

PALMER HIGH SCHOOL REZONE/LAND USE PLAN/VACATION PLAT

PROJECT STATEMENT

JUNE 2025, UPDATED AUGUST 2025

REQUEST

N.E.S. Inc., on behalf of Colorado Springs School District 11, requests approval of the following applications:

- A Rezone of property from R-1-6, R-5 and OR to FBZ-T2A (Form Based Zone-Transition 2 Palmer High School Renovation/Consolidation);
- A Land Use Plan for Palmer High School Phased Redevelopment; and
- A Vacation Plat for a one-block segment of E Boulder Street between N Nevada Avenue and N Weber Street.

LOCATION

The property is located between E Platt Avenue and E St Vrain Street between N Nevada Avenue and N Weber Street and is comprised of approximately 8.27 acres. The property includes all of Block 43 and 53 of the original Colorado Springs which are separated by E Boulder Street right of way. The right of way for E Boulder Street between N Nevada Avenue and N Weber Street is proposed to be vacated and included in the rezoning application as part of the redevelopment plan for the Palmer High School.

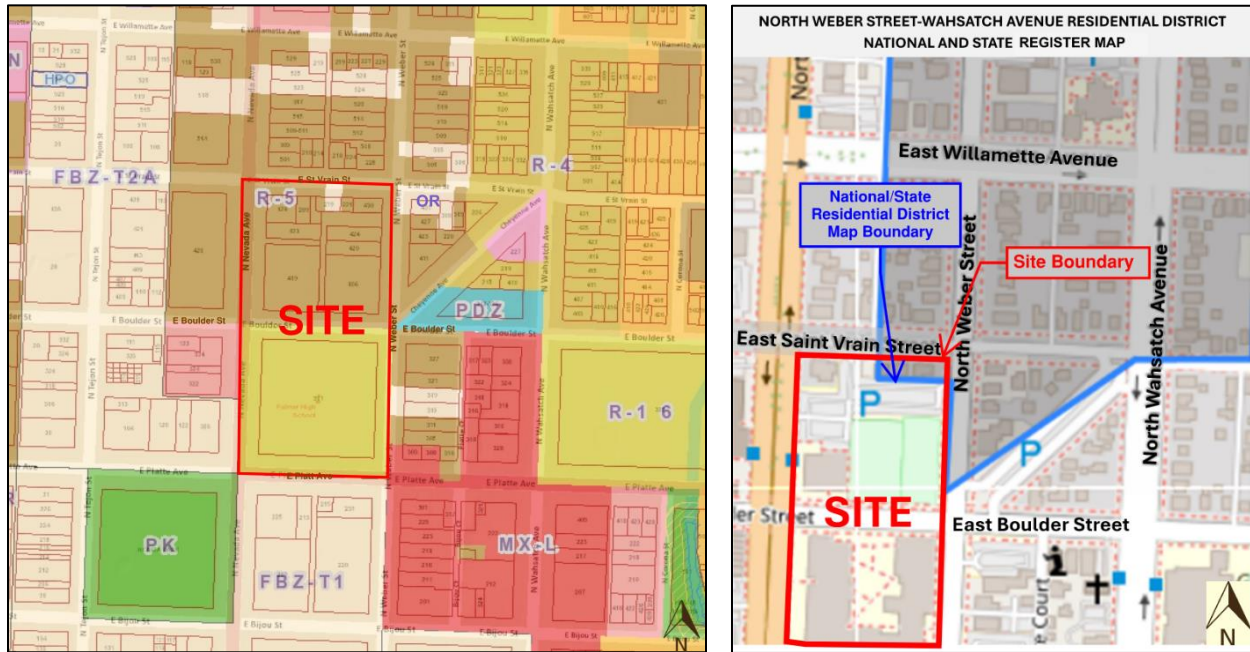
The property is surrounded by a mix of land uses. To the east is a mix of commercial, residential, and semi-public uses, including single- and multi-family residential, office, retail, parking, and religious institutional uses. To the south are commercial and semi-public uses. To the west are commercial and semi-public uses including retail, restaurant, and religious institutional uses. To the north are office and residential uses, including single family and multi-family homes.



CONTEXT

ZONING

The site is zoned R-1-6 (Single-Family Medium Density), R-5 (Multi-Family High), and OR (Office Residential). While not locally designated, a small portion of the property along E St. Vrain Street is on the National and State Historic Register Map as part of the North Weber Street-Wahsatch Avenue Residential District. The site is not located within a City designated Historic Overlay Zone.



Surrounding adjacent zoning includes FBZ-T1 to the south; R-5 to the north; R-5, OR, PDZ and MX-L to the east; and FBZ-T2A, MX-M, and R-5 to the west. The applicant is requesting a Rezone of the property to FBZ-T2A (Form-Based Zone-Transition 2A).

LAND USE

The subject property is in a mixed-use area on the northeast edge of Downtown Colorado Springs. To the west land uses include commercial, mixed density residential, and semi-public; to the south are commercial and semi-public uses; to the east are mixed density residential, commercial, and D11 parking uses; and to the north are office and mixed density residential uses.

The existing use and proposed consolidation and renovation are compatible and consistent in the neighborhood and surrounding area.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Colorado Springs School District 11 proposes a comprehensive renovation and consolidation of Palmer High School, the city's oldest high school, located in the heart of downtown Colorado Springs. The project is designed to modernize the educational environment while preserving the school's historic architecture and cultural legacy. Palmer High School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school and holds a long-standing tradition of academic excellence, pride, and community involvement. It has been a cornerstone institution in the region and downtown, known for its rigorous curriculum, diverse student body, and deep-rooted connections with generations of students, staff, and families.

Project improvements include the restoration of the existing historic building to maintain its architectural integrity, along with the construction of a new academic wing to meet modern educational needs. Classrooms will be upgraded to enhance learning conditions, with improvements in lighting, air quality, and flexible learning space. The campus will be consolidated with the removal of E Boulder Street and relocation of the off-site athletic field to the heart of the now bisected campus. The consolidated campus will also be redesigned to better serve students and the surrounding community.

The project is organized into three phases, Phase 1A, Phase 1B, and Phase 2, with Phase 1A scheduled to commence in June 2025. Each phase builds upon the last to deliver a cohesive, modernized campus that reflects the long-term educational and community goals of the district. The boundaries of the Land Use Plan, Rezone, and Vacation Plat encompass all three phases of the project to ensure comprehensive entitlement review and alignment with the full scope of proposed improvements. Aspects of each phase as pertinent to the above noted applications will be discussed below. In general, the campus consolidation and renovation project involves remodel of some existing building areas, phased demolition of some existing buildings and areas, new construction of several buildings and additions, a complete redesign of field and open/green areas, and phased elimination of on-site and some on-street parking on and in proximity to the consolidated campus.

To support these enhancements, the District is and will be requesting approval of several entitlement applications by the City of Colorado Springs including Rezone of the property to FBZ-T2 (Form Based Zone-Transition 2), a supporting Land Use Plan, and Vacation of a portion of E Boulder Street right-of-way and existing easements within the project boundary, Platting of the property, and multiple Development Plans for the various phases of the project. Applications for Rezone, Land Use Plan, and right-of-way/easement Vacations are submitted at this time. Future applications will include a Replat of the portion of the property south of E. Boulder Street, a Replat of the entire campus on either side of the vacated E Boulder Street including dedication of easements as necessary, and multiple Development Plans for the various phases of the consolidated campus.

The foundation of the entitlement applications is the Palmer High School Master Plan for renovation and consolidation of the campus, which has been created over several months with great effort by the District, High School staff and students, community leaders, citizens and neighbors, and local businesses. Through extensive community engagement efforts, the project team has actively engaged with the

community throughout the Master Plan process to ensure the renovation reflects the needs of students, staff, and neighborhood stakeholders. Over 2,255 participants took part in direct engagement sessions, and the project reached more than 40,000 individuals through emails, mailings, newsletters, and the website. Student engagement efforts included 400+ individual staff and student touchpoints, the selection of four student ambassadors, three student body workshops, five peer-led committee meetings, and three student newsletters. Staff participated in user group meetings held throughout the year, with each department engaged multiple times to ensure the design reflected their specific instructional needs and functions. Broader community outreach included six major public meetings, six Board of Education presentations, and targeted communication through neighborhood mailings, focus groups, and partnerships with local organizations.

This transformative project reaffirms the District's commitment to delivering high-quality education while honoring the history, identity, and future of downtown Colorado Springs.

Buildings and Density

The proposed project involves demolition, remodel, and new construction of buildings, over three general phases. Timing of the various phases is based on funding, however, phase 1A will begin in 2025. Due to the phased nature of the project, building density will change during each phase of the project. Phase 1A will result in approximately 251,000 square feet of building space in multiple stories. Phase 1B will result in approximately 206,000 square feet of building space in multiple stories. Phase 2, which is the final phase of this project, will result in approximately 401,000 square feet of building space in multiple buildings, some of which will have multiple stories. It should be noted that actual building footprints, layouts, and square footage are reviewed and approved through the Development Plan for each phase of development.

Phase 1A

Phase 1A includes the demolition of the Tech Building and Eagle Wing located on the northeast side of the campus to make way for a new academic building addition. The academic building will include classrooms, office space, support areas and a new main entry to the building. Phase 1A also includes renovations to the southern portion of the building within the historic 1939 building. Renovations include the creation of a new entry on the southwest corner to reflect the original entry configuration, renovations of the auditorium, library-the heart of the school, and music and performing arts spaces. A new kitchen and cafeteria will be created as well as renovations to existing classrooms on the west side of the existing building. Phase 1A includes a pedestrian plaza at the vacated Boulder Street and a building addition, which encroaches at upper levels over Boulder Street. Everything north of the E Boulder Street right of way remains existing in Phase 1A.

Phase 1B

Phase 1B includes the demolition of the 1968 Auxiliary Gym and northwest classroom building and removal of all the parking, fields and tennis courts on the north side of Boulder Street. Phase 1B includes the removal of the existing residential buildings on the north end of the campus and construction of a 400M track and football field at the heart of the consolidated campus spanning across the current

footprint of Boulder Street and the northern portion of the site. Phase 1B includes the construction of a small Field Building to support athletic functions. On the northwest side of the site new temp parking will be provided where the existing tennis courts now exist.

Phase 2

Phase 2 includes the construction of a new athletic building that will house the main gymnasium, swimming pool, fitness rooms and locker rooms for the school. This facility is intended to replace the main gym (Erps Gymnasium) currently located on Wasatch Street to the east of the main campus.

As noted above, the campus will be remodeled, redeveloped and expanded in multiple phases. Because specific Development Plans will come later in the process, the intent with the current applications is to broadly consider and discuss the project in more general terms based on proposed land use/s and density, access to the site, traffic, utilities, and drainage.

Access and Parking

The property fronts on several local streets, including E St. Vrain Street, N Weber Street, E Platte Avenue, and N Nevada Avenue. Direct access to the Palmer High School sites is currently provided for pedestrians, student drop-off and pick-up, buses and emergency responders. Parking for the Palmer High School sites is currently provided on-site, on-street, and off-site. The following section will discuss current provisions for each type of access and parking, as well as the proposed provisions for access and parking in each of the three phases of the campus renovation project.

Access

Private Passenger Vehicle Drop-off and Pick-up

Currently, student drop-off and pick-up by private passenger vehicles occurs on the west side of N Weber Street north of E Boulder Street. It is intended that this area will continue to function in the same way in all phases of consolidation and renovation of the campus.

Bus Drop-off and Pick-up

Currently, student drop-off and pick-up by bus occurs on N Boulder Street, with approximately 4-6 buses. In Phase 1A and subsequent phases, student drop-off and pick-up by bus will occur on the east side of N Nevada Avenue north of E Boulder Street.

Pedestrians

Pedestrians currently arrive at Palmer High School from all directions and utilize cross walks at all surrounding intersections. Pedestrians can enter the building primarily at the N Weber Street entrance located near E Platte Avenue. Pedestrians can exit the building on all sides with primary exit points being the N Weber Street doors and the Front Nine doors on the historic front courtyard at the N Nevada Avenue and E Platte Avenue Intersection. Closing E Boulder Street and incorporating the land into the campus will improve pedestrian safety in the area.

At the completion of Phase 1A and 1B the primary entrance to Palmer High School remains on N Weber Street but moves north near E Boulder Street. There will also be a primary entry at the historic Front Nine located on the southwest corner of the building near the intersections of N Nevada Avenue and E Platte Avenue. The new campus will have security fencing around the perimeter of the campus to allow for internal access to buildings without security concerns.

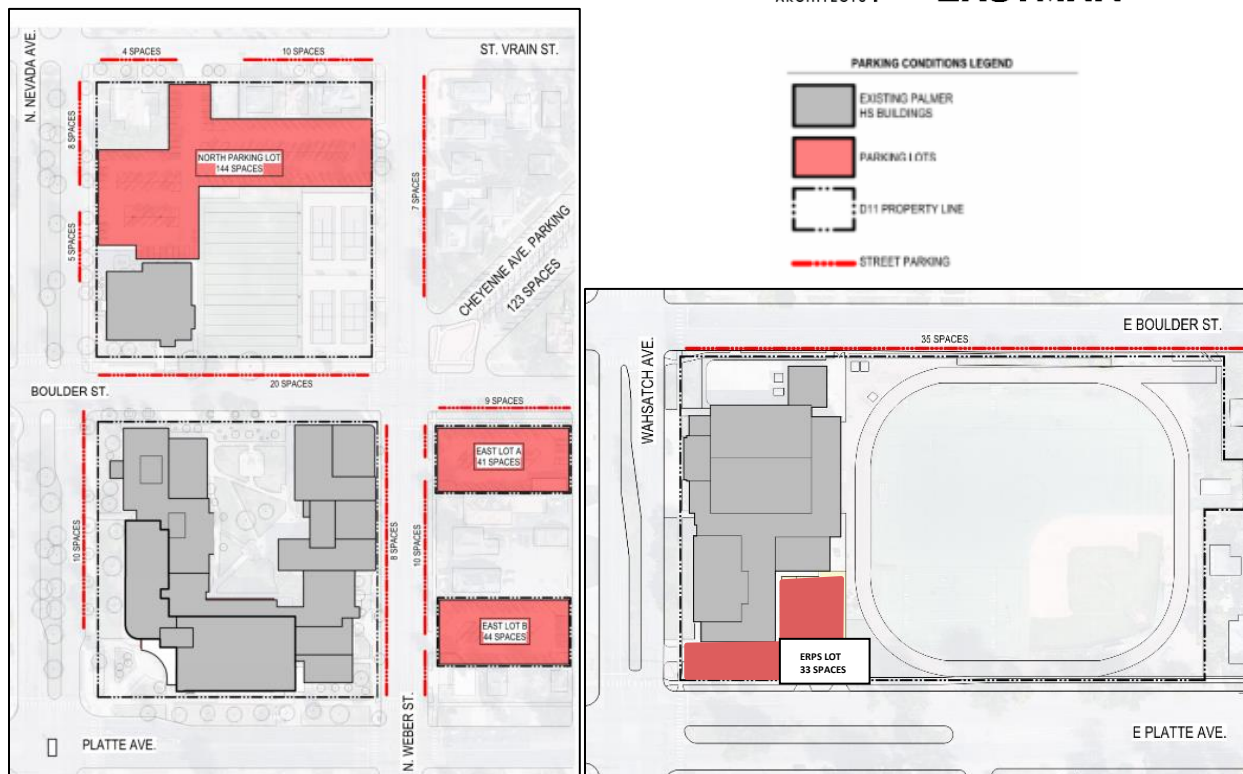
With the completion of Phase 2 the primary pedestrian access does not change for the high school building. With the construction of the Athletic Building in Phase 2 there will be student access to this building which will primarily occur near the E Boulder Street intersection.

Emergency Responders

Access for emergency response vehicles is currently provided in multiple locations including existing curb cuts and in the areas where there are building entrances. Upon completion of Phase 1A and Phase 1B emergency responders can enter the building at the Main Entrances on either N Weber Street or at the southwest corner. Other entrances could be accessed by using keys available through Knox Boxes as needed. The campus will be provided with vehicle size gates at the vacated E Boulder Street alignment on both the east and west sides. The gates may be opened for emergency access by means of Knox Box keys. Emergency responder access does not change for Phase 2.

Based on the primary designation of the property for Civic uses as noted above, FBZ-Transition 2 standards require 1 parking space per 750 square feet of building area for the Palmer High School. Specific parking details will be addressed and considered during the Development Plan review stage of each phase of the project. In general, parking for the Palmer High School is currently provided on-site, on-street, and off-site in District owned or leased parking areas.

The Palmer High School currently provides a total of 443 parking spaces on or adjacent to the campus. **On-Site** parking consists of the North Parking Lot which has 144 parking spaces. This lot is located on the north campus site and has one access on each N Nevada Avenue, E St. Vrain Street, and N Weber Street. **Off-Site** parking is provided in two lots on District 11 owned property (East Lot A and East Lot B) located across N Weber Street from the south campus site. East Lot A comprises 41 parking spaces and East Lot B is comprised of 44 parking spaces. **On-Street** parking comprises portions of E. Boulder Street, N Nevada Avenue, N Weber Street, E St. Vrain Street, and Cheyenne Avenue. Parking on E. Boulder Street comprises 20 spaces on the north side of the street and 9 spaces on the south side of the street. Parking on N Nevada Avenue comprises 23 spaces on the east side of the street. Parking on N Weber Street comprises 8 spaces on the west and 17 spaces on the east side of the street. Parking on E St. Vrain Street comprises 14 spaces on the south side of the street. Parking on Cheyenne Avenue comprises 123 spaces on both sides of the street. The District does not use parking on E Platte Avenue.

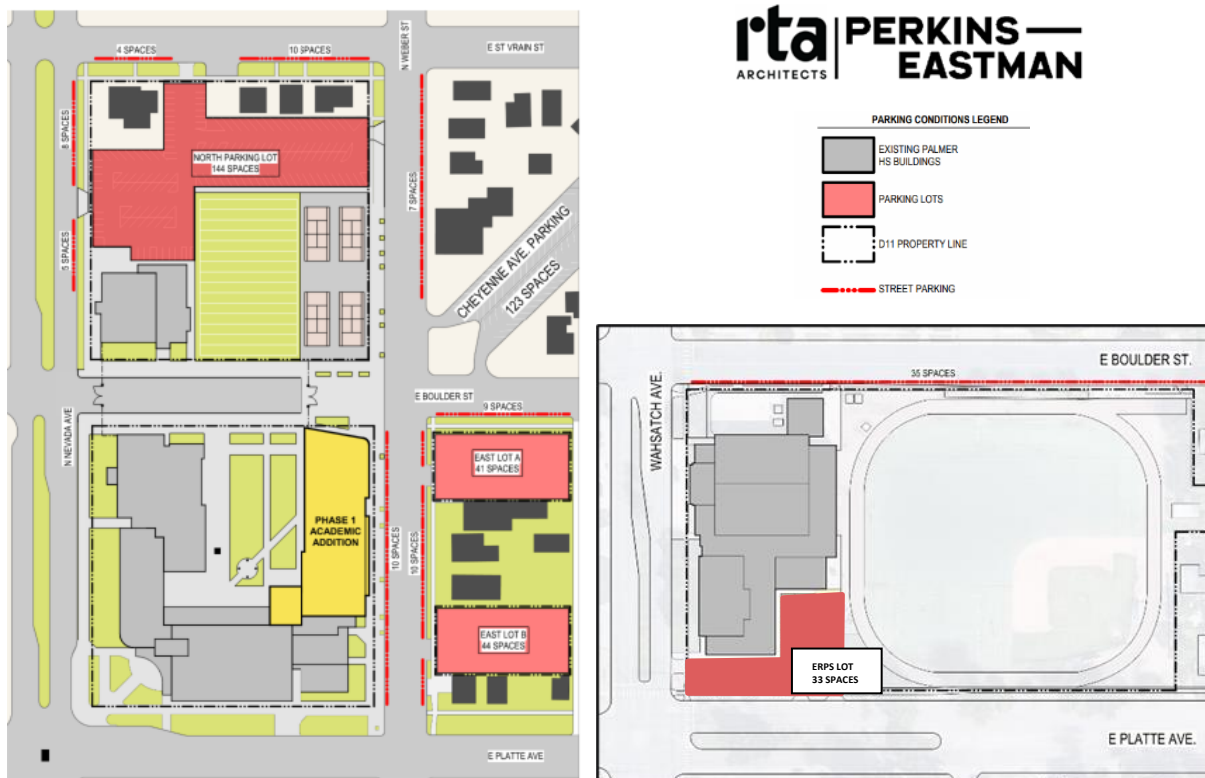


Additional non-contiguous parking consisting of both Off-Site and On-Street parking is provided at Erps Field including 33 parking spaces in the Erps Lot and 36 spaces on the south side of E. Boulder Street.

Phase 1A

In Phase 1A, the Palmer High School will provide a total of 415 parking spaces on, adjacent to, or in proximity to the campus. **On-Site** parking will consist of the North Parking Lot which has 144 parking spaces. This lot is located on the north campus site and is accessed from N Nevada Avenue, E St. Vrain Street, and N Weber Street. **Off-Site** parking is provided in two lots on District 11 owned property (East Lot A and East Lot B) located across N Weber Street from the south campus site. East Lot A comprises 41 parking spaces and East Lot B is comprised of 44 parking spaces. **On-Street** parking comprises portions of E. Boulder Street, N Nevada Avenue, N Weber Street, E St. Vrain Street, and Cheyenne Avenue. . Parking on E. Boulder Street through the consolidated campus is eliminated in this phase to accommodate new building construction as well as plaza space internal to the campus, however, the 9 parking spaces on the south side of the street, east of the campus are retained. Parking on N Nevada Avenue is reduced to 13 spaces on the east side of the street adjacent to the north portion of the campus only. The street frontage on the east side of N Nevada Avenue adjacent to the south portion of the campus will be formalized as bus loading/unloading. Parking on N Weber Street comprises 10 spaces on the west side of the street and 17 spaces on the east side of the street. Parking on E St. Vrain Street comprises 14 spaces on the south side of the street. Parking on Cheyenne Avenue comprises 123 spaces on both sides of the street. The District does not use parking on E Platte Avenue.

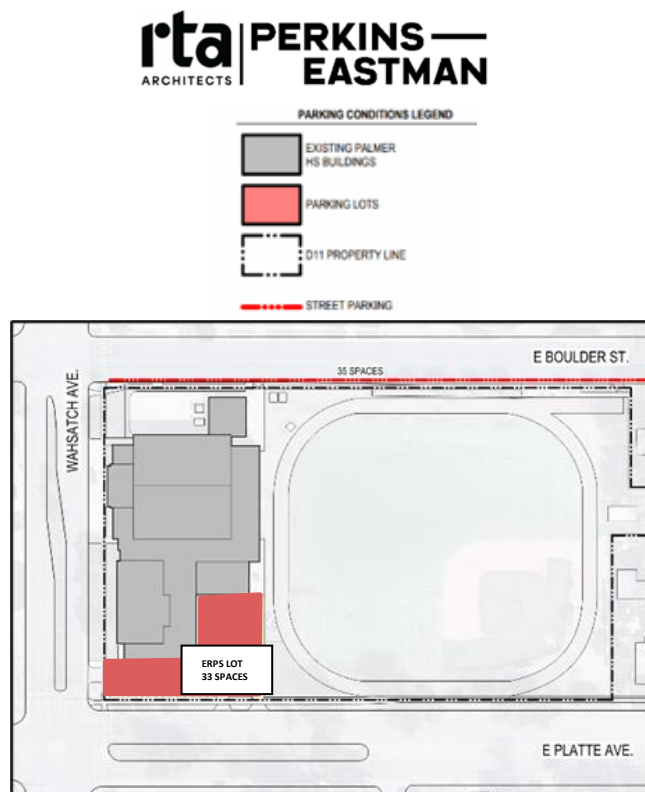
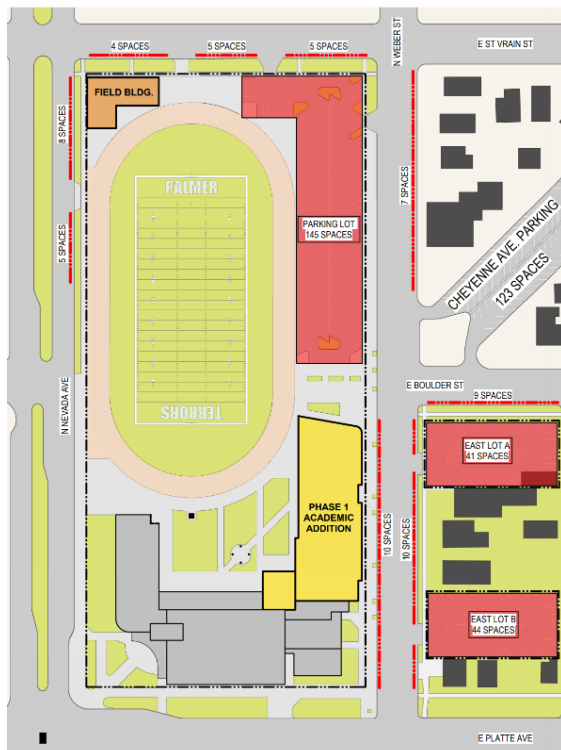
Additional non-contiguous parking consisting of both Off-Site and On-Street parking is provided at Erps Field. This parking comprises 33 parking spaces in the Erps Lot and 36 spaces on the south side of E.



Phase 1B

In Phase 1B, the Palmer High School will provide a total of 416 parking spaces on, adjacent, or in proximity to the campus. **On-Site** parking will consist of reconfigured parking on the north portion of the campus. The existing North Lot will be removed to make room for the new athletic field and a new parking lot will take its place in the northeast corner of the campus. The new North Lot will have 145 parking spaces, which is an increase of 1 parking space on the campus. This lot is accessed from two locations on N Weber Street and the existing east access drive on E St. Vrain Street. The existing west access drive on E St. Vrain Street will be retained for other access purposes with this phase. **Off-Site** parking is provided in two lots on District 11 owned property (East Lot A and East Lot B) located across N Weber Street from the south campus site. East Lot A comprises 41 parking spaces and East Lot B is comprised of 44 parking spaces. **On-Street** parking comprises portions of N Nevada Avenue, N Weber Street, E Boulder St, E St. Vrain Street, and Cheyenne Avenue. Parking on the south side of E Boulder Street, east of the campus is retained. Parking on N Nevada Avenue is sustained at 13 spaces on the east side of the street adjacent to the north portion of the campus only. The street frontage on the east side of N Nevada Avenue adjacent to the south portion of the campus will continue to function as bus loading/unloading. Parking on N Weber Street comprises 10 spaces on the west side of the street and 17 spaces on the east side of the street. Parking on E St. Vrain Street comprises 14 spaces on the south side of the street. Parking on Cheyenne Avenue comprises 123 spaces on both sides of the street. The District does not use parking on E Platte Avenue.

Additional non-contiguous parking consisting of both Off-Site and On-Street parking is provided at Erps Field. This parking comprises 33 parking spaces in the Erps Lot and 36 spaces on the south side of E.



Phase 2

In Phase 2, **On-Site** parking will be eliminated with this phase to accommodate the new Athletic Complex building/s. The District is exploring several parking alternatives, including but not limited to underground parking garage, shared parking agreements, and public parking garage facilities. Replacement off-site parking options will be explored by the District and will be reviewed and approved in conjunction with the Development Plan/s for this phase of the renovation.



Utilities

Water

The project site is surrounded by a looped network of public water mains on all sides. An existing 8" DIP Public Water Main is located in Nevada Avenue, an existing 8" DIP Public Water Main is located in E St Vrain Street, an existing 8" DIP Public Water Main is located in Weber Street, and an existing 12" DIP Public Water Main is located in Platte Avenue. Water service to the existing High School Building (301 N Nevada Avenue) is provided by a 4" DIP water service line entering the south side of the original 1939 Building, and the existing water service is anticipated to remain in operation.

Construction of the re-developed East Academic Wing and the future Athletic Building along Weber Street will include new domestic water service and fire service connections to the existing 8" water main in Weber Street.

Based on consultation with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), we understand the existing 8" DIP Public Water Main in E Boulder Street between N Nevada Avenue and E Weber Street can be abandoned with the proposed demolition of the existing Auxiliary Gym (419 N Nevada Avenue), prior to construction of the track. CSU has also confirmed that the existing 4" water main extending north between E Boulder Street and E St. Vrain Street can be abandoned.

Wastewater

Wastewater service for the existing high school building (301 N Nevada Avenue) is provided by an existing 8" VCP Public Wastewater Main which flows south through the existing courtyard and under the existing 1939 building, connecting to an existing 8" VCP Public Wastewater Main in East Platte Avenue. The wastewater main crossing the existing building will be converted to a private wastewater main serving the school, and CSU has confirmed that the existing WW main extending north from the courtyard can be abandoned.

Sanitary sewer service for the existing Auxiliary Gym (419 N Nevada Avenue) is provided by an existing 8" VCP Public Wastewater Main which flows easterly along E. Boulder Street. Construction of the re-developed East Academic Wing and the future Athletic Building along Weber Street will include new wastewater service connections to the existing 8" public wastewater main along the west side of Weber Street at the E. Boulder Street intersection. CSU has confirmed that the existing 8" WW Main extending west in E. Boulder Street can be abandoned with demolition of the existing Auxiliary Gym.

Gas

Gas service for the existing high school building (301 N Nevada Avenue) is provided by a gas service line entering the south side of the building, served by an existing gas main in Platte Avenue. The proposed school re-development on the south side of E. Boulder Street is anticipated to be served through interior building gas piping improvements.

Gas service to future buildings on the north side of E. Boulder Street is anticipated to come from new service connections in Weber Street.

CSU has confirmed that the existing gas line along E. Boulder Street (between N Nevada and E Weber) can be abandoned in conjunction with the proposed right-of-way vacation. CSU has identified a need for a "reinforcement project" to install a new gas main along N Nevada Avenue between E Boulder Street and E St. Vrain Street in advance of abandoning the existing gas line along E Boulder Street.

Electric

School District 11 has initiated coordination with CSU for conversion of the existing overhead electric lines along Weber Street (between Platte and E St Vrain) to underground lines. Re-development of the existing school campus will require design coordination with CSU for phased electrical service upgrades, removals, and electric facility improvements.

Drainage

Site drainage from the majority of the existing Palmer High School site, including the courtyard area, E Boulder Street, and the campus between E Boulder Street and E St. Vrain Street, flows to an existing 48" public storm sewer system in E. Boulder Street, draining easterly into the Shooks Run Drainage Channel.

The proposed master plan is anticipated to involve a total disturbed area of over 6-acres. City Drainage Criteria Manual (DCM) policies require re-development projects with disturbed areas exceeding one acre to provide stormwater detention unless the existing downstream storm drainage system has capacity for the proposed improvements. The proposed project is anticipated to result in a net reduction in the total impervious area (or a negligible increase). As a result, the existing 48" storm sewer system in E. Boulder Street will have adequate capacity to serve the proposed re-development with no stormwater detention requirements.

The proposed re-development project will include drainage improvements to meet current City DCM policies for stormwater quality. A proposed Rain Garden (Bioretention Area) has been designed within the re-developed courtyard area to provide the water quality capture volume (WQCV) to meet City stormwater requirements. Proposed building roof drains and athletic field underdrains will be directed into the new Rain Garden, providing compliance with current City "Green Infrastructure Manual" (GIM) requirements for runoff reduction in the form of Planned Infiltration Areas (PIA's). The Rain Garden will discharge through an outlet structure into an existing 12" storm drainpipe connecting to the existing 48" public storm sewer in E. Boulder Street.

Private storm inlets and storm sewer improvements will be constructed to provide positive drainage throughout the site re-development areas, conveying developed flows into the new Rain Garden and appropriate storm drainage connections.

Traffic

The traffic study conducted for the Palmer High School renovation project evaluates the potential impacts of closing E. Boulder Street between N NEVADA Avenue and Weber Street to improve campus cohesion and pedestrian safety. This section of E. Boulder currently bisects the school campus, requiring students and staff to frequently cross the street. The study 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.

Findings show that while the closure would redistribute traffic to adjacent routes, primarily E St. Vrain Street and Platte Avenue, all signalized intersections in the area would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service (LOS C or better). The only movement expected to fall below LOS D is the eastbound and westbound left turns from E St Vrain Street onto N NEVADA Avenue, which are projected to operate at LOS E/F. However, these movements are not anticipated to cause significant queuing or exceed intersection capacity.

To mitigate impacts, the study recommends converting the E Boulder Street/N Nevada Avenue and E Boulder Street/N Weber Street intersections to three-leg intersections, adjusting signal timing and striping, and eliminating specific turning pockets no longer needed. It also notes that converting E. Boulder Street to a pedestrian plaza will improve safety and connectivity on campus.

Modifications to the nearby E Platte/N NEVADA intersection, including potential roundabout alternatives, should be carefully coordinated with broader city planning efforts to avoid introducing operational challenges.

It should be noted that the District has applied for and granted a permit to close E Boulder Street through the campus to accommodate demolitions/construction activity that is currently occurring on the site. As such, E Boulder Street has recently been closed. In conjunction with this permitting request, a traffic plan was required and provided. The TIS is being updated to include data and analysis based on the construction closure of E. Weber St, and will be provided upon completion.

LAND USE PLAN APPLICATION

A Master Plan for the Palmer High School was recently adopted by the District 11 School Board, guided by and extensive public engagement process. The Master Plan establishes future plans for the existing campus, as well as other District owned properties in the area. In conjunction with the rezone application, a Land Use Plan is provided. The Land Use Plan is based on the Campus Master Plan and establishes the land use for the campus redevelopment, in compliance with the Form Based Zone standards of the FBZ Transition 2A Sector standards.

Current land uses on the property include public/semi-public civic land uses related to and supporting of educational facilities, including school and office buildings, parking, indoor and outdoor recreation, and recently acquired multi-family residential uses. The residential buildings and uses will be removed from the site for campus renovation purposes.

Proposed land use on the campus includes civic uses appropriate to education and associated accessory uses such as athletic facilities and fields, academics, counseling, performing arts, history and culture, and the like. Maximum height, density, setbacks, design aesthetics and parking will be established during the FBZ-T2 Development Plan review and approval process.

REZONE APPLICATION

To facilitate renovation and consolidation of the campus on its highly constrained urban site, District 11 is requesting a Rezone of the property from its current mixed zoning of R1-6, OR, and R-5 to FBZ, Form Based Zone. Further, as provided in the FBZ standards, the zoning sector will be T-2A, Transition 2A, Urban Center with a more gradual transition to adjacent neighborhoods. Sector T2 is characteristically located at the periphery of the urban core rather than surrounding the urban core. This sector is further defined by two sub-headings, A and B. Areas delineated with sub-heading B are permitted a wider range of uses than sub-heading A. Because civic oriented uses such as those proposed on the Palmer High School Campus are permitted in sub-heading A, there is no need to expand allowable uses by zoning to sub-heading B.

The Transition 2 sector is established to convey the benefits of form-based code while also protecting the adjacent neighborhoods. As such, zoning the property to FBZ-T2A is appropriate based on the property's location at the periphery of the urban core and proximity to the surrounding mixed-use neighborhood. The adjacent neighborhood is comprised of buildings and properties of varying form and massing, where the Palmer High School has coexisted for decades.

The Palmer High School Campus is classified as a Civic building type. Civic use types are defined as including the performance of educational, recreational, cultural, medical, protective, utility, religious, governmental, and other uses which are strongly vested with public social importance. Civic buildings and uses are permitted uses in the T2-A Sector.

The Palmer High School Campus is in an urban setting on land that is highly constrained by existing mixed-use development in the area. Rezoning the property to FBZ-T2A will facilitate the design flexibility and creativity necessary to achieve a comprehensive renovation and consolidation of the Palmer High School campus. The FBZ zoning district standard, density bonus, and warrant provisions of the FBZ zone will allow the District to modernize the educational environment while preserving the school's historic architecture and cultural legacy. The resulting consolidated and redeveloped campus will allow perpetuation of the Palmer High Schools history of academic excellence and pride, and its designation/hard earned reputation as a cornerstone institution in the region, known for its rigorous curriculum, diverse student body, and deep-rooted connections with generations of students, staff, and families.

Due to the site constraints and desired high design, FBZ warrants may be necessary for various elements, which may include height, building envelope, parking, amenity zones, etc. Warrants and/or density bonuses will be reviewed and evaluated based on the FBZ defined criteria at the time of Development Plan submittal for each redevelopment phase of the project. Parking needs and requirements will also be reviewed with each redevelopment phase of the project.

VACATION PLAT APPLICATION

As noted above, the District is planning a comprehensive consolidation and renovation of the Palmer High School buildings and campus. This project is designed to modernize the educational environment while preserving the school's historic architecture and cultural legacy. To facilitate the redevelopment project on this highly constrained urban site, District 11 is requesting vacation of the E Boulder Street right-of-way between N Nevada Avenue and N Weber Street.

As noted above, the campus is currently comprised of all of Block 53 and Block 43 Colorado Springs. E Boulder Street is located between these two blocks, splitting the Palmer High School Campus into two separate parts which divides academic and extracurricular facilities and creates operational and logistics inefficiencies and exposes students to daily safety risks. The request to vacate E Boulder Street right-of-way will allow the property within the right-of-way to be owned and used by the District for school purposes and will facilitate consolidation of the campus. This is possible because the E Boulder Street right-of-way was dedicated within the same subdivision plat as the property owned by the District (Blocks 43 and 53), and upon vacation, ownership of the land within the right-of-way automatically reverts to the property owner on either side of the vacated right-of-way.

The Plat Vacation also includes vacation of internal lot lines and existing easements, in whole or in part, as necessary to facilitate platting and development of campus property. Easements to accommodate existing public utilities that will remain in place either long-term or temporarily are retained on the plat. New easements to accommodate new and/or realigned public facilities for the development will be provided via future platting or recordation of separate instruments in conjunction with future development plans as necessary.

District 11's Palmer High School is a cornerstone of the downtown community and stands as one of the oldest and most historically significant schools in Colorado. The concept of interrupting the city's street grid to serve the public good is well established in Colorado Springs, with precedents such as Memorial Park, the UC Health campus, and Colorado College. In this context, vacating E Boulder Street to unify the Palmer High School campus aligns with both historic and modern urban planning principles and contemporary community goals for student safety, institutional efficiency, and educational excellence. A cohesive campus will perpetuate and enhance Palmer High School's role as a key civic anchor downtown and strengthen its position as a regional hub for high-quality, urban public education.

Vacating E Boulder is necessary to complete Phase 1A of the master plan, due to design of the 1st new building addition to be constructed on the site. This building incorporates high level design, which includes an upper-level building cantilever over the south portion of E Boulder Street. This cantilever is critical to the integrated and cohesive design of the campus and buildings. Immediate action is required to align with construction timelines which are strictly tied to funding cycles. Postponement would delay critical improvements to aging infrastructure and diminish the opportunity to create a modern urban high school environment that meets 21st-century standards. Furthermore, Phase 1B includes relocation of the athletic track and field to the campus. The plans for construction of an official size and quality track and field require these improvements to occupy the entire central corridor of the campus, which crosses both property lines as well as the vacated E Boulder Street.

Palmer High School operates with the smallest campus footprint among major high schools in the city, yet it is expected to deliver an elite education experience, including its International Baccalaureate (IB) program. Vacating E Boulder Street is essential to achieving a safe, efficient, and unified campus that supports this academic mission. The current divided layout strains supervision, coordination, and scheduling of programs and creates daily safety risks due to frequent street crossings.

In March of 2025, City of Colorado Springs Staff leadership from multiple departments including CSPD, EMS, CSFD and Traffic Engineering Division, prepared a memorandum regarding the potential closure of a portion of E Boulder Street to facilitate the Palmer High School campus renovation. This memorandum is a culmination of information and statistics gathered and analyzed by the Departments. The memorandum evaluates traffic and public safety in the area of the Palmer High School, and assesses the potential impacts associated with closure of E Boulder Street between the blocks occupied by the school.

Include in the memorandum is information related to:

- Existing emergency response times in the area
- Anticipated emergency response times with a closure of Boulder Street
- Crash data at intersections adjacent to, and near, Palmer High School
- Pedestrian and bicycle crash data in the area
- An assessment of traffic safety conditions at intersections
- The impact on traffic safety with a closure of Boulder Street
- Utility considerations, as provided by Colorado Springs Utilities

The conclusions of the study are as follows:

- Response time would increase by 20 seconds; therefore, the closure would not have a major impact on response times, and 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 analysis concluded that between 2019 and 2024, there were 284 crashes in the area of the school, with 265 involving vehicles, 14 involving pedestrians, and 5 involving bikes. A review of these crashes does not indicate if the victims were students at Palmer High School; however, three bicycle crashes and three pedestrian crashes from involved juveniles.
- The intersection safety assessment concluded that closure of E Boulder street as proposed would result in improvement in safety as follows:
 - The daily volume of students leaving campus to walk to and from Palmer High School buildings located across from the main building would be reduced;
 - Elimination of the broadside crash pattern at the Boulder/Nevada intersection;
 - Reduction of crashes at the Boulder/Weber intersection; and
 - Reduction in conflicts between vehicles and pedestrian and bicycle users thus improving pedestrian and bike safety at these intersections.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

As part of the Palmer High School master planning process, the concept of vacating E Boulder Street was presented to the public, stakeholders, staff, students, and local businesses for review and discussion. The overall master plan, which includes the proposed street vacation, was submitted to the Board of Education for approval. Specific outreach related to the E Boulder Street closure was conducted during this phase, including targeted meetings and opportunities for community feedback.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The Palmer High School campus is located in a Downtown urban neighborhood. The contiguous site is approximately 8.27 acres in area, including the right of way for the vacated E Boulder St. The existing campus is severely constrained by N Nevada Avenue to the west and E Platte Avenue to the south, both of which are Principal Arterials; as well as E Boulder St which bisects the campus. To partially alleviate the site constraints, the school district is proposing to vacate this portion of E Boulder St, as described above. While the right of way vacation will help unify the campus and provide additional land for campus use, the 8.27 acre site is still very small for a high school campus.

Industry standards recommend a base acreage of 20-30 acres plus 1 acre per 100 students to accommodate adequate building, athletic field and recreation space, circulation, parking, etc. While urban school space standards are lower, they would recommend far more than 8.27 acres. Below is a comparison of the size of Palmer High School Campus and other high schools in Colorado Springs. The campuses reviewed include Mitchell High School (24.07 Ac), Rampart High School (37.48 Ac), Sand Creek High School (40.51 Ac), Coronado High School (27.2 Ac), Cheyenne Mountain High School (51.46 Ac), Doherty High School (41.42 Ac). The Mitchell High School campus is closest in size to the Palmer Highschool Campus at 24.07 Acres which is nearly three (3) times the size. The largest comparable campus is Cheyenne Mountain High School at 51.46 Acres, which is more than six (6) times in size.



Conformance with Land Use Plan Review Criteria (Code Section 7.5.514.C.3):

If the Land Use Plan is submitted in connection with an application to establish a zone district or to change zone district boundaries shall be reviewed based on the following criteria:

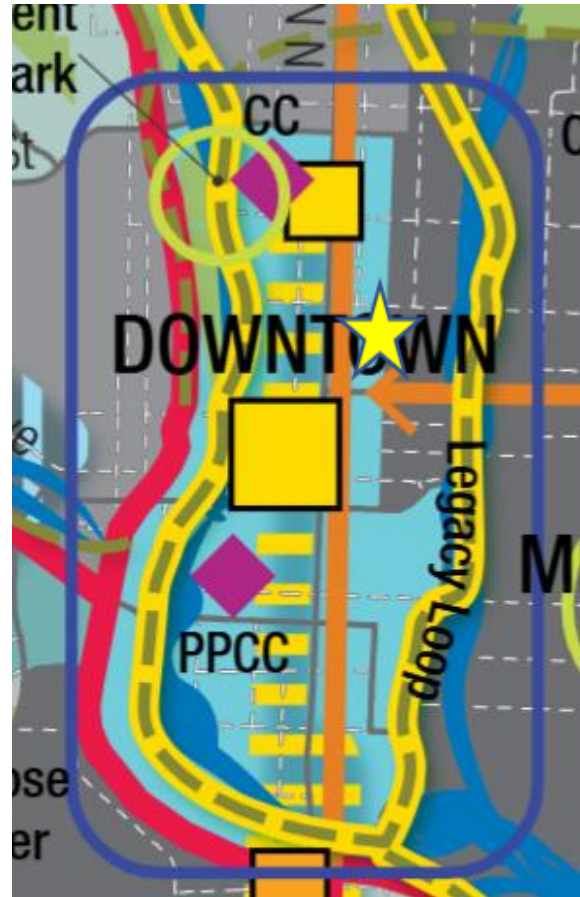
A. Consistency with the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan and other plans and policies adopted by City Council;

The applications are consistent with PlanCOS. The Vision Map includes the project as part of the Downtown. The campus is an integrated element of the Downtown which is a Major Destination Area Typology on the Strong Connections Transportation Map and designated for Modern Upgrades as a Changing Neighborhood typology on the Strong Connections Utilities Framework Map. The campus has proximity to a transit hub and reinvestment area and community hub as shown on the Unique Places Framework Map, and within the Experience Economy on the Thriving Economy Framework Map.

The PLANCOS Vision “promotes and embraces arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity. This builds on the efforts of General Palmer and many others that envisioned culture as the cornerstone of the community and where creative energy generates new possibilities, interpersonal connections, and unprecedented philanthropy”. Key strategies include:

- Consider arts and culture in other city plans
- Support centers of education, arts, and culture
- Identify and preserve our rich and diverse history

K-12 education is a Community Asset typology. “The goal of this cultural typology is to increase access and foster thriving arts, education, and cultural organizations and resources at all levels and throughout the city.” Consolidation and renovation of Palmer High School, including vacation of E Boulder Street which currently bisects the campus, will increase access to, and allow the school to thrive in its current constrained environment. GOAL RC-2 states “add to, enhance, and promote Colorado Springs’ institutions, attractions, and community assets integral to our local culture and civic pride. GOAL RC-3 states “ensure the accessibility and diversity of arts and culture opportunities throughout the city.” Supporting Policy RC-3.E states, “encourage the adaptability of public rights-of-way and public gathering space”. GOAL RC-6 states, “Strengthen and diversify the range of



educational and lifelong learning opportunities and resources in Colorado Springs.” Supporting Policy RC-6.B states, “support a network of public resources, schools, community centers and other Community Assets that address the city’s educational and training needs and also function as places for community activity.” Strategy RC-6.B-1 states, “Review and approve plans for new or redeveloped educational facilities and other Community Assets (Typology 2) to enhance integration within the surrounding neighborhood with an emphasis on access connectivity.” Strategy RC-6.B-2 states, “Support the adaptive reuse of existing educational facilities.”

The applications are supported by Experience Downtown (Experience), a master plan for the downtown area. Experience encourages providing a range of urban amenities and a variety of housing in Downtown Colorado Springs, as well as diverse and active adjacent neighborhoods. As noted in Experience, “downtown is the city’s center of business and entertainment activity, but it has managed to grow and develop in a manner that successfully retained the single-family residential character in surrounding neighborhoods adjacent to Downtown. These urban neighborhoods, each with their own distinct character and relationship to the core, provide a strong foundation for the culture of active Downtown living that is beginning to take hold. Home to a wide range of residents – from students and millennials, to young families, to seniors – neighborhoods in the greater city center provide a diverse and active community that supports Downtown and wants to see it grow. Improved walking and biking connections and a wider range of amenities will further enhance this important relationship”. Palmer High School is in one such supporting neighborhood on the periphery of the existing downtown and adjacent to the Formed Based Zone districts of the Downtown.

According to Experience, “highly skilled workers, particularly those of the millennial generation, are demanding walkable and bikeable urban environments. Downtown, being the most walkable and bikeable area of the city, has demonstrated that urban amenities provide value to segments of the workforce that are in high demand and able to choose where they want to work and live. Providing most or all of a resident’s daily needs within walking or biking distance is central to the effort to attract more residents”. Educational institutions are an important element of residents’ daily needs. Experience states “connect students with Downtown opportunities for learning, living, shopping, dining, culture, fun and employment.”

Experience states that “art, cultural, and educational amenities abound and are located throughout much of the core” and that “institutional areas are varied in use types, all different but integral to Downtown’s flow of visitors throughout the day. These areas are associated with Colorado College, Palmer High School, City Auditorium, the Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts and the Pioneers Museum. Because the buildings associated with these areas are generally considered prominent public landmarks – many frequented by out-of-area visitors and pedestrian trips – it is important that they are integrated into the urban fabric with high-quality streetscape design, prominence of wayfinding signage, and flanked by welcoming public spaces.”

Experience recommends to “assess publicly owned assets, including various rights of ways and public parking, to ensure highest and best usage of such assets to fulfill community goals. Vacating E Boulder Street to allow consolidation of the Palmer High School campus, and allowing use of on-

street parking for, but not limited to, school use is supported by this recommendation. According to Experience, “one of the key factors influencing future growth in Downtown is its parking availability. From a parking supply perspective, the system must be robust enough to not only accommodate existing parking demand but have enough capacity to accommodate future growth. The Parking Enterprise is an asset and a tool to Downtown revitalization that can be used to achieve public goals, to manage the parking system in a way that supports urban planning and design objectives, and as a tool for public-private partnerships in development of catalytic sites and priority uses.” This will be a valuable tool in creatively assessing and providing for parking needs associated with the phased consolidation, restoration and renaissance of the Palmer High School Campus and buildings.

Experience notes that “public spaces are the connective tissue” in the Downtown and FBZ zones, and the “the Transition 1 and Transition 2 Sectors surround much of the Central Sector in order to provide an area of transition from the high-density land uses to the lower density residential and mixed uses in surrounding neighborhoods and other master planned districts. These sectors allow a variety of nonresidential uses and a mix of housing types at medium to low intensities and densities, but permit all building types outlined in the code. Experience notes that the FBZ’s purpose is to “promote a high quality, pedestrian oriented public realm that encourages activation of the space for the comfort and safety of all users” and to:

- Remove barriers to revitalize Downtown Colorado Springs;
- Promote a mix of uses including retail, office, residential, institutional, and others;
- Establish transitions from the Downtown core and urban renewal sectors to the surrounding neighborhoods;
- Promote new development which respects the historic building fabric, as well as the natural environment, and enhances the pedestrian experience.

The purpose of the FBZ zones, and specifically the T2 Sector, are consistent with the phased consolidation, restoration and renaissance of the Palmer High School Campus and buildings.

B. Consistency with development standards the zone district in which the property is located, or would be located after a requested zone district change;

The proposed land uses are consistent with those allowed in the FBZ-T2A district. Density, height, and bulk proposed is consistent with what is allowed in the district either outright or through incentives or warrants.

C. Compatibility with the land uses and development intensities surrounding the property;

The project site is located in an area of mixed use and density. Consolidation and renovation of this long-time occupant in the neighborhood, which is a civic use including education, athletics, green space, and other supporting and/or associated civic uses, is compatible and complimentary to the surrounding uses and development. The renovation and consolidation of the campus preserves the existing character and history of the site, which is consistent with the character and history of surrounding existing development in the area.

D. Impacts of the permitted or requested uses, are appropriate to the type of development, the neighborhood, and the community;

The primary purpose of the campus project is to renovate and modernize the educational environment and to consolidate the District's properties used by students into an integrated campus. The property has historically been occupied by educational and related civic uses, except for the residential uses on the north end of the project site. The consolidation and renovation will discontinue the residential multi-family uses on the north end of the site and fully occupy the property with civic uses. While vacation and closure of Boulder St will impact traffic patterns in the area, the Traffic Study completed in conjunction with this application has found that there will be no negative impacts, and that access and safety will be improved. Once E Boulder Street was closed for construction, the District commenced additional study of traffic in the area. This study will be provided upon completion.

E. Adequacy of proposed ingress/egress points and traffic circulation, both on and off the site;

Currently, Boulder St bisects the school's properties that comprise the Palmer High School campus. With the proposed renovation and consolidation of the campus, Boulder Street is proposed to be vacated and the land incorporated into the consolidated campus. While this land area will evolve as the renovation progresses, it will initially be the campus gateway and will function as part of the campus courtyard. In future phases, much of the area will be included in the athletic field and the courtyard/gateway will move closer to the buildings on the south side of the campus.

There is currently a parking lot on the north portion of the campus, which will remain in its current configuration through phase 1A. This parking has one access on each N Nevada, E St. Vrain St, and N Weber St. In phase 1B, this parking will be consumed by the new athletic field, and new parking will be provided in the northeast corner of the campus. This new parking will have access in two locations along N Weber St. and the parking lot accesses on N Nevada St and E St. Vrain St will be removed. In phase 2, there will be no parking on the campus, so access for parking purposes will not be needed. It should be noted that access for public safety purposes will be explored as Development Plans for the various phases of development are reviewed and entitled.

Temporary and permanent easement will be retained by CSU as needed during the phased project, including a permanent storm sewer easement in the vacated E Boulder Street. New easements as necessary will be provided through the Plat/s and/or the Development Plan/s for the project.

F. Capacity of the existing streets, utilities, parks, schools, and other public facilities to serve the proposed development;

The campus is located on the northeast edge of Downtown and is part of the original Colorado Springs grid system. The site is served by a street network of various classifications including Local Residential (E St Vrain Street) Minor Arterials (N Weber Street, E Boulder Street), and Principal Arterial (E Platte Avenue and N Nevada Avenue), which are adequate to serve the renovation. E Platte Avenue is designated as a Smart Corridor and Multimodal Corridor on the PlanCOS Strong Connections Framework Transportation Map, and N Nevada Avenue is designated as a Smart

Corridor. The campus plan to vacate the segment of E Boulder Street that currently bisects the campus will change traffic patterns in the area, however, has been determined to have mitigating impacts on the occurrence of accidents in the area. Further, a Traffic Study has been completed for the project, the findings for which are provided in the narrative above. This Traffic Study is being expanded to include data based on the construction closure of E Weber St, and will be provided upon completion.

The campus is currently served by municipal utilities, and while the renovation plan requires termination of some of the utilities in E Boulder Street, adequate infrastructure is in place in other locations on the perimeter of the site to adequately serve the renovation. Utilities are being coordinated with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) and are discussed in detail in the narrative above. Easements as needed are being reserved in the vacation plat, and new easements to accommodate any new or realigned infrastructure will be provided with future Development Plans and/or Platting.

G. Promotion of transitions in height, intensity, or character between proposed non-residential or mixed-use development and nearby low-density residential zone districts.

The campus is in a mixed use and density neighborhood with structures of varying bulk, height, and setback. The current campus has been part of this mixed use area for decades and is compatible with the neighborhood and existing development. The consolidated and renovated campus will continue to be an integral part of the neighborhood and new and remodeled buildings, and project elements will be compatible with and consistent with the site features to remain and the surrounding existing development.

Conformance With Zoning Map Amendment Criteria (Code Section 7.5.704.D)

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).

A. PlanCOS

The proposed campus renovation and consolidation are consistent with the goals and policies of PlanCos. The Vision of the Renowned Culture chapter of PlanCOS “promotes and embraces arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity. This builds on the efforts of General Palmer and many others that envisioned culture as the cornerstone of the community and where creative energy generates new possibilities, interpersonal connections and unprecedented philanthropy”. It recognizes educational facilities as a contributor to defining “the collective sense of place for our growing and diversifying citizenry”; that “arts and culture in Colorado Springs directly benefits our tourism industry and attracts companies and residents to the city”; “the presence, quality and quantity of...lifelong education, and cultural opportunities are increasingly playing a significant role in attracting new business and individuals”; and that “our roles in arts, culture, and education should not be overly prescriptive”.

Lifelong learning opportunities are considered Community Assets typologies. The goal of this cultural typology is to increase access and foster thriving arts, education, and cultural

organizations and resources at all levels and throughout the city. Attributes and recommendations for this typology include:

- Provide lifelong learning opportunities
- Increase connections with surrounding neighborhoods
- Serves as focal point of unique places
- Concentrate activities and resources for artistic, educational, and cultural exploration
- Coordinate with schools and community groups for shared facilities and resources.

Goal RC-2 states “add to, enhance, and promote Colorado Springs’ institutions, attractions and community assets integral to our local culture and civic pride”. Policy RC-2.B states to “promote existing and new arts and cultural hubs, venues and focal points as elements of activity centers throughout the city; and Policy RC-2.C states “increase accessibility and awareness about the city’s unique attractions, activities and resources, across all cultural typologies”. Policy RC-3.B states “reinforce Downtown as an historic, cultural, and entertainment center of the community and region. Strategy RC-3.B-1 states to “continue to work with property owners and civic organizations to implement the Experience Downtown Master Plan”; and Strategy RC-3.B-2 states to “encourage the establishment of more and improved arts, education, and cultural opportunities in and near Downtown”.

Goal RC-6 states “strengthen and diversify the range of educational and lifelong learning opportunities and resources in Colorado Springs”, and supporting Strategy RC-6.B-1 states “review and approve plans for new or redeveloped educational facilities and other Community Assets to enhance integration within the surrounding neighborhood with an emphasis on access connectivity”, and Strategy RC-6.B-4 states “Actively encourage arrangements between educational institutions, local arts agencies, cultural websites, online community calendars, and the City and other properties for shared use of assets such as parks, athletic facilities, and parking”.

The Vibrant Neighborhoods chapter of PlanCOS identifies Downtown as its own unique type of neighborhood. The goal of this neighborhood typology is to retrofit, reinvent, and introduce new features to enhance the identity, quality, affordability, and attractiveness of these neighborhoods. Common desired elements include “a strong sense of identity, sense of place, and community, including distinguished attributes and focal points” such as “schools, parks, gathering areas, and unique places”; “an integrated mix of land uses to allow siting of residential, retail, office, recreational and educational facilities within close proximity”; and “safe physical connections to support and encourage walkability with links to existing and future multimodal transportation systems, the city’s trails and green infrastructure network, and neighborhoods.” Recommendations include “fully integrated local schools within neighborhoods”; and “redevelop or repurpose declining commercial buildings”.

The Unique Places chapter Vision “Centers on a vibrant Downtown and is strengthened by our investment in walkable, healthy, and magnetic activity centers that are located in new and reinvented areas throughout the city.” Key strategies include:

- Identify, promote and support redevelopment and infill opportunities
- Implement Experience Downtown Master Plan
- Implement public, non-profit and private partnerships

The 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 Master Plan. Common Desired Elements include an “accessible location and design that promotes the safety and convenience for all users”; a center of activity with an integrated mix of land uses”; “a walkable and human scale experience with the built environment”; and a focus on arts, education and culture”. For the Downtown Typology the following recommendations include:

- High quality walkable destinations
- Mix of institutional centers, retail, lodging and supportive uses
- Focus on walkable and bike friendly connections
- Lead in innovative urban design
- Maintain short and walkable blocks

Goal UP-2 states “embrace thoughtful, targeted, and forward-thinking changes in land use, infill, reinvestment, and redevelopment to respond to shifts in demographics, technology, and the market. Supporting Policy UP-2.A states “support infill and land use investment throughout the mature and developed areas of the city” and supporting Strategy UP-2.A-1 states “encourage the development or redevelopment of vacant properties in the core area of the city by using a combination of incentives, rezoning, and creative design solutions” and Strategy UP-2.A-4 states “Actively support ongoing and potential infill projects, employ problem solving approaches and continue to implement process improvements in support of infill and redevelopment.” Goal UP-3 is to “continue to grow and support Downtown as an inclusive, mixed use, cultural, and economic heart of the region”. Supporting Policy UP-3.A states to “proactively participate and invest in the development of Downtown as the city’s premier urban activity center” and supporting Strategy UP-3.A-2 states to “continue to refine, adapt, and expand the Downtown Form Based Zone District as Downtown develops and evolves”.

The Thriving Economy Chapter Vision “fosters an environment of inclusivity and economic diversity by attracting an innovative and adaptive workforce, advancing existing and targeted industry clusters, investing in quality of life...” Common desired elements of a Thriving Economy include “a mix of complementary uses”; “amenities including walkability, parks, gathering places and supporting uses that attract investment and provide value to employees, customers and visitors”; and “land use integration with surrounding areas”. Key strategies include “create amenities to attract business and residents”.

- B. The south portion of the property is within the Downtown Qualified Opportunity Zone, and all of the property is within an Enterprise Zone.

- C. The project is consistent with the purpose of the Form Based Transition 2A zone district, which is:
1. To implement the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan by promoting development that is characterized by a sustainable, efficient, and adaptable urban form in areas that have had, or will have, the benefit of detailed context-sensitive public planning processes.
 2. To provide a method of regulating the use and development of buildings, and address how buildings relate to surrounding development and public infrastructure with less focus on the separation and regulation of particular land uses.
 3. 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.
 4. 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.

2. The rezoning will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare.

Rezoning the property to FBZ-T2A will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare. The property is currently and has historically been occupied by civic education and recreation uses, including buildings, athletic fields and parking. Rezoning the property will facilitate renovation, consolidation, and modernization of Palmer High School, which is in the public interest. Rezoning and consolidation of the campus will reduce safety issues for site users and others in the neighborhood due to vacation of a 1-block section of E Boulder Street which will be incorporated into the campus.

Public Benefit

- **Student Safety:** Reduces pedestrian-vehicle conflict by eliminating mid-block crossings.
- **Urban Development:** Supports Colorado Springs' downtown revitalization by strengthening one of its most prominent civic institutions.
- **Educational Equity:** Provides Palmer students access to facilities comparable to larger suburban schools.
- **Economic Impact:** According to the Colorado Springs Chamber & EDC economic study, strong public schools drive talent retention, workforce development, and business investment. A thriving downtown high school is key to regional competitiveness.

- **Historical Vision:** This aligns with General Palmer’s original city plan, which emphasized educational and cultural institutions at the heart of Colorado Springs. The current interruption of the street grid for civic purposes (such as schools and parks) is consistent with this historic planning precedent.

3. The location of the lands in the zoning map area being amended are appropriate for the purposes of the proposed zone district(s).

The property is located in the Downtown and adjacent to other Form Based Zone districts. Further, as with many downtown properties, the site is highly constrained, which causes the need for the flexibility allowed through the FBZ zone district standards.

4. If the application proposes to rezone a small area of land, the application demonstrates that 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 approval conditions.

The property to be rezoned is comprised of 8.27 acres, which includes a one-block segment of vacated E Boulder Street right of way. This is a relatively large area of land for a development in the Downtown area, therefore this criterion does not apply.

5. If the application proposes to rezone a relatively small area of land, the application demonstrates that the change in zoning will not create significant dislocations of tenants or occupants of the property, or 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.

The property to be rezoned is comprised of 8.27 acres, which includes a one-block segment of vacated E Boulder Street right of way. This is a relatively large area of land for a development in the Downtown area and therefore this criterion does not apply.

6. If a Land Use Plan or amendment to a Land Use Plan accompanies the application, the Land Use Plan or amendment complies with the applicable criteria in Subsection 7.5.514C.3 (Land Use Plan Criteria).

A Land Use Plan, which complies with the applicable criteria above, accompanies the Rezoning application.

7. The application is consistent with any approved Concept Plans in the area for which the map is being amended or includes or is accompanied by a provision that approved Concept Plans that have been classified as implemented do not have to be amended in order to be considered consistent with an amended zoning map.

There is no Concept Plan applicable to this property.

8. If the application is for creation of an ADS-O district, the approval criteria applicable to the creation of the text of the ADS-O district in Section [7.2.607D.47.5.702](#) (Decision) shall also apply to

consideration of the zoning map amendment required to create or amend the boundaries of the ADS-O district.

This criterion does not apply.

- 9. If rezoning to a PDZ district, the proposed PDZ district provides significant community amenities or other benefits, as determined by the Manager, that promote the achievement of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan goals and would not otherwise be required of the applicant under this UDC or other City or governmental regulations.**

This criterion does not apply.

- 10. Complies with the additional standards of the base zone district where the property is located (see Article 7.2 (Zone Districts)) or in an overlay district that applies to the property (see Part 7.2.6 (Overlay Districts)). (Ord. 23-03).**

The FBZ-T2A is a base zone therefore this criterion does not apply.

Conformance with Vacation Plat Criteria (Code Section 7.5.522 C.)

- 1. The right-of-way is no longer needed for public transportation purposes;**

E Boulder Street currently bisects the Palmer High School campus, disrupting its safety, cohesion, and operational efficiency. The street segment between N Nevada Avenue and E Weber Street no longer serves a vital transportation role given the presence of multiple east-west arterials nearby, including E Platte Avenue and E Kiowa Street. The campus division creates a daily safety hazard for students and staff who must cross a functioning roadway to access school facilities. The 2025 traffic study prepared by FHU supports this conclusion, finding that rerouting traffic from this segment of E Boulder Street results in only minimal impacts to surrounding streets, with all major intersections continuing to operate at acceptable levels of service. The vacation supports a shift in urban mobility priorities toward pedestrian safety and campus connectivity. TIS is being updated to include data based on the construction closure of E. Boulder St, and will be provided upon completion.

One can argue that every public street in “needed” for public transportation purposes. One can also argue that vacation of the E Boulder St and transforming the space for a pedestrian and public safety corridor through the Palmer (public) High School campus is meeting a public transportation need. The PlanCOS Transportation Framework Vision is to adapt “to how we move by transforming our corridors to support our future generations’ health and mobility needs, enhance economic vibrancy, and improve (ing) regional connectivity.” This is a vision of BALANCE, necessary in all planning efforts, to promote and protect the public interest to the greatest extent possible. Key Strategies include:

- Make transit a more viable option
- Add non-motorized facilities

There are many examples of right of way vacations that interrupt the original grid system for community valued development projects. These types of projects primarily focus on values such as

education, and health, and quality of life and wellbeing; which include K-12 schools, colleges, hospitals, and parks/recreation and entertainment development.

Education related projects include K-12 schools as well as colleges. Examples of these types of projects that resulted in disruptions to the street grid include the vacation of Tejon Street for Colorado College; the vacation of Cheyenne Avenue for Palmer High School; and the vacation of streets including San Rafael Street and N Royer Street for North Middle School.

Health related projects include hospitals and associated clinics. Examples of these types of projectst that resulted in disruptions to the street grid include the vacation of N Logan Avenue, E St. Vrain Street and N Foote Avenue for Memorial Hospital and vacation of E Monroe Street and N Tejon Street for Penrose Hospital.

Quality of life and wellbeing projects include parks, recreation, and sports related projects. Examples of these types of projects include the vacation of W Moreno Street for Weidner Field; disruption of multiple streets for Memorial Park, disruption of N Sheridan Avenue for Boulder Park; disruption of N Corona Street for Erps Field; disruption of N Meede Avenue, Farragut Avenue, E St. Vrain Street, E Willamette Avenue, E Monument Street, and E Dale Street for the US Olympic and Paralympic Training Center.

Another example of a disruption to the street grid is the decision by the City to not connect Constitution Avenue, due to negative public sentiment toward the project.

PlanCOS

The Transportation Framework classifies streets downtown as Urban Core Streets, for which common desired elements include:

- A design and pattern that supports safety, commerce, mobility for all users, long-term sustainability, and adaptability;
- A network of physical connections to support community life, including walkability

The goal of this transportation typology is to recognize the existing character of these streets, while incorporating redevelopment, and the addition of new facilities to encourage multimodal use and optimized capacity. New uses and redevelopment along these streets should incorporate elements including landscaped medians, tree lawns, and bike and bus facilities. The Palmer High School consolidations through vacation of E Boulder Street, accomplishes these goals.

The streets in the vicinity of the Palmer High School campus can also be classified as Local Streets and Connections. The goal of this transportation typology is to emphasize safety and local connectivity while deemphasizing vehicular speed. Local Street and Connections recommendations include:

- Integrate Traffic Calming into local street design
- Connect to modified street grid

Vacating E Boulder St and transforming into a pedestrian corridor is consistent with these characteristics of and recommendations for Local Streets and Connections.

Goal SC-1 is “Multi-modally connect people and land use throughout the city and region. Policy SC-1.A is to “Plan for and implement transportation project for overall mobility of people and to manage impacts on our built environment.” Strategy SC-1.A-2 states “focus attention on increasing multi-modal east-west transportation capacity”. Strategy SC-1.A-8 states “design land uses and transportation improvements with an emphasis on “first and last mile” trips having desirable and safe options for non motorized travel. Policy SC-1.F states to “maximize multi-modal transportation options serving the Downtown area to reduce the need for individual car ownership and use by visitors, residents, and employees. Strategy SC-1.F-1 states “consistent with City-adopted plans, repurpose identified rights-of-ways of Urban Core Steets to provide and enhance non-motorized travel in the Downtown area”. Strategy SC-1.F-4 states to “actively support car share programs beginning in Downtown and in higher density activity centers, as a means of reducing the footprint of car storage and the need for household car ownership in these area”.

Policy SC-1.G is to “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”.

Intermodal Transportation Plan

The Intermodal Transportation Plan establishes goals for Mobility, Livability, and Intermodalism.

- Mobility-Plan, develop and maintain a safe and efficient transportation system to provide the community with adequate present and future mobility. Mobility objectives include:
 - Provide for safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services.
 - Preserve mobility for emergency response vehicles and maintain emergency access to people and property.
 - Protect pedestrian safety and provide mobility particularly in high pedestrian use areas such as schools, residential neighborhoods, parks, and other community gathering places
 - Provide a network of facilities to allow for the safe conveyance of bicycle traffic to all sections of the city.
 - Promote methods to enhance capacity of the arterial system on identified corridors.
 - Work with public safety agencies to ensure adequate consideration of emergency response needs.
 - Consider the transportation needs of all residents and visitors, including those with limited mobility.
 - Plan, develop and implement a transportation system that enhances the livability of our residential neighborhoods.
- 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.

- Design and maintain transportation facilities to be compatible with adjacent land uses.
- Protect residential neighborhood integrity by minimizing through traffic within neighborhoods.
- Apply traffic calming measures where appropriate.
- Construct or widen major streets through established neighborhoods only after other measures have been considered.
- Manage both on-street and off-street parking to support access and transportation objectives.
- 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.
 - Enhance opportunities for pedestrian access and movement by developing, promoting, and maintain pedestrian networks and environments.
 - Promote and encourage bicycling as a mode of transportation not restricted to recreation.
 - Coordinate and integrate the planning and development of transportation system facilities to meet the needs of users of various transportation modes including highways, public transit, bikeways, pedestrian facilities...
 - Identify areas of conflict and of compatibility between modes (i.e. bicycles and transit...). Pursue strategies to reduce or eliminate conflicts and to foster intermodal compatibility.

The goals of the Intermodal Transportation plan focused on balancing multiple and sometimes conflicting community and public interests. This plan is supportive of vacation of E Boulder St right of way and allowing its transformation into a pedestrian plaza and emergency services access within the Palmer High School campus.

Experience Downtown Master Plan

Experience Downtown Master Plan states to “connect students with Downtown opportunities for learning, living, shopping, dining, culture, fun and employment”. Experience acknowledges that Downtown’s neighborhoods are thriving places providing housing and amenities for people and families of all cultures, ages and incomes. Public transit, employment opportunities, schools, shopping and parks are conveniently located within walking distance. Experience also encourages to “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. These priorities are supportive of vacation of E Boulder St right of way an allowing its transformation into a pedestrian plaza and emergency services access within the Palmer High School campus.

2. The vacation will not adversely impact use of the right-of-way for public utility and/or drainage purposes;

All existing utilities and drainage infrastructure within the right-of-way will be evaluated and either relocated, vacated, preserved via easements, or improved through the redesign of the unified campus. The design process will include coordination with utility providers and city engineering to ensure no adverse impacts. Easements as needed are being reserved in the vacation plat, and new

easements to accommodate any new or realigned infrastructure will be provided with future Development Plans and/or Platting.

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;

The proposed vacation applies only to the single block of E Boulder Street that lies fully within the Palmer High School campus footprint. All other segments of E Boulder Street to the east and west will remain intact, preserving the uniformity of the right-of-way outside of this internal campus zone. Traffic circulation is maintained via surrounding streets, and per the traffic study, intersections will continue to perform well with the revised configuration. Adjacent rights-of-way will remain fully intact and functional. The TIS is being updated to include data and analysis based on the construction closure of E Weber St, and will be provided upon completion.

4. Access to lots or properties surrounding the public right-of-way will not be adversely affected; and

There are no private properties abutting the block proposed for vacation. The land on both sides of E Boulder Street is owned by Colorado Springs School District 11 and is already used for school operations. The vacation will enhance internal access and circulation across campus while maintaining required access for emergency and service vehicles. According to the traffic study, access to surrounding properties is not impacted by the closure, and rerouted vehicle traffic remains within the network's capacity. The TIS is being updated to include data and analysis based on the construction closure of E. Weber St.

5. The vacation is consistent with the purpose of this UDC.

The Unified Development Code promotes safe, coordinated development and the efficient use of infrastructure. Vacating E Boulder Street aligns with these principles by eliminating a hazardous pedestrian-vehicle conflict zone and enabling the development of a cohesive, modern, urban high school campus. The traffic study confirms that this can be accomplished without compromising the broader street network's functionality. The TIS is being updated to include data and analysis based on the construction closure of E. Boulder St, and will be provided upon completion. More broadly, this action supports the city's goals for downtown revitalization, public safety, and educational excellence, consistent with the UDC's vision for community-focused planning.