

SOUTHEAST STRONG



A COMMUNITY PLAN FOR NEIGHBORHOODS

DRAFT 1/2025



DEDICATION

This plan is not the beginning. It's built upon a foundation laid by the tireless and passionate work of Southeast Colorado Springs residents, businesses, and organizations. This plan is a reflection of their persistence and strength. This plan is a dedication to the collaborative partnerships formed and a commitment to work hand in hand into the next era for Southeast.

Southeast Colorado Springs has a strong sense of community and recognition of past practices reflected in a challenging built environment; however, out of these past circumstances, an extraordinary and enthusiastic grassroots movement to stimulate change arose.

Land Acknowledgement

The Pikes Peak region is situated on the ancestral homeland of the Ute Peoples, who are the Southern Ute, Ute Mountain Ute, and Northern Ute. Other tribes who lived and hunted on this land include the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Comanche, and Apache. Even through forced relocation and land dispossession, we recognize that the land still holds Ute traditions, language, stories, and history. Today, Indigenous people from many Native nations reside here and continue to make significant contributions to our community - Debbie Howell (Pawnee/Dekota) - COPPR

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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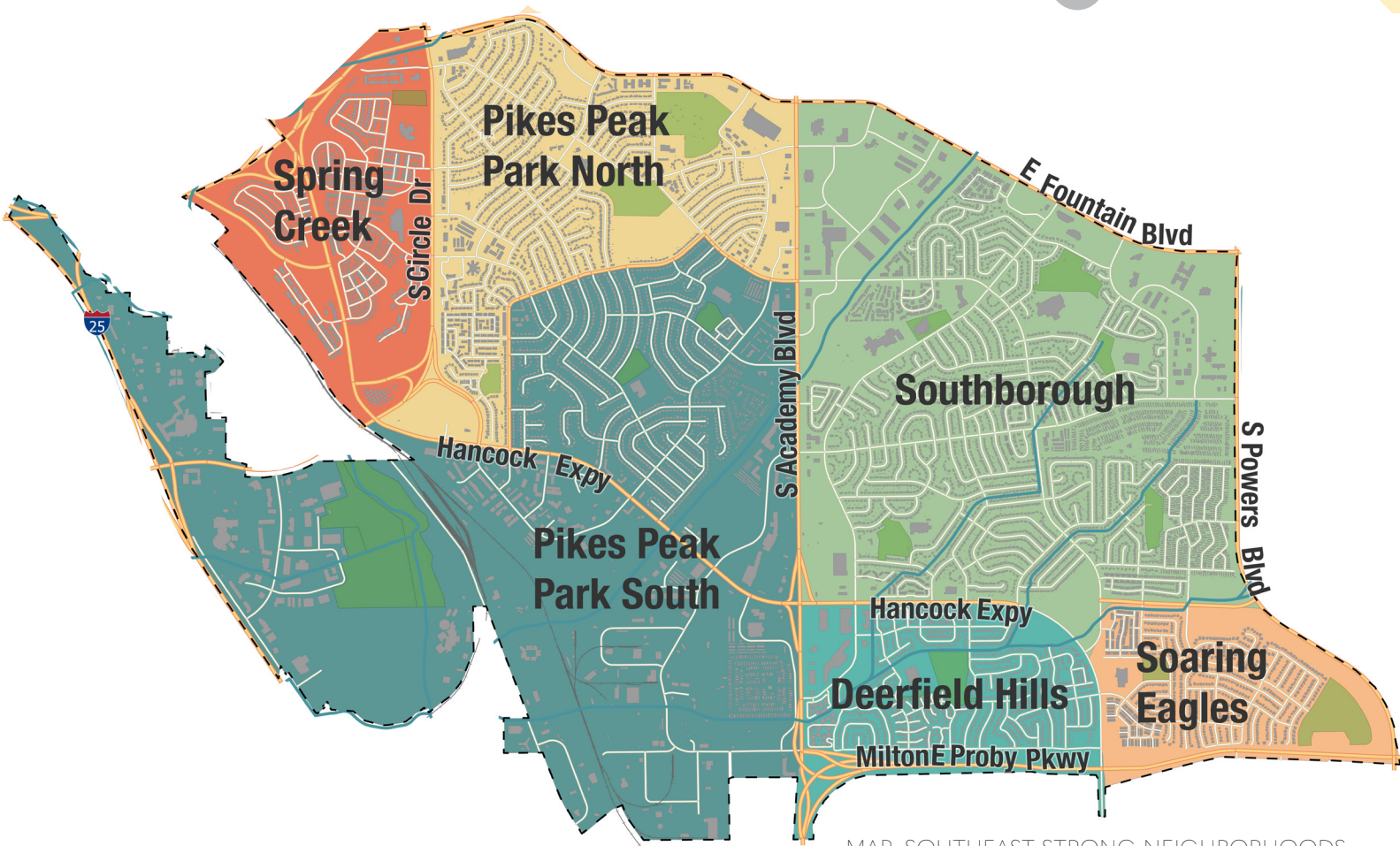
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MAP: SOUTHEAST STRONG NEIGHBORHOODS





COUNCILMEMBER AVILA

Chair of the Southeast Strong Steering Committee -

“ Don’t think of the plan as a document full of things that aren’t getting done and get discouraged. Think of it as a large piece of succession/ legacy planning – The plan is a tool to help everyone in the whole community know what the data points to, the priorities being at any given time, so when each organization has their time to advocate, city department leaders and council etc. are hearing a consistent and insistent message. When we all help shoulder the burden, we all have a lighter lift. ”

SOUTHEAST STRONG

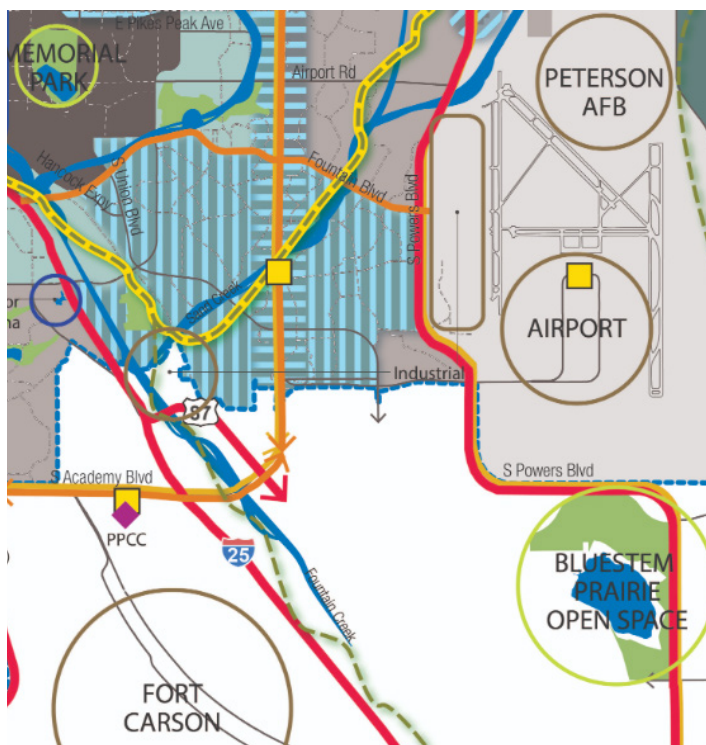
A COMMUNITY PLAN FOR SIX SOUTHEAST NEIGHBORHOODS

INTRODUCTION

PLANCOS AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROGRAM

PlanCOS, the City of Colorado Springs' comprehensive plan, calls out the need for a neighborhood planning program. As stated in PlanCOS, "Everybody is in a Neighborhood," and the "Plan purposefully moves us in the direction of enhanced neighborhood identity, planning, support, and livability." PlanCOS goes on to say that "Individual neighborhood plans will focus attention on the ideas and goals of each neighborhood and the overall community plan." PlanCOS neighborhoods are considered macro-level geography. The City Planning Department's Neighborhood Planning Program structure emphasizes community planning for neighborhoods based on shared geography, assets, and needs.

By civic collaborative partnering with local organizations and their communities to address



PlanCOS Vision Map - A focus on the Southeast Strong area, as an activity center for reinvestment and community hub planning

an established vision and goals for future generations, community plans, coordinated with City departments, can advocate for strategies and actions to support public safety, infrastructure, housing solutions, economic vitality, and community activation, furthering progress toward the City's Strategic Plan goals and objectives.

The Neighborhood Planning Program began by identifying communities loosely based on City Council Districts, where the elected representative could chair the steering committee. Using PlanCOS neighborhood areas, a matrix of factors concluded planning needs, directing the first community plan to these Southeast Colorado Springs neighborhoods. The matrix graph can be found in Appendix D.

WELCOME TO THE SOUTHEAST STRONG COMMUNITY PLAN AREA

The Southeast Strong planning area does not encompass all of southeast Colorado Springs and boundaries vary from residents' experiences and historical memory, in this case is bounded by Martin Luther King Bypass/US 24 and Fountain Boulevard to the north, Powers Boulevard to the east, Milton E Proby Parkway, the City boundary to the south, and Interstate 25 to the west.

PLANNING NEED

The 2023 Southeast Healthy People and Places Assessment and the 2023 El Paso County Health Assessment identified that the greater Southeast neighborhoods face significant challenges related to poverty and health inequities. This area has a history of disinvestment, challenges with the built environment, and residents struggle with access to healthy food options, which can contribute to higher poverty rates compared to other parts of the City. Additionally, the area lacks comprehensive planning, both privately and publicly initiated. A list of related reports, assessments, and plans can be found on page 57.

PLAN PARTNERS

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- RISE Southeast
- The Thrive Network
- Solid Rock CDC
- Harrison School District 2
- CONO
- Care and Share
- Pikes Peak United Way
- Faith based community
- Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center
- SCORE Southern Colorado
- Family Success Center
- Boys and Girls Club
- Colorado Springs Senior Center
- Pikes Peak Workforce Center
- Pikes Peak Library District
- Pikes Peak Workforce Center
- Colorado Springs Housing and Building Assoc.
- Pikes Peak State College
- Centro de la familia
- Peak Vista
- Silver Key

CITY, COUNTY, STATE PARTNERS

- Office of the Mayor
- City Council
- City Long Range Planning and Land Use Review
- City Housing and Homelessness Response
- City Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services
- City of Colorado Springs Public Works
- Colorado Springs Utilities
- City Engineering
- City Traffic Engineering
- Mountain Metro
- City Office of Accessibility
- City Neighborhood Services
- City Human Resources
- City Economic Development and Small Business Development
- City Police Department
- Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority
- El Paso County Public Health
- DOLA and the State of Colorado

Partners are identified within corresponding strategies in the Plan's Implementation table in Appendix B, and on p. 38. The community partners listed are not a complete list of community organizations working in the area or in partnership with the City. The community organizations supporting their residents are the pillars of this community, and the City of Colorado Springs recognizes these groups' work and the support they provide to their community and the City as a whole. The Plan's Implementation is dependent on these partners.

CITY COMMITMENT

The City of Colorado Springs' commitment: Shape and sustain a built environment and economy that supports healthy living and reflects the uniqueness, strength, and power of the Southeast community.

BIG IDEAS + COMMUNITY VISION

BIG IDEAS

THE IDENTITY OF THE SOUTHEAST STRONG PLANNING AREA IS CHARACTERIZED BY THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF BOTH THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE AND WORK HERE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT. REFLECTING AND CELEBRATING THE AREAS DIVERSE CULTURE AND STRONG LEGACY PRIDE PROVIDES FOCUS ON THE SOUTHEAST AS A DESTINATION OF CULTURE AND ECONOMY.



**REFLECT AND
CELEBRATE OUR
DIVERSE CULTURE**

p08



**GROW AND SUPPORT
OUR BUSINESSES,
ENTREPRENEURS, AND
HOUSING**

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**LIVE BETTER,
LIVE LONGER**

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**SUPPORT OUR
SAFETY**

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**CREATE SPECIAL
PLACES & COMMUNITY
HUBS**

p20



**UPGRADE HOW WE
MOVE**

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PLAN STRUCTURE

THIS PLAN IS A TOOL

This Plan shall serve as a tool and method of connecting and leveraging partner resources and collaboration with City departments. Focusing on meeting the needs of the community and six neighborhoods within is a commitment to social, environmental, and housing justice principles—ensuring opportunities are distributed fairly and that residents have access to healthy environments and safe, affordable housing.

PLANS STRUCTURE

The Southeast Strong Plan consists of six **BIG IDEA** concepts and outcomes (chapters) which establish the **COMMUNITY VISION** statements in the Plan.

To accomplish the community's vision for the area, all Big Ideas are associated with community priority goals, additional goals, and strategies to reach these goals. The primary goals of the residents have been reviewed by City departments, associated agencies, the Plan's Steering Committee, and community organizations and are placed at the front of each chapter.

The implementation of the Plan includes using this Plan, active advocacy by the implementation team, which is made up of residents, partner organizations, and City staff. Tracking, measuring, and reviewing the goals will serve as a way for other City Council-adopted community plans to measure progress. The methods to accomplish the Big Ideas are defined as follows:

- **COMMUNITY PRIORITY GOALS** – the primary goals and shared objectives of the community
- **GOALS** – additional identified objectives for the area
- **STRATEGIES** – lists of solutions for accomplishing the goals

When a City department, associated partner agency, or community organization partner has been identified, collaboration with the Planning Department will ensure the goals outlined in this Plan are achieved.

Community grassroots organizations have been doing the work in the Southeast, and this Plan intends to advocate for and highlight those endeavors while addressing additional planning needs and recommendations from the City and its partners.

Actions in this Plan, particularly in the chapter on transportation, are considered progress already underway through an existing plan or project. Monitoring will continue as a method to support the Southeast. These directives have been reviewed by specific City departments, associated agencies, or community organizations.

ORIGIN OF THE NAME SOUTHEAST STRONG COMMUNITY PLAN

RISE Southeast – Resilient, Inspired, Strong, and Engaged – generously contributed the name ***Southeast Strong Community Plan***.

PLAN STRUCTURAL STEERING

Southeast Strong Steering Committee guided the structure of the Plan with the following elements:

- Place goals and strategies at the forefront.
- Limit the number of online surveys.
- Translate the Plan into Spanish.
- Provide community resources within the Plan. Keep the Plan concise.
- Continue efforts to engage the Spanish-speaking community.
- Engage the Korean-speaking community.

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

USE THE PLAN

1. To review land use applications in the area for consistency and in conjunction with the City Zoning Code.
2. As a guide for City initiatives pertaining to the physical development in the area, including but not limited to the following:
 - Priorities and areas of focus
 - Direction for changes to area zoning
 - A consideration in development of capital improvement priorities
 - Guidance for grant applications and community partnerships

HOW WILL CITY STAFF USE THE PLAN

Community plans can be considered topical subsets of the City's larger community vision as laid out in PlanCOS. Staff will work with applicants and stakeholders to review development proposals in the Southeast Strong planning area and provide decision-makers with information about how proposals and capital improvement projects align with the Plan.

HOW DO BUSINESSES AND DEVELOPERS USE THE PLAN

The Plan provides guidance on how to best achieve the community's vision in ways that allow businesses to grow, adapt, and implement their plans. Acting as a roadmap for developers, the Plan includes maps, goals, and strategies that outline desired development patterns. Land use proposals should demonstrate a commitment to addressing community concerns and collaborating with residents on buildout decisions.

HOW WILL ELECTED OFFICIALS USE THE PLAN

Elected officials will use this Plan to position the Southeast for the future by ensuring accountability of City departments and making informed decisions that align with the goals of the Plan. The City Council representative will play a key role in advocacy and guiding the Plan's implementation strategies, acting on behalf of and in partnership with the community to advance related City projects and priorities.

HOW WILL NON-PROFITS USE THE PLAN

Nonprofits can use this Plan to collaborate with the City, promote the Southeast Strong area in grant requests, identify community needs, and incorporate its recommendations into their strategic planning sessions. Aligning with area nonprofit goals will enhance effectiveness, legitimacy, and community engagement in the Plan's implementation

HOW WILL THE COMMUNITY USE THE PLAN

This Plan serves as an advocacy tool for the area. It was developed to assist residents and stakeholders in bridging community needs with capital programming. Community members can champion these goals by using the Plan at public meetings and ensuring continued accountability.

HOW TO USE THE DEVELOPMENT MAP

This typological map is advisory in nature and should be referenced during land use review processes. The map functions as a reference for desired growth patterns and should be updated regularly to reflect changing conditions.



BECAUSE OF RISE

Thanks to RISE, the Southeast Strong Community Plan was possible. The implementation of this Plan will require further alignment with the RISE Southeast Strategic Plan goals and strategies, as well as collaboration with City departments and the Neighborhood Planner. This partnership will further support area connections, health and wellness, strong neighborhoods, and a thriving economy through RISE's leadership.

RISE Southeast Strategic Plan Overview:

RISE Southeast is committed to transforming Southeast Colorado Springs into a vibrant, connected, and thriving community driven by resident-led change. With a mission to enhance the area from within, RISE envisions a community that celebrates culture and diversity while providing opportunities for all residents to thrive. The initiative addresses systemic challenges in the 80910 and 80916 neighborhoods, which have faced decades of divestment, resulting in economic disparities and community skepticism. By leveraging the power of local leadership and collaboration, RISE Southeast fosters trust, builds community connections, and drives sustainable development.

The strategic plan centers on four key goals. The first goal is to strengthen connections by empowering resident leaders, amplifying local stories, and fostering collaboration through resource hubs, events, and storytelling platforms like the revived Southeast Express. Second, the coalition focuses on enhancing health and wellness by expanding access to physical activities, mental health resources, and nutritious food while beautifying public spaces to promote community vitality. The third goal is to build strong and safe neighborhoods by improving infrastructure, such as sidewalks and multi-modal transportation networks, and fostering social bonds through neighborhood organizing and crime prevention strategies. Finally, RISE aims to create a thriving local economy by supporting small businesses, addressing barriers to entrepreneurship, revitalizing commercial spaces, and advocating for legislation to hold property owners accountable.

Through these initiatives, RISE Southeast embodies its guiding principles of resident-led change, collaboration, equity, and sustainability. By focusing on community-driven efforts and leveraging partnerships, RISE builds on its successes, such as Panorama Park, to ensure lasting progress. This long-term commitment invites all stakeholders to join the journey and make Southeast Colorado Springs a model of resilience, inspiration, strength, and engagement.

IMPLEMENTATION

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNER

The ultimate purpose of this Plan is to offer tools to those within the Southeast Strong area, enabling collaboration with City departments and community organizations to provide potential solutions, one such way is a City liaison or neighborhood planner.

A Neighborhood Planner could:

Advocate: Sit at resident leaders' tables to listen, respond, support, and collaborate with City departments, associated community collectives, and non-profits.

Seek Grants and Funding: Research and identify relevant grants and funding sources in collaboration with City grant writers.

Identify Needs: Determine community needs, resources, and challenges.

Support Communities in Developing Plans: Involve neighborhoods in plans for public spaces, such as parks, bike paths, and housing communities.

Research: Study social, cultural, economic, and environmental conditions within the area.

Coordinate: Organize public forums and meetings with local authorities, government officials, non-profits, and community collectives.

Review: Evaluate and provide guidance on existing planning documents.

Draft: Prepare progress and measures reports, as well as major updates to the Plan.

Map and Analyze: Create maps of land areas and resources and perform data analysis.

Monitor: Observe and predict development trends while tracking progress on neighborhood and community plans.

Permit review: Coordinate updates to the permitting process.

Ensure compliance: Advocate for and monitor compliance with regulations related to the Southeast's built and natural environment.

PARTNERS AND IMPLEMENTATION

What will the Southeast Strong planning area look like in 20 years? The area is seeing their built environment change and the implementation of this Plan will guide these neighborhoods for generations to come. A list of community partners can be found on page 9 and in the implementation table in Appendix B. Implementation will require action - monitoring strategies and informing progress and measures reporting while continually collaborating with the community, partners, City, County, and the State.

Regular updates to stakeholders, residents, the City's Southeast Strong Plan web page focusing on annual reporting and a five-year refresh cycle.

The Neighborhood Planner will partner to seek funding to accomplish the Plan's goals ongoing. Continual engagement and partnerships with the Southeast Strong community will drive the Plan's community priorities in the forward direction.

PROGRESS AND MEASURES

Annual progress and measures reports will be provided to the community and partners, City departments will weigh in on progress on the related priorities, goals, and strategies in this plan ensuring accountability.

A five-year refresh will account for the 2030 decennial US Census data availability when reporting and measuring the Southeast Strong area to monitor indicators of change.

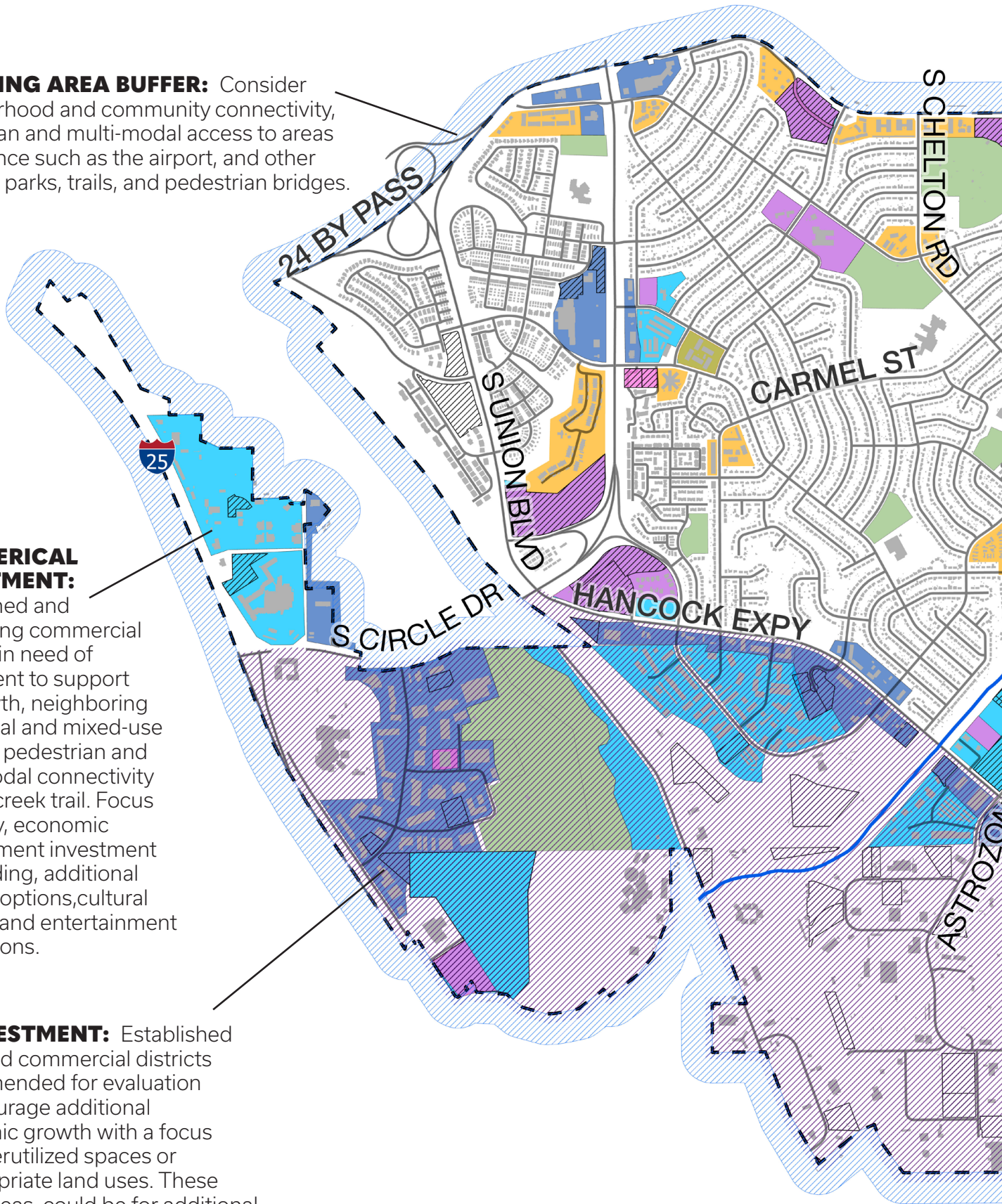
ADAPTABLE PLAN

This plan will be monitored and updated. Primary community priority goals will be evaluated during implementation and can be considered ongoing. The Plan's maps, list of partners, and resources are adaptive and responsive to changing conditions.

PLANNING AREA BUFFER: Consider neighborhood and community connectivity, pedestrian and multi-modal access to areas of influence such as the airport, and other adjacent parks, trails, and pedestrian bridges.

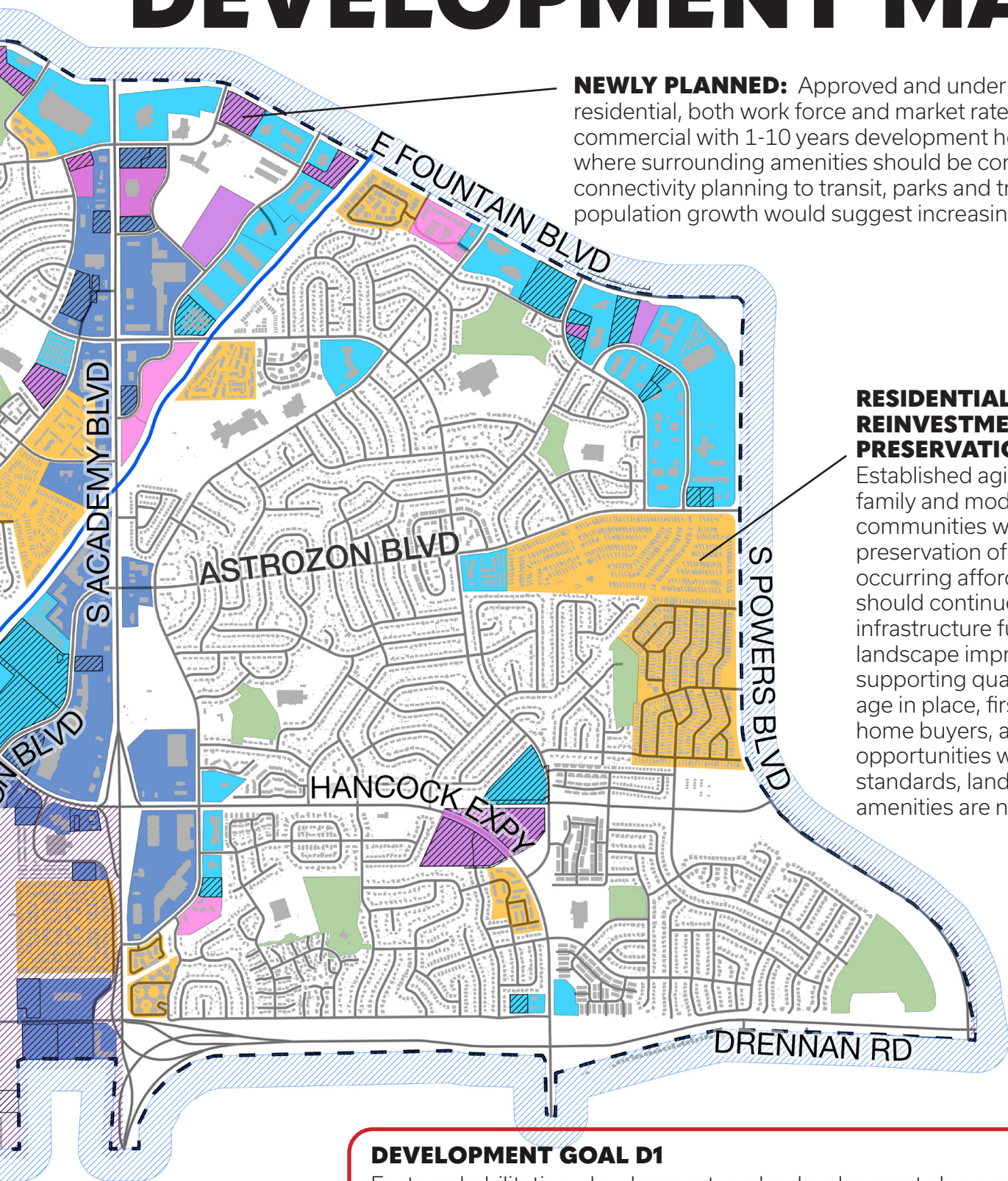
COMMERICAL INVESTMENT: Established and developing commercial districts in need of investment to support job growth, neighboring residential and mixed-use districts, pedestrian and multi-modal connectivity to sand creek trail. Focus on safety, economic development investment and funding, additional housing options, cultural centers, and entertainment destinations.

REINVESTMENT: Established identified commercial districts recommended for evaluation to encourage additional economic growth with a focus on underutilized spaces or inappropriate land uses. These focus areas could be for additional housing, URA grant funding for façade improvement, landscape improvements, full-service grocery stores, cultural restaurants, and community event spaces near transit and where additional investment is needed.



- Investment
- New Planned
- Reinvestment
- ▨ Vacant Land 20+
- Reinvestment Residential
- Parks

DEVELOPMENT MAP



NEWLY PLANNED: Approved and under construction residential, both work force and market rate, and new commercial with 1-10 years development horizons where surrounding amenities should be considered for connectivity planning to transit, parks and trails; where population growth would suggest increasing services.

RESIDENTIAL REINVESTMENT AND PRESERVATION: Established aging multi-family and modular communities where preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing should continue to seek infrastructure funding and landscape improvements supporting quality of life, age in place, first time home buyers, and rental opportunities where safety standards, landscaping, and amenities are needed.

DEVELOPMENT GOAL D1
Foster rehabilitation, development, and redevelopment along major corridors, nodes, and community hubs supporting incremental density, transit-oriented development, and walkability.

- Opportunity Zone
- Sand Creek
- Area of Influence

STRATEGY D1.A

Evaluate mixed-use zoning for increased residential density and analyze for an overlay buffer between Hancock Expy between Circle Dr. for more appropriate transitional land uses between industrial and residential.



COMMUNITY VISION FOR CULTURE

The six Southeast Strong area neighborhoods strive to be destinations for a cultural experience in Southern Colorado. Communities that take pride in their culture and heritage feature strong networks where people can connect by walking with their neighbors, gathering in accessible public spaces, and communicating about shared values and identity. To accomplish this big idea and assist with furthering the 2020 City Council-adopted Public Arts Master Plan, the history and depth of Southeast Strong area will be promoted through opportunities such as community-led public art projects that promote community pride and identification of public and private spaces fostering this goal.

CULTURE THROUGHOUT

In this Plan, the heritage of the Southeast Strong area is intended to be highlighted and prioritized in all goals and strategies. The extremely successful redevelopment of Panorama Park in 2022 is a testament to the collaborative work of City Departments, grant sponsors, and community agencies, namely Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, RISE Southeast Colorado Springs, and the Trust for Public Land. For many of these Opportunities, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) has desires to continue their partnership with Colorado Springs and continue to enhance the Southeast.

TOP CULTURE GOALS - COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

CULTURE GOAL CP-C1

Preserve the diverse cultural history in the southeast and promote as a cultural destination with storytelling, shared memory, and community-building opportunities.

STRATEGY CP-C1.A

Collaboratively include City partnerships with RISE Southeast, Solid Rock CDC, Thrive Network, resident lead and faith-based organizations and businesses, the Youth Advisory Committee, School District 2 and local educational institutions, Sand Creek Library, Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, and Deerfield Hills Community Center.

CULTURE GOAL CP-C2

Prioritize creating a permanent cultural event center, museum, and additional third places, such as coffee shops, promoting cultural awareness, tourism, and social unity.

STRATEGY CP-C2.A

Actively seeks opportunities and funding for the development and zoning of a year-round farmer's market/craft center, veteran's park, children's museum, western heritage/ranching museum, Native American center, Hispanic center, and/ or a Buffalo Soldier museum to honor diverse histories and traditions.

STRATEGY CP-C2.B

Establish a long-term temporary use permit process through the city's land use review department to elevate community hubs to support events and programming including festivals, farmers markets and educational events celebrating diverse cultural experiences.

CULTURE GOAL C1

Recognize culture and history through public art, park design, and city improvements (such as sidewalks and benches) and provide identification for unnamed spaces to create a sense of place for community members.

STRATEGY C1.A

Work with Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum and other related agencies to encourage storytelling and preserve historical elements of Southeast Strong area culture and structures, such as the tile art mural at Panorama Park.

STRATEGY C1.B

Support diversity cultural history through inclusive arts and cultural programming at Deerfield Hills Community Center and Sand Creek Library that are accessible to all ages and abilities including to preferred language populations.

STRATEGY C1.C

Translate city documents into multiple languages, ensuring cultural relevance supporting a diversity of media so that all groups within the community can participate and feel represented.

CULINARY CULTURE GOAL C2

Support the development of culinary centers that include pop-up restaurants, cooking classes, culinary experiences, and other culinary retail products.

STRATEGY C2.A

Include communicating food-related uses that are permitted in the zoning code through community partners, such as Food to Power, to highlight potential opportunities.

STRATEGY C2.B

Allow affordable Temporary Use Permits for food truck parks and food halls in compatible locations such as in underutilized parking lot promoting used as a food truck rally event spaces.

PUBLIC ART GOAL C3

Public art supports the expression of the values of individuals and, collectively, a community. The Southeast Strong area offers recommendations for supporting public art as one approach for improving street safety, providing tourism, and combating social isolation.

STRATEGY C3.A

Support the Gateway Signage Program to define neighborhoods with input from individual residents, neighborhood groups, local students, and other partner agencies on design. Encourage colors, symbolism, and concepts that are meaningful to the respective neighborhood.

STRATEGY C3.B

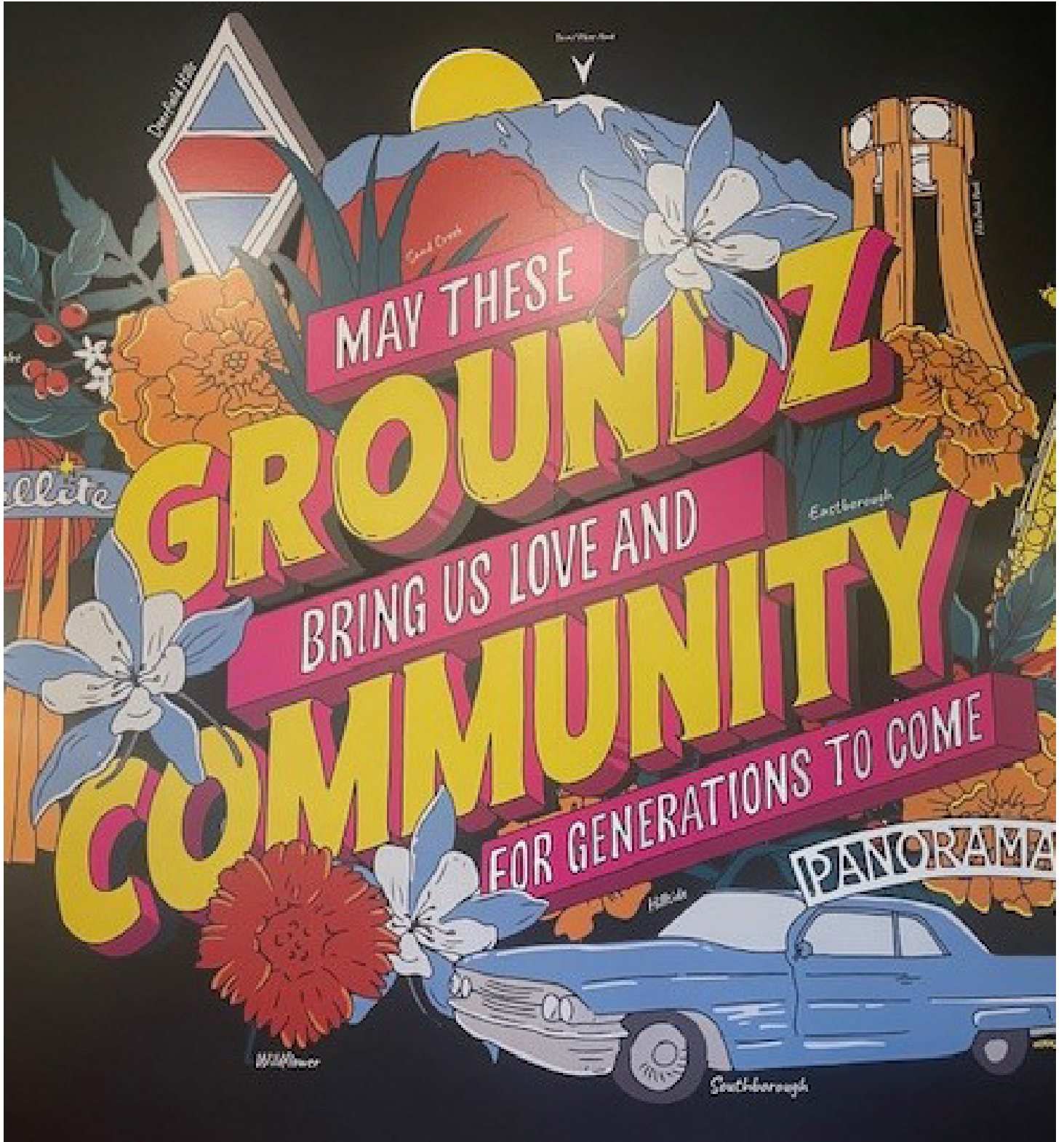
Encourage the inclusion of public art in each new development project based on the new opportunities for meeting architectural design requirements. Engage artists early in the project design process to achieve integration between art and architecture.

STRATEGY C3.C

Collaborate with area community members and the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department, and Traffic Engineering Division to include art in public spaces such as sidewalks, street medians, parks, and community centers.

STRATEGY C3.D

Encourage art installations around the expanded Kelker Substation wall and on South Academy Boulevard transit corridor and consider art along other major roadways reconstruction projects in scopes of work.



Mural credit:

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





COMMUNITY VISION FOR HEALTH

The Southeast Strong area envisions a vibrant, equitable, and sustainable community where residents and visitors feel welcome to enjoy spacious parks and trails and walkable neighborhoods. Rooted in principles of environmental and social justice, this vision prioritizes fair access to essential resources such as affordable healthcare, nutritious food, and safe, well-maintained public spaces, ensuring that everyone - regardless of background - has the opportunity to live a healthy quality life.

Our community is dedicated to addressing environmental challenges through innovative solutions like expanding tree canopies, transforming brownfield sites into natural areas, and integrating more landscaping to mitigate pollution. By cultivating partnerships with nonprofits and advocacy groups, we aim to reduce socioeconomic disparities, promote mental and physical wellness, and create spaces that reflect the beauty and resilience of Southeast Strong's diverse population.

This shared vision also prioritizes safety, accessibility, and connectivity by enhancing lighting, improving trail systems, and supporting sustainable mobility options. Together, we commit to building a community that uplifts, protects, and celebrates cultural diversity - a foundation for a healthier and more inclusive future.

TOP HEALTH GOALS - COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

HEALTH GOAL CP-H1

Advocate for comprehensive Community Hubs prioritizing area parks and trail design planning with safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

STRATEGY CP-H1.A

Focus on coordination and mutually use benefits around Van Diest Park and seek grants and other create funding sources to accomplish this goal.

STRATEGY CP-H1.B

Collaborate with community organizations, the Youth Advisory Council, City Public Works, and the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department to, at a minimum, update the basketball courts in Van Diest Park.

STRATEGY CP-H1.C

Evaluate the Park for shade, trees and shade structures, and walking loops and signage. Act on the recommendations of the evaluation to improve connectivity with the Family Success Center and adjacent educational facilities.

HEALTH GOAL CP-H2

Promote health, walkability, and safe pedestrian environments in the area neighborhoods.

STRATEGY CP-H2.A

Collaborate and continue progress toward complete sidewalks working with City Public Works Department and community advocates whose programming is for education and exercise focusing on connectivity to transit, parks, trails, and area amenities.

STRATEGY CP-H2.B

Partner with COS Walkability promoting walkability and health as a culture and support the expansion of "Walking Parades" and "Non-driver" events. Continue to leverage Walkability Day as Proclaimed by the City of Colorado Springs.

URBAN FOREST GOAL H1

Support the USDA-approved 'Colorado Springs – Urban Forest Improvements' grant that was awarded in 2023 for the Southeast Strong area.

STRATEGY H1.A

Using the USDA grant as inspiration, develop a grant program for appropriate vegetation cover, such as tree voucher program, focusing on the west side of the planning area, as well as along the west side of Astrozon Boulevard as recommended in the Southeast Community Plan Healthy People and Places Assessment.

SUSTAINABILITY GOAL H2

Prioritize beautification and safety - more natural landscapes will help with pollution and heat effects - and clean up areas like Mission Trace Shopping Center and Astrozon Boulevard to make them attractive and functional community hubs and maintain landscaping along streets and medians to improve aesthetics.

STRATEGY H2.A

Encourage new development to utilize the City of Colorado Springs Unified Development Code (UDC), add landscape code, to support more environmentally friendly development and landscape practice, including opportunities for:

- A 'Sustainability and Resilient Development Incentive' which encourages light colored hardscaping, covered parking, and cool or vegetated roofs.
- Discourage variances within private developments that seek reductions in landscaping.

STRATEGY H2.B

Partner with community and environmental groups to host regular "clean-up" events along City trails and creeks and in City parks. Panorama Park needs extra support for clean ups due to heavy use.

HEALTHY FOODS

A key component to a healthy lifestyle is access to healthy or nutrient-dense foods. The recommendations in this section are intended to encourage a wide variety of grocery options in the Southeast that may help to and support availability of high-quality food options. Area non-profits and faith-based organizations are critical partners in the Southeast area supporting access to food.

FOOD SECURITY GOAL H3

Limit fast-food outlets to make room for small businesses, farmers markets, food pantries, cottage industry residential businesses, and the like.

STRATEGY H3.A

Partner with local organizations to support permitting food pantries, mobile markets, and community fridges. Support and improve the existing network resources for residents in navigating where they can find low to no cost fresh foods.

STRATEGY H3.B

Support and partner with non-profits and faith-based organizations managing food pantries and mobile markets. Advocate for Solid Rock CDC's Community Food Center, the Family Success Center, Care and Share, and other non-profits by helping identify funding resources.

STRATEGY H3.C

At the permitting stage in the planning process, provide supportive printed materials for farmers market managers.



LIVE BETTER, LIVE LONGER

MAP: ZONING MAP FOR THE AREA SHOWING MIXED

STRATEGY H3.D

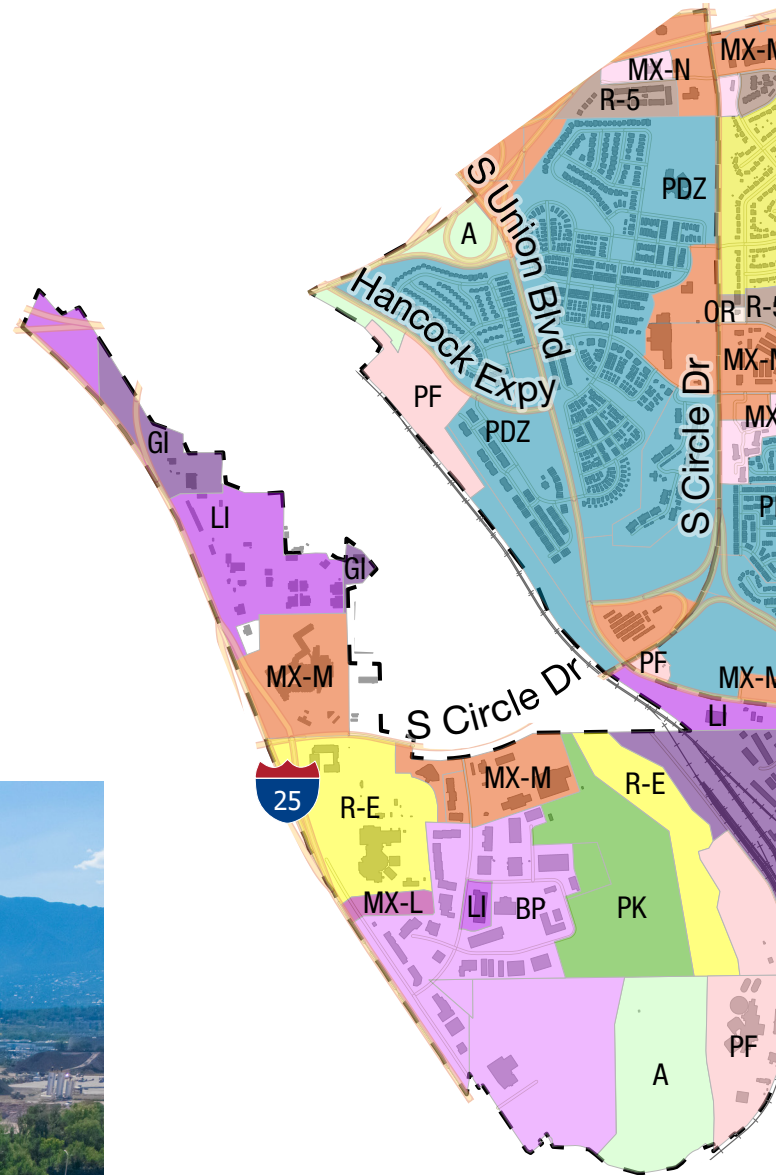
Advertise new urban garden options that are permitted through the City of Colorado Springs including food cultivation to encourage self-reliance, production, and consumption of nutrient-dense food - promoting and preserving generational harvest and culinary knowledge, mental health, and reducing carbon emissions.

FOOD ACCESS GOAL H4

Develop incentives for grocery stores and larger retail businesses to open in the area to address food support job growth for area residents.

STRATEGY H4.A

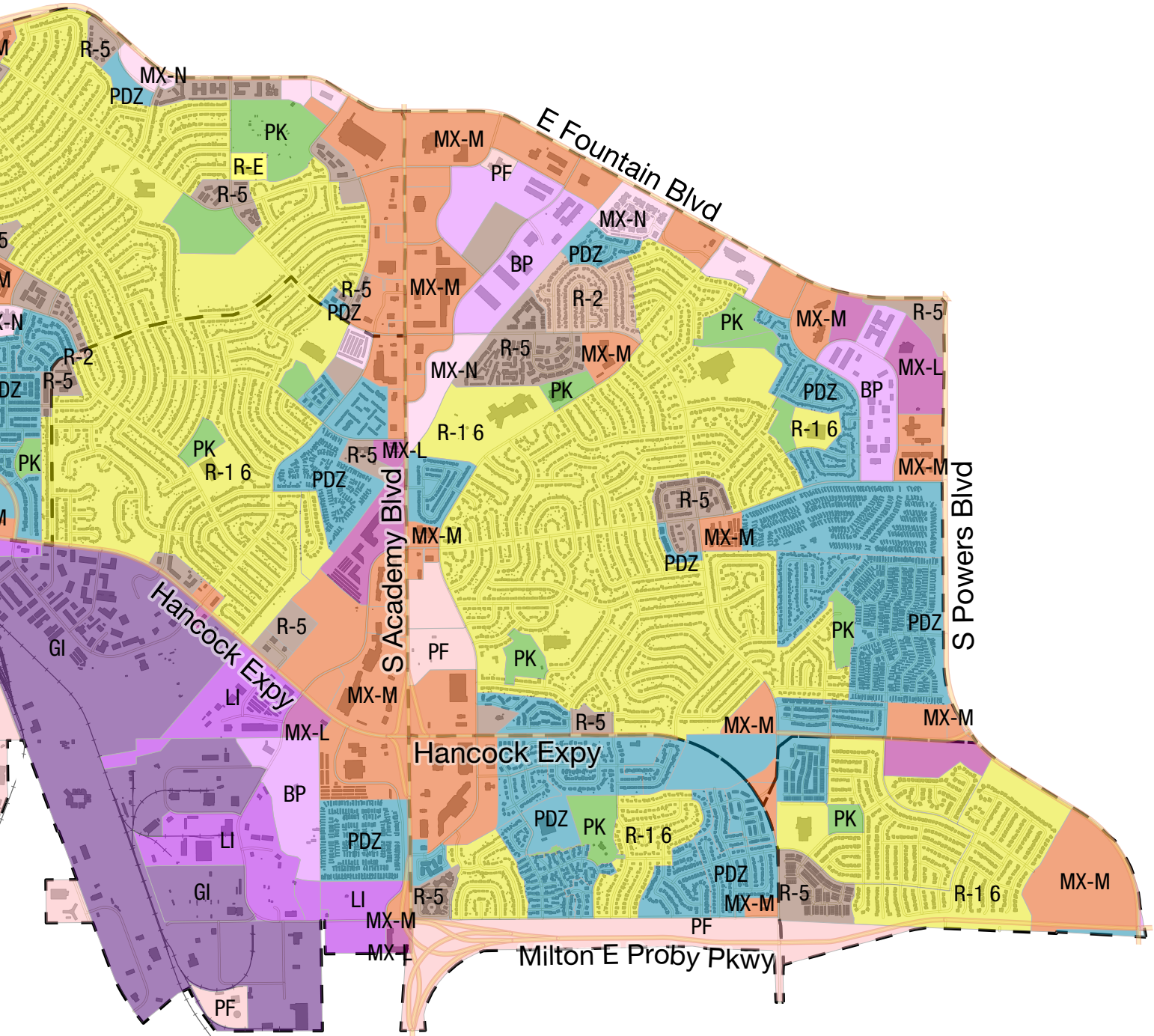
While preserving existing local small businesses, attract big-box retailers like Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and Sprouts to anchor the local economy through economic development incentives such as tax credits, streamlined permitting, and zoning and code adjustments, and explore mixed-uses



- A: Agriculture
- Single-Family
- Two - Family



USE ZONING ALONG S. ACADEMY BLVD., E FOUNTAIN BLVD, S CIRCLE DR, AND HANCOCK EXPY MAJOR CORRIDORS



- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Multi - Family High | Mixed - Use Medium Scale | Office Residential |
| Public Parks | Mixed - Use Large Scale | Business Park |
| Public Facilities | Mixed - Use Neighborhood Scale | Light Industrial |
| | Planned Development Zone | General Industrial |



HEALTHY PEOPLE AND PLACES

Healthy People and Places Assessment, “well-being includes metrics relating to individual morbidity and mortality. Morbidity refers to diseases, disability, or poor health, while mortality refers to a measure of death in a population.” While measures to support the well-being of the Southeast Strong Plan area can be found throughout the plan, this section specifically focuses on the availability of facilities within the area as well as programming.

WELL-BEING GOAL H5

Expand access to affordable healthcare, including Medicaid-accepting clinics. Partner with nonprofits to establish direct primary care facilities where there are gaps. Address mental health and promote self-care as essential services.

STRATEGY H5.A

Widely broadcast the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County Health Pikes Peak Rising public health and mental health resources to the Southeast Strong community.

PARKS, TRAILS, LANDSCAPE, AND OPEN SPACES

The Southeast Strong area has opportunities for residents to capitalize on a greater outdoor experience. The recommendations in this section address opportunities for a higher quality of user experience for both infrastructure and amenities. Grant fund should be active pursued with the Trust for Public Lands, as an example, funding from ARPA was applied to upgrading the irrigation systems at Evergreen Cemetery and Valley Hi golf course located near the planning area, supporting green spaces, the urban tree canopy, along with improved irrigation systems. This upgrade to the irrigation systems intends not only to support a landscape redesign but to address water conservation in these large open areas. An effort to submit for Audubon Certification is underway for the Valley Hi golf course to further protect the environment.

HEALTH AND PARKS GOAL H6

Advocate for parks and trail improvements and upgrades in the area working with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department.

STRATEGY H6.A

Continue the study of existing city parks within the area to determine if amenities are underutilized and the potential for upgraded design to better match needs. Renovations of existing park spaces to meet community needs, address outdated equipment, improve accessibility, address maintenance needs, and improve safety.

STRATEGY H6.B

Advocate for Sand Creek as a linear park and continue to perform maintenance and improve Sand Creek Trail connections in the area including:

- From Airport Road to Platte Avenue providing regional connectivity;
- Connections to Homestead Trail north of Airport Road;



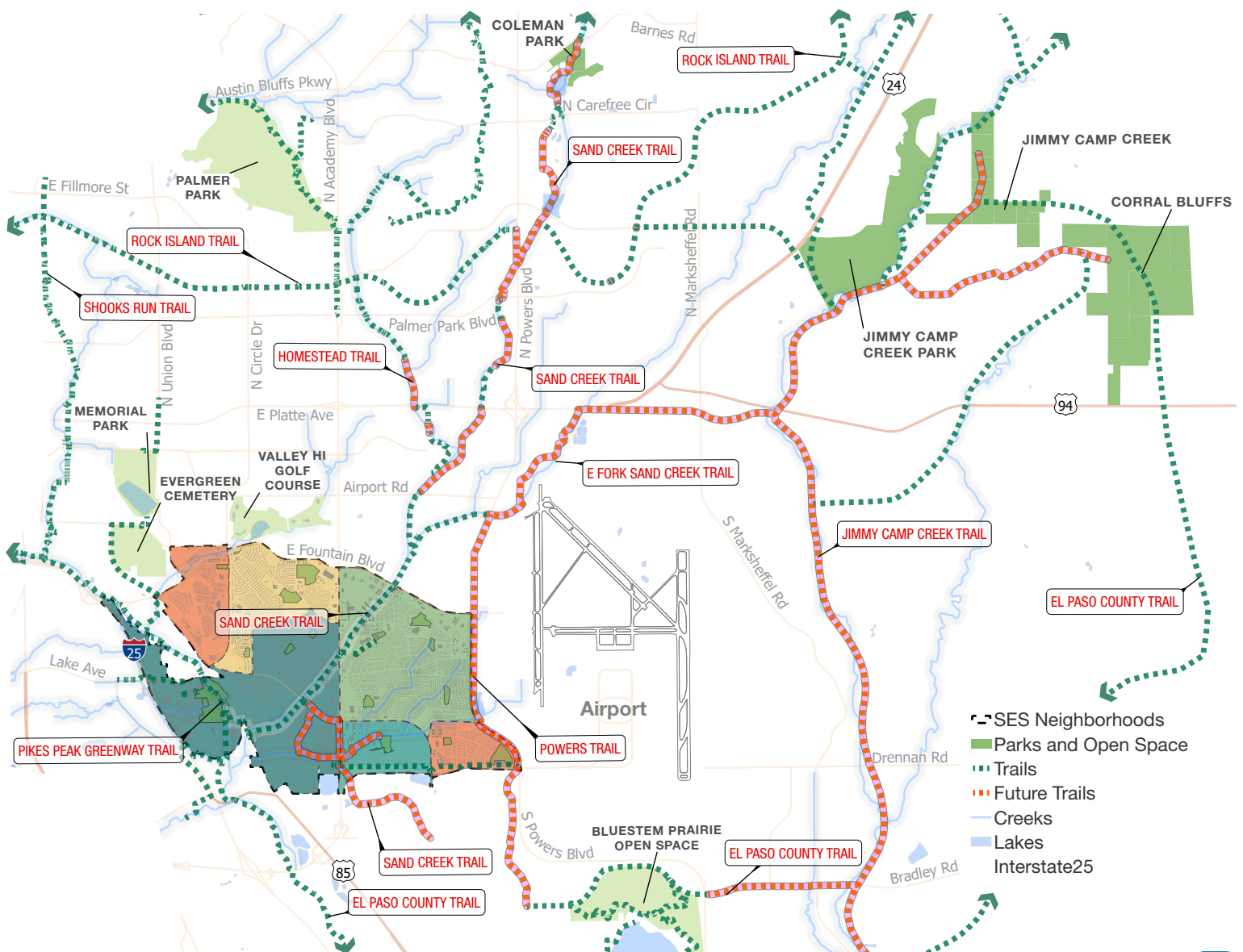
- Locations between Palmer Park Boulevard and Barnes Road;
- Future access to Coleman Park; and
- Continuation of the East Fork Sand Creek Trail east of Powers Boulevard to Space Village Ave and eastward, specifically at the dead end where connectivity opportunities are needed.

STRATEGY H6.C

Identify connections immediately outside of this planning area boundaries to support more regional connectivity and multi-modal transportation options, including:

- Future connectivity to Jimmy Camp Creek and Corral Bluffs;
- Build out of the Powers Trail, planned along Powers Boulevard from Airport Road into County.

MAP: CURRENT AND FUTURE TRAILS AROUND THE SOUTHEAST STRONG PLAN AREA



The Sand Creek Trail runs through the Southeast Strong Plan Area. Planned trails traverse the Area to connect users to other neighborhoods and regions.



STRATEGY H6.D

Work with Traffic Engineering to improve safety and connectivity to the trail system from sidewalks and bike lanes.

STRATEGY H6.E

Use the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) grant received from the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Adult and Juvenile Justice Assistance, SB22-01 – Crime Prevention Through Safer Streets as a model to seek funding for improved lighting, visibility, and security cameras on Sand Creek Trail. Focus safety efforts around schools, residential, the SE YMCA, visibility community hubs on or near the trail.

STRATEGY H6.F

Partner with Mountain Metro and Public Works Departments to offer transportation services to healthcare locations, particularly from areas that lack healthcare facilities.

STRATEGY H6.G

Partner with Peak Vista and other social and well-being services that are available in the Southeast Strong area.

STRATEGY H6.H

Support the development of additional opportunities and partnership between local schools and higher education institutions to integrate a garden and ecology program for youth.

LIVE BETTER GOAL H7

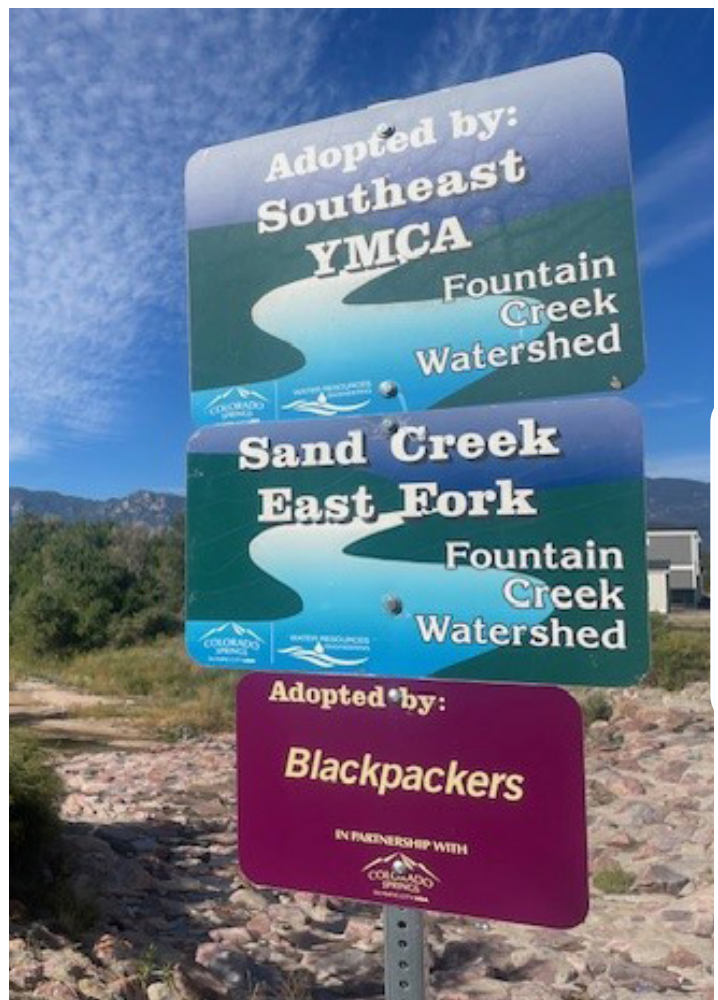
Enhance the Southeast Strong area by creating safer, more attractive public spaces through natural landscaping, pollution reduction, and beautification efforts, while supporting small businesses with improved curb appeal and cleanups.

STRATEGY H7.A

To support a more pedestrian-friendly experience by removing or requiring removal of overgrown vegetation interfering with sidewalks through Neighborhood Services efforts.

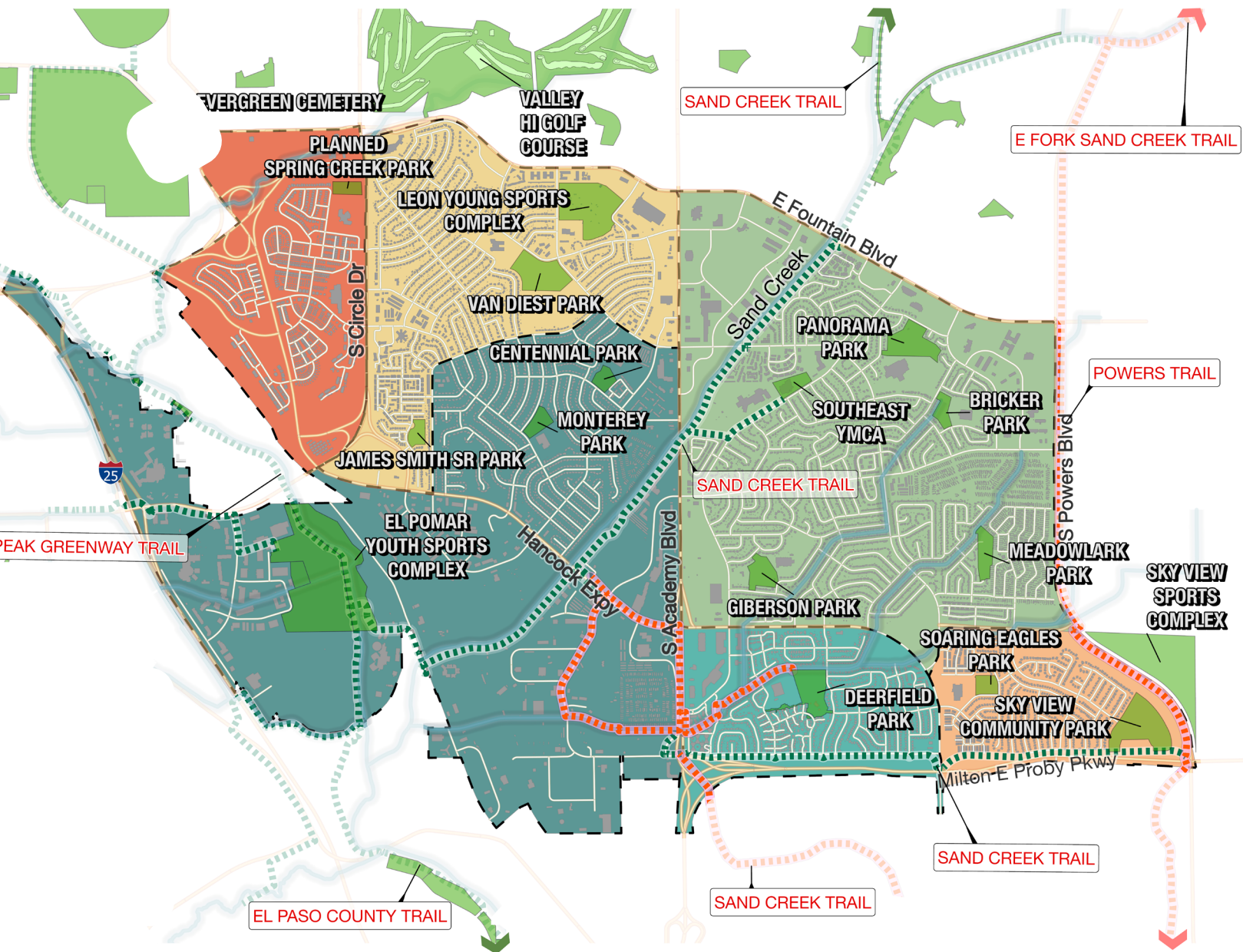
STRATEGY H7.B

Partner with Colorado Springs Utilities and Sand Creek Library to provide educational information programs that provide guidance on best landscaping practices and incentives for homeowners.



- ▭ SES Neighborhoods
- ▬ Trails
- ▬ Future Trails
- ▬ Creeks
- ▬ Parks

MAP : PARKS AND CURRENT AND FUTURE TRAILS WITHIN SOUTHEAST STRONG PLAN AREA



The Sand Creek Trail is part of a larger trail network connecting to downtown. Complete Creeks activate waterway corridors as safe and convenient multi-modal transportation for bicyclists and pedestrians.



CREATE SPECIAL PLACES & COMMUNITY HUBS

COMMUNITY VISION FOR PLACE

The Southeast Strong area will become a regional destination for cultural celebration and tourism. Vibrant neighborhoods, as envisioned in PlanCOS, will thrive through reinvestment in walkable, healthy, and magnetic activity centers. Community hubs will serve as critical resources, addressing mental health, physical health, economic development, and fostering community unity.

These spaces will take various forms, including parks, community centers, and private event or cultural centers. They will provide residents with opportunities to host events, exercise, study, and socialize. Hospitality hubs will include accommodations, dining options, and attractions showcasing the cultural contributions of local creatives for visitors to experience.

Inclusive spaces, designed with the principles of "universal design," will ensure environments are accessible and usable by people of all abilities, ages, and circumstances, fostering inclusivity and full participation.

COMMUNITY HUBS

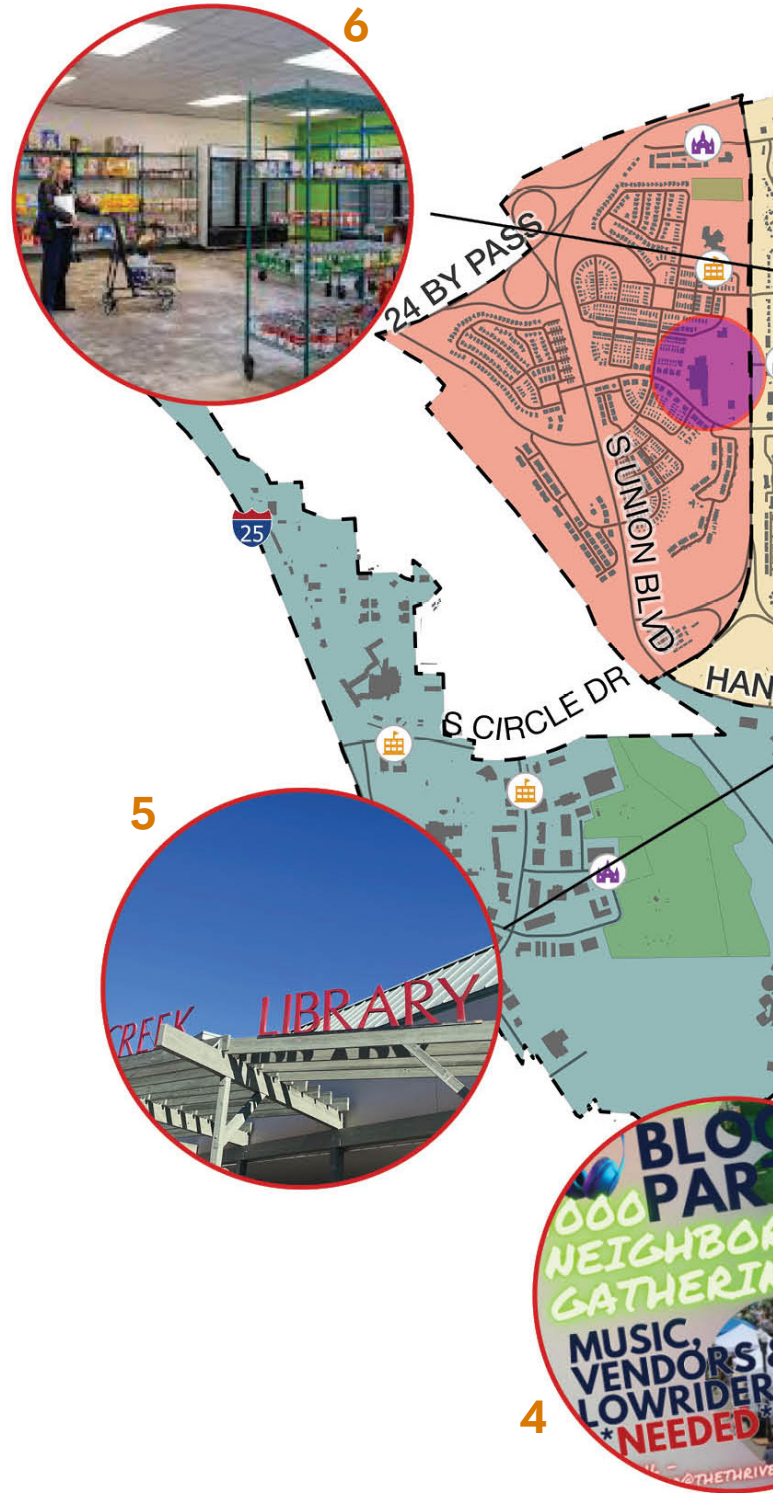
Community hubs and third spaces, such as local coffee shops, are emerging in the area through public-private partnerships. PlanCOS calls for collaboration among the community, service providers, and stakeholders to plan small business-supportive community hubs in the Southeast, aligning with the Unique Places chapter and the Southeast Strong Plan's Grow and Support Our Businesses and Entrepreneurs chapters.

Despite these developments, residents often travel outside their neighborhoods to access unique spaces, entertainment, and cultural venues. The identified community hubs in the area have a rich history of grassroots initiatives, yet additional development is needed. This includes further build-out, thoughtful design, connections to parks and trails, and partnerships with adjacent and compatible properties to fully realize the vision.

Churches and schools remain foundational to the concept of community hubs, playing a vital role in fostering community connection.

1 Chelton Crossing

2 SE Armed Services YMCA



- 3 Deerfield Community Center
- 4 Mission Trace Center
- 5 Sand Creek Library
- 6 Family Success Center and Van Diest Park
- 7 Silver Key Center
- 8 Panorama Park





TOP SPECIAL PLACES GOALS -COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

COMMUNITY GOAL CP-P1

Celebrate and promote southeast's cultural and economic assets.

STRATEGY CP-P1.A

Market Southeast as a cultural destination by highlighting local music, food, and events, and develop a cohesive campaign to showcase its diversity.

STRATEGY CP-P1.B

Support small businesses and entrepreneurship through partnerships, temporary business incubation spaces, and community-focused economic programs.

COMMUNITY GOAL CP-P2

Revitalize key areas into thriving community hubs, nodes, and corridors and create and sustain temporary and permanent community gathering spaces.

STRATEGY CP-P2.A

Prioritize and support the Solid Rock CDC and Southeast Strong identified Community Hub at Chelton Crossing with additional funding support options furthering the vision for community space, food security, and STEAM education.

COMMUNITY GOAL CP-3

Advocate for the City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department Deerfield Hills Community Center as a community hub with inclusive programming for all.

STRATEGY CP-P3.A

Support future development plans to expand facilities and capacity and use the Hillside Community Center as a model, focusing on inclusivity, accessibility, mental health, fitness, and creative arts in partnership with local organizations.

REGIONAL HUBS AND TOURISM

The Southeast area has a rich culture that can be used to entice regional guests to each of the neighborhoods. Regional hubs are specific places that tourists may visit to enjoy all that the community has to offer.

STORY TELLING GOAL P1

Partner with City Departments to highlight the culture of the Southeast Strong area to create a small business-supportive economically prosperous community.

STRATEGY P1.A

Partner with Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum on hosting pop-up exhibits featuring public art and storytelling events in local venues, such as the Sand Creek Library to further the 2020 Public Arts Master Plan.

STRATEGY P1.B

Support expanding community events by partnering with Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department and with area non-profits.

COMMUNITY LOCAL SPACES

SAFE SPACES GOAL P2

Expand and create inclusive spaces for community engagement.

STRATEGY P2.A

Partner with City Departments and agencies to create activity in parking lots, on sidewalks, and other public places through expanded seating options, creative lighting, public art installations, and other interactive streetscaping elements and evaluate for reduced costs for permitting.

SAFE SPACES GOAL P3

Provide safe spaces for residents of all ages and abilities.

STRATEGY P3.A

Identify and utilize resources, including but not limited to, existing grant funding, non-profits, or public facilities available for those within the Southeast Strong area and collaborate with community agencies to determine gaps and opportunities.

STRATEGY P3.B

Remove barriers to safe, comfortable spaces, such as at transportation hubs and include multiple languages.

STRATEGY P3.C

Speak with caretakers on gaps in childcare to determine locations and programming that support safe spaces for children before and after school.

STRATEGY P3.D

Work with senior citizens in the area to understand the gaps in access to socialization and integrate perspectives into discussions on locations and design of gathering spaces.

TEEN SAFE SPACES GOAL P4

Increase after school youth and teen programming, available activities, and outdoor spaces.

STRATEGY P4.A

Expand the Sand Creek Library's teen room and associated programs, homework resources, volunteer opportunities, workforce readiness, and books.

STRATEGY P4.B

Mobilize the Youth Advisor Council, developed to assist with the Panorama Park design, and provide additional opportunities for teens to be involved in civic engagement.

STRATEGY P4.C

Develop more STEAM programs similar to the Solid Rock CDC and SEMtech partnership, to foster the quickly growing need for tech-literate students by expanding partnerships with cybersecurity educators.

STRATEGY P4.D

Support teens by supporting families through the Pikes Peak United Way Family Success Center's partners:

- Assistance League of Colorado Springs
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado
- CASA of the Pikes Peak Region
- Catholic Charities of Central Colorado
- Care & Share Food Bank of Southern Colorado
- Community of Caring Foundation / The Aspen Mine Center
- Court Care for the Pikes Peak Region
- CPCD – Early Childhood Education Program
- CPCD – Two-Generation Career Pathways Program
- Crossfire Ministries, INC.
- Dream Centers of Colorado Springs
- Serenity Recovery Connection
- Forge Evolution
- Fostering Hope Foundation
- Greccio Housing Unlimited, INC.
- Homeward Pikes Peak
- Hope & Home
- Junior Achievement of Southern Colorado
- Lutheran Family Services
- Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center
- Partners in Housing
- Peak Education
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern Colorado
- Safe Passage
- Silver Key Senior Services
- TESSA
- The Place
- The Resource Exchange
- Tri-Lakes Cares



CREATE SPECIAL PLACES & COMMUNITY HUBS



Chelton Crossing at Chelton Rd. and Jet Wing Dr.



Deerfield Park and Community Center at Deerfield Hills Rd.



The Family Success Center and Van Diest Park at S. Shelton Rd. and Verde Dr



Panorama Park at Fenton Rd.



GROW AND SUPPORT OUR BUSINESSES, ENTREPRENEURS, AND HOUSING

COMMUNITY VISION FOR ECONOMY AND HOUSING

Southeast Strong area residents and business owners will have the option to live and work within the planning area to reduce the amount of time it takes for residents to travel to work. Patrons for all over will frequent local businesses and enjoy their services at nearby vibrant public gathering spaces. A range of housing options will be available to business owners and entrepreneurs. A thriving community sustains the local economy and keeps dollars within the neighborhood to contribute to residents, community centers, schools, festivals, and more. Job opportunities and vocational training begin in nearby educational institutions and create a pipeline into innovative and exciting industries.

Recent successes in economic development and urban renewal adjacent to the Southeast Strong area continue to support and expand the local economy. Peak Innovation Park is attracting large investments providing quality jobs and community spaces for both local and regional residents and workers. The 2022 Colorado Springs Municipal Airport Master Plan outlines and guides development for growth and sustainability over a 20-year planning period. These two large initiatives are creating a hub for economic development driving tourism, recreation, office development, and industrial uses and serve as opportunities for increasing the attractiveness and viability of Southeast Colorado Springs.

SMALL BUSINESS & COMMUNITY CULTURAL RETAIL

Many vital commercial corridors and neighborhood hubs serve both the Southeast Strong area residents and those from nearby neighborhoods. Notably, neighborhood nodes, often situated near churches and schools or along corridors, when development occurred in a even more auto-centric time, hold a substantial number of small, community-owned businesses that provide valuable services and employment opportunities.

These establishments are highly valued by the community. In the Southeast Strong area commercial centers can be tucked into aging strip malls developed before active landscape codes. However, they still face numerous challenges, such as escalating rents and difficulty in hiring staff, which put them at risk of closure or relocation. This concern is particularly poignant for some of the longstanding Southeast Strong area businesses, which have witnessed displacement over the past decades and fear further losses. The following recommendations present policies and programs aimed at preserving existing businesses while exploring avenues to attract new ones that cater to everyday household needs.

Additionally, providing cultural competency training for City staff to improve service to the culturally diverse business population of the area will assist in the area's economic equity goals.

TOP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS - COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL CP-E1

Partner with Southeast Strong area businesses and civic organizations to develop a marketing package to promote the area as a cultural, creative, or arts district.

STRATEGY CP-E1.A

Create partnerships with City of Colorado Springs Economic Development Department, RISE Southeast, Solid Rock CDC, Pikes Peak Workforce Center, and Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center to assist with new business development/redevelopment to help attract neighborhood residents and customers to individual businesses.

STRATEGY CP-E1.B

Help locally owned businesses locate in the districts, hire and retain quality employees, and integrate into the community.

STRATEGY CP-E1.C

Further develop and implement the Urban Renewal Authority's Façade Improvement Program to assist property owners with exterior building or site enhancement.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT GOAL CP-E2

Collaborate with Colorado Springs Utilities to create standards for water wise streetscapes to address the heat island effect initially focusing on identified areas.

STRATEGY CP-E1.A

Collaborate with Colorado Springs Utilities to create standards for water wise streetscapes to address the heat island effect initially focusing on identified areas referenced in the Southeast Community Plan Healthy People and Places Assessment. Implement mitigating practices within transportation systems and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment within neighborhood commercial areas.

SMALL BUSINESS & RETAIL

SMALL BUSINESS GOAL E1

Provide and assist with resources for funding options to small businesses to help with coming into zoning compliance with code requirements such as landscape and site maintenance.

STRATEGY E1.A

Support a Southeast Strong planning area network for small businesses that aims to build capacity among the areas' various commercial nodes and corridors within the area. A small business alliance could include a membership component aiming to:

- Provide information on issues of concern to small businesses;
- Assist with marketing goods and services to area residents;
- Connect businesses to services offered by the City of Colorado Springs;
- Build organizational capacity to help identify and create funding options such as special districts; and
- Create opportunities to support marginalized business owners and entrepreneurs.

STRATEGY E1.B

Support, uplift, and partner with non-profit and local organizations, such as RISE Southeast, The Thrive Networks, SCORE, and Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center to provide technical and legal assistance at a local, convenient location that may include:

- Business planning,
- Succession or transition planning,
- Lease negotiations,
- Maintenance fees,
- Predatory lending,
- Property taxes and other challenges faced by small business owners.



GROW AND SUPPORT OUR BUSINESSES, AND ENTREPRENEURS

STRATEGY E1.C

Provide business owners information on opportunities for sources of capital, such as grant programs for upgrading or expanding retail space, storefront improvements, business signage upgrades, and building rehabilitation.

STRATEGY E1.D

Connect businesses to agencies that can assist and support sustainable practices, including, but not limited to:

- Education on the benefits of opportunities such as adding solar panels or recycled building materials during project design and establishing waste reduction programs that promote composting and recycling.
- Provide resources on how to successfully establish landscapes with native plantings and xeric principles.

STRATEGY E1.E

Distribute information on opportunities to acquire a building space or property, by utilizing programs such as the Small Business Administration's 504 Loan Program, mobilizing community development organizations, such as Community Development Corporations (CDCs), to acquire commercial property through community land trusts, and exploring programs such as right of first refusal.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL E2

Attract new businesses and retailers to help meet the needs of Southeast Strong area residents working with the City of Colorado Springs Economic Development Department, Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority, and El Paso County Office of Economic Development.

STRATEGY E2.A

Assist business organizations in developing small business incubators for property owners and entrepreneurs, particularly in existing vacant and underutilized buildings, as a test market for new retail and services. Successful incubator tenants should then be encouraged to move to permanent storefront locations within the area with assistance from local organizations.

STRATEGY E2.B

Promote the utilization of small business initiative programs, such as tax credit programs including business personal property and Enterprise Zones, that have the potential to support entrepreneurs through the El Paso County Office of Economic Development.

STRATEGY E2.C

In developed areas that meet the State Statute definition of "blight" through the Urban Renewal Authority, support opportunities for vacant property conversion(s) allowing for new businesses that creatively use former tenant spaces to help spur redevelopment.

STRATEGY E2.D

Collaborate with the Urban Renewal Authority to establish procedures similar to the current Rapid Response application process for taxing entities that may support new development and redevelopment.

STRATEGY E2.E

Support retail and craft manufacturing in industrial areas, particularly between Harrison High School and El Pomar Youth Sports Park.

STRATEGY E2.F

Support the Urban Renewal Authority's implementation of a Façade Improvement Program to assist property owners with exterior building or site enhancement.

STRATEGY E2.G

Support retail and craft manufacturing in industrial areas, particularly between Harrison High School and Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services' El Pomar Youth Sports Park.

PRESERVING & GROWING PRIMARY EMPLOYERS

Unique to the City of Colorado Springs are the amount of industrial manufacturing and logistics jobs, including industrial and warehousing in Pikes Peak Park South. Additionally, Peak Innovation Park, located east of the planning area, and the Airport Business Park are employment sectors potentially serving the area. Access to quality jobs and education is key to achieving PlanCOS vision for a more inclusive city where all residents have equitable access to quality education, jobs, and services. Education and training programs are critical to ensure the Southeast Strong area has job growth and residents have increased access to higher wage jobs.

By supporting Harrison School District 2 (D2) and other entities providing job training for career growth within strategic sectors having partnerships with D2, local businesses, and workforce partners will help ensure that area residents benefit from future jobs opportunities.

CULTURAL BUSINESSES GOAL E3

Support and develop new initiatives and community-minded ownership models that have a goal of maintaining a variety of local and culturally significant businesses in the area.

STRATEGY Y E3.A

Identify and provide support to preserve culturally and/or historically relevant businesses including marginalized groups, through business assistance, property ownership, and other innovative efforts.

STRATEGY E3.B

As new development or redevelopment occurs in the Southeast Strong Plan Area, partner with community agencies to develop strategies and tools to help existing businesses stay in the area.

PRESERVE AND GROW JOBS GOAL E4

Preserve existing industrial jobs and create new job opportunities that can benefit neighborhood residents and the regional economy.

STRATEGY E4.A

In collaboration with major employers within the Southeast Strong area, support creation of vocational job training, apprenticeship program, and the careers in construction program at D2 area high schools and other apprenticeship and job training programs. *(Partners – City of Colorado Springs Economic Department Dept, Harrison School District 2, Pikes Peak Workforce Center, Colorado Springs Housing and Building Association)*



GROW AND SUPPORT OUR BUSINESSES, AND ENTREPRENEURS

PRESERVING & GROWING PRIMARY EMPLOYERS

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PRESERVE AND GROW JOBS GOAL E5

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STRATEGY E5.B

Where the potential for involuntary displacement is identified, evaluate, and implement methods to mitigate business displacement, such as incentives, property ownership and/or other assistance to existing businesses to preserve jobs in the area.

STRATEGY E5.C

Identify businesses that may be considered as being cultural and/or historic destinations and anchors and explore incentives, marketing support and/or economic development tools to retain them.

STRATEGY E5.D

Support local and regional high-value manufacturing places and consider forming high-value manufacturing districts as additional needs are identified such as additional regulatory relief, and a mobility network that facilitates truck traffic and access to major highways.

STRATEGY E5.E

Support new job growth in manufacturing through new and existing local and regional economic development resources such as shared makers spaces, incubators, or the Enterprise Zone program.

STRATEGY E5.F

As buildings, uses, and supporting technology evolve, consider utilization of special districts and/or other economic development tools to help finance the modernization or expansion of needed infrastructure. For localized infrastructure upgrades, consider general improvement and/or metropolitan districts. For broader district-wide improvements and marketing support, a business improvement district(s).

EDUCATION AND CAREER GOAL E6

Partner with local school districts, community organizations, and other major area employers in connecting Southeast Strong area residents to new career opportunities.

STRATEGY E6.A

Through career exploration and career exposure opportunities, workforce training and continuing education. Provide educational opportunities at community centers, libraries, Pikes Peak State College, and other public facilities by connecting residents to scholarships and other programs to improve access to learning.

STRATEGY E6.B

Promote partnerships with Harrison School District 2 and other education institutions located in the area neighborhoods.

STRATEGY E6.C

Connect businesses to agencies that can assist and support sustainable practices, including, but not limited to:

- Education on the benefits of opportunities such as adding solar panels or recycled building materials during project design and establishing waste reduction programs that promote composting and recycling.
- Provide resources on how to successfully establish landscapes with native plantings and xeric principles.

EDUCATION AND CAREER GOAL E7

Distribute information on opportunities to acquire a building space or property.

STRATEGY E7.A

Utilize programs such as the Small Business Administration's 504 Loan Program, mobilizing community development organizations, such as Community Development Corporations (CDCs), to acquire commercial property through community land trusts, and exploring programs such as right of first refusal.





GROW AND SUPPORT OUR HOUSING

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & WEALTH BUILDING

The most common measure of housing affordability assesses the burden that housing costs put on a household. If a household pays more than 30% of their gross income in rent and utilities or on mortgage payments, utilities, property taxes and insurance they are considered to be "cost-burdened" and susceptible to displacement should housing costs increase. The higher the cost burden, the greater the vulnerability. Cost burden can lead to financial stress and limited access to basic necessities such as medical care, nutritious food, and transportation. For children in particular, housing stability significantly affects educational development and in turn lifelong earning potential. For seniors, stable housing ensures a safe and supportive environment for aging in place, maintaining social connections and accessing necessary healthcare services. In addition, affordability does not just refer to subsidized housing for people at extremely low-income levels: it also affects an increasingly wide spectrum of working households across the City.

Supporting the development of affordable and attainable housing in the form of both rental and homeownership opportunities will support financial stability and wealth building over time. The following recommendations provide policies and programs to enable these neighborhoods to maintain and improve housing into the future. Additional citywide recommendations and programs can be applied to this area from the City's Housing and Homelessness Response Department.

TOP HOUSING GOALS - COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

HOUSING GOAL CP-HS1

Preserve existing affordable housing inventory for current and future homeowners and renters.

STRATEGY CP-HS1.A

Providing below-market loans to existing affordable multi-family rental properties in need of minor rehabilitation, and by continuing to fund owner-occupied housing rehabilitation for low- to moderate-income homeowners.

HOUSING GOAL CP-HS2

Collaborate with developers to tailor proposed affordable housing construction to meet identified needs of the Southeast.

STRATEGY CO-HS2.B

For example, encourage dedication of space in proposed designs for needs such as parks, child-care facilities, or food pantries.

HOUSING GOAL CP-HS3

Consider all housing needs for existing and future residents. Review using an a phased housing approach and focus on creating open spaces and parks improvements as amenities for area residents.

STRATEGY CP-HS3.A

Continue and use the City's housing needs assessment through the Housing and Homelessness Response Department to determine housing needs and gaps. Where identified, implement an anti-displacement tool kit.

HOUSING GOAL HS1

Foster the growth of affordable and diverse housing options, especially those in proximity to transit, essential services, and amenities, to address a range of living situations.

STRATEGY HS1.A

Ensure affordable rental housing aligns with community needs, including:

- Permanent Supportive Housing for stability of our most vulnerable, lowest-income residents.
- Diverse housing options for various household types, such as families, multi-generational living, aging in place, residents with disabilities, and those requiring supportive services.
- Rental options that match the quality and compatibility of market-rate housing in the area.

STRATEGY HS1.B

Continue to support the allocation of Private Activity Bonds (PAB) and Federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds by the City for construction and rehabilitation of affordable multi-family housing projects. Pursue innovative funding sources for affordable housing development, such as Prop 123 funding, philanthropic funders, or other revenue-generating programs.

STRATEGY HS1.C

Ease the process of financing and building ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units) for homeowners by streamlining the permitting process, partnering with local lenders to expand traditional financing tools, and providing education to homeowners on the responsibilities of serving as a landlord.

STRATEGY HS1.D

Support the use of various models to provide affordable homeownership options to residents.

PRESERVE HOUSING GOAL HS2

Support the use of various models to provide affordable homeownership options to residents.

STRATEGY HS2.A

Support property tax exemptions, energy and accessibility support, and foreclosure prevention for low-income and/or senior homeowners. Maintain and enhance the quality of older homes through programs designed to rehabilitate homes in disrepair or without critical accessibility features, so that our most vulnerable residents can comfortably and safely age in place.

STRATEGY HS2.B

Continue the successes of pandemic-era rental assistance programs by building capacity in the non-profit community to administer displacement and eviction prevention programs for residents most at risk of displacement, including senior citizens. This outreach aims to explore additional assistance programs and options to mitigate displacement.



GROW AND SUPPORT OUR BUSINESSES, ENTREPRENEURS, AND HOUSING

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AMI – Area Median Income
BID – Business Improvement District
CDC – Community Development Corporation
HUD – Housing and Urban Development
PAB – Private Activity Bond
URA – Urban Renewal Authority

GLOSSARY OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Several partners have been named in this big idea, here is what do they all do.

COLORADO SPRINGS SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center offers small business consulting and training that maximizes the economic potential of entrepreneurs. Their mission is to help existing and new businesses grow and prosper with the goal of helping emerging and existing entrepreneurs gain control of their business operations. They provide free guidance and counseling in all aspects of funding and developing small business. We strive to help grow and start businesses. While they cannot eliminate risk, they work to minimize it by helping clients write comprehensive business plans, conduct financial forecasts, strategize marketing tactics, apply for funding, and improve operations.
<https://pikespeaksbdc.org/>

PIKES PEAK WORKFORCE CENTER

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center provides a wide variety of free services to assist registered job seekers, provides skills training to help residents achieve success, and offers resources to connect to future employers.
<https://ppwfc.org/>

RISE SOUTHEAST COLORADO SPRINGS

RISE | Southeast is an initiative developed and led by resilient, inspired, strong, and engaged residents of 80910 and 80916. In 2016, El Paso County Public Health was the recipient of El Pomar Foundation's Possibilities grant and El Pomar made a seven-year commitment to help fund RISE | Southeast an initiative aimed to enhance southeast Colorado Springs from within through resident led change.

<https://risesoutheast.com>

SCORE

SCORE's (Service Corps of Retired Executives) mission is to foster vibrant small business communities through mentoring and education.

<https://www.score.org/southerncolorado>

SOLID ROCK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (CDC)

Solid Rock CDC seeks to support a revitalized Southeast Colorado Springs that becomes a destination area for living, business development through innovative community collaboration through housing diversity advocacy and development, small business support, facilitation of healthy community connections, and being policy advocates within the community and State.

<https://www.solidrockcdc.com>

THRIVE NETWORK

The Thrive Networks' goal is to eliminate economic barriers by providing people in communities with tools to activate and launch their own success, primarily through entrepreneurship. They achieve this goal through teaching those within communities to see their problems as economic opportunities, and providing a framework to launch small businesses to address those needs.

<https://thethrivenetworks.org>





CITY AND COMMUNITY VISION FOR SAFETY

Our community envisions a future where every resident feels safe, valued, and connected. By prioritizing well-maintained streets, improved lighting, and pedestrian safety, we will foster safer environments for youth, seniors, and families. Through community-driven safety initiatives, trust-building with law enforcement, and culturally sensitive approaches, we will address crime prevention collaboratively. Our parks and public spaces will be vibrant, drug-free, and welcoming to all, supported by targeted efforts to provide resources for those in need. Leveraging innovation and technology, we aim to create a neighborhood that is secure, inclusive, and a place of pride for everyone.

A safe Southeast Strong area is one where residents and visitors feel safe to carry about their day-to-day activities. To discourage crime activity, the development and redevelopment of a site should incorporate measures that prevent the potential for unsafe situations and criminal activity.

CPTED, or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, is a theory that can be utilized by designers of the built environment such as architects, landscape architects, city planners, and law enforcement that encourages smarter design to reduce crime and to create a sense of safety. This concept focuses on how the physical environment impacts our day-to-day activities with the goal of ensuring safe interaction with the development around us in part through positive human behavior. CPTED is a tool to be considered in a site's design using five strategies, which include:

- Natural Access Control – focuses on access points to a property.
- Territoriality – establishes safe boundaries for a property and welcomes users.
- Natural Observation – property users can safely

- observe the property, such as through property lighting.
- Legitimate Activity Support – expands on the “Eyes on the Street” theory which incorporates users as monitors of the environment.
- Image and Maintenance – encourages property maintenance, showing an area is active with users and safe from hazards.

TOP SAFETY GOALS -COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

SAFETY GOAL CP- S1

Enhance public infrastructure for safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclist, and include transit stops, crosswalks, parks and trails, and multi-modal routes in the effort.

STRATEGY CP-S1.A

Work with Public Works to improve road maintenance and safety by prioritizing speed reduction, clearly marked and illuminated crosswalks, and flashing lights near schools and high-traffic pedestrian areas.

STRATEGY CP-S1.B

Evaluate street lighting infrastructure to implement smart lighting systems at streets, intersections, trails, and parking lots to improve nighttime visibility and reduce safety risks.

SAFETY GOAL CP-S2

Foster a safer and more inclusive community environment in partnership with community-driven and Public resources.

STRATEGY CP-S2.A

Expand the Neighborhood Watch Program, youth mentorship, and culturally sensitive crime prevention efforts in collaboration with the Police Department and CONO.

STRATEGY CP-S2.B

Address public space safety concerns by enhancing police presence, enforce drug-free zones in parks, and address homelessness with targeted cleanup and resources.

STRATEGY CP-S2.C

Promote emergency alert apps and use town halls to refine safety measures and celebrate successful initiatives to encourage participation.

STRATEGY CP-S2.D

Promote funding opportunities and provide resources to assist residents, renters, and businesses on the importance and effectiveness of protective measures such as locks, alarms, and security cameras.

TRAIL SAFETY GOAL CP-S3

Promote health, walkability, and safe pedestrian environments in the area neighborhoods.

STRATEGY CP-S3.A

Ensure there are clear sightlines and visibility in public spaces, reducing potential hiding spots for criminal activity in both public and private places focusing on Sand Creek Trail.

- Designing for this natural observatio, providing opportunity and comfort for legitimate users of the space to engage in their normal activities.
- A key factor is the use of uniform lighting standards for illumination of parking lots, urban trails, and building entrances adjacent to trails.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

SAFETY GOAL S1

Use signage, landscaping, and architectural features to define ownership of which areas are public and private.

STRATEGY S1.A

- In commercial areas, such as Mission Trace Shopping Center, the use of private space as public space may increase a sense of safety.
- Site design may define these areas through landscaping, grade changes, or non-opaque walls and fences.

STRATEGY S1.B

Opacity limits on outdoor fencing, walls, and other visual barriers.

- Fencing, railing walls, or other built barriers that divide outdoor areas should be discouraged from being constructed in a manner that results in a complete visual barrier.
- Landscaping buffers must be designed to not create a visual barrier or "hiding" spaces.

Keep the area well-maintained to show that property is cared for and watched over. This may include maintaining landscaping, ensuring that lighting is functioning, and supporting programs for property owners to help identify opportunities for improvement as it applies to safety.

STRATEGY C1.C

Through the development review process, ensure there are clear sightlines and visibility in public spaces, reducing potential hiding spots for criminal activity in both public and private places.



UPGRADE HOW WE MOVE

CITY VISION FOR MOBILITY

The Southeast Strong planning area is uniquely located at the crossroads of major regional commercial and industrial centers such as Colorado Springs Airport. We envision major thoroughfares provide access to, from, and through each of the six neighborhoods. Locally, residents desire transportation options that balance efficiency and availability of options. A comprehensive transit network connects residents to the many zoning uses as shown in and to key destinations such as medical services, job centers, and food and entertainment options. South Academy Boulevard, Hancock Expressway, and South Circle Drive have been transformed into multimodal transit streets, and a network of local buses and bike and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure offer safe connections between commercial centers and residential areas.

Based on the findings in the Southeast Community Plan: Healthy People and Places Assessment (Appendix A) and stakeholder comments, this Big Idea supports the expansion of safe, reliable access within the area, multimodal transportation options without impeding efficiency of the most used forms of travel, and maintenance of existing infrastructure. This undertaking is supported by City-initiated plans including ConnectCOS, adopted by City Council in 2023, and the 2050 Regional Transit Plan & Specialized Transportation Plan that is expected to be completed in 2025.

The 2050 Regional Transit Plan & Specialized Transportation Plan intends to identify improvement and enhancements to the existing Mountain Metro transit system. This could include the expansion of services to be more frequent, new routes, and enhanced infrastructure. As work is still in progress, continued support will be provided and Southeast Strong area residents will be included in the public process. It should be noted that the partner for this Big Idea is the City of Colorado Springs Public Works Department.

TOP MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION GOALS - COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

MOBILITY GOAL CP-T1

Enhance public transit accessibility and coverage.

STRATEGY CP-T1.A

Expand the existing bus system by adding routes and introducing a second transit center to improve regional connectivity.

STRATEGY CP-T1.B

Adjust fare costs for EBT users and provide additional bus stops near major employers, such as Amazon, to better serve the workforce.

MOBILITY GOAL CP-T2

Improve safety and usability for pedestrians and cyclists.

STRATEGY CP-T2.A

Develop and maintain safe bike lanes and sidewalks, ensuring connectivity between key transit stops and local destinations.

STRATEGY CP-T2.B

Upgrade crosswalks and lighting near transit stops to enhance walkability and safety for pedestrians, especially during early and late hours.

MOBILITY GOAL CP-T3

Promote sustainable first/last-mile transit solutions.

STRATEGY CP-T3.A

Establish partnerships for scooters and bike-sharing programs, ensuring integration with public transit hubs.

STRATEGY CP-T3.B

Enhance wayfinding and signage to guide users to transit routes and encourage the use of alternative mobility options like bikes and scooters.

STREET TYPES

The various street types in the Southeast Strong planning area influence how residents travel through and across neighborhoods. Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRA), the City's General Fund budget, and ballot item 2C help to address physical infrastructure ailments such as potholes or broken and missing sidewalks. In addition to physical deterioration, the design of roadways may discourage multimodal transportation uses by creating uncomfortable bicycle or pedestrian experiences. PlanCOS and ConnectCOS outline a complete multimodal transportation network that provides mobility choices to all residents. This complete network offers residents the ability to choose how they access jobs, education, residential, commercial, and entertainment destinations. Based on ConnectCOS, residents who use the multi-modal transportation network generally opt for one of the following modes of travel:

- Drive alone,
- Carpool,
- Work from home; therefore, no transportation,
- Walk,
- Utilize a taxi or rideshare service,
- Motorcycle or other,
- Public Transportation, and
- Bike.

CRITICAL CORRIDORS

The Southeast Strong planning area sits at the intersections of several regional thoroughfares. These thoroughfares transport thousands of vehicles daily to link residential neighborhoods to commercial centers. They were often constructed in a transportation vision that prioritized single-occupancy vehicles. Several of these thoroughfares, such as the MLK Bypass/Fountain Boulevard, have disconnected communities and pushed residents farther away from economic opportunity. They continue to stand as physical reminders of historical damage, but they also serve as opportunities to create new and better conditions for the community to flourish.

POWERS BOULEVARD CITY ACTION

Work with Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) on future Powers Boulevard improvements to ensure that projects include bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide connectivity across and adjacent to Powers Boulevard.

MLK BYPASS/FOUNTAIN BOULEVARD

Study and implement improved and new protected bicycle infrastructure from South Union Boulevard to Circle Drive. Protected bicycle infrastructure could include a physical separation from vehicle traffic or a multi-use sidewalk adjacent to the corridor.



UPGRADE HOW WE MOVE

CONNECTED CORRIDORS

Many of the commercial corridors within the Southeast Strong planning area are situated on major arterials, such as South Academy Boulevard. These major arterials reflect decades of planning for single-occupancy vehicles without adequate infrastructure to support other modes of transportation such as walking and biking. Economic vibrancy and community pride rely on the efficiency and overall user experience of these roads. The vision of this big idea recognizes the existing dependence on single-occupancy vehicle travel while planning for a more connected, multimodal transportation corridor.

Connected corridors are classified as principal arterials in the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan, found in ConnectCOS.

SOUTH UNION BOULEVARD/HANCOCK EXPRESSWAY CITY ACTION

Action 1 – Conduct a transportation corridor study to determine safety, traffic operations, multi-modal enhancements, and functionality of the roadway from Union Boulevard to Chelton Road.

Action 2 – Enhance bike infrastructure from Monterey Road to the Sand Creek trail crossing.

Action 3 – Implement lane reallocation for bike lanes between Chelton Road and Powers Boulevard.

Action 4 – Study the feasibility of converting the Chelton intersection to a roundabout intersection.

Action 5 – Complete connection of Hancock Expressway from Clarendon Drive to Chelton Road.

Action 6 – Install 10-foot shared use path along the southside of Hancock Expressway from the Sand Creek trail crossing to the 10-foot shared use path on Academy Boulevard.

SOUTH ACADEMY BOULEVARD CITY

ACTION

Action 1 – Continue the enhancements included in the Academy Boulevard Improvements Project.

Action 2 – Enhance and implement pedestrian facilities, including additional crossings to close long, inconvenient gaps between signalized intersections, and 10-foot share use path.

Action 3 – Complete Enhanced Transit Feasibility Study and implement recommendations.

NEIGHBORHOOD LINKS CITY ACTION

Neighborhood links are the roads that serve local needs. These roads are often one or two lanes in each direction that connect residential neighborhoods to the larger thoroughfares and corridors. Neighborhood links are an opportunity to build on the City's existing multi-modal infrastructure without effecting efficiency on heavier-trafficked roads. Neighborhood links in the Southeast Strong planning area include:

- Aeroplaza Drive;
- Astrozon Boulevard;
- Capulin Drive;
- Carmel Drive;
- Chelton Road;
- Delta Drive;
- Janitell Road;
- Jet Wing Drive;
- Monterey Road;
- Murray Boulevard, and
- Verde Drive.

Neighborhood links are classified as minor arterials in the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan, found in ConnectCOS.

BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL T1

Study and implement lane reallocation projects to improve safety.

STRATEGY T1.A

To advance the implementation of the City's Bike Master Plan continue planned projects:

- Chelton Road from Mallard Drive to Hancock Expressway.
- Murray Boulevard from Platte Avenue and Chelton Road.

SAFER INTERSECTIONS GOAL T2

Study and implement safer intersections.

STRATEGY T2.A

Implement identifying signal modifications and traffic control modifications such as roundabouts.

NON-MOTORIZED SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

Infrastructure upgrades in the Southeast Strong planning area are intended to address safety concerns and user comfort. Lack of controlled mid-block pedestrian crossings, missing sidewalk connections, excessive speeding on streets, and needed modernized facilities. This section, focusing primarily on the non-motorized experience. Creatively opportunities to install safety improvements should be considered.

ROAD SAFETY GOAL T3

Create and implement strategies for slowing vehicles speeds on roads in the immediate vicinity of schools, healthcare centers, libraries, commercial areas, and parks and other recreational centers.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY GOAL T4

Implement a connected, functional, comfortable, and safe pedestrian network.

STRATEGY T3-T4.A

Implement sidewalk improvements and fill in sidewalk gaps along South Academy Boulevard, Fountain Boulevard, and South Circle Drive, and Hancock Expressway using PPRTA, grant, or developer funding as opportunities arise.

STRATEGY T3-T4.B

Evaluate new crossing locations along major arterials such as South Academy Boulevard, Fountain Boulevard, and Hancock Expressway to close long, inconvenient gaps between signalized intersections.

STRATEGY T3-T4.C

Install missing sidewalk connections particularly to access area parks and trails, adjacent to high-trafficked routes, and to connect neighborhoods and businesses to transit stops. (*Partners – City of Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, and Public Works*)

STRATEGY T3-T4.D

Determine new segments of shared use paths (e.g. 10-foot sidewalks) to provide trail-to-trail connections, trail-to-park connections, and park-to-park connections using PPRTA funding or other funding opportunities as they arise.

CROSSING SAFETY GOAL T5

Explore the feasibility of and implement additional high-visibility and controlled bicycle and pedestrian crossings that traverse significant obstacles such as highways, creeks, or railroads.

REDUCE CRASHES GOAL T6

Implement design ideas that promote overall pedestrian safety and comfort. Study and implement ways to reduce pedestrian-related crashes.



UPGRADE HOW WE MOVE

STRATEGY T5-T6.A

Use signal timing strategies and detection technologies to implement safety enhancements at signalized intersections.

STRATEGY T5-T6.B

Implement pedestrian infrastructure enhancements such as wider sidewalks, curb bulb-outs, pedestrian refuge islands, and pedestrian activated crossing controls such as Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) and pedestrian signals.

STRATEGY T5-T6.C

Collaborate with residents of the planning area to prioritize completing missing links and improve quality of sidewalks in the immediate vicinity of schools, healthcare centers, libraries, commercial areas, and parks and other recreational centers.

BIKE PLANNING GOAL T7

Implement and upgrade the City's Bike Master Plan for bikeway infrastructure.

STRATEGY T7.A

Create bicycle facilities that are designed to prioritize safety and comfort.

STRATEGY T7.B

Consider options that involve closing residential street segments to vehicular traffic flow while still ensuring continued household and business access.

TRANSIT

The City's transit system and the supporting multi-modal infrastructure allows someone to navigate through the area safely and conveniently without a vehicle.

TRANSIT GOAL T8

Implement transit system enhancements.

STRATEGY T8.A

Implement enhancements to the existing transit system identified in the 2050 Regional Transit Plan & Specialized Transportation Plan to improve user experience. Enhancements should initially focus on increasing the frequency of routes to 15 minutes and increasing the span of service to include longer weekday and weekend operating hours.

STRATEGY T8.B

Work with Mountain Metro Transit to implement Innovate Mobility Zones in southeast Colorado Springs to complement the existing transit network. *(Partners – City of Colorado Springs Public Works, Mountain Metro, Mountain Metro Transit)*

STRATEGY T8.C

Study and implement the recommendations of the enhanced transit study for the South Academy Boulevard corridor.

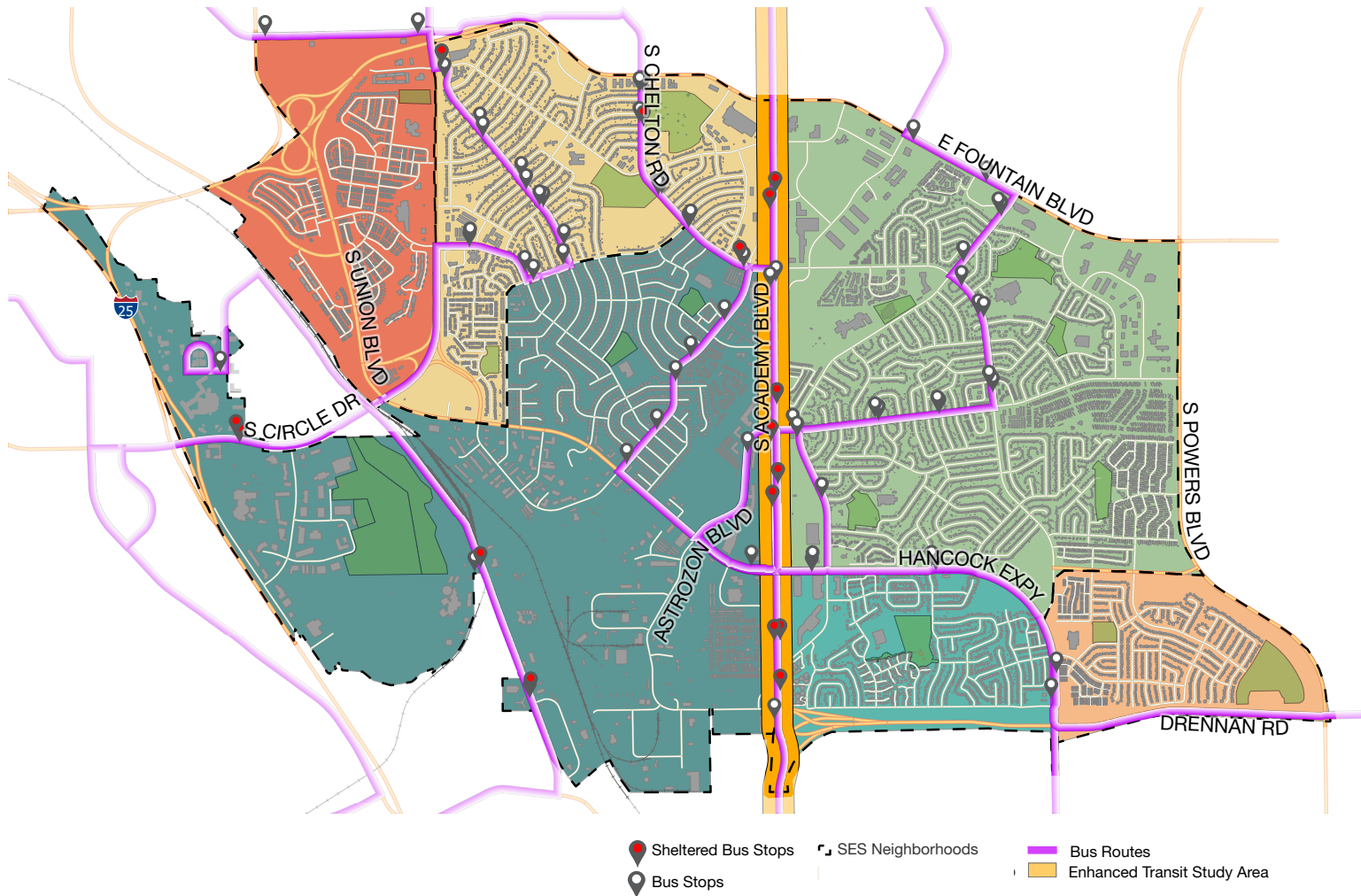
STRATEGY T8.D

Implement infrastructure improvements at bus stops including bus shelters, seating, sidewalk connections, landscaping where appropriate, and micro-mobility stations. *(Partners – City of Colorado Springs Public Works, Mountain Metro, Mountain Metro Transit)*

STRATEGY T8.E

Work with local partners to include beautification at bus stops through public art.

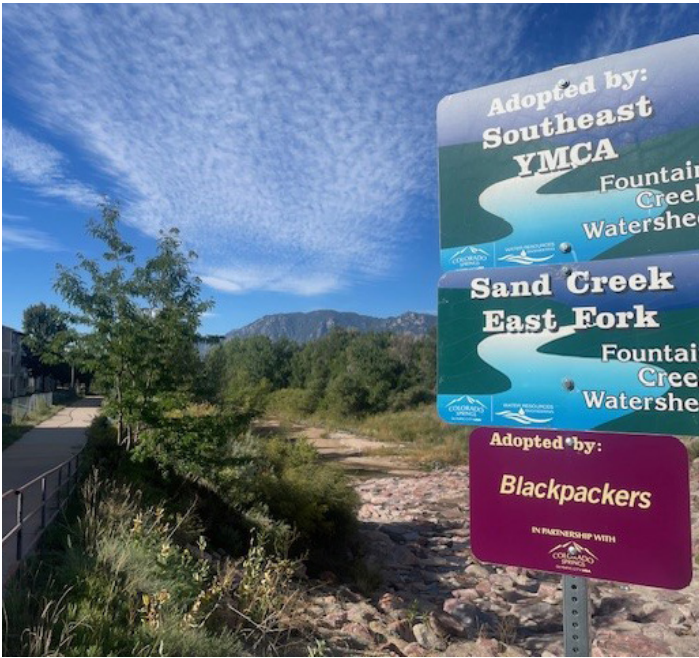
MAP 9: TRANSIT WITHIN SOUTHEAST STRONG PLAN AREA



There are many sheltered bus stops along S. Academy Blvd.; however, the majority of bus stops otherwise are unsheltered.



UPGRADE HOW WE MOVE



Mountain Metro Bus

Sand Creek Trail wayfinding to Sand Creek Library and Downtown



COMMUNITY

- Pikes Peak Rising: The City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County Public Health have a free resource for public health and mental health. This powerful tool is on the City's website at <https://coloradosprings.gov/PikesPeakRising>
- In 2024, the City of Colorado Springs Public Works Department and CONO established the Neighborhood Signage Program to support conveying information, offer directions, and enhance aesthetics of a neighborhood. <https://www.cscono.org/neighborhoodsigns>.
- PPRTA funding allows for adapting the needs of the community for transportation projects, such as sidewalk and trail enhancements, bridge maintenance, and on-street bicycle infrastructure improvements.
- The City of Colorado Springs' 2C Road Improvement is a voter-approved sales tax, serving as the main source for rebuilding and improving the condition of our existing roadway infrastructure in Colorado Springs. To see what roads have been paved since 2016 and what is proposed into 2027, visit <https://coloradosprings.gov/2c>.
- Community centers that are often used for hosting events such as camps hosted by the Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, community organization meetings, and City-hosted public land use meetings. Deerfield Hills Community Center, located in the Southeast Strong area. <https://coloradosprings.gov/deerfield>
- SCORE Southern Colorado helps small businesses with mentoring, workshops, and resources. <https://www.score.org/>
- Workforce or affordable housing is subject to restrictions in the form of long-term rent limits, or, in the case of for-sale housing, initial sale to a low- to moderate-income household.
- Affordable housing or housing affordability is any housing that does not require more than 30% of household income to secure.
- Attainable housing is housing that is affordable to moderate income households. For information on affordable housing, home repair, and renters rights. <https://coloradosprings.gov/get-help-housing-and-homelessness-response>
- The Colorado Springs Urban Renewal Authority (CSURA) promotes projects that supply public benefit, provide quality sustainable places, create jobs, promote public art, offer affordable housing, and raise the standard of development in Colorado Springs. These projects are achievable through the coordinated partnerships of private and public entities, civic leaders, financial institutions, and the use of tax increment financing. The objective of CSURA is to facilitate development of balanced, sustainable environments where people live, work, and come together as a community.
- CSURA provides financial support to fund blight studies (condition studies) in conjunction with developers. Additionally, the building owners and area businesses can apply for facade improvement planning and funding through URA. <https://www.csura.org/>
- One of PlanCOS' several key strategies is to "complete, update, and implement public art plans and to consider arts and culture in other city plans." The Public Art Master Plan, hopes to support the accomplishment of this strategy.
- The Thrive Network empowers residents to start their own small businesses by teaching those in under resourced communities. <https://thethrivenetworks.org>

RESOURCES

- Care and Share's website provides information on partner food pantries, mobile markets, and neighborhood markets. You can find these resources on a map in your location. <https://careandshare.org/findfood/>
- Solid Rock CDC has a community food center and provides a free farmer's markets in the summer and monthly drive-through food distribution programs. <https://www.solidrockcdc.com/community-food-center>
- Community and civic organizations are good resources to refer to for assistance with neighborhood clean-ups. CONO and other neighborhood organizations provide resources for neighborhood cleanups, including roll-off dumpsters. <https://www.cscono.org/>
- The Public Art Commission is a City Council-appointed advisory board that evaluates, advocates, and facilitates public art for the City of Colorado Springs.
- The Daily Dose 719 is an award-winning platform aiming to give a voice to marginalized community of Colorado Springs, CO. From docuseries to podcasts the stories of the Southeast area are produced, shared, and celebrated. <https://www.dailydose719.com/>
- The Colorado Equity Compass navigator has stories and resources on the Southeast area of the city. <https://coequitycompass.netlify.app/partner-communities/southeast-colorado-springs/>
- The City of Colorado Springs Small Business Development website provides resources and tools such as COS Business Navigator, COS Open for Business road map, and Permit Partner to name a few. <https://coloradosprings.gov/smallbiz>
- ConnectCOS established goals of creating a transportation system that is safe, equitable, sustainable, reliable, accessible, and connected.
- Appendix A of ConnectCOS includes a project list which includes many projects for completion around Colorado Springs, including Southeast Neighborhood Safety and Active Transportation Projects.
- The Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) successfully passed a ballot initiative in November 2022 to support a one-cent sales tax increase to support transportation capital improvements for a period of 10 years.
- The Pikes Peak Small Business Development Center provides training, consulting, and information for small businesses. <https://pikespeaksbdc.org>
- You can report Code Enforcement complaints and potholes on the GoCOS! app or City website <https://coloradosprings.gov/gocos>
- The "eyes on the street" theory suggests that the presence of people in public spaces can help prevent crime and create safe environments.
- Colorado Springs Police Department received from the Colorado Division of Criminal Justice a grant to install safety measures at Memorial Park including lighting and security cameras.
- CPTED is one of four Crime Prevention Programs in the CSPD Crime Prevention Unit which also includes Neighborhood Watch, community presentations, and reporting crimes and concerns.

COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Southeast Strong Plan is an effort informed and guided by its residents and the southeast area leaders and community advocates.

SURVEY OF SURVEYS 2017-2020

The Plan's Steering Committee recognized that the Southeast community had been surveyed extensively and recommended analyzing existing data through a "survey of surveys." This process reviewed comments related to the Southeast area, focusing on zip codes 80910 and 80916. A summary of these findings is provided in Appendix C.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2021-2024

The planning process began with the formation of a Steering Committee composed of Southeast stakeholders, leaders, and residents. A technical support team, including members from various City departments, was also assembled. Over four years, the committee discussed the community's priorities, needs, gaps, and existing grassroots efforts. The group recommended drafting the Plan, followed by community review, surveys, amendments, and finalization, including a robust implementation strategy. The Steering Committee held eight meetings during this process.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Residents and organizations invested in the Southeast—those who live, work, play, and care about the community—were interviewed to understand their priorities. Interviews took place at local businesses, non-profit offices, community events, the Sand Creek Library, and the Family Success Center.

PUBLIC MEETING

A large public meeting was held at Stompin' Groundz, a popular local coffee shop, following the "world café" format. Residents from all six

neighborhoods represented in the Plan participated. Attendees sat at six tables, each focused on a priority area: culture, economic development, health, mobility, housing, and safety. Facilitators guided discussions, helping residents review, discuss, and rate the Plan's priority goals as community priorities. Additional concerns and needs were also documented. The event saw more than 75 attendees. A detailed analysis of feedback from this event is available in Appendix C.

11

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

16

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

75+

ATTENDEES AT PUBLIC MEETING

64

SURVEY RESPONSES

PRIORITIES SURVEY

To expand community engagement, a survey was published on the City's Southeast Strong Community Plan website in both English and Spanish. This effort, accompanied by outreach from City and partner organizations, was promoted through social media posts, press releases, stakeholder emails, and Colorado Springs School District 2's 21 social media and email platforms. Feedback collected through this survey further informed the Plan. The lower survey response numbers, especially in Spanish prove further public outreach efforts are needed in future planning efforts.



SOUTHEAST STRONG COMMUNITY PLAN

¿Qué es un plan comunitario?

El Plan Comunitario Southeast Strong es un plan de la Ciudad de Colorado Springs para seis vecindarios: Deerfield Hills, Pikes Peak Park North, Pikes Peak Park South, Soaring Eagles, Southborough, y Spring Creek. Las prioridades de los residentes ayudarán a guiar el plan.

Se espera que este plan proporcione orientación sobre el desarrollo físico en el área. Las recomendaciones de este plan abarcarán temas como transporte, desarrollo económico, celebración de la cultura, vivienda, resiliencia climática, seguridad pública y salud pública.

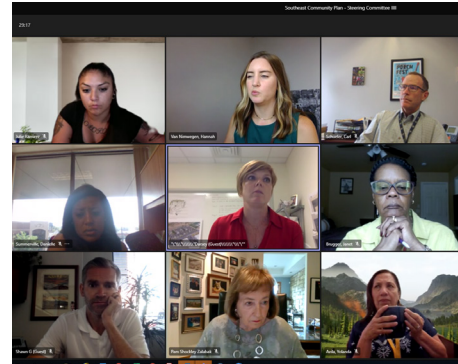
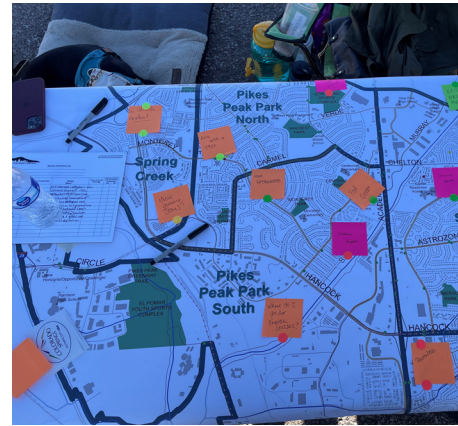
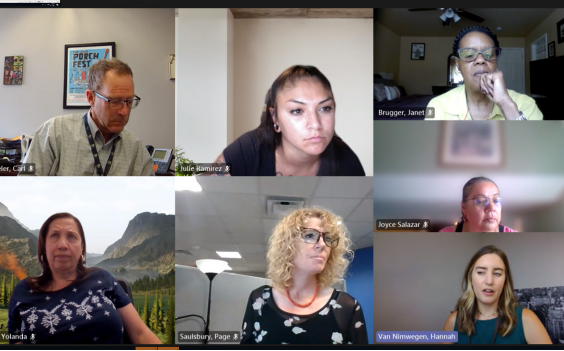
NECESITAMOS TU OPINIÓN!

REVISA EL PLAN PRELIMINAR

APRENDE MÁS
ENCUESTA ABIERTA HASTA
EL 10 DE NOVIEMBRE



ENGAGEMENT



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The numbers of attendees at meetings and lower survey responses, especially Spanish language, made it clear that traditional outreach would not be sufficient. One measure of success from this public engagement process is the fact that RISE Southeast and School District 2 promoted the public meeting and survey and the attendance numbers were considered successful from the communities perspective.

"Promote the Southeast as a Cultural Destination"

"Create Cultural Spaces & Develop Community Hubs"

"Uplift and Mobilize Existing Community Organizations"

"Increase Access to Healthy Foods"

"Expand Safe Walkable Neighborhoods for All"

"Preserve Affordable Housing and Programs"

"Workforce Development and Small Business Support"

"Attract Big Box Grocery & Primary Employers"

"Upgrade Parks and Trails"

REFLECT AND CELEBRATE OUR DIVERSE CULTURE

Celebrating Diversity:

- Host diverse cultural festivals and events in parks and pavilions.
- Propose creating cultural spaces like a permanent building for a year-round farmer's market/craft center, veteran's park, children's museum, western heritage/ranching museum, Native American center, Hispanic center, and a Buffalo Soldier museum to honor diverse histories and traditions.
- Use art and murals to represent cultural heritage. Introduce entrance/neighborhood signs celebrating diversity.
- Develop a cultural landmark or sculpture marking the Southeast area. o Promote storytelling and community building at events.
- Translate city documents into multiple languages, ensuring cultural relevance.
- Expand communication channels (social media, fliers, radio) for cultural engagement.
- Partner with nonprofits to maintain a community calendar of events.

Identity Building:

- Introduce imagery, decals, and flags representing the Southeast's diverse culture.
- Showcase Southeast's underrepresented culinary diversity as a cultural asset.
- Promote and celebrate new businesses and initiatives.

UPGRADE HOW WE MOVE

Public Transit Enhancements:

- Maintain and expand the existing bus system. Introduce additional covered and shaded bus stops near major employers (e.g., Amazon).
- Adjust fare costs for EBT users and add closer bus stop locations.
- Improve walkability, crosswalks, and lighting near stops for safety.
- Establish partnerships for scooters and bike lanes for first/last-mile transit.
- Add a second transit center in the area for better connectivity.

Infrastructure & Accessibility:

- Improve sidewalk repair and trail connectivity.

NT takeaways

- Add safe bike lanes and curbs to enhance usability. Promote airport transit with specific Southeast stops.
- Create better signage and wayfinding for transit routes.

SUPPORT OUR SAFETY

Community-Centered Safety:

- Strengthen trust between police and neighborhoods. o Implement culturally sensitive approaches to crime prevention.
- Encourage community-driven safety programs and neighborhood watch alternatives.
- Enhance lighting standards, especially in parking lots and streets.
- Address homelessness with targeted cleanup efforts and services.
- Youth & Senior Safety:
- Develop youth crime prevention programs and mentorship initiatives.
- Provide seniors with programs to stay informed about neighborhood safety.
- Improve crosswalk safety near schools with flashing lights.

Technology & Innovation:

- Utilize technology (e.g., emergency apps, security cameras) for public safety. o Offer discounts on smart security devices like Ring cameras.

GROW AND SUPPORT OUR HOUSING

Affordable & Diverse Housing Options:

- Promote more starter homes and diversify affordable housing options.
- Address concerns with over-concentration of tiny homes.
- Encourage development in underutilized areas (e.g., behind King Soopers, Mission Trace).
- Align housing initiatives with the principle of residents working and living in the same area.

Community Revitalization:

- Develop neglected spaces into community hubs or parks. o Ensure equitable housing that doesn't stigmatize affordability.

GROW AND SUPPORT OUR BUSINESSES, AND ENTREPRENEURS

Support for Businesses:

- Focus on Southeast businesses with equitable city exposure.
- Create a Southeast business directory and mentorship opportunities.
- Offer resources like access to loans, grants, and support for minority businesses.
- Enhance small business curb appeal with cleanups and beautification efforts.

Workforce Development:

- Provide job opportunities and internships for students.
- Partner with trade schools, auto shops, and local businesses for career readiness.
- Promote financial literacy and incentivize hiring local talent.

Zoning and Incentives:

- Limit fast-food outlets to make room for small businesses.
- Attract large employers offering competitive salaries.
- Address disparities caused by zoning laws and land ownership issues.

CREATE SPECIAL PLACES & COMMUNITY HUBS

Revitalizing Key Areas:

- Develop Chelton Crossing and Mission Trace as community centers or pop-up business hubs.
- Activate underutilized parks with inclusive designs and accessible parking.
- Support temporary leases for diverse businesses and events in these areas.

Creating New Spaces:

- Transform land behind King Soopers into a park or community space.
- Build more inclusive community centers similar to Hillside's model.

Highlighting Assets:

- Promote Southeast's music hubs, unique food spots, and special events to the wider city.
- Market the area as an attractive destination for its cultural and culinary diversity.

INVENTORY &

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

The analysis of existing conditions, supporting materials, assessments, and statistical and demographic profiles of the area informed the development of this Plan, and listed below. The area's profile data, primarily sourced from the U.S. Census, is detailed in both the Southeast Strong and El Paso County Health Assessments.

PLANS, STUDIES, & ASSESSMENTS

- Academy Blvd. Corridor Great Streets Plan - 2011
- South Academy Economic Action Plan - 2014
- RISE Action Plan & Transforming Safety - 2017
- ULI Healthy Places Report & Quad: Access to Social Services Report - 2018
- PlanCOS & Community Investment Trust Study & SE Impact Fund Report - 2019
- Because of RISE Action Plan - 2020
- Southeast Community Plan Healthy People & Places Assessment - 2021
- RISE Strategic Plan - 2024
- Southeast Strong Community Plan - 2025
- Parks Master Plan - 2014-2025
- COS Bikes! - master plan - 2018

*this is not an extensive list and is meant to highlight the continued evidence for the need for additional investment in the southeast and a process to monitor progress.

NOTABLE ACTION

- RISE - long term funding El Pomar -2024
- Community Investment Trust - grant award to Solid Rock CDC - 2022
- Circle Bridge replacement - 2024
- USFS grant for SE and other - \$9 million 2022
- Panoram Park redevelopment - 2022
- S Academy Blvd Improvements - ongoing

ADDITIONAL PARTNER

RESEARCH

- Air Pollution in Southeast Colorado Springs
- Southeast Colorado Springs Food Security Research
- Policy Recommendations to Alleviate the Urban Heat Island
- Southeast Colorado Springs: Mitigating the Urban Heat Island

*Documents can be found on the Southeast Strong website.

DEMOGRAPHICS - 2020 CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS

Population 36,098 people

Hispanic - 13,231

White non-Hispanic - 14,597

Black non-Hispanic - 5,052

Housing units - 13,123

Owned (housing) - 6,382

Rented (housing) - 5,840

ANALYSIS

THE SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT 2021-2023

The Southeast Community Plan: Healthy People and Places Assessment, originally created in 2021 and updated in 2023, analyzed the Southeast Strong planning area and associated health inequities within Colorado Springs to demonstrate if it surpassed or fell behind other areas of the City. As stated in the Assessment, “the well-being and socioeconomic health of the study area lag behind those of the city as a whole; however, the distribution of health impacts related to the built environment is generally even between the community and the City, apart from a few areas that have either much higher or much lower equity. The Assessment focuses on “Healthy People” and “Healthy Access”, including analysis of the socioeconomic breakdown of the Plan area, access to and quality of food, availability and access to parks, condition of infrastructure, and life expectancy. More specifically, the primary findings of the report, largely related to the built environment, included the following –

- Bicycle and pedestrian networks are fairly well-connected, but do not feel safe.
- Grocery store access is not evenly distributed throughout the Plan area.
- South Academy has a high concentration of fast food.
- Users find trail connections to be difficult to access to the Area’s parks.
- The urban heat island effect is higher in the Plan area when compared to the rest of Colorado Springs due to the lack of vegetation.

A primary goal of this plan is to offer tools to those within the Southeast Strong Plan area to collaborate with City Departments and associated community agencies to provide potential solutions for what was identified in the assessment. The assessment is referenced throughout this Plan.

EL PASO COUNTY COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023

Southeast Colorado Springs faces significant challenges related to poverty and health inequities. This region has a history of disinvestment, limited civic representation, and poor transportation nodes and links all have some contribution to higher poverty rates and lower life expectancy compared to other parts of the city. Residents also struggle with access to healthy food options, as highlighted in the 2018 Urban Land Institute report, which noted a higher percentage of minority households, lower median incomes, and elevated vacancy rates in businesses and residences. Additionally, the assessment revealed further disparities, including uneven grocery store access, a prevalence of fast-food outlets, and limited safe access to parks, exacerbating the region’s socioeconomic struggles.

The **RISE Coalition** aims to foster resident-led change in southeast Colorado Springs, envisioning a vibrant community where everyone can thrive. By engaging local leaders, RISE enhances five key areas: cultural, social, built, human, and financial capital. Their initiatives have secured millions in funding for local projects, including the Southeast Women, Infants and Children Clinic, which improves access to services for residents lacking transportation. Notably, RISE collaborated with the City of Colorado Spring and several organizations to renovate Panorama Park, marking the largest park renovation in the city’s history. Officially opened in August 2022, the park features playgrounds, an event lawn, a bike park, climbing boulders, fitness stations, a splash pad, and community art.

Solid Rock remains committed to serving the most under-served communities in southeast Colorado Springs, particularly those experiencing poverty. Their approach emphasizes strategic and collaborative investments in community transformation, aiming to support and empower local residents.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Southeast Community Plan: Healthy People and Places Assessment _____
Appendix B – Southeast Strong Plan Implementation Table _____
Appendix C – Public Engagement _____

