

ACADEMY BOULEVARD CORRIDOR PROFILE

PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

JANUARY 12, 2009

The following is a draft of the Executive Summary of the approximately 160-page Academy Boulevard Corridor Profile, which is currently being finalized. Some of these findings and recommendations may be modified prior to finalization of the Profile.

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DRAFT

I. Executive Summary

A. Purpose and Overview

This Academy Boulevard Corridor Profile is first intended to provide context and focus for a wide range of multi-departmental efforts to revitalize the Academy Corridor primarily between Maizeland and Drennan Roads with a particular focus on retail revitalization. Many of these efforts are ongoing. The second purpose of the Profile is to “set the stage” for further implementation of City Council direction to undertake and complete a comprehensive and participatory public process directed toward establishing a community vision focusing on market-driven opportunities for the corridor along with the strategies to implement this vision.

The area of focus for this Profile is an approximately 12-square mile planning area which is centered on this 6.2 mile segment of Academy Boulevard and extends one mile to the east and west. This larger planning or analysis area was chosen because the success of a comprehensive effort directed toward retail revitalization along Academy will be necessarily contingent on a clear understanding of the demographic, land uses, infrastructure and land use support systems within the surrounding area. The boundaries of the area are depicted in Map 1. The planning area represents about 6.2% of the total area within the current City limits, the equivalent of about 9.3% of the City’s developed area and about 15.5% of the City’s current population. Measured by population, this area by itself would equate to the 15th largest city in the State of Colorado. The area includes about 11.8 million square feet of privately managed commercial, office and industrial buildings, which is about 11% of the total for the metropolitan area.

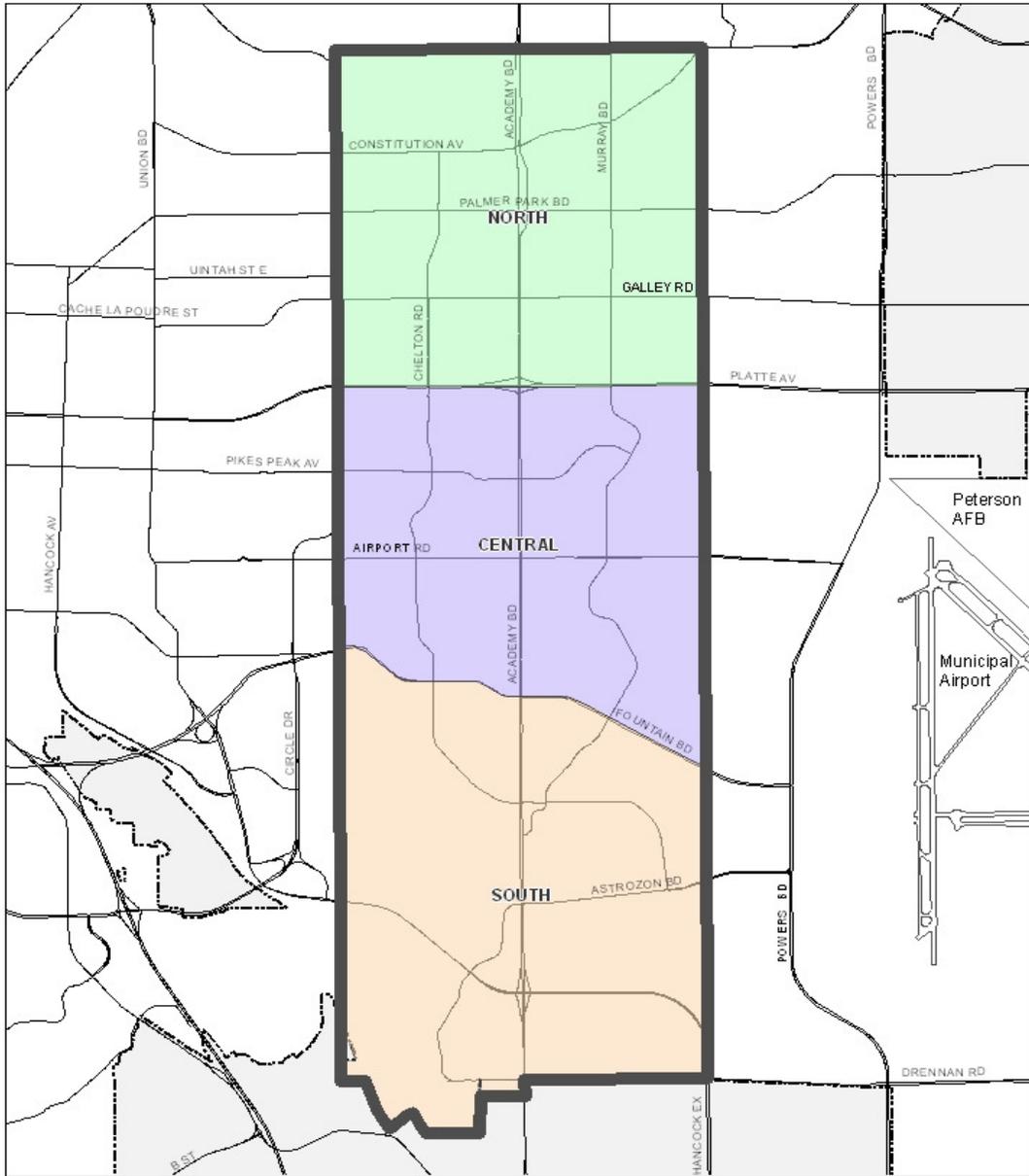
This *Profile* is intended to function as a preliminary SWOT analysis of the planning area.

SWOT stands for:

- Strengths
- Opportunities
- Weaknesses, and
- Threats

As the planning process progresses, this analysis will be further refined to reflect additional information and input based derived through a participatory stakeholder process.

Map 1 General Vicinity Map



South Academy Revitalization
Sub-areas Vicinity Map



- NORTH
- CENTRAL
- SOUTH



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B. Key Findings

The following summary points are described in more detail in the body of this report and in its appendices or referenced documents.

1. Impetus and Overall Trends

The initial and ongoing impetus for this effort has been the observation that retail vacancies have generally been increasing along the entire corridor and there has been a trend toward non-traditional tenants in shopping centers. This trend is occurring throughout the corridor and the surrounding planning area. As of June 30, 2008, the shopping centers in the planning area had an average vacancy rate of about 2.7 times that of the entire County with an Office vacancy rate 1.5 times the County average.

In October, 2007 City Council formally designated many of the commercial properties along this segment of Academy as "Mature/ Redevelopment Areas" in the City Comprehensive Plan. The City's adopted 2008 Strategic Plan includes a number of policies which address the need to identify at-risk commercial corridors and implement strategies to revitalize them. The City Manager's 2008 Performance Goals contain more explicit direction to propose a comprehensive revitalization plan for South Academy Boulevard.

Although this planning area contains large amounts of diverse and vital land uses, socio-economically it has begun to trail behind the City as a whole. For a combination of reasons including demographics and shopping center obsolescence, many "big box" anchor, and higher-end retailers have relocated from this corridor to Powers Boulevard and other locations. This pattern of relative decline in first and second tier suburban areas is common in larger cities across the United States. What may be somewhat unique about the Academy Boulevard case is the "accelerated obsolescence" of such a large area, which has resulted from the rapid pace and large scale of development in the region and from the economic forces that led to overbuilding and over planning for retail uses in this corridor during the 1970's and 80s.

2. Summary Findings

a. Demographics

i. There are estimated to be almost 64,000 persons residing in the planning area as of mid-2008 with area accounting for about 15.5% of the population of the City as a whole. Of this population, the total number of employed persons residing in the planning area is estimated at approximately 28,250 with the highest categories of employment being retail trade, health care, construction, accommodations/food and manufacturing. The employed area labor force is overrepresented in jobs such as retail trade, construction and manufacturing and underrepresented in fields such as professional/technical jobs, educational services and finance. Unemployment rates in the planning area are estimated to be significantly higher compared to the overall City.

ii. The planning area has a low **jobs/housing balance**, meaning that on a net basis more people leave the area to work than come in from outside the area to

work. On a per capita basis, the planning area only has about 61% of the total employment necessary to maintain a net balance of jobs to residents. Additionally, the jobs that are located in the planning area are disproportionately weighted toward the retail category and other categories which tend to pay lower wages. Parts of the planning area are located in relatively close proximity to a number of external employment centers including Downtown, Peterson Air Force Base, Fort Carson and the Airport with its associated Airport Business Park.

iii. The northern part of the planning area measures higher than the southern part by most socioeconomic measures including housing prices, average incomes, and educational attainment. However, this internal variation is less pronounced compared with the lag between the overall planning area and the City at-large. For example, the average (mean) Year 2008 household incomes in the overall planning area are only about 76% of the City-wide average. The average net worth of households in the planning area lags considerably behind levels for the City as a whole, especially in the Central and Southern Sub-area. Similarly, the average sale price of a single-family home in the planning area during 2007 and the first half of 2008 was 57% of the City average. Much of this difference is due to the relative absence of high income households throughout the area.

iv. At 30.2 the estimated median age of residents of the area is somewhat lower than the City-wide median of 34.7 years. However, the median age in the northern 1/3 of the area is much higher than that of the southern 2/3rds. The proportion of school age children within the planning area is generally comparable with City averages, although, as noted below, school enrollments of all types are declining.

v. The area is more ethnically diverse than the overall City. For example, the proportion of Hispanic population in the planning area is 25.1% compared with the City average of about 14.5%. At 16.9%, the proportion of Black population is more than double the City average of 6.9%. This diversity is reflected in the schools, neighborhoods and the mix, demand for and often the ownership of commercial businesses in the area. Although good statistics are not available, there is also understood to be a growing presence of undocumented immigrants in the area.

b. Land Use Trends and Analysis

i. There has been a major shift of retailers from the Academy Corridor to other locations in the City, to other municipalities and to unincorporated areas. This shift and the corresponding evolution of the remaining retail properties have occurred in part due to the changing demographic profile of the area. A market analysis has been undertaken by the City's Business Development Division and preliminary results indicate there is some "leakage" of retail sales from the planning area in certain categories such as grocery stores, lawn and garden and electronics. However, for most retail categories the planning area still has a surplus of retail establishments compared with market area demand. "Retail leakage" occurs when there are insufficient businesses in the market area to meet internal retail demand on a net basis.

ii. Development in the parts of planning area "never quite finished" before the shift to newer areas such as Briargate, Powers Boulevard, the Woodmen Corridor and most recently, Banning-Lewis Ranch. As a result, there are numerous vacant never-developed potential infill properties throughout the corridor, but especially south of Airport Road. In this area, approximately 12.8% of all of the privately held property is vacant and undeveloped. Several of these

vacant properties front Academy Boulevard, and many others are located a few blocks away from Academy Boulevard often with primary access from minor arterial or collector roads. Altogether, there are about 605 acres of vacant developable property in the planning area with about 35 individual vacant parcels or parts of parcels of 5.0 acres or larger. At a number of locations, there is the potential for assembling two or more of these vacant parcels into a larger developable site. However, there is a shortage of large undeveloped sites with the best locations for new commercial development.

The majority of the vacant properties in the planning area are zoned for some kind of non-residential use including industrial zones and the PBC (Planned Business Center) commercial zone district. There likely is an “overzoning” in the PBC category in comparison with future projections for shopping center demand. Due to the current zoning and location of the vacant properties in the planning area, many have the “capacity” to be developed at a higher density and/or intensity than the average of the overall existing development pattern.

iii. Although there are several viable shopping centers located throughout the entire corridor, the pattern of vacancies and at-risk centers also extends along the whole corridor. Similarly, occupied office parks tend to be interspersed through the corridor along with largely vacant or more at-risk office properties. In addition to actual vacancies, there is clear trend toward diversification of uses in centers (e.g. non-retail services, religious institutions, schools and daycares etc.), as well as underutilization of space still used for retail purposes.

iv. Many of the shopping centers in the planning area have a high proportion of unneeded parking spaces. Parking ratios for these centers were often established in excess of the minimum City requirements for the centers at the time they were originally developed. In many cases the near-term effect of excess parking is further exacerbated by vacancies and non-traditional uses which often have lower demand for parking, especially during peak hours.

v. The planning area contains a very diverse mix of housing types with a relative overweighting toward multifamily, and relatively few very expensive homes. Of the total of about 26,000 dwelling units in the area, about 47% are single-family. By comparison the City-wide single-family proportion is approximately 60% of all dwelling units. The vast majority of the dwelling units in the planning area were constructed in the 1960s, 1970's and 1980's. Generally, these units tend to be smaller and have lower resale values compared with the City at-large.

vi. Apartment complexes, especially those with 50 or more units, are scattered throughout the planning area, with an area of concentration in the center of the planning area between Platte Avenue and Fountain Boulevard. The demand for apartment rentals within the planning area tends to lag behind much of the rest of the metropolitan area. The combination of somewhat higher vacancy rates (currently about 10-12% for the area) and lower values for resale of existing complexes (less than \$35,000 per unit) results in limited present demand for new market rate apartment construction.

vii. Based on current estimated vacancy rates, it appears that on the order of about 2,100 vacant housing units could be absorbed within the planning area prior to triggering a demand for new housing construction. About 2/3rds of these available housing units are multifamily or attached units

vii. Constraints on available program funds and a currently soft market for housing tax credits, are limiting near term prospects for affordable housing

investment through governmental programs sponsored by the City Housing Division and other agencies.

viii. Overall, 50.2% or just over half of all the dwelling units in the planning area are owner occupied. This compares with a 63.8% owner occupancy rate City-wide. Within the planning area, rates of owner occupancy range from a low of 38.1% in the central sub-area to a high of 59.8% in the northern sub-area.

ix. The Citadel Mall is a major employment center, regional activity center and retail anchor within the planning area. While the Citadel Mall area was not included in the 2007 designating of added Mature/Redevelopment Areas along Academy Boulevard, the Mall and its surrounding development is understood to be critical to the economic vitality of the larger area.

c. Fort Carson

i. The present economic impact of Fort Carson on the planning area is not fully quantified. However, it is generally estimated that between 5% and 9% of the planning area population are Fort Carson personnel or their dependents. The lower number reflects a general assumption of the impact of current overseas deployments. The higher number reflects the calculated population with no deployments. The proportions of Fort Carson employees are much higher in the southern and central portions of the planning area than in the northern part.

ii. Between the beginning of 2009 and the end of 2011 Fort Carson is expected to add approximately 10,000 new stationed military personnel in the form of two new brigades, with an additional 15,200 family members for a total directly added population of about 25,200 persons. The multiplier effect of new jobs created in the larger community is projected to result in the further creation of approximately 1.20 new civilian jobs for each new authorized military employee, although a percentage of these new jobs will be absorbed by military spouses. Each of these net new civilian jobs is, in turn, projected to result in about 1.2 additional non-employed family members, thereby raising the cumulative population impact to a total of about 51,600 persons, after equilibrium is achieved. Additionally, as of the summer of 2008, Fort Carson troop strength is effectively depressed by the equivalent of at least 2 brigades due to overseas deployments. It is now estimated that only about 9,400 of the currently authorized troops are actually in residence at Fort Carson at this time. Therefore, the economic "bounce" which might come from newly stationed troops would be further increased as some already-stationed troops return from overseas deployments.

iii. As a general rule of thumb, about 75% of new and returning troops can be expected to live off-post with about 40% of that number expected to reside in multi-family units and 60% in single-family homes. The overall equilibrium demand for new off-base housing for Fort Carson personnel only, would therefore be for about 5,000 new or existing single-family homes and about 3,300 new or existing multifamily units. Based on Zip Code surveys of current residences for these troops, it would then be assumed that the planning area's traditional "share" of this new housing demand would be on the order of 15% of the total or a demand for about 750 single-family units and about 500 multifamily units, most of which would be in the south half of the planning area. Overall, the planning area appears to have sufficient vacant housing capacity to generally meet this direct demand. Additional housing stock would be needed for the increased civilian demand. Still more housing capacity will be needed to absorb currently deployed troops if they were to return. Additional studies are being undertaken to better understand the

dynamics of deployments, family relocation behaviors and the credit status of military personnel. All of these factors have a significant impact on the actual nature of the additional housing demand that will occur.

iv. The population and employment impacts associated with the Fort Carson expansion are expected to be better understood as information from Phase 2 of the Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan is completed in 2009.

d. Transportation

i. In 2007, jurisdiction for Academy Boulevard was transferred from the Colorado Department of Transportation to the City as part of the “swap agreement” which, among other things, included Powers Boulevard going to the State. The City’s Intermodal Transportation Plan identifies Academy as a principal arterial north of Platte Avenue, and an expressway to the south. This classification has been in place for several decades and is reflected in adopted long range plans. Within the planning area there is a decrease in the frequency of access points from north to south. Both current and modeled future traffic congestion on Academy Boulevard is highest in the vicinity of Platte and Galley, and is considerably less pronounced south of Pikes Peak Blvd.

ii. Currently there is no adopted access management plan or transportation corridor vision specific to Academy Boulevard. Right-of-way width along the majority of this segment of Academy ranges between as little as about 110 feet wide in the northern part of the planning area to as wide as 170 feet in the southern area. Additional right-of-way is set aside at certain intersections, notably at Platte and Hancock. In portions of the Northern Sub-area this right-of-way is divided, with privately owned commercial property located in the medians.

iii. Over the recent years, CDOT, the City and the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority have completed significant safety and capacity improvements primarily at intersections along the corridor. These changes have largely been targeted toward intersections with an accident rating in the top 25 City-wide.

iv. Mountain Metropolitan Transit’s Academy Boulevard bus Route (# 25) carries substantially more trips than any route in the system due primarily to the length of the route. However, the rating of this route in terms of riders per mile is approximately the average for all routes. Mountain Metro’s 2035 Long Range Transit Plan and other studies identify Academy as a potential corridor for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or other possible options for rapid transit.

v. The bike, pedestrian and trail system that directly serves Academy Boulevard is fairly limited. The system of sidewalks directly adjacent to Academy Boulevard is sporadic. The Sand Creek and Rock Island Trails cross the corridor within the planning area and are major components of the regional trail system. The City’s Bike Plan does not show routes along Academy Boulevard in most of the planning area, but instead focuses primarily on the Chelton and Murray alignment, for existing and proposed major north/south bike routes.

e. Other Community Services and Facilities

i. Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) reports no significant concerns with current utility capacity or with accommodating most options for development or redevelopment in the corridor.

ii. CSU owns and maintains a major double circuit (115 kV) electric transmission corridor which parallels and in some places runs down the center of Academy Boulevard. This above-ground transmission line and generally 100-foot wide utility easement have a major visual impact on the corridor and affect the layout and character of land uses in its vicinity. The current policy of CSU is to allow undergrounding of utilities providing funding is provided to match dollars that may be available from CSU. As a general planning number, it is estimated that the total cost of undergrounding segments of this line would be about \$ 2.8 Million per mile.

iii. The planning area is equally divided between Colorado Springs School District 11 and Harrison District 2 with the boundary line being generally along Airport Road. Each District has 10 public and/or charter school facilities within the planning area including Mitchell High School in District 11 and Sierra High School in District 2. Most schools in the planning area are operating with enrollments well below building capacity. Both Districts have experienced declining enrollments in much of the planning area and throughout their districts. These declines appear to be largely due to an aggregate of shifts to "choice" schools outside of the planning area (either to other schools in the same district or to another district). There may also an overall demographic trend toward less school age children living in northern part of the planning area.

iv. In the case of School District 11, their students at facilities in the planning area have higher poverty rates as measured by Free and Reduced Lunch programs and lower academic performance measures, compared with District-wide averages. In the case of Harrison District 2, schools in the planning area compare favorably with other parts of the District, but the overall District is challenged by the same issues as District 11. Both Districts are experiencing a rapid acceleration in the growth of their populations of ESL (English as a Second Language) students, particularly in the planning area, with several elementary schools having over 25% of their enrollment eligible for ESL programs.

vi. With some notable exceptions such as Palmer Park, the Valley Hi Golf Course and the Sand Creek Greenway, the amount of preserved open space in or directly adjacent to the planning area is fairly limited and, overall the park and open space system has limited linkages.

vii. The area is generally well served by sports complexes, community, and neighborhood parks, with most neighborhoods meeting or exceeding standards related to maximum distance from these facilities. There are some exceptions in the older neighborhoods in the northern part of the planning area that were developed prior to adoption of the higher current standards for neighborhood and community parks. To the south and east there are some cases where planned capital improvements have not yet been funded.

viii. Over the past few decades, the Parks Department has invested a significant share of their resources in park and recreation projects that serve this area. This includes some use of dedicated Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) funds along with a significant share of Conservation Trust Fund dollars spent on facilities which serve this area.

f. Public Safety and Code Enforcement

i. Most of the planning area falls within the within the Police Department's Sand Creek Division area. Although there is evidence of recent progress in reducing the rate of crime within the corridor, the crime rate within the area remains significantly higher than the City-wide averages. For example between 2004 and mid-2008,

31.0 % of all the homicides in the City took place in the planning area. In the first 8 months of 2008, the planning area accounted for about 29.2% of total violent crimes and 22.1% of total nonviolent crimes in the City. These numbers translate to a “per capita” violent crime rate in the planning area approximately twice the City-wide average, and a non-violent crime rate of 1.4 times the average.

ii. Various “hot spot” analyses within an around the planning area shows that concentrations of higher incidence of crime are fairly widespread. Areas of higher incidence of violent crimes tend to be focused on apartment complexes while non-violent crimes tend to be focused both in multifamily areas and in association with shopping centers.

iii. There is strong anecdotal and some statistical evidence to suggest that concerns about crime have had a significant negative influence on the economic development, land use and business investment decisions within the area.

iv. The 3 fire stations which are located in the planning area are generally the busiest in the City. However, Fire Department service within the planning area currently meets or exceeds all planning standards. Therefore, no additions to capacity or other major changes are anticipated within the planning area at this time. Station #11, which is located near the Mission Trace Shopping Center may be considered for closure and replacement by 2 new stations at some point in the future. However, this option is not being actively pursued at this time, as the Department currently has a priority to serve those growing areas of the City where service does not meet standards.

v. Staffs of City Land Use Code Enforcement and the Housing Code Enforcement Unit do not maintain specific quantitative records for the planning area but note a higher-than average number of complaints in the planning area. A number of these land use complaints pertain to commercial property owners first obtaining conditional use approval for uses such as auto repair and then not meeting the conditions of those approvals. Housing Code Enforcement deploys more staff in this area compared with others in the City and process more complaints regarding deteriorated housing. In both cases, staffs observe owners and tenants allowing initially-required landscaping to die. They also note enforcement complications arising from language diversity, absentee owners and differing cultural expectations.

g. Public Process and Civic Engagement

i. Given the large number of individual business and commercial property owners with an interest in the area, their diversity and the fact that several owners do not live in the County, there will likely be no easy opportunities to rely on a small existing or newly created stakeholders group to fully represent the collective commercial interests in the area. A combination of stakeholder outreach efforts will likely be required as the planning process moves forward.

ii. Because of the relatively limited amount and scale of land use development activity in the area, and the wide distribution of this activity, there will likely need to be outreach to the wider development community through entities such as the Housing and Building Association. As of the date of this *Profile*, there is no active Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, which may complicate coordination with the Hispanic business community.

iii. Responses from the Police Department's annual Citywide Citizen Survey indicate the majority of residents in the planning area and immediately surrounding

areas have a favorable perception of their neighborhoods and City services. However, the proportion of negative responses and perceptions is much higher for this area, than for the balance of the City.

iv. Effective participation of the neighborhoods in this planning area will likely be a challenge given the size of the area, the limited number of active organizations and the lower levels of civic engagement noted above. Alternative citizen outreach strategies will be required, along with the need for some indirect representation provided by the leadership of the City and larger community groups such as the Council of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO) and the Urban League.

C. Potential Revitalization Opportunities

- The combination of size, population numbers, land use capacity, and dynamic changes within the planning area present an opportunity to develop a comprehensive vision for the area through the involvement of stakeholders and strategic partners.
- Academy Boulevard itself presents an opportunity for integration within this larger land use vision through adoption of a vision and corridor plan for the roadway itself, possibly with a multi-modal urban cross section and access management plan supporting eventual bus rapid transit or other forms of enhanced transit.
- The southern part of the planning area is likely to be directly and positively influenced by the ongoing expansion of Fort Carson, road improvements such as the Proby Parkway project and proximity to new residential and employment development in areas adjacent to, but outside of the planning area.
- The availability of vacant, never-developed properties, combined with vacant and underutilized shopping centers, creates an opportunity for substantial development and redevelopment, particularly in the southern half of the planning area. Due to their proximity to major roadways and existing commercial developments, many of these locations have potential for higher density development of various types compared with many previously developed areas within the corridor.
- The planning area has the capacity available to accommodate the additional primary job creation which will be essential to creating a market for commercial and residential development/redevelopment.
- The southern part of the planning area, in particular, has the potential to flexibly adapt to the land use needs of the real estate market.
- Within the larger planning area, there are a number of smaller areas which present opportunities to be “dynamic drivers” for the focus of development and redevelopment of the area due to their location, availability of vacant land, and/or the fairly low cost basis in some existing development.
- The overall retail “leakage” to be identified as part of the market study, which will be completed for the area, should indicate a current unmet demand for additional commercial development in the area.

- The changing demographics of the planning area present an opportunity for new and different investments in commercial businesses, employment centers and residential developments. Accommodating these demographically-driven land use changes will require changes to traditional economic development and land use approaches.
- Much of the necessary infrastructure is already in place to support new development, redevelopment and revitalization efforts along the corridor. This is particularly true in the southern half of the planning area, where there is generally “excess capacity” in the road system and utilities.
- The City currently has land use regulatory tools in place to flexibly accommodate the potential for development and redevelopment of the area, including mixed uses and higher density attainable housing of various types. However, there are opportunities for targeted enhancements of regulations with the objective of better accommodating the market realities associated with the planning area.
- Both school districts which serve the area, have excess building capacity and could readily absorb the additional students which might be generated by most new development or redevelopment.
- Various short term and long term incentives and funding options are available or potentially available for strategic investment within the corridor. (Refer to Section I.D- Ongoing Efforts and Recommendations for Future Planning and Actions below).
- An opportunity presents itself to convene and facilitate an interdepartmental Project Team for the purposes of maintaining a focus on the Academy Boulevard revitalization area, coordinating ongoing investments and programs, monitoring progress, and working with other stakeholders on the future vision and elements of its implementation.
- Such a Project Team could work in coordination with local and regional business and community groups on the plans, their implementation, and their monitoring.

D. Ongoing Efforts and Recommendations for Future Actions

1. Introduction

Thus far, the approach taken toward implementing City Council’s strategic direction to engage in revitalization of the Academy Boulevard corridor has not been a “pause to plan”. Going forward, such a pause is also not recommended, and in many cases simply would not make sense in light of ongoing private development initiatives as well as public projects and programs. Staff recommends a more comprehensive, encompassing and coordinated approach toward developing a land use and economic development vision and program for the area. This process would take place concurrently along with ongoing and

shorter term or more incremental efforts related to stabilization, revitalization and investment within the corridor.

This section is organized to describe actual and potential Ongoing, Short Term, Medium Term and Long Term efforts. An activity is identified as short term if it might reasonably be substantially undertaken by the end of 2009. The medium term is defined as years 2-5 (2010 through 2013) and the long term refers to activities which would not be substantially undertaken within the next 5 years. All options, but especially those potentially recommended for the longer term, are understood to be contingent upon further study, community and business input, ultimate feasibility and Council Direction.

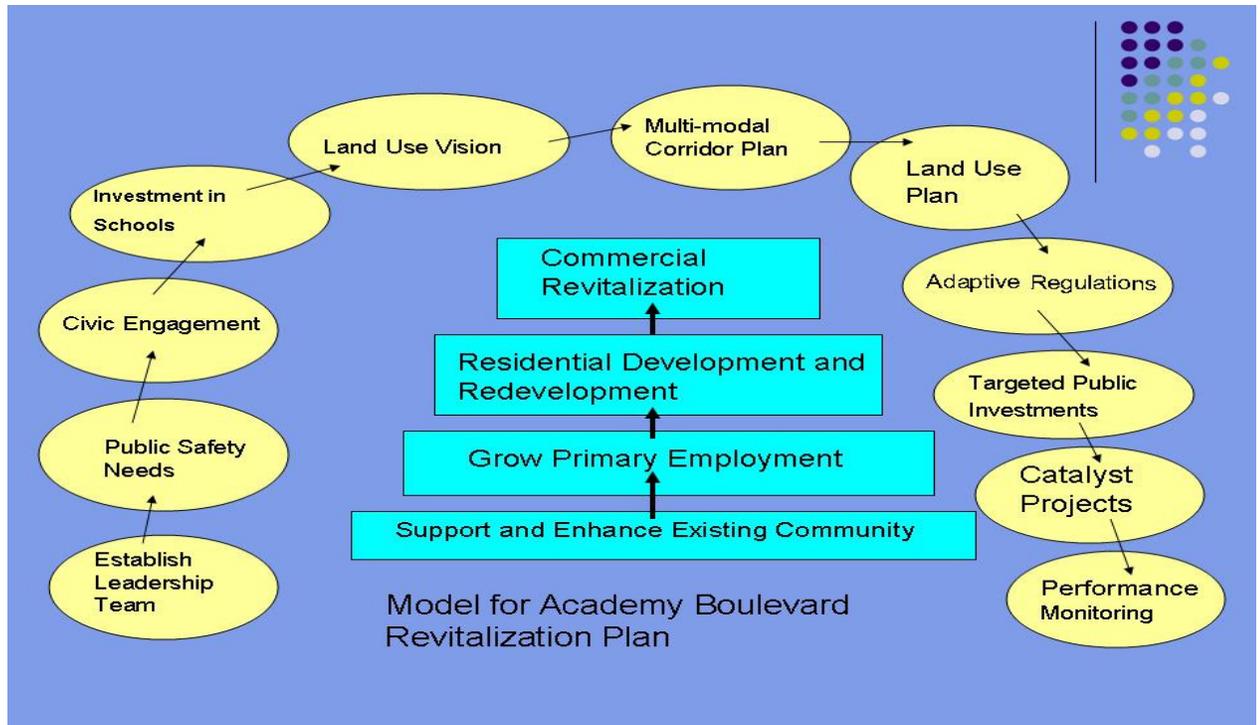
2. Assumptions

There are certain overriding assumptions that set the context for these recommendations. One is that the area is large enough that revitalization strategies are more apt to be successful if they recognize and in many cases adapt to, rather than attempt to fundamentally alter the demographic and socioeconomic forces that have defined and will continue to define the area. It is also assumed that the development pattern in the majority of the planning area is largely established as a more or less pre-existing condition, particularly in existing residential neighborhoods. Most of the more encompassing new development and land use change will occur on vacant parcels, and within areas of existing non-residential development. The private market will continue to be the dominant driver behind development and redevelopment in the area. However, it is further assumed that public plans, regulatory decisions, public investments, and cooperative quasi-governmental partnerships among private developers could have a substantial positive influence on the land future of the area.

3. Recommended Revitalization Approach

Figure 1 provides a model for the overall revitalization planning and implementation approach recommended for the corridor. The model is presented as a set of building blocks that first assumes the success of any revitalization effort will be contingent on supporting the existing neighborhoods and businesses in the area. The next foundational element needs to be investments in new and retained jobs in and near the planning area. The focus needs to be on primary employment, as these jobs create the basis for economic vitality. Additional employment in the area will, in turn create the demand for additional housing. Additional housing and primary employment create the market for commercial businesses, and retail uses in particular. A certain amount of retail revitalization can occur independently by capturing a larger share of the regional market. However, fundamentally the four building blocks need to work in coordination.

Figure 1
Overall Framework for Revitalization Plan



For the revitalization model to work, there needs to be City, stakeholder and neighborhood leadership. There then needs to be a succession of needs met and processes followed. These are depicted as the general progression of steps that form an outline around the building blocks. The steps do not need to be followed in a completely linear sequence, but they do need to occur in a manner which is logically consistent with this progression.

The first step is to establish a leadership team to set and maintain the priority, focus and direction for the project. Next, the basic health, safety and welfare needs of the community need to be addressed. The three most significant of core community needs identified at this time are higher crime rates, issues related to schools and those financial and related challenges associated with lower-than-average socioeconomic measures. Then, a dynamic land use vision for the larger planning area should be developed through a community process. As part of the core of this land use vision, there needs to be vision for how Academy Boulevard itself is expected to function as a multi-modal transportation corridor.

Based on these visions, the overall land use plan and transportation corridor plan can be fashioned. Then, regulations can be adapted, more detailed land use plans can be developed, targeted catalyst development areas can be identified, projects can be started and strategic public investments made, all in coordination with the private sector and neighborhoods.

4. Ongoing Activities

There are a variety of activities related to revitalization which have been and will continue to be pursued while the larger planning process moves forward. These current activities are presented by City Departments, whereas potential future activities are listed primarily by activity type, since it may not be clear at this time which Department(s) may be primarily responsible.

a. Economic Development

i. The Comprehensive Planning Division has developed this Profile and analysis of the planning area, in conjunction with other Divisions and Departments, and is in a position to continue to monitor and analyze trends, and is also poised to move forward with the participatory planning process when given direction.

ii. Through its retail revitalization program, the Business Development Division continues to work with a number of commercial clients and enhancement projects along the corridor. Currently the Division is working with about 8-10 active prospects in the planning area. One example is the Lowes project in the Citadel Crossing Shopping Center which is continuing to proceed through the final permitting and implementation processes. The Division has also prepared market study information for the area using an interactive model, and can use this model to evaluate different informational needs as these arise.

iii. The Housing Division administers a variety of ongoing City-wide housing and foreclosure programs which impact the area. They specifically are continuing to address options to secure funding for the 200-unit Whitney Young Manor apartment project near the intersection of Academy and Delta Drive.

b. Community Development

i. Community Development Department continuously reviews and processes current land development applications within the planning area under the broad Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan direction to promote revitalization of the corridor. The Department also pursues land use enforcement cases subject to the same general direction. The Department coordinates closely with Economic Development and other Departments to assure timely and effective service, especially in the case of projects with revitalization benefits.

c. City Engineering and PPRTA

i. City Engineering and the Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority are currently managing a number of transportation and drainage-related projects and programs which affect the corridor. Of particular note is the Proby Parkway project and its interchange with Academy Boulevard. Planning and engineering for this project are well underway. Construction of this \$50+ million project is anticipated to begin in 2010 and be completed in about 2013. Engineering has also recently completed a number of intersection improvements along Academy including at Pikes Peak and Academy and Fountain and Academy. The Engineering Department is presently planning reconstruction of the segment located near Academy and Astrozon Boulevards which has been impacted by an old landfill.

ii. Several drainage projects have either been recently completed or are presently underway. These include major work in the Sand Creek drainage way.

d. Transit

i. In 2009 Mountain Metropolitan Transit (MMT) will close its current transfer facility located on Astrozon Boulevard, and reconfigure it as a main line transfer point directly on Academy Boulevard. MMT is also actively pursuing region transportation planning funds in order to evaluate the corridor for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or other mass transit options. Options for funding this study may be available in 2009. In the short term the 2009 City's transit budget cuts should have a limited impact on core services within the planning area.

e. Green Infrastructure

i. The City Parks Department has continued to develop and enhance neighborhood and community parks which serve the planning area. Over \$3 million in Trails, Open Space and Parks (TOPS) funds have been spent in the planning area since the inception of that program. Funded projects have included major improvements in the Sand Creek Trail, the Homestead Trail and the Rock Island Trail. Within the past few years Conservation Trust Funds have also been used to construct and/or develop facilities including the Deerfield Park Sprayground, Wildflower Park and Van Diest Park, among others.

f. Public Safety

i. City Police (CSPD) continue to dedicate higher than average of amounts of patrol and community policing resources to the Sand Creek District. Although comparative per capita crime rates remain relatively high, CSPD have succeeded in reducing the crime rate for many categories of crime in the planning area between 2006 and the present. Some positive examples include a collaborative project with School Resource Officers, Mitchell High School and the Rustic Hills Park Apartments, and other efforts to reduce violent crime including robbery and sexual assaults.

ii. In January, 2008, the Colorado Springs Fire Department opened a new facility to replace Fire Station 8 at a location about 4/10ths of a mile east of the original location. The total cost of the capital project to replace this outdated 1960's era station, was about \$4.5 million. The Department is continually evaluating options for making minor modifications to maximize and improve their service within the planning area, but is not currently pursuing any major changes because the current service levels meet or exceed adopted standards.

5. Recommendations for Future Action

a. Short Term

Recommended short term programs and activities are those which either continue ongoing efforts, or those new projects which would be substantially initiated in 2009. There is a continuum of certainty for these efforts that runs from those already funded and programmed through those where there has been no firm decision to proceed and/or where a guaranteed funding source has not yet been established. These short term recommendations are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1
Short Term (2009) Corridor Recommendations**

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
Leadership	Authorize Corridor Planning and Vision Leadership Team	City Council	Leadership Team to provide input, direction and leadership for future planning efforts
Land Use Planning and Economic Development	Complete the Area Profile Specifically initiate and complete an updateable inventory of area businesses Initiate and substantially complete corridor visioning process	Planning, Engineering and Project Team	Deliverable will be a completed Profile which will support the ongoing visioning and planning efforts Deliverable will be an overall Corridor Vision Plan by the end of 2009
Code Revisions	Initiate work program on interim updates of regulations	Community Development Department and Comprehensive Planning Division	Should include a reevaluation of the Mixed Use Zone District
Transportation Planning	Secure funding for BRT/mass transit study of Academy Boulevard. Initiate comprehensive evaluation of Academy Boulevard as a future multi-modal transportation corridor and create a Transportation Vision	Engineering, Planning and Leadership/Project Teams	Include recommendations for a new functional classification and cross section for the corridor
Planning Coordination	Participate in and leverage Fort Carson Military Impact Planning	PPACG and Planning	Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan- Phase 2 will be completed by 12/09 The consultant will specifically address the Academy corridor Data and findings will be incorporated in plans
Planning for Housing Programs	Designate Neighborhood Strategy Areas (NSAs)	Housing, Engineering, Planning	Work in conjunction with other plans and efforts to identify potential opportunities for NSA designation

Table 1 - Continued

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
Housing Implementation	Pursue Funding for Whitney Young Manor Project and others as needed	Housing	Continue to pursue funding for this project with understanding that capital and tax credit markets are tight
Economic Development	Continue Existing Programs Retail Enhancement Complete Market Study for the Planning Area	Business Development and Planning	Continue to work with and assist retail, primary employment and residential development prospects within the corridor
School Districts	School Utilization Decisions	School Districts	Finalize school closure and realignment decisions related to School District 11 Utilization Study
Transportation	Proby Parkway Evaluate and Potentially Modify Speed Zones on Academy Boulevard	Engineering	Continue to engage the impacted residential and business communities during final engineering for the project
Parks	Continue making improvements to the Sand Creek Trail, the Rock Island Trail & the Homestead Trail	Parks	Continue to improve and repair trails as needed
Police	Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) Projects	Police	CSPD can conduct an in-depth analysis of specific crime problems and design POP projects with the goal of decreasing crime
Fire Protection	No major new activities or changes planned Participate in the planning process to ensure that roadway interconnections are encouraged	Fire	Service currently meets standards, and capacity is currently available to support limited redevelopment
Monitoring	Monitor trends and progress	Planning	Monitor and report on key trends and measurements in the planning area on an annual basis

b. Medium Term

Medium term recommendations include projects, tasks and efforts are those that could be substantially initiated or completed within 5 years (by 2013). Table 2 summarizes these. Within these recommendations, there is continuum of certainty which ranges from projects that are fully committed at this time through efforts that will be contingent on allocation of future resources and then to others that may or may not ultimately be recommended at all depending on the outcome of the planning process.

**Table 2
Medium Term (2010-2013) Corridor Recommendations**

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
Leadership	Continue Role of Corridor Planning and Vision Leadership Team	City Council	Leadership and Project Teams will monitor ongoing plans and implementation efforts
Land Use Planning	Complete and adopt corridor vision and component plans	Planning, Engineering and Leadership/Project Teams	Deliverables would include an adopted City-initiated Master Plan for the planning area
Code Revisions	Revise Zoning Code and Related Regulations as Needed	Comprehensive Planning, Teams and Development Community	Revise codes as needed to accommodate and streamline implementation of adopted plans and recommendations; possibly adopt one or more Form Based Zoning Districts for part of the corridor
Transportation Planning	Adopt Multi-modal Transportation Plan for the Corridor	Engineering, Planning and Teams	Incorporate recommendations of mass transit/ BRT study Include access management plan; amend component elements of City Intermodal Transportation Plan as needed

Table 2- Continued

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
School Districts	School Utilization Actions	School Districts	Implement formal school closure and realignment decisions related to School District 11 Utilization Study
Planning Coordination	Follow through on findings of Fort Carson Regional Growth Plan- Phase 2 Process	PPACG and Planning	Incorporate formal findings and added information in the component plans
Strategic Investments	To be determined	To be determined	
Planning for Housing Programs	Continue Designation of Neighborhood Strategy Areas (NSAs)	Housing, Engineering, Planning	Use new planning information and adopted plans to identify additional NSA and other designation of targeted housing areas
Housing Implementation	Fund Housing Projects Consistent with Adopted Vision and Plans	Housing	Continue to pursue targeted opportunities
Economic Development	Refine and Implement Business Enhancement Program	Business Development and Planning	Focus on primary job creation in and around the planning area consistent with adopted plans; also assist in mixed use and retail enhancement projects
Economic Development-Financing	Establish Funding Districts and Plans	Economic Development, other Departments	Establish Urban Renewal Areas, Business Improvement Districts consistent with the adopted plans and in coordination with stakeholders
Transportation	Complete Proby Parkway; obtain funding for and extend Hancock Expressway through to Powers	Engineering	

Table 2- Continued

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
Parks	Continue to look for new park locations and acquire new park land. Continue to acquire necessary easements for future trail corridors (i.e. Homestead Trail)	Parks	Park land acquisition would be based on the amount of residential infill and redevelopment projects
Police	Conduct long term evaluation of police response in the target area	Police Department	Evaluate previous and existing POP projects for effectiveness, continue to monitor for diffusion effects, research evidence based best practices for law enforcement response to Urban Renewal Areas, and continue to deploy appropriate staffing levels to target area based on crime and calls for service data
Fire	No major activities planned; see Table 1 above	Fire Department	
Monitoring	Continue to Monitor Trends and Progress	Planning	Monitor and report on key trends and measurements in the planning area on an annual basis

c. Long Term

Long term recommendations for the Corridor are those which will not be substantially undertaken within the next five years (See Table 3). They are necessarily preliminary in nature in large part because the visioning and planning process has not yet been completed. More complete and detailed recommendations will be expected as an outcome of these processes.

**Table 3
Preliminary Long Term (2013 and Beyond) Corridor Recommendations**

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
Leadership	Continue Role of Corridor Planning and Vision Leadership Team as needed	City Council	Continue to rely on Leadership Team or an evolved organization to direct and monitor ongoing plans and implementation efforts
Plan Implementation	Continue Implementation of Plans	Various Departments and Leadership/Project Teams	
Planning Coordination	To be determined	To be determined	
Strategic Investments	To be determined	To be determined	
Planning for Housing Programs	Continue Designation of Neighborhood Strategy Areas (NSAs)	Housing, Engineering, Planning	Use new planning information and adopted plans to identify additional NSA and other designation of targeted housing areas
Housing Implementation	Fund Housing Projects Consistent with Adopted Vision and Plans	Housing	Continue to pursue targeted opportunities
Economic Development	Continue to Implement Business Enhancement Program	Business Development and Comprehensive Planning	Focus on primary job creation in and around the planning area consistent with adopted plans; also assist in mixed use and retail enhancement projects
Transportation	Complete extension of Hancock Expressway through to Powers	Engineering	
Transportation/ Transit	Implement Multi-modal Corridor Option	Engineering, Transit, Comprehensive Planning	Implement public, public/private and privately funded improvements as identified in plans and based on available opportunities, secure State and regional funding for these projects

Table 3- Continued

Topic	Activity	Responsible Entity	Comments
Parks	Development and planning of South East Community Park. Completion of the three (3) trails through this portion of the City	Parks	Development of the South East Community Park is contingent on funding available within the TOPS program
Police	Continued efforts to work collaboratively and respond proactively to reduce crime	Police Department	Engage community stakeholders by expanding POP projects to include appropriate community groups and neighborhood representatives
Fire	Review capacity at this time and consider need for relocation of Station #11	Fire Department	Would require construction and staffing 2 new fire stations to replace Station 11; not currently in long range plan.
Monitoring	Continue to monitor trends and progress and adapt plans		Monitor and report on key trends and measurements in the planning area on an annual basis