

Southeast Colorado Springs Colorado

January 7–12, 2018



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Healthy Places: Promoting Equitable and Healthy
Communities in Southeast Colorado Springs

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About the Urban Land Institute

THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is a global, member-driven organisation comprising more than 40,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of providing leadership in the responsible use of land and creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions, with members in 80 countries.

The extraordinary impact that ULI makes on land use decision making is based on its members sharing expertise on

a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns.

Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate. In 2017 alone, more than 1,900 events were held in about 290 cities around the world.

Drawing on the work of its members, the Institute recognises and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

More information is available at uli.org. Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

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Colorado Health Foundation's Healthy Places Initiative

THE COLORADO HEALTH FOUNDATION is bringing health in reach for all Coloradans by engaging closely with communities across the state through investing, policy advocacy, learning, and capacity building. For more information, please visit www.coloradohealth.org.

Healthy Places is a four-year, \$5.3 million initiative to inspire and support the development of healthy communities in Colorado. Through a community-led approach, Healthy Places helps Colorado communities become healthier by creating opportunities to increase physical activity. The initiative aims to transform the places where we live, work, and play—to make our cities, towns, and neighborhoods safer and more appealing to walking, bicycling, and other daily activities that encourage movement, connection, and fun. The Foundation originally launched the initiative in 2012, in three communities—the Westwood neighborhood of Denver, the suburban city of Arvada, and the rural city of Lamar—with the goal to increase opportunities for safe physical activities through improvements to the built environment of the community.

The current iteration of Healthy Places is focused on four additional Colorado communities—the East Memorial neighborhood of the city of Greeley, historic Commerce City, the Montbello neighborhood of Denver, and Southeast Colorado Springs. Much has changed since 2012. Most significant, Healthy Places has evolved to better address the Foundation's efforts to advance health equity

in all Colorado communities. This evolution reflects not only the Foundation's values, beliefs, and vision, but more important, direct feedback from the three prior Healthy Places communities regarding obstacles and challenges their residents face that extend beyond needed physical improvements. Healthy Places supports community-identified solutions to increasing physical activity by targeting health where it matters most, with the individual and the community in which he or she lives.

The ULI Advisory Services program is partnering with the Colorado Health Foundation to conduct panels in each of the selected Colorado cities. Following each panel visit, the panel's recommendations will be reviewed by the communities and, working with a consultant, the communities will apply for up to \$1 million from the Colorado Health Foundation for implementation funding.

About ULI Advisory Services

THE GOAL OF THE ULI ADVISORY SERVICES program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 600 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and are screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives, a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 100 key community representatives, and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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The ULI panel team.

AUBREY DAY

Acknowledgments

ON BEHALF OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE, the panel acknowledges and thanks the more than 85 individuals who were interviewed. Representing city and county agencies, the business community, community activists, students, faith-based communities, and residents, these stakeholders provided valuable information and perspectives through their passion and understanding of the issues, greatly aiding the panel in its analysis.

The panel wishes to thank Southeast Colorado Springs for sponsoring this important panel. Thank you to El Paso County Public Health for supporting this effort and especially Aubrey Day, healthy environment planner, for her excellent preparation, support, and coordination leading up to and during the panel week. Additional thanks to Mina Liebert, public health planner for El Paso County Health; Jeannie Orozco, member of the Harrison School District 2 Board of Education; and Joyce Salazar, community outreach director for El Paso County Public Health, for working closely with the panel throughout the week. A special thank you to the organizations whose input through the panel's tours and interviews helped inform the panel's recommendations, including but not limited to Bike Colorado Springs, city of Colorado Springs, Deerfield Community Center, El Paso County, Norwood, Pikes Peak Library, RISE Coalition, and Silver Key Senior Services. And special thanks to City Council member Yolanda Avila and Mayor John Suthers.

Finally, the panel thanks the Colorado Health Foundation for sponsoring this four-panel series focused on active, healthy communities. The panel also thanks Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.), especially J.J. Folsom and Amanda Kannard, for helping El Paso County Public Health prepare and coordinating so closely with ULI and the host cities for this very important work.

Note: This publication contains recommendations by the ULI Advisory Services panel that convened in Southeast Colorado Springs, Colorado, the week of January 7 to 12, 2018. These recommendations constitute a comprehensive report of the Healthy Places: Designing an Active Colorado initiative for the community of Southeast Colorado Springs. The Healthy Places initiative was designed to promote policies that incorporate physical activity into land development and land use. Although the Colorado Health Foundation contracted with ULI to conduct the Advisory Services panel, the complete recommendations do not signify key funding opportunities for or commitments by the Foundation.

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Background and the Panel's Assignment

AFTER YEARS OF DISINVESTMENT and underrepresentation, the Southeast Colorado Springs community is advocating for the resources to transform itself into a thriving, healthy, and safe place to live. Southeast Colorado Springs is a family-focused, 12-square-mile community that is home to 16 percent of Colorado Springs's population. Throughout some of the city, a negative perception of Southeast has been allowed to develop, because narratives of crime and poverty have become synonymous with the community. However, the residents have a different, more realistic story to tell—one that highlights the successes and the vibrancy of the people living and working in Southeast. The neighborhood is home to diverse cultures, incomes, religious affiliations, and perspectives, lending itself to becoming an area of the city known for great food, fun music, and interesting cultural events.

The Panel's Assignment

El Paso County Public Health asked the panel to develop a set of strategic recommendations to address community needs and to provide a road map for how to turn the panel's recommendations and previous plans and studies into actionable next steps. Specifically, the ULI Advisory Services panel was asked to examine the following items:

- Make the case for investment, both public and private, for projects that increase community connections (physical, social, economic) and are also market sensitive. Provide financing and organization strategies for these projects.
- Apply the principles of building healthy places and experiential solutions to identify and prioritize projects that are both responsive to community needs and in alignment with the strategic direction of the city and region.



ALLEN BEAUCHAMP/BIKE COLORADO SPRINGS

Thanks to Bike Colorado Springs and Kids on Bikes, the panelists toured the study area by bicycle, experiencing firsthand how difficult it is for residents to get around the area on foot or by bike.

- Recommend realistic and resident-driven strategies to activate vacant spaces (buildings, parking lots, land) and underused public places that encourage community development.
- Prioritize ideas from existing plans and seek opportunities to implement those that have the potential to affect both community and economic health in the area, such as Economic Opportunity Zone incentives, community hub, street design.

Recommendations from Previous Reports

As described above, part of the panel's assignment was to help prioritize recommendations from past plans and studies that focused on the study area. The panel identified the following priority projects from previous recommendations:

- Develop a community resource center(s) or "hub" that offers amenities, services, recreation opportunities, and job or skills training for all ages.
- Implement the existing 2011 *South Academy Great Streets Plan*. Take an inventory of existing gaps in the pedestrian network and improve the overall pedestrian experience in the area.

- Partner with local organizations and institutions to support events, public art, and other initiatives that activate Southeast's public areas.
- Beautify the area through streetscape improvements, grounding of transmission lines, implementation of design standards, facade improvements, and greening the public right of way.
- Create distinctive multimodal neighborhoods along South Academy Boulevard, focusing on creating a walkable, connected corridor. Use the strength of the area's diversity to create nodes with recognizable identities that connect the community and establish pride in multiple neighborhoods.
- Engage, enrich, and accommodate the lives of residents of all ages by providing better access to services and daily needs.
- Seek infill development and adaptive use of vacant structures to attract new businesses and uses.

Summary of the Panel's Recommendations

Following a week of briefings, review of past plans and studies, site tours, and community stakeholder interviews, the panel developed a number of strategic recommendations for Southeast Colorado Springs. The panel identified myriad small- to large-scale recommendations and has organized them into five categories: Connect It, Getting Together, Organizing and Communicating, Health Access, and Making It Happen. A summary follows of recommendations to begin working on immediately.

Connect It

- *Safe crossings:* Build upon and improve existing infrastructure to make sidewalks ADA compliant to help residents access their community. The panel saw first-hand an immediate need for more and better-connected sidewalks, observing residents walking on busy roads next to cars without any type of safety barrier.

- *Link to Greater Colorado Springs:* Many residents of Southeast noted that they felt separated from and uncomfortable in other parts of Colorado Springs. One interviewee noted that getting to the new location of health care services can take up to two hours on public transportation. Increasing access to other parts of Colorado Springs is imperative to making the city whole.
- *Link to nature:* The panel heard many people say that the best part of living in Colorado Springs is access to nature; however, Southeast lacks the same connections to nature as the rest of the city. Creating better access to the natural resources of the great outdoors will support better physical and mental health for Southeast residents.
- *Maintain it:* Although bike paths and new bus routes have been created to enable stronger connectivity within Southeast, these resources need continuous maintenance to ensure that they are easy to use and attractive.
- *Light it:* To promote safety, accessibility, and use, sidewalks should be well lit.

Getting Together

- *Community gathering space:* Southeast residents expressed a great need and desire to have a place to come together and celebrate. A gathering space or hub should be created that can accommodate a variety of community gathering events as well as community support activities including youth training and capacity building. Input from the community on the design and function of this space should be central to its creation.
- *Temporary activation of vacant spaces:* The panel believes the vacant spaces in Southeast can be used as opportunities for creative spatial solutions for other community issues. For example, painting an unused parking lot to become a pop-up park, establishing a temporary community hub, or conducting a seasonal farmers market inside a vacant building are examples of temporary solutions that can activate vacant spaces while enhancing social interaction within the community.

Organizing and Communicating

- *Community advocacy:* From the RISE Coalition to SWEAT Gym to Just Breathe, the panel saw strong leadership growing from many different parts of the community. These efforts need to be supported and provided the resources to better collaborate and communicate.
- *Community communication:* Much is going on within Southeast; however, residents have expressed difficulty finding information and resources. A community calendar should be developed to highlight existing resources and upcoming events.
- *Community branding:* A discrepancy exists in Colorado Springs between the outside perception of Southeast and the realities within the neighborhood. A community-led branding effort needs to start from within Southeast to change this narrative. Storytelling is a wonderful way to create connections, reaffirm values, and restore hope.

Health Access

- *Health task force and needs assessment:* An area-specific assessment of health care needs should be undertaken to define service gaps within Southeast. This assessment should lead to development of a health task force that tackles the identified priority areas.
- *Mobile clinics:* For residents unable to access the social services scattered throughout Colorado Springs, the panel suggests that a mobile clinic be created. Mobile clinics could have resources such as healthy groceries, online banking, basic preventive care, and other needs as identified by the community it serves.
- *Community gardens:* Creating community gardens both encourages healthy eating and teaches life skills. The panel heard that a few are already in the works at Solid Rock Christian Center, at the Deerfield Community Center, and by Colorado Springs Food Rescue. These should be supported and expanded where necessary.
- *Transit connections:* The panel heard from many residents that current public transportation services in Southeast are neither convenient nor serving the community's

needs. The panel suggests that a transit center be built, bus stops become sheltered, all buses be ADA compliant, and creative solutions to the “first and last mile” be taken into consideration.

- *Incorporating principles of building healthy places:* For long-term success in creating a thriving community, ULI's *Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places* should be incorporated into all future development plans.

Making It Happen

- *Maintain current affordable housing:* Existing naturally occurring affordable housing needs to be preserved, but it also needs to be brought up to safe and healthy living standards through enforcement of city codes and regulations. A strategy for ongoing enforcement should be created and followed, together with support with future affordable housing initiatives.
- *Create a community development corporation:* An entity needs to be put in charge of helping identify, support, and finance projects; moving them along; and making sure that community efforts are working in conjunction with each other.
- *Identify redevelopment incentives and financing mechanisms:* These tools should be identified and implemented for the projects described.

Study Area and Surrounding Context

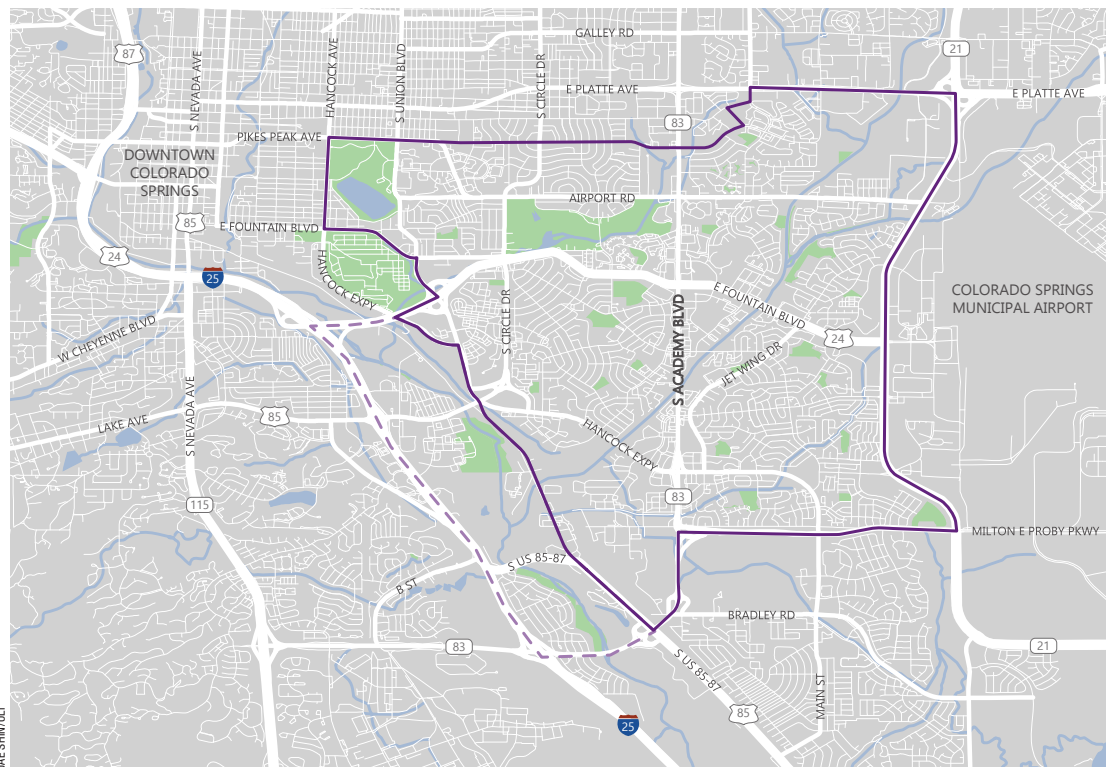
HOME TO SOME 73,697 PEOPLE, the Southeast Colorado Springs study area comprises about 12 square miles. The residents of Southeast make up 16 percent of Colorado Springs's population, which, if taken alone, would make the study area Colorado's 15th-largest city. Southeast is the most racially diverse area of Colorado Springs, with double the percentage of residents of color of the rest of the city.

The area's landscape is characterized by wide and busy roads, spread-out commercial shopping centers, and 1950s- and 1960s-style subdivisions. The study area is made up of two zip codes, 80910 and 80916, and is bounded by Pikes Peak Avenue and East Platte Avenue

on the north, Highways 21 and 24 on the east, Milton E. Proby Parkway and South Academy Boulevard on the south, and US 85/87 and Hancock Avenue on the west.

As seen in the figure on the facing page, Southeast struggles with many institutional and structural challenges that put it at a disadvantage when compared with the city of Colorado Springs as a whole.

Depending on how the statistics are presented, they can tell two very different stories. One story is of an area struggling to keep up with the rest of the city: it has higher vacancies, lower incomes, and a slower growth rate. The panel reviewed statistics that support this perspective, such as the percentage of Harrison School District 2



The study area encompasses the area known as Southeast Colorado Springs. It comprises several neighborhoods and consists of two zip codes, 80910 and 80916.

JAE SHIN/ULI

Southeast Colorado Springs versus Colorado Springs, 2017

Metrics	Southeast Colorado Springs study area	City of Colorado Springs
Population	73,697	459,681
Population growth, 2000–2017	19.2%	26.7%
Average household size	2.61	2.45
Percentage over 18 years of age	72.0%	76.7%
Median age	30.2 years	36.3 years
Unemployment rate	5.5%	3.6%
Median income	\$40,786	\$59,604
Housing vacancy rate	7.1%	4.8%
Median home value	\$150,079	\$273,788
Retail vacancy rate	17%	7%
Retail lease (per square foot)	\$9.50	\$23

Source: ULI briefing book.

students qualifying for free or reduced lunch growing by 11 percent in the last ten years, or that, as stated in the Colorado Springs *Gazette* special report series “Southeast,” 42 percent of Colorado Springs’s gang incidents occur in Southeast. This is the most commonly told narrative of Southeast, forming a perception of Southeast as a dangerous and poverty-ridden area of the city.

However, these numbers also tell a story of opportunity. Southeast is a family-focused area in which 21,000 young people are growing up. The panel heard that the Harrison School District is excelling, with 100 percent of Sierra High School’s 2016–2017 graduating class accepted into a college, university, trade school, or the military. Because Southeast is a multigenerational community, these students have a great opportunity to stay in the

neighborhood and filter into its workforce and leadership. The community has naturally occurring affordable housing, which, if brought up to code, can serve as an important and vital amenity for the area’s stability. Infill development opportunities are also plentiful, and they can provide creative opportunities for future multiuse redevelopment. With the right strategy and investments, Southeast has the tools to become a thriving, affordable, and culturally rich place to live.

Who Is Southeast?

MAKING THE NUMBERS COME TO LIFE, the panel reviewed past studies that provided recommendations for Southeast; talked with more than 85 stakeholders, including local students, community activists, business owners, and faith-based leaders; and experienced the physical neighborhood by foot, bicycle, and car.

Southeast Colorado Springs is not a monolithic neighborhood with one constant set of conditions, rather the area is more complex than any single statistic can describe. In the context of the city of Colorado Springs, Southeast is one of the most under-resourced communities in the region and suffers from significant economic and environmental hardships. Within the last 20 years, the community has been disproportionately affected by retail vacancies, food deserts and food swamps, health care deficiencies, and higher rates of recorded crime incidents. However, Southeast is far more than its negative perception. Its long community history and residents' commitment to the neighborhood show that Southeast Colorado Springs offers more than what the numbers indicate and has the backbone to support a sustainable, healthy, and vibrant area.

Community Strengths

The following discussion of the community's strengths notes aspects that Southeast can leverage to seek investment opportunities.



JULIE SUJKA

Southeast already has a series of community events that build up connections and pride. Activities like BUILD's free Zumba class should be held more frequently and promoted throughout the area.

Cultural Diversity

The Southeast community's biggest asset is its diversity. Diversity means more than race and ethnicity; it speaks to a variety of backgrounds and lifestyles. Based on this definition, Southeast is the most diverse neighborhood in Colorado Springs, home to a wide array of cultures, incomes, religious and faith affiliations, and perspectives. Specifically, Southeast has strong enclaves and subneighborhoods that serve the Latino diaspora, African Americans and the African diaspora, white Americans, and the pan-Asian diaspora. These groups bring resources to the area, such as various types of food, music, ethnic experiences, and cultural events. These neighborhood attributes are an asset and can be leveraged to provide value to the greater city and residents of Southeast.

Multigenerational Community

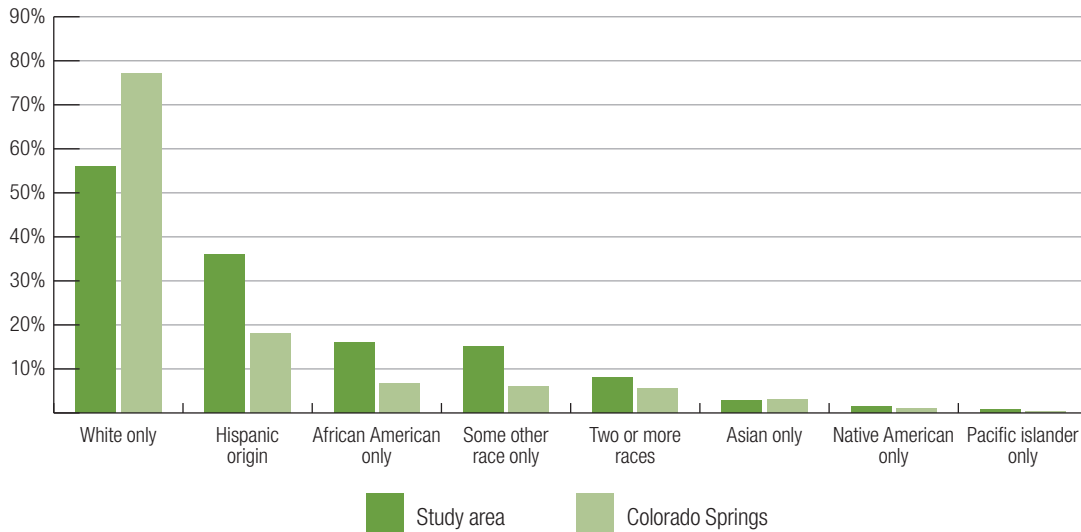
From students to seniors, residents wear their zip codes as a marker of identity. For many, their families have been living in Southeast for multiple generations, deeply rooting the neighborhood into peoples' identities. Despite the many economic disadvantages that exist, the community is proud of its resilience and ability to overcome difficult situations. Residents have taken a stake in the successes of their neighborhood institutions, such as the community centers, libraries, schools, and places of worship. This pride and commitment to improving the neighborhood from within is an asset that will support success of future projects.

Leadership and Advocacy

Southeast has a strong and vocal existing network of formal and informal leadership. From grassroots community leaders, active nonprofit and faith-based leaders, to individuals at the city, county, and school district level, Southeast has many voices working to lift the community.

These leaders have already succeeded in improving community engagement through voter education trainings

Race and Ethnicity, 2017



Southeast Colorado Springs has a significantly larger percentage of residents of color than does Colorado Springs as a whole. In particular, the area has about double the percentage of African American and Latin American residents.

Source: ULI briefing book.

and the provision of mobile ballot boxes at the library. They have also started a variety of community programming, including entrepreneurship classes, physical activity clubs, and mental health support groups. Their exhibited leadership shows a strong capacity for residents to tackle challenges; they are ready for their work to be expanded and given additional resources. Moreover, the opportunity exists to bring these leaders together to work on a shared vision and shared initiatives for the Southeast community.

Excelling Schools

In 2005, Harrison School District 2 was on life support, with some of the lowest graduation rates and highest drop-out rates in the region. However, with new leadership and improved engagement, it has become a success story and perhaps the neighborhood's most burgeoning asset.

Southeast schools have a graduation rate of over 80 percent and have received multiple awards for high achievement from the Colorado Department of Education. The district has multiple national blue ribbon schools, free pre-K and kindergarten programs, and among the highest minority graduation rates in the state. In fact, the 2016–2017 Sierra High School graduating class earned 1,000 college credits before high school graduation and had a 100 percent acceptance rate to a college, university,

trade school, or the military. The district currently has partnerships in place with Pike Community College and the Colorado State University system that enable students to earn their associate's degree before high school graduation and to receive up to \$16,000 toward college tuition.

Existing Business Infrastructure

A healthy economic environment is a key component of healthy communities. Although tremendous business

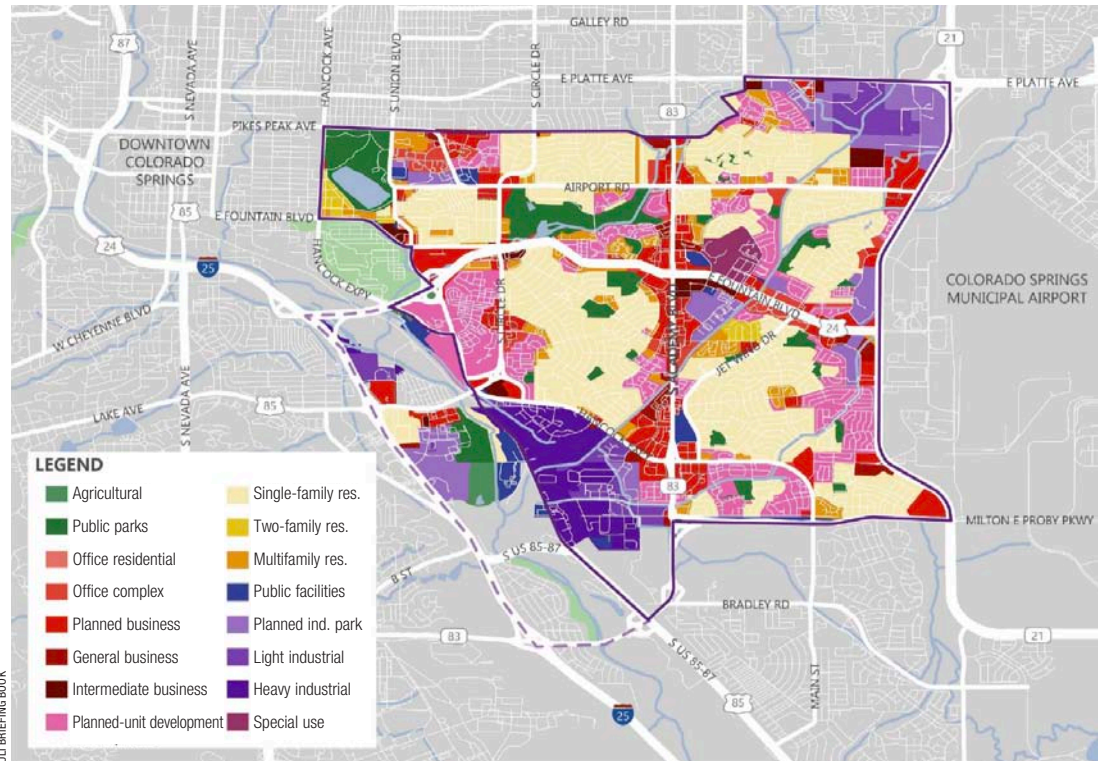


SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL FACEBOOK, @SIERRAHS2

SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL FACEBOOK, @SIERRAHS2

Sierra High School has transformed from an underperforming school to a model institution. Despite this amazing change, the panel heard a lingering distrust of the school from residents and a resistance to using its facilities. By rebuilding this trust, the Southeast community could gain a valuable asset.

Zoning



Southeast has two main corridors zoned for commercial use, both of which are underused. Increasing the commercial occupancy rate along these corridors needs to be a top priority to help kick-start Southeast's economy.

investment and economic development needs exist, large corporate organizations already have a presence in Southeast. Employers such as Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman, Harris Corporation, and Harrison School District 2 each have office space in the study area. Many of these businesses operate on a contract-related basis and are tied to the region's strong military and airport presence. Although contract turnover can cause fluctuations in job availability, it also offers an opportunity for Southeast to capitalize on the business community's continuous need for office space, workforce support, and logistic placement. The presence of these existing businesses and the proximity to the constant economic drivers of the military and the Colorado Springs Airport can serve as catalysts for future business investment in Southeast.

Opportunity Areas

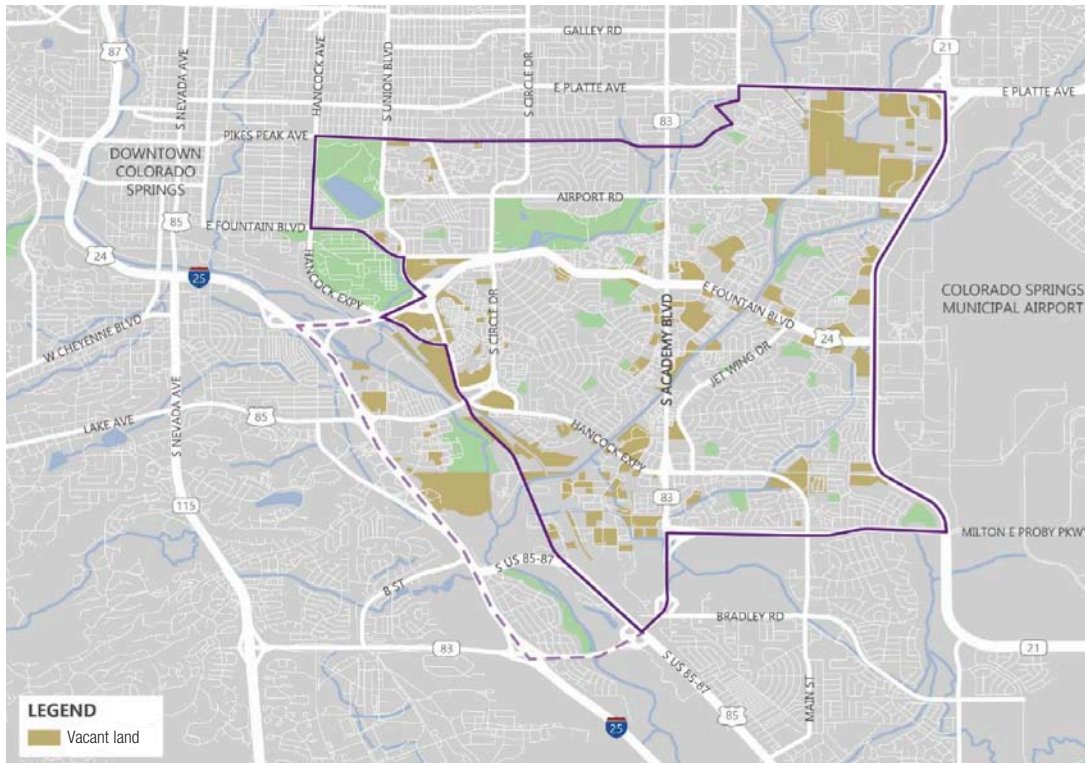
The following section discusses aspects of the study area where momentum exists to turn them into strengths.

Making the City Whole

For Colorado Springs to achieve its goal of being known internationally as "Olympic City USA" and the "top middle-weight city in the US," the city must function effectively as a whole entity. Because of poor transportation links, historic biases, and limited representation in the civic process, Southeast is one of the most disconnected and disenfranchised areas of Colorado Springs. During the panel's interviews, individuals from all parts of Colorado Springs articulated the physical and psychological divide between Southeast and the rest of the city.

Specifically, the panel heard from Southeast residents that they do not feel welcome or safe in other parts of town and vice versa. This perception has affected economic investment, infrastructure improvement, sense of community, and overall health statistics in the study area. These physical, reputational, and cultural barriers need to be overcome for Colorado Springs to reach a level of equity.

Vacant Land



Southeast's ample vacant space poses opportunities for creative activation through pop-ups and placemaking.

Without making this reconnection a priority, Colorado Springs will not achieve its reputational goals; just as no athlete is fit to compete unless his or her entire body is trained and in shape, Colorado Springs cannot reach its potential if Southeast is not thriving.

Space to Build and Activate

Southeast has the most vacancies and lowest building values in the entire city, currently resulting in blight and lack of investment. With a 17 percent retail vacancy rate, the number of vacant lots and empty storefronts creates a disconnected area that fails most metrics of healthy places and negatively impacts the quality of life and morale of residents. These spaces pose an opportunity to offer community stakeholders, businesses, entrepreneurs, and developers a clean canvas from which to rebuild and rebrand the neighborhood.

A plethora of plans and studies have evaluated what could be done to improve Southeast, and these vacancies provide

the space to implement creative solutions. Later in the report, strategies to temporarily activate these vacant spaces during the long-term planning period are discussed.

Perception and Identity

Much of the current outside information shared about Southeast is largely negative, adversely affecting the area's environmental conditions, community perception, civic engagement, real estate development, and corporate investment. Although raising awareness on issues such as violence, poverty, and lack of resources may be important, it should not be the only story told; an equal need exists to celebrate the Southeast community. A change in public perception needs to occur through better communication around the community's successes. This information should be imparted in culturally sensitive language and shared in ways that are accessible to people of all generations living throughout Colorado Springs. Focusing on this style of communication opens the gates to renewed community pride and increased outside investment.

Building Healthy Places

WHERE WE LIVE DIRECTLY AFFECTS our well-being, yet in many places, the built environment—including buildings, streets, and neighborhoods—does not adequately support practices that sustain healthy living, thereby causing health outcomes to vary widely from one neighborhood to the next.

The Commission to Build a Healthier America, a national group of leaders from both the public and private sectors that was convened by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, explains that neighborhood features—such as the density of convenience stores and fast-food restaurants relative to grocery stores selling food, the concentration of poverty, the availability of high-quality affordable housing, and access to transportation and places to exercise—all directly affect public health outcomes.

In Southeast Colorado Springs, the existing built environment presents major health challenges, including the following:

- **Active transportation:** Because of the high proportion of unsafe roads with fast-moving automobile traffic and a lack of connected sidewalks and crosswalks, many Southeast Colorado Springs residents lack opportunities to incorporate “active transportation,” such as walking and bicycling, into their daily routines.
- **Access to high-quality food:** Although Southeast Colorado Springs has several full-service grocery stores, popular restaurants, and successful food access programs, many residents face difficulties accessing affordable, healthy foods because of the relatively limited number of these facilities throughout the area.
- **Affordable housing:** In Southeast Colorado Springs, high-quality, well-managed affordable housing is in limited supply, putting lower-income residents at risk of spend-

ing a high proportion of their incomes on housing costs. This can cause frequent moves and result in negative health outcomes.

- **Access to health care:** Southeast Colorado Springs has limited facilities for residents to access health services within their community. To reach essential health care service providers, many residents rely on infrequent or difficult-to-access bus services.
- **Social connectivity:** Residents of Southeast Colorado Springs have expressed a strong desire for additional spaces to come together, relax, and celebrate in their community. Studies have shown that social connections are as essential as a healthy diet, physical activity, and abstaining from smoking to support one’s health.

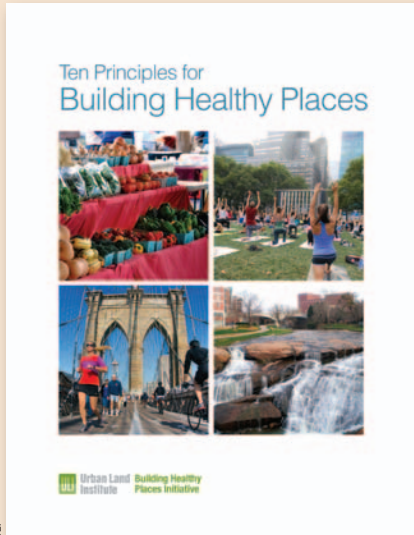
As noted in the ULI report *Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places*, successful places put people first. Communities that consider health upfront and integrate health into planning and development not only better serve residents, but they also generate a set of economic advantages that far outweigh associated costs.

Communities can equitably address the root causes of health disparities through investments in infrastructure to support walking and bicycling, access to high-quality foods, affordable housing, access to health care services, and creating spaces for events that bring people together to celebrate.

Intentionally creating walkable, healthy, diverse, and thriving communities gives cities an edge. Employers now want to locate where they can be assured of a stable supply of educated and happy workers, and workers are moving to places that focus on these elements of community life. To compete effectively in today’s marketplace, it is essential for cities to plan for their future by investing in infrastructure

Principles for Building Healthy Places

- **Put People First:** Individuals are more likely to be active in a community designed around their needs.
- **Recognize the Economic Value:** Healthy places can create enhanced economic value for both the private and public sectors.
- **Empower Champions for Health:** Community engagement is a powerful vehicle for bringing about changes that improve the health of a community and its residents.
- **Energize Shared Spaces:** Public gathering places have a direct, positive impact on human health.
- **Make Healthy Choices Easy:** Health is about individual choices. To overcome inertia—after all, human nature is to do what is easy and what one knows—communities must make the healthy option the easy option.
- **Ensure Equitable Access:** Many segments of the population would benefit from better access to services, amenities, and opportunities.
- **Mix It Up:** A variety of land uses, building types, and public spaces can be used to improve physical and social activity.
- **Embrace Unique Character:** Places that are different, unusual, or unique can be helpful in promoting physical activity.
- **Promote Access to Healthy Food:** Because diet affects human health, access to healthy food should be considered as part of any development proposal.
- **Make It Active:** Urban design can be used to create an active community.



Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places *distills lessons learned from the three spring 2013 Advisory Services panels ULI conducted in Colorado, as well as insights from a workshop attended by experts from a variety of fields.*

For more information, see <https://americas.uli.org/research/centers-initiatives/building-healthy-places-initiative/>.

Source: Thomas W. Eitler, Edward T. McMahon, and Theodore C. Thoerig, Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places (Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute, 2013).

that promotes the health and well-being of all its residents.

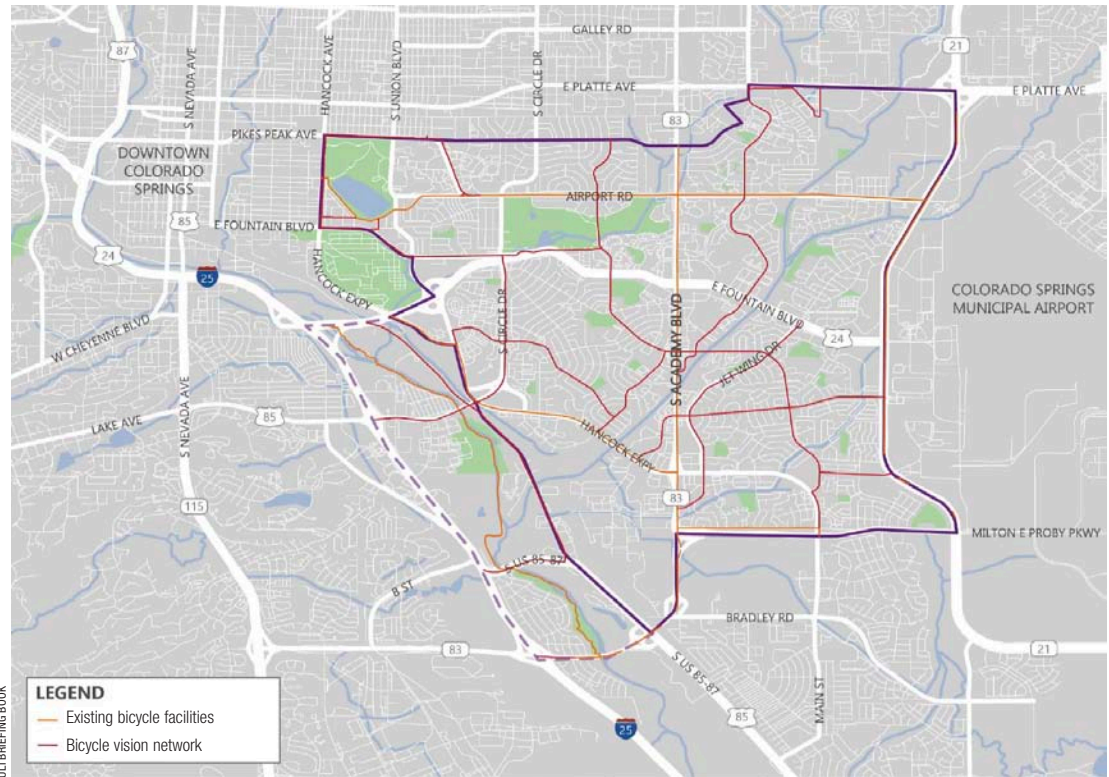
Recognizing the Value of Active Transportation

Walkable and bike-friendly communities that connect key destinations, such as parks, community centers, transit services, residential areas, and employment destinations with “active transportation” infrastructure—including

sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and trails—are growing in popularity throughout the United States.

According to ULI’s *America in 2015* report, 50 percent of U.S. residents say that walkability is a top priority or a high priority when considering where to live. Over half of all people (52 percent) and 63 percent of millennials would like to live in a place where they do not need to use a car very often.

Bicycle Facilities



In recent years, Southeast Colorado Springs has started the process of building bike paths, but efforts need to be continued with a focus on expanding, connecting, and maintaining the trails.

ULI's report *Active Transportation and Real Estate: The Next Frontier* notes the economic considerations, such as the high cost of owning, operating, and insuring a car—which averaged nearly \$8,700 in the United States in 2015, according to AAA—as well as the environmental, social, and health factors that have led to greater demand for places that accommodate walking and bicycling. Such places have the potential to benefit all income brackets because they provide less expensive alternatives to automobile ownership.

Places where people can safely reach their destinations without a car also support resident health. The *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* found that people who live in neighborhoods with shops and retail establishments within walking distance have a 35 percent lower risk of obesity.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the value of investing in active transportation infrastructure through how it promotes economic development. For example:

- A 2014 study of Indianapolis's eight-mile Indianapolis Cultural Trail by the Indiana University Public Policy Institute found that since its opening in 2008, the value of properties within a block of this high-quality biking and walking trail has risen by 148 percent. The value of the nearly 1,800 parcels within 500 feet of the trail increased by more than \$1.01 billion over the same period.
- A study by the Salt Lake City Department of Transportation found that "replacing parking with protected bike lanes increased retail sales." After 30 percent of on-street parking on Broadway Avenue was replaced with improved sidewalks, crosswalks, and protected bike lanes, retail sales went up by 8.8 percent in a year, compared with a citywide average increase of 7 percent.

Infrastructure to support walking and bicycling can catalyze nearby real estate development. Developments across the country, including Blue Dot Place in downtown Colorado Springs, are building along active transportation

corridors and including amenities such as secure bike parking and bike repair workshops within buildings.

By expanding networks of crosswalks, bike lanes, sidewalks, and trails while also creating multisector partnerships that make walkable and bike-friendly real estate development the norm, communities can equitably improve health outcomes, enhance access to the natural environment, and generate economic wins that give them competitive advantages over automobile-dominated places.

Southeast Colorado Springs has an opportunity to invest further in improving the safety and convenience of walking and bicycling throughout the area by creating additional crosswalks, adding pedestrian-activated crossing signals, updating current bike trails, and building sidewalks and trails that link residents to their places of employment and key destinations, such as local schools, the Sand Creek Library, the Value Care Health Clinic, grocery stores, and Mountain Metro bus stops.

Investments in walking and bicycling infrastructure in Southeast Colorado Springs could be leveraged by the real estate community and local business leaders to create residential, mixed-use, and commercial development projects that would benefit from the potential of increased property values and retail sales. Such projects could lead to greater property and sales tax revenues and an overall healthier population, reducing the strain on local public services.

Recognizing the Value of High-Quality Food in Community Development

As noted in *Cultivating Development: Trends and Opportunities at the Intersection of Food and Real Estate*, a 2016 ULI report, residents of the United States at all income levels have recently shown an increased awareness of and demand for high-quality foods that are consistent with healthy lifestyles. This preference shift presents opportunities for community groups, nonprofit organizations, and the



After Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans was in desperate need of many resources, including access to healthy food. The ReFresh Project brought together fresh and healthy food, groceries, health resources, and community development to create a multifaceted food hub in what was formerly considered a food desert. The project was financed through a combination of contributions from New Markets Tax Credits (JP Morgan Chase, Goldman Sachs), Goldman Sachs, the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, the Foundation for Louisiana, the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, the New Orleans Fresh Food Retailers Initiative, Newman's Own Foundation, and self-financing.

local real estate industry to leverage the topic of food while addressing health challenges.

ULI's *Building Healthy Places Toolkit* suggests that new development projects and communities consider including grocery stores, hosting a farmers market, facilitating healthy food retail, and offering on-site gardening and farming programs. Projects can go even further by including food hubs, kitchen incubators, and programs and services that improve knowledge of health, nutrition, and cooking.

By creating projects near existing food-based community amenities or by accommodating facilities such as farmers markets, community farms, and local restaurants within projects, real estate developers can leverage the growing demand for fresh, healthy, and local food while supporting the local food economy.

Changing consumer preferences related to where food is grown, produced, purchased, and consumed present significant opportunities for community economic development. For example, according to a report commissioned by the Detroit Food & Fitness Collaborative that was produced

by Econsult Solutions and Urbane Development, the food system in Detroit is responsible for \$3.6 billion in revenue, directly employs more than 36,000 people, and is the third-largest industry in the city. If the percentage of consumers purchasing local food shifted by 30 percent, the food system would rise to be the second-largest industry in Detroit.

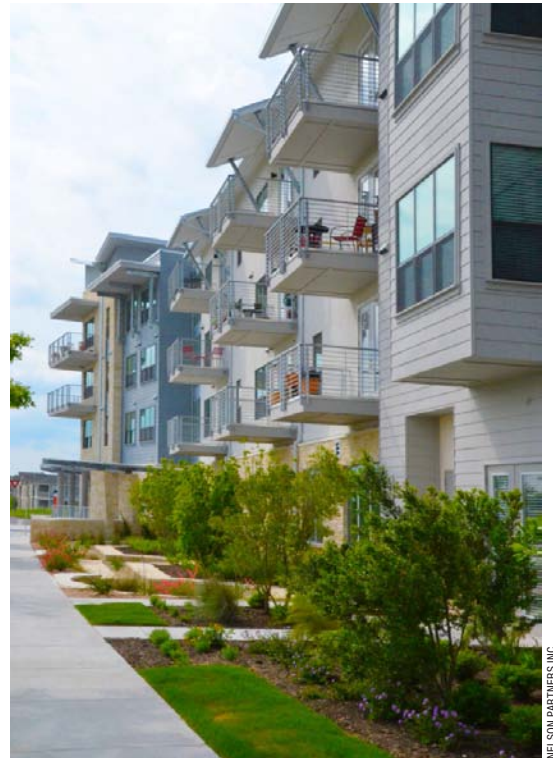
Residents of Southeast Colorado Springs are looking for places to access healthy, affordable food and to share meals with friends, family, and visitors to the community. Partnerships among the real estate sector, local non-profit groups, educational institutions, and other active community organizations could be harnessed to create food-focused projects that strengthen the local economy and support additional real estate development.

Projects are already in motion in Southeast, including the creation of a satellite location of Switchback Coffee, which will have pay-what-you-can items and job-training services, and the creation of a community-designed food-growing hub, operated by Colorado Springs Food Rescue, that offers skills training and nutrition education programs. These projects have the potential to expand the availability of spaces in which the community can gather and access healthy foods.

Recognizing the Value of a Full Range of Affordable Housing Options

Providing a full range of affordable housing options is an essential component of creating stable, healthy, and vibrant communities; however, high-quality housing is largely unavailable for many low- and middle-income residents of the United States.

As noted in the ULI report *The Economics of Inclusionary Development*, multifamily apartment construction across the United States reached near-record highs in 2016, yet millions of Americans were experiencing significant housing affordability challenges, paying more than half of their incomes for housing costs.



NELSON PARTNERS INC.

Windflower Terrace, a 2017 winner of the Jack Kemp Excellence in Affordable and Workforce Housing Award, is a 201-unit, four-story mixed-income apartment community in Austin, Texas, for people ages 55 and older. Of those units, 174 (85 percent of the total) are dedicated to people earning 80, 60, 50, and 30 percent of area median income, keeping most units affordable while ensuring that the project can afford the appropriate amenities and continue property maintenance. For more information, visit americas.uli.org/awards/jack-kemp-excellence-affordable-workforce-housing-awards-2017-windflower-terrace.

Stable, affordable housing for people and communities offers numerous benefits. According to *Impact of Affordable Housing on Families and Communities: A Review of the Evidence Base*, a 2014 report by Enterprise Community Partners Inc., these benefits include preventing homelessness, improving educational outcomes for children, and reducing the risk of negative health impacts, including “[the] risk of depression, development delays, mental stress, and trauma.”

The provision of affordable housing can also drive economic development by increasing the amount of available discretionary income for individuals and families, which in

turn expands local purchasing power. Places with more available resources to support local businesses can attract additional community-serving retail anchors that add to a community's strength and vitality.

Providing affordable housing can also serve to create jobs and attract workers and employers, thereby bolstering local tax revenues. According to the National Association of Home Builders, building 100 new units of affordable housing can lead to the creation of 120 jobs during project construction and can generate an additional 30 longer-term jobs. Furthermore, affordable housing can produce the same amount of local tax revenue for local governments as market-rate properties.

Although much of the housing stock in Southeast Colorado Springs is more affordable than in other parts of the city, it suffers from a shortage of high-quality, well-managed, and well-maintained housing set aside for lower-income individuals and families. Current naturally occurring affordable housing should be preserved by being brought up to code.

In the future, as local leaders in Southeast Colorado Springs implement strategies that have positive economic consequences for the area—potentially including investing in active transportation, development of food-centric projects, and creating new community gathering places—will become even more essential to address local housing affordability, because these neighborhood investments may result in higher property values, housing prices, and monthly rents. Intentional affordable housing can ensure that existing residents can equitably benefit from improvements to their community that could otherwise lead to displacement.

Recognizing the Value of Access to Health Care

All too often, people with limited incomes and people who cannot drive or choose not to do so are presented with barriers in accessing health care services when hospitals and clinics are unavailable near where they live. Ensuring that all residents can reach health care services is

essential in developing equitable, stable, and healthy communities; improving access to health care also can create economic benefits. The National Immigration Law Center reports that workers who have access to health care are significantly more productive, and health-related productivity losses have been found to reduce U.S. economic output by \$260 billion annually.

Furthermore, state and local economies benefit when residents can access affordable health care because their disposable income that can be spent locally on goods and services increases, thereby bolstering local tax revenues and reducing the strain on limited public resources.

Although several high-quality, community-serving health care providers are located in Southeast Colorado Springs, including AspenPointe and the Value Care Health Clinic, the number and capacity of these facilities are extremely limited given the size and population of the area. As a result, many residents are forced to travel relatively long distances to receive care.

Further investing in existing and new health care centers within Southeast Colorado Springs would support improved resident health outcomes and could produce economic benefits for the community, including more disposable income being spent locally. Improving the convenience of local active transportation infrastructure and Mountain Metro bus services could supplement these investments and reduce barriers for health care services that remain unavailable within Southeast Colorado Springs.

Recognizing the Value of Social Connectivity

A growing body of evidence shows that social connections not only give us pleasure but also make a significant positive contribution to our long-term health. The existence of strong social connections in one's life has been shown to be as essential as getting an adequate amount of sleep, eating nutritiously, and not smoking. The evidence shows that people who have satisfying relationships are happier, have fewer health issues, and live longer.

The Recording Studio at the Pike's Peak Public Library is an example of a community space where people can come together, play, and create.



Conversely, a relative lack of social ties is associated with depression, later-life cognitive decline, and increased mortality. The Harvard Medical School reported in 2010 that a lack of strong relationships increased the risk of premature death from all causes by 50 percent—a similar effect to smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day and a greater effect than being obese or physically inactive.

In addition to the health benefits of social connections, understanding has grown that creating spaces for people to gather with their friends, families, and neighbors, such as parks, community gardens, restaurants, libraries, and community centers, is an integral component of community economic development. Creating gathering places can produce spillover benefits that support local retail and development opportunities. For example, a Project for Public Spaces report notes that 60 percent of shoppers at indoor and outdoor food markets around the United States visited other local retail establishments on the same day they visited the markets—and they did so only on days they visited the markets.

Existing gathering places in Southeast Colorado Springs, including the Deerfield Hills Community Center and the Sand Creek Library, are well loved and well used, yet area residents still lack a sufficient supply of safe and appealing places that can accommodate the creation and maintenance of social relationships. The panel heard that some residents feel as if they have to travel outside Southeast to build their community.

Residents of Southeast Colorado Springs have expressed a strong desire for additional spaces to informally come together to gather and celebrate. These spaces could include new or expanded community centers, coffee shops, improved parks with recreational amenities, local restaurants, community farms, and gardens. By creating community hubs that offer a number of these gathering places in one physical location, Southeast Colorado Springs would have the opportunity to not only serve the needs of residents, but also attract additional investment to the area.

Engaging Southeast: Why Does Storytelling Matter?

A NEGATIVE NARRATIVE OF AREAS with generally lower incomes, communities of color, and neighborhoods with a high percentage of immigrants has developed in the United States through decades of institutional racism and discrimination. Coded terms such as “a bad neighborhood” and “the wrong part of town” create stigmas and conjure negative imagery of danger, crime, and substance abuse.

Southeast is a victim of this type of misrepresentation, as the panel heard many descriptors such as “high crime, dangerous, gang ridden, and poverty” when discussing the area. However, many residents speak of pride, unity, and great neighborhood amenities such as the Deerfield Hills Community Center and the recording studio at the Sand Creek Library. More recently, residents speak of meaningful community celebrations like the Shades of Colorado Springs Festival that continues to grow every year. If Southeast Colorado Springs does not start telling its story, others will do so and will continue to misrepresent it. The following recommendations describe specific strate-

gies for developing and communicating a positive story for the Southeast community.

Community storytelling helps a community find its voice, reaffirm values, and restore hope in the existing and future conditions of the community. Confirming community values and vision reinforces the ability to advocate a community’s priorities and to provide a unified voice when communicating to neighbors, businesses, political leaders, and potential investors. According to a Gallup study in conjunction with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, a significant correlation exists between people’s passion, connection, and loyalty to a community and its local economic growth.

Telling the story of Southeast should begin with an inclusive, community-based approach to developing a branding and marketing plan. The *brand* is an image of peoples’ perception of a community or neighborhood. It is strategic in nature and represents the overarching values and principles of the community. *Marketing* is the allocation of



At the end of 2017, the Colorado Springs Gazette ran a special report looking at the inequalities between Southeast and the rest of Colorado Springs. The report was split into eight sections: Background, People, Education, Crime, Slumlord, Business, Health, and Future. The panel heard a spectrum of reactions to the report: some people were happy that ongoing concerns in Southeast were being brought to the forefront, but others were upset that the report constituted fear mongering and mainly focused on negative aspects of the community.

resources to support the brand. It is more tactical in nature and provides a blueprint for how to share a community's brand with specific audiences.

Branding Life in Southeast

Many communities across America are losing their identity and often their affordability to new development pressures. In Derek S. Hyra's book *Race, Class, and Politics in the Cappuccino City*, the American University professor coins the term *black branding*. This term describes the phenomenon by which developers actively promote an area's historic African American identity as a marketing strategy to attract newer renters and buyers to the area. In the case study cited from Hyra's book, the community mentioned had not been involved in developing or marketing its story into a brand. To ensure that the focus of a branding process is centered on improving Southeast for its current population, its branding and marketing plan should incorporate the following elements:

- An inclusive, community-based approach;
- The creation of core messaging that reinforces the community's vision;
- The development of positive branding that reflects the Southeast communities' diversity and resilience;
- An emphasis that Southeast Colorado Springs is one area that comprises many different neighborhoods;
- The identification of target audiences such as the following:
 - Religious institutions;
 - Community groups;
 - Schools;
 - Southeast's youth;
 - Southeast's elderly;
 - Leadership within Southeast;
 - Leadership from across the city of Colorado Springs;

- Nonprofits and grant makers;
- New businesses;
- New employers; and
- Potential investors.

- The creation of an "experience map" that highlights and connects people with existing places of interest such as parks, open space amenities, and historical sites.

Telling the Southeast Story

The methods used to share a community's story are equally as important as developing the story. Marketing tools should include innovative, culturally specific strategies that resonate with current residents, local businesses, and others identified as a target audience. A phased implementation process approach is strongly encouraged to demonstrate progress on priorities and momentum. This approach should take digital and physical form and be targeted to people with different experiences with technology, who speak different languages, and who exist in the different realms of the Southeast community.

Key steps that can be initiated to help support a robust communications and storytelling plan include the following:

- Creation of a community newsletter, which should be available in print and online;
- Creation of marketing materials in multiple languages;
- Organization of volunteer street teams and block captains to distribute information;
- Implementation of community information kiosks or community bulletins, which should be placed strategically in spaces already frequented by the community such as the Dollar Store, the Sand Creek Library, and Deerfield Community Center;
- Implementation of a news-spreading system through cellphone texting apps;

- Incorporation of social media platforms such as Next-Door, Facebook, and Instagram to advertise community events and news;
- Creation of a Southeast section for the *Gazette's* neighborhood section; and
- Starting Southeast Community Story Circles, where members of the community gather over potluck meals to share stories and bring family photos.

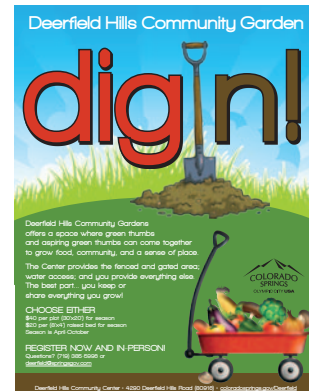
Supporting the Stories Being Told

As highlighted throughout this report, countless stories about Southeast and its community are worth telling. The panel believes that investment is coming to Southeast, and it should be used to support what is already happening and to help start other programs that residents have expressed interest in creating. Current initiatives to expand and new ones to think about implementing include the following:

- Increase access to healthy food options.
 - Increase the number of free community gardens.
 - Explore sponsorship opportunities to make the Deerfield Hills Community Garden free.
 - Community gardens should grow foods that participants want to eat and cook with.

- Work with local grocers to expand the mobile food pantry.
- Create a community farmers market in currently vacant spaces.
- Expand talent and workforce development opportunities.
 - Continue to expand youth and workforce development training programs like Thrive, Kids on Bikes, and the Southeast Springs Soccer Initiative.
 - Further develop partnerships with schools.
- Support community festivals such as the Shades of Colorado Spring Music Festival.
 - Showcase local talent.
 - Use local restaurants and vendors.
- Create a faith-based healthy community collaborative:
 - Heartbeat of Colorado Springs;
 - 5K runs/walks; and
 - Health challenges.

Deerfield Hills Community Center hosts a community garden, where participants rent a plot of land for \$40 a season.



DEERFIELD HILLS COMMUNITY CENTER AND SPRINGGROUND
FACEBOOK@DEERFIELDHILLS

Designing for Southeast

THIS SECTION EXPLORES planning and design strategies the panel recommends be implemented in the study area to promote a healthier, safer, and more vibrant community. These designs focus on how to improve and build on existing infrastructure and rooting these projects in a community-centered design process. These projects are split into short- and long-term initiatives.

Some wanted a place for organized sports, some for celebrating quinceañeras, and others an outdoor amphitheater. This section explores how to involve the community in designing and creating a space, or spaces, that fits their varied needs and desires.

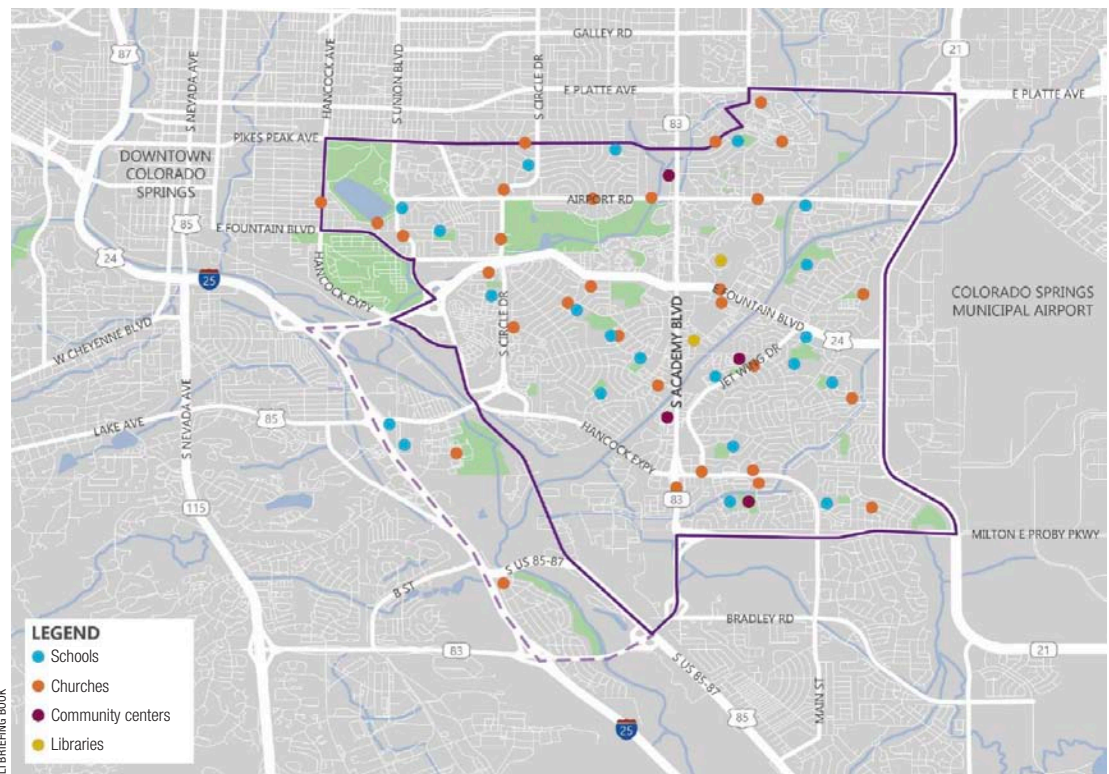
Short Term: Identify, Celebrate, and Strengthen Existing Gathering Places

Southeast's spatial assets include not only institutional indoor and outdoor gathering spaces, but also libraries, restaurants, food trucks, retail shops, and parks that are frequently centers of activity. These facilities are functioning as gathering spaces that embody the pride and

Community Gathering Space and Healthy Places Programming

Almost every resident the panel talked with referred to the need for a community gathering place within Southeast.

Institutions



Places of worship, libraries, and community centers serve as strong community gathering places for residents of Colorado Springs. However, the panel heard that none of these spaces currently is big enough or has the capacity to function as a central hub for community celebrations and events.

ULI BRIEFING BOOK

character of the Southeast community. The following three strategies can maximize use of these current spaces to increase connections:

Investigate and inventory the institutional and noninstitutional places where people feel safe and comfortable to gather and connect. Together, they make up the community's place-based asset for social

cohesion. An early project could be a series of publications, events, and installations designed to make visible what is already in Southeast. As discussed in the previous section, these spaces and their resources should be made more accessible through wider and more comprehensive communication. Projects in line with this suggestion include the Willowbrook Project and James Rojas's work (see case study).

Case Study: A Community Approach to Planning

James Rojas is an urban planner, community activist, and artist, and the founder of Place It!, a design- and participation-based urban planning practice in Los Angeles.

In addition to working with museums, schools, and cities on community visioning and planning, Rojas examines the urban landscape through the lens of the Los Angeles Latino community's cultural influences on urban design and sustainability. Rojas has found that how Latinos use public and semiprivate spaces influences how all Angelenos experience and interact with the city's built environment.

For more information on James Rojas and his work, visit

- <https://folklife.si.edu/talkstory/2015/on-fences-plazas-and-latino-urbanism-a-conversation-with-james-rojas>

- <https://la.streetsblog.org/2017/09/21/latino-active-transportation-reinvigorating-walking-in-u-s-suburbs/>
- <https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/elysian-park-a-plaza-set-in-nature>
- <https://la.streetsblog.org/2014/04/14/students-re-envision-their-neighborhood-through-interactive-workshop/>



James Rojas documents and photographs the ways in which Los Angeles's Latin American culture influences the experience of private versus public spaces.



TINY WPA



TINY WPA



TINY WPA



TINY WPA

Tiny WPA's mission is to "grow and empower an army of talented community-design leaders—Building Heroes—that will make Philadelphia the national model for how to engage people of all ages in the design of their cities and help lay the foundation of an incomparable future for community-generated civic innovation."

Improve and extend places of gathering using low-cost additions. Small, shorter-term improvements to existing infrastructure can help increase both the capacity of a space and its visibility. For these low-cost additions, the key is to go beyond typical facade improvement projects that often help create an impression of “new” and “branding” but do not actually offer space for people to connect and gather. Instead, investing in an addition that increases visitor interaction as well as being visibly appealing is a better long-term investment. An example is installing a brightly painted bench in front of a store, which both adds to the store’s aesthetics and encourages patrons to stay around after their purchase, in turn activating the street front and attracting more customers.

Projects in line with this suggestion within Southeast include the Sand Creek Library and the Deerfield Community Center’s expansion. Examples from other places include Alex Gilliam’s work at Public Workshop and Paul Chan’s work at Creative Time.

Expand the impact of current spaces through active programming. Programming should target a predetermined list of priorities that fill existing gaps of social need in Southeast. This list should be identified by community leaders and could include the following:

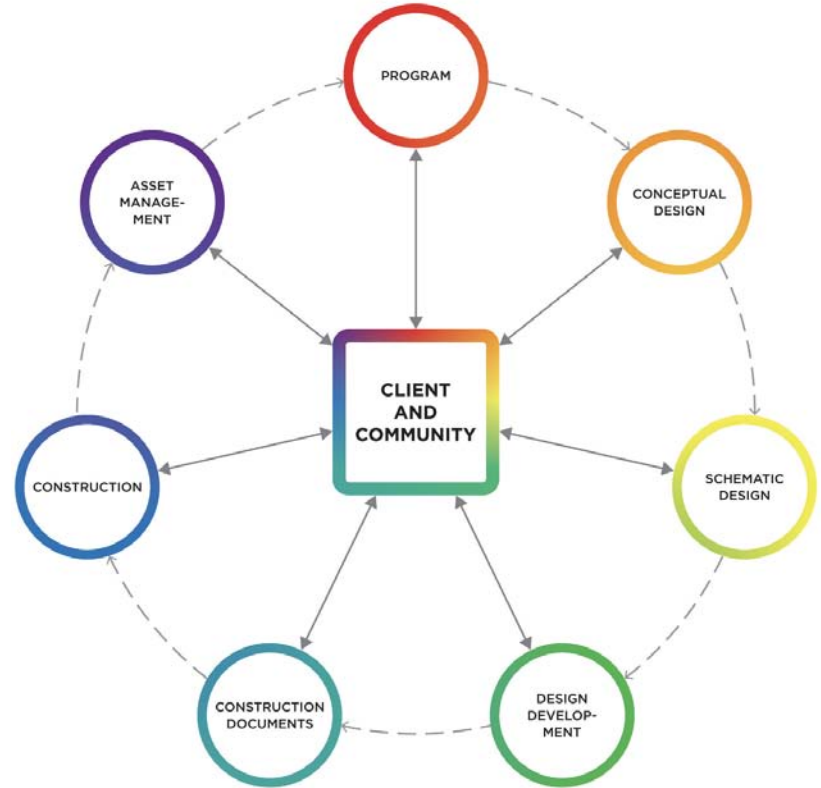
- Access to healthy food options;
- Access to health care;
- Talent and workforce development;

- Increased social spaces; and
- Good-quality affordable housing options.

The following strategies can be used to promote these priorities in existing, underused spaces:

- Provide access to food options:
 - Expand the mobile and stable food pantry system.
 - Create a food truck rally—Southeast Eats or SouthEATS.
 - Create a farmers market.
 - Start free community gardens.
- Improve access to health care:
 - Create mobile clinics.
 - Increase access to the new Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinic.
 - Start community health projects such as a walk-athon, 5K, community-led exercise classes, or a game day.
- Increase talent and workforce development opportunities:
 - Expand current programs such as THRIVE, Kids on Bikes, and Southeast Springs Soccer Initiative.
 - Partner with schools and use their after-hours spaces.
 - Collaborate with faith-based organizations and leaders.
- Increase social spaces:
 - Enhance Memorial Park’s use by implementing ongoing programming and activities.
 - Increase the number of and expand the capacity of community festivals.
 - Showcase local talent and use local vendors at all programming.

Community-Driven Design



ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Long Term: Create a New Hub for Collective Learning and Gathering

Undertake a community visioning and design process to create a shared understanding of the need for a community “hub.” A carefully delivered community design process can help build a broader coalition for this long-term community investment. It should include conducting a needs assessment, whose findings should be incorporated into the final design and programming.

A successful community design process should include the Southeast community’s full participation in all phases of the project, including during the needs assessment phase and all phases of design, construction, and stewardship. The engagement process should be carried out at a variety of times and in different forms (in person, through social media, by surveys, and by direct outreach), to include people from as many different parts of the community as possible. This process can help raise larger

Enterprise Community Partners’ guide to a community-driven participatory design process. For more information on the Participatory Design Toolkit, visit <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/download?fid=7332&nid=4092>.



In summer 2016, Hector urban design, planning & civic arts collaborated with a group of young people and teaching artists to create a design for the rebuild of Mifflin Square Park in south Philadelphia. After a two-month process of working with the community and investigating the site, Hector was hired by SEAMAAC to lead the park's design.

community support and improve the design, thereby increasing the impact of the project.

An example of a project with a successful community design process is the Mifflin Square Park and Neighborhood Plan, by Hector urban design, planning & civic arts, a Newark, New Jersey-based studio.

Activate Vacant Spaces

Southeast is rich in vacant and underutilized spaces that can be transformed and repurposed for community good. Suggestions on kick-starting this process follow.

Short Term: Activating Vacant Spaces

Activating the existing vacant spaces in Southeast both opens up programming opportunities and diminishes the perceived blight that results from vacancy. However, before committing to an event or interim use, a careful survey is needed of existing ownership and how the vacant commercial spaces are being used or may be reconsidered for alternative (interim) uses. After conducting a similar survey, urban designer Dan D'Oca described in a *New York Times* article how "what looked dead wasn't, but you would have missed it if you just passed by it with a predisposed idea about sprawl." Looking beyond perceived vacancy and examining whether unofficial space uses exist that should be preserved are important.

Projects already underway to activate parking lots and vacant spaces in Southeast include the Shades of Colorado Springs concerts and the cultural festival at Mission Trace. Successful projects outside Southeast include the work

being done by San Pablo Area Revitalization Collaborative in West Oakland and Off the Grid across the Bay Area, both in California; New York's Brooklyn-based Interboro; and Julia Christensen's Big Box Reuse.

Medium Term: Temporary Use of Vacant Commercial Space

Public/private partnership opportunities to host exhibitions, church gatherings, an incubator kitchen, youth education, or other temporary community events should be leveraged to bring these ideas to life in vacant commercial spaces. The community has so many ideas for programming to bring residents together that finding a space should not be a limiting factor.

A project already being done in Southeast is Imagination Celebration at the Citadel Mall. A project from outside Southeast is San Francisco's the Hall.

Long Term: Create Pedestrian-Friendly and Welcoming Gateways into Southeast

Transforming highway underpasses and unmarked transitions into Southeast can bring a sense of place to the area. Simple projects include painting murals on underpasses that brand the area as part of Southeast. The panel identified the MLK Bypass berm as a prime location to implement this project. New development should also be designed to be pedestrian-friendly, going beyond sidewalks and looking at creating a streetscape that invites people to spend time there.

Newark Staircase in New Jersey, designed by Hector urban design, planning, & civic arts, is an example.

San Francisco's the Hall

Situated at the intersection of the burgeoning Mid-Market district and the historic Tenderloin neighborhood, the Hall SF seeks to foster a connection among members of the community by creating a space for them to convene, hold events, and enjoy small, local food places. It was created to bring new energy to a site that had been vacant and blighted for nearly seven years while its development team undertakes the entitlement of a mixed-use apartment building that will eventually replace the existing property. The development is an experiment in 4,000 square feet of temporary retail space as a means of urban revitalization. The next and final phase will redevelop the site into a 186-unit mixed-use apartment building with about 10,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space. Rehabilitation of the site and construction of the temporary retail space have an estimated total cost of \$825,000.

Inspired by War Horse's Belvedere Square Market located in Baltimore, Maryland, the Hall SF is committed to supporting local food economies and creating thriving community gathering places. It features six local food vendors and a bar with outdoor seating. With most of the vendors originating from food truck backgrounds, the site provides these vendors an opportunity to experiment with brick-and-mortar retail without making the financial commitment usually required for such an endeavor. Since opening in October 2014, on average over 4,000 meals

per week have been served and 15 full-time workers have been employed in addition to the staff maintained by the vendors. In January 2015, the *Wall Street Journal* named the Hall one of the "Great New American Food Halls," and it was included in the top ten of San Francisco *Eater's* "Heat Map" of hot new restaurants in the city.

The Hall creates a gathering space for nonprofits, businesses, workers, and residents in the Mid-Market/Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco and strengthens the community. The Hall has hosted 36 different nonprofits for events and fundraisers and has donated nearly \$10,000 to 25 of them through its operations. Live music, art exhibits, and private events have added to the active community calendar, ensuring that all members of the surrounding neighborhood are welcome to gather and build community.

The Hall SF closed in the fall of 2017, after the successful entitlement of Tidewater Capital's new development, 1028 Market Street. The project received unanimous approval from San Francisco's planning commission with a large outpouring of community support. Once the project is completed, the developers intend to put a permanent retail space similar to the Hall in their mixed-use building.

Source: ULI case study from the 2016 Global Awards for Excellence.



The Hall activated a vacant billiards hall to become a beloved asset for San Francisco's Tenderloin, South of Market (SoMa), and downtown communities. The site transformed a hotspot of drug use and illicit activity into a unique food hall that is also used for job fairs, community outreach for a new development project at the site, and community and nonprofit event space.

A proposal for a highway underpass near Plume House, the second-oldest building in Newark, New Jersey, adds low-cost features, including lighting, paint, and plantings to improve the pedestrian experience.

HECTOR URBAN DESIGN, PLANNING & CIVIC ARTS



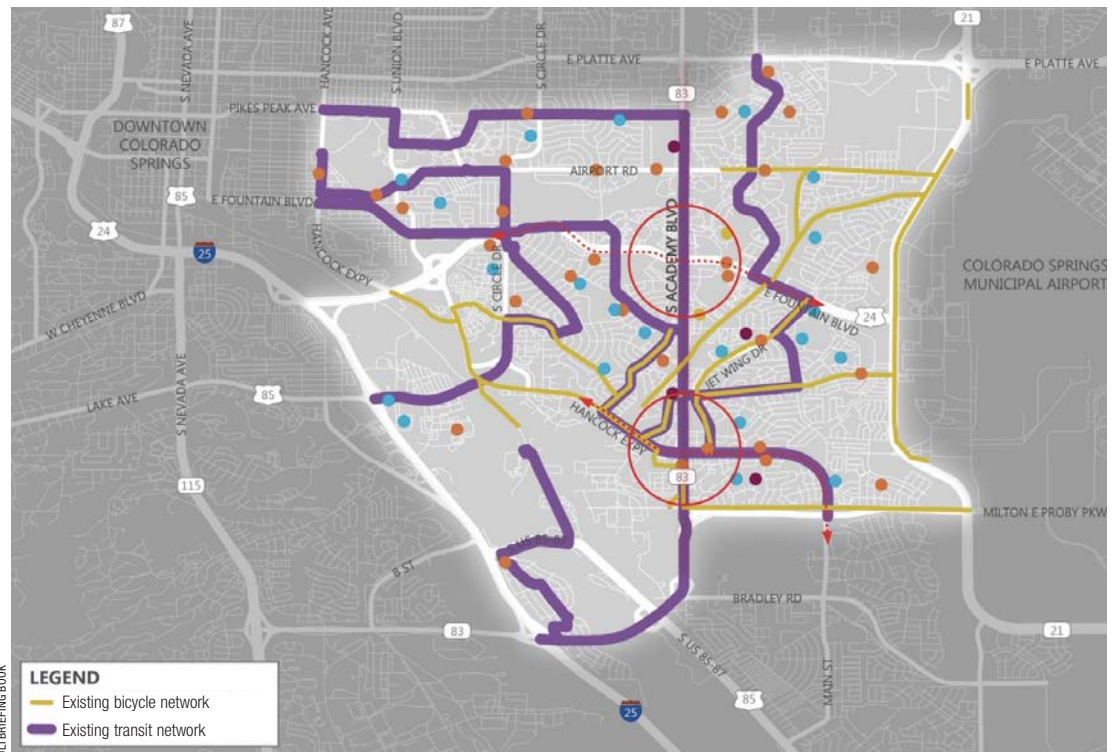
Transportation

The design of communities and the public realm should cater to all modes of transportation (cars, walking, biking, and transit), with a priority on moving people not cars. Southeast must allow residents, employees, and visitors to conveniently and safely connect to their destinations, benefiting the physical, mental, social, and spiritual health of the community. To connect people to their destinations, Southeast needs to prioritize creating an

integrated system from high-level connectivity to ground-level design improvements.

The following are specific short-term and long-term projects that should be implemented to connect Southeast. These include recommendations from the 2011 *Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan*, the 2017 *Colorado Springs Bike Master Plan*, and the 2016 *Hancock Expressway/Academy Boulevard Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study*, which the panel reviewed and

Transit and Bicycle Access to Community Destinations



This map shows the existing transit and bicycle networks in Southeast. To encourage use of modes of transportation other than cars, these networks need to be better connected. In particular, the areas highlighted with red circles should be priorities for the expansion and connection of both networks.

ULI BRIEFING BOOK

prioritized based on the recommendations that have the greatest opportunity to affect the health of the Southeast community.

Short Term: Connections through Transit

The transit network throughout Southeast shows decent local bus coverage throughout the community; however, the panel heard many residents say they are frustrated by the travel time to and from destinations outside the study area. Thanks to District 4 Councilwoman Yolanda Avila, funding for 15-minute frequencies on Routes 1 and 27 was recently passed to help support access to and from jobs, goods, services, recreational opportunities, and health care. As mentioned by some residents, an existing transit app should continue to be leveraged to help Southeast residents get around and to/from their community.

The *South Academy Great Streets Plan's* transit recommendations should continue to be implemented, focusing on the following recommendations:

- Retrofit bus stops throughout Southeast to be ADA compliant and provide shelters that protect from sun, rain, and snow exposure. Bus stops should be completed with eight-by-five-foot accessible boarding and alighting pads, connected to sidewalks, and provide the right level of amenities based on the transit activity at that bus stop. ADA retrofitting should be prioritized at high-activity stops and near community activity centers.
- Although current ridership and level of available funding do not dictate addition of a premium transit service in Southeast, an incremental step toward improving the current transit service, Mountain Metro, is the implementation of transit signal priority and queue jumps.

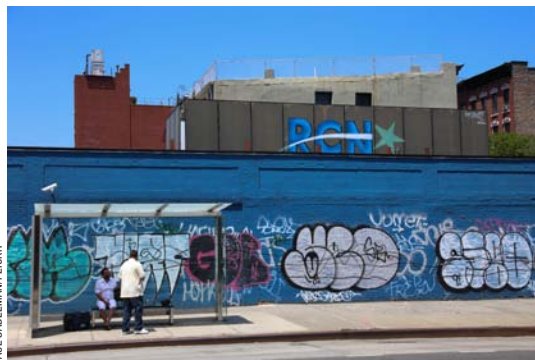
Sheltered bus stops across the world include these examples from (clockwise from top left) Copenhagen, Chicago, Seattle, and New York City. Putting these types of structures at high-volume stops could vastly improve the relationship Southeast residents have with the public transportation system.



SIFRID LUNDBERG/FLICKR



RENEE MCCURRY/FLICKR



PAUL SABLEMAN/FLICKR



ORAN WIRTHNYC/FLICKR

These can be cost-effective solutions that decrease transit travel time and enhance the rider experience.

- Evaluate current conditions for the following:
 - Right-turn lanes along transit corridors;
 - Transit corridors that experience high levels of congestion;
 - Traffic queues longer than 200 feet;
 - Capacity for cross streets for transit phase; and
 - Sufficient right-turn-lane length or potential to increase right-turn-lane length within existing right-of-way.

Short and Long Term: Creative Solutions to Transit's First- and Last-Mile Issues

Throughout the panel's conversations with Southeast stakeholders, it became apparent that residents of Southeast, particularly those with disabilities, have difficulty accessing the transit routes that run through the community. These are considered "first- and last-mile" issues, where transit exists but is not convenient enough to be fully utilized. Solutions center on connecting people to existing transit options, including providing a safer and more connected network of bike and pedestrian facilities, transit circulators, and on-demand transport.

In the short term, city and transit agency leaders should consider the full menu of first- and last-mile options to create better connections. Unconventional ideas to try include the following:

- Using nontraditional transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft, which have instated pilot programs across the country focusing on the first- and last-mile challenge, including programs in Los Angeles, Dallas, Minneapolis, Atlanta, and Denver;
- On-demand transit;
- Vanpools;
- A neighborhood circulator that runs through the core of the Southeast neighborhood, making connections between community centers, major shopping centers, social services, and parks; and
- Driverless shuttles or buses.

Longer-term projects that can help alleviate first- and last-mile issues include the following:

- Locate a new transfer center on the southeast corner of the intersection of Academy Boulevard and Hancock Expressway, on the site of the Mission Trace redevelopment. This site is more convenient for the transit-dependent populations on the east side of Academy, leverages the redevelopment of the plaza, and capitalizes on the

A variety of neighborhood circulator systems are used around the world, ranging from formal systems like Washington, D.C.'s Circulator bus, to informal systems such as Cape Town, South Africa's minibus system.



potential for a public pocket park on the southeast corner of the intersection.

- Pursue potential for bus rapid transit or express service, with supplemental local service on Academy Boulevard, to enhance connections between Southeast, Downtown Colorado Springs, and the rest of the transit network.
- Mountain Metro should aim to continue increasing frequencies on more high-activity transit routes running throughout Southeast.

Short Term: Transportation Access

Councilwoman Avila has done a great job in advocating for persons with disabilities in Southeast. Although paratransit is currently offered in Southeast, the panel heard that its service area extends only a half-mile from transit corridors and is cumbersome to use. Therefore, other sources for access to transit for people with disabilities should be pursued.

Immediate actions to help support transportation access include the following:

- Support the Independence Center’s pursuit of implementing nontraditional transportation network companies like Uber and Lyft to help tackle the first-mile/last-mile issues, specifically for the disabled population.
- Prioritize retrofitting bus stops and intersections throughout Southeast to be ADA compliant. This process should start at high-activity stops and near community gathering areas.

Connectivity: Biking and Walking

The auto-oriented nature of Southeast Colorado Springs presents pronounced challenges for people dependent on walking and biking as their primary mode of transport. Currently, the wide, high-speed roads serve as barriers between neighborhoods, separating people from their community and necessary resources. Improving pedestrian

and bike routes is a high priority and necessary to create a safe and convenient flow through the area.

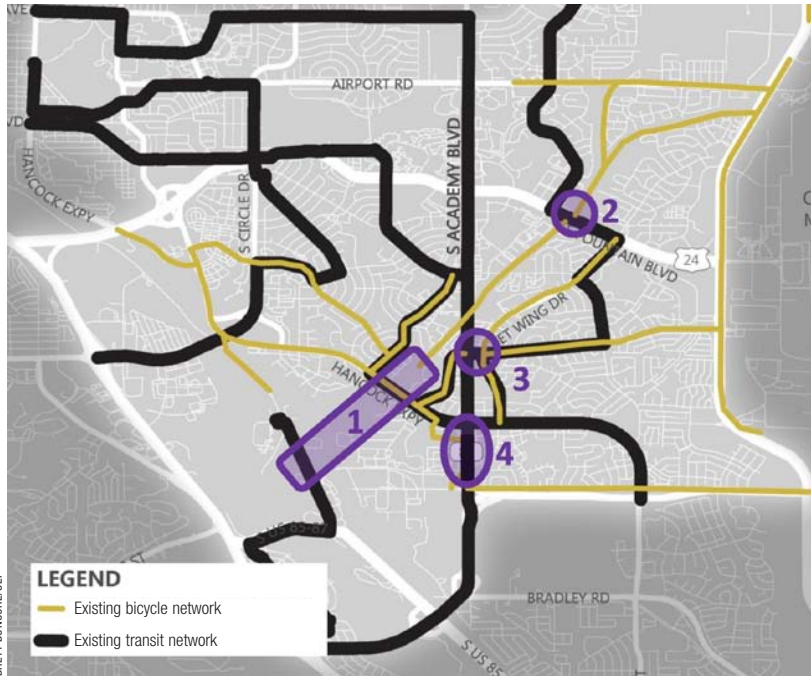
Short and Medium Term: Biking

Almost the entirety of Southeast Colorado Springs has been identified as a bicycle priority area in the 2017 Bike Master Plan, including some high-priority areas. In some areas of the community, bicycle travel is uncomfortable and, in many instances, unsafe. Along the Sand Creek Trail, the lack of trail-crossing signalization (across five- and six-lane roads) at some intersections, such as Chelton Road, presents barriers to access and unsafe conditions. Furthermore, at some locations, no crosswalks are present. A result of minimal infrastructure investment in recent years, lack of implementation of land use planning, and auto-oriented street design, implementing safe bike routes has not been prioritized.

In the short term, the current bike network should be retrofitted to become safe and comfortable to use. This starts with filling in the network’s gaps, specifically those located in the bicycle priority areas. Prioritize filling in gaps of the Sand Creek Trail to allow it to become the backbone of the community—for both recreation and commuting. Some of these priority areas include the following:

During the bicycling part of the site tour, panelists found navigating parts of the Sand Creek Trail very difficult because of poor trail maintenance and abrupt starts and stops to the path. In addition, certain roads that merge with the trail lack safe connections to the sidewalk, making these trails dangerous for use in accessing the rest of the area.





Priority areas for the bicycle network connections are 1) the Sand Creek Trail gap from just north of Hancock Expressway to Las Vegas Street; 2) the trail crossing without a signal at Chelton Road; 3) the bike lane gap on Astrozon Boulevard, east of Academy; and 4) the gap between Hancock/Academy and the Sand Creek and Milton Proby trails.

- Continue Sand Creek Trail to the south, connect it to East Las Vegas Street, and connect it to bike lanes to the north (as recommended by Bike Master Plan).
- Fill bike lane gaps on Astrozon Boulevard, east of Academy (as recommended by Bike Master Plan).
- Create a multiuse trail that connects the Hancock/ Academy area to the Sand Creek and Milton Proby trails. The panel recommends implementing this on the

east side of Academy Boulevard to support potential redevelopment of Mission Trace plaza and the proposed future transit hub.

In the medium term, make the existing infrastructure more accessible through small-scale urban design improvements. This does not need to include large-scale projects but can comprise a series of small actions to open up large, existing portions of the bike network. Having community organizations work on the bike path acts as team building, teaches skills, and creates support and visibility to the bike network. Maintenance could be done through ongoing partnerships with schools, faith-based institutions, and community centers.

Short Term: Walking

Southeast is not pedestrian friendly, a fact evident both from interviews with community members and from the panel's own walks around the neighborhood. For example, at Hancock Expressway, pedestrians must cross at uncontrolled locations or complete a circuitous route to the nearest signalized intersection to cross. Other barriers that present challenges for pedestrians include channelized right-turn lanes, high-speed ramps, and lack of sidewalk curb ramps, sidewalks, and median pedestrian refuges.

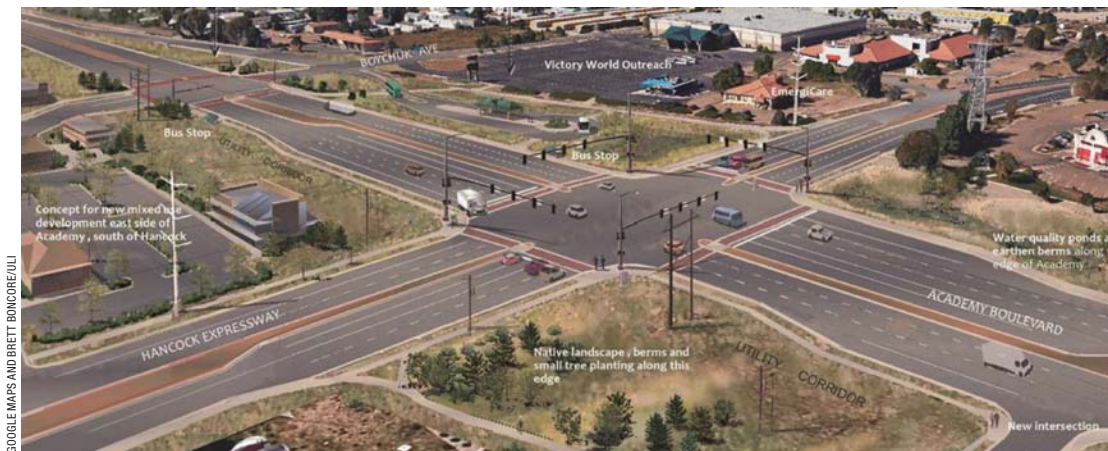
In the short term, inventory existing gaps in the pedestrian network. Prioritize pedestrian access improvements near

During the site tour, the panel saw several residents walking along the side of unsafe, high-speed roads without a sidewalk or barrier. These images were taken along Chelton Road.





GOOGLE MAPS AND BRETT BONCORE/ULI



GOOGLE MAPS AND BRETT BONCORE/ULI

The panel recommends that the intersection of Academy Boulevard and Hancock Expressway be transformed into a pedestrian- and bike-friendly crossing.

schools and designated existing and future community hubs. Specific improvements should include the following:

- Implement lighting at dark-lit locations throughout Southeast. Even in places with lighting infrastructure, residents mentioned that this lighting had been dimmed to save costs. The panel recommends this street lighting be reintensified to support safe crossings and deter crime throughout Southeast neighborhoods. Priority areas include along Sand Creek Trail and high-traffic pedestrian crossing locations and the sidewalk on Drennan Road and Academy Boulevard.
- Improve landscaping at intersections and along exposed pathways (trees, benches, other park elements) to use a unique opportunity to repurpose some sections of public right-of-way for pocket parks and beautification. Part-

nership between the streets and parks divisions should be pursued for implementation. Priority areas include Academy Boulevard and Sand Creek Trail.

- Eliminate channelized right-turn lanes and ramps, where present, and bring right-turn movements into the rest of the intersection. This slows down right-turn speeds and puts right-turn movements under signal control (as shown in the Hancock Expressway/Academy Boulevard PEL).
- Advance intersection signalization.
- Include pedestrian accessibility features such as ADA-compliant curb ramps, well-marked crosswalks, and audible pedestrian signals in all roadway modifications.
- Modify signals to allow enough time for seniors to cross the road, recommended at 3.5 feet/second. Priority



ERIC FISCHER/FLOICKR

The Indiana Cultural Trail, built in 2007, is an eight-mile bike and pedestrian path in downtown Indianapolis. The trail also has nine pieces of public art along its route. It is run by the nonprofit Indianapolis Cultural Trail Inc., which manages, maintains, and continues to extend the trail. The project cost \$63 million, with \$27.5 million from private funding and \$35.5 million from federal transportation funding.

areas include Hancock Expressway/Academy Boulevard (from PEL plan) and Hancock Expressway/Astrozon Boulevard.

- Construct raised, landscaped medians to provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing the roadway, allowing them to negotiate one direction of travel at a time. These commonly include landscaping to increase comfort for pedestrians and corridor beauty. Priority areas include intersections with four or more lanes such as the following: trail crossing at Chelton intersections of Hancock Expressway/Academy Boulevard, Boychuk/Academy, and Hancock/Boychuk, and other intersections from the *South Academy Great Streets Plan* including Academy Park Drive Loop South.

Short and Long Term: Create Safe Routes to School

All of the preceding recommendations should support transforming Southeast into an area where getting around is safe and easy for people of any age and physical ability. A goal of projects that allow children safely to travel to school by transit, walking, or biking could have ripple effects throughout the community. Children could more easily access after-school resources such as Deerfield

Community Center and the Sand Creek Library, parents or guardians could save time on transporting children to and from school and other activities, children would gain access to a natural source of exercise, and car use would be reduced.

To change transport patterns in the short term, bike education must be available in schools. Kids on Bikes is already doing this type of work and should be given the necessary resources to expand operations throughout Southeast. To tackle the lack of awareness of the Southeast bike network, bike tours should be supported to promote the network’s growth, use, and maintenance.

In the long term, coordination with programming recommendations and establishing a “public art” corridor along the Sand Creek Trail would be an amazing opportunity to create a vibrant public space. Using the opportunity of the colocated creek and shared-use trail, a public art corridor would further enhance a positive interaction with the public realm for families, increasing comfort with children using outdoor spaces without adult supervision. A successful example of this is the Indianapolis Cultural Trail.

Implementation

SOUTHEAST COLORADO SPRINGS has historically been an underserved community, the result of a city policy that has favored greenfield growth in the north instead of investing in its existing communities. Little use appears to have been made of financial tools to incentivize the development community to lead change and improvements in the area. However, the area clearly is situated in the growth path of urban renewal and revitalization that appear to be occurring in Colorado Springs from the inner-ring suburbs to the south of downtown. It is only a matter of time until the circumstances become favorable for the development community to look at Southeast's market and realize the value of low land costs, a well-performing school network, availability of established infrastructure, and its proximity to city, airport, and community facilities.

The city must leverage the role it plays in helping stimulate this interest, either through policy initiatives, incentives, or other tools at its disposal. The city is currently in the process of updating its comprehensive plan to provide a strategic framework to guide the future growth and development of the metropolitan area. Many of the emerging policies appear to align with the potential of Southeast; however, stronger policies are needed that shift favorability away from the low-hanging fruit of urban sprawl to infill development. Suburban areas are costly to service and have proven challenging in meeting the health and wellness objectives contained in the Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places. Promoting smart and sustainable development in Southeast will both benefit the residents of the area and help Colorado Springs grow successfully.

Recommendations and Implementation

The panel has been tasked with addressing the questions outlined in the introduction of this report, as well as the panel's priority list of projects from previous plans and studies. On the basis of these recommendations and the panel's observations during its week in Southeast, the panel has come up with five major priorities for the community and city to strategically implement.

Priority 1: Connect It!

Multimodal connectivity is an effective priority in terms of supporting health and wellness throughout the local community. Addressing connectivity at a community-wide level, rather than focusing on any one area, is important.

The panel heard about the existing challenges, not only with the level of transit service in the area (which is set to improve), but most significantly with first- and last-mile connectivity issues. In addition, providing connectivity between disjointed trail segments will enhance the level of service, usability, and safety of the pedestrian and bicycle ability for the community. In turn, this will increase the use of alternative modes of transportation and alleviate car dependency. Finally, improving pedestrian lighting will further enhance the feeling of safety for residents who currently are concerned about using sidewalks in the area.

Priority 2: Getting Together

The panel heard from a number of sources the need for a gathering place that hosts community celebrations, educa-

AUSTIN CALE, NO BARRIERS PROJECT, CHARLOTTE, N.C., JOHNS AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION



The No Barriers Project in Charlotte, North Carolina, uses a public park to bring together two communities that lie on either side of it. The project creates a common space for both communities to come together through light, sound, and play.

tion and training, and recreation activities. This desire does not discount the important role that Deerfield Hills, Hillside, local schools, YMCA, Pikes Peak Library, and faith-based institutions play in gathering the community, but it aims to create a space capable of gathering more people and offering a variety of functions. However, such facilities are costly and may prove out of reach without an identified source of funding. With this in mind, a major opportunity lies in repurposing the significant amount of vacant and underperforming buildings and land within Southeast. Temporary and pop-up activities can be programmed in these spaces, as well as within the existing park network to serve as community gathering spaces.

Priority 3: Advocacy and Communication

As highlighted in the body of this report, a number of highly respected and effective community activists are already serving the interests of Southeast Colorado Springs residents. However, outside the city administration, no coordinating entity exists to spearhead the necessary improvements and health initiatives recommended in this report. El Paso County Public Health has provided leadership in initiating this project, but taking on additional coordination alone may be beyond its capacity.

One solution is establishing a community development corporation (CDC), a 501(c)(3) entity tasked with implementing the plan's recommendations and overseeing the revitalization of the neighborhood. Representation of the major community organizations, including El Paso County Public Health, can contribute to the CDC's management and coordination to ensure alignment with community values and expectations. The scope of this entity's mandate would include coordinating the hub initiative, leading outreach to cultural groups, coordinating a community branding effort, leading media coordination, and managing a community calendar.

Priority 4: Health Access

Access to health care and healthy food are two fundamental basic needs to support a healthy community. Projects and strategies addressing these two essentials are a high priority. The panel heard about the large impact caused by relocation of health and community services out of Southeast and the difficulty in accessing these services through public transit. Access to health care facilities can be achieved through the reintroduction of permanent facilities, colocating with existing facilities such as the recently established Women, Infants, and Children food and nutrition center, or through mobile clinics.

In addition to health care access, this report has highlighted the importance of providing access to healthy food options.

Priority 5: Making It Happen

Many tools and funding mechanisms are currently available to help incentivize and guide the redevelopment and improvement initiatives in Southeast Colorado Springs. Clearly these opportunities are not being used to the benefit of the neighborhood, and an important, yet easy step is to shift the focus of these tools' application from greenfield development in the north to improving public amenities, facility maintenance, and infill redevelopment in Southeast. A number of these recommendations exist

at the policy level and fall under the city's jurisdiction. Establishing a CDC can provide the vehicle to effectively and strategically implement these tools.

Recommendation Matrix

The following matrix of recommendations synthesizes and prioritizes projects and strategies that the panel believes would best serve the goal of achieving health improvements within Southeast Colorado Springs. Although varied entities may be responsible for either initiating or delivering these projects, in many cases the panel charges the county and city with leading the way. Change will catalyze the private sector to move behind the city and to initiate

the important investment necessary to renew the health of the built environment. However, positive and effective change will ultimately be best served through the involvement of the local institutions and community-based groups that currently provide valuable services and advocacy for the local population. The panel has attempted to identify effective organizations or entities to provide leadership, funding, or both for the various projects and strategies, but the panel emphasizes that the matrix is only a starting point and the local community is better equipped to define the most effective champions and funding mechanisms.

Recommendations Matrix

	Projects	Priority	Responsibility/funding
Social connectivity			
Community hub(s)	Pop-up concepts for underused sites	Medium	City and NGO funding
	Mobile hub	High	City and NGO funding
	Community hub concept development	Medium	City
Community advocacy	Community development corporation	High	City
	Leadership development and training	High	CDC
Communication	Coordinated communications integration	High	CDC
Safety and accessibility			
Transit improvements	Install ADA-compliant bus stops	High	City/transit agency
	Integrate transit hubs with land use	Medium	City
	Promulgate land use policy to promote mixed-use infill at transit hubs	High	City
First- and last-mile trail connectivity	Improve sidewalk connectivity to transit stops	Medium	City
	Coordinate Lyft/Uber or other alternatives with city and agencies	High	City/transit agency
Academy Boulevard streetscape improvements	Establish implementation priorities (safety at crossings)	High	City/CDOT
	Define and implement temporary bicycle interventions	Medium	City/CDOT
	Implement recommended streetscape design	Medium	City
Community intersection improvements	Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at major intersections	High	City
Pedestrian/bicycle trail connections	Carry out ADA audit of the community	Medium	City
	Improve sidewalk connectivity	High	City/county/GOCO
	Complete trail connections	Medium	City/county/GOCO

	Projects	Priority	Responsibility/funding
Pedestrian/bicycle trail connections	Improve lighting, seating, and landscape quality of trails		City/county/GOCO
	Integrate bike-share facilities at key locations in community (transit centers and hubs)		City/private sector
	Prepare and circulate bike trail map with regional connections		City/bike advocates
	Implement more regular maintenance program		City
	Implement bicycle training program		Bike advocacy
On-road bicycle amenities	Complete existing disconnected network		City
	Implement protected lanes on arterial roads		City
Access to health care			
Provision of services in community	Open temporary clinic in vacant building(s)		County/health care providers
	Add services within WIC facility		County
	Add a mobile clinic		County/health care providers
	Enhance (direct) transit connection to facilities		City/transit agency
Evaluation of need for permanent health services	Undertake needs assessment		County/health care providers
	Coordinate with agencies and health service providers		County/health care providers
Access to food			
Promotion of healthy food choices	Survey availability of fresh food across the community		County/city
	Define potential sites for temporary or permanent community garden uses		City/community advocate
	Implement community garden program		City/community advocate
	Coordinate food education and cooking classes		City/community advocate
	Coordinate food pantry with Silver Key, community centers, and other agencies		Silver Key/community advocate
Affordable housing			
Prioritization of integration of housing within the redevelopment of vacant retail sites	Review infill zoning to promote integrated mixed-use development		City
	Upgrade and administer policy to ensure integration of affordable housing in new developments		City
	Review existing developer incentives and HUD requirements to make affordable housing funding more accessible		City/HUD
	Promote policy to ensure housing diversity		City—Comprehensive Plan
	Increase enforcement and penalties for housing code violations		City
	Develop loan fund for improvements on blighted properties		City

Note: The priority values shown in the table are marked from dark to light, with darkest as highest or most immediate priority and lightest as lowest or most long-term priority.

CDC = community development corporation; CDOT = Colorado Department of Transportation; GOCO = Greater Outdoors Colorado; HUD = U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; NGO = nongovernmental organization; WIC = Women, Infants, and Children.

Organizational Framework

CDCs have been an integral part of American community revitalization strategies for more than 40 years. CDCs are generally nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations that are initiated at a grassroots level. They tackle public benefit projects and other redevelopment activities in areas that have difficulty attracting private capital or that lack the development expertise to undertake complicated public/private financing strategies. Typical activities include the following:

- Facilitating and/or constructing affordable housing;
- Assisting in the growth and development of small businesses and economic development;
- Developing underused real estate;
- Facilitating links and partnerships throughout the community, such as a neighborhood police effort or a clean and safe program;
- Providing a comprehensive organization structure to engage in a variety of activities to aid the healthy development of downtowns and neighborhoods; and
- Facilitating financing and the development of financing tools.

The economic downturn forced communities to rethink traditional approaches to downtown and community development, and as a result CDCs have become more widely used to foster growth and development. Private sector downtown management organizations, institutions such as universities and hospitals, as well as local government are leading the CDC movement. The new relevance of CDCs to downtowns and community development is driven by the following factors:

- Downtown and community development strategies are increasingly incremental and entrepreneurial.
- CDCs tend to take care of the details, such as infill development, that are often overlooked by large plans and public financing agencies.
- CDC approaches are tactical and project-based.

- CDCs create a proven mechanism for including more diverse markets and constituencies within the umbrella of traditional downtown and community management organizations.

As downtowns and neighborhood business districts continue to be seen as competitive destinations for both investors and customers, they will continue to become increasingly multidimensional environments that support a variety of uses, including employment, shopping, entertainment, recreation, and living. To create the “24-hour city,” or at least push the clock beyond nine to five, CDCs can provide downtowns and neighborhood business districts the tools to creatively develop.

Funding Sources

As demographics, economic growth, and federal funding sources change, communities and property owners are accessing an increasingly sophisticated menu of financing tools that can be layered to revitalize a community. The city has a number of these tools in place; however, their use is not evident in Southeast.

Public/Private Partnerships

Public/private partnerships are often the most effective means of deploying large-scale new investment and redevelopment into communities. Local tools such as tax increment financing (TIF) and tax abatement programs as well as other, newer community-based mechanisms have evolved to promote investment. These kinds of partnerships share the financial risk between public and private entities, thus creating an alignment of interests for success.

El Paso County and the city of Colorado Springs have a wide variety of tools available to make these priority projects happen:

- *Sales tax and/or tourism tax:* The panel's interviews suggest that El Paso County residents and politicians are open to revisiting a sales tax increase for transportation funding through either a public vote or a City Council action. The panel recommends exploring and reconsidering

a sales tax as a mechanism to support transportation options. In addition, the panelists recommend a revisit of Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority funds and how they are allocated. Consideration should also be given to a tourism tax to support infrastructure, transportation, and transit.

- *TIF and mill levies:* TIF mechanisms are already being used in the city of Colorado Springs through special districts and urban renewal authorities. Southeast Colorado Springs has the Spring Creek General Improvement District and the Vineyard Property Urban Renewal Authority, which together make up a small portion of the study area. TIF funding can be used for infrastructure improvements, such as streets, sewers, parking lots; acquiring land; rehabilitating buildings; affordable housing; and planning and development costs.

As investments are made and businesses locate in a TIF district as the area redevelops, property values rise. The property tax revenues are divided into two streams. The first stream is set at the original amount of the property value before redevelopment, known as the “base rate.” This stream continues to be directed as it was before the community redevelopment authority’s project—typically to the school district or the city’s general fund—to pay for local services (e.g., police and fire departments). The second stream contains the additional tax money generated by the higher property value, or the “tax increment.” This stream is kept separate and used to pay the cost of the redevelopment. The money invested in TIF projects either may be fronted by a developer in a large master planned project or may be obtained through the sale of bonds, both of which are then repaid over time with the annual tax increment funds.

Great Outdoors Colorado Grants

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) offers a series of competitive grants for programming relating to outdoor recreation and land conservation. Southeast Colorado Springs should apply for these grants to help fund relevant priority initiatives:

- *Planning grants:* GOCO planning grants help local governments execute a wide range of planning efforts, including site-specific plans, department master plans, and strategic plans. Local governments are eligible to apply for planning grants. Planning grants have a \$75,000 limit; total project cost has no maximum. Applicants must provide at least 25 percent of the total project cost in matching funds, at least 10 percent of which must be a cash match. GOCO does not fund maintenance, programming, or non-fixed assets (i.e., lawnmowers, rakes, etc.).

- *Local parks and recreation mini-grants:* Local Park and Outdoor Recreation (LPOR) grants can provide up to \$350,000 per project or mini-grants for up to \$45,000 per project that costs \$60,000 or less. These grants will fund the following projects:

- New park development;
- Enhancing existing park facilities;
- Park land acquisition; and
- Building new or enhancing existing environmental education facilities.

Cities, counties, and parks and recreation districts are eligible for LPOR and mini-grants. Eligible entities can sponsor projects on behalf of school districts, unincorporated cities and towns, community groups, and other ineligible entities. Applicants must provide at least 25 percent of the total project cost in matching funds, at least 10 percent of which must be a cash match.

- *Connect Initiative Grants:* GOCO’s Connect Initiative Grants help increase access to the outdoors in Colorado communities by filling trail gaps, building new trails, and providing better walkable and bikeable access for youth and families. Applicants may request up to \$2 million for trail construction projects. Eligible grantees include municipalities, counties, and Title 32 special park and recreation districts that receive Conservation Trust Fund money from the Department of Local Affairs. These eligible entities may also sponsor projects on behalf of

entities that are not eligible for GOCO funding, such as school districts, nonprofit organizations, and the like.

Although projects must be primarily for trail construction, land acquisition may be considered with staff approval. There is no requirement for trail surface type. Projects that present an exciting opportunity to leverage partnerships and outside funding, connect important trail segments, and are shovel-ready may score more competitively.

- *Inspire Initiative*: The Inspire Initiative gives grants to projects that work to connect youth and their families to the outdoors. According to the website, the initiative operates in the belief that “for our quality of life to endure, we know that Coloradans must appreciate and care for our great outdoors. We can’t appreciate what we don’t experience. That’s why GOCO and its partners are establishing places for kids and their families to play and connect with the outdoors, programs that activate those places, and pathways to outdoor stewardship and leadership roles.” In December 2016, the GOCO board awarded \$13.5 million in grants to pilot coalitions, which affected more than 40,000 children across the state. In December 2017, Southeast was awarded \$1,393,955 through this grant for Memorial Park. The grant will go toward creating community equity and inclusiveness while engaging youth and families from the Hillside neighborhood in Colorado Springs in the outdoors.

Transportation Improvements

Colorado Springs should implement tax-based transportation bonds to fund the identified priority transportation initiatives.

- *Transportation improvement bonds*: One example using transportation improvement bonds is the Denver Eagle P3 Project, which is part of the larger FasTracks program, a voter-approved, tax-backed transit plan expanding rail and bus service throughout metropolitan Denver. The project, being implemented by the Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD), is a 34-year-term design/build/finance/operate/maintain concession contract. RTD will make monthly payments to a private entity,

Denver Transit Partners, based on the availability and performance of the facility. RTD retains ownership of the assets throughout the concession period, sets fares and fare policies, and retains all project revenues. This comprehensive public/private partnership draws on a mix of federal loans and grants and private investments to support major capital transit projects in the region.

- *General obligation bonds*: In November 2017, Denver voters approved a massive general obligation (GO) bond that extends the existing \$8.433 mill levy for an additional ten years to fund transportation developments. The GO Bond, as it was dubbed, includes \$937 million of investment designed to protect, improve, and repair infrastructure that supports transportation and mobility, parks and public spaces, or arts and cultural institutions. About half the value of the bond package funds new projects, with the remainder covering repairs and long-deferred maintenance. The bonds will be repaid by an extension of an existing property tax levy currently repaying bonds issued in 2007 (\$89.9 million) and in 2016 (\$123 million). The incremental debt service is being covered by virtue of a significant increase in property value from 2007 to date, as well as future anticipated property value increases as a result of the infrastructure and cultural improvements from the new investments.

Alternative Funding Mechanisms

Some interesting emerging funding mechanisms that are gaining traction in communities nationwide include civic crowdfunding and tactical urbanism. These and other tactics should be looked into and considered.

- *Civic crowdfunding*: Crowdfunding (e.g., Kickstarter, Indiegogo, GoFund Me) simply means to collect monetary contributions for a specific project from a large number of people or sources through an online platform. Civic crowdfunding specifically focuses on community amenities. A wide array of projects are fundable, such as bike racks, community gardens, playgrounds, renovation projects, neighborhood markets, cultural facilities, parks and recreation facilities, social services, and conservation easement purchases. Although usually geared toward

raising relatively small sums, crowdfunding platforms can help seed larger projects and can be used in conjunction with other funding mechanisms.

- *Tactical urbanism:* Placemaking or pilot projects are community-led demonstration projects that enable residents and stakeholders to participate in relatively inexpensive temporary transformations to test and experience changes. A growing number of creative and successful national examples exist, such as the conversion of street edges into enhanced bikeways, parking spaces into “parklets,” vacant lots into community gardens, and off-street parking areas into small plazas or food-vendor courtyards. These inexpensive and often temporary projects can have a significant impact. They help both the community and local officials envision a new future for a place, test new ideas, and attract funding for permanent improvements.



Northampton, Massachusetts's Complete Streets Demonstration Day in 2016 experimented with tactical urbanism: the city put up temporary road installations to gauge people's reactions to interacting with streets that are people- and bicycle-focused. For more information, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdyXbiadJFI>.

Conclusion

SOUTHEAST HAS ALL THE NATURAL TOOLS to become a successful, desirable, and healthy neighborhood; it has a superb school system, easy access to nature and the outdoors, proximity to the downtown and airport, and a caring, diverse, and supportive community. However, years of under-resourcing have blocked the area from achieving its full potential. It is time for the necessary economic tools to be added to Southeast's toolbox and for partners to come forward to work with community leaders to start using them.

This report outlines a series of project recommendations whose implementation would create all the elements needed for a healthy community. All should be implemented to complement each other, paying attention to the fabric of life that is already present in the community. Marketing and branding, transportation access, design, and leadership are all recommendations aimed at enhancing the goals of the existing local community.

Southeast faces many challenges that have been well discussed over the years. The conversation needs to turn, not toward ignoring these issues, but to view them as opportunities for growth and out-of-the-box ideas. The school system already rapidly transformed dire numbers in a highly successful opportunity to reintegrate into community life and use its success to bring families back into school spaces for after-school programming. Vacant spaces do not need to look like blight but can be transformed into playgrounds and gardens. Programs such as THRIVE can be given the resources to create an intentional culture of entrepreneurship throughout the Southeast community.

Look beyond the usual suspects. Bring in the private sector, the government, faith-based institutions, schools, and community groups to take complementary action. All these stakeholders should not only be in communication

with each other but also should coordinate to leverage their unique attributes toward the same objectives. The time has arrived to take the responsibility of advocating off the individual and to create a joint force that works toward the organizational goals stated in this report. It is their job to make sure everyone is working together toward the priority goals to transform Southeast into a healthy community.

Even though the weight should be taken off individuals' shoulders, the community should still be involved and consulted every step of the way. Seeking out the voices and input of students and the younger generation who will become the future leaders of Southeast is especially important. Engage them to build, maintain, and design neighborhoods they want to stay in, work in, and lead.

This is not just about Southeast, it is about the whole city. Colorado Springs will not be successful unless it invests in all its neighborhoods, including the Southeast community. This investment is not about "cleaning up" or "beautifying" but is about infusing investment into the areas the city has been ignoring for years. As the new Colorado Springs comprehensive plan sets out priorities for the next 20 years, all of its set goals should have actions that work in Southeast.

Do not wait for something to happen to catalyze this movement; think about what you can start doing now. Start with organizing, start with coming together, and start with healing to start thriving. All of the recommendations the panel has put forth are the rights of the residents of Southeast; these are not luxuries. It is time for Southeast to be brought up to the healthy and beautiful standard that Colorado Springs boasts about.

Appendix: Additional Resources for Designing for Southeast

- The Willowbrook Project by Rosten Woo
 - <http://rostenwoo.biz/index.php/willowbrook>
 - The book *Willowbrook Is . . . /Es . . .*: http://rostenwoo.biz/content/willowbrook_book/Willowbrook%204-20-13.pdf
- James Rojas
 - <https://folklife.si.edu/talkstory/2015/on-fences-plazas-and-latino-urbanism-a-conversation-with-james-rojas>
 - <https://la.streetsblog.org/2017/09/21/latino-active-transportation-reinvigorating-walking-in-u-s-suburbs>
 - <https://www.kcet.org/shows/lost-la/elysian-park-a-plaza-set-in-nature>
 - <https://la.streetsblog.org/2014/04/14/students-re-envision-their-neighborhood-through-interactive-workshop>
- Alex Gilliam/Public Workshop
 - <http://publicworkshop.us>
 - <https://americas.uli.org/podcast/leading-voices-uli-alex-gilliam>
- Paul Chan/Creative Time
 - <http://creativetime.org/programs/archive/2007/chan/artist.html>
- Hector urban design, planning & civic arts
 - <http://hectordesignservice.com/project-mifflin-square>
- San Pablo Area Revitalization Collaborative (SPARC)
 - <http://ebaldc.org/what-we-do/neighborhood-collaborations/sparc>
- Interboro
 - <http://www.interboropartners.com>
- Off the Grid
 - <https://offthegrid.com/about>
- The Hall SF
 - http://warhorsecities.com/case_study/1028-market-street/the-hall-sf

About the Panel

Andrew Irvine

*Panel Chair
Denver, Colorado*

Irvine is an energetic, creative, hands-on professional with a passion for design and is known by his clients as someone who delivers exceptional quality. As senior principal and leader of the urban design discipline within Stantec's buildings group, he brings more than 30 years in the industry and a knack for bringing people together to work toward a common goal. Irvine is the one you want in charge of building, motivating, and managing large interdisciplinary teams.

An enormous responsibility comes with designing new cities, places, and buildings. We have an important role in shaping the places where future life will play out. As a result, Irvine believes in doing work that promotes happiness and health and has a positive cultural and social impact. In support of this mission, he has served on a Building Healthy Places Advisory Services panel in Lamar, Colorado, and coauthored ULI's *Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places*.

Before his current position, Irvine was a senior landscape architect at EDAW Inc., where he developed a strong portfolio of master planning projects across the United States, South East Asia, Africa, and Australia. He has specialized skills in site planning, master planning, and urban design guidelines. His range of projects includes major infrastructure, urban renewal, public domain, and traditional park design. He has worked on numerous planning projects that include significant experience with transportation and waterfront development. Irvine also has completed projects that have incorporated comprehensive open-space networks and ecological restoration areas into planned communities.

Irvine has served on nine of the Urban Land Institute's national Advisory Services panels and on one international Advisory Services panel. He has degrees in landscape architecture and environmental design.

Jose Bodipo-Memba

Sacramento, California

Bodipo-Memba is the manager of environmental services for the Environmental and Real Estate Team of the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD), which is the nation's sixth-largest public utility district. He has spent over 17 years managing projects associated with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act on both the private and public sides. Bodipo-Memba serves as the program manager for SMUD's Long Range Asset Management Plan and Headquarters Campus Master Plan, and as the environmental compliance/land management coordinator for the 5,000-acre Solano Wind Project just outside of Rio Vista, California.

His development projects have covered a range of technical areas, including specific plan development, infill development, school and facilities planning, historical research, site feasibility analysis, wind energy, and infrastructure improvement. Some of his more notable CEQA projects include the Sacramento Railyards Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the Lincoln High School Complex (San Diego) EIR, Solano Wind Project Phase 3 EIR, San Diego State Medical Health Center Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), the Country Club Estates Specific Plan EIR, and the California Lottery Headquarters MND. With direct project experience throughout California, Bodipo-Memba has shown the versatility needed to address the variety of environmental and planning issues cities face.

Active in the community, Bodipo-Memba serves as the chair emeritus of the Sacramento Planning and Design Commission, a member of the ULI Sacramento Leadership Team and ULI National PDIC, the Coro Fellowship Program of Northern California board of directors, the American River Parkway Foundation board of directors, the Next Move Sacramento board of directors, the Drexel University Graduate Student Association Civic Involvement Committee, and the Nehemiah Emerging Leaders Alumni Association.

Bodipo-Memba was a 2010 recipient of the *Sacramento Business Journal* 40 under 40 leadership award, the 2012 recipient of the Drexel University Oxholm Award for Community Leadership, and a 2015 Drexel University 40 under 40 Distinguished Alumni honoree.

He holds a BA in history from the University of California, Berkeley, and a master's degree in business administration from Drexel University.

Brett Boncore

Orlando, Florida

Boncore is a transportation planner and engineer whose career has focused on building thriving communities through the development of multimodal transportation infrastructures that serve all users of the public space and support the holistic goals of the community. He has project experience that includes health impact assessment, bike and pedestrian planning, transit corridor planning, and engineering traffic impact analyses. A registered Professional Engineer in Florida, Boncore has managed a variety of complete streets, traffic engineering, and health planning projects throughout the United States.

He works with the Florida Department of Transportation, municipal planning organizations, cities, and transit agencies to prioritize and implement multimodal projects that serve the most vulnerable users of the transportation system. Boncore has managed several transportation-related health impact assessments (HIAs), including the most recent SR 436 HIA evaluating how bus rapid transit

and station area complete streets investments can affect the physical, mental, and social health of residents and employees. He was a primary contributor to MetroPlan Orlando's complete streets policy and implementation, conducting several model projects and trainings to educate local officials and city and state staff about the process and importance of complete streets.

During his time in Orlando, Boncore has worked with local governments and developers to implement multimodal transportation systems in support of infill projects. His recent project experience includes the Orlando City Soccer Club's mobility and parking plan for its downtown stadium and the Orlando Magic's implementation of its new Sports and Entertainment District.

Boncore has also served abroad with a nonprofit organization, Engineering Ministries International, planning and designing campuses for philanthropic institutions in the majority world. He holds an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from the University of Florida.

Colleen Carey

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Carey is president and founder of the Cornerstone Group, a real estate company whose mission is to transform the ordinary spaces around us to the extraordinary places that inspire us. She brings nearly 30 years of experience in the field of real estate development and finance. She is particularly interested in taking a holistic approach to redevelopment, looking beyond just bricks and mortar to a full range of tools to create strong, healthy communities.

The Cornerstone Group focuses on transformative redevelopment projects; it has special expertise in mixed-use developments and affordable housing and a strong emphasis on sustainable design. Its current endeavors include redevelopment of the Lyndale Garden Center in Richfield, Minnesota, into a new town center for the first-ring suburb of Richfield and redevelopment of a blighted industrial area at the Prospect Park Station into a vibrant new arts and creativity-oriented urban village.

Carey currently serves as a national trustee for the Urban Land Institute as well as the governance chair of ULI Minnesota. She also serves on the Sustainable Development Product Council for the Urban Land Institute.

She has served on the Metropolitan Council's Livable Communities Advisory Committee and the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board. In addition, she has served as the president of the board of the Minnesota Land Trust, the Illusion Theater, and Tubman Center as well as numerous other community and professional organizations.

Carey graduated from the University of Wisconsin—Madison with both a BBA and then an MBA in real estate development and investment finance. In addition to her work pursuits, she is a passionate bicycle commuter.

Alysia Osborne

Charlotte, North Carolina

Osborne joined Charlotte Center City Partners (CCCP) as director of Historic West End in October 2015. In this role, she works closely with neighborhood stakeholders and local businesses, coordinating CCCP's efforts to create and implement a vision for a strong neighborhood center that preserves and enhances existing neighborhood assets while attracting new investment to Charlotte's oldest African American neighborhoods. Since taking the position in 2015, she has brought unlikely partners together to work toward a common goal. She is working to minimize the displacement of small businesses, residents, and community organizations within the Historic West End.

During 2016, Osborne led Strategic Alliances for the Historic West End Initiative with over 27 businesses and organizations. These alliances included large and small organizations/businesses such as the city of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, the Duke Endowment, Johnson C. Smith University, Neighboring Concepts, Charlotte B-Cycle, M&F Bank, NCBW-QCMC, Charlotte Black Chamber, and the Bruns Academy.

She joined CCCP from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department, where she had worked for eight years as

a planning coordinator in the Long-Range Planning Division. Before that, she served as a transportation planner for the Charlotte Department of Transportation and as a planner for the city of Jackson, Mississippi. She began her career with Parsons Brinkerhoff.

As a result of her community involvement in the Charlotte region, Osborne has received various awards and recognition from the American Planning Association, North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association, Urban Land Institute, and James S. and John L. Knight Foundation.

Osborne has a BA in political science/pre-law from Tougaloo College and an MS in urban and regional planning with an emphasis in environment/land use law from Jackson State University. She is a certified planner in the American Institute of Certified Planners and a member of the American Planning Association, North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association, and the Urban Land Institute. She uses her skill set in advocating for residents, which improves the lives of African American women and their families. She lives her life on the basic principle that "to whom much is given much is required." Our life's blessings are given to us, so that we may be a blessing to others.

Jae Shin

Newark, New Jersey

Shin is a partner at Hector, a studio dedicated to advancing urban design and planning through connections to civic life and popular education. Her design approach focuses on agents and constituencies (the people and organizations that get things done) and how public imagination connects places and programs. With Hector, Shin has recently led a park design and neighborhood planning process in South Philadelphia; urban design for a highway interchange in Newark, New Jersey; and an exhibition and youth program on accountable development for the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco.

She served as an Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellow at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the city's largest provider of housing, where she led the agency's design excellence initiative to align design practices with the agency's strategic plan and sustainability goals. To set consistent design standards, Shin edited Design Guidelines for the Rehabilitation of NYCHA Residential Buildings to guide \$200 million of annual capital work.

Shin is a MacDowell Colony Fellow and her projects have received recognition and support from the Museum of Modern Art, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and the National Endowments for the Arts. As an educator, she has led design studios at the New Jersey Institute of Technology and Harvard Graduate School of Design. She holds a bachelor of fine arts degree from Rhode Island School of Design and a master of architecture degree from Princeton University.

Tamara Zahn

Indianapolis, Indiana

Zahn is president of Zahn Associates, specializing in building stronger communities. She has nearly 40 years of urban and community development experience. She is passionate about building healthy places and has served on several ULI panels and coauthored ULI's *Ten Principles for Building Healthy Places*. She has been involved in the development and management of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail and Pacers Bikeshare and the revitalization of Holliday Park in Indianapolis.

Zahn served as founding president of Indianapolis Downtown Inc. (IDI), a not-for-profit organization strategically focused on developing, managing, and marketing Downtown Indianapolis since its formation in 1993 until she stepped down, after nearly 20 years, in 2012. She was instrumental in the revitalization of Downtown Indianapolis. During her tenure, nearly \$8 billion of development was completed, and IDI designed and implemented a number of innovative economic/cultural development, security, parking, placemaking, and marketing programs. She led a team in developing, managing, and marketing

Indianapolis's cultural districts and led an international Idea Competition for Monument Circle.

Before IDI, Zahn consulted in cities throughout the United States. Clients included Simon Property Group, the Rouse Company's American City Corporation, and the New York Port Authority.

She serves on a number of boards, including the Indianapolis Cultural Trail/Pacers Bikeshare, and is past chair of International Downtown Association (IDA). She has served on the Host Committees for NFL Super Bowl 2012, NCAA Final Fours, and other major events. She was recognized as one of the first "40 under 40," "Most Influential Women," and Downtown Champion in Indianapolis. Zahn is the recipient of marketing and leadership awards from IDA, International Council of Shopping Centers, and numerous civic organizations. She was an Olympic torch bearer in honor of her efforts to revitalize Indianapolis Downtown and Holliday Park. Zahn graduated summa cum laude with a degree in real estate from Indiana University.

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