



# NORTH FORT COLLINS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

*August 4, 2020*

Prepared by:



In collaboration with:



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present the development goals and priorities of North Fort Collins' community members and stakeholders to the Fort Collins Urban Renewal Authority (URA) Board. Gathered through a series of workshops, the Board can use this community input to inform strategic priorities for allocating remaining tax increment funds in the North College Plan Area (see Figure 1). Additionally, this report offers recommendations for integrating community criteria into the URA's existing project evaluation scoresheet to proactively support community-defined needs and initiatives.

## COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS STRUCTURE & PARTICIPATION

Community members who participated in the workshops had the opportunity to better understand the URA's function, and to explore the context and desired future in and around the North College Plan Area. The Family Center/La Familia (TFC/LF) conducted three community workshops with an average of 30 participants—primarily from the Latinx community—who included members of Mi Voz (a civic engagement leadership program organized by TFC/LF), North College Latinx residents, business owners, advocates, and parents. IBE conducted six workshops that included an average of approximately 25 participants who included residents, City of Fort Collins and Larimer County staff, Fort Collins Police Department representatives, members of the North College Plan Area Citizen Advisory Group, North Fort Collins business owners, and non-profit and community organizations. Within each of the two workshop tracks (IBE and TFC/LF), attendance was relatively consistent across all workshops.

### The Family Center / La Familia led Workshops



### Institute for the Built Environment led Workshops



## WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

North Fort Collins is characterized by its diverse resources, ethnic and demographic diversity, and an identity that is unique to and discrete from other parts of town. Community members collectively recognized an opportunity for the North College Plan Area to host small businesses, social venues, and educational and creative ventures that promote cultural identity, health, and wellbeing. At the same time, the area and its community face structural and social disadvantages—especially as compared to surrounding areas—such as a lack of infrastructure, resulting in an unsafe and disjointed pedestrian experience. Further, community members and stakeholders expressed that future growth and development should consider the diversity and affordability along North College, so as to not displace tenants and residents from what are currently considered affordable commercial and residential spaces, particularly those inhabiting mobile home communities.

Workshop participants identified existing resources and prioritized potential community improvement projects that the URA has the ability to financially support. In the workshop series, IBE and TFC/LF walked community members through a process of community-informed urban planning that concluded in participatory budgeting exercises. The highest-priority projects for each workshop track – IBE and TFC/LF – are summarized below (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Priority Projects Identified in IBE Workshops**

<i>TFC/LF-led Workshops Participant Priorities</i>	<i>IBE-led Workshop Participant Priorities</i>
<p><b>Community hub</b>—a welcoming place for families to share, connect, and learn; a central location to gather, celebrate, develop new skills, and access resources and support.</p> <p><b>Recreation opportunities</b> that increase access and are culturally appropriate (e.g., youth activity center, soccer fields, outdoor grilling areas, and better connections between parks and neighborhoods).</p> <p><b>Activities and entertainment</b> that celebrate the rich culture and heritage of the Latinx/Hispanic community, specifically for children and families (e.g., a place for seniors to gather, space for quinceañeras and other cultural celebrations, a movie</p>	<p><b>Stormwater infrastructure</b> on the west side of College Avenue and Mason Street</p> <p><b>Mixed-use (re)development</b> that would address a variety of community needs (e.g., small business opportunities, affordable housing, new food and entertainment establishments, additional health care services, and expanded Family Center/La Familia services)</p> <p><b>Latinx community center</b> (e.g., community meeting/event space, indoor and outdoor recreation activity space, cultural services and amenities, workforce development, and youth/teen activities)</p>



theater that plays Spanish language / Latinx-created movies, and highlights of local art and talent throughout the North College corridor).

***Bicycle and pedestrian connectivity*** to parks and natural area

## SYNTHESIZED OUTCOMES

**The end goals from both groups point toward very similar outcomes, with certain nuances in how those outcomes were expressed.**

Overarching themes between the two groups were as follows:

- Increase vibrancy through maintaining and adding services and amenities that the community wants.
- Enhance and celebrate cultural needs and opportunities, including artistic expression.
- Increase access to a variety of recreation options.



### Complete & Vibrant Neighborhood

- Support and encourage small businesses
- Affordable housing, including preservation of mobile home parks
- Assets reflective of, supporting, and attuned to Latinx culture, businesses, and families
  - Food and entertainment
  - Health services
  - Additional affordable child care
  - Library/community college branch
  - Highlight local art / artist throughout corridor
  - Spanish language / Latinx movies

Approach A: Proactively encourage mixed-use (re)development through issuing an RFP.

Approach B: Distribute resources to support small businesses and target community-prioritized amenities.



### Latinx Community Hub

- Indoor community and recreation space
- Space for seniors to gather, and for quinceañeras and other cultural celebrations
- Economic stability and job training opportunities
- Space for youth activities

- Family and community health support services
- Possible incubator space
- Community skills and asset sharing

Approach: Facilitate and support a community-driven design process with potential funding from non-profit, philanthropic, and possibly grants or an angel investor.



### Stormwater Improvements

- Continue to invest in stormwater improvements on the west side of College Avenue to enable real estate development

Approach: Continue to partner with City of Fort Collins Engineering Services to help deliver improvements. Leverage stormwater improvements to help support bike/pedestrian connectivity. Potentially explore stormwater improvements serving as a source for future revenues through repayments as development occurs along Mason Street.



### Recreation & Connectivity

- Increase access, connectivity, and community-desired activities
- Improve connection between parks and neighborhoods
- Outdoor recreation spaces (e.g. soccer, outdoor grilling)
- Additional outdoor grilling areas
- Indoor soccer fields
- Plaza and mercado

Approach: Relatively low-cost investment can provide impact improvements in residents' quality of life and will help support multi-modal transportation in the corridor. Work with City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation, as appropriate.

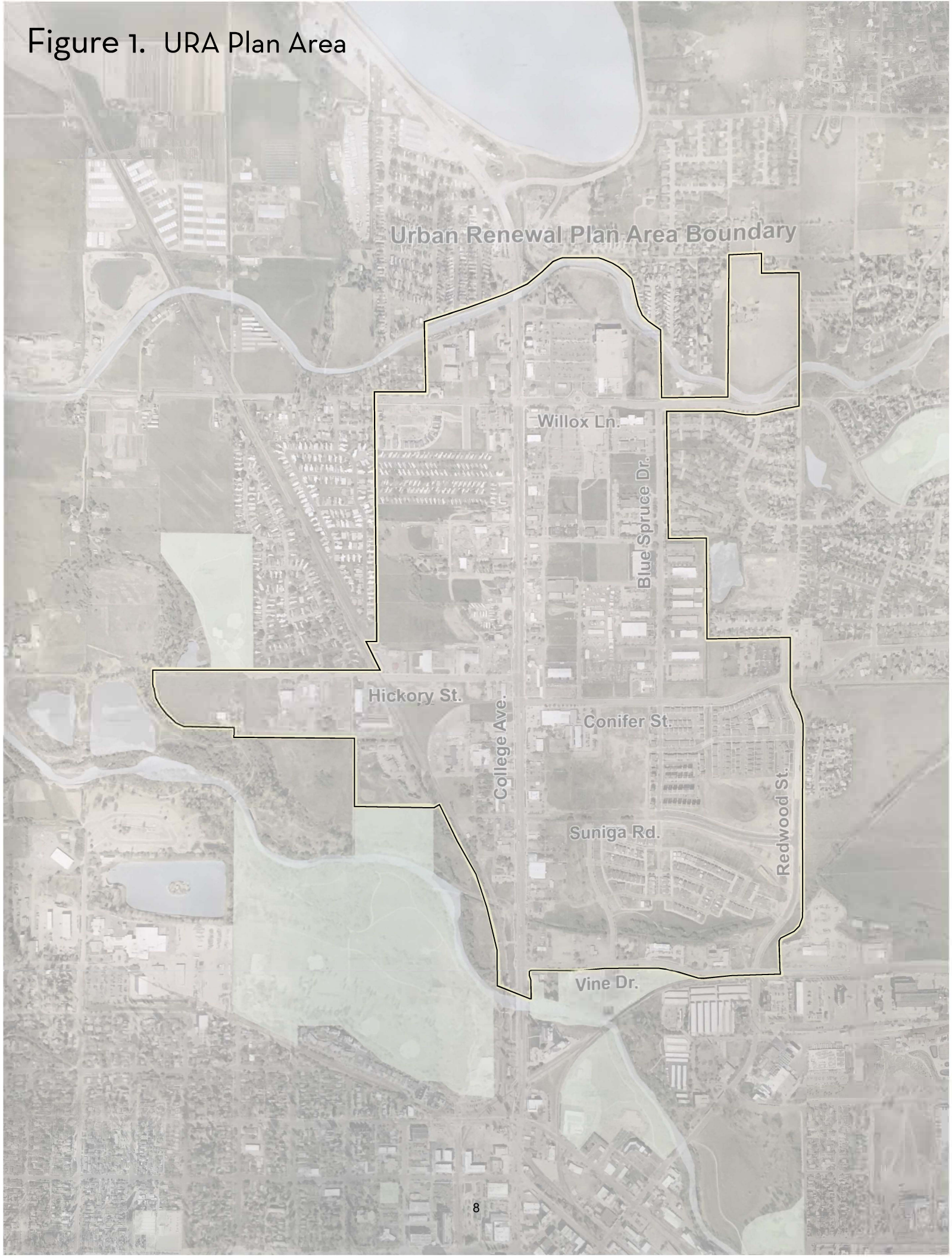
## LIMITATIONS

The workshops engaged a diverse and representative group of stakeholders in a series of in-depth conversations that were designed to build appreciation and relationships within the community, develop understanding of the URA's capabilities, and identify community priorities. A limitation of this approach, while more inclusive than past efforts in the Plan Area, is that the total number of participants was not large enough to be statistically significant (n= approx. 50).

Given the different workshop participant populations, TFC/LF and IBE took different approaches. TFC/LF engaged participants in community asset mapping, brainstorming of broad project ideas, and a participatory budgeting activity based on the brainstormed project ideas. In addition to conducting similar activities, the IBE workshops included a historical review of the area, walking tours, and guided conversations about development opportunities and barriers, and considerations of other plans, zoning, and agencies that sometimes inform how URA funds are allocated. Further, the participants' inherent biases and understanding of their respective lived experiences undoubtedly and intentionally shaped the priorities that were identified within each workshop track.

The URA may wish to conduct additional community outreach and engagement efforts around specific projects to verify and further refine the outcomes of this effort. Additional community engagement would be critical for the development of a Latinx community center and a community-led design approach for such a center is highly recommended.

Figure 1. URA Plan Area



# EVALUATION SCORESHEET

To better reflect community intentions in decision making for URA funding, it is recommended that the existing evaluation scoresheet be updated. Specifically, the existing scoresheet lacks points/prioritization for community criteria. By including community criteria in the scoresheet, the Board has greater opportunity to be proactive in decision making and to support specific community needs and initiatives.

Refer to Appendix A for the current scoresheet that staff and the North College Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) use to evaluate projects requesting Tax Increment Financing (TIF) assistance. The scoresheet provides general guidance on how well the proposed project meets the objectives of the Urban Renewal Plan. The URA Board uses this scoresheet as a reference point when considering TIF assistance requests.

## **Options for Modifications**

- Require that any funded project be aligned with community-identified priorities AND/OR
- Add “community-identified priority” to Community Benefits Section, possibly taking one point from City Plan and another from blight definition and language.



# PLAN AREA BACKGROUND & PROJECT OVERVIEW

## BACKGROUND

The Fort Collins URA works to remedy blight, using TIF to leverage private capital investment, and to stimulate development and public improvement projects. The URA Board is comprised of the Fort Collins City Council, one Larimer County Representative, one Poudre River Public Library representative, one Poudre School District Representative and a mayoral appointee. The CAG is a committee of North College URA project area residents, businesspersons and representatives of organizations that provide advice to the decision-making authority.

TIF is used to fill the gap between the total cost of a redevelopment project and the level of private financing it can support. Under this financing tool, the level of property tax and/or sales tax collected before redevelopment is used as a base and the new tax revenues expected are estimated. The difference between the base and the increase in taxes collected as a result of the redevelopment project is the tax increment.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 2004, the City of Fort Collins adopted the North College Urban Renewal Plan with a 25-year horizon to collect and distribute TIF to help stimulate development and redevelopment in the area. During the first 15 years of the plan, part of the Fort Collins URA's focus has been on the delivery of critical infrastructure improvements including stormwater improvements. In 2019, with ten years remaining for the plan area to generate funds, the CAG for the North College Plan Area suggested that the URA engage in developing strategic priorities for allocating remaining TIF funds.

The Fort Collins URA engaged the Institute for the Built Environment (IBE) at Colorado State University and TFC/LF in facilitating a total of nine community engagement workshops combined. The workshops were designed to engage North Fort Collins community members and stakeholders in identifying goals and priorities for URA funding in the North College Plan Area (see Figure 1) through the 2029 sunset of the TIF period.

In addition, IBE conducted a review and synthesis of past plans and documents related to North College; documented example projects from other URAs to illustrate how URA funds can be used in innovative ways to stimulate the economy and develop a sense of place (see Appendix A); and reviewed and suggested changes to the existing URA project evaluation framework to integrate learnings from the community engagement into the URA decision making process.

# COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

## OVERVIEW

IBE and TFC/LF collectively facilitated nine workshops: six facilitated by IBE and three facilitated by TFC/LF. Collectively, the workshops provided community members the opportunity to better understand the function of the URA; explore the context within and near the North Fort Collins URA plan area; and offer recommendations for funding priorities to make the greatest impact along North College.

Most notably, these workshops highlighted that North Fort Collins is an area shared by an inclusive community that values its diverse resources, ethnic and demographic diversity, and unique identity—an identity that has evolved from its local businesses, affordable housing and commercial spaces, and non-homogenous architecture.

On the other hand, the community identified structural and social disadvantages particular to North Fort Collins, especially as compared to its surrounding areas, including Old Town. Primary community concerns included the unsafe and disjointed pedestrian experience of the area, in large part due to lacking infrastructure on the west side of North College and inadequate lighting, as well as a high prevalence of people experiencing homelessness.

Additionally, through the workshop experience, the community recognized an opportunity to shift toward venues and spaces conducive to a wide range of small business, educational opportunities, artistic expression, and social venues that promote cultural identity, health, and wellbeing without causing community displacement. The community expressed that future growth and development should prevent displacing tenants and residents of what are currently affordable commercial spaces and residential communities, especially mobile home communities.



## IBE-LED WORKSHOP #1

### Overview

The goal for IBE's first workshop was to introduce a process of community-informed planning and to initiate a collaborative and welcoming space. The session also aimed to provide community representatives a chance to better understand the URA, its function and funding mechanism, and the opportunities that it is designed to support. The workshop was held at Innosphere Ventures.

### Participants

Participants for this workshop included representatives from the following organizations and neighborhoods:

#### Organizations & Groups:

- Fort Collins City Council
- The Family Center/La Familia
- North Fort Collins Business Association
- North College Community Advisory Group
- Colorado State University
- The City of Fort Collins Planning
- The City of Fort Collins Social Sustainability
- Bike Fort Collins

- Salud Family Health Centers
- Fort Collins URA
- Larimer County Department of Health and the Environment

#### Neighborhoods:

- Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park
- Old Town North
- Revive

### Activities

Following introductions, workshop participants engaged in an opening activity that used personal reflection to answer three questions: 1) What do you value about the North Fort Collins community? 2) How is North Fort Collins unique? And 3) What are the current issues you see within the North Fort Collins area? Subsequent small group discussions followed, and IBE asked participants to find a member of a different group for one-on-one report-outs.

### Key Takeaways

#### **Question #1: What do you value about this community?**

- There are a lot of hidden gems and resources in North Fort Collins, such as high-quality childcare, good parks, and small businesses.
- The community tries hard to promote local art, food, and beverages, which helps to promote diversity.

- North Fort Collins is growing, and several organizations and community members are trending towards more positive inclusion of community members for whom English is not a primary language.
- There is appreciation for the diversity of North Fort Collins, its residents, and its immigrant populations. This diversity seems to begin downtown and is expanding northward.

**Question #2: How is North Fort Collins unique?**

- There are varying industries.
- There is a mix of old and new architecture, and buildings are non-homogenous.
- There is an eagerness among residents to learn and be educated.
- North Fort Collins is one of the few places in town where artists can successfully live and work due to affordable rents.

**Question #3: What are the current issues you see within the North Fort Collins project area?**

- There is a lack of mobility and transportation connectivity.
- There is a lack of commitment from City officials to make community improvements.
- It is difficult to distinguish between public and private areas, especially trails.
- There is a feeling of disconnect between North Fort Collins, Downtown, and the rest of Fort Collins.

## IBE-LED WORKSHOP #2

### *Overview*

The goals for IBE's second workshop were to: 1) orient participants to the architectural and commercial history of North Fort Collins and the North College Avenue/US Highway 287 corridor and 2) provide a socio-cultural overview of the area's settlement and planning. The workshop was held at Launch: Community through Skateboarding.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included representatives from the following organizations and neighborhoods:

#### Organizations and Groups:

- North Fort Collins Business Association
- North College Community Advisory Group
- Colorado State University
- City of Fort Collins Planning
- City of Fort Collins Social Sustainability
- Bike Fort Collins
- Fort Collins Police Department
- Homeward 2020
- Launch Skate
- Salud Family Health Centers
- Fort Collins URA
- Larimer County Department of Health and the Environment

#### Neighborhoods:

- Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park
- Old Town North
- Revive

### *Activities*

Participants were randomly divided into four groups of four and each was given a set of envelopes and instructions. The groups were sent northbound and southbound on the east and west sides of College Avenue, starting from Launch Skate, located at 1007 North College. Participants walked approximately 0.35 miles in each direction on their respective sides of the road. Each group was provided an envelope and instructions for eight to 10 stops (illustrated in Figures 2 and 3) along their route. Envelopes contained images of historic photographs for each stop and some historic information about the site, building, and/or business. The images were captured from Fort Collins dead file tax parcel records, predominantly during the 1960's and 1970's. IBE asked participants to record and take note of observations and experiences, which they later shared in a group report out.

### *Key Takeaways*

Participants highlighted the unique characteristics and qualities along the corridor, including a sense of diversity and community, a hidden but palpable sense of history, and

the importance of the automotive culture on the past and present of the area. Participants noted the new development and redevelopment, including the notion that there are many opportunities in North Fort Collins that do not exist in other parts of town, including access to affordable commercial and residential space. Many commented on how unsafe and disjointed the pedestrian experience of the area was, as well as the need for greater safety and connectivity. Several people commented on the lack of social amenities, especially eateries. Key observations and takeaways are categorized below.

### **Pedestrian Safety Observations**

- Crossing College Avenue is scary and feels unsafe; despite recent improvements, bike and pedestrian infrastructure still needs to be strengthened. Traffic calming measures throughout the corridor should be a top priority.
- Pedestrian connections across storm water basins and railroad tracks to natural areas would be beneficial.

### **Historical Character Observations**

- The area feels distinctly different from Old Town, and much more unique than South Fort Collins.
- Dirt-road neighborhoods and ad-hoc businesses reflect the area's historical character.
- The sign code has negatively impacted the historical aesthetic of this area, in some instances, and could potentially be reversed.
- Ethnically and demographically diverse communities must not be displaced; growth must be planned to prevent displacement and gentrification.
- The retro character of buildings behind facades is unique; the area's character should be kept historical.
- There are still a few, hidden, single-family homes that reflect the historical residential character.
- North College Avenue lacks many eateries, and new eateries should reflect the area's diversity.
- Cannabis shops have given new life to certain areas and historical buildings that may have otherwise been at end of life.

### **Car Culture Observations**

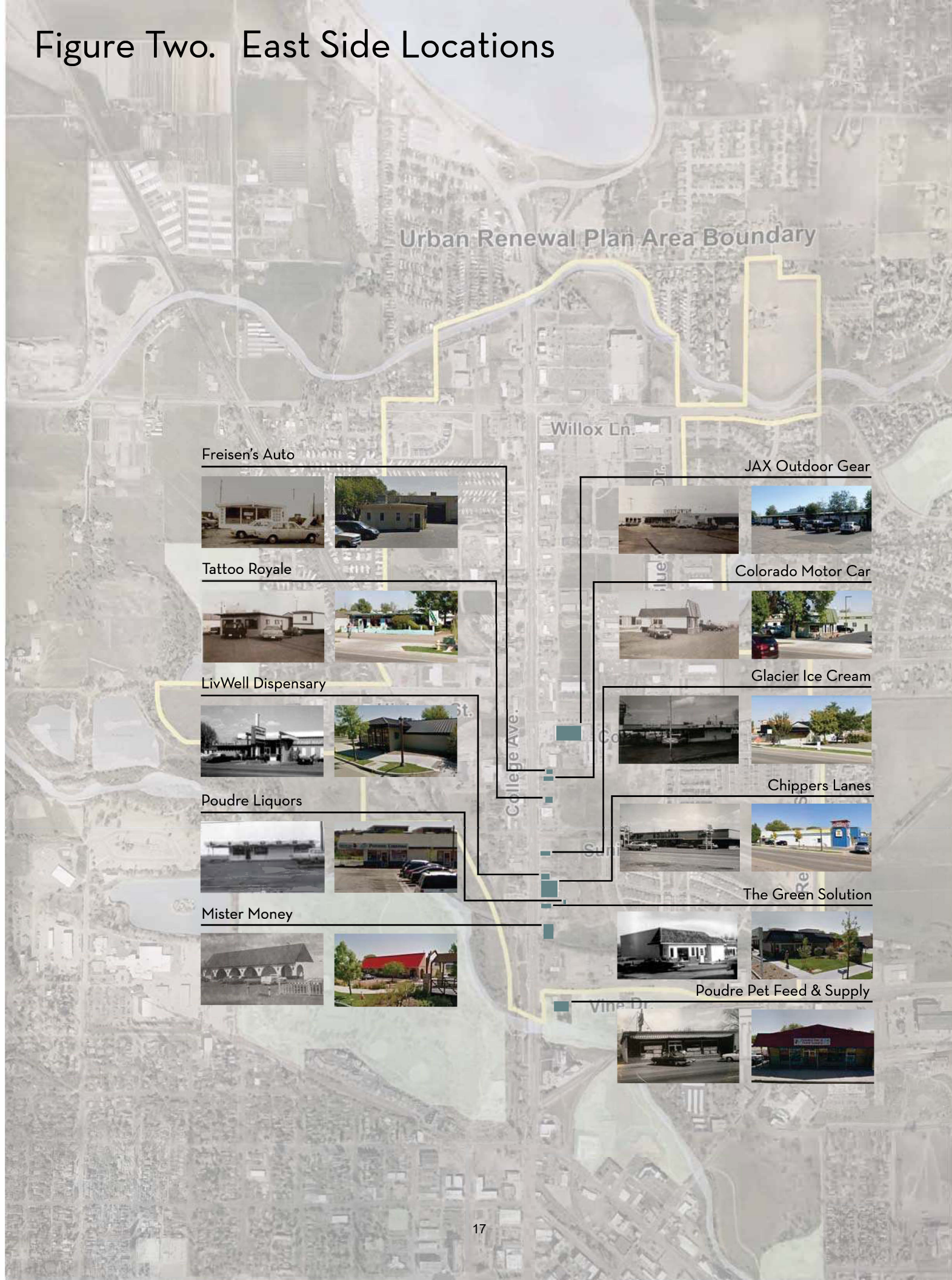
- The automotive industry and culture have historically been and remains significant in the area (e.g., auto courts, auto parts shops, and motor courts/motels, etc.).
- While the automotive culture was central to economic and social vibrancy in the past, today's heavy traffic, limited pedestrian comfort, and distance between businesses contribute to the area lacking a sense of destination.

### **Development Observations**

- The extension of I-25 (Owl Canyon Road) altered / is altering the economy of North College as US 287 is becoming a less important thoroughfare.

- The curb appeal of businesses has decreased over time because of new facades, smaller setbacks, and the area's shifting economy.
- Participants were surprised by how many buildings have survived over time regardless of physical alterations (e.g. façade alterations, changes subsequent to sign code updates, etc.).
- Development and redevelopment on the east side of College Avenue has outpaced that on the west side.
- North Fort Collins is an incubator for new and small businesses; retain existing small businesses and affordable options for new small businesses.
- The Poudre River and its proximity to agriculture is unique and makes North College feel like a small town; honor and celebrate the small-town life of the area.
- There is a need for creative spaces and spaces for youth.
- North College could be revitalized through already-existing character (e.g. food trucks, diverse cultures, etc.).

# Figure Two. East Side Locations





# Figure Three. West Side Locations





## IBE-LED WORKSHOP #3

### Overview

The goal for IBE's third workshop was to introduce community representatives to a community development process called asset mapping, with the aim of identifying community assets related to diversity and inclusivity, economic vitality and opportunity, health and wellness, and social and cultural identity. The workshop was held at Jax Outdoor Gear.

### Participants

Participants for this workshop included representatives from the following organizations and neighborhoods:

#### Organizations and Groups:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| • North Fort Collins Business Association    | • Bike Fort Collins           |
| • North College Community Advisory Group     | • Salud Family Health Centers |
| • Colorado State University                  | • Fort Collins URA            |
| • City of Fort Collins Planning              |                               |
| • City of Fort Collins Social Sustainability |                               |
| • City of Fort Collins Cultural Services     |                               |

#### Neighborhoods:

- Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park
- Old Town North
- Revive
- Lindenwood

### Activities

Following a review of Workshop Two, participants divided into four groups and took their positions at one of four tables that included a large aerial map, trace paper, and markers. Each table was assigned one of the four themes: 1) diversity and inclusivity, 2) economic vitality and opportunity, 3) health and wellness, and 4) social and cultural identity. IBE asked participants to identify places, organizations, and businesses, etc. that reflected their responses to the questions below.

1. How are diversity and inclusivity revealed (or how could they be improved) in the community?
2. What creates or could create economic vitality and opportunity in the area?
3. How is health and wellness supported and created in the area?
4. How are social and cultural identity found and understood in the area?

After completing their first asset map, each group was asked to rotate to a different station that hosted the same base map, and a fresh piece of trace paper, to complete their responses to the questions for the subsequent theme. This rotation continued until all four

groups completed an individual asset map for three of the four themes (there was not enough time for the fourth rotation).

### *Key Takeaways*

After the workshop, IBE synthesized the results into maps (see Figures 4 through 13) that visually represent what all four workshop groups collectively identified as assets of North College Avenue and surrounding areas. Physical assets within each theme (diversity and inclusion, health and wellness, etc.) are depicted in Figures 4, 6, 8, and 10. Figures 5, 7, and 9 illustrate sub-themes that workshop participants identified within each theme (participants did not identify sub-themes in the social and cultural identity theme). Figure 11 depicts assets that were consistently identified, across the four workshop groups; Figure 12 illustrates assets identified by only one participant; and Figure 13 reflects existing assets that were not identified at all by participants. Some participants noted details such as racial composition of the plan area, recognizing that it is still a segregated area, and that there is a connection between open space (including, e.g., dog parks) and health outcomes.

Based on workshop outcomes, the following conclusions were made:

- There were overlapping outcomes across the four community theme areas; many businesses and other community assets were listed on more than one map (e.g., on both the health and wellness, and the diversity and inclusivity, maps).
- Automotive businesses categorically did not appear in the mapping activity, despite consistent recognition of their historical significance; participants felt there were too many to list.
- Several small businesses and most materials and manufacturing businesses in the area did not appear in any of the mapping activities.
- Connectivity of natural spaces is lacking.
- There is a health and services district that is valued by the community.

Figure 4. Community Identified “Diversity & Inclusivity” Assets

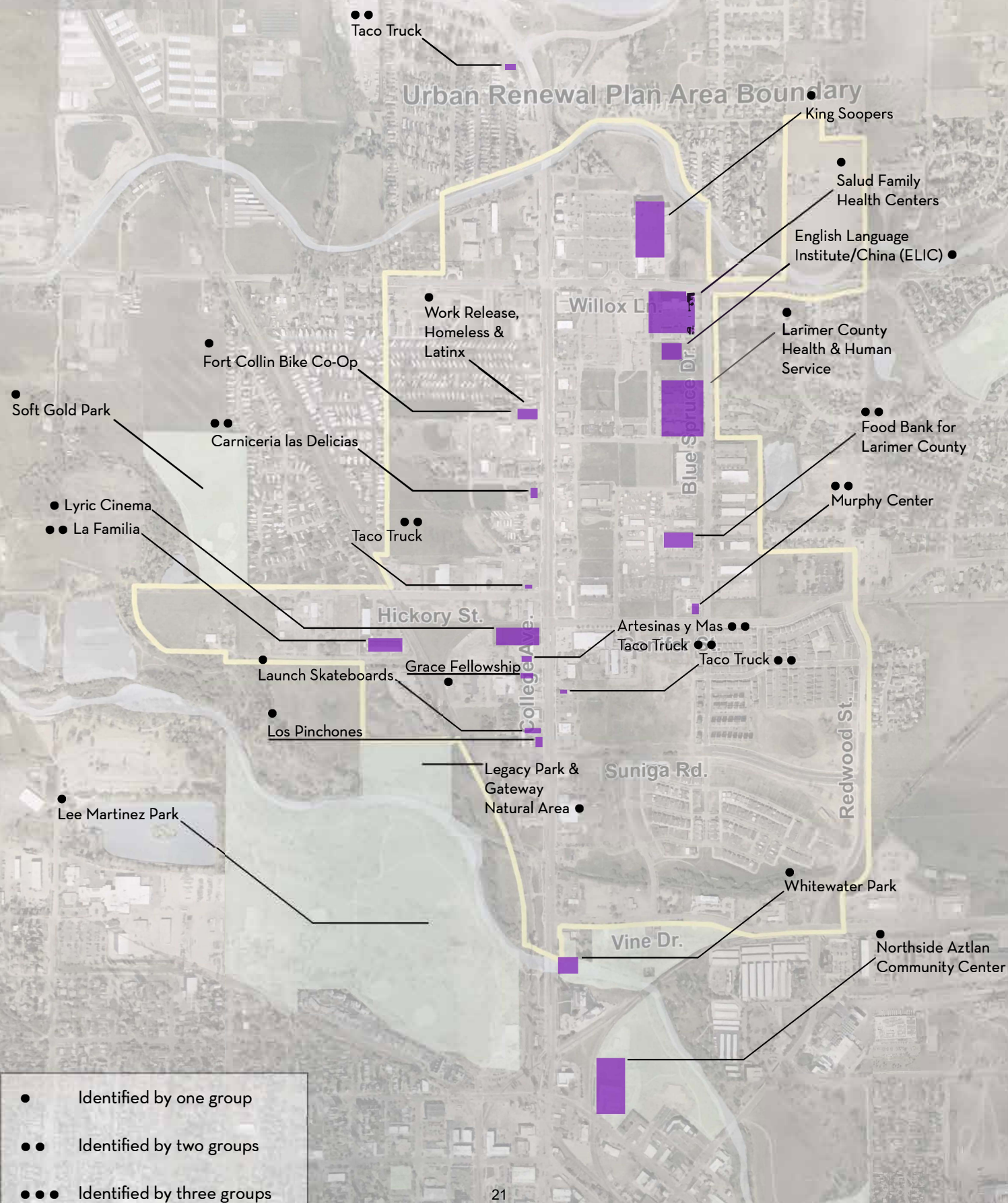
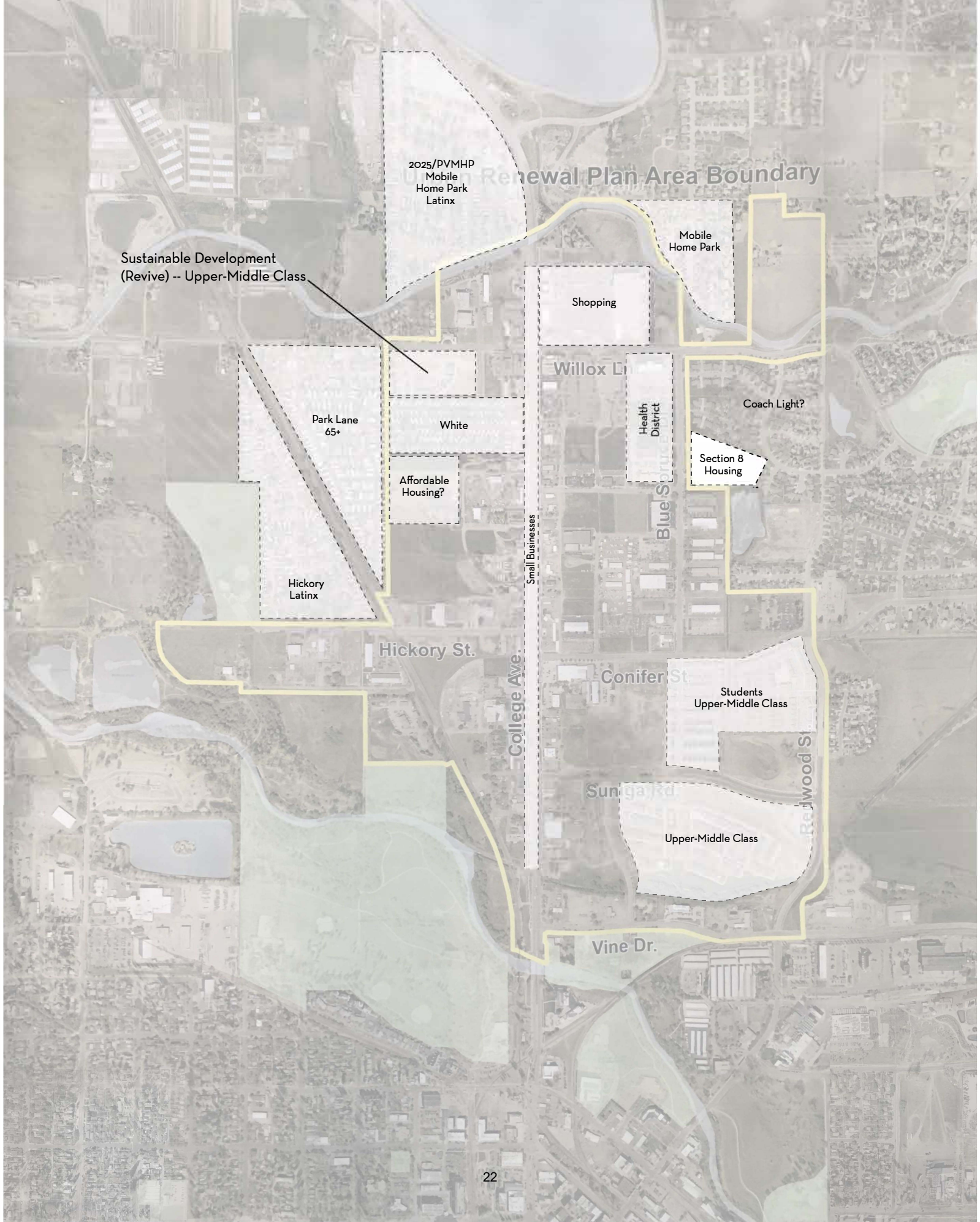




Figure 5. Community Identified “Diversity & Inclusivity” Spatial Themes





# Figure 6. Community Identified “Economic Vitality and Opportunity” Assets

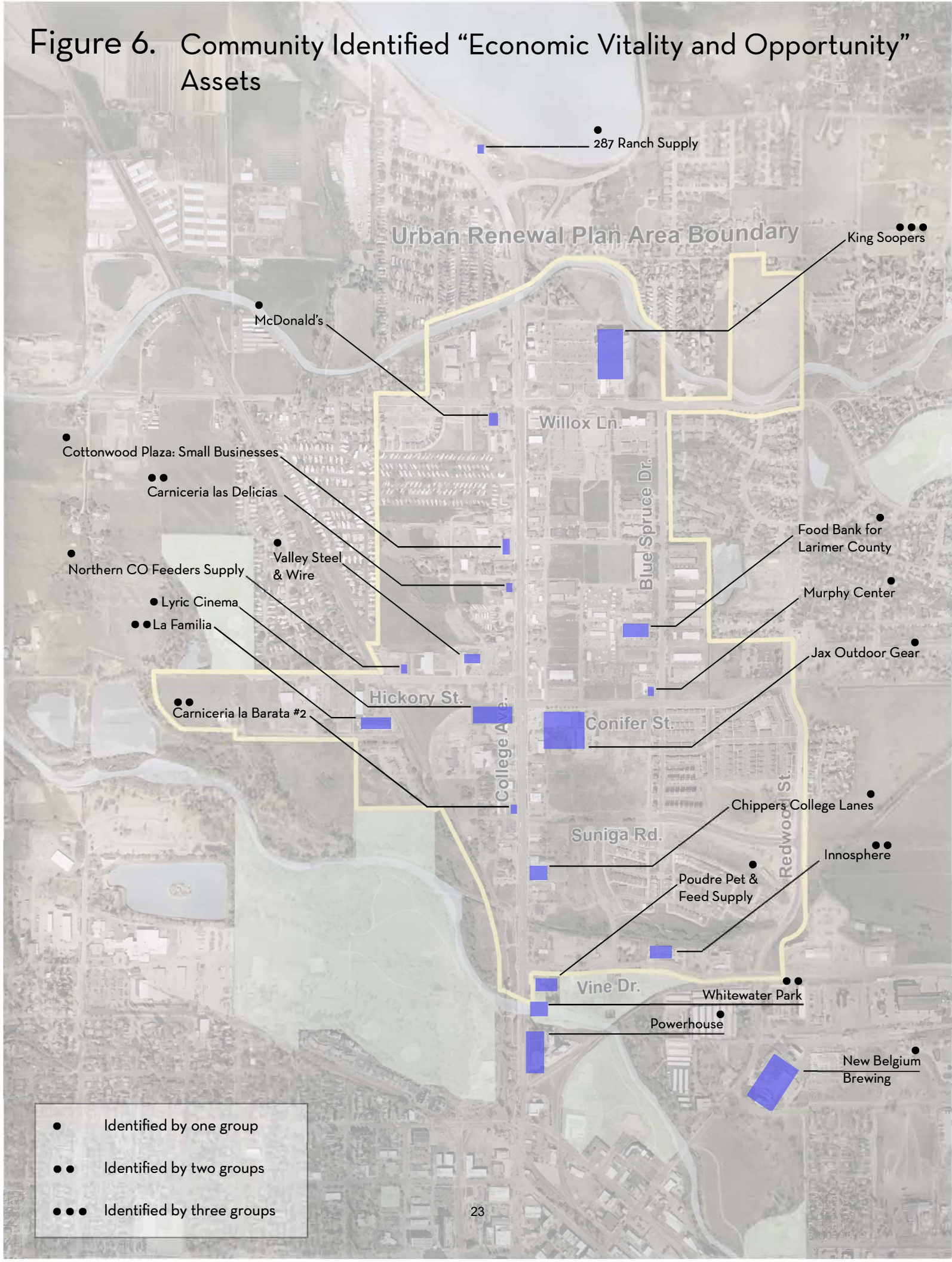
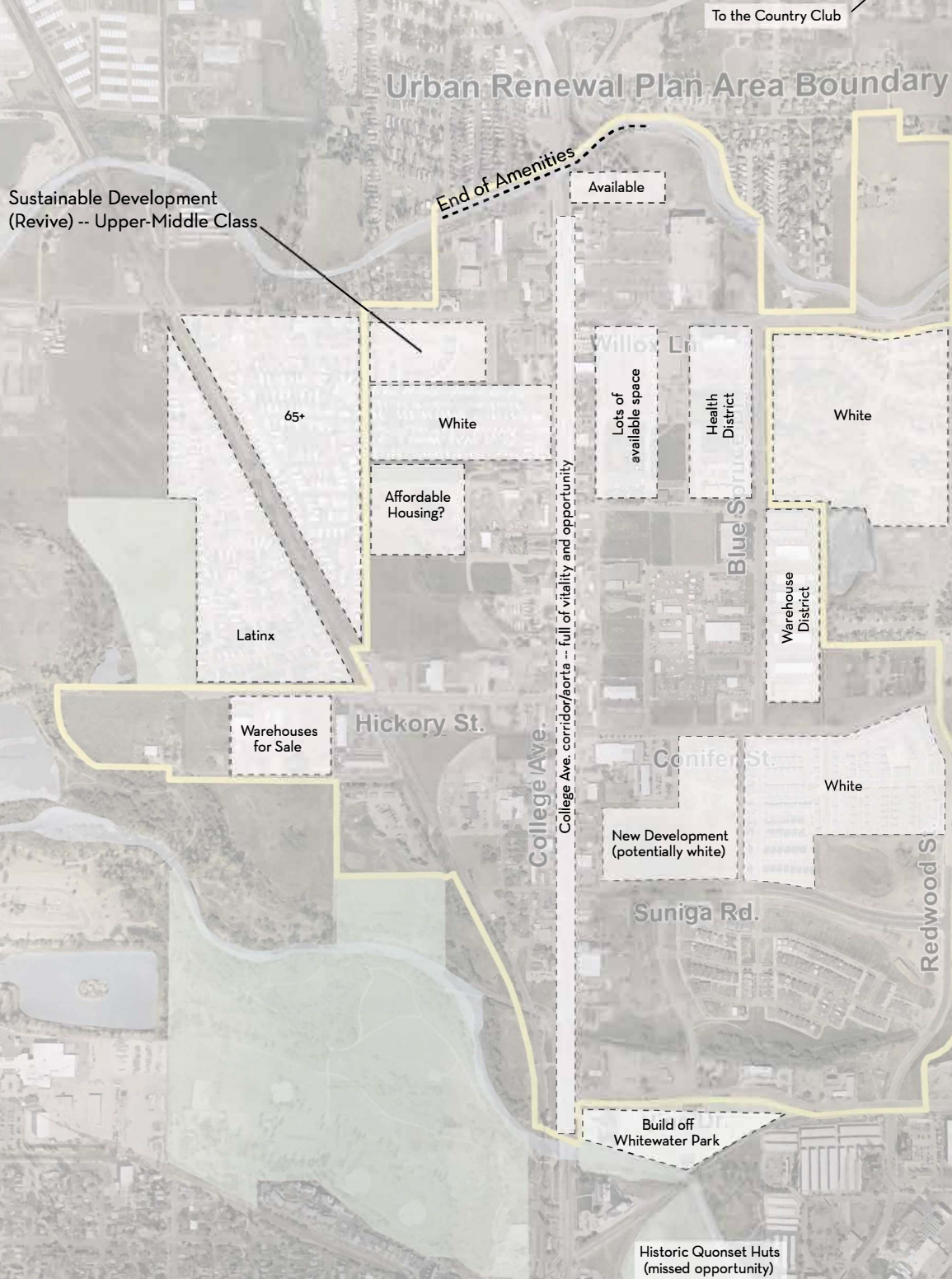




Figure 7. Community Identified “Economic Vitality and Opportunity” Spatial Themes



Lack of:

- Public Transit
- Benches
- Waste Services



# Figure 8. Community Identified “Health & Wellness” Assets

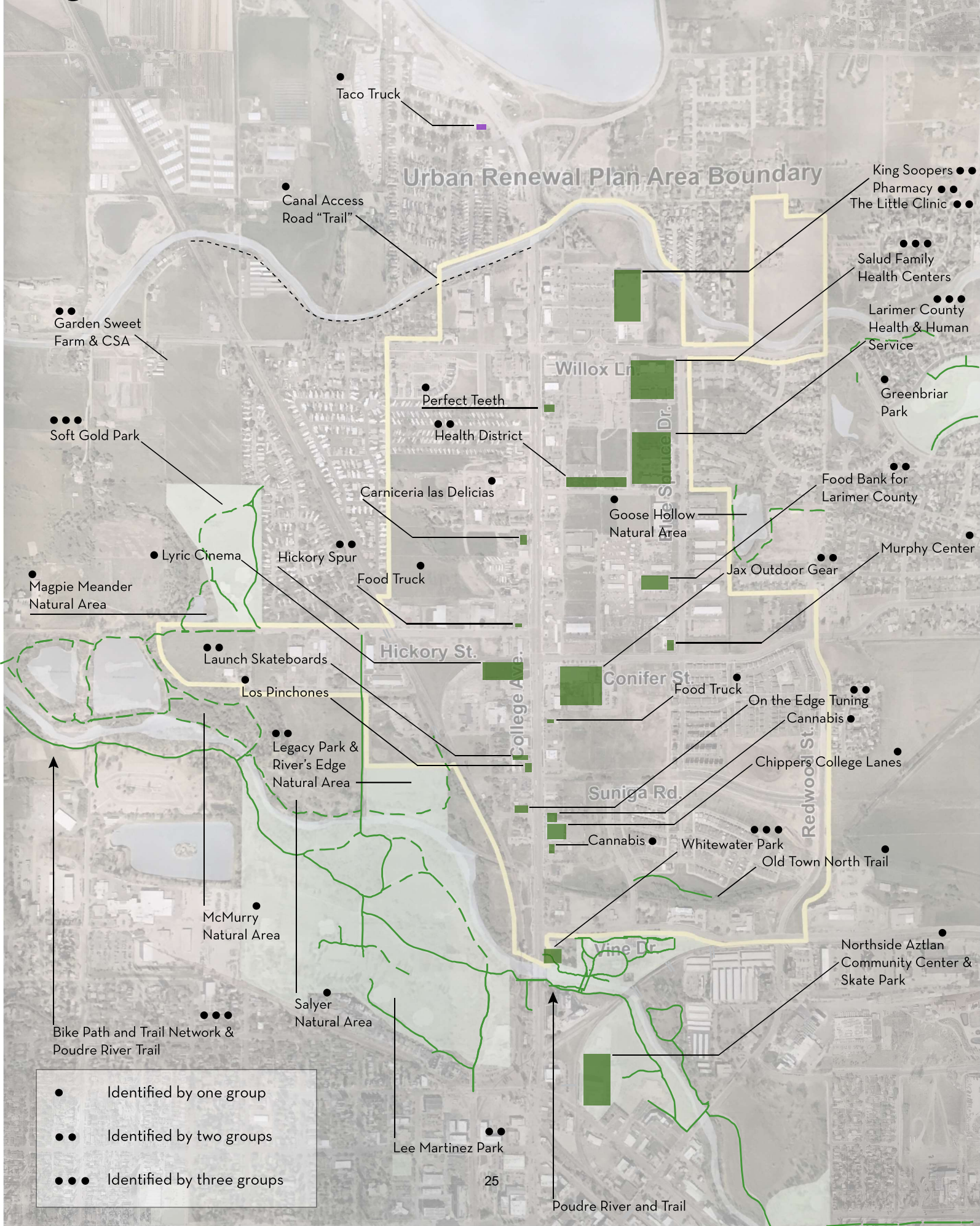




Figure 9. Community Identified “Health & Wellness” Spatial Themes





Figure 10. Community Identified “Social & Cultural Identity” Assets

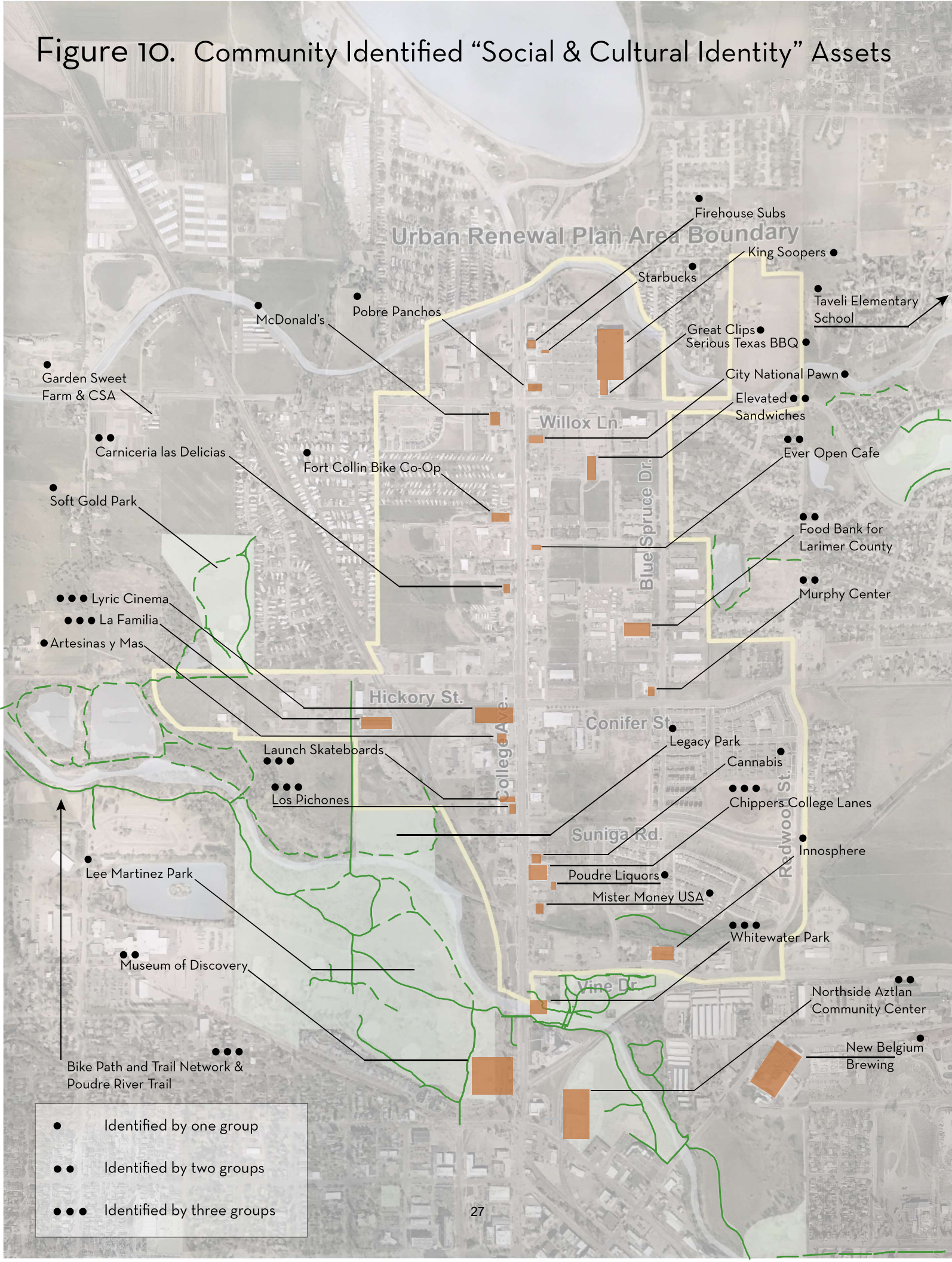




Figure 11. Consistently Identified Assets

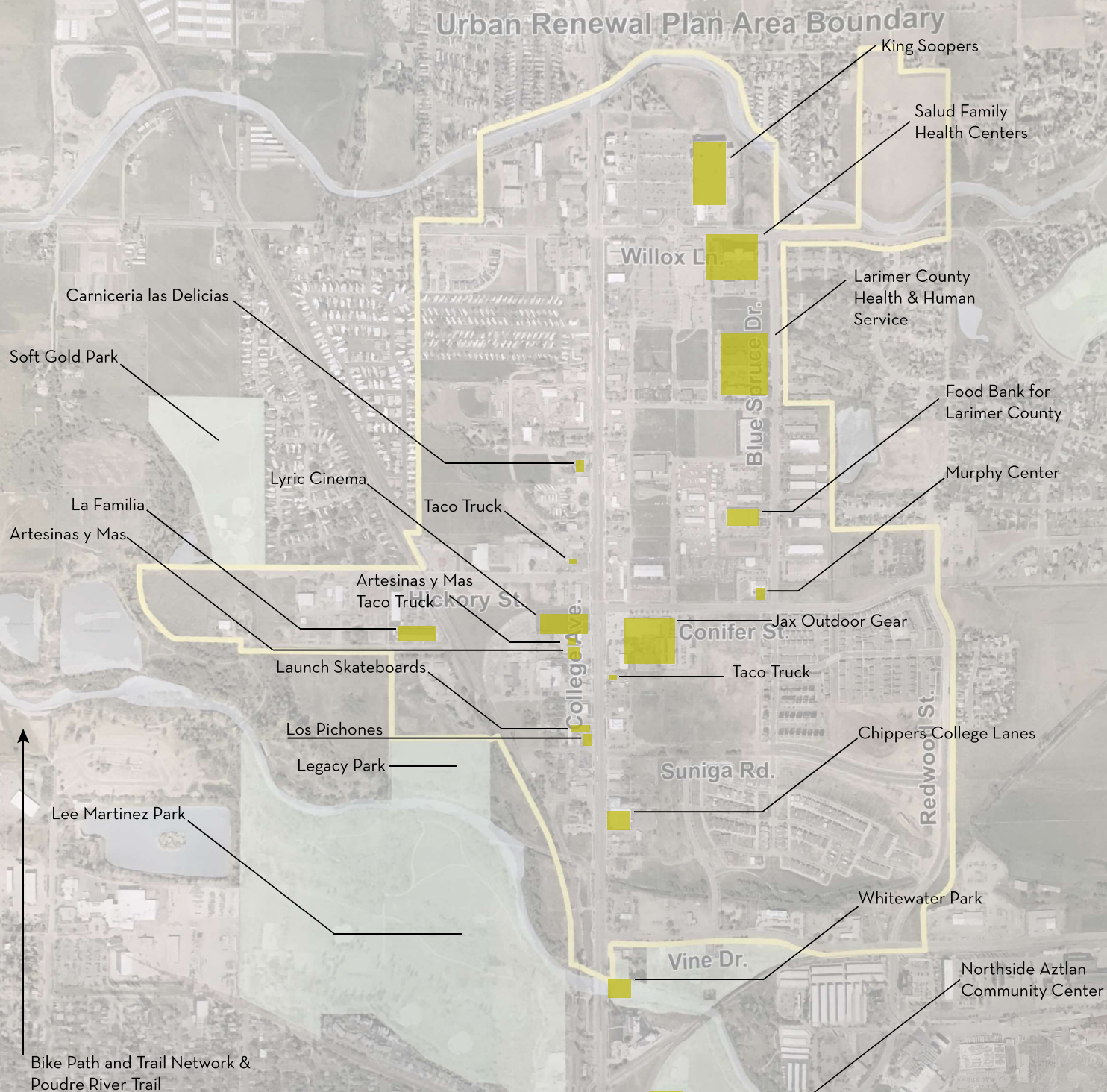


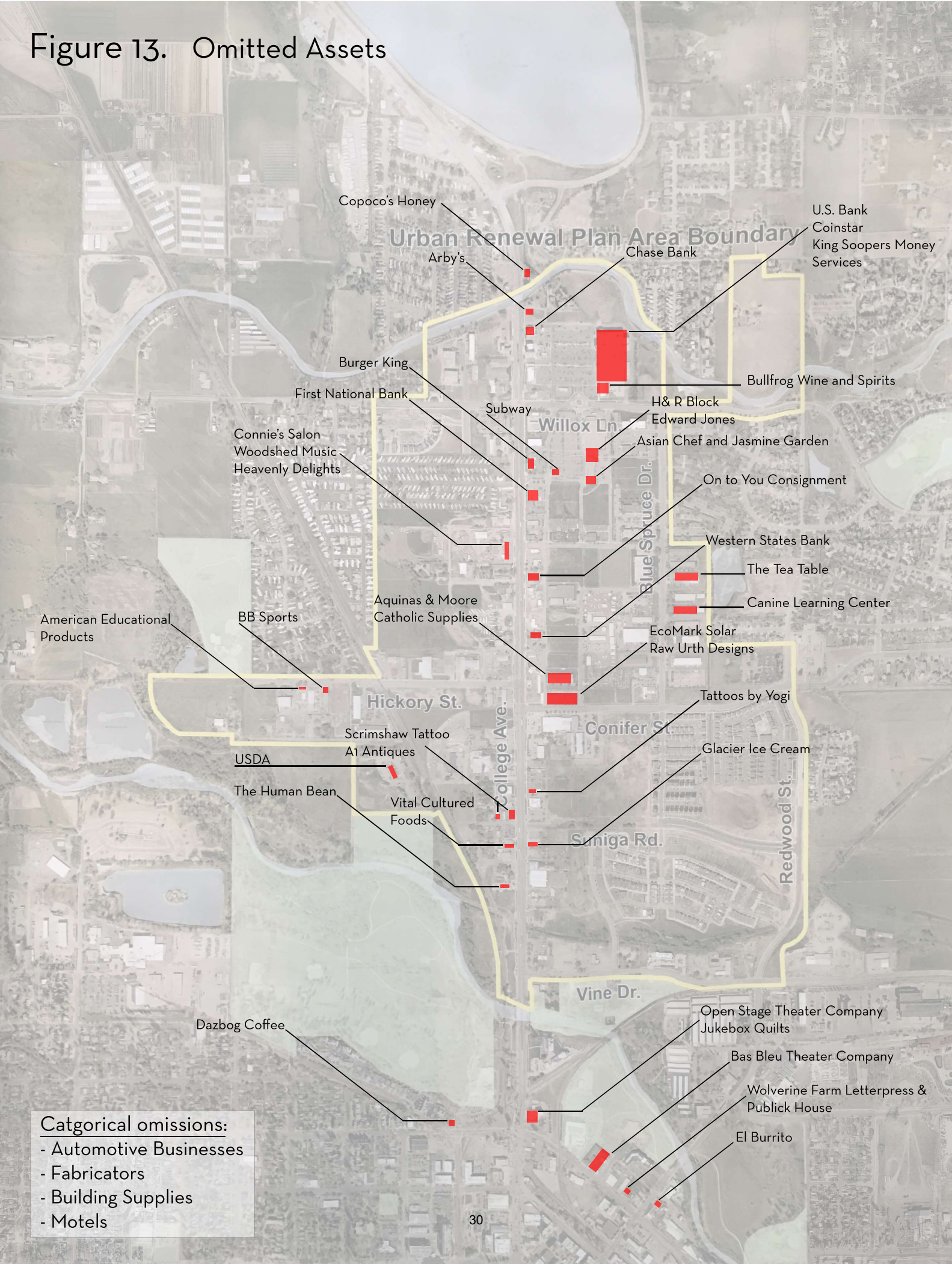


Figure 12. Assets Identified by a Single Participant





Figure 13. Omitted Assets



## IBE-LED WORKSHOP #4

### *Overview*

The goals for IBE's fourth workshop were to: 1) introduce community representatives to urban design, and 2) begin to identify potential improvements. The workshop was held at The Family Center/La Familia.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included representatives from the following organizations and neighborhoods:

#### Organizations and Groups:

- The Family Center/La Familia
- North Fort Collins Business Association
- North College Community Advisory Group
- Colorado State University
- City of Fort Collins Planning
- City of Fort Collins Social Sustainability
- City of Fort Collins Transportation

- Bike Fort Collins
- Fort Collins URA

#### Neighborhoods:

- Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park
- Old Town North
- Revive
- Lindenwood

### *Activities*

To begin, participants engaged in an open discussion and reflection of the Workshop Two value-based reflections and Workshop Three asset mapping outcomes. Following a brief primer on urban design, IBE asked participants to self-group into three "design teams" and to come up with big-picture design ideas for the URA North College Plan area. Groups then reconvened and discussed design ideas group by group, answering the following questions:

1. Why would this area benefit from your development/redevelopment ideas?
2. What changes does your team recommend?
3. What was your thought process?
4. What local individuals or organizations would you add to your team?

### *Key Takeaways*

The following, presented by workshop group, summarizes key design ideas contributed during the workshop. Mapping outcomes are reflected in Figures 14 through 16.

### **Group 1**

- Add a bike and pedestrian connection over the Weld/Larimer Canal from Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park to Soft Gold Park.
- Repave Pinon Street (now West Suniga Road).
- Increasing property values may hurt existing community members.
- Extend the MAX BRT line to northern City limits.
- Build a community space to house learning, community events and activities, vocational training, cooking classes, health and wellness teaching, and multigenerational community events.

### **Group 2**

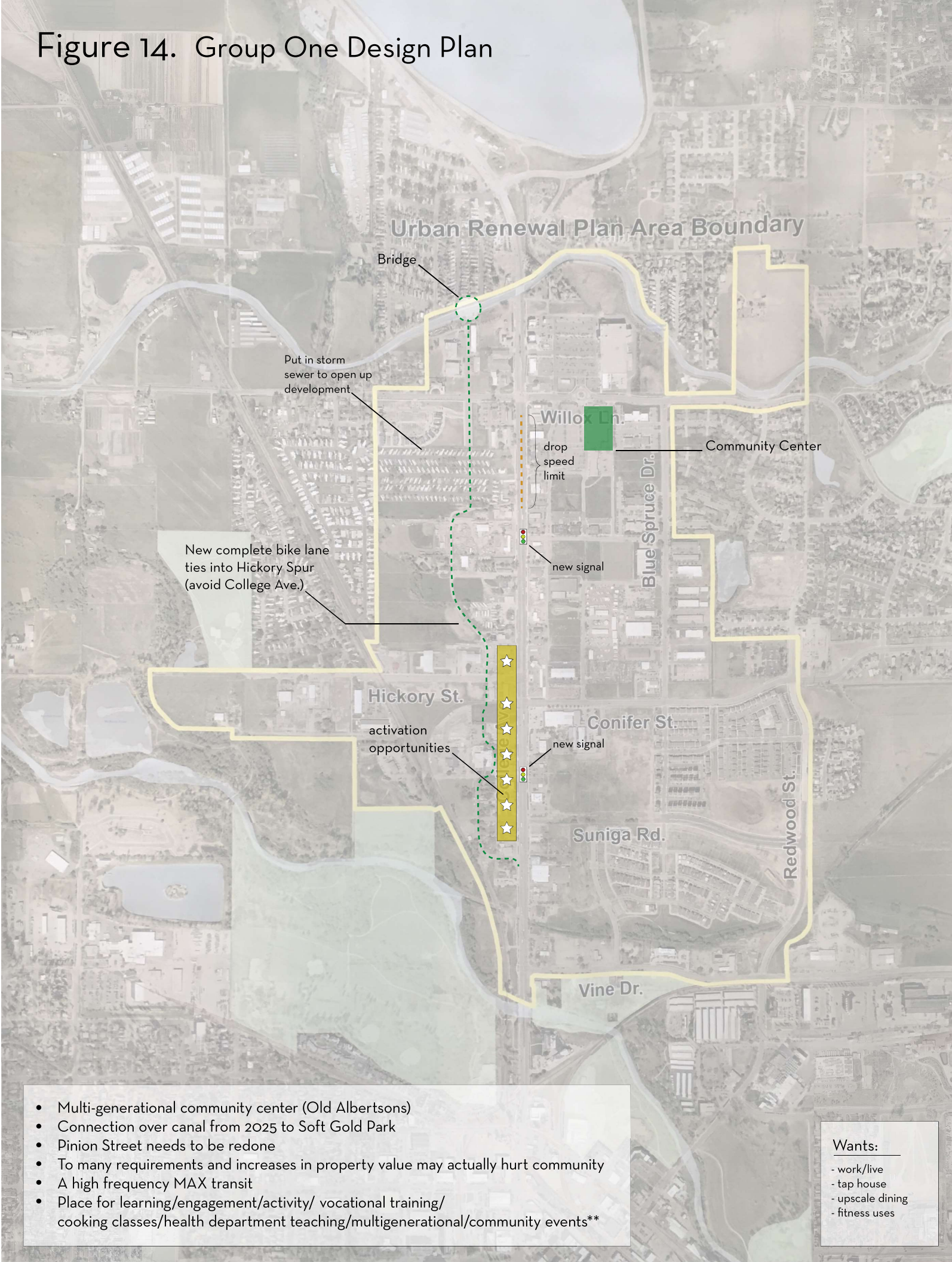
- Build a North College transit center that connects to a North Fort Collins “town center”.
- Build an underpass beneath US 287/College Avenue that connects to the “town center”.
- Build low-income and mixed-use apartments in phases to limit displacement.
- Establish a vendor market area—an indoor farmers market or Mercado.
- Build a full-service hospital on the west of the railroad tracks.
- Bohemian Foundation land could consolidate Rescue Mission and Murphy Center.
- Add a connection over the Weld/Larimer Canal bridge.

### **Group 3**

- Provide a pedestrian connection on US-287.
  - Complete Mason Street to create pedestrian service.
  - Install stormwater infrastructure on the west side to open up new opportunities for development.
- Build a footbridge over the Weld-Larimer canal.
- Provide better transit opportunities (e.g., bike and MAX) on the west side near mobile home parks.
- Implement traffic calming strategies to address the heavy, high-speed traffic that comes into town from the north.
  - Install a new traffic signal to break up the section to decrease speed and support bicyclists on Mason Avenue and Blue Spruce Drive.
  - Assess if traffic timing can be altered using the light in front of Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park.
- Traditional retail will flock to rooftops: Span out from the Lyric and merchandize off that (pocket of opportunity).
- Make Mason Street multi-model.



# Figure 14. Group One Design Plan



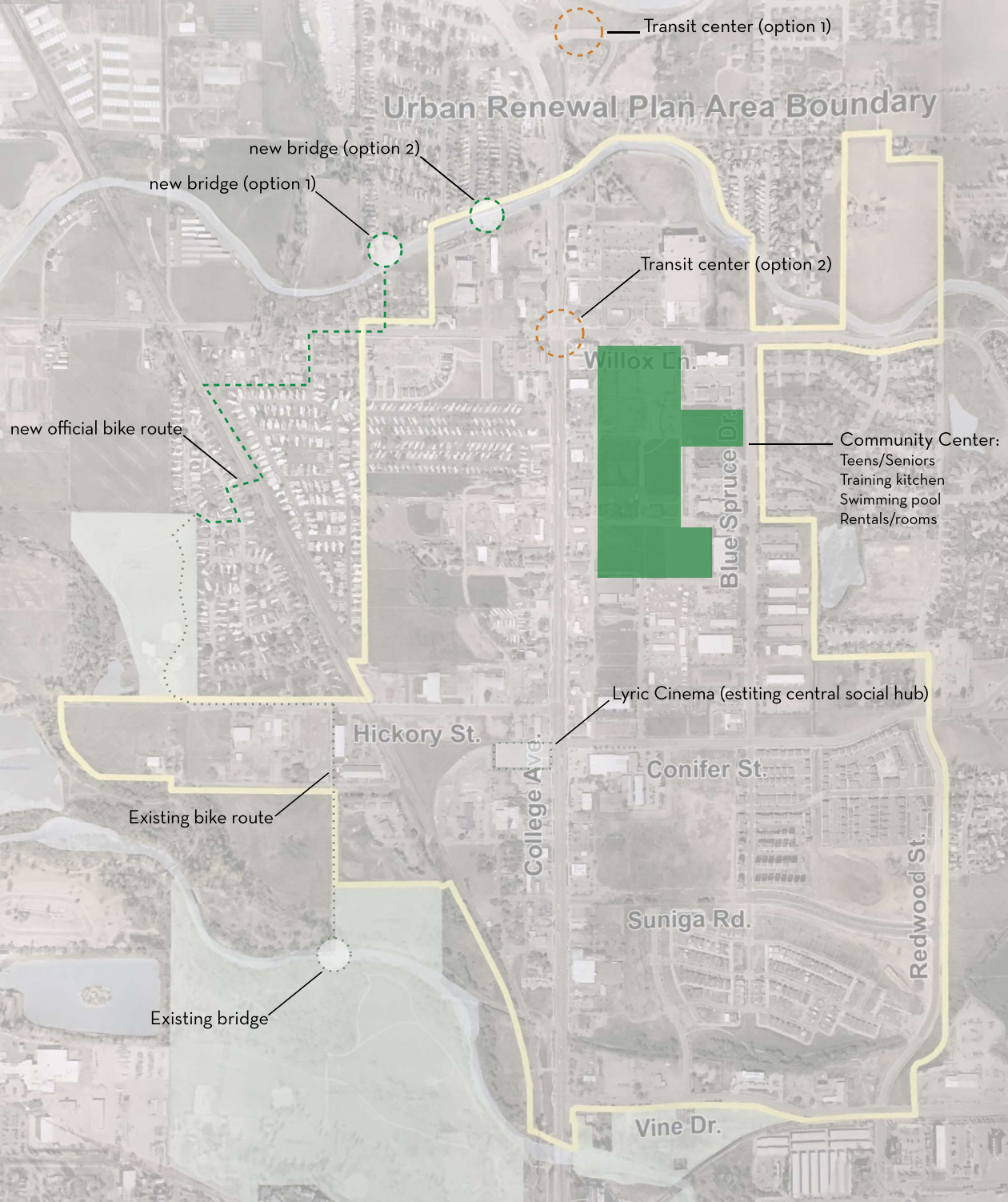
- Multi-generational community center (Old Albertsons)
- Connection over canal from 2025 to Soft Gold Park
- Pinion Street needs to be redone
- To many requirements and increases in property value may actually hurt community
- A high frequency MAX transit
- Place for learning/engagement/activity/ vocational training/ cooking classes/health department teaching/multigenerational/community events\*\*

## Wants:

- work/live
- tap house
- upscale dining
- fitness uses



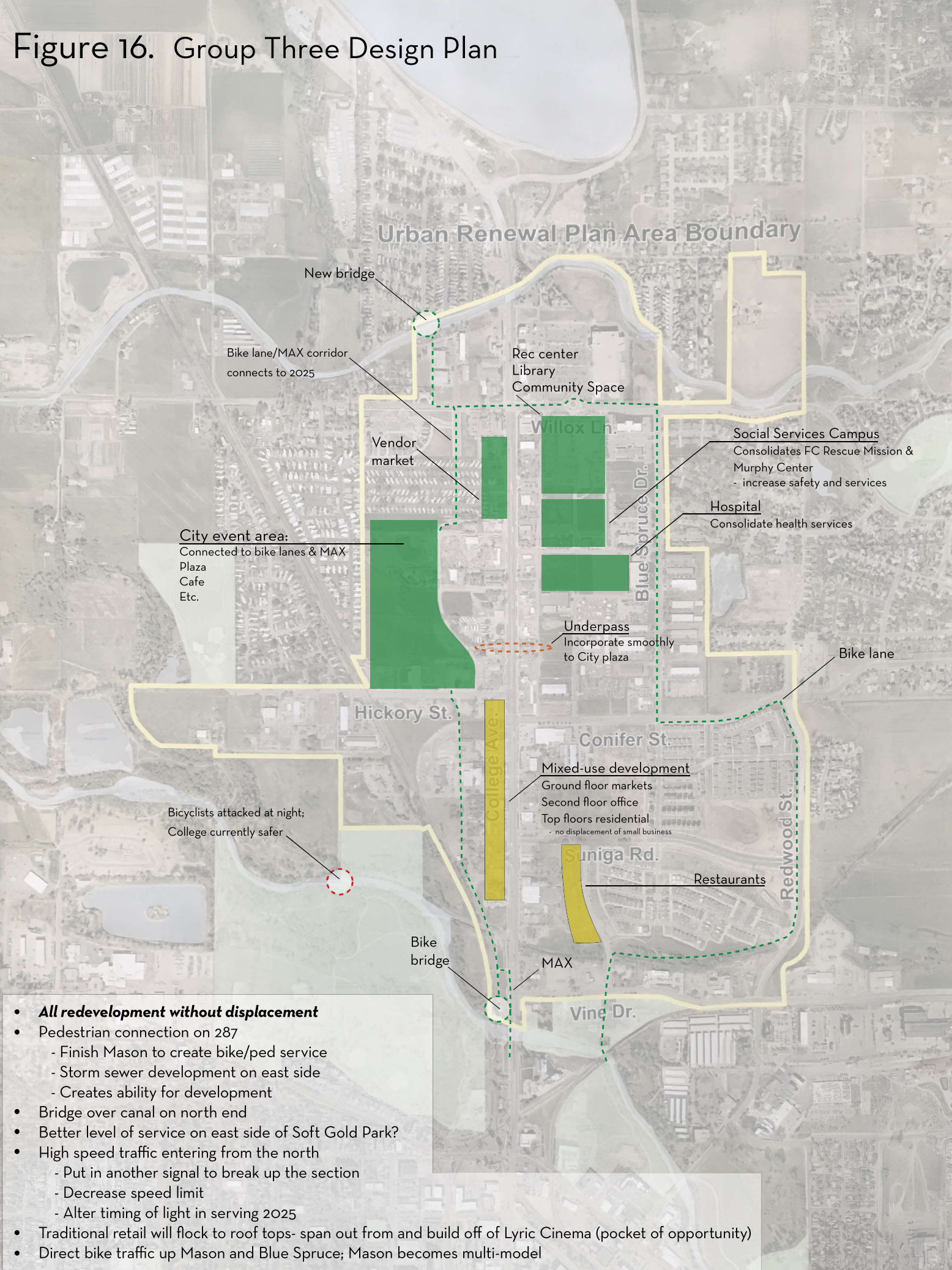
# Figure 15. Group Two Design Plan



- Connected MAX through North & South
- Bridge Old Town by railroad connect to center?
- Underpass that puts you into center area
- Mixed use apartments to limit displacement
- Vendor market area/indoor farmers market
- Full-service hospital
- Land purchased by Bohemian: consolidate rescue and Murphy Center
- Connect Legacy Park and Hickory Spur bike route north to 2025 with a new canal crossing



# Figure 16. Group Three Design Plan



## IBE-LED WORKSHOP #5

### *Overview*

The goal for IBE's fifth workshop was to prioritize community projects that fall under four categories developed based on the synthesis of all prior workshops, including workshops facilitated by The Family Center/La Familia. The four categories are: Recreation & Amusement, Food & Retail, Community Amenities & Health Services, and Transportation/Infrastructure & Housing. The workshop was held online.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included representatives from the following organizations and neighborhoods:

#### Organizations & Groups:

- North Fort Collins Business Association
- North College Community Advisory Group
- Colorado State University
- City of Fort Collins Planning
- Bike Fort Collins

- Fort Collins URA
- The Family Center

#### Neighborhoods:

- Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park
- Old Town North
- Revive

### *Activities*

IBE began the workshop by presenting a synthesis of its workshops 1 through 4 and TFC/LF workshop 3. IBE shared a compiled list of emerging ideas with the group, followed by a brief discussion that included clarifying questions and remarks. IBE then divided participants into four randomized breakout groups, each facilitated by members of IBE and/or the URA. Each breakout group was again shown the compiled list of project ideas, divided into the four overarching categories that arose out of the previous workshop: Recreation & Amusement, Food & Retail, Community Amenities & Health Services, and Transportation/Infrastructure & Housing. The facilitator of each group (from IBE or the URA) led a discussion beginning with an assigned category. The groups rotated through as many subsequent categories as possible in one hour. In each discussion, the facilitator prompted participants to discuss their thoughts and concerns, ask questions, offer their ideas, and identify their priorities.

### *Key Takeaways*

#### **Recreation & Amusement**

There was collective agreement to direct funds towards improving existing parks, community areas, and programming, rather than focusing only on building new amenities.

There was also a strong demand for indoor sports courts and affordable recreational facilities throughout the area, particularly ones that are culturally appropriate for the Latinx community.

### **Food & Retail**

There was a high demand for an international marketplace, food truck court, farmers market, and eateries. At the same time, there was a shared understanding that there are barriers to entry for a food market, as well as the potential for possible associated gentrification. The participants' stated preference for these projects was leveraging them as catalytic projects to spur further reinvestment into North Fort Collins.

### **Community Amenities & Health Services**

High priority was placed on opportunities that support the Latinx community. The vacant Albertson's site was identified as a prime location for potential reinvestment, as it provides the greatest ability to satisfy several community needs (e.g., a cultural community center, workforce development, and education). There was also an emphasis on increasing and expanding affordable childcare locations and services (e.g., expansion of TFC/LF and a community library / childcare location). Lastly, there was interest in consolidated health services, including a homeless services/mental health center.

### **Transportation/Infrastructure & Housing**

The west-side stormwater project, construction of Mason Street, and community connectivity (e.g., bike/pedestrian connections and MAX North) were all deemed priorities. The stormwater project would act as a catalyst to service and market opportunities, and to building the economic character of North Fort Collins. A secondary focus was on increasing accessibility to community parks and recreation areas.

## IBE-LED WORKSHOP #6

### *Overview*

The goal for IBE's sixth workshop was to engage community members in a participatory budgeting exercise, using a list of informed funding priorities that were synthesized from IBE workshop #5, to further narrow project initiatives. The workshop was held online.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included representatives from the following organizations and neighborhoods:

#### Organizations & Groups:

- North Fort Collins Business Association
- North College Community Advisory Group
- Colorado State University
- City of Fort Collins Planning
- City of Fort Collins Social Sustainability

- Bike Fort Collins
- Fort Collins URA
- The Family Center

#### Neighborhoods:

- Old Town North
- Revive

### *Activities*

Prior to the participatory budgeting exercise, IBE discussed the value of community outreach and highlighted its significance in the redevelopment process. IBE then provided a brief introduction to the synthesis of thematic priorities from the preceding workshop. Priority projects were presented to workshop participants in the form of a google document. Projects 1-5 were categorized as standalone, while projects 6-12 would likely be components of larger mixed-use development and redevelopment projects. IBE and the URA provided verbal descriptions of each of the twelve project priorities and ask participants to discuss their thoughts and concerns, ask questions, and to suggest additional ideas. Using a vote tally, each participant was given ten votes to individually distribute to the priority projects. Votes were calculated and project priorities were re-established.

### *Key Takeaways*

Workshop participants identified and prioritized existing resources and prioritized potential community improvement projects that the URA has authority to financially support.

Prioritization was accomplished through a voting process. Each participant was offered a total of ten votes, loosely representing a monetary budget. Thirteen people participated for a total of 130 possible votes. Workshop facilitators did not participate in voting. Some



individuals who were unable to attend the workshop voted online. Items in the participatory budgeting exercise were a culmination of past workshops, including the workshops led by The Family Center/La Familia.

The highest-priority projects (see Table 2 for complete voting tally) were identified by workshop participants and online voters as

1. *Stormwater infrastructure* on the west side of College Avenue and Mason Street,
2. *Latinx community center* (e.g. community meeting/event space, indoor and outdoor recreation activity space, cultural services and amenities, work force development, and youth / teen activities,
3. *Bicycle and Pedestrian connectivity* to parks and natural area, and
4. *Mixed-use (re)development* that would address a variety of community needs (e.g., small business opportunities, affordable housing, new food and entertainment establishments, additional health care services, and expanded TFC/LF services). Collectively 42 votes (or 32%) were given to projects and initiatives that could be integrated into a mixed use project. Many of these items could be supported in a variety of ways – not just through a mixed use development .

**Table 2. Participatory Budgeting Outcomes (based on workshop & online votes)**

<b>Project/Initiative</b>	<b># Votes of 130</b>	<b>% of Votes</b>
Stormwater West Side of College & Mason Street Infrastructure	38	29%
Latinx Community Center	25.5	20%
Bike & Pedestrian Connectivity	16	12%
What to Include in a Mixed Use (Re)development – (42 votes / 32%)		
Small Business Support	11.8	9%
Affordable Housing	9	7%
Food & Entertainment Amenities	7.8	6%
Health Services	5.7	4%
Library Branch	3.5	4%
Childcare	2.2	2%
Community College Branch	2	2%
PVMP Bike/Pedestrian Connectivity	5.5	4%
Rearage Road	3	2%

## THE FAMILY CENTER/LA FAMILIA-LED WORKSHOP #1

### *Overview*

The goal of TFC/LF's first workshop was to host a community event at which residents of North Fort Collins could share their opinions on what they would like to see in the changing North Fort Collins landscape. The workshop was held at First Presbyterian Church.

The agenda included:

1. What is a resource?
2. Where are the resources in your community?
3. Map the resources
4. Which resources do you use?
5. Top priority resources
6. Draw the future of North Fort Collins
7. Next steps

This activity supported strategic planning efforts by building on existing community strengths and recognizing human capital, while highlighting the capacity of individuals to use their knowledge and personal experiences to build and create positive structures in their communities. Additionally, this exercise assisted in fostering community cohesion and facilitating empowerment by bringing community members together to generate a shared awareness and understanding of community assets.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included 32 Spanish-speaking residents and one English-speaking resident of North Fort Collins.

### *Activities*

Since the group would be mapping assets—or resources—participants were first asked to establish a common definition of a “resource.” TFC/LF provided an example definition, to which participants added in concepts that they felt were lacking from the definition. The translated version of the group’s final definition was:

“A positive place or program that benefits the community and makes the community a safe, healthy, and good place to live.”

Following this exercise, TFC/LF asked the group to list out locations that they visit in Larimer County. These locations could be places they visit daily, weekly, or even just once a year. The participants then mapped the resources onto maps of the North College Plan Area. After mapping, participants shared out the resources and TFC/LF recorded those most frequently mentioned. Participants then drew or listed what they perceived the future of

North Fort Collins would look like, keeping in mind the locations and characteristics the group mentioned in the prioritization process (see Figure 17). The drawings and lists were used to start the second workshop.

### *Key Takeaways*

The following represents those resources most frequently mentioned by participants.

#### **Priority Resources (Most to Least Mentioned)**

- |                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. King Soopers North         | 7. Northside Aztlan Community Center |
| 2. Salud Family Health Center | 8. The Family Center / La Familia    |
| 3. Walmart Mulberry           | 9. Lee Martinez Community Park       |
| 4. Holy Family Church         | 10. Food Bank                        |
| 5. First Presbyterian         |                                      |
| 6. City Park                  |                                      |

There were several themes that arose from the drawn and written descriptions provided by participants.

#### **Community**

Several participants noted the desire for a safe, clean, well-lit community that is free of drugs, accessible for all ages, and free of people suffering from homelessness. Participants voiced the need for outdoor and indoor event spaces for people of all ages to host clubs and parties, with a community kitchen that supplies free meals for seniors. They also asked for a community space to coordinate these needs and activities, as well as other community town hall events.

#### **Recreation**

To be more physically active, participants suggested more parks, a swimming pool, a place for large groups to exercise together, an ice skating rink, a safe route to get to Soft Gold Park from Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park, a place to dance, a Fly High trampoline park, and parks with water features like a waterfall and splash pad.

#### **Albertson's**

Participants mentioned the Albertson's property several times. Ideas for the space included a recreation center like Edora Pool and Ice; a larger Salud clinic with a lab, ultrasound, dental clinic, and pharmacy; a water park for all ages, connected to the Poudre Trail; a childcare center for infants to adolescents; a church; a bilingual school; an adult education center; a farmer's market and flea market; a workforce development center; a satellite location for Front Range Community College; a library; senior housing with a dedicated bus stop; a place for mental health counseling for all; and a dog shelter.

## **Library**

Participants expressed a desire to have a library in the area that reflects local residents' culture – complete with books in both English and Spanish, and bilingual staff to make families and kids feel more welcome.

## **Safe Places to Bike**

Participants desired free bikes for families, more trails and bike lanes, and routes within parks that are well lit and wide enough for entire families to ride together.

## **Services for the Homeless**

Several drawings mentioned the fear participants and their families feel when encountering people experiencing homelessness, specifically in Soft Gold Park. As a solution, they mentioned creating a center to teach job skills, offer a place to rest, and provide behavioral health services to people who are currently homeless.

## **Soft Gold Park**

Participants requested a safe route to access Soft Gold Park with lights and a dedicated sidewalk to safely travel from Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park.

## **Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park**

Participants desired changes within Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park, including increased safety through lighting and security cameras, a place to hold parties, a playground, a nearby bilingual library, and flower gardens.

## **Hickory Village Mobile Home Park**

Participants desired changes within Hickory Village Mobile Home Park, including greater safety in the park, a park for small children, more lights on the streets, security cameras, and an increased police presence.

## **Salud Family Health Center**

Salud appeared several times in the drawings and some suggested a larger Salud clinic with a lab, ultrasound, dental clinic, and pharmacy, as well as transportation between the clinic and residences.

## **Entertainment**

The community desired more destinations for entertainment, particularly for children and families. Ideas included parks, a water park, outdoor exercise equipment, a pool, bike trails, cook-out areas, and a retail clothing store.

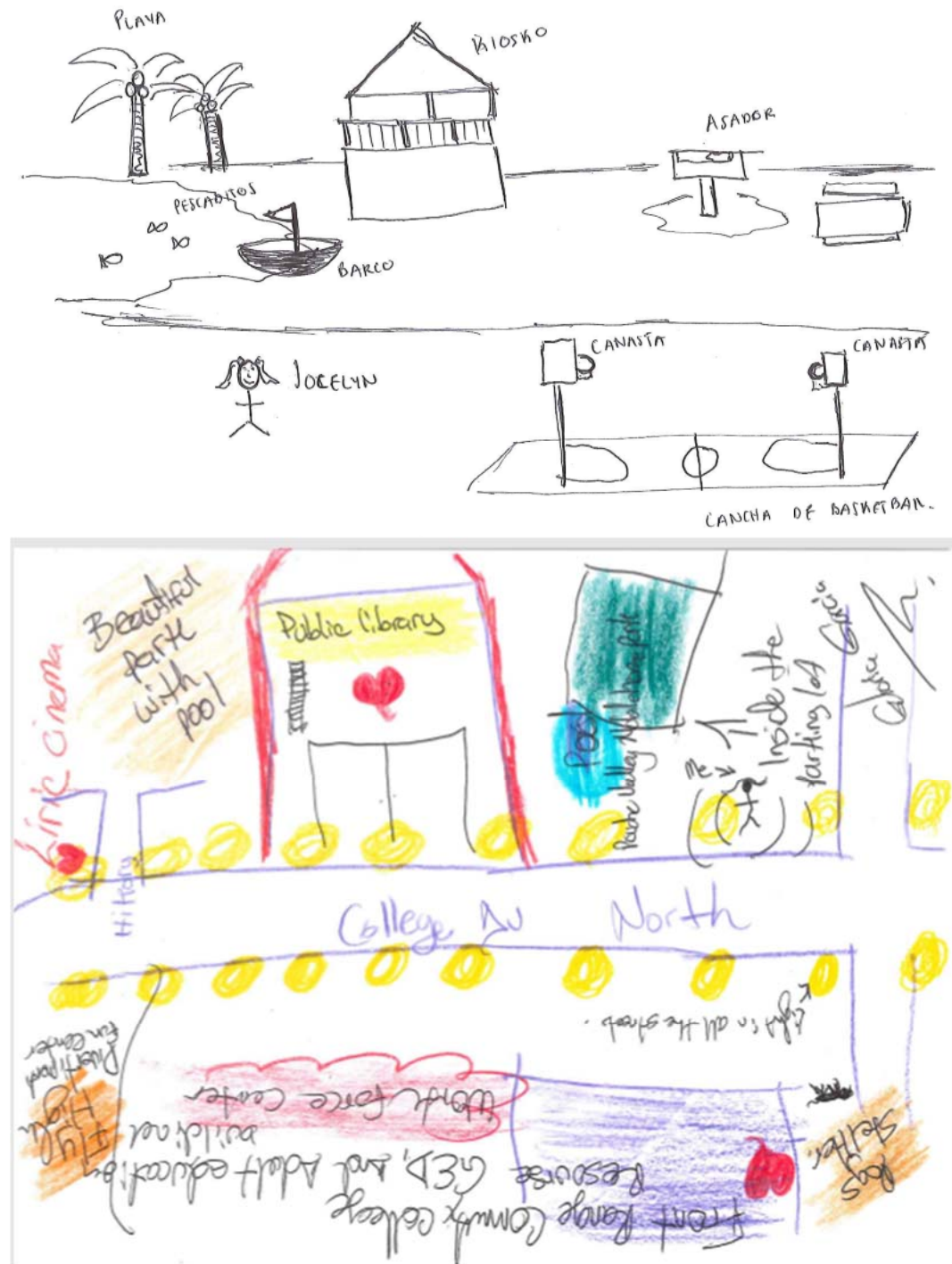
## **Laundromat**

One participant voiced the need for a closer laundromat that has dedicated staff to ensure there is an open bathroom and that everything is clean, and that specifically sells Suavitel soap.

## Transit

Participants requested more locations for information about bus routes, more bus stop locations, and someone bilingual available to help people understand the bus routes.

**Figure 17: Community-generated Drawings of Perceived Future for North College**





## THE FAMILY CENTER/LA FAMILIA-LED WORKSHOP #2

### *Overview*

The goals for TFC/LF's second workshop were to: 1) highlight three plans – City Plan, the City's Strategic Plan, and the North College Urban Renewal Plan and 2) identify both what community members value in the North College area and what they believe is missing to support a high quality of life. The workshop was held at The First Presbyterian Church.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included community members of the Mi Voz group that is organized by The Family Center/La Familia.

### *Activities*

To develop an increased understanding among participants of how the URA operates, City staff presented various planning initiatives to include the City Plan, the City's Strategic Plan, and the North College Urban Renewal Plan. Following this presentation, a member from URA provided a brief overview of what urban renewal is, how it functions in Fort Collins, and what kinds of projects other communities have brought to life via urban renewal. After these introductory remarks, attendees divided into four smaller groups. Using markers, each group drew suggested improvements on a map of North College Avenue (Figure 18). All groups had a facilitator who answered questions and kept the conversation moving forward. After coming up with its list of projects, each group presented its ideas to the larger group. These ideas formed the basis for the third Family Center/La Familia workshop.

### *Key Takeaways*

The following represents projects that participants identified would improve North College, and themes that emerged from workshop dialogue. See Figures 18 through 21 for maps created by each group to illustrate missing attributes for improvement.

### Improvement Projects

- Martial arts
- Adult education
- Meet and greet club
- Homework assistance
- Police presence
- Accessible resources, regardless of immigration status
- Exercise equipment
- Mexican movies
- Volleyball courts
- Consulate
- Market
- Clothing store
- Latinx club
- Teen center
- Turn signal for 2025 (Poudre Valley Mobile Home Park)

- More street lights
- Soccer fields
- Basketball courts
- Plaza space
- Indoor shooting range
- Restaurants
- Family Center expansion
- Recycling building
- Replace Arby's with Popeye's
- Skating rink
- Coffee shop
- Food truck park
- Flea market
- Childcare
- Trampoline park
- Workforce development
- Community center
- Senior center
- Mental health center
- Library
- Drive-in theater
- Dance/event hall
- Mini-amusement park
- Rodeo
- Water park
- Affordable housing
- Senior housing
- Overpass for the train near Cherry Street

## Common Themes

### Meeting/Gathering Area

Many groups expressed a desire to have a place to meet with friends, family and youth, including:

- A Mercado (market) with a plaza with various activities ranging from food trucks to ice cream to local artisans
- A center for dancing and celebrations
- One place to hold gatherings or serve a variety of uses, such as coffee shop, place for youth to get help with homework, recreation area, dancing, and bingo

### Recreational Opportunities

Participants expressed the need for more or different recreational options, including:

- Indoor and outdoor soccer fields
- Improvements in Soft Gold Park, such as grills, exercise equipment, and soccer fields
- An affordable gym, pool, and ice-skating rink
- An affordable youth activity center

### Skills Development

Participants expressed the desire for a place to either learn or teach skills, including workforce development (e.g., sewing, mechanic, cooking, internet, etc.), that offers the opportunity for adults to teach skills to youth.

## **Services**

Participants identified a need for additional services, including expanding existing services in the area that cater to the needs to the Latinx community, including:

- Expanded Family Center services to provide additional child care and family support
- A mental health clinic
- Other services, such as a library, DMV, recycling, and consulate office

## **Activities**

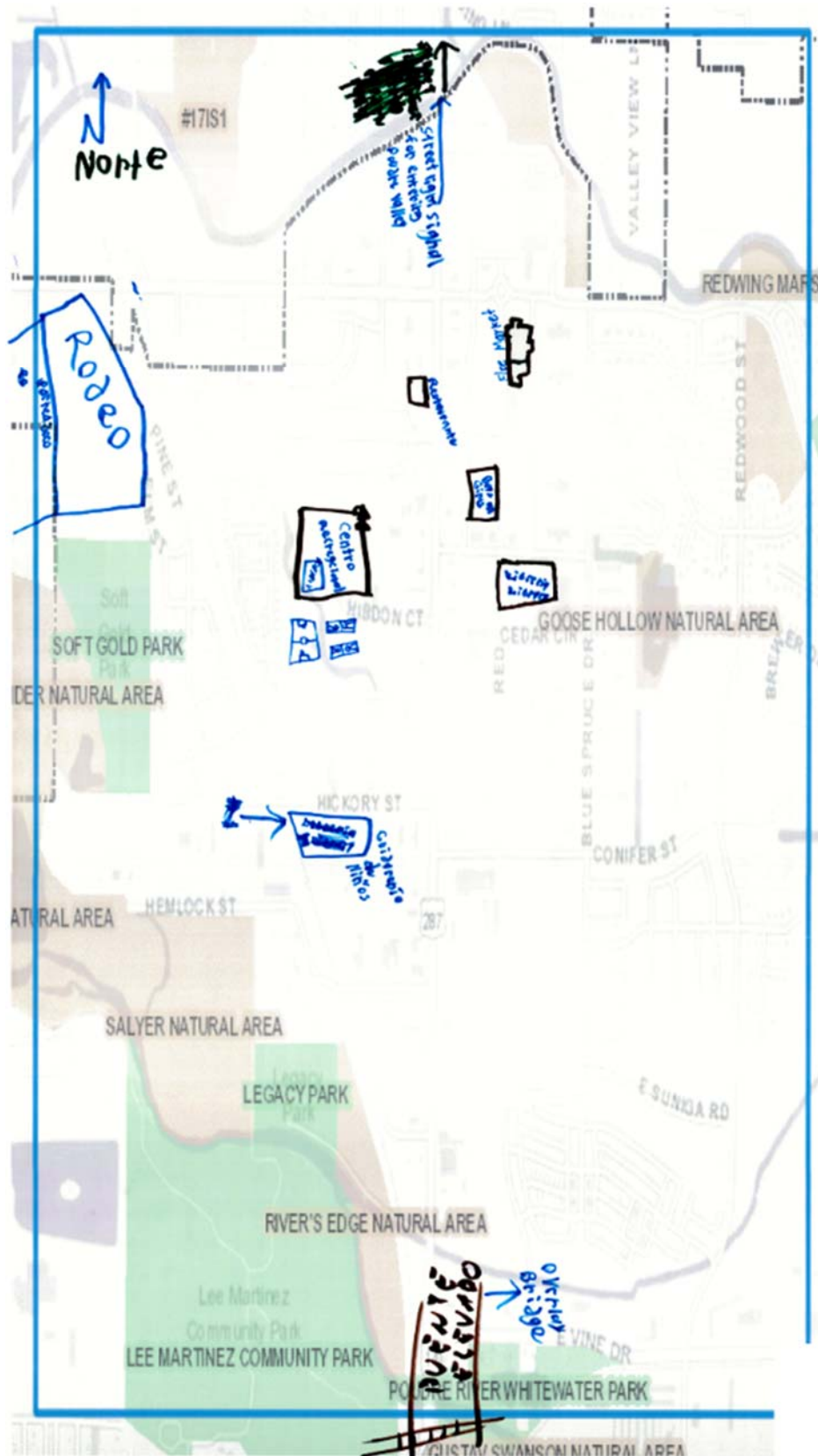
Places for more activites, particularly with children, such as

- An air park, trampoline park, amusement park, and water park
- A drive-in movie theatre that plays Spanish movies

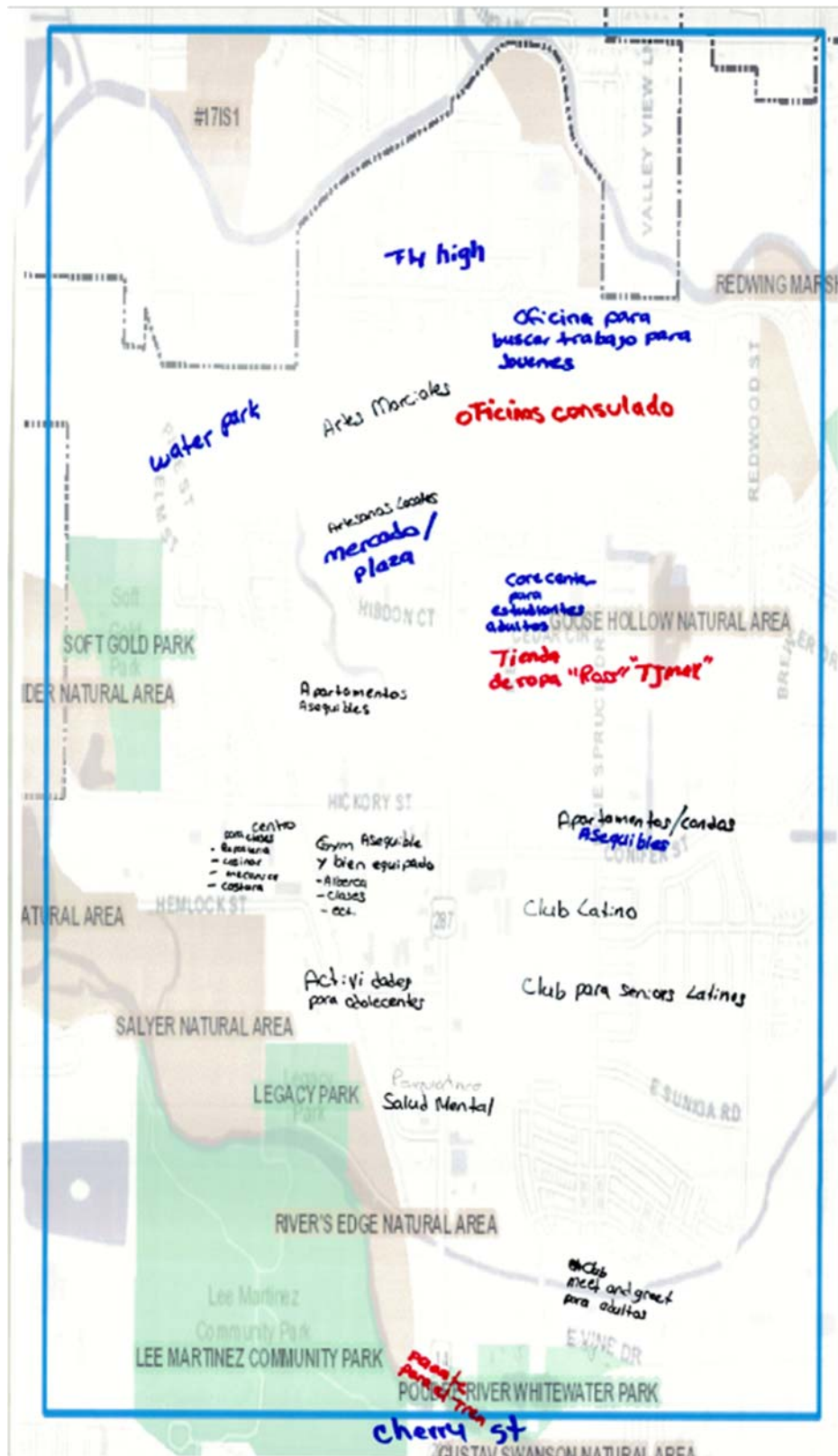
While some of these resources already exist in Fort Collins and the North College area, not all are utilized by North College residents. A primary reason for this is a lack of culturally attuned programming and spaces that support intergenerational relationships and activities.



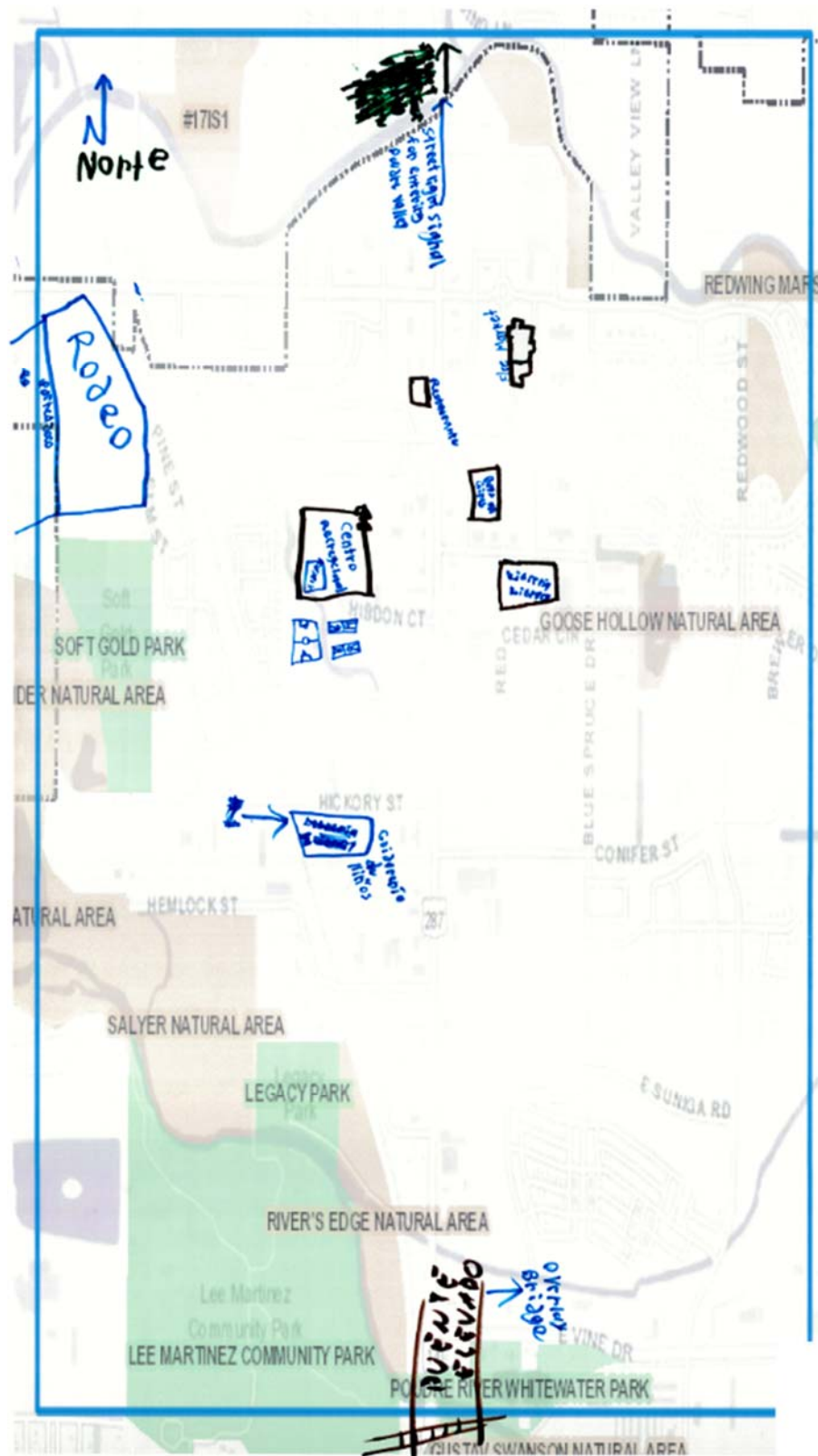
**Figure 18: Community-identified Missing Attributes for North College (Group 1)**



**Figure 19: Community-identified Missing Attributes for North College (Group 2)**

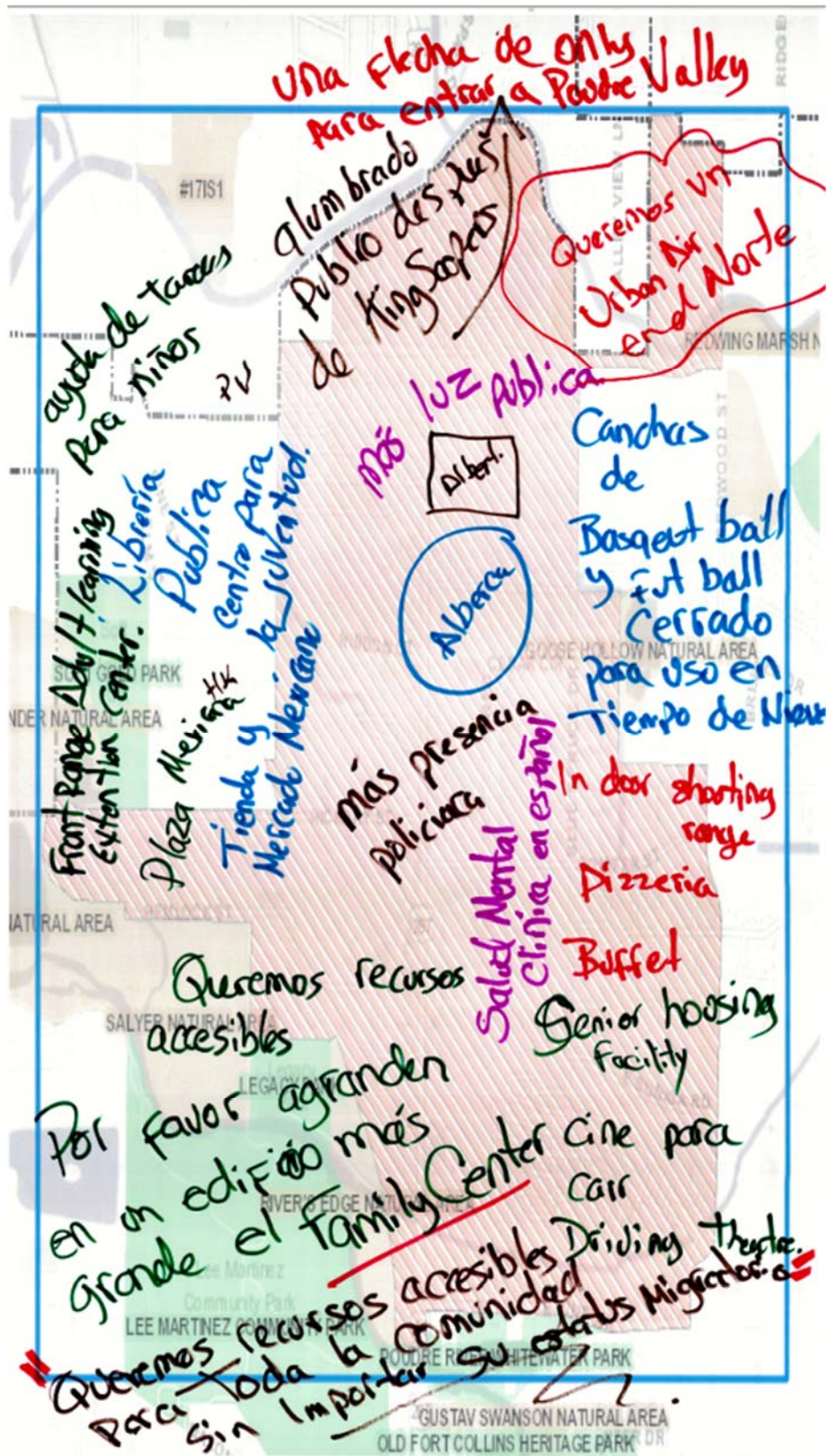


**Figure 20: Community-identified Missing Attributes for North College (Group 3)**





**Figure 21: Community-identified Missing Attributes for North College (Group 4)**



## THE FAMILY CENTER/LA FAMILIA-LED WORKSHOP #3

### *Overview*

The goal for TFC/LF's third workshop was for community members to prioritize potential improvements in the North Fort Collins URA area. These improvements were community-sourced proposals from previous workshops and reflect the types of projects that the URA has the authority to support financially.

### *Participants*

Participants for this workshop included community members of the Mi Voz group that is organized by The Family Center/La Familia.

### *Activities*

TFC/LF divided participants into four smaller groups to collectively identify and prioritize the top ten ideas out of 47 total potential improvements. Following facilitator guidance, each group used play money to allocate funds to its top ten project ideas and prioritized within its list of the top ten.

### *Key Takeaways*

The following summarizes which projects participants identified as priority:

### Collectively Prioritized Projects

Two projects were included in more than one group's list of funded projects (numbers in parentheses indicate how many groups prioritized that project):

1. Teen community center (3)
2. Family Center expansion (2)

Seven projects were included in more than one group's top ten list (numbers in parentheses indicate how many groups prioritized that project):

- Teen community center (3)
- Family Center expansion (3)
- Train bridge (2)
- Mexican Consulate (2)
- Community recreation center (2)
- Restaurants (2)

### Group-by-Group Prioritized Projects

Table 3 provides a break-down, by group, of project priorities.

**Table 3. Community-identified Project Priorities, By Group**

<b>Group Number</b>	<b>Projects Given Funding Priority (in decreasing order of priority)</b>	<b>Additional Top 10 Projects (in no particular order)</b>
<b>1</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Affordable housing</li><li>2. Teen community center</li><li>3. Family Center expansion</li><li>4. Workout stations</li><li>5. Mexican Consulate</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Train bridge</li><li>• Water park</li><li>• Food truck park</li><li>• Event hall</li><li>• Restaurants</li></ul>
<b>2</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Teen community center</li><li>2. Market</li><li>3. Childcare services</li><li>4. Resources for undocumented immigrants</li><li>5. Latin dance club</li><li>6. Tutoring services</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental health center</li></ul>
<b>3</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Public library</li><li>2. Hispanic heritage plaza</li><li>3. Soccer fields</li><li>4. Front Range Community College branch</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community recreation center</li><li>• Increased police presence</li><li>• Theme park</li><li>• Family Center expansion</li></ul>
<b>4</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Family Center expansion</li><li>2. Teen community center</li><li>3. Popeye's restaurant</li><li>4. Rodeo</li></ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Train bridge</li><li>• Community recreation center</li><li>• Public lighting</li><li>• More traffic lights</li><li>• Mexican movies</li><li>• Mexican Consulate</li></ul>

TFC/LF developed two public-facing documents to summarize the outcomes of its three workshops: 1) a summary highlighting the community priorities (see Appendix B) and 2) a supporting document that presents the economic case for a community hub (see Appendix C).



# HISTORICAL SYNTHESIS

## *Historical Overview of the North College Corridor*

Historically, North Fort Collins has been defined as the area starting at the 100 North block of College Avenue, spanning north to city limits and especially along the commercial artery of College Avenue / U.S. Highway-287. This area north of Mountain Avenue and south of City limits has grown with Fort Collins. Originally, the unofficial recognized city limit to the north was the Poudre River corridor until 1933, when it was extended to 900 North College Avenue. Until the 1940s, the north side played host to a dump and trash incineration site (located at the current location of the Powerhouse) and an adjacent raw sewage outlet into the river. A subsequent annexation in 1955, named the Griffin Addition, brought a 50-foot strip north of the river and the Lake Canal (Eaton and Abbott Canal) into city limits. In 1959, the Griffin Addition was expanded northward to the Eaton Ditch (Weld-Larimer Canal) to bring City limits to their current northern boundary (see Figure 22). Technically, North Fort Collins begins north of Mountain Avenue and stretches north to City limits, though the commonly held definition of North Fort Collins is the area within City limits north of the river, west of Lemay Avenue/9th Avenue, and east of Shields Street. However, for the purposes of Fort Collins URA outreach and planning, this area is further restricted to the area north of Vine Avenue and south of City limits, following an irregular line roughly a quarter mile to the west and a half mile to the east of College Avenue. In short, the plan area deals with the College Avenue corridor north of Vine Street and adjacent areas in this sector of the City.

Several immigrant groups contributed to the early shaping of Fort Collins and the North College area, including Norwegian, Scottish, French, Chinese, Volga Germans, British, and later Chicano and Mexican American. Many of these groups were migrant workers who arrived to work early industries in the area, including sugar beet production; coal mining and hauling from the north to power the town; and quarrying sandstone from the town of Stout (now beneath the surface of Horsetooth Reservoir) and moving the product into town via the town of Laporte and into Fort Collins from the north. North Fort Collins remains one of the most demographically and ethnically diverse areas in town, with much of the current cultural influence in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century belonging to the Latinx population.

The area has historically played host to low-income housing options, even before they were referred to as such. Simple single-family homes and salt box houses that reflect the early trends of the neighborhood can still be found in North Fort Collins just west of College Avenue, on a still-unpaved portion of Mason Street and adjacent roads. Some of the current low-income neighborhoods in North Fort Collins tell a story of a somewhat forgotten history of the area. The mobile home parks in the area developed adjacent to the motor lodges that once flanked US 287 in North Fort Collins. These mobile home parks

survived the gradual disappearance of motor lodges and continue to survive because of the lower cost of land on the fringes of the city.

During the 20th Century, as automobile culture took hold of the nation, this strip of College Avenue was popularly thought of as U.S. Highway 287 / CO Route 14. It was the northern gateway to the Colorado Front Range from Laramie and beyond, and roughly traced historical indigenous overland routes (for which Overland Trail itself is named), as well as wagon wheel trading routes over the continental divide in Wyoming. It was the exit route from Colorado for RV and motor tourists headed to Yellowstone National Park. Because it was the northern motor gateway of the state, it developed a rich automotive culture that can still be found today. Part of the auto-centric economy of the time was RV parks and motor courts, which served as affordable living options. This original influence is still present in the North College Mobile Home Plaza, the El Palomino Inn, and many of the automotive businesses along the stretch.

North Fort Collins has always played a role in piloting and incubating new business in the city. In 1969, when Fort Collins lifted its ban on alcohol, some of the first liquor stores were established in the neighborhood. Likewise, in 2012, when recreational cannabis consumption was legalized statewide, the first dispensaries in town opened their doors in North Fort Collins. Several local businesses that still survive today in other parts of town were first established in the neighborhood, including Lloyd's Custom Framery and Markley Motors. Today, North Fort Collins is home to the Innosphere, which incubates small business and entrepreneurial start-ups.

The importance of small business and start-up spaces along North College Avenue, its automotive past and present, its importance socio-culturally to Fort Collins' history and present, and how it has long been home to lower-income groups all remain important characteristics of this unique neighborhood in the Choice City.

### *Planning Area Background*

North Fort Collins is one of four urban renewal plan areas in the City that utilizes TIF mechanisms to aid in the remediation of "blight" and to help spur new development through the Fort Collins URA. The URA, a governmental agency with authority over this funding mechanism, has been working alongside Fort Collins City Council and the City of Fort Collins Planning Department to address planning challenges and desired outcomes in the North College Corridor since the adoption of the North College Corridor Plan as a component of the 1994 Fort Collins City Comprehensive Plan (renamed City Plan in 1997). Much of the URA's early planning processes and redevelopment monies have been focused on the delivery of critical infrastructure to an area with hundreds of acres of historical prime farmland behind the commercial frontage of College Avenue. These large parcels have historically lacked the infrastructure necessary to make the subdivision of large plots accessible to small businesses and landowners, as the area has slowly converted from majority agricultural use to majority commercial and light industrial use. North Fort Collins

has been an infill and redevelopment focus area for several years and has been an official urban renewal planning area since City Council's adoption of the North College Urban Renewal Plan in 2004.

## *Relevant Planning Documents for North Fort Collins*

### *1995 North College Avenue Corridor Plan*

The first official planning document to specifically define physical and economic priorities for North Fort Collins was the 1995 North College Avenue Corridor Funding Plan. This plan, adopted as part of the 1994 City Comprehensive Plan (City Plan), established five major policy sections and implementation strategies for the area: Land Use; Storm Drainage; Transportation; Economic Development; and Image, Character, and Urban Form. It went into further detail by segmenting and analyzing the area according to its unique assets and shortcomings.

The Plan identified physical, infrastructural, and zoning issues that had hindered further development in North Fort Collins for decades. The greatest constraint to redevelopment was liability caused by the Dry Creek floodplain. In addition, the area's spatial isolation—both toward the downtown core to the south and toward east and west due to limited connections to adjacent areas of the City—limited both bicyclist/pedestrian and automobile access. North Fort Collins residents continue to experience connectivity challenges because of the absence of north-south arterial streets between College Avenue and Shields Street north of the Poudre River. Heavy truck traffic on US HWY 287 / SH 14 further degraded the safety and experience of the area, and more frequent crossings of the BNSF railroad line between Riverside Avenue and North Fort Collins (now the Union Pacific line) made access intermittent. The Plan began to address these factors to help spur stagnated development in the area.

The Plan established the general footprint and boundaries of the plan area and clear linkage to the Land Use Code language that the URA uses for its work in the area. It also began the first phases of multidisciplinary and multisectoral public outreach and prioritization that continues in the area through the URA.

### *2004 North College Avenue Urban Renewal Plan*

The 2004 North College Avenue Urban Renewal Plan identified opportunities for infill and redevelopment, and various capital improvement projects in North Fort Collins. Importantly, it enabled TIF as the primary funding resource for URA projects. The document also identified the State level statutes and Urban Renewal Law that define blight conditions applicable to TIF funding. This funding mechanism allowed for projects within the North Fort Collins area to seek TIF assistance to close funding gaps based on statutory definitions. The plan outlined the process by which TIF funds could accrue, and projected



that the mechanism would eventually provide the URA with sufficient funds to proactively identify needs in North Fort Collins. The 2004 North College Avenue URA Plan sought to identify and remediate blight through the baseline language included in the following plans:

- North College Avenue Corridor Plan
- North College Avenue Access Management Plan
- City of Fort Collins Master Street Plan
- Fort Collins Infill Infrastructure Report
- City Plan (The City of Fort Collins Comprehensive Plan)
- City of Fort Collins Master Transportation Plan
- Dry Creek Drainage Basin Master Plan

### *2007 North College Corridor Plan*

The North College Corridor Plan focused on the coordination of redevelopment and public improvements from a city planning perspective. This included the coordination of vision, goals, and design guidelines that would highlight the distinct character of North Fort Collins. Particular attention was paid to North Fort Collins' unique history and population, and this document laid the groundwork for intentional plans and processes that would prevent the area from becoming a standardized and homogenous district. The plan sought to create more meaningful connection between North Fort Collins and the downtown urban core, including bike and pedestrian connections, while enabling North Fort Collins to stand as its own distinct northern gateway to Fort Collins.

The Corridor Plan established clear historical and spatial analysis of the North Fort Collins area. While recognizing the area's distinct character and history, the plan also recognized its changing cultural and economic conditions. Importantly, this included an inventory of land uses and parcels, and recognized that historically agricultural parcels were becoming fragmented and functionally obsolete for future redevelopment priorities. Through this analysis, the 2007 North College Corridor Plan defined and categorized the following top issues and opportunities for the corridor:

- Identity and community design
- North College Avenue / US 287 / SH 14
- Retrofitting streets in the corridor
- Existing development
- Land use and business mix
- The river and connections to downtown
- Transportation
- Drainage and utilities
- Financing

### *2010 North College Infrastructure Funding Plan*

The 2010 North College Infrastructure Funding Plan further defined and prioritized projects for the URA to leverage potential funding sources against, including TIF funds. It also acted as the tool and platform for coordination of new potential projects and for previously adopted guidelines to coordinate several local and regional master plans and programs that would have some effect and bearing on redevelopment in North Fort Collins. These include:

- The City's Stormwater Capital Projects Program
- The City's Transportation Master Plan
- The City's Capital Improvement Budget
- Colorado Department of Transportation Project Lists
- North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization Project Lists

The 2010 North College Infrastructure Funding Plan focused on four main categories for capital improvements: existing streets; new street construction; storm drainage infrastructure; and sewer line extension and realignment. The plan further mapped potential projects in North Fort Collins, ranked them in terms of priority, streamlined public input, and flagged the most appropriate resources and funding scenarios for each.

### *2019 Fort Collins City Plan*

The most recent update to the City and comprehensive plan (City Plan) defines the North Fort Collins focus plan area as a Suburban Mixed-Use District. According to the typological categorizations in the City Plan, commercial uses form the main spine in the area—including increased restaurant and retail—in addition to the current light industrial, automotive, and small business inventory. These main uses are supported by a higher density of residential and socially focused business services, including entertainment and childcare.

According to City Plan, the form that this would take in North Fort Collins depends on a more intentional approach to infill and redevelopment of parcels between the downtown core and the North Fort Collins area. This would likely mean a gradient of building height and density stepping down from the downtown core. Further, the district would become a clear and defined urban space with its own distinct character through redevelopment efforts, including clear gateways into the area from the north and the south, and an increased focus on pedestrian access within the area and to the area, particularly from the downtown core. City Plan also defines increased access and frequency of public transit / BRT to connect the area to the remainder of Fort Collins' longitudinal commercial spine.

City Plan prioritizes the infill and redevelopment opportunities of this neighborhood typology within the Growth Management Area as key focus areas for growth and to supply new employment and housing opportunities, recognizing that investment in transit

infrastructure is a key factor to promote this growth. Infill opportunities along planned future transit corridors (such as the North College Corridor) have received higher prioritization in the planning process because of the high triple-bottom-line impacts of transit-oriented development (TOD). These developments will help to encourage North Fort Collins to be one of the key Community Activity Centers prioritized in City Plan.

City Plan has specific policies within its Economic Health and the Neighborhood Livability and Social Health categories that offer direct language for the URA in the North Fort Collins planning area. In summary, the City Plan language that is most relevant to URA efforts in North Fort Collins focuses on issues mentioned above, including mixed-use redevelopment, higher density with one- to five-story building limits, increased social uses and pedestrian access, and TOD.

Perhaps most importantly for the North Fort Collins area, City Plan's Health and Equity Index shows more vulnerable populations clustered north of the Poudre River and rates this area in the highest priority category. The Plan offers specific language regarding the prevention of displacement through redevelopment. In other words, the URA's North Fort Collins effort can play an important role in a broader planning process, with equitable outcomes for current vulnerable populations that reside within the area and utilize it commercially.

To read specific Fort Collins City Plan language referenced above, refer to Appendix D.



ANNEXATION MAP

WILCOX LANE

EATON DITCH

ASPEN LANE

CEDAR LANE

N-1 IS N. COLLEGE AVENUE ADDITION (1959)

N-1

N-5

Dry Creek

G-21

G-14

HICKORY STREET

N-1

N-1

HEMLOCK ST

PINON ST

MASON ST

ALPINE ST

Cache La Poudre River

Lake Canal

ORIGINAL CITY (1873)

G-22

S-34

G-5

S-54

D-3

G-3

G 3-4 IS GRIFFIN ADDITION (1955)

59

1700 800

1600 800

700 800

600 800

# RESOURCES

North College Infrastructure Funding Plan (Funding Plan). Fort Collins Urban Renewal Authority. 2010.

North College Corridor Plan. City of Fort Collins Planning Department, Advance Planning Division. 2007.

North College URA Strategic Investment Plan. Economic & Planning Systems, Inc., Livable Cities Studio. 2018.

North College Urban Renewal Plan. City of Fort Collins Community Planning & Environmental Services, Advance Planning Department. 2004.

North College Avenue Historical Research for The North College Avenue Study. City of Fort Collins Planning Department, Advance Planning Division. 1993.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: CURRENT URA PROJECT SCORESHEET

Date _____			
Project _____		Project # _____	
<i>Project Characteristics</i>	<i>Applicability Yes or no Weight Factor</i>	<i>Range for Points 0-10</i>	<i>Score Weight x Points</i>
<b>FINANCIAL BENEFITS</b>			
Annual Property Tax Increment/Acre	2	\$0-10K-20K+	(20)
Annual Sales Tax Increment/S.F. (Retail Only) (1st 36 Months Projected)	1	\$0-5-10+	(20)
Annual Payroll (Commercial Only)	0.5	\$0-500K-1M+	(5)
<b>COMMUNITY BENEFITS</b>			
Implements City Plan (Incl. N.College Plan)	2	Min.-Mod.-Greatly	(20)
Enhances Area/Eliminates Blight	2	Min.-Mod.-Greatly	(20)
Local Ownership (Larimer Co.) (Commercial Only, Property Owner After Completion)	0.5	None-Some-Most	(5)
<b>FINANCIAL STRUCTURE</b>			
Demonstrated Need/Gap in Proforma	0.5	Low-Med-High	(5)
Type of Request	1	Grant-Loan-Loan Guar.	(10)
Form of Payment	0.5	Lump Sum-Over Time	(5)
% of Total Project Cost Requested	1	50+-30-15 or less	(10)
% of Total TI Requested	1	50+-30-15 or less	(10)
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>			
<b>% of MAX SCORE FOR APPLICABLE CRITERIA</b>			
<b>ATTACH NOTES</b>			



## APPENDIX B: URA-FUNDED MODEL PROJECTS

To support an inclusive and intentional approach to redeveloping North Fort Collins, the URA and IBE researched how other communities have dedicated URA funds to projects that directly support Latinx and other cultural communities. The following eight case examples, which represent diverse communities across the United States, offer inspiration for how URA contributions could be used to preserve, restore, and adaptively reuse the historical aspects of North Fort Collins.

### *Model Project #1: The Basque Block-Grove Street*



**Location:** Boise, ID

**Year Constructed:** Completed in 2000

**Total Project Budget:** \$415,000

**Funding Source:** Public

**URA:** Capital City Development Corporation

**URA Contribution:** \$100,000

### **Project Background**

The Basque Block in Boise, ID—home to many Basque immigrants—originated from the preservation of two historic Basque landmarks, the Cyrus Jacobs-Uberuaga House and the Anduiza. The restoration of these structures kindled a revival of Basque traditions and heritage, thereby creating a culturally rich community atmosphere. To complement this cultural revival, Grove Street was redeveloped to provide a friendly city block that supports easy pedestrian movement and festival celebrations. Subsequent economic development surged throughout the area as a variety of services and amenities—funded by private investments, private donations, and the Capital City Development Corporation (Boise Redevelopment Agency)—became available to the public.

### **Project Highlights**

- Granite slabs featuring song lyrics, surnames of local families, and the crest of each of the seven Basque provinces
- Basque emblems
- Pavement with national colors

## *Model Project #2: Arts Warehouse*



**Location:** Delray, FL

**Year Constructed:** Completed in 2017

**Total Project Budget:** Unknown

**Funding Source:** Public

**URA:** Delray Community  
Redevelopment Agency

**URA Contribution:** \$3.7 million

### **Project Background**

This project, initiated by the Delray Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), is located on Artist Alley in the Pineapple Grove District of Delray, FL. The 15,000-square-foot Arts Warehouse Project provides affordable studio space to aspiring and professional artists who specialize in new media, painting, photography, ceramics, and more. The intention was to develop and stabilize downtown Delray Beach and its surrounding districts in a way that would complement the established interests of the community. Therefore, efforts were directed toward assisting professional development of artists with the goal of creating an arts destination that would facilitate economic development, growth, and sustainability in the community.

### **Project Highlights:**

- Artist Resident program
- Gallery exhibitions
- Visual art workshops
- Professional development programs
- Talks/discussions
- Special events

### *Model Project #3: **Portland Mercado / Micro Mercantes Kitchen***



**Location:** Portland, OR

**Year Constructed:** 2013-2015

**Total Project Budget:** \$3.2 million

**Funding Source:** Public & Private

**URA:** Hacienda Community Development Corporation

**URA Contribution (Prosper Portland):** \$1.1 million

#### **Project Background**

The Portland Mercado, an economic project initiated in 2010 by the Hacienda CDC (Latino Community Development Corporation), was designed through a community-engaged process. Using a combination of federal, local, foundation, and private funds, the Hacienda CDC transformed this bleak location into a high-performing, affordable retail space that supports the Latinx community. The Portland Mercado is now home to 19 full-time businesses and continues to promote small business art, entertainment, and culinary diversity within the community.

#### **Project Highlights**

- Commissary kitchen, featuring two culinary trainings per month through a partnership with the Food Innovation Center
- Referrals
- Access to capital and trainings in both Spanish and English
- Public market
- Frozen storage units
- 114 new jobs created in the first year of business
- Over \$2.5 million in sales in first year



## *Model Project #4: Owe'neh Bupingeh Rehabilitation Project*



**Location:** Ohkay Owingeh, New Mexico

**Year Constructed:** Broke ground in 2010

**Total Project Budget:** \$8,972,563 (requires \$4 million more)

**Funding Source:** Public & Private

**URA:** Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority

**URA Contribution:** N/A (Subsidized with foundation and federal funding)

### **Project Background**

To preserve the historical core of the Ohkay Owingeh community—a federally-recognized tribe of Native American Pueblo people—and to bring life and tradition back to the community court area, the Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority (OOHA) committed to the Owe'neh Bupingeh Rehabilitation Project. To balance funding, restoration standards, and cultural values, the OOHA partnered with an Advisory Committee, a Cultural Advisory Team, tribal leaders, and community youth. The project was divided into three phases aimed at providing housing renovations to low-income families. Project efforts began in 2005 with a \$7,500 grant from the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (HPD). Through a variety of funding sources—including the HPD, National Park Service Preservation Program, McCune Foundation, and federal funding—this project has successfully reconstructed 34 homes, decreased substandard living, and promoted the Pueblo's history and heritage. To continue the reconstruction of homes in the area, this project requires private funding and the utilization of a \$500,000 tax credit provided by the State of New Mexico.

### **Project Highlights**

- Spaces for ceremonial dance and gatherings
- Traditional adobe plaster
- First time ever that funds from the federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program were used for rental housing on tribal land in New Mexico
- First time ever that the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority used its risk-sharing loan on American Indian trust lands, enabling authority to underwrite construction and permanent first-mortgage financing insured by the Federal Housing Administration

## *Model Project #5: SteelStacks Arts & Cultural Center*



**Location:** Bethlehem, PA

**Year Constructed:** Opened in 2011

**Total Project Budget:** \$93.5 million

**Funding Source:** Public & Private

**URA:** Bethlehem Redevelopment Authority

**URA Contribution:** \$45 million

### **Project Background**

SteelStacks is an arts and cultural campus that was restored using existing steel structures at the Bethlehem Steel mill site. The goals of this project were to supplement the region's existing culture and to create a major cultural center for local and surrounding communities. Through a partnership between ArtsQuest, the City of Bethlehem, the Bethlehem Redevelopment Authority, PBS 39, and Sands BethWorks Retail LLC, the property on what was once the second-largest steel company in the United States is now a 10-acre arts campus that provides a variety of educational, cultural, and artistic experiences. Located within a 126-acre area that is designated as a Tax Incremental Financing District, SteelStacks provides a precedent for brownfield reclamation, historic preservation, community pride, and economic stimulus.

### **Project Highlights**

- Alehouse cinema
- Multifunctional events space
- Café
- Festival center (temporary markets, hospitality events, exhibitions)
- Community stage and outdoor live performance venue

- Playground and family picnic area
- Elevated steel walkway

### *Model Project #6: Lawrenceville Community Land Trust*



**Location:** Pittsburgh, PA

**Year Constructed:** Construction financing in 2017; completed in 2018

**Total Project Budget:** \$2,161,500

**Funding Source:** Public & Private

**URA Contribution:** \$674,000

#### **Project Background**

The Lawrenceville Community Land Trust is the first permanently affordable community land trust in the City of Pittsburgh, PA. The Lawrenceville Corporation (LC) is a not-for-profit community development corporation that serves Upper, Lower, and Central Lawrenceville. Over the last decade, housing values in Lawrenceville have steadily increased, making homeownership in the neighborhood unobtainable for some long-time Lawrenceville/City of Pittsburgh residents. To create affordable homeownership and ensure that the homes remain affordable for many generations to come, the LC created the City's first Community Land Trust.

#### **Project Highlights**

- Seven permanently affordable for-sale homes in Upper Lawrenceville for households at or below 80% AMI
- Designed using sustainable, ENERGY STAR-certified materials



## *Model Project #7: Lents Town Center Development*



**Location:** Portland, OR

**Year Constructed:** 2014 - 2020

**Total Project Budget:** \$109,000,000

**Funding Source:** Public

**URA Contribution (Prosper Portland):** \$37,000,000

### **Project Background**

Neighborhood business vitality is central to the development of the Lents Town Center Urban Renewal Area in Portland, OR. Job generation, small business support, and infrastructure improvements to foster community growth and vibrancy have been the focal points for Prosper Portland's work in Lents. In May 2014, Prosper Portland and the City, with community support and input, launched the Lents Five-Year Action Plan, calling for focused investments that would have the greatest benefit and impact on existing residents and businesses. The first phase of Lents Town Center redevelopment (phase 1) consisted of total investment of \$109 million, including \$37 million in loans from Prosper Portland and \$17 million in loans from the Portland Housing Bureau. Phase 1 (2014-2018) added 263 new housing units, including 157 affordable units and 47 workforce units, as well as commercial space for 10 businesses. In late 2018, Prosper Portland began the community engagement process for Lents Town Center Phase 2 development, involving a 4.4-acre site owned by Prosper Portland.

### **Project Highlights**

- Lents Commons, a mixed-use, mixed-income project with 54 units of housing and approximately 7,500 square feet of retail space on the ground floor

- Development of two new buildings will add 126 affordable units and 19 market rate units, and approximately 29,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space with parking included
- Mixed-income apartment building with 64 units, including 13 affordable units and 50 workforce housing units
- International farmer's market
- Asian Health & Service Center includes medical clinics, offices, and a community meeting space
- Brewery, pub, and full-service restaurant centered on family-friendly entertainment

### *Model Project #8: Southern Charm Kitchen*



**Location:** Gainesville, FL  
**Year Constructed:** 2010  
**Total Project Budget:** Unknown  
**Funding Source:** Public & Private  
**URA Contribution (Gainesville CRA):** \$330,734

#### **Project Background**

In 2008, the Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) began the process of redeveloping a lot with a vacant cinderblock building. The goal was to encourage economic development in the Southeast Gainesville Renaissance Initiative (SEGRI) area by: 1) creating a visually appealing site that would serve as a catalyst for commercial development along Hawthorne Road; 2) bringing a use to the Eastside that did not currently exist; and 3) leasing or selling the building to a small business. The CRA completed renovations of the shell and leased the space to Omar and Arpita Oselimo, the owners of the nearby Reggae Shack Cafe. Southern Charm created 20 new jobs and was the first sit-down restaurant in the North Lincoln Heights area.

#### **Project Highlights**

- First sit-down restaurant in the Gainesville Eastside Community Reinvestment Area
- Serves culturally relevant heritage food

## APPENDIX C: MI VOZ COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY



### Working Together to Improve Our Community

Mi Voz is dedicated to making positive changes in mobile home parks and the North College corridor by utilizing community strengths to create community solutions. Three pillars guide and inform our work:



#### **Community-Led:**

By ensuring issues and solutions are community-based we not only address needs, we amplify the strengths of our community.



#### **Civic Engagement/ Advocacy:**

We work to proactively shape the community around us by engaging with elected officials, participating in public input, and mobilizing voices to make changes.



#### **Leadership Development:**

Supporting each other by identifying strengths to become leaders to support community work.

*By working together with our neighbors, we can solve issues and reach our community's goals and dreams.*

We are uniting to create better opportunities and a sense of place for today and the future. We are a collective of business owners, workers, parents, and community members working together to create a colorful and vibrant North College corridor that reflects the rich cultural heritage of the immigrant, Latinx community.





In 2019, residents from North College neighborhoods and businesses came together to discuss the future use of vacant land and buildings along the North College corridor in hopes of better shaping the community around us for future generations.

**We are advocating for improvement in 3 areas:**



**Community Hub**

Community hubs are welcoming places for families to come, share, connect, and learn. A community hub can serve as a central location for us to gather, celebrate, develop new skills, and access resources and support. Examples include: workforce development, community skill and asset sharing, mental health clinic, DMV, and family support services.



**Recreational Opportunities**

Increased access and culturally appropriate activities so residents can be more active. This includes activities such as indoor and outdoor soccer fields, youth activity center, outdoor grilling areas and better connections between parks and neighborhoods.



**Activites & Entertainment**

Celebrating the rich culture and heritage of the Latinx/Hispanic community through art and entertainment, specifically for children and families. Examples include: a place for seniors to gather, space for quinceaneras and other cultural celebrations, a movie theatre that plays Spanish language/Latinx created movies, and highlighting local arts and talent throughout the North College corridor.

*It is important to understand that while some of these resources already exist in Fort Collins or even in the North College area, they are not necessarily used by North College residents. These spaces do not reflect our culture and the way we interact with one another.*



As a community, we practice community-led development (CLD). CLD builds on local strengths and facilitates leadership by local voices to set vision and priorities by the people who live in the community. Rather than working on short-term projects, CLD works to achieve systemic changes with the residents designing sustainable, high-impact changes for our community.

**Interested in supporting our work?**



**Reach out:** Learn more about our work.  
970-416-7448 | [info@thefamilycenterfc.org](mailto:info@thefamilycenterfc.org)

# COMMUNITY FIRST: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT

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A brief overview of challenges for  
Hispanic/Latinx residents' economic  
mobility and possible community-  
developed solutions

Dear Business and Community Leaders:

As Fort Collins grows, it is imperative to invest in diversifying the workforce that contributes to our City's thriving economy. Research supports this investment through explicit efforts to attract and retain a workforce that includes an array of skill sets, educational attainment and racial and ethnic diversity.

As Larimer County's fastest growing population, critical members of our workforce, cultural fabric, and overall vibrant community, many Latinx community members continue to struggle financially due to the lack of adequate economic mobility opportunities, housing affordability, and immigration-related challenges. Fort Collins' lack of adequate programming, policies, cultural attunement and continued oversight of this vibrant community continues to limit the human capacity of our fellow residents and our collective potential as a community.

This brief, *Community First: The Importance of Community-Led Development*, authored by The Family Center/La Familia, provides a concise overview of the challenges Latinx/Hispanic residents encounter when trying to attain economic mobility, the larger costs to our City, and Latinx, community-identified solutions. The issues are complex and rooted in decades of structural racism and systemic oppression and the solutions require the joint effort of businesses, government agencies, elected officials, and non-profits with Latinx/Hispanic leaders informing direction.

Thank you for your interest in becoming informed about this issue. For additional information, please contact Emily Gorgol at [emilyg@thefamilycenterfc.org](mailto:emilyg@thefamilycenterfc.org).



According to Colorado's Center on Law and Policy's (CCLP) Self Sufficiency Standard for Colorado 2018, minimum wage employment does not cover the cost of basic needs in Colorado (health care, transportation, food, child care, housing, etc.).<sup>1</sup> In Larimer County a family of four (2 adults, 1 preschooler, 1 infant), requires two adults making \$18.35 per adult, per hour for an annual combined income of \$77,499 to be "self-sufficient," meaning having no reliance on public benefits.<sup>1</sup> However, only 47.7% of jobs in Larimer County pay over an hourly rate of \$17.84.<sup>2</sup>

The economy is dependent on immigrant labor, as they are the backbone of many industries including: restaurant workers, landscapers, construction, hospitality and agriculture. These low-paying jobs often are coupled with no health insurance, paid time-off or sick leave further perpetuating income inequality.

One step to closing the income gap is to increase access to jobs that pay a higher wage and have long-term career potential. Latinx/Hispanic residents face many barriers to accessing education and skill enhancement opportunities due to language barriers, lack of cultural attunement in delivery and setting of classes, cost barriers, and lack of flexible scheduling. By removing cultural, linguistic, and geographic barriers to workforce training and education and creating opportunities to enhance skills, Latinx/Hispanic residents have the ability to link to good paying jobs and increased potential for skill development and career advancement.

Peer communities have made great strides in increasing the visibility, contributions of, and economic mobility of Latinx immigrants through place-based and resident-led approaches. For example, in West Denver<sup>3</sup>, a vibrant cultural district came together to highlight the arts, Latinx/Hispanic-owned businesses and other assets to promote and support small businesses, cultural organizations, and residents in the area.

## Proposed Solution

The path to increasing economic mobility and illuminating the strengths of the Latinx/Hispanic community can take many routes. In 2019, The Family Center/La Familia embarked on a process of community-led development (CLD). CLD builds on local strengths and facilitates leadership by local voices to set vision and priorities by the people who live in the community. Rather than working on short-term projects, CLD works to achieve systemic changes with the residents designing sustainable, high-impact changes for their communities. Below are solutions proposed by the North College Latinx/Hispanic community through this CLD process:

### Creation of a Community Hub/Resource Center:

Community hubs are welcoming places for migrant families to come, share, connect, and learn. In particular, a community hub can serve as a central location for community members to gather, celebrate, develop new skills, and access resources and support. In addition, hubs can strengthen communities and increase resilience by providing and co-locating services such as community programming, job training, childcare, and resource distribution. Below are examples of resources that could be located in a community hub:

**Workforce Development Programs and Resources** that include: trade schools classes (mechanic, electrician, plumber, etc.), business classes, small business support, legal services tax assistance and drivers' licenses. Co-locating resources and education, for those just starting out in their career or looking to expand their business, provides an opportunity for community members to share and build on each others's skills and assets while enhancing the entire community's capabilities.

A resilient community hub builds a strong sense of place through the utilization of trusted providers and programming specifically attuned for the intended community. Designing and building a sense of place that is culturally specific for the Latinx/Hispanic community will require community members to be involved and lead throughout all phases including; concept, design, building, implementation and selection of service providers. The CLD process

“Immigrant businesses are more likely to succeed and thrive in a community where the individuals who start them, along with the new goods and services they offer, are valued.”

*Welcoming America, Guide to Immigrant Economic Development*

uncovered areas worth pursuing with the community (highlighted below) to better understand the cultural preferences. It is important to understand that while some of these resources already exist in Fort Collins or even in the North College area, they are not necessarily utilized by North College residents. Because the community was not involved in designing, planning or informing services offered, there is a lack of culturally attuned programming and spaces and differences in preferences based on culture. The following were key additional areas the community expressed interest in providing through a community hub/resource center:

**Activities and Entertainment** to celebrate the rich culture and heritage of the Latinx/Hispanic community, specifically for children and families. This includes: quinceañeras and other cultural celebrations, movie theatres that play Spanish language/Latinx created movies, and highlights local arts and talent throughout the North College corridor.

**Recreation and Social Gatherings** to improve access to culturally appropriate activities such as indoor and outdoor soccer fields, youth activity center, place for seniors to gather, outdoor grilling areas and better connections to parks and neighborhoods.

To better attract Latinx/Hispanic residents to start, launch, or grow their business within their neighborhood, a sense of place and belonging needs to be built to reflect the culture and heritage of the community. Supporting the highest and best use of skills of all community members is in the best interest of the entire region as immigrant economic development makes the region not only more competitive and prosperous, but also more attractive for other entrepreneurial businesses. To efficiently, effectively, and fully connect immigrants to the workforce, integration of resources and opportunity is essential.<sup>4</sup> Results are best achieved when business development programs, classes, and training are hosted in a trusted setting, delivered credible organizations, and taught by people who share customs and culture.

Adopting a more immigrant-friendly approach through the creation and building of a sense of place has been a key driver of economic growth for cities across the U.S.<sup>4</sup> Addressing economic mobility and an inclusive economy is vital to a health economic environment. Solutions will require a cross-sector approach but most importantly, putting the community in the forefront of the conversation and following their lead to ensure ultimate success.

#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/sites/default/files/selfsuff/docs/CO18\\_SSS\\_Web.pdf](http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/sites/default/files/selfsuff/docs/CO18_SSS_Web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.larimer.org/ewd/data-dashboard/economy-jobs-family-sustaining-potential>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bucuwest.com/about-us/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.welcomingamerica.org/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Guide-to-Immigrant-Economic-Development\\_Final.pdf](https://www.welcomingamerica.org/sites/default/files/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Guide-to-Immigrant-Economic-Development_Final.pdf)



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**@TFCLF**



## APPENDIX E: POLICY LANGUAGE FROM CITY PLAN

- **Policy LIV 2.1: *Revitalization of Underutilized Properties***

Support the use of creative strategies to revitalize vacant, blighted or otherwise underutilized structures and buildings, including, but not limited to

- Adaptive reuse of existing buildings (especially those that have historic significance);
- Infill of existing surface parking lots—particularly in areas that are currently, or will be, served by bus rapid transit (BRT) and/or high-frequency transit in the future;
- Public/private partnerships;
- Infrastructure improvements/upgrades;
- Streetscape enhancements; and
- Voluntary consolidation and assemblage of properties to coordinate the redevelopment of blocks or segments of corridors where individual property configurations would otherwise limit redevelopment potential.

- **Policy LIV 2.2: *Priority Locations for Infill and Redevelopment***

Ensure appropriate use of the City's public investments in infrastructure/improvements in the following areas to achieve the City's strategic goals:

- Downtown District;
- Urban Mixed-Use Districts;
- Mixed-Employment Districts; and
- Metro Districts.

Make regulatory and other incentives, within the City's control, available only to projects that are consistent with the long-term vision for these districts in terms of density, intensity, overall mix of uses and affordability.

- **Policy LIV 2.3: *Transit-Oriented Development***

Require higher-density housing and mixed-use development in locations that are currently, or will be, served by BRT and/or high-frequency transit in the future as infill and redevelopment occurs. Promote a variety of housing options for all income levels.

- **Policy LIV 6.9: *Prevent Displacement***

Build the capacity of homeowner groups, affordable housing providers and support organizations to enable the purchase, rehabilitation and long-term management of

affordable housing. Particular emphasis should be given to mobile home parks located in infill and redevelopment areas.

- **Policy EH 4.2:** *Infill and Redevelopment Barriers in Mixed-Use Employment Districts*

Develop new and modify current policies, procedures and practices to reduce and resolve barriers to infill development and redevelopment in mixed-use employment districts. Utilize and support public funding and financing tools that facilitate redevelopment, reduce costs associated with redevelopment, increase access to amenities and services and address feasibility gaps.

“The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) focuses on the redeveloping urban core, with particular attention toward areas with aging infrastructure and unsafe conditions. Through financial incentives and strategic partnerships, the URA attracts private-sector investment to the urban core to achieve the community’s desired vision. Specifically, the URA is authorized to use TIF to stimulate development. TIF is a tool to remove blight and finance public improvements. This is done through the diversion of future property tax revenue into the URA to pay for public infrastructure improvements such as sidewalks, recreation centers and other public facilities within the district.”