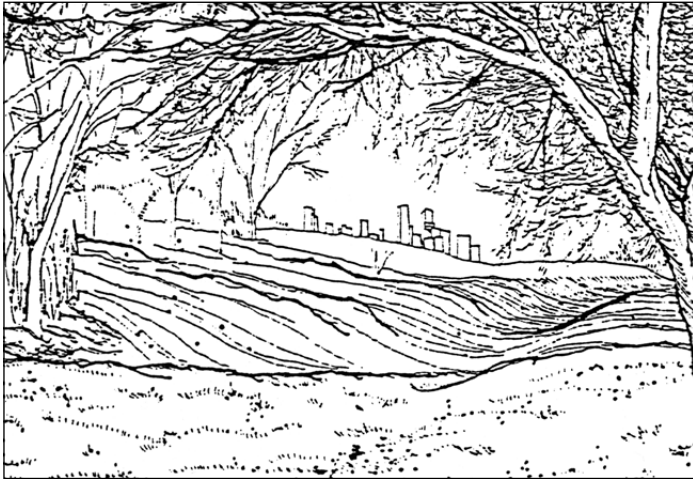




# VILLA PARK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



ADOPTED APRIL 29, 1991





# VILLA PARK NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Adopted April 29, 1991

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Readopted January 24, 2000 as a supplement to the Denver Comprehensive

Plan 2000  
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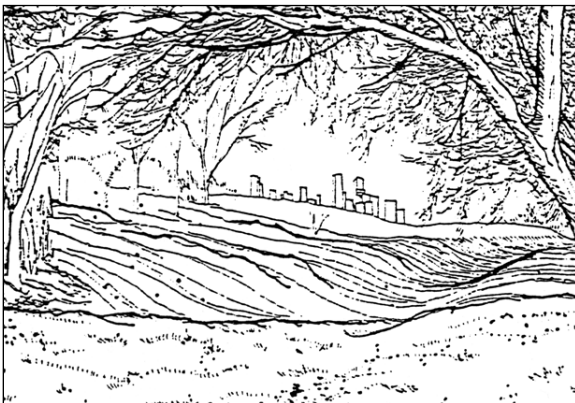
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# **INTRODUCTION**





## THE VISION FOR VILLA PARK

What will Villa Park look like in the future? If the goals, strategies, and implementation programs outlined in this neighborhood plan are pursued and accomplished, Villa Park will be an attractive, economically vital, and exciting, safe, stable, affordable, and inviting place to live and do business.

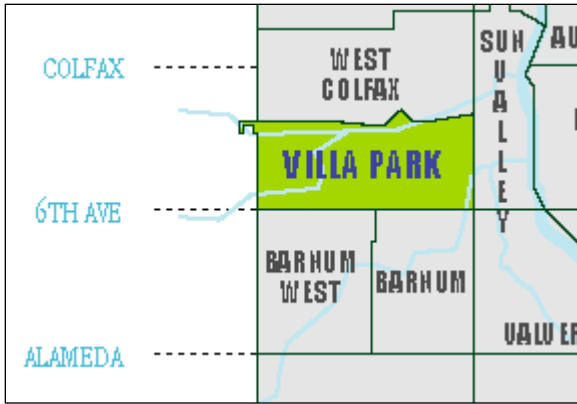
Villa Park will continue to be a neighborhood of mostly single-unit houses, with a few small apartment buildings and apartment complexes interspersed with the houses. Rezoning from R-2 to R-1 will relieve large sections of the neighborhood from the pressures for redevelopment to higher density and will assure that new housing will be single-unit, rather than higher density apartments. Both the houses and apartments will be buffered from the traffic on the surrounding streets and will have safe and attractive access to the trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities in Lakewood and Dry Gulches; to the neighborhood-serving retail, conveniently located within the neighborhood and at its edge; and to the light rail system which can make a trip Downtown, the new airport, the Denver Tech Center, or any of the other major destinations in the Metropolitan Denver area fast and enjoyable.

Villa Park will have developed a strong image, focused on its unique access to Lakewood and Dry Gulches, its well maintained and affordable housing, its mature landscaping, its wonderful topography and views, its central location, and its culturally diverse population, welcoming everyone from young families to the elderly.



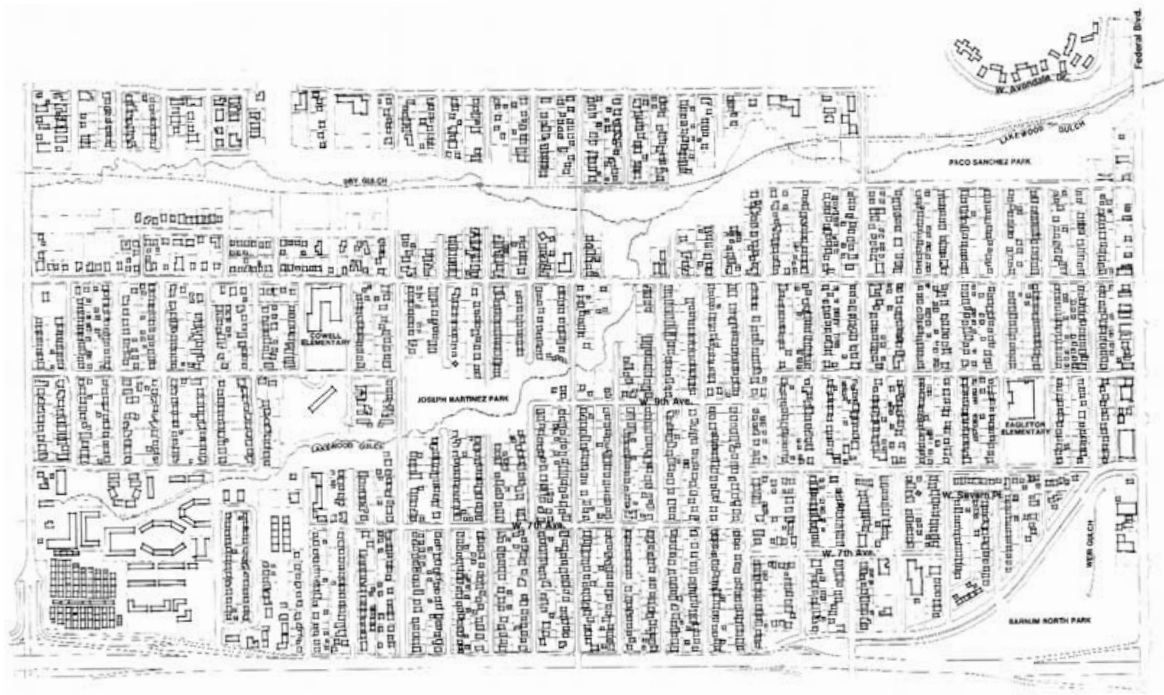
## **SUMMARY OF NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS**

- › **improve neighborhood arterials**
- › **plant trees and improve tree maintenance**
- › **establish a neighborhood image or identity**
- › **support and enhance neighborhood commercial activity**
- › **enhance the appearance and quality of neighborhood housing**
- › **improve neighborhood environmental conditions**
- › **improve neighborhood circulation for all modes of travel**
- › **enhance neighborhood safety**
- › **upgrade neighborhood infrastructure**
- › **create neighborhood recreation opportunities**
- › **develop lakewood gulch as a neighborhood asset**



## LOCATION

The neighborhood is situated on Denver's western border. Its edges are clearly defined: Lakewood / Dry Gulch on the north, the 6th Avenue Freeway on the south, Federal Boulevard on the east, and Sheridan Boulevard on the west.



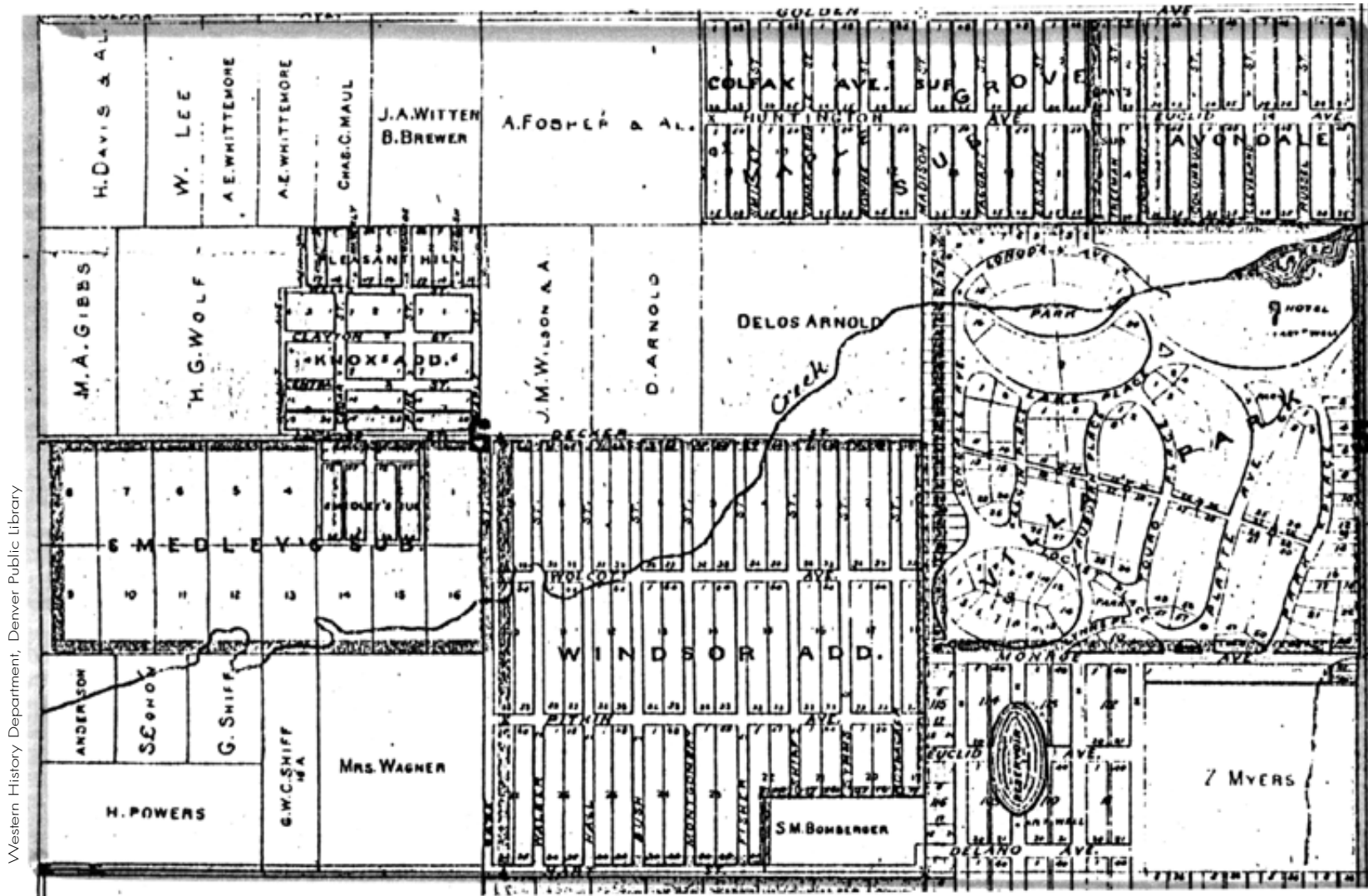
## HISTORY

The Villa Park neighborhood got its start in 1871, when a mixture of Colorado and eastern developers bought 1000 acres in what is now the Villa Park-Barnum area. According to the Rocky Mountain News of August 24, 1871, the group planned a subdivision, which would include artificial lakes in ravines on the property, grand views, and streets with pedestrian walkways. Initial plans for the area also included a hotel, landscaping by the man who designed Central Park in New York City, and a design consultation group to review plans for the new housing.

Eight years later, in 1879, the still largely-undeveloped land was sold to Phineas Barnum, whose family was extremely active in real estate development in Denver, and for whom the neighborhood immediately south of Villa Park is named Barnum is also credited with establishing Villa Park School in 1879.

By 1890, a hotel was still being mentioned for the area, but development plans were proceeding slowly. In the 1900 Census, there were only 50 single-unit dwellings and 16 multi-unit dwellings in the area. As current residents might expect, historic newspaper articles also indicate that the ditches and ravines in the neighborhood have been an ongoing issue for Villa Park. An article from the March 10, 1900, Denver Times, for instance, noted that Villa Park needed sewers much more than a proposed high school for its 40 students.

From 1900 to 1939, slow but steady residential development occurred in Villa Park. An average of 14 dwelling units was added per year, with a total of 577 single and multi-unit dwellings added during this time. Over 91.5% of these were single-unit dwellings. From the 1940's through the 1950's, the area was largely built-out with single-unit dwellings. During the late 1950's, and into the 1960's and 1970's, multi-unit construction predominated, particularly on sites at the western edge of Villa Park.



Western History Department, Denver Public Library

Historic Map

## USE OF THIS PLAN

Following review by the Denver Planning Board and adoption by Denver City Council, the Villa Park Neighborhood Plan will function as the official planning document for the neighborhood. As such, City agencies, neighborhood organizations, and private developers will use it. It will provide guidance for public improvements, programs, and private development.

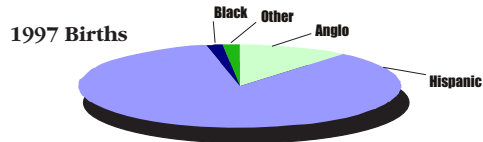
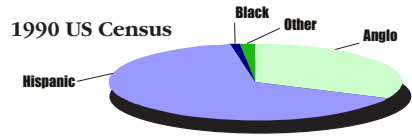
### **Relationship to Other Plans**

This and all other neighborhood plans are consistent with and supplemental to the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan presents a citywide perspective, while each neighborhood plan provides more specific guidance both for the allocation of City resources and for the location and design of private development.

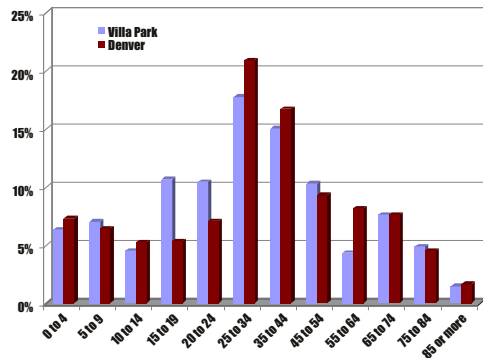
### **The Planning Process**

The Villa Park Neighborhood Plan began as a project for the Urban and Regional Planning Studio II at the University of Colorado in Denver. The project was guided by Bernie Jones, Ph.D., an Associate Professor in the Urban and Regional Planning program. A team of six graduate students prepared the first draft of the plan. Working closely with Councilwoman Ramona Martinez, representatives from the Denver Planning and Community Development Office, and a Steering Committee of neighborhood residents, the student team held a series of work sessions and public review meetings and incorporated the comments from those meetings into a draft plan. The draft plan was then turned over to representatives from the Denver Planning and Community Development Office, who edited the plan and circulated it to other City agencies for review. After the departmental comments were incorporated, the draft plan was returned to the neighborhood for a final review and then was presented to the Denver Planning Board for review. With a recommendation for approval from the Planning Board, the plan is currently proceeding to City Council for review and adoption as an element of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

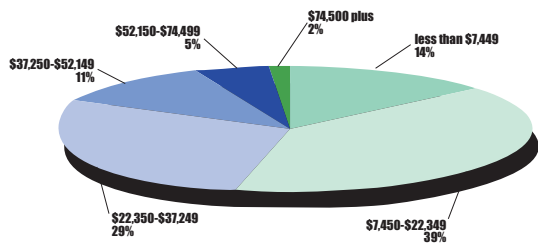
Race



Age Distribution



Household Income — 1985



# SOCIAL ANALYSIS


## Population

The population and demographics of Villa Park are continually changing. The population of the neighborhood dropped from 7,419 in 1980 to 7,066 in 1990, a loss of 353 people, or 5% of the 1980 population. The demographics of Villa Park have also changed, with the principle shift being toward an older and more Hispanic population. Between 1970 and 1980, for example, the number of residents who were 65 years or older increased 38% and the number of households receiving Social Security benefits rose 54%. Despite this shift, in 1985, Villa Park still had a smaller percentage of its population which was older than 65 than did the City as a whole: 9.2% of the neighborhood versus 12.6% of the City residents who were over 65. In 1990, Villa Park had a larger percentage of its population, which was younger, than 18 than did the City as a whole: 33% for the neighborhood versus 22% for the City. While 23% of the City's population was of Spanish origin in 1990, the figure for Villa Park was 64%, up from 50.5% in 1980.

The Villa Park work force suffered during the period from 1970 to 1980. The workers, who were employed primarily in blue collar jobs, experienced a dramatic increase in unemployment, with the number of unemployed residents 16 years and older increasing 48% in that 10 year period. During the same period, the number of households receiving public assistance increased over 60%.

In 1985, the estimated median household income was lower in Villa Park than it was in the City as a whole: \$21,003 in Villa Park and \$23,546 in the City. Villa Park also has shown a wide disparity between the income levels of owner-occupied households and renter-occupied households. In 1980, the median income of owner-occupied households was \$17,941 and of renter-occupied households \$9,944.

*Note:* The demographics presented in this section have been updated with the most current figures available, in some cases 1990 Census data, in others 1985 estimates.



# NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS, STRATEGIES & IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS



Each of these goals has several strategies and suggestions for implementing those strategies. It should be noted that the strategies and implementation steps detailed in this section can be accomplished alone or in conjunction with one another. Names of contact agencies referred to in the implementation statements are listed in the Appendix.

**Note:** The neighborhood goals are not listed by priority.



► **Lakewood Gulch**



► **Low profile housing**



► **10th & Federal**

## NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN FEATURES

Villa Park's hilly topography provides panoramic views of downtown Denver and of the Rocky Mountains, particularly from Lakewood / Dry Gulch, which divides the neighborhood diagonally.

### Scale and Building Materials

Villa Park is a low profile neighborhood, laid out in a grid pattern. Most of the buildings are residential. Although the dominant structure in the neighborhood is the G.A.O. Maes Apartment building, which is 12 stories tall, the majority of residences are single-unit, one-story brick houses. One, two, and three story multi-unit dwellings are also present in the neighborhood, particularly in the western half. Most of the residences are set back from the street on small lots with front and rear yards. Non-residential units consist of single-story shops and numerous churches, which are scattered throughout the neighborhood.

### Gateways and Edges

Although Villa Park has distinct borders, there are no "gateways" which clearly identify entry into the neighborhood. There are, however, intersections, which could serve as gateways if they were improved and clearly marked. These include both 8th and 10th Avenues at Federal Boulevard, on the eastern edge of the neighborhood. On the western edge, 10th Avenue could serve as an identifiable gateway. Both Knox Court and Perry Street are potential gateways, from the north at Lakewood / Dry Gulch, and from the south at the 6th Avenue Freeway.

### Activity Centers

Villa Park has no major center of activity, such as a centralized shopping area. The neighborhood, however, does have minor activity centers, including the intersection of 10th and Knox Court, with the convenience store and liquor store on two corners; Presentation Church; Cowell and Eagleton Elementary Schools; and the intersection of 6th Avenue and Knox Court, where there are several stores.



**Image**

Villa Park does not project a strong image; few people outside the neighborhood know where Villa Park is, let alone what the boundaries of the neighborhood are. Lack of major activity centers and of identifiable gateways have contributed to this problem. While Lakewood / Dry Gulch provides an opportunity for creating a strong image for Villa Park, it will not do so until it is more fully developed and better maintained.

Aside from its lack of a clear public image, the biggest image problem facing Villa Park is the deteriorating quality of maintenance of housing. There is a stark contrast between the owner-occupied homes, most of which are well maintained, and the renter-occupied homes, many of which are poorly maintained. A rising number of absentee-ownerships, HUD repossessions, and vacant homes are adding to this image problem in Villa Park.

**vision**

- ▶ Build on the positive physical characteristics of the neighborhood.
- ▶ Create a more beautiful neighborhood in which to live and do business.

**goal UD-1:** Improve neighborhood arterials.

**strategy UD-1a:** Initiate business, streetscaping and business facade improvements along Federal Boulevard.

**implementation program UD-1a-1:** Initiate a study of Federal Boulevard.

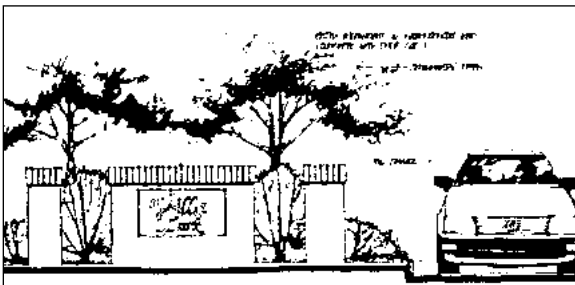
- ▶ Work with the Mayor's Office of Economic Development, the Colorado Department of Highways, the Transportation Division of the Denver Department of Public Works, and the Denver Planning Office to initiate and implement market, business development, traffic, and urban design studies of Federal Boulevard. The studies should evaluate how improvements to the businesses and the traffic flow can be balanced with improvements to the way in which Federal Boulevard impacts and serves both the adjoining neighborhoods and the City as a whole. To the extent possible, address these issues in the Southwest Quadrant Transportation Study.



▶ **8th & Federal**



► **6th & Perry**



**implementation program UD-1a-2:** Seek funding for streetscaping and facade improvements and maintenance.

- Set annual priorities for streetscape and business facade improvement projects.
- Work with the City Council District office and the Denver Planning and Community Development Office to identify funding programs currently available through the City or other funding sources, the funding cycles for each of those programs, the criteria for qualifying for those programs, and the criteria which will be used by the funding entity to evaluate whether or not the project should be funded.
- Work with property owners to put together applications for funding programs, to develop community support for those applications, to establish mechanisms which will assure long-term maintenance of the improvements, to guarantee the participation of new retail or residential uses, and to follow through the application, evaluation, funding, and construction process.

**goal UD-2:** Establish a neighborhood image or identity.

**strategy UD-2a:** Build neighborhood gateways

**implementation program UD-2a-1:** Select locations for gateways to the neighborhood.

- Possible locations for gateways to mark the entrance to Villa Park include 8th and Federal, 10th and Federal, 10th and Sheridan, Lakewood / Dry Gulch (approximately 12th) and Sheridan, Knox Court and 6th Avenue, Knox Court and the Gulch, Perry and 6th Avenue, or Perry and the Gulch.

**implementation program UD-2a-2:** Design gateways for each of the selected locations.

- For each of the selected locations, consider preliminary designs for a gateway. These might include a sign, similar to the sign for Barnum at 6th and Knox; trees; or other landscaping. The design should be preliminary; funding for final design work should be included in the request for funding of the gateway.

**implementation program UD-2a-3:** Seek funding to construct and maintain the gateways.

- ▶ Develop a program for maintaining the gateways once they have been constructed; consider using neighborhood volunteers and holding fundraisers to help provide both a matching contribution for the construction and an ongoing fund for maintenance. With the preliminary design, an estimated construction cost, locally raised funds which can be used as a match for the funds raised from outside the neighborhood, and a maintenance plan, approach alternative funding sources with proposals for funding the remaining portion of the cost of construction of the gateways.

## LAND USE AND ZONING

### **Types of Land Use**

There are six types of development in Villa Park, each of which is indicated on the land use map.

- 1 Single-unit detached housing dominates Villa Park.
- 2 Multiple-unit housing, including duplexes and low-to-medium density apartments are the second most prominent land use.
- 3 Commercial uses, including retail and business services, border the neighborhood on Federal and Sheridan Boulevards and are also found in small clusters within the neighborhood.
- 4 Public open space, including Lakewood and Dry Gulches, is concentrated on the north edge of the neighborhood.
- 5 Semi-public uses include churches and schools.
- 6 Vacant land, including privately owned vacant lots, is the sixth, less predominant, land use.

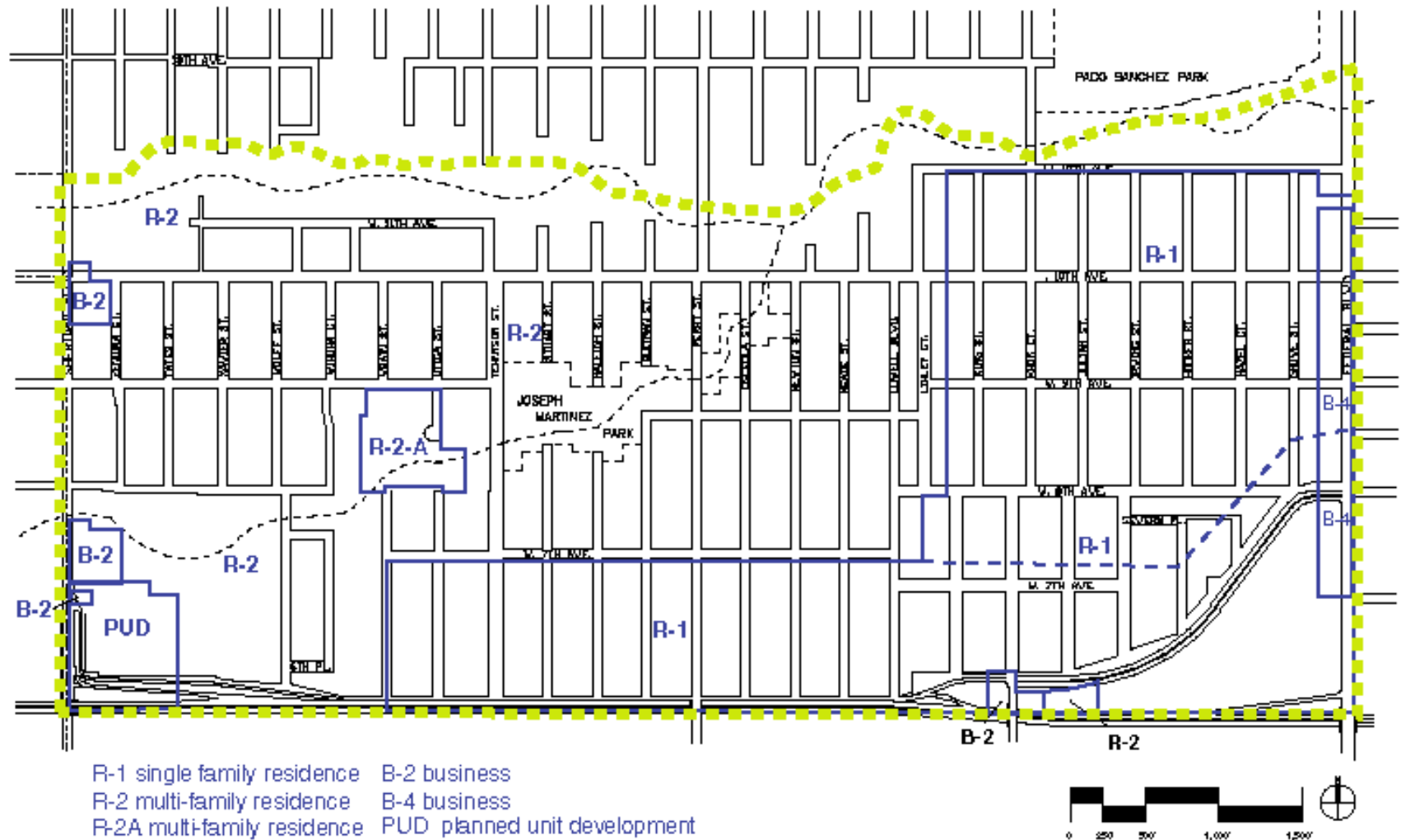


Land Use Map

**Zoning**

The predominant zoning in Villa Park is residential, although there is also business zoning along the edges of the neighborhood. The zoning categories listed below correspond to the zoning maps and describe what types of development are allowed in each zone district.

- R-1 ***Single-unit Detached Dwellings, Low Density*** — maximum density is 7.3 units per acre. Foster family care, day care, home occupations, and room renting to one or two persons are allowed after special permit approval.
- R-2 ***Multi-unit Dwellings, Low Density*** — maximum density is 14.5 units per acre. Home occupations are allowed as listed above after special approval.
- R-2A ***Multi-unit Dwellings, Medium Density*** — maximum density is 21.8 units per acre. Home occupations are allowed only after special permit approval.
- B-2 ***Neighborhood Business District*** — regulations are designed to permit development of a variety of locally-oriented retail uses, limited by standards designed to protect the adjacent residential district.
- B-4 ***General Business District*** — provides commercial uses which include a wide variety of consumer and business services and retail establishments that serve other business activities. Limitations imposed in these areas are designed to protect integrity and character of adjacent residential districts.
- PUD ***Planned Unit Development*** — a form of development characterized by unified site design (for clustering buildings and providing common open space), density increases and a mixture of building types and land uses. Permits planning of project and calculation of densities over an entire development area, rather than on an individual lot. Allows both residential and commercial uses if requested.



Zoning Map



Land use in Villa Park generally conforms to the existing zoning. For example, the multiple-unit dwellings along Lakewood / Dry Gulch are located in the R-2 zone district, and most of the businesses are located along Federal and Sheridan Boulevards in the B-2 and B-4 zone districts. There are, however, several small pockets of businesses located in R-1 and R-2 zone districts. These are considered legally non-conforming uses since they existed prior to the R-1 and R-2 zoning and were, therefore, “grandfathered” in as legal uses.

The primary inconsistency between the current zoning and the land uses in Villa Park is the predominance of single-unit dwellings in the R-2 zone district. Because zoning should be consistent with the existing and desired character of an area, most of the area in Villa Park which is zoned R-2 can be considered over-zoned, even though single-unit dwellings are a use-by-right. R-1 zoning would be more consistent with the existing character in most of the neighborhood.

### vision

- ▶ Compatibility of zoning to land use.
- ▶ Protection of residential character of the neighborhood.
- ▶ Compatibility between residential and business land use.

**strategy LZ-1:** Discourage higher density development.

**implementation program LZ-1a:** Consider rezoning portions of the neighborhood.

- ▶ Zoning is intended to reflect both the current and the desired character of an area. However, while most of the housing in Villa Park is single-unit, the zoning throughout much of the neighborhood, R-2, allows and encourages the development of low density apartments. The property owners in those areas, therefore, should consider rezoning to a lower density residential zone, which would more accurately reflect the existing and desired character of the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with the Council office, the Planning and Community Development Office, and the Zoning Administration to determine the best strategy for rezoning and the appropriate procedures.





**strategy LZ-2:** Discourage development that is incompatible with the scale and quality of the neighborhood.

**implementation program LZ-2a:** Monitor requests for rezoning and for zoning variances.

- ▶ With a registered neighborhood organization, Villa Park will receive notification of any applications for rezoning or zone variances. Using the neighborhood plan as the basis for reviewing these applications, the neighborhood organization should establish a procedure and assign responsibilities for commenting on these applications, sending written comments to the appropriate agencies, and appearing at any applicable public hearings with the comments of the association.

**strategy LZ-3a:** Remove housing from marginal areas.

**implementation program LZ-3a-1:** Rezone housing in marginal areas for commercial uses.

- ▶ As a way to help people sell houses which are in areas which no longer provide healthy residential environments, such as along Sheridan and Federal Boulevards, encourage rezoning that housing as a Planned Unit Development which would allow commercial or other more intense, but residentially-compatible, uses while buffering the remaining adjoining residential uses from potential negative impacts.

CHARACTERISTICS		
Built Before 1940:	20.69%	20.13%
Rentals:	51.49%	50.80%
90 Vacancy Rate:	14.21%	11.97%
98 Board Up:	3	217
Rent Pay > 35%:	43.54%	31.51%
Own Pay > 35%:	25.23%	16.41%
> 1 Person/Room:	10.97%	4.23%
Same Home:	45.96%	46.26%

SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING		
99 Public Assist:	10.96%	6.61%
96 Res Care Fac:	0	106
95 In Res Care:	0.00%	0.70%



## HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Housing in Villa Park is slightly older than the average for the City of Denver — 46 years for single-unit residences and 37 years for multiple-unit residences, compared to a Denver average of 39 years. The average size of housing units in Villa Park is smaller than in the City as a whole — 863 square feet for single-unit residences and 720 square feet for multiple-unit residences, compared to a Denver average of 1024 square feet.

The percentage of owner-occupancy is comparable to the City average — 46% of the housing units in Villa Park are owner-occupied and 54% are renter-occupied, versus 48% and 52%, respectively, for Denver. During the later part of Denver’s economic recession of the 1980’, Villa Park experienced an increasing number of vacant residences.

Villa Park has few commercial or semi-public land uses, and no industrial uses. Retail activity is concentrated along Federal Boulevard and Sheridan Boulevard, with a limited mixture of neighborhood-serving retail uses located within the neighborhood. Semi-public uses such as schools and churches are scattered throughout the neighborhood.

Using the land use map, some generalizations can be made about land use in Villa Park and the way differing land uses interact. First, the boundary between private and publicly-owned land in Lakewood / Dry Gulch is often unclear. This land ownership pattern blurs the lines of responsibility for maintenance since it is difficult to determine at what point the public responsibility ends and the responsibility of private landowners begins.

Second, multiple-unit uses have changed the appearance, value, and composition of the western side of Villa Park, particularly on the streets nearest Sheridan Boulevard.

### Patterns of Residential Development and Condition

Residential development in the neighborhood has undergone periods of transition. The first area within Villa Park to be developed was the eastern section; development there was primarily single-unit dwellings and few lots were left vacant. Development in the western section of the neighborhood was slower and more scattered,

with many lots initially left undeveloped. As a result, as the demand for multiple-unit housing grew, the western section of Villa Park experienced the development of apartments on many of its vacant lots. As Denver's economy reeled from the oil boom and bust of the 1980's, the housing stock in Villa Park increasingly suffered from deterioration and abandonment, with many homes reverting to bank, HUD, or VA ownership. Initial 1990 Census counts of vacant housing in Villa Park indicated there were 425 vacant housing units, accounting for 14.5% of the 2934 housing units in the neighborhood. Field checks confirmed the accuracy of that figure. As the economy has begun to improve, so has the occupancy and the condition of housing in the neighborhood. More recent field checks have shown a decrease in the number of vacant units.

**vision**

- ▶ A strong and vital residential neighborhood.
- ▶ Increase the rate of home ownership.
- ▶ Sound management and a mix of income levels in rental single family homes and apartments.
- ▶ Renovate and maintain housing.

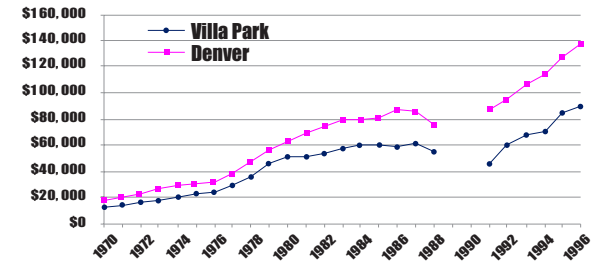
**goal H-1:** Enhance the appearance and quality of neighborhood housing.

**strategy H-1a:** Focus on vacant and boarded-up structures.

**implementation program H-1a-1:** Focus on existing owners.

- ▶ Create and maintain a current list of deteriorated, vacant, or boarded-up structures in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Research the ownership of these properties through the Denver Assessors Office.
- ▶ Write letters to the owner(s) of problem properties as a neighborhood organization requesting that they repair their property and have it occupied. Provide information to them on available programs for funding renovations. Follow-up on the initial contact with additional letters and telephone calls.
- ▶ If the owner does not respond, work with the Council District office to identify and report City codes violations.

**Mean Housing Sales Prices — 1970–1998**





- ▶ Put a “Hit List” of problem properties in local newsletter as the Neighborhood Housing Service does. This could include pictures of the properties with their addresses and the owners’ names.

**implementation program H-1a-2:** Seek funding for renovating and occupying structures.

- ▶ Establish a new non-profit group, or work with an existing group, which will focus on improving housing in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with the Council District office and the Denver Planning and Community Development Office to identify funding programs currently available through the City or other funding sources, the funding cycles for each of those programs, the criteria for qualifying for those programs, and the criteria which will be used by the funding entity to evaluate whether or not the project should be funded.
- ▶ Work with the non-profit housing group and property owners to put together applications for funding programs, to develop community support for those applications, and to follow through the application, evaluation, funding, and construction process.

**strategy H-2a:** Focus on poorly maintained and managed rental housing.

**implementation program H-2a-1:** Identify problem properties.

- ▶ Create and maintain a current list of rental properties, which are poorly maintained, poorly managed, or in violation of Denver building codes.
- ▶ Continue efforts, by following the process outlined in H-1a-1, above.

**implementation program H-2a-2:** Seek funding for renovating rental properties.

- ▶ Establish a new non-profit group, or work with an existing group, which will focus on improving housing in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with the Council District office and the Denver Planning and Community Development Office to identify funding programs currently available through the City or other funding sources, the funding cycles for each of those programs, the criteria for qualifying for those programs, and the criteria which will be used by the funding entity to evaluate whether or not the project should be funded.

- ▶ Work with the non-profit housing group and property owners to put together applications for funding programs, to develop community support for those applications, and to follow through the application, evaluation, funding, and construction process.

**strategy H-3a:** Encourage housing rehabilitation.

**implementation program H-3a-1:** Seek funding for renovating housing.

- ▶ Establish a new non-profit group, or work with an existing group, which will focus on improving housing in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with the Council District office and the Denver Planning and Community Development Office to identify funding programs currently available through the City or other funding sources, the funding cycles for each of those programs, the criteria for qualifying for those programs, and the criteria which will be used by the funding entity to evaluate whether or not the project should be funded.
- ▶ Work with the non-profit housing group and property owners to put together applications for funding programs, to develop community support for those applications, and to follow through the application, evaluation, funding, and construction process.

**strategy H-4a:** Transfer ownership of substandard rental properties to home ownership.

**implementation program H-4a-1:** Seek funding for home ownership programs.

- ▶ Establish a new non-profit group, or work with an existing group, which will focus on improving housing in the neighborhood.
- ▶ Work with the Council District office and the Denver Planning and Community Development Office to identify funding programs currently available through the City or other funding sources, the funding cycles for each of those programs, the criteria for qualifying for those programs, and the criteria which will be used by the funding entity to evaluate whether or not the project should be funded.
- ▶ Work with the non-profit housing group and property owners to put together applications for funding programs, to develop community support for those applications, and to follow through the application, evaluation, funding, and construction process.



► **10th & Knox**

## BUSINESS

### vision

- Support and enhance neighborhood commercial activities.
- Increase retail activity.
- Research the shopping desires and needs for new businesses.
- Institute a senior shopping service.

**goal B-4:** Support and enhance neighborhood commercial activities.

**strategy B-4a:** Upgrade the visual appearance of 10th Avenue and Knox Court.

**implementation program B-4a-1:** Seek funding for streetscaping and facade improvements and maintenance.

- Follow the recommendations outlined in UD 1a-2 on page 12.

**strategy B-4b:** Research the shopping desires and needs for new businesses.

**implementation program B-4b-1:** Conduct a neighborhood survey.

- Conduct a survey of neighborhood residents and businesses, asking residents their attitude toward the businesses which are currently in the neighborhood, changes which they would like to see to those businesses, and which additional businesses they would most like to see added to the neighborhood. Ask business owners about their customers, other businesses which are in the neighborhood and those, which they would like to see, added, and how they think their businesses could be improved.

**implementation program B-4b-2:** Form an association of business and property owners.

- Work with the business and property owners in and adjacent to the neighborhood to form one or more business associations. At a minimum, form an association of businesses along Federal Boulevard. As one of the first steps in the process of creating an association, talk to representatives of similar business associations in the City. Once formed, the business association can work to improve the business climate in the areas by solving common problems; attracting new businesses; and jointly applying for available funding for business development, facade renovation, and streetscaping.

**strategy B-4c:** Increase retail activity.

**implementation program 4c-1:** Develop and fund a business development program.

- Using the results of the neighborhood survey, work with the Council District and the Mayor's Office of Economic Development to establish a business development program and to identify potential funding sources for implementing the program. Work with business and property owners to apply for funds to implement the program.

**strategy B-4d:** Institute a senior shopping service.

**implementation program B-4c-1:** Use an existing service or create a new service.

- Work with current providers of senior shopping services to evaluate the need for expanded service in Villa Park and potential mechanisms to provide the expansion. Current providers include Senior Support Services, RTD's Senior Shopping Program, and RTD's Senior Ride program. Local churches should be contacted for a source of volunteers for expanding existing services or creating a new senior shopping service.



## TRANSPORTATION

### Description and Analysis

Streets are designated by the Denver Comprehensive Plan according to the following definitions:

- ▶ **Local Streets:** Serve the function of providing direct access to adjacent properties and of carrying low volumes of traffic (less than 2,000 vehicles per day) with an origin or destination within the neighborhood. Examples 7th Avenue and Tennyson Street.
- ▶ **Collector Streets:** Distribute traffics between arterial and local streets within the community and link residential areas, local and community shopping, and other major community activity areas. Collector streets have average volumes of 5,000 to 12,000 vehicles per day. Examples of collector streets are Perry Street and 10th Avenue.
- ▶ **Arterial Street:** Provide for through traffic on a continuous route. They serve as the primary link between communities and major land use elements. The average traffic volumes typically range from 10,000 to 50,000 vehicles per day. Examples of arterial streets are Federal Blvd. and Sheridan Blvd.

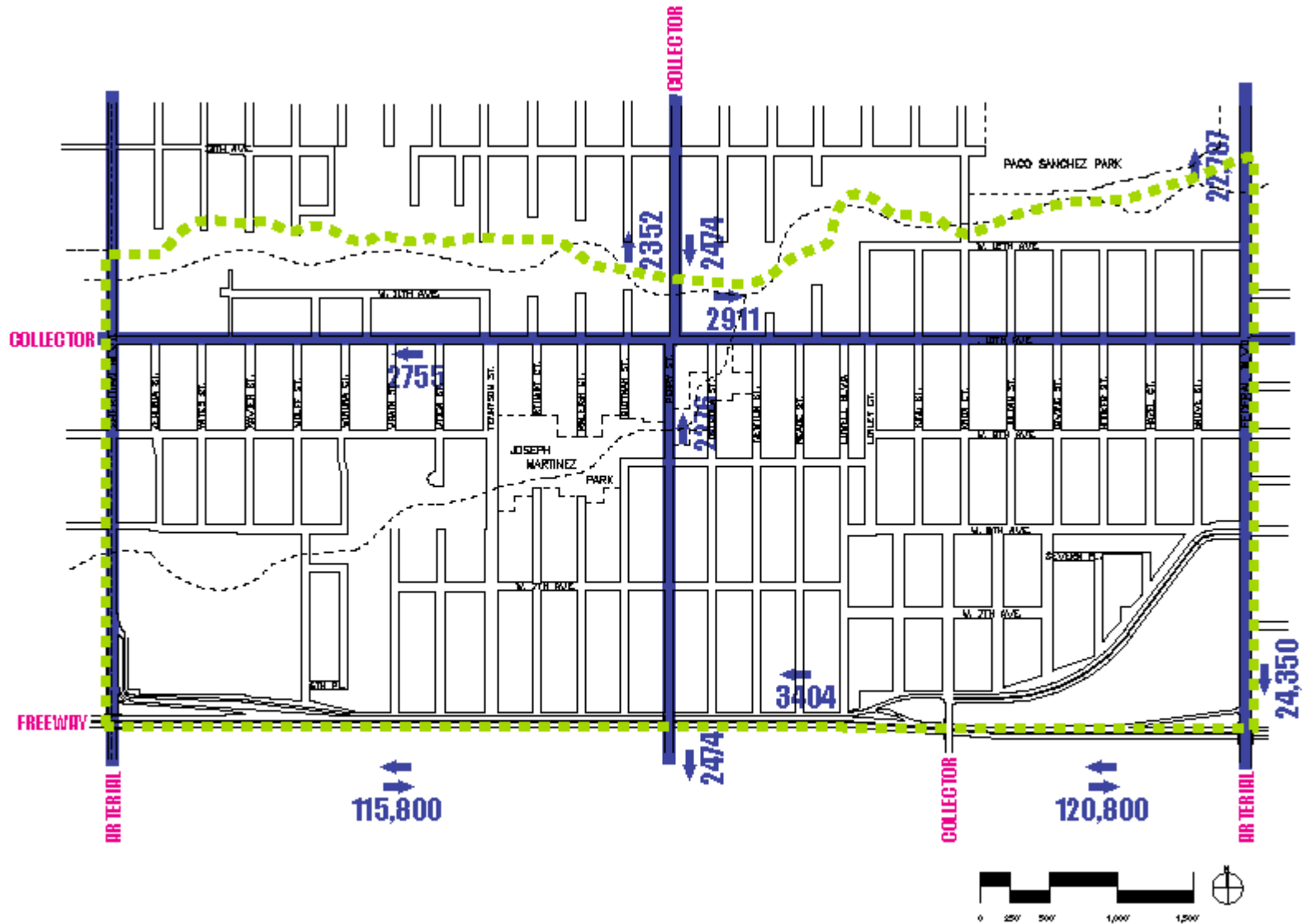
The Department of Public Works classifies existing streets. The map shows the Villa Park neighborhood with existing street classification and average daily traffic counts from 1988 and 1993.

### Major Streets

The main streets, or “arterials,” in Villa Park — Federal Boulevard, Sheridan Boulevard, and 6th Avenue Freeway — form three of the four neighborhood edges.

Tenth Avenue, which carries less traffic, runs east-west near the northern border of the neighborhood, and is considered a “collector” for traffic from other, less traveled, streets.





Traffic Count and Street Classification Map



Perry and Knox Court, which run north-south, are also considered “collectors” and are the only streets internal to the neighborhood which cross the 6th Avenue Freeway. The extension of Eighth Avenue from Federal to Knox Court is a remnant of the street system which existed prior to the construction of the 6th Avenue Freeway. This street is currently considered a “collector” and has received City funding for traffic and streetscaping improvements.

#### **Traffic impacts from expanding 6th Avenue Freeway**

There are long-range traffic plans, which consider the widening of 6th Avenue Freeway by two lanes on each side and improving the frontage road. If these plans were approved and funded, they would require the purchase and removal of a row of houses on either side of the freeway. This plan is not likely to begin, however, for at least five years, because of delays in the Federal funding process and the lack of State and Federal funds. The Southwest Quadrant Transportation Study is also addressing the potential need for widening 6th Avenue.

#### **Sidewalks and Bike Paths**

While most streets in Villa Park have sidewalks, there are streets which do not have them on both sides, and in some cases do not have sidewalks on either side of the street. Other streets have sidewalks which are uneven and, therefore, hazardous. While bike paths run along sections of the gulches, they are not continuous and are in some cases difficult to use because of poor maintenance, including low-hanging branches and mud.

#### **Public Transportation**

Villa Park has a long history of access to public transportation. The street cars which served Denver from the end of the 1800’s until the 1950’s serviced Villa Park, and many of Villa Park’s first homes were built near these old routes. Currently, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) operates a number of bus routes in and around the neighborhood, which follow the original street car routes.

RTD is not planning changes, which will affect the bus routes in and near Villa Park. However, if constructed, the proposed rapid transit route servicing west Denver would go through Lakewood / Dry Gulch, passing directly over the railroad tracks near Dry Gulch at 12th Street. With this proposed route, one or more transit stations might be built near Villa Park. Prior to construction of a rapid transit system, funding would have to be approved by voters in the affected municipalities.



## vision

- ▶ Safe and uncongested traffic flow within and through the neighborhood
- ▶ Landscaping and buffering that will protect adjacent residences along arterial streets.
- ▶ Reduced noise levels along 6th Avenue Freeway
- ▶ Convenient RTD bus transit service to all areas in the neighborhood.

**strategy T1:** Provide noise barriers on the western portion of the 6th Avenue Freeway.

- ▶ Both the north and south sides of the 6th Avenue Freeway are considered Type 2 areas, meaning that there were “existing conditions exceeding 67 decibels.” As a result, both sides of the freeway are eligible for federal funds for noise barriers. However, because the freeway may be widened and that widening might result in the removal of any noise barriers, which were installed prior to the widening, federal funds cannot be used to construct them.

**implementation program T1-a:** Secure funding for noise barriers.

- ▶ Address this issue through the Southwest Quadrant Transportation Study.
- ▶ If it is consistent with the completed Southwest Quadrant Study, form a coalition with other neighborhoods, which adjoin the 6th Avenue Freeway in order to work on acquiring noise barriers and to participate in the design process for the anticipated expansion.
- ▶ Work with the Colorado Department of Highways to determine the schedule for widening of the 6th Avenue Freeway and the anticipated acquisitions, which would be required for that widening.
- ▶ Using the tentative schedule and the knowledge of anticipated acquisitions, determine the best approach for the neighborhoods: whether to push for an accelerated construction schedule or for construction of temporary noise barriers.
- ▶ Work with City, State, and congressional representatives to lobby for the desired approach to acquiring noise barriers.





**strategy T2-b:** Improve parking and traffic circulation around schools.

**implementation program T2-b-1:** Investigate the residential parking permit program.

- ▶ The Transportation Division of the Department of Public Works administers the residential parking permit program. The program restricts parking to residents with permit stickers, with a few parking spaces retained for guest parking. The neighborhood organization should investigate the advantages of such a program around the neighborhood schools. As part of this effort, the organization should work with the schools to find alternative parking for staff and visitors.

**implementation program T2-b-2:** Improve signage and lighting.

- ▶ Work with the Department of Public Works Transportation Engineering Section to identify deficiencies and to request improved signage and lighting around neighborhood schools. Work with the Parks Department to improve signage and trail lighting in Lakewood / Dry Gulch.

**strategy T3-c:** Improve traffic control.

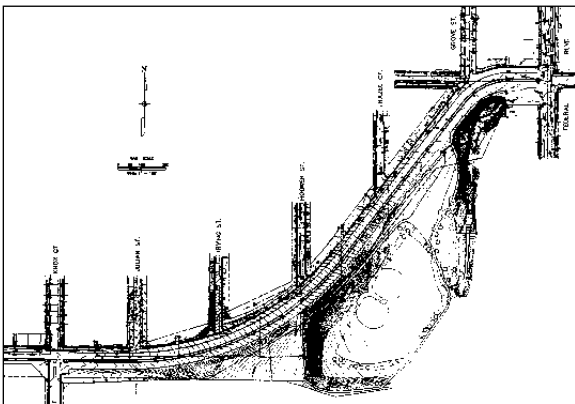
**implementation program T3-c-1:** Work with the department of public works.

- ▶ Work with the Traffic Engineering Section of the Department of Public Works to identify and request traffic control improvements, such as left turn arrows at both 10th and Sheridan and 10th and Federal.

**strategy T4-d:** Improve the extension of 8th Avenue to Knox Court.

**implementation program T4-d-1:** Work with the departments of public works and parks.

- ▶ Work with the Transportation Division of the Department of Public Works and the Parks Department to improve both the efficiency and aesthetics of the extension of 8th Avenue to Knox Court. The design should also improve the linkage of Barnum Park to the neighborhood, including pedestrian linkages.



**strategy T4-e:** Improve the service roads along 6th avenue.

**implementation program T4-e-1:** Lobby for resolution of the 6th avenue widening issue.

- ▶ As part of the Southwest Quadrant Study, seek a solution, either temporary or permanent, to the deterioration of the service roads along 6th Avenue.

**strategy T5-f:** Monitor and participate in transportation plans.

**implementation program T5-f-1:** Assign transportation responsibilities.

- ▶ The neighborhood organization should assign individuals who will be responsible for attending transportation meetings and monitoring transportation programs which might affect Villa Park, such as the Southwest Quadrant Transportation Study, the potential widening of the 6th Avenue Freeway and the potential construction of a light rail line along the gulch. Those individuals should report back to the neighborhood organization and ask for direction and assistance from the larger organization.

**implementation program T5-f-2:** Encourage neighborhood participation in plans.

- ▶ Encourage neighborhood participation in planning for major transportation projects, such as projects affecting 6th Avenue, Federal, Sheridan, or other projects, which could have a major impact on the neighborhood and its residents.

**goal T6-g:** Enhance neighborhood circulation.

**strategy T6-g:** Improve the condition of bike routes and sidewalks and expand the system for both circulation and recreation uses.

**implementation program T6-g-1:** Work with the parks department.

- ▶ The Parks Department has the responsibility for constructing and maintaining bicycle routes. Work with the Trail Planner for the Parks Department and the State Bicycle Coordinator to seek improvements and expansion to the existing system of bicycle routes, including connecting the Lakewood / Dry Gulch trail to the Weir Gulch trail, providing curb cuts at Perry, and a pedestrian/bicycle-activated signal across Sheridan. For sidewalks, see Implementation Program PS-9e-1.





## ENVIRONMENT

Although Villa Park is a relatively small neighborhood, it is an area of geographical contrast. Steep slopes alternate with very flat areas, causing drainage problems for the neighborhood. Some property abutting the two gulches lies in the designated flood plain areas and several old landfills lie underground — one at 7th and Perry and a second at northeast corner of 6th and Sheridan.

### **Lakewood / Dry Gulch**

Lakewood / Dry Gulch is the most prominent, contiguous parcel of open space in the neighborhood. It is owned and managed by a combination of jurisdictions and agencies, including the Denver Parks and Recreation Department, Public Service Company of Colorado, the Regional Transportation District (RTD), and the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District. In addition to the open space and park improvements mentioned above, the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District has plans to install 3-4 “drop structures” in sections of Lakewood Gulch in the next few years. These structures are designed to prevent downstream erosion, and will be constructed between Tennyson and Perry Streets. The District also has funds to begin designing flood control improvements for an additional section of Lakewood Gulch. The Parks and Recreation Department shares maintenance responsibilities for the area along the Gulch with the Drainage District, with the Parks Department generally having responsibility for improving and maintaining areas which abut the Gulch.

### **Vegetation**

Native cottonwood and willow trees line the gulches in Villa Park, while the ground cover consists of both native grasses and weeds. Along the streets, the dominant tree species in Villa Park are silver maples, Chinese elms, and spruce.

### **Wildlife**

Because of the “natural” state of the gulches, many species of wildlife continue to exist in Villa Park, including squirrels, skunks, raccoons, muskrats, and cottontail rabbits. The greatest variety of wildlife in

Villa Park, however, is provided by birds, including owls, ducks, and geese.

### **Pollution**

Pollution problems in Villa Park are typical of many Denver neighborhoods. The “brown cloud” of dust and automobile exhaust envelopes the neighborhood periodically, especially during the winter months. Automobile traffic on 6th Avenue and Sheridan and Federal Boulevards exacerbates the air pollution problem. Noise from the 6th Avenue Freeway is also a continuing problem, and litter and garbage are eyesores and can create unpleasant odors.

### **Methane Gas**

One of the biggest environmental problems in the neighborhood is the old covered landfill between 6th and Sheridan and 8th and Wolff. As a known generator of methane gas, care should be taken when excavating or rebuilding on or near this location. To enhance neighborhood safety, precautions issued by the Denver Building Department should be adhered to at all times.

City programs should give priority to helping owners of housing on or adjacent to this landfill both mitigate the dangers of methane gas and provide the frequent repairs to foundations, sidewalks, gutters, and streets necessitated by the settling of the soil.

### **vision**

- ▶ Improve neighborhood environmental conditions.
- ▶ Establish a neighborhood image of identity.

**goal N-3:** Establish a neighborhood image or identity.

**strategy N-3a:** Strengthen the neighborhood organization.

**implementation program N-3a-1:** Seek funding for the neighborhood association.

- ▶ Develop a program, which will provide funds for the operation of the neighborhood organization.

**implementation program N-3a-2:** Seek broad neighborhood participation in the association.

- ▶ Make a membership drive a primary focus of the neighborhood association in order to build its strength and viability. Focus on developing active representation from each geographic, economic, interest, and cultural sector of the neighborhood.
- ▶ Incorporate tenants into both the neighborhood organization and neighborhood activities.
- ▶ Take the neighborhood organization to the tenants.
- ▶ Periodically, hold neighborhood organization meetings in an apartment complex.
- ▶ Conduct one of the neighborhood events at an apartment complex.
- ▶ Deliver the neighborhood newsletter to the apartment complexes.

**implementation program N-3a-3:** Develop an annual work program for the association.

- ▶ Using the neighborhood plan as a base, develop an annual work program for the association, determine priorities for each of the tasks, and assign responsibilities for accomplishing them. Distribute the work program to the City Councilperson and to the Denver Planning and Community Development Office.

**strategy N-3b:** Publish a neighborhood newsletter.

**implementation program N-3b-1:** Set parameters for the newsletter.

- ▶ Check with other neighborhood organizations, such as Southwest Improvement Council, Neighborhood Housing Service, and Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods, regarding their newsletters: what they hope to achieve with their newsletters, how they are written and laid out, how often they are published, how they are distributed, how many copies are printed, how much they cost, etc. Adapt the processes used by other organizations to the needs and capabilities of Villa Park.

**implementation program N-3b-2:** Publish and distribute the newsletter.



- ▶ Using these parameters, organize a process for producing and distributing the newsletter. Seek donations and volunteers to help with production and distribution. Begin production and distribution.

**strategy N-3c:** Sponsor an annual neighborhood event or festival.

**implementation program N-3c-1:** Set goals for the neighborhood event.

- ▶ Decide what should be accomplished by each neighborhood event; publicity, image building, community building, fundraising, etc. Select an event, or multiple events, which will meet these goals. Possible events might include a series of block parties as “get acquainted” opportunities; a crafts fair with music, food, and entertainment; a neighborhood clean-up of the gulches; or a celebration of neighborhood improvements.

**implementation program N-3c-2:** Organize the event.

- ▶ Establish a committee, which will organize the event(s), solicit volunteers and funding, and oversee the event itself.

**strategy N-3d:** Adopt a neighborhood logo.

**implementation program N-3d-1:** Develop, adopt, and use a neighborhood logo.

- ▶ Seek volunteers who will donate several alternative designs for a neighborhood logo, select one of these as the official neighborhood logo, and use the selected logo on all stationery for the neighborhood association and on signage throughout the neighborhood.

**strategy N-3f:** Adopt a unified signage program.

**implementation program N-3f-1:** Use the neighborhood logo throughout the neighborhood.

- ▶ Put the neighborhood logo on signs erected in Villa Park, including those at the gateways and announcing neighborhood events.

**goal N-6:** Improve neighborhood environmental conditions.

**strategy N-6a:** Clean-up graffiti.

**implementation program N-6a-1:** Work with “Keep Denver Beautiful” to develop an ongoing neighborhood anti-graffiti campaign.

- ▶ Utilize the neighborhood association newsletter and the resources of “Keep Denver Beautiful” to distribute information to all property owners and tenants on the importance of immediately removing graffiti, available resources and techniques for removing graffiti, and programs for preventing new graffiti.

**strategy N-6b:** Clean-up trash.

**implementation program N-6b-1:** Publicize available trash pick-up and recycling programs.

- ▶ Utilize the neighborhood association newsletter to publicize and explain available trash pick-up and recycling programs, including both the regular home trash collection program of the Denver Department of Public Works and the monthly “large item” pick-up service. Explain the distinction between home collection services, provided by the City, and commercial collection services, provided by private contractors.

**implementation program N-6b-2:** Acquire “roll-barrels” for selected areas.

- ▶ Where appropriate, along those streets without alleys, acquire City-owned “roll-barrels” for trash collection.

**implementation program N-6b-3:** Improve trash collection and eliminate dumping.

- ▶ Work with “Keep Denver Beautiful” to organize periodic neighborhood-wide trash collection programs and to develop new strategies for eliminating the dumping of junk and trash along the gulches.

**strategy N-6c:** Remove old, abandoned cars.

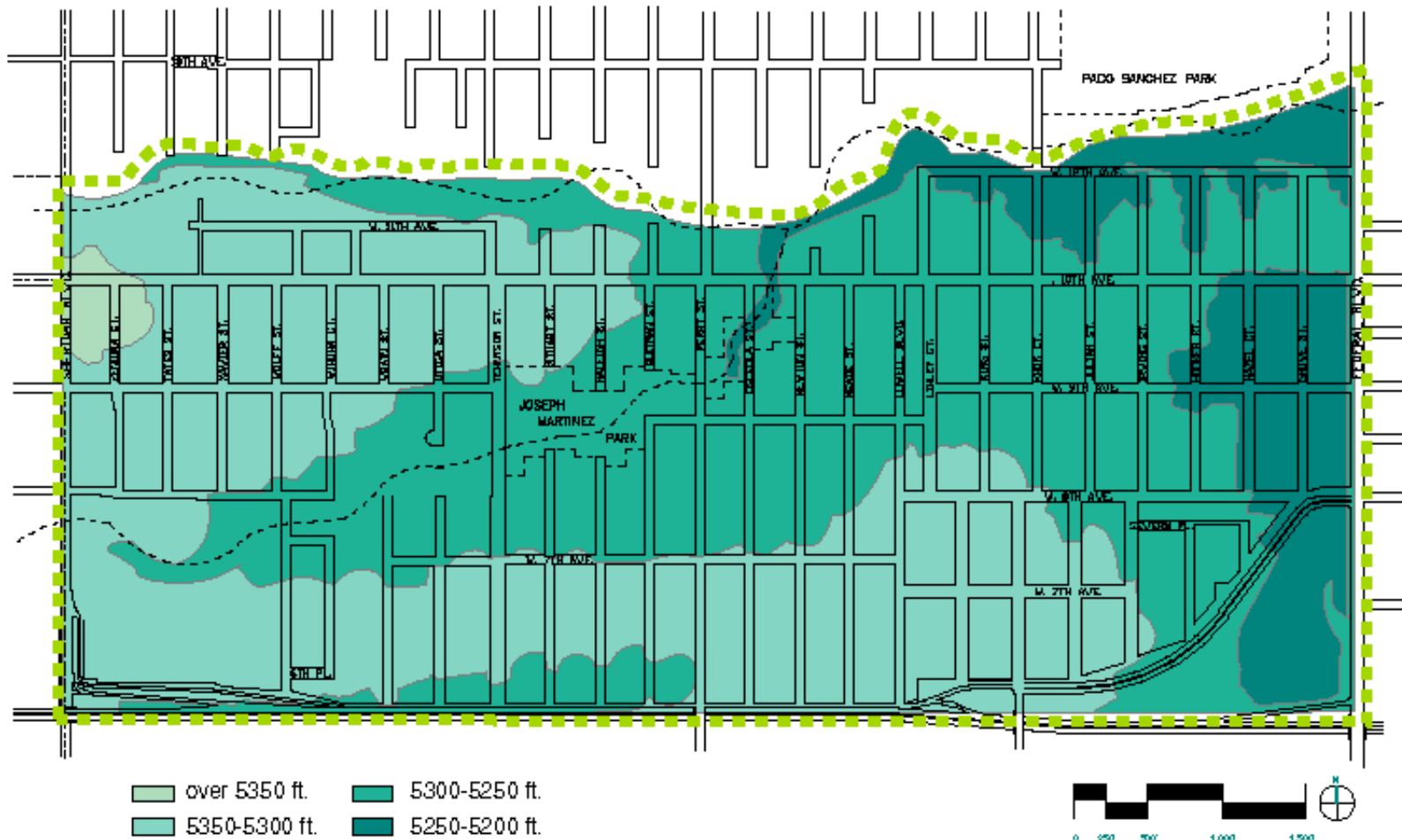
**implementation program N-6c-1:** Use city “police powers.”

- ▶ Work with the City Council office, the Zoning Administration, and the Police Department to have the Zoning Administration remove inoperable, dismantled, or wrecked vehicles from any public or private property or to have vehicles impounded by the Police Department if they have been abandoned for more than 72 hours and either create an obstruction to traffic or present a public nuisance to health and safety.

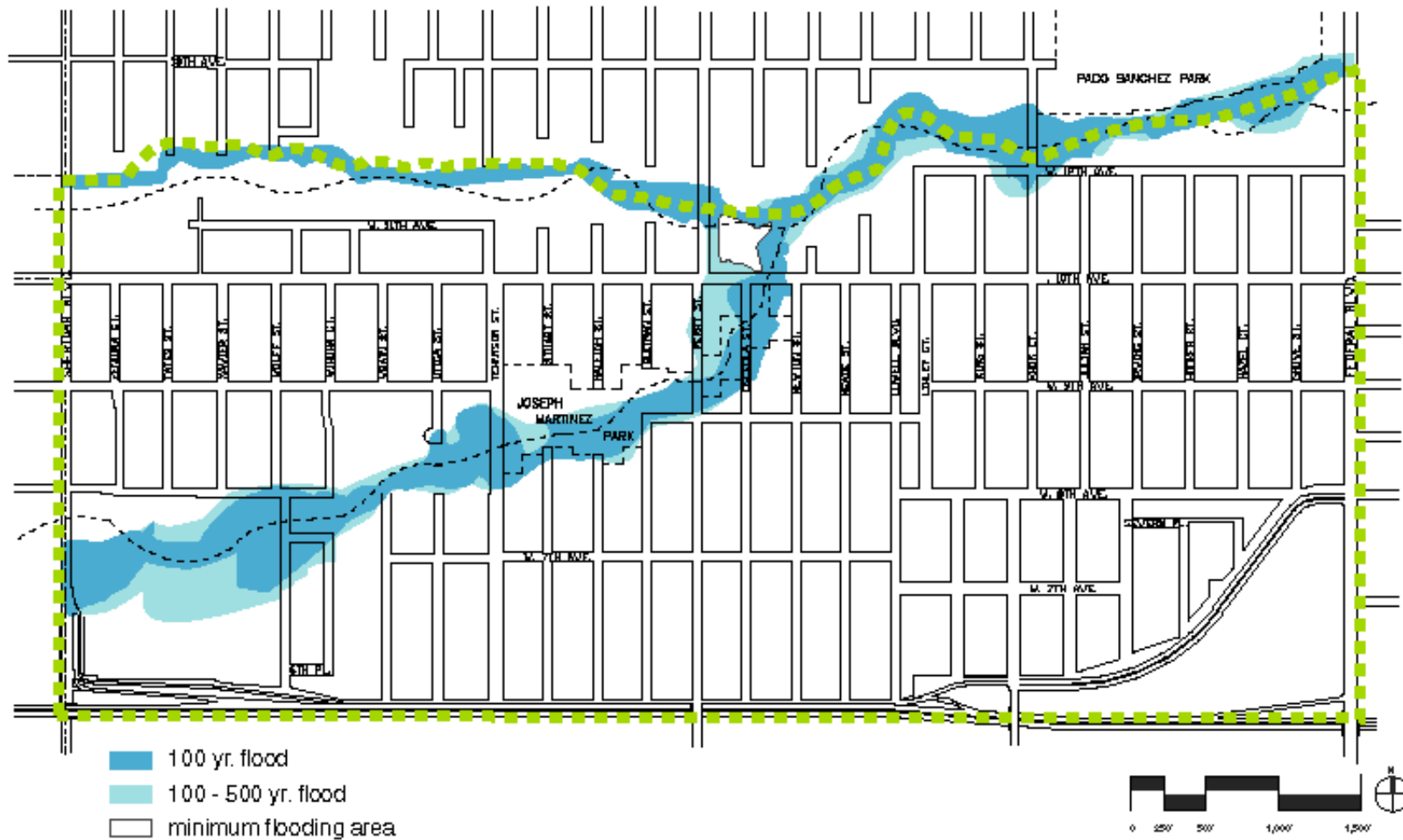
**strategy N-6d:** Support the leash law.

**implementation program N-6d-1:** Assist city agencies in the enforcement of city codes.

- ▶ The Manager of Health and Hospitals has the authority to impound any animal, which is loose or does not have license tags. According to the City’s Animal Control Code, protection against dogs is also regulated for persistent barking, damaging property, or vicious behavior. Contact the City Council office for the proper procedure to follow for enforcing either of these authorities.



Elevation Map



Flood Hazard Boundary Map



Geologic Hazards Map

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION

Denver crime statistics place Villa Park 27th among the 68 neighborhoods in the City, with a rate of 89.8 crimes per 1000 residents. The highest-ranked neighborhood had a rate of 277.4 crimes per 1000 residents, and the lowest-ranked neighborhood had a rate of 20.9 crimes per 1000 residents. The largest number of offenses committed in the Villa Park neighborhood were burglaries, with the highest crime areas near Federal and Sheridan Boulevard.

### vision

- ▶ Plant new trees and improve tree maintenance.
- ▶ Upgrade the neighborhood infrastructure.
- ▶ Enhance neighborhood safety.

**goal PS-8:** Enhance neighborhood safety and security.

**strategy PS-8a:** Expand the neighborhood watch program.

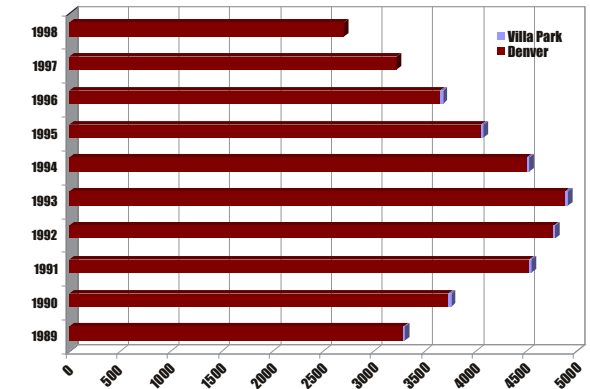
**implementation program PS-8a-1:** Encourage additional participation in neighborhood watch.

- ▶ Each block currently involved in the neighborhood watch program should encourage surrounding blocks to join in order to increase the protection in the area. The neighborhood organization should promote the program through its neighborhood newsletter and in its meetings.

**strategy PS-8b:** Improve lighting.

**implementation program PS-8b-1:** Improve lighting in Martinez Park, around Lakewood / Dry Gulch, and in other inadequately lighted areas.

1998 Crimes vs Person





- ▶ Lighting in Martinez Park and along the bicycle trail is the responsibility of the Parks Department. Working with the City Council office, the neighborhood organizations should send a written request to the Manager of the Parks Department. Typically, interior park lighting must be funded as a capital improvement item, a highly competitive and potentially lengthy process.
- ▶ Lighting along streets in the neighborhood is the responsibility of the Transportation Division of the Department of Public Works. Every intersection is required to have a 30-foot high-pressure sodium streetlight, but mid-block street or alley lights must be requested by 75 percent of the residents in a block. A standard form and explanation of the procedure is included in the Appendix. If a block is over 600 feet long, the Department will consider more than one mid-block light. Once the Street Lighting Section receives the request, it is sent to the Public Service Company for installation. There is no cost to residents for installation or maintenance.
- ▶ Because Lakewood / Dry Gulch is a 100-year flood plain, no lights would be allowed in the gulch itself, but could be installed outside the flood plain boundaries. The master plan for Lakewood/Dry Gulch shows lighting in the interior of the park and includes recommendations for street lighting. Ownership of land within the gulch responsibility for lighting is shared by several public entities: the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, the Parks Department, and Public Service Company. The neighborhood association should work with all three entities as they plan improvements to the gulch.

**strategy PS-8c:** Enhance communication with the police.

**implementation program PS-8c-1:** Include District One officers in neighborhood meetings.

- ▶ Invite District One police officers to regularly scheduled meetings, and provide regular opportunities for police officers to address the neighborhood. Request that representatives of the neighborhood organization be allowed to ride with police officers on a patrol shift to increase their understanding of neighborhood police issues.

**goal PS-2:** Plant new trees and improve tree maintenance.

**strategy PS-2A:** Start a tree planting program.



**implementation program PS-2A-1:** Seek funding for a tree planting program.

- ▶ Set annual priorities for tree planting projects.
- ▶ Check with the Denver Parks and Recreation Department, Denver Urban Forests, The Park People, and all other potential sources for the availability of programs for acquiring trees, application schedules for those programs, the criteria for qualifying for those programs, and the criteria which will be used by the funding entity to evaluate whether or not the project should be funded.
- ▶ Work with property owners and tenants to put together applications for funding programs, to develop community support for those applications, and to follow through the application, evaluation, funding, and planting process.

**strategy PS-2B:** Maintain existing trees.

**implementation program PS-2B-1:** Educate people on tree maintenance.

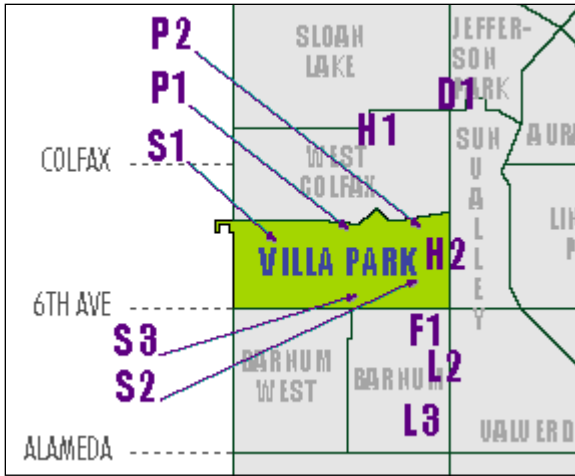
- ▶ Ask the City Forester to help provide information on tree maintenance (e.g. when and how to trim).
- ▶ Distribute the information provided by the City Forester throughout the neighborhood.

**implementation program PS-2B-2:** Seek funding for tree maintenance.

- ▶ Because City funding for tree maintenance on private property and in the public right-of-way is extremely limited, lobby to increase that funding.
- ▶ Seek alternative sources of funding for tree maintenance.
- ▶ Apply for any sources of funding which might be available to the neighborhood for tree maintenance.

**implementation program PS-2B-3:** Support code enforcement for existing trees and other vegetation.

- ▶ If education efforts have failed, report trees in need of maintenance to the City Forester, who can force property owners to trim their trees or to mow their weeds.



- |                     |                         |                           |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| P1 Marinez Park     | S1 Cowell Elementary    | H2 Westside Health Clinic |
| P2 Sanchez Park     | S2 Eagleton Elementary  | D1 Police Department      |
| L2 Hadley Library   | S3 Presentation School  | F1 Fire Station 20        |
| L3 Westwood Library | H1 St. Anthony Hospital |                           |

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### Hospitals and Medical Facilities

Saint Anthony’s Hospital, located at 4231 West 16th Avenue, is the nearest full-service hospital. The Westside Health Center, a public health center that services the Villa Park neighborhood, is located at 1100 Federal Boulevard. Its services include an adult clinic, maternity and family planning, pediatrics, teen clinic, social service aid, laboratory, X-rays, dental clinic, pharmacy, and food supplement programs.

### Police and Fire Stations

The District 1 Police Station is located at 2195 Decatur Street. It serves Precincts, 133 and 134, both of which are located in Villa Park. The fire station for the neighborhood is Station 20, located at 501 Knox Court.

### Libraries

There are no public libraries in the neighborhood, although there are two branch libraries nearby. The Hadley Branch at 1890 Grove and the Ross-Barnum Branch at 3570 West 1st Avenue are both within the general area surrounding the neighborhood.

### Parks

The City parks in the neighborhood are Martinez Park and Sanchez Park. Martinez Park is primarily open space, with a few picnic tables, and Sanchez Park has a baseball diamond. Lakewood / Dry Gulch provides a unique opportunity for the development of open space, trails, and parks. The General Obligation Bond Issue passed by Denver voters in 1989 includes funds for developing a master plan for the improvement of Lakewood / Dry Gulch as a public open space and park facility and for the first phase of construction of the planned improvements. Additional funding will be needed for later phases of the planned improvements. The concept for development of the gulches is that they will provide open space and trails connecting into a larger metropolitan system, connecting into the Platte River Greenway and, eventually, through Lakewood into the foothills. Additionally, at selected locations along the gulches, small park and recreation sites will be developed.



## Schools

There are three schools in Villa Park, two public elementary schools and one private school. Eagleton Elementary, at 9th and Hooker, and Cowell Elementary, at 10th and Utica, are public schools. Presentation School, at 7th and Julian, is a private, parochial school. These schools have all experienced growth in the past few years because of the increasing number of families with young children in the neighborhood.

## Senior Centers

The GAO has received a grant from the City to build a senior center adjacent to its Maes Apartment building to help accommodate the needs of the rapidly increasing number of senior citizens living in the Villa Park neighborhood.

**goal PS-9:** Upgrade the neighborhood infrastructure.

**strategy PS-9a:** Upgrade street drainage.

**implementation program PS-9a-1:** Identify and request necessary drainage improvements.

- ▶ The Wastewater Division of the Department of Public Works is responsible for identifying drainage problems and for developing and implementing master plans for storm drainage improvements throughout the City. The Parks Department is responsible for maintaining parks only to the point where they abut designated flood channels. The Urban Drainage and Flood Control District maintain the flood channel itself. The neighborhood organization should work with the City Council office to identify drainage problems, contact the appropriate agency, and seek funding for improvements.

Currently, between three and five million dollars in drainage improvements are planned for Lakewood / Dry Gulch, including numerous major and minor projects. Initially, however, improvements will be made only to the channel, costing approximately one million dollars. Because of the topography of Villa Park, many of its streets drain into Lakewood / Dry Gulch, aggravating drainage and erosion problems. Give priority to rectifying these drainage problems, including the 12th~and Knox Court drainage project.



**strategy PS-9b:** Improve street pothole repair.

**implementation program PS-9b-1:** Identify and report potholes.

- ▶ The Department of Public Works is responsible for repairing potholes. Residents may write requests for repair to the Pothole Service of the Department of Public Works and fill-out a log sheet which describes the location of potholes. Upon receipt of the log sheet, the District Foreman will inspect the area and initiate pothole repairs.

**strategy PS-9c:** Establish a program of low-cost and no-cost alley improvements.

**implementation program PS-9c-1:** Initiate alley improvements.

- ▶ While numerous alleys in Villa Park need improvement, emphasis should initially be placed on those unpaved and poorly paved alleys which drain into Lakewood / Dry Gulch, aggravating drainage and erosion problems. Alleys should be improved with concrete paving. Alley paving requires the formation of a local improvement district, which will provide a mechanism for assessing property taxes to pay for the paving. Through the Board of Equalization, a property owner may request a reduction in the assessment. The neighborhood organization should work through the City Council office to identify alleys in need of repair and to initiate requests for funding assistance.

**strategy PS-9d:** Provide uniform street, curb, and gutter improvements.

**implementation program PS-9d-1:** Initiate street, curb, and gutter improvements.

- ▶ The Transportation Division of the City Engineer's Office is responsible for designing new streets, curbs, and gutters and improvements to existing ones. The Street Maintenance Division is responsible for maintaining streets, curbs, and gutters. The neighborhood organization should work through the City Council District office to identify both locations for streets, curbs, and gutters in need of repair and locations which currently do not have these facilities but need them, and then to initiate work requests. Similar to alley paving — street, curb, and gutter improvements require the formation of an improvement district through the Transportation Division. Streets currently requiring street, curb, and gutter improvements include:

- 1200 block of Grove
- 12th Avenue between Lowell and Newton
- 1000 block of Winona Court
- 1200 block of Knox Court at Lakewood / Dry Gulch

**strategy PS-9e:** Provide uniform sidewalk improvements.

**implementation program PS-9e-1:** Initiate sidewalk improvements.

- ▶ While sidewalk construction, repair, and replacement is the responsibility of the adjoining property owner, not the City, the Transportation Division of the City Engineer's Office is responsible for designing both new sidewalks and improvements to existing sidewalks. Sidewalk improvements in a large area may be financed through the formation of an improvement district. To be consistent with Citywide mobility plans and to provide accessibility for the physically disabled, five-foot minimum width sidewalks must be provided where they are non-existent and, where they are existing, are at a substandard width. Intersection curb ramps should be included to provide improved accessibility for the elderly and disabled populations. The neighborhood organization should work through the City Council District office to identify sidewalks in need of repair and those areas, which have no sidewalks, and to initiate work requests. Locations currently requiring new sidewalks include:

- 600 block of Tennyson — Perry
- 600, 700, and 800 blocks of Perry — Lowell
- 800, 900, and 1000 blocks of Grove
- 800 block of Linley Court
- 900 and 1000 blocks of Irving

**goal CF-10:** Create neighborhood recreation opportunities.

**strategy CF-10a:** Use existing public facilities.

**implementation program CF-10a-1:** Initiate discussion of joint-use of existing facilities.

- ▶ While the two elementary schools and the churches in Villa Park offer some recreation opportunities, these are limited and are not widely known. At a minimum, the neighborhood organization should inventory existing recreation programs and publicize those through its newsletter. Beyond that, the organization should initiate discussion with the schools and churches regarding the potential expansion of the existing programs.

**strategy CF-10b:** Utilize recreation centers in other neighborhoods.

**implementation program CF-10b-1:** Increase awareness of existing recreation facilities.

- ▶ Barnum Park has senior and child/adult activities, an outdoor pool, lighted tennis courts, and playground and picnic facilities. Rude Park has softball fields, playground and picnic areas, and an indoor pool. Mulroy Community center at 13th and King is also available for public use. Use the neighborhood organization newsletter to help publicize these facilities, their locations, programs, and hours.

**implementation program CF-10b-2:** Improve access to recreation facilities.

- ▶ While Barnum Park, Rude Park, and Mulroy Community Center all have RTD service, they would benefit from improved pedestrian and bicycle access. Work with the State and the Parks Department to provide better pedestrian and bicycle access.

**goal CF-11:** Develop Lakewood / Dry Gulch as a neighborhood asset.

**implementation program CF-11-a:** Participate in planning and maintaining Lakewood / Dry Gulch.

- ▶ The 1989 General Obligation Bond Issue includes funding for developing a master plan and for the first phase of improvements to Lakewood / Dry Gulch and for related bicycle path improvements. The neighborhood organization should take an active role in planning both these and ongoing improvements to the gulch. Similarly, it should lobby for and participate in the ongoing maintenance of the gulch as it is improved. Specific issues, which should be addressed, include:
  - Establishing a program to prevent dumping
  - Establishing an ongoing clean-up program
  - Upgrading lighting
  - Creating more pedestrian gulch crossings
  - Preventing erosion and mud problems.
  - Acquiring additional funding.
  - Providing for ongoing maintenance.