

Conformance with the City Comprehensive PlanCOS

PlanCOS, the City's pending newly adopted Comprehensive Plan, is a high level and visionary document. Although PlanCOS purposefully does not include site-specific map-based recommendations regarding land use or annexations, there are multiple areas of alignment between the Plan and this proposed annexation and project.

Foundationally, PlanCOS is theme based. Three of its six themes are particularly pertinent to and aligned with these annexation and development plan requests. These are:

- Unique Places
- Thriving Economy, and
- Renowned Culture

Unique Place-

In Chapter 3, PlanCOS lists 10 "Common Contributing Elements" for Unique Places. This proposed annexation and development plan aligns, or has the potential to align with many or all of these.

“1. a uniquely identifiable character and design that reinforces a sense of identity, focus and place;

2. an accessible location and design that promotes the safety and convenience for all users,

3. a center of activity with an integrated mix of land uses;

4. a network of physical connections to support walkability, links to and alignment with the City's trails, bike lanes, and green infrastructure network;

5. an incorporation of historic buildings, features, legacy, and character (when available);

6. a focus on public gathering places with areas for public interaction;

7. a connection with and orientation to the outdoors, parks, public plazas, streets, and views of important natural features;

8. a walkable and human scale experience with the built environment;

9. an incorporation of “Third Places;” and

10. a focus on arts, education, and culture”

As a unique and iconic building and gathering place, the Visitors Center itself will certainly qualify as a unique place and contribute positively to the **Big Idea** “Be a City of Places”. The Visitors Center will be identifiable nationally and internationally, both physically and with its connection to the Academy. Depending on their selection and design, the ancillary uses within the larger project, have the potential to contribute to integrated, connected and walkable placemaking. Although there will not be any permanent residents, the likely combination of lodging, restaurants, other retail and business uses, create at least a potential for a place that is activated year round and throughout the day and evening. Forward thinking planning, design and adaptability will critical in this project.

Future details for the planning, design and adaptability of this project will be import to its ultimate full alignment with this PlanCOS theme. For example, while it can be assumed that access to the site will predominantly be by individually owned or rented motor vehicles, forward looking design and integration could serve to maximize integration with a variety of other forms and modes of transportation including but not limited to: ridesharing, vans and buses, electrified, smart, autonomous and/or connected vehicles.

Thriving Economy-

Chapter 4 of the Plan focuses on a Thriving Economy. Again, many of the common desired elements of for this theme are well aligned:

1. *Access to or opportunities for well-connected multimodal transportation;*
2. *A mix of complementary uses;*
3. *A variety of integrated or nearby housing options for employees working in the area;*
4. *Opportunities for additional economic development and investment, particularly tied to fiscally sustainable job growth;*
5. *Amenities including walkability, parks, gathering places and supporting uses that attract investment and provide value to employees, customers and visitors;*
6. *A recognizable and attracting physical design and character; and*
7. *Land use integration with surrounding areas.*

All five of the **Big Ideas** in this chapter have substantial applicability. These are:

“Brand as the Best

Expand our Base

Think and Act Regionally

Embrace Sustainability

Become a Smart Cities Leader”

The annexation and project would advance the first 3 ideas directly, by advancing the City’s brand, leveraging our relationship with the military and enhancing economic development via partnerships. Arguably, this project will also result in a net fiscal benefit to the City, and it presents a potential for cutting edge Smart Cities technologies.

For this theme there is a particular PlanCOS **Typology** (Typology 3: The Experience Economy) that is particularly applicable. Moreover, essentially all of the desired elements of this Typology, will or may be supported by this project.

One Chapter 4 **strategy** that is particularly on point with this request is the following:

“Strategy TE-3.B-2: Coordinate among military installations and other partners on public improvements and facilities that serve the city and installations.”

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS FOR CITY INITIATIVES

Each of core chapters of PlanCOS includes **Essential Questions for City Initiatives**. While these questions are not ordinarily expected to be used to evaluate individual privately initiated development requests, the strategic and partnership nature of this request is could argue for their applicability. The Chapter 4 Essential Questions are as follows:

- “1. Support the overall focus of our Thriving Economy theme?*
- 2. Help attract new businesses in targeted industry clusters?*
- 3. Create or enhance a built environment with amenities that will help attract new, skilled talent to the city?*
- 4. Support the creation of new, high-paying, and livable wage jobs?*
- 5. Contribute to effective and efficient use of City resources?*
- 6. Provide for fiscal sustainability for the city over the long-term?*
- 7. Support or is it consistent with regional business attraction and retention efforts?*
- 8. Support the mission and role of the military in the city and region?*
- 9. Have a positive impact on the educational competitiveness of the city?*

10. *Contribute or align with our goal of becoming a Smart Cities leader?"*

There is a fairly clear and positive correlation with this annexation and many of these questions

Renowned Culture-

One of the more unique themes and elements of PlanCOS is Chapter 6 which focuses on renowned culture. This annexation and project (particularly the visitor's center) mesh very well with all the **Big Ideas** in this chapter:

"Honor Our History

Grow and Celebrate Our Culture

Create Cross-Cultural Connections

Celebrate Our Partnerships

Strengthen Our Educational Resources"

The Air Force Academy is now very much a historical and cultural asset. This will be a partnership project. At the future programming level, it has the potential to promote cross cultural connections and to strengthen educational resources.

Each of the core PlanCOS chapters identifies **Key Trends and Assumptions**. For this chapter destination travel is one of the highlighted trends:

"Destination Travel is an important and growing sector of our city's economy, which continues to rely on a healthy and robust cultural ecosystem."

In the case of Renowned Culture, several of its **Typologies** are pertinent, with (Typology 5: Cultural and Tourist Attractions), being particularly applicable and consistent with these applications.

A few of the more applicable **strategies** in Chapter 6 are excerpted below:

"Strategy RC-2.A-1: Allow for the addition of complimentary uses, services, and infrastructure to support existing Defining Institutions and tourism destinations.

Strategy RC-5.B-3: Partner with special districts, such as Business Improvement Districts, General Improvement Districts, and Local Improvement Districts, to integrate and fund public art programs and events.

Strategy RC-6.A-2: Provide or allow for a full range of complementary uses to support Defining Institutions, including housing options, retail, lodging, allied businesses, and access to transit.”

Vision and Framework Maps

PlanCOS includes a very high level Vision Map along with Framework Maps. Because these maps pertain primarily to the already-annexed areas of the City, they are only partially applicable. However the key aspect of the Vision Map and several of the Framework Maps in their depicted importance of the Air Force Academy.

PlanCOS Chapter 8 and Annexations

PlanCOS purposefully does not address annexation policy or site-specific options in detail, and instead recommends a systematic update of the City’s current (2006) City Annexation Plan Chapter 8 of the Plan (Adaptable Implementation) includes a number of high level recommendations for this update including the following:

- *“Guidance for strategic annexations of properties along the periphery of the city that support economic growth or accommodate expansion of the regional roadway network.*
- *Update of current recommendations for properties along the periphery of the city including the annexation of eligible and logical city-owned properties”.*

Although particular changes to the Annexation Plan are undermined at this time, PlanCOS anticipates changes that would focus on the kinds of strategic, logical, targeted and fiscally effective annexation such as this one.