



BRISTOW-LOWELL URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

Planning Commission September 11, 2024

Staff Report by Case Planner: Ryan Tefertiller



Quick Facts

Applicant

Colorado Springs Urban
Renewal Authority

Property Owner

Draper Commons Land
Holdings LLC and QOF Lowell
Commons LLC

Address / Location

6 parcels located east of S.
Nevada Ave. along both sides
of E. Las Animas St. and
south of E. Fountain Blvd.

TSNs

6419106022, 6419106023,
6419106025, 6419100002,
6419100018, 6419100024

Zoning and Overlays

Current: PDZ/SS

Site Area

5.75 acres + ROW

Proposed Land Use

Commercial & Residential

Project Summary

A request to establish the Bristow-Lowell Urban Renewal District. The plan area includes six parcels which total approximately 5.75 acres plus adjacent public rights-of-way. The properties are all zoned PDZ (Planned Development Zone) and one of the six parcels also includes the Streamside Overlay zone. The site is located east of S. Nevada Ave. along both sides of E. Las Animas St. and south of E. Fountain Blvd. Establishment of the proposed Urban Renewal District will support the redevelopment of the land through use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

File Number	Application Type	Decision Type
URAP-24-0001	Urban Renewal Plan	Legislative

Background

Prior Land-Use History and Applicable Actions

<i>Action</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
Annexation	Town of Colorado Springs	Sept. 1872
Subdivision	Poet Lofts Sub; and Unplatted	July 2001
Master Plan	Experience Downtown Plan	Nov. 2016
Prior Enforcement Action	None	N/A

Site History

The subject properties are comprised of 6 parcels and the adjoining public rights-of-way in the Lowell Neighborhood on the southeastern edge of Downtown Colorado Springs. The Lowell neighborhood was the subject of the City's first Urban Renewal District which was approved by City Council in 1988. Many of the buildings within Lowell were built or renovated using the available Urban Renewal financial tools during the District's 25-year operating period. While the District expired in 2013 a number of undeveloped properties at that time have recently seen new construction. Only a few vacant parcels remain within the Lowell Neighborhood, including the 6 parcels that make up the proposed Bristow-Lowell Urban Renewal District. A development plan was approved in May of 2022 for the southern three parcels to allow construction of 185 apartment units, although construction has not yet begun. A zone change and land use plan modification were recently submitted (June of 2024) for the northern three parcels to allow for two new buildings with a mix of commercial and high-density residential apartments.

Applicable Code

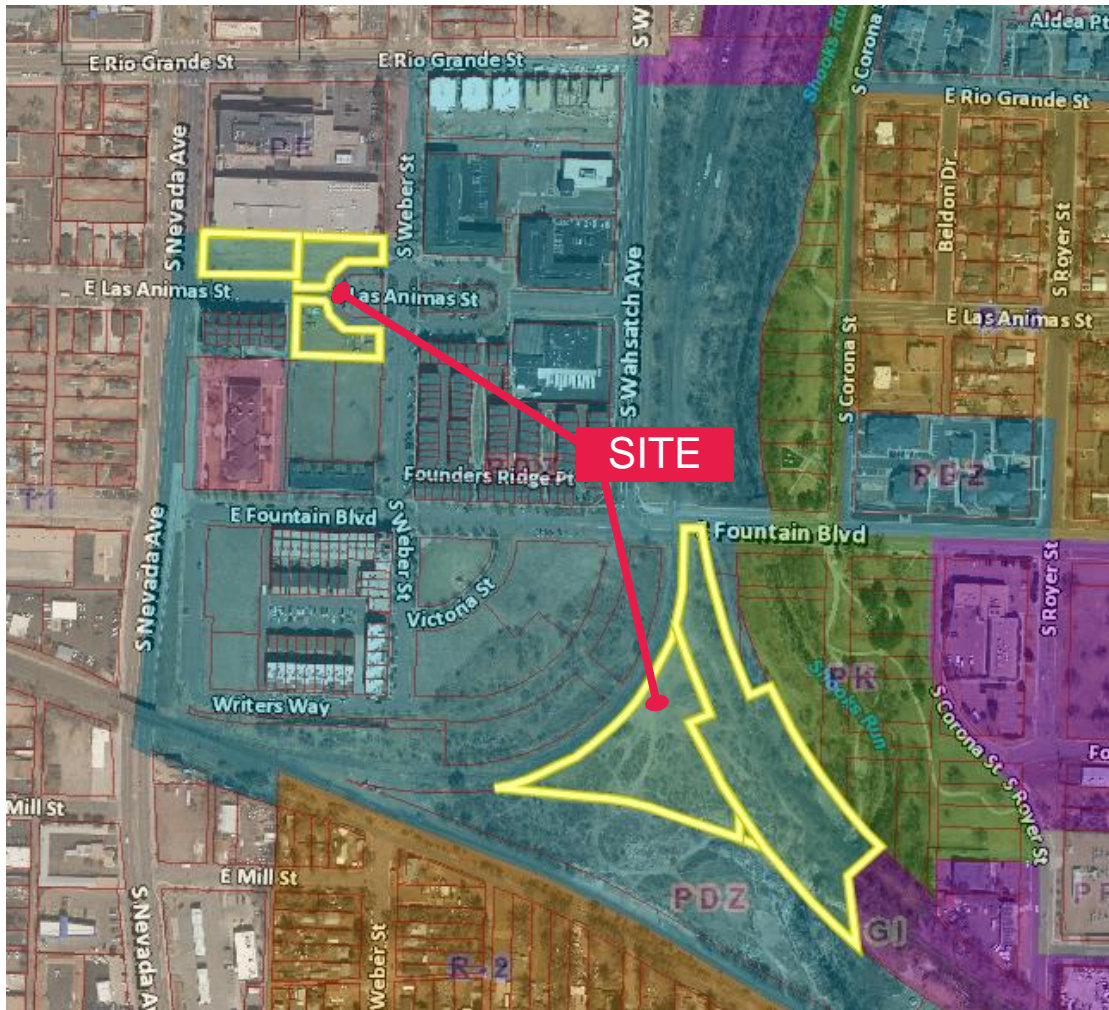
The subject application was submitted after the implementation date (06/05/2023) of the ReTool project. All subsequent references within this report that are made to "the Code" and related sections are references to the Unified Development Code.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

Adjacent Property Existing Conditions

	<i>Zoning</i>	<i>Existing Use</i>	<i>Special Conditions</i>
North	PF	Civic Use	Police Operations Center
West	FBZ-T1	Mixed	Various small office and residential uses
South	PDZ	Mixed	Mixed use buildings in Lowell and Concrete Coyote to the south east
East	PDZ & PK	Mixed	Residential and senior living in Lowell and Public Park use along Shooks Run

Zoning Map



Stakeholder Involvement

Public Notice

Public Notice Occurrences
(Poster / Postcards)

Public notice for Urban Renewal Designation is managed by the Urban Renewal Authority and not required prior to Planning Commission recommendation. This item is noticed in the newspaper as part of the overall Planning Commission agenda.

Postcard Mailing Radius

N/A

Number of Postcards Mailed

N/A

Number of Comments Received

N/A

Public Engagement

Public notification for Urban Renewal designation is in accordance with State Statutes and is managed by the Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority. City Planning Department Staff are in compliance with zoning code requirements for public notice for other land use applications (e.g. zone change and land use plan modifications) that are currently under review for a portion of this site.

Timeline of Review

Initial Submittal Date	July 2024
Number of Review Cycles	One
Item(s) Ready for Agenda	July 2024

Agency Review

Traffic Impact Study

Not applicable

School District

School District 11 is engaged with the Urban Renewal Authority regarding the applicant's TIF request

Parks

Not applicable

SWENT

Not applicable

Colorado Springs Utilities

Not applicable

Urban Renewal Plan

Summary of Application

The applicant is requesting Urban Renewal District designation which would allow access to additional financial resources for the development of the proposed project.

Application Review Criteria

Urban renewal authorities, urban renewal plans, and the use of tax increment financing (TIF) are regulated by CRS Title 31, Article 25. The intent of urban renewal plans is to encourage and facilitate redevelopment and to eliminate blight within the designated area, ideally consistent with a city's comprehensive plan. For the purpose of urban renewal, "blighted area" is defined in CRS. In order for an area to be classified as blighted, it must exhibit 4 of 12 characteristics also stipulated in CRS. A blight conditions survey was completed and concludes that as a stand-alone area, it qualifies as a "blighted area".

In accordance with CRS 31-25-107(2), prior to City Council approval of an urban renewal plan or a substantial amendment to an existing plan, the plan or amendment must first be reviewed and a recommendation offered by the City Planning Commission regarding its conformity to the City's Comprehensive Plan. If no recommendation is offered by the City Planning Commission within 30 days of submittal, the City Council may proceed to act upon the submitted plan or amendment.

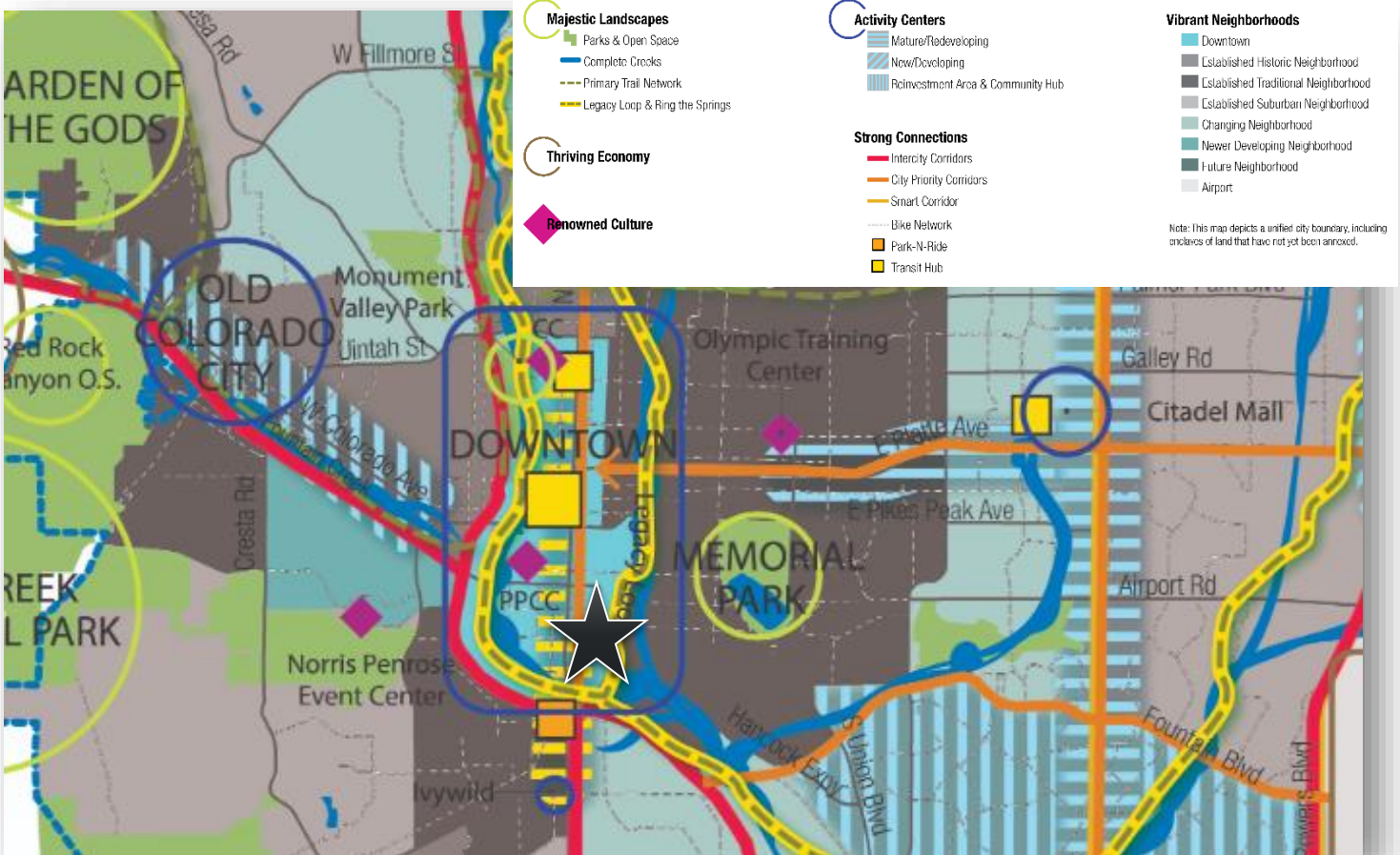
Pursuant to CRS, urban renewal plans sunset 25 years after their adoption. The most common method of funding improvements is through the issuance of bonds by an urban renewal authority in order to initiate the money for specified improvements. The bonds are then repaid by the urban renewal authority using the revenue generated from the incremental increase in sales and property taxes collected within the urban renewal area. This is commonly referred to as tax increment financing or "TIF". It should be noted that creation of an urban renewal area does not change the tax rate

base - the tax increment yields are generated by the increases in property values and sales of taxable goods above the taxes collected prior to the adoption of the plan. (Typically, the year prior to or the year a plan was adopted serves as the “base year” from which the increment is determined. The “base year” rates are later adjusted every two years to establish a new base.) It should be noted that Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority (CSURA) normally receives 100% of the property tax increment; however, the portion of the City’s 2% of the general sales tax increment is negotiated through a separate agreement with the City.

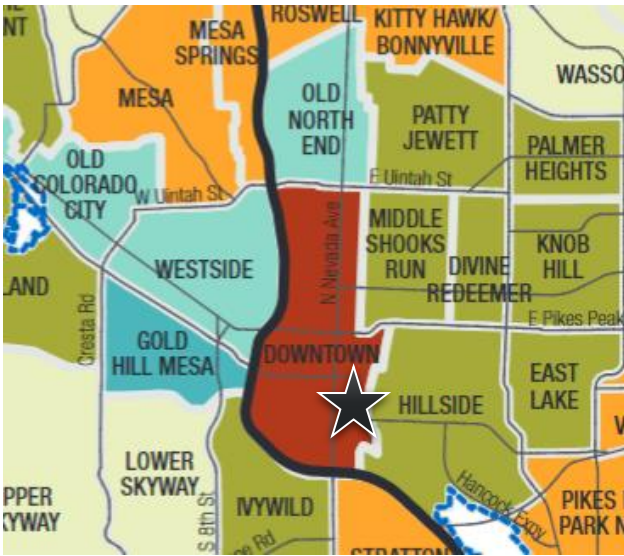
The adoption of the Bristow-Lowell Urban Renewal Plan (see attachment) allows CSURA, among other powers, to enact property tax and sales tax increment financing to assist with the financing of infrastructure and site remediation requirements necessary to eliminate and prevent the spread of blighted conditions in the area for a full 25-year period.

Compliance with PlanCOS

PlanCOS Vision



The subject properties are located on the southeastern edge of the Downtown Colorado Springs activity center. The site is within the largely developed Lowell Neighborhood which was the City’s first Urban Renewal District established over 25 years ago. The site has immediate access to Downtown’s multi-modal system and multiple transit routes, as well as public parks and trails along the Shooks Run corridor. It is within walking distance of major employment, dining, arts and cultural opportunities, education and civic uses. The site is highly compatible with the PlanCOS Vision and most, if not all, of the Plan’s “Big Ideas.”



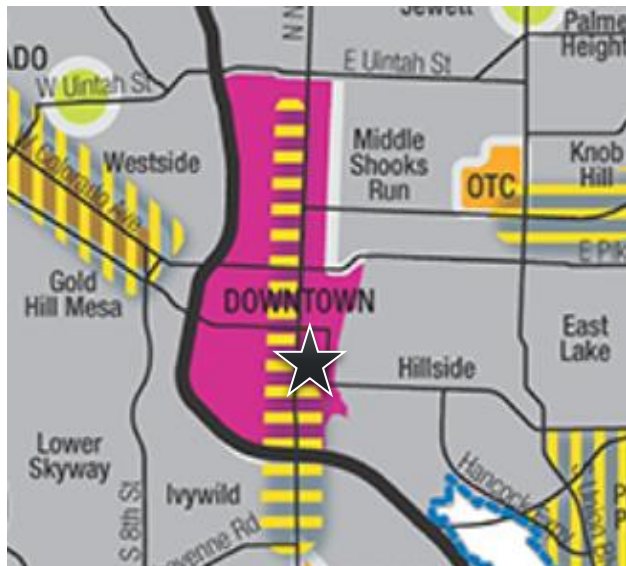
Predominant Typology

- Downtown
- Newer Developing Neighborhood
- Changing Neighborhood
- Established Historic Neighborhood
- Established Traditional Neighborhood
- Established Suburban Neighborhood
- Airport
- Future Neighborhood

Vibrant Neighborhoods

The subject properties fall within the southeastern edge of the Downtown neighborhood, and more specifically within the Lowell Neighborhood. Redevelopment efforts within the proposed District are consistent with a number of Goals, Policies, and Strategies of the Vibrant Neighborhood chapter of the Plan including:

- Goal VN-2: Strive for a diversity of housing types, styles, and price points distributed throughout our city through a combination of supportive development standards, community partnerships, and appropriate zoning and density that is adaptable to market demands and housing needs.
- Strategy VN-3.A-6: Where and when applicable, specifically incorporate mixed-use neighborhood building as an outcome tied to the use of urban renewal area designation, public/private partnerships, and other tools and incentives to encourage redevelopment.
- And others



Predominant Typology

- Neighborhood Centers
- Community Activity Centers
- Entertainment and Commercial Centers
- Regional Employment and Activity Centers
- Downtown
- Mature/Redeveloping Corridors
- New/Developing Corridors
- Reinvestment Area and Community Hub

Unique Places

The proposed district area is within the Downtown area and specifically within the Lowell Neighborhood. Downtown generally, and Lowell specifically, are unique areas with long and interesting histories. The proposed district aligns with a number of Goals, Policies, and Strategies of the Unique Places chapter of the Plan including:

- Goal UP-1: Enrich the texture and livability of the city as a tapestry of unique, vibrant, and walkable places.
- Strategy UP-1.B-4: When feasible, integrate development with surrounding natural areas and maximize trail connectivity to enhance quality of life.
- Policy UP-2.A: Support infill and land use investment throughout the mature and developed areas of the City.
- Strategy UP-2.A-1: 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.
- Policy UP-3.A: Proactively participate and invest in the development of Downtown as the City's premier urban activity center.



Predominant Typology

- Cornerstone Institutions
- Spinoffs and Startups
- The Experience Economy
- Life and Style
- Industry Icons
- Critical Support
- City Boundary
- Interstate 25
- Major Roads

Thriving Economy

The proposed urban renewal district is on the southeastern edge of Downtown Colorado Springs which is identified in PlanCOS as an area for Cornerstone Institutions, Spinoffs & Startups, and the Experience Economy. Additionally, the Thriving Economy chapter includes a number of Goals, Policies, and Strategies that support the proposed district, including:

- Policy TE-1.C: Leverage the City’s livability as a workforce and economic driver
- Strategy TE-1.C-3: Ensure an adequate supply of attainable housing for the workforce across all industries, and that it is conveniently located near hubs of employment and/or public transportation.
- Strategy TE-4.A-1: Encourage revitalization and infill in underutilized urban places, as detailed in Chapter 3
- Policy TE-4.B: Improve local funding mechanisms to better support economic development efforts.



Predominant Typology

- Urban Core Streets
- Established Suburban Streets
- Developing Suburban Streets
- Future Streets
- Smart Corridors
- Multimodal Corridors
- Bike Master Plan Network
- Major Destination Areas
- Transportation Hubs
- Park-N-Rides

Strong Connections

The proposed urban renewal districts is within the City’s “urban core streets” area and just outside the area identified as a “major destination area.” The district is also immediately adjacent to the S. Nevada Ave. “multimodal corridor.” The proposed district aligns with a number of Goals, Policies, and Strategies of the Strong Connections chapter of the Plan including:

- Goal SC-1: Multimodally connect people and land uses throughout the City and region.
- Policy SC-2.A: Systematically support and encourage the density and design needed to support this network beginning with Downtown, key corridors, activity centers, and trip generators.

Statement of Compliance

URAP-24-0001

After evaluation of the Bristow-Lowell Urban Renewal Plan Planning Staff have determined that the proposal is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan.