

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

STAFF: NINA VETTER, PETER WYSOCKI

FILE NO(S): CPC MP 17-00010

PROJECT: RENEW NORTH NEVADA AVENUE MASTER PLAN

APPLICANT: CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

PROJECT SUMMARY:

1. Project Description: The Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan sets out a vision and recommendations for preferred land uses, transportation, and infrastructure within the corridor that will guide future private sector redevelopment and public funding priorities. The planning area generally extends from the Rock Island Railroad in the south to Austin Bluffs Parkway in the north, and from Cascade Avenue to the west and North Stone Avenue to the east. The primary focus is the core of Nevada Avenue corridor where there is multiple zoning that includes heavy and light industrial, commercial, public facility and some residential uses.
2. Planning and Development Team's Recommendation: That the Planning Commission recommend approval to City Council for the Plan.

A complete copy of the plan will be provided as a separate attachment.

Additional information is available at the project website:

<http://www.coloradosprings.gov/renewnave>

BACKGROUND:

The impetus for the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan (the "RNN Ave. Plan") was the North Nevada Economic Opportunity Zone ("EOZ") report. The North Nevada EOZ, along with the South Academy EOZ, was initiated by Mayor Bach in 2013. Mayor Bach formed a task force of private stakeholders to evaluate barriers and opportunities for redevelopment of both EOZ area. The task force was led by Mr. Fred Veitch of Nor'wood. Although initially intended to be an informal report, the North Nevada EOZ was endorsed by Mayor Suthers and officially adopted by resolution by the City Council in 2016 as a document for strategic planning purposes.

The North Nevada EOZ makes several recommendations including promotion of desirable businesses that complement UCCS (and know cybersecurity industry), adoption of regulations that influence desirable uses and designs, redevelopment of the public realm, and acquisition/reuse of the existing railroad right-of-way. Given a multi-disciplinary nature of the recommendations made by North Nevada EOZ, staff determined that a master plan and an accompanying zoning overlay would be the best method to encapsulate all the disciplines.

1. Existing Zoning/Land Use: Due to its extent, the area in the boundary includes a wide range of zoning and land uses which is detailed in the Master Plan. Along the corridor itself, the predominant zoning categories include M-1 (Light Industrial), and C-5, C-6 (Commercial)
2. Comprehensive Plan/Designated 2020 Land Use: The planning area includes a variety of 2020 Land Use Map classifications. These predominantly include Mature/Redevelopment Corridor and Employment Center along with some General Residential. From a Comprehensive Plan perspective the Mature/Redevelopment Corridor designation is particularly amendable to the kinds of land use evolution contemplated and supported by this Plan

3. Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use: With the exception of the *North Nevada/University of Colorado, Colorado Springs Economic Opportunity Zone Task Force Findings and Recommendations* which was adopted by City Council in 2016 for general and strategic planning purposes, (see discussion below) there are no adopted area-area specific master plans that pertain to this area, and therefore no master plan-designated land uses.
4. Subdivision: N/A, the planning area includes a combination of platted and unplatted property
5. Zoning Enforcement Action: N/A
6. Physical Characteristics: The physical characteristics of the area are described in and are being addressed by the Plan. The area can be broadly described as an older highway commercial area originally developed in part prior to annexation, heavily influenced by the former main State highway, historic freight rail uses and electric generation and transmission uses. Housing in the immediate study area predominantly consists of older mobile home parks. The Nevada corridor in this segment lacks landscaping, curb and gutter and sidewalks in most cases. Several areas within the corridor could be described as “blighted” while, but some businesses and other uses are economically viable. The corridor is also home to several ComCor community c

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT:

The Renew North Nevada Avenue plan was initiated by the City in summer of 2016. The City held four community workshops and an open house, distributed a survey, and distributed postcards to property owners in the area, resulting in input from unduplicated 853 participants. This recommended plan is highly reflective of the input gained from and refined by the project workshops. The project also had a steering committee comprised of planning staff, economic development staff, UCCS, CONO, Councilmember Knight, and a private developer.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA/MAJOR ISSUES/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & MASTER PLAN CONFORMANCE:

The Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan divides the corridor into three areas – the North Zone, Central Zone, and South Zone. For each zone, the Master Plan identifies preferred land uses based on community-driven land use goals. The Master Plan also identifies mobility goals and corridor streetscape concepts for each zone.

Analysis of Master Plan Criteria (7.5.408)

7.5.408.A. Comprehensive Plan: The Comprehensive Plan and the 2020 Land Use Map are the context and the benchmark for the assessment of individual land use master plans. The proposed land use master plan or the amendment conforms to the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed land use pattern is consistent with the Citywide perspective presented by the 2020 Land Use Map.

The proposed Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan conforms to the policies and strategies of the City's current Comprehensive Plan. The dominant land use designations of the corridor include “Mature/Redevelopment Corridor” which is defined as being:

“Corridor: Corridors are the areas that line major arterial streets with commercial and employment uses. They include those corridors that have historically developed as commercial strips, as well as those that are currently in the process of doing so. The Comprehensive Plan includes two types of corridors.”

New/Developing Commercial Corridors: Corridors that have recently developed, or are now in the process of developing, with major retail uses, services, and strip centers accessible exclusively by automobile and characterized by large dominating parking lots.

Mature/Redevelopment Corridors: Corridors that line older arterial streets and state highways with retail uses and auto-oriented services developed in a typical strip commercial pattern, with multiple curb cuts, individual parking lots, cluttered signage, and small lots. These corridors also include significant infill and redevelopment opportunities.”

Policy LUM 206 describes the recommended use of Mature/Redevelopment Corridors:

“Utilize the Mature/Redevelopment Corridor designation for existing, smaller, mature retail corridors that offer opportunities to transform from exclusively auto-oriented places to more mixed-use centers through infill and redevelopment. As existing uses expand, they often migrate to new corridors, thus creating opportunities for redevelopment and redesign in these corridors. Integrate mobility choices by providing transit, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the center as well as to adjoining areas”

The 2001 Comprehensive Plan contains on the order of 300 individual goals objectives and strategies.. Because this Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan is both consistent with and applicable to the majority of them it is difficult to choose examples to excerpt.

“Policy LU 203: Develop a Land Use Pattern that is Mutually Supportive with the Intermodal Transportation System

Develop a land use pattern that supports, and is in turn supported by, increased pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel and that reduces the need for automobile use.

Strategy LU 203a: Locate the Places that People Use for Their Daily Needs and Activities Close to Each Other

Group and link the places used for living, working, shopping, schooling, and recreating and make them accessible by transit, bicycle, and foot, as well as by car.

Strategy LU 203b: Concentrate and Mix Uses

Concentrate and mix activities and uses in and around defined centers in order to create more diversity and synergy between uses, combine destinations, support more effective transit service, and provide viable pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation.

Strategy LU 203c: Define the Functional Relationships between the Elements of the Land Use Pattern and the Elements of the Intermodal Transportation System

Develop criteria and guidelines that

- define how each element in the land use pattern should incorporate the four major modes of travel - pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile;*
- show the appropriate level of application of each mode to access and circulation; and*
- define the desired transitions between modes.*

Strategy LU 302a: Promote an Integrated Pedestrian Circulation System

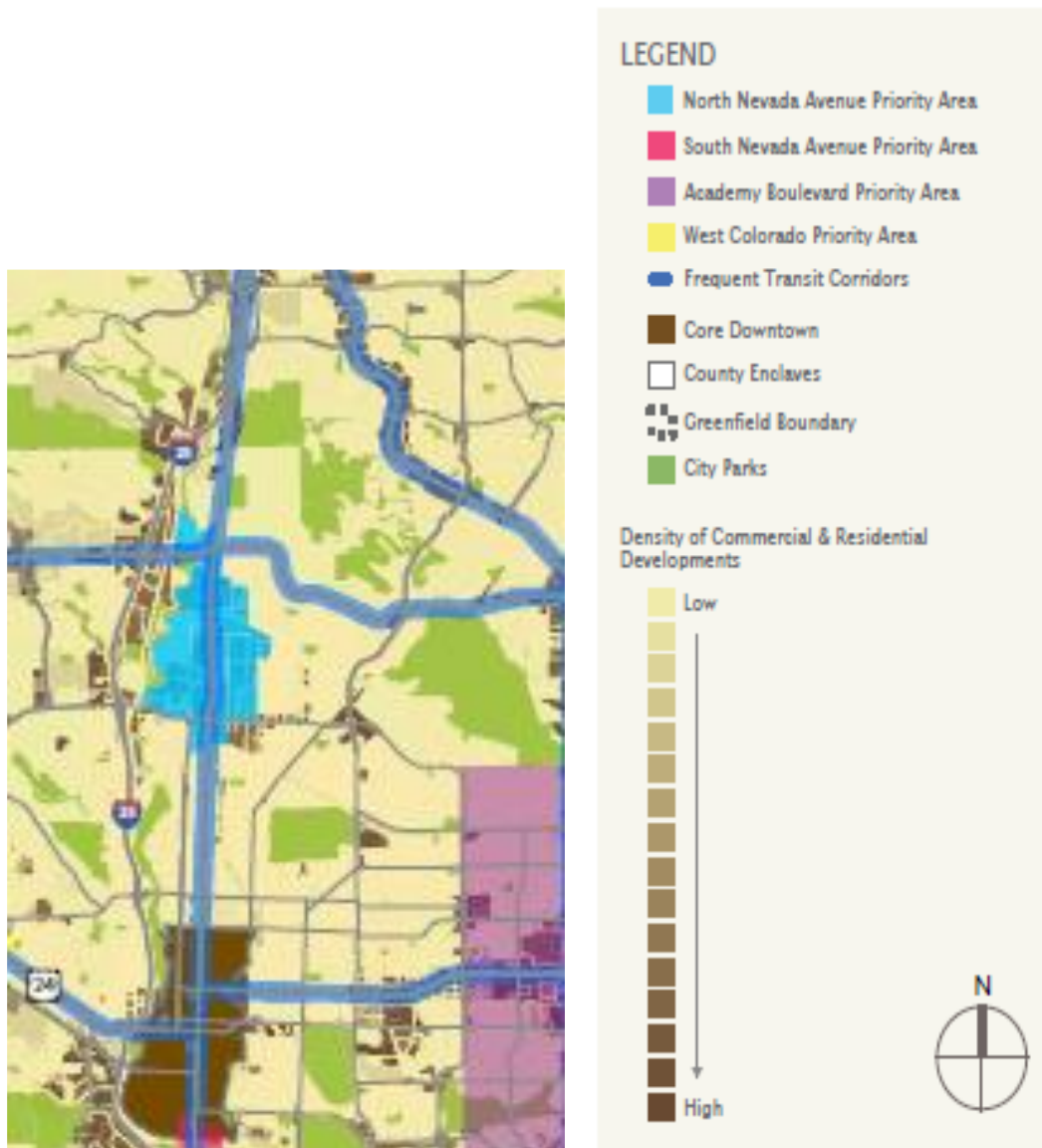
Design pedestrian sidewalks and pathways in activity centers so that they function as an integral part of the overall circulation system. Provide pedestrian connections for activity centers, linking parking areas, transit stops, and surrounding neighborhoods with principal and complimentary uses within the center.”

Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement (2016)

This Plan and process is recommended as **very highly consistent with the** recently adopted **Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement**. That document places a priority infill and redevelopment of corridors such as North Nevada Avenue for the following reasons or based on the following factors:

- North Nevada Avenue is a specifically designated high priority infill area in the Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement
- Emphasis on arterial corridor redevelopment, particularly mature corridors with symptoms of disinvestment
- Location on designated high frequency transit corridors
- Proximity to density of commercial and residential development

Figure 2 is an excerpt from the Infill & Redevelopment Map included in the Infill Plan



The guiding principles in the Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement are:

- Creates Community Benefit
- Removes Barriers to Infill Development
- Minimizes Infill Investment Risk

This Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan will contribute to all three of these principals.

The Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement also includes 9 overarching goals which are excerpted below:

As logical and appropriate, the following goals should be used to evaluate the value of and priority for city-initiated actions or public-private partnerships. These goals should also be used as part of the justification of the use and allocation of special city incentives for private and non-profit development.



Density achieves context-sensitive increases in density



Priority use advances quality land use mix, design, connectivity and integration to achieve desired results



Connectivity contributes to multimodal viability allowing for a range of choices for traveling between destinations in the community



Economic stimulus catalyzes further development and/or contributes to primary employment



Fiscal efficiency effectively utilizes existing infrastructure, enabling the city to maintain growth while providing and maintaining higher levels of service



Community pride and perception contributes to the perception of greater safety, security, and attractiveness of the community for both residents and visitors



Reinvestment in priority areas drives development in the downtown and along mature arterial corridors, aiming to take advantage of the city's existing capacity and development potential and reflect a more dense urban environment



Support of neighborhoods and placemaking encourages better integration between neighborhoods and their adjoining communities for a more interconnected and livable city



Blight relief addresses substantial redevelopment need in areas or sites experiencing blight or sites that are vacant/underutilized, areas with excess parking capacity and other sites that present an opportunity for conversion to new and/or Intensified uses

The Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan directly and significantly supports each and every one of these goals

Finally, the Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement is intended to be supported by an actionable and adaptable Infill Action Plan. The Action Plan more specifically recommends several directly applicable actions:

- The preparation and adoption of corridor land use plans just like this one
- Development and adoption of TOD-supportive zoning for areas exactly like this
- Support of robust transit

Additional Master Plan Review Criteria

7.5.40.B. Land Use Relationships:

- 1. The master plan promotes a development pattern characterizing a mix of mutually supportive and integrated residential and nonresidential land uses with a network of interconnected streets and good pedestrian and bicycle connections.*
- 2. Activity centers are designed so they are compatible with, accessible from and serve as a benefit to the surrounding neighborhood or business area. Activity centers also vary in size, intensity, scale and types of uses depending on their function, location and surroundings.*
- 3. The land use pattern is compatible with existing and proposed adjacent land uses and protects residential neighborhoods from excessive noise and traffic infiltration.*
- 4. Housing types are distributed so as to provide a choice of densities, types and affordability.*
- 5. Land use types and location reflect the findings of the environmental analysis pertaining to physical characteristics which may preclude or limit development opportunities.*
- 6. Land uses are buffered, where needed, by open space and/or transitions in land use intensity.*
- 7. Land uses conform to the definitions contained in Section 7.5.410 of this part.*

The Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan supports all of these criteria

C. Public Facilities:

- 1. The land use master plan conforms to the most recently adopted Colorado Springs parks, recreation and trails master plan.*
- 2. Recreational and educational uses are sited and sized to conveniently service the proposed population of the master plan area and the larger community.*

3. *The proposed school sites meet the location, function and size needs of the school district.*
4. *The land use master plan conforms to the adopted plans and policies of Colorado Springs Utilities.*
5. *Proposed public facilities are consistent with the strategic network of long range plans.*
6. *The master development drainage plan conforms to the applicable drainage basin planning study and the drainage criteria manual.*

Considerable effort has been made to coordinate the drafting of the proposed Plan with key City Staff in Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Traffic Engineering, Colorado Springs Utilities, and others. City Council and Mayoral Strategic Plans (2015), Parks Master Plan (2014), Transportation Plan (2014), and others. There no k-12 schools in within the immediate project area. Staff finds that this required criterion is met.

D. Transportation:

1. *The land use master plan is consistent with the adopted intermodal transportation plan. Conformity with the intermodal transportation plan is evidence of compliance with State and local air quality implementation and maintenance plans.*
2. *The land use master plan has a logical hierarchy of arterial and collector streets with an emphasis on the reduction of through traffic in residential neighborhoods and improves connectivity, mobility choices and access to jobs, shopping and recreation.*
3. *The design of the streets and multiuse trails minimizes the number of uncontrolled or at grade trail crossings of arterials and collectors.*
4. *The transportation system is compatible with transit routes and allows for the extension of these routes.*
5. *The land use master plan provides opportunities or alternate transportation modes and cost effective provision of transit services to residents and businesses.*
6. *Anticipated trip generation does not exceed the capacity of existing or proposed major roads. If capacity is expected to be exceeded, necessary improvements will be identified, as will responsibility, if any, of the master plan for the construction and timing for its share of improvements.*

Staff finds that these criteria have been met. A major focus of this effort has been to address several of these criteria affirmatively and directly.

E. Environment

1. *The land use master plan preserves significant natural site features and view corridors. The Colorado Springs open space plan shall be consulted in identifying these features.*
2. *The land use master plan minimizes noise impacts on existing and proposed adjacent areas.*
3. *The land use master plan utilizes floodplains and drainageways as greenways for multiple uses including conveyance of runoff, wetlands, habitat, trails, recreational uses, utilities and access roads when feasible.*
4. *The land use master plan reflects the findings of a preliminary geologic hazard study and provides a range of mitigation techniques for the identified geologic, soil and other constrained natural hazard areas.*

In the case of these criteria, the linkage is mostly indirect in terms of connection with the high-value environmental features associated with Monument Creek.

F. Fiscal:

1. *A fiscal impact analysis and existing infrastructure capacity and service levels are used as a basis for determining impacts attributable to the master plan. City costs related to infrastructure and service levels shall be determined for a ten (10) year time horizon for only the appropriate municipal funds.*
2. *The fiscal impact analysis demonstrates no adverse impact upon the general community and the phasing of the master plan is consistent with the adopted strategic network of long range plans that identify the infrastructure and service needs for public works, parks, police and fire services.*

3. *The cost of on site and off site master plan impacts on public facilities and services is not borne by the general community. In those situations where the master plan impacts are shown to exceed the capacity of existing public facilities and services, the applicant will demonstrate a means of increasing the capacity of the public facilities and services proportionate to the impact generated by the proposed master plan. Mitigation of on site and off site costs may include, but is not limited to, planned expansions to the facilities, amendments to the master plan, phasing of the master plan and/or special agreements related to construction and/or maintenance of infrastructure upgrades and/or service expansions. Any special agreements for mitigation of on site and off site impacts for public improvements, services and maintenance are shown to be workable and supported by financial assurances. Preexisting and/or anticipated capacity problems not attributable to the master plan shall be identified as part of the master plan review.*
4. *Special agreements for public improvements and maintenance are shown to be workable and are based on proportional need generated by the master plan.*
5. *Any proposed special districts are consistent with policies established by the City Council.*

To the extent they are applicable to a master plan of this type, staff finds that the proposed plan is consistent with the required fiscal criteria. In particular there is no required fiscal impact analysis as there would be for a privately-initiated Master Plan. In many cases the detail associated with these considerations will need to be addressed at the implementation stages. With a plan of this nature, there is an assumption, but not an obligation for some level of community reinvestment to leverage private reinvestment within this previously developed area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan to City Council, subject to minor technical and topographical corrections.