

# Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan

CREATING OPPORTUNITY IN THE NORTH NEVADA AVENUE CORRIDOR



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The NES consultant team acknowledges and thanks the hundreds of community residents who contributed their insights, ideas, dreams, and many hours to help create the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master. The Plan is much more likely to endure and yield positive action as a result of their collective contributions.



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 Purpose of the Plan

#### Project Background

In 2013 North Nevada Avenue was identified by the City as an Economic Opportunity Zone (EOZ) and a task force was created to develop solutions for the corridor. The task force 'Findings and Recommendations' report provides the strategic context for this area and identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the area (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: EOZ Task Force SWOT Analysis

#### Strengths:

- University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) planned expansion, to include concentrated studies in sports and wounded warrior medicine and the performing arts.
- The development of University Village Colorado (UVC); a 655,000 sq.ft commercial center providing a wide range of shops, restaurants and services.
- Both the UCCS and UVC initiatives have already lead to major utility infrastructure improvements which should reduce both the need and cost of additional utility improvements for the North Nevada Avenue EOZ.

#### Weaknesses:

- The disarray of the corridor. While several good small-businesses are located along the corridor, many others have deteriorated.
- ComCor Inc., a community corrections provider, maintains the majority of its facilities in this corridor, housing in the order of 400-450 daily residents.
- Crime rates within this EOZ appear to be high based on Colorado Springs Police Department statistics, and the perception of crime is also an issue.
- The former dog track is a major issue due to its current use as a marijuana grow facility and car storage.
- The wide and unimproved existing street roadway and streetscape are visually unappealing and create a lack of connectivity with adjoining uses and properties. The unused railroad right-of-way along the east side of Nevada will cause any redevelopment to be significantly offset from Nevada.
- There is very little prioritization of funding for public improvements allocated for this area.
- The Birdsall Power Plant occupies a major footprint within the corridor.

#### Opportunities:

- Economic growth in the northern portion of the corridor centered around UCCS needs to include but not be limited to:
  - Off-campus student housing
  - Neighborhood services for UCCS's growing student population
  - Hotels for parents, new students, and medical tourism
- Economic growth in the southern portion providing high income jobs directly connected to the areas of study and work force being produced by UCCS, Colorado College, and Colorado Technical University.
- Connecting UCCS to both Colorado College and Downtown with both multi-modal transportation and architecture.
- There are some historic or unique buildings within the corridor which could be adaptively redeveloped to establish the corridor as an inviting and special place.

#### Threats:

- Those cities with college campuses will be in direct competition with Colorado Springs for the same high paying jobs we are seeking.
- Uncertainties surrounding the street cross-section (including its design, access, timing and funding), decisions regarding rights-of-way and easements, a possible but undetermined land use plan and Code changes, and yet-to-be-made choices concerning acceptable special incentives for this area.
- Any new entrants into the EOZ before new codes are developed, could be non-conforming to the new master plan for this area.
- The current land-use regulations for this area are arguably too permissive in some respects and not permissive enough in others and ignore the aspects of urban form and design.



One of the Task Force's first actions was to identify and bound the area of concern to focus energy and resources on that portion of the EOZ that had the most inertia and opportunity for transformation into a community gateway and to improve the connection between the University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) and downtown Colorado Springs (Figure 1.2). The recommended area of focus is the immediate Nevada Corridor between UCCS and the Old North End. The 'Corridor Improvement Focus Area' identified for the purposes of the EOZ is broadly consistent with the study area for this Master Plan.

Since the EOZ Task Force issued its findings, further activity in and around the area has occurred which emphasizes that it is an opportune time to develop a plan for the renewal of the North Nevada Avenue corridor. This includes the announcement that the National Cybersecurity Center is to relocate to the Mortgage Solutions Financial Expo Center building on North Nevada Avenue in 2017, and the construction of the UCCS Sports Medicine and Performance Centre and UC Health Hospital just to the north of the study area. This new growth will inform the direction of the recommendations of this Master Plan.

*Figure 1.2: North Nevada Avenue Economic Opportunity Zone Boundary*



In cooperation with El Paso County and UCCS, the City of Colorado Springs submitted a grant request to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Local Government for the Renew North Nevada Avenue planning effort. The issuing of this grant was conditioned upon the completion of the following tasks:



- A market and needs assessment;
- Preparation of an illustrative and tactical plan;
- Preparation of new zoning and potential development standards;
- Assessment of current utility infrastructure;
- Development of a strategic direct and indirect economic development incentive plan;
- Facilitation of neighborhood meetings and public hearings; and
- Specific consideration of the potential impact to the Colorado Community Corrections (ComCor) interests within the corridor and recommendations for relocation of their facilities.

### Why Create a Master Plan?

A master plan for a specific area or corridor bridges the gap between the broad community goals established in the Comprehensive Plan and the detailed city review of individual development projects and capital improvements. An area plan outlines the desired future development of an area – its character and scale, the land uses, and the location of streets, paths, parking, public spaces and public facilities. It also outlines how the desired future will be achieved.

Master planning provides an opportunity for the community to evaluate and shape its experiences and goals for the area in anticipation of that change. It helps ensure that when redevelopment occurs, property owners can design their projects to be consistent with the vision for the area. It also helps ensure that public improvements will be in place to support the new development and advance city goals.

The Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan provides the guiding framework for realizing the vision of a healthy, vibrant corridor. It reflects the desires and aspirations of a wide range of community members, stakeholders, steering committee participants, City staff, and the Planning Commission and City Council. It also reflects real economic/market feasibility. The plan describes the vision for the future of the study area and will guide long-term development of the area.

### How the Plan Will be Used

The Master Plan is more than simply developing a new conceptual plan for the corridor. The plan is about creating a new image for the community, rallying residents around positive change, and laying the foundation for an exciting prosperous future. Based upon extensive public input and involvement, the plan provides a guide to determine appropriate development, including recommendations for future land-use patterns, design and character of the area, and accessibility and infrastructure improvements.

***“This area is a treasure waiting to happen. The potential is vast and good.”***

**Workshop participant**

The plan is intended for use by the public, business and property owners, City officials and staff. It provides the community with an idea of what to expect in the future and will guide decisions about private development, and public facilities and services in the area. Over time, the plan will become an important “snapshot in time,” and provide a record of the intent behind policy decisions and regulatory changes that are made subsequent to plan adoption.

The pace of the area development will be determined by if and when private property owners voluntarily choose to redevelop their properties. The ultimate intent of the plan is to enhance the livability of the corridor. Land use and zoning can further this objective by creating a policy framework that will shape development patterns aligned with the vision set forth by the community.

Realization of the vision and goals of the Master Plan will require a proactive approach by the City to implement the plan and will include some or all of the following measures:

- amending existing zoning regulations;
- establishing phasing of and funding for key public improvements;
- planning capital improvement projects where appropriate; and
- providing an incentive package to encourage private investment in the area.

The over-arching objective of this project is to enhance the many strengths in and around the area, to improve safety, enhance pedestrian and bicycle access, encourage redevelopment, and improve the quality of life for the wide variety of people who depend on this major corridor. By working together, the community has created a plan that will encourage the revitalization of the corridor into a thriving city gateway.

## 1.2 The Study Area

As noted above, the boundary for the Master Plan largely represents the ‘Corridor Improvement Focus Area’ identified for the purposes of the EOZ. The area is generally bounded by Austin Bluffs Parkway/Garden of the Gods Road to the north, North Cascade Avenue to the west, the Rock Island Railroad to the south, and North Stone Avenue/Weber Street to the east (Figure 1.3).

Prior to the late 1950s, this section of North Nevada Avenue functioned as the principal highway to Denver and the main route into downtown Colorado Springs from the north. Many roadside motels, gas stations, and restaurants edged this important roadway. In the 1960s, the constructing of Interstate 25 (I-25) by-passed this area that once served as the northern gateway to the city. Over 50 years later, North Nevada Avenue still contains a mix of commercial businesses, but the primary land use now is industrial and manufacturing. This corridor still serves as a major arterial route between downtown Colorado Springs and Austin Bluffs Parkway/Garden of the Gods Road and acts as an alternate route to access I-25 to the north.



*Roadside motels in the corridor are evidence of the former highway function of North Nevada Avenue*

North Nevada Avenue is a primary north-south arterial through the City of Colorado Springs and acts as a gateway to the City’s historic North-End, downtown Colorado Springs and UCCS. The corridor accommodates through-traffic and local traffic accessing commercial properties and adjoining residential neighborhoods. The intersections along this corridor provide critical links between adjacent residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and recreational amenities.



Figure1.3: North Nevada Avenue Renewal Master Plan Boundary



### 1.3 The Planning Process

The project team, led by N.E.S. Inc, consists of primarily local experts that understand the challenges of the corridor and how redevelopment could transform this part of the City.

The first step was to understand the project area and its potential for growth and redevelopment. This involved the analysis of parcel data, rights of ways, known utilities, floodplain information, and topographic data. An inventory of existing conditions through site visits, photography, and analysis mapping was used to further assist the understanding of the project. The project team also reviewed the existing development pattern and zoning that currently govern development activities in the area. As a separate exercise, a market analysis was undertaken by ArLand Land Use Economics to provide input regarding the future land use market potential in this area. A summary of the market analysis is provided in Section 3 and the full study is available on the City's Renew North Nevada Avenue web page: [www.coloradoadssprings.gov/renewnnave](http://www.coloradoadssprings.gov/renewnnave).

Set parameters and non-negotiable points were established at the beginning of the planning process by consultation with the North Nevada Avenue Steering Committee, and City and Colorado Springs Utilities staff. These "Project Givens" underpinned the community decision-making process detailed in Section 4 (Figure 1.4).

*Figure 1.4: Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan Project Givens*

#### Project Givens

- The Plan must be economically feasible and address and balance market needs with the priorities expressed through a community involvement process.
- It must be consistent with the City of Colorado Springs Infill Policy Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and Infill Action Plan and consistent with and inform the City of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan Update currently in process.
- It will capitalize on and leverage the success of public and private investments affecting the project area, such as implementation of the University of Colorado Colorado Springs 2013 Master Plan, the University Village Colorado commercial area, and the planned National Cybersecurity Center.
- The City of Colorado Springs will not use eminent domain to implement the Plan.
- All City of Colorado Springs vehicle and pedestrian safety standards as well as infrastructure standards must be addressed.
- The Birdsall Power Plant provides supplemental electric generation capacity and hosts other core operations. The Plant and its necessary supporting infrastructure will remain in the project area.
- Many businesses, neighborhoods, groups, and individuals are interested in and are encouraged by the City to participate in the open, public process that will result in creation of the North Nevada Avenue Plan.
- The preferred Plan will be submitted to the Colorado Springs Planning Commission for review and recommendation to the Colorado Springs City Council for consideration and final approval.

At the outset of the process many small businesses and residents of mobile home parks were concerned that the Master Plan would result in the City condemning their property to implement the plan. The City decided at the outset to reassure the community that it would not use eminent domain for the purposes of implementing the land use recommendations of this plan.



## 1.4 Relationship to Other Plans

There are several existing and pending plans, studies, and guiding documents that set the framework for the Master Plan. In 2009, the City adopted a study for the North Nevada Avenue corridor. This current Master Plan will supersede the recommendations of the 2009 plan. Together these documents will inform the City's land use decisions for the North Nevada Avenue corridor.



### [City of Colorado Springs 2001 Comprehensive Plan \(currently being updated\)](#)

The Comprehensive Plan is a guide for the physical growth of the city to the year 2020. The plan provides an overall view of development for the City. The land use map (updated January 2014) for the 2020 identifies mature, older auto-oriented commercial corridors, including Nevada Avenue, to have greater potential for redevelopment to more mixed-use developments. PlanCOS is the update to the Comprehensive Plan that will be adopted in 2018,

### [City of Colorado Springs Bicycle Plan \(in progress\)](#)

The City of Colorado Springs is working to create a community where people of all ages and abilities have access to a safe and connected network of trails and on-street bicycle facilities that facilitate bicycling for transportation or fun. The update to the Bike Master Plan will outline a plan for bicycle infrastructure to support the growing needs of the City's bicycle friendly community.

### [Downtown Colorado Springs Form-Based Code \(adopted June 2009\)](#)

The City's Form-Based Code primary focus is the heart of Downtown Colorado Springs. Additionally, a form-based zoning overlay following the intent of this Form-Based Code has been implemented.

### [Enterprise Zone Re-designation \(2015\)](#)

As part of a 2015 re-designation process, much of this corridor has been included within a State Enterprise Zone boundary.

### [City of Colorado Springs Infill and Redevelopment Plan \(adopted March 2016\)](#)

In 2016, the City adopted a new Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan focusing on infill and redevelopment. In this document the North Nevada corridor and other "high frequency transit corridors" are identified as priority infill areas. The Infill Action Plan is the implementation document for this Plan and supports several of its key components.

### [Pikes Peak Area Council of Government Regional Nonmotorized Transportation System Plan \(adopted July 2015\)](#)

The Plan is the result of collaboration between PPACG, El Paso County, the City of Colorado Springs, and the City of Woodland Park. The purpose of the Plan is to create a regional roadmap for the long-term development of nonmotorized modes in the Pikes Peak region that leads to an increase in the number of people using nonmotorized modes for transportation.

### [The Intermodal Transportation Plan \(ITP\) \(adopted 2001\)](#)

The ITP is the primary companion document to the Comprehensive Plan. It provides a central focus for all of the City's transportation planning efforts. The ITP also has sections addressing land use and implementation.

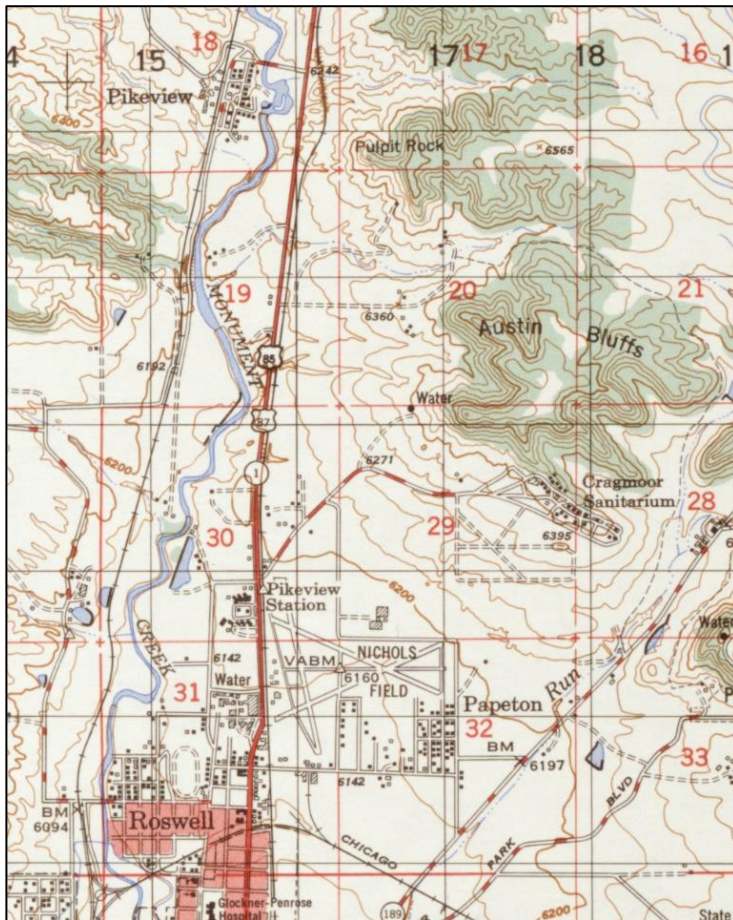
### [Pikes Peak Area Council of Government 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan \(July 2015\)](#)

The PPACG 2040 Plan models and identifies improvements to this corridor as part of its fiscally constrained funding plan.



## SECTION 2: PLANNING AREA COMPOSITION

### 2.1 Historic Context



*Historic map showing Cragmoor Sanitarium, the old mining communities of Pikeview and Papeton, Pikeview Station, the former Nichols Airfield, and Roswell horse-race track*

In the Master Plan area, there is evidence of a number of intriguing narratives from the community's past. To the north is the former Cragmoor Sanitarium, now home to UCCS, which is a key part of our enduring connection to health and health care. To the east is Monument Creek and the tracks of the historic Denver and Rio Grande Railroad.

To the south is the Roswell neighborhood that was once a company town for the Rock Island Railroad and home to its roundhouse and maintenance operations. Roswell was also the location for a horse-race track situated north of Fillmore and west of Nevada.

North Nevada Avenue has a fascinating history that is dominated by its role as a transportation corridor and as home to a number of distinctive industries. The City of Colorado Springs, first settled in 1871, became a destination for tourists visiting the west and the Pikes Peak region. For decades, Nevada Avenue was the main highway running north-south through Colorado Springs that connected the city to Denver and Pueblo. As a result, it was lined with roadside motels, automobile oriented merchants, such as gas stations and truck rentals, restaurants, and tourist shops.

Today, this history is preserved through the Navajo Hogan, Murphy's Tavern, Roman Villa, and the other surviving roadhouses and motor lodges that dot the corridor. One can gain a deeper appreciation of the heritage of the Colorado Springs by exploring these and other stories that echo along the avenue.

With the building of Interstate 25 (I-25) in 1960, much of the traffic heading south by-passed Nevada Avenue and it was no longer the gateway to the City. It remained a business loop for I-25 until it was reverted to local control in 2007 as part of a trade for the State takeover of Powers Boulevard to the east.



*Roswell horse-race track*

In the heart of the district was Alexander Film and Aviation, once a leading employer for the region. Many of the original buildings are still in evidence in the area southwest of Nevada and Commerce street. Nichols airfield which served Alexander Aviation was located to the east of North Nevada Avenue.

To the east is the coal mining district that once provided fuel for the Birdsall Power Plant and energy for the whole city. This included the old mining community of Papeton just east of Nevada and Fillmore and the Pike View mine to the northwest of the plan area. Pike View Station also served as key component of the mining district at the point where the railroad met North Nevada Avenue. The Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad itself was an important component of this area and part of the vacated right-of-way is being purchased by the City and will be available for alternative uses for this Master Plan. The accessibility of the area by the railroad influenced the industrialization of the North Nevada corridor since the 1960's, following the construction of I-25.



*Alexander Film & Aviation in the foreground with the Roswell neighborhood and horse-race track in the background*



*Pikeview Mine encouraged settlement in the corridor*

If any federal funding is used for the Master Plan, either in planning or in implementation, an historic inventory must be done as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.



*Murphy's Tavern is an historic roadside business*

There are properties in the project area that are on the National Historic Register, including the Navajo Hogan bar/restaurant and the bridge structure over the railroad tracks south of Fillmore. The roadside businesses and other elements in the project area that were once adjacent to the old Denver Highway in the project area are of some historic interest, and may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, including:

- Travel Lodge-type motels in the area;
- Murphy's Tavern;
- Alexander Film and Aviation;
- Western Horseman; and
- Birdsall Power Plant (some portions of the building have art deco elements) and also the Plant's relationship to the coal fields which used to be nearby.



*The Navajo Hogan Bar/Restaurant is on the National Historic Register*



## 2.2 Land Uses

The initial development along North Nevada Avenue pre-dated the annexation of the area into the City in 1969/1970. The current land uses are predominately light industrial and manufacturing, as well as destination retail for building and construction supplies. Major land uses include the Birdsall Power Plant and associated overhead electrical transmission lines, the adjacent Colorado Springs Utility communication center, a former dog racing track, the Mortgage Solutions Financial Expo Center, and a Kmart retail store. ComCor also operates out of several older motels and office buildings along the North Nevada Avenue corridor. There are also several automotive repair businesses, used car lots, mobile home parks, roadside motels, bars, diners and restaurants, which together make Nevada Avenue an eclectic mix of activities and buildings.



*There are several mobile home parks in and adjacent to the plan area which provide affordable housing opportunities for residents on low or fixed incomes.*



*Some existing local businesses can make a positive contribution to the renewal objectives of the Master Plan*

The highest concentration of commercial activity is typically at the major intersections. Most of the businesses are small scale operations and many have been in existence for several decades. There are also several very successful local companies in the corridor that can make a positive contribution to the renewal objectives of the Master Plan. However, the Plan area as a whole is underutilized as much of the existing development along the corridor is low density and auto-oriented due to the former highway designation of North Nevada Avenue. This auto-centric pattern is exacerbated by the absence of sidewalks, buffers from travel lanes for pedestrians, and lack of pedestrian connectivity.

The following are some of the major establishments along the corridor:

### **Birdsall Power Plant**

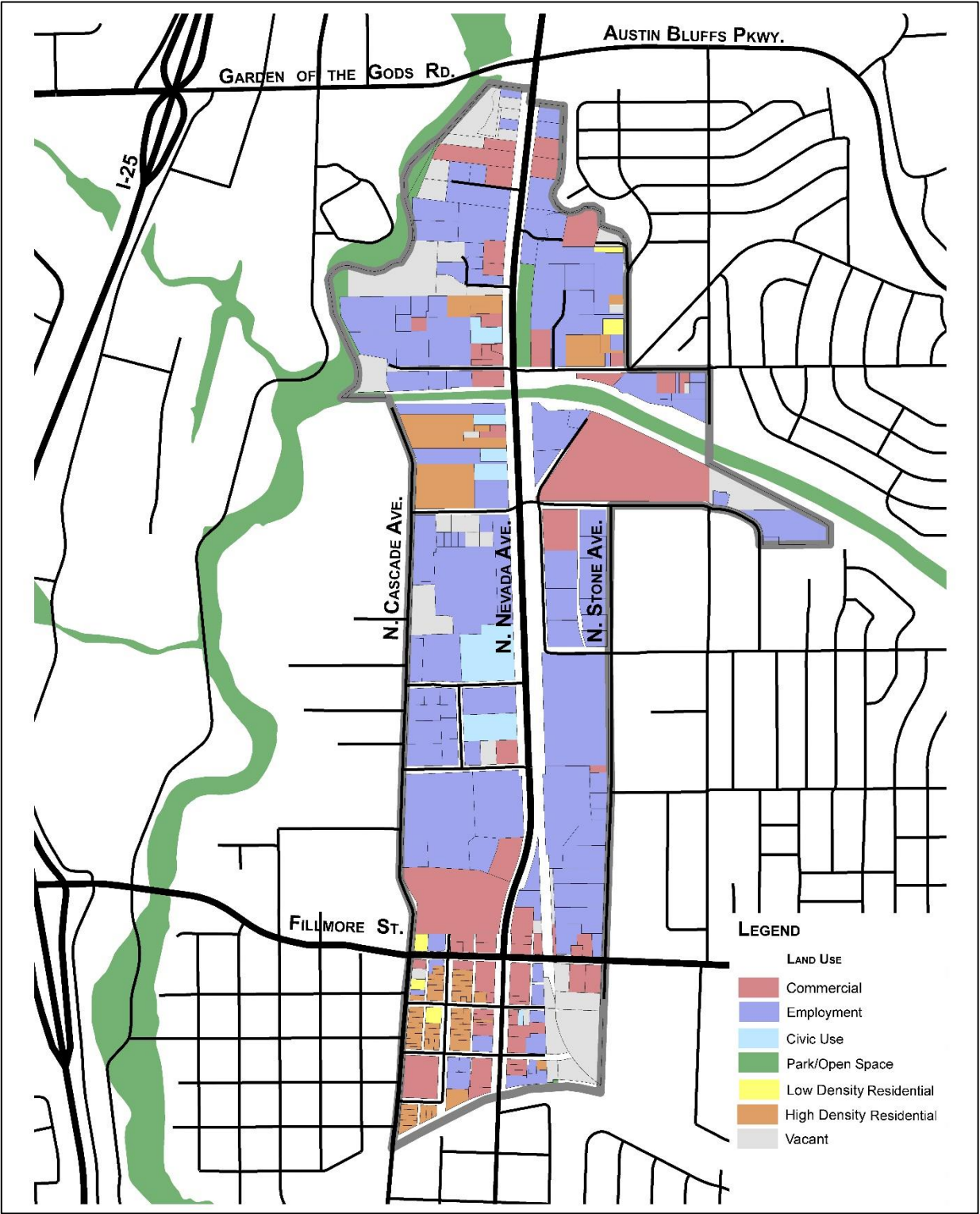
Colorado Springs Utilities' (CSU) George Birdsall Power Plant was built in 1953. This power plant has a large presence on the Nevada Avenue landscape and is critical to the overall power delivery system for CSU. CSU Utility Board voted in 2016 to decommission the Drake Power Plant in downtown Colorado Springs no later than 2035. The Birdsall Power Plant will replace some of the carrying capacity of the Drake Power Plant in downtown Colorado Springs when it is decommissioned. The large utility transmission lines dominate the corridor. Although the cost of burying them is costly, this is something that should be examined when redevelopment projects are proposed and in partnership with CSU.



*Birdsall Power Plant*



Figure 2.1: North Nevada Avenue Existing Land Use Map



Source: City of Colorado Springs, Existing Land Use Map

### Former Rocky Mountain Greyhound Park

The Rocky Mountain Greyhound Park's history dates to 1949, after state voter's legalized horse and dog racing gambling a year earlier. Once a popular venue for bettors, interest in greyhound racing waned as other forms of gambling took hold in Colorado; small-stakes wagering was approved by state voters in 1990 in Cripple Creek and two other mountain towns. Dog and horse tracks around the country have suffered similar fates over the last several decades. Rocky Mountain Greyhound closed as a racing venue in 2005, although off-track betting took place for a few years until the facility closed for good in 2008. Over the past years, the park has housed a handful of industrial users, and currently accommodates a medical marijuana grow facility in the main building and a vehicle storage yard.



*Former Rocky Mountain Greyhound Track*

### Expo Center



*The Expo Center will be the new home for the National Cybersecurity Center*

The Mortgage Solutions Financial Expo Center occupies 55,000 square feet of the 134,600 square feet UCCS owned building and is the largest single building in the corridor. The Expo Center currently hosts year-round trade shows and events.

The National Cybersecurity Center is planning to occupy the entirety of the 134,600 square feet building in 2017. The National Cybersecurity Center is a nonprofit organization that provides collaborative cybersecurity knowledge and services to the nation.

### ComCor

ComCor was established in 1977 as the El Paso County Community Corrections Department after the 1976 passage of the Community Corrections Act by the Colorado General Assembly. In 1984, ComCor, Inc. was formed to continue providing community corrections services in the 4th Judicial District. ComCor provides basic community corrections services by offering correctional services and treatment programs that provide opportunities for offenders to change their lives and make positive contributions to society.

ComCor has offices, four residential accommodations (three in former motels), a kitchen facility and offices along the North Nevada Avenue corridor. One of the main challenges the organization faces is the dispersed nature of its facilities. A consolidation of ComCor operations and its relocation outside of the Study Area is being considered and a detailed assessment of requirements and opportunities is provided in Section 8 of this Plan.



*ComCor Offices and accommodations on Roberts Road*

### Transit Mix



The Transit Mix Concrete Company supplies foundation building materials, including concrete, aggregate, rebar, masonry supplies and tools. It is located between the former dog track and North Nevada Avenue Corridor.

Since 1945, Transit Mix Concrete has been at the heart of dozens of civil and commercial projects that are vital to the tremendous community growth and economic development of southern Colorado. Today, Transit Mix provides much of the sand and mineral aggregate essential to the construction of the buildings, homes, streets, and highways that make up the region's cities, towns, and rural landscape.

Transit Mix has indicated its willingness to move to an alternative location elsewhere in the City in order to facilitate the renewal of the North Nevada Avenue corridor.

### Kmart Plaza

The existing prominent Kmart Plaza is bounded by three roadways - North Nevada Avenue to the east, Cascade Avenue to the west and Fillmore Avenue to the south. Kmart and some smaller retail shops sit in a large parking lot that covers half of the property. The owners of the Kmart site have been actively engaged in the stakeholder process and have confirmed that it has redevelopment potential.





## 2.3 Current Zoning

Most of the Master Plan area includes zoning that was established when North Nevada Avenue was the main north/south roadway and pre-dates the annexation of the area into the City. Consequently, over half of the land area along North Nevada Avenue is zoned for industrial and manufacturing uses, interspersed with commercial, residential and public facility zoning.

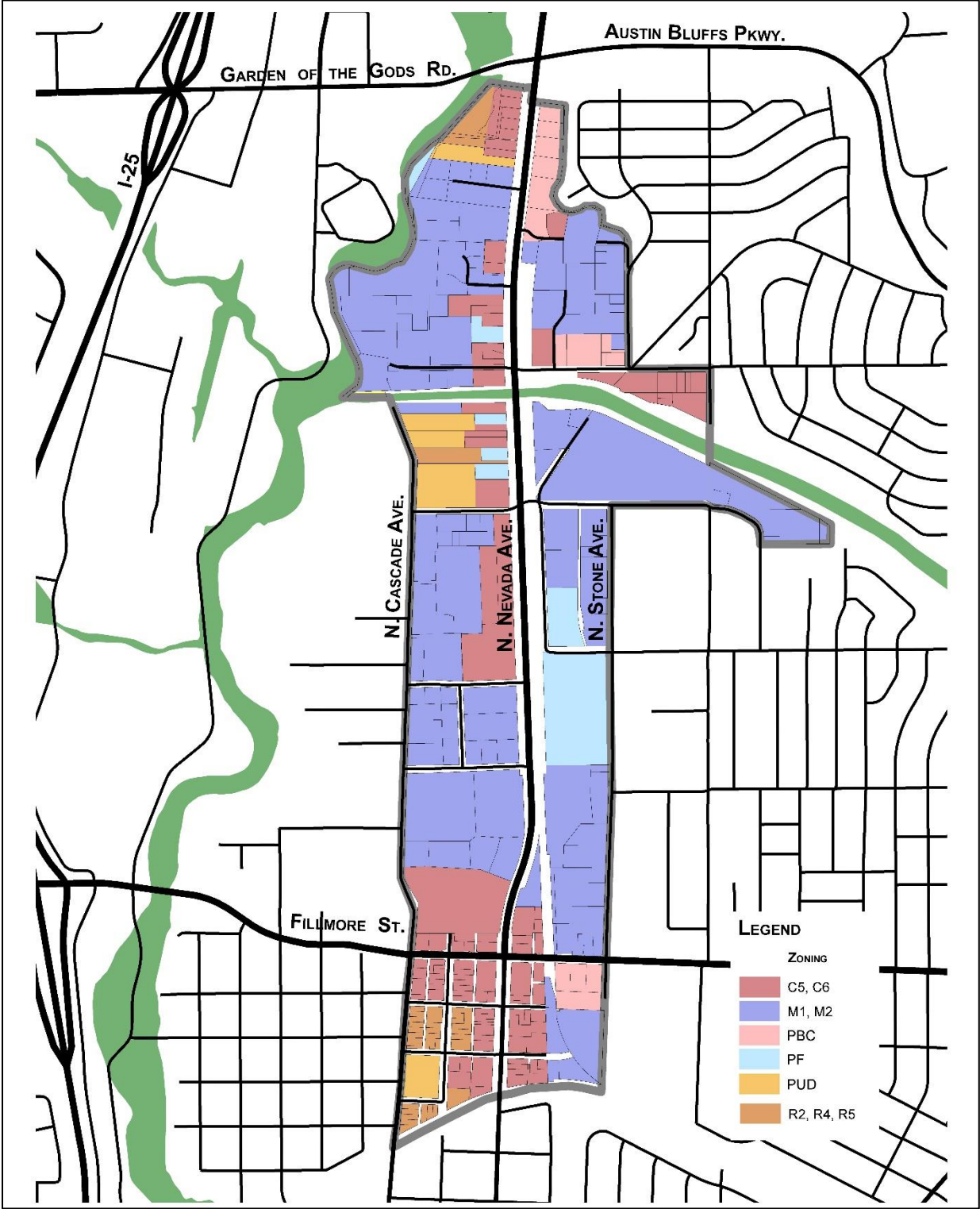
- The area that lies west and east of North Nevada Avenue is predominately zoned Industrial with large areas of Public Facility zoning which encompasses Birdsall Power Plant and the ComCor facilities.
- The area south of Fillmore Street to Lilac Street/Rock Island Railroad is zoned Commercial with some residential.
- The area north of Winters Street has a mix of zoning that includes Manufacturing/Industrial, Office Commercial, Public Facility, and PUD.

Figure 2.2 summarizes the purpose and intent of the existing zoning districts found within the master plan area. Figure 2.3 is a map of the existing zoning in the North Nevada Avenue corridor.

*Figure 2.2: Summary of North Nevada Avenue Existing Zoning Districts*

<b>General Business (C-6) and Intermediate Business (C-5)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Found throughout the corridor, mostly on the east side. These are typically destination business such as sign print shops, auto and truck repair, and specialty tool shops.</li> <li>• C-6 zone district accommodates general uses that are typically high volume traffic generators and are generally dependent on more than the immediate neighborhood for their market area.</li> <li>• C-5 zone district accommodates commercial land uses and preserves and enhances areas for a range of retail sales and service establishments.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 99.50 acres.</li> </ul>	<b>Planned Business Center (PBC )</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the east side of Nevada, south of Austin Bluffs, are Planned Business Centers. These are among the newest developments on the corridor and have landscaping, sidewalks, and curb and gutter as well as managed access and parking.</li> <li>• This zone district accommodates commercial land uses and preserves and enhances areas for a range of retail sales and services establishments.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 22.18 acres.</li> </ul>
<b>Light Industrial (M-1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of the land within the corridor is zoned M-1</li> <li>• This zone district accommodates light industrial uses and commercial uses that are complementary and compatible to the industrial uses.</li> <li>• Study area contains 245.7 acres.</li> </ul>	<b>Heavy Industrial (M-2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One site, a concrete mix facility.</li> <li>• This zone district accommodates heavy industrial uses that are likely to have an extensive impact on the surrounding area.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 5.14.</li> </ul>
<b>Planned Unit Development (PUD)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This zone is intended to provide the means through which land may be developed through an overall unified approach rather than the traditional lot by lot approach. The PUD zone allows for a variety of use types and encourages appropriate mixed use developments.</li> <li>• The existing mobile home parks were zoned PUD by the City and this is the only zone in which they are permitted.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 13.67 acres.</li> </ul>	<b>Public Facility (PF)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This zone district is provided for land which is used or being reserved for governmental purposes by the City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County, the State of Colorado, the Federal government or public utility.</li> <li>• CSU's Birdsall Power Plant site is on the east side of the corridor.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 31.32 acres.</li> </ul>
<b>Two-Family Residential (R-2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This zone district accommodates small or medium lots primarily for detached one-family or attached two-family residential use.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 4.38 acres.</li> </ul>	<b>Multi-Family (R-4)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This zone district accommodates lots primarily for medium density attached multi-family residential use at a density of not more than eight (8) dwelling units per acre.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 3.43 acres.</li> </ul>
<b>Multi-Family Residential (R-5)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This zone district accommodates lots primarily for high density attached multi-family residential use.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 7.07 acres.</li> </ul>	<b>Single-Family Residential (R-1 6000)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This zone district accommodates small lots primarily for detached single-family residential use.</li> <li>• Study Area contains 4.43 acres.</li> </ul>

Figure 2.3: North Nevada Avenue Existing Zoning Map



Source: City of Colorado Springs, Zoning Map

## 2.4 Transportation and Mobility

The City's Comprehensive Plan states that a major goal of the transportation system is to provide for safe and efficient movement of people, goods, and services throughout Colorado Springs. The plan specifically states that "all modes of transportation are provided so that each mode (single-occupant vehicle, multi-occupant vehicle, pedestrian, bicyclist, public transit, and freight) has an opportunity to be utilized and there is reasonable choice among modes for travel needs."

North Nevada Avenue is identified in the City's *Major Transportation Plan* as both a Principal (Fillmore to I-25) and Minor (Lilac to Fillmore) Arterial street (Figure 2.4). This plan also suggested that North Nevada Avenue should be a six-lane road from Fillmore north to I-25, based upon the recommendations of the 2009 Corridor Study. With the growth and changes anticipated for the North Nevada Avenue, the City should review the function of this roadway as it will need to provide the adjacent properties and surrounding area with full service multi-modal access, with less emphasis on its current function as an uninterrupted, high speed street carrying through traffic.

The North Nevada Avenue corridor has a wide right-of-way (approximately 130 feet wide) with many buildings set well back from the edge. Most of North Nevada Avenue has very little access control (raised medians, curbed intersections) or pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pedestrian ramps). There are long stretches without any defined property access or roadway edge. Some business parking requires a backing maneuver into the flow of traffic. Despite the lack of adequate facilities, many people walk and bicycle along the corridor either using the limited paved shoulders or the adjacent business frontage. This situation presents serious safety concerns to pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicular traffic.



*The lack of curb, gutter, sidewalk and access control creates conflicts and safety issues*

### Vehicular

Nevada Avenue is oriented north-south and is generally parallel to I-25. It is connected to the interstate via Fillmore Street to the south of the plan area and via Garden of the Gods Road to the north. Due to the former railroad along the east side of North Nevada Avenue, the east-west street connectivity is limited. The north-south streets that parallel the North Nevada Corridor are not continuous. Cascade Avenue, North Stone Avenue, and North El Paso Street are cut-off from their northern trajectory by the Templeton Gap drainageway and the old dog track site. North Tejon Street is disrupted by the Kmart site and the Expo Center. This forces all through traffic on to North Nevada Avenue.



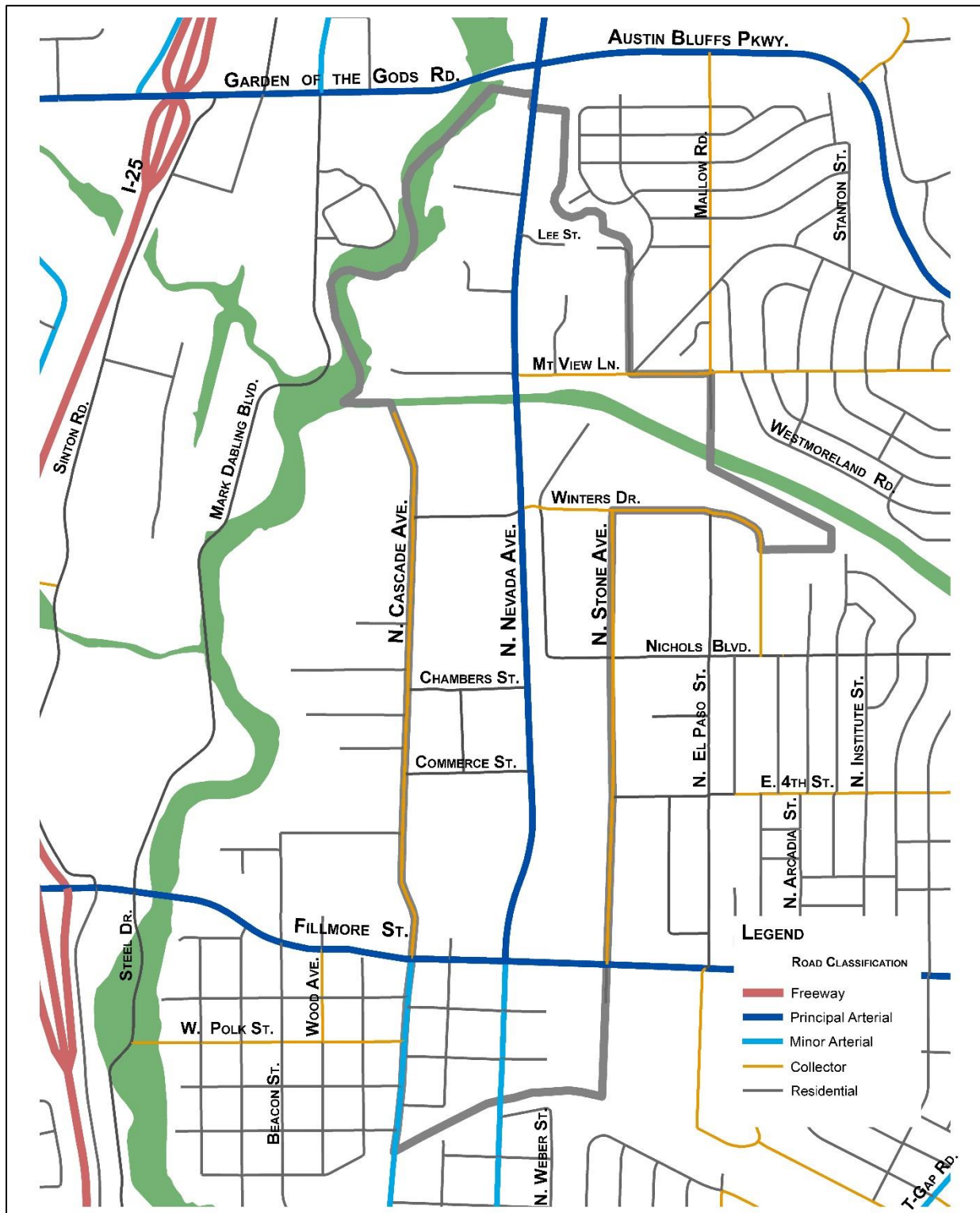
*Much of North Nevada Avenue is a designated Truck Route*

North and south of the study area, the corridor, and the neighborhood it traverses and connects, are significantly different than within the Master Plan area. Connecting the study area to the north and south requires a transition in character for both land uses and traffic.

The North Nevada corridor also serves as a truck route between Fillmore Street and Garden of the Gods Road and then north to its connection with I-25. Given the currently high proportion of industrial uses in the corridor that rely on truck access, this function is likely to remain for the foreseeable future. This may need to be revisited as the character of the area is likely to evolve over time in response to changes in the land use mix along the corridor.



Figure 2.4: North Nevada Avenue Existing Road Classification



Source: City of Colorado Springs, Major Thoroughfare Plan

## Transit

Mountain Metropolitan Transit System provides fixed routes in the study area, with the majority of service occurring during the weekday and limited weekend service. Mountain Metro operates approximately 5:30 am to 9:30 pm on weekdays, on Saturday from 6:30 am to 7:00 pm, and Sundays from 7:30 am to 6 pm. Limited bus services are provided on New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Independence Day and Labor Day.

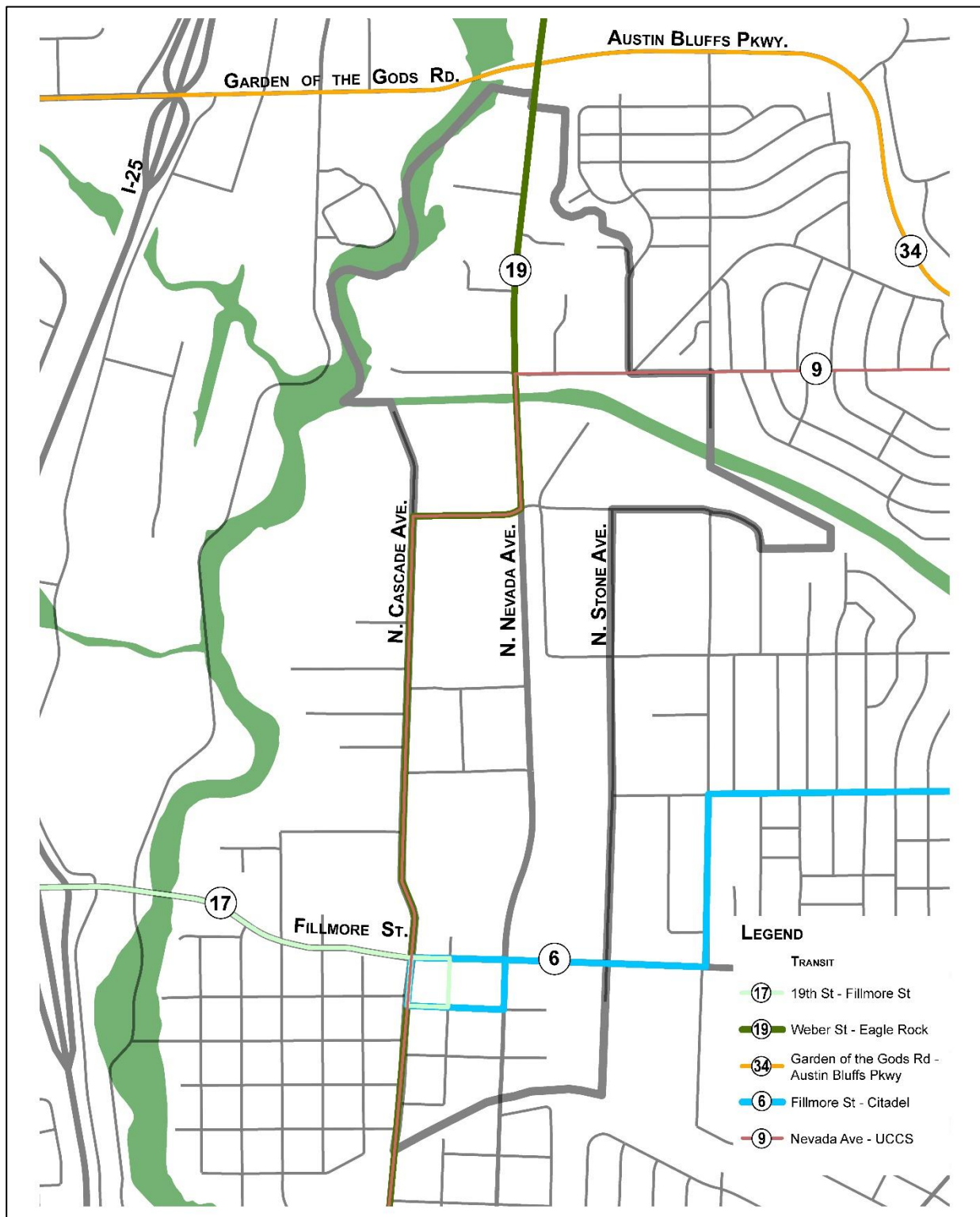
Several fixed-bus routes serve the Study Area. Bus Routes 9 and 19 run along Cascade Avenue, cutting over to North Nevada Avenue at Winters Drive. Other Bus Routes that connect include Bus Routes 17 and 6 on Fillmore Avenue and Bus Route 34 along Garden of the Gods/Austin Bluffs Parkway. Figure 2.5 shows the existing bus routes within the study area.



*A southbound bus on North Nevada Avenue turns right on to Winters Drive to head down Cascade Avenue, by-passing most of the North Nevada Avenue corridor*

There is currently limited bus service on North Nevada Avenue due primarily to the absence of any significant residential or employment destinations in the corridor and the inadequacy of sidewalk infrastructure. With the growth anticipated by this Master Plan, public transportation is likely to become essential to facilitate the successful renewal of the area. Improved connectivity between downtown Colorado Springs and UCCS has already been identified as desirable by the EOZ Task Force and UCCS leadership. The proposed enhancements to the corridor, together with the draw of University Village and the recently completed UC Health hospital to the north, are likely to increase demand for a frequent and efficient transit system to serve this part of the City.

Figure 2.5: North Nevada Avenue Existing Transit Routes



Source: Mountain Metro Transit



## Pedestrian and Bicycle

Although this is not a pedestrian or bicycle friendly corridor, many pedestrians and bicyclists are present and often in conflict with vehicle movement. There is no definition to the edge of the road and business parking areas along the majority of North Nevada Avenue.

The *Colorado Springs Bicycle Plan*, the *Intermodal Transportation Plan* and the *Parks System Master Plan* identify a number of important trails and on-street bicycle facilities that are in or near to the North Nevada Avenue corridor. The Templeton Gap Trail is a principal east-west trail corridor that intersects North Nevada Avenue just south of Mount View Lane. This in turn provides access to the Pikes Peak Greenway to the west. The Pikes Peak Greenway is a significant regional trail that traverses north/south Colorado Springs, connecting the City of Fountain to the south with the Towns of Monument and Palmer Lake to the north, providing extensive connectivity to other regional and neighborhood trails.



*A cyclist travels southbound on the northbound travel lane on North Nevada Avenue*



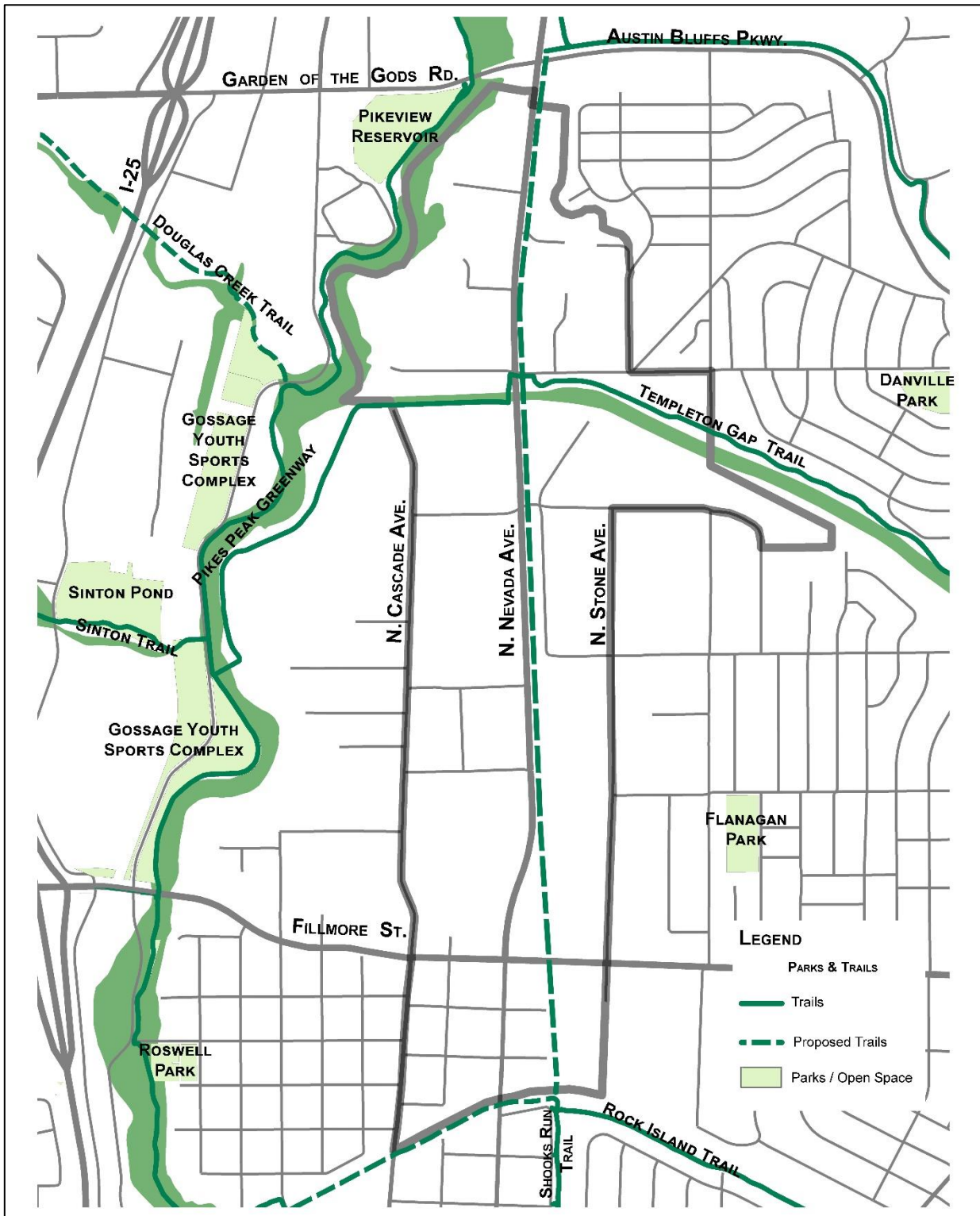
*Templeton Gap trail is a principal east-west connection through the study area but crossing North Nevada Avenue is a challenge*

A significant constraint of the Templeton Gap Trail is the need to cross North Nevada Avenue at-grade across a wide, poorly defined, street. Improvements to this trail crossing would be a benefit to existing trail users and would likely increase trail use.

Immediately to the south of the study area, is the intersection of the Rock Island Trail, which runs east, and Shook's Run Trail, which runs to the south. The City recently acquired the land necessary to continue the Rock Island Trail to the west so that it can connect with the Pikes Peak Greenway. These three trails together for the Legacy Loop, a 10-mile trail, park, and recreation loop around Downtown Colorado Springs. It would be beneficial if a connection to these trails from the study area could be achieved, as it would significantly improve the trail accessibility prospects for the North Nevada avenue corridor.

The City's *Parks System Master Plan* was updated in 2014 to include a proposed multi-use trail along the North Nevada Avenue corridor. Given the planned expansion of the UCCS campus to the northeast of the study area, other new developments nearby, and the renewal objectives of this master planning effort, the number of people bicycling and walking along and across the corridor will increase. A trail along North Nevada Avenue would greatly enhance pedestrian safety and non-motorized transportation options to and from existing and future land uses. Accommodations should be made in this Master Plan to meet these future mobility needs.

Figure 2.6: North Nevada Avenue Existing Parks and Trails



Source: City of Colorado Springs, Parks System Master Plan



## 2.5 Infrastructure

### Existing Utilities

The western portion of the plan area contains several undeveloped parcels with little or no utility infrastructure at this time. Utilities will have to be extended to these parcels if redeveloped. City utility infrastructure presently serves all of existing businesses/residents. Some properties are currently served by private utility mains (water). Depending upon the land-use and redevelopment location proposed, utility main infrastructure may need to be upgraded/upsized to adequately support the renewal of the area. This will be determined by CSU when reviewing any redevelopment project.

The corridor is dominated by the major overhead electric facility corridor along the east side of Nevada Avenue. While this is likely to remain in place, CSU has indicated a willingness to underground these powerlines through the redevelopment of the area and, consistent with their approach elsewhere in the City, will consider a cost share arrangement with private developers. There are also numerous minor overhead electric facilities along North Nevada Avenue and the connecting east-west streets. It is likely that these will be required to be relocated/buried upon re-development.

*Figure 2.7: North Nevada Avenue Existing Utilities*





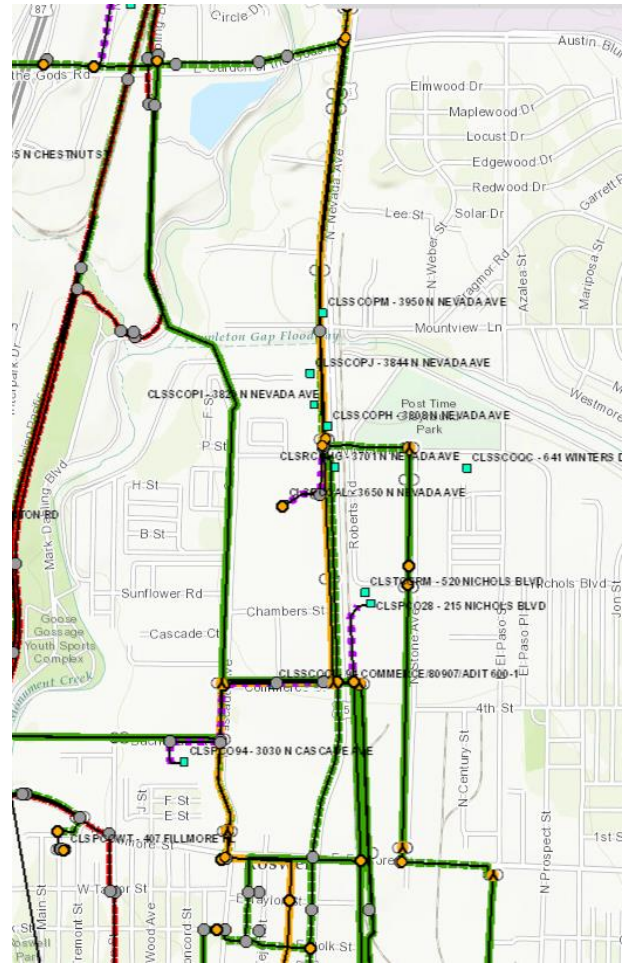
## Fiber Optics

One issue of concern raised during the Stakeholder process was the adequacy/capacity of the Fiber Optic network in the North Nevada Avenue corridor to support the anticipated demand for cybersecurity and other high-tech companies. There are several fiber providers that have existing network running up Nevada Avenue from Fillmore Street to Garden of the Gods Road that can support any level of bandwidth and exceed any level of security needed to support cybersecurity and other high-tech users:

- Patetec
- PCI
- Level 3
- Time Warner (now Level 3)
- Century Link
- Comcast (Garden of the Gods and Nevada Avenue)
- City of Colorado Springs Traffic Department (may do swap or trade with a provider)
- CODT (may do a swap or trade with a provider).

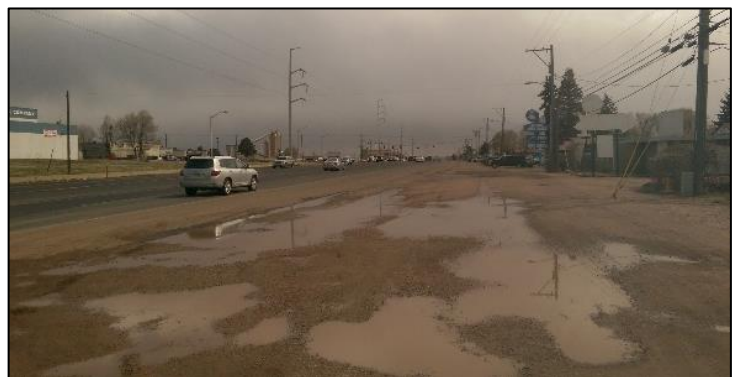
Level 3 seems to be the most aggressive as far as building network to new developments or customers. Level 3 supports many local military facilities and for Cybersecurity it has multiple services from simple Ethernet rings to full channels (up to 10Gig capacity for both) and also has the necessary security clearance in place. Level 3 recently acquired Time Warner's network and back office functions focused on selling and supporting retail users.

*Figure 2.8: Level 3 Fiber Routes in Master Plan area*



## Existing Drainage Facilities

The Master Plan area generally lacks adequate storm sewer for even the current conditions. The Templeton Gap Floodway is a 2-mile channelized levee that runs through the northern part of the study area, from Union Boulevard in the east and to Monument Creek to the west. It was constructed in 1949 to mitigate significant flood events and divert floodwater away from Shooks Run. Apart from this east-west drainage, there are no stormwater conveyance systems along Nevada Avenue itself or for the areas south of Templeton Gap and east of Nevada Avenue. There is also very little detention/storm water quality is currently provided for the existing older land-uses. This results in localized flooding in low-lying areas.



### *Evidence of inadequate stormwater infrastructure in the corridor*

Much of the Nevada Avenue roadway corridor through this zone currently lacks City standard curb and gutter and thus public storm sewer improvements. Current older storm sewer facilities were likely not designed to handle the larger storm events and current City criteria. There is evidenced throughout the corridor during periods of heavy rain where there is significant pooling of stormwater along the corridor.

It is therefore important to consider flood control and water quality with this master planning effort, particularly since the plan area is adjacent to Monument Creek. Any increase of impervious surfaces through proposed road infrastructure improvements or redevelopment are likely to trigger detention and/or water quality requirements. It will be difficult to address detention/water quality on a site by site basis and a myriad of different individual controls would exhaust resources necessary to maintain them. A regional detention/water quality pond could potentially be utilized within the corridor. The City has identified detention/water quality ponds as a priority within the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the County of Pueblo, particularly in older areas of the City that were originally constructed without such measures.

### Non-Potable Water

Demand for non-potable water may increase with the expansion of UCCS and the new median and park areas proposed in the plan. The extension of non-potable water sources for the UCCS campus and surrounding areas should be explored.

### Railroad Right-of-Way



*The disused railroad right-of-way provide opportunities for new trails, transit, and community spaces, and improved street connectivity.*

The right-of-way for the former Atchison, Topeka and Sante Fe Railroad runs along the eastern side of North Nevada Avenue from approximately Lee Street to Commerce Street. At Commerce Street, it diverges southeast behind the buildings that front North Nevada Avenue, before crossing Fillmore Street and heading south to connect with the Rock Island Railroad. The right-of way varies in width from between 60 feet and 130 feet at its widest. The existence of the railroad prevented the streets to the east, 4<sup>th</sup> street and Nichols Boulevard, from connecting to North Nevada Avenue.

The City is currently in negotiations to purchase the Lee Street to Commerce Street section of the former railroad right-of-way. This could contribute significantly to the renewal of the corridor, as it has the potential to provide opportunities for new trails, transit, and community spaces, as well as improved street connectivity. Figure 2.9 identifies the extent of the Railroad right-of-way in the corridor and the section that the City seeks to acquire.

### Environmental Considerations

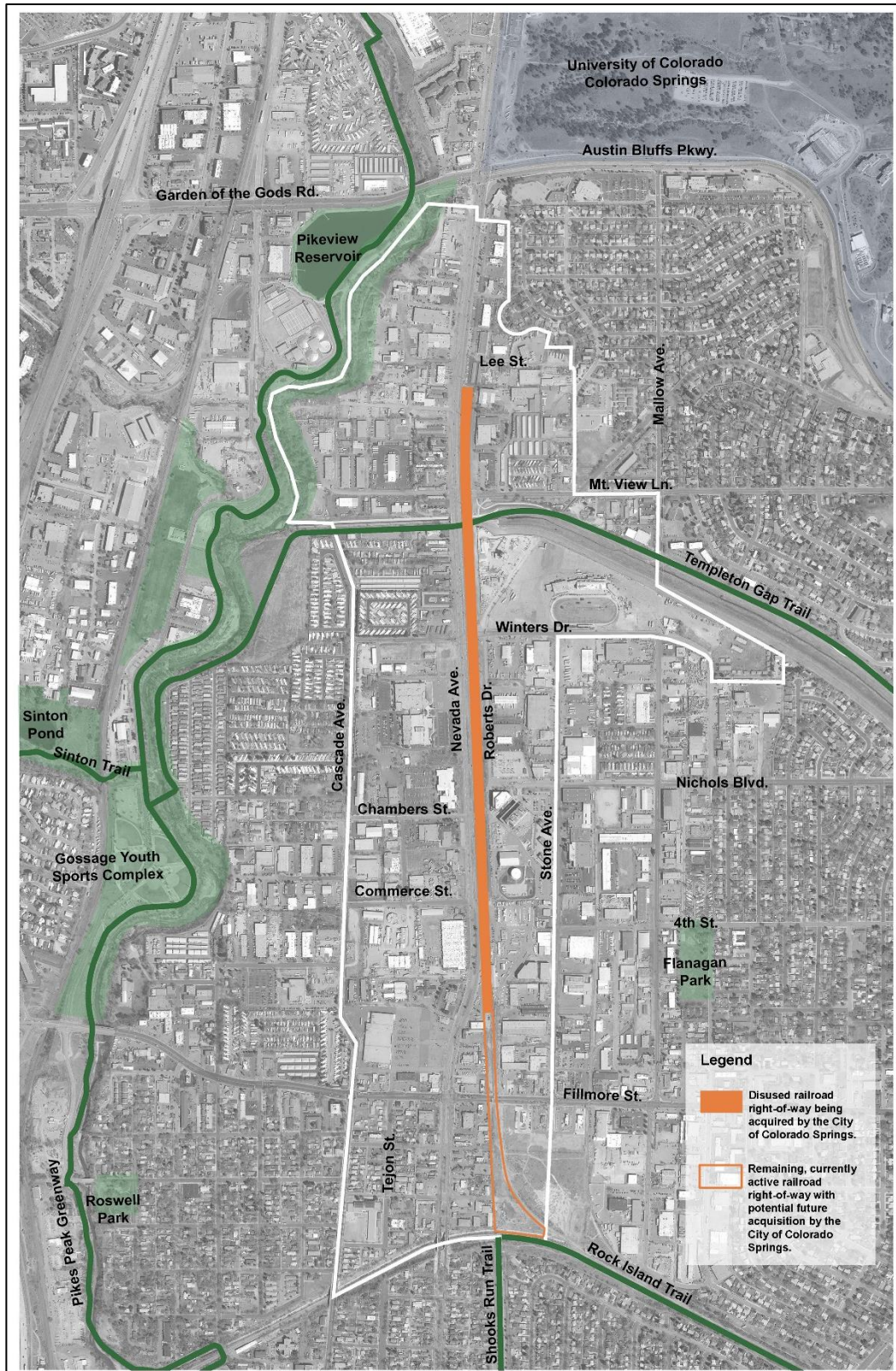
Over the years, many manufacturing businesses have come and gone along North Nevada. Many of the existing uses involve vehicle repair, older motels, and industrial sites. Some of these properties may have environmental issues such as leaking underground storage tanks, deposits of heavy metals, asbestos, and other problems that may need to be mitigated. While this is a challenge, many properties with these conditions have been successfully cleaned-up. Environmental clean-up is an important factor in the ultimate redevelopment of the corridor.



*Environmental clean-up may be required to facilitate redevelopment*



Figure 2.9: Atchison, Topeka and Sante Fe Railroad Right-of-Way



Source: City of Colorado Springs, Economic Development Department



## SECTION 3: MARKET ANALYSIS

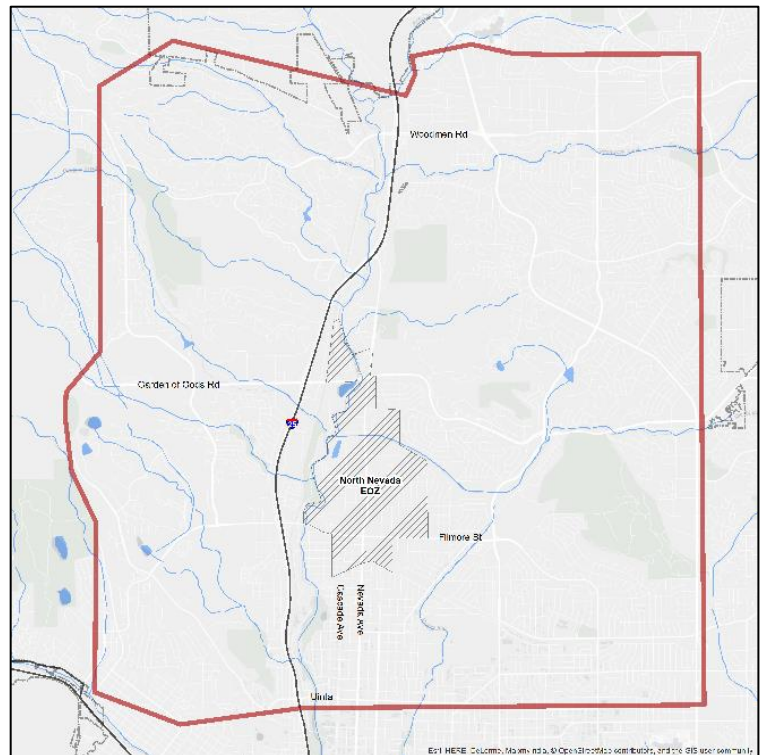
### 3.1 Introduction

A market study was conducted by ArLand Land Use Economics to help inform the North Nevada planning effort. The purpose of the market study was to provide input based on past trends, data analysis, and interviews regarding the future land use market potential in the North Nevada area. The analysis examined the potential for the type and overall magnitude of residential, retail, employment (including office and industrial), hotel, and entertainment land uses over a long-term planning horizon. The full Market Study is available on the City web site [www.ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNave](http://www.ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNave).

### 3.2 Market Area

The area of focus is the North Nevada Economic Opportunity Zone (EOZ), which is about 3.5 miles north of downtown Colorado Springs, and the North Nevada Avenue Primary Market Area (PMA) shown in red in Figure 3.1. The PMA generally consists of the area within about a 3-mile radius of the EOZ, which is the area from which a project will draw most its residents (housing), patrons (retail), employees (office, industrial, institutional) and visitors, and will also likely be the primary source of competition/ demand.

Figure 3.1: North Nevada Primary Market Area



Source: ArLand

Figure 3.1: Summary Market Demand

Summary Demand	Low	High
Multifamily (units)	1,160 units	2,160 units
Employment (sf) - includes office and industrial	650,000	2,780,000
Lodging (1-2 hotels) (sf)	425,000	425,000
Retail / Restaurants (sf) - includes grocery	115,000	130,000
Entertainment	Theater, bowling, etc.	

Source: ArLand

### 3.3 Summary Market Demand

The analysis indicates demand for a variety of uses as outlined in Figure 3.2. The biggest drivers of change in the area include the potential for expansion of the cybersecurity industry in the corridor and the planned expansion of the UCCS campus, including its new Sports Medicine and Performance Center. This is likely to generate demand for additional employment in the corridor and demand for additional multifamily units for both students and new workers in the area. The analysis also identifies potential demand for two new hotels to support the needs of UCCS and the wider community. There is also likely to be demand by 2040 for additional support services, including a smaller grocery store and entertainment options, to serve the anticipated growth in the area.

However, it will take time for the existing land uses to transition and there are challenges to harnessing this potential demand given market forces and trends. This Master Plan and its ongoing implementation, will provide the City with the tools to be proactive in positioning North Nevada Avenue as a preferred location for cyber-related and high-tech tenants. It will also enable the City to respond to demand for new housing and create an environment for complementary retail, lodging and entertainment uses.

### 3.4 Economic/Demographic Framework

- In 2016, there are about 2,000 households in the North Nevada area and 55,000 households in the PMA. There are over 170,000 households in the City of Colorado Springs and over 240,000 households in El Paso County.
- The median age in the North Nevada area is older than the other areas examined at 40.4 years. The desirable “Millennial” population (young adults who are between 25-34 years old) represents about 15% of the population across the geographic areas analyzed (EOZ, PMA, City and County).
- Area ethnicity is predominately white, although there is a higher percentage of residents of Hispanic origin in the study area at 22% of the population, compared to less than 20% of the population in the other areas analyzed.
- While average household incomes are relatively low in the EOZ area at about \$28,000, they are much higher in the PMA and the City and County at \$70-80,000 per household.
- El Paso County felt the negative effect of the Great Recession, but has experienced a net gain in employment of about 17,000 over the past 10 years, with health care and social assistance being the largest and fastest growing jobs sector.

### 3.5 Market Conditions and Future Demand by Sector

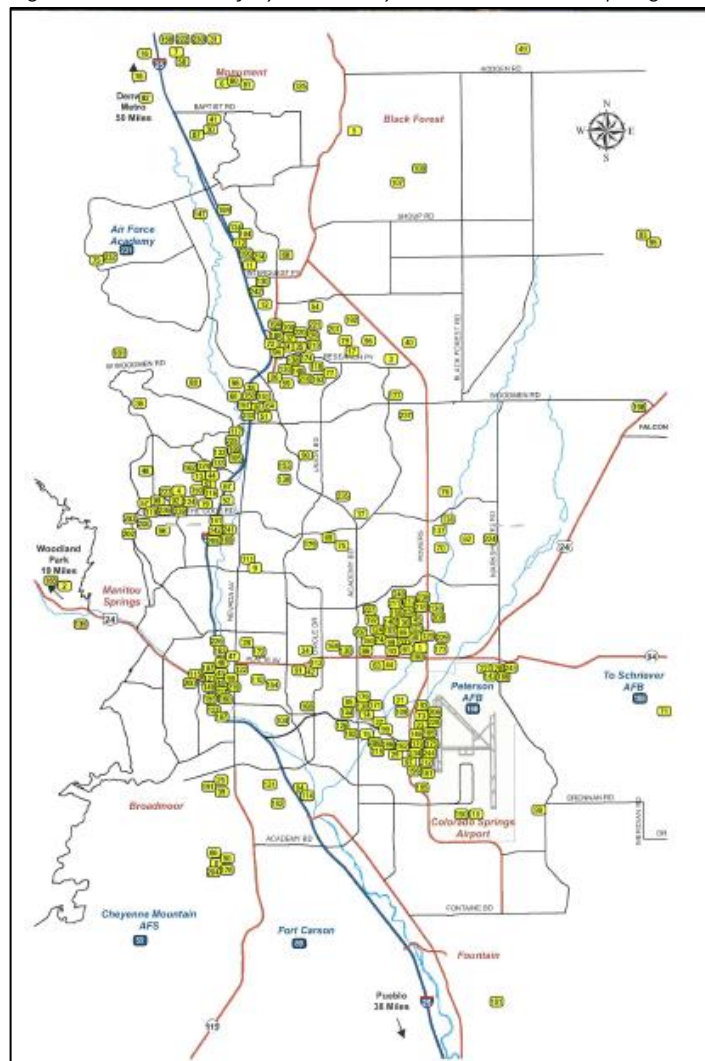
#### Employment: Office and Industrial

It is anticipated that the North Nevada employment demand will be driven by the growth of the cybersecurity industry, which is forecast to grow at a compound annual 4.4% rate nationally. Most of this growth is anticipated to take place in office space. The current number of local cybersecurity jobs is estimated at 1,000 to 10,000 jobs, with most local cybersecurity firms located in conventional office space clustered along I-25 (Figure 3.3).

The National Cybersecurity Center is to occupy the UCCS owned building on North Nevada that currently accommodates the Expo Center. This will be focused on research, education, and training. There will be a local and state government response team to help local governments, as well as research laboratories and associated activities in collaboration with UCCS.

Future employment growth is estimated to generate demand for 650,000 to 2.78 million square feet. The low end of the range assumes that market area jobs grow at a consistent 1.1% range and that the North Nevada area captures 50% of future employment growth in the Professional, Scientific and Technical category where the majority of cybersecurity jobs lie. For the high end of the employment range, the analysis begins with a forecast of office jobs at the County level and assumes that the estimated 10,000 local cybersecurity jobs grow at a 4.4% growth rate annually. It also assumes North Nevada Avenue captures a significant percentage of growth in that jobs category assuming that the area becomes a highly attractive employment location.

Figure 3.2: Location of Cybersecurity Firms in Colorado Springs



Source: Colorado Springs Regional Business Alliance

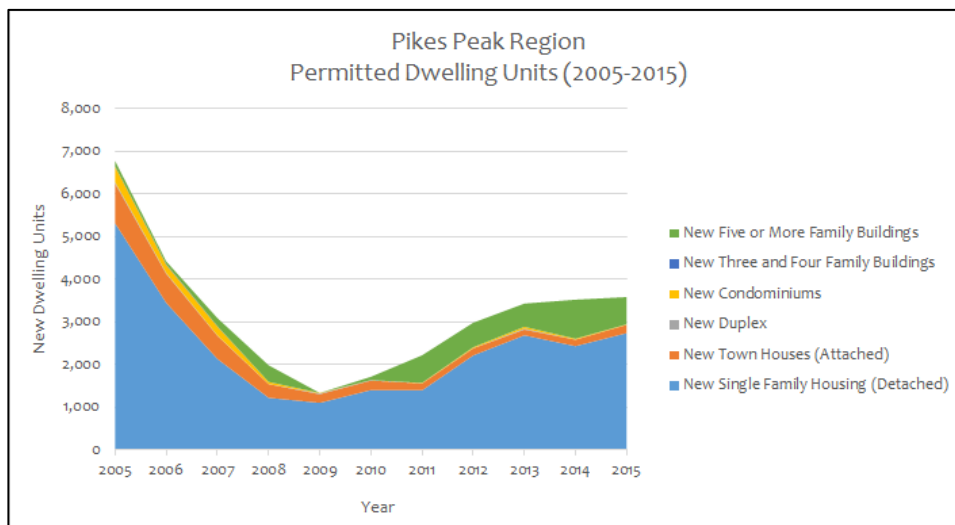
In addition to cybersecurity jobs growth, there is potential growth in other sectors, such as medical services and innovation, as well as growth in professional services. As the demand for space changes, there is potential demand for office as well as flex space, which would include industrial space that could be used flexibly.

A couple of important points to note about the potential for employment related uses are as follows:

- There is a lot of competition for cybersecurity in El Paso County, in Colorado, and across the country and cybersecurity jobs do not need to locate near the National Cybersecurity Center to be successful. Other office, residential, and retail locations in Colorado Springs will also be competitive locations for cybersecurity jobs and services. Since cybersecurity jobs do not need to locate near the National Cybersecurity Center to be successful, it is particularly important that North Nevada Avenue stand out as a preferred location.
- Fast growing high tech and primary employers typically prefer to look for existing available office space, of which there is a great deal. The current office market inventory is estimated at 28 million square feet, with only 5 million square feet of that being Class A space.
- There has been no new speculative general office construction in the PMA except for medical office buildings.
- Office space vacancies in the PMA have been over 25% since 2013 and despite the relatively strong and consistent employment growth over the past three years, there have been some quarters of negative absorption. However, this may be partially attributable to the type of space available.
- Recent industrial trends in this market area have been challenging with a current vacancy rate of 35% following some quarters of negative absorption. Some of this may be attributed to the type of industrial space available. However, there may be the potential to transition some of the existing industrial buildings over time to accommodate future industry needs.

## Residential

Figure 3.4: Pikes Peak Region Permitted Dwelling Units



Source: Pikes Peak Regional Building Report, ArLand

Single family detached units comprise the predominant residential building format permitted in the region. There were approximately 3,600 residential unit permits issued in the Pikes Peak Region in 2015, with 76% of these permits being for single family detached units. However, a dramatic slowdown in the number of single family attached units built (townhomes, condos) has occurred recently because of the construction defects issue. This has led to an increase in the number of apartment buildings constructed in recent years. Given the number of planned single family detached

communities in the broader market area, and because of UCCS, the North Nevada Avenue area is envisioned as an ideal location for denser, multifamily housing.

Overall multifamily residential demand in the market area is estimated at 1,160 to 2,160 units. The higher number accommodates additional potential student and faculty housing needs and the growing cybersecurity industry. Past housing studies have also indicated that there is significant affordable housing demand throughout the City and County. While the North Nevada Avenue area accommodates a fairly significant affordable senior population in mobile home parks, future plans can also accommodate additional affordable housing options in the area.



## Retail

In the market area, University Village fulfills big box and chain demand, as well as some restaurant demand. The community has voiced support for “unique” retail, not “big box” retail, and has indicated a strong desire for grocery and entertainment options. There is an estimated 115,000 to 130,000 square feet of retail demand for the North Nevada Avenue corridor.

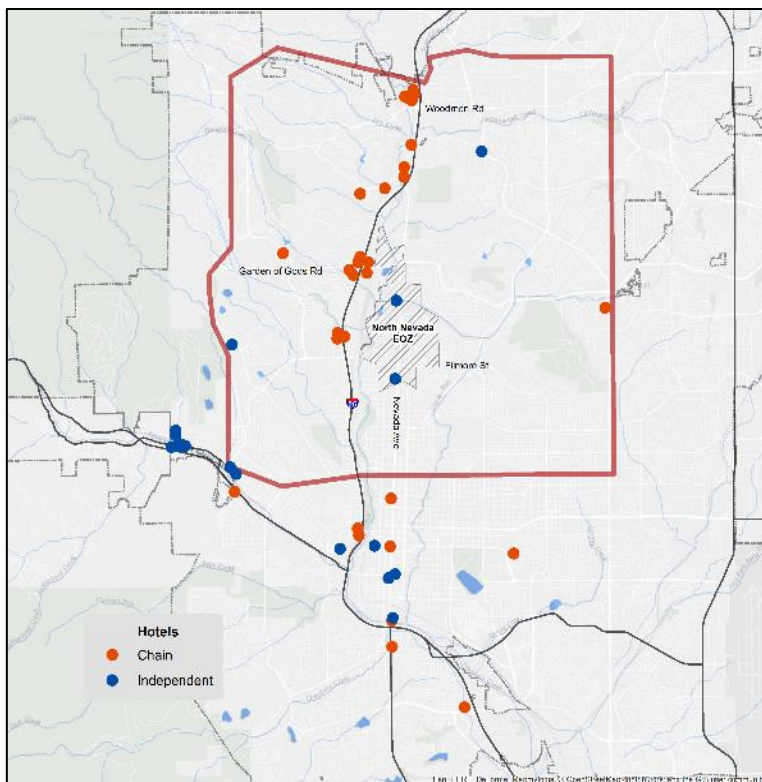
Although providing unique retail offerings is very challenging outside of downtown-type environments, it is not impossible. For example, there are two planned restaurant/breweries for the southern portion of the study area, which will begin to change the area’s character. Other particularly strong potential categories include clothing (particularly women’s clothing) and full service restaurants. Services geared to students (i.e. some sporting goods items) are also opportunities in this area.

There are many grocery stores operating in the market area today, including well-known, large grocers, Hispanic grocery stores, and other specialty markets. In addition, many households in the market area spend a portion of their grocery dollars at the military commissaries, which partially skews grocery store demand. However, despite there being fewer residential households than grocers may typically like to be surrounded by, there is a potential small service gap present. If residential development is attracted to this area at the level anticipated, the analysis indicates a moderate level of demand for a smaller grocery store in the long-term planning horizon.



*Panera Bread at University Village Colorado Springs*

*Figure 3.5: Hotel Locations in North Nevada PMA*



Source: STR, ArLand

## Entertainment

Entertainment options in the North Nevada area appear to be lacking and the community voiced a desire for movie theaters and other entertainment options. There is some indication that entertainment is a potential use that should be incorporated into the planning effort. In particular, a movie theater becomes an increasingly desirable use if the number of students in the area increases. Other entertainment options, or certain businesses that mix restaurant with entertainment, are also possible.

## Hotels

The hotel market is relatively robust in the Colorado Springs area as shown in Figure 3.5. A Hilton Garden Inn is in the planning pipeline to help meet some current demand in the downtown market. In the future, given growth at UCCS as well as future growth in the cybersecurity industry, the analysis indicates potential demand for 417 rooms or approximately two new hotels. One of the options to explore would be the potential for a “teaching hotel” in partnership with a major chain and professional operator, a model that has been successful in other markets.

## SECTION 4: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

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### 4.1 Introduction

The City of Colorado Springs staff team, Steering Committee, and the NES consultant team shared a strong commitment to working with Colorado Springs residents, businesses, and organizations to create a community-based plan to renew the North Nevada Avenue project area.

To that end, an open and extensive community involvement process was conducted that played a significant role in the creation of the North Nevada Renewal Plan. The community's response to this call to action was impressive: ***894 unduplicated individuals participated during the eight-month process.***

The process was inclusive, deliberative, and strategic. It moved sequentially from consideration of broad topics, to translation of spoken dreams into a project vision, to response to first general and then specific approaches for making the vision a reality. Each process step informed subsequent steps and each was grounded in the judgment developed through data analysis combined with community deliberation. The direction established through this process created a plan that is both responsible and responsive.

#### **The Community Involvement Process...**

- Was open and transparent to all who are interested in the North Nevada Avenue corridor.
- Combined and considered both technical analysis and the “lived experiences” of people who care about the corridor.
- Built relationships of trust with and among process participants.
- Developed public judgment by providing factual information as well as multiple opportunities for people to hear from each other.
- Supported throughout by a vigorous communication effort to promote and document the process.

### 4.2 Process Promotion

A robust communication program was conducted throughout the process to support and promote community participation in creating the plan. A wide range of communication tools were used to make project area residents, businesses, and the broader Colorado Springs community aware of the project and to encourage their active participation in the planning process.

The communication program included:

- A project flier mailed in July to approximately 1,500 property owners in the project area;
- Handouts and posters hand-delivered in July to all businesses within the project area boundary;
- A project page established on the City of Colorado Springs' website which served as a key information source throughout the process. The site contained all verbatim and summary community responses received through every process step and all presentations and materials. The site also featured video coverage of all community workshops\*;
- A series of news releases distributed to all local news media;
- Social media messages consistently posted on Facebook, Twitter and Next Door; and
- A series of e-newsletters distributed via email to all participants/survey respondents throughout the process.

*\*All verbatim and summary responses gathered through each process step, as well as all process materials and videos, can be found on the project website: [www.ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNAve](http://www.ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNAve).*



#### 4.3 Process Description

##### Step 1: Identify Issues and Vision Elements

The first step in the process was designed to gather a wide range of opinions about the project area. It was important early on to hear and understand community residents' concerns related to challenges facing the project area, the opportunities they believe now exist and could exist, and their hopes for the future of the area.

The following three questions were asked through each of the Step 1 outreach methods described below:

1. What are the biggest challenges for this area?
2. What are the opportunities you see for this area?
3. How would you like this area to look and feel 10 years from now?



Outreach Method	Rationale	Dates	Participation
Stakeholder interviews	One-on-one interviews with potentially-impacted and interested stakeholders identified initial insights into their assessment of the project area and their commitment to and interest in renewing it.	June-early August	15
Roundtable discussions with: - Representatives from adjacent neighborhoods - Project area business owners and managers - Mobile home park managers in/around the area - Members of business-related groups in the community	Encouraged informal discussions with and between: - Representatives of those with the potential to be most impacted by the project - People with knowledge of the area's business/market	July 11 – July 27	40
Online survey through the City website	Provided equal and widespread opportunity for all residents to conveniently share their individual perspectives	July 11 – August 15	589
Community workshop	Offered open, public forum for all who are interested in influencing the plan to provide opinions individually and discuss in small groups	August 3	About 200
Total estimated Step 1 unduplicated participants			844



*Participants at roundtable discussion*

After conducting the interviews and roundtables and receiving the first two weeks of survey responses, the consultant team prepared a preliminary list of challenges, opportunities and elements of a 10-year vision of the project area. That list was shared with those who participated in the first of a series of community workshops held on August 3, 2016.

Workshop participants worked in small groups to review and prioritize the list of the project area's challenges and opportunities. Participant groups were also asked to identify any 10-year vision elements missing from the preliminary list. In addition, all participants were asked to individually complete a response form to identify any challenges or opportunities they believed were missing from the preliminary list. The final, comprehensive list of project area challenges, opportunities and vision elements was prepared by the consultant team, based on all responses received through process Step 1.

## Step 1 Responses

Summary of Step 1 Responses	
Responses gathered through all of the Step 1 outreach methods were analyzed by frequency of mention to identify priority topics. The summarized responses below reflect the most-mentioned challenges, opportunities and vision elements.	
Project Area Challenges	
First Tier	
- Transportation: Traffic volume; business access; parking; lack of transit	
- Business: Mix and nature of existing businesses; fear of displacement of existing businesses	
- Housing: Lack of /need for a mix of housing that's affordable for all age groups; displacement of current residents	
- Land use: Many and incompatible land uses; private property rights and fear of re-zoning; impacts on neighborhoods	
Project Area Opportunities	
First Tier	
- Business: Need/desire for a combination of new and existing; UCCS is a draw; National Cybersecurity Center	
- Transportation: Improved traffic flow/parking; pedestrian/bicycle accommodation; added transit; business access	
- Land use: Area of mixed-use with live/work/shop/play; mix of old and new; model for future land use planning	
- Housing: Serves all ages and incomes; intergenerational approach; includes high-density	
- Infrastructure: Driver, pedestrian, bicyclist, shopper, and employee safety; streetscapes; stormwater management	
Project Area Vision Elements	
First Tier	
- Land use/planning: Mix of uses; respect existing business owners/residents; establish a character; a "destination"	
- Transportation: Access to businesses; multi-modal transportation; minimize traffic/transit impacts to neighborhoods	
- Business mix: Wide variety; community-based flavor; service-related businesses for people living in the area	

(A brief re-cap of the responses from process Steps 1 through 5 will be included throughout this section. More complete summaries of the community's responses from each process step can be found in [Appendix 1](#) of this Plan.)

*"Create businesses that are not only good for this area, but also good for the community."*

Roundtable participant

*"Safely accommodate all transportation modes – high traffic volume + bikes and pedestrians."*

Online survey respondent

## Use of Step 1 Responses

Project participants' prioritized list of challenges and opportunities and the key vision elements they identified served as the foundation for the project area vision.

## Our Vision

*We imagine and look forward to a renewed North Nevada Avenue Corridor.*

*Our collective vision serves as our foundation for the future.*



### *How we move:*

- \* Connections within the area and to the community are strengthened by improved roadways and expanded transit service.
- \* Pedestrians and cyclists are encouraged and are safe from vehicular traffic.
- \* Access within the corridor is easy and serves resident, business and visitor needs.
- \* Trail connections link us to local and regional trails as well as to the waterways near us.

### *How we live:*

- \* Our vibrant community is strengthened by housing that serves the needs of existing and new residents and offers options for all ages and levels of income.
- \* We can conveniently access restaurants, shops, stores, and entertainment activities which also draw people from all over the community.
- \* Our corridor's streets, sidewalks, drainage, streetscape, and other infrastructure function well.
- \* Parks, public spaces and community gathering places increase our sense of community and pride in our corridor.

### *How we work:*

- \* A creative mix of business types and uses supports and employs our residents and serves as a regional economic magnet.
- \* Historic and existing businesses are valued and new businesses and employment generators are welcomed.
- \* Services and facilities support the needs of UCCS and its students.

### *How we look and feel:*

- \* Our corridor is clean and it is safe.
- \* Our residents enjoy public green spaces, amenities, trees and landscaped areas.
- \* The history of our area is celebrated and incorporated into the fabric of our community.
- \* Our corridor is a destination because its appealing character is unlike any other in Colorado Springs.

August 2016



## Step 2: Prioritize Vision Elements and Review Technical Data



*The project team share results of market assessment and infrastructure analysis with participants at Community Workshop #2*

A second community workshop on September 13, 2016 was the venue for review of the project vision. In order to get a clear picture of the community's priorities related to the vision, workshop participants worked in small groups to discuss and agree on the vision elements they believed were most important for first action as the plan is implemented.

*"Those with affordable housing want to know what will happen to them if their landlords sell. Will there be assistance in place for people?"*

Workshop participant group response

At the same workshop, the NES team shared results of and answered questions about its market assessment and infrastructure analysis so that process participants could begin to develop judgment about current and projected conditions in the area.

### Step 2 Responses

#### Workshop Groups' Assessment of Vision Elements Most Important for First Action

- \* A creative mix of business types and uses supports and employs our residents and serves as a regional economic magnet.
- \* Connections within the area and to the community are strengthened by improved roadways and expanded transit service.
- \* Our vibrant community is strengthened by housing that serves the needs of existing and new residents and offers options for all ages and levels of income.
- \* Our corridor's streets, sidewalks, drainage, streetscape, and other infrastructure function well.

## Use of Step 2 Responses

Guided by both the community's prioritization of vision elements and results of NES's market assessment and infrastructure study, the NES team worked collaboratively with City staff and the Steering Committee to develop multiple land use plan concepts or "what if" approaches for the area.

*"Homes and traffic patterns should be planned to make this a place people want to live."*

Roundtable participant

## Step 3: Review and Respond to Plan Concepts



Participants at Workshop #3 discuss plan concepts

Three concepts were presented to the community at a third workshop on October 27, 2016. The workshop provided a venue for participants to ask questions about the concepts and to deliberate among themselves about what they liked best and least about each. Participants were also asked to provide the rationale for their assessments, providing insights into the values driving their responses.

Summary of Group Responses to Concepts	
<b>Concept A—Mixed Use Neighborhood</b>	
<b>Like Best About</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Variety and balance of land uses</li><li>- Amount/type of residential areas</li><li>- Amount of and access to mixed use</li><li>- Least amount of traffic</li></ul>	<b>Like Least About</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Not enough entertainment</li><li>- Feels uncertain/is it feasible?</li></ul>
<b>Concept B—Employment Hub</b>	
<b>Like Best About</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Brings in more job opportunities</li><li>- Improved infrastructure</li></ul>	<b>Like Least About</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Too much commercial/manufacturing</li><li>- Loss of residential uses</li><li>- Creates the most traffic</li></ul>
<b>Concept C—Urban Village</b>	
<b>Like Best About</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Good balance of land uses</li><li>- Amount/location/type of residential uses</li></ul>	<b>Like Least About</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Lack of mixed use</li><li>- Traffic volume</li><li>- Lack of light rail or streetcar</li></ul>

## Use of Step 3 Responses

Workshop participants' group responses to the land use concepts and continued technical analysis informed NES's decision-making regarding recommended land use elements of the Draft Plan.

*"I'm excited about the possibility of vibrant, fresh thinking in terms of urban planning and making some historical landmarks vital."*

Workshop participant

### Step 4: Review and Respond to Renewal Plan Options

At the fourth and final community workshop on December 8, 2016, the project team explored with workshop participants multiple options related street design, transit service, streetscape, and the City's potential use of the excess railroad right-of-way in the project area. Workshop participants again worked in small groups to discuss and reach agreement on a numerical ranking indicating their group's level of support for each option.

*"The view! Look at that mountain. Look at the space! This is sometimes the first thing visitors see as they get off of I-25. Yuck!"*

Online survey respondent

<b>COMMUNITY WORKSHOP</b> <b>DECEMBER 8, 2016</b> <b>Group Level of Support for Plan Options</b>	
CENTRAL ZONE OPTIONS	AVERAGE RATING*
<b>STREET</b>	
Off-street bike trail	1.45
Narrow median	2.80
Wide median	2.80
Minimal improvements/street width	3.09
On-street bike lane	3.27
On-street parking	4.54
<b>TRANSIT</b>	
Separate transit corridor	2.72
On-street with through traffic	2.81
Separate on-street transit lane	3.60
Separate transit corridor with parking	4.20
<b>STREETSCAPE</b>	
Semi-urban	2.10
Urban	2.70
Suburban	3.00
<b>EXCESS RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY</b>	
Hybrid: City sells right-of-way; incentives for public benefits	2.40
City keeps right-of-way and uses for public purposes	2.60
City sells right-of-way to adjacent land owners	2.80
SOUTH ZONE OPTIONS	AVERAGE RATING
<b>STREET</b>	
Off-street bike trail	1.54
On-street bike lane	3.09
Minimal improvements/street width	3.27
On-street angled parking	4.00
<b>TRANSIT</b>	
Separate transit corridor	2.72
On-street with through traffic	3.09
<b>STREETSCAPE</b>	
Urban	2.10
Semi-urban	2.80
<b>EXCESS RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY</b>	
Hybrid: City sells right-of-way; incentives for public benefits	2.20
City keeps right-of-way and uses for public purposes	2.70
City sells right-of-way to adjacent land owners	3.20

\* Based on a 1 to 5 ranking, with 1 indicating the highest level of support.





### Use of Step 4 Responses

The plan options rankings were valuable to NES as final decisions were made regarding community-supported elements related to infrastructure design as well as the look and feel of the project area to include in the Draft Plan.

## Step 5: Respond to the Draft North Nevada Avenue Plan

### Community Review and Response

The community was invited to an open house held on January 17, 2017 to view displays, hear a short presentation, and to provide final comments about the Draft Plan.

### Use of Step 5 Responses

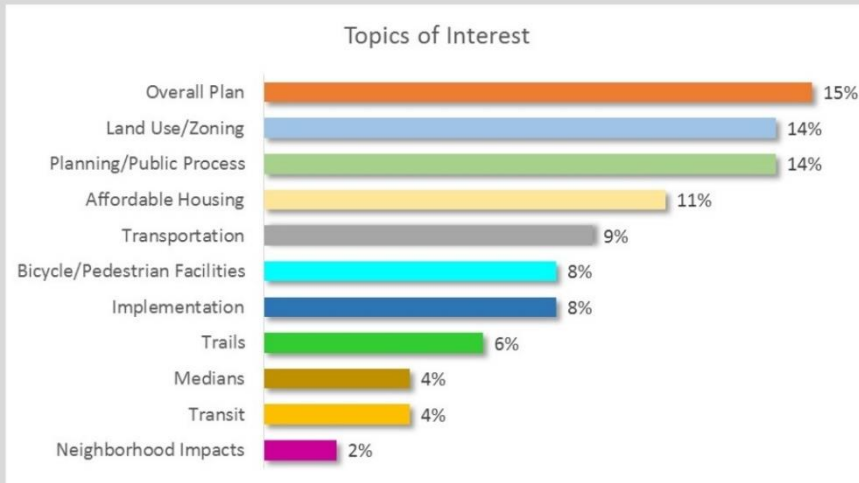
All responses about the Draft Plan received through the open house were reviewed by the NES consultant team and were used to both confirm and “fine-tune” the Draft North Nevada Avenue Plan.



*Participants at the Open House review the Draft Master Plan*

## OPEN HOUSE RESPONSE SUMMARY

Is there anything about the Draft North Nevada Avenue Plan that you would like to make sure the project team understands?



Approximately 100 people attended the open house and their responses to the Draft Plan were generally positive. A number of people indicated support for the overall approach of the Plan. Some cited liking specific plan elements such as zoning which allows for both new and existing uses, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities and trails, while others praised the planning process itself. Concerns focused on the amount of density, the fear of increased traffic, potential displacement of residents of mobile home parks in the area, and fear of impacts on the Old North End Neighborhood.

***“The significant frustration I have in the final presentation is the complete lack of respect for the impact this development will have on the Old North End Neighborhood.”***

Open House participant

***“My favorite elements are the dedicated transportation corridors and connected bike and trail systems.”***

Open House participant

### Step 6: City Review of the Recommended Renewal Plan

The community will have additional opportunities to comment on the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master at the City’s Planning Commission and City Council public hearings prior to approval and adoption of the Plan.

### Acknowledgement and Appreciation

The NES consultant team acknowledges and thanks the hundreds of community residents who contributed their insights, ideas, dreams, and many hours to help create the North Nevada Avenue Plan. The Plan is much more likely to endure and to result in positive action as a result of their collective contributions.

## SECTION 5: THE RECOMMENDED PLAN

### 5.1 Determining Factors

#### Interpreting the Market Analysis

As noted in Section 1, this Master Plan is to be based upon realistic expectations of future market demand in the area. This requires the identified demand in the market analysis to be converted into acreages based on estimated Floor Area Ratios (FARs) and density, as shown in Figure 5.1. The estimated market demand will not absorb all of the existing land in the study area and thus some existing uses will remain. The new uses anticipated in the area will primarily be student housing to support the university and new office space for cybersecurity, medical offices, and high-tech businesses to support UCCS curriculums in cybersecurity and sports medicine. This analysis allows us to assess the anticipated change in land use in the area, which in turn enables an assessment of where that change should occur and what the impact will be on existing infrastructure in the area.

Figure 5.1: Interpretation of Market Demand

	Summary Demand		Avge Density/FAR	Acres	
	Low	High		Low	High
Multifamily (units)	1,160	2,160	20 du/ac	58	108
Office (sf)	650,000	2,700,000	0.40 FAR	37	155
Industrial (sf)	-	-			
Lodging (1-2 hotels) (sf)	425,000	425,000	0.75 FAR	13	13
Retail/Restaurants (sf) ~ including grocery	115,000	130,000	0.20 FAR	13	15
Entertainment	theater, bowling, etc.			5	11
TOTAL				126	302
DEVELOPABLE ACREAGE IN PROJECT AREA				350	350
RESIDUAL LAND AREA				224	48

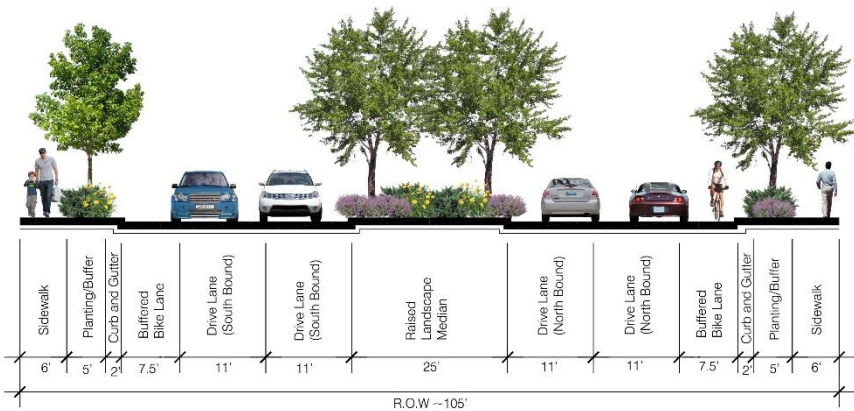
#### Interpreting the Community Input

A second driving force behind this Master Plan is incorporating the vision and preferences identified by the community through the stakeholder process. The key components of the community vision statement are: *How we Move, How We Live, How We Work, and How We Look and Feel*. In this context, the Plan Goals are focused on providing a greater variety of residential accommodation to meet the affordability needs of the community, to provide student and faculty housing to support UCCS growth, to provide other housing options for the new workforce that will be attracted to the area, and services and gathering places for those new residents and workers. The Plan Goals also seek to encourage opportunities for new businesses to support the growth of the cybersecurity and medical research, as well as encouraging opportunities for permitted existing businesses to grow and prosper.

**LAND USE CONCEPTS:** To evolve the components of the vision statement into a master plan for the area, the community was presented with three alternative land use concepts; an urban village, a mixed-use community, and an employment zone. These concepts also identified potential options for improved street connections throughout the plan area to help disperse the additional traffic that would be generated by the land use concepts. Summaries of these concepts are provided in [Appendix 2](#). The most popular option was the mixed-use community, with the housing focused component of the urban-village also receiving positive feedback. The participants viewed the employment zone least favorably as it did not sufficiently foster the community connectivity aspirations of the vision statement. These preferences have been incorporated into the final plan



recommendations. However, the plan intentionally avoids making specific land use recommendations for individual properties, other than the identified Opportunity Areas. As noted above, the anticipated market demand does not encompass the entire acreage in the study area and some existing uses will remain. It will be for the market to determined where the new development occurs, subject to the recommendations of this plan.

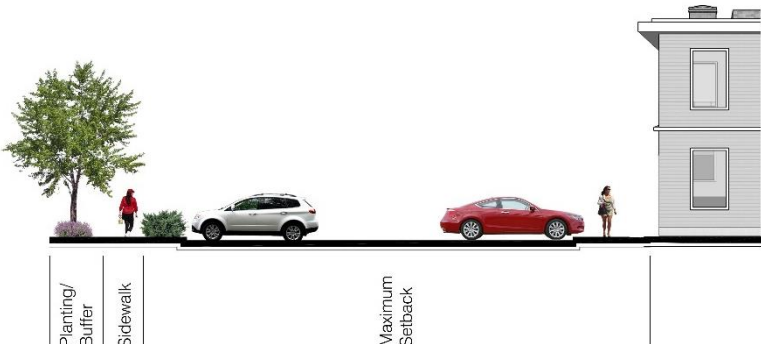


*Landscaped medians, bike lanes and detached sidewalks with tree lawns were preferred throughout the corridor.*

**CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES:** In addition to land use characteristics, the community provided input on the proposed street cross-section for North Nevada Avenue, as this will determine the functionality of the road corridor and the visual characteristics of the area. The details of the Corridor Alternatives are provided in [Appendix 3](#). The community’s preference was for the inclusion of landscaped medians, bike lanes, and detached sidewalks with tree lawns throughout the corridor. The community was given the option of narrow or wide medians but there was no clear preference. On-street parking was identified as a preference for the area south of Fillmore Street, and the former railroad corridor was identified as a good location for an off-street bike/ pedestrian trail and for an off-street transit corridor.

Decisions about the exact design of the street and the need for and location of additional road connections will be made by the City Traffic Engineering Department. This Master Plan recommends that the City prepare a separate study to assess in more detail the implementation of the street cross-sections and new road connections suggested through this planning effort.

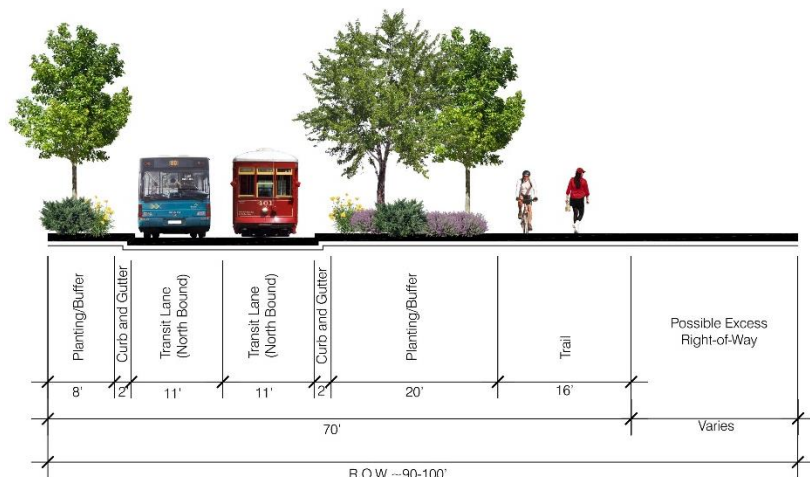
The community was also presented with the option of an urban, semi-urban, or suburban streetscape, which relates to the relationship of the buildings to the street. The preferred option for the area to the south of Fillmore street was an urban streetscape, reflective of its closer relationship to the Old North End neighborhood. For the remainder of the Master Plan area, a semi-urban streetscape was considered the most desirable and practical, which would allow for one row of parking between the building and street.



*The Semi-Urban Streetscape option was favored for most of the corridor*

**MOBILITY:** The Plan also identifies opportunities to improve vehicular connectivity in the area by adding new road connections. The City’s proposed purchase of the abandoned railroad right-of-way provides the opportunity to connect streets on the eastern side of the study area to Nevada Avenue. There are also opportunities to improve north-south street connectivity, although these will be more costly and long-term as they require bridging the Templeton Gap drainageway. These improvements to the street grid will help to disperse traffic so that the new traffic generated by the increased density of development in the area will not all be channeled onto North Nevada avenue. The introduction of signalization at the new street intersections will also help traffic conditions, as it will spread the traffic out along the corridor. Improvements to North Nevada itself, including curb, gutter, sidewalks and medians will physically and visually narrow the street, which will also help to slow traffic. These latter two measures will reduce the current bottle-necking that occurs at the intersection of North Nevada Avenue with Austin Bluffs Parkway.

In addition to improving the vehicular traffic movements in the area, the plan goals also seek to improve pedestrian and bike connectivity. Sidewalks along North Nevada Avenue and connecting streets are paramount to making the Plan area more accessible and livable for the existing and future community in this area. The addition of off-street trails will also improve accessibility and attractiveness of the area for pedestrians and cyclists. Improving existing and introducing new medians to the streets section will help pedestrians negotiate the crossing of this wide right of way.



*The community supported the use of the abandoned railroad right-of-way as a trail and transit corridor with any excess right-of-way being used for other public purposes*

Finally, movement in the corridor will also be improved by the addition of reliable, frequent public transportation. Currently buses serve the area via Cascade Avenue. The Plan proposes to add a dedicated transit corridor along the railroad right of way to improve connectivity from downtown to UCCS, University Village and beyond, with the potential to connect to the park and ride facility at Woodmen Road and I-25 in the future. During the stakeholder process, there was a general acknowledgement of the desirability of the proposed transit corridor. However, streetcar advocates have consistently lobbied for the introduction of a streetcar operation along the abandoned railroad right-of-way, to include a dining car and extensive storage sheds. Conversely, others prefer to see the transit corridor function as an integral part of the City-wide transit system. To achieve this, and in order for the City to receive federal funding to implement transit improvements, any new transit facilities must be:

- Part of City-wide network
- Reliable
- Frequent
- Direct (predictable path)
- Fast (separate/dedicated right of way)
- Accessible for persons with disabilities
- Attractive and comfortable

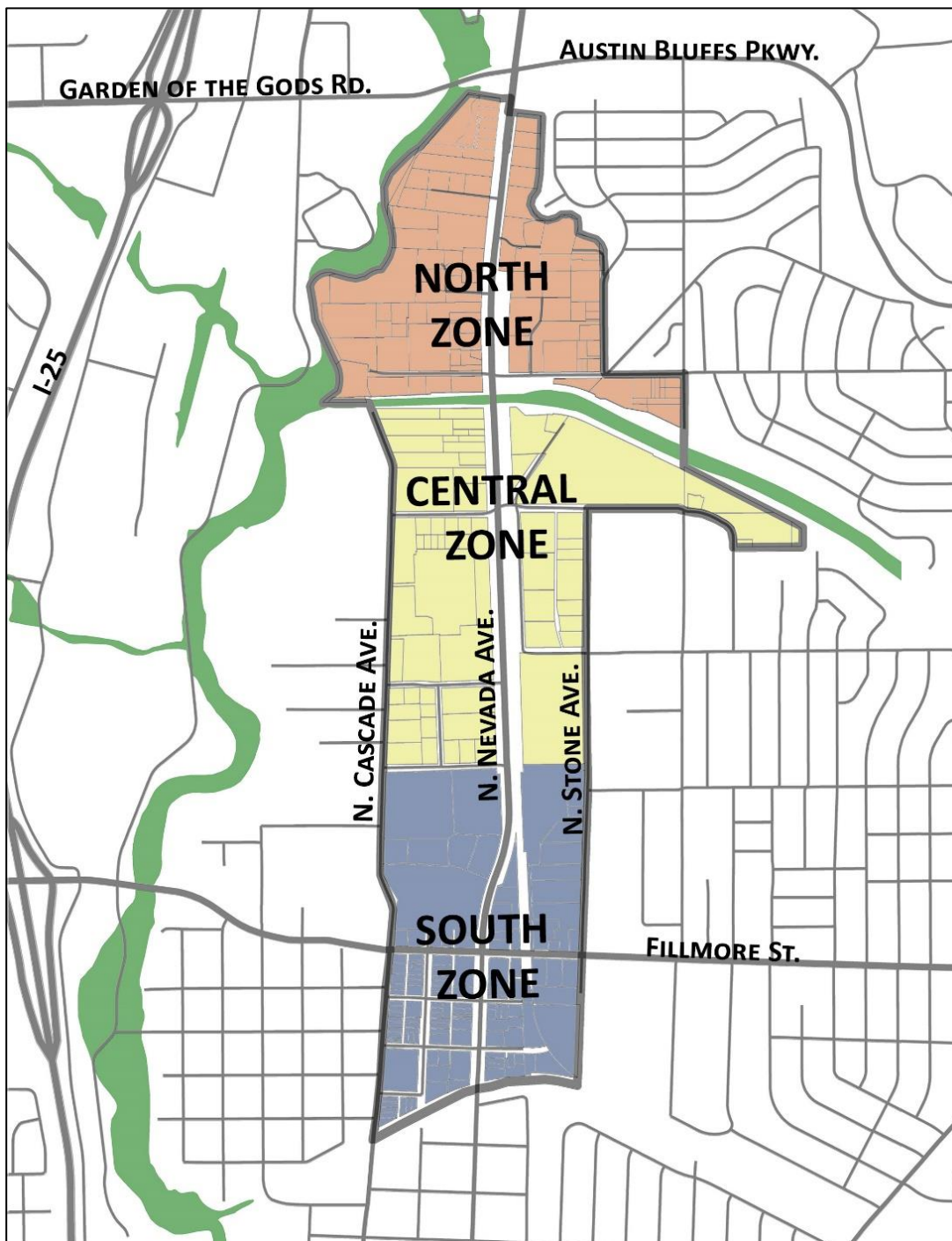
In addition, residents of the Old North End have expressed concern about the impact of the proposed transit corridor on their neighborhood to the south of the study area. This stems for the termination of the transit corridor at the Rock Island Railroad and the implication that it will continue into the Old North End. This Master Plan has not sought to make recommendations regarding the type of transit that should utilize the proposed transit corridor, nor the preferred route once it leaves the Master Plan area. It is a recommendation of this Plan that the City commission a further study to fully assess the transit options for the corridor and its transition to adjoining areas.

**CHARACTER:** The look and feel of the corridor will be changed through the proposed improvements to the street cross-section for North Nevada Avenue. This in itself will act as a stimulus to private investment in the area. Other improvements will occur through the proposed introduction of a linear park and trail system along the railroad-right of way. The Plan also includes recommendations regarding the desired streetscape, which the community suggested should be of a more urban/semi-urban scale. This leads to recommendations relating to maximum setbacks and incentives to encourage new development to maintain an active street frontage. Redevelopment within the Opportunity Areas identified in the plan will improve the look of the corridor by removing unattractive uses and by creating new destinations within the corridor and focal points for the community. The option to sell any excess railroad right-of-way to adjacent businesses can provide the City with the opportunity to incentivize the provision of public benefit in the form of new public plazas, parks, or art.

## 5.2 Master Plan Zones

In order to more readily develop the Master Plan goals and recommendations, the study area is divided into three planning zones: North, Central, and South. The North Zone is the area from Austin Bluffs Parkway to the Templeton Gap drainage. The Central Zone runs from Templeton Gap drainage to Commerce Street on the west side of Nevada Avenue and to the southern extent of the Birdsall Power Plant on the east side. The South Zone encompasses the remainder of the Plan area from Commerce Street to the Rock Island railroad.

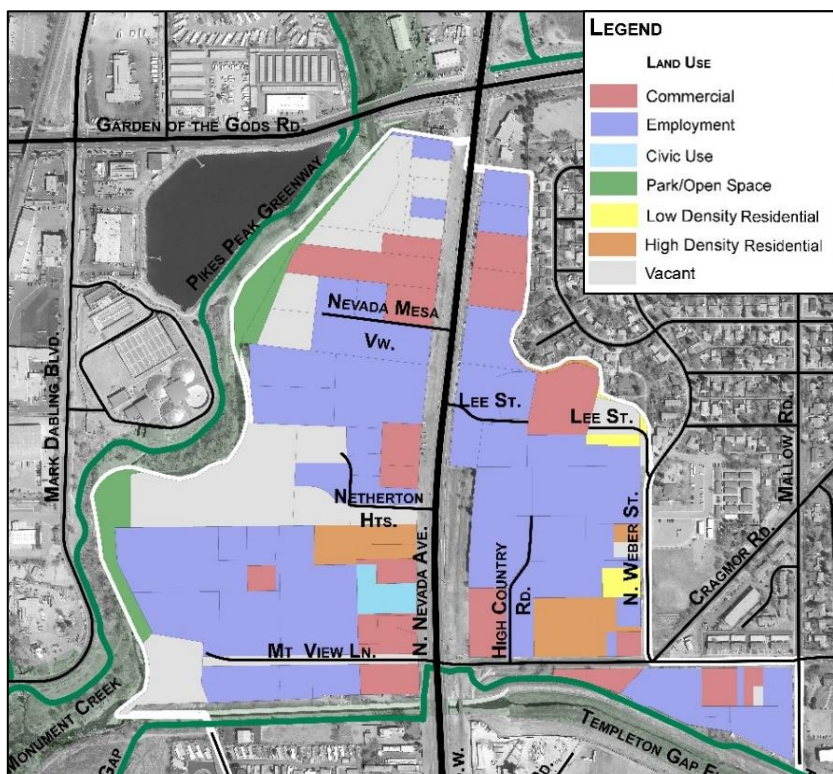
Figure 5.2: North Nevada Avenue Planning Zones





## 5.3 North Zone Plan

Figure 5.3: North Zone Existing Land Use Plan



### Land Use

As noted in Section 2, the majority of the master plan area is currently in industrial use and this is evident in the North Zone. However, there is also a good mix of commercial uses within the corridor, particularly on the east side with a variety of uses in modern buildings to the north of Lee Street and the small neighborhood center at the corner of Mount View Lane. These areas include some eclectic local businesses, such as Kapow Comics and Café, Great Storm Brewing, and Sheldon's Diner, that could be leveraged to promote a more diverse neighborhood that supports UCCS.

This area also has substantial areas of vacant land adjacent to Monument Creek. Some of these areas have environmental issues which will have to be addressed with any redevelopment. There are also some existing industrial uses, such as Qualtek Engineering and High-Tech Manufacturing that could continue to play a positive role in the revitalization of the area.

The pie charts in Figure 5.4 show the current distribution of land use and the preferred distribution of land use in the North Zone. The Master Plan recommends a change in emphasis for the area to include more residential and commercial uses. Encouraging more mixed-use ultimately results in a healthier, more vibrant neighborhood that is appealing to both students and the existing aging population. The residential component will include student and faculty housing that supports UCCS and market rate housing to support the wider community needs. The commercial uses will include small-scale retail, restaurants, cafes, and bars to help create an urban village focus and a hotel to support UCCS and visitors to the area. An increase in office use is also encouraged to support UCCS cybersecurity and sports medicine programs.

Figure 5.4: North Zone Existing and Preferred Land Use Distribution

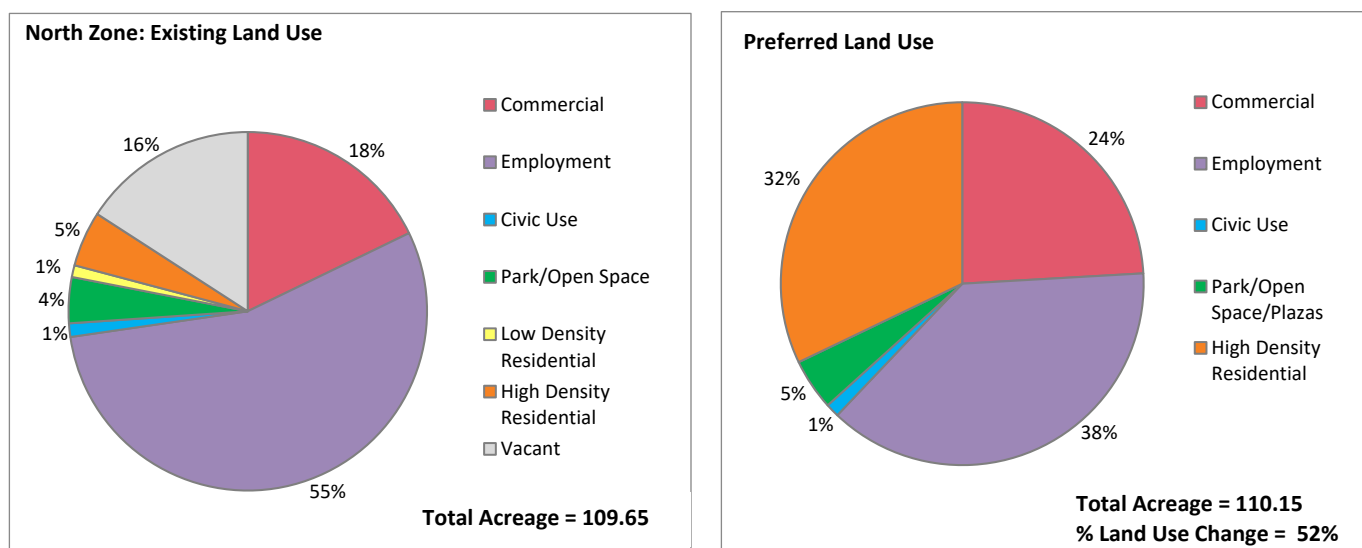


Figure 5.5: North Zone Plan Goals

**Land Use Goals:**

- ❖ Build upon the existing neighborhood center by encouraging the inclusion of residential adjacent and above and incorporating an urban plaza.
- ❖ Capitalize on the mountain views on the west side of the area with hotel and/or market rate high-density housing.
- ❖ Create a student village with housing and local retail/restaurants.
- ❖ Encourage adaptive reuse of properties in this zone to support UCCS activities and student population.
- ❖ Encourage employment uses that support UCCS medical programs.
- ❖ Relocate ComCor to facilitate redevelopment.
- ❖ Create a pocket park at the Southeast corner of Mount View Lane/North Nevada Avenue that could double as a water quality facility.

**Mobility Goals:**

- ❖ Include curb, gutter, sidewalk and bike lanes on North Nevada Avenue.
- ❖ Improve vehicular connectivity across Templeton Gap drainage by extending Cascade Avenue north and Mallow Road south.
- ❖ Provide a transit stop at Mount View Lane intersection.
- ❖ Encourage the connection of Lee Street to Weber Street.
- ❖ Improve the Templeton Gap trail crossing at Nevada Avenue, preferably via an underpass.
- ❖ Utilize the railroad right of way for trail and transit use.

**Preferred Uses:**

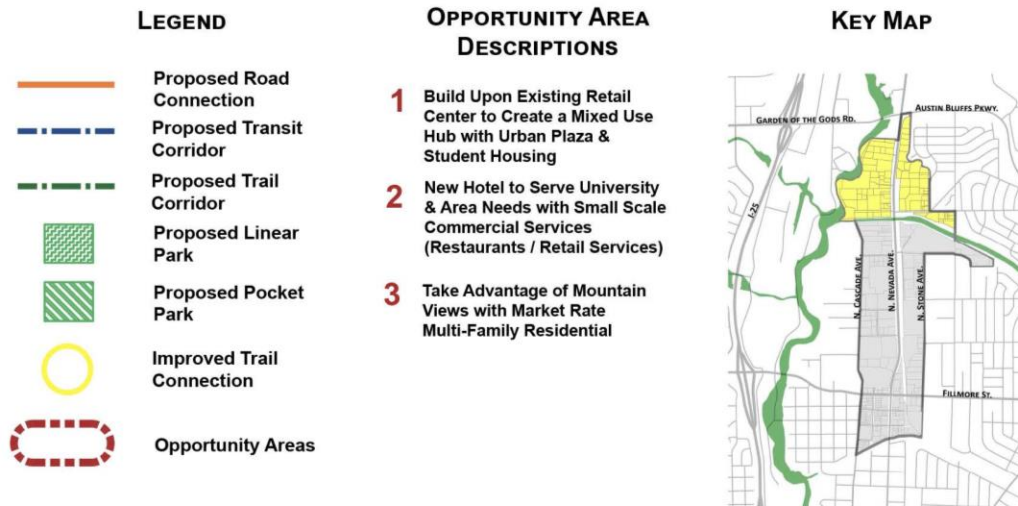
- ❖ Hotel
- ❖ Independent retail/restaurants
- ❖ Student housing
- ❖ Medical Office/Research & Innovation
- ❖ Local employment
- ❖ Market rate multi-family residential

## Plan Goals

The goals for the North Zone expressed in Figure 5.5 amplify the mixed land use objectives. It also identifies goals relating to parks, trails, transit and improved connectivity. The preferred uses reflect the overarching goal for this part of the corridor of providing support services and accommodations for UCCS, while at the same time creating an area that is energetic and distinctive, and somewhere where students and local residents alike would want to spend time. The desire for the corridor to be “cool” and “like nowhere else in Colorado Springs” was a consistent theme through the stakeholder process and the North Zone provides the opportunity to create this unique and authentic ambience.

Figure 5.6 expresses the above goals in plan form. It identifies the specific Opportunity Areas, potential new street connections, and other components of the recommended Plan Goals. The three Opportunity Areas are where the Plan anticipates the most significant change through potential redevelopment. Area 1 suggests consolidating the existing neighborhood center on the corner of Mount View Lane (North Nevada Business Center) by introducing student housing adjacent or above and creating an urban plaza as a gathering place, possibly through the sale of excess railroad right of way. Area 2 identifies potential for a new hotel in the northwest corner of the Zone that is located where it can serve both UCCS and other populations. This site is elevated above Monument Creek and will be visible from the highway as well as having spectacular views of the Front Range. Area 3 also seeks to capitalize on the elevated terrain and mountain views by suggesting market rate multifamily housing. This area potentially has contamination issues which should be thoroughly investigated prior to any residential redevelopment.

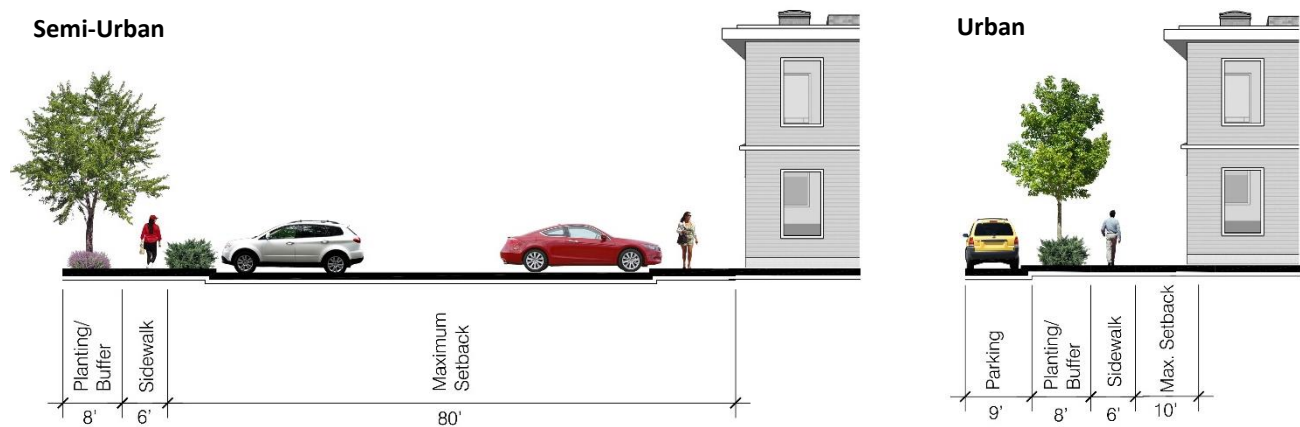
Figure 5.6: North Zone Plan Goals Map





For the North Zone the preferred streetscape was Semi-Urban, which allows for one row of parking at the front of the businesses and a maximum building setback of 80 feet. This is very typical of many existing businesses in the Zone such as the commercial uses north of Lee Street, the neighborhood center at Mount View Lane, and some of the industrial uses on the west side. There are also one or two buildings like the older motels that are directly on the street frontage. This urban form will also be encouraged in new development where appropriate. This will create some variety in the streetscape and will help foster a more vibrant appearance as it will keep activity closer to the street.

Figure 5.7: North Zone Recommended Streetscape



### Street Cross-Sections

There are two recommended street cross-sections for the North Zone. Section A runs from the end of the railroad right of way to Austin Bluffs Parkway. It identifies a 4-lane street with a central median, buffered bike lane, and a tree lawn. It also includes a standard 6-foot sidewalk on the west side but a wider 12-foot urban trail on the east side. This trail will act as a transition from the off-street corridor within the railroad right of way, as shown through the rest of the corridor. It will then provide the opportunity to connect to the existing urban trail on the west side of North Nevada Avenue, which runs from University Village to the Cottonwood Creek Trail. This street section will also have to be modified before reaching Austin Bluffs Parkway to provide appropriate turn lanes and will require the tapering down of the median at the intersection.

Figure 5.8: North Zone Recommended Street Cross-Section Locations

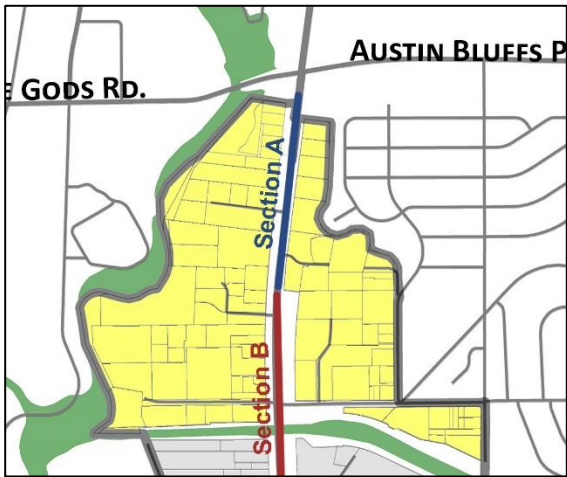
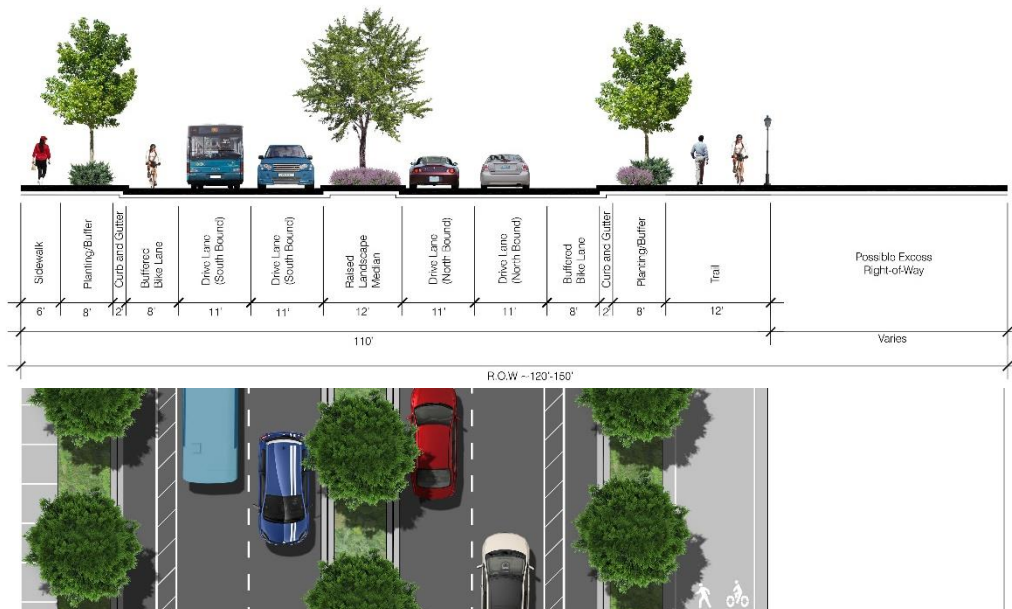
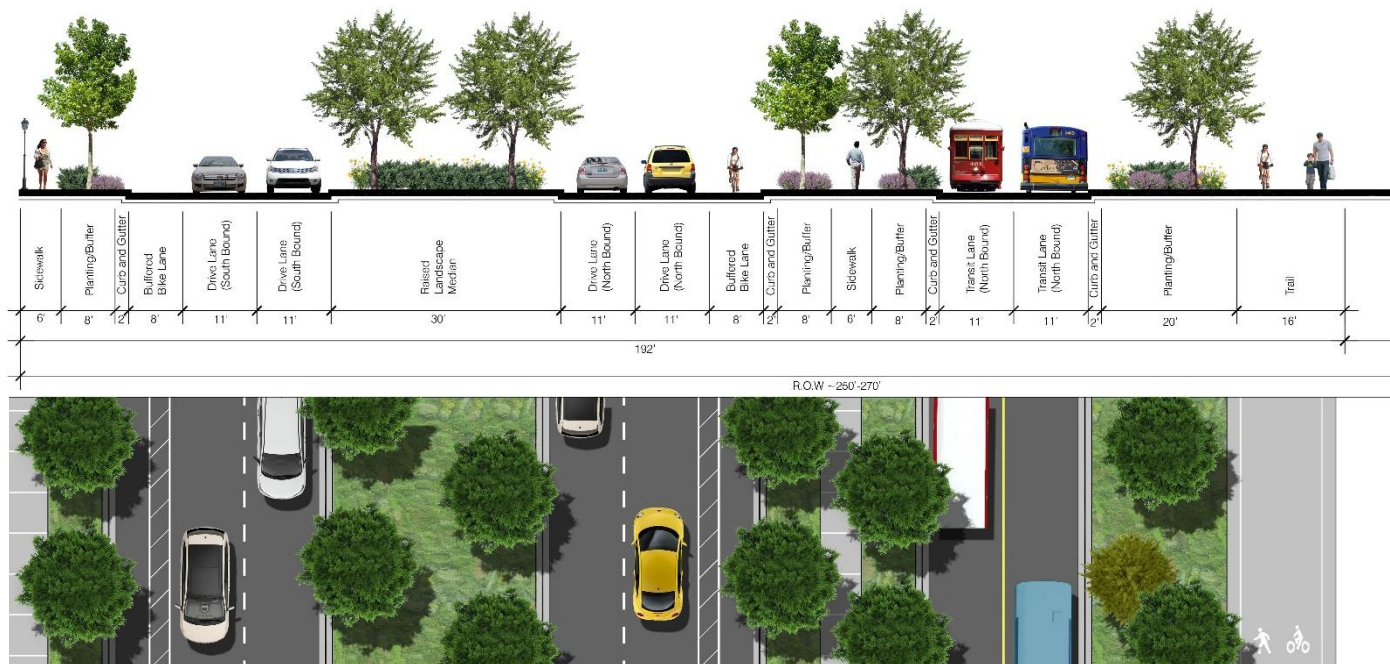


Figure 5.9: North Zone Recommended Street Cross-Sections

## Section A



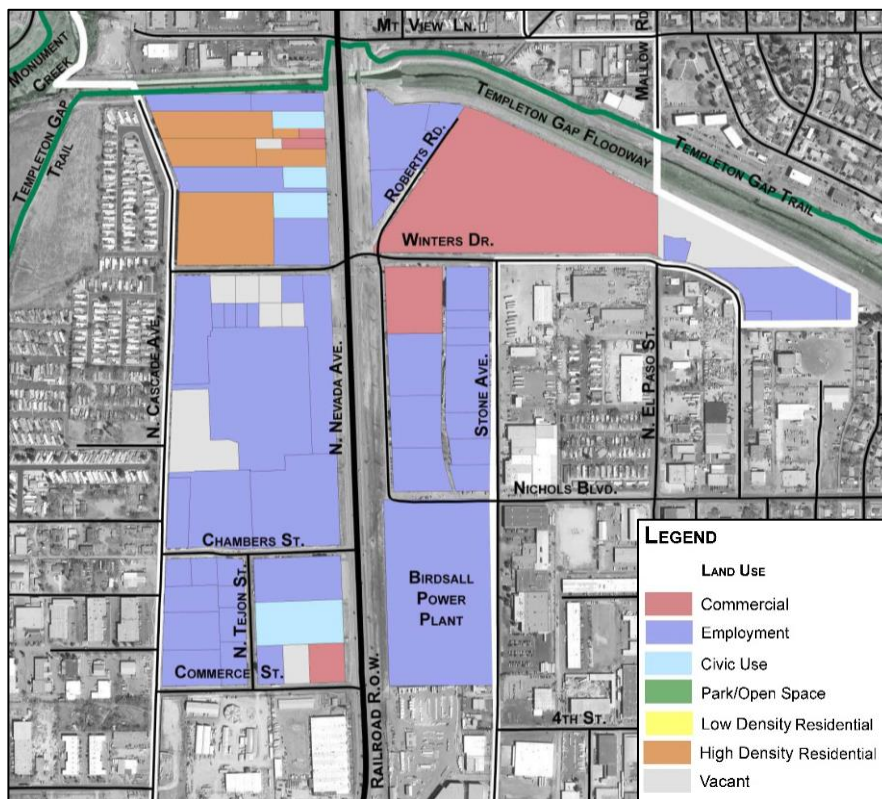
## Section B



The railroad right of way provides an opportunity in Section B to create additional off-street transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. In all other respects, it is the same as Section A. There will need to be a transition between Section B and A to accommodate the change from an off-street transit corridor to on-street transit and to accommodate the transition from a trail corridor to the urban trail depicted in Section A.

## 5.4 Central Zone Plan

Figure 5.10: Central Zone Existing Land Use Plan



### Land Use

In the Central Zone the dominance of industrial/employment use is even more evident. The principal exceptions are the existing mobile home parks in the northwest of the Zone and the former dog racing track. The Expo Center occupies a prime location in the center of this zone.

The Central Zone is home to several uses that are incompatible with the renewal aspirations for the corridor. These include Transit Mix concrete batch plant, AmeriGas Propane center, the marijuana grow facility at the old dog track, Waste Management depot and Birdsall Power Plant.

In addition to these larger uses, the Central Zone is also home to the majority of ComCor's facilities. While the buildings themselves do not materially impact the character of the area, the regular foot traffic between the facilities is viewed negatively by the community.

There are, however, a few modern light industrial/office buildings in the area that accommodate viable local business that can continue to play a positive role in the revitalization of the area. The Grace Baptist Church and the BPO Elks are also positive influences in the area and represent the only civic uses in the corridor.

The pie charts in Figure 5.11 indicate a redistribution of land use to include more office/employment to support the cyber security industry and the UCCS medical programs, together with additional market rate and affordable multifamily housing.

Figure 5.11: Central Zone Existing and Preferred Land Use Distribution

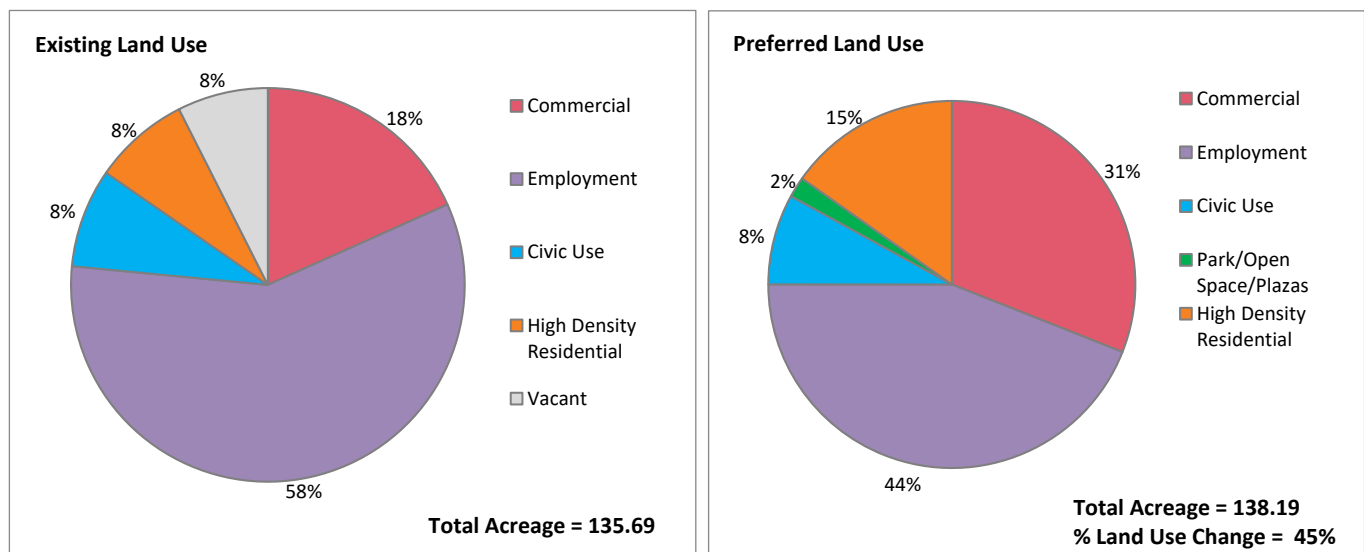




Figure 5.12: Central Zone Plan Goals Map

**Land Use Goals:**

- ❖ Create an employment zone to support the National Cybersecurity Center and the UCCS medical programs.
- ❖ Accommodate market rate high density residential to accommodate new workers at the National Cybersecurity Center.
- ❖ Create a new destination for the corridor at the former dog track that includes retail, restaurants, entertainment, and urban plazas.
- ❖ Encourage use of available funding incentives to provide housing that is affordable for the local community.
- ❖ Relocate ComCor to facilitate redevelopment.
- ❖ Create a linear park along Railroad Right of Way to help screen the Birdsall Power Plant.
- ❖ Work with Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) to develop creative opportunities for the Power Plant and power structures, acknowledging mission-critical operations, safety, and security compliances.

**Mobility Goals:**

- ❖ Include curb, gutter, sidewalk and bike lanes on North Nevada Avenue.
- ❖ Improve vehicular connectivity across Templeton Gap drainage by extending Cascade Avenue north and Mallow Road south.
- ❖ Improve east-west connectivity between Cascade Avenue and Stone Avenue.
- ❖ Encourage a new urban trail connection along Commerce Street/4<sup>th</sup> Street to connect Flanagan Park to the east with the Pikes Peak Greenway and Gossage Park to the west.
- ❖ Utilize the railroad right of way for trail and transit use.

**Preferred Uses:**

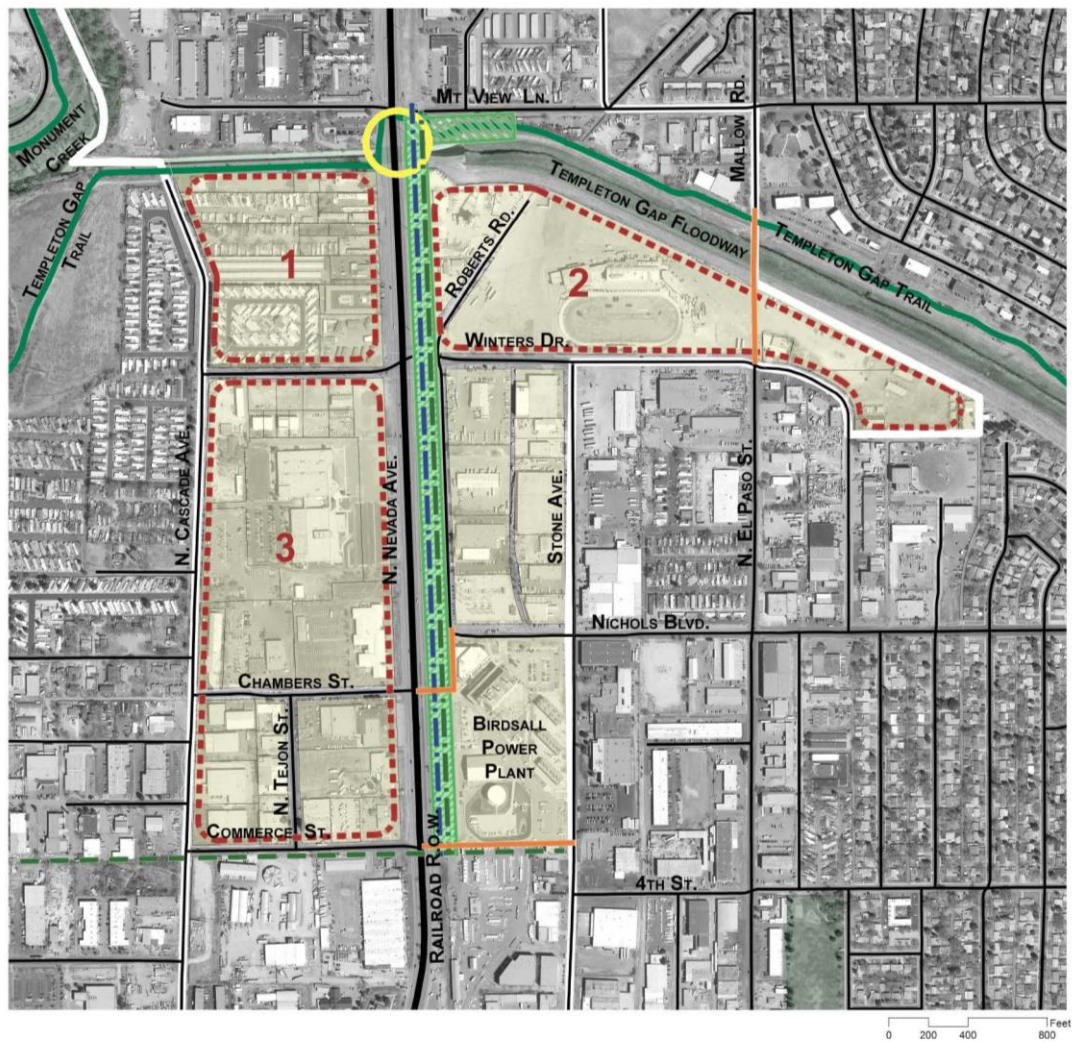
- ❖ Cybersecurity related employment
- ❖ Medical Office/Research & Innovation
- ❖ Local employment
- ❖ Retail/restaurants/entertainment
- ❖ Market rate multi-family residential
- ❖ Affordable housing
- ❖ Student housing
- ❖ Hotel

### Plan Goals

The goals for the Central Zone expressed in Figure 5.12 replicate these land use mix objectives. The preferred uses reflect the goal of creating an employment hub to build upon the relocation of the National Cybersecurity Center to the Expo Center and the expanding UCCS medical programs. New housing to support this growth is also proposed, as well as new housing that is affordable for existing low-income residents. Improved street connectivity will help to disperse additional traffic through the plan area. Any plan proposals in the vicinity of Birdsall Power Plant should be discussed with CSU to ensure compliance with mission-critical operations, safety, and security requirements.

Figure 5.13 identifies the specific Opportunity Areas for the Central Zone, together with the potential new street connections, and other components of the recommended Plan Goals. A linear park along the railroad right-of-way would be a public amenity and will help screen the Power Plant. Area 1 is identified for higher density housing, which should be encouraged to include an affordability component. Area 2 promotes the former dog track as a new destination for the corridor that could include retail, entertainment, housing, and urban plazas, creating a focal point for the northern part of the corridor. Area 3 is primarily seen as an employment center to support the growing cybersecurity industry.

Figure 5.13: Central Zone Plan Goals



#### LEGEND

- Proposed Road Connection
- Proposed Trail Connection
- Proposed Transit Corridor
- Proposed Trail Corridor
- Proposed Linear Park
- Proposed Pocket Park
- Improved Trail Connection
- Opportunity Areas

#### OPPORTUNITY AREA DESCRIPTIONS

- 1** Encourage High-Density Housing.
- 2** Corridor Destination to Include Retail, Restaurants, Entertainment, High-Density Residential, and Urban Plazas.
- 3** Encourage Employment Uses to Support National Cybersecurity Center.

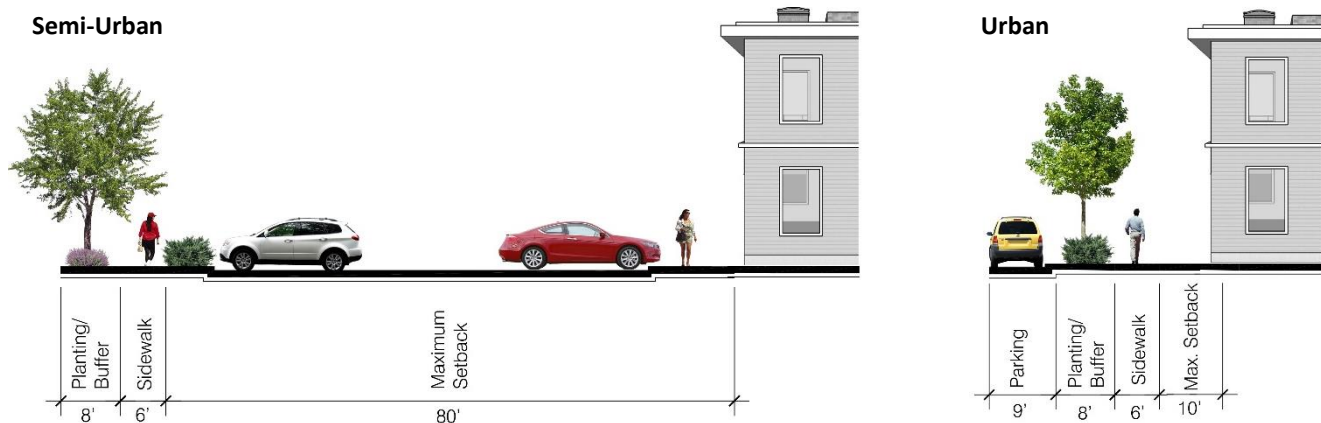
#### KEY MAP



## Streetscape

The preferred streetscape for the Central Zone is also Semi-Urban, with the Urban form being encouraged where appropriate. While there are many existing businesses in the Central North Zone that already have this adjacency to the street, there are a few that are set further back from Nevada Avenue with extensive parking areas to the front. Any redevelopment of these properties will be encouraged to create a more integrated streetscape that enhances the appearance and function of the corridor.

Figure 5.14: Central Zone Recommended Streetscape



## Street Cross-Sections

Section B is the only recommended street cross-section for the Central Zone as the railroad right-of-way runs along the entire length of this zone. This provides the opportunity to provide 4-lanes with a central median, buffered bike lane, tree lawn and off-street transit and trail throughout this zone.

Figure 5.14: Central Zone Recommended Street Cross-Section Location

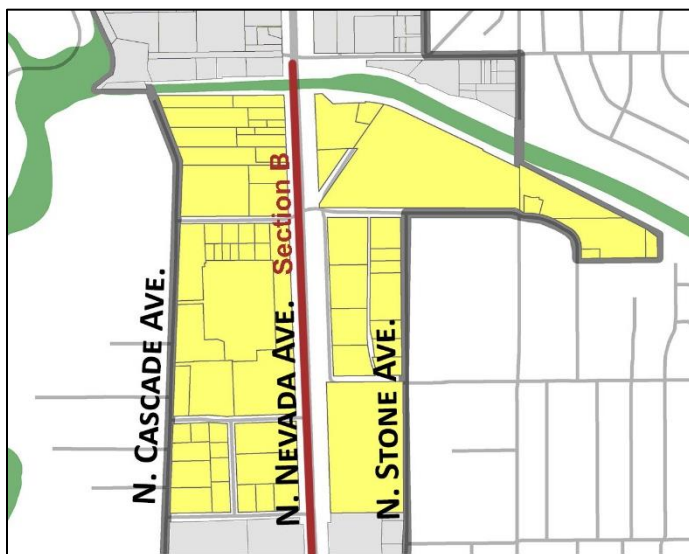
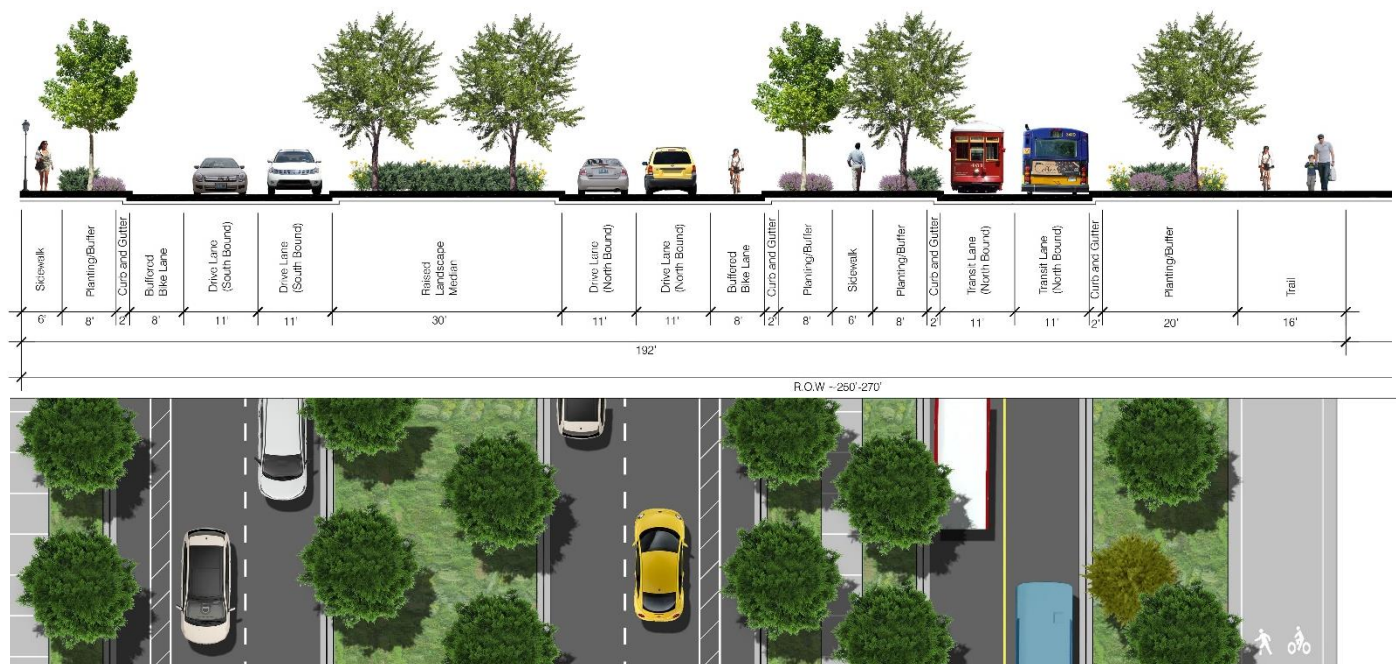




Figure 5.16: Central Zone Recommended Street Cross-Section

## Section B



## Excess Right-of-Way

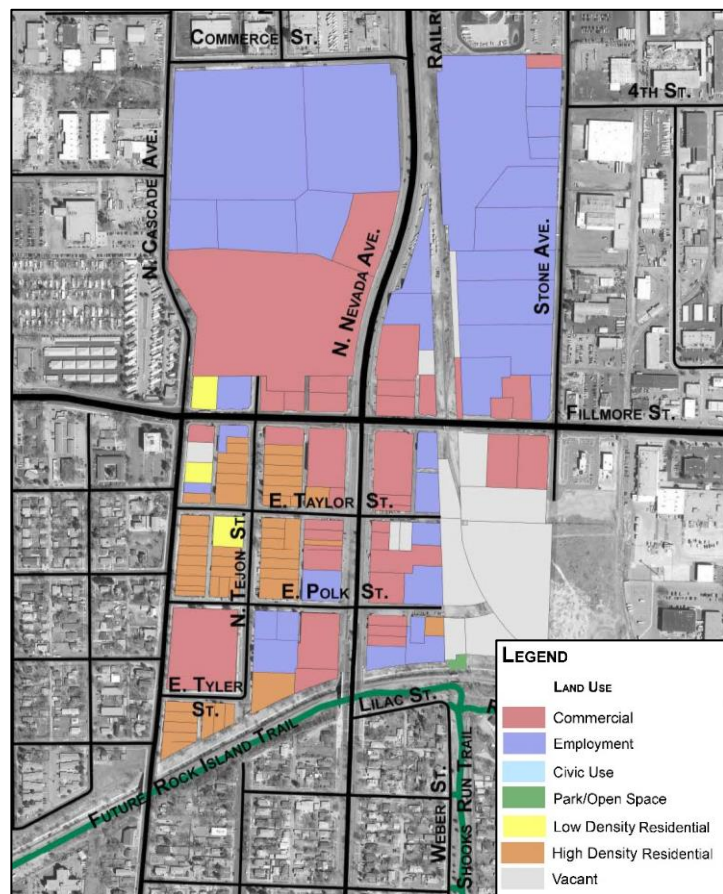
With the potential acquisition of the railroad right-of-way by the City there will be ample space available to accommodate Section B, which is the widest of all the proposed street cross-sections. There will be approximately 60 - 80 feet of additional, unused right-of-way available. The plan goals for the Central Zone include a recommendation for a linear park to flank the proposed trail corridor which will occupy some of this surplus land. However, there are still likely to be areas where there will be extra right-of-way. As noted in Section 4, at the December 8<sup>th</sup> Community Workshop where the corridor alternatives were discussed, the community were asked what the City should do with any excess right-of-way. The options were

- The City keeps the right-of-way and uses for public purposes;
- The City sells right-of-way to adjacent land owners; or
- A Hybrid – the City sells the right-of-way to adjacent land owners with incentives to provide public benefit.

The community's preferred option was the Hybrid solution, where the City can sell any excess right-of-way to adjacent land owners in exchange for some public benefit that addresses the goals of the Plan.

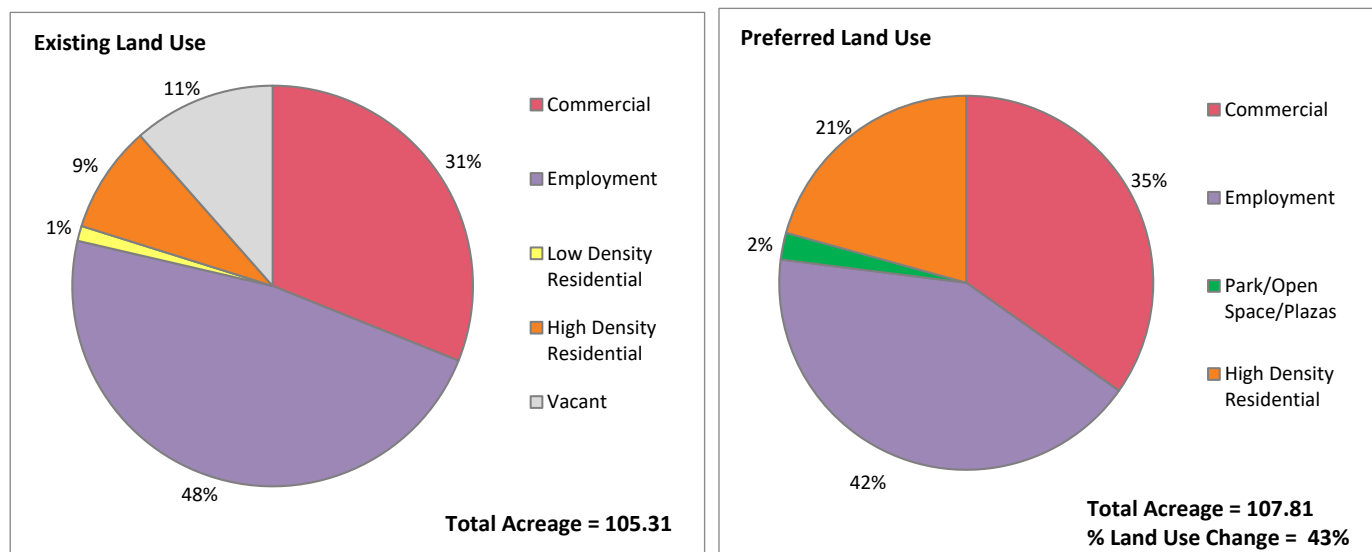
## 5.4 South Zone Plan

Figure 5.17: South Zone Existing Land Use Plan



The main change in land uses distribution identified in the pie-charts in Figure 5.18 is the transfer from vacant land to higher-density residential development. There is only a slight increase in commercial, but it is anticipated that the existing commercial, most notably the Kmart site, will redevelop. There is also an anticipated shift in the nature of the employment uses from industrial to office or flex-space.

Figure 5.18: South Zone Existing and Preferred Land Use Distribution



### Land Use

While the northern part of the South Zone is also primarily industrial, the rest of this Zone has a much broader mix of uses and more historical influences. The former Alexander film buildings in the northwest corner of the Zone have a distinctive character that could be capitalized upon for more eclectic land uses. There are far more commercial uses in this Zone, including several small retail outlets, restaurants, fast food, and bars. These could all be incorporated in the renewal plans for the area.

The only major uses that are not compatible with the renewal objectives are the Fox & Galbraith lumberyard, and the U-Haul depot at the key intersection of Nevada Avenue and the railroad right of way. The K-mart store is also incompatible in terms of its design and its poor relationship to the streetscape, rather than the use itself.

The area to the south of Fillmore Street has a more distinctive character than the rest of the corridor and provides a transition to the Old North-End neighborhood. The area is characterized by small lots, older single-family homes, and historic roadside uses such as the Navajo Hogan and Murphy's Tavern. The former Lincoln School has recently been repurposed as a mixed-use development with a craft brewery, café, yoga studio and other small-scale uses. The Plan aims to build upon this variety and character to activate the renewal of this area.

Figure 5.20: South Zone Plan Goals

**Land Use Goals:**

- ❖ Build upon the existing historic urban character and uses to the south of Fillmore Street by encouraging local retail, restaurant, and business uses.
- ❖ Provide on-street parking south of Fillmore Street to support the businesses along this stretch of North Nevada Avenue.
- ❖ Encourage higher density townhome development in the area south of Fillmore Street behind the North Nevada Avenue frontage.
- ❖ Encourage a mixed-use redevelopment of the Kmart property to include retail, office, and restaurant uses.
- ❖ Encourage adaptive reuse of the historic Alexander Film buildings for a variety of creative uses, such as local restaurants, craft breweries/distilleries, art galleries.
- ❖ Encourage the development of the vacant parcel in the southeast corner of the zone for high-density residential, retail fronting Fillmore Street.
- ❖ Encourage the creation of a pocket park adjacent to the railroad to accentuate the intersection with the Rock Island and Shook's Run trails that could also double as a detention/eater quality facility.

**Mobility Goals:**

- ❖ Include curb, gutter, sidewalk and bike lanes on North Nevada Avenue.
- ❖ Extend Polk Street to the east and north to connect to Fillmore Street, which will open up the vacant parcel in the southeast corner of the zone.
- ❖ Provide a transit stop where the proposed transit corridor will intersect Fillmore Street.
- ❖ Encourage a new urban trail connection along Polk Street to Pikes Peak Greenway to the west.
- ❖ Utilize the railroad right of way for trail and transit use.

**Preferred Uses:**

- ❖ Retail/restaurants.
- ❖ Breweries/distilleries.
- ❖ Art galleries/civic uses.
- ❖ Market rate multi-family housing.
- ❖ Employment.

## Plan Goals

The goals for the South Zone expressed in Figure 5.20 reflect the objectives for this part of the corridor to create an area that transitions to the older part of the City to the south of the railroad, yet creates a vibrant area that provides local employment, services and entertainment to the surrounding neighborhoods in a walkable and attractive environment.








Figure 5.21 identifies a continuation of the transit/trail corridor to and across the Rock Island railroad, which will foster connectivity with the downtown area and link to the existing trail network. Opportunity Area 1 seeks to harness the potential of the Alexander Film buildings for more creative uses that will make the most of the unique buildings. Area 2 suggests a redevelopment of the Kmart site with a mix of retail, restaurants, and high density housing. Area 3 encourages the redevelopment of the lumberyard with more compatible employment uses. Area 4 is currently vacant and ripe for development. This area would benefit from high density residential to support the existing and proposed commercial uses. Area 5 is the intersection of the proposed transit corridor with existing transit routes on Fillmore and provides an opportunity for higher density development. Area 6 proposes to strengthen the historic character of the southern section of the corridor by encouraging appropriately scaled retail, restaurant, and business uses.



Figure 5.21: South Zone Plan Goals



#### LEGEND

-  Proposed Road Connection
-  Proposed Trail Connection
-  Proposed Transit Corridor
-  Proposed Trail Corridor
-  Proposed Linear Park
-  Proposed Pocket Park
-  Improved Trail Connection
-  Opportunity Areas

#### OPPORTUNITY AREA DESCRIPTIONS

- 1** Encourage Repurposing of Historic Alexander Film Buildings for Employment, Commercial or Civic/Arts Uses.
- 2** Encourage Redevelopment of the KMart Site and Adjacent Properties with a Mix of Retail, Restaurants, Office and High Density Residential.
- 3** Encourage Redevelopment of Lumber Yard for More Compatible Employment Uses.
- 4** Encourage Development of Vacant Sites for High-Density Residential with Retail Adjacent to Fillmore Street and Include a Pocket Park.
- 5** New Transit Hub and Opportunity for High-Density Development.
- 6** Strengthen Historic Uses and Character of South Section of Nevada Avenue.

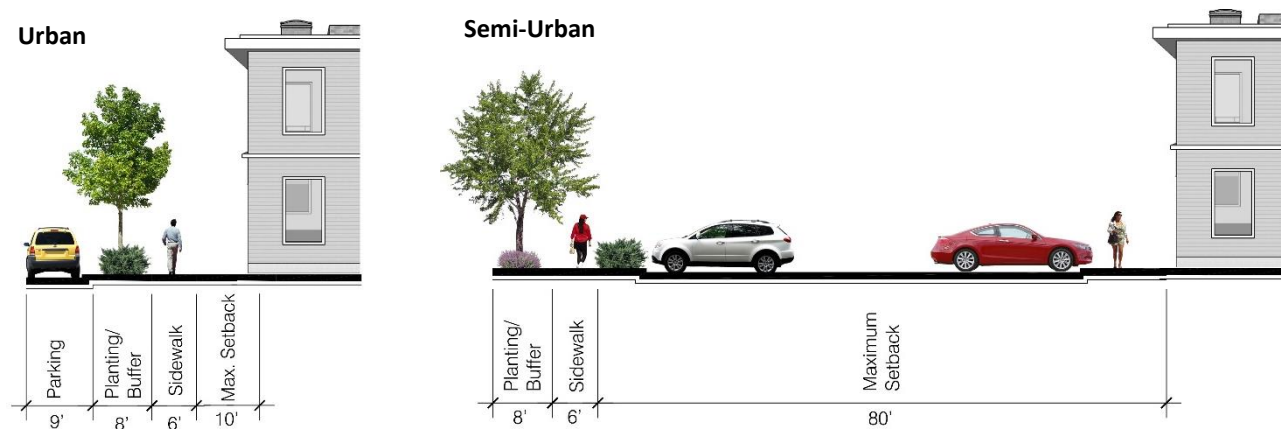
#### KEY MAP



## Streetscape

The preferred streetscape for the area south of Fillmore Street is the Urban form, which is consistent with the existing character of the area and is appropriate given proximity of the area to the historic north-end. This will help activate the streetscape, enhance walkability, and bring vitality to the area. To the north of Fillmore Street, the Urban form will be encouraged but the Semi-Urban form may also be acceptable, especially where it crosses over to the Central Zone. In general, redevelopment projects will be encouraged to create a more unified streetscape that improves the appearance and function of the corridor.

Figure 5.21: South Zone Recommended Streetscape



## Street Cross-Sections

The South has four recommended street-sections due to the different character and function of North Nevada Avenue through this Zone and the varying right-of-way width. In this Zone the railroad right-of-way veers to the east, away from the street, and thus has a separate cross-section for the remainder of its length to the southern boundary of the study area.

Figure 5.22: South Zone Recommended Street Cross-Section Locations

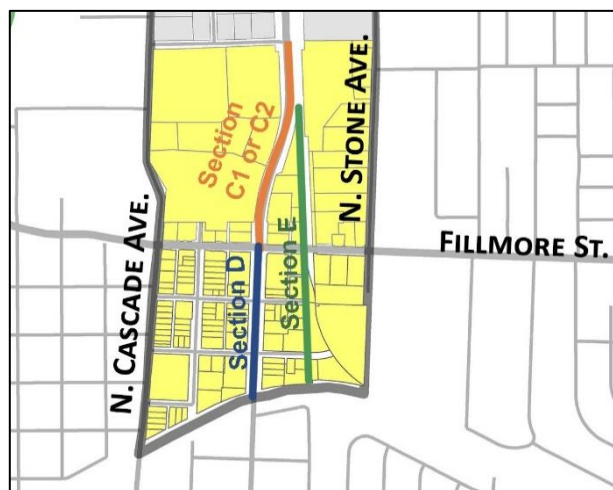
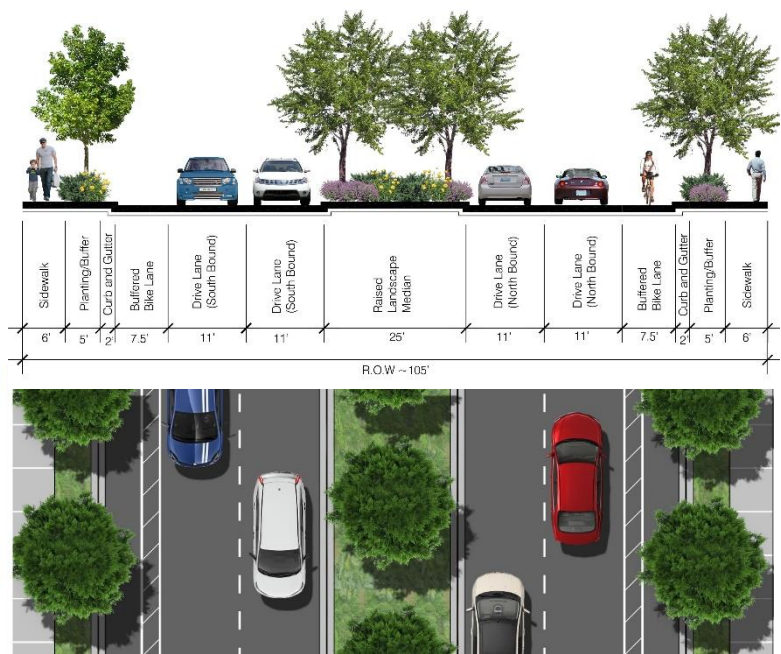


Figure 5.23: South Zone Recommended Street Cross-Sections

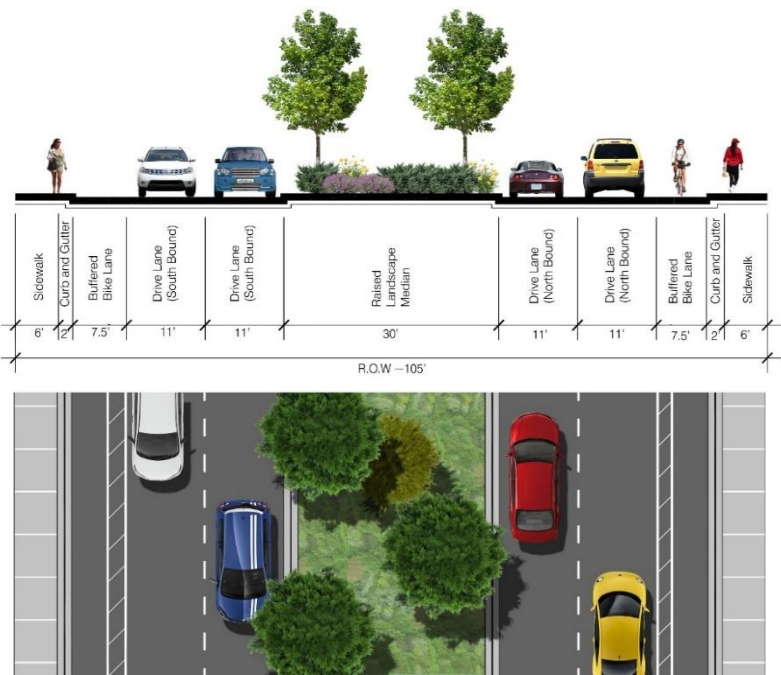
**Section C1**



From Commerce Street to Fillmore Street the available right-of-way on Nevada Avenue significantly narrows. There is insufficient width to include all of the amenities provided in the cross-sections for the North and Central Zones. For this reason, two alternate sections are proposed.

Section C1 includes four travel lanes, a buffered bike lane, tree lawn and sidewalk. The compromise with this section is a narrower median, which will mean a reduction in some existing medians.

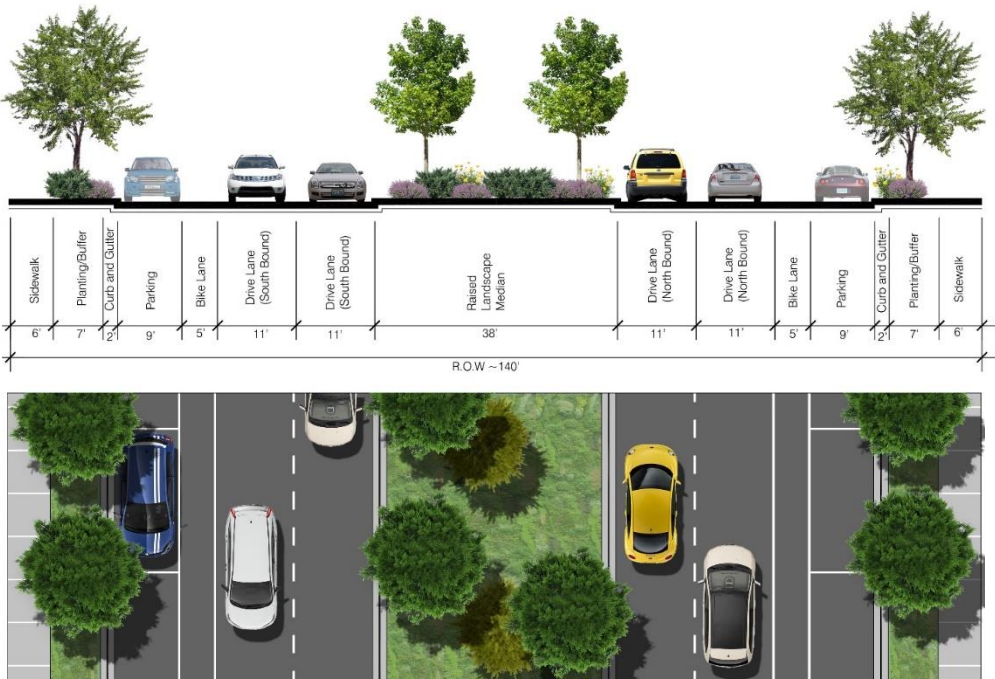
**Section C2**



Section C retains the existing median widths but eliminates the tree lawn on each side of the street. It will also be necessary to incorporate turn lanes at the intersection with Fillmore Street. At this point the median will have to taper out, as it does today, and it may also be necessary to reduce the width of the bike lanes and possibly remove the buffer.

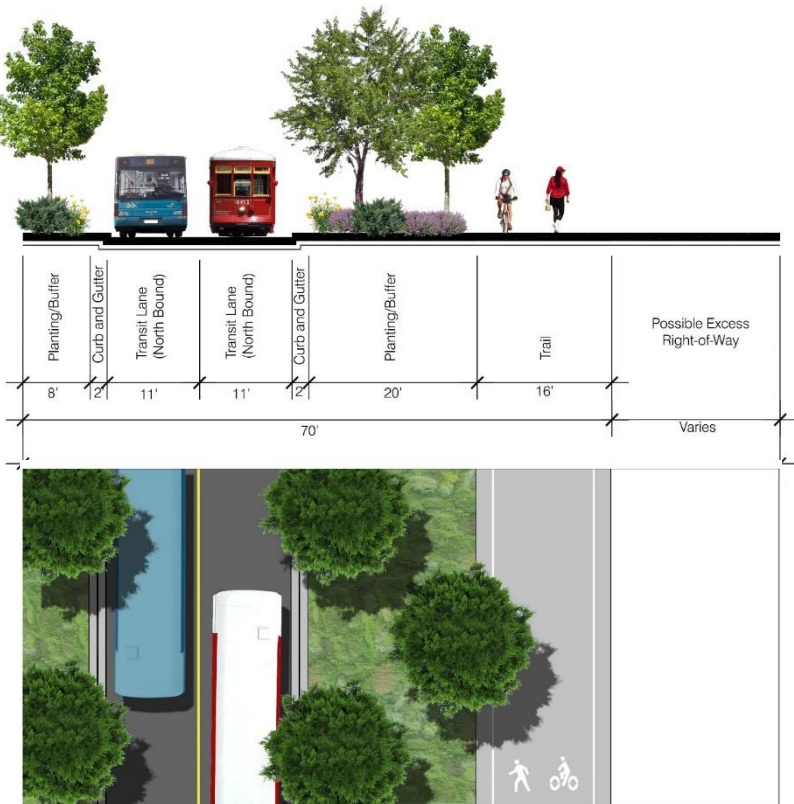


Section D



Section D applies only to the area south of Fillmore Street. The principal distinction is the inclusion of on-street parking to support the existing and proposed businesses in this sector. While a bike lane is included, there is insufficient right-of-way width to include a buffer. However, the introduction of on-street parking should help to slow traffic down so that the absence of a buffer is not as critical.

Section E



Section E identifies the proposed continuation of the transit and trail corridor in the railroad right-of-way. The part of the railroad from the lumberyard south is still active so this section can only be implemented when the use of the railroad ceases and if the City is able to acquire it.

## 5.6 Utility and Drainage Recommendations

Based upon the analysis of existing conditions and the anticipated redevelopment goals for the area, the following recommendations are made with regard to the need for utility and stormwater upgrades. Figure 5.25 identifies potential locations for new regional and more localized detention facilities to support the recommendations of this plan, particular in the context of the identified Opportunity Areas. If the regional detention facilities can be secured through the use of available IGA funding, then this could eliminate the need for some of the identified localized facilities. This would help to stimulate redevelopment of the area.

*Figure 5.24: Utility and Drainage Recommendations*

### **Utility Recommendations:**

- ❖ All new public roadways will be planned with City standard utility design/layout.
- ❖ Larger redevelopment areas may require additional water looping/redundancy to meet current City Utility standards or upgrading sanitary sewer outfall for new demands.
- ❖ Redevelopment of the North Nevada Avenue streetscape will likely require relocation and/or upgrades to existing utility infrastructure.
- ❖ Upon any re-development, private utility mains (water) should be converted to public facilities.
- ❖ Where practical, minor overhead electric facilities should be relocated/buried upon re-development.
- ❖ Where practical, the opportunity for burying the major overhead power lines should be investigated, with possible CSU cost sharing.

### **Drainage Recommendations:**

- ❖ All new public roadways or roadway improvements in the Master Plan area will be planned with City standard curb and gutter and required storm sewer improvements.
- ❖ Redevelopment in the Master Plan area adjacent to a City right-of-way will be required to install City standard curb and gutter and storm sewer improvements/upgrades, as required by the City Subdivision Code.
- ❖ Larger redevelopments, such as the identified Opportunity Areas, are likely to require on-site detention and/or stormwater quality facilities.
- ❖ The areas identified as potential new parks in the Master Plan should be considered for dual use as detention and/or water quality facilities.
- ❖ The City should investigate locations for regional detention within the Plan area. If a regional detention/stormwater quality facility within this zone is not included, site specific facilities will be required for projects affecting over 1-acre. A regional detention facility would not only address current drainage deficiencies in the area but could, act as a stimulus to investment in the North Nevada corridor.
- ❖ Additional drainage corridors through redevelopment areas may be required to facilitate the routing of developed flows towards Monument Creek or the Templeton Gap Floodway in the North Zone and to Monument Creek in the Central and South Zones.



Figure 5.25: Stormwater Recommendations

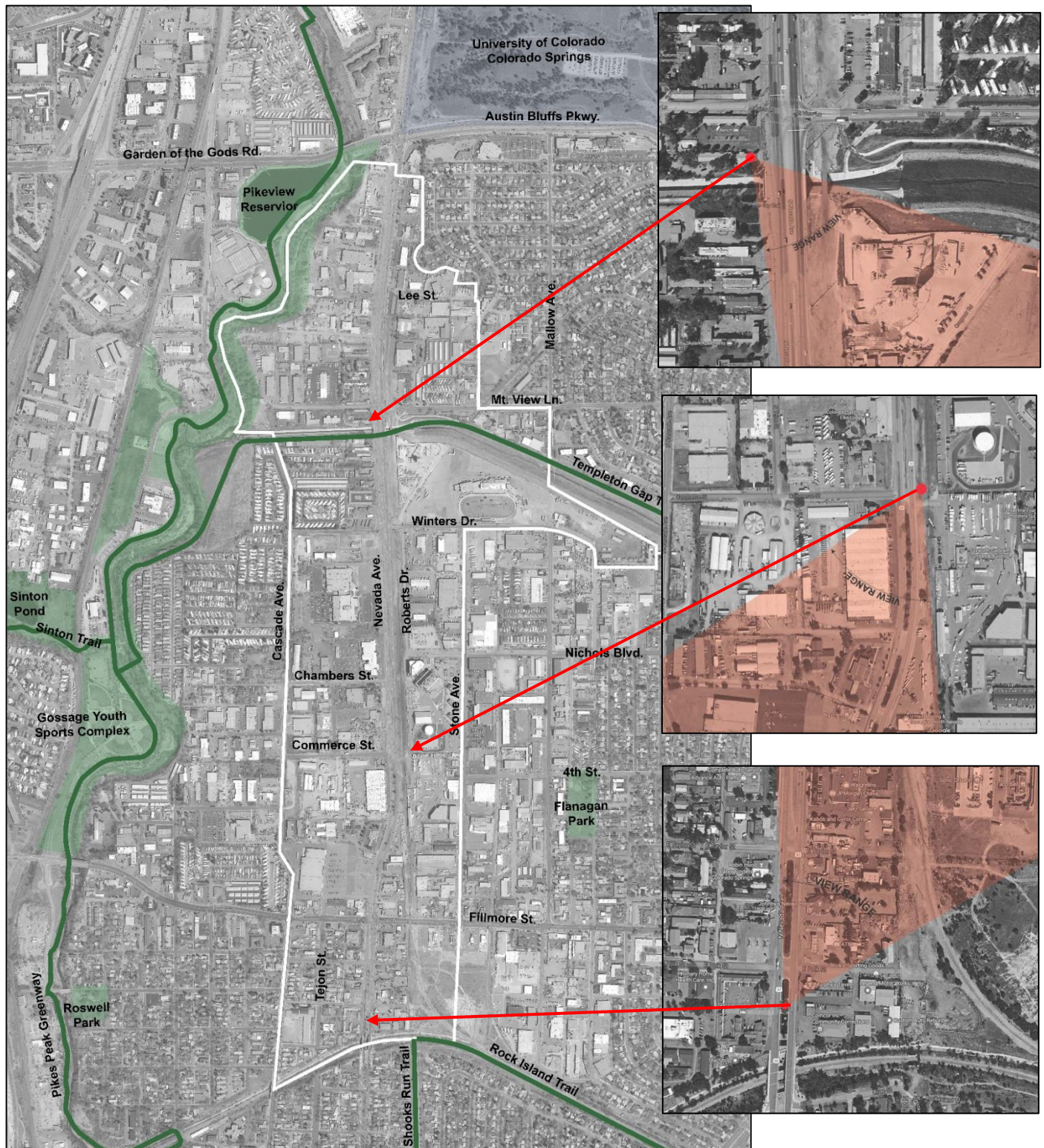




## 5.6 Recommended Plan Illustrations

Below are a series of illustrations at various view points in the North, South and Central Zones. This attempts to highlight the possibilities for the corridor if the recommendations of this Master Plan are implemented.

Figure 5.25: View Point Locations





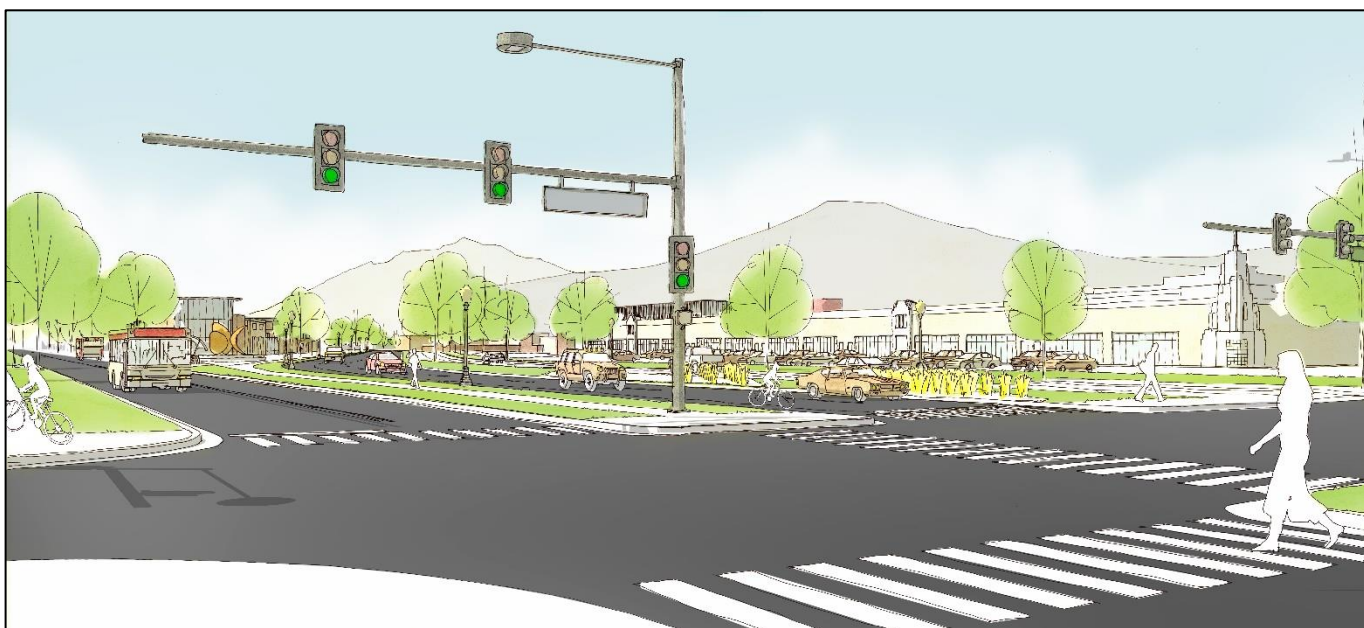
## North Zone



Standing on the northwest corner of North Nevada Avenue and Mount View Lane, the uninspiring view of the concrete batch plant, propane tank depot and former dog track could be replaced with a new high-density destination for the corridor providing retail, restaurants, entertainment, office, and residential uses. The street will become more pedestrian and bicycle friendly and new landscaped tree lawns and medians will make the area more visually appealing. Templeton Gap trail will be diverted underneath Nevada Avenue and the trail corridor will be enhanced with additional landscaping. A new transit corridor and transit stop will make the areas more accessible to the broader community.



## Central Zone



Standing in front of the Birdsall Power Plant looking southwest across the disused railroad toward the former Alexander film building, the potential for adaptive reuse of the Alexander Film building and improvements to its façade could activate the streetscape in this part of the plan area. The character and function of the streetscape will be enhanced through landscaped tree lawns, bike lanes and improved pedestrian facilities. The proposed transit and trail corridor in the railroad right-of-way will improve the accessibility to and mobility through the North Nevada Avenue corridor. Redevelopment of the U-Haul site and the inclusion of a public plaza with public art could create a much needed focal point for this part of the plan area.



## South Zone



Standing in the central median in the southern part of the corridor looking north along North Nevada Avenue, the changes are less apparent than in the other two images as the recommendations for this area are more modest. Small infill projects and adaptation of existing buildings, such as that shown in the illustration for the gas station, is the more likely scenario for this part of the corridor. The introduction of on-street parking will help improve the viability of adjacent businesses. Improvements to the streetscape through additional landscaping will visually enhance the area and upgraded pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring new vitality to this part of the South Zone. The potential to connect Polk Street to Fillmore street to the east will open up the vacant site to the rear, providing opportunities for new residential development, which will also help support the local business in the area.

## SECTION 6: SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

During the stakeholder process, specific issues were raised to include: how the existing zoning will be impacted, the need to retain viable affordable housing options in the plan area, and how the recommendations of the plan will be funded. This Section seeks to address these particular issues, together with the requirement attached to the State issued grant to give specific consideration of the potential impact to ComCor's interests within the corridor and recommendations for relocation of their facilities.

### 6.1 Zoning

The North Nevada Corridor is subject to the City of Colorado Springs Zoning Ordinances. The zoning ordinance for the City is based upon Euclidean zoning, a term that refers to a 1920s court case in Euclid, Ohio that established the historic precedent of separating land uses by zoning. This approach fosters separation of uses and "buffering" of neighboring properties through landscaping and setbacks and is sometimes referred to as conventional zoning.

Investment in land development tends to move towards areas with a predictable approval process. To a certain extent zoning provides this predictability. However, existing zoning regulations can make redevelopment of urban communities more difficult by applying suburban zoning standards. Based upon the outcome of the community process, the objective for the North Nevada Corridor is to achieve a more urban or semi-urban form. The development standards set forth within the existing zoning classifications in the corridor are contrary to this component of the recommended plan.

In Figure 6.1 the existing zone districts within the Master Plan Area are listed. The majority is M-1 (Manufacturing) and most of the existing zones do not support the preferred uses identified in the Recommended Plan. For instance, the M-1 zoning does not allow multifamily housing as a permitted use by right. It is a conditional use which requires a public hearing and approval by the City Planning Commission and sometimes City Council. This additional level of review provides an element of unpredictability to the development process which could inhibit investment in projects along North Nevada Avenue. A more inclusive zoning classification for the corridor could remove this barrier and reduced the time needed for land use approval for new development in the Master Plan area.

Conversely, there are some uses that are allowed in the existing zones, most noticeably in the M-1 zone, that are incompatible with the renewal objectives for the corridor and not conducive to encouraging new investment in the area. In reviewing the zoning for the area, one objective should be to restrict such uses so that the prospect of them either remaining or moving into the area is controlled. This approach will remove any uncertainty regarding the allowed uses in the Master Plan area and will generate more confidence in the implementation of the plan recommendations. This confidence in the plan will help to stimulate new investment in the corridor.

Figure 6.1: Recommended Uses Allowed in the Master Plan Zone Districts

ZONE	ACREAGE	MEDICAL/GENERAL OFFICE	MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL	GROCERY	RETAIL/RESTAURANTS	LODGING	ENTERTAINMENT
M-1	245.69	P	C	C	C	C	C
M-2	5.14	P	X	X	X	C	C
C-5	29.44	P	C	P	P	P	P
C-6	70.05	P	P	P	P	P	P
PBC	22.18	P	C	P	P	P	P
R-5	7.07	P	P	X	X	X	X
R-4	3.43	X	P	X	X	X	X
R-2	4.38	X	X	X	X	X	X
R-1 6000	4.34	X	X	X	X	X	X
PUD	13.67	X	X	X	X	X	X
PF	31.32	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>436.71</b>						

P = Permitted  
C = Conditional  
X = Not Permitted

## Zoning Options

Assurances were given to the North Nevada Avenue business and residents at the beginning and throughout this master planning process that the City would not use eminent domain to implement the economic development recommendations of this plan. This is the practice of condemning a property in order to allow another developer to construct prioritized uses. Similar assurances were made regarding the rezoning of individual properties. Consequently, alternative forms of zoning control were assessed, such as a form-based code and a zoning overlay, to determine the most appropriate approach for the master plan area.

A form-based code was adopted for downtown Colorado Springs in 2009. Unlike conventional zoning that focuses on separating land uses, form-based codes focus primarily on site planning and building form to achieve design compatibility. Form-based codes allow for a mixture of uses so long as the design requirements are met. As a result, compatibility of uses is achieved through design and orientation, instead of strict land use separation. While such an approach could achieve the streetscape form that is recommended in the plan, it does not provide the level of control over land use that is required to realize the plan's land use goals. In addition, a form-based code would replace the existing zoning regulations for the area, which would be counter to the assurances made to the community regarding rezoning.

An overlay zone is a set of land use and development requirements designed to be applied over the requirements of the base zone on a property. This specific purpose district “overlays” the current property zoning without removing the underlying zone. The overlay zone can add an additional layer of restriction or flexibility to the base zone. The City has several existing overlay zones in place, which are summarized in Table 6.2. These existing overlay zones impose additional limitations to the underlying zone, provide additional design flexibility, restrict uses, and relax development standards. This approach aligns with the goals and recommendations for the renewal of North Nevada Avenue and it is this zoning method that is recommended for the Master Plan.

Figure 6.2: Existing City Overlay Zones

OVERLAY ZONE	PURPOSE
High Rise	Allows construction of high rise buildings subject to specific height, floor area and bulk limitations.
Hillside	Imposes additional standards and allows design flexibility to protect the unique character of the hillside environment.
Historic Preservation	Imposes additional standards to preserve and enhance the city's historic heritage.
Airport	Restricts certain uses in the zone that are incompatible with airport activities/fly zones and adds noise and rezoning restrictions
Planned Provisional	Addresses relationship issues in newly developed or older redeveloping areas by measures such as limiting permitted uses in the base zone, increasing required setbacks, parking and landscaping, or lessening minimum requirements of the base zone.
Design Flexibility	Allows additional design flexibility in certain residential zones by relaxing standards such as lot size, lot width, lot coverage, setbacks.
Streamside	Allows additional standards to protect and enhance the wildlife habitat, riparian vegetation, water quality, flood protection and recreational opportunities of the streamside areas.



## The North Nevada Avenue Overlay Zone

The Overlay Zone should incorporate the following components:

### USES:

There are several uses allowed under the existing zoning in the corridor that are not compatible with the community vision for the area as reflected in the Recommended Plan. Figure 6.3 identifies uses that fall into this category in the M-1 and M-2 zones that are either permitted (P) or conditional (C). This list is not exhaustive and should be studied further during the development of the overlay zoning ordinance. Other uses in the corridor, such as the Public Facility (PF) zoned halfway houses operated by ComCor, do not accord with the renewal efforts. The Overlay Zone should restrict such uses in order to encourage new investment in the corridor.

If a current land use does not comply with the overlay zone, then it is considered a “non-conforming” use. City Code regulations for non-conforming uses state that:

- The use can continue to operate;
- The owner can perform regular maintenance/repairs;
- Expansion of the use within the building cannot exceed 50% of the non-conforming use;
- The building cannot be enlarged or structurally altered;
- If the use is discontinued for more than a year, it cannot be re-instated; and
- If damaged, the building can be repaired if the cost of the repairs is less than 50% of the replacement cost

Figure 6.3: Incompatible Uses Allowed in the M-1 and M-2

	M-1	M-2
Truck Terminal	P	P
Car/Equipment Repair/Storage	P	P
Outdoor Kennels	P	P
Medical Marijuana cultivation	P	P
Construction yards	P	P
Batch Plant		P
Vehicle Dismantling Yard	C	P
Waste Transfer Station	C	P
Junk Yard	C	P
Garbage Services	C	C
Recycling Center	C	P
Heavy Industry		P

### DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

**Setbacks:** The community process identified the preferred streetscape character for the corridor and this is reflected in the Recommended Plan. The Semi-Urban and Urban form identified is generally not supported by the existing development standards. The setbacks for the existing zones range from 20 feet to 50 feet and are expressed as a minimum requirement. This is why much of the post 1960s construction in the corridor is set back from the street frontage with large expanses of parking at the front. The Semi-Urban form recommended for the majority of the Master Plan Area strives to improve the building to street relationship to bring more vitality to the area. It still allows for a row of parking spaces at the front of the building which requires a setback of approximately 80 feet. The Urban form should also be encouraged in the area south of Fillmore Street and elsewhere in the plan area where appropriate. The Overlay Zone should impose maximum setback development standards in preference to the existing front setback for underlying zones.

**Lot coverage:** Currently there are no standards for lot coverage in the industrial and commercial zones that cover the majority of the Master Plan area. Some of the smaller zoning districts have lot coverage ranging from 35 – 40%. Given the objective of the plan to increase development density in the corridor, the Overlay Zone should require that lot coverage be consistent with the underlying zone but that additional lot coverage may be approved administratively for an identified preferred use project or otherwise contributes to furthering the specified goals of the Recommended Plan.

**Building Height:** Currently the maximum building height in the existing zones generally ranges from 40 to 50 feet. Within the M-2 zone the maximum building height is 80 feet but the only property zoned M-2 is the Transit Mix concrete batch plant. To encourage higher density development in the corridor, the Overlay Zone should require that maximum height be consistent with the underlying zone but that additional height may be considered if the project is for an identified preferred use project or otherwise contributes to furthering the specified goals of the Recommended Plan.

Immediately upon approval of this Master Plan the project team and City staff should formalize these recommendations into an Overlay Zone ordinance to ensure that the appropriate tools are in place to support the recommendations of the plan.

## 6.2 Affordable Housing

Throughout the planning process and community input sessions concern was expressed regarding the potential impact on the existing mobile home parks in the area as a result of the renewal objectives of the plan. The existing mobile home parks play a vital role in providing affordable housing for residents on low fixed incomes. The community process identified a mix of housing, including affordable housing, as a priority.

The North Nevada corridor is a Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) target area, and is a low/moderate income area. Currently, there is no modern affordable housing in the corridor. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as:

*“In general, housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities. Please note that some jurisdictions may define affordable housing based on other, locally determined criteria, and that this definition is intended solely as an approximate guideline or general rule of thumb.”*

The City, through this Master Plan, encourages the development of a mix of housing, including affordable housing units, to address the lack of existing residential development, the community desire for a mix of housing in the area, and to accommodate senior housing demand in the area, in the event that any of the existing mobile home parks are privately sold and repurposed.

There are several potential funding sources and incentives available for developers who intend to build affordable housing. There are also funding sources available for the City to improve infrastructure around affordable housing development.

One of the primary funding tools available is the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (“LIHTC”) program. In the State of Colorado, it is administered by the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (“CHFA”). LIHTC provides funding for the development costs of low-income housing by allowing an investor to take a federal tax credit equal to a percentage of the cost incurred for development of the low-income units in a rental housing project. The amount of the credit is based on the amount of credits awarded to the project in the competition, the actual cost of the project, the tax credit rate announced by the IRS, and the percentage or number of the project's units that are considered affordable.

In partnership with a LIHTC project, the City is able to leverage HOME Investment Partnership Programs funding to provide gap funding for affordable housing projects. While the City is limited to the annual formula grant funding appropriation received for this program, the North Nevada Avenue corridor is an identified target area and is a priority for use of the funding, should appropriate projects be identified.



### **Josephine Commons, Lafayette, CO**

*A Boulder Housing Authority affordable housing development providing 153 apartments for seniors (55+) and low income families. The rentals are restricted to specified income levels.*



### **Morgan Place, Los Angeles, CA**

*An Adobe Communities affordable housing development providing 55 apartments for seniors (62+) earning 30-50% Average Median Income (AMI). Adobe Communities use a variety of funding sources including LIHTC, Tax Exemption bonds, CDBG, HOME, Redevelopment Tax Credits.*

Furthermore, the City is able to use CDBG funds to improve infrastructure around affordable housing projects and in low/moderate income areas. Potential improvements include:

- Sidewalks, curbs, and gutters
- Street Paving
- Park and Trail Development
- Pedestrian Ramps
- Pedestrian Crossing Signals
- Street Lighting
- Other Infrastructure Improvements

In order to realize the recommendations of this Master Plan for a mix of housing, including affordable housing units/projects, the City should encourage developers to take advantage of the existing funding options available.

### **Available Affordable Housing Resources**

The following agencies operate a variety of programs that provide funds to encourage the development of affordable housing. Further details are provided in [Appendix 4](#).

#### **El Paso County Housing Authority**

##### Housing Trust Fund

The El Paso County Housing Authority provides funding to organized community-based groups with experience in the design and administration of innovative programs that address the housing needs of low-income residents of El Paso County. The purpose is to provide for more adequate and affordable housing for residents. Funding is available in the form of loans or the direct purchase of services for which no repayment is required; loans are preferred. The intent is to revolve the funds so more low-income residents are assisted in the future.

#### **Colorado Springs Housing Authority**

##### Tax Credit Partnerships

The Colorado Springs Housing Authority has partnered with some developments in Colorado Springs to use the Authority's tax-exempt status in exchange for the development to offer affordable housing units, based on income. The Housing Authority does not manage these properties,

#### **Colorado Housing Finance Authority**

##### Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program encourages the construction and rehabilitation of low-income rental housing by providing a federal income tax credit as an incentive to investors. Both individual and corporate investors may receive 10 years of tax credits in return for investing equity capital into the development of eligible housing projects. Federal housing tax credits are awarded to developers of qualified projects. Developers then sell these credits to investors to raise capital (or equity) for their projects, which reduces the debt that the developer would otherwise have to borrow. Because the debt is lower, a tax credit property can in turn offer lower, more affordable rents.

##### Multifamily Loan Programs

Loans to acquire, rehabilitate, build, or refinance multifamily affordable rental housing projects.

#### **Colorado Department of Local Affairs**

##### Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

HOME dollars provide competitive funding to local government, non-profit and private developers. The purpose of the HOME Program is to address a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or ownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.



#### Housing Development Grant Funds (HDGF)

The HDGF program is a competitive grant that provides funds for acquisition, rehabilitation and new construction. The Fund was created by the Colorado state treasury and consists of monies allocated to the Colorado Affordable Housing Construction Grants Fund by the General Assembly. HDGF improves, preserves or expands the supply of affordable housing, finances foreclosure prevention activities in Colorado, and finances the acquisition of housing and economic data necessary to advise the State Housing Board on local housing conditions.

#### Housing Development Loan Fund (HDLF)

The HDLF program was created to meet federal matching funds requirements. This fund makes loans for development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of low- or moderate-income housing. Loans provided through HDLF require collateral.

#### Colorado Housing Investment Fund

The CHIF was created with \$13.2 million from the Attorney General's custodial funds to address Colorado's need for affordable rental housing. At this time, applications are accepted only with a Special Request for Applications.

As part of the implementation of this Master Plan, the City should develop a funding and incentives package that is geared specifically toward addressing the affordable housing needs of the existing low-income residents in this area.

### **6.3 Funding Options**

In order to successfully implement this Master Plan, City staff should develop a package of funding options to stimulate public and private investment in the corridor. The potential funds that could be available to help accomplish the goals and recommendations of the Master Plan include the following:

#### **Local Public Funds**

**City General Fund:** The City General Fund could be used to pay for various essential improvements (e.g. transportation, stormwater/drainage, parks). The City uses the general fund to pay for projects throughout the entire municipality. For 2017, there is budgeted \$350,000 for high priority implementation projects for North Nevada. Given the limited funds available, there is unlikely to be any additional funding available from this source.

**Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA):** PPRTA generally funds specific projects from tax revenues it collects, as identified on project lists that are periodically updated. The organization also identifies target dates for the completion of projects and a review board oversees the granting of funds. It also has some discretionary funding pools available for disbursement. PPRTA periodically seeks voter approval for extensions of particular funding initiatives. Given the multi-decade time frame of this project, funding from multiple extensions or cycles of PPRTA funds could help support projects over many years. PPRTA funding could support transportation and infrastructure projects, but there are currently no specific PPRTA projects for North Nevada Avenue.

**Trails, Open Space & Parks Ordinance Tax (TOPS):** The Trails Open Space and Parks tax is a 0.1 percent tax on all sales in the city. The TOPS program was established in 1997 to acquire parks, trails and open space. The existing TOPS program sunsets and could be extended beyond 2025. This program would be most appropriately targeted toward new parks, trails, recreation, and open space recommendations of the plan. The legislation limits the percentage of funds that can be spent in specific areas. In the last several years, approximately \$8 million annually has been collected.



*TOPS dollars could be used for trail improvements in the North Nevada Avenue corridor*

**Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU):** CSU may represent a source of funding in certain circumstances, if a utility line owned by CSU is located near a future project. If a project involves modifications or upgrades to utility infrastructure that were already needed, then CSU could provide funding for the utility-related portion of the overall project budget. If a project impacts a utility asset that did not already require upgrade or modification, then CSU would not be responsible to fund the project.

## State & Federal Public Funds

**Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG):** This “flexible” program was created from the long-standing Surface Transportation Program into the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, acknowledging that this program has the most flexible eligibilities among all Federal-aid highway programs and aligning the program’s name with how the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) has historically administered it. The flexible nature of this program focuses on funding to priority areas and areas of greatest need. The Surface Transportation Block Grant Program may be used for bridge and safety projects on any public road, facilities for non-motorized transportation, transit capital projects and public bus terminal and facilities. The STBG is programmed through the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG) and plans for the funding are in place through 2022 in the PPACG’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). An amendment to the TIP would be necessary to use this funding in the next several years.

**Congestion Management / Air Quality (“CMAQ”):** Administered by the FHA, the CMAQ program was implemented to support surface transportation projects and other related efforts that contribute to air quality improvements and provide congestion relief. The federal government is currently projecting funding of \$2.3 to \$2.5 billion each year from 2016 to 2020 for CMAQ projects nationwide. Colorado Springs will only be eligible for this funding until 2019, as the City meets current air quality standards.

**FASTER:** Senate Bill 09-108, also known as the Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Act of 2009 (FASTER), was signed into law on March 2, 2009. FASTER’s key benefit is providing CDOT and local governments with a new funding source separate from the General Fund that is stable and predictable. Similar to federal programs, FASTER funds 80 percent of each project, with the local entity supplying the remaining 20 percent. The FASTER Bridge Fund is used to repair or replace a specific list of poor-rated bridges on the state highway system. FASTER transit funds are granted to local governments and transit agencies for projects such as new bus stops, maintenance facilities, or multimodal transportation centers. This funding is also programmed through the PPACG and plans for the funding are in place through 2022 in the TIP. An amendment to the TIP would be necessary to use this funding in the next several years.



*STP funds could be used to implement transit improvements*

**Surface Transportation Program–Metro (STP):** The Surface Transportation Program is the most flexible of all the highway programs and historically one of the largest single programs. States and metropolitan regions may use these funds for highway, bridge, transit (including intercity bus terminals), and pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects. STP can cover 80 percent of the total cost of a project, with the rest covered by states or localities. Eligible projects include highway and bridge construction and rehabilitation, transit capital projects, and bicycle, pedestrian and recreational trails, and environmental mitigation.

**TIGER Grant:** The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery, or TIGER Discretionary Grant program, provides a unique opportunity for the Department of Transport to invest in road, rail, transit and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Since 2009, Congress has dedicated nearly \$4.6 billion for seven rounds of TIGER to fund projects that have a significant impact on the Nation,

a region or a metropolitan area. The highly competitive TIGER grant program supports innovative projects, including multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects, which are difficult to fund through traditional federal programs.

**Federal Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG):** The Department of Local Affairs of the State of Colorado administers the federal CDBG program for municipalities and counties to carry out community development activities. The funds

must be used for activities that either benefit low- and moderate-income persons, prevent or eliminate slums or blight, or address community development needs that have a particular urgency. Eligible use of funds includes acquisition, design, engineering, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation or installation of public improvements or public facilities.

### Dedicated Funding Sources

**Business Improvement District (BID):** Authorized under Title 31 of Colorado Revised Statutes, a business improvement district (BID) is a private sector initiative to manage and improve the environment of a business district with services financed by a self-imposed and self-governed assessment. Services financed by a BID are intended to enhance, not replace, existing City services. BIDs can finance a wide variety of services, including marketing, maintenance, economic development, public safety, planning, events and parking management.

BIDs are accountable to those who pay through a BID board of directors comprised of property and business owners within the district. Services financed by a BID are usually provided by a private sector organization, not government. BIDs require demonstrated support from owners of personal and real property representing more than 50% of assessed value and acreage.

**General Improvement Districts (GID):** A GID is a public infrastructure district that applies an additional property tax or assessment to a specific improvement area to pay for new public infrastructure. GIDs are commonly used to fund shared infrastructure facilities. They can be initiated by a majority of property owners. GIDs are well suited to provide long-term financing for one-time major public improvements and for ongoing maintenance funding.

**Special Improvement District (SID):** SIDs apply special assessments or charges to specific individual properties that benefit from public improvements. The special assessment is determined based on the amount of benefit a property receives. The overall assessment to a particular area benefiting from an improvement must be distributed equitably. The most likely improvements that involve the use of a SID include roads, sidewalks, sewer lines, and water lines. The assessments are typically distributed in an area based on linear feet of road adjacency, the number of lots, or area. Special assessments are not property taxes, but represent a lien on a property included in an SID. In these types of arrangements, bonds are issued to finance the improvements, and the assessments charged to property owners typically represent the sole source of repayment for these bonds. Colorado Springs has its own version of an assessment district referred to as a LID (Local Improvement District). SIDs or City-approved LIDs are particularly well suited as a method of finance for discrete one-time public improvement upgrades. At least 50% of property owners must concur with the assessment.



*A SID could be formed to implement the recommended infrastructure improvements in the North Nevada Avenue*

**Special Improvements Maintenance District (SIMD):** Under its City code, Colorado Springs has another unique district financing option, which are subject to TABOR votes. SIMDs have the ability to levy ongoing property taxes for the purpose of maintaining existing public improvements. They do not have the authority to borrow money or issue debt. SIMDs could be employed to provide funding for the ongoing maintenance of landscaping and streetscape improvements originally installed using other funding sources. SIMDs do not have separate boards that govern their operation, but they may have advisory committees that oversee operations. City Councils typically act as the de facto board overseeing SIMDs.

**Urban Renewal Authority (URA):** A URA is a quasi-municipal organization intended to address or redevelop deteriorating or “blighted” areas. There is normally only one URA in a given municipality, but a city can have multiple urban renewal project areas. A URA can use Tax Increment Financing (TIF), a tool in which improvements are financed through a net increase in property or sales tax in a defined area. Under TIF arrangements, a base property valuation or base sales tax level is identified for the specified



area, and the TIF entity collects the tax revenue generated by additional property or sales tax revenues. The City continues to receive the “base” level of tax proceeds from the specified area. A mayor-appointed board governs a particular URA.



To form an urban renewal project area, the City Council must pass a resolution stating that blight is being eliminated through the URA process and its activities. In addition, a URA must develop a formal urban renewal plan for each project area, outlining the proposed public improvements to move forward. It is possible that areas along North Nevada Avenue could be determined to be blighted under urban renewal criteria. TIF revenues are available for only a 25-year period under Colorado law. The City can establish an urban renewal area when one or more redevelopment projects with a significant potential tax increment have been identified and have a strong probability of near-term initiation.

**Housing and Urban Development (HUD):** HUD provides grants for various community development objectives, and in recent years has funded community planning efforts dedicated to the promotion of sustainability.

**Metropolitan (Metro) District:** Metro districts are quasi-governmental entities and political subdivisions of the state that finance, construct, and maintain public facilities. These districts may finance and maintain street improvements, water, sewer, and drainage improvements, parks and recreation, fire protection, public transportation systems, solid waste and limited security improvements and maintenance costs. Metro districts often apply additional mill levies to development to pay for infrastructure costs and maintenance expenses. Metro districts have the power to issue general obligation and revenue bonds to finance improvements.

Developers and private property owners have formed metro districts, authorized under Title 32 of the Colorado State Statutes, to finance and maintain larger scale new developments and redevelopment efforts. A number of infill projects in the Denver area, for example, have used metro districts.

### Private Funding

**Public Improvement Fees (PIFs):** Developers impose a PIF on retail and service tenants to fund public improvements. PIFs are collected as a fee charged on sales within a set of negotiated categories and a designated geographic boundary. General obligation or revenue bonds may be issued based on the revenue collected. Because PIFs are fees, they become a part of the cost of the sale or service and are subject to sales tax. Administered through covenants on retail leases, PIFs are usually collected by a metro district established as part of a project.

**Private Foundations:** Private foundations provide grants across a variety of focus areas including arts and culture, civic and community initiatives and education, health, and human services.



## 6.4 ComCor

The 2014 North Nevada EOZ Task Force Findings and Recommendations included twelve (12) basic recommendations. Recommendation #3 identified the need for the City to work with ComCor to identify the long-term goals and requirements with respect to the planned improvements in the EOZ. One of the planning efforts to be completed as part of the grant funding with respect to ComCor is “specific consideration of potential impacts to local community corrections programs, including ComCor, and recommendations for optimum location/relocation of community corrections facilities.”

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners established a County Community Board in 1996, which advises Commissioners on community-based and community-oriented programs that provide housing and supervision of offenders being diverted from prison, and those transitioning back into the community after prison. The County currently receives \$6.3 million from the State of Colorado Department of Corrections to administer the program.

El Paso County contracts with three programs for offender services: two programs are private and one is operated by the El Paso County Sheriff’s Office. ComCor is one of the largest private, not-for-profit community corrections programs in the state of Colorado and has been in business for over 30 years. ComCor provides basic community corrections services by offering correctional services and treatment programs that provide opportunities for offenders to change their lives and make positive contributions to society.

Halfway houses are located in the community where people are placed to either (1) serve all or part of a sentences, or (2) serve a period of time after being released from federal prison, in order to prepare for reentering the community. Halfway houses are also called “Community Correction Centers”, but several years ago, the Bureau of Prisons named them “Residential Reentry Centers” (RRCs).

### Existing Facilities

ComCor has several RRCs and offices located along the North Nevada Avenue corridor. Most of the RRCs are former tourist motels, which were not constructed for the current year-round use. The program offices, commercial kitchen and dining facilities (which provides breakfast and dinner), and residential facilities (sleeping quarters) are all dispersed. This results in residents walking along North Nevada Avenue not only for services/programs provided by ComCor, but for other services, such as catching a bus to work and convenience services (i.e. gas station, grocery store, etc.).

On weekends, residents gather at the main recreational facility and common area at 3950 North Nevada Avenue, where they receive visitors or socialize with other residents. ComCor tries to give them tasks to do during these down times, some may get passes to go off site, and other residents attend church.

Figure 6.4 shows the location of the ComCor facilities in the North Nevada Avenue Corridor and an inventory of these facilities is provided in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.4: Existing ComCor facilities in Master Plan area



Figure 6.5: Inventory of Existing ComCor facilities in Master Plan area

Building	Use	# of Beds	#of Sleeping Rooms	Total Square Footage
3950 N Nevada	Offices (11), sleeping rooms, and laundry	135	25	13,561
3844 N Nevada	Offices (7), sleeping rooms, laundry, tech office & basement	68	16	6,588
3808 N Nevada	Offices (8), sleeping rooms and laundry. Basement under office	136	25	15,355
3615 Roberts Rd	Classrooms (5), Offices (22), residential facility	112	4 (open sleeping bays)	15,228
2723 N Nevada (2 story)	Non-Residential Program, Offices (25), meeting rooms	0		11,484
3820 N Nevada	Kitchen & Dining Area, Seating Capacity (265). Offices (6)	0		6,902
Total		451	70	55,557

ComCor also has property outside of the North Nevada corridor. Primary administrative offices, including IT department, accounting, additional meeting rooms and approximately 30 offices are located on Kelly Johnson Boulevard. Square footage of this space is approximately 13,329 square feet on 5.7 acres.

ComCor currently has 320 residents. In the past, they have housed over a thousand residents but changes to the system have reduced the scope of effort for ComCor. The work release component of their operation was recently returned to the County. There are 140 staff working at the various facilities, including shift workers and visiting employees, such as a probation officers. There are also 1400 visits per month for people serving probation at the 2723 North Nevada Avenue facility. This building has 30 parking spaces, which is insufficient for current needs. The facility at Roberts Road is a former office/warehouse. The warehouse area was converted to 112 bed, dormitory style correction facility and provides offices for staff and rooms for the various programs. The Roberts Road location has 70 parking spaces. In the three primarily residential facilities (3950, 3808, and 3844) there are generally four occupants per room in bunkbeds. The kitchen facility has a capacity of 165 seats and operates from 4:00 – 7:00 am and from 4:30 – 6:30 pm.

Residents come and go at all times of day and night from the various facilities due to work commitments. Residents have job requirements throughout the City with many different employers. This approach is more effective for resident reintegration and reentry into society, but necessitates easy access to transportation.

### Existing Zoning Requirements

#### City of Colorado Springs:

The type of facilities operated by ComCor fall under the land use category of ‘Detention Facilities/Halfway Houses’ in the City Zoning Code. “Detention Facilities/Halfway Houses” are only permitted in the PF (Public Facilities) Zone District. The PF Zone District provides land which is used or being reserved for a governmental purpose by the City of Colorado Springs, El Paso County, the State of Colorado, the Federal government or a public utility and to private facilities which perform traditional government functions. In 1997, all the ComCor owned properties along North Nevada Avenue, except for one office facility, were rezoned from either C6 or M1 to PF/cr (condition of record). The condition of record noted that “*any new or revised development plan shall go before the Planning Commission for public hearing.*”

A relocation of ComCor elsewhere in the City is likely to require rezoning to PF. To rezone a property as PF requires a determination that a public need exists and that the use and location are compatible with adjacent land uses. In making this determination, the City will consider setbacks from adjacent uses or property lines, landscaping, screening, access, and the placement and size of signs and amount of parking. These development standards are determined by the review of the concept or development plan at the time the zone is established.



## El Paso County:

Under the El Paso County Land Development Code, ComCor would fall under the regulations for a ‘Half-Way House’. In accordance with El Paso County Land Development Code, these uses require Special Use review in the following zone districts:

- **F5 (forestry and recreational district)**
  - A 5-acre district intended to accommodate the conservation of forest resources, protect the natural environment and preserve open space, while accommodating limited residential uses.
- **A35 (Agricultural District)**
  - A 35-acre district primarily intended to accommodate rural communities and lifestyles, including the conservation of farming, ranching, and agricultural resources
- **A5 (Agricultural District)**
  - A 5-acre district primarily intended to conserve agricultural resources and ranching operations and accommodate limited residential uses
- **RR5 (residential rural district)**
  - A 5-acre district intended to accommodate low density, rural, single-family residential development

The purpose of the Special Use process is to address potential impacts of certain land uses on existing and allowed uses in the same neighborhood. The special use process considers location, design, configuration, intensity, density, natural hazards, and other relevant factors pertaining to the proposed use.

## ComCor Relocation Requirements

ComCor is required to adhere to the Colorado Department of Criminal Justice facilities standards. These standards *‘address the quality and safety of living and working environment for program staff and offenders. Facilities must be in compliance with applicable zoning, building, fire, and health codes. In addition, facilities must meet space requirements, providing adequate living space for resident offenders, as well as providing sufficient space for staff and for offender services.’*

ComCor is also required to provide separate space for each of the following programs:

- Private Individual counseling
- Group Meetings
- Monitored visitation (residential only)
- Dining (residential only)
- Food preparation (residential only)

RRCs in accordance with Federal Bureau of Prisons standards can *“not be part of a building in which other business(s) share space which could be construed as a conflict of interest to the mission of a community based correction facility.”* In addition, *“the contractor will locate the facility within one mile of public transportation. In the event the facility is not located within one mile of public transportation, the contractor will provide transportation for offenders to seek employment, work, and participate in program and or treatment activities at no cost to the offender. Transportation will be made available 7 days a week. Transporting of offenders in staff member’s private vehicle should only be done in unusual circumstances.”*



ComCor prefers a location served by public transportation

During the stakeholder meetings and subsequent coordination with ComCor, representatives identified some of the issues and needs for their program which include, but are not limited to:

- The facilities are old and conditions vary between facilities. The buildings were not originally constructed for this purpose and not for year around use. ComCor has spent money to improve their facilities over the years but they still require upgrading.
- Since the residents do not drive, ComCor would prefer a facility close to public transportation and a location that accommodates various work schedules (days, evenings, and weekends). However, this is not essential as they also operate a van pool to take residents to places of employment.
- The current ComCor facilities on North Nevada Avenue are dispersed. Residents have to walk between the accommodation buildings, the kitchen facility and the administration building. This makes their presence in the corridor more noticeable then if all facilities were combined in one building or property.
- If ComCor is to relocate, they will require a campus facility and need approximately a 5 to 10 acre site.
- Rather than new build, ComCor would prefer to relocate to an existing building with an industrial kitchen, laundry facilities, and with room for the various programs, residential services (sleeping and living accommodations), and staff offices. This would likely be the most cost effective option as ComCor likely cannot afford new construction. The building should preferably be in proximity to public transportation.



*The ComCor facilities are in former motels, which were not constructed for the current use.*



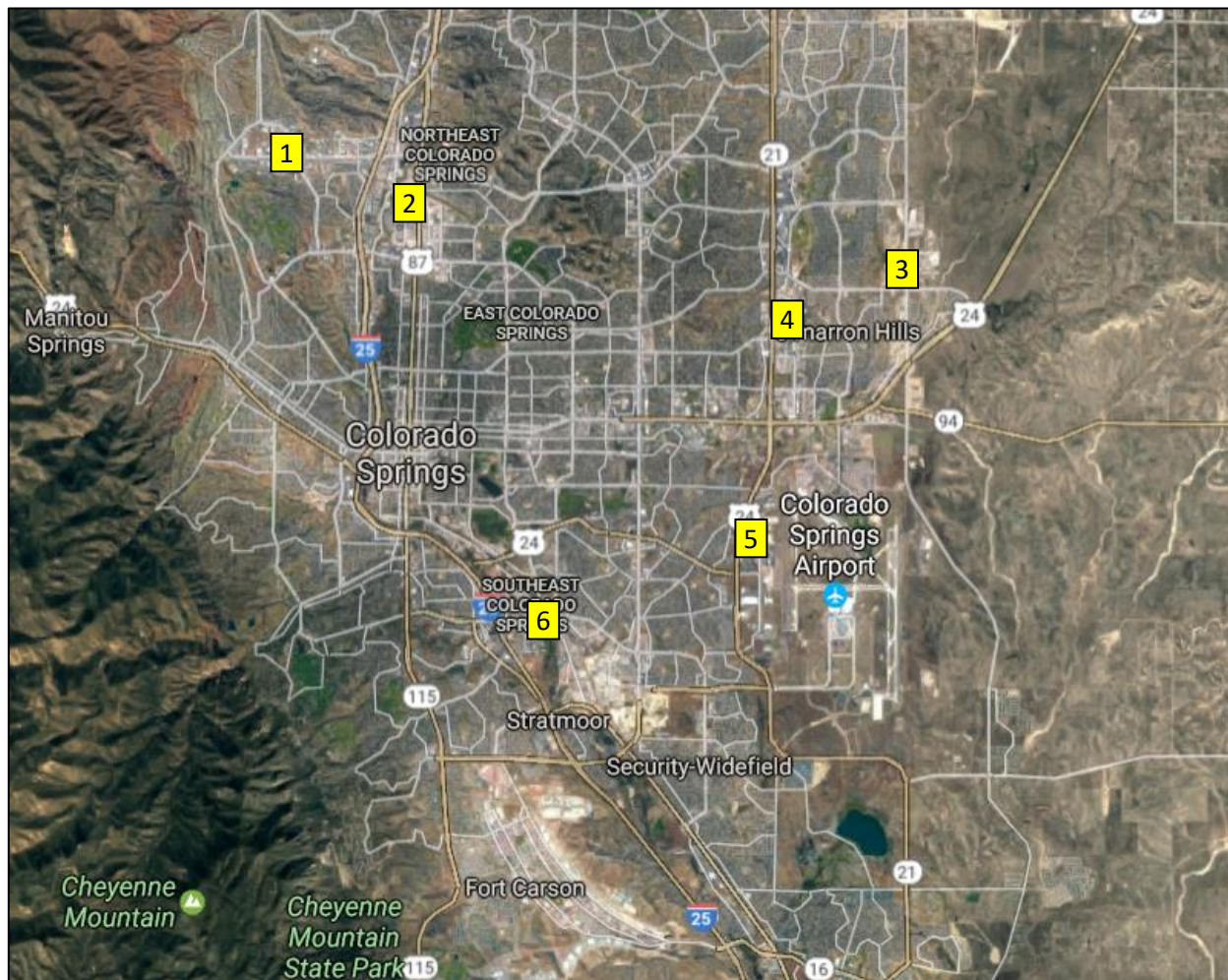
### Relocation Options

There are unlikely to be any existing PF zoned properties in the City that could accommodate the ComCor operation as such zoning is limited and is very much tailored to a specific public facility. In the County, the zones within which halfway houses are permitted is extremely restrictive, as they are all rural in character and by their nature are unlikely to be in locations accessible to public transport. Those few areas appropriately zoned close to the City limits where services are available are also close to existing residential areas.

Given the potential conflict of this type of use with residential areas, the more appropriate locations in the City would be those of a more commercial and industrial character, preferably in a location that has public transport accessibility. This would likely require a rezoning to PF in the City. In the County, this would not be permitted even as a Special Use. A use variance would be the only course of action available in the County.

As noted above, the requirements for a new campus is a site of between 5-10 acres. Suitable areas for a campus of this size in the City or County are shown in the map at Figure 6.6. In discussions with El Paso County staff, a relocation to vacant land in the vicinity of East Las Vegas Street was suggested. However, this is not a preferred option for ComCor as they foresee operational issues if they were to mix with other correctional programs.

Figure 6.6: Potential Relocation Options for ComCor



**1. Garden of the Gods Corridor west of I-25**

Pros: This area is fully developed but has large industrial/office buildings, some of which are vacant. Public transport is available as it was recently upgraded in the area to serve the El Paso County Service Center which occupies the former Intel building. The location of the Service Center in this corridor is also a convenient to ComCor residents.

Cons: Established residential areas and schools are close by with no buffer.



**2. Mark Dabbling Boulevard/Sinton Road Corridor between South Rockrimmon Boulevard to Fillmore Street**

Pros: This area is mainly developed with a few vacant parcels and has some larger industrial/office buildings that could be repurposed if they became available. There are no established residential areas and schools close by and the area is buffered by I-25 and Monument Creek.

Cons: Public transport is not directly available in the corridor but transit service is provided on the intersecting streets of Garden of the Gods Road, Fillmore Street. The area around Gossage Youth Sports Complex should be avoided.

**3. West and East side of North Marksheffel Road between North Carefree Circle and Constitution Ave.**

Pros: This area is largely industrial with some large industrial buildings and some vacant land. Established residential areas lie to the south so any facilities would be best placed east of the Rock Island Trail corridor, which will provide a buffer.

Cons: The area is not well served by public transportation as services do not extend further east than Tutt Blvd/Peterson Road.

**4. East of Powers Boulevard between Constitution Avenue and Peterson Air Force Base**

Pros: This area is characterized by small industrial sites some of which are developed but many are vacant. Cherokee Ridge Golf Course lies in the north of this area and could provide a buffer to part of the Cimarron Hills neighborhood to the east. Powers Boulevard and Peterson Air Force Base provide substantial buffers to the west and south.

Cons: The established residential neighborhood of Cimarron Hills lies to the east but appropriate siting could avoid any conflicts. There is limited direct access to public transport but it is available on Galley Road and nearby on Palmer Park Blvd and

**5. Area between Powers Boulevard and Colorado Springs Airport between Sand Creek and East Fountain Boulevard**

Pros: This area is partially developed with larger industrial buildings and there are also a number of vacant parcels of sufficient size to accommodate ComCor's requirements. Established residential areas are located to the west of Powers Boulevard and the freeway provides a substantial buffer. The airport also provides a buffer to the east.

Cons: James Irwin Charter School is to the south of this area, so any ComCor relocation should not be sited in close proximity to the school. There is no public transport in this immediate area but services are available to the west on Fountain Boulevard.

**6. Both sides of East Las Vegas Street and the railroad between El Paso Street and Lake Avenue**

Pros: This is approximately two-mile corridor has a variety of industrial and special uses. There are many vacant parcels and some buildings that have reuse potential. There are no established residential areas in this corridor and I-25 and the railroad provide substantial buffers. The northern part of the corridor is close to downtown facilities.

Cons: The El Paso County Jail lies to the south of this area and ComCor has specifically indicated that it prefers not to locate in proximity to other correction facilities. Locations close to the El Polmar Youth Sports Complex and Harrison High School should also be avoided. Public transport runs along Lake Avenue but the rest of the corridor is not well served.

As noted above, ComCor prefers to repurpose an existing building rather than engage in new construction as the latter is cost prohibitive. ComCor has employed a realtor who has been looking for facilities to meet their requirements for the last 15 years. The type of building that could be readily repurposed for ComCor is a former hotel, an old school, a closed nursing home, or vacant office building with a cafeteria. The challenge that ComCor faces is that this type of use is not readily embraced in most locations and many of the locations for this type of building are in close proximity to residential areas and schools, which is not a viable option. The areas identified in Figure 6.6 could also be suitable locations to search for existing buildings to relocate ComCor.

The requirements for such a building would include:

- A minimum of 450 beds
- An industrial kitchen
- An industrial laundry
- Recreational facilities, such as a basketball court, and common areas
- Parking for 120-150 cars
- Proximity to public transportation services as a preference.

The recommendation of this Master Plan is that the City and County work collaboratively to find a suitable relocation opportunity for ComCor. This may require the County to revisit the zones in which halfway houses can be located or indicate a willingness to issue a variance in appropriate circumstances. In all cases, the Federal Bureau of Prisons has to sanction any new location for the ComCor operation.

## SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

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The *Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan* provides a guide to determine appropriate development for the area, including goals relating to land-use patterns, design standards, mobility, and infrastructure. There was some skepticism during the community process about how and when the Master Plan would be realized. This Plan is not designed to sit on a shelf collecting dust; it is intended for use by the public, businesses and property owners, and City officials and staff to encourage and shape public and private investment in this corridor. The City's role in Plan implementation will include oversight and potential commitment to funding improvements relating to infrastructure and transportation. The private sector will be encouraged to drive the changes and preferred uses identified in the Plan.

Since full implementation of the Master Plan requires both the availability of public funding and private sector interest and financial investment, it is difficult at this point to define how and when implementation of the Plan will occur. The market analysis demand projections extend to 2040, so it is reasonable to expect that full implementation of this plan could take several years. However, if the cybersecurity and medical innovation sectors generate public and private investment as anticipated, then the pace of change could be more rapid.

In order to implement the Recommended Plan outlined in Section 5 and the Specific Implementation Strategies outlined in Section 6, the following recommendations will need to be acted upon by the City following adoption of the Plan by City Council.

### Zoning

- **Recommendation 1:** Immediately upon approval of the Master Plan, the consultant team and City staff will create a zoning overlay for the Master Plan area to codify the recommended zoning and development standards. This will ensure that the appropriate tools are in place to support the recommendations of the plan. An ordinance for the zoning overlay will be presented to Planning Commission and City Council for approval in 2017.

### Implementation and Timing

- **Recommendation 2:** Immediately upon approval of the Master Plan, City staff will create a detailed Implementation Plan outlining the steps needed to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. This should include a phasing plan for the timing of the implementation steps.

### Funding/Incentives

- **Recommendation 3:** In preparing the Implementation Plan, City staff should develop a package of funding options/incentives to stimulate public and private investment in the corridor. Funding strategies will affect the order in which elements of the Plan are implemented.
- **Recommendation 4:** In addition to funding incentives, the City should develop a package of non-monetary incentive options to stimulate development in the corridor. This could include:
  - selling excess right-of-way to adjacent land owners in exchange for some public benefit that addresses the goals of the Plan;
  - flexibility in applying the development standards of the underlying zone to encourage preferred uses, especially affordable housing; and
  - relaxation in parking standards if a contribution is made toward implementing the transit recommendations for the corridor.



## Infrastructure and Mobility

- **Recommendation 5:** In 2017, the City should commission a separate and more in-depth transportation plan for the corridor that will guide transportation funding options and applications for funding. The transportation plan should assess the technical aspects of implementing the street improvements and the new street connections recommended in this Master Plan.
- **Recommendation 6:** The City should commission a further study to fully assess the transit options for the corridor and its transition to adjoining areas. This should also address the availability and requirements of federal and state funding sources.
- **Recommendation 7:** A major component of this plan is the streetscape improvements to North Nevada Avenue including curb and gutter, sidewalks, etc. Early implementation by the City could serve as a major catalyst for the renewal and growth of this corridor. The City should prioritize this project and development funding options for its implementation.
- **Recommendation 8:** The City should continue to pursue the acquisition of the railroad right of way paralleling North Nevada Avenue. This includes both the disused portion North of Commerce Street and the currently active portion to the south, as this is a fundamental element to the future transit and trail recommendations of this plan.
- **Recommendation 9:** Consistent with the recommendations in this Plan, the City should work with landowners to acquire the land necessary to develop regional detention facilities in the area. This could act as a significant stimulus to new investment in the corridor. The City should utilize IGA funds for this purpose when possible.

## Existing Land Uses

### Affordable Housing:

- **Recommendation 10:** As part of the implementation of this Master Plan, the City should develop incentives specifically focused on the affordable housing needs of low-income residents in this area. This could include flexibility in the application of development standards if a project includes an element of affordable housing.
- **Recommendation 11:** The City should encourage developers to take advantage of the existing funding options for affordable housing units/projects available as described in Section 6.2.

### ComCor:

- **Recommendation 12:** The City should work collaboratively with the County to find a suitable relocation opportunity for ComCor. This may require the City/County to revisit the zones in which halfway houses can be located, indicate a willingness to issue a variance in appropriate circumstances, or rezone the property to accommodate this vital public need.

### Former Dog Track:

- **Recommendation 13:** The former dog track is a great opportunity and there may be potential for future redevelopment. This City should continue to communicate with the owner on long-term plans for the property.

Transit Mix/AmeriGas:

- **Recommendation 14:** The Transit Mix concrete batch plant and the AmeriGas propane depot occupy critical frontage along the North Nevada Avenue that will be required if the redevelopment of the former dog track is to become a reality. Transit Mix has indicated a willingness to relocate provided they can find a suitable site elsewhere in the City. The City should work with both Transit Mix and AmeriGas to help them find suitable locations elsewhere to capitalize on this major redevelopment opportunity.

Kmart:

- **Recommendation 15:** The owner of the Kmart site has been engaged in the community process and has indicated a desire to redevelop the property. The City should work with this landowner to encourage this development while at the same time ensuring that it achieves the recommendations of this plan.

If these recommendations are applied and the Implementation Plan is executed, then the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan will become a reality and the City and local community will have a place that is both unique and authentic, and somewhere that all City residents can enjoy and be proud of.

## APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY PROCESS DETAILS

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This Appendix contains five documents which summarize community responses received through each step in the community involvement process.

The process focus moved sequentially from broad topics, discussions, and process participants' dreams of a vision for the corridor, to responses to a Master Plan containing specific actions designed to make that vision a reality.

Each step in the process informed subsequent steps and each was grounded in the judgment developed through a combination of data analysis and community deliberation.





# Project Area Community Assessment

August 2016



# INTRODUCTION

The City of Colorado Springs and the NES consultant team are committed to working with Colorado Springs residents and businesses to create a community-based plan to renew the North Nevada Avenue project area. One of the goals for the extensive community involvement process is to combine and consider both technical analysis and the “lived experiences” of people who care about the area. The ultimate goal is to create a plan that is both responsible and responsive.

The first step in the process gathered a wide range of opinions about the project area. It was important to hear and understand community residents’ concerns related to the project area, the opportunities they believe exist now and could exist, and their hopes for the future of the area. This report provides a summary of the responses received through this early step in the planning process.

## OUTREACH METHODS

In order to solicit a wide range and volume of opinions, multiple outreach methods were employed. The table below describes each of the outreach methods, the rationale for its use, and the level of participation each generated.

Outreach Method	Rationale	Dates conducted	Number of participants/ respondents
Roundtable discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Representatives from adjacent neighborhoods</li><li>- Project area business owners and managers</li><li>- Mobile home park managers in/around the area</li><li>- Members of business-related groups in the community</li></ul>	Encouraged informal discussions with and between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Representatives of those with the potential to be most impacted by the project</li><li>- People with knowledge of business/market analysis</li></ul>	July 11 – July 27	40 participants
Online survey through the City website	Provided equal and widespread opportunity for many to conveniently share their individual perspectives	July 11 – August 15	589 respondents
Community workshop	Offered open, public forum for all who are interested in influencing the plan to provide opinions individually and in small groups	August 3	Approximately 200 participants
Total estimated participants/respondents			829

The following three questions were asked through each of the outreach methods:

What are the biggest challenges for this area?

What are the opportunities you see for this area?

How would you like this area to look and feel 10 years from now?

Following the roundtables and after receiving the first two weeks of survey responses, a preliminary list of challenges, opportunities and elements of a 10-year vision for the area was prepared. That list was shared with those who participated in the August 3 workshop. Workshop participants worked in small groups to identify the two most important challenges, the two most important opportunities in the project area, and any 10-year vision elements that were missing. All participants were also asked individually to identify any challenges or opportunities missing from the list. Additions were made to the preliminary list, based on workshop suggestions and final survey responses. The final list of project area challenges, opportunities, and vision elements can be found on the project website: [www.ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNAve](http://www.ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNAve).

Summary and verbatim reports which document the survey and workshop responses are also posted on the project website, as are the verbatim comments from the roundtables.

A robust communication program was launched in early July to support and promote community participation in creating the plan. The following communication tools were used to make project area residents, businesses, and the Colorado Springs community aware of the project and to encourage their participation in the planning process.

- \* A flier providing information about creation of the Renew North Nevada Avenue Plan and detailed information about how to get involved was mailed to approximately 1,500 property owners in the project area;
- \* Handouts and posters were hand-delivered to all businesses within the project boundary on North Nevada Avenue;
- \* A project page was established on the City of Colorado Springs' website;
- \* A news release was distributed to all local news media explaining the project and the community engagement process which resulted in coverage by multiple media outlets;
- \* Multiple social media messages were posted on Facebook, Twitter and Next Door; and
- \* Distribution of a series of e-newsletters were distributed via email to all participants/survey respondents who provided their email addresses.

**NNAve**  
RENEW NORTH NEVADA AVENUE

North Nevada Avenue Plan

There are great opportunities that exist in the North Nevada Avenue Corridor. In order to take advantage of them, the City of Colorado Springs needs your help in deciding how to build on and enhance the strengths in and around the area. Working together, we can create a plan to generate continued investment in and renewal of the Corridor into a thriving community gateway.

Tell us how you most commonly use the North Nevada Avenue Corridor, what issues and concerns you have and what could make it better!

What is your connection to this location?

☐ Commute  
☐ Live  
☐ Work  
☐ Shop / Do Business  
☐ Area Property / Business Owner  
☐ College  
☐ School  
☐ Exercise  
☐ Socialize

A screen shot of question #1 on the online survey.

**Great Opportunities Exist in the North Nevada Avenue Corridor**

In order to take advantage of them, the City of Colorado Springs needs your help in deciding how to build on and enhance the strengths in and around the area. Working together, we can create a plan to generate continued investment in and renewal of the Corridor into a thriving community gateway.

**NNAve**  
RENEW NORTH NEVADA AVENUE

**The North Nevada Avenue Plan Will**

- Analyze what land uses would be appropriate for the area;
- Identify incentives to attract businesses and jobs; and
- Study roads, utilities, and zoning to determine what's needed to support the Corridor's renewal.

The Plan will focus on the North Nevada Avenue Corridor, beginning at Austin Bluffs Parkway and extending south of Fillmore Street to the railroad bridge. Individuals, businesses, neighborhoods, and groups are all encouraged to participate in the open, public process to create the North Nevada Avenue Plan.

**Here's How You Can Help**

- Visit [ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNAve](http://ColoradoSprings.gov/RenewNNAve) to take a quick survey to help the City gather information on and ideas about the North Nevada Avenue Corridor - you can even share photos! Plus, stay informed about the project by signing up for email updates about the project and community workshops.
- Attend the first in a series of community workshops on August 3. Turn this card over for a complete schedule.

For more information, contact Project Manager Nina Vetter at [NVetter@springsgov.com](mailto:NVetter@springsgov.com).

**COLORADO SPRINGS**  
CO SPRINGS CITY, USA



# SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Responses gathered through all of the outreach methods were analyzed to identify topics which were consistently mentioned. While all responses were valued and valuable and should be considered as the plan is developed, they have been organized by frequency of mention to identify priorities held by those participating in the process to-date.

## CHALLENGES IN THE PROJECT AREA

FIRST TIER CHALLENGES
Transportation
Businesses
Housing
Land Use
SECOND TIER CHALLENGES
Infrastructure
Negative Perception of the Area
Plan Implementation

### FIRST TIER CHALLENGES

**Transportation:** The most-frequently mentioned challenge cited in the roundtables, the survey, and the workshop focused on transportation-related issues in the project area. Traffic volume, both now and in the future, as well as traffic movements and flow were frequently cited as challenges.

***"Safely accommodating all transportation modes — high traffic + bikes and pedestrians."***

Access to existing businesses is a challenge, as is the lack of and location of parking. Nevada Avenue serving as a truck route was mentioned, as was the challenge of providing 18-wheel truck access to some businesses along the Avenue. Transit was also frequently raised as a challenge, with many focused on the present lack of access to/from the rest of the community. Others fear transit's potential impacts on adjacent neighborhoods. The fact that there is an abandoned railroad right-of-way in the project area with an undefined future is considered a challenge by some; uses suggested for its future were a trail, a streetcar route, and a transit route.

**Businesses:** Businesses were another topic frequently mentioned across all outreach methods. Responses focused on the mix and nature of businesses that exist in the project area, including industrial, manufacturing, diverse retail and historic. Another frequently-mentioned business-related challenge is the impact this planning effort may have on the future of existing businesses. Some business owners in the corridor fear displacement and others are worried about "out-pricing" existing small businesses. Still others are concerned about "fair" treatment of existing businesses in comparison to how new businesses moving into the area might be treated by the City of Colorado Springs.

**Housing:** Housing was often cited as a challenge facing the area. Many comments related to the lack of/need for a mix of housing that is affordable for all age groups. The lack of UCCS student off-campus housing was mentioned as a challenge, as was the need for mobile home parks as an affordable option for senior residents. Echoing the expressed concerns of existing business owners and/or managers, fear was also expressed about displacing existing residents from their homes and mobile homes.

**Land use:** Not surprisingly, land use is one of the top-tier challenges consistently mentioned. Many comments focused on the complicated nature of

***"Many small parcels of land [are] not easily aggregated to facilitate change-of-use."***

the area because of the many, and often incompatible, land uses that

currently exist in the area. Others cited the issue of private property rights and fear of the impacts of being re-zoned as a result of this project. Concerns with signage and with building height were also raised, as were concerns related to potential negative impacts on adjacent neighborhoods as a result of future land use decisions in the project area.

## SECOND TIER CHALLENGES

**Infrastructure:** Drainage and stormwater run-off were cited frequently as existing infrastructure challenges. The area's lack of curb, gutter, sidewalks, and bike lanes was also consistently referenced. Some mentioned the need for streetlights and maintenance of existing infrastructure. A few referenced high-capacity broadband capability as an additional infrastructure-related challenge.

**Negative perception of the area:** Many believe there is a strong negative perception of the area held by others in the Colorado Springs community. Descriptors such as "undefined," "unattractive," and "run down" were used. Some reported the difficulty of access and moving around in the area creates a negative perception. Others mentioned the condition of some of the area businesses and the lack of streetscape and amenities as negatives.

***"Vagrancy, dangerous traffic, decline in safety, decline in property value."***

Another challenge resulting from perception issues focused on the difficulty of establishing new uses and attracting new business investment in the area. The larger industrial and social service uses which presently exist in the project area were often referenced as negative influences on public perceptions about the area.



**Plan implementation:** Issues about implementation of the plan that will ultimately be created through this community process were varied. Some people focused on funding, suggesting the use of Tax Increment Financing or investors to implement the plan. Others cited the uncertainty of funding as a challenge, while others indicated

they fear a tax increase will be

***"The City will listen to developers but not to citizens."***

needed to implement the plan. Another implementation challenge is the perception that the City and/or UCCS already has a plan for this area which is not being shared with the community. Issues related to trust of the City were also raised. Some expressed doubt about the City's willingness and/or ability to follow through on implementing the plan. Finally, uncertainty for existing businesses and residents about what the plan will recommend and when changes will occur was often mentioned as a challenge.

## THIRD TIER CHALLENGES

Other challenges mentioned less often were trail connectivity in the area, adequacy of City services to the area, and the presence of homeless people. Public safety issues were also raised, including pedestrian/bicyclist safety, currently allowed uses being a draw for "nefarious" activity in the area, and the presence of drug activity and prostitution.

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE PROJECT AREA

FIRST TIER OPPORTUNITIES
Businesses
Transportation
Land Use
Housing
Infrastructure
SECOND TIER OPPORTUNITIES
History of the area
Trails and parks
Facilities to support UCCS
Amenities

### FIRST TIER OPPORTUNITIES

**Businesses:** Responses to the question about opportunities in the project area most often referenced businesses. Many expressed the need and desire for new businesses, and for a good mix of businesses, with some recommending existing industrial/manufacturing businesses should remain in that mix. Others were more specific about new business opportunities, preferring small, local businesses and shops. Others see the need for a ‘big box’ store in the area, while others specifically indicated the desire *not* to have ‘big

***“Create businesses that are not only good for this area, but also good for the community.”***

box’ as part of the business mix. Others would like “useful stores,” like a grocery store and a gas station, and entertainment-related businesses such as theaters, bars and restaurants. Some want to expand the “University Village approach” to provide retail options to this area, while others specifically recommended *not* extending that approach, considering it not distinctive enough or too “car-centric.”

Others focused on UCCS’s presence as being a draw for new business, citing an opportunity for job training in conjunction with UCCS. Some speculated that UCCS’s Bachelor of Innovation degree will serve as a business magnet.



A number of roundtable and workshop participants specifically mentioned the planned National Cybersecurity Center as presenting an opportunity for the area. Many believe the Center will likely create jobs and encourage other businesses to locate in the area. In addition, use of rehabbed manufacturing space for arts, food, and entertainment-related businesses was suggested, as was artisan manufacturing. Some participants called for help for existing businesses, including offering incentives, “facelifts,” and “...possible use of an entitlement process to eliminate costs of business relocations.” Finally, some predicted that having new businesses in the area will transform it into a “younger place,” and that new businesses could also strengthen the nearby Fillmore Street area.



**Transportation:** Transportation is seen by many as both a challenge and an opportunity. In considering opportunities, some people focused on traffic flow and traffic movement, suggesting additional turn lanes and traffic signals. Others

***“Create a street design that will catalyze the redevelopment we desire.”***

want easier access to businesses and to UCCS for drivers,

pedestrians and bicyclists as well as use of the wide rights-of-way for bike lanes and pedestrian walkways. Many focused on transit opportunities, suggesting Nevada Avenue could become a high-density corridor, including the addition of transit service to connect the project area to downtown and the rest of the community. A few suggested a free trolley in the right-of-way to move people around the corridor or a street car with links to UCCS, Colorado College, and downtown. People also saw opportunities for improved parking in the area. Some suggested minimizing traffic on Nevada Avenue by locating parking lots behind businesses and the use of shuttles to serve them.

**Land use:** A very consistent theme of the many land use comments was that the area be one of mixed-use, integrating existing and new uses, and resulting in an area where one can “live/work/shop/play.” Respondents called for a mix of old and new buildings and for creativity in considering land uses. As one person suggested, “Make it a model for future land use planning.”

**Housing:** Housing was often cited as an opportunity. The suggestions made most often centered on housing that serves all income

***“Homes and traffic patterns should be planned to make this a place people want to live.”***

levels and ages. Some used the term ‘intergenerational’ in describing the housing opportunity they envision. Some also see an opportunity for high-density housing.

**Infrastructure:** Opportunities related to infrastructure focused on making the project area safer for drivers, pedestrian, bicyclists, shoppers, and employees. Many indicated they would like the project area to be more beautiful by adding

benches, lighting and streetscaping, or by extending the medians, trees, and underpasses south from University Village. A suggestion was also made to create a water retention facility to address stormwater and drainage issues in the area. A related suggestion was to provide non-potable water for landscaping in the area and at UCCS. A few cited the placement of utility and telephone lines underground as an opportunity.



## SECOND TIER OPPORTUNITIES

**History of the area:** Many of the process participants indicated a knowledge of and appreciation for the history of the project area. Many responses supported the desire to preserve historic properties and a few suggested revitalizing historic properties in the Cragmoor area. Design standards and interpretive signs that reflect and explain the area’s history were also referenced as an opportunity.



**Trails and parks:** A number of participants were interested in trails that provide access to the area and that connect to other local and regional trails. They saw opportunities for “green connecting spaces,” and many expressed the desire to have a new park in the area.



**Facilities to support UCCS:** Opportunities to provide facilities and services to support the needs of UCCS were consistently raised, particularly by survey respondents. Opportunities

***"Thousands of UCCS students and other university personnel [are] looking for a place to meet in the evenings or places to have social meetings after work."***

to create student housing, hotels/long-term stay facilities for parents of students, and housing for UCCS staff were often cited. The opportunity to meet the University population's retail needs was also suggested, such as the addition of restaurants, bars, a grocery store, and a movie theater. The possibility of leveraging UCCS's curriculum by creating labs and research facilities within the project area was seen by some as an opportunity.

**Amenities:** Many participants noted the opportunity and the desire to make the project area a "destination." Supporting that vision were suggestions for adding a variety of amenities to the area. Amenities mentioned included a community event area, a multi-generational community center, a community garden, water features, and access to and incorporation of the water to the west of the project area.

### THIRD TIER OPPORTUNITIES

Among the additional opportunities less frequently mentioned were the area's location advantage, with good access to Interstate 25, proximity to downtown and UCCS, its central location, and the possibility of becoming

***"Location! It is prime real estate and provides great connection points to major roads as well as having access to open spaces, parks, and greenways."***

a gateway to the city. Other opportunities cited dealt with City policies and planning, including a suggestion for the creation of the "first City/Urban Renewal Authority project that is proactive, with the City actively soliciting public/private initiatives." Others suggested offering Tax Increment Financing to attract new businesses. Some people expressed the desire for planning that will ensure that the project area is different from all

other areas in the community, and that the plan will, "...benefit all without economic discrimination."

***"It adds to Colorado Springs and is different from what we already have."***

Other opportunities cited included a focus on arts and culture and health and wellness, capitalizing on related facilities located in and around the project area.



***"This area is a treasure waiting to happen. The potential is vast and good."***

## VISION ELEMENTS FOR THE PROJECT AREA

FIRST TIER VISION ELEMENTS
Land use and planning
Transportation
Business mix
SECOND TIER VISION ELEMENTS
Housing mix
Infrastructure
Trails and parks
Clean/amenities

### FIRST TIER VISION ELEMENTS

**Land use and planning:** In considering the most important elements for the project area's future, many participants expressed support for a wide mix of uses in the area. Some suggested storefronts with residential uses behind them or

***"[It should be] cleaned up, renewed but not generic California-esque architecture."***

first-floor retail with residential above. Others

were interested in shared uses, such as industrial and coffee shop combinations. In describing how they would like the area to look and feel, some respondents would like to have businesses close to the road with parking behind. Others called for establishing a 'character' for the area, with some seeking a modern feel and others calling for incorporating and capitalizing on the area's history.

Some would like outdoor spaces to take advantage of the views in the area. Others focused on the desire to incorporate the area's waterways. Others want the area planned for "enjoyment and relaxation," with public spaces for events and performances. Many would like the area to feel like and be a destination, with a "downtown" feel, rather than like "just another strip mall."

***"The view. Look at that mountain. Look at the space! This is sometimes the first thing visitors see as they get off of I-25. Yuck!"***



In thinking about the future of the area, others were concerned about existing residents and businesses, stressing the need to value them and to "address the fears" of those currently in the project area. Many want to keep existing businesses as well as bring in new. Some mentioned the need to increase trust in the City of Colorado Springs, expressing the hope that the City will "listen to citizens as well as developers," and that the plan that is created through this process will indeed be implemented.

***"Those with affordable housing want to know what will happen to them if their landlords sell. Will there be assistance in place for those people?"***



**Transportation:** Access is a key issue identified for the future of the corridor. Based on the comments received, people want easy and safe access to businesses in the area, whether they are in their cars, on foot, or on bicycles. Many

***"Nevada presents a dilemma, it's the primary corridor but it's also a barrier to non-motorized travel."***

indicated a desire to having multi-modal transportation options available to them, calling for transit, streetcars, and light rail, in addition to walking and biking. Residents in adjacent neighborhoods, however, consistently expressed the desire to have traffic and transit impacts to their neighborhoods minimized. A few suggested on-street parking in the area to reduce traffic speeds and "make people feel safe." Others thought using frontage roads parallel to Nevada Avenue would help accommodate UCCS traffic and minimize traffic congestion in the area.



**Business mix:** Many would like to have a wide variety of businesses in the renewed project area. A large number of those prefer a community-based flavor, using such adjectives as "local," "small," "mom and pop," "boutique," and "historic." Some called for no 'big box' stores: "The city has enough big box retailers and franchise restaurants. How about a destination arts and entertainment district?" Fewer indicated a preference for having a 'big box' store in the area. Many people would welcome having a grocery store, a gas station, a movie theater, and other service-related businesses that make it convenient for people to live in the area.

**Housing mix:** Responses consistently indicated the desire and the need for housing in the area that is affordable for all incomes and ages.

Some specifically mentioned the need to include mobile home parks as a housing option. Others called for "...apartments for rent and condominiums for sale." The need for UCCS student off-campus housing and for housing for future employees of the

***"The biggest challenge for this corridor will be making improvements without pricing current residents out of the area."***

National Cybersecurity Center was also cited.

**Infrastructure:** Many of the infrastructure needs mentioned are related to transportation-related issues, such as streets and sidewalks on Nevada Avenue and on side streets. Some responses focused on the need for streetscapes throughout the area. A few called for "A total infrastructure plan."

**Trails/parks:** Many people see trails, trail connections, and parks in their descriptions of the future for this area. Trails connections to the creek and to other area/regional trails were specifically mentioned.



**Clean, with amenities:** "Clean" was used repeatedly in describing the desired future of this area, as were "uncluttered" and "green." Many suggested "tree-lined" streets. Others clearly envision an area with such amenities water features, sculpture, and fountains.

***"Make it an area we Colorado Springs citizens are proud of! Make it a place where out-of-towners want to come. In short, a destination!"***

## DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PROJECT AREA IN 10-15 YEARS

Participants in the roundtables and the August 3 workshop were asked, “Thinking ahead 10-15 years, what short phrase would you like to be able to use to describe this area of North Nevada Avenue?”

The Word Cloud below includes all responses submitted, emphasizing those descriptors used most often.



## USE OF RESPONSES

The wealth of information received through the roundtable, survey, and workshop responses served as the basis for a statement of the project area Vision. That Vision will guide plan decisions. Combined with the information gathered through technical analysis conducted by the NES consultant team, the Vision will drive development of a set of concepts that will provide a variety of possible approaches for a plan to renew the project area.

Participants in an October 27 community workshop will review, discuss, and provide responses to the concepts. That community guidance will be considered and applied as plan alternatives are developed for the community's review and consideration at a December 8 community workshop.



# North Nevada Avenue Plan

## September 13, 2016 Community Workshop

### Summary of Small Group Responses

*The following summarizes the responses from workshop participants working in 16 small groups.*

PERCENTAGE OF MENTION	VISION ELEMENT'S IMPORTANCE FOR FIRST ACTION
12%	A creative mix of business types and uses supports and employs our residents and serves as a regional economic magnet.
11%	Connections within the area and to the community are strengthened by improved roadways and expanded transit service.
11%	Our vibrant community is strengthened by housing that serves the needs of existing and new residents and offers options for all ages and levels of income.
11%	Our corridor's streets, sidewalks, drainage, streetscape, and other infrastructure function well.
9%	Historic and existing businesses are valued and new businesses and employment generators are welcomed.
9%	Our corridor is clean and it is safe.
7%	Pedestrians and cyclists are encouraged and are safe from vehicular traffic.
5%	Access within the corridor is easy and serves resident, business and visitor needs.
5%	We can conveniently access restaurants, shops, stores, and entertainment activities which also draw people from all over the community.
5%	Services and facilities support the needs of UCCS and its students.
5%	Our corridor is a destination because its appealing character is unlike any other in Colorado Springs.
4%	Parks, public spaces and community gathering places increase our sense of community and pride in our corridor.
4%	The history of our area is celebrated and incorporated into the fabric of our community.
2%	Trail connections link us to local and regional trails as well as to the waterways near us.
1%	Our residents enjoy public green spaces, amenities, trees and landscaped areas.

Small Group Responses to Land Use Concepts

CONCEPT	LIKE BEST ABOUT	LIKE LEAST ABOUT
<p><b>A</b></p> <p><b>MIXED USE NEIGHBORHOOD</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amount of mixed use is good.</li> <li>- The blue area is already being improved and has existing businesses.</li> <li>- Residential areas.</li> <li>- Most balanced plan – probably the one that would best succeed.</li> <li>- Good balance of uses and disbursts traffic with new roads.</li> <li>- Dog track property –great potential.</li> <li>- Mixed uses.</li> <li>- Four icons at Mt. View, diversity near UCCS to gain momentum.</li> <li>- Placing residential, office, retail, entertainment within bike/walking.</li> <li>- Lots of opportunities for variety.</li> <li>- Residential area along Monument Creek is very nice.</li> <li>- Our property stays in a business area.*</li> <li>- Supermarket needed for residents.</li> <li>- Preserving current residential area.</li> <li>- Improved infrastructure.</li> <li>- We like this one the best.</li> <li>- It would leave the trailer park residential.</li> <li>- Least traffic.</li> <li>- Least disruptive.</li> <li>- It allows development to be organic. i.e. develop in bits and pieces.</li> <li>- It would best represent what UCCS wants (housing and entertainment.)</li> <li>- Residential / mixed.</li> <li>- More flexible.</li> <li>- Lots of mixed use / flexibility.</li> <li>- Larger lodging parcel.</li> <li>- Least additional traffic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Life cycle of malls / urban redevelopment is at 25 years.</li> <li>- No tunnel under Nevada at Templeton Gap Trail.</li> <li>- More in / out access (roads) for Cragmor neighborhood.</li> <li>- Provide more housing and entertainment for students at UCCS.</li> <li>- People will still drive for most shopping and social entertainment.</li> <li>- Feels very uncertain – lots of things up in the air.</li> <li>- Loss of residential area.</li> <li>- Road drawn over top of our property.*</li> <li>- Doesn't clean up area enough.</li> <li>- Doesn't address traffic.</li> </ul>

CONCEPT	LIKE BEST ABOUT	LIKE LEAST ABOUT
<div>B</div> <div>EMPLOYMENT HUB</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not many in favor.</li> <li>- Cyber security will drive development in this area.</li> <li>- Dog track.</li> <li>- Jobs.</li> <li>- Maintain historic business properties.</li> <li>- Not a lot.</li> <li>- Bring in more jobs, lots of job opportunities.</li> <li>- More manufacturing.*</li> <li>- First choice.</li> <li>- New roads / sidewalks – improved infrastructure.</li> <li>- Bridge over floodway.</li> <li>- Additional connecting roads but more are needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <u>Too much commercial.</u></li> <li>- What jobs are you talking about – strip malls, retail?</li> <li>- No park areas.</li> <li>- Very sterile area without more residential trail.</li> <li>- Too much business / manufacturing use.</li> <li>- A lot of people coming to work and leaving.</li> <li>- More office / employment loses an opportunity for more character.</li> <li>- Lose some residential.</li> <li>- Probably increase traffic.</li> <li>- Our manufacturing property is in center of residential area.*</li> <li>- Redevelops existing residential.</li> <li>- Most traffic (Nevada already gridlocks).</li> <li>- Could cost the most.</li> <li>- Overburdens Nevada.</li> <li>- Not enough unique.</li> <li>- Too industrial.</li> <li>- Traffic.</li> <li>- Very little mixed use.</li> <li>- Lack of residential use.</li> </ul>



CONCEPT	LIKE BEST ABOUT	LIKE LEAST ABOUT
<b>C</b>  <b>URBAN VILLAGE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In some ways it's a more balanced plan than Concept B.</li> <li>- Residential use is increased.</li> <li>- Good balance of business and residential.</li> <li>- Dog track property has development potential to drive residential development.</li> <li>- Fits well with Old North End so very compatible.</li> <li>- Prefer this option as an opportunity for major residential development along Nevada Avenue north of Winters Drive (new North End – North) (Add dog track).</li> <li>- And...between Cascade Avenue and Prospect along Nevada Avenue bordered north by Fillmore Street and south by Lilac Street (new North End – South) and extend new North End – South east to Prospect Street.</li> <li>- Additional residential development around the dog track.</li> <li>- Walking distance between housing, commercial, retail.</li> <li>- More housing on north end.</li> <li>- Residential along Cascade.</li> <li>- Strong residential areas.</li> <li>- Less mixed use.</li> <li>- More residential on the south side.</li> <li>- All seem about the same as far as my concerns.*</li> <li>- More residential – more people, less business.</li> <li>- It would leave the trailer park residential.</li> <li>- More residential.</li> <li>- Least amount of change.</li> <li>- Lots of residential (maybe too much).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What type of residential? Will there be enough arterials to move people to and from jobs?</li> <li>- More mixed use is needed.</li> <li>- Very little lodging.</li> <li>- Not enough park space.</li> <li>- Too much residential.</li> <li>- No tunnel under Nevada at Templeton Gap Trail.</li> <li>- No mallow road over T-Gap.</li> <li>- Land assembly and clearance required.</li> <li>- No light rail!</li> <li>- Lost residential area by Monument Creek.</li> <li>- Would like to see Nevada finished.</li> <li>- Our manufacturing property is in center of residential area.*</li> <li>- Where's anything about a streetcar system on the Nevada corridor?</li> <li>- Traffic is heavy on this one, but not as bad as B.</li> <li>- Don't like the transit interchanges.</li> <li>- Lack of business and mixed use.</li> </ul>

\*One small group was comprised of one couple and their children.

Group Level of Support for Plan Options

The following documents the responses from workshop participants working in 11 small groups to review and rate a slate of options for possible inclusion in the North Nevada Renewal Plan. Because of existing conditions, different options were presented for the southern zone of the project area and the central area zone.

Each group was asked to agree on a numerical rating of each option. The rating system was: 1 = really like; 2 = like; 3 = neutral; 4 = dislike; 5 = really dislike. The numerical responses from all groups were added and the mean (average) score and the median (middle value) score were calculated for each. It's important to note that the lowest cumulative numerical scores indicate the highest level of support by the groups. The scores are listed in descending level of support.

CENTRAL ZONE OPTIONS	MEAN	MEDIAN	COMMENTS
STREET			
F. Off-street bike trail	1.45	1.00	- Yes, more connectivity
D. Narrow median	2.80	2.50	- Where are turn lanes? - Include bike lanes
E. Wide median	2.80	2.50	- Include bike lanes and left-turn cut-outs
A. Minimal improvements/street width	3.09	3.00	- Add parallel parking - Option A over B
C. On-street bike lane	3.27	4.00	- Prefer closed median - Add parallel parking - No improved trail system/connectivity
B. On-street parking	4.54	5.00	- Angle - Add parallel parking - Parking at businesses
TRANSIT			
B. Separate transit corridor	2.72	3.00	- Good idea. Better access to businesses
A. On-street with through traffic	2.81	2.00	- Recommend pull-out area for bus stops - Like it. Problem with snow-plowing - Bus pull-outs
C. Separate on-street transit lane	3.60	4.00	
D. Separate transit corridor with parking	4.20	5.00	
STREETScape			
B. Semi-urban	2.10	1.50	
A. Urban	2.70	3.00	- Prefer no on-street parking - Good walkability, good for business
C. Suburban	3.00	3.00	
EXCESS RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY			
C. Hybrid: City sells right-of-way with incentives to provide public benefits	2.40	2.00	- Aware of type of business
A. City keeps right-of-way and uses for public purposes	2.60	2.50	
B. City sells right-of-way to adjacent land owners	2.80	2.50	

(over)

SOUTH ZONE OPTIONS	MEAN	MEDIAN	COMMENTS
STREET			
D. Off-street bike trail	1.54	1.00	- Safest. Should not exclude on-street bike lanes - Yes, more connectivity
C. On-street bike lane	3.09	3.00	- Prefer no on-street parking - Protected by curb and parking - No improved trail system
A. Minimal improvements/street width	3.27	3.00	- Parallel parking – stops traffic - Option A over Option B
B. On-street angled parking	4.00	5.00	- Reverse parking - Parking should be incorporated into commercial building development plans - Most did not want angled parking - Angled - Hate angled parking
TRANSIT			
B. Separate transit corridor	2.72	3.00	- Good idea. Better access to businesses - Trolley or light rail – group rate of “1”
A. On-street with through traffic	3.09	3.00	- Recommend pull-out area for bus stops - Stops traffic - Like it. Problem with snow-plowing - Bus pull-outs
STREETSCAPE			
A. Urban	2.10	2.50	- Prefer no on-street parking - Good visibility, good for business
B. Semi-urban	2.80	3.00	- Not as visually appealing
EXCESS RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY			
A. City keeps right-of-way and uses for public purposes	2.20	2.00	
C. Hybrid: City sells right-of-way with incentives to provide public benefits	2.70	2.50	- Aware of type of business - Use for trolley, bus, monorail!
B. City sells right-of-way to adjacent land owners	3.20	3.50	

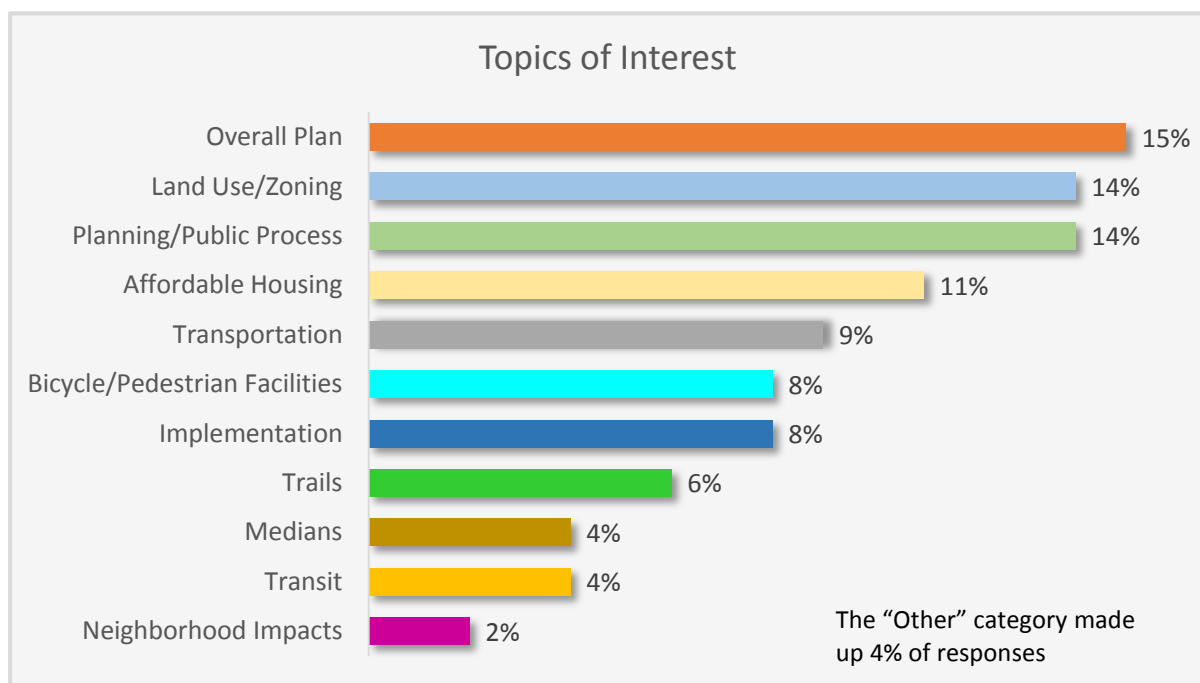
Additional group comment

- Intersections need to meet ADA standards for pedestrians. Add audio to crosswalks.



### Individual Response Form Comments Categorized by Topic

*Is there anything about the Draft North Nevada Avenue Plan that you would like to make sure the project team understands?*



### **Categorized Comments in Descending Order of Mention**

#### Overall Plan (10 mentions=15%)

- Love most of the plan. Thanks.
- My favorite elements are dedicated transportation corridors and connected bike and trail systems.
- Much of the “preferred use” seems very reasonable and potentially exciting. However, I feel that the area is lacking an “identity” or focus that could drive the right long-term citizen-embraced development. We don’t need the area to be reiterations of University Village. The history of our city shows that developers, left to their own imaginations, do not necessarily create for the locals. I would encourage more direction and vision when it comes to redeveloping this area. The City leading the way would be welcome, refreshing, and set us on a more intentional and valuable trajectory. Not to mention the possibilities of using the area to attract tourist and spending since our City coffers are dependent on sales tax.

- The plans look good.
- Thankful to see the City working on this! Please be intentional about look/feel and vibe...making Colorado Springs an even more desirable place to live and work...
  - Green space, trails, connecting the city through trails;
  - Better transit...mass transit...less use of cars;
  - Long-term infrastructure;
  - Mixed-use spaces;
  - Bike lanes and walkability!;
  - Electric vehicle charging;
  - Parking lots underground to avoid sprawling parking lots;
  - Thoughtful identity of this area as a district...with an identity;
  - More affordable housing.
- Looks like a lot of good initial planning.
- I love everything that has been proposed.
- The cybersecurity place seem irrelevant to the needs of the community but seems like developer-driven plan. Overall I'm remaining hopeful.
- [Include] language that clearly describes the use and relationship of the Plan to the Influence Area since they will presumably be delineated in the Plan.
- I am delighted to see the ongoing results of the redevelopment planning for North Nevada Avenue. Looking at the University Village area only makes this process more hopeful.

#### Land Use/Zoning (9 mentions=14%)

- Like the emphasis on uses related to UCCS in the north.
- Like the emphasis on high-density residential in the residential areas.
- Redevelopment of Kmart area seems like a good idea.
- What's with all the expanded high-density housing plans? I don't recall anyone being positive about that plan! Plus, I asked one of the planners (who spoke about this at the second meeting) and she said it wasn't part of the plan!
- Glad to see exiting mobile home parks will not be rezoned.
- I am interested by the 6<sup>th</sup> priority for the south zone plans to "encourage historic use." I see much planning for high-density housing/retail, etc. I hope this has an emphasis on affordable housing because that was a priority of the early meetings.
- High-density urbanity is not exactly historically relevant for this area which borders the original Venetucci farmland. Again, I am interested to learn what the team means by historic uses. I would recommend maintaining some of this historically-farmed land.
- I particularly was glad to see the overlay zoning concept being used to increase the flexibility of the planning/development as events go forward.
- Lastly, can we turn the Greyhound track into a sports complex and move the Switchbacks downtown instead of committing the next 30 years to paying off a stadium?

#### Planning/Public Process (9 mentions=14%)

- Thanks for the effort and work. Let's keep it up and keep going.
- Thank you. This team has done a great job.

- I do not trust this City government and feel that is a commonly-shared concern. Residents in this area should have the highest “weigh” insofar as land use/zoning/etc. goes. Respect them and their homes. Many of them have built this town and they must not be pushed aside.
- Thank you for the time already put into this project.
- The input and continued involvement of the UCCS students is very important. The administration often speaks from the top down in speaking for students when students often don’t agree with the administration. They bring a lot to the table, but have been ignored frequently over the decades. It might take time to engage them, but it will be worth it as they are the future of this area. Involve them, make a welcome area for them, and they’ll stick with this city through thick and thin, instead of fleeing to Denver as they do now.
- I hope that the participants in this process will continue to receive email updates. Process to involve the community was good.
- Thank you for trying to engage the community on this.
- So far I feel as if “your team” should all pat themselves for doing an outstanding task. I also say thank you for the way you have “handled the public” at the meetings.
- Making this power facility [*Birdsall Power Plant*] off limits to public comment as a part of this planning process also seems to run counter to the generally inclusive nature that has been evident in the stream of public meetings. What do residents think of this old plant?

#### Affordable Housing (7 mentions=11%)

- That there are many residents in the area who are low income and fixed income. Preserving their only homes is of highest priority – many are unable to actively protest or resist potential changes coming down the pike. I have seen some very subtle remarks concerning the fact that owners (of mobile home parks) may opt, in the future, to sell out and change their land use. Although eminent domain will not take place, such subtle hints about future possibilities may be planting seeds to slowly pave the way.
- Replace transient motels to low-cost, affordable housing.
- Like the fact that our mobile home park will be staying.
- We blue collar retirees at Panoramic Mobile Home Court would like to be reassured we might always be able to live there. It’s been wonderful.
- I live in the residential area and it is reassuring to know that we might still be able to live there for awhile. Thank you.
- The long-term hotels are vital and many different types of people rely on them. Affordable housing is essential. Gentrification will displace people that will have very few alternatives.
- Affordable housing for seniors is good for everyone.

#### Transportation (6 mentions=9%)

- Additional high-density housing in the area would be detrimental to traffic flow. Currently, it is fairly easy to travel on N. Nevada.
- Keep alive the potential use of streetcars to aid the area’s redevelopment, help move people, and provide linkage from UCCS/University Village to the south side of downtown via Penrose Hospital and Colorado College.



- A better plan for traffic flow than has been achieved north of Garden of the Gods Road on Nevada!!! Extremely congested.
- Implement trolley system.
- I have concerns about the traffic. The public transit lanes on the east seem like overkill. Very few people take the bus. I realize the hope is that it will increase, but it is a certainty that personal traffic will dramatically increase with new development. Making Nevada six lanes seems a better solution. It looks like it would even be possible to keep the bus lanes and add the other lanes where the medians are.
- I think we need three auto lanes in each direction. There will be increased auto traffic and not a lot of use of buses. Currently the two lanes are already congested driving peak commute times.

#### Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities (5 mentions=8%)

- Would like to see bike lanes all the way through.
- I feel that the openness of the areas adjacent to N. Nevada are safer and more navigable for pedestrians and cyclists than sidewalks, curbs, and bicycle lanes.
- I hope that quality bike infrastructure isn't seen as optional for this corridor.
- Like the idea of sidewalks along Nevada. Much safer for pedestrians.
- I like plans for walkability and bikability and trees along Nevada ☺.

#### Implementation (5 mentions=8%)

- I'd like to know what kind of incentives the City will provide to businesses to come and some to leave the corridor.
- I'm curious if the roadway/improvements are prioritized as the first step – driving the changes by the private sector. Seems will it would be necessary before the private side invests in their own redevelopment.
- I like the presentation – very informative but probably would like some cost projections, anticipated avenues to fund these projects (e.g. developer fund, individual tax breaks, etc.). Maybe early call for possible expressions of interest by companies, or residential plans.
- I hope that it is implemented exactly how you have laid it out. We need more redevelopment like this in order to compete with Denver.
- I hope you will keep us [the community] closer in mind than developers moving forward.

#### Trails (4 mentions=6%)

- I hope they do add more to the bike trails (connecting them). We use the bike trails quite often in the summer.
- Trails – like the added trails. Connectivity is essential. Map shows trail along north side of Austin Bluffs just ending just short of Nevada with a block or so gap to the Greenway Trail. Should consider connecting to Greenway. Trail does connect if you go south and back north, but people are unlikely to divert that far out of their way.
- Keep the railroad right-of-way for trails or green space – don't sell it. Once it's sold, it's gone.
- Like increased connectivity for roads and trails.

#### Medians (3 mentions=4%)

- On Nevada corridor would like to see more island with sidewalk. Lot safer for people.
- Medians are way too big and will be expensive to keep up and will probably not be as pretty as everyone thinks with drought issues. They are not environmentally-friendly. This entire project should be as green as possible.
- Please preserve the existing historic medians and, in fact, extend them all the way through the redevelopment area on Nevada.

#### Transit (3 mentions=4%)

- I'm also curious why Nevada itself wasn't considered as the possible transit line with I-25 a stone's throw to the west and an increasing focus on active transportation. I find it hard to believe that we really need to preserve two lanes of car travel in each direction. Perhaps the left lane in each direction could be made into BRT [*bus rapid transit*] or light rail (one can dream), using the median area for boarding.
- The opportunity for improved transit between Ivywild and UVC is the most interesting to me and it would be a great way to connect a diverse set of populations!
- The plan for a public transportation hub seem relevant and great. I know many could use it!! More public transportation, please.

#### Neighborhood Impacts (2 mentions=3%)

- The significant frustration I have in the final presentation is the complete lack of respect for the impact this development will have on the Old North End Neighborhood (ONEN) – especially since those neighbors have been active through the process in reflecting our concerns – progress at the expense of neighborhoods is wrong – neighborhoods and the people who live there are why a city exists and who development needs to thoughtfully support, not just big interests like UCCS and developers. Very disturbed that mass transit is being embraced with total disregard for neighborhood below. Neither Nevada or Weber should be abused by mass transit – City needs to connect downtown to this development through mass transit on I-25 or access-road-style transit – other residential areas built around or near development are not treated this way – mass transit is not in single-family-owned front yards like the City proposes operating down Nevada and Weber. ONEN wants a healthy and productive redevelopment of this area – but not at the expense of our historic homes – a treasure this City seems willfully to disregard. Even Denver does better – much better to include historic buildings and neighborhoods in transit planning. Do better, Colorado Springs, by your citizens and neighborhoods.
- Please understand that when many of us bought our homes in the tree-lined ONEN, we had not bargained on massive transit corridors and large amounts of traffic that will adversely impact our lives and the value of our homes. Please be respectful of that and think of other transit corridors outside of this historic neighborhood.

#### Other (3 mentions=4%)

- Improve appearance of mobile home parks.
- I have attended all discussions, submitted my comments to have culture relevance included in plan and see nothing addressing Chinese Tea House and Culture Heritage Center. Did the committee feel

our input is irrelevant? Our idea of unique, destination place for tourist has been disregarded. We need to embrace all cultures, so please revise to include our input.

- As I began reading the displays, I was disappointed to see that the Birdsong [*Birdsall*] Power Plant was identified as an untouchable subject. Sitting in the middle of the redevelopment area, it seems out of touch with the progressive thrust of the overall project. As I have driven up and down Nevada for eight years (I'm a relative newcomer) I have wondered what it was. Visually, it is an ugly structure that dominates the sightlines of the area. I feel that its existence is a negative factor in locating residential or commercial areas that pulls down the ideas of a modern, mixed-use section of the city. I asked Don Knight, a member of the Springs Utility Board, who were the main users of the power plant's output. He indicated that there really were no significant users since the plant is in operation only the equivalent of two days per year.

If this is the case, then it seems like a good time for regional utility planning to kick in as a part of this redevelopment effort. If the Drake plant is going to ultimately be phased out, why not start the process with this plant's elimination?

While the removal of the plant may be complex and somewhat expensive, why not include the Utility Board in this overall community discussion. The plant's removal doesn't have to be a major barrier to this redevelopment effort moving forward, but the discussion would be a positive factor in the planning of various developers' thought processes. As it is, the plant seems to me to be the elephant in the room that we are ignoring in this redevelopment effort. If it is discussed, it can add another part to the Utility Board's future assessment of power needs as they prepare for the ultimate departure of the Drake plant. North Nevada redevelopment and Colorado Springs' power planning can and should go hand-in-hand.



## APPENDIX 2: LAND USE CONCEPTS

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At the October 27, 2016, community workshop, three Land Use Concepts were presented for consideration. All three of the concepts presented would:

- Encourage a mix of existing and new businesses
- Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and facilities
- Improve vehicular connectivity
- Improve stormwater drainage by providing curb and gutter
- Accommodate housing to serve the needs of all ages and income
- Accommodate transit system service expansion
- Expand trail connectivity north/south and east/west
- Create opportunities for community focal points through urban plazas and small parks

In order to assimilate the Project Vision into the concepts, the Project Vision was translated into four Concept Icons defined as:

- Vitality – How we live
- Character – How we look and feel
- Work Place – How we work
- Connections – How we move

These are expanded upon in Figure A.1.

The three alternative land use concepts that were presented to the community interpreted the results of the market analysis as follows:

**Concept A - Mixed Use Neighborhood:** This concept assumed a more balanced approach to the integration of new housing and employment in the plan area, while at the same time introducing a variety of supporting retail, restaurants, entertainment, and lodging uses.

**Concept B - Employment Hub:** This concept focused more on supporting the new National Cyber Security Center with additional employment land uses. While additional housing and supporting services were also identified, these were less well integrated, particularly in the Central Zone. This option would also generate the most traffic.

**Concept C - Urban Village:** This concept shifted the emphasis toward new housing in the area with supporting service integrated into the new residential areas. While new employment uses were accommodated, these were less dominant throughout the corridor.

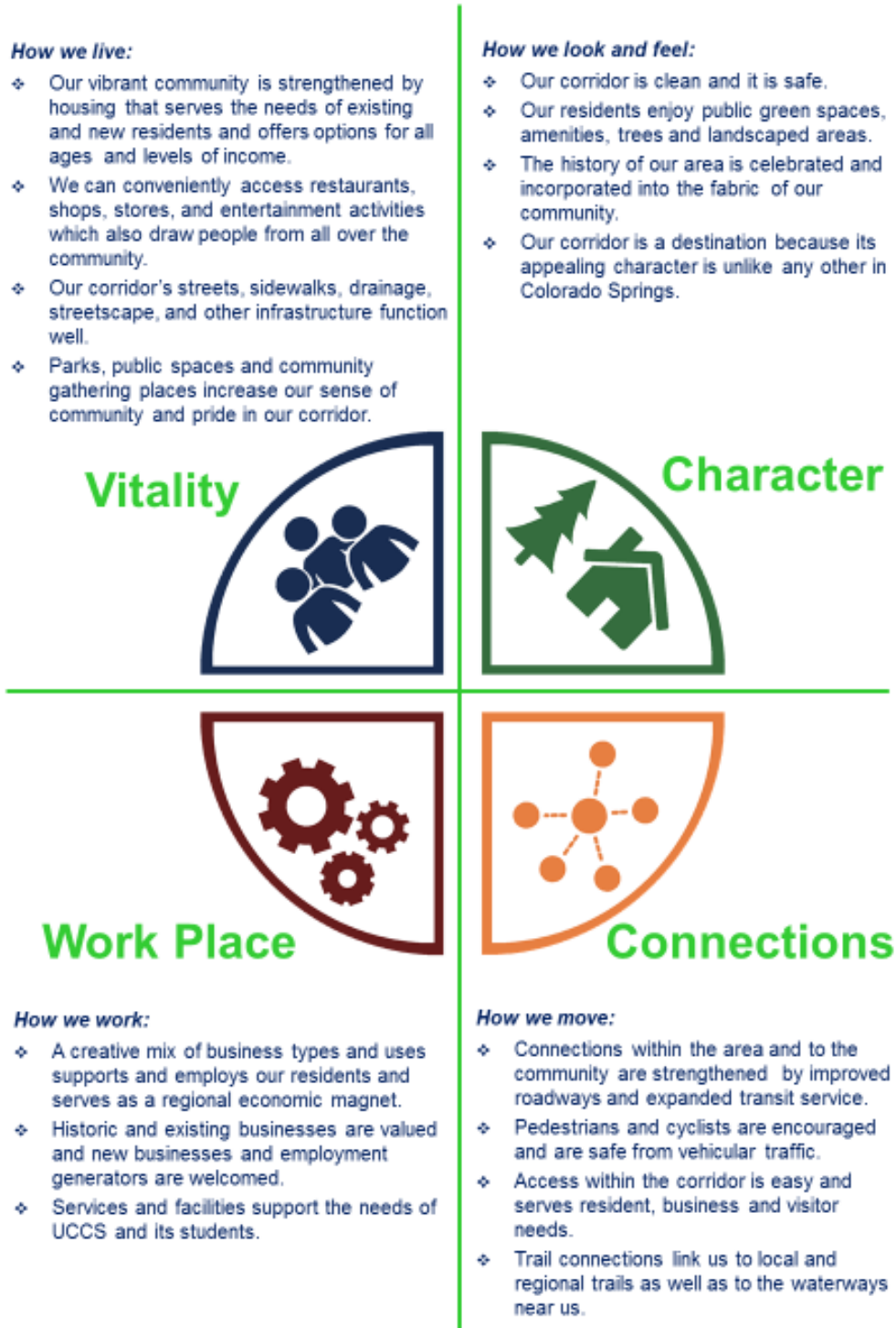
To better understand the corridor, the Study Area was broken into zones as identified in the following Concept Plans. These created a nomenclature for discussing and analyzing the corridor, its current conditions, and its future possibilities.

- **North Zone** – The North Zone encompasses the area in the Study Area north of the Templeton Gap drainageway
- **Central Zone** – The Central Zone encompasses the area south of Templeton Gap and north of Commerce Street
- **South Zone** – the South Zone encompasses the area south of Commerce Street to the southern limit of the plan area.

In all cases the arrows showing “Proposed Vehicular Connection” are conceptual only and do not represent exact future road connection locations. The general need for improved north-south and east-west connectivity in the corridor was identified as a high priority by the community but the precise location of any new road connections will be analyzed as part of a subsequent Transportation Study for the corridor.

The results of the community input on these concepts are detailed in Section 4 and [Appendix 1](#). The preferred option was the Mixed-Use Neighborhood, with the Urban Village coming a close second. The Employment Hub was the least favored.

Figure A2.1: Concept Icons



## Concept A - Mixed Use Neighborhood

### North

- Creates a vibrant mix of uses to support UCCS.
- Provides opportunities for affordable/ student housing.
- Improvements to east/west connectivity encouraged.
- Creates opportunities to support existing businesses.

### Central

- Includes employment uses to support the National Cybersecurity Center.
- Creates a retail/entertainment/community focal point at the former dog track.
- Provides opportunities for affordable/student housing.
- Improvements to east west connectivity desirable.

### South

- Encourages retention of historic commercial uses.
- Builds upon existing character by encouraging small scale redevelopment.
- Provides opportunities for repurposing existing buildings.
- Create a mixed-use hub at Fillmore & Nevada.
- Connecting Stone to Nevada encouraged.

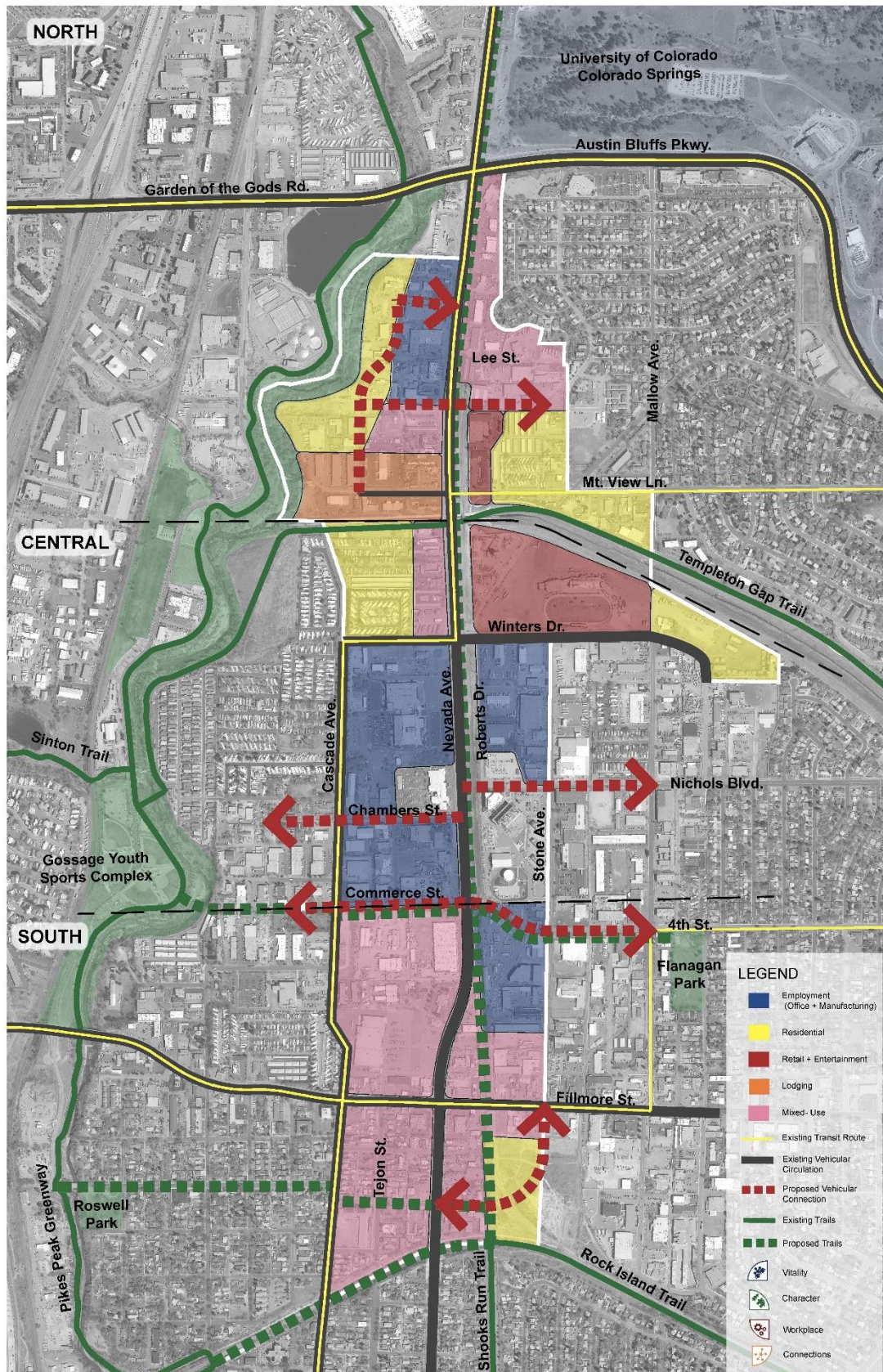
### Tradeoff

- Provides less opportunity for major employment to support the National Cybersecurity Center.
- Emphasis on mixed use reduces likelihood of a major catalyst for redevelopment.
- Can be accommodated within existing road infrastructure with little incentive for major improvements.



## Initial Concepts Provided for Public Input

Figure A2.2: Concept A - Mixed-Use Neighborhood



## Concept B - Employment Hub

### North

- Provides opportunity to facilitate the student housing needs of UCCS.
- Consolidates existing commercial.
- Provides opportunity for expansion of uses to support the National Cybersecurity Center.
- Incorporates options for market rate multifamily development that capitalizes on views of the mountains.
- Improvements to east/west connectivity required.

### Central

- New employment uses to support National Cybersecurity Center dominate the zone.
- The former dog track will become a focal point for the area with emphasis on retail, entertainments and hotel use.
- North/south connectivity across Templeton Gap drainage will be required to support increases employment uses.
- Improvements to east/west connectivity required.

### South

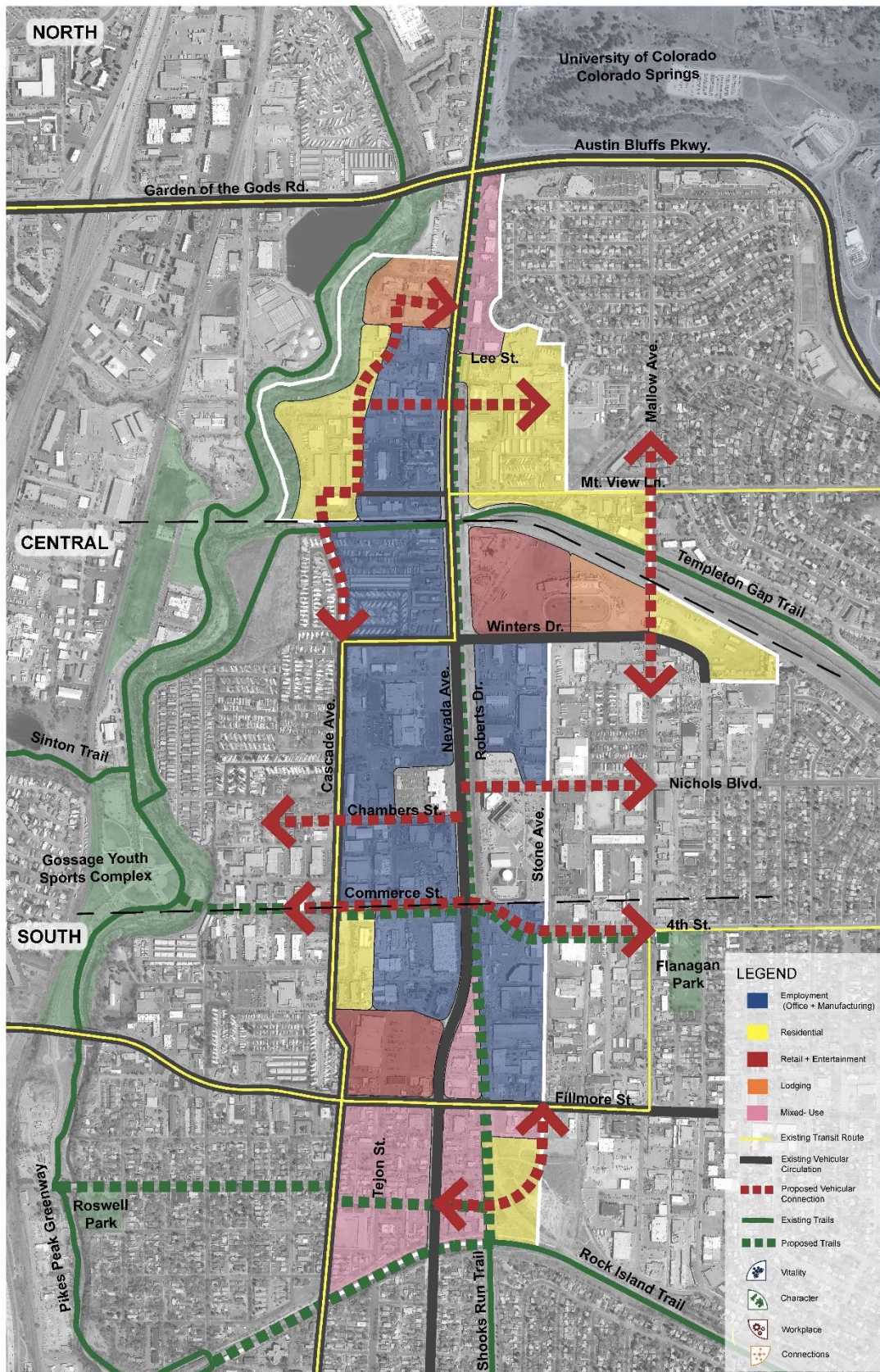
- Encourages retention of historic uses and character to the south of Fillmore Street.
- Provides opportunities for repurposing existing buildings.
- Envisions the creation of a commercial hub at Fillmore & Nevada.
- Connecting Stone to Nevada encouraged.

### Tradeoff

- Property assemblage may be required to facilitate redevelopment.
- Will likely trigger the need for major investment in road and drainage infrastructure, including additional north/south and east/west connections.
- Provides limited support facilities for UCCS.



Initial Concepts Provided for Public Input  
 Figure A2.1: Concept B – Employment Hub





## Concept C - Urban Village

### North

- Provides opportunities for a wide range of multifamily housing.
- Creates opportunities to support existing businesses.
- Consolidates existing commercial.
- Improvements to east/west connectivity encouraged.

### Central

- Includes employment uses to support the National Cybersecurity Center.
- Provides opportunities for affordable and student housing.
- Creates a retail/entertainment/community focal point at the dog track.
- Envisions the creation of a community hub and transit interchange at Mt View & Nevada.
- Improvements to east west connectivity desirable.

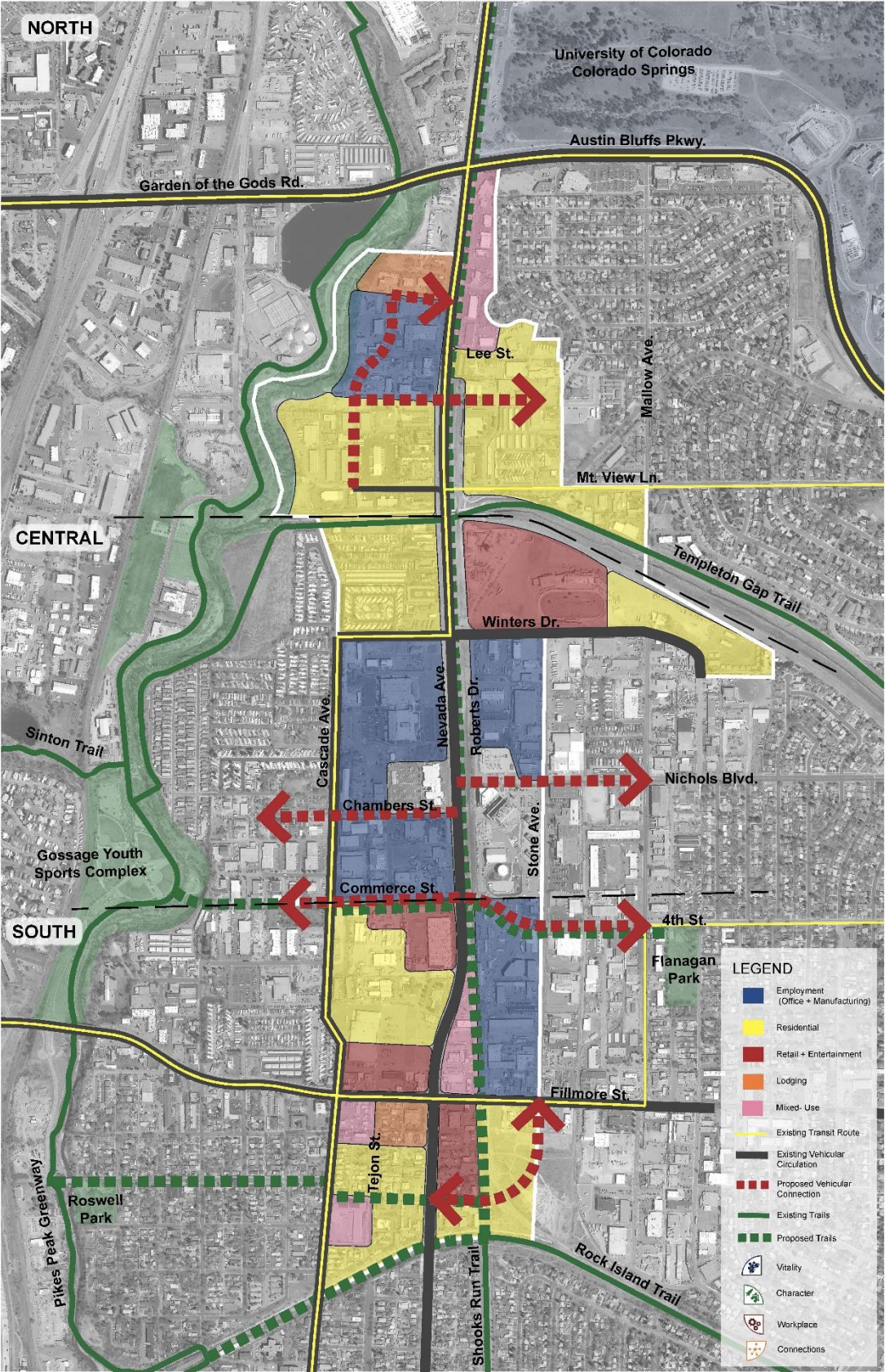
### South

- Encourages retention of historic uses and character to the south of Fillmore Street, with emphasis on residential uses.
- Provides some opportunities for repurposing existing buildings.
- Envisions the creation of a commercial hub and transit interchange at Fillmore & Nevada.
- Connecting Stone to Nevada encouraged.

### Tradeoff

- More limited opportunities for mixed uses.
- Opportunity for creation for transit interchanges and higher density transit oriented development which could reduce traffic.
- Will require investment in road and drainage infrastructure, including additional east/west connections.

Initial Concepts Provided for Public Input  
Figure A2.1: Concept C – Urban Village





## APPENDIX 3: CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES

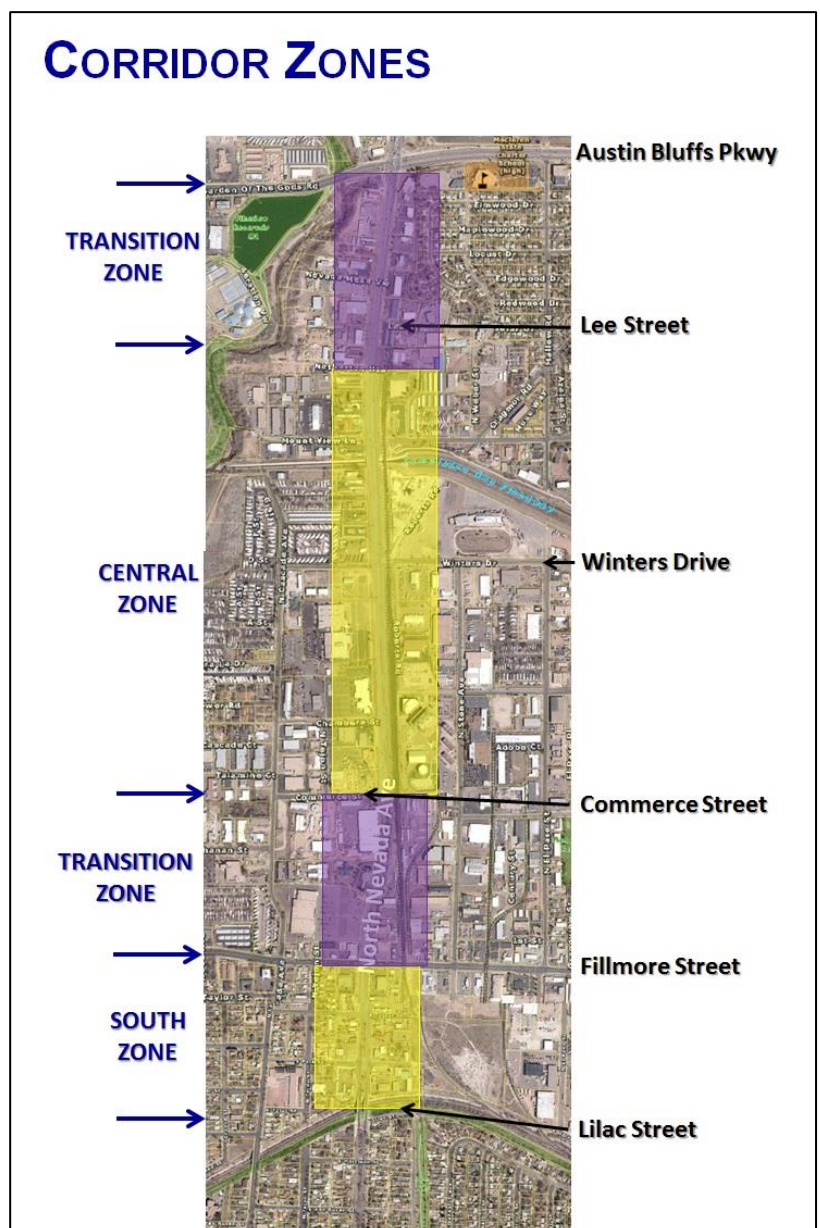
At the December 8<sup>th</sup> workshop meeting, the community were asked to assess and vote a series of options for the corridor that looked at the incorporation of sidewalks, bike lanes, medians and transit North Nevada Avenue, together with options for an off-street bicycle and pedestrian trail and off-street transit corridor. The Community were also asked to vote on the preferred streetscape form. Finally, the community were asked to vote upon options for any excess railroad right-of-way that may be available once the street cross section was determined. These options included:

- The City keeps the right-of-way and uses it for public purposes;
- The City sells the right-of-way to adjacent land owners; or
- A Hybrid – the City sells the right-of-way to adjacent land owners with incentives to provide public benefit.

Details of the voting outcome are provided in Section 4 and Appendix 1.

Figure A3.1: Corridor Zones

In order to more readily evaluate the options for the area, the corridor was divided into two principal zones - Central and South – with identified transition zones between the two. The transition zones would be analyzed by the project team based on the public preference for the principal zones.





## South Zone: Lilac - Fillmore

Figure A3.1: South Zone

### Existing Conditions:

- 140' Wide ROW
- 38' Landscaped Median
- 4 Travel Lanes
- Some On-Street Parking
- Limited Curb, Gutter, or Sidewalk

### South Zone Street Options:

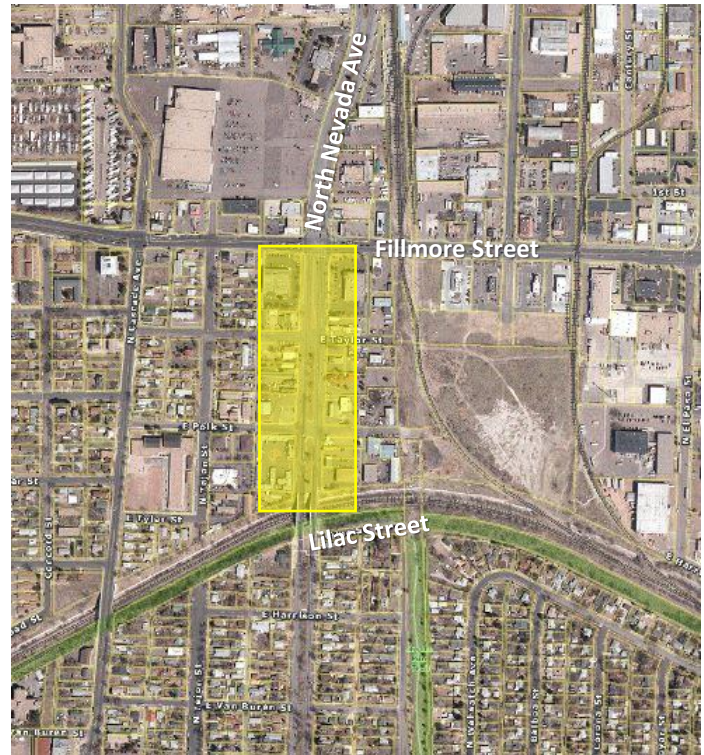
- OPTION A: Minimal Improvements
- OPTION B: On-Street Parking
- OPTION C: On-Street Bike Lane
- OPTION D: Off-street Bike Trail

### South Zone Transit Options:

- OPTION A: On-Street with Through Traffic
- OPTION B: Separate Transit Corridor

### South Zone Streetscape Options:

- **Urban** – Limited setback, parking to rear
- **Semi-Urban** – Sufficient setback to allow two rows of parking at front



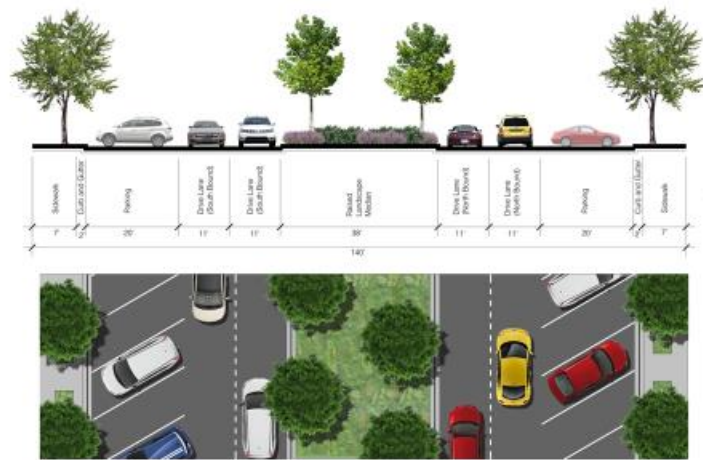
# SOUTH ZONE STREET OPTION A

## Minimal Improvements



# SOUTH ZONE STREET OPTION B

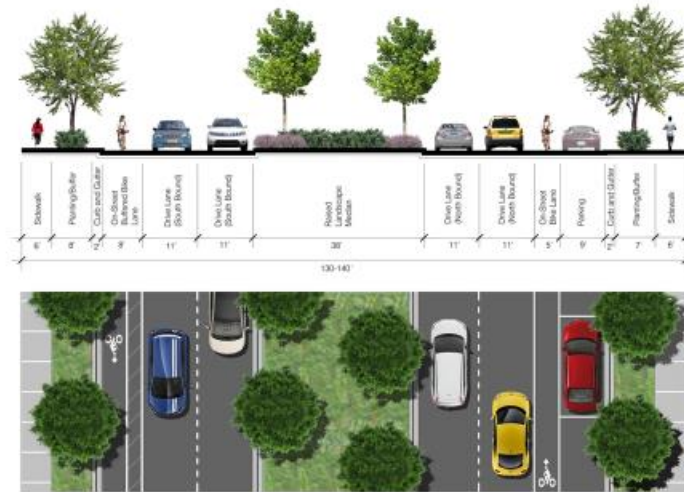
## On-Street Parking - angled





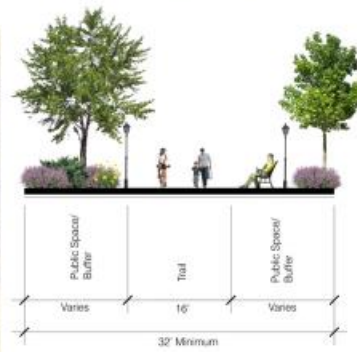
# SOUTH ZONE STREET OPTION C

## On-Street Bike Lane



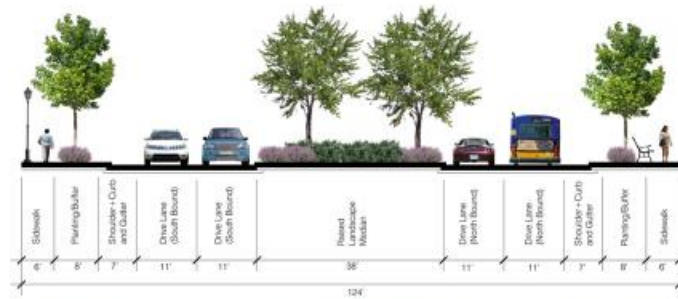
## SOUTH ZONE STREET OPTION D

### Off-Street Bike Trail



# SOUTH ZONE TRANSIT OPTION A

## On-Street with Through Traffic





## SOUTH ZONE TRANSIT OPTION B

### Separate Transit Corridor



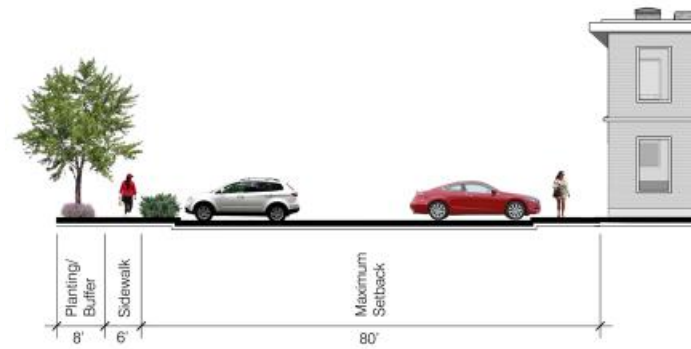
# STREETSCAPE OPTION A

## Urban



## STREETSCAPE OPTION B

### Semi-Urban





## Central Zone: Commerce - Lee

Figure A3.3: Central Zone

### Existing Conditions:

- 250'-290' Wide ROW (includes Railroad ROW)
- Median Varies
- 4 Travel Lanes
- No On-Street Parking
- No Curb, Gutter, or Sidewalk

### Central Zone Street Options:

- OPTION A: Minimal Street Width
- OPTION B: On-Street Parking
- OPTION C: On-Street Bike Lane
- OPTION D: Narrow Median
- OPTION E: Wide Median
- OPTION F: Off-Street Bike Trail

### Central Transit Options:

- OPTION A: On-Street with Through Traffic
- OPTION B: Separate On-street Transit Lane
- OPTION C: Separate Transit Corridor
- OPTION D: Separate Transit Corridor with Parking

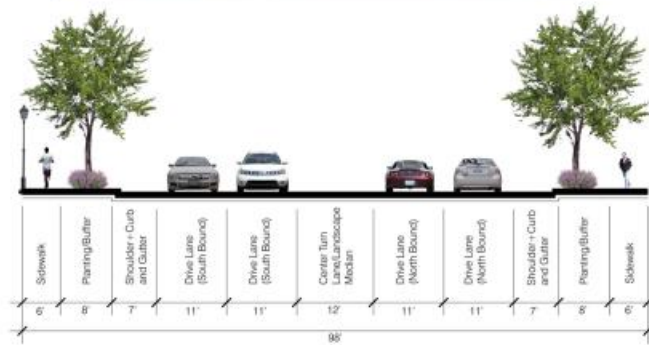
### Central Zone Streetscape Options:

- **Urban** – Limited setback, parking to rear
- **Semi-Urban** – Sufficient setback to allow two rows of parking at front
- **Suburban** – no limit on setback, encourages larger parking areas visible from street



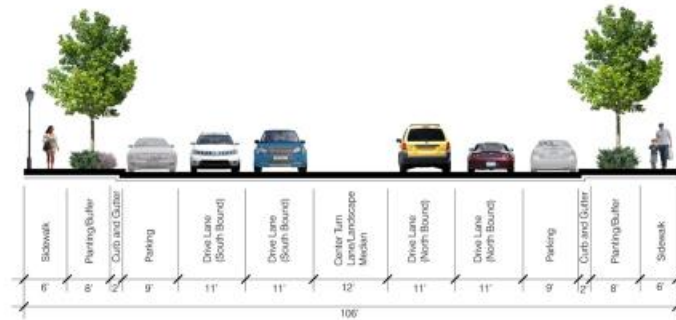
# CENTRAL ZONE STREET OPTION A

## Minimal Street Width



## CENTRAL ZONE STREET OPTION B

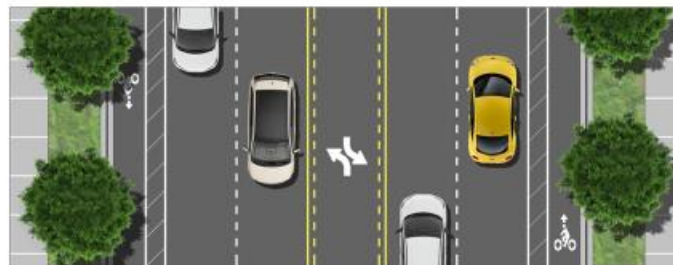
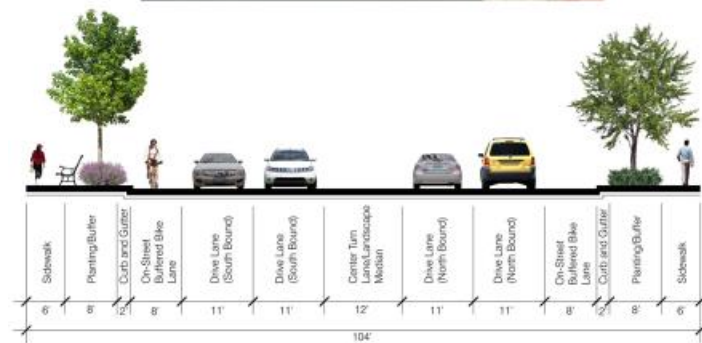
### On-Street Parking





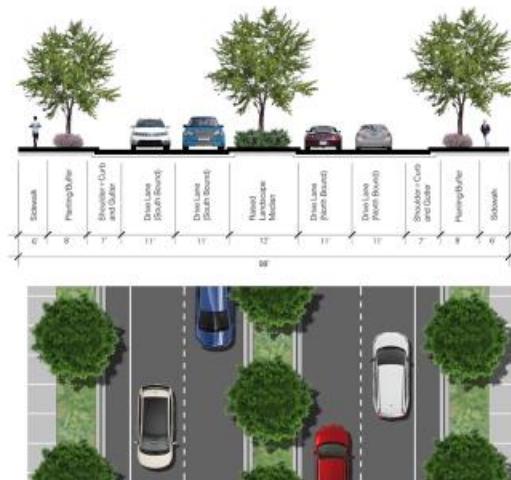
# CENTRAL ZONE STREET OPTION C

## On-Street Bike Lane



## CENTRAL ZONE STREET OPTION D

### Narrow Median



## CENTRAL ZONE STREET OPTION E

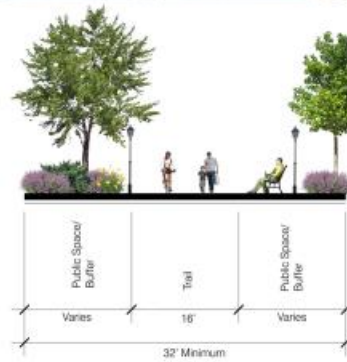
### Wide Median





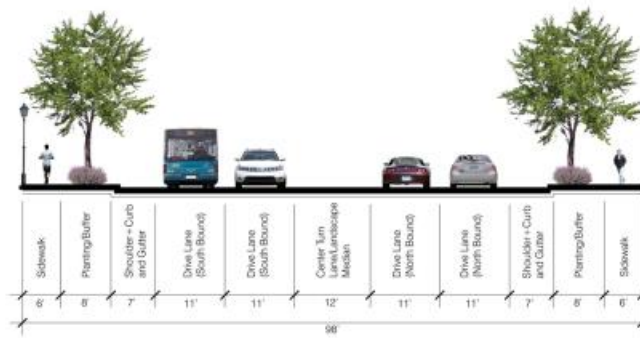
## CENTRAL ZONE STREET OPTION F

### Off Street Bike Trail



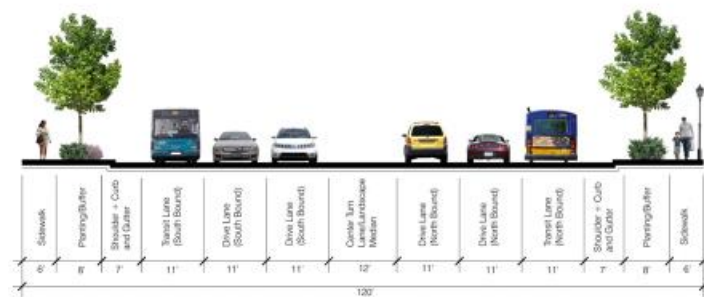
# CENTRAL ZONE TRANSIT OPTION A

## On-Street with Through Traffic



# CENTRAL ZONE TRANSIT OPTION B

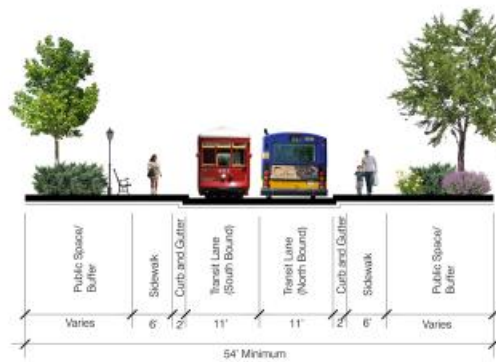
## Separate On-Street





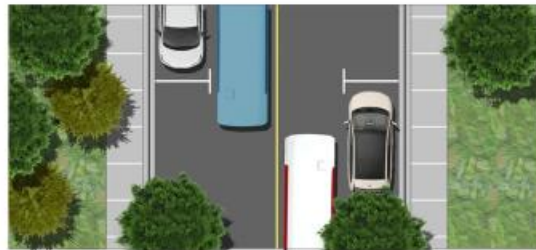
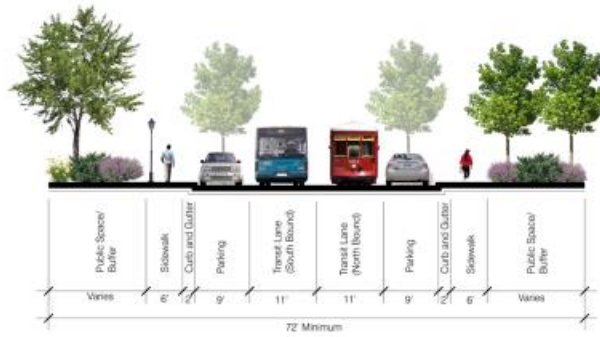
# CENTRAL ZONE TRANSIT OPTION C

## Separate Transit Corridor



## CENTRAL ZONE TRANSIT OPTION D

### Separate Transit Corridor with Parking



# STREETSCAPE OPTION A

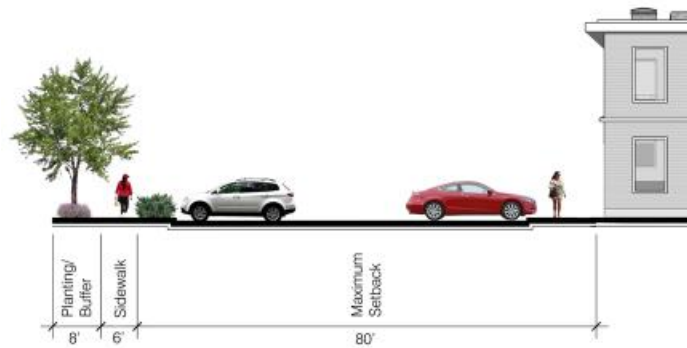
## Urban





## STREETSCAPE OPTION B

### Semi-Urban



# STREETSCAPE OPTION C

## Suburban



## APPENDIX 4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES

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### **El Paso County Housing Authority**

<http://adm.elpasoco.com/BudgetAdministration/EconomicDevelopment/Pages/HousingTrustFund.aspx>

#### Housing Trust Fund

The El Paso County Housing Authority provides funding to organized community-based groups with experience in the design and administration of innovative programs that address the housing needs of low-income residents of El Paso County. The purpose is to provide for more adequate and affordable housing for residents. Funding is available in the form of loans or the direct purchase of services for which no repayment is required; loans are preferred. The intent is to revolve the funds so more low-income residents are assisted in the future.

### **Colorado Springs Housing Authority**

831 S. Nevada, Ave.

Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Phone: 719-387-6700, Fax: 719-632-7807, Email: [Info@csha.us](mailto:Info@csha.us)

<http://www.csha.us/Tax%20Credit/default.html>

#### Tax Credit Partnerships

The Colorado Springs Housing Authority has partnered with some developments in Colorado Springs to use our tax-exempt status in exchange for the development to offer affordable housing units, based on income. We do not manage these properties,

### **Colorado Housing Finance Authority**

<https://www.chfainfo.com/arh>

#### Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program encourages the construction and rehabilitation of low-income rental housing by providing a federal income tax credit as an incentive to investors. Both individual and corporate investors may receive 10 years of tax credits in return for investing equity capital into the development of eligible housing projects.

Federal housing tax credits are awarded to developers of qualified projects. Developers then sell these credits to investors to raise capital (or equity) for their projects, which reduces the debt that the developer would otherwise have to borrow. Because the debt is lower, a tax credit property can in turn offer lower, more affordable rents.

#### Multifamily Loan Programs

Loans to acquire, rehabilitate, build, or refinance multifamily affordable rental housing projects

### **Colorado Department of Local Affairs**

*Division of Housing*

1313 Sherman St., Room 500

Denver, CO 80203

Phone: 303-864-7810 | Fax: 303-864-7856 | TDD/TTY: 303-864-7758

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/division-housing>

#### Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME)

HOME dollars provide competitive funding to local government, non-profit and private developers. The purpose of the HOME Program is to address a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or ownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.

#### Housing Development Grant Funds (HDGF)

The HDGF program is a competitive grant that provides funds for acquisition, rehabilitation and new construction. The Fund was created by the Colorado state treasury and consists of monies allocated to the Colorado Affordable Housing Construction Grants Fund by the General Assembly. HDG funds improve, preserve or expand the supply of affordable housing; finance foreclosure



prevention activities in Colorado and acquisition of housing and economic data necessary to advise the State Housing Board on local housing conditions.

Housing Development Loan Fund (HDLF)

The HDLF program was created to meet federal matching funds requirements. This fund makes loans for development, redevelopment or rehabilitation of low- or moderate-income housing. Loans provided through HDLF require collateral.

Colorado Housing Investment Fund

The CHIF was created with \$13.2 million from the Attorney General's custodial funds to address Colorado's need for affordable rental housing. At this time, applications are accepted only with a Special Request for Applications.