



Comprehensive Plan **Annual Report 2004-2005**

for the City of Colorado Springs

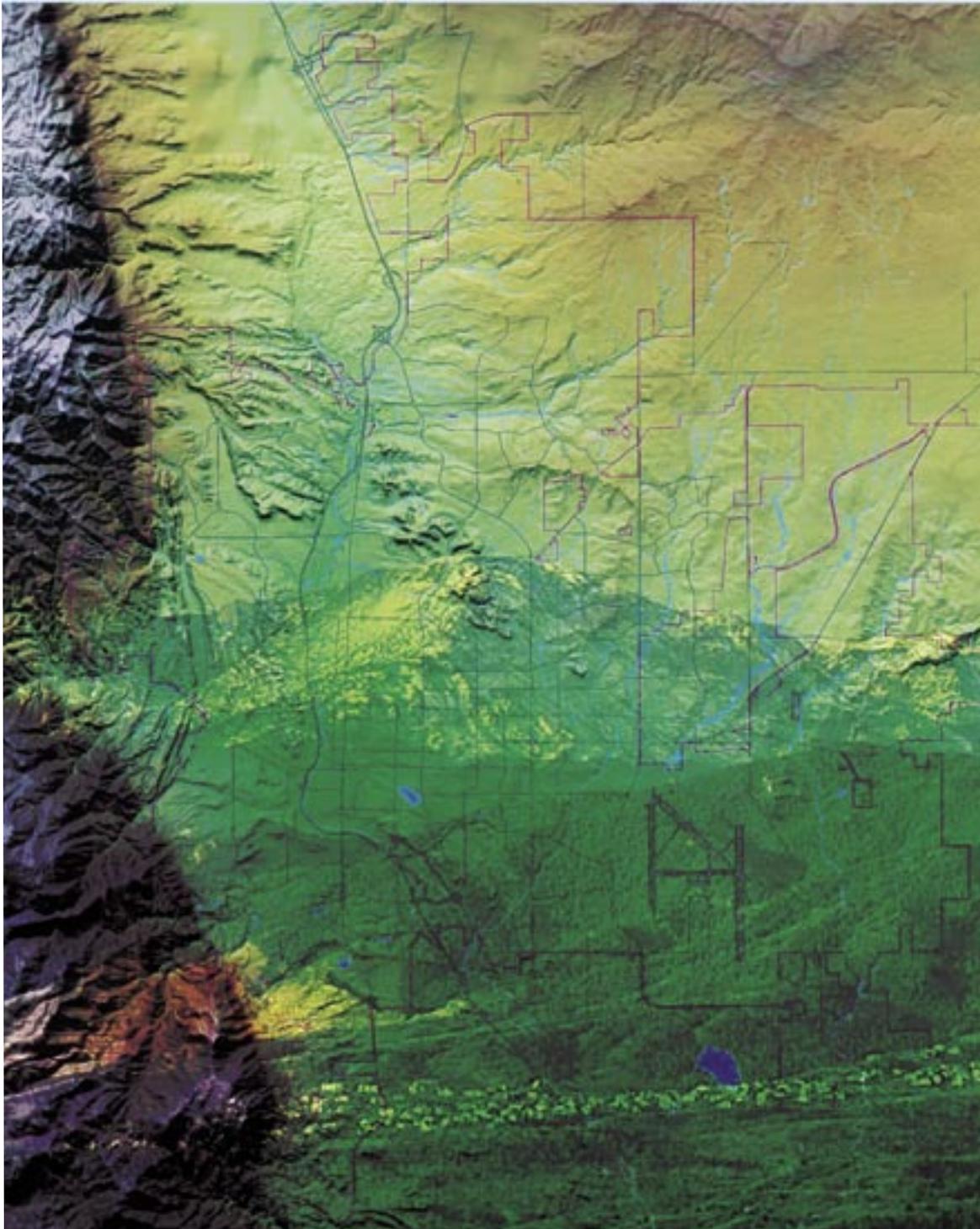




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Introduction



■ Purpose

This is the fourth in a series of annual reports designed to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Like previous reports, it includes sets of quantitative data to indicate the general direction in which the community has been heading, as well as a summary of City projects and programs that are implementing the Plan's objectives.

An important feature of last year's report was the specific linkages and references to the *City's Strategic Action Plan 2005-2010*. The *Strategic Action Plan* is a five-year rolling plan designed to steer City Council policy and decision-making through fiscal year 2010. It focuses on short-term, year-to-year actions across the full spectrum of City operations. The Comprehensive Plan, on the other hand, is a long-term policy document with

a twenty-year horizon that guides City decision-making regarding land use and development. The two plans overlap in several areas, particularly with respect to the Strategic Plan's implementation of the Comprehensive Plan's objectives for transportation, infrastructure, and community growth and development. This overlap took on a new dimension with the approval by voters on April 5, 2005, of ballot initiative 2B, which requires the City Council to maintain a Strategic Plan that includes the Comprehensive Plan. This mandate will be accomplished through annual reports on the Comprehensive Plan and the semi-annual updates and annual review of the Strategic Plan.

This year's report has a wider scope than its predecessors. It goes beyond the general purpose of tracking the year-to-year progress made in meeting the Comprehensive Plan's objectives to include a full five-year assessment of the Plan's implementation. The current Comprehensive Plan was formally adopted by City Council on March 27, 2001. Typically the City has undertaken a complete revision and update of its Comprehensive Plan about once every ten years, which means that the current Plan is approaching the half-way point in its useful life. Although major portions of the Plan have been implemented during the past four-plus years, there are a number of provisions that have not been addressed or that have simply become obsolete. This report will step back and evaluate the Plan's implementation over the five years since its adoption. Based on that assessment, recommendations for revising and updating the Plan will be presented, and a new set of priority implementation tasks will be identified. The intent of this five-year assessment is to set the stage for a thorough revision of the Comprehensive Plan and to identify new implementation tasks that may be incorporated into future updates of the Strategic Plan.

■ **The Status and Use of the Comprehensive Plan**

Planning is a necessary part of any organization's efforts to formulate and accomplish its objectives. For the City of Colorado Springs, planning is directed not only toward providing a broad range of public services to its citizens, but also toward shaping the overall physical development of the city. This dual aspect of municipal planning is reflected in the two ways the word "city" is used. With a capital "C" it refers to the organization of the municipal local government. With a small "c" it refers to the area over which the municipal government has jurisdiction.

In the first sense of the word, the "City" engages primarily in organizational planning. In order to deliver public services as cost effectively and efficiently as possible, City departments prepare plans for carrying out their various operations. These plans cover operational considerations of staffing, and equipment, as well as the construction and maintenance of needed capital facilities such as drainage ways, fire and police stations, maintenance garages, streets, multi-use trails, and parks and recreation centers. To set the annual priorities and objectives to be accomplished by individual City departments, Council has formulated its Strategic Action



Plan, which it reviews and updates in conjunction with each year's budget cycle. Furthermore, to prioritize capital facilities needs, Council will be adopting a new Five-year Capital Improvements Plan this year.

In the second sense of the word, the City addresses how land should be developed within its jurisdiction. In order to guide the overall physical growth of the "city" over a twenty-year period, Council has adopted the Comprehensive Plan by ordinance and devoted an entire Article in the City Code to it. (See Chapter 7, Article 1 Comprehensive Plan Procedures in the City Code).

The status of the Comprehensive Plan is spelled out in the adopting ordinance and in Council's legislative declaration contained in the City Code. In essence, they designate the Comprehensive Plan as the official planning document of the City for all land development decisions. The Plan, however, remains advisory. Section 7.1.109 of the City Code addresses its legal status:

■ *The contents of the Comprehensive Plan are designed to serve as a guide in the public and private development of land and as such are not binding upon the City when making specific land use decisions.*

What is binding upon the City when making specific land use decisions are the requirements of the Zoning Code and the Subdivision Code, both of which are required to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies and to implement them. (See sections 7.2.104 and 7.7.102 B.1. and F of the City Code.)

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is primarily "to set forth the desired sequence, patterns, and characteristics of future land development and its probable environmental, economic, and social consequences". It is also intended to provide a statement of the programs necessary to achieve that future land development pattern.

Although the Comprehensive Plan is advisory for specific land use decisions, its areas of consideration are quite broad. In addition to the public and private development of land, they include the correlation, integration, and coordination of natural conditions, public improvements, public utilities, public investments, community character, and quality of life. The Comprehensive Plan is, in fact, the only officially adopted planning document that strives to coordinate the characteristics and consequences of land development within the city. Its use is mandated by the City Code as follows:

■ **7.1.111: USE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:**
The City Council, all City boards and commissions, the various City groups, departments, divisions, enterprises and officials shall be

responsible for knowing the contents of the Comprehensive Plan and shall consider the relevant policies set forth in the Comprehensive Plan prior to making decisions.

■ Organization of the Report

An Executive Summary immediately follows this introduction. The report is then organized into two main sections. The first section presents quantitative data and an evaluation of trends in the city over the past five years. It covers population and employment, land use and development, transportation, infrastructure, and services. The next section discusses the implementation of the Plan and presents recommendations for revising the Plan and updating its implementation tasks.

For More Information

The 2001 Comprehensive Plan and Annual Reports are available online by going to www.springsgov.com and clicking on City Planning and City Comprehensive Plan. Printed copies of the Comprehensive Plan may be obtained from Office Services in the City Administration Building, 30 S. Nevada Avenue, Suite L01, Colorado Springs, CO, 80903.



CITY ATTY'S OFFICE
CODE CHANGE REVIEW
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ORDINANCE NO. 01-43

AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE 2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

WHEREAS, the City Council, Planning staff, Comprehensive Plan Citizens Steering Committee and interested citizens have engaged in an extensive public process to review the existing Comprehensive Plan, evaluate current planning practices and consider future development trends; and

WHEREAS, development of the Comprehensive Plan considers accepted projections for population and employment, the need for a variety of land uses and the demand for public facilities and services over a 20-year time period to accommodate expected growth; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Steering Committee has reviewed this information and recommended revisions to the existing Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, City Planning Commission has reviewed the revised Comprehensive Plan and recommended approval; and

WHEREAS, the proposed revisions to the Comprehensive Plan will enhance efforts to plan for growth and development in a manner which preserves the City's natural features and resources, improves the City's physical appearance, continues the practice of providing City infrastructure, utilities and services in a cost-effective and orderly manner and enhances community character and improves the quality of life for its citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:

Section 1. That the 2001 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Colorado Springs is hereby adopted and shall be considered an official planning document for the City. All land use applications filed with the City after the adoption of this ordinance and which require compliance with the City's Comprehensive Plan shall be subject to the provisions of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan.



Executive **Summary**



GROWTH, CHANGE, AND TRENDS

■ Population and Employment

Population growth in the city and county spiked in 2001 and then leveled off as the region entered an economic downturn. It is once again on the upswing. Since 2000, the city has added an estimated 25,848 residents. This amounts to an average increase of 5,170 persons per year and an average annual growth rate of 1.4%. Over the past five years, population growth in the city has accounted for 58% of the total population growth in El Paso County.

The changes in population growth have mirrored the trend in total wage and salary employment in El Paso County with a spike in 2001. After two successive years of net job losses, by the end of 2004 wage and salary employment had surged back to a level not seen since 2002.

■ Land Use Patterns

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in March of 2001, the overall pattern of land uses in the city has changed little. Notable exceptions have included isolated traditional neighborhood developments (TND's) in residential subdivisions, where different types of residential units are mixed, and one major planned mixed use center that has yet to be built. For the most part, the prevailing pattern of land uses in the city, characterized by single-use, auto-oriented development, has been replicated.

■ Land Use Changes

Vacant land, the largest single land use category in the city, has actually shown a net gain over the past two years due to a series of annexations. Residential land use dominates changes in developed uses, with the medium density category (3.5 to 7.99 dwelling units per acre) accounting for most of the growth. The increase in residential acreage slowed in 2005, due perhaps in part to an increase in the building of attached units. Parks and open space were big gainers in 2005 with the acquisition and annexation of Red Rock Canyon. Conserved open space is considered a developed land use, since it puts land into a permanent committed use. Most of the changes in commercial, office, and industrial (CO&I) uses are attributable to commercial development, with office and industrial lagging.

■ Vacant Land, Infill, and Edge Development

Banning Lewis Ranch, at over 22,000 acres, still accounts for 49% of all the vacant land in the city. Annexations continue to add vacant land at the edge faster than it is being developed. Infill development has been steadily declining since its peak in 2001, although the supply of vacant infill land is still over 10,000 acres.

■ Redevelopment

Ivywild Neighborhood Community Park. As of August 2005, a 1.5 acre park is under construction in the Ivywild Neighborhood. This particular tract of land was designated for park use in the area master plan and purchased by the city in 2002 with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Since that time, CDBG funds have been allocated towards development of the park.

Mill Street Neighborhood Strategy Area. The Mill Street Neighborhood was designated as a Neighborhood Strategy Area (NSA) by the Colorado Springs City Council in February 2001. Since that time, Conejos St. has been improved with curb, gutter, and sidewalk. Utility improvements were done in conjunction with this project by CSU. A similar project is currently in the final design stage for Baltic St. and Fountain Blvd. In 2004, pedestrian ramps were installed on Mill St.



America the Beautiful Park/Southwest Downtown Urban Renewal Area. Phase I & II are now complete and the Park was opened to the public in October of 2004. The Arts District and affordable housing development is proceeding through the financing stage. In addition to purchasing the Gas Operations Building from the City, DADA LLC is pursuing redevelopment funding from a variety of public and private sources. Planning is continuing on phase 1 of the Palmer Village section of the area.

Redevelopment Corridors. Portions of the North Nevada and the Highway 24 corridors have been designated as Urban Renewal Areas, with plans for significant infill and redevelopment activity. Building permit activity has increased since 2001 in Designated Corridor Redevelopment Areas (DCRA's).

Employment and Regional Centers

Employment and Regional Centers are designated on the 2020 Land Use Map in accord with approved master plans and/or zoning. These centers represent the likely location for future office and industrial development. Employment and Regional Centers in the Banning Lewis master plan area are excluded because the large vacant areas that have been zoned and master planned for employment uses there cannot be developed until the necessary utilities and infrastructure become available. Office and industrial development of vacant land within Employment and Regional Centers has slowed significantly since 2001 in line with decreases in wage and salary employment. Outside Banning Lewis, the supply of vacant office and industrial land in the city remains high at over 4,000 acres.

Housing Development and Affordability

The Housing and Community Development Division (HCD) continues to place an emphasis on the development of housing for families at or below 50% of area median income for Program Year 2004. In order to regularly track the activities of the local housing market, HCD monitors the percentage of homes sold that meet affordability standards and the vacancy rate and Fair Market Rent levels for rental housing. HCD calculates a price point for single family home sales that is considered affordable for low-moderate income families. The price point for the initial six months of 2005 is \$145,000. During the initial six months of 2005, approximately 19% of all single-family homes sold in the Colorado Springs market were at or below the price point.

Transportation

Since 2000, significant progress has been made in transportation planning, transportation funding, and improvements to the city's transportation infrastructure. They include the adoption of the Intermodal Transportation Plan, voter approval of a 1% sales tax to fund the Pikes Peak Regional Transportation Authority (PPRTA), a new Transit Services Infrastructure

Plan, numerous studies and assessments to support and target future improvements, and the COSMIX project to widen Interstate 25. One area that is still lagging is planning for pedestrian improvements and facilities.

■ Transit

As of the date of this report, Springs Transit has been renamed Metro and has embarked on a major upgrade of the transit system, including new buses and a new route structure. Trends since 2002 show a decline in the total one-way trips per year. The current improvements being made to the system are designed to reverse that decline by providing better service.

■ Capital Improvements

Capital improvement program expenditures per capita have remained relatively flat since 2002, while the list of unfunded needs, particularly for stormwater improvements, has continued to grow. This year City Council will adopt a new Five-year Capital Improvements Plan, which will update the city's needs for infrastructure and present options for funding them.

■ Parks, Trails, and Open Space

The acres of parks provided since 2000 has kept pace with population growth, the trail system has been extended, and the open space system continues to expand, thanks in large measure to the Trails, Parks and Open Space (TOPS) program.

■ Stormwater Management

At the request of City Council, staff is currently leading a collaborative effort to address stormwater issues through the implementation of a stormwater enterprise. A stormwater enterprise is a City-owned business that can be established to fund operations and maintenance functions on existing stormwater infrastructure, administration of the City's Federally-Mandated Municipal Permit, engineering and technical review staff, and the design and construction of capital improvements. An enterprise would provide a dedicated funding source to address stormwater needs.

FIVE-YEAR ASSESSMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RECOMMENDED FUTURE ACTIONS

■ Land Use

- City Planning, with its GIS capabilities, should assume the coordinative role in the provision of accurate and reliable data used by DOLA for annual population forecasting.



- Continue efforts to improve and simplify the use of TND and mixed-use zoning options, particularly in conjunction with infill and redevelopment projects, downtown development, and promote as a preferred land use and zoning tool for annexations and master plans.

- Pursue development standards and/or guidelines that help adjust big-box retail site design to include more pedestrian-oriented and multi-modal features.

- Continue the use of GIS for zoning and physical development analysis.

- Monitor the condition of existing commercial corridors for signs of deterioration and disinvestment resulting from relocation of businesses to newly developing corridors and activity centers.

■ Neighborhoods

- Use GIS to assess opportunities to adjust zoning standards in established neighborhoods to more accurately reflect physical development characteristics that may have predated zoning.

- Investigate zoning incentives, possibly through TND and mixed-use, that can be tied to affordability initiatives and can expand housing diversity in neighborhoods.

- Monitor the effect of commercial corridor disinvestment on adjacent and nearby neighborhoods.

■ Transportation

- Subdivision code amendments to encourage connectivity in streets system hierarchy to complement zoning tools should be pursued.

■ Community Infrastructure and Services

- Evaluate Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan, "Community Infrastructure and Services," for amendment to be more consistent with the city's current practice of planning and funding the construction, operation and maintenance of public infrastructure and services.

- Colorado Springs Utilities should continue to work with General City to anticipate need for utility system upgrades in order to efficiently maintain and expand service in areas with approved redevelopment plans and in the downtown core.

- The city should also look at alternatives to basin fees on a per acre basis, as there is no incentive to reduce stormwater flows and runoff through impervious surface standards for site development.



■ The city needs to evaluate the interrelation of special district activity with capital improvements planning and programming that is based on public revenues in order to maintain balance in public investment between special district areas and the rest of the city.

■ **Natural Environment**

■ Cluster zoning has not been developed, but has the potential to address sensitive lands issues and help assess features within identified candidate open space areas while maintaining development potential.

■ **Community Character and Appearance**

■ Design elements of development are becoming increasingly important as a means to improve compatibility of uses, improve the appearance of projects, and enhance the image of the city; the use of design standards and guidelines should be selectively expanded for infill and redevelopment projects, and in the downtown core.



Growth, Change, and Trends



The data presented here are collected for the most part on a mid-year basis from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005. This is the case for all the land use data, which is derived from the El Paso County Assessor's data base. For other information, where mid-year data is unavailable, the effective date of the data is either noted or is as of the end of 2004.

POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Changes in population and employment for the city and county are the two most general indicators of growth. They also provide a context for evaluating other quantitative indicators presented in this report. Population change is made up of two components: net migration (the difference between the number of people moving into the city and the number moving out) and natural increase (births minus deaths). Employment is the leading factor in overall city growth. New jobs attract new residents and generate increased demand for goods, services, housing, and infrastructure.

It should be noted that these figures do not take into account the direct effect of the deployment, return, and redeployment of troops between Fort Carson and Iraq. That activity in combination with the projected increase of as many as 12,000 new personnel resulting from the recommendations of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) may have a major impact on population and employment in the region in the future.

■ Population and Employment — Trends

Population growth in the city and county spiked in 2001 and then leveled off as the region entered an economic downturn. It is once again on the upswing. Since 2000, the city has added an estimated 25, 848 residents.

This amounts to an average increase of 5,170 persons per year and an average annual growth rate of 1.4%. Over the past five years, population growth in the city has accounted for 58% of the total population growth in El Paso County.

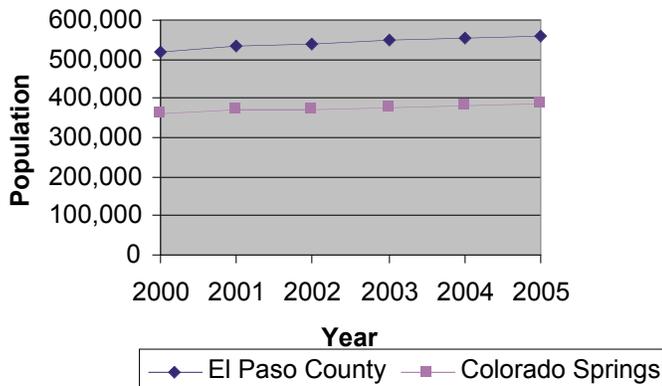
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Population 2000-2005 El Paso County and City of Colorado Springs

	2000 (1)	2001 (2)	2002	2003	2004 (3)	2005 (3)	Change 2004- 2005	%Change 2004- 2005
El Paso County	516,929	533,534	541,069	547,566	554,340	561,701	7,361	1.3%
Colorado Springs	360,890	369,853	373,328	377,006	381,670	386,738	5,068	1.3%

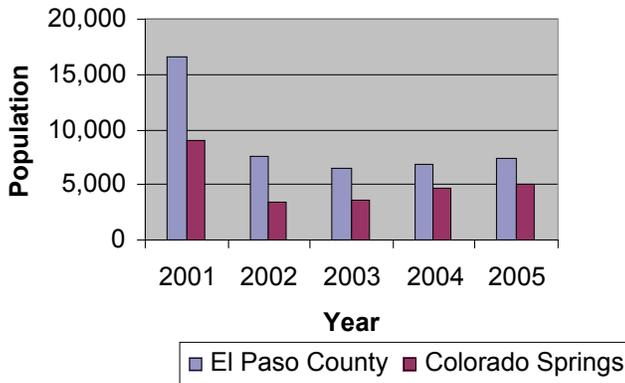
Notes on Data Sources:

- (1) Numbers for 2000 are from the April 2000 Census.
- (2) Numbers for 2001 through 2003 are official estimates by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs in July of each year.
- (3) Numbers for 2004 and 2005 are forecasts by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs





Population Change over Previous Year 2001-2005

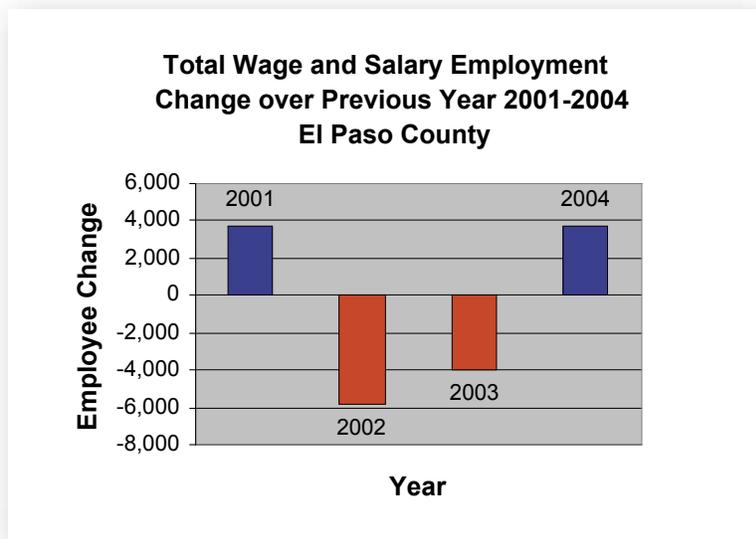
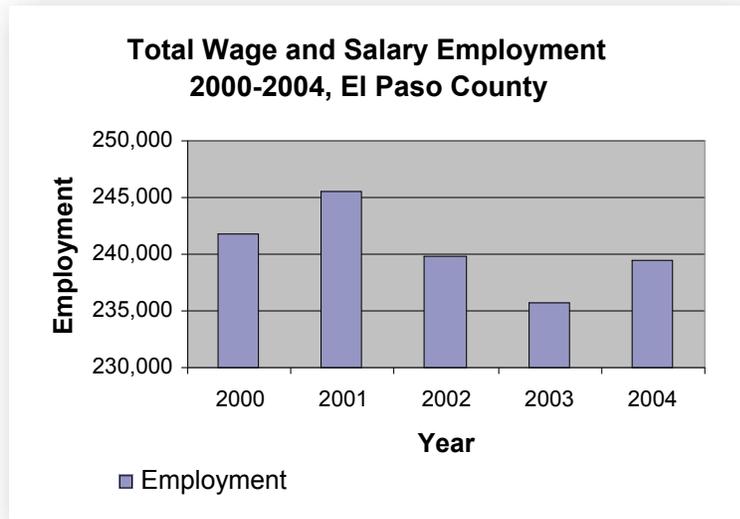


**Total Wage and Salary Employment
El Paso County 2000- 2004**

Year*	Employment	Change
2000	241,794	
2001	245,568	3,774
2002	239,753	-5,815
2003	235,767	-3,986
2004	239,519	3,752

Note: *Data for 2000 through 2003 are as of the month of June of each year. Data for 2004 are for December.

Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Labor Market Information, QCEW (ES202)



For More Information

For Colorado State, counties, and municipal population data, go to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs at www.dola.colorado.gov.

The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment provides employment data for Colorado State and counties at www.coworkforce.com. The best local source for economic information on the Pikes Peak Region is the Southern Colorado Economic Forum (SCEF) at <http://web.uccs.edu/scef/data/scef/>

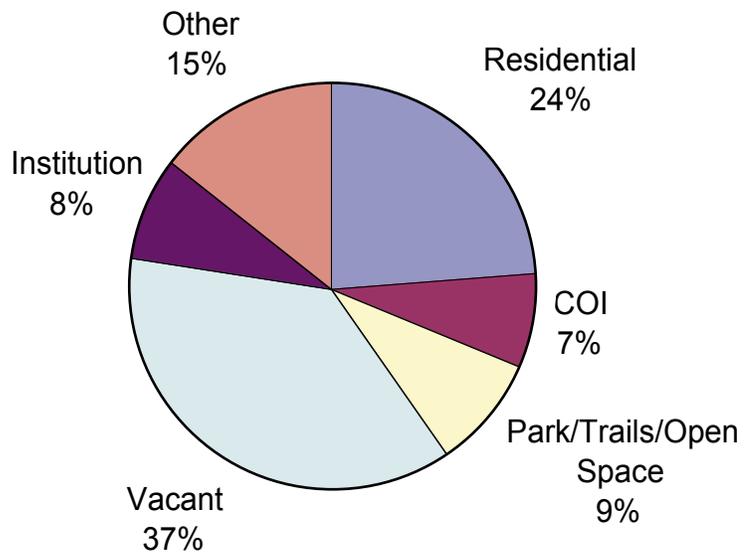


LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT

■ Land Uses: Type, Location, Amount, and Activity

The Comprehensive Plan focuses on the physical development of the city, particularly on how land is used. This section starts off with a look at the amount and location of the general categories of land uses in the city. It then looks at the major components of change and activity in those uses, with an emphasis on new development, vacant land, infill and redevelopment, and housing.

Land Use by Type Colorado Springs 2005



■ Land Use Patterns – Trends

Since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in March of 2001, the overall pattern of land uses in the city has changed little. Notable exceptions have included isolated traditional neighborhood development (TND) in residential subdivisions, where different types of residential units are mixed, and one major planned mixed use center that has yet to be built. For the most part, the prevailing pattern of land uses in the city, characterized by single-use, auto-oriented development, has been replicated.

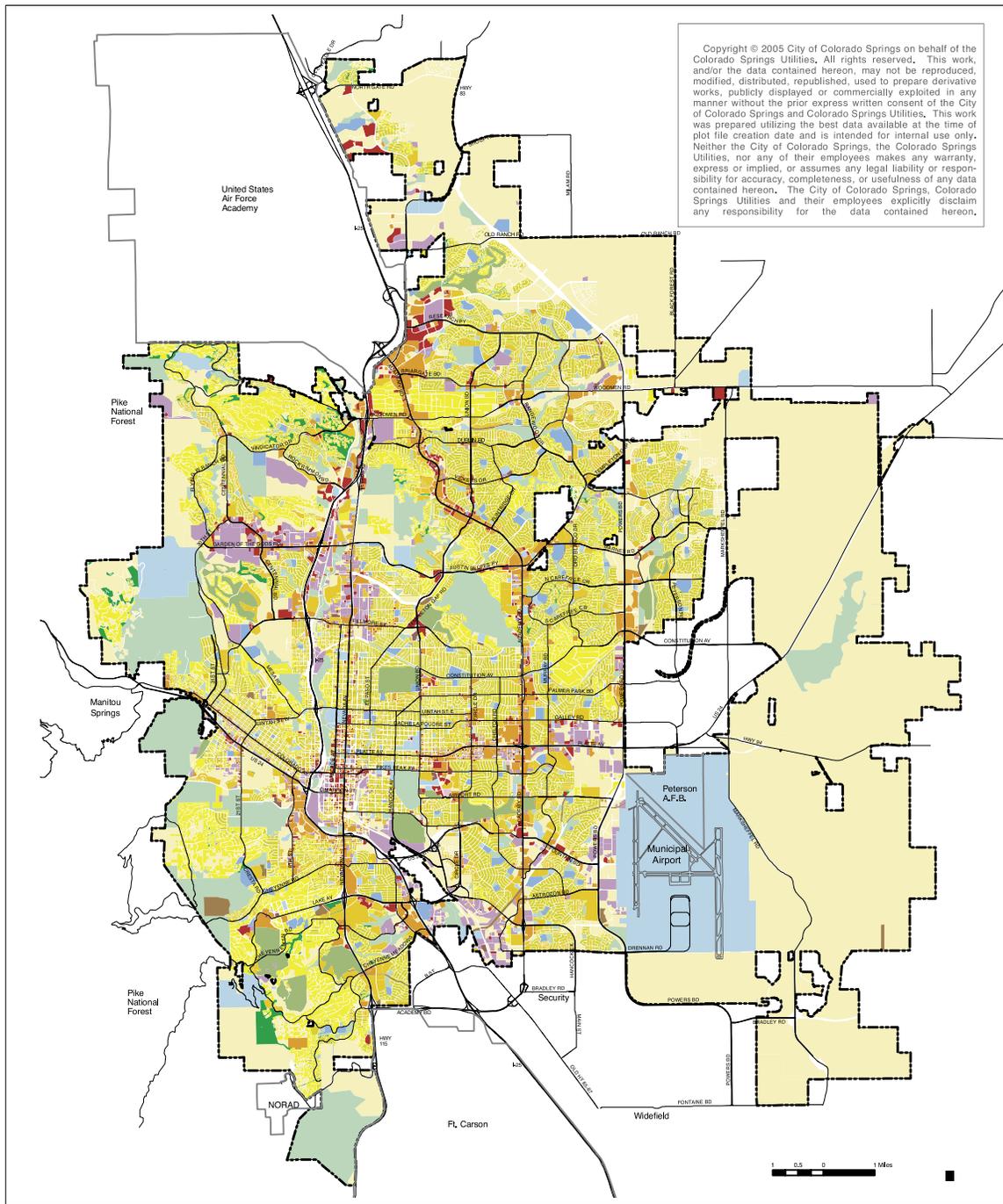
Land Use by Type - Colorado Springs 2000- 2005* In Acres 2004-2005 Change

Land Use Category	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2004-2005 Change
Low Density Residential (0-3.49 du/ac)	8,410	8,561	8,726	8,931	9,140	9,312	172
Medium Density Residential (3.5-7.99 du/ac)	12,265	12,667	12,952	13,283	13,698	14,055	356
High Density Residential (8.0-25+ du/ac)	4,536	4,686	4,851	5,011	5,280	5,336	56
Private Common Residential	526	560	613	774	800	820	20
Residential Sub-Total	25,737	26,474	27,142	28,000	28,919	29,523	604
Commercial	3,072	3,190	3,221	3,364	3,554	3,722	168
Office	1,318	1,474	1,534	1,563	1,590	1,627	37
Industrial	3,438	3,521	3,580	3,611	3,616	3,628	12
COI Sub-Total	7,828	8,186	8,336	8,538	8,761	8,977	217
Parks / Open Space	8,985	9,163	9,164	9,199	9,355	10,292	937
Trails	453	440	443	484	498	512	14
Park/Trails/Open Space Sub-Total	9,438	9,603	9,607	9,684	9,852	10,804	951
Institution Total	9,457	9,549	9,698	9,594	9,699	9,791	92
ROW / Undetermined	14,357	14,510	14,945	15,375	15,752	16,135	383
Cemetery/Golf Course	2,183	2,176	2,150	2,152	2,146	2,147	1
Other Sub-Total	16,541	16,686	17,095	17,527	17,898	18,282	383
Vacant	50,043	48,548	47,347	45,884	46,029	46,083	54
Total City Acres	119,043	119,045	119,225	119,226	121,157	123,459	2,302

Note – Data sources and land use categories:

Land use data are derived from the El Paso County Assessor's records

Data for parks and open space are supplemented by geographic information system data from the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department.



City of Colorado Springs
Existing Land Use
(2005)



- | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Low Density Residential | Commercial | Golf Course/Cemetery | School |
| Medium Density Residential | Office | Vacant | Parking |
| High Density Residential | Industrial | Drainage Easement | Police/Fire |
| Private Common Residential | Parks, Trails, Open Space | Institution | Exempt/Undetermined |

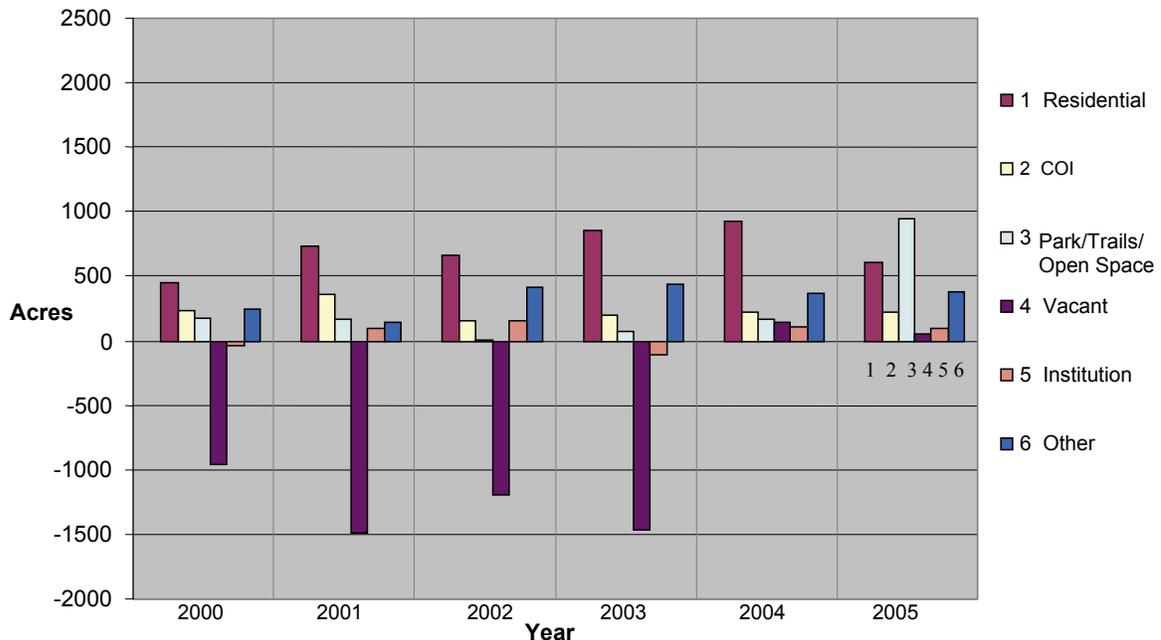


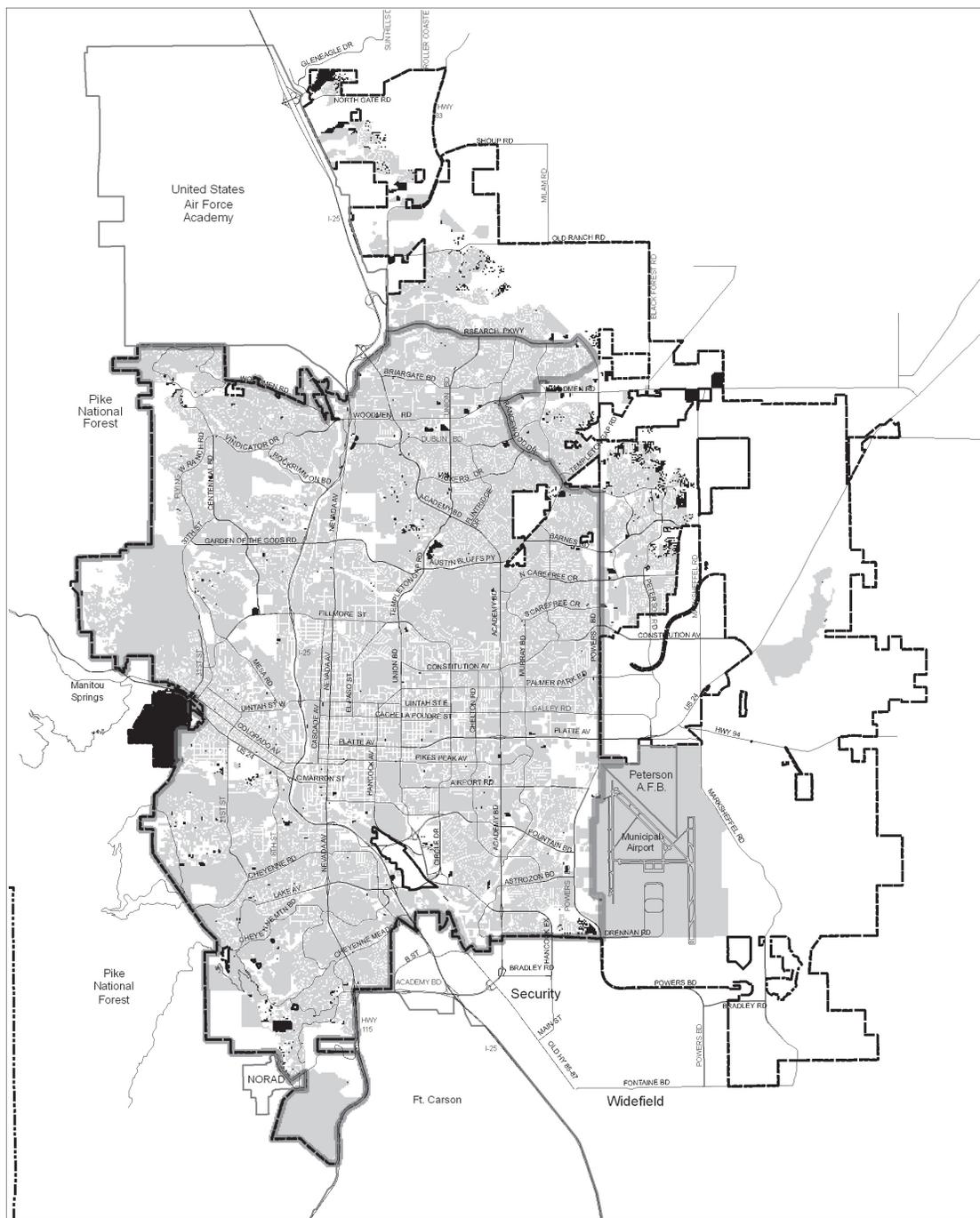
■ Land Use Changes - Trends

Vacant land, the largest single land use category in the city, has actually shown a net gain over the past two years due to a series of annexations. Residential land use dominates changes in developed uses, with the medium density category (3.5 to 7.99 dwelling units per acre) accounting for most of the growth. The increase in residential acreage slowed in 2005, due perhaps in part to an increase in the building of attached units. Parks and open space were big gainers in 2005 with the acquisition and annexation of Red Rock Canyon. Conserved open space is considered a developed land use, since it puts land into a permanent, committed use. Most of the changes in commercial, office, and industrial (CO&I) uses are attributable to commercial development, with office and industrial lagging.

Land Use Change over Previous Year - Colorado Springs 2000-2005 Acres

Land Use Category	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Residential	454	737	667	858	919	604
COI	236	358	150	203	222	217
Park/Trails/Open Space	171	165	4	77	169	951
Vacant	-958	-1495	-1201	-1463	145	54
Institution	-44	92	149	-104	105	92
Other	249	145	410	431	372	383





City of Colorado Springs
Development 2004-2005

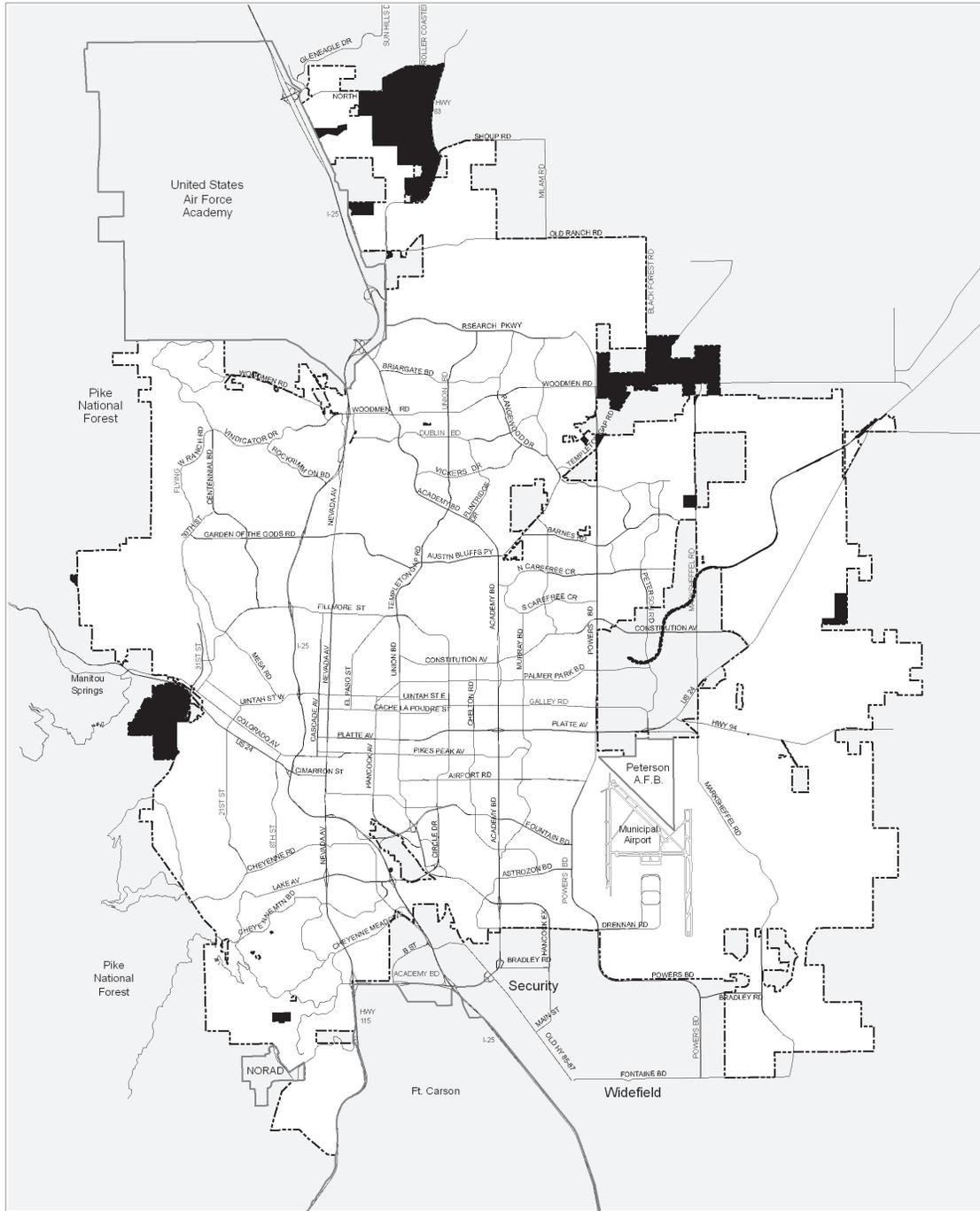


Legend

- Development 2005
- Development thru 2004
- Infill Boundary
- City Limits



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City of Colorado Springs
Annexations
(July 1, 2000 - June 30, 2005)



- Legend**
- Annexations
 - City Limits



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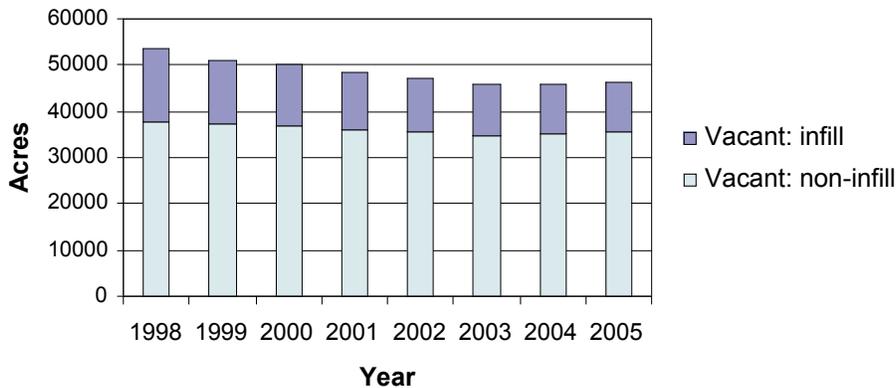
Vacant Land, Infill, and Edge Development — Trends

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Vacant Land Colorado Springs 1997-2005

Year	Vacant (Citywide)	Vacant (Citywide) excluding Banning Lewis	Net Change (Citywide)	Vacant (Infill)	Net Change (Infill)
1997	55,511	32,556	na	16,927	na
1998	53,647	30,770	-1,864	15,872	-1,055
1999	51,001	28,152	-2,646	13,775	-2,097
2000	50,043	27,187	-958	13,210	-565
2001	48,548	25,707	-1,495	12,475	-735
2002	47,347	24,517	-1,201	11,833	-642
2003	45,822	23,114	-1,525	11,309	-524
2004	46,029	23,362	207	10,781	-528
2005	46,083	23,414	54	10,389	-392
Total		-9,428		-6,538	

Vacant Land





■ **Redevelopment Trends**

Ivywild Neighborhood Community Park

As of August 2005, a 1.5 acre park is under construction in the Ivywild Neighborhood. This particular tract of land was designated for park use in the area master plan and purchased by the city in 2002 with Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG) funds. Since that time, CDBG funds have been allocated towards development of the park. Curb & gutter has been installed around the park and several on-site buildings demolished. Park construction commenced in Spring 2005. The park includes a large playground, picnic shelter, sidewalks, and multi-use field. The park will be naturally landscaped and requires no irrigation. Plans also include restoration of an existing neighborhood wishing well.



Mill Street Neighborhood Strategy Area

The Mill Street Neighborhood was designated as a Neighborhood Strategy Area (NSA) by the Colorado Springs City Council in February 2001. Since that time, Conejos St. has been improved with curb, gutter, and sidewalk. Utility improvements were done in conjunction with this project by CSU. A similar project is currently in the final design stage for Baltic St. and Fountain Blvd. In 2004, pedestrian ramps were installed on Mill St. Sidewalk completion on Sierra Madre and drainage improvements on Sawatch and Cascade are planned for the future. The Mill St. Neighborhood Association remains active and provides consistent input for projects.

America the Beautiful Park/Southwest Downtown Urban Renewal Area

Phase I & II are now complete and the Park was opened to the public in October of 2004. America the Beautiful Park is a 21-acre parcel and is the outcome of a decade of planning which culminated in an exciting, citizen approved opportunity to redevelop the neglected front door to downtown as a riverfront park. The park is identified as a part of the green "Park Ring" surrounding Downtown, a premier amenity unique to Colorado Springs.

Several benefits of the Park are:

- The Park creates a catalyst that will prompt the redevelopment of the surrounding area.



- The Park provides a trail access to Downtown.
- The Park improves the unsightly image of the primary entries into Downtown.
- The Park creates a gathering place for the community.

Phase III, which includes a spectacular water feature “Sculptural Fountain”, is being designed with construction scheduled for 2006.

The Arts District and affordable housing development is proceeding through the financing stage. In addition to purchasing the Gas Operations Building from the City, DADA LLC is pursuing redevelopment funding from a variety of public and private sources. If successful, redevelopment of the site will commence in 2006.

Planning is continuing on phase 1 of the Palmer Village section of the area.

Redevelopment Corridors

The Comprehensive Plan designates eight corridors (and associated areas) in the city for potential infill development and/or redevelopment. (See the accompanying map.) Most of these corridors are characterized by obsolete, highway-strip type of development and old lotting patterns. The number of building permits issued within each Designated Redevelopment Corridor and Area (DRCA) is one measure of infill and redevelopment activity. Portions of the North Nevada (#1) and the Highway 24 (#7) corridors have been designated as Urban Renewal Areas, with plans for significant infill and redevelopment activity. Building permit activity has increased since 2001 in DCRA's.

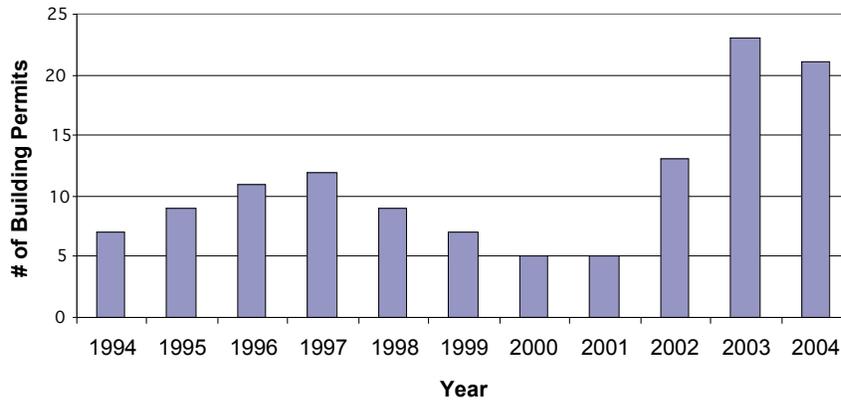


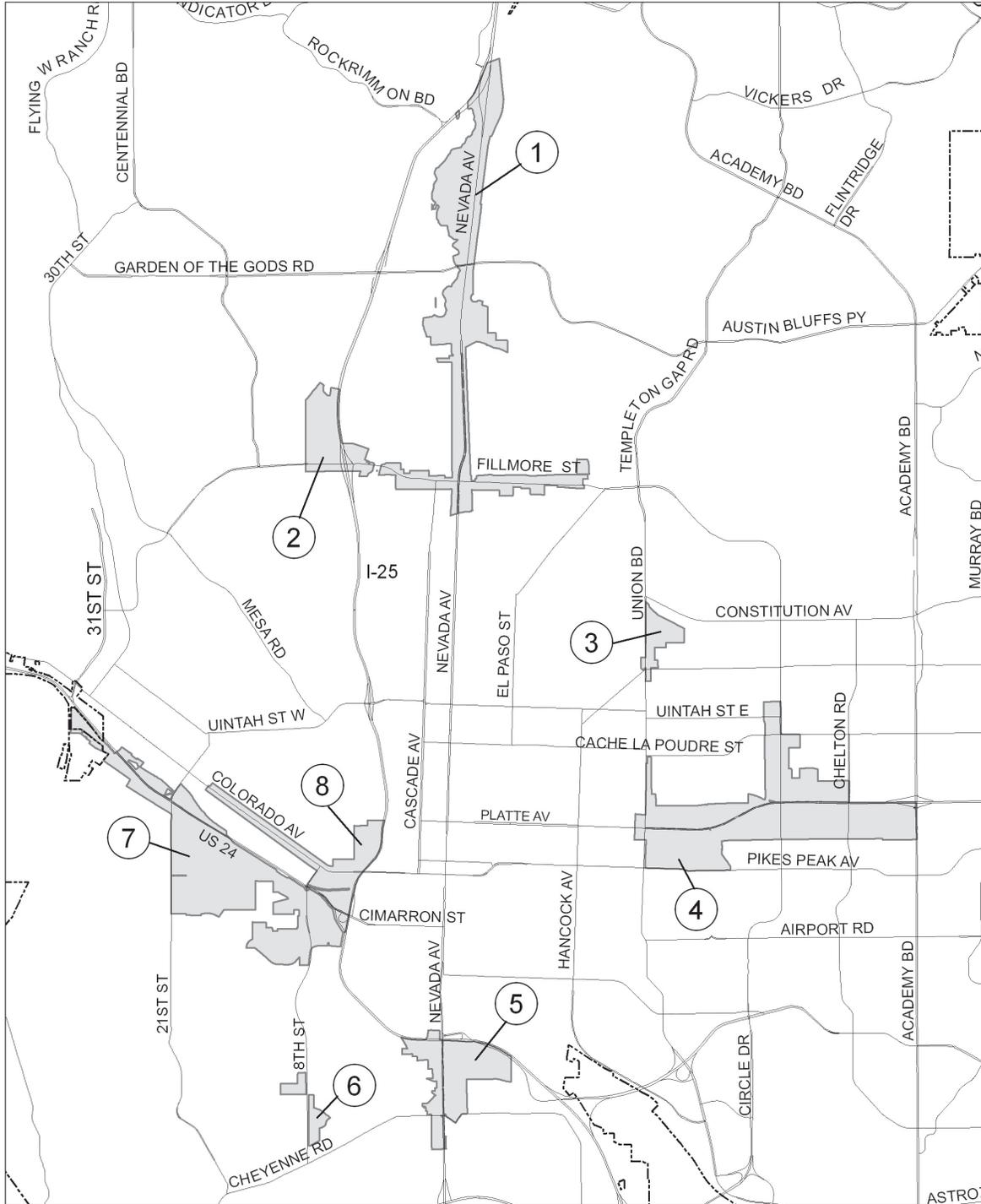
Building Permits Issued for Designated Redevelopment Corridors and Areas

Year	Building Permits
1994	7
1995	9
1996	11
1997	12
1998	9
1999	7
2000	5
2001	5
2002	13
2003	23
2004	21

Building Permits Issued in DRCA's 2004

DRCA	Building Permits
1	2
2	1
3	0
4	2
5	0
6	0
7	14
8	2
Total	21





City of
Colorado Springs
**Designated Redevelopment
Corridors and Areas (DRCA)**



Legend
 DRCA



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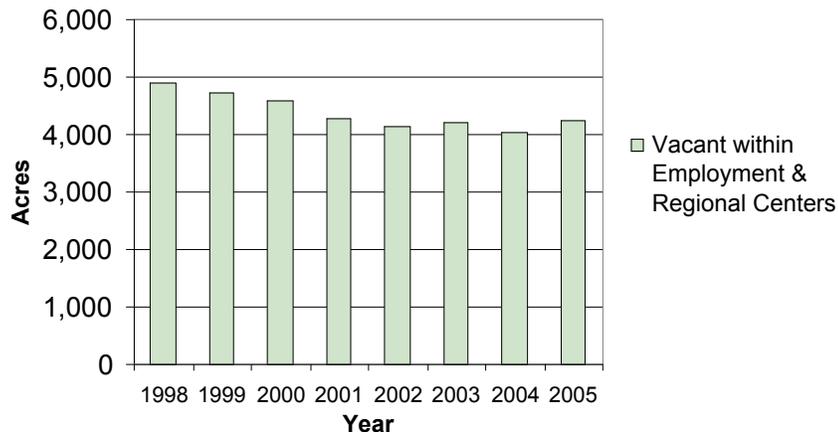
■ Employment and Regional Centers — Trends

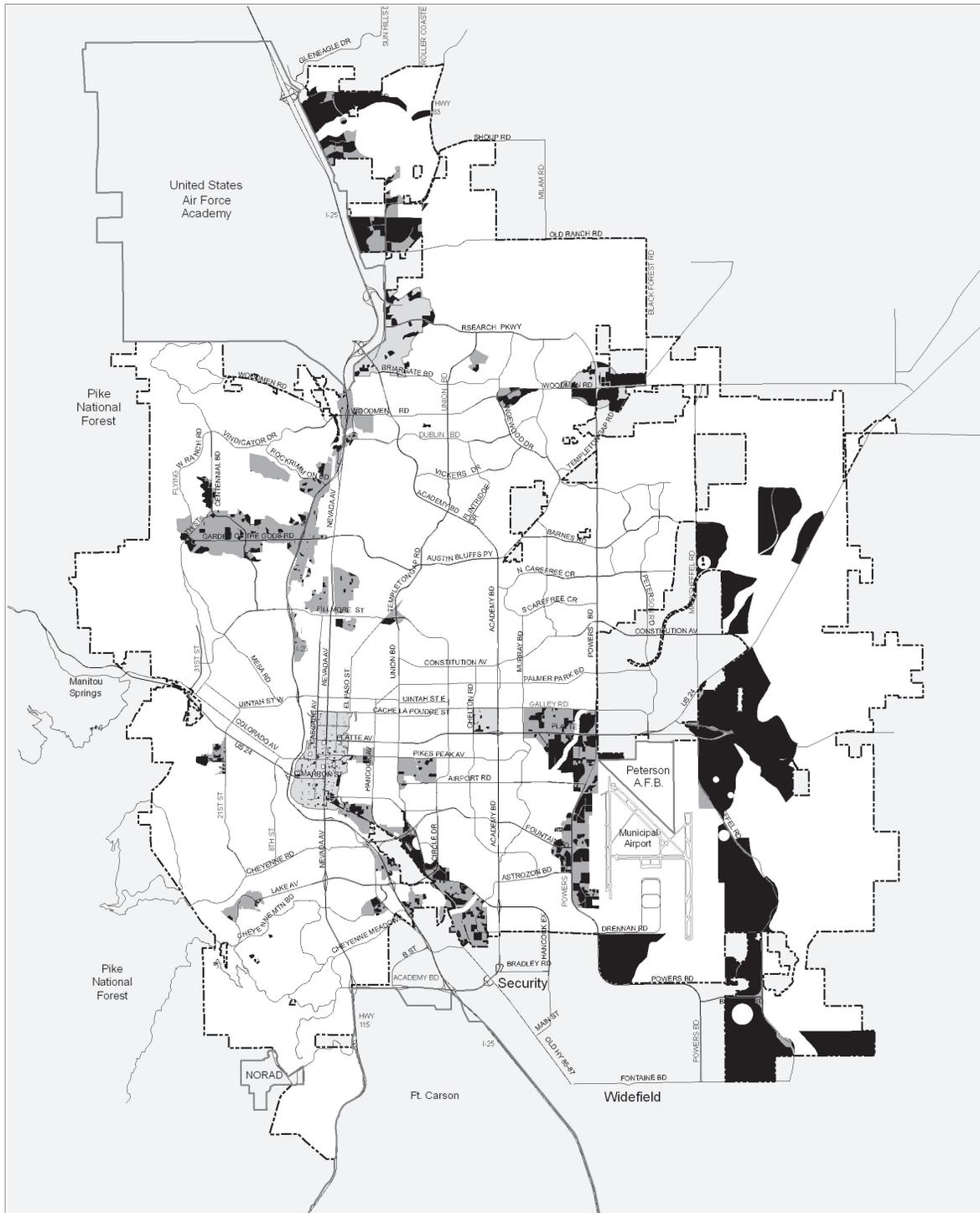
Employment and Regional Centers are designated on the 2020 Land Use Map in accord with approved master plans and/or zoning. (See accompanying map.) These centers represent the likely location for future office and industrial development. Employment and Regional Centers in the Banning Lewis master plan area are excluded because the large vacant areas that have been zoned and master planned for employment uses there cannot be developed until the necessary utilities and infrastructure become available. Office and industrial development of vacant land within Employment and Regional Centers has slowed significantly since 2001 in line with decreases in wage and salary employment. Outside Banning Lewis, the supply of vacant office and industrial land in the city remains high at over 4,000 acres.

Year	Vacant Land within Employment & Regional Centers in Acres**	Employment & Regional Centers Land Developed as Office or Industrial in Acres**
1997	5,155	No Data
1998	4,889	148
1999	4,737	175
2000	4,570	103
2001	4,283	207
2002	4,125	59
2003	4,218	60
2004	4,050	54
2005	4,230	37
Total		843

**Note: Excludes Banning Lewis Ranch master plan area.
 Vacant land within Employment and Regional Centers may vary from year to year with amendments to the 2020 Land Use Map.

**Vacant Employment & Regional Centers Land
 (Excludes Banning Lewis Area)**





City of Colorado Springs
Employment and Regional Centers



Legend

- City Limits
- Employment Center
- Regional Center
- Vacant within Employment and Regional Centers



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■ Housing Development and Affordability — Trends

The Housing and Community Development Division (HCD) continues to place an emphasis on the development of housing for families at or below 50% of area median income for Program Year 2004. In order to regularly track the activities of the local housing market, HCD monitors the percentage of homes sold that meet affordability standards and the vacancy rate and Fair Market Rent levels for rental housing.

HCD calculates a price point for single family home sales that is considered affordable for low-moderate income families. This price point may fluctuate depending upon various factors such as mortgage rates, annual median income levels, and the general state of the market. The price point for the initial six months of 2005 is \$145,000. During the initial six months of 2005, approximately 19% of all single-family homes sold in the Colorado Springs market were at or below the price point. This home ownership affordability index provides a general measurement of the capability of low-moderate income households to purchase a single family home in El Paso County.

HCD also monitors vacancy rate reports from various sources in order to ascertain the status of the rental market. The Fair Market Rent levels published by HUD help to clarify the “baseline” rent levels in the City. For the second quarter of 2005, vacancy rates climbed to approximately 13%. This high level indicates a market that is out of balance. The 2005 Fair Market Rent for a two bedroom apartment is \$734.

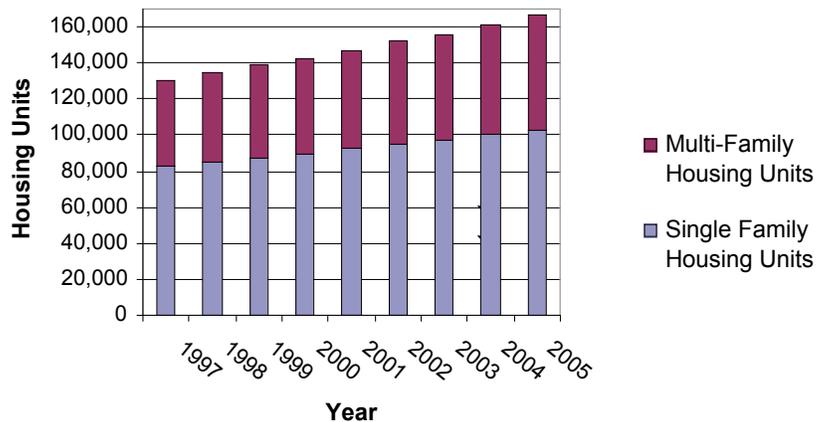


Housing Units - Colorado Springs 1997-2005

Year	Single Family Housing Units	SF % Total Housing Units	Multi-Family Housing Units	MF % Total Housing Units	Total Housing Units
1997	82,688	63	47,713	37	130,401
1998	84,817	63	49,490	37	134,307
1999	87,734	63	51,509	37	139,243
2000	89,324	63	53,112	37	142,436
2001	92,453	63	54,871	37	147,324
2002	94,692	62	57,416	38	152,108
2003	97,341	62	58,712	38	156,053
2004	100,176	62	60,654	38	160,830
2005	102,701	62	63,921	38	166,622

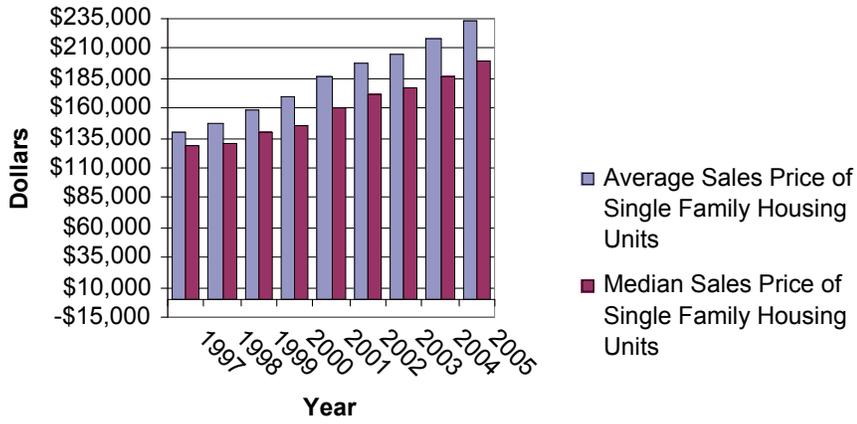
Single Family housing units are detached units only and exclude townhomes.
 Multi-Family units are all attached units including townhomes, duplex, triplex, multi-unit (4-8), multi-unit (9 & up), and condominiums.

Single Family & Multi-Family Housing Units





Average & Median SF Housing Sales Price



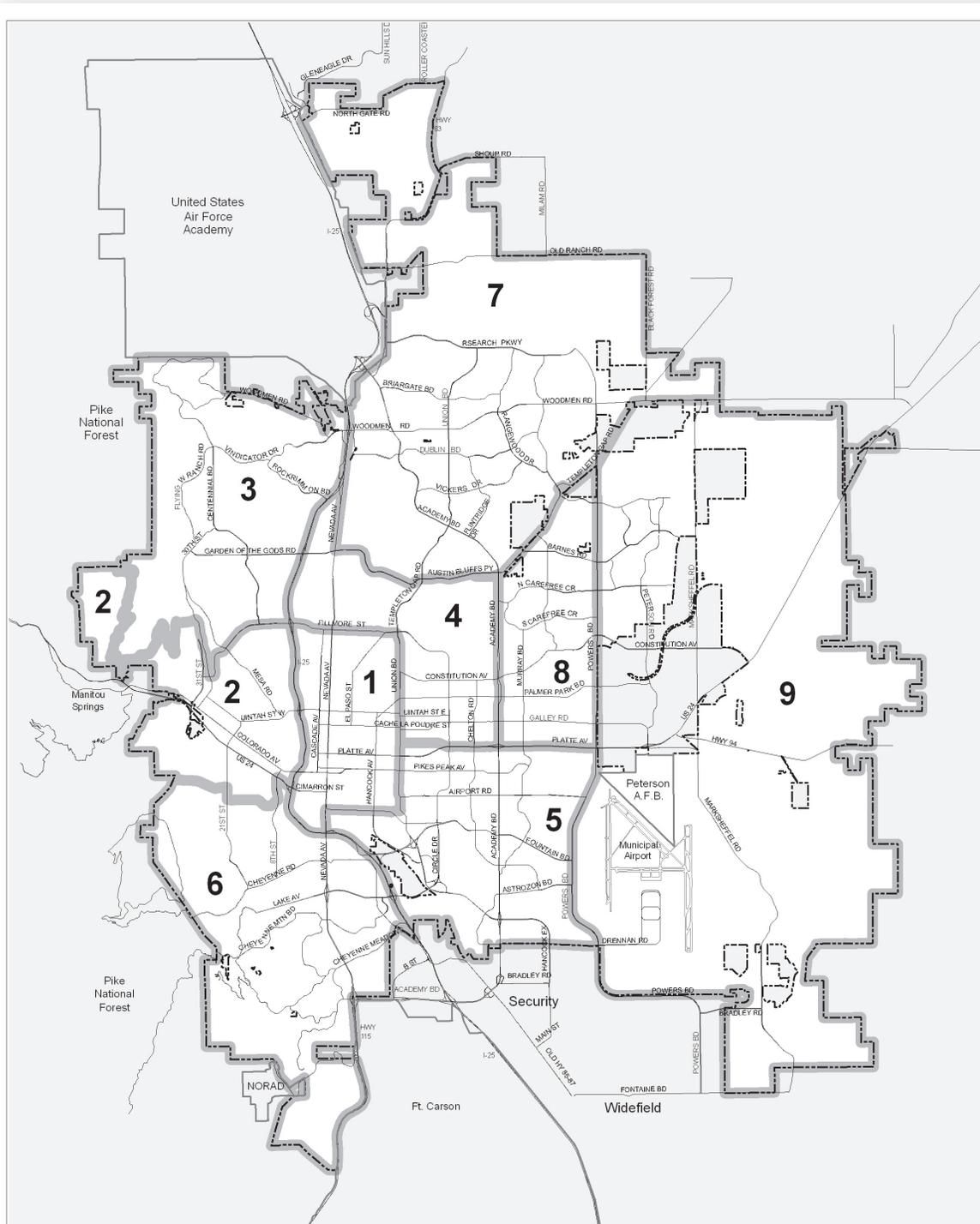


LAND USE PLANNING

■ Planning Evaluation Zones

When the Comprehensive Plan was initially developed, the city was mapped into nine geographical sub-areas in order to organize and compare various types of planning information. (See the accompanying map.) These sub-areas were called Planning Evaluation Zones (PEZ's). Their boundaries were drawn to capture whole census tracts, master planned areas, neighborhood organizations, and, with a minor exception, postal zip codes. All the land use data compiled by the City's Department of Planning and Community Development and presented in this report has been broken out on a PEZ basis. Data for each PEZ can be accessed by going to the City's website at www.springsgov.com and clicking on City Planning and City Comprehensive Plan.





City of Colorado Springs
Planning Evaluation Zones
 (Revised: April 2004)



Legend

- PEZ Boundary
- City Limits

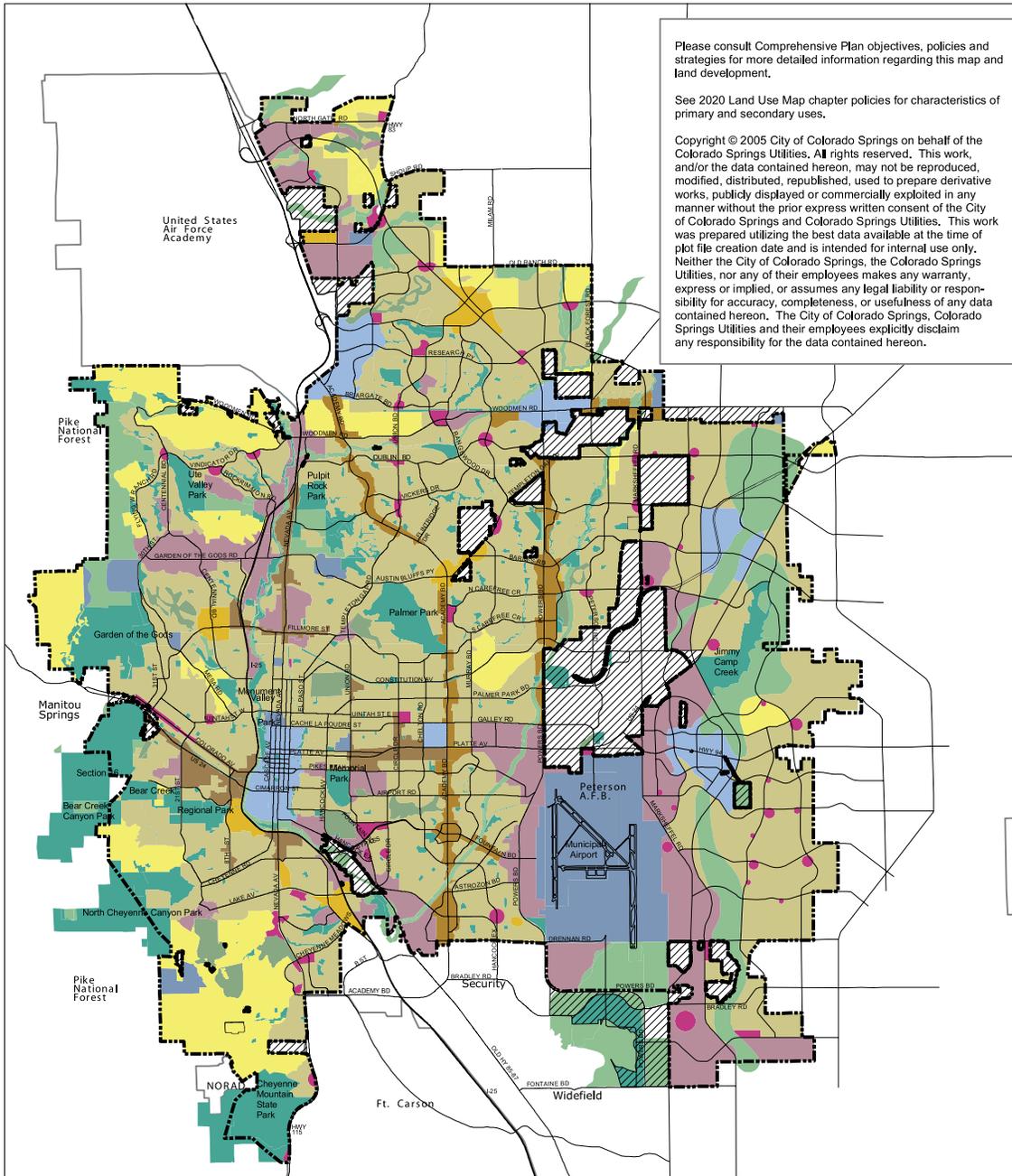


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■ **2020 Land Use Map**

The 2020 Land Use Map was initially adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan and is amended as needed each year to reflect major changes in master planned land uses and annexations. As a composite picture of existing development, zoned uses, and master planned uses, it represents a framework for city growth through the year 2020. The generalized land uses depicted on the map are the result of grouping similar zoned and master planned uses in the city under broader headings. The purpose of the Map is to provide a citywide land use context for coordinating decisions regarding planning and future development.



Please consult Comprehensive Plan objectives, policies and strategies for more detailed information regarding this map and land development.

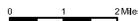
See 2020 Land Use Map chapter policies for characteristics of primary and secondary uses.

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City of Colorado Springs
Comprehensive Plan
2020 Land Use
Draft: 2005



- Low Residential
- General Residential
- Employment Center
- Community Activity Center
- Regional Center
- Major Institutional
- Commercial Center
- Candidate Open Space
- Existing Parkland & Open Space
- Mature Redevelopment Corridor
- Golf Course or Cemetery
- Potential Annexation

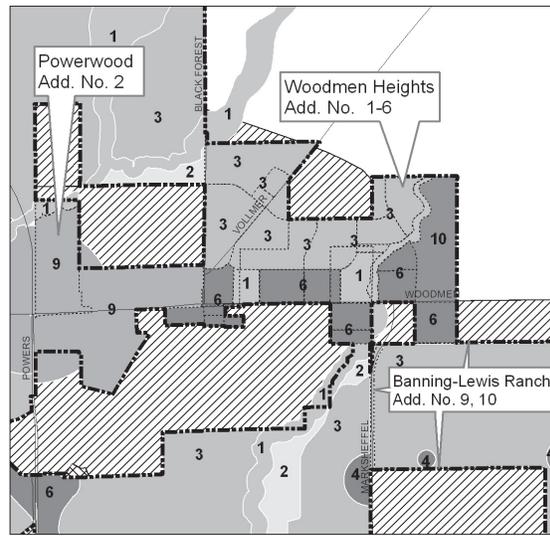
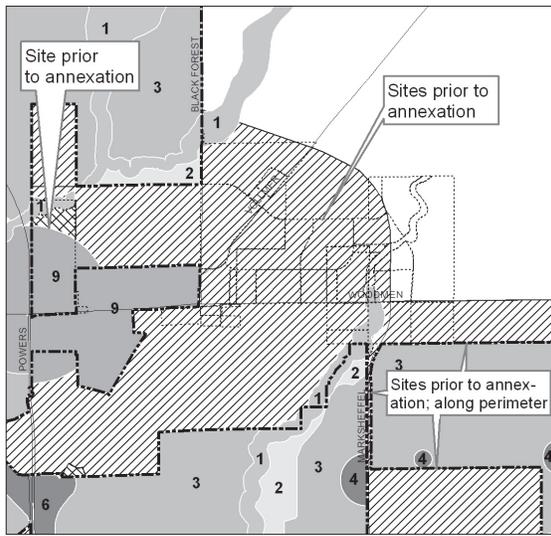




2020 Land Use Map Amendments 2004-2005

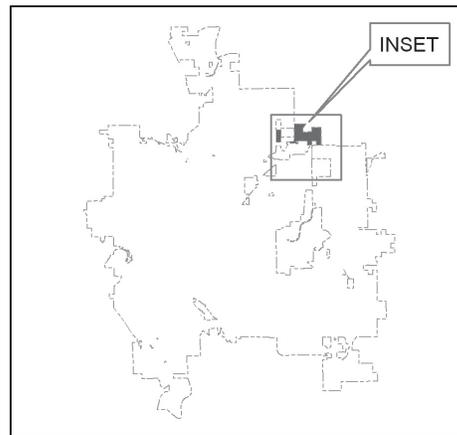
Name	Land Use Action(s)	Land Use Change	Acres
Powerwood Addition No. 2	Annexation	Add Regional Center	113.33
Woodmen Heights Additions Nos. 1-6	Annexations (6)	Add New/Developing Corridor, Major Institutional, Candidate Open Space	835.25
Banning-Lewis Ranch Nos. 9,10	Annexations (2)	Add General Residential	38.36
Eastview Estates	Annexation	Add General Residential	45.83
Banning-Lewis Ranch Nos. 8, 11-14	Annexations (5)	Add General Residential, Candidate Open Space, Regional Center, Employment Center	241.16
Red Rock Canyon Addition	Annexation	Add Existing Parkland and Open Space	751.00
Star Ranch Addition	Annexation	Add Low Density Residential	47.81
Neal Ranch Addition No. 4	Annexation	Add Low Density Residential	.84
Santa Fe	Zone Change	From Existing Parkland and Candidate Open Space to General Residential	16.54
Academy Christian Church	Annexation	Add General Residential	7.30
Sierra Springs	Zone Change	From New Developing Corridor to General Residential	14.83
Woodland Hills Plaza	Master Plan Amendment and Zone Change	From General Residential to Community Commercial	12.80
Siferd Addition No. 4	Annexation	Add Commercial Center	2.75
Crossroads Animal Hospital Addition	Annexation	Add Commercial Center	1.32
Tutt Commercial Center	Master Plan Amendment and Zone Change	From General Residential to Commercial Center	8.80
3501 West Colorado Avenue	Annexation	Add Mature/Redevelopment Corridor	.40

2020 LAND USE AMENDMENT
 Banning-Lewis Ranch 9,10, Powerwood No. 2, Woodmen Heights 1-6



Legend

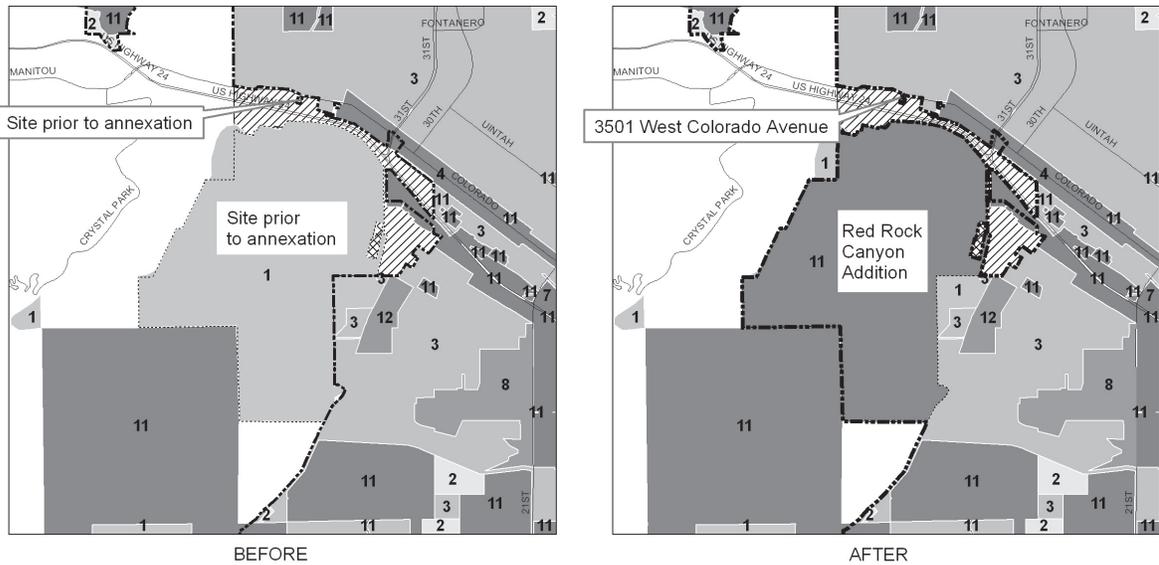
- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| ■ 1 Candidate Open Space | ■ 4 Community Activity Center | ■ 10 Major Institutional | ▨ Potential Annexation | — City Limits |
| ■ 2 Low Density Residential | ■ 6 New/Developing Corridor | | ▩ Petitioned/Pending Annexation | |
| ■ 3 General Residential | ■ 9 Regional Center | | ⋯ Affected Areas | |



VICINITY MAP

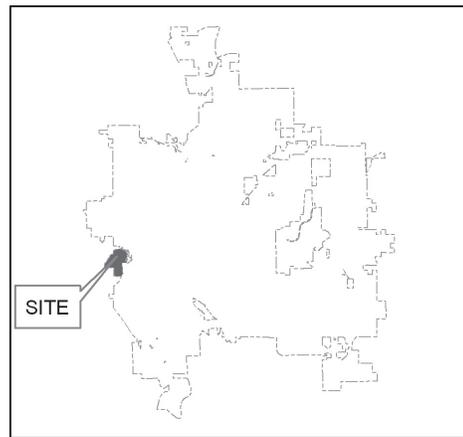


2020 LAND USE AMENDMENT
Red Rock Canyon Addition, 3501 West Colorado Avenue



Legend

- 1 Candidate Open Space ■ 4 Community Activity Center ■ 11 Existing Park Land and Open Space ▨ Potential Annexation
- 2 Low Density Residential ■ 7 Mature Redevelopment Corridor ■ 12 Golf Course or Cemetery ▩ Petitioned/Pending Annexation
- 3 General Residential ■ 8 Employment Center ▭ Affected Areas
- City Limits



VICINITY MAP

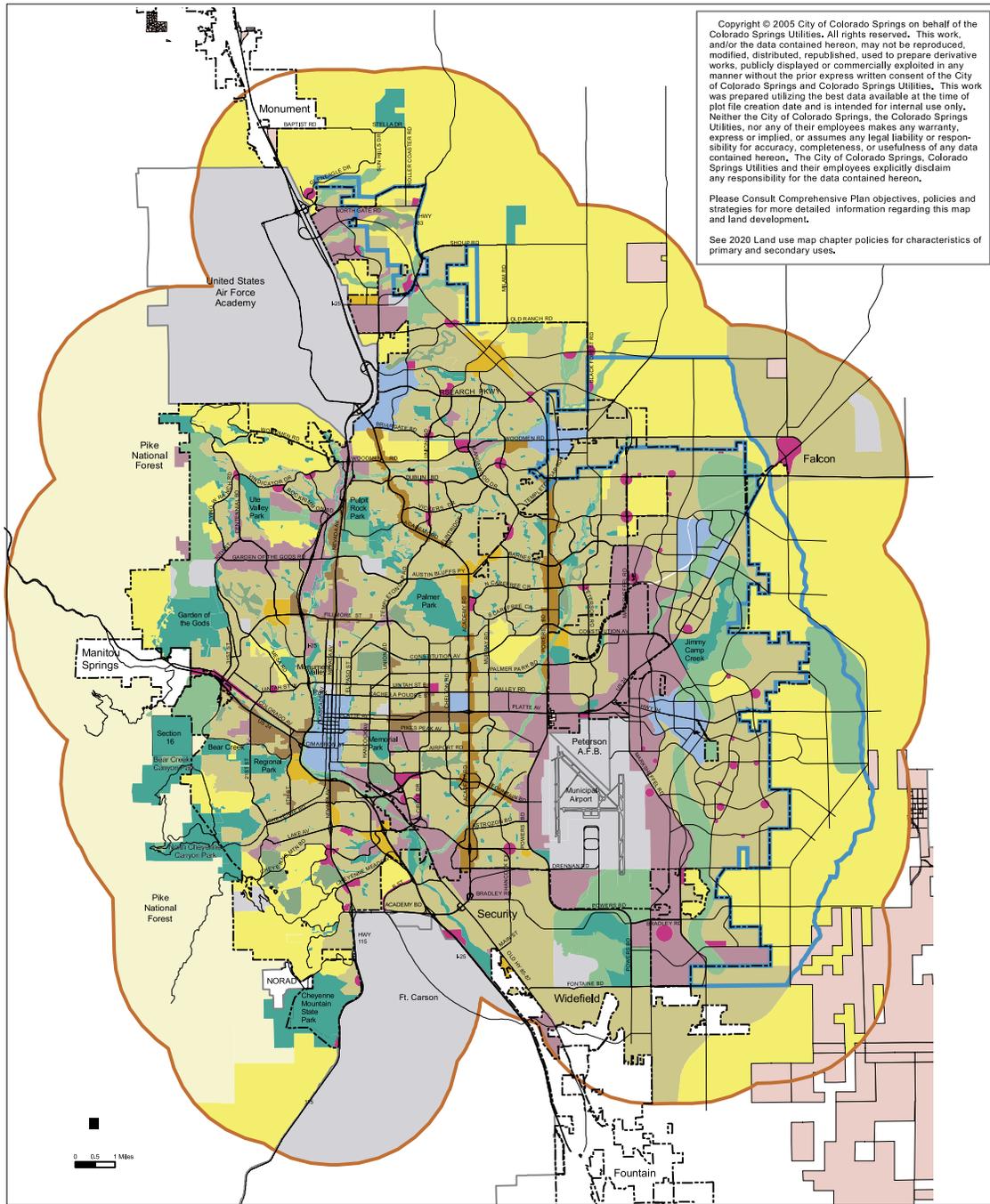


■ **Three-mile Extraterritorial Planning Area**

The Colorado Revised Statutes, Section 31-12-105 (1)(e) requires that there be a plan in place for an area extending three miles beyond a municipality's boundaries prior to the annexation of territory into the municipality. The Three-mile Extraterritorial Planning Area Map is the required Three Mile Plan.

The Three-mile Extraterritorial Planning Area Map is designed to work in conjunction with the 2020 Land Use Map of the City's Comprehensive Plan. It serves as the graphic representation of the City's annexation policies and future land use patterns and provides a context for annexation decisions. Created in conjunction with El Paso County's Small Area Plans and the City of Fountain's Comprehensive Plan, the map represents a framework for the future growth of the metro area. It also provides a context for the examination of enclaves.

This map uses the twelve land use classifications identified in the City of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan 2020 Land Use Map, and adds State Lands and US Forest Service and Conservation designations. It should not be considered a fixed determination of land use patterns. As the region continues to grow and develop the map will have to be amended.



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Please Consult Comprehensive Plan objectives, policies and strategies for more detailed information regarding this map and land development.

See 2020 Land use map chapter policies for characteristics of primary and secondary uses.

City of Colorado Springs
Three-mile Extraterritorial Planning Area



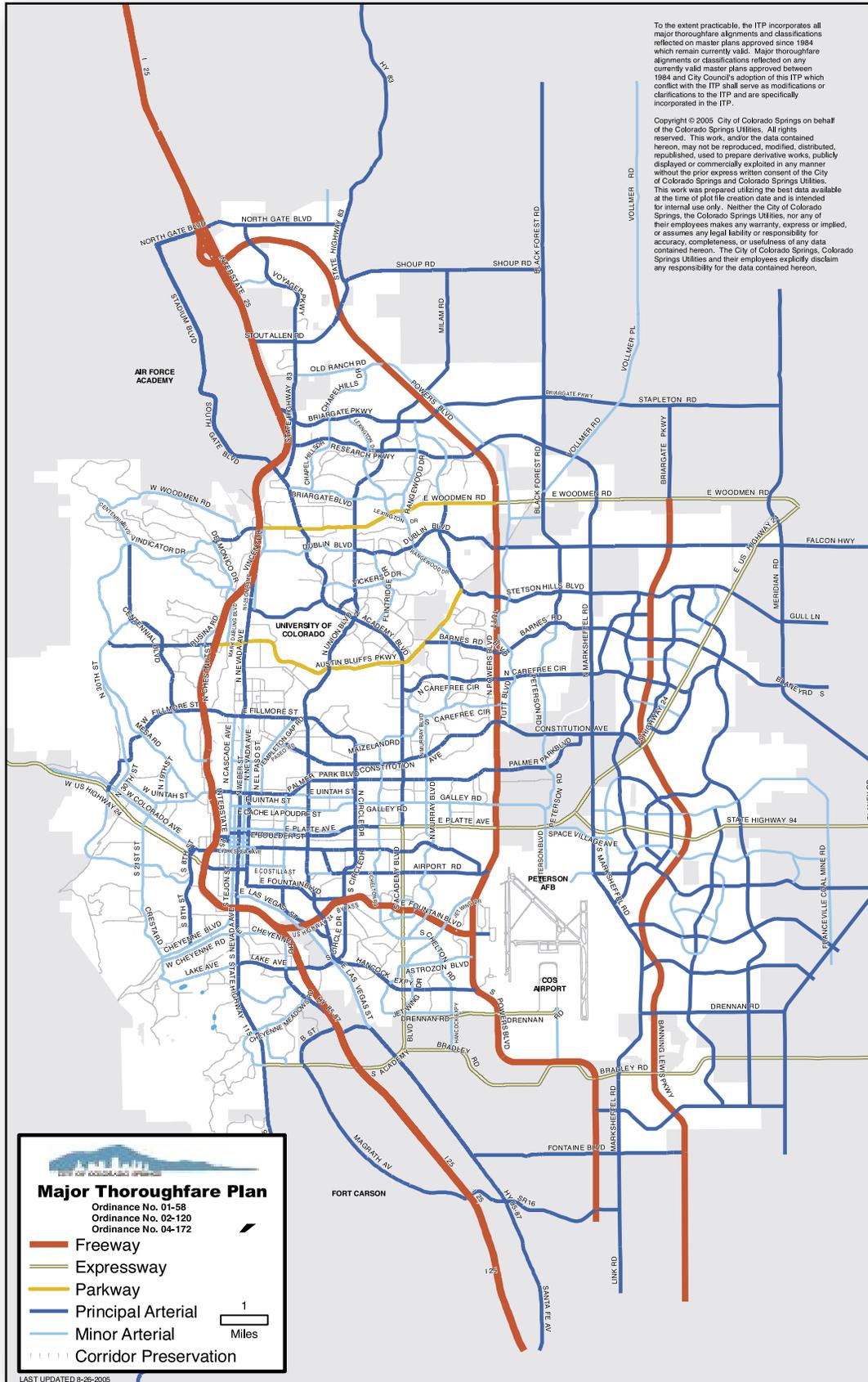
- LOW RESIDENTIAL
- GENERAL RESIDENTIAL
- REGIONAL CENTER
- MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL
- COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER
- CANDIDATE OPEN SPACE
- COMMERCIAL CENTER
- EXISTING PARKLAND & OPEN SPACE
- NEW/DEVELOPING CORRIDOR
- GOLF COURSE OR CEMETERY
- MATURE REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR
- NATIONAL FOREST AND CONSERVATION
- EMPLOYMENT CENTER
- State Land
- 3 Mile Buffer
- Potential Urban Growth Area
- City Limits



TRANSPORTATION

■ Transportation — Trends

Since 2000, significant progress has been made in transportation planning, transportation funding, and improvements to the city's transportation infrastructure. They include the adoption of the Intermodal Transportation Plan, voter approval of a 1% sales tax to fund the Pikes Peak regional Transportation Authority (PPRTA), a new Transit Services Infrastructure Plan, numerous studies and assessments to support and target future improvements, and the COSMIX project to widen Interstate 25. One area that is still lagging is planning for pedestrian improvements and facilities.





Traffic Level of Service (LOS) on Selected Arterial Links

	2003			2004			2005		
	Ave. Daily Traffic Volume	Volume to Capacity Ratio	Level of Service	Ave. Daily Traffic Volume	Volume to Capacity Ratio	Level of Service	Ave. Daily Traffic Volume	Volume to Capacity Ratio	Level of Service
North/South									
I-25: Bijou to Uintah	99,390	1.24	F	99,399	1.24	F	101,700	1.27	F
Powers Blvd: South of Woodmen	28,560	0.36	B	34,955	0.44	B	48,613	0.61	C
Union Blvd: North of Austin Bluffs	46,735	0.93	E	42,107	0.84	D	39,649	0.79	D
Academy Blvd: North of Austin Bluffs	50,310	1.01	F	58,142	1.17	F	51,519	1.03	F
East/West									
Garden of the Gods: West of I-25	59,600	1.19	F	57,669	1.15	F	50,587	1.01	F
Woodmen Rd: I-25 to Academy	42,165	0.84	D	42,933	0.86	E	45,337	0.91	E
Platte Ave: West of Circle	40,195	0.80	D	41,732	0.83	D	42,138	0.84	D
Fountain Blvd: West of Powers	25,500	0.51	C	23,300	0.47	B	24,122	0.48	B

Data Source: City of Colorado Springs Transportation Planning and Traffic Engineering

Bike Lanes

Year	Total Linear Miles	Population	Miles/1,000 persons
1997	19	342,548	0.06
1998	25.3	349,988	0.07
1999	32.5	356,208	0.09
2000	39.5	360,890	0.11
2001	42.5	369,853	0.11
2002	53.85	373,328	0.14
2003	72.25	377,006	0.19
2004	Data not available		

■ Transit — Trends

As of the date of this report, Springs Transit has been renamed Metro and has embarked on a major upgrade of the transit system, including new buses and a new route structure. Trends since 2002 show a decline in the total one-way trips per year. The current improvements being made to the system are designed to reverse that decline by providing better service.

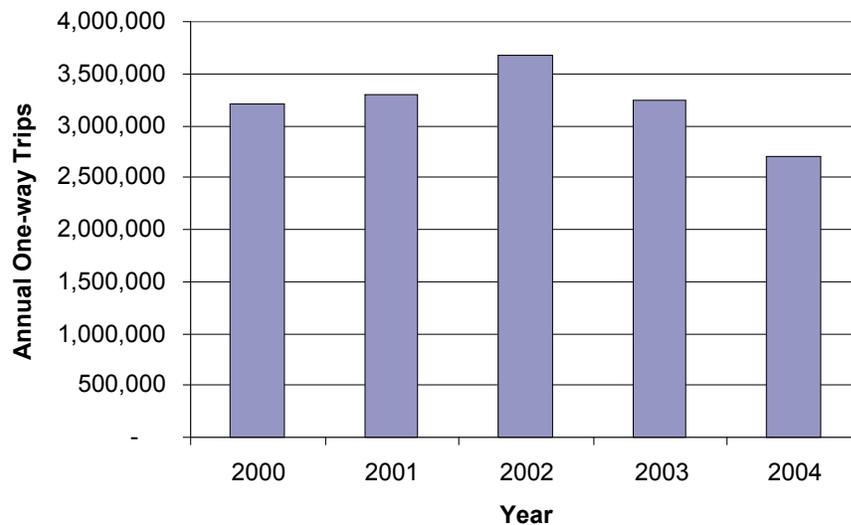
Number of One-way Trips per Year

Year	Fixed-Route One-way Trips	Paratransit Trips	Total One-way Trips
2000	3,145,082	56,232	3,201,314
2001	3,234,024	66,699	3,300,723
2002	3,594,589	86,218	3,680,807
2003	3,150,395	97,199	3,247,594
2004	2,596,042	103,530	2,699,572

NOTE: Additional Paratransit Service is provided for individuals who, because of a disability, are unable to use the Fixed-Route service.

Data Source: Transit Services Division, 2005.

**Colorado Springs Public Transportation
Total Annual One-way Trips**





INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

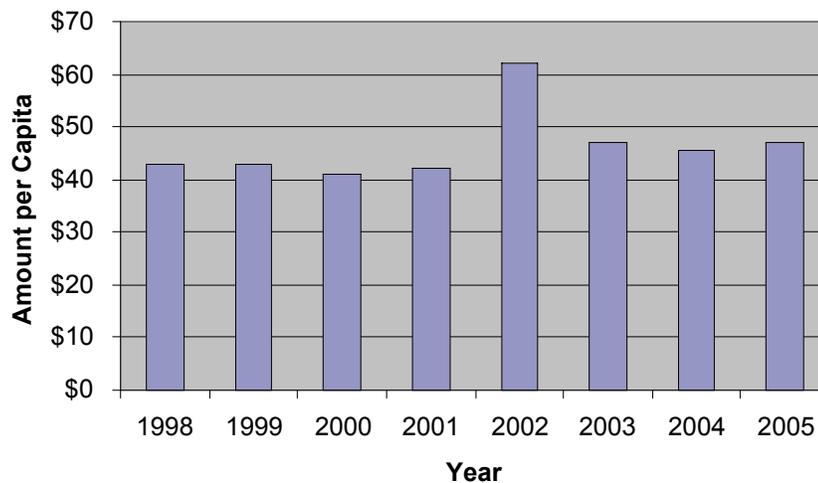
■ Capital Improvements - Trends

Capital improvement program expenditures have remained relatively flat since 2002, while the list of unfunded needs, particularly for stormwater improvements, has continued to grow. This year City Council will adopt a new Five-year Capital Improvements Plan updating the city's needs for infrastructure and presenting options for funding them.

Amount of CIP Expenditures Per Capita

Year	\$ Per Person
1998	\$43
1999	\$43
2000	\$41
2001	\$42
2002	\$62
2003	\$47
2004	\$46
2005	\$47

CIP Expenditures per Capita

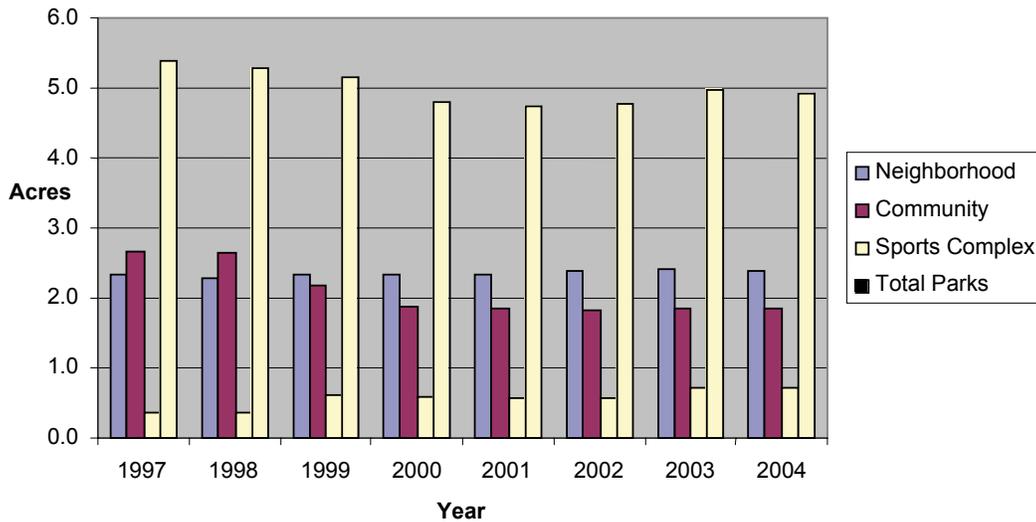


■ Parks, Trails, and Open Space — Trends

The acres of parks provided since 2000 has kept pace with population growth, the trail system has been extended, and the open space system continues to expand thanks in large measure to the Trails, Parks and Open Space (TOPS) program.

Acres of Parks per 1000 Persons

Year	Neighborhood	Community	Sports Complex	Total	Population figures
1997	2.3	2.7	.4	5.4	345,648
1998	2.3	2.6	.4	5.3	352,580
1999	2.3	2.2	.6	5.1	358,809
2000	2.3	1.9	.6	4.8	366,111
2001	2.3	1.8	.6	4.7	372,284
2002	2.4	1.8	.6	4.8	374,861
2003	2.4	1.9	.7	5.0	377,006
2004	2.4	1.8	.7	4.9	380,684





■ Parks and Trails Projects in 2005

Neighborhood Parks

- Stetson Neighborhood Park
- Snowy River Neighborhood Park
- Ivywild Neighborhood Park
- Westcreek Neighborhood Park
- Mary Kyer Neighborhood Park



Trail Projects

- Pikes Peak Greenway Improvements
- West Fork Sand Creek Trail- Constitution to Palmer Park
- Midland Trail - Pikes Peak Greenway to 21st Street
- Skyline Trail- Briargate Blvd. to Union
- University Park Trail- Rockhurst Blvd. to UCCS
- Cottonwood Creek Trail – Rangewood Underpass
- Shooks Run Trail-Pikes Peak Ave to Las Vegas
- Sandcreek Trail- Chelton to Wildflower Park

Total Open Space Acres

Year	Total Open Space Acres (City-owned)*	Trail corridors (City-owned)**	North Slope Recreation Area (North Slope of Pikes Peak)	Cheyenne Mountain State Park (State portion)	El Paso County Parks & Section 16 (In city limits)***
1997	6,130	356	2,267		459 & 635 (1,094)
1998	6,392	370	2,267		459 & 635 (1,094)
1999	6,524	403	2,267		602 & 635 (1,237)
2000	8,019	404	2,267	1,043	602 & 635 (1,237)
2001	8,420	404	2,267	1,043	602 & 635 (1,237)
2002	8,467	482	2,267	1,043	602 & 635 (1,237)
2003	9,265	494	2,267	1,043	602 & 635 (1,237)
2004	9,446	516	2,267	1,043	602 & 635(1,237)

Data Source: Colorado Springs Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department

* Includes Regional Park Preserves, Open Space Areas & Natural Resource Areas

** Trail corridors are land areas owned by the city and are used for urban trails, but also include "buffer" land that remains undeveloped as "open space"

*** Bear Creek Regional Park



■ Stormwater Management — Trends

At the request of City Council, staff is currently leading a collaborative effort to address stormwater issues through the implementation of a stormwater enterprise. A stormwater enterprise is a City-owned business that can be established to fund operations and maintenance functions on existing stormwater infrastructure, administration of the City's Federally-Mandated Municipal Permit, engineering and technical review staff, and the design and construction of capital improvements. An enterprise would provide a dedicated funding source to address stormwater needs. City Council and the HBA also requested that the stormwater enterprise implementation plan also research and evaluate options to address issues associated with the existing drainage basin fee program.

A City Council work session to review the status of the effort was conducted in September, 2005. Formal presentations to City Council are scheduled in November and December 2005.





Five-Year Assessment of the **Comprehensive Plan**



With the passage of nearly five years since formal adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, it is time to assess how well the plan is working. In addition to an annual report process and monitoring of physical development in quantitative terms, it is valuable to gauge the extent to which the plan is able to effectively provide guidance in land use decision making. As the Comprehensive Plan is concerned primarily with physical development, two major issues for discussion are infrastructure planning and land use. These items are discussed below, and are followed by a summary of status and recommendations for future action for each chapter of the plan.

INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING ISSUES

■ Creation of Special Purpose Tax Revenue Streams

Several major events have occurred since adoption of the Comprehensive Plan that directly affect the community's ability to implement certain long

range planning objectives. Many of the changes have been positive and include voter approval of sales tax increases to fund:

- police and fire facilities and services through the Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST) 0.4 cent approved 2001
- extension of the 0.1 cent open space sales tax, approved 2003
- creation of the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) with an additional county 1 cent sales tax to pay for numerous transportation projects in Colorado Springs and other entities in the region.

Targeted, specific financial questions appear to be acceptable to voters, particularly when funds are earmarked for basic public safety and public facilities needs.

While the evolution of special purpose allocations of tax revenue (“earmarking” sales tax increments) was not anticipated when the Comprehensive Plan’s approach to infrastructure and community services was developed, voter approval of various sales tax issues has greatly helped the city in maintaining and improving services in designated functions.

Renewed attention is being given to long range capital facility needs through reprisal of efforts to develop a 5 year capital improvements plan. Despite the success in obtaining voter approval for certain parts of the city’s capital and operating needs, large components of the city’s service and facility needs (those without “earmarked” revenue streams) remain under funded or unfunded. In addition, budget revenue limitations required by TABOR affect the ability of the City to program revenue into facilities and services if a revenue override is not approved by voters.

Similarly, the City has not sought voter approval for greater use of general obligation debt, the means by which many communities have historically funded long term capital facilities needs. Total permitted debt is 10 percent of assessed valuation, or about \$410.7 million in the city. Current debt is about \$11.3 million, or about 3 percent of the total debt limit.

■ Inter-relation of Special Districts, Long-Range Capital Improvements Planning, and Special Purpose Tax Revenue Streams

The Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) authorize the creation of quasi-governmental entities to provide certain public services by taxing properties within a defined boundary that benefit from those services. These entities are commonly called special districts and their current prevalent form is the metropolitan district authorized by Title 32 of CRS. Districts are independent of local governments, although local governments approve the districts’ service plans, and any district debt is not an obligation of the city within which a district might be located.



The circumstances noted above may be partially responsible for the increased utilization of special district financing in newly developing areas of the city. Particularly with recent annexations, the city's financial constraints have resulted in developers in new areas making greater use of metropolitan districts to finance construction of many public improvements, provide certain enhanced maintenance activities, and in some cases build, maintain and operate park facilities that the City could otherwise not program for development and use. The Comprehensive Plan encourages the use of impact fees as an additional means of generating revenue for new infrastructure capital costs. However, the City's practice of requiring individual annexations to assume regional infrastructure obligations, when combined with the use of districts, has rendered the impact fee issue essentially moot.

This scenario has some good sides to it, in that property owners in new developments pay for new infrastructure through specific mill levies, with the cost most frequently added into mortgages on new homes, with attendant tax deduction opportunities for homeowners. Also, districts can assume some functions previously carried out by homeowners associations, and a more reliable vehicle for enforcement of design controls can be provided.

A potential downside to the district approach is that it effectively segments the city into discrete areas with different levels of taxation to provide public improvements, at the potential expense of not anticipating and providing a means of paying for the inevitable long term, community-wide or regional improvements that will be necessary as a result of continued growth. The possible long term result is that a large part of the city built before the onset of special districts, which relies on general fund revenue for maintenance and upgrade of facilities needed as a result of new development, might be unable to afford those upgrades and could experience deterioration in the condition of public infrastructure. The lengthy C.I.P. list of identified public infrastructure needing major repair or replacement, with no identified funding source, is testament to the current extent of this problem.

In a tax-averse community such as Colorado Springs, development of revenue streams through specific sales tax issues has become an attractive alternative to general tax increases. Additionally, use of enterprises to perform certain government operations exempts those operations from TABOR-imposed revenue limitations. Re-evaluation of a stormwater enterprise to help fund maintenance of the city's stormwater facilities is a case in point.

All of these examples point to the great challenge in Colorado Springs in developing a unified infrastructure planning and programming process. The city's system can best be described as a series of special purpose revenue streams to fund maintenance and limited expansion of basic public safety-related facilities and services, with considerable deference given

to the private sector regarding the amount, timing, and location of infrastructure needed to accommodate new development activity. At best this system is complementary; if not closely monitored it can become uncoordinated. Pro-active, debt-financed construction of new community or regional infrastructure is not feasible, unless it is accomplished by the private sector as a condition of annexation.

■ **Relation of Current Practice to the Comprehensive Plan**

The combination of specific purpose tax revenue streams and special district use represents a major change from the general revenue fund and impact fee orientation of the "Community Infrastructure and Services" Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Near-term new capital costs are addressed through districts, and new capital costs and some operating costs for police and fire are addressed through use of the aforementioned special sales tax revenue streams. However, once built and dedicated to the city, all of these new facilities eventually compete for the same general fund dollars for operations, maintenance, major reconstruction and upgrades. Thus far, the ongoing O/M cost issue (sometimes referred to as "lifecycle cost") has not been clarified or given more predictability.

At present the city's practice of managing infrastructure and service planning is different from the Comprehensive Plan's policy approach. Some concepts, such as impact fees, appear to no longer be applicable. Others dealing with long range infrastructure planning are made more difficult by the increased use of districts and eventual lessened ability to anticipate the programming and construction of major infrastructure, and to coordinate those with delivery of services. Chapter 4 of the Plan, dealing with these issues, should be evaluated for amendment to be more consistent with current practice.

LAND USE ISSUES

■ **New Planning Tools**

The obvious key focus of the Comprehensive Plan is on land use within the City of Colorado Springs. The Comprehensive Plan attempted to break new ground by promoting a more compact, mixed-use land pattern in the city, with potential benefits of reduced automobile traffic, greater pedestrian mobility, reduced infrastructure costs, and better provision of housing diversity in neighborhoods. The two major implementation tasks to facilitate these goals were Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and Mixed-Use Development (MUD) zoning code amendments, which were identified in the Comprehensive Plan and completed within 2 and ½ years of the plan's adoption.

Ironically, one of Colorado Springs' great planning opportunities also serves as an impediment to achieving stated planning goals. Simply stated, with approximately 37 percent of the city's land area vacant and



developable, there is no real market incentive for developers to pursue alternatives to the low-density development pattern that has characterized growth in the city since the 1960's. Communities that successfully implement innovative land planning concepts either have a limited supply of developable land (Denver, for instance), or more aggressively use growth management to guide development into a desired pattern that helps to achieve community goals regarding efficiency of public services, protection of natural features or other combination of public purposes.

In the period since adoption of the Comprehensive Plan there has been only limited use of the TND, and mixed-use has been applied only under planned unit development (PUD) zoning. While the city has development tools that reflect contemporary thinking regarding successful planning and design of both of these new development trends, they are not being utilized.

Static Land Use Pattern

Perhaps more troubling has been the City's reluctance to more aggressively pursue these planning options as part of the annexation and master planning processes by which the city's land area is expanded and its development pattern shaped. An example is the Woodmen Road corridor, east of Powers Boulevard, which has been master planned and could develop as a linear, auto-oriented strip commercial corridor, rather than as a more focused set of connected, mixed-use "nodal centers" that more effectively integrate housing, shopping and employment opportunities.

While the Woodmen corridor has not been master planned to best achieve Comprehensive Plan objectives, it is still possible to "bend the trend" with effective use of zoning tools. In this regard, staff efforts to improve on the ease of use of the TND and mixed-use options will become more important. Without jettisoning the attention to detail necessitated by these more intricate tools, the city must redouble its efforts to improve the attractiveness of these tools to developers, through closer cooperation in their site-specific application, and by considering opportunities to provide faster and easier processing. For TND and mixed-use to work, they have to be seen as desirable alternatives to the status quo, rather than as simply lofty planning goals.

Relation of Current Practice to the Comprehensive Plan

Adoption of Zoning Code amendments to promote TND and mixed-use has created consistency between Comprehensive Plan objectives and regulatory tools that implement those objectives. However, actual use of these tools has lagged behind expectations, and single-use zoning is still the favored option by the development industry.

The increased use of TND and mixed-use will take time, as both represent departures from historical development practice and may be seen

as greater risk ventures. The existence of both tools represents proactive retooling of the Zoning Code and provides much flexibility for the eventuality of new development proposals to come forward. In this regard, regulatory tools are out in front of the real estate market in terms of ability to accommodate innovative land use concepts. Patience with the real estate market and education of developers on the benefits of both zoning tools, rather than changes to the "Land Use" Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, are recommended.

STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY CHAPTER OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

■ Land Use

Status

- Staffing and resource limitations for both the city and county have prevented progress in regional planning considerations; activities have been confined to demographic work in conjunction with small area forecasts as a basis for long-range transportation plans.
- Major zoning code amendments to facilitate traditional neighborhood development and mixed-use development have provided regulatory tools, but the real estate market has been slow to utilize them in Colorado Springs. However, the component parts appear to be very similar to those of communities that are successfully implementing both land use alternatives.
- Three urban renewal areas have been planned (SW Urban Renewal, Gold Hill Mesa, North Nevada).
- Commercial development is still characterized by big-box highway commercial in a linear, strip pattern (the most prominent example is Woodmen Road east of Powers); improved site development standards for single-use commercial developments as a supplement to mixed-use zoning have not been developed.

Recommended Future Actions

- City Planning, with its GIS capabilities, should assume the coordinative role in the provision of accurate and reliable data used by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) for annual population forecasting.
- Continue efforts to improve and simplify the use of TND and mixed-use zoning options, particularly in conjunction with infill and redevelopment projects, downtown development, and promote as a preferred land use and zoning tool for annexations and master plans.



- Pursue development standards and/or guidelines that help adjust big-box retail site design to include more pedestrian-oriented and multi-modal features.
- Continue the use of GIS for zoning and physical development analysis.
- Monitor the condition of existing commercial corridors for signs of deterioration and disinvestment resulting from relocation of businesses to newly developing corridors and activity centers.

■ Neighborhoods

Status

- TND zoning has been used sparingly but demonstrates that mixing housing types and densities can be successful with proper attention to design considerations.
- Mixed-use zoning contains standards intended to help new development fit in to the scale and character of established areas of the city as well as in new, large “greenfield” sites.

Recommended Future Actions

- Use GIS to assess opportunities to adjust zoning standards in established neighborhoods to more accurately reflect physical development characteristics that may have predated zoning.
- Investigate zoning incentives, possibly through TND and mixed-use, that can be tied to affordability initiatives and can expand housing diversity in neighborhoods.
- Monitor the effect of commercial corridor disinvestment on adjacent and nearby neighborhoods.

■ Transportation

Status

- Voter approval of the PPRTA sales tax will improve the ability of the entire Pikes Peak Region to fund a backlog of needed upgrades and improvements to the regional transportation system.
- Development pattern adjustments to improve pedestrian mobility and reduce single-occupancy auto use have not occurred, although zoning tools are in place.

Recommended Future Actions

- Subdivision code amendments to encourage connectivity in streets system hierarchy to complement zoning tools should be pursued.

■ **Community Infrastructure and Services**

Status

- Approval of a development agreement mechanism as part of the PUD zone amendments gives the city an additional tool for securing substantial infrastructure and services not otherwise obtainable through the standard development exaction process.
- Stormwater enterprise concept is being re-evaluated and can help to address backlog of stormwater facility maintenance needs .
- Proliferation of special districts is changing the way in which all public improvements are provided; the mechanics of certain municipal functions ceded to districts (e.g. parks provision) need to be carefully evaluated; the city needs to ensure that the land development process can effectively secure major public improvements required as conditions of annexation, that may exceed “rough proportionality” requirements of the land development exaction process.
- Voter approval of the Public Safety Sales Tax in 2001 has improved the city’s ability to add facilities and services and move toward its service standards for emergency response.

Recommended Future Actions

- Evaluate Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan, “Community Infrastructure and Services,” for amendment to be more consistent with the city’s current practice of planning and funding the construction, operation and maintenance of public infrastructure and services.
- Colorado Springs Utilities should continue to work with General City to anticipate need for utility system upgrades in order to efficiently maintain and expand service in areas with approved redevelopment plans and in the downtown core.
- The city should also look at alternatives to basin fees on a per acre basis, as there is no incentive to reduce stormwater flows and runoff through impervious surface standards for site development.
- The city needs to evaluate the interrelation of special district activity with capital improvements planning and programming that is based on public revenues in order to maintain balance in public investment between special district areas and the rest of the city.



■ **Natural Environment**

Status

■ Open space planning has been a dramatic success, with significant open space acquisitions, thanks to voter approval and subsequent extension of the open space sales tax.

Recommended Future Actions

■ Cluster zoning has not been developed, but has the potential to address sensitive lands issues and help conserve natural features within identified candidate open space areas while maintaining development potential.

■ **Community Character and Appearance**

Status

■ Drought conditions have highlighted the limitations of reliance on landscaping and use of live vegetation to soften appearance of public improvements (e.g. parking lot landscaping requirements); xeriscape is preferred environmentally.

■ Both TND and mixed-use codes contain provisions for public amenities, but have seen limited utilization thus far.

■ Newly developing areas are rolling Homeowner Association responsibilities into metro district functions, which may be a more viable method than the traditional HOA to administer covenants and other private design controls.

Recommended Future Actions

■ Design elements of development are becoming increasingly important as a means to improve compatibility of uses, improve the appearance of projects, and enhance the image of the city; the use of design standards and guidelines should be selectively expanded for infill and redevelopment projects, and in the downtown core.