

# A City Within the City: Proposed Master Plan, Lowry Air Force Base

MARVIN HATAMI  
University of Colorado at Denver

**History:** Lowry Air Force Base opened on October 1, 1937 and was named after Lt. Francis Brown Lowry, a Denver native who was killed in action during World War I. The base, a training center, has been closed since late 1994.

**Design Challenge.** In the last few decades we have produced a non descriptive homogeneous environment with no particular character or identity. To devise various systems of identification, we should look for physical qualities which relate to the attributes of identity and urban structure in the mental image. They may be shape, color or space arrangements which would invite the eye and the senses to greater attention and participation. The major challenge in development of the 1,800 acre site is to arrive at a visionary solution to last through time, a dimension containing fantasy of the past and fantasy of the new. In our modern development we should translate and apply the traditional understanding of *Urban Space*, the *Square* and the *Street* in the new setting.

**Design Approach.** The most important elements of the site, such as two runways, major roadway, dormitories, officer's residential section, Air Force Accounting Center, employees housing, two large

hangers, historical administration building, market and golf course, are retained as illustrated in accompanying plans. They shape a major portion of the urban structure and are integrated into the new plan. Major features of the plan are:

- A heterogeneous environment to induce human activities (A city within the city). Residential / Commercial services to be incorporated in all development zones.
- A linear public park surrounded by commercial and residential developments (*Denver Central Park*) which divides the traffics.
- An artificial lake covering the flood plain through the site.
- Golf course, health and sports wellness center, next to Alameda Ave.
- A government and conference center at the south portion of the site.
- An educational center, science and industry center integrated with residential and retail uses on the rest of the site.
- A cohesive urban form with the height limitation of two to six (2 – 6) story buildings and no open parking next to the street.

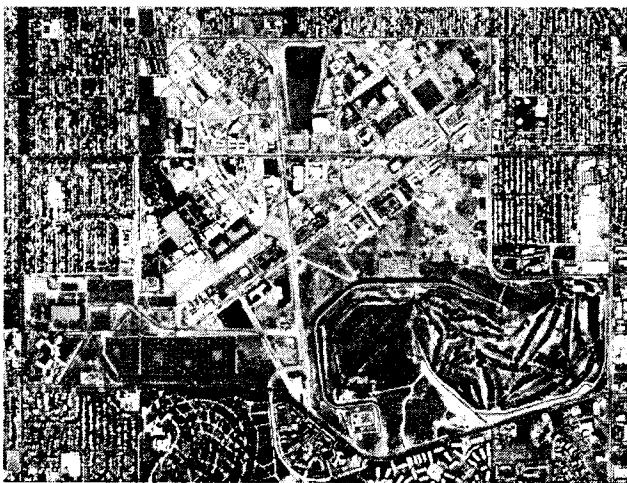


Fig. 1. Aerial view showing the site of Lowry Air Force Base in the city before closure.

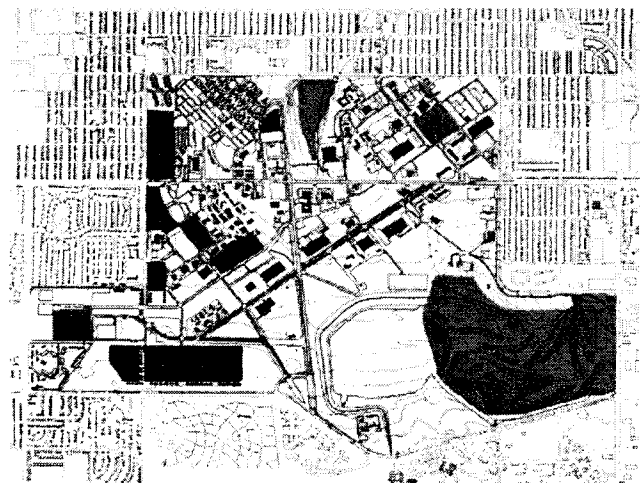


Fig. 2. Plan showing existing conditions and facilities to be retained.

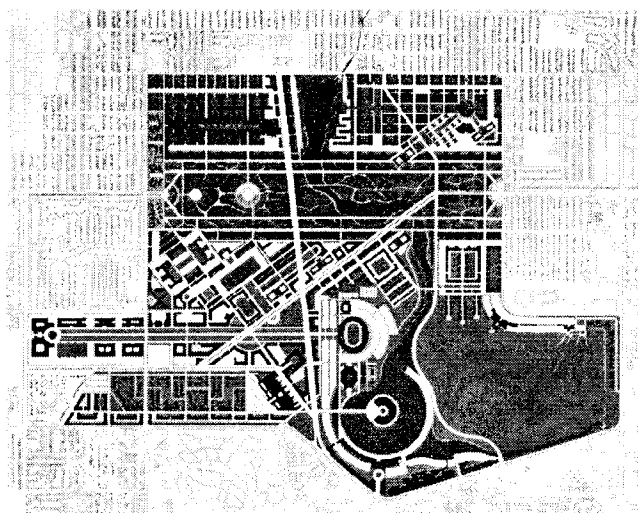


Fig. 3. Proposed master plan incorporating existing buildings and runways, proposing linear central park and an artificial lake in the flood plain.

Fig. 4. Architectural model showing the physical form of the entire site.

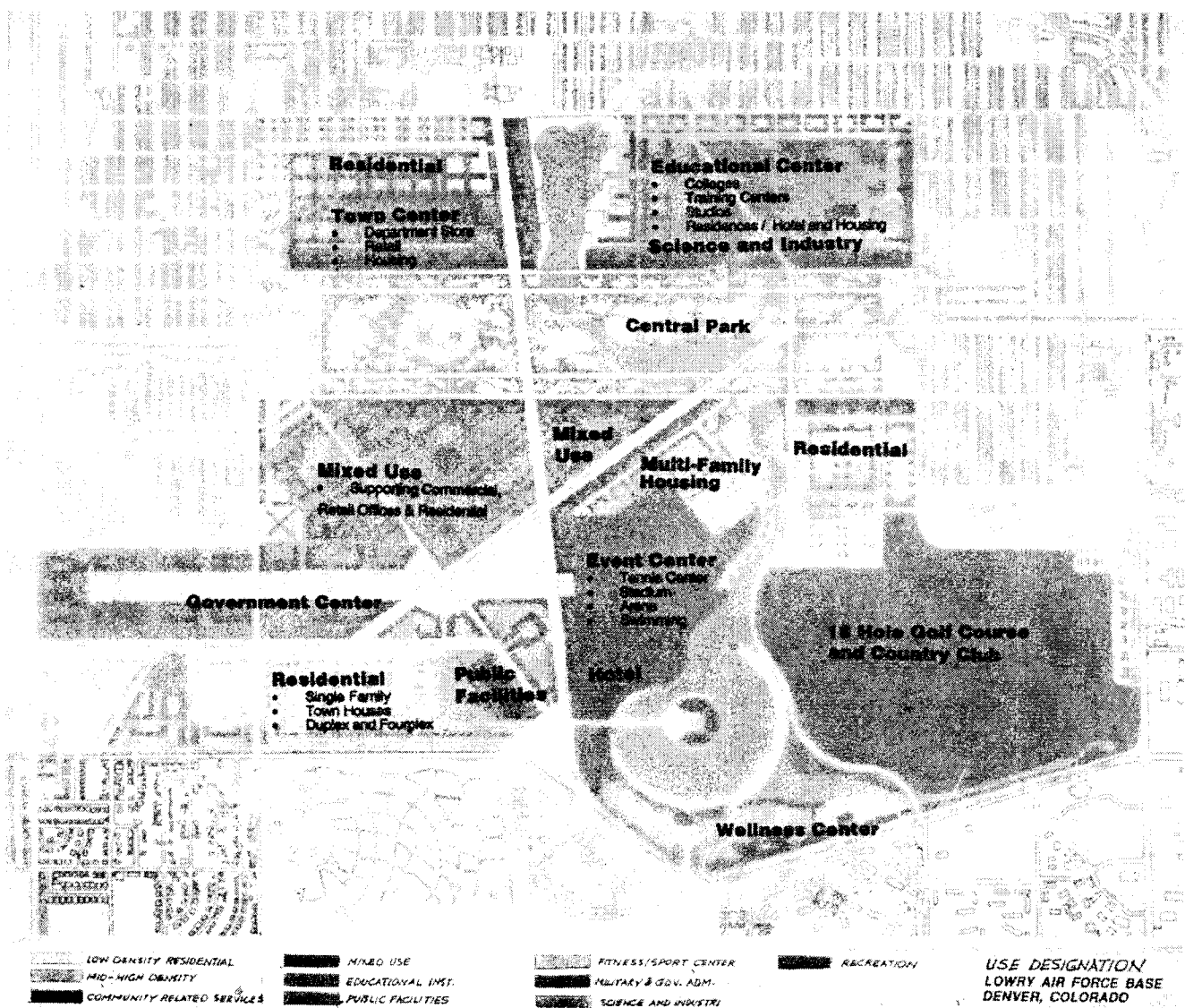


Fig. 5. Recommended specific use in each use district.

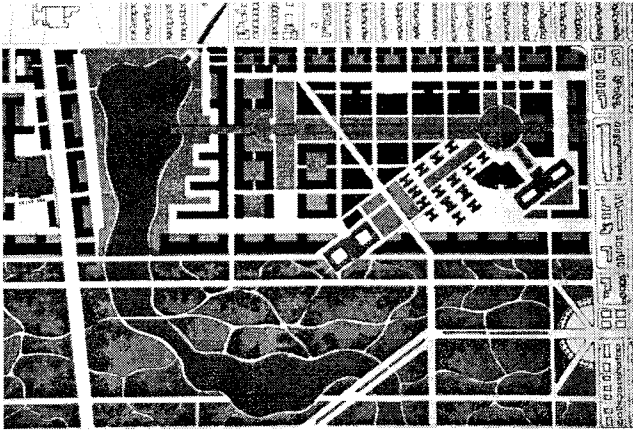


Fig. 6. Plan showing the north east section of the site allocated for science and industry, surrounded by residential use.

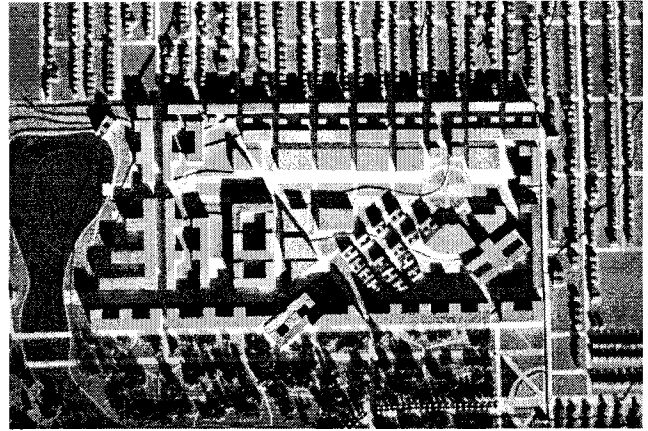


Fig. 8. Model showing the development of the northeast section of the site.

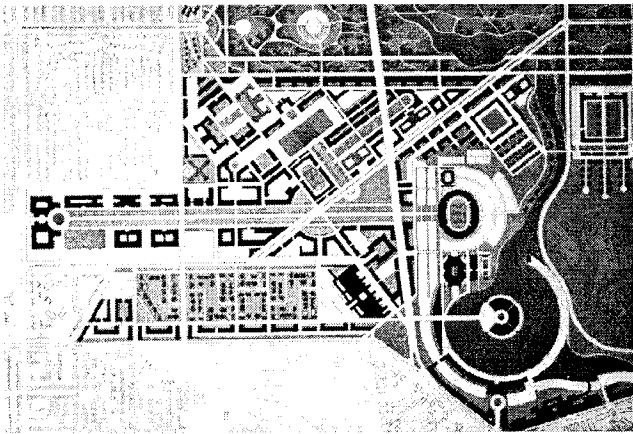


Fig. 7. Plan showing the southwest section of the site to be used for government and event center, hotel, public facilities, and wellness center.

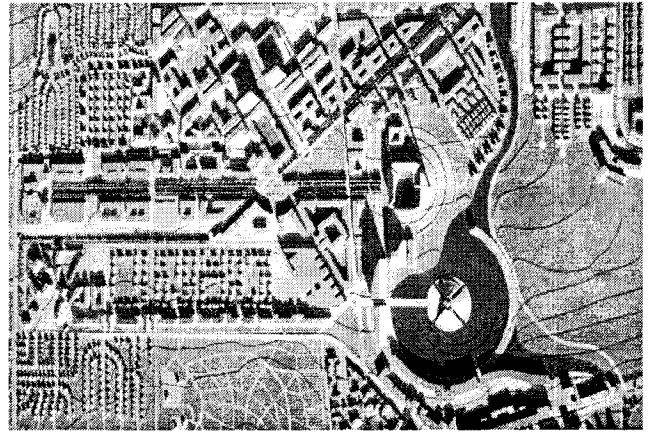


Fig. 9. Model of the southwest section of the site, showing the physical form of the proposed development.