SASAKI

AURARIA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER™

Campus Master Plan

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER

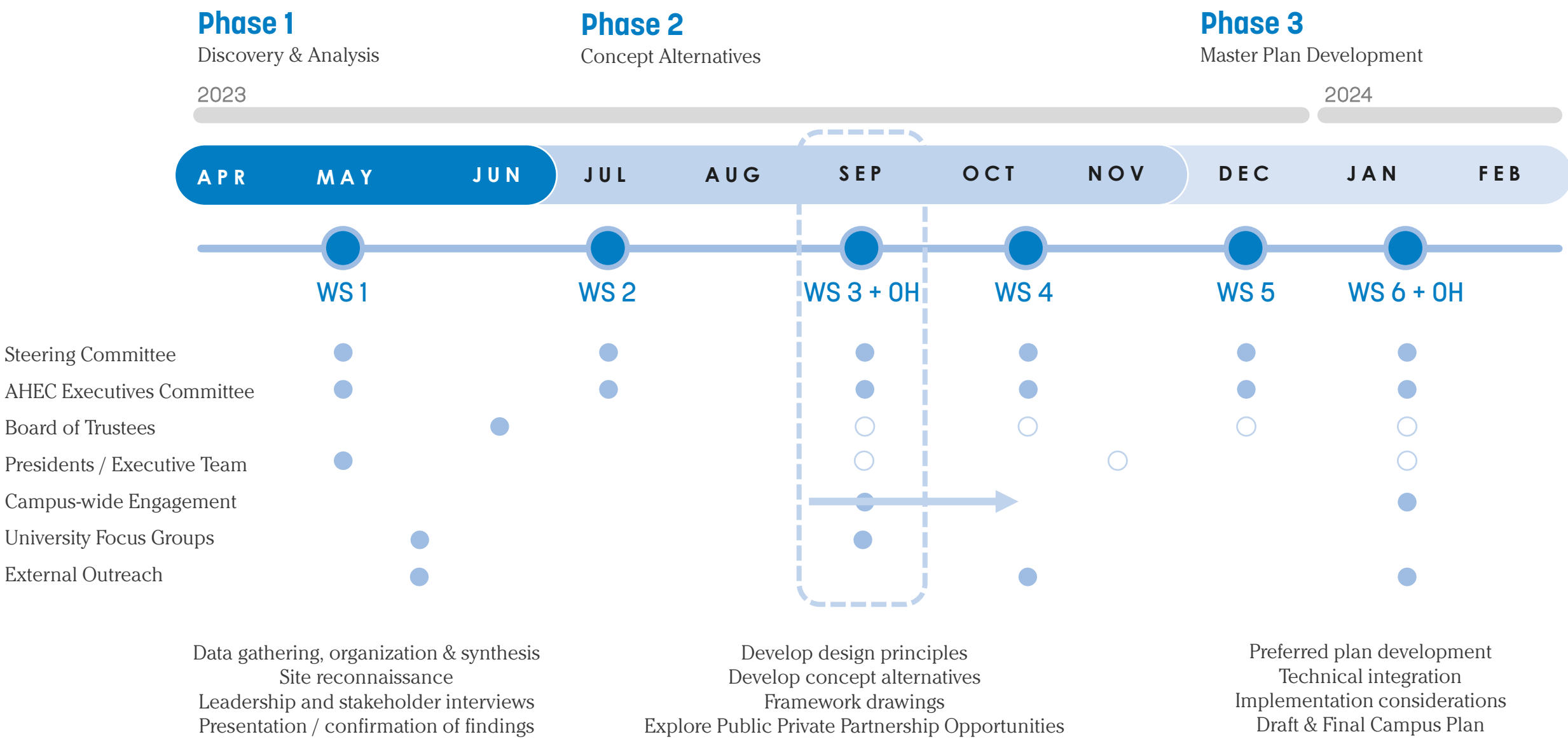
MSU DENVER

Denver

DRAFT CONCEPTS

September, 2023

SCHEDULE


Phase 1
Discovery & Analysis
Phase 2
Concept Alternatives
Phase 3
Master Plan Development
2023
2024
APR
MAY
JUN
JUL
AUG
SEP
OCT
NOV
DEC
JAN
FEB
WS 1
WS 2
WS 3 + OH
WS 4
WS 5
WS 6 + OH
Steering Committee
AHEC Executives Committee
Board of Trustees
Presidents / Executive Team
Campus-wide Engagement
University Focus Groups
External Outreach
Data gathering, organization & synthesis
Site reconnaissance
Leadership and stakeholder interviews
Presentation / confirmation of findings
Develop design principles
Develop concept alternatives
Framework drawings
Explore Public Private Partnership Opportunities
Preferred plan development
Technical integration
Implementation considerations
Draft & Final Campus Plan

STRATEGIC ASPIRATIONS

AURARIA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

The Auraria Campus is a dynamic academic environment shared by three separate and distinct institutions of higher learning that are all designated Hispanic Serving Institutions:

- Community College of Denver
- Metropolitan State University of Denver
- University of Colorado Denver

The Auraria Higher Education Center is a separate state entity whose role is to provide and manage shared services, facilities, and property to support these prominent institutions in achieving their goals.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF DENVER

Vision Statement

Every member of our community will attain the education they desire.

Mission Statement

CCD provides our diverse community an opportunity to gain quality higher education and achieve personal and professional success in a supportive and inclusive environment.

Values

- Involvement
- Student-Focus
- Integrity
- Lifelong Learning
- Excellence
- Healthy Work Environment

METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Role & Mission

Metropolitan State University of Denver is a comprehensive, baccalaureate-degree granting, urban university that offers arts and sciences, professional, and business courses and programs to a diverse student population in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Excellence in teaching and learning is MSU Denver's primary objective.

The mission of MSU Denver is to provide a high-quality, accessible, enriching education that prepares students for successful careers, post-graduate education, and lifelong learning in a multicultural, global, and technological society. To fulfill its mission, MSU Denver's diverse university community engages the community at large in scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and the application of knowledge.

Values

- Community
- Access
- Diversity
- Respect
- Excellence

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

CU Purpose

Make a CU Denver education work for all — to transform lives, expand economies, and uplift communities.

CU Vision

At CU Denver, we are building a radically inclusive model for higher education based on the simple idea that everyone deserves access to an excellent education and a fulfilled life of their design.

Values

- We are learner-centered
- We strive for belonging and equity on our campus and in our community
- We are partnership-oriented, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and innovative
- We learn by doing and impact the world around us near and far
- We are an agile, adaptable, and aspirational organization
- We are committed to sustainability and building a better future

Campus Plan Vision & Principles

Vision

Create a thriving and active campus to support student success and institutional identities in order to enrich our collective experiences, strengthen campus cohesion, and achieve financial sustainability.

Guiding Principles (in alignment with the AHEC Strategic Plan)

- In order to support the educational objectives of the academic institutions create the development framework that transforms the Auraria Campus into a **complete community**
- Leverage existing and future campus opportunities to achieve a new **sustainable financial model**
- Enhance and **expand connections** to downtown Denver, surrounding communities, and new neighborhood development projects
- Design and define a **cohesive campus with a distinctive character** that complements the individual institutional identities
- Create a plan that that reflects the community we serve and **promotes diversity, equity and inclusion** throughout the Master Plan process
- **Honor and celebrate the history** of the campus

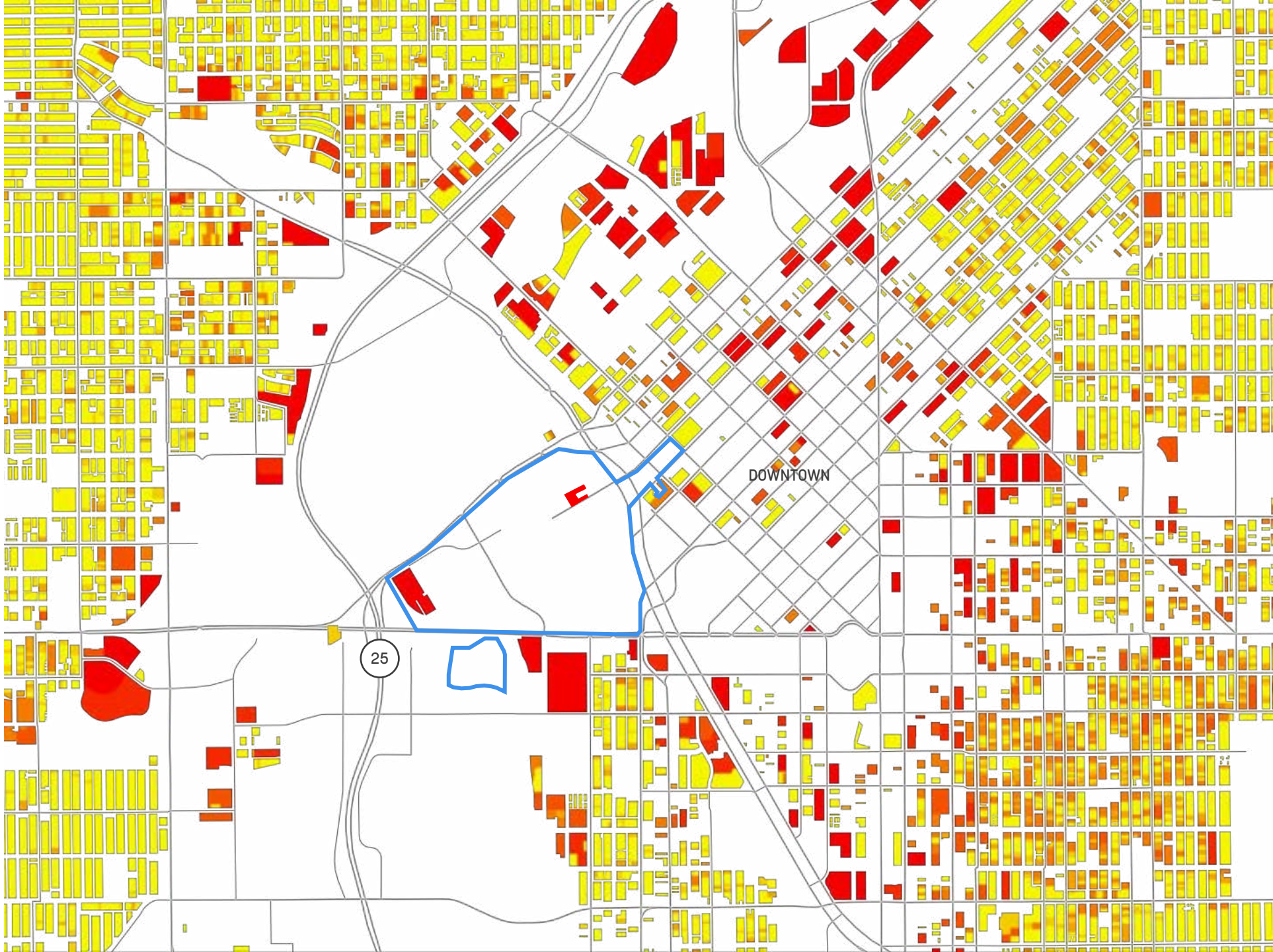
Framing the Issues

URBAN CONTEXT

The Campus is adjacent to important Civic areas but is incredibly disconnected from these surrounding areas

HOUSING UNITS

There is a housing desert on and around campus.

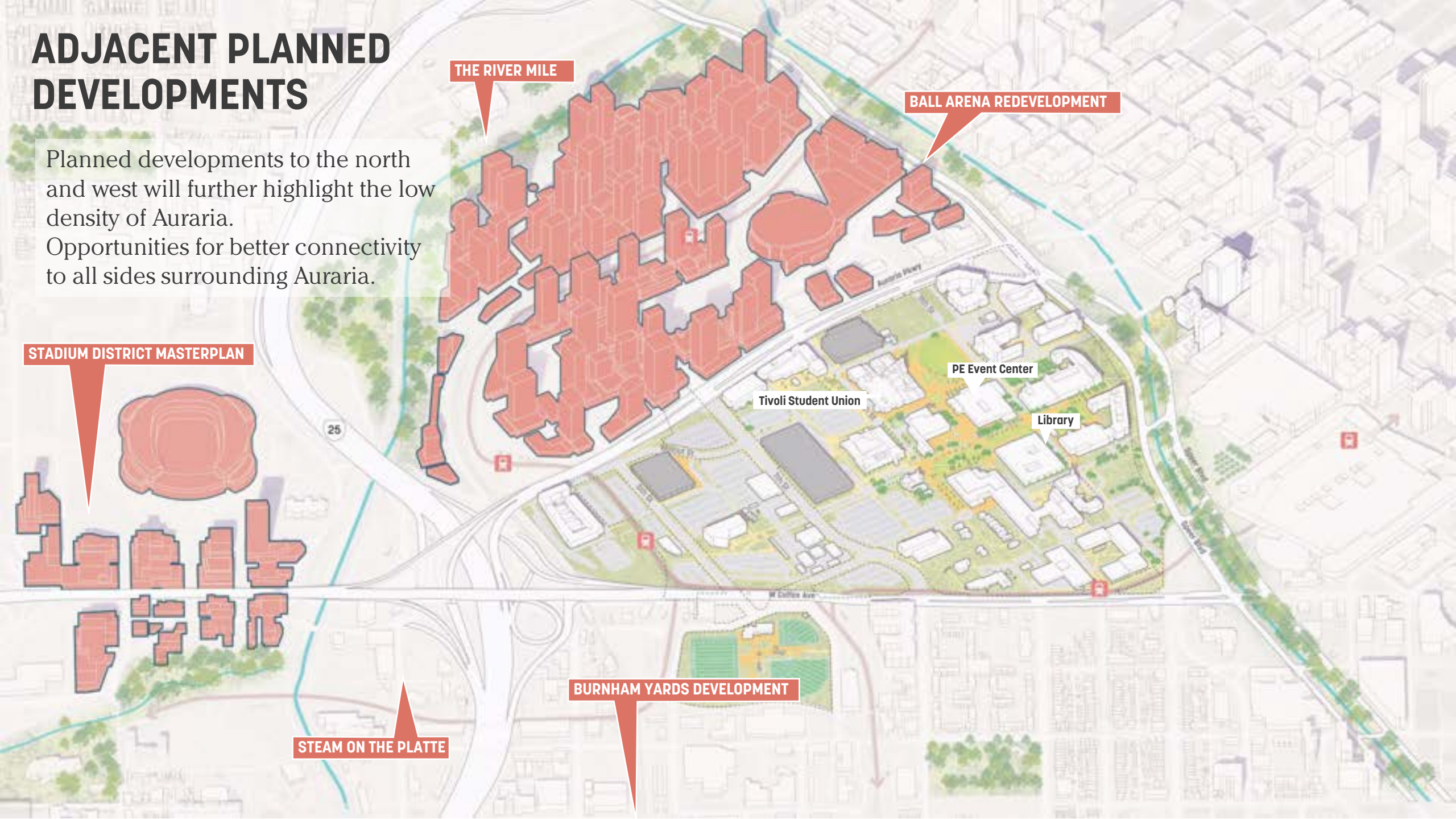


- 1
- 2
- 3 - 10
- 11 - 50
- 51 - 100
- 101 - 200
- > 200

Source: Denver.gov | Parcels Dataset

ADJACENT PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS

Planned developments to the north and west will further highlight the low density of Auraria.
Opportunities for better connectivity to all sides surrounding Auraria.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

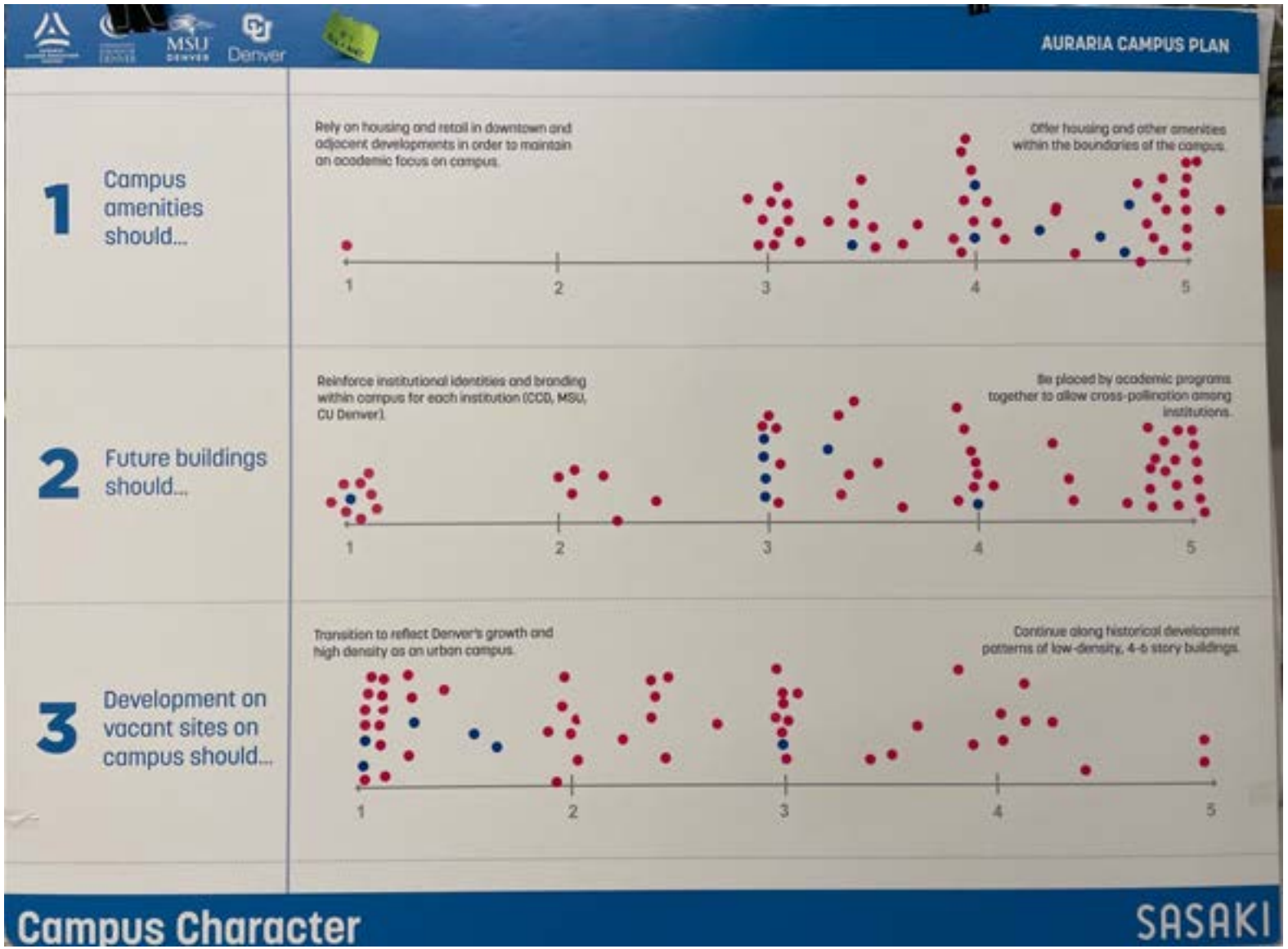
Opportunity sites include surface parking lots and various other underutilized parcels.

Other experience enhancement opportunities include gateways, connections and views

LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES

Engagement Feedback

Open House 1


AURARIA CAMPUS PLAN
MSU DENVER
Denver
1
Campus amenities should...
Rely on housing and retail in downtown and adjacent developments in order to maintain an academic focus on campus.
Offer housing and other amenities within the boundaries of the campus.
1
2
3
4
5
2
Future buildings should...
Reinforce institutional identities and branding within campus for each institution (CCD, MSU, CU Denver).
Be placed by academic programs together to allow cross-pollination among institutions.
1
2
3
4
5
3
Development on vacant sites on campus should...
Transition to reflect Denver's growth and high density as an urban campus.
Continue along historical development patterns of low-density, 4-6 story buildings.
1
2
3
4
5
Campus Character
SASAKI

Campus Character

26 sticky note comments

"Missing the green space, too many parking lots ."

"More branding and wayfinding needed in city."

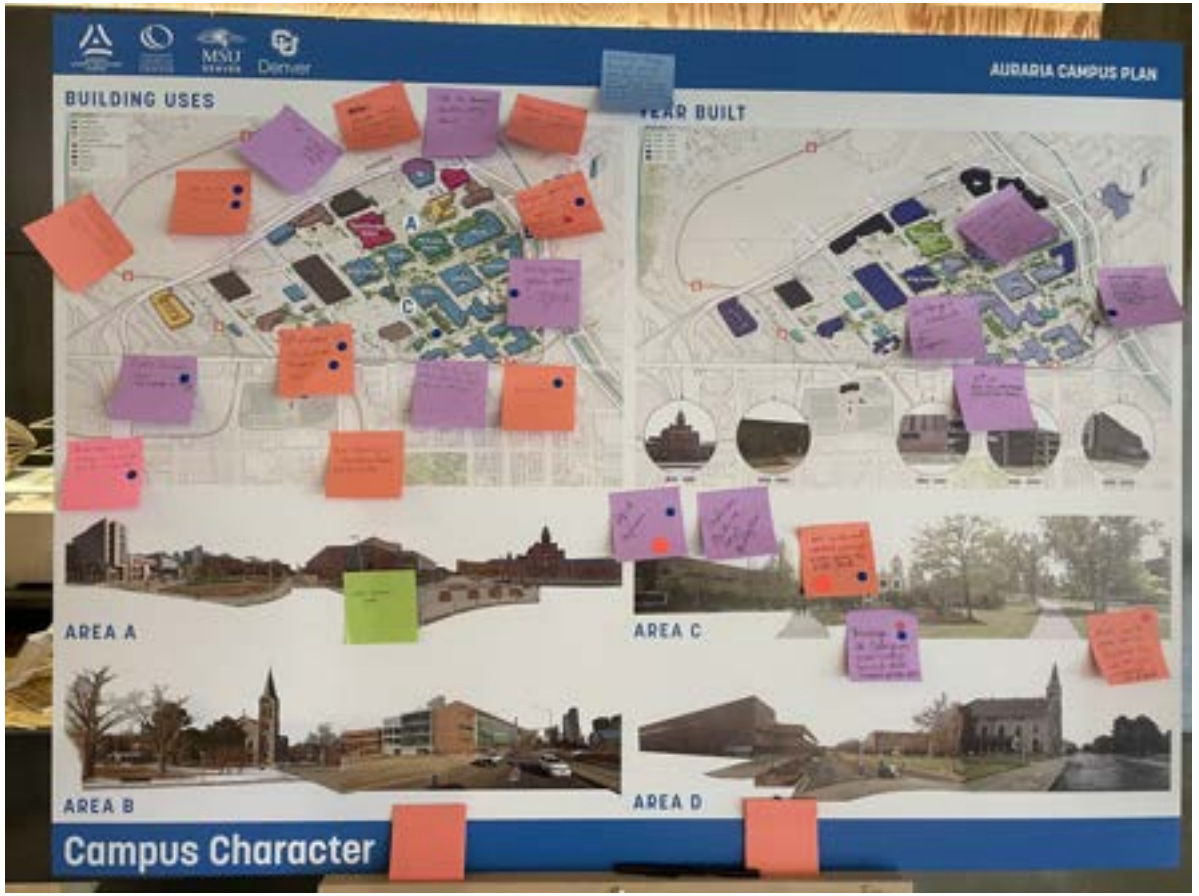
"Revitalize St. Cajetan's to make use of shared space."

"ADA compliance."

"Art walk and student exhibit areas along the 5280 trail."

"Ensure open spaces and event spaces meet institutional needs first."

"Skateboard between classes."

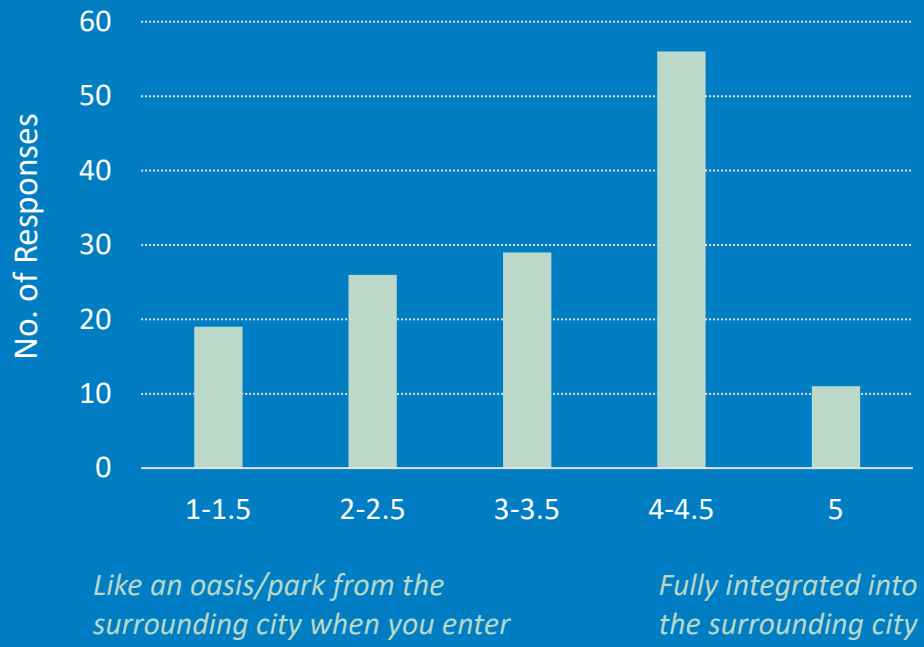


Open House Results

Campus Context

403 stickers

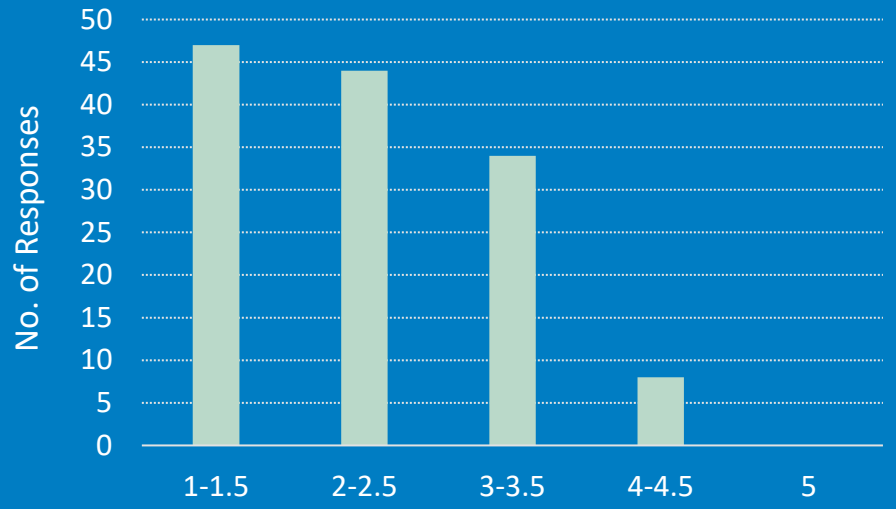
Experience entering the Campus



Like an oasis/park from the surrounding city when you enter

Fully integrated into the surrounding city

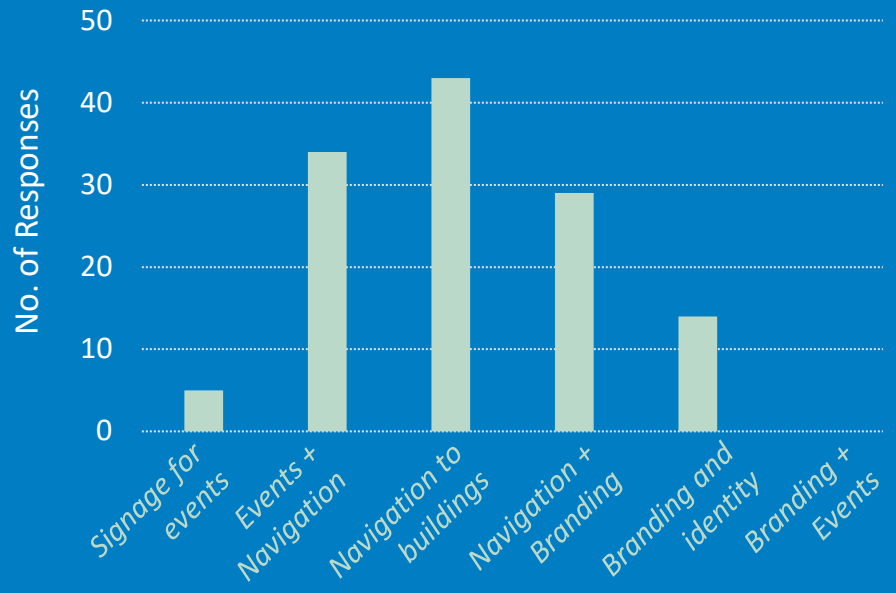
Campus edges should...



Be extremely porous & seamlessly connected to the outside

Limit porosity/access points from the neighborhood

Priority issues with wayfinding & signage



KEY Takeaways

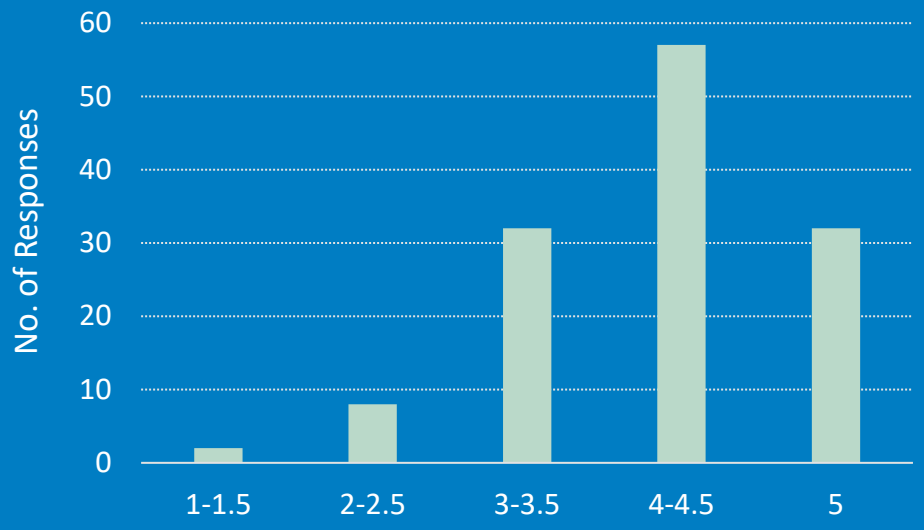
- Strong support for **campus integration to the city** with **porous/seamless connections**.
- **Navigation to buildings** needs a lot of improvement in campus wayfinding and signage.

Open House Results

Campus Character

396 stickers

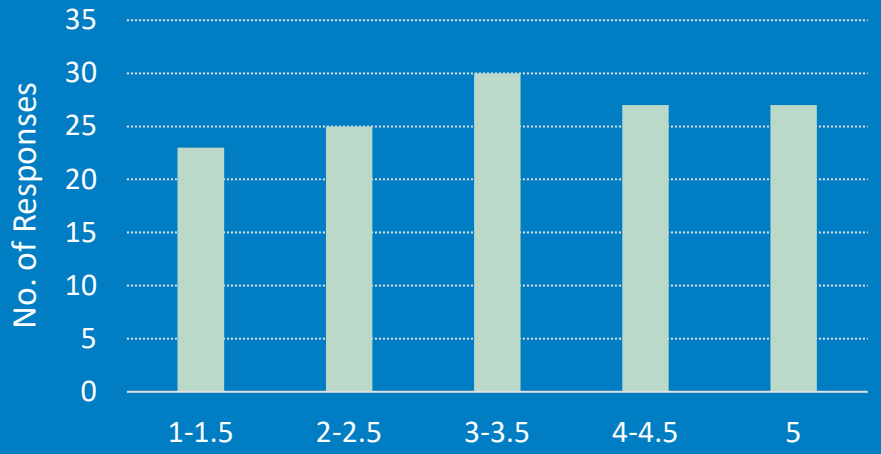
Campus amenities should...

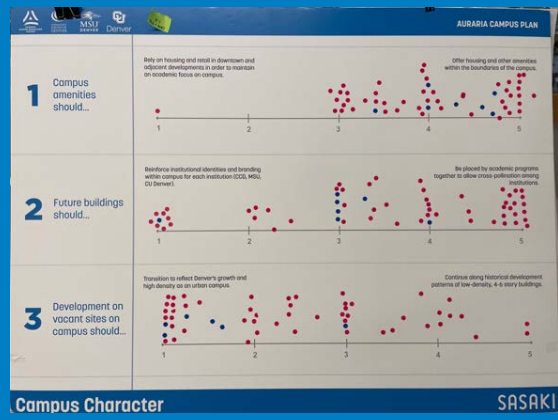


Rely on housing and retail in downtown and adjacent developments in order to maintain an academic focus on campus.

Offer housing and other amenities within the boundaries of the campus.

Future buildings should...

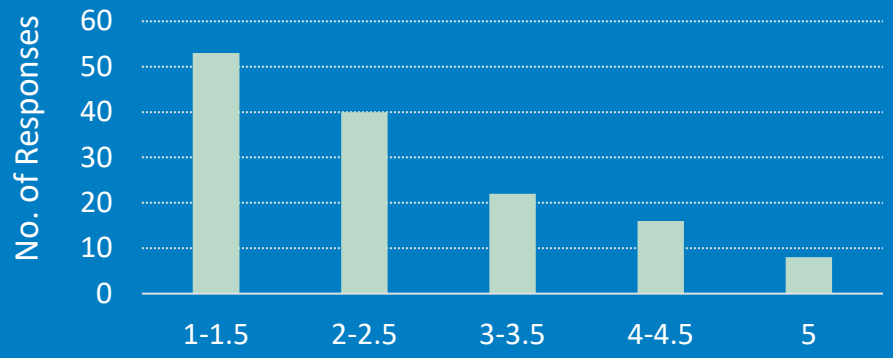




Reinforce institutional identities and branding within campus for each institution (CCD, MSU, CU Denver).

Be placed by academic programs together to allow cross-pollination among institutions.

Development on vacant sites on campus should...



Transition to reflect Denver's growth and high density as an urban campus.

Continue along historical development patterns of low-density, 4-6 story buildings.

KEY Takeaways

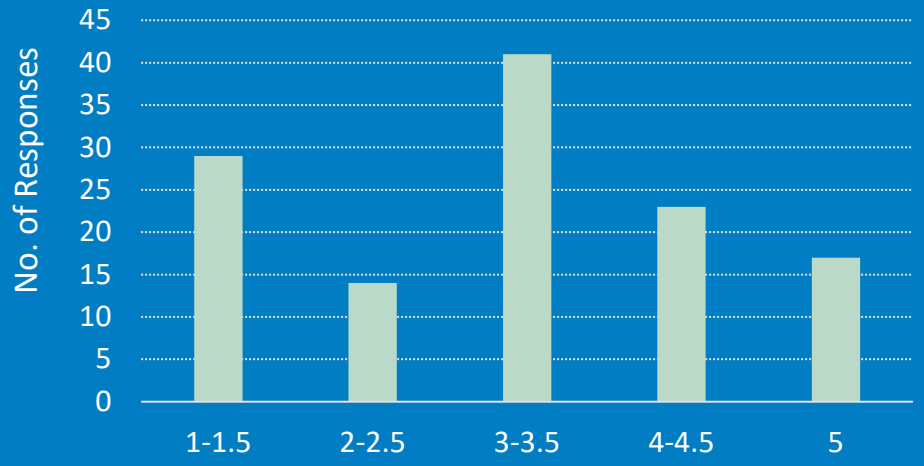
- Strong support for **housing and amenities ON campus.**
- No clear preference for organization of buildings on campus as a whole, but campus community has a greater preference for **increased cross pollination across institutions**.
- Clear preference for **higher density development on campus.**

Open House Results

Campus Connectivity

350 stickers

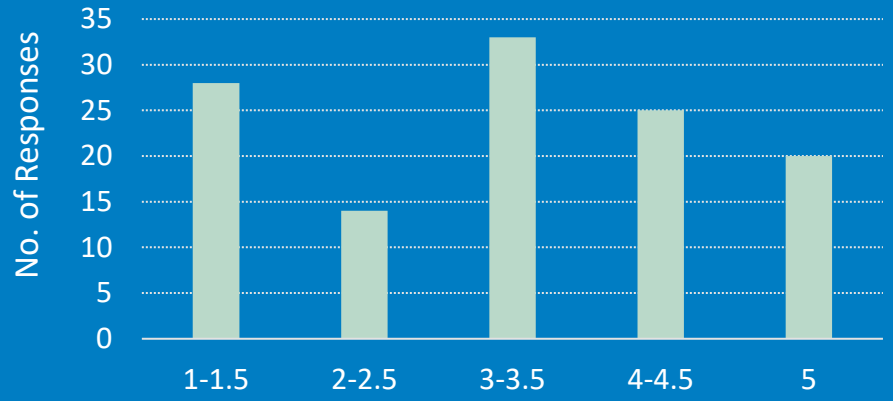
If I were transitioning away from a car, I would want to see…



Greater public transit access to buildings on campus.

Improved infrastructure for active modes of transportation such as walking, scooter, and bicycle.

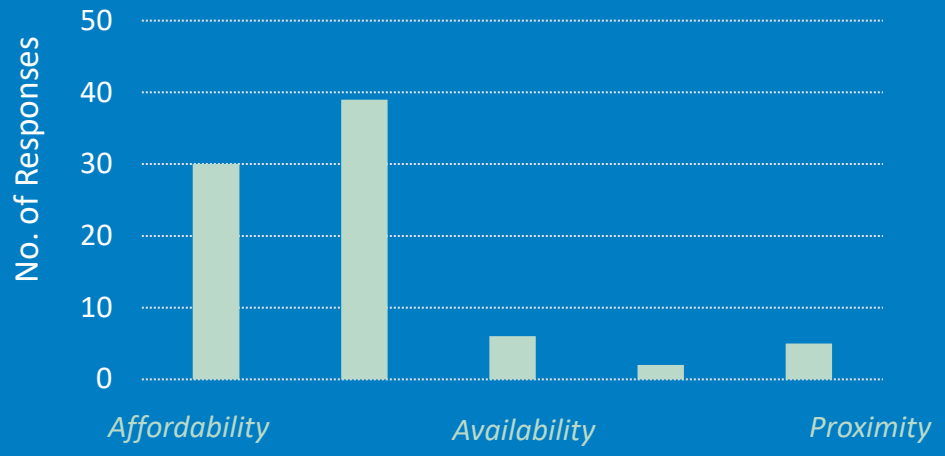
Campus transit would work better if the first and last mile were served by…



A frequent campus shuttle between transit stops and campus buildings.

Better first- and last-mile infrastructure for bikes and scooters from transit stops to campus buildings.

Parking cannot satisfy all 3, which would you prioritize?



KEY Takeaways

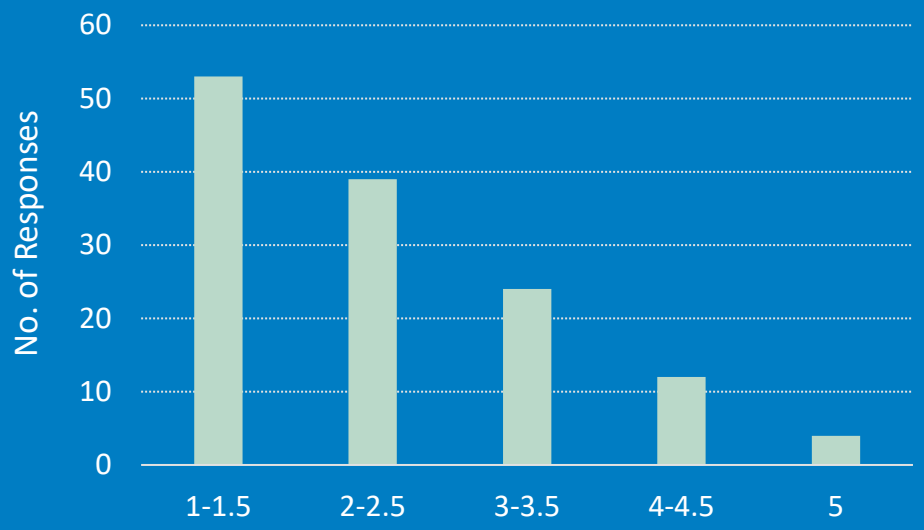
- Mixed preferences with comparable support for **increasing transit access to campus** as well as **improved campus micromobility infrastructure**.
- **Affordability and availability** rank much higher than proximity with parking needs.

Open House Results

Campus Open Space

397 stickers

Campus landscape should...



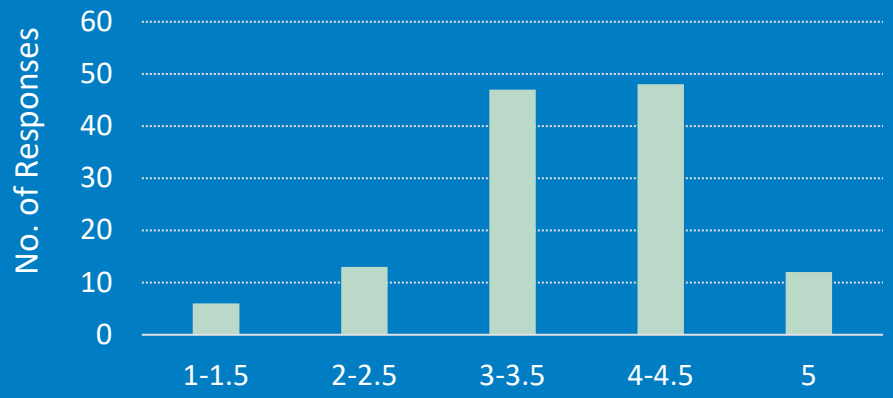
Offer more forested and vegetated areas that emphasize regionally appropriate and native plants.

Provide more traditional, formal campus design (quads, plazas, courtyards).

KEY Takeaways

- Much stronger support for **naturalized open spaces with native species** as compared to traditional formal campus open spaces.
- Slight preference for **programed and diverse open spaces** rather than flexible, multipurpose ones.
- Strong desire for **seamless links to Denver's trail networks**.

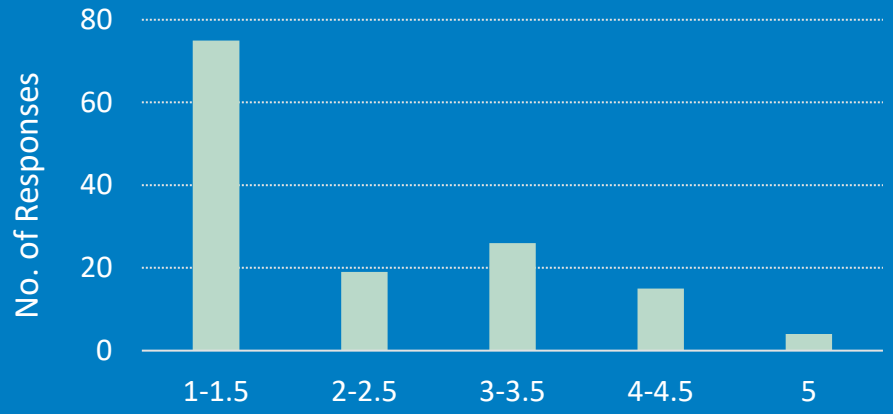
Design of campus open spaces should...



Remain open and flexible to cater to various needs.

Explore diverse functional and programmed spaces like outdoor classrooms, recreational fields, community gardens etc.

Campus circulation should...



Link seamlessly with the broader trail network in Denver.

Focus on an internal circulation system connecting open spaces within campus.

Initial Big Ideas

Create a campus that supports the growth of Denver as a **destination for education, innovation, sustainability and research**

Create a campus that **supports student engagement, increased opportunities for housing, interactions with the city, and quality of life**

Create a campus that has a distinct identity as an urban campus with **strong gateways and connections to the surrounding city**

Create a campus that supports growth of each institution by **increasing enrollment through attracting new students**

Framework Alternatives

PURPOSE OF TODAY

1. Don’t worry about the details.
2. We will figure it out.
3. Focus on the big ideas.
4. Dream Big!

1 Campus as City

2 Campus as Park

3 Campus + City + Park

Concepts Overview

1 Campus as City

2 Campus as Park

3 Campus + City + Park

* Colors represent program/use concept

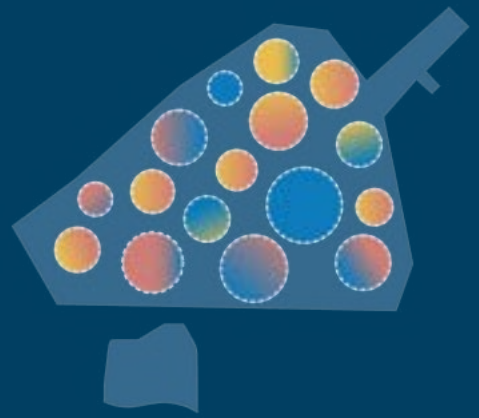
CONCEPT 1: Campus as City

Big Idea

- Reinforce the grid with through streets, connecting to downtown via transit.
- Trail and pedestrian circulation connecting the campus fabric and context.
- Lower campus building heights, rising toward the west.

Program Concept

Vertical Mix Use as a dominant condition throughout the entire Campus footprint



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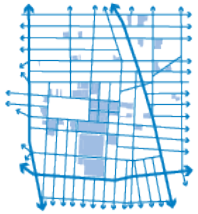
Precedents for Campus as City

Public Space | Transit Node | Ground Floor | Identity

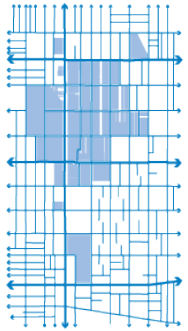
New York University

Fully integrated with the city grid, no clear boundaries.



Temple University

Fully integrated with the city grid, no clear boundaries.



Arizona State University - Phoenix

Fully integrated with the city grid, no clear boundaries.

CONCEPT 2: Campus as Park

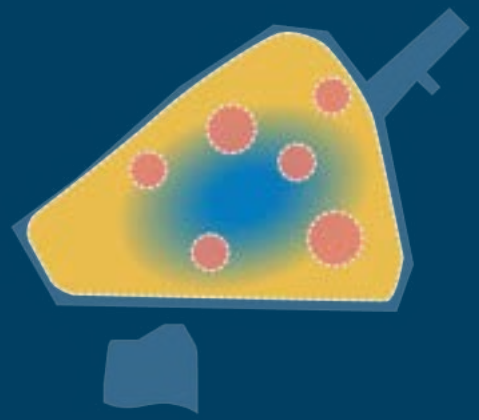
Big idea

Internal loop connecting open spaces

Creating a meandering oasis loop connecting open spaces with different characters throughout the campus and linking the urban context. Buildings as objects in space, low density.

Program Concept

Horizontal Mix Use with a concentration of academic functions in the core and traditional mixed use around the edges



CONCEPT 2: Campus as Park

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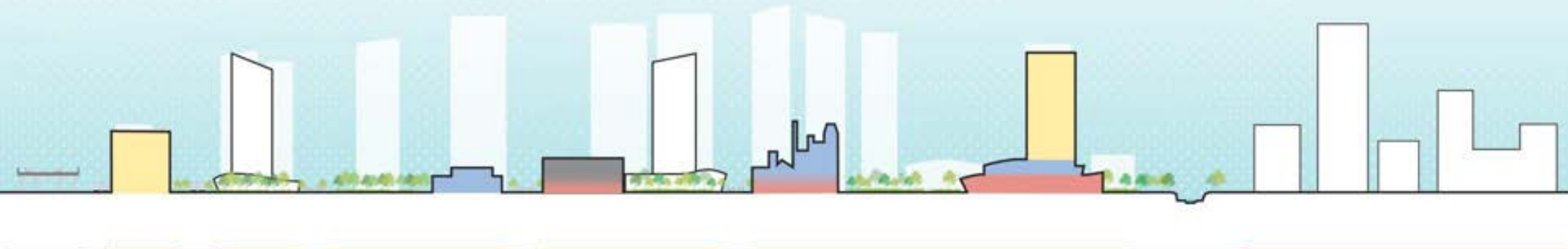
Venn Diagram of Trail Loops Connecting to Context

Connecting the campus to the larger city context by providing multiple pedestrian friendly trails/loops:

1.Creek Memory
2. Event Loop
3. Downtown Exploration Loop



Precedents for Campus as Park

Iconic

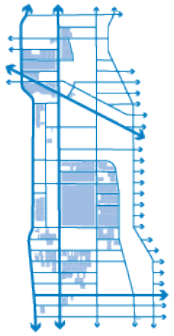
Moments

Gateways

Adjacencies

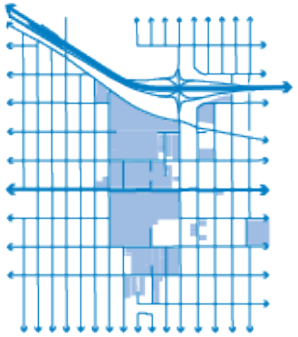
Columbia University

Partially integrated with the city grid, areas with traditional campus boundaries.



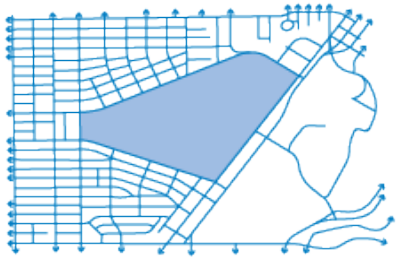
University of Denver

Partially integrated with the city grid, areas with traditional campus boundaries.



Rice University

Bounded traditional campus, fully disrupts city grid.



CONCEPT 3: Campus + City + Park

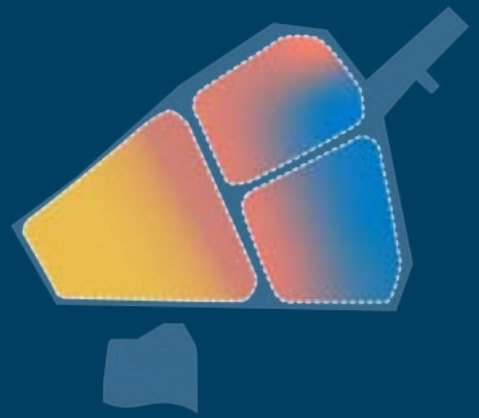
Big idea

Academic distinct from city

Use a green/blue way around the daylit creek to protect academic space while allowing partnerships on the west side of campus to develop a denser, mixed-use development with housing, retail, and commercial

Program Concept

Creation of two distinct identities. Campus on the East and a new urban neighborhood on the west



CONCEPT 3: Campus + City + Park

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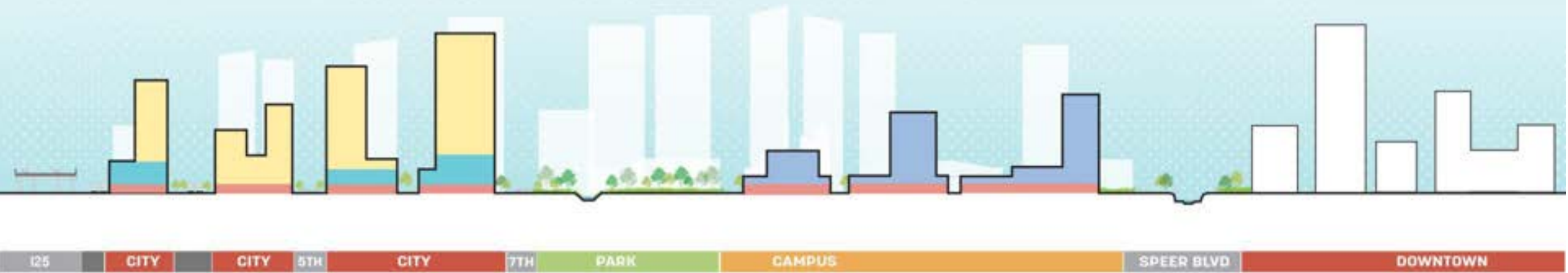


Precedents for Campus + City + Park

Urban

Oasis

Distinct

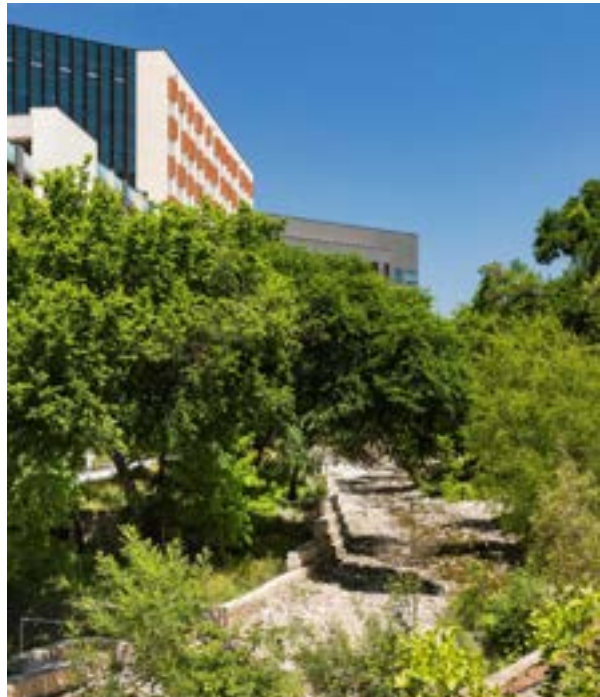
Living

Georgia Tech
EcoCommons

Aggie Park

Waller Creek at UT
Dell Medical

University of Washington
Rainier Axis



Discussion

Concepts Overview

1 Campus as City

2 Campus as Park

3 Campus + City + Park

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