

**DOWNTOWN REVIEW BOARD AGENDA  
NOVEMBER 6, 2019**

**STAFF: RYAN TEFERTILLER**

**FILE NOS:**

**CPC CU 19-00111 – QUASI-JUDICIAL**

**CPC V 19-00112 – LEGISLATIVE**

**CPC MP 97-00261-A6MN19 – QUASI-JUDICIAL**

**PROJECT: ROBSON ARENA**

**OWNER: COLORADO COLLEGE**

**CONSULTANT: NES, INC.**



## **PROJECT SUMMARY:**

1. **Project Description:** This proposal is to develop a roughly 3,400 seat arena to serve as the new home for the Colorado College Hockey Program. The project also includes a new 324 stall parking structure and multiple street-level supporting uses. The project spans roughly 3.67 acres of FBZ-T2A zoned (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2A) land on the block bound by E. Cache la Poudre St., N. Nevada Ave., E. Dale St., and N. Tejon St. (**FIGURE 1**)

Since the project includes a right-of-way vacation and a master plan amendment, Downtown Review Board's action is a recommendation to the City Council, which will consider all three applications.

2. **Applicant's Project Statement:** (**FIGURE 2**)
3. **Planning & Community Development Team's Recommendations:** **Approval of the applications with technical modifications**

## **BACKGROUND:**

1. **Site Addresses:** The site is made up of 9 separate parcels on the 800 blocks of N. Tejon St. and N. Nevada Ave. as well as the 100 block of E. Cache la Poudre St. and E. Dale St.
2. **Existing Zoning/Land Use:** FBZ-T2A (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2A) / The site previously included a number of commercial, office and institutional buildings but demolition has already proceeded and the site is currently largely vacant.
3. **Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:**
  - North: SU / Colorado College uses
  - South: FBZ-T2A and C5 / commercial, office, civic and residential uses
  - East: C5 / commercial, office, civic and residential uses
  - West: FBZ-T2A / Colorado College, civic and residential uses
4. **PlanCOS Vision:** Downtown Activity Center and are of Renowned Culture
5. **Annexation:** Town of Colorado Springs, 1872
6. **Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use:** Experience Downtown Master Plan (2016) / Institutional and "Influence Site"; Colorado College Master Plan (2008) / currently shown as an area for "potential relocated ice arena" and "proposed mixed-use district (including parking)" however, the College Master Plan is proposed for amendment as part of this project to more closely align with the proposed project.
7. **Subdivision:** Addition No. 1, Colorado Springs (1873) and others; an application to establish one lot via the Robson Arena Filing No. 1 plat is in process with administrative review.
8. **Zoning Enforcement Action:** None
9. **Physical Characteristics:** The site is largely vacant and level.

## **STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT:**

The stakeholder involvement for this project was significant. Over the last year, the applicant has organized and held 6 large public meetings (5 presentation style meetings and 1 hand-on workshop), met one-on-one with number stakeholder organizations, managed a website relaying information about the project to the public (<https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/robsonarena/>), and sent out at least 6 newsletters and multiple press-releases to interested parties. All of the larger public meetings were video recorded and made available on the project website for those who were not able to attend in person. Hundreds of individuals actively participated in the public dialog process for this project and many, many more were

made aware of the project details via the local press, social media, and direct communication from the College.

As with most projects that have such significant public engagement, the details of the plan as it stands today are a result of public input. The area orientation and location on the block changed significantly between the third public meeting in February 2019 and the fourth meeting in March 2019. Additionally, the current plan includes an attached 324 stall parking structure where the original plan that was discussed early in 2019 had no new off-street parking on the site. These changes, and many more, reflect the College's willingness to listen to stakeholders and make adjustments that will ultimately lead to a better outcome for all interested parties.

In addition to the developers' noteworthy efforts to engage surrounding property owners, businesses, and residents, the City led a traditional neighborhood meeting shortly after the applications were submitted. On Monday, September 9, 2019 roughly 100 people attended the neighborhood meeting to learn about the project details, the standards and criteria that are used to evaluate the project, and the review/approval process that the project is working through. While concerns regarding scale, use, traffic, parking, design, lighting and other issues were expressed by some stakeholders throughout the project, others have communicated strong support for the project and the changes that the College have made during the process.

All formal written comments that were received by Planning Staff during the formal review process for the project are included as **FIGURE 3**. As part of the applicant's resubmittal, a stand-alone "Response to Public Comments" exhibit (**FIGURE 4**) was provided to Staff; that document describes the community engagement process as well as formal responses to many of the most common concerns that were submitted to the City.

Prior to the Downtown Review Board hearing, the site will be posted and postcards will be mailed to surrounding property owners. An email will also be sent to all individuals who have communicated to staff about the project. Those communications will include information on how to review the most recent plans as well as the date, time, and location of the public hearing. Any formal communications received by Staff just prior to the hearing will be made available at the hearing.

The application was reviewed by all standard City agencies including, Public Works, Traffic Engineering, Colorado Springs Utilities, Water Resource Engineering, the Parking Enterprise, the Urban Renewal Authority, and others. All reviews support the project; any remaining technical concerns are included as Technical Modifications at the end of this report.

## **ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA AND MAJOR ISSUES**

### **1. Background**

The subject property is located on the north edge of Downtown and the southern edge of the Colorado College campus. The site is made up of a standard 400' by 400' City block. The site was original platted and developed in the late 1800's as four individual lots; the original lots have gone through various stages of development and configuration over the last 146 years. The College has owned some of the site for decades while other parcels on the block were acquired within the last few years. The site has included a wide range of commercial uses including restaurants, retail and service uses along Tejon, residential uses along Dale, and a number of lodging and institutional uses along Nevada. Many of the buildings on the site have recently been demolished in preparation for the new arena.

In 2009, the site was rezoned from C5 (Intermediate Business) to be within the northern-most edge of the Downtown Form-Based Zone which covers the bulk of the City's downtown core area. In 2013 the City of Colorado Springs initiated the City for Champions effort to utilize over \$120 million awarded by the Colorado Economic Development Commission through the Regional Tourist Act. These funds help support four major projects intended to bring increased tourist revenue to the area. After initial struggles to define and progress the sports and event center project, a concept began to take shape in 2018 to bifurcate the project into two separate but related venues: 1) Robson Arena – the indoor component of the project would be located on the south edge of the Colorado College campus and would serve as the new home arena for the College hockey team; and 2) the Downtown Stadium project located on Cimarron and Sahwach would serve as the new home for the Colorado Springs Switchbacks Football Club.

Through extensive design work by the project's architect, planners, and landscape architects together with College leadership, City Staff, and community stakeholders, the proposed arena has taken shape. The building design and materials attempt to complement the surrounding area. The addition of the parking structure on the southern portion of the site helps address one of the main community concerns, particularly during Colorado College home hockey games and other larger events. Bringing the College's hockey program downtown to a new, high-quality facility, like the proposed Robson Arena will be a huge boost to Downtown Colorado Springs as well as Colorado College.

## 2. Form-Based Conditional Use Development Plan

The Downtown Colorado Springs Form-Based Code (FBC) was adopted by City Council in 2009 after extensive planning, professional consultation, and stakeholder involvement. The Code de-emphasizes regulations of uses, while placing a higher emphasis on the built environment, specifically how buildings contribute to a walkable, pedestrian friendly urban core. The code supports a high-density, mixed use area where residents, employees, and visitors can park their vehicles on-street or in off-street parking lots and structures, and comfortably navigate on foot to multiple destinations. The Form-Based Code established quantifiable standards for redevelopment to minimize risk and increase predictability. Projects that meet all basic standards can be reviewed and approved quickly by administrative action; projects that need relief from any standard must be reviewed and approved at a public hearing with the Downtown Review Board (DRB).

While the Code encourages a wide range of urban uses in close proximity to each other, often times vertically integrated on one property, there are uses that require special consideration through the Conditional Use process. The most common Conditional Uses that have required DRB consideration over the last decade are new bar uses and new human service uses. These uses are common and expected in an urban core, but have the potential to affect surrounding properties and as such special consideration and analysis is justified.

The FBC also requires a Conditional Use permit for "any convention center, arena, or sports stadium, whether indoor or outdoor." The Code indicates that such a review may be necessary due to "the fact that the proposed structure does not adhere to one of the Code's approved building types." While the Code acknowledges that an arena doesn't fit cleanly into one of the approved seven building types, the applicant has utilized the "civic" building type for the proposed project as it fits better than any of the other options and provides some guidance on issues such as building envelopes and glazing that would otherwise be unknown.

a. Project Details.

While the process to design the proposed project has been going on for more than a year, the formal submittal of the project applications wasn't made until August of 2019. The initial review letter was issued on September 18, 2019 and described a wide range of issues that needed to be improved or clarified prior to the public hearing and formal approval process. A revised plan (**FIGURE 1**) and updated traffic/parking study (**FIGURE 5**) was submitted on October 9, 2019. This resubmittal addressed the vast majority of items from the September review letter.

The plan illustrates the construction of a fully enclosed arena, attached street-level commercial spaces, and an attached four-level parking structure. The total building footprint on the site totals 114,100 square feet. The proposed arena has a maximum seating capacity for a sold out hockey game of 3,407. The parking structure has a maximum capacity of 324 vehicles.

The arena structure is located on the northern portion of the site, spanning nearly the entire 400 foot distance from N. Tejon St. to N. Nevada Ave. The primary spectator entrance to the facility is at the northwest corner of the building near the intersection of N. Tejon St. and E. Cache la Poudre St. A secondary entrance into the building is located on the northeast corner of the building near the intersection of N. Nevada Ave. and E. Cache la Poudre St. The Tejon-side of the building is to be developed with street-level commercial, office and/or civic uses. These may include deli/restaurant (likely the new home of Wooglin's), College bookstore / merchandise, College health/counseling services, and campus mail. These uses will help increase activity and interest along the Tejon side of the project where walkability and activity are most critical.

The southern portion of the site is largely occupied by the attached parking garage. Vehicular access is achieved via two separate driveways that are accessed from E. Dale St. The parking structure includes four levels and has a capacity of 324 vehicles; the structure is being engineered to support addition of an additional level in the future though a development plan amendment would be necessary prior to that work. The southern edge of the parking structure is roughly 70 feet north of the E. Dale St. right-of-way. The area between the parking structure and the E. Dale St. sidewalk will be developed as a landscaped "green space" and buffer as part of this project. However, the plan does label the area as an area that could be developed in the future for a new building and use creating a more urban design along E. Dale St. Again, an amendment to the development plan would be required for a new building or building addition.

The proposed structures extend fairly close to the public right-of-way along Tejon, Cache la Poudre, and Nevada Ave. This creates a relatively urban design that is expected, and in fact required, within the Downtown Form-Based Zone. Although the north and east side of the project has limited street-level glazing due to the nature of the building and uses within the building along the north and east sides of the ice rink, the west side of the project is well glazed and includes number street-level uses and access points.

The building uses a range of materials that have been chosen to complement many of the buildings on the College's campus to the north and other surrounding structures. The plan calls out the use of brick, wood, metal, and terra cotta to create an interesting and varying mix of materials and colors. The tallest portions of the building are shown

with lighter shades of stucco that will minimize the perceived bulk and scale of the project.

In addition to details regarding the proposed building, the plan calls out public space improvements along all four sides of the project. Wide sidewalks, private plazas with colored and stamped concrete, flagstones, new street trees, lighting, seating, bike parking, and landscape beds are shown throughout the project. The proposed improvements should function well both during large events with significant pedestrian volumes as well as day to day use.

The plan also shows street improvements to the adjacent roadways. The removal of numerous driveways allow for an increase in on-street parking on Tejon and Dale. Ride share and shuttle bus drop off areas are designed closest to the building's primary entrance at Tejon and Cache la Poudre to make the use of shared transportation options as easy and convenient as possible.

b. Form-Based Code Physical Standards

The Form-Based Code includes a number standards that guide new development to ensure that the goals of the Experience Downtown Master Plan are met and that a high density, pedestrian friendly urban core is established. The primary organizing concept of the FBC is that all new buildings fall into one of seven established "building types." All other physical standards are related to the defined building type to create appropriate densities, setbacks, heights, and uses within each building. While the code acknowledges that stadiums and arenas don't fall cleanly into specific building types, the proposed plan utilizes the "civic building" type to guide implementation of the required physical standards.

Projects that don't meet all the required physical standards may still be approved by the Downtown Review Board through the warrant process. A warrant is the term used in the FBD for relief. There are five specific criteria in the FBC that are utilized for evaluating and granting a warrant (further discussion below). Warrants are also noted on development plans to document which standards are not fully met and to what extent relief is granted.

The first standard for consideration is building envelopes. The FBC does not include minimum setbacks which are used in many of the City's other zone districts. Instead, maximum setbacks are utilized to require buildings to be located close to the right-of-way and public sidewalk thereby creating a higher density pedestrian environment. As discussed briefly above, the proposed arena is designed with limited setbacks along Tejon, Cache la Poudre, and Nevada. The majority of the Dale St. setback is more significant becoming as much as 70 feet from the right-of-way adjacent to the proposed parking structure. While this setback is much larger than desired for Civic buildings, future redevelopment in this area could be proposed for this area which address this issue.

The Form-Based Code's building frontage standards also require some flexibility in relation to the proposed design. Typically, urban buildings within the FBZ are to have significant and repeated awnings and a high percentage of glazing and fenestration. While these design elements are largely provided along Tejon, the north, south and eastern sides of the building demand significant relief as the proposed use doesn't support high levels of glazing that is typically seen within the FBC. The proposed

building does include significant landscaping, diverse materials and textures, and other techniques to mitigate any possible impacts of the design. The applicant has provided a rendering of the east side of the project (**FIGURE 6**) to better illustrate the proposed design and to document the effectiveness of the landscaping and architectural treatments in creating a high-quality façade.

The FBC also includes block standards that requires that blocks retain the historic 400 foot by 400 foot platting configuration and that mid-block alleys or pedestrian paths be included. The intent of the block standards is to create a predictable, convenient and safe pattern for travel downtown and to provide areas for utilitarian functions (e.g. trash dumpsters, loading docks, and utility infrastructure). The proposed project is dependent on the vacation of the mid-block alley that connects Cache la Poudre to Dale St. Given the minimum size needs of the rink and arena, the vacation of the alley is unavoidable.

The last set of development standards within the FBC relate to the developer's obligations to improve the public spaces adjacent to the project. This includes standards for sidewalk and amenity zone width, amenity zone elements (e.g. trees, benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, lighting, etc.), paving and surface materials, and others. While the proposed project includes many of these items and is a big improvement over the existing conditions, the plan does fall slightly short regarding the number of trees relative to the FBC standard. The proposed design is largely justified by some relatively unique issues particular to the arena, specifically the need for ride share pick-up and drop-off areas and adequate pedestrian plazas at the building's primary entrance.

### 3. Parking and Traffic

The project applications include a parking and traffic evaluation produced by local firm Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig (**FIGURE 5**). The study goes into great detail to estimate the likely traffic increases, parking demand, and parking supply issues for the proposed project at maximum capacity. The study focuses on Friday early evening traffic volumes given typical start time and dates for Colorado College hockey games. It uses studies for similar sporting venues to estimate that an estimated 95% of attendees will arrive in personal vehicles and that each vehicle will average 2.7 occupants. The study also estimates that the average student attendance will be 238, which is important as it is expected that all students will walk to games. Given these factors, the study predicts that a total of 1,215 vehicles will be arriving at the facility for a sold out hockey game.

While the focus of the study is on the parking and traffic impacts for sold out hockey games, the study also addresses the parking needs of day to day use as well as for smaller C4C events. The parking for these uses are largely accommodated by the attached parking structure and adjacent on-street public parking. It should also be noted that the Form-Based Code does require private off-street parking based on the square footage of specific uses on the site. Given the standard parking ratios in the code and the size and mix of uses on the site, the plan calls out that 215 private, off-street stalls are required; 326 stalls are provided within the attached parking structure which easily meets the minimum code requirement. All parties understand that more than the 215 stalls required by code are needed to adequately meet the demands of a sold out hockey game.

The applicant's focus during the design and planning stages of this project was to ensure that adequate parking would be available for sold out hockey games to prevent negative impact to the surrounding neighborhood. As such, the study documents that between existing on-campus parking lots, new on-campus lots/structures, immediately adjacent on-

street parking, parking agreements with nearby private property owners, and limited use of the City's public parking structure to the south, that adequate parking will be available.

Though adequate dedicated parking may be available, some stakeholders who live or own property in the area are still concerned that on-street parking in the surrounding neighborhood could be a concern, and has even been a concern today, prior to the creation of the arena. Recognizing high demand and use of public on-street parking in the Near North End and southern edge of the Old North End, the City has initiated a study to propose areas of on-street permit restricted parking, new areas of metered parking, and areas where parking orientation could change to increase on-street supply. A series of maps showing areas where change is anticipated later this year is provided as **FIGURE 7**.

While the study shows that adequate parking is available without significant impact to the neighborhood and that most of the adjacent roadways and intersections can continue to function adequately even at peak demand, it is worth noting that other factors not included in the study could also help to further reduce potential impacts. The City has been working with key stakeholders to explore the creation of an urban circulator bus route similar to The Dash which existed roughly 10 years ago. While funding has not been secured, there is hope that this route could be established in the future as the Olympic Museum, the Downtown Stadium and Robson Arena come on line. The other factor that could affect parking and traffic is a higher than expected percentage of visitors to Robson arriving on-foot or on bike. While the seasonality of College hockey games could limit this, expected increases in urban residential densities and improved mobility options (bike lanes and off-street trails) could result in lower demands for parking at the facility.

#### 4. Conditional Use Criteria

The FBC uses the same three criteria to evaluate a conditional use as are used City-wide.

As a conditional use, the Downtown Review Board must find that the project substantially complies with the following conditional use criteria:

- A. Surrounding Neighborhood: That the value and qualities of the neighborhood surrounding the conditional use are not substantially injured.
- B. Intent Of Zoning Code: That the conditional use is consistent with the intent and purpose of this Zoning Code to promote public health, safety and general welfare.
- C. Comprehensive Plan: That the conditional use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the City.

Staff has made considerable effort to evaluate these criteria given the size and significance of the proposed project. While the project will bring significant change to the area and will create short periods of significant parking demand and traffic increase, the project will also make huge improvements to a key gateway into Downtown. The proposed arena will bring a major regional attraction, Colorado College hockey, not only to campus, but to downtown. This is well aligned with the Experience Downtown Master Plan which advocates bringing "one-of-a-kind" uses to the City's core.

As noted in **FIGURE 3**, there are many stakeholders that oppose the proposed arena for a wide array of issues including bulk/scale, traffic, parking, lighting, noise, crime, and others.



However, Staff has concluded that the value and qualities of the neighborhood immediately surrounding the site as well as downtown as a whole will actually benefit from the project. The arena will further solidify Colorado College as a premier liberal arts college and is expected to provide significant benefit to the College's hockey program. While the seating capacity is significantly smaller than the existing arena on the City's southern edge, Robson Arena's proximity to classes, dormitories, and all aspects of student life will be a significant recruitment tool for the hockey program.

The project is also highly consistent with the newly adopted PlanCOS, our City's Comprehensive Plan. See below for additional discussion of this issue.

#### 5. Warrants from Form-Based Code Standards

The proposed project does not meet a number of specific Form-Based Code standards including building envelopes, frontage, block standards, and public space standards. Many of these standards aren't met largely due to the fact that a stadiums or arenas don't fit cleanly into one of the seven standard building types; this is one primary reason why a Conditional Use is needed. That being said, the Form-Based Code requires warrants to be evaluated using five standard criteria:

1. Is the requested warrant consistent with the intent of the Form-Based Code?
2. Is the requested warrant, as well as the project as a whole, consistent with Section 4 – Design Guidelines of the form-based code?
3. Is the requested warrant reasonable due to the proposed project's exceptional civic or environmental design?
4. Is the requested warrant consistent with the Downtown Master Plan?
5. Is the requested warrant consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan?

The project's consistency with the intent of the Form-Based Code has already been discussed above. While large stadiums and arenas may present unique issues in a high density urban area, they can be approved through the Conditional Use process. Staff finds that the proposed project is well aligned with the intent of the Code in that the project creates a high-density, one-of-a-kind use in our City's Core. The public street-level retail uses on the west side of the building and significant public improvements around all four sides of the project will create an interesting and comfortable environment for pedestrian traffic.

The FBC's design guidelines provide direction on a number of more subjective issues which must be evaluated as part of the warrant process. Staff finds that the proposed project is consistent with most applicable guidelines. The proposed building provides significant architectural detail, includes multiple front facades, has multiple pedestrian access points, screens utilitarian features (e.g. trash dumpsters, loading docks, etc.) from the public view, provides well designed structured parking, and provides a high quality hardscape and plaza design.

Staff also concludes that the proposed building has both exceptional civic and environmental design. The building will not only benefit Colorado College, but the whole community through it the hosting of a wide range of public events. It will also be designed with a very high level of energy efficiency, which will be unique not only to facilities of this size but to ice rinks in general.

All the project elements that need warrants have been found to be consistent with the required warrant criteria.

6. Right-of-Way Vacation

The proposed arena requires the vacation of a public alley way in order to move forward. The vacation plat submitted as part of the project (**FIGURE 8**) illustrates the full vacation of the public alley that runs north/south bisecting the block and connecting E. Cache la Poudre St. to E. Dale St. While the existing alley helps provide access to the internal portions of the block and provide a convenient area for trash and delivery services, the proposed design of the arena and the service area off of N. Nevada Ave. will accommodate those needs. Should City Council approve the proposed ROW vacation, Staff is recommending that public utility and drainage easements be retained in order to protect and service the infrastructure in the area.

A right-of-way vacation must be found to meet the review criteria in City Code Section 7.7.402.C., specifically that:

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;
3. 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 Subdivision Code.

Planning Staff has carefully considered the required criteria and has consulted with other review agencies to ensure that the proposed alley for vacation is not necessary for access, drainage, or utility purposes. And while the proposed vacation ordinance will initially retain public utility and drainage easements over the vacated area, once all the necessary infrastructure is removed, those easements can also be administratively vacated through the City's Real Estate Services Division. Staff finds that all five criteria are met and recommends that the proposed vacation be approved.

7. Conformance with the City Comprehensive Plan

PlanCOS was adopted in January of 2019 and establishes the Vision, framework, goals, policies and strategies for the City of Colorado Springs. The subject property and the majority of downtown falls within the Downtown Activity Center and neighborhood. Downtown is also designated as one of six city-wide "typologies." The specific goal of the downtown typology is "to continue to grow and adapt Downtown Colorado Springs as the singular economic and cultural heart of the city and region, consistent with the Experience Downtown Colorado Springs Plan." The proposed arena clearly furthers that goal by creating a unique entertainment venue that will serve as a regional attraction. The primary user of the new facility, the Colorado College hockey program, will be moving from the southern edge of the City to Downtown strengthening the City's core as the economic and cultural heart of the region.

Other specific strategies within the Unique Places chapter of PlanCOS that are closely aligned with the proposed arena include:

Strategy UP-1.A-5: Design urban activity centers to encourage walkability.

Strategy UP-1.B-1: Support and promote a system of gateways and signature streets extending beyond Downtown to create unique, desirable, and identifiable entries to the overall city and the distinct places within it.

Strategy UP-1.C-1: Locate and design public spaces and civic facilities at key locations throughout the city that set an example for quality design and integrate with surrounding private development.

Strategy UP-3.A-1: Place a high priority on implementation of the City's adopted Experience Downtown Master Plan, including upgrades to festival streets, multimodal transportation facilities, Southwest Downtown improvements, Downtown park enhancements, and alley and street activation projects.

Within the Plan's Thriving Economy Chapter, the proposed project falls clearly into Typology 3 – the Experience Economy. These are tourism, entertainment and cultural attractions that appeal to a wide range of residents and visitors. The experience economy is critical to maintaining high quality of life, a factor that is important for attracting and retaining skilled talent and the businesses that rely on these workers. This project is well aligned with a number of goals, policies and strategies within the Thriving Economy Chapter including:

Goal TE-1: Build on our quality of place and existing competitive advantages.

Strategy TE-1.A-4: Prioritize Downtown redevelopment to establish it as the region's employment center, hub of commerce, governing, innovation, tourism, entertainment, art and culture.

Policy TE-1.B: Build on our emerging sports, recreation, and outdoors economy. This includes the Olympic Training Center, Olympic Museum, sports and recreation organizations and other related businesses and industries.

Strategy TE-1.B-3: Pursue opportunities for building additional sports venues throughout the city, including in or near Downtown.

Strategy TE-2.C-1: Prioritize redevelopment and activation in Downtown and other urban activity centers in order to establish or enhance economic development.

While the Unique Places and Thriving Economy chapters of PlanCOS have the most goals, policies, and strategies that align with the proposed project, the following are number of other plan elements from other chapters that also support the applications:

Strategy RC-3.B-1: Continue to work with property owners and civic organizations to implement the Experience Downtown Master Plan to market arts and festivals and incorporate creative placemaking into new developments and redevelopments.

Strategy RC-3.B-2: Encourage the establishment of more and improved arts, education, and cultural opportunities in and near Downtown.

Staff finds that the proposed project is highly consistent with PlanCOS and creates direct and specific progress toward a number of specific goals spanning a wide range of key issues.

8. Conformance with the Area's Master Plan:

This project falls within two different master plans: The 2008 Colorado College Master Plan, and the 2016 Experience Downtown Master Plan. While the 2008 Colorado College Master Plan labeled the site as an area for “potential relocated ice arena” and “proposed mixed-use district (including parking)” both of which are supportive of the proposed project, the applicant has submitted an amendment to the College Master Plan (**FIGURE 9**) to update the how the subject property is described as well as to illustrate a couple associated land use changes that are necessary to support the arena. The proposed plan illustrates the subject property as “proposed ice arena,” “proposed parking garage,” as well as having a “potential future development” area on the southern portion of the site. Roughly two blocks to the west of the arena site, the plan calls out the removal of the existing tennis facility to be developed with a new surface parking lot. Lastly, a vacant area owned by the College on Glen, south of Uintah, is shown on the plan as being developed for a “proposed tennis facility.”

Staff has reviewed these proposed changes and finds that they are acceptable on the master plan level. However, the Downtown Review Board, City Council, the College, and the public must understand that prior to constructing the new parking lot and new tennis facility land use applications must be produced, submitted, and approved by staff after a comprehensive review.

The site also falls within the northern edge of the Experience Downtown Plan which includes eight primary goals, each with numerous “action steps” to bring success to Downtown Colorado Springs. A few of the goals and action steps that the project aligns with include:

Goal 1 – Economic and Cultural Heart of the Region

Support the growth and viability of one-of-a-kind retail, restaurant and service businesses, with keen attention to first-to-market brands and offerings.

Goal 3 – Celebrating and Connecting with Outdoor Recreation and Exceptional Natural Setting

Create and implement a brand campaign positioning Downtown as a vibrant urban area integrated with world class outdoor experiences.

Goal 4 – A Place for Healthy and Active Lifestyles

Signal and invite an active lifestyle through amenities, events, and offerings.

Goal 7 – Offering an Unforgettable Visitor Experience

Complete feasibility study for a sports event center and determine next steps accordingly.  
*Staff Comment – the proposed arena project is the outcome of the feasibility study which was completed shortly after the Experience Master Plan was adopted.*

The Plan specifically discusses this site within Chapter 1 of Volume 2 as an “influence site.” While the plan didn’t call out the site as the future home of a hockey arena, it does recognize the area along the College’s southern boundary as critical to the success of downtown and its ability to improve linkages and interaction between Downtown and Colorado College.

The proposed arena is consistent with a wide range of issues within the Experience Downtown Master Plan. This despite the fact that the project had no defined location and seemed unlikely to move forward during the period of time that the Master Plan was being drafted and approved. The approval and construction of the proposed arena will bring the City closer to achieving the vision and many of the goals of the plan.

9. Technical Modifications Required for the Plan.

The conditional use development plan for Robson Arena was initially submitted in late August, 2019 and then a revised and updated plan was submitted in early October (**FIGURE 1**). While the resubmittal was a significant improvement over the initial submittal, some items must still be resolved before the plan is officially approved.

The proposed recommendations at the conclusion of this report include a number of technical modifications to the master plan amendment, the conditional use development plan, as well as the vacation plat. While the number of items may exceed many projects that are heard by the DRB and City Council, most items are more a matter of clarity as opposed to substantive design-related or compatibility issues. Staff is confident that the applicant and designer can continue working with Planning Staff, as well as Staff of a few other key agencies, to resolve the remaining technical items while honoring the overall intent and design of the plan as it sits today.

**Staff finds that the project substantially complies with the required standards and criteria for both the conditional use development plan as well as the right-of-way vacation if all the Technical Modifications listed below are fully implemented.**

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**CPC CU 19-00111– CONDITIONAL USE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Recommend that City Council **Approve** the Conditional Use Development Plan based on the findings that the Conditional Use criteria found in Section 7.5.704 of the City Code will be met once the following technical modifications are addressed:

Technical modifications to the Conditional Use plan:

1. Finalize approval of the project’s drainage report.
2. Correct the parking table on sheet 1 of the plan to accurately reflect FBZ-specific parking requirements.
3. Document the dimensions of new on-street parking stalls and drop-off areas to ensure that adequate width and depth are available.
4. Address the minor landscape plan items described in detail in the October 25, 2019 staff review letter including:
  - a. Document the square footage of wood mulch and sod proposed

- b. Confirm the design and extent of tree planting “trenches” and tree staking type
- c. Revised street tree type to comply with the City’s approved street tree list
- d. Ensure that all proposed tree grates are shown with trees
5. Update the facilities sheet with the plat name on the sheet title and to ensure consistency between the legend and line types on the plan.
6. Update the plan to clarify which pedestrian ramps are being replaced by the developer.

**CPC V 19-00112– RIGHT OF WAY VACATION**

Recommend that City Council **Approve** the Right-of-Way vacation based on the findings that the vacation criteria found in Section 7.7.402.C. of the City Code are met.

**CPC MP 97-00261-A6MN19 – MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT**

Recommend that City Council **Approve** the proposed master plan amendment based on the findings that the criteria found in Section 7.5.408. of the City Code will be met once the following technical modifications are addressed:

Technical modifications to the master plan amendment:

1. Adjust the labels for the new arena, the new parking structure, and the future development area south of the garage so that the labels do not interfere with the College-owned land a block to the east on Weber.