

# Experience Downtown Colorado Springs

Informal City Council  
October 24, 2016  
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Sarah Humbargar



# Background

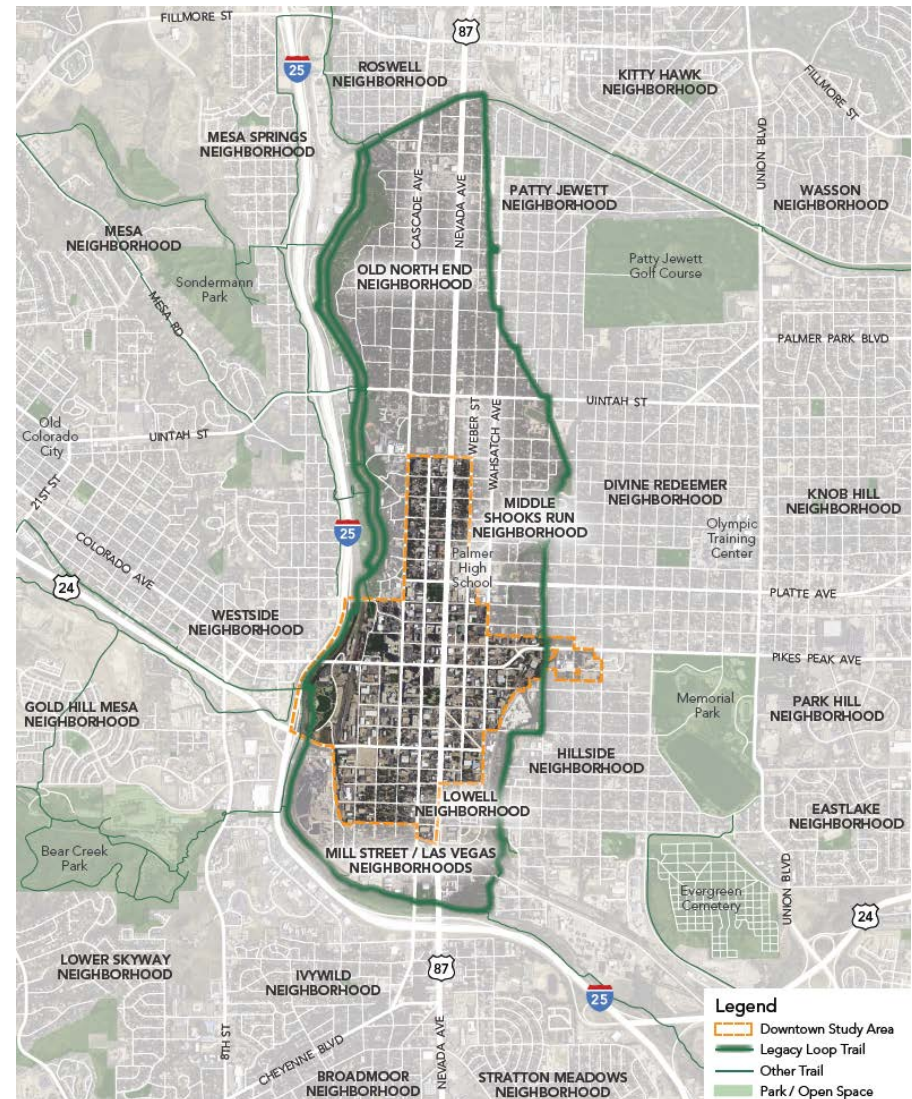
- Experience Downtown Colorado Springs is a joint effort of the DDA and the City (funding provided by DDA)
- Considered a major update to the Imagine Plan approved by City Council in 2007 and 2009
- 16 month process

# Background

- Rich planning history for Downtown:  
Downtown Plan (1971), Downtown  
Action Plan (1992), Imagine Downtown  
(2007 & 2009)
- Experience Downtown Plan updates:
  - Plan of Development for DDA (2007)
  - Land use master plan for City (2009)

# Context

- Primary focus on 1 sq. mile DDA
- Addresses some issues within the context of the 10 mile long Legacy Loop



# Drafting Process

- DDA funded consultant team
- Analysis of integrated plans
- City and other key stakeholders represented on PMT, TAC, and others
  - Multi-agency support
- Public input: online surveys, workshop, focus groups, charrettes, etc.

# Approval Process

- Significant internal review
  - DDA
  - City Staff
- Public Hearings:
  - ATAC / CTAB – approved
  - Downtown Review Board – approved
  - Parks Board – approved
  - Planning Commission – approved
  - City Council - November

# Formal Review Criteria

- City Code Section 7.5.408 requires substantial conformance with 6 sets of criteria:
  1. Comprehensive Plan
  2. Land Use Relationships
  3. Public Facilities
  4. Transportation
  5. Environment
  6. Fiscal

# Formal Review Criteria

- Each of the 6 includes multiple, more detailed questions
- Staff report includes significant discussion on each criteria
- Careful analysis by Planning and other Departments finds that criteria are met



# Recommendation

- Staff recommends that City Council finds that the review criteria are met and that:
  - A Resolution be approved implementing a new Plan of Development
  - The land use master plan be approved
    - Minor technical and typographic changes to be addressed administratively



# Experience Downtown Master Plan

October, 2016



# Two Plans, One Vision



# Downtown Colorado Springs Vision

Welcoming | Vibrant | Connected | Walkable | Anchor | Innovative | Entrepreneurial | Valued

## Goals



## Action Steps

### EXPERIENCE DOWNTOWN PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT

JUNE  
2016  
DRAFT

The Development Plan serves as the official plan of development for the Downtown Development Authority, outlining the goals and actions that will move Downtown toward achieving its vision.

#### VOLUME 1 CONTENTS:

- Chapter 1** Assets, Opportunities, and Challenges
- Chapter 2** Vision Framework
- Chapter 3** Boundary Description
- Chapter 4** Tax Increment Financing

### EXPERIENCE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

The Experience Downtown Master Plan is designed to fulfill Downtown's long-term Vision and Goals through key physical elements that define its desired character and function.

#### VOLUME 2 CONTENTS:

- Land Use **Chapter 1**
- Parks, Trails and Waterways **Chapter 2**
- Gateways and Districts **Chapter 3**
- Transportation, Mobility and Parking **Chapter 4**
- Urban Design and Public Space **Chapter 5**

**GOAL 2**

Diverse and Inclusive Place to Live,  
Integrated with Adjacent Neighborhoods



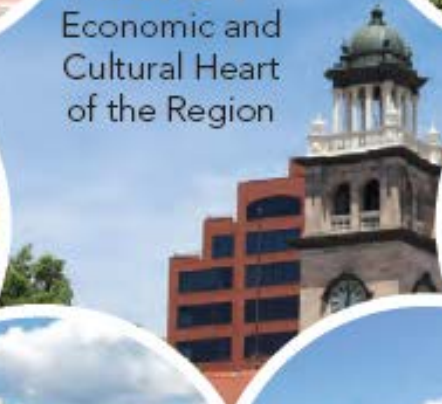
**GOAL 3**

Celebrating and  
Connecting with  
Outdoor Recreation  
and Exceptional  
Natural Setting



**GOAL 1**

Economic and  
Cultural Heart  
of the Region



**GOAL 8**

A Place for Inspiration,  
Honoring History and  
Facing the Future



**GOAL 4**

A Place for  
Healthy and Active  
Lifestyles



**GOAL 7**

Offering an  
Unforgettable  
Visitor Experience



**GOAL 5**

A Walkable and Bike-Friendly  
Center Connected Through  
Safe and Accessible  
Multimodal Networks



**GOAL 6**

A Leader in Innovative  
Urban Design and Sustainability



# Action Steps

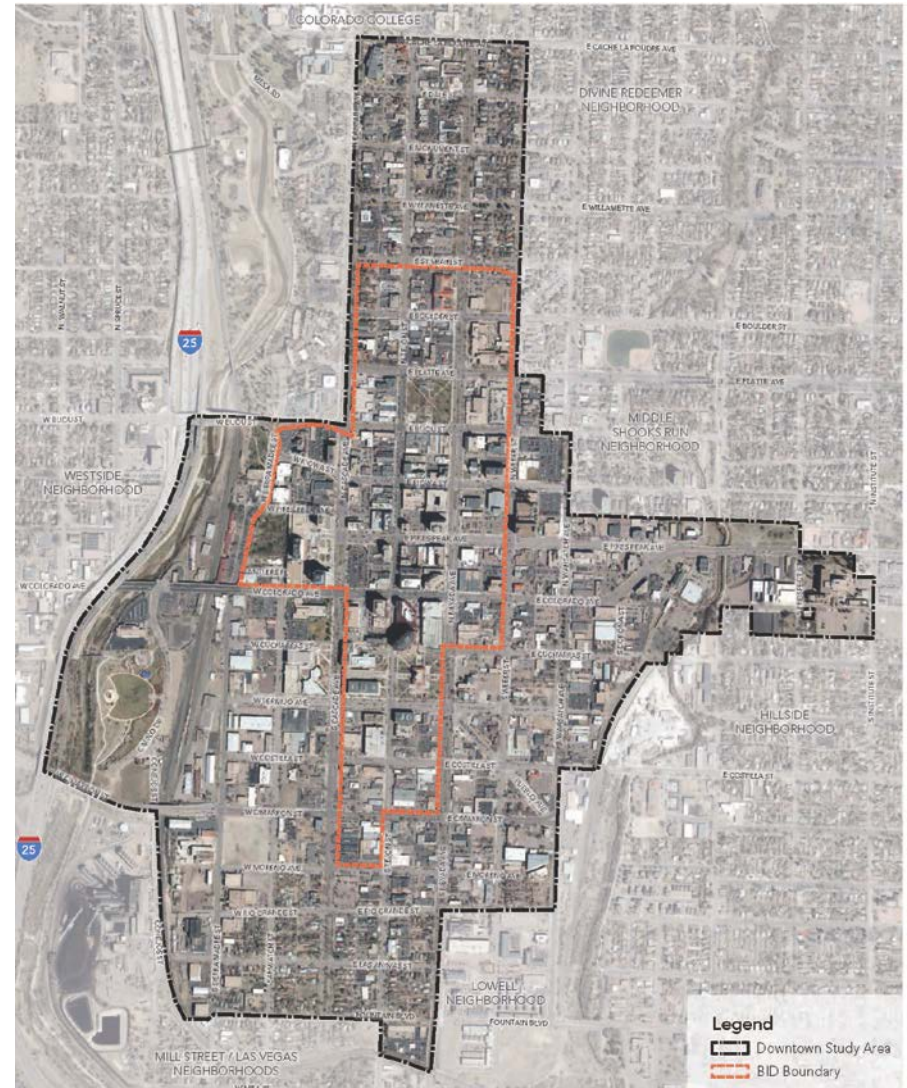


# Plan of Development



# Plan of Development

- Legally updates the 2007 Imagine Downtown Plan of Development
- Consistent vision, no changes to boundaries or available tools (TIF)
- 8 goals, 36 action steps guide the work of the DDA





# Land Use Plan



# Land Use Master Plan

**The Guiding Principles** inform the land use portion of the master plan, and prioritizes **economic development, placemaking, branding and development of Downtown as its own neighborhood**. The Guiding Principles in this plan will help “create a city that matches our scenery.”

## Focus Areas Include

Land Use  
Parks, Trails, Waterways  
Mobility  
Transit  
Parking  
Urban Design  
Public Space

# Seven Land Use Guiding Principles

**Foster conditions** that make Downtown a magnet for local investment, external investment and talent.

**Provide the housing and amenities** for Downtown to thrive as a neighborhood.

**Promote healthy lifestyles** and connect to world class outdoor recreation.

**Improve walking, biking and transit** within and to Downtown.

**Creatively use rights-of-way** and other public assets to stimulate and support private-sector development.

**Use creative placemaking** techniques to enhance gathering spaces and showcase local culture.

**Develop the public realm** to create an environment attractive to employers and job seekers.

# Plan Framework

## Five Downtown Districts

- Districts help define **physical and programmatic character** for planning purposes. These districts' boundaries are not hard lines.

## Seven Gateways

- The Plan recognizes current efforts to address gateways into Downtown and suggests innovative new strategies to **bolster infrastructure, enhance placemaking, foster multimodal access, and support of private realm improvements.**

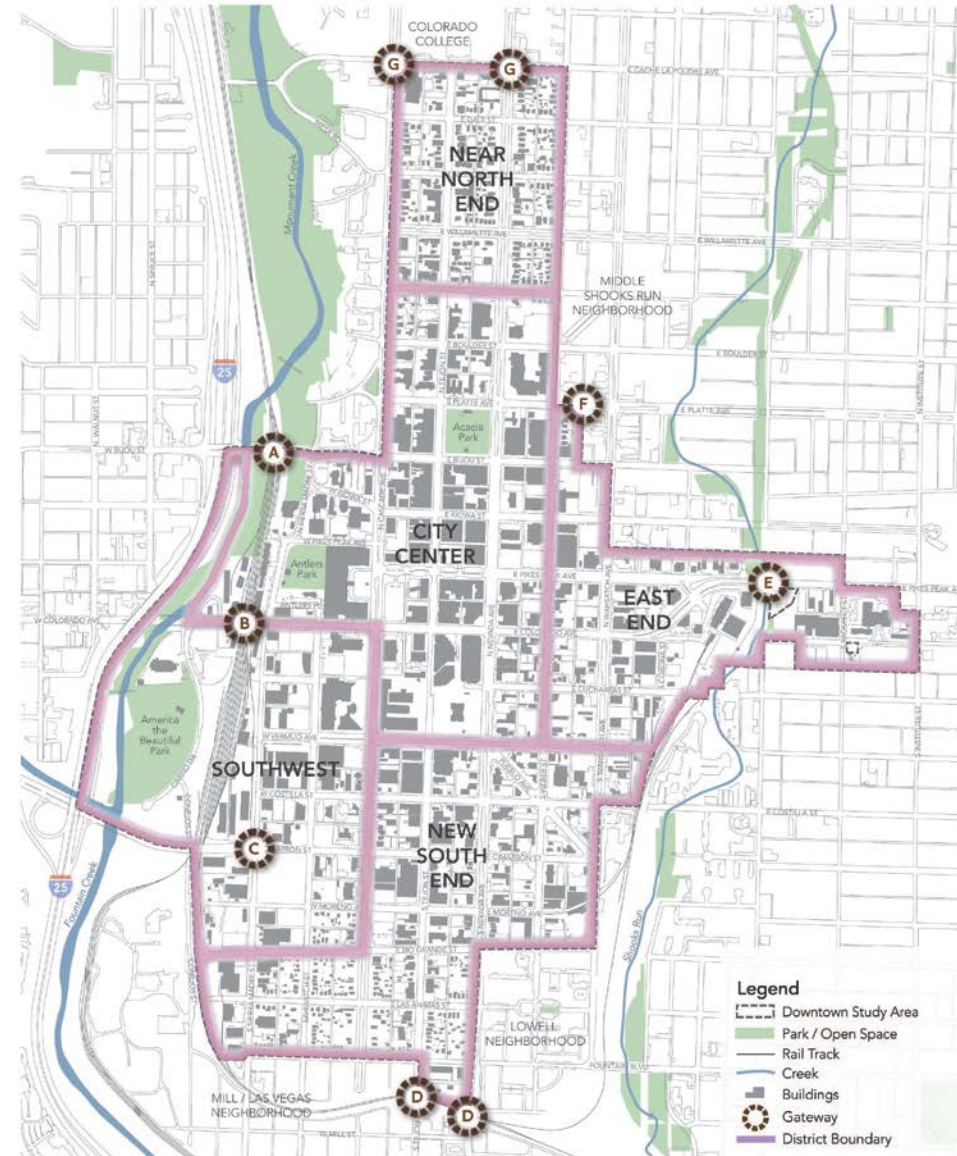


Figure 6.1 | Gateways and Districts

# Plan Framework

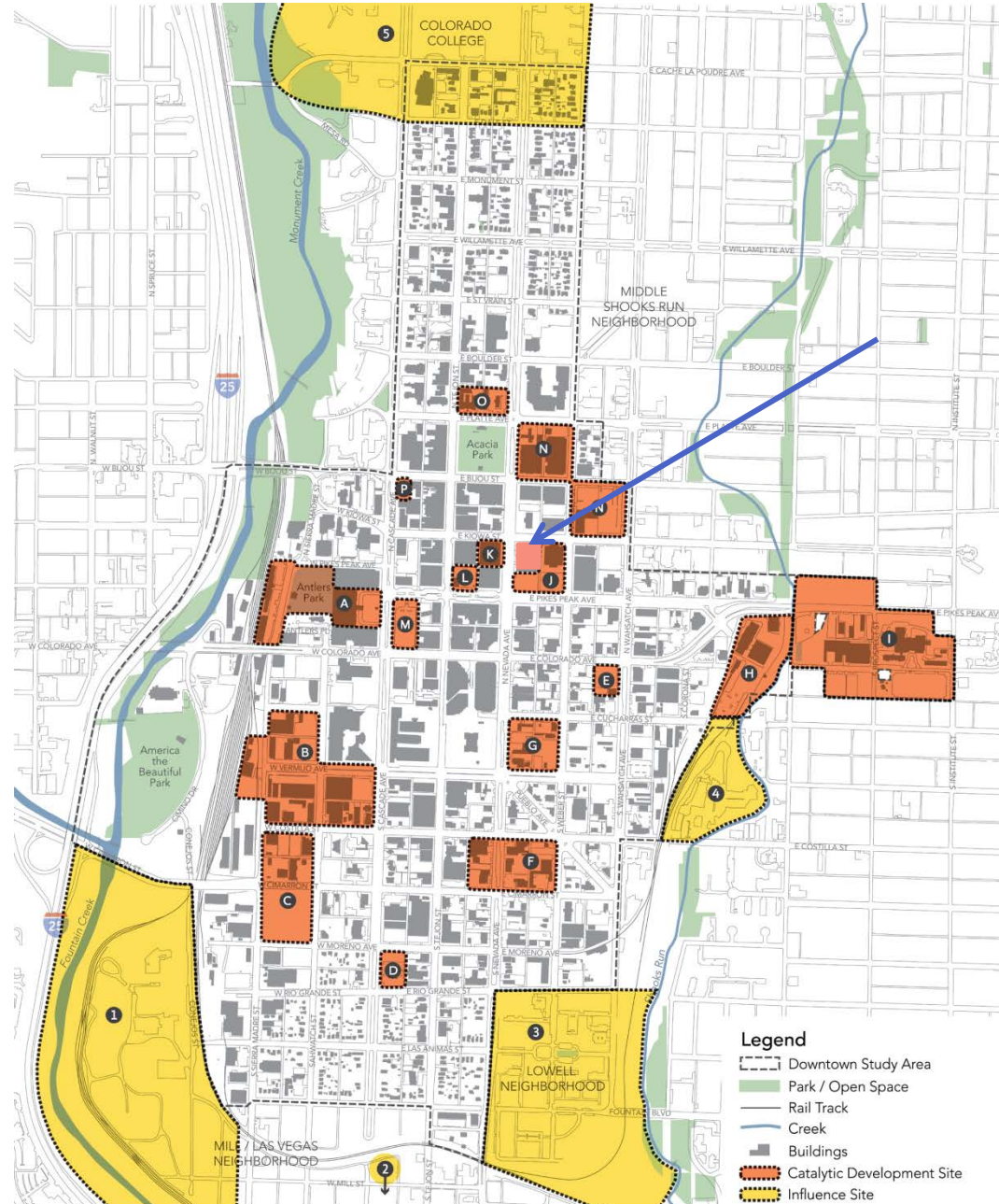
## Sixteen Catalytic Sites

- Identified based on near-to-mid-term redevelopment potential and ability to impact the development and capital attraction patterns in the city center.

## Five Influence Sites

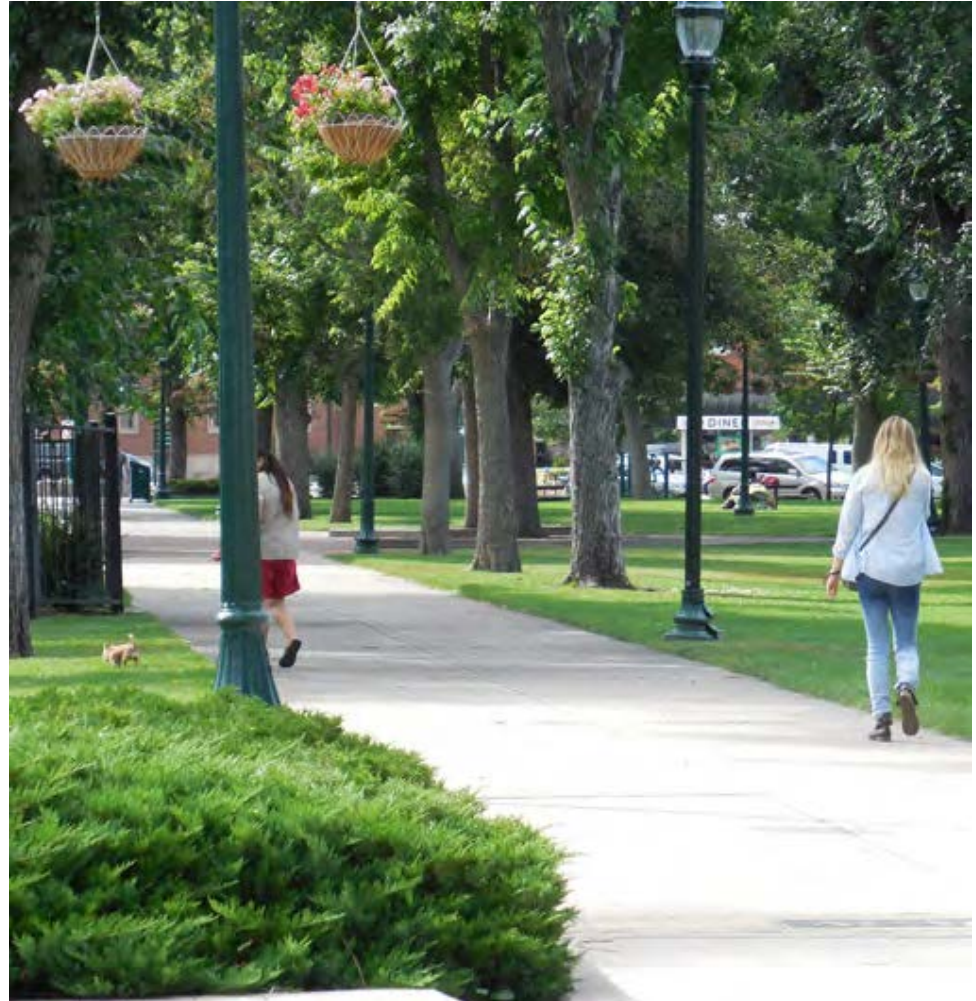
- located outside the study area boundary, but have immense impact on the growth and overall success of the greater Downtown area.

Both Catalytic sites and Influence sites will require **strong public private partnerships and continued planning efforts.**

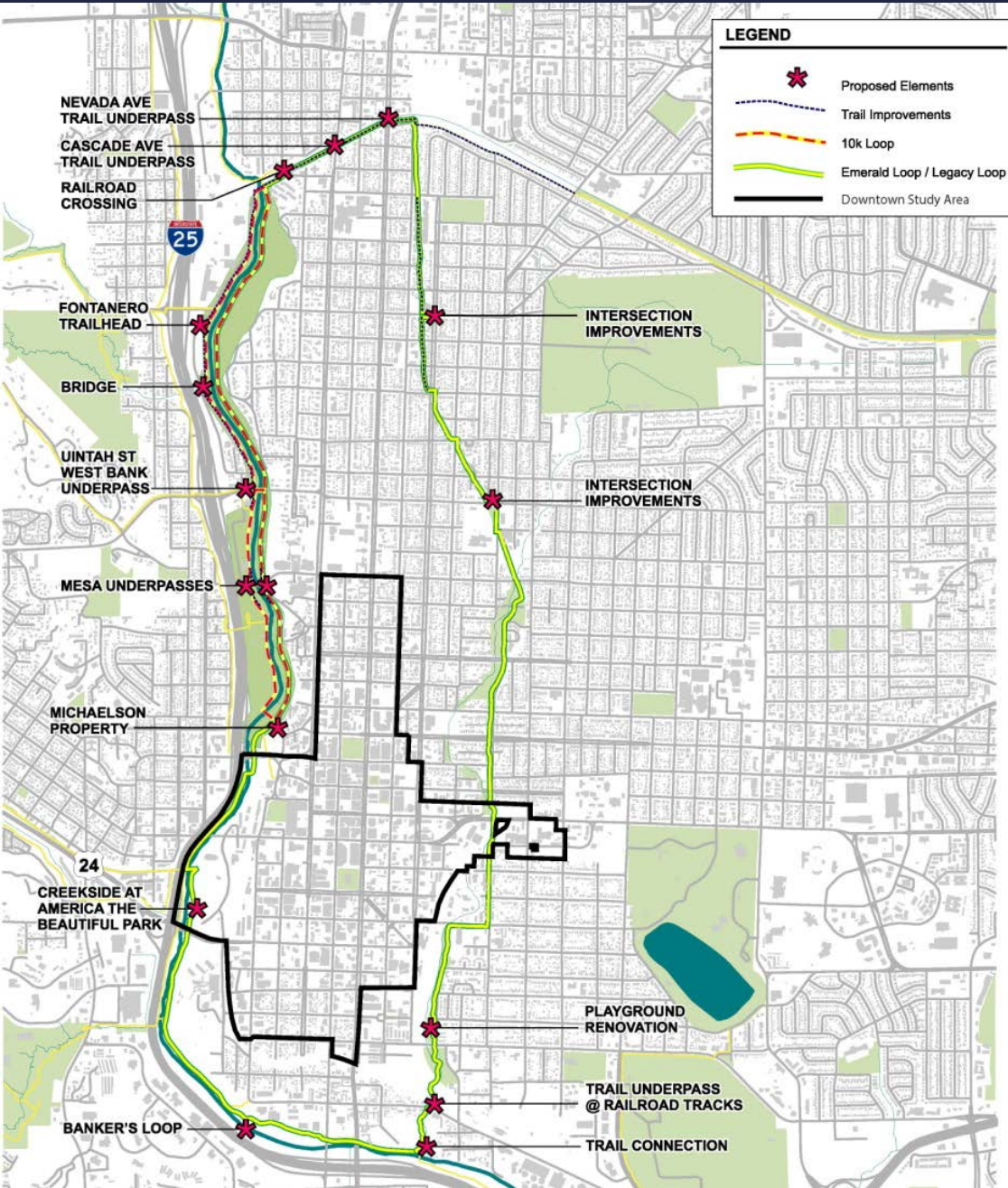


# Parks

- Connection to and celebration of the natural environment is **ingrained in the city's origins**. Downtown's most tangible connection to this history and beauty is through its parks and trails.
- Proactively **address design, access, and programming** for growing downtown, and promoting healthy lifestyles.
- Parks are a **resident serving amenity**, as well as a driver of economic development and growth.



# Legacy Loop



- A park and trail ring around Downtown and neighborhoods to the north.
- A major asset for Colorado Springs.
- Originally the vision of General Palmer over 100 years ago.
- Several sections remain to complete the 9.75 mile loop, particularly in the north and southeast portions.

# Waterways

**Colorado Springs should actively identify opportunities to increase access to its waterways, particularly in conjunction with adjacent park and trail projects.**

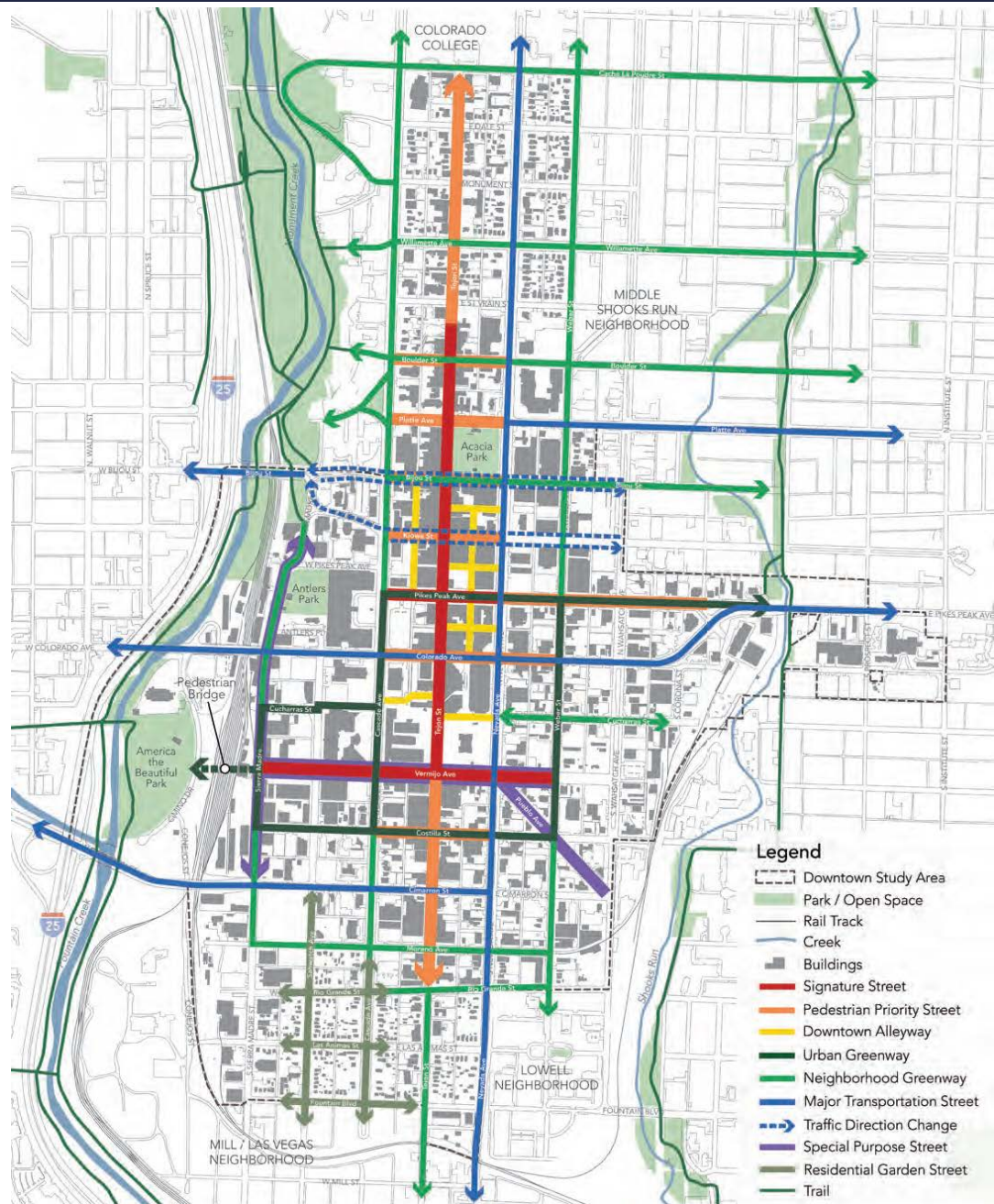




# Mobility

## Mobility

- A range of mobility enhancements and infrastructure improvements **guide future public and private investments.**



# Mobility

## Signature Streets

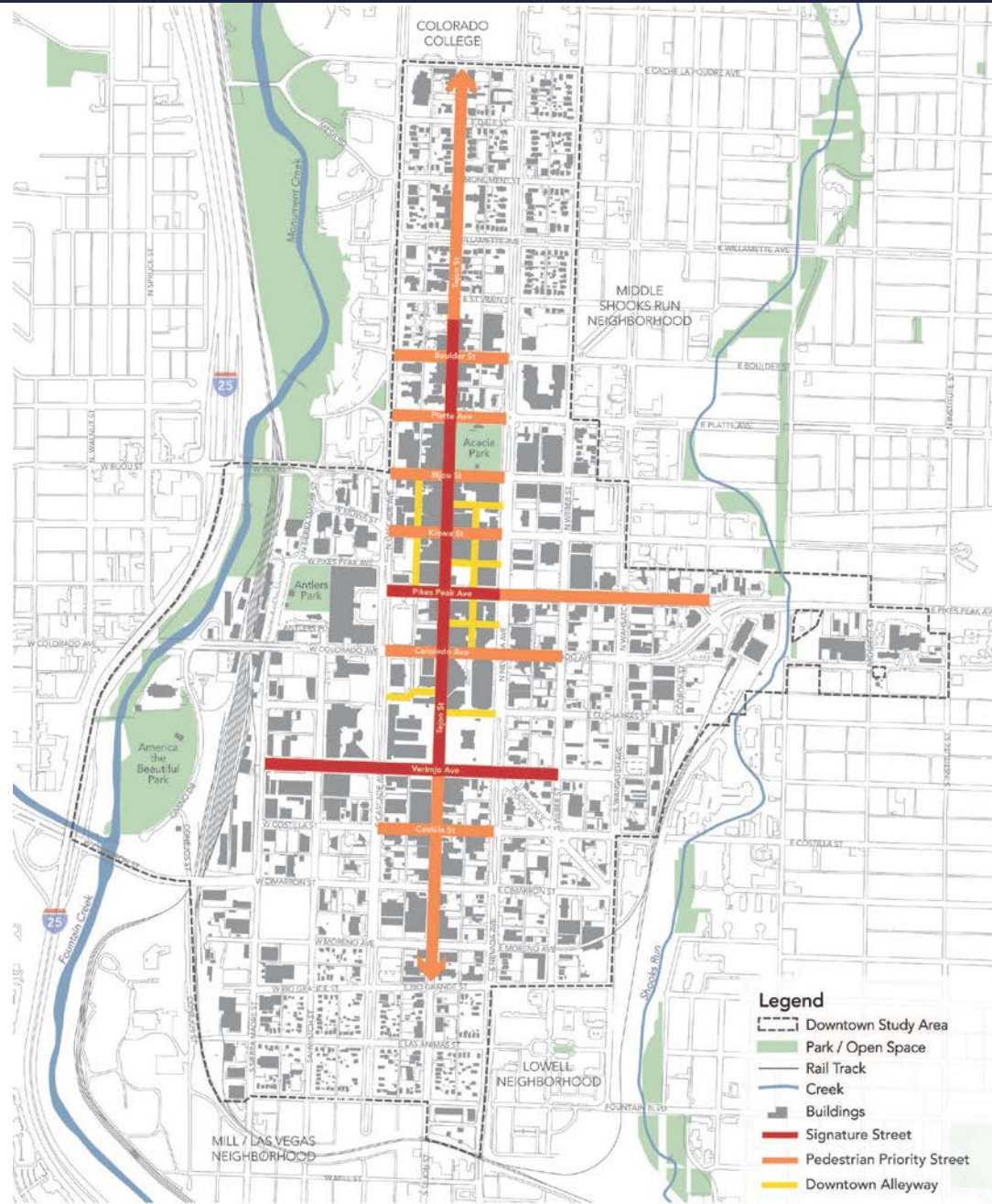
- Segments of Tejon and Pikes Peak currently **work well as pedestrian streets and set precedent for Downtown's character**. The perpendicular streets, Bijou, Kiowa, Pikes Peak and Colorado are identified as supporting streets for retail expansion.

## Pedestrian Extension Streets

- Extensions from the Signature Streets on Tejon, Pikes Peak and Vermijo build on what's working well and recognize **future development opportunities**.

## Downtown Alleyways

- alleys utilized by pedestrians



# Mobility

## Urban Greenway

- Designed to **continue the trail experience into the downtown core**. Provides protected and comfortable infrastructure to connect to the core.

## Green Streets

- These streets are designated routes designed to **slow automobile traffic and creating safe street environments** for pedestrian and bicyclist movement, including gathering places.

## Legacy Loop

- The greenway system that surrounds the Downtown will be strengthened through **constructing missing trail links, establishing new access points, and adding enhanced amenities**.

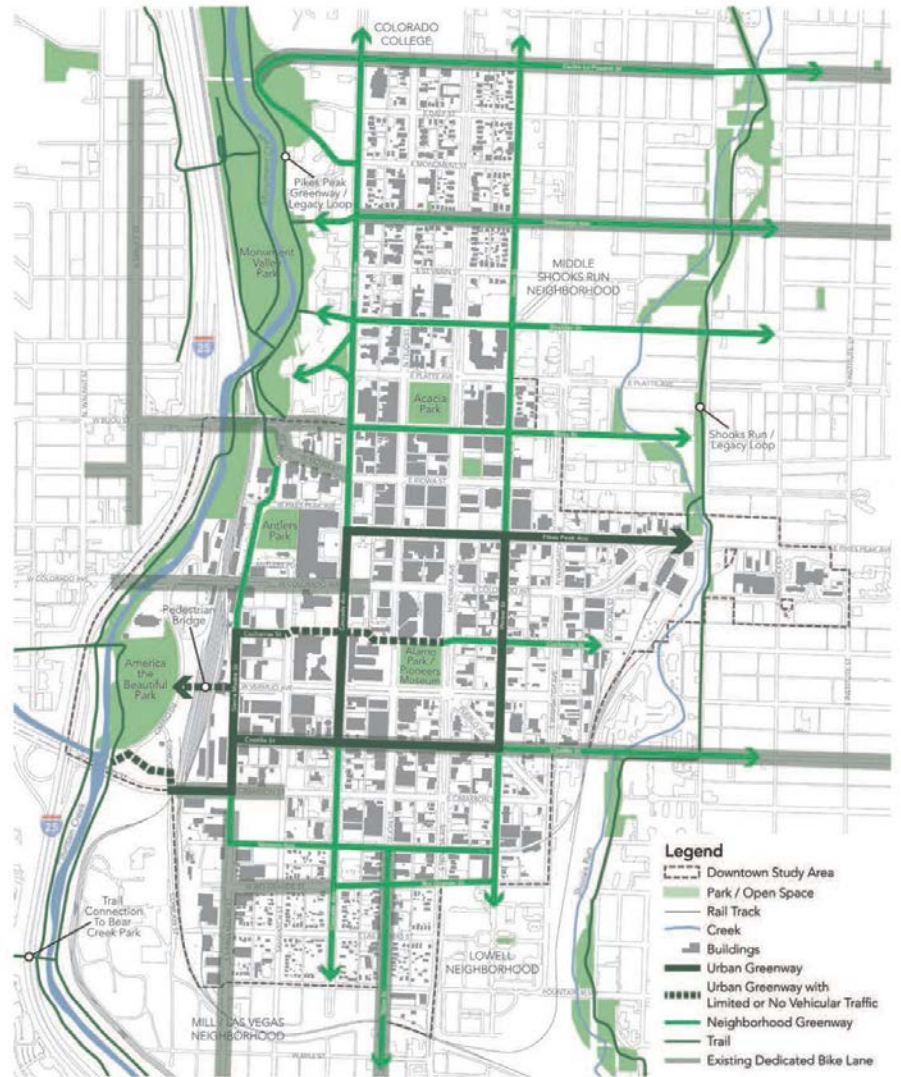
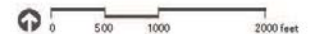


Figure 4.5 | Greenways, Trails and Parks



# Green Street Framework

## Green Streets

- These streets are designated routes designed to **slow automobile traffic and creating safe street environments** for pedestrian and bicyclist movement, including gathering places.

## Legacy Loop

- The greenway system that surrounds the Downtown will be strengthened through **constructing missing trail links, establishing new access points, and adding enhanced amenities.**



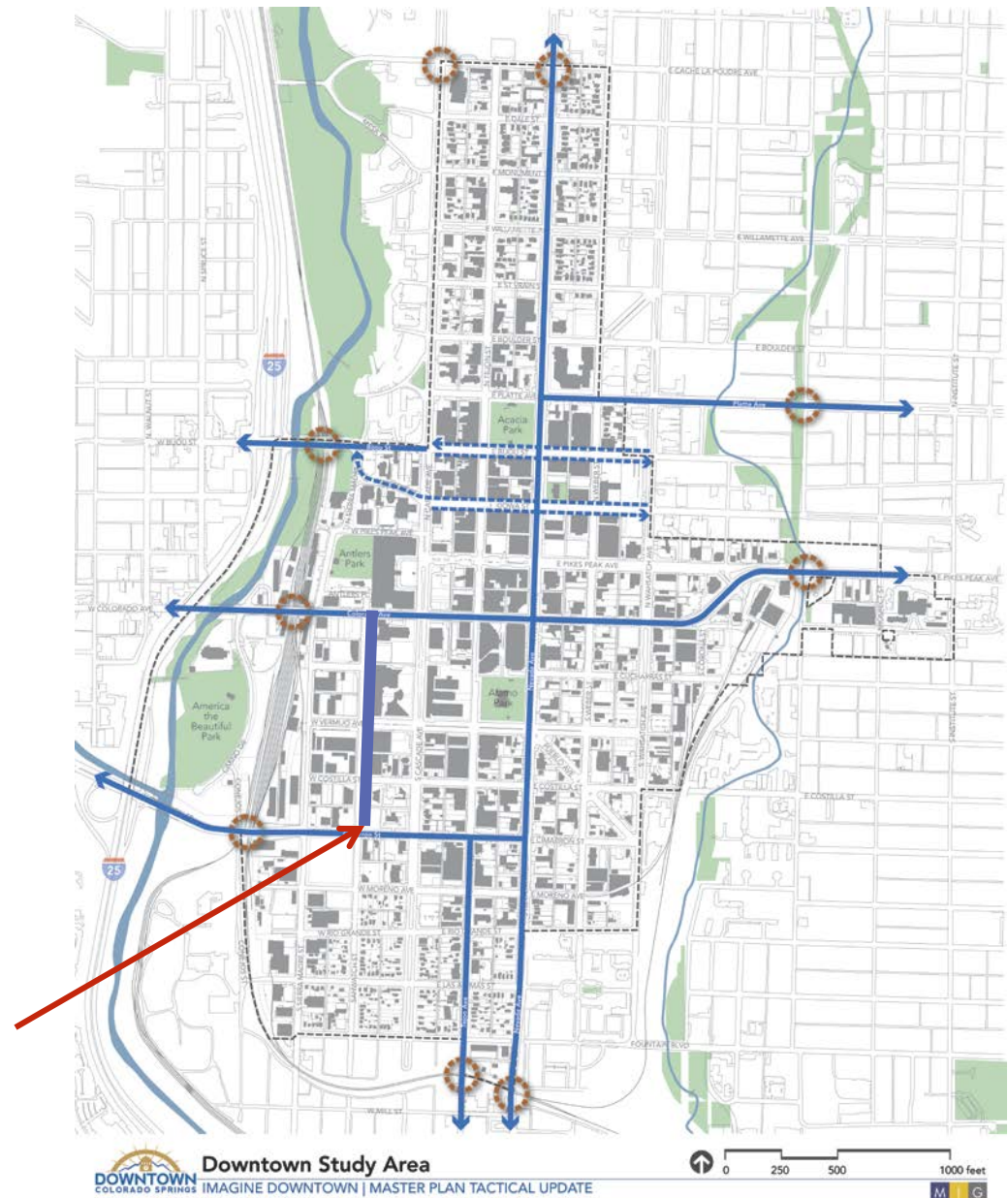
# Mobility

## Transportation Streets

- These streets primarily provide for the **movement of automobile traffic and transit routes** to and through the Downtown, or provide direct connection to the Interstate.

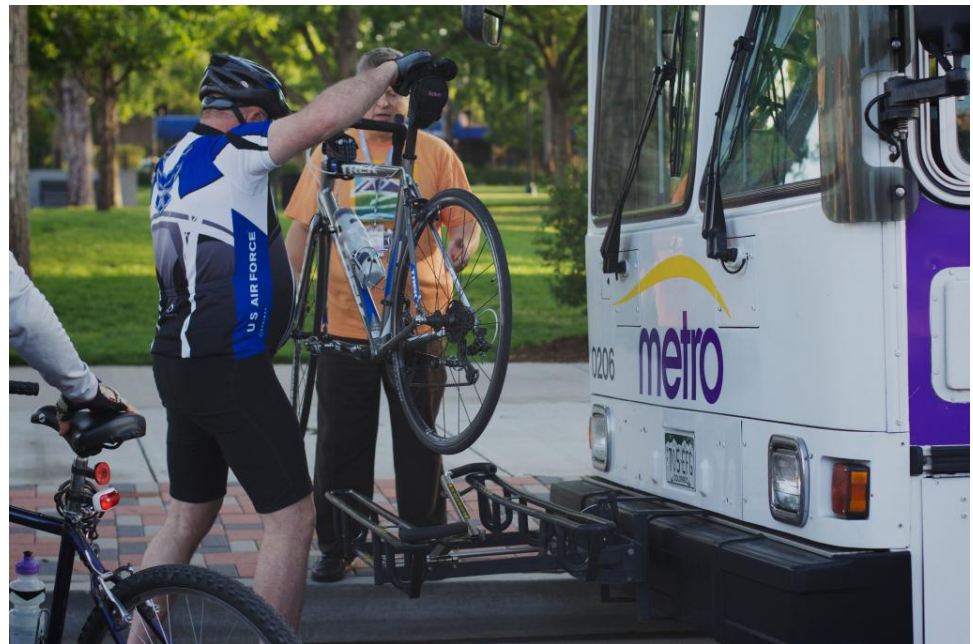
## Two Way Conversion

- Plan recommends conversion of Bijou and Kiowa into two way streets from Cascade to the east to **improve pedestrian safety, bicycle access, and retail storefront viability.**



# Transit

- Improved transit options and **increased transit utilization are crucial aspects of developing a thriving Downtown.**
- Placemaking and transit oriented development(TOD) efforts should be taken to **drive choice ridership.**
- Circulation within downtown is desired, and a **free-fare/frequent stop zone** in Downtown could help serve the role for employees, residents and visitors.



# Transit

- The **new transit center should be designed to drive vitality and growth** downtown. A positive public space that enriches the Downtown urban fabric and operates during all hours of the day is desired.
- Long range, visionary planning is essential for **regional connectivity**.



# Parking

- The balance between business/revenue needs and urban form objectives requires a **strategic and holistic approach to managing the parking system.**
- Greater efficiencies might be possible within the parking system if the City can partner with the County and other private parking owners to **offer excess parking for public use.**
- **Parking is a development tool** in an urban setting and should be treated as a driver of economic development.





# Streetscape and Public Space Elements

- Public space elements exist within the public right-of-way and help establish the character pedestrians, bicyclists, and others experience in the public realm.
- As downtown grows, **new elements and district character should be curated** to foster unique identity.



# Streetscape and Public Space Elements

## New elements of identity could include:

- Low impact design for stormwater management.
- Characteristic pedestrian lighting
- Year round ornamental lighting



# Questions

- Questions for City Staff or Downtown Partnership Staff?