

West Colfax Avenue Action Plan

January 2006



City of Lakewood



West Colfax Corridor Advisory Committee

The West Colfax Corridor Advisory Committee was appointed by Mayor Steve Burkholder and chaired by Councilor Bob Murphy. The Committee developed the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan, Vision Statement, Guiding Principles and Action Steps.

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Archived
April 27, 2015

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Executive Summary

The West Colfax Avenue Action Plan was developed through the cooperative efforts of West Colfax Corridor Advisory Committee and the City of Lakewood. The West Colfax Corridor Advisory Committee was comprised of business owners, commercial property owners, residents and representatives of the registered neighborhood organizations located adjacent to Colfax Avenue. By working together, a vision has been established and action steps identified to beautify and enhance the economic vitality of West Colfax Avenue from Sheridan Boulevard to Indiana Street.

The West Colfax Corridor Advisory Committee started the planning process with an in-depth analysis of the challenges and opportunities that exist on Colfax Avenue. Upon completion of this analysis, the Committee developed a Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, and Action Steps designed to achieve the Vision for the corridor.

As the Committee worked through the planning and visioning process for Colfax Avenue, the over-riding theme was a belief that Colfax Avenue is more than just a road. Specifically, the Committee believed that Colfax Avenue should be:

- A vibrant, unique and attractive *place* that provides a mix of small and large businesses and unique housing opportunities.
- A *place* that unites neighborhoods and celebrates the historic and eclectic character of northern Lakewood.
- A *place* that effectively and attractively balances vehicular needs with those of the pedestrian and the transit user.

Using these concepts as a framework, the Committee developed a Vision Statement for Colfax Avenue that states:

West Colfax Avenue Action Plan Vision Statement

“As a celebration of the historic and eclectic character of north Lakewood, Colfax Avenue will be a place that unites neighborhoods and provides a variety of vibrant businesses and housing opportunities for generations to come.”

Seven Guiding Principles were developed to achieve the Vision for Colfax Avenue. These Guiding Principles provide the structure of the Plan. The Guiding Principles are as follows:

Achieve the Vision
Make it Sparkle
Make it Vibrant
Maximize Transit
Invest Wisely
Value History
Get the Zoning Mix Right

Key Action Steps related to the seven Guiding Principles include: updating and revising the Colfax Overlay Zone District to develop a unique character and sense of place, analyzing the use of urban renewal powers to encourage redevelopment of properties along the corridor, forming a business improvement district, assisting property and business owners with façade improvements, developing events such as the Colfax Marathon to market the corridor and build excitement around the vision for Colfax Avenue.

In developing the Vision, Guiding Principles, and Action Steps, the Committee members realize that successful implementation of the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan will depend on forming creative partnerships and using creative financing strategies. The Action Plan cannot be implemented by just one entity. Achieving the Vision for Colfax Avenue will take a strong and creative partnership that includes business owners, property owners, neighborhoods, business organizations, neighborhood organizations, the City, the Lakewood Reinvestment Authority, and other agencies such as the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, Colorado Department of Transportation, and the Regional Transportation District.

Purpose of the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan

As an amendment to the Lakewood Comprehensive Plan, the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan will be used to guide the future of West Colfax Avenue. The Vision Statement, Guiding Principles, and Action Steps provide a plan of action for the future of Colfax Avenue. This vision includes changes to the Lakewood Zoning Ordinance, forming creative partnerships to implement the vision, and championing and cheerleading the unique and eclectic character of West Colfax Avenue.

As new development projects and redevelopment projects are proposed, the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan will be used as a measure of fit of a proposal with the Vision for the corridor. In measuring this fit, the City will work closely with the West Colfax Community Association and neighborhood organizations to ensure that the Vision for West Colfax Avenue is being achieved.

Planning Process

The West Colfax Corridor Advisory Committee developed the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan. This Committee was appointed by Mayor Steve Burkholder in April 2004 and chaired by Councilor Bob Murphy. The Committee spent many months learning about the challenges and opportunities facing Colfax Avenue. They met approximately twice a month for the entire planning period. In addition to education sessions, the Committee worked through two design charrettes and completed a photo exercise where they photographed things they liked and wanted to see along Colfax Avenue and things they disliked and wanted to see removed from Colfax Avenue. The information from the design charrettes and the photo exercise formed the basis of the Vision, Guiding Principles and Action Steps. This information was then refined by the Committee and presented to the Lakewood community at two open houses. The result is the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan.



Planning in Action

Citizens and Businesses Shaping the
Community's Future



West Colfax Avenue “an avenue of challenges and opportunities”

In developing the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan, the Committee embarked on an education about the issues and myriad of challenges and opportunities facing Colfax Avenue. As the Committee members analyzed these challenges and opportunities, they realized that both the challenges and opportunities frame the vision for West Colfax Avenue. When looking at the challenges, the Committee did not see these things as insurmountable but rather they saw areas that need addressing and used this perspective when developing the Action Steps. Many of the challenges and opportunities speak for themselves, however a brief summary of these issues is provided below. Where appropriate maps and graphics are also provided.

Challenges

Overall Colfax Image

West Colfax Avenue has always been a major transportation corridor. The focus on the corridor has been on moving people through the area to the mountains and into Denver. During the 1940's and 1950's many auto-oriented motels and associated businesses, such as restaurants were built to accommodate America's passion of traveling by automobile. This period of time was truly the prime time for West Colfax Avenue. Things were new and vibrant. However, as alternative routes to U.S. 40 were built and people started staying in other areas, the use of motels declined and they ultimately have become weekly rentals. The majority of the restaurants have changed over into fast food restaurants or liquor stores. Additionally, there are many pawn shops and tattoo parlors. These uses tend to result in a negative image for West Colfax Avenue.



Example of Older Area of West Colfax Avenue

Vacant Buildings and Lots

Along West Colfax Avenue in Lakewood, there are many vacant, boarded up buildings and vacant lots. The Committee members felt that these buildings and lots contributed to an overall sense that areas of Colfax Avenue are in decline rather vibrant and attractive.



Example of Vacant Parcel and Building on Colfax Avenue

Obsolete Buildings and Small Lots

Many of the buildings along Colfax Avenue were developed in the 1940s and 1950s and do not lend themselves to the needs of today's businesses. Additionally, small lots are frequently difficult to locate businesses upon because there is insufficient space for today's parking and landscaping needs and requirements.

Complex Ownership Patterns

In many areas along the corridor, the ownership of lots and buildings is complex. Many of the landowners are out of state and frequently unaware of the appearance of their properties. Complex ownership patterns can work against a tenant's desires to upgrade buildings and properties.

Marginal Commercial Developments

West Colfax Avenue is home to the majority of the City of Lakewood's used car lots, pawnshops and liquor stores. While these uses by themselves are not bad, large concentrations of these types of uses do not represent the image that the Committee members want to see for Colfax Avenue in the future. Additionally, these uses are not ones that encourage people to stay and shop or play in the corridor.

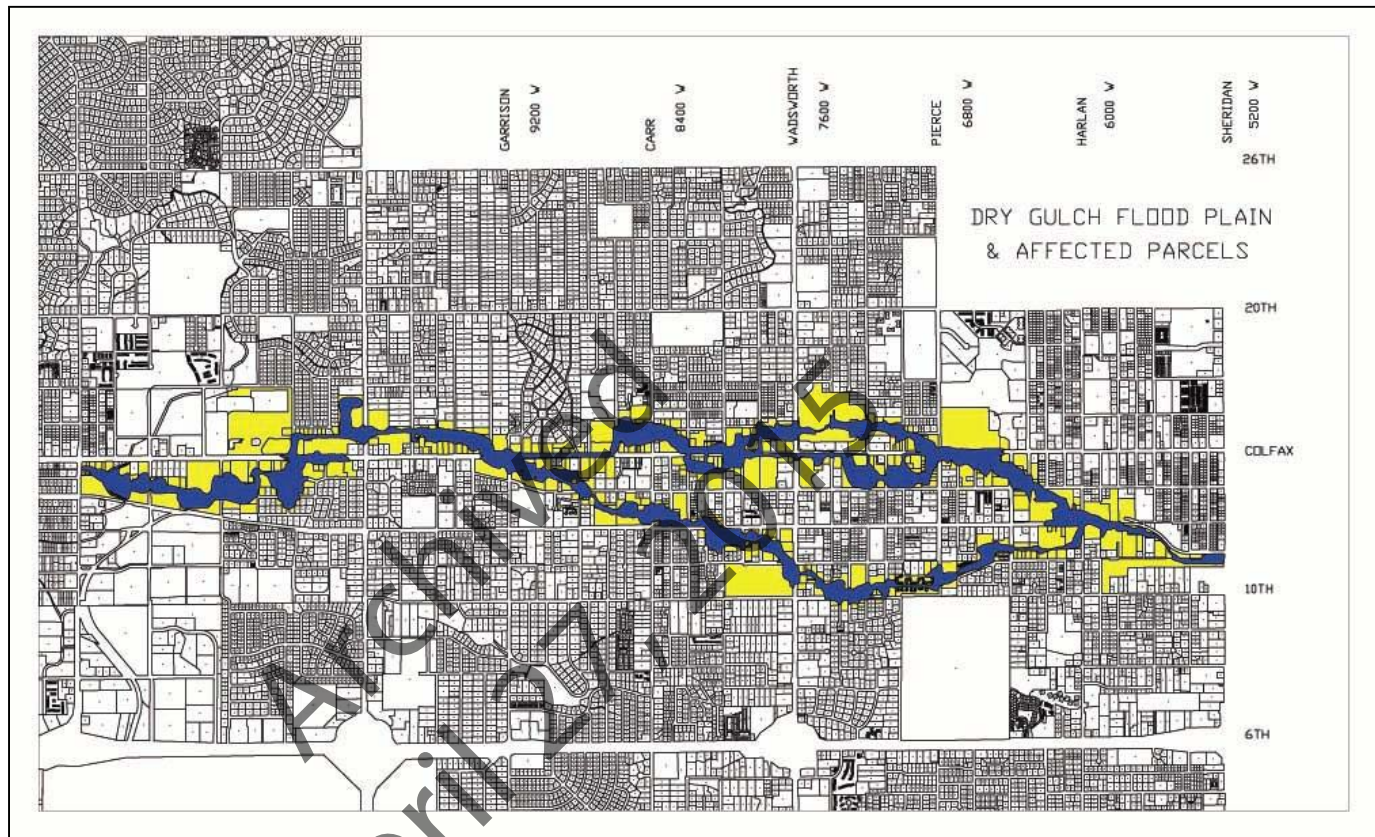
Lack of Infrastructure

Currently, many areas along Colfax Avenue are missing sidewalks and brick pavers and landscaped medians. These amenities provide not only safe pedestrian travel paths and safe traffic operations, but also contribute to the corridor's identity. A major limitation to completing the sidewalk and brick paver system and landscaped medians is the lack of available right-of-way. In order to complete these systems, land will need to be purchased or easements obtained from adjacent property owners. This is frequently problematic due to the small size of the properties along Colfax Avenue.



Example of Marginal Commercial Development on Colfax Avenue

Floodplain and floodways are one of the key challenges to development and redevelopment efforts along Colfax Avenue. As seen in the map, the majority of West Colfax Avenue is covered by floodplain (shown in yellow) and floodway (shown in blue). As owners and tenants attempt to redevelop and develop properties, they are required to meet current standards pertaining to floodplains and floodways and this represents a substantial cost. Frequently, this cost alone will cause a project to not go forward.



State and Federal Highway Designation and City Designated Major Arterial

Currently, Colfax Avenue carries approximately 27,000 vehicle trips per day. Colfax Avenue is officially named U.S. Route 40 and runs from the east coast to the west coast of the United States. Additionally, the City of Lakewood has designated Colfax Avenue as a major arterial. These designations clearly recognize that the job of Colfax Avenue is to carry vehicular traffic. As the Committee addressed this issue, they recognized the importance balancing vehicular needs with the needs of the community to ensure that Colfax Avenue provided a good image for their City and neighborhoods and connects rather than separates the neighborhoods along the corridor.

Opportunities

History and Unique Character

Throughout the planning process for the future of West Colfax Avenue, the Committee always came back to the history and unique character of the corridor as the key strength of the area. These are things that set Colfax apart from other commercial corridors, these will be things that ensure that West Colfax Avenue becomes and remains a quirky, eclectic area for shopping, working and living.

Light Rail Transit and Key Regional Bus Route

The implementation of light rail transit along 13th Avenue is a major opportunity for those living and doing business in the Colfax corridor. The line is slated to start operation in 2013 and planning efforts for the station areas are currently underway. The Committee members strongly recommend that business and property owners participate in these planning processes to ensure that effective connections are made between Colfax Avenue and the light rail stations.



Davie's Diner on Colfax Avenue

Overlay Zone District

The City of Lakewood adopted an overlay zone district for West Colfax Avenue in 1992. The Overlay Zone District is a set of zoning tools that guide development with respect to architecture, character, landscaping, public improvements, signage and lighting. To date, the Overlay Zone District is seen as a success. The Committee recommends that the District regulations be updated to accommodate current development practices and to allow for a mix of uses.

Appendix One contains maps of the current zoning designations and the Overlay Zone District boundaries.

State Enterprise Zone Designation

West Colfax Avenue is located within a State designated Enterprise Zone District. The purpose of this District is to provide tax incentives to businesses who make improvements to their businesses and properties and who employ people within the corridor.

New Developments

Many new developments have taken place over the last several years. Specific examples include: Freedom Harley, Denver West Shopping Center, the Colorado Mills, and Wal-Mart. These developments have all contributed to the overall desirable character of the area and have served as catalysts for other new developments.



Freedom Harley Davidson on Colfax Avenue

Community Organizations

There are many strong community organizations within the West Colfax Avenue area. These organizations include: the West Colfax Community Association an association of businesses and neighborhood organizations; the Two Creeks Neighborhood Association which represents the neighborhood located south of Colfax Avenue between Sheridan and Wadsworth boulevards; the Eiberhood Neighborhood Association which represents the neighborhood south of Colfax Avenue between Wadsworth Boulevard and Oak Street; the Edgewood Neighborhood Association which represents the neighborhood north of Colfax Avenue between Sheridan and Wadsworth boulevards; and, the Morse Park Neighborhood Association which represents the neighborhood north of Colfax Avenue between Wadsworth Boulevard and Kipling Street.

Planning Efforts: Adopted Neighborhood and Corridor Plans

Within the area of West Colfax Avenue, there are four adopted corridor plans and four adopted neighborhood plans. These plans set out specific policies for the areas where there is interface between Colfax Avenue. These planning efforts also represent the City of Lakewood's commitment to making the North Lakewood area vibrant. The plans include the following:

Molholm Area Plan
Edgewood Neighborhood Plan
Eiber Neighborhood Plan
Morse Park Neighborhood Plan
Wadsworth Boulevard Strategic Plan
North Kipling Street Strategic Plan
Sheridan Boulevard Strategic Plan
The Framework Plan for the West Corridor Light Rail Line

Appendix Two contains maps of the adopted plan areas.

Vision Statement

The Vision Statement is the heart of the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan. This vision sets the tone for the Plan, sets the framework for the Guiding Principles and serves as a measuring stick for all Action Steps.

As the Committee worked through the planning and visioning process for Colfax Avenue, the over-riding theme was a belief that

... Colfax Avenue is more than just a road ...

Specifically, the Committee believed that Colfax Avenue should be:

- A vibrant, unique and attractive *place* that provides a mix of small and large businesses and unique housing opportunities.
- A *place* that unites neighborhoods and celebrates the historic and eclectic character of northern Lakewood.
- A *place* that effectively and attractively balances vehicular needs with those of the pedestrian and the transit user.

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Guiding Principles

Seven Guiding Principles were developed to achieve the Vision for Colfax Avenue. These Guiding Principles provide the structure of the Plan and the key ways to achieve the Vision for the corridor. The Guiding Principles are as follows:

Achieve the Vision
Make it Sparkle
Make it Vibrant
Maximize Transit
Invest Wisely
Value History
Get the Zoning Mix Right

Once the Guiding Principles were identified, Action Steps were developed that relate specifically to the seven Guiding Principles. The following seven sections summarize the Action Steps as they relate to the Guiding Principles and the Vision for West Colfax Avenue.

In developing the Vision, Guiding Principles, and Action Steps, the Committee members realized that successful implementation of the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan will depend on forming creative partnerships and using creative financing strategies. The Action Plan cannot be implemented by just the City or just the business community, achieving the Vision for Colfax Avenue will take a strong and creative partnership that includes business owners, property owners, neighborhoods, the City, the Lakewood Reinvestment Authority, and other agencies such as the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, Colorado Department of Transportation, and the Regional Transportation District.

Achieve the Vision

“enhance the image of Colfax Avenue”

As the Committee developed ideas and concepts for the future of Colfax Avenue, they were ever mindful of the need to ensure that the Action Plan for Colfax Avenue will truly be implemented and not just sit on a shelf collecting dust. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Achieve the Vision” include a range of activities designed to build excitement around Colfax Avenue, market the corridor, and result in events that draw people to the corridor.

The Committee understands that not just one entity will be able to implement the Plan and Vision for West Colfax Avenue. Specifically, creative partnerships must be formed. These partners can be for the financing of the Vision for Colfax Avenue or for championing the Vision for Colfax Avenue. The Committee generated a general list of potential partners, but also recognized that as the Plan is implemented it will be important to remain open to finding and including new partners. As of the writing of this Plan, the following partners have been identified: City of Lakewood, Lakewood Reinvestment Authority, Commercial Property Owners, Business Owners, West Colfax Community Association, Two Creeks Neighborhood Association, Eiber Neighborhood Association, other registered neighborhood organizations, Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, Colorado Department of Transportation, the Regional Transportation District etc. Other future partners could include a business improvement district, local improvement districts, parking district, special improvement district, etc.

The Action Steps are grouped by the timeframe anticipated to complete the idea. Short-range Action Steps are anticipated to be completed or started in one to five years, sometimes the Action Step is already underway; mid-range Action Steps are anticipated to be started and/or completed in six to ten years; and, long-range Action Steps are anticipated to be started and/or completed in ten or more years. In setting out an implementation schedule for the Action Steps, the Committee was not stating that certain Action Steps were not important; rather they were recognizing limitations associated with resources. The following is a summary of the Action Steps related to “Achieve the Vision”.

Achieve the Vision_____short-range action steps

A1. Build community excitement around Colfax Avenue and the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan. Build upon bright spots along the corridor.

A2. Assess the feasibility of various financing strategies including but not limited to: formation of a business improvement district; creation of special improvement districts; creation of local improvement districts; creation of parking districts; use of urban renewal tools; use of public improvement fees; use of Brownfield remediation funds; etc.

A3. Create a pedestrian focus for the corridor and ensure that bicycle parking is provided.

A4. Proactively establish public/private partnerships to implement the vision for Colfax Avenue e.g., West Colfax Community Association, neighborhood organizations, property owners, business owners, Lakewood Reinvestment Authority, other districts, etc.

A5. Develop a specialized business profile piece for Colfax that includes demographics, land-use, zoning, neighborhood characteristics, types of uses, amenities (recreation centers, transit, etc), events, etc.

A6. Develop and implement a range of community events and special events designed to increase visibility of Colfax Avenue in the metro area and to increase identity of the corridor. Some examples could include:

- a. The Colorado Colfax Marathon and related events.
- b. Farmer's Market on Colfax Avenue.
- c. Coordination with events at the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design including the Art Show and Blue Grass Festival in mid to late June, the Italian Car Show in early June, and art shows throughout the year.
- d. A motorcycle show to showcase motorcycle related businesses along the corridor.
- e. Development of a high level event that is specific to the Corridor.



Colfax on the Hill Business Improvement District - Banners Increase Area Identity

- A7. Advertise events and special features of the corridor.
- Use tools such as: community bulletin boards, message signs, call-in numbers, private signs (like advertisements at Pickering's Automotive), Bravo magazine, Sentinel, Channel 8, Regional Transportation District bus stops and light rail stations, and highly visible City owned properties.
 - Develop a schedule of events for the corridor.
 - Use larger businesses as places to hold events.
 - Consider hiring a coordinator to organize events.
 - Develop an events website to promote and advertise events along the corridor.
 - Use the West Colfax Community Association's website to advertise and promote events.
- A8. Co-market with merchants along the corridor to increase the benefit of their events to all merchants along the corridor.
- A9. Market West Colfax Avenue. Develop a marketing plan for Colfax Avenue that outlines the area's desirability. Focus on unique businesses in the corridor, history, affordability, mix of uses, adjacent to light rail transit, etc.
- A10. Review Action Steps on an annual basis and develop an implementation schedule for the West Colfax Avenue Action Plan.

Achieve the Vision _____ mid-range action steps

- A11. Develop a "brand" for Colfax Avenue that incorporates history, transportation, gateway to the mountains, and the eclectic nature of Colfax Avenue. Let the "brand" evolve out of the positive developments and events happening along the corridor.

Achieve the Vision _____ long-range action steps

- A12. Hold Lakewood on Parade on Colfax Avenue, perhaps after Marathon has been in place for several years.

Make it Sparkle

“improve the look of the corridor”

As the Committee developed ideas and concepts for the future of Colfax Avenue, they heard themselves saying “Colfax should sparkle” and it’s eclectic, funky, quirky character needs to be celebrated. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Make it Sparkle” include a range of activities that will result in a set of design standards that celebrate the unique and special character of Colfax; proactively assist property and business owners with their redevelopment efforts; protect views and vistas; and keep the corridor clean.

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Make it Sparkle_____short-range action steps

- S1. Develop, increase and ensure the development of a signature style for West Colfax Avenue. Use this signature style to unify the corridor and provide identity. Keep and enhance the eclectic character of the corridor. Analyze and update the existing Overlay zone District to ensure that the District addresses: architecture, landscaping, site design, parking design, parking lot location (parking lots to sides and rear of buildings), building materials (brick, glass block), development of small gathering places, decorative lighting, banners, interesting signage, provision of art, use of neon, development of water features, incorporation of history, etc.



Example of increased pedestrian accommodation on Colfax Avenue.

Rendering by Odell Architects



Fountain at Englewood City Center

- S2. Identify gateway locations and treatments to define and connect the corridor. Ensure that treatments are of an appropriate scale to make a statement. Use these gateway areas to create “visual rest stops” along the corridor. Use these areas to create pedestrian focus and to ensure that Colfax Avenue is not just auto oriented.
- S3. Use design and development standards to create a mix of uses within buildings. Incorporate these standards into the Colfax Overlay Zone District
- S4. Implement a proactive review process for all façade changes along Colfax Avenue.
- S5. Educate businesses and property owners on various redevelopment strategies. Develop a “work book” or “tool kit” for people developing and redeveloping buildings and properties along Colfax Avenue. This workbook should provide design examples and associated cost information. The workbook should include examples of potential “make over” options. The workbook should be provided in both print and web versions. Use the workbook as an asset for being a member of West Colfax Community Association.



Existing Conditions – Pierce and Colfax



Potential Future – Pierce and Colfax

Example of how landscaping, signage and lighting can enhance the Colfax image.

Rendering by Odell Architects

S6. Implement effective, consistent, and attractive buffers between Colfax and the adjacent neighborhoods. Consider the use of interesting fencing, landscaping, berms, etc.

S7. Establish consistent, attractive, and safe pedestrian connections along Colfax Avenue. Implement defined areas for pedestrians to cross Colfax. Implement countdown timers and pedestrian refuge areas in medians.

S8. Establish safe, consistent and attractive connections between light rail stations and Colfax Avenue.

S9. Maintain and enhance views and vistas along Colfax Avenue. Provide design assistance through the development review process to protect these assets.

S10. Proactively enforce maintenance and nuisance codes, ordinances, and regulations.

S11. Schedule three clean-up events of the corridor per year. Involve businesses and neighborhoods.

S12. Educate business owners and property owners regarding maintenance and nuisance codes, ordinances, and regulations.



Example of weeds not being maintained.

Make it Sparkle _____ mid-range action steps

S13. Provide incentives to achieve the architectural vision for the corridor. Provide architectural assistance to business and property owners who are redeveloping properties along the corridor.

S14. Provide incentives for including art in developments along the Corridor.

S15. Research programs similar to a business inspection program.



Pictures taken by
Committee Members to
illustrate examples of
community based art.



Make it Sparkle_____long-range action steps

None listed.

Make it Vibrant

“make Colfax Avenue economically vibrant”

The Guiding Principle “Make it Vibrant” represents the wholehearted agreement by the Committee that Colfax Avenue needs to be vibrant and bustling and not appear as though it is in decline or stagnant. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Make it Vibrant” include a range of activities designed to eliminate vacant buildings and lots along the corridor, identify and build upon niche markets, support family owned businesses, and attract businesses that draw people to the corridor.

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Make it Vibrant_____short-range action steps

- V1. Attract retail uses and restaurants to locate on Colfax Avenue. Ensure sufficient parking for uses.
- V2. Proactively seek to provide mixed income housing within the Colfax Corridor.
- V3. Throughout the corridor, share marketing efforts among the businesses in the corridor.
- V4. Pursue Federal New Market Tax Credits. These Credits must be used in an area that meets the Federal criteria defining “economically distressed”. The U.S. Government has approved the use of these credits in the year 2006 for several areas in the Denver metro area including the JCRS Shopping Center, Oak Street and Colfax Avenue, and 6th and Sheridan.
- V5. Facilitate redevelopment of sites, including but not limited to: provision of information about grant programs, tax credits, meetings with local banking institutions, connections to the Small Business Development Center, assistance with the City of Lakewood’s development review process, assistance from the Lakewood Reinvestment Authority, etc.
- V6. Proactively seek businesses that will attract and keep people in the corridor e.g., restaurants, destination shopping areas, businesses that are unique to the corridor, businesses that provide a mix of day and night activities, etc.
- V7. Identify and inventory uses along Colfax Avenue, note where compatible and complementary businesses are located and market to other related types of businesses.
- V8. Continue to support locally owned businesses.



Lakewood Endoscopy Center - Redevelopment Example

Make it Vibrant_____mid-range action steps

V9. Re-establish a newspaper for Colfax Avenue similar to “Life Begins on 40.”

V10. Establish a storefront on Colfax Avenue that coordinates events, marketing, leasing, vision, and community involvement in the corridor.

Make it Vibrant_____long-range steps

None listed.



New Wal-Mart at Colfax and Wadsworth - Example of Redevelopment

Maximize Transit

“capitalize on the light rail line”

A major opportunity adjacent to Colfax Avenue is the development of light rail transit along 13th Avenue just two blocks south of Colfax Avenue. This line is slated for opening and operation in 2013. The Committee recognized this incredible opportunity but was also very aware that design and layout of development could result in limited access between Colfax Avenue and the light rail stations. As a result of these discussions, the Committee developed ideas and concepts for the future of light rail transit in Lakewood and specifically for how Colfax should interface with the light rail stations. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Maximize Transit” include a range of activities designed to create solid connections between Colfax Avenue and the light rail stations, result in superior design at the station areas, and build on the unique character of Colfax Avenue.

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Maximize Transit_____short-range action steps

T1. Use the West Colfax Community Association as a clearinghouse for planning efforts related to the implementation of light rail transit along 13th Avenue. This effort would supplement City planning efforts for station areas and the work of the Regional Transportation District in implementing the light rail line.

T2. Support the planning principles provided by the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel. The principles and recommendations include building two parking structures to disperse traffic, ensuring that the bridge design is open to prevent division of the neighborhoods, ensuring that the parking areas are connected to the station area, developing zoning tools to encourage residential uses and mixed use development, ensuring that density is located near the light rail station, and ensuring that the single-family character of the adjacent neighborhoods is protected.

T3. Develop station area plans that address land use and design. Identify standards or an overlay zone district to ensure that areas around the stations are attractive and provide a desired identity for the community. These standards should ensure quality development, allow for flexibility in building design and include the ability for the structures to expand their intensity and density should the need arise in the future. The standards should allow for the provision of residential, office and commercial uses to be located above parking structures.



Garrison Street Light Rail Station – Conditions Today and an Example of Enhanced Pedestrian Connections to Colfax
Rendering by Odell Architects

Invest Wisely

“improve the infrastructure along the corridor”

While many public improvements have been made along West Colfax Avenue, namely landscaped medians, sidewalks, and brick pavers, there are many areas along the corridor where these improvements are not in place. Also, floodplains and floodways represent a major hurdle to development and redevelopment efforts. The Committee recognizes that public improvements have the ability to shape the look of the corridor. Also, the Committee recognizes that it is possible to leverage investments of these types to get additional and better improvements along the corridor. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Invest Wisely” include a range of activities designed to create a cohesive urban design image for West Colfax Avenue, to address drainage issues along the corridor, address areas where there is insufficient parking, and address safety needs of the area.

The Committee understands that not just one entity will be able to implement the Plan and Vision for West Colfax Avenue. Specifically, creative partnerships must be formed. These partnerships can be for the financing of the Vision for Colfax Avenue or for championing the Vision for Colfax Avenue. The Committee generated a general list of potential partners, but also recognized that as the Plan is implemented it will be important to remain open to finding and including new partners. As of the writing of this Plan, the following partners have been identified: City of Lakewood, Lakewood Reinvestment Authority, Commercial Property Owners, Business Owners, West Colfax Community Association, Two Creeks Neighborhood Association, Eiber Neighborhood Association, other registered neighborhood organizations, the Regional Transportation District, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, the Colorado Department of Transportation. Other future partners could include a business improvement district, local improvement districts, parking district, special improvement district, etc.

The Action Steps are grouped by the timeframe anticipated to complete the idea. Short-range Action Steps are anticipated to be completed or started in one to five years, sometimes the Action Step is already underway; mid-range Action Steps are anticipated to be started and/or completed in six to ten years; and, long-range Action Steps are anticipated to be started and/or completed in ten or more years. In setting out an implementation schedule for the Action Steps, the Committee was not stating that certain Action Steps were not important; rather they were recognizing limitations associated with resources. The following is a summary of the Action Steps related to “Invest Wisely”.

Invest Wisely _____ short-range action steps

I1. Use public facilities and investments to make the area attractive and to provide identity along the corridor. These investments include: drainage facilities, sidewalks, decorative brick pavers, bike paths, art, statues, green space, landscaped medians, pedestrian refuge on medians, etc. Investments also include upgrading landscaping along the corridor both on the sides of the road and within medians. Additional maintenance requirements may need to be provided by a special district.



Colfax Avenue – Existing medians and an image of medians with enhanced landscaping and sidewalks.

I2. Continue to address drainage issues along the corridor. Work with businesses to address these issues in creative and attractive ways.

I3. Work with the Lakewood Police Department to continue its program of meeting the business owners along Colfax Avenue. Visits were completed for the 2005 calendar year.

I4. Analyze parking needs throughout the corridor. Include the analysis of creating parking districts. Where parking is deficient, explore the use vacant lots to provide shared parking. Ensure that there are signs along the corridor to direct people to parking areas.

Invest Wisely _____ mid-range action steps

I5. Work with the Lakewood Police Department to increase use of bicycle patrols.

Invest Wisely _____ long-range action steps

I6. Implement creative and environmentally friendly lighting and streetlights that are pedestrian friendly and provide enhanced identity for the corridor.

I7. Research the feasibility of establishing a police substation on the corridor.



Example of enhanced medians and sidewalks in Denver, CO.



Example of pedestrian refuge area in median. Site is in Denver, CO.

Value History

“preserve history and assets”

One of the most unique aspects of Colfax Avenue is the sheer amount of history in place along the corridor. Historical businesses include Davie’s Diner, Rockley Music, the Westland Shopping Center and the JCRS (Jewish Consumptive Relief Society) Shopping Center, and the former JCRS facility which is now the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design. The Committee recognizes this incredible and unique asset and wanted to ensure that historical aspects of the corridor are preserved and enhanced. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Value History” include a range of activities designed to protect historical assets, form solid partnerships to protect and enhance the historical character of the area, and use these assets to build excitement and interest along the corridor.

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Value History _____ short-range action steps

H1. Incorporate history and the preservation of historical elements into the identity of Colfax Avenue by incorporating these elements into the Colfax Overlay Zone District and any future design standards for the area.

H2. Appoint a historical committee to be responsible for working with property owners to preserve and enhance historical aspects of the corridor.

H3. Along and adjacent to Colfax Avenue, historical assets should be inventoried and mapped. This inventory can then be used in marketing efforts for the corridor and to protect the assets as the corridor continues to grow and evolve. Currently, neighborhoods are working with the Lakewood Historical Society, the Colorado State Historical Society, and the West Colfax Community Association to inventory and protect historical assets.

H4. Implement a series of historical markers throughout the corridor. Focus on the history of transportation, retail, and agriculture.

H5. Continue to preserve, enhance, and revitalize neighborhoods.

H6. Conduct historical tours of neighborhoods. Some suggestions include ghost tours and tours of unique aspects of the areas.

Value History _____ mid-range action steps

None listed.

Value History _____ long-range action steps

None listed.

Get the Zoning Mix Right

“revisit zoning and land uses along the corridor”

Colfax Avenue is a key commercial corridor within Lakewood. As such, the primary land uses along the corridor are commercial, office and industrial. Although these uses are important to the community, the Committee recognized the need for Colfax Avenue to provide residential uses. By mixing residential uses with commercial and office uses, the corridor will begin to achieve a vibrancy that can only happen with a true mix of uses. The Action Steps associated with the Guiding Principle “Get the Zoning Mix Right” include a range of activities designed to create a mixed-use environment, to ensure that mixed-use areas blend with the adjacent neighborhoods, and to encourage reinvestment in the housing stock that currently exists in the area.

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The Action Steps are grouped by the timeframe anticipated to complete the idea. Short-range Action Steps are anticipated to be completed or started in one to five years, sometimes the Action Step is already underway; mid-range Action Steps are anticipated to be started and/or completed in six to ten years; and, long-range Action Steps are anticipated to be started and/or completed in ten or more years. In setting out an implementation schedule for the Action Steps, the Committee was not stating that certain Action Steps were not important; rather they were recognizing limitations associated with resources. The following is a summary of the Action Steps related to “Maximize Transit”.

Get the Zoning Mix Right_____short-range action steps

M1. Develop zoning tools and standards to encourage and allow creative, flexible, mixed-use developments. Zoning tools should:

- Encourage the provision of a mix of housing types and densities;
- Allow for the provision of housing integrated with retail, office and parking garages;
- Ensure quality design; and,
- Ensure that development fits with the adjacent neighborhoods.

M2. Use the City's performance-based review process to ensure quality results along the corridor and to ensure that developments complement adjacent neighborhoods.

Get the Zoning Mix Right_____mid-range action steps

None listed.

Get the Zoning Mix Right_____long-range action steps

M3. Provide incentives for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of multi-family housing units that are in proximity to light rail stations.



Examples of how residential uses could be added to commercial areas along Colfax Avenue.

Above: JCRS Shopping Center today and potential future with residential uses in the commercial area – Rendering by Odell Architects

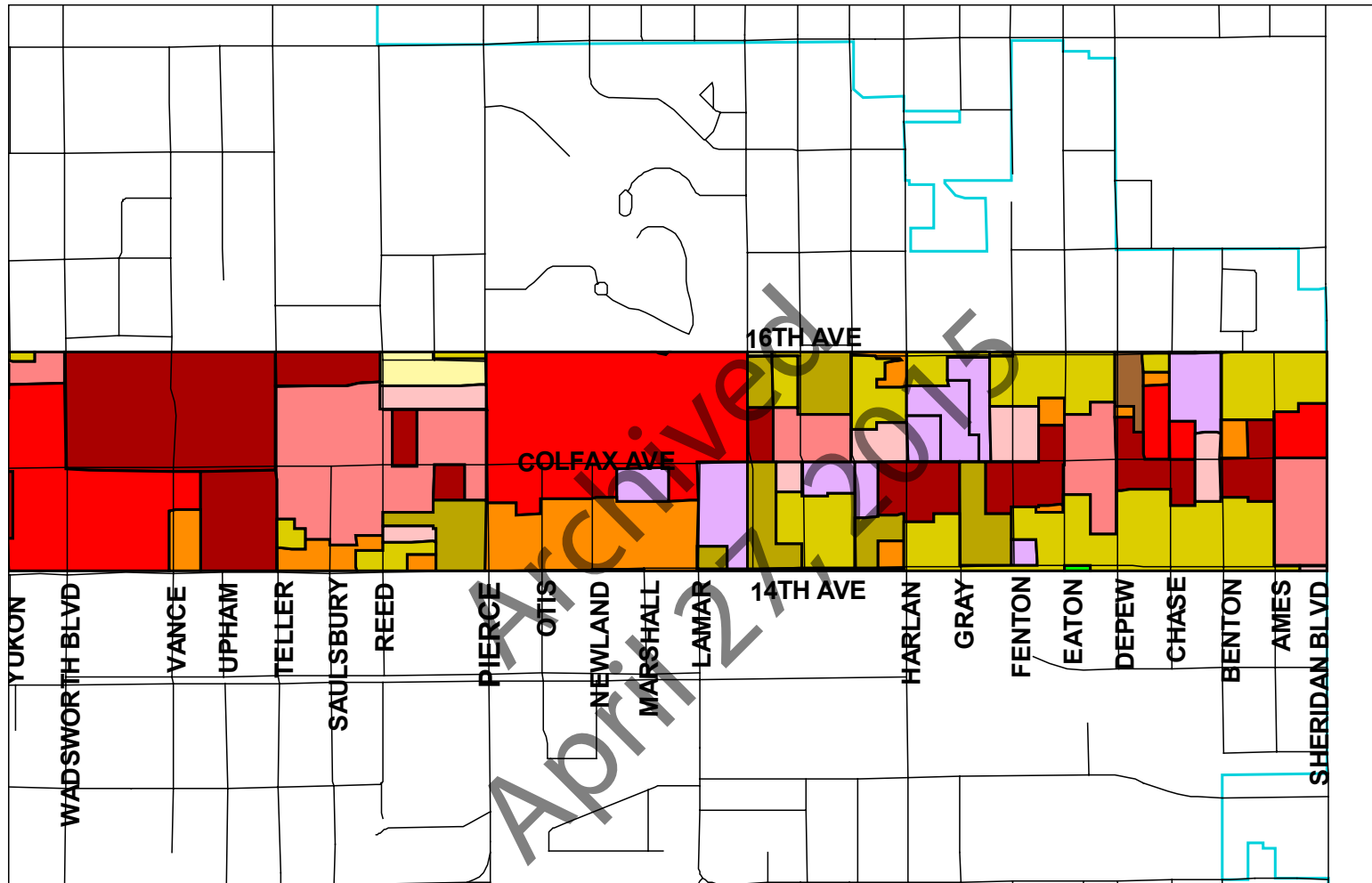
Below: Westland Shopping Center today and potential future with residential uses in the commercial area.



Appendix One
Zoning Designations
Overlay Zone District Boundaries

Archived
April 27, 2015

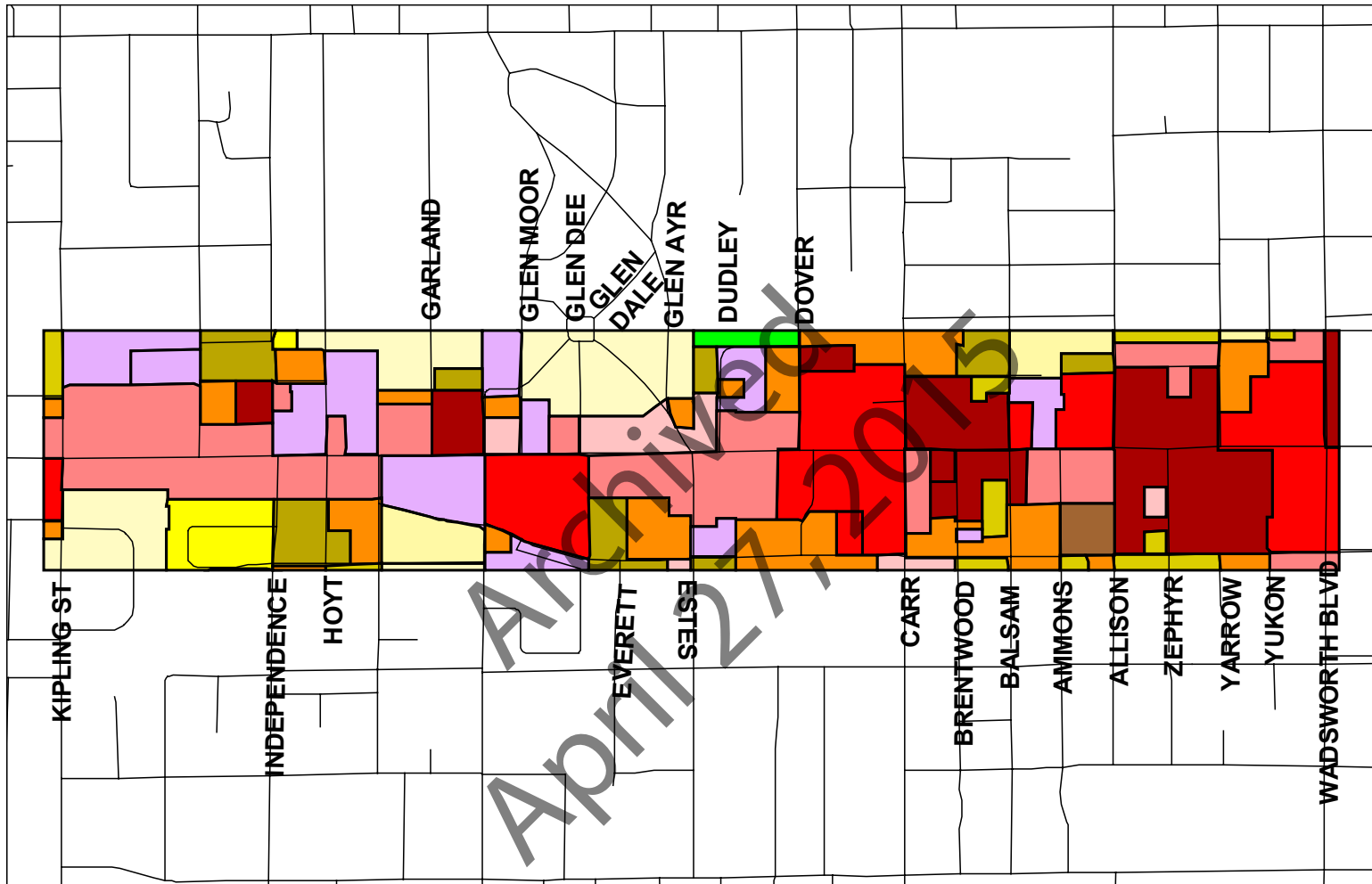
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April 27, 2015



West Colfax Avenue Action Plan Zoning: Vicinity of West Colfax Avenue, Sheridan Blvd. to Wadsworth Blvd.



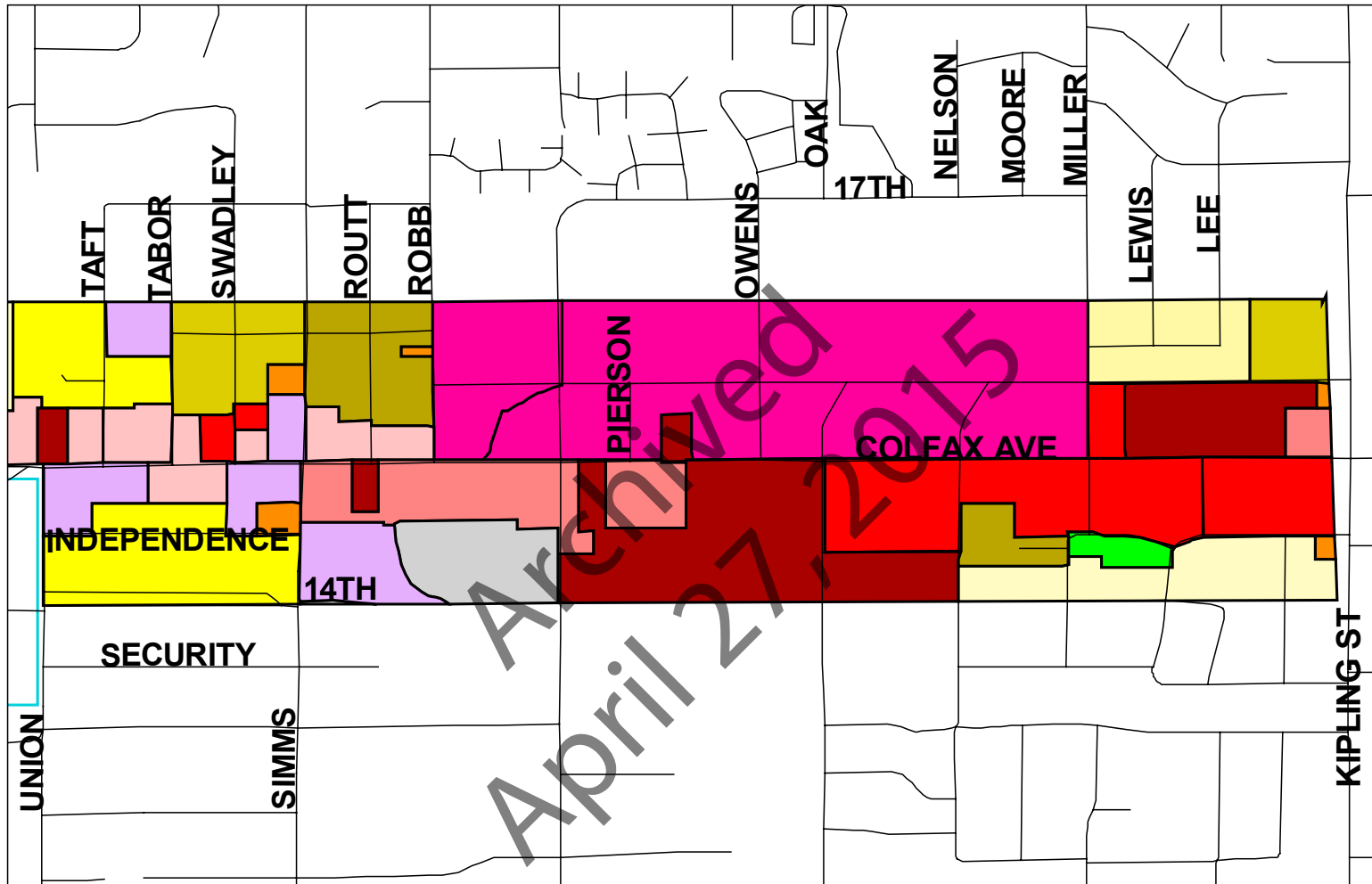
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	R-1A		S-1-R		S-3-R		S-5-R		S-1-C		S-3-C		S-5-C		S-IN
			2-R		4-R		6-R		2-C		4-C		OF		PD



West Colfax Avenue Action Plan Zoning: Vicinity of West Colfax Avenue, Wadsworth Blvd. to Kipling St.

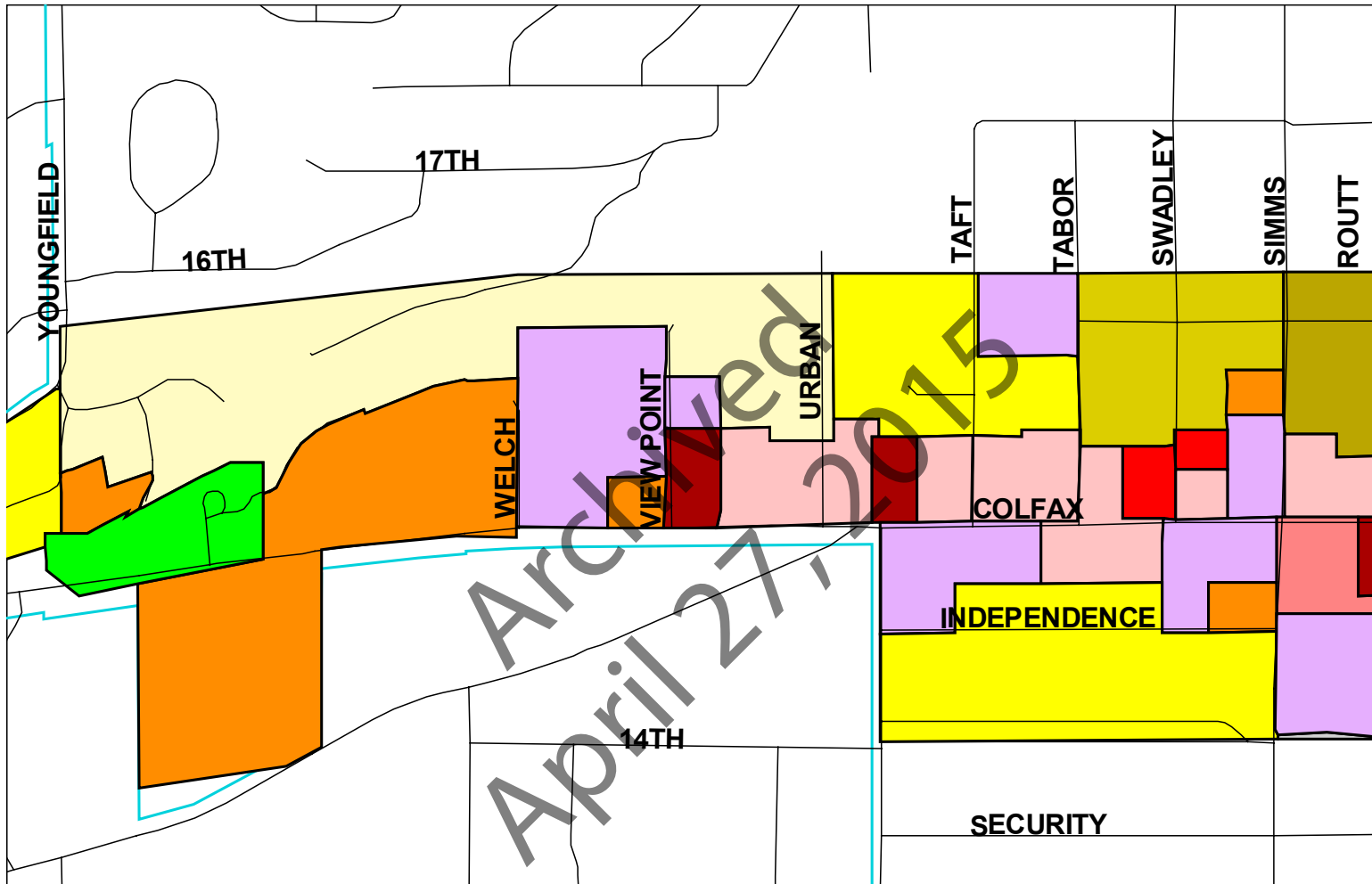


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	R-1A		S-1-R		S-3-R		S-5-R		S-1-C		S-3-C		S-5-C		S-IN
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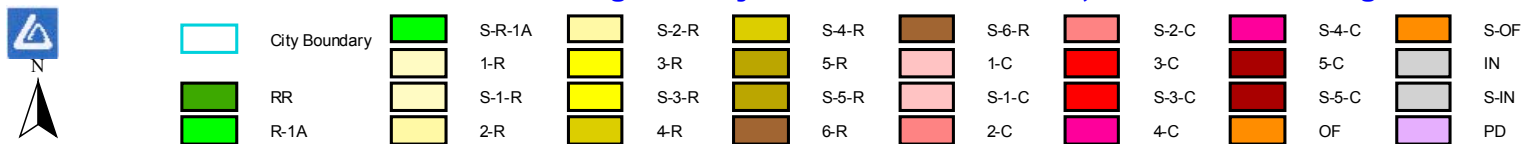


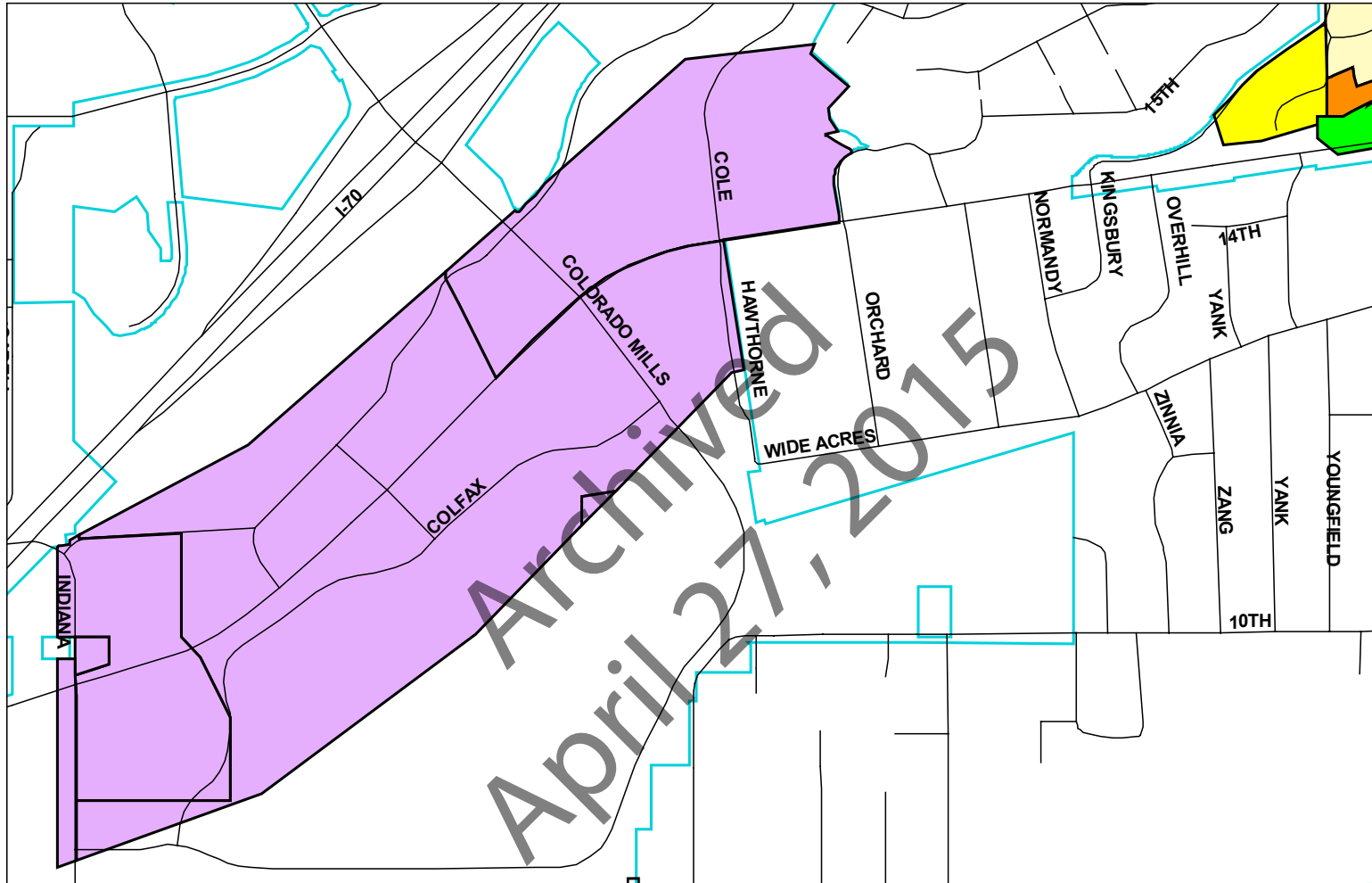
West Colfax Avenue Action Plan Zoning: Vicinity of West Colfax Avenue, Kipling St. to Union St.



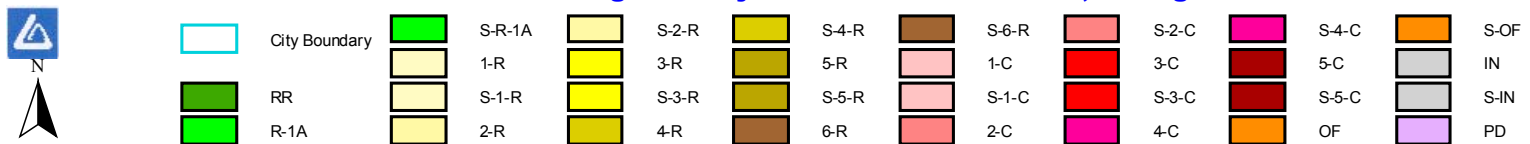


West Colfax Avenue Action Plan Zoning: Vicinity of West Colfax Avenue, Simms St. to Youngfield St.

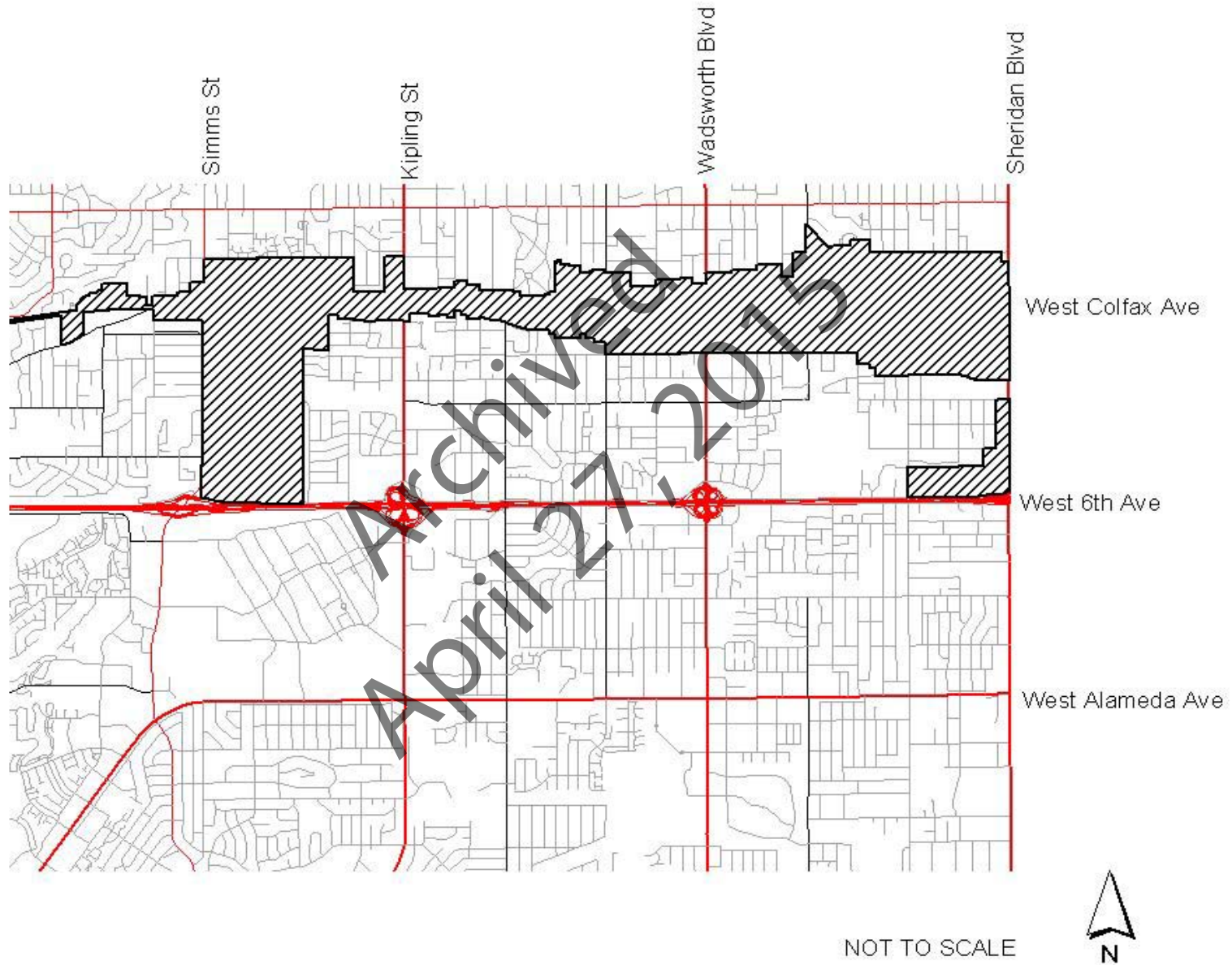




West Colfax Avenue Action Plan Zoning: Vicinity of West Colfax Avenue, Youngfield St. to Indiana St.



Colfax Overlay Zone District Boundaries

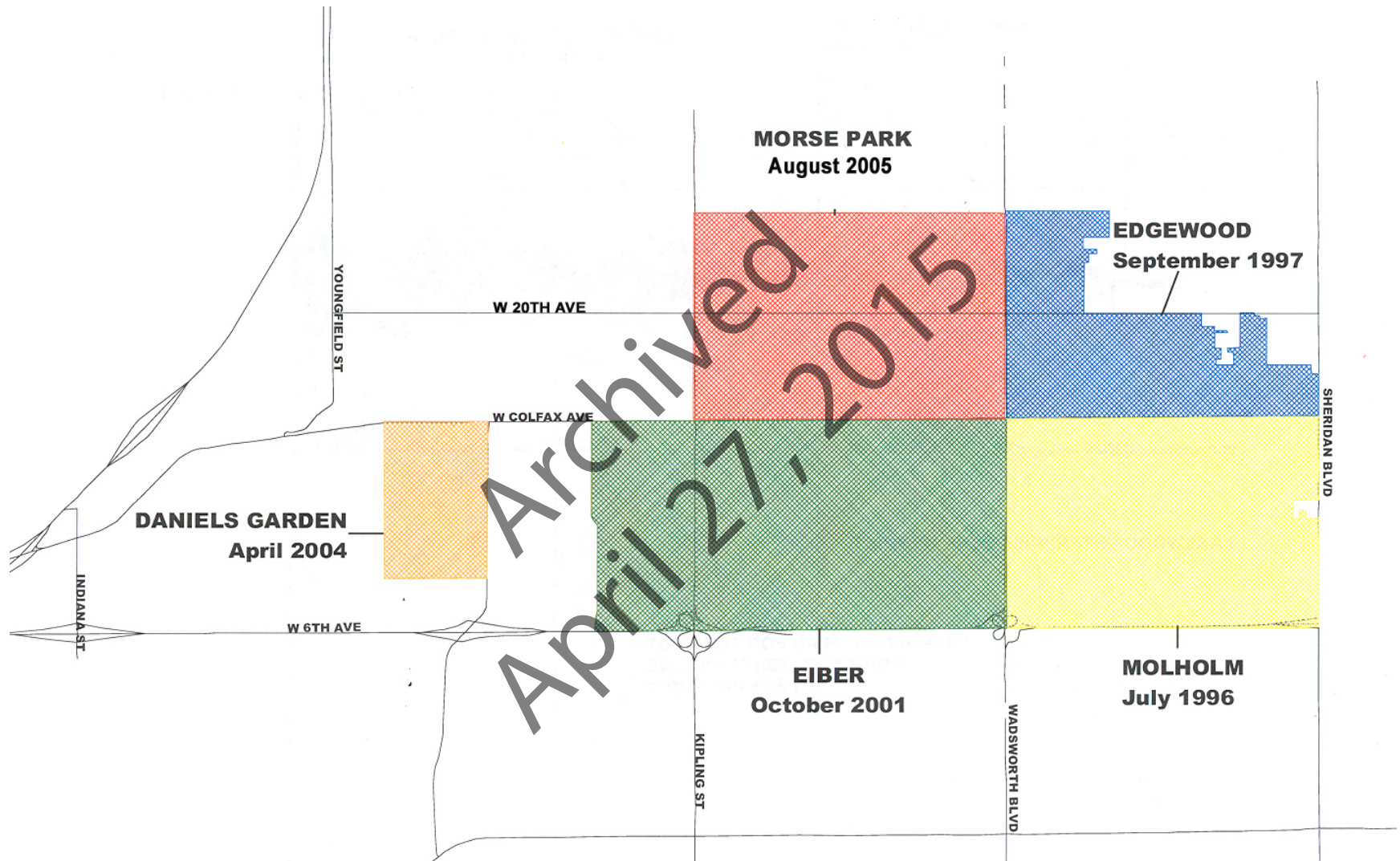


Appendix Two Adopted Plans

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Adopted Neighborhood Plans



Corridor Plans: Vicinity of West Colfax Avenue

