Welcome! The High Line Canal Conservancy is leading a broad and inclusive community conversation about the future of the well-loved High Line Canal. Today, we collectively take the second step in the creation of this vision - a forward-looking story of what the Canal can be in the future. We’ll be asking thoughtful questions and posing some difficult choices, and want to understand what YOU want for the High Line Canal.

The resulting Vision Plan will ensure the Canal reaches its greatest potential as an economic, environmental, recreational, and social asset along not just some, but all of its 71 miles.
The Vision Plan is the Story of the Canal’s next 100 years.

For more than a century, the High Line Canal has served a number of purposes - a water delivery infrastructure, a unique man-made ecosystem and, recently, a recreational asset. But what does the next century hold in store for the High Line Canal? There are challenges and opportunities ahead ... and new decisions need to be made around each bend.

We need your help to write this story. What do you imagine the Canal can be for future generations?

A Vision Plan includes:
- Big picture opportunities for preserving and enhancing the Canal’s character and identity
- Strategies for celebrating the diverse communities and landscapes along the Canal
- Ideas for future actions and processes to engage the communities, partner organizations, and governmental agencies

This process is structured like a story.
Connecting Communities
Connecting Nature—From The Foothills To The Plains

The High Line Canal stretches 71 miles—all the way from Waterton Canyon in Douglas County to nearly the Denver International Airport.

Waterton Canyon
Mile 0
Diversion Structure
Beginning of the Canal

Platte River
Canal trail starts here

Waterton Canyon

Denver International Airport
CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER
ENGLEWOOD
SHERIDAN
LITTLETON
CENTENNIAL
HIGHLANDS RANCH
DOUGLAS COUNTY
CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE
GREENWOOD VILLAGE
ARAPAHOE COUNTY
JEFFERSON COUNTY
CHERRY CREEK STATE PARK
ROCKY MOUNTAIN ARSENAL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Green Valley Ranch

Map Legend:
- Rivers & Creeks
- Open Space
- High Line Canal Trail & Disruption
- Regional Trail
- Interstates & Major Roads

2 MILES
Your High Line Canal
Here's What You Shared With Us

WHAT IF...

### OF STICKERS PLACED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NORTH</th>
<th>CENTRAL</th>
<th>SOUTH</th>
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- The Canal had a unified and memorable 71-mile identity?
- The Canal served as a new kind of green infrastructure?
- We enhanced the prairie sections to be healthier ecosystems?
- It was a place to intentionally connect to nature in the city?
- The Canal captured water in new ways?
- The Canal helped to link a larger land conservation vision?
- Everyone could learn the amazing story of the Canal?
- We reimagined the Canal as a place for play and children?
- The Canal were the defining feature of neighborhoods?
- The landscaping along the Canal were more productive?
- The Canal was more connected & welcoming for everyone?
- The Canal was an inviting frontage for all visitors & residents?
- The Canal became the regional destination for urban recreation?
- We reimagined the Canal as a place for fitness for all ages?
- There were more ways for community to come together?

**OPEN HOUSE #1: JUNE 8-9**

“I've learned how incredibly diverse each section of the Canal is—all of the endless possibilities and untapped potential the Canal’s future has.”

“This was a great experience that opened my mind to the total of the High Line Canal.”

The Canal is known far and wide as a...

**VISIONARY STATEMENT**
- Urban Nature Corridor
- Beloved Regional Gem
- Recreational Trail
- Peaceful Retreat
- Tremendous Asset
- Natural, Well-Connected Passage

STORIES WRITTEN

- Signage, website, branding, map, field guide
- Stormwater management, tree planting
- Habitat creation, birds & butterflies
- Learning stations, peaceful retreat
- Rainwater harvesting, flood storage
- Open spaces, water resources
- Mobile app, education stations
- Adventure play, classroom spaces
- Public art, connections
- Urban agriculture, forestry
- Multi-modal trailsheads
- Development that engages the Canal
- Bike races, fishing tournaments
- Fitness stations, senior programming
- Food carts, outdoor performances
KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. PRESERVE
   as a green corridor for the region
   STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, TREE PLANTING, OPEN SPACE

2. PROTECT
   the natural ecosystem
   HABITAT, ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION, APPROPRIATE VEGETATION

3. ENHANCE
   with basic trail “infrastructure”
   SIGNAGE, BATHROOMS & BENCHES, TRASH CANS & TRAIL HEADS

4. ACTIVATE
   small areas for communities’ use
   FITNESS & PLAY AREAS, PUBLIC ART, EVENT / GATHERING SPACES

5. EDUCATE
   the region about the Canal
   HISTORICAL CONTEXT, CONNECTIVITY TO TRAILS, PARTNERSHIPS

YOU SAID

Water is an important benefit to people and encourages wildlife.

Better maps on the trail, and more cohesive.

Stormwater and water quality

Promoting more awareness of the Canal, important historic resource

More foot bridges in areas that don’t seem to be used much now

A trail needs to be built to bridge the gap near Plum Creek

More benches needed for oldsters!

Plant natural Colorado trees that normally grow in this area. Let nature be!

Explore connecting to existing bike trails

Education for the younger generation about how to use the Canal

From conflict to...

PEACEFUL RETREAT
OPEN SPACE VITALIZATION
NATURAL REFUGE
A COMMUNITY ASSET
LOVED, PRESERVED
CORRIDOR OF TRANSFORMATION
PEOPLE-FRIENDLY
THRIVING ANIMAL HABITAT

I first visited the Canal in...

[SETTING]
AURORA
LITTLETON
BIBLE PARK
WATERTON CANYON
DEKOEVEND PARK
EXPO PARK
CENTENNIAL
THE TRAIL THROUGH FAIRMOUNT CEMETERY
THROUGH MY BACKYARD

It captivated me with its...

[ADJECTIVES]
WILDERNESS IN AN URBAN SETTING
BEAUTY
PEACEFUL PARKLIKE SETTING
NATURAL BEAUTY
ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
MANY TYPES OF FLORA AND FAUNA

On the Canal, you might bump into...

[CHARACTERS]
A FOX
DEER
COYOTES
A FRIEND
NEIGHBORS
PEOPLE
CYCLISTS
EVERYONE
ANYONE

Sometimes, you’d be lucky to...

[CONFLICT]
FIND A WAY TO CROSS THE CANAL
KNOW WHERE YOU ARE
SEE ANIMALS
FIND A COMFORTABLE PLACE TO REST
FIND A PLACE TO EAT
EASILY CROSS THE ROAD

Birds and butterflies -- by working to restore native landscaping

Need funding mechanisms for these structures and other amenities

Education for the younger generation about how to use the Canal
YOU’VE HELPED DEFINE SOME OF THE CONFLICTS AND CHALLENGES FACING THE CANAL TODAY. IF WE CONTINUE DOWN THE CURRENT PATH, WHAT ARE THE RISKS, POSSIBLE IMPACTS, AND UNFULFILLED POTENTIALS?

**ENVIRONMENTAL**
Lost opportunities for the Canal as a regional environmental resource. Cottonwood trees today are aging and require more water than other species. With limited water resources, what might the future look like for the Canal?

**HUMAN**
Without action, the Canal is likely to become increasingly polarized. Beloved sections will still be places to enjoy, but other sections may be forgotten and feel less safe. New amenities like benches to offer places to rest would be limited.

**ECONOMIC**
Lost opportunities for the Canal as a regional economic resource. Without planning, we will not be able to capture potential private and public funding for maintenance & capital improvements. Without a vision, how will new development relate to the Canal? Will it turn its back on it?

**CONNECTIONS**
Gaps in trail persist; neighborhoods become more isolated. Lack of wayfinding signage and disparate trail signage.

**WATER**
With limited water resources, what might the Canal’s future look like? Stormwater pilots are occurring in some areas already, but without collective action the Canal is largely reactive to external forces.

**HISTORICAL & EDUCATIONAL**
How many residents know the rich history of the Canal? Without action, knowledge and awareness will fade in some areas of the Canal.
A Different Path

Now that we have collectively defined the opportunities and challenges, our task today is to start thinking about the possibilities of new paths forward.

The following ideas are presented to provide you with new ways of thinking about the future. We have also provide some technical considerations, benefits and trade-offs associated with potential changes.

On this journey, you will be asked some provocative questions and posed some difficult choices. We want to understand what YOU want for the High Line Canal.

Tell us your thoughts!

Throughout the journey today, you will see circles on boards inviting you to provide feedback about the options you are seeing.
A Community-Driven Vision

The mission of the High Line Canal Conservancy is to preserve, protect, and enhance the 71-miles-long Canal in partnership with the public. These three “plot lines” are the organizing structure of our story today: we’ll use them to explore the ideas and opportunities for the future of the Canal.

Preserve

FOCUS ON THE CANAL’S HISTORIC CORRIDOR
Preservation means different things to different people and we may place value on different elements. What is most important to you about the Canal’s identity, ecology, and physical character? This category focuses on the area within the Canal’s 100 to 150 foot right-of-way.

Protect

CONSIDER THE FORCES OUTSIDE THE CANAL’S CORRIDOR
Existing neighbors, connections, and changes in use adjacent to the Canal corridor can effect the long term health of the Canal – both positively and negatively. What kinds of actions outside the Canal can keep it healthy long term? What opportunities are most appealing?

Enhance

EXPLORE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CANAL
The Canal evokes our emotions by presenting us with a wide variety of experiences. How do you want to feel when you’re on the Canal? Does this vary in different stretches of the Canal?
FOCUS ON THE CANAL’S HISTORIC CORRIDOR

Preserve

Preservation means different things to different people and we may place value on different elements. Questions in this section aim to understand what is most important to you about the Canal’s identity, ecology and physical character.
There are many ways to preserve the Canal as a cherished ecological asset. How do these approaches feel?

**MAN-MADE ECOSYSTEM** (i.e. the Canal today)

The Canal’s construction in the late 1800s brought water to previously dry prairie, nurturing flora and fauna usually found in wetter environments, like Cottonwood trees. Looking ahead, this ecosystem is not sustainable as-is in the long-term. Lining the Canal has been proposed as a solution. This would allow water to flow farther in length through the Canal, but it means water would not seep in along the way to water trees.

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Study and familiar environment

**CHALLENGES**
- Future of irrigation management is unclear
- Water-demanding Cottonwoods are aging and not a sustainable species
- Water does not reach the northeastern end due to seepage and evaporation
- Costs to maintain as-is are relatively high, while benefits are nominal

**MANAGED LANDSCAPE** (Stormwater or other opportunities)

The Canal could be retrofit to collect stormwater from adjacent neighborhoods. This would provide more days when the Canal would be wet / moist, which would help support a new generation of trees of different species that need less water.

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- More wet days provides a sustainable long-term option for trees
- Potential for stormwater use to be a revenue source

**CHALLENGES**
- Expensive while this approach is feasible throughout the entire Canal, it might not be economically viable on its own everywhere
- Water can be held for a limited amount of time
- Requires long-term maintenance plan/funding
- Denver Water might need alternative delivery method for irrigation customers along the Canal

**NATURAL ECOSYSTEM** (Prairie)

A common misconception is that a drier Canal provides less habitat for wildlife. In fact, this is just a different kind of habitat, which can be beautiful, too, when cultivated. For example, a more natural prairie landscape with meadows of wildflowers and grasses can attract butterflies. This can help reestablish the region’s native prairie landscape of drought-tolerant grasses and shrubs.

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Habitat for native fauna - new kinds of wildlife than other parts of the Canal
- Less cost to maintain
- Does not require water flow for healthy landscape

**CHALLENGES**
- Irrigation water customers along the Canal would need alternative delivery method
- Less shade from vegetation

What’s going on with water in the Canal?

**STORMWATER POTENTIAL**: Most of the Canal could capture and treat water from nearby neighborhoods, resulting in 100 more “wet” days per year.

**INEFFICIENT DELIVERY**: Even when the Canal is running, roughly 70% of water evaporates or seeps out by the time it reaches Denver Water customers. Water doesn’t make it past Fairmount Cemetery.

**WHAT ABOUT THE TREES?** Water-demanding Cottonwood trees are aging, in decline, and require more water than other trees to be healthy. Maintaining any tree canopy long-term will require some water (diverted or stormwater).

**LESS DIVERSION**: Denver Water is limited in how frequently it can run water in the Canal, with current practices being about 2 water runs per year when water rights are in priority. This means that over the last 10 years there have been an average of 37 wet days per year.

Tell us your thoughts on your handout Question 3
Preserving the Canal’s Identity

How do you want to see the fundamental character of the Canal’s length?

UNIFIED AND CONSISTENT CHARACTER FOR 71 MILES

The Canal would maintain one profile, set of uses, and relationship to its surrounding neighborhoods for its entire length. This approach means we would focus on creating as similar of an experience as possible for the entire 71 miles.

OPPORTUNITIES
• Visible and recognizable brand
• One experience to unite many communities
• May be easier to manage and plan for as a unified approach

CHALLENGES
• Unique details of the Canal’s districts could get lost

DIVERSE DISTRICTS (i.e. “Rooms of a house”)

Along its 71 miles the Canal would pass through distinct zones each with a specific character defined by its adjacent communities, ecology and use patterns. It could still have elements of unity like wayfinding signage or furniture. This approach means we would focus on creating an identity that adapted to different communities along the way.

OPPORTUNITIES
• Diversity of culture and ecology is celebrated and enhanced

CHALLENGES
• Could be harder to create a distinct brand for the Canal

PATCHWORK CHARACTER

This would mean an identity that changed frequently along the Canal without a clear pattern. The changing character could add an element of surprise to the experience of moving along the Canal. This approach means the character would be less consistent and more of a patchwork experience.

OPPORTUNITIES
• Smaller-scale identities could be more driven locally
• One canal many neighbors

CHALLENGES
• More difficult to make legible as one Canal
• Sections would not relate to each other; experience could feel more jarring when moving between sections

INSPRATIONAL PRECEDENTS

THE HIGH LINE, NYC
The identity of the high line reflects its conversion from an abandoned rail line to an elevated public space. The character has a consistent feel throughout, with small variations between segments.

CHICAGO RIVERWALK, IL
Preserving the Canal’s Historic Story

What about the Canal’s historic construction should be preserved?

**MAINTAIN THE CANAL’S PROFILE AS-IS**

The Canal’s historic profile, or cross-section, has an identifiable channel on the uphill side and embankment on the downhill side with a maintenance path, all within the corridor measuring 100 to 150 foot in width. This approach means future uses would be more limited and water would only be possible through continuing diversions from the Platte River.

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- No changes to existing landscape structure
- Preserves the Canal as an element of cultural heritage

**CHALLENGES**
- Over time, ecosystem would change
- Less flexible; stormwater would require adaptation (approach 2)

**ADAPT (New uses for the historic profile)**

Honoring the simple low channel and high pathway of the historic profile, new uses and landscapes could be inserted within the corridor. With this approach, many options are possible and could vary along the Canal.

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Flexible approach allows for stormwater management or a range of other options
- Provides opportunities for elevated experiences as well as protected options in the low Canal bed
- Preserves Canal’s historic shape

**CHALLENGES**
- Maintaining the historic profile constrains proportions of new ideas and interventions
- Trees within the levee may compromise the Canal’s ability to carry water

**HONOR THE HISTORIC LEGACY IN NEW WAYS**

Are there other, less literal, ways we could honor the Canal’s history through future enhancements? What other possibilities could you imagine?

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Greatest flexibility of potential new uses
- Trail alignment could shift to one side of right-of-way
- Opportunity for wider, flatter areas for sports, picnicking, playgrounds, public art and more

**CHALLENGES**
- Maintaining the Canal’s story

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**THE HISTORIC PROFILE**

- **CHANNEL**
- **EMBANKMENT + PATH**
- **100’-150’ RIGHT-OF-WAY**

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**OUTDOOR CLASSROOM**

Adapting the Canal as a tiered social space where the low points could collect stormwater

**STORMWATER**

Adapting the channel to temporarily hold stormwater

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

The high and low variation could be enhanced for wildlife watching with elevated viewing platforms, boardwalks, and habitat enhancements

**PARALLEL TRAILS**

Parts of the Canal could become a parallel path or a protected area for dogs to play

**PICKNICKING & BUTTERFLIES**

Wider flat areas could offer space for picnicking, tossing a frisbee, or other play opportunities

**PLAY & PUBLIC ART**

Shifting the trail alignment could provide a broader area for butterfly meadows, public art, or a nature-play area
Existing neighbors, changes in use, and connections adjacent to the Canal corridor can effect the long term health of the Canal - both positively and negatively. This theme explores what kinds of actions outside the Canal can keep it healthy long term, and asks you to identify what opportunities are most appealing.
Existing Plans

What is already planned for the High Line Canal?

This is a sampling of projects planned or already occurring adjacent to the High Line Canal—stormwater pilots, trail connections, residential developments, and a transit stop.
Introduction

The High Line Canal connects open spaces, communities, trails, and waterways and watersheds. The experience of the Canal is not just about the Canal itself, but also the views, connections, and relationships with what is along it. Although outside the control of the canal, we can work on specific ideas in collaborations with those neighbors. So, what do we want?

This section shows three potential “storylines” for enhancing the Canal’s impact on the region. What roles do you find most important? What are the opportunities within each to strengthen connections?

1. The Canal as a community connector
2. The Canal as a wildlife corridor
3. The Canal’s neighbors and adjacent uses

What are the opportunities to weave these three identities together to enhance the Canal?

Protection the Canal’s Connections

Strengthening the Role of the Canal to Connect Communities

The High Line Canal already acts as movement corridor for walking, jogging, and bicycling. What are the opportunities to further protect this identity?

OPPORTUNITIES:
1. Improve crossings along and to the Canal
2. Strengthen connections with other trails across the region
3. Promote development of additional trail connections
4. Support active lifestyles and recreation

THIS APPROACH COULD INCLUDE IMPROVING ...

TRAIL CONNECTIONS
EXAMPLES
Cherry Creek Greenway and Triple Creek

STREET CROSSING
EXAMPLES
Sante Fe and Broadway

EXAMPLE
Bloomingdale Trail
CHICAGO

This trail focuses on mobility, improving connections between neighborhoods and other destinations. The character reflects a focus on efficient mobility. This mobility-focus is required by funding; $39M of the project was from Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement funds to support this corridor as an alternative to driving.
Protecting the Canal’s Habitat

Strengthening the Role of the Canal as a Wildlife Corridor

The High Line Canal already acts as movement corridor for wildlife. The success of the Canal depends on its connections to existing and new development, adjacent conservation land, creek corridors, and other open spaces.

**OPPORTUNITIES**
1. Strengthen the Canal’s environmental role in the region
2. Link patches of larger habitat areas, providing a connection for wildlife
3. Intersections with creeks and waterways connect the Canal’s habitat with other green corridors
4. Backyards can provide small patches of open space for wildlife.

**CONSERVATION LAND**
- Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
- DeKoevend Conservation Land

**CREEK CROSSINGS**
- Cherry Creek
- Toll Gate Creek

**BACKYARD HABITAT**
- Homes and lots of other adjacent uses

**EXAMPLE**
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Region

USA & CANADA

This effort is about connecting large conserved areas along the Rocky Mountain range. It is led by a non-profit organization working with more than 300 partners and scientists. It is a collection of projects to help wildlife move between protected areas.
The BeltLine is an integrated approach to a connected corridor around Atlanta focusing on rails, public transportation, redevelopment, and recreation. About 50% of the effort is funded through a “Tax Allocation District.” This means that future increases in property values along the BeltLine are used to justify public spending to create it. The project has generated more than $2.4 billion dollars in private development (six times greater than the existing public/private investment of $400 million).

## Protecting the Canal’s Surroundings

**Supporting the Canal through Adjacent Uses and Neighbors**

As the High Line Canal passes through diverse communities, the character of adjacent development and neighbors impacts this experience. How can these nearby uses support and enhance the Canal?

### OPPORTUNITIES
1. Revenue generation to support Canal enhancements
2. Programming and recreational opportunities
3. Development that supports the character and function of the Canal, providing a source of stormwater, trail connections, and integrates with the Canal (not turning its back on the Canal)
4. Parks and schools can provide recreational connections, expanded social space, and educational programming opportunities
5. Cafes and other nearby uses can provide places to pause, rest, and grab a bite to eat. These locations could also provide supporting activities like games or disc golf. Revenue could help support the Canal.

### DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLES
- Plum Creek and Sterling Ranch Village

### PARKS & SCHOOLS EXAMPLES
- Eisenhower Park and Expo Park

### OTHER USES EXAMPLES
- Dry Dock Brewing; Hudson Gardens Coffee House (Mary Carter Greenway Trail)

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**Tell us your thoughts on your handout**

**Question 5**

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**EXAMPLE**

**BeltLine**

**ATLANTA**

The BeltLine is an integrated approach to a connected corridor around Atlanta focusing on rails, public transportation, redevelopment, and recreation. About 50% of the effort is funded through a “Tax Allocation District.” This means that future increases in property values along the BeltLine are used to justify public spending to create it. The project has generated more than $2.4 billion dollars in private development (six times greater than the existing public/private investment of $400 million).
Enhance

EXPLORE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CANAL

The Canal evokes our emotions by presenting us with a wide variety of experiences. This theme explores how you feel, or how you want to feel, when you’re on the Canal, and asks you to locate desired feelings and experiences along the Canal.
Canal Experiences
WHERE DO YOU WANT TO EXPERIENCE THESE ACTIVITIES?

MEDITATIVE
a peaceful retreat
- Seating / Pause Places
- Views
- Birdwatching / Passive Rec
- Bighorn Sheep Viewing

GATHER
a community social space
- Art
- Performance
- Food
- Picnic

INSPIRE
a learning landscape
- Play as Learning
- Environmental Education
- Ecological Restoration
- Stormwater Education

EXPLORE
a wild adventure
- Climbing
- Parcours
- Ropes
- Equestrian

EXERCISE
a place supportive of fitness & health
- Running & walking
- Biking
- Hiking & Equestrian
- Dog Walking

GATHER
a community social space
- Art
- Performance
- Food
- Picnic

SOMETHING ELSE?
- Let us know!

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO EXPERIENCE THESE ACTIVITIES?
Place stickers on the grids below:

- Green Valley Ranch, Aurora, and the northern end of the Canal
- Denver & Unincorporated Arapahoe County
- Cherry Hills Village, Greenwood Village, Littleton, & Centennial
- Highlands Ranch & Douglas County
- Waterton Canyon
Looking ahead ...

How will your feedback today be used to develop the draft vision, the future story of our Canal?

Many kinds of feedback together will build the Vision

Chapter 1 Open House
Our High Line Canal Survey results
City as Play sessions
Stakeholder Focus Groups
HLC Working Group, Core Team, and HLCC Board

Chapter 2 Open House (Today!)

At the next open house (September 7-8), we’ll share the Draft Vision with you, sharing with you what we’ve heard and asking for your feedback.

Chapter 3 Open House

Draft Vision

WHAT “STORY” DO WE WANT THE CANAL TO TELL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS?
WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES FOR PRESERVING, PROTECTING, AND ENHANCING THIS SPECIAL RESOURCE?

Chapter 4 Open House

Final Vision & Action Plan

Physical improvements/changes that help establish or reinforce the desired vision
Action steps to get us to the draft Vision
Roles and responsibilities
Priorities

Then, the next step is refining the Vision based on your feedback, and developing an Action Plan to bring the Vision to reality.