



AMBASSADOR HOMEWORK
West End “What ifs . . .”

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

Please submit three (3) “What if” dreams for Lakewood’s west end of West Colfax.

The following is a compilation of Ambassadors’ submissions. All submissions were included; you will notice some redundancy, but we have combined some concepts, ideas, and recommendations that were very close to the same. A number in parentheses after an idea indicates the number times the same/closely related idea was submitted.

West End ‘What Ifs’

- What if a large business or campus took over Westland (or any assembled property) and created both a headquarters there (Google Lakewood headquarters or the Culinary Institute of Lakewood headquarters) and created a large public open space in front with benches, walkways and a community garden for the public to enjoy?
- What if the RTD land became an active senior living complex – with ‘micro’ apartments for a single or two active seniors with public businesses on the other end that are open to all but catered to active seniors, such as café/tea/smoothie bars, small recreation center/gym, shared public gardens, hair/nail salons, a mini-library, and wellness businesses, like healthy grocers, chiropractors, nutritionists, yoga studios, etc.? (2)
- What if a property became a health and wellness complex, with a large ‘anchor’ business like a huge climbing gym with indoor/outdoor climbing walls combined with a host of other wellness businesses – (see above) with the front parking lot being transformed in part to a small pocket park with community gardens?
- What if Oak Street Station and the parcel north of it became a designated entertainment district, filled with restaurants and boutiques, like Old Towne Arvada or Morrison? (3)



- What if every other year, The Colfax Marathon or Half Marathon ended at the Westland area to great celebration, including a festival and entertainment. Runners and the community could celebrate together and return to the race start via the W-line light rail?



- What if we attract a major “niche” museum to the west end of Colfax Ave. (like a neon museum or hot rod museum).

- What if there were an early spring Applewood-centric event – possibly a sculpture festival and sale.



- What if the Westland mall (or another redeveloped area on the west end) included plazas that were each a different theme, attracting different themed shops?

- What if at the West end of Colfax there was a walkable, multipurpose Community Center with recreational facilities, where one could meet friends for good coffee or a beer, eat at a quaint restaurant, or watch an artsy movie outside with the kids? (3)

- What if the City of Lakewood would launch a new sustainability initiative to enhance Lakewood’s urban forest by putting in many new trees and shrubs on the north & south edges of Colfax Ave.? This effort would include south of the Miller Heights neighborhood & Oak Street station.

- What if the people at Golden Music (corner of Miller & W. Colfax) worked with the community to hold a music festival every year in the Westland parking lot—or better yet—a new green space with an amphitheater? (2)

- What if there was an amphitheater and gathering spot with biking/walking trails along Quail Street, making Oak Street Station a destination? (2)

- What if there were strategically located and authentically designed pedestrian bridges [or one other idea said “archways”] over West Colfax, providing safe access to pods of activities, and these artistic bridges became iconic symbols of the new vibrancy along the corridor. (2)



- What if Trolley Car 25 could run along Quail and maybe across W. Colfax to shuttle visitors to activities along the north side. (3)

- What if we (the City, WCCA, the community at large) could mount a campaign (or recruit a major philanthropist) to implement the plan for Oak St. Station that former Councilor Ed Petersen and other former City Councilors worked on. It envisioned a museum to house our historic Trolley Car 25.



- What if a new westside park was home Trolley Car 25 where families could not only see but ride it as well—with a museum, gift shop, and authentic time-period restaurant—like originally envisioned when we worked on the Oak Street Station Area Plan?



- What if an open-air retro trolley (modeled after Car 25) shuttled people back and forth between 40 West Arts District and a new West End Entertainment District that included shops and restaurant along Quail Street?

- What if we had a life/work/play community developed on RTD’s site on the south side of Colfax—one that rivals Belmar as it would have more open space? (4)

- What if we could redevelop the King Soopers complex at Quail and Colfax. Something that attracts retailers to surround an updated grocery. Or, if the whole complex could become an artist community?



- What if we connected with our past and rekindled “Colfax Cruising” to host a major must-see outdoor festival celebrating both classic cars and new electric/hybrid concepts?

- What if the City of Lakewood could purchase the RTD land and then lead a nationwide call to developers to partner with the City (and provide incentives) to redevelop the parcel to include mixed-uses for residential, services, office, entertainment, retails, working, and include a new Colfax Town Square—an interactive public green space with art throughout, a bandstand for performances, and play areas for kids and families. (4)



- My dreams for West Colfax definitely include someplace around the Westland to house the trolley (Car 25). If it can transport people along the Colfax corridor that would be even better.
- Having a destination spot for kids and young adults like an outdoor as well as indoor recreation and educational fun environment would be a draw for folks in and outside of Lakewood.
- What if we could attract a dinner entertainment-type nightclub like Taylor's Supper Club? (2)
- Outdoor entertainment venues for music as well as other entertainment would be great, perhaps in front of Whitlock or incorporated into a new park at RTD land or Westland. (3)
- More restaurants. We need more restaurants (with easy in and out parking) and not just national chains.
- Trolley at Westland Shopping Center. This is the only area left that could handle this along with the buildings that would be required to deal with this car.
- More Walkability. It would be nice to have Colfax walkable. It is not - at this time. Walkable locations for restaurants and retail.

OTHER IDEAS SUBMITTED:

The pictures included here are of the land adjacent to the new RTD station in Broomfield. We still have the opportunity to do something similar. The two lots across from the Oak street station are still vacant and RTD has no plans for them. The north lot is in a flood plain and would need lots of expensive work if it were to be developed into a buildable site. This idea makes so much sense since Ward 1 is severely lacking in park land. Perfect place given within a couple blocks are the Oak street apartments 300 units, Avenida 250 units and West Link 225 units and the new one being built in front of Avenida another 250 units. A park is sorely needed here.



- Not the west end of West Colfax—but—what if someone took over the Casa Bonita space and turn it into multi-themed entertainment experience (with no food purchase required for entry).
- Not the west end of West Colfax—but—what if the back parking lot (behind the ARC and Casa Bonita) could be repurposed and used for a productive purpose—such as affordable student/artist housing or transitional housing that’s sorely needed in the corridor.



COMMENTS INCLUDED DURING HOMEWORK:

- It was a fun exercise!
- Hold on to Casa Bonita.
- Colfax needs sidewalks and a bike lane!
- Continue to include history where possible but do not keep buildings if they are too old and decrepit.
- Can we do something to encourage deadbeat property owners to take better care of their property?
- It would be nice to have Colfax more walkable. It is not - at this time.
- The only real place that's walkable is Lamar Station Plaza. That location needs more interesting retail stores. Right now a dentist office and laundry are not locations one visits often.
- Please make Colfax safer for autos, bikes, and walkers.
- Let's tie West Colfax together with art!
- Does the corridor need design guidelines (in addition to what is already in the Zoning Ordinance)?
- How can we encourage RTD to sell the City the land on the south side of Colfax?
- How much money does the City have set aside new parks along Colfax in Ward 1?
- It's great to dream and I agree it's important (essential), but are we going to talk about what's actually possible?
- Does the City of Lakewood have the capacity to lead this right now?
- The big problem, right now, is the pandemic. Hopefully, things change as we get out of this time.
- What can we do link to whole West Colfax together (by signage, median art installation, other visual cues, etc.)?
- Thanks for organizing this group.