



PALMER HIGH SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION

LAND USE PLAN, FBZ-T2A REZONE, & RIGHT-OF-WAY VACATION



PROJECT TEAM

School District 11 | Owner

Jessica Wise: Senior Executive Director of Engagement

Jennifer Hotaling: Capital Program Manager

RTA Architects | Architect

Brian Calhoun: Principal

Perkins-Eastman | Architect

Gabriella Bermea: Senior Associate

JPS Engineering | Civil Engineer

John Schwab: Principal

NES Inc | Plan & Landscape Architect

Chris Lieber: Principal

Feldsburg Holt & Ullevig | Traffic Engineer

Lyle DeVries: Principal







COMMUNITY DRIVEN



Collection based

2,400+ 37,700+ Information based



Public Meetings

Board Presentations





25 Student & Staff



23 Community



Partners

AUG. 2024 - JAN. 2025

Vision & Planning

JAN. 2025 - MAR. 2025

Schematic Design

MAR. 2025 - JULY. 2025

Design Development

Over

Student & Staff Individual touch points





PRESENTATION AGENDA

VISION

Jessica Wise – School District 11

MASTERPLAN

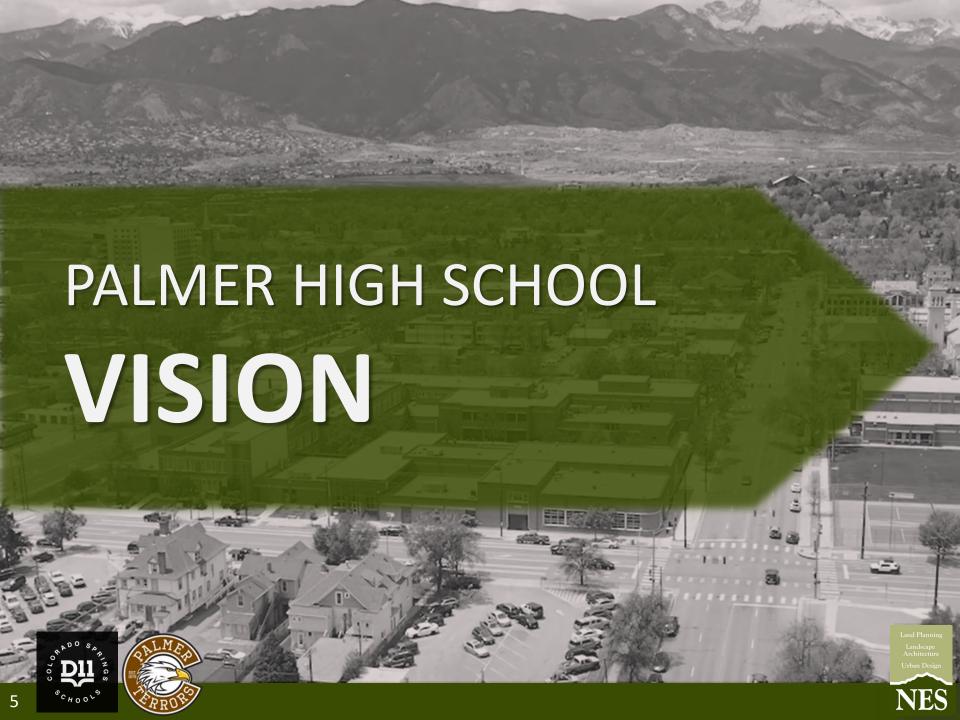
Brian Calhoun-RTA

ENTITLEMENT APPLICATIONS

Chris Lieber – NES

- Land Use Plan
- FBZ Rezone
- Right of Way Vacation





VISION: PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Founded in 1871 by General William Palmer and his partner Abraham Bell, Colorado Springs was envisioned as a place for excellence—a thriving city dedicated to learning, culture, and community well-being.









VISION: Education Rooted In Excellence

Palmer's modernization is shaped by an inclusive and collaborative process that engaged over 40,000 community touchpoints-students, educators, alumni, families, and city partners-who helped define six guiding priorities:

- ✓ Academic Excellence and the IB Philosophy
- ✓ Community Engagement
- ✓ Arts and Cultural Enrichment

- ✓ Athletics, Health, and Well-Being
- ✓ Preservation of History and Tradition
- ✓ A Healthy and High-Performance Building

'Interdisciplinary, connected to real-world learning, and designed to support every student.'





Palmer High School Community Breakfast

Steering committee visit to Banneker High School in Washington, D.C.

VISION: IB Philosophy

Palmer's new academic spaces are designed to reflect the International Baccalaureate (IB) approach—an inquiry-based, globally focused model that prepares students to think critically and act with purpose.

The IB framework is built around the learner, giving teachers the flexibility to design instruction that supports many different learning styles and needs.

The result is a campus where learning is active, collaborative, and visible—mirroring the values of curiosity, rigor, and global engagement.



VISION: Respecting History & Tradition

- As the oldest high school in Colorado Springs, Palmer is a true downtown landmark and a living part of the city's educational history. This renovation protects the building's historic character while making it adaptable for today's students.
- By honoring its architectural roots and modernizing its learning spaces, we ensure Palmer remains both a civic anchor and a place where future generations will learn, gather, and belong.



VISION: PALMER HIGH SCHOOL & DOWNTOWN

We are no longer "imagining" a great downtown we are creating it and experiencing it daily

Experience Downtown COS

A transformative initiative that underscores commitment to educational excellence and community success.

Aim to create a landmark, and a dynamic community hub in downtown Colorado Springs.

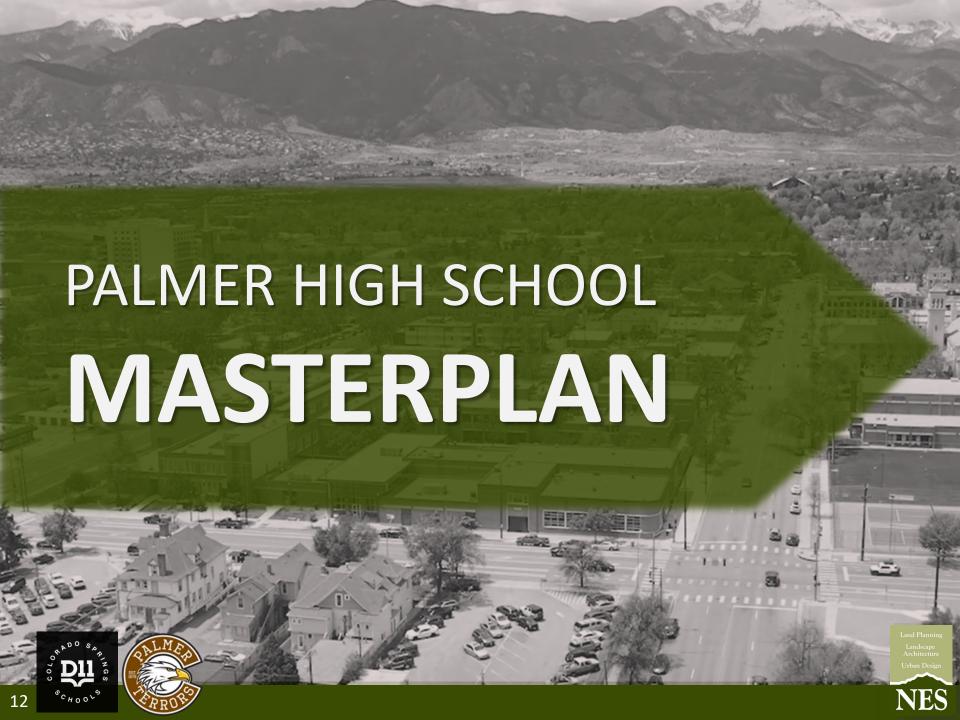
Foster connections with local government, industry, retail, and higher education, setting a new standard for high school environments.





VISION: PHS CAMPUS MASTER PLAN



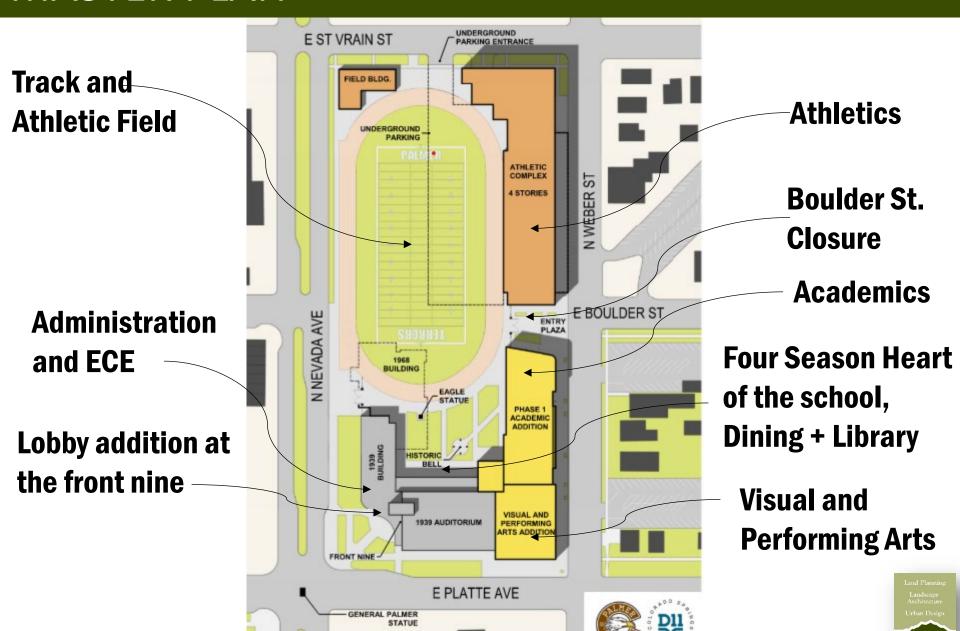


MASTER PLAN-SITE CONTEXT

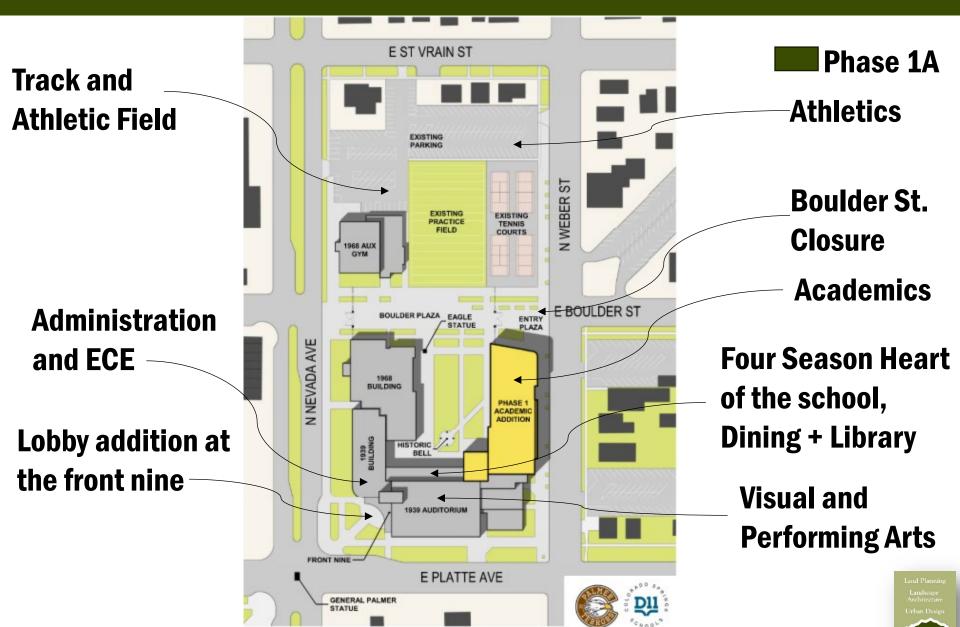




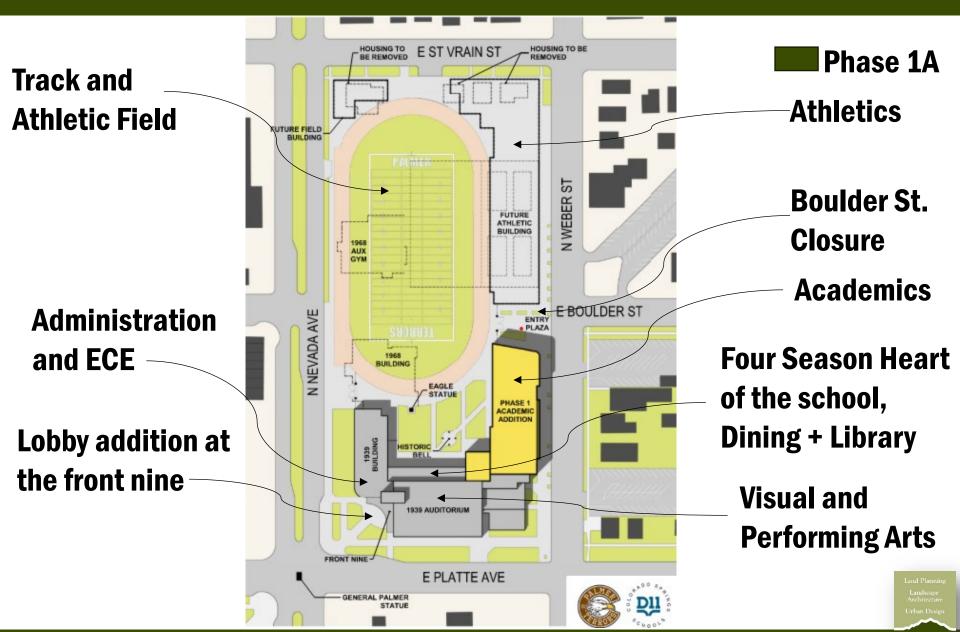
MASTER PLAN



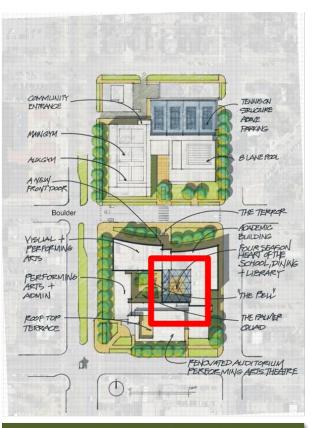
MASTER PLAN – Phase 1A



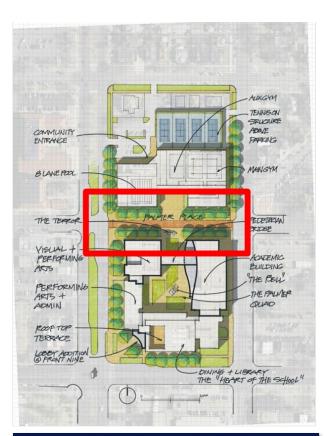
MASTER PLAN – Phase 1B



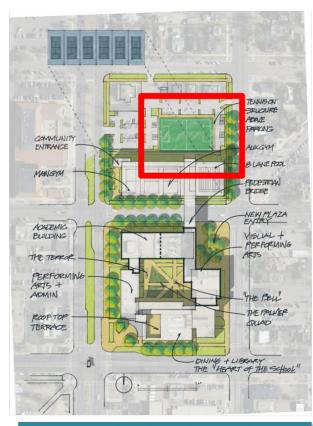
PROCESS-ALTERNATIVES







Concept 2: Connected Campus



Concept 3: Boulder Plaza



Courtyard



Courtyard Steps





Weber Street Entrance



Weber Street





PROCESS-STEERING COMMITTEE

Purpose

- Purpose is to gather feedback and provide input to the District and the design team throughout the design development phase of the renovation.
- Help shape the design process and prioritize key aspects of the renovation to ensure the project aligns with the needs and the community feedback that has been gathered thus far.
- Composed of Palmer High School representatives, alumni, neighbors, and community members.







APPLICATION OVERVIEW

- There area three (3) primary applications required
 - Land Use Plan-Long-term vision for the site
 - Rezone of the property from mixed zones to FBZ-T2A
 - Vacation of the E Boulder Street Right of Way
- There are several secondary applications required
 - Replatting of the Property as a consolidated site
 - Development Plan/s for each phase of development
- Three (3) Phases
 - Phase 1A-Demolition, Rehabilitation, New East Wing, Courtyard
 - Phase 1B-New Practice Field
 - Phase 2-Fieldhouse



COMMUNITY CONTEXT

"promote and embrace arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity"

PlanCOS: Vision

Ensuring fundamental needs of residents and businesses are reliably met every day.

"increase access and foster thriving arts, education, and cultural organizations and resources at all levels and throughout the city."

"Strengthen and diversify the range of educational and lifelong learning opportunities and resources in Colorado Springs."

PlanCOS: Thriving Economy

"employers are having trouble filling certain types of jobs due to widening skills gaps"

Downtown COS Market Assessment

"Palmer High School serves as the city's central urban high school, offering an International Baccalaureate focus, a challenging program with a global approach."

"Downtown benefits from the lunchtime student traffic, volunteer partnerships and after-school workforce of Palmer students."

State of Downtown COS



COMMUNITY CONTEXT

"Institutional areas are integral to Downtown's flow of visitors and are associated with Colorado College, Palmer High School, City Auditorium, Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts, and the Pioneers Museum."

Experience Downtown COS

"Connect students with Downtown opportunities for learning, living, shopping, dining, culture, fun and employment."

Experience Downtown COS

"Assess publicly owned assets, public parking, to ensure highest and best usage of such assets to fulfill community goals."

Experience Downtown COS



KEY ISSUES

- Student Safety
- Traffic
- Parking
- Zoning-Compatibility/Density Creep
- Pedestrian Safety
- Emergency Access/Response Times
- Removal of Houses
- Platte Corridor Study
- Detour During Platte Reconstruction
- Bus/Parent Dropoff
- Business Impacts of Vacation



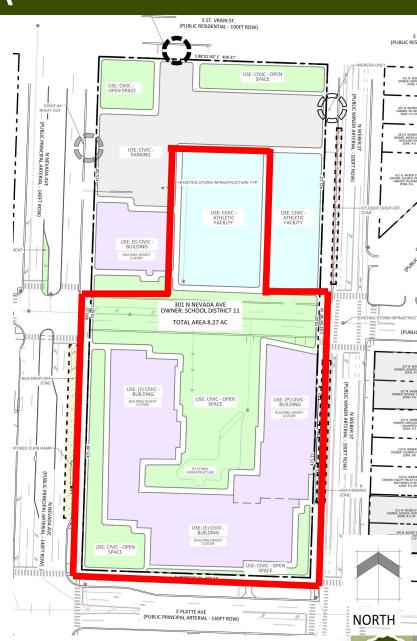




LAND USE PLAN – PHASE 1A

Initial Development Plan

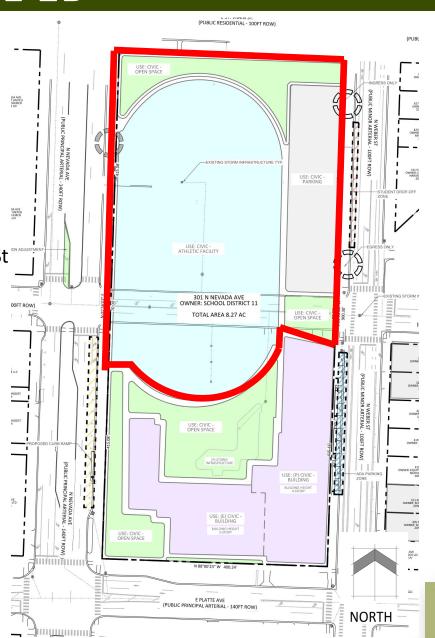
- Demolish tech building and east wing
- Renovate southern portion of existing building
 - New entry on the southwest corner
 - Auditorium, library, music/performing arts center
 - Classrooms-west side of existing building
 - New kitchen and cafeteria
- Construct academic addition
 - Upper levels encroach over boulder street
 - Classrooms, office space, support areas
 - New entry
- Construct pedestrian plaza at vacated E Boulder Street
- No new development north of vacated E Boulder Street
- No change to parking



LAND USE PLAN – PHASE 1B

PHASE 1B-Future Development Plan/s

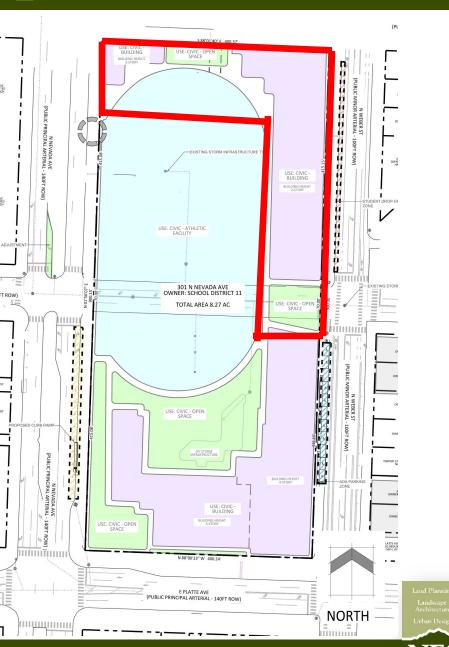
- North of Vacated Boulder St
 - Demolish 1968 Auxiliary Gym
 - Remove Parking, Fields, Tennis Courts
 - Remove Existing Residential Buildings
 - Construct 400M track and football field
 - Heart of the Campus
 - Spans across Current Footprint of Boulder St
 - Occupies north portion of Courtyard and Pedestrian Plaza
 - Construct Small Field Building
 - New Temporary Parking in place of Tennis Courts
- South of Vacated Boulder St
 - Demolish Northwest Classroom Building



LAND USE PLAN – PHASE 2

PHASE 2-Future Development Plan/s

- Construct New Athletic Building
 - > Main Gymnasium
 - Swimming Pool
 - > Fitness Rooms
 - > Locker rooms
 - Replaces Main Gym (Erps Gymnasium)
 - ➤ Parking TBD with Development Plan for Phase 2

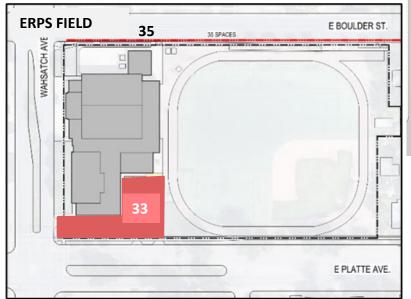


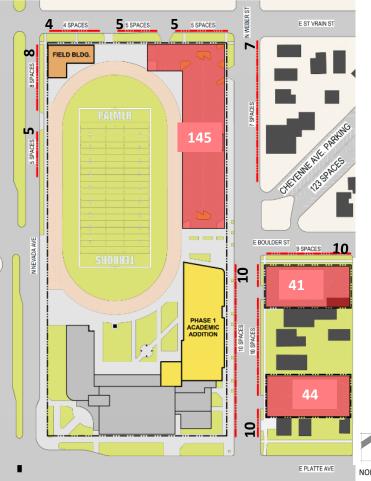
LAND USE PLAN – PARKING

Parking

PALMER HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS PARKING COMPARISON

PARKING LOCATION	PRE-RENOVATION PARKING (214,000SF OF BUILDING)	1A POST-RENOVATION PARKING (300,000SF OF BUILDING)
ADJACENT DISTRICT PROPERTY (BLOCK 43)	144	144
ADJACENT ON-STREET PARKING (BLOCK 43 & 53)	91	63
NON-ADJACENT ON-STREET PARKING (CHEYENNE)	123	123
NON-ADJACENT ON-STREET PARKING (ERPS FIELD)	36	36
NON-ADJACENT DISTRICT PROPERTY (ERPS FIELD)	33	33
NON-ADJACENT DISTRICT PROPERTY (EAST LOT A)	41	41
NON-ADJACENT DISTRICT PROPERTY (EAST LOT B)	44	44
TOTAL PARKING PROVIDED	512	484
TOTAL PARKING REQUIRED	286	400
(1 SPACE / 750SF OF BUILDING)		

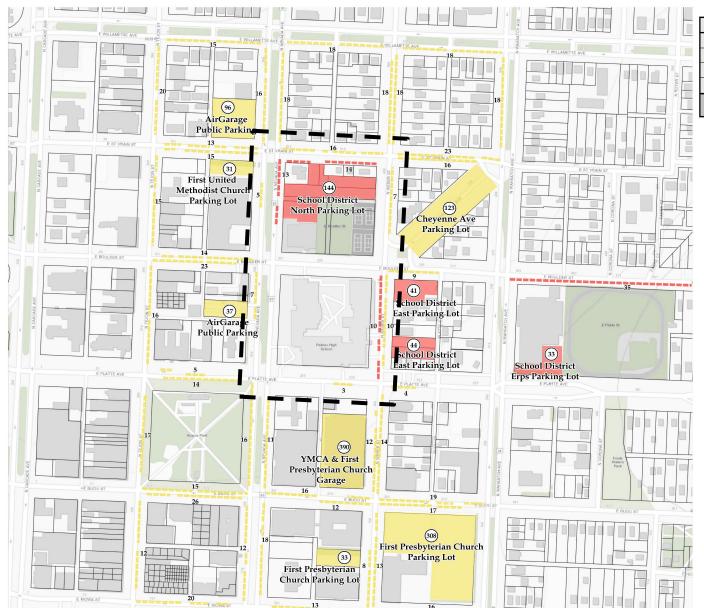








LAND USE PLAN: PARKING INVENTORY



	Public	School
On-Street Parking	663	72
Surface Parking Lot	628	262
Parking Garage	390	
Parking Spaces	1681	334
Total	2015	





LAND USE-NATIONAL/STATE REGISTER

National and State Register Map

- Weber St-Wahsatch Ave Residential District
- ➤ Northeast Corner of Property
- ➤ Not within Local Historic District Overlay
- ➤ No Local HPC Authority

Historic Homes

- Purchased by D-11 for Campus Consolidation
- Historic Evaluation Conducted
- Community Partnerships Explored





APPLICATIONS: LAND USE PLAN

Review Criteria

- A. The Project is Consistent with the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan and other plans and policies adopted by City Council;
- B. The Project is Consistent with Development Standards of the FBZ-T2A Zone District in which the Property would be Located after a Requested Zone District Change;
- C. The Project is Compatible with the Land Uses and Development Intensities Surrounding the Property;
- D. Impacts of the Permitted or Requested Uses are Appropriate to the Type of Development, the Neighborhood, and the Community;
- E. Proposed Ingress/Egress Points and Traffic Circulation, Both On and Off the Site are Adequate;
- F. Capacity of the Existing Streets, Utilities, Parks, and other Public Facilities are Adequate to Serve the Proposed Development;
- G. The Project promotes a Transitions in height, intensity, and character between Nearby Low-Density Residential Zone Districts

APPLICATIONS-LAND USE PLAN

WHAT IS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN?

Promote and embrace arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity
-PLANCOS: Vision

Meet daily needs of residents & businesses with high quality, varied, and easily accessible options Ensure Fundamental needs of residents and businesses are reliably met every day

-PlanCOS: Thriving Economy

Increase access and foster thriving arts, education, and cultural organizations and resources at all levels and throughout the city."

"Strengthen and diversify the range of educational and lifelong learning opportunities and resources in Colorado Springs."

-PlanCOS: Renown Culture





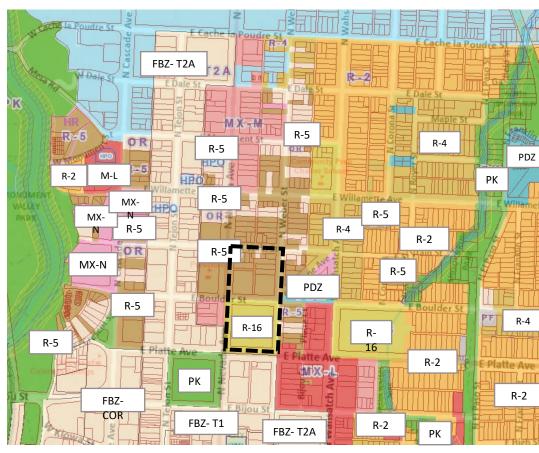
REZONE – EXISTING

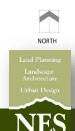
Current Property Zoning

- South of E Boulder St
 - > R-1 6: Single-Family Medium
 - Schools Require a Conditional Use Permit
 - Legal Existing, Non-conforming
- North of E Boulder St
 - > R-5: Multi-Family High
 - Schools Require a Conditional Use Permit
 - Legal Existing, Non-conforming
 - ➤ OR: Office/Residential
 - Schools Require a Conditional Use Permit
 - Legal Existing, Non-conforming

Surrounding Zoning

- \triangleright North = R-5
- East = R-5, OR, PDZ, MX-L
- South = FBZ-T1
- West = FBZ-T2A, MX-M, R-5



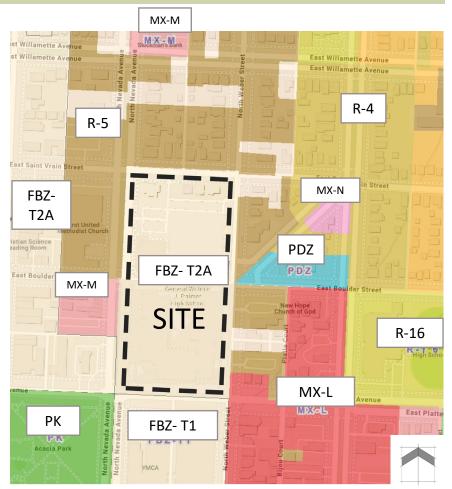


REZONE – PROPOSED

Proposed Zoning

- FBZ: Form Based Zone
 - Transition 2: Urban Center (Zoning Sector)
 - More Gradual Transition to Adjacent Neighborhoods
 - Located at the Periphery of the Urban Core
 - Benefits of form-based code while protecting neighborhoods
 - Sub-Heading A
 - Narrower Range of Uses
 - Building Type-Civic
 - School and Supporting Uses (Strongly Vested with Public Social Importance) Permitted
 - Prescriptive Standards for Each Building Type
 - Building Envelope, Building Height,
 Frontage, Façade Treatment, Parking,
 Public Space, and Signage.
- Density, Maximum Height, Parking, Building Design,
 Outdoor Spaces Established with Development Plan

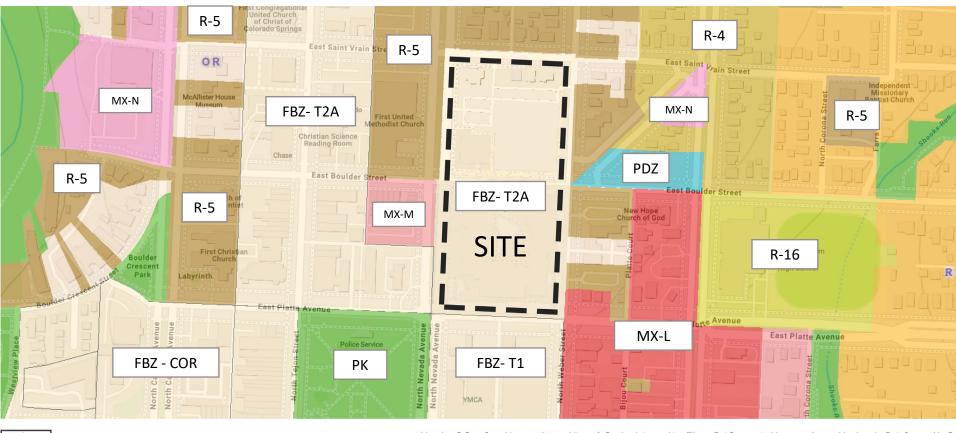
Rezoning to FBZ-T2A will Facilitate the Design Flexibility and Creativity Necessary to Achieve a Comprehensive Renovation and Consolidation of the Palmer High School Campus



NORTH

Land Planning Landscape Architecture Urban Design

REZONE – PROPOSED



200 ft NORTH

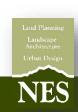
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REZONE – REVIEW CRITERIA

Review Criteria

- 1. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the goals and policies of the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan, with other plans and policies adopted by the City Council; and with the purpose statement of the proposed zone district(s).
- 2. The rezoning will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare.
- 3. The location of the lands in the zoning map area being amended are appropriate for the purposes of the proposed zone district(s).
- 4. The application proposes to rezone a small area of land, and the application demonstrates the size, scale, height, density, and multimodal traffic impacts of the proposed rezoning are compatible with surrounding development or can be made compatible with surrounding development through the Development Plan.
- 5. The application proposes to rezone a relatively small area of land, and the application demonstrates that any impacts are outweighed by other public benefits or progress toward other Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan goals that would be achieved by approval of the application.
- 6. A Land Use Plan accompanies the application and complies with the applicable criteria in the UDC.
- 7. The application is not subject to any approved Concept Plans.
- 8. Related to ADS-O district and not applicable.
- 9. Related to a PDZ district and not applicable.
- 10. The Application Complies with the Additional Standards of the FBZ Zone.



APPLICATIONS-ZONING

WHAT IS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSED REZONE?

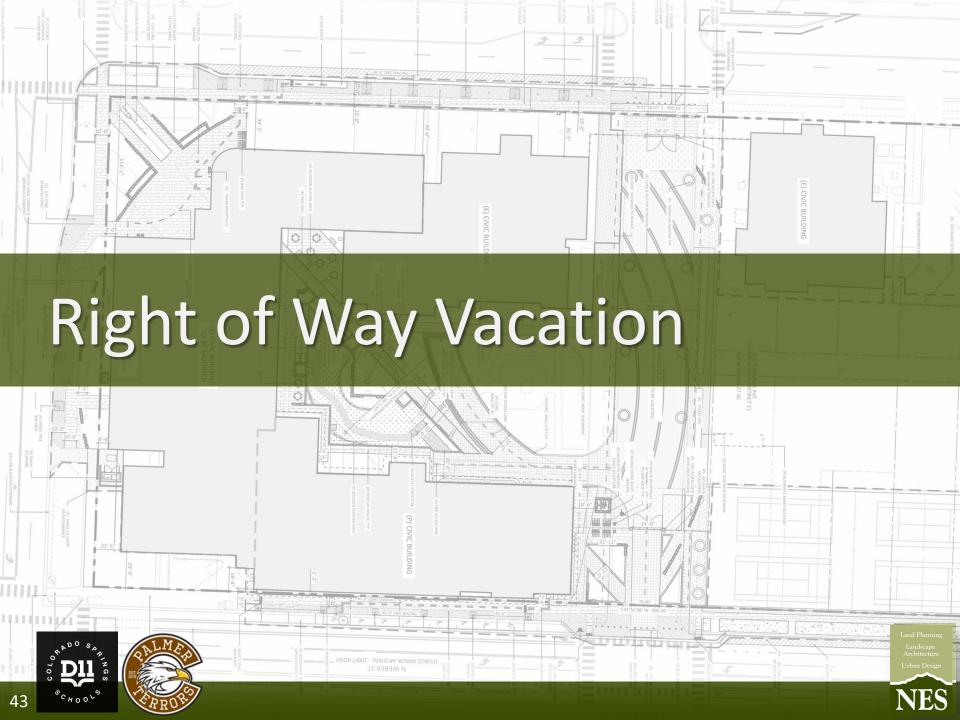
To provide a zoning option that allows for and accommodates the changing uses of buildings while maintaining the integrity and viability of the public realm, with an emphasis on intermodal transportation options, pedestrian linkages, and orientation.

-City of Colorado Springs FBZ Guidelines

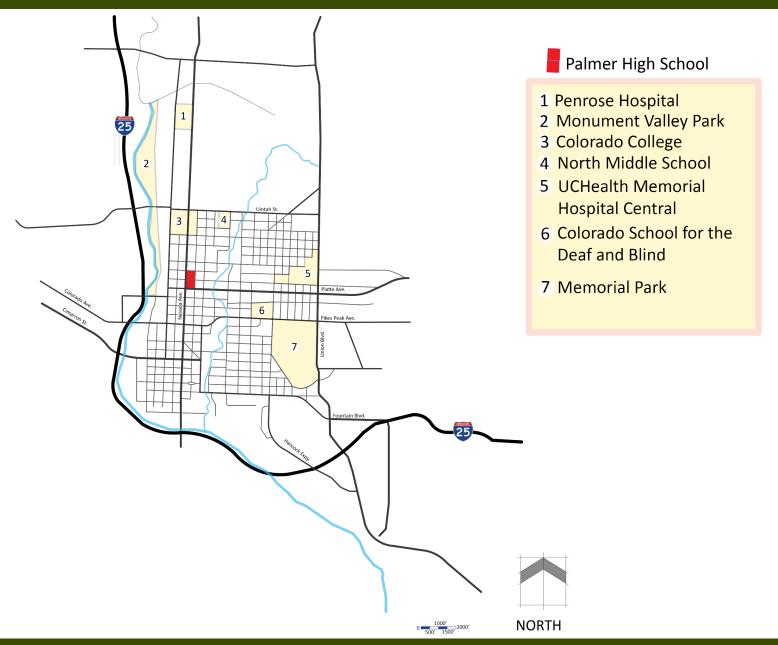
To encourage flexibility, innovation of design, and a variety of development types that will improve the quality of physical development over that normally achieved through the application of the City's standard single use zones, and when the Planned Development Zone (PDZ) and mixed-use (MX) zoning options are not sufficient for providing the desired flexibility and innovation.

City of Colorado Springs FBZ Guidelines





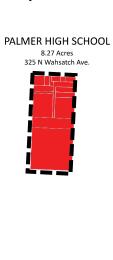
VACATION OF ROW — CONSOLIDATED CAMPUS



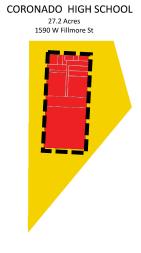
VACATION OF ROW — CONSOLIDATED CAMPUS

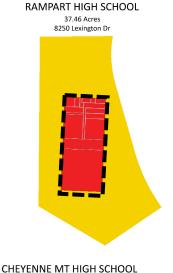
Palmer High School Constrained Campus-8.27 Acres

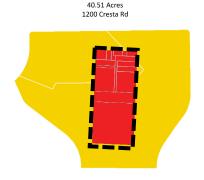
Industry standards recommend a base acreage of 20-30 acres plus 1 acre per 100 students



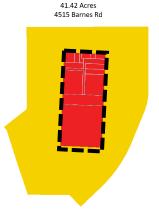




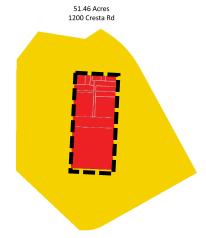




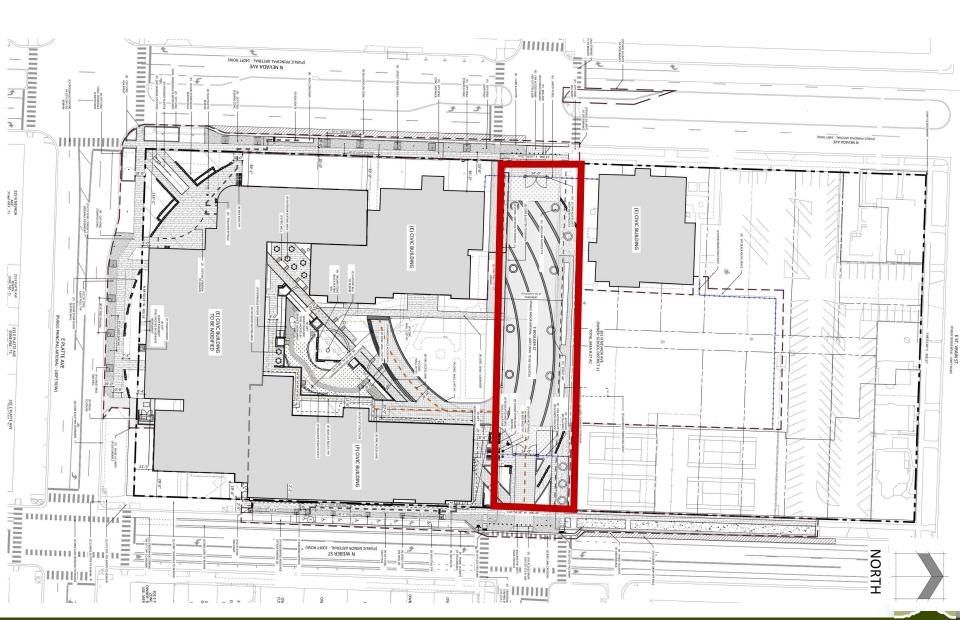
SAND CREEK HIGH SCHOOL



DOHERTY HIGH SCHOOL

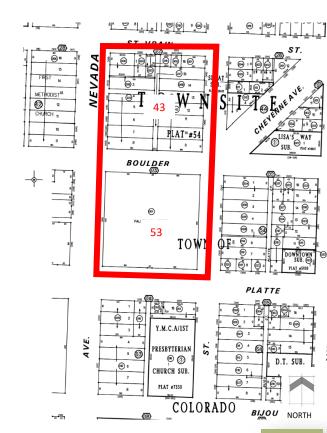


VACATION OF ROW – PLAN VIEW



VACATION OF ROW – OVERVIEW

- The campus is currently comprised of all of Block 53 and Block 43
 - E Boulder Street bisects the campus
 - Divides academic and extracurricular facilities
 - Creates operational and logistics inefficiencies
 - Exposes students to daily safety risks
- Vacating E Boulder Street allows the right-of-way property to be owned/used by the District to consolidate the campus
- Easement retained to accommodate utilities to remain in place
- 15' of retained easement will be vacated on side to accommodate the Development Plan
- Vacating E boulder is necessary to complete phase 1A of the master plan, due to design of the new east wing building addition

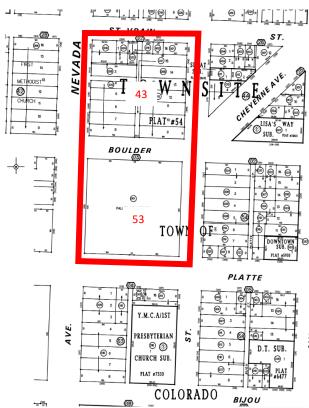




VACATION OF ROW – CITY MEMORANDUM

City Memorandum Regarding Closure of Boulder St

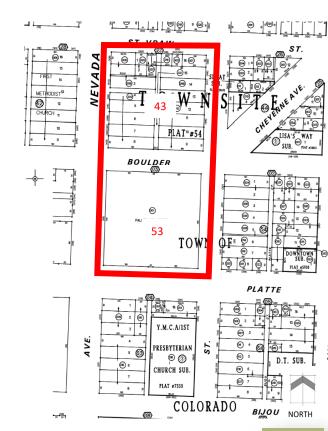
- Response time would increase by 20 second
 - The closure would not have a major impact on response times
 - Any other routes originating from the north or south of E. Boulder would use the alternate routes regardless of the blocked access of that segment.
- Crash Data
 - 2019 and 2024-284 crashes in the area of the school
 - 265 involving vehicles
 - 14 involving pedestrians
 - 5 involving bikes
- Intersection Safety Assessment concluded closure would result in improved safety





VACATION OF ROW – TRAFFIC STUDY

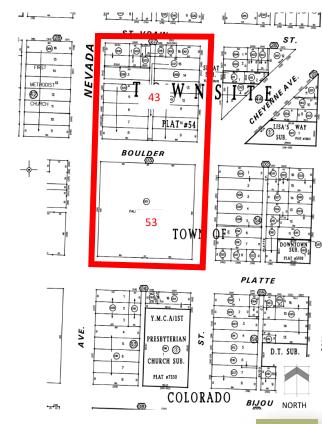
- Evaluates the Potential Impacts of Closing E. Boulder Street
 Between N NEVADA Avenue and Weber Street
- Initial Study based on April 2025 data, Updated Study based on August 2025 data
- Assessed Existing Traffic Conditions, Forecasted 2030 Traffic Volumes, and Modeled Scenarios With and Without the E. Boulder Street Closure
- Eight surrounding intersections were analyzed during AM and PM peak hours.





VACATION OF ROW – TRAFFIC STUDY FINDINGS

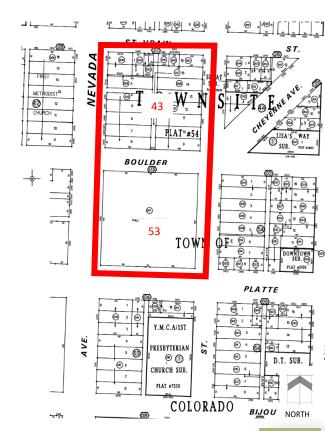
- Redistributes traffic to adjacent routes, primarily E St. Vrain Street and Platte Avenue
- All signalized intersections continue to operate at acceptable levels of service, except east- and westbound left turns from E St Vrain Street onto N Nevada Avenue
 - Projected to operate at LOS E/F
 - Significant queuing or exceeding intersection capacity are not anticipated
- Converting E. Boulder Street to a pedestrian plaza will improve safety and connectivity on campus
- Study updated in August of 2025 due to temporary closure of E Boulder St
 - Conditions with Boulder Street closed were generally consistent with original projections
 - Most notable differences were higher than expected through volumes at Platte & Nevada and Platte & Wahsatch
 - LOS remained acceptable, suggesting the network can continue to accommodate the closure impacts.



VACATION OF ROW – TRAFFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Mitigation Recommendations

- E Boulder St/N Nevada Ave & E Boulder St/N Weber St intersections
 - Convert the to three-leg intersections
 - · Adjust signal timing and striping
 - Eliminate specific turning pockets no longer needed
- E Platte/N Nevada intersection
 - Coordinate carefully with broader planning efforts to avoid operational challenges
 - Curb and gutter improvements to eliminate the existing southbound to eastbound left-turn lane on N. Nevada Avenue (north side of Boulder Street)





VACATION OF ROW – CRITERIA

Review Criteria

- 1. The right-of-way is no longer needed for public transportation purposes;
- 2. The vacation will not adversely impact use of the right-of-way for public utility and/or drainage purposes;
- The vacation will not adversely impact the uniform width of the remaining portions of the public right-of-way along the block frontage for which vacation is sought;
- 4. Access to lots or properties surrounding the public right-of-way will not be adversely affected; and
- 5. The vacation is consistent with the purpose of this UDC.



VACATION OF ROW – PLANCOS

Adapt "to how we move by transforming our corridors to support our future generations' health and mobility needs, enhance economic vibrancy, and improve regional connectivity."

Transportation Framework

Urban Core Streets recognize the existing character of these streets, while incorporating redevelopment, and the addition of new facilities to encourage multimodal use and optimized capacity.

Desired characteristics include "design and pattern that supports safety, commerce, mobility for all users, long-term sustainability, and adaptability"

Transportation Framework

Local Streets & Connections emphasize safety and local connectivity while deemphasizing vehicular speed. Recommendations include integration of traffic calming and connection to the modified street grid.

Transportation Framework

Repurpose identified rights-of-ways of Urban Core Steets to provide and enhance non-motorized travel in the Downtown area."

"reduce the barrier and other negative impacts of major transportation corridors without unreasonably reducing their capacity and function" and supporting Strategy SC-1.G-5 states to "retrofit urban core streets to focus predominately on increasing connectivity and multimodal utility while maintaining their needed capacity."

Transportation Framework



VACATION OF ROW – INTERMODAL TRANSPORT. PLAN

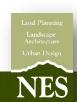
The goals of the Intermodal Transportation plan focused on balancing multiple and sometimes conflicting community and public interests.

-Intermodal Transportation Plan

Mobility: Plan, develop and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system to provide the community with adequate present and future mobility

Livability: Balance the mobility needs of the community with the overall community objective of creating a livable human and natural environment. Coordinate the interaction of transportation systems development with land use planning activities.

Intermodalism: Encourage the use of transportation modes other than single occupant automobile in such a way as to allow all modes to be mutually supportive and to function together as on transportation system.



VACATION OF ROW – EXPERIENCE DOWNTOWN COS

"Connect students with Downtown opportunities for learning, living, shopping, dining, culture, fun and employment"

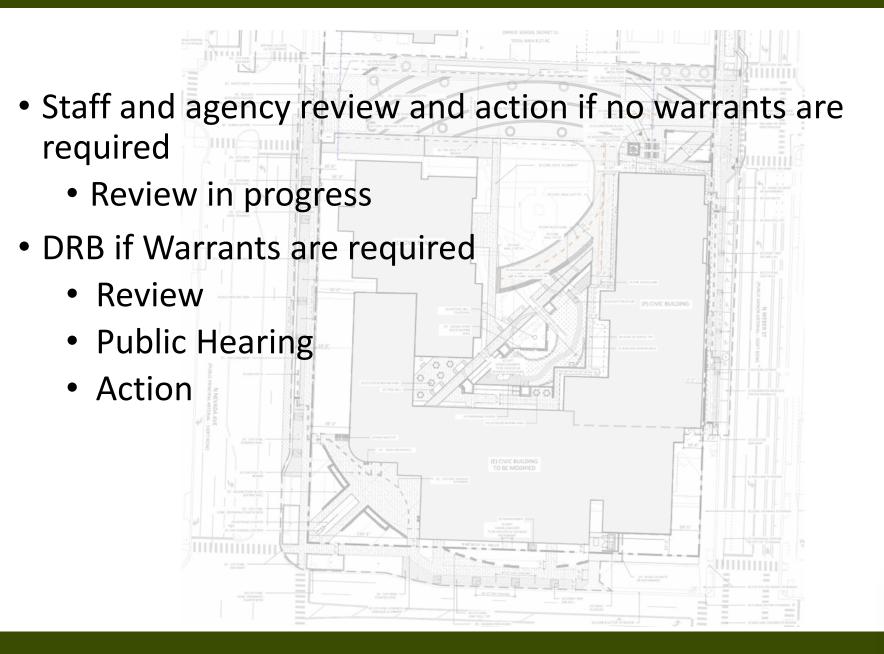
-Experience Downtown COS Master Plan

"Assess publicly owned assets, including but not limited to... various rights of ways and public parking, to assure highest and best usage of such assets to fulfill community goals."

Experience Downtown COS Master Plan



DEVELOPMENT PLAN – PHASE 1A: PROCESS





APPLICATIONS-RIGHT OF WAY VACATION

WHAT IS THE JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY VACATION?

Adapt "to how we move by transforming our corridors to support our future generations' health and mobility needs, enhance economic vibrancy, and improve regional connectivity."

Transportation Framework: PlanCos

The goals of the Intermodal Transportation plan focused on balancing multiple and sometimes conflicting community and public interests.

-Intermodal Transportation Plan

"Connect students with Downtown opportunities for learning, living, shopping, dining, culture, fun and employment"
-Experience Downtown MP

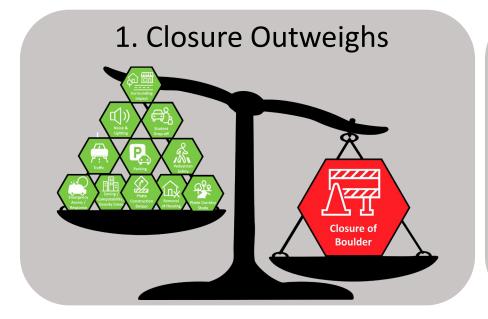


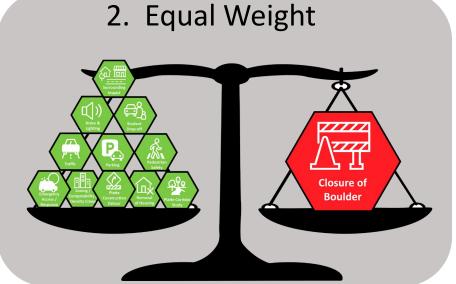
COMMUNITY BENEFITS

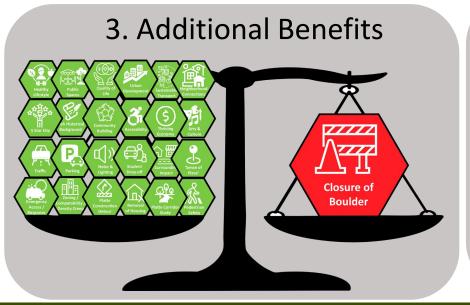


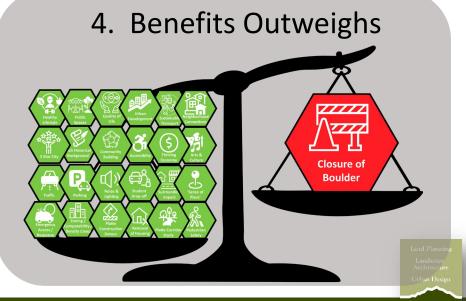
Land Planning Landscape Architecture Urban Design

COMMUNITY BENEFITS VS CLOSURE









CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

An agreement between the City of Colorado Springs and School District 11 shall be entered into that requires School District 11 to allow public egress over the property if the space is unused for construction or permanent School District 11 activities.

Request that D11 collaborate with the City to provide public egress during construction of the PPRTA-fund Platte Avenue Improvements (Wahsatch to Circle) project.

An agreement between the City of Colorado Springs and School District 11 shall be entered into that requires School District 11 to return ownership to the City of Colorado Springs, should the district choose to dispose of the property.



VISION: PHS CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

General William Palmer's vision was "to make (Colorado Springs) the most attractive place for homes in the west—a place for schools, colleges, literature, science, and everything those embody."



A transformative initiative that underscores commitment to educational excellence and community success.



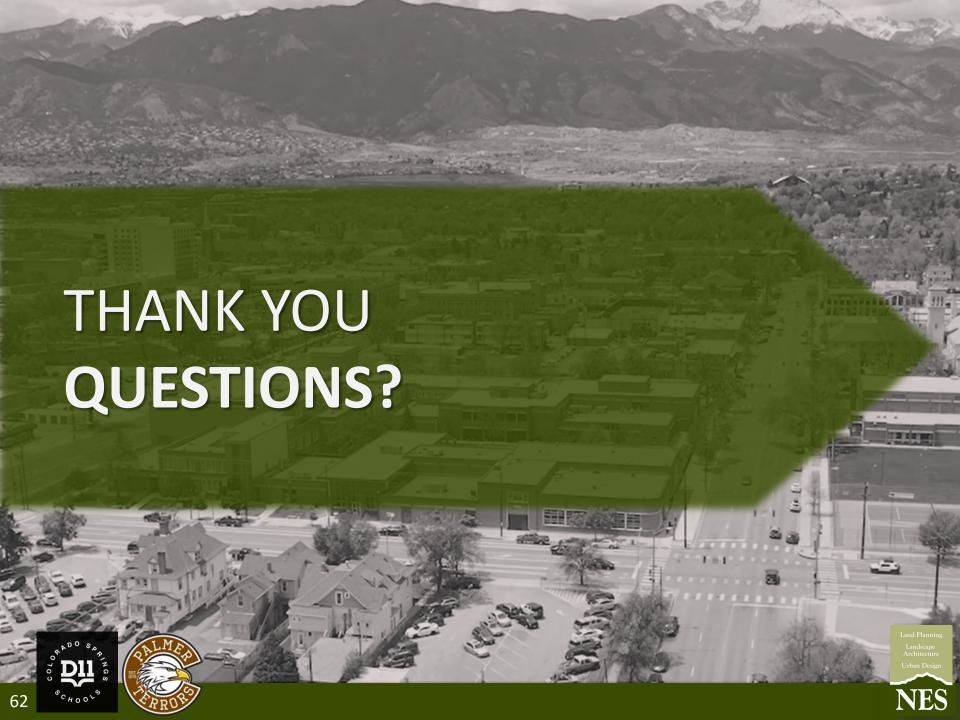
Foster **connections** with local government, industry, retail, and **higher education**, setting a new standard for high school environments.

Aim to create a landmark, and a dynamic community hub in downtown Colorado Springs.









CONTEXT PLAN





CONTEXT PLAN - ENLARGED



