

Golden Triangle Zoning and Design Guidelines Update

GOLDEN TRIANGLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN – REGULATORY IMPLEMENTATION

Planning Board Information Item #2 (April 15, 2020) – ONLINE



Goals for the Presentation

1. Project Overview
2. Preliminary Preferred Zoning Framework and DSG Update
3. Next Steps

Project Overview

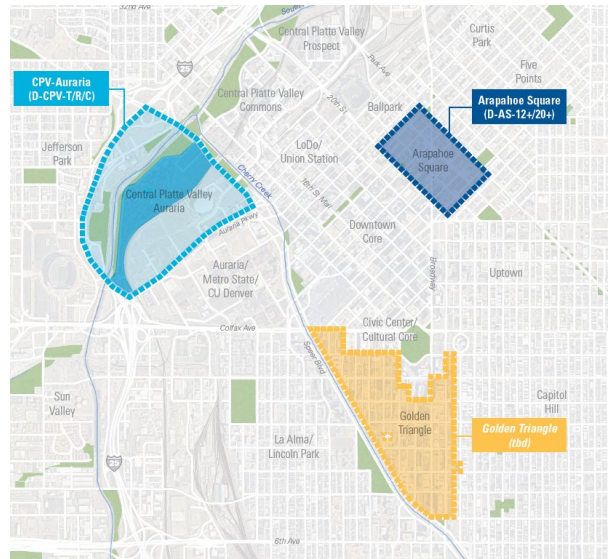


Project Purpose

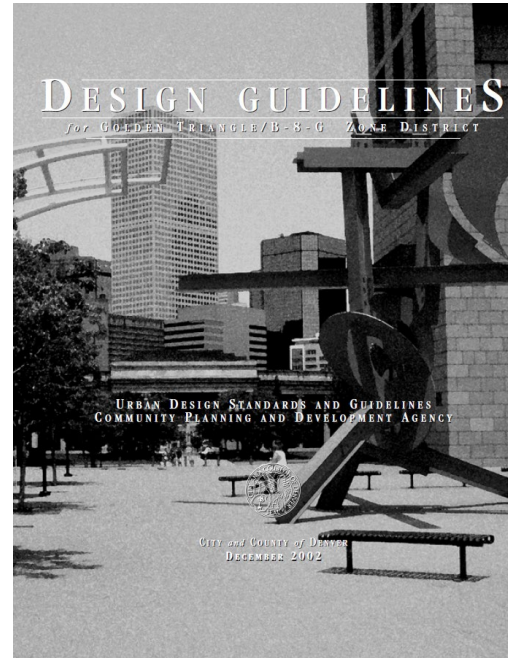
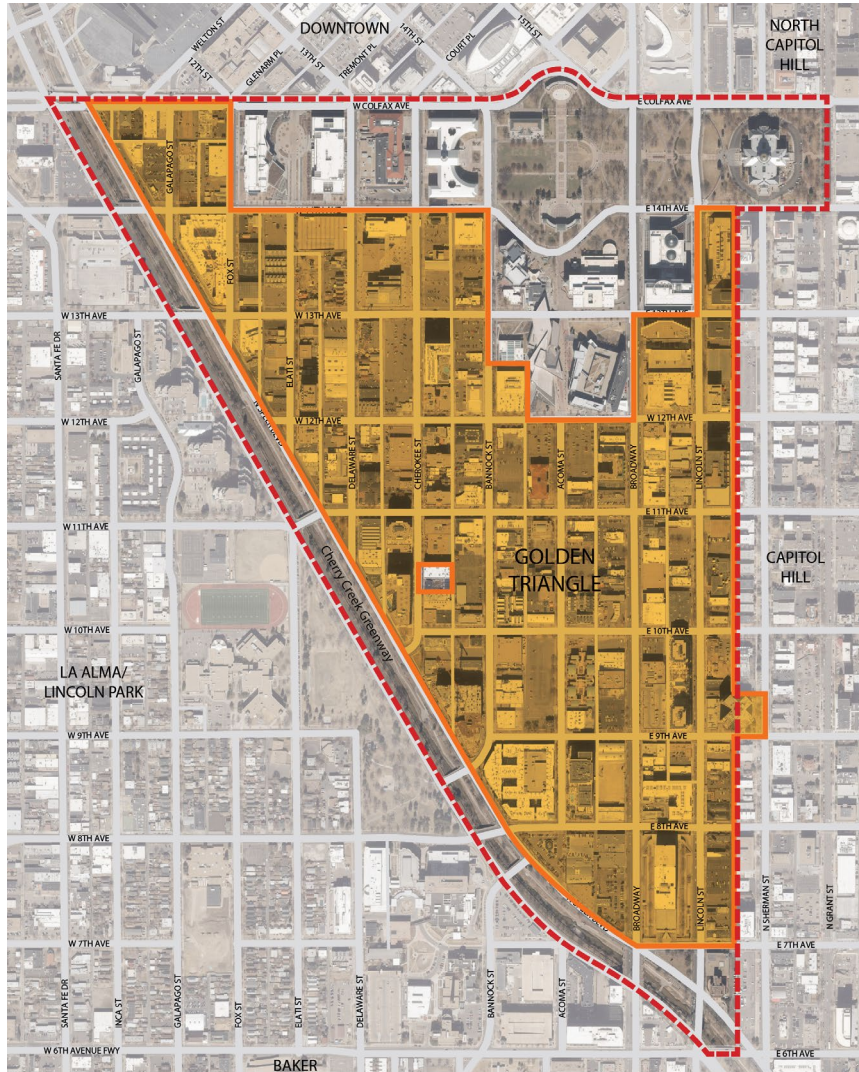


Update the Golden Triangle Zoning and Design Guidelines to:

- 1. Implement the recommendations of the Neighborhood Plan**
- 2. Apply more current zoning/design approaches and procedures**



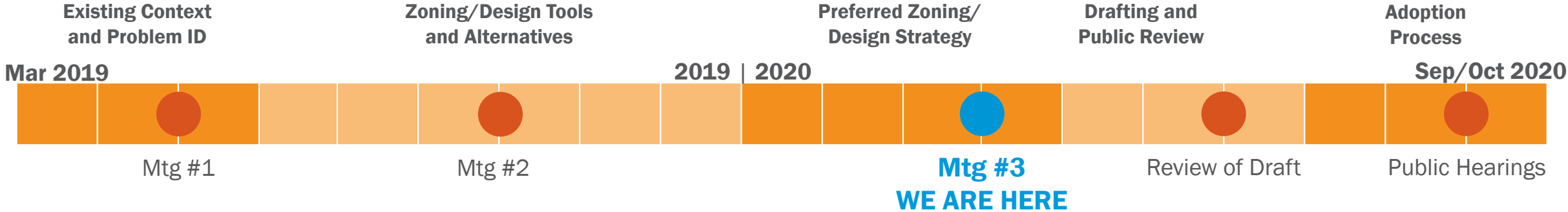
Area of Applicability



- Update the Downtown – Golden Triangle (D-GT) zone district that is based on zoning from 1994
- Update the B-8-G Design Guidelines that were adopted in 2002 and apply to the D-GT zone district

Project Schedule

- 3 months – Existing Context and Problem Identification
- 6 months – Regulatory Tools and Alternatives
- 3-4 months – Preferred Zoning/DSG Strategy
- 3-4 months – Drafting and Public Review
- 2-3 months – Adoption Process
- **Approximately 18 months total**



Golden Triangle Neighborhood Plan (2014)

A Land Use

1. Encourage a range of uses and development types
2. Highlight certain streets/areas with different uses
3. Promote a broad range of housing opportunities
4. Evaluate minimum parking requirements

B Building Form/Type

5. Allow a diverse range of building forms/shapes
6. Continue to allow current building height
7. Ensure building mass is compatible with adjacent buildings
8. Encourage protection/reuse of existing buildings

C Street Level Experience

9. Promote a high-quality pedestrian experience
10. Ensure building design considers pedestrian scale and comfort
11. Encourage provision of privately-owned public gathering spaces
12. Improve activity and visual characteristics of parking

Evaluation Matrix of Potential Zoning Tools

ZONING/DESIGN TOOL	EVALUATION CRITERIA					
	Consistency	Effectiveness	Variety	Flexibility	Predictability	Used in DZC
ZONE DISTRICTS AND BUILDING FORMS						
Use a single zone district for the entire neighborhood		1, 5				
Utilize different building forms to address various lot sizes, building sizes, and massing requirements		1, 5, 6, 7, 10				yes
Include a Point Tower option		1, 5, 7, 10				AS, CPV
Set height limit similar to existing for typical buildings (~175-200 feet)		1, 5, 6, 7, 10				yes
Set height limit for Point Tower taller than existing to make it an equivalent option		1, 5, 7, 10				AS, CPV
<i>Not Selected for Further Study</i>						
Use multiple zone districts to distinguish different areas within the neighborhood		1, 2				D-C
Use a single building envelope similar to the existing zoning for all future projects		1, 6				D-C
Set height limit for Point Tower similar to existing (~175-200 feet)		1, 6				no
MASSING TOOLS						
Use FAR to limit overall bulk allowed within a slightly taller building envelope		5, 7, 9, 10				CPV, D-C
Use an Upper Story Setback to break down the scale of taller buildings at the street level		5, 7, 9, 10				AS, CPV
Use Mass Reduction to shape taller buildings		5, 7, 9, 10				CPV, RiNo
Limit Point Tower floor plate sizes and require minimum spacing		5, 7, 9, 10				AS, CPV
<i>Not Selected for Further Study</i>						
Use height limit as the only tool to limit overall bulk and scale (ie, no FAR or other massing limitations)		1				yes
Allow Point Towers to be close together (ie, no minimum spacing)		1				no

Evaluation Criteria

- 1. Consistency** – is it consistent with the Neighborhood Plan?
- 2. Effectiveness** – does it address more than one plan objective?
- 3. Variety** – does it encourage variety in use/form and support an eclectic neighborhood?
- 4. Flexibility** – is it flexible to adapt to different site and market conditions?
- 5. Predictability** – does it result in predictable outcomes? (not the same as repetition)

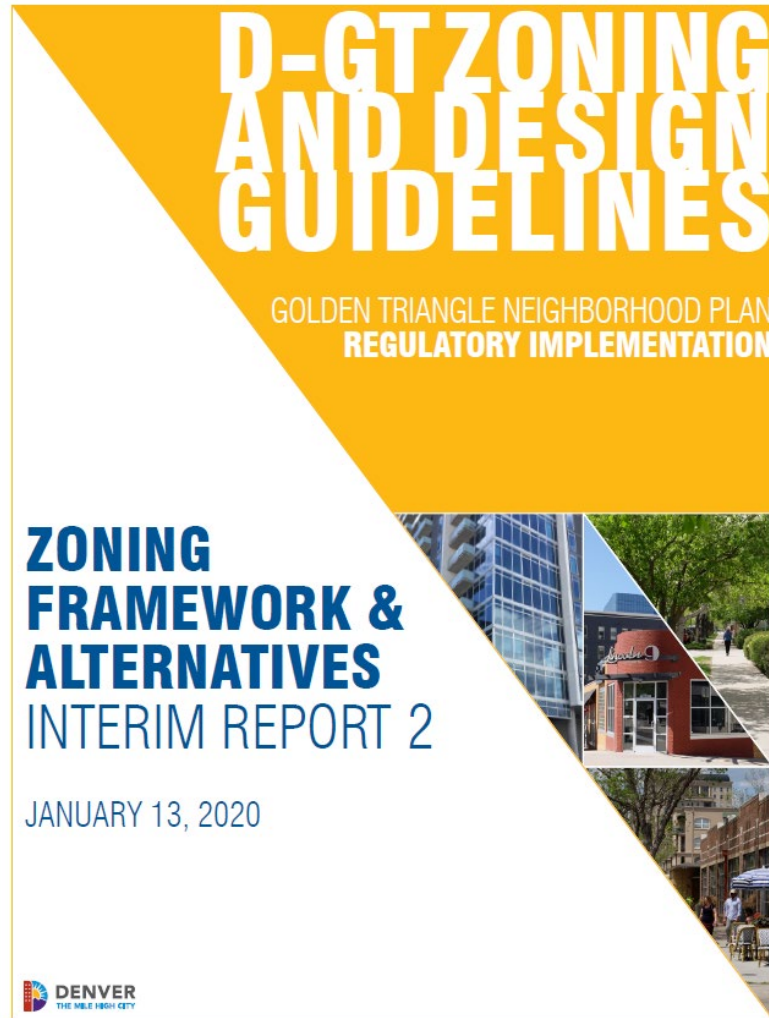
Strongly Meets Criteria
Meets Criteria
Does Not Meet Criteria

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- Zoning tools fall into a few distinct categories including:
 - Zone Districts and Building Forms
 - Massing Tools
 - Street Level and Design Quality Tools
 - Parking
 - Development Capacity and Incentives
- Tools that met 4 of 5 criteria were included as appropriate options
- Tools meeting less than 4 criteria were not selected for further study

Interim Report 2 – Zoning Framework and Alternatives

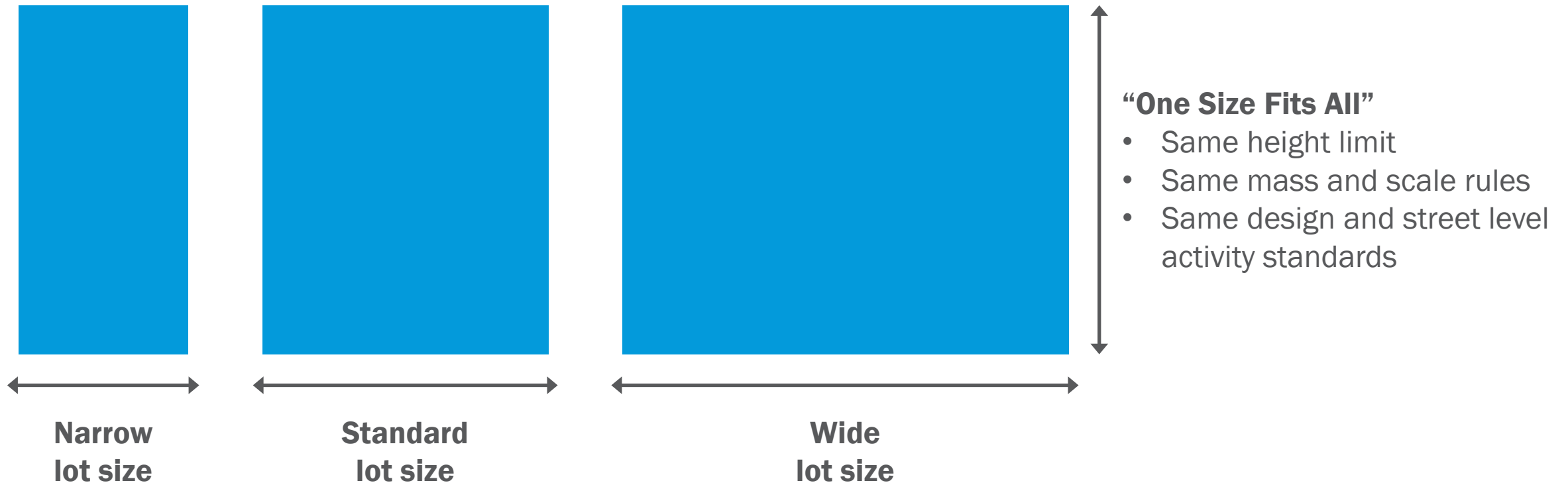


- Released to the public in January
- Summary of existing zoning tools that can be used to address Neighborhood Plan objectives
- Outcomes from recent outreach, activities, surveys, etc.
- Evaluation of alternative zoning tools and approaches
- All project documents and meeting materials are available for review at: www.denvergov.org/goldentriangle

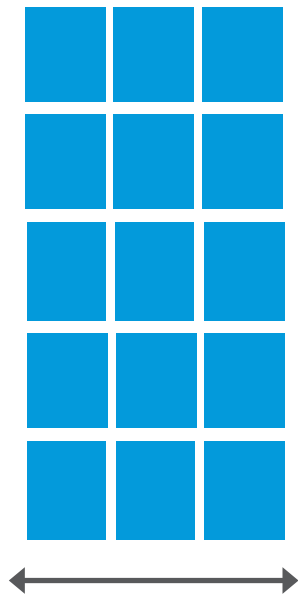
Preliminary Preferred Zoning Framework and DSG Update



Current Zoning – “One Size Fits All”

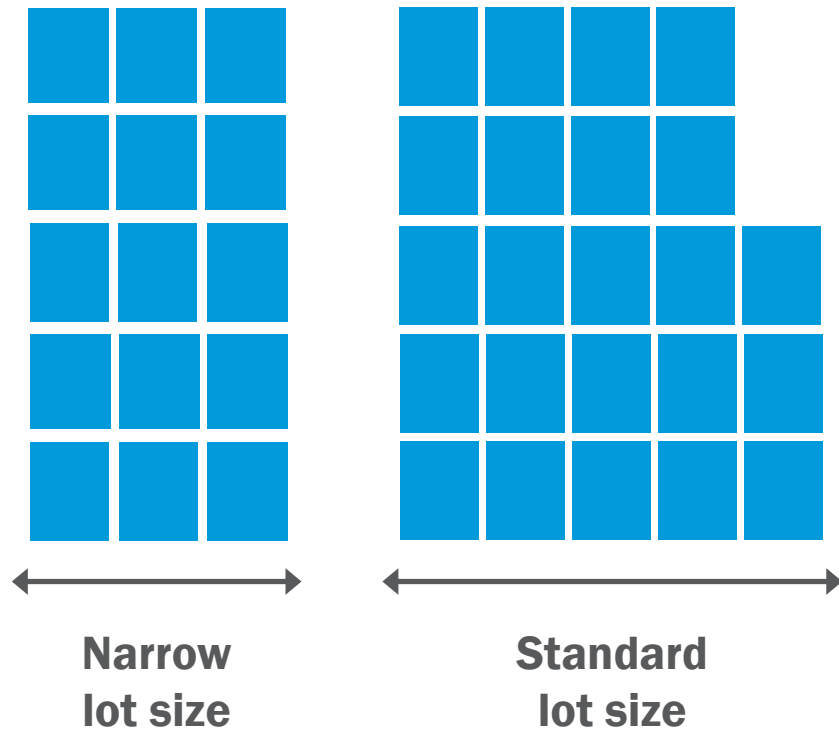


Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes

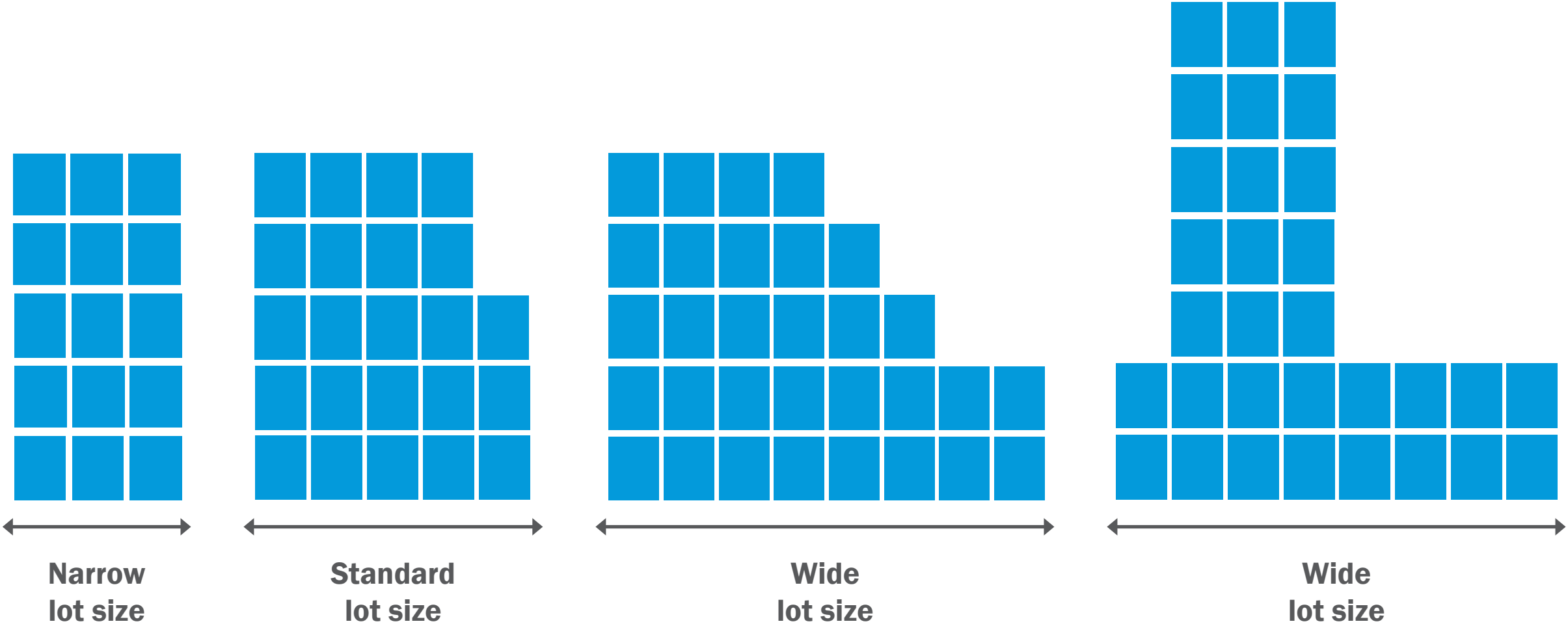


**Narrow
lot size**

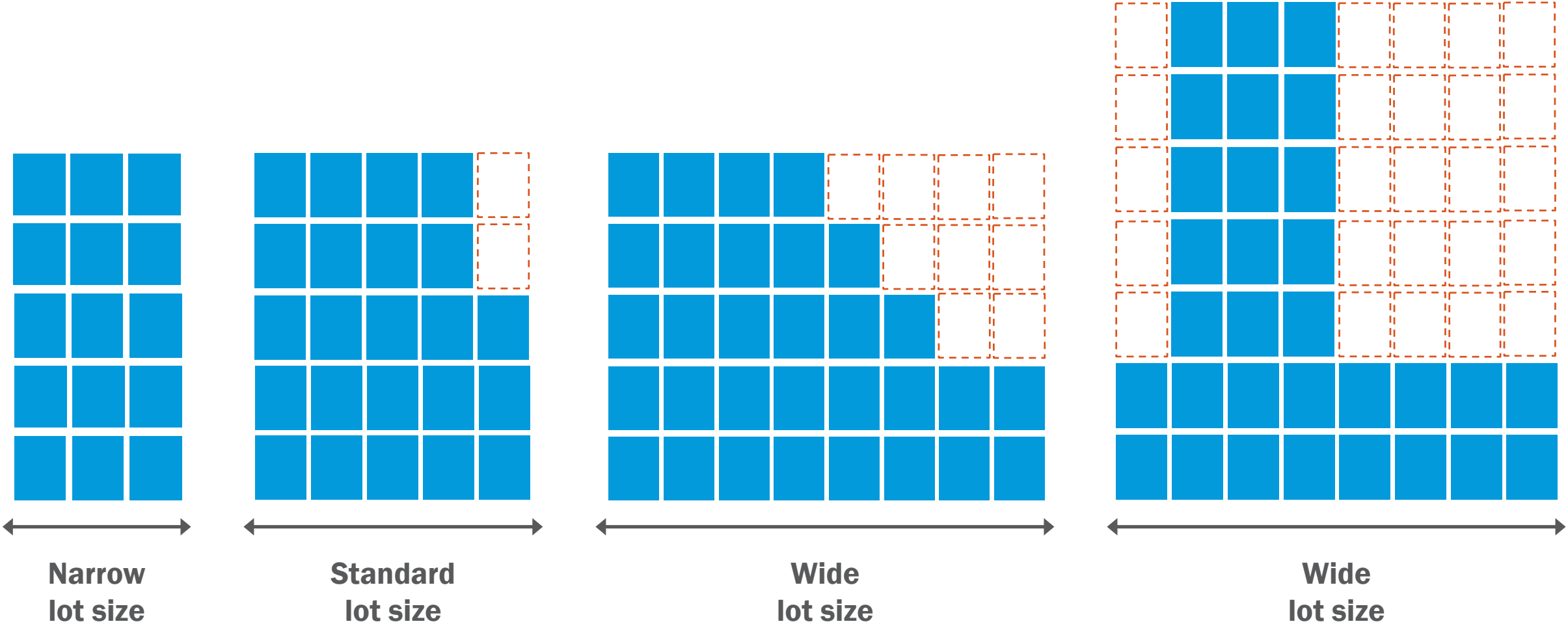
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes



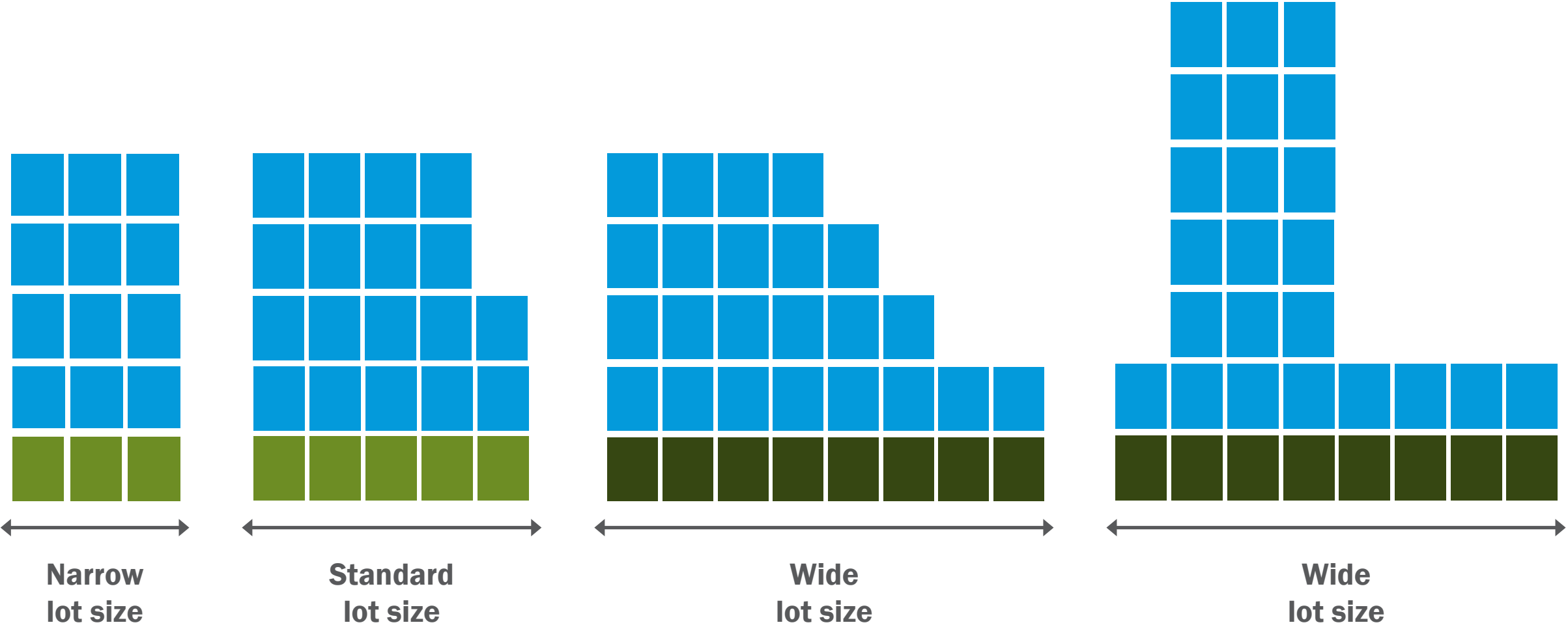
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes



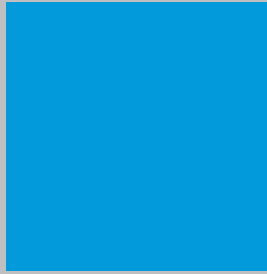

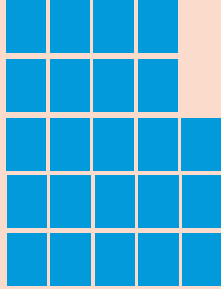
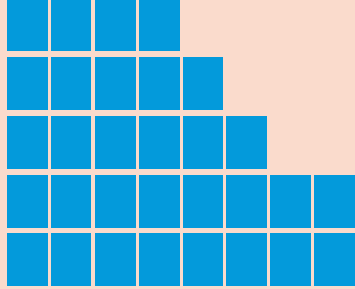
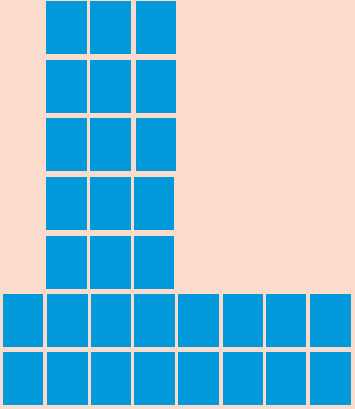
Enabling a Range of Building Types – Proposed Changes



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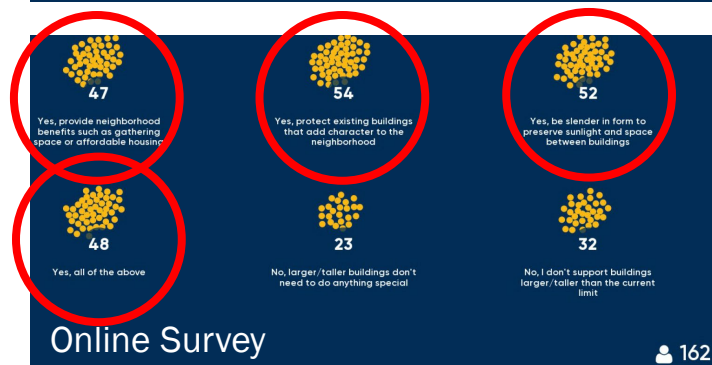
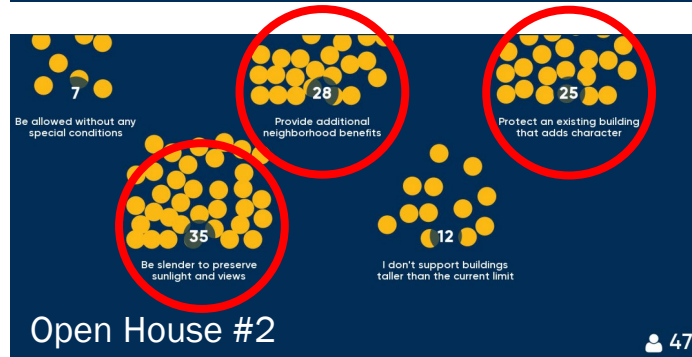
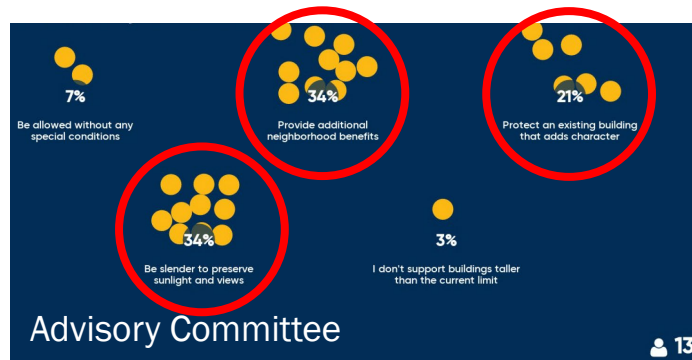


Enabling a Range of Building Types – Summary

	<i>Existing</i>	GENERAL			POINT TOWER
					
Lot Size	<i>na</i>	NARROW (75 ft or less)	STANDARD (75-150 ft)	WIDE (more than 150 ft)	WIDE (more than 150 ft)
Allowed Height	<i>175 feet*</i>	200 feet			300 feet
Mass/Scale Standards	<i>na</i>	Low	Medium	High	Highest
Design and Active Use	<i>Medium</i>	High			Highest

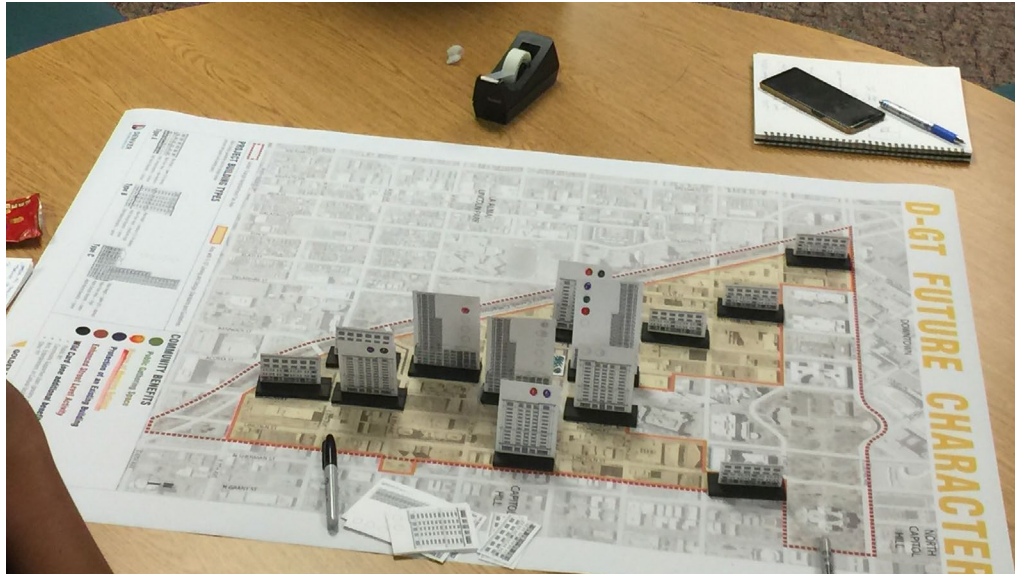
* As measured from elevation of Broadway (results in ~200 feet limit near Speer)

Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?



- **~75% favorable ranking**
- Allow buildings taller than the current height limit (175 feet) if they meet certain size restrictions
- Most agree that taller/larger projects should do something special
 - Be slender to preserve sunlight and views
 - Provide additional neighborhood benefits like affordable housing or open space
 - Help protect an existing building that adds character to the neighborhood

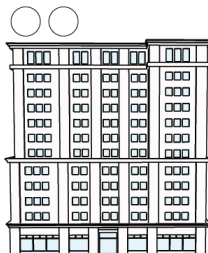
Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?



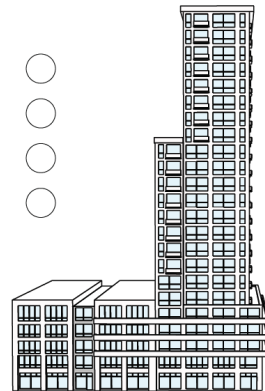
- Five tables “built” 10-12 projects each
- Larger building types (Types B and C) provided support for community priorities
 - Enhance Street Level Activity
 - Public Gathering Space
 - Range of Housing Options
 - Protect an Existing Building
 - Wild Card
- Use the same building type or benefit as many times as desired



Type A



Type B



Type C

Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?

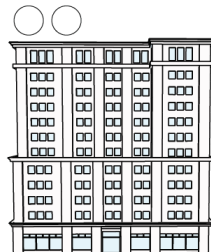
D-GT Open House #2 - September 25, 2019
09.26.2019

	Small Projects	Medium Projects	Large Projects	TOTAL Projects	Public Gathering Space	Range of Housing Options	Protect an Existing Building	Enhanced Street Level Activity	Wild Card / Dealer's Choice	TOTAL Benefits	Ratio (benefit/project)
Table 1	6	4	3	13	6	3	4	7		20	1.54
Table 2	4	1	2	7			6	4		10	1.43
Table 3	6		4	10	4	2	2	7	1	16	1.60
Table 4	2	4	4	10	9	2	1	9	3	24	2.40
Table 5	3	3	4	10	4	2	5	7	4	22	2.20
	21	12	17	50	23	9	18	34	8		
	42.0%	24.0%	34.0%		25.0%	9.8%	19.6%	37.0%	8.7%	avg	1.83

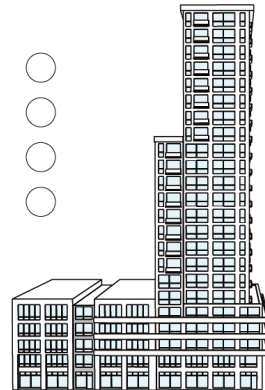
- **58% of all projects were Type B or C**
 - Minimum of two Point Towers (Type C) were used per table
- **4 of 5 tables used a mix of all three Types** (one table used Type A and C only)
- Neighborhood priorities were utilized in the following order:
 1. Enhance Street Level Activity
 2. Public Gathering Space
 3. Protect an Existing Building
 4. Range of Housing Options
 5. Wild Card (Public Art was cited most often)



Type A

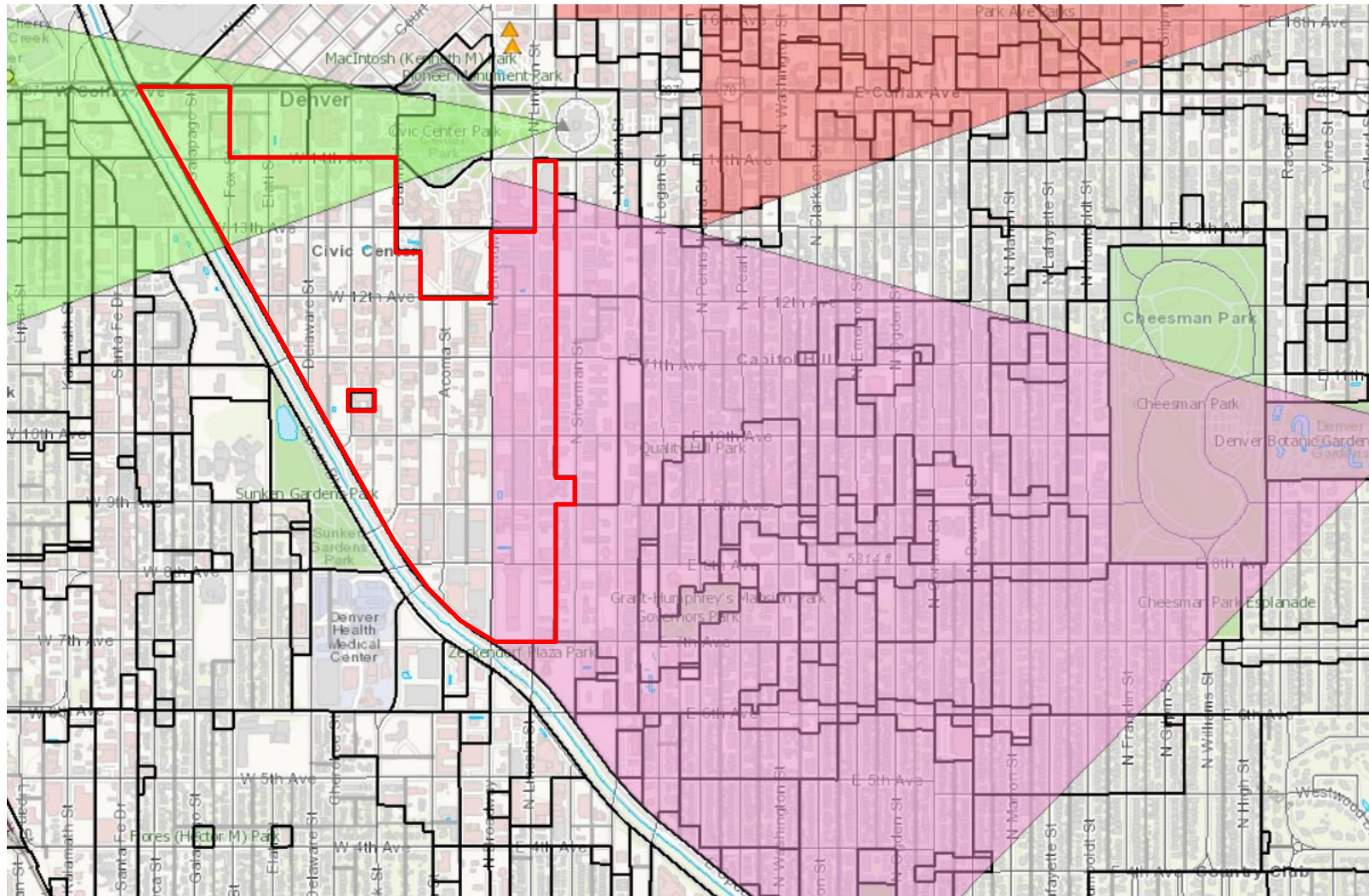


Type B



Type C

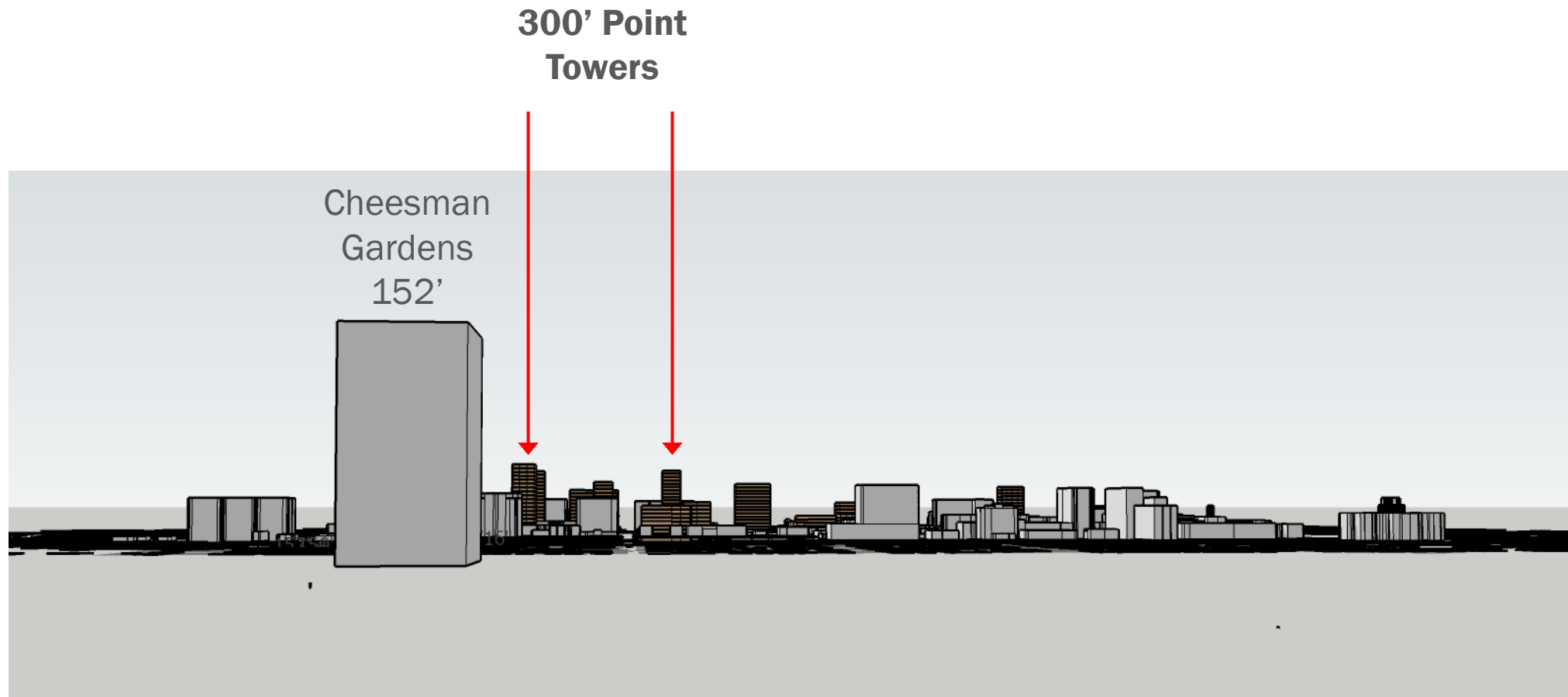
Is a Taller Height Limit Appropriate?



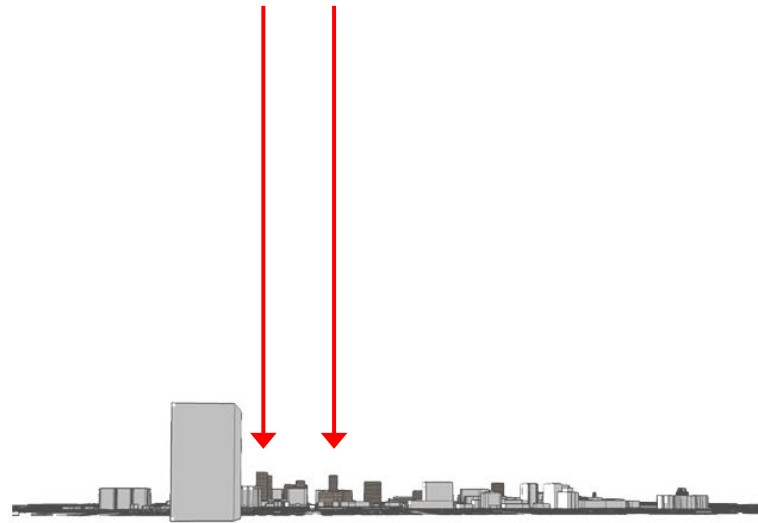
View from Cheesman Pavilion



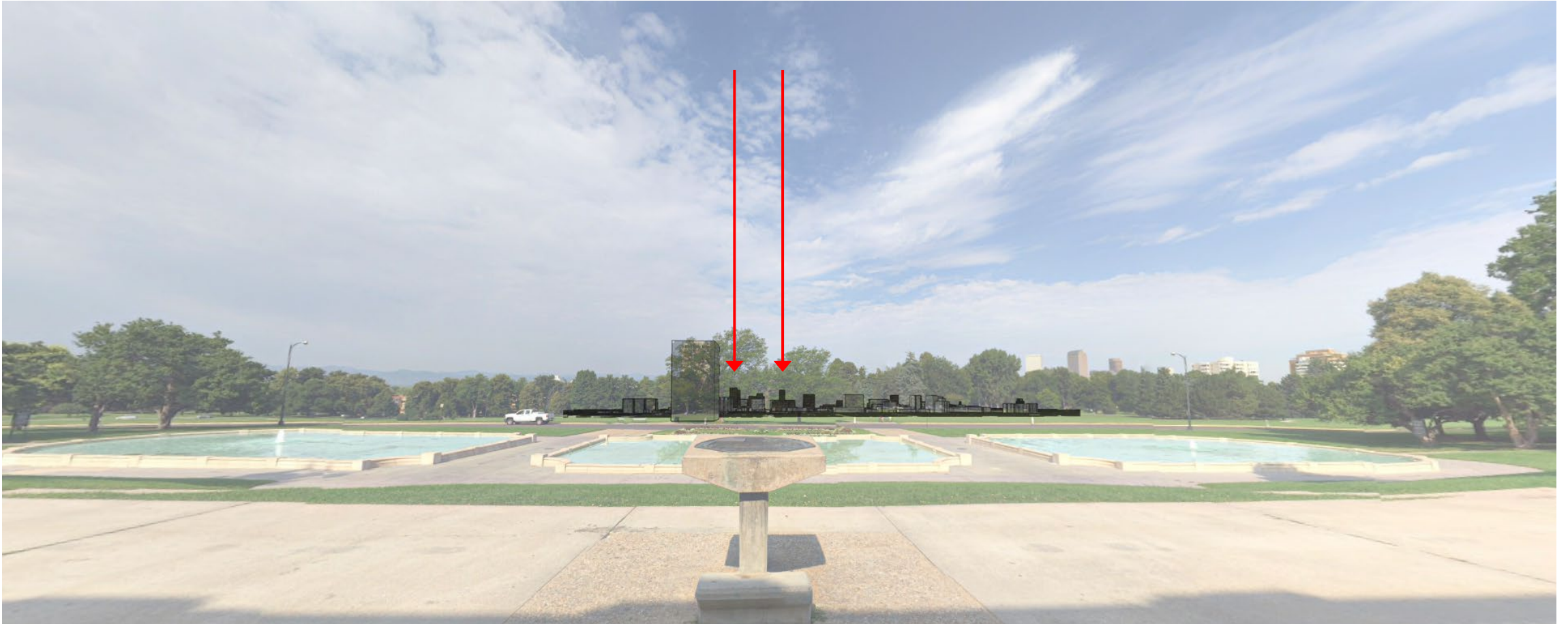
Sketchup Model of Golden Triangle



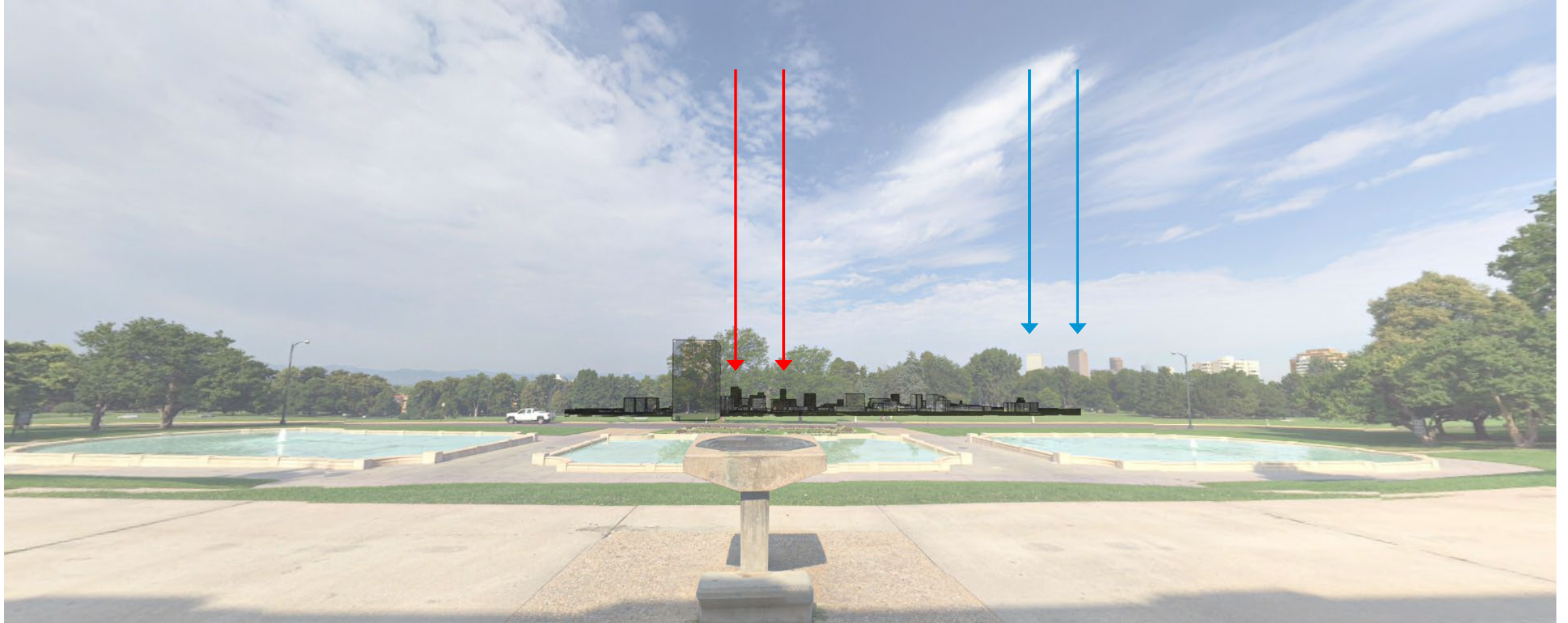
Sketchup Model of Golden Triangle



View from Cheesman Pavilion



View from Cheesman Pavilion

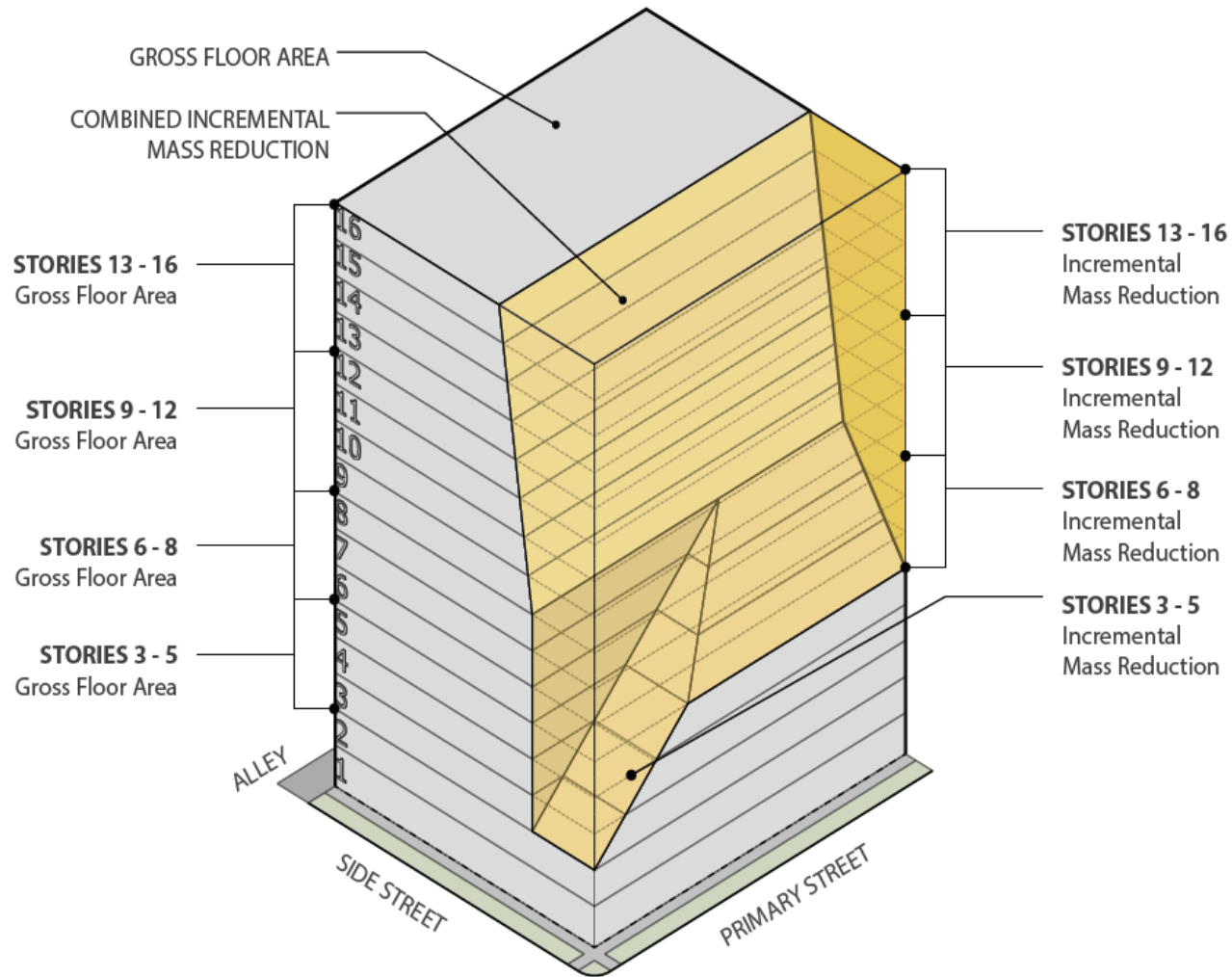


FAR as a Zoning Tool (Massing and Entitlement)



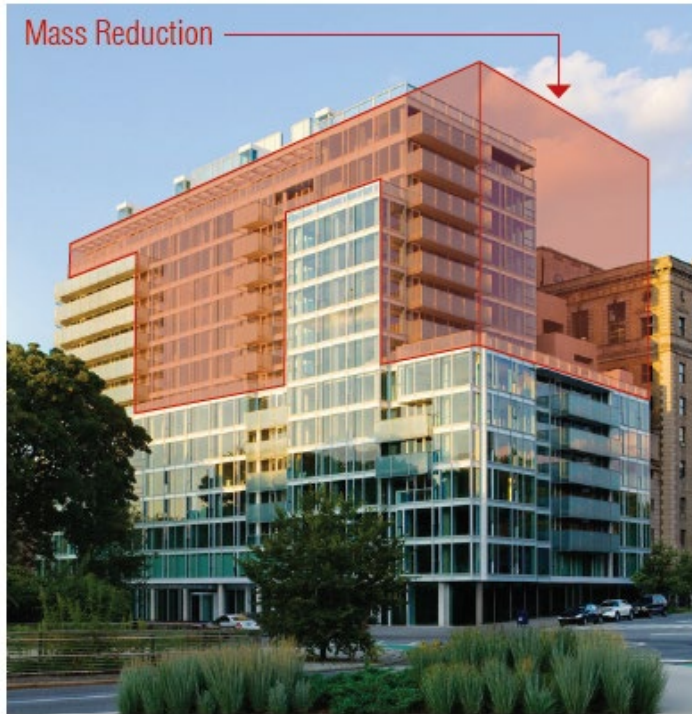
- Use higher FAR maximums to encourage use of smaller lots or Point Tower form
- Allows variety of outcomes without “loss” of entitlement
- Design review can more easily influence massing without affecting overall floor area

What about Mass Reduction?



- Useful to create a backstop for at least some shaping
- Need to be cautious of being too restrictive with reductions

Shaping Larger Buildings for Pedestrian Comfort



**Mass
Reduction**



**Upper Story
Setback**



**Upper Story
Setback**

Tower Floor Plate Size
Establishes a maximum area for the tower



Tower Dimension
Establishes a maximum linear dimension for the tower



Tower Separation
Establishes a minimum separation distance between towers



**Point Tower
Limitations**

Activating the Street Level



Residential Setback Area



Residential Setbacks



Non-Residential Active Uses



Street Level Non-Residential Active Uses

Street Level Open Space



Street Level Open Space

Design Tools to Distinguish Different Lot Sizes

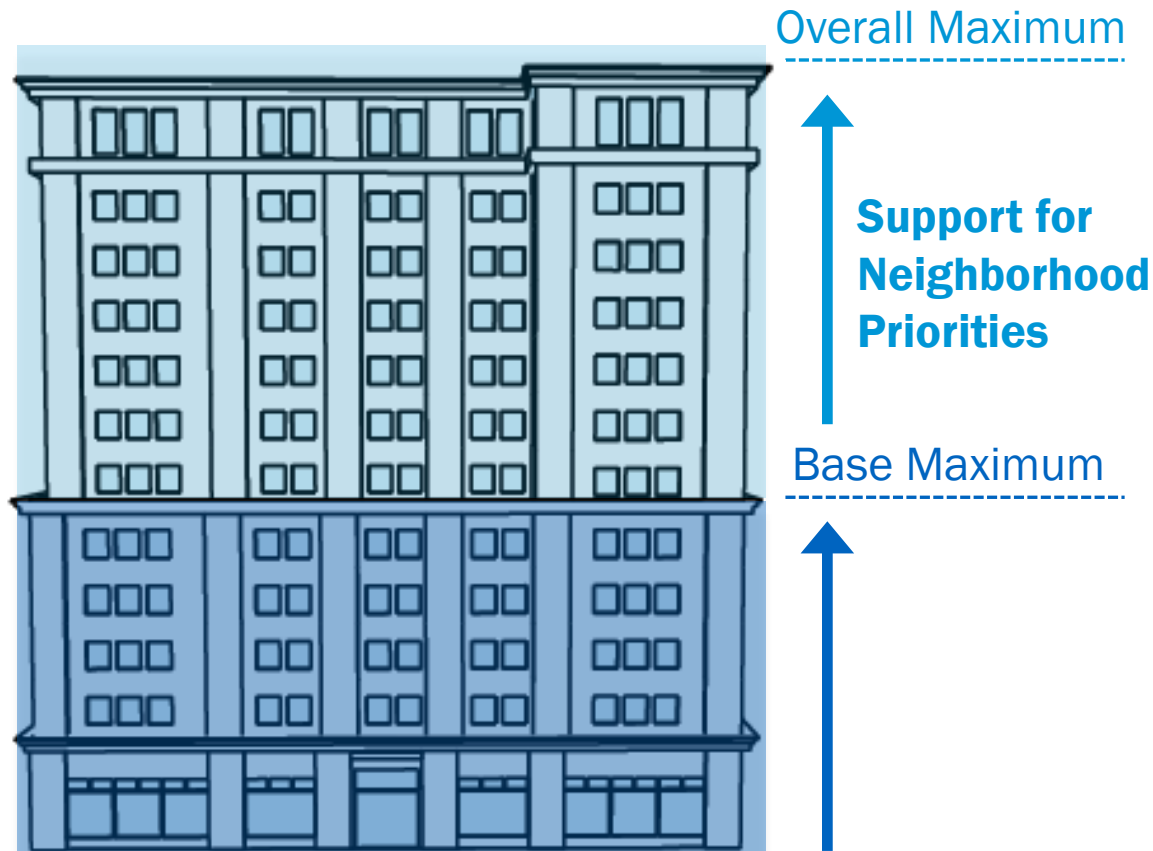
	GENERAL			POINT TOWER
Lot Size	75 ft or less	75-150 ft	more than 150 ft	more than 150 ft
Height	200'	200'	200'	300'
Maximum FAR	11.0	10.0	9.0	12.0
Mass Reduction	-	Yes <i>(above 8 stories)</i>	Yes <i>(all stories)</i>	Yes <i>(podium and tower)</i>
Upper Story Setback	-	Yes <i>(portion of frontage)</i>	Yes <i>(portion of frontage)</i>	Yes <i>(100% of frontage)</i>
Parking Wrapped by Active Uses	-	Yes <i>(only if > 5 stories)</i>	Yes	Yes
Non-Residential Use Requirement	-	-	Yes	Yes
Street Level Open Space Requirement	-	-	Yes <i>(only if > 250' wide)</i>	Yes <i>(only if > 250' wide)</i>

Supporting Neighborhood Priorities

- Utilize similar system as currently exists
- Build up to a Base Maximum (by-right), without any special conditions



Supporting Neighborhood Priorities



- Utilize similar system as currently exists
- Build up to a Base Maximum (by-right), without any special conditions
- Can qualify for additional building area, *or incentives*, by supporting various neighborhood priorities up to an Overall Maximum

Base and Overall Maximums – Summary

	<i>Existing</i>	GENERAL			POINT TOWER
Lot Size	<i>na</i>	NARROW (75 ft or less)	STANDARD (75-150 ft)	WIDE (more than 150 ft)	WIDE (more than 150 ft)
Overall FAR Maximum	7.0*	11.0	10.0	9.0	12.0
Base FAR Maximum	4.0*	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

* Does not include floor area dedicated to parking

Proposed Incentive Options



Goal is to focus on most important neighborhood priorities not addressed directly by other zoning tools

- Housing Affordability
- Promoting Neighborhood Character
 - Landmark Designated
 - Character Buildings
- Public Art

Promoting Neighborhood Character

	Landmark	Character
Design Review	Yes	Yes, if property owner has applied for “Protected” status
Exterior Modifications	Minor	More flexible
Designation	Property owner or community	Property owner only
Bonuses/Incentives	High	Medium

- **Landmark** designation is primary path and receives greater incentives
- **Character Buildings** are a new category that allows greater flexibility for exterior modifications and adaptive reuse



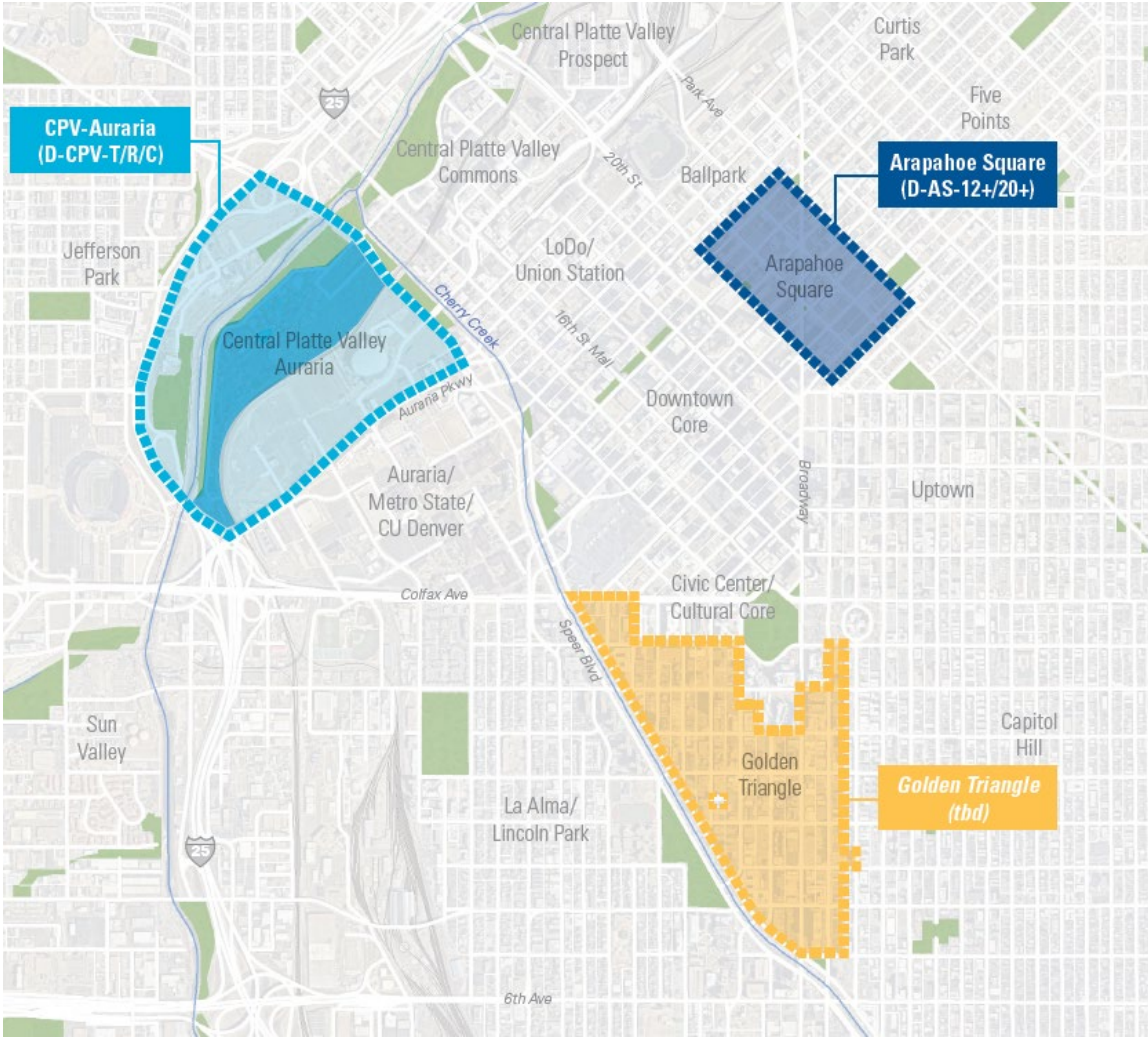
Promoting Neighborhood Character



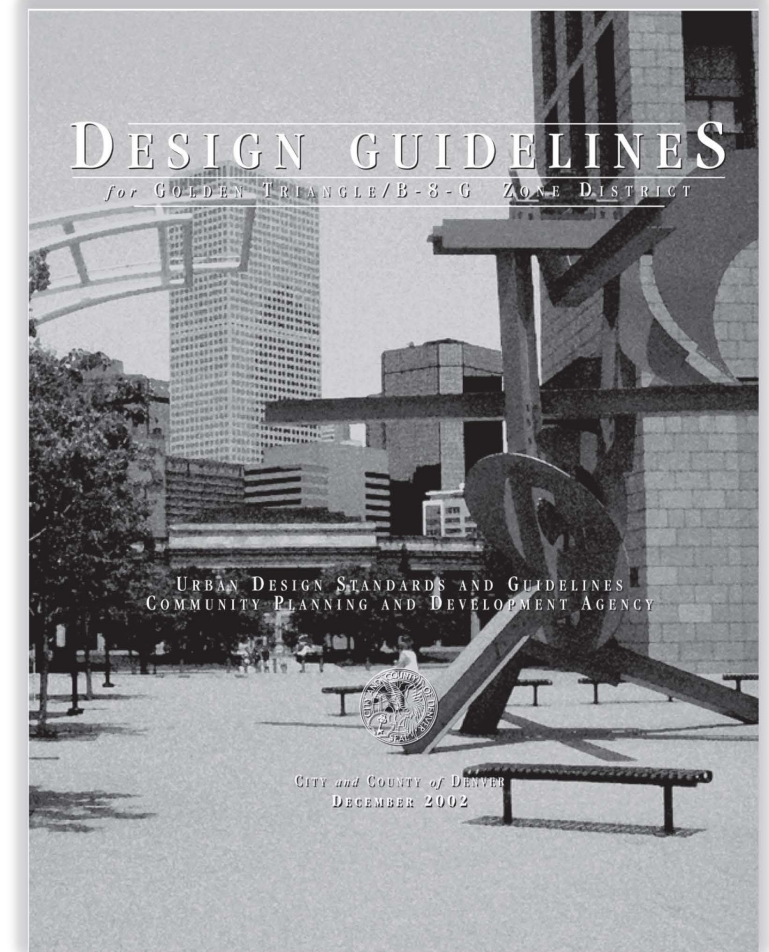
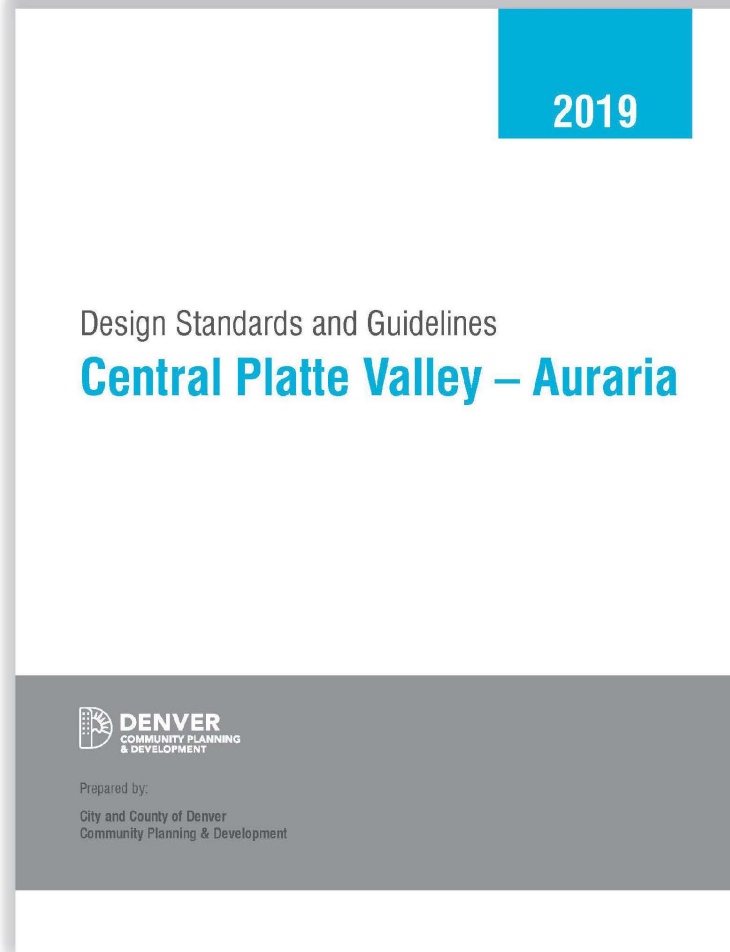
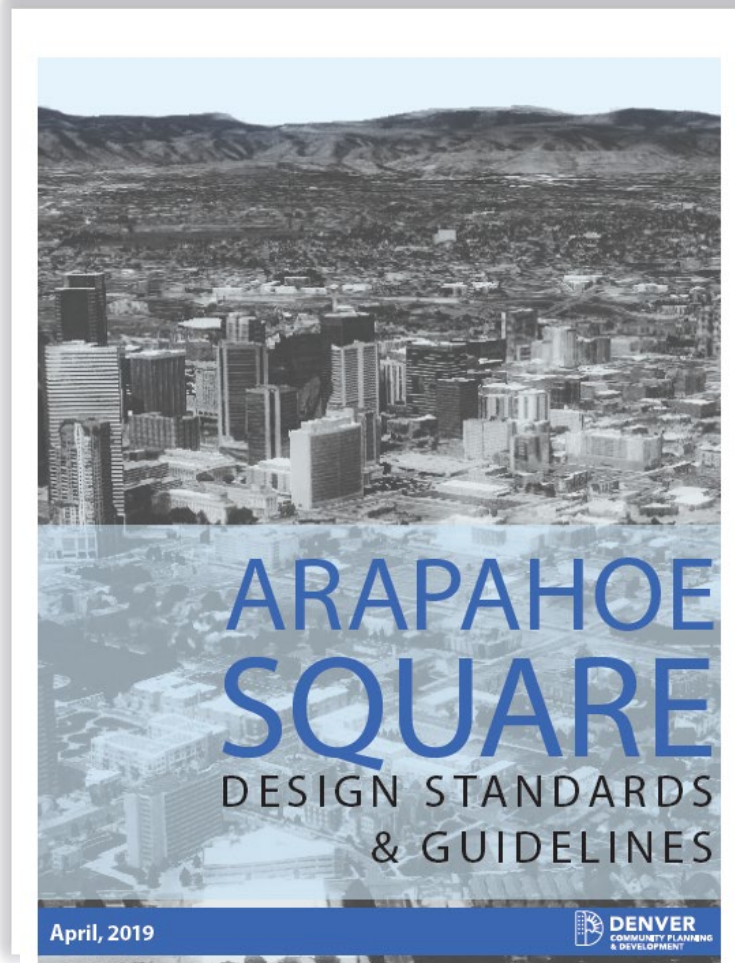
- Protected Character Building is ***voluntarily*** registered with City
- Design review by CPD staff, not LPC
- Preliminary criteria for defining a Protected Character Building
 - No age restriction
 - Exhibit distinctive architectural details and materials
 - Exhibit distinctive massing and/or roof form
 - Relationship with the streetscape context
 - Minimum level of quality/integrity

Design Standards and Guidelines

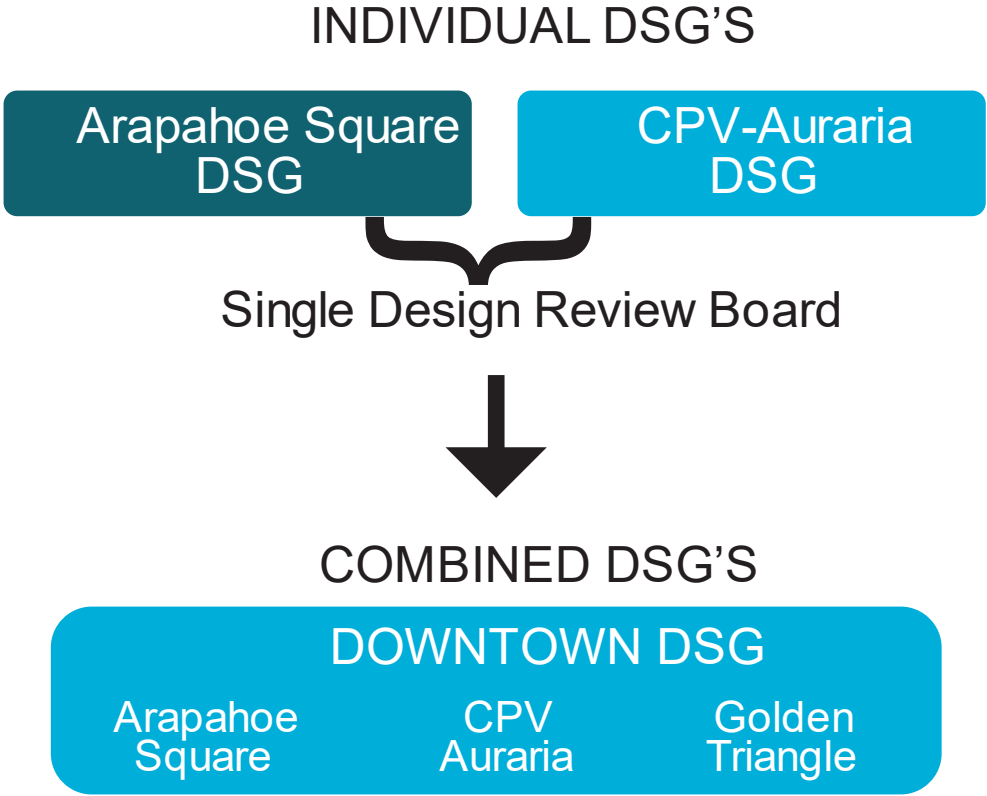
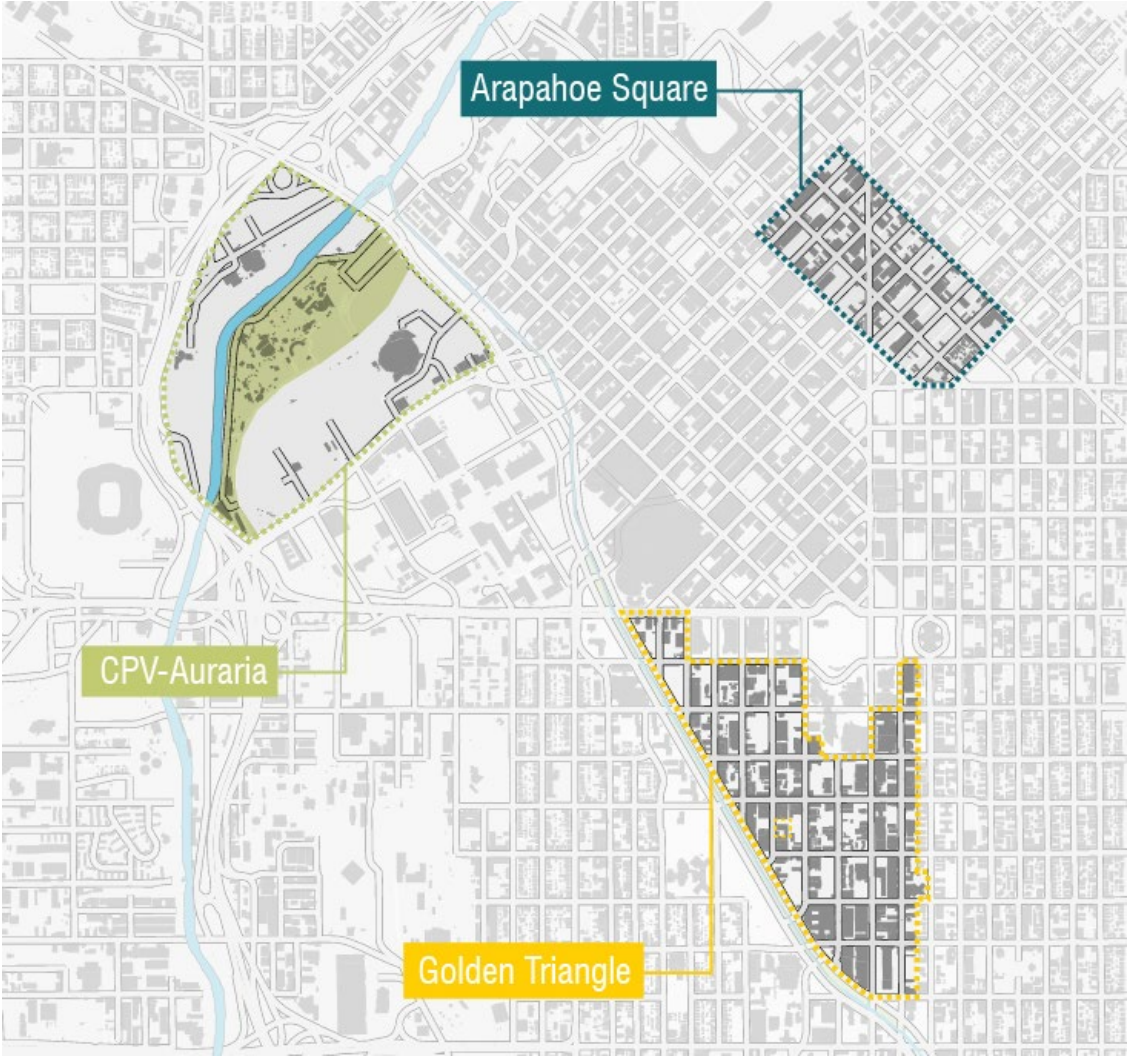
- D-GT is next step in more consistent and comprehensive approach to design review in Downtown



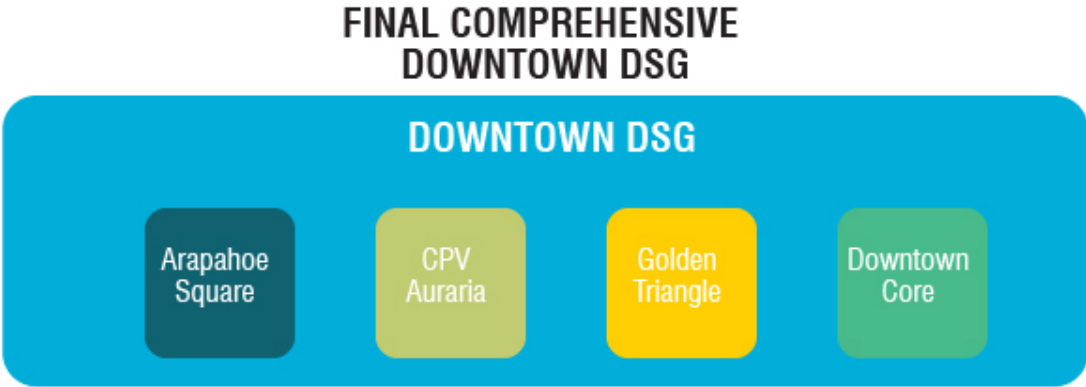
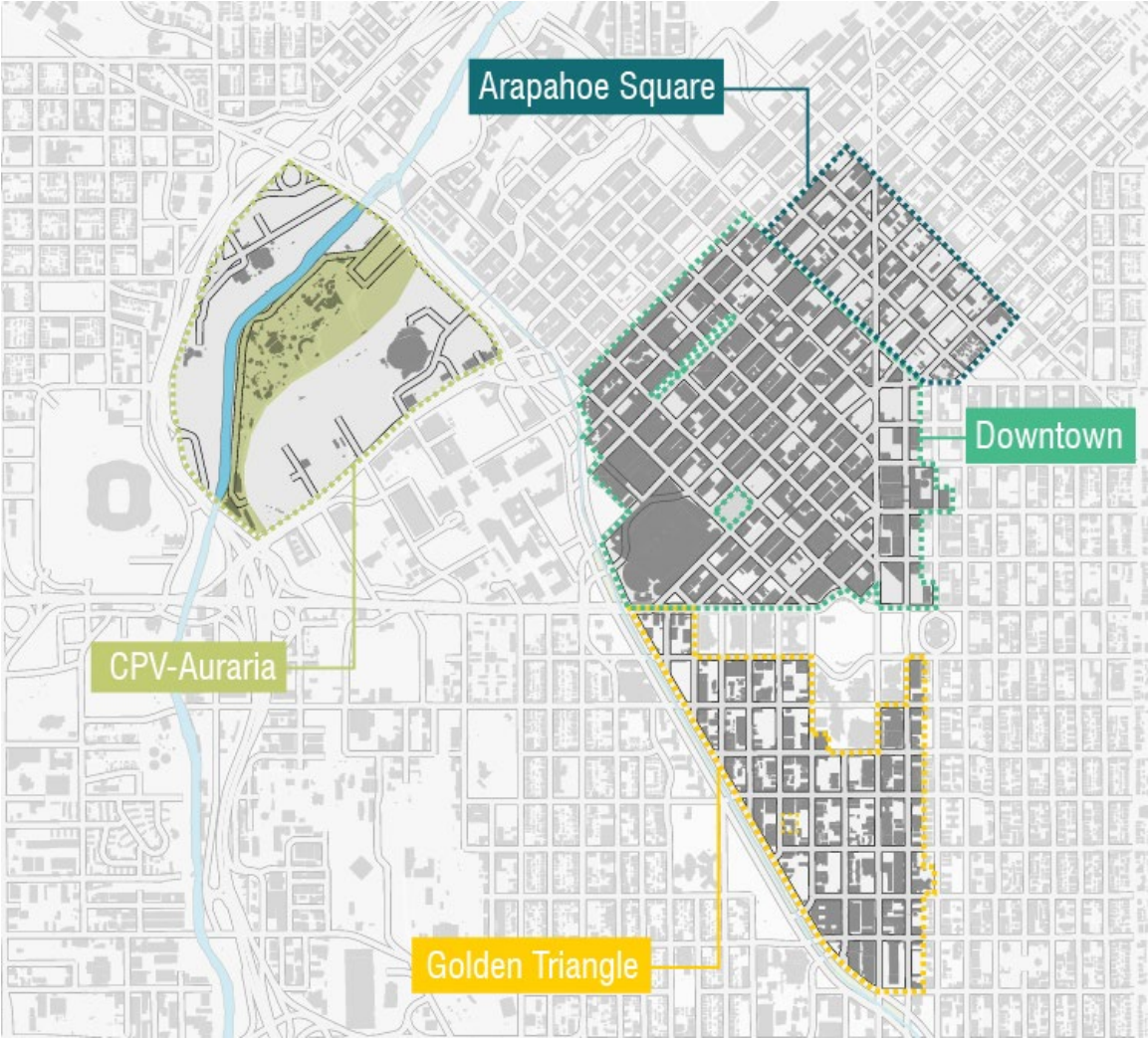
Coordinating & Merging Individual DSG's



Downtown DSG – Near Term



Downtown DSG – Long Term



Downtown DSG Chapter Breakdown

- Chapter 1 | Site Organization
- Chapter 2 | Building Mass & Scale
- Chapter 3 | Façade Design & Site Details
- Chapter 4 | Streetscape Design
- Chapter 5 | Neighborhood Specific Design
(D-AS-12+/20+, D-CPV-T/R/C, and D-GT)**
- Chapter 6 | Building Signs

Next Steps



On-going Discussions with Advisory Committee

- **Point Tower separation distance**
 - Does 120 feet (or more) overly impact development opportunities on nearby lots?
- **Keeping Base FAR at 4.0**
 - Is this too restrictive now that we are including parking in FAR calculation?
- **Desire for more use-based incentives** (i.e., Live/Work, public parking, etc.)
 - Wanted by the community, but are difficult to monitor over time
- **Housing affordability incentives**
 - Concern about getting ahead of potential citywide approach and/or state changes

Online Open House

Available on website (www.denvergov.org/goldentriangle) until **April 20**

1. Review the presentation video and slides for an overview of the preliminary preferred alternative
2. Review the topic boards for more details on the proposed zoning tools
3. Provide your feedback via the online survey before April 20
4. Tell your friends, family, and colleagues!

Next Steps

- **Preferred Strategy Interim Report #3 (end of May)**
- Internal Drafting of Zoning Code / DSG (June-August)
- Public Review of New D-GT Zoning and DSG (late summer)

Thank you!

