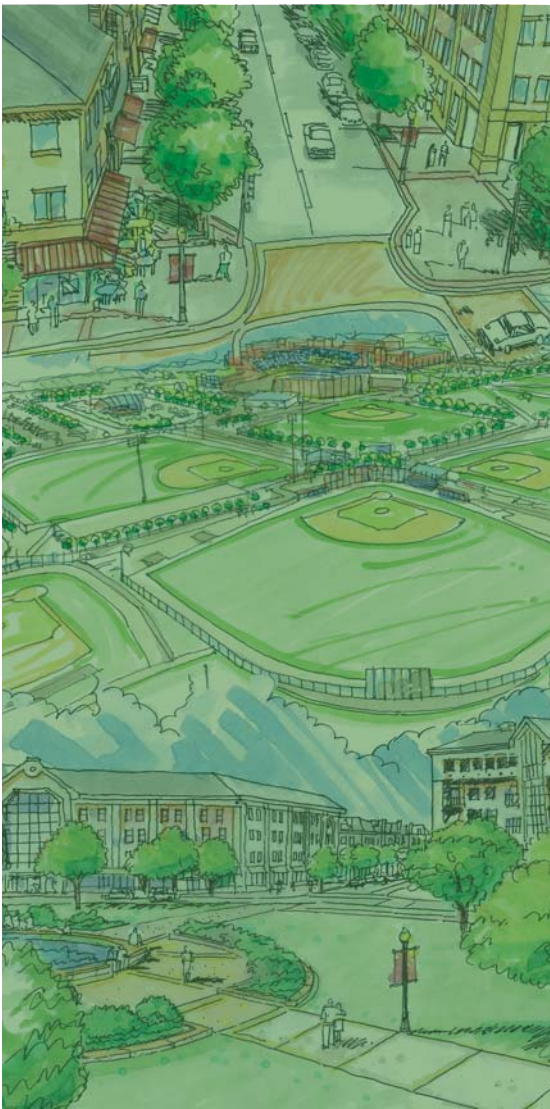


# Section 7.0

## Great Amenities



### 7.0 Introduction

In addition to recommendations on future land use and basic infrastructure discussed in previous sections, the Comprehensive Plan also contains a number of core Plan goals. These core Plan goals give further definition and guidance on important issues for Thornton's future. These are:

- Quality and Diverse Neighborhoods
- Plentiful Quality Jobs
- Great Amenities
- Active and Engaged Partnerships

This section of the document presents recommendations and policies for the Comprehensive Plan related to the Great Amenities goal. Other sections address the other goals.



## 7.1 Current Opportunities

Cities are the focus of commerce, culture and entertainment for their residents. The challenge of a city is to offer a variety of places to go, meet, work, discover, entertain, learn and enjoy. Physical facilities, strong infrastructure and unique branding all play a role in establishing a “City of Great Amenities” for residents and visitors alike.

The quality of the overall public environment – both the public realm elements (including streets and parks) as well as iconic landmarks (such as institutional facilities and major employment or entertainment centers) make a city livable and, more importantly, memorable.

A well-designed public environment evokes community pride and creates a strong, lasting image. It is this type of vibrant environment that attracts future economic development, diversifies the community demographics and helps to sustain the social dynamics of a city.

## 7.2 Important Needs

The establishment of community character is defined as creating memorable places and an identifiable image. Often, this is accomplished through the creation of amenities—unique places, architecture and services that provide comfort, identity, convenience and pleasure for residents and visitors of a community. This is often referred to as creating a “sense of place” for a community. In order to create a sense of place for the City of Thornton, this comprehensive planning effort conducted a thorough inventory and analysis of existing land uses and the physical characteristics of the community. Included as part of this analysis was a review of the community’s urban design features, natural features, economic centers, institutional areas and existing parks and open space network.

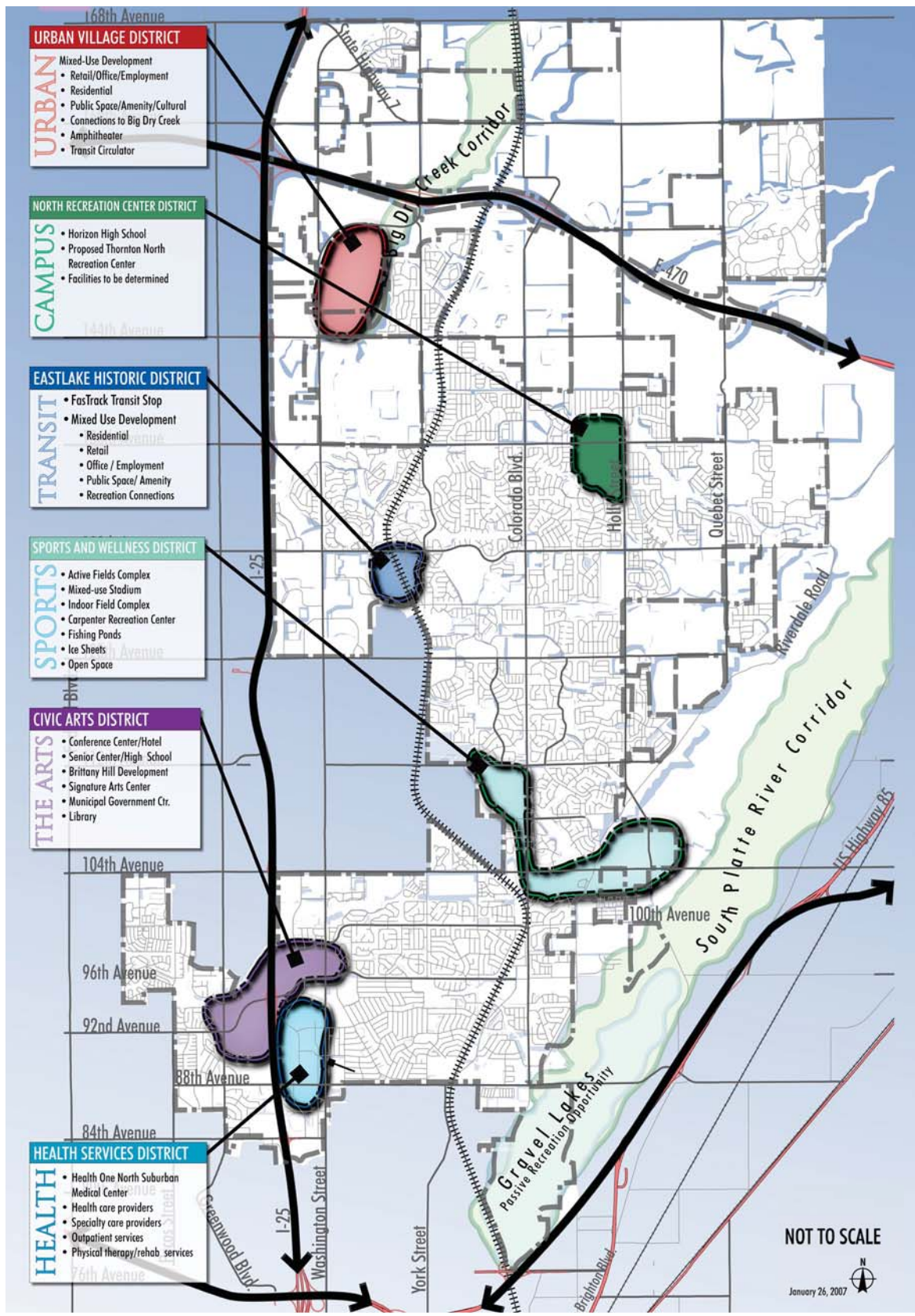
The historic development pattern in Thornton did not establish a central downtown. Rather, a series of cultural destinations and employment centers are distributed around the community, creating a challenge to identify only one area as the heart of the City. A “sense of place” for Thornton will be reinforced through the establishment of several placemaking districts that will collectively serve the purpose of a traditional downtown (see Figure 7-1).

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the following important needs:

- Placemaking Districts - Thornton needs to create active, exciting districts - ones that provide both residents and visitors alike the chance to live, work and play in a stimulating and creative environment.
- Public Services - Thornton needs to offer an array of high-quality public services, from recreation and urban design to technology and educational opportunities.
- Trail System - Thornton needs to create a national-caliber trail system and a unique placemaking cultural trail.
- Reinforced Identity - Thornton needs to create a high-quality urban design setting - complete with gateways, boulevards, comprehensive wayfinding signage and ornamental lighting.
- Inclusive Community - Thornton needs to offer an array of inter-generational programming activities for all residents of Thornton.
- Collaborative Partnership - Thornton needs to use creative public/private partnerships to foster strong outreach opportunities and programming events.



Figure 7-1: City of Great Amenities



## 7.3 Core Recommendations

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, the idea of establishing a clear identity for Thornton was a top priority. As such, Plan recommendations focus on communicating a clear sense of place for the community through the creation of distinct placemaking districts and the use of environmental and open space networks, trail systems and key transportation corridors to reinforce a unique image and identity for Thornton.

### Placemaking Cultural Districts

The idea of formally establishing unique and distinct districts capitalizes on the existing land use and future development opportunities (see Figure 7-1). The criteria for creating a placemaking district included the ability of a designated district to:

- Preserve and enhance existing assets.
- Provide high quality design opportunities.
- Provide strong linkages to existing neighborhood and community facilities.
- Integrate into the City's parks and open space network.
- Provide opportunity for new economic development initiatives.
- Provide a concentration of similar or related intensity and uses.



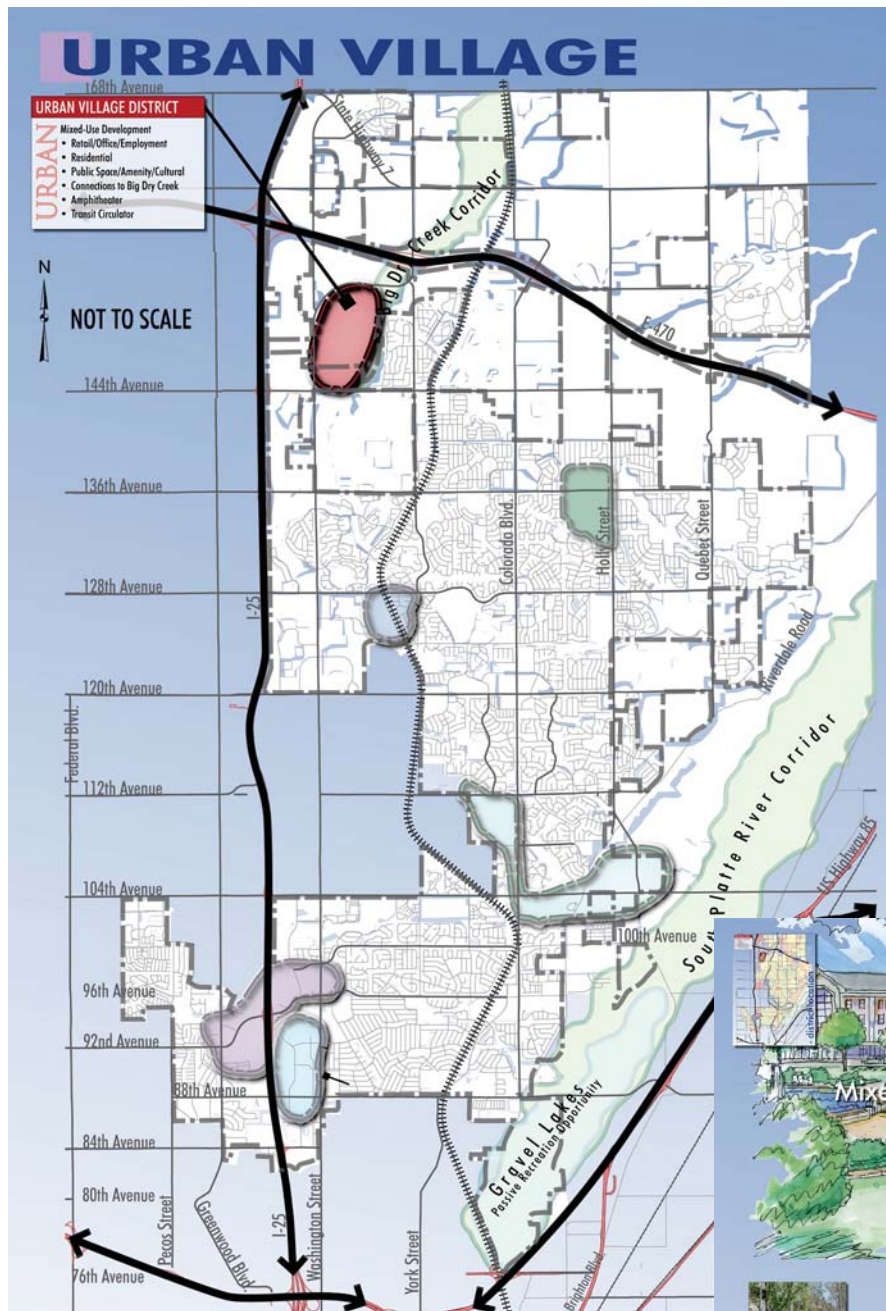
Following this criteria, the Comprehensive Plan recommends creating six catalyst Placemaking Districts throughout the City. These districts are:

- **Urban Village District**
- **Eastlake Historic District**
- **North Recreation Center District**
- **Sports and Wellness District**
- **Civic Arts District**
- **Health Services District**

Future districts may be developed as economic conditions and future implementation efforts evolve.

Figures 7-2 to 7-7 illustrate the six Placemaking District locations and their intended design vision.

# Urban Village District



## 1. Urban Village District

### Key Principles:

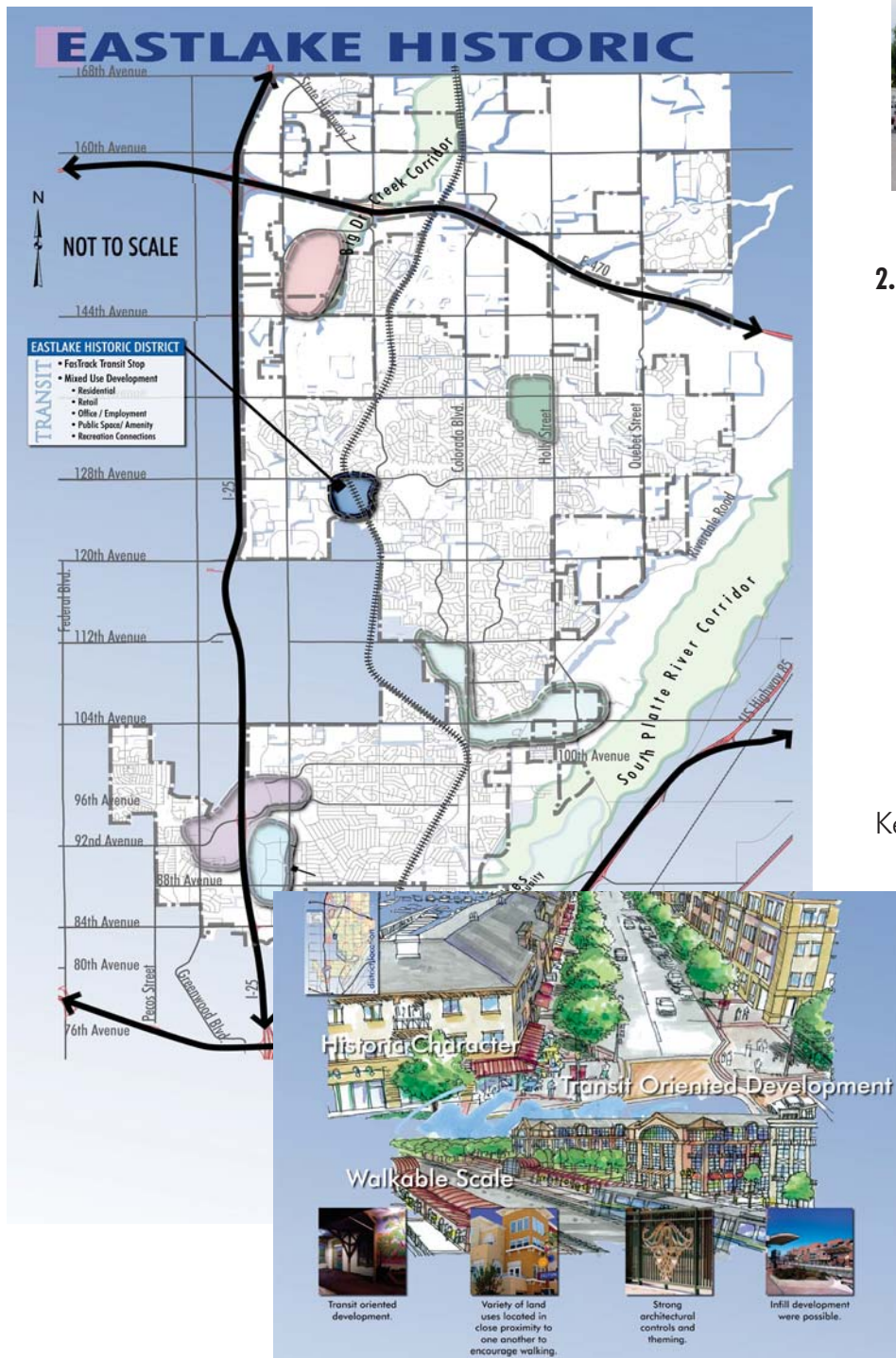
- Promote Diversity of Use
- Encourage Compactness
- Manage Intensity of Development
- Balance Activities
- Provide for Accessibility
- Create Functional Linkages
- Build a Positive Identity



▲ Figure 7-2: North Washington Urban Village District



## Eastlake Historic District



### 2. Eastlake Historic District

The Eastlake Historic District is the only placemaking cultural district with a subarea plan. The Eastlake Subarea Plan, completed in 2003, establishes goals and recommendations related to transportation, parks, open space and trails, land use, historic conservation and urban design, water and sewer, and economic development for the Eastlake Historic District.

#### Key Principles:

- Encourage Mixed-use Development
- Encourage Compactness
- Provide Linkages to Multi-modal Transit
- Provide Distinct Urban Design Guidelines to Reflect Existing Scale of the Eastlake Neighborhood

▲ Figure 7-3 Eastlake Historic District