



Legislation Text

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A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado acknowledging the community's participation and approving the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan

(Legislative)

Presenter:

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Summary:

The City of Colorado Springs received a state grant in 2016 to undertake the study and development of a master plan for the North Nevada Economic Opportunity Zone. In summer 2016, the City hired N.E.S. to conduct the master plan process titled the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan (the "Plan"). Since the summer of 2016, the project team has conducted a robust public input process, generating feedback from nearly 900 individuals, and has completed a market analysis. The recommended plan is a reflection of the input gained through the public input process and the market analysis.

Previous Council Action:

An overview of the scope and process thus far was presented to City Council in October and December 2016.

Background:

The impetus for the Plan was through the final North Nevada Economic Opportunity Zone ("EOZ") report. The North Nevada EOZ, along with the South Academy EOZ, was initiated by Mayor Bach in 2013. Mayor Bach formed a task force of private stakeholders to evaluate barriers and opportunities for redevelopment of both EOZ areas. The task force was led by Mr. Fred Veitch of Nor'wood. Although initially intended to be an informal report, the North Nevada EOZ was endorsed by Mayor Suthers and officially adopted by resolution of the City Council in 2016 as a document for strategic planning purposes.

The North Nevada EOZ makes several recommendations including promotion of desirable businesses that complement the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (including the cybersecurity industry), adoption of regulations that influence desirable uses and designs, redevelopment of the public realm, and the acquisition/reuse of the existing railroad right-of-way. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of the recommendations made in the North Nevada EOZ report, City staff determined that a master plan and an accompanying zoning overlay would be the best method to encapsulate all of the recommendations.

The Plan divides the corridor into three (3) areas - the North Zone, Central Zone, and South Zone. Within each zone, the Plan identifies preferred land uses based on community-driven land use goals. The Plan also identifies mobility goals and corridor streetscape concepts for each zone. The City staff and the City Planning Commission have reviewed the master plan adoption criteria contained in City Code section 7.5.408 and determined that the Plan substantially conforms to the review criteria. Specifically, but not limited to, the Plan is in substantial conformance as follows:

7.5.408.A. Comprehensive Plan: The Comprehensive Plan and the 2020 Land Use Map are the context and the benchmark for the assessment of individual land use master plans. The proposed land use master plan or the amendment conforms to the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed land use pattern is consistent with the Citywide perspective presented by the 2020 Land Use Map.

The proposed Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan conforms to the policies and strategies of the City's current Comprehensive Plan. The dominant land use designations of the corridor include "Mature/Redevelopment Corridor" which is defined as being:

"Corridor: Corridors are the areas that line major arterial streets with commercial and employment uses. They include those corridors that have historically developed as commercial strips, as well as those that are currently in the process of doing so. The Comprehensive Plan includes two types of corridors."

New/Developing Commercial Corridors: Corridors that have recently developed, or are now in the process of developing, with major retail uses, services, and strip centers accessible exclusively by automobile and characterized by large dominating parking lots.

Mature/Redevelopment Corridors: Corridors that line older arterial streets and state highways with retail uses and auto-oriented services developed in a typical strip commercial pattern, with multiple curb cuts, individual parking lots, cluttered signage, and small lots. These corridors also include significant infill and redevelopment opportunities."

Policy LUM 206 describes the recommended use of Mature/Redevelopment Corridors:

"Utilize the Mature/Redevelopment Corridor designation for existing, smaller, mature retail corridors that offer opportunities to transform from exclusively auto-oriented places to more mixed-use centers through infill and redevelopment. As existing uses expand, they often migrate to new corridors, thus creating opportunities for redevelopment and redesign in these corridors. Integrate mobility choices by providing transit, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the center as well as to adjoining areas"

The 2001 Comprehensive Plan contains approximately 300 individual goals, objectives and strategies. The Plan is both consistent with and applicable to the goals, objectives and strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to:

*"Policy LU 203: Develop a Land Use Pattern that is Mutually Supportive with the Intermodal Transportation System
Develop a land use pattern that supports, and is in turn supported by, increased pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel and that reduces the need for automobile use.*

Strategy LU 203a: Locate the Places that People Use for Their Daily Needs and Activities Close to Each Other

Group and link the places used for living, working, shopping, schooling, and recreating and make them accessible by transit, bicycle, and foot, as well as by car.

Strategy LU 203b: Concentrate and Mix Uses

Concentrate and mix activities and uses in and around defined centers in order to create more diversity and synergy between uses, combine destinations, support more effective transit service, and provide viable pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation.

Strategy LU 203c: Define the Functional Relationships between the Elements of the Land Use Pattern and the Elements of the Intermodal Transportation System

Develop criteria and guidelines that

- define how each element in the land use pattern should incorporate the four major modes of travel - pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile;*
- show the appropriate level of application of each mode to access and circulation; and*
- define the desired transitions between modes.*

Strategy LU 302a: Promote an Integrated Pedestrian Circulation System

Design pedestrian sidewalks and pathways in activity centers so that they function as an integral part of the overall circulation system. Provide pedestrian connections for activity centers, linking parking areas, transit stops, and surrounding neighborhoods with principal and complimentary uses within the center.”

The Plan and process is recommended by City staff as very highly consistent with the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement. That document places a priority on infill and redevelopment of corridors such as North Nevada Avenue for these reasons based on the following factors:

- North Nevada Avenue is a specifically designated high priority infill area in the Comprehensive
- Plan Infill Supplement
- Emphasis on arterial corridor redevelopment, particularly mature corridors with symptoms of
- disinvestment
- Location on designated high frequency transit corridors
- Proximity to density of commercial and residential development

The guiding principles in the Comprehensive Plan Infill Supplement are:

- Creates Community Benefit
- Removes Barriers to Infill Development
- Minimizes Infill Investment Risk

This Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan will contribute to all three (3) of these principles.

Additional Master Plan Review Criteria:

7.5.408.B. Land Use Relationships:

1. *The master plan promotes a development pattern characterizing a mix of mutually supportive and integrated residential and nonresidential land uses with a network of interconnected streets and good pedestrian and bicycle connections.*
2. *Activity centers are designed so they are compatible with, accessible from and serve as a benefit to the surrounding neighborhood or business area. Activity centers also vary in size, intensity, scale and types of uses depending on their function, location and surroundings.*
3. *The land use pattern is compatible with existing and proposed adjacent land uses and protects residential neighborhoods from excessive noise and traffic infiltration.*
4. *Housing types are distributed so as to provide a choice of densities, types and affordability.*
5. *Land use types and location reflect the findings of the environmental analysis pertaining to physical characteristics which may preclude or limit development opportunities.*
6. *Land uses are buffered, where needed, by open space and/or transitions in land use intensity.*
7. *Land uses conform to the definitions contained in Section 7.5.410 of this part.*

City staff and the City Planning Commission find that the Plan conforms to all of these criteria and that it encourages harmonious land use relationships.

C. Public Facilities:

1. *The land use master plan conforms to the most recently adopted Colorado Springs parks, recreation and trails master plan.*
2. *Recreational and educational uses are sited and sized to conveniently service the proposed population of the master plan area and the larger community.*
3. *The proposed school sites meet the location, function and size needs of the school district.*
4. *The land use master plan conforms to the adopted plans and policies of Colorado Springs Utilities.*
5. *Proposed public facilities are consistent with the strategic network of long range plans.*
6. *The master development drainage plan conforms to the applicable drainage basin planning study and the drainage criteria manual.*

Considerable effort has been made to coordinate the drafting of the Plan with key City staff in Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Traffic Engineering, Colorado Springs Utilities, and others. City staff and the City Planning Commission believe the Plan meets these criteria.

D. Transportation:

1. *The land use master plan is consistent with the adopted intermodal transportation plan. Conformity with the intermodal transportation plan is evidence of compliance with State and local air quality implementation and maintenance plans.*
2. *The land use master plan has a logical hierarchy of arterial and collector streets with an emphasis on the reduction of through traffic in residential neighborhoods and improves connectivity, mobility choices and access to jobs, shopping and recreation.*
3. *The design of the streets and multiuse trails minimizes the number of uncontrolled or at grade trail crossings of arterials and collectors.*
4. *The transportation system is compatible with transit routes and allows for the extension of these routes.*
5. *The land use master plan provides opportunities or alternate transportation modes and cost effective provision of transit services to residents and businesses.*
6. *Anticipated trip generation does not exceed the capacity of existing or proposed major*

roads. If capacity is expected to be exceeded, necessary improvements will be identified, as will responsibility, if any, of the master plan for the construction and timing for its share of improvements.

City staff and the City Planning Commission find that these criteria have been met. A major focus of this effort has been to address several of these criteria affirmatively and directly for future transportation needs.

E. Environment

- 1. The land use master plan preserves significant natural site features and view corridors. The Colorado Springs open space plan shall be consulted in identifying these features.*
- 2. The land use master plan minimizes noise impacts on existing and proposed adjacent areas.*
- 3. The land use master plan utilizes floodplains and drainageways as greenways for multiple uses including conveyance of runoff, wetlands, habitat, trails, recreational uses, utilities and access roads when feasible.*
- 4. The land use master plan reflects the findings of a preliminary geologic hazard study and provides a range of mitigation techniques for the identified geologic, soil and other constrained natural hazard areas.*

In the case of these criteria, the linkage is somewhat indirect. However, the connection with the high-value environmental features associated with Monument Creek is taken into consideration within the Plan and meets the criteria.

F. Fiscal:

- 1. A fiscal impact analysis and existing infrastructure capacity and service levels are used as a basis for determining impacts attributable to the master plan. City costs related to infrastructure and service levels shall be determined for a ten (10) year time horizon for only the appropriate municipal funds.*
- 2. The fiscal impact analysis demonstrates no adverse impact upon the general community and the phasing of the master plan is consistent with the adopted strategic network of long range plans that identify the infrastructure and service needs for public works, parks, police and fire services.*
- 3. The cost of on site and off site master plan impacts on public facilities and services is not borne by the general community. In those situations where the master plan impacts are shown to exceed the capacity of existing public facilities and services, the applicant will demonstrate a means of increasing the capacity of the public facilities and services proportionate to the impact generated by the proposed master plan. Mitigation of on site and off site costs may include, but is not limited to, planned expansions to the facilities, amendments to the master plan, phasing of the master plan and/or special agreements related to construction and/or maintenance of infrastructure upgrades and/or service expansions. Any special agreements for mitigation of on site and off site impacts for public improvements, services and maintenance are shown to be workable and supported by financial assurances. Preexisting and/or anticipated capacity problems not attributable to the master plan shall be identified as part of the master plan review.*
- 4. Special agreements for public improvements and maintenance are shown to be workable and are based on proportional need generated by the master plan.*
- 5. Any proposed special districts are consistent with policies established by the City Council.*

To the extent it is applicable to a master plan of this nature, City staff finds that the proposed plan is consistent with the required fiscal impact criteria. Pursuant to additional research prior to and following the City Planning Commission hearing, as noted in the Fiscal Impact Analysis the existing current infrastructure in the area, the absence of set site-specific development plans, and the intent of the plan to develop a vision for the area and guide the use of economic development incentives, the Fiscal and Strategic Planning Office determines that the proposed master plan will not have an adverse fiscal impact to the City.

In addition to the review criteria contained in the City Code, the Plan is also consistent with other community plans and visions including the “Experience Downtown Plan”, the “Colorado Springs Infill and Redevelopment Plan”, “Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments Regional Nonmotorized Transportation System Plan”, the “Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan”, and others.

Of note, there are no K-12 schools within the immediate project area.

Financial Implications:

While many of the recommendations rely on market implementation, there are broad concepts and recommendations regarding transportation and infrastructure contained in the Plan. One of the key recommendations is to develop a more specific transportation and transit plan with preliminary design, which will allow the City to better identify potential funding sources and timelines for transportation and infrastructure improvements. The Plan also recommends considering various economic development incentive strategies, and City staff will develop an implementation plan determining the best strategies moving forward. However, this FMP itself does not obligate future City or other funding.

Board/Commission Recommendation:

At its February 16, 2017 meeting, the City Planning Commission recommended unanimous approval of the Plan.

Stakeholder Process:

The project team’s public input process resulted in input from almost 900 individuals. The City held four (4) community workshops and an open house, distributed a survey, and distributed postcards to property owners in the area. Representation at the community workshops included current residents in the corridor, business owners and property owners in the area, residents from surrounding neighborhoods including Cragmoor and the Old North End, and other interested citizens. All of the input received from the planning and input process is included in the plan document and available on the website at <http://www.coloradosprings.gov/renewnave>.

While there has been wide support for the Plan as drafted, one citizen (Mr. Mike Anderson) spoke in opposition to the Plan at the City Planning Commission meeting.

Alternatives:

Approve a resolution adopting the Plan.

Approve a resolution, with amendments, adopting the Plan.

Not approve a resolution adopting the Plan.

Refer the Plan back to the City Planning Commission for additional input.

Proposed Motion:

Approve the resolution adopting the Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan based upon the finding that the Plan substantially conforms to the review criteria contained in section 7.5.408 of the City Code, subject to minor technical and typographical corrections.

N/A