

New Frontiers in Land Conservation: Conserve, Redevelop, Un-develop

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Outline of Session

- I. **New Frontiers and Opportunities for Innovation: Why Conserve, Redevelop, Un-develop?**
- II. **Innovation in Action: Conservation organizations at work**
 - ▶ Trust for Public Land
 - ▶ Colorado Open Lands
 - ▶ Clear Creek Land Conservancy
- III. **Incentives for the New Frontiers: Existing and New**
- IV. **Discussion: Sharing Experiences, Questions, Answers, and Guidance**
- v. **Conclusions and Take-Aways: (building blocks, road maps, lessons learned)**



Like the mantra of

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

the new frontiers of land protection
will be

**Conserve, Redevelop, and
Undevelop**



This session focuses on **land trusts as new social entrepreneurs** shepherding the movement from large-scale, raw land protection to **smaller-scale, interconnected repurposing of land and its uses.**

Presenters will share their experiences and examples of working within, and developing new, legal, practical, and **functional frameworks** for land trusts;


Presenters will also use their examples to **provide financial, legal, and regulatory guidance** for land trusts endeavoring projects on the new frontiers.

- 
- **Conserving**, creating, and interconnecting people and parcels of land for public parks, community gardens, cooperative farms, and public forests;
 - **Redeveloping**, reimagining, and reinventing the already-built environment for new public purposes such as affordable housing, recreation, and community places; and
 - **Undeveloping**, recovering, and restoring developed, degraded, or polluted lands to support revitalized ecological and human systems.



Land conservation organizations at work in conservation, redevelopment, and un-development in Colorado

- ▶ Trust for Public Land, National Land Conservation Organization
- ▶ Colorado Open Lands, Statewide Land Trust,
- ▶ Clear Creek Land Conservancy, Local Land Trust

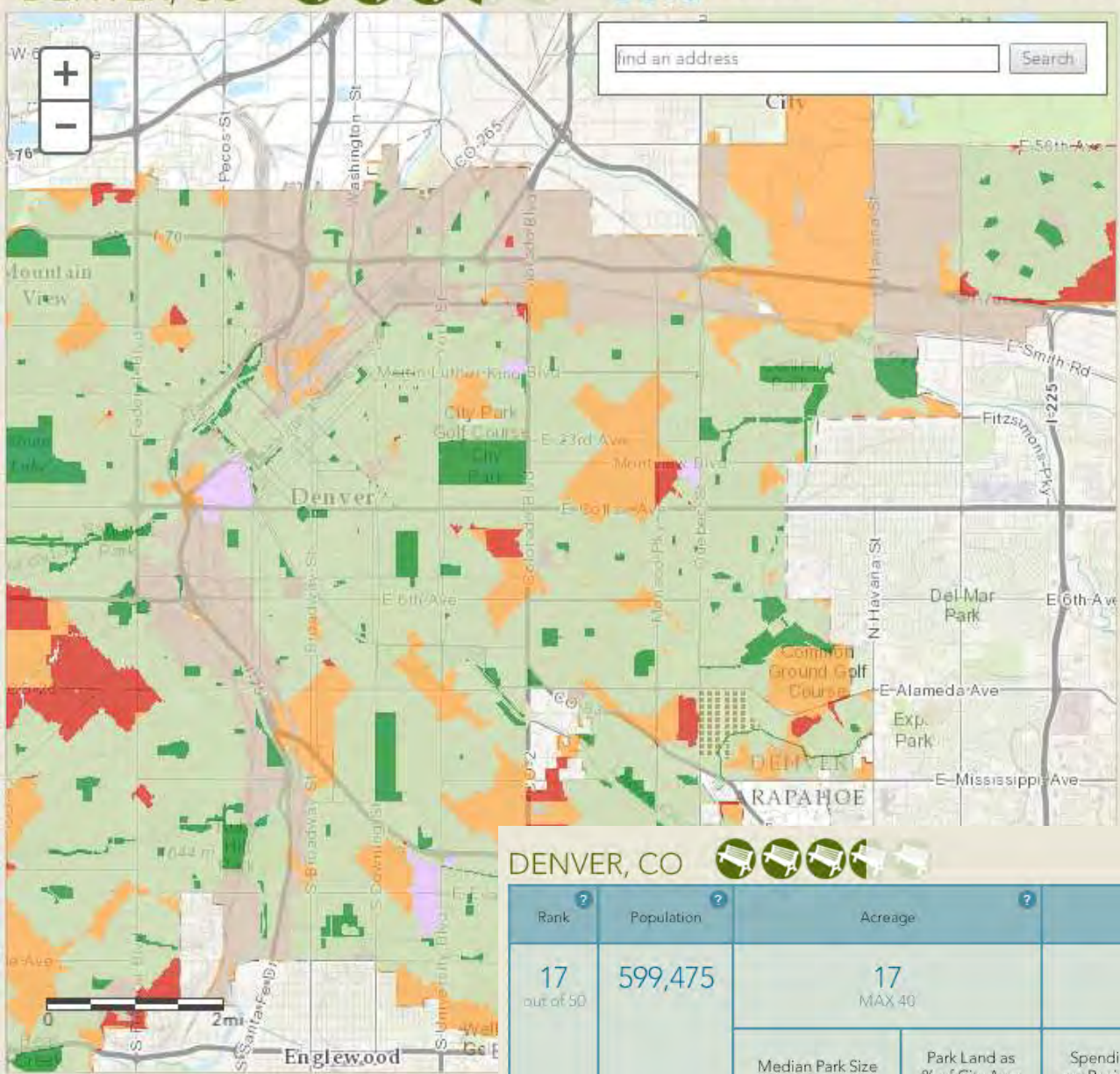


New Frontiers in Land Conservation

JIM PETTERSON, COLORADO STATE DIRECTOR

ROCKY MOUNTAIN LAND INSTITUTE – MARCH 2016

DENVER, CO  = 60.0 ParkScore 



City Stats

- City area: 97,920 acres
- Median park size: 6.29 acres
- Park land as % of city area: 6.0 %
- Spending per resident: \$131.33
- Playgrounds per 10,000: 2.5
- Population density: 6.1 per acre

Park Facts

- Park acreage: 5,900 acres
- People served per park acre: 80
- Oldest park: Mestizo Curtis Park , est. 1881
- Largest park: City Park , 314 acres
- Most-visited park: City Park

DENVER, CO 

[DOWNLOAD MAP & TABLES](#)

Rank 	Population 	Acreage 		Services & Investment 		Access 	Raw Score 	ParkScore 
17 out of 50	599,475	17 MAX 40		25 MAX 40		30 MAX 40	72 MAX 120	60.0 MAX 100
		Median Park Size	Park Land as % of City Area	Spending per Resident	Playgrounds per 10,000 Residents			
		12 MAX 20	5 MAX 20	16 MAX 20	9 MAX 20			



THE HIGH LINE





THE





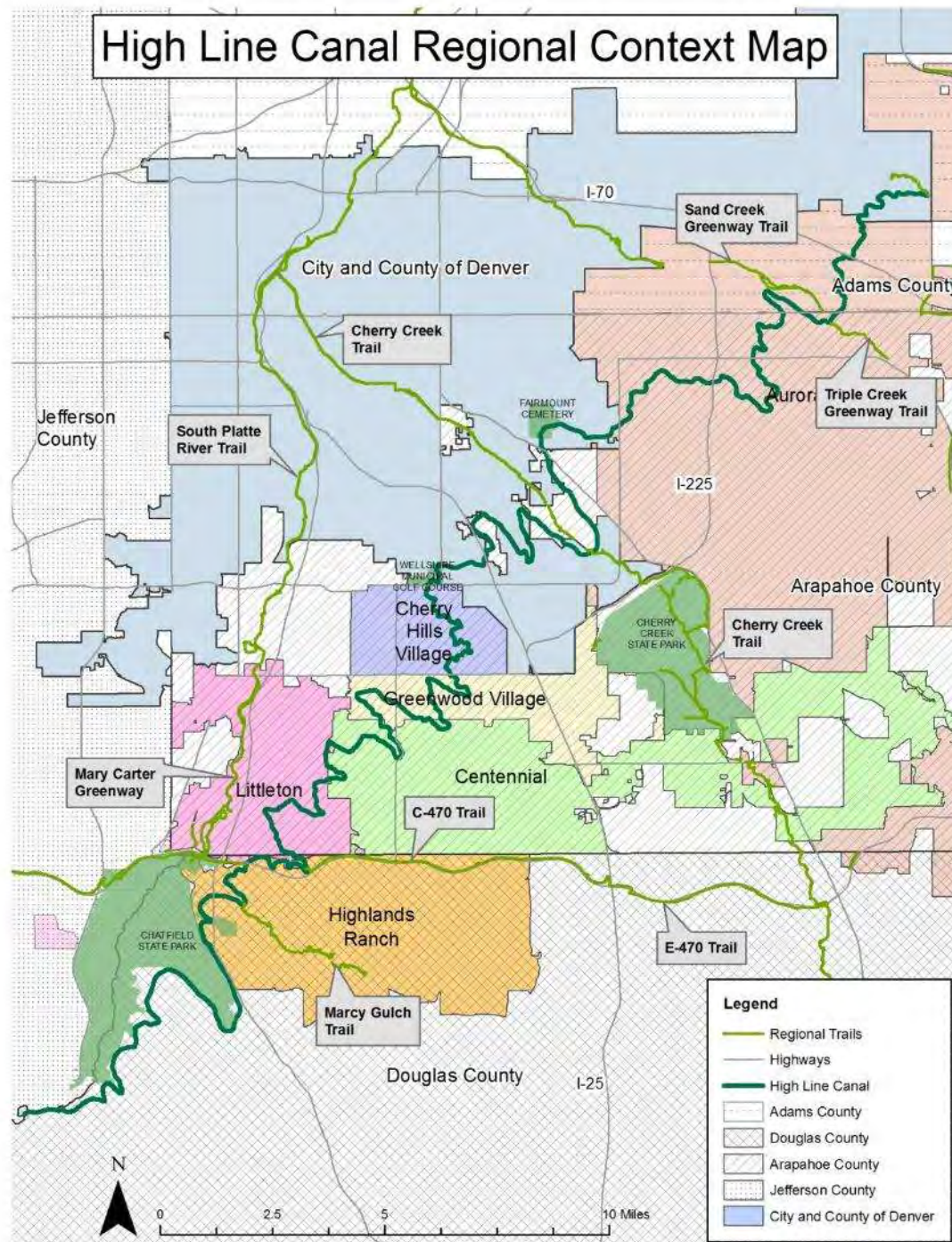






THE HIGH LINE CANAL

High Line Canal Regional Context Map







CUATRO VIENTOS PARK











CUATRO VIENTOS
FOUR WINDS PARK







RIVER NORTH PARK



Interstate 25 HOV (Toll road)

RIVER NORTH
ART DISTRICT

E Brighton Blvd

Blake St

Fox St

2nd St

BALLPARK

Blake St

Walnut St

Farmer St

E 31st St

Google

City of Cuernavaca Park

RIVER NORTH PARK - BEFORE



RIVER NORTH PARK - BEFORE



RIVER NORTH PARK - BEFORE





**35TH STREET
VISIONING**

*Conceptual Design
Funding TBD*



**PROMENADE
29TH TO 38TH**

*Conceptual Design
Funding TBD*



**RIVER NORTH
PARK**

*Thru Final Design
\$2.9M for construction
Construction 2017*

RIVER NORTH PARK SITE



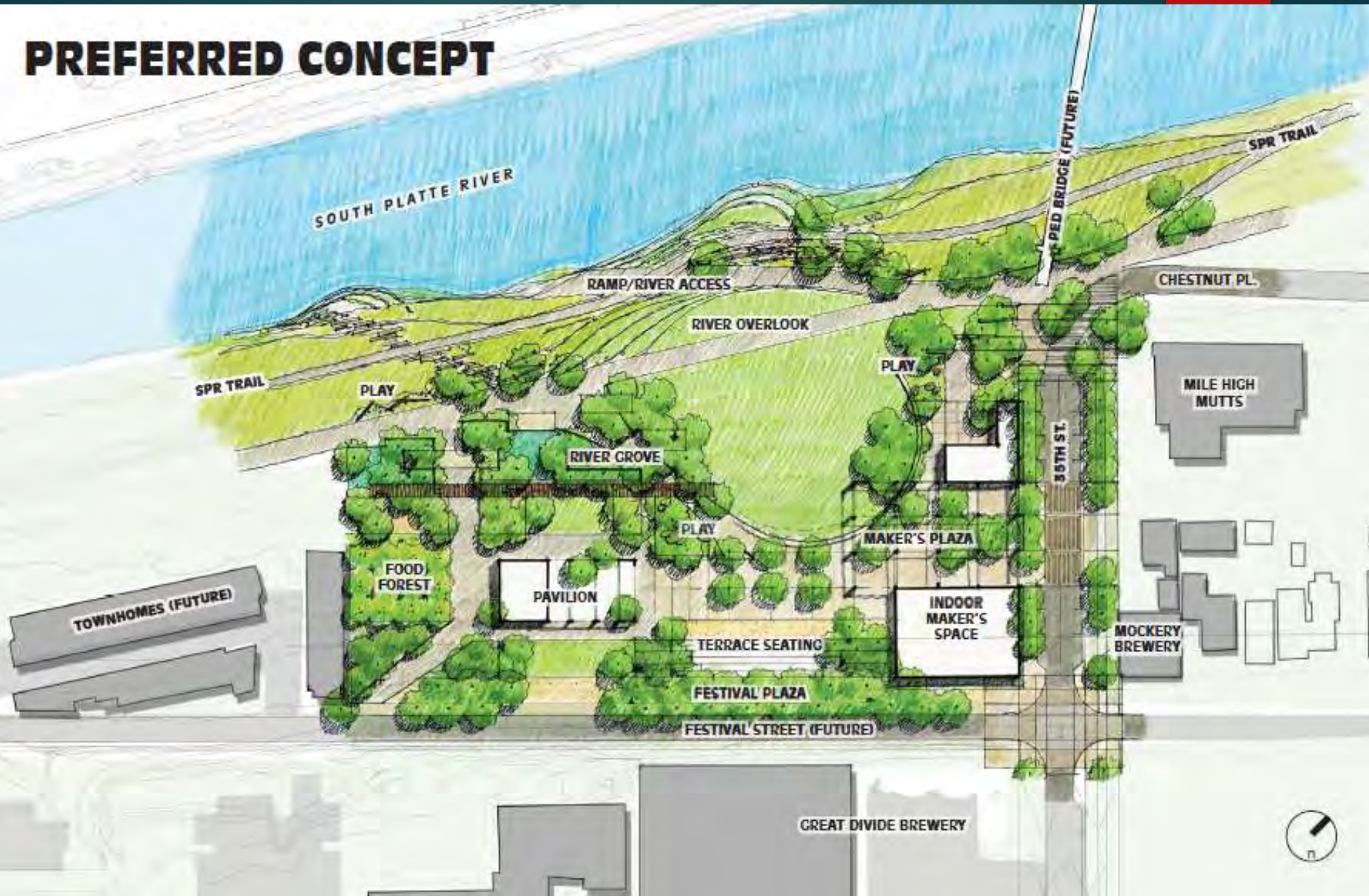
Interstate Trucking Building- Existing



Police Service Building / EEB- Existing



PREFERRED CONCEPT





MONTBELLO OPEN SPACE PARK

Elk Property

Montbello Neighborhood, Denver CO

Property Boundary

August 2012

100 ft



N. PEORIA ST

E. ALBROOK DRIVE

N. TULSA CT

E. 46TH AVE







LEGEND



5.52 ACRES OF LAND FOR SALE
ADJACENT TO NEW DENVER HEALTH CLINIC
SITE DETENTION POND IN PLACE



THE NESBITT GROUP

303.346.4869

www.thenesbittgroup.com
Keller Williams Operations

ERIC NESBITT

Ana Sandomire

The Trust for Public Land and
Environmental Learning for Kids



ARE WORKING WITH
THE CITY OF DENVER TO
TRANSFORM THIS VACANT LOT
INTO AN OPEN SPACE FOR
EVERYONE TO ENJOY



THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND
A 501(c)(3) Non-Profit



Colorado Open Lands



Sarah Parmar

Director of Conservation

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CONSERVE



A sustainable food system for Metro Denver enabled by a network of protected irrigated lands

National Food System Trends

- Direct sales from farms to consumers and restaurants have increased 120 percent in last decade from \$600 million to more than \$1.2 billion.
- Farmers markets have similarly increased in number 123 percent from 3,706 in 2004 to 8,258 in 2014.
- Community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs have proliferated from two in 1986 to 1,144 in 2005 and possibly over 2,500 as of 2010.
- Farm to school district programs have grown from six in 2001 to 4,322 in 2011 resulting in \$385 million of healthy, farm-fresh purchases per year.
- The National Restaurant Association reports local food is the top trend in restaurant purchasing.

Five Fridges Farm



13 acres in Wheatridge, Colorado –
bounded by suburban homes and
an apartment complex

Leases to Clear Creek Organics
(CSA), produces eggs, goat milk,
honey

Protected with a conservation
easement

<http://5fridgesfarm.com/involvement/>

An issue of quality and quantity

The City and County of Denver have begun development of a comprehensive, citywide fresh food strategy which will incorporate **infrastructure needs** for the growing, processing, distribution and retailing of fresh foods .

Key infrastructure realities:

- land AND water rights
- Metro core AND surrounding counties which are undergoing rapid change, but still have threshold agricultural production systems(e.g. Arapahoe)

Organizational considerations

Challenges

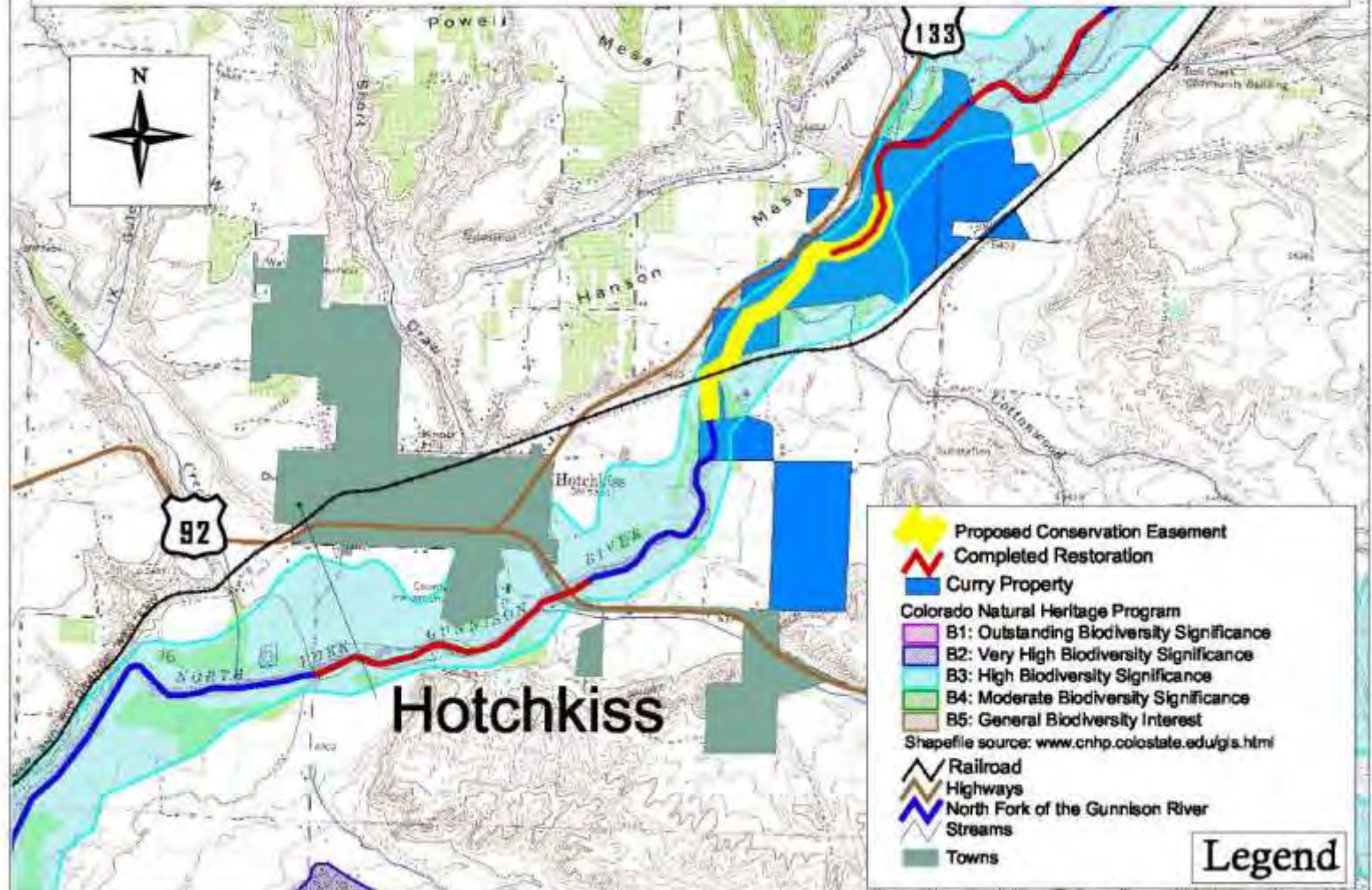
- The price tag is either too high or not high enough
- Limited capacity, high investment

Opportunities

- Fee ownership as a supplement to conservation easements
- New connections to conserved land

UNDEVELOP

North Fork Gunnison Conservation Project



Active in-stream gravel
mining

Habitat for yellow-billed
cuckoo and bald eagle



Couple conservation
easement with
restoration plan



Questions?

CLEAR CREEK
LAND CONSERVANCY

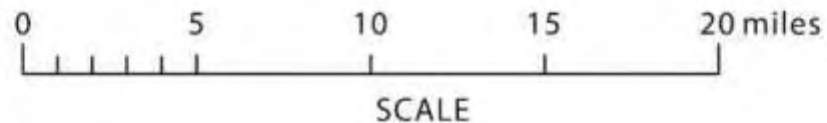


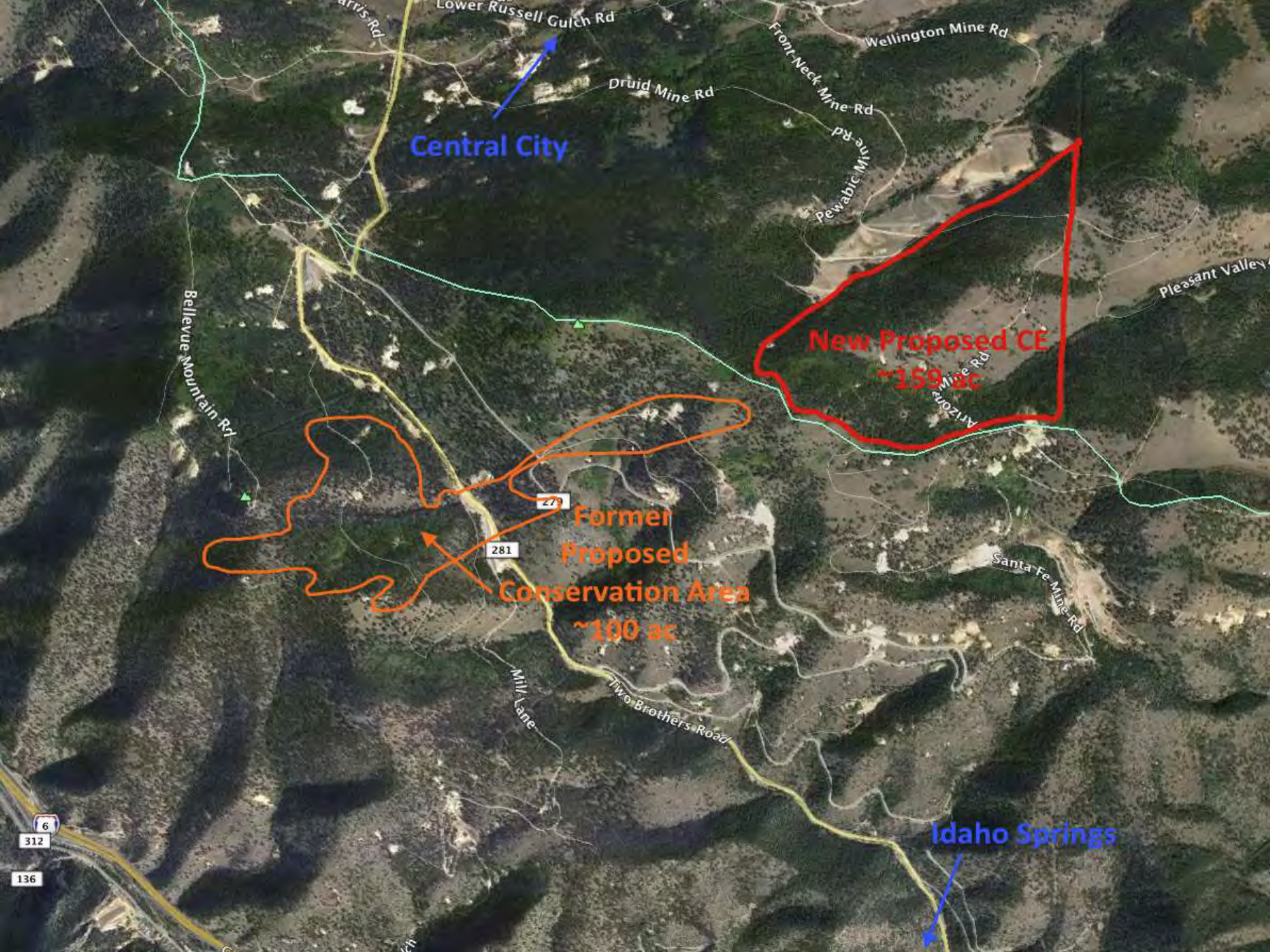
Claire Riegelman
Executive Director
303.718.9546

www.clearcreeklandconservancy.org



MAP OF THE DRAINAGE BASIN OF CLEAR CREEK ABOVE THE MOUTH OF THE CANYON SHOWING LANDS PROTECTED BY CCLC (purple shading) AND OTHER PROTECTED LANDS NEAR THE CANYON (blue shading)





Central City

New Proposed CE
~159 ac

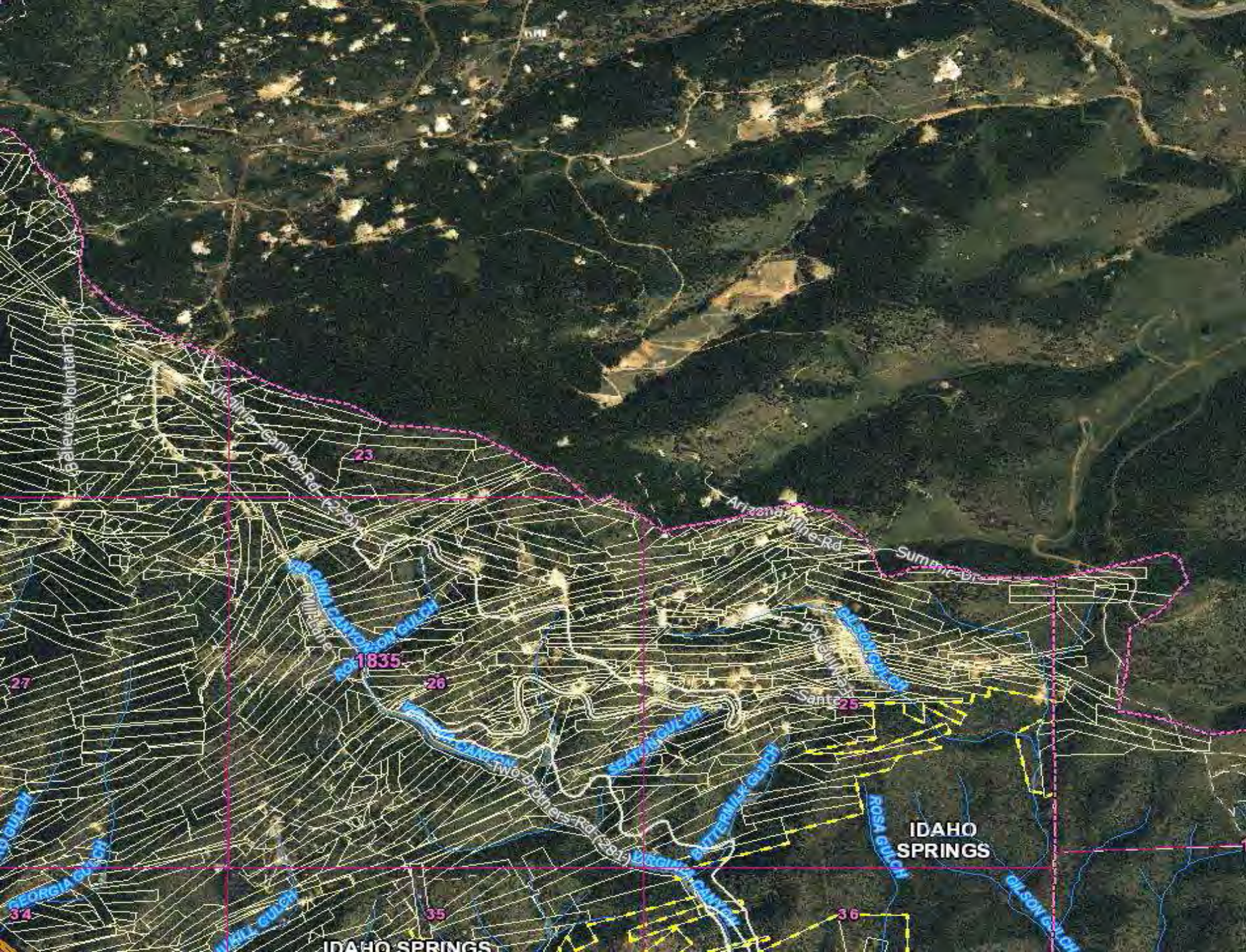
Former
Proposed
Conservation Area
~100 ac

Idaho Springs









Existing and New Incentives

▶ Individual incentives for new frontiers



- ▶ Historic tax credits
- ▶ Affordable housing tax credits
- ▶ Brownfields tax credits: Federal and State
- ▶ New market tax credits
- ▶ Federal conservation easement tax deduction
- ▶ State conservation easement tax credits

Existing and New Incentives cont.

- ▶ Programmatic cooperative, collaborative community-based, local, land-use incentives
 - ▶ Tax Increment Financing: State and Local
 - ▶ New Incentives and New Benefits—challenge/non-tax-based?

Tax Increment Financing: State and Local

- ▶ Tax increment financing (TIF) is the most popular financial tool for financing local redevelopment activities. It has been widely used for revitalizing blighted areas, redeveloping new housing units, and cleaning up environmentally contaminated and polluted sites. Currently, TIF is authorized in 49 states and the District of Columbia. Simply defined, TIF is a financial mechanism to capture the new or incremental taxes that are created when underutilized and vacant properties are redeveloped and use the captured revenues to finance the costs of redevelopment. TIF is generally thought of as a self-financing district.



In concept, local governments do not lose anything during the TIF period because the projects would not have occurred “but for” the TIF. At the end of the TIF period, the local governments receive higher tax revenues. TIF has several benefits. First, it provides incentive for private developers to build in economically depressed areas; second, it increases property values and creates a stronger tax base; third, it does not require a general tax increase.

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- ▶ Local Revitalization Financing districts authorized by state to allow districts to receive state tax revenues as long as matched by new local tax revenue through TIF future property tax revenue

Panel Questions

- ▶ What were your lessons learned/would you do differently in your project with hindsight?
- ▶ Are you going to take on new frontier projects again?
- ▶ Was there mission drift in your new frontier project?
- ▶ Will you incorporate similar projects into your overall program?
- ▶ Is there a way to inspire other organizations to take local actions based on your project?
- ▶ What are your next steps on the new frontiers?
- ▶ What do you think would incentivize individuals, communities, and organizations to take on more of these projects?
- ▶ Have you or would you participate in or propose legislation to inspire new frontier projects? Describe

Conclusions and Take-Aways

- ▶ Building Blocks
 - ▶ Road Maps
- ▶ Lessons Learned
 - ▶ Next Steps