



**DENVER UNION STATION
MASTER PLAN SUPPLEMENT**

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DENVER UNION STATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Denver Union Station (DUS) will be a multimodal transportation hub of international significance and a prominent and distinctive gateway to downtown Denver and the region.

Denver Union Station will bring critical elements of public and private local, regional, statewide, and national transportation systems, existing and planned, together with private development and inspiring civic features.

Denver Union Station will create an exciting setting that will improve the connections between all transportation modes, respect the character and historical significance of the station and its adjacent neighborhoods, and provide a stimulating environment for public activity and economic vitality.

Vision Statement for Denver Union Station developed by the Executive Oversight Committee and the Union Station Advisory Committee, 2002.

The Vision statement above, developed by the public in 2002, has been the guiding element of the planning process for Union Station for most of the past decade. It articulates the high aspirations that the partner agencies and the community have for their Union Station. Since RTD purchased the 19.5 acre Union Station site in 2002, planning efforts have seen significant progress but have also had to react to changes in the assumptions of the FasTracks corridors, agency requirements and funding realities. This Denver Union Master Plan Supplement (Supplement) reviews the accomplishments since adoption of the 2004 Master Plan, reiterates the unchanged major elements of the 2004 Master Plan, describes the Union Station Transit District Plan including updated information about various transportation and private development components – none of which would have been possible without extensive community involvement.

To be clear about how the project and properties are referenced, it will be important to understand a few key terms.

The **Executive Oversight Committee** (EOC) refers to the formal entity that the partner agencies formed through an intergovernmental agreement between the Regional Transportation District (RTD), the City and County of Denver (CCD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and Denver Regional

Council of Governments (DRCOG) in 2001 to pursue a common interest in Denver Union Station.

The **Historic Station** refers to the Denver Union Station Terminal Building and includes only the existing train room and wing buildings as they are today.

The **acronym DUS** and the term “**site**” refer to the Denver Union Station site, which is the 19.5 acres encompassing most of the area from Wynkoop to



Aerial view of outdoor “Train room” above Passenger Rail station

Wewatta and 15th to 20th, including the Historic Station. This is the area that was purchased by RTD in 2001 and was the only property included in the 2004 Master Plan.

The **Transit District** is geographically defined as the area from Wynkoop to the Consolidated Main Line (CML) and 16th to 18th, also jutting out to include the area between 15th and 20th from the track side of the Historic Station to Wewatta. It includes DUS and also includes

more of the surrounding property that is involved in the master planning efforts document in this Supplement.

The **Transit District Plan** describes the set of public and private improvements within the Transit District that are outlined in this Supplement. These transportation, open space and private development improvements will make the DUS of 2012 into the multimodal transportation hub of regional significance that was envisioned in 2002. For future

transportation elements that are not currently part of the Transit District Plan, the 2004 Master Plan and this supplement will be used a guide for decisions about how to incorporate those as-yet-unknown elements into the DUS site.

Elements of the Transit District Plan

Historic Station

The Historic Station will be the heart and soul of the Transit District Plan and symbol of the project. The exterior and interior of the Historic Station will be restored and rehabilitated to return the Historic Station to its historic prominence as a major transportation gateway to Denver. The Train Room will connect the east and west sides of the site and serve as a passenger waiting area. It is envisioned that it will provide space for ticketing, rental cars, airlines, baggage, information, the stationmaster’s office, retail, and public uses. The north and south wings will be used for transportation support functions such as baggage and check-in facilities and for retail, restaurant, or office uses, much as they have been in the past.

Passenger Rail

Passenger rail includes both RTD regional passenger rail services and intercity heavy rail, such as Amtrak, and Ski Train. The passenger rail facility will be located at-grade adjacent to the Wewatta Street side of the Historic Station. The facility includes eight passenger rail tracks plus a storage track and four passenger platforms and one service platform. The facility will accommodate the RTD, Amtrak, the Ski Train, as well as surplus capacity for new service or special trains. Platforms will be accessed several ways: at-grade from 16th Street, below grade from the Regional Bus Facility, or above from the pedestrian deck adjacent to the buildings along 18th Street. Track 1, which will be closest to Historic Station, will accommodate the East Line and can be directly



Denver Union Station Transit District Plan



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accessed at the Historic Station.

Light Rail

The light rail station will be located at-grade adjacent to the CML and will be aligned with 17th Street. The light rail station will have two tracks and platforms, with space to add one more track and platform when needed. All trains will arrive from and depart to the south. Arriving passengers will have a clear view of the Historic Station as an immediate orienting feature and will have easy access to the Mall Shuttle and Downtown Circulator for connections to the Historic Station or destinations in Downtown.

RTD Regional Bus Facility

The Regional Bus Facility, which will replace RTD's Market Street Station, will be located under 17th Street between the light rail station and the Historic Station. The facility will provide 22 bus bays serving RTD regional and express buses, the Downtown Circulator, and commercial buses. The facility will be climate controlled and will connect pedestrians on moving walkways between the light rail platforms and Historic Station, and to the passenger rail platforms.



Outdoor "Train Room" from 16th Street

Street Mall Shuttle and the Downtown Circulator

The 16th Street Mall Shuttle and the Downtown Circulator will provide the main distribution for passengers to and from Downtown. The Mall Shuttle will be extended to provide a convenient connection adjacent to the light rail station, passenger rail platforms and the Historic Station.

The Downtown Circulator will use 18th Street to access the Regional Bus Facility and connect the Transit District with the rest of Downtown. Stops will be provided at each end of the Regional Bus Facility for the Circulator to provide convenient access to and from light rail and passenger rail.

Public Space

The primary public spaces for the Transit District are Wynkoop Plaza on the east side of the historic building and the 17th Street Promenade on the west.

Wynkoop Plaza will be used as circulation space, casual gathering, outdoor eating and vending, and as a gathering space for small groups or events. This open space will provide views of the Historic Station façade as well as façade's of the historic structures across Wynkoop Street. It will enhance the Historic Station's setting, and create a vibrant and attractive pedestrian amenity that links the Historic Station and Transit District with Lower Downtown. To ensure that Wynkoop Plaza becomes a lively public space, it will provide active uses along the plaza's edge and along 16th and 18th Streets, and within the plaza itself.

The major public circulation space will be along the 17th Street Promenade. As the spine of the Transit District, 17th Street Promenade provides a visual and physical connection between the Historic Station, major buildings, and all the major transportation modes. This will be a busy circulation space providing the opportunity for small retail shops,

cafes, and transportation services. The area along the Promenade will be at an appropriate scale and will provide interesting elements for pedestrians making transit connections or traversing the site. The 17th Street Promenade will be anchored by two plazas: one just to the west of the passenger rail platforms and the other just east of the light rail platforms – both with connections down to the Regional Bus Facility.

Another smaller public space will be provided at the northeast corner of 18th and Wewatta Streets. This smaller plaza will be the counterpart plaza to the new development on the opposite corner of the intersection and will be the main access to the pedestrian connections over the passenger rail tracks from 18th Street as well as the main connection to the parking structure from the west side of DUS.

Private Development

There are six development parcels on DUS. The intent of the Transit District Plan is to accommodate a dynamic and complementary mix of residential and commercial uses in buildings of the highest quality. It will include buildings with active ground floor uses fronting along Wynkoop, Wewatta, 16th, 17th, and 18th streets. The DUS zoning allows for varying amounts of development under different height limits and setbacks to reinforce the architectural character and scale of the Historic Station and provide the urban design transition from Lower Downtown to the Commons Neighborhood.

Pedestrian Circulation and Connection

The 17th Street Promenade provides the primary orienting and connecting spine of the Transit District. At ground level, the 160-foot-wide boulevard provides a clear connection between the Historic Station, passenger rail, regional bus, and light rail. The Regional Bus Facility will be under the 17th Street Promenade providing people the choice of an

open air stroll along the Promenade or a weather-protected connection with moving walkways below the street. It also includes escalators and elevators for vertical circulation from the busway concourse to all the street level amenities including connections to the rail services, taxis, limousines, and shuttles. Clear pedestrian routes connect the site internally and with the surrounding neighborhoods. Safe and comfortable pedestrian crossings of streets within and at the perimeter of the Transit District are essential to a successful pedestrian experience; the intersection of Wewatta and 17th Streets will be especially important. Pedestrians will access the site at 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, Wynkoop, and Wewatta Streets. 16th Street has recently been connected to the Highland neighborhood with a series of three pedestrian/bike bridges over the CML, South Platte River, and I-25.

Bicycles

Bicycle access to and from the regional and local bike system will be maintained and access to the at-grade light rail and passenger rail platforms will be provided. Additionally, convenient bicycle access to the Regional Bus Facility will be provided. The Transit District Plan will improve bicycle flow between the Millennium Bridge and Wynkoop Street. In addition, ample bicycle racks and lockers situated at key locations will be provided to encourage people to arrive at the site on bicycles but also encourage cyclists to dismount before entering areas congested with pedestrians. Though the Transit District Plan does not identify a location for a bike station, one will be provided to serve bicyclists at DUS. Like pedestrians, bicycles can access the site on the street network at 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, Wynkoop (dedicated lanes), and Wewatta Streets – as well as the new bridges connecting 16th St to the Highland neighborhood.

Automobile Access and Parking

Auto access within the Transit District will be

provided on Wynkoop, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, Wewatta Streets and Chestnut Place. 16th Street will be expanded to allow for through movements of the Mall Shuttle as well as the introduction of general purpose lanes to better connect the LoDo and Commons neighborhoods, and serve local traffic access to DUS. Primary drop-off zones for taxis, limousines, and private vehicles will be along Wynkoop and Wewatta Streets.

This Master Plan outlines the necessary parking needed for the private development uses on site as well as some additional public parking. Parking will be provided internal to each private development building. However, since the passenger rail runs beneath the building on 18th and Wewatta some of that parking will be located in a structure between 18th and 19th Streets. The market rate public parking will also occupy approximately 150 spaces in that structure.

Sustainability

In the few years since the adoption of 2004 Master Plan, global events have focused significant attention on sustainability. Sustainability has many definitions and anticipates that available technology will improve markedly in the near future. This plan documents the current goals and policies of each of the partner agencies as aspirations for the design and construction of the Transit District Plan.

Project Costs and Funding Sources

The partner agencies have identified sources offunding up to \$477 Million to construct the public elements of the Transit District Plan. This matches the most recent cost estimate and has given the partner agencies and master developer the confidence to move forward with the final design and approval processes.



Benefits of the Union Station Transit District Plan

The Transit District Plan will accommodate light rail, passenger rail, and regional bus, as well as other public and private transportation providers. Taken together, the arrangement of the transportation components, public open space, and development components creates clear and intuitive wayfinding for pedestrians circulating from one mode to another or from one destination to another. Perhaps most important, all of the transportation elements can be constructed at the same time, prior to opening day of any of the FasTracks expansion operations. This single phase of construction also allows for immediate open space construction and eliminates barriers to private development like the prospect of future underground construction activity. Benefits of the Transit District Plan will be realized throughout the city, metropolitan region, and state. The transportation hub will promote economic vitality by providing citizens better access to housing, jobs and commerce, and improved connections for business, recreation, tourism, and services. Connections within the Transit District will also benefit the young, the elderly, and the disabled by helping them access employment, shopping, and leisure activities more independently.



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