

Forward Thinking on the Front Range

A Smart Growth Tour

with national walkability experts

Dan Burden, Mark Fenton, and Paul Zykofsky

February 10-12, 2014

Background Information

This two-and-a-half-day “discovery” tour samples from a rich mosaic of community-building change underway in the Rocky Mountain Front Range.

This tour, like its predecessors dating back to 1994, allows each participant to set a new framework and understanding for town making and suburban retrofits. This tour expands upon the tradition set by Dan Burden, the WALC Institute, and the Local Government Commission and adds the talents of walkability leaders Mark Fenton, Paul Zykofsky, Gary Toth, and Lynn Richards.

This tour is for anyone who advocates better walking, bicycling, aging in place, successful main streets, town making, historic preservation, neighborhood development, governance – anything really to improve the built environment and health

of a town or a regions’ people. Participants will gain an understanding of how people in your related, relevant professions or practices see the world. They will discover—together—what works and what doesn’t work in efforts to make built environments more walkable, more livable, and downright smarter.

Why the Front Range?

Colorado is one of the best states in which to observe how places embrace a healthier future and the new economy. It’s a great place to see how policies and practices can support historic preservation, main streets, paseos, infill investment, successful pedestrian malls, walkable suburbs, strip malls converted to villages, people-focused streetscapes, transit-supportive development, placemaking, trails, and traffic calming.



Forward Thinking on the Front Range – Tour Summary

When and Where to Show Up

Starting point: Denver International Airport

Start time: 12:30 p.m. local time
Monday, Feb. 10, 2014

Accommodations and food: Hotel rooms are provided Monday and Tuesday nights as part of the tour registration fee. Breakfast and dinner are provided. Participants will be on their own for lunches each day.

What to Bring

Layered Clothing: It will be cold outside and warm inside, so bring layered clothing, ideally including an outer windbreaker, a hat, gloves and comfortable all-weather shoes or boots. We might get a snow storm or two (or not) to make the trip even more special, but keep in mind, you are urban pioneers, and so you will be with a group of individuals, like yourselves, who can adjust to just about anything.

Money for Lunch: Breakfast, dinner, and snacks are provided. Participants will buy their own lunch each day at locations they choose and must pay for wine or beer they consume at dinner.

A Camera: Plan to take lots of photos. If possible have an extra memory card and battery so you won't miss any photo opportunities and have one freshly charged battery at all times.



Schedule in a Nutshell

Monday, February 10:

Time: 12:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Depart 1 p.m. sharp

Areas of focus: Fort Collins, Longmont, Prospect

Lodging: Best Western Plus Plaza Hotel

Tuesday, February 11:

Time: 7:15 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Areas of focus: Boulder, Louisville, Golden

Lodging: Hampton Inn Denver West/Golden

Wednesday, February 12:

Time: 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Areas of focus: Lakewood (Belmar), Cherry Creek and Cherry Creek North, Stapleton, Glendale, and Denver's Lower Downtown Historic District (LoDo)

Lodging: Participants are responsible for their own lodging this evening, but the tour will conclude at the location of the New Partners for Smart Growth conference, which is the Hyatt Regency Denver at the Colorado Convention Center.



Forward Thinking on the Front Range – Day One

Monday, February 10

Fort Collins, Longmont, and Prospect

12:30 p.m. All aboard!

Everyone boards the bus at Denver International Airport

1:00 p.m. Bus Ride to Fort Collins

Introductions of all participants and leaders; an overview of the tour by Dan Burden.

2:15 p.m. Fort Collins



Money magazine listed Fort Collins as the best small city in Colorado, emphasizing the “bikes and beers” culture, the town’s high-end microbreweries, and expansive cycling trails. It also noted the Fort’s impressive economic activity, fostered by Colorado State University and Hewlett-Packard. We will add that Fort Collins has evolved a keen sense of preservation and placemaking.



What we will feature:

- The inspiration for Walt Disney’s Main Street
- Woonerf “B” Streets
- Alleys and alley systems (More “B” Streets)
- Urban infill and mixed use projects
- Historic preservation

- Bicycle facilities, trails, and bicycle library
- Innovative solutions to vehicle parking
- Boulevard streets
- New Belgium Brewing Company’s active transportation programs

4:15 p.m. Bus Ride to Longmont

5:00 p.m. Longmont

We only have time for one stop, and a short walk into the downtown, but what you will discover in the downtown area and at the transit hub will add to the fullness of the first day.

5:30 p.m. Short Bus Ride to Prospect

5:40 p.m. Prospect

On the southern edge of Longmont, Prospect was the first full-scale New Urbanist development in Colorado. This popular community has a traditional layout of streets and plazas with commercial uses and a rich diversity of housing types. Begun in the mid-1990s by Kiki Wallace, at buildout there will be roughly 2,000 residents in 585 units on 340 lots. Prospect was designed by the firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, who also designed the new urbanist community of Seaside, Florida.



What we will feature:

- A New Urbanist mixed use village
- The central plaza area
- Parks, and more

6:30 p.m. Dinner in Prospect

We will eat at the Rib House. Dinner is provided, with vegetarian and gluten-free options available. Alcoholic beverages are at each tour participant’s expense. Developer Kiki Wallace will join us.

8:00 p.m. Bus departs for our hotel

That will be the Best Western Plus Plaza Hotel in Longmont.

Forward Thinking on the Front Range – Day Two

Tuesday, February 11

Boulder, Louisville, and Golden

7:15 a.m. Participants deliver luggage to the bus
Then head to hotel conference room for presentations. You may pick up breakfast on your way into the conference room. Tables will be available for participants to sit, listen, and eat.



7:30 a.m. Presentation in hotel conference room
“Walking Audits: How and Why, and What to do Afterwards.” The American Planning Association has approved this training session for 4.0 AICP Certificate Maintenance credits.

8:45 a.m. Bus ride to first walk audit training site
9:15 a.m. Boulder

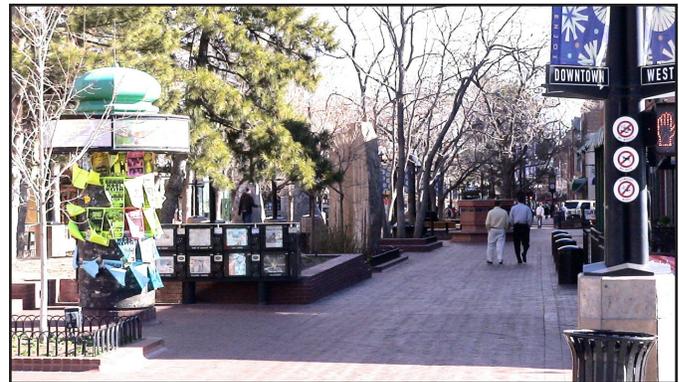
We’ll divide into two groups for walking audit sessions, led by Dan Burden and Mark Fenton.



This first site features the Pearl Street Pedestrian Mall – four blocks filled with public art, fountains, sculptures, a sandbox for children, a stylized map of Boulder County, and small gardens planted with a variety of flowers and trees (tulips are prominent in the spring).

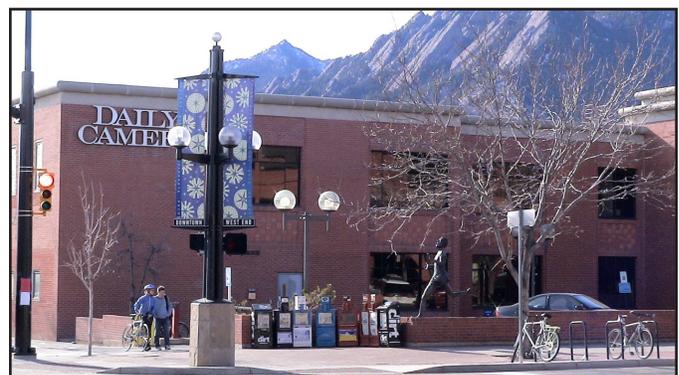


The secret to the success goes beyond good design. Years ago City officials limited outward growth and focused attention in the City center, with the Mall at its core. This is one of only four thriving malls of this type in the nation, out of over 200 built. This historic district includes many older buildings.



What we will feature:

- Designing for pedestrian focus and interest
- A mixed-use infill project at Pearl and 8th Street
- The Boulder Creek Trail



10:30 a.m. Bus ride to second training site

Leaders will switch groups at the second audit site, where we will explore more suburban settings.

What we will feature:

- North Boulder Village
- A conventional mall to village conversion

11:45 a.m. Bus departs for Louisville

Forward Thinking on the Front Range – Day Two

12:10 p.m. Louisville

For eight years Forbes magazine has listed Louisville in its top five places in the nation to raise families. It's a safe community with well-regarded schools. Our tour will focus on how placemaking and main street programs both provide a tie to the historic coal mining days, and feature activities sought by the Millennials and retiring boomers.



Louisville's housing market has been strong since 2008, and its place in the Denver to Boulder tech corridor has kept the job outlook solid. Summer brings weekly events with food trucks from local restaurants, beer gardens, live music, and more.

What we will feature:

- Main Street and Downtown
- Parkettes (first in the nation in 2008)
- Bicycle facilities and grade-separated crossings
- A focus on retaining local character
- North of downtown a Safeway converting from suburban to urban form & underground parking
- Preservation of an historic grain elevator
- A new Community Library and parking garage
- 1,800 acres of open space
- A festival site with a fully operational ice rink

1:00 p.m. Lunch on your own in Louisville

2:00 p.m. Bus departs for Golden

2:35 p.m. Golden



The City of Golden is improving neighborhoods and the community as a whole by tapping into its natural assets. Trails, kayak runs, recreational centers, and rock climbing opportunities abound. They have done a spectacular job attracting high-density infill development into the downtown, along with fantastic traffic calming and some of the best Safe Routes to School projects in the country.



What we will feature:

- A downtown rich with character and mixed use investments
- City of Golden Parks and Recreation, Community Center Building
- Clear Creek Trail and historic village
- Extensive road diet and roundabout projects
- Integrating significant open space into a road project funded by a \$25M grant
- Bicycle facilities, trails, and other active transportation investments



6:30 p.m. Dinner in Golden

8:15 p.m. Bus departs for hotel

We spend this night at the Hampton Inn Denver West/Golden

Forward Thinking on the Front Range – Day Three

Wednesday, February 12

Lakewood, Cherry Creek, Glendale, Stapleton, Lowry, LoDo

7:30 a.m. Bus departs hotel for Lakewood

8:00 a.m. Belmar in Lakewood, Colorado

This mall-to-village conversion is one of the nation's most successful greyfield transformations. Belmar is a mixed-use renovation and redevelopment of the failed Villa Italia Mall in Colorado's fourth-largest city. Even though it is still a work in progress, this has already become a bustling, vibrant downtown district for Lakewood, which had no such district before the renovation effort began. Belmar represents the cumulative will of the City of Lakewood and its residents, who clamored for a downtown. The 104-acre site covering 23 city blocks is already influencing development at its borders – and drawing impressive numbers of residential buyers and renters in a soft market.



What we will feature:

- Using contemporary zoning controls and standards to foster walkable projects

9:00 a.m. Bus departs for Cherry Creek

9:20 a.m. Arrive in Cherry Creek District

We will walk through the revitalized Cherry Creek Shopping Center and the Cherry Creek North storefront shopping district. We'll see a village conversion of an existing mall, with main street components and a curb-free festival street. These two retail centers anchor this neighborhood, and have stimulated ongoing infill investment nearby. The surrounding area of the neighborhood remains residential.



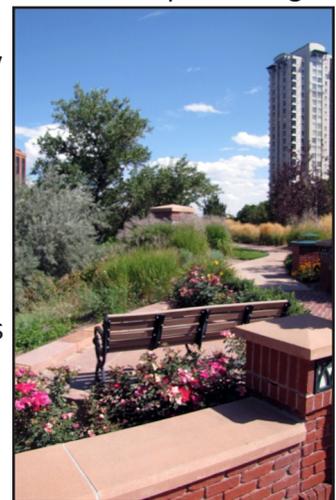
What we will feature:

- The pedestrian friendly Fillmore Plaza
- Pedestrian oriented streetscapes
- High-quality placemaking
- A 16 block shopping and dining district with over 300 upscale shops and restaurants

10:50 a.m. Bus departs for Glendale

11:00 a.m. Glendale

The area's smallest town is focused on promoting a good land use mix, density, and a high quality of life. One-square mile big Glendale is one of the most interesting infill-focused communities in the nation. Streets on prime development sites promote access and views of Cherry Creek and its trail system. Glendale has set the stage for significant new projects, some now completed, including the nation's first rugby stadium, and a host of major infill mixed use projects. The city also built a community park at its heart, an 8-acre open space development adjacent to the stadium. The recently completed High Altitude Training Center marks the final phase of the Infinity Park project.



What we will feature:

- Designing to protect and enhance natural areas
- Setting a vision for development rather than simply reacting to proposals
- Creating key facilities to attract development

11:30 a.m. Bus departs for Stapleton

Forward Thinking on the Front Range – Day Three

12:00 noon Stapleton



While Denver International Airport was under construction, city officials began to plan for redeveloping the 4,700 acre Stapleton Airport site.

12:30 p.m. Lunch on your own in Stapleton



Forest City Enterprises is now responsible for the 1995 New Urbanist master plan where construction began in 2000. The new community is zoned for residential and commercial development, including office parks and “big box” shopping centers. In 2004, residents moved into Stapleton’s first apartments, pushing Stapleton’s population to 2,500 residents. In 2006, the Denver School of Science and Technology opened, along with The Shops at Northfield Stapleton.



What we will feature:

- A very large scale mixed-use district
- Parks and open space uses on 35% of the site
- Large adjacent nature preserves
- A 38-mile trail network
- Ten years of residential growth, 30,000 planned

2:00 p.m. Bus departs for Lowry

2:15 p.m. Lowry

The former site of Lowry Field and Lowry Air Force Base now includes homes surrounding a village. This reuse project’s goal was to revitalize an existing community while avoiding sprawl. Lowry has been so successful that this model infill community received the Governor’s Award for Smart Growth.

What we will feature:

- The Colorado Free University in an old firehouse
- A forward-thinking, mixed-use community



3:00 p.m. Bus to LoDo and Highlands

3:15 p.m. LoDo

Denver’s Lower Downtown Historic District is one of the best historic town centers in the nation. It is now attracting significant investment supporting urban living. We’ll explore its many treasures. Highlands is another older neighborhood, just to the north across the South Platte River.



What we will feature:

- High quality historic preservation
- Dense and vibrant urban infill
- River trails along the South Platte

6:00 p.m. Dinner in LoDo

We will eat at McCormick and Schmick’s

8:00 p.m. Walk or bus to NPSG conference hotel

Gather at the Hyatt Regency Denver to reconnect with our luggage in the hotel lobby.

8:20 p.m. Concluding remarks by tour leaders

Then everyone decompresses as they wish! Thank you for participating!