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Project Statement

November 21, 2023

City of Colorado Springs
Planning and Development Department
Attn: Gabe Sevigny, Planning Manager
30 S. Nevada Avenue, Suite 701
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Re: Printers Hill – MX-L: Mixed-Use Large Scale Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning)
Project Statement

To the City of Colorado Springs Planning and Development Department,

Please accept this document as the Project Statement for the Land Use Plan application pursuant to the Land Use Plan (New Master Plan) Application Submittal Checklist for the Printers Hill master-planned development.

Background

Printers Hill (formerly known as the Union Printers Home property) is located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and is comprised of two parcels totaling 26.21 acres, both of which are currently zoned R-5, Multi-Family High. The historic Union Printers Home and the associated dormitories and boiler building are located on the larger of the two parcels (see Exhibit 1 below). The 5-story Union Printers Home castle structure was built and established in the late 1800s and was later expanded to its current size of 91,434 square feet in the early 1900s. The facility was historically used as a care facility for members of the International Typographical Union, and was later opened up as a more general convalescent home. More recently, however, the facility was operated as a private nursing home until it closed and was sold to UPH Partners, LLC, in 2021.

The property is located immediately adjacent to the east of Memorial Park and lies at the southeast corner of the Union Boulevard and Pikes Peak Avenue intersection at a distance of approximately 1.3 miles east of Downtown Colorado Springs.

Exhibit 1



Request

The owner of the Union Printers Home property, which is a local partnership known as UPH Partners, LLC, is proposing to redevelop the site as a mixed-use master planned community while still preserving, rehabbing, and repurposing the historical structures. To facilitate the development effort, approval of a Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning) is requested to change the zoning of the two parcels from the current R-5: Multi-Family High zoning district to the newly created MX-L: Mixed-Use Large Scale zoning district.

The concurrently reviewed Printers Hill Land Use Plan proposes to allow for a total of approximately 1,413,758 square feet of mixed-use development on 14.67 acres, including multi-family and attached single family residential, commercial retail, hotel, and civic land uses. The Plan also depicts approximately 7.08 acres of publicly accessible but metropolitan district constructed, owned, and maintained parks and open space.

COMPLIANCE WITH UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC)

Please see below for an analysis of compliance of the proposed Printers Hill Map Amendment (Rezoning) with the City of Colorado Springs Unified Development Code (UDC), specifically

the Zoning Map Amendment (Rezoning) Approval Criteria as outlined in Section 7.5.704.D of the UDC.

1. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the goals and policies of the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan, with other plans and policies adopted by the City Council; and with the purpose statement of the proposed zone district(s).

The City of Colorado Springs comprehensive plan, Plan COS (2019), is the primary document used to guide land development decisions particularly with respect to Zoning Map Amendments (Rezoning). Consistency with the Plan is paramount when considering a variety of land use applications, including rezoning applications. Please note that elements of the City’s comprehensive plan have been included and addressed throughout this Project Statement to allow for more appropriate application of the Plan to topical considerations (e.g., transportation, mutually supportive land uses, use-to-use compatibility, etc.). Those discussions are also included by reference into this section, as appropriate.

CHAPTER 2: VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS

Chapter 2 of PlanCOS emphasizes the importance of strong neighborhood and recognizes that the “strength of a neighborhood’s identity, values, and positive attributes extend beyond traditional residential areas and can benefit the overall character of the city.” The goal of this neighborhood typology is to “recognize, support, and enhance the existing character of these neighborhoods, while supporting their ongoing investment and improved adaptation. New development and/or redevelopment should incorporate elements of the existing neighborhoods.” (p. 27)

The Printers Hill development site is depicted on the Vibrant Neighborhoods Framework map on p. 32 of the Plan as being part of the Hillside neighborhood, which is characterized in the Plan as being within the Established Traditional Neighborhood typology. The recommendations for the typology include:

- Integrate traffic calming measures
- Integrate neighborhood monumentation
- Enhance existing parks
- Enhance landscape treatments on collector streets
- Improve sidewalks and bike lanes
- Redevelop commercial areas
- Connect to off-street trail system

The proposed rezoning and land use plan for the Printers Hill development are intended to create a pedestrian-first environment featuring narrower street cross sections with wider sidewalks and unique public gathering areas which appropriately parallels the description of Traditional Neighborhoods on p. 28 of PlanCOS, which states “These neighborhoods have a high value in

preserving and enhancing walkability features including their gridded street patterns, wide sidewalks, and sometimes limited building setbacks from the street.”

GOAL VN-1 of this chapter is supported by the recent efforts of the ownership group to connect with the nearby neighborhoods through a number of neighborhood meetings and discussions particularly as it conveys the need to “Increase neighborhood identity, inclusion, and participation throughout the city for residents, employees, and visitors.” The Plan goes on to provide additional guidance specific to this goal through the following applicable policy and strategy:

Policy VN-1.B: Inform and engage with neighborhoods, neighborhood-based organizations, and individual residents during the development review process, capital improvement planning, and decisions on City and County facilities and services.

- Strategy VN-1.B-2: Collaboratively include and partner with neighborhood associations and the development community on planning initiatives of community or area-wide importance.

One of the main goals of PlanCOS, as identified in the Plan itself, can be further identified in the text of Goal VN-2, which encourages the City to “Strive for a diversity of housing types, styles, and price points distributed throughout our city through a combination of supportive development standards, community partnerships, and appropriate zoning and density that is adaptable to market demands and housing needs.” The Plan goes on to include the following policy and strategy, which are directly supportive of the associated Development Standards Adjustment, with the intent of supporting regulatory flexibility for standards such as building heights for the sake of promoting development of additional attainable housing and in support of projects like Printers Hill that include neighborhood elements that are commonly desired:

Policy VN-2.A: Promote neighborhoods that incorporate common desired neighborhood elements.

- Strategy VN-2.A-4: Allow for zoning residential bonuses that result in the provision of additional attainable housing, such as increased heights or densities.

Although there isn’t an adopted neighborhood plan for the Hillside Neighborhood, Goal VN-3 of this chapter still applies. The goal reads as follows:

“Through neighborhood plans, associations, and partnerships, empower neighborhoods to reinvest in order to create community, vibrancy, and to address their specific vision and needs.”

The degree of community and increased vibrancy that is proposed to be created within the Printers Hill development through the planning of unique design elements such as an urban garden along the eastern boundary of the property, numerous pedestrian connections and gathering spaces, and mixed-use development that includes ground floor retail is a perfect match with the following policies and strategies:

Policy VN-3.B: Support unique and innovative community design elements and features such as urban farms and gardens, co-op housing, live/work spaces, or neighborhood gathering places.

- Strategy VN-3.B-3: Encourage walkable civic, retail, and community gathering places as design elements within neighborhood centers.

Policy VN-3.C: Promote neighborhood-level shopping and service options to include a variety of healthy food markets, coffee houses, restaurants, and other supportive businesses that increase local access and walkability.

- Strategy VN-3.C-1: Assign land use designations and implement zoning to support and facilitate neighborhood activity centers within walking or biking distance of residential areas.

Policy VN-3.E: Encourage and support the integration of mixed-use development in neighborhoods.

- Strategy VN-3.E-1: Focus incentives for mixed-use development within parts of the city that have been identified as priority redevelopment areas or corridors that have the potential for enhanced multimodal access and walkability.
- Strategy VN-3.E-2: Encourage vertical mixed-use design in neighborhood focal points along with neighborhood design meant to encourage a sense of community and provide a walkable environment. Vertical developments, where the various uses are “stacked” on top of each other, are typically used in areas with limited space, while larger sites allow those different components to be built next to each other—such as an apartment building adjacent to a grocery store.
- Strategy VN-3.E-3: Though a combination of Zoning Code changes and development review decisions, encourage and support flexible site and building designs and residential densities that are adaptable to the specific site.

CHAPTER 3: UNIQUE PLACES

PlanCOS provides very important guidance specific to places and spaces just like the existing Union Printers Home and the proposed Printers Hill redevelopment. The Plan highlights the important of protecting and creating these unique places by stating “As our city and region continue to grow in area and population, it will be all the more important to keep and create unique and special places throughout our community. Together these places create the fabric for a well-functioning city.” (p. 44) The Plan goes on further emphasize the “Importance of Unique Places” by including the following language:

“We need to proactively support and enhance these existing and valued unique places in more mature areas of our city, and ensure that more of these places are created in newly developing areas. Our vision of placemaking should be applied enthusiastically and broadly across the city. However, the details of how we best create and support these places should be expected to vary based on their particular context.”

The redevelopment of the UPH site is perfectly in line with this language. In addition to preserving the unique and historic Union Printers Home as a valued and significant cultural facility, the Printers Hill development proposes to create numerous additional unique and special spaces surrounding the castle structure as depicted on the associated land use plan.

Be a City of Places

The first goal in this chapter is Goal UP-1, which reads “Enrich the texture and livability of the city as a tapestry of unique, vibrant, and walkable places.” The Printers Hill development will help accomplish this goal by repurposing the iconic Union Printers Home as a hospitality destination, creating new housing options within the City’s core with a multitude of residential offerings, establishing neighborhood-scale retail units within vertical mixed-use structures, and preserving land for much needed civic uses all while promoting livability and ensuring connectedness into and throughout the site by strategically locating numerous pedestrian corridors and gathering areas. The many positive attributes of the Printers Hill development will help enrich the texture of the immediate area and for the City as a whole and will create much needed excitement surrounding the otherwise vacant and, in some ways, dilapidated Union Printers Home property.

The policy and strategies under this goal that support the Printers Hill rezoning and land use plan applications include the following:

Policy UP-1.A: Emphasize placemaking throughout the city with design and programming that supports a distinctive identity and experience.

- Strategy UP-1.A-1: Incorporate distinctive placemaking as an element of public and private development plans including privately initiated master plans, concept plans, and Planned Unit Development zoning.
- Strategy UP-1.A-2: Evaluate new and redeveloping land use related to enhancement and support of existing, transitioning, and new activity centers.
- Strategy UP-1.A-5: Design urban activity centers to encourage walkability.

Embrace Creative Infill, Adaption, and Land Use Change

Goal UP-2 from this section of Chapter 3 encourages the City to “Embrace thoughtful, targeted, and forward-thinking changes in land use, infill, reinvestment, and redevelopment to respond to shifts in demographics, technology, and the market.” A significant shift in the local residential market has been occurring in recent years as a result of ever-increasing costs of housing. The number of developments receiving approvals to construct higher density residential projects continues to grow. Infill projects, like Printers Hill, offer an opportunity to live and work in close proximity within a well-established urban environment. The immediate proximity to Memorial Park and walkability to Downtown Colorado Springs serve as even greater attributes of the project that may unrivaled in the local market.

The policies and strategies under this goal that support the Printers Hill rezoning and land use plan applications include the following:

Policy UP-2.A: Support infill and land use investment throughout the mature and developed areas of the city.

- Strategy UP-2.A-2: Provide opportunities for redevelopment by identifying and supporting catalyst projects in underutilized locations such as disinvested shopping centers and business parks, former “big box” retail spaces, and no longer needed school buildings.

The Printers Hill project is well poised to be a catalyst project for other infill and redevelopment projects in the City. The Union Printers Home property is currently an underutilized property with historic structures that remain vacant and in disrepair. Redeveloping the property to better utilize a significant portion of the vacant land surrounding the historic structures and repurposing those same structures directly supports Strategy UP-2.A-2 identified above.

As the City of Colorado Springs embarks on implementation of the new Unified Development Code (UDC), the need to work through some of the concepts and development standards on a case-by-case basis becomes apparent. Fortunately, PlanCOS anticipated this scenario by including the following strategies resulting in more flexibility in how the new regulations are applied so as to promote and encourage creativity in planning new infill developments:

- Strategy UP-2.A-1: Encourage the development or redevelopment of vacant properties in the core area of the city by using a combination of incentives, rezoning, and creative design solutions.
- Strategy UP-2.A-3: Continue to implement infill supportive Code changes including provisions tailored for older developed areas.
- Strategy UP-2.A-4: Actively support ongoing and potential infill projects, employ problem-solving approaches and continue to implement process improvements in support of infill and redevelopment.
- Strategy UP-2.A-5: Revise zoning and building regulations to be more streamlined and flexible regarding infill, redevelopment, and mixed-use development, especially in older, underutilized commercial areas.

A perfect example of applying the above strategies to the new UDC comes in support of the concurrent request for a Development Standards Adjustment to allow an increase in the standard maximum building height of the MX-L zoning district. The request, if approved, would allow the planned development of the site to expand and repurpose the historic structures, apply more creative and non-monolithic building massing, maintain critical views and connections to Pikes Peak and Memorial Park, and generate enough mixed-use square footage to render the project financially feasible.

Focus on Corridors and Centers

GOAL UP-4 of this section of Chapter 3 urges the City to “Strengthen our overall community identity and better serve the needs of residents and businesses within our large metropolitan area by developing active, unique, and connected centers and corridors.” In support of efforts to achieve this goal are included the following applicable policies and strategies:

Policy UP-4.A: Actively plan and encourage a development pattern consisting of unique centers located along new and redeveloped corridors and at other designated areas throughout the city.

Policy UP-4.B: Within unique centers, incorporate density and mixed uses along with higher standards of design, attention to the public realm, and design for multimodal access including transit.

- Strategy UP-4.B-1: Evaluate development applications in and around unique centers with particular attention to their contribution to the integration and mixing of uses, orientation to the public realm, and their support of connections with multimodal transportation.
- Strategy UP-4.B-2: Develop and implement design standards to support the vision for identified, prioritized, and redeveloping corridors and centers that lack density and mixed uses.

Create Sustainable and Resilient Places

The most pertinent goal and policy from this section of PlanCOS is Goal UP-5 and Policy UP-5.A. Goal UP-5 states to “Develop and support unique places and centers as models of resilience and sustainability” and Policy UP-5.A suggests measures for implementing the goal by encouraging the City to “Actively evaluate plans for existing, new, and redeveloping urban places and corridors from the perspective of fiscal and environmental sustainability.”

The Printers Hill development is planned as an active and unique center in the middle of a fully developed area of the City. The commercial opportunities being proposed within the development, which could even include a small scale grocer, can help better serve the daily needs of the existing and future residents in the neighborhood and in the larger area of the City. Significant attention has been paid while laying out the associated land use plan to create inviting pedestrian-supportive public spaces and corridors. Multi-modal access to the site can be accomplished via three vehicular access points and connections to existing pedestrian and bicycle pathways. In addition, the site sits along the number 7 bus line, which connects Downtown to neighborhoods to the east. The area is also served by Mountain Metro Transit as well as a private shuttle connecting the existing parking in the area to UCHealth Memorial Hospital. The plan for development is proposed to feature low impact stormwater management facilities and protect and showcase a large portion of the existing vegetation on the property that make it the site a visually attractive gem in the community.

CHAPTER 4: THRIVING ECONOMY

This Chapter of PlanCOS identifies the nearby Printers Parkway as being a within Typology No. 1, Cornerstone Institution, which is likely based on the presence of multiple office and medical facilities within the Printers Parkway/Parkside Drive vicinity. The area functions as a significant employment hub within the City and serves the needs of residents from around the Pikes Peak Region. The introduction of redevelopment via the Printers Hill rezoning and land use plan is

the perfect complement to the Printers Parkway employment hub by bringing more housing and services to the immediate area. Creating additional employee housing within walking distance to so many offices and medical facilities is an integral component of PlanCOS.

The Printers Hill development should also be considered under Typology No. 3, The Experience Economy, which is highlighted by the following components:

- Including resort and convention destinations
- Integrating flagship hotels
- Increasing access to public gathering places
- Marketing regional cultural destinations and tourist attractions

The stated goal of this Typology is “to support a variety of high quality existing and new attractions and related amenities for residents and visitors, appealing to a diverse mix of interests and incomes.”

The Printers Hill development proposed to repurpose the historic Union Printers Home into a flagship hotel and tourism destination. The planned parks and open spaces, which again are proposed to be constructed, owned, and maintained by the anticipated metropolitan district, along with the ground floor retail and public spaces, are a perfect fit into this Typology and are being proposed for a site that can readily serve as a new neighborhood gathering spot. The plan for development would create much needed small-scale retail options in the area, all of which could appeal to a variety of interests and incomes.

In addition to potentially fitting into The Experience Economy Typology, the proposed development fits nicely into Typology 4, Life and Style. The recommendations for the Life and Style Typology include:

- Encourage activated and vibrant spaces
- Encourage high-quality and mixed-use environment
- Focus on pedestrian friendly design
- Locate supporting housing nearby

This Typology also emphasizes a number of neighborhood character-based goals, such as:

- Capitalize and increase access to nearby homes
- Encourage small, local businesses
- Integrate mixed-use
- Integrate and/or reuse cultural landmarks

The Printers Hill development would overwhelmingly support so many of these recommendations and goals by creating pedestrian-focused spaces within a mixed-use environment. The development would create much improved pedestrian travel corridors for residents within the development as well as so many residents living in the nearby neighborhoods, particularly for those traveling to and from Memorial Park.

The historic Union Printers Home (UPH) is the very definition of a cultural landmark in the City of Colorado Springs, and with the Printers Hill development UPH is being adaptively reused and will be well integrated into the much larger redevelopment effort, serving as the focal point and main attraction within the development.

Goal TE-1 of PlanCOS is to “Build on our quality of place and existing competitive advantages.” There are a number of policies and strategies under this goal that support the Printers Hill rezoning and land use plan applications, including the following:

Policy TE-1.C: Leverage the city’s livability as a workforce and economic driver.

- Strategy TE-1.C-1: Improve access to parks, trails, nature and the outdoors from employment centers.
- Strategy TE-1.C-2: Support and leverage projects and initiatives with mixed uses, transit supported and walkable attributes to attract and retain a skilled workforce and business investment
- Strategy TE-1.C-3: Ensure an adequate supply of attainable housing for the workforce across all industries, and that it is conveniently located near hubs of employment and/or public transportation.
- Strategy TE-1.C-5: Provide for convenient access to quality goods and services that support major employment areas, through a combination of proactive and responsive planning, zoning, and development approval actions.

Policy TE-1.D: Enhance our Cornerstone Institutions (Typology 1) campuses, while also integrating them into the surrounding community.

- Strategy TE-1.D-3: Provide a mix of uses that are both neighborhood and institutional campus-serving to help integrate them into the community.
- Strategy TE-1.D-6: Ensure that these employment and activity nodes are pedestrian-oriented and easily accessible by existing or future alternative modes of transportation.

CHAPTER 5: STRONG CONNECTIONS

The “connections” detailed in this chapter extend well beyond traditional discussions revolving around the automobile. This chapter emphasizes the importance of considering all connected infrastructure, including utilities, stormwater facilities, multi-modal transportation corridors, and infrastructure needed to advance smart technologies and communications. Although the Strong Connections Framework map on p. 94 of the Plan does not specifically identify a smart corridor or multi-modal corridor along either Pikes Peak Avenue or Union Boulevard, it does identify both corridors as being within the Bike Master Plan Network. The planned development of the Printers Hill site will incorporate connections to the bike corridors and allow for safe travel into the site and ensure the provision of bicycle parking stations pursuant to the applicable City standards.

The internal street cross sections, featuring reduced vehicular travel lanes and enhanced pedestrian amenities, support the following recommendations from this Chapter:

- Reduce motor vehicle through lanes while accommodating demand
- Provide ADA-accessible sidewalks and crosswalks
- Reduce barriers and enhance local connections
- Widen and improve sidewalks
- Connect off-street paths
- Separate facilities to accommodate bikes and pedestrians

It is difficult at the rezoning and land use plan stages of development to provide specific details regarding the infrastructure improvements within the project. However, the owners of the property are determined to work with the City to ensure that the infrastructure connections needed to maintain and enhance the continuity of existing and planned facilities are accomplished. The conceptual plan for the Printers Hill development that is required at the land use plan and rezoning stages of development, which includes the proposed street alignments and intersections and a multitude of pedestrian corridors, confidently supports the following policies and strategies in this Chapter:

Policy SC-1.A: Plan for and implement transportation projects for the overall mobility of people and to manage the impacts of cars on our built environment.

- Strategy SC-1.A-5: Build “complete streets” by safely and reasonably incorporating multiple modes in the design of new and redeveloped transportation corridors.
- Strategy SC-1.A-8: Design land uses and transportation improvements with an emphasis on “first and last mile” trips having desirable and safe options for non-motorized travel.
- Strategy SC-1.A-9: Reduce the emphasis on requiring transportation facilities to be designed to fully address peak hour traffic demand forecasts, especially in Downtown and other identified higher density multimodal corridors and centers.

Policy SC-1.D: Establish and maintain convenient multimodal connections between neighborhoods, local destinations, employment and activity centers, and Downtown.

- Strategy SC-1.D-2: Enhance street connectivity in new developments with shorter, pedestrian-scale blocks and narrower local streets to improve walkability and connectivity.
- Strategy SC-1.D-6: Continue to coordinate bicycle and pedestrian planning, design, and implementation with other infrastructure projects and land use decisions.

Policy SC-1.H: Improve neighborhood livability by providing connections between neighborhoods and Neighborhood Centers (Chapter 3: Typology 1) and by reducing vehicular speeds.

- Strategy SC-1.H-3: Modify local streets to be consistent with their purpose by implementing speed control measures using enforcement, intersection control, and design.
- Strategy SC-1.H-4: Continue to work with Colorado Springs Utilities and the Fire Department to allow narrower streets and on-street parking for local “first and last mile streets.”

Policy SC-3.A: Design new and redeveloped projects to reduce their contribution to regional stormwater flows and to improve the quality of the runoff that is generated.

Policy SC-4.A: Efficiently use the existing utility system capacity.

- Strategy SC-4.A-1: Support a combination of density, infill, redevelopment, and design to reduce the rate of addition of pipeline and conductor miles that need to be maintained by Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) or other entities.

CHAPTER 6: RENOWNED CULTURE

This chapter opens by expressing the “Importance of Culture” and specifically emphasized the meaningful impact existing and new development can have on culture in form of the built environment by stating the following:

“The built environment of Colorado Springs can be an expression of our distinctive culture. For our arts, culture, and education to continue to flourish, we will need places that support their incubation, growth, and celebration throughout the community. Our architecture, public art, parks, wide boulevards, museums, performance and educational institutions, historic areas, and public gathering places all help define the collective sense of place for our growing and diversifying citizenry.”

A reading of this statement suggests that part of the culture of the City is inherently comprised of places just the Union Printers Homes and is visually supported by buildings just like the castle and other existing historic structures on the property. To that point, the plan for developing the property and repurposing the historic structures supports the following recommendations in this chapter:

- Increase connections with surrounding neighborhoods
- Encourage adaptive use and reinvestment
- Integrate features that represent our City’s History and Heritage
- Increase public awareness of historic resources
- Focus on pedestrian experience
- Preserve character-defining features

The Union Printers Home property has served as a focal point in the community for well over 100 years. Preserving and repurposing the castle building and the other historic structures for years to come was one of the main factors for the owner when deciding to invest in the property. The unequalled architecture and historical significance of the buildings on the property truly are some of the “best of our history.” By repurposing the buildings, the owners intend to transition the site from being purely aesthetically pleasing, but without contemporary function, into an aesthetically pleasing cultural hub and focal point within the greater community which justifies a finding of consistency with the following goals and policies of this chapter:

GOAL RC-1: Preserve the best of our history.

Policy RC-1.A: Continue to preserve and advance Colorado Springs’ historic and cultural resources and integrate themes and features into design and development that represent Colorado Springs’ history and heritage.

GOAL RC-2: Add to, enhance, and promote Colorado Springs’ institutions, attractions, and community assets integral to our local culture and civic pride.

Policy RC-2.B: Promote existing and new arts and cultural hubs, venues, and focal points as elements of activity centers throughout the city.

CHAPTER 7: MAJESTIC LANDSCAPES

One of the most applicable concepts from this chapter as it applies to the Printers Hill development is found in the introductory paragraphs when it states that “Open spaces, parks... help shape growth, maintain scenic vistas, and provide non-motorized transportation and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.” The planned neighborhood park located on the west side of the property in front of the historic castle perfectly embodies this statement by ensuring that nothing on the property will be constructed so as to block the scenic views from the castle towards Pikes Peak and the Colorado Front Range. The need to define the park space in middle of the property adjacent to Union Boulevard serves as a main pedestrian amenity into and within the development and it helped to positively shape the plan for development of taller vertical structures in areas that are located more towards the perimeter of the property.

Many of the recommendations in this chapter support the plan for development of the Printers Hill project, including the following:

- Offer active and passive recreation
- Incorporate internal walking paths
- Locate within the neighborhood fabric
- Provide community-wide recreation activities
- Incorporate access from major streets and transit routes
- Limit imposing infrastructure to highlight unique natural features
- Support facilities and events that activate the space and engage the community
- Incorporate areas to rest and gather
- Integrate and connect with surrounding neighborhoods

The layout of parks and open space sites with the Printers Hill development is specifically designed to ensure that the surrounding pedestrian facilities and the neighborhoods utilizing those facilities can be well connected to the planned pedestrian spaces within the project. Examples of this can be seen in strategic locations along the perimeter of the project where parks and associated travel corridors invite pedestrian access into the property.

In addition, a variety of goals, policies and strategies from this chapter support the proposed rezoning and land use plan, particularly as a result of the project being immediately adjacent to Memorial Park and due to the inclusion of so many unique open spaces, parks, and plazas along with the preservation of many of the vegetative and other natural features found on the property. Examples of some of these supporting goals, policies and strategies include the following:

GOAL ML-2: Activate and expand sustainable community use and interaction with open spaces, parks, and cultural resources.

- Strategy ML-2.A-4: Activate spaces in parks and trails with regularly occurring events such as farmer’s markets, food trucks, educational events, tours, and cultural festivals that build community and provide market opportunities.
- Strategy ML-2.A-8: Implement interactive recreation and educational features within parks, such as climbing walls, splash pads, nature playgrounds, dog parks, and community gardens.

Policy ML-2.C: Provide green infrastructure lands, facilities, and services that are tailored and aligned to meet the conditions and needs of all areas of the city.

- Strategy ML-2.C-3: Maximize opportunities for citywide and non-exclusive access to linear and linked open space systems with convenient non-motorized connection.
- Strategy ML-2.C-4: De-emphasize reliance on a single standard for both the size and program for neighborhood parks (e.g. 5 acres) in favor of options for facilities of different sizes and programs.
- Strategy ML-2.C-5: Coordinate with local developers and private interests to construct and maintain pocket parks with higher density Unique Places.
- Strategy ML-2.C-6: Repurpose underserved areas with new parks and encourage creation or redevelopment of Neighborhood Greenspaces (Typology 1) associated with neighborhood focal points, unique places, and activity centers.
- Strategy ML-2.C-7: Encourage new development and redevelopment to occur near existing parks and open spaces to increase their access to and use by the public.

Policy ML-4.D: Cultivate an ethic of environmental stewardship and landscape health through community education and engagement.

- Strategy ML-4.D-4: Educate and encourage citizens to better care for street trees on private property.

ConnectCOS as an Element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan

The City’s master transportation plan, ConnectCOS, is the guiding comprehensive planning document regarding existing and planned transportation corridors. The Plan identifies both Pikes Peak Avenue and Union Boulevard adjacent to the Printers Hill site as being Principal Arterial streets and it depicts the portion of Pikes Peak Avenue adjacent to the Printers Hill property as being a Primary Bike/Ped Route. As mentioned above in varying sections of the PlanCOS consistency analysis, the proposed development will include two accesses onto Pikes Peak Avenue and another access onto Union Boulevard and it will connect to any existing bike and pedestrian corridors to further support multi-modal transportation in the area.

The Corridor Congestion Map in the Plan identifies Pikes Peak Avenue as being at or below the 50th percentile for congestion and Union Boulevard at an even lower percentile (40th and 30th) for congestion, both of which compare very favorably to other more congested corridors such as portions of North and South Nevada Avenue, Garden of the Gods west of I-25, and the central section of Powers Boulevard north of the Colorado Springs Airport. In addition, none of the

immediately adjacent intersection were highlighted on the Traffic and Intersection Performance Map in the Plan as being one of the “Worst Performing Intersections” in the City.

The Transit Vision Network Map included in the Plan highlights the Platte Avenue to Pikes Peak Avenue corridor as being an “Enhanced Transit Connection TBD”. The details of the transit connection appear to still be in the planning phase, but any desire by the City to coordinate these efforts with the Printers Hill development would be welcomed. The map does not currently identify any other transit routes or facilities in close proximity to the site.

Lastly, the Truck Routes Map provided as an exhibit in the Plan identifies Union Boulevard as being one of the existing truck routes providing commercial access through the City.

City of Colorado Springs Parks System Master Plan

The City’s Parks Master Plan clearly identifies Memorial Park as a community park located immediately to the west of the Printers Hill development and identifies two “Proposed Urban Trails” connecting from the north and the south into Memorial Park along or near Union Boulevard and Pikes Peak Avenue (see Map 1: Composite Parks, Open Space and Trails Master Plan).

Table 9: Parkland Classifications and Standards, of the Plan states that the purpose or function of a neighborhood park is to “Provide nearby recreation and leisure opportunities for the individual neighborhoods they are intended to serve. Should serve as a common area of neighbors of all ages to gather, socialize, and play.” Park No. 1, as proposed in the Printers Hill Land Use Plan, fits this description very well as it is planned to be a place where all residents of the development and surrounding community can engage in recreation and where recreational synergies can be realized in concert with the significantly larger Memorial Park located directly across Union Boulevard the west.

The remaining parks and open space areas identified in the Printers Hill Land Use Plan do not qualify as neighborhood parks due to their reduced size, however, the neighborhood park land requirement for the development can be fully satisfied with Park No. 1. All of the parks and open space areas within the development, including Park No. 1, are proposed to be designed, constructed, and maintained by the anticipated Printers Hill Metropolitan District, which relieves the City of the cost burden that often creates challenges with developing parks and providing ongoing maintenance, which is specifically discussed as a challenge facing the City throughout various sections of the Parks Master Plan.

Consistency with the MX-L: Mixed-Use Zone District Purpose Statement

The Colorado Springs Unified Development Code (UDC) includes the following purpose statement for the MX-L Zone District:

The MX-L zone district accommodates a high-intensity mix of, for example, commercial, retail, office, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, and multifamily residential uses. Land uses are as indicated in Table 7.3.2-A: Base and NNA-O District Use Table. MX-L zone districts typically serve the City as a whole and have significant traffic generation potential. Some MX-L zone districts may also include uses that have a regional draw. Uses in MX-L zone districts may be mixed horizontally or vertically mixed depending on their density and intensity. MX-L zone districts should be organized to promote synergy among uses, combine destinations, support more effective transit service, and provide viable pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation. MX-L zone districts should have direct access to existing or planned major transportation facilities and be designed to promote compatibility with adjacent land uses. The layout of permitted use types shall be as shown in a Land Use Plan approved pursuant to Section 7.5.514 (Land Use Plan).

The proposed rezoning of the property to the MX-L zoning district and the associated land use plan, if approved, would allow the site to be developed with many of the land uses included in the purpose statement such as a hotel, office, retail, restaurants, and multifamily residential. The intent is to mix uses both horizontally across the development and well as vertically within some of the parcels. The synergy created by mixing the uses, incorporating residential development, and providing pedestrian pathways within the project will help enhance access and circulation in the area and throughout the site. As mentioned above, the site will have access to a planned transit corridor to the north and will create a new, unique gathering place within the community. The planned development will promote compatibility with the adjacent non-residential land uses and provide retail and service opportunities to residents living in neighborhoods within close proximity to the property. The associated land use plan depicts the layout of the permitted use types for the property.

2. The rezoning will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or general welfare.

The proposed rezoning and associated land use plan depict a plan for repurposing the historic structures on the property and creating additional development opportunities on underutilized portions of the property which will improve the general welfare of the citizens of the City. Developing extensive pedestrian connections and gathering places within the project should only serve to enhance the sense of community in the area thereby promoting the public's interests and improving the convenience for existing and future residents in the area to pursue recreation and social engagement, thereby enhancing the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

3. The location of the lands in the zoning map area being amended are appropriate for the purposes of the proposed zone district(s).

A geological hazards report waiver has been submitted concurrent with the land use plan. The waiver is supported by the City staff due to the absence of any potentially hazardous geological conditions on the site.

A drainage report has also been submitted with the application identifying that any potential impacts associated with stormwater runoff can be adequately mitigated with the development of City-approved designs and construction of appropriate drainage infrastructure.

Colorado Springs Utilities has confirmed that the proposed development can be served by water, wastewater, electric, and natural gas infrastructure. Off site improvements to some of the existing infrastructure may be required prior to full build out of the site.

- 4. If the application proposes to rezone a small area of land, the application demonstrates that the size, scale, height density, and multimodal traffic impacts of the proposed rezoning are compatible with surrounding development or can be made compatible with surrounding development through approval conditions.**

The area proposed to be rezoned is 26.21 acres, which complies with the minimum zoning area of 10 acres required under the MX-L zoning district. The property would likely be considered a fairly large area of development particularly when compared to most other rezonings in the existing urbanized area of the City. The associated land use plan demonstrates compatibility with the surrounding development, most of which is non-residential, in terms of size, scale, height, density, and multimodal offerings. Further analysis of specific opportunities for planning and designing amenities and connections to the surrounding areas will need to be considered at later stages of development such as during the development plan and subdivision processes.

- 5. If the application proposes to rezone a relatively small area of land, the application demonstrates that the change in zoning will not create significant dislocations of tenants or occupants of the property, or that any impacts are outweighed by other public benefits or progress toward other Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan goals that would be achieved by approval of the application.**

The existing structures on the property are vacant and do not currently house tenants or other occupants.

- 6. If a Land Use Plan or amendment to a Land Use Plan accompanies the application, the Land Use Plan or amendment complies with the applicable criteria in in Subsection 7.5.514C.3 (Land Use Plan Criteria).**

A Land Use Plan has been concurrently submitted with this rezoning request. The Plan complies with the applicable criteria set forth in Subsection 7.5.514C.3 of the UDC.

- 7. The application is consistent with any approved Concept Plans in the area for which the map is being amended or includes or is accompanied by a provision that approved Concept Plans that have been classified as implemented do not have to be amended in order to be considered consistent with an amended zoning map.**

There are no previously approved Concept Plans for the area proposed to be rezoned.

- 8. If the application is for creation of an ADS-O district, the approval criteria applicable to the creation of the text of the ADS-O district in Section [7.2.607D.47.5.702 \(Decision\)](#) shall also apply to consideration of the zoning map amendment required to create or amend the boundaries of the ADS-O district.**

The rezoning application is not for the creation of an ADS-O district.

- 9. If rezoning to a PDZ district, the proposed PDZ district provides significant community amenities or other benefits, as determined by the Manager, that promote the achievement of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan goals and would not otherwise be required of the applicant under this UDC or other City or governmental regulations.**

The rezoning application does not include a request for PDZ zoning.

- 10. Complies with the additional standards of the base zone district where the property is located (see [Article 7.2 \(Zone Districts\)](#)) or in an overlay district that applies to the property (see [Part 7.2.6 \(Overlay Districts\)](#)).**

The application complies with the base zone district except as otherwise modified by the concurrently submitted Development Standards Adjustment regarding maximum building height in the MX-L zoning district.