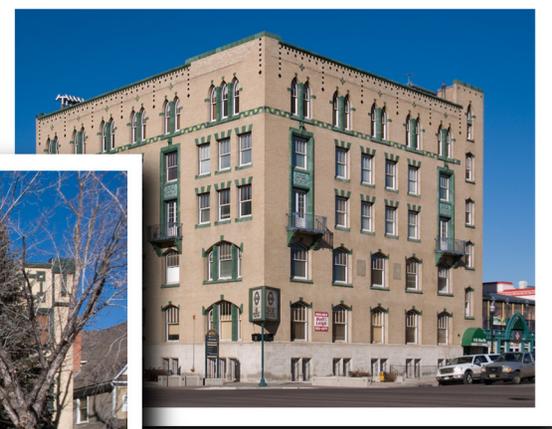
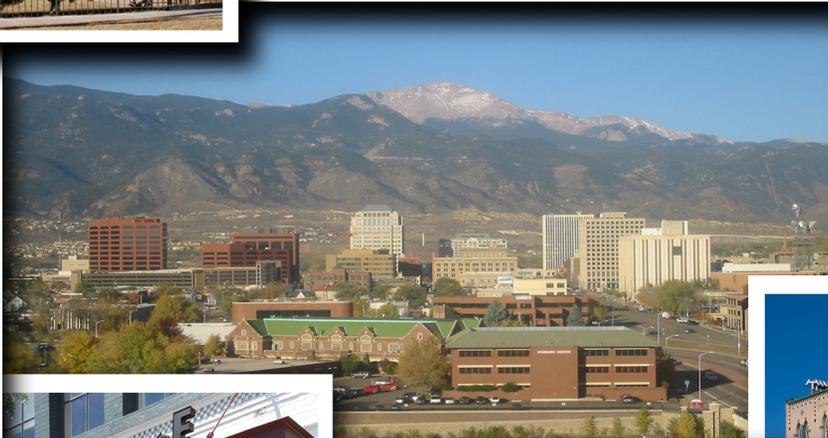
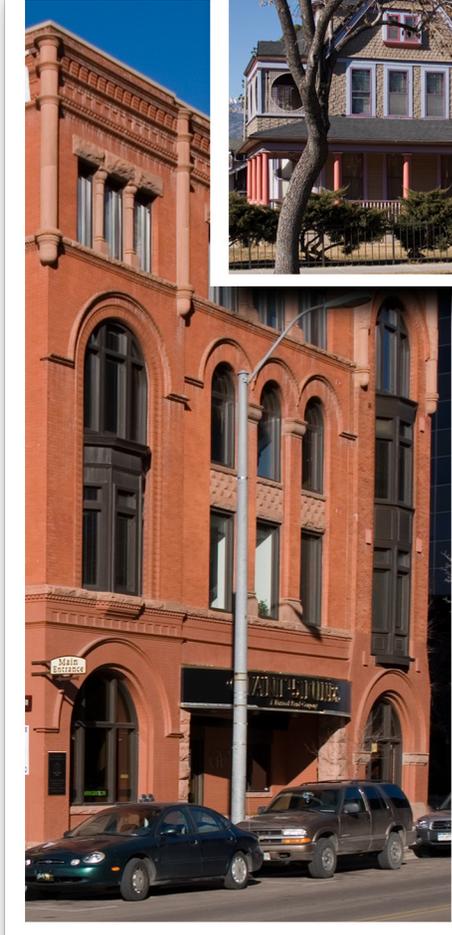


Imagine Downtown Colorado Springs

Master Plan



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City Council:

Lionel Rivera, Mayor

Larry Small, Vice Mayor

Scott Hente, Councilmember District 1

Darryl Glenn, Councilmember District 2

Jerry Heimlicher, Councilmember District 3

William B. (Bernie) Herpin Jr, Councilmember District 4

Tom Gallagher, Councilmember At-Large

Randy Purvis, Councilmember At-Large

Jan Martin, Councilmember At-Large

Planning Commission:

Richard Hansen, Chair

Carla Hartsell, Vice-Chair

Donald Magill

Janet Suthers

Kevin Butcher

Diann Butlak

Dan Cleveland

Timothy Stroh

Edward Gonzalez

Downtown Stakeholder Committee:

Ron Butlin, Downtown Partnership

Beth Kosley, Downtown Partnership

Nolan Shriner, Downtown Development Authority Chair

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Steve Engle, Griffis / Blessing, Inc.

David Schneider, LandCo Equity

David Lord, Griffis Group of Companies, LLC

Louise Conner, Middle Shooks Run Neighborhood Association

Mike Hassel, Downtown Development Authority Board member

Nancy Harley, Middle Shooks Run Neighborhood Association

Dr. Kailash N. Jaitly, Downtown Partnership Board member

Judy Noyce, Downtown Partnership Board member

Chris Melcher, Colorado College

Rich Guy, Downtown Partnership Board member

John Olson, Colorado Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism

Stuart Coppedge, American Institute of Architects, Colorado South Chapter

Sam Eppley, Sparrow Hawk

Jim Kin, Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority

Ken Farmer, Downtown Partnership

City Staff:

Ryan Tefertiller, Senior Planner

Meghan Riesterer, Planner II

Dick Anderwald, Land Use Review Division Manager

Craig Blewitt, Comprehensive Planning Division
Manager

Carl Schueler, Senior Planner

Erin McCauley, Planner I

Connie Perry, Landscape Architect II

Steve Vigil, GIS Analyst II

Wynetta Massey, Deputy City Attorney

Marc Smith, Staff Attorney

John Leavitt, Senior Public Communications Specialist

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Introduction

This is the spirit and essence of this Downtown Plan: to energize and revitalize the historic city center

In 1871, General William Jackson Palmer laid out the City of Colorado Springs at the confluence of Monument and Fountain Creeks. His survey crew drove the first stake for Pikes Peak Avenue directly in line with the summit of Pikes Peak. He set in motion the aspirations, perseverance, and civic pride that would create the unique place we now call the Downtown. The community has since grown far beyond its original town site, but the Downtown remains the vibrant, urban center of Colorado Springs.

Since Palmer's day, there have been many private and public efforts to carry on and add to his legacy, each responding to the challenges and demands of a particular time. Many have begun with the recognition of Downtown's importance to the City's image, identity, and sense of place.

In our own time, the citizens of Colorado Springs have come to realize that a mature City's vitality requires a lively downtown. Just as we have been the beneficiaries of Palmer's legacy, so it is our responsibility to build upon it, to enrich the lives of future generations as ours have been enriched. Instead of living off the accomplishments of the past, we need to pass on a pragmatic vision that will carry us through the 21st century. This is the spirit and essence of this Downtown Plan: to energize and revitalize the historic city center.

Context

The City of Colorado Springs is located at the foot of Pikes Peak, 70 miles south of Denver. With a land area of approximately 194 square miles and a 2007 estimated population of 402,417, Colorado Springs is the State's largest city in terms of land and is second only to Denver in population. The town was established in 1872.

Although many towns and cities in Colorado were settled by miners and ranchers, Colorado Springs' appeal was climate and culture. By 1918 with both the Antlers and Broadmoor Hotels, Colorado Springs was renowned as a tourist destination. At an elevation of 6,035 feet, the area also became a health destination where thousands of people came to relieve their tuberculosis in the dry mountain air.

Colorado Springs is still known as a tourist destination due to its surrounding natural beauty and other features. Some of the more popular sightseeing in and around Colorado Springs includes the Garden of the Gods, Pikes Peak, the United States Olympic Training Center, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, the United States Air Force Academy and The Broadmoor Hotel. The City also features 14,287 acres of dedicated public parkland and experiences an average of 247 days of sunshine per year, adding not only to its tourist charm, but also to its status as a great place to live.

Area military installations are a significant factor in the local economy. Five major military installations are located in the City: Fort Carson, Schriever and Peterson Air Force Bases, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the United States Air Force Academy. Other large employers contributing to the economy include software/systems firms, manufacturing, information processing companies, and national nonprofit associations.

The City also has 7 school districts with over 161 elementary, middle, junior and senior high schools. Of those 161, over 50 are private, parochial, and charter schools. In addition, Colorado Springs has more than 28 colleges and universities with an estimated college population of 31,840 students, as well as 30 vocational and 2-year schools.

Colorado Springs has a Council-Manager form of government with a nine-member Council consisting of a popularly elected mayor, four Council members elected at large and four elected by district. The City is also the county seat for El Paso County and as such, many of the County offices are located in the downtown.

At just over 2 square miles in size, downtown serves not only the citizens of Colorado Springs but also serves as a regional center catering to nearby towns such as Payton, Black Forest, Widefield, Security, and Woodland Park.



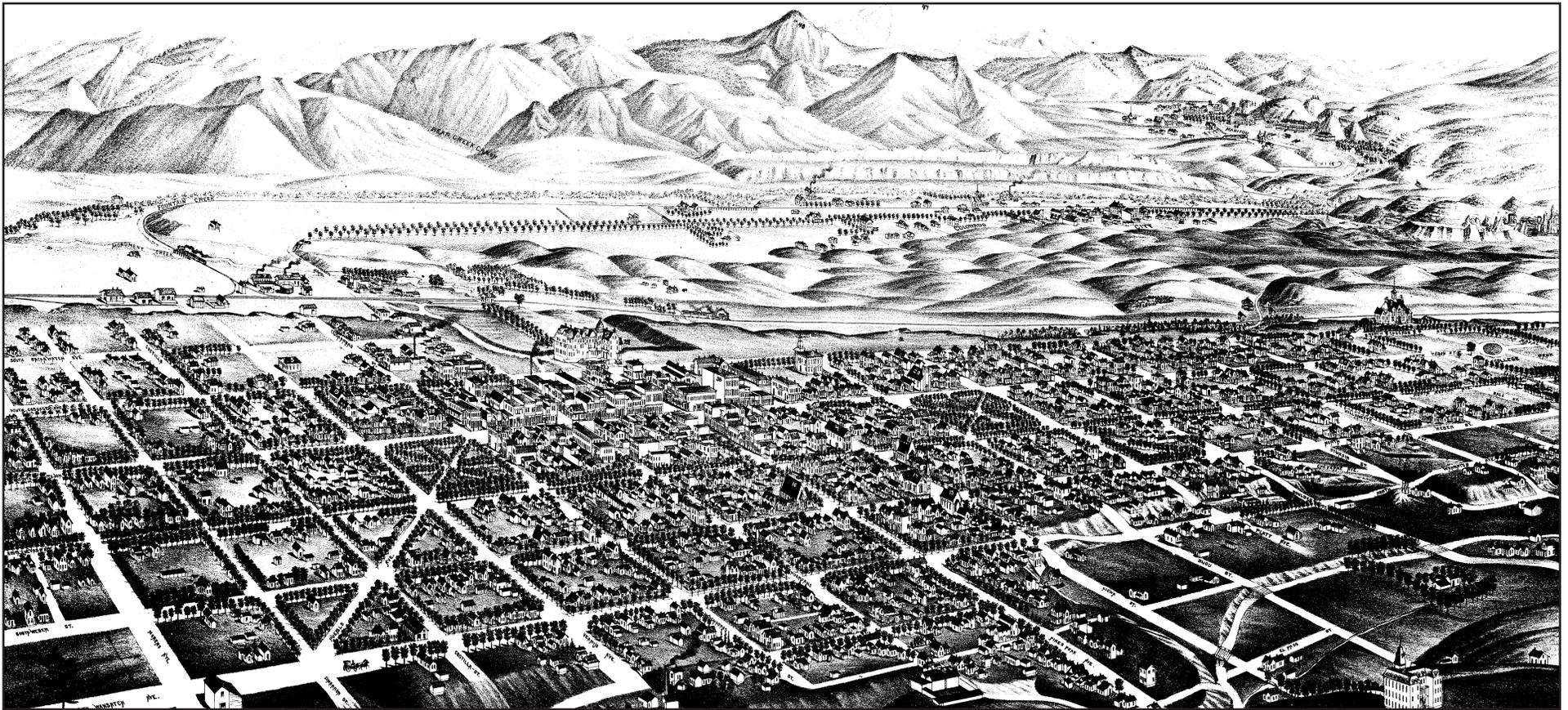
History and Chronology

- 1871 Palmer's crew drives the first stake at the intersection of Pikes Peak and Cascade Avenues.
- 1871 The City's first parks, Acacia Place and Alamo Square (now Pioneers Square), are deeded to the public with the plat filing of the original townsite.
- 1872 The region's first successful weekly paper, *The Out West*, begins publication.
- 1874 Colorado College is founded by the Colorado Council of Congregational Churches on land donated by the Colorado Springs Company.
- 1883 The first Antlers Hotel, "The Finest Resort Hotel in the Mountain West," is opened.
- 1893 Katherine Lee Bates, while staying at the Antlers Hotel, pens "America the Beautiful" upon descending from Pikes Peak.
- 1897 The Payne Chapel A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) Church was built on Weber Street and Pueblo venue to serve the African American community in Colorado Springs.
- 1898 The Great Fire levels the business area, including the first Antlers Hotel.
- 1899 Antlers Park is deeded to the public.
- 1901 Winfield Scott Stratton, mine owner and philanthropist, purchases a street car company and creates a 41-mile transit system costing a nickel per ride.
- 1901 The second Antlers Hotel is opened.
- 1903 The El Paso County Courthouse opens its new building in Alamo Square.
- 1905 The Colorado Springs Public Library opens.
- 1907 Monument Valley Park, donated by General Palmer, is opened.
- 1912 Charles Mulford Robinson prepares "Colorado Springs, the City Beautiful," the first city-wide plan.
- 1914 Hibbard's Department Store opens its new building.
- 1916 The drivers in the first Pikes Peak Auto Hill Climb race to the top of the 14,110 foot mountain.
- 1917 Huerfano Avenue is renamed Colorado Avenue with the annexation of Colorado City to Colorado Springs.
- 1918 The new Broadmoor Hotel is opened by Spencer Penrose.
- 1923 Electric traffic lights are installed at major downtown intersections.
- 1932 The last electric trolley car is removed from City streets.
- 1936 The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, displaying an international award-winning design, is opened to the community for the practice of all fine arts.
- 1940 The Colorado Springs High School's (Palmer High School) new building opens.
- 1941 The U.S. Army accepts 35,000 acres from the City for establishing a training base to be called Camp Carson, in honor of Kit Carson.
- 1949 The Pikes Peak Range Riders begin their annual ride around Pikes Peak.
- 1958 The first cadets begin studies at the U.S. Air Force Academy.
- 1960 Interstate-25 is opened along Downtown's western boundary.
- 1965 The second Antlers Hotel is demolished.
- 1967 The Chase Stone Center, a complex including the third Antlers Hotel, the Holly Sugar Building, and retail shops is finished.
- 1970 The Alamo Plaza Urban Renewal Project is approved by City Council.
- 1971 The first Downtown Plan is issued.
- 1972 The City's first regional shopping center, The Citadel, opens.
- 1978 The Olympic Training Center moves its headquarters to Colorado Springs.
- 1979 The Pioneers Museum opens in the renovated El Paso County Courthouse after the Pikes Peak Landmarks Council lobbies for the building's preservation.
- 1990 The Palmer Center, a renovation of the Chase Stone Center, is opened.
- 1992 The Downtown Action Plan is completed.
- 1992 Downtown Action Plan adopted by City Council.
- 1994 Partnership between local government and citizens develops the Master Plan for the Pikes Peak.
- 1997 Founding of Cottonwood Arts School.
- 1997 Founding of Downtown Partnership.
- 1997 Founding of Art on the Street.
- 1998 Community approves \$11 million bond for America the Beautiful Park.
- 1999 One City Centre constructed on the northeast corner of Nevada Avenue and Colorado Avenue.
- 2000 Lowell a 58-acre mixed-use urban renewal project in the southeast corner of downtown is underway.
- 2000 Conover Building on the northwest corner of Colorado Avenue and Weber Street.
- 2000 The renovation of the Carnegie Library at the Penrose Public Library.
- 2001 South Tower of the Plaza of the Rockies constructed on Tejon.

2001 Uncle Wilber Fountain opens in Acacia Park.
2001 Daniels Lofts – first downtown loft conversion.
2002 The Greenway, a continuous 35 mile trail from Palmer Park to Fountain completed.
2003 City Walk, located on Kiowa Street just east of Wahsatch, renovates senior housing to create a modern residential condominium loft tower.
2004 Cottonwood Arts School Relocation.

2004 America the Beautiful Park Opens.
2006 FAC Modern opens in Plaza of the Rockies.
2006 Founding of the free downtown shuttle.
2006 Imagine Downtown design charrettes.
2006 Giddings I Lofts – second downtown loft conversion.
2007 The FAC unveiled its \$28.4 million 48,000 square foot renovation and expansion.

2007 Penrose Fountain unveiled at America the Beautiful Park.
2007 Pikes Peak Center Renovation.
2007 Founding of Downtown Development Authority.
2008 Two-way Tejon
2008 Colorado College opens the Cornerstone Arts Building



Background

It is not often that a large group of strong community leaders with diverse interests goes into a room and emerges with a clear and common vision

The first Downtown Plan was issued in 1971 and reflected the community's desire to sustain the area's prominence while suburban sprawl took the city center farther and farther away from the original town site. The Plan did not, however, serve as a rallying point for community decisions on important public improvements in the downtown, despite the completion of several of the urban renewal projects outlined in its pages. Further, the 1971 plan did not provide a context within which individual development decisions could be evaluated.

During the 1980s, the need for a more coordinated, dynamic approach to developing and improving Downtown Colorado Springs was raised repeatedly by citizens and elected officials in the community. This public concern sprang from several sources, and worries included economic vitality, the physical quality of both public and private realms, and the need for new tools for public policy and community participation to aid in achieving downtown goals.

The result of this realization was the Downtown Action Plan (DAP), formally adopted as the master plan for downtown in 1992. The DAP organized the downtown into distinct districts and set forth specific economic and land use recommendations for each of those areas.

In the 17 years since the DAP was adopted, many of its major objectives have been met. The look and feel of downtown has been energized; the streetscape is cleaner, more pedestrian friendly and punctuated by more public art, trees, flowers and attractive and functional signage. Educational and cultural offerings have increased, and the area's attraction as a premier address for business has held. Downtown Colorado Springs today is bustling with energy and

activity—a flurry of ongoing construction amidst the constant hum of automobile traffic, the pleasant blur of pedestrian movement and the vibration of commerce in action.

In 2005, a need for an updated strategic downtown plan was recognized. While interest and momentum in the downtown was awakening, there were also signs of vulnerabilities that were not foreseen by the Downtown Action Plan, due to population gain, changes in downtown revitalization strategies and best practices, restaurant and bar growth over retail growth, and decreases in sales tax collection within the downtown area.

With such trends in mind and observing the sunset years of the 1992 DAP, the Downtown Partnership of Colorado Springs promoted and facilitated the 2 year community-wide initiative of the known as "Imagine Downtown."

It is not often that a large group of strong community leaders with diverse interests goes into a room and emerges with a clear and common vision. Yet that is precisely what happened during the 18-month Imagine Downtown process, when business and civic leaders, government officials and staff, and a wide mix of other downtown stakeholders gathered several times to imagine a thriving future for downtown Colorado Springs.

Over a series of five daylong planning sessions, nearly 400 individuals from the community participated in workshops and worked on committees and task forces for the purpose of creating a common vision contained in the Imagine Downtown Plan. The volunteers studied similar markets, noting the lessons of both failures and successes, plied through recent studies, analyzed downtown data, considered the infrastructure necessary to support the urban

hub they desired, and identified the need for a driving force to keep an eye on a common vision and to help bridge gaps in vital financing. In less than 18 months, this collective effort resulted in the Imagine Downtown Plan (IDP).

The IDP not only set a vision for the future of downtown but also served as the “plan of development” for the Colorado Springs Downtown Development Authority. However, the IDP did not meet the legal definition of a land use master plan.

To address this issue an effort was begun in 2007 to incorporate the goals of Imagine Downtown into a land use master plan. For several months, a group of downtown stakeholders met to formulate master plan specifics. They talked through major policy issues and identified additional goals and recommendations beyond those contained in the Imagine Downtown Plan.

This new plan is the product of the stakeholder effort. Simply named The Imagine Downtown Master Plan, it is founded in the vision of the Imagine Downtown Plan; it builds upon the energy and ideals that stemmed from that plan and planning process. Further, it contains the work of several issue-specific Imagine Downtown committees; it incorporates revisions to the district framework outlined in the DAP with the street corridor framework of the IDP; it is drafted to be consistent with complementary plans such

as the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan, the Intermodal Transportation Plan, individual neighborhood plans, and drainage basin planning studies; and it contemplates both economic and land use planning issues. Finally, this plan advances the Vision, Objectives, Policies and Strategies of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, while also including the necessary elements to act as the updated land use master plan for the downtown planning area.



This updated master plan provides the framework and guidelines to shepherd downtown into a bright and promising future.

Plan Goals

The Vision: Downtown is an image and symbol of the region and has an opportunity to reaffirm it's identity as the epicenter and economic engine of the city, a desirable place to live, work, learn and play, and a point of public and private investment.

In its broadest sense, the goal of this plan is to implement the vision stated herein. That is to reaffirm the key role that downtown plays in the City's overall quality of life. To achieve the desired vision, this plan must be forward thinking and dynamic to account for future market trends. The success of downtown depends in part on its ability to be proactive and capitalize on the increased focus to revitalize and improve downtown. Colorado Springs is blessed with highly desirable climate, amazing physical features, armed forces presence, multiple institutions of higher learning, and much, much more. These and other characteristics have contributed to making Colorado Springs the #1 place to live according to Money Magazine (Best Big City, 2006). While the downtown has a lot to offer, it hasn't reached its full potential. The primary goal of this plan is to build upon the downtown's past success to create the regional hub of commerce, culture, and energy that the area is hoping for.

Revitalizing downtown will not necessarily proceed in an easily discernible, linear fashion, but rather, will often be recognizable in multiple efforts occurring simultaneously and synergistically. Private economic efforts will work alongside public community efforts and every endeavor will operate in concert to present downtown with a bright and prosperous future.

As participants of the Imagine Downtown process sifted through issues and began to find solutions to affect change in the downtown, eleven key goals were realized. The goals are as follows:

A Focus on Community Activity and A Place to Live

Residential Development

Encourage the construction and/or conversion of new housing units, particularly in the downtown core, to establish sustainable neighborhoods with diversity in housing types, including both work-force and attached housing types.

Economic Strength and Vitality

Jobs

Focus on primary job development, particularly in export employment (manufacturing, research and development, corporate headquarters, tourism and conventions, etc.). Increase the number of workers in the downtown and support regional and local-serving workers, as well.

Retail Development

Recruit and grow downtown retail to meet the demand generated by employee, resident and visitor populations. Recruitments include local-serving businesses (groceries, drugstores, dry cleaners, etc.), lower-priced retail, food- and arts-oriented businesses, and high-end retail and restaurants to create an urban entertainment zone. A focus on unique, independent business is preferable, with careful consideration in selecting chain stores as anchors. Retain downtown's existing and long-standing businesses and institutions to strengthen City resident's sense of place and history for downtown shopping.

A Center for the Region

Entertainment, Arts, and Culture

Encourage the establishment of new and improved arts and cultural opportunities downtown to attract more downtown patrons, to create a unique and fresh identity for downtown, and to give new life to established organizations and older amenities. Additionally, focus on encouraging unique cultural and sports facilities, events and activities to build wide-appeal assets downtown that draw from the metro area and beyond.

An Image and a Symbol, A Good Neighbor, and An Example for Community Design

Environmental Improvements

Develop unique street character block by block, particularly off the Tejon Street corridor. Revitalize the concept of the Park Ring around downtown. Focus on safety in the urban realm.

Marketing and Branding

Develop an effective marketing and branding campaign for downtown Colorado Springs.

A Place for Pedestrians and an Ease of Movement

Transportation and Pedestrian Orientation

Ensure efficient transit into and out of downtown while also striving for pedestrian orientation. Provide for multiple modes of transportation. Incorporate additional pedestrian-friendly design and

streetscape improvements including wider sidewalks, more trees, art and architectural texture. Construct a pedestrian bridge at the end of Vermijo, over the railroad tracks and into America the Beautiful Park. Increase downtown public transit (e.g. light rail to connect with Front Range commuter rail, continued use and expansion of the downtown shuttle, and explore the possibility for a streetcar system).

Parking

Provide a sufficient supply and form of parking to meet urban character goals. Explore parking asset management to provide additional parking and user-friendly parking and to provide a financial tool for residential and mixed-use development.

Downtown for Future Generations

Technology and Sustainability

Encourage “green” components in development projects. Influence state-of-the-art technology in downtown infrastructure.

An Open, Natural Setting

Urban Design and Land Use

Capitalize on the natural setting by creating accessible connections to the surrounding environment. Utilize innovative design principles to help preserve mountain views from public spaces. Achieve a high-density, pedestrian-oriented downtown that creates an iconic skyline, incorporates vertical mixed use with structured, on-site or underground parking, and concentrates products, activities and projects into small spaces. Respect downtown’s edges by managing bulk, height, and scale of development and focusing on quality transitions from low-density to high-density.

Links to the Past

Historic Preservation

Link past railroad uses to future commuter rail. Preserve the historic assets in and around downtown for the future; proactively use historic preservation tools, government support, and incentives for preservation.

Each goal can be further refined into specific objectives, challenges and opportunities, and suggested actions. These refinements appear below.

Residential

Primary Objectives

Identify needed housing types, price points, and tools to encourage downtown housing production.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Higher land construction costs downtown;
- Need for a higher-density development market; and
- Need for a cohesive, phased residential development plan.

Suggested Actions

- Prepare a hypothetical pro forma to show prospective developers there is an opportunity to build profitably downtown.
- Focus on midpoint priced housing on the edges of downtown and in the Core.
- Collaborate with cadre of affordable housing experts and agencies to ensure all price points are represented in downtown housing.

- Encourage rehabilitation of downtown homes, where practicable.

Primary Jobs

Primary Objectives

Encourage the development of more export employment downtown (e.g. manufacturing, research and development, corporate headquarters, tourism and convention businesses that export goods and services to other metro areas).

Challenges and Opportunities

- Higher downtown lease rates.
- Need for office space for 200 to 600-plus employee companies.
- Need for incentives to increase building occupancies.
- Misperceptions about the availability of parking.
- Need for economic incentives needed to compete with other areas.

Suggested Actions

- Meet with Department of Defense contractors and developers to discuss technology campuses, additional buildings, building specifications.
- Create a value proposition to address issues and sell downtown.
- Utilize the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to provide financial incentives.

Retail, Restaurants and Entertainment

Primary Objectives

Increase retail, entertainment and restaurants downtown by focusing on current status, opportunities, challenges and resources available, including background studies prepared by Greg Stoffel in 2003 and Melinda Benson in 2004 which can be found on the Downtown Partnership's website.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for more residential mass downtown.
- Ease of pedestrian movement.
- Rent and parking costs.
- Need for national chain stores.
- Effects of concentrated nightclubs and bars.
- Need for a "center of gravity" such as a ball park.
- Need for a cohesive retail plan—each developer has an individual plan.
- Vacant storefronts create the misperception that downtown is struggling.

Suggested Actions

- Develop a program to market downtown to potential retail, using the DDA as funding source.
- Partner with AIA to create a visual retail master plan showing different retail zones.
- Address concerns relating to locations of bars, restaurants and retail stores.
- Provide good linkages between housing, shopping, offices and recreational spaces.
- Focus on immediate needs in the short-term.

- Create more interactive public downtown areas.
- Provide resources to help the broker community sell the downtown.
- Create an urban downtown lifestyle appealing to specific demographics, including younger people and baby boomers.
- Focus on unique independent retailers in a concentrated area.
- Explore using vacant lots near major arteries to locate local-serving retail.



Arts and Culture

Primary Objectives

Encourage the establishment of more and improved arts and cultural opportunities downtown to attract more downtown patrons, create a unique and fresh identity for downtown, and give new life to established organizations and older amenities.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for adequate funding.
- Need to balance artistic freedom with public acceptance.
- Need for adequate publicity and communication.
- Need for leadership and staff.

Suggested Actions

- Use the arts to “brand” downtown and draw more people into the area.
- Improve and enhance existing cultural venues.
- Market appropriate festivals as a downtown draw.
- Incorporate art and creativity into all new downtown development and redevelopment.
- Create the means to sustain nonprofit arts groups.
- Incorporate natural and environmentally inclined art.

Environmental Improvements

Primary Objectives

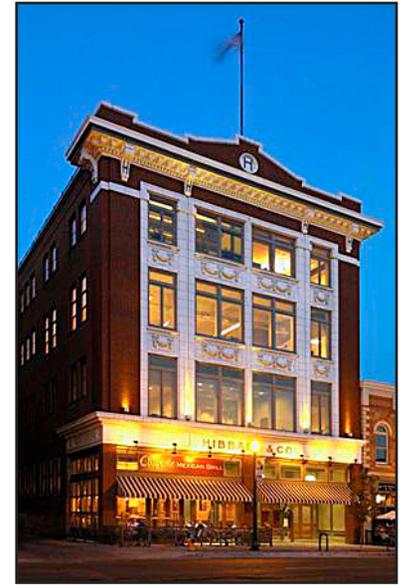
Develop unique street character block by block, revitalize the concept of the Park Ring, focus on safety in the urban realm.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for comprehensive inventory and analysis of existing and preferred street characteristics.
- Acquisition of trail right-of-way or easements for the full Park Ring is needed.
- Prevalence of bars and nightclubs downtown has resulted in the public perception that downtown is not safe at night.

Suggested Actions

- Develop form-based code for the downtown area.
- Work with property owners to obtain trail rights over the missing pieces of Park Ring.
- Increase public safety by increasing the number of “eyes on the street” through more downtown residential units.
- Develop policing mechanisms specific to downtown.



Marketing/Branding

Primary Objectives

Develop an effective marketing and branding campaign for downtown Colorado Springs.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for diverse products and consumers.
- Products constantly develop and change.
- Limited funding.

Suggested Actions

- Conduct strategy and production meetings with downtown constituencies.
- Develop lines of strong communication.
- Coordinate with the Visitors Bureau, the City of Colorado Springs and Colorado College to market downtown.
- Utilize and employ DDA funding.

Transportation and Pedestrian Orientation

Primary Objectives

Balance efficient vehicular movement with pedestrian orientation, develop multi-modal options, improve the pedestrian experience downtown, create a pedestrian connection to America the Beautiful Park, increase public transportation opportunities.

Challenges and Opportunities

- When possible, public space improvements should be implemented in a comprehensive manner to avoid a fragmented pedestrian environment.

- Physical and legal issues associated with creating a new pedestrian connection to America the Beautiful Park may be significant.
- Some alternative transportation opportunities (i.e. light rail) require a critical mass of users to be successful.
- Commuter rail must have market demand to support the public investment in the necessary infrastructure.

Suggested Actions

- Utilize BID and TIF funds for public space improvements to improve the pedestrian experience downtown.
- Explore opportunities to finance multi-modal and public transportation improvements.
- Study unique and attractive public transportation opportunities such as streetcars or trolleys.
- Improve and enhance the existing wayfinding system.

Parking

Primary Objectives

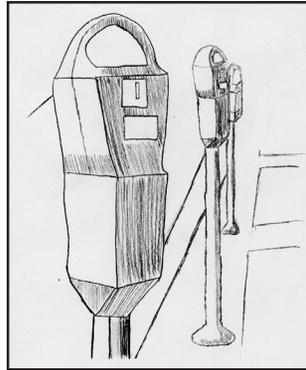
Provide a sufficient supply of parking while simultaneously meeting urban character goals.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Existing parking requirements outside of the parking exempt district are difficult to meet in an urban environment.
- There is little ability to increase on-street parking opportunities.
- An increase in overall density in the downtown will demand an increase in parking supply.

Suggested Actions

- Explore parking asset management.
- Partner with the Parking Enterprise to share costs of new public/private parking structures.
- Complete a comprehensive parking supply/demand analysis to determine where parking needs are the greatest.
- Capitalize on the role that on-street parking plays in creating a buffer between vehicular travel lanes and pedestrian walkways.
- Study on street parking configuration options at the core's edges to maximize the number of stalls available while also calming traffic and improving the pedestrian experience.
- Provide a range of payment options for structured and non-structured parking.



Technology/Sustainability

Primary Objectives

Encourage “green” components in development projects; reduce the carbon footprint of downtown; influence state-of-the-art technology in downtown infrastructure.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Education and awareness.
- Technical knowledge.
- Need for implementation partnerships.

Suggested Actions

- Amend the Electric Integrated Resource Plan to focus more on sustainable development.
- Speed up Utility plan approval for green and high performance buildings.
- Use native landscaping and construction materials which are appropriate to the local climate

Urban Design and Land Use

Primary Objectives

Achieve a high-density, pedestrian-oriented downtown that creates an iconic skyline, incorporates vertical mixed use with structured, on-site or underground parking, and concentrates products, activities and projects into small spaces.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Market influences on downtown investment are difficult to predict and impossible to control.
- Transitions from low-density to high-density uses often occur over very short distances.

Suggested Actions

- Incorporate innovative design principles to help preserve mountain views from public parks.
- Develop form-based zoning for the downtown area that will provide more flexibility for a wide range of mixed uses while simultaneously requiring a high-quality and predictable urban form.
- Respect downtown's edges by managing bulk, height, and scale of development and focusing on quality transitions from low-density to high-density.

- Work closely with Downtown Stakeholders to understand and respond to market demands and constraints.

Historic Preservation

Primary Objectives

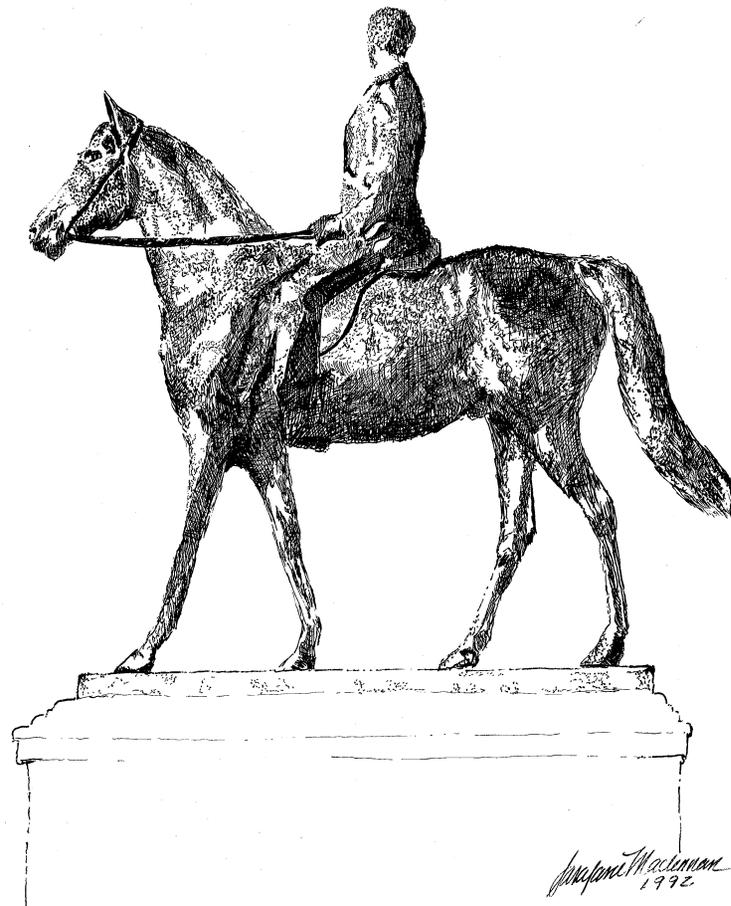
Link past railroad uses to future commuter rail. Preserve the historic assets in and around downtown for the future; proactively use historic preservation tools, government support, and incentives for preservation.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Some historic assets are in need of significant repairs and investment.

Suggested Actions

- Increasing density and residential presence downtown may increase demand for commuter rail services.
- Evaluate historic value and condition of historic assets in redevelopment areas.
- Provide public incentives or assistance to repair and maintain notable historic assets.
- Maintain historic block patterns in the Downtown.
- Develop guidance for preserving contributing historic features of the built environment.



Land Use Framework

The Land Use Framework is a diagram that defines the physical structure of downtown. It arranges the streets, open spaces, and activity centers into a logical pattern based on downtown's landmarks, patterns of use and original layout.

Every city starts out with a plan or diagram: a main street, a market area, perhaps a park. Over time, the careful thought that went into creating the original layout becomes obscured by unanticipated development, the need to accommodate automobiles, or the lack of a strong cultural legacy. In downtown Colorado Springs, that sense of the original plan is still there and waiting to be revived to acknowledge the needs of the 2000s and beyond.

The early plans of Colorado Springs' original town site were carefully laid out so that Pikes Peak Avenue would line up with the majestic view of the mountain that dominates the landscape. These plans included the addition of three parks—Antlers, Acacia, and Pioneers Square (formerly Alamo Square)—to anchor the edges of the town site. The main street and the commercial and office district were carefully planned to be the center of the community. Surrounding neighborhoods, schools, and churches all used downtown as the center for their business, social and cultural activities.

This plan draws on strengths of these original ideas, articulates them in contemporary terms, and defines a new Framework to direct and focus growth and development in downtown.

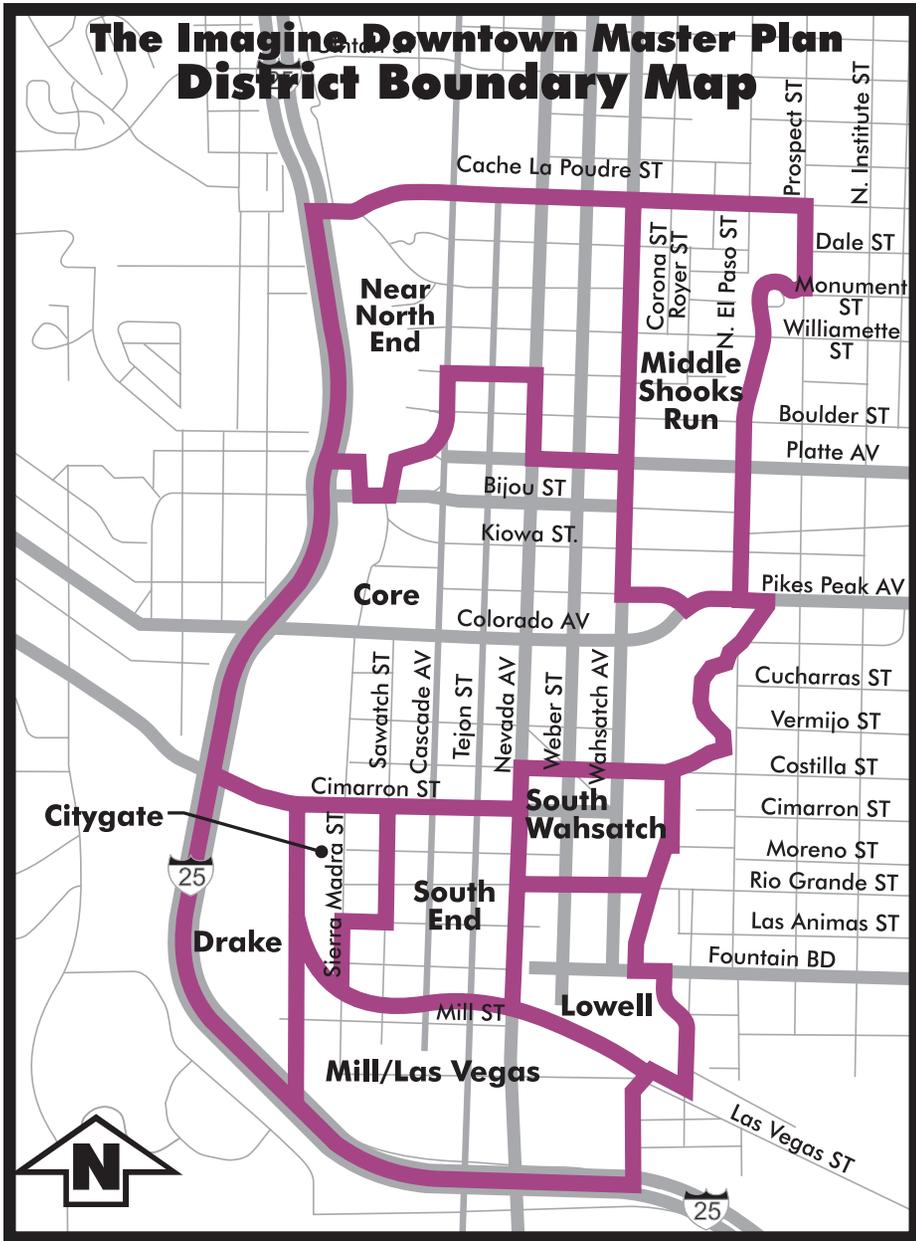
This Framework consists of several Districts combined with building height sub-areas, transition areas, street corridors, and Urban Renewal Areas, it concludes with a comprehensive future land use map.

The Districts

The districts consist of a Core and several unique neighborhoods. Eight distinct areas surround the Core in the greater downtown area:

- Near North End
- Middle Shooks Run
- South End
- Las Vegas
- Drake
- Citygate
- South Wahsatch
- Lowell

Each district has its own, unique composition and atmosphere and combines with the Core to create the distinctive character of the greater downtown area.



The Street Corridors

While Tejon Street has long been the center of activity, early plans of Colorado Springs were laid out so that Pikes Peak Avenue would line up with a view of the mountains. Over time, the relationship of Pikes Peak Avenue to the mountains eroded along with its historical link to early Colorado Springs plans. The importance of Pikes Peak Avenue to downtown also declined.

By identifying Pikes Peak Avenue and Tejon Street as “spines”, the plan framework symbolically identifies the importance of the two streets to downtown. While it does not possess the activity levels of Tejon Street today, development along Pikes Peak Avenue from depot to depot should be reflective of a desire to develop more street level activity.

One noteworthy characteristic of nearly all of Downtowns major streets is the presence of extremely wide right-of-ways. At either 100’ or 140’ these right-of-ways far exceed those in most downtowns. This situation should be seen as an opportunity to provide a more open feeling for the pedestrian as well as to explore unique development proposals which capitalize on unnecessary right-of-way area.

Street character has been defined for streets throughout the downtown. The definitions used in this plan are intended to reflect what exists and what may be possible. Streets may exhibit qualities of one or more street types but all streets should serve the pedestrian.

Non-Designated / Standard Streets

Several downtown streets are well established and will not change significantly over the planning period, or are not critical downtown corridors. Standard local street architecture is normally appropriate for these non-designated streets.

Pedestrian Streets

Two types of pedestrian streets are defined. Pedestrian Spines serve as major pedestrian corridors or attractors, with strong pedestrian activities and streetscape amenities. These corridors are characterized by wide sidewalks, street cafes, adjacent retail and entertainment activities, patterned street crossings, low level pedestrian lighting, ornamental landscaping, pedestrian benches, public art, etc. Examples include sections of Pikes Peak Avenue and Tejon Street in its entirety.

Pedestrian Streets can support considerable commercial activities and residential uses, but generally have less concentrated retail and entertainment activities in comparison to primary pedestrian streets. Examples of pedestrian streets include sections of Bijou Street, Kiowa Street, and Vermijo Avenue and Pueblo Avenue, and Weber Street in their entireties.

Gateways

These streets serve as key entryways into the downtown. The entryways into downtown should be designed to impart a sense of arrival and departure. Entry signage will help provide a sense of arrival and place. Gateway areas within the plan boundary include the north ends of Nevada Avenue and Cascade Avenue; the east ends of Pikes Peak Avenue, Platte Avenue and Fountain Boulevard; the west ends of Cimarron Street, Colorado Avenue, and Bijou Street; and the south ends of Nevada Avenue and Tejon ST.

Boulevard Streets

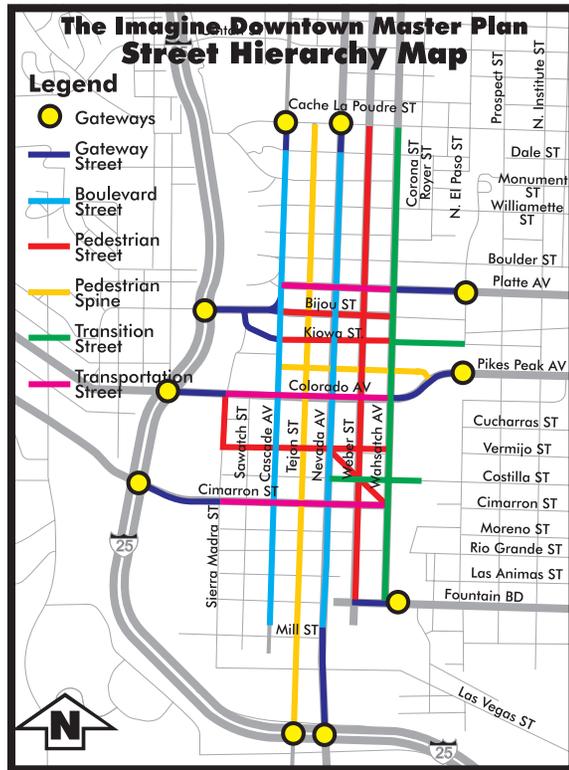
These are wide, stately streets, often servicing larger buildings and cultural, civic and institutional uses. Wide sidewalks and landscaped center medians are typical. Examples include sections of Cascade Avenue and Nevada Avenue.

Transportation Streets

These streets primarily provide for the movement of traffic to and through the downtown, or provide direct connection to the Interstate. Efficient traffic flow, capacity and signal timing is of primary importance. However, the importance of pedestrian, transit and bicycle mobility is also critical. Examples include sections of Platte Avenue, Colorado Avenue, and Cimarron Street.

Transition Streets

These are the transition segments, transitioning and linking areas of varying land uses, scale and character. Examples include sections of Bijou Street, Kiowa Street, Costilla Street and the entirety of Wahsatch Avenue.

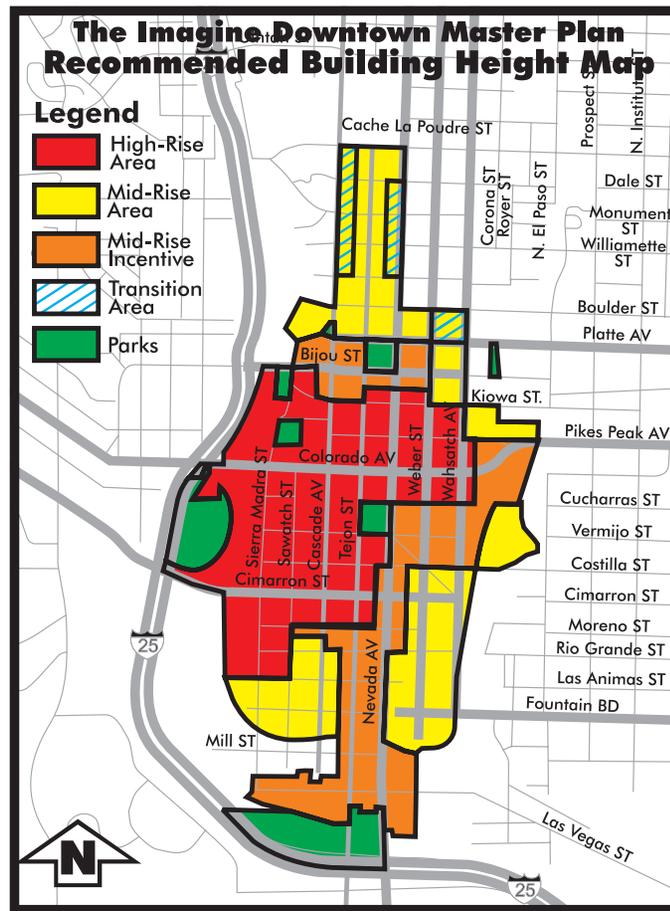


	Non-Designated	Pedestrian Spines	Pedestrian Streets	Entry or Gateway Streets	Boulevard or Ceremonial Streets	Transportation Streets	Transition Streets
Streetscape Elements							
Street Trees	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Landscaped Medians				E	◆	E	
Ornamental Planters		◆	◆				
Cluster Landscaping / Massing / Mix of Inorganic Materials		E	E	◆	◆	◆	E
Transit Shelters and/or Turn-outs		E	E	E	E	E	E
Information Kiosks		E			E	X	
Public Art Displays		E		E	E		
Benches		E	E	E	E		
Bicycle Storage Racks or Facilities		E	E	E	E		E
Pedestrian Lighting		◆	◆	E	E		E
Ornamental Overhead Streetlights		◆	◆	E	E		E
Underground Utilities	E	◆	◆	E	E	E	E
Use of Pavers		◆	E	E	E		
Pedestrian Circulation							
Pedestrian Plazas		E	E		E		
Pedestrian Connectivity / Public Space Connections		◆	E	E	E		E
Wide Sidewalks		◆	E	E	E		E
Street Cafes / Tables		E	E				
All-Way Pedestrian Crossings / Pavement Design		E			E	X	E
Traffic Calming Design / Pedestrian Bump-Outs		◆	E	E	E	E	E
Designated Bicycle Lanes		E	E	E	◆		E
Alley Pedestrian Improvements		◆	E	E	E		
Public Transit / Downtown Circulator Facilities		E	E	E	E	E	E
Parking Elements							
On-Street Diagonal Parking		E		X	X	X	
On-Street Parallel Parking	E	E	E				E
On-Street Median Parking		E				X	
Surface Parking Lots (Behind Buildings)	E	◆	◆	E	E	E	E
Parking Structures (with First Level Retail)		◆	E				
Parking Structures (100% Parking)		X					
Signage							
Uniform Public and Directional Signage	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	E
Pedestrian Oriented Private Signage		◆	◆	E	E		E
Auto Oriented Private Signage		X	X				
Gateway or Downtown Entry Signage				◆	E	E	
Form and Building Scale							
Height to Street Width Pedestrian Scale (Building Step-Backs)		◆	◆	E	◆		◆
Adherence to Build-to Lines	E	◆	◆	E	E	E	E
Transparency / Glazing Requirements (Street Level Windows)		◆	E				E
Enhanced Architecture / Building Form / Architectural Detail		◆	E	E	◆		E
Identified Palette of Acceptable Façade Materials / Façade Treatment		◆	E	E	◆		E
Pedestrian Well-Defined Entry Considerations		◆	◆	◆	◆		
Skyline / Roof and Parapet Design Considerations		◆	◆	◆	◆		E
Sun and Shadow Considerations	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	E
Historic Preservation Considerations / Conversion Guidelines		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Public View Preservation Considerations	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Neighborhood and Land Use Transitioning / Transition Considerations		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Listing of Discouraged or Prohibited Land Uses	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

◆ = Required E = Encouraged X = Prohibited

Building Height Sub-Areas

Within the plan, there are four distinct building height areas: High-Rise, Mid-Rise with Incentives, Mid-Rise and those defined by the current zone districts. The Recommended Building Height Map serves as a guide for maximum building heights across the master plan area; however, those properties within the Downtown Form-Based Zone shall rely on the maximum building height standards included in the Form-Based Code regulating plan.



High-Rise Areas

High-Rise areas are shown on the “Building Height Recommendations” map in red. These areas are where dense, vertical, urban development should occur. These areas will not limit building height but will require new development to conform to new form-based zoning provisions.

Mid-Rise with Incentive Areas

Mid-Rise with Incentive areas are shown on the map in orange. Building height is limited to 85’ in these areas unless some public incentive is proposed as part of the development. Maximum building height with incentives in this area will not exceed 140’. This plan intends to provide extra height in exchange for public amenities that are above and beyond those required of normal development proposals. Possible incentives include:

- Exterior public plazas, observation decks and mid-block pedestrian connections or arcades
- Pedestrian alley improvements
- Interior public meeting space
- Public art and cultural amenities
- Daycare/child care facilities
- Public transit facilities
- Market rate housing units
- Below market rate housing units
- Green building design
- Historic Preservation
- Bicycle Storage
- Underground Parking

Mid-Rise areas

Mid-Rise areas are shown in yellow. These areas are designed to step-down the intensity from the dense urban core to the surrounding neighborhoods. Building height in these areas shall not exceed 85'. Mixed-Use (MU) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning will be required in these areas as well.

The remaining areas in the downtown planning area shall be defined by the current base-zone. Building height will be regulated through existing development standards, found in the City Zoning Code. Form-Based Code, Mixed-use (MU) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) will be encouraged in these areas.

Transition Areas

Within the downtown planning area, there are three identified transition areas. Two of these transition areas are half-block sections in the Near North End Neighborhood, where the Tejon Corridor abuts residential neighborhoods and one area lies within the Core itself and transitions from Mid-Rise building heights to residential uses along the border of the Middle Shooks Run neighborhood.

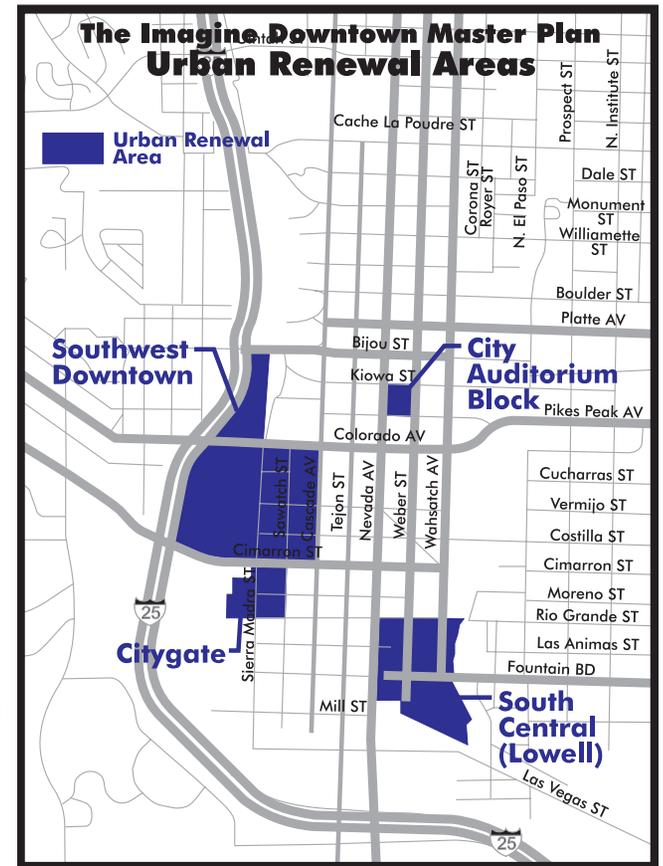
In these areas, great attention should be paid to the compatibility of proposed and existing uses. These areas should facilitate transition; more-intense uses should fade into less-intense uses using careful site design and review considerations.

Urban Renewal Areas

Urban renewal areas are shown on the plan framework to impart where large scale redevelopment is anticipated in downtown. Although these areas today are made up of a mix of uses including light industrial, warehousing, and vacant land, however, in the near

future redevelopment will transform the City's Urban Renewal Areas to thriving urban centers. The mission of the Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority is "to encourage private investment and reinvestment which restores targeted areas with strong community benefits while strengthening the tax base of the whole city. Through partnerships and collaboration, we advance sound urban planning and design, fiscal prudence and cultural sensitivity. Our objective is to facilitate development of balanced, sustainable environments where people, live, work and come together as a community." The adoption of the Southwest Urban Renewal Plan in 2001 and the City Gate Urban Renewal Plan in 2007 have enabled a significant portion of the Downtown Master Plan area to qualify for state statute-based tools that contribute to public investment related to renovation of deteriorating properties.

While separate from the Urban Renewal Designation, it should be noted that in 2001 the Mill St. area (bound by Tejon, Las Vegas, Conejos, and Fountain) was designated as a Neighborhood Strategy Area. The associated Neighborhood Improvement Plan allows the City to utilize federal block grant funds to implement public improvements that are described within the Plan. Taken together, there are a number of existing and potential future opportunities to leverage state and federal monies to revitalize the downtown area.



Future Land Use Map

The last component of this Plan's Land Use Framework is a future land use map. This map reflects the objectives of each individual district, and the direction from the street type and building height maps. It presents a generalized, yet more specific than the City's Comprehensive Plan 2020 Land Use, map to guide the future land uses in the Master Plan area. The map delineates six generalized land use categories.

Activity Center

By definition, an activity center is a mixed use center that integrates a range of complementary and mutually supporting uses and activities. The area is to be pedestrian oriented and should include good connections and transitions to surrounding areas. While a wide range of uses are expected, residences are to be considered a critical element.

Mixed Use

Similar to activity center, but with a slightly decreased intensity and density, these areas are intended to include a range of individual uses, again stressing the presence of urban residential use. Mixed use areas are to be designed to be pedestrian friendly and serve as transitions to the surrounding areas.

Institutional

A small, but important, land use category, the institutional area is intended to be utilized by Colorado College for the fulfillment of their educational and cultural mission.

General Residential

These areas of the master plan are primarily intended to serve a range of residential use types and densities. However, a select number of non-residential uses may also be acceptable in General Residential areas, these include: low-impact shops and services, small offices, parks and recreation areas, religious institutions, and schools.

Industrial

The only area within this Plan mapped as industrial is the Drake district. This area is currently used for the production of electricity. While this plan describes the desire to improve the compatibility of this area with the adjacent neighborhoods, the park ring and downtown as a whole, it is expected to remain as an industrial use for the near future.

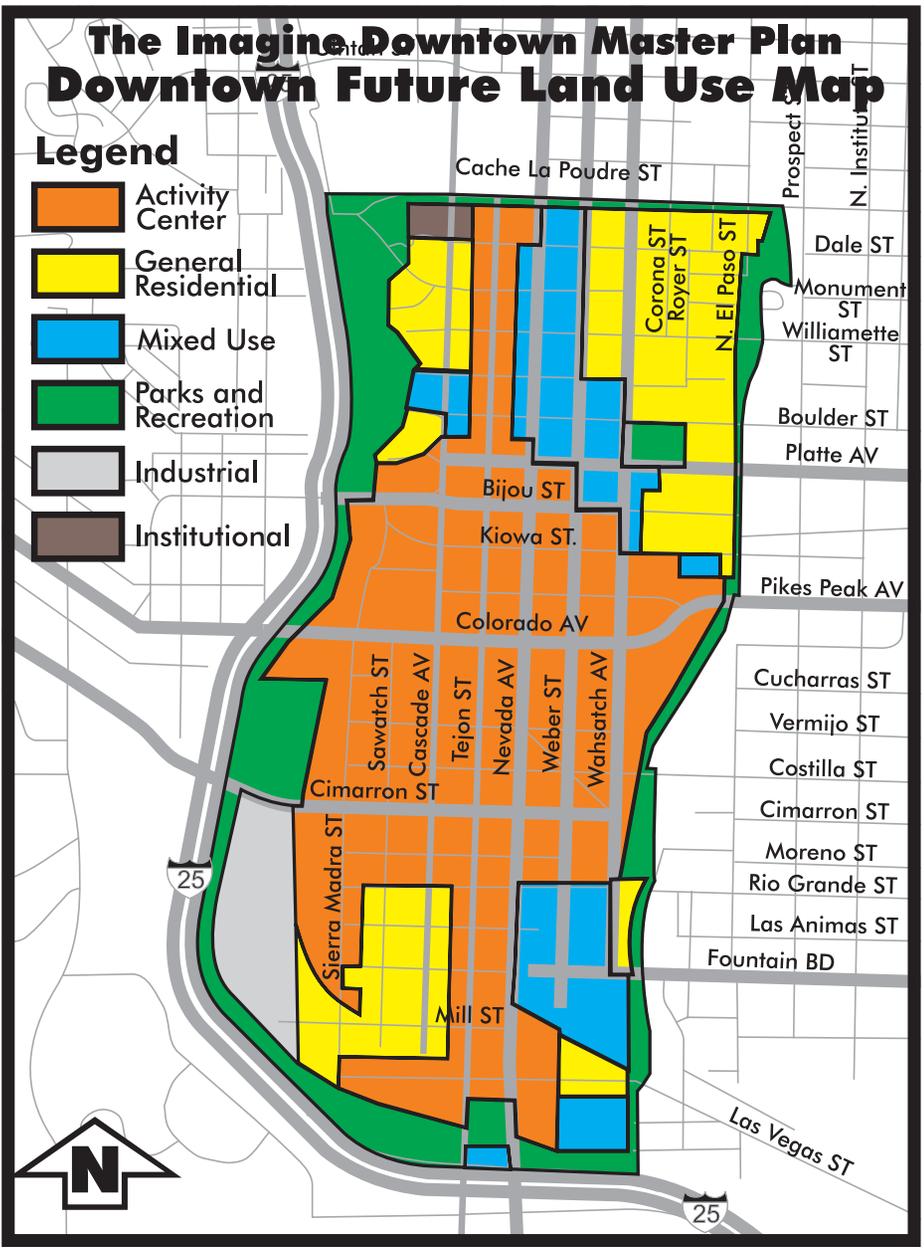
Parks and Recreation

Areas mapped as parks and recreation include existing and planned trail corridors, larger parks and open spaces. With only one small exception (Palmer play fields), the Park Ring makes up the entirety of this land use category. This area serves the important roles of providing urban open spaces, recreational opportunities for downtown residents, and the provision of non-motorized connectivity.

The Imagine Downtown Master Plan Downtown Future Land Use Map

Legend

-  Activity Center
-  General Residential
-  Mixed Use
-  Parks and Recreation
-  Industrial
-  Institutional



The Master Plan Districts

The Core

Lively and energetic, the City's center buzzes with activity. The area is truly a fusion of variation, where tall buildings overlook open, public spaces and people of every size, shape, culture and economic status mix and mingle on the streets. Historic architecture blends with newly built structures while bronze statues of the City's founders watch over pedestrians and motorists alike.

The history of the City runs deep within the downtown core, and understandably so, for the first survey stake was driven at the intersection of Pikes Peak and Cascade Avenues. The former county courthouse, now the Pioneers Museum, looks westward toward the mountains that edge the City. Within its walls are artifacts from every era of Colorado Springs' history, waiting to be discovered by locals and visitors. The Carnegie Library, now part of the larger Penrose Library, sits nestled in the shadows of the First Bank Building a few blocks north. Items from that very library have entertained and instructed residents for almost as long as Colorado Springs has been a city.

National coffee chains and independent local shops caffeinate the local workforce and independent retailers offer exclusive items found nowhere else in the City. At lunchtime, the core bustles with office workers and Palmer High School students out for a walk or a bite to eat. The flavors of downtown are as varied as the inhabitants; Southeast Asian cuisine is only a block away from Mexican, Italian, and French fare.

The core features establishments of every type; residential, office, commercial and even industrial uses are represented. Ground-level storefronts and restaurants provide the foundation for stacked,



residential lofts with balconies that overlook the streets below. Government offices are based in the core district and sometimes even share the same building with corporate headquarters and independent groups.

As day fades into night, the composition of the core changes. The marquis of Kimball's Twin Peak Theatre glows with advertisements for the latest in independent film. Streetlights illuminate the sidewalks and live music from the bars and clubs spills into the streets. Residents and visitors from all parts of Colorado Springs flock to concerts, philharmonic performances, and plays at the Pikes Peak Center and City Auditorium. Whether night or day, the core offers something for everyone.

Objective:

Increase the Development of Diverse Residential Units.

- Strategy 1 Establish incentives to encourage private housing developments throughout the district.
- Strategy 2 Rehabilitate older warehouses and industrial structures for loft housing and other adaptive reuse.

Objective:

Establish the Core as a Regional Work Center.

- Strategy 1 Retain and increase government, civic, institutional, and cultural facilities in the Core.

Objective:

Develop the Core as a Regional Shopping Destination.

- Strategy 1 Increase diversity in retail uses while ensuring that those uses are compatible with residential development.
- Strategy 2 Focus on street-level retail and locate offices above shops and restaurants.

Objective:

Develop the Core as an Entertainment Center.

- Strategy 1 Create a historic market and artisan's district that includes a permanent public market.
- Strategy 2 Arts, culture, entertainment venues and activities should be encouraged through incentives, the market and policy. Look for more "one-of" anchors for downtown.

Objective:

Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Reconnect Antlers Park to the rest of downtown, possibly by adding a staircase from the park to the Antlers Hotel.
- Strategy 2 Improve the pedestrian connection between Pikes Peak Avenue and the Antlers' Plaza.
- Strategy 3 Link past railroad use to future commuter rail.
- Strategy 4 Construct a plaza-like pedestrian overpass at the end of Vermijo, over the railroad tracks and into America the Beautiful Park.
- Strategy 5 Improve alleyways between pedestrian streets and encourage building design that connects the street frontage to the alleys.
- Strategy 6 Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to the west, linking the downtown with Gold Hill Mesa and other major Westside developments.
- Strategy 7 Complete, maintain and enhance the Emerald Necklace.
- Strategy 8 Ensure connectivity between public parking garages and retail, restaurant, and office uses.
- Strategy 9 Encourage convenient and attractive shuttle stops throughout the Core.

Objective:

Ensure the Availability of Parking.

- Strategy 1 Maximize, easy-to-find, on-street parking for shoppers and visitors to the downtown.
- Strategy 2 Evaluate the boundaries of the Parking Exempt District and the sufficiency of downtown parking facilities to ensure parking needs are being met.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

- Strategy 1 Develop a form-based zoning code that is based on the principles outlined in this plan and ensures quality urban design for the high-rise building height area. The code should address design features including public places, public art and cultural amenities, and other site development standards for an urban area.
- Strategy 2 Develop a more impressive, iconic skyline that includes tall, beautiful buildings and a higher floor area ratio.
- Strategy 3 Encourage green building design.
- Strategy 4 Amend the Landscape Code to address internal landscaping in terms of urban design standards.
- Strategy 5 Continue to explore design changes to the Antlers' plaza and throughout downtown to foster a dynamic pedestrian area.
- Strategy 6 Promote the construction of interior courtyards to provide private open-space and pass-thrus to facilitate pedestrian movement.
- Strategy 7 Encourage the redevelopment of surface parking. Eliminate surface parking or locate lots to the rear of the buildings.
- Strategy 8 Encourage vertical mixed-use projects.

Objective:

Increase Safety for Downtown Visitors and Residents.

- Strategy 1 Improve Colorado Avenue so that drivers are more aware of and anticipate pedestrians, especially at Cimino Drive, Sierra Madre Street and Sahwatch Avenue. Improvement possibilities include entry signage and street design. Provide linkages off of Colorado Avenue to connect Tejon Street to America the Beautiful Park and the Southwest Downtown Urban Renewal Area.

- Strategy 2 Install landscaped medians with breaks or bump outs along Nevada Avenue to facilitate pedestrian crossings.
- Strategy 3 Increase pedestrian safety throughout downtown through the use of bump outs and other cross-walk improvements.

Objective:

Preserve the Past.

- Strategy 1 Focus attention on the historic marker at the city's foundation, located on the south side of Pikes Peak Avenue at Cascade. Currently, this marker is almost lost against the backdrop of asphalt surface parking.
- Strategy 2 Preserve and integrate historic buildings into the streetscape.

Objective:

Create Quality Transitions between More- and Less-Intense Land Uses.

- Strategy 1 Limit building height to 70' in those locations not adjacent to residential and 55' in locations that are adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 2 Require shade and shadow analyses as part of the development plan review process.
- Strategy 3 Require landscape buffering.
- Strategy 4 Prohibit surface parking lots on street frontage where adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 5 Institute other measures such as increased setbacks, landscaping or building orientation, as necessary to ensure compatibility with residential land uses.

Near North End

The idyllic campus of Colorado College is situated just beyond the northern border of the Near North End district. Its students spill onto the streets of the Near North End in search of funky hang-outs and retail shops. North Tejon Street provides the students with just what they seek; delis, taco shops, and the neighborhood pizza place are all within walking distance of the dormitories at the south end of the campus while laundries, salons and sports supply stores intermingle with business offices and residences in the near vicinity. The Near North End bonds the Colorado College campus to the core of the City while providing unique offerings catering to both college students and residents.

Off the well-worn path of Tejon, quiet residences and offices silhouette the side streets. Boasting large, landscaped medians and tree-lined streets, the neighborhoods in the Near North End feel historic and inviting. Throughout the district, grand houses are reused as apartments and bed and breakfasts, filling the needs of CC students and out-of-town visitors, while more modest homes along the side streets provide shelter to young professionals and families.

The arts and cultural scene is strong within the district. The Fine Arts Center sits perched on a hill, overlooking Monument Valley Park and the mountains beyond. The exquisite paintings and exhibitions are matched only by the views from the western balcony. Within walking distance of the art museum is the American Numismatic Society Museum, where patrons can study history through various forms of currency. Further north is Bemis Art School, a long favorite of school children and adults alike. After classes, students can be found catching a bit of lunch on the sprawling grounds.

Monument Valley Park winds along the western boundary of the Near North End district. The park is one of the oldest and largest in Colorado Springs and was dedicated to the City by General William Jackson Palmer himself. The park's trails and playgrounds afford residents and visitors plenty of opportunity for physically



demanding outdoor recreation while the sprawling green spaces and forested areas supply the perfect landscape for a picnic or a leisurely stroll. The eclectic mix of uses found in the Near North End caters to college students, out-of-town visitors, and residents.

Objective:

Create a sustainable residential neighborhood with a variety of housing types.

Strategy 1 Remove barriers to establishing housing options. For example, define multi-family residential as a principal, permitted use in the Office-Residential (OR) zone district instead of a conditional use to encourage mixed-market housing within the district.

Objective:
Encourage college-oriented retail uses along Tejon, with a strong focal point termination at the college boundary.

Objective:
Retain existing arts and cultural uses.

Objective:
Improve Park Access.

- Strategy 1 Construct the portion of the Park Ring along Cache la Poudre Street, which includes adding to the street tree edge and adding bike lanes to the street.
- Strategy 2 Improve the access points to Monument Valley Park with pathways, signage, landscaping and lighting.

Objective:
Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Encourage convenient and attractive shuttle stops near Colorado College.

Objective:
Ensure the Availability of Parking.

- Strategy 1 Provide additional on-street parking spaces where possible to encourage residential development; this may be possible on a number of the east-west streets in the district.
- Strategy 2 Examine the use of a residential parking permit program in the Near North End.

Objective:
Promote Innovative Urban Design.
Strategy 1 Encourage green building design.

Objective:
Preserve the Past

- Strategy 1 Create design guidelines which address the conversion of historic buildings and the construction of new structures.
- Strategy 2 Strive to retain the Victorians along Nevada Avenue.
- Strategy 3 Preserve the structures along Weber Street that are listed as part of the National Registry for Historic Places. New development along this corridor should respect the historic district and be built at a similar size and scale with surface parking located behind the buildings.

Transition Areas

There are two half-block transition areas within the neighborhood boundaries fronting along Cascade Avenue and Nevada Avenue and stretching between E. St. Vrain Street and Cache la Poudre Street. These areas are important buffers between the busy Tejon Street corridor and surrounding residential uses.

Objective:
Create Quality Transitions from More- to Less-Intense Land Uses

- Strategy 1 Limit building height to 70' in those locations not adjacent to residential and 55' in locations that are adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 2 Require shade and shadow analyses as part of the development plan review process.

- Strategy 3 Require landscape buffering.
- Strategy 4 Prohibit surface parking lots on street frontage where adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 5 Institute other measures as necessary to ensure compatibility with residential land uses.

Middle Shooks Run

A quiet, single-family neighborhood lies just outside the boundaries of the dense, urban core of Colorado Springs. Its tree-lined streets and green lawns provide a nearby oasis from the hustle and bustle of urban life. To be sure, residents of the district enjoy the proximity to downtown; for many properties in Middle Shooks Run, less than a thirty minute walk separates their inhabitants from the heart of the City.

Middle Shooks Run is rich in historic appeal. The area exhibits architectural styles from almost every era in Colorado Springs' history. Modest Queen Ann and Victorian homes exist near post-World War II housing, and recently built structures intermingle with late nineteenth-century homes, adding to the varied and unique feel of the district. Wrought-iron garden fences and consistent front yard setbacks create a sense of regularity, but every house is different and showcases each property owner's distinctive taste.

On sunny days, residents of Middle Shooks Run walk their dogs around the neighborhood and through the Middle Shooks Run Park, which runs almost the entire length of the district. Children play in the park playgrounds, shrouded from busy streets by abundant, mature landscaping while parents watch from shady park benches.

The area is a fantastic place for evening walks as well, when passers-by pause to chat with neighbors enjoying the evening air on their front porches.

At the southern end of the district, the strongly residential character fades into a more commercial one, with a mixture of old and new construction signaling the transition to the urban core. These buildings are not strongly characteristic of the Middle Shooks Run district, but do not quite fit in the busy core either. They do, however, leave an impression on the travelers entering the city on Pikes Peak Avenue.



Objective:

Preserve the Residential Character of the District.

- Strategy 1 Retain the existing residential uses within the neighborhood. Commercial development should not expand.

Objective:

Encourage Art and Cultural Opportunities.

- Strategy 1 Consider adding public art along Middle Shooks Run Trail.

Objective:

Create Connections.

Strategy 1 Ensure pedestrian connectivity along Pikes Peak Avenue with the historic Santa Fe depot and with the Shooks Run trail.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Encourage redevelopment of non-conforming land uses.

Objective:

Preserve the Past.

Strategy 1 Create design guidelines which address the conversion of historic structures and the construction of new structures to ensure compatibility with the existing low- to medium-density structures of the neighborhood.

South End

A quirky mix of historic and rejuvenated industrial, commercial, and residential properties lies just south of Cimarron Street. Converted residences along Tejon Street and Cascade Avenue now house professional offices and the occasional retail store. Warehouses and other industrial buildings have been adapted for restaurants and modern retail uses occupy revitalized spaces throughout the district. The area has undergone somewhat of a revitalization, but several redevelopment opportunities still present themselves.

The residential component of the district measures only four or five blocks of modest cottages and bungalows neatly ordered with consistent setbacks. Substantial, landscaped medians and street trees provide a shady canopy under which children ride their

bicycles. Large, open spaces are atypical of the area obliging residents to rely on nearby parks for recreation.

Although parts of the district have been revitalized, the area has maintained its historic character. One example is the Colorado Springs Day Nursery, in operation since 1923, which stands at the corner of East Rio Grande and South Tejon Streets. For 85 years the nursery has watched over children from families in all economic brackets. The nursery began as a service for children whose families were unable to care for them during the workweek. It has evolved into one of Colorado Springs' most beloved landmarks and adds to the district's diverse composition.

Objective:

Develop Additional Housing.

Strategy 1 Create infill housing. The South End has available land that could be assembled into larger parcels. Several lots are available for residential infill.



Strategy 2 Explore the possibility for conversions from commercial to a mixture of residential and commercial uses within the same structure.

Objective:

Promote the South End as a Secondary Employment Center.

Strategy 1 Encourage the conversion and possible redevelopment of warehouse buildings for office and retail uses.

Strategy 2 Continue compatible office use of residential structures that maintain the residential character of the neighborhood.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment.

Strategy 1 Replace or upgrade failing infrastructure, such as sidewalks, curbs and gutters, etc.

Strategy 2 Develop a neighborhood plan for this district to establish goals, create a sense of community and protect historic resources. Once a neighborhood plan is complete, a program of public improvements can be crafted. The types of improvements could be landscaping, sidewalks, neighborhood sign guidelines, street lights, and connections to other neighborhoods. Once the plan is complete, the area should be considered for designation as a Neighborhood Strategy Area so that it is eligible for grants and funding.

Objective:

Create Connections.

Strategy 1 Develop connections to nearby parks, the Park Ring and the core. Investigate the use of the railroad lines right-of-way as an east-west pedestrian and bicycle connection to the Park Ring. Tejon Street is the designated connection to the core district and should be designed using limited way-finding elements and landscaping.

Strategy 2 Continue to develop on-street bikeways along Tejon Street, with connections to the Park Ring.

Strategy 3 Maintain Downtown Shuttle service into the district.

Mill/Las Vegas

The Mill/Las Vegas district serves as the southern gateway into the heart of downtown. It is an area of stark contrast, where spots of increased neighborhood pride about abandoned properties, ripe for redevelopment. Massive industrial buildings dominate the streetscape of Tejon Street and Nevada Avenue, while small houses line the side streets.

The highly industrial section of the district bisects the Mill Street Neighborhood, historically composed of working-class residences. The same contrast that is seen in the larger district is present in the Mill Street Neighborhood; recently improved homes and public infrastructure stand beside houses in dire need of repair. But the neighborhood is transforming.

In 2000, the residents of Mill Street organized and crafted their own neighborhood plan. The Mill Street Neighborhood Preservation Plan describes the residents' aspirations to preserve the character of their historic neighborhood while identifying areas of necessary change. Since the plan's adoption, numerous improvements have been made; Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money was employed to upgrade decaying infrastructure, Habitat for Humanity built new houses in the neighborhood, and long-time residents have improved their properties. Throughout the Mill Street Neighborhood, a renewed sense of pride and ownership is mounting.

Although still in transition, the sense of pride in the Mill/Las Vegas area has taken root and provided a strong foundation on which to build a revitalized downtown district.

Objective:
**Establish a “Quiet Zone”
within the Area to Mitigate
Train Horn Noise.**



- Strategy 1 Study alternatives and obtain funds to implement mitigating treatments at the at-grade rail crossing within the district, specifically at the Las Animas and Sierra Madre rail crossings.
- Strategy 2 Continue to advocate for relocating freight rail east out of downtown and the City as a whole.

Objective:
**Maintain and strengthen the residential quality of the
neighborhood.**

- Strategy 1 Vacant land in the housing areas should be developed with affordable single-family, duplex, or multi-family homes. The architecture and scale of new or additional units should be compatible with the character and scale of this district.

Objective:
**Examine the Possibility of Establishing an Urban Renewal
Area.**

- Strategy 1 Urban Renewal Designation for the commercial and industrial uses along Las Vegas, particularly at Nevada and Tejon, would make funds available to revitalize the non-residential areas of the district.
- Strategy 2 Investigate other opportunities such as Certified Development Companies, tax credits, and Business Improvement Districts (BID) to provide incentives for the desired development.

Objective:
Improve the Public Environment.

- Strategy 1 Improve Dorchester Park to make it more attractive.
- Strategy 2 Design the Tejon Street Marsh, part of the Park Ring, to be an educational area to each park users about wetland areas in urban environments.

Objective:
Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Maintain the FREX stop at the Park and Ride at Nevada Avenue/Tejon Street and I-25.
- Strategy 2 Maintain Downtown Shuttle service to the Park and Ride.
- Strategy 3 Connect Dorchester Park to the Park Ring.
- Strategy 4 Acquire the necessary land to complete the Park Ring between Monument/Fountain Creek Trail and Shooks Run Trail.
- Strategy 5 Connect Mill/Las Vegas with Shooks Run through a pedestrian path along the railroad right-of-way.

Objective:
Promote Responsible Urban Design.

- Strategy 1 Protect residential areas by creating transition zones or buffers between intense commercial uses and housing. These could be landscaped areas, small offices, or multi-family dwellings.
- Strategy 2 Adjust zoning to support the Mill Street Neighborhood Preservation Plan’s goals.

Drake

A mass of energy lies on 66 acres in the southwestern downtown area. It labors and exhales as it converts mountains of deep, black coal to electric power. Coal mountains dominate the terrain, adding to a stark and surreal landscape. The smoke stacks rise from the bulk of the mammoth, churning out billowy, white steam clouds that are visible for miles.

Built in 1940, the Martin Drake Power Plant is one of two coal-fired power plants under the control of the municipal utility. The plant itself is a perfect example of pure, World War II-era industry, but the technology within the walls is extremely advanced and environmentally conscious.

A segment of the Park Ring runs between the power plant and the creek. There is contrast here; dense trees and riparian vegetation are juxtaposed against the striking presence of the power plant. Old, iron bridges and utility pipes span the width of the creek, connecting one bank to the other. Automotive noise from the interstate stands out against the sounds of wildlife nesting in the trees.

Drake is austere, industrial and incredibly distinctive. Although its makeup differs strongly from the composition of the rest of the downtown, it is bound to the larger area through its history and location.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment

Strategy 1 Work with the Utilities Department concerning the Martin Drake Power Plant to accomplish two

objectives: calm the visual impact of the plant through landscaping and repainting; and, provide interpretive materials on the power plant's operations for those passing along the Park Ring trails to its west.



Objective:

Create Connections.

Strategy 1 Complete the Pikes Peak Greenway link of the Park Ring from Bijou south to beyond the power plant complex. Along that newly defined edge, construct formal gateway features at Colorado Avenue and Cimarron Street to convey a sense of arrival and announce the entrances to the downtown area.

Objective:

Relocate the Power Plant

Strategy 1 Accelerate the idea of retiring Drake in favor of a re-located source of power with a more environmentally sound facility.

CityGate

Four blocks of cleared land lie just south of Cimarron Street. The area is quiet and calm, but that sleepy feeling will soon fade. Before long, the area could feature one of the most progressive downtown developments. Plans are underway that will incorporate quality urban design concepts and pedestrian amenities, including

hidden internal parking and tree-lined streets complete with outdoor cafés and benches. These four blocks will be the first impression for travelers entering the city along the Cimarron gateway and will include opportunities for living, working, dining and entertainment.

All aspects of the plans have not yet been formalized, but this much is certain: the development will be mixed-use, it will be vibrant, and it will be dynamic.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Construct mixed-use residential and live-work structures along Sierra Madre Street between Cimarron and Rio Grande.

South Wahsatch

If there is one word that could be employed to sum up an entire area, “opportunity” would suit South Wahsatch just fine. The district should not be judged on what it is now, but rather what it could become in the future. Currently, a mixture of community service agencies, automotive-related land uses, parking lots, industrial buildings and dilapidated residential properties intermingle throughout the district with no particular order. The area is in search of an identity it has not yet found.



There is great potential for redevelopment in the area. Presently, several arts-oriented uses are located within the district, including

a recording studio, a well-known potter, and an art gallery. The industrial parts of the district would be perfect locations for trendy lofts and studios required of an art district.

On the other hand, the district’s location between the Core and the revitalizing Lowell district makes it perfect for mixed-use development. New neighborhoods could bloom and flourish, with corner groceries and pocket parks. Pueblo Avenue could feature townhomes and other mixed-use developments with a park-like feel.

There is great possibility within the South Wahsatch district; one only needs to take the first step.



Objective:

Residential: Promote New and Dense Residential Uses in Close Proximity to Downtown

Strategy 1 Provide redevelopment incentives and public assistance to transition industrial uses along Wahsatch Avenue to residential uses.

Objective:

Promote South Wahsatch as a Secondary Employment Center.

Strategy 1 Encourage the South Wahsatch district to realize its potential as a secondary business and office area that supports the core. This should be done in a way that takes advantage of its central location and serves as a good neighbor to surrounding areas.

- Strategy 2 Strengthen the South Wahsatch district as an area for affordable office and commercial space near the core. Encourage businesses, non-profit organizations, and offices that need to be close to the downtown to occupy the vacant buildings and build on vacant land.
- Strategy 3 Study the possibilities for creating a business “incubator zone” or other method of encouraging development. An incubator zone is a specific area targeted for new businesses and is often supported by governmental economic programs that make rent, for instance, more affordable. Special Improvement Districts, tax credits, and the State Enterprise Zone are examples of these economic programs.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment.

- Strategy 1 Prepare a neighborhood plan to determine district goals, image, land use, and direction. The plan should outline a method for future growth that will suggest projects for the vacant land and buildings. Existing and proposed development should combine to create order.

Objective:

Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Acquire the land necessary to complete the Park Ring in this district.
- Strategy 2 Make Pueblo Avenue a connection that links the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum to the Park Ring.

- Strategy 3 Ensure important pedestrian connections are made between Vermijo, Pueblo, and Costilla and the Park Ring.
- Strategy 4 Create connections to downtown and the Park Ring.

Objective:

Promote Responsible Urban Design.

- Strategy 1 Design street improvements, such as landscaping and lighting, to lessen the negative effects of the major roadways throughout the district. Screen surface parking lots, perhaps through landscaping, to soften their appearance from the street.
- Strategy 2 Design buffers for nearby housing.

Lowell

The Lowell School stands above Nevada Avenue, facing westward toward Pikes Peak. Lowell is to its district what the mountain is to the city—a symbol of endurance. The building itself is quite striking with its Boulder brick and sandstone façade. For nearly 100 years those same walls sheltered the youth of Colorado Springs, giving them a place to further their knowledge. To be sure, the school has born witness to much of the City’s history and still, the building endures.

Lowell School has transformed, much like the district that bears its name. In 2001, the building re-opened as the headquarters of the Housing Authority, adding a much needed draw of office space to the area. Soon thereafter the district followed suit, revitalizing into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood with a variety of housing types.

A major investment has occurred in the Lowell district with the construction of a mixed-use project that incorporates Traditional Neighborhood Development design. The Lowell district is now the perfect combination of historic charm and modern amenities. The live-work units, lofts and townhomes are designed to complement the architecture of the Lowell building while offering residents the latest in urban living. Several neighborhood parks dot the district landscape, providing open space where both children and adults can play.

Objective:
Expand residential uses, particularly multi-family, senior housing, lower income and subsidized housing.



Objective:
Improve the Public Environment.

Strategy 1 Complete the Park Ring and construct the Fountain Boulevard gateway taking advantage of topography, natural vegetation, and drainage while ensuring safe and convenient access to the park and trail.

Objective:
Create Connections

Strategy 1 Investigate the use of Railroad lines right-of-way as an east-west Pedestrian-Bikeway connection to the Park Ring.

Objective:
Promote Responsible Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Develop design guidelines for residential, office, commercial and industrial uses that address appropriate facades, landscaping, signs, lighting and parking.
 Strategy 2 Examine zoning codes to ensure coordination with design guidelines and that land use intensities are compatible with the other districts.

Objective:
Preserve the Past.

Strategy 1 The significance of the former Lowell Elementary School, both in terms of its Romanesque architecture and history should be recognized and preserved as a significant landmark. The Downtown Plan supports the Urban Renewal Plan, which states that the structure should be preserved if feasible.

The Park Ring

In this Plan, the downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods are woven together by a beautiful park. The Park Ring, a continuous open-space surrounding downtown, consists of existing parks such as those along Monument and Fountain Creeks, neighborhood parks, and connections between them.

The idea of the Park Ring builds upon the traditions of General Palmer, who dedicated thousands of acres to the City for parks and open space. The Park Ring's 6.7-mile circumference is a place for jogging, hiking, biking, special events (e.g. walk-a-thons), or just strolling. The Park Ring forms a hub for the entire Trails network of the City.

The following are updated recommendations for the Park Ring as a whole.

Objective:

Identify Champions/Stakeholders

- Strategy 1 Identify existing “champions” and stakeholders for discrete segments of the Park Ring, such as neighborhood groups, commercial and residential developers, Colorado Springs Utilities, institutions, local governments, and others who own adjacent property, or interest groups, such as the Friends of Monument Valley Park or Shooks Run Trail Friends.
- Strategy 2 Find out what current or planned projects, goals, hopes and dreams, etc. those champions or stakeholders have for “their” segment.
- Strategy 3: Recognize and encourage current efforts and future participation of champions in the development of the Ring.
- Strategy 4 Establish a program through which champions can “adopt” segments.
- Strategy 5 Build support for, and then implement, improvements to the Park Ring one interested party at a time.

Objective:

Form Partnerships

- Strategy 1 Building on the identified champions and stakeholders, form community partnerships for planning, funding, and implementing improvements to the Park Ring.
- Strategy 2 Bring City Council, the City Administration, City departments and divisions, Colorado Springs Utilities, the Downtown Partnership, and the Downtown Development Authority into the mix with property owners, developers, neighborhood groups, interest

groups, downtown churches, major employers, school District 11, Colorado College, Pikes Peak Community College, and others.

- Strategy 3 Through these community partnerships, promote and support the improvement of the Park Ring as a high quality, well used amenity for the downtown and the neighborhoods.

Objective:

Promote Awareness

- Strategy 1 Promote awareness of the Park Ring in the downtown, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the community through events sponsored by champions and partnerships, such as group walks, runs and bike rides.
- Strategy 2 Hold an annual “Ride the Ring” as part of Bike Week.
- Strategy 3 Link these events into activities at America the Beautiful Park, Springspree, and other downtown happenings.
- Strategy 4 Use these events as fund raisers to improve the Park Ring segments and build support for completing the two remaining broken links between Shooks Run and Monument Creek.
- Strategy 5 Use a web-based approach for getting out information and building support for segments of the park Ring in collaboration with champions and stakeholders.

Objective:

Utilize the Park Ring as an Economic Development Tool and Catalyst

- Strategy 1 Use the Park Ring as a catalyst for economic development by realizing its potential to draw more people into the downtown and by marketing it as a public amenity for residential and non-residential development.



Strategy 2 Combine the promotional, recreational, entertainment, and partnership aspects of the Ring to help support new business and development opportunities, both along the Ring itself and throughout the greater downtown area.

Objective:
Create a Wayfinding System

- Strategy 1 Create a wayfinding system with locational, informational, and directional signage that folds into both the overall wayfinding system for downtown and the Parks Department’s existing trail and interpretive signage system.
- Strategy 2 Use a logo or icon to identify the Park Ring on all signage.
- Strategy 3 Use the wayfinding system to relate the Park Ring to unique neighborhoods and unique areas along it and to enhance the local sense of place and identity.
- Strategy 4 Include interpretive signage for historic and environmental features.
- Strategy 5 Use the system to flag gateways to the downtown and important arterial crossings, bike and pedestrian connections into the downtown and the neighborhoods, and significant destinations, such as the Fine Arts Center, Colorado College, the Penrose Public Library, large employers, and other facilities and places of note.
- Strategy 6 Identify the Park Ring on all downtown maps.

Objective:
Plan and Improve the Park Ring as a Continuous Greenway

- Strategy 1 Protect and enhance the Park Ring segments along Monument Creek and Shooks Run as wildlife corridors and habitats and areas of significant riparian vegetation.
- Strategy 2 Consider hiring a wildlife manager for the City with responsibilities for habitat management of the Park Ring as well as for habitats in other public open spaces.
- Strategy 3 Protect and manage the stream corridors as significant riparian features and ecological systems.
- Strategy 4 Capitalize on existing volunteer efforts and educational opportunities to improve the streamside Park Ring segments as natural systems and examples of “nature in the City.”
- Strategy 5 Adopt by reference the relevant environmental and stormwater management goals and objectives and recommendations of the Pikes Peak Greenway Master Plan as they relate to the Fountain Creek segment of the Ring.
- Strategy 6 As opportunities arise to acquire gaps in the greenway along Shooks Run, reclaim those areas through restoration of the riparian environment.
- Strategy 7 Incorporate stormwater management considerations and improvements in greenway planning for both the creek corridors.

Objective:

Plan and Improve the Park Ring as a Transportation Corridor

- Strategy 1 Improve the function of the Park Ring as a major multimodal corridor for the downtown, serving both commuters and recreational users, with easy bicycle and pedestrian circulation, enhanced connectivity, signage and wayfinding, easy links to the transit system, more direct school access, and good off-street to on-street transitions.
- Strategy 2 Plan transportation improvements to the Park Ring within the context of the connecting trail systems and street network, and the land uses and neighborhoods served.
- Strategy 3 Improve connectivity and access to the Park Ring at each of the downtown gateways identified in the Street Corridor section of the Framework.
- Strategy 4 Emphasize the overlapping recreational and health benefits for pedestrians and cyclists using the Ring as a transportation corridor.

Objective:

Plan and Improve the Park Ring as a Recreational Amenity

- Strategy 1 Enhance the Park Ring, with its creek corridors, trail system, and linear parks, as a high-quality recreational amenity serving both the downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Strategy 2 Promote the health and wellness benefits of the recreational uses of the Park Ring through activities and programs sponsored by downtown employers, the YMCA, downtown churches, and other organizations and businesses.

- Strategy 3 Hold an annual “Run the Ring” event.
- Strategy 4 Adopt by reference the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Pikes Peak Greenway Plan as they relate to recreational opportunities and uses for the Fountain Creek segments of the Park Ring.

Objective:

Improve the Actual and Perceived Security of the Park Ring

- Strategy 1 Work through the champions, stakeholders, and partnerships with the CSPD and the Parks Department, to identify and address specific security concerns and problems.
- Strategy 2 Create greater visibility and improve lighting along those segments that have few “eyes” on the trail.
- Strategy 3 Create as many connections as possible from adjacent land uses to enhance the perception of security.
- Strategy 4 Promote greater use of Park Ring segments through regularly scheduled events to reinforce the sense of a secure environment.
- Strategy 5 Design adjacent development to increase visibility and access to the Ring and to put more “eyes” on it.
- Strategy 6 Thin vegetation where needed, especially along the power plant/I-25 segment, to increase visibility and reduce safety concerns.
- Strategy 7 Encourage more residential development to front on the Ring with open, direct access.
- Strategy 8 Enhance security through improved signage by providing users with clear information for the location and direction to nearby uses and connections.

Objective:

Create a Public/Private Working Group to Help Implement Recommendations for the Park Ring

- Strategy 1 Form a working group with liaisons from City departments such as Planning, Parks, Stormwater, Traffic, Police, and Utilities, and from the Downtown Partnership, the DDA, EDC, and other stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the Park Ring recommendations.
- Strategy 2 Select a coordinator for the group and use the group as a clearinghouse and web-based communication network to resolve issues, identify funding sources, and match funding to projects.



Implementation

Implementation of this Plan will be the responsibility of both the public and private sectors of Colorado Springs. The Committee's work—creating the Vision and Framework, establishing the Vision, and providing recommendations—sets the program. This is the beginning. Community willingness and the ongoing commitment of those who care about downtown is the next important ingredient. The Committee, the community, City Staff, City Council, businesses, retail owners, cultural institutions, homeowners, and many others must all work together tenaciously to complete the Plan.

The projects are organized into broad categories, including Economic Projects, Public Infrastructure and Land Use.

Economic Projects

Primary Jobs

- Develop materials to market downtown development.
- Increase efforts to recruit businesses to downtown.
- Pursue more defense and military-related companies.
- Partner closely with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Provide the EDC sufficient downtown materials and encourage its participation in pitching downtown.
- Identify specific employers that would fit well within the downtown fabric and market downtown to them.
- Evaluate sensible downtown business clustering.

Retail, Restaurants and Entertainment

- Create a visual retail master plan with AIA.
- Encourage the redesign of retail and restaurant facades through DDA funding.
- Create a mentoring program that links successful

merchants with potential new retailers.

- Build pedestrian traffic by transforming vacant storefronts into displays and exhibits.
- Continue monitoring successful retailing concepts of other downtowns.
- Utilize recent downtown retail studies to shape targeted recruitment.
- Focus on unique independents as a primary draw; use chain stores selectively as anchors.
- Construct a downtown recruitment packet that advances the mix and adheres to identified downtown development strategies.
- Commission appropriate entertainment market studies as necessary.
- Help preserve and strengthen Kimball's Twin Peak as an independent venue.
- Promote development of a downtown baseball stadium, virtual performing arts center with flexible space, and museums.

Arts and Culture

- Use bold, permanent street banners to identify cultural districts (e.g. Near North End, South End, Middle Shooks Run, etc.).
- Utilize public art as a branding device.
- Consider expanding the presence and scope of public art to include unique creativity with multi-media and widely promote the program through pedestrian access to printed guides.
- Provide a weekly email calendar of downtown cultural events.
- Create a public market south of the Palmer Center.

- Employ special retail promotions including later hours integrations with arts and culture.
- Cross promote downtown with existing arts activities.
- Create a widely distributed facilities guide for all downtown venues.
- Renovate the City Auditorium.
- Provide partnerships to encourage arts organizations to locate downtown.
- Ensure that America the Beautiful and Acacia Parks are fully utilized for public events.
- Reconsider the design of the Palmer Center.
- Support the continued efforts of the Downtown Arts District Association.
- Create additional, unique festivals of varying sizes that promote downtown, draw eclectic crowds and are hosted in different downtown pocket areas.
- Use the METSO project as a prototype of incorporating arts/creativity into development. Draw on Lakewood’s Belmar project and expertise.
- Utilize DDA funding to support targeted non-profit arts groups in the downtown.

Marketing and Branding

- Develop a strong branding campaign.
- Communicate brand messages extensively and through multiple channels.
- Promote the importance of downtown relative to the City’s overall economic strength and quality of life.

Financing

- Devise creative public-private financing and partner opportunities to provide underwriting, gap financing and needed equity.
- Make tax increment financing (TIF) available throughout downtown.
- Establish a “patient fund” based on the McKuen Foundation model.

Residential

- Publish a Request for Proposals and distribute it to residential builders, as both a solicitation for projects and as an education device.
- Develop workforce attached housing to provide rental or for-sale housing to low-income households within the downtown area.

Technology and Sustainability

- Adopt the 2030 Challenge for downtown (see www.architecture2030.org).
- Provide and operate CO-GEN facilities downtown as a “green infrastructure”/economic development/location incentive.
- Price power pole leases to encourage above-ground internet-based communications.



Public Infrastructure

Parking

- Seek an outside consultant to study Business Improvement District (BID) parking assets, report findings, and suggest improvements.
- Present a five-year Capital Improvement Program with rate increase request to City Council and request funding in the budget.
- Improve and experiment with new systems such as free Saturdays or rate changes.
- Increase the availability of parking card kiosks and parking meters that take the parking card.
- Work toward resolution of parking concerns and potential conflicts with area nightlife.

Transportation

- Conduct a professional study to determine the impacts of multi-modal transportation on the downtown.
- Explore additional transportation options, such as light rail or commuter trains, and additional trails.
- Differentiate and prioritize pedestrian mobility and vehicle mobility; analyze and refine street-by-street patterns. Focus on east-west movement patterns.
- Make downtown more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly with lanes and medians, especially in gap areas.
- Advance the capability of the Downtown Shuttle.
- Secure funding for pedestrian improvement projects, including any alley improvements and pedestrian plaza construction.
- Conduct a streetcar feasibility study to identify potential routes, funding sources, and economic development impacts.

Utilities

- Provide education opportunities on downtown electric, wastewater, natural gas and water delivery systems.
- Provide opportunity for analysis and discussion of the Utilities 2006 Planning Forecast, pertinent City Code sections on utilities, resource and infrastructure planning, utility tariffs related to development charges, extension policies, and recovery agreements, and maps of the utility infrastructure for downtown.
- Develop environmental or “green” building incentives and benefits.
- Inventory the components of Greenfield and downtown projects to create cost differentials.
- Identify opportunities to offset downtown development costs and complete a policy recommendation and implementation strategy.
- Provide a downtown low temperature, hot water district heating system for new development, City and Utilities buildings and remodeling projects.
- Consolidate underground pipelines to allow for significant tree placement on downtown streets as a complementary energy saving green strategy.
- Encourage renewable energy and net metering, and provide expedited approval for such projects.
- Provide an excess revenue accounting system that rewards conservation and renewable energies as a “profit center.”
- Expand incentive programs for use of photovoltaic technology and wind power.
- Consider the Drake Power Plant for recycled heating.
- Demonstrate payback for investment in upgraded downtown infrastructure.
- Establish a fiscal impact basis.

Parks and Open Space

- Acquire the necessary land for completion of the Park Ring encircling downtown.
- Explore further protections and use of water (creeks) surrounding downtown.
- Create a connection between Antlers Park and Pikes Peak Avenue.
- Focus on Pioneers Square site improvements, including the addition of landscaping and sculpture.

Security and Cleanliness

- Fund a downtown “on the streets” ambassador program.
- Add more waste receptacles, power wash more often and add alley maintenance.
- Increase downtown lighting.
- Increase police presence downtown.

Land Use

Zoning

- Write and adopt a Form-Based Code that will require high-quality urban design in the high-rise Core area.
- Pursue revisions to the zoning code to reduce barriers to development and to bring the code in line with the recommendations of this plan.
- Create policies to encourage the use of rooftops in either public or private ways and to further the concept of sustainable or “green” development.
- Employ the recommendations of each district to guide development propositions in each area.
- Review the boundaries of the Parking Exempt District

and the sufficiency of downtown parking facilities.

- Amend the Landscape Code to address internal landscaping requirements for the downtown area.

Historic Preservation and Education

- Create opportunities for citizens to interact with the history of downtown.
- Increase the availability of the data on historic buildings.

Building and Development

- Pursue revisions to the building code to reduce barriers to development.



Conclusion

This plan intends to update the 1992 Downtown Action Plan and incorporate the outcomes from Imagine Downtown Plan's public outreach and workshop efforts. Significant efforts have been made to clarify goals, objectives and strategies that will continue to move downtown Colorado Springs toward the desired vibrancy, density and revitalization that is fitting of our City. This plan is intended to be forward thinking and flexible; it should spur investment; put more people on the street through residential growth; strengthen the role that downtown plays in the economic health of the region; provide diverse entertainment, arts and cultural opportunities; foster a sense of place on a pedestrian scale; preserve our rich history; promote sustainability; and create an urban environment that equals the unique and beautiful natural setting of Colorado Springs.



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Michael K. Maloney
Planning Assistant
City of Colorado Springs
Development Review Enterprise

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Introduction

This is the spirit and essence of this Downtown Plan: to energize and revitalize the historic city center

In 1871, General William Jackson Palmer laid out the City of Colorado Springs at the confluence of Monument and Fountain Creeks. His survey crew drove the first stake for Pikes Peak Avenue directly in line with the summit of Pikes Peak. He set in motion the aspirations, perseverance, and civic pride that would create the unique place we know call the Downtown. The community has since grown far beyond its original town site, but the Downtown remains the vibrant, urban center of Colorado Springs.

Since Palmer's day, there have been many private and public efforts to carry on and add to his legacy, each responding to the challenges and demands of a particular time. Many have begun with the recognition of Downtown's importance to the City's image, identity, and sense of place.

In our own time, the citizens of Colorado Springs have come to realize that a mature City's vitality requires a lively downtown. Just as we have been the beneficiaries of Palmer's legacy, so it is our responsibility to build upon it, to enrich the lives of future generations as ours have been enriched. Instead of living off the accomplishments of the past, we need to pass on a pragmatic vision that will carry us into the 21st century. This is the spirit and essence of this Downtown Plan: to energize and revitalize the historic city center.

Context

The City of Colorado Springs is located at the foot of Pikes Peak, 70 miles south of Denver. With a land area of approximately 194 square miles and a 2007 estimated population of 402,417, Colorado Springs is the State's largest city in terms of land and is second only to Denver in population. The town was established in 1872.

Although many towns and cities in Colorado were settled by miners and ranchers, Colorado Springs' appeal was climate and culture. By 1918 with both the Antlers and Broadmoor Hotels, Colorado Springs was renowned as a tourist destination. At an elevation of 6,035 feet, the area also became a health destination where thousands of people came to relieve their tuberculosis in the dry mountain air.

Colorado Springs is still known as a tourist destination due to its surrounding natural beauty and other features. Some of the more popular sightseeing in and around Colorado Springs includes the Garden of the Gods, Pikes Peak, the United States Olympic Training Center, Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, the United States Air Force Academy and The Broadmoor Hotel. The City also features 14,287 acres of dedicated public parkland and experiences an average of 247 days of sunshine per year, adding not only to its tourist charm, but also to its status as a great place to live.

Area military installations are a significant factor in the local economy. Five major military installations are located in the City: Fort Carson, Schriever and Peterson Air Force Bases, Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, and the United States Air Force Academy. Other large employers contributing to the economy include software/systems firms, manufacturing, information processing companies, and national nonprofit associations.

The City also has 7 school districts with over 161 elementary, middle, junior and senior high schools. Of those 161, over 50 are private, parochial, and charter schools. In addition, Colorado Springs has more than 28 colleges and universities with an estimated college population of 31,840 students, as well as 30 vocational and 2-year schools.

Colorado Springs has a Council-Manager form of government with a nine-member Council consisting of a popularly elected mayor, four Council members elected at large and four elected by district. The City is also the county seat for El Paso County and as such, many of the County offices are located in the downtown.

At just over 2 square miles in size, downtown serves not only the citizens of Colorado Springs but also serves as a regional center catering to nearby towns such as Payton, Black Forest, Widefield, Security, and Woodland Park.



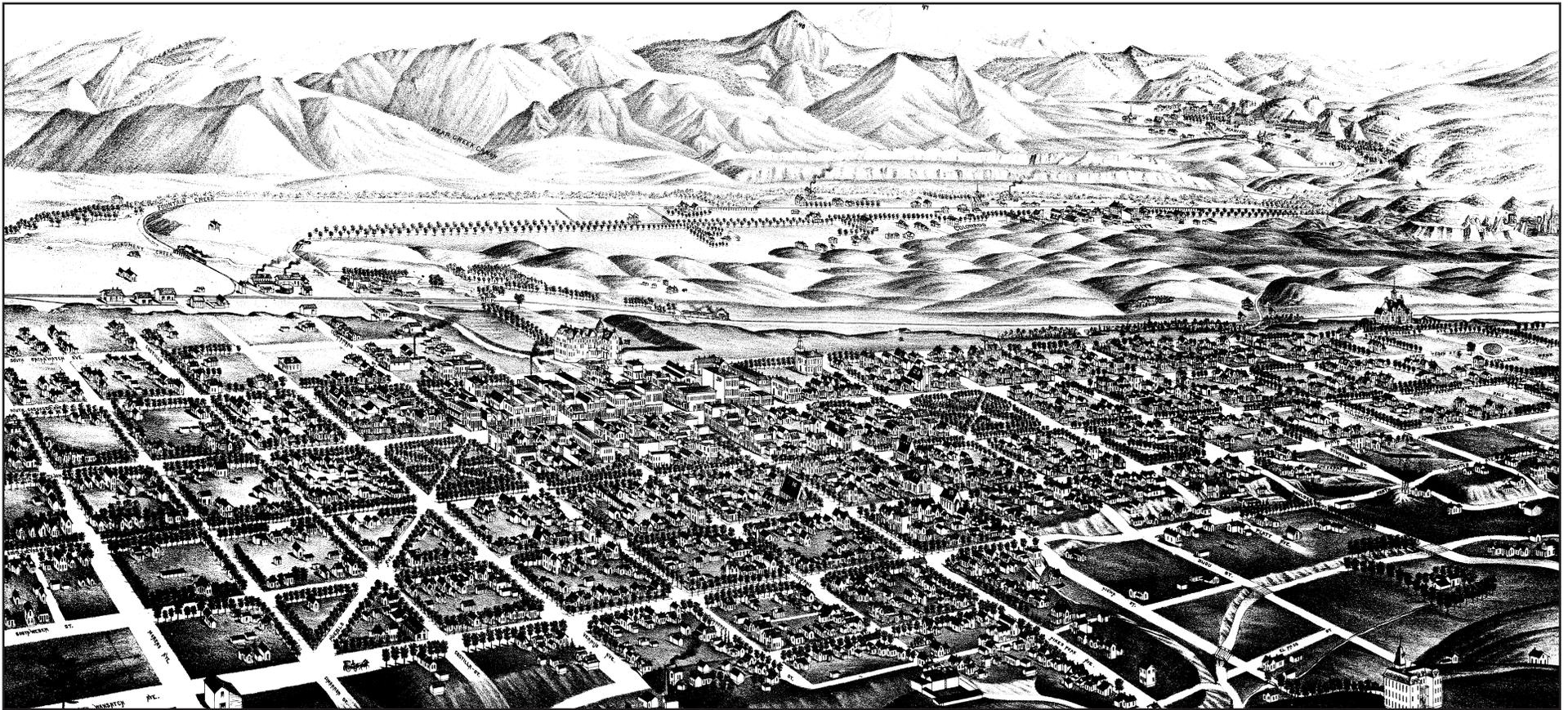
History and Chronology

- 1871 Palmer's crew drives the first stake at the intersection of Pikes Peak and Cascade Avenues.
- 1871 The City's first parks, Acacia Place and Alamo Square (now Pioneers Square), are deeded to the public with the plat filing of the original townsite.
- 1872 The region's first successful weekly paper, *The Out West*, begins publication.
- 1874 Colorado College is founded by the Colorado Council of Congregational Churches on land donated by the Colorado Springs Company.
- 1883 The first Antlers Hotel, "The Finest Resort Hotel in the Mountain West," is opened.
- 1893 Katherine Lee Bates, while staying at the Antlers Hotel, pens "America the Beautiful" upon descending from Pikes Peak.
- 1898 The Great Fire levels the business area, including the first Antlers Hotel.
- 1899 Antlers Park is deeded to the public.
- 1901 Winfield Scott Stratton, mine owner and philanthropist, purchases a street car company and creates a 41-mile transit system costing a nickel per ride.
- 1901 The second Antlers Hotel is opened.
- 1903 The El Paso County Courthouse opens its new building in Alamo Square.
- 1905 The Colorado Springs Public Library opens.
- 1907 Monument Valley Park, donated by General Palmer, is opened.
- 1912 Charles Mulford Robinson prepares "Colorado Springs, the City Beautiful," the first city-wide plan.
- 1914 Hibbard's Department Store opens its new building.
- 1916 The drivers in the first Pikes Peak Auto Hill Climb race to the top of the 14,110 foot mountain.
- 1917 Huerfano Avenue is renamed Colorado Avenue with the annexation of Colorado City to Colorado Springs.
- 1918 The new Broadmoor Hotel is opened by Spencer Penrose.
- 1923 Electric traffic lights are installed at major downtown intersections.
- 1932 The last electric trolley car is removed from City streets.
- 1936 The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, displaying an international award-winning design, is opened to the community for the practice of all fine arts.
- 1940 The Colorado Springs High School's (Palmer High School) new building opens.
- 1941 The U.S. Army accepts 35,000 acres from the City for establishing a training base to be called Camp Carson, in honor of Kit Carson.
- 1949 The Pikes Peak Range Riders begin their annual ride around Pikes Peak.
- 1958 The first cadets begin studies at the U.S. Air Force Academy.
- 1960 Interstate-25 is opened along Downtown's western boundary.
- 1965 The second Antlers Hotel is demolished.
- 1967 The Chase Stone Center, a complex including the third Antlers Hotel, the Holly Sugar Building, and retail shops is finished.
- 1970 The Alamo Plaza Urban Renewal Project is approved by City Council.
- 1971 The first Downtown Plan is issued.
- 1972 The City's first regional shopping center, The Citadel, opens.
- 1978 The Olympic Training Center moves its headquarters to Colorado Springs.
- 1979 The Pioneers Museum opens in the renovated El Paso County Courthouse after the Pikes Peak Landmarks Council lobbies for the building's preservation.
- 1990 The Palmer Center, a renovation of the Chase Stone Center, is opened.
- 1992 The Downtown Action Plan is completed.
- 1992 Downtown Action Plan adopted by City Council
- 1994 Partnership between local government and citizens develops the Master Plan for the Pikes Peak
- 1997 Founding of Cottonwood Arts School
- 1997 Founding of Downtown Partnership
- 1997 Founding of Art on the Street
- 1998 Community approves \$11 million bond for America the Beautiful Park
- 1999 One City Centre constructed on the northeast corner of Nevada Avenue and Colorado Avenue.
- 2000 Lowell a 58-acre mixed-use urban renewal project in the southeast corner of downtown is underway
- 2000 Conover Building on the northwest corner of Colorado Avenue and Weber Street
- 2000 The renovation of the Carnegie Library at the Penrose Public Library
- 2001 South Tower of the Plaza of the Rockies constructed on Tejon
- 2001 Uncle Wilber Fountain opens in Acacia Park
- 2001 Daniels Lofts – first downtown loft conversion
- 2002 The Greenway, a continuous 35 mile trail from Palmer Park to Fountain completed

2003 City Walk, located on Kiowa Street just east of Wahsatch, renovates senior housing to create a modern residential condominium loft tower
2004 Cottonwood Arts School Relocation
2004 America the Beautiful Park Opens
2006 FAC Modern opens in Plaza of the Rockies
2006 Founding of the free downtown shuttle
2006 Imagine Downtown design charrettes

2006 Giddings I Lofts – second downtown loft conversion
2007 The FAC unveiled its \$28.4 million 48,000 square foot renovation and expansion
2007 Penrose Fountain unveiled at America the Beautiful Park
2007 Pikes Peak Center Renovation
2007 Founding of Downtown Development Authority

2008 Two-way Tejon
2008 Colorado College opens the Cornerstone Arts Building



Background

It is not often that a large group of strong community leaders with diverse interests goes into a room and emerges with a clear and common vision

The first Downtown Plan was issued in 1971 and reflected the community's desire to sustain the area's prominence while suburban sprawl took the city center farther and farther away from the original town site. The plan did not, however, serve as a rallying point for community decisions on important public improvements in the downtown, despite the completion of several of the urban renewal projects outlined in its pages. Further, the 1971 plan did not provide a context within which individual development decisions could be evaluated.

During the 1980s, the need for a more coordinated, dynamic approach to developing and improving Downtown Colorado Springs was raised repeatedly by citizens and elected officials in the community. This public concern sprang from several sources, and worries included economic vitality, the physical quality of both public and private realms, and the need for new tools for public policy and community participation to aid in achieving downtown goals.

The result of this realization was the Downtown Action Plan (DAP), formally adopted as the master plan for downtown in 1992. The DAP organized the downtown into distinct districts and set forth specific economic and land use recommendations for each of those areas.

In the 16 years since the DAP was adopted, many of its major objectives have been met. The look and feel of downtown has been energized; the streetscape is cleaner, more pedestrian friendly and punctuated by more public art, trees, flowers and attractive and functional signage. Educational and cultural offerings have increased, and the area's attraction as a premier address for business has held. Downtown Colorado Springs today is bustling with energy and activity—a flurry of ongoing construction amidst the constant hum of

automobile traffic, the pleasant blur of pedestrian movement and the vibration of commerce in action.

In 2005, a need for an updated strategic downtown plan was recognized. While interest and momentum in the downtown was awakening, there were also signs of vulnerabilities that were not foreseen by the Downtown Action Plan, due to population gain, changes in downtown revitalization strategies and best practices, restaurant and bar growth over retail growth, and decreases in sales tax collection within the downtown area.

With such trends in mind and observing the sunset years of the 1992 DAP, the Downtown Partnership of Colorado Springs promoted and facilitated the 2 year community-wide initiative of the known as "Imagine Downtown."

It is not often that a large group of strong community leaders with diverse interests goes into a room and emerges with a clear and common vision. Yet that is precisely what happened during the 18-month Imagine Downtown process, when business and civic leaders, government officials and staff, and a wide mix of other downtown stakeholders gathered several times to imagine a thriving future for downtown Colorado Springs.

Over a series of five daylong planning sessions, nearly 400 individuals from the community participated in workshops and worked on committees and task forces for the purpose of creating a common vision contained in the Imagine Downtown Plan. The volunteers studied similar markets, noting the lessons of both failures and successes, plied through recent studies, analyzed downtown data, considered the infrastructure necessary to support the urban hub they desired, and identified the need for a driving force to keep an eye on a common vision and to help bridge gaps in vital

financing. In less than 18 months, this collective effort resulted in the Imagine Downtown Plan (IDP).

The IDP not only set a vision for the future of downtown but also served as the “plan of development” for the Colorado Springs Downtown Development Authority. However, the IDP did not meet the legal definition of a land use master plan.

To address this issue an effort was begun in 2007 to incorporate the goals of Imagine Downtown into a land use master plan. For several months, a group of downtown stakeholders met to formulate master plan specifics. They talked through major policy issues and identified additional goals and recommendations beyond those contained in the Imagine Downtown Plan.



This new plan is the product of the stakeholder effort. Simply named The Imagine Downtown Master Plan, it is founded in the vision of the Imagine Downtown Plan; it builds upon the energy and ideals that stemmed from that plan and planning process. Further, it contains the work of several issue-specific Imagine Downtown committees; it incorporates revisions to the district framework outlined in the DAP with the street corridor framework of the IDP; it is drafted to be consistent with complementary plans such as the Parks, Recreation and Trails Master Plan, the Intermodal Transportation Plan, individual neighborhood plans, and drainage basin planning studies; and it contemplates both economic and land use planning issues. Finally, this plan advances the Vision, Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Plan Goals

The Vision: Downtown is an image and symbol of the region and has an opportunity to reaffirm it's identity as the epicenter and economic engine of the city, a desirable place to live, work, learn and play, and a point of public and private investment.

of the City's Comprehensive Plan, while also including includes the necessary elements to act as the updated land use master plan for the downtown planning area.

This updated master plan provides the framework and guidelines to shepherd downtown into a bright and promising future.

In its broadest sense, the goal of this plan is to implement the vision stated above. That is to reaffirm the key role that downtown plays in the City's overall quality of life. To achieve the desired vision, this plan must be forward thinking and dynamic to account for future market trends. The success of downtown depends in part on its ability to be proactive and capitalize on the increased focus to revitalize and improve downtown. Colorado Springs is blessed with highly desirable climate, amazing physical features, armed forces presence, multiple institutions of higher learning, and much, much more. These and other characteristics have contributed to making Colorado Springs the #1 place to live according to Money Magazine (Best Big City, 2006). While the downtown has a lot to offer, it hasn't reached its full potential. The primary goal of this plan is to build upon the downtown's past success to create the regional hub of commerce, culture, and energy that the area is hoping for.

Revitalizing downtown will not necessarily proceed in an easily discernible, linear fashion, but rather, will often be recognizable in multiple efforts occurring simultaneously and synergistically. Private economic efforts will work alongside public community efforts and every endeavor will operate in concert to present downtown with a bright and prosperous future.

As participants of the Imagine Downtown process sifted through issues and began to find solutions to affect change in the downtown, eleven key goals were realized. The goals are as follows:

A Focus on Community Activity and A Place to Live

Residential Development

Encourage the construction and/or conversion of new housing units, particularly in the downtown core, to establish sustainable neighborhoods with diversity in housing types, including both work-force and housing.

Economic Strength and Vitality

Jobs

Focus on primary job development, particularly in export employment (manufacturing, research and development, corporate headquarters, tourism and conventions, etc.). Increase the number of workers in the downtown and support regional and local-serving workers, as well.

Retail Development

Recruit and grow downtown retail to meet the demand generated by employee, resident and visitor populations. Recruitments include local-serving businesses (groceries, drugstores, dry cleaners, etc.), lower-priced retail, food- and arts-oriented businesses, and

high-end retail and restaurants to create an urban entertainment zone. A focus on unique, independent business is preferable, with careful consideration in selecting chain stores as anchors. Retain downtown's existing and long-standing businesses and institutions to strengthen City resident's sense of place and history for downtown shopping.

A Center for the Region

Entertainment, Arts, and Culture

Encourage the establishment of new and improved arts and cultural opportunities downtown to attract more downtown patrons, to create a unique and fresh identity for downtown, and to give new life to established organizations and older amenities. Additionally, focus on encouraging unique cultural and sports facilities, events and activities to build wide-appeal assets downtown that draw from the metro area and beyond.

An Image and a Symbol, A Good Neighbor, and An Example for Community Design

Environmental Improvements

Develop unique street character block by block, particularly off the Tejon Street corridor. Revitalize the concept of the Park Ring around downtown. Focus on safety in the urban realm.

Marketing and Branding

Develop an effective marketing and branding campaign for downtown Colorado Springs.

A Place for Pedestrians and an Ease of Movement

Transportation and Pedestrian Orientation

Ensure efficient transit into and out of downtown while also striving for pedestrian orientation. Provide for multiple modes of transportation. Incorporate additional pedestrian-friendly design and streetscape improvements including wider sidewalks, more trees, art and architectural texture. Construct a pedestrian bridge at the end of Vermijo, over the railroad tracks and into America the Beautiful Park. Increase downtown public transit (e.g. light rail to connect with Front Range commuter rail, continued use and expansion of the downtown shuttle).

Parking

Provide a sufficient supply and form of parking to meet urban character goals. Explore parking asset management to provide additional parking and user-friendly parking and to provide a financial tool for residential and mixed-use development.

Downtown for Future Generations

Technology and Sustainability

Encourage "green" components in development projects. Influence state-of-the-art technology in downtown infrastructure.

An Open, Natural Setting

Urban Design and Land Use

Capitalize on the natural setting by creating accessible connections to the surrounding environment. Utilize innovative design principles to help preserve mountain views from public spaces. Achieve a

high-density, pedestrian-oriented downtown that creates an iconic skyline, incorporates vertical mixed use with structured, on-site or underground parking, and concentrates products, activities and projects into small spaces. Respect downtown's edges by managing bulk, height, and scale of development and focusing on quality transitions from low-density to high-density.

Links to the Past

Historic Preservation

Link past railroad uses to future commuter rail. Preserve the historic assets in and around downtown for the future; proactively use historic preservation tools, government support, and incentives for preservation.

Each goal can be further refined into specific objectives, challenges and opportunities, and suggested actions. These refinements appear below.

Residential

Primary Objectives

Identify needed housing types, price points, and tools to encourage downtown housing production.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Higher land construction costs downtown;
- Need for a higher-density development market; and
- Need for a cohesive, phased residential development plan.

Suggested Actions

- Prepare a hypothetical pro forma to show prospective

developers there is an opportunity to build profitably downtown.

- Focus on midpoint priced housing on the edges of downtown and in the Core.
- Collaborate with cadre of affordable housing experts and agencies to ensure all price points are represented in downtown housing.
- Encourage rehabilitation of downtown homes, where practicable.

Primary Jobs

Primary Objectives

Encourage the development of more export employment downtown (e.g. manufacturing, research and development, corporate headquarters, tourism and convention businesses that export goods and services to other metro areas).

Challenges and Opportunities

- Higher downtown lease rates.
- Need for office space for 200 to 600-plus employee companies.
- Need for incentives to increase building occupancies.
- Misperceptions about the availability of parking.
- Need for economic incentives needed to compete with other areas.

Suggested Actions

- Meet with Department of Defense contractors and developers to discuss technology campuses, additional

buildings, building specifications.

- Create a value proposition to address issues and sell downtown.
- Utilize the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to provide financial incentives.

Retail, Restaurants and Entertainment

Primary Objectives

Increase retail, entertainment and restaurants downtown by focusing on current status, opportunities, challenges and resources available, including background studies prepared by Greg Stoffel in 2003 and Melinda Benson in 2004 which can be found on the Downtown Partnership's website.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for more residential mass downtown.
- Ease of pedestrian movement.
- Rent and parking costs.
- Need for national chain stores.
- Effects of concentrated nightclubs and bars.
- Need for a "center of gravity" such as a ball park.
- Need for a cohesive retail plan—each developer has an individual plan.
- Vacant storefronts create the misperception that downtown is struggling.

Suggested Actions

- Develop a program to market downtown to potential retail, using the DDA as funding source.
- Partner with AIA to create a visual retail master plan

showing different retail zones.

- Address concerns relating to locations of bars, restaurants and retail stores.
- Provide good linkages between housing, shopping, offices and recreational spaces.
- Focus on immediate needs in the short-term.
- Create more interactive public downtown areas.
- Provide resources to help the broker community sell the downtown.
- Create an urban downtown lifestyle appealing to specific demographics, including younger people and



- baby boomers.
- Focus on unique independent retailers in a concentrated area.
- Explore using vacant lots near major arteries to locate local-serving retail.

Arts and Culture

Primary Objectives

Encourage the establishment of more and improved arts and cultural opportunities downtown to attract more downtown patrons, create a unique and fresh identity for downtown, and give new life to established organizations and older amenities.

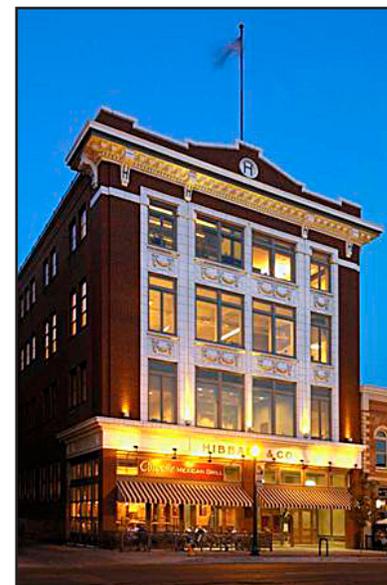
Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for adequate funding.
- Need to balance artistic freedom with public acceptance.
- Need for adequate publicity and communication.
- Need for leadership and staff.

Suggested Actions

- Use the arts to “brand” downtown and draw more people into the area.
- Improve and enhance existing cultural venues.
- Market appropriate festivals as a downtown draw.

- Incorporate art and creativity into all new downtown development and redevelopment.
- Create the means to sustain nonprofit arts groups.
- Incorporate natural and environmentally inclined art.



Environmental Improvements

Primary Objectives

Develop unique street character block by block, revitalize the concept of the Park Ring, focus on safety in the urban realm.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for comprehensive inventory and analysis of existing and preferred street characteristics.
- Acquisition of trail right-of-way or easements for the full Park Ring is needed.
- Prevalence of bars and nightclubs downtown has resulted in the public perception that downtown is not safe at night.

Suggested Actions

- Develop form-based code for the downtown area.
- Work with property owners to obtain trail rights over the missing pieces of Park Ring.
- Increase public safety by increasing the number of “eyes on the street” through more downtown residential units.
- Develop policing mechanisms specific to downtown.

Marketing/Branding

Primary Objectives

Develop an effective marketing and branding campaign for downtown Colorado Springs.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Need for diverse products and consumers.
- Products constantly develop and change.
- Limited funding.

Suggested Actions

- Conduct strategy and production meetings with downtown constituencies.
- Develop lines of strong communication.
- Coordinate with the Visitors Bureau, the City of Colorado Springs and Colorado College to market downtown.
- Utilize and employ DDA funding.

Transportation and Pedestrian Orientation

Primary Objectives

Balance efficient vehicular movement with pedestrian orientation,

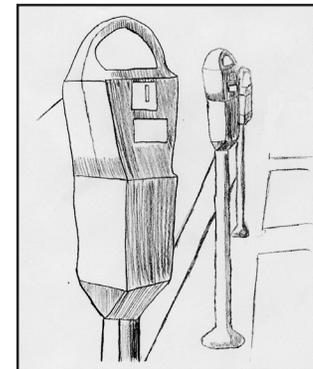
develop multi-modal options, improve the pedestrian experience downtown, create a pedestrian connection to America the Beautiful Park, increase public transportation opportunities.

Challenges and Opportunities

- When possible, public space improvements should be implemented in a comprehensive manner to avoid a fragmented pedestrian environment.
- Physical and legal issues associated with creating a new pedestrian connection to America the Beautiful Park may be significant.
- Some alternative transportation opportunities (i.e. light rail) require a critical mass of users to be successful.

Suggested Actions

- Utilize BID and TIF funds for public space improvements to improve the pedestrian experience downtown.
- Explore opportunities to finance multi-modal and public transportation improvements.
- Study unique and attractive public transportation opportunities such as street cars or trolleys.
- Improve and enhance the existing wayfinding system.



Parking

Primary Objectives

Provide a sufficient supply of parking while simultaneously meeting urban character goals.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Existing parking requirements outside of the parking exempt district are difficult to meet in an urban environment.
- There is little ability to increase on-street parking opportunities.
- An increase in overall density in the downtown will demand an increase in parking supply.

Suggested Actions

- Explore parking asset management.
- Partner with the Parking Enterprise to share costs of new public/private parking structures.
- Complete a comprehensive parking supply/demand analysis to determine where parking needs are the greatest.
- Capitalize on the role that on-street parking plays in creating a buffer between vehicular travel lanes and pedestrian walkways.
- Study on street parking configuration options at the core's edges to maximize the number of stalls available while also calming traffic and improving the pedestrian experience.
- Provide a range of payment options for structured and non-structured parking.

Technology/Sustainability

Primary Objectives

Encourage “green” components in development projects; reduce the carbon footprint of downtown; influence state-of-the-art technology in downtown infrastructure.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Education and awareness.
- Technical knowledge.
- Need for implementation partnerships.

Suggested Actions

- Amend the Electric Integrated Resource Plan to focus more on sustainable development.
- Speed up Utility plan approval for green and high performance buildings.
- Use native landscaping and construction materials which are appropriate to the local climate

Urban Design and Land Use

Primary Objectives

Achieve a high-density, pedestrian-oriented downtown that creates an iconic skyline, incorporates vertical mixed use with structured, on-site or underground parking, and concentrates products, activities and projects into small spaces.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Market influences on downtown investment are difficult to predict and impossible to control.
- Transitions from low-density to high-density uses often occur over very short distances.

Suggested Actions

- Incorporate innovative design principles to help preserve mountain views from public spaces.
- Develop form-based zoning for the downtown area that will provide more flexibility for a wide range of mixed uses while simultaneously requiring a high-quality and predictable urban form.
- Respect downtown's edges by managing bulk, height, and scale of development and focusing on quality transitions from low-density to high-density.
- Work closely with Downtown Stakeholders to understand and respond to market demands and constraints.

Historic Preservation

Primary Objectives

Link past railroad uses to future commuter rail. Preserve the historic assets in and around downtown for the future; proactively use historic preservation tools, government support, and incentives for preservation.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Commuter rail must have market demand to support the public investment in the necessary infrastructure.
- Some historic assets are in need of significant repairs and investment.

Suggested Actions

- Increasing density and residential presence downtown may increase demand for commuter rail services.

- Evaluate historic value and condition of historic assets in redevelopment areas.
- Provide public incentives or assistance to repair and maintain notable historic assets.



Land Use Framework

The Land Use Framework is a diagram that defines the physical structure of downtown. It arranges the streets, open spaces, and activity centers into a logical pattern based on downtown's landmarks, patterns of use and original layout.

Every city starts out with a plan or diagram: a main street, a market area, perhaps a park. Over time, the careful thought that went into creating the original layout becomes obscured by unanticipated development, the need to accommodate automobiles, or the lack of a strong cultural legacy. In downtown Colorado Springs, that sense of the original plan is still there and waiting to be revived to acknowledge the needs of the 2000s and beyond.

The early plans of Colorado Springs' original town site were carefully laid out so that Pikes Peak Avenue would line up with the majestic view of the mountain that dominates the landscape. These plans included the addition of three parks—Antlers, Acacia, and Pioneers Square (formerly Alamo Square)—to anchor the edges of the town site. The main street and the commercial and office district were carefully planned to be the center of the community. Surrounding neighborhoods, schools, and churches all used downtown as the center for their business, social and cultural activities.

This plan draws on strengths of these original ideas, articulates them in contemporary terms, and defines a new Framework to direct and focus growth and development in downtown.

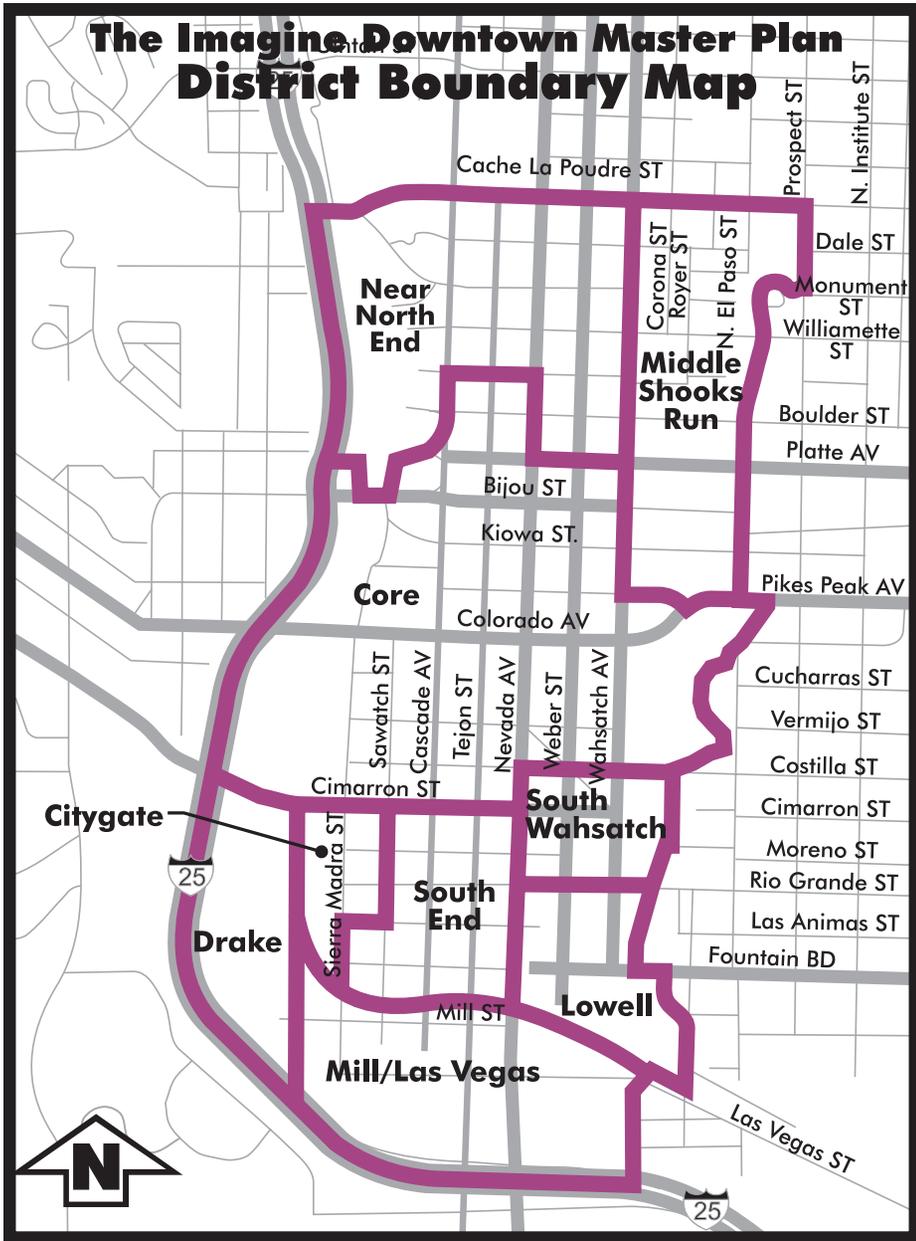
This Framework consists of several Districts combined with building height sub-areas, transition areas, street corridors, and Urban Renewal Areas, it concludes with a comprehensive future land use map.

The Districts

The districts consist of a Core and several unique neighborhoods. Eight distinct areas surround the Core in the greater downtown area:

- Near North End
- Middle Shooks Run
- South End
- Las Vegas
- Drake
- Citygate
- South Wahsatch
- Lowell

Each district has its own, unique composition and atmosphere and combines with the Core to create the distinctive character of the greater downtown area.



The Street Corridors

While Tejon Street has long been the center of activity, early plans of Colorado Springs were laid out so that Pikes Peak Avenue would line up with a view of the mountains. Over time, the relationship of Pikes Peak Avenue to the mountains eroded along with its historical link to early Colorado Springs plans. The importance of Pikes Peak Avenue to downtown also declined.

By identifying Pikes Peak Avenue and Tejon Street as “spines”, the plan framework symbolically identifies the importance of the two streets to downtown. While it does not possess the activity levels of Tejon Street today, development along Pikes Peak Avenue from depot to depot should be reflective of a desire to develop more street level activity.

One noteworthy characteristic of nearly all of Downtowns major streets is the presence of extremely wide right-of-ways. At either 100’ or 140’ these right-of-ways far exceed those in most downtowns. This situation should be seen as an opportunity to provide a more open feeling for the pedestrian as well as to explore unique development proposals which capitalize on unnecessary right-of-way area.

Street character has been defined for streets throughout the downtown. The definitions used in this plan are intended to reflect what exists and what may be possible. Streets may exhibit qualities of one or more street types but all streets should serve the pedestrian.

Non-Designated / Standard Streets

Several downtown streets are well established and will not change significantly over the planning period, or are not critical downtown corridors. Standard local street architecture is normally appropriate for these non-designated streets.

Pedestrian Streets

Two types of pedestrian streets are defined. Pedestrian Spines serve as major pedestrian corridors or attractors, with strong pedestrian activities and streetscape amenities. These corridors are characterized by wide sidewalks, street cafes, adjacent retail and entertainment activities, patterned street crossings, low level pedestrian lighting, ornamental landscaping, pedestrian benches, public art, etc. Examples include sections of Pikes Peak Avenue and Tejon Street in its entirety.

Pedestrian Streets can support considerable commercial activities and residential uses, but generally have less concentrated retail and entertainment activities in comparison to primary pedestrian streets. Examples of pedestrian streets include sections of Bijou Street, Kiowa Street, and Vermijo Avenue and Pueblo Avenue, and Weber Street in their entireties.

Gateways

These streets serve as key entryways into the downtown. The entryways into downtown should be designed to impart a sense of arrival and departure. Entry signage will help provide a sense of arrival and place. Example gateway areas within the plan boundary include the north ends of Nevada Avenue and Tejon St.; the east ends of Pikes Peak Avenue, Platte Avenue and Fountain Boulevard; the west ends of Cimarron Street, Colorado Avenue, and Bijou Street; and the south end of Nevada Avenue.

Boulevard Streets

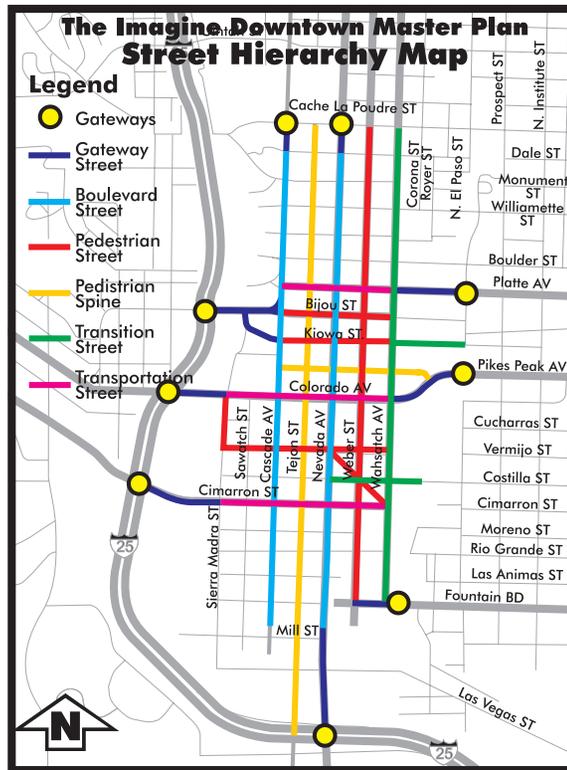
These are wide, stately streets, often servicing larger buildings and cultural, civic and institutional uses. Wide sidewalks and landscaped center medians are typical. Examples include sections of Cascade Avenue and Nevada Avenue.

Transportation Streets

These streets primarily provide for the movement of traffic to and through the downtown, or provide direct connection to the Interstate. Efficient traffic flow, capacity and signal timing is of primary importance. However, the importance of pedestrian, transit and bicycle mobility is also critical. Examples include sections of Platte Avenue, Colorado Avenue, and Cimarron Street.

Transition Streets

These are the transition segments, transitioning and linking areas of varying land uses, scale and character. Examples include sections of Bijou Street, Kiowa Street, Costilla Street and the entirety of Wahsatch Avenue.

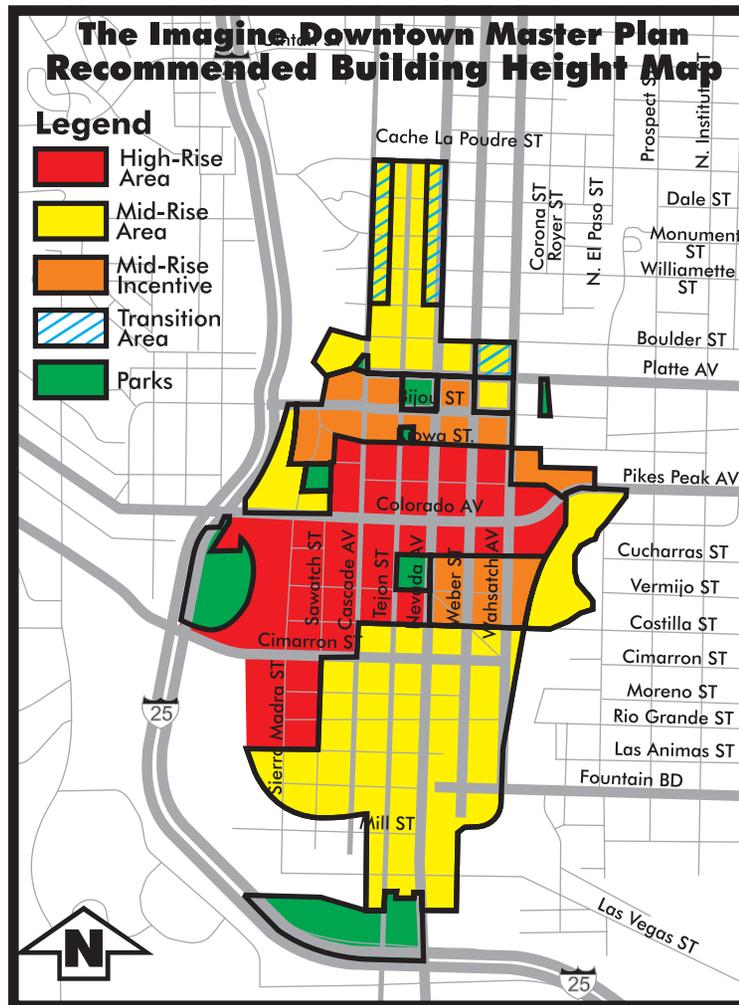


	Non-Designated	Pedestrian Spines	Pedestrian Streets	Entry or Gateway Streets	Boulevard or Ceremonial Streets	Transportation Streets	Transition Streets
Streetscape Elements							
Street Trees	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Landscaped Medians				E	◆	E	
Ornamental Planters		◆	◆				
Cluster Landscaping / Massing / Mix of Inorganic Materials		E	E	◆	◆	◆	E
Transit Shelters and/or Turn-outs		E	E	E	E	E	E
Information Kiosks		E			E	X	
Public Art Displays		E		E	E		
Benches		E	E	E	E		
Bicycle Storage Racks or Facilities		E	E	E	E		E
Pedestrian Lighting		◆	◆	E	E		E
Ornamental Overhead Streetlights		◆	◆	E	E		E
Underground Utilities	E	◆	◆	E	E	E	E
Use of Pavers		◆	E	E	E		
Pedestrian Circulation							
Pedestrian Plazas		E	E		E		
Pedestrian Connectivity / Public Space Connections		◆	E	E	E		E
Wide Sidewalks		◆	E	E	E		E
Street Cafes / Tables		E	E				
All-Way Pedestrian Crossings / Pavement Design		E			E	X	E
Traffic Calming Design / Pedestrian Bump-Outs		◆	E	E	E	E	E
Designated Bicycle Lanes		E	E	E	◆		E
Alley Pedestrian Improvements		◆	E	E	E		
Public Transit / Downtown Circulator Facilities		E	E	E	E	E	E
Parking Elements							
On-Street Diagonal Parking		E		X	X	X	
On-Street Parallel Parking	E	E	E				E
On-Street Median Parking		E				X	
Surface Parking Lots (Behind Buildings)	E	◆	◆	E	E	E	E
Parking Structures (with First Level Retail)		◆	E				
Parking Structures (100% Parking)		X					
Signage							
Uniform Public and Directional Signage	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	E
Pedestrian Oriented Private Signage		◆	◆	E	E		E
Auto Oriented Private Signage		X	X				
Gateway or Downtown Entry Signage				◆	E	E	
Form and Building Scale							
Height to Street Width Pedestrian Scale (Building Step-Backs)		◆	◆	E	◆		◆
Adherence to Build-to Lines	E	◆	◆	E	E	E	E
Transparency / Glazing Requirements (Street Level Windows)		◆	E				E
Enhanced Architecture / Building Form / Architectural Detail		◆	E	E	◆		E
Identified Palette of Acceptable Façade Materials / Façade Treatment		◆	E	E			E
Pedestrian Well-Defined Entry Considerations		◆	◆	◆	◆		
Skyline / Roof and Parapet Design Considerations		◆	◆	◆	◆		E
Sun and Shadow Considerations	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	E
Historic Preservation Considerations / Conversion Guidelines		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Public View Preservation Considerations	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Neighborhood and Land Use Transitioning / Transition Considerations		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Listing of Discouraged or Prohibited Land Uses	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆

◆ = Required E = Encouraged X = Prohibited

Building Height Sub-Areas

Within the plan, there are four distinct building height areas: High-Rise, Mid-Rise with Incentives, Mid-Rise and those defined by the current zone districts.



High-Rise Areas

High-Rise areas are shown on the “Building Height Recommendations” map in red. These areas are where dense, vertical, urban development should occur. These areas will not limit building height but will require new development to conform to new form-based zoning provisions.

Mid-Rise with Incentive Areas

Mid-Rise with Incentive areas are shown on the map in orange. Building height is limited to 85’ in these areas unless some public incentive is proposed as part of the development. Maximum building height with incentives in this area will not exceed 140’. Mixed-Use (MU) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning will be encouraged in these areas in order to provide the mix of uses described in this plan and to exceed the building height limits included in the existing base zone for much of this area. This plan intends to provide extra height in exchange for public amenities that are above and beyond those required of normal development proposals. Possible incentives include:

- Exterior public plazas, observation decks and mid-block pedestrian connections or arcades
- Pedestrian alley improvements
- Interior public meeting space
- Public art and cultural amenities
- Daycare/child care facilities
- Public transit facilities
- Market rate housing units
- Below market rate housing units
- Green building design

Mid-Rise areas

Mid-Rise areas are shown in yellow. These areas are designed to step-down the intensity from the dense urban core to the surrounding neighborhoods. Building height in these areas shall not exceed 85'. Mixed-Use (MU) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning will be required in these areas as well.

The remaining areas in the downtown planning area shall be defined by the current base-zone. Building height will be regulated through existing development standards, found in the City Zoning Code. Where sensible, redevelopment in these areas is encouraged to follow Mixed-Use (MU) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning.

Transition Areas

Within the downtown planning area, there are three identified transition areas. Two of these transition areas are half-block sections in the Near North End Neighborhood, where the Tejon Corridor abuts residential neighborhoods and one area lies within the Core itself and transitions from Mid-Rise building heights to residential uses along the border of the Middle Shooks Run neighborhood.

In these areas, great attention should be paid to the compatibility of proposed and existing uses. These areas should facilitate transition; more-intense uses should fade into less-intense uses using careful site design and review considerations.

Urban Renewal Areas

Urban renewal areas are shown on the plan framework to impart where large scale redevelopment is anticipated in downtown. Although these areas today are made up of a mix of uses including

light industrial, warehousing, and vacant land, however, in the near future redevelopment will transform the City's Urban Renewal Areas to thriving urban centers. The mission of the Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority is "to encourage private investment and reinvestment which restores targeted areas with strong community benefits while strengthening the tax base of the whole city. Through partnerships and collaboration, we advance sound urban planning and design, fiscal prudence and cultural sensitivity. Our objective is to facilitate development of balanced, sustainable environments where people, live, work and come together as a community." The adoption of the Southwest Urban Renewal Plan in 2001 and the City Gate Urban Renewal Plan in 2007 have enabled a significant portion of the Downtown Master Plan area to qualify for state statute-based tools that contribute to public investment related to renovation of deteriorating properties.

While separate from the Urban Renewal Designation, it should be noted that in 2001 the Mill St. area (bound by Tejon, Las Vegas, Conejos, and Fountain) was designated as a Neighborhood Strategy Area. The associated Neighborhood Improvement Plan allows the City to utilize federal block grant funds to implement public improvements that are described within the Plan. Taken together, there are a number of existing and potential future opportunities to leverage state and federal monies to revitalize the downtown area.

Future Land Use Map

The last component of this Plan's Land Use Framework is a future land use map. This map reflects the objectives of each individual district, and the direction from the street type and building height maps. It presents a generalized, yet more specific than the City's Comprehensive Plan 2020 Land Use, map to guide the future land uses in the Master Plan area. The map delineates six generalized land use categories.

Activity Center

By definition, an activity center is a mixed use center that integrates a range of complementary and mutually supporting uses and activities. The area is to be pedestrian oriented and should include good connections and transitions to surrounding areas. While a wide range of uses are expected, residences are to be considered a critical element.

Mixed Use

Similar to activity center, but with a slightly decreased intensity and density, these areas are intended to include a range of individual uses, again stressing the presence of urban residential use. Mixed use areas are to be designed to be pedestrian friendly and serve as transitions to the surrounding areas.

Institutional

A small, but important, land use category, the institutional area is intended to be utilized by Colorado College for the fulfillment of their educational and cultural mission.

General Residential

These areas of the master plan are primarily intended to serve a range of residential use types and densities. However, a select number of non-residential uses may also be acceptable in General Residential areas, these include: low-impact shops and services, small offices, parks and recreation areas, religious institutions, and schools.

Industrial

the only area within this Plan mapped as industrial is the Drake district. This area is currently used for the production of electricity. While this plan describes the desire to improve the compatibility of this area with the adjacent neighborhoods, the park ring and downtown as a whole, it is expected to remain as an industrial use for the near future.

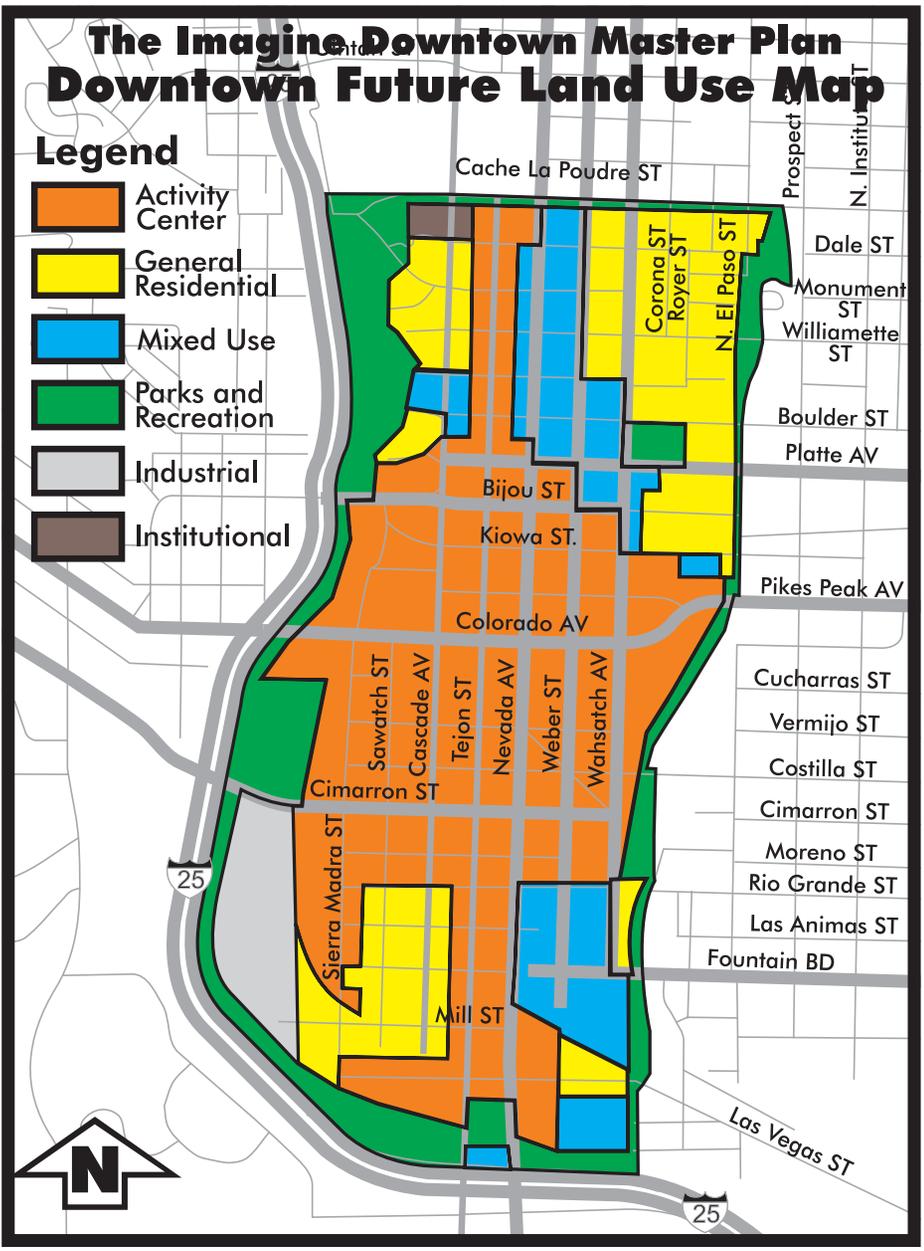
Parks and Recreation

Areas mapped as parks and recreation include existing and planned trail corridors, larger parks and open spaces. With only one small exception (Palmer play fields), the Park Ring makes up the entirety of this land use category. This area serves the important roles of providing urban open spaces, recreational opportunities for downtown residents, and the provision of non-motorized connectivity.

The Imagine Downtown Master Plan Downtown Future Land Use Map

Legend

-  Activity Center
-  General Residential
-  Mixed Use
-  Parks and Recreation
-  Industrial
-  Institutional



The Master Plan Districts

The Core

Lively and energetic, the City's center buzzes with activity. The area is truly a fusion of variation, where tall buildings overlook open, public spaces and people of every size, shape, culture and economic status mix and mingle on the streets. Historic architecture blends with newly built structures while bronze statues of the City's founders watch over pedestrians and motorists alike.

The history of the City runs deep within the downtown core, and understandably so, for the first survey stake was driven at the intersection of Pikes Peak and Cascade Avenues. The former county courthouse, now the Pioneers Museum, looks westward toward the mountain that edges the City. Within its walls are artifacts from every era of Colorado Springs' history, waiting to be discovered by locals and visitors. The Carnegie Library, now part of the larger Penrose Library, sits nestled in the shadows of the First Bank Building a few blocks north. Items from that very library have entertained and instructed residents for almost as long as Colorado Springs has been a city.

National coffee chains and independent local shops caffeinate the local workforce and independent retailers offer exclusive items found nowhere else in the City. At lunchtime, the core bustles with office workers and Palmer High School students out for a walk or a bite to eat. The flavors of downtown are as varied as the inhabitants; Southeast Asian cuisine is only a block away from Mexican, Italian, and French fare.

The core features establishments of every type; residential, office, commercial and even industrial uses are represented. Ground-level storefronts and restaurants provide the foundation for stacked,



residential lofts with balconies that overlook the streets below. Government offices are based in the core district and sometimes even share the same building with corporate headquarters and independent groups.

As day fades into night, the composition of the core changes. The marquis of Kimball's Twin Peak Theatre glows with advertisements for the latest in independent film. Streetlights illuminate the sidewalks and live music from the bars and clubs spills into the streets. Residents and visitors from all parts of Colorado Springs flock to concerts, philharmonic performances, and plays at the Pikes Peak Center and City Auditorium. Whether night or day, the core offers something for everyone.

Objective:

Increase the Development of Diverse Residential Units.

- Strategy 1 Establish incentives to encourage private housing developments throughout the district.
- Strategy 2 Rehabilitate older warehouses and industrial structures for loft housing and other adaptive reuse.

Objective:

Establish the Core as a Regional Work Center.

- Strategy 1 Retain and increase government, civic, institutional, and cultural facilities in the Core.

Objective:

Develop the Core as a Regional Shopping Destination.

- Strategy 1 Increase diversity in retail uses while ensuring that those uses are compatible with residential development.
- Strategy 2 Focus on street-level retail and locate offices above shops and restaurants.

Objective:

Develop the Core as an Entertainment Center.

- Strategy 1 Create a historic market and artisan’s district that includes a permanent public market.
- Strategy 2 Arts, culture, entertainment venues and activities should be encouraged through incentives, the market and policy. Look for more “one-of” anchors for downtown.

Objective:

Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Reconnect Antlers Park to the rest of downtown, possibly by adding a staircase from the park to the Antlers Hotel.

- Strategy 2 Improve the pedestrian connection between Pikes Peak Avenue and the Antlers’ Plaza.
- Strategy 3 Link past railroad use to future commuter rail.
- Strategy 4 Construct a plaza-like pedestrian overpass at the end of Vermijo, over the railroad tracks and into America the Beautiful Park.
- Strategy 5 Improve alleyways between pedestrian streets and encourage building design that connects the street frontage to the alleys.
- Strategy 6 Provide pedestrian and bicycle connections to the west, linking the downtown with Gold Hill Mesa and other major Westside developments.
- Strategy 7 Complete, maintain and enhance the Emerald Necklace.
- Strategy 8 Ensure connectivity between public parking garages and retail, restaurant, and office uses.
- Strategy 9 Encourage convenient and attractive shuttle stops throughout the Core.

Objective:

Ensure the Availability of Parking.

- Strategy 1 Maximize, easy-to-find, on-street parking for shoppers and visitors to the downtown.
- Strategy 2 Evaluate the boundaries of the Parking Exempt District and the sufficiency of downtown parking facilities to ensure parking needs are being met.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

- Strategy 1 Develop a form-based zoning code that is based on the principles outlined in this plan and includes a design review process for the high-rise building height area. The code should address design features including public places, public art and cultural amenities, and other site development standards for an urban area. The code should also incorporate view preservation techniques into new building design so that the majority of the view of Pikes Peak is protected from public spaces.
- Strategy 2 Develop a more impressive, iconic skyline that includes tall, beautiful buildings and a higher floor area ratio.
- Strategy 3 Encourage green building design.
- Strategy 4 Amend the Landscape Code to address internal landscaping in terms of urban design standards.
- Strategy 5 Continue to explore design changes to the Antlers' plaza and throughout downtown to foster a dynamic pedestrian area.
- Strategy 6 Promote the construction of interior courtyards to provide private open-space and pass-thrus to facilitate pedestrian movement.
- Strategy 7 Encourage the redevelopment of surface parking. Eliminate surface parking or locate lots to the rear of the buildings.
- Strategy 8 Encourage vertical mixed-use projects.

Objective:

Increase Safety for Downtown Visitors and Residents.

- Strategy 1 Improve Colorado Avenue so that drivers are more aware of and anticipate pedestrians, especially at Cimino Drive, Sierra Madre Street and Sahwatch Avenue. Improvement possibilities include entry signage and street design. Provide linkages off of Colorado Avenue to connect Tejon Street to America the Beautiful Park and the Southwest Downtown Urban Renewal Area.
- Strategy 2 Install landscaped medians with breaks or bump outs along Nevada Avenue to facilitate pedestrian crossings.
- Strategy 3 Increase pedestrian safety throughout downtown through the use of bump outs and other cross-walk improvements.

Objective:

Preserve the Past.

- Strategy 1 Focus attention on the historic marker at the city's foundation, located on the south side of Pikes Peak Avenue at Cascade. Currently, this marker is almost lost against the backdrop of asphalt surface parking.
- Strategy 2 Preserve and integrate historic buildings into the streetscape.

Objective:

Create Quality Transitions between More- and Less-Intense Land Uses.

- Strategy 1 Limit building height to 70' in those locations not adjacent to residential and 55' in locations that are adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 2 Require shade and shadow analyses as part of the development plan review process.
- Strategy 3 Require landscape buffering.
- Strategy 4 Prohibit surface parking lots on street frontage where adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 5 Institute other measures such as increased setbacks, landscaping or building orientation, as necessary to ensure compatibility with residential land uses.

Near North End

The idyllic campus of Colorado College is situated just beyond the northern border of the Near North End district. Its students spill onto the streets of the Near North End in search of funky hang-outs and retail shops. North Tejon Street provides the students with just what they seek; delis, taco shops, and the neighborhood pizza place are all within walking distance of the dormitories at the south end of the campus while laundries, salons and sports supply stores intermingle with business offices and residences in the near vicinity. The Near North End bonds the Colorado College campus to the core of the City while providing unique offerings catering to both college students and residents.

Off the well-worn path of Tejon, quiet residences and offices silhouette the side streets. Boasting large, landscaped medians and tree-lined streets, the neighborhoods in the Near North End

feel historic and inviting. Throughout the district, grand houses are reused as apartments and bed and breakfasts, filling the needs of CC students and out-of-town visitors, while more modest homes along the side streets provide shelter to young professionals and families.



The arts and cultural scene is strong within the district. The Fine Arts Center sits perched on a hill, overlooking Monument Valley Park and the mountains beyond. The exquisite paintings and exhibitions are matched only by the views from the western balcony. Within walking distance of the art museum is the American Numismatic Society Museum, where patrons can study history through various forms of currency. Further north is Bemis Art School, a long favorite of school children and adults alike. After classes, students can be found catching a bit of lunch on the sprawling grounds.

Monument Valley Park winds along the western boundary of the

Near North End district. The park is one of the oldest and largest in Colorado Springs and was dedicated to the City by General William Jackson Palmer himself. The park's trails and playgrounds afford residents and visitors plenty of opportunity for physically demanding outdoor recreation while the sprawling green spaces and forested areas supply the perfect landscape for a picnic or a leisurely stroll. The eclectic mix of uses found in the Near North End caters to college students, out-of-town visitors, and residents.

Objective:

Create a sustainable residential neighborhood with a variety of housing types.

- Strategy 1 Examine the possibility of new housing development throughout the district, including but not limited to accessory dwellings along alleyways.
- Strategy 2 Remove barriers to establishing housing options. For example, define multi-family residential as a principal, permitted use in the Office-Residential (OR) zone district instead of a conditional use to encourage mixed-market housing within the district.

Objective:

Encourage college-oriented retail uses along Tejon, with a strong focal point termination at the college boundary.

Objective:

Retain existing arts and cultural uses.

Objective:

Improve Park Access.

- Strategy 1 Construct the portion of the Park Ring along Cache la Poudre Street, which includes adding to the street tree edge and adding bike lanes to the street.
- Strategy 2 Improve the access points to Monument Valley Park with pathways, signage, landscaping and lighting.

Objective:

Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Encourage convenient and attractive shuttle stops near Colorado College.

Objective:

Ensure the Availability of Parking.

- Strategy 1 Provide additional on-street parking spaces where possible to encourage residential development; this may be possible on a number of the east-west streets in the district.
- Strategy 2 Examine the use of a residential parking permit program in the Near North End.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

- Strategy 1 Encourage green building design.

Objective:

Preserve the Past

- Strategy 1 Create design guidelines which address the conversion of historic buildings and the construction of new structures.

- Strategy 2 Strive to retain the Victorians along Nevada Avenue.
- Strategy 3 Preserve the structures along Weber Street that are listed as part of the National Registry for Historic Places. New development along this corridor should respect the historic district and be built at a similar size and scale with surface parking located behind the buildings.

Transition Areas

There are two half-block transition areas within the neighborhood boundaries fronting along Cascade Avenue and Nevada Avenue and stretching between E. St. Vrain Street and Cache la Poudre Street. These areas are important buffers between the busy Tejon Street corridor and surrounding residential uses.

Objective:

Create Quality Transitions from More- to Less-Intense Land Uses

- Strategy 1 Limit building height to 70' in those locations not adjacent to residential and 55' in locations that are adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 2 Require shade and shadow analyses as part of the development plan review process.
- Strategy 3 Require landscape buffering.
- Strategy 4 Prohibit surface parking lots on street frontage where adjacent to residential.
- Strategy 5 Institute other measures as necessary to ensure compatibility with residential land uses.

Middle Shooks Run

A quiet, single-family neighborhood lies just outside the boundaries of the dense, urban core of Colorado Springs. Its tree-lined streets and green lawns provide a nearby oasis from the hustle and bustle of urban life. To be sure, residents of the district enjoy the proximity to downtown; for many properties in Middle Shooks Run, less than a thirty minute walk separates their inhabitants from the heart of the City.



Middle Shooks Run is rich in historic appeal. The area exhibits architectural styles from almost every era in Colorado Springs' history. Modest Queen Ann and Victorian homes exist near post-World War II housing, and recently built structures intermingle with late nineteenth-century homes, adding to the varied and unique feel of the district. Wrought-iron garden fences and consistent front yard setbacks create a sense of regularity, but every house is different and showcases each property owner's distinctive taste.

On sunny days, residents of Middle Shooks Run walk their dogs around the neighborhood and through the Middle Shooks Run Park, which runs almost the entire length of the district. Children play in the park playgrounds, shrouded from busy streets by abundant, mature landscaping while parents watch from shady park benches.

The area is a fantastic place for evening walks as well, when passers-by pause to chat with neighbors enjoying the evening air on their front porches.

At the southern end of the district, the strongly residential character fades into a more commercial one, with a mixture of old and new construction signaling the transition to the urban core. These buildings are not strongly characteristic of the Middle Shooks Run district, but do not quite fit in the busy core either. They do, however, leave an impression on the travelers entering the city on Pikes Peak Avenue.

Objective:

Preserve the Residential Character of the District.

Strategy 1 Retain the existing residential uses within the neighborhood. Commercial development should not expand.

Objective:

Encourage Art and Cultural Opportunities.

Strategy 1 Consider adding public art along Middle Shooks Run Trail.

Objective:

Create Connections.

Strategy 1 Ensure pedestrian connectivity along Pikes Peak Avenue with the historic Santa Fe depot.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Encourage redevelopment of non-conforming land uses.

Objective:

Preserve the Past.

Strategy 1 Create design guidelines which address the conversion of historic structures and the construction of new structures.

South End

A quirky mix of historic and rejuvenated industrial, commercial, and residential properties lies just south of Cimarron Street. Converted residences along Tejon Street and Cascade Avenue now house professional offices and the occasional retail store. Warehouses and other industrial buildings have been adapted for restaurants and modern retail uses occupy revitalized spaces throughout the district. The area has undergone somewhat of a revitalization, but several redevelopment opportunities still present themselves.

The residential component of the district measures only four or five blocks of modest cottages and bungalows neatly ordered with consistent setbacks. Substantial, landscaped medians and street trees provide a shady canopy under which children ride their bicycles. Large, open spaces are atypical of the area obliging residents to rely on nearby parks for recreation.



Although parts of the district have been revitalized, the area has maintained its historic character. One example is the Colorado Springs Day Nursery, in operation since 1923, which stands at the corner of East Rio Grande and South Tejon Streets. For 85 years the nursery has watched over children from families in all economic

brackets. The nursery began as a service for children whose families were unable to care for them during the workweek. It has evolved into one of Colorado Springs' most beloved landmarks and adds to the district's diverse composition.

Objective:

Develop Additional Housing.

- Strategy 1 Create infill housing. The South End has available land that could be assembled into larger parcels. Several lots are available for residential infill.
- Strategy 2 Explore the possibility for conversions from commercial to a mixture of residential and commercial uses within the same structure.

Objective:

Promote the South End as a Secondary Employment Center.

- Strategy 1 Encourage the conversion and possible redevelopment of warehouse buildings for office and retail uses.
- Strategy 2 Continue compatible office use of residential structures that maintain the residential character of the neighborhood.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment.

- Strategy 1 Replace or upgrade failing infrastructure, such as sidewalks, curbs and gutters, etc.
- Strategy 2 Develop a neighborhood plan for this district to

establish goals, create a sense of community and protect historic resources. Once a neighborhood plan is complete, a program of public improvements can be crafted. The types of improvements could be landscaping, sidewalks, neighborhood sign guidelines, street lights, and connections to other neighborhoods. Once the plan is complete, the area should be considered for designation as a Neighborhood Strategy Area so that it is eligible for grants and funding.

Objective:

Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Develop connections to nearby parks, the Park Ring and the core. Investigate the use of the railroad lines right-of-way as an east-west pedestrian and bicycle connection to the Park Ring. Tejon Street is the designated connection to the core district and should be designed using limited way-finding elements and landscaping.
- Strategy 2 Continue to develop on-street bikeways along Tejon Street, with connections to the Park Ring.
- Strategy 3 Maintain Downtown Shuttle service into the district.

Mill/Las Vegas

The Mill/Las Vegas district serves as the southern gateway into the heart of downtown. It is an area of stark contrast, where spots of increased neighborhood pride abut abandoned properties, ripe for redevelopment. Massive industrial buildings dominate the streetscape of Tejon Street and Nevada Avenue, while small houses line the side streets.

The highly industrial section of the district bisects the Mill Street Neighborhood, historically composed of working-class residences. The same contrast that is seen in the larger district is present in the Mill Street Neighborhood; recently improved homes and public infrastructure stand beside houses in dire need of repair. But the neighborhood is transforming.



In 2000, the residents of Mill Street organized and crafted their own neighborhood plan. The Mill Street Neighborhood Preservation Plan describes the residents' aspirations to preserve the character of their historic neighborhood while identifying areas of necessary change. Since the plan's adoption, numerous improvements have been made; Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money was employed to upgrade decaying infrastructure, Habitat for Humanity built new houses in the neighborhood, and long-time residents have improved their properties. Throughout the Mill Street Neighborhood, a renewed sense of pride and ownership is mounting.

Although still in transition, the sense of pride in the Mill/Las Vegas area has taken root and provided a strong foundation on which to build a revitalized downtown district.

Objective:
Establish a "Quiet Zone" within the area to mitigate train horn noise.

Strategy 1 Study alternatives and obtain funds to implement mitigating treatments at the at-grade rail crossing within the district, specifically at the Las Animas and Sierra Madre rail crossings.

Strategy 2 Continue to advocate for relocating freight rail east out of downtown and the City as a whole.

Objective:
Maintain and strengthen the residential quality of the neighborhood.

Strategy 1 Vacant land in the housing areas should be developed with affordable single-family, duplex, or multi-family homes. The architecture and scale of new or additional units should be compatible with the character and scale of this district.

Objective:
Examine the Possibility of Establishing an Urban Renewal Area.

Strategy 1 Urban Renewal Designation for the commercial and industrial uses along Las Vegas, particularly at Nevada and Tejon, would make funds available to revitalize the non-residential areas of the district.

Strategy 2 Investigate other opportunities such as Certified Development Companies, tax credits, and Business Improvement Districts (BID) to provide incentives for the desired development.

Objective:
Improve the Public Environment.

Strategy 1 Improve Dorchester Park to make it more attractive.
 Strategy 2 Design the Tejon Street Marsh, part of the Park Ring, to be an educational area to teach park users about wetland areas in urban environments.

Objective:

Create Connections.

- Strategy 1 Maintain the FREX stop at the Park and Ride at Nevada Avenue/Tejon Street and I-25.
- Strategy 2 Maintain Downtown Shuttle service to the Park and Ride.
- Strategy 3 Connect Dorchester Park to the Park Ring.
- Strategy 4 Acquire the necessary land to complete the Park Ring between Monument/Fountain Creek Trail and Shooks Run Trail.
- Strategy 5 Connect Mill/Las Vegas with Shooks Run through a pedestrian path along the railroad right-of-way.

Objective:

Promote Responsible Urban Design.

- Strategy 1 Protect residential areas by creating transition zones or buffers between intense commercial uses and housing. These could be landscaped areas, small offices, or multi-family dwellings.
- Strategy 2 Adjust zoning to support the Mill Street Neighborhood Preservation Plan's goals.

Drake

A mass of energy lies on 66 acres in the southwestern downtown area. It labors and exhales as it converts mountains of deep, black coal to electric power. Coal mountains dominate the terrain, adding to a stark and surreal landscape. The smoke stacks rise from the bulk of the mammoth, churning out billowy, white steam clouds that are visible for miles.

Built in 1940, the Martin Drake Power Plant is one of two coal-fired power plants under the control of the municipal utility.

The plant itself is a perfect example of pure, World War II-era industry, but the technology within the walls is extremely advanced and environmentally conscious.



A segment of the Park Ring runs between the power plant and the creek. There is contrast here; dense trees and riparian vegetation are juxtaposed against the striking presence of the power plant. Old, iron bridges and utility pipes span the width of the creek, connecting one bank to the other. Automotive noise from the interstate stands out against the sounds of wildlife nesting in the trees.

Drake is austere, industrial and incredibly distinctive. Although its makeup differs strongly from the composition of the rest of the downtown, it is bound to the larger area through its history and location.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment

- Strategy 1 Work with the Utilities Department concerning the Martin Drake Power Plant to accomplish two objectives: calm the visual impact of the plant through landscaping and repainting; and, provide interpretive materials on the power plant's operations for those passing along the Park Ring trails to its west.

Objective:

Create Connections.

Strategy 1 Complete the Pikes Peak Greenway link of the Park Ring from Bijou south to beyond the power plant complex. Along that newly defined edge, construct formal gateway features at Colorado Avenue and Cimarron Street to convey a sense of arrival and announce the entrances to the downtown area.

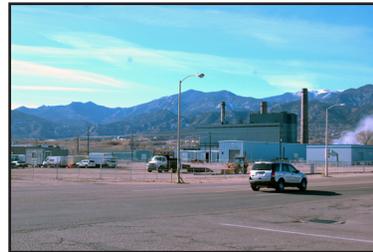
Objective:

Relocate the Power Plant

Strategy 1 Accelerate the idea of retiring Drake in favor of a re-located source of power with a more environmentally sound facility

CityGate

Four blocks of cleared land lie just south of Cimarron Street. The area is quiet and calm, but that sleepy feeling will soon fade. Before long, the area could feature one of the most



progressive downtown developments. Plans are underway that will incorporate quality urban design concepts and pedestrian amenities, including hidden internal parking and tree-lined streets complete with outdoor cafés and benches. These four blocks will be the first impression for travelers entering the city along the Cimarron gateway and will include opportunities for living, working, dining and entertainment.

All aspects of the plans have not yet been formalized, but this much is certain: the development will be mixed-use, it will be vibrant, and it will be dynamic.

Objective:

Promote Innovative Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Construct mixed-use residential and live-work structures along Sierra Madre Street between Cimarron and Rio Grande.

South Wahsatch

If there is one word that could be employed to sum up an entire area, “opportunity” would suit South Wahsatch just fine. The district should not be judged on what it is now, but rather what it could become in the future. Currently, a mixture of community service agencies, automotive-related land uses, parking lots, industrial buildings and dilapidated residential properties intermingle throughout the district with no particular order. The area is in search of an identity it has not yet found.



There is great potential for redevelopment in the area. Presently, several arts-oriented uses are located within the district, including a recording studio, a well-known potter, and an art gallery. The industrial parts of the district would be perfect locations for trendy lofts and studios required of an art district.

On the other hand, the district’s location between the Core and the revitalizing Lowell district makes it perfect for mixed-use

development. New neighborhoods could bloom and flourish, with corner groceries and pocket parks. Pueblo Avenue could feature townhomes and other mixed-use developments with a park-like feel.

There is great possibility within the South Wahsatch district; one only needs to take the first step.

Objective:

Residential: Promote New and Dense Residential Uses in Close Proximity to Downtown

Strategy 1 Provide redevelopment incentives and public assistance to transition industrial uses along Wahsatch Avenue to residential uses.

Objective:

Promote South Wahsatch as a Secondary Employment Center.

Strategy 1 Encourage the South Wahsatch district to realize its potential as a secondary business and office area that supports the core. This should be done in a way that takes advantage of its central location and serves as a good neighbor to surrounding areas.

Strategy 2 Strengthen the South Wahsatch district as an area for affordable office and commercial space near the core. Encourage businesses, non-profit organizations, and offices that need to be close to the downtown to occupy the vacant buildings and build on vacant land.

Strategy 3 Study the possibilities for creating a business “incubator zone” or other method of encouraging development.

An incubator zone is a specific area targeted for new businesses and is often supported by governmental economic programs that make rent, for instance, more affordable. Special Improvement Districts, tax credits, and the State Enterprise Zone are examples of these economic programs.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment.

Strategy 1 Prepare a neighborhood plan to determine district goals, image, land use, and direction. The plan should outline a method for future growth that will suggest projects for the vacant land and buildings. Existing and proposed development should combine to create order.

Objective:

Create Connections.

Strategy 1 Acquire the land necessary to complete the Park Ring in this district.

Strategy 2 Make Pueblo Avenue a connection that links the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum to the Park Ring.

Strategy 3 Ensure important pedestrian connections are made between Vermijo, Pueblo, and Costilla and the Park Ring.

Strategy 4 Create connections to downtown and the Park Ring.

Objective:

Promote Responsible Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Design street improvements, such as landscaping and lighting, to lessen the negative effects of the major roadways throughout the district. Screen surface parking lots, perhaps through landscaping, to soften their appearance from the street.

Strategy 2 Design buffers for nearby housing.

Lowell

The Lowell School stands above Nevada Avenue, facing westward toward Pikes Peak. Lowell is to its district what the mountain is to the city—a symbol of endurance. The building itself is quite striking with its Boulder brick and sandstone façade. For nearly 100 years those same walls sheltered the youth of Colorado Springs, giving them a place to further their knowledge. To be sure, the school has born witness to much of the City’s history and still, the building endures.



Lowell School has transformed, much like the district that bears its name. In 2001, the building re-opened as the headquarters of the Housing Authority, adding a much needed draw of office space to the area. Soon thereafter the district followed suit, revitalizing into a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood with a variety of housing types.

A major investment has occurred in the Lowell district with the construction of a mixed-use project that incorporates Traditional Neighborhood Development design. The Lowell district is now the perfect combination of historic charm and modern amenities. The

live-work units, lofts and townhomes are designed to complement the architecture of the Lowell building while offering residents the latest in urban living. Several neighborhood parks dot the district landscape, providing open space where both children and adults can play.

Objective:

Expand residential uses, particularly multi-family, senior housing, lower income and subsidized housing.

Objective:

Improve the Public Environment.

Strategy 1 Complete the Park Ring and construct the Fountain Boulevard gateway taking advantage of topography, natural vegetation, and drainage while ensuring safe and convenient access to the park and trail.

Objective:

Create Connections

Strategy 1 Investigate the use of Railroad lines right-of-way as an east-west Pedestrian-Bikeway connection to the Park Ring.

Objective:

Promote Responsible Urban Design.

Strategy 1 Develop design guidelines for residential, office, commercial and industrial uses that address appropriate facades, landscaping, signs, lighting and parking.

Strategy 2 Examine zoning codes to ensure coordination with design guidelines and that land use intensities are compatible with the other districts.

Objective:

Preserve the Past.

Strategy 1 The significance of the former Lowell Elementary School, both in terms of its Romanesque architecture and history should be recognized and preserved as a significant landmark. The Downtown Plan supports the Urban Renewal Plan, which states that the structure should be preserved if feasible.

The Park Ring

In this Plan, the downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods are woven together by a beautiful park. The Park Ring, a continuous open-space surrounding downtown, consists of existing parks such as those along Monument and Fountain Creeks, neighborhood parks, and connections between them.

The idea of the Park Ring builds upon the traditions of General Palmer, who dedicated thousands of acres to the City for parks and open space. The Park Ring’s 6.7-mile circumference is a place for jogging, hiking, biking, special events (e.g. walk-a-thons), or just strolling. The Park Ring forms a hub for the entire Trails network of the City.

The following are updated recommendations for the Park Ring as a whole.

Objective:

Identify Champions/Stakeholders

Strategy 1 Identify existing “champions” and stakeholders for discrete segments of the Park Ring, such as neighborhood groups, commercial and residential developers, Colorado Springs Utilities, institutions,

local governments, and others who own adjacent property, or interest groups, such as the Friends of Monument Valley Park or Shooks Run Trail Friends.

- Strategy 2 Find out what current or planned projects, goals, hopes and dreams, etc. those champions or stakeholders have for “their” segment.
- Strategy 3: Recognize and encourage current efforts and future participation of champions in the development of the Ring.
- Strategy 4 Establish a program through which champions can “adopt” segments.
- Strategy 5 Build support for, and then implement, improvements to the Park Ring one interested party at a time.

Objective:

Form Partnerships

- Strategy 1 Building on the identified champions and stakeholders, form community partnerships for planning, funding, and implementing improvements to the Park Ring.
- Strategy 2 Bring City Council, the City Administration, City departments and divisions, Colorado Springs Utilities, the Downtown Partnership, and the Downtown Development Authority into the mix with property owners, developers, neighborhood groups, interest groups, downtown churches, major employers, school District 11, Colorado College, Pikes Peak Community College, and others.
- Strategy 3 Through these community partnerships, promote and support the improvement of the Park Ring as a high quality, well used amenity for the downtown and the neighborhoods.

Objective:



Promote Awareness

- Strategy 1 Promote awareness of the Park Ring in the downtown, the surrounding neighborhoods, and the community through events sponsored by champions and partnerships, such as group walks, runs and bike rides.
- Strategy 2 Hold an annual “Ride the Ring” as part of Bike Week.
- Strategy 3 Link these events into activities at America the Beautiful Park, Springspree, and other downtown happenings.
- Strategy 4 Use these events as fund raisers to improve the Park Ring segments and build support for completing the two remaining broken links between Shooks Run and Monument Creek.
- Strategy 5 Use a web-based approach for getting out information and building support for segments of the park Ring in collaboration with champions and stakeholders.

Objective:

Utilize the Park Ring as an Economic Development Tool and Catalyst

- Strategy 1 Use the Park Ring as a catalyst for economic development by realizing its potential to draw more people into the downtown and by marketing it as a public amenity for residential and non-residential development.
- Strategy 2 Combine the promotional, recreational, entertainment, and partnership aspects of the Ring to help support new business and development opportunities, both along the Ring itself and throughout the greater downtown area.

Objective:

Create a Wayfinding System

- Strategy 1 Create a wayfinding system with locational, informational, and directional signage that folds into both the overall wayfinding system for downtown and the Parks Department’s existing trail and interpretive signage system.
- Strategy 2 Use a logo or icon to identify the Park Ring on all signage.
- Strategy 3 Use the wayfinding system to relate the Park Ring to unique neighborhoods and unique areas along it and to enhance the local sense of place and identity.
- Strategy 4 Include interpretive signage for historic and environmental features.
- Strategy 5 Use the system to flag gateways to the downtown and important arterial crossings, bike and pedestrian connections into the downtown and the neighborhoods, and significant destinations, such as the Fine Arts Center, Colorado College, the Penrose Public Library, large employers, and other facilities and places of note.
- Strategy 6 Identify the Park Ring on all downtown maps.

Objective:

Plan and Improve the Park Ring as a Continuous Greenway

- Strategy 1 Protect and enhance the Park Ring segments along Monument Creek and Shooks Run as wildlife corridors and habitats and areas of significant riparian vegetation.
- Strategy 2 Consider hiring a wildlife manager for the City with responsibilities for habitat management of the Park Ring as well as for habitats in other public open spaces.

- Strategy 3 Protect and manage the stream corridors as significant riparian features and ecological systems.
- Strategy 4 Capitalize on existing volunteer efforts and educational opportunities to improve the streamside Park Ring segments as natural systems and examples of “nature in the City.”
- Strategy 5 Adopt by reference the relevant environmental and stormwater management goals and objectives and recommendations of the Pikes Peak Greenway Master Plan as they relate to the Fountain Creek segment of the Ring.
- Strategy 6 As opportunities arise to acquire gaps in the greenway along Shooks Run, reclaim those areas through restoration of the riparian environment.
- Strategy 7 Incorporate stormwater management considerations and improvements in greenway planning for both the creek corridors.

Objective:

Plan and Improve the Park Ring as a Transportation Corridor

- Strategy 1 Improve the function of the Park Ring as a major multimodal corridor for the downtown, serving both commuters and recreational users, with easy bicycle and pedestrian circulation, enhanced connectivity, signage and wayfinding, easy links to the transit system, more direct school access, and good off-street to on-street transitions.
- Strategy 2 Plan transportation improvements to the Park Ring within the context of the connecting trail systems and street network, and the land uses and neighborhoods served.

- Strategy 3 Improve connectivity and access to the Park Ring at each of the downtown gateways identified in the Street Corridor section of the Framework.
- Strategy 4 Emphasize the overlapping recreational and health benefits for pedestrians and cyclists using the Ring as a transportation corridor.

Objective:

Plan and Improve the Park Ring as a Recreational Amenity

- Strategy 1 Enhance the Park Ring, with its creek corridors, trail system, and linear parks, as a high-quality recreational amenity serving both the downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Strategy 2 Promote the health and wellness benefits of the recreational uses of the Park Ring through activities and programs sponsored by downtown employers, the YMCA, downtown churches, and other organizations and businesses.
- Strategy 3 Hold an annual “Run the Ring” event.
- Strategy 4 Adopt by reference the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Pikes Peak Greenway Plan as they relate to recreational opportunities and uses for the Fountain Creek segments of the Park Ring.

Objective:

Improve the Actual and Perceived Security of the Park Ring

- Strategy 1 Work through the champions, stakeholders, and partnerships with the CSPD and the Parks Department, to identify and address specific security concerns and problems.

- Strategy 2 Create greater visibility and improve lighting along those segments that have few “eyes” on the trail.
- Strategy 3 Create as many connections as possible from adjacent land uses to enhance the perception of security.
- Strategy 4 Promote greater use of Park Ring segments through regularly scheduled events to reinforce the sense of a secure environment.
- Strategy 5 Design adjacent development to increase visibility and access to the Ring and to put more “eyes” on it.
- Strategy 6 Thin vegetation where needed, especially along the power plant/I-25 segment, to increase visibility and reduce safety concerns.
- Strategy 7 Encourage more residential development to front on the Ring with open, direct access.
- Strategy 8 Enhance security through improved signage by providing users with clear information for the location and direction to nearby uses and connections.

Objective:

Create a Public/Private Working Group to Help Implement Recommendations for the Park Ring

- Strategy 1 Form a working group with liaisons from City departments such as Planning, Parks, Stormwater, Traffic, Police, and Utilities, and from the Downtown Partnership, the DDA, EDC, and other stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the Park Ring recommendations.
- Strategy 2 Select a coordinator for the group and use the group as a clearinghouse and web-based communication network to resolve issues, identify funding sources, and match funding to projects.



Implementation

Implementation of this Plan will be the responsibility of both the public and private sectors of Colorado Springs. The Committee's work—creating the Vision and Framework, establishing the Vision, and providing recommendations—sets the program. This is the beginning. Community willingness and the ongoing commitment of those who care about downtown is the next important ingredient. The Committee, the community, the City Council, businesses, retail owners, cultural institutions, homeowners, and many others must all work together tenaciously to complete the Plan.

The projects are organized into broad categories, including Economic Projects, Public Infrastructure and Land Use.

Economic Projects

Primary Jobs

- Develop materials to market downtown development.
- Increase efforts to recruit businesses to downtown.
- Pursue more defense and military-related companies.
- Partner closely with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Provide the EDC sufficient downtown materials and encourage its participation in pitching downtown.
- Identify specific employers that would fit well within the downtown fabric and market downtown to them.
- Evaluate sensible downtown business clustering.

Retail, Restaurants and Entertainment

- Create a visual retail master plan with AIA.
- Encourage the redesign of retail and restaurant facades through DDA funding.
- Create a mentoring program that links successful merchants with potential new retailers.

- Build pedestrian traffic by transforming vacant storefronts into displays and exhibits.
- Continue monitoring successful retailing concepts of other downtowns.
- Utilize recent downtown retail studies to shape targeted recruitment.
- Focus on unique independents as a primary draw; use chain stores selectively as anchors.
- Construct a downtown recruitment packet that advances the mix and adheres to identified downtown development strategies.
- Commission appropriate entertainment market studies as necessary.
- Help preserve and strengthen Kimball's Twin Peak as an independent venue.
- Promote development of a downtown baseball stadium, virtual performing arts center with flexible space, and museums.

Arts and Culture

- Use bold, permanent street banners to identify cultural districts (e.g. Near North End, South End, Middle Shooks Run, etc.).
- Utilize public art as a branding device.
- Consider expanding the presence and scope of public art to include unique creativity with multi-media and widely promote the program through pedestrian access to printed guides.
- Provide a weekly email calendar of downtown cultural events.
- Create a public market south of the Palmer Center.
- Employ special retail promotions including later hours integrations with arts and culture.

- Cross promote downtown with existing arts activities.
- Create a widely distributed facilities guide for all downtown venues.
- Renovate the City Auditorium.
- Provide partnerships to encourage arts organizations to locate downtown.
- Ensure that America the Beautiful and Acacia Parks are fully utilized for public events.
- Reconsider the design of the Palmer Center.
- Support the continued efforts of the Downtown Arts District Association.
- Consider a different location for the Springspree festival.
- Create additional, unique festivals of varying sizes that promote downtown, draw eclectic crowds and are hosted in different downtown pocket areas.
- Use the METSO project as a prototype of incorporating arts/creativity into development. Draw on Lakewood's Belmar project and expertise.
- Utilize DDA funding to support targeted non-profit arts groups in the downtown.

Marketing and Branding

- Develop a strong branding campaign.
- Communicate brand messages extensively and through multiple channels.
- Promote the importance of downtown relative to the City's overall economic strength and quality of life.

Financing

- Devise creative public-private financing and partner opportunities to provide underwriting, gap financing and needed equity.
- Make tax increment financing (TIF) available throughout downtown.
- Establish a "patient fund" based on the McKuen Foundation model.

Residential

- Publish a Request for Proposals and distribute it to residential builders, as both a solicitation for projects and as an education device.
- Develop workforce attached housing to provide rental or for-sale housing to low-income households within the downtown area.

Technology and Sustainability

- Adopt the 2030 Challenge for downtown (see www.architecture2030.org).
- Provide and operate CO-GEN facilities downtown as a "green infrastructure"/economic development/location incentive.
- Price power pole leases to encourage above-ground internet-based communications.



Public Infrastructure

Parking

- Seek an outside consultant to study Business Improvement District (BID) parking assets, report findings, and suggest improvements.
- Present a five-year Capital Improvement Program with rate increase request to City Council and request funding in the budget.
- Improve and experiment with new systems such as free Saturdays or rate changes.
- Increase the availability of parking card kiosks and parking meters that take the parking card.
- Work toward resolution of parking concerns and potential conflicts with area nightlife.

Transportation

- Conduct a professional study to determine the impacts of multi-modal transportation on the downtown.
- Explore additional transportation options, such as light rail or commuter trains, trolleys and additional trails.
- Differentiate and prioritize pedestrian mobility and vehicle mobility; analyze and refine street-by-street patterns. Focus on east-west movement patterns.
- Make downtown more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly with lanes and medians, especially in gap areas.
- Advance the capability of the Downtown Shuttle.
- Secure funding for pedestrian improvement projects, including any alley improvements and pedestrian plaza construction.

Utilities

- Provide education opportunities on downtown electric, wastewater, natural gas and water delivery systems.
- Provide opportunity for analysis and discussion of the Utilities 2006 Planning Forecast, pertinent City Code sections on utilities, resource and infrastructure planning, utility tariffs related to development charges, extension policies, and recovery agreements, and maps of the utility infrastructure for downtown.
- Develop environmental or “green” building incentives and benefits.
- Inventory the components of Greenfield and downtown projects to create cost differentials.
- Identify opportunities to offset downtown development costs and complete a policy recommendation and implementation strategy.
- Provide a downtown low temperature, hot water district heating system for new development, City and Utilities buildings and remodeling projects.
- Consolidate underground pipelines to allow for significant tree placement on downtown streets as a complementary energy saving green strategy.
- Encourage renewable energy and net metering, and provide expedited approval for such projects.
- Provide an excess revenue accounting system that rewards conservation and renewable energies as a “profit center.”
- Expand incentive programs for use of photovoltaic technology and wind power.
- Consider the Drake Power Plant for recycled heating.
- Demonstrate payback for investment in upgraded downtown infrastructure.
- Establish a fiscal impact basis.

Parks and Open Space

- Acquire the necessary land for completion of the Park Ring encircling downtown.
- Explore further protections and use of water (creeks) surrounding downtown.
- Create a connection between Antlers Park and Pikes Peak Avenue.
- Focus on Pioneers Square site improvements, including the addition of landscaping and sculpture.

Security and Cleanliness

- Fund a downtown “on the streets” ambassador program.
- Add more waste receptacles, power wash more often and add alley maintenance.
- Increase downtown lighting.
- Increase police presence downtown.

Land Use

Zoning

- Write and adopt a Form Based Code that includes design review elements for the high-rise Core area.
- Pursue revisions to the zoning code to reduce barriers to development and to bring the code in line with the recommendations of this plan.
- Create policies to encourage the use of rooftops in either public or private ways and to further the concept of sustainable or “green” development.
- Employ the recommendations of each district to guide development propositions in each area.

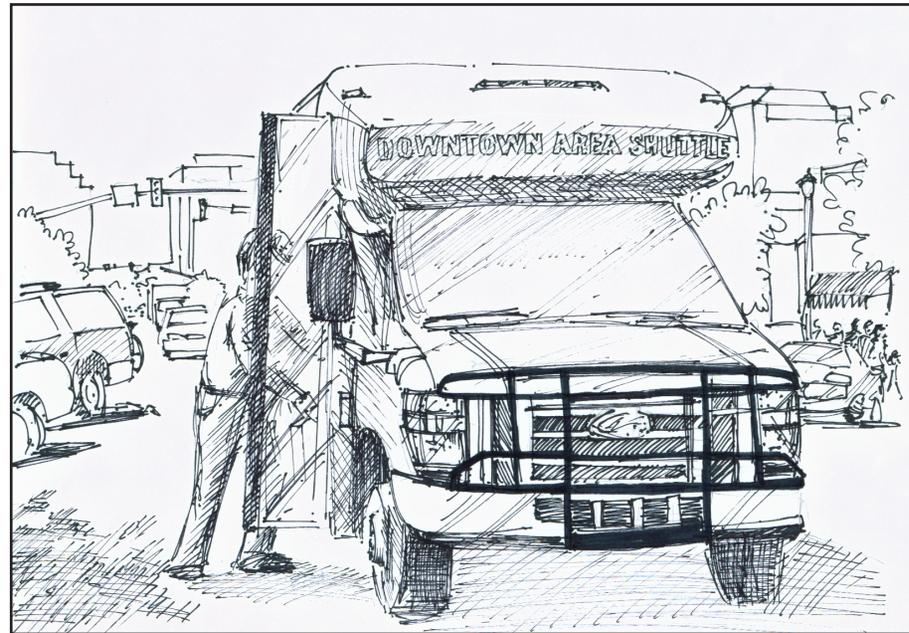
- Review the boundaries of the Parking Exempt District and the sufficiency of downtown parking facilities.
- Amend the Landscape Code to address internal landscaping requirements for the downtown area.

Historic Preservation and Education

- Create opportunities for citizens to interact with the history of downtown.
- Increase the availability of the data on historic buildings.

Building and Development

- Pursue revisions to the building code to reduce barriers to development.



Conclusion

This plan intends to update the 1992 Downtown Action Plan and incorporate the outcomes from Imagine Downtown Plan's public outreach and workshop efforts. Significant efforts have been made to clarify goals, objectives and strategies that will continue to move downtown Colorado Springs toward the desired vibrancy, density and revitalization that is fitting of our City. This plan is intended to be forward thinking and flexible; it should spur investment; put more people on the street through residential growth; strengthen the role that downtown plays in the economic health of the region; provide diverse entertainment, arts and cultural opportunities; foster a sense of place on a pedestrian scale; preserve our rich history; promote sustainability; and create an urban environment that equals the unique and beautiful natural setting of Colorado Springs.

