

Project Summary

The *Southeast Strong Community Plan* (Plan) is the first community planning project proposed under the PlanCOS key initiative for a Neighborhood Planning Program details priorities, goals, and strategies related to mobility, economic development, and housing among other determinants identified through locally-informed, public input processes. The Plan is tactical and advisory and will help guide efforts and efficient use of public and community-based resources to maximize the success of our neighborhoods. The Plan represents a City-community partnership and is a derivative of the PlanCOS Vibrant Neighborhoods key initiative for neighborhood planning.

The Council adopted PlanCOS includes goals for neighborhood and corridor revitalization as well as an emphasis on maximizing opportunities and continuing to address challenges in the southeast areas of the City.

The planning area is geographically between Interstate 25 and Powers Blvd. with a northern boundary of Fountain Blvd and the City boundary to the south along Milton E Proby Pkwy and includes six PlanCOS neighborhoods: Spring Creek, Pikes Peak Park North, Pikes Peak Park South, Southborough, Deerfield Hills, and Soaring Eagle. Map of Community Plan area: <https://coloradosprings.gov/document/plan4aadjusted6202107132022.pdf>

File Number	Plan Type	Decision Type
25-020	Neighborhood Plan	Legislative

Background

Prior Land-Use History and Applicable Actions

<i>Action</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Date</i>
Comprehensive Plan	PlanCOS	2019
Study	Hancock Expressway / Academy Boulevard Planning and Environmental Linkages Study.	2015
Action Plan	The South Academy Economic Opportunity Zone Action Plan	2014
Master Plan	Academy Blvd Corridor Great Streets Plan	2011

History

A presentation to City Council in March of 2022, by the Planning Department, proposed a plan of action to re-initiate a systematic neighborhood planning program consistent with the recommendations of PlanCOS. Neighborhood Planning Program is one of the important initiatives of PlanCOS as “Effective and viable small area and neighborhood land use plans are essential for implementation of the PlanCOS vision. PlanCOS sets the overall vision and framework, but neighborhood plans are necessary to apply this larger vision in a practical manner.” Community Plans “allow planning and implementation at scale that can address the unique characteristics and needs of different areas of the city.”

The Southeast Strong Community Plan is the first community planning project proposed under this Neighborhood Planning Program. The Southeast Strong Community Plan priorities leverage smart growth and support livability in line with PlanCOS goals. Robust implementation will include promoting diverse cultural resources, encourage walkability, support safety initiatives, develop equitably and incrementally, and redevelop to more present-day development standards. - community planning for neighborhoods.

The Southeast Strong Community Plan is well aligned with the City’s Strategic Plan which aims to plan for the future to motivate stimulate flourishing communities and promote safe, economically prosperous, culturally rich, and welcoming neighborhoods ensuring that residents are not marginalized.

Link to the draft Southeast Strong Community Plan on the City website<<https://coloradosprings.gov/SEcommunityplan>>

Link to the Southeast Health Assessment, a health assessment for the area completed in 2020 an updated in 2023:
https://coloradosprings.gov/system/files/2023-10/se_cos_healthy_people_and_places_asesment_updated.pdf

7.1.103: PURPOSE:

The purpose of this UDC is to:

- A. Promote health, safety, and general welfare of the public;
- C. Implement the Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan;
- F. Encourage adequate multi-modal transportation facilities;
- G. Promote opportunities for affordable and attainable housing throughout the City; and
- H. Facilitate adequate provision of utilities, schools, parks, and other public infrastructure services.
- I. Enhance the quality, diversity, and safety of neighborhoods by encouraging pride and investment. (Ord. 23-03)

Stakeholder Involvement

Public Engagement

Steering Committee	Eight Southeast Strong Steering Committee stakeholder meetings and charrettes were held with area leadership and resident participation.
Stakeholder Interviews	Eleven one-on-one interviews were held by the project team.
Public Meeting	A public workshop with over 70 attendees was held in October of 2024 to discuss and review the community’s priorities related to the draft Plan.
Online Survey	Targeted focus area events, communication, and social media promotion were organized including area advocacy groups such as RISE Southeast and Colorado Springs School District 2.

Review Process

Southeast Strong Plan Steering Committee	Endorsed January, 2025
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Public Engagement

The Southeast Strong Community Plan was informed by numerous official City Plans all of which included significant stakeholder involvement. At different stages of Plan creation included a variety of opportunities for public input. The City issued a press releases in both English and Spanish announcing the draft plan and publicized the opportunities for public input; additional announcements will promote the formal public hearing. The survey was published on the City’s Southeast Strong Community Plan website in both languages. The public meeting was considered successfully attended by the area residents and stakeholder community. Feedback collected through these efforts further informed the Plan.

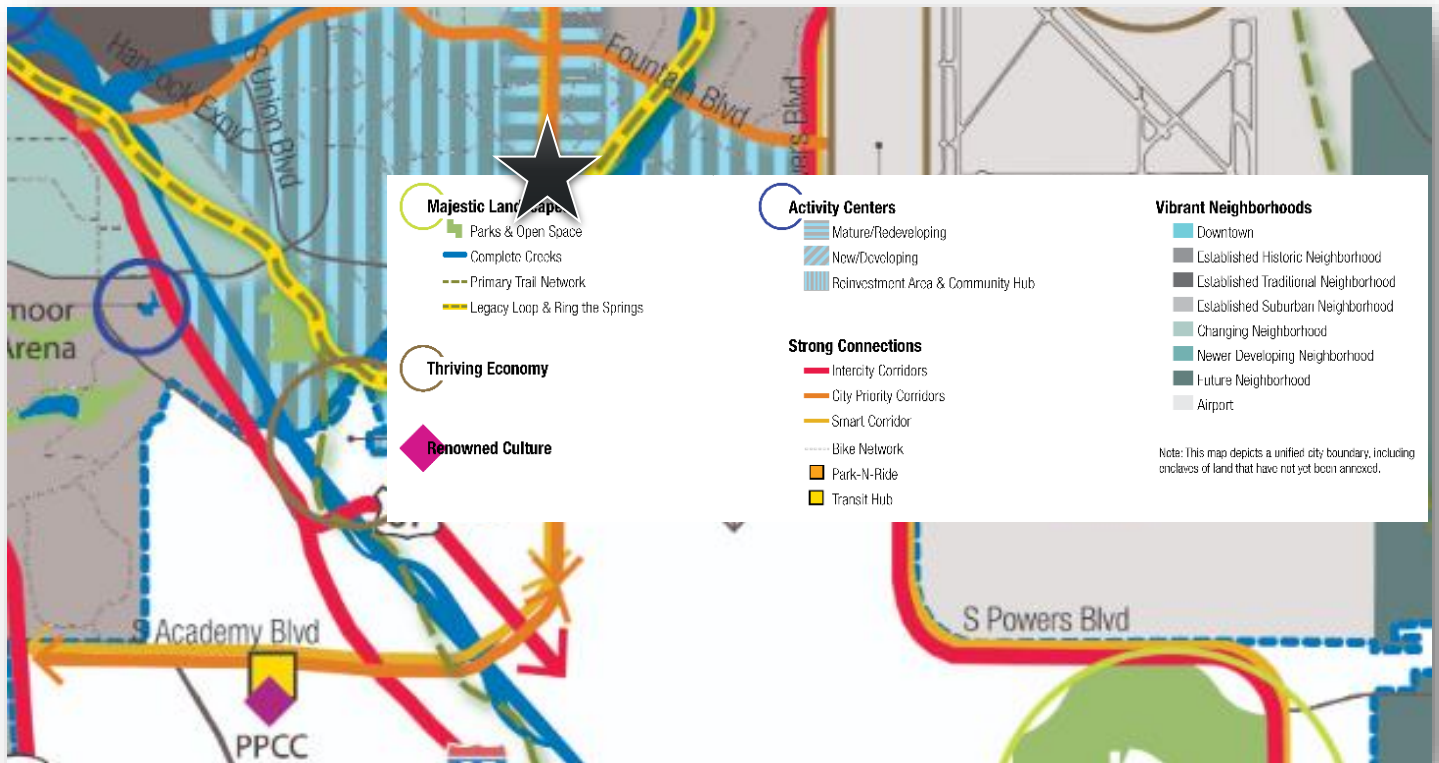
City Agencies Involved

City Planning Department
Office of the Mayor

City Economic and Small Business Development Department
 City Housing and Homelessness Response Department
 Colorado Springs Utilities
 City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department
 City Police Department
 City Public Works Department
 City Office of Accessibility
 Colorado Spring Utilities
 Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority

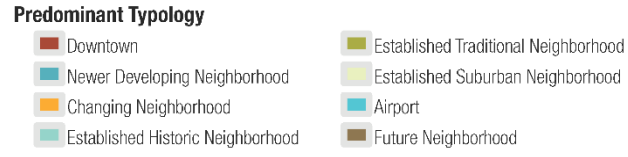
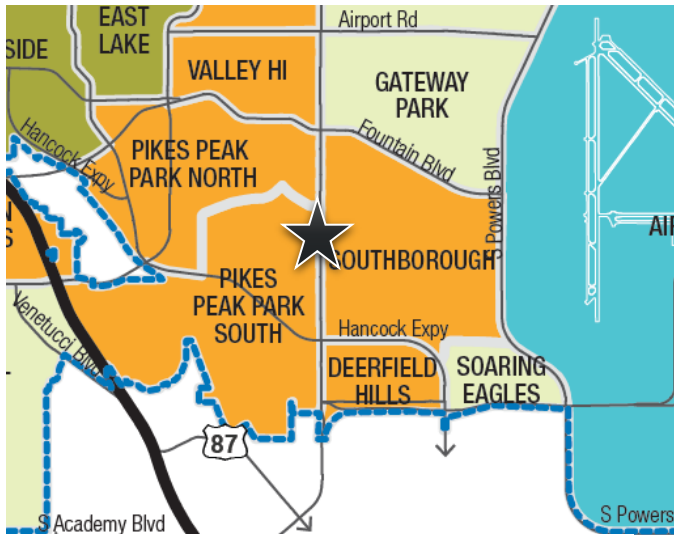
Compliance with PlanCOS

PlanCOS Vision



PlanCOS identifies the southeast Colorado Springs geographic area in the Vision Map as an activity center for reinvestment and community hub planning. Furthermore, the Neighborhood Planning Program evaluated a matrix of factors, including presence and age of master plans, infill development, and low to moderate income (LMI) and concluded planning need in the area, directing the first community plan to these neighborhoods.

The Map generally details desired priority areas and locations and landscapes providing a “starting point” for city initiatives and development proposals in our neighborhood communities. This Vision, further stated, acts in coordination with the City land use code.



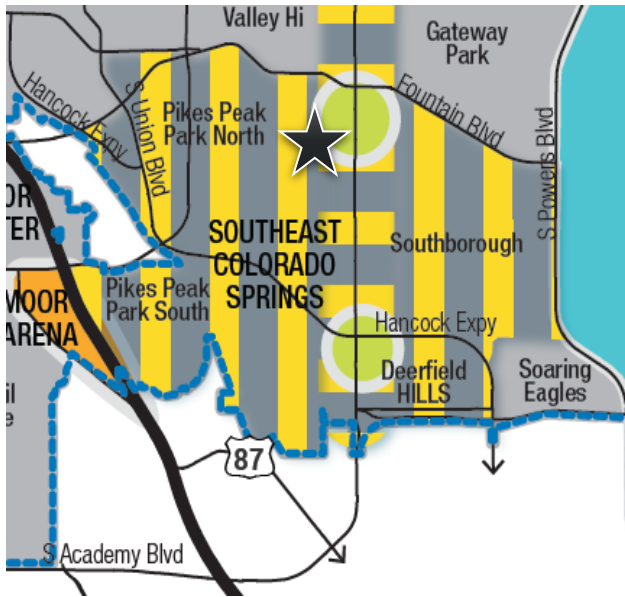
Vibrant Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Plans defined by PlanCOS provide "additional detail required for effective application and implementation of the Vibrant Neighborhoods Chapter."

Neighborhoods in the Southeast Strong Community Plan are listed as "changing" or vulnerable to change.

Big Idea: *Reclaim Neighborhood Space* – "As our city matures, a decline of any neighborhood will not serve us well. Neighborhood disinvestment affects our entire city. If we are not paying attention and being proactive as a city, we should expect areas to change in undesirable ways. A key tenet of this Plan is that viable opportunities for neighborhood reinvestment need to be identified, prioritized, and pursued in all neighborhoods, but particularly those that are most vulnerable."

Each big idea in the Southeast Strong Plan has goals and strategies focusing on enhancing quality, diversity, and safety of its six neighborhoods and encourages pride and investment.

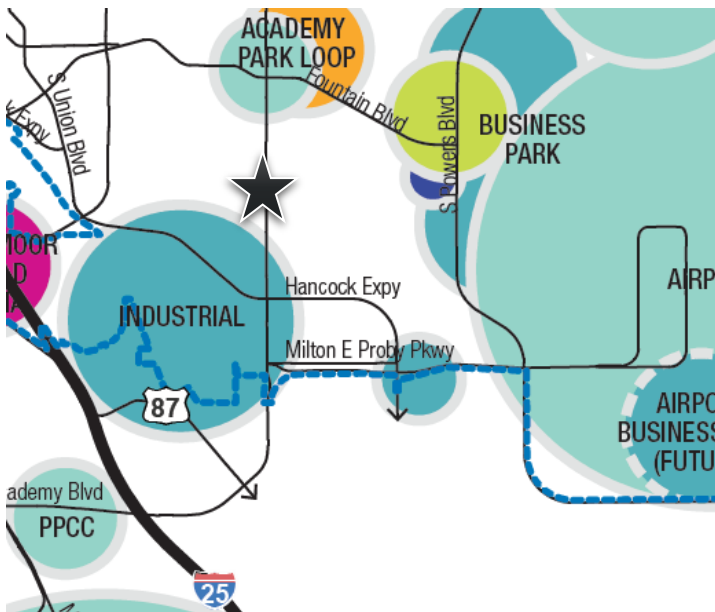


Unique Places

The southeast neighborhoods in this PlanCOS chapter, again, are listed as "Activity Centers" for reinvestment and community hub planning and S. Academy Blvd is highlighted as a mature/redeveloping corridor.

Big Idea: *Be a City of Places* – "... Missing in some areas are the unique and special places for these communities to identify with and gather in. Places are what make a city special and how we share it as community. The best and most special places have a combination of common desired elements and unique attributes. This Plan is about community building through placemaking everywhere in the city. The plan looks to incorporate centers in neighborhoods throughout the city."

The Southeast Strong Plan big idea chapters, *Reflect and Celebrate Our Diverse Culture* and *Create Special Places and Community Hubs* encourages investing in and expanding area community hubs focusing on major corridors such as S. Academy Blvd.

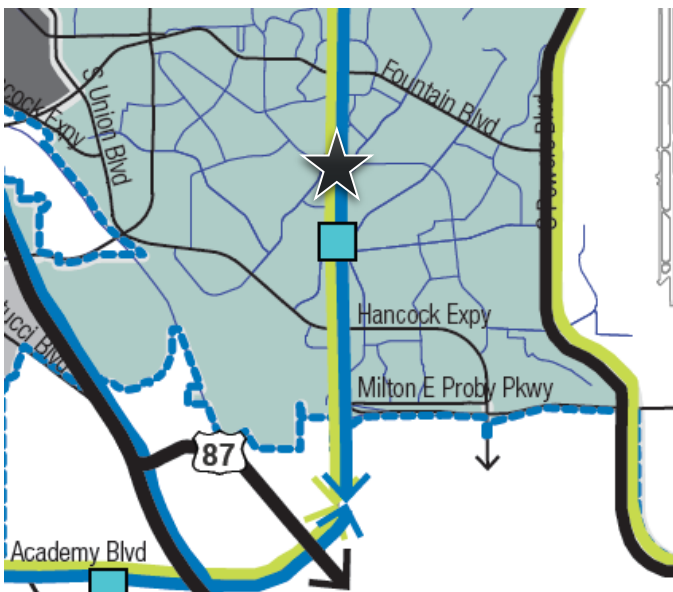


Thriving Economy

The large industrial land use in the southeast is cornerstone of PlanCOS “Industry Icons” and support the overall economy of the City.

This vision statement serves and “Fosters an environment of inclusivity and economic diversity by attracting an innovative and adaptive workforce, advancing existing and targeted employment sectors, investing in quality of life...”. And the big idea to *Embrace Sustainability* “...begins with core services such as public safety and water availability but extends to other infrastructure and programs.”

The Southeast Strong big idea chapter, *Grow and Support Our Businesses, Entrepreneurs, and Housing* incorporates goals and strategies for small business and primary employer retention and support, education and vocational training programs, and safety and other infrastructure initiatives.

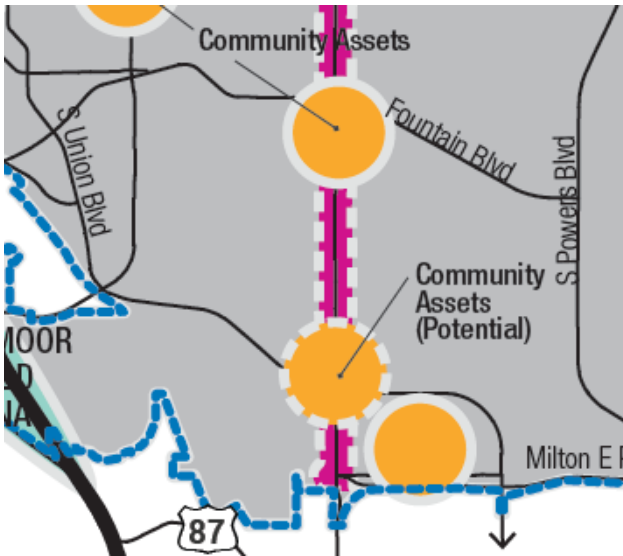


Strong Connections

The area’s major corridors S. Academy Blvd and Powers Blvd are listed in PlanCOS as Smart and Multimodal Corridors and support the greater public transit system.

Strong Connections envisions and “adapts to how we move by transforming our corridors to support our future generations’ health and mobility needs, enhancing economic vibrancy, upgrading infrastructure, and improving regional connectivity.”

Upgrade How We Move, the Southeast Strong Plan big idea and its actions do plan for connected multimodal transportation and expanded transit services. The Plan’s goals for safe walkable neighborhoods are a community priority, in the area.



Predominant Typology

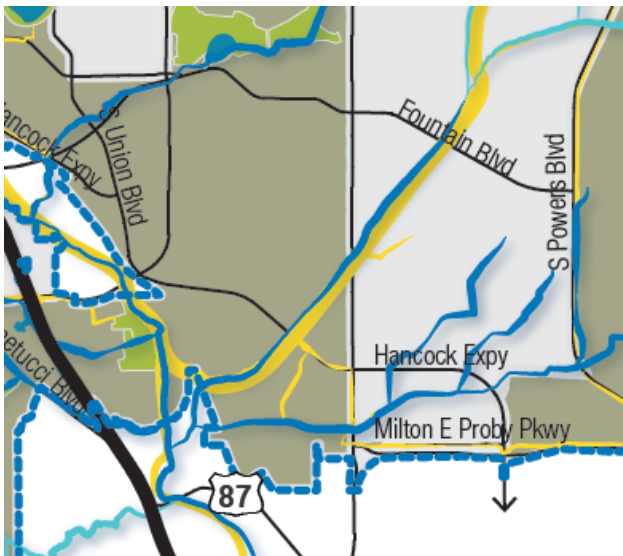
- Defining Institutions
- Historic Districts
- Community Assets
- Creative Districts and Corridors
- Cultural and Tourist Attractions
- Pop-Up Culture

Renowned Culture

Colorado Springs culture is renowned, and this map suggests the southeast to have potential “Community Assets” or community hubs.

This Vision statement “promotes and embraces arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity. This builds on the efforts of General Palmer and many others that envisioned culture as the cornerstone of the community and where creative energy generates new possibilities, interpersonal connections, and unprecedented philanthropy.”

The southeast has a strong legacy of diverse culture and the Plan’s big idea *Reflect and Celebrate Our Diverse Culture* goals and strategies to be the cultural destination of our City supports PlanCOS big ideas to “Grow and Celebrate our Culture, Create Cross-Cultural connections, and Celebrate Our Partnerships”.



Predominant Typology

- Neighborhood Greenspace
- Sports and Active Recreation
- Natural Resources and Regional Recreation
- Community Education Landscapes
- Trails and Connections
- Major Trail Corridors
- Complete Urban Creeks
- Complete Greenways

Majestic Landscapes

The southeast has many smaller neighborhood parks, some newly renovated and some underdeveloped. The area map identifies regional sports complexes and Sand Creek and trail for activity and connections.

This PlanCOS Vision “values our natural and man-made outdoor spaces and celebrates our location at the base of America’s Mountain by designing a city oriented around our iconic landmarks. We ensure our community can engage with and enjoy these places through an integrated system of parks, streetscapes, and natural areas.”

The Southeast Strong Plan celebrates Panorama Park redevelopment and calls for focus on additional amenities for all additionally outlines in the PlanCOS big ideas to “Provide Parks for the People, Engaging with Our Landscapes, Invest in Resilient and Adaptable Landscapes, Complete Our Creeks”.