Platte Ave.

A **ConnectCOS** Community Corridor

State of the Corridor

August 2023

Prepared for:

COLORADO SPRINGS

OLYMPIC CITY USA

City of Colorado Springs
107 North Nevada Avenue
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

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Introduction

This State of the Corridor document summarizes the current conditions of the Platte Avenue Corridor Study (PACS) project area, including transportation, community, and land use characteristics, that will be important to informing recommendations that may come out of the corridor study. The culmination of the State of the Corridor analysis is a set of objectives, needs, and opportunities for the Platte Avenue Corridor. The PACS will look to identify solution options that address these needs and take advantage of these opportunities to help move the corridor from its current condition to the envisioned future conditions, as articulated by the City of Colorado Springs and its community members.

Planning Foundation

The process and goals of this Platte Avenue Corridor Study has its foundations in a progression of City-wide planning efforts that build on each other with the goal of creating a Colorado Springs that addresses the needs and desires of current and future residents of the City.

PlanCOS, the City's Comprehensive Plan, completed in 2018, outlines a future vision for Colorado Springs as part of six big visions: Thriving Economy, Vibrant Neighborhoods, Unique Places, Strong Connections, Majestic Landscapes. PlanCOS is the City's roadmap to help guide City decision making processes for both physical and policy-related investments for all areas of the public realm for which it has influence.

ConnectCOS, the City's transportation master plan, takes a more detailed and focused look at the transportation/mobility visions for the City and specifies a plan for the City transportation network that makes progress towards the vision articulated in PlanCOS. Through input from technical analyses, City staff, and the Colorado Springs community, ConnectCOS further defines and articulates the goals for the citywide transportation system and puts forth a holistic program of infrastructure, policy, and program improvements that the City should pursue to reach its transportation vision. At the time of this document, the ConnectCOS effort is currently in process, and many of the efforts and outcomes of the PACS will be incorporated in ConnectCOS and the specific investment program that is recommended out of the plan.

The PACS is the first major corridor plan to apply the foundations and processes established in ConnectCOS at the more micro-scale of a corridor. It is critical that the PACS addresses and accommodates the unique circumstances and environment of the corridor study area while remaining true to the goals and visions outlined in the other citywide guiding documents. As such, there are many components of this State of the Corridor document that tie back to PlanCOS or ConnectCOS and look to provide direct traceability and consistency between the inputs and outcomes of the study and those of the city guiding documents.

Why Platte Avenue?

The Platte Avenue corridor has always been part of the backbone of the City's transportation network, providing one of a limited number of interrupted east-west connections across Colorado Springs. Initially, Platte Avenue was a Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)-owned facility and was operated as the east-west portion of US-24 that moved high volumes of vehicle and truck traffic through Colorado Springs and between surrounding areas. The City of Colorado Springs took over ownership of Platte Avenue, and as the City continued to grow and develop around it, there have been evolving, and often time competing, demands of Platte Avenue and its surrounding roadway network.

Three key conditions or triggers make the PACS particularly timely and worthy of investment at the current time.

Changing Demands

Travel demand for all modes is significant and is likely to increase as destinations east of Powers Boulevard (CO-21) continue to be built out and increase in activity. Peterson Air Force Base (AFB) will continue to see near term growth as it adapts to new missions and Schriever AFB also sees growth. Long-term growth may also be expected as Banning Lewis Ranch and other planned and future developments in the east get developed.

Community Momentum

With the momentum behind PlanCOS and subsequently ConnectCOS to make bold investments toward creating the future for Colorado Springs, the Platte Avenue corridor presents a tremendous opportunity for the City to put its planning into practice and identify a feasible and implementable plan that is a model for how the City can intentionally invest and make changes toward a desired future state of the City. Opportunities for the Platte Avenue corridor stem from the synergies of the economic and community development potential outlined below and the current demand for growth and development both within and around the City of Colorado Springs.

Development Potential

A market and economic analysis for the Platte Avenue corridor found that while the rest of Colorado Springs and El Paso County has grown and developed, the Platte Avenue corridor has remained mostly the same in the past several decades and seen limited investment and development. However, there is also significant opportunity for the (re)development of housing, retail, office, and industrial uses throughout the corridor that could catalyze economic development and support community health and vitality for the residents, travelers, and visitors of the corridor and the City.

- When compared to the City and County, the Platte Avenue corridor has experienced minimal growth and demographic shifts since 2010.
- The corridor as a whole appears to well behind both the City and County in regard to median household income and income distribution.

- The corridor presents a substantial opportunity to develop housing to bring much needed re-investment to the corridor while also creating housing options for the City and County's rapidly growing population.
- The property and infrastructure along the corridor, coupled with the current economic environment, create an opportunity for the City to draw interest from the development community by implementing programs, incentives, or new transportation infrastructure such as streetscape improvements or high capacity transit.
- Without City intervention, the development market may continue to prioritize investment in other areas of the city while the Platte Avenue corridor remains stagnant.

The full analysis and findings from the Economic and Market Analysis is found in Appendix A.

Future Roadway Vision

As a key corridor for the City with many demands placed on it, the Platte Avenue corridor has a variety of elements contributing to the overall vision for the corridor. One major focus of the PACS is to understand the vision elements, identify synergies between them that highlight opportunities for multiple benefits, and help reconcile any potential conflicts in the demands and visions for the corridor that may exist. The following summarize the vision for the Platte Avenue corridor outlined in various recent City planning efforts.

PlanCOS

PlanCOS recognizes several roadway typologies that identify the characteristics of streets and what enhancements should be considered to support them. The Platte Avenue corridor is designated as a Multimodal Corridor and a Smart Street Corridor in PlanCOS.

- A Multimodal Corridor is a facility and planning approach that accommodates varied types of users but with a specific and concerted effort to promote effective transit service to connect key destination areas within the city. The goal of this typology is to transform or further transform these corridors into transit-supportive areas of focus for development, redevelopment, and community life.
- A Smart Street Corridor is a facility where technology investments will help improve safety and efficiency of the roadway. Technology can provide data on real-time roadway conditions that can inform traffic operations strategies sch as optimizing signal timing and can create a communication platform for the operations of connected vehicles and autonomous vehicles.

PlanCOS also recognizes various corridor typologies that relate to land use and development characteristics, known as the Unique Places Corridor typologies. Unique places are defined as a blend of attractions, destinations, uses, and experiences that integrate a range of uses and activities which complement and support each other. Corridor-specific Unique Places typologies are those where there is a "potential to take advantage of the capacity and create unified, vital, connected, and more transit supportive urban places, each with its unique character, identity,

and design." The Platte Avenue corridor is designated as a "Mature/Redeveloping Corridor" between Union and Academy.

- Mature/Redevelopment Corridors are those that line older arterial streets including current or former state highways. Often the existing pattern along these corridors includes a combination of retail uses and auto-oriented services developed in a typical in-line retail pattern, with multiple curb cuts, individual parking lots, cluttered signage, and small lots. These corridors represent significant infill and redevelopment opportunities.

COS Bikes!

COS Bikes! is the City's bicycle master plan that provides a roadmap for success and strategies to strengthen the City's support of bicycling, build a connected on-street bikeway network, and increase the number of people bicycling safely.

COS Bikes! puts forth a bicycle Vision Network that highlights streets in Colorado Springs where appropriate bicycle infrastructure is recommended to improve connectivity and access to City destinations. The Vision Network consists of:

- Existing trail and on-street facilities,
- Recommended corridors from the COS Bikes! process;
- Recommended corridors identified as part of the 2015 PPACG Regional Non-motorized Plan; and
- Recommended facilities from the 2016 Experience Downtown Master Plan.

The following roadways and trail facilities within the PACS area are included within the COS Bikes! Vision Network, which is shown on Figure 1:

- Bijou Street
- Kiowa Street
- Boulder Street
- Cascade Avenue
- Weber Street
- Shooks Run Trail
- Institute Street
- Hancock Street
- Wooten Road
- Iowa Avenue
- Willamette Place
- Yampa Street/Galley Road
- Chelton Road
- Galley Road
- Homestead Trail
- Sand Creek Trail

Experience Downtown Master Plan

The Experience Downtown Master Plan provides a market-based, tactical plan that will lead to the desired growth and development of Downtown Colorado Springs. The Master Plan serves both as the Downtown Development Authority's legal "plan of development" to guide the best use of resources in Downtown, and it also serves as the City's land use master plan for the downtown area.

While mostly focused on land use and development, the Downtown Master Plan identifies two transportation/mobility related visions for the Platte Avenue corridor:

- Platte Avenue Gateway – the intersection at Platte Avenue and Wahsatch Avenue presents itself as the natural entrance to Downtown, particularly for students at nearby Palmer High School. While this gateway is primarily a local location, creating a better sense of place and comfortable access for all modes of transportation along the street will increase the area's vibrancy as an urban neighborhood.
- Bijou/Kiowa Gateway - Bijou and Kiowa streets act as major highway access points into the City's core. While the view of the Downtown skyline creates a sense of arrival, the road configuration as one-way streets promotes higher speeds and confuses orientation and wayfinding, especially for drivers unfamiliar with the area.

Additionally, the Experience Downtown Plan identifies Platte Avenue west of Nevada Avenue as a Pedestrian Priority Street, which is a street that acts as a social gathering space, with wayfinding features, mobility and access for all abilities, and designated places with capacity for events and programming.

Future Land Use Vision

In addition to the roadway visions articulated in various plans, there are also land use visions and goals for the PACS area that may or may not align with the variety of transportation visions. This section summarizes the various visions and demands of the properties and communities adjacent to roadways within the Platte Avenue study area.

PlanCOS

PlanCOS's Thriving Economy theme addresses a vision of furthering Colorado Springs' economic health when making land use decisions moving forward by actions such as diversifying the local economy but also building on the city's current strengths, thinking regionally, and remaining fiscally responsible through land use decision-making. The Economic Framework Map identifies the following typologies within the Platte Avenue study area, as shown on Figure 2.

- The Experience Economy – The 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. It includes tourism, entertainment, and cultural industries throughout the region that serve both residents and visitors.
- Life and Style – The goal of this typology is to meet the daily needs of residents and businesses with high-quality, varied, and easily accessible options. It encompasses much of the large retail and services sector that serves the daily needs of local residents and businesses. It is important that this typology is dispersed throughout Colorado Springs and easily accessible to all.
- Industry Icons – The goal of this typology is to maintain and grow a diversified primary employment and manufacturing economy that attracts investment and provides a variety of jobs and opportunities for the local workforce. This segment of the economy is diverse and provides varied employment opportunities.
- Spinoffs and Startups – The goal of this typology is to become increasingly competitive at business and worker attraction in medium and high-wage jobs by supporting the creation of environments that attract them and allow them to thrive. Industries are those that are emerging as increasingly important segments of the local economy and jobs base.

PlanCOS provides a vision and framework for enhancing the quality, diversity, and safety of neighborhoods in the City. It looks to address the effects of growth and land use changes, attainable housing options, and ideas for revitalization where appropriate. This Vibrant Neighborhoods vision defines various types of neighborhoods to provide a more focused direction to protect, enhance, or revitalize different types of neighborhoods.

Figure 1 – COS Bikes! Vision Network

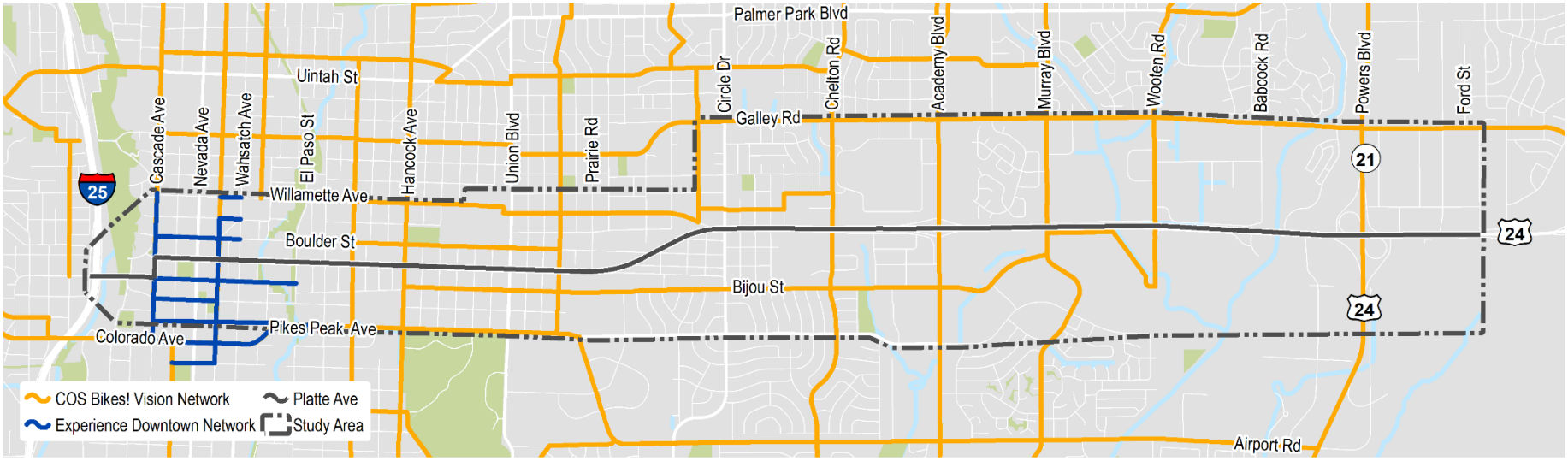
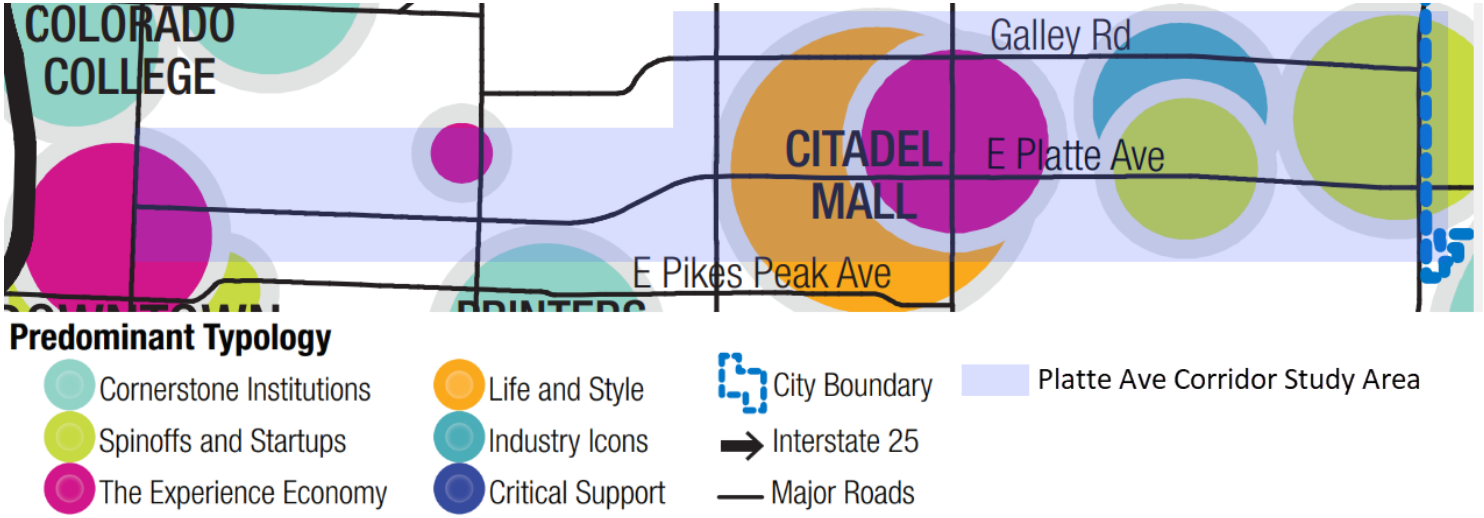


Figure 2 – PlanCOS Economic Framework Map



Based on the Vibrant Neighborhood Typology, shown on Figure 3, seven neighborhoods are included in the PACS area, and these neighborhoods are categorized into three neighborhood typologies, in addition to the Downtown area:

- Established Traditional Neighborhood – Older and developed or at least laid out prior to the mid-1950s, regardless of a formal historic status. They 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.
- Changing Neighborhood – Existing neighborhoods that have the potential or need for City attention, reinvestment, and land use change. Planning emphasis should be placed on implementing strategies necessary to support, incentivize, or adapt to change resulting from market forces, redevelopment, or disinvestment. They will expect to see more infill and redevelopment than other areas of the City.
- Established Suburban Neighborhood – Those neighborhoods developed with a suburban pattern. They have matured to the point where they are not actively being developed and no longer have actively managed privately initiated master plans. They have a high value in maintaining the privacy of homes and safe streets for families. New development should focus on safe connections into and within these neighborhoods.

In addition to the Unique Places Corridor Typologies previously noted, the Unique Places vision identifies three areas within the Platte Avenue study area with specific designations and visions:

- Entertainment and Commercial Centers – Accommodate larger retail establishments and serve a number of residential and employment areas over a significant portion of the city. The special characteristics and tourist attraction of some entertainment centers may draw users from a state-wide market area or even beyond. These centers typically include a mix of supporting uses, such as higher density residential, office, service, medical, and civic uses. Examples include the Olympic Training Center and the Citadel Mall area.
- Community Activity Centers – Serve the day-to-day needs of subareas of the city and their surrounding neighborhoods. These places may be anchored by uses such as grocery stores and supporting public, private, and non-profit service establishments. They should be designed to be multimodally connected to the surrounding development and include a well-integrated mix of uses including smaller businesses and various housing choices. An example would be the area around the intersection of Galley and Circle

Experience Downtown Master Plan

The Downtown Master Plan focuses on future land uses, catalyst sites, and long-term redevelopment opportunities as part of the goals and vision for Downtown Colorado Springs.

As Downtown Colorado Springs continues to evolve, the following land uses are recommended to ensure the continued growth of the area:

- Activity Center Mixed-Use – Pedestrian-oriented areas that should include safe and accessible connections and transitions to surrounding neighborhoods and districts.
- General Mixed-Use – Areas that should include a range of uses, stressing the presence of urban residential options.
- Institutional – Various use types that need to be integrated into the urban fabric and public spaces.
- General Residential – Various residential types and densities

The Downtown Master Plan also identified 16 catalytic sites and 5 influence sites that are ideal for development opportunities in the area. Within the Platte Avenue study area, three Catalytic Development Sites are shown on Figure 4:

- Site N – First Presbyterian/ YMCA Expansion (Renovation of the facility)
- Site O – Acacia Park Apartments Reuse (Redevelopment of the residential properties)
- Site P – Bijou and Cascade Redevelopment (10-story 176 room hotel)

Figure 3 – PlanCOS Vibrant Neighborhoods Map

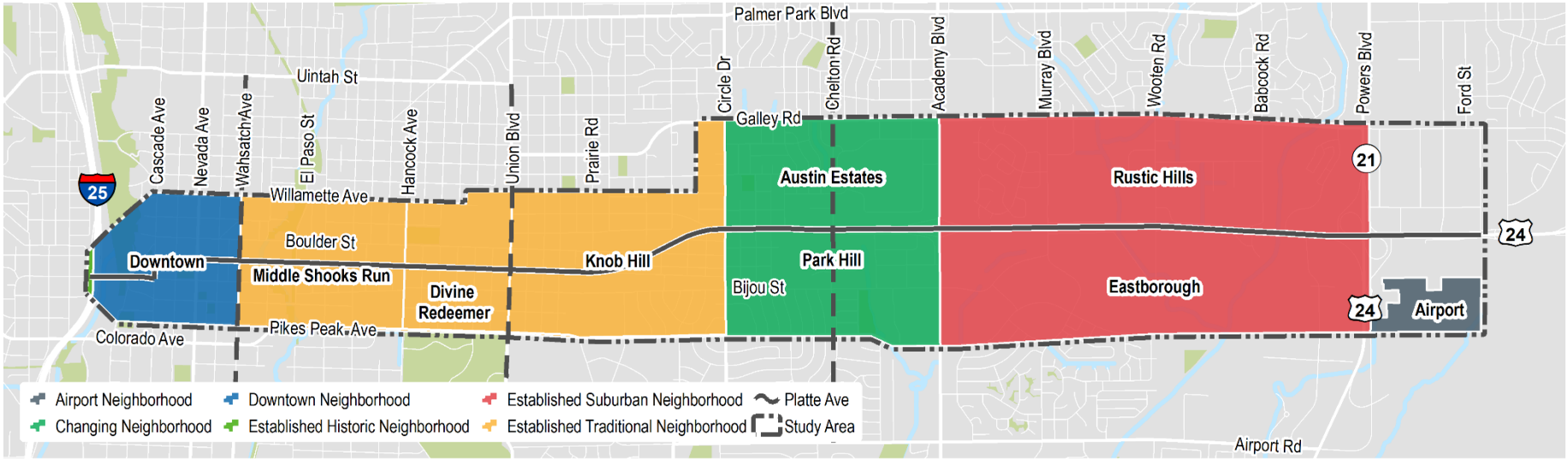


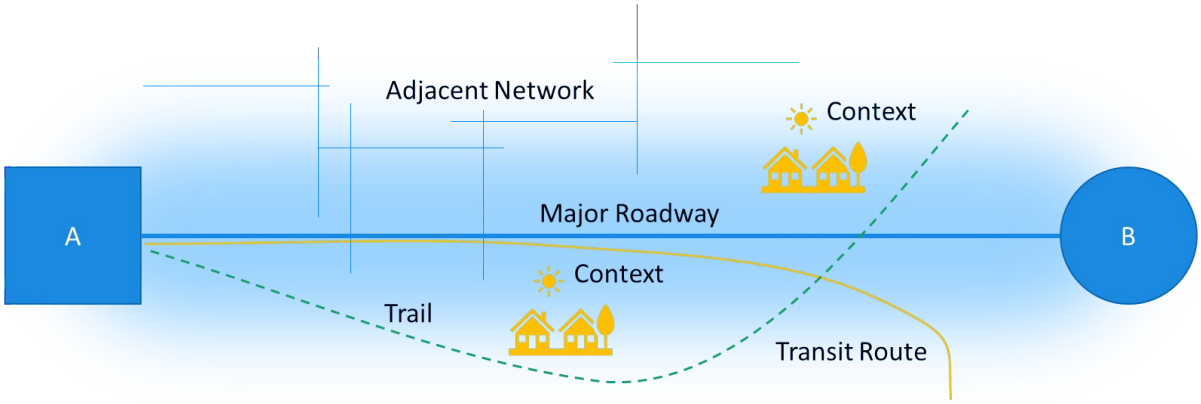
Figure 4 – Downtown Master Plan Catalytic Development Sites

Corridor/Travelshed Approach

While this corridor study centers on Platte Avenue as the corridor backbone, it is not limited to Platte Avenue and is instead considering all of the major transportation and land use factors within a defined "travelshed" of Platte Avenue.

Figure 5 depicts the concept behind a travelshed, which considers all facets of a corridor that connects two locations, including the roadways, the parallel and intersection roadway network, trails, and transit routes. It also considers the land use contexts surrounding the transportation facilities.

Figure 5 – Travelshed Concept



Taking a travelshed approach acknowledges the network-level interactions of transportation facilities and land uses, understanding that impact to one characteristic of the corridor will also have rippling impacts to the other elements. Similarly, it reduces the number of demands that are put on a signal roadway and instead creates the opportunity to balance demands within a corridor so that multiple goals and demands can be addressed.

Corridor Overview

The Platte Avenue Corridor study area is a 7-mile corridor between I-25 in the west and Powers Boulevard/CO-21 in the east. Platte Avenue connects a range of neighborhoods, activity centers, and destinations and is the one of the few east-west roadways that provides an interrupted connection across the City. It is a key gateway into the Downtown urban core. Platte Avenue is also a key east-west connector to the eastern portions of Colorado Springs and further reaches of the county. The importance of providing east-west connectivity continues to rise as significant planned developments are identified and advanced, including active development of the Banning Lewis Ranch community and developments further east near Falcon and the Schriever AFB.

The PACS corridor also serves one of the highest ridership routes (Route 5) in the Mountain Metro Transit (MMT) system and connects to the also heavily used Academy Boulevard route (Route 27). This section discusses the various components and demands of the Platte Avenue corridor in more detail.

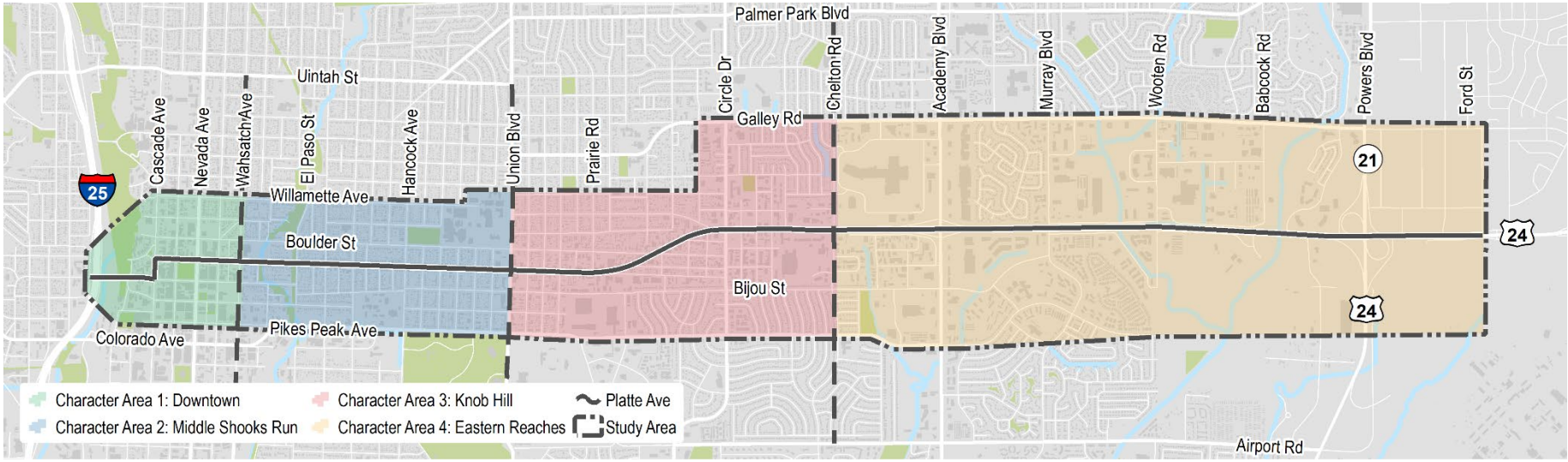
Character Areas

Within the 7-mile study area, there is tremendous diversity related to roadway characteristics, roadway function, and land use characteristics. Because of this diversity and the need for the PACS to advance a vision that addresses the unique needs of all areas of the corridor, the study considers the PACS corridor in four character areas:

- Downtown Character Area – Boast walkable streets and the highest density in the downtown area.
- Middle Shooks Run Character Area – Established residential area with lush tree canopies and bungalow-style homes constructed in the mid-20th century. The Olympic Training Headquarters and UC Health Center are also located in this area along Boulder Street.
- Knob Hill Character Area – Transitions from a residential area to a commercial zone with large parcels constructed in the 1980s. This portion of the Corridor also consists of large parking lots and an overall strip mall character. Vegetation becomes more sporadic as the corridor continues east.
- Eastern Reaches Character Area – The roadway splits and is divided by a grass stripped median with an increased speed limit that gives the thoroughfare an interstate feel that reaches beyond the corridor's extents.

The general locations of each character area are shown on Figure 6.The character areas are not meant to be hard boundaries but are instead loosely defined at areas where there is a substantial change in either roadway or land use characteristics of the corridor. Between each character area is a transitional zone where roadway and land use characteristics may take on elements of either adjacent character areas.

Figure 6 – Character Areas



Corridor Characteristics

Roadway Footprint

As noted, each identified character area has not only unique land uses and functions but inconsistent roadway characteristics between each character area. Each character area of the corridor contains specific features defined by typical cross sections and other roadway characteristics.

- Downtown – Contains two vehicle travel lanes in each direction with on-street parking along both sides of the street. Eight-foot sidewalks located along both sides of the street are divided from the roadway by wide landscaped areas. This typical section is depicted on Figure 7.
- Middle Shooks Run – Contains two vehicle travel lanes in each direction with a wide outside travel lane. The direction of travel is divided by a 32-foot-wide landscaped median. Eight-foot sidewalks located along both sides of the street are divided from the roadway by wide landscaped areas. This typical section is depicted in Figure 8.
- Knob Hill – Contains three travel lanes in each direction with the outer travel lane serving as a shared turn lane. The direction of travel is divided by a center two-way left-turn lane. and a 12-foot striped buffer in each direction. Eight-foot sidewalks located along both sides of the street are divided from the roadway by landscaped areas. This typical section is depicted in Figure 9.
- Eastern Reaches – Contains two vehicle travel lanes and a 12-foot striped buffer in each direction. The direction of travel is divided by a 30-foot-wide landscaped median. A 60-foot landscaped area divides the roadway from land use areas. This typical section is depicted in Figure 10.

Figure 7 – Downtown Character Area Typical Section

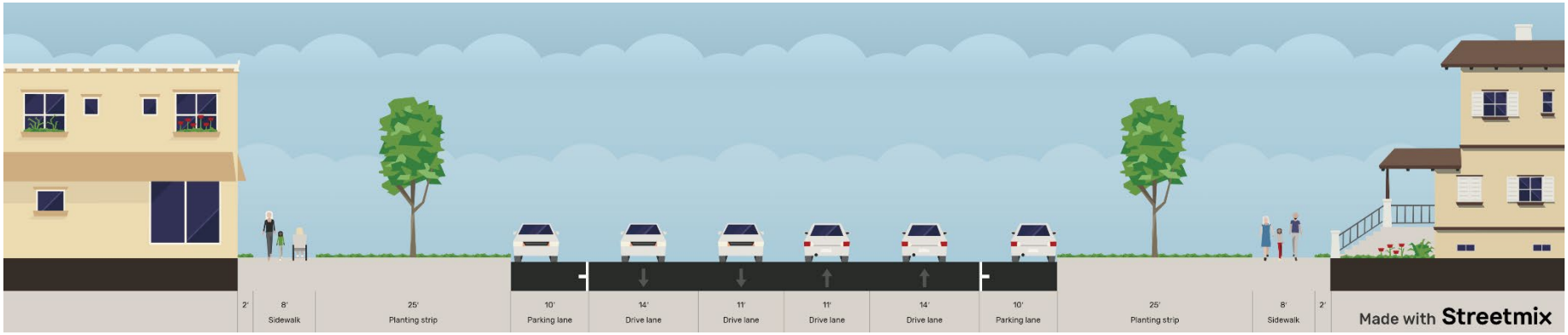


Figure 8 – Middle Shooks Run Character Area Typical Section

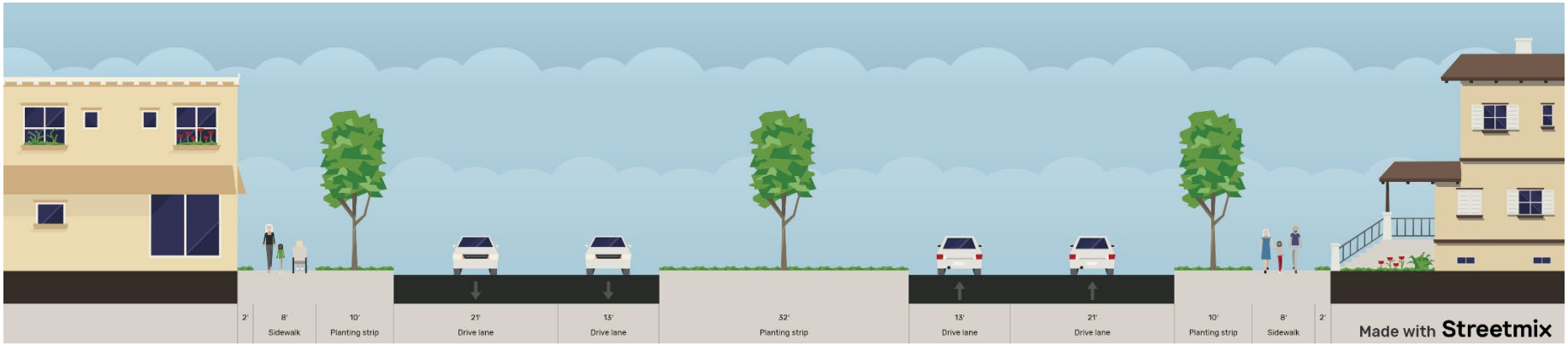


Figure 9 – Knob Hill Character Area Typical Section

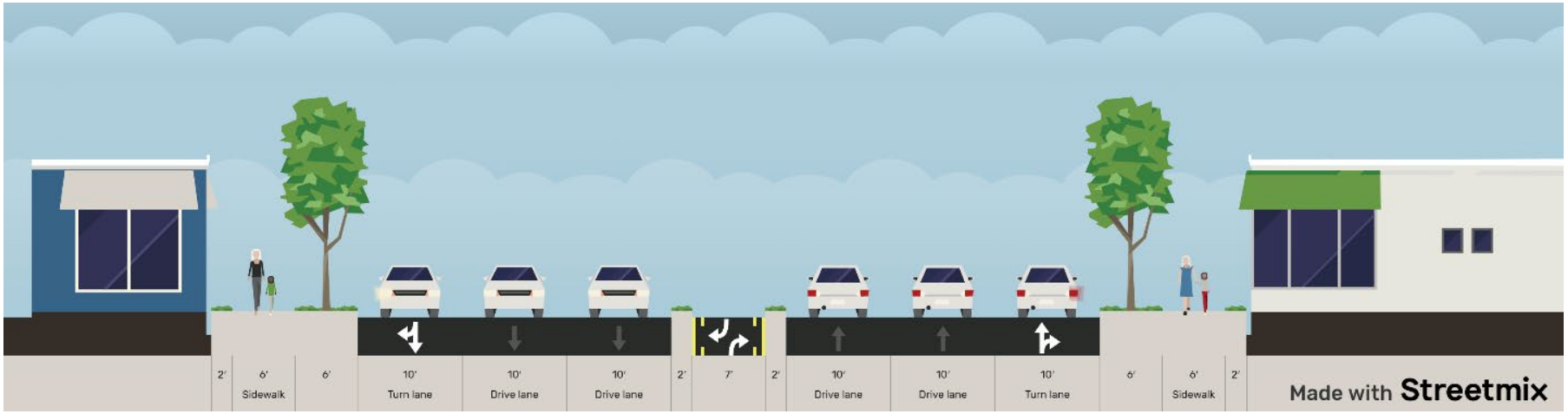
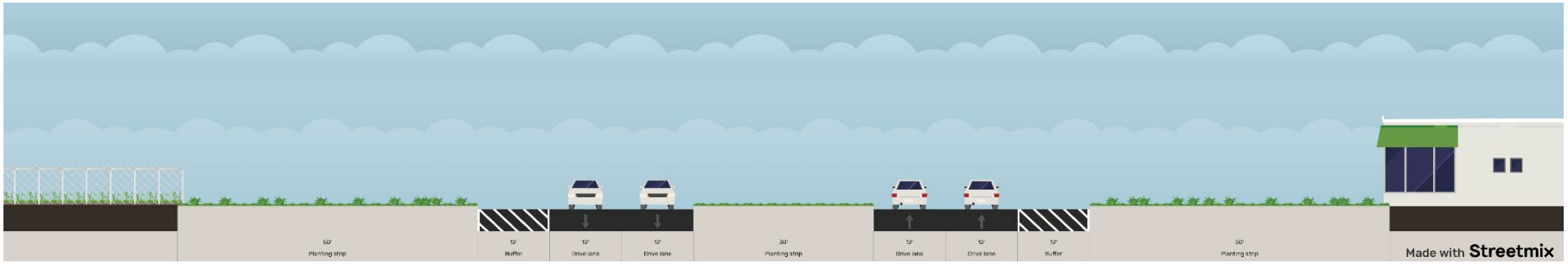


Figure 10 – Eastern Reaches Character Area Typical Section



In addition to the differing typical sections, the roadway footprint, including the amount of right-of-way (ROW) available, along Platte Avenue varies significantly, as shown on Figure 11. The roadway ROW from curb-to-curb varies between 60-feet in the downtown area and 105-feet in the Eastern Reaches, while the total ROW, which includes sidewalks and any buffers, varies between 90-feet in Middle Shooks Run and 280-feet in Eastern Reaches.

Along the corridor, there are diverse median characteristics in terms of existence of a median, median width, and median use, as described previously in the typical sections and as shown in Table 1 and on Figure 12. Some medians have established vegetation, such as in the Middle Shooks Run character area, while others are in place to help with traffic control along the corridor, such as in the Knob Hill character area.

Table 1 – Corridor Median Analysis

Location	Length	Width	Vegetation	Concrete	No Median	Signalized Crossing
Downtown Segement						
N. Cascade Ave.-N. Tejon St.						X
N. Tejon St.- CanAm Hwy						X
CanAm Hwy.-N Weber St.						X
N.Weber St.- Wahsatch Ave.						X
Wahsatch Ave.-N.Prospect St.	350'	20'				
West Central Segment						
N.Prospect St.-N.Arcadia St.	275'	32'				X
N.Arcadia St.- N.Institute St.	275'	32'				
N.Institute St. Custer Ave.	275'	32'				X
Custer Ave.- N.Cedar St.	275'	32'				
Cedar St.- N.Willow St.	275'	32'				
Willow St.- N. Hancock Ave.	275'	32'				X
N. Hancock Ave.-Farragut Ave.						
Farragut Ave.-N. Meade Ave.						
N. Meade Ave.- N. Union Blvd.	400'	2'-4'				X
East Central Segment						
N. Union Blvd.-Bonfy Ave.	330'	2'				
Bonfy Ave.-Swope Ave	330'	2'				
Swope Ave.- Iowa Ave.	330'	2'				
Iowa Ave.-Praire Rd.	800'	5'-10'				
E. Platte Pl.-Platte Pl.	415'	5'-10'				
Platte Pl.-E.Gunnison St.	350'	5'-8'				
E. Gunnison St.-E. Boulder St.	600'	5'-10'				X
E. Boulder St.-Pitkin St.	735'	2'-10'				
Pitkin St.-N.Circle Dr.	830'	2'-6'				
N. Circle Dr.- Tia Juana St.	640'	2'				X
Tia Juana St.-Arrawanna St.	315'	2'				
Arrawanna St.-Don Juan St.	265'	2'				
Don Juan St. + Walmart Entrance	60'	15'				
Walmart Entrance- N. Chelton Rd.	900'	2'-10'				X
East Segment						
N. Chelton Rd.- Frontage Rd.	620'	5'-30'				X
Frontage Rd.- N. Murray Blvd.	3700'+	30'				X
N.Murray Blvd.-Wooten Rd.	2500'	2'-25'				
Wooten Rd.-Space Center Dr.	2500'+	10'-30'				
Powers Interchange- Beyond	4000'+	10'-45'				

Figure 11 – Existing Right-of-Way

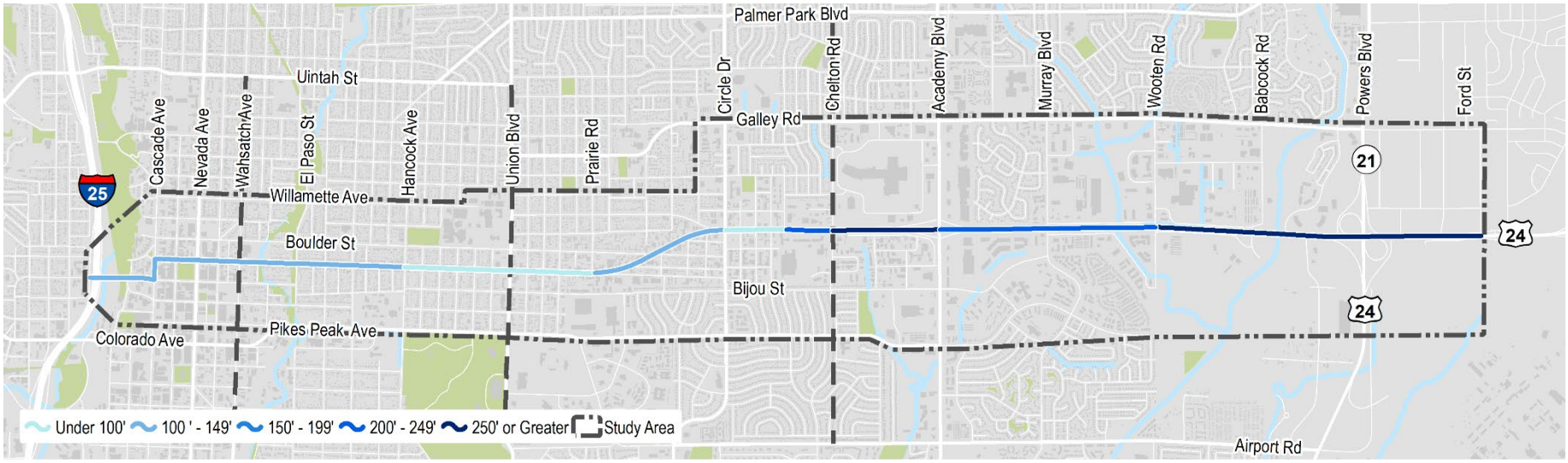
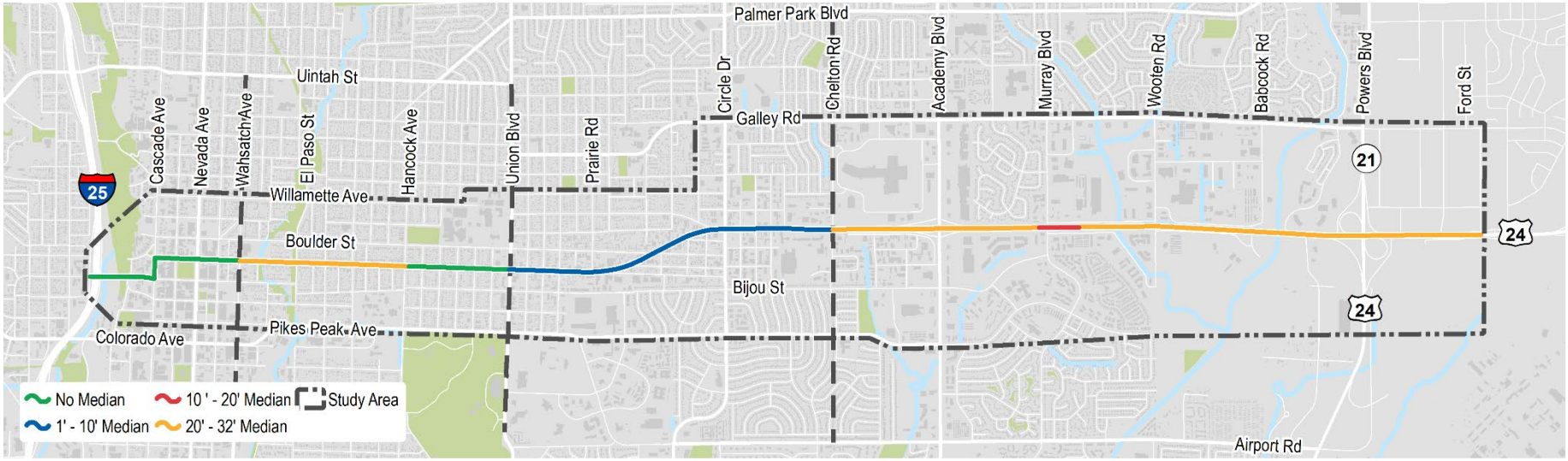


Figure 12 – Corridor Median Inventory



Traffic and Travel Patterns Overview

Traffic Analysis

The extents of the Platte Avenue corridor have two roadway designations based on the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan. From I-25 to Chelton Road, Platte Avenue is designated as a Principal Arterial. From Chelton Road to Powers Boulevard, the corridor is classified as an Expressway.

An operational analysis was conducted along Platte Avenue to understand current traffic operational conditions along the corridor. The analysis included the evaluation of 17 signalized intersections for existing 2021 conditions and long term 2045 planning horizons. The full traffic conditions memo is included as Appendix B. The following conclusions and recommendations were identified:

2021 Horizon

- All studied signalized intersections along Platte Avenue are anticipated to operate acceptably with LOS D or better during both peak hours with the exception of the Platte Avenue intersections at Circle Drive (#11) and Murray Boulevard (#16). Optimizing traffic signal timing at these two intersections, as likely happens in the field with the existing actuation detection, will address the current LOS deficiencies.
- The timing splits at the intersections along Platte Avenue at Union Boulevard (#8) and Chelton Road (#13) can also be optimized with the existing actuation detection to decrease delay on some of the approaches. With these timing split optimization recommendations, all studied intersections along Platte Avenue are anticipated to currently operate acceptably at LOS D or better during both the weekday morning and afternoon peak hours.

2045 Horizon

- Improvements in addition to signal timing are recommended at the Platte Avenue intersections with Circle Drive, Murray Boulevard, and Wooten Road to improve future intersection operations to LOS D or better.

  Platte Avenue & Circle Drive
  - Dual southbound (SB) Left Turn Lanes (350 feet)
  - Separate westbound (WB) Right Turn Lane (375 feet) with Overlap Right Turn Phasing
  - A third northbound (NB) Through Lane
  - Overlap NB Right Turn Phasing

  Platte Avenue & Murray Boulevard
  - Three eastbound (EB) Through Lanes (Convert Right Turn Lane to a Shared Through/Right Turn Lane)
  - Three WB Through Lanes (Convert Right Turn Lane to a Shared Through/Right Turn Lane)
  - Dual WB Left Turn Lanes (500 feet)

Platte Avenue & Wooten Road

- Three EB Through Lanes (Convert Right Turn Lane to a Shared Through/Right Turn Lane)
- Remove the EB Acceleration Lane from NB Right Turn (Absorbed into Third EB Through)
- Modify WB Acceleration Lane from 300 feet to Continuous for Three WB Through Lanes West of this Intersection

Travel Patterns

StreetLight Data provided an understanding of existing (2019) vehicular travel patterns along Platte Avenue. StreetLight is an online platform for transportation analytics and traffic count estimates based on mobile device location data. It allows investigation of the travel demand on roadways as related to specific origins and destinations in the city. StreetLight analyses also provide trip details such as trip purpose (e.g., home-based-work), traveler attributes such as income level and race, and trip attributes such as trip length and time. Two types of analyses were performed for each segment:

- Origin-Destination (O-D) Analysis – Identifies neighborhoods, as defined in PlanCOS, where trips on Platte Avenue within each character area begin and end for the morning and afternoon peak periods.
- Top Routes Analysis – Identifies the roadways that feed traffic into and away from Platte Avenue within each character area.

I-25/Platte Avenue Interaction

Understanding traffic interactions between Platte Avenue and I-25 in the western-most portion of the corridor was important to help define the vision and function for Platte Avenue through the Downtown character area. The main goal of analyses related to I-25/Platte interactions was to understand the level of demand and need for a more direct connection between Platte Avenue and I-25 beyond what is currently provided. Both Top Routes and O-D analyses were conducted to answer this question.

Top Routes Between I-25 and Platte Avenue

Figure 13 shows the top routes used between locations on I-25 (blue dots) and locations on Platte Avenue (green stars) for all days and all time periods. The darkest red colors show where there is the highest number of trips that originate at an I-25 location and end at a Platte Avenue location.

- Trips starting on I-25 north of the City frequently use Academy and Powers to access points on Platte Avenue
- Trips starting on I-25 south of the City frequently use Powers, Academy, and US 24/MLK Bypass to access points on Platte Avenue.
- Trips that use the Bijou Street ramp more frequently use Kiowa Street to connect to Weber or Wahsatch to eventually get to Platte (500 to 1,000 trips) than those that use Cascade to get to Platte (250 to 500 trips).

Figure 13 – Top Routes Between I-25 and Platte Avenue

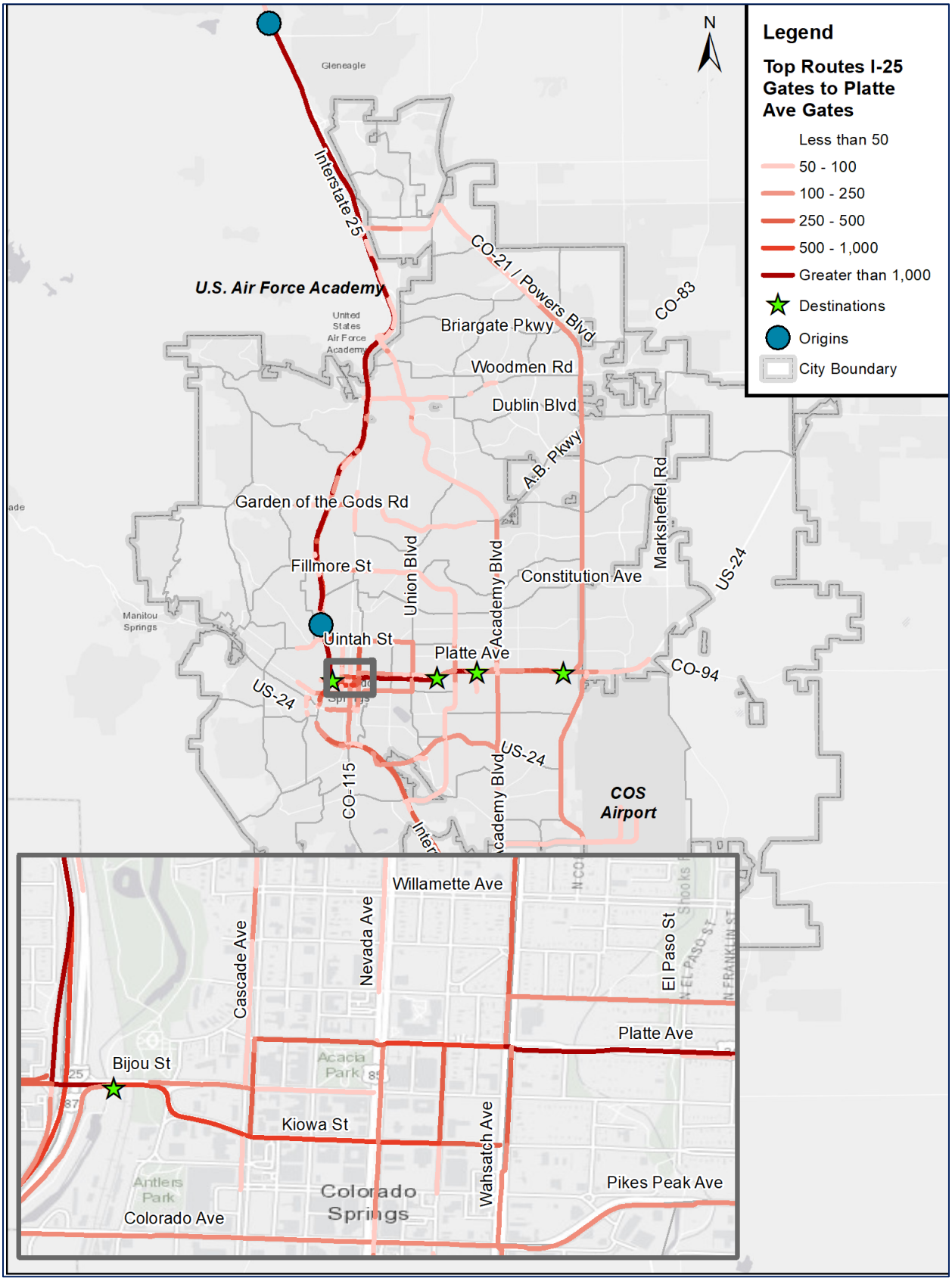


Figure 14 isolates the I-25 origin point near Uintah St and shows the top routes that "start" at that point and end on Platte Avenue.

- There are a significant number of trips (500 to1,000) that use the Uintah exit and then use Wahsatch or Union (and Cascade to a lesser extent) to reach their destination on Platte.
- For trips that use the Bijou Street ramp, there are more trips (500 to 1,000 trips) that use Kiowa Street to connect to Weber or Wahsatch to eventually get to Platte Avenue than there are trips that use Cascade to get to Platte Avenue (250 to 500 trips).

O-D Analysis for Bijou St at I-25

Figure 15 shows an origin-destination analysis specifically for a point on Bijou, just east of I-25. The data shows trips during all days, all time periods.

Origin Trips, shown in shades of red, indicate roadways most frequently used if the "destination" of a trip is considered the I-25/Bijou location (meaning the roadway segment is the "origin"). In this case, the darker red colors show the roadway locations that had the greatest number of trips that were destined for the I-25/Bijou location.

- The greatest number of trips destined for the Bijou/I-25 location were generated from Kiowa Street, between Tejon and Cascade (greater than 5,000 trips per day).
- Along Platte Avenue, the portion of the roadway between Institute and Weber generated the greatest number of trips destined for I-25/Bijou location (2,500 to 5,000); all other portions generated between 1,000 and 2,500 trips per day.
- Boulder Street between Wahsatch and Institute generated between 500 and 1,000 trips per day destined for the I-25/Bijou location, which is the only portion of Boulder that generated more than 500 trips per day.

Destination Trips, shown in shades of blue, indicate roadways most frequently used if the "origin" of a trip is considered the I-25/Bijou location (meaning the roadway segment is the "destination"). In this case, the darker blue colors show the roadway locations that were most frequently destinations for trips using the I-25/Bijou location.

- Most trips that "started" at the I-25/Bijou location were destined for areas along Kiowa within downtown
- Along Platte Avenue, the portion of the roadway between Weber and Union was the most frequent destination for trips associated with I-25/Bijou; all other locations saw fewer than 1,000 trips daily.
- Fewer than 500 trips daily that "start" at I-25/Bijou are destined for Boulder Street.

Figure 14 – Top Routes Between I-25/Uintah and Platte Avenue

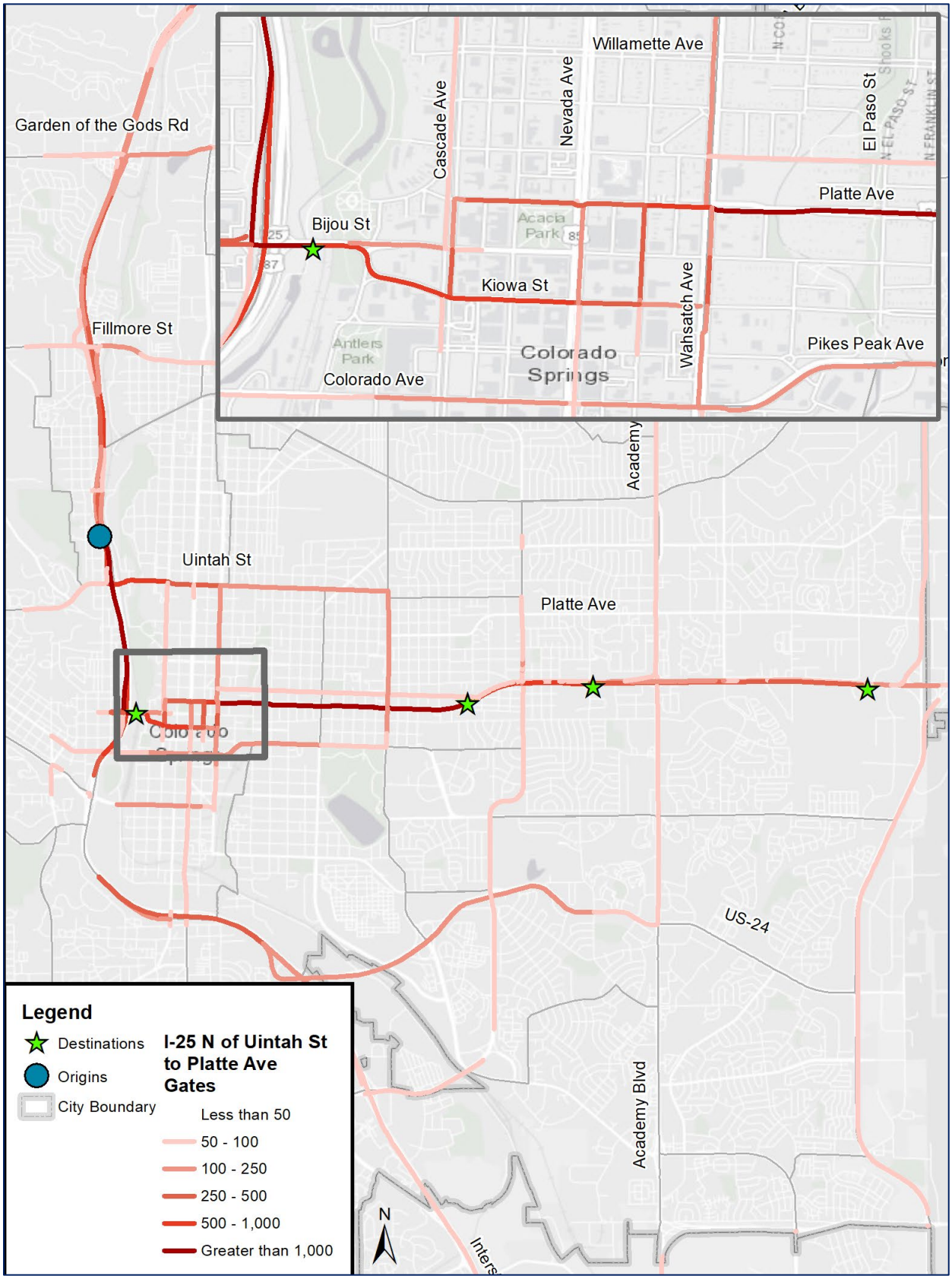
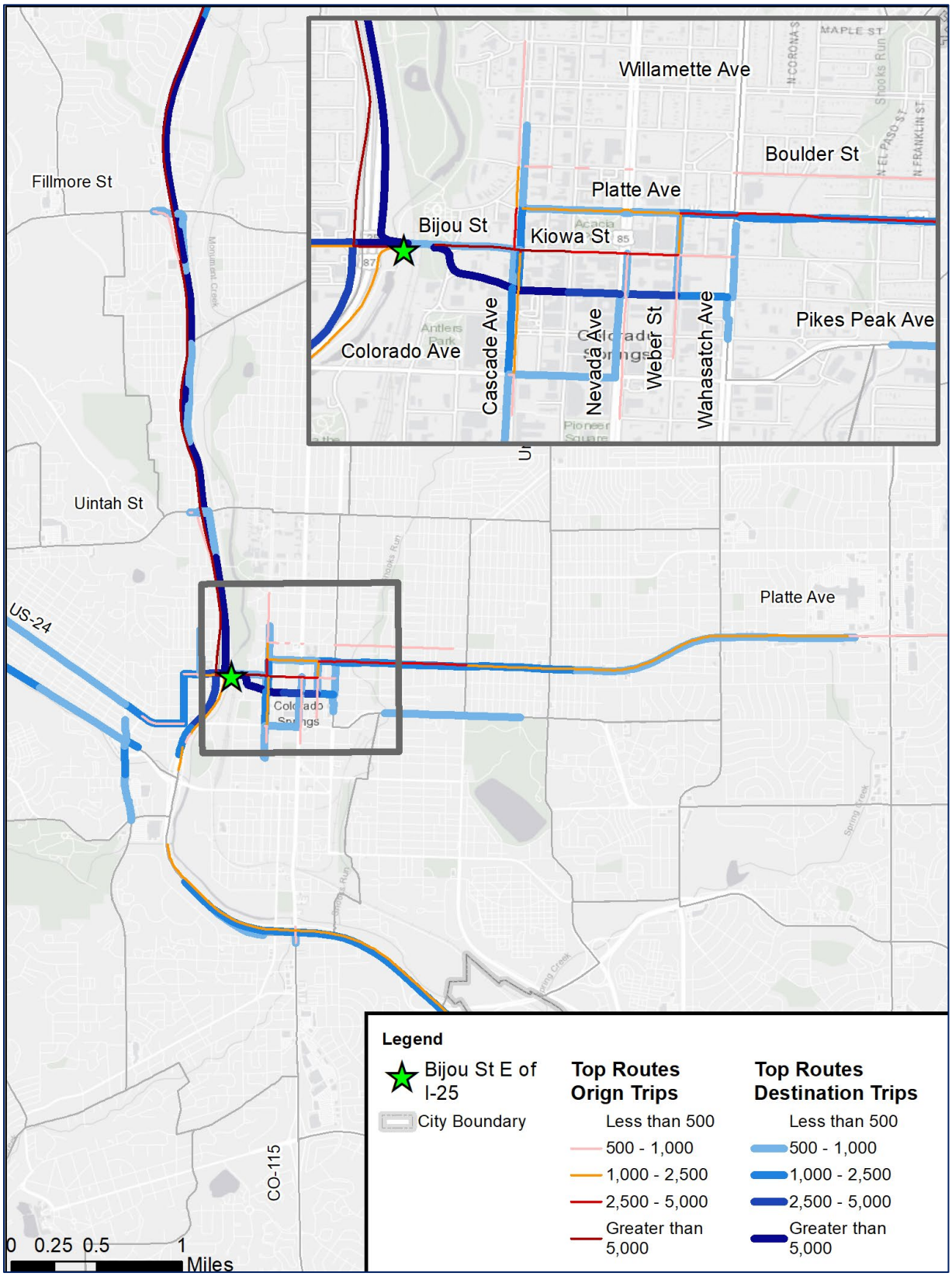


Figure 15 – Origin and Destination Trips Associated with I-25/Bijou



Overall, the travel patterns analysis for I-25/Platte showed that, while there is interaction between trips on Platte and trips on I-25, there does not seem to be a specific need to bolster the current connection between Platte and I-25. Traffic uses other roadways, such as Academy, Powers, and Union, to travel between I-25 and Platte and avoid downtown. For trips that do come through downtown, traffic efficiently uses the downtown street grid to navigate between Platte and I-25 and does not specifically rely on Cascade or another roadway to make that connection.

Table 2 summarizes the additional conclusions from the travel patterns analysis for each character area . The Travel Patterns Analysis memo can be found in Appendix C.

Table 2 – Travel Pattern Analyses Summary

Character Area	O-D Analysis	Top Routes Analysis
Downtown	• Downtown is a major origin and destination. • This segment serves many neighborhoods north along the I-25 corridor to the west. • To the east, this segment primarily serves neighborhoods very near to the Platte Avenue corridor.	• The highest number of trips at the west end of the corridor use I-25 to the north. • I-25 to the south and a combination of US 24 and Colorado Avenue to the west feed a lot of trips to Segment 1.
Middle Shooks Run	• Downtown is a major origin and destination for trips to the west of this segment. • This segment serves trips to a wide area east of the segment, particularly north and south along the Powers Boulevard corridor.	• Most trips originate on Platte Avenue just east and west of Boulder Street. • Chelton Road, Powers Boulevard, and Academy Boulevard to/from the north are destination roadways for many trips on this segment
Knob Hill	• This segment serves trips across a wide swath of the city, as far north as the Woodmen Road corridor and south to the area around the Colorado Springs Airport. • Major origins and destinations include downtown, the Rustic Hills neighborhood, and Springs Ranch area.	• Most trips originate at end on Platte Avenue just east and west of Academy Boulevard. • Academy Boulevard and Powers Boulevard north of Platte Avenue are major origin and destination roadways. • A significant number of vehicles travel along US-24 to this segment.
Eastern Reaches	• Major origins and destinations for trips on this segment include downtown, the Colorado Springs Airport, Rustic Hills, and Springs Ranch. • Many trips originating and ending in the far eastern portions of the city use Platte Avenue to access the central city.	• Academy Boulevard, Powers Boulevard, and Marksheffel Road north of Platte Avenue are major origin and destination roadways. • A significant number of vehicles travel along US-24 to this segment. • A significant number of trips traveling from the southwest part of the city use Circle Drive to Platte Avenue.

Transit Overview

Figure 16 shows the transit network that provides services within or connects to the Platte Avenue corridor study area. The downtown area has routes that range from 15-minute weekday frequencies to 60-minute frequencies. In the eastern segments, bus routes converge at the Citadel Mall transfer station. East of Academy, east-west transit options are located on Galley Road.

Route 5 is the main bus route serving riders traveling east-west within the corridor. The route covers 3.8 miles in total, 0.9 of which are on Platte Avenue. One of the main functions of Route 5 is to connect Downtown to the major transfer station located on the Citadel Mall property. Nine buses service Route 5 at a 15-minute frequency on weekdays and 30-minute frequency on weekends. There are 16 outbound stops and 17 inbound stops along the route, with approximately 0.23 miles between each stop. Route 5 connects with Route 25 at the Citadel transfer station, providing connections to the Academy corridor.

In 2019, Route 5 accounted for the highest ridership of the MMT system, serving 12 percent of all transit trips on the MMT system that year. Table 3 shows average daily ridership for the route.

Table 3 – Route 5 Ridership

Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
1,305	678	326

Ridership is highest on weekdays, with an average daily ridership of 1,305. Route 5 weekday ridership gradually increases from 8:00 AM until reaching peak ridership at 3:00 PM, with a peak of 140 riders per hour, then continues to decrease until 6:00 PM. High weekday ridership indicates that the route is used heavily as a commuter route to the downtown and surrounding areas. Compared to the MMT system, Route 5 ridership also shows a higher-than-average percentage of younger riders. This is due to its close proximity to the Downtown area and the variety of uses along the rest of the corridor.

Active Transportation Overview

Figure 17 shows the bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the study area. The Downtown area has a variety of interconnected bicycle facilities, including bike lanes, bike routes, buffered bike lanes, and protected bike lanes. Although Platte Avenue does not have bicycle infrastructure in the Downtown character area, there are parallel roadways in the corridor travelshed with designated bicycle infrastructure, including Willamette Avenue to the north of Platte Avenue and Pikes Peak Avenue to the south. Bijou Street provides continuous on-street bike lanes between Hancock Avenue and Auburn Drive. Platte Avenue has a shoulder between Chelton Road and the eastern project limit that could be used for bicycling, but the shoulder is not marked as a bicycle facility and has frequent conflicts with turn lanes and ramps.

Figure 16 – Study Area Transit Routes

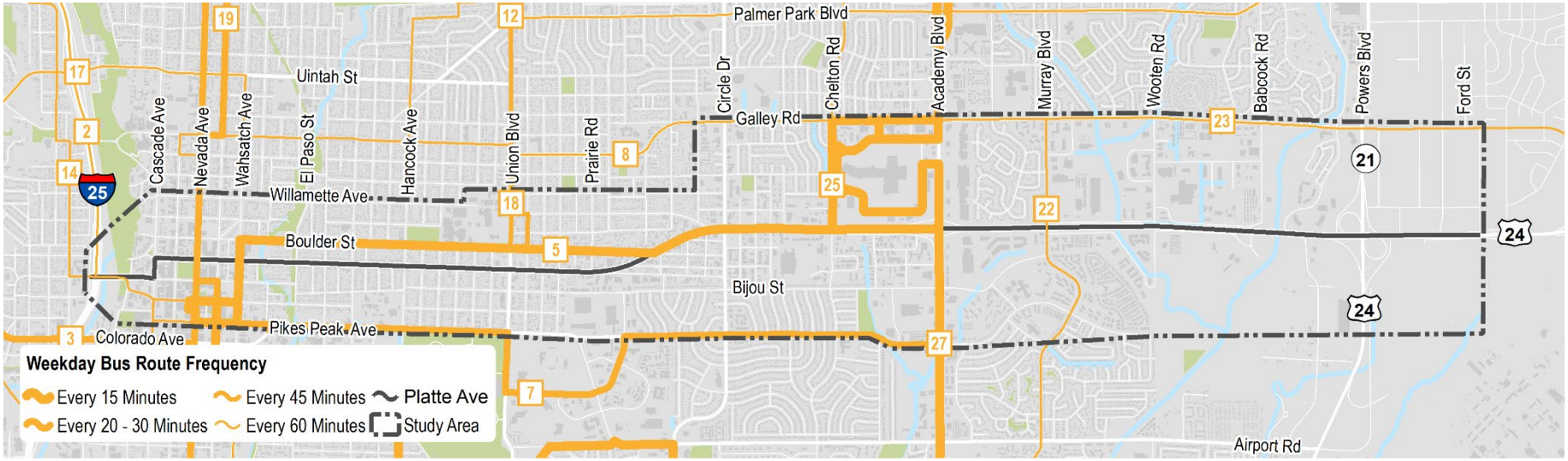


Figure 17 – Active Transportation Facilities

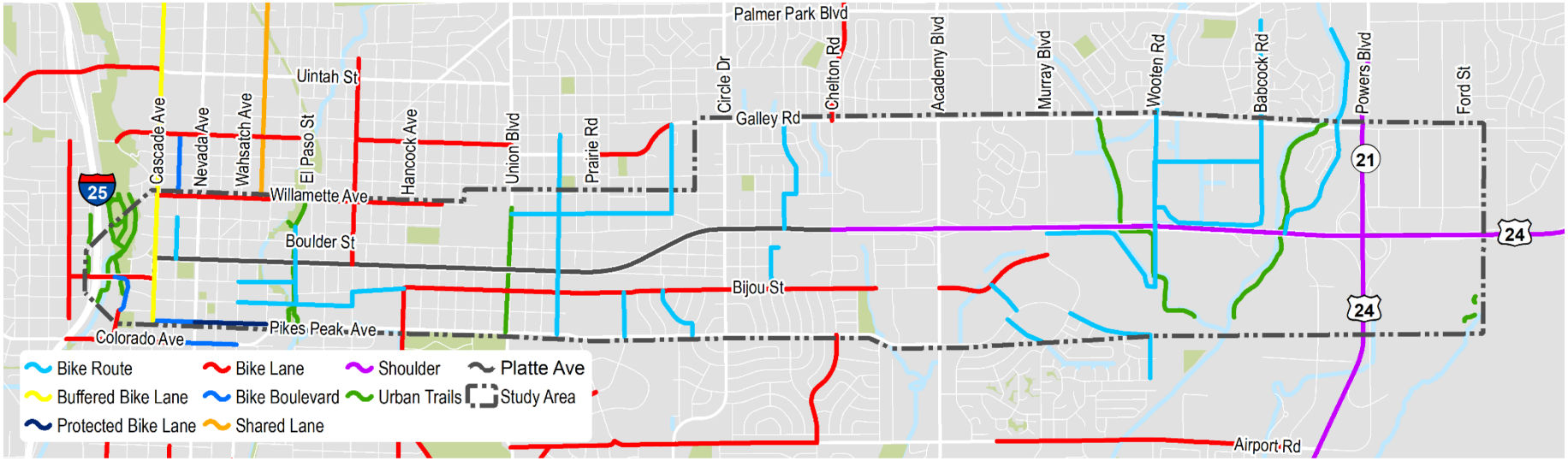


Figure 18 shows a heat map of bicycle ridership throughout the study area. This data was collected by the Strava mobile app, which allows riders to record their routes and provide them into a database. Particularly high bicycle ridership occurs within the Downtown character area and the adjacent residential neighborhoods to the east. Despite poor bicycling connections along Platte Avenue, there is still relatively high bicycle ridership as it is the only continuous east-west corridor in the area. The presence of bicycle trips along the corridor shows demand for bicycle infrastructure along entire corridor.

Figure 18 – Strava Bicycling Data

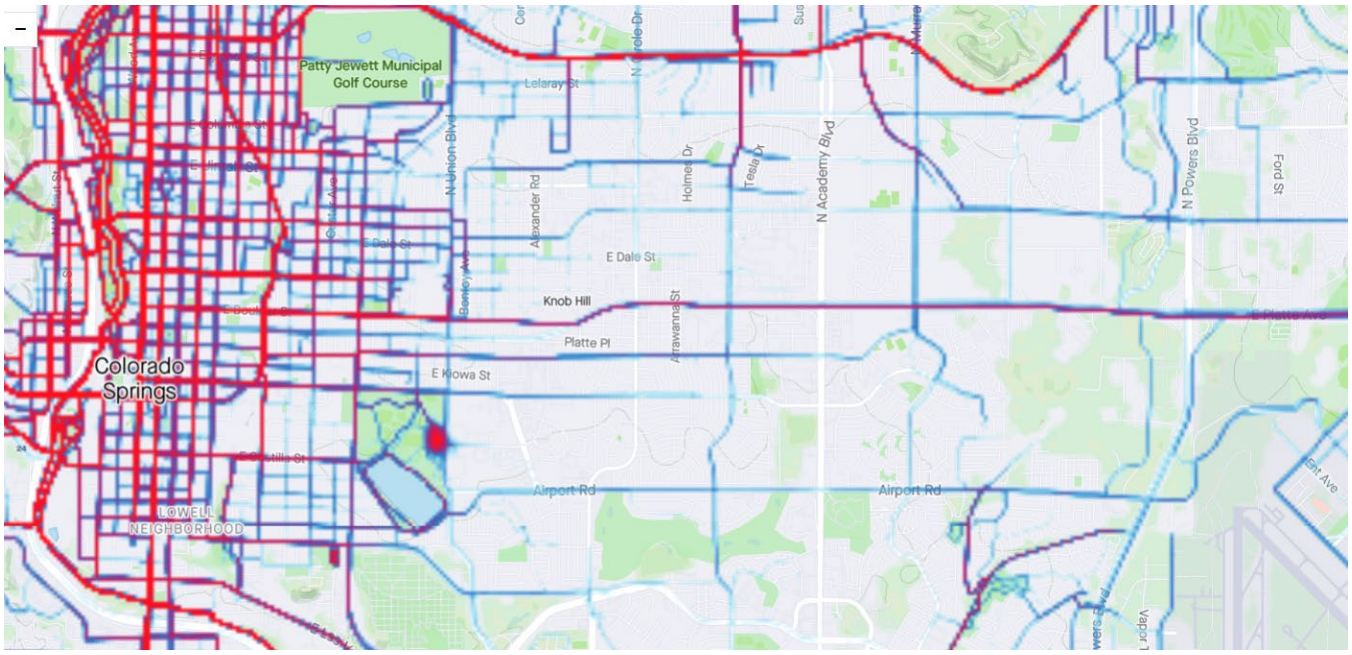


Figure 19 shows the pedestrian infrastructure throughout the corridor. There is good density of sidewalk connections in the Downtown and Middle Shooks Run areas but limited sidewalks in the Knob Hill and Eastern Reaches areas. Two areas where the sidewalk gaps are notable include the area within the Knob Hill character area, which intends to be a destination arts district, and the area along Chelton Road adjacent to the Citadel Mall, where there is the existing transit transfer station.

The sidewalk and on-street bicycle networks are supported by the City's off-street trail network. Figure 20 shows trails and open space within the study area. The Pikes Peak Greenway Trail crosses the corridor just east of I-25, and the Shooks Run Trail crosses Platte Avenue just west of El Paso Street. There is also a north-south trail planned along the waterway that intersects Platte Avenue just west of Wooten Road and along Sand Creek, just west of Space Center Drive. The nearest continuous east-west trail is the Rock Island Trail, which connects from the Monument Creek Trail in the west to Powers Boulevard in the east, just over one mile north of the Platte Avenue corridor.

Figure 19 – Pedestrian Facilities

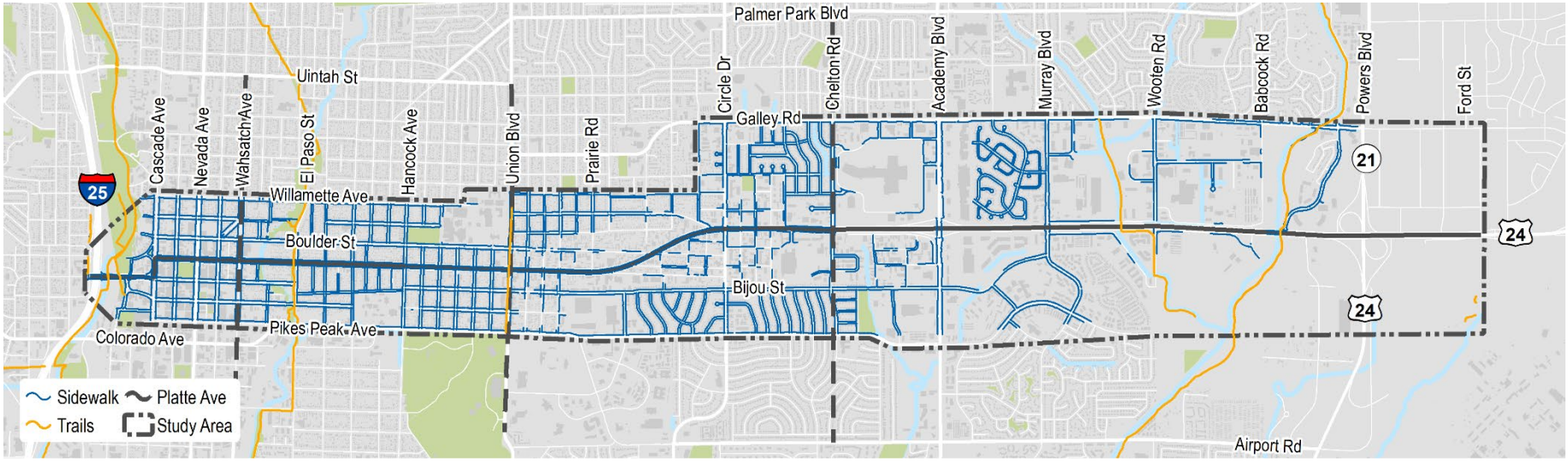
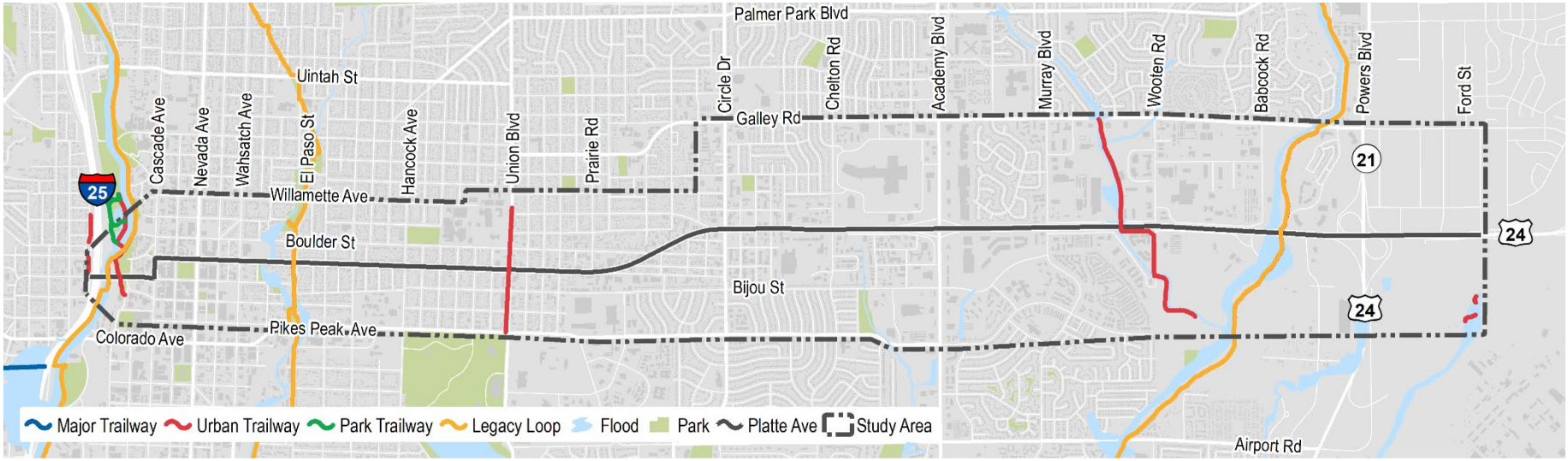


Figure 20 – Open Spaces and Trails



The need for improved pedestrian infrastructure along Platte Avenue in the eastern segments of the study area is best illustrated through "goat paths," or informal trails created by pedestrians walking through landscaping, between destinations. Figure 21 shows the goat path formed just east of Academy Boulevard along Platte Avenue, connecting pedestrians to the commercial development along the roadway. The presence of these pathways shows that pedestrians do not have the ability to safely and conveniently get to and from their destinations.

Figure 21 – Informal "Goat Path" on Platte Avenue

Utilities and Stormwater Overview

One component of the Platte Avenue corridor related to the roadway but not directly to transportation is the utilities and stormwater infrastructure present within the ROW. While not contributing to transportation conditions, the condition and existence of stormwater and utility infrastructure are considerations when contemplating ROW changes, as activities like reconstructing roadways or sidewalks often require concurrent changes or impacts to this other infrastructure. Additionally, the condition of stormwater infrastructure is often a factor in development/redevelopment potential in an area, and sometimes City investments in this infrastructure are important to help catalyze or incentivize new developments in an area designated for economic development.

Utilities

Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) provides gas, electric, water and sanitary sewer service throughout the corridor. CSU's facilities extend eastward, beyond Powers Boulevard to serve additional areas such as Banning Lewis Ranch, Peterson AFB, El Paso County and other developments.

Sanitary sewer – From Downtown to Academy Boulevard, the mainline sewer lines are generally located in the north-south direction, and there are limited mainlines within Platte in this section. From Academy to Powers, there is a large 18-inch diameter sewer main running along the north side of Platte.

Water – From Downtown to Shooks Run, mainline water exists within the street. From Shooks Run to Circle Drive, segments of mainline water exist within the street. From Circle Drive to Powers Boulevard, there is limited mainline water within the street section and the primary lines are located on either the north or south boundary of the ROW.

Gas/Electric – Underground gas lines are consistently located within the corridor parallel to Platte Avenue. From Downtown to Circle Drive, there is limited underground electric in the corridor. From Circle Drive to Powers Boulevard, there is a significant number of overhead electric lines running along the southern ROW boundary.

CSU has developed a Utility Reliability Program (URP) focused on replacing or abandoning undersized and aging infrastructure within the Downtown area. The PACS should consider where transportation opportunities might also provide the ability to replace aging infrastructure throughout the corridor, including upsizing existing infrastructure to support future redevelopment in the corridor and future development east of Powers Boulevard.

Stormwater

The stormwater infrastructure within the PACS area is inconsistent both in infrastructure type and quality. There is a water mainline in the Downtown area, but the infrastructure is aging and undersized. From Shooks Run to Circle Drive, there are limited underground trunklines. Drainage is generally carried in the street section and captured by existing inlets within Platte Avenue where it is then conveyed underground to nearby trunklines in parallel streets. From Circle Drive to Academy, dual underground trunklines exist on both the north and south sides of the street ultimately conveying flows to Spring Creek. From Academy to Powers, a series of vegetated swales/ditches, culverts and limited underground lines convey flows to both the Sand Creek West Fork and Sand Creek.

Water Quality and 100-year detention is generally non-existent in the corridor from I-25 to Powers. The inclusion of this infrastructure will need to be considered as part of recommendations coming out of the PACS based on the scale of improvements outside the existing roadway footprint.

Corridor Context

The following sections discuss land uses, zoning, and demographic data that define the corridor. The land use and zoning map help showcase existing land uses and development zones while displaying vacant parcels. The demographic data show characteristics that make Platte Avenue unique.

Character Area Overview

Current Land Use and Zoning

Existing land uses along the corridor were reviewed to understand how the land surrounding the Platte Avenue corridor will impact recommended improvements. Overviews of land uses by corridor segment are:

- Downtown Character Area – Grid pattern with short walkable blocks and a range of land types typical of downtown areas. This segment has a high concentration of institutional land uses, such as William J. Palmer High School, multiple places of worship, the YMCA, Acacia Park, and Monument Valley Park. This segment also has a significant amount of housing; however, the housing stock is older and less diverse than housing found along other parts of the corridor. The Downtown area also has limited office space and a mix of commercial uses that include retail and restaurant space.
- Middle Shooks Run Character Area – Primarily consists of residential land uses. The Olympic Training Center and UC Health Memorial Hospital Central are located in this area one block north of Platte Avenue, and the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind is one block south of Platte Avenue.
- Knob Hill Character Area – Mostly commercial properties and much of the land are dedicated to auto-oriented land uses such as big box retail, fast food restaurants, and motor vehicle dealerships. This area also has many vacant parcels that may provide opportunities for future redevelopment of the area.
- Eastern Reaches Character Area – This area consists of more land-intensive land uses, such as large-scale retail and industrial. Land uses are also more segregated in the Eastern Reaches than in other areas, with large retail and industrial parks, separated from residential areas by major roadways and other barriers. There are also large vacant parcels along the corridor near Powers Boulevard.

In total, there are 117 vacant parcels that total 295 acres along the length of the corridor. Housing along the corridor is generally older than elsewhere in the city, specifically the Downtown and Middle Shooks Run areas. There has been limited development of new housing and nearly all has been single family homes. The corridor has seen no new multi-family development within the last 10 years. Existing land uses within the study area are mapped on Figure 22.

Existing zoning in the study area includes a variety of commercial, residential, and industrial districts. Zoning designates the type of development that can be developed within each district and has implications for the existing and future built environment along the corridor. The existing zoning districts in the study area are detailed in Table 4 and mapped on Figure 23.

Table 4 – Existing Zoning Districts

Zoning District	Description	Location within Corridor
R-1 6000	Small lot, detached single family residential	Concentrated in the Middle Shooks Run and Knob Hill areas both north and south of Platte Avenue
R-2	Small or medium lots primarily for detached single or attached two-family residential	Concentrated in the Middle Shooks Run and Knob Hill areas, largely north of Platte Avenue
R-4	Medium density attached multi-family residential (up to 8 dwelling units/acre)	Located in isolated sections the Downtown, Middle Shooks Run, and Eastern Reaches areas
R-5	High density attached multi-family residential use	Concentrated in the Downtown and Knob Hill areas, primarily north of Platte Avenue
PUD	Used to implement PlanCOS by promoting a variety of mutually supportive and integrated residential and non-residential land uses	Primarily in the Eastern Reaches along Pikes Peak Avenue and Sports Center Drive
OR	A transitional district with a variety of residential unit types and small offices.	Most common in the Downtown area, north of Platte Avenue
OC	Various types of office uses (administrative, professional and personal services); typically small office buildings developed in a cluster or one larger office building	Isolated locations within all four character areas along the corridor
PBC	Commercial land uses with a range of retail sales and service establishments	Primarily in the Eastern Reaches around the Citadel Mall area
C-5	General commercial uses of moderate intensity	Primarily in Knob Hill and Eastern Reaches areas, along the Union Boulevard, Academy Boulevard, and Wooten Road corridors
C-6	General commercial uses that are typically high-volume traffic generators and dependent on more than the immediate neighborhood for market area	The primary land use along Platte Avenue in the Knob Hill I and Eastern Reaches areas
PIP-1/ PIP-2	Limited group of professional, administrative, research, manufacturing and industrial uses with operations which are quiet and clean	Located in the Eastern Reaches on both sides of Platte Avenue
M-1	Light industrial and commercial uses that are complementary to industrial uses	Primarily in the Knob Hill and Eastern Reaches area, south of Platte Avenue

Zoning District	Description	Location within Corridor
M-2	Heavy industrial uses that are likely to have an extensive impact on the surrounding area	One location in the Eastern Reaches area near Bijou Street and Auburn Drive
PK	Land set aside for use as public recreation and open space	Primarily in the Downtown and Middle Shooks Run segments, particularly the Monument Creek and Shooks Run corridors
APD	Developments with a mix of uses near COS Airport	Southeast portion of the Eastern Reaches
PCR	Major cultural attraction	Olympic Training Center on Union Boulevard
PF	Public facilities	Isolated locations throughout the PACS area
FBZ-Central	Form-based code for Downtown Colorado Springs	Downtown core of Colorado Springs, south of Platte Avenue
FBZ-Corridor	Form-based code for specific corridors	Cascade Avenue just south of Platte Avenue
FBZ-T1/ FBZ-T2	Form-based code for transitional areas around downtown	Tejon Street corridor and eastern fringe of Downtown Colorado Springs

Figure 22 – Existing Land Use

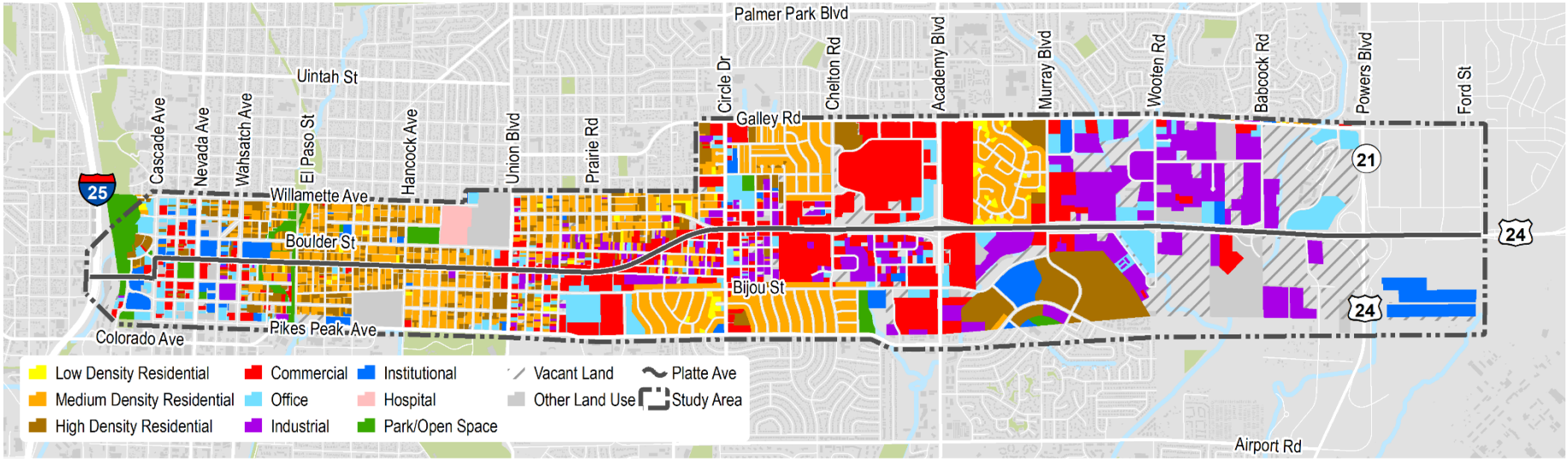
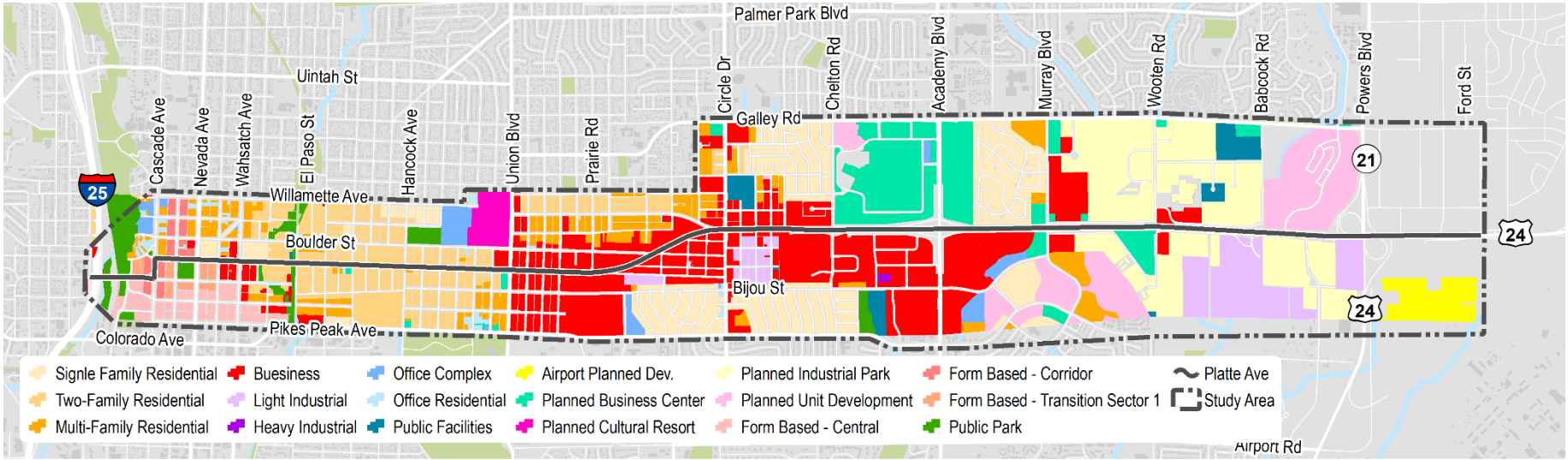


Figure 23 – Existing Zoning



Economic Zone Designations

Platte Avenue has specific designations to encourage development in economically distressed areas. These designations include Economic Opportunity Zones (EOZ), Enterprise Zones (EZ), and Urban Renewal Areas (URA). The areas covered by these designations are shown on Figure 24.

Economic Opportunity Zones

EOZs are designated by the U.S. Department of Treasury. Within the study area, portions of the Downtown character area and portions of the Knob Hill area, including the Citadel Mall, are designated as EOZs. EOZs offer incentives to private investors taking an equity stake in community development at the nexus of need and opportunity. Interested investors can defer their capital gains taxes by investing them in Opportunity Funds that provide needed long-term investments in EOZ to promote economic vitality.

Enterprise Zones

Roughly three-fourths of the study area is within a designated EZ. The Downtown, Knob Hill, and Eastern Reaches areas – from Hancock Avenue to Hathaway Drive – are largely within EZs. This State program encourages development in economically distressed areas. Designated EZs have high unemployment rates, low per capita income, or slow population growth. Benefits extended to EZs include:

- Businesses are eligible for state income tax credits and sales and use tax exemptions for specific business investments.
- Economic development projects are encouraged by incentivizing taxpayers to contribute through state income tax credits.
- Taxpayers who contribute to EZ projects may earn income tax credits through the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade.

Urban Renewal Areas

The Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority (CSURA) assists with the restoration and redevelopment of specified areas determined to meet the State statutes for blight. CSURA promotes projects that supply public benefits, provide quality sustainable places, create jobs, promote public art, offer affordable housing, and raise the standard of development in Colorado Springs. There are two small URAs in the Downtown character area.

People

Table 5 provides an overview of population and households within the study area compared to the entire City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County. The Platte Avenue corridor has a slower population growth than the city and county: the PACS study area growth has been between 0.43 percent in 2010 to 1.07 percent in 2020, while the City and County grew at a rate of 1.5 percent and 1.65 percent, respectively. However, there are areas of the corridor that current trends would indicate are positioned to transition over time and are less established than other parts of the city.

Figure 25 shows locations in the study area that have a relatively high likelihood of being developed or redeveloped.

Table 5 – Study Area Demographic Overview

	Downtown Segment	West Central Segment	East Central Segment	Eastern Segment	Colorado Springs	El Paso County
2010 Population	2,167	2,619	5,110	6,107	422,140	624,025
2020 Population	2,528	2,736	5,497	6,596	485,817	736,060
2010-2020 Annual Growth Rate	**1.07%**	**0.43%**	**0.74%**	**0.74%**	**1.50%**	**1.65%**
2025 Forecasted Population	2,706	2,819	5,740	6,897	520,695	790,382
2020-2025 Annual Growth Rate	**1.37%**	**0.60%**	**0.87%**	**0.90%**	**1.40%**	**1.43%**
2010 Households	1,113	1,363	2,324	2,491	169,654	236,653
2020 Households	1,367	1,430	2,520	2,673	193,985	276,974
2010-2020 Annual Growth Rate	**1.35%**	**0.47%**	**0.83%**	**0.68%**	**1.42%**	**1.58%**
2025 Forecasted Households	1,497	1,475	2,644	2,789	207,917	297,686
2020-2025 Annual Growth Rate	**1.83%**	**0.62%**	**0.97%**	**0.85%**	**1.40%**	**1.45%**
2010 Average Household Size	1.57	1.85	2.16	2.45	2.44	2.56
2020 Average Household Size	1.54	1.84	2.14	2.47	2.46	2.58
2025 Average Household Size	1.53	1.84	2.13	2.47	2.46	2.59

Figure 24 – Economic Zone Designations

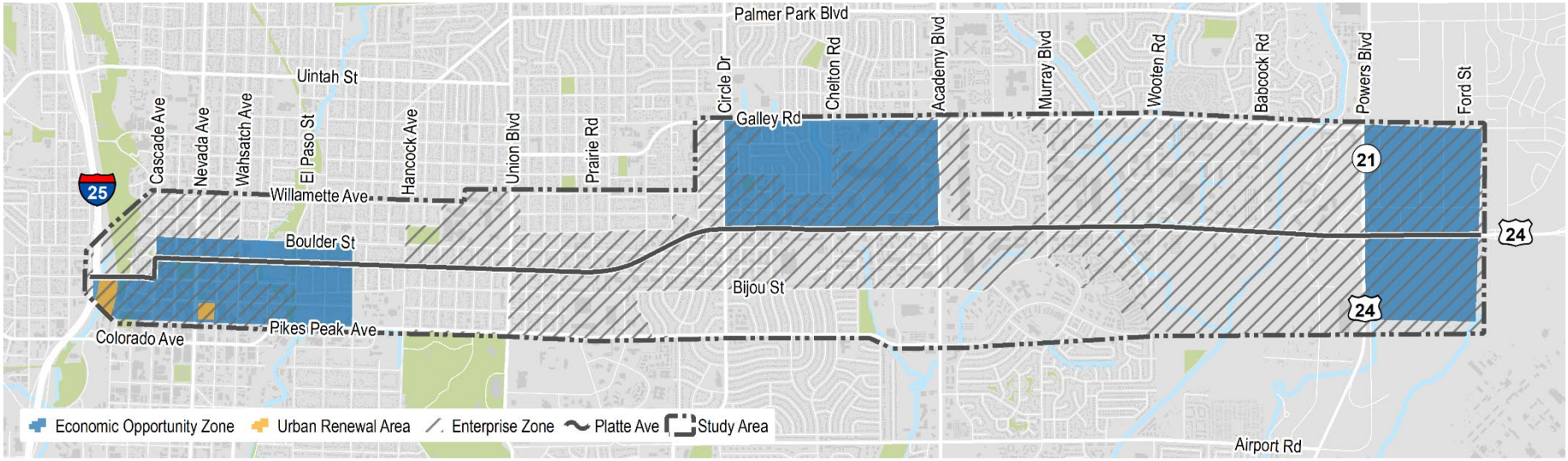
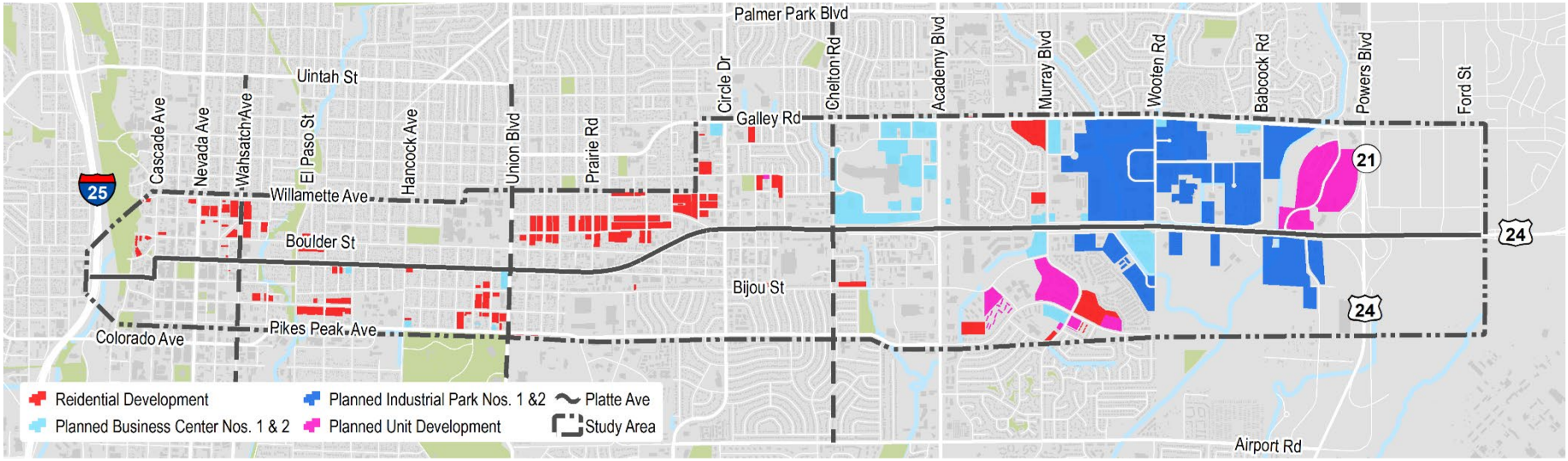


Figure 25 – Zoning Overlays and Planned Developments



Resident Demographics

Median Income

The segments of the Platte Avenue study have a wide range median household income. As shown on Figure 26, portions of all character areas have median household incomes of under $30,000, which is considerably lower than the median household income of Colorado Springs ($64,120) and El Paso County ($68,604). The highest income areas in the study area are in the Middle Shooks Run area and the eastern-most portion of the Eastern Reaches area.

Disability Status

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a disability as anyone with hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, or independent living difficulty. Figure 27 shows concentrations of disability status by census tract. The highest concentrations of those with disabilities are in the Knob Hill area; however, additional concentrations are present in the Downtown and Eastern Reaches. The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is in the Middle Shooks run area, one block south of Platte Avenue between Institute Street and Hancock Avenue.

Figure 26 – Median Household Income

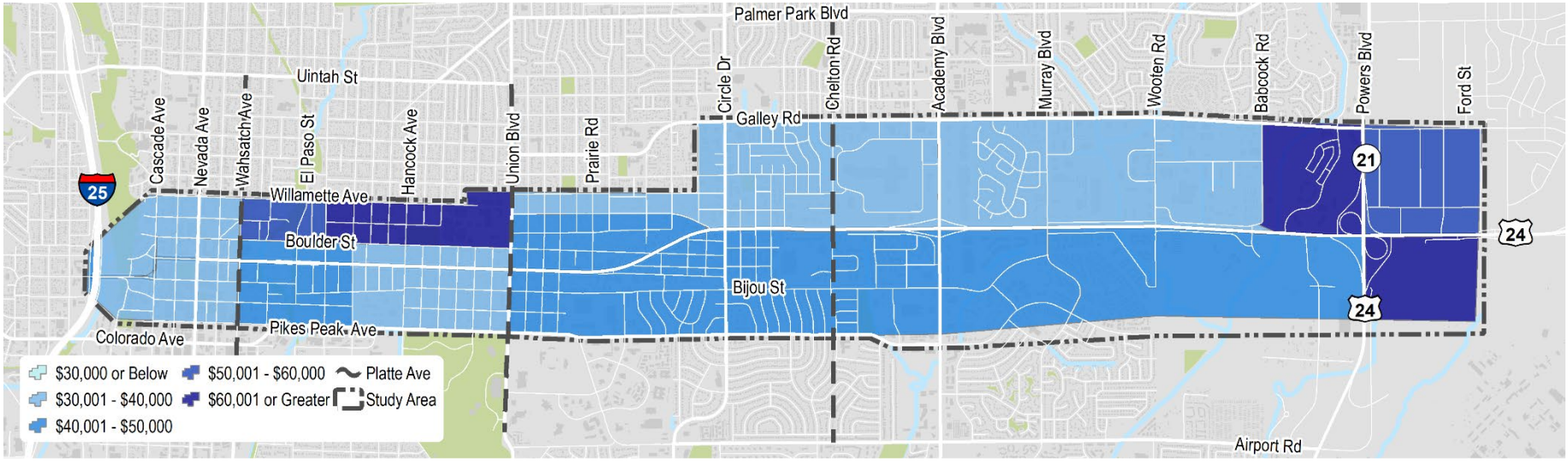
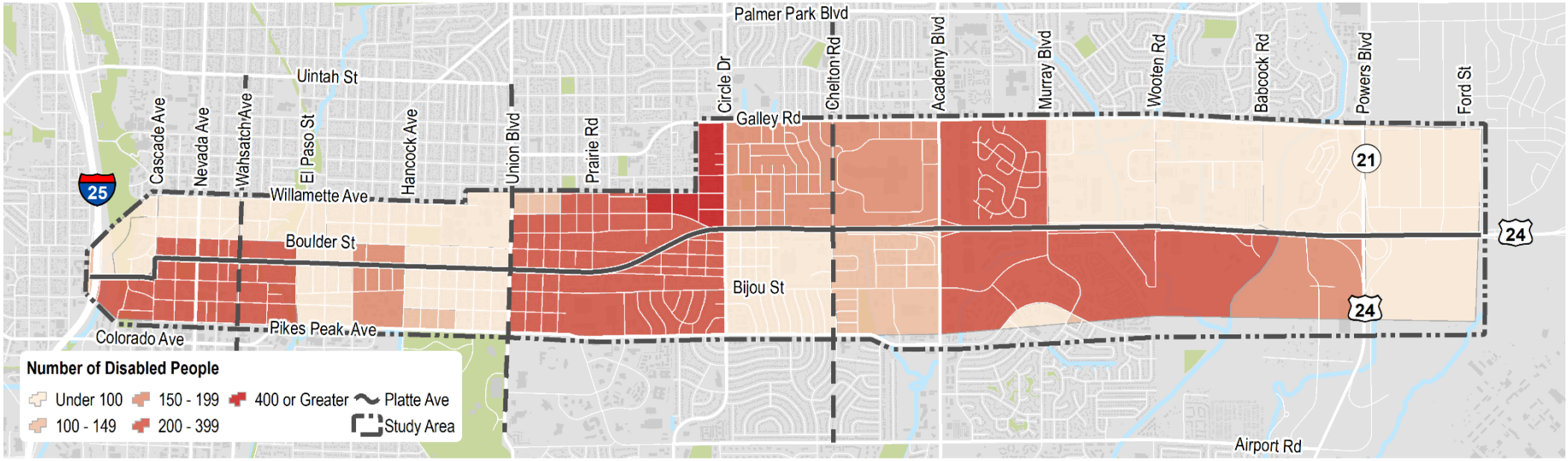


Figure 27 – Disability Status



Vehicle Availability

Vehicle availability has a large impact on the need for quality bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Figure 28 shows the percentage of households with no vehicles available in the study area. The highest percentage of the population with no vehicle available is in the area surrounding the Citadel Mall. Vehicle availability is particularly important in the Eastern Reaches where there is little access to multimodal transportation options.

Bicycle and Pedestrian System Usage

The largest concentrations of households that use the pedestrian and bicycle system are in the Citadel Mall area (20 to 48 percent) and the western portion of the downtown segment (20 to 48 percent). Figure 29 shows a gradient with the highest bicycle and pedestrian system users generally concentrated in the western portion of the study area becoming less frequent further east. This pattern could be due to a lack of pedestrian infrastructure and high roadway speeds in the Eastern Reaches.

Transit System Usage

Around 16 percent of households in the study area use transit, with fewer than 1 percent of households using transit in much of the eastern half of the study area. Figure 30 shows the percentage of households that use transit. Much like bicycle and pedestrian system usage, transit system usage generally decreases from west to east, with the exception of the Citadel Mall area, which has some of the highest transit ridership in the study area and in the city.

Figure 28 – Zero Vehicle Households

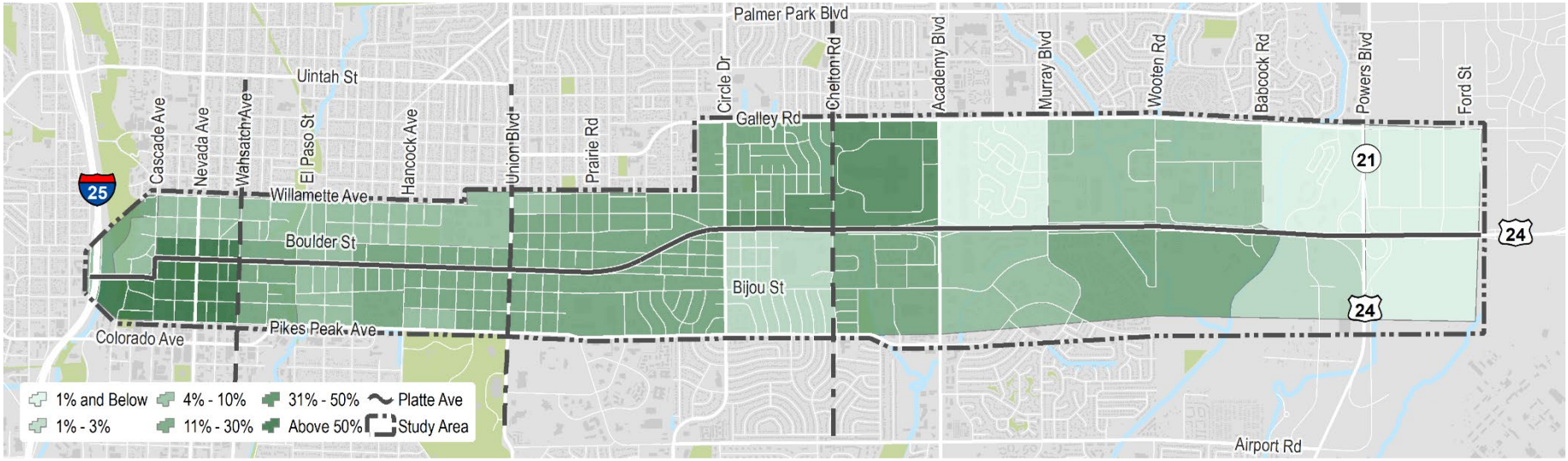


Figure 29 – Households that Use Active Transportation

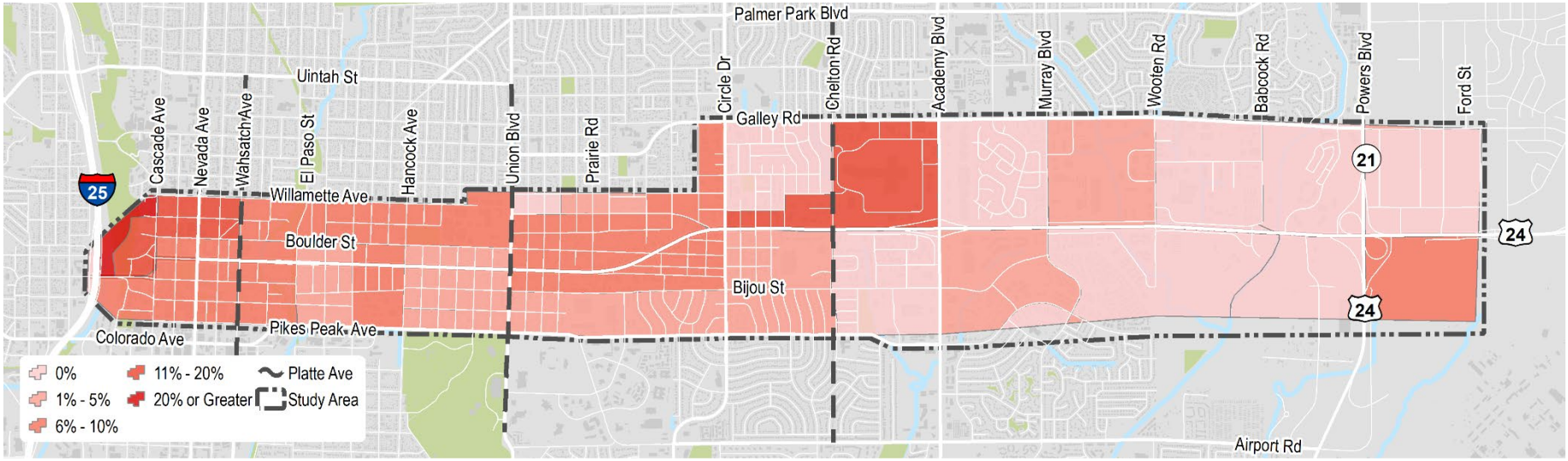
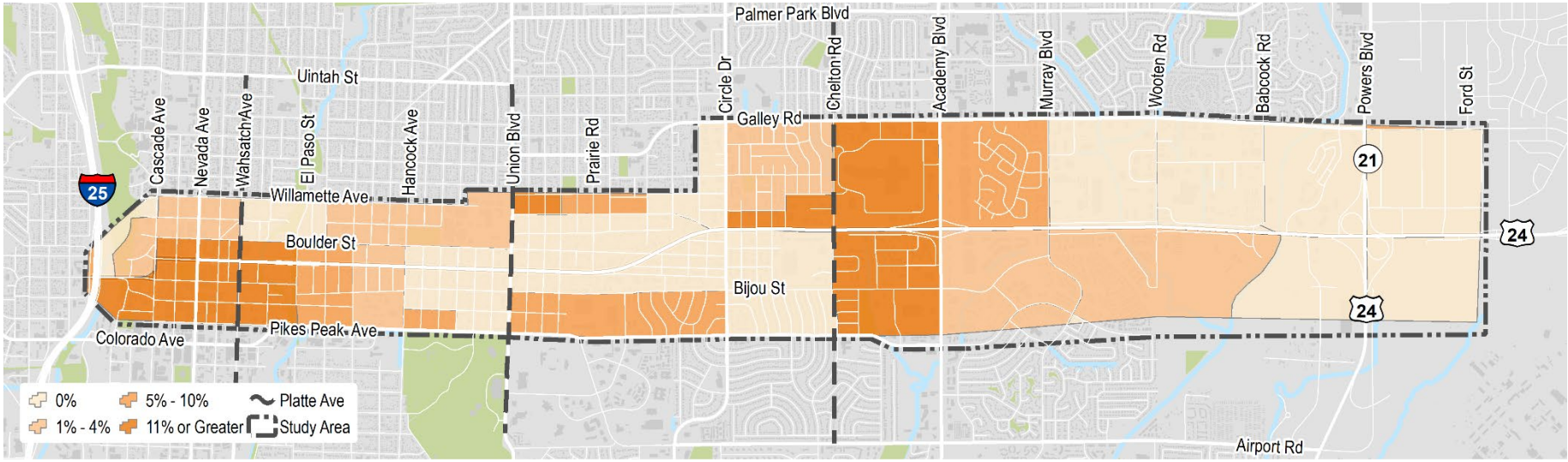


Figure 30 – Households that Use Transit

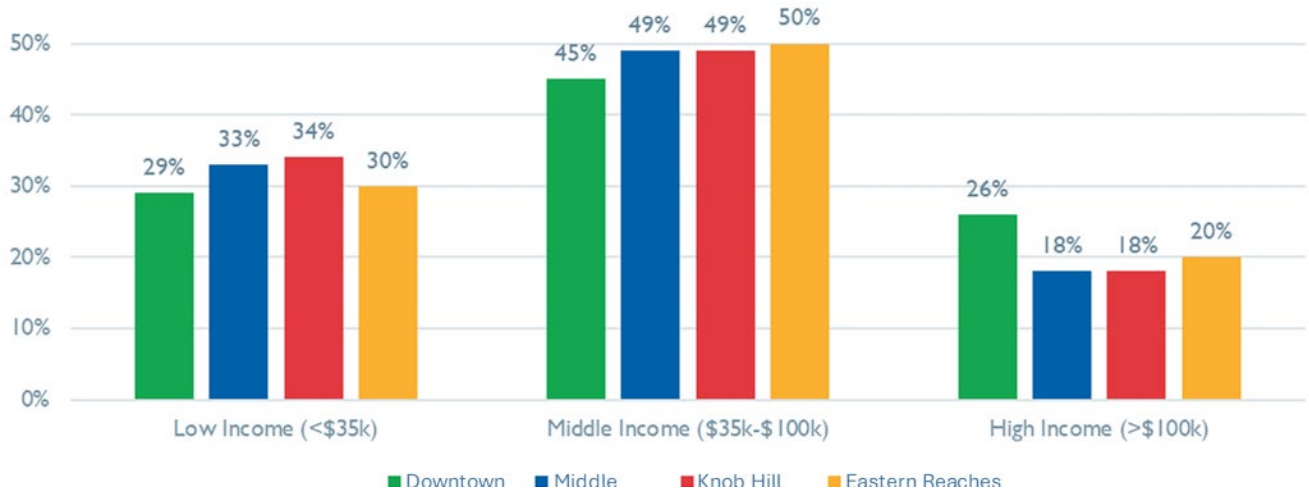


Corridor Traveler Demographics

Select demographics for those that travel the corridor, not just those that live along the corridor, was obtained from StreetLight Data. Available demographic datasets include traveler income, traveler race and ethnicity, and traveler education.

- Traveler Income – Traveler (annual) income is provided in Figure 31; these statistics indicate demographics for drivers in the PACS area, understanding that StreetLight data is a vehicular-trip focused data set. Downtown has the lowest number of low-income travelers and the most high-income travelers. Middle Shooks Run and Knob Hill have higher percentages of low-income travelers and fewer high-income travelers. Overall, the incomes of travelers through the corridor are higher than those that live along the corridor, particularly in Downtown.

Figure 31 – Corridor Traveler (Driver) Income by Character Area



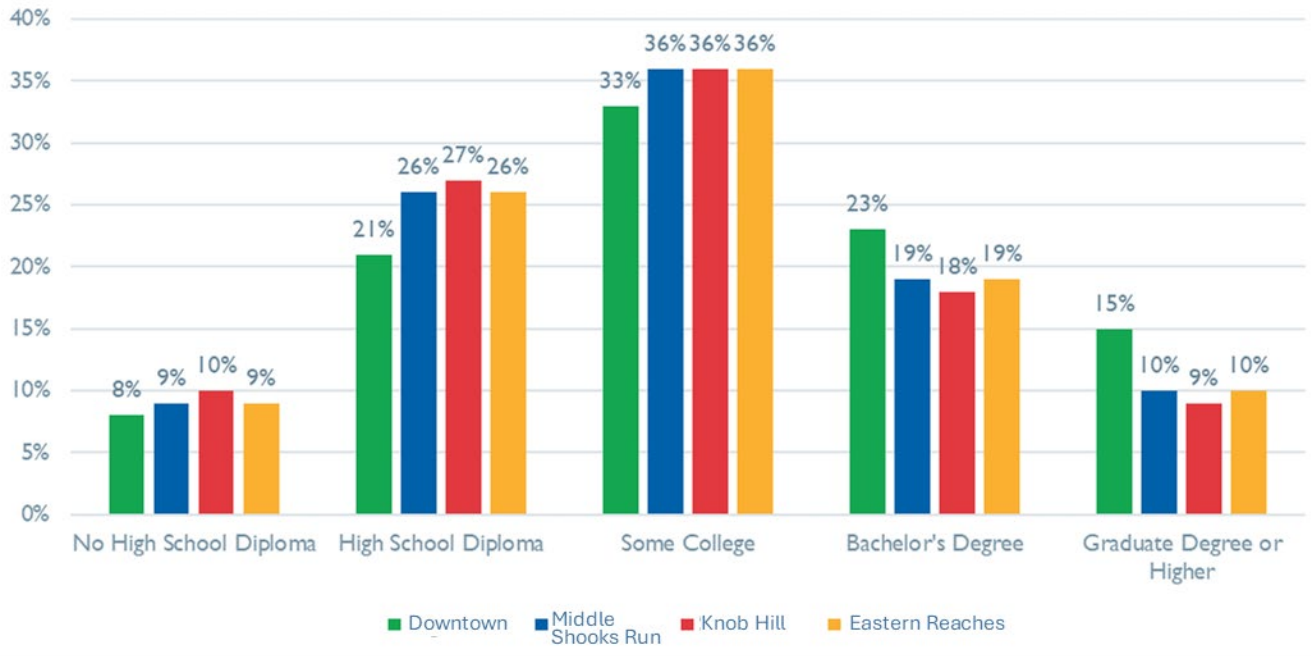
- Traveler Race and Ethnicity – Table 6 shows a breakdown of the race of travelers (drivers) on the corridor by corridor. Downtown has the highest proportion of white travelers. The other character areas all have relatively similar traveler race breakdowns, with just under 80% of travelers being White with other races making up between four and seven percent of travelers each. Downtown also has the lowest percentage of Hispanic travelers at 14%, while the other areas have between 17% and 18%.

Table 6 – Traveler (Driver) Race and Ethnicity by Character Area

Race/Ethnicity	Downtown	Middle Shooks Run	Knob Hill	Eastern Reaches
Race				
White	83%	78%	77%	79%
Black	5%	7%	7%	6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%	4%	4%	4%
Other Race	4%	6%	6%	6%
Multiple Races	4%	5%	5%	5%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	14%	17%	18%	17%

- **Traveler Education** – Travelers (drivers) traveling in the Downtown area are more likely to have a bachelor's or advanced degree than the other areas of the corridor. The other areas have similar distributions of educational attainment, as shown in **Figure 32**.

Figure 32 – Traveler Educational Attainment by Character Area



State of the Corridor

ConnectCOS Goal Framework

As part of the ConnectCOS planning process, a detailed analysis helped identify *Critical Corridors* that were the foundations of the City transportation network and where transportation investments would have the greatest impact in improving overall mobility in Colorado Springs. Each Critical Corridor was assessed against the ConnectCOS Goal Framework elements, shown in Figure 33, to comprehensively assess each corridor for deficiencies related to each of the elements that described the goal area.

Figure 33 – ConnectCOS Goal Framework

This section summarizes the assessment of the Platte Avenue corridor travel shed (comprised of the multiple transportation facilities within the study area) against the ConnectCOS Goal Framework and highlights where there are needs that should be addressed through the PACS.

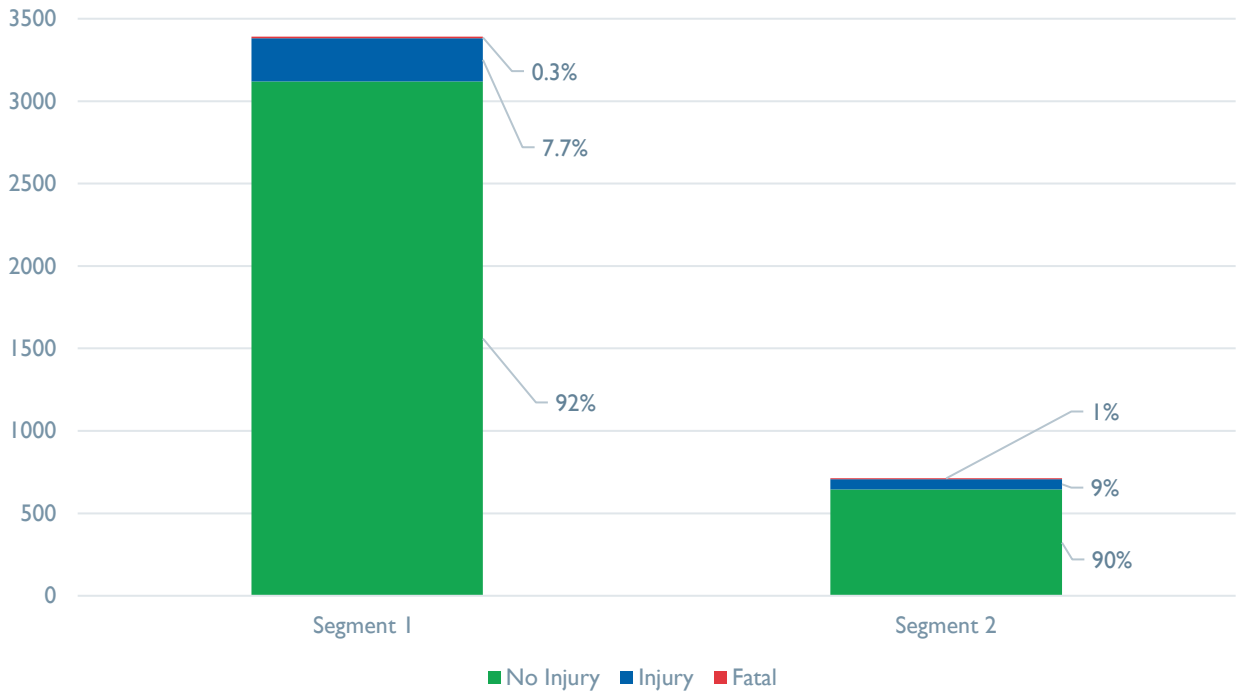
Safe

To quantify safety conditions along the Platte Avenue corridor, crashes along the corridor between 2015 and 2019 were analyzed. The corridor was assessed in two segments:

- Segment 1 (western) – Cascade Avenue to Academy Boulevard
- Segment 2 (eastern) – Academy Boulevard to Powers Boulevard

Figure 34 shows the total crashes by severity within the five-year period. The Downtown area and surrounding residential neighborhoods have almost five times more crashes than the eastern segment. Frequency of severe crashes for both segments are higher than the citywide rate of 7.5%.

Figure 34 – Total Crashes by Severity



The percent of total and severe crashes by type is shown in Table 7 and Table 8. Head-on, approach turn, and bicycle and pedestrian crashes make up a higher percentage of severe crashes than total crashes. This trend is especially apparent in the bicycle and pedestrian crash percentages, indicating a need for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements along the corridor.

Table 7 – Crashes by Type – Segment 1 Severe Frequency Rate

Crash Type	Percent of Total Crashes	Percent of Severe Crashes
Head-On	<1%	6%
Approach Turn	9%	13%
Bike & Ped	4%	25%

Table 8 – Crashes by Type – Segment 2 Severe Frequency Rate

Crash Type	Percent of Total Crashes	Percent of Severe Crashes
Head-On	<1%	10%
Approach Turn	8%	15%
Bike & Ped	2%	10%

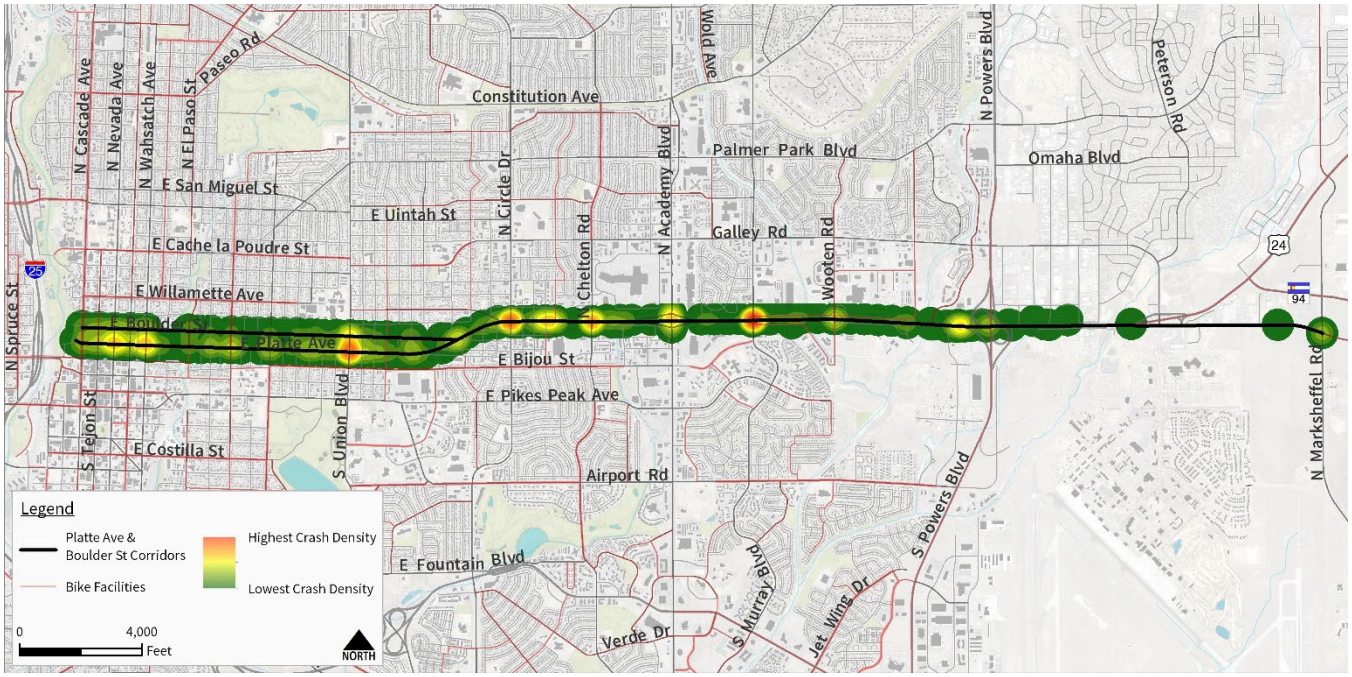
Segment 1 (western) has a significantly higher number of crashes and a higher percentage of severe pedestrian and bicycle crashes. Although bike and pedestrian crashes makes up significant portion of severe crashes, the severity rate of bicycle and pedestrian crashes for both

segments is either nearly identical or below the citywide average. The low frequency of bike and pedestrian crashes in Segment 2 (eastern) may be due to the minimal pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along this part of the corridor.

Along Segment 1, broadside crashes were overrepresented, at 28% of total crashes, compared to the citywide average of 22%. The crash frequencies for broadside, approach turn, and head-on crashes for Segment 2 were also significantly higher than the citywide average.

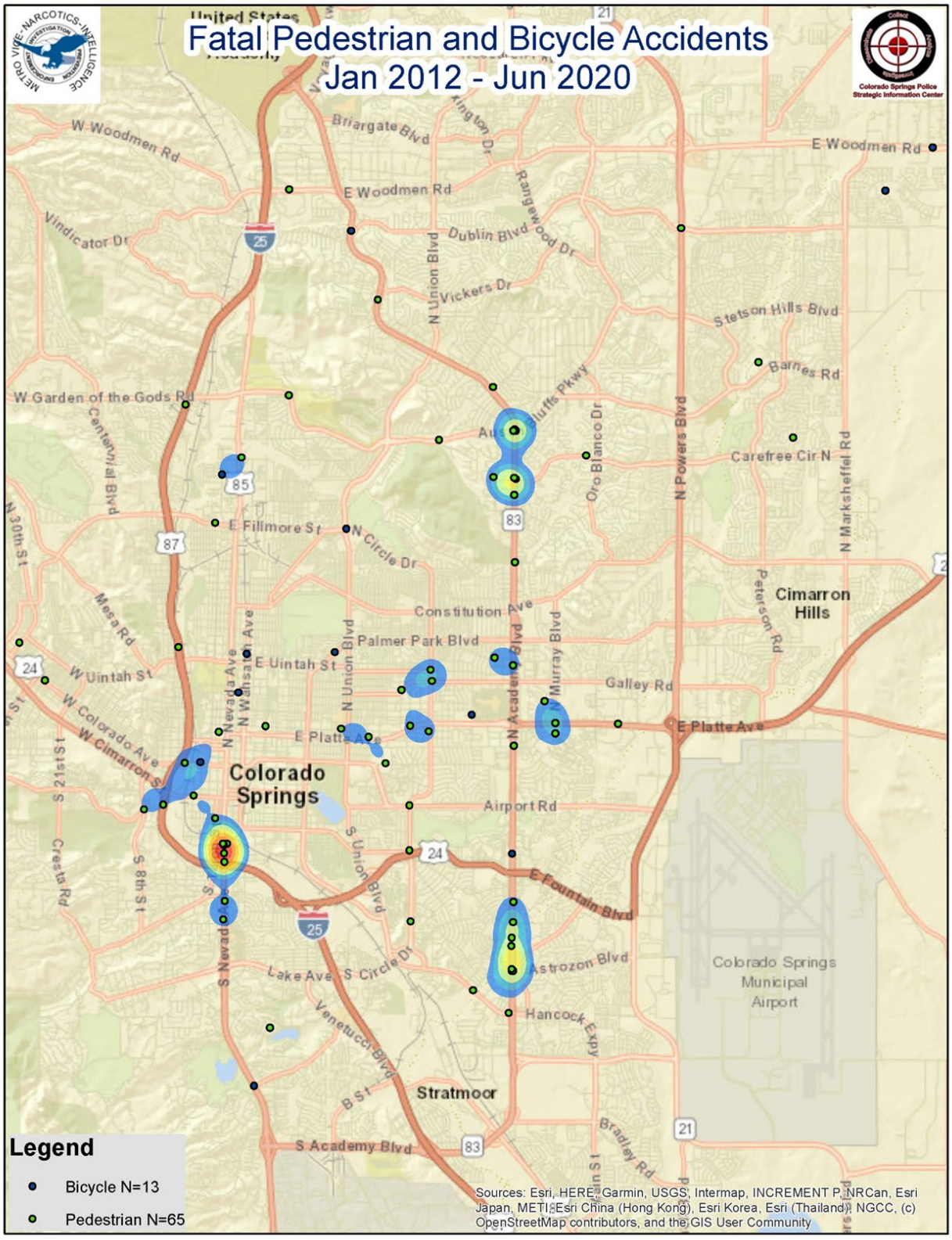
Figure 35 shows crash densities along the corridor. High crash densities can be seen sporadically throughout the corridor, with the downtown area consistently having a higher number of crashes. There are crash hot spots at the intersections of Union Boulevard, Circle Drive, Chelton Road, Academy Boulevard, and Murray Boulevard.

Figure 35 – Crash Density



Per stakeholder and public feedback, a significant challenge along the corridor has been a lack of safe crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists. Figure 36 shows the fatal and injury pedestrian and bicycle crashes from January 2012 to June 2020, respectively. Platte Avenue has a high concentration of pedestrian and bicycle accidents for both injury and fatal crashes when compared to most other corridors in the city. Fatal crashes are spread throughout the entirety of the corridor while injury accidents have a significantly high concentration in the Downtown area as well as around Union Boulevard.

Figure 36 – Fatal Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes (Jan 2012 – June 2020)



Source: Colorado Springs Police Department

Pedestrian safety challenges were identified by multiple stakeholders at the intersection of Platte Avenue and Nevada Avenue. Palmer High School is at the northeast corner of the intersection. Lunch and dismissal time brings a significant increase in both vehicular and pedestrian traffic to the intersection, creating a hazard for all users during these times.

In addition to quantitative safety conditions shown through crash data, the perception of safety along Platte Avenue is also an issue. The roadway has minimal lighting that is not consistent throughout the corridor and very few bus stops have lighting, making active transportation conditions uncomfortable and potentially unsafe at night.

Equitable

The main question to answer for the Equity goal is "Do the transportation facilities available serve the transportation needs of travelers and current and future land uses on the corridor?" A variety of data sets and observations indicate that there are not adequate mobility choices provided by transportation facilities within the PACS area.

Addressing the needs of the corridor's residents and travelers:

- While the Downtown and Middle Shooks Run character areas generally provide a variety of multimodal options, the Knob Hill and Eastern Reaches areas are mainly vehicular-focused and do not address the mobility needs of both residents and travelers along the corridor, even though there are demographics that indicate mobility options are important for both travelers and residents along those portions of the corridor.
- Transit routes on the corridor have the highest ridership of any route in the City; however, the amenities that serve transit riders are lacking – no lighting at bus stops, sidewalk conditions are poor condition or are unavailable in areas, and some of the transit stop locations are not located in a place that is accessible to the potential riders.
- There is demand for walking and biking along the corridor, as indicated by a variety of insights such as Strava data, data on car ownership/use of other modes, and indications such as the goat paths that have been established in areas along the corridor where sidewalks do not exist. However, there are frequent gaps in sidewalks and there are not continuous or connected bicycle facilities along the corridor. While Boulder is a preferred bike route for the corridor, there are no bike lanes on Boulder for a portion of the study area and the bike lanes on Willamette are 1/3 mile away from user who start on Platte Avenue.

Addressing the demands of the corridor's current and future land uses:

- The corridor houses some specific land uses that attract travelers who have specific mobility needs, including the School for the Deaf and Blind and the Paralympic athletes at the Olympic training center. Observations from stakeholders and data on infrastructure conditions as they relate to ADA-compliance, crossing distances, transit stop locations, and sidewalk connectivity indicate that the current transportation facilities do not

adequately address the mobility needs of these groups to allow for safe and connected travel within the corridor.

- Platte Avenue traverses highly residential, historic neighborhoods in the Middle Shooks Run area, and through Downtown but is still built as a roadway that serves high traffic volumes and high vehicle speeds. This mismatch in transportation and land use functions impacts quality of life and the economic development potential of the corridor.
- Platte Avenue is identified as a gateway for two purposes: entering the City from the east and entering Downtown Colorado Springs east of El Paso Street. However, the existing infrastructure and aesthetics of the corridor does not function or look like a gateway corridor.

Sustainable

The Sustainable goal considers conditions of the "three pillars" of sustainability – economy, environment, and society.

From an economic standpoint, the existing conditions analysis highlighted the economic challenges of the corridor, including the absence of investment and more limited development as compared to the rest of the City. The corridor has more than 100 vacant and underutilized parcels and carries all three economic designations (EOZ, EZ, and URA) along portions of the corridor. Despite these designations that are in place to incentivize and spur development, the current corridor infrastructure does not promote key elements of economic vitality, such as providing a good pedestrian experience to allow people to walk to different corridor amenities/shops, and there has not been investment in transportation and roadway-related infrastructure, including utilities and stormwater, that would help indicate to potential developers that the City is investing in the area.

The "environmental" considerations include assessment of green infrastructure and tree cover, connectivity to parks and open space, and environmental resources or constraints on the corridor that would impact potential projects or development along the corridor.

- Tree coverage along the corridor is concentrated in the western character areas. A well-established tree alley covers most of the Middle Shooks Run segment, with some of the oldest trees in Colorado Springs. As shown in Figure 37, the streets between Wahsatch Avenue and North Logan Avenue have the densest tree coverage, while tree coverages tappers away east and west of this location.
- Multiple north-south aligned trails and pedestrian routes cross various locations along the corridor, including Pikes Peak Greenway, Shooks Run trail, and Sand Creek Trail, in addition to other pedestrian-oriented facilities. East-west connections are limited, as shown in Figure 38.
- Parks and Open Space accessible within the corridor include Monument Valley Park, Boulder Park, Acacia Park, Shooks Run Trail, Franklin Park, Wagner Park. There are also

some smaller neighborhood parks near the study area boundaries in residential neighborhoods areas.

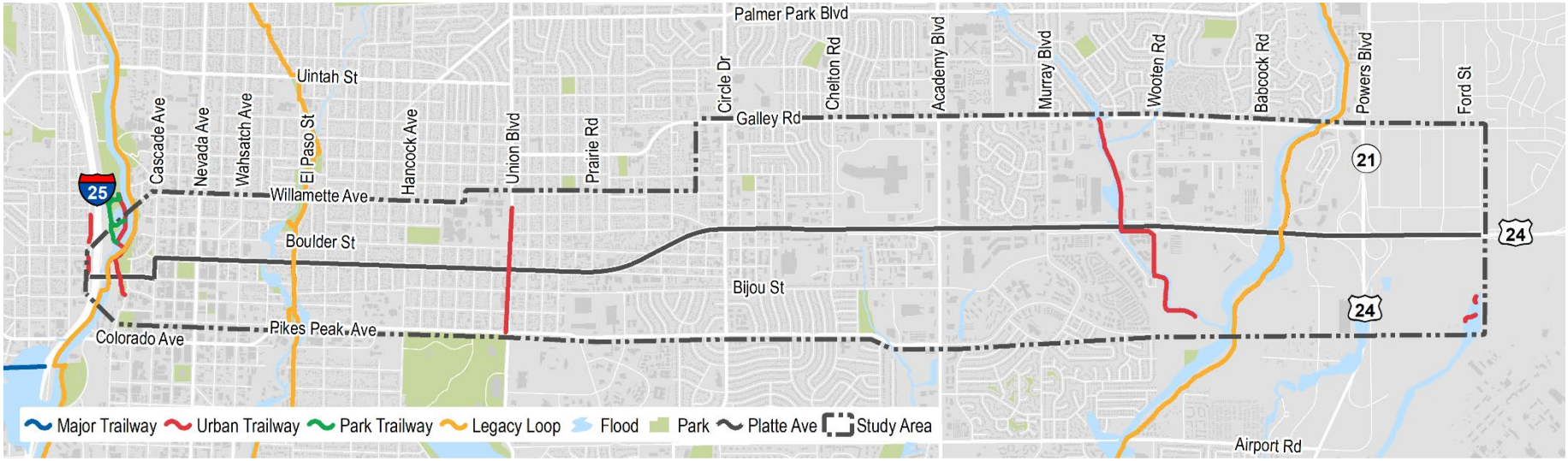
- A variety of streams and rivers traverse north-south through the PACS area including Monument Creek, Shooks Run, and multiple forks of the Sand Creek.
- At least 599 eligible or potentially eligible cultural resources were identified within the proposed study area, based on date of construction. Within these resources, the Colorado's On-line Cultural Resource Database, COMPASS, identifies 24 previously recorded, eligible resources within the study area. The remaining 575 resources are unrecorded resources and should be considered potentially eligible to the State and/or National Register of Historic Places until assessed. See Appendix D for the complete Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report.

The "society" aspect of this goal element considers metrics related to *quality of life* for residents and users of the corridor; the assessment of "quality of life" included the availability and accessibility via multiple modes of essential services along the corridor, including grocery stores, housing options, and healthcare services.

- For much of the corridor except for the Eastern Reaches, there are a variety of modal options to reach corridor establishments and services, including transit routes, bicycle facilities, and sidewalks. In the Eastern Reaches, there is a need for improved multimodal options.
- There is an imbalance between renters and owners in the corridor and the stock of affordable housing for purchase is low.

Figure 37 – Tree Cover

Figure 38 – Trails and Open Space



Reliable

This goal element includes an assessment of current and future anticipated vehicular (traffic and transit) performance of the roadways within the study area and an assessment of transportation infrastructure.

Traffic Performance

As discussed in the previous section on *Traffic and Travel Patterns* and described in detail in Appendix B, two intersections (Platte/Circle and Platte/Murray) are operating unacceptably in current (2021) conditions based on traffic engineering principles. However, it was also determined that optimized traffic signal operations that the City currently supports can address these current deficiencies so that all intersections can operate acceptably in current conditions.

In projected future (2045) traffic conditions, three intersections are expected to operate at levels below acceptable conditions, including Platte/Circle, Platte/Murray, and Platte/Wooten. The analysis determined that physical improvements beyond just traffic signal timing will be needed at these intersections to address anticipated delay.

Additionally, as part of ConnectCOS, a citywide traffic performance assessment used a big data set from INRIX to assess delay and congestion metrics of all Arterial, Parkway, and Expressway roadways within Colorado Springs. Metrics considered included:

- Travel Time Index (TTI)[1]: the ratio of travel time during the peak period as compared to the travel time for the same trip at free-flow speed. Separate TTIs were developed for morning and afternoon peak periods.
- Vehicle hours of delay: the difference between peak period and off-peak travel time (delay) while accounting for segment volume.
- Vehicle hours of delay per mile: the difference between peak period and off-peak travel time (delay) while accounting for segment volume and normalizing for segment length.

A traffic performance "score" was calculated for each roadway to allow comparison between roadways. Platte Avenue was found to be within the 30% poorest performing roadways in the City based on this relative scoring.

Transit Performance

The travel time and reliability for transit routes is identified by "on-time" performance. This is defined by MMT as routes that operate between one minute early or five minutes late of their established schedule. MMT strives to meet the 85% standard of "on-time." The system-wide mean of routes having on-time performance is 92.02%. Route 5, the main bus route serving riders traveling east-west on Platte Avenue, has an on-time performance just below 92.00%.

[1] https://www.bts.gov/content/travel-time-index#:~:text=The%20Travel%20Time%20Index%20is,minutes%20during%20the%20peak%20period.

Corridor Capacity

Another consideration related to the Reliable goal is the corridor's capacity to move more vehicles and people as travel demand grows over time. The foundation of this analysis is related to a metric called volume-to-capacity ratio (V/C), which considers the current traffic volume on the roadway related to the capacity of the roadway, which is largely dictated by the number of travel lanes available. When the V/C exceeds 1, the travel demand on the roadway exceeds the capacity and will result in congestion and delay.

The assessment of capacity considered the availability of right-of-way (ROW) to expand the existing roadway at locations where current or future V/C is exceeds 1. A critical need was identified where a roadway segment's V/C exceeds 1 and there is no additional ROW or other constraints to widening the road to accommodate additional vehicular travel lanes; this condition often indicated that additional "people moving" capacity is necessary beyond just "vehicle moving" capacity.

Table 9 and Table 10 show the existing and future V/C for segments of Platte Avenue.

Table 9 – Volume-to-Capacity Assessment -Existing (2021)

Platte Avenue Road Segment	Volume	V/C
I-25 to Wahsatch Avenue	15,300	0.48
Wahsatch Avenue to Union Blvd	29,100	0.91
Union Blvd to Chelton Rd	35,000	0.82
Chelton Rd to Powers Blvd	44,200	1.38

Table 10 – Volume-to-Capacity Assessment – Projected (2045)

Platte Avenue Road Segment	Volume	V/C
I-25 to Wahsatch Avenue	18,000	0.56
Wahsatch Avenue to Union Blvd	34,600	1.08
Union Blvd to Chelton Rd	40,100	0.94
Chelton Rd to Powers Blvd	54,500	1.70

- Along Platte Avenue between Wahsatch and Union the V/C equals 1 in the future condition, meaning that future anticipated volumes will match the existing capacity. In this section, there is limited additional capacity to expand Platte Avenue, however, there is additional capacity on other parallel roadways within the corridor travelshed that can absorb additional demand, making this a low level of need.
- Along Platte Avenue between Chelton and Powers, the traffic volumes exceed the roadway's capacity in current conditions, and this will only degrade further in future conditions. However, the current ROW in this section of Platte Avenue provides

opportunities to expand the capacity of the roadway to provide additional travel lanes in the future.

Infrastructure Condition

The final consideration for the Reliable goal element is infrastructure reliability, including pavement, bridges, sidewalks, and other key transportation infrastructure along the corridor such as stormwater.

- The bridge over Sand Creek in the eastern section of Platte Avenue was recently reconstructed and is in very good condition.
- The bridges over Platte Avenue at El Paso Street and the Shooks Run trail are in very poor condition and require attention. Additionally, in Fall 2021, the El Paso Street bridge was hit by an under-passing vehicle and the bridges integrity was degrading to the point that the bridge has been closed to traffic until it can be replaced.
- The culvert under Platte Avenue near Palmer High School is one of the oldest structures within the City's inventory and needs to be replaced.
- Stormwater infrastructure in the more western portions of the corridor is aging and undersized and there is a lack of infrastructure to support water quality and detention throughout the corridor.

Accessible

The "Accessible" goal framework element considers the ease in which travelers using various modes can use and navigate the corridor. Key elements of accessibility in ConnectCOS is compatibility of modes within the corridor, including how modal facilities interact with and connect to each other. Another consideration is how intuitive it is to navigate to your destination. Generally, the state of the corridor from an accessible standpoint answers the question "Do the collective facilities along the corridor provide a comfortable experience for users of all modes?"

Figure 40 shows an evaluation of pedestrian connectivity along Platte Avenue and highlights challenges that degrade the comfort and accessibility of the pedestrian experience.

- There are a limited number of safe pedestrian crossings in all character areas except for downtown. In downtown, signalized crossings occur approximately every 550 feet, while they exist approximately every 1,500 feet in the Middle Shooks Run and Knob Hill areas and even further in parts of the Eastern Reaches area.
- There is a lack of continuous sidewalk connections in portions of Knob Hill and all of the Eastern Reaches areas, including around transit stop locations and the transit transfer station at the Citadel Mall.
- The topography for some portions the corridor, shown in Figure 41, results in steep grades that create challenges for bicyclists and pedestrians in terms of modal comfort.

Specifically, in the Eastern Reaches between Chelton Road and Murray Boulevard near the Citadel Mall, there is significant elevation change.

- There are a limited number of continuous and connected separated bicycling facilities that support east-west bicycle travel within the corridor, as shown in the previous Figure 17. Existing bicycling facilities are on-street and directly adjacent to vehicles, making bicycling travel uncomfortable for many potential cyclists.

Other considerations related to the "accessible" goal for the PACS corridor is the lack of existing infrastructure to support modal connections along the corridor.

- Many bus stops along the corridor are located in areas with limited sidewalk connections, safe pedestrian crossings, and first mile/last mile connection opportunities.
- There current transit transfer station, located in the western portion of the Citadel Mall property as shown in Figure 39, is in an area with poor pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, especially for potential riders trying to access the station from the east. The intersection of Academy Blvd and Platte Avenue is a significant retail area, and there are also many residences east of Academy, but the location of the transfer station on the far west portion of the mall property makes it largely inaccessible to those parcels.

Figure 39 – Citadel Transit Transfer Station Location

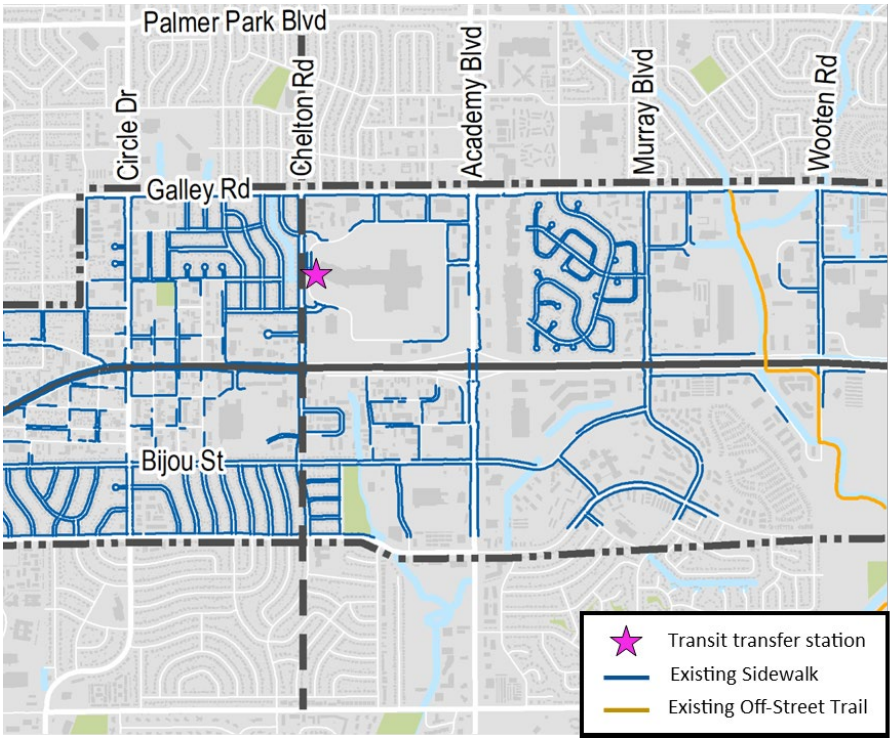


Figure 42 shows an analysis of the overall pedestrian experience that considers roadway widths, street characteristics, and vegetated areas that define the user's experience along the corridor.

Figure 40 – Pedestrian Connectivity Overview

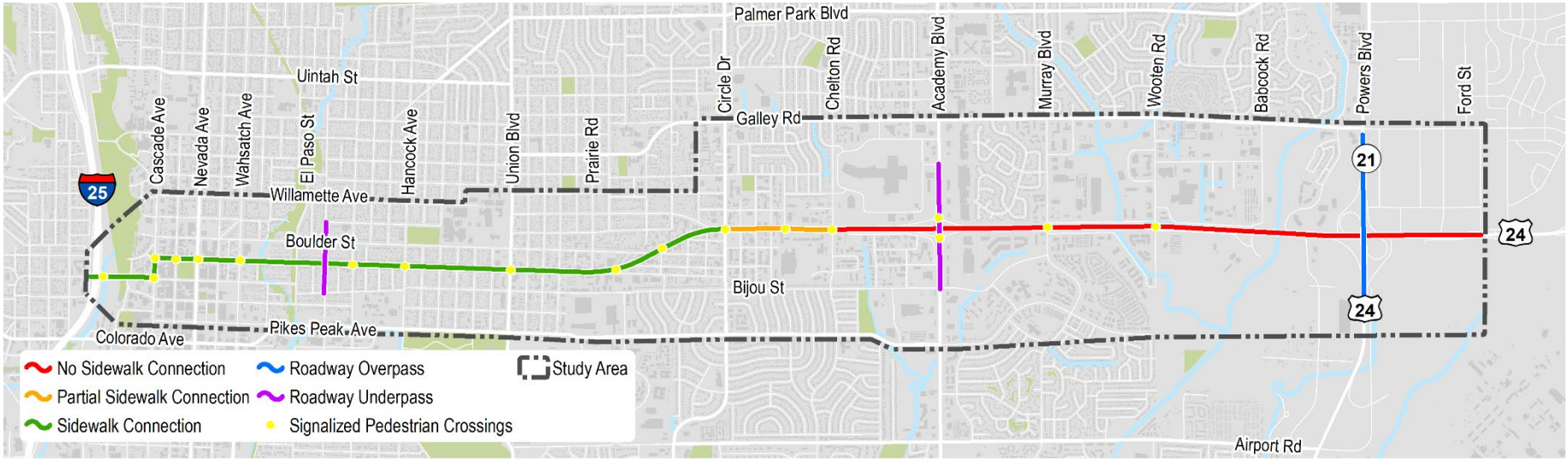


Figure 41 – Corridor Elevation/Contours

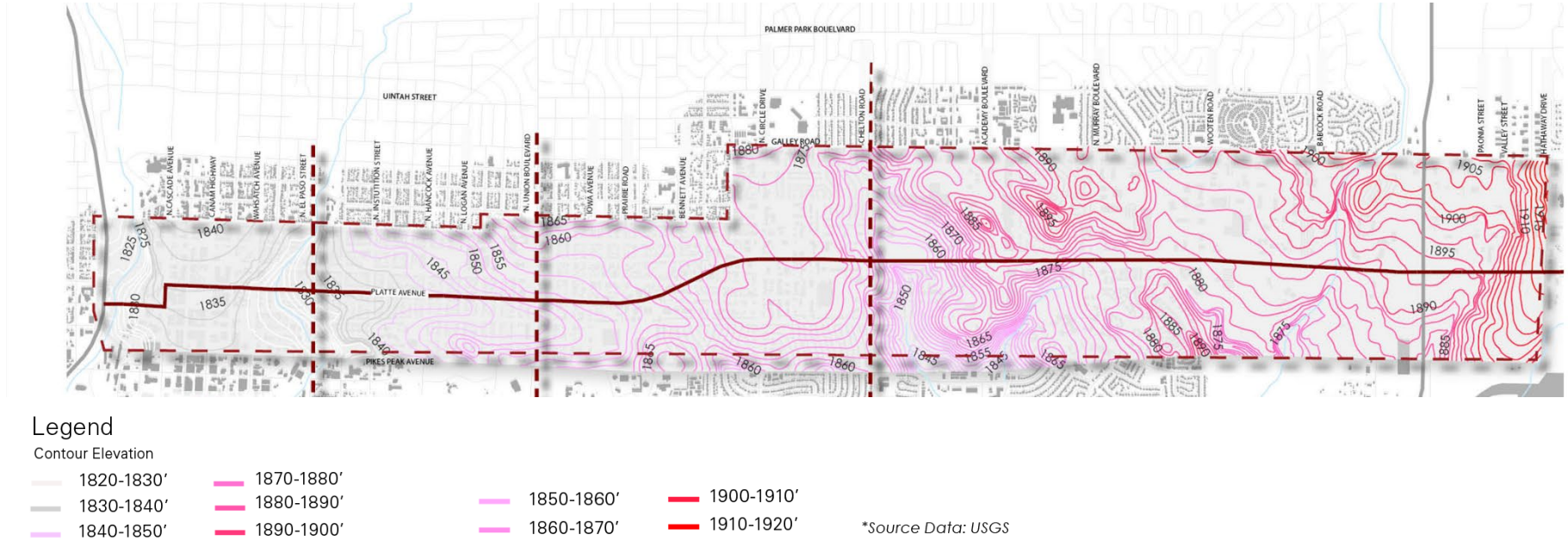
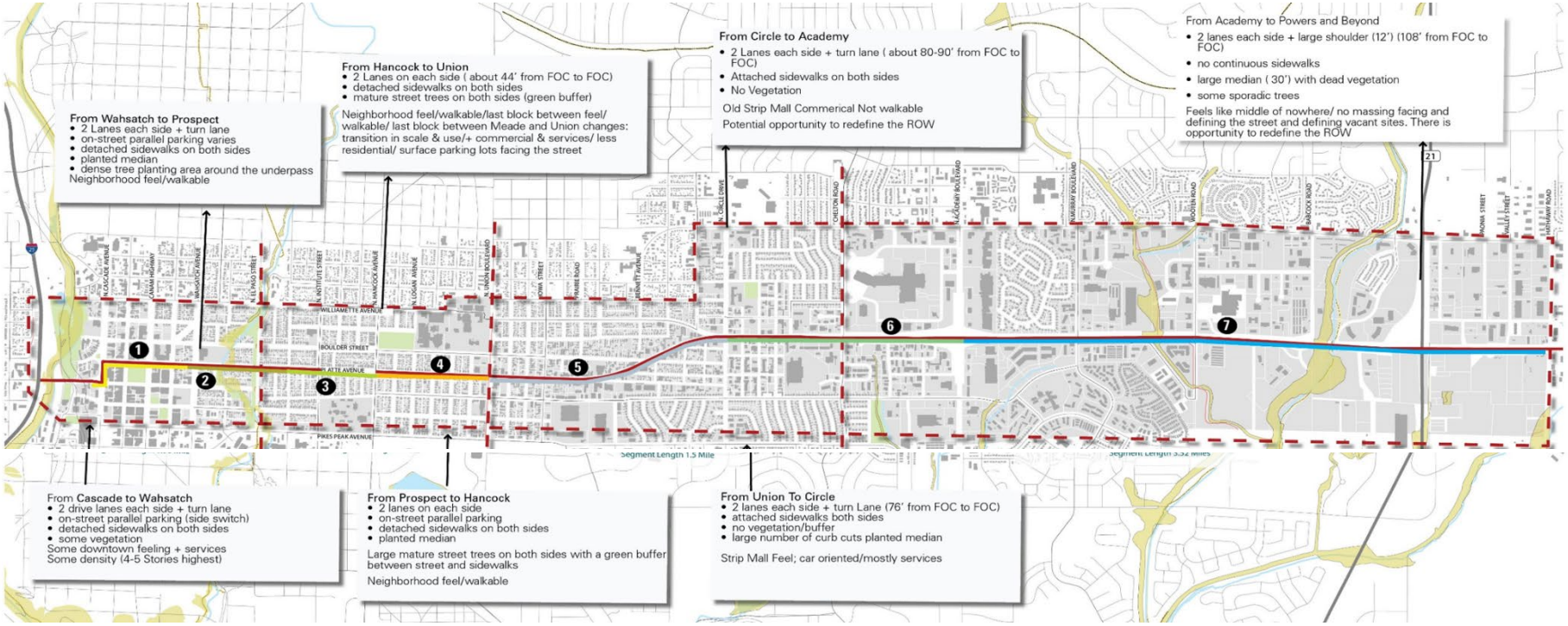


Figure 42 – Pedestrian Experience Overview



Connected

The "Connected" goal area considers connectivity from three lenses. The first is the connection or compatibility between the roadway function and the anticipated or desired land uses for that area. The second is the corridor's ability to connect people to key local and regional activity centers within Colorado Springs. Finally, the third element of connectivity is the ability of the corridor to connect neighborhoods and the community.

Connecting Roadway Function to Land Uses: The following maps from the ConnectCOS process show how various corridors in the city relate to anticipated land use changes:

- Figure 43 shows that Platte Avenue between Union and Academy is designated as the Redeveloping Corridor by the city planning department. In these areas, transportation investments are critical not only to help support and catalyze these redevelopment efforts, but the future transportation environment should be consistent with the desired changes to land uses that come with redevelopment.
- Figure 44 shows that Platte Avenue east of Chelton was identified as a candidate corridor within the ConnectCOS process given the likelihood of land use changes, as depicted by darker shades of orange in the map. With the heavy anticipated changes to land use in the eastern part of the City, Platte Avenue will likely experience increase in travel demand, as a key connector between the eastern portion of the city and downtown, and it will also likely experience different types of demands.
- Figure 45 also highlights areas that were identified in the Economic and Market Analysis (Appendix A) as positioned to transition their land use, based on zoning, planned development, and other economic or land use factors that indicate ripeness for change. This also shows the corridor east of Chelton as primed to accommodate land uses that are not there today.

Figure 43 – ConnectCOS Future Land Use Corridors

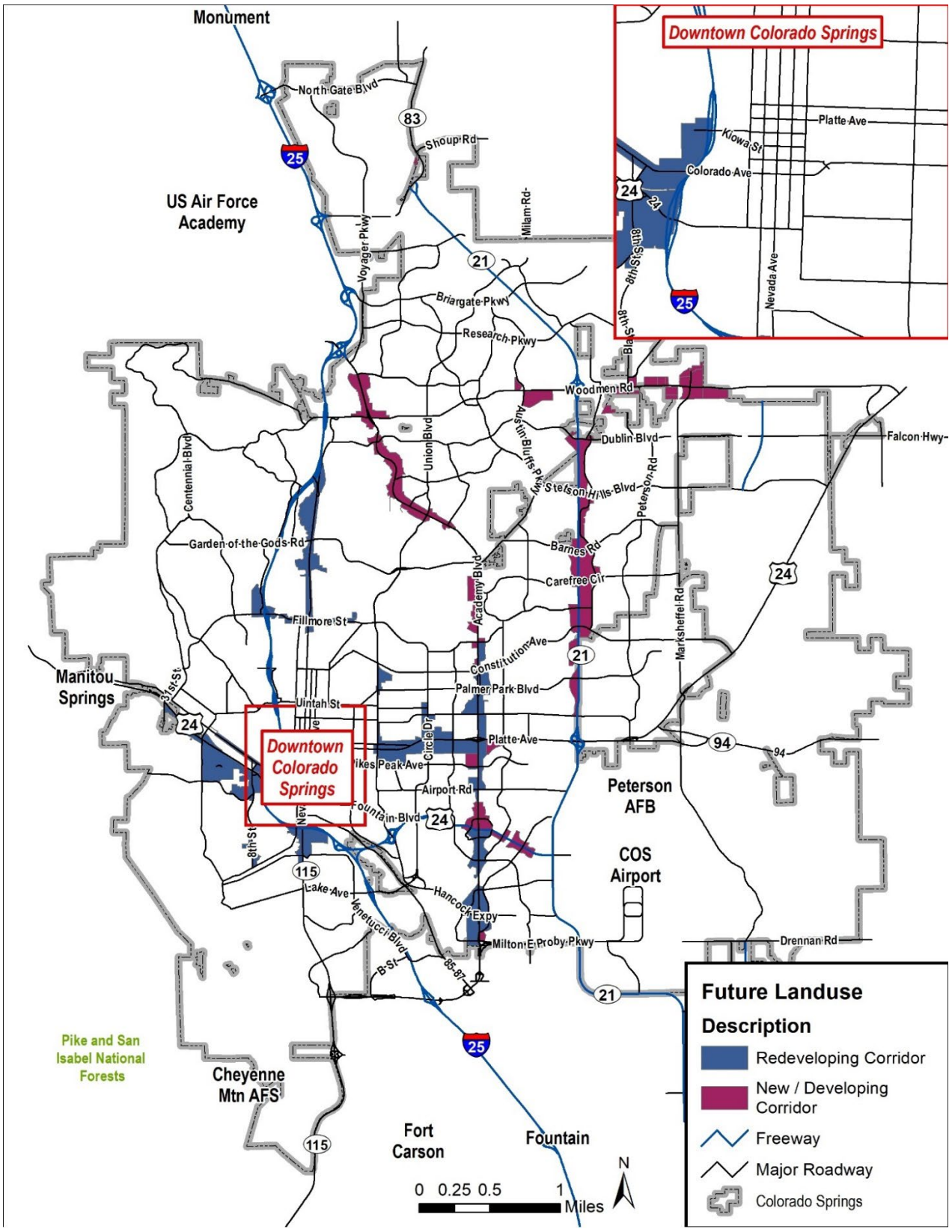


Figure 44 – ConnectCOS Likelihood of Land Use Change

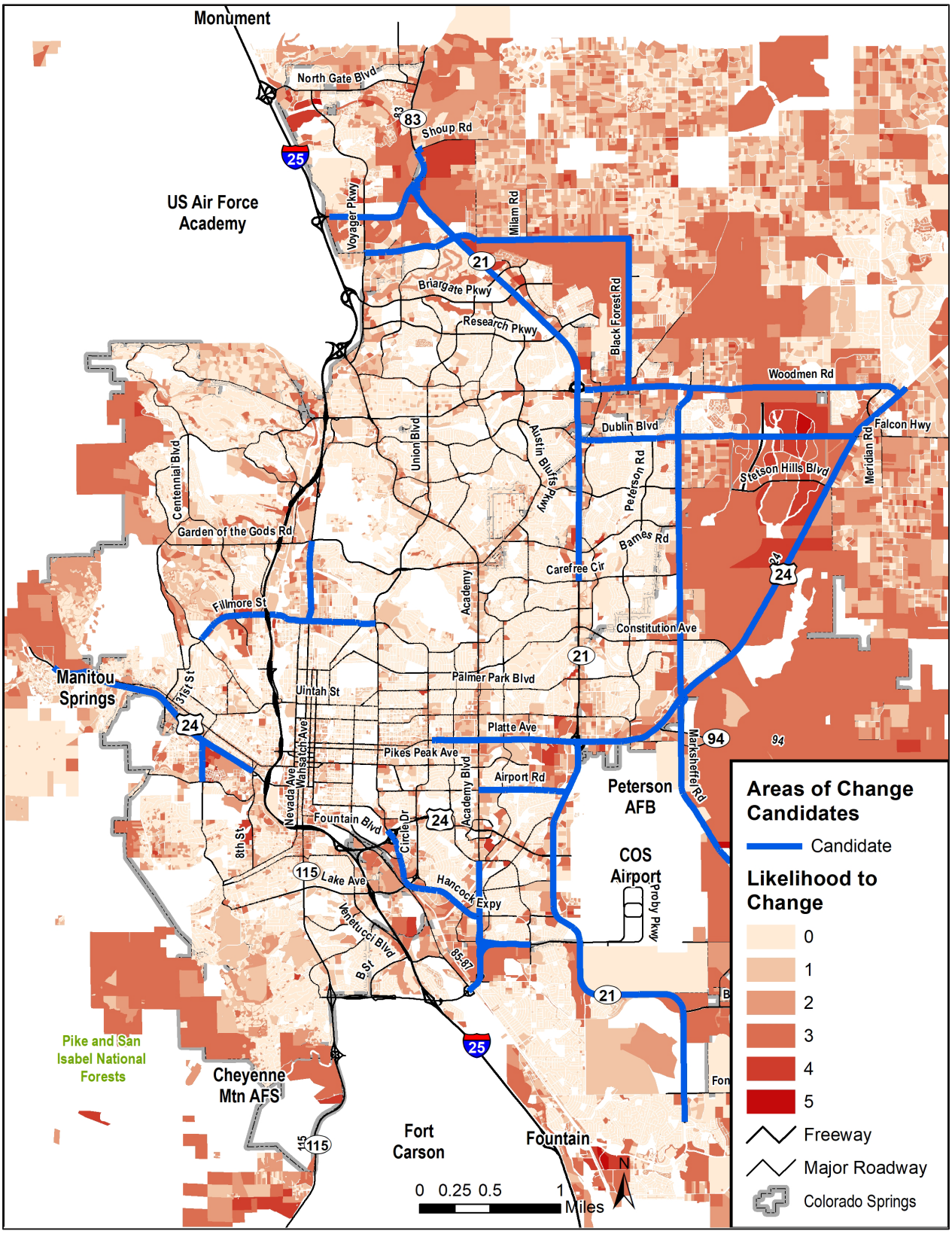


Figure 45 – Areas Indicating Potential for Change

Legend

- Form Based Central
- Form Based Corridor
- Form Based Trans.Sec. 1
- Planned Business Center Park No. 1&2
- Planned Industrial Park No. 1
- Planned Industrial Park No.2
- Planned Unit Development
- Unknown

Source Data: Data Provided from PlanCOS 2019

Commercial Development

1. Hilton Garden
4. New Arena/ Parking Structure
9. Restaurant

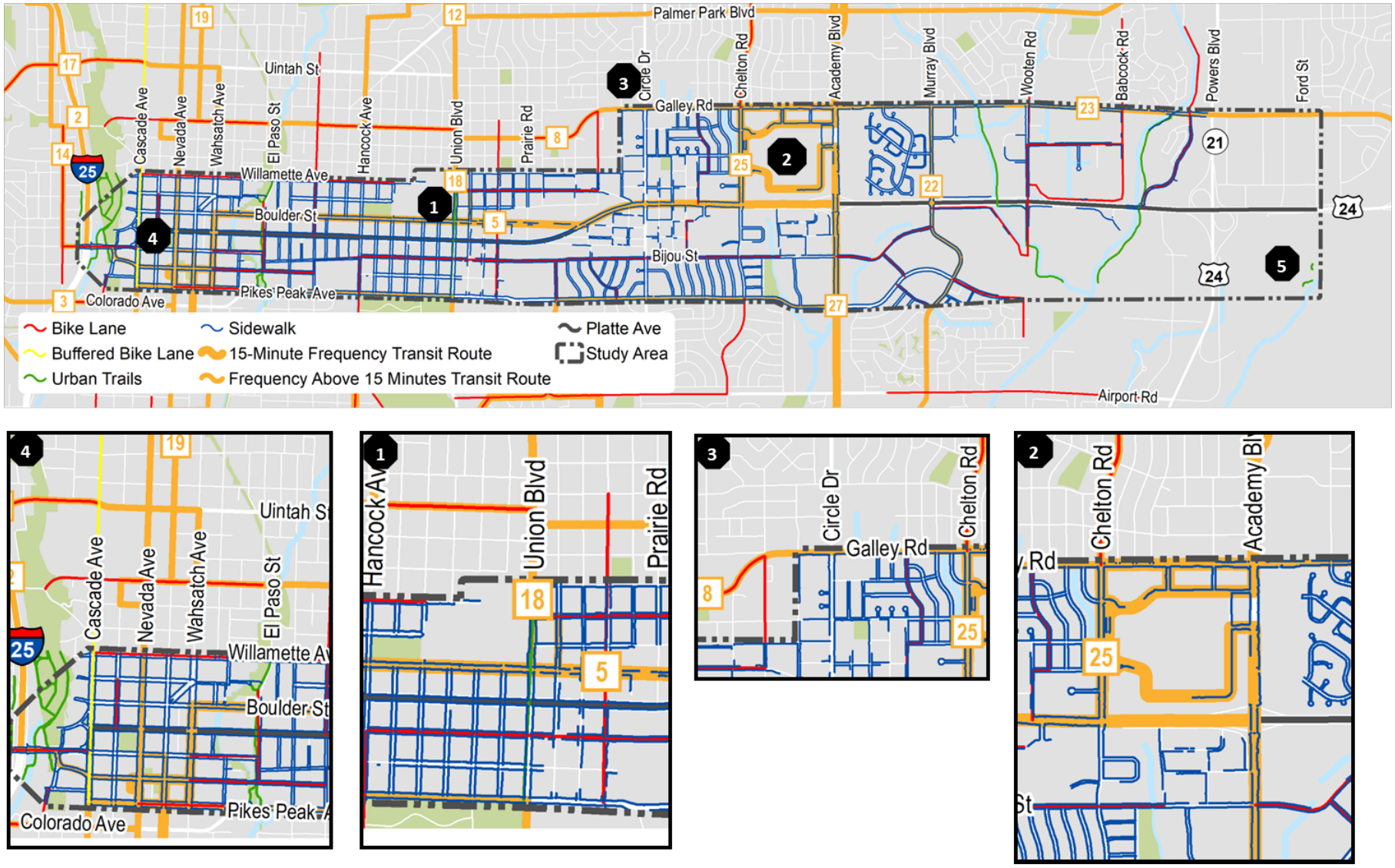
Residential Development

2. Residence by Pikes Peak
3. Bijou Lofts
5. 9 S. Weber Street
6. 53 Weber Street (2024)
7. Elan Pikes Peak (2024)
8. Duplex Housing Upgrade
10. Ridge at Sand Creek Housing Development
11. Patriot Park Residential Development

Connecting People to Destinations: As noted in a previous section, three locations within the PACS area are identified in PlanCOS as part of the Unique Places framework: the Olympic Training Center (OTC) and the Citadel Mall area (identified as Entertainment and Commercial Centers) and the area around the intersection of Galley and Circle (identified as a Community Activity Center). Other key corridor destinations include Downtown Colorado Springs and Peterson AFB. Figure 46 shows the multimodal infrastructure around each of these areas (represented by their respective number), which is summarized below:

1. The US OTC can be accessed via multiple modes including vehicles, pedestrians, high frequency transit, and bicycling (via Willamette Avenue). There is desire from the community to provide additional bicycling connections both for east/west connectivity and north/south connectivity to the OTC.
2. The Citadel Mall area is connected by vehicles and high frequency transit but lacks access via pedestrian and bicycle travel.
3. PlanCOS-identified Community Activity Center near Galley and Circle is generally lacking multimodal connections. There is vehicular infrastructure and sidewalks, but no bicycling facilities serve the area and transit services are provided at 60-minute frequencies.
4. The transportation network within the PACS area provides critical multimodal connections to Downtown. This includes travel by vehicles and pedestrians on all roadways, high frequency transit (15 minute service) via Boulder Street and bicycles via Willamette Avenue. There is desire from the community to provide additional bicycling connections to and from downtown via the corridor.
5. Peterson AFB can be accessed exclusively by a vehicle. There is desire to provide a direct and frequent transit service to the base.

Figure 46 – Multimodal Connectivity for Key Activity Centers



Connecting Neighborhoods: Currently, Platte Avenue itself and some of the other major north/south roadways within the corridor study area act and are seen as physical barriers between adjacent neighborhoods.

- The limited number of crossings of Platte Avenue within the Knob Hill area result in a lack of neighborhood cohesion between areas north of Platte Avenue and areas south of Platte Avenue
- The lack of multimodal connectivity across Academy Boulevard results in physical separation between neighborhoods east of Academy and the destinations and services on the western side of Academy, including the transit transfer station.
- Platte Avenue is seen as a pedestrian barrier within Downtown, being seen as a separator between the expanding northern portions of downtown and the established downtown core south of Platte.

Summary of Critical Needs

Table 11 summarizes the key findings from the assessment of the corridor facilities within the PACS area related to each ConnectCOS Goal Framework element. These elements will help guide the development of solutions to address these critical needs as recommendations for the corridor.

Table 11 – Summary of Critical Needs

Goal Area	Key Needs to Address
Safe	• High number of bike/ped crashes • Intersection crash hot spots • Improve infrastructure and perception of safety (including aesthetics) at crossings and bus stops
Equitable	• Residents along corridor need mobility options • Corridor users need mobility options • High transit propensity uses throughout the corridor • Improve accessibility of corridor facilities and to corridor destinations
Sustainable	• Desired economic investment in multiple locations throughout corridor • Need for affordable housing options • Need for improved multimodal access to corridor services in eastern portion of the corridor • Need for corridor amenities that combat environmental impacts from flooding or urban heat
Reliable	• Platte Avenue among 30% worst performing roadways within the City • Unacceptable intersection delay at multiple intersections that cannot be improved with signal timing • Multiple bridges/structures in poor/unacceptable condition • Stormwater infrastructure in poor condition or non-existent
Accessible	• Lack of continuity for pedestrian facilities degrades pedestrian comfort and accessibility to destination and transit • Incompatibilities between modes on the same roadway, resulting in the comfort of one mode to be degraded at the expense of another • Desire for corridor to be a gateway for various contexts • Desire for Knob Hill area to be pedestrian-oriented and walkable • Need improved transit transfer station at Citadel Mall (location and amenities)
Connected	• Incompatibilities between land use context and transportation function throughout the corridor • Need to reduce Platte as a neighborhood barrier • Need to elevate corridor's sense of place • Need to elevate Platte's function for east/west mobility with multiple modes • Need to provide expanded multimodal options for key corridor destinations identified in PlanCOS and the community.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

An initial set of public and stakeholder engagement activities were conducted in spring and early summer 2020 to begin to understand key opportunities, challenges and general perceptions of the corridor environment, including both transportation and general community and land use input.

Corridor Stakeholder Engagement

Early in 2021, the Platte Avenue Corridor Study project team met with approximately 50 corridor specific stakeholders over several weeks by conducting small group discussions, topical workshops, and one-on-one interviews. Stakeholders were selected to represent a diverse range of project partners and community members who live and work within the PACS area.

The meetings were largely conducted virtually and included the following stakeholders and community representatives:

- Downtown Partnership
- The Independence Center
- Mountain Metro Transit
- Colorado Springs Utilities
- The US Olympic and Paralympic Committee
- Trails and Open Space Coalition
- Emergency services
- Community representatives and advocates
- Bike Colorado Springs
- Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce
- UC Memorial Hospital
- Citadel Mall
- Middle Shooks Run Neighborhood Association
- Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA)
- School District 11 and Palmer High School

High-level Themes

- Platte Avenue is poised for a multimodal transformation that better serves the surrounding neighborhoods.
- The corridor is a gateway corridor to many destinations, but the current character is unwelcoming and not a good first impression.
- The corridor is a key transit route that functions reasonably well and experiences high ridership.
- There is a desire to walk and bike in the adjacent neighborhoods but crossing Platte Avenue presents significant challenges.
- Accessing I-25 from Platte Avenue is difficult for all modes, including bikes.
- The City has received feedback that living directly on Platte Avenue compromises their quality of life because of the traffic, inability to cross the street, and noise.

Public Engagement

The first public engagement activity was a digital mapping exercise that asked participants to identify things that are working well and things that are not working well within the PACS area related to transportation and community. Community was defined as aspects of the corridor that were related to quality of life and community placemaking.

There were 679 visits to the Social Pinpoint site and 245 unique users who provided specific inputs and comments. Participants could write in comments and these comments are summarized below based off the different segments of Platte Avenue. Figure 47 shows the map-specific feedback that visitors to Social Pinpoint provided as to what is working well and what is a concern for Pedestrian, Bicycle, Transit, Vehicle, and Community.

Figure 47 – Social Pinpoint Survey Results

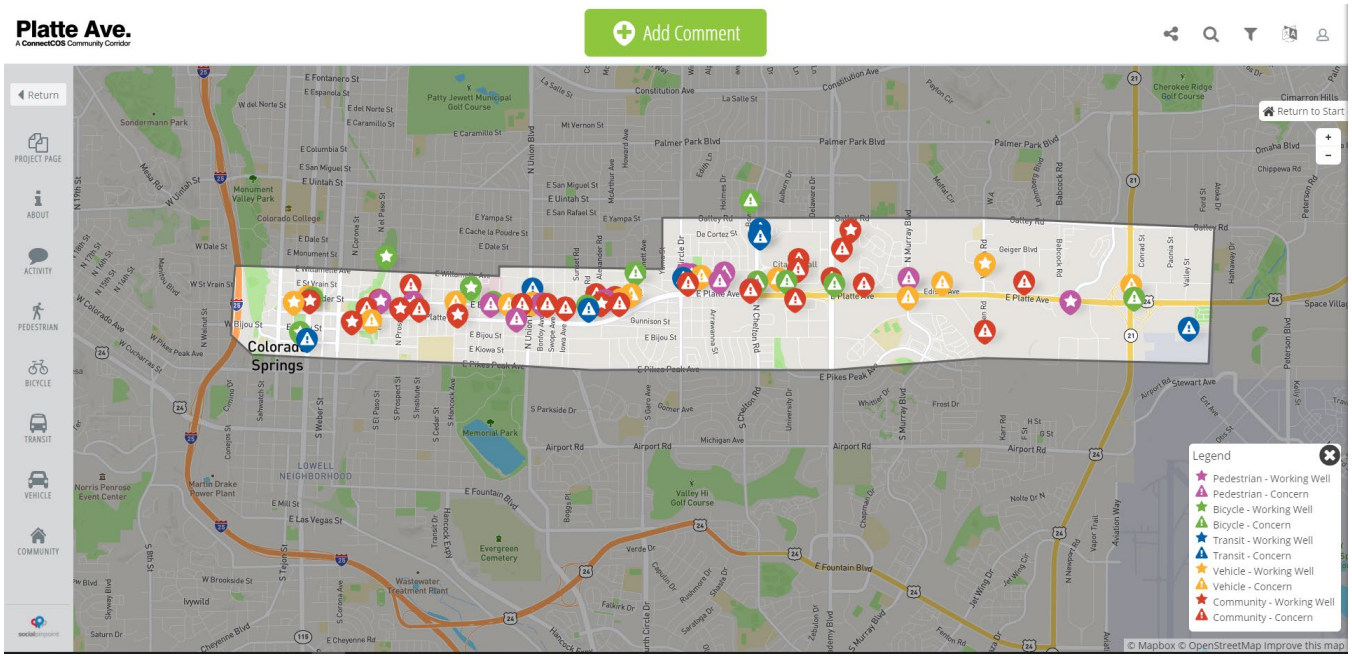
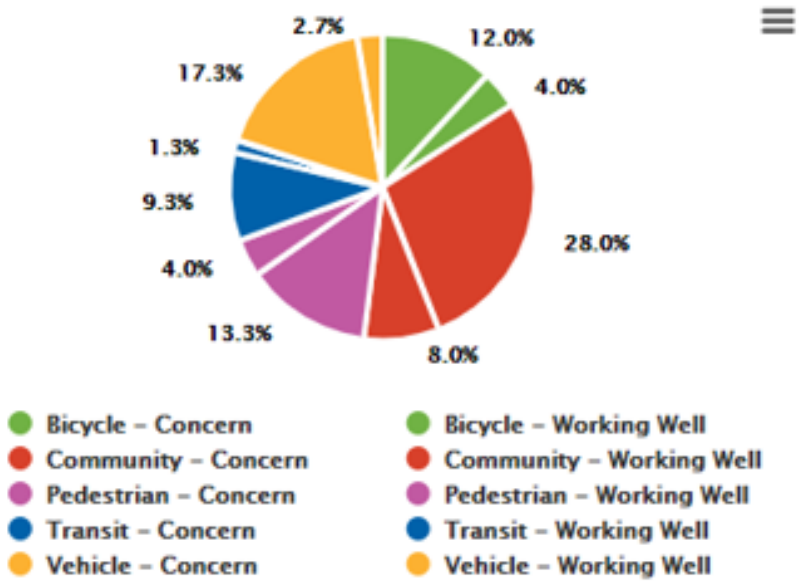


Table 12 and Figure 48 show the distribution of types of comments that were received on the map.

Table 12 – Percentage of Comment Type by Category

Category	Working Well	Concerns	Total (%)
Community	8	28	36
Vehicle	2.7	17.3	20
Pedestrian	4	13.3	17.3
Bicycle	4	12	16
Transit	1.3	9.3	10.6
Total (%)	20	80	

Figure 48 – Breakdown of Comment Type



Below is a high-level summary of comments received by character area. Overall, the Knob Hill area received the highest number of comments, with 42 total comments.

Downtown Character Area

There were many comments about things working well related to Bicycle and Community. Participants had positive comments about how they enjoy the improved biking experience along this stretch of the corridor, including connectivity to Shooks Run trail. There is common sentiment that having a safe option for those who do not travel by car is important. There was concern that intentionally connecting and associating Platte Avenue with I-25 could ruin the fabric of the historic neighborhood it would be running through.

There were also many comments (both Working Well and Concern) around the Platte/Nevada intersection with the General Palmer Statue, with comments noting that preserving its current location is important but also recognizing that there are some operational challenges with its location. The majority sentiment was that the statue's location should be maintained, but that

there are also some important improvements that should be considered for the intersection to improve safety.

Middle Shooks Run Character Area

There were prevalent concerns in this area related to Bicycle, Community, Pedestrian, and Vehicle. While the importance of Platte Avenue as an east to west roadway was recognized, residents within this character area noted high vehicle speeds to be a frequent concern both for quality of life and for the ability for travelers to bike and walk along the corridor while still feeling safe. One participant wrote that they prefer to bike on Boulder Street because it is not as stressful as Platte Avenue. Participants also commented that the shaded and comfortable sidewalks are working well and should be emulated throughout the corridor.

Knob Hill Character Area

For this section, there was a trend of "Concern" comments related to Community. Participants commented that with underutilized space, such as parking, there could be an opportunity for development. Participants felt that there was a lack of pedestrian-oriented amenities in this area such as trees and aesthetics, making it seem like a "concrete jungle." There were recommendations for broadening sidewalks, traffic dieting, increased shade, and adding medians where there are none could help bring this area to life. Also, participants noted that Platte Avenue in this area is a gateway to Knob Hill, and they would like to see it branded as a "place."

Eastern Reaches Character Area

Similar to in Knob Hill, there were also comments about facilitating walkable and bike accessible shops and restaurants near the Citadel Mall to bring more attraction and investment to the area. Participants were interested in new land uses like high-rise lofts, apartments, and more restaurants. Participants wanted to see improved bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along Platte Avenue and more frequent and safer crossings in the Eastern Reaches. One participant commented that they would bike to the transit transfer center, but they did not feel safe enough to cross Platte Avenue by bike. Other comments noted that this section of Platte Avenue is too dangerous to put bicyclists and pedestrians along.

Participants also identified this area to be poorly connected and confusing. The road network bounded by Murray/Platte/Powers/Airport was noted to be poorly connected and sends drivers through driveway-lined streets. Other challenges here are people having to wait too long at the intersections, and safety concerns for vehicles turning left onto northbound Murray from Bijou. The frontage roads also make this intersection confusing for drivers.

Finally, there was interest in exploring ways to improve Platte Avenue as a gateway into Colorado Springs from the east. One participant suggested including a "Welcome to Colorado Springs" sign on Highway 24 to really welcome people.

Key Takeaways and Next Steps

SWOC Analysis

Based on the variety of inputs from previous plans, PACS-specific technical analyses, stakeholder input, and public input, a comprehensive analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints (SWOC) identified consistent gaps, challenges, and opportunities that will guide the PACS.

The following key themes were consistent across the six Goal Framework elements and/or across the four character areas:

- The current interaction between existing modes of travel along the corridor degrade both safety and comfort for all corridor users.
- Much of the corridor lacks a community identity, which results in limited investment and ownership of corridor and its facilities.
- Economic investment in all portions of the corridor is severely lacking.
- There is frequent conflict between the need for efficient vehicular travel along the corridor and the need for a pedestrian-oriented environment.
- There are not consistent or clear expectations for function of the roadways within the corridor.
- There are not consistent or clear expectations for the interaction between transportation facilities and land uses within the corridor.

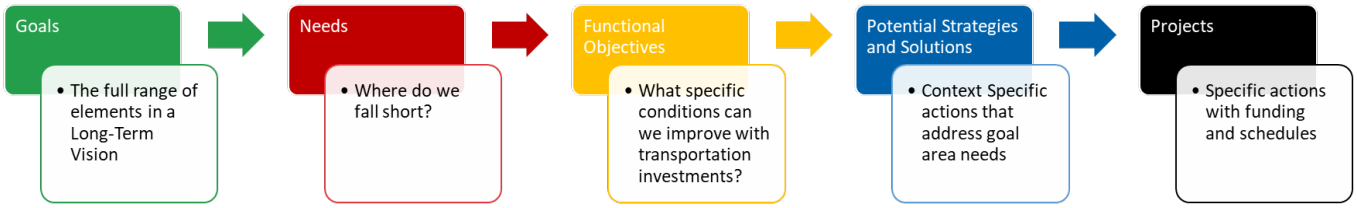
In summary, the lack of clear and consistent expectation for the function of Platte Avenue and its complementary facilities creates safety, economic, and equity challenges throughout the corridor.

Functional Objectives

The key challenges and deficiencies highlighted in the SWOC analysis helped create a framework for crafting the vision for the PACS area that the study should strive to achieve. Because the ConnectCOS Goal Framework provides the overarching goals for the PACS, a set of PACS ***Functional Objectives*** were identified to help translate the ConnectCOS Goals to the needs and context of the PACS area.

Functional describes the key elements of a high performing PACS corridor, and *Objectives* describe conditions where effort should be directed for specific outcomes. Figure 49 highlights the relationships among goals, needs, functional objectives, and solutions.

Figure 49 – Defining and Relating Functional Objectives to the Project Process



The following Functional Objectives were identified for the PACS:

The Platte Avenue Corridor should…

- **Maintain and enhance east-west connectivity and capacity for current and future traffic as the primary function** of the corridor, considering travel times, network connectivity, and activity centers served.
- Support **Downtown as a destination** – while connectivity between I-25 and the eastern reaches is important, the character of the Downtown portion of the corridor should prioritize the vision for Downtown
- **Establish a consistent identity** for the corridor while integrating and enhancing the different character areas and the transitions between
- **Integrate the corridor into the community** to create an "Avenue," visual connections, and context-specific **placemaking** opportunities
- **Invest in the corridor** to support the significant opportunity presented by Platte Avenue to positively impact Citywide **economic and equity outcomes**
- Provide **safe, efficient, and comfortable transportation options** along and across the corridor to enhance mobility for those who drive, ride, walk, or roll

Next Steps

The Functional Objectives, as well as the outcomes of the SWOC analysis, are key inputs into the process of crafting potential solutions for the corridor. While the Functional Objectives will be the overarching framework, how the objectives are met will be different in each character area because of the drastically different contexts and expectations that exist in each area. As such, these inputs and further technical analyses will help to generate a specific set of potential solutions for each character area to drive the development of strategy scenarios, or alternatives, for each character area. These strategy alternatives will be the foundation for the next round of stakeholder and public engagement to help further refine alternatives to eventually get to a recommended alternative for the PACS corridor.

Appendix A. Economic and Market Analysis

To request a copy of this document, please contact the City of Colorado Springs Department of Traffic and Transportation Engineering at 719-385-5908.

Appendix B. Traffic Operations Existing Conditions Assessment

Traffic Operations Information is provided as Appendix C to the Platte Avenue Corridor Study report.

Appendix C. Travel Patterns Analysis

To request a copy of this document, please contact the City of Colorado Springs Department of Traffic and Transportation Engineering at 719-385-5908.

Appendix D. Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report

To request a copy of this document, please contact the City of Colorado Springs Department of Traffic and Transportation Engineering at 719-385-5908.