

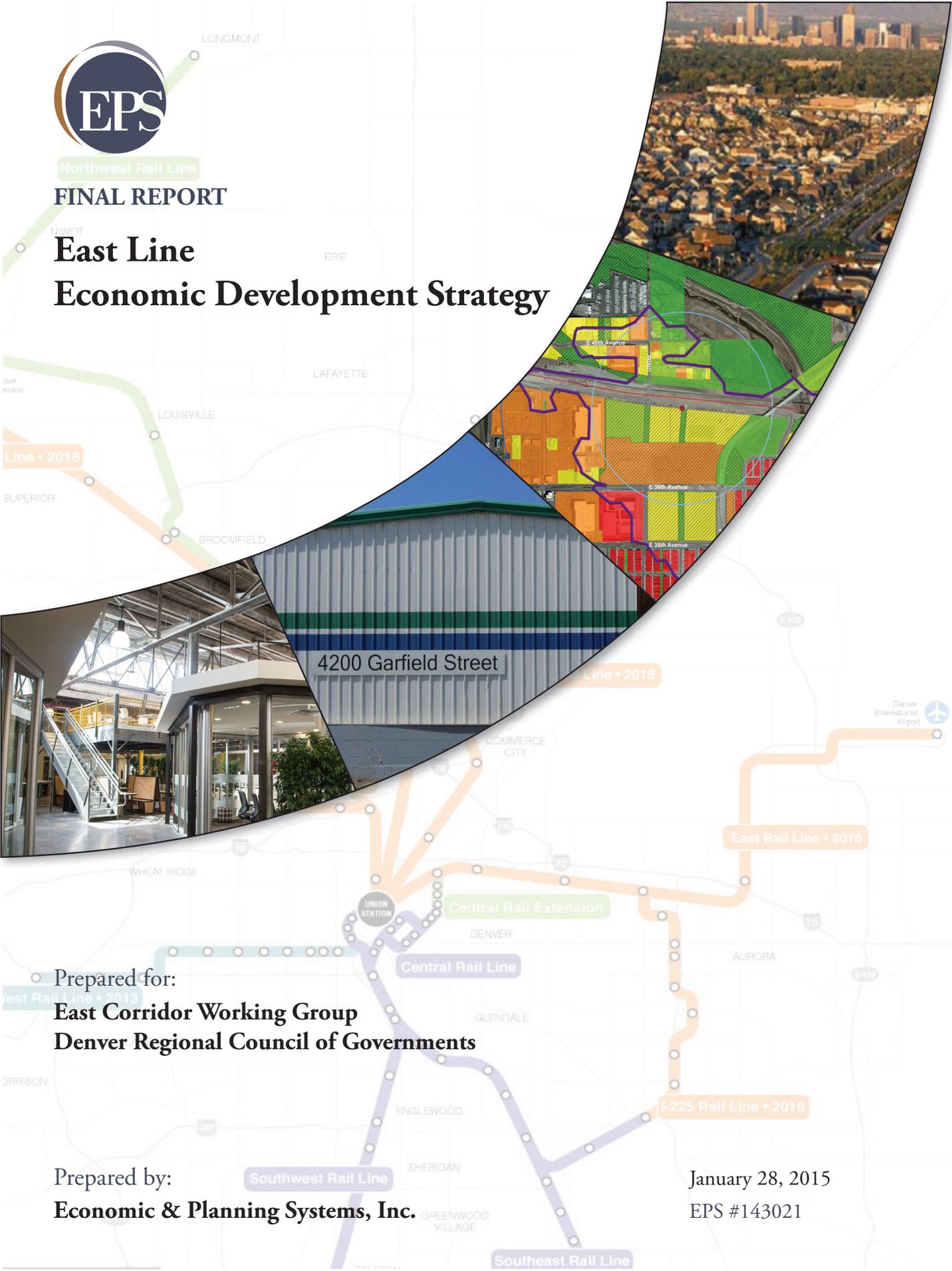


Northwest Rail Line

# FINAL REPORT

## East Line

# Economic Development Strategy



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4200 Garfield Street

Prepared for:  
**East Corridor Working Group**  
**Denver Regional Council of Governments**

Prepared by:  
**Economic & Planning Systems, Inc.**

January 28, 2015  
 EPS #143021



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## Introduction

The purpose of the *East Line Economic Development Strategy* is to develop an implementation plan to expand economic development along the Corridor to benefit the Metro Denver region, the Cities of Denver and Aurora, and to increase access to jobs and opportunity for Corridor residents. The project was completed by Economic & Planning Systems (EPS) around four interim products summarized in this final report.

**Market Readiness Analysis** – This analysis included interviews with key real estate developers and brokers, property owners, and employers along the Corridor to gauge development interest; an assessment of the Corridor’s strengths and weaknesses from a real estate and economic development perspective; a detailed analysis of industry clusters along the Corridor; and an analysis of demographics, current land use, future land use plans, and growth trends. The Market Readiness Analysis Report identifies development potentials and business/industry prospect types for each station.

**Rail Line Case Studies** – A separate analysis of comparable rail lines in other cities includes a focus on airport to downtown rail connections as well as industrial-oriented TOD efforts and approaches.

**Economic Development Strategy** – The Draft Economic Development Strategy Report recommended an economic development strategy including policies, actions, and investments needed to remove barriers to development and to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of station areas for employment development.

**Marketing Strategy** – The Marketing Strategy prepared by Atlas Advertising and EPS outlines a preliminary marketing strategy and branding concept for the East Line and its individual rail stations component of the Economic Development Strategy.

**Final Report** – This Final Report summarizes the previous interim reports including an Executive Summary for policy and decision makers.

## Executive Summary

### ***1. There is a climate of optimism surrounding the East Line as a catalyst for investment and economic and residential growth in Northeast Denver and Northwest Aurora.***

Northeast Metro Denver has several major growth opportunities as well as some of the region’s largest economic anchors and activity centers. There are several major development sites and active development projects shaping this area: Reunion at 104th and Tower Road, Gateway Park at 40th and Airport, Denver International Business Center at 61st and Peña, Denver International Airport (DIA) and the planned Airport City, Green Valley Ranch, and Stapleton. The Anschutz Medical Campus located in Aurora is the fastest growing employment center in Metro Denver having added nearly 19,000 jobs between 2005 and 2013. The City and County of Denver has announced plans for a redevelopment and repositioning of the National Western Stock Show and Denver Coliseum complex as a state of the art western heritage events center, and agriculture and business center.

The East Corridor is unique among the RTD rail corridors in that there are large vacant sites with master developers and consolidated property ownership at three stations. At the Central Park Boulevard, 40th and Airport, and 61st and Peña stations development can be shaped to maximize transit access and economic opportunity. Developers at these stations have also indicated a willingness to be patient and stage development in a way to preserve the best development opportunities with the most impact and value closest to the station.

### ***2. While there are expected to be regional benefits with the opening of the East Line, its effects on station area economic development will vary highly for each station according to its surrounding context and local market conditions.***

The amount of vacant and assembled land will be a major determinant of how much the land use pattern can change and by how much employment can expand at each station. It will be difficult to change the land use at built up stations, especially Colorado and Peoria, without major public investments in infrastructure and extensive land assemblage by either private developers or urban renewal authorities.

## 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

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Three of the station areas are largely built out with few vacant parcels remaining and limited consolidation of property ownership: 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria. These three stations also have major gaps in the local street network, and a lack of adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In contrast, at Central Park Boulevard, Forest City Stapleton controls over 20 acres of vacant property surrounding the station. The 40th and Airport station has 320 acres of vacant land controlled largely by one developer, The Pauls Corporation. At 61st and Peña there are 584 acres of vacant land at controlled by developer L.C. Fulenwider, DIA, and two other major property owners.

### ***3. The East Line will be one of the best airport to Downtown transit connections in the U.S., giving Metro Denver increased exposure to outside business and leisure travelers through their positive experience.***

Travelers will be able to make the connection from DIA to the East Line by walking through baggage claim in the main terminal building and through a hotel lobby directly to the station platform. Service is expected to be at 15-minute intervals during morning, daytime, and evening hours and the travel time to Union Station is estimated at 35 minutes. Other U.S. airport to downtown connections require transfers on rubber tire shuttle buses, walks through parking lots or parking structures, or travel between terminals by monorail or other vehicles, adding complexity and inconvenience to the transition. The DIA connection will be world class and similar to systems in major European and other global cities.

### ***4. The East Corridor lags Metro Denver in key economic and socioeconomic health metrics, although some areas are changing rapidly. Gaps in community development assets and infrastructure barriers contribute to lagging economic vitality and the need for economic and community development.***

Seventy three and a half percent of Corridor residents have completed high school, compared to 89.8 percent Metro-wide. Labor force participation along the Corridor is estimated at 64.9 percent, compared to 71.8 percent in Metro Denver. The unemployment rate along the Corridor is 12.3 percent (in 2012) compared to just under 8 percent metro-wide. Schools are also perceived

to be of lower than average quality, with the exception of some newer magnet and charter schools within the Stapleton development. Additionally, much of the Corridor can be considered a “food desert,” as there are few grocery stores and healthy food options within a mile of the Corridor. The lack of retail and grocery businesses and other community amenities such as parks, sidewalks, non-motorized paths, and good schools is a constraint on housing and economic development that needs to be addressed.

The demographics of the Corridor are in rapid transition especially at 38th and Blake and Central Park Boulevard stations. The 38th and Blake area is gentrifying rapidly and attracting moderate and upper income households and restaurant, retail, and office-type businesses (located in flexible space) that command higher real estate values. At 38th the combined influences of the success of River North (RiNo) and the spread of gentrification north from LoDo into the Curtis Park and even the Cole neighborhoods are the major drivers of change. Stapleton has had a major impact on the demographics and perception of northeast Denver in particular.

### ***5. The East Line is located within one of the most desirable industrial corridors in Metro Denver. The economic development strategy, implementation measures, and land use policy should reflect this economic reality.***

Warehousing, distribution, and transportation-related firms make up nearly half of the jobs within a half-mile of East Corridor. The Corridor contains 25 percent of Metro Denver’s jobs in these industries, making it important to the region’s economic base and supportive services. Other industry clusters along the Corridor include manufacturing, construction and building trades, and building services. Manufacturing businesses range from small scale artisanal to mass-market food production, building products, and industrial/commercial machinery. The I-70 corridor location, central in the Denver Metro area, is particularly attractive to these businesses because they can easily serve customers in all directions using I-70 (east-west), and I-25 and I-225 (north-south).

Due to the concentration of industrial businesses, some station areas contain land uses that will be undesirable as transit service begins and development interest at the stations expands. There are numerous businesses that

produce noise and fumes, store equipment and material outside, and require frequent large truck movements. The Cities should explore zoning options to prevent these businesses from expanding or locating with a certain distance of transit stations. At the City and Metro Denver level, the station areas represent a small amount of land and there are other locations where these businesses can operate without conflicts with higher value businesses and transit riders.

**6. *The overall jobs strategy recommended for the Corridor is to attract businesses to the station areas that house more employees than the current pattern of warehousing and distribution businesses.***

The employment density in the station areas with development is low compared to mixed-use TODs and urban locations that have a greater concentration of office and retail employment. Urban and suburban office buildings range from approximately 250 to 500 square feet of building per employee. For the most part, the current business mix does not require or benefit significantly from transit service because of the low job density. Employment density in the non-retail businesses along the Corridor is greater than 750 to 1,000 square feet of building per employee.

To maximize the benefits of the East Line service, there will need to be a focus on attracting businesses with higher employment density. The firms on the Corridor with the highest employment densities include small manufacturing firms, building and administrative service firms, and specialty trades contractors.

**7. *The development opportunities and recommended target industries vary widely by station and in scale according to existing site conditions and land ownership patterns. Table 1 and Figure 1 below summarize the market niches and development potentials identified for each station.***

The stations with the most immediate development opportunities are 38th and Blake and 61st and Peña. At 38th and Blake there are several development projects proposed or underway and investor activity in land and property acquisition. This station is expected to emerge as a creative and professional hub with a diverse mix of business types ranging from office and flexible space based creative and professional firms to small scale high value manufacturing and industrial design firms. Housing will reflect the expansion of infill and redevelopment occurring in Curtis Park and RiNo.

At 61st and Peña, Panasonic Corporation announced plans for a new facility in the company's solar power systems division. It is expected to house up to 400 jobs in sales and marketing, engineering and product development, and eventually manufacturing. An energy efficient residential component or "smart town" has also been cited as a conceptual part of the project. This development could be a major catalyst for the DIA area stations and for further Airport City development.

At 40th and Colorado, the initial economic development and marketing focus should be on attracting firms with higher employment density than warehousing and trucking operations. Building trades and services, and manufacturing firms moving out of the RiNo and 38th and Blake areas are immediate prospects. In general, this location suits firms that need lower cost space that is at the same time close to Downtown (and DIA) as well as good access to all corners of Metro Denver. A longer range prospect is to attract office employment that can be retrofitted into industrial buildings at a low cost, such as customer service and back office functions, or any firm simply looking for lower rent office space than downtown.

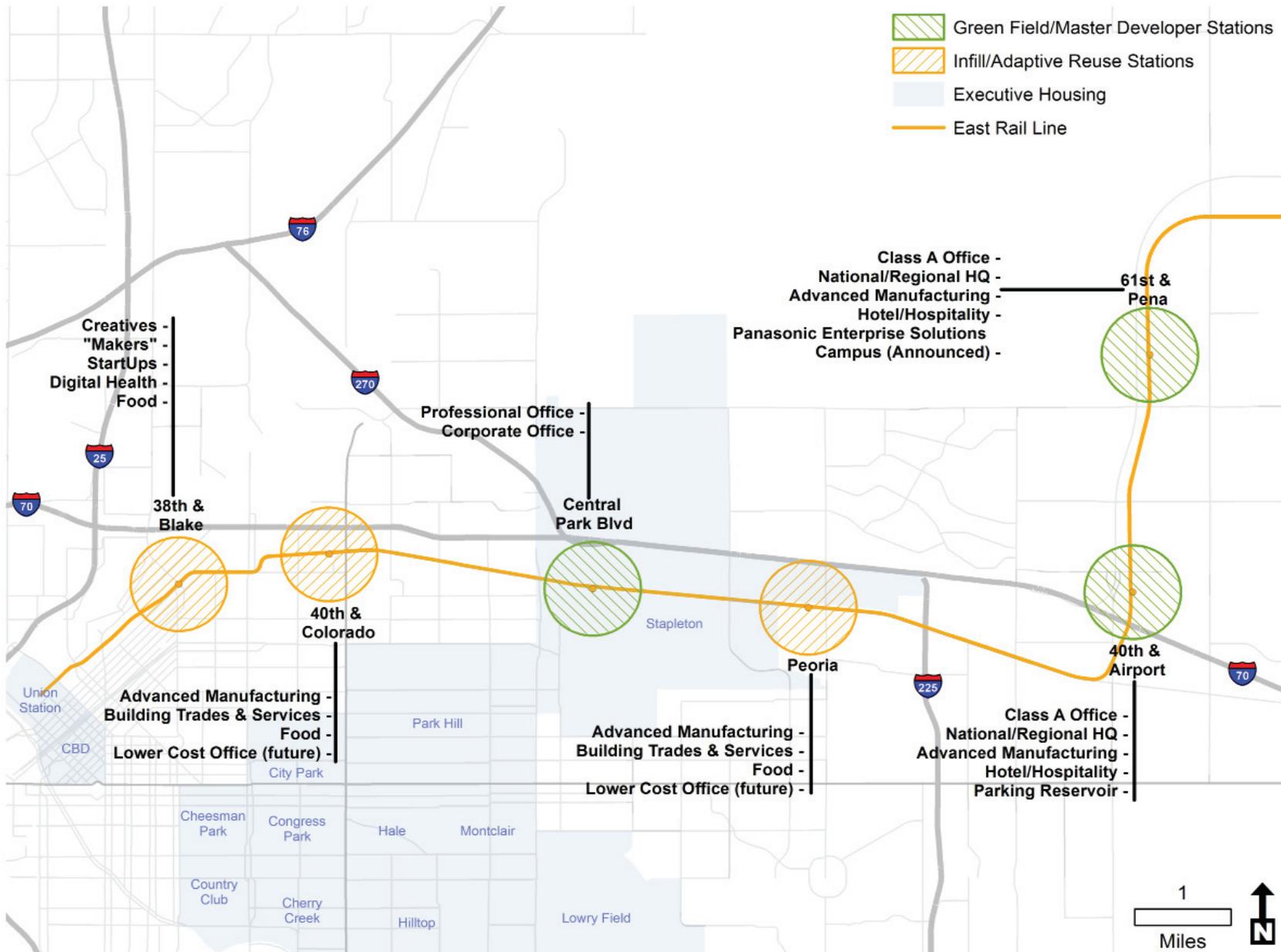
The Central Park Boulevard location benefits from the upper income households and generally well educated labor force in nearby Stapleton and its associated housing stock ranging from entry level to high end executive housing. Backed by national developer Forest City, this site is ideal for a national or regional headquarters office, or for higher skill corporate divisions such as legal, financial and tax, or marketing departments.

# 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

**Table 1: Targeted Industries and Development Potentials**

Station and Market Reach	Target Industries	Housing	Retail/Commercial/Services
<b>38<sup>th</sup> and Blake</b> Metro Denver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative - design, advertising, technology, arts, and media</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial ventures and start-ups</li> <li>• Small professional services firms</li> <li>• High value product mfg. and design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market rate and income restricted apartments;</li> <li>• For-sale condominiums and townhomes</li> <li>• Building rehab for lofts and townhomes</li> <li>• A mixture of densities and project sizes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurant and bars complementing neighborhood retail</li> <li>• Personal services</li> </ul>
<b>40<sup>th</sup> and Colorado</b> Metro Denver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction trades and higher value production</li> <li>• Sales and service functions that need central access and access to DIA and downtown</li> <li>• Customer service and support functions; convert warehouses to low-cost office space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market rate and affordable multifamily</li> <li>• Mix of price levels and types</li> <li>• Lower density products adjacent to existing neighborhoods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grocery store as area housing expands</li> <li>• Capitalize on Colorado Boulevard frontage</li> <li>• Ethnic markets (A-Mart)</li> </ul>
<b>Central Park Boulevard</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class A office tenants</li> <li>• National and regional headquarters offices</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental and for-sale multifamily</li> <li>• Empty nester condominiums</li> <li>• Senior housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited ground floor mixed use space</li> </ul>
<b>Peoria</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on increasing employment density</li> <li>• Building trades and building services</li> <li>• Customer service and support functions</li> <li>• Convert warehouses to higher value flex spaces</li> <li>• Manufacturing or construction-related startups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHA affordable housing</li> <li>• Assemblage of junk yards for more affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited - less than 10,000 square feet on Aurora Housing Authority site</li> </ul>
<b>40<sup>th</sup> and Airport</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced manufacturing and R&amp;D needing larger sites and buildings and more direct I-70 access</li> <li>• Build to suit office station area</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market rate apartments in Denver</li> <li>• Specialized housing products (senior)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited until significant population growth in trade area</li> </ul>
<b>61<sup>st</sup> and Peña</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class A office tenants</li> <li>• National and regional headquarters offices with frequent travel needs</li> <li>• Sales divisions</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apartments initially</li> <li>• Condominiums possible future phases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airport related hospitality</li> <li>• Hotels and restaurants</li> <li>• Potential grocery location to serve HighPointe trade area as residential population grows</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Targeted Industries by Station Area



## 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

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At Peoria, the recommended development prospects are similar to 40th and Colorado. The initial focus should be on increasing the employment density. Because of its industrial context and lower real estate values, Peoria may also appeal to startup firms and entrepreneurs whose businesses are more industrial in nature, with larger building and site needs. Like 40th and Colorado, office employment that can be retrofitted into industrial buildings at a low cost is also a possibility.

The DIA area stations, 40th and Airport and 61st and Peña, are similar in their market positions and targeted industries. Both can pursue class A office tenants that value DIA access (travel needs) more than an established office location such as Downtown Denver or the other suburban employment centers in the region. These firms or functions include international companies, regional headquarters, and companies with a large traveling sales force.

***8. Enhancing economic development and access to opportunity will require coordinated actions at the Corridor level and at the individual station level. The recommended strategies fall readily within existing Aurora and Denver economic development, planning and community development, and public works department priorities and functions.***

Chapter 6 contains several recommended strategies and initiatives which can be applied at the Corridor level. Chapter 7 identifies the highest priority development implementation needs for each station. The recommended Corridor level strategies do not differ vastly from traditional economic development activities consisting of business recruitment, business outreach and retention, other business assistance such as incentives and low cost or non-traditional financing, and marketing. Denver OED and Aurora EDC already engage in these activities and can adopt their efforts to the East Corridor. An important consideration for Denver and Aurora will be to determine the resource allocation that can be prioritized to the East Corridor considering the economic development needs of other transit and transportation corridors, and other districts or neighborhoods that have similar economic and community development needs.

A key Corridor recommendation is the formation of an East Corridor Business Partnership. So far, the key players in the East Line Working Group have been each city's respective planning departments. After the East Line begins operations, the key stakeholders should encompass a larger group of Corridor businesses; real estate brokers and developers; major property owners, industry trade organizations; and the economic development departments of Denver, Aurora, and Adams County; and the Aurora and Denver Housing Authorities. The Working Group should be continued and expanded and/or restructured to involve the key stakeholders necessary for economic development, marketing and real estate development. A lead person from each city should be assigned to identify key partners and a process for outreach with the end goal of continuing a working partnership of business and property owners, brokers, developers, and industry representatives to address the key economic strategies agreed to by the stakeholders.

The role of the Community Development/Planning and Public Works departments is recommended to be complementary to the economic developers. These departments can assist in partnership formation and business outreach. However their core function is recommended to be in addressing development readiness through accelerating the infrastructure plans and financing plans to address the barriers to development identified in this Study, and in responding to development proposals.

***9. Infrastructure deficiencies including first and last mile connections to the stations should be a priority for improving development readiness.***

The Union Pacific rail and I-70 contribute to the Corridor's strength as an industrial location. However the development pattern that has emerged around these facilities has separated neighborhoods and created an incomplete street and block structure that is not supportive of transit access or transit oriented development. Addressing these physical barriers should be the highest priority for attracting economic development. The 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria stations are challenging development environments because of the presence of large industrial buildings, a large auto and truck oriented block structure, and barriers created by major arterial roads, the rail right of way, and I-70.

The term “first and last mile connections” refers to the connection that needs to be made at the beginning and end of a transit trip. Since people riding transit arrive at a destination without a car, safe and convenient non-automotive connections from transit stations to employment and other destinations are critical in increasing transit use, making it accessible to all people, and therefore maximizing its benefits. Good pedestrian, bicycle, and bus connections also increase the influence area of a transit station. So far, the only stations where planning for first and last mile connections have occurred are 38th and Blake and Peoria. Each station needs a more detailed access plan and strategy. This could be developed in conjunction with station area infrastructure planning which is also needed.

With the exception of 38th and Blake, properties north of the rail will see little benefit from transit service in the short term and therefore have limited potential for enhanced development. The costs to relocate parking north of the rail and to construct additional street and pedestrian crossings to connect properties north of the rail will take resources from investments that can be made to benefit properties south of the rail with nearer term development potential. The cities should focus efforts and investments on shorter term and more easily implementable development opportunities south of the rail until those areas are established and new development and economic activity are expanding on their own.

***10. There is a need for additional affordable housing and community and family services along the East Corridor that the market will not provide on its own.***

In addition to attracting more quality jobs to the Corridor, access to affordable housing, education, and job resources need to be expanded in order to benefit a wider range of residents. Affordable housing developers including the Urban Land Conservancy, Medici Communities, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, and Aurora Housing Authority are already active on the Corridor. Affordable housing development should continue to be supported through funding, such as the Denver TOD Fund and by inclusionary housing regulations.

The lack of affordable childcare is an impediment to low income parents entering the workforce and climbing out of poverty. Other than competitive grants from the CDBG program and local and national philanthropic organizations, there is little funding available for affordable childcare, making this a regional and state-wide issue. Transit-oriented developments are a logical location for childcare because it can be combined with a home-work trip.

***11. Input from Corridor Stakeholders indicates that a marketing and branding strategy for the Corridor could be a useful and effective economic development tool, but there are issues related to branding a single RTD line that need to be resolved.***

The scope of work for this Study developed by Denver, Aurora, and the East Corridor Working Group contains a Marketing and Branding Strategy, prepared under a separate cover. The Marketing Strategy Report provides guidance on how an overall corridor economic development marketing and branding strategy could be structured and implemented, including the necessary partnerships, and its approximate cost (approximately \$150,000 over 24 months). It is a draft plan that provides a framework for further discussion at a number of levels, including as a starting point, the merits of marketing and branding an individual transit line within the larger RTD system. This is relatively new ground, but not unprecedented as the City of Aurora conducted a similar effort on the I-225/Aurora light rail line in 2013.

The unique attributes of the East Line connecting DUS and downtown Denver to DIA creates a higher level of visibility and potential marketing opportunity to a national and international market compared to the other RTD rail corridors that largely connect downtown Denver to the surrounding suburban cities. Therefore a case can be made that the East Line should therefore be considered individually with some level of unique identity. The benefits of doing so would largely accrue to the Corridor’s businesses, property owners and resident workforce. There are potential benefits to each city’s economic development efforts as well by creating greater visibility to the Corridor in the national market. Marketing and branding the East Line will however require the participation and agreement of RTD, DIA, and the host cities.

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This chapter summarizes existing conditions along the East Corridor including the major anchors and economic drivers, and the vision and goals for the Corridor from the East Corridor Working Group (CWG), the City and County of Denver, and the City of Aurora. It concludes with a summary of the Corridor's strengths and weaknesses from an economic and community development perspective provided by Corridor stakeholders, real estate developers and brokers active along the Corridor, and EPS' own observations and professional experience.

### East Corridor

The East Corridor follows the East Rail Line (East Line), a 22.8-mile commuter rail line being constructed by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to connect Denver International Airport (DIA) with downtown Denver at the Denver Union Station (DUS) intermodal transit (**Figure 2**). The line is planned to open in the second quarter of 2016 and is expected to provide service every 15 minutes during the day including the morning and evening peak commuting hours. For airport travelers, the connection from the terminal to the station will be directly by a short walk through baggage claim and a new airport hotel, making it one of the most convenient downtown to airport rail connections in the U.S. Between DIA and DUS, six stations are planned: 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, Central Park Boulevard (Stapleton), 40th and Airport (Gateway Park), and 61st and Peña (Aviation Station).

Parts of the East Corridor suffer from a history of disinvestment and fragmented connections to neighborhoods, jobs, and services. A major objective of this study is to identify ways to leverage the new rail transit service and investment to enhance real estate and economic development opportunities around each station, with a focus on attracting jobs and housing, and increase Corridor residents' access to jobs and economic opportunity. Creating Transit Oriented Development (TOD) around stations is an objective, especially TODs that house living wage jobs. Given the industrial nature of employment and land use along the East Corridor, an evolving definition of TOD for this Corridor is needed, as are realistic expectations of the degree to which land use will change with rail transit service. As described in this report, the Corridor is a highly valued location for industrial businesses.

### Corridor Anchors

Several of Metro Denver's largest employment and activity centers are located along or within approximately one mile of the East Corridor, providing potential catalysts for additional development.

- ▲ **Downtown Denver** – With over 30 million square feet of office space (private and government) and over 110,000 jobs, Downtown Denver is the largest employment center in the State of Colorado.
- ▲ **National Western Complex** – The City and County of Denver has prepared an ambitious redevelopment plan for this complex in partnership with Colorado State University, the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, History Colorado (HC), and the Western Stock Show Association. The plan calls for the existing 95-acre stock show complex and the City's 30-acre to 10,000 seat coliseum to be transformed into a 270-acre National Western Center with an expanded calendar of education, recreation, festivals, and other events.
- ▲ **River North (RiNo)** – The RiNo neighborhood is located between approximately Park Avenue on the southwest and I-70 on the North and Lawrence Street to I-25 east to west. The area is rapidly transitioning from an older and historic industrial railroad area to a gentrifying area of new upper, income, and mixed housing and creative industries, catalyzed by the Taxi developments consisting of condominiums, live-work, and flexible office space. The 38th and Blake station is within RiNo.
- ▲ **Stapleton** – The redevelopment of the former Stapleton Airport, is the largest new urbanist infill development project in the nation. It has been suggested to be the most successful master planned community in Metro Denver in terms of market share. Stapleton's developer, Forest City Stapleton, began building in 2000 and has completed over 5,000 housing units (out of a planned buildout of 10,000 units) and over 3 million square feet of commercial development. Central Park Boulevard station is within Stapleton, and Forest City controls the majority of the property in the station area.

## 2. East Corridor Context

Figure 2: RTD Rail System Map



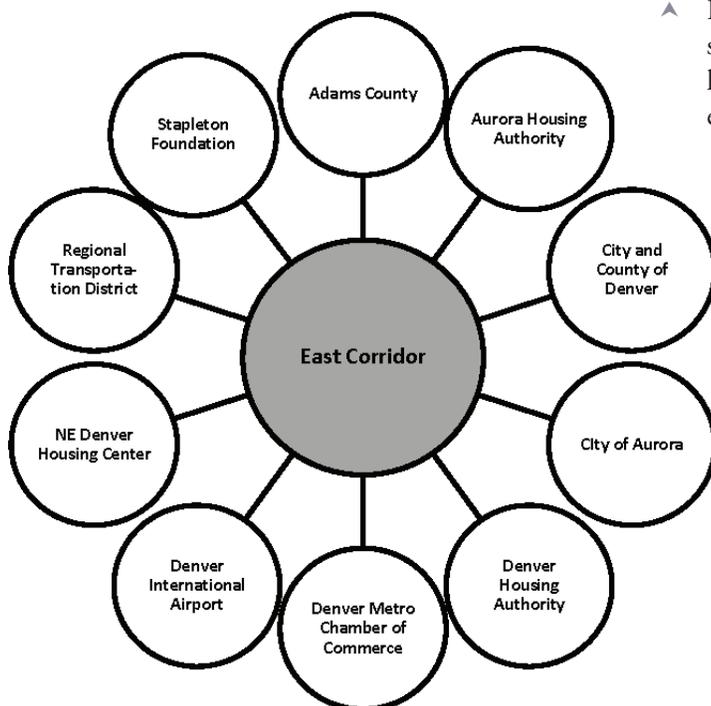
- ▲ **Anschutz Medical Campus** – Located in Aurora along the I-225 light rail line at near the intersection of East Colfax Avenue and I-225, the Anschutz Campus is the fastest growing employment center in Metro Denver. Since groundbreaking in 2000, a current total of 7.6 million square feet of hospital, education, and R&D spaces and nearly 20,000 employees have been built. Completion of the Denver Veteran’s Administration Hospital (under construction) is a planned bioscience research park that will add an additional 10,000 employees in the next 10 years.
- ▲ **Denver International Airport** – DIA, which is owned by the City and County of Denver, is the fifth busiest airport in the U.S. with 53 million annual passengers. The City and DIA also have a vision for development of Airport property under the Airport City plan. The desired development types include a variety of employment, bioscience, clean and green technology businesses, and supportive housing, retail, and hospitality. The City and County of Denver recently announced plans for a Panasonic headquarters at the 61st and Peña station, which they expect to be a catalyst for further Airport City development.

## Vision and Goals

### East Corridor Working Group

The East CWG is comprised of stakeholders with the resources and capacity to lead and/or contribute to transit-oriented development (TOD) implementation strategies. The CWG vision for the East Corridor is a regional gateway that connects the diverse neighborhoods of Denver and Aurora with Metro Denver and the world. The Goals of the East CWG are summarized below.

- ▲ Connect workers to existing and new employment centers and connect large employment centers to each other.
- ▲ Encourage capital improvements to promote economic development around the stations.
- ▲ Improve connectivity to the stations to provide easy multi-modal access by walking, bicycling, transit and driving.
- ▲ Preserve and enhance a range of quality housing choices for new and existing residents.
- ▲ Provide quality housing that is affordable for people who work at large employment centers along the corridor.
- ▲ Provide access to jobs and promote accessible services such as education, family and health services, healthy food options, jobs, retail, recreation and entertainment attractions, and cultural amenities.



## 2. East Corridor Context

### City and County of Denver

- ▲ The East Corridor is located within the Corridor of Opportunity established by Denver Mayor Hancock and is to be marketed as an engine for regional economic growth and an opportunity to improve economic and social mobility for area residents. Within the Corridor of Opportunity, there are several regional scale infrastructure and development projects planned, and the City is preparing two new neighborhood plans. These activities are being coordinated under the North Denver Cornerstone Collective (NDCC). The five major projects are described below:
- ▲ Reconstruction of I-70 – CDOT has completed an EIS for the reconstruction of I-70 between “The Mousetrap” (I-25/I-70 interchange) and Colorado Boulevard. One of the alternatives being evaluated is to rebuild the highway below grade and cover it with a park and new streets to reconnect Elyria Swansea and Globeville to the East Line and jobs and neighborhoods to the south.
- ▲ National Western Stock Show – Plans are underway to redevelop the National Western Stock Show and Denver Coliseum sites into modern, expanded, state of the art complex and facilities, as described above.
- ▲ Brighton Boulevard – This important downtown gateway and the spine of the River North (RiNo) neighborhood will be improved and partially reconstructed to improve aesthetics and multimodal access.
- ▲ East Line - The East Line is included in the NDCC with an expected opening early in 2016.
- ▲ Neighborhood Plans - Denver Community Planning and Development (CPD) is in the process of establishing new neighborhood plans for Elyria Swansea and Globeville to address housing and job opportunities and neighborhood empowerment.

### City of Aurora

The City of Aurora shares Denver’s objectives for the East Corridor and East Line – a regional economic engine that connects major employment centers, and residents to jobs. Aurora would like to expand the economic base at Peoria Station and 40th and Airport, the two stations that are partially in Aurora. Since many Aurora residents work along the Corridor and at DIA, any business growth along the Corridor will also benefit Aurora.

Located just outside the Corridor, the Anschutz medical campus in Aurora is the fastest growing employment center in Metro Denver. Although the Anschutz Campus is not directly on the A-Line it will be accessible via a transfer at Peoria and then by either walking/cycling a short distance or by a shuttle bus connection.

## Corridor Strengths and Weaknesses

Interviews with Corridor stakeholders, real estate brokers and developers, and employers identified strengths and weaknesses from an economic and real estate development perspective. The major findings are summarized below.

### Corridor Strengths

- ▲ **Regional Economic Drivers** – As described above, some of Metro Denver’s largest development projects and opportunity sites, and economic drivers are located along or near the East Line Corridor in Northeast Denver and Aurora. The connectivity and accessibility provided by the rail line presents an opportunity to capture additional development.
- ▲ **Land Availability and Development Opportunities** – Central Park Boulevard, 40th and Airport, and 61st and Peña are surrounded by largely undeveloped land controlled by a single developer, or a small number of collaborative land owners. Forest City controls the majority of property at Central Park Boulevard; RTD owns the station property and parking. The Pauls Corporation owns the majority of the land on the east side of the rail at 40th and Airport; DIA owns the land between Peña Boulevard and the rail. At 61st and Peña there are three major landowners: DIA, L.C. Fulenwider, and Karl Smith.

These developers have the ability to control and phase development and therefore to place the highest value and density uses closest to the stations.

- ▲ **Rising Incomes** – The Stapleton Development and the revitalization of the Park Hill neighborhood has stimulated gentrification in Northeast Denver, thus raising incomes and property values. While there are affordable housing impacts, the rising incomes associated with these neighborhoods is viewed by real estate interests as a strength.
- ▲ **Central Location** – The East I-70 Corridor is attractive to construction, trades, building services, distribution, and manufacturing businesses. I-70, I-25, and I-225 provide four directional trucking access enabling businesses to easily access customers and suppliers anywhere in Metro Denver. In addition, there are several business parks with freight rail service for moving large goods. The Corridor is the largest and highest value industrial locations in Metro Denver.

### Corridor Weaknesses

- ▲ **Connectivity** – Although the commuter rail line enhances rail access and mobility, there are connectivity constraints at the Corridor level and at each station. The existing UP freight rail line and the construction of I-70 have limited north south street connections along the corridor. The Elyria Swansea and Montbello neighborhoods, and the businesses north of the rail lack adequate connections to the East Line stations.
- ▲ **Industrial Development Pattern** – At 40th and Colorado and Peoria in particular, the existing land use pattern is predominately industrial with larger building footprints and sites, and inadequate street and sidewalk connections. This development pattern does not currently support transit oriented development, or safe and convenient connections between the East Line stations nearby jobs and housing.

- ▲ **Historic Perception** – Although rising in affluence and public investment, the area continues to be perceived as industrial and working-class. This perception has made it difficult for economic developers to attract interest in office development.
- ▲ **Community Development Assets** – Community development infrastructure such as quality housing and retail stores, high performing schools, and neighborhood trails and parks are lacking at many locations. These amenities are needed to help attract residents, employers, and employees. The Stapleton development has been able to construct these amenities by using area wide financing tools including a metro district and is designated as an urban renewal area.
- ▲ **Housing Diversity** – The corridor needs more diverse housing options, as 83.5 percent of the homes are single family detached. While approximately half are rentals, many are older homes with high energy and maintenance costs. The Stapleton neighborhood is expected to produce more apartments and income restricted affordable housing over time; however, other areas of the Corridor would also benefit from more housing types to appeal to a broader cross section of residents and employers.



A warehouse building near 40th and Colorado station illustrates the lack of street activity.

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This chapter summarizes land use and development conditions along the East Corridor. It is divided into two major sections: 1) existing land use and development activity and constraints at each station, and 2) overall infrastructure challenges.

## Existing Land Use

Three East Line stations are in predominately industrial areas with limited vacant land: 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria. Development opportunities at these infill stations will therefore be largely dependent on the on the intents of individual business and property owners and on the ability of developers to assemble sites large enough for a project (**Figures 3-7**). Existing land use at 40th and Colorado and Peoria is comprised largely of industrial buildings of a range of size from under 20,000 square feet to over 100,000 square feet. At 40th and Colorado and Peoria, the street grid is incomplete which creates access and circulation challenges for workers, residents, and transit riders. The block structure at these sites is also more suburban in character than at 38th and Blake, which retains some of the smaller urban grid pattern of central Denver. Land use at 38th and Blake is more diverse with new restaurants, flexible workspace, and housing being proposed and constructed, and residential neighborhoods are better connected to the station area than at 40th and Colorado or Peoria.

In contrast, Central Park Boulevard, 40th and Airport, and 61st and Peña are considered “greenfield” development areas, as the quarter- to half-mile station areas are almost entirely undeveloped. In addition, land at these stations is largely owned or controlled by a single master developer. Forest City, the master developer of Stapleton, controls most of the non-RTD property at Central Park Boulevard. The Pauls Corporation and DIA are the major land owners at 40th and Airport. At 61st and Peña there are three major land owners: L.C. Fulenwider, DIA, and Karl Smith. L.C. Fulenwider has been selected by DIA to develop the property DIA owns at the site of the future station platform. At each of these greenfield stations, the developers have formed Title 32 Metropolitan Districts (metro districts) to assist with infrastructure financing.



Lower value industrial buildings in the Peoria Station area.

## Development Activity

An overview of development activity surrounding each station is shown in **Figure 3** and described in this section.

### 38th and Blake

The 38th & Blake station is the closest one to downtown and is experiencing the greatest market momentums to date, including the following projects:

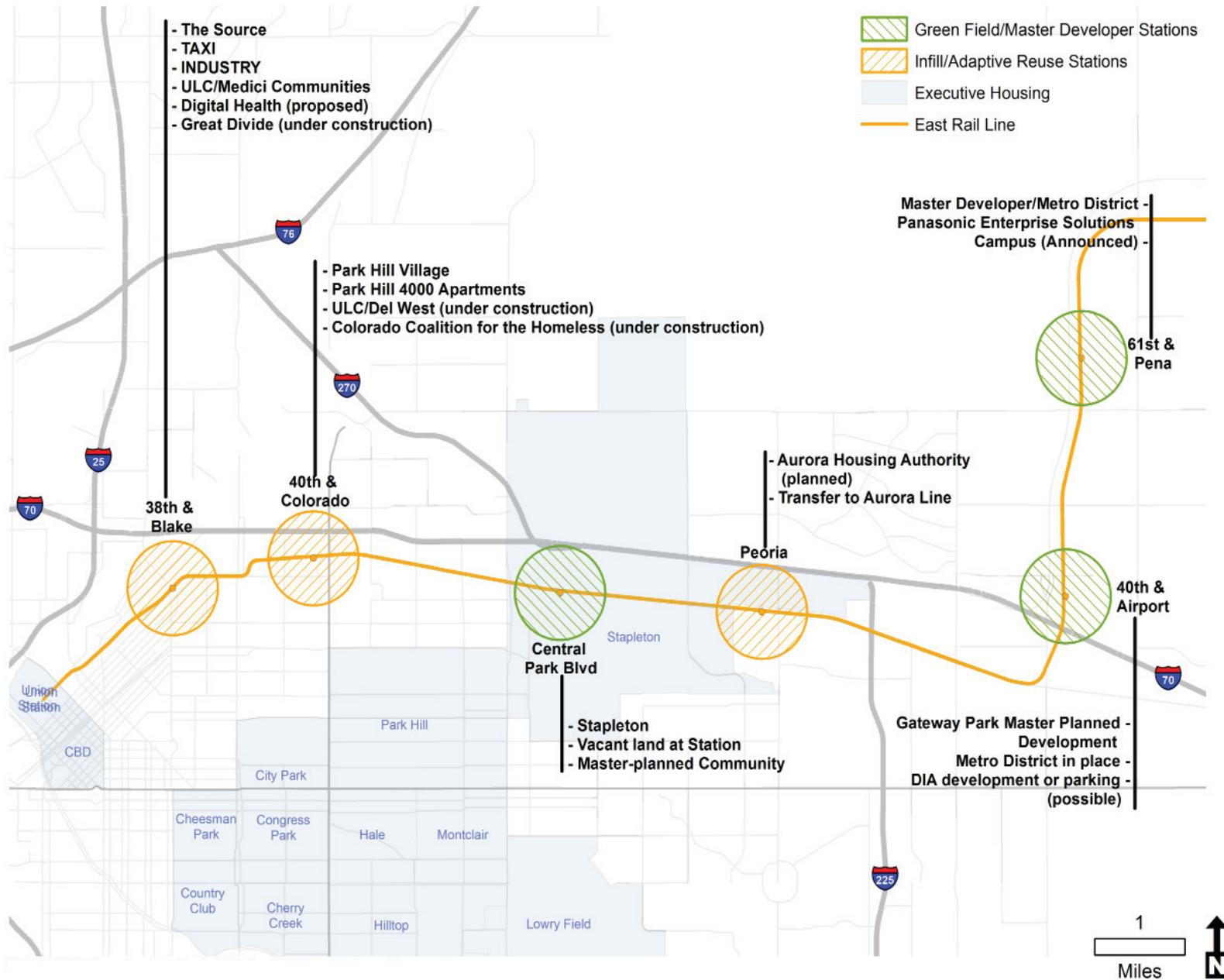
- ▲ Taxi, located west of the South Platte River on Ringsby Court, was the RiNo area’s first redevelopment project that begun in 2000 with the conversion of the 25,000 square feet former yellow cab depot site flexible work space and a café. The 20-acre mixed use project now has six buildings with more than 80 businesses and 400 employees along with 44 residential units.



Taxi development in the RiNo neighborhood.

### 3. Development Conditions

Figure 3: Corridor Development Activity



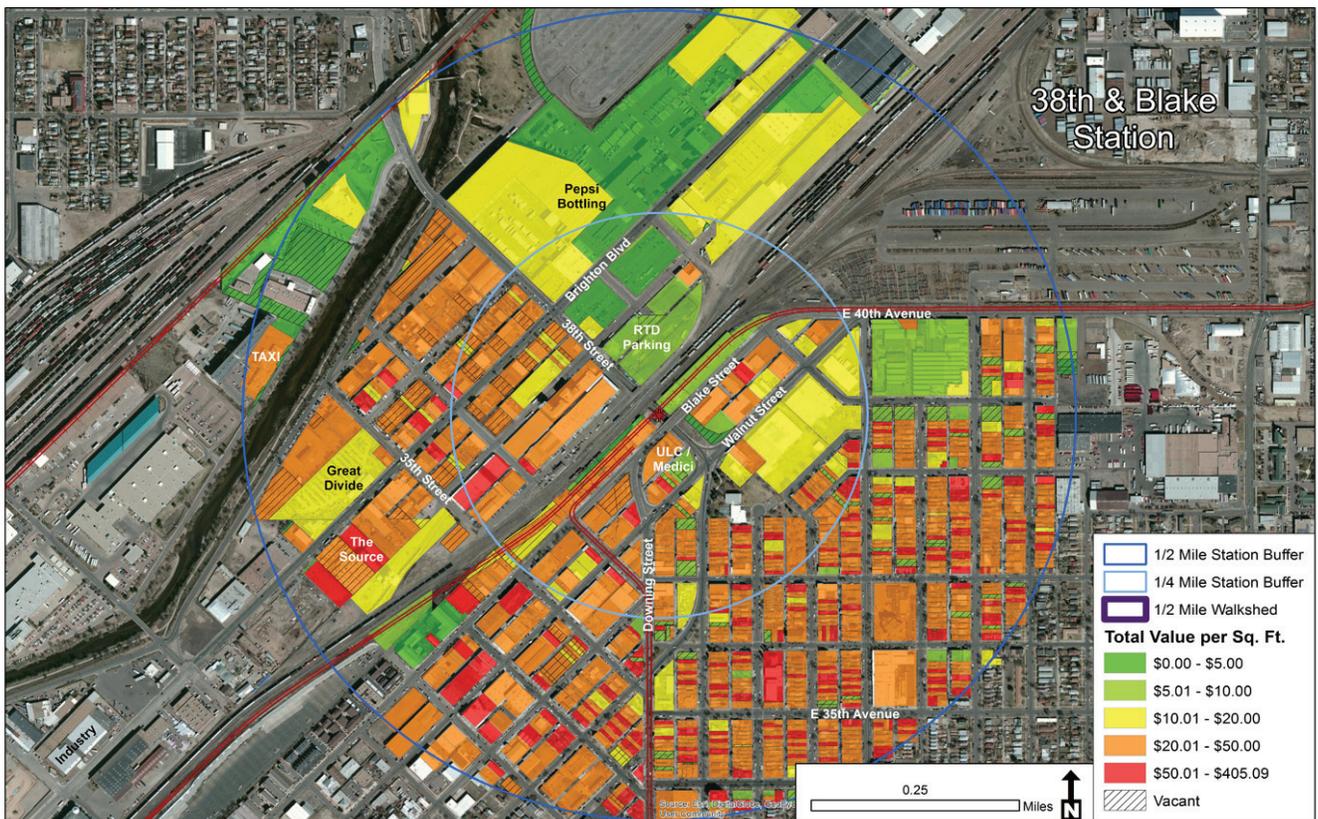
- ▲ The Source, located on Brighton Boulevard at 35th, opened in 2014 and is a market, restaurant, and brewery in a former brick foundry building built in the late 1800s.
- ▲ Industry, which opened in 2014, is a 12,000 square foot single story collaborative workspace retrofitted into a former warehouse building for start-ups, entrepreneurs, and technology companies. The mixed use project is also planned to contain 200 apartment units in a seven-story building and 55 townhouses in a second phase of development.
- ▲ The Urban Land Conservancy is partnering with Medici Communities to construct 90 market rate and 60 tax credit apartment units on a 2.5-acre site. The developers of Industry and Battery 689 are also planning STRIDE, a Digital Health shared cluster workspace similar to industry to allow health technology firms to co-locate for better synergies. The Denver Office of Economic Development is assisting with project financing. This project fits within the creative industry target cluster that is already beginning to emerge here.
- ▲ Great Divide has begun construction on a new brewery and tap room on a five acre site at 34th and Brighton Boulevard across from the source.

Recent development activity suggests that the land use industry mix in this industrial neighborhood will continue to change over time. In addition to the land assemblage that has already occurred, at least one other major industrial property owner has listed his buildings for sale and plans to relocate his manufacturing operations.



### 3. Development Conditions

Figure 4: Land Use and Parcel Values – 38th & Blake Station Area



#### Constraints

Consistent with Denver’s classification of 38th and Blake as a “Catalyze” station, the market for development is tempered by the need for a number of key TOD infrastructure investments including local street and sidewalk improvements and connections to the west across the freight rail corridor. Many of these issues are being addressed in the Brighton Boulevard Project (Denver Public Works), the City’s adopted Station Area Plan, and in other projects funded by Denver’s Capital Improvement Plan.



“The Hump” at 38th and Blake creates connectivity barriers to the station.

### 40th and Colorado

The majority of new development occurring near the 40th and Colorado station is housing. Two projects are being developed on infill parcels along the Colorado Boulevard Frontage. Property near the station is more constrained by access and vicinity, an incomplete street grid, and existing industrial development.



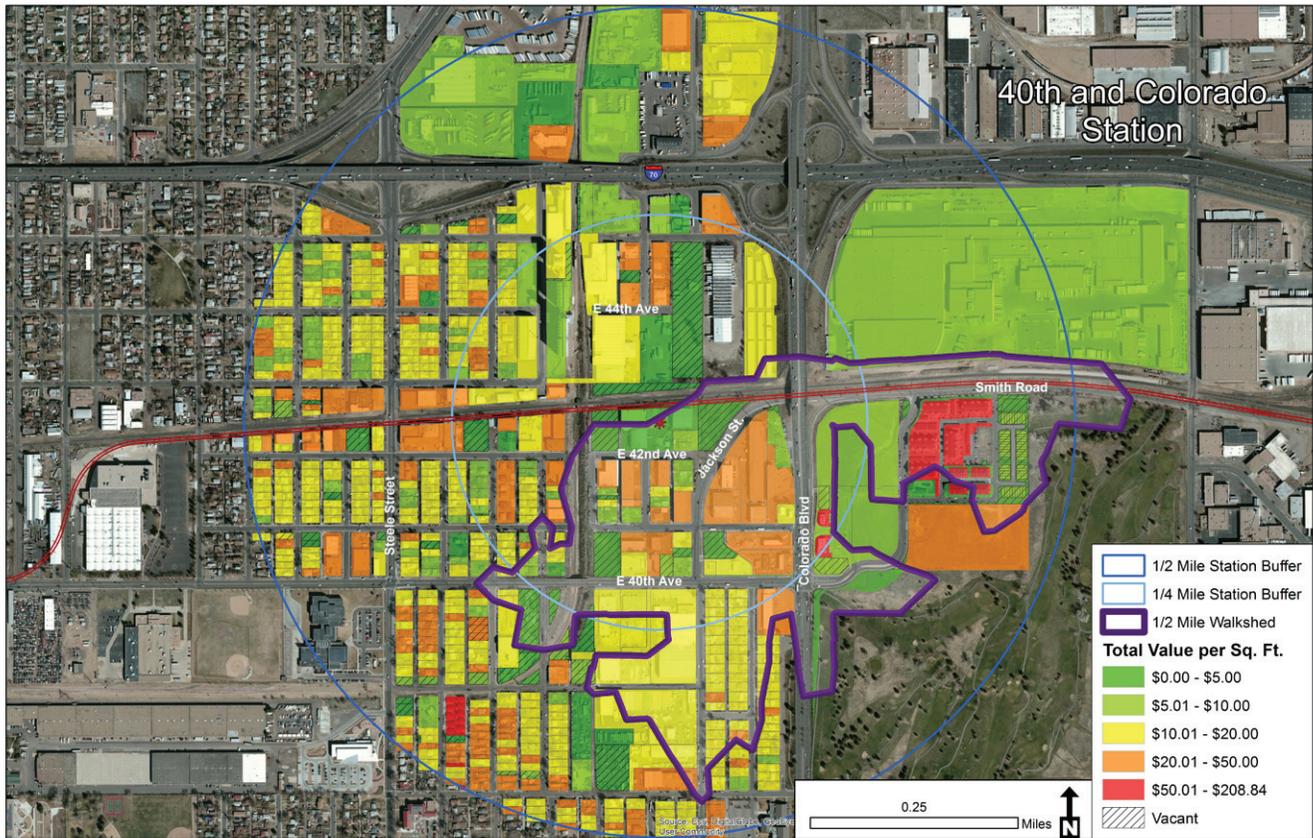
A former motel at East 40th Ave. and Colorado Boulevard has been purchased by the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless to be redeveloped as affordable housing and supportive services.

- ▲ Del West recently broke ground on 156 affordable units on 2.5 acres purchased from ULC at the northeast corner of East 40th Avenue and Colorado Boulevard adjacent to the 140-unit Park Hill Village townhome development and the 168-unit apartment project previously built by Del West.
- ▲ Colorado Coalition for the Homeless purchased and demolished a motel on the Southwest corner of this intersection. In 2016 it plans to construct the Renaissance at North Colorado Station with 129 affordable transitional housing units and on-site supportive services.

### Constraints

In order to expand development at this station, additional land will need to be assembled. The forthcoming Elyria & Swansea Neighborhood Plan proposes that the Union Pacific Market Lead be purchased and filled in to provide a potential development opportunity, as well as enhanced connectivity from the stations to the south. Other

Figure 5: Land Use and Parcel Values – 40th & Colorado Station Area



### 3. Development Conditions



The Park Hill Village townhomes east of 40th and Colorado Station are connected to the station by a pedestrian and bicycle tunnel under Colorado Boulevard along Jackson Street, which will be closed to vehicles. At night, there may be safety concerns in this area.

potential areas to target for land assemblage are the industrial properties between the Union Pacific Market Lead and Colorado Boulevard, both north of the tracks to I-70 and south of the tracks to E. 40th Avenue. The northern properties could be targeted for additional employment and commercial development, benefiting from the exposure along I-70 and the rail. The southern properties may be more appropriate for housing and mixed use, as a transition to the existing Clayton neighborhood to the south.

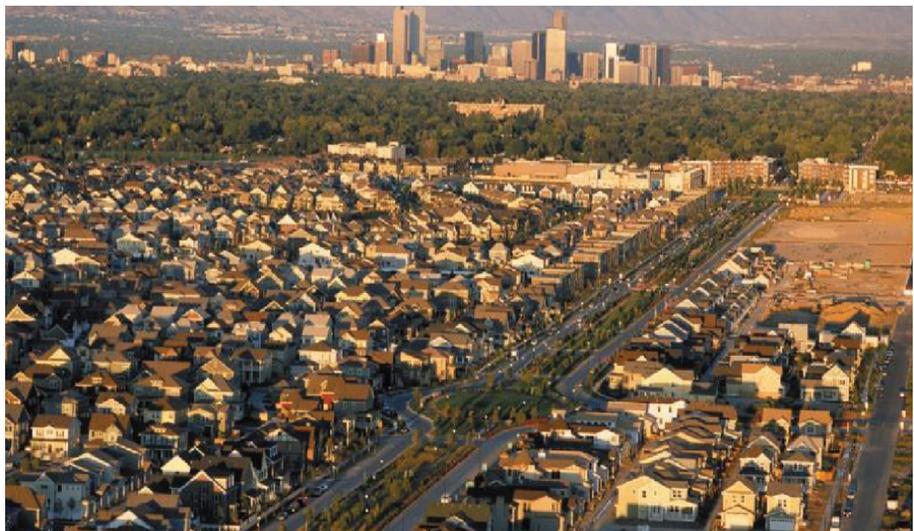
In addition, completing the street grid would greatly improve access and visibility to the station and businesses. Extending Monroe Street and E. 44th Avenue are two possibilities.

#### Central Park Boulevard

The Central Park Boulevard station area is largely within the Stapleton Development Plan. Forest City controls approximately 14 acres of vacant land south of the 12 acre RTD station site north of 36th Avenue and east and west of the Ulster Road station access.

Forest City envisions the station as its highest value land appropriate for an employment driven TOD including Class A office uses, hotels, and high-density residential uses. However, market conditions (land values, rents, and lease rates) do not currently support Class A office development. The East Corridor is not an established office location and the \$30 per square foot rents needed for Class A office construction are not yet supportable in this location. Forest City is actively marketing other nearby properties to establish a critical mass of office development before moving to the station area property. They have business park property north of I-70 and a 41-acre corporate campus site south of I-70 and north of Smith Road that would accommodate a number of major users.

At opening, the station will have 1,500 park-n-ride spaces on a 12-acre site. This parking site will replace the current Stapleton transit center park-n-ride that largely serves DIA Sky Ride passengers including travelers and DIA employees. This parking is therefore expected to be highly utilized. The City and County of Denver has expressed interest in a partnership between RTD, Stapleton and the City to move some of this parking away from the prime property at the station to allow for better TOD. This concept, in principle, has merit and should be pursued.



Stapleton is the largest new urbanist infill development in the U.S. and has attracted more upper income white collar workers and professionals to Northeast Denver. Photo credit: Forest City Stapleton

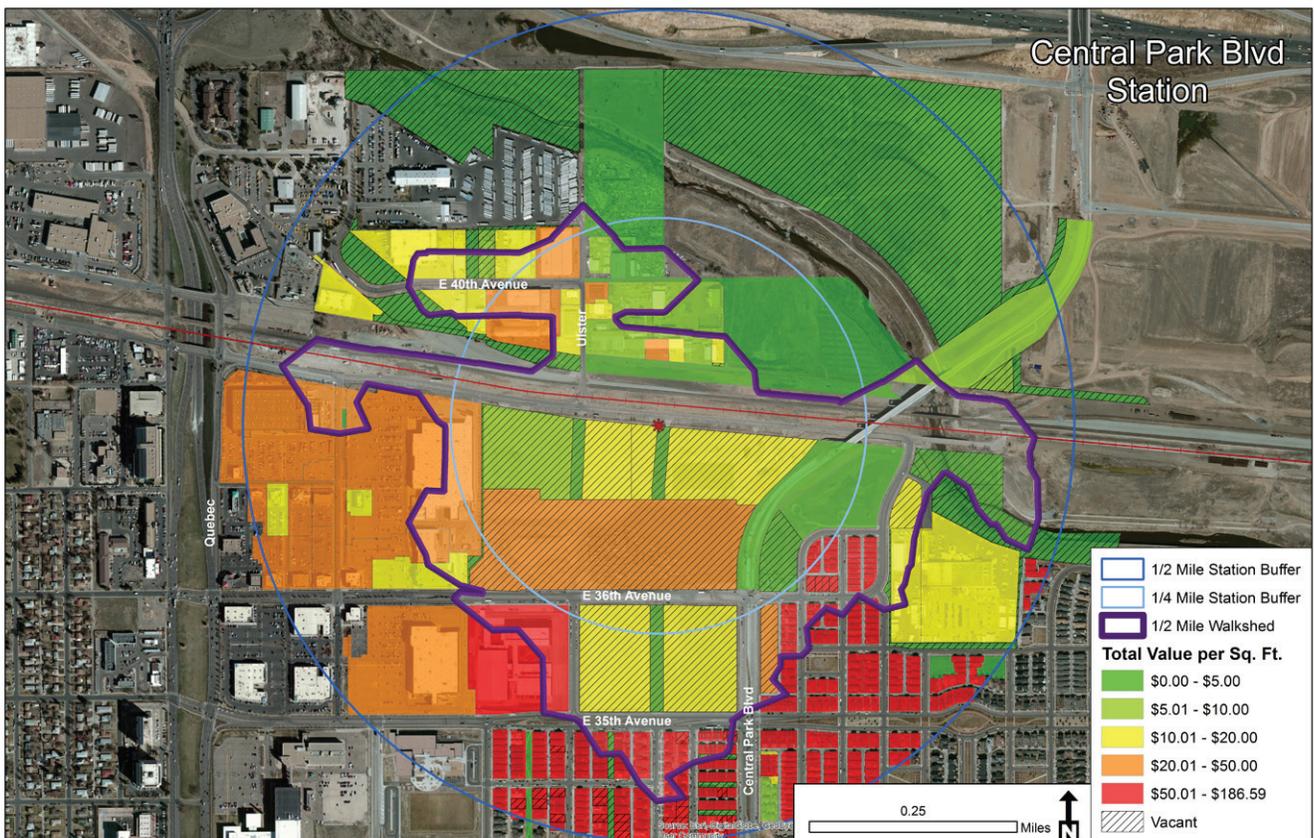
### Constraints

There are no major infrastructure issues regarding development south of the station. The Park Creek Metro District and Forest City will build the streets and pedestrian network. The RTD property is expected to remain surface parking for some time given that there is not an existing land constraint driving the need to structure the parking. This station is expected to have high ridership numbers and correspondingly high parking demand. If and when a joint development project (development of RTD property) is considered, replacing the surface parking with structured parking will be a major cost to the project.

North of the Rail, the disconnected east-west street grid is the primary impediment to development. Smith Road does not extend past the Sand Creek Greenway, limiting access from residential areas to the east of the station. There is an at-grade crossing at Ulster Street that provides access north and south which can serve businesses, or a potential future relocation of station parking.

The Sand Creek Greenway is an amenity to the area, but also limits the amount of developable land north of the tracks and will require substantial infrastructure (bridge) investments to eventually extend E. 40th Avenue and link the area to the industrial and business park areas to the east. Without these improvements, this land will not be developed to its full potential.

Figure 6: Land Use and Parcels Values – Central Park Boulevard Station Area



### 3. Development Conditions

#### Peoria

At Peoria, the most immediate development opportunity is the 5-acre Aurora Housing Authority (AHA) property located on the east side of Peoria between 30th and 33rd Avenues. AHA plans to apply for CHFA 9 percent LIHTC funding and non-competitive 4 percent tax credits for 150 to 200 units of affordable and transformational housing on the site. Due to the competitive nature of the program, this project is expected to be built in two or three phases over a 5 to 7 year time period. Additional affordable housing may be supportable after this project is completed. Lease rates do not support new construction of market rate housing at this time. There may be opportunities in the longer term for multifamily rental housing as area conditions improve. There are a number of low value uses including junkyards that could be assembled for future housing within the station area.

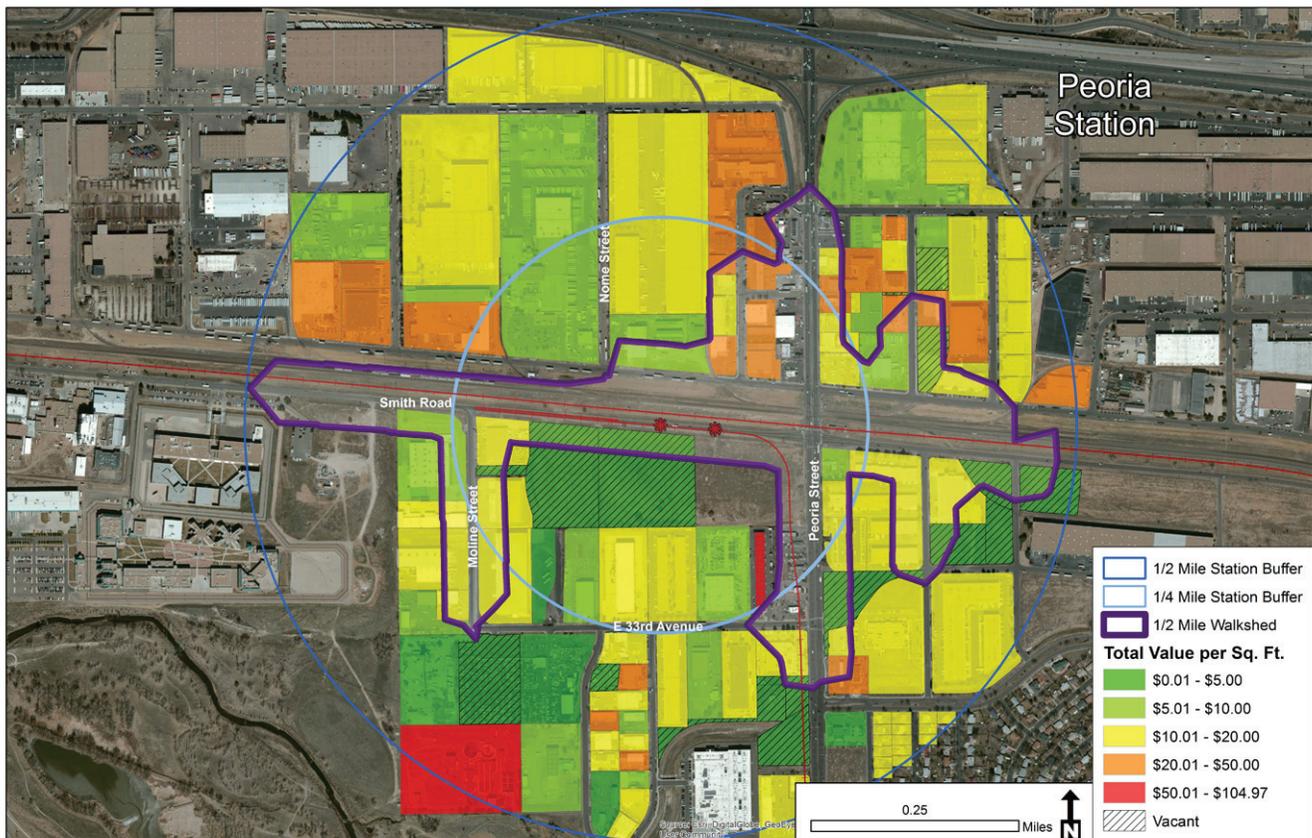
#### Constraints

Transitioning from large block warehouse and distribution uses to more employment intensive uses will require substantial improvements to the street and pedestrian circulation system. In addition, intensification of land use north of the rail line will require increased access by a pedestrian bridge and/or road crossing that are currently not planned.



A large warehouse at Peoria station is adjacent to the station where Nome Street is being extended to the station.

Figure 7: Land Use and Parcel Values – Peoria Station Area



### 40th and Airport

The 40th & Airport Station has 178 acres of surrounding vacant land controlled by The Pauls Corporation. The Station is within the 3,200-acre Gateway Park master planned business park development. DIA owns the 34-acre property between the rail and Peña Boulevard east to west and between 40th Avenue and I-70 north to south. The station area is therefore a “clean slate” and development can be planned and shaped to integrate with the station.

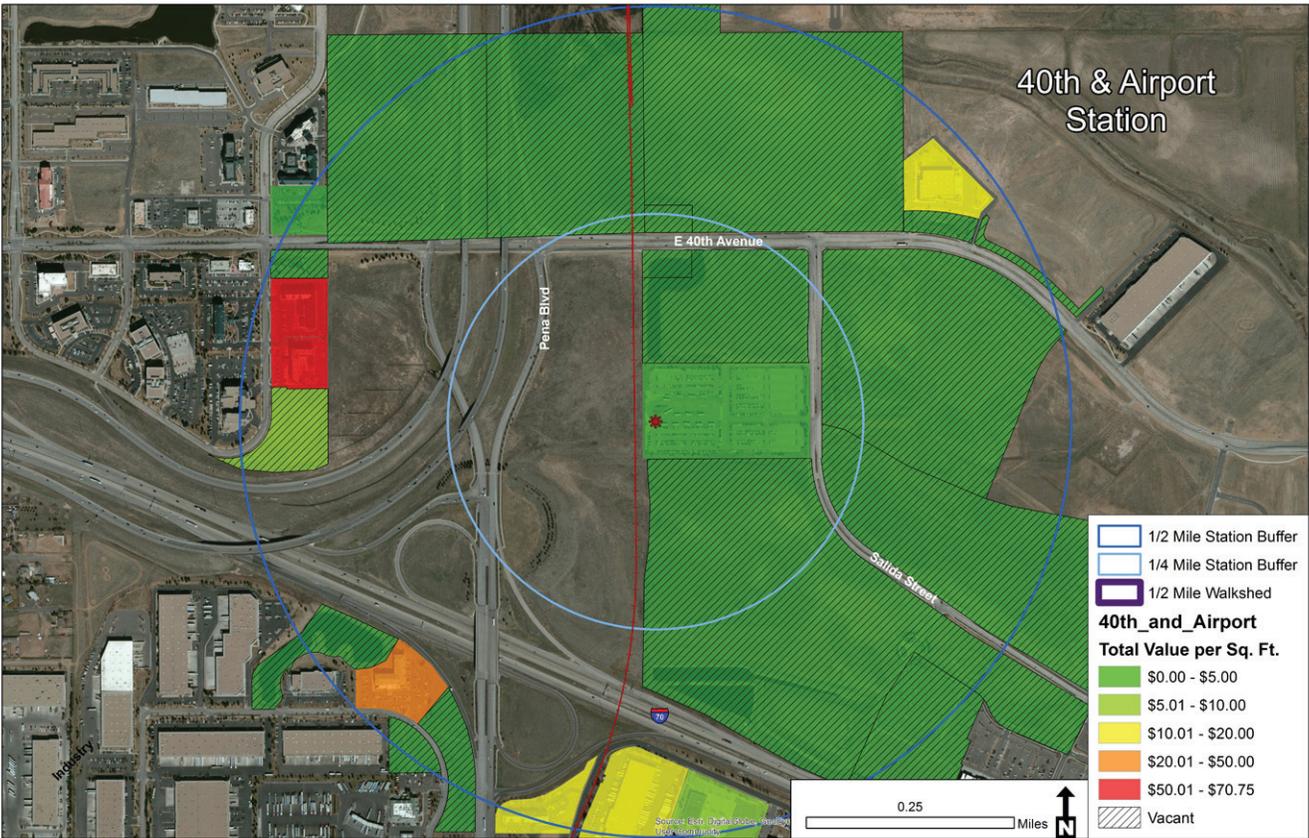
Gateway Park has targeted distribution, industrial, office, hospitality, and multifamily residential development. The earlier more developed part of Gateway Park consists of hotel and office development west of Peña Boulevard along Tower Road. East of Peña Boulevard, residential development is planned in Denver, north of 40th Avenue while the majority of the commercial development is planned in Aurora south of 40th Avenue. The developer has established a metro district to finance infrastructure costs, and wvvhich may also be available to assist in some station area development costs. The Pauls Corporation has indicated a willingness to wait for the

right opportunity to develop the station property by phasing development from east to west to create a higher value place than just an industrial park. Other assets include proximity to DIA and I-70 access which will appeal to a broad range of business types in addition to the warehousing and distribution tenants locating on the East I-70 corridor. There are also tentative plans to pursue apartments in the Denver portion of the station area east of Airport Boulevard along East 40th after the line begins operations.

### Constraints

Like other large greenfield employment sites, the major constraint at 40th and Airport is the timing of attracting a large employer, especially one that values the transit station location. Office development has been slow to materialize in Northeast Denver and Aurora along the Corridor. Once an anchor tenant is attracted development of other complementary uses may accelerate. DIA also anticipates needing to add several thousand parking spaces to accommodate travel growth over the next 20 to 30 years which could affect development opportunities at both Peña Boulevard area stations.

Figure 8: Land Use and Parcel Values – 40th & Airport Station Area



### 3. Development Conditions

#### 61st and Peña

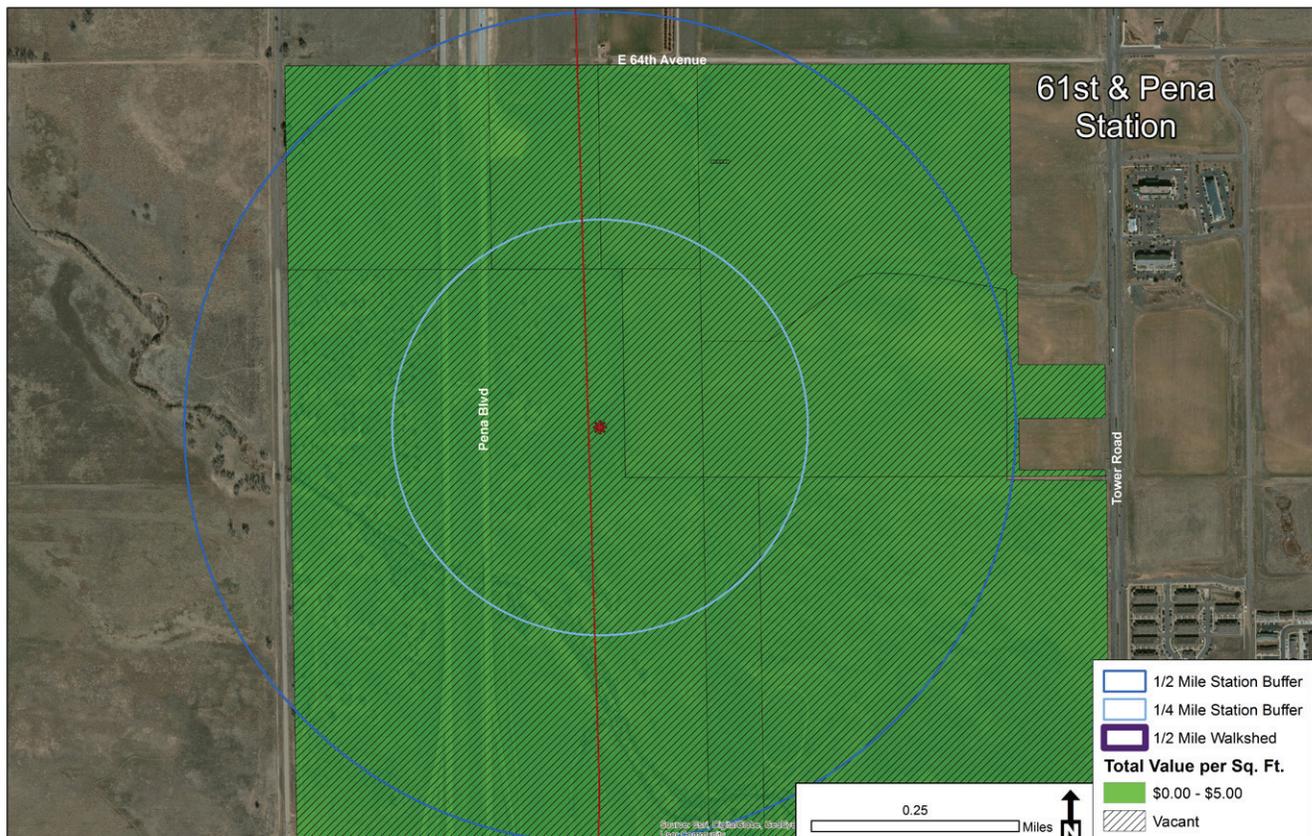
The 61st and Peña station is similar to the 40th and Airport station. Both are vacant development sites owned by a master developer(s). The station area is owned by four major landowners: DIA, L.C. Fulenwider, SMT Investors, and Karl Smith. L.C. Fulenwider has been selected by DIA to develop the property DIA owns at the site of the future station platform. L.C. Fulenwider has a metro district established for infrastructure financing, Denver International Business Center, a project also being developed by L.C. Fulenwider is located immediately to the north where development of limited service airport hotels and restaurants has been focused between 64th and 72nd Streets and along Tower Road. This airport-related development momentum presents an advantage for the 61st and Peña Station compared to 40th and Airport in terms of attracting residential, hotel, and retail/restaurant development. In addition, LNR Properties is developing the High Pointe project along the east side of Tower Road in the same general vicinity, consisting of housing, retail/commercial, and eventually office or other employment space.

The City and County of Denver, L.C. Fulenwider, and Panasonic Corporation recently announced plans for a major corporate facility at the 61st and Peña Station. The project is expected to utilize approximately 400 acres of land over time, beginning initially with a regional sales and operations office. It will eventually house up to 400 jobs in engineering and product development, and even manufacturing. This facility will serve Panasonic’s digital video and solar power systems divisions. The announcement references a “smart town” that Panasonic created in Fujisawa, Japan,<sup>1</sup> an energy efficient residential community built with the latest efficiency technologies. This suggests that housing will be a component of the development as well, consistent with the City’s Station Area Plan.

#### Constraints

Like 40th and Airport, the major constraint at 61st and Peña has been the timing of attracting a large employer that values the station location. The Panasonic project should provide a major anchor and catalyst for additional uses.

Figure 9: Land Use and Parcel Values – 61st & Peña Station Area



<sup>1</sup>[http://news.panasonic.net/archives/2011/0526\\_5407.html](http://news.panasonic.net/archives/2011/0526_5407.html)

## Infrastructure Barriers and Last Mile Connections

The major physical constraints to development around the East Line Stations are mainly related to infrastructure barriers and incomplete street, bicycle, and pedestrian networks. At the Corridor level, the rail right of way and I-70 create a hard edge that limits the ability to connect station areas with jobs and neighborhoods north of these two transportation facilities. The cost to create new connections will be very high and may be impossible over the rail; discussions with Union Pacific will be needed. If the Partial Cover Lower Alternative for I-70 is approved and funded, it will greatly improve north-south connections at 40th and Colorado.

As noted in the Denver and Aurora station plans for 38th, 40th, and Peoria, each station area has mobility and connectivity constraints that need to be addressed in order to increase access to stations. The street grids should be completed to create a more defined physical framework for development. These gaps include 41st, 42nd, 44th, and 45th Streets at the 40th and Colorado Station; Smith Road, East 40th Avenue, and Ulster Street at Central Park Boulevard; and a general lack of connectedness at Peoria. At 38th and Blake, the “hump” and under pass configuration is a barrier, and the intersections connecting adjacent neighborhoods are awkward for all modes of travel. Denver and Aurora’s Station Area Plans identify these constraints in more detail. At the three greenfield stations, the street network will be constructed concurrently with new development.



Businesses north of the rail are not well connected to the station platforms south of the rail.

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This chapter summarizes key findings from the demographic and economic analysis conducted in the Market Readiness Report.

## Demographics

Socioeconomic indicators along the Corridor show that it lags the Metro Area in important socioeconomic health indicators such as household income, education, labor force participation, and unemployment rates (**Table 2**).

- ▲ The Corridor has a higher concentration of renters than Metro Denver as a whole at 40.3 percent compared to 37.5 percent.
- ▲ The housing vacancy rate along the corridor is higher than the Metro average, at 7.6 percent compared to 5.7 percent.
- ▲ Seventy three and a half percent of Corridor residents have completed high school, compared to 89.8 percent Metro-wide.

- ▲ The concentration of non-whites and Hispanics or Latinos along the Corridor is approximately twice that in the Metro Area. Forty-three percent of Corridor residents describe themselves as non-white, and 44 percent describe themselves as Hispanic or Latino.
- ▲ Average household income is lower than the Metro average, at \$60,700 compared to \$85,600.
- ▲ The half-mile study area has a less diverse housing stock than Metro Denver with 83.5 percent single family housing compared to 66.8 percent.
- ▲ Labor force participation (the percentage of people either working or seeking employment) along the Corridor is 64.9 percent, compared to 71.8 percent in Metro Denver.

**Table 2: Half-Mile Corridor Demographics, 2014**

Description	East Line 1/2 Mile Radius	7-County Metro Area
<b>Housing Characteristics</b>		
% Homeowners	52.1%	56.8%
% Renters	40.3%	37.5%
% Vacant	7.6%	5.7%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
% High School Graduates	73.5%	89.8%
% Bachelor’s Degree and Higher	27.4%	41.0%
<b>Race and Ethnicity</b>		
% Non-White	43.0%	22.0%
% Hispanic or Latino Origin	44.1%	22.7%
Median Age	31.7	36.2
Avg. HH Size	3.5	2.5
Average Household Income	\$60,742	\$85,629

Source: ESRI, Economic & Planning Systems

## 4. Demographic Conditions and Economic Conditions

### Industry Clusters

The industrial cluster analysis in the Market Readiness Report examined corridor jobs in five super-sectors: food producing; wholesale, Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities; Service Producing; Health Care and Education; and Retail, Accommodation, and Food Service.

- ▲ The Corridor has a high concentration of industrial and transportation jobs. Wholesale Trade and Transportation and Warehousing are the largest industries along the Corridor, with 23,894 jobs or 46.6 percent of the total compared to just 8.5 percent overall in Metro Denver (**Table 3**).
- ▲ Goods-Producing sectors make of nearly half of all jobs along the Corridor with 10,795 jobs and 21.0 percent of the total compared to 12.8 percent in Metro Denver.
- ▲ The majority of the Corridor industries have average wages in the \$20 per hour range with the exception of retail and hospitality jobs which average \$11.92 per hour (not including gratuities).
- ▲ Compared to Metro Denver as a whole, the Corridor has approximately half of the concentration of Service jobs, a tenth the concentration of Health Care and Education jobs, and just over half of the concentration of Retail, Accommodations, and Food Service jobs.



A catering business located near 40th and Colorado station pays living wages and houses a larger number of employees than surrounding warehouses.

**Table 3: Employment by Super Sector, 2013**

Industry Super Sector	1/2 Mile Study Area		7-County Metro Area	
	Jobs	% Total	Jobs	% Total
Goods-Producing	10,795	21.0%	151,162	12.8%
Wholesale, Transportation and Warehousing, Utilities	23,894	46.6%	100,149	8.5%
Service-Providing	8,908	17.4%	432,170	36.7%
Health Care and Education	1,152	2.2%	253,746	21.6%
Retail, Accommodation and Food Service	<u>6,541</u>	<u>12.8%</u>	<u>239,916</u>	<u>20.4%</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,289</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,177,143</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Colorado Department of Labor, Economic & Planning Systems

- ▲ By station, DIA has by far the largest number of jobs at approximately 35,000 according to DIA publications. In the data source available, not all employees working at DIA are reported at that location, resulting in the roughly 16,000 employee figure shown (**Table 4**).
- ▲ Peoria station has approximately 3,678 jobs making it the next largest employment station outside DIA.
- ▲ Central Park Boulevard station has 2,355 jobs mostly in retail and related sectors, with 1,257 Retail, Accommodations, and Food Service jobs located mostly along Quebec Street in the Quebec Square shopping center anchored by Wal-Mart and Home Depot.
- ▲ 40th and Airport has only 500 jobs in the half-mile station area. This station and 61st and Peña are almost entirely undeveloped and therefore have very few jobs currently.

A list of major employers for the four developed stations, along with their building size and square feet of space per employee, is shown in **Table 5**. These data give additional context of how the NAICS codes translate to actual business operations.

- ▲ Some station areas contain business types that may not be desirable to have in a transit station area. They include businesses with extensive outdoor storage needs, chemical processes, noise, or general nuisances in the traditional zoning sense. Metal fabrication and coating, industrial painting and sandblasting, and trucking are examples.
- ▲ The employment density in these station areas is low at greater than 500 square feet of building per job. Mixed-use and office TODs in more urban locations can have employment densities of 250 to 500 square feet of building per employee.
- ▲ The firms with the highest estimated employment densities include some small manufacturing firms, building and administrative service firms, and specialty trades contractors. Some construction, trucking and wholesale firms show high employment densities, but many employees are not on-site.

**Table 4: Employment by Super Sector, Half-Mile Station Area, 2013**

Industry Super Sector	38th & Blake	40th & Colo.	Central Park Blvd.	Peoria	40th & Airport	DIA	Total
Goods-Producing	1,239	556	273	1,674	---	116	3,858
Wholesale, Transportation and Warehousing, Utilities	246	602	743	1,024	100	10,693	13,409
Service-Providing	560	347	52	605	273	2,369	4,206
Health Care and Education	103	74	30	107	2	---	315
Retail, Accommodation and Food Service	<u>299</u>	<u>361</u>	<u>1,257</u>	<u>268</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>2,755</u>	<u>5,065</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,447</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>2,355</b>	<b>3,678</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>15,934</b>	<b>26,854</b>

<sup>1</sup> DIA publications report 35,000 employees.

Source: Colorado Department of Labor, Economic & Planning Systems

## 4. Demographic Conditions and Economic Conditions

**Table 5: Employers by Station**

Company Name	NAICS Code	NAICS Description	Jobs	Building Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft per Employee
<b>38th and Blake</b>					
Pepsi Bottling Group	312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	501-1,000	598,136	750 - 1,000
Colorado Pet Treats	311	Food Manufacturing	101-250	6,260	< 500
Roadsafe Traffic Systems Inc	237	Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	51-100	6,000	< 500
Service Solution	561	Administrative and Support Services	51-100	15,625	< 500
Ready Mixed Concrete Co	327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	51-100	5,871	< 500
Factory At Walnut Llc	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	51-100	35,755	500 - 750
Wyatt Edison Charter School	611	Educational Services	26-50	58,219	1,000+
Victor Marble Company	327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	26-50	9,362	< 500
New Tech Machinery Corp	333	Machinery Manufacturing	26-50	51,504	1,000+
Jakes	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	26-50	4,271	< 500
TT Food Mart VI Corp	445	Food and Beverage Stores	26-50	29,116	1,000+
Mile High Mutts Inc	812	Personal and Laundry Services	26-50	7,800	< 500
Grayhawk Leasings Llc	312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	26-50	299,068	1,000+
<b>Colorado Blvd</b>					
All Copy Products Llc	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	101-250	29,986	< 500
Buehler Mayflower	484	Truck Transportation	101-250	7,546	< 500
Total Plumbing Inc	238	Specialty Trade Contractors	101-250	27,716	< 500
Geeks Who Drink Llc	713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	51-100	6,646	< 500
Denver Rescue Mission	624	Social Assistance	51-100	32,917	500 - 750
Blue Beacon Of Denver	811	Repair and Maintenance	51-100	5,185	< 500
Colorado Counter Tops Inc	327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	51-100	30,859	500 - 750
Pilot Travel Center 316	447	Gasoline Stations	51-100	8,777	< 500
Gourmet Alternative Inc	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	51-100	20,490	< 500
Anderson Drilling	238	Specialty Trade Contractors	26-50	6,365	< 500
Goalie Entertainment	551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	26-50	37,044	750 - 1,000
Premier Tire Terminal Inc	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	26-50	108,928	1,000+
Colorado Party Rentals	532	Rental and Leasing Services	26-50	12,100	< 500
Denver Metal Finishing Co	332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	26-50	33,001	750 - 1,000
AFood Service	424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	26-50	87,707	1,000+
KBP Coil Coaters Inc	332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	26-50	71,480	1,000+
Penske Truck Leasing Co	532	Rental and Leasing Services	26-50	15,022	500 - 750
Hi Performance Wash Inc	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	26-50	9,928	< 500
Sno White Linen & Uniform Rental	812	Personal and Laundry Services	26-50	49,635	1,000+
Carls Jr	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	26-50	2,725	< 500
Cap Air	488	Support Activities for Transportation	26-50	9,594	< 500
Manna Pro Products Llc	311	Food Manufacturing	26-50	7,540	< 500
Nuss Professional Services Group Inc	551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	26-50	9,658	< 500
Garage Door Specialties	238	Specialty Trade Contractors	11-25	12,000	< 500

Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor; Economic & Planning Systems

Table 5: Employers by Station (continued)

Company Name	NAICS Code	NAICS Description	Jobs	Building Sq. Ft.	Sq. Ft per Employee
<b>Central Park Blvd</b>					
Swift Transportation	484	Truck Transportation	251-500	30,604	< 500
Walmart	452	General Merchandise Stores	251-500	208,897	500 - 750
The Home Depot	444	Bldg Material/Garden Eqpt./Supplies Dealers	101-250	118,815	500 - 750
Sams Club	452	General Merchandise Stores	101-250	130,516	750 - 1,000
Famous Daves	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	101-250	6,445	< 500
Integrated Airlines Services Inc	488	Support Activities for Transportation	51-100	40,636	< 500
Direct Door Of Colorado	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	51-100	157,970	1,000+
Aspen Baking Co & Madame Bs Gourmet	311	Food Manufacturing	51-100	44,596	500 - 750
Country Buffet	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	51-100	8,352	< 500
Finishing Professionals Llc	332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	51-100	63,164	750 - 1,000
Buffalo Wild Wings Grill & Bar	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	51-100	7,000	< 500
Ihop	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	51-100	3,994	< 500
Ross	452	General Merchandise Stores	51-100	36,000	500 - 750
Aviation Service Supply Co	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	26-50	13,937	< 500
Quality Linings & Painting Inc	238	Specialty Trade Contractors	26-50	17,376	< 500
Skyline Business Forms Inc	323	Printing and Related Support Activities	26-50	59,806	1,000+
Goodwill Industries Of Denver	453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	26-50	32,092	750 - 1,000
<b>Peoria</b>					
Fritolay Inc	311	Food Manufacturing	251-500	172,127	
Rolling Frito-Lay Sales Lp	424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	101-250	344,254	500 - 750
General Glass	327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	101-250	86,036	1,000+
Advanced Pallet Management Systems	321	Wood Product Manufacturing	101-250	19,140	500 - 750
Gca Production Services Inc	561	Administrative and Support Services	101-250	33,958	< 500
Auto Truck Group Llc	336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	101-250	39,600	< 500
Pro Drivers	561	Administrative and Support Services	101-250	1,600	< 500
Xpedx	424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	101-250	251,471	< 500
Arrow Stage Lines	485	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	101-250	15,000	1,000+
Servicemaster Commerical Cleaning	561	Administrative and Support Services	101-250	109,592	< 500
Deline Box Company	322	Paper Manufacturing	101-250	152,503	1,000+
Chrysler Group Llc	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	51-100	128,506	1,000+
Rural Metro Ambulance	621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	51-100	33,958	1,000+
FI Transportation Inc	484	Truck Transportation	51-100	172,127	< 500
Pim Asphalt And Concrete Inc	238	Specialty Trade Contractors	51-100	5,000	1,000+
Overhead Door Company Of Denver Inc	444	Bldg Material/Garden Eqpt./Supplies Dealers	26-50	32,420	< 500
Arch Aluminum & Glass	327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	26-50	49,606	500 - 750
Frontier Business Products Co	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	26-50	109,592	1,000+
Lian Fa Food	424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	26-50	54,650	1,000+
Roofing Supply Of Colorado Llc	423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	26-50	24,600	1,000+
Advance Environmental Group Llc	561	Administrative and Support Services	26-50	26,700	500 - 750
Dennys	722	Food Services and Drinking Places	26-50	3,898	500 - 750
Super Bowl Portable Restrooms Inc	562	Waste Management and Remediation Services	26-50	12,496	< 500
Acuren Inspection Inc	541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	26-50	33,958	< 500
Ideal Electric Inc	238	Specialty Trade Contractors	26-50	12,107	1,000+
Future Foam Inc	326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	26-50	100,000	< 500

Source: Colorado Dept. of Labor; Economic &amp; Planning Systems

## 4. Demographic Conditions and Economic Conditions

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### Key Findings

Real estate brokers working along the East Corridor report that some building trades and building services firms (e.g., janitorial and maintenance) are being priced out of closer-in stations, especially 38th and Blake, and are moving east to the industrial parks east of Stapleton. These types of firms and other service firms that desire a central location and have a transit-dependent workforce could be targeted for Peoria Station (and 40th and Colorado). While workers may not be on-site all the time, these businesses support more employees per location than the current heavy industrial, warehouse, and trucking businesses currently located at Peoria or 40th and Colorado.

The demand for industrial space along the East Corridor is strong, and it is an important area for middle skill and living wage jobs in Metro Denver. However, some station areas have businesses that may have impacts on transit riders' experiences, and the ability to attract higher value development. The overall jobs strategy for the East Corridor stations is therefore to attract businesses that house more employees per unit of building or land area than existing warehousing and trucking businesses, and to limit businesses with nuisance-like impacts in the quarter-mile station area. These industry targets can include:

- ▲ Construction trades and building services businesses;
- ▲ Food manufacturing, value added processing, and catering;
- ▲ Sales and service functions that need central access and access to downtown or DIA; and
- ▲ Office space users such as customer service and support functions that can utilize warehouse buildings converted to low cost office space.
- ▲ More specific target industries are recommended for each station area in the next chapter.

This chapter identifies target industry opportunities for each station based on an analysis of industry clusters, recent and planned real estate development activity, and interviews with Corridor real estate interests and economic development stakeholders. In addition, residential and retail development opportunities are provided for each station

## 38th & Blake - Creative Industry Hub

In addition to an active development market, this station has other assets that are contributing to its success as a TOD and area of neighborhood economic opportunity. The development and investment activity occurring is an expansion of the activity and interest occurring north of Downtown Denver in the Curtis Park neighborhood, and in the River North district to the west. A key feature is the existing compact traditional street grid and small block structure, and direct easy connectivity to Downtown Denver and LoDo and all of the associated jobs and amenities by transit, bicycle, or car. The mix of building types and ages gives the area an authentic urban feeling that is conducive to attracting entrepreneurs and a young labor force with a mix of new housing and revitalized living spaces and creative and knowledge based industry jobs.

This station should be positioned as a creative industry and lifestyle hub for businesses who are seeking well-located space with urban amenities (**Table 6 and Figure 10**). Targeted industries recommendations include:

- ▲ Creative industries including design, advertising, technology, arts, and media firms;
- ▲ Health and wellness technology and other technology firms;
- ▲ Entrepreneurial ventures and start-up companies seeking urban mixed-use neighborhoods;
- ▲ Small professional services firms (engineers, architects and planners, lawyers, etc.); and
- ▲ Small firms engaged in high value product manufacturing and wholesale trade such as artisanal goods, rapid prototyping, Colorado made products, food and beverage, clothing and accessories, furniture, and other goods with a higher level of design and finish than mass market products.

## Retail/Commercial Development

The market is already expanding restaurant and bar businesses in the area to create a unique food district within Denver anchored by The Source and the Great Divide brewery (under construction). As businesses and housing expand in the area, commercial uses serving residents and employees will also expand. The expected tenant types include more eating and drinking establishments, personal services, a small market or specialty foods grocer, and other convenience and boutique retail.

## Housing

The 38th and Blake station area will continue to capitalize on the demand for close-to-downtown housing, with both market rate and affordable housing in demand.

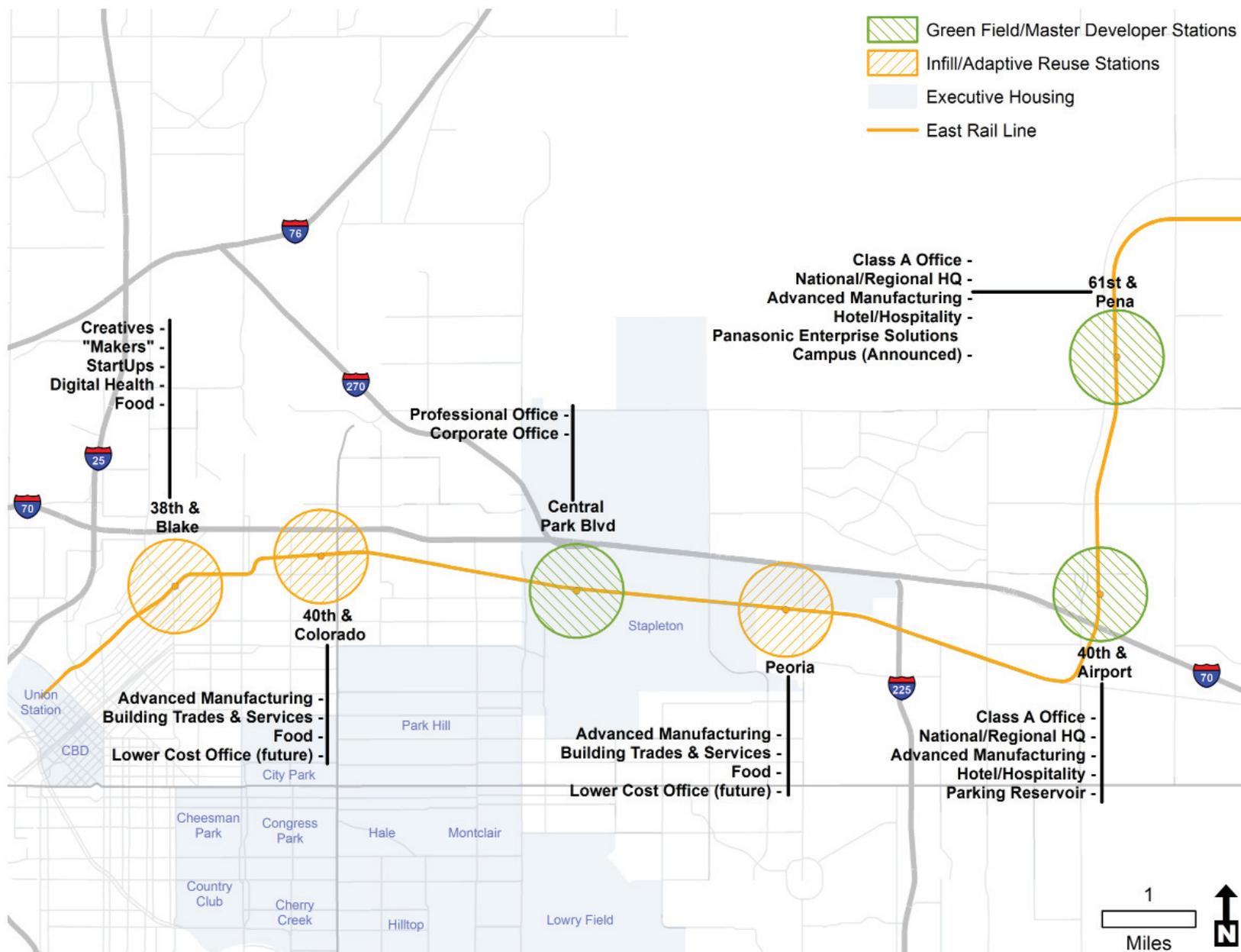
- ▲ Market rate and income restricted apartments;
- ▲ For-sale condominiums and townhomes similar to recent infill projects in the Curtis Park neighborhood to the south;
- ▲ Rehabilitation of existing buildings for urban lofts, studios and townhouses.

## 5. Target Industries and Development Types

Table 6: Targeted Industries and Development Potential

Station and Market Reach	Target Industries	Housing	Retail/Commercial/Services
<b>38<sup>th</sup> and Blake</b> Metro Denver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creative - design, advertising, technology, arts, and media</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial ventures and start-ups</li> <li>• Small professional services firms</li> <li>• High value product mfg. and design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market rate and income restricted apartments;</li> <li>• For-sale condominiums and townhomes</li> <li>• Building rehab for lofts and townhomes</li> <li>• A mixture of densities and project sizes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restaurant and bars complementing neighborhood retail</li> <li>• Personal services</li> </ul>
<b>40<sup>th</sup> and Colorado</b> Metro Denver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction trades and higher value production</li> <li>• Sales and service functions that need central access and access to DIA and downtown</li> <li>• Customer service and support functions; convert warehouses to low-cost office space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market rate and affordable multifamily</li> <li>• Mix of price levels and types</li> <li>• Lower density products adjacent to existing neighborhoods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grocery store as area housing expands</li> <li>• Capitalize on Colorado Boulevard frontage</li> <li>• Ethnic markets (A-Mart)</li> </ul>
<b>Central Park Boulevard</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class A office tenants</li> <li>• National and regional headquarters offices</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rental and for-sale multifamily</li> <li>• Empty nester condominiums</li> <li>• Senior housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited ground floor mixed use space</li> </ul>
<b>Peoria</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on increasing employment density</li> <li>• Building trades and building services</li> <li>• Customer service and support functions</li> <li>• Convert warehouses to higher value flex spaces</li> <li>• Manufacturing or construction-related startups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AHA affordable housing</li> <li>• Assemblage of junk yards for more affordable housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited - less than 10,000 square feet on Aurora Housing Authority site</li> </ul>
<b>40<sup>th</sup> and Airport</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced manufacturing and R&amp;D needing larger sites and buildings and more direct I-70 access</li> <li>• Build to suit office station area</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market rate apartments in Denver</li> <li>• Specialized housing products (senior)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited until significant population growth in trade area</li> </ul>
<b>61<sup>st</sup> and Peña</b> Metro Denver National International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class A office tenants</li> <li>• National and regional headquarters offices with frequent travel needs</li> <li>• Sales divisions</li> <li>• Hotels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apartments initially</li> <li>• Condominiums possible future phases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airport related hospitality</li> <li>• Hotels and restaurants</li> <li>• Potential grocery location to serve HighPointe trade area as residential population grows</li> </ul>

Figure 10: Targeted Industries by Station Area



## 5. Target Industries and Development Types

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### 40th & Colorado - Service and Trades Hub

This Station's assets include a central location in Metro Denver, easy access to Downtown Denver and DIA via I-70 and commuter rail, and north-south access along Colorado Boulevard. At least two firms have taken advantage of the East Line. One is a catering company that reported it believes employees and customers will find the location convenient to get to by transit. It may add retail or cafe operations depending on station traffic. Another is a third party logistics company that has frequent business at DIA and a sales staff that travels out of state often. There is also the potential to capture businesses moving out of the 38th and Blake area as real estate costs rise. Colorado Boulevard is an asset for retailers because of the high traffic counts, highway access, and good visibility along its frontage.

#### Targeted Industries

The recommended strategy for 40th and Colorado is to attract businesses with a higher employment density than the existing warehouses. These can include:

- ▲ Construction trades and building services businesses;
- ▲ Food manufacturing, value added processing, and catering;
- ▲ Sales and service functions that need central access and access to downtown or DIA; and
- ▲ Office space users such as customer service and support functions that can utilize warehouse buildings converted to low cost office space.

#### Retail/Commercial

Retail and commercial opportunities should be focused on the Colorado Boulevard frontage for its visibility. The area is not served by a grocery store and can be considered a food desert. As housing expands in the area, a grocery store may be possible on Colorado Boulevard.

#### Housing

There is an established market for housing and vacant land for additional development near Park Hill Village. Medium density (30 to 50 units per acre) multifamily development will likely be the most appropriate based on the context, and the densities needed to make development financially feasible on redevelopment sites.

A mix of price levels and types should be targeted, with lower density products in the transition areas adjacent to existing neighborhoods.

### Central Park Boulevard - Corporate Office

Central Park Boulevard Station has several assets that give it the potential to be a high quality TOD and large economic center along the Corridor. First, there are approximately 14 acres of vacant land south of the 12 acre RTD station site controlled by one owner/developer, Forest City. Second, the Stapleton Development has brought a range of new housing from entry level to executive, and new highly rated schools which are needed to attract executive and mid-level white collar office employees. The station is also halfway between Downtown Denver and DIA, and two stops away from the Anschutz Medical Campus.

#### Target Industries

The south portion of the quarter-mile station should be positioned and marketed for corporate build-to-suit buildings for national and regional headquarters, or for class A multitenant offices. Forest City is expected to begin marketing this location for these uses when the East Line opens. Potential tenants and industry types are as follows:

- ▲ Professional and technical services including legal, financial, engineering, and software firms;
- ▲ Colorado-based or national companies seeking a headquarters or regional hub location; and
- ▲ Healthcare.

#### Retail/Commercial

Supportive ground floor mixed use retail, restaurants, and services will increase the appeal of the station to workers and residents. However, these are likely to be created in a limited quantity to minimize competition with the existing 29th Street Town Center and proposed Eastbridge Town Center. The regional retail market in this location is saturated with the Quebec Square and Northfield shopping centers.

## Housing

While this station is expected to be predominately an employment center, medium and high density residential uses could complement the station area by concentrating more housing near jobs. As with employment oriented development, these higher density products have higher construction costs and higher land values. Forest City is expected to pursue these products as its other residential properties build out and the Stapleton market matures to support higher value apartment and condominium development. Mixed income development would also expand opportunities for lower income residents.

## Peoria Station - Service and Trades Hub

Peoria Station has the most constraints, market and physical, of any station on the East Line. The existing development pattern is dominated by low density and lower value warehouse and distribution uses. Visibility and access to the station is poor. There is no access to the north side of the rail and access from the south is limited by an incomplete street grid. Access from the east will be restricted by the Peoria Street overpass and the future light rail tracks of the I-225/ Aurora line.

The comparatively low cost of real estate here may appeal to firms looking for low cost space. An additional asset is the station's role as a transfer point to the I-225/Aurora line that connects to the Anschutz Medical Campus, Denver Tech Center, and the Southeast I-25 corridor, which are major white collar and service employment centers. However, the market context is not currently supportive of office or residential development that would capitalize on this access.

## Target Industries

The recommended strategy for Peoria is similar to 40th and Colorado. It is to attract businesses with a higher employment density than the existing warehouse and distribution businesses. Peoria should be positioned as a location for trades, services, manufacturing, and other businesses with enough employees to take advantage of the transit. These can include:

- ▲ Construction trades and building services businesses.
- ▲ Food manufacturing, value added processing, and catering.

- ▲ Sales and service functions that need a central location and access to downtown, DIA, the
- ▲ I-225 Corridor, and South I-25 Corridor.
- ▲ Office space users such as customer service and support functions that can utilize warehouse buildings converted to low cost office space.
- ▲ Peoria could also be pitched as a location for industrial or fabrication start-up firms seeking low cost real estate.

## Retail/Commercial

An analysis of retail development potentials recently conducted for the Peoria Station Catalytic Project determined that no more than 10,000 square feet of convenience retail uses is currently supportable as part of the AHA development project located at the corner of Peoria and 30th Avenue.

## Residential

The five-acre Aurora Housing Authority (AHA) property located on the east side of Peoria between 30th and 33rd Avenues is the only existing residential site in the station area. AHA plans to build 180 to 200 units of affordable and transformational housing here.

## 40th & Airport - Corporate Gateway

Key assets at 40th and Airport consist of 178 acres of vacant land owned by the Pauls Corporation in its Gateway Park development, proximity to DIA, good access to I-70, and a metropolitan district established to finance infrastructure costs. This location and access will appeal to a broad range of business types in addition to the warehousing and distribution tenants.

## Target Industries

The target industries for 40th and Airport station reflect the developer's stated strategy and the current pattern of employment, airport hospitality, and multifamily housing development occurring along the Peña Boulevard, Airport Way, and Tower Road corridors. Recommended major anchors to target at 40th and Airport are hotels, build-to-suit office users, and restaurants closer to the station, with distribution and warehousing uses further from the station.

## 5. Target Industries and Development Types

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It is recommended that the target industries for 40th and Airport be differentiated to the degree possible from 61st and Peña. 40th and Airport could have a greater focus on major employers with large building requirements and businesses that benefit from the I-70 access. This may mean a greater focus on:

- ▲ Advanced manufacturing and precision machining;
- ▲ Aerospace; and
- ▲ Clean technology and R&D.

There would therefore be less of a focus on corporate or class-A office. The cities may not be able to influence these target markets, as L.C. Fulenwider (61st and Peña) and The Pauls Corporation seem to be competing to attract very similar business types and may need to satisfy investor return requirements.

### Residential

The Pauls Corporation indicated that any residential development would likely be apartments, with ownership condominiums a possibility in future phases as the location becomes established and there are more amenities in place. Residents would be a mix of DIA employees and others who work in eastern Metro Denver, or who wish to live in more modestly priced housing in commuting distance of Downtown Denver or the Southeast Corridor by transit.

## 61st & Peña - Aviation Station

Aviation Station's assets are similar to the 40th and Airport: large areas of undeveloped land, consolidated property ownership, and infrastructure financing mechanisms in place. The major land owner and developer L.C. Fulenwider has also been selected as DIA's partner to develop DIA's property surrounding the planned station platform location. The recently announced Panasonic campus will be a major catalyst for this station in attracting additional businesses, housing, and supportive services and retail.

### Targeted Industries

The station positioning and target industries for this station also mirror the developer's plans and the recent Panasonic announcement:

- ▲ Regional and national headquarters;
- ▲ International companies with frequent travel needs;
- ▲ Companies with a large travelling sales force; and
- ▲ Federal government.

### Retail/Commercial

Additional airport related hospitality (hotels and restaurants) is recommended as the majority of commercial development here. The 61st and Peña station could also target a grocer to serve the existing development plus new residential growth. This is a long term strategy, as the existing King Soopers at Green Valley Ranch Boulevard and Tower Road plus the Walmart Supercenter at Tower Road and I-70 meet current demand

### Residential

Vertical mixed use apartments (initially) and condominiums (future) are envisioned for this station. Residential is proposed to be concentrated around the station, with employment and commercial development focused further from the station and along Tower Road. Like 40th and Airport, residents would be a mix of DIA employees and others who work in eastern Metro Denver. The Panasonic campus may incorporate an innovative energy efficient residential neighborhood.

## Station Market Positions

As a way of differentiating the stations, target markets, and markets served, the likely business origin for each station is suggested in **Table 7** and **Figure 11** to aid in economic development prospecting and marketing. These are not recommended to be absolutes, as real estate and economic development are highly unpredictable and business opportunities can arise from multiple sources.

Initially, the 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria stations are recommended to be marketed to companies based in Metro Denver and Colorado. These sites are infill development sites – a riskier development environment – and locally based firms and developers will have a better understanding than outside firms and investors of the local market, how the East Line relates to the rest of Metro Denver, and the opportunities it creates.

Land at Central Park Boulevard, 40th and Airport, and 61st and Peña is controlled by national developers with national and international reach. Combined with the site sizes and ability to control infrastructure and other conditions, these sites may appeal more to national and international corporate businesses with lower appetite for risk and the complexities of redevelopment.

## Innovation Firms and Young Labor Force

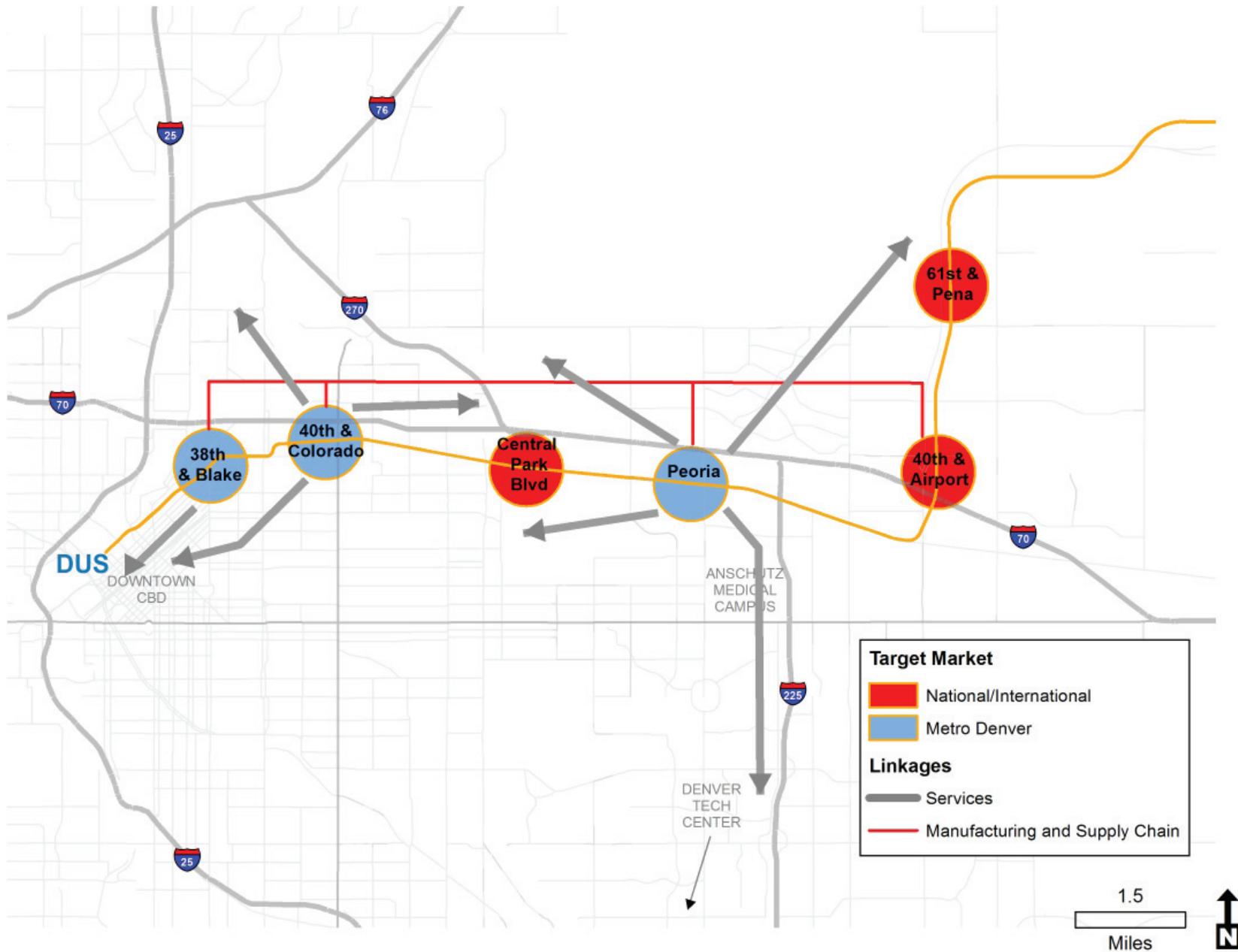
It has been suggested that the East Line will appeal to younger companies and a younger workforce. Compared to the southeast I-25 corridor, which generally has an older and more conservative workforce and business mix, the East Line will offer a mix of urban grit that will appeal to Millennials and some Generation X employees. In addition, the Stapleton development and increasing popularity of Park Hill has created a gradual shift of young and mid-career professional and highly educated labor to the northeast. Younger workers tend to favor urban mixed use locations, and are more likely to utilize transit, bicycling, and walking to get to work.

**Table 7: Target Markets by Station**

Business Origin	Station	Primary Markets Served	Secondary or Aspirational Markets Served
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Denver</li> <li>• Colorado</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38th and Blake</li> <li>• 40th and Colorado</li> <li>• Peoria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Denver</li> <li>• Colorado</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National</li> <li>• International</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Denver</li> <li>• Colorado</li> <li>• United States</li> <li>• International</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Park Boulevard</li> <li>• 40th and Airport</li> <li>• 61st and Peña</li> <li>• Denver Union Station</li> <li>• Denver International Airport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metro Denver</li> <li>• Colorado</li> <li>• National</li> <li>• International</li> </ul>	---

## 5. Target Industries and Development Types

Figure 11: Station Market Positions



This chapter presents an economic development strategy for transit-oriented and real estate development along the East Corridor. It begins with an overview of the principles of Transit Oriented Development (TOD), followed by corridor-wide implementation strategies. Station specific strategies are presented in the next chapter.

## General TOD Principles

The principles of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) planning and implementation should still be applied to the East Line even though there is a stronger focus on employment and more industrial-type land uses due to its market position in the region. Transit Oriented Denver, 2014, Denver’s strategic plan for TOD surrounding its rail stations, provides a detailed definition of TOD and the implementation measures needed for it to be successful in creating economic opportunity, housing choice, and to reduced energy consumption. Key strategies are summarized below:

- ▲ **Employment Density** – The overall jobs strategy for the East Line is to attract businesses that house more employees per unit of building or land area. Large low density employers such as distribution and trucking are not recommended for the immediate quarter-mile radius station areas.
- ▲ **Connectivity and access** – The better the access and connectivity at a station, the larger its reach is to businesses and residents. Well-connected blocks and safe convenient access for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit buses are essential.
- ▲ **Highest densities at the stations** – The highest density buildings should be placed closest to the stations. More employees and residents at the station will create more transit riders.
- ▲ **Mix of uses where appropriate** – Business locations that also have nearby services and amenities such as dining, shopping, childcare, and other daily services are increasingly appealing to workers, busy families that need to combine trips, and younger workers with less inclination to drive or own a car.
- ▲ **Land assemblage** – The 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria Stations are located in built up areas with multiple property owners and varying property sizes. In order to create cohesive TOD, consolidation of property ownership will

be required. The political environment for Urban Renewal Authorities after the Kelo vs. the City of New London decision indicates that property assemblage will need to be largely a private sector effort.

- ▲ **Public investment, partnerships, and incentives** – 40th and Colorado and Peoria station areas have the most difficult market and physical conditions that need to be overcome to attract more jobs and development. Denver and Aurora will need to lead the market with targeted infrastructure investments to improve connectivity and to better define the block and circulation structure. Partnerships with developers to share costs on mutually beneficial projects and financial incentives should also be used where appropriate.

## Corridor Strategy (CS) 1 - Address gaps in first and last mile connections

Creating better first and last mile connections to the stations should continue to be a priority in each city’s transportation planning and capital improvements funding programs. Stations that are well connected to their surroundings will have more benefit to businesses, and make it easier for residents and workers to access jobs, training, and services elsewhere in the region. The lack of good last mile connections also disproportionately affects the poor, who may not be able to afford to drive, and other transit dependent people including the elderly and disabled.

As noted in the Denver and Aurora station plans, each station area has mobility and connectivity constraints that need to be addressed in order to increase access to stations. Street grids should be completed, either initiated by the Cities or in partnership with developers as opportunities present themselves. Completing the street grid enhances connectivity, but also helps to define logical development sites where property ownership can be consolidated.

## 6. Corridor Economic Development Strategy

### CS-2 - Address incompatible land uses within the quarter-mile station area

The 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria Station areas are largely developed with industrial land uses. Strategies for industrial development in transit corridor and urban settings are evolving to address preserving jobs and expanding access to jobs. However certain land use and business types have negative impacts on adjacent property and transit riders and operations. Zoning should restrict businesses with noxious, noise, or other nuisances from the immediate half-mile radius station area where there will be the most pedestrian and transit rider activity. Performance standards (e.g., noise levels, delivery hours, hours of operation) have been used by other cities to control business types and activities, rather than a prescriptive list of allowable uses. This allows flexibility to accommodate unforeseen business types. More intensive industrial uses can be allowed between stations.

### CS-3 - Promote new building types and design ideas for industrial and flex buildings to better support street activity and sense of place.

In all but the most urban real estate markets with high land values that require dense development based on development economics, it is challenging to integrate industrial development into transit oriented development. The large buildings and blank walls also detract from street activity, vitality, and safety perceptions. While true multistory urban industrial buildings are not a realistic goal for most of the Corridor, with 38th and Blake being a potential exception, there are other creative ways to design industrial and flex buildings. The Elyria

Swansea Neighborhood Plan proposes some alternative building type and design ideas that should be promoted to developers and business owners, and potentially converted to land use and zoning regulations. These concepts allow for two story mixed use or general commercial space fronting the street, with open modern functional industrial and flexible space in the rear (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Balance of Residential and Flex Uses



## CS-4 - Use a full range of infrastructure and development funding and financing tools

Colorado legislation allows several land/real-estate based public-private financing tools that capture value from new development. The most applicable tools for the East Corridor include improvement districts, Title 32 Metropolitan Districts (metro district), urban renewal areas, and the Denver TOD Fund as described below.

### *Improvement Districts*

A general improvement district (GID) is a public infrastructure district that applies a property tax or assessment to a specific improvement area to pay for new public infrastructure. GIDs are commonly used to fund shared infrastructure facilities including parking garages, pedestrian improvements, and/or storm water management. GIDs can be initiated by a majority of property owners. The City of Boulder has utilized a GID to pay for shared parking facilities in the Transit Village Area Plan.

A special improvement district (SID) is a public infrastructure district that assesses specific improvement costs to abutting property. A SID does not assess property tax, but rather charges an assessment of a specific capital improvement project. A SID is best applied for very specific infrastructure costs relating to a discrete number of abutting properties that directly benefit from the improvements. An example is a storm water or drainage improvement needed to address flooding impacts to a small number of properties, but that does not provide wider district or neighborhood benefits. SIDs are not separate governmental entities and are under full control of the city. An example is the SID the City of Denver created for the streetscape amenity portions of the South Broadway street reconstruction.

### *Urban Renewal Authorities*

Urban Renewal Authorities (URA) are designed to address blighted economic conditions through the use of redevelopment powers including land acquisition and tax-increment financing (TIF). URAs have a life of 25 years, after which the increase in property tax is returned to the City's General Fund. Aurora and Denver both have urban renewal authorities that have helped finance landmark projects such as the Anschutz Medical Campus and Denver Union Station.

Denver and Aurora should consider establishing URAs at 40th and Colorado and Peoria to capture the expected increases in property values. The resulting tax increment financing (TIF) Revenues could be used for area wide infrastructure projects or public infrastructure related to a development project (developer incentives). TIF could be especially useful in incentivizing a grocer at 40th and Colorado. A URA may not be needed at 38th and Blake given the current level of development interest.

### *Title 32 Metropolitan District*

A metro district is an independent special district formed to develop and/or operate two or more public infrastructure improvements such as roads, utilities, parks, or public parking. Metro districts are most often created by a land developer to apply an additional mill levy to future development to create a revenue stream to help pay for infrastructure costs. They require the city's approval of the service plan. There is a statutory maximum of 50 mills but no time limit on the duration of the district. Metro districts are an effective financing tool for many development projects. Several TOD sites in Metro Denver have metro districts including Broadway Station (Cherokee Metro District), Alameda Station (BMP Metro District), and Belleview Station (Madre Metro District).

### *Denver TOD Fund*

The Urban Land Conservancy (ULC), Enterprise Community Partners, the City and County of Denver, and several other investors have partnered to establish the first affordable housing Transit Oriented Development (TOD) acquisition fund in the country. The purpose of the Denver TOD Fund is to support the creation and preservation of over 1,000 affordable housing units through strategic property acquisition in current and future transit corridors. The Fund often invests in real estate around proposed transit stations before RTD's FasTracks lines are operational, allowing it to capitalize on current values and to preserve affordable housing opportunities in advance of market and speculative pressures. A revolving loan fund is available to purchase and hold sites for up to five years along current and future rail and high frequency bus corridors.

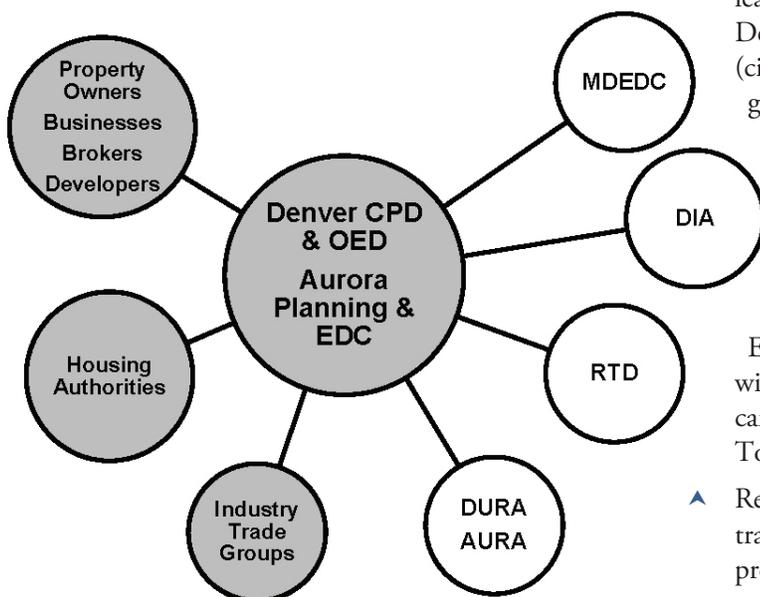
## 6. Corridor Economic Development Strategy

### CS-5 - Establish a formal working East Line Business Partnership

The key players in the East Line Working Group have been each city’s respective planning departments. In order to implement coordinated and effective economic development, a more formal partnership with an expanded number of key stakeholders and actors should be created. The Working Group should be continued and expanded and/or restructured to involve the key stakeholders necessary for economic development, marketing and real estate development. A lead person from each city should be assigned to identify key partners and a process for outreach with the end goal of continuing a working partnership of business and property owners, brokers, developers, and industry representatives to address the key economic strategies agreed to by the stakeholders.

The primary actors, and therefore key partners, in implementing economic development goals and attracting or expanding businesses are the major property owners, businesses, real estate brokers and developers. Industry trade groups may also be valuable partners because of the network of people involved in them, and their collective knowledge of the targeted industries. The City planning and economic development departments are also obviously very important, and should increase cross-department collaboration.

Figure 13: Economic Development Partnership



The Denver and Aurora Housing Authorities should also be involved to identify new sites for affordable housing, and to assist with and promote co-locating housing, childcare, and job resource services in station areas.

The Cities should also explore the benefits of reaching out to trade organizations of target industries. These groups could be an effective way to reach expanding businesses or businesses who may be considering a Colorado or Metro Denver location. Key trade associations include the following:

- ▲ Association of General Contractors of Colorado
- ▲ Colorado Clean Technology Association
- ▲ Colorado Association for Manufacturing Technology
- ▲ Colorado Advanced Manufacturing Alliance
- ▲ Colorado Association of Commerce & Industry (Manufacturing Initiative)
- ▲ Colorado Technology Association

The roles and relative importance of other stakeholder groups are summarized below.

- ▲ Denver and Aurora Urban Renewal Authorities (DURA and AURA) – Urban renewal authorities have the power to use tax increment financing to fund important public infrastructure or amenity projects. They can also assist with land assemblage in redevelopment settings.
- ▲ Metro Denver EDC – Metro Denver EDC is the lead economic development agency for Metro Denver. It works in partnership with sub-regional (city, county, and subarea) economic development groups in Metro Denver and Northern Colorado. Under the Metro Denver EDC code of ethics, partner organizations inform clients and customers about the Metro Denver region first and individual communities second. The market position and goals for the East Corridor should be communicated to the Metro Denver EDC so that they are aware of the opportunities, with an understanding that Metro Denver EDC cannot specifically promote individual Cities or Towns.
- ▲ Regional Transportation District – RTD is the transit operator and owns strategically located property, primarily to be used as parking, at each station. RTD has the ability to enter into joint

development agreements with the private sector to allow real estate to be developed on RTD property and/or park-n-Ride lots to be relocated or placed in a parking structure as long as parking needs are met and the transit functions are protected. RTD can also coordinate on TOD projects near stations, and evaluate possible bus service changes to assist in last mile solutions.

- ▲ Denver International Airport – DIA owns property on the west side of the 40th and Airport station and at 61st and Peña. At 40th and Airport, this property will potentially provide additional airport parking as demand grows. It could also be incorporated into a TOD project. DIA and Denver are also exploring ways to create synergistic industry clusters on DIA landside property under the Airport City initiative; these would further complement East Line businesses. Other than ensuring that DIA is a world class facility, DIA has a limited role at the other stations. DIA should participate in an East Line business partnership if established, however.

### **CS-6 - Establish a business outreach process to assist businesses who are considering relocating out of transit corridors.**

Business outreach is needed to help retain businesses on the East Corridor, and other transit Corridors such as the Central Corridor, who are considering moving due to the increased real estate values. Real estate brokers and developers and employers interviewed for this Study report that some building trades and building services firms (e.g., janitorial and maintenance), and manufacturing firms are relocating out of the 38th and Blake area. As the value of real estate rises, building (and business) owners see an opportunity to make a profit on their property and will move their business to another suitable location.

A reality is that few of the existing businesses along the East Corridor see value in transit for their operations or workforce; many however do value the central location. Locations outside the immediate quarter-mile station area or between stations may be lower cost but still have the same general location requirements, and as last mile connections are completed these locations can still be accessible by transit.

### **CS-7 - Employ and expand the full range of business assistance tools available through the cities of Denver and Aurora and the State of Colorado**

Denver and Aurora both have several business assistance and low cost loan and gap financing programs in place to assist new business start-ups and expansions of or improvements to existing businesses. Two of Denver’s loan programs target an area that includes the East Corridor. Aurora’s loan programs give priority to, but are not limited to East Colfax and Original Aurora, and the Havana Street Corridor. Both cities should continue to actively promote these programs to existing and prospective East Line businesses.

Denver and Aurora should continue to promote the available financing sources in their revolving loan funds. As part of broader economic development programs, they should continually seek to expand these programs based on loan demand.

#### **Denver OED**

The Neighborhood Revolving Loan Fund program will loan up to 25 percent of project costs to provide a gap between business owner equity and bank financing, with a maximum loan amount of \$350,000.<sup>2</sup> Its priorities are quality jobs with career advancement, deteriorated industrial and commercial areas, and minority and women owned businesses. This program complements the economic goals for the East Corridor.

The Create Denver Revolving Loan Fund is targeted at expanding creative industries in Denver. Eligible businesses include non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses engaged in art, photographic and graphic art, performance art, handcraft and design and media. Loan amounts range from \$15,000 to \$30,000. This program could be promoted for 38th and Blake, 40th and Colorado, and Peoria stations which have been recommended to target small Metro Denver and Colorado businesses.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.denvergov.org/oed/DenverOfficeofEconomicDevelopment/BusinessServices/Financing/tabid/435838/Default.aspx>

## 6. Corridor Economic Development Strategy

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The Neighborhood Business Revitalization Loan (NBR) targets commercial corridors and neighborhood commercial districts, and will lend up to 50 percent of project costs. There are no designated NBR lending areas on the East Line. The City could consider expanding this program to include select TOD station areas, although it may overlap with the Neighborhood Revolving Loan Fund.

### **Aurora EDC**

Aurora EDC also operates a revolving loan fund aimed at increasing economic diversity and supporting job creation, especially in wholesale trade and distribution which are targeted industries for Aurora. It currently targets the Havana Street and East Colfax Avenue corridors, but can be used city-wide. Loan amounts up to \$75,000 are available. Aurora EDC also has a separate loan fund focused on lending for brownfield remediation projects, with flexible lending terms.

Aurora's New Job Reward program offers a cash incentive of \$5,000 per new job created for three years. Jobs must have wages over \$35,000 per year, not including benefits. It cannot be used however if an applicant is also receiving other tax incentives (e.g., property, or sales and use tax rebates) from the City.

### **Enterprise Zone**

An Enterprise Zone covers nearly all of the East Line Corridor in Denver and the Peoria Station area in Aurora. This is a State of Colorado program that encourages business growth in economically distressed areas. It offers tax credits for new job creation, capital investment, rehabilitation of vacant buildings, research and development, and state sales tax exemptions for capital equipment.<sup>3</sup>

### **Foreign Trade Zones**

Two Foreign Trade Zones are located along the East Line. One is at WorldPort at DIA and the second is located at West 40th and Havana between Central Park Boulevard and Peoria stations. Foreign Trade Zones allow reduced tariffs on imported goods.

### **CS-8 - Additional partnerships and funding are needed to create additional affordable housing and community and family services along the East Corridor**

In addition to attracting more quality jobs to the Corridor, access to affordable housing, education, and job resources need to be expanded in order to benefit a wider range of residents. Affordable housing developers including the Urban Land Conservancy, Medici Communities, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, and Aurora Housing Authority are already active on the Corridor. Affordable housing development should continue to be supported through funding, such as the Denver TOD Fund and inclusionary housing regulations.

The lack of affordable childcare is an impediment to low income parents entering the workforce and climbing out of poverty. Other than competitive grants from the CDBG program, and local and national philanthropic organizations, there is little available funding for affordable childcare, making this a regional and state-wide issue. Transit-oriented developments are a logical location for childcare because it can be combined with a home-work trip. The Denver and Aurora Housing Authorities are important partners because of their involvement in job training, job access, and affordable childcare programs.

### **CS-9 - Develop metrics to monitor business activity and track economic development progress.**

Denver and Aurora should establish data driven tools to monitor progress and changing business conditions along the East Line over time to assist with further planning and implementation strategies. One example would be to use city business license data to monitor business formation and relocation along the Corridor over time. There may be other information such as utility accounts that could be used to develop a finer grained inventory of businesses.

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<sup>3</sup>See <http://www.advancecolorado.com/funding-incentives/incentives/enterprise-zone-tax-credits/tax-credit-resources>

### **CS-10 - Build a website with up-to-date marketing and site selection information.**

To help market the East Line for new businesses, an interactive web based tool should be developed with up-to-date information on available buildings and development sites. It would potentially tie into existing brokerage networks such as Loopnet, CoStar, and other major commercial brokerage websites in the Metro Denver area. As noted in the Marketing and Branding Strategy which is part of this Study, a website will be a critical component of economic development marketing for the Corridor.

Supplemental information should include information on planned infrastructure projects, and other real estate projects in planning or underway. Information on available incentives and financing sources through Denver and Aurora Economic Development, CHFA, and the State of Colorado could also be included. Denver and Aurora Economic development already publish much of this information online.

### **CS-11 - Marketing and branding is a component of many economic development programs and can be considered as part of the strategy and implementation measures for the East Corridor.**

The scope of work for this Study developed by Denver, Aurora, and the East Corridor Working Group contains a Marketing and Branding Strategy, prepared under a separate cover. The Marketing Strategy Report provides guidance on how an overall corridor economic development marketing and branding strategy could be structured and implemented, including the necessary partnerships, and its approximate cost (approximately \$150,000 over 24 months). It is a draft plan that provides a framework for further discussion at a number of levels, including as a starting point, the merits of marketing and branding an individual transit line within the larger RTD system. This is relatively new ground, but not unprecedented as the City of Aurora conducted a similar effort on the I-225/Aurora light rail line in 2013.

Input from Corridor Stakeholders indicates that a marketing and branding strategy for the Corridor could be a useful and effective economic development tool, but there are issues related to branding a single RTD line that need to be resolved. The unique attributes of the East Line connecting DUS and downtown Denver to DIA creates a higher level of visibility and potential marketing opportunity to a national and international market compared to the other RTD rail corridors that largely connect downtown Denver to the surrounding suburban cities. Therefore a case can be made that the East Line should therefore be considered individually with some level of unique identity. The benefits of doing so would largely accrue to the Corridor's businesses, property owners and resident workforce. There are potential benefits to each city's economic development efforts as well by creating greater visibility to the Corridor in the national market. Marketing and branding the East Line will however require the participation and agreement of RTD, DIA, and the host cities.

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This chapter outlines specific actions and steps for each station to address development readiness which is needed to implement the Economic Development Strategy.

## 38th & Blake

The City and County of Denver’s adopted Plan addresses the major development constraints. The parking for this station is being built on the west side of the rail at 38th and Wynkoop and the platform will be located along Blake Street. Denver and RTD are constructing one pedestrian bridge parallel to 38th Street to connect the parking and the platform. The 38th street underpass and the “hump” on Blake Street create east-west and north-south barriers to neighborhoods and businesses on either side of the station. Priority recommendations include a second pedestrian bridge at 36th Street, bicycle and pedestrian improvements along 37th Avenue, and others summarized below. The Plan also contains specific recommendations on connecting the station with the Cole and Whittier neighborhoods to the east and the River North neighborhood to the west. Proposed funding sources, added by EPS, are included in the recommendations.

## 40th & Colorado

This station area is being studied as a component of the ongoing Elyria & Swansea Neighborhood Plan that will be published for public review in November 2014. Neighborhood feedback identified multiple key issues to be addressed through the neighborhood plan, including:

- ▲ Disjointed connectivity including the BNSF Market Lead, an inactive rail spur located in a depression, and disrupted street grid;
- ▲ Missing services (retail, health clinics, fresh food);
- ▲ Environmental issues; and
- ▲ Nuisances and crime (property neglect, underutilized and vacant land, vandalism).

The reconstruction of East I-70 could have a transformational impact on this station. The preferred Partial Cover Lowered Alternative is being considered, and is supported by The City and County of Denver. This Alternative proposes to remove the viaduct section of I-70 between Brighton Boulevard and Colorado Boulevard and rebuild the segment below grade following the current highway alignment. Several street connections and a park would be built on a deck above the highway, re-connecting the north and south sides of the Elyria Swansea neighborhood and the 40th & Colorado station area. Access to the station would be greatly improved.

38 <sup>th</sup> and Blake				
#	Action	Responsible Party	Proposed Funding	Notes
1	Conduct a detailed circulation and transportation study	Denver CPD and Public Works	Denver CPD Work Program	See station area plan
2	Construct pedestrian bridge at 36 <sup>th</sup> Street	Denver CPD and Public Works	Denver CIP	See station area plan
3	37 <sup>th</sup> Avenue pedestrian and bike improvements	Denver CPD and Public Works	Denver CIP	See station area plan
4	Other intersection and circulation improvements	Denver CPD and Public Works	Denver CIP	See station area plan

## 7. Station Area Development Strategy

Key recommendations for this station are summarized as follows:

- ▲ Improve the incomplete street grid and first and last mile connections. This is recommended to be the highest priority.
- ▲ Designate an urban renewal area and use tax increment financing for area-wide connectivity and placemaking improvements, and as a potential incentive to attracting a grocer as housing expands.
- ▲ Evaluate options for accommodating the parking demand of 1,800 spaces forecasted for 2030 in a parking structure.

40 <sup>th</sup> and Colorado				
#	Action	Responsible Party	Proposed Funding	Notes
1	Support the I-70 Partial Cover Lower Alternative	Denver City Council Mayor's Office	N/A	Creates needed connections for Elyria Swansea labor force
2	Form an Urban Renewal Area	DURA Denver CPD	Denver CPD and DURA Work Program	Fund area wide improvements
3	Purchase market lead from BNSF	Denver CPD Denver Public Works Legal	Denver CIP	TBD based on cost/feasibility
4	Based on feasibility of purchasing Market Lead, connect some combination of 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, or 45th Streets.	Denver Public Works Denver CPD	Denver CIP Developer partnerships	Incomplete block structure is a major impediment. Development unlikely without connectivity improvements.
5	Ensure safe bicycle and pedestrian connections: Smith Road/Jackson Street, Colorado Blvd. Create well signed and lit routes to station.	Denver Public Works Denver CPD	Denver CIP	Connect new housing east of Colorado Boulevard. Preserve Smith Road bicycle and pedestrian access. Determine if new pedestrian crossings are needed and can be created on Colorado Boulevard.
6	Attract a grocery store as housing grows to supportable levels	Denver OED	TIF from URA as incentive	Address lack of grocers and food desert conditions

## Central Park Boulevard

Forest City will largely control the development direction that the Central Park Boulevard station takes, as it owns the majority of vacant land in the area. The company has confirmed it prefers high-density, mixed use development at the station that could include Class A multi-tenant office or a build-to-suit office building or hotel uses. RTD has indicated initial support for this approach, and appears willing work on joint venture developments with Forest City on RTD property. Forest City has also indicated that it can be patient, and may hold the most valuable TOD site to allow land values to appreciate over time. Achieving high enough real estate values to support structured parking will be required for any joint development project to be feasible.

There are gaps in the street network, largely north of the rail between Smith Road and I-70. Many street improvements south of the East Line rail will likely be constructed by Forest City concurrent with development. The City's role will be primarily in responding to development proposals, ensuring that the goals of the Central Park Boulevard Station Area Plan are supported, and assisting with other street network and last-mile connection gaps. Completing street connections will help open up the Stapleton Industrial Area north of the rail to more development and improve access to jobs. Key improvements and considerations are summarized below.

- ▲ The rail tracks limit station access from the north Quebec Street is a barrier to the Park Hill neighborhood to the west.
- ▲ Smith Road does not extend past the Sand Creek Greenway, limiting access from residential areas to the east of the station.
- ▲ The Sand Creek Greenway is an amenity but limits the amount of developable land north of the tracks. Bridge investments will be needed to extend East 40th Avenue to connect this area with the Enterprise Park business park to the east.
- ▲ The station area will have 1,500 surface parking spaces on opening day of the East Line, limiting development potential and density until structured parking can be financed or the parking moved to a less valuable site.

Central Park Boulevard				
#	Action	Responsible Party	Proposed Funding	Notes
1	Ensure Uinta Street is active, vibrant, and connects Stapleton neighborhoods with the station.	Developer Denver CPD	Developer	See station area plan
2	Extend 40th Street to complete the gap across Sand Creek	Developer Denver CPD	Denver CIP Developer	See station area plan
3	Extend Smith Road to complete the connection to Havana Street	Developer Denver CPD	Denver CIP	See station area plan
4	Pursue development of RTD property at station at the appropriate time	Developer RTD Denver CPD	Public Private Partnership	Explore options to relocate parking to less valuable land that meets RTD's access criteria

## 7. Station Area Development Strategy

### Peoria

Peoria Station is the most challenging environment for TOD and attracting new businesses on the East Line. Several elements within the station area limit access to the rail platforms. The rail tracks limit access from the north. Peoria street (with approximately 40,000 cars per day) and the future light rail tracks running adjacent limit access from Morris Heights and other areas to the east. These constraints and others will be costly to address, as summarized below:

- ▲ The Baranmor ditch and a loose unconnected street grid limit mobility within the station area.
- ▲ The Sand Creek Regional Greenway is not well connected to the Station.
- ▲ The new Peoria Crossing bridge eliminates vehicle and pedestrian at-grade crossings for the commuter and freight rail tracks.

- ▲ The Denver County Jail and Women’s Correctional Facility, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center, and the Aurora Wastewater facility reinforce a negative perception of the area.
- ▲ Market pressure for industrial space is strong, limiting economic motivations for conversion to other uses. The growth of the marijuana industry has also increased demand for industrial space.

The draft East Line Catalytic Project Report (November 2014) for Peoria Station recommends five priority actions and strategies designed to address connectivity and placemaking constraints, as summarized below. Denver and Aurora should coordinate funding and timing of infrastructure projects in their capital improvement plans.

Peoria				
#	Action	Responsible Party	Proposed Funding	Notes
1	Identify preferred streetscape alternative for Peoria Street	City of Aurora Public Works	Peoria St. improvement funds	Buffered sidewalks, multi-use paths, center median, and light rail tracks.
2	Establish an Urban Renewal Area(s)	DURA AURA	DURA and AURA work program	Fund area wide improvements
3	Multimodal improvements to E. 33rd Avenue, E 30th Avenue, Nome Street, and Moline Street.	City of Aurora Public Works	Aurora CIP	6 foot sidewalks, buffered or unbuffered bike lanes with street parking.
4	End of trip bicycle storage options	RTD or City of Aurora	RTD	Bike racks and lockers at the station and at local businesses
5	Encourage adaptive reuse of large, low density employment buildings along E 33rd Avenue.	City of Aurora Aurora Redevelopment Authority	TIF	Long term strategy to increase employment density and diversity in Station Area. Helps create a more pedestrian friendly active district.
6	180 to 200 units of Affordable and Transformational housing on the AHA site at Peoria Street and E. 30th Avenue	AHA	CHFA LIHTC	Creates affordable housing with transit access at Peoria and Fitzsimons Parkway stations in an area with need

## 40th & Airport

Airport parking policies will exert a major influence over development decisions in the area, as the current park-n-ride at the station is already heavily used by DIA employees and travelers. The Gateway Park East plan proposes relocating an existing detention pond and RTD commuter parking to the west side of the tracks (DIA property adjacent to the Pena Blvd right-of-way) in order to allow those existing spaces to be developed more intensively in the prime TOD area east of the station.

Overall, the largest impediment at this station is slow market demand for employment development this far east along the Corridor. Strong marketing, recruitment, and cooperation between DIA, The Pauls Corporation, Denver OED, and Aurora EDC will be needed to create market momentum.

40 <sup>th</sup> and Airport				
#	Action	Responsible Party	Proposed Funding	Notes
1	Engage 40th and 61st property owners for collaborative market positioning	Denver OED Aurora EDC DIA	N/A	Stations are competing for similar markets
2	Support a strategy of developing east to west	Denver and Aurora Planning	N/A	Preserve immediate station property for most valuable and intensive uses
3	Pursue joint development of RTD parking at appropriate time in future	Denver and Aurora Planning	Replacement parking cost TBD	Long term strategy
4	Ensure that future DIA parking expansion does not compromise TOD opportunities	Denver and Aurora Planning DIA RTD	N/A	Long term strategy

## 7. Station Area Development Strategy

### 61st & Peña

Implementation at this station will be organized around executing the development of the recently announced Panasonic campus. The project is expected to begin with office space for a sales and marketing division, and expand with engineering, product development, and manufacturing. Housing may be part of the development, as the press releases reference an energy efficient “smart town” concept. The developer has a metro district in place to assist with infrastructure financing, and a street grid and trunk utilities will likely be constructed concurrent with development. Implementation actions for the City and County of Denver are therefore largely in responding to issues as they arise, and ensuring that the development plan is transit supportive.

61 <sup>st</sup> and Peña				
#	Action	Responsible Party	Proposed Funding	Notes
1	Support development of Panasonic facility	Denver CPD Denver OED DIA RTD	N/A	Catalyst development opportunity
2	Balance site plan with TOD best practices and economic requirements of developer and Panasonic	Denver CPD Denver OED DIA RTD	N/A	Preserve immediate station property for most valuable and intensive uses.