ACADEMY BOULEVARD
CORRIDOR

GREAT STREETS
PROGRESS REPORT
2018

COLORADO
SPRINGS

OLYMPIC CITY USA

INTRODUCTION

In 2007, a roundtable discussion led by Colorado Springs Mayor, Lionel Rivera, sparked the creation of what we know today as the Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan. The purpose of this plan is to support the needs of current residents and businesses', encourage area revitalization and reinvestment and long-term sustainability. The vision of the plan emphasizes this purpose:

VISION

"Promote, support and adaptively redevelop the Academy Boulevard Corridor as a Great Street with access to alternate modes of transportation, public/private investment in business and residential development, and enhanced connectivity with the street, between land uses, and with neighborhoods."

In order to evaluate progress towards reaching this vision, the 2018 Academy Great Streets Progress Report serves to monitor yearly changes following the completion of the initial plan, in 2011. Unique to this year's report is the inclusion of comparable geographies. Data analysis includes North Academy, Garden of the Gods, and other areas outside the study area to other similar, comparable geographies. The goal is to enhance contextual understanding of the data presented.

BOUNDARIES

The area being observed in the Academy Boulevard Progress Report consists of 12 square miles ranging from Drennan Road to the south and Maizeland Road to the north. The length of the area highlighted in this report is roughly 6 miles long and 2 miles in width. The exact boundaries are displayed on this page.

Planning Area

GREAT STREETS

What *are* great streets and what do they *do*?

Great streets are representative of their places and allow people to walk comfortably and safely. They contribute to economic vitality and are functionally complete. They strive to be green not only in building techniques but by working with natural systems. Providing mobility and facilitating community building, great streets are truly a measure of success. In all, the plan identifies seven key characteristics that embody a great street.

GREAT STREET CHARACTERISTICS:

Represents place: A Great Street reflects the neighborhood through which it passes and has a scale and design appropriate to the character of the abutting properties and land uses.

Safe and comfortable walkability: The pedestrian environment on, along, and near the street is well-designed and well-furnished. The relationship between the street and its adjacent buildings is organic, conducive to walking, and inviting to people.

Economic vitality: Great Streets facilitate the interaction of people and the promotion of commerce. They serve as destinations, not just transportation channels. They are good commercial addresses and provide location value to businesses that power the local economy.

Functionally complete streets: Great Streets support balanced mobility with appropriate provision for safe and convenient travel by all of the ground transportation modes: transit, walking, bicycling, personal motor vehicles and freight movement.

Provides Mobility: Great Streets strike an appropriate balance among the three elements of modern mobility: through-travel, local circulation, and access. The right balance varies with the function of the street and the character of its neighborhoods and abutting properties.

Place-Making: Great Streets incorporate within them places that are memorable and interesting. These may include plazas, pocket parks, attractive intersections and corners, or simply wide sidewalks, fostering an active street life.

Green: Great Streets provide an attractive and refreshing environment by working with natural systems. They incorporate environmentally sensitive design standards and green development techniques, including generous provision of street trees and other plantings and application of modern storm water management practices.

Measures of Success

Implementation of any plan follows a process of evaluation of efforts done to achieve success in the plan's vision. The 2011 Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan provides 12 measures of success with which to evaluate progress towards achieving a great street for Academy Boulevard:

1. Securing *funding* and dedicated funding streams

2. Progress toward *complete streets*

3. Progress toward *node redevelopment*

4. Comparative retail and office *vacancy rates*

5. Comparative changes in *property and sales tax* density

6. Major retail and other business *announcements*

7. Changes in *employment* within corridor

8. Per capita *crime*, compared with the city

9. Increased person *trips* on the corridor

10. Increased *transit* mode share

11. Vitality and progress for *schools* within corridor

12. Active *engagement* of residents and businesses in the area

Photo taken by City of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Planning Divison

Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Progress Report

Summer 2018

Courtesy of DeerField Hills Community Center

OVERVIEW

COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets approaches focus on multi-modal transportation planning efforts within a city. Complete streets meet the needs of the elderly, those with disabilities and children as well as meeting the needs of visitors and tourists who may be exploring the city. Some goals of complete streets include:

1. Making streets safe and accessible to everyone
2. Encouraging alternative transportation modes such as walking and biking
3. Reducing dependency of automobile use

AUTOMOBILE

Two major intersections along North Academy Boulevard and four along South Academy Boulevard are highlighted in this report. Traffic volumes have decreased at all six intersections along North & South Academy Boulevard as of early 2018. Automobile counts tend to average higher along North Academy than in South Academy. Hancock Expressway has the least amount of traffic passing through whereas Woodmen Road has the highest volume. Numbers used in this comparison are averages and include north bound traffic.

KEY POINTS:

* Traffic volumes along Academy Boulevard have declined at all assessed intersections for the year 2018. It may be assumed that this decline is due to a shift of north and south bound traffic using the Powers Corridor.
* Despite having the lowest traffic counts along the corridor, the Hancock and Academy Blvd. intersection is receiving significant funding and planning efforts.
* There is a trend of declining traffic volume along Academy Blvd.

Figure 1 Below
The area along Academy Boulevard between Union Boulevard and Austin Bluffs Parkway is predominantly residential. With a similar commercial presence to South Academy, the North Academy corridor serves as a benchmark to compare traffic counts. Traffic count data collection did not occur in 2016 and 2017. For this report, traffic count data was collected in April 2018 at the indicated intersections and is scheduled to occur again in subsequent years.
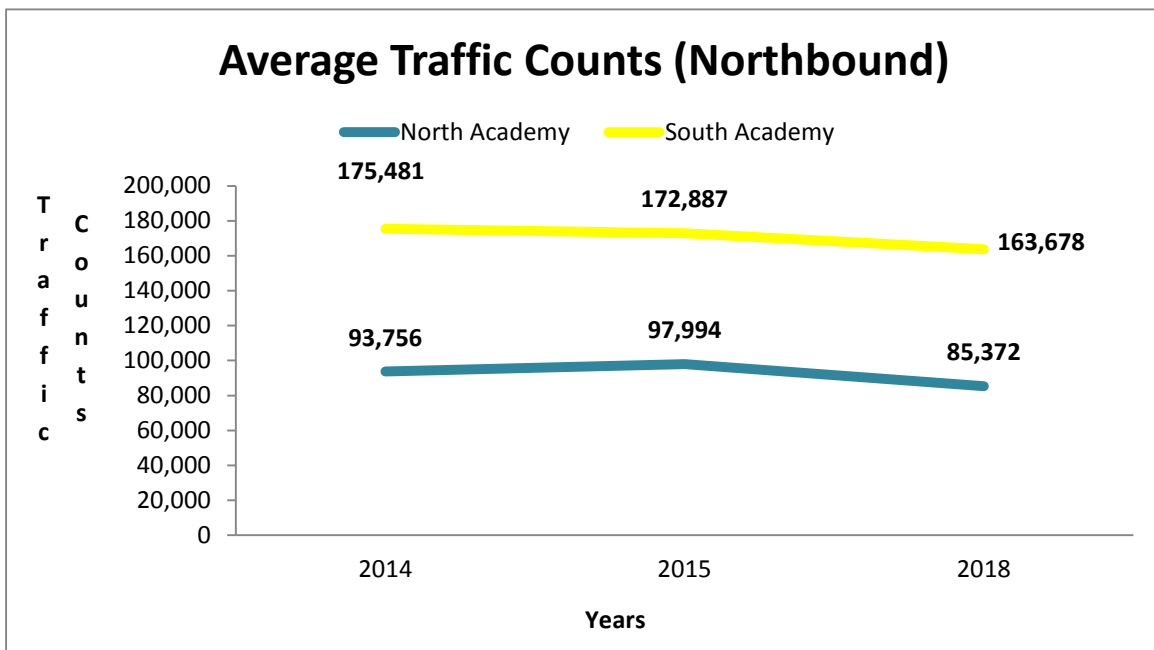
(Data provided by City of Colorado Springs Traffic Engineering Division)
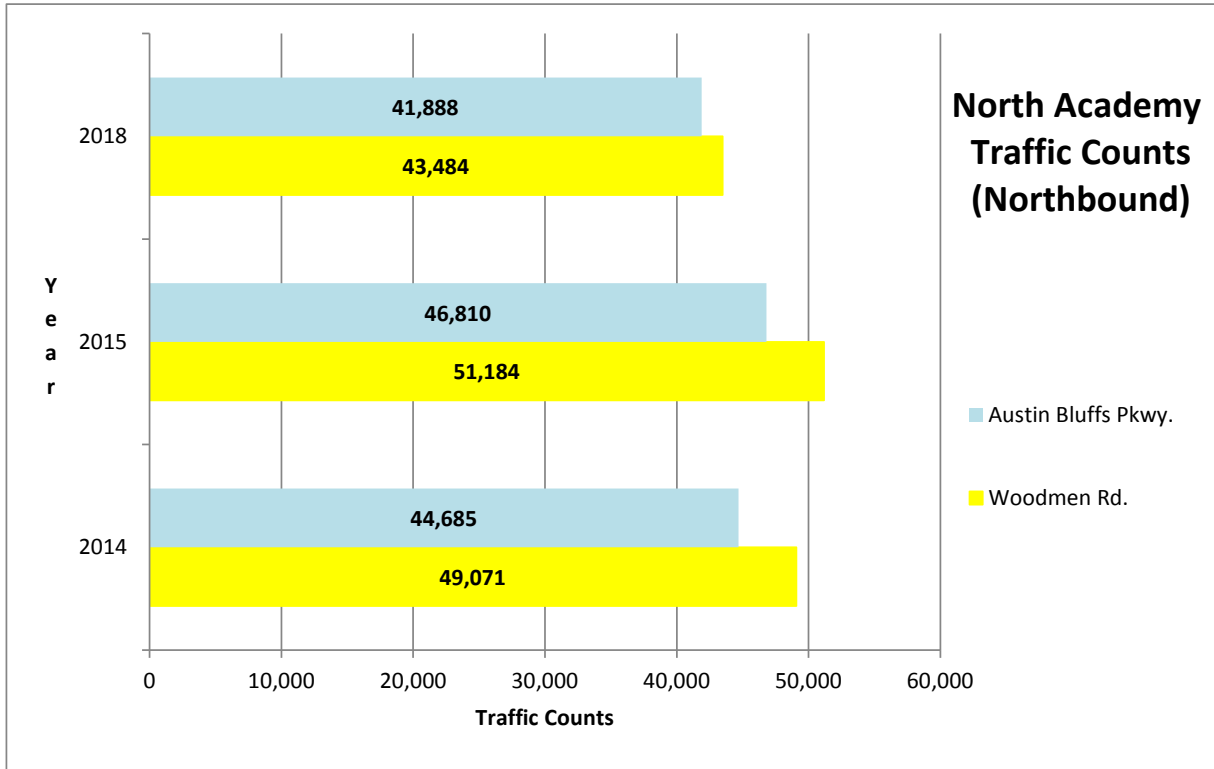
Figure 2 Above

This chart shows traffic counts at N. Academy intersections: Austin Bluffs Pkwy. and Woodmen Rd.
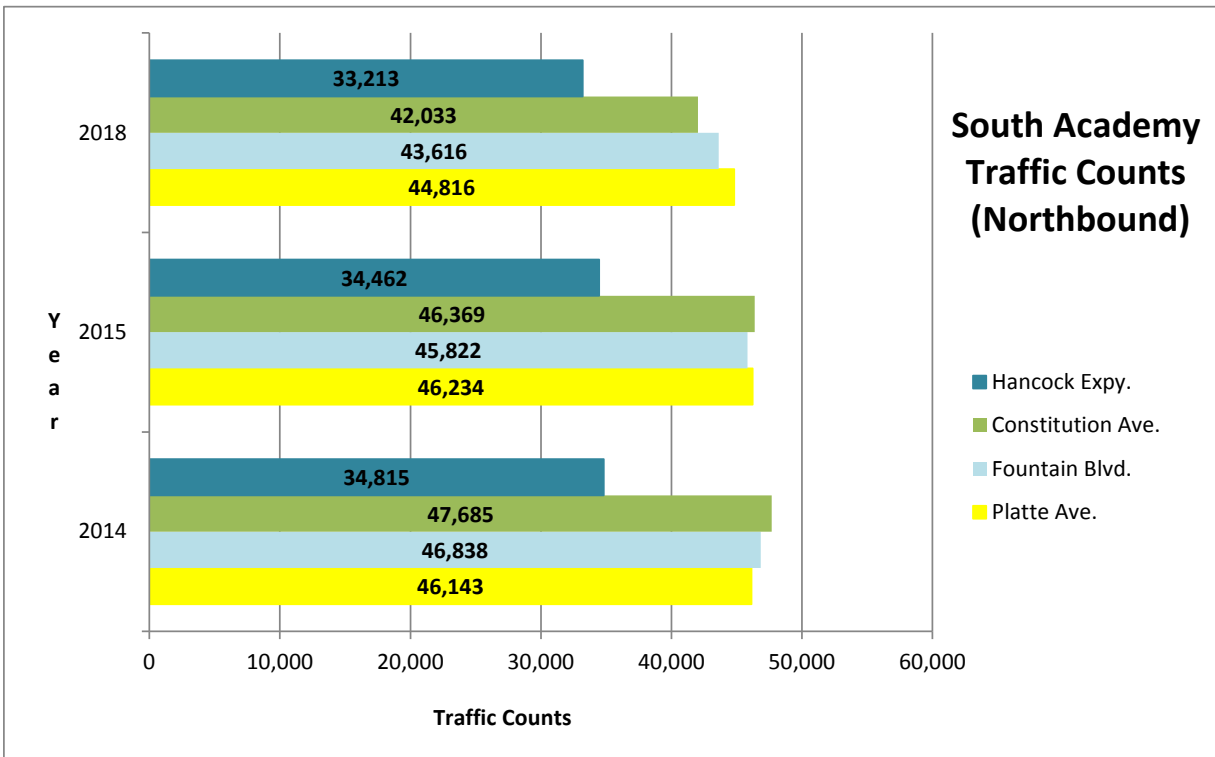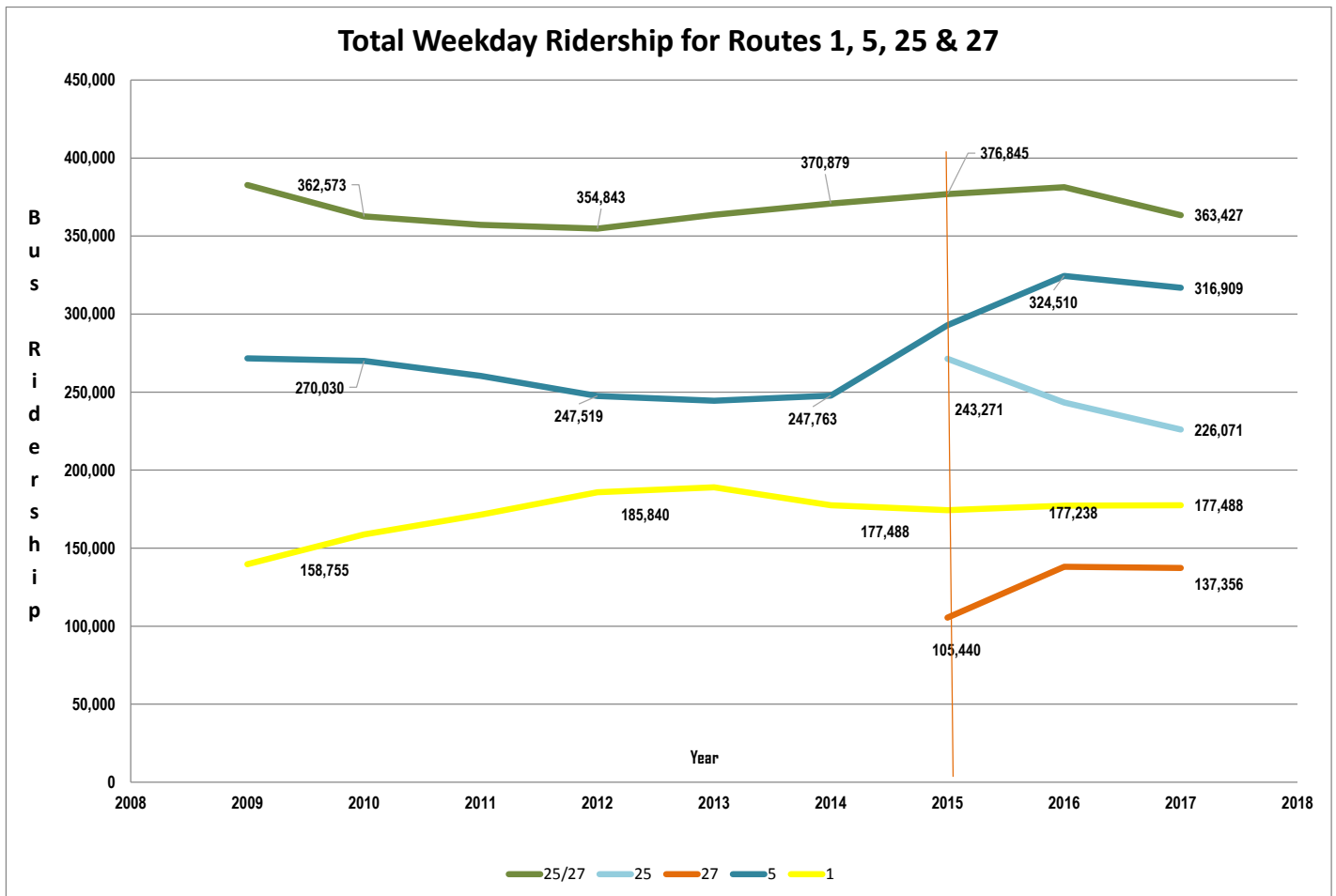

Figure 3 Above

This chart shows traffic counts at S. Academy intersections: Hancock Expy., Constitution Ave., Fountain Blvd. and Platte Ave.

(Data provided by City of Colorado Springs Traffic Engineering Division)

MOUNTAIN
METRO TRANSIT

Total Weekday Ridership for Routes 1, 5, 25 & 27

Legend: 25/27 — 25 — 27 — 5 — 1

Data points:
- 25/27: 362,573 · 354,843 · 370,879 · 376,845 · 363,427
- 5: 270,030 · 247,519 · 247,763 · 324,510 · 316,909
- 25: 243,271 · 226,071
- 1: 158,755 · 185,840 · 177,488 · 177,238 · 177,488
- 27: 105,440 · 137,356

(Data provided by Mountain Metropolitan Transit)

Figure 4 Above: Routes 25 & 27 were combined up until 2015 when they split off into two separate routes. This split can be seen after the orange line above. This explains the precieved decrease in Route 25 ridership.

The planning area is serviced by four Metro Bus routes: 1, 5, 25 and 27. Route 1 makes a total of 5 stops on its journey including Hancock Plaza, S Chelton Rd, Fountain Blvd, Prospect Lake, Hillside and finally the Downtown Terminal. Route 5 connects the Downtown Terminal, Memorial Hospital-Main, the U.S. Olympic Training Center and Citadel Mall Transfer Center. Route 25 operates on North Academy and travels to the Citadel Mall Transfer Center, Academy& Austin Bluffs, Academy& Vickers, and the Voyager Pkwy Transfer Center. Route 27 travels on South Academy and travels to the Citadel Mall Transfer Center, Hancock Plaza, and Pike Peak Community College Centennial campus.

2018 Metro Highlights:
Route 25 implemented 15-minute weekday daytime service increments beginning on October 1, 2017.
Route 27 (S. Academy Blvd - PPCC) will be implementing 15-minute service increments beginning on September 30, 2018 as part of the fall 2018 service change.
Route 1 (Hillside Hancock Plaza) will also begin operating 15-minute weekday daytime service beginning on September 30, 2018.
Route 5 has seen the biggest increase in ridership from 2014 to 2017 with a growth of over 76,000 riders.

B I C Y C L E S

Bike lanes are present on Academy Blvd. but may not provide sufficent safe crossings to promote cycling in the existing and expanding bike network. The Bike Master Plan, recently approved unanimously by City Council in 2018, identifies Bicycle Priority Areas for implementing new bicycle infrastructure. Portions of these Priority Areas are within the South Academy study area.

Photos taken along Academy Blvd. in study area

The map to the right was created using data from Strava Metro, a company which originated as a social network for athletes. This data only tracks rides for those who have a smartphone and choose to use the app for a given ride. While this data set is one of the larger sources of data currently available for tracking bicycle route use, its usefulness must be considered within the context of its limitations. The dataset only represents a small percentage of the actual bicycle population. It is largely biased towards males, typically of higher socioeconomic status, and between 25 to 45 years old. Consequently, Strava data underreports actual bicycle usage more dramatically in some neighborhoods than others. Data may reflect fewer collection points in lower income neighborhoods as opposed to higher income areas and may not accurately capture the route choices of other demographics. Nonetheless, strava data is useful in illustrating citizen interest to travel via bicycle and their main route choices.

To obtain reference sources regarding bicycles and strava data, please contact: Conrad Olmedo at colmedo@springsgov.com.

**Strava Data
June 2017
Weekdays Only**

Legend

- S. Academy Study Extent
- N. Academy Study Extent
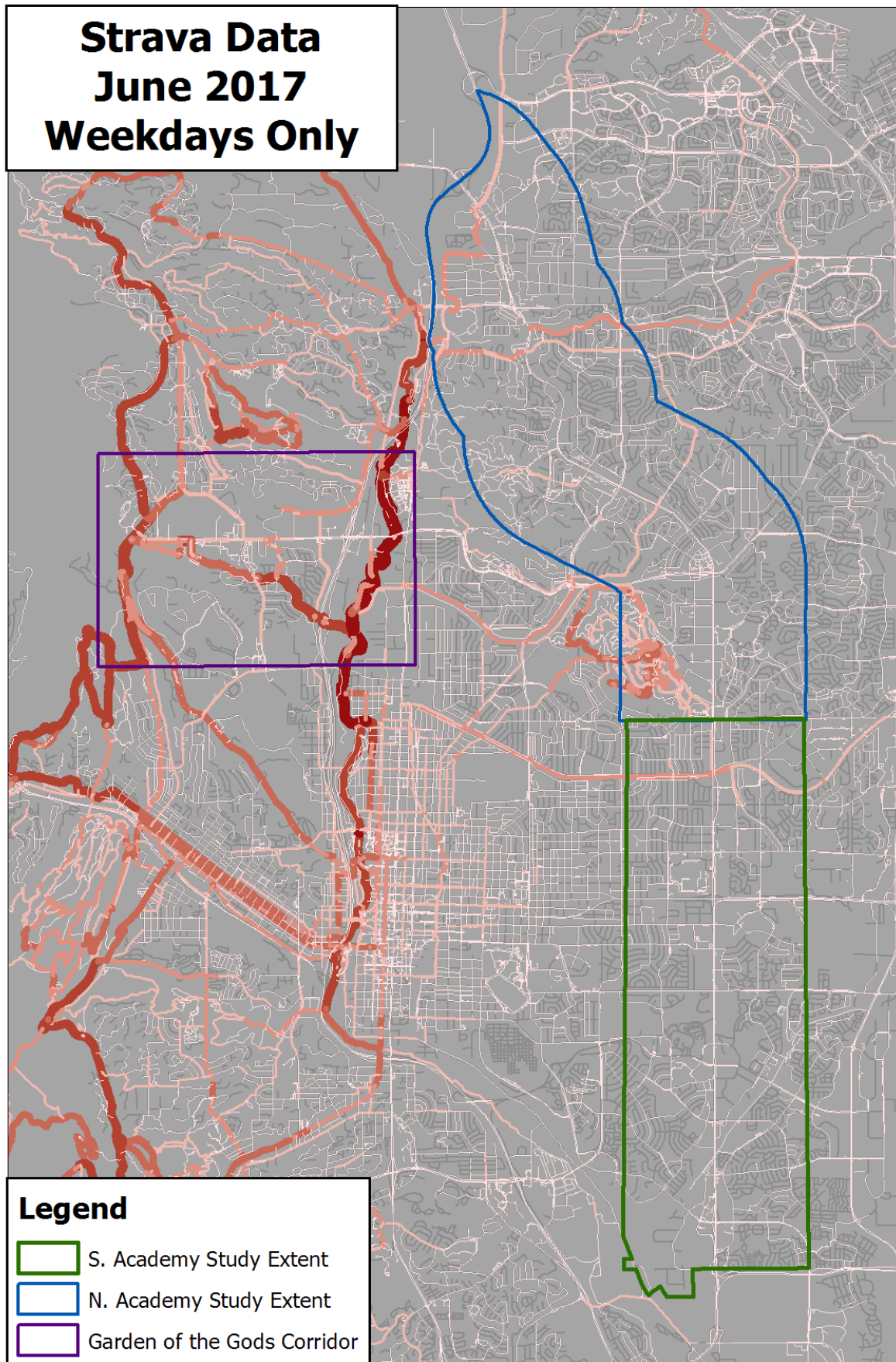- Garden of the Gods Corridor

Figure 7 Left
The map of Strava data reflects the total number of bike trips recorded by Strava users during the weekdays of June 2017. Strava data represents only a small percentage of the total bike rides / bike population.

(Data provided by the City of Colorado Springs Traffic Engineering)
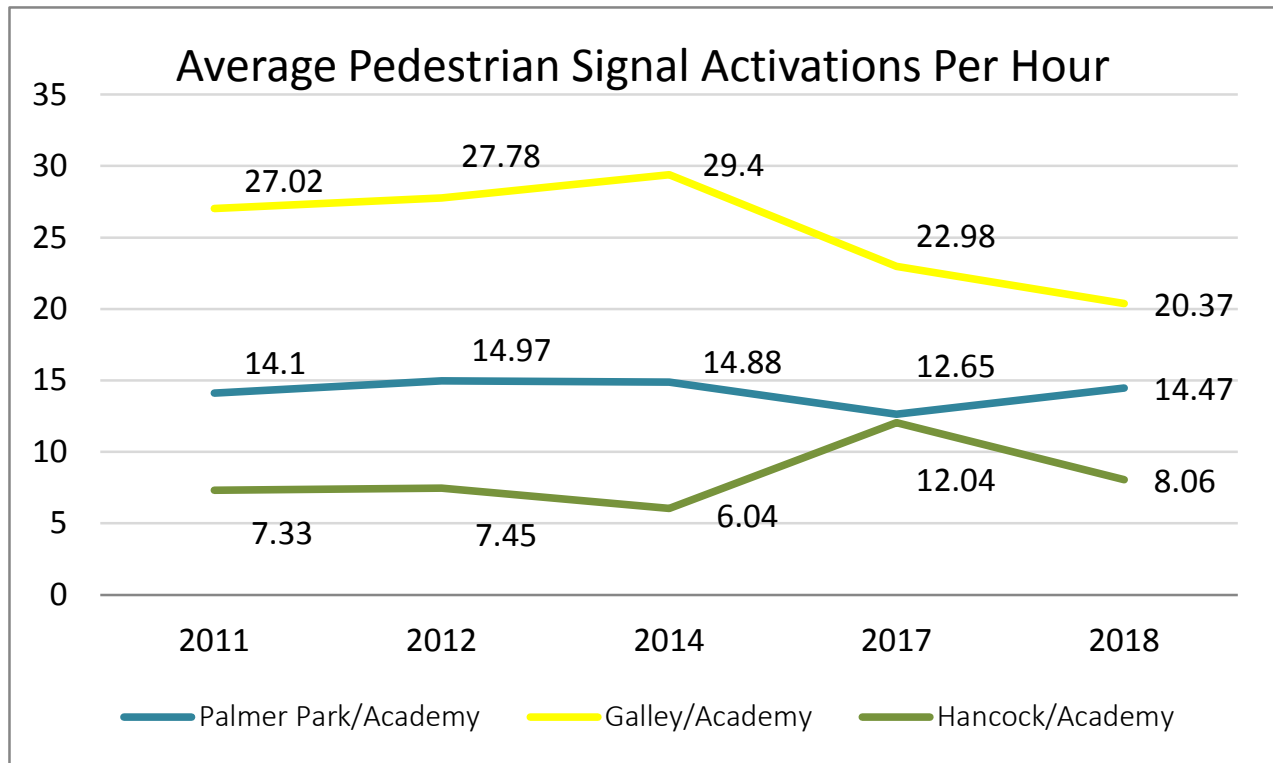
PEDESTRIANS

Figure 8 Above
(Information and map provided by the City of Colorado Springs Traffic Engineering)

Pedestrian activity was collected for 3 key major intersections along South Academy Boulevard: Palmer Park, Galley, and Hancock. Figure 8 above shows average hourly crosswalk activations for these 3 intersections. It should be noted that each year the numbers have been collected from different months (early August, late September, late January, and late February respectively) and the data consists of any combination of days of the week.

PEDESTRIAN HIGHLIGHTS

Galley and Academy is the most active of the three intersections. Although rates of signal activation have fallen from 29.4 activations per hour in 2014 to 20.37 in 2018, this intersection is the most pedestrian friendly by linking activities and promoting the frequent use of all four corners.

Palmer Park and Academy had an increase in pedestrian traffic counts, rising from 12.65 activation per hour in 2017 to 14.47 activations per hour in 2018.

Hancock and Academy intersection pedestrian signal activations show a significant decrease from last year's pedestrian counts averaging 8.06 activations per hour in 2018 versus 12.04 activations per hour.

SOUTH ACADEMY NEIGHBORHOODS

In 2017 the City of Colorado Springs evaluated boundaries and names of current neighborhoods. These updated names and boundaries are depicted on the map to the left. The study area includes 12 defined neighborhoods and borders for Neighborhoods in the study area. The website Walkscore.com examines neighborhood accessibility to restaurants, public transportation, coffee shops, grocery stores, schools, parks, and more. Walkscore.com provides three scores that assess places: Walk Score, Transit Score and Bike Score. Neighborhoods are assigned a Walk Score ranging from 1 to 100, with 100 being the most walkable. Walk Score measures the walkability of any address based on the distance to nearby places and pedestrian approachability.

Transit Score measures how well a location is served by public transit based on the distance to and type of nearby transit routes. Transit Scores in the study area range from 19 to 32. The Bike Score measures whether an area is ideal for biking based on bike lanes and trails, hills, road connectivity, and destinations. Bike scores in the sudy area range from 39 to 53.

WALKSCORE.COM HIGHLIGHTS

- Park Hill has the highest Walk Score of all the neighborhoods assessed in the area. It ranks as the 10th most walkable neighborhood in the city as a whole.
- Pikes Peak Park follows with a Walk Score of 44, making it the 15th most walkable neighborhood in the city.
- Wasson has the lowest walk score in the study area with its score coming in at 19.
- The Gateway Park neighborhood bike score is amongst one of the highest in the area coming in at 53.

Source: Colorado Springs Comprehensive Division

NEIGHBORHOOD WALKSCORE

Neighborhood	Residents	Walk Score	Transit Score	Bike Score	Total Score	Summary
Park Hill	12,063	50	32	46	128	Somewhat Walkable Some Transit Somewhat Bikeable
Deerfield Hills	3,929	41	29	51	121	Car Dependent Some Transit Bikeable
Pikes Peak Park	9,632	44	29	45	118	Car Dependent Some Transit Somewhat Bikeable
Eastborough	9,089	43	27	47	117	Car Dependent Some Transit Somewhat Bikeable
Rustic Hills	11,575	39	27	50	116	Car Dependent Some Transit Bikeable
Gateway Park	15,437	37	25	53	115	Car Dependent Some Transit Bikeable
Village Seven/Villa Loma	20,572	45	19	50	114	Car Dependent Minimal Transit Bikeable
Palmer Park/Austin Estates	12,488	40	24	50	114	Car Dependent Minimal Transit Bikeable
Wasson	N/A	19	23	50	92	Car Dependent Minimal Transit Bikeable
Southborough	8,579	29	23	39	91	Car Dependent Minimal Transit Somewhat Bikeable
Downtown	3,040	71	43	77	191	Very Walkable Some Transit Very Bikeable

{Data Collected from Walkscore.com}

Figure 8 Above
The chart above shows ten of the twelve neighborhoods located within the South Academy planning area. Out of the four scores(walk, transit, bike, total) walk score is the only score rated on a city-wide scale. The ranking are based out of the cities 74 neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES ACCESSIBLE BY BUS
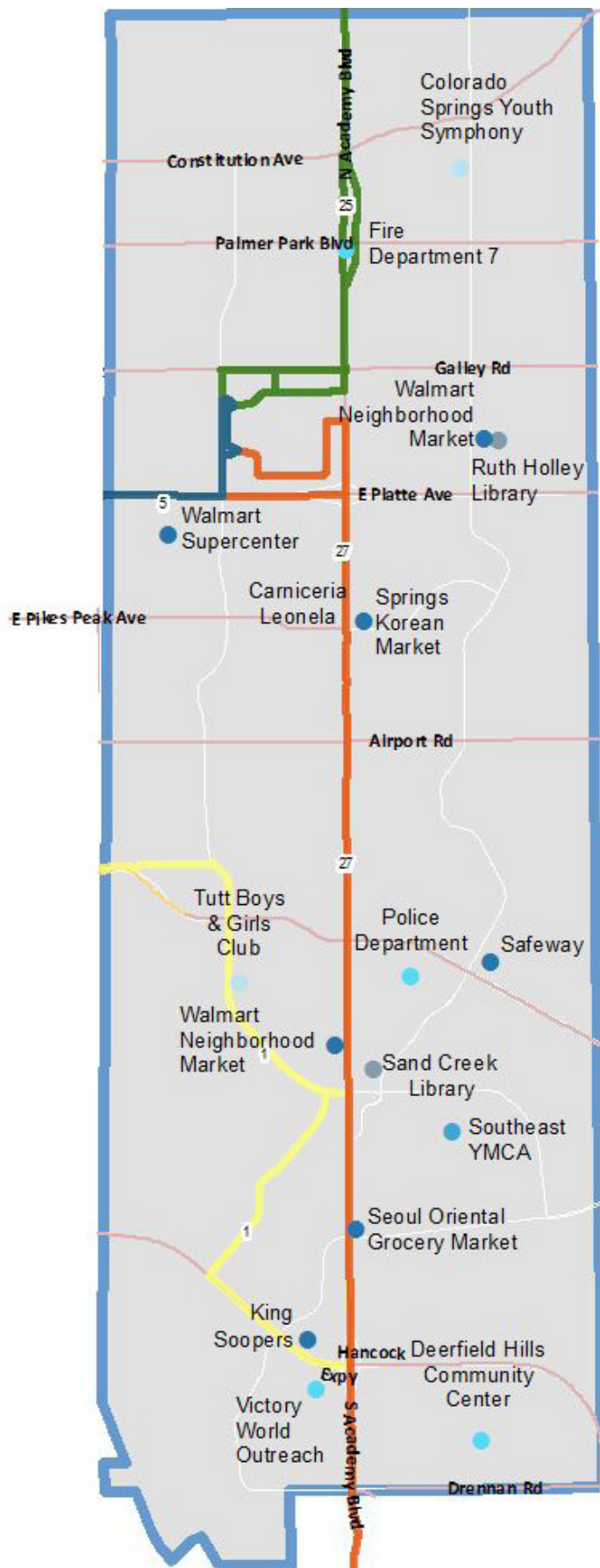
SOUTH ACADEMY BOULEVARD BUS ROUTES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Figure 9 Left
Map showing relationships between community facilities, bus routes, and neighborhoods.

The study area is made up of primarily residential parcels. Bus routes mainly North and South along Academy Boulevard with routes servicing east to west connectivity. bus routes extend service beyond the study area to outlying destinations.
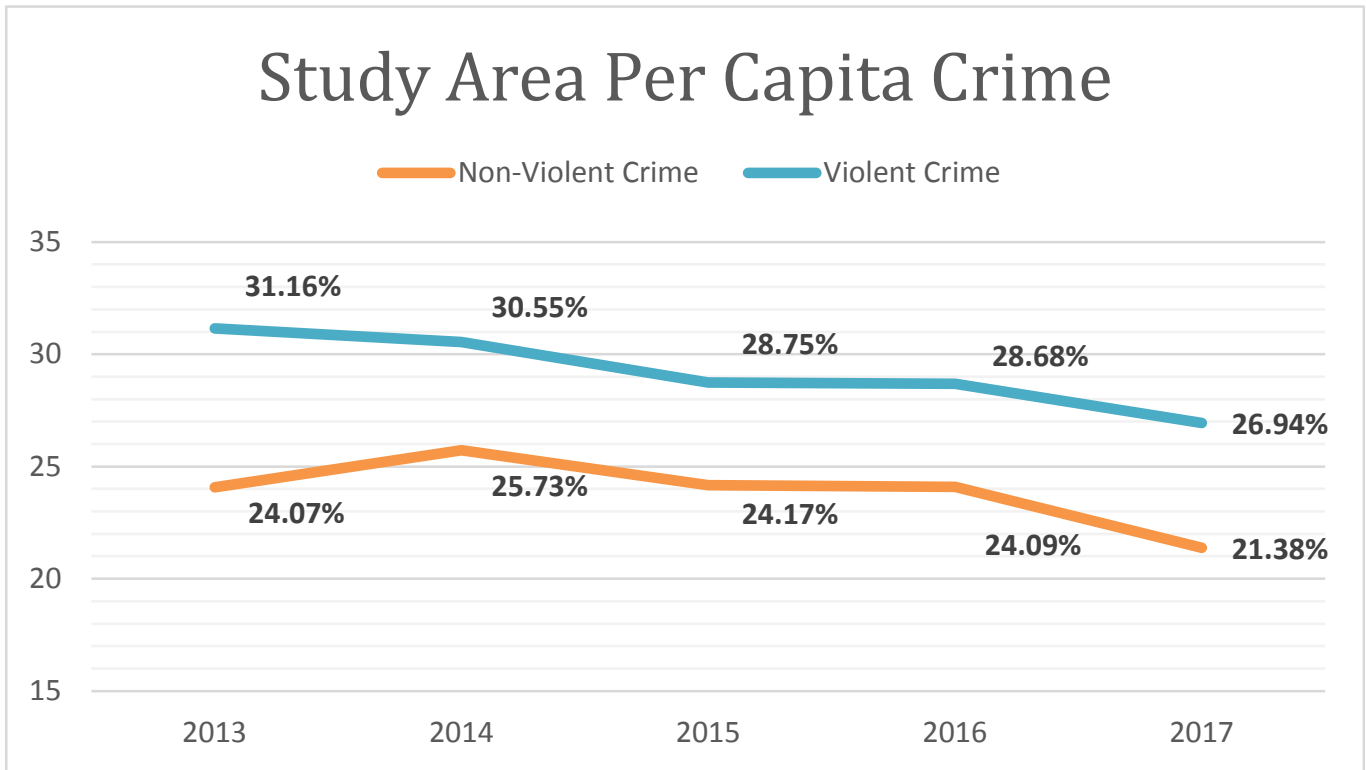
These percentages represent the overall volume of crime as a proportion of all crime reported for city of Colorado Springs as a whole. Non-violent crime dropped from 24.09% in 2016 to 21.38% in 2017. Violent crime also dropped from 28.68% in 2016 to 26.94% in 2017. Since 2013, per capita crime has dropped 4.22% for violent crimes and 2.69% for non-violent crimes.

This year's report includes most recent and vetted crime data as provided by Colorado Springs Police Department. A significant change in this revised data set is clarification of reported violent and non-violent crime. Data now reflects on-scene officer-confirmed crime type versus reliance on as received crime type from emergency dispatch services.

Study Area Per Capita Crime

Non-Violent Crime ——— Violent Crime

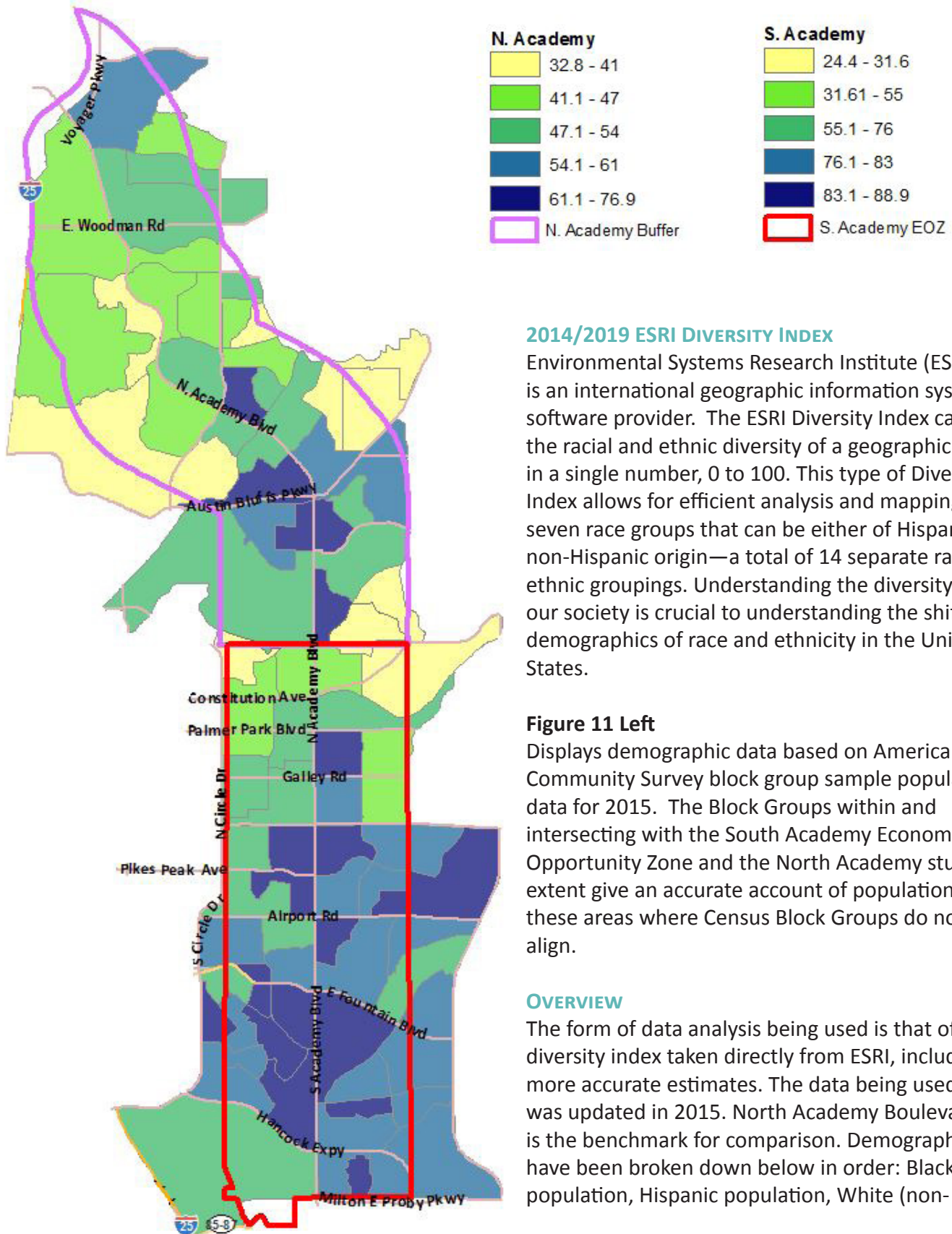|	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Violent Crime	31.16%	30.55%	28.75%	28.68%	26.94%
Non-Violent Crime	24.07%	25.73%	24.17%	24.09%	21.38%

(Data provided by the Colorado Springs Police Department-Strategic Information Center)

Figure 10 Above
Data includes all violent and non-violent criminal offenses (unfounded cases were omitted) geocoded (98.03% accuracy) within the city boundary for the years 2013-2017. These numbers provide an accurate picture of the criminal activity in the South Academy Study area.

Diversity Percentages in North Academy and South Academy Blvd. Corridors

N. Academy
- 32.8 - 41
- 41.1 - 47
- 47.1 - 54
- 54.1 - 61
- 61.1 - 76.9
- N. Academy Buffer

S. Academy
- 24.4 - 31.6
- 31.61 - 55
- 55.1 - 76
- 76.1 - 83
- 83.1 - 88.9
- S. Academy EOZ

2014/2019 ESRI Diversity Index

Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) is an international geographic information system software provider. The ESRI Diversity Index captures the racial and ethnic diversity of a geographic area in a single number, 0 to 100. This type of Diversity Index allows for efficient analysis and mapping of seven race groups that can be either of Hispanic or non-Hispanic origin—a total of 14 separate race/ethnic groupings. Understanding the diversity of our society is crucial to understanding the shifting demographics of race and ethnicity in the United States.

Figure 11 Left

Displays demographic data based on American Community Survey block group sample population data for 2015. The Block Groups within and intersecting with the South Academy Economic Opportunity Zone and the North Academy study extent give an accurate account of populations in these areas where Census Block Groups do not align.

Overview

The form of data analysis being used is that of the diversity index taken directly from ESRI, including more accurate estimates. The data being used was updated in 2015. North Academy Boulevard is the benchmark for comparison. Demographics have been broken down below in order: Black population, Hispanic population, White (non-

Source: Colorado Springs Comprehensive Planning Division

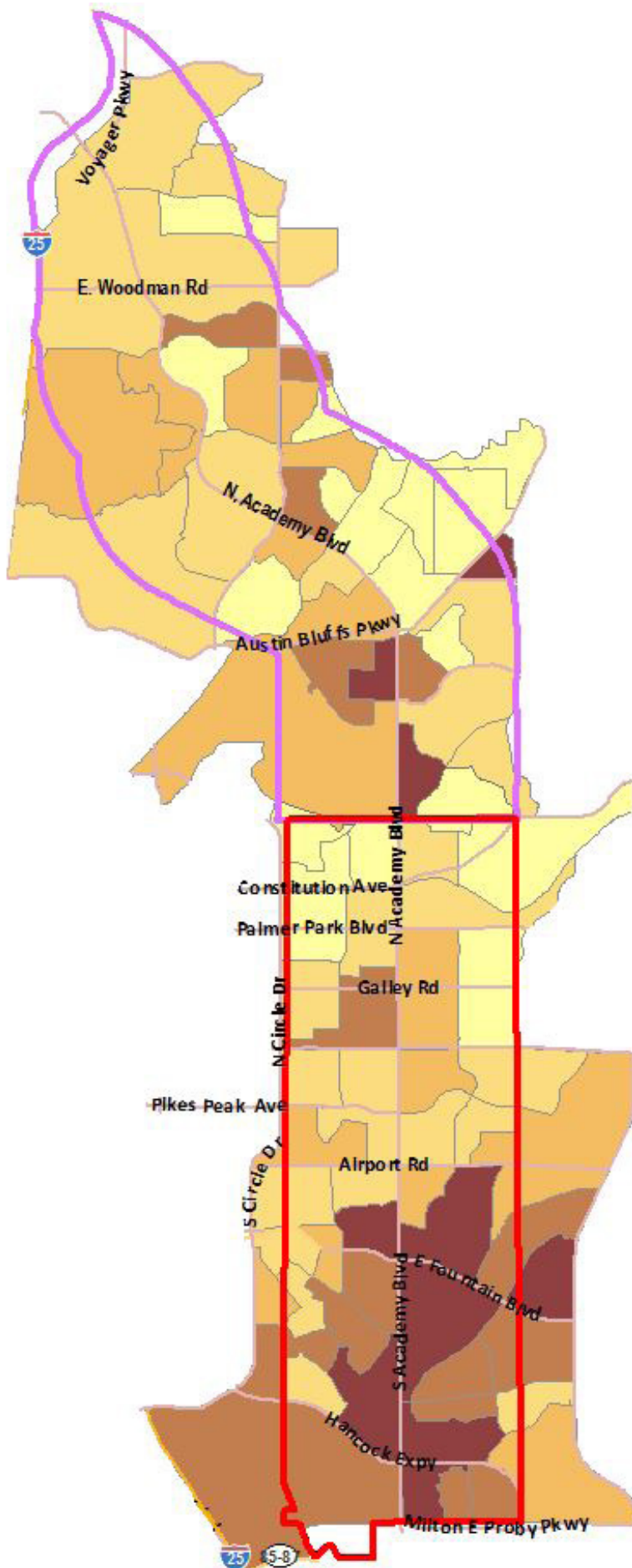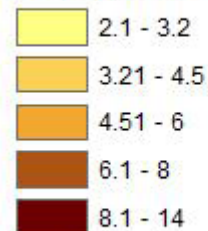# BLACK POPULATION % IN THE NORTH ACADEMY AND SOUTH ACADEMY BLVD. CORRIDORS
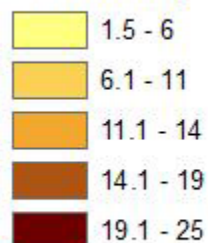
Figure 12 Left

This map illustrates the percentages of black non-Hispanic populations in the North Academy and South Academy areas with defined boundaries between the two. These numbers do not include any mixed race individuals. If anyone in these two areas checked more than one race, they will be included in the "All Other" category for population demographics.

N. Academy

	2.1 - 3.2
	3.21 - 4.5
	4.51 - 6
	6.1 - 8
	8.1 - 14
	N. Academy Buffer

S. Academy

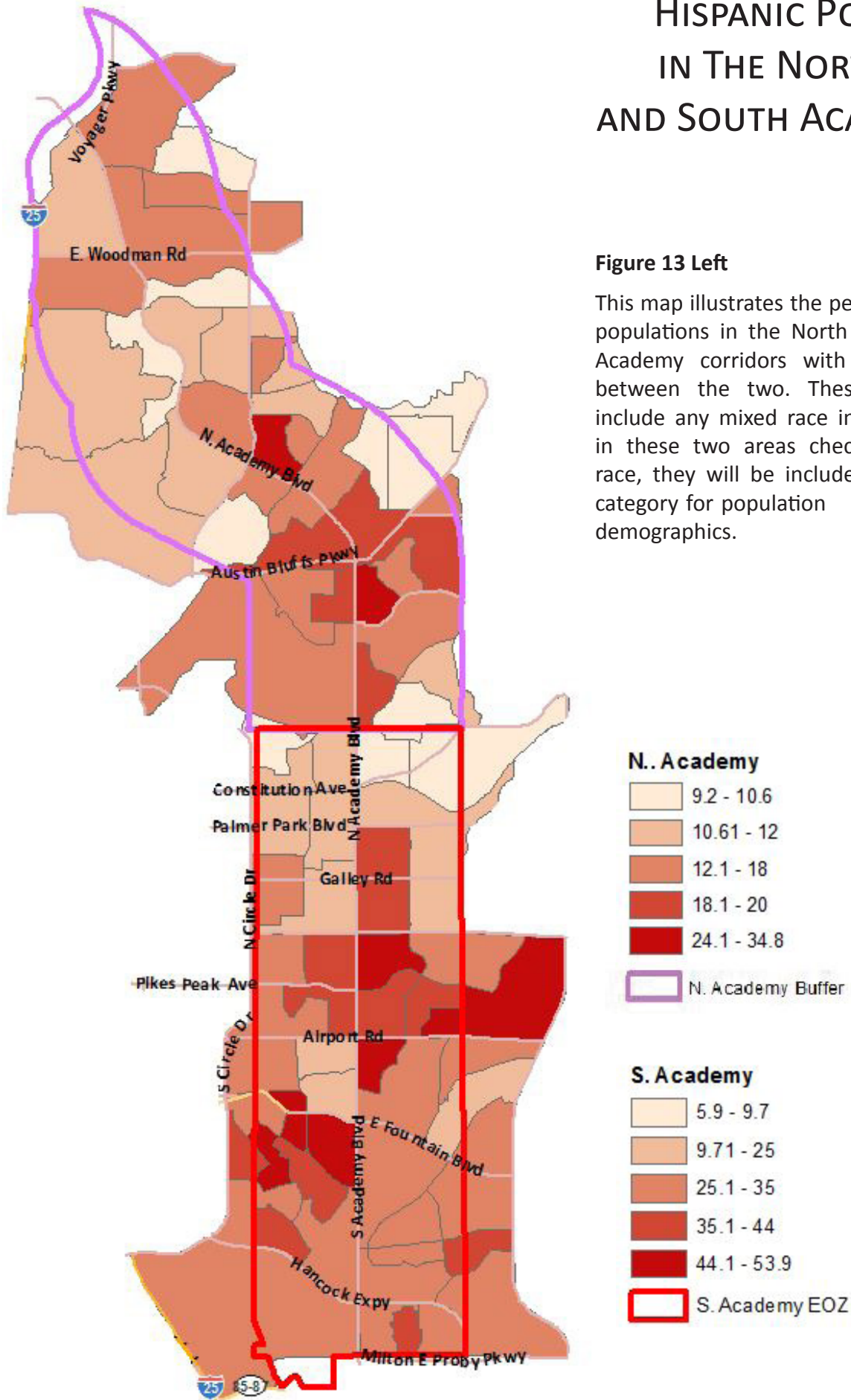|	
	1.5 - 6
	6.1 - 11
	11.1 - 14
	14.1 - 19
	19.1 - 25
	S. Academy EOZ

Source: Colorado Springs Comprehensive Planning Division

Hispanic Population % in The North Academy and South Academy Blvd. Corridors

Figure 13 Left

This map illustrates the percentages of Hispanic populations in the North Academy and South Academy corridors with defined boundaries between the two. These numbers do not include any mixed race individuals. If any one in these two areas checked more than one race, they will be included in the "All Other" category for population demographics.

N.. Academy

	9.2 - 10.6
	10.61 - 12
	12.1 - 18
	18.1 - 20
	24.1 - 34.8
	N. Academy Buffer

S. Academy

	5.9 - 9.7
	9.71 - 25
	25.1 - 35
	35.1 - 44
	44.1 - 53.9
	S. Academy EOZ

Source: Colorado Springs Comprehensive Planning Division

N. Academy

	50.2 - 61
	61.1 - 70
	70.1 - 75
	75.1 - 78
	78.1 - 85
	N. Academy Buffer

S. Academy

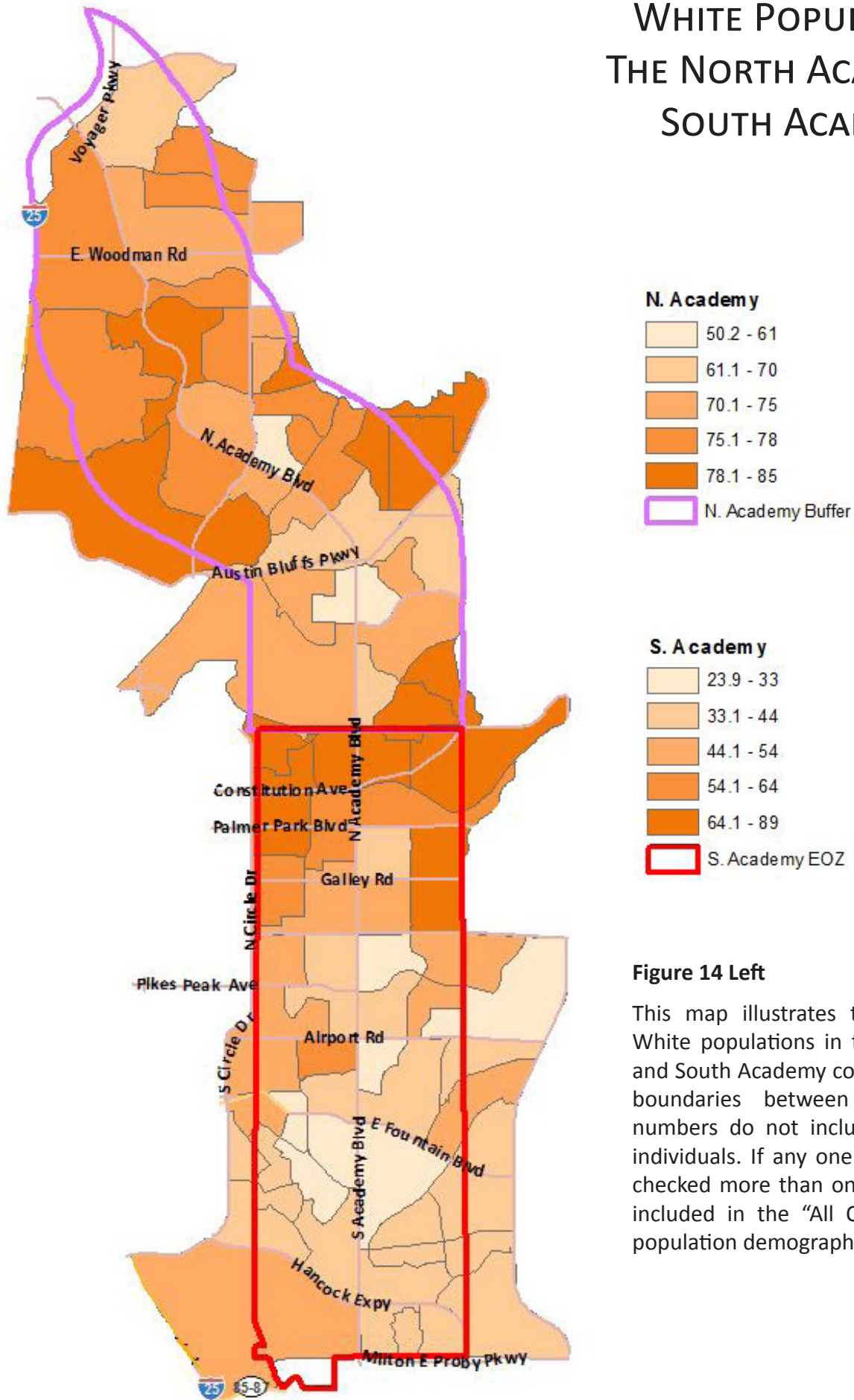|	
	23.9 - 33
	33.1 - 44
	44.1 - 54
	54.1 - 64
	64.1 - 89
	S. Academy EOZ

Figure 14 Left

This map illustrates the percentages of White populations in the North Academy and South Academy corridors with defined boundaries between the two. These numbers do not include any mixed race individuals. If any one in these two areas checked more than one race, they will be included in the "All Other" category for population demographics.

Source: Colorado Springs Comprehensive Planning Division

N. Academy

	1.7 - 2
	2.1 - 3
	3.1 - 3.5
	3.51 - 4
	4.1 - 5.5
	N. Academy Buffer

S. Academy

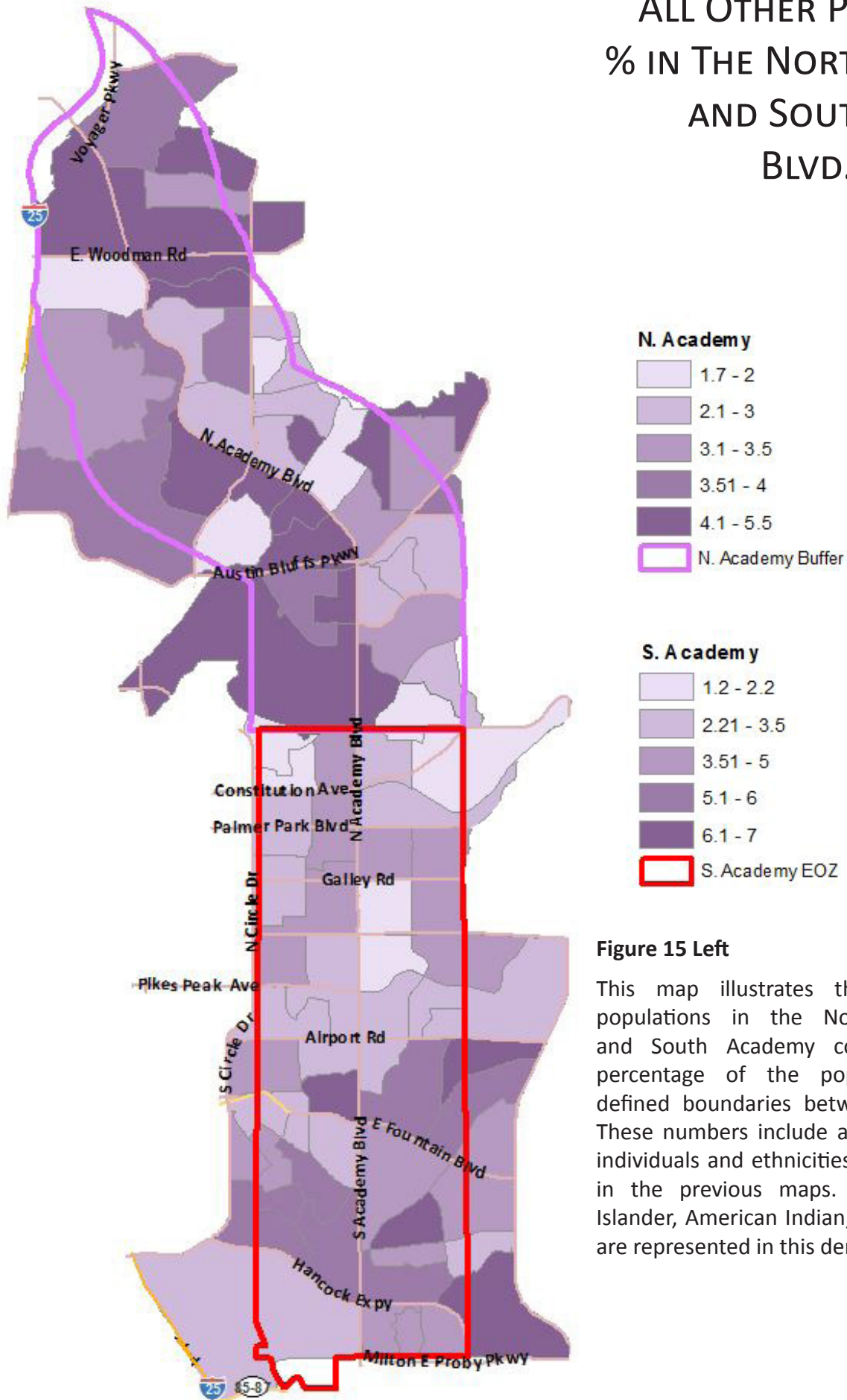|	
	1.2 - 2.2
	2.21 - 3.5
	3.51 - 5
	5.1 - 6
	6.1 - 7
	S. Academy EOZ

Figure 15 Left

This map illustrates the All Other populations in the North Academy and South Academy corridors as a percentage of the population with defined boundaries between the two. These numbers include any mixed race individuals and ethnicities not observed in the previous maps. Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, plus all other are represented in this demographic.

H IGH S CHOOL P ERFORMANCE

Two high schools fall within the study area:

SIERRA HIGH SCHOOL   *Harrison District 2*

MITCHELL HIGH SCHOOL   *COLORADO SPRINGS DISTRICT 11*

The Colorado Department of Education annually ranks all districts and schools within a performance framework of 100 points. From these values schools are placed into one of four categories:

60+ being "At Performance"
47-59 "Improvement Plan"
34-46 "Priority Improvement"
<33 "Turnaround"

***Mitchell High School**- Priority Improvement Plan: Decreased due to participation*
SCORE: 42.1

***Sierra High School**- Improvement Plan: Low participation*
SCORE: 44.7

Both Sierra High School and Mitchell High School have seen a drop in their scores from 2016 to 2017. The average scores ranging over seven years for Sierra are 53.8 and 51.4 for Mitchell. Both schools have been consistently marked in an improvement category and as of 2017 Mitchell High School is in the Priority Improvement Plan. The graph to the top right illustrates the first three levels of the performance framework with "at performance" scoring 60+, "improvement plan" 47-59, and "priority improvement" 34-46. The graph below illustrates the seven year trend for both schools regarding performance scores.
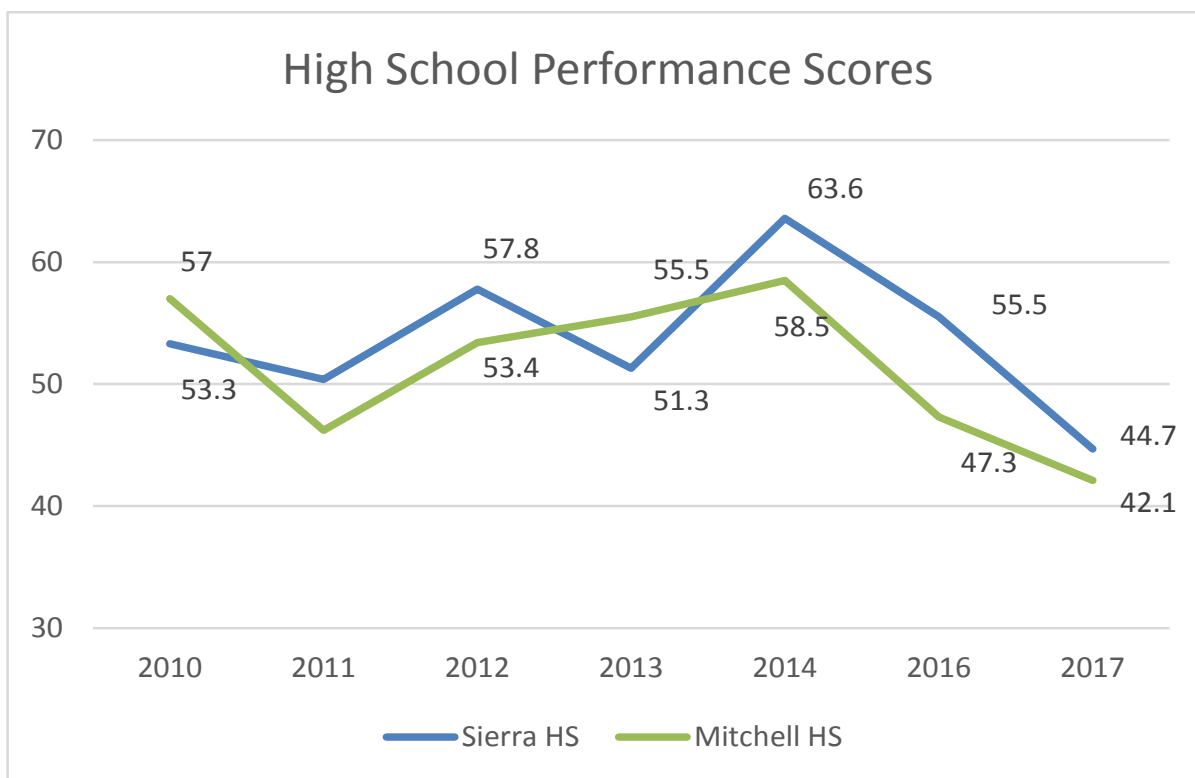

High School Performance Scores

Figure 16 Left

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PERFORMANCE COMPARISONS

Four-Year High School Graduation Rate (%)

Legend: State, Sierra HS, Mitchell HS

Annual High School Dropout Rate (%)

Legend: State, Sierra HS, Mitchell HS

Performance Framework Scores 2017

Rampart High School: 64.5
Doherty High School: 56.8
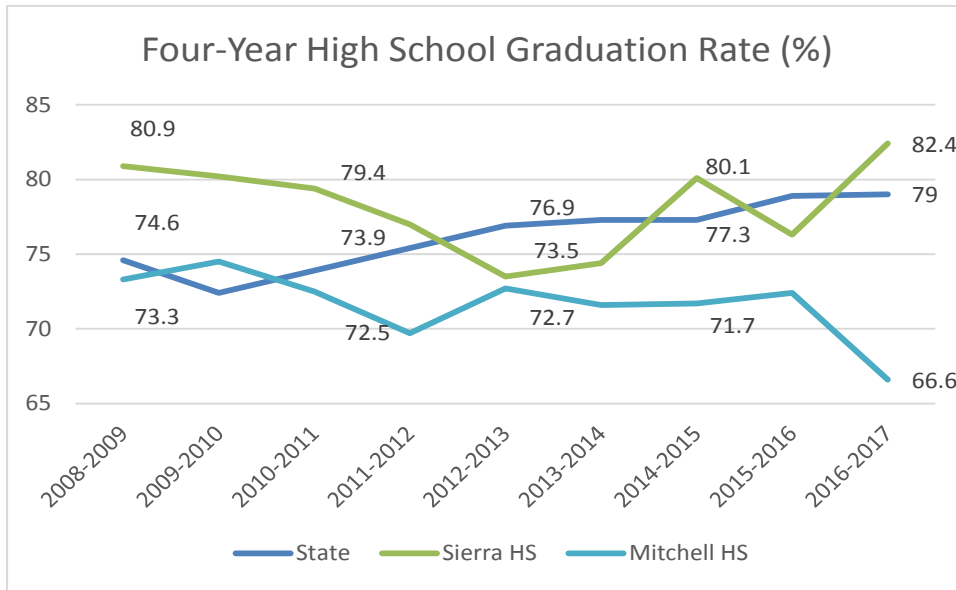Sierra High School: 44.7
Mitchell High School: 42.1

Figure 17 Left

Mitchell High School graduation rates have steadily decreased since 2009. The biggest drop can be seen in 2017 with a total decrease of 4.5%.

Sierra High School graduation rates also saw a significant drop in 2013. Rates have been steadily increasing since. Graduation rates at this school are 3.4% higher than the state average.
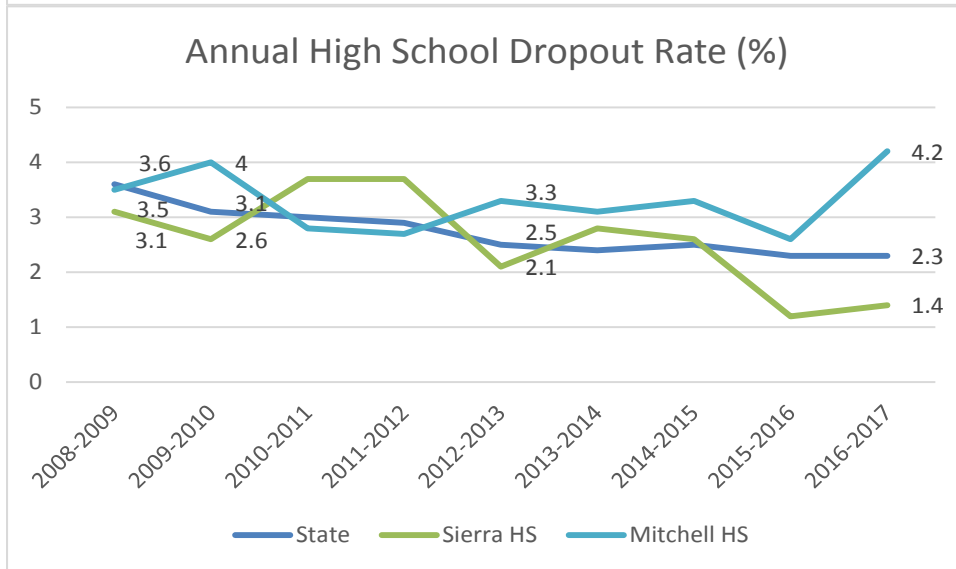
Figure 18 Left
Mitchell High School saw a 1.6% increase in dropout rates from 2016, while Sierra High Schools rates only increased by 0.2%.

Sierra High School dropout rates are 0.9% below the state average. Mitchell High School is 1.9% above the state average dropout rates.
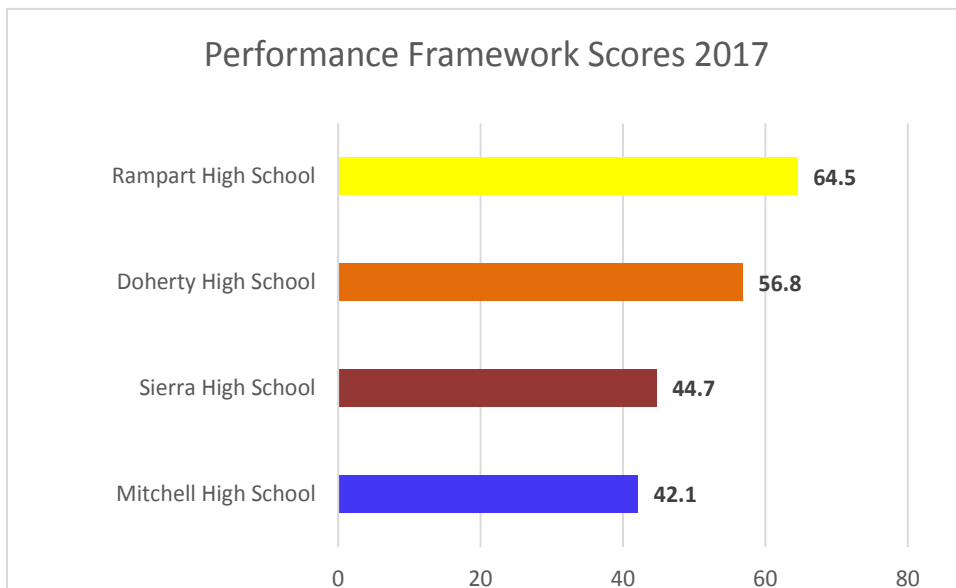
Figure 19 Left
Rampart High School located in District 20 and Doherty High School located is District 11 were added as a benchmark for comparison.

Both of these high schools are located in the North Academy area outlined above in figures 11-15.

Courtesy of El Paso County Public Health Department.

PROJECT ACCESS

Project ACCESS – a two-year grant funded by the BUILD Health Challenge – sunsetted at the end of 2017. This initial infusion of $175,000 offered an opportunity to engage the community in an authentic way and begin to prioritize needs among residents as it relates to their health. Partners agencies the YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region, El Paso County Public Health, and Penrose-St. Francis Health Services Department, worked with residents to look upstream at what might be causing poor health outcomes downstream. What they heard was that improved life skills, quality employment opportunities, and better access to healthcare and basic services would set residents up for higher quality of life and improved health. Residents felt strongly that building cohesion and leadership from within the community was the best way to make sustainable change toward those outcomes. Project Access Goals include: authentic community engagement, prioritized greatest needs – life skills, employment, access to healthcare and services, and build cohesion and resident leadership.

El Paso County Public Health was awarded funding to plan for and convene the RISE (Resilient Inspired Strong Engaged) Coalition to enhance Southeast Colorado Springs from within through citizen-led change. Guided by a majority-resident led steering committee, RISE works with coalition partners to connect people to each other, to resources, to places, to opportunity, and to potential.

RISE

This investment, of at least $350K up to $1M, will empower residents and stakeholders to create a vibrant, and connected Southeast COS. RISE will provide opportunities for all to thrive and make Southeast COS a destination for culture and diversity in Colorado Springs. Goals of RISE are:

- enhance resident leadership and community voice,
- strong connections,
- vibrant Southeast that serves its resident and is a destination for all of COS.

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Healthy Communities

In order to better connect people to places, resources, opportunities, and each other, the RISE Coalition was awarded Healthy Places funding from the Colorado Health Foundation to develop and implement strategies for the healthy development of Southeast COS. The community-led process began with an intensive week-long visioning exercise with the Urban Land Institute to strategize an impactful upstream approach for residents of the area to be active in the places where they live, work, and play.

Priority projects identified through the process include practical strategies for the implementation of the Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan and many of its *recommendations*, including:
• A community resource center ("hub");
• Place activation;
• Repurposing of vacant space;
• Enhanced streetscapes;
• Academy Blvd. as a walkable, connected corridor; and better access to services.
El Paso County Public Health is working with the community to develop their action plan for which $1 million of funding is available to implement prioritized strategies and leverage additional funding for larger-scale projects.

Healthy Places Goals:
• Build a healthier Southeast
• Connect community and activating space

(Information provided by El Paso County Public Health)

Vacancy Rates Summary

Due to the retirement of the individual providing the data, comparable data could not be obtained for 2017. However the following is an abbreviation of vacancy rates analysis as provided in the 2017 report.

For the Academy corridor, shopping center vacancies have paralleled a pattern similar to larger Colorado Springs Metro Area over the past eight years (2008-2016). Vacancy rates in the study area remain at approximately twice of those in the greater metro area.

Office space vacancy rates in the area have not shown the same trend. They have increased while the Colorado Springs Metro area's numbers have decreased. As of 2016, office vacancy rates were also approximately double than the Colorado Springs Metro area, although rates have been decreasing since their peak in 2010.

As of 2016, both Shopping Center and Office Space vacancy rates are over double than the Colorado Springs metro area. Since 2010, total vacancy rates have fallen in the study area. However, vacancy rates are higher being 16%.

Data compiled by Turner Commercial Research, all figures are for the end of the second quarter for each year

Shopping Center Vacancy Rate

% — Academy Planning Area — Colorado Springs Metro Area

Office Vacancy Rate

% — Academy Planning Area — Colorado Springs Metro Area

Total Vacancy Rate

% — Academy — Colorado Springs Metro Area
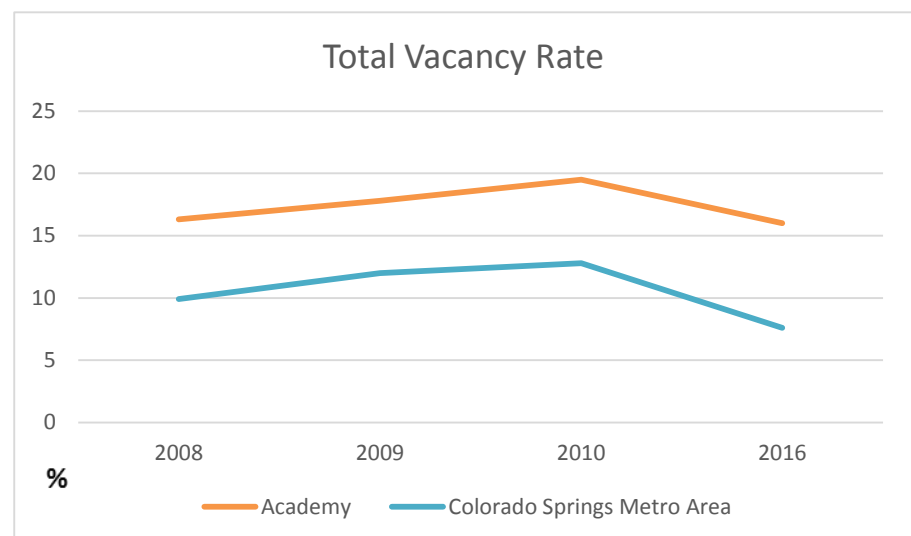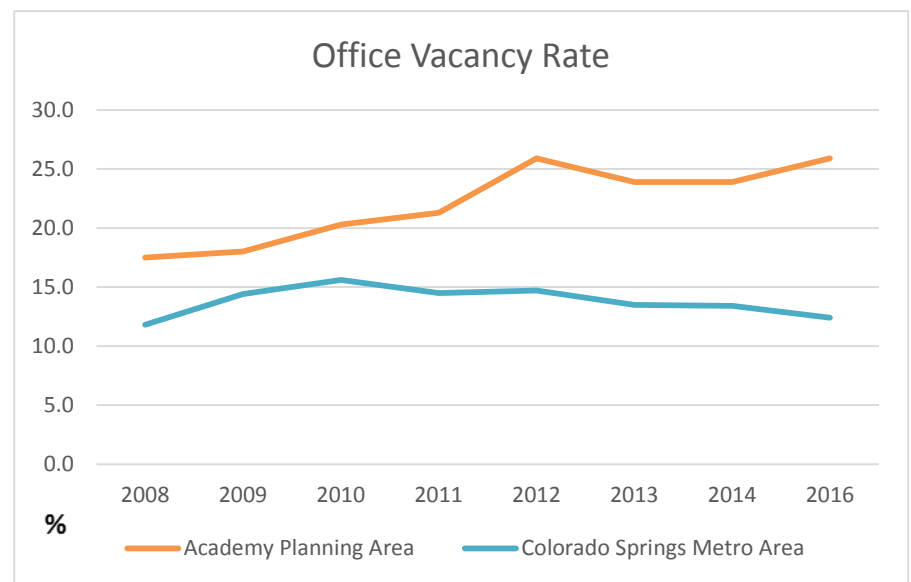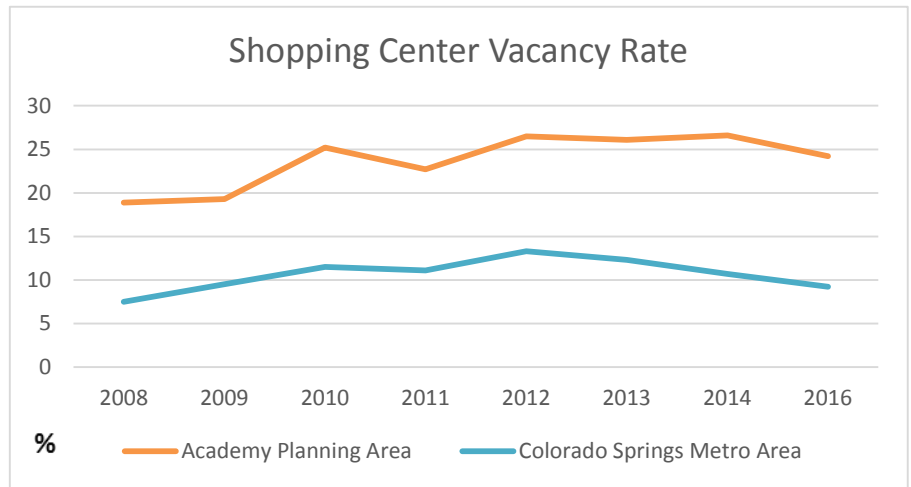
I N F I L L

Infill is a development strategy aimed to "fill in" the gaps throughout established communities. The following is a list of recent infill projects and their status as of early 2018.

COMPLETED
Kum and Go, Mini Storage Facility, and Carl's Jr. were all developed on previously vacant land located at 3700 Maizeland Rd.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION
Alpine Lumber Company is an indoor/ outdoor lumber storage yard including several administrative offices. It is located at 3370 Drennan Industrial Loop.

Office Building located at 712 Clarks Place, built on vacant land and consists of ten 2,400 square-foot condo units.

APPROVED
Sand Creek Police Substation will be developed on vacant land and will be located at Academy Park Loop.

UNSUCCESSFUL
Apartment units were proposed to develop on vacant land at 1715 Torin Pt.

Hamburger Stand proposed to be developed on vacant land at 2154 S. Academy Blvd.

APPLICATIONS IN REVIEW
Public Storage proposed to be developed on vacant land at 3440 Ashozen Ct.

Cherry Tree Apartments proposed on vacant land located at 1975 S. Chelton Rd., in pre-application phase.

Kennedy Fried Chicken proposed to tear down old KFC building to build a new one at 1050 N. Academy Blvd.

Starbucks proposed to demolish old building to build new at 3775 Citadel Dr.

F U N D I N G
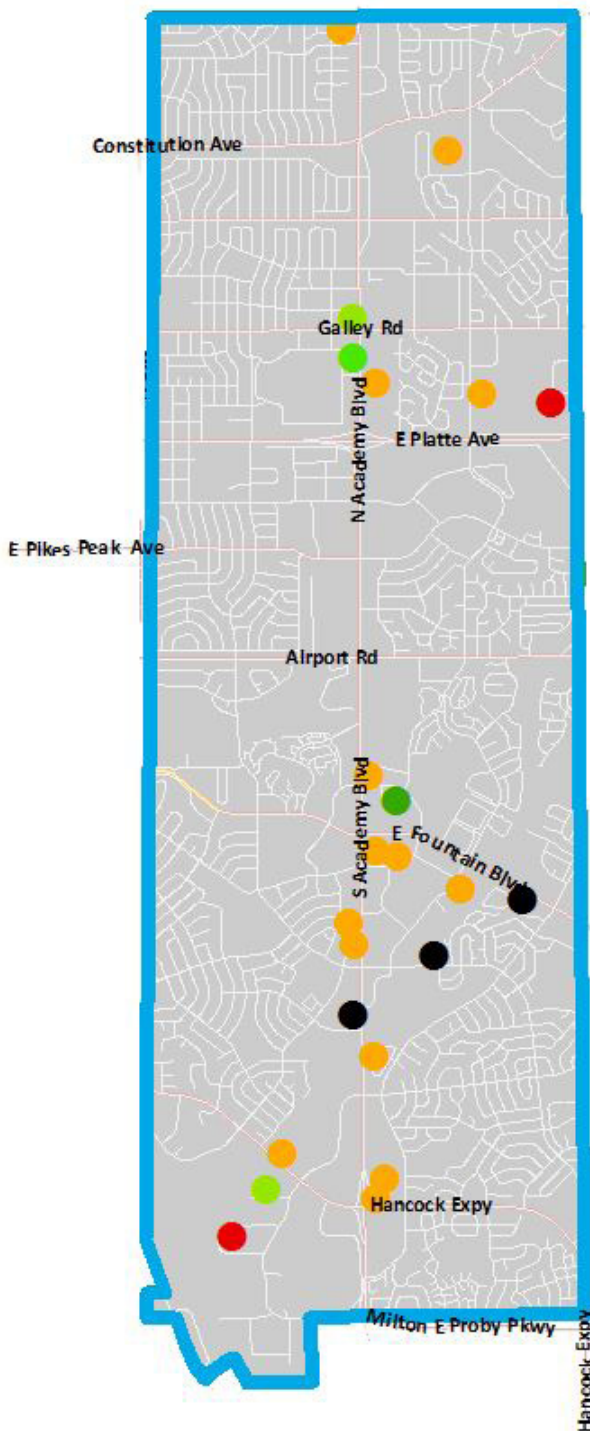
COMMERCIAL FACADE AND FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

This grant offered by the City of Colorado Springs was developed specifically for the improvement of commercial or mixed use buildings in the southeast area. Grant money through this program will help business owners overcome a major obstacle in the revitalization of their streets interface. The program encourages current building owners to invest in facade improvement by providing matching grants for renovation costs. The reimbursement rate will be a 50%-match for any dollar amount of up to $100,000. Community engagement is an important component of the program, and community members will have an opportunity to be engaged in the design process. Through this grant, exterior improvements to buildings are made extraordinarily affordable and encourage reinvestment in the area.

HOUSE BILL 17-1326: TRANSFORMING SAFETY COLORADO

State of Colorado House Bill 17-1326, the Justice Reinvestment Crime Prevention Bill, was created by the Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition to reinvest in crime prevention initiatives in Colorado. Adjustments in the length of time a parolee can serve while on parole were made on the state leveling in a savings of over $6 million dollars. $4 million dollars of these savings are being reinvested in two areas with high crime, Southeast Colorado Springs and North Aurora. Through a three year pilot program, close to $2 million in grants and small business loans will be reinvested into Southeast Colorado Springs alone.

Intended outcomes of the funding are to improve community-based supports, improve skills in youth and young adults, promote employment, prevent high-risk behaviors, and help lower overall crime in the area. The Small Business Loan Program offers a maximum loan of $50,000 ($500,000 total for Southeast Colorado Springs) to expand small

Business ownership in the community.

The Transforming Safety Colorado grant will focus on crime prevention and recidivism by:

• Supporting adults and youth who are or have been involved in the criminal justice system in order to reduce recidivism or incidence of re-offending.

• Helping youth (up to age 25) develop the skills and resilience to avoid, reduce, or stop high-risk behaviors that can lead to involvement with the criminal justice system.

• Addressing systemic causes of economic, racial, and academic disparities.

• Improving community-based supports to reduce violence and neglect in families.

(Information from https://transformingsafety.org/)

OPPORTUNITY ZONE INITIATIVE

This initiative was created as a result of a Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 provision designed to level the playing field of economic recovery following the Great Recession of 2007. It serves to help communities that still struggle with slow business growth, unemployment, and poverty. On March 21, 2018, a final list of Opportunity Zones was submitted to the United States Treasury Department. Southeast Colorado Springs was listed as one of the Opportunity Zones and is eligible for this investment. This initiative serves to provide investors with tax incentives to encourage reinvestment of their capital gains into Opportunity Funds. The Opportunity Funds will provide capital for new and expanding businesses, affordable housing, infrastructure, green energy, and commercial development within the Opportunity Zone.

Source: Colorado Springs Comprehensive Division

Complete Creeks Project

The purpose of this project is to stabilize the ½ mile channel at Sand Creek which directly impacts the Platte Avenue Bridge. This section of the channel was damaged in a 2008 storm that cut into the channel bottom by over 15 feet. This caused the channel walls to become highly unstable. After a failed attempt to stabilize the channel, the city applied for a grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The project qualified due to its direct impact on property owners, utilities, and Platte Ave. The city of Colorado Springs will cover the remaining costs. The stabilization of the channel will provide a magnitude of benefits including: reduce sediment transport from Sand Creek into Fountain Creek, improve overall water quality, provide flood protection to surrounding communities, and mitigate erosion.

Project Timeline:

- Design Phase: 2016-2017
- Design company: RESPEC
- Construction Phase: January - December 2018
- Construction company: Tezak Heavy Equipment
- Total storm water project cost: $5-$6 million
- FEMA grant = $3.9 million
- State match = $600,000
- Local match = $800,000

(Information from Water Resources Engineering Division)

Business Loans

Eight loans in the Southeast Economic Priority Zone closed in 2017 and disbursed a total of $81,620 in new funds (does not include refinanced balances). Two of the loans are technically outside the boundary for the upcoming Transforming Safety fund but are nonetheless stimulus's for the southeast economy. Eight loans do fall in the Transforming Safety area and are not in the city's Priority Zone. Fourteen loans for $138,775 in new funds will be considered in the Southeast for Transforming Safety.
(Information provided by Chelsea Gaylord and Ryan Flanders)

Transportation Funding

In July of 2016, a detailed Academy Boulevard/ Hancock Expressway Planning and Environmental Linkages Study (PEL) was completed for the Academy Boulevard/Hancock Expressway intersection. This study involved a great deal of community and business owner input and resulted in recommendations for additional access, improved safety, enhancement of non-motorized facilities, and a future transit center.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding in the amount of approximately $2.5 Million has been approved for a first phase project. The project will add an access location south of Hancock Expressway, Include sidewalk improvements, and is expected to occur by 2022.

Funding is available through Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) for an "A" list project to reconstruct major segments of the Academy Blvd. corridor. In accordance with voter direction, approximately $20 Million in funding will be expended prior to 2024. There is potential for this project and funding to be "leveraged" with other funding. This will provide associated improvements beyond replacing existing road base and asphalt.

Carmel Street Festival

On June 10, 2017, the Calvary Worship Center hosted the Carmel Street Festival. The Southeast community came together and enjoyed this family-friendly event as good vibes filled the air. The festival took place at Van Diest Park and featured a variety of activities including: a basketball tournament, bounce houses, face painting, a graffiti contest, and car show! Food trucks were abundant and live music filled the park. Local businesses, the City of Colorado Springs, and the PlanCOS team had the opportunity to table at the event. Based on discussions at the event, children felt fairly safe and enjoyed living in the neighborhood whereas adults voiced concerns relating to crime and safety.

ULI Implementation - Lets Do This!

The event, "Let's Do This!", was a follow-up implementation meeting by the El Paso County Public Health Department as a response to the Urban Land Institute's visit to Southeast Colorado Springs. "Let's Do This!" provided community members access to the planning process, ensured transparency, acquired community feedback, and discussed needs of the community. At the February 1, 2018 meeting, a poll was given to active community members to assess the community's most urgent needs. Results from the poll included the following responses (listed in order of priority):

1. Turn South Academy Blvd. into a walkable and connected corridor
2. Community resource center
3. Activate the area (events, art, etc…)
4. Repurpose vacant structures
5. Better access to services and daily needs

El Pomar Foundation- Heading Southeast

The Heading Southeast event entailed a work in partnership between PlanCOS and the El Pomar Foundation. The event allowed citizens to comment on the new comprehensive plan and what it could mean for the southeast. Mayor John Suthers and Councilwoman Yolanda Avila were in attendance as key speakers. A poll was taken at this event to further understand community needs. When asked, "What land use projects would you be most excited about for SE COS?", the answer was an astounding 62% in support of "mixed use redevelopment of shopping centers".

PLACES

Rustic Hills Shopping Center

Rustic Hills Shopping Center is a 230,000 square-foot center located at the corner of Academy & Palmer Park Blvd, which opened in 1965 and was later renovated in 1997. In June 2017, a business by the name of "Whirly Ball" opened its doors in the Center. The whirly ball game offers an experience unlike any other. The game involves bumper cars called Whirly Bugs, scoops, and whiffle balls. The buisness also offers a variety of food, drinks, and bowling if the crazy-fun game of whirly ball is not your forte.

Deerfield Hills Community Center

Proudly serving citizens in the Southeast Colorado Springs, the Deerfield Hills Community Center has been open since the 1970's. Serving as the City's first community center, Deerfield Hills strives to offer an entertaining yet safe environment in which community members can interact in various activities and events. Featuring a spray ground with 16 different water features, a wide array of program opportunities and community services, a vibrant staff, Deerfield is a well utilized neighborhood resource with activities for every age group.

Deerfield Hills Community Center Splash Park Photo Courtesy of Jody Derington

Quad Project

At the beginning of the 2018 spring semester, City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County leadership tasked the Quad Innovation Partnership to collectively identify real, innovative solutions to improving access to social services. The Quad – a collaborative effort of Pikes Peak Community College, Colorado College, University Colorado Springs, and the United States Air Force Academy – developed a team of students that spent the semester conducting extensive research and exploring the various barriers to services. While public transportation is one component to access, the team identified other significant opportunities for improvement – particularly through decreasing the number of visits necessary to receive services and improving how citizens receive the important information they need. With feedback, data, and insight from the City and County, the Quad team focused on a potential solution to design a user-friendly, "one stop shop" software platform to streamline the research and application experience for citizens seeking services. The Access to Social Services project with the Quad will run through December 2018. The second stage of the project will focus on designing a functioning concept that determines feasibility of the platform and the extent to which it actively improves access to services.