

# SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



AUGUST 1992





# SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Wastewater Management Division  
Zoning Administration  
Community Development Agency  
Denver Police Department  
Mayor's Office of Economic Development  
Parks and Recreation  
Fire Department  
Public Works — Street Maintenance

### ***Other Acknowledgments***

Special thanks to Councilman William Scheitler and Councilwoman Deborah Ortega for their support and assistance during the development of this plan. Also, many other residents and business owners have participated in steering committee meetings to help identify issues and offer solutions. They are too numerous to mention but their participation was greatly appreciated. We are also grateful to the Casa Loma Senior Center for allowing us to use their community room without charge.

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# PLANNING PROCESS





**Sculpture at Chaffee Park**

## USE OF THE PLAN

A neighborhood plan is an advisory document for initiating, directing and managing change. It demonstrates thoughtful work between the neighborhood and city in terms of recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of a neighborhood, the goals of the community, and the development of policies and strategies to address them. The neighborhood plan guides residents to initiate rather than react to change. This plan is the result of collaboration between residents, property owners, merchants and the City administration. It provides action strategies directed at both the City and its citizens.

Each section of this document provides policy recommendations. At the end of the section is a list of the parties responsible for following through or participating in the recommended actions. The top priorities were defined by the Steering Committee. They were the ones that were identified as being the most pressing of all the neighborhood concerns.

### **The Role of the Neighborhood Planner in Implementing the Plan**

The neighborhood planner will continue to work with the neighborhood through the neighborhood organizations to implement the plan. The planner can help coordinate efforts between city agencies and the residents. The planner will also work to get funding for big projects, and assist residents with applications for loans and grants that are available through city programs. It is best to perceive the neighborhood planner as a project manager who will oversee and coordinate projects on an ongoing basis.

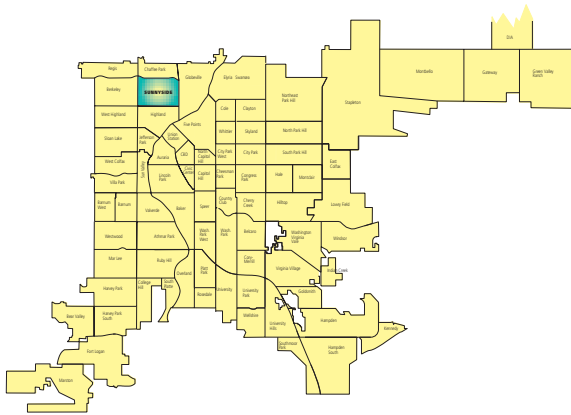
## HISTORY

The previous neighborhood plan for Sunnyside was written in 1976. At that time the neighborhood was considered “blighted” and was a Community Development priority neighborhood. When that plan was written, Sunnyside contained deteriorated housing, changing ethnic populations and stagnating business areas.

Since that time, two neighborhood groups have been active in implementing the Sunnyside plan. Jefferson-Highland-Sunnyside, and the Sunnyside Twilighters were the primary organizations that pursued neighborhood issues and improvements. Several Community Development Block Grants have been awarded to plant trees, sod, replace sidewalks, and make other neighborhood improvements.

Conditions in Denver changed rapidly and dramatically in the late 70’s and early 80’s. Early in the decade Denver went through a period of economic growth. As Denver grew, the demand for housing increased and the real estate market was strong. Substantial federal money was available to do work in inner city neighborhoods like Sunnyside. In the late 80’s Denver’s economy hit a low, federal funds began to dry up, and neighborhoods like Sunnyside felt the impacts. An outmigration of families created vacant homes, and many businesses were forced to close. The poor economy made people reluctant to invest in improvements to their home or business. Vacant homes and businesses began appearing at an alarming rate, many left in a state of disrepair that adversely affected the rest of the neighborhood. Sunnyside experienced the same economic rise and decline felt throughout the Denver metro area.

As a result many of the same conditions that precipitated the need for a plan in 1976, are once again evident in Sunnyside. The age distribution of the population has become unbalanced with a large number of elderly and youth, and there is a large number of low income families. Today, there is a problem with deteriorating residential and commercial areas, graffiti, and inadequate infrastructure. The reason for this document is two-fold: to repair and stabilize the damage from Denver’s slump, and also to create a blueprint for development as we recover and grow once again.



**Neighborhood location**

### **Current**

In 1987 as Sunnyside began to suffer from decline and neglect, Councilwoman Deborah Ortega asked the Planning Office to assist the Sunnyside neighborhood. A group of graduate students in the Planning Program at University of Colorado at Denver, studied the neighborhood for a class project. They chose to concentrate on the eastern half of the neighborhood where residential and industrial uses abut and co-mingle. That part of the neighborhood seemed to be the most “fragile.” The students’ report documented problems of decline and a neighborhood in transition. It was evident that a plan to stabilize and upgrade the neighborhood was necessary.

Three years later, the Planning Office committed the resources and staff time to update the 1976 Sunnyside Neighborhood Plan. In January, 1991, a three day Charrette was held at the Quigg Newton Senior Center to kick off the planning process. Residents, business people, service providers and city staff, were invited to participate, to discuss neighborhood issues and concerns. A vision for the neighborhood was developed. From the Charrette, a 20 member Steering Committee made up of residents and business people was established to continue meeting and working on the neighborhood plan.

The purpose of the Steering Committee was to help in the development of the Neighborhood Plan. The group met about fifteen times to discuss each section of the plan, which was organized around issues that had been identified during the Charrette. The recommendations were given careful thought and finally prioritized. City staff from the various agencies came to give input and strategize on solutions to neighborhood problems. The Steering Committee held a public meeting to present the draft neighborhood plan to the full community. Comments were recorded, and the plan was modified as needed.



## Neighborhood Map

The logo for Sunnyside United Neighbors, Inc. (SUNI) features a stylized grey 'S' on the left. To its right, the text 'SUNNYSIDE UNITED NEIGHBORS, INC.' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, the acronym '(SUNI)' is written in a smaller, bold, black, sans-serif font.

## **SUNNYSIDE UNITED NEIGHBORS, INC. (SUNI)**

Early on in the Charrette process, the need for a new neighborhood group was discussed. The previous groups had begun to dwindle and involvement in neighborhood issues was lacking. Several people expressed the need to form a new group to work on the implementation of the neighborhood plan and pull the neighborhood together. SUNI registered with the City as an official neighborhood group in July of 1991. Since that time their membership has grown to approximately 250 paid members, a newsletter is produced on a regular basis, and the group has worked on several issues. They have worked to oppose a cabaret license, formed a committee to work with bar owners on 44th Avenue, worked with the City to keep the Sunnyside Market open, instigated neighborhood clean-ups, and many other issues that have improved the quality of the Sunnyside neighborhood.



**VISION**





**New public art at Conflict Center  
on Tejon Street**

Residents of Sunnyside envision a neighborhood that is safe, beautiful and clean. They see a neighborhood that is inviting for families, with good schools and nice parks. They would like to see the commercial areas cleaned up and improved, bustling with activity, and the industrial area thrive to create new jobs.

The vision for Sunnyside includes neat and tidy homes. Streets are tree lined and there is no evidence of trash or graffiti. The parks are clean and safe, and children can walk safely to them. There is no problem with gangs, because kids have sufficient recreational activities and their energies are directed in a positive way.

There is a desire among residents to promote the diversity of their neighborhood. Houses are a mix of architectural styles - old and new, big and small, brick and frame. People of many different cultures and several generations live together harmoniously. There is a vision among the residents that, someday, the rest of Denver will realize how positive that diversity can be. Sunnyside and northwest Denver will be valued for its diversity which gives it character and charm.

The vision for Sunnyside is one of a close knit community where neighbors help neighbors with an active neighborhood association where people volunteer their time and resources to help improve the neighborhood. Members are informed and active in local issues, they help each other out because they know and care for each other, and they are committed to their community.

Someday there will be a revitalization of Denver neighborhoods. People will realize that living close to downtown means being that much closer to civic and cultural affairs. Urban neighborhoods will prosper when that happens, and Sunnyside will be ready to meet those new residents with pride.



**NEIGHBORHOOD  
DESCRIPTION**





**Street car tracks on Tejon Street**



**La Casa-Quigg Newton Family Health Center**

Sunnyside is located in the northwest corner of Denver. It contains 625 total acres with just over 17 acres remaining undeveloped as of 1988. The 1990 census reports just over 4,000 dwelling units and approximately 10,300 residents within Sunnyside. The neighborhood boundaries are Federal Boulevard on the west, Inca Street on the east, I-70 on the north and West 38th Avenue on the south.

This neighborhood has developed over several years beginning at the turn of the century. There is very little developable land remaining. Primary land uses are low density residential and industrial, with small amounts of low intensity commercial and office uses.

### **Local History**

Sunnyside became part of the city through a series of annexations in 1883, 1889 and 1902. In the late 1800's the area west of Pecos Street was occupied by small truck farms, orchards and undeveloped land. The northeast corner of Sunnyside was at one time part of the town of Argo, a "company town" comprised of smelter and railroad workers. Most of Sunnyside was open fields and prairie land until the early 1900's, although there were a few subdivisions that were suburbs to North Denver and Highlands in the late 1800's.

### **Community Features And Facilities**

Sunnyside is predominantly a residential community with small pockets of neighborhood serving businesses. Commercial and office uses are concentrated primarily along the edges of the neighborhood, on Federal Boulevard and West 38th Avenue. Tejon, Pecos, and West 44th Avenue are a mix of small scale commercial and residential uses. The eastern edge is an industrial area, bordered by housing to the west and the railroads to the east.

There are four parks in the neighborhood. Chaffee Park, La Raza/Columbus Park, Ciancio Park, and an unnamed park next to Remington School. Just outside the neighborhood to the west, are Highland Park, a small neighborhood park along Federal Boulevard, and Rocky Mountain Park, a large regional park located at 44th Avenue and Federal Boulevard.

Aztlan Community Center is located at 44th and Navajo, and the Quigg Newton Senior Center is located across the street. There are three elementary schools and one middle school. Fire Station #7 is located at 38th and Vallejo.

## Population And Demographics

The population of Sunnyside has not shown much fluctuation since 1970. At that time there were slightly more than 11,000 people, and in 1980 the population was 10,815. The 1990 Census documents a population of 10,324 persons. The predominant ethnicity is Hispanic and Anglo.

## Physical Characteristics Residential

Examination of a building footprint map shows a neighborhood that was developed over many years in an incremental fashion. Streets don't quite match up leaving "dog-leg" intersections. Some blocks are square and others are horizontal. The result is a development pattern that symbolizes a patchwork of history. The different architectural styles and building periods add to the character and uniqueness of the neighborhood.

There are distinct districts within the neighborhood. There is a predominance of large brick bungalows that are so prevalent in Denver. The area north of 46th Avenue is the most recently developed, and the homes are small wood frame houses, typical of the post WWII housing style. Some of the streets lack sidewalks, and others have the newer style of attached sidewalks.

The oldest parts of Sunnyside tend to be the areas closest to 38th Avenue and east of Zuni. The eastern edge of Sunnyside contains small, closely built Victorian homes, which probably housed the early smelter and railroad workers. The big Denver Square houses with carriage lots are scattered throughout the neighborhood, but tend to be concentrated between Wyandot and Tejon Streets, south of 42nd Avenue.

There is a relatively high degree of home ownership in Sunnyside.

In 1990 owner occupancy was estimated to be 54%, slightly higher than the overall city average. Even the non-conforming housing in the industrial area is predominantly owner occupied. The high rate of owner occupancy is somewhat surprising, since the neighborhood is zoned predominantly R2 which allows for higher density housing, ie. duplexes and triplexes. The average age of the housing stock throughout Sunnyside is 70 years.

There is some public housing in Sunnyside. Denver Housing Authority built Quigg Newton Homes, a public housing project, in the 1950's. It is comprised of 398 units and has a population of around 1200 people. Casa Loma, a senior housing facility was built recently, and houses 95 seniors.



**Post World War II housing**



**Bungalow**



**Recently renovated Quigg Newton homes**



**Sausage factory in industrial area**



**House in industrial area**



**Inca Street rail corridor**

### **Other Land Uses**

The far eastern edge of the neighborhood is zoned for industrial uses. This is an old area that developed from the smelters and railyards. Proximity to the freeways helped to continue the growth and viability of the area as the smelters and older industries moved out. Most of the uses are warehouse and distribution.

The commercial areas are concentrated along main arterials. The zoning allows pockets of small neighborhood serving businesses which are important to residents. Some of the storefronts are quite old and exist from the old trolley lines. Most of the commercial growth will occur along 38th Avenue, and the challenge will be to find a way to revitalize the businesses along the interior neighborhood streets where auto traffic is not as heavy.



**LAND USE AND  
ZONING**



Sunnyside developed long before zoning regulations existed. The different lifestyles and values of an earlier generation shaped older neighborhoods like Sunnyside. Long ago, when cars were scarce, people liked the convenience of having a corner grocery store, or a cafe down the street. Workers lived close to their jobs in the nearby factories and smelters around the railyards.

Houses were interspersed among the businesses, and many proprietors lived in apartments above or behind their shops.

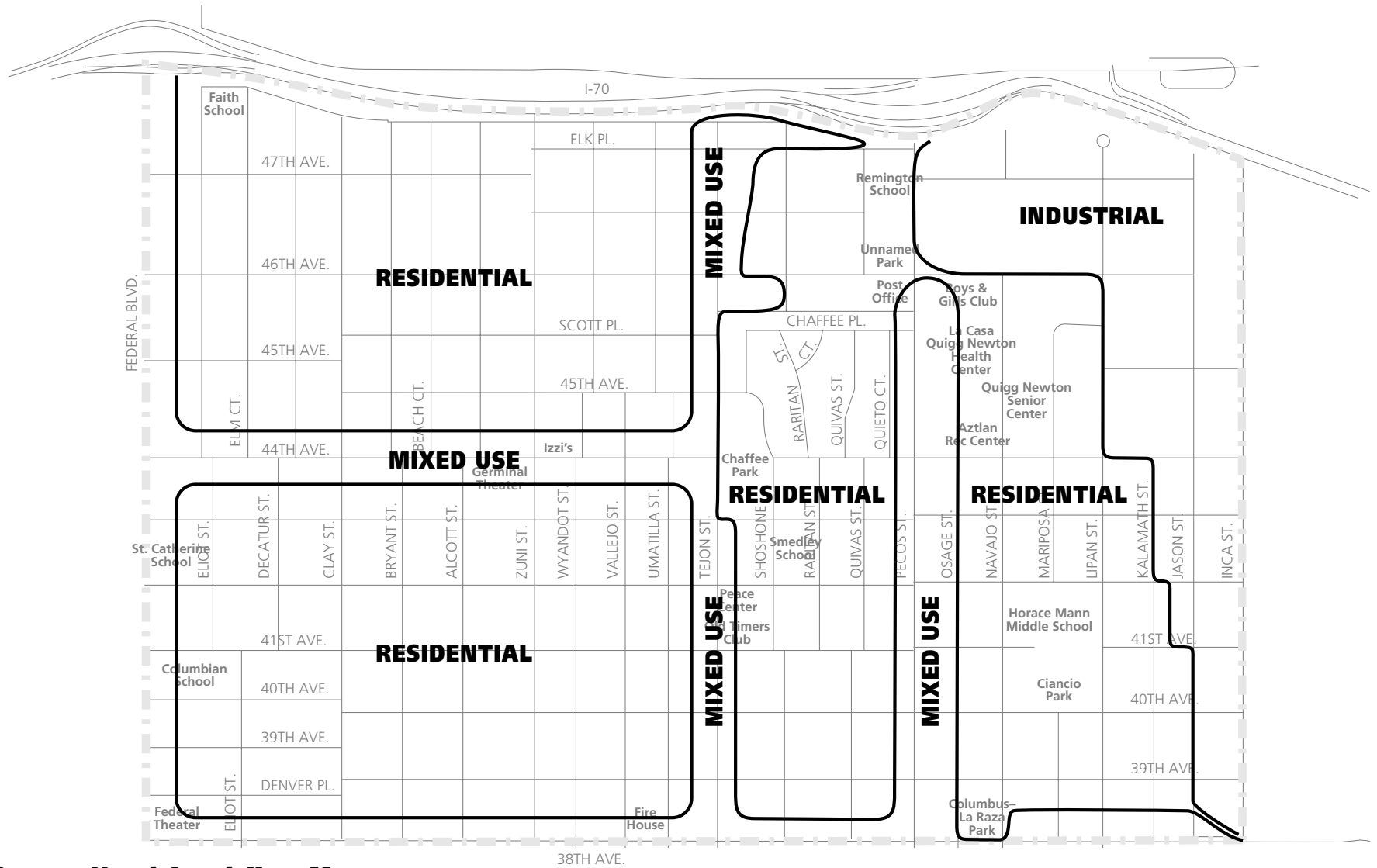
In 1953, when Denver passed its first zoning ordinance, existing land uses were granted the appropriate zone classification for the current use. As a result, there are scattered industrial and commercial uses in predominantly residential areas, homes scattered throughout the industrial zones, and residential zones abutting industrial and commercial zones. The situation, while sometimes desirable, has also caused conflicts between the homeowners and business people.

It is important however, to distinguish whether or not a problem exists because of conflicting land uses, or some other reason.

The way a business is managed and maintained will determine to a large extent whether or not problems will occur. Proper attention to screening, buffering, parking and other site improvements can help minimize conflicts. Most Sunnyside residents appreciate having small shops and offices nearby and don't mind industry sharing a part of their neighborhood since they add to the diversity and character that are valued elements in Sunnyside.

The zoning code was written to minimize the impacts of conflicting land uses. Generally, when a commercial or industrial zone abuts a residential zone, the zoning requires small, neighborhood serving businesses or light industries to serve as a buffer or "transition" zone.

There are both R-1 and R-2 zones in Sunnyside. The predominant zone is R-2, the ratio being approximately 1:3 between R-1 and R-2 acreage. The zoning tends to be incompatible with the land use since there are relatively few multi-family units and a predominance of single family dwellings. There is very little undeveloped land in the residential areas, so the potential for new housing development is very small.



**Generalized Land Use Map**



**Housing converted to industrial storage yard**

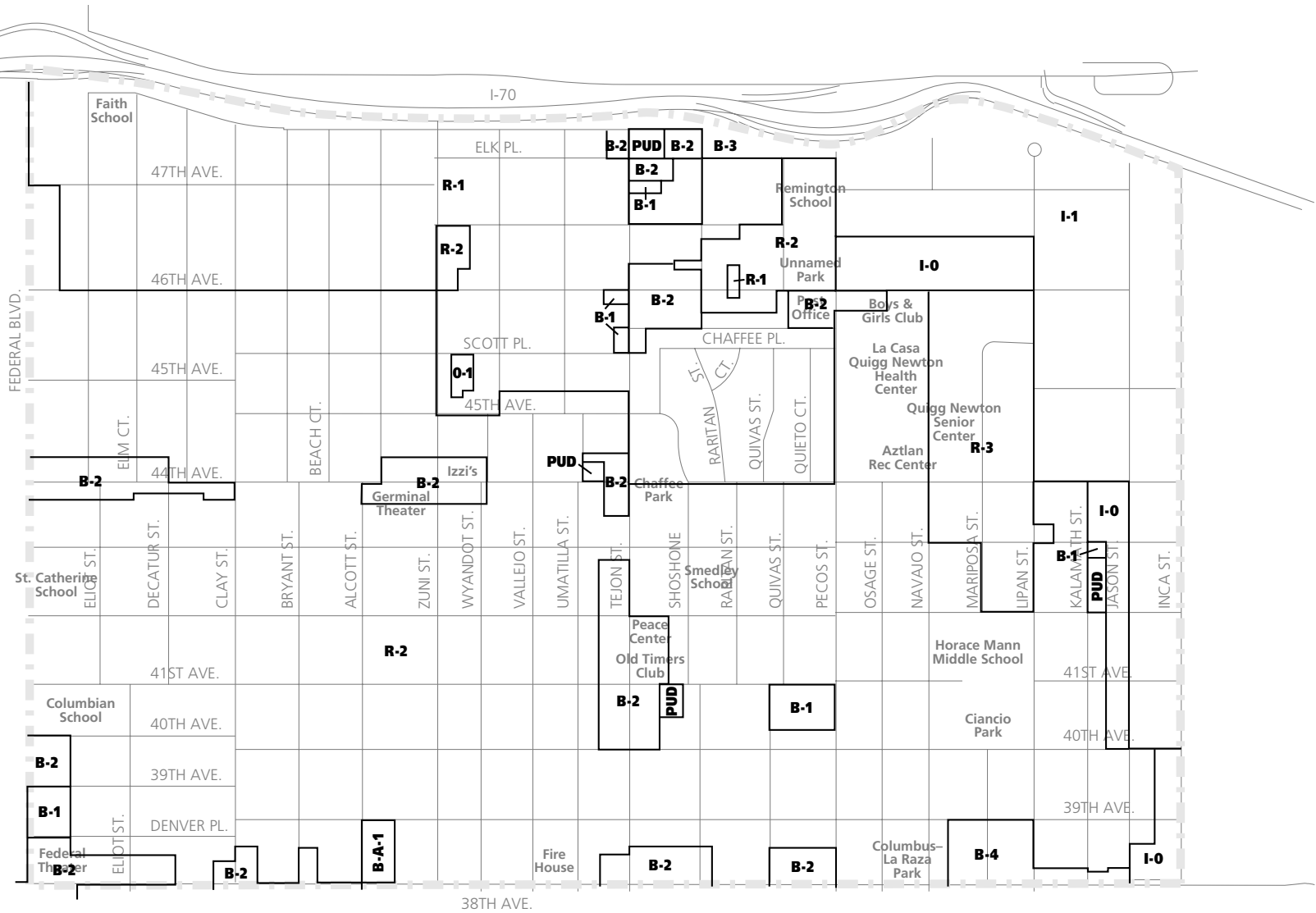
There are a few isolated problems with some residents operating what appears to be junk or storage yards at their home. Some people like living near or in industrial areas because they can supplement their income with industrial type home occupations. The biggest problem is with people who store junk or inoperable cars on their property. The division between an industrial area and a neighborhood becomes blurred, and people no longer feel like they live in an attractive area.

The far eastern section of the neighborhood is part of an industrial area that stretches along the Platte River and is dispersed around the railyards of the Central Platte Valley. This area is desirable for industry because of the access to both I-70 and I-25, and also because of the proximity to rail facilities. Most of the businesses tend to be warehouse and distribution facilities. There are very few manufacturing or fabricating industries. There remain a few vacant parcels of land that are developable. The industrial area also has a great deal of scattered non-conforming housing, which could eventually be redeveloped into industrial uses. In 1986, there were approximately 97 developed acres of industrial land, the majority being zoned I-1.

Most of the industrial areas in Sunnyside that abut residential areas are zoned I-0, the least intense of Denver's three industrial zone categories. In the northeastern section of the neighborhood, there is a section of R-2 land that abuts an I-1 zone which allows moderate intensity industrial development. The two zones are separated by Pecos Street which is four lanes wide at that point, thereby serving as a fairly effective buffer. Quigg Newton Homes on the other hand, abuts an I-1 zone with only a two lane street serving as a buffer, which is inadequate. Any future redevelopment in that area should address this problem. Until that time, the two areas can be buffered with plant materials and other screening devices. In the long term, a physical separation is desirable.

In January of 1991, Denver adopted a new industrial zoning ordinance. The new ordinance is much more protective of the environment and public health. There are some requirements that will apply to existing businesses. For instance, junkyards within 500 feet of a residential zone must be relocated within five years, and expanding businesses may be required to install landscaping or make other site improvements. Businesses within the industrial zones in Sunnyside should be reviewed to see which ones will be affected and in what manner.

Most of the commercial areas in Sunnyside are zoned B-2. In 1986, there were approximately 25 acres of developed B-2 land, and 2 acres that were undeveloped. Since that time, there have been a few parcels rezoned to B-1, B-3, B-4 and PUD. The commercial areas exist primarily along 38th Avenue, with small



**Existing Zoning Map – 1992**



**Federal Theater**



**Commercial next to single-family homes**

pockets along 44th Avenue and Tejon Street. A few scattered sites exist along 46th Avenue, Pecos Street, and Federal Boulevard.

The majority of commercial and office uses are located in strip fashion along the arterial and collector streets within and bordering the neighborhood. Many of the businesses in the interior of the neighborhood are vacant and have been left in a state of disrepair. It is preferable that existing commercial structures be utilized before any new commercial construction occurs. The commercial development along Tejon Street is predominantly office and small business related, along with fairly strong housing. The businesses along 44th Avenue are a mixture of small offices, light industry and other neighborhood-oriented uses. Some of the neighborhood's largest and oldest houses are located on Tejon and could be nicely converted to small offices and shops if they are no longer marketable for residential uses.

Along 38th Avenue and Federal Boulevard, there are scattered residential and business uses that seem to be co-existing quite well. The West 38th Avenue strip is undergoing a healthy revitalization process under the direction of the City's Neighborhood Business Revitalization program and the West 38th Avenue Merchant's Association.

The current business and industrial zones are adequate for Sunnyside and should not be expanded at this time or in the near future. There are several vacant storefronts in commercial areas and some undeveloped land remaining in the industrial zones that are adequate for the current demand.

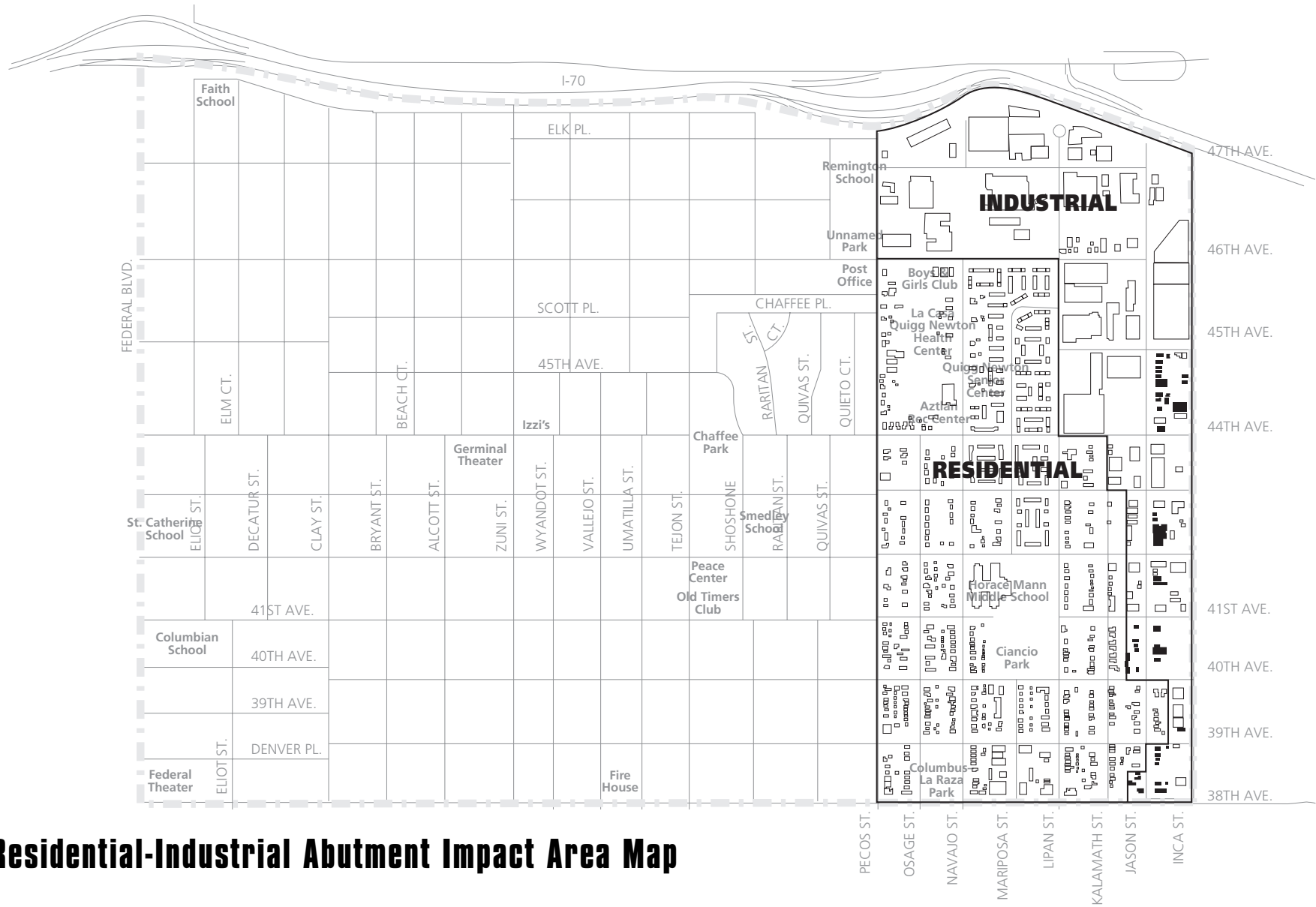
### **Goal**

Maintain and stabilize the residential character of sunnyside while encouraging small scale shops and offices, particularly in the commercial zones along 44th avenue and Tejon street, that will enhance and serve the neighborhood.

### **Policies**

#### ***Top Priorities***

- LUZ-1** Conduct a thorough study of the residential and industrial zone abutment to identify specific problems and develop possible solutions. Set up a task force comprised of owners of both property types.



**Residential-Industrial Abutment Impact Area Map**

**LUZ-2** Inform residents about zoning and code violations. Help residents to learn how to report and follow through on problem properties. Encourage the neighborhood group(s) to establish an ongoing process with city officials to tackle problem properties.

**LUZ-3** Utilize city programs to fund streetscape on residential blocks that abut commercial or industrial zones. Street trees can create a very effective screen between incompatible uses.

***Secondary or Ongoing Priorities***

**LUZ-4** Discourage further development of bars and taverns in areas that are primarily residential to prevent unruly behaviour, noise and other adverse impacts.

**LUZ-5** Maintain strict adherence to ordinances which require buffering, landscaping and screening between industrial and residential areas. The industrial zone code was re-written to help minimize the impacts on nearby residential and commercial properties. The neighborhood and city should carefully consider any application for a variance on these requirements.

**LUZ-6** Consider the possibility of rezoning R-2 zones to R-1 where the land use is predominantly single family. This can be a very time-consuming and controversial procedure. An R-1 zone eliminates the possibility of multi-family dwellings.

**LUZ-7** Do not allow heavy industrial development any closer than 500 feet from residential zones.

**LUZ-8** Do not allow commercial or industrial expansion into residential zones unless:

- physical deterioration exists
- the housing is non-conforming
- speculation and redevelopment have made it impossible to retain the existing character
- existing transportation corridors have diminished the demand for residential uses

**LUZ-9** Encourage the use of PUD zoning for redevelopment projects to allow greater flexibility in the type of use and design, and neighborhood input in the process.



**COMMUNITY  
FACILITIES**





**Chaffee Park**

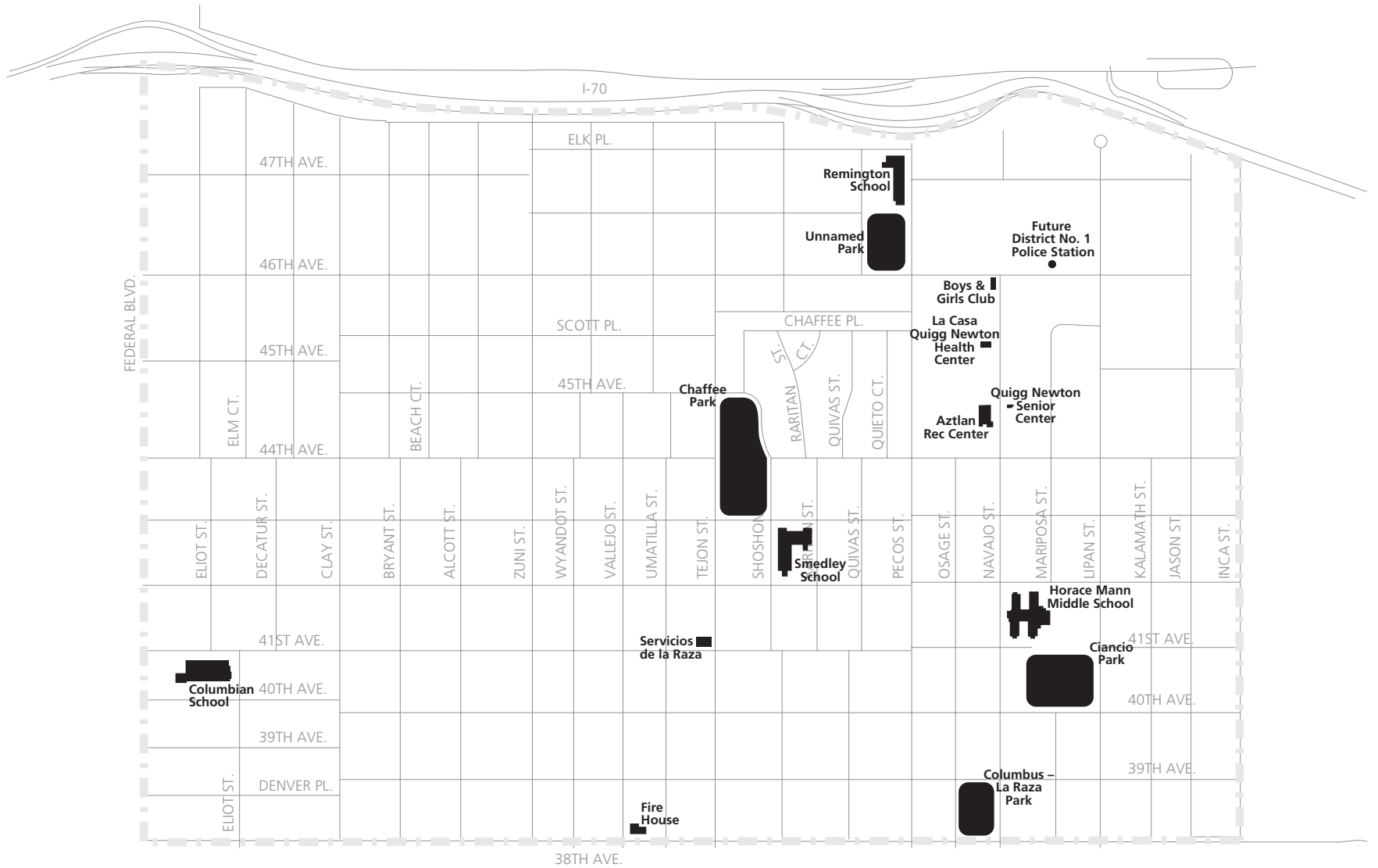
## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Sunnyside is a densely populated neighborhood that has very little open space left to provide relief from the built environment. There are four parks within Sunnyside, and two on the perimeter in the West Highland neighborhood. The parks that exist are well utilized and highly valued by Sunnyside residents. However, most of the parks are located east of Tejon, which leaves half of the neighborhood and about two-thirds of the population, without easy access to a park. Two of the parks that are on the perimeter of Sunnyside are located across Federal Boulevard which is a strong barrier to residents.

Residents feel that Sunnyside parks are not as well kept as those in other neighborhoods, and some are intimidated by the teenage youth who “hang-out” in the parks. Problems with vandalism have been reported as well as a lack of maintenance. The parks are lacking the amenities that exist in other parks such as trees, restroom facilities, basketball courts and playground equipment. There are no signs to identify the parks.

A recent study by the Denver Parks and Recreation Department, determined that Sunnyside ranks third highest among Denver neighborhoods for the number of youth ages 0-17, and 14th highest for seniors, aged 65 or older. The parks, recreation center and senior center are very important amenities to Sunnyside residents.

There appears to be a real need for expansion of existing facilities to meet the needs of the population. Only one of the parks has playground equipment. There are two parks that are used primarily as ballfields. The Azatlan Recreation Center is heavily used and cannot offer all the programs they would like to because of space limitations. A study should be done that inventories the existing recreational facilities and amenities in Sunnyside to determine if they are sufficient for the needs of the residents.



## Public Facilities Map



**Columbus-La Raza Park at 38th and Osage**

### **Columbus/La Raza Park**

This park is located on the north side of 38th at Osage and is therefore highly visible to traffic on along 38th Avenue. It is a three acre neighborhood park that was acquired by the city in 1906. The park contains a shelter, toilets, group facilities, playground and open fields.

This park underwent major improvements in 1987 as a recommendation of the Highland Plan. At that time the name was changed to recognize the multi-cultural and changing ethnic character. Columbus Park was a tribute to the Italian community, while Columbus/La Raza Park is acknowledgement of the Hispanic community who later moved to Sunnyside. Unfortunately, the name change was not fully supported by either ethnic group.

#### ***Recommendations***

- Work with Servicios de la Raza on issues of youth and gangs using the park as a “hangout,” graffiti and vandalism (Servicios, neighborhood groups)
- Provide additional lighting in and around the park to prevent illicit activity (Parks, Public Works)
- Continue the streetscape treatment including the street trees and lighting standards that are being incorporated along 38th Avenue along the edges and perimeter of the park to help integrate the park into the active street environment (PCDO, Parks)
- Use the park for neighborhood and community activities and festivals to help establish ownership and pride in the park (neighborhood groups)

### **Ciancio Park**

Ciancio Park is located at 41st Avenue and Lipan Street, adjacent to Horace Mann School. It is a five acre neighborhood park that was acquired by the city in 1948. It contains three baseball/softball fields and a junior football field. Except for a few picnic tables that the public can use, it primarily exists to provide recreation space for the school and city softball teams. The entire perimeter of the park is fenced which gives the impression of school ownership. There are no signs to indicate that it is a city park or that it's open to the public.

#### ***Recommendations***

- Reserve a section of the park for children and families. Provide play facilities and picnic tables (Parks)

- Adequately sign the park to show City ownership and indicate public use

### **Chaffee Park**

This park is located in the “heart” of the neighborhood, between 45th and 43rd Avenues, Tejon and Shoshone Streets. Use of the park is limited by the neighborhood because of the lack of facilities. It basically serves as a visual relief and open space rather than active use.

Chaffee Park is the terminus of 44th Avenue from its western origin in Golden. It is this interruption in the street and block pattern which gives it more significance as a park. Its central location also helps it to act as the “heart” of the neighborhood. Chaffee Park is lined almost entirely by single family homes which face onto it. It is “anchored” at one corner by Smedley Elementary School. There are two commercial sites on the north and south side of 44th at Tejon which frame the entry into the park. These sites are under-utilized and do nothing to benefit or enhance the park. The landscaping design does very little to reinforce the park’s role as a “terminus” and “heart” and seems scattered and unorganized.

### **Recommendations**

- Create a striking gateway entrance statement to the park at 44th Avenue and Tejon Street. This could include a special architectural element or building for recreational use and should include signage. Special design elements could be provided at the two commercial sites which flank 44th and/or at the far east side of the park or at the west side at the end of 44th. New additions should act as interesting visual amenities as one proceeds down 44th to the park. Provide a repetition of pattern in the streetscape design of 44th itself to enhance the overall “arrival experience” of the park (Parks, PCDO)
- Use a more formal landscaping treatment including street trees, pedestrian scale lighting and pedestrian amenities to unite 44th and Tejon and the park. Reinforce these three (the park, 44th and Tejon) as components in a unified parks and parkway system (Parks, PCDO)
- Provide minor gateway treatments at the pedestrian entrances to the park (Parks, PCDO)
- Provide playground equipment in addition to the swings that exist (Parks)
- Fix up and repair the existing basketball court (Parks)
- Provide amenities that will encourage greater public utilization and provide a real “heart” to the neighborhood (Parks)



**Looking west on 44th from Chaffee Park**



**Playground at Chaffee Park**



**"Unnamed Park" adjacent to Remington School and Post Office**



**Neighborhood Post Office**

**Unnamed Park**

There is an unnamed park located at 46th Avenue and Pecos Street adjacent to Remington School. It is a 2.3 acre neighborhood park that was acquired by the city in 1948. The main purpose of the park is to provide ballfields to the school and city teams. it contains three baseball/softball fields. Surrounding the park is a very "unfriendly" chain link fence that creates the impression of school ownership. There are no amenities, no trees, and the sod is poorly maintained. This park provides a natural entrance treatment for the neighborhood and should be improved to enhance that role.

**Recommendations**

- Name the park and allow the residents to participate in the process (Parks)
- Provide facilities for neighborhood use (Parks)
- Provide gateway treatments including signage, landscaping and architectural elements that reinforce its role as a neighborhood park and entrance into the neighborhood (Parks)
- Plant trees around the perimeter to soften the hard image of the fence, or preferably, replace the need for it (Parks)

**Rocky Mountain Lake Park (Berkley neighborhood)**

Rocky Mountain Lake Park is located at 46th and Hooker. It is located outside of the neighborhood, across Federal Boulevard, and serves a greater community. It is 60.5 acres in size and was acquired by the city in 1906. It contains various facilities including a 28.6 acre lake that allows fishing. Amenities include two tennis courts, two baseball fields, toilets, junior football field, playground, hike/bike paths, picnic tables and fireplaces, and group facilities.

Its large size, the facilities, and the natural amenity of the lake all attract Sunnyside residents. The park's proximity to the west side of the neighborhood helps to off-set the lack of neighborhood parks in that part of Sunnyside. Many of the people who live in Sunnyside or other neighborhoods east of Federal use their cars to access the park because pedestrian connections across Federal Boulevard are perceived as unsafe.

Rocky Mountain Lake Park has views of the mountains across the lake with most of the activity concentrated on the southern edge and away from 1-70. It is visible from 1-70 and helps to provide visual relief and enjoyment for traveling motorists.

***Recommendations***

- Strengthen the pedestrian connection across Federal Boulevard at 46th Avenue. Use special, wide “European-style” striping at the intersection. Coordinate timing of lights to allow pedestrian control crossings on demand (Traffic Engineering, Parks)
- Provide special landscaping treatment across all four quadrants of the 46th and Federal intersection to help tie both sides of the street together. Provide a center median that can accommodate pedestrians as an intermediate “landing” refuge, if traffic requirements allow (Traffic Engineering, Parks)
- Provide informational/directional sign indicating the preferred paths and crossings to the park (Parks)

**McDonough Park (Berkley neighborhood)**

McDonough Park is located on the west side of 41st Avenue and Federal Boulevard. It is a 4.2 acre neighborhood park that was acquired by the city in 1906. It is highly visible from Federal Boulevard and provides one of the few green belts along Federal.

There are some picnic tables, but the main purpose of the park is to provide open space.

The location of McDonough Park on Federal Boulevard exemplifies the traditional Denver design of the park and parkway system. This historic approach includes locating public buildings and parks along designated parkways and boulevards (including Federal Boulevard). This tradition reinforces streets such as Federal Boulevard as important and attractive corridors.

***Recommendations***

- Restore Federal Boulevard to its previous dignity and beauty with landscaping treatment in all public facilities that line it. Plant street trees along the edge of the park in the traditional pattern (every 25-30 feet) to help unite Federal Boulevard as a corridor (PCDO, Parks)
- Provide more facilities so that McDonough Park can become a neighborhood amenity and used by more residents. Enhance the use of the park which will in time bring more pedestrian activity to the Boulevard (Parks)
- Include gateway elements such as signage, landscaping and architectural elements to reinforce its role as a neighborhood park (Parks)



**Aztlan Recreation Center**

## RECREATION FACILITIES

The Aztlan Recreation Center is located in the northeast corner of the neighborhood and is heavily utilized. Across the street is the Quigg Newton Senior Center. Again, these facilities are not centrally located, leaving a large portion of the population isolated from recreational opportunities.

There is a great deal of concern that there is a severe lack of recreational opportunities for youth. Adjacent to Azatlan are the Quigg Newton Homes, which have a high percentage of youth. The recreation center is a valuable resource for these youth who need activities to keep them busy and productive. Lack of space prevents the recreation center from providing enough programs to meet the needs of the community.

The Quigg Newton Senior Center is currently in a rebuilding phase. There is a high percentage of Spanish speaking seniors in the vicinity, and a bilingual staff person was recently hired to help with outreach to them. Until the senior program increases, the facility is being used more as a family resource center for Sunnyside residents. Adult education, day care, and youth, tutoring are some of the programs that are held during the hours that senior programs are not scheduled.

### ***Recommendations***

- Examine the possibility of creating an amenity of the vacant land east of Lipan near 38th to provide more open space and take advantage of view corridors — see Globeville and Highland Plan (PCDO, Parks)
- Develop a bike route that will link Sunnyside to other parks and recreational facilities like Confluence Park, the proposed Rockmont Park, Platte River Greenway, etc. (Parks, Transportation)
- Purchase and develop land adjacent to Aztlan Recreation Center to increase parkland and open space (Asset Management, Parks)
- Fund the physical expansion of Azatlan Recreation Center to increase the programmatic capacity (Parks)

- Increase lighting to improve safety at Aztlan Park.
- Explore the possibility of creating pocket parks and tot lots in conjunction with a non-profit group, church or school in the western half of the neighborhood wherever vacant land exists (PCDO, Parks, residents)
- Expand or initiate community use of enclosed swimming pools at North High School and Skinner Junior High (Parks, DPS)
- Explore the possibilities of using DPS facilities for recreational and community needs (PCDO, Parks, DPS)
- Work to link the neighborhood parks with bike paths. (Parks, Transportation)



**Quigg Newton Senior Center**





**U R B A N   D E S I G N   A N D  
I M A G E**



Sunnyside lacks a positive identity, and some would say it lacks any kind of identity at all — positive or negative. Many residents do not know their neighborhood has a name, and others assumed they were part of the Highland neighborhood. Sunnyside residents, and business people in particular, would like the rest of Denver to know that their neighborhood is a wonderful, vibrant place to live.

Residents are proud of the diversity in their neighborhood cultural, architectural, and social. Ways to help celebrate that diversity need to be developed. Sunnyside has many well preserved historic homes and schools. Those structures should be identified and surveyed for historic designation. Effort needs to be put into building neighborhood pride. Beautification efforts that include tree-lined parkways and defined entrances/gateways into the neighborhood should be emphasized.

Urban design techniques help create a friendly, liveable environment. They knit the separate pieces of a neighborhood together and create a more unified feeling. An urban design blueprint can help guide changes in the appearance and function of a neighborhood over time. Urban design includes issues such as the role and character of the street system; transit, bike and pedestrian environment; parks and parkway system; and the function and appearance of buildings including size and scale of structures; landscaping/streetscaping; building placement and orientation.

It is appropriate then, to use urban design techniques in creating a neighborhood image and strengthening its various segments. Although the effects are subtle, the necessary improvements can be costly and occur over long periods of time.

Guidelines that regulate design may seem contradictory to the diversity and individuality that creates the charm and character of an older neighborhood, but that is not the intent. They are a tool that can be used to help create or maintain an image and consistent treatment for an area. For Sunnyside, design guidelines are recommended to help pull the fragmented pieces of the older commercial areas together to give them identity and strength.

Merchants along Tejon Street and West 44th Avenue will want to consider whether or not design guidelines are something they can benefit from and are willing to commit to. Guidelines are advisory only, and are usually implemented during redevelopment, renovation, or new construction.

## Goal

Celebrate the diversity of the neighborhood while creating a unified feeling.

## Policies

### *Top Priorities*

- UD-1** Design and install gateway and entrance treatments to help define the boundaries and add to the identity of the neighborhood. Suggested areas: 44th and Federal, 38th and Zuni, 1-70 and Pecos, 38th and Pecos, 46th and Federal, 46th and Pecos. (PCDO, Transportation, Parks and Recreation)
- UD-2** Use CDBG grants and other city programs to improve the public right-of-way. Funding programs exist for both residential and commercial areas. Special efforts should be made to improve the commercial areas along 44th Avenue and Tejon Street. (PCDO, Neighborhood, Merchants,)

### *Secondary or Ongoing Recommendations*

- UD-3** Focus new design projects or physical improvements on the “special places” (or highly visible) areas to build community pride and help create a positive identity. Include these streets on the list for undergrounding of utility lines.
- 44th Avenue between Federal and Tejon
  - Tejon Street between 41st and 44th Avenue
  - along 1-70 where it borders the neighborhood
  - 38th Avenue where it borders the neighborhood (PCDO, Public Works, Neighborhood, Public Service Company)
- UD-4** Identify and designate historic landmarks.
- Smedley School
  - Horace Mann Middle School
  - Federal Boulevard (Landmark Commission, Neighborhood, Denver Public Schools)
- UD-5** Recognize the importance of highly visible streets in the identity of the neighborhood. Focus code enforcement, clean-up and fix-ups along the streets with heavy traffic: Federal Boulevard, Zuni, Tejon, Pecos and Lipan Streets; 38th, 44th, and 46th Avenues. (Neighborhood, Zoning, Neighborhood Support Services, Non-profits, Keep Denver Beautiful)



**West 44th mixed use area**



**Germinal Stage on West 44th**



## DESIGN GUIDELINES

### **Federal Boulevard**

Federal Boulevard was once a stately, tree lined street running the entire length of the city and to suburbs beyond. Beautiful houses and graceful civic structures lined the boulevard. The portion of Federal that is in Sunnyside, north of 38th Avenue, developed later and is comprised primarily of post WWII bungalows. There is commercial development at key intersections - 38th Avenue, 44th Avenue, and at the 1-70 interchange. The housing along this stretch is well maintained, appears to be stable, and is predominantly single family. The businesses are there to serve the heavy traffic, and consist of restaurants, gas stations, and a few other commercial uses. A predominant landmark is the old Federal Boulevard movie theater that was converted to a church at one time, and is now used sporadically for lectures and concerts. Work will soon be underway for a master plan of Federal Boulevard.

### ***Guidelines***

- The traditional boulevard design concept should be retained and strengthened, ie. street trees, tree lawns, landscaped median, and special lighting
- Sunnyside residents and business people should be involved in the development of a master plan for Federal Boulevard
- Encourage utilization of existing residential structures for business use in the existing B zones, rather than construction of new buildings
- Discourage the installation of acceleration/deceleration lanes that widen the pavement and reduce green space at edges

## West 38th Avenue

### *Guidelines*

- Continue with the Highland plan for streetscaping with the long term goal being an entire landscaped strip.

## Tejon Street

Tejon is a mixture of office, residential and commercial uses. It creates a small neighborhood “Main Street” atmosphere. Many years ago the trolley cars used to run up and down Tejon from downtown and out to Elitch Gardens and other destinations. Today, it still provides direct access to downtown.

### *Guidelines*

- Tejon should be strengthened through economic development and urban design efforts to enhance and maintain the “Main Street” feel and character
- Encourage streetscaping with historic pedestrian lighting, street trees, benches, etc., keeping with a Victorian theme
- Identify and publicize any historic structures (ie. Ferretti house) or events (ie. trolley route)
- Develop design guidelines (or incorporate those from the Highland Plan) to guide facade improvements and redevelopment efforts

## West 44th Avenue

The character of 44th Avenue does not do justice to the neighborhood. The west end near Federal has a proliferation of auto related uses that do not blend well with the residential/small office character. Farther west, toward the park, the buildings are old, many are vacant, and most are rundown. The bars present a hard, unfriendly image. Public utility poles and lines clutter the street and obstruct views. This street has significance because of its connection to communities west of Denver. The gentle sloping topography creates a subtle feeling of termination into the neighborhood. It provides a nice view corridor in both directions. The actual terminus at Chaffee Park is significant and should be distinctive.

### *Guidelines*

- Make a physical connection between Chaffee Park, 44th Avenue and Tejon Street utilizing design



**Izzi's Coffee, on 44th, is a neighborhood gathering place**



**Unscreened auto uses on 44th**



**44th Avenue mixed-use block**

elements, signage and/or bike paths

- Discourage any new auto related uses or liquor licenses -Encourage the development of multifamily housing, neighborhood serving businesses, or small offices
- Encourage streetscaping and screening of existing auto uses
- Strengthen through landscaping and design guidelines the 44th and Zuni intersection to signify entrance into the neighborhood.
- Conduct a zoning inspection of 44th Avenue to identify zoning violations paying particular attention to the number of cars on a lot, U Haul storage, screening requirements, churches used car lot, and the general intensity of uses.



# **T R A N S P O R T A T I O N**



**Auto Related**

There are a number of highway and street improvements which are being planned or have recently been completed which should have a positive impact on Sunnyside. Pecos and Osage streets were converted from one way to two way streets south of 38th Avenue. The expected result is less traffic filtering through the neighborhood. Colorado Department of Highways is making improvements to the “Mousetrap” at 1-25 and 1-70. This should allow the freeway to function better and prevent people from exiting at Federal or Pecos and using local streets to avoid the mousetrap congestion. In addition, the viaducts across the Central Platte Valley are being replaced, which should help traffic flow better.

Three of Sunnyside’s boundaries are formed by arterial streets. An arterial carries a large volume of traffic and allows it to flow relatively unimpeded. Federal Boulevard, 38th Avenue and 1-70 are considered arterials. Pecos Street is an arterial north of 1-70, and continues through Sunnyside as a collector street.

Major arterials such as Federal Boulevard and 1-70 are part of the Denver Regional Council of Government’s (DRCOG) regional transportation plan. Pecos Street and 38th Avenue fall under local jurisdiction and are local planning issues. Neither DRCOG nor Denver have plans to widen or alter any street in the Sunnyside neighborhood within the next five years, other than the usual maintenance projects.

To protect the stability of a neighborhood, it is desirable to minimize the amount of “through traffic.” Through traffic refers to traffic from adjacent neighborhoods and municipalities which pass through the neighborhood on their way to destinations outside the neighborhood. To preserve the stability of Sunnyside, any future plans to widen Pecos, Zuni, Tejon or other major streets should be carefully examined.

For local trips within the neighborhood or by residents of Sunnyside, it is desirable to filter the traffic onto collector streets. Zuni, Tejon and Pecos are collector streets and are adequate at this time for existing traffic levels.

The Colorado Department of Transportation will be making improvements within the next five years to the I-70/Pecos intersection. It is not anticipated that there will be traffic impacts as a result of that project on the Sunnyside neighborhood. Residents need to become involved with the project to assure that any impacts are minimized and that the end result benefits the neighborhood.

### **Pedestrian And Bike Access**

It is important for a neighborhood to be “pedestrian friendly”. It adds to the liveability of a neighborhood. Children should be able to walk safely to and from schools or parks, the elderly to and from shopping facilities, and families should be able to walk comfortably around their neighborhood. Safe pedestrian access also encourages people to use their cars less and fosters a more intimate connection with the neighborhood.

Pedestrian access within Sunnyside is good with a few exceptions. Federal Boulevard is a barrier to many people who would like to access Rocky Mountain Park on the west side of the street. The area around Pecos and 1-70 is particularly treacherous for children walking to and from Remington School. It is also difficult to reach the commercial area on Pecos north of 1-70 without great risk. When the Colorado Department of Transportation reconstructs the Pecos/I-70 interchange, there may be an opportunity to improve pedestrian access.

Sunnyside has been included in a city wide bike plan which will evaluate the efficiency of existing bike routes, and determine where new ones are needed. The bike paths are on-street, signed routes. Residents have stated a desire for a higher level of street maintenance and cleaning on the streets that have bike routes. The proposed Rockmont Park in the Central Platte Valley will have good bike access for people in Highland and Sunnyside neighborhoods, which will add to the recreational amenities available to residents.

### **Truck Access**

Where residential uses abut industrial uses, problems tend to arise because of truck traffic on residential streets. Parents are afraid for their children’s safety, slow moving trucks are frustrating to other drivers, trucks tend to quickly wear down the streets and curbs, and the noise from trucks is disturbing to nearby residents. There is a city ordinance which prohibits large trucks from streets except those approved as truck routes, but nevertheless allows drivers to deviate from those routes in order to make deliveries. The ordinance is very hard to enforce. Truck drivers would rather use designated truck routes than residential streets, but also need efficient routes.

**Goal**


Assure safe and efficient mobility for cars, trucks and pedestrians while protecting the stability of the neighborhood.

**Policies*****Top Priorities***


- TRAN-1** Develop a city-wide truck access plan that involves the industrial area of Sunnyside. Include signage and enforcement of truck routes as part of the strategy (Transportation, PCDO, Industrial business owners)
- TRAN-2** Examine the possibility of pedestrian activated lights at 44th and 46th Avenue at Federal Boulevard (Transportation)

***Secondary Or Ongoing Priorities***

- TRAN-3** Encourage pedestrian access improvements during reconstruction of the I-70/Pecos intersection (Transportation, CDOT, Neighborhood, Denver Public Schools, Business owners)
- TRAN-4** Investigate ways to minimize the traffic impacts caused by RTD stops on Federal Boulevard
- TRAN-5** Assure pedestrian and bike connections to the Platte Valley and Rockmont Park from Sunnyside and Highland neighborhoods. Routes should be well marked and maintained (Transportation, Parks)



**ENVIRONMENT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**



Overall, the environment of Sunnyside is pleasant, with many well maintained homes and businesses, attractive parks, and well-kept lawns. The environmental impacts of the industrial area causes some concern, but if operated properly, the industries should not pose any immediate problems.

There are scattered problems throughout the neighborhood with graffiti, trash, poorly kept alleys, and poorly maintained yards. Dogs are allowed to roam the streets, and some people store junked cars or other salvage material on their property.

The proximity of industrial uses to the neighborhood and the potential occurrence of environmental hazards is a concern for some residents. Trucks carrying hazardous or toxic materials to industrial sites are driving by residential areas and Remington School. There is concern about the potential health and safety problems for residents near the industrial area. The 1990 revised industrial zone code is much more protective of public health and the environment. When a potentially hazardous use is proposed, residents will have the opportunity to make comments on the proposal at a public hearing. Residents of Sunnyside should be very diligent in following through with this responsibility.

There are many infrastructure problems that need attention. Sidewalks, curb and gutter need to be replaced or put in for the first time. Drainage problems exist in the northeast section of the neighborhood. The lack of curb and gutter adds to the drainage problems. There are some streets in the industrial area that need to be paved. Open ditches exist in some areas of the neighborhood.

Residents must learn to utilize city programs to help eliminate graffiti, trash and weeds. Efforts must be ongoing to be effective. City programs should also be utilized to plant street trees, sod, and other live plant materials. Not only does this help the environment, it also upgrades the overall appearance and image of the neighborhood.

### **Goal**

Create a safe and clean living environment.

### **Policies**

#### ***Top Priorities***

- ENV-1** Identify and clean up those properties which are not in compliance with zoning or public health standards by forming a committee that works on a regular basis with City code

enforcement officials (Neighborhood, Zoning, Neighborhood Support Services, Health and Hospitals, Building Department)

**ENV-2** Organize an effective, ongoing process for graffiti removal and neighborhood clean-up activities throughout the neighborhood (Neighborhood, Keep Denver Beautiful)

**ENV-3** Identify areas that need additional street lighting and coordinate with Public works to have it installed, particularly along 44th Avenue and Tejon Street where commercial areas exist (Public Works, Neighborhood, Public Service)

### *Secondary or Ongoing Recommendations*

**ENV-4** Work with Wastewater and Public Works to identify and prioritize infrastructure needs, such as drainage problems, missing curb, gutter and sidewalks, alley paving, etc. (PCDO, Neighborhood, Public Works, Wastewater)

**ENV-5** Require compliance with health and safety standards for businesses that use toxic and hazardous materials. Meet as needed with those businesses, state and city officials to assure a safe environment. Request copies of public records that indicate violations (Neighborhood, PCDO, State Health Department, Health and Hospitals, Fire Department)

**ENV-6** Inform residents of the process for forming special improvement districts to construct sidewalks or install cement alleys (PCDO, Public Works)

**ENV-7** Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation to mitigate the erosion along the 1-70 berm (PCDO, Neighborhood, CDOT)

**ENV-8** Identify vacant lots for community adoption to create community gardens, xeriscape projects, or other creative uses (Neighborhood, Asset Management, PCDO, Denver Botanic Gardens)



**Mix of residential and industrial land uses at eastern edge of Sunnyside**





# HOUSING

The housing in Sunnyside is an interesting mix of architectural styles - a result of the neighborhood developing around early turn of the century homes, and gradual development over a long period of time. The housing type is predominantly single family and there are more than 4,000 housing units, the majority of which are single family homes. The owner occupancy rate is about 54% which is slightly higher than the city average of about 50%. The 1990 Census reports that there were 404 vacant housing units, and 39 boarded up units.

Residents of Sunnyside would like to see a trend towards greater owner-occupancy. Owner-occupied homes tend to be better maintained and lead to a sense of stability for other neighbors. However, the reality is that only half of all Denver residents own their home. The key to a safe and stable neighborhood will be in providing decent, affordable rental housing. "While increased owner-occupancy and better housing maintenance will improve or encourage long term residency, these efforts alone will not stabilize the area. The neighborhood can actively encourage long-term tenancy by ensuring that high quality, safe, and well maintained rental housing is the standard." (Buckman Neighborhood Plan, Portland Oregon, 1989)

Most of the homes are in good to fair condition. The average age of the housing stock is 70 years, so it is not surprising that many homes are beginning to show their age. The neighborhood has a high proportion of elderly and low income residents, many of whom are not able to keep up with the maintenance that an older home requires.

In recent years as Denver experienced poor market conditions, Sunnyside has suffered its share of vacant houses. A number of problems result from an oversupply of housing. Absentee landowners who can't sell or find renters, tend to overlook the proper maintenance of their property. Sometimes, out of desperation, the owners are careless about who they rent to and allow their properties to fall into disrepair. Many residents in Sunnyside are concerned about the effect this has on their property values as well as the image of the neighborhood.

### **East of Tejon Street**

The most fragile part of the neighborhood in terms of housing is the far eastern section of Sunnyside. There are pockets of good housing stock, but overall conditions run the full range from good to poor condition. Despite the less than perfect conditions, most of the houses are occupied. An examination of the assessor's records show that most of them are also owner occupied.

Scattered within the industrial zone there are a few non-conforming houses. It appears that some of them are being used as an accessory use for a business, either as an office or for extra storage. Very few appear to be used as residences. These structures tend to be poorly kept. People should be discouraged from living in houses in industrial zones. With our knowledge of the potential harmful effects of noise, fumes, and toxic emissions of industry, we do not consider this to be a healthy living environment.

## Goal

Stabilize and upgrade the housing stock by encouraging long term residency and increasing home-ownership.

## Policies

### *Top Priorities*

**HSNG-1** Rehab and revitalize the housing in residential zones east of Tejon Street, especially Lipan and Kalamath streets (PCDO, Non-profits housing corporations, residents)

**HSNG-2** Develop a list of vacant structures that should be demolished because they are structurally unsound and/or create a safety problem. Work with city staff to have these problems addressed (Building Department, PCDO, Neighborhood)

### *Secondary or Ongoing Recommendations*

**HSNG-3** Form a public-private task force to work with the residents on the following:

- Improved maintenance of rental and vacant properties
- Renting to responsible tenants
- Marketing vacant homes and encouraging homeownership (Neighborhood, Property owners, PCDO, Non-profit housing groups, Realtors)

**HSNG-4** The neighborhood should take an active role in housing rehab and fix-up by identifying at least one structure per year that will be sponsored by the neighborhood for exterior cleanup (Neighborhood)



**Housing diversity: Cottage on Bryant . . .**



**. . . and a Denver Square on Bryant.**



**Parking on residential front lawn**





**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**





**Mixed use on 38th and Clay**

Most of the businesses in Sunnyside are small neighborhood serving establishments although some have clientele from all parts of the city. Many are very old, and are interspersed throughout the neighborhood. The traffic patterns and market conditions are not conducive for high-volume business, and as a consequence, many are struggling or have gone out of business. Technical assistance is needed to help strengthen and retain existing businesses. In many cases there is also a need for streetscape and facade improvements.

The business people in Sunnyside feel they have been overlooked by the City's assistance programs. There is a lack of organization among business people, and a lack of information about how to access city programs. The owners rely on each other for information, but often don't understand the process for applying for funds, or where to go for assistance and information. There is a need for an active merchants' association that can meet regularly to think of ways to strengthen the business climate in Sunnyside and give each other support.

Merchants would like the City and private lending institutions to make a bigger financial commitment towards economic development. There has been some interest shown by merchants to market the existing Sunnyside area businesses, and developing a data base of vacant land or businesses to help attract new development.

### **West 38th Avenue**

West 38th Avenue has been a designated Neighborhood Business Revitalization (NBR) area since 1986. The avenue forms the border between the Highland and Sunnyside neighborhoods. The recommendation for an NBR on 38th Avenue came from the Highland Neighborhood plan. Neighborhood Business Revitalization areas are funded by Community Development Block Grant Funds, administered by the Mayor's Office of Economic Development. Funding is awarded on an annual basis to pay the cost of an Executive Director.

The West 38th Avenue NBR has been one of Denver's success stories. Several thousand dollars in loans have been made to small businesses. A streetscape design that was developed as a recommendation in the Highland neighborhood plan is almost fully implemented. Prospect Plaza and Pecos Square are recent developments that have improved the level of commercial uses and are nearly at capacity.

Because West 38th Avenue is under the direction of the Merchant's Association and is a designated NBR, this plan will not further address the economic development needs of that area. Sunnyside

supports these ongoing efforts. For specific policy recommendations, please refer to the Highland Neighborhood Plan, 1986.

### **West 44th Avenue**

This avenue is a mixture of residential and commercial uses that runs from Wheatridge to its terminus at Chaffee Park on Tejon Street. The avenue has a different character west of Denver where it is much more commercial and is a main transportation arterial. East of Federal, 44th Avenue contains a few auto related businesses and small offices on shallow lots. Some are oriented parallel to the street, some are perpendicular. There is also a small community theatre, a few restaurants and bars, and various other small businesses along with several vacant storefronts.

### **Tejon Street**

Tejon Street has historic significance, considerable character, and pedestrian scale. At one time cable cars traveled Tejon taking people to and from downtown Denver. It still has direct access to downtown although it is not a main arterial. Old Victorian houses are intermixed with small shops and offices which consistently line the street on both sides.

Unfortunately, Tejon Street has been allowed to deteriorate. Most of the businesses need facade improvements, and many are vacant. The homes tend to be better kept than the businesses, but they also could use some exterior improvements. The unique character of Tejon increases the opportunities for future redevelopment.

### **Goal**

Strengthen existing businesses that operate responsibly and within city codes.

### **Policies**

#### ***Top Priorities***

- II-1** Strengthen the ties between the business owners and the neighborhood groups. Form a business association that can meet on a regular basis to address business/neighborhood issues (Neighborhood, Business owners)



**Housing-retail development opportunity at 46th and Tejon**



**Mixed-use development opportunity on northwest corner of Tejon and 44th**

**ED-2** Ask for assistance from a non-profit group or the city to research the demand for new business and identify potential markets in North Denver. Inventory vacant businesses and market them. Develop strategies for revitalizing deteriorated commercial and industrial areas (MOED, PCDO, Business owners, Developers, Realtors)

***Secondary or Ongoing Recommendations***

**ED-4** Work towards a goal of concentrated commercial nodes, rather than scattered site development. The commercial areas on 44th Avenue, Tejon Street, Federal Boulevard, and 38th Avenue should be priorities for city assistance (PCDO, MOED)

**ED-5** Organize merchants and property owners along 44th Avenue and Tejon Street to see if there is any interest in developing design guidelines for streetscaping, building orientation, facades, and signage to help create a unified, cohesive district (Neighborhood, PCDO, Merchants, Property Owners)

**ED-6** Create a business directory of neighborhood businesses and services to increase neighborhood patronage and serve as an advertising tool. Use festivals and other events to promote neighborhood businesses (MOED, Business Association, Neighborhood)

**ED-7** Utilize vacant residential structures for commercial and office uses in commercial zones as a way to limit new commercial construction. (Developers, MOED, Property owners)

**ED-8** Strengthen the industrial area as a way of providing an employment opportunities for the residents of Sunnyside (MOED)