

Concept B

Executive Summary

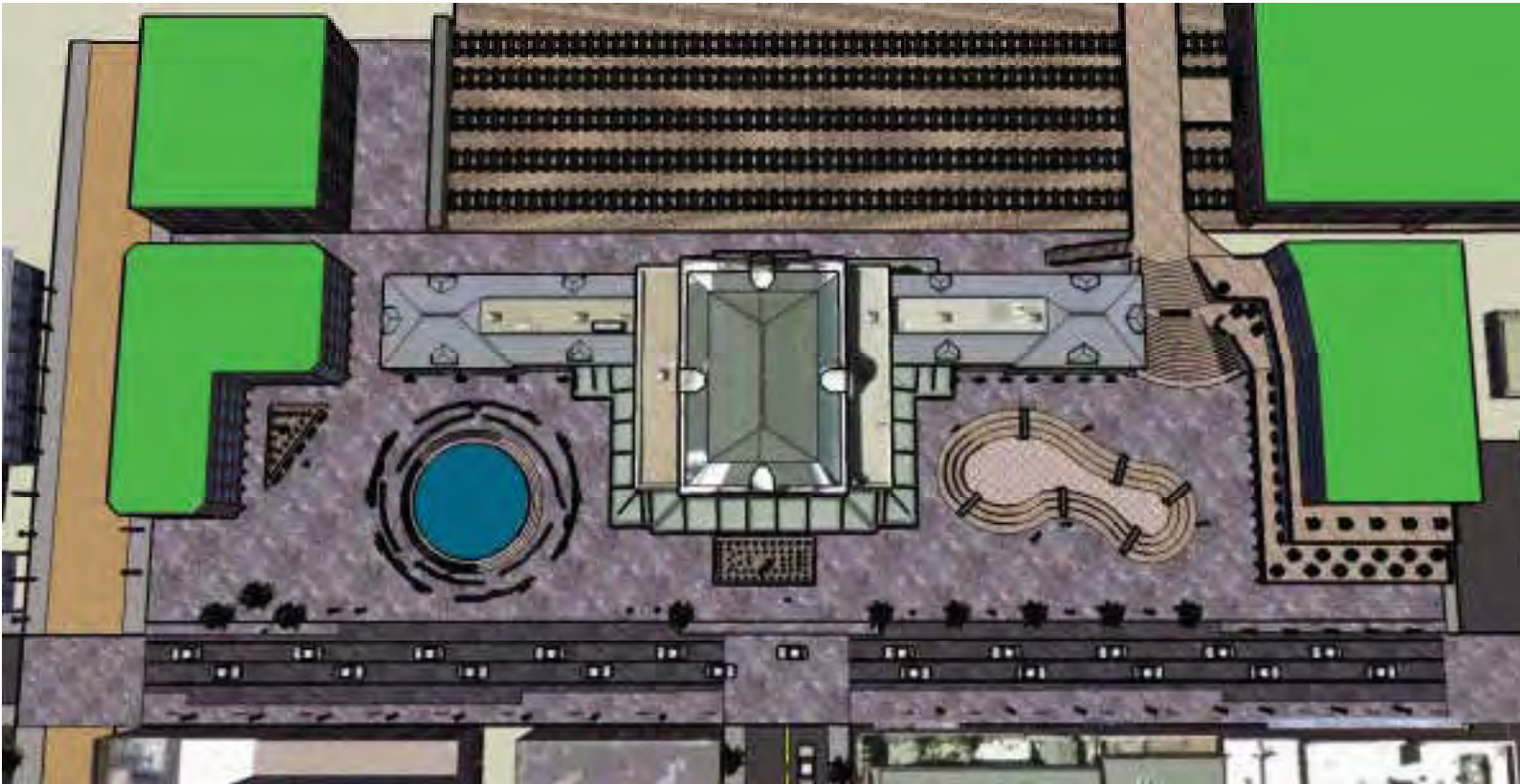
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Concept B: The Grand Staircase

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Plaza Vision

Denver Union Station Plaza is pivotal for the success of the Lower Downtown Denver neighborhood. This concept emphasizes the primacy of an active and successful public space. If the space between Wynkoop Street and the front of the station cannot be successful, the whole network of development on the 19-acre site will be in jeopardy. The character of the historic district should be optimized as a draw. The views of some of Denver's oldest historic buildings are important to preserve from the site. Designing for the long term and creating a sense of place are key elements of this concept. Flexibility, neighborhood compatibility and civic utility are guiding principles.

Plan Elements

In this concept, the plaza wing buildings are set back farther than 45 feet from Wynkoop Street, but their dimensions remain within the site's retail, office and zoning standards.

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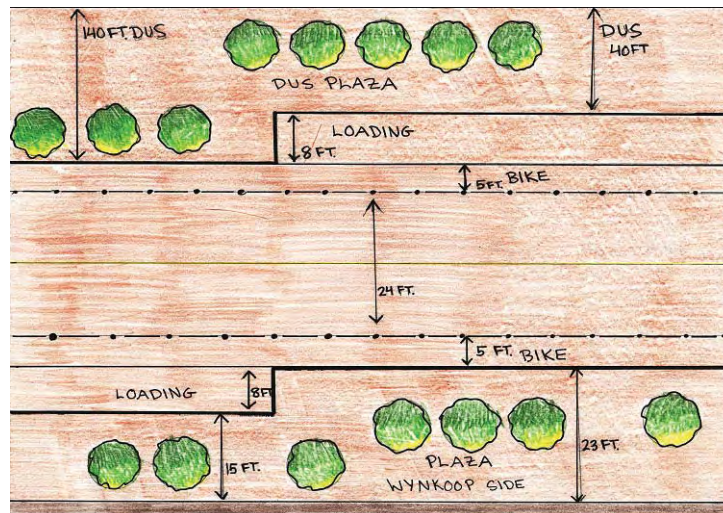


Green-roof technology and LEED construction practices should be used for sustainability.

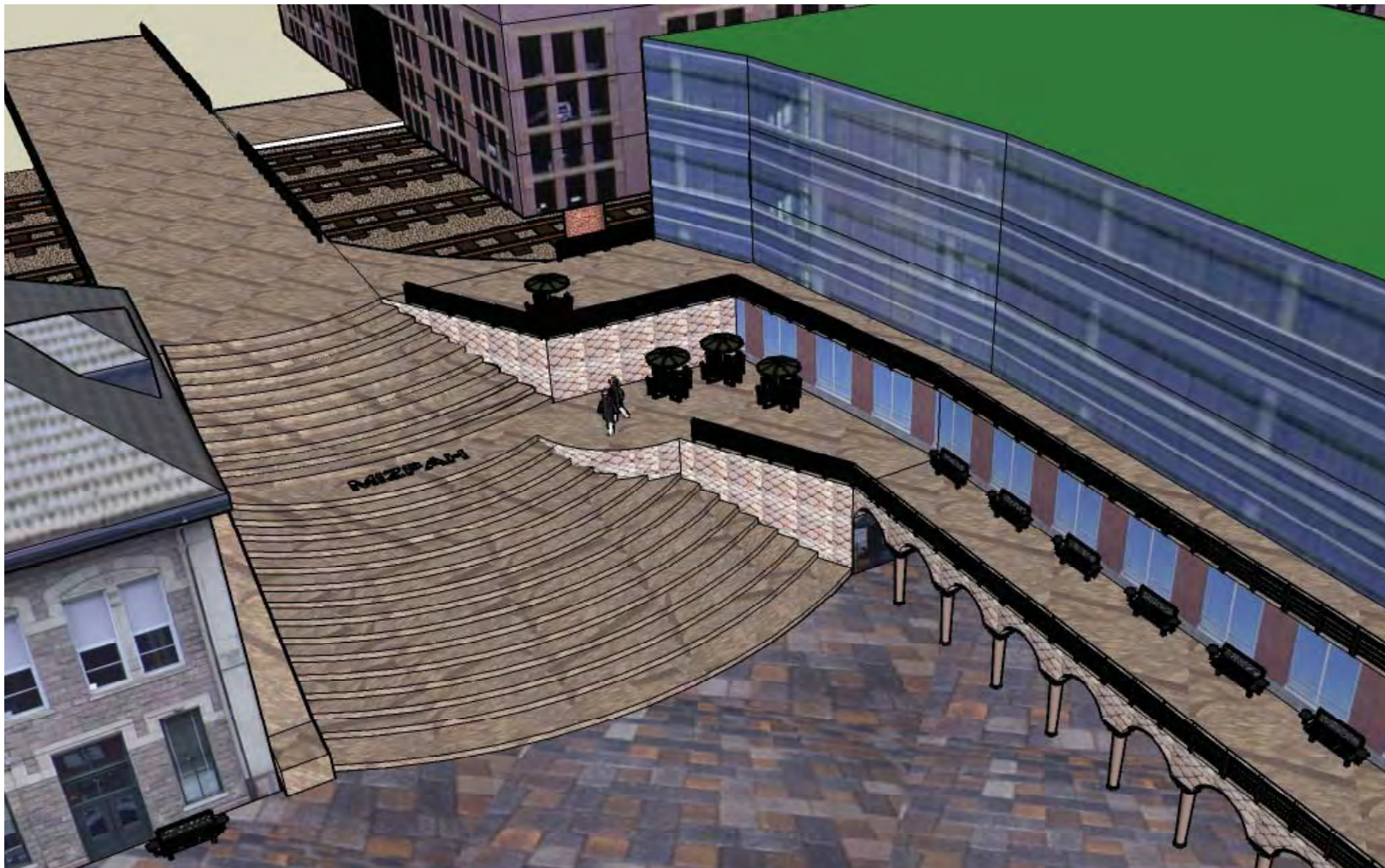
To manage storm water drainage on the site, this concept incorporates semi-permeable surfaces and a recessed performance area that doubles as a storm water retention basin. Flexible areas and open spaces allow users to experience the unique civic landmarks in close proximity to the station. Historic LoDo has many buildings that are nearly 120 years old. Future residents will appreciate the neighborhood's vibrant public plaza and the preserved views of the area's historic buildings.

The new wing buildings feature a recessed arch façade that adds old-world character to the site. Separation between busy commuters and retail shoppers is facilitated by the arched colonnades, where visitors can stroll and window shop.

An unobtrusive statue with complimentary landscaping in front of the station preserves the historic view down 17th Street. It also creates a meeting place for visitors. Trees line Wynkoop Street and the building edges. Street lamps are placed so as to provide



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lighting and safety without hindering pedestrian flow.

A safe civic space is critical to realizing the goals of this concept. The transportation hub will generate traffic at all hours; contracting security to monitor the plaza will be important to its success.

Management and Finance

The management structure is an essential component of Union Station Plaza. A non-profit management structure would ensure the plaza's success without relying strictly on public or private funds. Funding for the plaza and events would be raised through annual fundraising and fees for special uses, such as weddings. RTD and the City of Denver would provide funds for basic services, such as security and maintenance. The non-profit organization would coordinate the uses. This management structure is similar to that of Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia and has proven to be very successful.

Key Elements

The Grand Staircase – The stairs flare out into the plaza and link two floors of restaurant and retail space.

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They overlook the performance basin and are optimal for seating. As on the Spanish Steps in Rome, different uses create great places; this feature provides a flexible gathering place for the people of LoDo. The design adheres to preservation theory in that it is reversible and interpretable as a new element that abuts the historic masonry. The integrity of the building has not been compromised.

The Basin – The dimensions of the basin are adequate to accommodate runoff from a 2-year storm event. Plaza surfaces are semi-permeable, which allows for seepage into the water table. The bottom of the basin has a drain; it will remain dry most of the time. The surface paving extends across Wynkoop to give the impression of connection with the stores across the street. All buildings define the boundary of the plaza, however, the basin is its focal point. This feature allows for impromptu seating and blends in with the Grand Staircase. The space is flexible and can accommodate performances and other programmed activities.

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The Secret Fountain – This water feature is surrounded by climate-adapted grasses and bushes through which there is no direct path; one must change direction to get to the fountain, as if following a maze. The landscaping encloses benches. The fountain uses reclaimed water and during the winter can be capped and replaced with seasonal decorations.