

RESOLUTION NO. 100-17

A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND ADOPTING THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS TRANSIT CENTER RELOCATION STEERING COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION

WHEREAS, the existing Downtown Transit Terminal does not adequately meet the existing and future operational needs of the City's transit system or provide adequate multimodal connections; and

WHEREAS, the existing Downtown Transit Terminal lacks independent vehicular access and egress, and lacks quality internal pedestrian access and circulation; and

WHEREAS, the existing Downtown Transit Terminal lacks an inviting and pleasant physical environment; and

WHEREAS, a downtown transit station relocation study was completed in November 2016, that identified three recommended sites for a new downtown transit center, based on an extensive technical analysis and significant community involvement; and

WHEREAS, a Mayor-appointed steering committee comprised of two City Council Members and other community stakeholders prioritized the three recommended sites and made further recommendations to Mayor John Suthers as set forth in the City of Colorado Springs Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee's ("Steering Committee") recommendation, attached hereto and incorporated herein as **Exhibit A**; and

WHEREAS, on July 17, 2017, during a meeting with the Steering Committee, Mayor John Suthers accepted the Steering Committee's recommendation.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:**

Section 1. That the City of Colorado Springs Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee's recommendation, attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and incorporated herein, is hereby accepted and adopted.

Section 2. That this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage.

Dated at Colorado Springs, Colorado this 26<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2017.

ATTEST:

  
Sarah B. Johnson, City Clerk



  
Council President

“Exhibit A”

*Exhibit A:*  
City of Colorado Springs  
Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee  
R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

**Committee Goal**

The Downtown Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee was charged with ranking and prioritizing finalist sites for a new transit center, and to make a clear recommendation to the Mayor for action. The committee, comprised of nine community stakeholders, two City Council members and seven city and county staff, met from mid-February through mid-May. In particular, the skilled work and leadership from the transit and urban planning professionals at the city – Craig Blewitt, Brian Vitulli, and Ryan Tefertiller – was essential. The finalist sites are based on a yearlong study process that included several focus groups, a technical advisory group, a stakeholder working advisory group, two public open houses, and the assistance of a consulting team led by RNL Design.

**Project Vision**

Colorado Springs is at a pivotal point in its history. This proposed project is no exception. The new Downtown Transit Center will be a lynchpin in modernizing the region’s transportation infrastructure. Citizens from all walks of life recognize the necessity of investing in transit.

Results from the community survey can be found here:

[https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/dtts\\_final\\_report\\_preliminary.pdf](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/dtts_final_report_preliminary.pdf)

A modern transit center will immediately improve operations, safety, and the customer experience, and will serve the community’s transit interests well into the future.

The Downtown Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee site recommendation is made in context with the original goals and objectives outlined in the Relocation Study (see addenda). The committee felt strongly that to simply relocate the existing transit terminal, even with the benefit of gaining certain operational efficiencies, would not provide sufficient return on the significant investment required for MMT, the city or our citizens.

It is in this spirit that the committee respectfully offers its recommendation to the Honorable Mayor of Colorado Springs, John Suthers.

**Site Recommendation**

Site 8 – bound by Colorado, Cucharas, Sierra Madre, and Sahwatch – was the clear top choice of the committee. Among its qualities:

- Site is closest to rail in consideration and support of multimodal usage should passenger rail become a reality.
- Adjacent and proximate properties provide catalytic development opportunities.
- Property owner indicates willingness to explore partnership.
- Closest to anchor attractions such as America the Beautiful Park (festival site), U.S. Olympic Museum and Hall of Fame, the El Paso County Courthouse, and Pikes Peak Center for the Performing Arts, as well as Pikes Peak Community College and vertical office properties.
- The location offers smooth I-25 access for Bustang, Greyhound and other regional and intercity-type services.
- The location is ideal for future tourism shuttles or circulators connecting the Manitou Springs/Old Colorado City/Downtown corridor.
- Grade separation of the site offers opportunities to develop a multilevel structure to house additional services/functions and access points. Public (County) and commercial (Wells Fargo tower) parking is nearby, with potential for future additional structured parking.

*Exhibit A:*  
City of Colorado Springs  
Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee  
**RECOMMENDATION**

**Essential Factors**

The committee consented on three essentials it recommends the city utilize as it develops an action plan for relocating the center:

- **Alignment:** The center must align with and be highly supportive of the goals of the Experience Downtown Master Plan, inclusive of other current plans in place, and goals for southwest downtown redevelopment as part of the City's broader commitment to economic development and revitalization.
- **Design:** The center design must complement envisioned future surroundings with smart design and true multimodal transportation capability to accommodate bus, automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and future rail. While site location is important to riders, the committee resoundingly agreed that the center's design must stimulate economic development, mixed-use development, public-private partnerships, and convey the aspirations of a growing, forward-thinking city.
- **Access:** The center must ensure access for all: people who choose to use public transit (choice riders), people dependent on public transit to get to work and school, commuters, and visitors.

**Financial Considerations**

- The project will be funded through federal money and PPRTA matching funds, both of which are expressly designated and restricted to capital projects. These funds, secured by MMT, will influence the scope of city investment; federal funds will provide roughly 80% of the funding, with the balance coming from designated funding through PPRTA.
- The site selection is well positioned for grant funding, especially when planning is done in consideration of Federal Transit Administration standards.
- The site location is favorable for public-private partnership development (see addenda for examples of other successful public-private projects in the region).
- There may be potential to leverage/utilize PPRTA funds to match outside grants.
- There may be additional grant funding available through 5339 and TIGER grants.
- The funding currently in place is within the range of similar projects in peer communities.

**Other Finalist Sites**

The committee reviewed two other finalist sites, which are ranked below with their attributes and challenges.

Site 12: Bound by Cucharas, Vermijo, Nevada, and Weber

- The site is centrally located but with more challenging access to rail and interstate.
- Adjacent to an existing high-frequency transit corridor (Nevada Avenue).
- Possible opportunity for joint development with current property owner.
- Adjacent to Signature Street (Vermijo Avenue).

Site 17: Utilizing Pueblo Avenue, bound by Vermijo, Cimarron, Nevada, and Wahsatch

- While the site is located on City-owned property, operations are limited by the narrow configuration.
- Site has numerous small-parcel adjacencies, making private development potential very difficult.

*Exhibit A:*  
City of Colorado Springs  
Transit Center Relocation Steering Committee  
**R E C O M M E N D A T I O N**

- Site positions buses and services literally at the “front door” of neighboring properties, proving problematic for many businesses and residents.
- Site configuration has little area for a quality facility that could house additional services, such as retail, food service, etc.
- Site is near a rail spur, but it is unknown/unclear how viable such a spur could be for future rail service.

**Ongoing Role for Steering Committee**

We recommend the City continue engaging interested members from this committee to provide perspective on the project’s design and implementation, to come alongside City staff when beneficial to assist with negotiations with property owners, to act as project champions, and to provide expertise for creatively utilizing joint development strategies.

**Committee Members:**

- Tom Strand, Co-Chair, City Council
- Susan Edmondson, Co-Chair, Downtown Development Authority
- Bill Cherrier, Colorado Springs Utilities
- Jenny Elliot, Downtown Development Representative
- Jill Gaebler, City Council
- Jim Godfrey, PPACG Community Advisory Committee
- Jen Knellinger, PPRTA Citizens Advisory Committee
- Darsey Nicklasson, Downtown Development Representative
- Elena Nunez, Colorado Springs Utilities
- Brian Olson, El Paso County
- Hannah Parsons, Colorado Springs Chamber and EDC
- Ingrid Richter, Downtown Development Representative
- Brian Risley, Citizens Transportation Advisory Board
- Courtney Stone, Community Transit Coalition
- Henry Yankowski, El Paso County