

2014-2018 Strategic Plan



Jobs ➔ Transforming Government ➔ Building Community

Mayor's Office
City of Colorado Springs
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City of Colorado Springs

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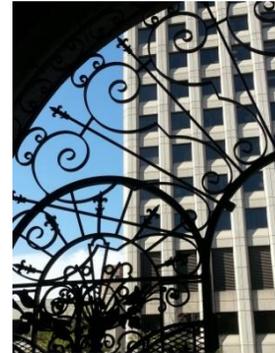
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INTRODUCTION

Colorado Springs, a City of over 400,000 people, has grown into a place where people want to live, work and vacation, building on its foundations of natural beauty, hard-working individuals, a health and wellness-focused culture, and friendly, generous, community-oriented spirit.

Colorado Springs is unique – our proximity to outdoor amenities, focus on health, extensive parks, trails and open spaces, strong sense of community, together with a western heritage and military and Olympic legacy, defines Colorado Springs.



In the last five years, our community has faced difficult challenges - fires, flooding, economic downturns. However, the spirit of Colorado Springs, embodied by our sense of community, compassionate nature, and collaborative neighborhoods, keeps the City strong.

We recognize that the services we provide and the positive changes we strive for are enhanced through our partnerships within the community. Our volunteers, community groups, economic development partners, local businesses, and visitor's associations, as well as input from our citizens help to shape our strategies, our priorities and our services.

The 2014-2018 Strategic Plan prioritizes our services, determines resource allocation, and fosters the way we do business to further the goals of the community and build upon the City of Colorado Springs' high quality of life.

The Strategic Plan aims to drive economic growth through strategies that increase the job base and residential/living options in the City, enhance public safety through proven techniques and new, innovative approaches, and join community efforts to work together to maintain and improve upon our City's best assets – our parks, recreational amenities, entrepreneurial spirit and desire to help those in need.

Throughout the Strategic Plan, the City seeks to continually transform City government and City services through encouraging employees to find creative and innovative ways of accomplishing more within resource constraints, and leveraging technology and community partnerships to drive a higher performing City government.

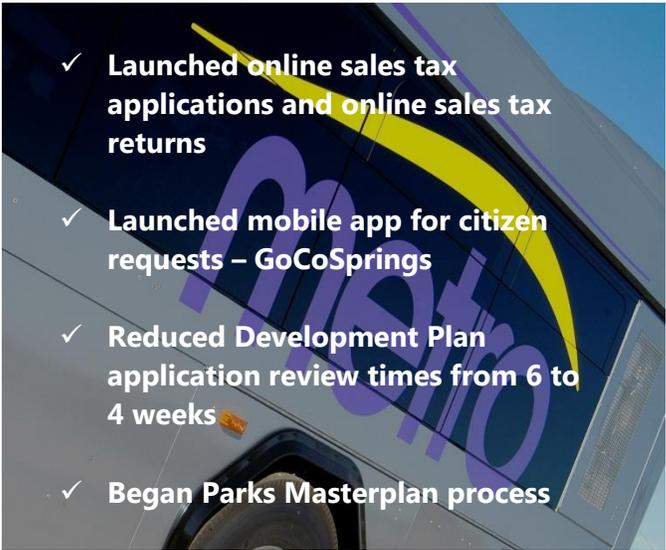
The resources the City needs to improve the quality of life for all exist beyond the walls of City government. Only a collaborative community can build a stronger future for Colorado Springs. The goals, objectives, and strategies laid out in this plan seek to leverage Colorado Springs' community spirit and resources, to do just that – build a stronger community together!

2013 CITY HIGHLIGHTS

Continuous improvement of customer service

Opened Fire Station 21

Instituted evening bus service

- 
- ✓ **Launched online sales tax applications and online sales tax returns**
 - ✓ **Launched mobile app for citizen requests – GoCoSprings**
 - ✓ **Reduced Development Plan application review times from 6 to 4 weeks**
 - ✓ **Began Parks Masterplan process**

Innovation and reinvention of core functions to deliver maximum community value per tax dollar spent

Invested ~\$9M in two major stormwater projects

Outsourced fleet maintenance (\$4M in savings over 5 years)

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- ✓ **CSPD contracted with Leads Online to track all items pawned within the City**
 - ✓ **Launched the City's Information Technology Strategic Plan, planning for enhanced citizen engagement, and data-driven business decisions**
 - ✓ **Renegotiated Humane Society contract to realize savings of \$1.4 million over three years**

Celebrating and connecting community, working with other Front Range elected officials in reaching mutual goals, and achieving community partnerships to enhance City services

Opened Pikes Peak for cyclists

City for Champions Proposed & State Funding Approved

- 
- ✓ **Partnered with health organizations & private organizations to conduct Clinic Days**
 - ✓ **Partnered with REI and RMFI to build Section 16 Trail**
 - ✓ **Together with Fort Carson, the City entered into an agreement with Armed Forces Service Corp to continue serving injured service members at Fort Carson's Warrior Transition Battalion**

VISION AND MISSION

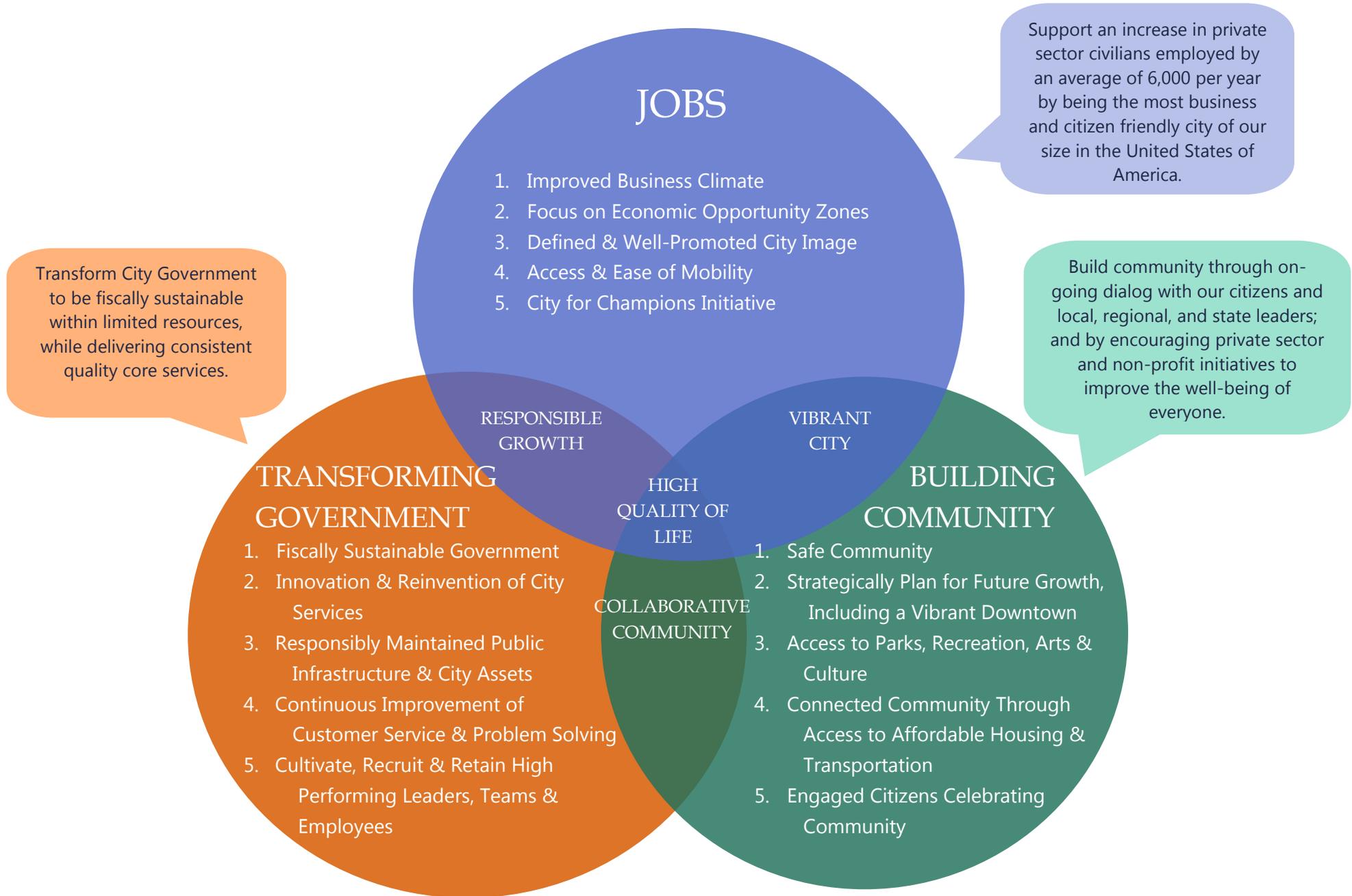
Vision: With America the Beautiful as our heritage, hard work as our foundation, and Western optimism as our guide, Colorado Springs will be a successful city where people love to live, work and vacation.

Mission: As stewards of the public trust, we will serve the people of Colorado Springs with core services effectively, efficiently and courteously with the wise use and management of our resources.



ASSUMPTIONS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. A safe community remains the number one priority for the City.
2. Economic growth and the resulting increase in revenue growth will be the driving force to the City's long-term fiscal sustainability. Targeted, performance-based incentives and catalyst projects will spur economic growth. Commercial and residential infill will positively affect revenues and provide density needed for more efficient service delivery.
3. With the current combined revenue streams from all funds, and their prescribed uses, it will be daunting to achieve the level of public services the community desires unless revenues increase substantially or we can find ways to repurpose existing revenues and rethink how the City provides its services.
4. Colorado Springs' competitive advantages are in the City's stunning natural environment, advanced education opportunities, recreational amenities, history of health, wellness and active lifestyles, growing arts scene, strong ties to amateur and elite sport, and tradition of service to community and country. Preserving and enhancing the unique features of Colorado Springs will continue to make Colorado Springs an attractive destination for visitors, draw prospective employers and inspire growth of new industries.
5. All of our citizens and visitors are valued and will benefit from successful implementation of the strategic plan. The City must work diligently to build trust and engage citizens so that they become ambassadors. Working with citizens, business community leaders, employees and other governmental entities is essential to success.



CATALYST PROJECTS

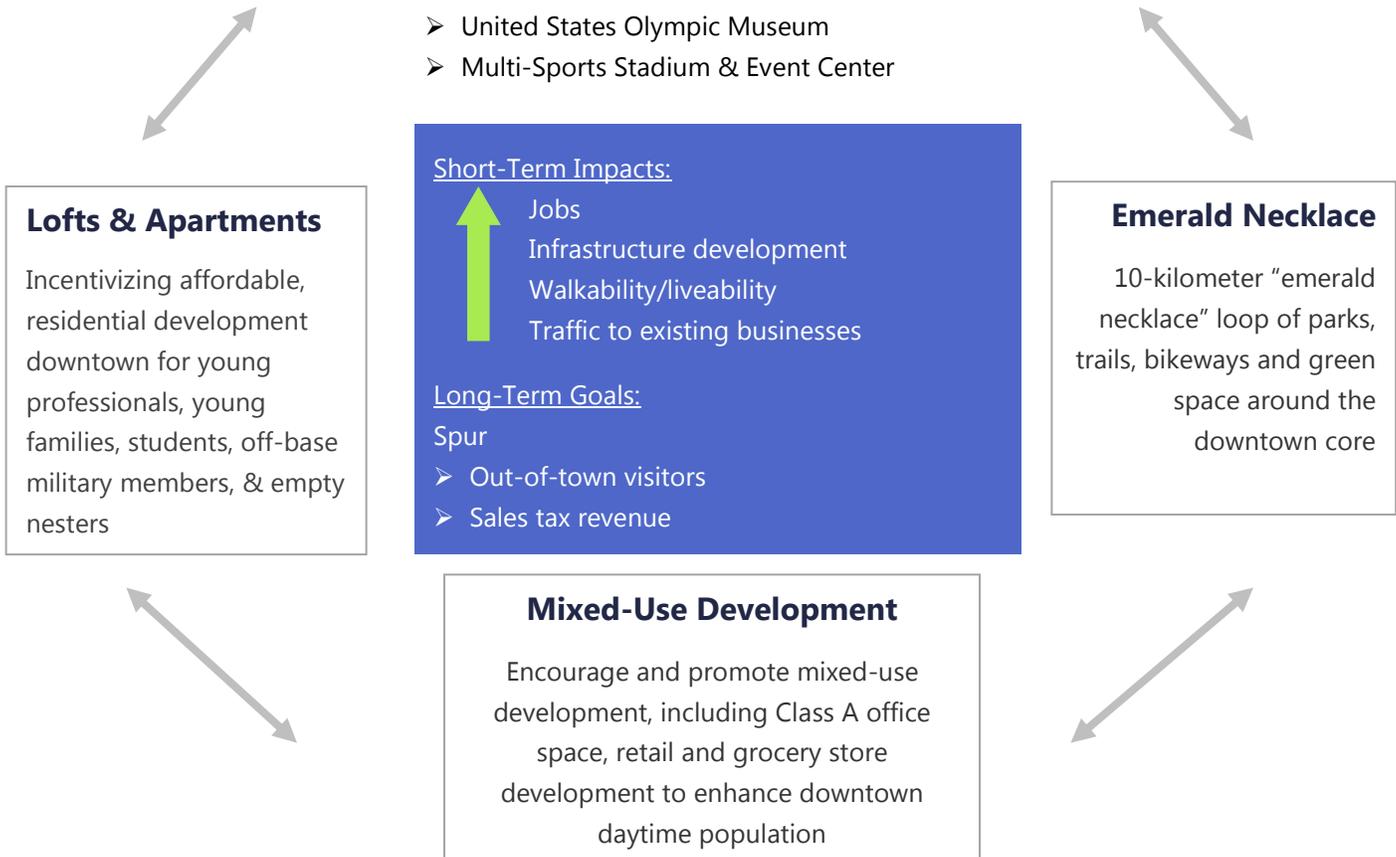
What projects stimulate further development, enhance the quality of life for all citizens, promote our surrounding natural beauty, build on our engaged community? What lays the foundation for the future of Colorado Springs?

A VIBRANT, LIVEABLE, ACTIVE DOWNTOWN



Downtown Initiatives:

- United States Olympic Museum
- Multi-Sports Stadium & Event Center



Colorado Spring's greatest assets – parks, trails, our Olympic heritage, entrepreneurial spirit, and active, engaged citizens – can be leveraged to drive a more vibrant downtown. However, the four priority projects for downtown, shown above, depend on each other to drive the desired short-term impacts and long-term goals.

Through Economic Vitality initiatives, and partnering with local development agencies, developers, community groups, and business associations, the City will work to further these downtown priority projects that will cultivate a vibrant, walkable, active downtown.

CATALYST PROJECTS (continued)

Key Development Opportunities & Strategies

The City of Colorado Springs has a substantial amount of vacant land available and prime for development; to leverage these opportunities to generate economic growth and build community, the City has identified key areas and strategies for development

Key Opportunities for Development

Airport Office Park

Create an aeronautical zone to provide tax incentives for aviation industry growth, increasing jobs, airline traffic and driving business growth in the area

Banning Lewis Ranch

Master Plan Banning Lewis Ranch to promote fiscally sustainable development with a job-housing balance including mixed use development, to create a liveable and walkable community

South Academy & North Nevada Economic Opportunity Zones (EOZs)

Apply EOZ task force recommendations, and work extensively with the community to determine job-generating strategies that build more cohesive, economically thriving quarters

Copper Ridge

Promote high-end retail area on a regional, high-traffic corridor to provide a higher quality of life, stem sales tax leakage and increase jobs and further development in the area

Interquest Parkway Area

Incentivize additional industrial park development to leverage recent growth; transportation connectivity and proximity to housing provides job-housing balance

The City's Approach to Infill

Infill – Incentivizing Urban Villages & Live, Work, Play Communities

Where appropriate, the City will seek to encourage development of Urban Villages or Live, Work, Play Communities in areas that are currently underdeveloped, by promoting:

- Medium density development
- Mixed-use zoning
- Utilization of existing infrastructure
- Expansion of existing trails, open spaces, parks
- Initiatives of entrepreneurs/new businesses, and creative arts

These development projects and concepts provide opportunities for the City to transform the City's sprawl into networks of communities, with a greater diversity in retail, entertainment and living options, building neighborhoods, creating more jobs, with liveable and walkable communities that enhance Colorado Springs as a desired place to live, work and vacation.

CORE STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal 1: Jobs



1.1 Improved Business Climate

- A. Enhance and promote business retention and expansion through performance-based incentives, issue resolution, Rapid Response and improving information readily available to potential businesses on the City's website
- B. Streamline development review processes, and evaluate regulations, fees and rules related to business development
- C. Conduct an active local industry visitation program and implement a City-wide "ambassador program" to incorporate business community relationships across all departments and further assist businesses in understanding City processes and gaining important information and contacts
- D. Encourage local business development, startups and entrepreneurialism through collaboration with existing economic development partners including universities, incubators, business associations, and venture capital investors
- E. Create an online business hub for permits, applications and licenses to improve the ease of doing business with the City and to easily track progress of applications
- F. Invest in tourism and tourism-related marketing through cooperative relationships with the CVB and other tourism-driving organizations

1.2 Focus on Economic Opportunity Zones (EOZs) (Downtown, North Nevada/UCCS Corridor, South Academy)

- A. Establish a stakeholder task force to conduct SWOT analyses to determine impediments to redevelopment in Economic Opportunity Zones and develop strategies for mitigating these impediments
- B. With the stakeholder task force, craft a vision and redevelopment strategy for each EOZ and define specific outcomes
- C. Identify anchor projects that stimulate infill development and realize the vision in each EOZ
- D. Actively market and promote redevelopment of EOZ areas by reaching out to developer and broker communities
- E. Consider public and public-private funding options for implementing recommendations of the redevelopment strategy

1.3 Defined and Well-Promoted City Image

- A. Support and contribute to CVB & Regional Business Alliance efforts to ensure consistent messaging through a multi-media marketing plan that highlights the City's amenities, natural resources, recreational opportunities and attractions
- B. Attract a health conscious, active and creative community through promoting, supporting and collaborating on events with downtown associations, local businesses, and community/neighborhood associations, in downtown and in other areas of the community
- C. Improve the City's overall first impression and appearance by reducing blight, and addressing aging and underutilized buildings and incentivize development efforts near our City's Gems and Gateways
- D. Promote City success stories by proactively reaching out to local newspaper and broadcast media and through social media
- E. Improve streetscapes and maintenance and care of medians and rights-of-way, prioritizing the City's Gateway and Gem corridors

1.4 Access and Ease of Mobility

- A. Continue to develop and promote Colorado Springs airport as affordable, convenient, and the preferred choice for air travelers, with direct flights to cities across the United States
- B. Define economic growth and development objectives for the City that defines a long-term vision and image for the City and strategically invest resources through the budget process and throughout the year in transportation, streets, infrastructure, transit and economic vitality to support the desired growth plan
- C. Develop a long-term, multi-modal transportation plan (bike trail, bus, roads, etc) that connect key points of the City, attractions, jobs, housing and retail
- D. Enhance transportation corridors' aesthetics, road quality, and bike lane accessibility
- E. Collaborate with PPRTA and PPACG to maximize funding for transportation improvements

1.5 City for Champions Initiative

- A. Pursue supplemental funding for the City for Champions initiative through the Regional Tourism Act of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade
- B. Conduct public meetings to inform citizens regarding the project and its impact on the community
- C. Work with stakeholders to establish an advisory board to oversee development of all four City for Champions projects

- D. Collaborate with all contributing partners to finalize a financing plan
- E. Provide leadership and support of the implementation of the City for Champions initiatives

Goal 2: Transforming Government



2.1 Fiscally Sustainable Government

- A. Through the annual budget process, maximize the use of existing resources, and establish partnerships between City departments to overcome resource constraints
- B. Develop funding strategies to address the backlog of needs (capital, rolling stock, etc.)
- C. Inform citizens regarding current pension unfunded liabilities and champion pension reform
- D. Enhance priority-based budgeting to further realize efficiencies and enhance services
- E. Institute a 5-year CIP program with annual updates

2.2 Innovation and Reinvention of City Services

- A. Form an Optimization Committee to employ private sector/non-governmental, as well as other successful city strategies to realize efficiencies, suggest alternative service delivery models, and drive employee ingenuity and career satisfaction
- B. Implement cross-departmental process improvement that looks at the intent of our processes, the flow of our processes, and makes improvements to increase efficiency and improve customer service
- C. Expand citizen access to services and information through mobile-enabled technologies
- D. Increase the number of documents available on the City website and enhance searchability to increase transparency

2.3 Responsibly Maintained Public Infrastructure and City Assets

- A. Develop a plan to address ongoing and deferred maintenance of facilities and infrastructure, including implementation of a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan with citizen involvement
- B. Reassess use of City facilities/space to maximize utilization, eliminate ineffective space, optimize utility usage, and ensure safety and security in City buildings
- C. Enhance infrastructure development standards to provide a high return on investment, focusing on low-impact, low-energy approaches to reduce long-term maintenance and operating costs

- D. Review existing landscaping standards for City-owned property (i.e. right of ways) to implement a cohesive landscaping strategy

2.4 Continuous Improvement of Customer Service & Problem Solving

- A. Develop customer service standards and train employees on customer service problem solving skills
- B. Improve citizen access to City services and information through enhanced website tools, increased available information
- C. Develop a centralized citizen-information call system (i.e. 311)
- D. Convert applications to electronic format for easy customer/client access and develop website, real time customer feedback
- E. Use available data to develop informative performance measures and improve decision-making processes

2.5 Cultivate, Recruit, & Retain High Performing Leaders, Teams & Employees

- A. Develop initial succession planning structure and program; encourage continuous leadership/career development training opportunities
- B. Establish a strategic plan support team to facilitate implementation and communication of strategic plan goals, and enhance cross-department collaboration
- C. Increase regular and timely communication of short-term and long-term City strategies and ideas to all levels of employees
- D. Enhance soft benefits to employees to increase employee productivity and employee satisfaction
- E. Introduce the beginnings of a Talent Management approach, using talent cross-departmentally and maximizing existing resources; HR serves as facilitator and 'Talent Broker'—departments bring needs and HR looks inside first for development opportunities

Goal 3: Building Community



3.1 Safe Community

- A. Improve citizen safety by reaching and maintaining the authorized and recommended level of personnel at Fire and Police, and increasing emergency preparedness for both staff and the community through emergency management training, planning and exercises
- B. Use innovative streetlight technology to increase public safety
- C. Enhance mutual aid relationships and interoperability among public safety agencies
- D. Allocate resources and collaborate with private enterprise to address critical safety infrastructure needs (bridges, stormwater, fire station, etc.)
- E. Make targeted investments in declining neighborhoods to improve housing quality, increase business activity, employment, and access to transit, stimulating the creation of safer neighborhoods

3.2 Strategically Plan for Future Growth, Including a Vibrant Downtown

- A. Emphasize infill and redevelopment in maturing neighborhoods
- B. Analyze all successful city funding models to recommend and develop funding models for long-term capital improvements and revitalization projects
- C. Conduct a needs assessment of land uses to determine future development needs and implement strategies accordingly that supports and encourages development of diverse populations
- D. Improve public safety in and image of the downtown area
- E. Ensure that land use policies encourage high density and mixed-use development in downtown and foster high quality development citywide

3.3 Access to Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture

- A. Develop a new Parks and Recreation System Masterplan, which will include accessibility, future development and funding strategies
- B. Develop a comprehensive Parks marketing plan, that increases communication to citizens and visitors on the variety of Park's amenities, highlighting historical significances
- C. Enhance connectivity between existing trails, parks, bike paths, historical sites, and City attractions, and improve lighting and safety
- D. Enhance the Public Art program to address funding, parameters, evaluation, selection and maintenance

- E. Continue to foster arts and culture through promoting creative industries, providing opportunities for local artists to display their works, and supporting entertainment events

3.4 Connecting Community Through Access to Affordable Housing & Transportation

- A. In partnership with the Continuum of Care's homeless assistance services, convene private and non-profit partners and homeless service providers to create a community plan for addressing homelessness
- B. Continue fair housing education, training and outreach, particularly among landlords
- C. Invest resources to increase the number of affordable housing units with a focus on serving the special needs of homeless, disabled, large families and elderly
- D. Strategically use grant funding and maintain healthy reserves to ensure long term sustainability of affordable, and effective transit services
- E. Prioritize and incentivize housing projects near transit in order to lower the combined cost of housing and transportation for households and build more walkable communities

3.5 Engaged Citizens Celebrating Community

- A. Develop a new citizens academy program to educate citizens on the array of City services and encourage emerging leaders to apply for seats on City advisory boards and committees
- B. Continue the Spirit of the Spring's Celebrate and Connect program to honor outstanding contributions of citizens and community leaders and supporting local events that celebrate community
- C. Create a new City-wide volunteer program to continue to expand volunteerism
- D. Encourage civic engagement by City leaders, including authoring key works for professional publications and attending professional association events
- E. Strategically use social media to increase engagement

STRATEGIC PLAN ROLES

The City plays a vital role in shaping Colorado Springs' future; the resources, expertise, and community awareness that are essential to accomplishing the strategies laid out in this plan exist in this community, beyond just the walls of City government.



The coordinated work of our citizens, existing economic development partners, local businesses, community groups, and regional associations and partners, as well as the City, builds a stronger community together.

Recognizing this, the City and these partners will serve in one or more of the following five roles while implementing the Strategic Plan. As the City develops its Implementation Plan, the City will identify its role(s) for each individual strategy.

- Manager - lead implementation of the strategy through changes to policy and/or procedures, implementation/funding of programs, with partnership and support of stakeholders
- Convener - organize and bring together key stakeholders, funding sources, and interested parties to shape the strategy and create a plan for implementation that may or may not directly involve City resources
- Champion - advocate for policy and program changes that are not under the direct control of the City and proactively educate and advise citizens and other stakeholders of how existing polices/practices/programs affect City operations and citizens' quality of life
- Catalyst - lead the implementation of key projects/programs or implement changes to City practices/policies that seek to further the long-term goals of the strategy and act as a driver of change
- Strategic Partner - assist the business community, business associations, and other local and regional partners in furthering goals that require collaboration of many entities from different sectors to affect change