



City of Leadville, CO

# Central Leadville Conditions Survey

26 October 2017

Prepared for:

Leadville Urban Renewal Authority (LURA)

Presented by:



Ricker | Cunningham

Anne Ricker  
Principal and Owner  
Redevelopment Specialist



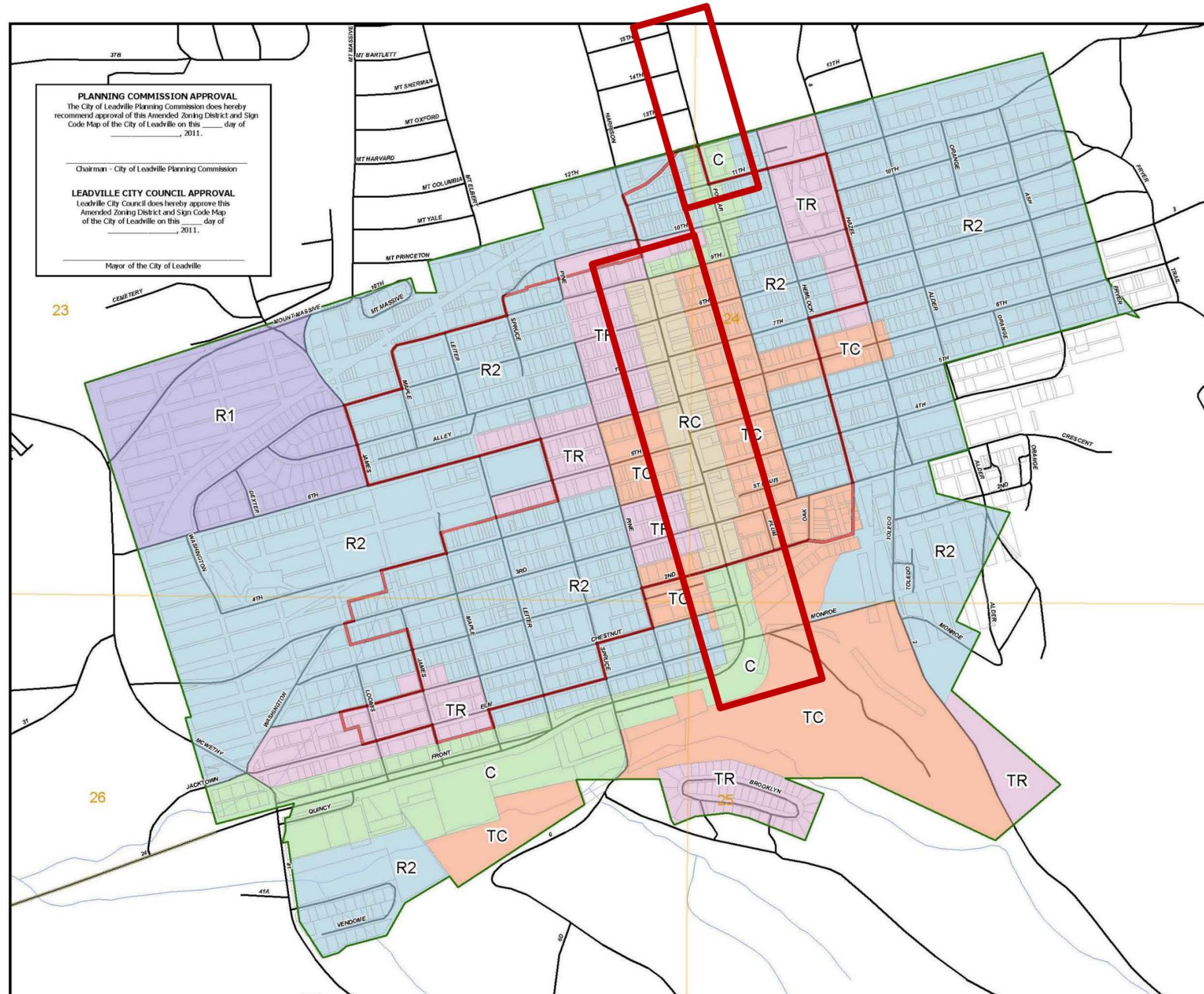
# Creating an Urban Renewal Area

- Determine survey area boundaries
- Notify property owners within boundaries
- Verify presence and location of “blighted” conditions (field survey)
- Prepare **conditions survey**
- Present survey findings to urban renewal entity and council for acceptance \*
- Define boundaries for urban renewal area (may be the same as conditions survey boundary)
- Complete market assessment in order to develop assumptions for impact report
- Define future role of urban renewal area in community (comprehensive plan)
- Prepare **urban renewal plan**
- Quantify (tax increment finance – TIF) potential impact of new investment within area
- Complete county **impact report**, and other impacted taxing bodies
- Present urban renewal plan to urban renewal entity for referral to council for adoption
- Work with property and business owners to determine opportunities for investment
- Implement plan objectives

\* Presentation to Council may occur in conjunction with presentation of final urban renewal plan.



# Survey Area Boundary



## Boundary Description:

Properties along .. both sides of Harrison Avenue between Elm and Monroe Streets on the south and 10<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, including the National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum; in addition to the northern extent of State Highway 24 and railyard property located between East 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Sawmill Road.

Approximate boundaries of the Survey Area are identified in **red**.

# Survey Area Characteristics

## Characteristics

Approximately 370 **parcels**

Approximately 330 **acres**

Over 300 **parcel owners or owner entities**

**Complete parcels** (public and private) and **rights-of-way**

Located within the **Historic Conservation Overlay District**

Total land and improvement **actual value** = \$62.0 million

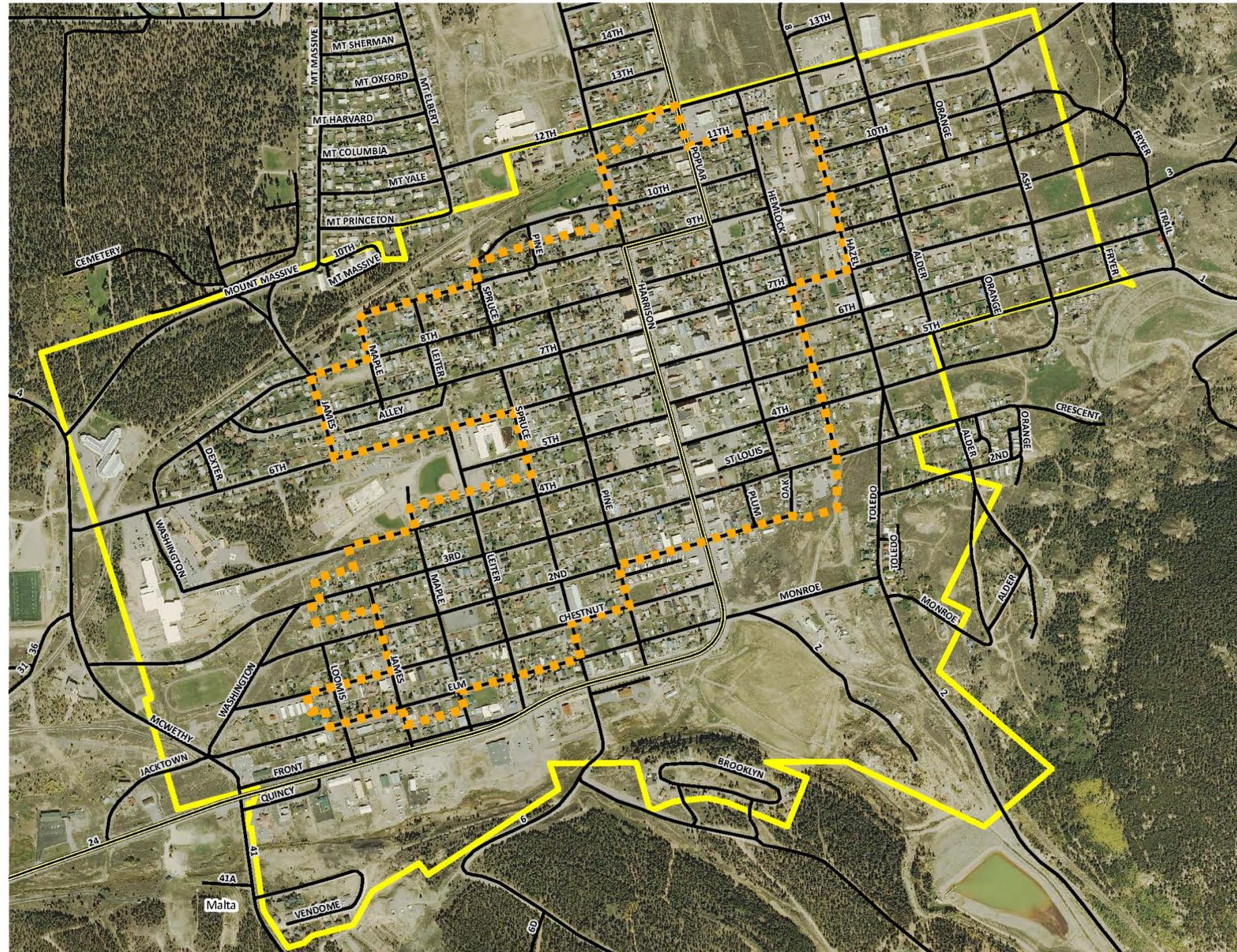
Total land and improvement **assessed value** = \$8.7 million (14% of actual value)

**Uses** – Historic Structures, Commercial Businesses, Residential Structures, Vacant Land

**Statutory Factors Present** - Eleven (11) of 11

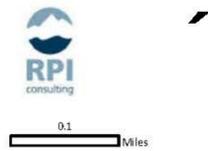


# Historic Conservation Overlay Map



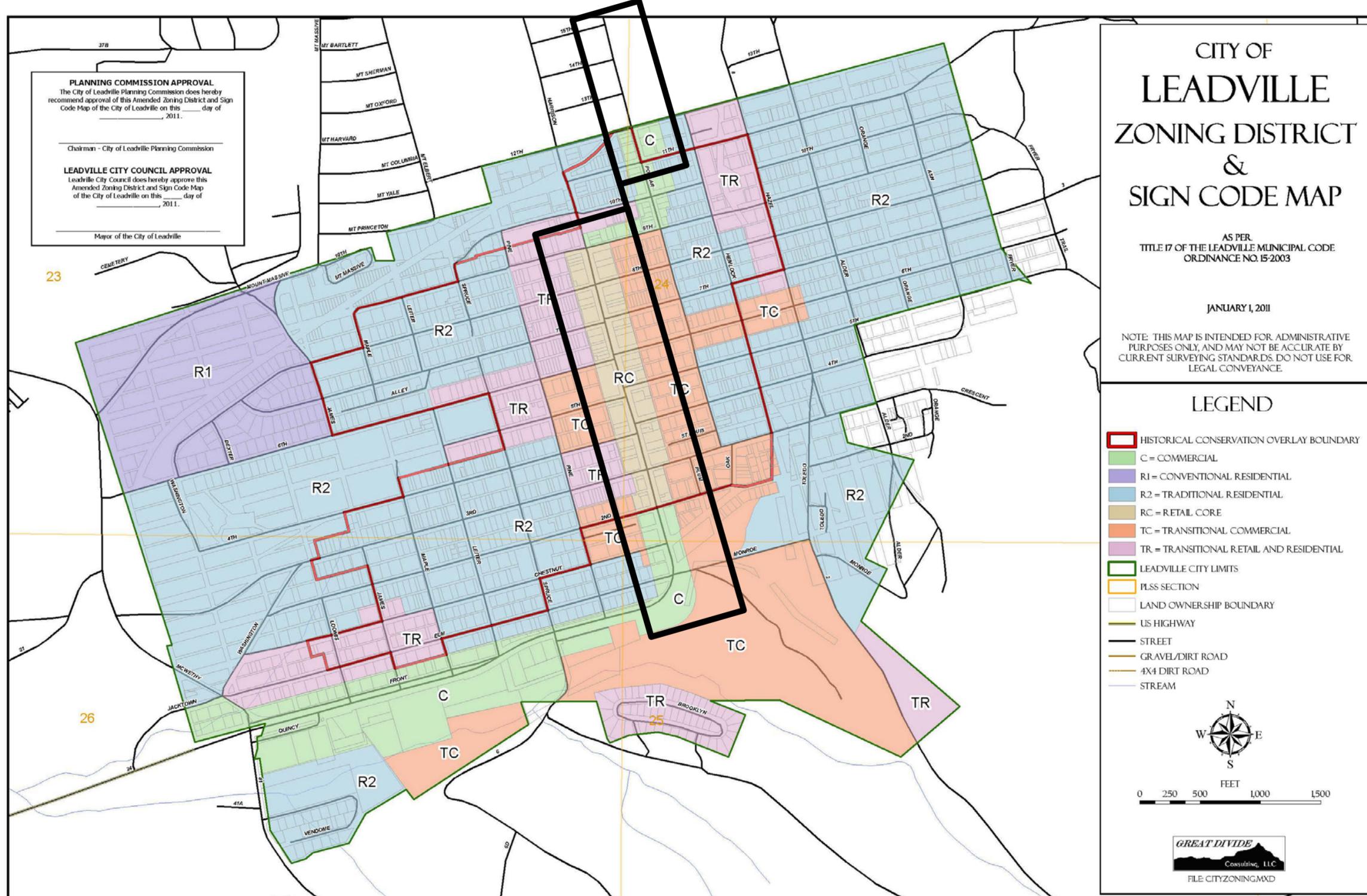
City of Leadville  
 Historic Conservation Overlay  
 City of Leadville, Colorado  
 Comprehensive Plan

-  Historic Conservation Overlay
-  Leadville-Limits
-  Highway 24
-  Streets



This map was created using Lake County GIS digital data, but this is a secondary product, not verified or authorized by the County.

# City Zoning Map



# Zoning Categories in Survey Area

## Chapter 17.32 COMMERCIAL/ HIGHWAY BUSINESS (C) DISTRICT

### 17.32.010 General requirements.

This district is created for the purposes of providing for tourism and automobile oriented business and commercial, office and retail services along the city's major highway approaches, and providing for the scenic and visual enhancement of those major highway approaches to Leadville. Consequently, the visual appearance and contribution to attractiveness of Leadville's gateways shall be a significant characteristic of all new and expanded development in this district.

## Chapter 17.28 RETAIL CORE (RC) DISTRICT

### 17.28.010 General requirements.

This district is created to encompass the principal retail and commercial core of the city, often with residential and office use on the upper floors of multi-story structures and intensive pedestrian shopping and sightseeing along the principal rights-of-way in the district. Streetscaping amenities along with rear or alleyway delivery facilities are particularly encouraged in this business and tourism oriented district.

## Chapter 17.24 TRANSITIONAL RETAIL/RESIDENTIAL (TR) DISTRICT

### 17.24.010 General requirements.

This district is created to allow traditional residential occupation in association with commercial business uses so long as such mixed land usage does not produce significant or objectionable levels of traffic, noise, dust or other adverse side effects not compatible with residential occupation.



# Statutory Definition of “Blight”

A determination of blight is a cumulative conclusion based on the presence of several physical, environmental, and social factors defined by state law. In reality, blight is often attributable to a multiplicity of conditions, which, in combination, tend to contribute to the phenomenon of deterioration of an area. For purposes of this Survey, the definition of a blighted area is based upon the definition articulated in the Colorado Urban Renewal Law, as follows:

*“Blighted area” means an area that, in its present condition and use and, by reason of the presence of at least four of the following factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the municipality, retards the provision of housing accommodations, or constitutes an economic or social liability, and is a menace to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare:*

- (a) *Slum, deteriorated, or deteriorating structures;*
- (b) *Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout;*
- (c) *Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;*
- (d) *Unsanitary or unsafe conditions;*
- (e) *Deterioration of site or other improvements;*
- (f) *Unusual topography or inadequate public improvements or utilities;*
- (g) *Defective or unusual conditions of title rendering the title non-marketable;*
- (h) *The existence of conditions that endanger life or property by fire or other causes;*
- (i) *Buildings that are unsafe or unhealthy for persons to live or work in because of building code violations, dilapidations, deterioration, defective design, physical construction, or faulty or inadequate facilities;*
- (j) *Environmental contamination of buildings or property;*
- (k.5) *The existence of health, safety, or welfare factors requiring high levels of municipal services or substantial physical underutilization or vacancy of sites, buildings, or other improvements;*

Source: Colorado Revised Statute 31-25-103(2).



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## a. Slum, Deteriorated, or Deteriorating Structures

Roof

Walls, Fascia, Soffits

Foundation

Gutters / Downspouts

Exterior Finishes

Windows and Doors

Stairways / Fire Escapes

Mechanical Equipment

Loading areas

Fences / Walls / Gates

Other Structures

Numerous properties, both occupied and abandoned, exhibited visible damage to the items identified above.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## b. Predominance of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

Vehicular Access

Internal Circulation

Driveway Definition / Curbcuts

Parking Layout Substandard

Accommodations for Non-Vehicular Mobility

Traffic Accident History \*

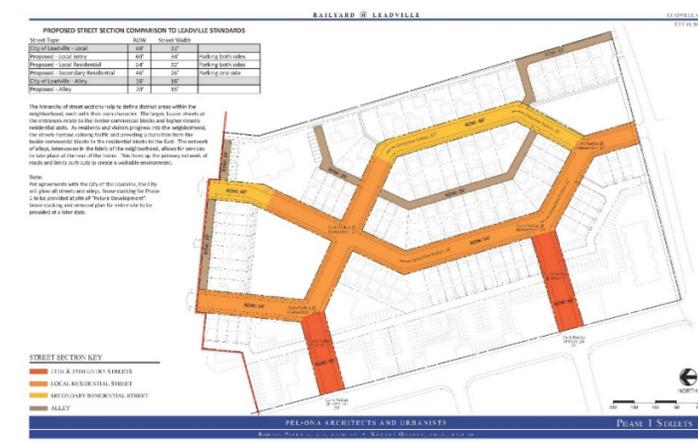


Numerous instances of roadway conditions, including a lack of appropriate accommodations for safe vehicular and non-vehicular movement, and deteriorating infrastructure, were both visible and confirmed by discussions with local officials.

\* As of the date of this report, no information was available regarding traffic incidents.

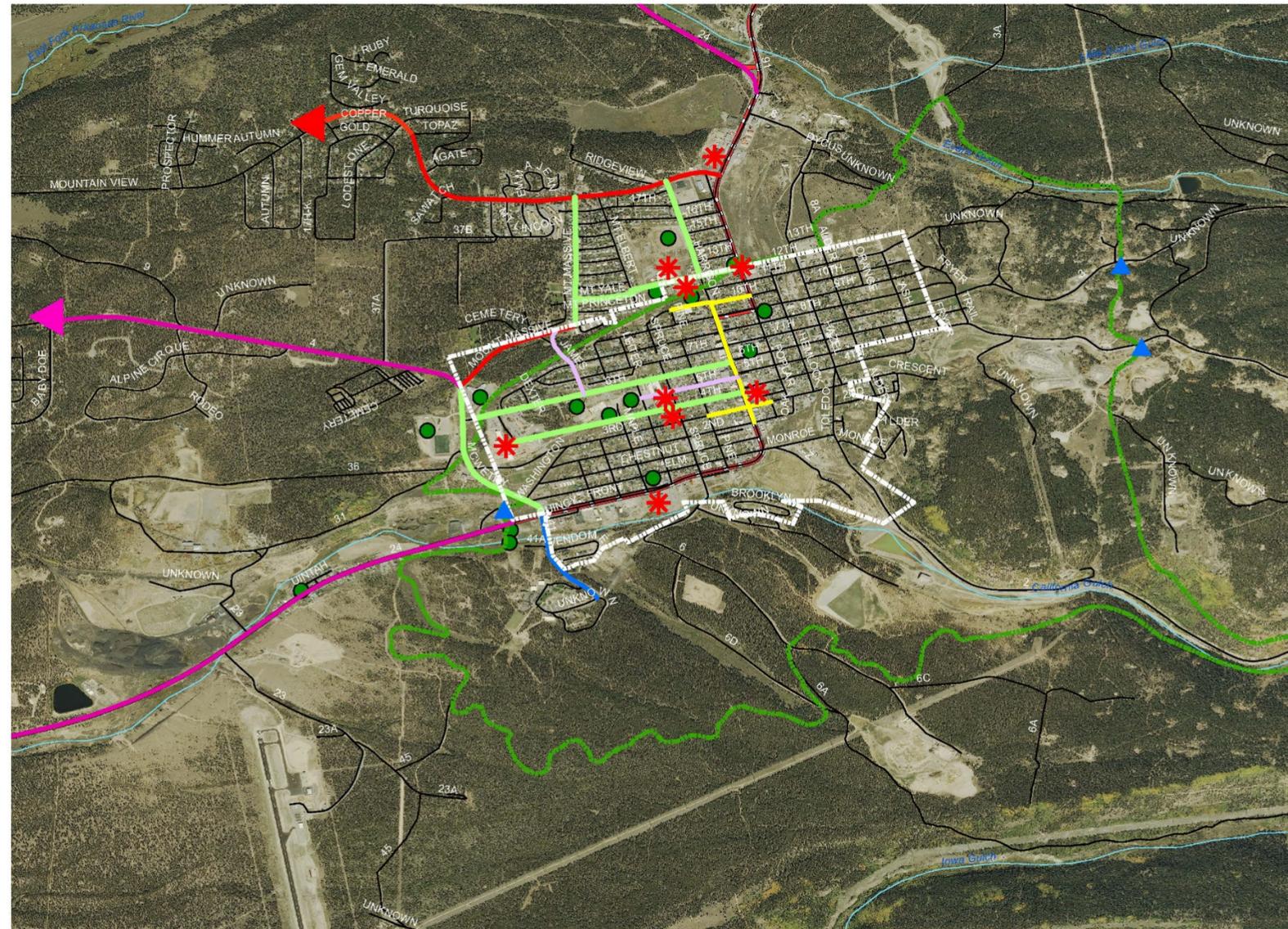
A lack of roads within large parcels has also been determined to contribute to unsafe conditions.

Railyard Property Proposed Street Plan



# Pedestrian and Bike Corridors Map

The Leadville Comprehensive Plan identifies the location of numerous pedestrian and bike improvements that are necessary to safely accommodate non-vehicular movement, as well as advance strategic community objectives. Few, if any, have been completed.



This DRAFT PRODUCT map was created using Lake County GIS digital data, but this is a secondary product, not verified or authorized by the County. Parcel data reflects available data, which is not complete.



## Multi-Modal Strategies Pedestrian and Bike Corridors Map

Lake County and City of Leadville  
Coordinated Comprehensive Plans Update

### Legend

- Regional Connections**  
These corridors, primarily along Highway 24 and County Road 6, are characterized by soft shoulders and heavy traffic. They connect important residential areas to the City's infrastructure and represent opportunities sidewalks and/or parallel pathways.
- CMC Bike Connection**  
The connection between the City and CMC should include a detached pathway or bike/pedestrian lane and safe highway crossing.
- Important Sidewalk Connection**  
These segments of sidewalk improvement will connect pedestrian traffic from Mt. Massive along James Street to the Mineral Belt Trail and the City's grid, as well as from Harrison Avenue to the school.
- Bike/Pedestrian Safety Concerns**  
These areas also have significant safety issues and provide an opportunity to connect residential areas with the internal circulation system.
- Important Walking/Biking Routes**  
These corridors represent the connective backbone for pedestrian and bicycle circulation with the City. Investment should focus on sidewalk improvements and bike lanes where feasible.
- Downtown Retail Core**  
The Downtown core spines represent areas where traffic should be slowed, walkability encouraged and beautification of public realm. Particular focus should be in creating public spaces for gathering and passive enjoyment, while enhancing human scale experiences.
- Mineral Belt Access Points**  
Access points to the trail should include the use of interpretive and wayfinding signage and formalized parking where appropriate.
- Leadville Boundary**
- Road Network**
- Origins and Destinations**
- Parks**
- Mineral Belt Trail**



# Findings by Factor

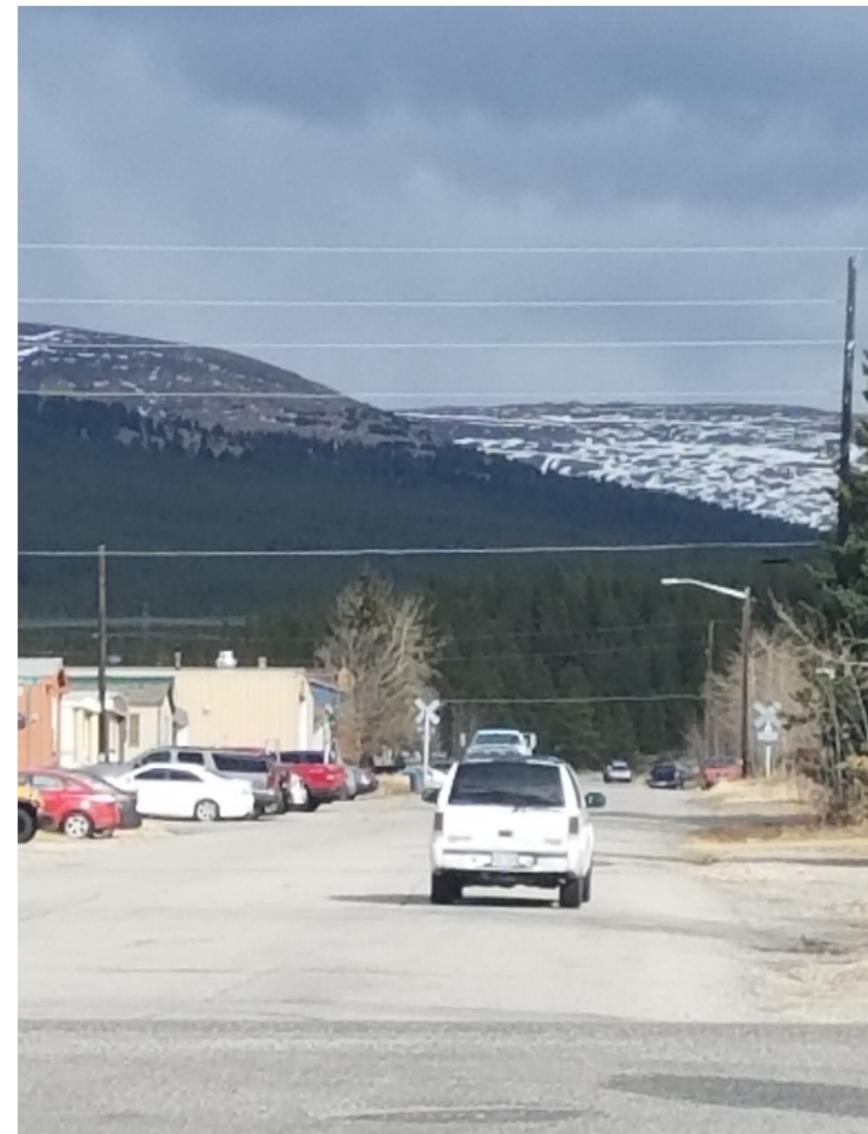
Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## c. Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness

- Faulty Lot Shape or Layout
- Vehicular Access
- Inadequate Lot Size

Whereas conditions related to the presence of Factor c, are either similar to, or the same as, those related to Factor b, particularly related to inadequate and unsafe property ingress and egress (a lack of curb and gutter or unmarked curbcut), both are considered to be present in the Survey Area.

A review of parcel lines visible from aerial photography illustrates numerous parcels which are irregular in shape, particularly among those located beyond the major corridors bisecting the Area, and likely the result of past property subdivision filings.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## d. Unsanitary or Unsafe Conditions

### Poorly Lit or Unlit Areas

Cracked or Uneven Sidewalks

Hazardous Contaminants

Poor Drainage

Floodplain / Flood Hazard

Grading / Steep Slopes

Unscreened Trash / Mechanical

Pedestrian Safety Issues

### High Crime Incidence

Fire Safety / Unprotected

Lack of Fire Protection

Vagrants / Vandalism / Graffiti

Conditions found under Factor k5 related to criminal incidents and service calls

Whereas conditions related to the presence of Factor c, are either similar to, or the same as, those related to Factor b, particularly related to inadequate and unsafe property ingress and egress (a lack of curb and gutter or unmarked curbcut), both are considered to be present in the Survey Area.

A review of parcel lines visible from aerial photography illustrates numerous parcels which are irregular in shape, particularly among those located beyond the major corridors bisecting the Area, and likely the result of past property subdivision filings.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## e. Deteriorating Site or Other Improvements

Presence of Billboards

Signage Problems

Neglect / Maintenance

Trash / Debris / Weeds

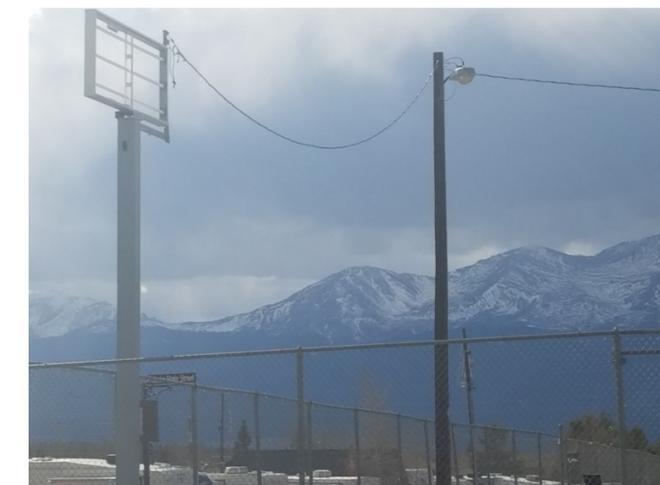
Parking Surface

Lack of Landscaping

Abandoned and degraded signs are obvious throughout the Survey Area, primarily along the major roadway corridors that bi-sect the major Survey Area segments.

Several vacant commercial properties located along Harrison Street appear abandoned and neglected, with overgrown weeds, cracked pavement, and accumulating trash and debris visible.

Few commercial properties have landscaping, and several of those with landscaping elements are adequately maintained.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## f. Unusual Topography or Inadequate Public Improvements or Utilities

Slopes or Unusual Terrain

Street Pavement

Curb and Gutter

Street Lighting

Overhead Utilities

Lack of Sidewalks / Parking

Lack of Roads

Substandard Road

Water Service

Sewer Service

Storm Water Quality



In addition to overhead utilities present throughout the Survey Area, and absence of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, there is inadequate lighting to allow for a safe walking environment. According to surveys completed by the owners of the Railyard Property, as well as discussions with representatives of the City, existing infrastructure and utilities serving the Area will require improvements including upsizing and material replacement, in order to meet the requirements of new development and redevelopment projects.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## g. Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title Rendering the Title Non-Marketable

Defective Title

Utility and Public Easements

Mineral Rights

As per the, "Materials Management Plan report, dated September 22, 2015," regarding the presence of environmental contamination within the Railyard Property, "The Property is included as a portion of OU3, designated as 'Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad Slag Piles, Railroad Easement, and Rail Yard.' Operable Unit 3 (OU3) of the CERCLA site includes three slag piles (Arkansas Valley, La Plata, and Harrison Street), an old railway easement that runs diagonally through the City of Leadville (now part of the "Mineral Belt Trail"), and the Old Rail Yard site on which the Property is located."

**MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Old Rail Yard Property  
Leadville, Lake County, Colorado

September 22, 2015

Project #: ESS-HCD-MMP-001

Prepared for:

**John P. Lichtenegger**  
Managing Member  
High Country Developers, LLC

Prepared by:

**Environmental Science Solutions LLC**  
8059 Wolff Street, Unit A  
Westminster, CO 80031  
(303) 427-5238



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## h. Existence of Conditions that Endanger Life or Property by Fire or Other Causes

Fire Safety / Unprotected \*

Hazardous Contaminants

High Crime Incidence \*

Floodplain

Conditions found under Factor i related to unsafe conditions

Conditions found under Factor k5 related to a lack of fire protection and service calls \*



Visible circumstances contributing to unsafe and unhealthy conditions primarily include those identified in the context of other factors including abandoned structures left in disrepair and inadequate infrastructure for non-vehicular mobility. Also posing a threat to property and people is the presence of environmental contaminants within the Railyard Property and a lack of appropriate protections from fire. In a letter provided by the Leadville Fire Marshal on 31 October 2017, there are several businesses and apartments located along Harrison Street in need of improvements that will make them fire code compliant. In addition, among those businesses which maintain a smoke detector, they are primarily located within the store area; meaning, if a detector activates it will only alert the occupants present in the building at the time, and no notification sent to the Lake County Dispatch.

\* As of the date of this report, no information was available regarding service calls.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## i. Sites / Buildings That Are Unsafe or Unhealthy to Live or Work

Hazardous Contaminants

Fire Safety Problems \*

Building / Facilities / Site Conditions Unsafe

Whereas conditions related to the presence of Factor i, are either similar to, or the same as, those related to Factor h, particularly related to the presence of hazardous contaminants and a lack of infrastructure to protect properties and people from fire and other causes, both are considered to be present in the Survey Area.

\* As of the date of this report, no information was available regarding service calls.



# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.



## j. Environmental Contamination of Buildings or Property

### Hazardous Contaminants

As per the, "Materials Management Plan report, dated September 22, 2015," regarding the presence of environmental contamination within the Railyard Property, "The Property is included as a portion of OU3, designated as 'Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad Slag Piles, Railroad Easement, and Rail Yard.' Operable Unit 3 (OU3) of the CERCLA site includes three slag piles (Arkansas Valley, La Plata, and Harrison Street), an old railway easement that runs diagonally through the City of Leadville (now part of the "Mineral Belt Trail"), and the Old Rail Yard site on which the Property is located. All OU3 sites are owned or were previously owned by the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Company (D&RGW). The medium of environmental concern at the OU3 sites is 'slag', a term used to describe a type of waste derived from the blast or reverberatory furnaces (smelters) historically used to support mining efforts in the Leadville area. These smelters, which operated primarily in the late 1800's and early 1900's, released metals from mined ore and produced slag as a byproduct. Slag is a dark vitreous material that is composed primarily of iron, magnesium, calcium, and silica with residual heavy metals such as lead and zinc; it is hard and dense and exists as lava-like rock layers or blocky and angular material often found near the smelter areas or in use as railroad ballast. Slag was used at the Old Rail Yard as railroad ballast and road base to provide support for heavy vehicle traffic."

#### MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Old Rail Yard Property  
Leadville, Lake County, Colorado

September 22, 2015

Project #: ESS-HCD-MMP-001

Prepared for:

John P. Lichtenegger  
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8059 Wolff Street, Unit A  
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# Findings by Factor

Conditions and improvements associated with this factor are listed below. Those observed or identified within the Survey Area that are present and deemed adverse or in disrepair, or absent and determined to be essential, are presented in blue.

## k.5. High Service Requirements or Substantial Physical Under-Utilization

High Volume of Calls for Service \*

High Crime Incidence \*

Site and / or Building Underutilization



There are numerous instances of both vacant and abandoned properties and buildings throughout the Survey Area. Efforts to protect pedestrians range from wire fencing to remnant infrastructure (roadway barriers), yet several offer no protections.

\* As of the date of this presentation, no information has been available regarding criminal incidents and service calls.



# Glossary of Terms

## Urban Renewal Terms (as defined in the Statute)

**Area or Urban Renewal Area** – means the physical geography, identified by City Council, legally defined, and found to be eligible for an urban renewal designation due to the presence of a sufficient number of blighting conditions as identified in the law.

**Authority** – means the urban renewal entity for the municipality identified and approved by its Mayor and City Council.

**Blight Study** – means a report of findings identified and observed within a defined Survey or Study Area, and an opinion regarding their consistency with those factors described in the law which constitute conditions of blight.

**Conditions Survey** – another term used to describe a Blight Study.

**Impact Report** – means a report, required by the law, which estimates potential levels of incremental revenues that may be generated within an Urban Renewal Area, and quantifies potential impacts (if any) to the County and relevant taxing entities.

**Plan or Urban Renewal Plan** – means a report that illustrates and defines the boundaries of the Urban Renewal Area, identifies its purpose and objectives, provides a list of those factors of blight which future Urban Renewal Projects will attempt to mitigate or eliminate, and describes the strategy by which improvements within the Area will be financed.

**Study (or Survey) area** – means the geographic territory which will be investigated for the potential presence of conditions consistent with factors of blight defined in the law, the boundaries of which may or may not be coterminous with the final Urban Renewal Area boundaries, excluding any parcels not located within the municipal boundaries.

**Tax Increment Area** – means all or a portion of the Area where incremental revenues will be collected and reinvested in furtherance of the Plan's goals and objectives for the purpose of reducing, eliminating or preventing the spread of blight.

**Urban Renewal Project** – as defined by the law, but generally an improvement, public or private that addresses the findings of blight and advances the goals of the Plan.

