

AN ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

16th Street Mall Denver, Colorado



Urban Land
Institute

16th Street Mall Denver, Colorado

Building on Success

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An Advisory Services Panel Report

ULI—the Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, N.W.
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About ULI—the Urban Land Institute

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 40,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About ULI Advisory Services

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments

are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Finally, the panel thanks the more than 120 community members who shared their time, insights, and hopes during the interview process. Everyone who participated in the panel process provided vital insight and demonstrated the civic dedication that makes the 16th Street Mall an outstanding place to live, work, and play.

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Foreword: The Panel’s Assignment

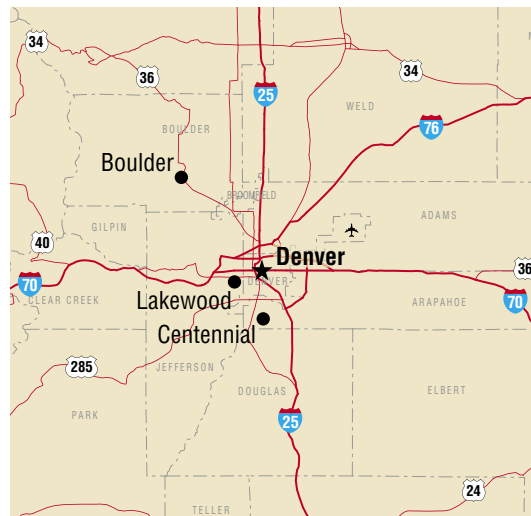
Denver, the Queen City of the West, has historically been a place where people seek a life unavailable anywhere else. Early pioneers settled here to create a better life for themselves and their families. Prospectors found their fortunes here, only to lose them and then make them all over again. Denver is a center of innovation, a place where people love the natural beauty that surrounds them, and a place where making a living in the arid high plains demands creativity and courage.

Today, Denver ranks among America’s premier cities, a destination for the “creative class” of knowledge-based workers who can live wherever they choose. They settle in Denver for its quality of life, rich experiences, pleasant climate, and recreational lifestyle. Symbolic of those qualities, the 16th Street Mall hosts a *mélange* of vibrant restaurants and watering holes, chic cafés, a lively mix of pedestrians and transit vehicles, specialty shops, and authenticity that appeals to visitors and residents who enjoy city life.

16th Street Mall

The 16th Street Mall is one of America’s most distinctive, well-known, and well-loved urban streets and one of the longest pedestrian/transit malls in the world. It serves twin roles as the city’s busiest transit artery and a premier public space. Over the Mall’s 25-year existence, its popularity and economic success, like those of Denver itself, have ebbed and surged with changes in the local and national economy.

The FREE MallRide, a very high frequency free shuttle service, runs the length of the Mall, from Union Station in the west to Civic Center Station in the east. (For the purposes of this study, the Downtown Denver Partnership, or DDP, asked the panel to refer to the 16th Street Mall as an east-west corridor, with Civic Center Station in the east and Union Station in the west. All cardi-



Location map, above.
Regional map, left.

nal directions referenced in the report follow this convention.)

Today, the 16th Street Mall offers a distinctive potpourri of urban experiences that provide



The 16th Street Mall is Denver's iconic civic space.

something for almost everyone. National retailers (for example, Barnes & Noble, Banana Republic, and Ann Taylor Loft), hybrid retail/entertainment venues (for example, Niketown and ESPN Zone), and mid-priced stores (for example, Ross Dress for Less and Dress Barn) coexist with chain drugstores and tourist-oriented shops. Recent additions include the Mall's first boutique food store—Cook's Fresh Market—which opened in the newly renovated 1600 Glenarm Place residential tower.

Challenges

The Mall derives its character and personality in part from its unique design, created by Henry N. Cobb, an architect with I. M. Pei & Partners (now Pei Freed Cobb & Partners). Cobb's distinctive

design remains attractive and functional. However, 25 years of use and repeated freeze-thaw cycles have taken a toll on the Mall's infrastructure. Transit-way pavers frequently break free from their mortar beds and require costly replacement. Light fixtures show signs of wear. Underground irrigation and drainage systems no longer function at their optimum level. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) and Downtown Denver Business Improvement District (BID) invest over \$1 million annually to maintain the Mall's paving surfaces.

The Panel's Assignment

The DDP, the BID, the RTD, and the city initiated the 16th Street Plan in response to the Mall's infrastructure challenges. The 16th Street Plan is a comprehensive effort to evaluate the Mall's successes and challenges and plan for the next 25 years. The plan will explore opportunities for reconstructing the transit ways in a more durable fashion, reevaluating the original lighting to enhance illumination and reduce operating costs, resurfacing the sidewalks to improve walkability, and reconfiguring the sidewalks to accommodate both safe pedestrian passage and space for sidewalk cafés and passive sitting areas out of the traffic flow.

The DDP sponsored a ULI Advisory Services panel to explore these issues in detail. The DDP defined the panel's study area as the entire Mall, from Wewatta Street to Civic Center Station, including one-half block north and south of the Mall. Specifically, the partnership asked the panel to

- Explore the Mall's audience and recommend retail and nonretail uses that will support a lively urban environment, including options for repositioning the Tabor Center and Denver Pavilions;
- Suggest ideas for improving the Mall's retail mix, including incentives to encourage property owners to enhance their retail spaces and strategies to market the Mall to potential retailers;
- Evaluate the desirability of dividing the Mall into "subdistricts" with distinct characteristics and boundaries, and suggest opportunities to

reshape the Mall to better connect and energize adjacent streets, sidewalks, and open spaces;

- Advise on infrastructure upgrades and technology to enhance the Mall's success and sustainability over the next 25 years; and
- Recommend changes to current land use, zoning, and urban design requirements to enhance the Mall's pedestrian environment and realignment of responsibilities among the city, the DDP, and the RTD for funding revitalization activities and managing the Mall.

The Panel's Findings

Denver is an undeniably great city that surrounds and identifies with a truly great urban street—the 16th Street Mall. Denver benefits from a pervasive optimistic attitude. This can-do, utterly American, very western attitude will propel Denver and the Mall toward a future that offers incoming residents and businesses greater opportunity, greater satisfaction, and an even greater city in which to live, work, shop, play, and learn.

The Mall's original plan delineated seven goals:

- Stimulate continued economic growth in the central business district, and encourage increased commercial and business activity.
- Create a people-oriented environment that stimulates participation in the activity on and adjacent to 16th Street.
- Clear the congested traffic conditions on 16th Street, and return the street to the public for its prime purpose—shopping and human interaction.
- Create a place of civic identity, and serve as a major focal point and unifying element for all of Downtown Denver.
- Provide access to the central business district and the Mall with a clear and improved transportation system.
- Reduce the effect of the automobile in the central business district and associated noise and air pollutants, and provide nonconflicting public transportation service for the activities in Downtown Denver.



The Mall's high-quality design elements contribute to its success. Left: Active use and lively retail attest to the Mall's success.

- Stimulate a sense of civic pride in Denver residents and visitors through sensitivity to design, detail, scale, and activity.

Denver should be proud that the Mall accomplished these goals over the last 25 years. The current planning effort poses an opportunity to raise these accomplishments to the next level and expand the Mall's potential to shape a livable, vibrant, sustainable Downtown at the heart of a vibrant city. The following sections detail the panel's recommendations.

Market Potential

Downtown must be special and offer retail, residential, and street environments distinct from every other neighborhood in the city. Downtown has the infrastructure and market to continue to grow and should remain the heart of the city and the key to Denver's global identity. The 16th Street Mall and other parts of Downtown offer dynamic, viable markets for continued retail, office, hotel, and residential growth. An impressive transportation network connects Downtown's subdistricts and links Downtown to the larger city and region.

Downtown's demographics support a lively commercial real estate market. According to the 2007 Downtown Area Plan, Downtown currently hosts 110,000 daily workers and more than 50,000 students on the nearby Auraria Higher Education Center Auraria Campus. By 2030, the plan projects that Downtown will host an additional 35,000 workers and 25,000 residents. Today, Downtown features an affluent and well-educated population: average household income is \$64,000, 8 percent higher than for Denver as a whole, and nearly one-third of residents hold at least a bachelor's degree.

The panel offers these additional observations on the local demographics:

- Downtown's demographics support many retail, office, dining, and entertainment experiences, especially those that cater to office workers and those along the 16th Street Mall.
- Downtown should identify new opportunities to serve Denver's strong Hispanic and Asian communities and encourage the growth of ethnically diverse retail and entertainment offerings. Successful integration of diverse cultures will enhance Denver's attractiveness to tourists, residents, and corporations.

Office Market

Denver's office market has seen many changes since the Downtown Development Plan of 1986. Volatility in the energy and technology sectors dramatically slowed office market growth in the late 1980s. Since then, the office market has again strengthened as Denver's economy diversified. Denver has experienced 16 consecutive quarters of positive absorption, and national brokerage firms remain optimistic for continued growth. Nine projects planned or under construction will add 3.1 million square feet to Downtown's office inventory. Denver's average office lease rate remains very affordable and ranks third lowest among the nation's 15 most competitive markets (CB Richard Ellis, first quarter 2008 market view).

Downtown's high-rise, Class A office buildings are clustered at the east end of the 16th Street Mall. Most projects planned or under construction are located at the western end, closer to Lower Downtown, known locally as LoDo, and the planned regional transit hub at Union Station. Local stakeholders told the panel they do not expect new office projects to cause negative absorption because of continuing job growth and the conversion of several high-rise office buildings to residential use. Expansion of the regional light-rail system under FasTracks will continue to bolster Downtown as a convenient, accessible business hub.

The panel offers the following findings regarding Denver's office market:

- A continued supply of smaller spaces will support small business development, a crucial step in sustaining the local economy. A strong office market should not create an over-reliance on high-rise, Class A product.
- Shared office operations on the periphery of Downtown could diversify the businesses

and people supporting the economy. Shared office space especially helps generate international business prospects and incubate startup businesses.

- Redevelopment and adaptive use of office space, particularly along the 16th Street Mall, could attract studios for performing and visual artists that would add a new dynamic to Denver's Downtown experience.

Hospitality Market

The hospitality market plays a major role in Downtown's economic vitality. A 2006 tourism study by Longwoods International showed that travel and tourism spending in Denver exceeded \$2.76 billion and Downtown hotels sold over 1.5 million room-nights in 2006. Downtown hosts nearly 20 percent of the Denver metropolitan statistical area's total hotel rooms. Downtown hotels have seen substantial annual increases in occupancy rates and room revenues, attributable primarily to the success of the Colorado Convention Center.

The strong Downtown hospitality market also helps support retail, dining, and entertainment uses. Business travelers spend, on average, \$96 per day on nonhotel expenses, and leisure guests spend \$93. The food and beverage category (\$713 million) tops the spending list, followed by retail sales (\$430 million), and recreation and entertainment (\$215 million). The most popular shopping area for visitors to Denver is the 16th Street Mall.

Investments made in Downtown attractions reap significant ongoing dividends. According to the DDP, nearly 30 million people patronized such facilities as the ballparks and stadiums, the Civic Center Cultural Complex, the Denver Performing Arts Complex, and the Colorado Convention Center in 2006. That same year, the Colorado Convention Center provided a net economic boost of \$521 million for Downtown.

Figure 1
Denver Demographics

	Denver Residential	Denver City	National
Total Population	63,000	560,036	301,825,750
Female	43.0%	49.1%	50.7%
25–55 Years	47.0%	46.0%	42.2%
Under 15 Years	–	22.1%	20.2%
White	78.0%	74.5%	74.5%
African American	4.0%	9.2%	12.0%
Hispanic/Latino	12.0%	35.7%	15.1%

Figure 2
Denver Office Market

	Central Business District	Denver Market
Net Rentable Area	23.4 million square feet	103.6 million square feet
Vacancy Rate	9.0%	12.5%
Availability Rate	13.4%	17.2%
Average Lease Rate	\$26.67 per square foot	\$20.44 per square foot
Net Absorption	16,783 square feet	71,737 square feet



Downtown's high-rise office buildings cluster near Civic Center Station.

Hospitality market prospects look bright. Projected convention bookings will bring 740,000 attendees and generate another 1.5 million room-nights through 2011. The DDP reports six major



LoDo's residential buildings include historic structures and sensitive new construction.

hotel projects in planning that will create 1,300 additional rooms. The new projects feature hotel brands (for example, Four Seasons and W) that will significantly raise Denver's competitiveness as a high-end lodging market.

The panel offers the following comments on the Downtown hospitality market:

- Denver's meeting and convention market should continue to grow for the foreseeable future. Because meetings and conventions provide a self-regenerating market for retail, dining, and entertainment, priority should be placed on developing new hotels and maintaining existing properties at the highest possible levels. Hospitality and customer-service training programs should be a target industry.
- Although Denver has become one of the top convention and meeting destinations in the country, its convention and visitors bureau and

The Mall's retail includes national chains and independent retailers.



local hotels should work together to provide adequate room blocks for potential conventions to help maintain its competitive advantages.

Residential Market

Economic prosperity and an excellent quality of life will continue to drive Denver's population growth. Although the city's population is projected to increase by only 1.8 percent by 2012, Downtown's growth will exceed that rate by attracting new residents from throughout the region who are looking for a more urban lifestyle.

Downtown currently offers more than 16,000 housing units within a half-mile radius of the intersection of the 16th Street Mall and Glenarm Place. In Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, rental apartment development historically exceeded for-sale unit development. This trend peaked in 2006 when nearly 2,000 new apartments entered the market. In 2007, the number of new apartments slowed to 156. The DDP reports 7,400 new residential units planned or under construction, evenly split between for-sale and rental properties.

Residential sale prices range from \$420 per square foot in LoDo to \$535 per square foot in the commercial core. The average monthly rent for Downtown apartments is \$1,200, up from \$625 in 1995. The panel heard that residential rents in the commercial core average about \$2 per square foot. Apartment vacancy rates for 2007 averaged 7 percent, a slight increase from the 1995 annual vacancy rate of 4 percent.

The panel offers the following comments for Downtown residential development:

- Local developers remain optimistic about Downtown's residential market. Although the national housing and credit crunches are slowing residential development nationally, Downtown should remain a steady market for both for-sale and rental units. Close attention should be paid, however, to developing trends to avoid overbuilding the Downtown market.
- New residential development should be strategically placed to complement developing Downtown activity centers, including the Theater

District, Union Station, LoDo, and the panel's proposed urban village.

- The DDP should expand its current marketing efforts to attract new residents.

Retail Market

Downtown's retail market is in a significant transition period. Several million square feet of new mixed-use projects have been announced, and most include new retail space. Regionally, 4.5 million square feet of retail space is in the construction pipeline, and most new projects are experiencing strong preleasing activity (CB Richard Ellis, first quarter 2008 market view). Regional retail vacancy rates stand at a ten-year historic average of 6.7 percent, but year-to-year comparison investment sales fell by half in the first quarter of 2008. Retail lease rates average \$17.11 per square foot citywide.

Downtown's retail market stands strong when compared to the region and the city. Lease rates on the 16th Street Mall corridor average \$25 per square foot with instances of \$40 to \$60. Downtown's central business district and LoDo offer 3.5 million square feet of leasable space. Significant resident, daytime workforce, and visitor populations support Downtown retail, including approximately 63,000 residents within 1.5 miles, 110,000 daily workers, 50,000 students, and thousands of hotel guests. Hotel occupancy is strong, with an average guest stay of three days.

Downtown demographics provide particular marketing and branding opportunities. One major market is professionals/executives and service employees working in Downtown offices. Another major market is young consumers, given that one in five city residents are under 15 years of age. Downtown could also better serve Denver's strong ethnic communities, especially the Hispanic/Latino population.

The panel offers the following general observations on the Downtown retail market:

- Downtown Denver's retail market is diverse and dynamic. Downtown is the heart of the city and does not need to rely on suburban shoppers. Downtown employees and visitors provide a re-

tail market with considerable buying power and a constant infusion of new shoppers throughout the year.

- Marketing efforts should build on the "Elevate Your Urban" campaign and promote Downtown as a safe, exciting place to live, work, and play. Image is everything; the city's long-term success largely depends on Downtown's ability to expand the workforce, convention market, and retail and entertainment offerings.
- Downtown must provide space for small, diverse retailers that offer a unique experience. A vibrant downtown offers surprises along every block. Opportunities exist for exciting new local retail shops, including ethnic and culturally diverse experiences.

16th Street Mall Retail Conditions

The 16th Street Mall's layout shares characteristics with a suburban shopping center: long and linear with large anchors at both ends. In the 16th Street Mall, the Denver Pavilions anchors the east end, and the Writer Square/Larimer Square/LoDo node anchors the west. Seven blocks of streetfront retail connect the anchors. The Mall's long-term plans must consider the retail collections in the two anchor areas, and from now on their merchandising strategies must be integrated. Their status as anchors warrants understanding them at the outset.

East Anchor: Denver Pavilions

Denver Pavilions is a planned shopping center in an urban setting. It occupies most of two city blocks on the south side of the 16th Street Mall, between Tremont Place and Welton Street. The project forms a rough horseshoe extending off the Mall and contains three merchandised levels, the upper two bridging Glenarm Place. Corner Bakery Café and Barnes & Noble anchor the east end, which also contains such noteworthy tenants as Talbot's and Ann Taylor. Hard Rock Café and Niketown occupy the two corners of the 16th Street Mall and Glenarm Place. A large Virgin Megastore anchors the west end, which also includes Express, Gap, Banana Republic, and Brighton Collectibles.

Festive lights and signage distinguish the Pavilions' interior court.



Good design and careful maintenance create a pleasant environment in Larimer Square.



The Mall offers a wide variety of retail tenants.



The Pavilions also offers a significant mix of entertainment and dining options. In addition to the iconic Hard Rock Café, Lucky Strike Lanes and the 15-screen United Artists theaters attract destination visitors. As destinations, these tenants succeed on the third level and bring considerable

life to Downtown at night. As for the restaurants, the Corner Bakery Café and Maggiano's Little Italy both succeed here. Maggiano's is one of the highest-volume restaurants in Denver. The panel does not view the failure of the Wolfgang Puck restaurant as a failure of the market to support high-end dining.

Denver Pavilions has established itself as a retail, dining, and entertainment magnet and will play an important role in Denver's future. The Pavilions will and should affect leasing in its immediate neighborhood and cause the entire east end of the Mall to serve the lifestyle and entertainment shopper. Marlowe's, Earl's, and Paramount Café are examples of nearby restaurants that serve this market.

West Anchor: Writer Square/Larimer Square/LoDo

At the west end of the 16th Street Mall lie Larimer Square, Writer Square, and LoDo. LoDo's historic buildings and expanse of funky charm attracted urban pioneers to settle Downtown in the 1980s. The city recognized the neighborhood's architectural, historical, and societal value by designating the Lower Downtown Historic District in 1988, and a year later, the LoDo District, Inc., formed to nurture and promote the neighborhood. Just east of LoDo, Larimer Square and Writer Square stand out as individual developments that complement the historic neighborhood.

LoDo, Larimer Square, and Writer Square offer retail, restaurants, art galleries, residences, offices, and hotels in rehabilitated historic loft buildings and new construction. Higher-income residents have replaced the early population of local artists. LoDo has emerged as a hot office and residential district and continues to see new mid- and high-rise projects. Its success spawned development in the adjacent Central Platte Valley.

Retail areas in and around LoDo offer unique retail, dining, and entertainment options. Larimer Square, a mixed-use retail and office development adjacent to LoDo, offers an impressive collection of independent retail businesses, such as Cry Baby Ranch, Dream Gallery, and The Bent Lens. The Denver-born, nationally recognized, independent Tattered Cover bookstore opened its second

location in LoDo, responding to public demand to open somewhere, anywhere, besides the original Cherry Creek location. Although LoDo offers few national chain retailers, it is home to national chain restaurants, including PF Chang's, Morton's, and The Capital Grille. Sports fans value LoDo's restaurants for their convenience to Coors Field and the Pepsi Center.

LoDo and Larimer Square are Downtown's center for eclectic, experiential, and edgy retailing and atmospheric and enjoyable dining. Unlike other parts of Downtown, LoDo's activity centers face the named streets, rather than the numbered streets. Most businesses face Larimer, Blake, Wazee, Market, or Wynkoop. LoDo is the only neighborhood along the 16th Street Mall for which the Mall is not the central activity spine. LoDo relies on the 16th Street Mall for transit, not as a retail or restaurant hub.

Tabor Center

Located at the western end of the Mall, the Tabor Center is less successful than neighboring retail areas and may require a new strategy to succeed. The Shops at Tabor Center opened in 1984 as an unanchored, multilevel enclosed Mall connected to office space and a hotel. When it opened, the Tabor Center made a significant splash, but its unanchored configuration and single-loaded upper-floor retail spaces soon proved a challenge.

Redevelopment of the Cherry Creek Shopping Center exacerbated Tabor Center's difficulties. Cherry Creek became Denver's premier fashion address and attracted Brooks Brothers and comparable retailers away from the Tabor Center. The Tabor Center's fortunes faded. The retail mix has degenerated and offers few clothing, electronics, or other comparison-shopping opportunities. The panel heard that the center's current management is considering converting the second level to office space.

Although the Tabor Center likely cannot survive in its present state, location, and merchandising, it has had some successes. The Cheesecake Factory remains one of the most successful restaurants in the market. The ESPN Zone also generates significant traffic, adding to the Tabor Center's

increased reliance on food and entertainment to sustain itself.

Streetfront Retail

The Mall's mile-long length alone prevents it from being effectively managed as one retail district. Downtown patrons, often office workers on a short lunch break, are unlikely to walk the Mall, primarily because of its length. The FREE Mall-Ride helps make the Mall more accessible by allowing shoppers to conveniently access the entire 16-block stretch without exhausting themselves.

A one-mile retail district presents very difficult challenges and should not be managed with a "one-shot" revitalization plan. Instead, the revitalization plan should focus on different elements of the Mall, coordinated to take advantage of existing and emerging market realities. Downtown serves several shopper groups; the Mall is long enough to offer different clusters of retail space designed to satisfy the demands of Downtown's various clienteles.

The Mall's seven central blocks, between Welton and Larimer streets, house a diverse mix of retail tenants. The competence, capitalization, and quality of retailers vary greatly. The variation creates weak links that hurt the Mall and limit its ability to serve its various markets. In some cases, tenants occupy spaces because they have the credit and capitalization to pay the rent, but their businesses damage the Mall's overall quality. One can empathize with landlords who make deals simply to avoid carrying vacant space, but their decisions compromise the Mall's success.

The panel heard that discount retailers thrive on the Mall. Large discount and budget-minded chains (for example, Ross Dress for Less, T.J. Maxx, Payless Shoesource, and Dress Barn) are located on the Mall and serve lower-paid and entry-level workers. To remain the true heart of the city, Downtown must guard against the temptation to weed out non-high-end retailers. Most people in the city, and most people Downtown, need budget-minded retailers. In the long run, these retailers could move from the Mall to other Downtown streets as the retail area grows to include 14th and 17th streets.

The large spaces offered by 17th Street could house anchor retailers in the future.



The Sage Building can complement the Pavilions' retail mix.



The Paramount Theatre is one of many distinguished buildings near the Pavilions.



In closing this section, the panel would like to make two additional observations:

- The 16th Street Mall contains virtually all of Downtown's retailing: 14th, 15th, and 17th streets contain sparse retail—convenience retail, business services, and restaurants—

and lack the pleasant pedestrian environment required for a thriving urban retail district.

- Cross streets along the Mall are not extensively merchandised. The panel dubbed these streets “ribs” in relation to the “spine,” the 16th Street Mall. Although a few cross streets contain exciting architectural treasures and some wonderful retailers, tenants prefer to stay as close to the 16th Street Mall as possible.

Revitalization Strategy

The panel recommends taking advantage of three immediate opportunities to improve retail Downtown:

- Encourage continued development of the Denver Pavilions and the Writer Square/Larimer Square/LoDo node as retail anchors for Downtown.
- Focus releasing and retail enhancement efforts on the seven blocks of the Mall between Larimer Street and Welton Street and on the cross streets in this stretch.
- Consider long-term opportunities for growing retail on 14th and 17th streets to broaden Downtown's retail area.

Strategies for the Eastern Anchor: Denver Pavilions

The Pavilions should focus on lifestyle retailing that caters to Downtown workers, residents, and hotel guests. It should not seek to attract suburban visitors as a staple customer base. Retailers like Ann Taylor, Talbots, and Chico's already serve women in the target lifestyle market. The Pavilions may not offer enough room to house a critical mass of men's stores, but retail on surrounding blocks could be reprogrammed to serve this important market. Entertainment venues should stay but should not be expected to bolster retail sales, given that their peak hours will be during the evening. More destination restaurants like Maggiano's will also work well.

The Pavilions understands that it cannot compete directly with Cherry Creek Shopping Center and Cherry Creek North, Denver's destination for couture retail. Cherry Creek offers Neiman

Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue and a recently opened Nordstrom. Tiffany, Polo Ralph Lauren, Burberry, and other prestigious names jostle for space here, or, failing that, for space in the adjacent Cherry Creek North neighborhood with its 300-plus shops and restaurants, including Crate & Barrel, Betsey Johnson, Marmi, and Whole Foods. The panel believes that any attempt by the Pavilions to compete directly with Cherry Creek for the couture customer will be fruitless.

New opportunities abound for the Pavilions and the surrounding area. The Pavilions appears headed for new ownership, although a public announcement has not yet been made. (Following the panel's visit, the Pavilions was indeed acquired by a new owner.) New ownership will offer the opportunity to reposition the Pavilions as an even more effective anchor for the 16th Street Mall by attracting new tenants. The nearby Sage Building should expand the Pavilions' retail and restaurant mass and serve a similar market.

Strategies for the Western Anchor: Writer Square/Larimer Square/LoDo

LoDo is progressing nicely and should continue doing what it is doing now. It is not a finished product, but to the extent that anything is "easy" in the retail world, LoDo will have the easiest time in the overall Downtown retail scheme. LoDo owns its reputation as an entertainment district, home of the hip, and place to see and be seen. Retailers and restaurant owners seek out spaces in LoDo, and LoDo's landlords exhibit a palpable understanding of what LoDo is and what it needs to be. Landlords and landowners should hold the course when it comes to leasing.

LoDo continues to see intense office and residential development that targets the same hip urbanites attracted to the neighborhood's retailers and restaurants. Larimer Square and Writer Square serve similar customers and will remain an important part of LoDo's retail scene. Newly developed residential space in LoDo and the Central Platte Valley increases the need for neighborhood retailing.

The western anchor area may offer an opportunity to introduce the supermarket Downtown shoppers want. Such a store could serve both Downtown



Market Street Station could offer a site sufficient for an anchor retailer.



Underused spaces could house new tenants.

residents and office workers who can shop or buy prepared foods on their way home. A system for making office and home deliveries will strengthen the store's market position. The panel recommends locating a supermarket as close to LoDo as possible. Possible sites could include the Tabor Center or, in the long term, the Market Street Station site. In any case, the supermarket site must be directly on the 16th Street Mall; the panel heard that potential supermarket operators may refuse other locations.

Revitalizing Streetfront Retail

The 16th Street Mall's streetfront retail will evolve more organically than that of the two anchor areas. The panel's recommendations focus on three different streetfront retail areas: the Mall's core blocks, from Welton to Larimer streets; cross streets along this stretch; and 14th and 17th streets. The panel recommends enhancing streetfront retail along the Mall and growing the

retail district along the cross streets and parallel numbered streets.

Spaces on the Mall's core blocks are ripe for retail leasing, one deal at a time. The retail mix should grow organically because of the Mall's length and diverse property ownership. Leasing strategies should respond to the market and be less prescriptive than strategies for the anchor areas. Ross Dress for Less and Dress Barn are satisfactory uses for the time being and serve an important market. In general, the panel encourages building owners and leasing agents to lease space to well-run, competent, adequately capitalized tenants who will abide by any adopted facade guidelines and complement the overall retail mix.

Recapturing leases offers an opportunity to enhance the Mall's retail mix. During the panel's interviews, few local stakeholders discussed the possibility of recapturing space occupied by existing tenants. The panel encourages stakeholders to reframe their view; the leasing effort for a space should not end simply because a tenant currently occupies the space. Sometimes, good tenants become available who would be excellent candidates for a space currently occupied by another user. Buying back the leases from tenants deemed unsatisfactory in favor of a better tenant is a legitimate business practice. In other cases, the existing tenants can be relocated.

The panel highly recommends expanding Downtown's retail district to the Mall's cross streets and 14th and 17th streets to provide diversely priced and sized retail spaces that can house a mix of retailers who serve Downtown's varied audiences. Currently, the 16th Street Mall is Downtown's only main street and offers the majority of shopping and dining opportunities. Its length and space limitations limit expansion of Downtown retail.

Expansion of the retail district could help mitigate the Mall's high retail rents. Rents often exceed the reach of many retailers, especially the experiential, creative, clever, and cool independent stores that help bring character to Downtown. The panel observed some of these retailers on East Colfax and in Capitol Hill. Expansion of the retail district onto the cross streets could provide smaller, cheaper spaces for such tenants.

Expansion of the retail district onto 14th and 17th streets could provide more affordable retail space for budget-minded retailers such as Ross Dress for Less, Dress Barn, and T.J.Maxx. As the Mall evolves, these retailers' current spaces will become more valuable and therefore less suitable for more price-driven stores. Lower rents allow these stores to keep their prices more affordable. Budget-minded and discount retailers may work better on adjacent blocks with lower rents and convenient access to office workers.

In response to many requests, the panel wishes to note that traditional department stores are not likely to locate in Downtown. The panel also heard frequent requests for a Downtown Target. Target is a high-quality operation that does well in upscale markets and has developed a successful urban format. The panel recommends pursuing a Target for Downtown. To find ample space, Target might need to locate a block off of 16th Street where large parcels are available. If such parcels can be assembled on 16th Street or within a block of it, ideally near either of the anchor areas, Target should be a major success and should help arouse intense retailer and restaurant interest in Downtown.

Design Principles

The original design concept that shaped the 16th Street Mall promised its success as Denver's vital, multiuse main street. Today, as then, the 16th Street Mall depends on the quality of its design and the diversity of the urban neighborhoods it serves. The panel proposes ten core principles to guide future design and development decisions that affect the 16th Street Mall. The principles grow from the civic spirit of the Mall's origins and provide concrete guidance for understanding and evaluating future opportunities.

Honor the Original Design

The panel encourages all stakeholders to honor the legacy of the original I. M. Pei & Partners design for the 16th Street Mall. Denver's residents view the Mall with great affection and pride as a powerful image of their city. The Mall is a unified concept and public art of the highest international quality, not merely an assemblage of elements. The lighting, landscaping, and paving all form part of a single unit. Any changes must be made cautiously and with full respect for the original design. Any change could fundamentally alter the success of the space and deny this legacy to future generations. The panel recognizes the need to address challenges posed by deferred maintenance and failed construction technologies; nevertheless, upgrades and repairs should be made with full respect for the original design.

Introduce Neighborhood Improvements

The panel recommends new programs and design solutions to reinforce neighborhood cross connections and promote development. Close-in established and emerging neighborhoods and major event venues surround Downtown. Most of these are within a ten-minute walk of the Mall, and many are within a five-minute walk. Among them,

the Denver Performing Arts Complex, the Colorado Convention Center, the Civic Center, the Auraria Campus, Coors Field, the Central Platte Valley, and Arapahoe Square form a Downtown nexus of sports, education, governance, recreation, and culture that make urban living enjoyable. The few blocks that separate the Mall from these assets should be upgraded with streetscape, land use, and transit improvements on the strategically selected streets identified in the 2007 Downtown Area Plan and discussed later in this report.

Improve the Terminations of the Mall

The Mall's terminations, from Market to Wynkoop streets in the west and from Tremont Place to Broadway in the east, should be upgraded. Much of the enjoyment of the urban journey is the anticipation of reward at the end. At the west end, the transit way opens into a poorly defined urban street environment from Market to Wynkoop streets. The Market Street Station bus staging area further compromises this experience. Before the RTD releases Market Street Station for development, all stakeholders should agree on a master plan that calls for development and streetscape improvements appropriate to LoDo's gateway.

At the eastern end, FREE MallRide movements and uncoordinated plazas and open spaces greatly diminish the quality of the gateway from the Civic Center. In partnership with the city, building owners, and the RTD, the DDP should undertake a unified master plan to upgrade this environment so that it equals the design standards set by the I. M. Pei & Partners plan. These improvements should create a beautified view from the 16th Street Mall to the State Capitol.

Maintain Vitality

Currently, office workers, tourists, convention visitors, and residents support the Mall's retail,

Both ends of the Mall could be enhanced to offer a sense of arrival.



restaurant, and entertainment venues. Every effort should be made to maintain that customer base for the businesses along the Mall. Improvements could include better security at night and upgraded north-south connections to nearby neighborhoods.

Enhance the Street Network

The 16th Street Mall should be included in a comprehensive street network of movement and address. The city must modify its network of one-way streets to provide better mobility for traffic and transit. Coupled with Downtown's large block structure, the one-way street system requires long travel distances through many intersections to circulate to destinations within Downtown. This network reduces shopping trips and thwarts accessibility to storefronts. The 16th Street Mall's prohibition on traffic exacerbates the problem between 15th and 17th streets. Two-way movements must be introduced within this zone to promote commerce and vitality.

Create a Space for Everyone

The Mall must welcome and provide for all Denver's citizens. From an economic point of view, monoculture environments are fragile. The healthiest cities allow everyone to participate, encourage experimentation and invention, and continuously reinvent themselves. Denver is a young city, positioned geographically, demographically, economically, and culturally to become a bigger and better one. Doing so will require energetic



and patriotic participation from as many human resources as it can muster and as many sectors of its population as it can embrace.

Promote Pedestrian-Friendly Streets

A great city is fundamentally a walking city. The sidewalks of the city street are where the city's people, buildings, and experiences greet one another face to face. Loss of these encounters diminishes the sense of shared culture, limits enjoyment of diversity, and restricts the chance for surprises that educate and entertain. Most important, poor pedestrian environments diminish residents' sense of personal responsibility for the civic realm.

Connect Streets with Open Space

Downtown streets should connect a network of parks and open spaces that are truly public. For Denver, pedestrian-friendly streets should integrate seamlessly with major public spaces, including Skyline Park, Civic Center Park, and even office building plazas. These spaces should serve as areas of repose, recreation, event, and assembly. In tandem with the street network, such spaces should be managed as the realm where democracy reigns, where none are excluded and all are respected. This overall network should feature the latest communication technologies, including interactive signage and advertising in select areas.

Involve the Public Realm

The city and county of Denver are ultimately responsible for the 16th Street Mall's vitality. The DDP, the BID, the RTD, and property owners have done a superb job maintaining the Mall as the city's premier open space but cannot afford the full cost of moving forward. The Mall is a civic space that belongs in the hands of the public realm. The city should allocate any financial and human resources it can afford to keep the Mall as an amenity for residents and visitors alike.

Provide a Feasible Vision

Downtown stakeholders need to define a feasible, near-term vision for the area around the 16th Street Mall. The panel proposes an urban village that provides an urban lifestyle with neighborhood convenience retail and specialty shopping, all within walking distance of Downtown's great resources. Such a development, done on a manageable scale, could be the seed of a great new Downtown neighborhood. Although recent development activity in the commercial core has rewarded Denver's successful Downtown efforts, land resources close to the 16th Street Mall remain underused. The city should apply incentives and leadership to jump-start development in the urban village.



The Mall provides an excellent model for new pedestrian-friendly streets.

Design Recommendations

The Mall and its transit system have been workhorses for positive change in Downtown's growing economy since 1982. Time and use have taken a toll. Today, almost 26 years since the Mall's opening, the Mall's infrastructure is near the end of its life span. In particular, some of the Mall's below-grade infrastructure is failing and requires reconstruction. Meanwhile, paving repair and maintenance costs continue to grow. The panel agrees with the prevailing opinion that a major reconstruction is needed.

Reconstruction efforts must honor the original design. The original design provides sufficient flexibility to accommodate future transit solutions and maintain the Mall's role as Denver's most prominent public space. Maintaining and reusing the existing granite pavers offers a sustainable solution and one that preserves the original public investment and unique sense of place. Reconstruction planning, design, and execution will be a complex process that must be done carefully and with appropriate expertise.

Paving System Solutions

The Mall's original paving system is a unique pattern of cut granite blocks set in mortar. The fields of pavers are precisely organized around light fixtures, tree wells, granite curbs, and intersections. The amazingly high level of design execution is one of the Mall's hidden treasures and often goes unrecognized by the casual observer. As stated in the preceding design principles, the reconstruction planning process must honor the quality of this design.

The paving system needs to be studied and reconstructed. Years of freeze-thaw cycles, marginal drainage, and maintenance caused the granite paving system to fail in several areas. Currently, repairs to the granite are costly and must be performed during off hours because of the Mall's

intensive and extended hours of use. Although repairs use a construction technique similar to the original, they create a patchwork of differing mortar colors and joint widths that detracts from the Mall's appearance and design integrity.

The panel heard extensive discussion about solutions for the paving system. Many stakeholders suggested using a sand-set paving system, similar to one used by the city for other recent projects. A sand-set system may not be able to match the tolerances used in the original design because sand-setting usually requires a wider tolerance. Paving experts should be retained to find an installation solution that can preserve the original tolerances.

The discussion should move from paving options to strategies for mitigating the freeze-thaw cycle entirely. Two possibilities offer promise. Under-sidewalk snow-melting technologies could offer a solution. Another option could be a rooftop solar energy system that would heat water for a de-icing loop. The latter option could be a model for sustainable design. Annual savings on operation costs and snow removal could offset the initial costs of either system. Pedestrians, property owners, and the RTD would likely view a snow-melting system as a high-quality amenity.

The reconstruction should also take steps to make the granite paving system safer for pedestrians and transit operators. Two possible strategies are (a) reflagging the existing granite pavers to recapture their original slip-resistant texture before replacement and (b) adding grooves to the top of the existing granite curbs for improved tactile warning and safety at the transit lanes.

Landscape Solutions

The panel recommends rehabilitating areas of the Mall where trees have been lost and not replaced. These areas may offer opportunities to add new landscape areas by converting modest-sized areas

of underused paved median into new planting zones. The intent is to add additional greenery to the Mall and reduce the visual clutter of street planters. The design for these areas must be studied carefully to create a safety refuge outside the transit lane without disrupting mid-block pedestrian crossings. This improvement should be designed to honor and enhance the Mall's original design.

The panel also recommends improvements to the Mall's water systems. Failing underground landscape irrigation infrastructure should be reconstructed to promote healthy tree growth. In addition, the Mall's subsurface drainage and stormwater systems should be repaired and upgraded as necessary.

Lighting and Electrical Infrastructure Solutions

The panel recommends preserving the original light fixtures and upgrading the electrical infrastructure. The existing light fixtures should be removed, inspected for structural failures at the rusting base areas, and reconditioned as needed. They should then be coated with a high-quality finish and reinstalled. All existing electrical wires, controls, and conduit that serve the lighting fixtures should be replaced. New power outlets should be added along the Mall to accommodate vendor needs and tree lighting. The panel also recommends studying the benefits and location for new unpopulated underground conduits to support future improvements such as a public music system or Wi-Fi.



Precision detail defines the paving system.



Connectivity and Mobility

The panel evaluated the 2007 Downtown Area Plan and the Downtown Multimodal Access Plan (DMAP) as part of its work and determined that these plans provide a comprehensive strategy for Downtown development. The panel believes that the 2007 Downtown Area Plan should put additional focus on the 16th Street Mall's role as a visitor attraction and civic icon.

The panel recommends the following enhancements to the 2007 Downtown Area Plan to better support the Mall's second renaissance as Denver's premier "great street" and the anchor of a growing network of great streets Downtown:

- Develop a network of primary and secondary "great streets" that knits together Downtown's districts and offers a wide range of desired addresses and real estate for new development.
- Position local transit as a critical tool for supporting new development Downtown and promoting the vitality of the 16th Street Mall and other Downtown areas.
- Improve transit connectivity throughout Downtown by creating a Downtown Circulator on 14th and 18th/19th streets. (The panel understands that this idea was considered and dismissed during the DMAP planning process but encourages stakeholders to revisit it.)
- Create a Downtown Transit Fare-Free Zone and operate the Downtown Circulator as a free service that supports growth and enhances mobility.
- Transform one-way streets into high-quality two-way streets.
- Design all streets as high-quality pedestrian environments with on-street parking, wide sidewalks, and streetscape improvements.

Enhancing Downtown's Transportation Network

Downtown's automobile, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation network provides regional accessibility and local mobility. Diverse transportation choices connect visitors, commuters, and residents to different Downtown districts and amenities. As Downtown grows, the transportation system will need to serve increasing automobile, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic. The system must balance efficient service and overall livability to achieve Downtown's long-term sustainability.

The 16th Street Mall is Denver's premier civic street, a spine linking Downtown's government, office, retail, entertainment, and recreation areas. It is also Downtown's principal transit artery. Downtown's transportation system must evolve to enable the 16th Street Mall to work in concert with other key streets to connect neighborhoods and activity nodes throughout Downtown.

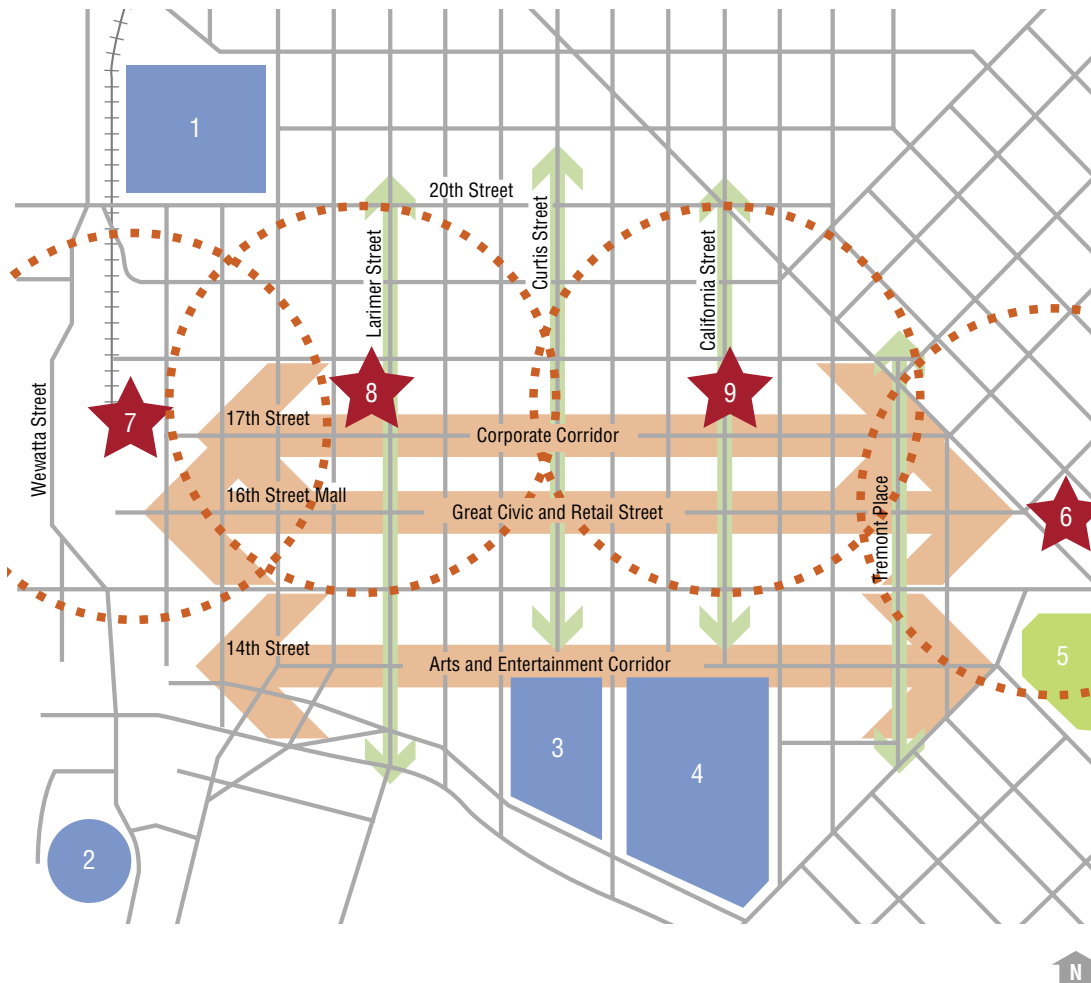
The panel's vision for a successful Downtown interweaves the 16th Street Mall, 14th Street, and 17th Street with key perpendicular named streets to form Downtown's connective tissue. All these corridors must provide an excellent pedestrian environment and support local transit, bicycle, and pedestrian needs.

Regional Transportation

Downtown serves as a regional hub for major highways, arterial roadways, and transit service. Currently, regional buses terminate at Market Street and Civic Center stations. The FREE MallRide links these two stations and distributes regional visitors throughout Downtown.

FasTracks' buildout will change Downtown's regional transportation patterns by shifting the

Comprehensive transit creates a walkable downtown.



Key

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Coors Field | 6 Civic Center Station | Five-Minute Walk from a Transit Hub |
| 2 Pepsi Center | 7 Union Station | Major Street |
| 3 Denver Center for the Performing Arts | 8 Market Street Station | Connector Street |
| 4 Colorado Convention Center | 9 Light-Rail Station | |
| 5 Civic Center Park | | |

regional transportation hub to Union Station and by increasing the number of jobs and transit riders in Downtown. Downtown transit service will need to change in response. Major changes include increasing capacity and providing easy local connections to regional transit services at Union Station.

Local Transportation

The 16th Street Mall performs well as Downtown’s principal transit artery. Its existence is owed in large part to its success as a transit corridor. With three peak travel periods per day, the

Mall’s ability to provide the majority of Downtown transit connections is remarkable. With the projected addition of more than 35,000 new workers and 25,000 new residents, local transit service will need to be enhanced to connect the major activity centers and to serve all Downtown transit riders.

The FREE MallRide should continue to operate and connect the major transit centers at Union Station and Civic Center Station to retail and commercial activity directly along the Mall. Local cross-town bus, and potentially streetcar, service



Light rail provides connections throughout the region, above. Union Station will become the hub of a major regional transit system, right.



should be expanded to provide connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

A Downtown Circulator should be established along 14th Street, Broadway/Lincoln Street, and 18th/19th streets to connect major activity nodes, including Coors Field, the commercial core, the Civic Center, the art and cultural museums, the Colorado Convention Center, and Downtown’s neighborhoods. The panel understands that this idea was discarded during the DMAP planning process but encourages the stakeholders to revisit it.

The panel recommends creating a Downtown Transit Fare-Free Zone to enable transit to serve the Downtown area as an amenity, distinct from its function as a regional connector. The Fare-Free Zone will support development by encouraging in-town transit use, reducing the projected overdemand of the FREE MallRide, and enabling transit riders to make easy connections to activity centers throughout Downtown.

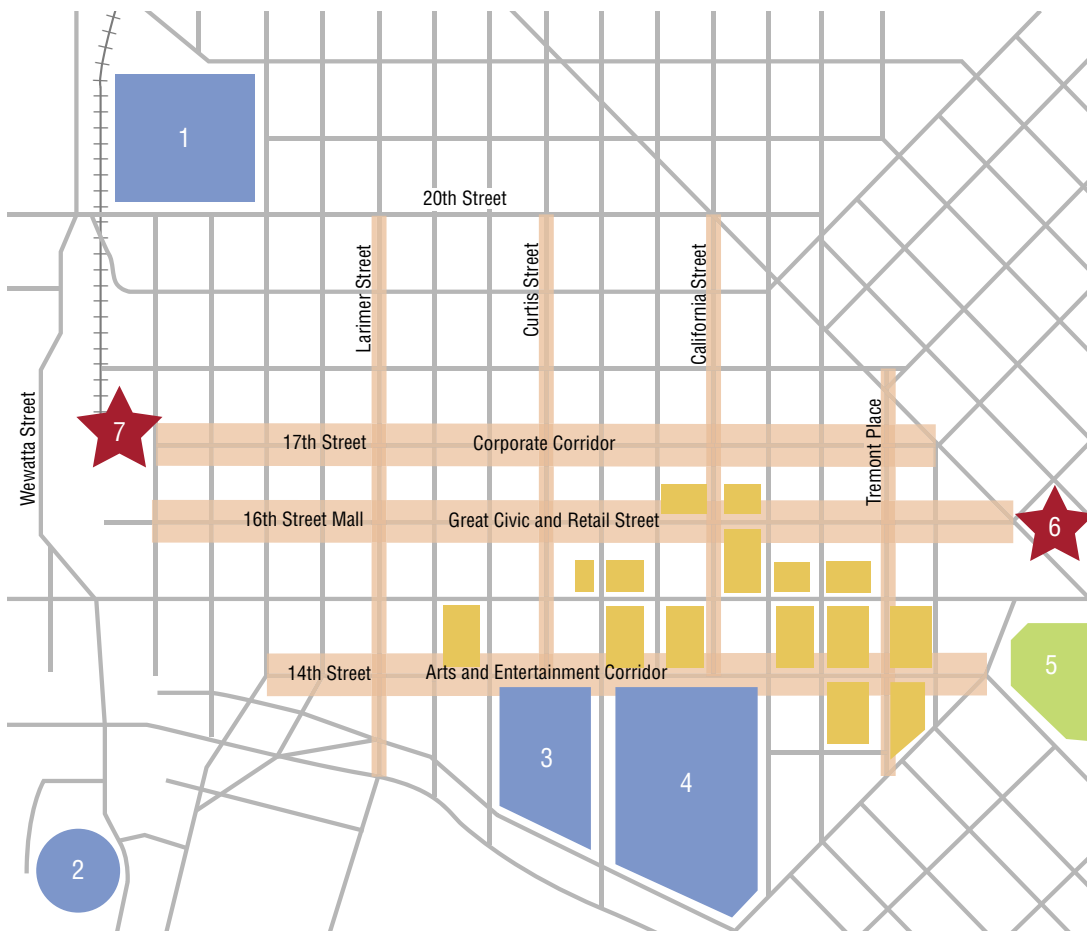
To fully enhance the Downtown living, working, and entertainment environment, Downtown should introduce additional mobility options to supplement fixed-route transit service and auto dependency. Car-sharing services; bicycles; reliable Downtown taxi service; designated scooter, motorcycle, and bicycle parking; and other personal transportation devices (for example, Segways) for short, local trips will support development of and access to various services from all the Downtown neighborhoods.

Creating Great Streets

Downtown’s street grid can provide mobility for all transportation modes. To achieve this goal, the panel recommends transforming Downtown’s street grid into a network of great primary and secondary streets that complement the 16th Street Mall. The “great streets” network will create new residential, office, institutional, and retail development opportunities by establishing many desirable addresses, pedestrian-friendly street environments, and easy connections throughout Downtown. On great streets, all street and building design focuses on creating a safe, pleasant, and lively pedestrian environment.

As a general note, the panel recommends abandoning Downtown’s current one-way street system. Most Downtown streets are one way, between two and four lanes wide, and lacking streetscape. The one-way street system requires long travel distances through many intersections to circulate to destinations within Downtown. The panel recommends opening all streets to two-way traffic and transforming the current streets by introducing trees, wide sidewalks, unified sidewalk paving, and on-street parking. All Downtown streets should be considered pedestrian-oriented streets.




Opportunity sites in the proposed urban village.



Key

- 1 Coors Field
- 2 Pepsi Center
- 3 Denver Center for the Performing Arts
- 4 Colorado Convention Center

- 5 Civic Center Park
- 6 Civic Center Station
- 7 Union Station

-  Great Primary Streets
-  Mixed-Use Opportunity Site
-  Major Venue



Great Primary Streets

The panel recommends creating a network of great primary streets to improve pedestrian movement and multimodal access. The primary streets should include the following:

- 16th Street Mall, Denver’s greatest civic and retail street;
- 14th Street civic/cultural corridor;
- 17th Street corporate/commercial corridor;
- Larimer Street, the rib connecting the Auraria Campus, LoDo, and Coors Field;
- Curtis Street, the rib connecting the Denver Performing Arts Complex to the emerging Arapahoe Square arts neighborhood;
- California Street, the rib connecting the Colorado Convention Center to the commercial core; and
- Tremont Place, the rib connecting the commercial core to the Silver Triangle and Civic Center.

Existing wayfinding devices are an example of great pedestrian amenities.



Great primary streets should be transformed into two-way streets with on-street parking and bicycle lanes, where possible. They should include boulevard-type streetscape treatments with wide sidewalks, street trees, unified sidewalk paving, and well-designed facades. The panel recommends establishing urban design guidelines for all build-

ings on the primary streets that will ensure that new developments reinforce the character and activity along these key neighborhood corridors.

Great Secondary Streets

Great secondary streets are neighborhood corridors that help Downtown function. Secondary streets present opportunities for developments not requiring prime street addresses; enable service access to primary street properties, providing access for city services; and offer space for enhanced transit and bicycle service. The character of the secondary streets should reflect the pedestrian-oriented environment of the primary streets with wide sidewalks, street trees, and unified sidewalk paving. Design guidelines on secondary streets should be less stringent but should remain consistent with the Downtown neighborhood character. Important secondary streets include 15th, 18th, and 19th streets.

A Walk around the Urban Village

The panel recommends focusing development efforts on creating a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly, civic, cultural, and residential urban village at the heart of Downtown and the center of the 16th Street Mall. The urban village will surround the core blocks of the 16th Street Mall and fill the area bounded by 14th, 17th, and Market streets and Glenarm Place. The new neighborhood will fill a hole in the center of Downtown with new development on currently vacant or underused sites.

The urban village should extend the vitality of the 16th Street Mall to the cross streets and through a walkable neighborhood that links LoDo, the Silver Triangle, the Auraria Campus, and Arapahoe Square. New residents in compact, mid-rise, and high-rise residential buildings will support further development on the Mall and throughout Downtown. As LoDo did, the urban village will become a new neighborhood with a unique identity. The following sections give the reader an opportunity to explore the urban village and understand its particular urban character.

The new urban village should be a mixed-use district that houses the full diversity of urban life but retains a residential focus. A residential focus promotes development of a true neighborhood character that, in turn, will attract new residents and development. Local developers told the panel that development in LoDo and the Union Station area is driven by tenants who want LoDo's lifestyle and ambience in their workplace. The same can happen in the urban village. Increased residential population will also support upgraded retail on the 16th Street Mall and its cross streets.

Buildings Oriented to Great Streets

Major buildings and ground-floor retail in the urban village should face the north-south primary great streets—Larimer, Curtis, California, and Tremont. These streets will spread vitality from

the Mall through the urban village and an entire network of human-scaled neighborhoods, especially for retail development. Buildings throughout the urban village should locate local, unique, or neighborhood-serving retail on their ground floors, facing the named streets.

Continuing to serve its current role, 15th Street should function primarily as a service street. Service frontage and access points should be minimized and oriented toward 15th and nonprimary named streets. Garage and service entrances should be discreetly located in the mid-block areas to minimize interruption of the facade and retail streetscape.



High-density buildings support street life and retail.

“Great streets” network and the urban village.



Higher Densities Where Appropriate

Building design in the urban village should create pedestrian-friendly streets, enable high densities, and preserve the views valued in Denver’s high-rise residential buildings. The panel believes that podium buildings with taller point towers will achieve all three goals. Vancouver, Portland, and other cities have used this model to successfully create higher-density, highly livable neighborhoods. The podium structure can be two to four stories and contain parking, retail, and service

functions. The point towers, which sit atop the podium, can be configured around rooftop gardens to maximize views and sunlight.

The panel recommends locating higher-density, taller buildings north of the Mall, along 14th and 15th streets. This location will help new development conform to the sunlight preservation ordinance. Clustering the taller buildings along the north side of the Mall will also create a hub of activity between the 14th Street cultural corridor and the 16th Street Mall.

Pedestrian-Friendly Streetscapes

The urban village should feature pedestrian-friendly streets with consistent streetscapes that foster a comfortable pedestrian experience. Street trees, planting areas, planter boxes along buildings, wide sidewalks, ornamental paving, on-street parking, and sidewalk bump-outs at crosswalks will all help create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Lively ground-floor uses and animated building facades further enhance the pedestrian experience. The panel recognizes that Downtown cannot support retail in all ground-floor spaces. Retail is not the only way to enliven streets. Buildings in the urban village should maintain a lively and inviting ground-level street facade skillfully articulated with entrances, stoops, recessed courtyards, and other features.

Buildings should align with the build-to lines to establish street facade continuity. Setbacks from the property line should be used only in conditions where sidewalks are excessively narrow. Street wall continuity is critical to creating the continuity of storefronts needed for a strong retail environment.

Appropriate Parking and Circulation

The urban village should feature on-street parking on all streets other than the 16th Street Mall. On-street parking increases short-term parking for retail and visitors and makes pedestrians feel safer by slowing traffic in adjacent travel lanes and providing a physical and psychological buffer between pedestrians and traffic.

The urban village should not include surface parking. Surface parking will not contribute to the desired high-density neighborhood environment. The large supply of structured parking at the Colorado Convention Center, Denver Performing Arts Complex, and other Downtown locations will provide supplemental parking. Maximum parking counts should be established for each new project based on land use and shared parking strategies; no minimum should be set. Parking garages should be located underground or be wrapped with other uses to screen them from public view.



Planters enhance the pedestrian environment.

Two-way travel should be permitted on most, if not all, streets within the urban village. Two-way traffic enhances mobility and connectivity while simplifying wayfinding for visitors and residents alike. It also tends to calm traffic and reduce speeds.

Open Space and Green Design

The urban village should feature green urban landscapes at every scale. Developers and public leaders should use extensive public and private landscapes and gardens to transform the area from a rather barren, concrete environment. Street trees, planter boxes, garden courts, roof gardens, pocket parks, and other private and publicly accessible landscapes will be assets. Privately controlled gardens and landscapes will contribute to the streetscape if they are visible to the public even if they are not publicly accessible. Streetscapes should link to existing open spaces, such as Skyline Park, that will become neighborhood parks for the urban village.

All buildings and landscapes in the urban village should meet high standards for sustainable development. New landscapes should feature water-sensitive design and native plants that conform to the city's Greenprint strategy. For buildings, the urban village should go beyond the minimum standards of LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) to enhance the overall sustainability of the district. Every opportunity for reducing the neighborhood's carbon footprint should be explored, including green infrastructure, green streets, energy-efficient technology,

and recycled and locally produced products. Stakeholders should set a goal of making the urban village carbon-neutral.

Design Controls for High-Quality Development

The panel recommends implementing a publicly managed and administered design review process for the urban village to ensure high-quality building, landscape, and urban design. Stakeholders should create urban design guidelines, based on a comprehensive urban design plan for the neighborhood. The guidelines and plans should identify the urban village as a separate neighborhood within the Downtown area in the same way that design guidelines distinguish LoDo, Arapahoe Square, and the Civic Center. All new projects—public or private—must conform to the design guidelines. Projects can then be reviewed and approved through the normal process administered by the Department of Community Planning and Development.

Implementation

To provide business continuity and minimize business interruption during reconstruction of 16th Street, the city will need to manage multiple programs and incorporate relevant requirements in the construction contracts, funding provisions, and maintenance standards.

Mitigation Strategies for the Reconstruction Process

Advance planning for the reconstruction process will minimize disruption to transit services and retailers on the Mall. The construction schedule should break the construction process into manageable phases. The panel recommends implementing the work one block and one half of the street at a time. Inefficient construction or poor sequencing will add calendar days and costs to the construction budget.

The BID should work with the contractor to ensure access to businesses throughout the reconstruction process. Several steps can help provide access. Project staging should be designed to provide access to businesses and minimize business interruption. Access to businesses and transit should be maintained while trenching and subsurface preparation work occur. Pavement preparation and installation should take place in coordination with a specifically oriented plan.

The construction contract must contain a requirement to minimize vehicular, transit, and pedestrian traffic interruptions and to provide notice promptly of required traffic interruption and rerouting schemes. The most disruptive work should occur overnight, avoiding business hours and weekend days to enable the Mall to function as a right-of-way.

Selecting the Right Construction Partner

The project will require a resourceful general contractor. The city should draft a detailed request

for qualifications and carefully evaluate the responses to find the right construction partner for this project, not the lowest-cost contractor. Key qualifications will include the contractor's ability to communicate with retailers and stakeholders, experience with high-quality public infrastructure projects, capacity to manage public stakeholders, and ability to organize a highly complex project. The city may consider a bonus incentive for work completed ahead of schedule to reduce the financial effects on retailers and tax collections. This approach has worked well for completing major infrastructure projects in other areas of the country, keeping them on time and on budget with minimal disruption of services.

Stakeholder Communications

The contractor must communicate progress; changes to the schedule; upcoming construction movements; and other issues to retailers, transit officials, and other stakeholders on an ongoing basis. The construction contract should require the contractor to designate a liaison who will be immediately and continuously available to mitigate unforeseen construction issues that affect business operations. The liaison should host weekly construction schedule and program update meetings and immediately communicate schedule



The community engagement process should continue throughout implementation.

changes that affect businesses. The liaison will be responsive directly to businesses to address day-to-day concerns and issues.

Financial Assistance

Planning should consider the financial effects of reconstruction on retailers and the city. Retailers may need subsidies if construction causes them to go dark for any time longer than a few days. In addition, reduced retail sales will reduce sales tax collections. Downtown stakeholders should plan for both of these financial needs.

A “mitigation fund” should be established as part of the construction budget. These funds will be used for public relations and awareness building, as well as to provide a contingency for business interruption funding. The city and the BID should also consider providing incentives for facade improvements immediately following the pavement work.

Public Relations and Awareness Building

The BID should retain a public relations team to build and maintain interest in the reconstruction project and ensure continuing business and retail activity. The team’s job will be to develop a themed campaign to build awareness for and celebrate the ongoing “event” of the project and its anticipated outcomes. Campaign features can include the following activities:

- Website and Web-based communications that provide continuous updates on the renovation process and progress;
- A joint advertising campaign, funded cooperatively by businesses and the mitigation fund, that highlights special events, individual promotions, merchandise opportunities, and merchant incentive programs;
- Distinctive on-site signage to direct customers through detours and to parking and affected stores;
- A multimedia advertising and promotion program that continuously broadcasts changing traffic and parking strategies before and during the reconstruction; and

- Regular coordinated progress coverage by all media.

The campaign will be expensive. All parties involved in the rehabilitation process must commit to making the project as painless and as efficient as possible. Cooperative effort will allow the 16th Street Mall to emerge better and more beautiful for all who enjoy it.

Parking

If the reconstruction disrupts transit access to the Mall or vehicular access near the Mall, the BID might consider creating and promoting dependable, accessible parking with fee reduction, merchant validation, and other inconvenience offsets. This strategy could help draw customers who might otherwise be discouraged by the reconstruction activities.

Funding

Fortunately, the 16th Street Mall has benefited from the commitment, investment, and resources of many. With acknowledged public sector funding pressures, successful public/private partnerships will become increasingly critical to the Mall and Downtown Denver’s future success. At the project’s outset, the public/private team should prepare detailed capital, maintenance, and operating pro formas for the entire Mall. The pro formas should consider all costs associated with the Mall’s rehabilitation, retail development, maintenance, programming, and marketing.

The panel recommends preparing a comprehensive funding strategy. The strategy should be imaginative and forward thinking to capitalize on all and any funding sources that can be used. In developing the funding plan, stakeholders should

- Strategize about funding sources, to include the city, RTD, DURA, BID, and other cultural and economic development partners;
- Evaluate state and federal funding sources;
- Identify corporate sponsorships and not-for-profit/foundation grants;
- Explore revenue potential from parking income, vending operations, programming, special

events, advertising, and other alternative opportunities; and

- Package a maintenance endowment with the capital budget, whenever possible, to create a permanent funding stream.

The DDP and the BID can and must continue to assume a leadership role in improving and managing Downtown and the 16th Street Mall. The DDP and the BID may require new revenue to achieve the enhanced economic development, maintenance, programming, and marketing envisioned for the Mall. New commercial development within the BID will generate additional income. The DDP should evaluate the feasibility of establishing a community improvement district, downtown development authority, or other district mechanism to capture additional revenue. It may be advantageous to overlay an appropriate district mechanism to achieve the necessary results. The BID could also solicit voluntary contributions from residential properties, individuals, and other currently nonassessed users.

Retail Enhancement Strategies

The DDP and the BID recently initiated the Retail Development Plan to retain and recruit retailers to Downtown, with special focus on the 16th Street Mall between Welton and Curtis streets. This plan seeks to improve the appearance and consistency of storefronts and exterior signage through a facade improvement program, enhance window displays and interior signage through a merchandising program, promote Downtown's retail amenities through a marketing program, and provide lease and buildout subsidies through an incentive program. The DDP is currently taking steps to secure \$2 million to \$3 million to fund those activities.

To achieve desired results, the panel recommends hiring a dedicated staff person to keep data, prospect, show available space, and liaise with property owners of available spaces. Experience from other cities indicates that having a trained individual focused on retail retention and recruitment is essential. In addition, the panel suggests the following efforts to enhance the Retail Development Plan:



Distinctive signage and facade design create a lively retail streetscape.

- Establish a merchandising plan to identify preferred uses and locations.
- Establish and enforce facade and storefront design guidelines to raise the bar and guide development.
- Provide design assistance to assist property owners in creating attractive, effective storefront designs.
- Pilot Portland's "Block by Block" program, and begin by working with the new Pavilions owners and other proposed new developments.
- Develop a retail incubator program to identify, nurture, and grow small businesses, including ethnic entrepreneurs, artisans, and emerging talents.

The panel recommends reserving grants, loans, and other services for property owners and tenants who comply with the 16th Street Mall merchandising plan and design guidelines. These efforts can be expanded to other areas along the Mall as desired.

Maintenance

Managing a popular and heavily used public space requires a never-ending commitment to the highest standards of maintenance. This responsibility necessitates dedicated and resourceful personnel,

equipment, and funding. It is especially important for the 16th Street Mall, Denver's living room. The BID, the DDP, the city, and the RTD have demonstrated a collaborative and effective approach in maintaining the Mall to date. This approach will be even more critical in the future.

Design considerations must continue to address and incorporate long-term maintenance factors. Involving maintenance expertise in the design team can save dollars in the future. As part of the paver solution, ongoing maintenance and cleaning requirements and realities must be balanced with aesthetic and cost preferences.

The BID and the RTD now use many green practices in cleaning and operations. Their green strategies include using environmentally friendly cleaning solutions and materials, reclaiming and reusing excess water, using vehicles and tools

powered by alternative sources, and using native, low-maintenance plantings. Future opportunities could include using environmentally friendly power sources such as solar-heated water for sidewalk snow melting, capturing ambient noise ("crowd farms") to power LED lighting, and other technologies yet to emerge.

The panel observed that the Mall's management agencies do not universally agree on the division of future maintenance and operation responsibilities, funding, and the status of existing contracts. These or new agreements need to be researched, clarified, and negotiated to be as effective and efficient as possible.

Conclusion

The panel believes that Denver will get the city it wants. Nevertheless, effective change will require Denver's leaders to want change badly enough to rally the collective civic will to bring about such change. Change requires the vision to see what others cannot, the conviction to inspire others to follow that vision, and the persistence of will to do what is required to achieve the vision. By creating the 2007 Downtown Area Plan, Denver has taken a bold step into its own future.

Clearly, Denver has proven repeatedly that it possesses the collective will to make big things happen to the benefit all of Denver's citizens.

Renewing the 16th Street Mall area is the next big thing. It will require close cooperation, constant communication, inspired and visionary leadership, and a willingness to understand that individual concerns must sometimes give way to a sense of desire, dedication, and commitment to that which best serves the interests of the entire Denver community. The panel believes that Denver has all the elements it needs to soar into its future place as a world-class city.

About the Panel

Ray Brown

Panel Chair
Memphis, Tennessee

Brown offers architectural and urban design services to Memphis architectural firms for individual projects. He specializes in projects that have the potential to improve quality of life for urban residents by reinventing neighborhoods into more livable communities.

Brown directed the design and construction of AutoZone Park in Memphis, a crown jewel in Memphis's downtown renaissance. As vice president for development of the Memphis Center City Commission, Brown set the framework for the downtown urban design plan, facilitated new development, recruited new businesses, and administered design standards.

For 26 years, Raymond Brown Architect specialized in providing municipal and private clients with architectural and urban design projects, focused on downtown redevelopment and planning. Before establishing his own practice, Brown was downtown planner for the city of Dayton, Ohio. He taught architectural design at the University of Cincinnati and the University of Memphis.

He is a member of ULI, the Congress for New Urbanism, and the American Society of Architectural Illustrators. He serves on the board of the Memphis Regional Design Center and Memphis Heritage, Inc. He chairs the Mayor's Committee on Land Use and Development for the Sustainable Shelby County Initiative. He has participated in 11 ULI Advisory Services panels, chairing three of them.

Brown holds a BS in architecture from the University of Cincinnati.

Christine Burdick

Tampa, Florida

With more than 30 years' experience in retailing and urban development, Burdick was chosen as the president of the Tampa Downtown Partnership in April of 2002. For the past five years, she and the partnership's leadership have taken a lead role in planning for the transformation of the region's largest urban core, working to further develop the sense of community in downtown Tampa and to bring exciting new projects to the area. With more than \$2.2 billion in recent and current construction, the redevelopment of Tampa's downtown is well underway.

Burdick came to Tampa from Chicago, where she worked first with Mayor Richard Daley and then as an independent consultant, creating strategies for revitalization and economic development in urban commercial settings. For the city of Chicago, she served as an assistant commissioner in the Department of Planning and Development, overseeing the implementation of the State Street Vision Plan, and was the liaison to key community groups representing developers, retail and property owners, and cultural and academic institutions involved in the redevelopment process in downtown Chicago. From 1993 to 1997, she initiated and was president of the Lincoln Road Partnership, an organization representing the interests of the business and cultural communities directing the revitalization of Lincoln Road in Miami Beach.

Burdick has been a member of ULI since 1990 and has served as a participant on Advisory Panels, Mayor's Forums, and District Councils in two states. She was elected chairman of the International Downtown Association for 1996–1997 and also served as the interim president in 1997. She is a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers, the International Economic

Development Council, and Lambda Alpha, a land economics society. Locally, Burdick is a trustee of the University of Tampa and a board member of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, the Tampa Bay Convention and Visitor Bureau, the Florida Aquarium, and the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County.

Paul Chapel

Dallas, Texas

Chapel is a leader for BOKA Powell's growing architecture practice based in Dallas. He has over 26 years of experience in the architecture profession and has successfully guided several complex architectural projects through redevelopment initiatives.

During his tenure at BOKA Powell, Chapel has gained extensive experience in design/planning on a wide variety of project types, including mixed-use, hospitality, retail, housing, corporate, sports, municipal, industrial, and medical facilities, both domestically and internationally. Currently, he is involved in several large private redevelopment projects in both urban and suburban locations and actively supports the city of Dallas's efforts to redevelop the Dallas Farmer's Market District Downtown.

He is a proponent of sustainable design solutions and encourages a consensus-building approach with stakeholders. Chapel holds a bachelor of architecture design option from Texas Tech University. He is also registered as an architect for the states of Texas and Oregon and holds a LEED-accredited professional certification. The recipient of several notable awards, Chapel holds the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Portland Award for Outstanding Service to the Profession and received the city of Portland Mayor's Commendation of Excellence. His work has received design award recognition by both the AIA and the construction community for its excellence, sensitivity, and practicality.

Chapel is a member of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, the AIA, the Texas Society of Architects, the Urban Land Institute, and the International Council of Shop-

ping Centers. In the past, he has chaired the Portland AIA Design Awards/Architecture Week programs, served on its board of directors, and facilitated workshops on transit-oriented development. He has also been involved with mentoring architectural students through online Design Studio critiques and led practice-exam workshops on site development.

Thomas Curley

Ossining, New York

Curley's projects can be found on six continents for clients as diverse as the Walt Disney Company, the Guggenheim Museum, the city of New York, the U.S. Air Force Academy, the National Capital Planning Commission, the city of Washington, D.C., the New Jersey Nets, and the Smithsonian Institution. He has designed new towns in the Philippines, China, Australia, and India and provided a submission for the 2008 Olympic Village in Beijing. He was the lead designer for EuroDisney in Marne-la-Vallée, and he provided strategic planning for 9,000 acres of Disney property south of the Disney World Resort in Florida. Curley provided the master plan for the reconstruction of downtown Beirut, for which he won an international design award for excellence from the Congress for New Urbanism.

At the national level, Curley was one of the authors of the Washington Legacy Plan for the National Capital Planning Commission, and he just completed a 25-year master plan for Congress for Capitol Hill. In New York, he was the master planner for a new community of 1,600 units and half a million square feet of commercial development for the city of New York on one of the city's last large landholdings. Curley believes that to be called to service on public projects is the highest honor an architect can achieve.

Curley graduated from the Southern California Institute for Architecture with graduate degrees in architecture and urban design. He is a registered architect in the state of New York and is a LEED-accredited professional.

Clarence Eng

Tampa, Florida

Eng is a practice leader for design and planning and a senior project manager with extensive experience directing complex land use, transportation, and economic revitalization projects in urban and large redevelopment areas. His experience in strategic planning, town planning, public involvement, public policy, urban design, and sustainable development provides a breadth and depth of understanding throughout the planning and development process. Notable national and international examples of his work include U.S. Housing and Urban Development–China Ministry of Construction model housing communities, redevelopment planning for Washington, D.C.’s South Capitol Street corridor, and new urbanism town master plan concepts for London and in the United States.

Eng is a National Charrette Institute certified charrette leader with over ten years of experience conducting public design charrettes. He has received numerous national awards, including a Congress for New Urbanism Charter Award for a transit-oriented development plan in the Washington, D.C., region. He was a vice chair for the American Planning Association’s Urban Design and Preservation Division (1999–2006), is a member of the Congress for New Urbanism and the Urban Land Institute, and is a Fellow of the Institute for Urban Design.

He is a regular speaker at national conferences on community planning and urban design for Main Street revitalization, new town plans, small area plans, brownfields, and corridor planning. He holds dual master’s degrees in planning and urban design from the University of Southern California and a bachelor’s in landscape architecture from the University of Montreal.

Scott Hall

Chesapeake, Virginia

Hall is the senior business development manager for the city of Chesapeake, Virginia’s Department of Economic Development. He has 12 years of ex-

perience as an economic development professional, including research, small business development, business assistance, marketing, and planning. Hall has also served as research director for the Virginia Peninsula Economic Development Alliance, a regional public/private economic development marketing organization.

While with Chesapeake, a city of 225,000 residents in the Hampton Roads region of Virginia, Hall has gained experience in international marketing, Enterprise Zone administration, comprehensive land use planning, and redevelopment planning.

A native of West Virginia, Hall received his BA in political science from Marshall University in 1985 and his master of urban studies degree from Old Dominion University in 1999. He served as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy before entering the field of economic development. He is a member of the Urban Land Institute, the International Economic Development Council, the Southern Economic Development Council, the International Council of Shopping Centers, the Brazilian/American Chamber of Commerce, the Virginia Economic Developers Association, and C2ER (formerly ACCRA).

Scott Schuler

Arnold, Maryland

Schuler has been active in the commercial and retail real estate market for 32 years. Seventeen years in the Rouse Company’s Research and Site Strategy department provided extensive experience in retail and commercial analysis, consumer research, and retail positioning. In 1993, he established Schuler Consulting, providing a range of retail research for public and private sector clients. Included in his menu of client services are retail market feasibility studies, market threshold analyses, sales projections, site opportunity studies, market and site screening, competitive sales and performance analyses, consumer research, and the development of merchandising and leasing plans. Recent emphasis has favored creating market positioning and repositioning programs along with strategies aimed at merchant attraction and retention, primarily for struggling retail districts and shopping centers.

He has conducted research throughout the United States and in Canada, South America, and the Middle East, involving markets of all sizes. To date, he has completed more than 300 retail market studies, of which more than 80 focused on downtown districts or on individual downtown properties.

Schuler is active in the Urban Land Institute, the International Downtown Association, and the International Council of Shopping Centers.

Michael Stern

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Stern has been involved in aspects of urbanism, city building, and public landscapes throughout his professional career. The focus of his work has always been the search for successful ways to improve the quality of urban environments through the practical application of sound design principles rooted in traditional values of urbanism. He has worked on a broad range of urban projects from urban garden design to planning new edge cities.

His professional experience in the New York firms of Cooper, Robertson & Partners and Quennell Rothchild Associates gave him broad training in the multiple aspects of planning, design, and construction of private and public urban precincts and landscapes. Subsequently, his teaching and research while a full-time faculty member at the School of Architecture, University of Virginia, focused on understanding the changing nature of urban form and organization in the face of new technologies and economies.

Stern's practice in Pittsburgh has been involved in many of the city's major urban design and planning efforts. He served as the project director and urban designer for the Department of City Planning on the Pittsburgh Downtown Plan, the first comprehensive master plan for the greater downtown area in 35 years. Other recent projects include the Pittsburgh Regional Parks Master Plan; the Downtown Bedford Revitalization Plan; a downtown revitalization plan for Washington, Pennsylvania; and the plan for the revitalization of Pittsburgh's Fifth and Forbes retail district. Stern has lectured widely and published and

edited numerous articles and journals on urban design and landscape design theory.

Stern received a master's of landscape architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design and a BA in anthropology from Grinnell College. He is a member of the Urban Land Institute, the American Society of Landscape Architects, Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and the Congress for the New Urbanism.

Tamara Zahn

Indianapolis, Indiana

Zahn is president of Indianapolis Downtown, Inc. (IDI), a not-for-profit organization strategically focused on developing, managing, and marketing downtown Indianapolis. Since forming IDI in 1993, Zahn has been instrumental in the revitalization of downtown Indianapolis, including the opening of Circle Centre and the introduction of a number of innovative security, parking, business improvement, and marketing programs. Under her watch, \$4.5 billion of development has been completed. More than 80 projects totaling \$3.2 billion are underway, including 1,900 new downtown homes and six cultural districts.

Before forming IDI, Zahn was a principal of Zahn Associates, her own consulting firm specializing in urban development. She has consulted in downtowns throughout the United States. Clients include Simon Property Group, the Rouse Company's American City Corporation, and the New York Port Authority.

Zahn serves on the boards of numerous organizations, including the International Downtown Association (IDA), the Urban Land Institute, the Indiana District Council, the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Association, the Children's Museum, and the Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention. She was recognized as one of the first "40 under 40" and "Most Influential Women in Indianapolis." Zahn is a recipient of the state's most prestigious Sagamore of the Wabash award as well as awards from IDA and the International Council of Shopping Centers.



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