



Chapter 4: Transportation Connections

Consistent with the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan (BVCP) and Transportation Master Plan (TMP), the Transportation Connections Plan was developed in conjunction with the proposed area land uses and to support the city's sustainability goals. The Connections Plan is also designed to: support the area's new regional rail and bus facilities; facilitate the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program; and support the plan's urban design goals.

The Connections Plan is a right-of-way plan that will be administered according to Section 9-9-8, BRC 1981.¹ The Plan will be incorporated into the TMP and replace the portions of earlier network plans that cover the Transit Village area. The transportation improvements included in the Connections Plan will be installed by property owners and the city at the time of redevelopment. Cost, phasing and financing are discussed in the Implementation Plan.

Objectives

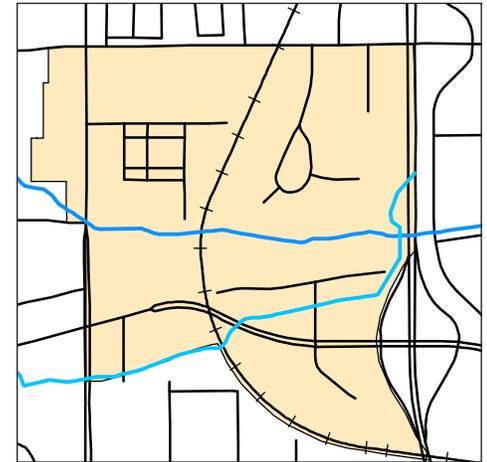
The objectives of the Connections Plan are to:

- Establish a fine-grained, multimodal network of transportation connections that will:
 - establish a pedestrian-friendly environment;
 - create safe and convenient access to transit;
 - establish a rich variety of safe and convenient connections for all modes within the area and to major activity centers and the rest of the community, including Twenty Ninth Street, CU, Downtown, nearby neighborhoods, and the employment and industrial area to the east; and
 - support the changes in land use, increases in density, and urban character proposed by the area plan.
- Provide new roads on an approximate 400-foot grid. (By way of comparison, the Downtown area, one of the city's most pedestrian-oriented areas, with densities similar to those proposed for some parts of the Transit Village area, has a 300-foot street grid.)
- Provide pedestrian connections approximately every 200 feet to provide mid-block access for bicycle and pedestrian access while providing flexibility for property owners.
- Provide key alley connections that are shown on the Connections Plan, where they are required for access or to separate different land uses. Encourage additional alleys, particularly in locations with higher intensity land uses that anticipate buildings located up to the street.
- Locate connections to straddle property lines when possible to reduce the burden on individual property owners.
- While providing significant flexibility through the amendment process, show some connections on the map as flexible in order to emphasize that the intent is a complete and appropriately spaced connection, rather than a precise alignment.
- Provide new traffic signals on Pearl Parkway, 30th Street, and Valmont Road at 34th Street to facilitate transit and traffic movement and provide safe pedestrian crossings and connections to the surrounding neighborhoods.

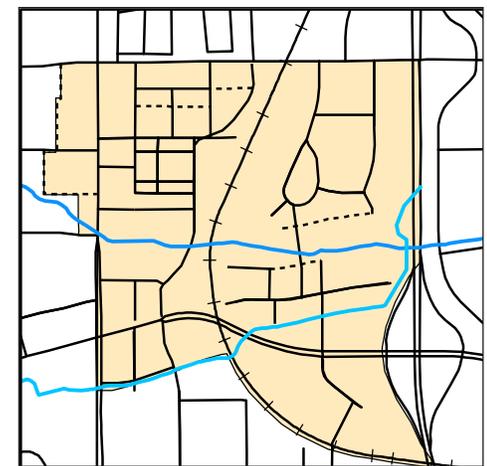
¹ Section 9-9-8 of the 1981 Boulder Revised Code addresses the reservations, dedication and improvement of rights-of-way.

Transit Village Area vs. Downtown Street Grids

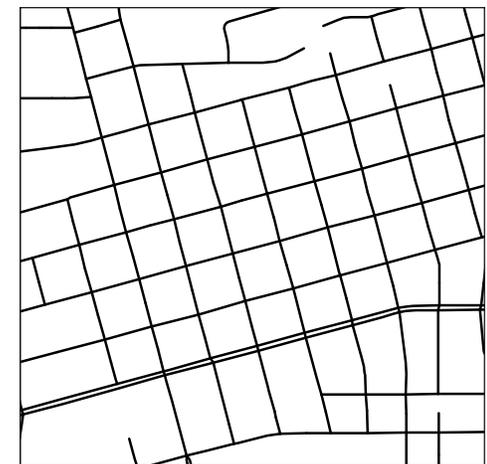
Current Grid



Future Grid



Downtown Grid



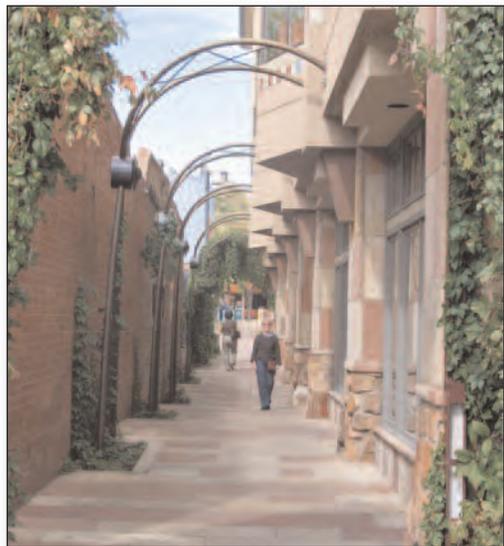
The Connections Plan establishes a more fine-grained street grid, similar to that of Downtown.



A path planned along the North Boulder Farmer's Ditch will connect the Transit Village to Twenty Ninth Street.



New mid-block crossings on Valmont Road and 30th Street will better connect the area to its surrounding neighborhoods.



Investing high-quality materials in a pedestrian connection can make a utilitarian facility into a special space of enduring value.

- Establish a central-spine multimodal connection (Junction Place) west of the railroad tracks, connecting the existing 32nd Street north to Pearl Parkway, then continuing through the city/RTD-owned property to serve the bus facility and farther north near the rail platform, and connecting to Valmont Road. Locate Junction Place to provide: full turning movements and a traffic signal at Pearl Parkway; a curvilinear alignment from Pearl Parkway to Goose Creek; and access to the civic plaza. If possible, align the street to provide a series of visual corridors that will frame or terminate with important destinations, such as the Depot, or views, such as of the Flatirons.
- Provide new bicycle and pedestrian links to the regional network, including a new multi-use path along Foothills Parkway. (See the Appendix for a regional Bikeway and Multi-use Path Network Map.)
- Provide a multimodal path connection between the area and Twenty Ninth Street along the North Boulder Farmer's Ditch.
- Consider new underpasses for pedestrians and bicycles, particularly to connect the multi-use path system and to Twenty Ninth Street.
- Support other goals of the area plan and relevant BVCP and TMP goals.

A detailed explanation and rationale for each connection on the Connections Plan is provided in the Appendix. It will be used to help interpret the Connections Plan for capital improvement planning and review of individual development review applications.

Amendment Process

Amendments to the Connections Plan generally will be reviewed either administratively or by the Planning Board. The process provides some flexibility to relocate proposed facilities to reflect site-specific considerations while ensuring that the connections necessary to realize a fully integrated multimodal network are created.

Significant changes to key proposed connections require an amendment to the plan by the Planning Board. In most cases, elimination of a proposed connection requires approval by both the Planning Board and City Council. Minor variations from the plan can be approved by the city manager. Amendment requests can be processed in conjunction with a Site Review. See table on next page.

Any amendment to the Connections Plan will be permitted upon a finding that one of the criteria has been met:

1. Such amendment is due to a physical hardship or practical hardship that would prevent construction of the connection;
2. The connection is made in a manner that is equivalent to the connection shown on the Connections Plan; or
3. Such amendment is consistent with the objectives of the Connections Plan described above.

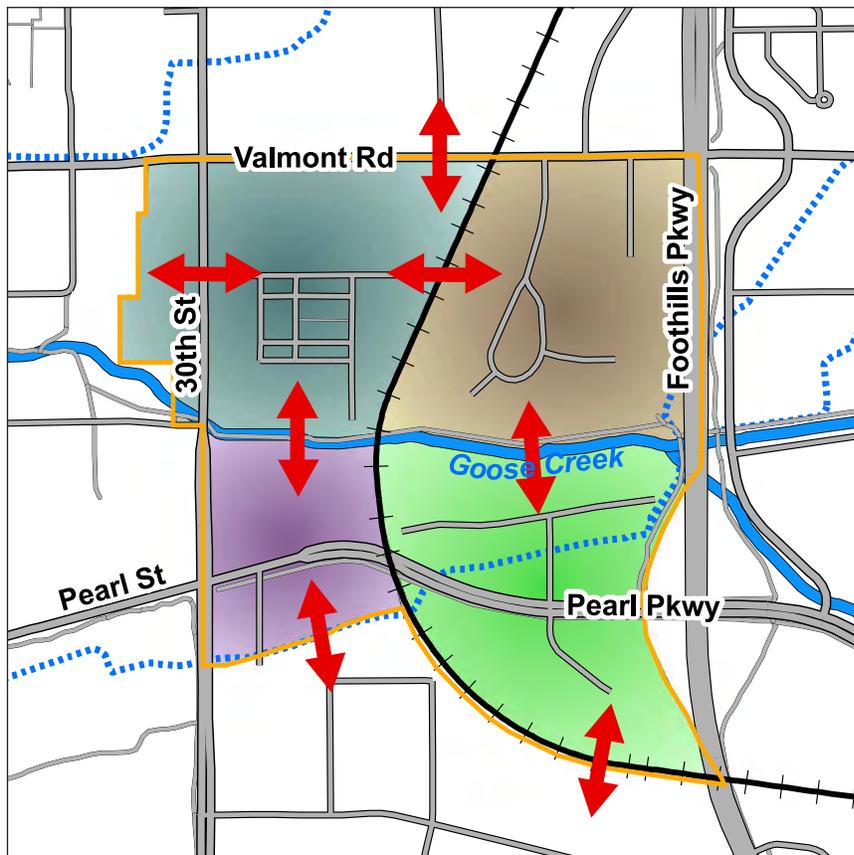
In those instances where the standards above cannot be met, the amendment will be considered legislative in nature and require approval by the Planning Board and City Council.



Approval Requirements for Amendments to the Connections Plan				
	Relocation greater than 50' or onto an adjacent property	Relocation less than 50'	Addition	Elimination
Streets				
Collector Street	Planning Board	Administrative	Planning Board	Planning Board and City Council
Local Street	Planning Board	Administrative	Administrative	Planning Board and City Council
Alley	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative except along 29 1/2 alignment ²
Paths				
Multi-use Path	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative	Planning Board and City Council
Pedestrian Walkway	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative	Planning Board and City Council

² Elimination of the alley proposed along the 29 1/2 alignment must be approved by the Planning Board and City Council.

Better Connectivity



Currently the area's districts are disconnected from each other. Although Goose Creek and the railroad tracks benefit the area, they also act as barriers. New connections will better integrate the area's districts and also will improve access to surrounding neighborhoods.



New bike facilities are planned throughout the area, including several dedicated bike lanes.



13th Street is closed periodically to create a temporary car-free zone for the Farmer's Market.

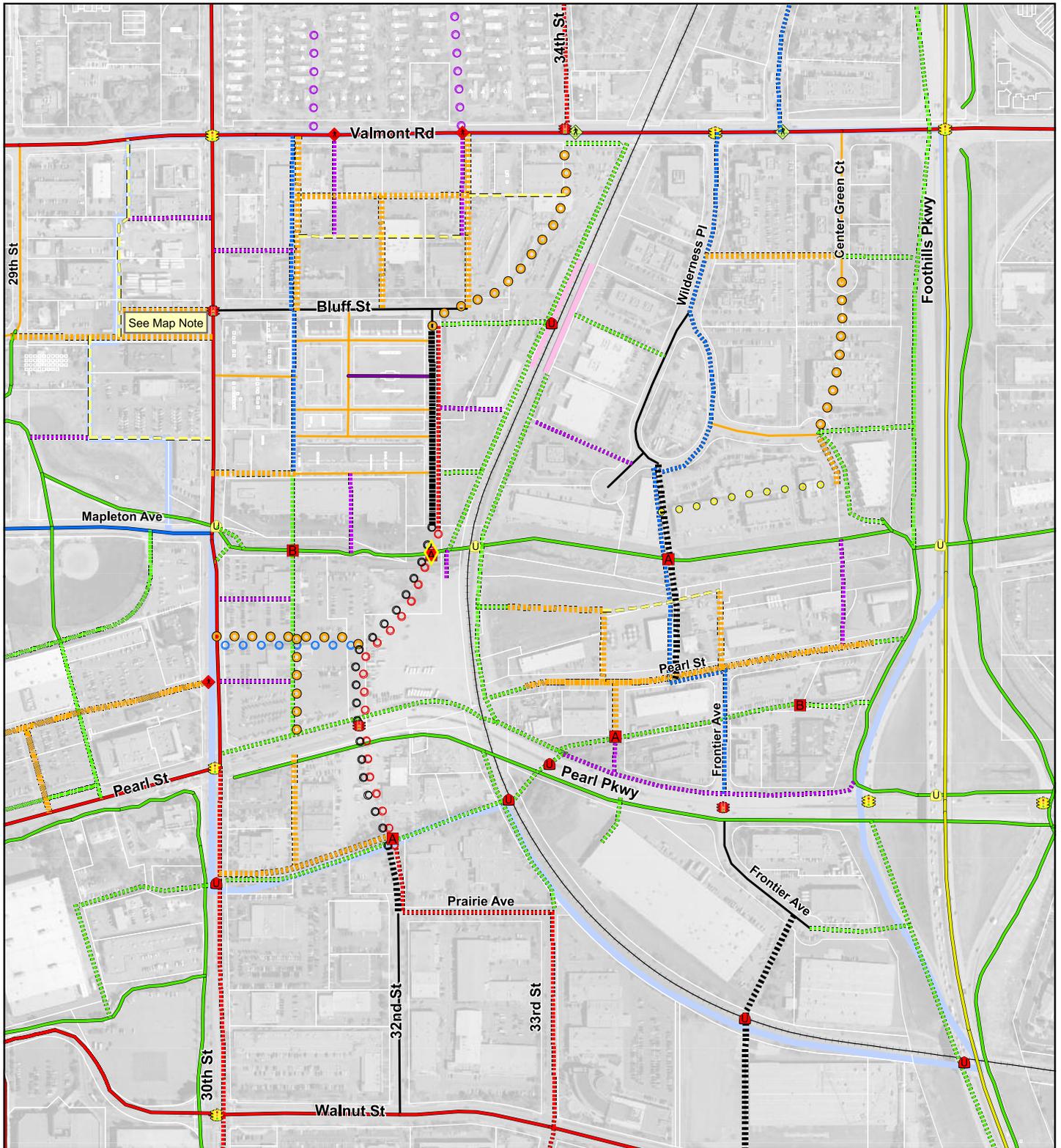


The Connections Plan accommodates all travel modes.

Plan Goals	How Met
<p>Transportation Connections: Create walkable streets in a fine-grain grid pattern, providing for walking, biking and possible car-free zones. Provide multimodal connections within the area to adjacent neighborhoods and to key nearby destinations and activity areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connections Plan provides comprehensive network of connections for all modes, with emphasis on creating walkable block sizes, improving access across arterials to surrounding areas, connecting bike facilities to the larger bicycle network, and serving properties with adequate vehicular access, as they redevelop to higher densities. • Transit and multimodal facility enhancements identified by FLO (FasTracks Local Optimization) project will strengthen travel between the area and downtown and CU.³ • Car-free zones include the Goose Creek and ditch multi-use paths and a civic plaza. Temporary closure of the east end of Bluff Street may be possible for special events. Guidelines identify possible additional car-free or car-reduced zones for the west side of the railroad tracks in the Rail Plaza District and the Pearl Street Center and Steelyards districts. • Streetscape Guidelines allow for a narrow local street option, which reduces space devoted to cars and slows vehicular speeds. • Design Guidelines specify special pedestrian character for Junction Place.

³The FLO project identified transportation facility and service improvements that are needed to support the new regional rail and BRT service.

Transportation Connections Plan



Existing Street Connections	Proposed Street Connections	Existing Bike and Ped Connections	Proposed Bike and Ped Connections	Existing Bike/Ped Crossings	Proposed Bike/Ped Crossings
Collector Street	Collector Street	Multi Use Path	Multi Use Path	Enhanced Crossing	Traffic Signal
Local Street	Collector Street - Flexible Alignment*	On Street Bike Lane	Multi Use Path Existing Upgrade	Underpass	Roadway Bridge
Railroad	Collector Street - Upgrade Existing	Designated Bike Route	On Street Bike Lane	Traffic Signal	Enhanced Crossing
Plan Area Boundary	Local Street	Sidewalk Connection	On Street Bike Lane - Flexible Alignment*		Bridge
Proposed Rail Platform	Local Street - Flexible Alignment*	Paved Shoulder	Designated Bike Route - Flexible Alignment*		Underpass
	Local Street - Upgrade Existing		Sidewalk Connection		Enhanced Access
	Alley		Sidewalk Connection - Flexible Alignment*		
	Alley - Flexible Alignment*				

* The start and end points of flexible alignments are fixed (with the exception of #24 in Appendix 3: Connections Explanation).

Map Note: Two alternative alignments are shown for Bluff Street west of 30th Street. The final alignment will be determined as part of a financial feasibility analysis for Bluff Street. For more information see Public Improvement Funding and Phasing Section 2 of the Implementation Plan.

