

# PIKES PEAK REGION SDAT REPORT



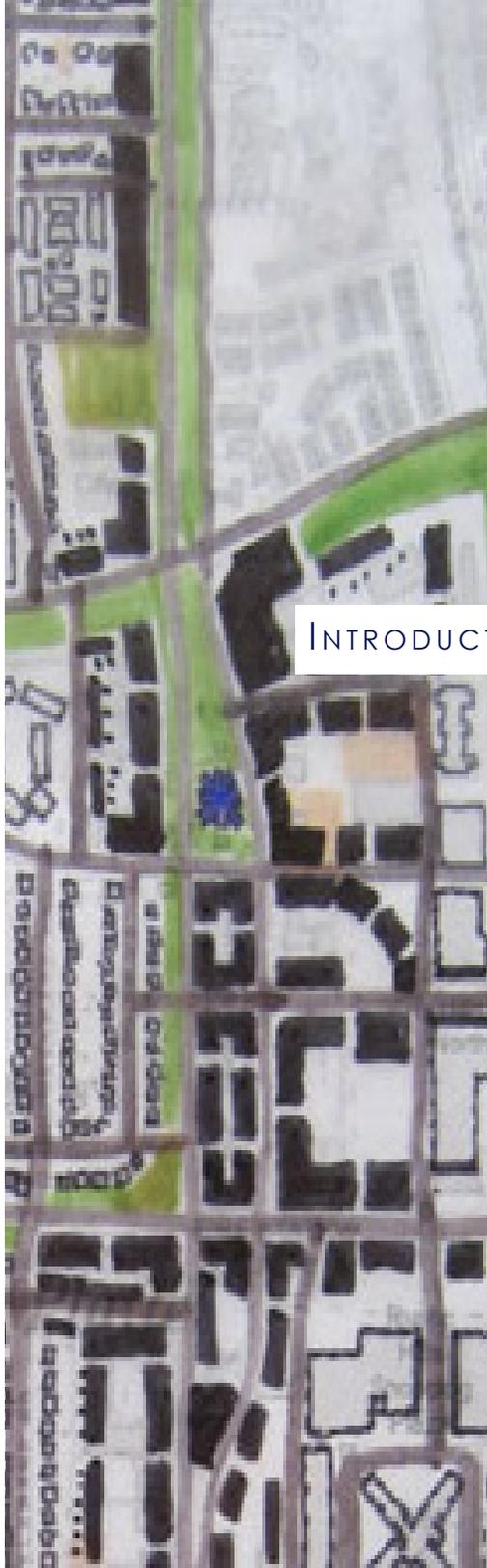
PIKES PEAK REGION, CO • SEPT 26-28

**AIA** Communities by Design   
ENVISION. CREATE. SUSTAIN.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
  - THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
  - THE PIKES PEAK SDAT PROCESS
2. THE BIG PICTURE - LEE QUILL
3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - CHUCK D'APRIX & RICHARD WARD
4. URBAN DESIGN AND LAND USE - JUNE WILLIAMSON
5. TRANSPORTATION - KRISTINE WILLIAMS
6. CREATING THE REGIONAL COMMUNITY - RON THOMAS
7. CONCLUSION: REGIONAL CAPACITY AND THE FUTURE OF PIKES PEAK
8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
9. CHARRETTE TEAM



INTRODUCTION

## THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

With nearly 300 state and local chapters and over 76,000 members, the American Institute of Architects serves as the voice of the architecture profession and the resource for its members in service to society. The AIA has a 44-year history of public service work. Through the Center for Communities by Design, the AIA has engaged over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines, ultimately providing millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, and engaging thousands of participants in community-driven planning processes. Its projects have led to some of the most recognizable places in America, such as the Embarcadero in San Francisco and the Santa Fe Railyard Redevelopment. In 2010, the AIA received the 'Organization of the Year' Award from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), recognizing its program impact on communities and contributions to the field.



- **Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT):** Created in 1967, the AIA's R/UDAT program pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations.
- **Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT):** In 2005, in response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long term sustainability plans. During the first 6 years of the SDAT program, the Center for Communities by Design has worked with over 50 towns, cities and regions.



The Center's Design Assistance Team programs operate with three guiding principles:

- **Multi-disciplinary Expertise.** Each project is designed as a customized approach to community assistance that incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes a multi-disciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. In order to accomplish this task, the Center forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.
- **Enhanced Objectivity.** The goal of the design assistance team program is to provide communities with a framework for action. Consequently, each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that is outside of the normal politics of public discussion. Team members are deliberately selected from geographic regions outside of the host community, and national AIA teams are typically representative of a wide range of community settings. Team members all agree to serve pro bono, and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.
- **Public Participation.** The AIA has a four-decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.

## THE PIKES PEAK REGION SDAT PROCESS

In November 2010, Pikes Peak Region officials submitted an application to the American Institute of Architects for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) project. As the Region's application stated:

"AIA Colorado South's SDAT objective is to discover ways of implementing, actualizing and incentivizing a successful, living Regional Sustainability Plan. We feel such a plan includes strategies that address public policy, economic development, investment in sustainable growth, and preservation of the beautiful environment of the Pikes Peak Region."



The application was accepted in December, and in April 2011, an initial visit to the region was conducted to determine the project scope and identify the expertise needed for the project. In September 2011, a six-member SDAT team conducted

a three-day charrette with the community to assess current conditions, listen to resident input, analyze constraints and opportunities, and form a series of key recommendations for the region moving forward. The charrette process included tours of the project area, targeted meetings with public officials and stakeholders, a public workshop, and studio design sessions. At the conclusion of the charrette, the team presented its recommendations at a community meeting.

The following report contains a narrative summary of the team's findings, with particular emphasis in the following areas:

- Economic Development strategies for the region
- Suggestions for an effective regional approach to governance
- An approach to regional land use and transportation that emphasizes infill development and the creation of centers and hubs
- Numerous examples of existing comparative approaches and models for the region to consider.





THE BIG PICTURE

## THE KEY CHALLENGE

The Pikes Peak Region SDAT application identified the following objective for the process:

“We hope to leverage the expertise of the SDAT team in structuring the dialogue in order to get at the barriers to change. We hope that the SDAT team can assist in identifying incentives, policy and structures that can effectively build a collaboration of diverse groups and organizations in support of change. We hope to gain from the SDAT team an understanding of how to get from the conceptual to the actual in realizing economically vibrant, livable communities.”

The following report captures the SDAT Team’s key recommendations across several important issues facing the Pikes Peak Region:

- Economic Development
- Land Use & Urban Design
- Transportation
- Regional Planning

While each team member authored a specific section of the report, there are clear themes evident across the entirety of our findings. The following summary captures the cross-cutting issues that the region faces, and the team’s assessment and core recommendations regarding them.

The SDAT application described the Pikes Peak Region’s central challenge in the following summary:

“The Region has experienced and is experiencing growth pains similar to many areas throughout the country. As development occurs beyond previously established urban and suburban areas there are negative effects on infrastructure, public budgets, traffic, pollution, and viable transportation options. Leap-frogging of established development onto new and cheaper real estate has created underutilized centers, or grey-fields, throughout the region.”



The team concurred with this analysis. As Kristine Williams writes:

“Colorado Springs, initially a compact downtown with neighborhoods connected by streetcars, has been transformed into a sprawling 200 square mile automobile mecca. The dramatic expansion of the City has been facilitated by its annexation of huge developments on the urban fringe. One resident, commenting on the change in travel patterns over time, characterized it this way: ‘We’ve gone from a 15 minute community to a 45 minute community.’ Regional planners note that more than 75% of workers drive alone to work. This need to drive for nonwork purposes is reinforced by the separation of residential subdivisions from commercial areas.”

This sprawling growth pattern has contributed to a number of regional challenges. From an economic standpoint, the team identified a growing issue concerning the region’s future economic health – as D’Aprix and Ward observe, “population growth in the 2000s was driven primarily by elderly and retirees migrating to the community, attracted by its relatively low cost of living and high quality of life. Job growth did not keep pace with population change.”

D'Aprix and Ward conclude, "it is clear the region is falling behind in economic growth – not attracting or creating jobs that generate needed public and private wealth and positive economic multiplier effects." As they explain:

"A frequently cited concern of residents and stakeholders interviewed by the team is declining public revenue vs. rising costs and demands for improved public services, facilities and infrastructure. This concern was coupled with a frequent observation that the community is over reliant on regressive sales taxes and dependent on declining state revenues especially in support of education, transportation, and public health needs. While such underinvestment and financing of the public realm may contribute to the region's relatively low cost of living, there is good reason to fear it will soon reduce the attractiveness and value of a wide array of community assets and attributes."

June Williamson amplifies the key land use challenge for the region. As she observes,

"there are miles – square mile after square mile – of "premature subdivisions." These exist only on paper, through various agreements and filed master plans. The challenge the region is left with boils down to this: is more suburban style growth inevitable in the Pikes Peak Region, or can the urbanization process be steered in another direction, back towards those ample greyfield opportunities?"

## THE TIME FOR REGIONALISM IS NOW

The team is unanimous in its belief that the Pikes Peak region must engage in more robust regionalism to address these key challenges. As June Williamson notes, "Where is the vision?" Ron Thomas describes the primary reasons for a new emphasis on regional collaboration:

"As the Pikes Peak region has experienced extraordinary growth over the last two decades, old boundaries have come to mean less and less. Increasingly, the problems most conspicuous to the public, such as congestion, sprawl, environmental degradation and loss of traditional community form are not solvable by any single jurisdiction, no matter how large. The challenge is to find common ground, forge new partnerships and work together across what have been guarded, competitive boundaries to begin working as a regional community of vested interests with shared goals."

Ward and D'Aprix concur that the region needs to move beyond its "tendency for its community institutions and economic drivers to operate independently without capitalizing on opportunities to collaborate and pursue a common vision." As they conclude, "The team strongly recommends that more intensive efforts be made to 'connect the dots' – that is, to find ways to join forces and reap greater rewards for the regional economy." Specific ideas regarding process design and public engagement for regional collaboration are articulated in the report.

## 'INCREMENTAL METROPOLITANISM': A LONG-TERM GROWTH STRATEGY

The report outlines a long-term strategy for healthy growth in the Pikes Peak region. The strategy described by the team integrates all of the key issues facing the region. From an economic standpoint, as Ward and D'Aprix explain, "redevelopment is essential to a sustainable economic development effort." They identify the following areas of emphasis for the region:

"The Pikes Peak region has a number of promising potential redevelopment areas, particularly those located in greater downtown Colorado Springs. While many of the recommendations are focused on downtown, there are also other locations that should be explored for reconfiguration and redevelopment as satellite town centers or mixed- use business districts. The Academy Boulevard corridor is one such example. As public transit expands, these other locations also become more attractive as unique and relatively dense, pedestrian-friendly, and energy-efficient destinations."

June Williamson lays out a coherent approach to "incremental metropolitanism," which also emphasizes the Academy Boulevard corridor and related key centers:

"This corridor is essential to establishing what the team sees as an emergent polycentric structure within Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region of "incremental metropolitanism." This term, coined by June Williamson and Ellen Dunham-Jones, is meant to invoke the idea of remaking a metropolis into a sustainable polycentric system, through the systemic transformation of prototypical single-use suburban nodes and corridors."

Williamson goes on to identify a toolbox of strategies and cases from across the country that the region can utilize in its implementation efforts:

“This goal may be accomplished through infill development and land use policy by pursuing three primary strategies of retrofitting: re-inhabitation, redevelopment, and/or regreening. Re-inhabitation is pursued through various forms of adaptive reuse of buildings, often for more community-serving purposes. Redevelopment, the replacement of existing structures and/or building on parking lots, can involve substantial demolition and restructuring of the urban morphology of relatively large parcels of land, that is, the pattern of streets, blocks, lots and buildings upon them. And regreening can range from the introduction of small-scale civic spaces into re-inhabitation or redevelopment retrofits – such as small parks and plazas – to initiatives scaled to the neighborhood, district, or region designed for wildlife corridors, watershed systems repair and the like.”

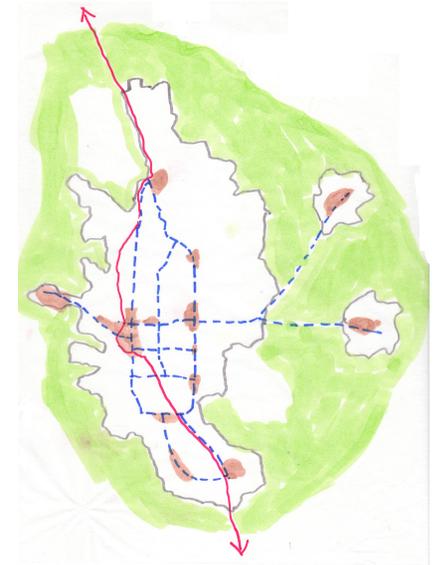
Kristine Williams explains that this strategy is necessary to address transportation challenges in the region as well, observing that, “poor accessibility and single land use areas are defining characteristics of urban sprawl. These land use issues have clear implications for transportation. Research has shown that destinations near the core of metropolitan areas and job centers that are highly accessible with a diversity of uses and well-connected street systems tend to be among the most vibrant and livable places and also have the greatest potential to reduce driving.”

As Williams explains, the region will need to move forward in an entirely new policy direction:

“To shift from an auto-oriented planning process to one that supports all modes of travel will require a new way of thinking about transportation. The region’s transportation and development process must shift the focus from moving cars to moving people and goods. This is not to say that the region should stop investing in its arterial highway system. It simply means that transportation and land use needs and relationships differ based upon the location and type of growth involved – development of the fringe or redevelopment of the core.”



Continued Sprawl Future



Incremental Metropolitanism Future

As Ron Thomas concludes, Pikes Peak’s pursuit of this strategy would align it with other similar regions across the country:

“An emerging standard for regional plans has been a ‘centers-and-corridors approach’ that has proven to be a useful guide for a region without intruding on local municipal planning responsibilities and authorities down to the zoning level. This approach does, at the same time, have significance in that it provides a visual growth strategy for the region, has a clear future development guide for each municipality and identifies the important connections and linkages between centers. Underlying this concept is the clear focus to concentrate future development as much as possible towards these centers in a pattern and density established in the plan.”



## LEVERAGING THE POWER OF PLACE

Finally, the team highlights the need to leverage the region's unique sense of place in all of its efforts moving forward. As D'Aprix and Ward state:

Think of sense of place in the community and region as a business decision. We know great places attract the best resources and investments. The planning and development of great places naturally leads to the formation of broad-based partnerships, bringing together diverse interests and groups. This partnership approach not only provides resources but also builds momentum for more investment.

By implementing the strategies articulated in the team's report, the Pikes Peak region can maintain its special beauty and quality of life, and leverage it for a stronger, more vibrant future.





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## SETTING THE STAGE

Salient economic development influences were identified by the team based on evaluation of background material and interviews of diverse community stakeholders. These influences are highlighted below:

### **Strong Population and Employment Growth**

The two-county Colorado Springs region grew by some 17% between 2000 and 2010, the same rate of growth as the State of Colorado but almost double the rate for the nation. On the other hand, among its peer regions in the central and mountain state, Colorado Springs' growth was exceeded substantially by Austin (37%) and Boise (33%), about the same as Albuquerque (22%) and Ft. Collins (19%) and greater than Omaha (13%). In the previous decade, 1990 to 2000, the region and state both grew at 31% compared to 13% for the U. S.

The problem with this picture is that while employment growth in Colorado Springs in the decade of the 1990s was roughly on pace with population expansion, continued population growth in the 2000s was driven primarily by elderly and retirees migrating to the community, attracted by its relatively low cost of living and high quality of life. Job growth did not keep pace with population change.

### **Impact of the National Recession**

The primary concern here is that private, non-military jobs declined in the decade of 2000 to 2010, with overall job growth occurring at just 6.5% of population growth over the decade. Given that, on average, each household is comprised of two persons of which one is employed, the potential labor force has grown almost eight times the rate of actual job growth. While this statistical shortfall is offset in part by the fact that many of those contributing to population gain are retired and not seeking or requiring jobs, or are in the lower ranks of military organizations, it is clear the region is falling behind in economic growth – not attracting or creating jobs that generate needed public and private wealth and positive economic multiplier effects. Important indicators of a weakened labor force profile are the rising unemployment rate, not just from 2007 to 2009 during the national recession (4.5% to 8% plus) but continuing to nearly 10.5% in early 2011, as well as a proportional decline in the young professional workforce as a percent of population.

### **Long-Term Growth of Military Establishments and Employment**

Colorado Springs is blessed with an expanding and dynamic array of government employment, including four major military installations – U. S. Air Force Academy (10,000), Peterson Air Force Base (12,000), Schriever Air Force Base (7,000) and Ft. Carson Army Base (32,000) that together employ approximately 60,000. Ft. Carson has grown by almost 10,000 in the past decade, largely as a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions, and is poised to receive 2,700 additional soldiers with the arrival shortly of a Combat Aviation Brigade. However, this large foundation of the region's economy does have its drawbacks in that there is a tendency for it to be taken for granted (forgetting that draw downs can be quick and painful) and excessively depended upon in ways that create a 'company town' community mentality.

### **Attractive Natural Environment and Active and Healthy Life-Styles**

Set against the background of the Rocky Mountains and the iconic Pikes Peak and with a relatively mild climate, the region is a natural draw for those desiring a healthy outdoor and fitness lifestyle. There is little doubt this aspiration has made a significant contribution to the area's steady population, job, and tourism growth and its overall desirability as a place to live, work and play.

### **Economic Development Action Plan Recently Completed**

Good work has been done by the region's civic institutions to understand trends and forces effecting economic growth and prosperity. Two examples of special note are: First, the Operation 60ThirtyFive comprehensive economic development strategic plan (2009) commissioned by an alliance of 17 public and private organizations and prepared by AngelouEconomics consultants; and, second, the Quality of Life Indicators report of the Pikes Peak Region United Way (2011) with its leading chapter on Growing a Vibrant Economy.

### Low Public Investment in Facilities and Services and Over-dependency on Sales Taxes

A frequently cited concern of residents and stakeholders interviewed by the team is declining public revenue vs. rising costs and demands for improved public services, facilities and infrastructure. This concern was coupled with a frequent observation that the community is over reliant on regressive sales taxes and dependent on declining state revenues especially in support of education, transportation, and public health needs. While such underinvestment and financing of the public realm may contribute to the region's relatively low cost of living, there is good reason to fear it will soon reduce the attractiveness and value of a wide array of community assets and attributes.

### RECOMMENDATION: CONNECT THE DOTS

A general impression gained by the team is that an important challenge facing Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region is a tendency for its community institutions and economic drivers to operate independently without capitalizing on opportunities to collaborate and pursue a common vision. Numerous of those providing input to the team spoke of these important institutions operating in "silos" and eschewing partnerships and economies of mutual endeavor. Hence the team strongly recommends that more intensive efforts be made to "connect the dots" – that is, to find ways to join forces and reap greater rewards for the regional economy.

Key sectors having the potential for greater interaction and healthy interdependence include:

- U. S. military in the region
- Local and state government agencies
- Higher education institutions
- Health care institutions
- Homebuilders, developers, contractors, and realtors
- Financial institutions
- Other non-profit organizations such as the U.S. Olympic Committee



### RECOMMENDATION: CAPITALIZE ON FT. CARSON/AIR FORCE ACADEMY SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The commitment of the U. S. Department of Defense, the Army and the Air Force to achieving a broad array of sustainability objectives within its operations and facilities offers the Pikes Peak region a golden opportunity. The military's efforts at its bases in Colorado Springs can provide ideal case studies to be emulated throughout the region and in all economic sectors. Reducing energy consumption, replacing or supplanting fossil fuels with green energy sources (solar, wind, biomass, etc.), increasing development density, mixing land and buildings uses and creating LEED certified facilities, and reducing and shortening commuting trips can all be demonstrated through the experiences at local military facilities, particularly Ft. Carson and the Air Force Academy (Note: Both are targeting achievement of sufficient renewable energy by 2016 to attain net zero energy usage). Also, the military's contractors, vendors and other suppliers of green goods and services can be more readily induced to locate their operations in the community if they perceive a market beyond that represented by local military procurement officers.

## RECOMMENDATION: INCREASE PUBLIC/PRIVATE INVESTMENT

The government sector employs a larger proportion of local residents than any other sector of the economy—over 25% of 250,000, or about 70,000 which are proportioned about 60/40 between uniformed military and civilian government employees (ranging from civilian U. S. Defense, to public schools, to colleges and universities, to health care, and to city, state and county government offices.) The opportunity is for this array of government employers to reach out and privatize as much as possible of its service and product inputs through partnerships with the private sector where practical and feasible, rather than taking the path of least resistance and internalizing these support functions. Privatization of otherwise governmental functions can yield greater efficiency, lower costs, and greater multiplier effects – creating more secondary and tertiary employment and expenditure cycles than are otherwise likely to occur, while serving as a catalyst for broader private business and institutional growth.

## RECOMMENDATION: STRENGTHEN DOWNTOWN AND SATELLITE MIXED-USE DISTRICTS

The Pikes Peak region has a number of promising potential redevelopment areas, particularly those located in greater downtown Colorado Springs. While many of the recommendations are focused on downtown, there are also other locations that should be explored for reconfiguration and redevelopment as satellite town centers or mixed- use business districts. The Academy Boulevard corridor is one such example. As public transit expands, these other locations also become more attractive as unique and relatively dense, pedestrian-friendly, and energy-efficient destinations.

Under the guidance of professional staff and advisors of the city and Downtown Partnership, downtown is already actively engaged in a variety of redevelopment initiatives. To that end, many of the economic development recommendations of this section have a downtown focus. However, as these concepts are introduced into downtown, they can be refined and applied to mixed-use satellite centers in the region.



### **Address and Rationalize Utility Costs**

The City of Colorado Springs public utility provides electricity and water to local residents and businesses. The rates are competitive if one is engaged in greenfield development. However, they become burdensome, if not prohibitive, when applied to a redevelopment project. The team heard from several public and private sector leaders who felt that the cost of redevelopment rises significantly because of the cost of upgrading connections to the existing utility networks—a fee borne by the developer rather than being shared by the utility.

The city's utility should be encouraged to carefully reexamine its rate structure and establish a working group from the business community to recommend changes that will encourage rather than discourage infill and redevelopment. Redevelopment can have significant positive economic impacts (with corresponding energy-efficiency and environmental benefits) on a community, thereby yielding economic gains that justify and off-set the utility's enabling investment.

### **Residential Infill**

Downtown presents a number of attractive options for residential infill. We recommend that an incremental residential infill program should be devised that includes identifying opportunities for repurposing upper stories in downtown buildings as housing locations. Additional downtown residents will have significant positive economic and cultural impacts on the city-center.

### **Utilize Public Parking Enterprise as a Catalyst for Private Investment Downtown**

Colorado Springs has a public parking funding and delivery mechanism - The Parking Enterprise. This should be employed to create more parking facilities that act as a catalyst for investment in mixed-use development downtown. The effectiveness of this approach has been clearly demonstrated in numerous successful downtown districts in cities across the country, including Greenville, South Carolina and Royal Oak, Michigan. Relieving private landlords, property owners and users of the cost and responsibility of providing on-site parking not only reduces risk and increases feasibility of private investment. It also reduces the total amount of space required for parking in the downtown and encourages a more dense and pedestrian friendly building pattern and public domain. The Downtown Partnership should take the lead in creating a 'guidebook' that highlights how developers can partner with the city to employ the fund for the creation of viable downtown development.

### **Building Partnerships**

Value the sense of place in the community to attract many stakeholders and benefactors. Form broad-based partnerships of civic groups, planners, community leaders, educators, business owners and others. Establish formal agreements that capture financial resources and build "community capital" and consensus for more local investment. Think of sense of place in the community and region as a business decision. We know great places attract the best resources and investments. The planning and development of great places naturally leads to the formation of broad-based partnerships, bringing together diverse interests and groups. This partnership approach not only provides resources but also builds momentum for more investment.





### **Reinvigorate DDA Grant Program**

The Downtown Development Authority, part of the Downtown Partnership, has a grant program in place to support façade improvements, storefront improvements, leasehold improvements and even working capital for new business start-ups. However, this tool is not well understood and is underutilized. The Downtown Partnership should again take the lead in reinvigorating and bringing attention to this vital resource. It could be restructured to combine a loan component with the grants.

Also, while the downtown retail and entertainment base is relatively strong and is outperforming many similarly-sized downtowns in the West, further assessment by the panel following its visit to Colorado Springs suggests there are significant gaps in the marketplace which can be filled by a more effective, retooled grant and loan program. This approach has been used very successfully in Denver and Santa Fe.

### **Greater Focus on Historic Preservation**

Historic preservation is essential to creating a uniquely attractive, as well as a sustainable and viable mixed-use business district. However, Colorado Springs does not now have a robust formal public sector historic preservation program. We recommend that the Downtown Partnership work with the City to explore marketing the benefits of historic preservation, clearly explaining the means of using available fiscal incentives, particularly federal historic preservation tax credits, in the downtown and beyond. The nonprofit Historic Preservation Alliance of Colorado Springs should be very helpful key player in this effort.

### **Additional Special Events Downtown**

A sustainable downtown district needs vibrant street life. Indeed one component of placemaking is the introduction of events and activities that bring people into the district. For a downtown of its size, Colorado Springs has relatively few events. Incremental addition of special events in the downtown as well as in satellite mixed-use districts should be a high priority.

### **Develop a Formal Downtown Entrepreneurship Initiative**

An important avenue to economic vitality in the Pikes Peak region is small business growth and entrepreneurship. Downtown is especially well positioned to become a “center of entrepreneurship” where independent businesses thrive. While the downtown has weathered the extended recession better than many communities, there are gaps in the downtown business mix and profile. By utilizing a sharpened DDA grant program as an incentive, entrepreneurs can be more readily induced to locate in downtown. In addition, the Downtown Partnership should consider initiating a business plan competition with the winner receiving a small incentive grant.

### **RECOMMENDATION: GET ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MESSAGES OUT MORE EFFECTIVELY**

There are compelling economic development location advantages of the Pikes Peak Region. Many of these opportunities are being marketed by the Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation. However, these advantages have not been effectively marketed nationally or within key vertical markets.

### **Fort Carson/Air Force Academy Sustainability Initiatives**

Both Fort Carson and the Air Force Academy are committed to environmental and energy sustainability and are pursuing these ends rigorously. This is a superb economic opportunity for the region. We recommend that these sustainability initiatives be marketed within the region to connect local suppliers of goods and services to the defense establishment. These opportunities should be marketed nationally in “green business” trade publications and at “green business” trade shows. While there is already a cluster of green businesses in the region, this presents an opportunity to increase its vigor.

### **Market the Unique Colorado Springs Lifestyle**

The unique quality of life enjoyed by the region’s residents needs to be better leveraged and marketed. The outdoor and recreational lifestyle opportunities offered by Colorado Springs are especially attractive to well-educated professionals. A review of distinctive lifestyle clusters in the region clearly indicates that people are drawn by the recreational opportunities afforded local residents. A well-educated workforce is a primary asset demanded by businesses today and entrepreneurs want to be in a location which offers high quality of life options. Ongoing marketing should highlight the region’s diverse quality of life indicators and attributes.





### **Use Tourism as a Gateway for Business Development**

The tourist economy in the Pikes Peak region has grown steadily and remains robust. Just as important as the number of people drawn to the area for recreation and relaxation is the profile of those attracted. Tourists who visit the area are well educated, skilled professionals with significant disposable income. Once exposed to the areas attributes as tourists, follow-up marketing should encourage them to relocate to the region, even to bring or open a new business in the region. A marketing effort focused on turning tourists into residents would be beneficial.

### **Leverage the Olympic Committee for Economic Development**

The US Olympic Committee is already an economic engine, not only in Colorado Springs, but regionally. Those who are in the region to conduct business with the Olympic Committee or come for athletic events should be viewed as potential residents, employees and business owners. As with tourists, the demographic profile of these visitors aligns well with the long-term economic needs of the community. A vertical economic development marketing effort targeting those visiting or doing business with the Committee should be initiated.

### **Engage College Students**

The Pikes Peak region has a number of colleges and universities including: Colorado College, the Air Force Academy, and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. As with many college communities, a significant number of students leave after completing their studies. However, every reasonable effort should be made to encourage students to stay and become part of the economic engine of the region. Obviously Air Force Academy students will not be staying—but they can return after completing their military obligation. As noted earlier, a well-educated work force is an economic development magnet. Hence, a marketing effort focused on converting students to long-term residents should pay dividends.



## RECOMMENDATION: ENHANCE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE

Entrepreneurship is essential to the long-term economic viability of the Pikes Peak region. Hence, it is important to enhance the entrepreneurial culture to ensure sustained economic growth and prosperity.

### **Business Incubators**

The Colorado Springs technology Incubator has been successful in launching a variety of promising new businesses. It appears as a result that there is a promising opportunity to expand the existing or add a second incubator to meet growing demand. The Pikes Peak region's significant number of educated and well-trained technology employees is a basic source of demand for additional incubation space. Likewise, the colleges and universities can be key tenant generators for additional incubator tenants. Further, sustainability initiatives of the U. S. military establishments can foster establishment and growth of supplier firms supported by local business incubation programs. The National Business Incubation Association is a good resource for lessons learned and for case-studies and best practices for successful incubator deployment.

### **Technology Transfer Initiatives with the Air Force Academy, Fort Carson, University Of Colorado/CS**

There are a number of professionals engaged in emerging technologies at the Air Force Academy, Fort Carson and the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Some of these technologies may very well have commercial viability. Every reasonable effort, given obvious security limitations, should be made to encourage these organizations to transfer these technology initiatives into the private marketplace.

### **Venture Capital**

Additional venture capital in the region will buttress local economic development efforts. Formal links with west coast venture capital firms should be increased and capitalized upon.

### **Recruit Entrepreneurs**

While it is always desirable to attract established businesses to relocate to Colorado Springs, a key component of any successful economic development effort should be to recruit budding entrepreneurs. Marketing efforts should focus on attracting these entrepreneurs.

### **Broadband Initiatives**

A robust broadband infrastructure is essential to long-term economic growth—and to the entrepreneurial climate. Yet, many commercial sites in the region are underserved in this regard. The City of Colorado Springs should evaluate the feasibility of initiating its own broadband system. Dublin, Ohio, offers a good example of such an initiative.



## RECOMMENDATION: REFINING AND EXPANDING TOOLS AND SYSTEMS FOR INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

### Market Infill and Redevelopment Sites

As noted earlier, redevelopment is essential to a sustainable economic development effort. However, there needs to be a central database of available infill and redevelopment sites. A marketing campaign to the regional real estate community making known available sites should be commenced. Although there are numerous redevelopment sites within the region, the initial marketing effort should probably begin with available sites in downtown Colorado Springs. Tucson, Arizona has done an excellent job of marketing infill opportunities.

### Utilities Comprehensive Plan

Although discussed earlier, the team underlines the importance of the City streamlining and improving the cost effectiveness of connecting infill and redevelopment projects to its utility network in inner city locations. This should be framed by a comprehensive utilities plan that underpins a new pricing structure that will drive sustainable development. Otherwise, 'greenfield' development will remain far more attractive than redevelopment, thereby inducing greater urban sprawl within the Pikes Peak region and well beyond the city.





URBAN DESIGN & LAND USE

## SETTING THE STAGE

The team was left with several primary questions after the AIA SDAT visit to Colorado Springs:

- Indicator studies are great. But, how will the planning and design community leverage the trends that you've observed through these studies, trends about which there is clear knowledge and significant data, into action?
- There are significant divisions in the community, reinforced by the differential property tax policy<sup>1</sup> and other factors. So the question is: what are potential unifying "Big Themes" that residents of the Pikes Peak Region can collectively rally around? Policies, suggestions and design ideas that are supported by these unifying big themes should be pursued. Two that stand out from our observations are:
  - o Preservation of the quality of the natural environment
  - o Fiscal prudence
- There is vast growth potential in Colorado Springs and the El Paso County. However, it lacks a coherent and consistent framework. On the one hand there are acres of "greyfields" ripe for retrofitting (dead shopping centers, vacant big box stores and the like). These are the facts on the ground – vacant and distressed properties that have already been urbanized and developed. They should be re-inhabited and/or redeveloped rather than laid to waste. On the other hand, there are miles – square mile after square mile – of "premature subdivisions." These exist only on paper, through various agreements and filed master plans. The challenge the region is left with boils down to this: is more suburban style growth inevitable in the Pikes Peak Region, or can the urbanization process be steered in another direction, back towards those ample greyfield opportunities?
- There is a need to shift from the models of past response to pressing issues in development policy. How does the community get from being reactive to being proactive?
- Finally, the overall question: where is *the vision* for the Pikes Peak Region?





## RECOMMENDATION #1: SEEK TO LEVERAGE THE QUALITY OF LIFE INDICATORS INTO ACTION

***Develop information graphics, videos and other communications strategies to get the messages out.***

The yearly “Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak Region” study document is extremely valuable.<sup>2</sup> The trends are known. Current trends include the following:

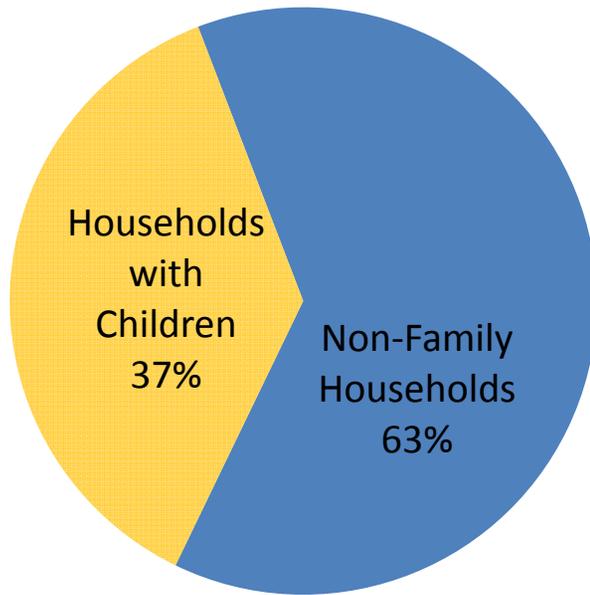
- The population is aging and young people are leaving. They are not choosing to make their home in Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region.
- Rates of child poverty and homelessness are rising.
- Mass transit service is declining while housing plus transportation cost burdens on households are increasing.<sup>3</sup>
- The quantity of cycling and pedestrian trails is growing, both for recreation and for commuting to work.
- There is a mismatch between household types and housing options.

One trend that pops out here is declining mass transit service and rising housing plus transportation cost burdens on households. These trends are happening at the same time that the city is developing great plans for mass transit. There is potential planning synergy there.

The useful information and data in the indicator studies needs to be more widely shared. The team’s recommendation for specific action is to develop information graphics, videos, and other communications strategies that innovatively use a variety of media to get the messages about the quality of life indicators out, so as to leverage them into action.

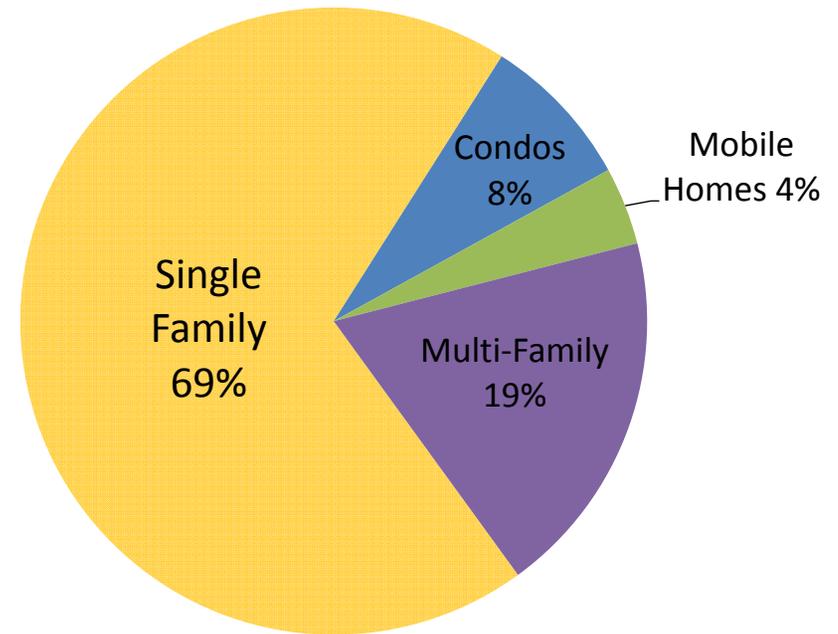


## Household Composition



Source: 2011 Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak

## Housing Variety



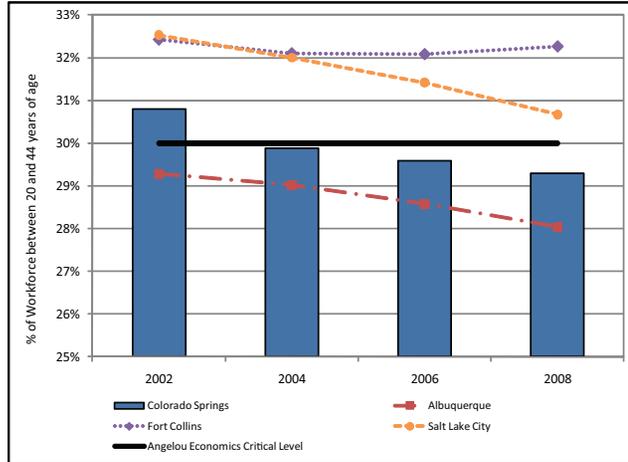
Source: 2011 Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak

The above figure provides an example of how to connect these trends into a clear message that can move policy and markets. One trend is a decreasing percentage of households with children. The current household composition in the region is 37% households with children, 63% non-family households.<sup>4</sup> Combine this with the trend that the current housing stock is predominantly comprised of single-family houses. That is, 69% of the housing stock is single-family, 19% multi-family, 4% mobile homes, and 8% condominiums.<sup>5</sup> How can the region do a better job of connecting the dots about the mismatch between household composition and available options in the existing housing stock?

## -Competitive Position-

### Competitive Metrics: Key Success Factors

#### Young Professionals (ages 25-44) in Colorado Springs MSA Workforce



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Factfinder 2006-2008

The first Chart shows the percentage of the Pikes Peak Region's working population that is considered "Young Professionals" in the 25-44 age group.

The second Chart shows the number of patents issued in the Pikes Peak Region from 2004-2008, compared to benchmark cities.

#### Why is This Important?

Young professionals are a key component of a workforce because they engage in entrepreneurial activity, and innovation, and provide a key resource for existing and new companies. A decline in this segment jeopardizes the ability of Colorado Springs to attract and retain primary jobs. The number of patents issued reflects the region's ability to foster and sustain innovation. This attribute is attractive for high growth technology companies and new start-up ventures. Many site selection consultants and corporate real estate executives look to these factors to select, or eliminate, communities from consideration for

potential company expansions and relocations.

#### How are We Doing?

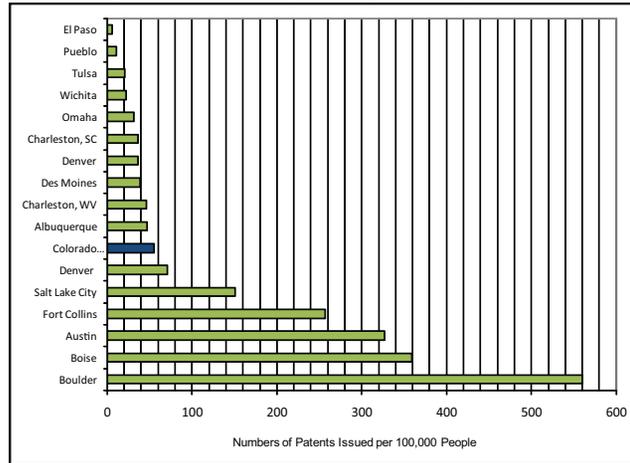
The Pikes Peak Region's "Young Professionals" population is now below the 30% critical threshold used by many site selection consultants. The downward trend decreases the region's attractiveness to high-impact, high value, knowledge-based businesses that require a strong talent pool. The number of patents issued locally places our region in the middle of the group of cities against which we typically compete. However, we are significantly below the high performers like Austin and Boise, which experience three times the rate of patent generation in Colorado Springs. We must improve our performance to be attractive to outside companies.

#### Potential for Action

Lead Organizations: Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corporation, Greater Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS) and Operation 6035 implementation effort.

Implement the action plan laid out in Operation 6035, to attract and retain young professionals and to expand our entrepreneurial growth. Continue to support the expansion and innovation coming out of UCCS. Develop a community venture fund for entrepreneurs to develop their ideas and thereby grow start-up companies in Colorado Springs.

#### Number of Patents Issued per 100,000 People



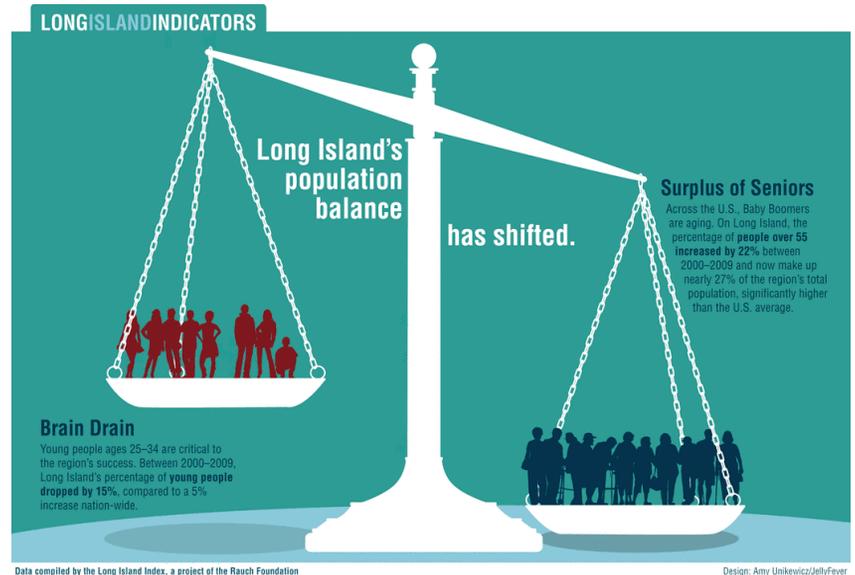
Source: U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Source: 2011 Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak Region

Another example is the trend in the region that the population is aging and young people are leaving.

The same is true on Long Island in New York, a suburban sector within the New York Metropolitan Region, where the non-profit Long Island Index sponsors research and publishes a yearly indicator study.<sup>6</sup> What did the Long Island Index do to publicize this alarming trend?

They leveraged the indicators into action by developing information graphics (infographics), videos, and even a design competition to get the messages out. They hired skilled graphic designers to clearly communicate related trends. In the example below the graphic includes the tag line "Long Island's population balance has shifted" set against an image in profile of a balance. The trends are summarized with the imageable phrases "Brain Drain" and "Surplus of Seniors."

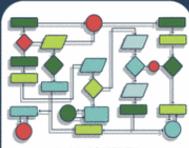


Data compiled by the Long Island Index, a project of the Rauch Foundation

Design: Amy Umkevicz/JellyFever

Source: Long Island Index

# 9 Facts and 1 Conclusion about Building in Long Island Downtowns



**FACT: COMPLEX**  
No two municipalities function the same.



**FACT: SLOW**  
We provide little to no technology to manage the process.



**FACT: OPAQUE**  
No one knows how long it will take to move through the process.



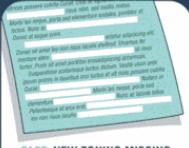
**FACT: CARS RULE**  
On-site parking requirements work against creating walkable downtown destinations.



**FACT: COSTS ADDED**  
Timely inspections are not consistently available driving up the cost of construction.



**FACT: FEW PLANS**  
Comprehensive plans are critical to defining a community's wishes yet we have few up-to-date plans.



**FACT: NEW ZONING MISSING**  
Without updated zoning, economic, demographic and community preferences aren't addressed.



**FACT: CAN'T BUILD RENTALS**  
Zoning works against making it easy to build the one thing we need the most.



**FACT: MINIMUMS NOT DEFINED**  
If we don't build enough in a downtown, we won't create the vibrancy we need.

**CONCLUSION:**  
Without addressing the nine items above, Long Island will fail to live up to...

...it's potential.

Data compiled by the Long Island Index, a project of the Rauch Foundation

Design: Amy Unikewicz/JellyFever

The Long Island Index also commissioned videos, which are an even more dramatic use of information in graphical format, to convey the otherwise dry statistical and tabular data from their indicator studies. Examples, such as “The Clock is Ticking” (2010) and “The Clock is Still Ticking” (2011) are posted on Vimeo.<sup>7</sup>

This next infographic is on the potential for building in Long Island downtowns, which are for the most part already served by mass transit, the 100-year old infrastructure of the Long Island Rail Road. The infographic contains nine facts and one conclusion: if the nine facts are not addressed, Long Island will fail to live up to its potential. Drawing the public’s attention to the conclusion is essential to the success of my recommendation to leverage solid data into action.

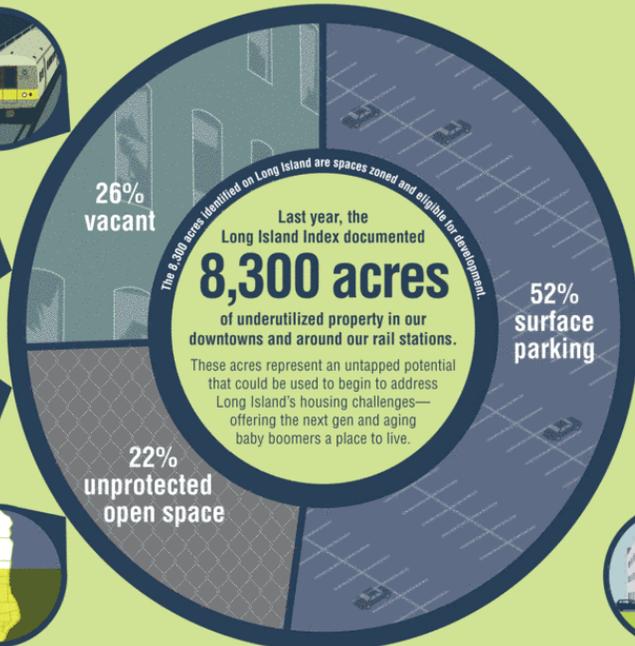
8,300 acres = 11% of all the land within 1/2 mile of our rail stations and downtowns

8,300 acres = Less than 1% of the Island's total land mass



8,300 acres = 7,580 football fields

8,300 acres = Everything south of 50th Street in Manhattan



## So, what's the potential?

If we used just **HALF** of those 8,300 acres to build a variety of housing we would add **90,000 units of housing:**



- 🏠 = Mid-rise Apartments
- 🏠 = 250
- 🏠 = Townhouses
- 🏠 = Garden Apartments



Finally, how do you swap surface parking for housing yet still provide enough parking? **Multi-story parking facilities!**

Data compiled by the Long Island Index, a project of the Rauch Foundation

Design: Amy Unikewicz/JellyFever

Source: Long Island Index

They then took the information from the “greyfield audit” and sponsored an ideas competition, called Build a Better Burb, asking designs what they would do with these acres of opportunity, which yielded over 200 submissions (disclosure: the author was the primary consultant on the competition). There was a component that invited the public to vote online for a favorite among the 23 finalists, who had been selected by a professional jury. The projects were – and still are – all posted<sup>8</sup> online. There was a graphic campaign with signs on buses and voting stations in public libraries across Long Island, a region of almost three million residents. These are all models for publicizing the findings of indicator studies.

## RECOMMENDATION #2: CAPITALIZE NOW ON ACADEMY BOULEVARD AS A CORRIDOR FOR RETROFITTING

***Implement tested strategies to retrofit suburban form: re-inhabitation, redevelopment, and greening.***

Another fabulous recent initiative and substantial document in the region is the “Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan” (CH2M Hill, May 2011). This dynamic area of the city, comprised of a two-mile wide, six-mile long swath along an arterial road, contains a significant percentage of the current residents of Colorado Springs. The vital statistics show that it is already dense: the study area contains 15% of the city’s population, living on only 6% of the land area, yielding a residential density 2.5 times the city’s average. It is already diverse: Hispanics, African-Americans and Korean-Americans are particular populations groups clustered there. However, it currently has a 25% shopping center vacancy rate, more than twice the national average, and a 13% industrial use vacancy rate. It has a lot of greyfields, or “underperforming asphalt” that could be revitalized.

This corridor is essential to establishing what the team sees as an emergent polycentric structure within Colorado Springs and the Pikes Peak Region of “incremental metropolitanism.”<sup>9</sup> This term, coined by June Williamson and Ellen Dunham-Jones, is meant to invoke the idea of remaking a metropolis into a sustainable polycentric system, through the systemic transformation of prototypical single-use suburban nodes and corridors.



Source: Long Island Index



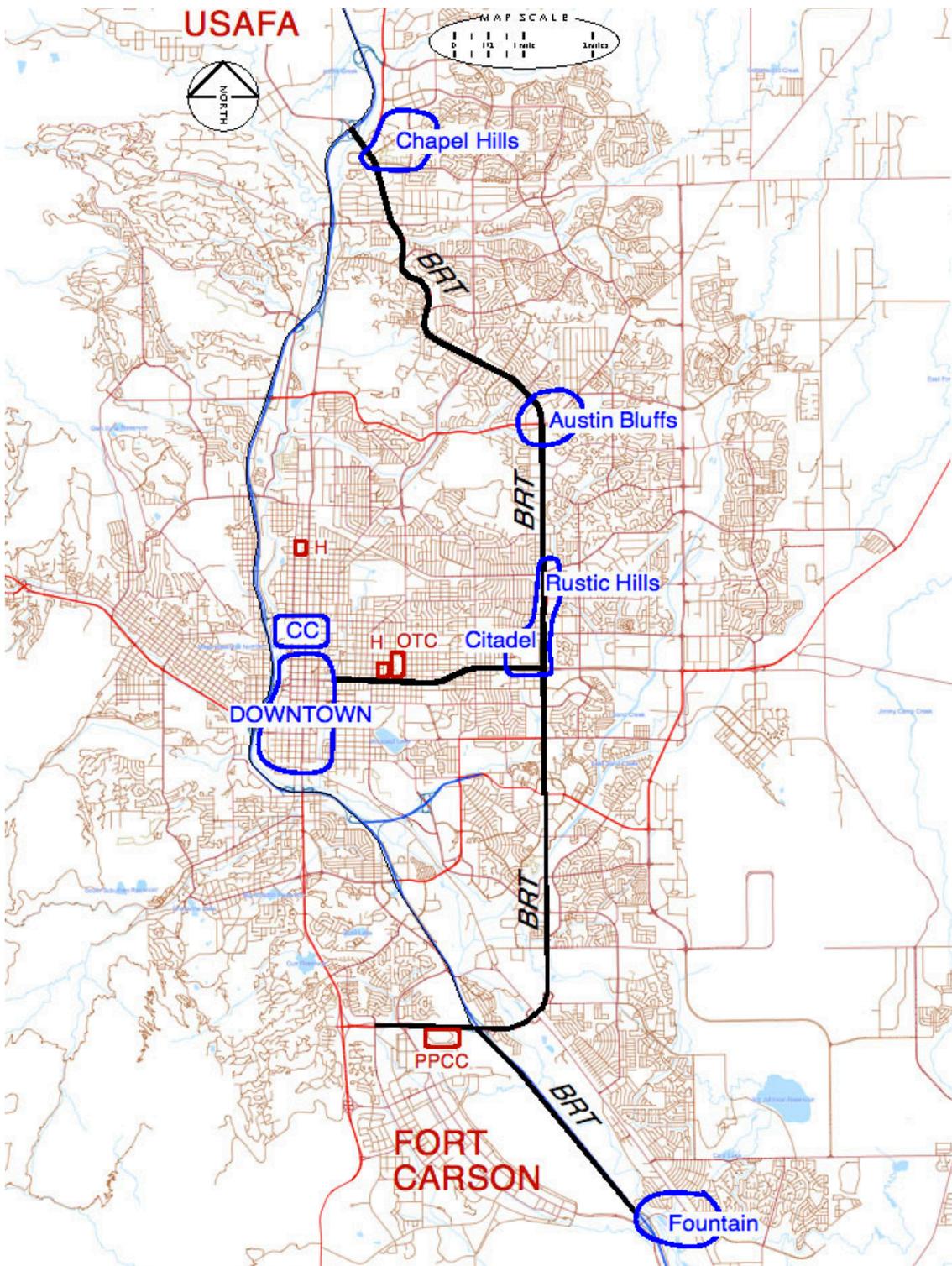
Source: Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan

This goal may be accomplished through infill development and land use policy by pursuing three primary strategies of retrofitting: re-inhabitation, redevelopment, and/or regreening. Re-inhabitation is pursued through various forms of adaptive reuse of buildings, often for more community-serving purposes. Redevelopment, the replacement of existing structures and/or building on parking lots, can involve substantial demolition and restructuring of the urban morphology of relatively large parcels of land, that is, the pattern of streets, blocks, lots and buildings upon them. And regreening can range from the introduction of small-scale civic spaces into re-inhabitation or redevelopment retrofits – such as small parks and plazas – to initiatives scaled to the neighborhood, district, or region designed for wildlife corridors, watershed systems repair and the like.

The Academy Boulevard Corridor seems to have the capacity to absorb a significant portion of new growth within the city and region, but a variety of strategies and tactics for retrofitting suburban form, along with new transit investments, will be required to get there.

*Retrofitting Suburbia* (updated edition, 2011) lists eleven urban design tactics for retrofitting that might be useful to consider here:<sup>10</sup>

- Reuse the box
- Provide environmental repair
- Revise zoning codes and public works standards
- Improve connectivity for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians
- Consider future connectivity and adaptability
- Use appropriate street types and real sidewalks
- Keep block size walkable
- Use shallow liner buildings
- Diversify housing choice and price
- Add new units to existing subdivisions
- Invest in durable, quality architecture



This quick diagram, developed during the SDAT visit, suggests one framework for a polycentric system of corridors and nodes for the Colorado Springs metropolitan region that connects transit, land use, and community needs for revitalization. Specifically, it outlines a twinned center concept, comprised of Downtown and the Citadel/ Rustic Hills section of the Academy Boulevard Corridor, directly to the east. Additional satellite town centers or nodes could grow up incrementally, over time, along the planned BRT transit routes, including Chapel Hills and Austin Bluffs to the north, and Fountain to the south.

Pikes Peak AIA SDAT, diagram by Bill Beard

**FIGURE 6-3**  
Hancock Intersection Concept Prototype



- POTENTIAL MIXED-USE:
- MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING
  - RETAIL
  - RESIDENTIAL
1. ACCESS LOCATIONS AND CONCEPTS ARE DEPICTED FOR GENERAL ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY, AND AN APPROVAL OF ACTUAL ACCESS POINTS WOULD BE CONTINGENT UPON COMPLETION OF A MORE RIGOROUS INTERSECTION DESIGN AND TRAFFIC ANALYSIS PROCESS
  2. ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE REQUIRED RIGHT-OF-WAY AND ROADWAY CROSS SECTION ARE SIMILARLY GENERALIZED. SIMILARLY THE LOCATIONS OF POTENTIAL NEW BUILDINGS ARE CONCEPTUAL AND WOULD BE FINALIZED IN COORDINATION WITH OWNERS OF ADJACENT PROPERTIES.

Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan

The team’s assessment is that the Academy Boulevard Corridor Great Streets Plan is quite good. We were impressed with the intersection studies proposing ideas for redevelopment by capturing land in excess rights of way and ramps coming on to the arterial, which would be eliminated as the arterial is transformed into a boulevard.

For an optimal result, it is important to capture and engage local design talent, and to invite talent from elsewhere, perhaps through a design competition, as the Long Island Index sponsored. Many municipalities have an urban design assistance staff that could assist private developers in arranging and proposing projects that meet the plan’s goals for mixed-use, mass transit and walkability.<sup>11</sup>

The following cases studies of provide examples of processes and projects for retrofitting the types of commercial developments that are typical of Academy Boulevard, such as failed malls and strip centers:

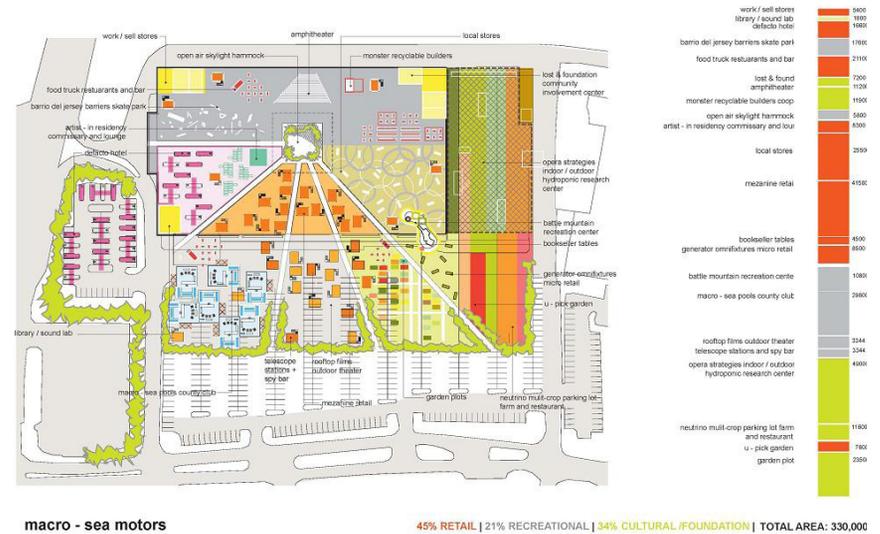
### Build a Better Bloc



Source: Betterblock.org

“Tactical urbanism” is an emergent set of methods to use in order to gain momentum for infill development and re-inhabitation of vacant structures in neighborhood revitalization. Build a Better Block, is a tactical crowd-sourced place-making process that had its first example in the Oak Cliff neighborhood in Dallas, TX. It was a temporary two-day, full-scale transformation of a “Main Street” commercial block to help kick start the process of revitalization and to gain public support for change. The Build a Better Block team painted temporary bike lanes, installed potted trees and fake street lamps to simulate real ones, and otherwise furnished the block. The Build a Better Block team has recently branched out nationally to simulate full-scale transformations of boulevards and strip mall parking lots.<sup>12</sup>

### Strip Mall Retrofit / Dumpster Pool Country Club



Source: Macro|Sea



A similar (though unrealized) idea for retrofitting a dead big box store in a strip mall was proposed by New York-based Macro|Sea. The design includes such elements as a skate park, an area for food trucks, a U-Pick vegetable garden, space for micro-retailers to set up stalls, and a recyclables station. The proposal also includes a collection of luxurious and attractive mobile pools constructed from dumpsters, an idea that Macro|Sea has realized a few times already in New York, once along Park Avenue in Manhattan and most recently on an unused bank parking lot in Brooklyn.<sup>13</sup>

### **Thornton Place at Northgate Mall**

Thornton Place is a publicly supported but privately developed project for infilling excess parking lots around a thriving regional shopping mall, in the Northgate neighborhood in the northern reaches of Seattle, built out largely in the post WWII period. This example exhibits all three strategies for retrofitting suburban form: re-inhabitation, redevelopment and greening.<sup>14</sup> A mix of new housing types is introduced in this neighborhood that is predominantly comprised of detached single-family houses. The project is an example of vertical mixed use, residential apartments over retail, in this case. Could this be a model for the Citadel Mall site in Colorado Springs?

Also significant in this project is the “Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel” which is the greening aspect of this project. It is a soft, green infrastructure, a complex drainage swale, designed by landscape architects and built by the city utilities department to replace a below-grade, six-foot diameter culvert for gathering surface storm water over an extensive area. This location is the headwaters of Thornton Creek, a major element in the area watershed. This “soft” infrastructure becomes a park amenity for the redevelopment project, with new housing units arranged around it. At the same time, it is both a beautiful emerging park (the plantings haven’t yet reached maturity), and a complicated highly functional drainage swale.



Detail of vegetation in the Thornton Creek Water Quality Channel



Thornton Place: Before

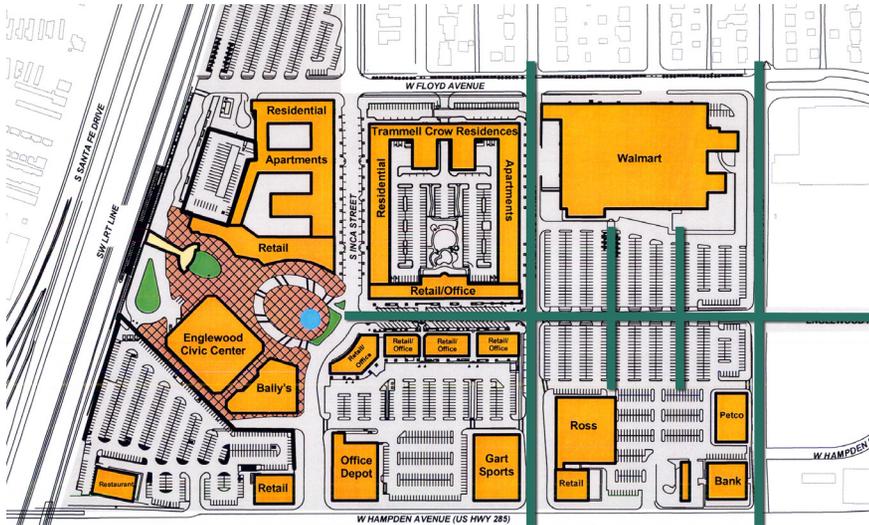


Thornton Place: After

Source: Sky-Pix Aerial Photography

### CityCenter Englewood

CityCenter Englewood is a more local example, from Colorado.<sup>15</sup> This example illustrates the concept of anticipatory retrofitting for future connectivity or planned densification.<sup>16</sup> It involves laying out the parking lots as future potential building sites, with utilities and trees aligned with the primary drive aisles, which are designed and conceived as if they are future streets. This shows the potential for phasing future infill.



Source: City of Englewood, Colorado



### Cambie Corridor

Cambie Corridor is an example from Vancouver, B.C., Canada, which integrates land use, transportation and energy while retrofitting a commercial corridor.<sup>17</sup> One innovative component is the integration of a district energy system. This corridor may be higher density than is envisioned for Academy Boulevard, but studies have shown that proximity, a mix of uses and connectedness may be more important factors for success than net density.



Source: City of Vancouver, British Columbia

### RECOMMENDATION #3: ARTICULATE A COHERENT AND CONSISTENT FRAMEWORK FOR GROWTH

***Policies and incentives should be adopted to explicitly channel growth into infill areas and away from not yet urbanized land.***

As noted at the beginning of this section, there are acres of downtown land and greyfield properties ripe for retrofitting, such as along Academy Boulevard. On the other hand, miles of “premature subdivisions” exist on paper, both in the city and in unincorporated areas in the region, which seem to comprise a self-fulfilling prophecy towards future sprawl.

A useful resource on this condition is the white paper “Premature Subdivisions and What to Do About Them” by Don Elliott, published in 2010 by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.<sup>18</sup> As Elliott writes in the paper’s abstract, “Premature land subdivisions occur when a landowner divides a parcel of land into lots for sale far in advance of the market for those lots. The estimated number of these entitled lots, most of which will not be absorbed by the market for some time, ranges in the hundreds of thousands for some jurisdictions in the West.” The paper looks at trends in Idaho and Arizona and outlines sixteen tools to redress the problem, including economic incentives, purchasing land or development rights, land regulation, and growth management. Some of these tools should be applicable in the Pikes Peak Region.

A coherent framework for growth is needed and the team’s recommendation is to develop new policies and incentives – using a variety of available tools – to explicitly channel growth into infill areas (of which there are many types in the region, including downtown) and away from not yet urbanized land.

Planners and designers in the region should also consider a more robust embrace of emergent models for deriving ecological and environmental productivity from open space, such as solar farms, urban and suburban agriculture, use of planted road medians, planting strips and swales in parking lots for active carbon sequestration and storm water management. Some of these models are already being tested and implemented, but could be more widespread.

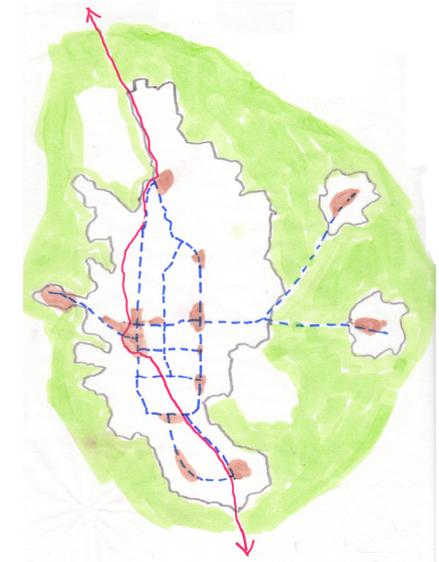
### Where should you grow?

The Pikes Peak Region faces a significant and important decision about future growth. The region has a choice: acres of greyfields versus miles of greenfields. From an infill development and land use policy perspective, it shouldn’t be such a hard choice, but somehow it is. For example, what is to be done about the Banning Louis Ranch and other similar properties that may be categorized as premature subdivisions, upon which so much planning for the future currently rests? The team believes this topic is urgent and should be addressed now, during the current economic and development “pause.”

Some quick sketches from the AIA SDAT visit to Pikes Peak illustrate this choice, between continuing past patterns or establishing a new vision, perhaps a polycentric one, tilted in favor of incremental metropolitanism.



Continued Sprawl Future



Incremental Metropolitanism Future

The region must face its key questions: What is the overall vision? Is it to continue the expansion and abandonment patterns of the past, or are you poised to establish a new vision and framework for growth? Where do you go from here? And, how do you get there? Proactive policies are needed.

## NOTES

1 We learned during the SDAT visit that infrastructure costs for new developments on the urban periphery are taxed locally on the users/residents of serviced areas. These new residents seem to be conditioned, therefore, to oppose any taxes, such as for repairs and upgrades to older neighborhoods, whose benefits they don't perceive as directly accruing to them.

2 The Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak Region yearly reports, sponsored by the Pikes Peak United Way, can be accessed here: <http://www.pikespeakqualityoflife.org/>

3 For more on the effect of transportation cost burdens on households across the United States, see the Center for Neighborhood Technology's online H+T Affordability Index: <http://www.cnt.org/tcd/ht>

4 "2011 Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak Region," page 31.

5 "2011 Quality of Life Indicators for the Pikes Peak Region," page 62.

6 The archive of yearly indicator studies from the Long Island Index, going back to 2002, can be accessed here: <http://www.longislandindex.org/Long-Island-Index-Reports.308.0.html>. The series of colorful and expressive infographics, designed by Amy Unikewicz of Jelly Fever, can be accessed here: <http://www.longislandindex.org/Multimedia.307.0.html>

7 Recent videos commissioned by the Long Island Index such as "The Clock is Ticking, produced for the 2010 report by Duarte Design, can be accessed here: <http://www.longislandindex.org/The-Clock-is-Ticking.715.0.html>

8 Complete information on the 2010 Build a Better Burb competition is available at these links: <http://www.buildabetterburb.org/>, <http://www.longislandindex.org/Build-a-Better-Burb.827.0.html>

9 See Ellen Dunham-Jones and June Williamson, *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Retrofitting Suburbia*, Updated Edition (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), p. 9-12, 230-233.

10 Ibid, p. ix.

11 Some examples that I am familiar with are within the planning departments of Miami-Dade County, FL, Charleston, SC, Glendale, CA, and Newark, NJ. The APA Urban Design and Preservation Division, chaired by Jason Beske, is currently compiling a list of mid-sized cities with dedicated urban design staff.

12 Complete details on the first Build a Better Block event, in Oak Cliffs, Dallas, is available here: <http://www.gooakcliff.org/how-to-build-a-better-block/>. The Build a Better Block initiative, run by planners Jason Roberts and Andrew Howard, maintains an active website here: <http://betterblock.org>

13 For more on the Macro|Sea strip mall proposal and other realized projects, including several mobile pools constructed from construction dumpsters, see: <http://www.macro-sea.com/projects/strip-mall/> . Macro|Sea is directed by David Belt.

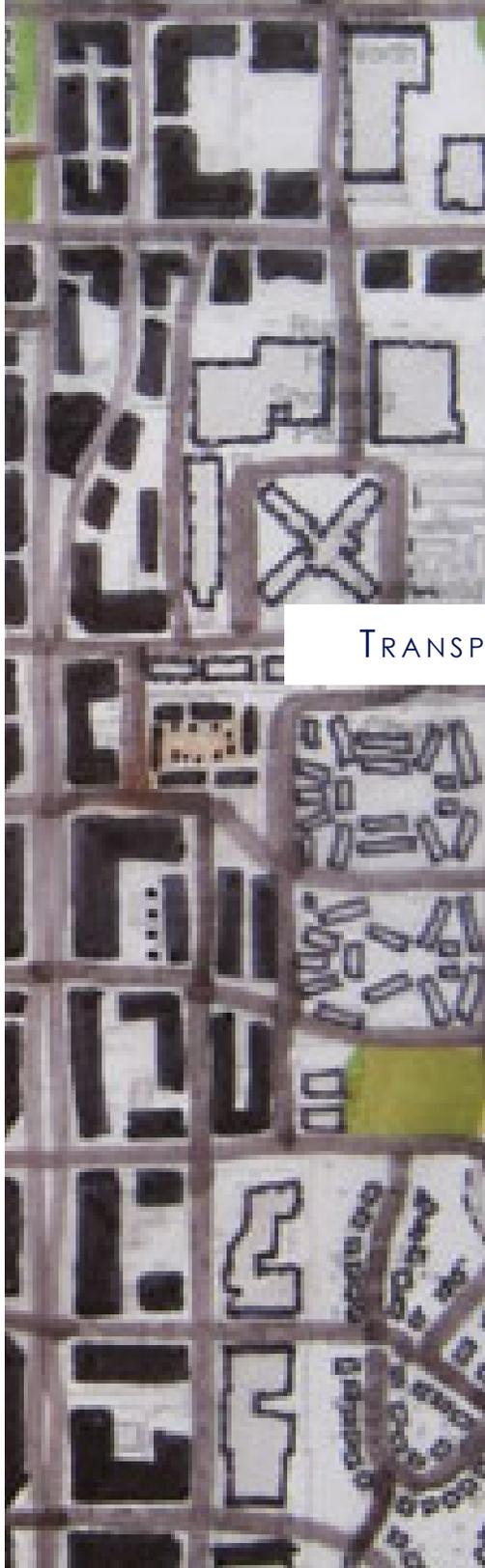
14 A description of Thornton Place in Seattle is included in the updated edition *Retrofitting Suburbia: Updated Edition*, p. xviii-xx.

15 Ibid., p. 129-134. See also: <http://www.englewoodgov.org/Index.aspx?page=468>

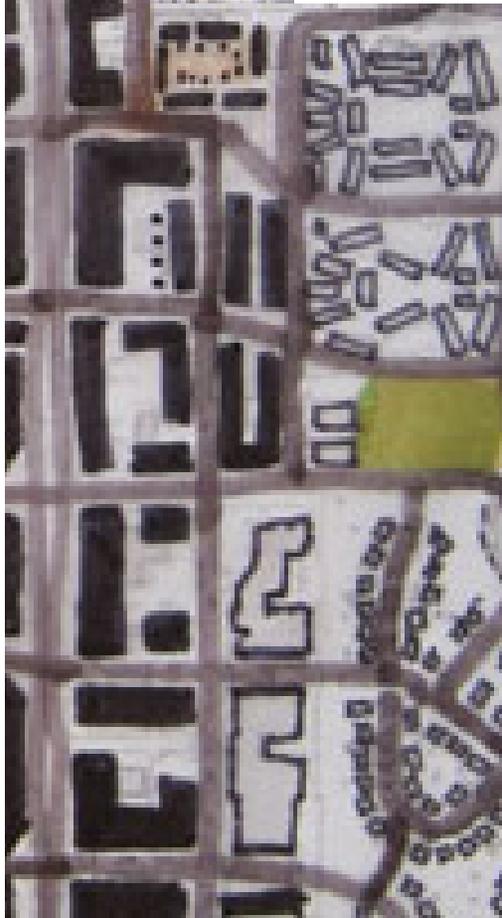
16 New urbanist legal consultant Dan Slone maintains a blog on Planned Densification: <http://www.planneddensification.com>. Another frequent speaker on the technicalities of this process is Lee Sobel, a Real Estate Development and Finance Analyst at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

17 For more on Cambie Corridor, see: <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/cambiecorridor/>

18 Donald Elliott, "Premature Subdivisions and What to Do About Them," Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Working Paper, 2010, available at: [http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1761\\_Premature-Subdivisions-and-What-to-Do-About-Them](http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/1761_Premature-Subdivisions-and-What-to-Do-About-Them)



## TRANSPORTATION



## OVERVIEW

Transportation has a direct impact on the quality of life in the Pikes Peak region. It affects the way the region grows, the ability of businesses to move freight and retain employees, the ability of residents to move about safely and easily without a car, the quality of the natural environment, and even the health and wellbeing of area residents. Because the transportation system has so many quality of life implications, it is a central issue in the quest for a more sustainable region. A tour of the area, review of current plans, and discussions with agency representatives and the public revealed several issues that set the stage for the SDAT review. These issues are discussed below along with a series of conceptual recommendations aimed at helping the region take the next steps toward its sustainability goals.

## SETTING THE STAGE

The Pikes Peak region has a clear desire for a state-of-the-art transportation system. The framework for the 2035 long range transportation plan update calls for a sustainable, multimodal transportation system that is safe, efficient, supportive of the economy and that protects and enhances the environment through “solutions that are sensitive to natural and human contexts.” Goals for the built environment similarly speak to a need for “Multiple forms of accessible and integrated transportation including walking, bicycling, transit, and automobile.” The City of Colorado Springs’ decision to enact a complete streets ordinance is a positive step in this direction.

The region also has a latent demand for non-auto travel and a population that is open to walking, bicycling and transit use. Colorado Springs has a highly active bicycling community, and a fitness ethic that is reinforced by the presence of an Olympic Training Center. The City maintains an extensive system of multi-use trails extending nearly 120 miles, leading to its ranking by the League of American Bicyclists in 2007 as a Silver-level Bicycle-Friendly Community. According to the League, bike to work events in the City typically attract more than 7500 participants – equivalent to the City of Boulder which has a higher, Platinum status.

Yet when a group of young professionals were asked to weigh in on the SDAT process, one indicates “Biking is hard to do in Colorado Springs. Even with the ‘Sharrows’ it is still not a bike friendly community. With (the Olympic Training Center) here we should embrace that as a theme to have more bike lanes and connections.” The need for improved connectivity of the system and changes to roadway design to increase safety and comfort for bicyclists was a frequently mentioned concern. This is alluded to in the League of American Bicyclists review of the City’s bicycling system, which identified engineering, education and enforcement as areas for improvement.

A tour of the area provided insight into issues that will need to be addressed to achieve a more walkable and bikeable community. Colorado Springs, initially a compact downtown with neighborhoods connected by streetcars, has been transformed into a sprawling 200 square mile automobile mecca. The dramatic expansion of the City has been facilitated by its annexation of huge developments on the urban fringe. One resident, commenting on the change in travel patterns over time, characterized it this way: “We’ve gone from a 15 minute community to a 45 minute community.” Regional planners note that more than 75% of workers drive alone to work. This need to drive for non-work purposes is reinforced by the separation of residential subdivisions from commercial areas.

The expansion of low density exurban growth in the Pikes Peak Region is indicative of the classic land use and transportation cycle shown in Exhibit 1. Transportation projects, particularly those that provide access to new areas, can clearly affect the rate of growth and the development patterns of an area. Although highways are essential to long distance high-speed travel in the region, they can also contribute to metropolitan decentralization. As development is approved on the urban fringe, it in turn leads to increased demands on the highway system. Yet adding more highway capacity to reduce congestion and make job centers more accessible from fringe areas induces further decentralization. Research by Cervero<sup>1</sup> (2003), for example, demonstrates that freeway improvements induce growth and investment along these corridors, as “real estate development gravitates to improved freeways, and traffic increases spawn road investments over time.”<sup>2</sup>

And yet the cycle of widening rarely leads to freedom from congestion. Leading transportation scholar Anthony Downs warns: “On urban commuter expressways, peak-hour traffic congestion rises to meet maximum capacity.”<sup>3</sup> This has been proven so often it is now called the “law of peak hour congestion.” In layman’s terms –we cannot build our way out of congestion. Increasing lane capacity to serve fringe development only makes these areas more accessible and ultimately attracts new low density growth. In the long run this increases vehicle miles of travel and those new trips will quickly fill the roads. This inevitable result is clearly illustrated in the 2035 fiscally constrained transportation plan, which shows that even with the roadway changes that can be funded over the next 30 years, the system will remain congested (Exhibit 2).

Adding new lanes to reduce traffic congestion also has direct and long-term implications for the viability of alternative modes. Wider roads and larger intersections to accommodate trucks and traffic growth create a barrier for pedestrians, and are particularly daunting for the elderly and disabled. Extensive areas of surface parking make it difficult to walk in commercial areas. Increased automobile speeds and frequent driveway access reduce pedestrian and bicycle safety. Signalized intersections become a focal point for delay and as signal cycles increase, intersections must be further expanded, leading to increased delay for all users. These factors, combined with the low-density character of the region and the separation of commercial and residential uses outside of the downtown area are not conducive to transit use.

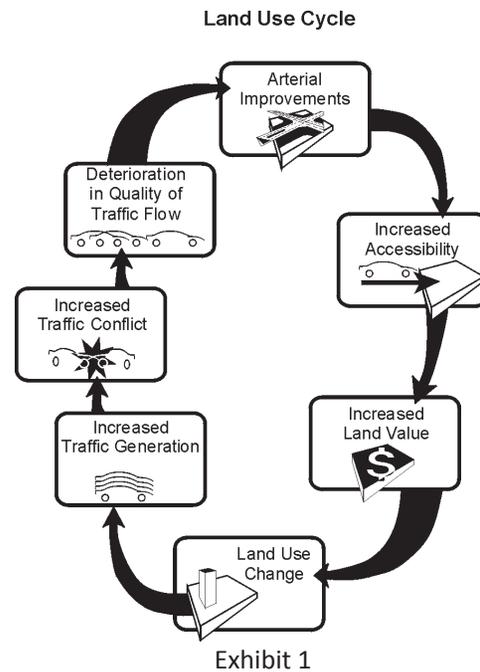


Exhibit 1

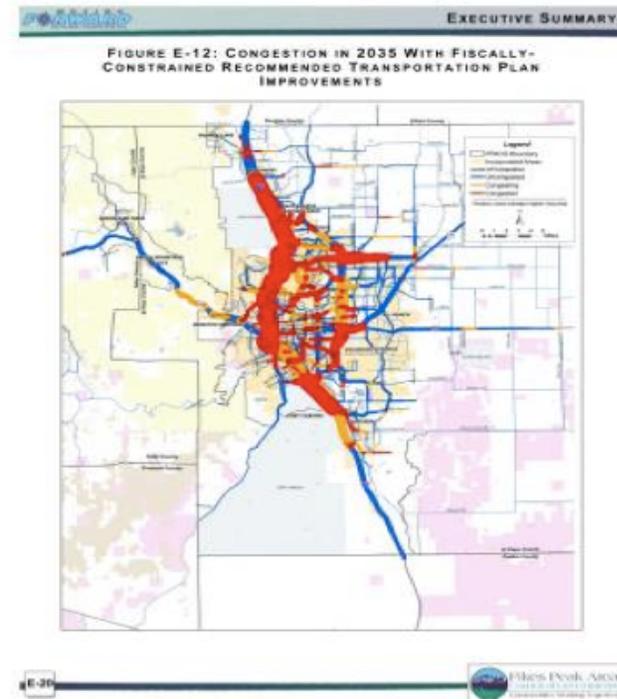


Exhibit 2: Pikes Peak Region 2035 fiscally constrained transportation plan.

## THINK MOBILITY NOT CAPACITY

In the traditional long-range transportation planning process, future transportation needs are estimated from local future land use plans using four-step travel demand models. Determinations of travel demand are made based on a fixed future land use scenario comprised of existing, approved, and planned land uses. Automobile level of service is the primary measure of improvement and the primary solution to increased travel demand is to add new lane capacity. Transportation and land use planning are performed separately, yet the two are clearly locked in an interdependent and reactive cycle that is counter to the region's long-term mobility and livability goals.

To shift from an auto-oriented planning process to one that supports all modes of travel will require a new way of thinking about transportation. The region's transportation and development process must shift the focus from moving cars to moving people and goods. This is not to say that the region should stop investing in its arterial highway system. It simply means that transportation and land use needs and relationships differ based upon the location and type of growth involved – development of the fringe or redevelopment of the core. As noted by leading transportation scholar Marlon Boarnet - the two are conceptually different and require different approaches to planning and investment. Investing in automobile infrastructure and in alternatives to the automobile are both essential. The point is not to choose one over the other but distinguish the appropriate location and contexts for each. <sup>4</sup>

For core areas or activity centers the region should place less emphasis on relieving congestion - a sign of vitality - than on expanding and reinforcing mode choice, improving walkability, and promoting a diverse and compatible mix of land uses. Dense, connected streets with narrower cross sections and continuous sidewalks are among the determinants of walkability, and also help to make activity centers functional, vibrant, and appealing. The region could begin by identifying which centers in the metropolitan area have the most potential to accommodate alternative modes and focus investment on enhancing walkability and connections to bicycle and transit facilities in those centers.

For a more sustainable highway system, the region should place less priority on preventing future congestion through lane expansion and fringe highways that induce exurban growth, and place higher priority on managing the existing system. Access management of the arterial system to reduce traffic conflicts and crashes is already actively practiced, and the addition of grade separated intersections

will further increase efficiency of the system. Other options to consider include improvements to signal coordination, better incident management, and more effective application of transportation demand management techniques. Integrating high occupancy toll lanes and express bus service on key highway corridors is another future strategy.

In addition, the region should follow the lead of other large cities and prioritize maintenance over expansion. The tendency to defer and underfund maintenance, while spending available funds on highway expansion is clearly evident in the region. As noted in the 2011 Quality of Life Indicators Report for the Pikes Peak Region, "the lane miles that need to be maintained are expanding faster than is our ability (funding) to maintain them." Examples abound of deteriorating pavement across the region's highway system. Given the dramatically higher costs of delaying pavement maintenance, a growing number of large cities are choosing instead to enact a "fix it first" policy. Los Angeles did so after estimates indicated that it would cost the City \$64,000/lane mile for immediate repair versus \$900,000 per lane mile for delayed repair.<sup>5</sup> Other cities that have adopted this approach include St Louis, Honolulu, Philadelphia and San Francisco.

Instead of roadway level of service as the singular benchmark for an effective transportation system, a variety of measures should be used to determine the region's progress in improving its transportation system. Measures of mobility could include: a) "aggregate delay," which is the total difference between travel time in freely-flowing, uncongested traffic and actual travel time of motorists and transit users; b) "person miles of travel," rather than vehicle miles of travel; and c) benefits and impacts related to emissions reduction, land use consumption, crash reduction, and other elements of sustainability and safety.

The approach to monitoring the system must acknowledge that some auto congestion is unavoidable in the immediate term. Mode shifts will occur gradually as transit, bicycle and pedestrian networks are improved and transit compatible development takes place on designated corridors. It will also be necessary to acknowledge the trade-offs in level of service that occur across the various modes and plan accordingly. For example, bicycle lanes on high speed arterials can lead to dangerous conflicts between bicyclists and vehicles at driveways and intersections. Mid-block pedestrian crossings and buses stopping in through lanes increase delays for automobiles. Streetcar or light rail tracks can confuse drivers and bicyclists at turning and crossing locations.

Therefore, efforts to move toward complete streets should be combined with a proactive and carefully conceived plan to identify which streets will place more priority on one mode or function versus another. In current practice, this is referred to as a layered network plan where each roadway is consciously planned in terms of the degree of priority that will be given to transit, bicycle, pedestrian, auto and freight goods movement. A commonly noted example is the City of Alameda in the San Francisco Bay Area whose Transportation Master Plan provides for transit priority, bicycle priority, and truck route roadways through the use of overlays and associated policies and design criteria. The recently published Institute of Transportation Engineers report, *Planning Urban Roadway Systems: An ITE Proposed Recommended Practice* (ITE 2011), explains the approach.

## DEVELOP A REGIONAL LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION CONCEPT PLAN

A shift to mobility planning will require an integrated transportation and land use concept plan. Land use strategies should be carefully integrated into the regional transportation planning scheme. The region is taking steps in this direction by performing analysis of alternative land use scenarios. To redirect growth in a more sustainable fashion, however, will require additional focus on characteristics necessary to improve mode choice in designated areas. This thinking is already apparent in the Academy Boulevard Great Streets Plan. It should also be done on a regional scale and include layered network planning, as discussed above.

An understanding of the land use characteristics needed to support mobility will be vital to effective integration of land use and transportation planning. These are characterized in the literature as the five Ds of development— density (of development), diversity (of land uses), design (attention to network and urban design details), destination accessibility (an areawide measure of ease of accessing a location from other areas), and distance to transit (typical walking distance, usually ¼ mile). Of these characteristics, destination accessibility is emerging as perhaps the most critical component to achieving more walking, bicycling and transit use, provided it is accompanied by adequate densities, land use mix, and network connectivity.

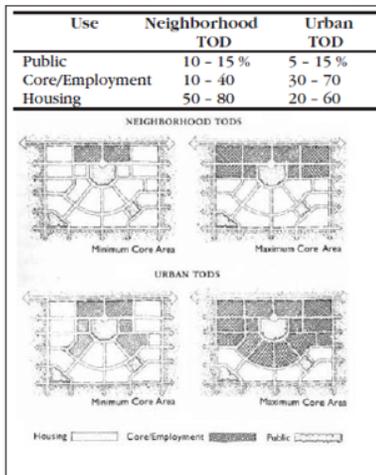
<b>Accessability</b>	An area-wide measure of the ease of travel between locations within a defined geographic area (e.g. is the ability to reach a given location from numerous other locations, or the ability to reach a variety of other locations from a given location.)
<b>Mobility</b>	The ability of people to make trips to satisfy their needs or desires by walking, driving, riding a bicycle, riding public transit, or any combination of modes of transportation.
<b>Activity Centers</b>	Activity centers are dense clusters of trip attractors like retail shops, office space, restaurants, or cultural venues. They may also be designed as transit oriented developments. Some activity centers are very large (such as a central business district), while others can be as small as a collection of neighborhood retail shops. Some housing is located in activity centers, but it is limited to very high density condominiums and apartments. The area surrounding the activity center contains progressively lower-density residential units, along with green space.

Alternatively, poor accessability and single land use areas are defining characteristics of urban sprawl.<sup>6</sup> These land use issues have clear implications for transportation. Research has shown that destinations near the core of metropolitan areas and job centers that are highly accessible with a diversity of uses and well-connected street systems tend to be among the most vibrant and livable places and also have the greatest potential to reduce driving.<sup>7</sup>

Alternatively, development of large residential subdivisions at the urban fringe, and focusing goods and services onto strips along arterials and highways forces residents to make more auto trips, longer trips, and focuses local traffic onto the arterial system. These development decisions preclude transit and walking and generally make travel less convenient. People may have to drive even where they live within walking distance of their destination. This pattern of development magnifies demand on the arterial system and increases the need for costly arterial expansion.

The willingness of individuals to ride public transit also depends upon the pedestrian environment at the beginning and end of the trip. Key destinations must be within walking distance of transit stops (approximately ¼ mile) and accessible via sidewalks. Pedestrian systems, including lighting, sidewalks, and street trees, can be improved to make walking more pleasant, safe, and convenient.

Transit, walking, and bicycling operate much more efficiently in communities with a diverse mix of land uses. Neighborhoods that include a greater mix of land uses within reasonable proximity not only have greater choice of travel alternatives, they also afford residents greater convenience in meeting daily needs. This translates into a higher quality of life. This type of development pattern is often accomplished through policies in support of transit oriented design. TOD policies can be used to require or encourage certain developments served by transit to be highly walkable, dense, and with a compatible mix of uses. Providing TOD along transit corridors creates walkable destinations at key transit stops and stations and helps to reinforce transit ridership. The figures below, taken from TCRP Report 102, provide insight into the land use densities and mix necessary to support different types of transit oriented developments (Exhibit 3). 8



**Figure 4.2. Land-Use Prototypes for TODs.** Source: P. Calthorpe, *The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community, and the American Dream* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press) 1993.

City/Source	TOD Type	Minimum Residential Densities (Dwelling Units/Acre)
San Diego TOD Guidelines	<i>Urban TOD</i> (light-rail served)	25 (18)
	<i>Neighborhood TOD</i> (Bus served)	18 (12)
Washington County, Oregon (Land Use and Transportation Air Quality Study)	<i>Urban TOD</i> (light-rail served)	15 (7)
	<i>Neighborhood TOD</i> (Bus served)	8 (7)
Portland Tri Met, TOD Guidelines	<i>Light-Rail Served TOD</i>	30: 0-1/8 mi 24: 1/8-1/4 mi 12: 1/4-1/2 mi
	<i>Bus Served TOD</i>	24: 0-1/8 mi 12: 1/8-1/4 mi

Source: Community Design + Architecture, *Model Transit-Oriented District Overlay Zoning Ordinance* (Oakland: 2001).

These issues are why a growing number of local governments have adopted a policy of focusing development into compact, mixed use centers as a method of reducing strip development and providing accessible destinations that can be served by transit. Clearly, every community needs a defined operational center that is linked with other parts of the community. Ideally a central business district will be highly accessible both locally and regionally via multiple alternative paths and a variety of transportation modes. These paths could include: a) regional transit service and access-controlled highways that provide regional mobility, b) local transit service and street networks that enhance mobility and accessibility on a neighborhood level, and c) a dense network of sidewalks, bicycle racks, and bus circulators to enhance mobility within the district. This same principle applies on a smaller scale to a neighborhood level. Land use planning and development review in the region should therefore focus on accomplishing the following:

- Activity centers of varying sizes and intensities throughout the community, including a strong central core,
- A diverse and complementary mix of land uses in activity centers that promotes activity during peak and non-peak hours and brings daily activities within walking distance of residences and offers streets and squares that are safe, comfortable, and attractive for the pedestrian;
- An interconnected network of streets and paths within activity centers and connecting to surrounding neighborhoods, with traffic calming where desirable; and
- Appropriate densities and intensities of land uses within walking distance of transit stops.

Decisions regarding the location of individual land uses also affect transit routes and ridership. If land uses that generate transit ridership are located along key transit routes, then route productivity increases and transit service can be offered more frequently. Locating transit supportive land uses outside an existing service area, however, may result in the need to alter or extend routes leading to longer headways and less convenient service – both disincentives to transit use. Thus, land use decisions can either reinforce or impede transit service. Transit compatible land use decisions are one way to build transit ridership and ultimately reduce headways, without the risk and uncertainty of major capital outlays.

Exhibit 3: Land use prototypes and density guidelines for transit oriented development.

Another strategy that supports transit is to provide financial or tax benefits or streamlined development approval to construction that is better suited to meeting the transportation vision of the region. Alachua County, Florida, for example allows administrative approval of transit-oriented developments that locate on transit corridors, rather than requiring rezoning approvals for such developments. A city may also reduce transportation impact fees or grant tax relief to a retail development located near the central business district or close to a transit line. A similar concept is found in residential construction, known as location efficient mortgages. In a location efficient mortgage, the homeowner is given a lower interest rate or allowed to place a reduced down payment if the home is near transit, close to the city center, or will be the location of a home office. The alternative loan terms reflect lower transportation costs being borne by the homeowner. Exhibit 4 summarizes some of the land use and transportation management strategies that may be employed as part of a regional land use and transportation concept plan.

Exhibit 4 – Transportation and Land Management Strategies	
Sample transportation actions	Sample land planning actions
o “complete” streets in urban areas with sidewalks, adequate pedestrian refuges, and provisions for public transportation;	o encouraging multi-use rather than single use developments and neighborhoods;
o increased supply of parallel relievers and continuous collector streets to provide alternatives to highway travel;	o making certain large developments contingent on the proximity and availability of high-capacity, high-speed transit ;
o improved local street and sidewalk network connectivity;	o orienting development along streets in urban areas where transit is provided or walking is desired;
o flexible work hours, vanpools, subsidized transit passes, and other transportation demand management strategies;	o mixed-use activity centers or transit-oriented developments planned along transit lines;
o congestion or parking pricing;	o zoning envelopes along new highways in rural and undeveloped areas to cluster commercial activity at key nodal points and minimize strip development.
o better management, design, and operations of major intersections;	
o multimodal transportation impact assessment that addresses the ability to reach a site conveniently and safely by walking, bicycle, transit, and car.	o Provide financial or tax benefits or streamlined approval to development that is located and designed to advance transportation goals

## INCREASE NETWORK CONNECTIVITY

A connected network reduces demand on the highway system by offering opportunities to circulate within neighborhoods without the need to access major transportation routes. Exhibit 5 illustrates the relationship between network connectivity and trip making on major roadways. The top example reveals how separate, stand alone land uses require use of the arterial for even short local trips due to the absence of network connections. This increases the need to drive among uses, rather than walk or bike, due to longer local travel distances. In addition, it essentially limits the solution to widening the major roadway. The bottom example shows how land uses can be integrated on a connected network to create an environment that reduces the need to drive and the length of trips that must be made. It also internalizes local trips off of the highway system, making them safer and more convenient – particularly for the younger and older driver. This latter example is consistent with the concept of transit oriented development design.



Exhibit 5: Land use, network connectivity and arterial traffic.

One simple and low cost way to promote improved connectivity is to adopt a connectivity index for new development in the land development code. A connectivity index is a measure of how well a site’s roadway network connects destinations, and can be calculated by dividing the number of links by nodes. A node is any point of intersection between two roadways and a link is the road that connects the nodes. (A cul-de-sac is considered a node, while a stub out is not, because it provides access opportunities to adjacent areas.) It is typically set at a desirable index of 1.4 links to nodes. The City of Orlando, for example, requires a connectivity index of 1.4 or greater to be maintained in new or redeveloped large-scale, single-family subdivisions and planned developments.

Another method is to establish maximum block perimeter standards, as is done in Eugene, Oregon and Alachua County, Florida, or to work with neighborhoods on detailed network sketch plans that offer a greater variety of street design types and improved connections, as was done in Nashville, Tennessee to improve street connectivity in the Lenox Village neighborhood. Simple changes in street network design can bring about major changes in connectivity. In addition, connectivity of bicycle and pedestrian networks can be maintained without necessarily connecting streets. This is useful in suburban areas, where highly disconnected streets may be augmented by bicycle /pedestrian connections between cul-de-sacs.

## MAKING TRANSIT A VIABLE AND ATTRACTIVE OPTION

If the region is to be successful in reducing the amount of driving and vehicle miles of travel, then the viability of transit for commute trips and other daily travel needs must improve. At present, the regional transit system is not a viable mobility alternative from this perspective. Like many similar "legacy" transit systems across the U.S., it has evolved in a hub and spoke fashion, with a focus on downtown as the dominant employment destination in an increasingly decentralized, low density region. Although each route serves specific needs and destinations, and provides essential service to those lacking an automobile, a different approach is needed if transit is to be capable of efficiently serving commuters.

This same issue is being faced by numerous regions across the nation. A national study by the Brookings Institute found "a striking paradox between where transit stops are located and where people work. While 70 percent of metro area residents live within three-quarters of a mile of a transit stop, only 30 percent of jobs in those metro areas can be reached via transit within 90 minutes."<sup>9</sup> The solution, as advocated by Brookings and others, is not only to increase funding for transit, but to more effectively connect job locations with transit in the planning process.

"Transportation leaders should make access to jobs an explicit priority in their spending and service decisions, especially given the budget pressures they face. Metro leaders should coordinate strategies regarding land use, economic development, and housing with transit decisions in order to ensure that transit reaches more people and more jobs efficiently."<sup>10</sup>

A frequently noted concern relative to transit spending is that transit does not pay for itself - operating costs must be subsidized by the public. Yet automobile operation is a growing private expense that remains hidden in these debates. For example, next to housing, transportation costs are the second highest expenditure of residents in the Pikes Peak region.<sup>11</sup> Growing transportation costs are putting further economic strain on American households, especially for low and moderate income suburbanites who are "spending large shares of their income owning and operating cars."<sup>12</sup>

Investing in transit must be done strategically, given the high costs and the growing transportation shortfall in the region. Given this reality, some areas have chosen to focus system expansion on high speed modes of public transportation, such as bus rapid transit (BRT) and light rail systems. High speed transit in its own right of way reduces congestion and when supported by careful integration of pedestrian and bicycle networks at station areas, provides a convenient and reliable alternative to driving. It also allows transit providers to increase the efficiency of providing service through reduced labor costs (one of the largest contributors to transit operating costs), improved operating speeds, and competitive travel time and reliability to attract riders to transit who have access to other travel options.<sup>13</sup> Cities that have shifted from conventional transit to bus rapid transit, for example, have noted significant ridership gains, as shown in Exhibit 7.

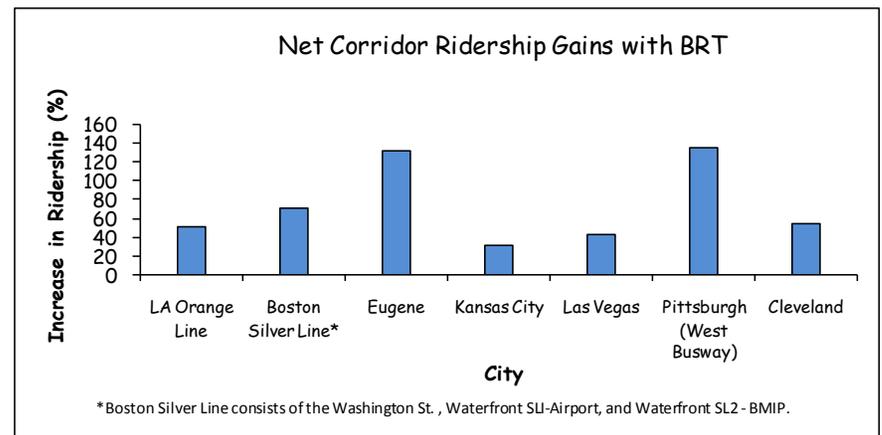


Exhibit 7: Net corridor ridership gains with bus rapid transit. Source: National Bus Rapid Transit Institute, University of South Florida, 2009.

Mountain Metropolitan Transit has developed a regional transit plan that has identified desired corridors for express bus or bus rapid transit service. Local governments and partner agencies in the region should coordinate to apply the various land use and transportation strategies identified here to reinforce the vast potential of these corridors to offer a sustainable alternative to single occupant vehicle travel.

## LEVERAGE BICYCLING AS TRANSPORTATION

The region is certainly well poised to leverage bicycling as a transportation mode. The current system of shared-use paths is an excellent starting point. These can be supplemented by bicycle lanes on high volume, high speed streets and by sharing of roadways with automobiles on low volume, low speed streets. Bicycle boulevards – or bicycle priority streets – can also be designated where they can be strategically integrated into low volume, low speed streets to connect key destinations with major transit station areas.

Bicycle trips may only be a part of the overall travel experience. Longer commute trips will involve both bicycles and buses. In addition, bicycles extend access to transit to a larger potential area. Therefore, the region should continue to look for opportunities to enhance the connections between bicycles and buses and provide for bicycle parking as needed at both ends of the trip. The 2011 Quality of Life Indicators Report for the Pikes Peak Region notes that the number of bicycles carried by buses, including the Front Range Express Bus (FREX), has increased steadily since 2004. This is a clear indication that latent demand exists and can and should be further promoted.

Good locations for bicycle parking are high demand bus stop and station areas. These locations can be identified through consultations with local bicycle groups and transit rider surveys and will include all bus rapid transit stops. In addition, bicycle parking can be required in new developments as a condition of development approval.

Sample regulations include the following:<sup>14</sup>

*Bicycle racks shall be located in convenient, visible, well-lit areas, with easy access, near main entrances. The racks should not interfere with pedestrian traffic and should be protected from potential damage by motor vehicles. They may be located within the public right-of-way with [local government] approval. The following requirements shall also apply:*

- a) All vehicle parking facilities containing less than ten parking spaces shall provide one bicycle rack with no less than four (4) spaces (two high-quality inverted “U” racks).*
- b) For vehicle parking facilities containing more than ten parking spaces the applicant shall provide one bicycle rack with no less than four spaces, plus two bicycle parking spaces for each additional ten parking spaces in the lot. No more than 20 bicycle parking spaces shall be required in any one parking facility.*
- c) One vehicle parking space may be eliminated for each four spaces of bicycle parking provided.*

Additional considerations in bicycle planning include:

- Make sure the area around existing and proposed transit stops is highly accessible by bicycle (as well as by foot)
- Provide adequate bicycle parking facilities as discussed in <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/engineering/parking.cfm>;
- Bicycle lanes should be placed to the left of bus travel lanes where possible, as buses stop and start and bicyclists need to maintain momentum;
- Connect key travel destinations as directly as possible with bicycle lanes, paths, or shared streets. Some areas are integrating contra flow lanes on low volume, low speed roads to increase the directness of the connection.



## SHARE THE MESSAGE

Because transportation system changes affect everyone, the benefits of a shift in policy and planning to promote sustainable transportation alternatives will need to be communicated to the public. These benefits include increasing bicycle and pedestrian safety, reducing household transportation costs, and reducing emissions and energy usage associated with single occupant vehicle travel. Another benefit is that increasing opportunities to walk and bicycle has direct benefits to public health. In an era when obesity rates in the U.S. are climbing dramatically, the City of Colorado Springs website ticker notes that it was voted the 4th fittest City in the U.S. in a Gallup poll. Maintaining fitness is clearly a community value that can be furthered through active transportation.

The region's largest employer, Fort Carson, has already set an example for the region to follow. The fort has set an objective of reducing single occupant vehicle travel 40% by 2027. To advance this objective it has instituted a systematic program for promoting walking, bicycling and transit use. Activities include a bicycle sharing program, construction of 16 miles of bicycle trails and shared use paths, sidewalk improvements, working with Metro transit to create front entry express service to the Fort, promoting the military mass transit benefit to riders who qualify and linking them to transit service (which also helps offset transit operating costs), working to implement shuttle service on base and a carshare option for emergencies, as well as organizing key activities into a walkable, bikeable area. Telling this story can help in achieving broader public support for the Region's complementary sustainable transportation efforts.

## CONSIDER ALL THE FUNDING OPTIONS

Given the challenges of maintaining funding for transportation needs, many agencies are expanding their funding efforts to nontraditional sources of capital and operating funding. Some areas, for example, are using tax increment financing (TIF) to capture the increase in property value afforded by redevelopment to reinvest in transportation system improvement. As a long-time user of TIF district plans, Portland, Oregon has had success implementing and carrying out several high-cost revitalization projects. According to the Portland Development Commission (PDC), the city spends TIF district funds on "bricks and mortar development, not programmatic or operational expenses."<sup>15</sup> One example is the PDC's efforts to revitalize Portland's Gateway community

by designating it as a TIF district in June 2001. The plan includes a \$164 million budget that spans over 20 years. Both private and public developers, including the PDC and TriMet and Parametrix, will complete projects including a new transit center, a new medical building, low and moderate income housing, realignment of dangerous intersections, and widen sidewalks, increase pedestrian lighting and other infrastructure improvements.

Portland, Oregon is also home of the nation's first modern streetcar. The City leverages the streetcar as one strategy to help keep its downtown economically healthy. As noted in the system development report, "the Portland Streetcar is at the heart of a new approach to shaping cities that promotes investment at the City's core." Data shows that the streetcar has led to an estimated \$3.5 billion in new investment within two blocks of the streetcar alignment since the original streetcar alignment was identified in 1997.<sup>16</sup> The City helps fund the system in part through an assessment on property that receives the greatest financial benefit from proximity to the Streetcar. This Local Improvement District has generated \$19.4 million for the streetcar to date.

	Westside Streetcar (in millions)	Eastside Loop (in millions)	Westside %	Eastside %
<b>Local</b>				
City Parking Bonds	28.6		27.7%	0.0%
Local Improvement District	19.4	15.5	18.8%	10.5%
Tax Increment Financing	21.5	27.68	20.8%	18.7%
City Funds-General Funds/Dept. Funds	5.5	6.11	5.3%	4.1%
Transportation Land Sale	3.1		3.0%	0.0%
Transportation Systems Development	2.5		2.4%	0.0%
Miscellaneous	5.6		5.4%	0.0%
<b>Regional</b>				
Regional Transportation Funds	10	3.62	9.7%	2.4%
<b>State</b>				
State Lottery Funds		20		13.5%
<b>Federal</b>				
Federal Transportation Funds	5	75	4.8%	50.6%
U.S. HUD Grant	1.95		1.9%	0.0%
Stimulus Funds		0.36	0.0%	0.2%
	103.15	148.27	100%	100%

Exhibit 9: Capital funding sources for Portland's Westside and Eastside Streetcar system. Source: Portland Streetcar Inc.

## NOTES

Exhibit 9 provides an overview of the many funding sources used by Portland to advance its streetcar system. Other sources not noted include selling advertising rights through a sponsorship program. An interesting variation of the tax increment financing concept called a corridor TIF is currently being explored by Portland to aid in further streetcar system expansion. It would apply TIF along future streetcar corridors and recapture the increased property taxes from redevelopment to help generate local funds for the streetcar. Other interesting options for funding transit include contracts or purchasing of services by major employers or other entities. Fort Carson's efforts to match personnel eligible for the mass transit benefit to the Metro transit service is a variation of this idea.

## MOVING AHEAD

The Pikes Peak region is poised to achieve a more sustainable transportation system. After years of decentralization and highway expansion, achieving such a system may seem overwhelming. But it is well within reach. The key is to act boldly and strategically. Focus investment on those centers and neighborhoods that have the greatest potential to be walkable and improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment in those areas. Connect key centers with express transit service, building on the Mountain Metro Transit plan. And leverage the five Ds of development to make transit, walking and bicycling more attractive and to provide the type of neighborhoods where residents can interact with their neighbors and their environment outside of an automobile.

1. Dr. Robert B. Cervero, Professor of City & Regional Planning; University of California, Berkeley; Director, University of California Transportation Center. Professor Cervero specializes in the area of sustainable transportation policy and planning, with concentration on urban transportation and land use system relationships.
2. Robert Cervero, "Road Expansion, Urban Growth and Induced Travel – A Path Analysis," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Spring 2003, Vol 69, No 2, pp. 145-163.
3. Anthony Downs. The law of peak-hour express-way congestion. *Traffic Quarterly*, 1962, Vol 16, No 3, pp. 393–409.
4. Marlon Boarnet, *Transportation Infrastructure and Sustainable Development: New Planning Approaches for Urban Growth*, Access, No. 33, Fall 2008, pp. 27-33.
5. Southern California Association of Governments, *2008 Regional Transportation Plan: Making the Connections*, adopted May 2008, p. 13.  
[Online] [http://www.scag.ca.gov/rtp2008/pdfs/finalrtp/f2008RTP\\_Complete.pdf](http://www.scag.ca.gov/rtp2008/pdfs/finalrtp/f2008RTP_Complete.pdf)
6. Reid Ewing, Rolf Pendall, and Don Chen, *Measuring Sprawl and its Impact*, Volume 1, 2010.
7. Reid Ewing and Robert Cervero, Travel and the Built Environment: A Meta-Analysis, *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 2010, Vol. 76, No. 3, pp. 265-294
8. R. Cervero, S. Murphy, C. Ferrell, N. Goguts, Y. Tsai. *TCRP Report 102: Transit-Oriented Development in the United States: Experiences Challenges, and Prospects*, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies
9. Ryan Holeywell, "Study: Transit Doesn't Take Workers to Jobs," *Governing: Fedwatch*, May 13, 2011. [Online] <http://www.governing.com/blogs/fedwatch/Study-Transit-Doesnt-Take-Workers-to-Jobs.html>
10. Adie Tomer, Elizabeth Kneebone, Robert Puentes, and Alan Berube. *Missed Opportunity: Transit and Jobs in Metropolitan America*, May 2011. [Online] [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/Programs/Metro/jobs\\_transit/0512\\_jobs\\_transit.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/Programs/Metro/jobs_transit/0512_jobs_transit.pdf)
11. *2011 Quality of Life Indicators Report for the Pikes Peak Region*
12. Tomer, et al. *Missed Opportunity*. 2011.
13. *Seattle Transit Master Plan: Briefing Book*, prepared by Nelson\Nygaard Assoc for the Seattle Department of Transportation, Washington (2011)
14. Kristine Williams and Karen Seggerman, *Model Regulations and Plan Amendments for Multimodal Transportation Districts*, National Center for Transit Research (2004).
15. Portland Development Commission. "Economic Development Implementation Strategy." Available online: [http://www.pdc.us/ura/interstate/strategy/econdev/03\\_purpose\\_and\\_function.html](http://www.pdc.us/ura/interstate/strategy/econdev/03_purpose_and_function.html).
16. City of Portland, *Portland Streetcar System Concept Plan: A Framework for Future Corridor Planning and Alternatives Analysis*, adopted September 9, 2009. [Online] <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=35953&a=321180>.



CREATING THE REGIONAL  
COMMUNITY



## INTRODUCTION

As the Pikes Peak region has experienced extraordinary growth over the last two decades, old boundaries have come to mean less and less. Increasingly, the problems most conspicuous to the public, such as congestion, sprawl, environmental degradation and loss of traditional community form are not solvable by any single jurisdiction, no matter how large. The challenge is to find common ground, forge new partnerships and work together across what have been guarded, competitive boundaries to begin working as a regional community of vested interests with shared goals.

Fortunately, in the Pikes Peak region there is a rich array of latent resources and an important agency that can provide the focus and forum for this new collaboration: your regional planning commission, The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACG). Until recently this agency and other regional agencies across the country have often been allowed to do little else than serve as the local conduit for state pass-through funds for federal transportation support. However, regional agencies possess great potential, as those here and elsewhere are discovering. The new Regional Sustainability grants are providing planning incentive to move in a more collaborative, open and comprehensive way to consider the shared issues of a region and derive mutually beneficial actions.

Working across boundaries and as a region does have its challenges. However, regions as large as Denver and those as rural as Pioneer Valley in Western Massachusetts are making important progress working collaboratively between multiple jurisdictions, public agencies and other civic resources.

A significant difference between regional and local planning is the distance and related travel-time to meet. Distance also brings diversity of community types and their related issues. However, single municipalities such as Denver, Houston, Chicago and even Los Angeles have learned to work across these challenges and find cooperative common ground.

## PPACG Metropolitan Planning Area



## REAL PARTNERSHIP

Traditionally, regional planning has met the federal mandate for transportation planning with state and federal authorization as a Metropolitan Planning Organization. However, The Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments has also taken advantage of its opportunities to develop a diverse service capability for the region. In addition to the long-range transportation plan, these capacities include:

- Area Agency on Aging
- Environmental Planning
- Regional Economic Planning
- Military Impact Planning
- Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority

As a cooperative, voluntary council of governments, PPACG is poised to guide and facilitate a regional, integrated land use & transportation plan for a sustainable, green future. The Pikes Peak Regional Sustainability Plan could provide the foundation to build an effective cooperative growth management plan for the entire region. Again, Denver provides a model to consider in their Mile High Compact in which the chief elected officials of the region have formed a compact, in addition to the formal regional agency, which commits them to work face to face and negotiate significant issues. This compact approach has been adopted by a number of other regions including Chicago, with its Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, the Bay Area, and Knoxville.

An example close to the scale of the Pikes Peak Region is in Newton County, GA, where the County and its 5 incorporated municipalities have jointly identified the growth and conservation zones in the county. They then produced new comprehensive growth plans at the same time, synchronized with a shared vision and strategy between the county and the municipalities. A nonprofit community-planning center has helped coordinate the process with assistance from the state university.

## THE DATA MEANS SOMETHING

There are politically challenging choices to face when seeking to implement an effective development strategy that will have some positive effects on issues such as air quality, vehicle miles traveled and land consumptions. The four most important agreements to forge between cooperating governments are the following:

1. Control new development in the unincorporated county areas
2. Plan for reality and not pipe dreams when it comes to growth
3. Increase density in the identified development areas that potentially might be served by transit
4. Follow the adopted integrated regional land use and transportation plan to guide the allocation of resources such as transportation project funds and provide infrastructure consistent with the plan.

Planning is an on-going component of civic life, not an occasional event. The federal transportation planning program requires a new long-range regional transportation plan every decade with at least two updates

## PLAN: BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

An Initiative of the Newton County Leadership Collaborative

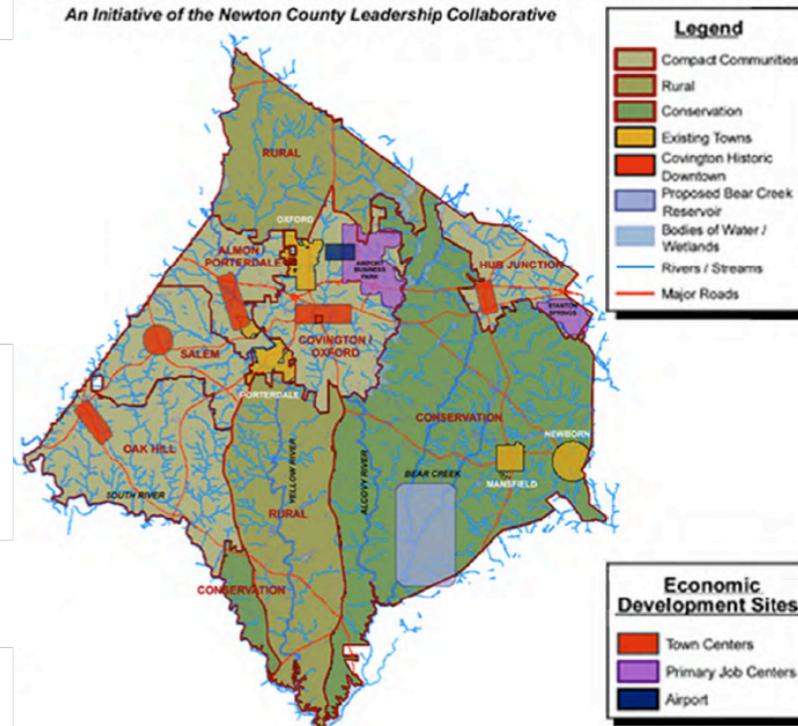


Figure 1 - Newton County, GA and collaborative growth management plan with 5 towns

in between. The related land use, environmental and economic development plans should be similarly updated and revised to respond to changing conditions such as the recent economic downturn. While specifics may change, the overall vision and goals should be maintained as much as possible and only adjusted with serious public review and cross-sector leadership consideration. With the growing need to then coordinate regional, municipal and county planning, intergovernmental coordination and cooperation is increasingly necessary. Fortunately, in the SDAT Teams' findings, there is a growing level of public support for and interest in pursuing these cooperative sustainability goals. The region is also gifted with an exceptional range of public, civic and nonprofit resources to support and contribute to this heightened level of regional partnership. Some of these include Sustainable Fort Carson, Pikes Peak Quality of Life Indicators, Great Streets, Dream City 2020, Downtown Colorado Springs, and ongoing regional plans such as

Moving Forward. The team did find frequent instances when the activities and work of these various initiatives were hardly coordinated or even communicated cross-boundaries and not at all to the public. The challenge, but also significant opportunity for the region, is to organize and coordinate these great resources in a very visible, recognized and effective partnership as opposed to continuing as interesting but separate activities.

Good data is the foundation of regional plans and critical to establishing realistic growth forecasts, allocating development projects, land consumption and infrastructure needs and setting evaluation benchmarks. With leadership, public commitment, excellent staff support and top quality data, planning can be made effective in shaping and working towards a clear vision for the future.

To be successful, a new level of public outreach, engagement and partnership will be necessary in the planning process itself. Some of the stakeholder interests will include:

- The PPACOG
- The County
- All Municipalities
- All neighborhood organizations
- All Stakeholder organizations including business, environment and faith-based groups
- Representative participation reflecting the region's ethnic and racial diversity.

## CENTERS, COORIDORS & GREEN INFRASTRUCUTURE

An emerging standard for regional plans has been a “centers-and-corridors approach” that has proven to be a useful guide for a region without intruding on local municipal planning responsibilities and authorities down to the zoning level. This approach does, at the same time, have significance in that it provides a visual growth strategy for the region, has a clear future development guide for each municipality and

identifies the important connections and linkages between centers. Underlying this concept is the clear focus to concentrate future development as much as possible towards these centers in a pattern and density established in the plan. Denver's Regional Council of Governments has used this approach for more than a decade.

A more recent addition to the Centers & Corridors Approach has been to integrate a regional Green Infrastructure component to the plan. Green Infrastructure is much more than mapping existing and proposed parks and open space lands. Green Infrastructure, like road, power and water infrastructure, establishes a connected network and system of “green and blue” water and land resources. The network is important to conserve wastewater, drainage and stormwater systems that also contribute to erosion control, reduced flooding, and also contribute to other environmental factors such as habitat protection and biodiversity. A Green infrastructure plan illustrated by the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision Plan below includes watersheds in four states and five regional MPO agencies.



Figure 2 - Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision Plan for 4-state and 5-MPO region

Green infrastructure can be identified and depicted as a resource guide following the natural watershed areas of streams and ridgelines. The land, as illustrated in the preceding *Green Infrastructure Vision Plan* for the Greater Chicago region, crosses four state lines, touches on five MPO regions, and includes lands that are environmentally important including private as well as public lands. This green infrastructure plan is indicating lands that should be protected and those that might be developed, but with approaches that include conservation development methods.

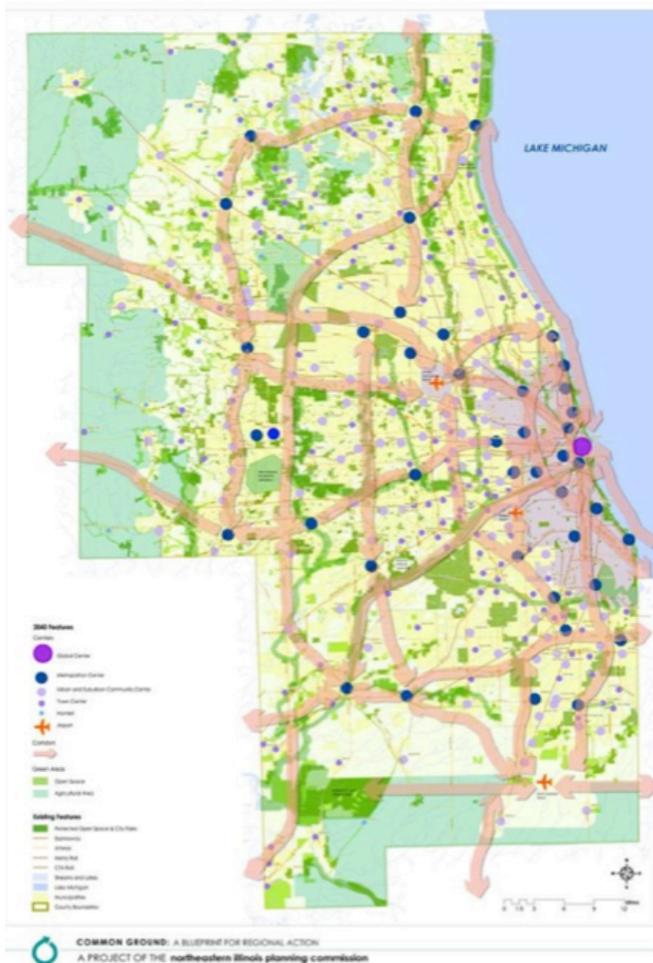


Figure 3 - Chicago region 2040 Regional Framework Plan incorporating Green Infrastructure plan

The resulting Chicago metropolitan regional plan for six counties and 272 municipalities is a Centers, Corridors & Green Infrastructure framework plan which was recognized by the American Planning Association for its high level of engagement and participation across this 3,400 hundred square mile region.

Other regions, such as the Atlanta Regional Commission, have successfully used a similar planning approach that also created implementation incentives by providing challenge grants to their member communities. These grants supported coordinated local planning as well as seed grant funding for the identified public improvements. In both of these examples, federal transportation planning and project funds to the region have been the primary source of funding.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

Historically, regional planning has remained a staff/commission activity in support of member local governments. However, the last decade has seen an opening-up of public participation at the regional level. We attribute this trend to several factors. First and foremost, regional planning has emerged from its technical, data analysis orientation to take on the kind of vision and goals-driven sustainability planning the team is recommending for the Pikes Peak region. These are issues civic stakeholder groups and the public-at-large care about and want a voice in. At the same time, new visualization tools such as GIS and support modeling programs are available to regional agencies, making complex plans at the regional scale understandable with clear graphic communication. Bringing together the new public interest and the new tools is also an emerging new level of professionals skilled in facilitation and negotiation, who are supporting broad-based, large-scale public involvement at the regional level.



Figure 4 - BCDCOG Regional Vision 21st Century Town Hall Forum in the Charleston, SC region.

One successful tool for managing large group processes is called the “21st Century Town Hall,” run by the national nonprofit organization *AmericaSpeaks*. Our team members have been instrumental in perfecting this approach and have used it successfully in regions as large as Chicago and Washington, D.C. It has also been utilized in jurisdictions similar in size to Pikes Peak, such as Charleston, SC, and Northwest Indiana. This effective launching event can generate a high level of civic interest and media attention. It requires careful planning and management of high-level conference quality support in logistics, communication, technology and hospitality.

Another process structure to consider is the organization and hosting of simultaneously linked sites across the region. The team recommends holding these by open invitation for participant convenience, rather than political geography, although site locations may be established with those considerations. Figure 5 illustrates the “Community Cluster” dispersed site organization recently used in the Charleston, SC, regional meeting at the BCDCOG regional agency. These five sites provided the structure for localized workshops and then were linked together for a final 21st Century Town Hall forum to finalize the preferred plan scenario.

All of these sessions (small scale and large scale) aim to include a true demographic representation of the regional community. Finding the right time, place and invitation method all contribute to a good turnout. Using campaign and community organizing techniques are required to break through the time and interest demands on people and attract their participation. Passive notices and even mailings will not suffice. These efforts require an active recruiting network. The team noted this capacity in the greater Colorado Springs area, but often these resources are not utilized by the public agencies.

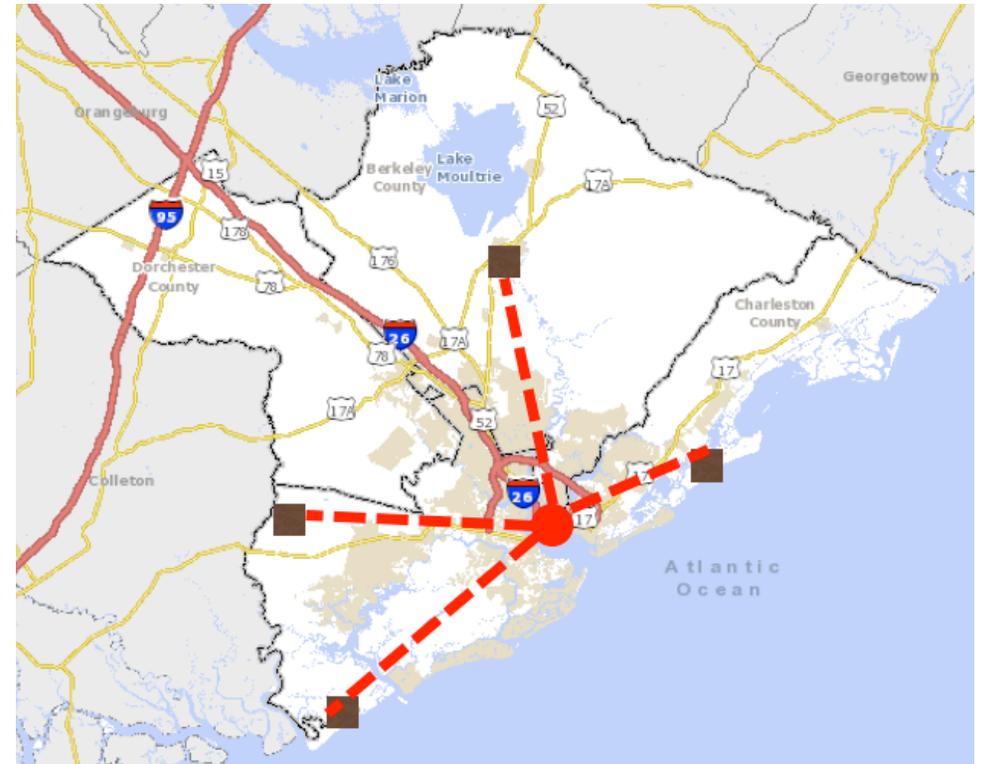


Figure 5 - BCDCOG Community Cluster linked workshops



Figure 6 - BCDCOG facilitated small group work table.

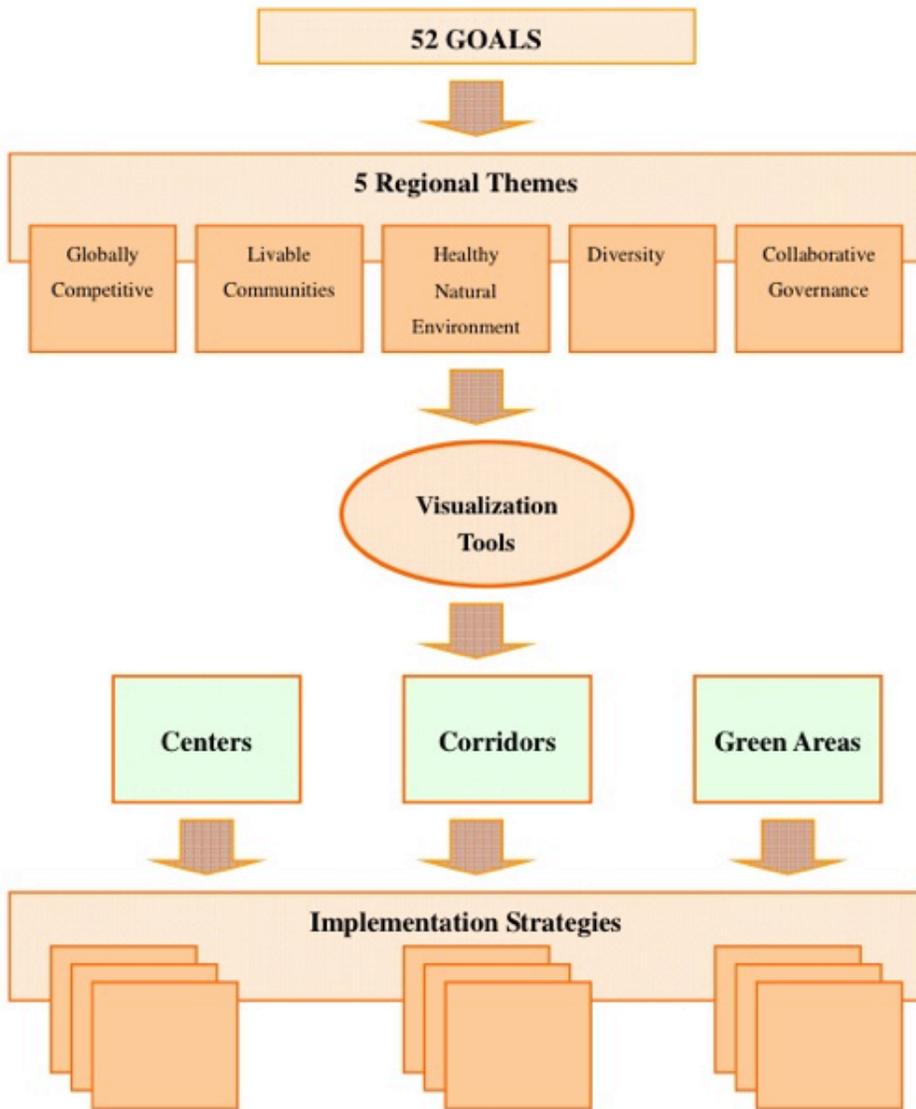


Figure 7 - Chicago Common Ground regional planning process 2001-2006

The next level of organization includes integrating the public process as an integral part of the overall planning process, so scheduled events and activities are identified at the outset. Most important, people want to know what they are coming to and how their input will be used. It is important to be clear on how public input will be used, as well as how it *won't be* used. The team recommends a meaningful consideration for including public input in balance with staff, consultant and leadership input. Being clear about who, what, where, when, why and how input will be used at the very beginning will go a long way to creating a successful planning process.

The team emphasizes that the public process should be an important part of shaping the plan and not conducted as only a public relations activity. This type of open public process is also the opportunity to bring other related civic activities into planning considerations. The Pikes Peak region has benefited from any number of official and unofficial planning and civic initiatives. The team was impressed with their content and spirit. However, there seemed to be a lack of connection, integration or coordination between those activities, which would help bolster and leverage their joint effectiveness.

In Chicago, several regional organizations received foundation support to form a program called the Campaign for Sensible Growth. It was housed at one of the region's civic organizations that was formed in 1932 to champion good planning and the sustainable implementation of the Burnham Plan of 1909. This longevity had generated the trust and leadership to serve as convener. While this organization demonstrated over a century of civic engagement with a consistent vision, the Campaign for Sensible Growth was a needed new public/civic partnership with a cross-sector board and staff support to champion sustainable planning goals throughout the region. The program generated support from many compatible programs in its member organizations, agencies and local governments. Such an organization in the Pikes Peak region would also include the major military facilities, including Ft. Carson and the Air Force Academy. This type of local participation is being encouraged by the Pentagon and can be referenced in recent directives such as the publication "Working with Regional Councils" produced by the Range Sustainability Outreach Coordinator of the Department of Defense. The publication includes the Pikes Peak Regional Commission as a resource.

## SKILLS AND CAPACITY FOR REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

It is fundamental that “for every action there is a reaction,” and our experience shows that the reaction for or against something is directly related to the degree of involvement and hence ownership in what is being proposed. The Pikes Peak region can build on its past experience with significant one-time events and bring those practices into the everyday workings of public agencies and civic organizations. There are places where public engagement in planning and other civic activities become a positive activity along with soccer leagues, music lessons and other volunteer activities. Denver again can be a resource from the headquarters of the Nation Civic League, which has over 100 years experience supporting this kind of civic life.

Some pointers we would like to reinforce are that planning meetings should generally be organized, like every teacher knows, with an engaging lesson plan. The goal is to deliver the information effectively, know what questions to ask and provide ample time for people to provide their response. A 50-minute lecture with 10-minutes of questions and answers just will not do.

We use a 3:1 rule that for every 1 unit (i.e. minute) of talk there are 3 units of facilitated dialogue and deliberation. For instance, for an hour of meeting time there would be 15 minutes of presentation with 45 minutes of discussion. In addition, a time and means of collecting and reporting on the discussions is necessary to include in the agenda. During introductions, the convening host such as the Planning Department should be clear and concise on how the results of the meeting will be used. Do not over promise (i.e. “We want to do whatever you want”). Explain precisely how the meeting’s input will be considered. (i.e. “We will include your ideas into the overall comments and research we are assembling.”)



Another recommendation is that meetings be organized around small group discussions at roundtables of 8 to 10 people. Table reports and summaries may then be shared with the whole meeting but individual comments and points of view are exchanged in small groups and not from the floor. These small groups should also be supported with trained volunteer, staff and consultant facilitators who are there to aid in active discussion not explain or defend an agency’s proposal. Often large institutions (hospitals, colleges, school boards and corporations) have training programs where skilled facilitators may be found as volunteers. Such a cadre has begun with the Dream City: Vision 2020 program that could be built upon for future efforts.

For this type of sustainable civic partnership there are a growing number of communication and technology tools to consider. Here we make a distinction between those used to support live, face-to-face activities and remote activities. While we always encourage good flipchart recording skills (see “How to Make Meetings Work”) these can be greatly enhanced with the new technology of keypad polling and linked “groupware” computers. The national nonprofit organizations *AmericaSpeaks* in Washington, DC and *PlaceMatters* in Denver are expert in using and training in these tools.

Many planning and other public agencies are also making use of social networks such as Facebook to inform and listen to their communities. We would caution that none of these should be used casually. They require experienced users to be used in successfully.

Regarding civic engagement in the Pikes Peak region, we would emphasize these key rules:

- Make clear the contract on the public's role at the beginning
- Follow agreed on ground rules for civil dialogue
- Build on the balance of public input, solid research & financial feasibility to establish priorities
- Be clear that authorized elected or appointed leaders are the final decision makers

Also ensure that engagement is a positive civic activity, and encourage it:

- Make it easy to participate (Time and location)
- Be welcoming (be a good host)
- Provide food (it makes all the difference)

Engagement goes far beyond the meeting. Plans and projects should also keep the process alive with transparency and accountability. A proven tool to maintain a plans' momentum is a monitoring, measuring, and reporting program to benchmark and track progress.

This kind of program can bring a number of benefits:

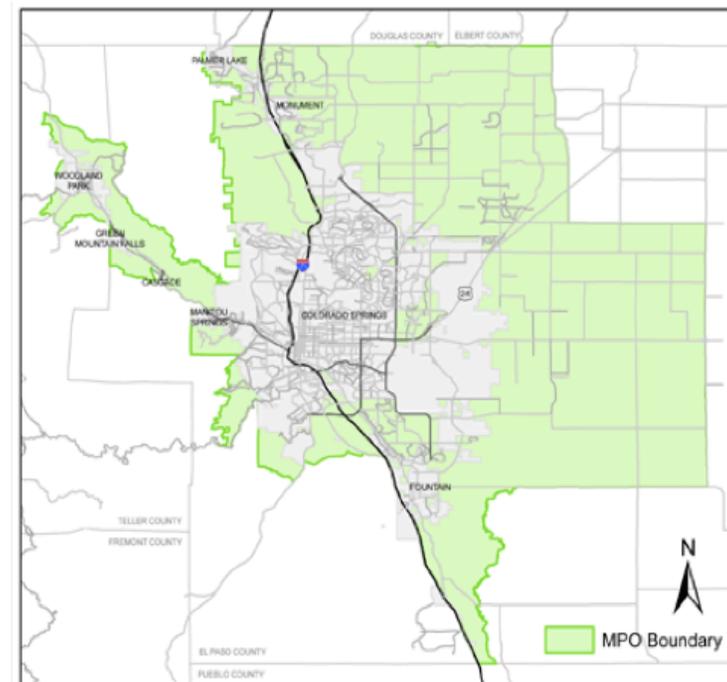
- Connects Vision, Goals & Results
- Guides public, private & nonprofit decision making
- Provides guidance for mid-course corrections
- Seeks Compact commitment signatures
- Becomes the civic annual or bi-annual type report card

Finally, sustainability is a community activity as well as an environmental and economic effort. Your civic culture needs to be sustainable, too:

- Hold the Vision
- Commit the resources
- Implement at all levels

- Adjust with change (use your benchmarked indicators)
- Maintain broad-based, inclusive engagement
- Keep the public eye on the goals
- Be visible, measurable & accountable
- Help each other be successful across boundaries and borders

Ultimately, sustainability is about conservation of resources, and a redirecting of consumptive practices in ways that will shift development patterns and create new community and housing types. With the expectation of shifting economics, continued rising fuel prices, and increased competitiveness from every direction, sustainability principles offer ideas for future success. Development requires both public as well as private investments. The taxpayers funding the public investments have a voice in the public choices as well as the free market, private investor. All successful land developers know that private development is absolutely dependent on public resources and funding for transportation, water, schools and the rest of the infrastructure every community needs. Planning for a sustainable future is about finding the public and private agreements about what the future holds and then committing all resources to ensure success. The choices are completely up to the people, and the communities of the region must work together for mutually beneficial results.





## CONCLUSION



## REGIONAL CAPACITY AND THE FUTURE OF PIKES PEAK

As the team suggests, the region has enormous capacity and talent to successfully address its core issues. As Ron Thomas states, “As a cooperative, voluntary council of governments, PPACG is poised to guide and facilitate a regional, integrated land use & transportation plan for a sustainable, green future. The Pikes Peak Regional Sustainability Plan could provide the foundation to build an effective cooperative growth management plan for the entire region.” The question is not whether the capacity exists. It is a question of collective will, and the pursuit of partnership and collaboration. As June Williamson surmises,

The Pikes Peak Region faces a significant and important decision about future growth. The region has a choice: acres of greyfields versus miles of greenfields. From an infill development and land use policy perspective, it shouldn’t be such a hard choice, but somehow it is. For example, what is to be done about the Banning Louis Ranch and other similar properties that may be categorized as premature subdivisions, upon which so much planning for the future currently rests? The team believes this topic is urgent and should be addressed now, during the current economic and development “pause.”

As Ron Thomas concludes, “Planning for a sustainable future is about finding the public and private agreements about what the future holds and then committing all resources to ensure success. The choices are completely up to the people, and the communities of the region must work together for mutually beneficial results.”

The SDAT process, like other public processes preceding it, has been a demonstration of the region’s collective capacity to engage a broad range of stakeholders and the public in a conversation about the community’s future. The region must build upon these efforts in reaching out to engage the community, and building novel and effective partnerships that can leverage all of the resources present to realize a vision for the future. The SDAT Team believes this future is not only possible, it is inevitable – *if the communities of the Pikes Peak region work together for common purpose*. The time has come.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Acknowledgements

The Colorado Springs SDAT process was the product of public collaboration among many organizations and individuals. The team would like to thank the many public officials, civic leaders, business representatives and residents who participated in the process. In particular, the team would like to thank the following individuals, who helped lead local efforts on the project:

**RJ Steer, AIA** - Steering Committee Co-Chair, Architect, AIACS 2009 President

**Bill Fisher, AIA, LEED AP** - Steering Committee Co-Chair, AIACS 2010 President

**Lou Galletta, AIA** - Architect, AIACS 2011 President

**Joe Wyka, P.E., LEED AP** - Chief, Engineering Division, Directorate of Public Works Fort Carson, Colorado

**Sarah White** - Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments Military Impact Planner II, Coordinator of PPACG Regional Sustainability Project

**Craig Casper, AICP** - Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, Transportation Director

**John Olson, CNU, APA ASLA, LEED AP** - CO Registered Landscape Architect, Planner, Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority & DT Review Boards

**Bill Beard, NCARB LEED AP** - Architect, Pikes Peak Community College Architecture and Construction Technology Faculty

**Carl Schuler, AICP** - Sr Comprehensive Planner City Of Colorado Springs Land Use Review Division

**Whitney Calhoun, Assoc. AIA LEED AP** - USGBC, Architectural Intern, Pikes Peak Sustainable Business Network Catamount Institute

**Dave Munger** - President Colorado Springs Council Of Neighborhoods & Organizations, Old North End Neighborhood Board, Citizens Transportation Advisory Board, El Paso County Community Development Advisory Board

**Frank Kinder, LEED AP** - Colorado Springs Utilities Senior Conservation Specialist

**Mark Tremmel, AIA, LEED AP** - Architect, USGBC, Colorado Springs Downtown Partnership Board

**Kyle Campbell, PE** - 2011 President Housing & Building Association of Colorado Springs

**Lisa Cochrun**, Economic Development Director, City of Fountain

In addition, the SDAT team would also like to thank AIA Colorado South for its partnership on the process. The SDAT team would also like to thank the students from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS) and Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC), who participated in the charrette studio sessions and supported the team's work with numerous contributions.





THE SDAT TEAM

## CHARRETTE TEAM



Lee Quill, FAIA (Washington, DC)  
*Charrette Team Leader*

Lee Quill, FAIA holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Prior to founding Cunningham | Quill Architects, PLLC, he was an Associate in the Washington, D.C. office of Skidmore, Owings &

Merrill. Mr. Quill has extensive experience in community master planning, university planning, urban design, residential and mixed-use in-fill, adaptive reuse of historic buildings, and institutional, university and commercial/corporate architecture. Recognized as a leader in design, he has lectured for national organizations including the National Building Museum, the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and the American Planning Association (APA). Most recently, he served as a juror for the EPA National Awards for Smart Growth Achievement and on numerous regional ULI Washington TAP planning panels. He has been heavily involved in shaping the future growth of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, developing policies with the DC Mayoral Task Force on Transit - Oriented Development and as an appointed member of the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee (COG). Mr. Quill's projects have received numerous design awards including, Awards of Excellence, Honor and Merit in Design and Historic Resources from the AIA, a National 2007 Charter Award from the Congress for the New Urbanism, the DC Mayor's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation and the Pro Bono Publico Award from the Washington Architectural Foundation.



Ron Thomas, AICP (Georgia)  
*Sustainable Regional Land Use*

Ron Thomas is the retired executive director of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC). When he joined the agency in 2000, he refocused the NIPC mission on providing more direct assistance to local communities based on their diverse planning, development, and environmental issues. He launched NIPC's award-winning Common Ground regional planning program and the innovative Full Circle community housing information center. These and other programs set new standards for public engagement in regional affairs.

His career work includes a range of planning issues such as land use, environment, housing, transportation (especially context sensitive design), economic development and many urban design and quality of life programs. He has pioneered extensive applied projects and published work on new planning approaches to visioning and strategic planning using innovative communication technology. Currently he consults on a wide range of planning issues and is an academic professional faculty at the University of Georgia's planning program in the College of Environment & Design.

He is widely published and has served on the boards of Chicago Wilderness, Illinois Association of Regional Councils, the National Association of Regional Councils, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Campaign for Sensible Growth and currently on the Oconee River Greenway Commission. For over two decades he was located in Washington, DC where he developed a number of leading-edge national foundation programs incubating today's concepts for sustainability, smart growth and neo-traditional communities. His focus has been on participatory planning within a democratic society.



June Williamson, RA  
(New York)  
*Retrofitting Suburbia*

June Williamson is Associate Professor of Architecture and Urban Design at the City College of New York / CUNY. She has taught and practiced in Boston, Salt Lake City, Atlanta, Los Angeles and now, New York City. Her deep interest in rethinking suburban

landscapes stems from growing up in several: Metairie in Louisiana, Needham and Westwood in Massachusetts, Mt. Lebanon in Pennsylvania, New Malden in Surrey, England, as well as Ras Tanura, a gated company compound in Saudi Arabia modeled on a U.S. 1940s subdivision. Recently, she was advisor for an ideas design competition for the suburbs of Long Island, titled “Build a Better Burb.”

June is co-author, with Ellen Dunham-Jones, of the book *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs*, winner of the 2009 PROSE Award for Architecture and Urban Planning from the Association of American Publishers, and her writing has been published in the book *Writing Urbanism: A Design Reader* as well as the journals *Places*, *Harvard Design Magazine*, *Urban Land*, the *Journal of Urbanism*, and *Thresholds*.



Kristine M. Williams, AICP (Florida)  
*Transportation*

Kristine Williams is Program Director of Planning and Corridor Management research at the University of South Florida, Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) where she specializes in land use and transportation planning and policy research. Kristine is a nationally recognized leader in roadway access management, which she views as essential to a sustainable

transportation system, and has participated in a number of policy studies for the Florida Department of Transportation relative to corridor management, multimodal planning, alternative funding, and impact mitigation for transportation, including the development of a regional mobility planning and mobility fee concept that serves as a model for Florida communities. She is co-author of the first national Access Management Manual published by the Transportation Research Board of

the National Academies (TRB 2003) and is currently working on the second edition under a grant from the National Cooperative Highway Research Program. She also consults frequently on transportation and land use policy issues, having helped numerous state transportation agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and local governments develop corridor management plans, policies and regulations. Kristine received the 2004 Award of Excellence from the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association for her work in multimodal transportation policy and was awarded the Institute of Transportation Engineers 2008 Transportation Planning Council Best Project Award for a best practices guide on transportation concurrency. In 2008, she served as a Fulbright Senior Specialist in Thailand where she provided training on corridor land use and transportation management strategies to the Thailand Department of Highways and faculty and students of the Asia Institute of Technology. Kristine presently serves as Chair of the Transportation Research Board Access Management Committee.



Richard Ward, CRE, CEcD, AICP  
(St. Louis, Missouri)  
*Real Estate Analysis*

Richard Ward joined Zimmer Real Estate Services in 2007. He manages Zimmer’s St. Louis office and is part of the firm’s Development Management Group. His principal areas of focus include: shaping and advising public/

private ventures and partnerships, development partner procurement, site selection and acquisition strategies, structuring incentive agreements between local governments and private investors, developer solicitation & selection, and master developer arrangements for complex multi-developer projects.

Representative assignments since joining Zimmer include: selecting and negotiating developer agreements to create urban mixed-use projects in association with a regional medical center in Jackson, MS and a branch facility of a major St. Louis bank. He has likewise advised the St. Louis Development Corporation regarding redevelopment of city-owned property occupied by its Streets Department and the St. Louis Metropolitan Sewer District. He is currently managing on behalf of the Jackson (MS) Municipal Airport Authority the creation of an airport-related business park on land owned by the airport.

Richard founded St. Louis-based Development Strategies, Inc. and was its principal owner and CEO from 1988 to 2007. During that time, the firm gained clients and

engagements nationwide and became a leading provider of market research, land use planning, financial analysis, and appraisal services. Zimmer has been a long-term client of Development Strategies and the firms continue to work together.

As a seasoned consultant in real estate, economic and community development, Richard's past assignments have been throughout the U.S., including planning and implementation strategies for: CORTEX, St. Louis's urban research park; Little Blue River basin in Independence, (MO); Father Flanagan's Boys Town in Omaha, surplus property; Knoxville's South Waterfront District; the Oklahoma City Medical District Corridor; the Augusta (Maine) Capital and Riverfront District; the Capital Gateway/Village East District in Des Moines; Downtown St. Louis; Lower Peninsula/Downtown Charleston (S.C.); Downtown Greenville (S.C.), retail strategy; Central Chicago Heights (IL); Downtown, New Center and West Riverfront districts of Detroit; Downtown Hartford (CT) and the nearby Trinity College area; South Side Medical District in Ft. Worth; Norfolk (VA) waterfront; and Canal Street in New Orleans. In addition, he has prepared economic development strategic plans for various communities and public/private partnerships, including: St. Louis County Economic Council, Greater St. Louis Economic Development Council, Arlington County (VA), and Tulsa (OK), Cleveland (OH), West Des Moines (IA) and Charlotte (NC).

When retained as an advisor and expert witness in legal proceedings, Richard's focus is typically on questions of highest and best use of real estate, best practices in real estate development, and issues associated with land use controls and use of the eminent domain power. Richard has served on 12 Urban Land Institute advisory panels throughout the U.S. and Europe, including, most recently, Detroit (MI), Nashville, (TN), Saarbrucken, Germany and South Bend (IA). He is a frequent speaker/panelist at professional and civic organization meetings and conferences, both local and national and a regular contributor to the publications of a variety of professional organizations. These include the International Economic Development Council, the Urban Land Institute, the Real Estate Counselors, and the American Planning Association.



Chuck D'Aprix (Toronto, Canada)

### Economic Development

Chuck D'Aprix has over twenty five years of extensive economic and community development experience. Mr. D'Aprix has served as the first President/Executive Director of three public/private economic development agencies and served as one of the first Main Street Managers in a diverse

urban environment. In addition, he was Director of Marketing for a major Boston area developer where he worked to unite several economic development entities in a common progressive mission.

He has consulted in large cities and small towns across the country and abroad and is often called upon to speak on issues related to community revitalization. In fact, Chuck, an economic development maverick and self proclaimed "rule breaker," is a tireless advocate for: Smart Growth, Creative Business Retention/Expansion, Innovative Downtown and Commercial District Revitalization, Business Incubation and other Entrepreneurship Development Programming, Historic Preservation, Redevelopment of Existing Structures, Big Box Regulation, Progressive Land Use, Creation of Local Economies and Pushing Back Against The Economic Development Establishment. He has decried the lack of intellectual rigor in local economic development and his oft heard refrain is "Let's go break some economic development rules!"

## AIA STAFF:

Joel Mills

*Director, Center for Communities by Design*

Joel Mills serves as Director of the American Institute for Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Through its design assistance programs, the Center has worked in 55 communities across 32 states since 2005. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Joel's career in civic health and governance spans over 17 years, and includes community-based technical assistance, process design, facilitation and training across a number of fields. During the 1990s, Mr. Mills spent several years supporting international democratization initiatives by providing technical assistance to parliaments, political parties, local governments, civic and international organizations. His scope of work included constitutional design and governing systems, voter and civic education, election monitoring and administration, political party training and campaign strategy, collaborative governance, human rights and civil society capacity building. His work has been featured on ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, Smart City Radio, The National Civic Review, Ecostructure Magazine, The Washington Post, and dozens of other media sources.

Erin Simmons

*Director, Design Assistance*

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in 200 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

To date, Erin has served as staff lead on over 45 design assistance teams. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as senior historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.

