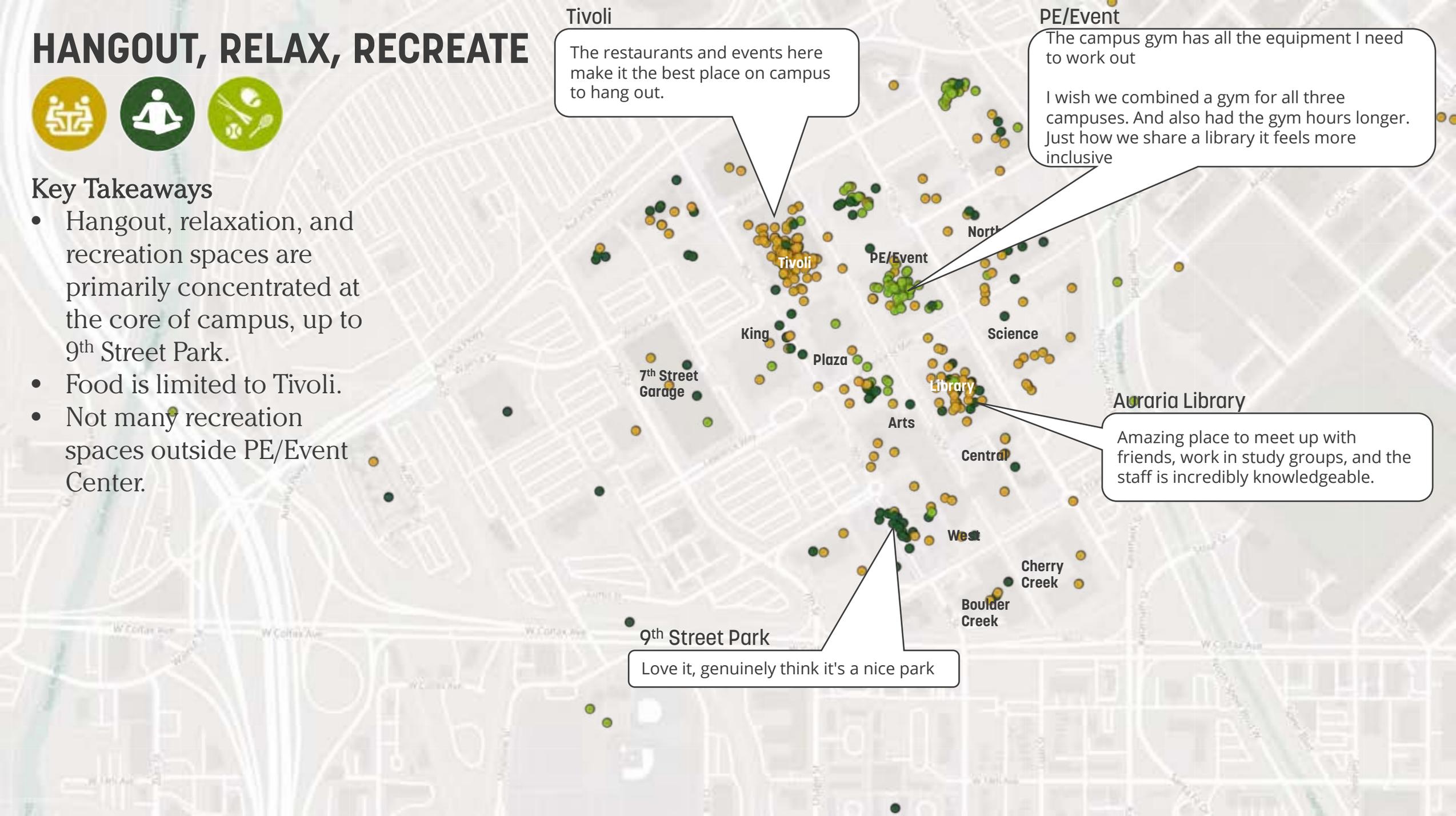
I wish we combined a gym for all three campuses. And also had the gym hours longer. Just how we share a library it feels more inclusive

Auraria Library

Amazing place to meet up with friends, work in study groups, and the staff is incredibly knowledgeable.

9th Street Park

Love it, genuinely think it's a nice park

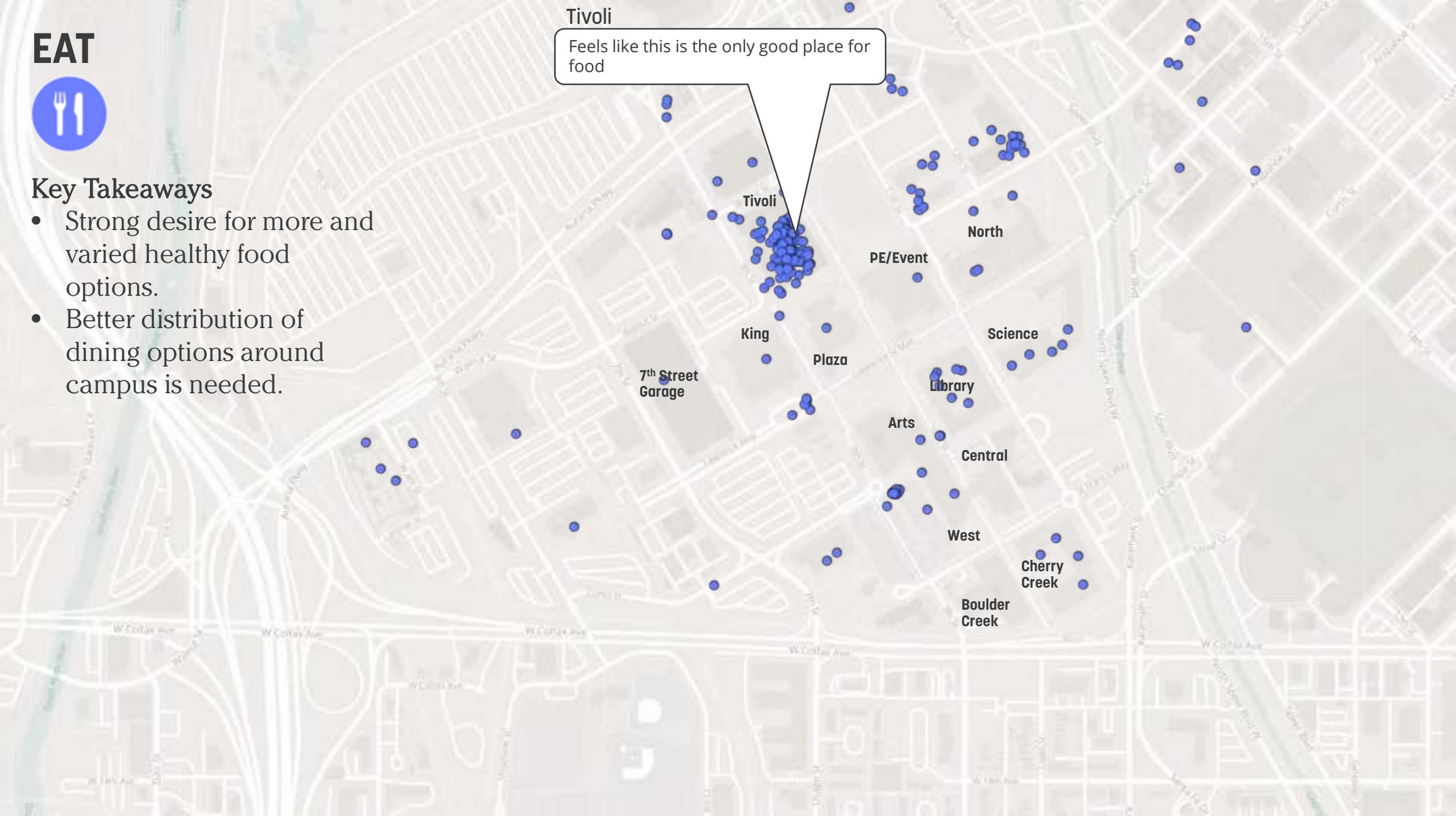


EAT



Key Takeaways

- Strong desire for more and varied healthy food options.
- Better distribution of dining options around campus is needed.



NEEDS IMPROVEMENT



Key Takeaways

- Lots of “improvement-needed” comments about access and mobility to and through campus.
- Lack of green spaces and outdoor seating.
- Desire for better utilization of surface parking lots.

Auraria & Speer

Horrible intersection! So many tourists and visitors to Ball Arena and Mile High cross this and I can see as I'm watching from the Wellness Center how difficult it is for them!

Open Plaza

There aren't a lot of green places on campus. This space could be improved by including more trees for shade, benches, and better kept grass to sit on the ground.

Holly Lot

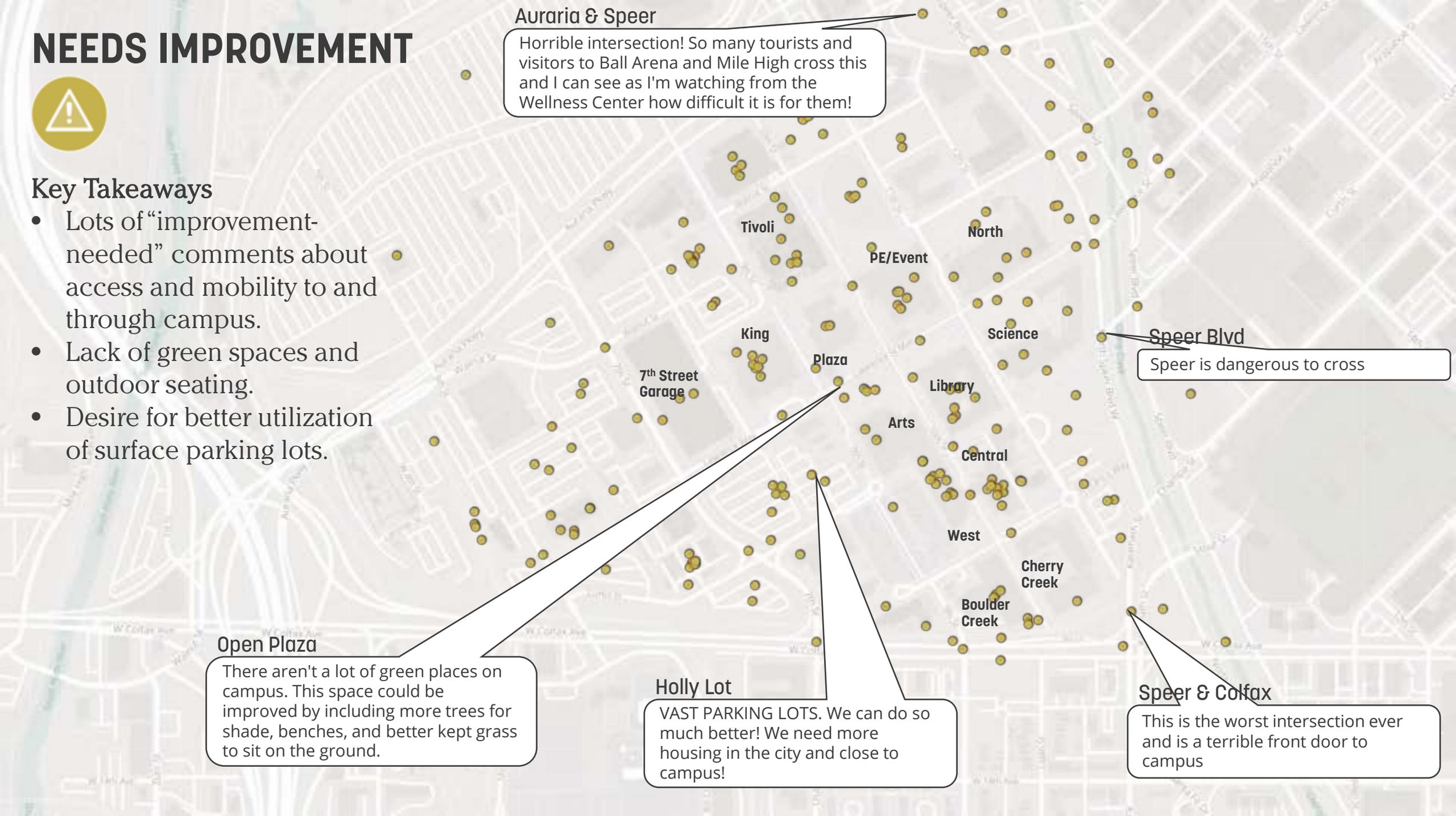
VAST PARKING LOTS. We can do so much better! We need more housing in the city and close to campus!

Speer & Colfax

This is the worst intersection ever and is a terrible front door to campus

Speer Blvd

Speer is dangerous to cross



HARD TO FIND



Key Takeaways

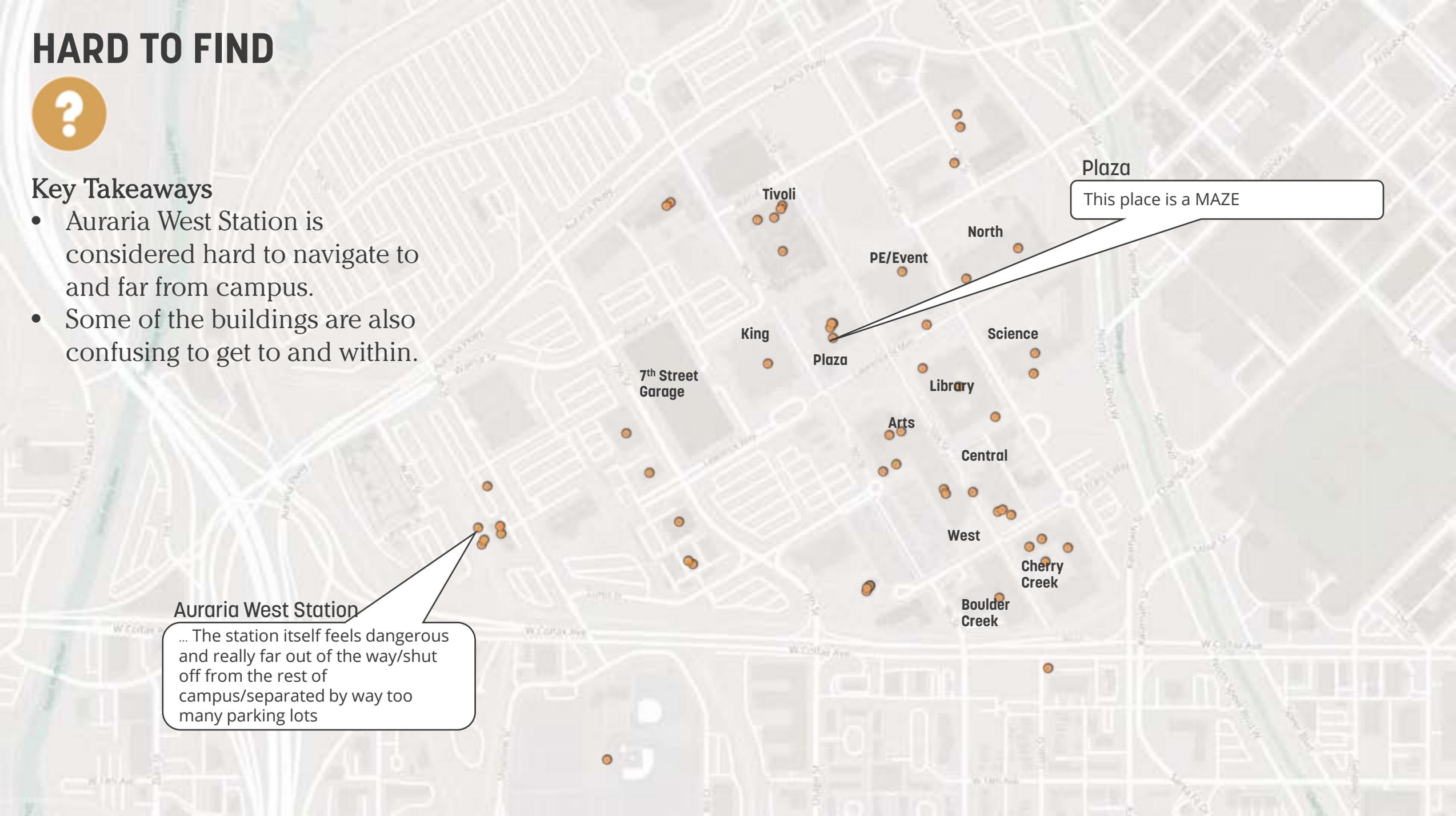
- Auraria West Station is considered hard to navigate to and far from campus.
- Some of the buildings are also confusing to get to and within.

Auraria West Station

... The station itself feels dangerous and really far out of the way/shut off from the rest of campus/separated by way too many parking lots

Plaza

This place is a MAZE



NOT INCLUSIVE



Key Takeaways

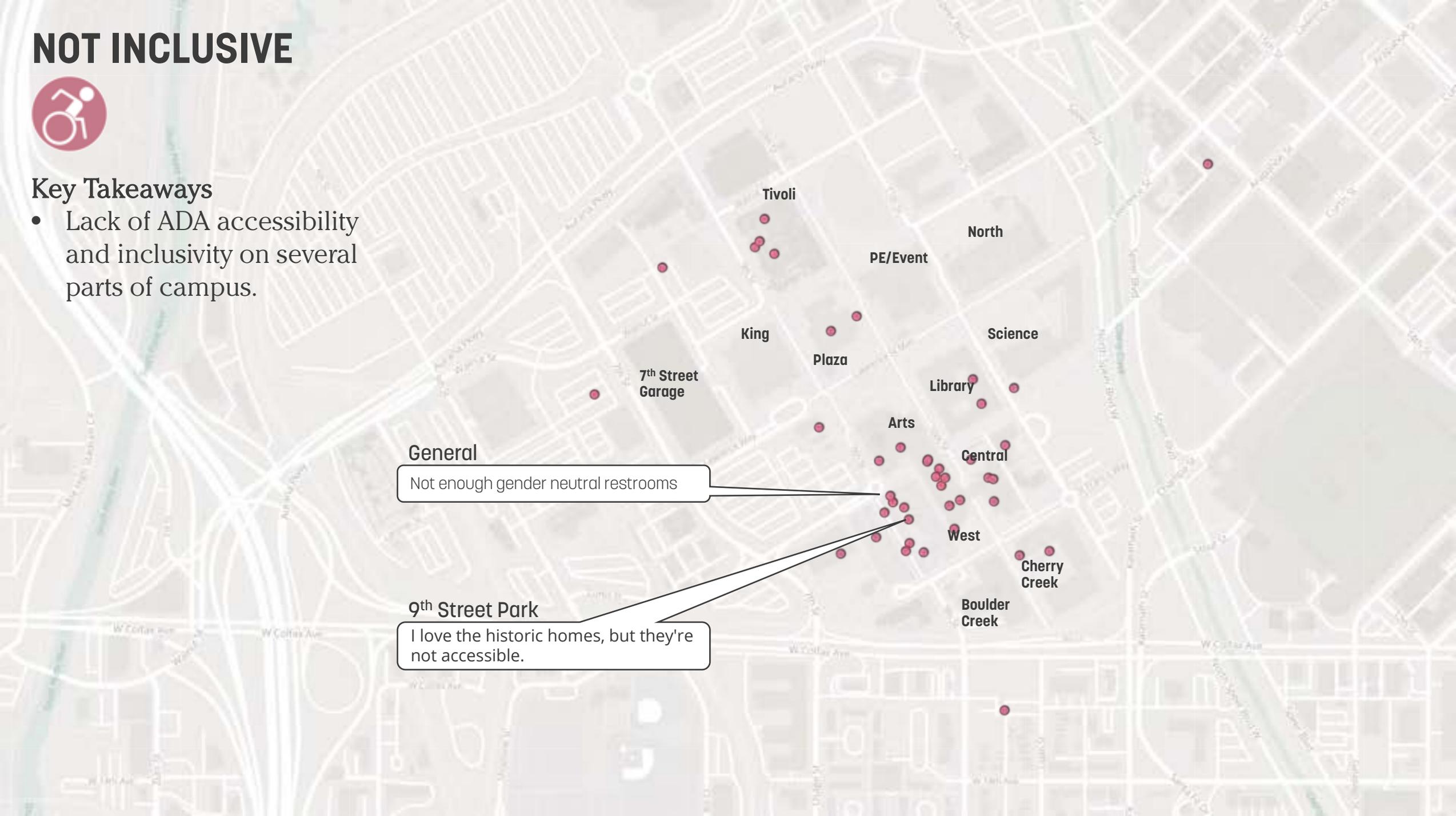
- Lack of ADA accessibility and inclusivity on several parts of campus.

General

Not enough gender neutral restrooms

9th Street Park

I love the historic homes, but they're not accessible.

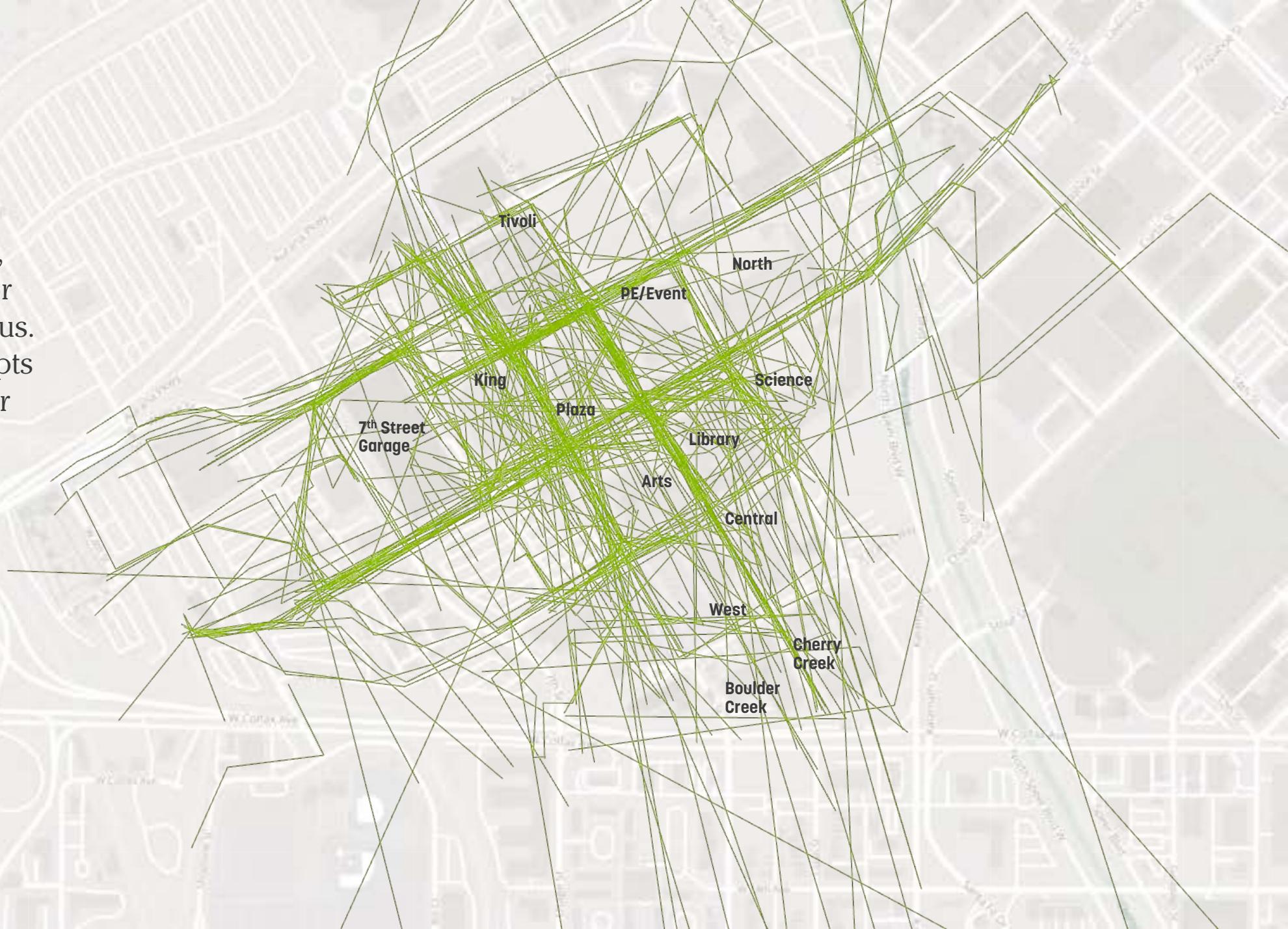


WALK / ROLL



Key Takeaways

- Larimer, Lawrence, 9th, and 10th Street are major thoroughways on campus.
- 7th Street Garage disrupts the walk along Larimer Street.



DRIVE



Key Takeaways

- Car access mainly from Auraria Parkway and Colfax Avenue.
- 7th Street is a major access road to campus, due to the garage and surface lots.
- Few access campus from Speer Blvd by car.



Open House #2

2 Open House days

Estimated over
200 attendees

130+ sticky note
comments



What do you find exciting about the plan?

"Love the green space shown"

"More priority for people walking and biking"

"A real urban campus, historic, inviting, and in downtown"

AMENITIES **CONNECTIVITY**
HISTORY **PUBLIC REALM**
SUSTAINABILITY **DENSITY** **MOBILITY**

"Greenway connections across barriers"

"More opportunities to live on campus, better use of space"

"More enjoyable pathways"

Any concerns you have about the plan

"Not enough green space"

"Create stronger connections to LODO, Ball Arena, Football, Sun Valley"

"Defined bike / scooter paths around pedestrian zones in addition to 5280 Loop path"

"Is housing crowding out educational space?"

FUNDING **ACADEMIC IDENTITY**
HONORING HISTORY **CONNECTIVITY** **AFFORDABILITY**
PUBLIC REALM **SUSTAINABILITY**
TOO COMMERCIAL **SAFETY/SECURITY**

"Green roofs and adopt a climate action plan"

"I was hoping to see a plan that honors the people who inhabited this land"

"Can students afford to live, eat, and buy on or near campus?"

"How is all this going to be funded?"

Initial Big Ideas

Create a campus that supports the growth of Denver as a **destination for education, innovation, sustainability and research**

Create a campus that **supports student engagement, increased opportunities for housing, interactions with the city, and quality of life**

Create a campus that has a distinct identity as an urban campus with **strong gateways and connections to the surrounding city**

Create a campus that supports growth of each institution by **increasing enrollment through attracting new students**

ABOD Retreat Summary

Framework

- Lots of constructive feedback on the framework.
- Some concern about compatibility with existing neighborhoods.
- Positive feedback on mixed-use / housing density and location, especially around transit hubs.

Development Process

- Overall consensus that increased collaboration could lead to more desirable outcomes for all.
- Concern around logistics, timing, and increased hoops to cross, potentially slowing down or preventing development.
- Desire to see details on who the integrated committee could be, how often they'd meet, and what specific criteria they would use to review projects.
- State representative at meeting confirmed that preferential funding would be given to more collaborative projects. Would love to see projects earlier in the process as well.

Preferred Framework



The Learning Loop



Urban Integration



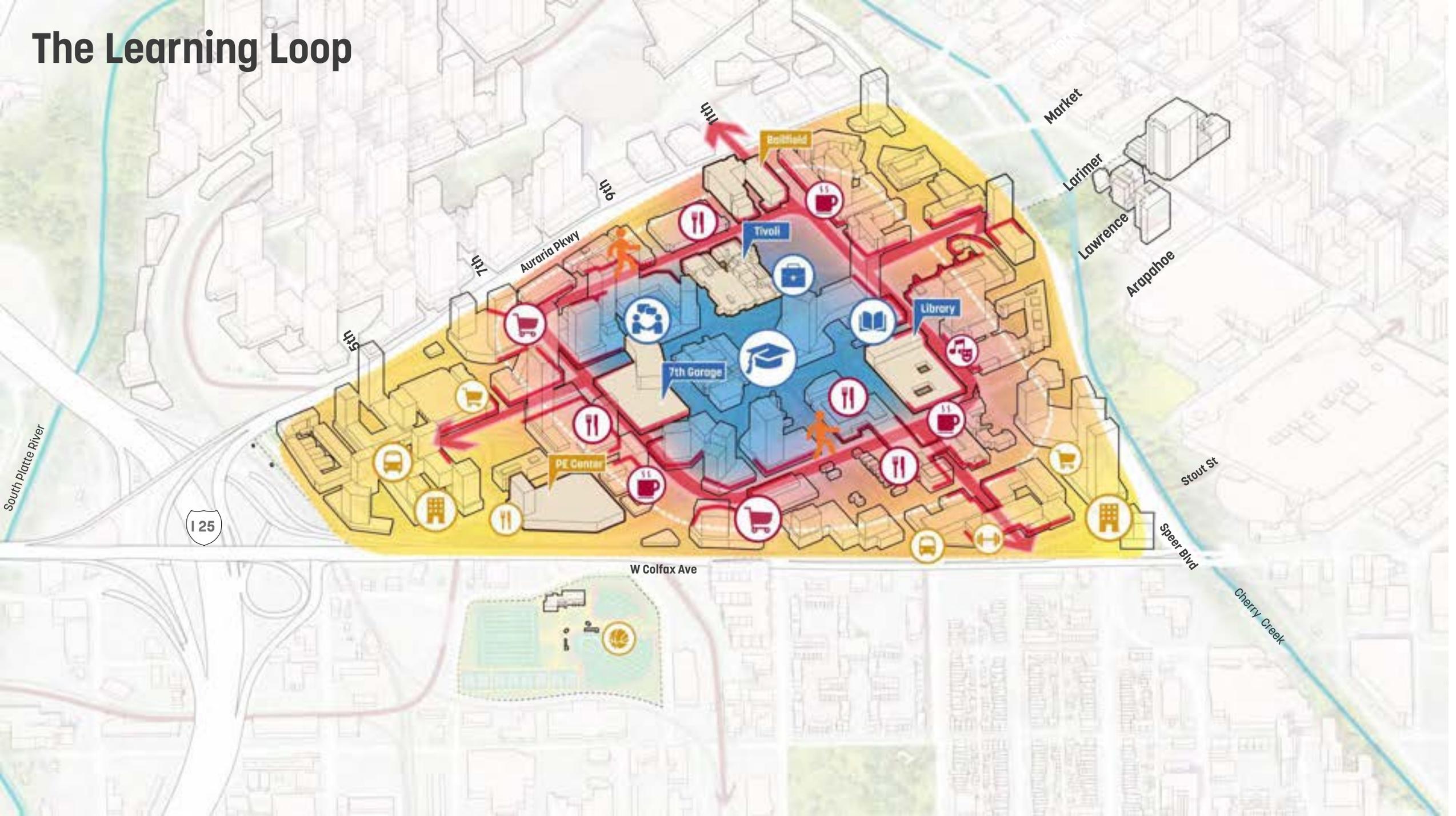
Predictable Development



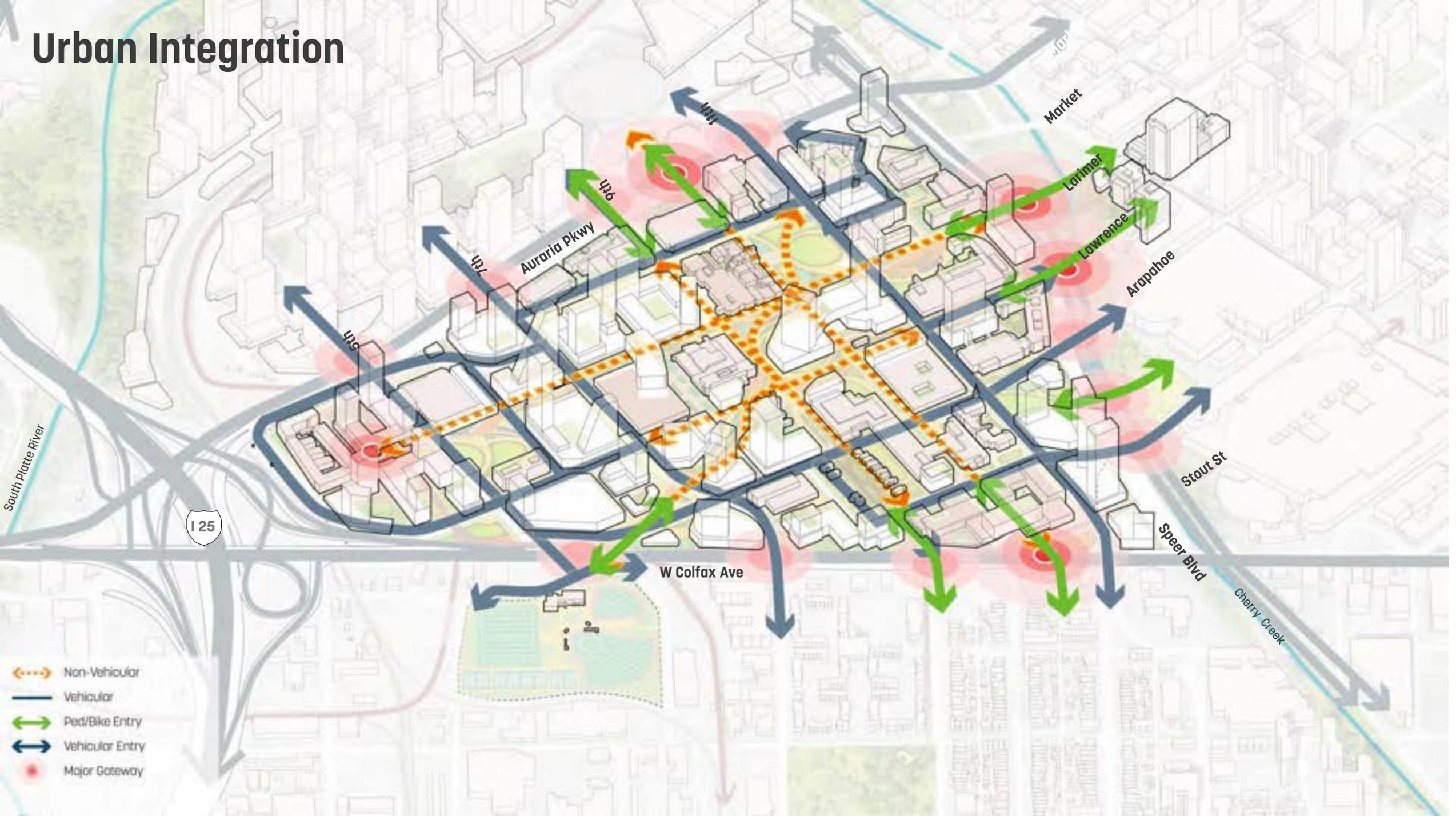
Vibrant & Active Public Realm



The Learning Loop



Urban Integration



South Platte River

I 25

Market

Larimer

Lawrence

Arapahoe

5th St

7th St

Auraria Pkwy

11th St

W Colfax Ave

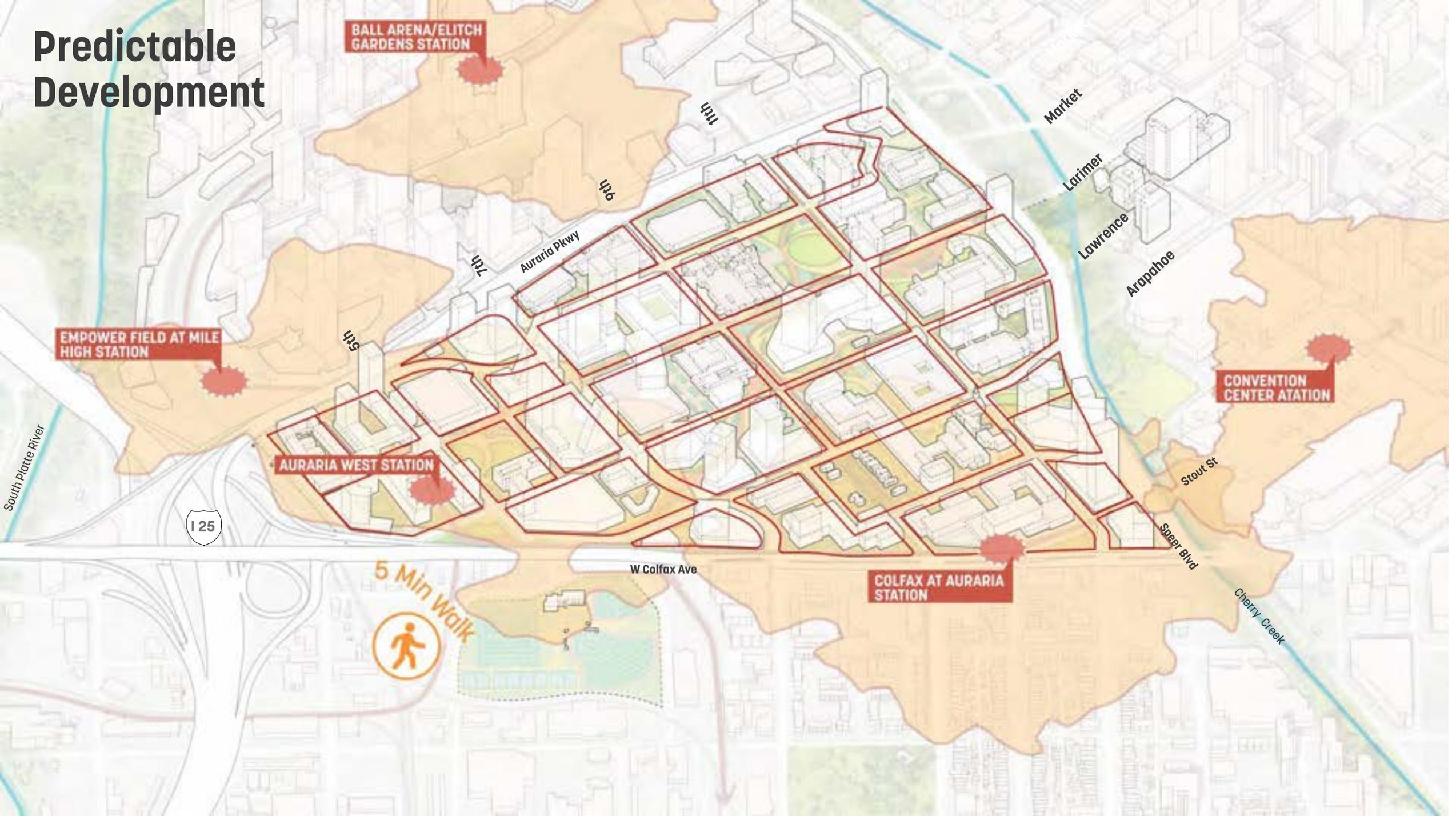
Stout St

Speer Blvd

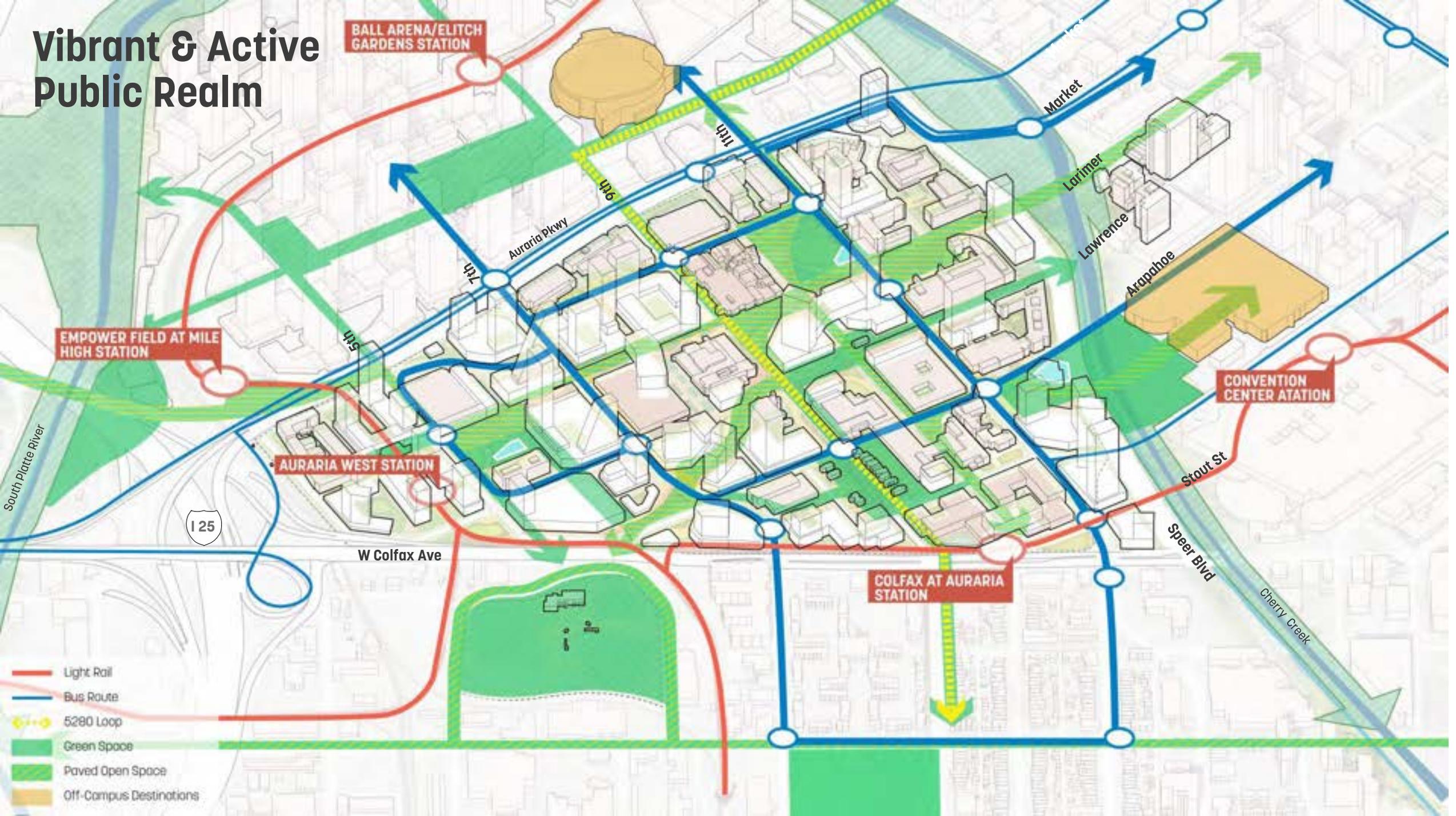
Cherry Creek

- Non-Vehicular
- Vehicular
- Ped/Bike Entry
- Vehicular Entry
- Major Gateway

Predictable Development



Vibrant & Active Public Realm



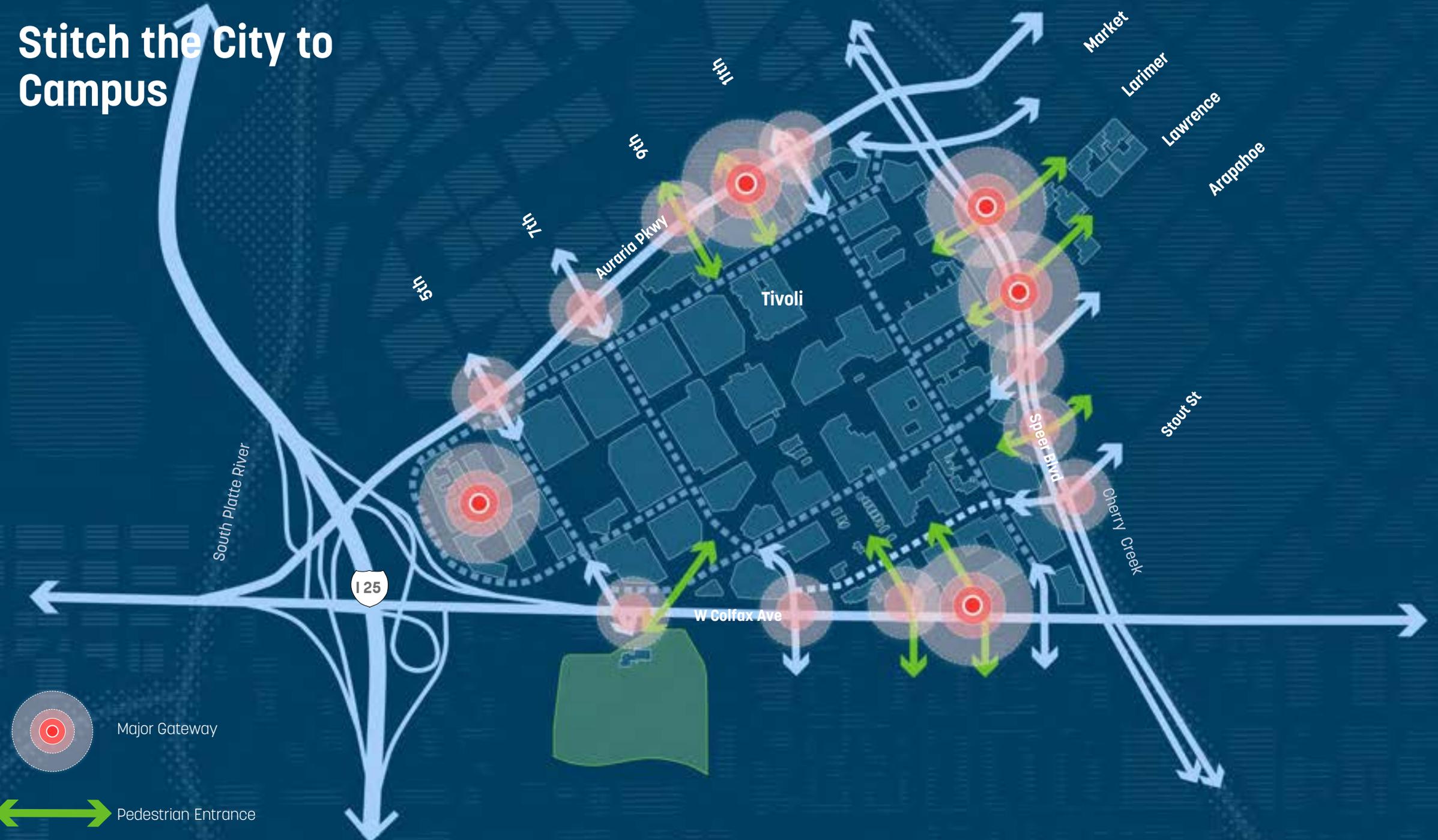
and Celebrate His



Create a Place to Learn, Live, Work, and Play



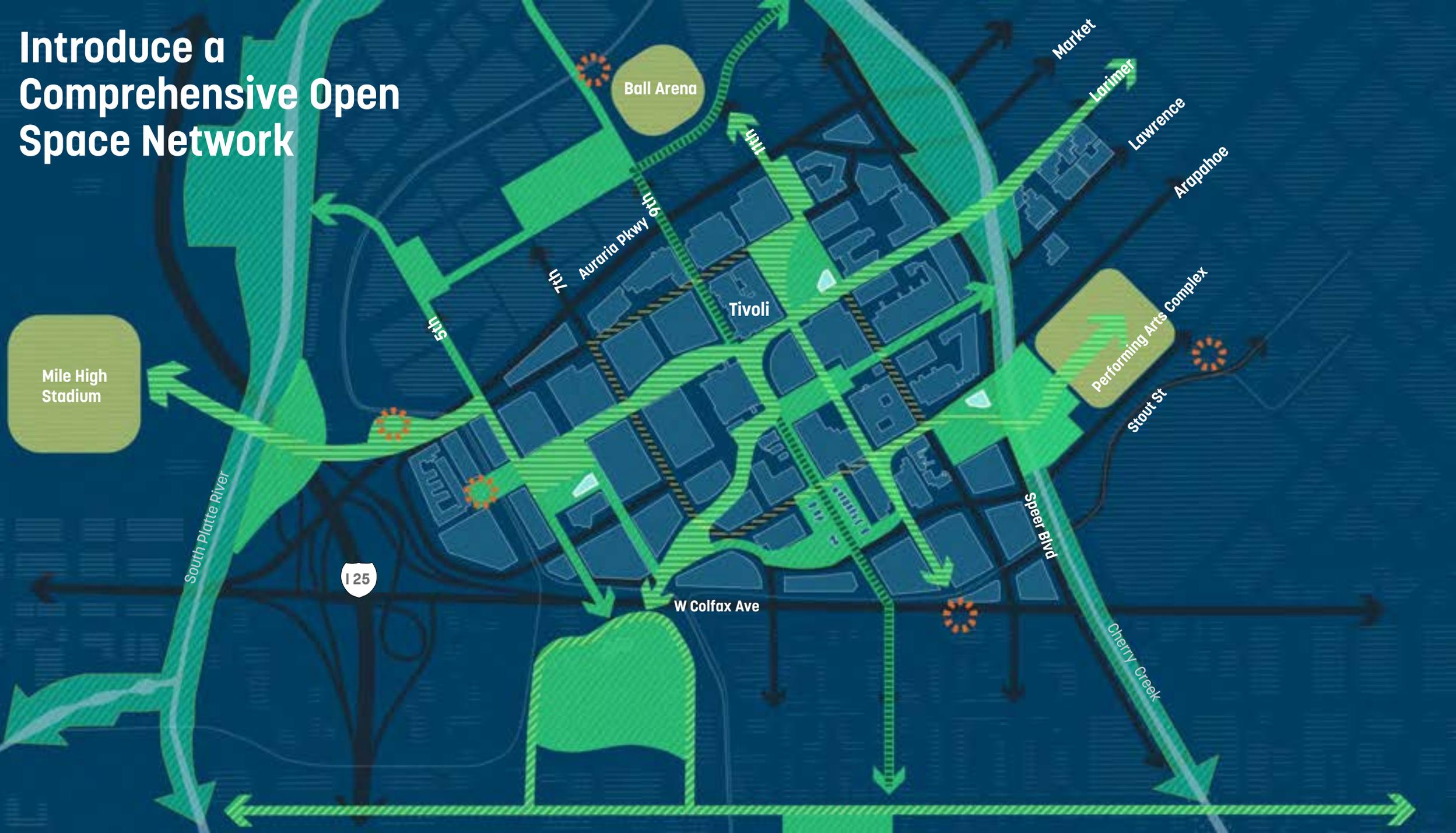
Stitch the City to Campus



 Major Gateway

 Pedestrian Entrance

Introduce a Comprehensive Open Space Network



The Headwater Campus



Open Space Big Idea:

- Connecting the two waterways and drawing inspiration for iconic campus open space experiences
- Establishing continuous tree canopy along the corridors
- Integrating stormwater management systems

-  Transit Station
-  City Trails
-  Beyond Campus Destinations
-  Open Space
-  Plaza Space
-  5280 Trail



Larimer and Lawrence from Speer

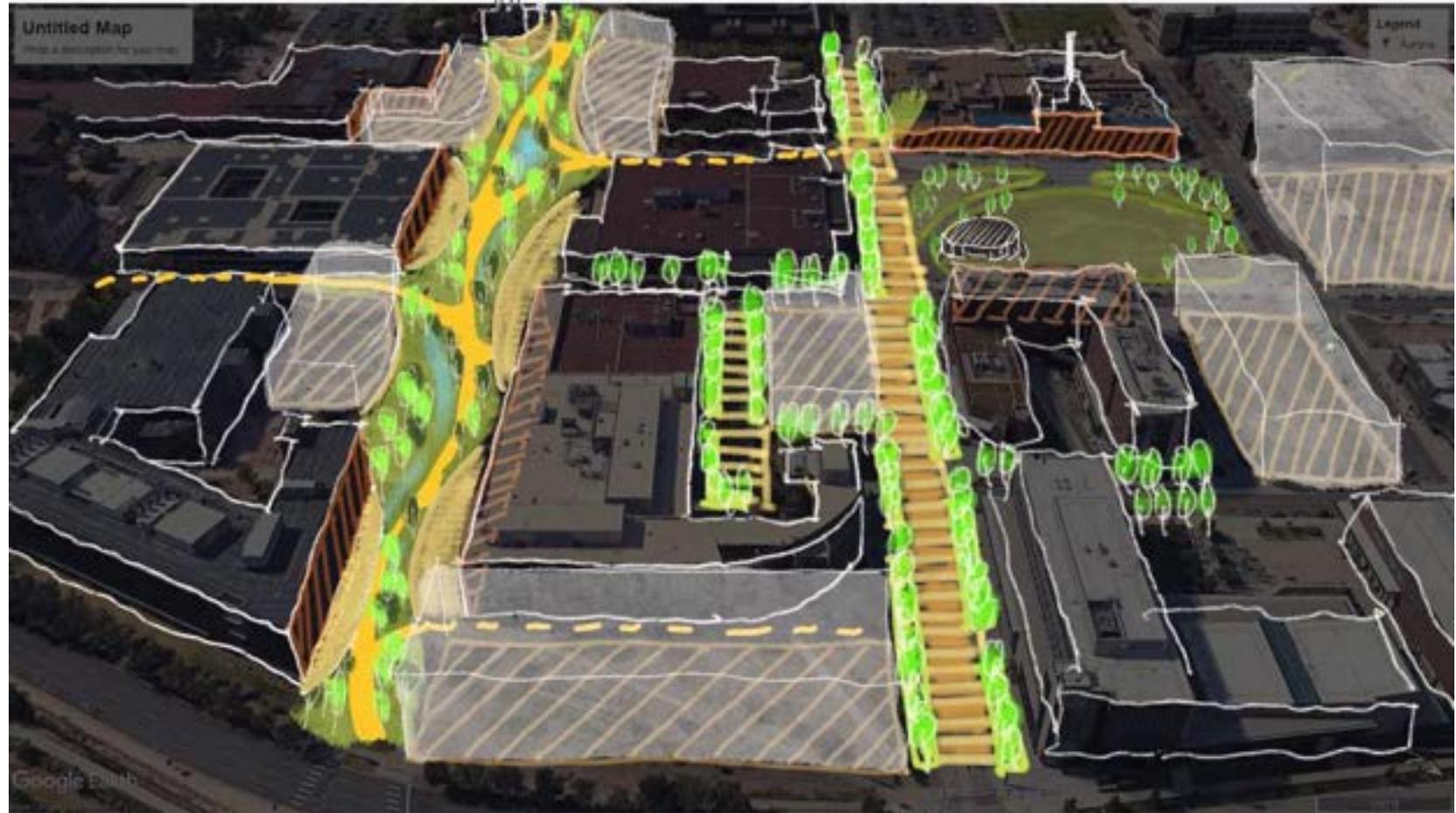
Key



Existing



Proposed

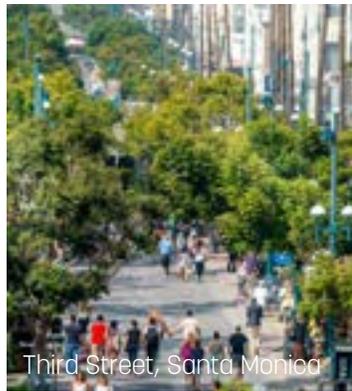


Lawrence

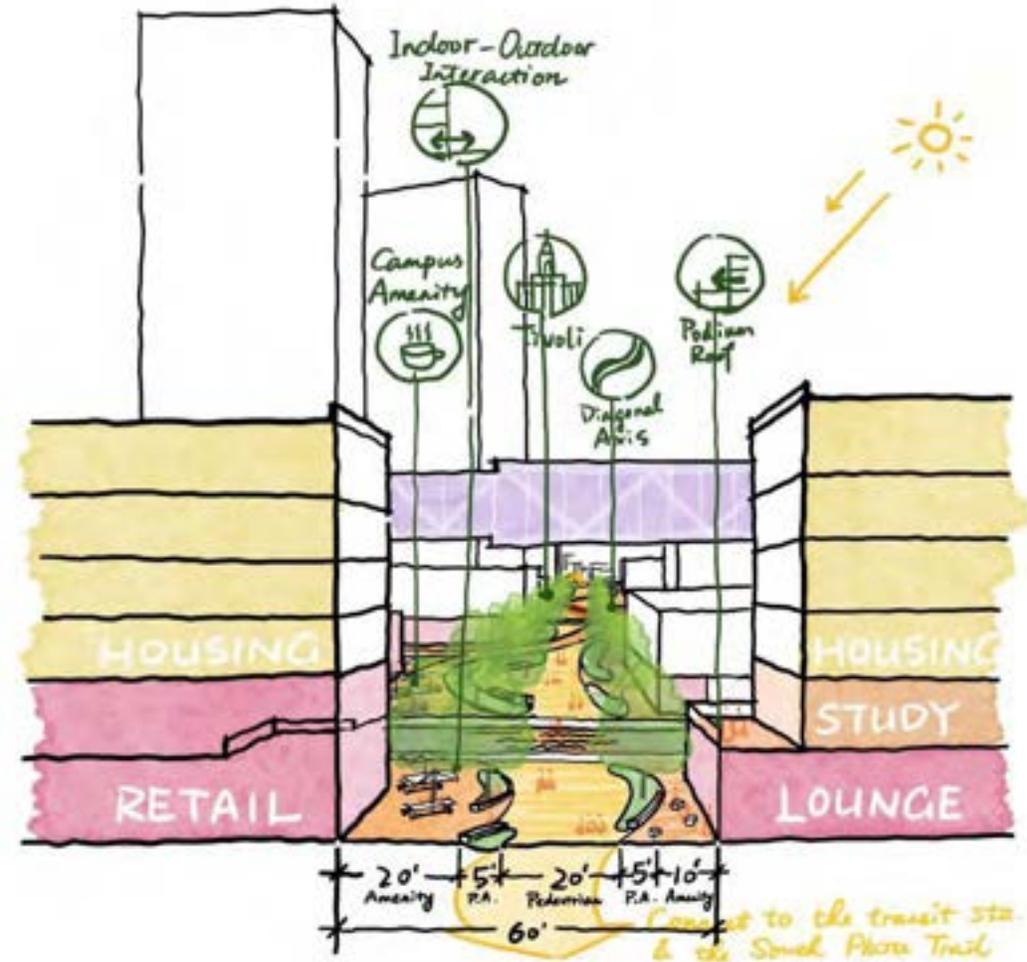
Larimer

Larimer Street

Precedents



Proposed



Lawrence Street



Precedents



Green Atrium, Amsterdam



Monash University



Walks, Reims

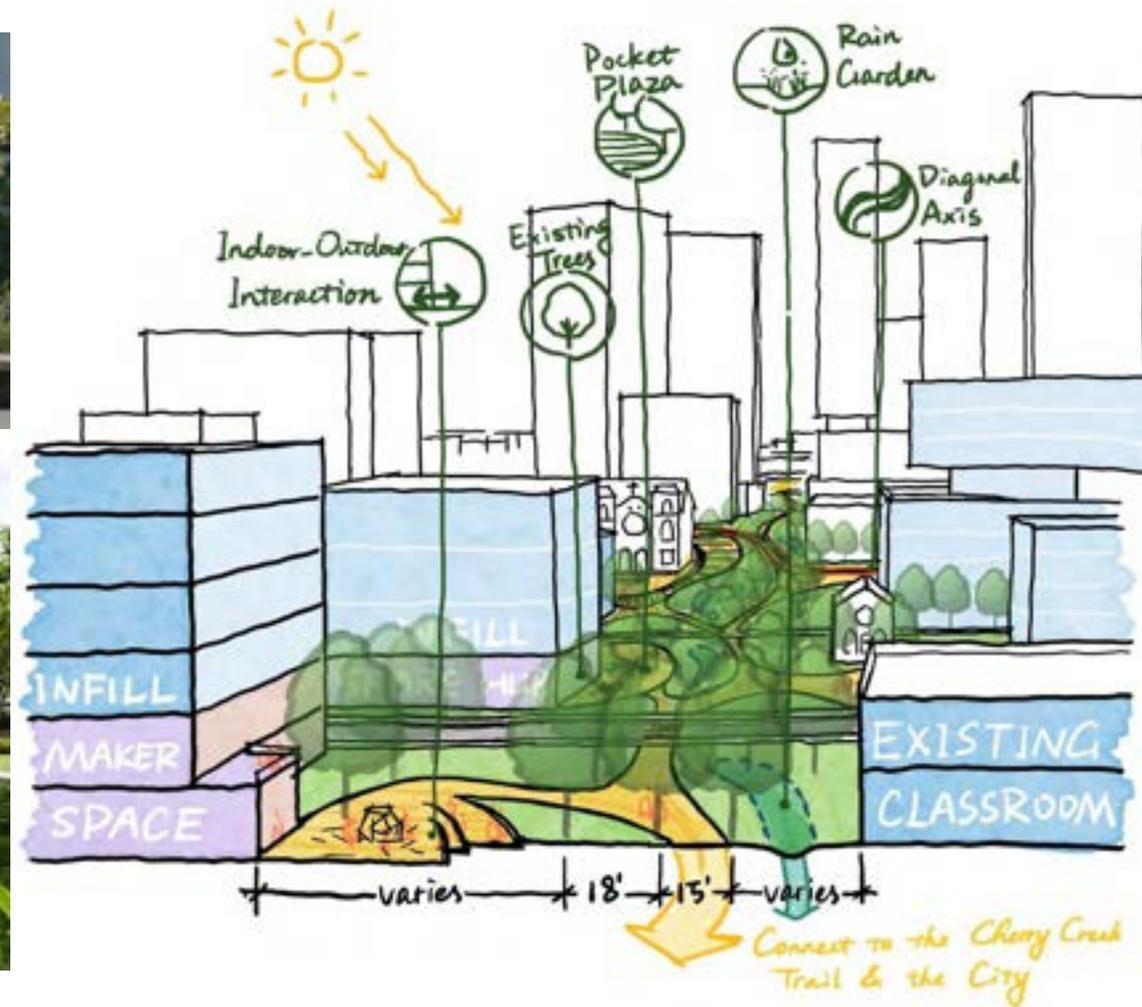


Fidelity Heart Zone, UK



Merriman Square, Cape Town

Proposed



Athletics Diagonal

The New Creek

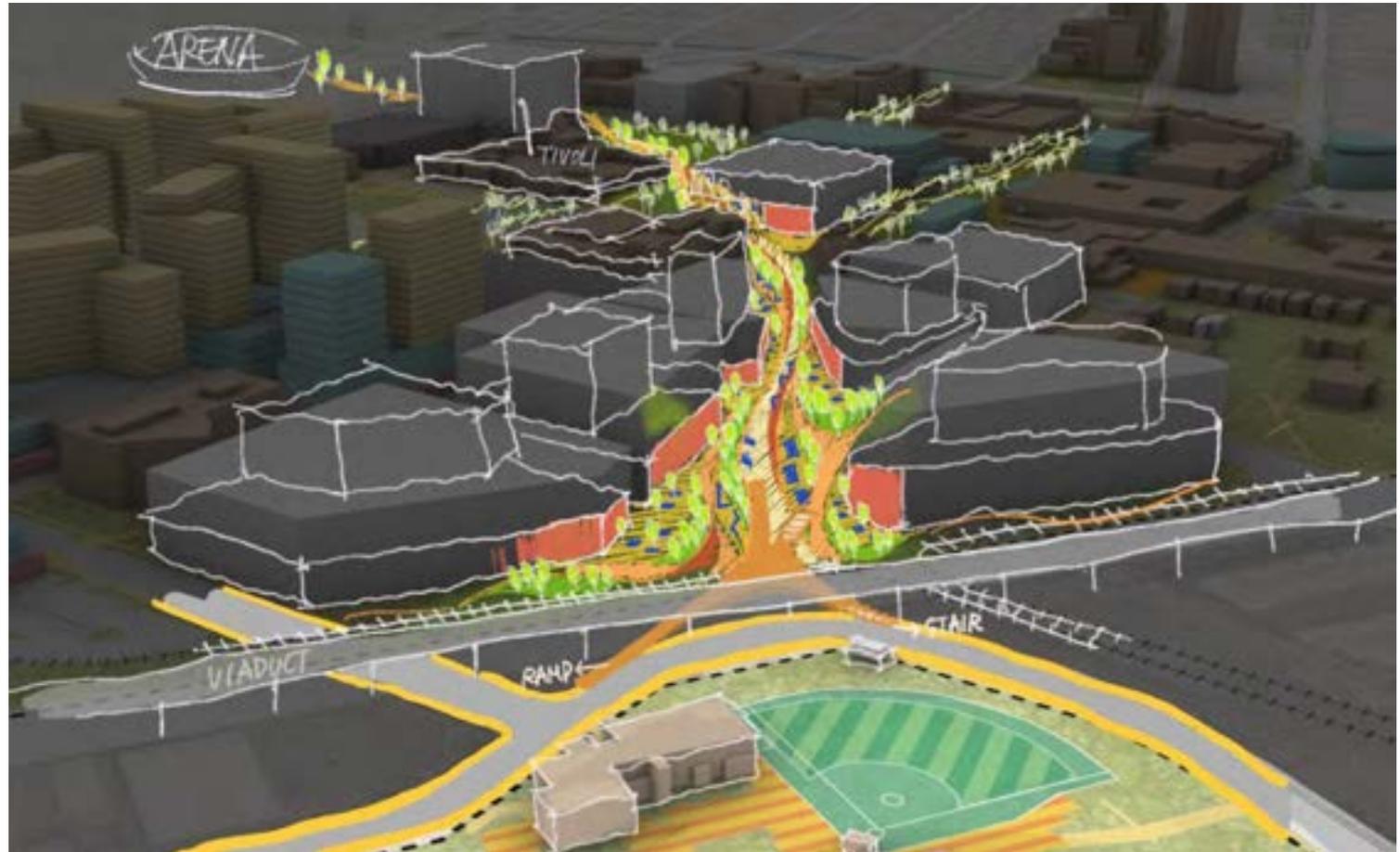
Key



Existing



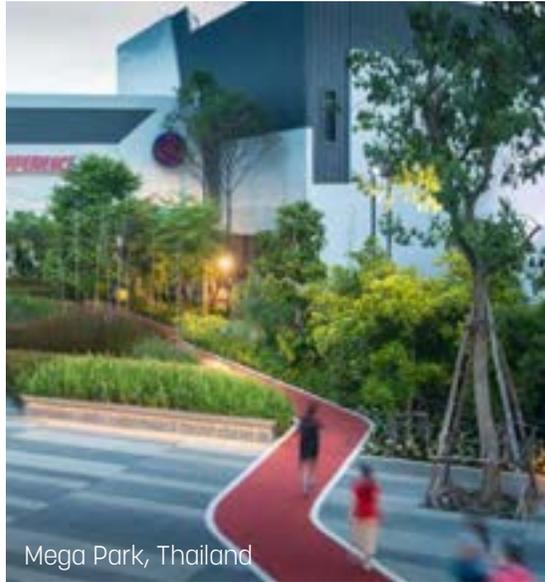
Proposed



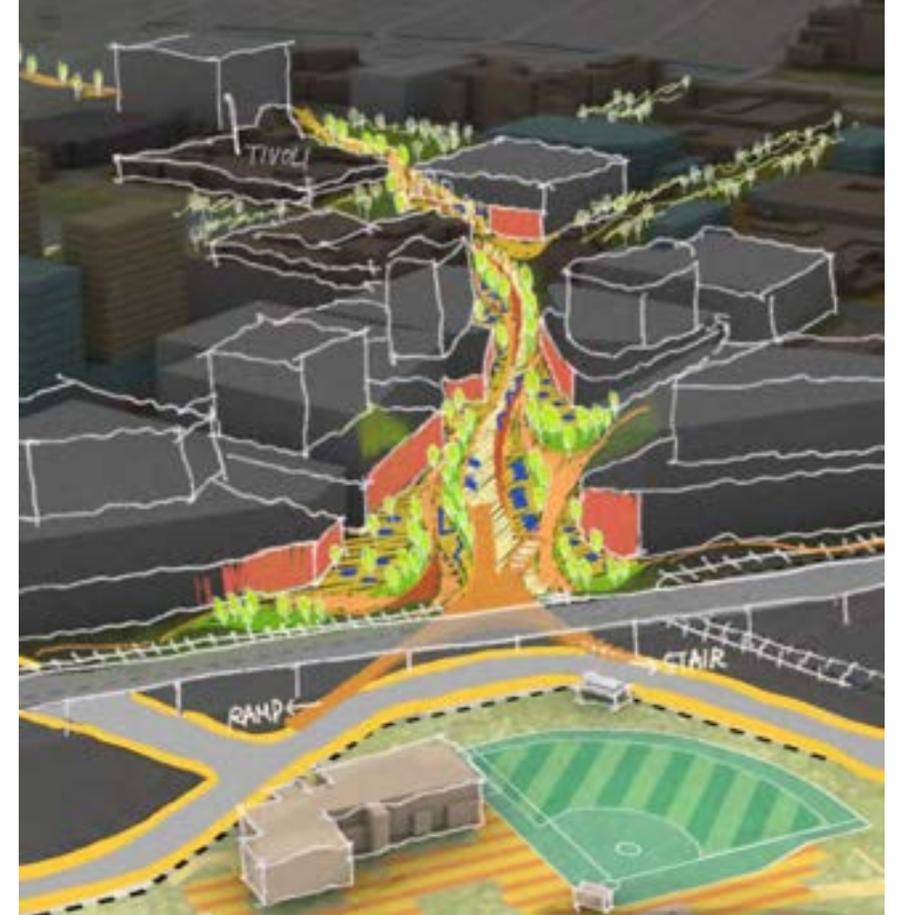
Athletics Diagonal

The New Creek

Precedents



Proposed



Regularize a Predictable Pattern for New Development

Redevelopment & renovations are prioritized based on FCI, optimal site and building use, and sustainability performance.



-  New or Re- Development
-  Major Renovation or Expansion

Make Room for Residential Density



Existing and Proposed Inner Loop

Existing



Proposed

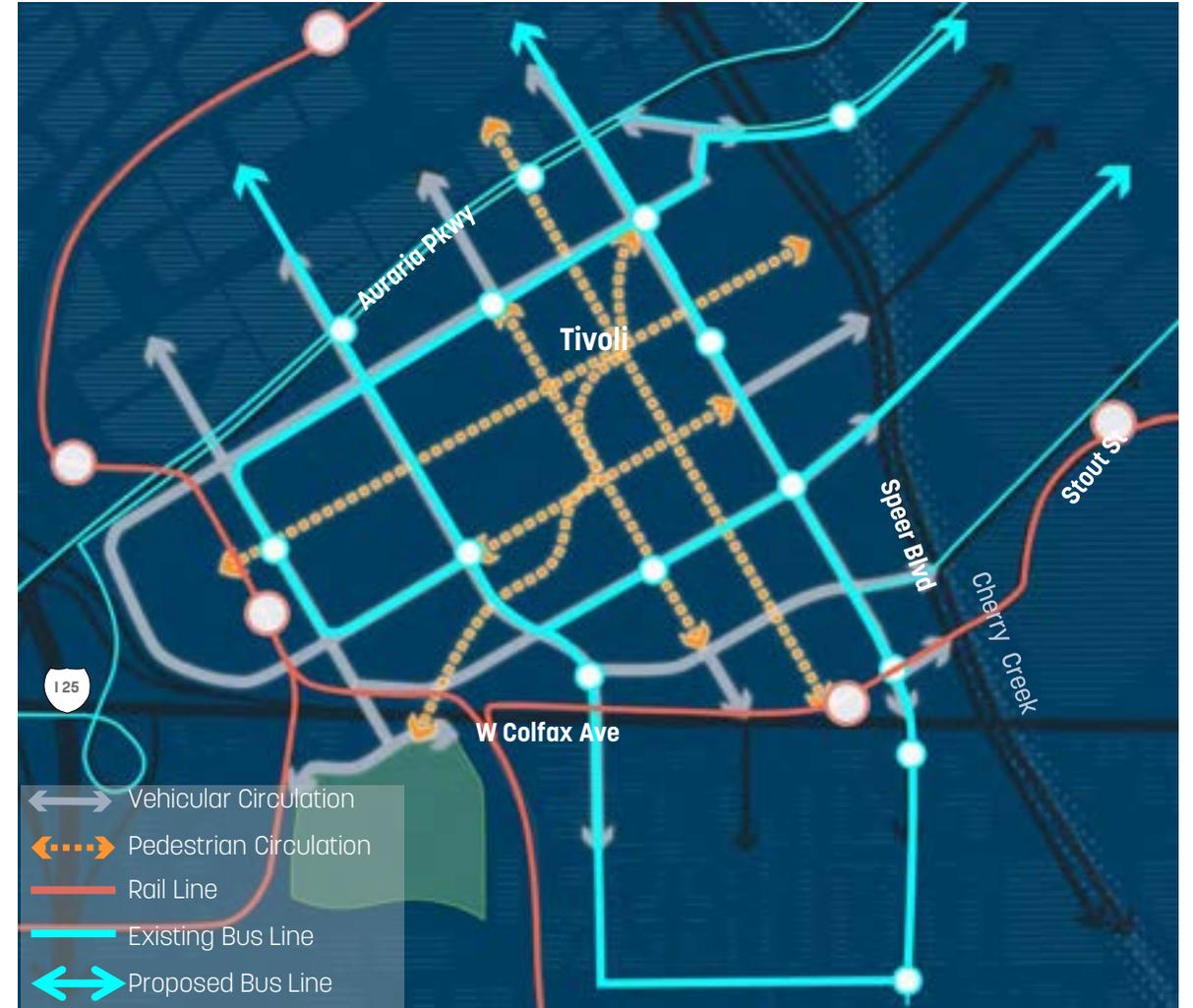


Show current vs proposed mobility grid side by side

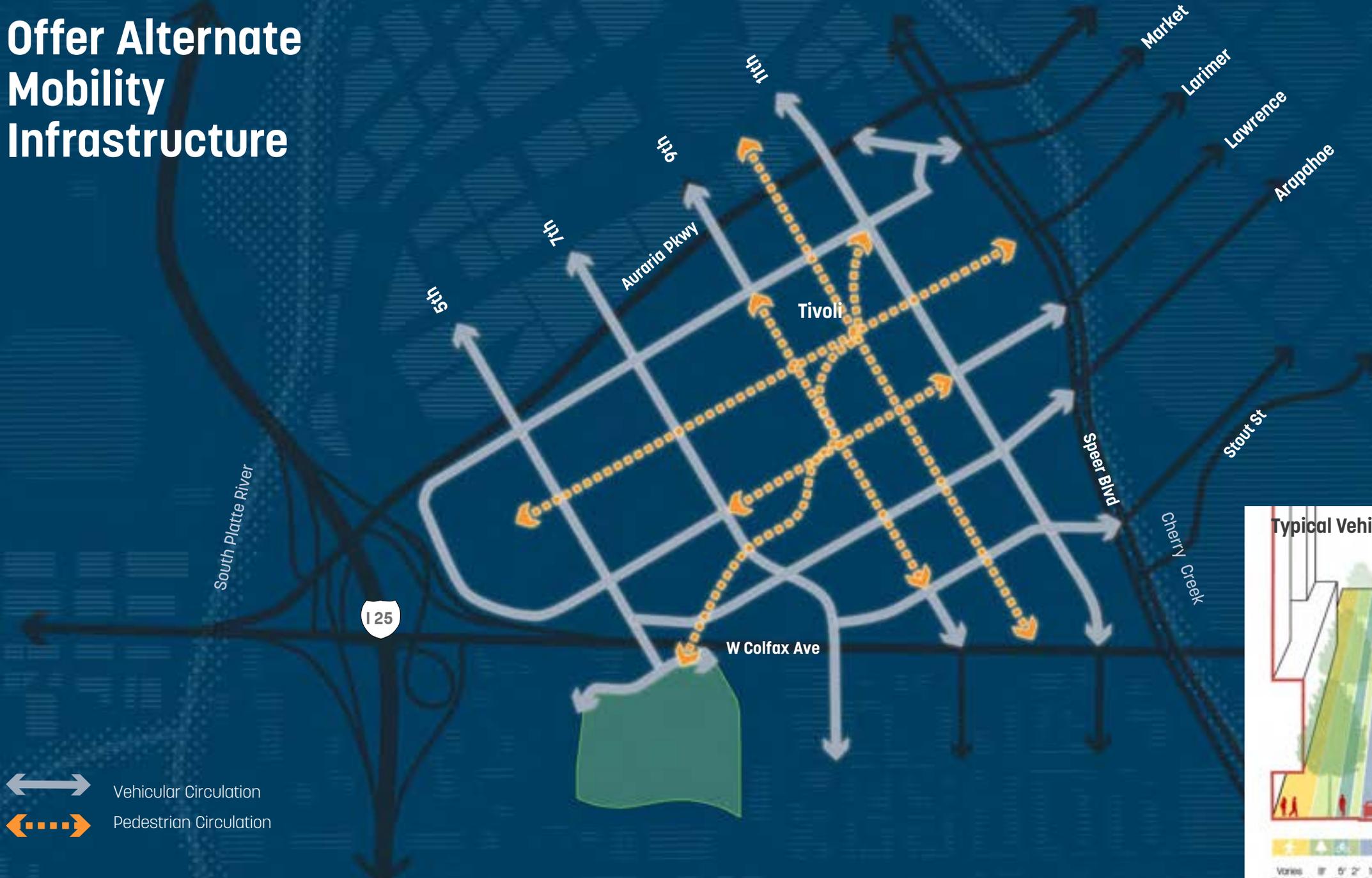
Existing



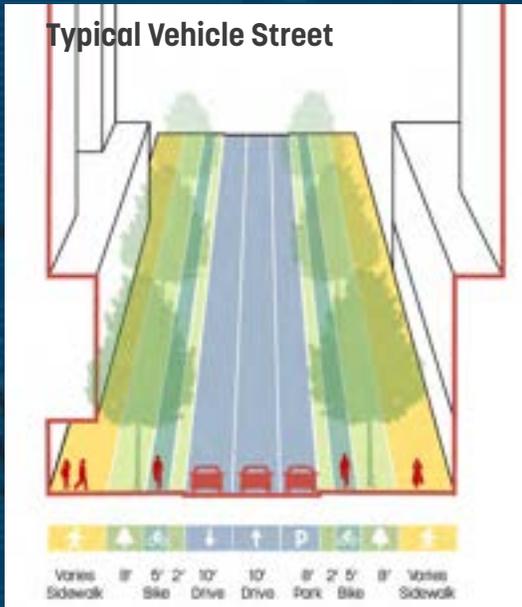
Proposed



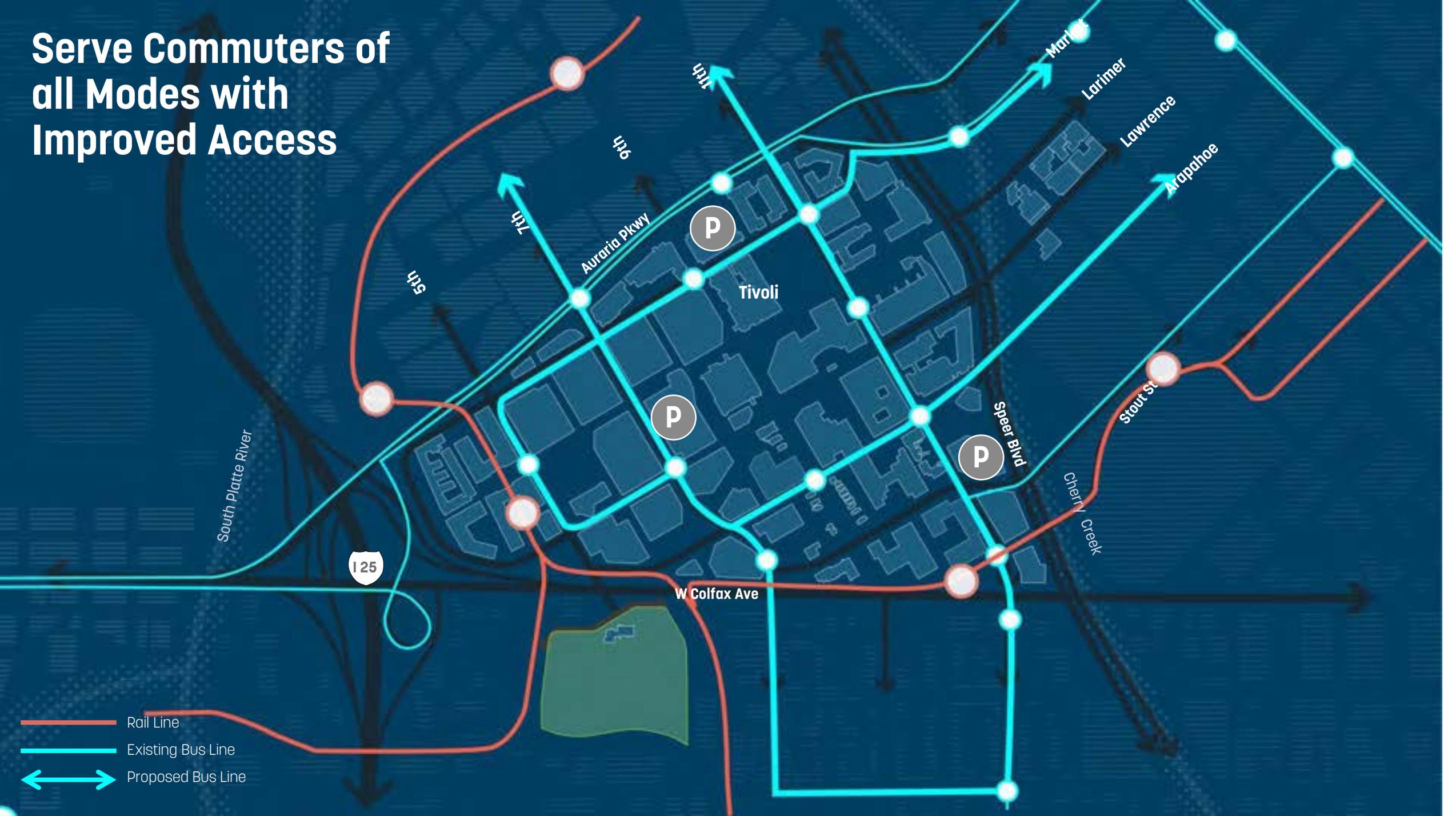
Offer Alternate Mobility Infrastructure



- Vehicular Circulation
- Pedestrian Circulation



Serve Commuters of all Modes with Improved Access



-  Rail Line
-  Existing Bus Line
-  Proposed Bus Line

DRAFT EMERGING FRAMEWORK PLAN



- Major Gateway
- New Mixed-Use Opportunity Site
- New Academic Opportunity Site

Implementation



DRAFT Integrative Planning Group (IPG) Proposed Process

New idea to ABOD soft approval 1-4 months.



- NEW IDEA OR NEED
- AHEC
- CCD
- MSU DENVER
- CU DENVER

Month 1



Institutions to communicate to their SLT

COLLABORATION & CHECK POINT

IPG meets monthly. Collaboration & checkpoint cycle not to exceed 3 months.

Months 2-3

IPG Project Report



AEC IDEA REVIEW

Month 4



DECISION

ABOD SOFT APPROVAL

Program Plan Development

IPG meets monthly. If program plan involves multi-institutional collaboration. Project to reengage IPG.

ABOD PRESENTATION FOR APPROVAL

DECISION



1. PROCEED TO DESIGN DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTATION
2. DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS WITH ABOD PRESENTATION



PLAN FLEXIBILITY

1. Each project should be mindful of its contribution to the campus' educational mission.

2. Proposed projects should carefully research and quantify their financial impact and contribution to Auraria and AHEC.

3. Siting future projects should closely refer to the long term vision and campus use zones identified in this plan.

4. Designing and orienting buildings as well as selecting building systems should reflect the sustainability and decarbonization goals identified in this plan.

5. Each new project should be designed with adjacent open space and wayfinding and signage simultaneously.

6. Infrastructural dependencies, including parking strategy and impact on utilities infrastructure, should be considered comprehensively for the campus.

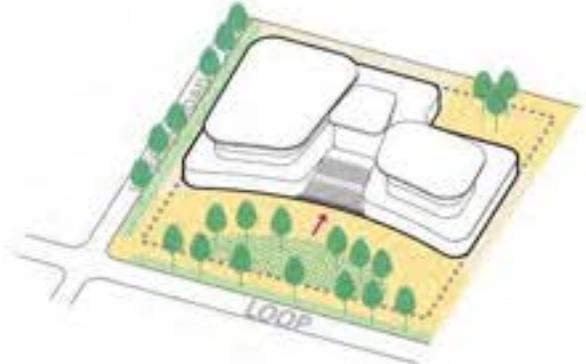
Building Typologies



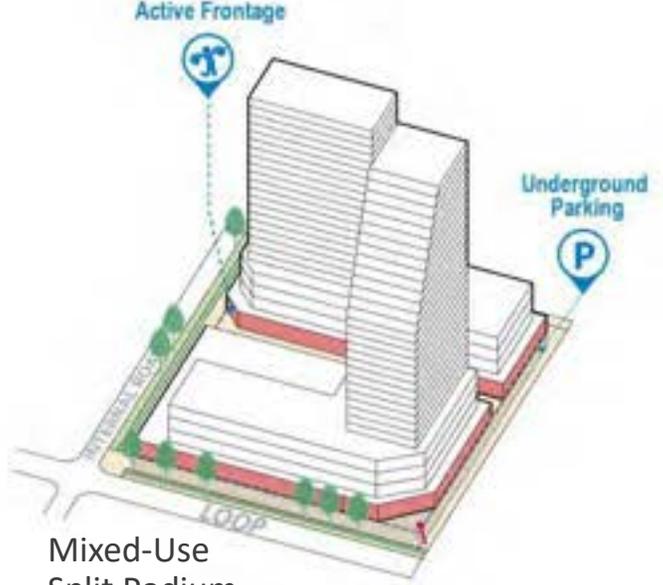
Low-Density Academic



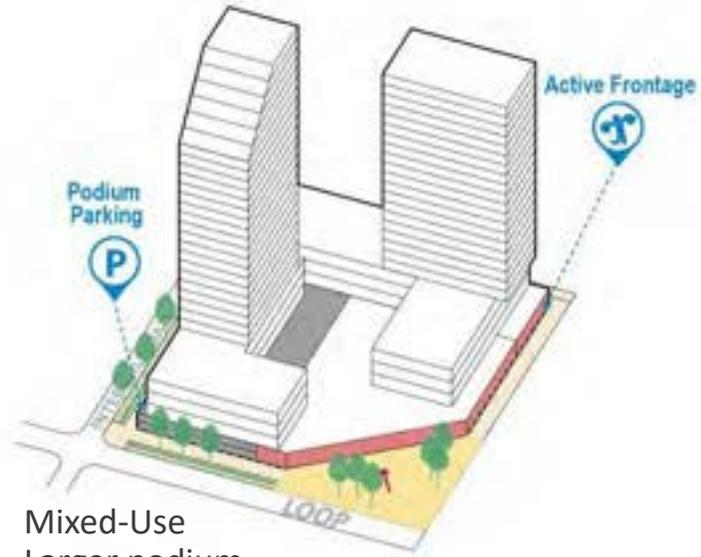
Higher-Density Academic



Special Use

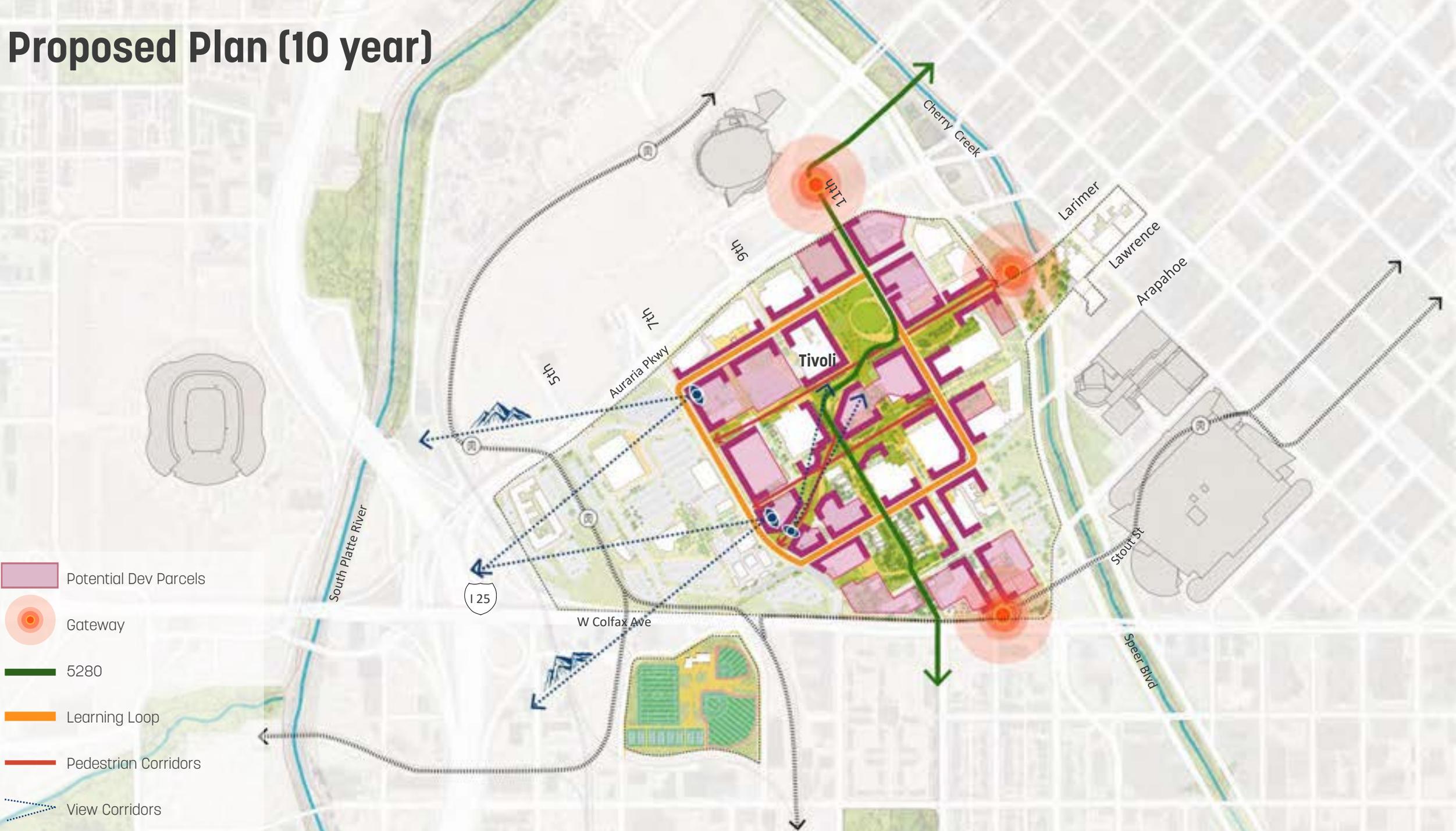


Mixed-Use Split Podium



Mixed-Use Larger podium

Proposed Plan (10 year)



-  Potential Dev Parcels
-  Gateway
-  5280
-  Learning Loop
-  Pedestrian Corridors
-  View Corridors

Proposed Plan

-  Potential Dev Parcels
-  Gateway
-  5280
-  Learning Loop
-  Pedestrian Corridors
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