

Denver's Civic Center

Park Master Plan

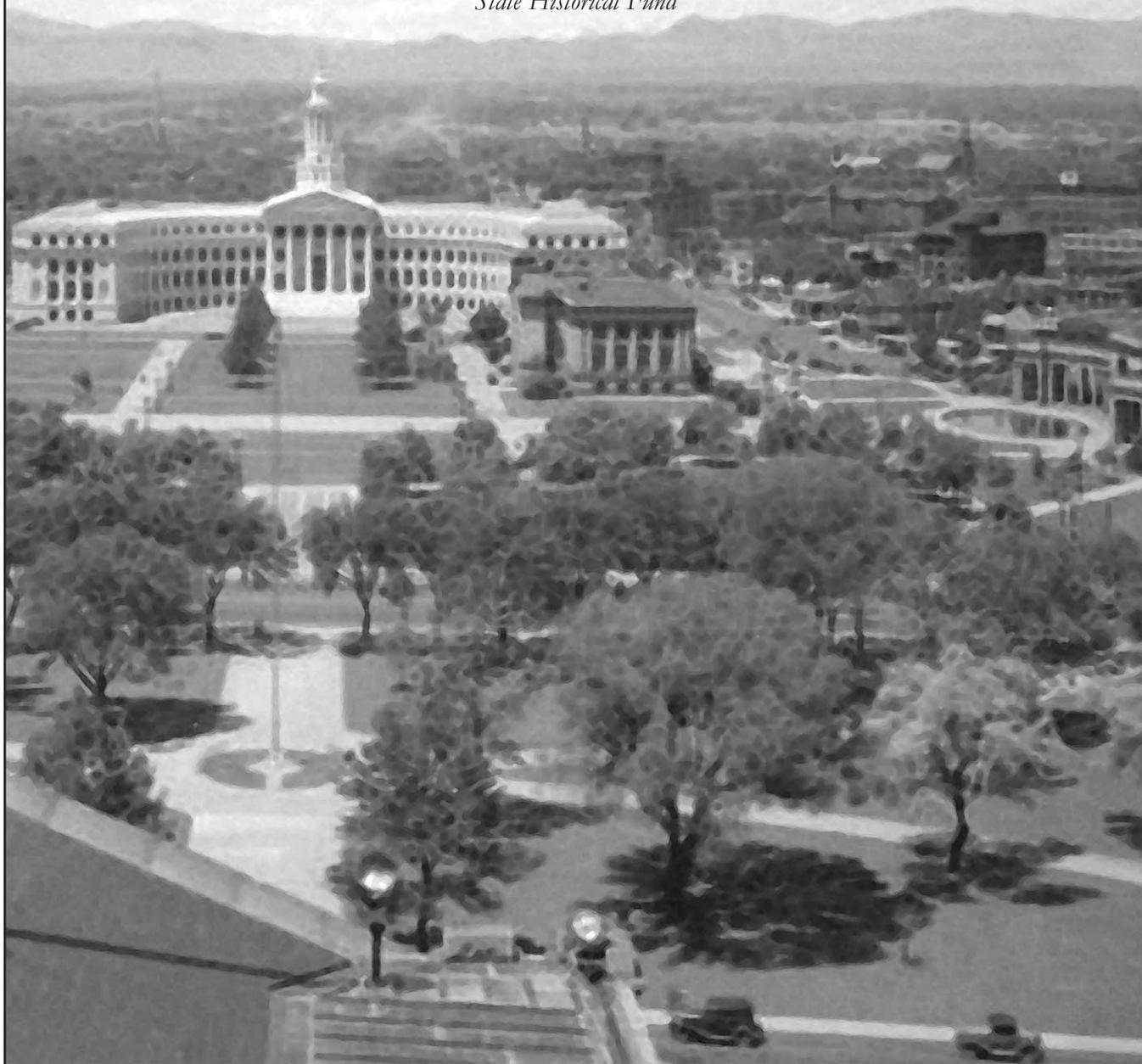


Denver Parks & Recreation Department

Mundus Bishop Design, Inc.

October 2005

*Funded in part by a Grant from the Colorado Historical Society's
State Historical Fund*



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CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS - RECREATION
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October 12, 2005

Mark Wolfe
State Historical Fund
225 E. 16th Ave. #950
Denver, CO 80203

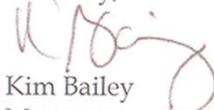
Dear Mr. Wolfe,

I am pleased to adopt the Civic Center Historic Landscape Assessment and Park Master Plan as the road map for the future of Civic Center. Civic Center represents Denver's rich history of civic idealism and engagement. Beginning with the people who first envisioned this park a century ago, each generation has contributed to the evolution of the park. This plan provides the research, analysis, evaluation and management recommendations we need to revitalize the park as a proud Denver icon. While Civic Center is an important historic park we need to protect, we also recognize that change is needed to keep a park relevant to community needs. This plan will guide the department in not only recognizing and valuing the park's historic integrity, but even more importantly; this plan provides guidance for appropriate change to occur so that the park will be a vital public space for generations to come.

I am particularly enthusiastic about the vibrant collaborative spirit of this plan. The comprehensive vision and goals set forth in this plan could not have come about without the cooperation of the public and other public agencies who participated in the planning process. This engagement helped foster the creation of the Civic Center Conservancy who formed during the planning process and has become a full-fledged partner in the future of the park. I look forward to supporting this partnership and pressing forward to implement the new projects, programs and activities for the park.

Today, with this new master plan, we are poised to renew the significance of Civic Center in our community as an important symbol representing our past and future ability to translate inspiration into action.

Sincerely,


Kim Bailey
Manager



Acknowledgements

Mayor

John W. Hickenlooper

Manager of Parks

Kim Bailey

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Rosemary E. Rodriguez, District 3
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Park Master Plan



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Purpose of the Park Master Plan

Civic Center is the heart and soul of Denver. Created over 100 years ago as the city's primary public gathering space and governmental center, it is one of the State's most symbolic places. Civic Center is one of the most complete and intact City Beautiful style civic center's in the country, and its importance is recognized by its listing on the National Register of Historic Places and its inclusion in the Civic Center Historic District, a Denver Landmark District.

Civic Center is a key component in Denver's larger urban framework and open space network. It is the primary green space in the center of the city, and as such, it serves as both regional and neighborhood park. Civic Center is best-known as the setting for the region's largest public festivals, including the Festival of Mountain and Plain - Taste of Colorado and the Capitol Hill People's Fair. Its central location and grand presence also makes it a first choice for smaller events. Theater in the Park, Bike to Work Day and political speeches, along with rallies and filming are just a few of the smaller events that took place in Civic Center in 2004.

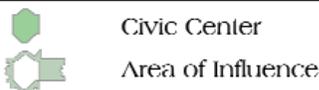
Civic Center serves as the key urban park in downtown Denver, however several issues combine to negatively impact its usability and denigrate its character. Civic Center attracts tens of thousands of people each day during large festival events (for example, in 2004, the Taste of Colorado estimated its attendance at 500,000 people over a four day period and another 250,000 attended the People's Fair). But on a daily basis and during the colder months of the year, park use is inconsistent. In warm weather Civic Center is most active during lunchtime during the week. At most other times the park primarily serves as a walking route from downtown Denver to the cultural complex.



ISSUES

- Inconsistent Use
- Physical Barriers
- On-Going Deterioration of Significant Features
- Vagrancy
- Perception as Unsafe

Legend



Vagrancy and crime are issues that impact most urban parks, and at Civic Center they foster an unsafe perception. The City's declining budget has reached Civic Center, where budget cuts have significantly reduced the ability of the Parks and Recreation Department to care for the park. Routine maintenance measures are not able to keep pace with the needs of Civic Center's memorable historic elements and buildings, and they are beginning to show signs of deterioration. While any one of these issues is challenging, the combination is making Civic Center a less than desirable public place.

Today, Civic Center's immediate surroundings and adjacent neighborhoods are resurging with redevelopment occurring at a rapid pace. With the completion of the Wellington Webb Office Building for city services, the expansion of the Central Library, and the addition of the Hamilton Wing of the Denver Art Museum, the Civic Center District is beginning to resemble the governmental center that Charles Mulford Robinson intended in his original plan for the civic center in 1906. Civic Center is once again at the heart of the city, poised to serve as its grand, central public gathering space.

The Park Master Plan for Civic Center is the cohesive framework that will guide decision-making when making physical changes to the park, when programming uses and when managing its landscape and buildings.

The Park Master Plan for Civic Center offers a cohesive vision for the future of the park and its immediate surroundings.

- The Park Master Plan builds on the park's rich historical context to ensure that its historical integrity is preserved while enlivening Civic Center for contemporary use.
- The plan addresses the issues and needs related to Civic Center, and offers strategies for creating a dynamic, lively place that will attract people on a daily basis.
- The Park Master Plan provides recommendations for the restoration and rehabilitation of the park's significant features.
- The plan defines important new physical features that will complete the vision for Civic Center and ensure its use as an active urban space.
- The Park Master Plan provides a management strategy to guide operations and maintenance efforts, ensuring that Civic Center is a clean and safe place.

The Park Master Plan for Civic Center is the cohesive framework that will guide decision-making when making physical changes to the park, when programming uses and when managing its landscape and buildings. The Park Master Plan will be the primary tool that will be used by the City & County of Denver and its partners to manage change at Civic Center.



PRIMARY
AND SECONDARY
SOURCES

- Historic publications
- Unpublished manuscripts
- Historic correspondence
- Reports
- Historic documents
- Nominations for historic designation

The Planning Process

The planning process for the Park Master Plan consisted of five phases: assessment, programming, conceptual alternatives, preferred alternative, and the master plan.

- The **Assessment** phase focused on evaluating Civic Center as a cultural landscape using recognized standard methodologies for research, inventory and analysis. Historic research was conducted at a thorough level of investigation and included review of all known primary and secondary sources. The park's composition and its significant features were evaluated for their historical integrity and present condition.
- The **Programming** phase identified existing uses and defined a program for Civic Center that is compatible with its resources and that will meet the community needs for an urban park that functions as both a regional and neighborhood resource.
- A series of three **Conceptual Alternatives** were developed to explore the range of physical improvements that could accommodate the program; that could ensure that the park becomes an active and lively place; and that would preserve and protect Civic Center's significant architectural and historical elements.
- The **Preferred Alternative** brings together the most important ideas into a park master plan that was reviewed, evaluated and supported by the City and the community.
- The **Park Master Plan** is the accepted plan that provides recommendations for physical improvements, defines a comprehensive park program and outlines a strategy for the improved management of Civic Center.

The planning for the Civic Center park master plan was guided by a very active public who represented a broad cross section of interests. Several key groups were instrumental in providing input including the Civic Center Advisory Committee, the Blue Ribbon Panel, the Civic Center Conservancy, City staff, residents of adjacent neighborhoods including the Golden Triangle, Silver Triangle and Capitol Hill, and community members.

Several opportunities were provided for public input, including a series of meetings and open houses focused on Civic Center and two additional workshops that informed the Civic Center District Plan. A user survey was conducted and was successful in contacting a wide range of participants, providing information on likes and dislikes as well as identifying the most popular park activities.



The public process included a half-day workshop with the Civic Center District Plan in August 2004; a Public Open House in September 2004; focus group meetings with event organizers, City personnel, neighborhood groups, Morey Middle School and the Civic Center Conservancy held during November and December of 2004; a Civic Center Advisory Committee meeting in November 2004; a public open house and comment period with the Civic Center District Plan in December 2004; a classroom project with Morey Middle School during January and February 2005; a public meeting and open house for the Park Master Plan alternatives in February 2005; a week-long design charrette for the Civic Center Advisory Committee in late February 2005; and a public open house during the week of March 22, 2005.



Civic Center History

Development of the Civic Center

In 1932 after more than eight years of design and construction, the final cornerstone of Denver's City & County Building was laid. The completion of the grand, classical building culminated a 30 year process to define the Civic Center as the heart of city government and its cultural center. Set on the western edge of Civic Center and symmetrically aligned with its primary axis and that of the State Capitol, the City & County Building perfectly completed Edward H. Bennett's 1917 master plan. It also marked the end of the City Beautiful era in Denver.

The roots of civic beautification in Denver began well before 1900 through the efforts of early city leaders and active citizens who envisioned a city of clean streets with places of respite and enjoyment. Mayor Richard Sopris put forth the earliest comprehensive vision in his 1878 park plan, which included two city parks located equidistant from the future state capitol site and connected by a tree-lined boulevard. Former Territorial Governor John Evans recognized the economic and aesthetic benefits of beautification, and expanded Sopris' ideas with his visionary 1894 plan that promoted an interconnected system of parks and parkways. Evans' plan, based on the city purchasing land for parks, failed to gain city council approval. His ideas, however, continued through the work of organizations such as the Woman's Club of Denver, whose members included Margaret Brown and Anne Evans, who championed aesthetic improvements to city streets and the City's parks including the entrance to City Park. This group ultimately spawned the impressive Civic Improvement Society (CIS), and in 1903, they created an umbrella organization - the Municipal Art League - to address civic issues. With a broad spectrum of city leaders, businessmen and civic organizations as members, and through its mission to "secure united action in the promotion, erection and protection of public works of artistic municipal improvements," the Municipal Art League would be instrumental in transforming the area west of the State Capitol into the new civic center.

In 1903, Denver leaders focused on consolidating city government into the city and county of Denver to function under a home rule charter. As the measure moved towards approval, the Municipal League was successful in pressuring lawmakers into creating an official Art Commission - a complement to the park commission that was also being established under the new charter. In 1904 with the approval of the charter, the Art Commission, consisting of seven members appointed by the mayor with the mayor as ex-officio, was charged with all the matters related to art.

One month after the home rule charter became law, civic beautification efforts in Denver received a huge boost with the election of Robert

"(Speer) was a civic idealist who argued that one way to improve humanity was to offer it an uplifting urban environment."

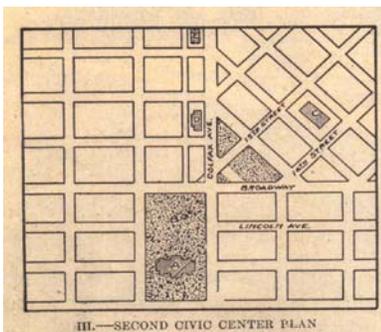
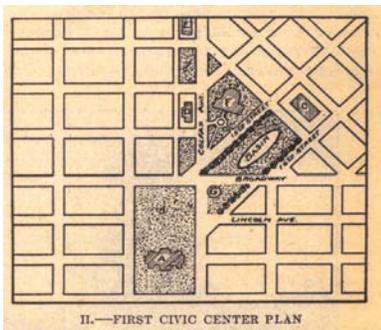
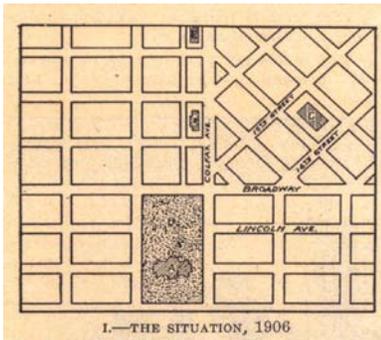
William H. Wilson,
The City Beautiful Movement



Speer as mayor. From his mayoral election in 1904 until his death in 1918, Mayor Robert Speer, through the power of the home rule charter, would be instrumental in championing civic beauty and public improvements - changing the face of Denver forever. Speer began with the much needed functional improvements such as paving streets and installing utilities, funding these public projects through special park districts. He then moved to general beautification tasks that had been the backbone of earlier efforts by the Municipal Art League including clean streets, control of signs, and street tree plantings.

In 1905, Mayor Speer's efforts were considerably amplified when the newly formed Art Commission, with his approval, commissioned noted planner Charles Mulford Robinson to define a vision for Denver. The Art Commission was already versed in the City Beautiful principles that the noted civic expert Robinson promoted. They were also quite familiar with the Senate Park Commission plan of Washington D.C., also known as the McMillan Plan, of which they desired a similar, but scaled down version for Denver. In his 1906 report, *The Development of Denver*, Robinson promoted a "civic renaissance" for Denver, in essence a civic overhaul for a city that was lacking structure and beauty.

Robinson's key recommendations were for a "civic center" in the heart of the city ". . .that would emphasize and dignify the State Capitol (with). . . the preservation of a very grand mountain view;" and ". . .a series of boulevards and parkways that would tie the scattered parks into a system." This "civic center" would be the city's great central space, bounded by government buildings and connecting the State Capitol Building with the then County Courthouse at 16th Street and Court Place. Robinson's civic center reconciled the two discordant street grids with a linear open space set on the downtown grid. He aligned this central space along a visual sight line between the two key government buildings, reinforcing this axis with a grand central basin and with the extension of 16th Avenue to Lincoln Street. For Colfax Avenue, Robinson recommended a series of small parks to connect the United States



Mint and the proposed Carnegie Library with the civic center. He placed a new auditorium between the United States Mint and the courthouse, and set the proposed pioneer monument in a plaza at its front door.

The Art Commission and Mayor Speer enthusiastically endorsed Robinson's vision and set about funding its creation through park district bonds. Approval of the funding required a vote of the people, and opposition quickly organized against the cost of the plan and its effects on Denver's taxpayers. The bond proposal failed in May 1906. In January 1907, Mayor Speer set about bringing the opposition into his on-going efforts. He created a new committee with his primary opponents as appointees and gave them the task of planning the new civic center. Their proposal was utilitarian, resolving simple functional issues including purchasing the Bates triangle where Robinson had envisioned the Auditorium. Primarily a smaller version of Robinson's central lawn, the scale of this proposed civic center was too small to create a viable setting for the area's government buildings. The plan was less expensive than Robinson's plan, but it also lacked the vision to inspire the support of the Art Commission.

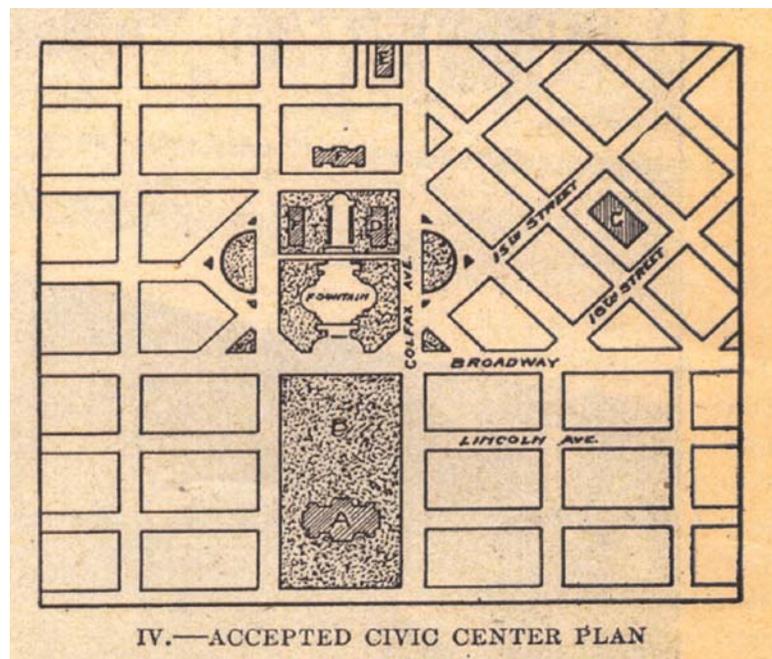
For Mayor Speer, 1907 would prove to be a very fruitful year. The Art Commission secured the services of George Kessler, the noted landscape architect from Kansas City, to create a parks and parkway system for Denver. They also continued in their efforts to create a public monument that would be a fitting tribute to Colorado's early pioneers, bringing sculptor Frederick MacMonnies to Denver to discuss the site for this important memorial. MacMonnies' visit provided an opportunity for the Art Commission to explore alternatives to the uninspiring plan for the civic center created by Speer's committee. The Art Commission enlisted MacMonnies' assistance, commissioning him to create yet another civic center plan.

MacMonnies quickly abandoned the notion of linking the corner of the State Capitol building with the Courthouse. Instead, he proposed an astonishingly simple, but spectacular plan. He oriented a grand park to the immediate west of the State Capitol, aligning this new linear space along the central east-west axis of the symmetrical building - creating a visual sight line that extended to the west to the Rocky Mountains. At its western end, MacMonnies placed a new city building symmetrically on axis with the State Capitol, defining a clear east-west axis. The pivoting of the axis was a bold, dramatic move. Set high on Brown's Bluff with steps that rise to an elevation of one mile high, the State Capitol aligned squarely with the mountain range of the Continental Divide. MacMonnies recognized this strong contextual setting and placed the new civic center in direct relationship with the State Capitol, defining a grand center of commerce and interaction.



To reconcile the two street grids, MacMonnies proposed two semi-circular park spaces, one north of Colfax Avenue on the Bates triangle to resolve the connection to the downtown grid, and the other on the south to balance the first. He sited the new monument to Colorado's pioneers on the northern of two triangular parcels on Broadway. In the park's interior, MacMonnies proposed a symmetrical arrangement with a grand central fountain and a long reflecting pool using the visual sight line as a defining east-west axis. He included the proposed Carnegie Library on the north of the axis and balanced it with another proposed building to the south.

MacMonnies' simple, Beaux Arts solution gained approval of the Art Commission, Mayor Speer and the Parks Commission who quickly moved forward in securing funds for the purchase of the land. To gain voter approval for this plan, they altered their approach substantially from their previous efforts. This plan was simpler and less extensive than Robinson's original 1905 vision. It was positioned where land was cheaper, allowing for a ten-year bond to pay for land acquisition and silencing some earlier critics. Learning from the previous endeavor, the group organized a broad promotional campaign. Voter approval was narrowed to just one district with the assessment placed solely on the East Park District where assessed property values were well above those of other city neighborhoods and in an area that had yet to participate in financing Denver's growing system of parks and parkways. Other improvements were wrapped into the assessment for the civic center, including the extension of parkways and boulevards, addition of new playgrounds in the district, and improvements to Cheesman Park. To defeat the bond proposal, opponents needed 25 per-



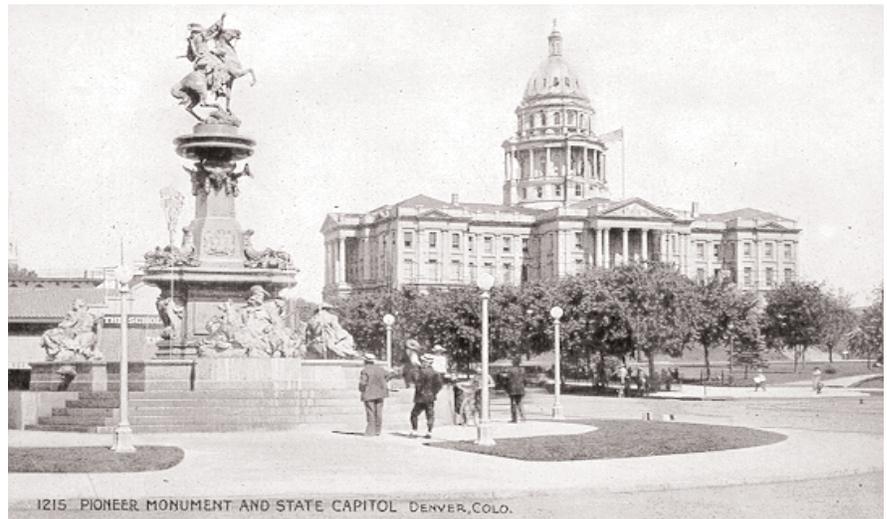
cent of the property owners to object. After the 1909 vote the city determined that only 20 percent had objected. Opponents disagreed, and pursued their opposition by taking the decision through several years of court battles. In 1911, the Colorado Supreme Court ruled in favor of Denver, allowing for land acquisition to begin.



The Carnegie Library, completed in 1909, was the first building to be constructed on the new civic center site. This location had been agreed to many years before construction began, and was a critical component of each park plan including Robinson's original 1906 plan and MacMonnies' subsequent 1909 plan. The Greek Revival style library was designed by Albert Ross of New York and funded through a \$200,000 gift from philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. Its architectural style was consistent with the Art Commission's vision for the new civic center and in keeping with the neoclassical aesthetic of the City Beautiful and its principles for order and harmony.

In his 1909 plan, Frederick MacMonnies defined two prominent locations for public art and sculpture, both along the Broadway edge of the proposed civic center. He selected the site just north of Colfax Avenue as the setting for the Pioneer Monument - his 1911 French Beaux Arts sculpture - that symbolically marks the end of the Smokey Hill Trail and commemorates Colorado's pioneers. The other site, on the south side of 14th Avenue, was not developed and became part of the grounds of the Denver Public Library in 1956.

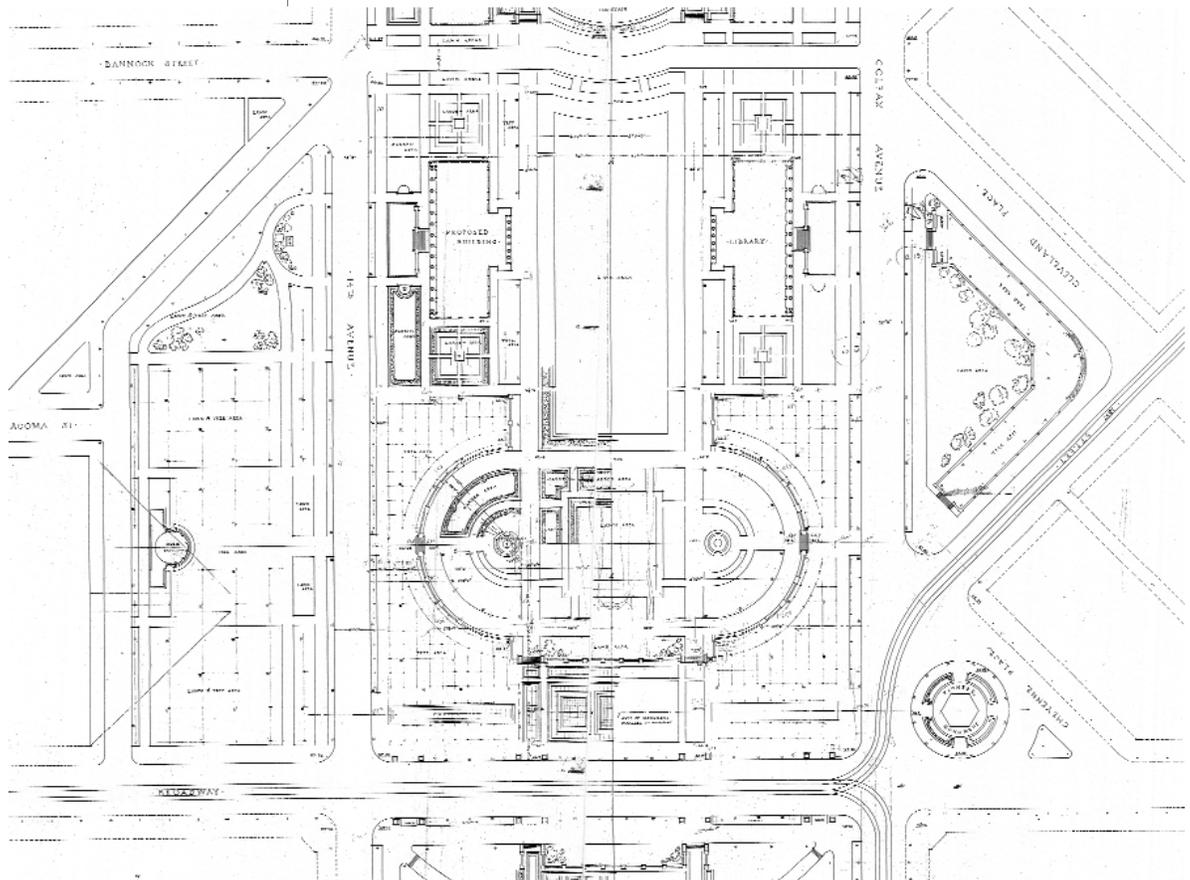
Mayor Speer's style and push for public improvements took its toll in 1912. Amidst recriminations on his tactics for securing funding, and the loss of significant sections of Cherry Creek to the 1912 flood including the undermining of improvements that he had championed, Speer decided



against seeking another term. Henry Arnold was elected mayor in 1912. Within one year, the City shifted from its strong mayoral form of government to a commission based government. They continued with the development of the civic center, commissioning the Olmsted Brothers landscape architectural firm from Brookline, Massachusetts in 1912 to assist the park board with its efforts to create a park system. The Olmsted Brothers' commission lasted from 1912 to 1914 during which time they substantially defined Denver's park aesthetic. Their work included planning the Denver Mountain Parks system, designing several parkways including East 7th Avenue, East 17th Avenue and Williams Street, and designing City Park and Sloan's Lake Park.



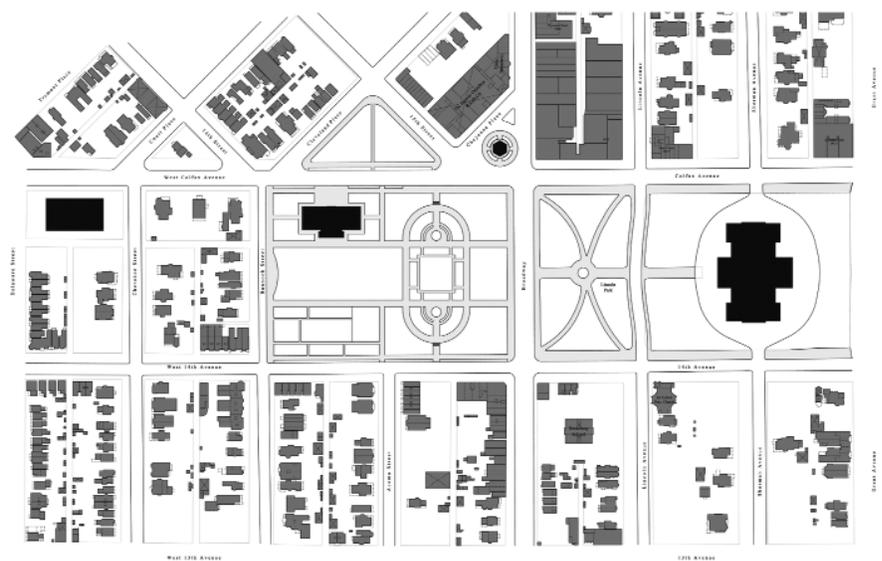
For the civic center, the Olmsted Brothers proposed a *tapis vert*, set in an axially symmetrical arrangement along MacMonnies' east-west axis. Their plan, which followed the firm's design philosophy of blending naturalistic principles with formal arrangements, consisted of a forest, a concert grove, formal gardens, and big splash of lights. Its symmetrical arrangement proposed a plaza at Broadway, created a sunken garden in the center that was defined by formal tree groves, and balanced the Carnegie Library with a proposed Art Museum to the south. A long linear lawn defined the



space between the two buildings and a proposed municipal building ended the civic center on the west. The Olmsted municipal building was larger than that proposed by MacMonnies, with wings that wrapped to the east to embrace the two park buildings. The Olmsted plan fundamentally ignored MacMonnies' semi-circular park spaces in which he had intended to reconcile the two street grids. Instead, they focused on the linear blocks between Broadway and Cherokee Streets. Unlike the MacMonnies vision, which was constrained to paper, the city proceeded with construction of the Olmsted plan. By 1914, gravel walks defined the central lawn, the sunken garden and the site for the future building. Grassy lawns filled the park spaces. But the Olmsted improvements would be short-lived.

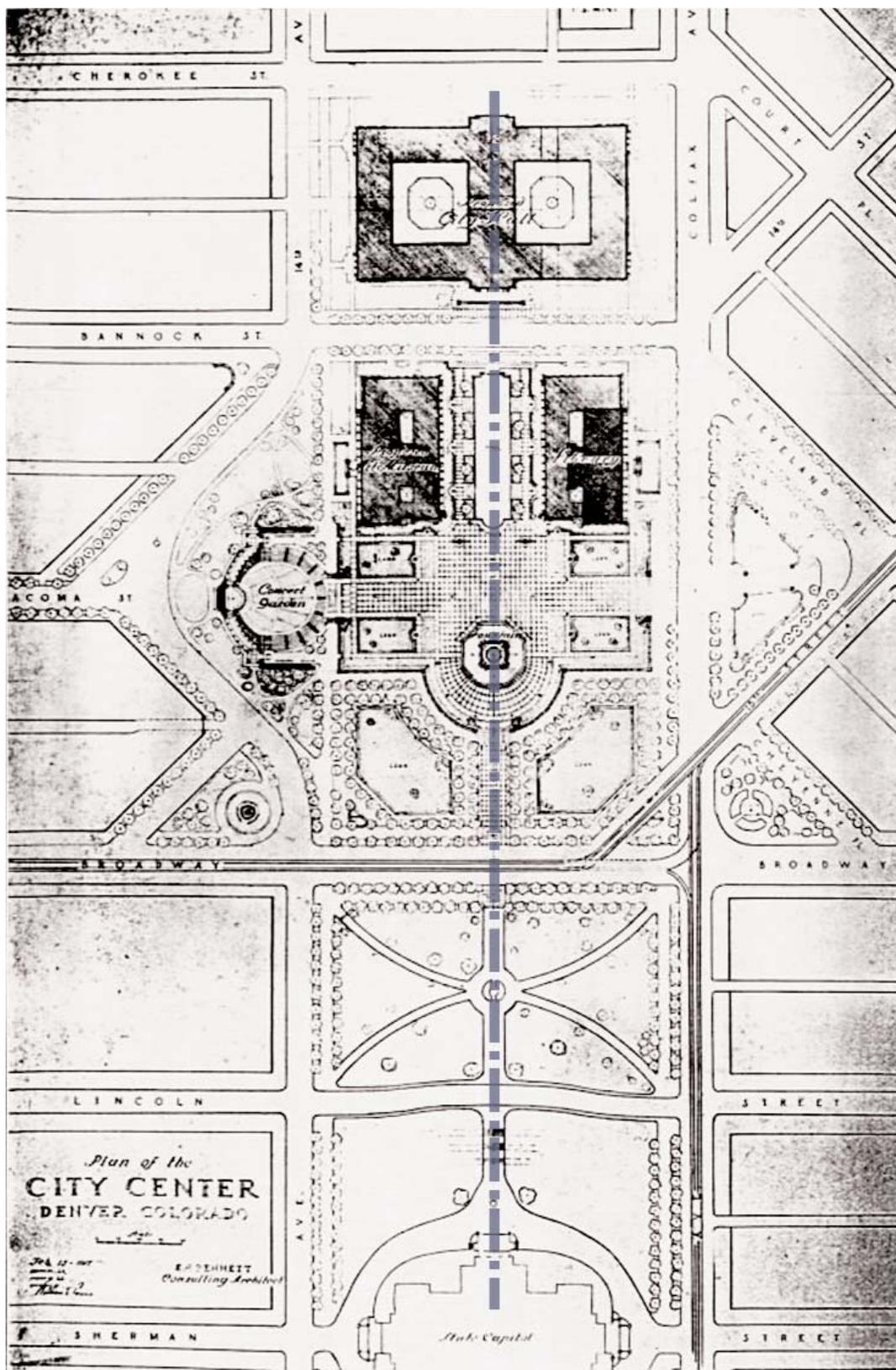
In May 1916, Denver voters once again elected Robert Speer as mayor with all the power of the home rule charter. Mayor Speer's dislike of the new civic center was profound, resulting in the scrapping of the new lawns and paving in favor of a new design with a new designer. Mayor Speer immediately commissioned the services of architect Edward H. Bennett of Chicago to develop his civic center vision. Bennett was well versed in the City Beautiful principles, having worked alongside the master architect Daniel Burnham in the design of the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition Fair, the Senate Plan for Washington D.C., and the Chicago Plan.

While earlier civic center plans had somewhat addressed the City Beautiful principles, Bennett's 1917 plan fully embraced its neoclassical planning, architectural style, and social conviction. Bennett expanded MacMonnies' arrangement by proposing a beautiful ensemble of buildings grouped around the civic center, providing a harmonious whole with a balanced contrast of open space and buildings. Bennett conceived "*The Civic*



Olmsted Plan, left
Figure Ground 1912, right





Center" as a grand open space - a place for all citizens where thousands could gather or individuals could relax. He found it ". . .essential that a large portion of the center itself should be paved or gravelled in such a way as to accommodate large numbers," while also recognizing that ". . .a considerable portion of the (park) should be shaded and there also should be small areas devoted to lawn and planting spaces for shrubbery to offer variety and background for statues, balustrades, and decorative features." Bennett brought the Bates triangle and ". . .the corresponding triangular space" on the south into his composition, proposing key park features in each. On the south, he proposed the Court of Honor to Civic Benefactors and the Open Air Theater and on the north, lagoons and a causeway.

It is ". . .essential that a large portion of the center itself should be paved or gravelled in such a way as to accommodate large numbers," while also recognizing that ". . .a considerable portion of the (park) should be shaded and there also should be small areas devoted to lawn and planting spaces for shrubbery to offer variety and background for statues, balustrades, and decorative features."

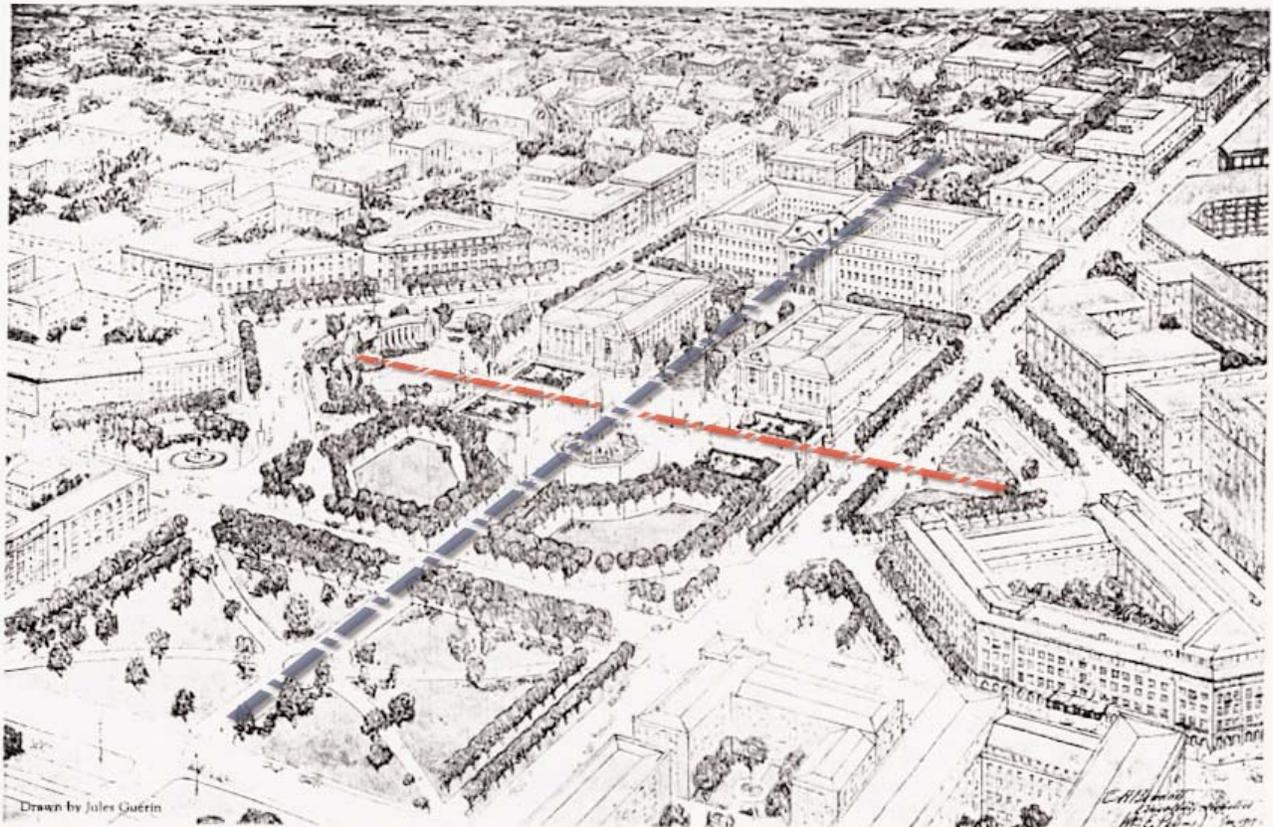
Edward H. Bennett

Bennett organized his formal composition along MacMonnies' east-west or primary axis, defining an axially symmetrical arrangement for the civic center where its southern half mirrored the northern. To accentuate the site's naturally sloping topography, Bennett created two stepped terraces, separated by a granite balustrade wall. He extended the primary axis to the west to include a proposed municipal building, which was also symmetrical and that would serve as the western terminus. Just to the east was the existing Carnegie Library, located just north of the primary axis, which Bennett proposed to enlarge. To its south, across the primary axis, he proposed a second building meant to house an Art Museum that would match the library's mass, form and scale, and its placement within the park. Between the two buildings, and aligned along the primary axis, Bennett placed a linear basin of still water - a reflecting pool he called the *Long Pool* - that he flanked by linear walks that he described as the *Court of Statuary*.

Towards the center of the park, Bennett introduced a transverse or secondary axis, along which he set a broad, linear space oriented north-south. The secondary axis was a remnant of the Olmsted Brothers work, which had a similar axis although it was located just east of Bennett's. Bennett envisioned this as a formal space, arranged along the secondary axis in an axial symmetrical pattern with a broad walk at its center. Linear lawn panels flanked either side of the central walk, and a series of narrower walks defined the space's outside edge. This secondary axis connected Bennett's two triangular spaces, linked the proposed open air theater with the Bates triangle, and created a grand public space in the park's center.

To the south, in alignment with the secondary axis, Bennett placed an open air theater and a commemorative space, the *Court of Benefactors*, for those who contributed to the park's development. Originally, conceived by the Olmsted Brothers as a concert grove, Bennett envisioned this to be the park's southern anchor, a park space that would be defined by a semi-circular building with an accompanying amphitheater. It was developed in 1918 as the *Greek Theater*, just as Bennett had envisioned. At the northern end of the secondary axis, the area known as the Bates triangle was where Bennett originally proposed a lagoon and causeway. This idea was quickly aban-





THE DENVER CIVIC CENTER PLAN

Plaza in Foreground—Part of State Capitol Grounds
 Circular Monument (left)—"The State"
 Circular Monument (right)—"Pioneer Monument"
 Triangle to left—Court of Honor to Civic Benefactors and Open-Air Theater
 Triangle to right—Lagoon and Causeway
 Rectangular Building (left)—Proposed Art Gallery

Rectangular Building (right)—City Library
 Long Building (double court)—Proposed City and County Building
 Above This to Right—United States Mint
 Long Pool—Court of Statuary
 Central Pool—Monumental Fountain

Edward H. Bennett's 1918 Plan

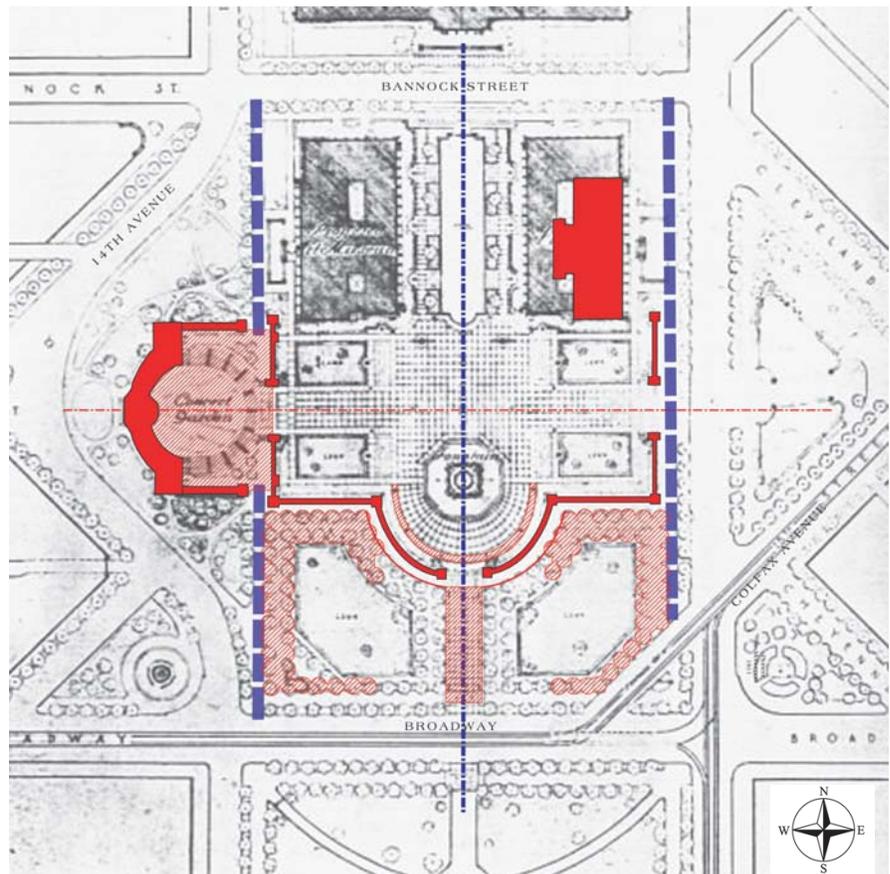


done when Mayor Speer secured a gift from John Voorhies to fund a memorial gateway. The addition of the Voorhies Monument in 1919 completed the northern end of civic center as a gateway, firmly positioning the Bates triangle as an integral park space and requiring that Colfax Avenue be re-routed around the park.

At the center of the park, along the primary axis, and as a central park feature, Bennett proposed a grand paved gathering area. At its center he placed a water feature of monumental proportions that included a large central jet as the primary focal point. The jet was proposed to be set in a reflecting pool with a paved plaza encircling it.

On Broadway, Bennett proposed an upper terrace with a central promenade that was aligned along the primary axis and was to be flanked symmetrically on either side by an open lawn defined by a grove of trees. The trees, set in a double row, aligned three sides of the open lawn.

While Bennett provided Mayor Speer and the Art Commission with a grand and visionary plan, he was also aware of providing essential human-scale components. He ensured that there was a balance between creating a



Legend

- - - Central Axis
- - - Secondary Axis
- Original Park Features
- Bennett Plan Features

Original Park Features That Remain





Historic Postcard, date unknown



monumental setting and providing areas of respite. He acknowledged the importance of defining shaded areas and small areas of lawn. Following his City Beautiful sensibilities, he noted that his composition would also provide the background for statuary, balustrades, & decorative features.

While the focus of Bennett's plan was on the central park space or public square, his vision extended to the surrounding context. In keeping with City Beautiful principles, he proposed that the civic center be defined by a grouping of buildings that would be harmonious in scale, form and design. To achieve this harmony, Bennett believed that ". . .the control of the height and use of the buildings to be erected on the surrounding blocks is of the utmost importance in order to safeguard the harmonious character of the public center." Using the Carnegie Library as the datum, Bennett recommended that the surrounding buildings be ". . .reserved for public and semi-public" use, and that their height correspond to the 70 foot height of the cornice line of the Carnegie Library. He also extended the formal, axial symmetry of the civic center plan beyond the park boundaries. Along Broadway, Bennett proposed to balance the *Pioneer Monument* with a complementary circular space and sculpture, *The State*, located just south of 14th Avenue.



Construction of Bennett's Beaux Arts composition began in 1918 continuing until the early 1920s when two sculptures, the 1920 *Broncho Buster* and the 1922 *On the War Trail* by the renowned sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor were installed. By 1918, the basic framework of Bennett's plan: the two terraces, balustrades and the lighted columns were in place. The *Greek Theater*, designed by Denver architects Marean & Norton, in collaboration with Edward H. Bennett was completed in 1918 fulfilling Bennett's vision of commemorating benefactors and providing an open air theater. In 1919, the

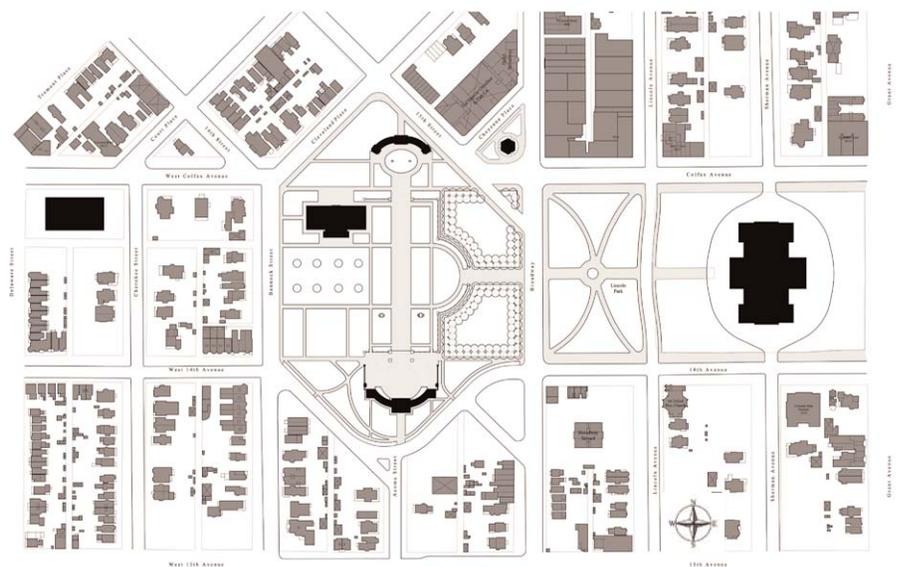


Figure Ground - 1918, right

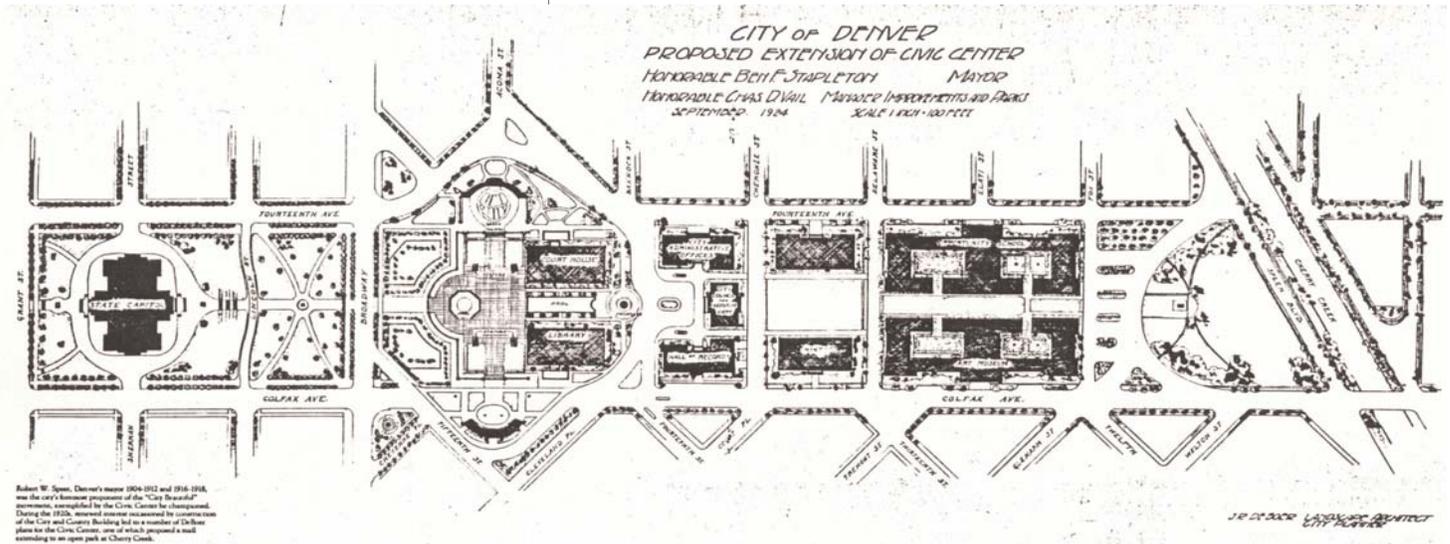


Voorhies Memorial, designed by noted Denver architects Fisher & Fisher, was built in the Bates triangle. Both structures included murals by local artist Allen True, who would be commissioned in later years to paint murals in the State Capitol Rotunda and the Brown Palace's lobby.

In 1924, the city landscape architect S. R. DeBoer created a new plan for the civic center. DeBoer envisioned a broad central 'mall' that would extend from Bannock Street to Speer Boulevard to the west. The 'mall' was to be aligned along the central axis and, in the keeping with the axial symmetry of the civic center it was to consist of a broad central lawn flanked by civic buildings. The proposed city government building was sited just west of the original civic center and a broad open, park space was situated at Speer Boulevard.



After more than 30 years, the City & County Building finally completed the western edge of the civic center in 1932. The government building had been envisioned as a central feature since Charles Mulford Robinson's earliest vision for a Denver civic center in his 1906 plan. Through the political backing of Mayor Stapleton, who cobbled together city funds by postponing other city improvements, selling the county courthouse and generating a \$5 million bond, plans were completed in 1926 and ground was broken in 1929. In an unprecedented move, a coalition created by the Denver A.I.A. brought together an association of 39 architects to design a masterpiece to complete the civic center. The Allied Architects Association of Denver worked collaboratively to craft a classical structure in keeping with the character of the civic center. The building was built of Colorado and Georgia granite, carved by John Garatti, a Venetian-trained master carver from Minnesota. The interior marble consisted of travertine from Howard, Colorado, white Yule marble from Marble, Colorado and pink Tennessee marble. Tall, elegant bronze doors graced the entries and a



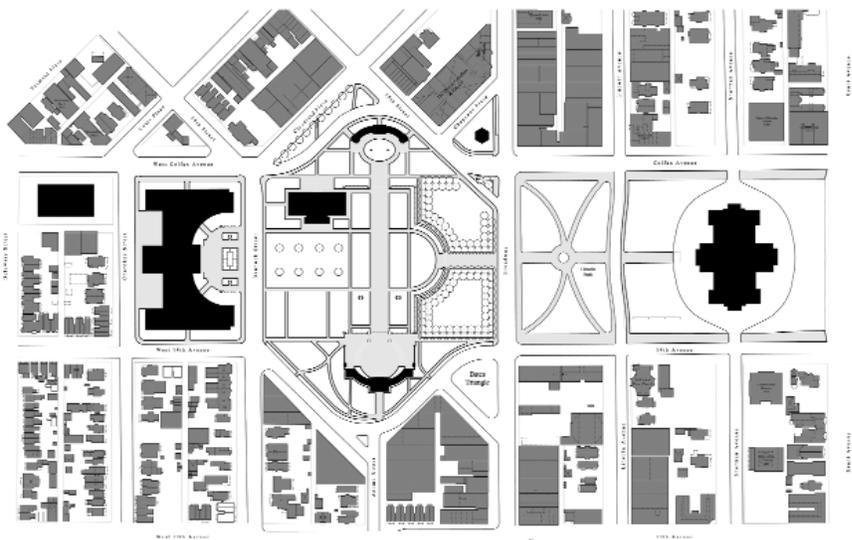
pink Tennessee marble. Tall, elegant bronze doors graced the entries and a six and one-half foot tall bronze eagle crowned the bell tower along with a clock donated by Kate Speer (Mayor Speer's widow).

A comprehensive city-wide plan was undertaken in 1928. Prepared by S.R. DeBoer, who was now a landscape architect and planning consultant, with McCrary Carhart & Culler, the plan included a transportation plan and a parks / parkways plan. Civic Center was at the heart of the comprehensive plan.



When Vaso L. Chucovich, a Denver businessman died in 1933, he bequeathed \$100,000 to the city to build a memorial for his good friend, Mayor Robert W. Speer. Serbian sculptor, Ivan Mestrovic was hired by the Denver Art Commission, but public outcry and objections from Mayor Speer's widow and friends against the proposed design derailed the project. The Art Commission then approached Arnold Ronnebeck, a local sculptor with an international reputation to submit sketches and a model. Another outcry followed, this time from other American sculptors who desired an opportunity to submit a design. And, although local artists supported Ronnebeck, an open competition was announced. In 1936, twenty-five proposals were submitted. A year later, after the designs remained unveiled, the City Council, the Art Commission and representatives of Mr. Chucovich's estate announced plans to abandon the project and bequeath the funds to build a new wing at the Children's Hospital, a much less controversial tribute to Speer.

The 1950s and 1960s brought functional changes to Civic Center. With little consideration of the role that aesthetics played in the defining the



S. R. DeBoer Plan, 1924, left
Figure Ground - 1929, right



park's character, and less knowledge of the park's original intent, maintenance modifications removed important walks and changed many original materials. The plans were signed by E. Johnson, who would later become manager of parks for the city.



Changes to Civic Center included the addition of a parking area next to the Carnegie Library (the Water Board building) and storm sewer improvements such as catch basins in 1956. The original entry on the north façade of the Carnegie Library was removed and replaced by a new concrete terrace in 1957. The shrub hedge was also added in 1957. By 1963, most of the interior gravel walks were removed and those that remained including the east-west gravel walk along the secondary axis, were paved with asphalt.

The city's Annex One, across Civic Center at Colfax Avenue and Bannock Street, was built in 1949 as a classroom building for the University of Denver. David Tryba Architect's addition, the Webb Office Building, was complete in 2002 and city offices were consolidated into the new addition and the rehabilitated Annex One.

In 1956, the Denver Public Library moved into its new building designed by Burnham Hoyt on the corner of 14th Avenue and Broadway. The Denver Water Board moved into the Carnegie Library in 1957, making numerous changes to the building's interior and the immediate site. The Michael Graves addition, in association with Klipp Architects, to the Denver Public Library was completed in 1995. The Carnegie Library, renamed the McNichols Civic Center Building in 1999 now houses city offices.



Civic Center Park - 1930s, right



In 1971, the Denver Art Museum, designed by Italian architect Gio Ponti and local architect James Sudler was completed at 14th Avenue and Bannock Street. The Art Museum's new Frederic C. Hamilton Building, designed by Daniel Libeskind, in association with the Davis Partnership, is under construction south of Civic Center and is scheduled for completion in 2006. By 1977, the Colorado History Museum at 13th Avenue and Broadway and the Colorado Supreme Court at 14th Avenue and Broadway were complete.



Today, Civic Center's immediate surroundings and adjacent neighborhoods are undergoing a resurgence with redevelopment occurring at a rapid pace. With the completion of the Wellington Webb Office Building for city services, the expansion of the Central Library, and the addition of the Hamilton Wing of the Denver Art Museum, the area is beginning to resemble the governmental center that Charles Mulford Robinson intended in his original plan for the Civic Center in 1906. Civic Center is once again at the heart of the city, poised to serve as its grand, central public gathering space.

Traditional Use at Civic Center

The history of Civic Center is more than just its buildings and architecture. Events, activities and the people who have traditionally used the park provide a rich layer of history. The Civic Center area served as the mecca for Denver's large festival gatherings well before Civic Center itself was formalized as the park we know today.



In 1895, the Chamber of Commerce organized the Festival of Mountain & Plains on Broadway at the future Civic Center site to boost

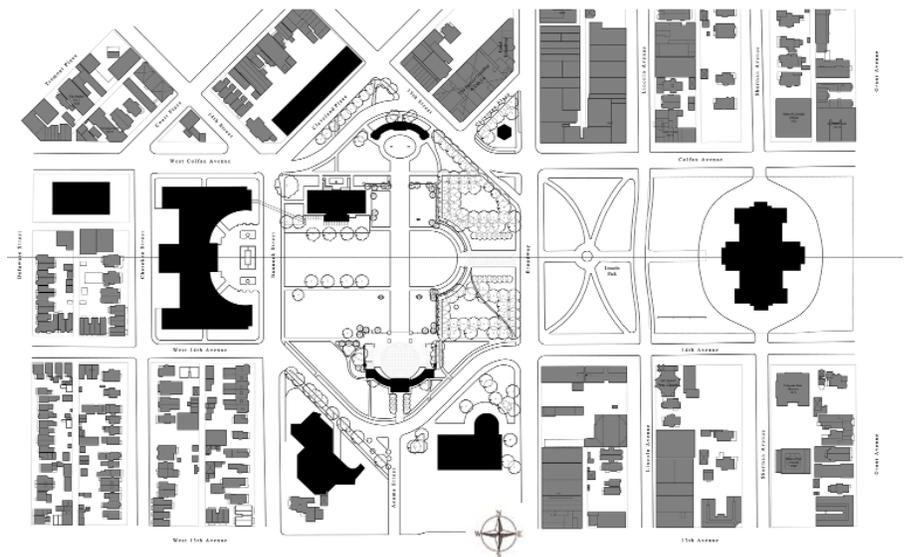


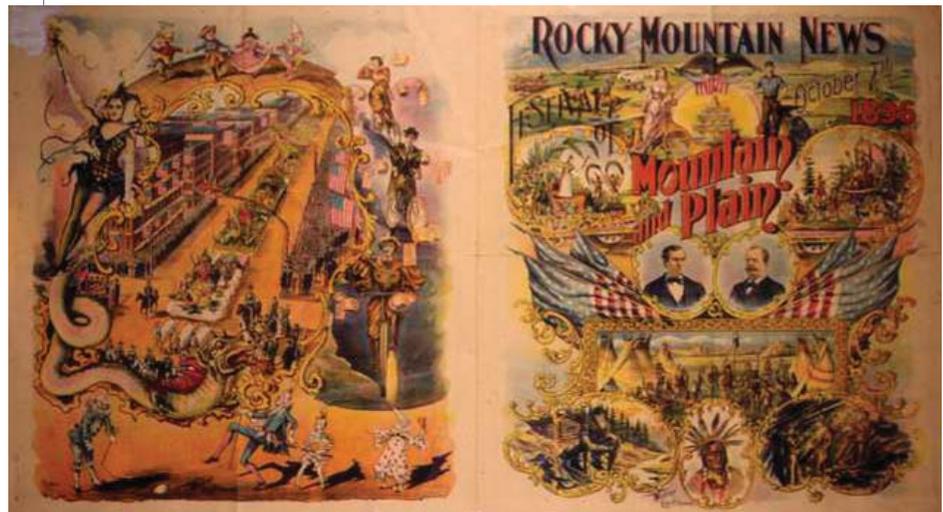
Figure Ground - 1955-1971, right



community spirit and pride after the silver panic of 1893. Intended as a carnival similar to New Orleans' Mardi Gras, civic leaders along with their wives and daughters masqueraded as kings, queens, and princesses. Hundreds of people marched inside a block-long silver serpent - a dragon-like monster made of metallic cloth. Slithering through the streets, the people sang the serpent's song and danced amongst the crowd. In the years that followed, the event became a Western celebration that included many of the images and activities associated with Denver's early identity as the heart of the Rocky Mountain west. Rodeo riders, Native American dances, horse shows and marching military bands collectively created the Wild West theme. The idea of a festival in the vein of Buffalo Bill's Wild West could not have been very far from the local booster's imagination. But while the festival endured only until 1896, perhaps this event stirred the original momentum to create a festival space to display these cherished western themes in the middle of Denver.



The classic western theme was drawn upon in 1911 for the dedication of the Pioneer Monument. On June 23, 1911 the Daily News brought a convention of the surviving "original" pioneers to Denver. For several days during the period of the dedication the old timers were feted around town like glamorous celebrities. The 24 original pioneers included Thomas Dickson, who was part of the Russell party that discovered gold in Cherry Creek and spawned Denver's settlement. Dedication events were scheduled around June 24th to commemorate the date commonly recognized as the day in 1858 that William Greene Russell and his gold party arrived in Denver. A generation later, when the monument was restored and re-dedicated on June 24, 1955 another event echoed the festivities of the initial dedication. Included among the 1955 dignitaries was Leona Wood who had attended the first dedication as an eleven year old girl and who was the grand-daughter of Kit Carson.



Perhaps the most remarkable moment in Civic Center's event history occurred in 1959 when Denver's boosters celebrated its centennial birth year with a re-creation of a pioneer era street on the park grounds. To the delight of many families and children (but to the dismay of some park lovers), the park lawns were transformed into a 300-foot long dirt street lined with period buildings including a blacksmith shop, post office, general store, saloon and livery stable among many others. Known as the Denver Centennial Commemoration, the event attracted 360,000 visitors during the four months that it was on display. The pioneer village display was not too surprising to anyone looking back at this period. What made this commemoration significant from today's perspective was the looming Titan Intercontinental Ballistic Missile concurrently on display in the park that formed the backdrop of the little rustic village. No other combination of images could have been a more jarring representation of the national historical context of the Cold War and western ideals being played out on the lawns of Civic Center.

Just as this startling event illustrates, an examination of the history of events and activities that have taken place at Civic Center since its completion in 1919 reveals a pattern of activities marking not only important moments in local history but also in many cases representing the climactic events and debates in our national history. The opening night of the Greek Theater was one such event. Strikingly without the jovial and carefree spirit normally on display for such an event, the evening program was somber. June 24, 1919, Denver's auspicious anniversary date was again chosen for this landmark dedication. The day was less than a year after the end of World War I, and just days before the allies gathered at Versailles to sign the infamous peace treaty. With millions of soldiers returning home and the fresh reality of war compounded by the idealism of a new world order likely sedated the desire for the stock version of Denver's Wild West themed festivals. The war to end all wars was the theme of the day. It was a day to stir compassion and instill the spirit of world peace through the relief efforts abroad. Dr. Livingston Farrand, Director General of the Red Cross was the keynote speaker who presented film footage of war scenes and the resulting devastation he had seen at the front lines in Europe. His message was a heartfelt plea to Denver residents to continue supporting the Red Cross in its mission for the reconstruction in Europe. The theme of peace through local action was as relevant then as it is today. How could the earliest planners and dreamers of Civic Center know it would begin with this speech which would launch Civic Center not only as a forum to stir community action but also as a forum for history to be dramatized before our eyes?

Freedom of speech has been publicly debated many times as the central theme of numerous park events, demonstrating that Civic Center continues to be one of the greatest places to grandstand in the city. One of the earliest events organized in the Greek Theater was the "Burning Issues



Forum" in the summer of 1920. It was originally promoted to allow anybody to take the stage and speak on any subject - free speech in action. However, the forum itself became the primary subject of debate when Joseph Shatzke, who arranged the event, changed the rules at the last minute to prevent people from talking on "theological topics involving the end of the world." The participants argued among themselves about the purpose of the event, the rules and their constitutional rights for free speech.



More than twenty years later, the issue of free speech in Civic Center once again became the subject of extensive public examination and debate. In this case, the city denied a request by President Harry S. Truman to speak at the Greek Theater during his re-election campaign in 1947. The action by city officials prompted several members of City Council to propose changing the ordinance that banned political speeches in city parks. The proposed amendment was supported by the city attorney who declared the original ordinance unconstitutional and recommended changing the language to allow all speeches including political speeches in the parks. In spite of the legal opinion, city council remained deadlocked for over a year and did not take action on the bill until after Truman appeared in Denver on the steps of the State Capitol. The Denver Post featured the President's speech on the front page with a full page photograph of Civic Center's City & County Building particularly prominent in the image and only a tiny view of Truman's back to the camera standing at the Capitol. The camera's perspective effectively placed Truman "in" Civic Center, perhaps as a visual editorial critique on the city council's inaction.

Oddly enough, Senator Richard Nixon was allowed to speak at the Greek Theater on May 1, 1947 in spite of the fact that Nixon was campaigning for president during this period. The American Legion organized a rally in the park and Nixon was presented as the keynote speaker. Consequently, city officials interpreted this event as allowable since it was not strictly a political campaign speech. Nixon talked about his role serving on the Un-American Activities Committee and the dangerous communist threat in the world. Just weeks after City Council enacted the ordinance to allow political speeches in Civic Center, there was another cause for public outrage. Paradoxically, the first political speech technically permitted in Civic Center occurred on August 26, 1947 when the Communist party held a rally in the park, allowable under the new ordinance. This time, city residents protested against the new measure that allowed political speeches in parks that included anti-American, communist rhetoric.

One of the most notable speeches in Civic Center occurred when Senator John Kennedy visited Denver and used the Greek Theater for his platform on September 24, 1960. In his speech, Kennedy said, "I seek a stronger America, to move not stand still..." an early version of his later rhetoric to call for proactive efforts in international relations. He also



specifically criticized Castro's reviling the US and eerily foreshadowed the future Cuban crisis two years later.

While the city continued to uphold free expression in the park, the "red" factor frequently provoked public attention. In 1950, Mayor Quigg Newton declared that the Soviet flag would fly in the park as part of the United Nations Day festivities and again on November 11 for Armistice Day. State Attorney General John Metzger considered this an offensive violation of the 1919 state statute that banned the display of the Russian flag. He immediately requested a District Court injunction and hinted at threatening to serve the Mayor with criminal prosecution if the courts supported the injunction. The courts ruled in favor of allowing the Soviet flag, concluding that it was different than the Russian flag that was referenced in the statute. The mounting tension around the Soviet Union was apparent in the public dialog and indicative of this significant period. Once again Civic Center became the symbolic local grandstand for discussing critical national issues of the day.

During the Vietnam era, Civic Center served as a venue for political activism. During the 1960's and 70's marches and demonstrations were staged through Denver's downtown streets, culminating with speeches at the State Capitol. Civic Center was the logical backdrop for many of these demonstrations. The largest demonstration occurred on November 7, 1971 when 5000 participants marched to the Capitol. The Greek Theater was center stage for a candlelight peace ceremony held on December 24, 1969. The 450 participants joined hands and sang "Give Peace a Chance". With the holiday lighting and displays in the background, the event was held in a fitting atmosphere for the spirit of the era.

Peace has been a common theme in the history of Civic Center. The first Christmas display was mounted in the winter following the park's dedication in 1919. Huge evergreen boughs that spelled out "WORLD PEACE" graced the upper face of the Greek Theater. Evergreen trees lined the roof edge of the monuments, and red and green bulbs replaced the ordinary white lights in the park globes. The aftermath of World War I was fresh in the minds of civic leaders and the peace theme prevailed over the other Christmas images. The following year, in 1920, a lighted Christmas tree was erected in the middle of the park, beginning in earnest the tradition of holiday decorations. Every year more decorations and holiday scenery were added until it reached a crescendo in 1950 when more than 40,000 lights were strung around Civic Center and on the City and County Building. Frances Melrose recalled, in her Rocky Mountain memories column in 1986, the many highlights in the history of Christmas decorations in the park including a year in the 1920s when several reindeer were corralled at the Seal Pond and Santa stood next to his sleigh parked on top of the Voorhies Memorial to wave at the children and families in the park.



The holiday lighting tradition has a history of its own and the central character was Johnny Malpied, an electrical engineer employed by the city who was in charge of the holiday displays from 1922 until his retirement in 1962. The displays began with a tiny \$100 budget and became so popular that the city expanded the budget and the scale of the displays each year. In 1979 the display was featured in Time Magazine as one of the nation's finest public holiday displays. The tradition continues today, albeit much reduced in scale, confined to just the City and County Building. About 14,000 lights are put up during the winter holidays from Thanksgiving through the Stock Show season. Even with this tradition, the debate over free expression, religion and politics is played out on the Civic Center grounds. In more recent history, the nativity scene display and Christian dominated messages have been debated, and have been tolerated by every mayor and administration over the last 20 years.

More recent events and traditions held in Civic Center are generally focused around the themes of culture, community and diversity. The two largest festivals, the People's Fair and the Taste of Colorado, bookend the summer season of free outdoor events. The Capital Hill United Neighborhoods People's Fair is held on the weekend after Memorial Day, celebrating Denver's diverse urban community and its residents with hand-made arts & crafts, food, entertainment. The event, which began in 1971 as a community-building festival at Morey Middle School and eventually moved to Civic Center in 1986 as it grew in popularity, raises funds for and promotes the missions of non-profit organizations in Denver.



In 1983, the Downtown Denver Partnership brought back the spirit of the original Festival of Mountain and Plains as the inaugural celebration of the opening of the 16th Street Mall. Serving as a celebration of Denver's and Colorado's heritage, the region's rich cultural and ethnic background, and the lifestyles of the region, the event was a resounding success. A Taste of Colorado was added to the name, and the event continued and expanded highlighting the region's favorite restaurants and their specialties, proving to be an even greater success. In 1984, the festival was moved to Civic Center and currently attracts over 500,000 people who make the four-day festival their Labor Day Weekend celebration to enjoy the offerings of over 50 area restaurants, 280 marketplace artisans and vendors, seven stages and educational programs promoting the diverse cultural and western heritage of the region.

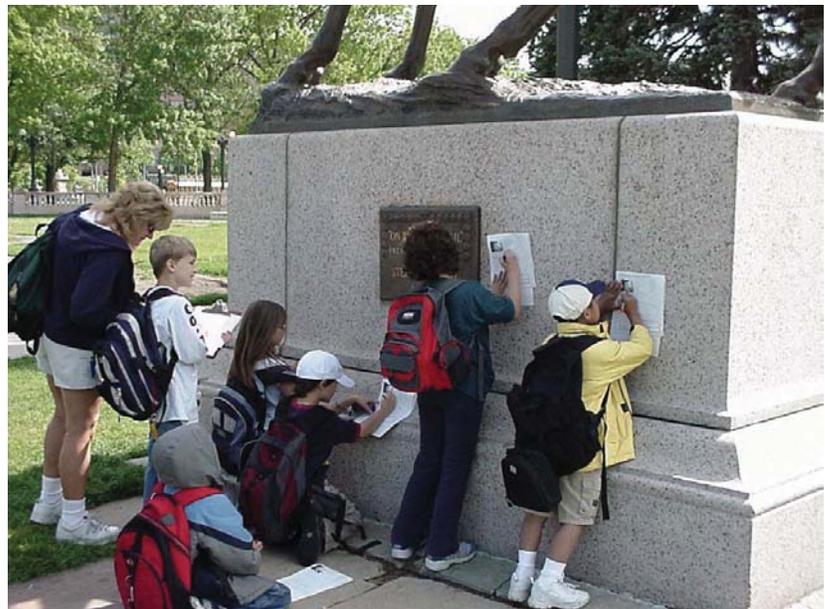
Other events such as Cinco De Mayo, Pridfest, Race for the Cure, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Parade and the Columbus Day Parade stage events with Civic Center as the center of their festivities. Collectively, these events serve to celebrate the wide range of diversity of culture and lifestyle representative of Denver. One of the most important and moving cultural events traditionally held in Civic Center is the Citizen Oath Ceremony commemorating the naturalization of hundreds of immigrants settling in Colorado. In 2001, 623 immigrants from over 87 countries such as Egypt, Pakistan, Vietnam, Mexico and Ukraine congregated in the Greek Theater to pledge loyalty to the United States and to celebrate their newfound rights of freedom, religion and speech.



Music and theater has also been a common theme for Civic Center activities. Beginning with Civic Center's inaugural summer of 1919, the Denver Municipal Band began its long-standing tradition of performing in the park. The band, which has been in existence since 1892, is one of the oldest on-going municipal bands in the country and has made it a tradition to perform free concerts in the Denver's parks every summer. Theater productions in Civic Center have been organized periodically throughout its history. El Centro Su Teatro made the Greek Theater its summer stage in 1994 before it moved to a new year-round facility in Elyria. After their exit, Theater in the Park, Inc. quickly organized a new non-profit organization to fill the void in 1998. Since then it has provided free theatrical productions in the Greek Theater over several weekends each summer.

Victims and heroes have found their niche in the park as well. The National Crime Victims Week has been commemorated through the dedication of trees and benches. In 2005, a Holocaust remembrance tree was planted to commemorate the victims of globally horrific crimes.

In contrast to these celebratory events are those that inflict harm and damage to park users. Perhaps the most visible negative reflection of current social times are the indigent and drug dealers who frequently take refuge in Civic Center. Altercations are common and almost every year, the park's down and out, like Samuel "Rick" Burrier capture the public attention. In Rick's case, his frozen body was found in the park on a particularly cold night on December 12, 2003. His death sparked city efforts to find additional homeless shelters in vacant city-owned buildings.



A history of the park's spectacles and events would not be complete without heroes. Some of the greatest public celebrations in the park have been to recognize victorious local athletic teams. In 1998, the Denver Broncos celebrated their Super Bowl championship with 650,000 fans packed into Civic Center. In 2001, the Colorado Avalanche won their hockey competition and proudly carried the Stanley Cup through the downtown Denver streets and into Civic Center.

Throughout Denver's milestones, Civic Center has been at the crossroads of local and national history. It has served as the central grounds to reflect the image of Denver's evolution as a proud and diverse urban community of the Rocky Mountain West. As a result, the individual, the city, the state and the whole of its identity is carved in stone monuments and etched in the memories of generations who have made Denver home. Supporting the continuity of the best traditions of free speech, expression of cultural identity and tolerance and steadfast commitment to the constitution's First Amendment is at the very heart of the park mission and purpose as a true civic center.



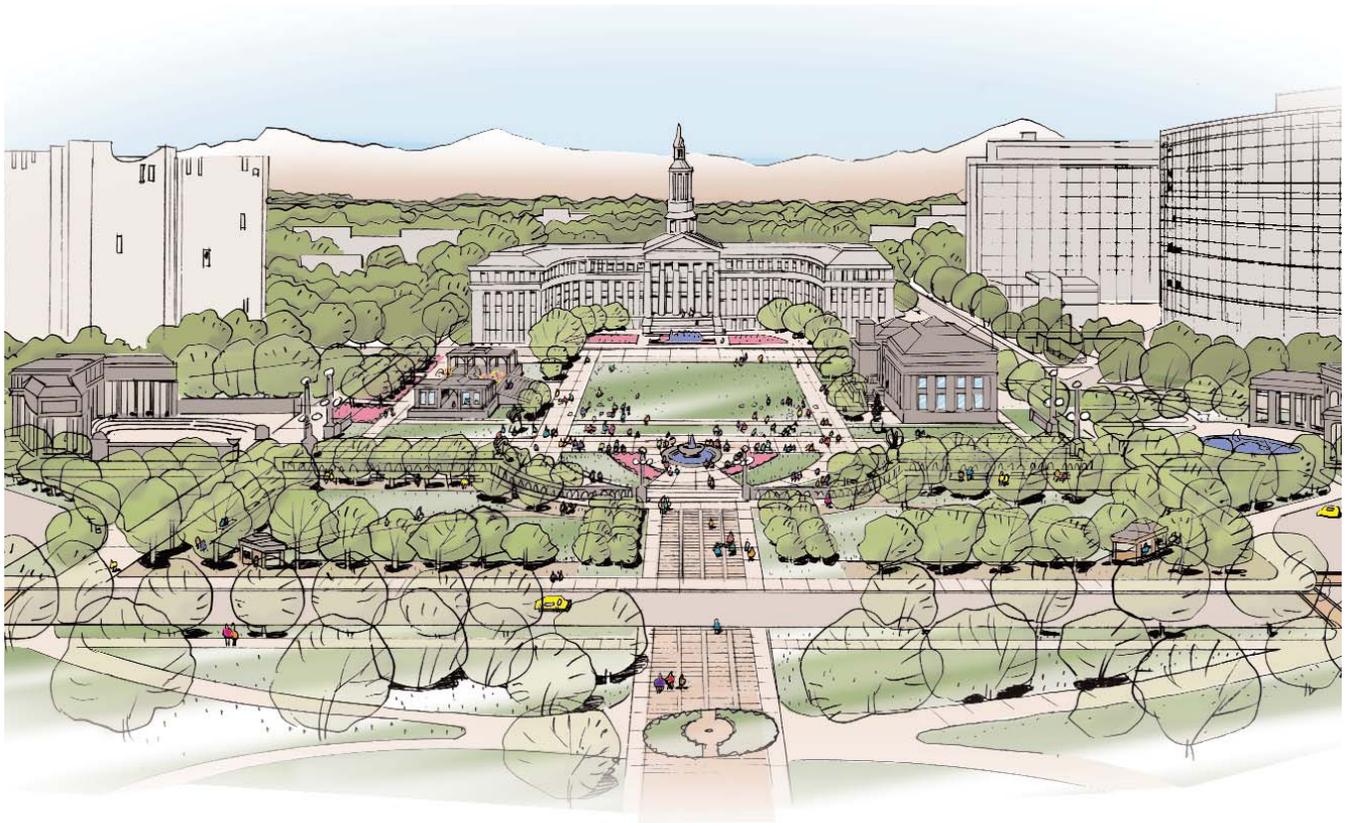
Chronology

<i>Date</i>	<i>Description/Event</i>
1858	Denver "city" Plan Laid out
1882	The Sopris - Lee - Downing Plan (Ratified in 1882)
1893	Department of Parks created by new city charter
1894	Evans / Rollandet Plan
1897	United States Mint , designed by architect James Knox Taylor is completed
1892	State Capitol built, designed by Elijah Myers in the Federal Revival style <i>Grounds by Reinhard Schuetze completed in 1895. Dome completed in 1904.</i>
1895	Festival of Mountain & Plain begins
1902	Mayor Robert W. Speer elected for his first term Denver Municipal League created
1903 to 1904	City Beautiful Movement
1905 to 1906	Municipal Arts Commission formed by Mayor Speer Charles Mulford Robinson's report "The Development of Denver" is published <i>Report is foundation for Denver's park and parkway system</i>
1907	Vote on Bond / Assessment to build Civic Center fails Map of the System of Parks and Boulevards, designed by landscape architect George E. Kessler
1909	Denver voters approve Assessment District for funding for Civic Center and over-budget library. Parkway and Boulevard System adopted by Mayor Speer and City Council Sculptor Frederick MacMonnies' plan for Civic Center, reconciling the two grids, is accepted and becomes basis for all future plans
1910	Carnegie Library, designed by Albert Ross of New York and funded by a gift of \$200,000 from philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, is dedicated in February 1910 Residential structures demolished to make way for Civic Center
1911	Pioneer Monument , designed by sculptor Frederick MacMonnies is dedicated with funding by the Mrs. J.N. Hall Foundation of the State Historical Society of Colorado
1913 to 1916	Buffalo Bill's Wild West show as part of Sell Floto Circus
1912 to 1916	Mayor Henry Arnold is elected and city shifts to commission based government Civic Center, designed by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. with architect Arnold W. Brunner <i>1913: Construction begins under Mayor Arnold</i>
1915	Station Agent at Civic Center
1916 to 1918	Mayor Speer returns as mayor until his death in 1918 with a shift back to home-rule based government
1918	"The Denver Civic Center, Recommendations to Accompany General Preliminary Plan" <i>Edward Bennett's Plan for Civic Center, commissioned by Mayor Speer</i> <i>Replaces Olmsted work from 1915 and is basis for Civic Center today</i>
1919	Lawsuits in State and Federal courts challenging financing for the Civic Center are defeated. Greek Theater and Voorhies Memorial are completed Marean and Norton Architects partner with Edward H. Bennett to design the Open-Air Theater and the Colonnade of the Civic Benefactors (the Greek Theater) Fisher Fisher Architects design the Voorhies Memorial, a gift to the city from local banker and mining man John H.P. Voorhies Murals by Allen True in Greek Theater and Voorhies Memorial
1920	"Bronhco Buster" by sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor is presented to Denver by J.K. Mullen Seal Fountain Pool and Sculpture, designed by Robert Garrison is added to Voorhies Memorial



<i>Date</i>	<i>Description/Event</i>
1922	"On the War Trail" by sculptor Alexander Phimister Proctor is presented to the city by Stephen Knight
1923	Mayor Ben Stapleton is elected mayor
1924	"Proposed Extension of Civic Center and Plan Showing Proposed Development of State Capital Grounds and Civic Center," designed by landscape architect S.R. DeBoer
1926	Denver's zoning ordinance is passed and a planning commission is appointed
1923	Denver's City & County Building, designed by the Allied Architects Association of Denver <i>Plans completed in 1926, ground broken is in 1929 and cornerstone is laid in 1931</i>
1929	Denver Plan No. 1, designed by S.R. DeBoer with McCrary, Culley and Carhart, landscape architects, addressed city-wide planning and transportation
1933 to 1937	Vaso L. Chucovich leaves a \$100,000 bequest to construct a memorial to Mayor Robert Speer Controversy over the sculptor and sculpture erupts and sculpture is not built
1949	Denver University Classroom Building is completed Becomes Denver's Annex One and a part of the Webb Office Building in 2002
1956	"The City & County of Denver - The Public Library" is completed in 1955, designed by Burnham Hoyt and Fisher and built by Mead & Mount Construction Company. Library moves from the Carnegie Building into The Public Library in 1956
1957	The Denver Water Board moves into the Carnegie Library
1956 to 1963	Civic Center Redevelopment Plan, designed by E. Johnson <i>1956: Catch basins added, walks paved with asphalt, parking at Acoma Street added;</i> <i>1957: A hedge and a parking area are added for the Water Board, south of the Carnegie Library.</i> <i>1963: Secondary walks are removed.</i>
1965	James Sudler's Denver Civic Center Plan
1970	Christopher Columbus Statue, designed William F. Joseph, sculptor and donated by Alfred and Anna Adamo in honor of Colorado as the first state to recognize Columbus Day as a holiday.
1971	Denver Art Museum, designed by Gio Ponti and James Sudler is completed
1974	Civic Center Historic District is placed on the National Register of Historic Places
1976	Civic Center Historic District is designated as a Denver Landmark Historic District, Ordinance #173 HAEB / HAERS Documentation
1977	Colorado History Museum is complete
1987	McNichols Building/Carnegie Library is designated as a Denver Landmark structure, and is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
1991	Bike to Work Day begins as an annual event
1991	Civic Center Park Restoration, designed by Long Hoeft Architects with Wenk Associates Jointly funded by the Park People, who raised \$1 million, and the Denver Parks and Recreation Department Carnegie Library has minor exterior restoration, designed by Slater-Paull Architects / Michael Barber Architects to solve water intrusion problems
1997	Denver Auditor Offices moves and new city offices occupy the Carnegie Building Historic Structures Assessment (HSA) and preservation plan for the exterior of the building is completed.
1999	Carnegie Library is named The McNichols Civic Center Building in honor of William H. McNichols, Sr. and his son, William H. McNichols, Jr. ("Mayor Bill") <i>Historic Structures Assessment (HSA) for Greek Theater</i>
2000	<i>Funded in part by grant from the State Historical Fund.</i> Webb Office Building, designed by David Owen Tryba Architects, completed.
2004	Greek Theater Reconstruction







THE PARK MASTER PLAN will:

- Articulate and promote Civic Center's identity as the civic and cultural crossroads of the New West.
- Transform Civic Center into a place of engagement that is a clean, safe and connected.
- Activate Civic Center as the city's premiere gathering space.
- Establish Civic Center as the region's heritage educational center.
- Sustain the Civic Center legacy through partnership and collaboration.

The Master Plan

Vision

Civic Center is the heart and soul of Denver; a green, urban oasis surrounded by an ensemble of the region's most prominent public institutions. Civic and cultural buildings, most of them architecturally significant, surround the park; the Webb Municipal Office Building, the City & County Building, the Denver Art Museum, and the Central Library.

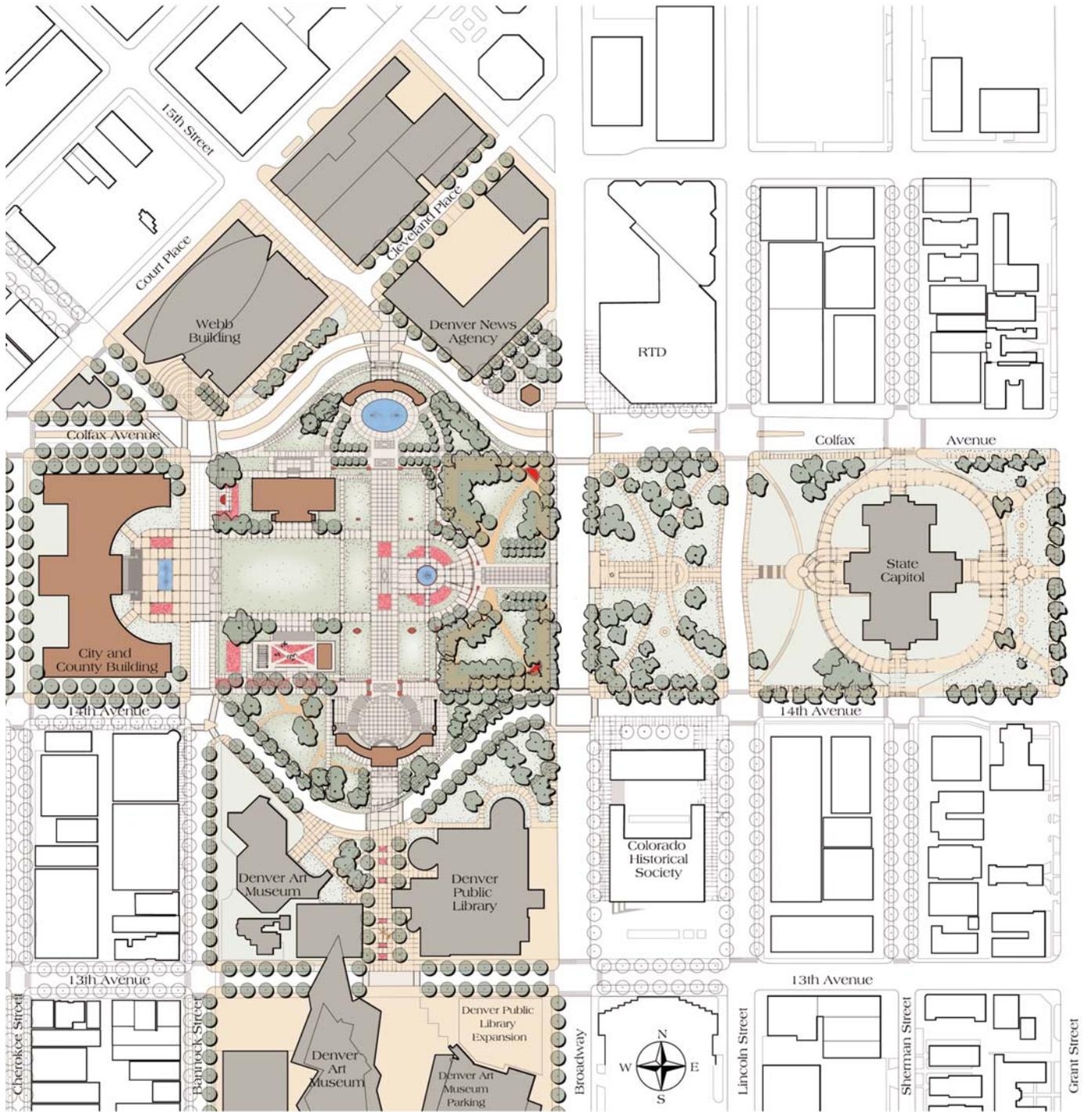
Civic Center's grand icons of neo-classical and Greek revival architecture, and its formal park alignment along primary and secondary axes reflect its original City Beautiful aesthetic. The distinct Beaux Arts palette of structures, urban design and landscape serve to link natural beauty with classicism to create harmony and beauty to elevate the human spirit. Civic Center's new additions - its central fountain and festival and linear gardens - match the original features in design excellence.

Today, Civic Center is emerging as Denver's active urban park hosting festivals, celebrations and community events as well as being a respite for its resurging neighborhoods - Golden Triangle, Uptown, Central Business District and Capitol Hill. Due to a broad public interest in its revitalization, Civic Center is now connected to the city by safe pedestrian crossings, its historic features are being restored, new improvements are bringing more daily and casual users to the park, and new management approaches have been elevated to an enviable standard of care.

Principles

- Physical improvements will be of an exceptional design quality that will match Civic Center's original design excellence. Restoration of the historic landscape, structures and infrastructure and new elements will enhance daily use, improve access and connectivity and enhance safety. They will be sustainable in every way: environmentally, fiscally and physically.
- A new model will guide the management of Civic Center, acknowledging its diverse constituents, new partnerships and collaborations and the diverse demands placed upon its buildings, landscape and historic infrastructure. Civic Center will remain the premiere gathering place for the region, accommodating active daily use as well as special events and regional celebrations.
- The Park Master Plan will be the basis for decision-making for the City & County of Denver and its partners and stakeholders.





Proposed Civic Center - A Connected Oasis



A Restored Civic Center

Vision

- Strengthen Central Axis
- Rehabilitate Original Features
- Central Gathering Space
- Festival Gardens
- Restore Tree Patterns
- Strengthen Connections
- Kiosks
- Narrow Bannock Street

Civic Center epitomizes the expression of beauty and democracy in the civic realm. Built in accordance with Edward Bennett's original plan of 1918, it is a formal park of monumental design and architecture that is the center of the region's governmental campus. Now significant for its history as Denver's central 'square,' architecturally important for its neo-classical design style, and noted for its social role, Civic Center is Denver's great legacy.

While a portion of Bennett's design was built by 1918, his vision has never been fully realized and later changes modified his original plan. However, enough of Bennett's original Beaux Arts composition was completed and still remains. This historic park composition retains many original components including park spaces; views and vistas; elements such as the east promenade, the stone walls, balustrades and columns; structures such as the Greek Theater, and plantings including the Red Oak groves near



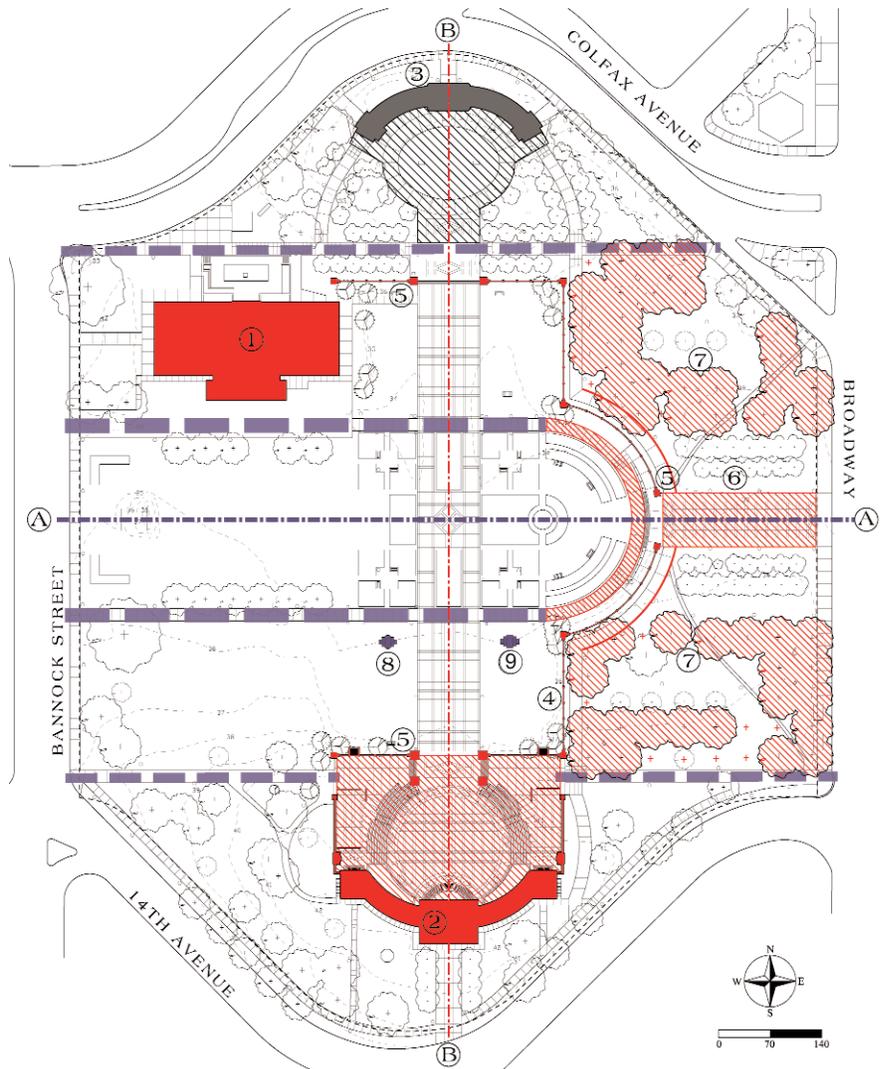
Legend

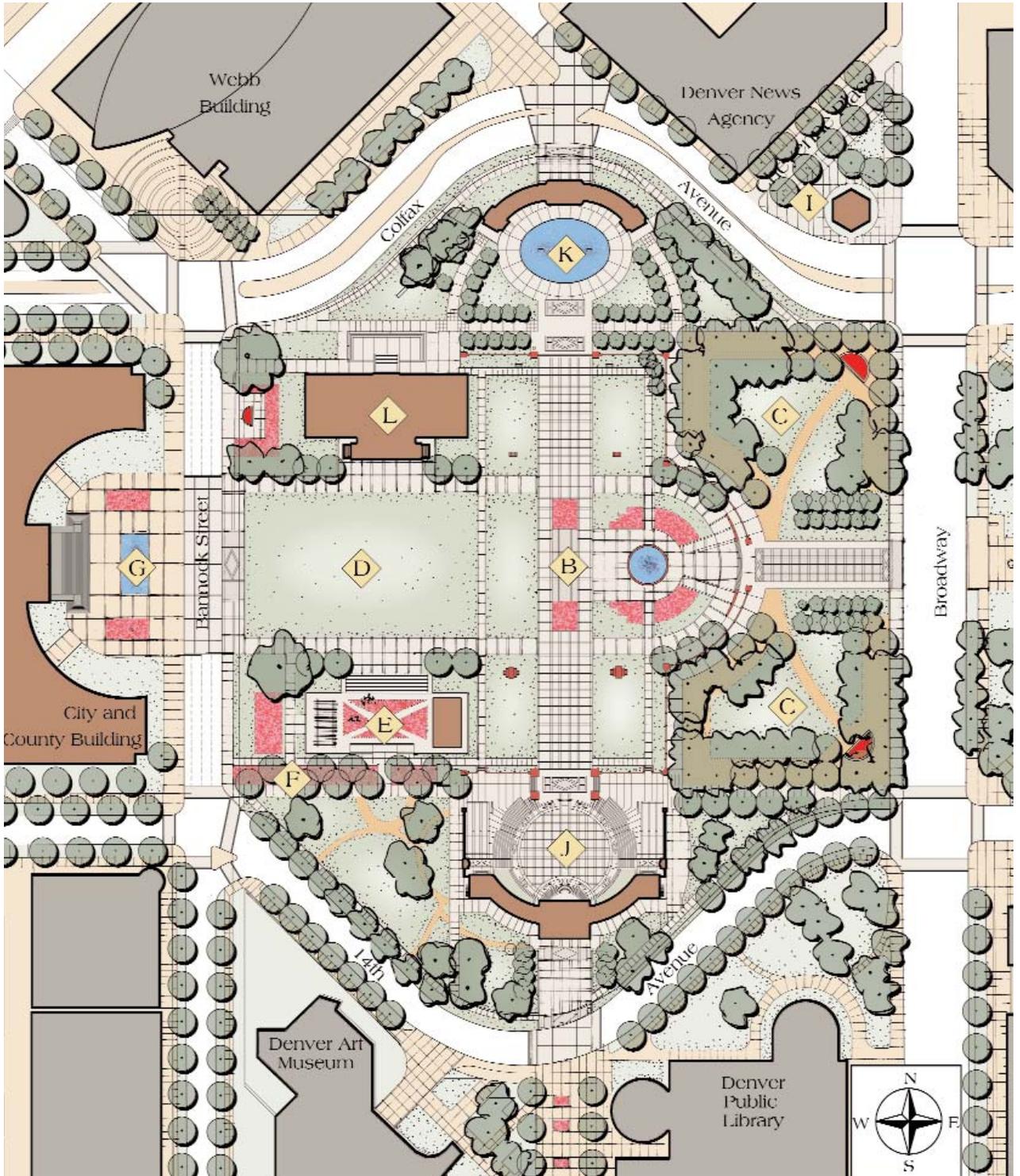
-  Olmsted Features
-  Original Park Features
-  Bennett Plan Features

Original Features

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Carnegie Library | 7. Original Trees |
| 2. Greek Theatre | 8. Broncho Buster |
| 3. Voorhies Memorial | 9. On the War Trail |
| 4. Balustrade | |
| 5. Lighted Columns | A. Central Axis |
| 6. Original Brick Promenade | B. Secondary Axis |

Original Park Features That Remain





Park Master Plan



Broadway. These components collectively contribute to the significance of the park, providing Civic Center with its unique and lasting character.

This original design is a strong, formal composition that offers opportunities for new expressions that can meet contemporary park needs. All contributing features play a role in maintaining Civic Center as Denver's central square and all will be restored or rehabilitated to ensure that Civic Center retains its civic character. New physical improvements will build upon the park's historic context while fulfilling Bennett's original plan, adding grace and elegance to create a truly great park.

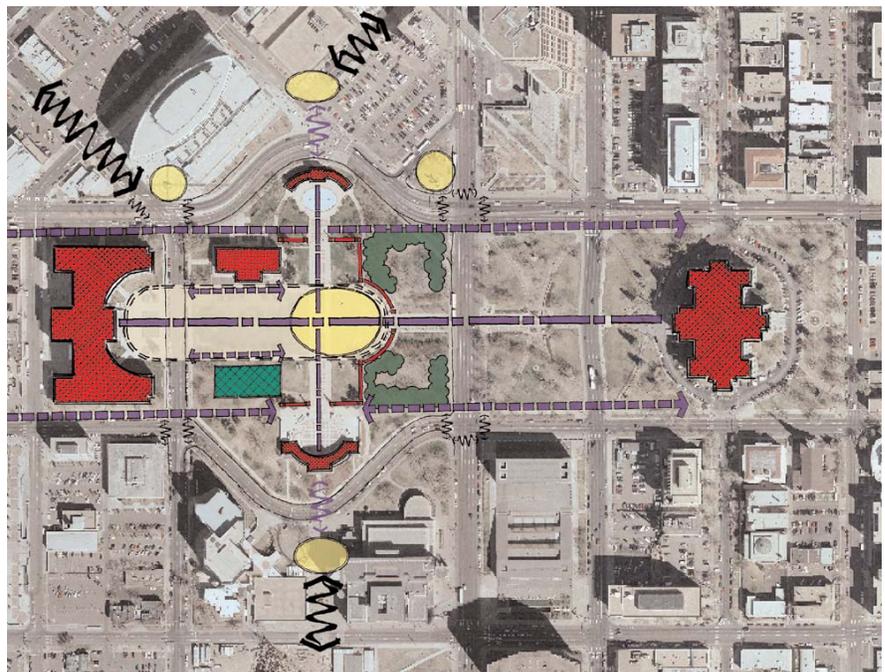
A CONNECTED OASIS

As Denver's most central urban space, Civic Center is a place for people. Physical improvements, new programming and enhanced management will transform Civic Center from a disconnected space into a place of engagement that is easily accessed, and that offers refuge, delight and inspiration.

To be a truly great park, Civic Center must be more easily accessed from its adjacent neighborhoods including downtown Denver, Capitol Hill, the Golden Triangle, and the Silver Triangle. Better pedestrian access will be created by improving the crossings at each park corner, including at Broadway and Bannock Street, with pedestrian activated signals. Connecting Civic Center with downtown Denver is essential to ensuring that it be a premiere gathering space for people-watching, relaxing, and celebrating. Likewise, it is critical that Civic Center be connected with the new wing of

- ◆ A Primary Axis
- ◆ B Central Gathering Area
- ◆ C Broadway Terrace
- ◆ D Great Lawn
- ◆ E Festival Gardens
- ◆ F Linear Garden
- ◆ G City & County Building Grand Entry
- ◆ H Secondary Axis

- ◆ I Pioneer Park
- ◆ J Greek Theater
- ◆ K Voorhies Memorial and Seal Pond
- ◆ L McNichols Building





"The main axis will form a vista extending from the state capitol house to the proposed city hall on Bannock Street. The main feature of this vista, and also of the center itself, will be a fountain of monumental proportions. There should be a large central jet, throwing water to a great height, which would be surrounded by minor jets and water effects in order to make this feature of brilliant and spectacular interest."

Edward H. Bennett, The Denver Civic Center - Recommendations to Accompany Preliminary Plan, 1918

the Denver Art Museum and its new entrance along the Acoma Street alignment. The two existing mid-block crossings at the Voorhies Memorial at Colfax Avenue and at the Greek Theater at 14th Avenue will be enhanced. Wide bands of rich paving and wayfinding elements will guide pedestrians into Civic Center along the secondary axis.

Wayside improvements will be installed at Court Place and the 16th Street Mall to orient pedestrians toward Civic Center from downtown Denver's primary retail spine and business district. The improvements may be additions to existing signage or be new artistic elements. Similar wayside improvements will be installed near the entrance to the Webb Office Building to connect Civic Center to the new grand boulevard along Colfax Avenue that will serve as one spine of the newly expanded Civic Center District.

COMPOSITION

The park composition will build upon the original vision defined by Edward Bennett, in essence completing the park for the 21st century. Original features that provide foundation of the park will be complemented by new spaces and elements that respect the park's historic patterns and elements, and that re-establish Civic Center as Denver's premiere gathering space.

The park's original composition as a formal, symmetrically arranged plan defined by two stepped terraces will be revealed and strengthened. The original primary axis will be re-established as the park's key organizing feature with new walks, park spaces and a central plaza all arranged symmetrically along it.

The secondary axis, set perpendicular to the primary axis, will continue to serve as key walk, connecting the Greek Theater and the Voorhies Memorial with the central gathering space and with each other.

The upper terrace, separated from the lower terrace by Bennett's original neo-classical balustrades, will be restored as a primary park space with a new gravel promenade, tree thinning and a new walk. The original narrow walks in the lower terrace will be restored, once again the north and south park spaces and completing the central park space.

PRIMARY AXIS (A)

Bennett's original, formal primary axis defines Civic Center's park composition and links the State Capitol and the City & County Building with Civic Center. Set parallel to the park's natural sloping gradient, the primary axis provides a direct sight-line to the Rocky Mountains. The primary axis will be re-established and strengthened, following its original alignment that defines



the east-west centerline of the park, Lincoln Park, the State Capitol and the City & County Building.

A series of four distinct park spaces - the original east promenade (see A Restored Civic Center), the Central Gathering Space, the Great Lawn and the City & County Building's grand entry - each arranged in axial symmetry along it, will define the primary axis. This four part composition visually and spatially extends the primary axis into the park.

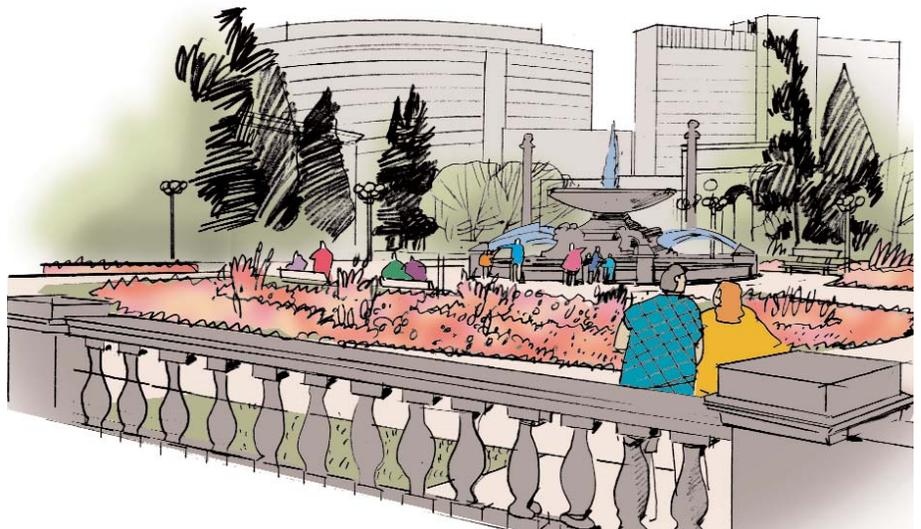
A sculptural water fountain will be the main feature along the primary axis, defining the central gathering space (a key feature of Bennett's plan that was not realized) and finally completing the vista and civic space from the State Capitol, situated high on Brown's Bluff to the City & County Building at park's western edge.

CENTRAL GATHERING AREA (B)

Civic Center has traditionally served as the heart of the city. However, at its heart (the center of the park where the primary axis drops below the historic balustrade), Civic Center is incomplete. A new central gathering space, aligned along the primary axis will bring artistic beauty and a memorable civic space to the 'heart' of the park. A new sculptural water feature, also aligned along the primary axis, will grace the center of the central gathering space - celebrating the value of water to the region and creating a spectacular visual element to draw people to the heart of the park. Flower gardens, grassy lawns, rich paving, and lots of seating will enrich the central gathering space.

"Civic Center is conceived as a large open space to be used as a place of public concourse. It is therefore, essential that a large portion of the center be paved or graveled in such a way as to accommodate large numbers. A considerable portion of the area should be shaded and there should be small areas devoted to lawn and planting space for shrubbery to offer variety and background for statutes, balustrades, and decorative features."

Edward Bennett, The Denver Civic Center - Recommendations to Accompany Preliminary Plan, 1918



Central Gathering Area with central focus and active park space.





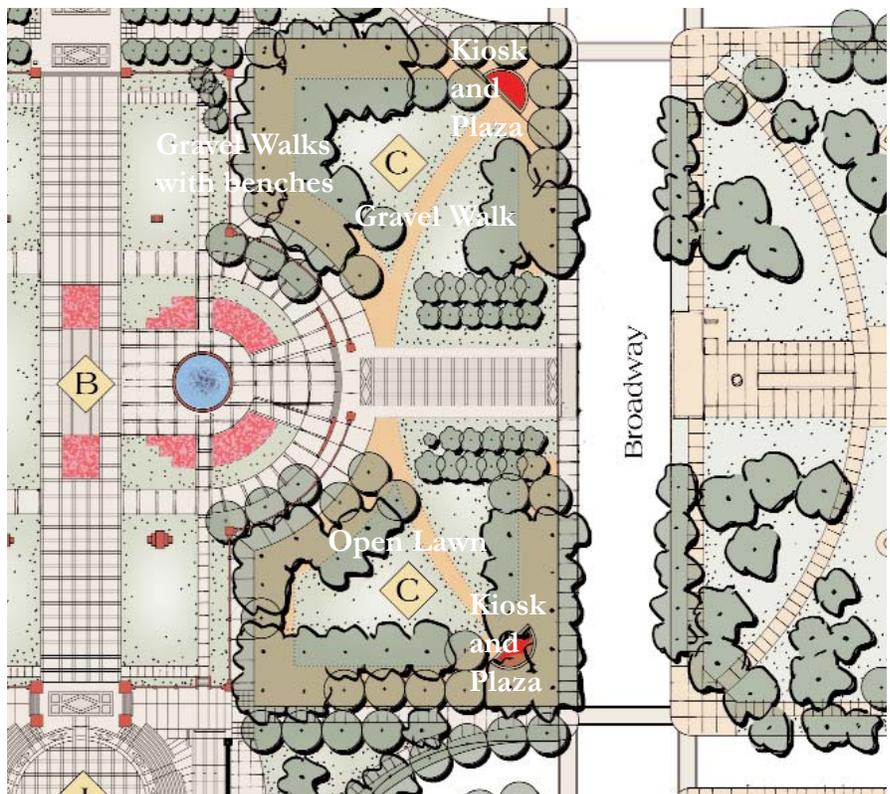
BROADWAY TERRACE (C)

The upper of Edward Bennett's two stepped terraces will be rehabilitated to re-establish its historic patterns and to create a more active park space. The original east promenade, the Red Oak groves will be thinned to create two open lawns, a new promenade of gravel and benches will define each lawn with views to the lower terrace; two gravel walks will provide access from Broadway and two new plazas with park kiosks will grace each corner.

Terrace

A wide gravel walk will be added to the interior edge of the concrete walks that define each grove, and a gravel plaza will provide a setting for a new kiosk / bus stop at each corner. The gravel walk in the southern grove will follow the historic Red Oak grove alignment along Broadway, 14th Avenue, and the concrete walk at the balustrade edge. In the northern grove, the gravel walk will also follow the historic grove, except at the new northern corner where it will define the new Colfax alignment.

The two gravel plazas will be added at the corners where Broadway meets 14th Avenue and Colfax Avenue. They will be scaled to provide an active space with room for a kiosk, direct access into the park and areas for seating. A new gravel walk, arranged as a broad arc that begins at the western edge of the east promenade, will connect the two gravel plazas with the interior of the park and provide a key, direct route for pedestrians.



Broadway Terrace, left and plan right, with a new gravel promenade of benches, open lawns, and kiosks at 14th and Colfax Avenues.



Red Oak Groves

The symmetrical groves will be rehabilitated to mimic the original tree patterns and the central lawn area within each grove will be expanded and improved. The original double rows of Red Oaks will be protected and will be pruned for health and form.

Newer trees in the interior of the grove that do not follow the historic pattern will be moved. Those trees that are too large to be moved will not be replaced when they die. In the northern grove, new Red Oak trees will be planted to follow the new northern corner of the park.

The lawn areas will be improved through horticultural measures, such as pruning and selective removal to open up the groves.



Central Promenade

The central promenade is a key contributing feature to the park's historical significance and is the only original paving left in Civic Center. It is in a moderate to poor condition as there is some deterioration of the bricks, cracking of the concrete paving and mortar joints, and inappropriate concrete and mortar patching.

As a significant feature and original fabric, the central promenade will be restored to its original condition. Brick paving will be reset within a compatible mortar bed, and concrete paving will be re-installed to match the color and finish of the original. Two rows of crabapple trees, one originally planted in the mid-20th century and the second planted in the early 1990s, line the central promenade.

Trees that are missing will be replaced, and replacement trees will be of the same genus and species, or of a similar species that matches the form and character of the original tree.



Stone Wall with Stone Balustrade

Edward Bennett's most notable park feature is the distinctive, neo-classical limestone balustrade that defines the two terraces and the distinct park spaces. The balustrade, consisting of grand lighted columns at the Greek Theater and the Voorhies Memorial, a granite base and a broad cap, classic balusters punctuated by short columns and two sets of narrow steps, and simpler columns, and a broad staircase and ramp at the primary axis, will be restored.

The balustrade's character-defining features vary in condition from the neoclassical lighted columns that are in good condition to individual balusters that are deteriorating and are in poor condition. The primary restoration task for all of the lighted columns is cleaning, most importantly removing discoloration and restoring power to the lights. The conduit



attached to the exterior of the columns should be removed. The temporary toilets or port-a-potties greatly detract from the grand columns and are detrimental to the setting. More appropriate facilities such as a public restroom in a park building should be installed and the temporary facilities removed.

The balusters, cap and base also vary in condition. Restoration measures include general cleaning, limestone patching to repair carvings due to vandalism, resetting of cap stones and balusters, mortar repair, and stabilization of the base such as at the far north end where the balustrade is sagging. Several balusters are deteriorating and should be immediately repaired or replaced. Some balusters were replaced with pre-cast concrete replicas as part of the early 1990s park improvements. Although, they appear very similar to the original balusters this approach to restoration should not be continued. Any replacement balusters should be of a limestone that resembles the originals in color and finish.

GREAT LAWN (D)

Arranged in axial symmetry along the primary axis and defined by two broad, east west walks, the Great Lawn will form a broad, “green” between the McNichols Building and the Festival Garden. This long rectangular green, with a distinct east-west orientation, will visually and spatially connect the central gathering space with the City & County Building.

The grass area that currently exists within the park will form the basic structure of the proposed Great Lawn. Impediments, such as the bermed flower beds have been removed recently. New walks will define the edges of the courtyard space and the lawn will be rejuvenated by re-grading and re-sodding. The irrigation system will be updated.

FESTIVAL GARDENS (E)

Edward Bennett's original plan included a second park building that would complement the original Carnegie Library in mass and scale, reinforcing the primary axis and creating a central court between the two civic buildings. This second building was intended to house a new art museum for the city.

In the spirit of completing Bennett's original intent, a new park space will be created in the footprint of his original proposal. The Festival Garden will be a lively new park space that could include a park pavilion, a café and a large garden. The new park space will be an elevated and well-defined terrace that will respect the neo-classical design tradition that so strongly characterizes Civic Center. The garden will be accessed from the Great Lawn along a grand staircase, and at the southern end along an accessible ramp.



Temporal gardens will complete the festival garden space. Intended to be annual garden installations, the temporal gardens will be newly designed each year and may include sculpture, flower beds, plantings, follies or other artistic elements.

LINEAR GARDEN (F)



Gardens have played a significant role in Civic Center - adding beauty and humanizing spaces in a park that is otherwise fairly monumental in scale. The Linear Garden will extend along the southern east west walk that connects Civic Center to 14th Avenue. The garden will be lined with an allee of deciduous shade trees that will flank a central flowerbed that extends from Bannock Street to the Greek Theater. Benches, and possibly small game tables, will provide spots for relaxing, people-watching and as opportunities to experience the garden. At its eastern end, a ramp will provide the primary accessible route from the Greek Theater into the lower terrace. The main southern entrance to the Festival Garden will be from the Linear Garden and will likely include an accessible ramp.

Sculpture, of a compatible scale, will be allowed within the Linear Garden and will be placed to respect its strong east-west arrangement. The Linear Garden will have temporal qualities as its flowerbeds will be newly planted each spring. It may also serve as an exhibit space for outdoor art installations.



CITY & COUNTY BUILDING GRAND ENTRY (G)

The spatial relationship between Civic Center and the City & County Building is a critically important component of the park even though it is technically outside its boundaries.

As early as 1909, when Frederick MacMonnies resolved Civic Center's composition by orienting the park along the east-west centerline of the State Capitol, and proposed a municipal building at its western terminus he defined Civic Center's fundamental park design. Bennett's 1918 plan proposed a monumental municipal building with a large forecourt to complete the park on the west. Today the arc of the 1933 building footprint mirrors the arc of Bennett's balustrades, effectively creating a long linear space that crosses Bannock Street. However, this space has never been adequately completed. Enhancing the City & County Building's Grand Entry and the creating the park's Central Gathering Space will assist in its completion.



The Grand Entry will be enhanced with new paving, a central water feature, gardens and new ornamental tree plantings. The axial symmetry of the space, centered on the primary axis will remain as its defining spatial organization. The water feature, consisting of a low pool with jets, will be centered in the space at the foot of the building's existing grand steps. Gardens will flank either side of the water feature, separated by a broad walk. An alternating row of ornamental trees will be added to the existing crabapple trees. High quality materials that match the quality of the materials of the City & County Building, including granites and materials available locally will replace the standard grey sidewalks that currently exist.

SECONDARY AXIS (H)

Civic Center is primarily arranged along the primary axis. However, the secondary axis, set perpendicular to the primary axis along a north south orientation, provides another key organizing element. This axis is subordinate to the primary axis and is used primarily to organize interior park spaces. In contrast, the primary axis is the dominate sight-line that organizes park spaces and those of its notable neighbors.

The secondary axis will continue to define the primary north south walkway within the park, connecting the Voorhies Memorial with the Greek Theater. It will also be extended to the north to connect Civic Center with downtown Denver, and to the south to connect with the Denver Art Museum, the Central Library, and with the Acoma Avenue of the Arts. To the north of the Voorhies Memorial and extending to Colfax Avenue, a new broad walkway will define the secondary axis. Extending from the south of the Greek Theater to East 14th Street, a new broad walkway of a similar width to the interior walkway will continue the secondary axis.



Improvements to the street crossing at both Colfax Avenue and East 14th Avenue will continue the secondary axis.

TREE-LINED WALKS

Two east west walks have traditionally connected Civic Center, both physically and visually with its surroundings. Located within the park along the original alignments of Colfax Avenue and 14th Avenue, these two walks will be re-established as tree-lined allees that will extend from Bannock Street to Broadway.

SCULPTURE

Sculpture has historically played an important role in the composition of Civic Center. Edward Bennett believed that sculpture was an important element. The earliest park sculpture includes the Benefactor Wall along the east side of the Greek Theater and the two central sculptures by Alexander Phimister Procter.



The two Procter sculptures are generally in good condition. “Broncho Buster”, the bronze horse and rider on a granite base, will be restored by repairing the base and its adjacent bench and concrete pad. “On the War Trail,” the bronze Native American on a similar granite base, is in need of slightly more restoration including replacement of its bronze plaque, installation of a new concrete pad and re-creation of its original cast concrete bench. The third piece of sculpture in the lower terrace, Christopher Columbus is much newer and will require repair of its base to eliminate or reduce cracking.

Pressure to add new sculpture to Civic Center will continue. New sculpture should be a part of the improvements to Civic Center in keeping with Bennett's vision of its role in adding interest and grace to the park. However, the following criteria should be followed when selecting and siting new installations.

- New sculpture should be located in sites indicated on the Park Master Plan. Locations should reinforce the park's composition.
- New sculpture should respect but not imitate Civic Center's neo-classical design,
- Sculpture should be of a scale and mass that is compatible with Civic Center,
- Temporary sculpture may be installed and is encouraged in the Festival Garden where it will be essential in creating an active and dynamic park space.



PIONEER PARK (I)

Pioneer Park symbolically marks the end of Smokey Hill Trail. Designed by Frederick MacMonnies and built in 1911, the impressive Pioneer Monument with its monumental fountain and sculptural figures, originally sat in a larger plaza, complete with a circular row of trees and ornamental lights. The plaza provided a contrast to the grand, openness of the State Capitol and was a defining feature of Edward Bennett's 1917 park plan for Civic Center. From its beginnings in 1911, Pioneer Park served as a civic plaza and as a place to gather for special civic events.



Pioneer Park will be rehabilitated as a new urban plaza to reflect its historical and civic importance. The existing bus stop will be relocated to provide additional space for the park. The existing triangular space will be reconfigured to create a large circular plaza around the Pioneer Monument. A low railing and plantings will be added to the base of the monument to protect it from public access. Trees and pedestrian scale lights will define the circular plaza, and line Broadway and both sides of Cheyenne Place. A triangular lawn will provide a park space at the northern end of the park. Cheyenne Place and the area adjacent to the Denver Newspaper Agency Plaza will be treated with the same paving materials as the circular plaza to visually extend the civic space to the building edge. Rich paving materials such as granite will be used for all paved areas to match the original materials of the Pioneer Monument. Since the Pioneer Monument, including its cast bronze figures and granite water basin, recently underwent restoration, it will be cleaned to eliminate staining and litter.

GREEK THEATER (J)

The Greek Theater was built in 1919, during the same time that Bennett's definitive balustrade, wall and columns were being constructed. Situated at the southern terminus of the secondary axis, the site was originally conceived as a concert grove by the Olmsted Brothers in their plan of 1912. This idea moved forward, but to be compatible with Bennett's vision of a City Beautiful aesthetic, architects Marean & Norton designed the amphitheater and colonnade with neo-classical sensibilities.

Over its nearly 90 years of existence, the Greek Theater has undergone a few minor modifications and rehabilitation projects including a 1990s restoration of the colonnade. In 2004 the amphitheater underwent a major reconstruction that included rebuilding the concrete benches, replacing the brick flooring in the bowl, replacing the drain system and adding a snow melt system.

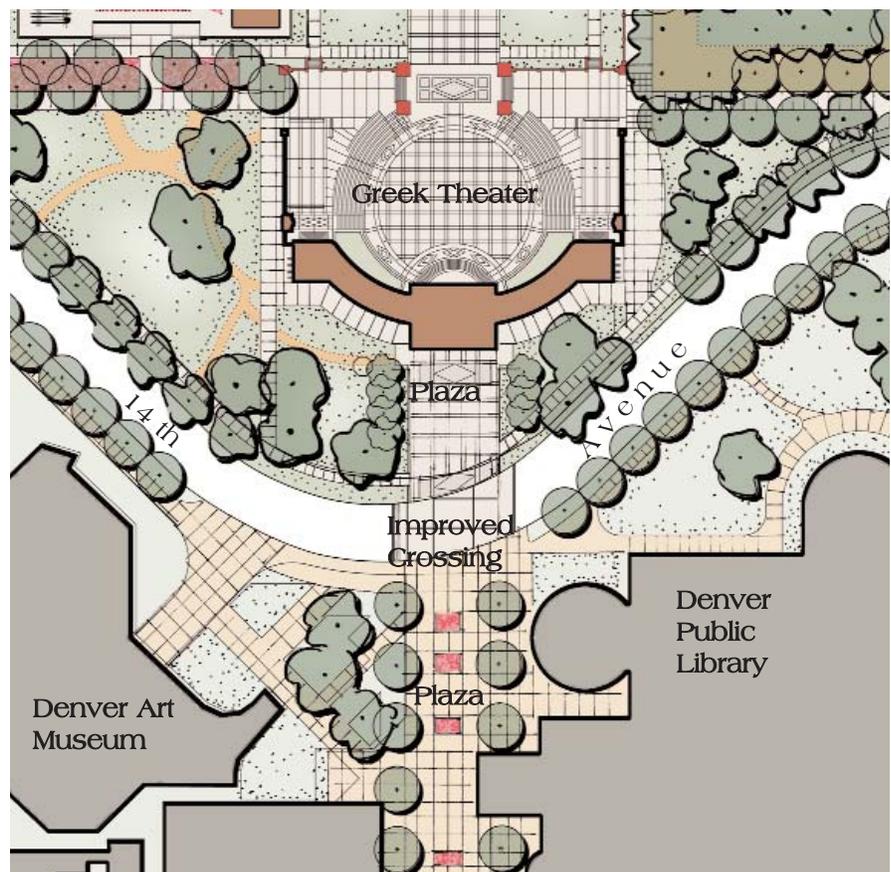
From its inception the Greek Theater has served as Civic Center's primary performance space. To continue as a desirable performance venue,



several rehabilitation efforts are necessary.

- Interior spaces, including storage spaces will be rehabilitated. The dressing rooms will be rehabilitated for use once again as dressing rooms.
- New restrooms will be built in the current restroom spaces, with their use restricted to performers or others directly associated with events.
- Park maintenance activities including office and storage facilities will be moved from the Greek Theater.
- Park offices will be relocated to the rehabilitated McNichols Library and maintenance facilities will be moved off-site.

The most significant rehabilitation efforts will include the restoration of the original screen to a usable condition and the restoration of the Allan True murals. The original screen and all of its associated components will be restored to a fully functional level. The screen will be available for use by the city and event organizers. The Allan True murals will be cleaned and restored to the extent possible. The murals will remain on the walls of the colonnade in their original locations. Additional methods for protecting





REHABILITATION PROJECTS

- Restore Allen True Murals
- Restore the Original Screen
- Rehabilitate the Colonnade
- Rehabilitate Dressing Rooms
- Replace Roof
- Rehabilitate Wall of Benefactors

them in place will be developed in cooperation with the Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs.

Exterior building restoration will focus on those areas that have not previously been restored including the replacement of the entire roof, restoration of the site walls on either side of the amphitheater, and restoration of the Wall of Benefactors.

- Site improvements will concentrate on connecting the Greek Theater with the remainder of the park and with the nearby cultural facilities.
- A new walk will be added to the western edge of the Greek Theater to provide for better park access and an accessible route.
- The existing walk on the east edge will be widened to mirror the new western walk.
- The existing plantings in both areas will be removed and the irrigation components will be moved away from the walls to the outside edge of the walks, in essence establishing a dry zone around the historic structure.
- The walks adjacent to the amphitheater will be upgraded in material, with the addition of a pattern that mimics the 1930s shuffleboard courts that were removed with the 2004 reconstruction.

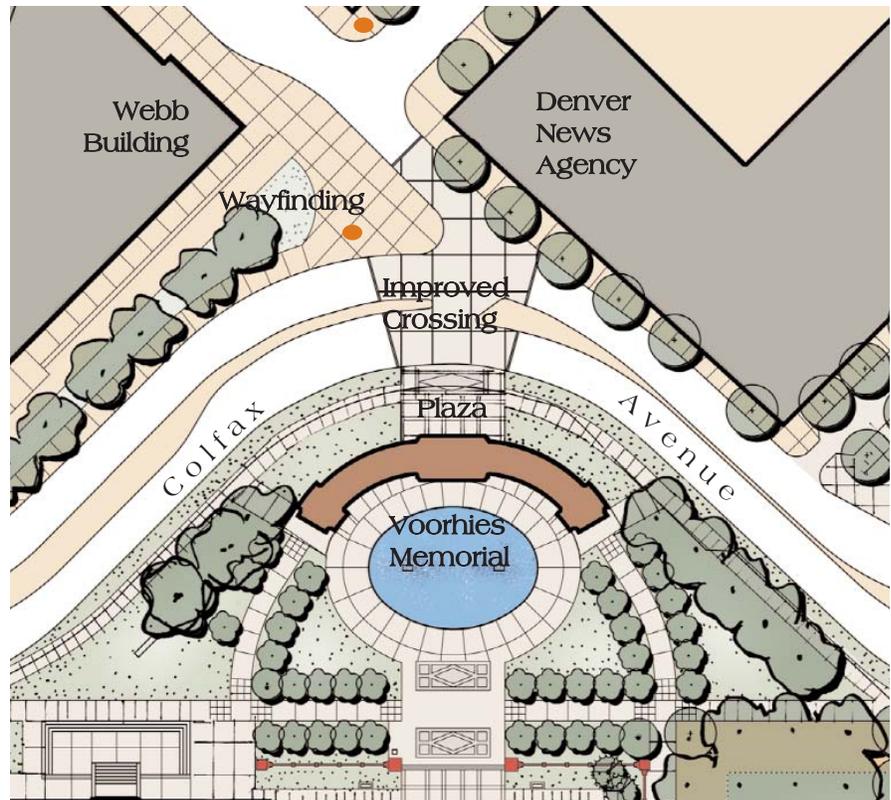


VOORHIES MEMORIAL AND SEAL FOUNTAIN (K)

The Voorhies Memorial was built in 1919, during the same year that the Greek Theater and Edward Bennett's elegant limestone balustrade were completed. Situated directly north of the Greek Theater at the northern terminus of the secondary axis, the Voorhies Memorial on a low terraced plinth, created a gateway to downtown and reconciled the two street grids. The characteristic Seal Fountain designed through a design competition and added in 1920 completes the setting. The Voorhies Memorial was one of a number of commemorative sculptures, like the Wall of Benefactors, that Mayor Speer and city leaders promoted to have substantial park architecture.

The Voorhies Memorial has had even less restoration and rehabilitation work than the Greek Theater. All of its original historic fabric remains intact, although features vary in condition. One of the most pressing needs is the restoration of the historic Seal Fountain, including repair of the plumbing system, repainting and repair of the water basin, and restoration of the bronze figures.

It is essential that a complete understanding of the Voorhies Memorial restoration needs be undertaken to determine the extent of work that is required. A historic structure assessment (HSA) should be completed in the near future.





MCNICHOLS CIVIC CENTER BUILDING (CARNEGIE LIBRARY) (N)

Built in 1909, the Carnegie Library was Denver's first public library near its developing downtown. At the time, the vision for the grand civic space that was to eventually become Civic Center was still evolving, making the Carnegie Library the first substantial construction on the site. Its early construction, made possible by a monetary gift of \$200,000 from Andrew Carnegie, also defined the Carnegie Library as a significant structure that would influence the character of Civic Center's later development.

The Carnegie Library was designed in the Greek Revival style by Albert Ross of New York City, a style very fitting with the City Beautiful aesthetic that Bennett's park plan would follow in 1917. Renamed as the McNichols Civic Center Building in 1999, the existing three story building is virtually identical to its original construction with a few key changes. In 1955 when the Denver Water Board moved their offices into the building, the original front entrance was removed, and the interior was modified to accommodate office space. The open spaces of the original library were filled with new finishes. New walls, ceilings, mechanical and electrical equipment, and an elevator were added to convert the interior to an office use.

The Carnegie Library will be revitalized as an active, public facility that is respectful of its heritage as a historically and architecturally significant building. Its revitalization will follow two tracts, 1) the restoration and rehabilitation of the interior and exterior, and 2) the activation of the spaces for public use.

Creating a Public Use

The key to activating Civic Center as a lively and engaging civic space is contingent upon restoring the McNichols Building for reuse as a public facility. New uses, that are compatible with Civic Center, will allow for greater public access, bringing vitality and activity to the park on a regular basis.

The office uses that are currently accommodated within the building will be moved into other city facilities within the Civic Center District. As noted under Restoring the Exterior and Interior, non-historic finishes including those that define existing office spaces will be removed and the building interior will be restored to its historic condition. New uses including public restrooms, a restaurant or café, retail space, park related offices and storage, and cultural facilities such as a library will provide desirable park activities and meet park needs.

The first floor will serve as the primary public space providing opportunities to have lunch, attend a community meeting, learn about the park's history, view the park from above, relax with a good book, or just use the restroom. The ground floor will accommodate support facilities that

REHABILITATION PROJECTS

- Restore Allen True murals
- Rehabilitate Colonnade
- Replace Roof
- Restore Interior
- Rehabilitate Seal Fountain and Sculpture





will ensure proper management of the park, including spaces for park personnel, or if a cultural program is included, their associated ancillary facilities.

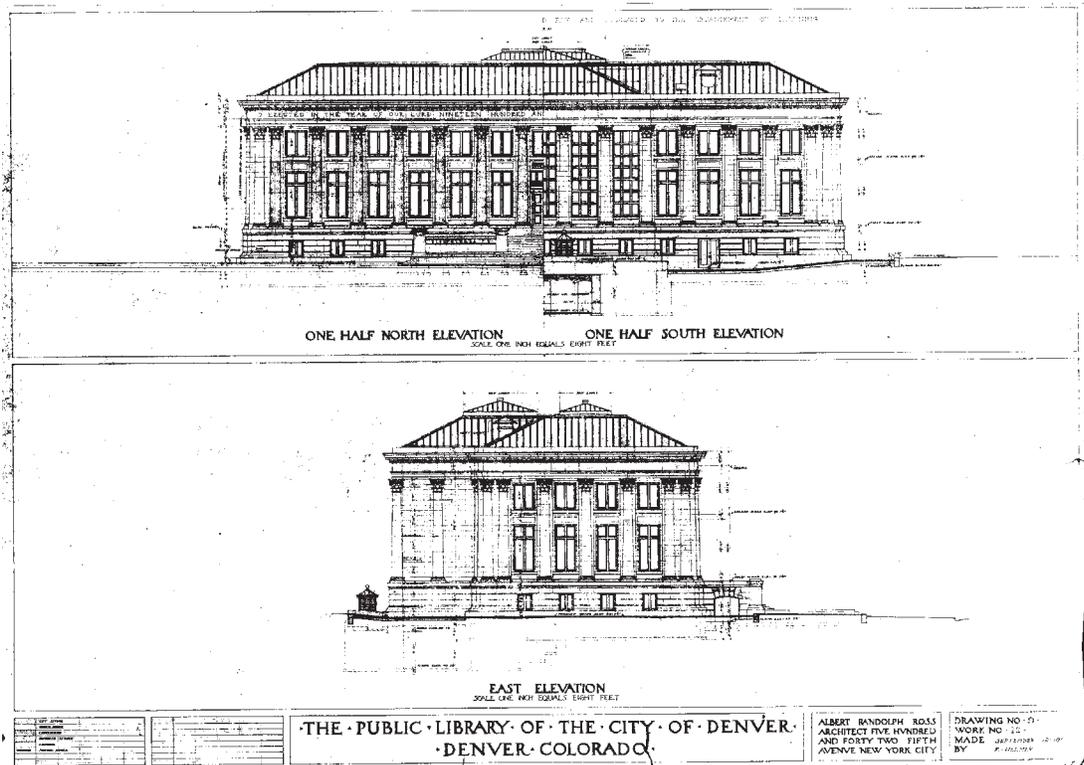
The second floor will be the primary space for the program needs of a cultural facility. For example, if the Stephen Hart Library were to move to the McNichols Building, the third floor would become their primary research and library space.

Restoring the Exterior and Interior

The restoration of its historic exterior and interior will reinstate the McNichols Building as an architecturally and historically significant structure, acknowledging it as Civic Center's most important feature. The exterior building restoration will be accomplished in accordance with the Secretary of Interior Standards, including the Guidelines for the Treatment of Historic Properties, and in compliance with Design Guidelines of the Denver Landmark Preservation Commission. The restoration of the building's interior will be undertaken as an adaptive re-use, as the new uses are compatible with its original use as a public library. This work will also comply with the Secretary of Interior Standards.

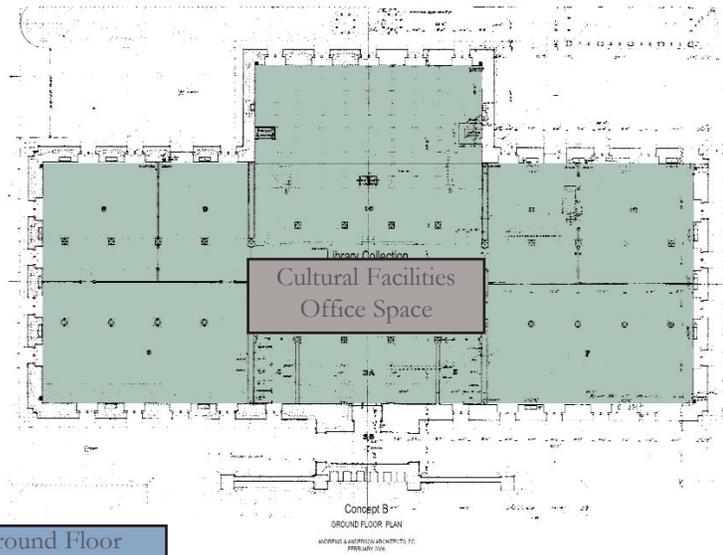


The original building exterior is largely intact and is in excellent condition, due in large part to the early 1990s restoration work that repaired

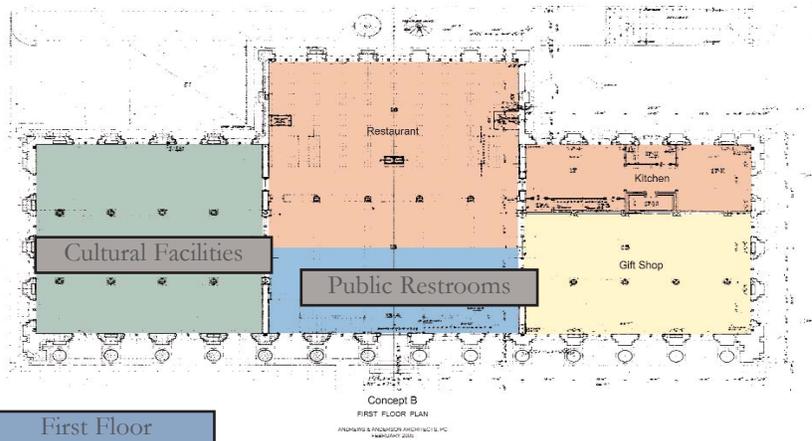


MCNICHOLS BUILDING

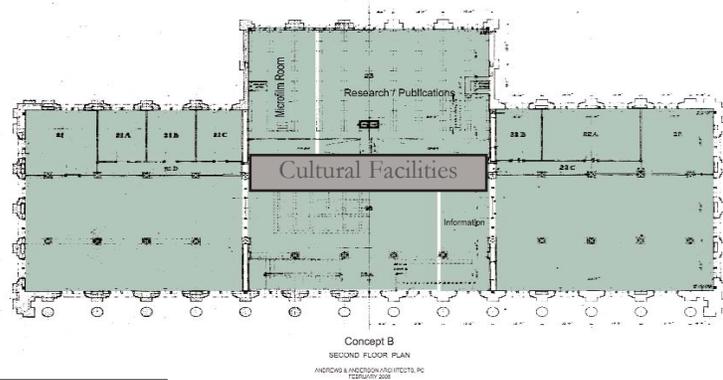
- Gift Shop
- Restaurant
- Cultural Facilities
- Meeting Rooms
- Public Restrooms



Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor



the roofs, stabilized and repaired stone fractures, replaced flashing, re-pointed critical head and bed joints, and removed earlier damaging repairs, replacing them with materials formulated for the repair of sandstone. However, major modifications dating to 1957 have significantly impacted several of the facades and the building's relationship to the park. Most damaging were the removal of the original doors and windows that were replaced with aluminum doors and windows, and the removal of the monumental stairway and the historic entry on the Colfax Avenue facade, which was replaced with a sunken entry.

The McNichols Building will undergo a full exterior building restoration. The existing aluminum windows and doors will be replaced with new windows and doors to match the appearance of the original features. The building exterior will be cleaned to remove stains and litter, all stonework will be re-pointed, a stone strengthener will be applied to all stone surfaces of the towers above the cornice line, and the cornice stone will be patched. The existing surface mounted electrical service and conduit will be removed. The original building entrance, at the first floor level, will be restored by reconstructing the monumental formal stairway according to historic drawings and photographs. The reconstruction will re-create the grand presence that the original entrance commanded on Colfax Avenue, effectively re-linking the building with the activity of the adjacent street. The ground floor, which is partially at grade, will once again be accessed through an arched opening on both ends of the grand stairway.

Perhaps the greatest modifications to the building occurred on the interior, where the wonderful open spaces of the original library were filled with walls and ceilings to convert them to a mix of small offices and larger work rooms. These interior spaces will be rehabilitated and restored to the



extent possible. It seems as though the mid-1950s and 1960s remodel did not substantially alter the original structural system. It is possible, although not yet substantiated, that the interior columns and column capitals are still intact, covered over by non-historic finishes. A thorough assessment of the interior, similar to the exterior assessment that was conducted in 1999, will be undertaken. The extent of alterations that will be necessary to restore the historic interior to accommodate the proposed uses will be determined and the existing building systems will be evaluated.



The first floor will be restored to its original character, housing a mix of uses including a restaurant or café, restrooms, public space, and a cultural program. The first floor will once again serve as the building's main entry. Its building entrance will be restored to the original location and condition on the north façade, requiring a restoration of the center third portion of the façade to match the appearance of the original. Existing windows will be replaced by a door that will match the appearance of the original door. The new building entry will include a public area and public restrooms. In the large central space that originally housed library stacks, the existing walls and ceilings will be removed and the historic grand open space re-established for use as the restaurant or café. Original features and materials including ceilings, window openings, and floors will be repaired to the extent possible. The proposed restaurant or café will include new architectural elements and finishes that will be designed to be compatible with the historic character. A visual connection to Civic Center will be made by adding windows to the existing openings in the southern wall, allowing for a spectacle view into the park. A new outdoor terrace, extending from the building's southern façade, will provide a much needed physical connection to Civic Center. Stairways at the east and west ends of the terrace will connect it and the McNichols Building with the park.

The western third of the first floor will be rehabilitated to accommodate a kitchen for the restaurant or café and to provide a retail space. The mezzanine will be rehabilitated for use as a storage area. Non-historic elements and finishes will be removed from each space. The kitchen will be designed so as to minimize impacts on historic materials and features. The retail space will restore the original space to the extent possible, and new architectural elements and finishes will be designed to be compatible with the historic character.

The ground floor, set partially below grade, will be rehabilitated as office and storage space for park related uses and to accommodate the needs of a cultural program, such as a library collection. Non-historic finishes and elements will be removed and the space restored to its original character to the extent possible. The ground floor will also provide an accessible building entrance. The new monumental stairway will include an arched opening where a ramp will provide a barrier free route from Civic



Center into the McNichols Buildings.

The third floor will be restored to its original character. Non-historic elements and finishes will be removed from the entire floor and new architectural finishes and elements will be designed to respect the historic character of the space. The southern wall will be rehabilitated with new windows set in existing openings to provide a new visual connection to Civic Center. New windows will match the appearance of the original windows and will be compatible with the building's historic character.

The building's systems - mechanical, electrical, and elevator (including many that appear to date to the 1950s or 60s) - will be updated to meet current building code standards. The building is Type III/A construction - a construction type that supports the proposed uses. Restoration and rehabilitation projects will include improvements to correct operational or life safety deficiencies including those needed for fire detection or fire suppression, fire ratings, and abatement. A thorough hazardous material survey will be undertaken to determine the extent of hazardous materials within the building, including the extent of asbestos-containing materials.





"Civic Center is conceived as a large open space to be used as a place of public concourse. It will at times of public events be the meeting place of many thousands of people. . ."

Edward Bennett, The Denver Civic Center - Recommendations to Accompany Preliminary Plan, 1918



Management Recommendations

Vision

Civic Center will be the robust center of downtown Denver, a favorite place to relax during lunch, a place for sightseeing, people watching, a place to read the morning paper, let the kids run, watch a film, or come once a year to celebrate. All of Civic Center will be well-used, from its historic tree groves along Broadway with lots of shade to the open, sunny center of the park with its sculptural water feature to the award-winning restaurant in the McNichols Building.

As Denver's most architecturally and historically significant urban park, Civic Center serves as the region's premiere gathering space, attracting well over one million people each year. Its current level of care and management is not keeping pace with its high level of use. Historic structures are nearing 100 years old. Repair is becoming increasingly important as maintenance has been deferred for years. As city budgets have diminished in recent years, maintenance staff has been severely cutback, making it increasingly difficult to adequately maintain park facilities.

The care and management of Civic Center must be elevated to a higher standard to adequately accommodate its greater level of use and to recognize its increasing value to the people of Denver and the region. New management approaches are being undertaken in many cities across the country. Modeled on public private partnerships where the community is invested in the care of urban parks, these new approaches bring volunteer commitment, funding and special expertise to the care of these special places. Places like Golden Gate National Park in San Francisco, and Central Park and Battery Park in New York City benefit from model partnerships where the partnerships are structured to best to accomplish each park's mission and to build a community of stewardship.

Background

Civic Center is managed in the same manner as other parks in the City & County of Denver Parks and Recreation system. It is one of the 46 parks, 12 parkways, and 15 public building grounds that comprise the Northwest Park District, one of Denver's four park maintenance districts. The district extends from 6th Avenue on the south to 52nd Avenue on the north and from Sheridan Boulevard on the west to Park Avenue and Washington Street on the east. The Northwest Park District crews provide daily maintenance and operations, caring for the turf, flower beds, irrigation systems and providing trash pick-up and repairs. In addition to the grounds maintenance



CURRENT FESTIVALS

- Cinco de Mayo Celebration
- CHUN People's Fair
- Pridefest
- Bike to Work Day
- Summer Festival of Free Theater
- A Taste of Colorado
- Veteran's Parade
- Parade of Lights

NEEDS

- Evening, Weekend & Holiday Groundskeeping
- Full-time Horticultural Staff
- Replacement of Standard Park Elements, i.e., benches

staff, other citywide operations are managed by a separate division in the parks and Recreation Department. Park Planning provides planning expertise and project management for long-range planning and capital improvement projects, Parks Permitting coordinates event permitting and scheduling, and Public Office Buildings maintains the Carnegie Library.

Each division has its own priorities, funding, staffing capacity and managed by separate supervisors. This broad stroke approach to park operations has some efficiency advantages but also has significant disadvantages, especially when operations budgets decline.

The operations budgets have followed a steady trend downward over the past seven years. Park maintenance crews have been reduced to spending just a few hours each day in Civic Center during the week. On weekends, only a two-man crew covers the entire 100-acre park district. Since crews must travel between parks, travel time further reduces time available in the park. The complex maintenance issues of Civic Center and its prominent location make this even more problematic. The intensity of use from large events, the wide variety of activities, vagrants and criminals that establish daily patterns results in higher than average trash and clean-up needs, and prominent location prompts more complaints and demands on park staff than other parks in the system.

Civic Center, more than most other parks in Denver, has more non-standard park structures constructed of unique materials that require specialized care and attention. Many, such as the stone monuments and balustrades cannot be easily categorized into the maintenance operations based on grounds or buildings. Currently, neither the park crews nor facility crews have the specialized skills and knowledge to care for these structures. Consequently, they receive little or no cyclical maintenance and inappropriate repairs are made that affect the historic integrity. Civic Center's two major features, the Greek Theater and the Voorhies Memorial do not have regular scheduled routine maintenance such as tuck pointing, caulking and sealing or gutter cleaning. These maintenance gaps have accumulated into major capital repair needs in excess of one million dollars.

The current management approach maintains the park at the minimally acceptable level in the following areas: turf management, weekday trash removal, irrigation system maintenance, tree care, fountain maintenance, and snow removal.

The most significant gaps are in the following areas: cyclical maintenance of historic structures and pavements, specialized care and repair for outdoor sculptures and murals and replacement or repair of unique features such as balustrades, ornamental fixtures, hardware and signs.



Some areas needing enhancement to improve deficiencies include: evening, weekend and holiday routine groundskeeping such as trash and cleanup, full-time horticultural staffing during the growing season, replacement or repair funds for existing standard park features such as benches, signs, bollards, concrete and asphalt paving.

The high concentration of vagrants and the perceived threats to personal safety are the most frequent complaints about the park experience from residents and visitors. Crime, especially drug dealing is a persistent problem in the park. A recent police department crime sweep resulted in over 70 arrests in one day. Park rules, permit requirements and overall security is under the jurisdiction of the Denver Police. Parks and Recreation department does not have staff or authority to enforce rules or regulations. Denver Police balances many priorities in the community and they need to weigh responding to emergencies and serious crime with the infractions that occur in the park. Many times the park crimes are lower priorities and the park is left disregarded. The lack of enforcement degrades the park experience and further exacerbates the park's negative reputation.



The park is a refuge for many people, including the homeless. Providing refuge is a valid park use, however areas of the park have become nearly the exclusive domain for the homeless. This has a detrimental affect of displacing or detracting other park users and further emphasizes the uninviting reputation of the park. Future park management must sensitively balance uses in the park in a way that does not offend public rights in the park. Some of the most effective measures employed in other parks around the country are to increase programmed park uses and attractions so that the homeless are less obvious among the larger numbers of other visitors and users in the park.

New Management Approach

A new management approach is needed to elevate Civic Center from its bare minimum quality of care to a premier showcase park at the hub of downtown Denver. The level of park management must be consistent with the high quality facilities, architecture and the respect of the park's historic significance desired in the future. For its true value to be fully appreciated the park must be well cared for, clean and secure.

Other communities around the country have recognized the benefit and long-term value of strengthening park management and operations in addition to capital improvements. Public-private partnerships, cost recovery measures, revenue generating strategies, and more efficient facility maintenance systems are some of the most effective management tools used to improve park quality.



The future management of Civic Center should be based on incorporating the public-private model and adopting the following key areas of change - **1) establishing the Civic Center Conservancy as an umbrella partner** and **2) enhancing city operations and maintenance.**

ESTABLISH CIVIC CENTER CONSERVANCY as the UMBRELLA PARTNER

· Civic Center is ideally suited to the public private partnership management approach because of its historical significance and origins as a legacy park. In the 1900's Civic Center's early development was made possible by the commitment of city leaders who envisioned a grand park based on civic ideals of philanthropic giving to the community. Its prominence today has broad appeal to a wide range of constituents from corporations and foundations to local residents and individuals.

· Continuing the tradition of individual giving to sustain the legacy is even more critical today with city funding dwindling and staff downsizing. The need for a community based organization to partner with the city is once again essential.

· The recently formed Civic Center Conservancy brings together a group of Denver leaders and community activists who share the city's vision of re-establishing Civic Center as a great urban center. They believe as the city does that it is necessary to establish a partnership to ensure the future improvement and appropriate care of Civic Center.

· The Civic Center Conservancy would serve as an umbrella organization to market and promote the park, develop park programs and activities, and function as the primary private non-profit fund-raising arm for rehabilitation as well as new construction projects. As the umbrella organization, they would promote other partners to collaborate on projects of mutual interest and serve as a liaison to work with other surrounding institutions and public agencies.

· The partnership would be formalized through a cooperative agreement that would define the working relationship between the City and the Civic Center Conservancy.

· The agreement would incorporate the master plan as the primary basis of mutual understanding and guide the decision-making process. The agreement would begin initially with a broad understanding and become more detailed and defined as the conservancy capacity evolves and increases its responsibility for the park.

· However, the city will continue its primary responsibility for the long-term stewardship and final decision-making authority in the park.

NEW MANAGEMENT APPROACH

- Establish Civic Center Conservancy as the Umbrella Partner
- Enhance City Operations and Maintenance



ENHANCE CITY OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

- To adequately raise the quality of the park experience, park operations must provide a strong on-site presence for both maintenance and security purposes. Trash and general park cleaning should be provided daily, year round. A park crew stationed in the park should be operated for lawn and horticultural care daily during the growing season. About 6-7 full-time staff would be required to provide this level of service for staggered shifts. Crews with specialized knowledge to care for historic structures should be developed into the overall department organization to provide service to all parks including Civic Center. Adequate operating funds should be allocated for service contracts and materials to repair and replace unique features in the park.
- Security staffing could be addressed through several measures. A park ambassador program similar to the Downtown Denver Partnership (DDP) program could either be created specifically for the park or contracted with DDP to extend the existing program into the park. The ambassador could provide visitor information, permit and general rules enforcement as well as serve as the "eyes" in the park. The staff could have direct communication capability with the police department to call during emergencies or criminal incidents. A park ranger program staffed by Denver Parks employees could provide similar services in the park. Another avenue would be to contract with a private security company to provide this service.
- A park manager should be established to efficiently coordinate park operations and serve as the point of contact for the conservancy, public and other agencies. The park manager would provide oversight to manage crews, security staff, capital improvement projects, and coordinate event permitting.
- As new facilities are planned for the park, additional maintenance costs must be factored into the park operations. New features, gardens and structures would likely need additional staff, staff with specialized skills, service contracts and new cyclical maintenance schedules. A maintenance endowment should be established for each new facility to ensure lasting protection of capital investments.
- Finally, a satellite operations facility is needed to stage park operations. Currently the Greek Theater houses park operating equipment, offices and storage. Consequently, park operations are often staged in the amphitheater plaza, posing significant risks and conflicts with public safety and use. The satellite facility could be established to serve all park maintained areas in the downtown vicinity at a centralized location near the park.



Public Private Partnership

"Partnerships need formal written agreements and work plans that define mutual interests and expectations, the roles and responsibilities of each partner, and clear accountability for the work to be performed."

Brian O'Neill's 21 Partnership Success Factors

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
Denver Parks & Recreation Department	Civic Center Conservancy
Public Entity	Non-Profit
Park Management, Planning, Policy and Permitting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Park Manager · Park Planner 	Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Executive Director · Staff
Park Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Dedicated Crew · Dedicated Equipment 	
	Marketing and Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Liaison with institutions · Partnerships
City Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Capitol Improvements (CIP) · Maintenance Funding · Permit Fees · Rental Fees 	Capitol Campaigns and Fund-raising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Donors and Gifts · Grants · Maintenance Endowment · Sponsorships
Event Coordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Select festivals · Permitting 	Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Daily events and use · Special events · Vendors
Police Presence	Private Security

The chart summarizes the respective roles of the City & County of Denver and the Civic Center Conservancy as the umbrella organization.



Retain Festival Events

Civic Center first hosted Denver's large festival gatherings in 1895 when the Chamber of Commerce brought the first Festival of Mountain and Plain to the park site to boost community spirit and pride. The festival only lasted until 1902. In 1983 the festival was re-established by the Downtown Denver Partnership to celebrate Colorado's rich cultural heritage. Renamed as the Taste of Colorado - Festival of Mountain and Plain, the event annually attracts upwards of 500,000 people over a four to five day period. The success of the Taste of Colorado has spawned other large festivals including the Capitol Hill People's Fair (who moved from another location), Pridefest and Cinco de Mayo.



Much has been made of the impact the large festivals have on the park and the neighborhood. But, the number of days that Civic Center and the surrounding streets are used for large festivals only amounts to 20 days per year, including 10 actual event days and an additional 10 days for setup and removal.

To ensure that Civic Center remains a lively, active urban park, it is important to retain festival events. The existing festivals are instrumental in introducing Coloradans and visitors to downtown Denver and the Civic Center. They also provide a key source of revenue for the City & County of Denver through the tax they generate during the festival event.



Increase Smaller Events

An increase in smaller festival events that focus on culture and fun, will augment these large festival gatherings. The smaller events that already call Civic Center home, will remain. The Theater in the Park is a good example of the type and size of event that is successful in attracting people to Civic Center on a regular basis. Occurring for 12 summer evenings in 2004 in the Greek Theater, Theater in the Park is a free evening event, sponsored in part by the City, as it waives the facility permit fee. Denver Public Schools' annual Shakespeare Festival is another great small event that is well suited to Civic Center. The variety and type of potential small events are numerous as is evidenced by those that presently occur including political rallies, city functions such as the Mayor's State of the City address, public ceremonies and commercial filming. These events will be encouraged to continue.

Civic Center offers a variety of great spaces for smaller events, including the historic Greek Theater, the monumental Voorhies Memorial and Seal Pond, and the proposed Festival Garden. The city, along with its partners, will work with non-profit groups and small organizations to bring more small events to each of these spaces. Emphasis will be made on pro-

INCREASE PARK ACTIVITIES

- Vendors with Movable Carts
- Programmed Activities
- More Small Events



viding events at various times of the day, including evenings, weekdays and weekends.

Potential small events may include dance recitals, films and plays in the Greek Theater; and outdoor exhibits on art, photography, the natural world, history or other relevant topics in the Broadway tree groves, in the Voorhies Memorial courtyard or in the proposed Festival Garden. Small concerts, small neighborhood festivals, and a weekly farmers market are also small events that will draw people to Civic Center.

Increase Daily Use

Located at the heart of the region's government campus, Civic Center is well situated to attract a wide variety of users on a daily basis. City and government employees, business people, visitors to the surrounding cultural complex and State Capitol, and tourists are near the park everyday. In 2004, over 900,000 people visited the Central Library, 250,000 people, many of them children visited the State Capitol, and another 350,000 people visited the Denver Art Museum. The park's proximity to the bustling neighborhoods of the Golden Triangle and Capitol Hill offer an additional base of residents, as Civic Center is their closest green space.

To ensure that Civic Center becomes lively and engaged, the day-to-day use in the park needs to increase, particularly in areas that now seem unsafe and underused such as the tree groves along Broadway. Two fundamental approaches are recommended to make this happen. The first is to implement the physical improvements as recommended in the Master Plan section. Rehabilitating the park's significant features will restore Civic Center as the grand dame of Denver. Adding the central water feature, the festival and linear gardens, and improving existing park spaces, will allow the park to have a more human-scale feeling while offering many more reasons to visit on a regular basis. The addition of movable chairs and lots of benches in both sunny and shaded areas will provide more opportunities for sitting, relaxing and people watching.

To augment these improvements, a series of programmed activities will be implemented to draw people to the park and to offer reasons to stay longer. The activities will be of three types:

- Vendors with special park permits, activities sponsored by the city or their partners, and activities that lease park space. Vendors with movable carts will be located in two locations: near the Seal Pond in the Voorhies Memorial courtyard, and the elevated plazas on either side of the Greek Theater's amphitheater. Additional opportunities will be available within the three park kiosks, within the restored McNichols Building and at the proposed Festival Garden. Vendors will be selected on their



compatibility with other park uses and on their ability to provide desired park services or commodities

- Programmed activities developed and marketed by the City, or in concert with a private or non-profit partner will have a recreational, educational or cultural focus. Activities will occur at various times of the day, including evenings, weekdays and weekends, and may include special lunch events, bands, student presentations, rallies or performance art.
- The city will work closely with its neighbors, the Central Library, Colorado Historical Society and the Denver Art Museum to develop additional activities for their visitors including activities for school children.

McNichols Civic Center Building · Carnegie Library

Built in 1909 through the generous contributions of Andrew Carnegie, the McNichols Building was Civic Center's first building, pre-dating the park's development by seven years and served as Denver's original central library until 1955. The McNichols Civic Center Building continues to contribute to the civic importance and historical significance of Civic Center and offers great opportunities for daily use.

Today, the classical McNichols Building offers nearly 30,000 square feet of space for park related use. Activating the building with public uses that are compatible with the park is critical to successfully activating Civic Center and to attracting people on a daily basis. Two approaches will be undertaken to activate the building: 1) restoration of its original exterior and interior; 2) providing a variety of new uses and new public restrooms. The proposed uses for the McNichols Building include only those that will be of public benefit - providing new reasons for visiting Civic Center and much needed park facilities. Proposed uses that are compatible with the park include:

- A new cultural facility, such as a library associated with one of the park's adjacent cultural institutions;
- A restaurant or food venue; galleries or exhibit spaces; public meeting rooms;
- An orientation space with accommodations for school groups;
- Retail space associated with the park or the area's history; office space for park maintenance personnel or park staff.
- Clean, safe and accessible public restrooms that are open during park hours will be a key component of the rehabilitated building.

ACTIVATE MCNICHOLS CIVIC CENTER BUILDING

- Restoration of the Original Exterior and Interior
- New Public Uses and Public Restrooms



Dedicated Revenue

Although Civic Center is a major draw for events and large gatherings, revenue from these activities including sales taxes and facility fees, is not funneled directly to the park.

As with all city parks and facilities, Civic Center is funded through the City's general fund, with funds distributed through the Parks & Recreation Department. As city revenues fluctuate, funding for park maintenance, programs and improvements also vary, and in recent years, monies have been extremely limited. In addition to the general fund dollars, permitting fees, assessed for use of the entire park, generate minor revenues, less than \$38,000 in 2004, for the Parks & Recreation Department.

POLICY CHANGES

A greater level of investment is required to adequately manage Civic Center as a premiere gathering space, and to ensure that it continues as a great urban park. This means that measures to create a higher level of funding are also necessary.

Denver's Game Plan, the city's 2003 parks system master plan, explored several alternative funding methods including a dedicated revenue stream. For Civic Center, this arrangement, where fees generated in the park directly fund its care, would be most readily accomplished by modifying the existing permit system. To generate an adequate level of funding would require three substantial changes:

- Modifying current policy to allow for a portion of permit fees to be directed to Civic Center,
- Increasing permit fees, and
- Leasing park spaces and facilities that are not currently leased individually.

Currently, the permit fee to lease the entire park for one day is \$1,000, an amount far below market average. In comparison, the Foothills Recreation District charges \$350 to lease the amphitheater for three hours. The fee for a day rental of the entire grounds at the Denver Botanic Gardens is \$11,000, with the daily rental of the gardens ranging from \$400 to \$750.

A combination of these three approaches will be followed to increase the level of funding for Civic Center. Festivals will continue to occur, generating tax dollars that will continue to fund the city's general

POLICY CHANGES

- Portion of Permit Fees
- Increase Permit Fees
- Lease Individual Park Spaces



fund, in turn funding Denver Parks & Recreation and allowing Civic Center to continue to receive its current level of city funding.

To augment these funds, permit fees for Civic Center could be increased to more closely resemble current market rates. Individual park spaces and facilities such as the Greek Theater will be rented on an hourly and daily basis. The additional dollars generated by the increase in permit fees and the income from the new rentals will be used to directly fund Civic Center.

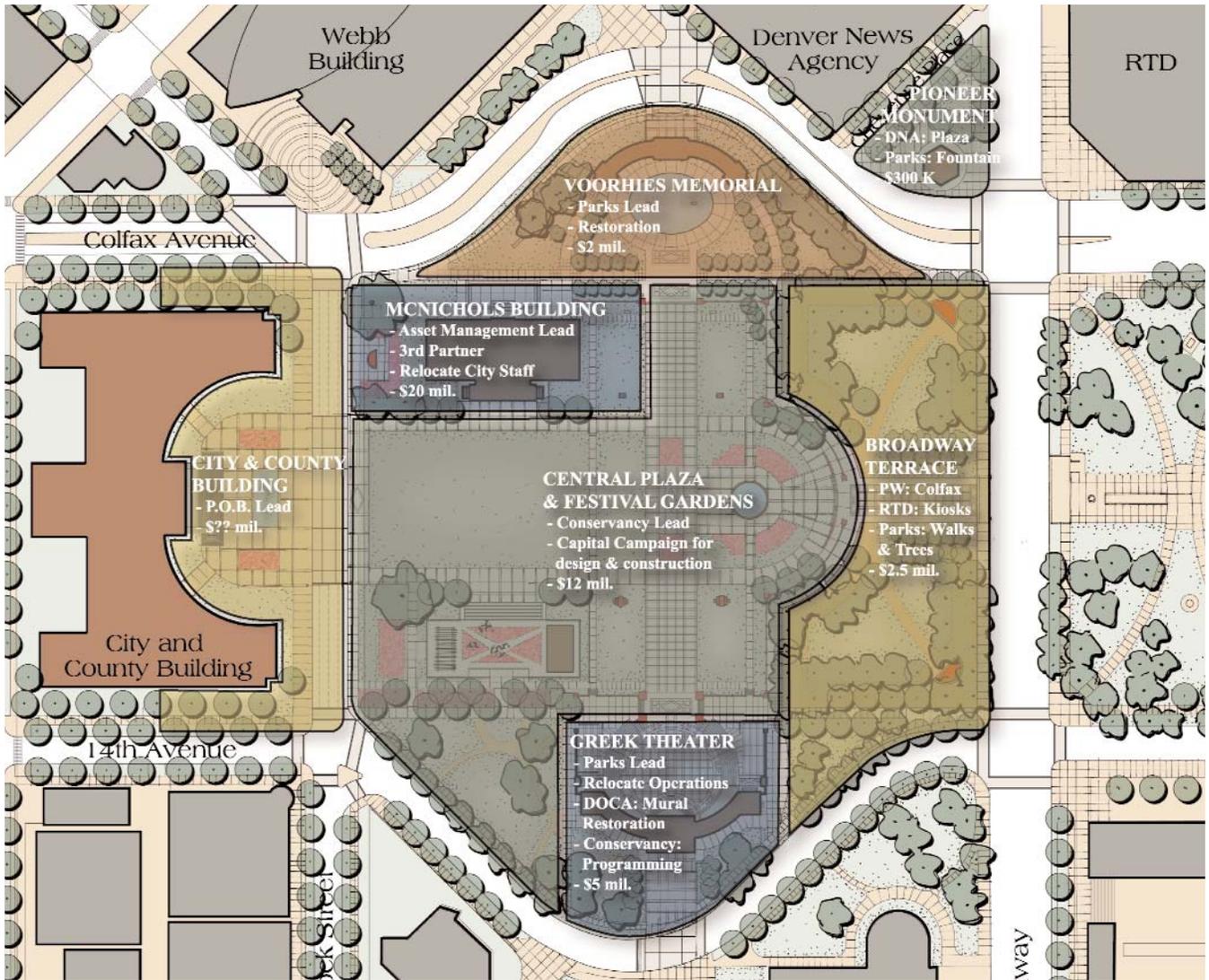
Event Management

A review of the existing City policies that relate to the management of events at Civic Center is necessary to ensure that the appropriate level of use is occurring; that the appropriate City staff and City agencies are involved and have the proper responsibilities; and that event organizers receive accurate information.

Several issues that should be evaluated on a regular basis include re-defining rest periods for Civic Center that ensure it can be adequately maintained. When a higher level of maintenance is established it may be possible for the rest periods to become shorter, allowing for more small events.

Since several City agencies have roles in the management of events at Civic Center, it is imperative that current efforts for collaboration occur. One possible measure to streamline event management is to develop an inter-agency staff position with the responsibilities of organizing the City process for obtaining event permits. One of the most effective methods of increasing small events in the park would be to have this staff position also promote events and assist in working with the neighborhood, and in coordinating events. The addition of this position would go a long way to increasing oversight and in improving community relations.





Implementation

Continuing in the tradition of Mayor Speer and his prolific Art Commission, a diverse group of city leaders have joined together to revitalize Civic Center for the next generation. With the Park Master Plan as their guide, Mayor John Hickenloper, Parks Manager Kim Bailey and the Civic Center Conservancy are committed to implementing the vision for Civic Center. They are joining together to prioritize improvements, develop programming, determine revenue sources, and identify additional partners.

Early action items include the improvement of programming for Civic Center. The Civic Center Conservancy will lead the effort to attract additional small events such as concerts and a farmers market.

The first step in the implementation of the physical improvements recommended in the Park Master Plan is to define roles for each partner by identifying their specific areas of influence. As illustrated in the plan graphic to the left, Parks & Recreation will continue to provide oversight for all improvements and will allocate available capitol improvement dollars to each park area. Improvements in individual park areas will be accomplished by partnering with other city agencies, adjacent entities and non-profit groups. Parks & Recreation will take the lead role for certain projects such as the Greek Theater, but in other instances the partner will lead the effort with support from Parks & Recreation.

The site rehabilitation for Pioneer Park is an early implementation item. Parks & Recreation is currently partnering with the Denver Newspaper Agency to implement a new urban plaza at the Pioneer

PARTNERS

- Parks & Recreation Department
- Civic Center Conservancy
- Public Works Department
- Public Office Buildings
- RTD
- Denver Newspaper Agency
- Denver Art Museum

Implementation Project	Lead Organization	Other Partners
Rehabilitate McNichols Building	City: Asset Management	City: Asset Management
Voorhies Memorial	City: Parks & Recreation	Civic Center Conservancy
Pioneer Fountain Plaza	City: Parks & Recreation	Denver Newspaper Agency, Community Planning and Development, Public Works
Broadway Terrace	City: Parks & Recreation	RTD, Public Works, Community Planning & Development
Central Plaza	Civic Center Conservancy	Parks & Recreation
Festival Gardens	Civic Center Conservancy	Parks & Recreation
Greek Theater Rehabilitation	Parks & Recreation	Department of Cultural Affairs, Civic Center Conservancy, Theater in the Park
Bannock Street	Public Works	Parks & Recreation, Community Planning and Development
City & County Building Plaza	Parks & Recreation	Public Office Buildings



Monument that will reflect the historical and civic importance of Pioneer Park. New paving of rich materials, a low railing and plantings at the base of the monument and a new lawn are scheduled for completion in 2006. Funding, design and construction for the improvements is provided by the Denver Newspaper Agency.

Parks & Recreation will lead the restoration, rehabilitation and new design projects at the Voorhies Memorial and Greek Theater, while partnering with the Civic Center Conservancy for funding opportunities. For Broadway Terrace that will require improvements to the bus stops as well as to park features, Parks & Recreation will work with Public Works and the Regional Transportation District (RTD).

Parks & Recreation will lead the effort to transform the Broadway Terrace into an active park space with tree thinning, new paving and seating and kiosks at Broadway. Parks & Recreation will work with Public Works and the Regional Transportation District (RTD) to improve and upgrade bus stops and adjacent park features at along Broadway.

Assessment Management and Public Office Buildings will lead the rehabilitation of the McNichols Building. The agencies will coordinate with Denver Parks & Recreation and seek other partners to rehabilitate and reuse the building as a cultural facility. The Civic Center Conservancy will play a role in assisting in identifying and securing new public uses.

Improvements to Bannock Street and to the grand entry to the City & County Building will require the participation of several city agencies including Public Office Buildings and Public Works. Parks & Recreation and the Civic Center Conservancy will assist in this effort through both advocacy and fund-raising, but it will be the responsibility of the other city agencies to design and construct these improvements. The schedule for the completion of these improvements is unknown, however the Civic Center District Plan identifies these as mid-term (2010 to 2017) priorities.

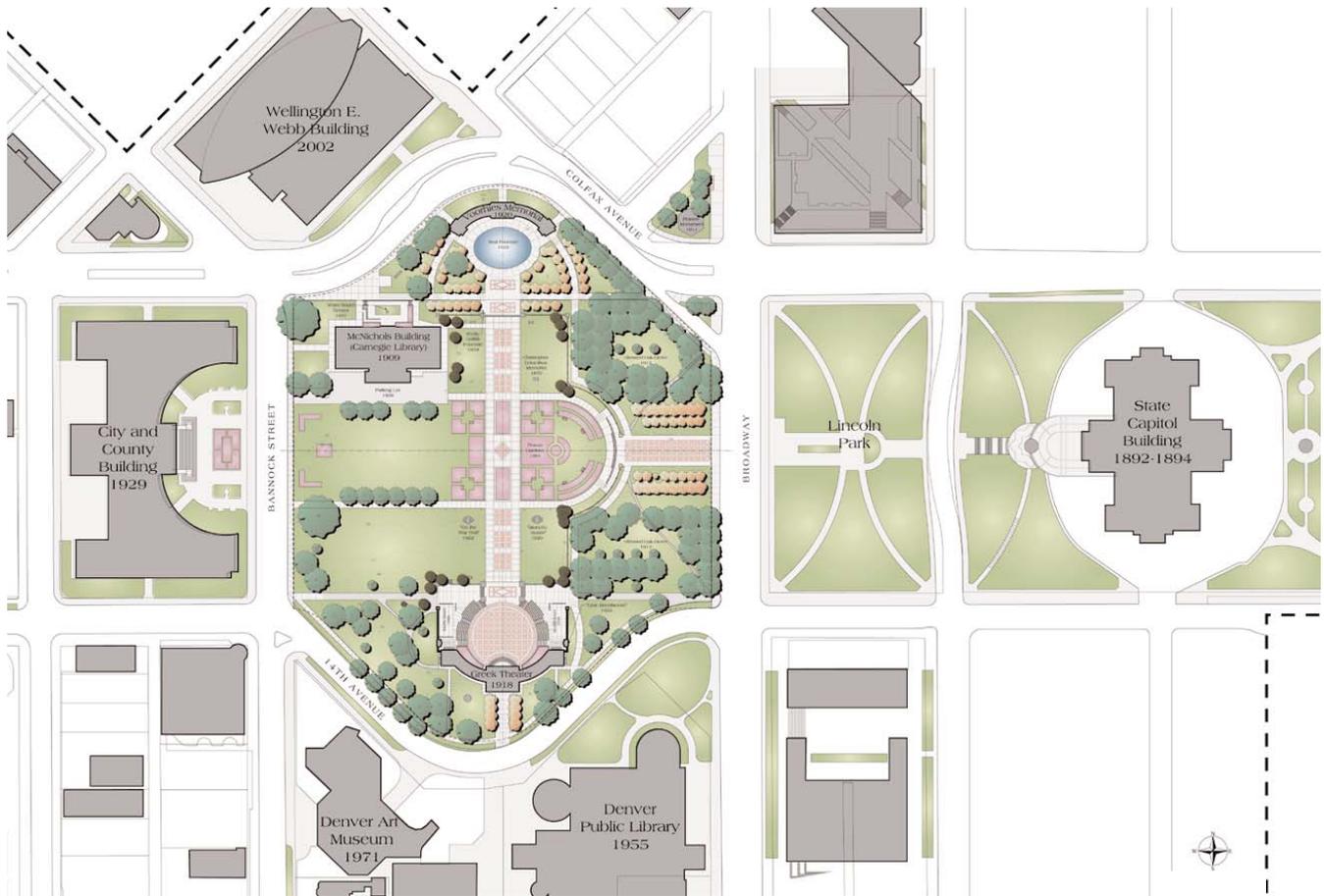
The Civic Center Conservancy will serve as the primary advocate and fund-raising entity for Civic Center. They will also have the responsibility of leading the effort to complete two of Civic Center's key park spaces - the Central Gathering Area and the Festival Garden. The Civic Center Conservancy will lead a capital campaign to raise funding to augment the city's capitol improvement funding for the design and construction of these features. This effort is anticipated to be underway in 2006.



Civic Center Cost Summary

<i>Item #</i>	<i>Item Description</i>	<i>Area Subtotal</i>
1	Demolition - Civic Center	\$142,500.00
2	Demolition - City & County Building Entry	\$23,125.00
3	General Site Work - Park-wide	\$318,550.00
4	Bannock Street	\$225,412.50
5	Great Lawn	\$158,800.00
6	Informal Lawn	\$174,000.00
7	Lower Terrace	\$1,428,600.00
8	Ice Skating Rink	\$125,000.00
9	Central Gathering Area	\$2,502,000.00
10	Upper Terrace	\$1,838,350.00
11	Historic Balustrades and Columns	\$870,000.00
12	Greek Theater	\$3,340,000.00
13	Festival Garden (<12,000 SF)	\$4,078,200.00
14	Linear Garden	\$240,300.00
15	City & County Building Entry	\$1,159,600.00
16	McNichols Civic Center Building	\$14,450,000.00
17	Voorhies Memorial	\$1,563,500.00
18	Pioneer Monument	\$206,250.00
19	Colfax Avenue Crossing	\$172,040.00
20	14th Avenue Crossing	\$72,600.00
21	Replace Perimeter Walks with Rich Paving	\$341,000.00
	SUBTOTAL	\$33,088,827.50
	20% Contingency	\$3,308,882.75
	15% Design Fees	\$4,963,324.13
	TOTAL	\$41,361,034.38





Civic Center - Existing Condition Plan



Background

Condition Assessment

The Condition Assessment is the analysis and evaluation of the physical qualities of Civic Center, including those qualities that are historically significant. Through field investigations and review of historic documents, those elements, components and relationships that are essential to Civic Center's composition are identified and their physical condition evaluated. At the same time, the integrity of Civic Center - the ability of the park landscape and grounds to convey its historical significance - is assessed by determining the extent to which the general character, characteristics, features, physical attributes and associations of the original 1917 Bennett Plan (or intentions) and any subsequent important changes are evident. Incompatible components that may negatively impact Civic Center's historical character are also identified and evaluated to determine their potential for removal or reversal.

A standard rating system, with a measure of poor, fair or good condition, was developed to evaluate Civic Center's physical condition and its historical integrity. A POOR rating indicates that a feature is badly deteriorated and that immediate corrective measures are necessary to ensure its preservation. FAIR is assigned when a feature is beginning to appear to be disturbed or is deteriorating and immediate action is necessary. FAIR is also used when it is apparent that cumulative deterioration if left to continue will result in a loss of historic qualities. A rating of GOOD indicates that there is little evidence of deterioration or disturbance and that no immediate action is necessary.

ORGANIZATION

The Condition Assessment is organized to present a general evaluation of Civic Center first, followed by an assessment of each of its important park spaces or components. The general evaluation describes Civic Center's distinct park character including its original composition and those extant characteristics that contribute to its historical and architectural significance. This is followed by an assessment of each important park space or component including the central axis, the central gathering space, the upper terrace and Red Oak groves, the great lawn, the City & County Building Grand Entry and the secondary axis. Each evaluation includes three sections, a description, an existing condition evaluation, and general recommendations. More specific recommendations are presented in the Master Plan section.



COMPOSITION

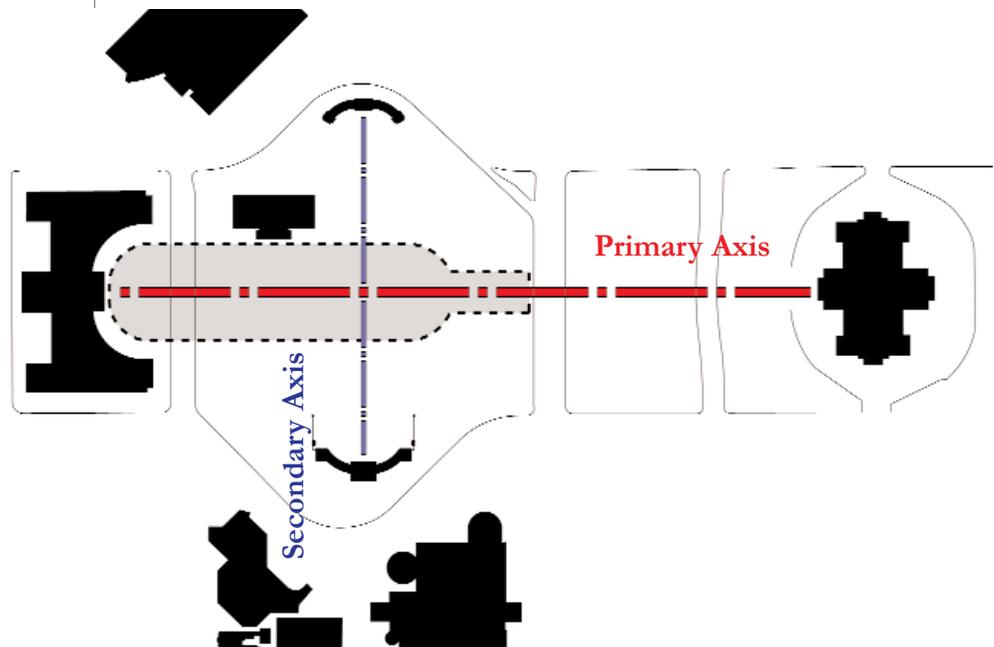
Description:

Civic Center, as designed in 1917 by Edward Bennett is Denver's great town square. It is a Beaux Arts style park that is the heart of the region's governmental center. Defined by the civic and cultural buildings along its edges, Civic Center epitomizes the City Beautiful influence that defined the aesthetics of Denver's early civic landscape. Civic Center is the grand centerpiece and contrasting open space set in a harmonious grouping of buildings. Situated at the center of Denver's distinguished system of parks connected by parkways and boulevards, Civic Center is a formal urban park with a neoclassical aesthetic, composed in an axially symmetrical arrangement with a distinct connection to the Colorado State Capitol to the east and the Rocky Mountains to the west. With its classic composition and its lasting beauty, Civic Center is the first choice for citizen gatherings.

Existing Condition:

Civic Center's original composition, as a formal, symmetrically arranged plan defined by two stepped terraces and a primary axis, is largely intact. Its composition is the park's strongest defining characteristic.

The park's composition closely resembles the constructed park of the early 1920s that was the result of Edward Bennett's plan of 1917. Today, as in the early 1920s, the primary park spaces and those features that define its organization remain. The primary park spaces include the upper terrace with its central walkway, the lower terrace and its characteristic balustrade with lighted columns, the Voorhies Memorial with its Seal Fountain, and the Greek Theater. The McNichols Building (originally the



Civic Center's Composition

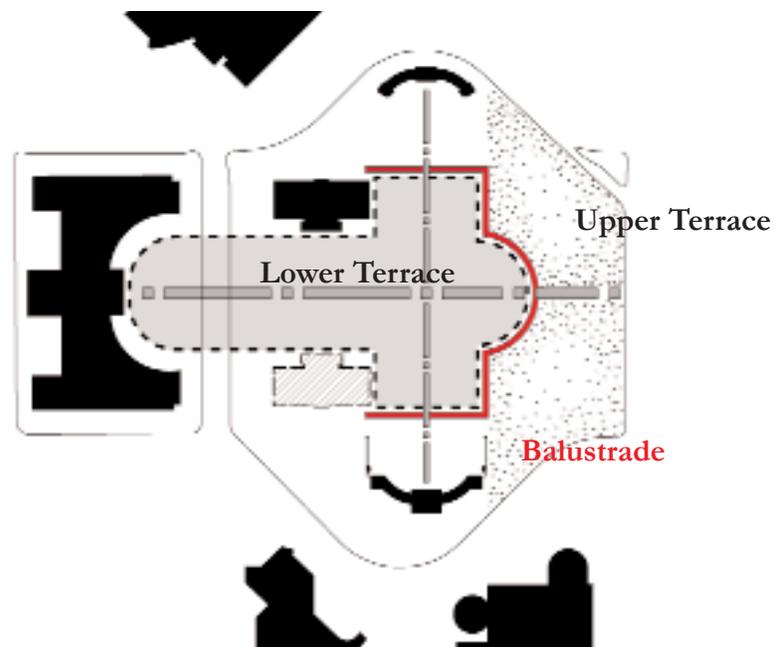


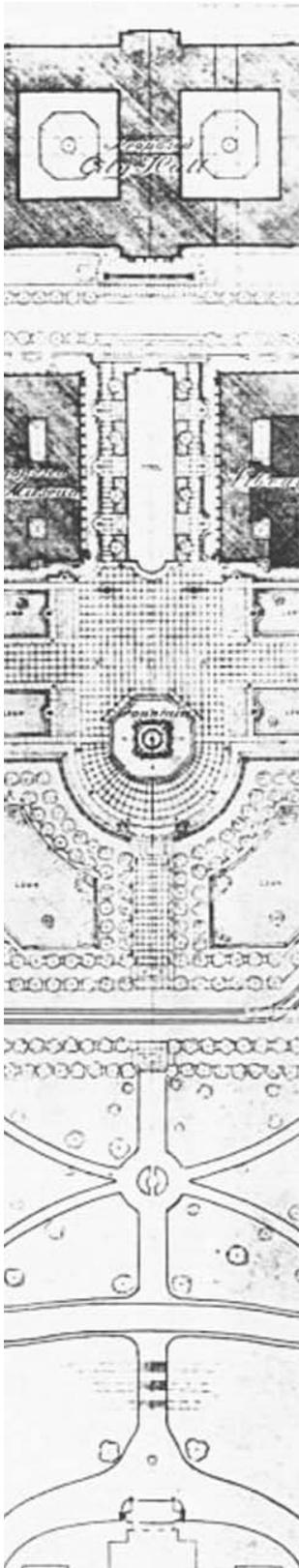
Carnegie Building) retains a prominent location within the park, completing the curve of the City & County Building.

The axially symmetrical organization of Bennett's 1917 plan remains. However, it is not as visually evident as it once was as new trees, never completed park spaces and overgrown vegetation currently obscure its striking east-west arrangement. The primary axis does not currently read as the most visually prominent axis, as Bennett meant it to be. The original broad, open visual corridor that aligned with the primary axis and visually connected the State Capitol and the City & County Building to Civic Center is frequently interrupted by overgrown and newer vegetation, and its edges are not clearly defined.

Bennett's plan was never fully realized. Important components of his composition are missing including the building that he proposed to mirror and complement the original Carnegie Library, and the central gathering area. The complementary building would have completed the western portion of the park, finishing Bennett's axial symmetrical arrangement and creating a definitive open park space between the two buildings. This space is currently ill-defined, as is the lawn area that exists where the building was to have been built.

The secondary axis, originally meant to connect the Voorhies Memorial and the Greek Theater (and the two original triangles) with the body of the park, has become the more prominent axis as it has been modified from its original gravel pavement to its current configuration as a concrete and brick walkway.





There were several features from Bennett's original 1917 plan that were intended to re-inforce the primary east-west axis that were never constructed. These included the large central gathering space where the primary axis intersects with the secondary axis, a building to mirror the McNichols Building, and the green space and pool between the two buildings.

The condition of the park's composition is rated as fair as several important defining characteristics are quickly diminishing, most notably the continued lessening of importance of the primary axis.

CENTRAL GATHERING SPACE

Description:

At the heart of Bennett's 1917 plan was a large central gathering space that he envisioned to be a grand paved court with a monumental water feature as its centerpiece. Bennett's central gathering space was to fill the half-circular space on the park's lower terrace that is defined by the stone balustrade. Set on the primary axis, the central water feature with a tall, shooting central water jet, was to be the defining feature of the section of the park.

Although, the space for the central gathering area is well-defined by the configuration of the original balustrades, it was never developed as a formal gathering area.

Existing Condition:

Today, the space is characterized by its extensive flower beds that are set in a pattern that imitates the arc form of the balustrade. The flower beds, separated by grass panels with areas for benches, extend into the secondary axis walkway.

The condition of the central gathering space is rated as good. Since the space was not completed as envisioned, its condition was evaluated on its existing physical qualities. Completing the space as a central gathering area would improve the condition of the park's composition.

UPPER TERRACE, CENTRAL WALKWAY AND RED OAK GROVES

Description:

The upper terrace extends from Broadway west to the stone balustrade. It is organized in an axial symmetrical arrangement along the primary axis. The upper terrace is characterized by two large Red Oak groves that are separated by a broad central walkway, which is an original feature of the 1917 Edward Bennett plan. Each Red Oak grove originally



had a central lawn. Two rows of ornamental flowering crabapple trees line the edges of the central walkway.

Existing Condition:

In general, the upper terrace retains its original arrangement and its characteristic features including the two Red Oak tree groves, remnants of the open lawns and the original central walkway.



Approximately forty-one (41) of the original Red Oak trees remain, from an estimated total of approximately sixty-three (63) trees. In addition to these original trees, several trees have been planted within the original open lawn areas, in essence filling these spaces and blurring the original tree pattern. The Red Oak trees are generally in good condition and are healthy, but they are also in need of pruning to redefine their graceful form, as well as needing lower branches limbed to open views into the space. The newer trees are in good conditions and many are small enough to be moved. The lawn area under the Red Oak groves is in fair condition, primarily due to the low level of light that it receives due to the overgrown overstory canopy.



Informal asphalt paths provide access through the Red Oak tree groves and their interior lawns. The paths are in poor condition and the asphalt material and installation is not compatible with the architectural qualities of Civic Center. However, the paths provide important routes through these spaces.



The original central walkway is generally in poor condition although certain segments are in good condition. The entire walkway retains the original pattern of four distinct linear bands of brick squares, alternated by concrete bands. Arranged along the primary axis, the original central walkway accentuates the connection between the State Capitol, Civic Center and the City & County Building. The majority of the materials are original including the brick paving. In those areas that are in poor condition, brick squares have been repaired using methods and/or materials that are not compatible with the original pavement such as concrete instead of mortar and in a few cases, the bricks have been replaced with a different material, possibly a concrete paver. In some areas of poor condition, large surface cracks are beginning to appear that may be indicative of a subsurface problem.

The central walkway is lined with a double row of crabapple trees on either side. The original planting is thought to have occurred during the time S.R. DeBoer was the city's landscape architect, and the second row was installed with the early 1990s rehabilitation project. More recently, newer trees have been installed in each row as existing trees have died. The trees are generally in good condition.



BALUSTRADE AND LIGHTED COLUMNS

Description:

The most notable feature of Edward Bennett's 1917 plan is the distinctive, neoclassical limestone balustrade that separates the two park terraces, defines the park spaces of the Greek Theater and the Voorhies Memorial, and creates a striking entrance into the lower park terrace from the east.

The balustrade defines the edge of the upper terrace. It consists of lighted columns at the entrance into each major park space, simpler columns at each corner, a limestone base that extends for the balustrade's entire length, classic balusters punctuated by short columns, a broad coping or cap, two sets of narrow steps that connect to the lower terrace, and the main staircase and ramp that follows the primary axis.

Neoclassical lighted columns are key features of the balustrade, defining the entrances into three of Civic Center's key park spaces - the upper terrace, the Greek Theater and the Voorhies Memorial. The lighted columns at the Greek Theater and Voorhies Memorial are nearly identical with the only difference being the size of their individual bases. Each consists of a tapered, fluted column-Greek Doric in style-that is set on a square, sturdy base or plinth. At approximately the mid-point of the each column are four pedestals that are topped with globe lights. At the top of the column is an entablature with a narrow frieze and cornice that supports a fluted Corinthian base with a large globe light. The two lighted columns that frame the transition from the upper to lower terrace are substantially different, although they do have the same base as the other two sets of columns. The square, granite base or plinth supports a massive light fixture, consisting of a center globe light with four arms that each supports a globe light.





The balustrade and the lighted columns are original features, with the exception of a few balusters that were replaced with pre-cast concrete replicas in the early 1990s, that were built as integral components of the balustrade in 1917 and 1918. They are important elements that contribute to Civic Center's architectural and historical significance.

Existing Condition:

Overall, the granite balustrade and granite lighted columns are in generally good condition. However, there are many areas of the balustrade that are in poor condition. The balustrade's cap and columns have several areas that are severely damaged, including chipped edges and markings by vandals. The granite base, or wall, that is primarily visible from the lower terrace, has areas of discoloration, areas where patching has been done with incompatible materials, and graffiti. Some of the balusters are exhibiting cracking and a few were replaced in the early 1990s with concrete and not granite replicas. A narrow gravel pavement extends along the balustrade on the upper terrace, and although the pavement is in fair condition, it is not compatible with the balustrade and is difficult to maintain.

Each of the lighted columns has areas of discoloration. The degree of discoloration varies by column, but appears to be most extensive on the fluted columns. The original lights remain and are currently functioning. A portable toilet has been placed at the base of each of the lighted columns. While it may seem that the columns provide an edge or defined backdrop for this type of use, the siting of the portable toilet greatly distracts from the significant architectural qualities of the lighted columns.

The greatest impact to the balustrade is the central steps and ramp that were built in the early 1990s. While the steps and ramps are compatible with the balustrade and ensure a safe, accessible route, the wall that defines the ramp is an inappropriate addition. Its stepped form contrasts with the formal simplicity of the original balustrade. Its overly simplistic detailing does not match the elegance of original balustrade, and the oversized colored, concrete cap draws attention to it as feature when it should just be a part of the overall composition.

LOWER TERRACE AND SECONDARY AXIS

Description:

The lower terrace of Bennett's 1917 plan consists of two park spaces, arranged perpendicular to one another. The primary park space is oriented east-west with an axially symmetrical arrangement where the primary axis is its centerline, and is defined on the east by the arc of the balustrade. The primary park space extends across Civic Center as a grassy lawn and is defined on the west by the arc of the City & County Building. The bluegrass lawn is generally defined by two walkways, oriented east-west.



The secondary park space is oriented north-south and extends from the Voorhies Memorial to the Greek Theater. It follows Bennett's secondary axis and consists of a broad center walk, built in the early 1990s of concrete paving bands that alternate with squares of brick paving, and is defined by the balustrade. On either side of the walk are grassy panels, arranged in an equal pattern of four. In three of the four panels are individual sculptures, two of which were installed in the early 1920s and are the work of sculptor Alexander Phimster Proctor. Just to the east of the intersection of the two axes is the central gathering space.

Existing Condition:

The form and composition of the lower terrace remains clearly evident. However, because the Bennett plan was never fully completed, the primary park space is not clearly defined. Two walkways, oriented east-west, help define the linear arrangement of the space, and the McNichols Building defines its northern edge.

The northern walkway ends at the McNichols Building and is replaced by an asphalt parking lot that detracts from the formal composition of the space and is incompatible with its park character. The space lacks a clear southern edge and without Bennett's formal central gathering area and his monumental water feature, it lacks a focus at its eastern end. Instead of visually extending to the City & County Building, the primary park space fades at Bannock Street.

The park space that follows the secondary axis is more clearly defined, due primarily to its broad walkway, taking on a more prominent presence in the park and overwhelming what was originally to meant be the strongest orientation, the primary axis.

CITY & COUNTY BUILDING GRAND ENTRY

Description:

The City & County Building is the western terminus of Civic Center, even though the park's official boundaries end at Bannock Street. The building's arc form mirrors that of Civic Center's balustrade defining the primary park space of the lower terrace. The entry consists of a formal, monumental staircase that connects the second floor (referred to as the first floor) to the street level, two entrances to the lower level, a concrete paving area that is formed to mimic the building's arc, a single row of ornamental trees that follow the paving, and two flagpoles and two blue spruce trees. The space is arranged axially symmetrical along Civic Center's primary axis as is the building itself.



Existing Condition:

The City & County Building continues to be an integral component of Civic Center, adding to its historical and architectural significance. However, the entry space does not connect visually or spatially to Civic Center as was originally intended.

CONNECTING WALKS

Description:

Two east west walks, located within the park along the original alignments of Colfax Avenue and 14th Avenue, have traditionally connected Civic Center, both physically and visually with its surroundings.

Existing Condition:

The two walkways are not as clearly evident as they were originally. The northern walkway only remains east of the Voorhies Memorial. The western portion of this walk was removed in 1955 to make way for the parking area on the south side of the McNichols Building (Carnegie Library), which remains today. The parking is wider than the original walk and is primarily asphalt pavement. It is not a pedestrian friendly area. The southern walkway extends for the entire width of the park. It is a mix of concrete and asphalt paving.



PIONEER MONUMENT

Description:

The Pioneer Monument is located just north of Civic Center across Colfax Avenue. Its 1911 construction pre-dates the developed of Civic Center. Designed by Frederick MacMonnies, the Pioneer Monument symbolically marks the end of the Smokey Hill Trail. It is composed of a circular granite water basin set on a stepped granite base. In the center of the basin is larger than life size cast bronze sculpture of three figures - a pioneer, a hunter and a prospector. The top figure, represents Kit Carson, looks towards the east, pointing the way west.



Remnants of its original plaza surround the Pioneer Monument including a small lawn at its base. A low steel chain, intended to discourage people climbing on the basin and sculpture, surrounds the lawn. Just to the north of the sculpture is a RTD bus stop. Cheyenne Place is immediately northeast of the monument and a few deciduous shade trees line its edges.

Existing Condition:

The Pioneer Monument is in good condition, but its setting is in poor condition. In the last ten years, the Pioneer Monument underwent restoration including cleaning of the bronze sculpture and repair of its granite basin.



The Pioneer Monument's original circular plaza has been removed to the extent that its original form and elegant appearance are no longer evident. The modification to the circular form occurred in part to a 1920s change that reconfigured the plaza as a triangular space to ease traffic flow and to create a more generous landscaped setting. Colfax Avenue has been widened on numerous occasions, which has reduced the separation between the sculpture and the driving lanes. Now, only a narrow walk separates the two. The triangular plaza is not well-defined and does not have a clear relationship to the Pioneer Monument. The RTD bus stop includes a standard bus shelter and it attracts large numbers of riders. The stop is not well maintained and the bus shelter is not compatible with the monument.

GREEK THEATER

Description:

The Greek Theater was built in 1919, during the same time that Bennett's definitive balustrade, wall and columns were being constructed. Situated at the southern terminus of the secondary axis, architects Marean & Norton designed an amphitheater and colonnade that complemented Bennett's City Beautiful aesthetic. The Greek Theater consists of a semi-circular colonnade with a formal amphitheater bowl and an upper terrace that is framed on two sides by a formal wall.

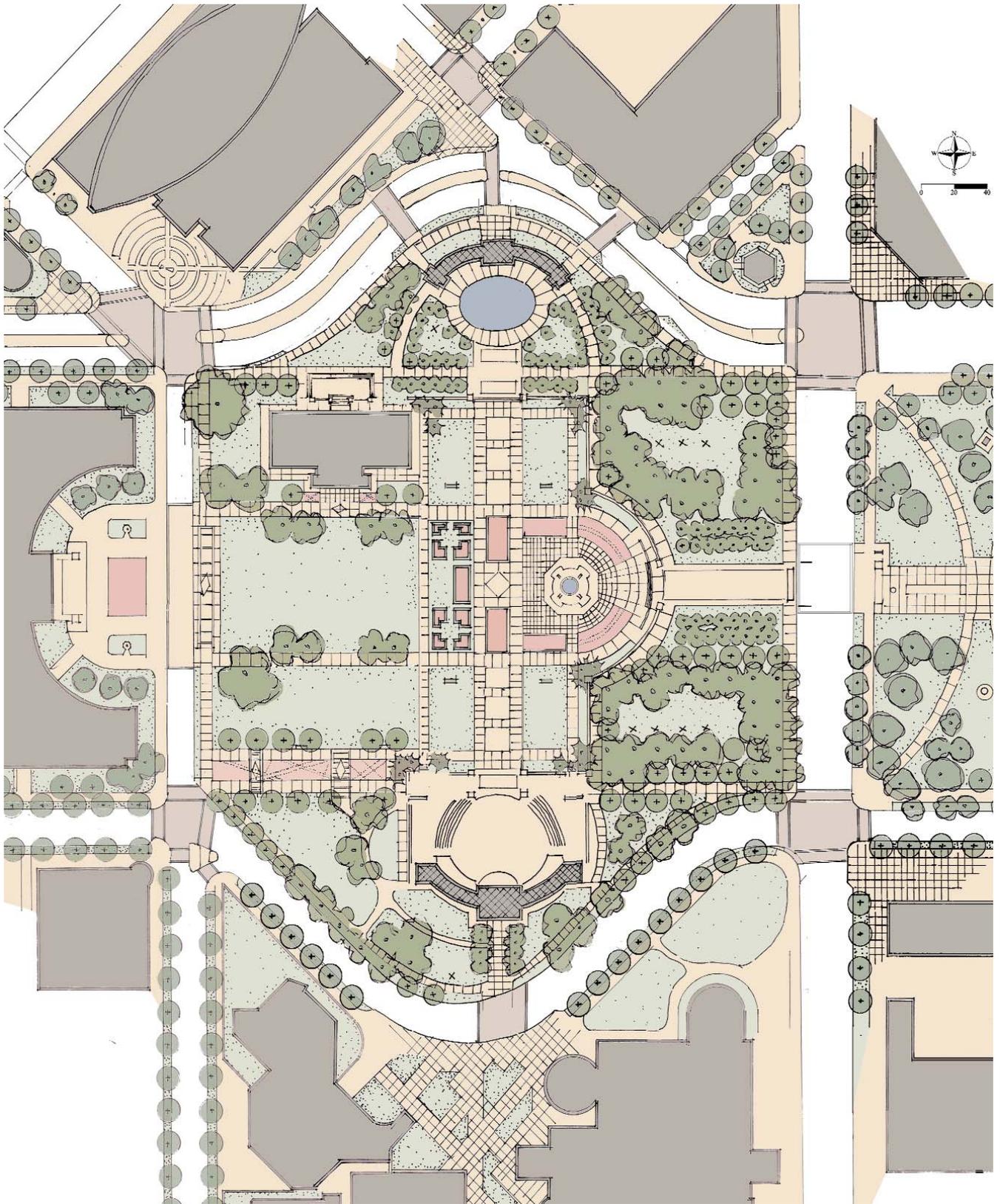


Existing Condition:

The Greek Theater is in good condition. It has undergone two recent construction projects, including a rehabilitation project that occurred in the early 1990s and consisted of roof repairs, repairs to the seats and pavement of the original amphitheater and minor landscaping.

The second project occurred most recently in 2003 and consisted of the re-creation of the historic amphitheater bowl. This project involved the demolition of original materials and the reconstruction of the amphitheater's paving and benches. At the same time, a snow melt system and an underdrain system were installed to ease maintenance, and the upper two terraces that flank the amphitheater bowl were rebuilt. The paving was reconstructed to mimic the original pattern, and included concrete pavers to resemble the original brick pavers and concrete that matched the original material. The original concrete benches were rebuilt using a concrete that matched the benches original material and a new concrete cap was installed to ensure longevity and to reduce damage by vandalism.





Concept Alternatives

Concepts progress in complexity and extent of improvements and modifications from restoring the park components to fully realizing the vision of the Bennett plan of 1917 where Civic Center is the central gathering area and a vibrant place of public concourse. Each concept includes physical improvements to Civic Center, the Carnegie Library and the immediate surroundings; management and operational improvements; and recommendations for a viable park program.

CONCEPT A

Physical Improvements

Restoration concept with improvements directed towards improving the safety, aesthetics and use of Civic Center. Focus is on fulfilling the early vision of Edward Bennett through restoring historic walks and features.

- Strengthen Central Axis
- Rehabilitate Original Features
- Central Gathering Space
- Restore Tree Patterns
- Strengthen Connections
- Narrow Bannock Street
- Linear Gardens
- Park Seating
- Connections to Surroundings

Carnegie Library (McNichols Building)

Restoration of the building's exterior including restoring the main entry promenade on the Colfax Avenue façade and removing the existing parking area for use a building/park terrace.

- Remain as Office Space
- Restore / Rehabilitate Exterior including historic entry
- Public Restrooms
- Remove Parking Lot
- Terrace

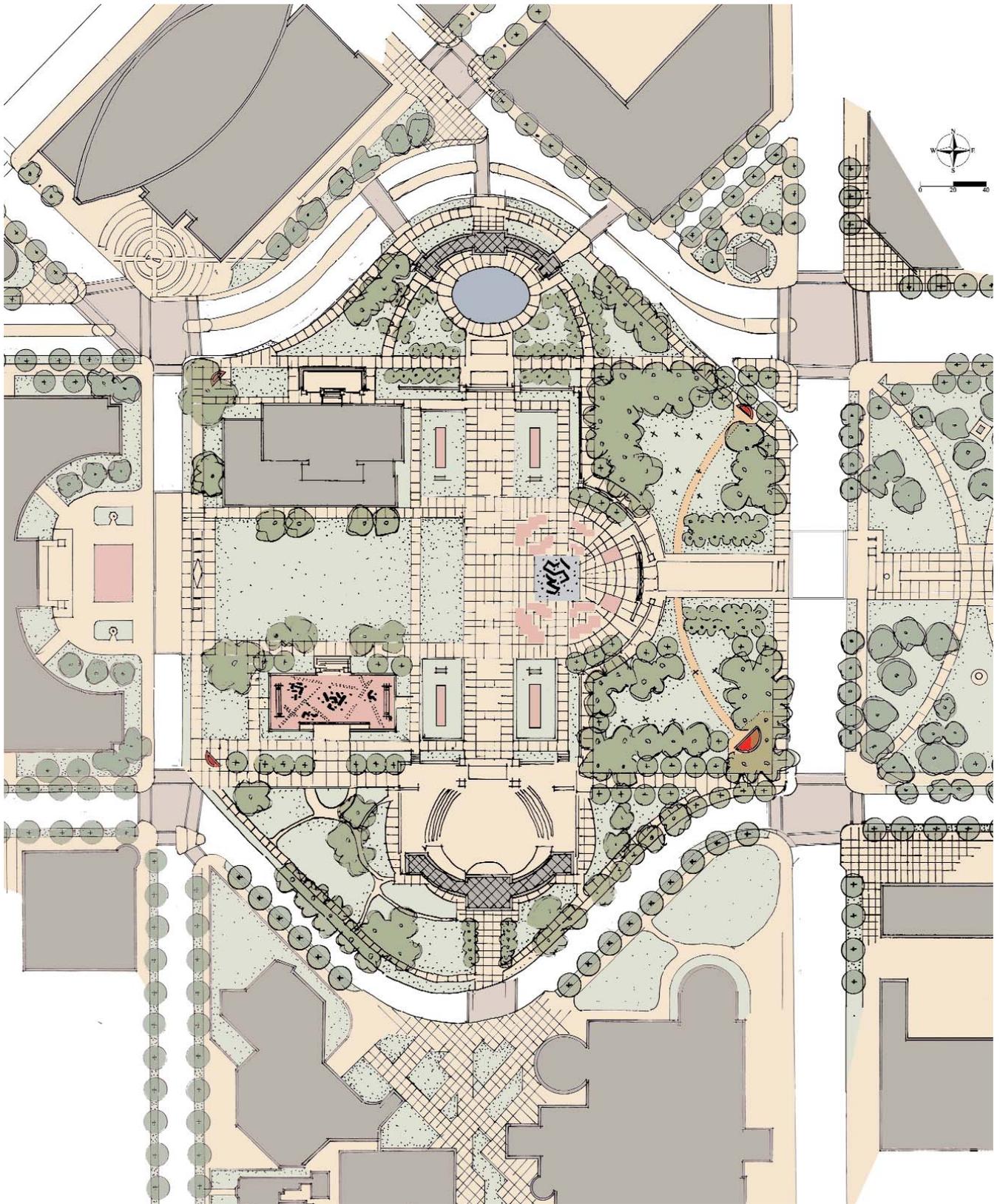
Greek Theater

Focuses on the restoration of interior spaces and the rehabilitation of exterior elements that have not been included with earlier restoration/rehabilitation projects. Projects are aimed at restoring existing spaces within the Greek Theater to provide better spaces for use by medium to small size events including Theater in the Park.

- Rehabilitate Colonnade
- Rehabilitate Dressing Rooms
- Restore Screen
- Rehabilitate Interior Spaces for Storage

Concept A





Management / Operational Improvements

Streamline management and operations through:

- Consolidation of Northwest District facilities at sub-station as per the City's Maintenance Master Plan recommendations (currently underway)
- Move park maintenance space to sub-station location as per Maintenance Master Plan recommendations
- Invest in equipment, resources and staffing
- Turn on the fountains
- Consistently enforce Noise Ordinance, especially during events
- If san-o-lets remain, provide frequent cleaning and new locations
- Movable or Portable chairs for events (at a minimum)

Programs

Augmenting the existing medium to large size events with on-going daily activities is the focus of Concept A. Capturing the current users and expanding use is key.

- Support small to medium sized events
- Promote recreation / exercise
- Vendors during key times (special use permit in the park) and in prominent locations - provide in morning and at noon
- School curriculum for use in Civic Center focusing on local Denver history
- Park docents, park ambassadors
- Partner with Denver Public Library, State Capitol and Colorado Historical Society

CONCEPT B

Builds upon the recommendations presented in Concept A and adds additional physical improvements to more fully develop the Bennett plan. Concept B also proposes additional programming and management and operational improvements.

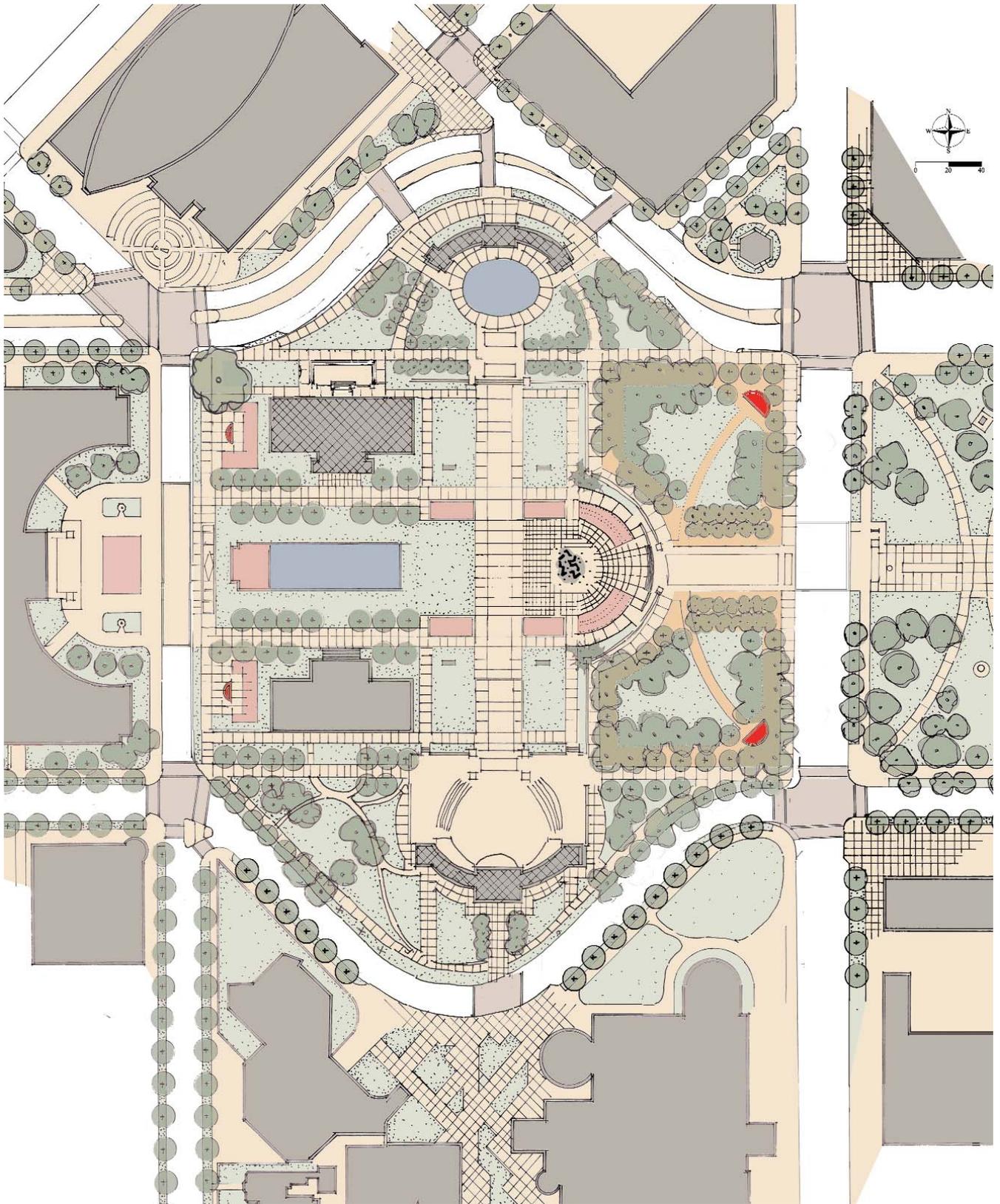
Physical Improvements

Builds upon the improvements recommended in Concept A, including restoration and rehabilitation of significant components, but also focuses on fulfilling the Bennett plan by:

- Restore / Rehabilitate Significant Park Components
- Large Central Gathering Space
- Open Space at Broadway
- Festival Gardens with Park Pavilions to fill complementary space
- Kiosks, activity on Broadway and Bannock Street
- Narrow Bannock Street with parking at City & County Building

Concept B





McNichols Civic Center Building - Carnegie Library

Restoration

- Restore Building Exterior and Site
- Building Expansion (as presented in Bennett and DeBoer plans)
- Office Space, Police Presence with Substation on Ground Floor
- Gift Shop, Orientation Area, Restaurant or Food Service on 1st Floor
- Cultural Facilities on 2nd Floor
- Public Restrooms on Ground Floor

Greek Theater

Same as in Concept A.

Management / Operational Improvements

Streamline management and operations through

- Consolidation of Northwest District facilities at sub-station as per Maintenance Master Plan recommendations
- Move park maintenance space to sub-station location as per Maintenance Master Plan recommendations
- Invest in equipment, resources and staffing
- Partner with Denver Botanic Gardens for Festival Garden
- Increase volunteer days / opportunities

Programs

Includes the programming presented in Concept A including supporting events and adding vendors, school curriculum and park docents/ambassadors.

- Vendor Kiosks on Broadway and Bannock Streets
- Additional Small Events (similar in size to Theater in the Park)
- Police presence with Substation in McNichols Building

CONCEPT C

Builds upon the recommendations presented in Concept A and is the concept that moves the closest towards fully developing the Bennett plan.

Physical Improvements

Builds upon the improvements recommended in Concept A, including restoration and rehabilitation of significant components, but also focuses on fulfilling the Bennett plan by

- Restoration / rehabilitation of significant park components
- Large Central Gathering Space
- Open Space at Broadway

Concept C



- Complementary Carnegie Building
- Gardens on Bannock Street
- Reflecting Pool

Carnegie Library (McNichols Building)

Restoration

- Restore building exterior and site
- Office Space on Ground Floor
- Restaurant / Food Service on 1st Floor
- Public Meeting Spaces on 2nd Floor
- Public Restrooms

Greek Theater

Same as in Concept A.

New Building

The earliest plans for Civic Center envisioned a building to complement the Carnegie Library to its south.

- Cultural facility - museum, visitor center, orientation center,

Management / Operational Improvements

Streamline management and operations as noted in Concept A including following the recommendations of the city's Maintenance Master Plan.

- Park maintenance staff office in the rehabilitated Carnegie Library
- Event Management - consolidate into a key position
- Wayfinding system
- Partner with Theatres & Arenas / Mayors Office of Culture & Film for events

Programs

Includes the programming presented in Concept A including supporting events and adding vendors, school curriculum and park docents/ambassadors.

- Kiosks on Broadway and Bannock streets with vendors
- Additional Small Events (similar in size to Theater in the Park)
- Police presence with substation location in Carnegie Library



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1909 March 6, 1909
March 27, 1909
May 5, 1909
July 17, 1909
October 2, 1909
1910 March 26, 1910
May 14, 1910
December 3, 1910
1911 March 4, 1911
March 1911
1912 June 1, 1912
June 15, 1912



1913	February 22, 1913 April 12, 1913 June 14, 1913 August 23, 1913
1914	May 23, 1914 July 11, 1914
1918	June 1918
1919	April 1919 May 1919 July 1919 September-October 1919
1920	April-May 1920 June-July 1920
1921	March 1921 April-May 1921 September-October 1921 November-December 1921
1922	May-June 1922
1923	January-February 1923 March-April 1923 May 1923 October-November 1923
1924	January-February 1924
1925	January-February 1925 November-December 1925 November-December 1926
1927	September-October 1927 November-December 1927
1928	May-June 1928
1930	November-December 1930

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DENVER PARKS & RECREATION

DECEMBER, 2004

CIVIC CENTER

PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS



SURVEY PROCESS

BACKGROUND

Denver Parks and Recreation is preparing a Master Plan for Civic Center. As part of the process, a public survey was distributed to gather information about what people like and don't like about park, how the park is used and how it could be improved in the future. This report documents the results of the survey.

HOW WILL THE SURVEY RESULTS BE USED?

The survey results will help validate assumptions made early in the planning process. These included identifying the primary park issues to include the following:

- There is a lack of regular activity in the park other than large events
- Crime, security and vagrancy is a problem
- Maintenance & upkeep cannot keep up with the pace of deterioration
- The history and character of Civic Center are important to protect while accommodating appropriate changes

The information will also substantiate the need for change that meet the desires and expectations of the public. Priorities for funding and implementation can also be informed by these results.

HOW WERE THE SURVEYS COLLECTED?

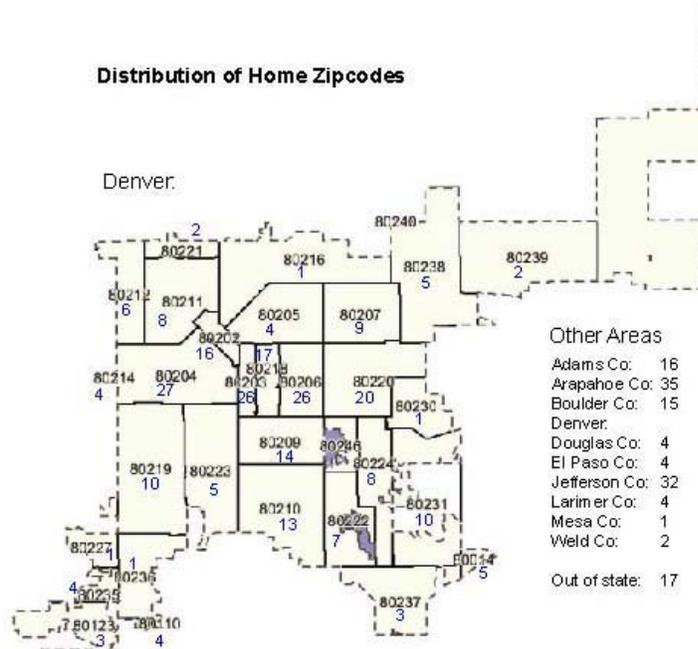
Surveys were distributed through a variety of methods to collect input from a wide range of public opinion. These included:

- A survey booth was set up at the Taste of Colorado on Sept 3 & 4, 2004
- An Open House was held in the park on September 23, 2004 to reach casual park users and area stakeholders
- The survey was posted on the denvergov.org website and email notifications sent to all city employees. The survey was available on the web from September—October, 2004
- Various distributions to interested individuals including the Denver Art Museum staff, Denver Public Library staff, Civic Center Conservancy and Golden Triangle Neighborhood Association.

A copy of the survey is included at the end of this report.



SUMMARY OF RESULTS

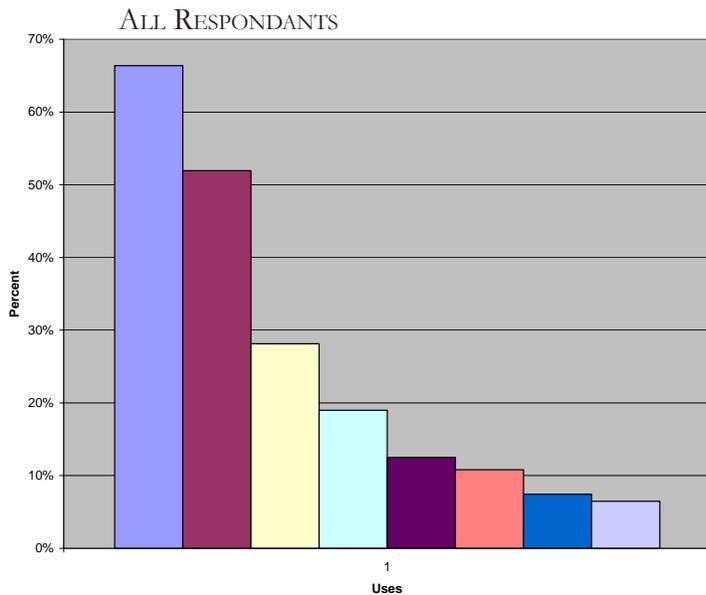


DENVER: 267 RESPONDANTS
ALL OTHER AREAS: 149 RESPONDANTS

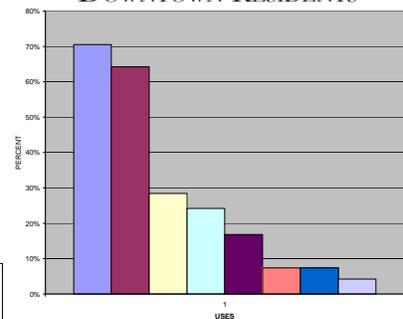
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY?

- 416 Surveys were collected
- 50% were female, 50% male
- Approx. 50% of the respondents use the park rarely (less than 5 days per year)
- Approx. 35% of the respondents use the park occasionally
- Approx. 13% of the respondents use the park frequently (more than 2 days per week)
- The largest concentrations of respondents came from the downtown area including: 80202, 80203, 80204, 80218 & 80206 zip codes
- Those who use the park frequently also came from the downtown area in the following zipcodes in rank order: 80202, 80204, 80203, 80206

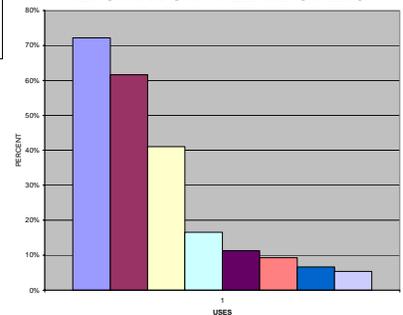
HOW DO PEOPLE CURRENTLY USE THE PARK?



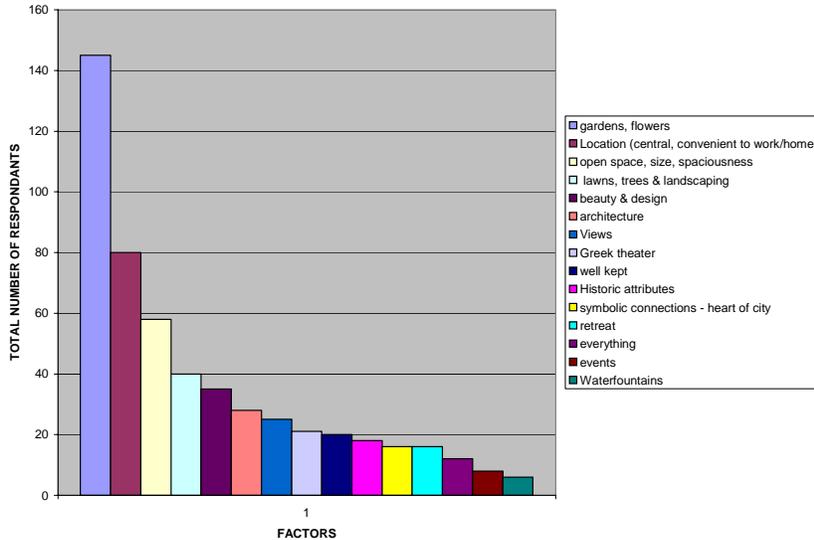
DOWNTOWN RESIDENTS



DOWNTOWN EMPLOYEES

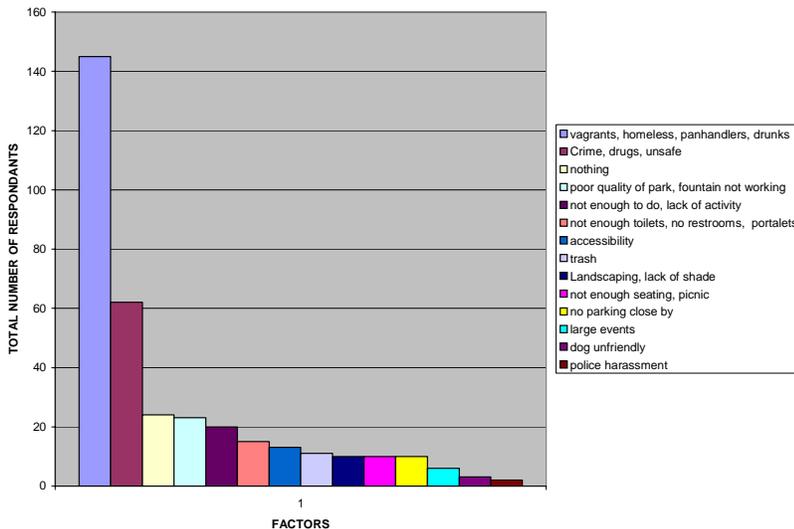


WHAT DO PEOPLE LIKE ABOUT THE PARK?



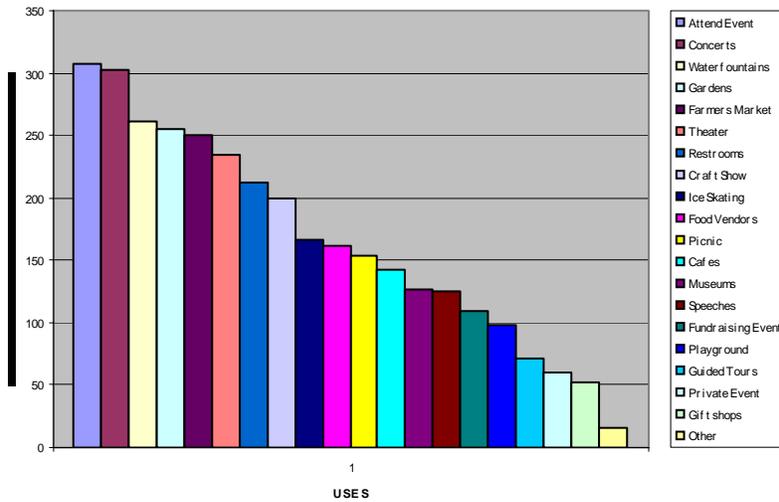
“What do you like about the park?” was an open ended question on the survey. Answers fell into 15 categories as listed in the adjacent chart. In general, the park-like qualities including the landscape, large open lawns, gardens and trees were all highly valued. Gardens were more frequently identified as a desirable feature than any other aspect. The park’s proximity to downtown was the second most frequent response. Architecture, views, design and historic structures were also relatively frequent responses. These results confirm the planning assumption that preserving the park qualities and historic features is important in future plans.

WHAT DO PEOPLE DISLIKE ABOUT THE PARK?



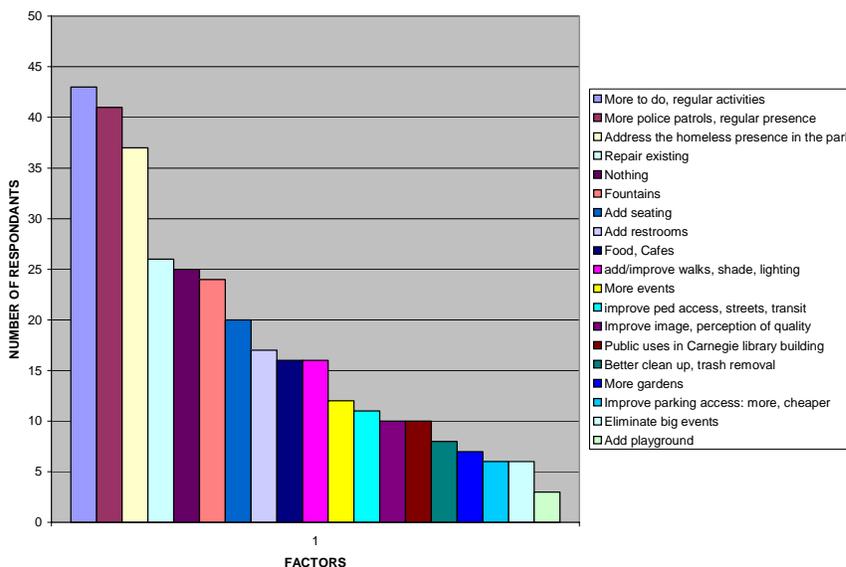
“What do you *not* like about the park?” was also an open ended question on the survey. Answers fell into 14 categories as listed in the adjacent chart. In general, an overwhelming number of respondents considered vagrancy and crime related issues as a negative aspect of the park. This strong pattern of results indicate that the vagrancy and crime issues are of the highest priorities to address to improve the park.

WHAT ARE APPROPRIATE USES FOR THE PARK?



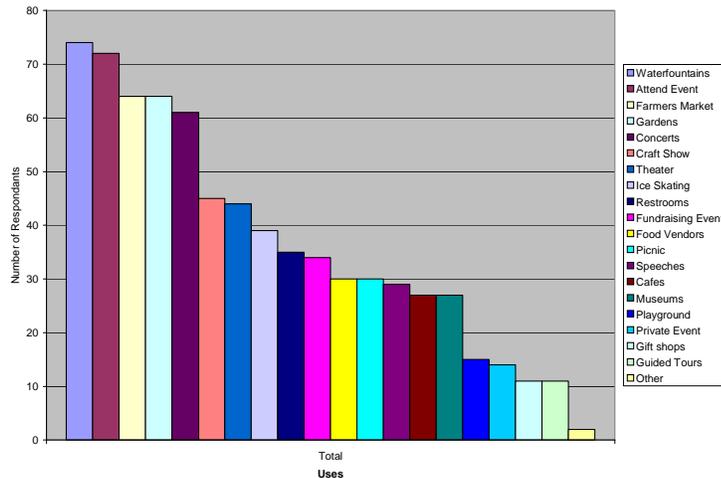
The survey included a list of possible uses and features in the park to select from. Most respondents confirmed that many of the current uses available in the park are appropriate. Indeed, the top four most frequent selections are currently available: events, concerts, waterfountains and gardens. Many respondents also selected uses currently not available in the park. This pattern confirms that people are interested in having more activities and programs in the park in the future. Food related activities were among the more frequently selected activities. The Farmers Market was the most frequently desired use not currently available. These results underscore the public desire to retain traditional uses in park, while also adding

WHAT ARE THE DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE PARK?



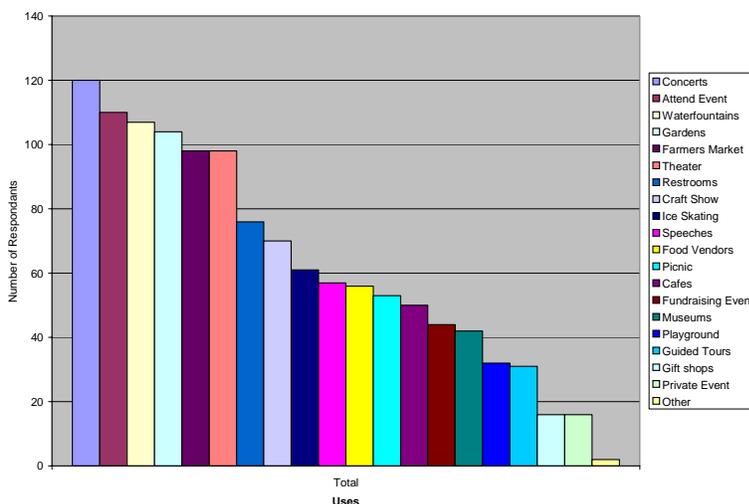
Respondants were asked to provide suggestions for improvements. These answers were categorized into common themes listed in the bottom graph. The top three most frequently suggested improvements included more regular activities in the park, more police presence and addressing the homeless problems. Notably, addressing these issues could entail more changes in management as a priority for the future of the park. Physical changes such as repairs and adding amenities such as fountains, seating, restrooms, food venues and more walks and landscaping appear to be secondary in prioritizing improvements.

APPROPRIATE FUTURE PARK USES RESPONSES SORTED BY DOWNTOWN RESIDENTS



Downtown residents were evaluated separately from the total group of respondents to identify preferences by those who live in the downtown zipcodes (80202, 80203, 80204 & 80206). This group indicated a slightly stronger preference for an equal mix of passive and active uses than downtown employees or the total aggregate of respondents. For example, water features and large events were almost equal in the top two preference selections for downtown residents.

APPROPRIATE FUTURE PARK USES RESPONSES SORTED BY DOWNTOWN EMPLOYEES



Downtown employees were slightly more interested in active uses indicated by the top two use selections: concerts and events. However, both residents and employees selected the same uses in the top five categories. These were sorted in slightly different order of frequency. But in general the relatively similar frequency in popularity indicates that both groups have similar interests. The top 5 uses are listed here in alphabetical order:

- Concerts
- Events
- Farmers Market
- Gardens
- Water Fountains

These were the same top five uses identified from the total group of respondents. The Farmers Market was the most frequently desired use not currently available.

Civic Center Survey

Denver Parks and Recreation is preparing a park master plan for Civic Center. As part of this effort we would like to know more about how people think about the park; what they like and don't like; so we can plan appropriate improvements in the future. Your responses to these questions are completely voluntary and confidential.

1. Zip code of primary residence _____
2. Zip code for place of employment (if applicable) _____
3. Gender(circle): Female Male

4. How often do you use the park at Civic Center:
 - Frequently (2 days a week or more) Occasionally
 - Infrequently (less than 5 days a year)

5. Why do you visit to the park? (check all that apply)
 - Relaxation or work break
 - Walking through to get to another destination
 - Sightseeing
 - Picnic
 - Exercise
 - Playing
 - Attend an event or performance
 - Other (specify) _____

6. Do you drive to the park by car? Y N
 - If yes, where did you park? Street Parking Lot or Garage
 - How far away is the parking space (approximate number of blocks)?

7. What types of activities or features do you want to have available in the park? Mark **ALL** that you think are appropriate and
 - Large Public Fairs/Festivals
 - Fund-raising events
 - Farmer's markets
 - Craft shows or markets
 - Gardens
 - Water fountains & features
 - Guided tours
 - Concerts & musical performances
 - Theater & other staged performances
 - Speeches
 - Picnicking
 - Food vendors
 - Cafes, restaurants
 - Gift Shops
 - Playground
 - Ice Skating
 - Private events
 - Restrooms
 - Museums, visitor center or other cultural facilities
 - Other (please specify) _____

8. What do you like about the park?

9. What do you not like about the park?

10. How could the park be improved?

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