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CITY OF ALAMOSA DOWNTOWN DESIGN PLAN

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MIG, Inc.



In conjunction with:

Economic Planning Systems



Fox, Tuttle, Hernandez



DEDICATION

This Plan is dedicated to the memory of Daniel E. Vaughn, AICP/ASLA. Dan served as the Project Manager of this effort for the City of Alamosa, and he had tremendous enthusiasm for the potential of Downtown Alamosa. His passion for this project was exceeded only by his sincerity, kindness and fervor for authentic and historic downtown main streets. We're confident that Dan would have been proud of the big ideas that emerged through this planning process, and even more excited about seeing the community's vision for Downtown Alamosa implemented in the years to come.

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Toolkits

The Alamosa Downtown Design Plan includes two community-oriented, implementation focused toolkits. The Ground Floor Activation and Developer Toolkits aim to provide specific, easy-to-use recommendations for local business owners, developers, and designers in updating or creating Downtown spaces. These toolkits can be used as part of the Plan or broken off separately to be individually distributed to their target audiences.

Chapter 6: Ground Floor Activation Toolkit

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In this Chapter:

Project Background

Planning Process

Community Vision

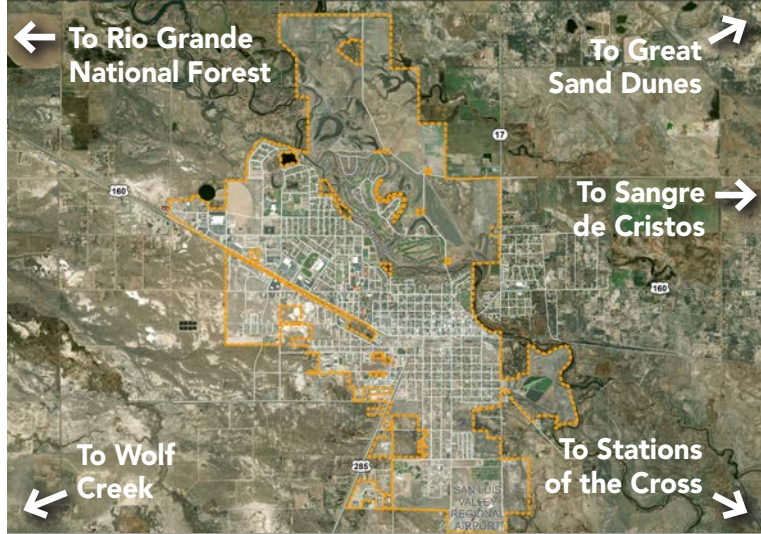
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The future is bright for Alamosa. As a community with a wealth of existing assets, Alamosa is well-positioned to continue to attract residents, businesses, students, outdoor enthusiasts, and tourists, with its downtown leading the way. It is poised to serve as an example – not only to the San Luis Valley, but to the greater Rocky Mountain region as a whole – of how an historic downtown can evolve to serve the changing needs of future generations without compromising its own unique identity.

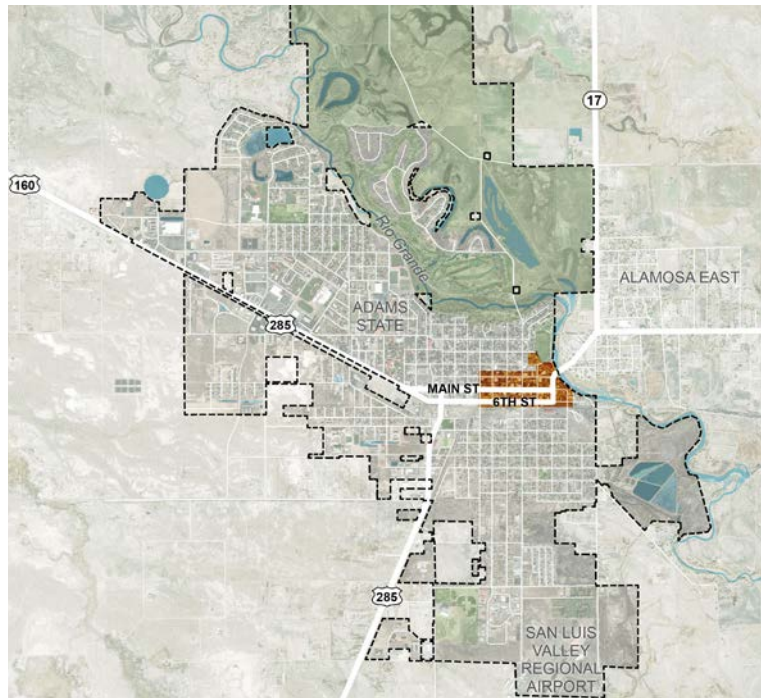
During the Comprehensive Plan process, which was completed in January 2017, community participants overwhelmingly conveyed the message that they believe the Downtown to be a critical element in the economic growth of Alamosa. They also expressed a very strong desire for physical improvements in the Downtown that would enhance the quality of life and public safety. This Downtown Design Plan was enabled by those desires and serves as the next step toward a focused revitalization and renewed energy in Alamosa’s commercial core.

In May 2018, the City of Alamosa began an 18-month planning and design process to create a new vision for the future of Downtown Alamosa in an effort to strengthen and enhance its core. The project was conducted in concert with a team of urban designers, planners, engineers, and economic development consultants, led by MIG, Inc. The resulting vision aims to position Alamosa’s commercial core as an energetic and inviting “Downtown on the Rio.”

The Downtown on the Rio Design Plan provides a strong foundation from which to implement the community’s vision for Downtown Alamosa and continue to inspire local champions to build upon the increased momentum established during this planning process.



Regional context aerial



Downtown Plan Study Area within the larger Alamosa boundaries

Plan Background and Organization

The City of Alamosa has a unique position within Colorado and the framework of the region's history. Its proximity to natural and historical assets such as the Great Sand Dunes, the Rio Grande River and Scenic Railroad, Stations of the Cross, the Sangre de Cristo mountains, Wolf Creek Pass and ski area, and the Rio Grande National Forest, as well as its central location within southern Colorado, make it an excellent destination, gateway, and place to live. An active and energetic downtown will benefit Alamosa's residents and continue to attract more people to enjoy these aspects of the city and the region.

With these goals and users in mind, the Downtown Design Plan aims to create a place that will connect to Alamosa's history, the surrounding natural environment, and the talents of the people living there. Improvements in the Downtown area should leverage local artists and artisans, local food and agriculture, the Rio Grande River and Railroad, and the historic Downtown buildings.

Downtown Alamosa mainly suffers from a lack of consistent visitorship, comfortable pedestrian space, and a strong sense of place. Those traveling east on Highway 160 are unlikely to see Main Street or stop to patronize the downtown. Those traveling west on the Highway are often traveling too quickly down the wide, three-lane roadway to take note of the historic buildings and unique businesses. The speed of these vehicles also reduces the feeling of security for pedestrians on Main Street.

Despite these difficulties, the Downtown Area (shown at right) has many assets and significant potential. This Plan addresses ways to improve the current uses to encourage more activity and vibrancy; ensure that existing and future development is attractive and appropriate for its surroundings; create comfortable and memorable spaces for people to inhabit; and provide safe and clear ways for all modes to travel through Downtown while attracting visitors to Main Street. These recommendations can be found in Chapter 3: Plan Framework.

The Plan also provides strategies for creating a downtown business organization, funding and financing projects, creating a system of signage and wayfinding, increasing the public art supply downtown, managing parking, strengthening regulatory tools, and developing opportunity sites to meet the community vision. These strategies and initiatives in Chapter 4 are structured so that they can be undertaken as resources and champions are identified.

Several specific projects to activate and improve spaces within the Downtown Design Plan project boundary were also identified by the public during the process. These projects include streetscape and pedestrian improvements to Main and 6th Street, a new Cultural Trail on Hunt Avenue, improvements to activate the alleys between 6th and Main Street and 4th and Main Street, and a Festival Street on San Juan Avenue. Recommendations, implementation tools, and graphic representations for these projects can be found in Chapter 5: Catalytic Projects.

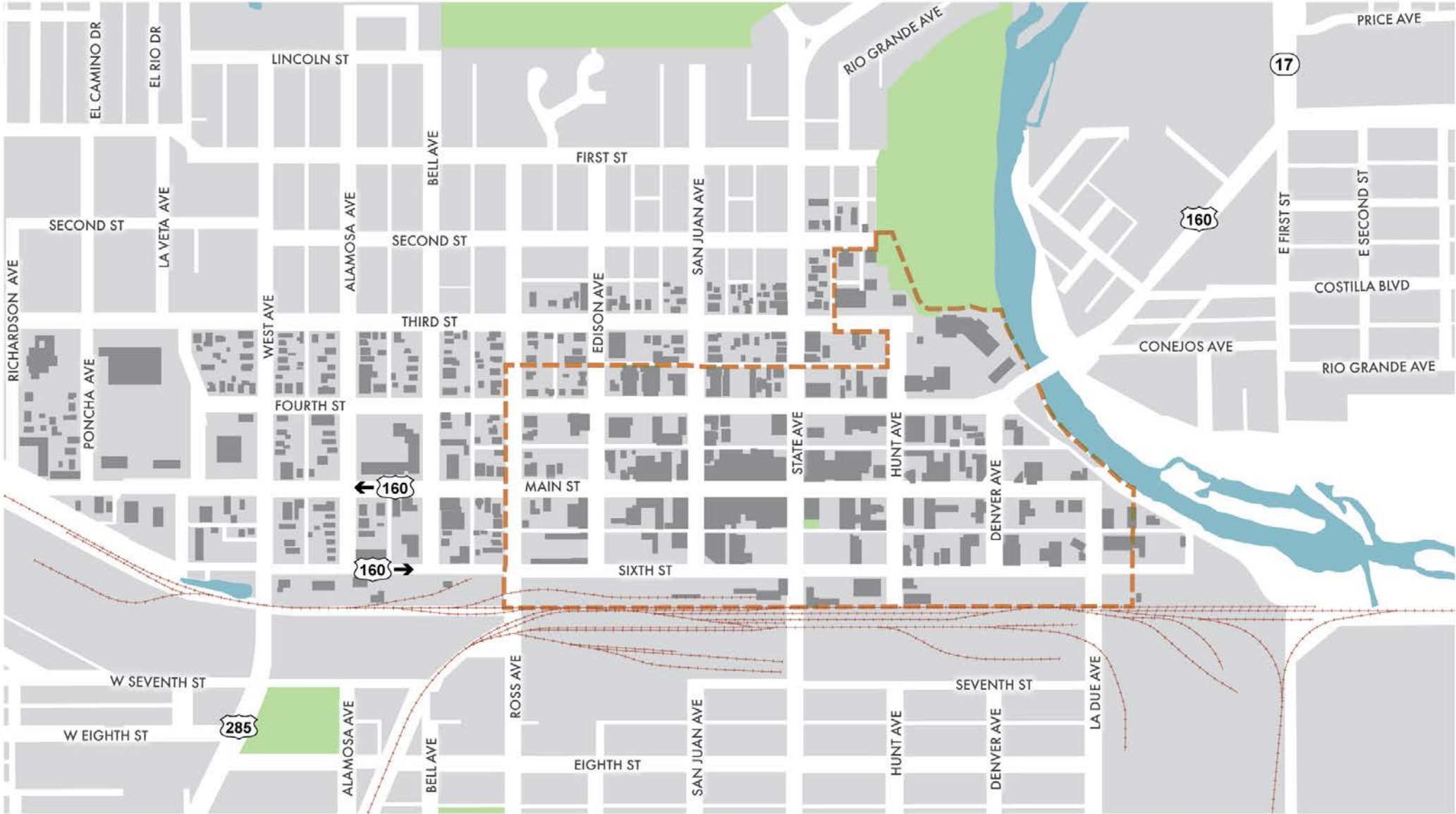


Figure Ground

LEGEND

- Plan Area Boundary
- City Block
- Railroad

- Downtown Building
- Body of Water
- Park or Open Space





Community Meeting #1, August 2018



Workshop Activity, Community Meeting #2, November 2018

Planning Process

Authentic and inclusive community input and participation is critical for creating plans and designs that reflect the community's desires and provide guidance for redevelopment interests. The "Downtown on the Rio" Design Plan engaged key stakeholders such as community members, local business owners, elected officials, technical experts, and students with a variety of methods to solicit a robust set of feedback to integrate into the plan and recommended design solutions.

Over an 18-month process, those methods included recurring meetings with a Project Advisory Committee; three Community Design Charrettes; three Community Open Houses; a series of Focus Group and one-on-one meetings with local business owners, including a Local Business Owner Breakfast event; tabling at Trinidad State Junior College and Adams State University; and work sessions with City Council and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). In addition to in-person community and stakeholder touch points, a series of on-line surveys were conducted throughout the process so that community members could identify preferred design options and provide detailed feedback on concept design solutions. Through the surveys alone, over 580 community members participated, generating over 2,200 individual detailed comments and data points.

The planning process was designed to ensure that the community input and guidance received was incorporated into all phases of the project, and through an iterative approach.

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

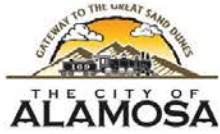
A committee made up of community, City, and business representatives provided preliminary input regarding their vision, strategies, and direction for the future of Alamosa's commercial core. Following each occurrence of broader community outreach, such as the Design Charrettes, Open Houses, and surveys, that feedback was presented to the Project Advisory Committee to explore and discuss how it could be reflected in the design strategies.

COMMUNITY DESIGN CHARRETTEs, OPEN HOUSEs, AND ON-LINE SURVEYS

Highly interactive public meetings were hosted to gain design direction and feedback at several touch points during the process. The project team would then incorporate those inputs and display the revised concepts at Community Open Houses to test if those design ideas were resonating. Following the Community Open House, an on-line survey was created to mimic that Open House experience so that those who may not have been able to participate in-person could do so virtually, at their leisure.

FOCUS GROUPS/STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder interviews were conducted with business leaders, property owners, County officials, students, and other interested parties to ensure that the proposals are grounded in Alamosa's social and economic realities. These interviews and conversations were instrumental in helping to ensure that design strategies and recommendations were considering the unique needs of the daily users of Downtown.



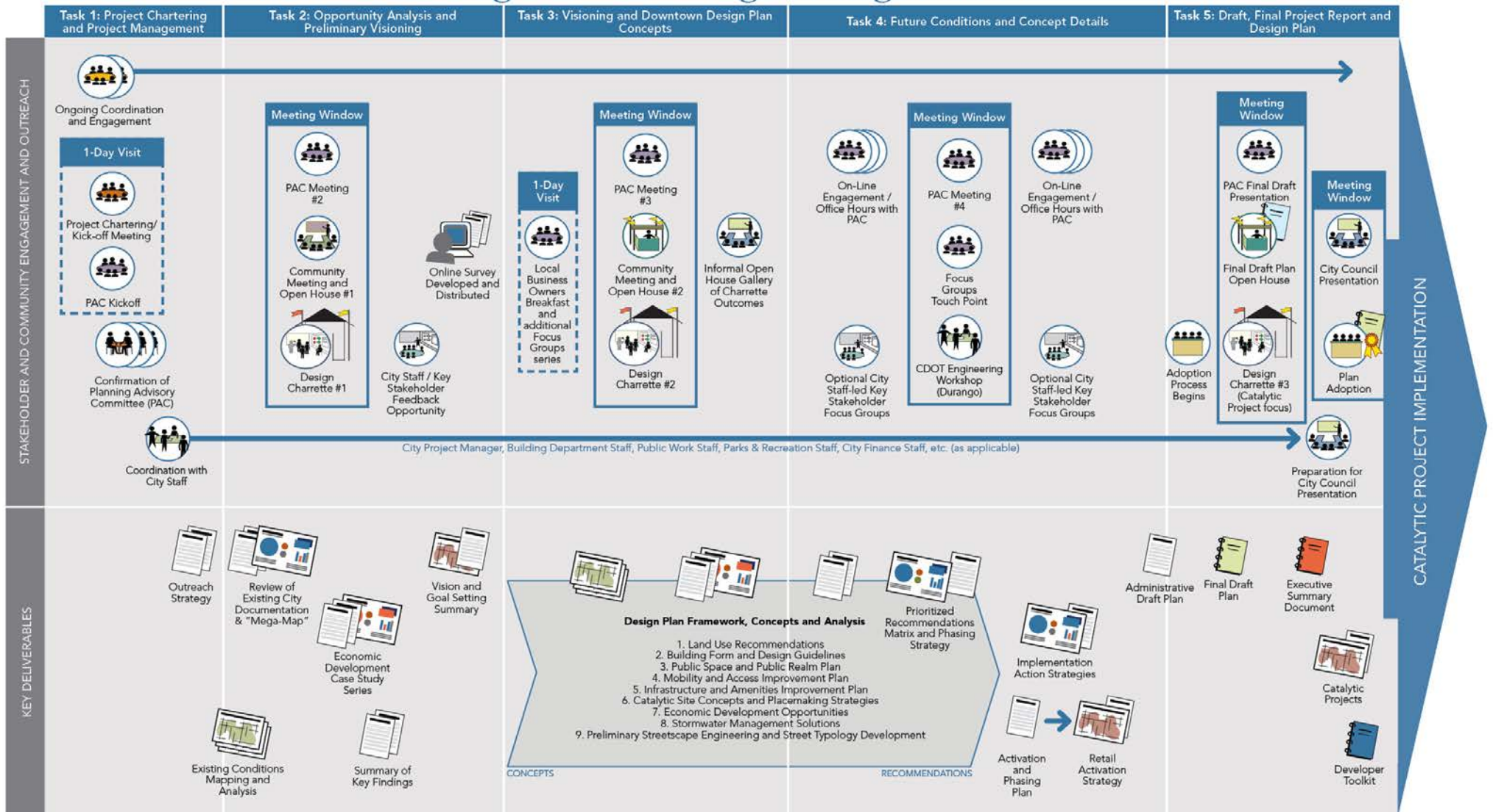
City of Alamosa

Downtown Design Plan and Engineering Services



PROCESS SCHEDULE

PAC = Planning Advisory Committee



The process schedule, outlining the multi-phased planning process that was guided and supported by the community, key stakeholders and staff.



"One-Word Vision" Word Cloud created by community members at Community Meeting #1.

Community Vision

A critical first step at the outset of the Downtown Design Plan process involved engaging key stakeholders and interested resident participants in a conversation about the Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities within Downtown Alamosa. Through that conversation and a series of exercises, a clear set of goals and aspirations emerged that informed a forward-looking community vision. Emphasizing unique attributes within, and ambitions for, Downtown Alamosa, four Identity Elements – Downtown on the River; Downtown on the Railroad; Farm To Main Street; and Arts, History and Cultural Heritage – were identified by community members as outcomes that they hoped Alamosa would be known for as a result of the implementation of this planning and design process.

Community members described a desire for Downtown Alamosa to be the type of destination that draws visitors to the region, but first and foremost serves its residents and the student

population. A common refrain through the process was that the conversion of Main Street to one-way, as a part of Highway 160, was immensely detrimental to downtown businesses and the perception of safety, and that it shifted the shopping and dining energy in the city to west of the Downtown area. Most frequently, participants expressed a desire for a return to an active, thriving downtown that, if better linked to the river and amenities such as Cole Park, would promote frequent visits by local residents and students by bike or on foot.

Using those inputs as a foundation, a logo and brand was developed to embody that community vision – Downtown on the Rio. Downtown on the Rio, and its corresponding logo expression, is intended to celebrate the assets inherent to Downtown Alamosa, including the Rio Grande River, the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad, and the unique architectural character of the Downtown. Aspirationally, it expresses a desire for the Downtown to distinguish

itself from other historic main streets in Colorado and the region by leveraging its proximity to the river, an attribute that is often missed by potential visitors passing through town. Placing this visual brand on signage, marketing materials, and event promotion, the logo can help to unify the Downtown area and provide it with an identity that is recognizable throughout the state.



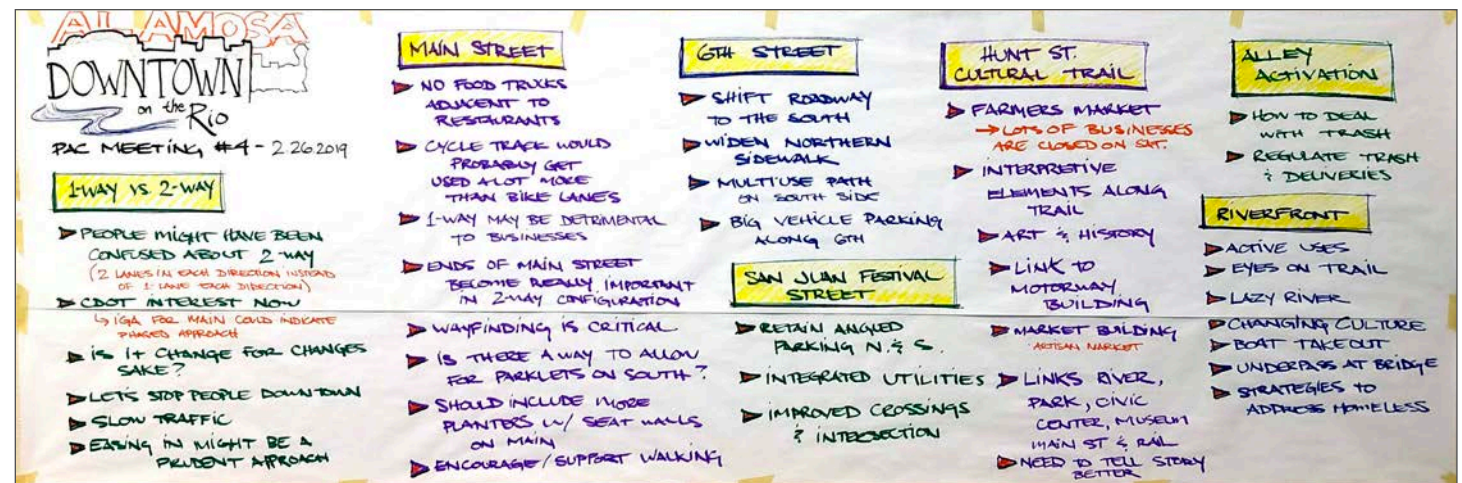
Downtown on the Rio logo

Downtown
on the River

Downtown
on the
Railroad

Farm to
Main Street

Arts, History
& Cultural
Heritage



Wall Graphic Recordings from Community Meeting #1, August 2018 and Project Advisory Committee #3, February 2019



2



In this Chapter:

Community Input

Preliminary Scenarios

Preferred Scenario

CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES

Emerging from the Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities that the community identified, a series of development alternatives were created and presented to the community for review and comment – both at Community Meetings and Open Houses, as well as through online surveys intended to recreate the physical meeting experiences as closely as possible.

This chapter outlines the four preliminary development scenarios that were explored and summarizes the community feedback that was given, both on these scenarios, as well as on the more detailed strategies that emerged from them. The preferred scenario, created as a direct response to community feedback, stakeholder input, and feasibility analysis, is then explored in more detail, to provide the foundation upon which the subsequent Plan Framework, Overarching Strategies and Initiatives, and Catalytic Projects, are built.



Workshop Activity, Community Meeting #1, August 2018



Community Open House #1, August 2018



Community Open House #3, July 2019

Community Input

During the planning process, community members were asked to provide feedback on concept design solutions, strategies, and recommendations through a variety of touch-points and engagement methods. A dedicated group of community members served as a Project Advisory Committee, helping to provide specific insight and guidance based upon the unique set of constituents that they represented. In-person feedback was gathered through highly interactive Community Meetings, Open Houses, Focus Groups, and Design Charrettes. Online surveys were then used to broaden the reach of participants and gain further insights on preferred aesthetics and approaches.

By engaging the community in a variety of ways, the design process was able to function as a more collaborative effort with several layers of input, always aimed at accurately reflecting the desired outcomes of the community – initial concept presentations to the Project Advisory Committee and the public, refinement of those concepts based upon the feedback provided, presentation of the revised concepts for confirmation that the design had evolved appropriately, and presentation to key stakeholders and local business owners to ensure that the proposed designs would meet their specific needs. Unlike some planning processes of this length, community participation continued to grow throughout the process, which is a testament to the pride and enthusiasm that Alamosa residents have for the future of their downtown. This represents an exciting opportunity for the City to continue this momentum and ask those participants to continue to champion the Plan's vision going forward and into implementation.

Participants in the community process were regularly prompted to provide candid feedback about the challenges being faced within the community so that this Plan could more effectively address those needs. In an effort such as this, which aims to balance aspiration with feasible implementation, that candor was a critical input for honing in on recommendations and strategies that would have a lasting impact, while still being achieved in the near future.

Common themes across all of the community input gathered included an emphasis on: increased safety for both pedestrians and cyclists; a desire for a downtown that is more family-friendly; a pedestrian-oriented core that encourages people to walk the short distance from nearby destinations like Cole Park to patronize local businesses; an environment that welcomes students and encourages them to add to the identity and vitality of the street life; a focus on leveraging and enhancing Alamosa's reputation as an art-oriented community with the ArtScape program; and the need to make potential tourists aware of the unique assets that downtown Alamosa offers, both when they are passing through town and when they are looking for an authentic Colorado main street experience to plan a trip around. These priorities expressed by the community allowed the design scenarios that follow to be fine-tuned to ensure that they each work in concert to achieve those priorities.

"I think visually changing the feel of Downtown is essential.
I love the idea of having activated spaces"

-Community Member, Community Open House #3, July 2019



Visual Preference Board, Open House #2, November 2018



Community Meeting #2, November 2018



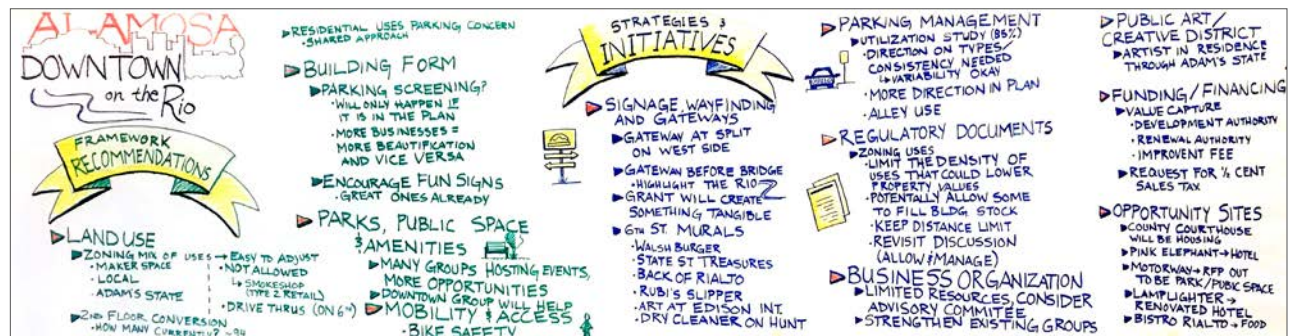
Community Open House #3, July 2019



Community Open House #2, November 2018



Community Open House #3, July 2019



Wall Graphic Recording from Project Advisory Committee #5, July 2019



Greater walkability and connectivity



Pedestrian safety measures



Public gathering space

Preliminary Scenarios

Drawing upon the aspirations and ambitions expressed in the community visioning process, four preliminary scenarios were created for review by the community. These scenarios provide a high-level glimpse at how the community's vision could be implemented, including where major infrastructure investments would occur, what the effects would be on pedestrian safety, how circulation would happen through the downtown, where redevelopment opportunities could be leveraged to build momentum, and how effectively the Downtown could engage the river.

While each scenario offers a different implementation of the vision for Downtown Alamosa, all four share a core focus, which was a careful exploration of the interaction between Highway 160 and Downtown, and the effects on safety and circulation for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Each scenario also strategically pairs a set of catalytic opportunity sites with the circulation strategy in order to provide for natural gateways into the Downtown area and promote a sense of vibrancy. Scenarios 1 and 2 explore retaining the one-way couplet system that exists for Highway 160 today, with Scenario 1 keeping that alignment on Main Street and 6th Street, while Scenario 2 looks at shifting it to 4th Street and 6th Street. Scenarios 3 and 4 focus on Main Street returning to two-way traffic, with Highway 160 shifting to be a two-way roadway on 6th Street.

SHARED ELEMENTS

In addition to the shared focus around circulation and Highway 160, as well as catalytic development site opportunities, participants in the process identified a few other elements that should be incorporated regardless of which circulation and alignment pattern was settled upon. The following elements were considered and integrated into all four scenarios:

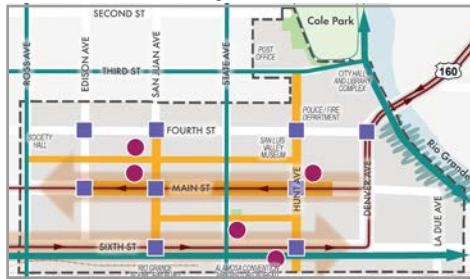
- » Pedestrian safety measures;
- » Public gathering spaces;
- » Greater walkability and connectivity; and
- » Opportunities for engagement with the Rio Grande.

The summary matrix at right outlines the key components of each of the four scenarios that were developed and includes a recommendation that reflects the community feedback that was gained on each. That feedback highlights the pros and cons identified for each scenario, which helped guide the development of a preferred scenario, outlined in greater detail on the following pages.

Legend



Scenario #1 1-Way Traffic Main and 6th



Pedestrian Safety

- » Improvements on Hunt and San Juan; intersections along 4th, Main, and 6th receive enhanced crossings
- » Three new traffic signals needed along Main to slow highway traffic

Circulation & Highway Routes

- » One-way highway routes on Main and 6th
- » Pedestrian circulation emphasized on Main, but includes adjacent alleys and streets
- » Bike lanes and trails surround the core

Riverfront Engagement

- » Improved off-street trail along the Rio activated with new riverfront development and amenities
- » New trail south of 6th connecting to the Rio and other regional destinations

Catalytic Development

- » Five identified redevelopment sites
- » The sites are located near public street projects and have potential to spark additional Downtown improvements
- » Improvements south of Main create two additional opportunities

Recommendation: Preferred (Phase 1)
Maintains 1-ways, improves targeted areas

Scenario #2 1-Way Traffic Main and 4th



- » Improvements on Main and 3rd connect people to the Rio; intersections along 4th and Main receive enhanced crossings
- » Three new traffic signals needed (two accommodate new traffic on 4th)

- » One-way highway routes on Main and 4th
- » Pedestrian circulation along Main extends east to the Rio and west to Ross
- » Pedestrian oriented streets north of Main and emphasized connection to the Rio
- » Bike lanes and trails surround the core

- » Improved off-street trail along the Rio activated with new riverfront development and amenities
- » New trail south of 6th connecting to the Rio and other regional destinations

- » Four identified redevelopment sites
- » The sites are located near public street projects and have the potential to spark additional Downtown improvements
- » Directing highway traffic off of Main creates an additional site on Denver

Recommendation: Not Preferred
Alleviates traffic on Main, but congests 4th

Scenario #3 2-Way Traffic with Current Bridge



- » Pedestrian improvements on Hunt and San Juan Avenue; Main, Hunt, and San Juan receive safety improvements at intersections
- » New traffic signal needed on Main and Richardson (west of the plan area)

- » Two-way Main and 6th Street with truck traffic directed to 6th
- » Pedestrian activity primarily focused in the Downtown core
- » Bike lanes and trails run adjacent to the core

- » Improved off-street trail along the Rio activated with new riverfront development and amenities
- » New trail south of 6th connecting to the Rio and other regional destinations

- » Five identified redevelopment sites
- » The sites are located near public street projects and have the potential to spark additional Downtown improvements
- » Improvements south of Main create two additional opportunities

Recommendation: Not Preferred
2-way traffic, but maintains congested entry

Scenario #4 2-Way Traffic with New Bridge



- » New bridge allows for safer Rio access
- » Primary intersections along 4th, Main and 6th receive enhanced crossings
- » New traffic signal needed on Main and Richardson (west of plan area)

- » Two-way Main and 6th with truck traffic on 6th and a new bridge south of 4th
- » Pedestrian activity primarily focused in Downtown core along east/west routes
- » Easier connection to the Rio
- » Bike lanes and trails off of the core

- » Improved off-street trail along the Rio activated with new riverfront development and amenities extending to Cole Park, under a new bridge
- » New trail south of 6th connecting to the Rio and other regional destinations

- » Seven identified redevelopment sites
- » The sites are located near public street projects and have the potential to spark additional Downtown improvements
- » The new bridge creates two additional sites

Recommendation: Potential Long Term
2-way traffic, alleviates congested entry



Opportunities to adaptively reuse existing buildings



A multi-use trail with wayfinding will provide clear access



Prioritize pedestrian safety and active street life

Preferred Scenario

Although many participants in the process expressed a great deal of interest in the scenario that contemplated a return to a two-way Main Street, coupled with a new bridge over the Rio Grande to create a better gateway and direct potential tourists onto Main Street, the preferred scenario that was developed acknowledged the significant investment and logistical coordination that strategy would take.

CIRCULATION AND HIGHWAY ROUTES

The preferred scenario recommends retaining the circulation pattern of Highway 160 – with Main Street one-way westbound and 6th Street one-way eastbound through Downtown Alamosa – but, it incorporates design elements to help calm the flow of traffic in an effort to prioritize the safety of pedestrians. In this scenario, Main Street would reduce its number of lanes from three to two (which requires the completion of a traffic analysis with CDOT). This would open up a variety of opportunities to strategically program and add amenities to the street. Given the interest of the community in the two-way configuration of Scenario 4 (shown on the previous page), this preferred scenario, and the Catalytic Projects that follow in the Plan (see Chapter 5 for more information), has been developed so as not to preclude implementation of a two-way configuration in the future, should the City decide to pursue this strategy. By calibrating many of the streetscape improvements to be short-term, lower investment strategies, it will give the city the opportunity to implement more quickly, and gauge whether this preferred scenario is indeed the long-term solution, or whether it would better function as an initial phase toward a greater long-term transformation.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

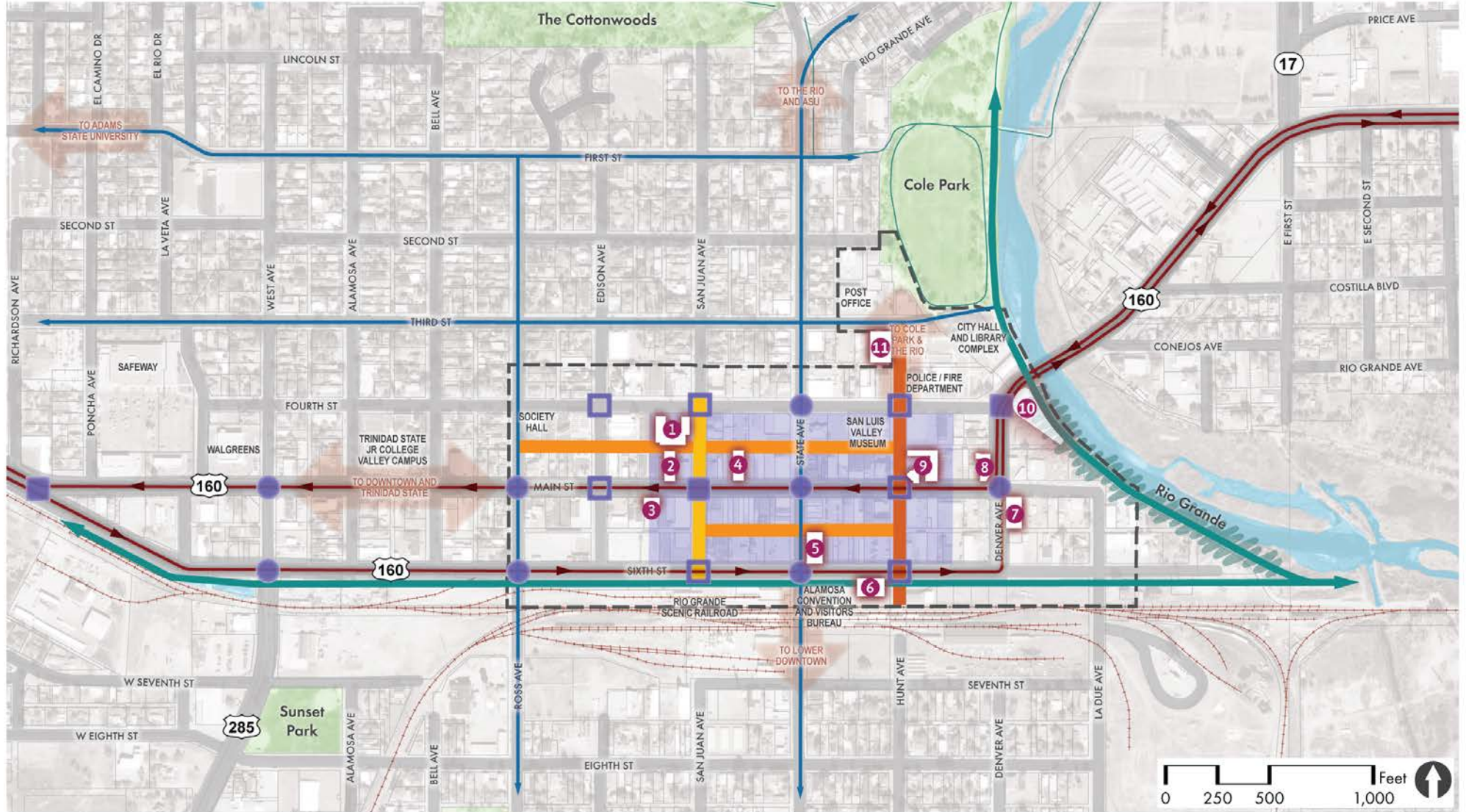
A Pedestrian Activation Area is identified, stretching from 4th to 6th Street, north-to-south, and just beyond Hunt and San Juan Avenue, east-to-west. This area will prioritize pedestrian safety and active street life over moving vehicles rapidly. Interventions such as activated alleys, a robust emphasis on amenities and art, a Cultural Trail, a Festival Street, and active ground-floor uses in existing buildings will signal to traffic that pedestrians are the priority.

RIVERFRONT ENGAGEMENT

The addition of a multi-use trail with wayfinding on the south side of 6th Street, as well as the Cultural Trail on Hunt Avenue, will provide clear and comfortable access to the Rio Grande via the trail and Cole Park. Improvements to the riverfront itself – including adding meaningful public space on the City-owned property adjacent to the bridge will help serve as a gateway into the downtown and promote active engagement with the river and adjacent properties.

CATALYTIC DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

This scenario identifies eleven sites with potential to be the catalysts that drive momentum in the Downtown area. Many of the sites, such as the former County Courthouse, the former Lockhart's store, and the Lamplighter Motel, represent opportunities to adaptively reuse existing buildings and breathe new life into those assets. Others, such as surface parking, the former Pink Elephant site, and the City-owned parcel adjacent to the river, represent opportunities to allow new development to add to the character of downtown. (See Chapter 4 for more information.)



Preferred Scenario

- Plan Area Boundary
- Vehicular Direction of Travel
- Bike Lane or Route
- Off-Street Trail/Multi-Use Path
- Key Connection
- Riverfront Activation

1-Way Traffic Main and 6th

- Festival Street
- Activated Alley
- Cultural Trail
- Existing Signalized Intersection
- Proposed Signalized Intersection
- Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing
- Pedestrian Activation Area

Development Opportunity Sites and Community's Preferred Uses

- 1 County Courthouse => Mixed-Use Brewpub and Entertainment
- 2 Lockhart Furniture Building => Art Gallery Space
- 3 Rialto Building => Farm to Table Restaurant
- 4 JCPenney Building => Retail
- 5 Pink Elephant Parcel => Mixed-Use Residential/Hotel
- 6 Motorway Building => Interactive Play Area/Railroad Museum

- 7 SE Corner of Denver and Main => Informal Pop-up Event Space
- 8 NW Corner of Denver and Main => Outdoor Market
- 9 Lamplighter Motel Building => Boutique Hotel
- 10 Riverfront Property => Formal Park / Plaza
- 11 Century Link Parking Lot => Bike Shop or Townhomes



3



In this Chapter:

Framework Recommendations

Land Use

Building Form and Design

Parks, Public Space, and
Amenities

Mobility and Access

CHAPTER 3: PLAN FRAMEWORK

The Plan Framework provides recommendations for the key topics of land use; building form and design; parks, public space, and amenities; and mobility and access. Each topic includes flexible guidance on how to activate and energize the Downtown Core, create a vibrant pedestrian environment, and make Main Street uniquely Alamosa.

Activation will bring more people to the area during all times of day, improve the Downtown economy, and ensure an ongoing mix of uses and events to attract visitors. A vibrant pedestrian environment will encourage residents and visitors to park their vehicle and experience Downtown on foot or bicycle. A comfortable public realm will create spaces that people are attracted to and help to beautify the city. A Downtown that is unique to Alamosa will establish a destination that celebrates its rich history and culture, and uses these elements, such as the connection to the railroad and agriculture, to attract visitors and create a sense of pride in the City's heritage.

This chapter begins with a diagram of the Plan Framework recommendations, showing where and how the recommendations could be implemented. It highlights the key opportunities for land use, building form, parks and public space, and mobility that can be leveraged to improve the Downtown area. The chapter then addresses each of these topics, providing steps that can be taken to activate, enrich, and celebrate Downtown Alamosa. Where more specific strategies are applicable, the topic pages provide reference to related sections within Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.



Ground Floor Activation Zone



Pedestrian Priority Zone



Off-Street Multi-Use Path

Framework Recommendations

The Downtown Framework Diagram, shown at right, provides spatial definition for key concepts used in this section. Map elements are color-coded and organized by Framework topic. Recommendation pages for these topics follow the map in the order shown. Key Terms in the following Chapter include:

• Land Use

- » **Ground Floor Activation Zone-** Areas where all ground floor uses should be active and transparent.
- » **Potential 2nd Floor Residential Conversion-** Two-story commercial buildings where a 2nd story renovation and residential use would be appropriate.
- » **Infill Development Opportunity-** Parking or empty lots where new development could occur. These areas are key in activating and energizing the Downtown area.

• Building Form and Design

- » **Character Defining Commercial Building-** Commercial buildings that are historic or unique to the character of Downtown Alamosa, including buildings with decorative facades, historic brick, murals, Spanish influences, or other historic features.
- » **Historic/Iconic Sign-** Locations of unique and/or historic signs that contribute to the Downtown character. These are often 3-dimensional signs.

• Parks, Public Space, and Amenities

- » **Riverfront Activation-** The area along the riverfront of the Rio Grande that should be activated, to the extent feasible. Potential strategies include an improved multi-use trail, active recreation opportunities, and lookouts or seating areas.
- » **Park/Public Space Opportunity-** Parking or empty lots where plazas, parks, or public spaces would be appropriate.

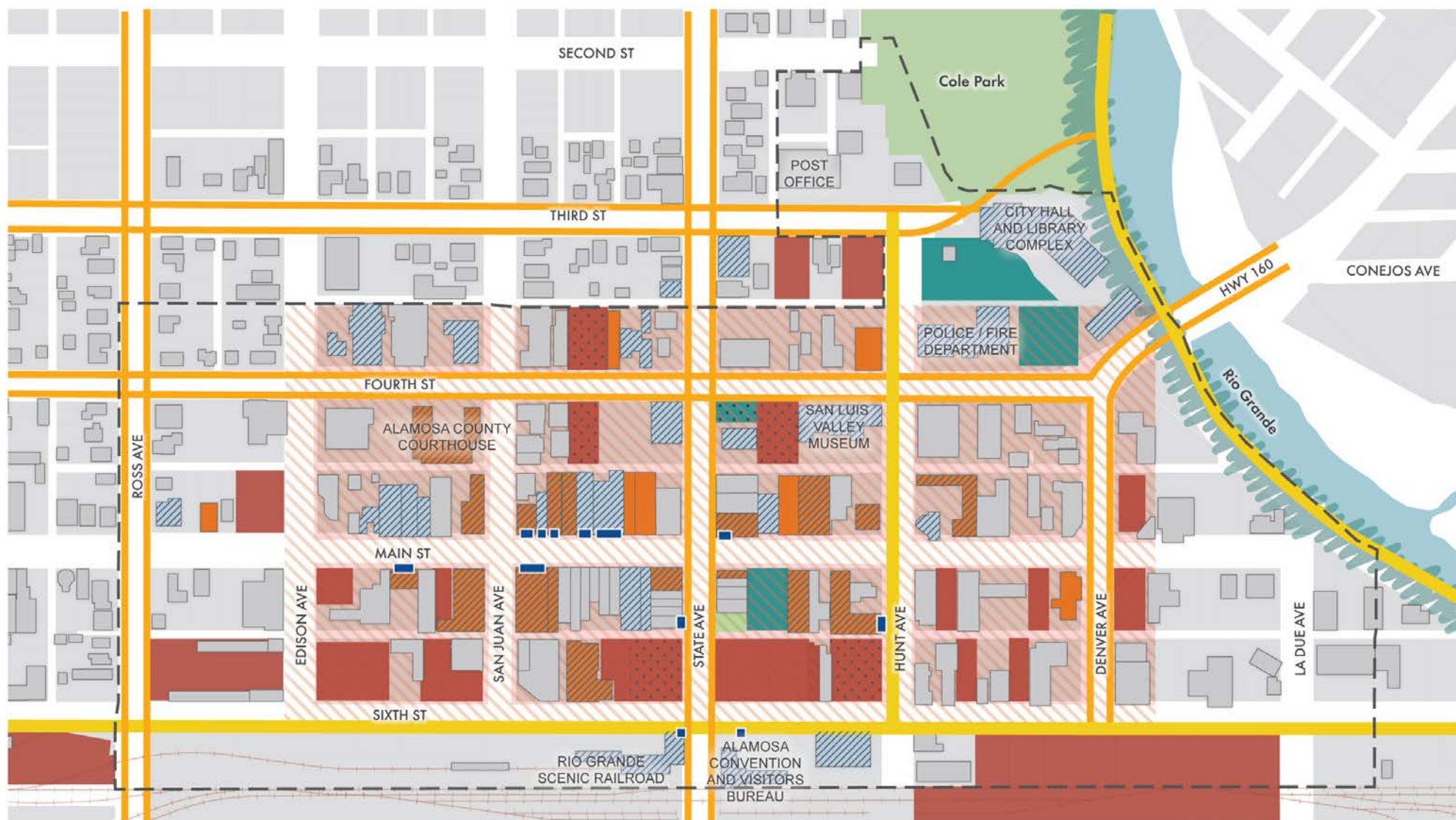
• Mobility and Access

- » **Pedestrian Priority Zone-** Areas where pedestrian comfort and safety should be prioritized above other modes. This area intentionally overlaps with the Ground Floor Activation Zone.
- » **Bike Lane or Route-** Streets that should include on-street bike facilities. Supplement with additional facilities as needed.
- » **Off-Street/Multi-Use Trail-** Appropriate locations for widened off-street multi-use trails. These include the Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail and the Rio Grande multi-use trail.

Community Vision Becoming Framework Recommendations:

Building upon the Vision articulated by the Community through this process, the Framework Recommendations are further organized within each Framework Topic by the 3 Vision Themes:

- Activate and Energize the Downtown Core
- Create a Vibrant Pedestrian Environment
- Make Main Street Uniquely Alamosa



Downtown Framework Diagram

Land Use

- Ground Floor Activation Zone
- Potential 2nd Floor Residential Conversion
- Infill Development Opportunity
- Potential Long-Term Infill Opportunity (Existing Parking)

Building Form and Design

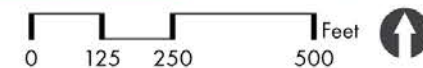
- Character Defining Building
- Historic/Iconic Sign

Parks, Public Space, and Amenities

- Existing Park/Public Space
- Riverfront Activation
- Park/Public Space Opportunity

Mobility and Access

- Pedestrian Priority Mobility Zone
- Bike Lane or Route
- Off-Street Trail/Multi-Use Path





Ensure a mix of uses including bars, restaurants, coffee shops, venues, breweries, and distilleries



Encourage active, primarily pedestrian-friendly uses



Encourage adaptive re-use of previously auto-oriented buildings

Land Use

As the use of online shopping continues to rise, Downtown areas like Alamosa's must provide a vibrant and engaging experience to attract visitors. In order to achieve this environment, brick-and-mortar stores need to create an active ground floor with a strong mix of uses that appeal to many types of customers at most times of day. By creating a flexible framework of appropriate uses and encouraging a variety of stores and services, Downtown Alamosa can continue to offer an experience lacking in chain and online retail with a strong sense of place that connects visitors and residents alike to the core of the city.

ACTIVATE AND ENERGIZE THE DOWNTOWN CORE

LU-1. Encourage active, primarily pedestrian-friendly uses within the Ground Floor Activation Zone (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23.) Land uses should include:

- Restaurants, bars, and coffee shops with a priority on cultivating higher-end or farm-to-table dining experiences;
- Entertainment and performance venues;
- Ground floor retail;
- Commercial services for residents such as yoga studios, barber shops, and child care;
- Hotels and other hospitality uses; and
- Select light industrial uses such as maker spaces, breweries, distilleries, or art studios.

LU-2. Align allowable uses within zoning to promote the desired mix of uses articulated in this Plan.

LU-3. Ensure a robust mix of uses that activate the Downtown area during most times of day and throughout the year. Appropriate uses include:

- Coffee shops, bakeries, and delis that are open early and through the early afternoon;
- Bars, restaurants, and venues that have happy hour specials and/or stay open late;
- Spaces that can transition use to meet all day needs. For example, a co-working space during the day that is a bar in the evening;
- Uses that attract tourists during daytime hours such as local artisans, boutique or niche shops, outdoor retailers that leverage the region's active lifestyle, and souvenir stores;
- Residential and hospitality uses;
- Uses that provide classes or services throughout the day such as yoga or art studios; and
- Services that keep locals on Main Street after business hours such as barber shops, dry cleaning, or fresh food markets.

LU-4. Encourage second floor conversions that activate the area. (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23 for buildings identified with the potential for second floor conversions.)

- Encourage second floor residential uses. Residents will enliven Downtown and provide more consistent activity throughout the day.
- Where second story residential uses are not possible, pursue office and/or studio uses.
- Identify opportunities to create live/work artist loft spaces in and around Downtown.

See Regulatory Tools / Documents on page 46 for more specific strategies on how to regulate, implement, and incentivize desired uses.

- LU-5.** Work with tenants, landlords, and property owners to cultivate the desired mix of uses.
- LU-6.** Ensure opportunity sites are developed or redeveloped with uses that are in-line with the community vision. (For more information see the Opportunity Sites section in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)
- LU-7.** Incentivize development that is in-line with the community vision in Infill Opportunity areas. (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23.)
- LU-8.** Provide amenities for existing or untapped user groups. Appropriate strategies include:
 - Uses that attract Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College students to leverage proximity to schools. Appropriate uses include:
 - » Cafes that are open late for studying;
 - » Co-working spaces that partner with the schools for a reduced student rate.
 - » Corner stores with healthy groceries and basic home goods; and
 - » A climbing gym in partnership with Adams State University Adventure Sports program where students can staff, teach, and learn.
 - Uses that attract people visiting the San Luis valley. Appropriate uses include:
 - » A variety of restaurants - ideally with a farm-to-table focus to celebrate the region's agricultural assets;
 - » Small shops including local artisanal goods, bookstores, or souvenir stores; and
 - » Boutique hotels and bed and breakfasts.

CREATE A VIBRANT PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

- LU-9.** Encourage ground floor uses that are compatible with transparent building frontages. Uses should be active and inviting to passers-by.
- LU-10.** Encourage uses that spill out onto sidewalks and adjacent public spaces such as café seating, 'yard' games, retail racks, etc.
- LU-11.** Discourage land uses that discourage or inhibit pedestrian activity, particularly along Main Street, such as drive-thrus, car repair shops, and gas stations.
 - Encourage the adaptive reuse of these previously auto-oriented buildings into something pedestrian-friendly and in-line with desired Main Street uses.

MAKE MAIN STREET UNIQUELY ALAMOSA

- LU-12.** Encourage adaptive re-use in existing buildings to preserve the historic downtown architectural character.
- LU-13.** Encourage and promote uses that support local businesses, goods, and farm-to-table enterprises that celebrate Alamosa's agricultural ties.
- LU-14.** Incentivize uses that support local artists and craftsmen. Encourage development to include small scale art studios or maker spaces that are visible from the street.
- LU-15.** Explore partnerships with Adams State University's art program and create opportunities for land uses that support local public art. (For more information see the Public Art/Creative District in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)



Encourage and promote uses that support local businesses



Encourage uses that spill out onto sidewalks and public spaces



Encourage development to include small scale art studios



Encourage building design that provides visual-interest



Buildings should be designed with a transparent ground floor



Architectural features should be used to indicate entry locations

Building Form and Design

Downtown Alamosa has a rich and unique architecture that reflects the City's history as both an agricultural and railroad town with strong Spanish influences. Preserving and adaptively re-using the buildings that contribute to the City's history and character will be essential to maintaining a Downtown that is authentic and a unique destination for both residents and visitors. Standards for new development and redevelopment should help shape a built environment that is consistent with this distinctive character, without necessarily trying to recreate or mimic an older style. Buildings within the Downtown Area should also be designed to support the desired visual interest, density, and transparency that enhance the pedestrian realm and accommodate the needs of the envisioned land uses.

ACTIVATE AND ENERGIZE THE DOWNTOWN CORE

BF-1. Pursue regulatory and zoning tools that will aid in creating development that aligns with the community vision. (See Regulatory Documents in Chapter Four's Supporting Strategies.) Desired building forms should include:

- Building heights of two to three stories. Buildings over three stories in height should include an upper-story setback to ensure access to sunlight and maintain the pedestrian scale.
- Articulation and massing that maintains compatible horizontal relationships with existing buildings.
- Variation in articulation and massing to break up larger buildings or long facades.
- More frequent entries along Main Street, creating a finer-grained retail environment.

- Parking lots set back from Main Street and screened or buffered from the public realm.
- Primary building entries on Main Street. Architectural features should be used to indicate entry locations.
- Setbacks along Main Street, only if used to expand the perceived public realm with café seating or other pedestrian amenities.

BF-2. Ensure development and redevelopment is designed with building forms that support the desired uses. Key considerations include:

- Adequate floor-to-floor heights for a variety of uses including restaurants and retail;
- Facades with frequent openings for doors and windows;
- Highly visible public entries; and
- Patios or balconies that activate public spaces.

CREATE A VIBRANT PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

BF-3. Buildings should be designed with a highly transparent ground floor.

- Encourage ground floors with large windows and openings at frequent intervals.
- Encourage building frontages that blur the line between indoor and outdoor spaces. Strategies include operable walls and functional garage doors with café seating on the interior and exterior of the wall.

BF-4. Encourage existing buildings to take advantage of funding for streetscape facade improvements.

See Regulatory Tools / Documents on page 46 for more specific strategies to implement form-based zoning and incentivize desired building forms.

- BF-5.** Building massing should engage the street and only setback when providing a publicly accessible amenity such as patio seating or greenery.
- BF-6.** Encourage building design that provides visual-interest and enhances the pedestrian environment. Appropriate strategies include:
- Patios or front porches on residential uses (located off of Main Street);
 - Awnings or canopies; and
 - A rich variety of materials and textures.
- BF-7.** Consider incentivizing development that incorporates sustainable design and low impact development principles. Appropriate strategies include:
- Passive solar orientation and design;
 - Rainwater catchment;
 - Solar arrays or green roofs; and
 - Water preservation techniques such as gray water recycling.

MAKE MAIN STREET UNIQUELY ALAMOSA

- BF-8.** Incorporate City of Alamosa and/or Downtown on the Rio branding into building design, particularly for City-owned and operated buildings.
- BF-9.** Ensure second floor conversions do not negatively impact the existing building and remain consistent with or complement the character.

- BF-10.** Preserve historic buildings and character through design review and demolition protection.
- Encourage adaptive re-use before demolition of all existing buildings.
 - Salvage historic materials, if feasible.
 - Consider reusing historic materials in development and redevelopment.
- BF-11.** Preserve and, if necessary, restore, Historic/Iconic signs. (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23 for Historic/Iconic Sign locations.)
- BF-12.** Encourage new signs to be 3-dimensional, creative and iconic.
- Align City Sign Code to ensure these sign types are permitted and encouraged.
- BF-13.** New development should be sensitive to the existing Downtown architectural character, as defined by the Character Defining Commercial Buildings. (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23 for locations.)
- New development should have similar scale and proportions to existing buildings.
 - Buildings should be sensitive to the historic character, particularly in massing and materials, but still authentic to their time.



Preserve Historic/Iconic signs



Preserve and restore historic downtown signs



Encourage new buildings to be designed with varied massing and articulation to break up large facades



Encourage events and temporary activation in public spaces



Consider interpretive elements such as signage and public art



Provide engaging amenities for all ages, interests, and abilities

Parks, Public Spaces, and Amenities

Vibrant parks and public spaces are an integral part of shaping the Downtown Alamosa experience. Events, markets, and amenities should continue to be encouraged to bring year-round interest and activation, while also enriching the day-to-day experience of the Downtown Core. Opportunities that are unique to Alamosa, such as vacant lots adjacent to historic structures on Main Street and the proximity to the Rio Grande River and Scenic Railroad can and should be realized. New development should also contribute to Downtown open space.

An important piece of implementing improvements to parks and public spaces will be the use of high-quality pedestrian furnishings and other amenities that are consistent with the Downtown character. All features should enhance the pedestrian experience and contribute to a fun and historic Alamosa atmosphere.

ACTIVATE AND ENERGIZE THE DOWNTOWN CORE

PS-1. Encourage events and temporary activation in Downtown public spaces such as farmers markets, art festivals, food and drink festivals, outdoor games, small concerts, etc.

- Consider a dedicated staff member to expedite permitting and facilitate coordination of such events. (See Business Organization in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)

PS-2. Create parklets in the flexible/programmable space between the parallel parking and existing curb on Main Street. (See the Main

and 6th Street Catalytic project in Chapter 5 for more information.)

PS-3. Provide engaging amenities for all ages, interests, and abilities in Downtown public spaces. Appropriate strategies include:

- Interactive art elements;
- All-ages, accessible play features;
- Exercise equipment;
- Outdoor games such as cornhole or horseshoes;
- Small vendor kiosks, food, or coffee carts;
- Community gardens or urban agriculture; and
- Various forms of outdoor seating and tables.

PS-4. Implement pocket/pop-up parks or public spaces on empty lots. Use temporary park activation on lots that are likely to redevelop to provide a pedestrian amenity in the interim.

PS-5. Consider some parking or empty lots for permanent park/public space. (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23 for specific locations.)

- Explore regulations that require or promote publicly accessible, private open spaces as part of new developments.

CREATE A VIBRANT PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

PS-6. Ensure a safe and accessible pedestrian environment with adequate lighting, ADA compliant paving, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

PS-7. Provide trees, landscaped areas, furnishings, art and artistic elements, flexible shade structures, and other pedestrian amenities along streets and in all parks and public spaces.

- Ensure best practices for tree planting areas, including structural cells and adequately sized or flexible tree grates.
- Consider planting that is colorful, drought tolerant, and pollinator-friendly and provides year-round interest.
- Ensure furnishings are high-quality, durable, and low maintenance. Consider furnishings made with local materials.

PS-8. Co-locate pedestrian amenities, wayfinding, and multi-modal facilities in strategic clusters to encourage activity and easy navigation.

PS-9. Explore regulations that require parking lots and potential future structured parking to be located off of Main Street, screened or buffered from the public realm, with prioritized pedestrian access along the activated alleys contemplated in the Downtown Core.

PS-10. Consider opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure and low impact development into parks and public spaces.

- Consider bioretention areas and infiltration planters along the streetscape.
- Consider tree trench filters for street trees.
- Consider swales and rain gardens in parks.

PS-11. Work with property owners and business owners to keep sidewalks and adjacent public spaces clean.

PS-12. Create a clear maintenance plan for downtown outdoor spaces.

MAKE MAIN STREET UNIQUELY ALAMOSA

PS-13. Integrate public art into parks and public spaces. Explore partnerships with the Adams State art program to implement art throughout Downtown. (See Public Art in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)

PS-14. Use design elements (furnishings, paving, lighting, etc.) that are more traditional in style to maintain the historic character of the Downtown Core.

- Develop a coordinated approach for design elements in the Downtown Core to provide a cohesive look and feel.

PS-15. Provide funding and engage local stakeholders/champions to revitalize and reimagine existing Downtown public spaces like Centennial Park.

PS-16. Connect spaces to the City's river and railroad heritage, consider interpretive elements such as signage and public art that educate and engage people in Alamosa's history.

PS-17. Provide recreational opportunities along the Rio Grande multi-use trail.

PS-18. Consider incorporating City of Alamosa or Downtown on the Rio branding into public spaces, particularly around City-owned and operated buildings.



Provide recreational opportunities along the Rio Grande trail



Implement pocket/pop-up parks on empty lots



Consider planting that is colorful, drought tolerant, and pollinator-friendly



Consider using enhanced crossing treatments to highlight crosswalks and improve awareness of turning vehicles



Historic photo of two-way Main Street



Provide bike parking at key intersections and along bike routes

Mobility and Access

Ensuring that residents and visitors can easily access the Downtown area and navigate within it is a priority of the Plan. Providing visually interesting points of entry will create a sense of arrival and a more memorable downtown experience. Safe and clear paths of travel with frequent wayfinding will ensure that people can easily move between destinations and are more likely to spend more time in and return to Downtown. Alamosa streets should be multi-modal, but a comfortable pedestrian experience should be the main priority within the Downtown Core, as high-volume pedestrian use will be a major factor in activating the area. Another major mobility priority should be connections to nearby amenities, primarily the Rio Grande multi-use trail and Cole Park.

ACTIVATE AND ENERGIZE THE DOWNTOWN CORE

- MO-1.** Make improvements to Main and 6th Street. Use narrower lanes and vertical elements to slow vehicular traffic, particularly along Main Street. (See the Main and 6th Street Redesign Catalytic Project on page 54 for more information.)
- MO-2.** Provide a unique pedestrian environment in the form of a Cultural Trail along Hunt Avenue and a Festival Street along San Juan Avenue. (See the Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail and the San Juan Festival Street Catalytic Projects on pages 62 and 66, for more information.)
- MO-3.** Improve pedestrian connections through alleys between 6th and Main Street and Main and 4th Street. Prioritize the alley between 6th and Main. (See the Alley Activation Catalytic Project on page 64 for more information.)

- MO-4.** Connect sidewalks and bike lanes in the Downtown Core to the Rio Grande multi-use trail. Provide signage and wayfinding and obstacle-free circulation routes to guide and encourage visitors to the Rio Grande River.
- MO-5.** Explore opportunities for Recreational Vehicle (RV) parking, including dump stations, along 6th street to capture tourists passing through town. Heavily advertise this amenity.
- MO-6.** Explore the potential of a two-way conversion on Main Street and 6th Street.

CREATE A VIBRANT PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

- MO-7.** Prioritize and develop a complete ADA accessible pedestrian network within the Pedestrian Priority Zone, see the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23.
 - All streets within this area should include sufficiently wide sidewalks, accessible curb ramps, and pedestrian crossings.
 - Where possible, use landscaping to separate sidewalks from moving cars.
- MO-8.** Ensure traffic signals have clearly defined pedestrian crossings and provide a comfortable crossing interval.
- MO-9.** All intersections should include pedestrian crossings with bulb-outs, when possible, to minimize the crossing distance.
- MO-10.** Provide a clear system of signage and wayfinding to aid navigation throughout downtown. (See Signage and Wayfinding in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)

MO-11. Consider using enhanced crossing treatments to highlight crosswalks and improve awareness of turning vehicles at Key Intersections. Appropriate features and strategies include:

- Enhanced intersection signage;
- Painted intersections;
- Accent paving; and
- Vertical elements.

MO-12. Provide mid-block crossings in key locations such as where alleys meet major streets.

MO-13. Consider Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB) at intersections and crossings where stoplights are not needed and pedestrian comfort and convenience is a priority.

MO-14. Perform a Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Evaluation every two years. The study should include a summary of the number and location of crashes and results should be presented to City Council to consider recommendations for improvements.

MO-15. Provide a network of on and off-street bike facilities to improve multi-modal travel through Downtown. (See the Downtown Framework Diagram on page 23 for more detail.)

- Provide bike lanes along State Street, Ross Avenue, and 3rd and 4th Streets.
- Provide an off-street multi-use trail along 6th Avenue and Hunt Avenue.

MO-16. Provide an improved off-street multi-use trail along the Rio Grande River, extending from the railroad to Cole Park. Create a connection on the east side of Main Street to the Rio Grande multi-use trail.

MO-17. Provide bike parking at key intersections, along bike routes, and where bike routes intersect major Downtown streets.

MO-18. Examine parking availability and policy to ensure parking is right-sized to community needs. (See Parking Management in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)

MAKE MAIN STREET UNIQUELY ALAMOSA

MO-19. Create a new citywide active transportation map that includes preferred “Walk and Wheel” routes to Downtown Alamosa.

- Consider including bike parking, parks, City facilities, and destinations on the back side.
- Distribute the map to students and residents annually and make it available at all public facilities for visitors.

MO-20. Identify key gateways into Downtown and the pedestrian priority area. These gateways should incorporate public art and signage and wayfinding. (See Signage and Wayfinding in Chapter 4 Overarching Strategies and Initiatives.)

MO-21. Consider colorful painting or accent paving along streets or sidewalks, particularly along the Festival Street or Cultural Trail, to promote a vibrant pedestrian environment.

MO-22. Integrate public art into transportation facilities such as signage and bicycle parking.



Provide a network of on and off-street bike facilities



Consider integrating public art into transportation facilities



Consider colorful painting or accent paving along streets or sidewalks, particularly along the Festival Street or Cultural Trail



4



In this Chapter:

Business Organization

Funding / Financing

Signage, Wayfinding, and Gateways

Public Art / Creative District

Parking Management

Regulatory Tools

Development Opportunity Sites

CHAPTER 4: OVERARCHING STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

The Plan's Overarching Strategies and Initiatives provide detailed, implementation-oriented recommendations to help meet the community's vision for the Downtown area. These topics apply to the entire Downtown area and relate to key aspects of how the area is organized, managed, and regulated. This chapter addresses specific strategies for how to implement, manage, fund, or set up initiatives for business organization; funding and financing; signage, wayfinding, and gateways; public art and a creative district; parking management; regulatory documents; and development opportunity sites. More specialized, location-specific projects can be found in the next chapter, Catalytic Projects.

Each topic is organized by overall initiatives, short-term actions (1-2 years), medium-term actions (2-5 years), and long-term actions (5-10 years). Each strategy includes an "at a glance" bar in the top left corner of the spread that shows generally how implementable, impactful, and expensive it is. The specific recommendations for each include guidance about time-frame, suggestions for implementation measures, and potential champions.

The order of the strategies in this chapter is reflective of their relative priority according to community feedback received during the July 2019 open house. These projects range from the adoption of Downtown Design Standards and Guidelines, to developing an opportunity site to achieve the community vision, to providing interpretive signage along the Rio Grande multi-use trail. Providing an easy-to-use framework for these projects aims to encourage and expedite their implementation.

Business organization, feasibility at a glance

Ease of Implementation:



Visible Change:



Project Cost:



Form a downtown organization to promote Downtown



Focus initial efforts on events and promotional efforts

Business Organization

Downtown areas are most successful when a partnership of municipal, private, and non-profit entities come together to manage the downtown as a place. Downtowns are destinations with cultural, historic, civic, entertainment, educational, and economic attractions. They need more coordination to address the variety of users and needs present. Alamosa should form an organization to steward this Plan's proposed investments and programs to sustain the momentum created from initial actions and investments.

Communities throughout the United States use place management organizations to support important places. A city has to balance its capital funding priorities across the entire community and often doesn't have the resources to provide more dedicated efforts to downtowns. A downtown organization will bring together the public and private sector to invest in, prioritize, and support the downtown. There is not one specific approach that is best and Alamosa's approach should be deliberate to match the assets and resources of the community. The organization formed should have a defined role and responsibilities beyond existing services.

Successful downtown areas often evolve over time. Downtown organizations can be formed in a variety of ways and often grow to increase their scope of services and purpose. The essential element is the willingness of private entities to collaboratively work together to support Downtown. The public participation within the organization can vary and is greater when using a dedicated public funding stream. The organizational options most appropriate for Downtown Alamosa include:

- » **Membership organizations** – A relatively loose organization of area stakeholders (business owners, property owners, residents or HOAs, etc.) convened to discuss and address downtown issues.

These organizations are typically funded through membership fees and have limited ability fund or maintain major projects.

- » **Example:** Business Merchants Association

- » **Typical Primary Roles:** Marketing, promotions, events, community outreach and engagement, and downtown advocacy

- » **Improvement District** – An entity formed to fund and/or manage capital investments and public spaces for a specific area or district. They are typically funded through a dedicated revenue stream that is most often a publicly administered tax or fee charged on property and/or business owners in the district.

- » **Example:** Business Improvement District or Downtown Development Authority

- » **Typical Primary Roles:** Cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces, capital project investment mechanisms, development financing support, public space activation, marketing, promotions, events, community outreach and engagement, and downtown advocacy

- » **Special purpose organizations** – An entity formed to address one or more specific issues or needed services for a specific geographic area. Funding for these organizations can vary but typical includes a dedicated revenue source generated from special taxes or assessments and/or through membership, private funding, or grants.

- » **Example:** Creative District; Community Development Corporation

- » **Typical Primary Roles:** Dependent on agency mission, but typical examples include: marketing and promotions, events, community services coordination, community outreach and engagement, advocacy, and economic development

ONGOING ACTIONS:

- Provide support from the City for downtown businesses including routine outreach to businesses and property owners and coordination of quarterly meetings of downtown businesses, property owners, and stakeholders.
 - » Work within the meetings to formally define the responsibility of a downtown organization.
 - » Provide a streamlined process and point of contact for application for use of City resources and services for downtown events.

SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS):

- Form a downtown organization comprised of downtown businesses, attractions, and public stakeholders to collectively promote Downtown Alamosa as a destination.
 - » Focus initial efforts on coordination of events, identification of collective promotional and marketing efforts, and prioritization of issues and opportunities to be addressed
 - » Identify a staff person or partner with staffing resources dedicated to the coordination and operation of the organization

MEDIUM-TERM (2-5 YEARS):

- Identify and implement a funding mechanism to support on-going efforts of the new organization.
 - » Identify resources to fund a permanent staff person(s) in charge of the organization.
 - » Modify and/or expand the responsibilities of the organization once operating for one or two years.

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION HIGH-LEVEL TAKEAWAYS

Organizational Options

- Business improvement district
- Downtown membership organization
- Creative District



Essential Elements

- Ownership and participation from businesses and stakeholders (public-private partnership)
- Defined role
- Focus on downtown



Preliminary Roles

- Event coordination
- Promotion, marketing, and branding
- Downtown advocacy and community outreach/engagement



Future/Additional Roles

- Public space management and activation
- Cleanliness, safety, maintenance and operations
- Limited capital improvements



Funding and financing, feasibility at a glance

Ease of Implementation:



Visible Change:



Project Cost:



Funding and Financing

The recommended strategies within this Plan will require financial investment in part by the City and area stakeholders. The magnitude of these projects will likely require a combination of federal, state, and local dollars. Some of the proposed strategies can be funded through existing resources and potential grants, however additional money will be needed to achieve the objectives of the Plan. Therefore, a public financing mechanism is needed to fully implement the Plan.

The strategies in the Plan are intended to attract private investment and (re)development in Downtown. However, in many cases, new development and even substantial reinvestment into existing buildings is not financially feasible for the private sector. Financial support is also needed to pay for public improvements that facilitate private development. New development will generate increased value for properties and increased tax revenue for the City and other taxing entities. The City should identify a mechanism or mechanisms for capturing the increased value and associated tax revenue generated in Downtown and reinvest it into the area. These types of “value capture” mechanisms are routinely used in Downtown areas. The most common mechanisms in Colorado are Urban Renewal Authorities (URAs) and Downtown Development Authorities (DDAs). These authorities can use tax increment financing (TIF) to capture increased property tax (and sales tax if the City is willing to allocate their portion of sales tax) from all taxing entities and use it to fund public improvements in the area.

The City of Alamosa created an Urban Renewal Authority (Authority) in 2009. At the time of formation of the Authority, the City had contracted for the creation of an urban renewal plan and conditions study for a proposed Urban Renewal Area (Area). The Area stretched along 6th Street and included most of the parcels between 6th Street and 8th Street from the intersection of Main and 6th Street on the west and the Rio Grande River on the east. A collection of parcels along the north side of 6th Street were included as well. This proposed Area was never

created and the Authority remains but has no active areas. Alamosa could explore the creation of the original proposed area but the creation of this area alone will not allow use of tax increment outside the boundaries (in most cases) and therefore may not be useful for supporting investment and projects along Main Street. The proposed area is large and it may be more strategic to create an additional Urban Renewal Area, of a smaller size, within the Downtown. There is the potential that the existing conditions study and plan for the proposed Area can be used to meet state criteria for the formation of an Area (given that existing blight conditions in this area identified in 2009 largely remain), which would be the quickest and cheapest way to create an Area.

ONGOING ACTIONS:

- Use a value capture mechanism(s) to support downtown development and help fund capital improvement projects.

SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS):

- Seek legal guidance on if the proposed urban renewal area plan and blight conditions study can be used to create an urban renewal area for the entire area studied or portion of the area studied.
- Through outreach and meetings with Downtown business and property owners, discuss the potential interest in creation of a Downtown Development Authority, instead of the use of urban renewal to utilize tax increment financing.
- Identify resources and commission an Urban Renewal Plan and blight conditions study for some or all of the Downtown Study Area.
 - » Identify the desired boundary for where the uses of Urban Renewal Authority powers are potentially useful (tax increment financing, eminent domain) and develop a plan and blight conditions study for that area.
 - » It may be possible to modify the existing proposed plan and conditions study to include more area within the blight study and better reflect current Downtown efforts (i.e. uses of tax increment funds).



Proposed Preliminary Urban Renewal Area Boundary

Submitted by
The Elk Mountains Planning Group, Inc.
December 2, 2009

The Urban Renewal Authority remains for Alamosa, but has no active Areas.

MEDIUM-TERM (2-5 YEARS):

- Create an Urban Renewal Area and the initiation of the clock on the use of tax increment in coordination with a new development project within the larger urban renewal area.
 - » This may be short-term action if a project comes to fruition sooner.
 - » Consider the creation of an Urban Renewal Area smaller than the Plan area boundaries to maximize the use of tax increment for projects that may occur in the other portions of Downtown.
 - » Utilize tax increment generated by the project to support both the funding of public improvements needed to support development of the project and to accumulate funds for future capital improvements.



Development on infill sites can be leveraged to capture additional value and funding opportunities for Downtown

KEY FEATURES OF FUNDING/FINANCING MECHANISMS

Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

- Could serve as both a business organization and funding tool
- Allows for use of TIF (City sales and all property tax)
- Increase in property tax rate allowed to fund on-going operations
- Board elected by property owners, businesses and residents

Urban Renewal Authority (URA)

- City already has an Urban Renewal Authority, but it is inactive
- Need to designate an Urban Renewal Area/District and complete plan and blight conditions study
- Controlled by URA Board which City Council appoints and includes representation from impacted taxing entities
- Allows for use of TIF (City sales and all property tax)



Adaptive re-use and redevelopment opportunities can also have financial benefits for the Downtown Area

Signage, wayfinding, and gateways, feasibility at a glance

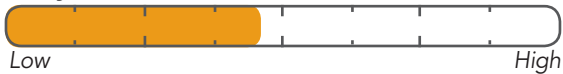
Ease of Implementation:



Visible Change:



Project Cost:



Gateways should be designed to create a memorable entrance to Alamosa



Informational signage should be located where pedestrians can safely stop



Signage, Wayfinding, and Gateways

Signage and wayfinding should work as a common, visually unifying thread throughout the Downtown area. Signage character, colors, design, and materials should reflect the Downtown on the Rio brand and maintain a similar visual language to help visitors navigate throughout. Wayfinding should focus on directing people to Main Street, emphasizing movement to and from the Rio Grande River, 6th Street, and Downtown destinations. Gateways should be designed to create a memorable entrance to Alamosa and to the Downtown area while keeping in line with existing look and feel and the unique aspects of the city. Alamosa's 2017 Comprehensive Plan included concepts for the potential design of some of these gateway features.

The strategies and initiatives in this section generally deal with recommendations for directional/wayfinding signage. Designs for these types of signs were created through a public input and stakeholder process, including a dedicated Design Charrette, and are included in this section. This process and Design Charrette also yielded some guidance and locations for informational signage and identity signage. More information can be found on the following pages.

FOR ALL SIGNAGE INITIATIVES:

- Develop a consistent look and feel for signage and wayfinding so that messages are recognizable, easy to read, and supportive of the overall Downtown Character. Sign designs developed during the Signage and Wayfinding Charrette and supported by the community are provided on the following page.
 - » Gateway sign character should remain consistent with overall signage look and feel. Use a traditional color and material palette to reflect community preference.
- Size and locate signage appropriately for the intended user.
 - » Signs intended for vehicles should be larger and closer to the street, away from pedestrian areas.
 - » Signs intended for pedestrians and bicyclists should be smaller and located in the public realm where users can safely stop and read the content.

- » Signs developed during the signage and wayfinding charrette are intended for vehicles and pedestrians.
- » Informational signage should be located where pedestrians can safely stop and read.

- Co-locate signage and wayfinding with other pedestrian amenities including benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and lighting fixtures.
- Ensure signage and wayfinding investments are long-lasting by using low-maintenance, durable, and vandal-resistant hardware and coatings.

SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS):

- Welcome people to Downtown Alamosa with entry gateways that are highly visible and recognizable and that convey a sense of arrival.
 - » Prioritize gateways at:
 - › Main and Denver
 - › Main and 6th
 - › Hwy 285 and 6th
 - › Rio Grande Bridge
 - » Appropriate gateway features include:
 - › Architectural or artistic features that extend vertically on one or both sides of the street;
 - › An architectural or artistic element that spans the street such as an arch or banner;
 - › Distinctive public art; and
 - › Large signs with Downtown on the Rio branding; consider also incorporating accent lighting and landscaping with this option.
- Attract people traveling through Alamosa to Main Street. Remind people on 6th Street of their proximity to Main Street. Consider the following strategies to direct traffic to Main Street:
 - » Public art, including murals on the backs of buildings along Main Street or sculptural elements on the north side of 6th Street (See Alley Activation in Catalytic Projects on page 64); and
 - » Signs that are visible to vehicle traffic, identifying Main Street destinations on both sides of 6th Street.
- Clearly identify public parking opportunities.
 - » Ensure travelers on 6th Street are aware of parking adjacent to Main Street.
 - » Incorporate parking symbols onto directional signage for Main Street destinations.

- Provide wayfinding signage that directs people to major destinations. Several destinations should be included on one sign (see design at right and on the following page, as well as the Locations and Destinations map on page 41). Destinations after the first phase of wayfinding signage to consider highlighting include:

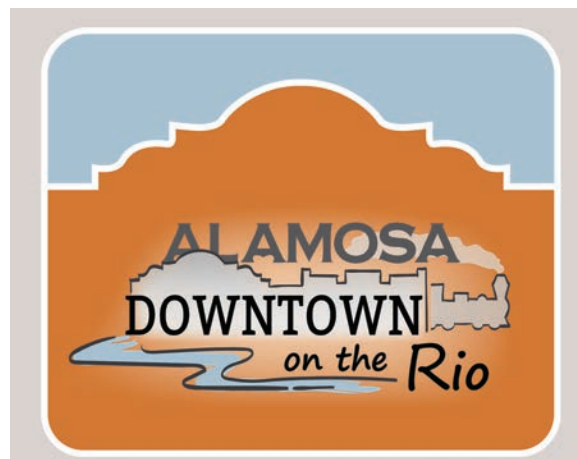
- » Catalytic projects implemented as part of the Downtown Plan including future riverside parks, trails or other amenities; the Hunt Cultural Trail; and the San Juan Festival Street.

MEDIUM-TERM (2-5 YEARS):

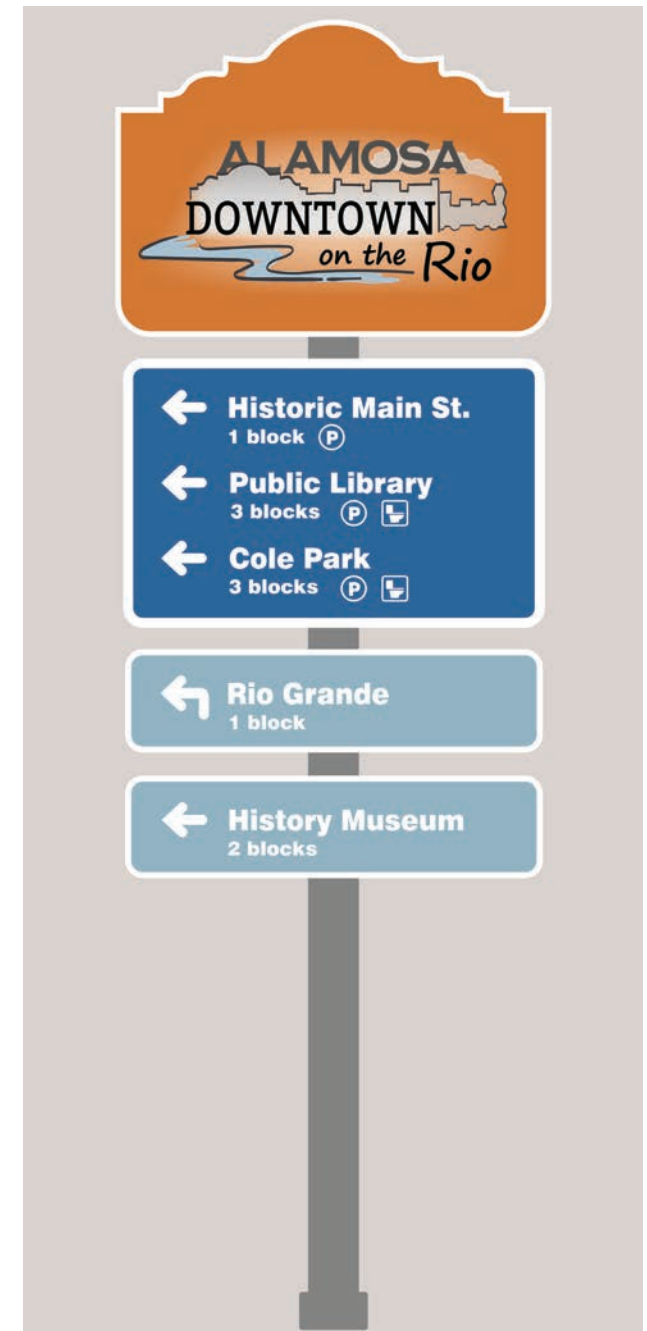
- Once the first phase of wayfinding signage is in place, explore opening up opportunities for local businesses on an application/payment basis.
- Provide interpretive signage and enhanced wayfinding along the Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail. (See the Hunt Ave Cultural Trail Catalytic Project on page 62 for more information.)
- Highlight Downtown's proximity to adjacent natural amenities such as the Rio Grande River and Cole Park; direct travel to and from these destinations and to Main Street.
- Highlight Downtown's proximity to adjacent educational institutions such as Adams State University and Trinidad State Junior College, direct travel to and from these destinations and Main Street.
- Consider providing interpretive signage along the Rio Grande multi-use trail. These signs could engage visitors about topics such as:
 - » The river's history and importance to Alamosa;
 - » The river's flora and fauna; and
 - » The river's morphology and importance to the region.
- Work with Public Works or other local entities to identify a source for annual maintenance costs.
- Recommend a Comprehensive Sign Plan for Downtown to ensure consistent design and implementation.
- Consider informational signage along Main Street that educates visitor's about Alamosa's history. Highlight the City as a unique central location between many important regional destinations.

LONG-TERM (5-10 YEARS):

- Provide bicycle-oriented wayfinding along all new routes. This system should guide cyclists smoothly between facilities and include additional information such as safety guidance and bicycle parking locations.
- As the City of Alamosa grows and other modes of travel, particularly public transportation, become more accessible, recommend the creation of a Multi-Modal Signage Plan.
 - » Signage should clearly identify transit stops, route numbers, and destinations.
 - » Transit facilities should integrate real-time information for easy ridership.
- Integrate smart technology implementing smart phones, augmented reality, and/or real-time or location specific services into the Downtown signage and wayfinding system.



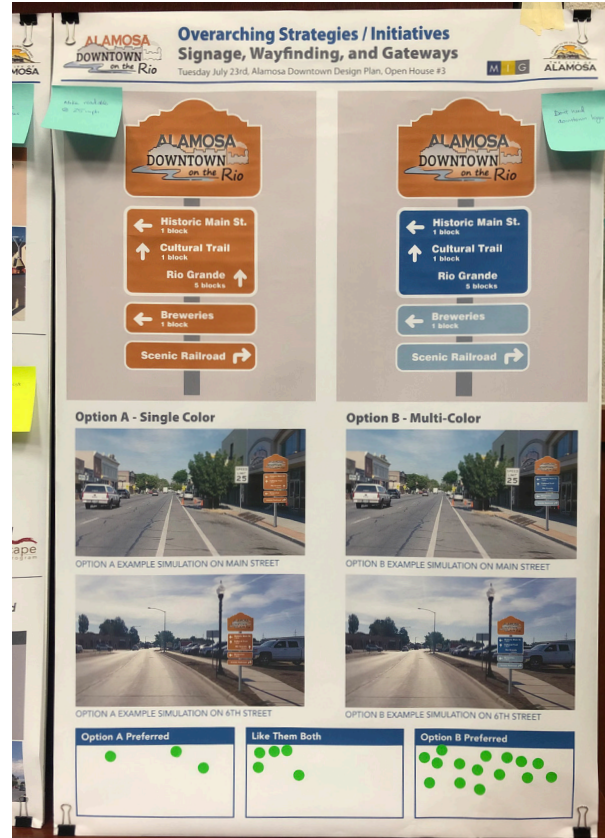
Potential alternate sign design selected during the Signage and Wayfinding Charrette for cost saving



Sign design and layout created through the Signage and Wayfinding Charrette Process



Directional sign design on 6th St and San Juan Ave



Signage board at the July 2019 Community Open House

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING COMMUNITY INPUT

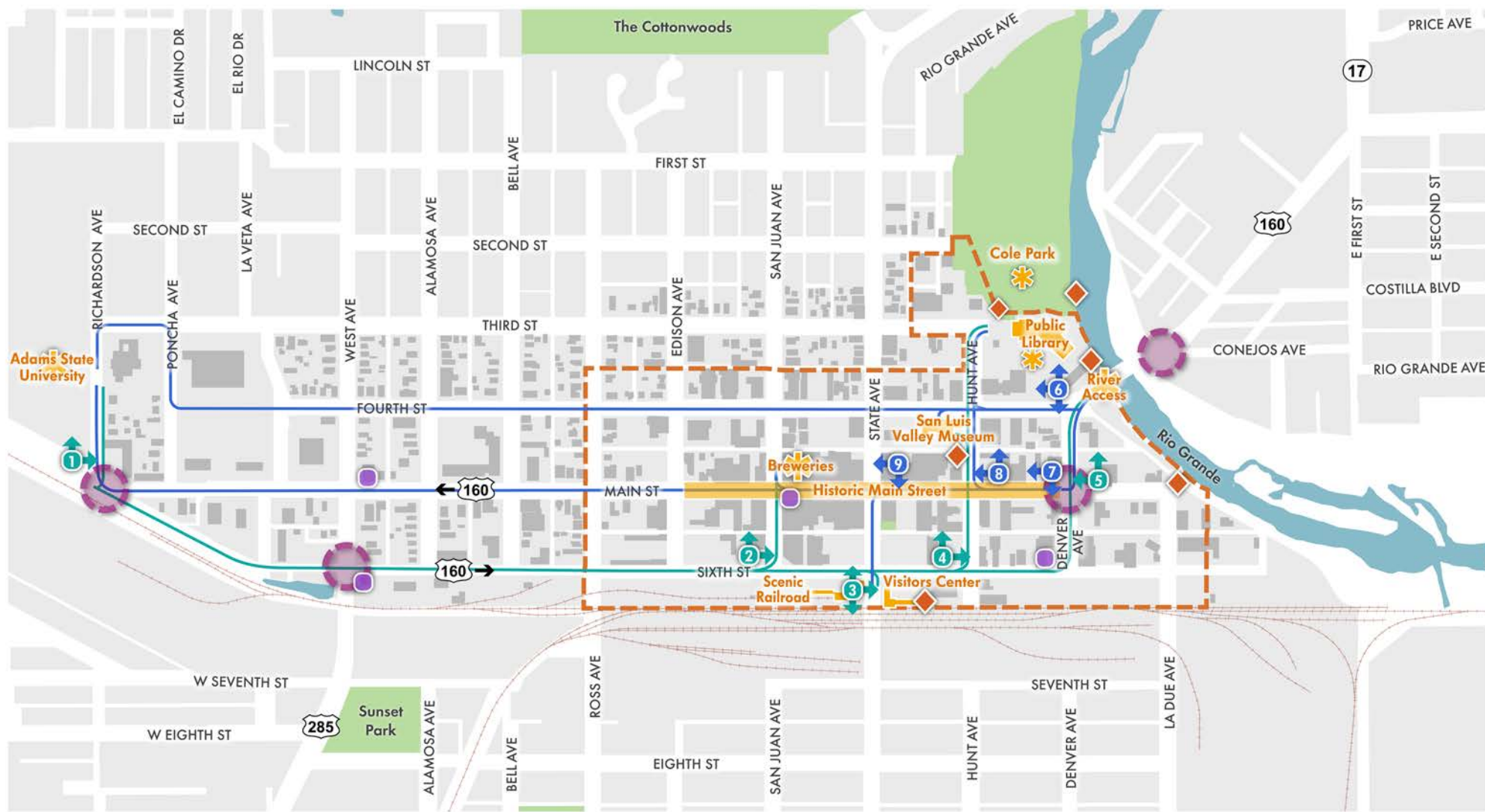
After participating in the Colorado Rural Academy for Tourism (CRAFT) Studio 101 program, the Marketing District received a CRAFT 101 Implementation Grant to fund the design and construction of a small, downtown-oriented project. Directional signage was identified as a low cost, easily implementable project with a large community benefit.

Previous community input identified attractive and traditional design elements with a uniquely Alamosa look as a priority for Downtown. With this as a starting point, concept sign designs were created and presented at a Signage and Wayfinding Charrette, with key members of City Staff, local businesses and organizations, and Downtown stakeholders. Participants selected their preferred shape, color, fonts and symbols, destinations, and locations. The Charrette also included a discussion of identity and informational signage. Recommendations for the location of the sign types that were discussed can be found on the previous page. Notes from the meeting are recorded in the wall graphic below.

Following the Charrette, the input received was used to refine and update the sign design for the Community Open House later that day. The community was shown two potential options for the final sign coloring and given the opportunity to provide general feedback. This feedback was then incorporated into another round of refinement. The final design, shown on the previous page, will be fabricated and installed throughout Downtown.



Wall graphic recording of the July 2019 Signage and Wayfinding Charrette



Recommended Signage Locations and Destinations

LEGEND

- Plan Area Boundary
- Parcels
- Railroad

- ★ Destination

- West Bound Directional Sign

- East Bound Directional Sign

- Future Directional Sign

- West Bound Route

- East Bound Route



- Identity Sign/Monument



- ◆ Future Informational Signs*

*Informational signs should be located on every block face of Main Street.



Public art / creative district, feasibility at a glance

Ease of Implementation:



Visible Change:



Project Cost:



ArtScape is an art on loan program; sculptures are selected through a community jury process and then placed throughout Downtown to create a unique self-guided sculpture walk. The program was created in 2017 to help beautify and revitalize the Downtown.



COLORADO CREATIVE DISTRICTS

Public Art / Creative District

The most successful downtown retail districts are those within a downtown that is the true center of not only business and civic activity but also cultural activity. Fortunately, Downtown Alamosa already has many of the assets needed to be an arts and culture destination. The Downtown should build upon these assets and continue to grow the base of arts and arts-related uses. The City's ArtScape program and Adams State University's art program are existing efforts that should be supported through additional programs and resources. Several strategies described below can help Alamosa grow the presence of art in Downtown and leverage the activity generated.

In addition to these efforts, the City of Alamosa has the components necessary for designation as a Colorado Creative District. This State of Colorado program is used by arts districts throughout the state to encourage and support artists, artisans, and arts programming and events. This program is also used to create attractive and affordable spaces for entrepreneurs to locate and create an additional amenity for visitors. The pursuit of Colorado Creative District designation can help bolster the current and future arts activities in Downtown. The designation can help bring greater recognition but may compete for resources or confuse the efforts of a business organization; therefore thoughtful consideration of the value and the role of the Creative District is needed in concert with efforts related to the business organization.

ONGOING ACTIONS:

- Provide support to arts programs and active entities in the form of financial resources or organizational/capacity resources.
- Leverage the influence and connections of the Planning Department to encourage public art on private and public property.
- Explore opportunities to partner with Adams State University's art program on a variety of project types and scales.
- Continue to promote and expand the ArtScape program.

SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS):

- Create a mural program in Downtown with an emphasis on conveying Alamosa's unique heritage.
- Provide a centralized location, potentially an office in the City building, for artists to use for resources, information, announcements, and opportunities in support of public art.
- Include funding within new projects, such as the catalytic projects (Alleys, Festival Street, Cultural Trail, etc.) and opportunity site development, for public art.
- Explore achieving the Colorado Creative District designation.
 - » Identify the partners and geographic areas best suited for the district.
 - » Identify the hosting entity that will apply for the designation.
 - › Explore coupling the Creative District designation with the business organization entity.
 - › Identify the roles and responsibility of the Creative District entity and ensure it doesn't overlap or conflict with existing efforts.
 - » Seek a formal designation or proclamation by the City Council of the Creative District.

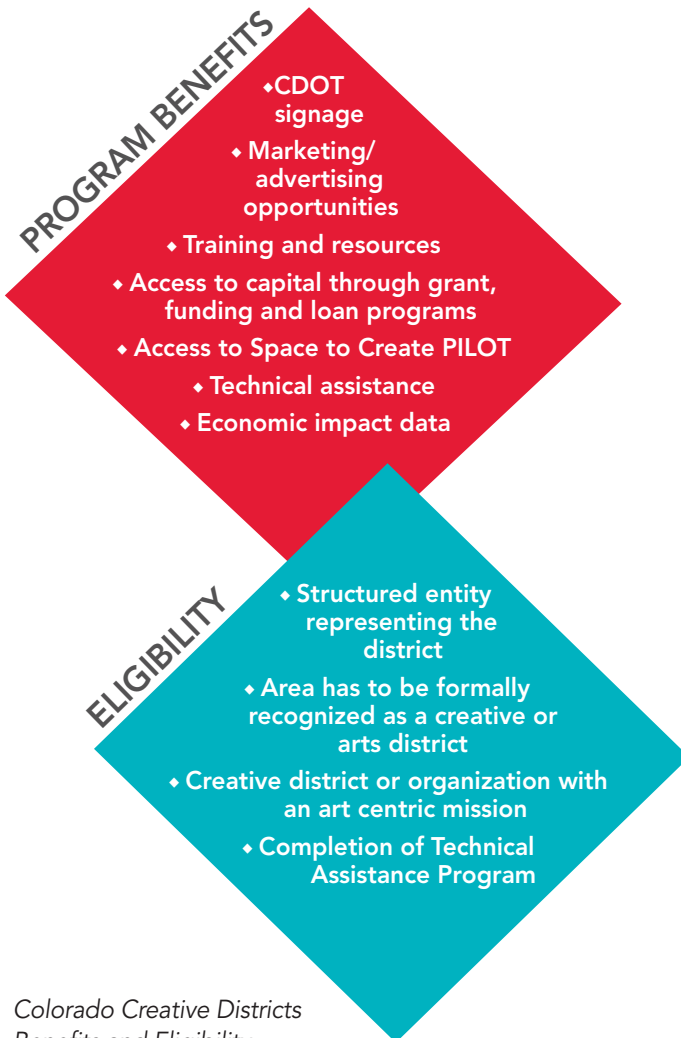
MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YEARS):

- As redevelopment occurs, evaluate public-private partnerships to provide artist housing or artist in residence programs.
 - » Provide developers and landlords with information on the value of art and creative uses Downtown.
 - » Explore participating in the State of Colorado's Space to Create program to aid in the development of artist housing and/or studio space.
- Inventory existing spaces and buildings that could be used for affordable start-up, live and/or work space and invest in public-private partnerships to develop new affordable creative spaces.
- Incentivize art in redevelopment and development sites. Audit the Land Use Code for opportunities to encourage or incentivize art in new projects.

- Consider the creation of a permanent funding source to generate revenue that funds arts and culture Downtown. Look at the Denver Scientific and Cultural Facilities District as a potential case study.

LONG-TERM (5-10 YEARS):

- As the creative industries grow, consider the creation of a dedicated Arts and Culture Plan for Downtown.



Colorado Creative Districts
Benefits and Eligibility

CASE STUDY: RIDGWAY, CO

The small town of Ridgway, CO only has a population of about 1,000 people, but nearly 20% of residents are artists or creative professionals. The creative community has galleries, shops and museums that showcase an authentic and innovative spirit. The thriving artistic community is housed in "Old West style storefronts" within the Creative District.



Creative District Case Study City: Ridgway Colorado



Create a mural program in Downtown with an emphasis on conveying Alamosa's unique heritage.

Parking management, feasibility at a glance

Ease of Implementation:



Visible Change:



Project Cost:



Higher parking utilization creates a sense of vibrancy



Provide striping for parallel parking along Main Street

Parking Management

The City of Alamosa should conduct a parking study every two years to determine how the public on-street and off-street parking lots are being utilized. The study should be conducted over a few days and should capture parking utilization and duration in the core six blocks of Downtown (see map on the following page). The results should be evaluated against the 85% parking utilization concept. This concept is common in Colorado downtowns with thriving commercial areas that have on-going redevelopment projects. The concept tries to get parking to reach 85% utilization for a set time. Until the 85% parking utilization is reached, no new parking is added. After the 85% utilization concept is reached, new parking management techniques are instituted.

ONGOING ACTIONS:

- Conduct a parking study every two years to optimize on-street and off-street parking usage at approximately 85% in the 6-block Core area, shown in the map on the following page. The parking study will be:
 - » Conducted over a few days during peak summer season;
 - » A minimum 12-hour study evaluating each space hourly to understand the total cars parked, the percent utilized, and the duration the vehicles are parked; and
 - » Potentially conducted by students or volunteers to save on cost.

SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS):

Prior to reaching 85% utilization, a few simple actions can be taken to improve parking convenience and availability in Downtown:

- To increase efficiency and parking supply, provide striping for parallel parking along Main Street as other streetscape improvements are made.
- Re-stripe on-street parking on North-South streets.
- Provide parking symbols on wayfinding signage to direct visitors to the public facilities that provide free parking. (See Signage and Wayfinding on page 38 for more details.)

AFTER 85% UTILIZATION IS REACHED:

When the six-block area in Alamosa reaches 85% utilization for six hours-a-day the following parking management concepts could be undertaken:

- Work with Downtown employees to ask that they park in private parking spaces or in a surface lot outside of the 6-block Downtown Core to leave parking opportunities available to unexpected visitors.
- Provide signage to underutilized parking lots and spaces.
- Enhanced enforcement and varied time limits in the Downtown area to keep spaces available.
- 3-hour time limits and parking enforcement is implemented at on-street parking spaces in the six-block core area (requires police support or another mechanism to enforce time limits)
- Manage off-street parking lots by providing business owners with permits in order to maximize on-street parking availability.

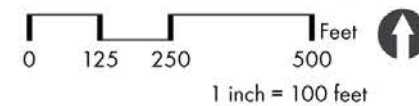
Why 85% Utilization?

This rate translates to one to two open spaces per block face, which provides enough available capacity to encourage people to visit downtown. Higher parking utilization also creates an overall sense of vibrancy and activity.



Parking Management

- Downtown Core
(6 block area for parking study)
- Parking Restripe Area
(for additional efficiency)
- Public Parking Lots



Regulatory tools, feasibility at a glance

Ease of Implementation:



Visible Change:



Project Cost:



Regulatory Tools

Regulatory documents, including the City of Alamosa Municipal Code, Zoning Standards, and Design Guidelines are an important tool in cultivating the desired character and mix of uses in the Downtown area. A variety of tools such as revised regulations, design standards and guidelines, incentives, design review boards, and form-based zoning would allow staff to work with private property owners to promote the desired look and feel of Downtown expressed by the community.

Note that where recommendations overlap - for example, a regulation for building massing in the Downtown Design Standards and in the recommended form-based code - either strategy can be used, or both if stronger regulatory leverage is deemed necessary.

SHORT-TERM (1-2 YEARS):

- Provide more prescriptive zoning in the Downtown core area, with only the desired uses allowed.
 - » Consider amending the Central Business District (CBD) allowed land uses to permit townhouses or rowhouses, small scale child care facilities, schools, and college or university uses (to allow some Adams State University or Trinidad State Junior College owned and operated facilities in the area).
 - » Consider amending the CBD land uses to permit, with limitations, type 2 retail and light industry (which could allow for maker spaces and artist studios). Limitations should restrict the number of these types of businesses on a single block face.
 - » See the chart at right for the specific land uses to consider permitting.
- Encourage existing buildings to take advantage of funding for streetscape facade improvements with expedited permitting.
 - » Consider an information campaign or targeted outreach to Downtown building owners.
- Consider implementing public space or fee-in-lieu alternatives for meeting parking requirements in the Downtown area.

- Update the “Downtown Design Standards” Section 21-4-804 of the code with more specific and enforceable standards and guidelines, OR consider creating a separate Design Standards and Guidelines Document for key portions of the Downtown Core to ensure development and redevelopment meets the City’s standards and is in-line with the community vision. Potential topics and goals for design standards could include:
 - » Responsive and contextual mass and scale;
 - » Visually interesting articulation and detail;
 - » Integrated sustainable design elements;
 - » Integrated multi-modal design elements;
 - » High-quality building materials;
 - » Landscaping, paving, and furnishings;
 - » Effective, contextually appropriate, and visually interesting signs; and
 - » Pedestrian-oriented lighting.
- Review the Municipal Code to identify opportunities to provide regulatory relief, density bonuses, and/or expedited processing for desired land uses or amenities.
 - » Land uses to incentivize should include active ground floor uses, higher density of second floor housing that offers increased affordability, live/work spaces, and dining or entertainment venues.
 - » Also consider incentivizing publicly accessible private open spaces.
 - » See Land Use Framework Recommendations on page 24 for a complete list of recommended uses.
- Consider amending the Municipal Code to allow existing vehicular uses in the CBD Zone to improve their properties to be more pedestrian friendly without becoming non-conforming uses.
- Consider amending the Municipal Code to allow uses not currently allowed on the ground floor in the CBD Zone to fill vacant spaces if they meet certain metrics for transparency or visual interest. Prioritize filling vacancies over extensive use restriction.
- Consider amending the City Sign Code to ensure that creative, 3-dimensional iconic signage is permitted and encouraged within the CBD zone district.



Example form-based code from Denver Zoning Code

MEDIUM-TERM (3-5 YEARS):

- Create a design advisory board for Downtown that can provide well-informed guidance for development.
 - » Potential members include: Planning Commissioners; City Councilors; City Staff; local organization leaders; educational institutions; and artists and designers.
- Explore form-based zoning to ensure development and redevelopment supports the desired character and is context-appropriate. Potential regulations could include:
 - » Two to three story building height with an upper-story setback;
 - » A minimum of one entry for every 30 feet of building frontage along Main Street;
 - » Parking lots off of and screened from Main Street; and
 - » Small setbacks with exceptions only for public spaces.
- Review the Municipal Code to identify opportunities to provide regulatory relief, density bonuses, and/or expedited processing for desired building forms.
 - » Building forms to incentivize include mixed-use, transparent ground floors, live/work spaces, and uses that incorporate sustainable elements.
 - » See Building Form and Design Framework Recommendations on page 26 for a complete list of recommended building forms.

LONG-TERM (5-10 YEARS):

- Continue tracking and inventorying land uses Downtown; consider additional incentives for those not seeing the desired growth. The Municipal Code should remain responsive to the needs of the Downtown area.

USES TO CONSIDER AS APPROPRIATE WITH LIMITATIONS IN THE CBD ZONE DISTRICT

- Retail Sales and Services Type 2
 - » Laundromat
 - » Second-Hand Stores
 - » Thrift Shops
 - » Consignment Stores
 - » Tattoo Parlors
- Light Industry
 - » Research and Development
 - » Assembly
 - » Re-manufacturing
 - » Packaging

Land Use	Zones								
	EN	RE	RL	RM	RH	MU	CB	I	CBD
Residential Uses									
Single-family detached	(by lot type – see below)								
Duplex or twin house	P	-	-	P	P	P	-	-	-
Townhouse or rowhouse	-	-	-	P	P	P	-	-	-
Multiplex or Multifamily	L	-	-	L	P	P	L	-	L
Manufactured home	L	-	-	L	L	-	-	-	-
Cottage clusters or co-housing clusters	L	L	L	L	L	L	-	-	-
Live-work	L	-	-	L	L	P	P	-	P
Day Care									
Adult Day Care	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	-	-
Child Care Center, Small	L	L	L	L	L	P	P	L	-
Child Care Center, Large	L	-	-	L	L	P	P	L	-
Family Child Care Home	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-
Education									
School	L	L	L	L	L	P	P	C	-
College or University	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	L	-
Vocational School / Job Training Center	-	-	-	-	-	L	L	L	-
General Commercial									
Heavy Retail	-	-	-	-	-	L	P	P	-
Liquor Stores	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	-	P
Personal Services	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	-	P
Retail Sales and Services Type 1	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	L	P
Retail Sales and Services Type 2	-	-	-	-	-	L	L	-	-
Industry									
Heavy Industry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	L	-
Light Industry	-	-	-	-	-	L	L	P	-

Land Use Tables for the CBD Zone District; Source: Alamosa Municipal Code

 = Uses to consider permitting



County Courthouse Opportunity Site



Riverfront Property Opportunity Site



Lockhart Furniture Building

Development Opportunity Sites

Development opportunity sites are parcels with underutilized or vacant buildings and land that may be attractive for investment. The purpose of the Development Opportunity Sites is to highlight investment opportunities in Downtown and align them with desired uses the community identified as something they would like to see added to downtown. Eleven development opportunity sites were identified within downtown as opportunities for attracting reuse, redevelopment, and new development. Descriptions of the Development Opportunity Sites and detailed information about tools developers and investors can access to support projects in downtown are provided in the Chapter 7 Developer Toolkit of this Plan.

Analysis of real estate market conditions and development feasibility was completed for this Plan. The findings from this analysis were:

- » The Downtown has several vacant and underutilized buildings and parcels that could attract development.
- » Most uses are not likely able to support new construction without public support.
- » Housing and hotel uses are the most feasible uses for supporting new construction. These uses also can have a positive impact on adding vitality and diversity of consumers in downtown, in turn helping retail viability.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES:

The Development Opportunity Sites identified as part of the Downtown Planning effort are:

- County Courthouse
- Lockhart Furniture Building
- Pink Elephant Parcel
- Motorway Building
- Lamplighter Motel Building

- Northwest Corner of Denver & Main
- Southeast corner of Denver & Main
- Riverfront Property near Bridge
- Rialto Building
- JCPenney Building
- CenturyLink Parking Lot

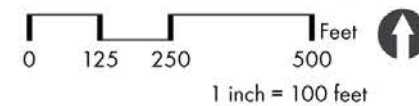
ONGOING ACTIONS:

- **Focus business and investment attraction efforts on adding retailers and new businesses downtown through use of existing buildings and spaces.**
 - » Utilize strategies in the Chapter 6 Ground Floor Activation Toolkit and distribute the toolkit to Downtown businesses and property owners.
 - » Continue the façade improvement program.
 - » Integrate funding for murals as part of the façade improvement program through creation of a separate fund/program.
 - » Explore permit and development fees that may be waived or reduced to incentivize reinvestment in existing buildings.
- **Attract development of new housing units and hotel units within downtown.**
 - » Fund public improvements needed to address feasibility gaps for (re)development through use of tax increment financing.
 - » Promote the designation of Downtown Alamosa as an Opportunity Zone.
 - » Promote access and opportunities for use of Federal tax credit programs (historic, low income housing, and new market) and support applications for use of tax credit programs.



Development Opportunity Sites

Development Opportunity Sites







In this Chapter:

Catalytic Projects and Priorities

Main and 6th Street Redesign

Riverfront Activation

Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail

Alley Activation

San Juan Avenue Festival Street

CHAPTER 5: CATALYTIC PROJECTS

The Catalytic Projects are comprised of streetscape projects and investments in activating under-utilized public spaces, envisioned to improve and energize the Downtown Area. They provide much needed space for events, festivals, pedestrian seating and amenities, public art, and recreational amenities.

These projects primarily address previously vehicle-oriented spaces and provide guidance for transforming them into vibrant and active public places. Some include larger infrastructure changes, such as changing lane configuration and potentially moving the curb and gutter (as on Main Street and 6th) or adding in a new multi-use trail and public spaces (as on the Riverfront Activation project), while some can be achieved with more easy-to-implement solutions, such as Activated Alleys, which can be successful with the addition of seating, lighting, wall murals, and event programming.

All of the Catalytic Projects are envisioned and described as full build-out projects, but this level of completion is intended to be a long-term, visionary effort. Each project can be implemented incrementally, and even the first few phases and improvements for each would be very effective in activating and beautifying the Downtown area.

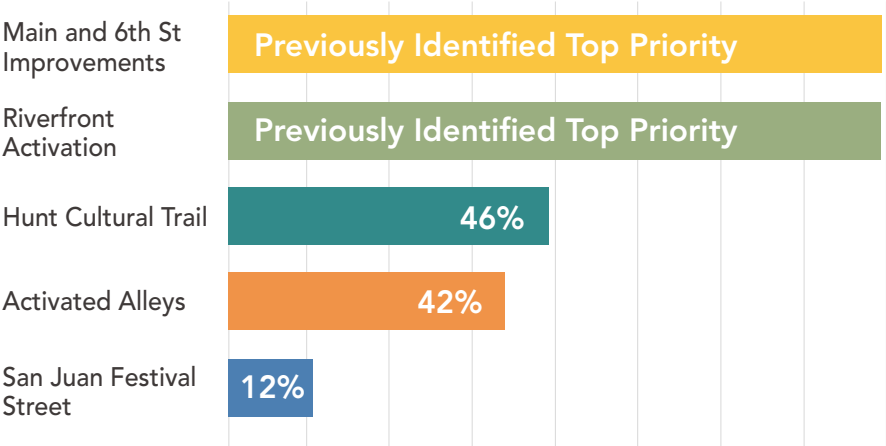
An Implementation Matrix, found at the end of the chapter on page 68, breaks each Catalytic Project into more simplified, phased steps. Each of these “phases” includes general information about timing, a order of magnitude cost, key partners, and potential champions. The phases are designed to break the project into logical portions, with each portion adding individual value without necessarily requiring the completion of the subsequent phase.

Catalytic Projects and Priorities

The Downtown Alamosa Catalytic Projects represent new public spaces and street improvements that were identified and selected during the robust public outreach process. Participants chose the types of infrastructure projects they wanted to see Downtown and voted on the top priorities for future improvements. This prioritization can be seen in the chart below, and the colors of the projects are also used in the map on the following page, which illustrates the specific extents of each project.

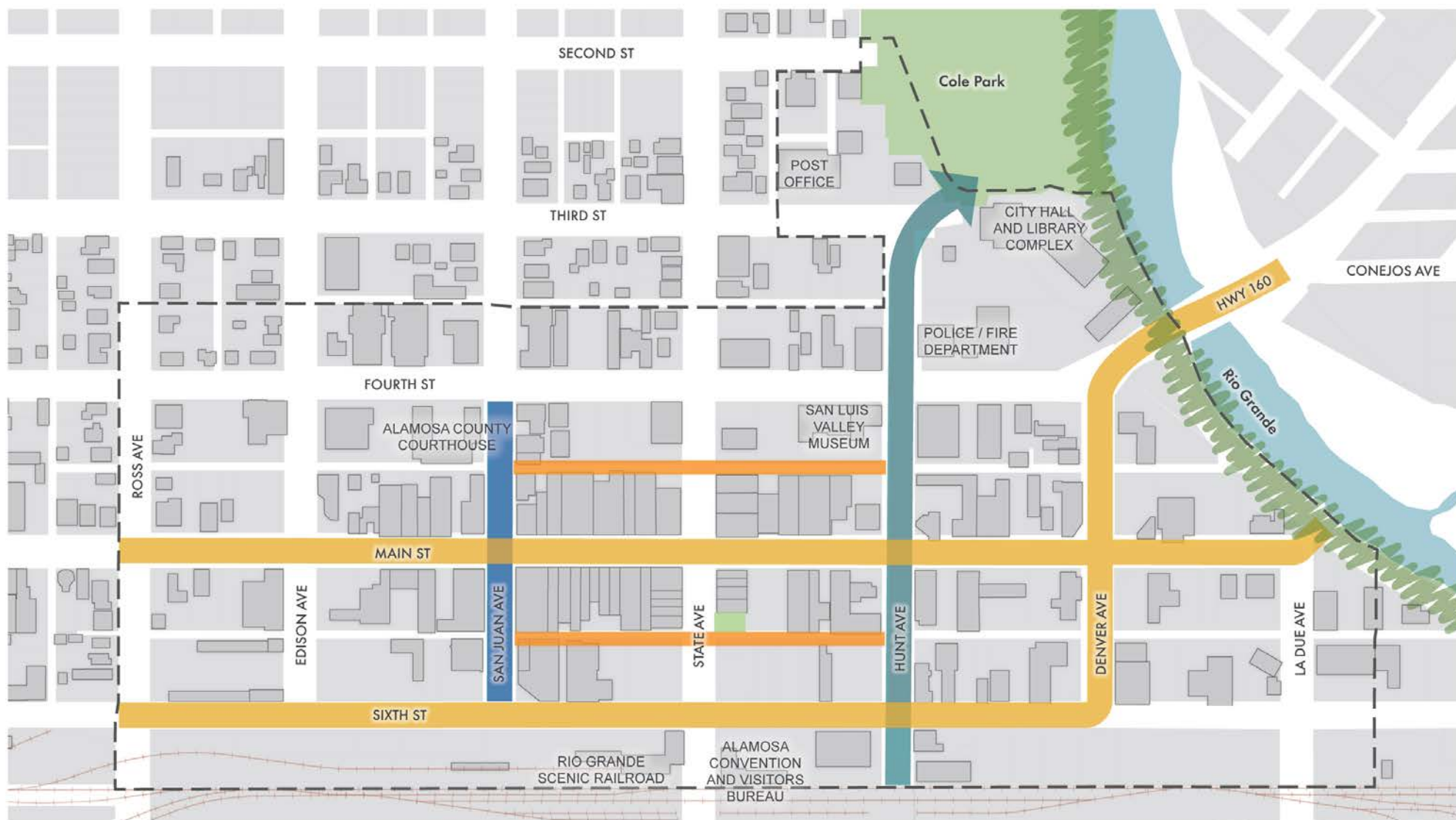
The projects recommended in this Chapter include information on appropriate design features, potential phasing, precedent imagery, graphics illustrating key concepts, and recommendations for implementation. These projects can be completed independently of each other in any order to reduce any potential barriers to their being constructed.

Some of these projects have the potential to be implemented beyond the extents of the Plan Area Boundary identified in the scope of this effort. However, since each of these projects would require a significant financial investment, it is recommended that these areas (shown on the map at right) be prioritized in order to promote the most transformative impact within the Downtown Core as soon as possible.



Prioritization ranking identified by community participants.





Downtown Framework Diagram

LEGEND

- Plan Area Boundary
- City Block
- Downtown Building
- Body of Water
- Park or Open Space
- Railroad

Catalytic Projects

Main and 6th Street Redesign

Catalytic Project Area

Alley Activation

Catalytic Project Area

San Juan Ave Festival Street

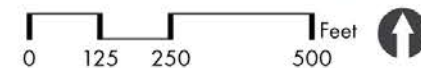
Catalytic Project Area

Riverfront Activation

Catalytic Project Area

Hunt Ave Cultural Trail

Catalytic Project Area



Main and 6th Street Redesign

The redesign of Main and 6th Street should incorporate a variety of improvements. A redesign of the street layout and pedestrian infrastructure will be the cornerstone piece of the project. These changes include narrowing the roadways, slowing vehicle traffic, and creating more space for pedestrians. In addition, a wide range of placemaking strategies should be utilized to create a vibrant, active streetscape. Design features such as art, trees, decorative furnishings, and patios and parklets will contribute to a revitalized streetscape for both Main and 6th Street. Increased programming such as festivals, markets, and live music are also recommended to help activate the Downtown area.

The following page illustrates the recommended reconfiguration of Main Street and 6th Street. These diagrams show how underutilized or over-sized rights-of-way can be reclaimed to create spaces that pedestrians can more comfortably inhabit. The diagrams call this reclaimed space “additional programmable space” and the illustratives to the right show several concepts for how this space can be used, including for cafe-style seating, coffee carts, patio space, bar games, and shaded seating.

The pages that follow include information about timing, phasing, and critical next steps for both Main and 6th Street. For both streets, the vision can be implemented incrementally as funding or other resources become available. An illustrative graphic on page 59 shows a potential design for the improvements on 6th Street. These improvements include using art and decorative paving to draw attention to the Downtown area, adding a multi-use trail to connect to the Rio, signage and wayfinding, amenities, and beautification techniques in the underutilized right-of-way and railroad property on the south side of the street (note, as some of this area is private, yet underutilized, property, any improvements shown are purely examples).

The City of Alamosa and CDOT should continue to collaborate on returning Main Street and 6th Street back to a two-way configuration. The first step is for the City of Alamosa to prepare traffic forecasting, traffic re-routing, truck routing, and design plans for the two-way conversion. This work would be funded by the City of Alamosa and coordinated with CDOT staff. It would include opportunities to gather input from the community, stakeholders, and elected officials. The outcome of this study would be an agreement on the reconfiguration of intersections, multimodal roadway segments, and managed access along both roads to facilitate the return to two-way traffic. This study should also outline a process to transition Main Street over to the City of Alamosa’s jurisdiction over time. In the interim, however, the recommended design (shown on page 56) achieves the vision and goals of this Plan, while not precluding this possible future outcome.

DESIGN PALETTE

Community members were presented with options for the types of fixtures and linear design elements that would be most appropriate for Main Street and 6th Street. Through public meetings, charrettes, online surveys, and conversations with City staff, participants expressed the most interest in the features shown below. These include parklets, planters with seat walls, a boardwalk or multi-use trail, an enhanced tree canopy, seating and patio space in front of businesses, and more traditional fixtures for lighting and other design elements.

DESIGN ELEMENTS:



SEATING TYPE:



PAVING/TRAIL TYPE:



PLANTING TYPE:

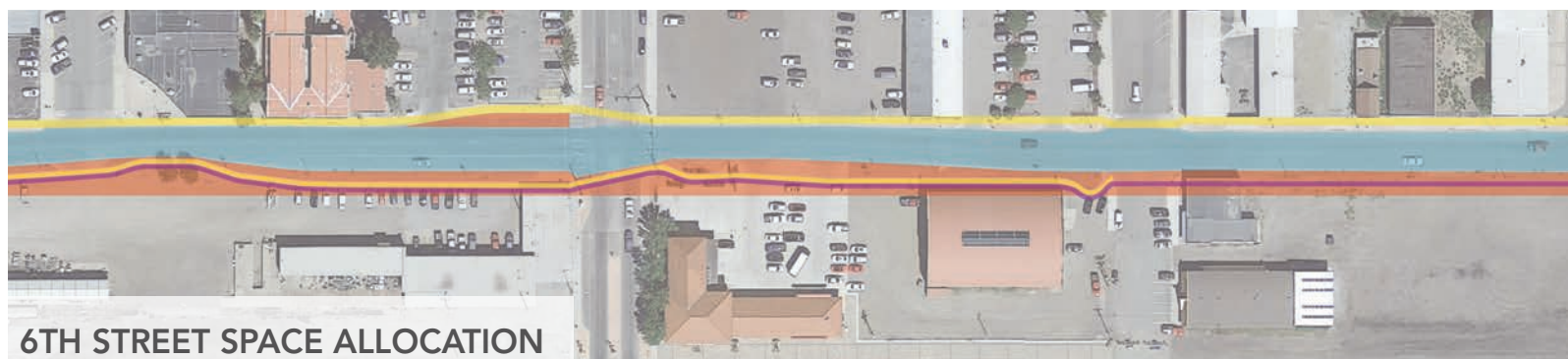
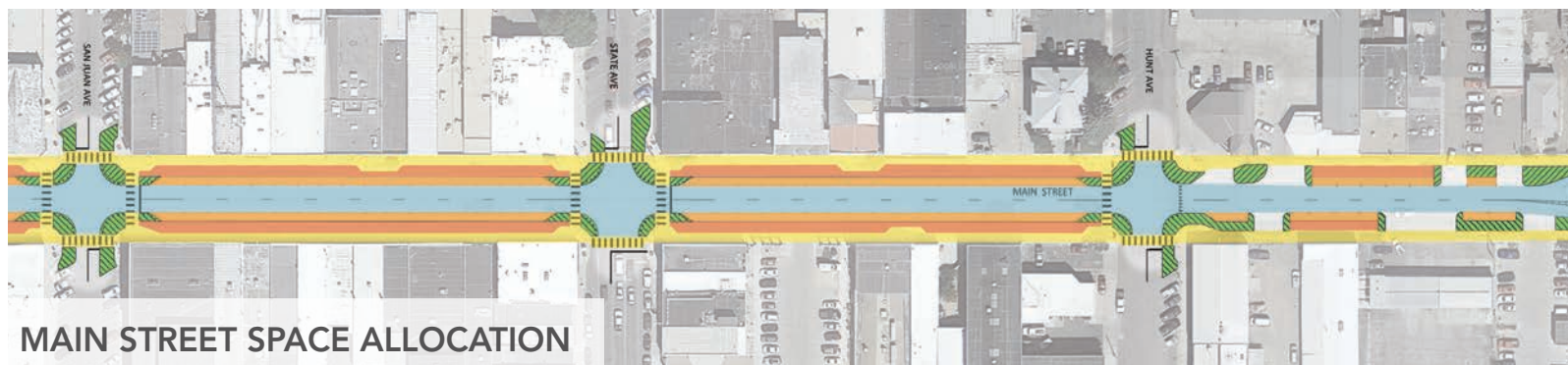


ACTIVITIES & EVENTS:



LIGHTING TYPE:





*Programmable Area Potential Uses



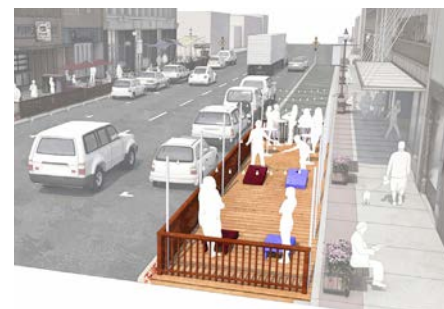
CAFE AND OUTDOOR SEATING

This space can be used for formal seating areas. Existing and future restaurants can expand their dining onto these patios while ensuring proper maintenance and beautification.



COFFEE CART

Small scale or pop-up food options like coffee carts or street food vendors can be used next to offices or other commercial uses. Seating and shade should be provided, as well.



OUTDOOR/BAR GAMES

Bars, restaurants, and breweries can provide fun active uses with games such as horseshoes, cornhole, giant jenga, etc. These should be coordinated with daytime use to reduce noise issues.



SHADE, SEATING, PAINTED PAVING

Planting areas and public art can be combined with informal seating and shade structures to create multi-use, pedestrian friendly spaces where people can linger on Main Street.

Main Street Design Phasing



EXISTING STREET

- Three wide lanes create an oversized roadway that allows for and promotes fast vehicle speeds
- The wide roadway creates long - and often unsafe - crossing distances for pedestrians
- Minimal bicyclist comfort is provided in unprotected bike lanes
- Narrow sidewalks have limited space for outdoor patios
- Few pedestrian amenities exist, including landscaping or shade
- Oversized parking lanes, without striped spaces, leave wasted space in the right-of-way



SHORT-TERM / RECOMMENDED DESIGN

- Reduce to two 12' travel lanes
- Relocate bike travel onto adjacent roadways
- Resize parking lanes to 8' typical condition and stripe individual spaces
- Implement patios, seating, planting, shade structures, bike parking, etc.
- Increase tree canopy either with ornamental trees in planters that are rotated out seasonally (a pilot program trial is recommended using winter watering, to test viability within the climate), or select areas within the programmable area, where an adequate in-ground tree pit could be installed (note: coordinate this work with CDOT for any necessary approvals).
- Add of pedestrian amenities along the sidewalk
- Use creative and decorative physical barriers to create an 11' wide programmable space between on-street parking and the sidewalk
 - » One of the 11' programmable spaces could be used as a two-way multi-use trail if desired, although equity issues for businesses would need to be addressed.

CRITICAL STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Complete Traffic
Analysis for Lane
Reduction



Consideration
of New Bike
Facilities



Installation
of Temporary
Parklets

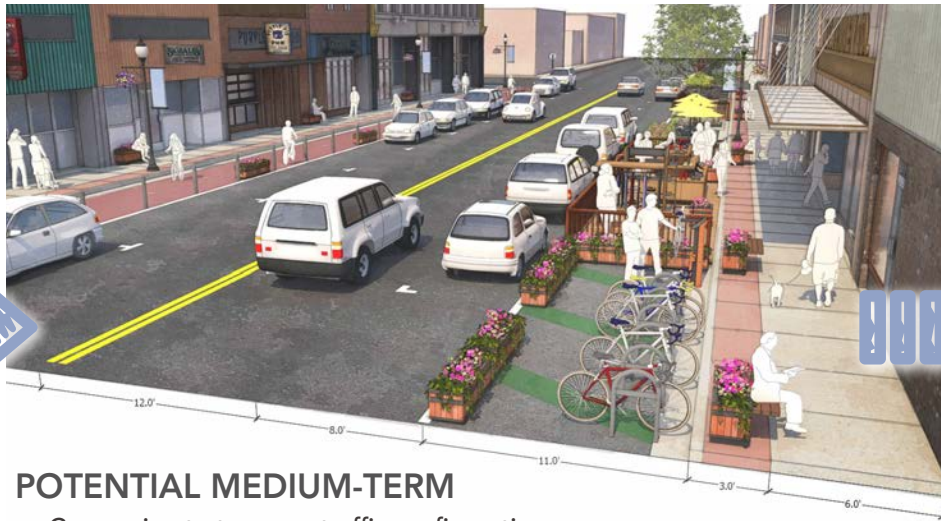


Memorandum of Understanding
(MOU)/ Intergovernmental
Agreement (IGA) with CDOT



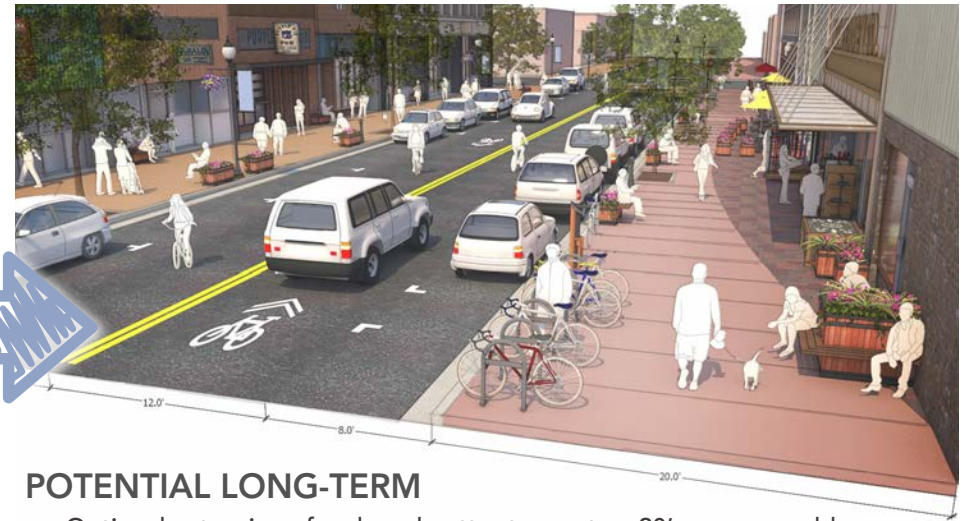
Road and
Parallel Parking
Re-Striping





POTENTIAL MEDIUM-TERM

- Conversion to two-way traffic configuration
 - » Intersections at Main Street and Denver Avenue and Main Street and 6th Street will be updated to accommodate new traffic flow and direct more vehicles onto Main Street
- Optional cycle track creates comfortable, safe bike facility
- Parklets and flexible, programmable spaces remain
- Narrowed roadway width continues to increase pedestrian safety by reducing vehicle speeds and shortening crossing distance
- Two-way configuration will slow traffic, creating both better visibility for Main Street businesses and promote a safe, pedestrian priority on the street.



POTENTIAL LONG-TERM

- Optional extension of curb and gutter to create a 20' programmable space at the sidewalk level
 - » New sidewalk space could incorporate decorative paving, permanent planters with seat walls, street trees with adequate rooting area, and restaurant and retail spaces that spill out onto the sidewalk
- Increased tree canopy
- Option to convert cycle track to boardwalk and use shared on-street bike facility
- Narrowed curb-to-curb width increases pedestrian safety by reducing vehicle speeds and shortening crossing distance

Potential Future Steps

Two-Way
Circulation
Study



Installation of
Cycle Track
(if desired)

Convert Main and
6th to Two-Way
Streets (6th Street
becomes Hwy 160)



Identify Funding
Sources



City of Alamosa
Relocates Curb and
Gutter on Main Street



Construction
of Permanent
Amenities

6th Street Design Phasing



EXISTING DESIGN

- One-way with fast vehicle speeds and dedicated left and right-turn lanes
- Minimal building frontages along roadway
- Parking lots without many screening treatments
- Lack of shade and consistent pedestrian amenities
- *Immediate steps that can be undertaken to improve the pedestrian experience include:*
 - » Add amenities, including lighting, seating, planting areas, public art, etc.
 - » Update intersections to with visual traffic calming features to enhance pedestrian safety



SHORT-TERM

- *Short-term steps that can be undertaken to improve the pedestrian experience include:*
 - » Confirm right-of-way ownership in order to enhance/expand the multi-use path continuously along the south side of 6th Street to extend to the Rio.
 - » Optimize underutilized space between the multi-use trail and 6th St. Strategies include screening, gateways or signage directing people to Main St.
 - » Add well identified RV Parking to the south side of 6th Street where possible.



POTENTIAL MEDIUM-TO-LONG TERM

- Street converts to a two-way configuration with intermittent left turn lane
- Left turn lanes provided as needed; where turn lanes are no longer required, this space can be re-purposed for pedestrian uses
- Opportunities for public gathering spaces, pedestrian amenities, and pop-up style retail or food trucks
- Removal of some turn lanes provides reduced pedestrian crossing distance
- Two-way configuration reduces design speed, provides traffic calming, and increases the potential of attracting visitors to Main Street

CRITICAL STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Complete Traffic Analysis for Lane Reduction



Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/ Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with CDOT



Confirmation of Right-of-Way Ownership



Construction of Multi-Use Trail



Potential Future Steps



Identify Funding Sources



Two-Way Circulation Study



Convert Main and 6th to Two-Way Streets



EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROPOSED 6TH STREET DESIGN VISUALIZATION

MURAL ART

Mural painted on the sides and backs of buildings visible from 6th Street will draw attention and visitors toward Main Street.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Signs along 6th Street will direct people passing through Downtown to destinations, particularly along Main Street.

PAINTED INTERSECTION

Artistic paving and paint treatments will highlight the intersection and increase pedestrian safety and placemaking.

PLANTING BEDS

Planted areas will protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic and add color, interest, and shade to the street.



Riverfront Activation

The Rio Grande River is one of Alamosa’s most unique and underutilized assets. A variety of strategies should be implemented to increase activation of the riverfront and create a destination that is special to Alamosa. An easily implementable first step to the river activation is the creation of a more safe, accessible, and comfortable multi-use trail along the river, extending north and south from the Highway 160 bridge. This trail should include bike and wheelchair-friendly paving, lighting, interpretive signage, a cohesive and clear system of wayfinding, and seating. A safe means of crossing major roadways, such as an underpass under Highway 160 (shown on adjacent page) should also be considered.

After the installation of the multi-use trail, an incremental approach to adding in pavilions, plazas and gathering areas, and art along the route can be taken. A boat launch pad or other recreational amenities along the river would allow residents and visitors to have an even more direct interaction with the Rio and add to Alamosa’s rich stock of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Local wildlife, conservation, and naturalist groups should be consulted in an riverfront projects to ensure that construction is sensitive, and beneficial, to the local ecology and the flood plain. Riverfront projects should also take advantage of the opportunity to celebrate and educate about this natural ecosystem and increase people’s stewardship of the Rio Grande River.

Multiple groups in the San Luis Valley and Alamosa are major stakeholders in the Rio Grande riverfront usage and ecological health and the valley’s recreation opportunities. San Luis Valley Great Outdoors (SLV GO), a coalition that promotes outdoor recreation and stewardship in the area, and the Adams State University Outdoor Program are two potential partners that can add significant value in activating the riverfront and ensuring the continuing health of the Rio Grande river corridor.

Other strategies for activation should include using regulatory tools to allow and incentivize the development of housing and dining along the riverfront, similar to riverfront uses in other small towns in Colorado, such as Salida or Golden.

DESIGN PALETTE

Participants in the Downtown Design Plan’s public process, including community meetings, charrettes, open houses, and surveys, selected the features and uses they’d most like to see for riverfront activation. The most popular design elements are shown below, including interpretive art and signage connecting to the history and ecology of the river corridor, cafe seating and riverfront dining, pavilions and shade structures, a multi-use trail with pedestrian amenities, and housing or restaurant uses in riverfront properties.

ARTISTIC ELEMENTS:



SEATING TYPE:



PAVING/TRAIL TYPE:



FIXED ELEMENTS:



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS:



LAND USES:





EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROPOSED RIVERFRONT ACTIVATION DESIGN VISUALIZATION

PARK PAVILIONS

Pavilions and shade structures offer places for rest along the trail and a good location for public art and other amenities.

SEATING AREAS

Frequent opportunities to sit and rest or enjoy views of the river should be provided along the multi-use trail.

WAYFINDING

Multiple strategies for wayfinding should be used. Pedestrian and cyclist routes should be well marked, safe, and easy to follow.

BRIDGE UNDERPASS

Ensuring an unobstructed path of travel for pedestrians and cyclists will encourage people to use the trail and increase safety.



Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail

The Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail will create a consistent venue for art and culture in Alamosa, while connecting people between major Downtown destinations including the Rio Grande Railroad, the San Luis Valley Museum, the Public Library and Municipal Building, Cole Park, and access to the Rio Grande multi-use trail. The Cultural Trail was the community's top choice among the smaller streetscape Catalytic projects with 46% of participants naming it as their top priority (Alley Activation and the Festival Street were the other voting options and were the 2nd and 3rd priorities, respectively).

The Cultural Trail will combine both culture and mobility. A widened sidewalk as well as a sharrow will create a comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists traveling north/south through Downtown. Sculptures and signs describing Alamosa's history or showcasing local artists will provide consistent interest and activation. These improvements are illustrated in the graphic rendering on the following page. The enhanced streetscape will also be an ideal location for the Alamosa Farmer's Market (see graphic rendering below). Movable planters can be used to green the street during the week and then can be moved, as needed, to allow the Farmer's Market or other events to take place.

The other objective of the Cultural Trail is to connect people from Alamosa's natural assets and trails around the Rio Grande River and Cole Park more easily to Downtown, and vice versa. The trail emphasizes the proximity of these destinations to each other and provides a safe and attractive conduit for residents and visitors alike.



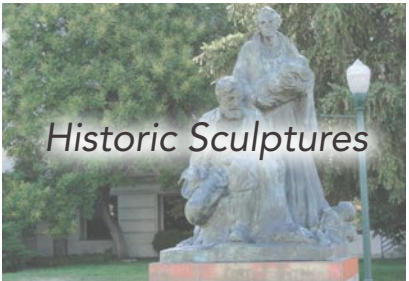
DESIGN PALETTE

Alamosa residents were presented with options for the types of amenities, programs, and design elements that would be most appropriate for the Cultural Trail. Through public meetings, charrettes, online surveys, and conversations with staff, participants expressed the most interest in the features shown below, including fixed seating (benches and walls) along the pathway, historic and artistic sculptures that tell the story of Alamosa, a widened "boardwalk" (achieved through paving patterns and techniques), a venue for the Farmer's Market, and decorative lights with planting and signage.

OVERALL LOOK AND FEEL:



DESIGN FEATURES:



PAVING TYPE:



INTERACTIVE STORY TELLING:



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS:



PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS:





EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROPOSED CULTURAL TRAIL DESIGN VISUALIZATION

FIXED SEATING

Seating all along the sidewalk will create a comfortable pedestrian environment and place to stop and enjoy the art.

HISTORIC/ART SCULPTURE

Sculptures and public art with interpretive signage can tell the history of Alamosa and speak to what makes it unique while adding visual interest.

ACCENT PAVING

Artistic paving (such as a stamped, colored asphalt) will highlight the streetscape while providing a sturdy, even walking surface.

FLOWER BASKETS

Decorative lights with planting can enliven and add color to the street while additional signs can advertise Downtown.



6th and Main Street Alley Activation

The alley between 6th and Main Street is unique in its visibility from 6th Street. Several parking areas and empty lots along 6th expose this alley to vehicles traveling east and bypassing Main Street. The advertisement of Downtown should be the first priority for this alley. The side or back of the Rubi Slipper, State Street Treasures, the Hunt Ave Boutique, or other visible buildings should be painted or decorated to draw attention to Main Street and attract visitors. If additional funding or desire is available, the alley could also become another Downtown gathering space with public art, overhead planting and tree canopy (including hanging flower baskets and vine trellises), small stalls or shopping opportunities, seating, and decorative lighting and paving.

4th and Main Street Alley Activation

The alley between 4th Street and Main Street offers a great location to turn underutilized urban space into an activated and attractive place that residents and visitors to Downtown Alamosa will inhabit and enjoy. This length of alley, between San Juan and Hunt Avenue, has some of Downtown's most active destinations to the north and south. This alley can safely connect visitors to shops, restaurants, and breweries on Main Street and to the San Luis Valley Museum, County Courthouse opportunity site, churches, housing, and businesses on 4th Street.

This alley should be prioritized as a space for community gathering, local art installations, and events. Seating, lighting, and paving will make the space more inviting. Local businesses should be encouraged to create or enhance back patios or entries to help enliven the alley, and Happy Hour, networking, and other small scale local events can help activate the space throughout the day.

Activating the alleys was the community's second priority among the smaller streetscape Catalytic projects with 42% of people naming it as their top choice.

Operational Considerations for Activated Alleys:

- » Encourage consolidated, shared trash enclosures to minimize truck time spent in alleys, and to leave available more space for seating/gathering
- » Coordinate deliveries to off-peak hours to maintain access for pedestrians and events
- » Explore temporary barricades placed at alley entrances during scheduled events to restrict access

DESIGN PALETTE

Participants in the Downtown Plan's public meetings, charrettes and surveys selected a palette of the most appropriate design elements for the Downtown alleys. For the alley between Main and 4th Street this included painted murals, planters, paving patterns and Happy Hour events. For the alley between Main and 6th Street this included changeable art panels, tree and vine canopies, banded paving patterns, and shopping areas. Both alleys should have string lighting and cafe seating.

6th and Main Alley

ARTISTIC ELEMENTS:



PAVING TYPE (TIE):



ARTISTIC ELEMENTS:



PAVING TYPE:



Both Alleys

LIGHTING TYPE:



PLANTING TYPE:



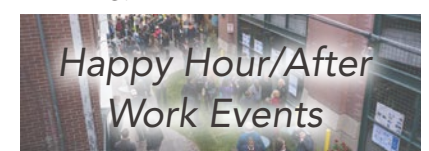
ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS:



PLANTING TYPE (TIE):



EVENTS:



SEATING TYPE:





EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROPOSED 4TH AND MAIN STREET ALLEY DESIGN VISUALIZATION

OUTDOOR SEATING

Restaurants can open up to the alleys, providing seating and activation to energize the space.

PAINTED WALL MURAL

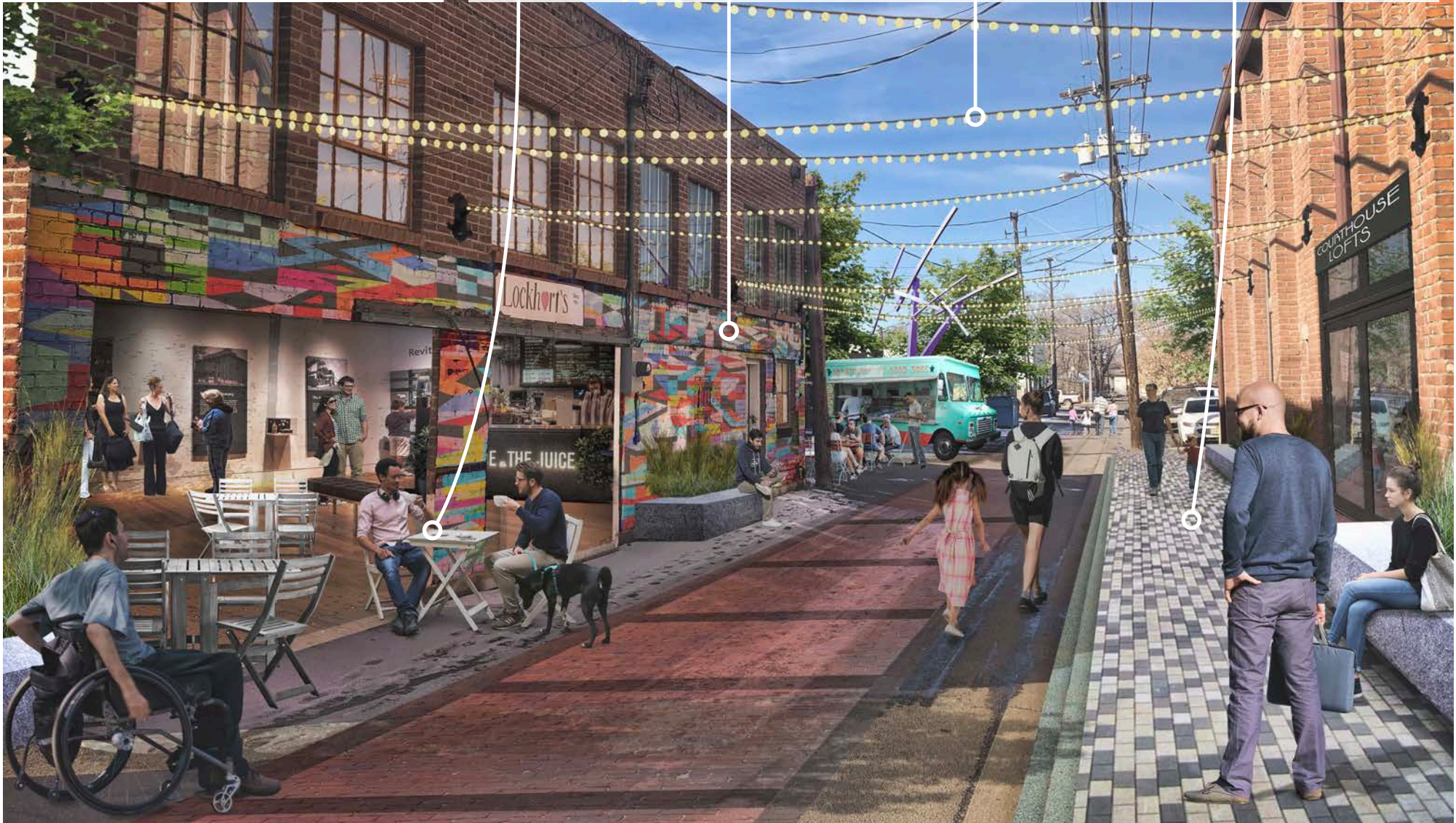
Public art will make for vibrant alley spaces with color and activity. It will also act as a canvas for local artists.

STRING LIGHTING

Lighting will make alley spaces feel more bright and comfortable and encourage people to spend time in them, especially after working hours.

ACCENT PAVING

Artistic paving will provide an even walking surface and show that the alley is an extension of the public realm.



San Juan Avenue Festival Street

The San Juan Festival Street should be designed as a community-oriented event space. By beautifying the streetscape with trees, decorative lights, and banners pedestrians will feel more comfortable inhabiting the space and passing drivers may be compelled to slow down or stop.

While San Juan Avenue is already occasionally used for events and festivals, the addition of a larger temporary stage, removable bollards to temporarily restrict vehicle traffic, and dedicated utility hook-ups for vendors and musicians would allow for larger and more frequent events. The Festival Street design should be able to seamlessly transition between a vibrant and effective event space and an attractive, but still functional, streetscape. It is recommended that the intersection of San Juan and 6th not be permanently closed to vehicle traffic.

A variety of programming should take place on the Festival Street. The activity most selected by residents was beer and food festivals, but other popular choices that should be considered include art festivals, local vendor shows, yard games, group exercise classes, and concerts.

An enhanced intersection treatment was a high priority for Alamosa residents. While permeable paving was one of the top selected design elements, removing the existing asphalt and replacing it with individual pavers would be both prohibitively expensive and also require significant maintenance in Alamosa's extreme climate and freeze/thaw cycles. While a painted intersection won't provide as much environmental benefit, it is a good first step towards improving the intersection for pedestrian safety and creating a memorable place. Other, more simple options for run-off infiltration and water quality treatment could include tree trench filters and rain gardens in sidewalk planters.

The San Juan Festival Street was the community's third priority among the three smaller streetscape Catalytic projects with 12% of people naming it as their top choice. Input collected from several people and conversations with City Staff suggested that this was because the street is already one of the nicer Downtown streets and already accommodates several events every year, making the project feel less urgent than the other street improvements. This investment would be aimed at simplifying the hosting of events and creating an identifiable and unique urban gathering space for the region.

DESIGN PALETTE

Participants were presented with options for the types of amenities and design elements that they would most like to see on the San Juan Festival Street. Through public meetings, charrettes, online surveys, and conversations with staff, participants expressed the most interest in the features shown below, including pop-up stages, interactive play spaces, an outdoor stage (although concern was later expressed at the possibility of a permanent stage closing San Juan, and a temporary stage may be more appropriate), a tree-lined street, beer and food festivals, and decorative lights with banners to advertise events.

PORTABLE ELEMENTS (TIE):



PAVING TYPE:



ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS:



FIXED ELEMENTS:



PLANTING TYPE:



PLACEMAKING ELEMENTS:





EXISTING CONDITIONS

PROPOSED FESTIVAL STREET DESIGN VISUALIZATION

PAINTED INTERSECTION

Artistic paint treatments will highlight the intersection and increase pedestrian safety and placemaking. Stamped, colored asphalt could also be used.

OUTDOOR STAGE

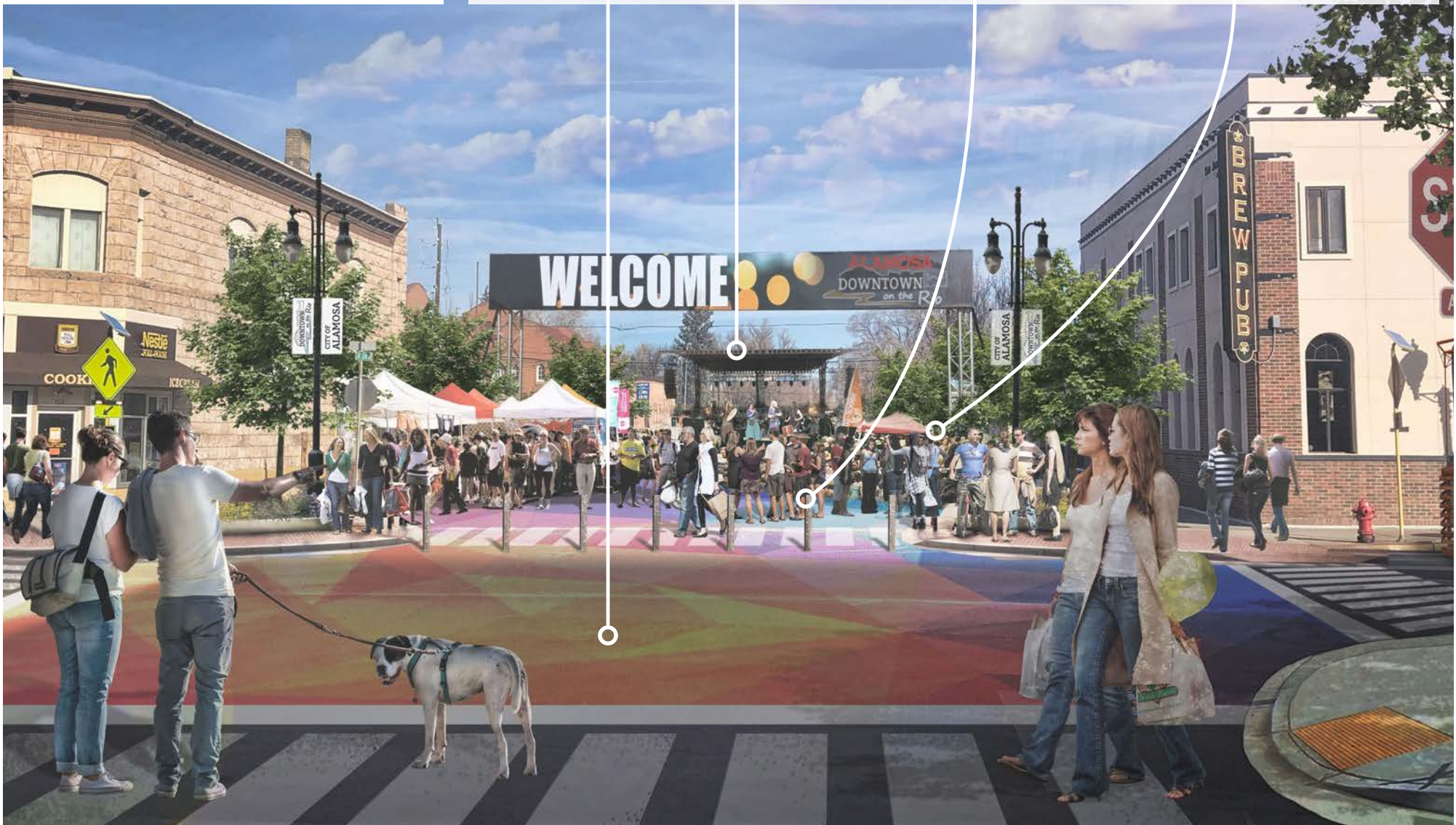
A temporary stage for concerts and other events signals that the street is intended for festivals and pedestrians.

REMOVABLE BOLLARDS

Enabling street closure temporarily for events. Bollards can also be decorative elements and help with crowd control.













INTEGRATED UTILITIES














Provide power outlets, water hook-ups, and other utilities necessary to support events and vendors on the street.



Catalytic Projects Implementation Matrix

This implementation matrix aims to guide the execution of some or all of each Catalytic Project. The sub-tasks or phases below each project provide an incremental approach to their completion so that phases can be achieved as resources become available. Each phase also includes general timing and order of magnitude cost estimates. Key partners, which are groups that are integral to the project and must be bought-in, and potential champions, which are stakeholders that could be involved in some steps of implementation or take ownership of portions of the project, are also recommended for each phase.

CATALYTIC PROJECT		TIMING	ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST ESTIMATE	KEY PARTNERS	POTENTIAL CHAMPIONS
1. MAIN STREET REDESIGN					
Potential Long Term	TRAFFIC ANALYSIS AND ROAD RE-STRIPING	6 Months - 1 Year		CDOT, CoA-Public Works	Main Street and Adjacent North/South Street Business Owners
	INSTALL TEMPORARY PARKLETS	1-2 Years		CDOT, Business Organization (to be formed)	Main Street Business Owners, Local Artists
	TWO-WAY CONVERSION	After Circulation Study and CDOT approval		CDOT, CoA-Public Works, Parks and Recreation Tree Board	Main Street and Adjacent North/South Street Business Owners, transportation advocacy groups
	MOVE CURB AND GUTTER				
2. 6TH STREET REDESIGN					
Potential Long Term	TRAFFIC ANALYSIS AND ROAD RE-STRIPING	6 Months - 1 Year		CDOT, CoA-Public Works	6th Street and Adjacent North/South Street Business Owners
	INSTALL PERMANENT AMENITIES (PLANTING, LIGHTING, TRAIL)	2-3 Years		CDOT, Rio Grande Scenic Railroad	Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau, Local Artists
	TWO-WAY CONVERSION	After Circulation Study and CDOT approval		CDOT, CoA-Public Works, Parks and Recreation Tree Board	6th Street and Adjacent North/South Street Business Owners, transportation advocacy groups
	MOVE CURB AND GUTTER				
3. RIVERFRONT ACTIVATION					
	CONSTRUCT MULTI-USE TRAIL	1-2 Years		Public Works, Parks and Recreation	SLV GO, Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, SLV Dirt Worx
	INSTALL PERMANENT AMENITIES (BENCHES, SHELTERS, PLAZAS)	2-3 Years			
	INCENTIVIZE RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT	2-3 Years		Planning Department, Local Developers	Local Restaurants
	DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT RIVER AND RECREATION ACCESS	3-5 Years		Public Works, Parks and Recreation	Adams State Outdoor Recreation, SLV GO

CATALYTIC PROJECT	TIMING	ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST ESTIMATE	KEY PARTNERS	POTENTIAL CHAMPIONS
4. HUNT AVENUE CULTURAL TRAIL				
STREETSCAPE AMENITIES (LIGHTING, MOVABLE PLANTERS)	1-2 Years		Public Works, SLV Museum	Adams State Art Program, Porter Realty, Elks Lodge, SLV Museums Association, Farmer’s Market
INTERPRETIVE STORY TELLING (ART AND SIGNAGE)	1-2 Years		SLV Museum, ArtScape	
PERMANENT IMPROVEMENTS (FIXED SEATING, SIDEWALK, PAVING)	2-3 Years		Public Works, SLV Museum	
5. ALLEY ACTIVATION BETWEEN MAIN AND 6TH STREET				
INSTALL HIGHLY VISIBLE ART PANELS AND WALL MURALS	0-1 Years		ArtScape, Alley Abutting Local Businesses (i.e. Rubi Slipper, State St Treasures, Hunt Ave Boutique), Public Works, Parks and Recreation (Centennial Park)	Adams State Art Program, Local Artists, SLV Museums Association
ALLEY AMENITIES (STRING LIGHTING, MOVABLE SEATING)	1-2 Years			
PERMANENT IMPROVEMENTS (BANDED PAVING, PLANTING AREAS)	2-3 Years		Public Works, Parks and Recreation Tree Board	
6. ALLEY ACTIVATION BETWEEN MAIN AND 4TH STREET				
INSTALL WALL MURALS	0-1 Years		ArtScape, Adams State Art Program, Building Owners, Public Works	Adams State Art Program, Local Artists, SLV Museums Association, Business Organization (to be formed)
ALLEY AMENITIES (LIGHTING, MOVABLE SEATING/PLANTERS)	1-2 Years			
ENCOURAGE ACTIVE USES ON ALLEY	1-2 Years		Alley Abutting Local Businesses (i.e. Roast, SquarePeg Brewerks, Home and Mattress, Colorado Sports, etc.,) Planning Department	
PERMANENT IMPROVEMENTS (PAVING, PLANTING AREAS)	2-3 Years			
7. SAN JUAN AVENUE FESTIVAL STREET				
STREETSCAPE AMENITIES (LIGHTS, BANNERS, PAINTED INTERSECTION)	0-1 Years		Public Works, Adams State Art Program, Business Organization (to be formed)	Abutting Local Businesses (i.e. SLV Brewery, SquarePeg, Woody’s Barbecue, etc.) Local Artists, Business Organization (to be formed)
FESTIVAL IMPROVEMENTS (UTILITIES, BOLLARDS, STAGE)	1-2 Years			
PERMANENT IMPROVEMENTS (PLANTERS, WIDENED SIDEWALK)	2-3 Years		Public Works, Parks and Recreation Tree Board	



6

WE LOVE COFFEE

SPECIALS

① STIR FRY + RICE OR EGG
NOODLES
ADD CHICKEN

② SALMONY SALAD + AVO

③ ROAST VEGETABLES SALAD
+ ROAST PUMPKIN SEED, ROAST
PECAN, SESAME SEEDS + KETA

④ BEEF STEW

⑤ GREEN BEANS + VEGIE SOUP

⑥ PEA & CARROT SOUP



In this Toolkit:

Understanding the Market
Context

Design Interventions

Programming Recommendations

Merchandising Strategies

Other Resources

CHAPTER 6: GROUND FLOOR ACTIVATION TOOLKIT

While a component of the Downtown Design Plan, this toolkit is intended to be a resource that can be distributed independently to local business owners. The toolkit contains market context information specific to Alamosa and the San Luis Valley, as a reference point. Following that information, the toolkit includes a series of strategies and recommendations detailing how businesses can better position themselves given that context.

WHY IS RETAIL SUCCESS IMPORTANT TO THE CITY OF ALAMOSA?

In addition to being an important source of sales tax revenue for cities, successful retail environments can bring a considerable amount of energy and vibrancy to downtown environments. For Alamosa, the desire for a thriving downtown, with a distinctive street-level pedestrian experience, will be supported by retail and dining experiences at the ground floor that cater to both local residents and visitors.

WHAT IS THE CITY DOING TO HELP GROUND FLOOR ACTIVATION?

Through this Downtown Design Plan effort, the City of Alamosa is committed to helping property and business owners enliven their ground floor frontages. Strategies to help in that effort, which are contained in the Plan include: recalibrating regulatory tools to broaden the types of businesses that can help activate the ground floor, encouraging the development of business organizations so that local business owners can work together to unify the ground floor experience of downtown, and exploring funding and financing mechanisms to help with beautification efforts, among others. This toolkit is also intended to serve as a guide to local business owners, developers, and designers to identify steps they can take to help invigorate the streetscape and better attract patrons to the downtown environment.

“Social media has a powerful impact on consumers because it offers a platform to ask for advice and do research on what they are looking to buy.”



Food halls serve as dining destinations and social spaces



Active street at night with retail, patios and lighting

Understanding the Market Context

THE EFFECT OF HIGHWAY RETAIL ON ALAMOSA

Post-WWII retail trends along state highways tended to include large format department stores that combined multiple service offerings into one location (i.e. large format grocers with butchers, floral, pharmacy, etc.). These stores also provided large dedicated parking lots for the ultimate in convenience. Development like this happened west of downtown in Alamosa about 10-15 years ago, which had a significant impact on the prosperity of downtown retail; pulling energy and activity from the Downtown Core.

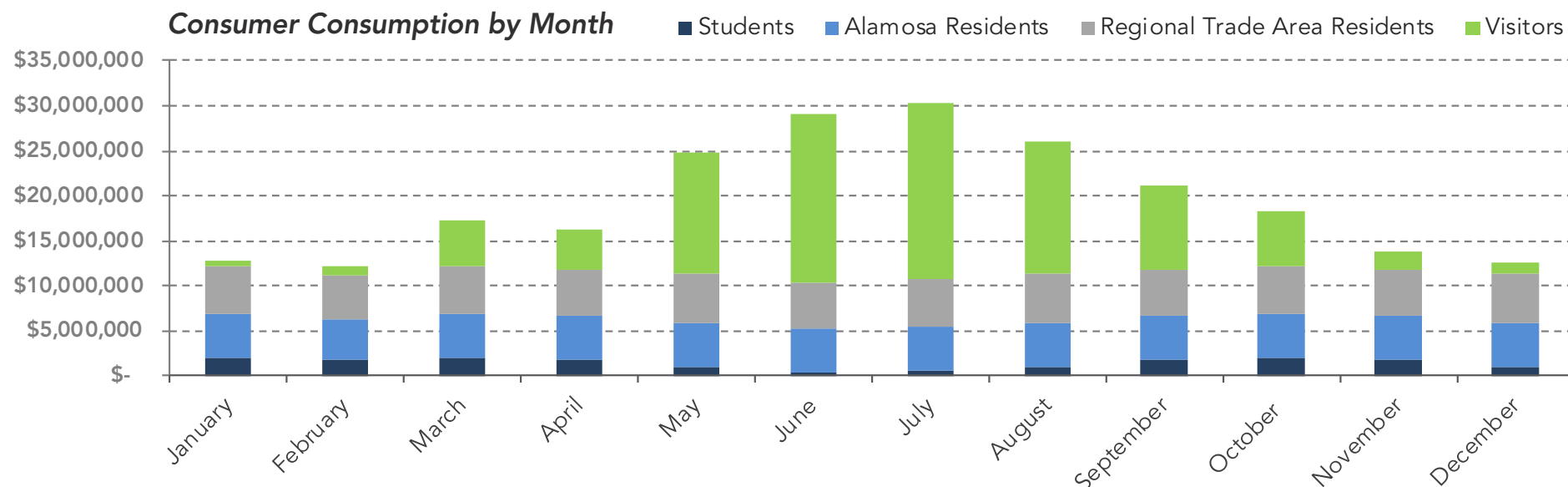
NATIONAL RETAIL & RESTAURANT TRENDS

The retail industry has shifted greatly over the last 10 to 15 years, as well, impacted by the growth of internet sales, declining brick and mortar store sales, retail chain consolidations, and demographic shifts and preferences. Collectively, these trends are impacting store sizes and reducing the demand for new retail space both locally and nationally.

- » **The Rise of E-Commerce** - Between 2001 and 2015, total online retail purchases grew from approximately \$29 billion to \$310 billion, an 18.4 percent annual growth rate. During the same period, brick and mortar stores grew at a 3.7 percent annual growth rate. The growth in online shopping is impacting the demand for traditional

brick and mortar stores. Most importantly, this also affects the way retailers are doing business, pushing them to alter store formats and incorporate online sales and marketing into their business concepts.

- » **Store and Chain Consolidation** - Over the past five years, there have been nearly 200 retail chain bankruptcies. In 2017, CNN Money reported that there were 5,300 store closing announcements through June 20 compared to 6,200 in 2008 during the Great Recession—the worst year so far for store closings. With fewer stores in the market, it is more difficult to find tenants for retail spaces. This is especially impactful in smaller, rural communities where the loss of a large retailer means towns are left with one option for certain retail goods and/or have to travel several miles to access retail goods. Property owners have had some success filling these vacancies with nontraditional tenants, specifically ones that are fitness or entertainment oriented.
- » **Spending Patterns** - Changes in spending patterns are also affecting the amount and mix of retail space. Consumers, especially younger people, are becoming less likely to accumulate furniture, home furnishings and other large, high cost items as they are becoming more mobile due to the cost of housing and the location of



economic opportunities. They are also more interested in experiences, emphasizing travel, recreation, and entertainment. However, they still like the experience of shopping, but in more experience-oriented retail areas and/or with retailers that match their lifestyle.

- » **Restaurants and Entertainment-** The changes in spending patterns are impacting the mix of retail space in aggregate as well as within individual districts, corridors, and centers. The growth of traditional retailers (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, etc.) is flat or declining nationally while the number of dining and entertainment businesses continues to grow. New concepts such as market/food halls, microbreweries, food trucks, and farm-to-table restaurants are more common not only as dining destinations, but as social gathering and entertainment spaces. Growth in this dining and entertainment sector aligns well with the community vision and goals that have been expressed throughout the Downtown Design Plan effort.

» **Social Media** - Social media has a powerful impact on consumers because it offers a platform to ask for advice and do research on what they are looking to buy. Online product research allows consumers to check for reviews and the lowest prices. It also allows retailers to advertise their brand and their products to more than just foot-traffic. Research is especially important to younger generations (Millennials through Gen X) for electronic and apparel purchases, as well as their decisions for dining out.

BUSINESS MIX WITHIN ALAMOSA

Alamosa serves as the regional commercial hub for the San Luis Valley and is the primary destination for groceries and general merchandise with major retailers including Walmart, Bealls, Safeway, and City Market. Downtown traditionally has been the main commercial destination, but the expansion of retail in Alamosa to the west along US-285/Main Street has captured much of the grocery, convenience, general merchandise, apparel, home improvement, and others shopper's goods retailers. Downtown's

retail mix consists largely of restaurants/bars/cafes, furniture/home furnishing/garden stores, and antique/thrift/specialty stores. Downtown has lost some of its major anchors including the recent closing of JCPenney's. Downtown also has a mixture of services including auto, beauty, financial, and a pharmacy (Walgreens just outside the Downtown Design Plan study area boundary). The retail mix has been trending to a more entertainment and tourism orientation given the recent changes, which presents opportunities, but limits the appeal of downtown.

TARGET MARKETS

The consumer base for downtown Alamosa is made up of three main groups: residents/workers, students, and tourists. The composition of the consumer base shifts depending on the month, which presents challenges for businesses. The area residents and workers are the most stable consumer segment and represent approximately 40% of consumer spending. However, they can represent anywhere from 25% (in summer months) to 75% (in shoulder seasons) of the consumer spending in a given month.



Great Sand Dunes National Park is a regional draw for visitors



Customers at San Luis Valley Brewing Company



Experiential retail can happen in a variety of formats

Students at Adams State University and Trinidad State Community College are a small, but significant component of consumer spending. Tourism accounts for about half of the annual consumer base and its share can shift from as little as 10% of consumer spending to as much as 75% depending on the month. These three consumer groups are targets for Downtown businesses and services but require different strategies for capturing their business.

- » **The area resident and worker base** collectively is sizable and is what maintains viability for businesses year round. This group should not be ignored and should be catered to. Events and programming can help provide family-friendly visitation opportunities. Increased visitation from this group can be through highlighting shopping destinations, entertainment and dining options, and community events. Outreach and marketing to this group is needed to keep people aware of activities and events.
- » **Tourist visitation** represents the most attractive consumer base to target given their size but the seasonality puts heavy pressure on the summer months to capture sales and activity to offset the down seasons. Focus should be paid to raise awareness of downtown stores and attractions for visitors. Tourist should be targeted with multiple reasons to visit downtown more than just for dining. Providing traveler services can

help capture and raise awareness to downtown. Spreading the tourism season out more and identifying more repeatable tourism events can also help. Communication and regular coordination with downtown activities and events is needed to make sure downtown is a component of the region's convention and visitors' bureau marketing efforts. The convention and visitors' bureau (CVB) can help raise awareness of reasons to come downtown to visitors. CVB website visits are driven first by National Park information seekers but second by people searching for "Things to do." Downtown Alamosa should be a "thing to do", as opposed to the current promotion of individual businesses. Market the collective downtown experience/destination in addition to the individual approach the CVB provides.

- » **Students** are a small but significant portion of population and are present in non-tourism season. This group doesn't produce a lot of sales potential but can help add vitality and activity with events, programmed activities, and street-life. Additional activities and events to attract students to Downtown can increase capture of this consumer group during the school year. These efforts do not have to be large or costly, as simple and flexible events are effective. Also, student-oriented programs can be used as pilot programs for attracting residents and tourists.

RETAIL LEAKAGE AND SURPLUS ANALYSIS

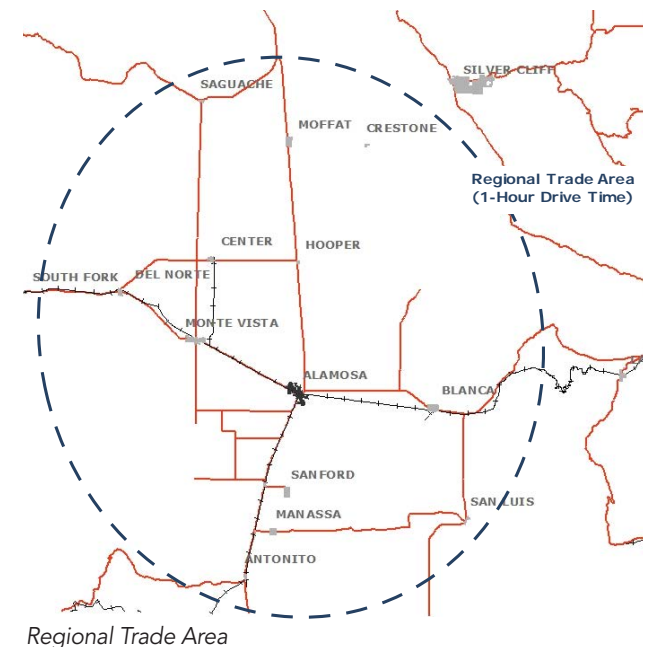
As the commercial center for the San Luis Valley, Alamosa serves a trade area of consumers that are generally within an hour drive from the city of Alamosa. The regional trade area is estimated to span along major roadways with approximate boundaries of South Fork and Del Norte on the west, San Antonio and Antonito on the south, Fort Garland to the east, and Saguache and Moffatt to the north. This hour drive time trade area has a population of approximately 47,000 people in 18,300 households. The households in this trade area have an average annual household income of approximately \$50,000.

An analysis of the retail demand from the regional trade area for Alamosa versus estimated sales in the trade area was completed for this study. Generally the retailers in the trade area are primarily serving the residents of the trade area. Most retail store categories have a small amount of inflowing sales from people visiting from outside the trade area. However, three store categories do generate a large amount of inflowing sales- food stores (i.e. grocery stores), convenience stores (i.e. gas station), and eating and drinking establishments. The convenience store and eating and drinking establishments' sales inflow is related directly to tourism to the area. The inflow of grocery store sales indicates both a high capture of tourism spending and also a likelihood

that the grocery stores in Alamosa serve a larger trade area. The stores within categories outside those three listed do not capture a significant amount of inflowing sales and there is an opportunity to try to expand this capture. Additionally, the capture of inflowing sales for eating and drinking establishments was estimated to be lower than the volume of tourists in the area would indicate. The lack of hotel options near major eating and drinking areas, like downtown, could be a reason visitors are not staying near convenient food options and are opting to eat food they brought along on their trip.

The analysis also indicated areas where sales from trade area residents are leaking (or being spent elsewhere- physically or online) to other options. Most shopper's goods categories, such as clothing, accessories, electronics, appliances, sporting goods, hobby, and miscellaneous retail are capturing approximately half of the residents' expected sales potential. This indicates that residents are either obtaining these items online, on trips to larger commercial areas (i.e. Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Denver), or are spending less on these items than typical Colorado residents. There is also a lower than expected capture of resident sales at eating and drinking establishments, which indicates that residents are likely spending more on food for home consumption than choosing to dine out.

"This hour drive time trade area has a population of approximately 47,000 people in 18,300 households. The households in this trade area have an average annual household income of approximately \$50,000."



Given this valuable market context information, the remainder of this toolkit is focused on design interventions, programming recommendations, and merchandising strategies aimed at helping to mitigate the challenges associated with the market context, while leveraging the opportunities Alamosa has to fill a unique void in the market.



Bi-fold glass patio doors are a great way to embrace warm weather and connect the indoors and outdoors



Temporary winter enclosures can provide a year-round patio experience



Awnings in a variety of styles and materials add visual interest to storefronts

Design Interventions

STRUCTURAL IMPROVEMENTS

» Building Articulation

The ground floor of a building is closely related to the pedestrian experience. Breaking up a large, uninteresting building mass into smaller parts ensures that this experience is more personal and human-scaled. This helps the vitality of a business in the long term. Approaches to increasing building articulation include differentiating wall planes based on function, articulating corners, creating a visual rhythm with windows or columns and exposing structural systems.

» Transparency/Window Locations

Transparency on the ground floor of a building is a great way to share activation between the indoors and the outdoor public realm. Large glass windows provide an opportunity to showcase goods, display a busy restaurant, and

draw people inside. Large amounts of glass on a storefront also increases daylighting which is pleasant for shoppers, diners and office workers alike.

» Doors

Doors serve as a crucial storefront element and there are many designs to choose from. Plain, nondescript doors may detract from an otherwise inviting facade, whereas a unique door can be a signature statement for a small business. Aside from aesthetics, accessibility and security are essential aspects in door design. Door placement is the first step in creating a smooth flow of movement through a shop, office or restaurant.

» Seasonal Flexibility

Alamosa is a town with cold winters and warm summers. Flexibility to adapt to the seasons is beneficial for any business. In winter, commercial patio heaters, fireplaces, transparent vinyl patio enclosures, blankets, padded chairs and

additional ambient lighting can be used to keep outdoor patios operational and comfortable. In summer, misters, fans, shade structures and umbrellas can be used to cool off customers and citronella candles or repellent lanterns can be used to deter insects. Incorporating retractable windows and/or garage and other roll-up doors are a great way to open up a storefront or patio in warm weather.

» Accessibility

Providing entry ramps, doors with at least 32" of clear width, railings on stairways and lever-style door handles are all ways to ensure customers of varying physical abilities are able to access a business establishment.



This brightly colored shop stands out from its neighbors

FACADE ENHANCEMENT

Improving a facade enhances the downtown experience from the public realm. Beautifying and improving the functionality of storefronts can lead to increased curb appeal and therefore increased foot traffic for all establishments on a block.

» Color

Adding color to a building's ground floor can give aging facades a fresh look, make a business more memorable and enhance branding. Some ways to incorporate color include painting the whole facade, emphasizing doors or window frames, colored awnings, and planter boxes.

» Materials

Adding selective accent materials as a complement to the building's primary materials can add a sense of contemporary design. While additional materials add visual interest, avoid using too many materials in a single facade (more than 3-4) so as not to create a busy or incoherent appearance.



Enhanced lighting and lightly colored overhangs can help a business feel more welcoming in the evening hours

» Lighting

At nighttime, a business feels safer and more approachable with adequate lighting. Lighting techniques can also be used to highlight architectural details, illuminate window displays and ensure signage is legible after dark.

» Awnings

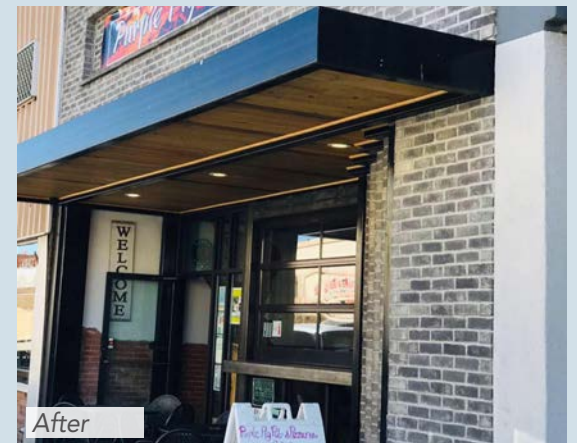
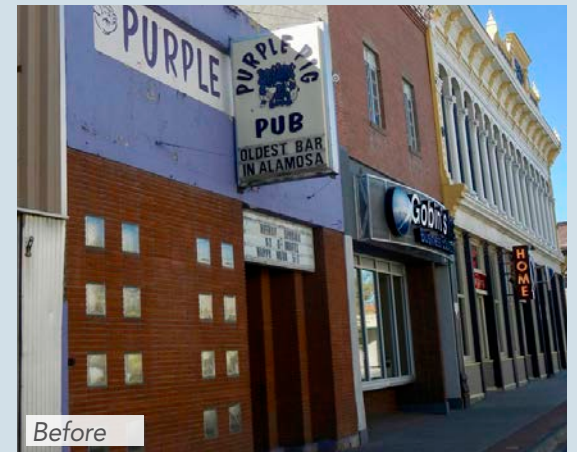
Awnings on ground floors serve multiple purposes. The most functional purpose is to provide shade from the high summer sun and keep the interior of a building more cool. Awnings are also an opportunity for branding, visibility, signage and unique design. Awnings should also be constructed out of durable materials that are able to weather all seasons, and should be refreshed about every 5 years.

» Facade Restoration

In some cases, the original facade materials of Alamosa storefronts have been covered up. The removal of stucco and other overlays could reveal the historic grain and original materials.

LOCAL FACADE REMODEL EXAMPLE: THE PURPLE PIG

Along with a rebranding of the restaurant, the Purple Pig Pub was remodeled to have a more inviting and transparent facade. Design elements include an awning with lighting and lightly colored wood, a recessed entry providing space for patio seating, material improvements, and a large retractable window with bar-top seating.





Local eye-catching signage



Local eye-catching signage



Local eye-catching signage



Art can be used in storefronts to emphasize a brand

» Signage

Exterior signage is often the first impression customers get of a business and can also be a key factor in getting them in the door. Eye-catching signage that clearly communicates a brand is essential for any successful business. Memorable signage adds to the character of downtown as a whole.

Businesses should consider signage as an opportunity to increase visibility from a distance. The scale of signage should consider the perspectives from pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles. This may require signage at multiple scales.

» Art

Adding art to a facade can quickly draw customers to a business. Art is an opportunity to highlight the special character of a place, emphasize the values of a business, create an iconic and memorable visual aesthetic and encourage passersby to linger or get a closer look. Art is also an opportunity to utilize local artisans such as mural painters.

Businesses in Downtown Alamosa should be encouraged to work with Adams State University's art program to identify students or young artists available to help create art installations at an affordable price point, providing valuable experience for the artist in the process.

REAR FACADES AND ALLEYS

» Rear Facade

While attention is often entirely focused on the street side of a building, Alamosa has many businesses that are accessed from a rear parking lot or alley. It's important to ensure that a business is not only recognizable from the back, but that the back has a special character. Adding beauty and articulation to the rear of a building can

transform the back into a second storefront, provide additional opportunities to reach customers, and ensure a positive experience.

Improved rear facades would be particularly effective on buildings whose back faces 4th Street and 6th Street, as those are opportunities for those Main Street businesses to double their visibility.

» Alley Activation

The alley between 4th Street and Main Street offers a great location to turn underutilized urban space into an activated and attractive place that residents of and visitors to Downtown Alamosa can inhabit and enjoy. The alley between 6th and Main Street is unique in its visibility from 6th Street, which carries a relatively high traffic volume. The side or back of visible buildings should be painted or decorated to draw attention to Main Street and attract visitors.

These alleys should be prioritized as a space for community gathering, local art installations, and events. Seating, lighting, and decorative paving techniques will make the spaces more inviting. Local businesses are encouraged to create back patios or entries to help enliven the alleys. Small scale local events can also activate the space throughout the day. Alleys can also serve as additional pedestrian connections and should be safe, clean and well-lit.

Businesses should work together to maintain an orderly and welcoming appearance along the alley - consolidating trash bins into shared enclosures; coordinating deliveries to off-peak times in order to better allow pedestrians and events to occupy the space, etc.

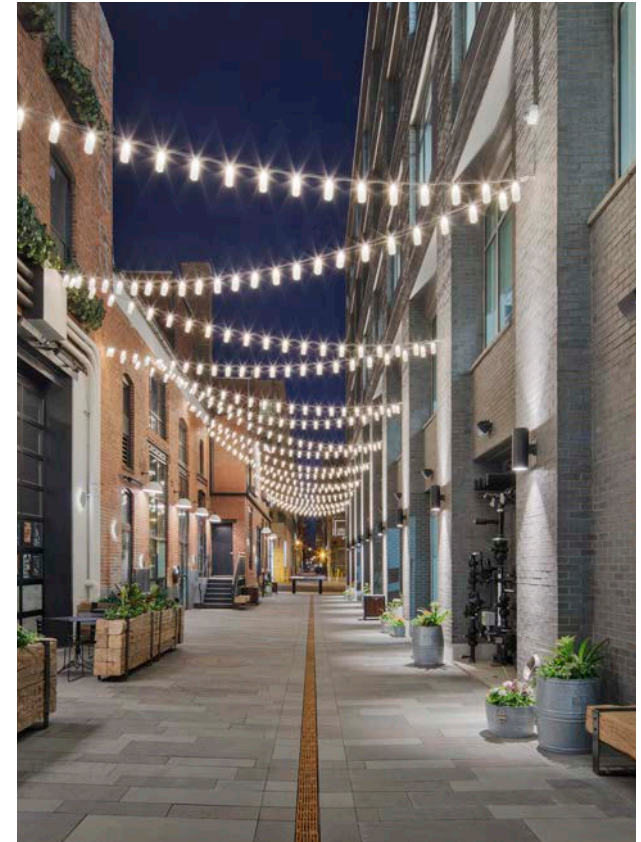
**See the Catalytic Projects chapter of the Downtown Design Plan for more detail on specific Alley Activation elements desired by the community.*



This brewery has a rear entrance with retractable windows and bar seating



Alleys can be transformed into unique public gathering spaces



Alley with enhanced lighting, seating and paving



Alley with enhanced paving, art and landscaping



Bath bomb testing at a cosmetics shop



Event booths should have prominent signage, bright interiors and clear branding



Outdoor dining can happen in flexible spaces outside of a restaurant

Programming Recommendations

ADD EXPERIENCES

In the age of online shopping, experiential retail is more important than ever to get people in the door. Brick and mortar stores need to provide reasons for customers to shop in person rather than online, which is often cheaper and more convenient. Experiences can come in a variety of forms, for example:

- » A live reading by an author at a book store
- » A cooking class at a kitchen goods store
- » Crafting workshops at an arts and crafts store
- » Product testing at an electronics store
- » Hiking group meet-up at an outdoor gear store
- » Fashion show at a clothing boutique
- » Holiday party at a stationary store

ENGAGE WITH CITY EVENTS

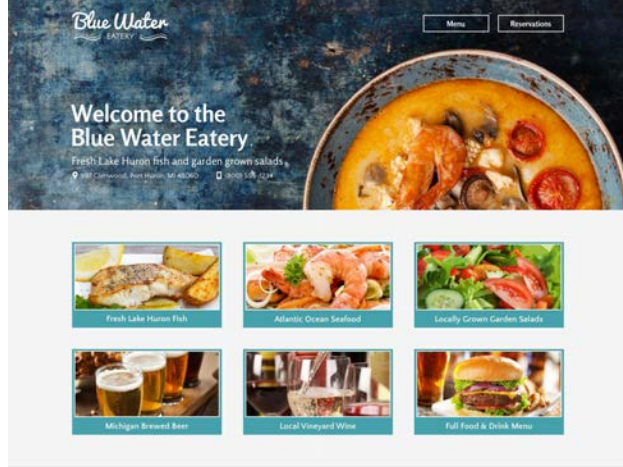
Any time a city event is taking place, it is an opportunity to directly reach potential customers including both local residents and visitors. Even if a business has a storefront, it is still beneficial to host a pop-up tent at an event. This provides additional exposure for a business as well as a chance for face-to-face contact and a first taste of the business's customer service. This is also a great way to provide potential customers with a sampling of products, whether that is food, clothing, art, or other goods.

For businesses that provide a service rather than a product, exposure at an event is equally important. Rather than showcasing product, a service-based business may provide an overview of services, special coupons, interesting imagery, or ideally an interactive experience.

PROGRAM THE PUBLIC REALM

Many businesses may see their front door or window as the beginning of their establishment while overlooking the sidewalk outside. Spilling out onto the sidewalk increases visibility of a business to passersby. This can be accomplished as simply as placing a welcoming sandwich board sign outside. Additional signage is a chance to speak directly to passersby and give them a taste of the brand.

Another major way to program into the public realm is by providing seating. An outdoor patio in front of a business can bring life and attention to a restaurant. Even if there does not seem to be space, a restaurant can get creative with small tables, bar-style seating, recessing part of the facade to create additional space or by working with the city to create a parklet, such as those envisioned along Main Street in the Downtown Design Plan. Retail establishments also benefit from seating, by providing a resting place for the busy shopper and encouraging lingering near a storefront window.



What Our Customer's Have to Say
 "Delicious Seafood & Beautiful View" ★★★★★ "Great Selection of Local Beer & Wine" ★★★★★
Restaurant website with eye-catching design, menu, reviews, reservations and additional information



Networking events can happen in a series format and take place in local businesses



Loyalty program sign-up can happen at the point of sale and be used as a tool to communicate with customers

INCREASE ONLINE PRESENCE/ SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

Using the internet to promote a business is both efficient and effective. A 2019 survey by the Pew Research Center reported that 90% of Americans are using the internet. Having a website that is regularly updated and properly represents a brand is extremely important, especially as a means to reach tourists and visitors to Alamosa.

Additionally, a study by Social Media Today found that the average person spends two hours on social media per day. Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are a great way to visually advertise with regular posting by sharing eye-catching graphics, images of new inventory, and photos of enticing food and drinks. Paying for targeted ads on social media is inexpensive and ensures a target audience beyond those in the immediate area is reached.

JOIN LOCAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS

Small business associations provide an array of benefits to members. By joining together, small businesses can have a collective voice and work towards a common goal. Many resources and services often come with a small business association such as lobbying efforts, rules/regulations, charitable opportunities, networking, increased credibility, sales/marketing advice, access to market research, and promotion/advertising. Being a member can help a business remain competitive and expand into new markets as well as grow locally.

The Alamosa Chamber of Commerce and the Southern Colorado Small Business Development Center are two local organizations that help local business owners by advocacy, members-only resources, networking events, referrals, and increased visibility.

UTILIZE CUSTOMER REWARDS PROGRAMS

The purpose of a loyalty program is to reward customers for repeat business. Loyalty, rewards, and discount programs can be easy to implement, help to retain a local customer base, and tend to imply a commitment to the customer which can help improve a business's reputation. Another benefit of a customer rewards program is that a business can provide increased communications with its best customers. For example, by using a digital platform for rewards tracking, a business can also collect email addresses to use for email marketing. Examples of rewards programs include punch cards, a passport with other local businesses, points programs, dividends for a co-op and charitable contributions based on purchases.



A display with products grouped by color and theme



An eye-catching, seasonal window display



A retail store with a loop layout

Merchandising Strategies

Merchandising is generally defined as the promotion and presentation of the sale of goods, especially in retail outlets. Many of the strategies below also directly apply to restaurants, services, and other active ground floor uses. Utilizing merchandising strategies can enable retailers to enhance the shopping experience. Getting people in the door is the first and most important task of merchandising. Creating an intriguing window display and ensuring visibility into a store can get customers in the door. Often, less is more in merchandising. Attention should be paid to the quality and creativity of a display, rather than the quantity of products displayed. Also, customers attract other customers. When passersby can see others shopping, they are more likely to enter and shop themselves. Variety is the spice of life, so it is especially important that there is something new for locals to see and shop for.

WINDOW DISPLAYS

Well-designed window displays can be a great way to convert foot traffic on the street into customers. A window display design should start with a theme and aim to tell a story. One design strategy is to use an attention grabbing item or focal piece to catch the eye of a passerby and cause them to come inside. Items in a window or internal display can be grouped by common theme in order to spark further interest or grouped by color to be visually appealing. Items should be artistically staggered vertically, horizontally and into the depth of the display. Words can be used in displays but should be minimal, artistic and legible. Window displays should always represent the brand of a business; the more unique the better.

Visibility into a store or restaurant beyond the window display can pique interest and therefore increase the amount of people entering the business. In bars or restaurants, putting seating adjacent to the windows brings activity right up to the view of the potential customer.

FLOW OF PEOPLE THROUGH STORE

Designing a store layout is all about flow and managing peoples' experience. Stimuli can be controlled in a way that ensures customers are exposed to certain products at the ideal time. Depending on the size of a space, common layouts include grid, spine, herringbone, loop, and free flow. See diagrams of these common store layouts on the following page.

Regardless of a layout, when a customer first enters a store, they tend to look it over as a whole. For this reason, key items should not be placed within the first 5-15' from the entryway. Following entering a store, behavioral studies have shown that most shoppers turn and walk to the right. This means there is an excellent opportunity for the placement of primary product and branding in the front right area of a store. Typically, impulse items should be placed near the front of a store and staple items towards the back. This way impulse items must be passed by and viewed on the way to the staple items in back.

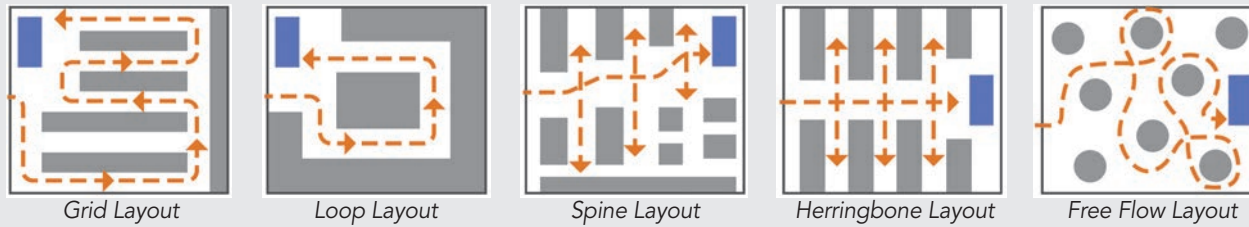
CHANGING PRODUCTS/DISPLAYS REGULARLY

Regularly changing a window display to showcase new products is a way to show the public that a business is constantly being updated with the latest trends. It can also remind regular customers and locals that inventory is always changing and therefore they should come in regularly to see what is new.

SEASONALITY/HOLIDAYS

Embracing the changing seasons can keep a business looking fresh and help convert customers' excitement into revenue. Demands and trends often change per season and a successful store will react to this behavior. It is important to merchandise some products based on the natural seasons in addition to major and culturally diverse holidays. This should

Common Store Layouts



also be specific to the local customer base of a store, offering products serving predominant languages and customs.

One key piece of seasonal merchandising is to plan in advance. Season-specific campaigns should be planned 3-4 months in advance. Timeliness is also important. Seasonal campaigns should not start too early and should not overlap each other, but they should start soon enough to capture early shoppers. Retail establishments should also be cautious of overstocking, because while valuable in-season, products may quickly move to the sale rack if overstocked.

Flexibility will help a retailer with seasonal merchandising. Using adjustable and movable fixtures can allow for changes in layout based on changing seasonal products and decor.

The online presence of a business can also be branded to reflect the seasons. Using themed graphics that represent the current season can help show customers that a business is currently selling seasonal goods. Email and online promotions can be used to offer seasonal discounts, holiday gift certificates and advertise new products.

LABELING/PRICES

Price is a major factor in a customer's decision to purchase an item. Aside from the most high-end retail, stores should always label items with price tags. Price tag labeling leads to an enhanced experience for the customer because they are able to easily decide whether the price of an item is competitive or not. It also increases customer comfort because they can decide whether items are in their budget without having to repeatedly ask a salesperson. If an item is adequately labeled, a customer is also more likely to immediately decide to purchase it. From the business owner's perspective, using price labeling also helps increase the ease of management of pricing structures and sales.

MENUS

A clear and concise menu is likely to encourage sales and a positive experience for a dining customer. Research by Upserve states that unless it is a beverage-oriented establishment, (coffee shop, bar, etc.) menus should include about two-thirds food options and one-third beverage options. Desserts should be on a separate menu in order to not overwhelm a customer. Signature dishes should be spotlighted using selective color and prominent placement. The Center for Hospitality Research has found that people spend significantly more money at restaurants that do not include dollar signs on their menus. Menus should always represent a restaurant's brand through typography, color, size, shape, photos and graphics.

Other Resources

CITY OF ALAMOSA RESOURCES

The City of Alamosa provides assistance to existing and prospective businesses with navigating the permit, license, and development process with the Director of Economic Development. Alamosa also operates a façade improvement program for businesses. The City of Alamosa partners with regionally oriented entities to support businesses including the San Luis Valley Small Business Development Center, the Alamosa Chamber of Commerce, Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the San Luis Valley Development Resource Group.

SAN LUIS VALLEY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The San Luis Valley Small Business Development Center is hosted by the San Luis Valley Development Resource Group. The center provides resources to small businesses in the San Luis Valley through consulting, training, loan programs, and connection to additional resources. The opportunities and resources provided by the center can be found at www.slv-sbdc.com.

ONLINE RESOURCES

The City of Alamosa and its regional partners provide a range of online resources aimed at different target audiences. The City of Alamosa's economic development webpage (www.cityofalamosa.org/finditfast/doing-business-in-alamosa/economic-development) directs businesses to programs and resources. The San Luis Valley Development Resource Group's website (www.slvdr.org) provides information and links to active economic development organizations, programs the group administers, and access to local economic and demographic data. Lastly, the Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau website (www.alamosa.org) is a major resource for visitors to the area and provides opportunities for businesses to promote their business to visitors to the region.

Additional Visual Strategies



Outdoor seating can take place even in a shallow space



Seasonal merchandising and campaigns are great ways to increase sales



Experiential retail can come in a variety of forms, creating an interactive space can increase the value of visiting a store



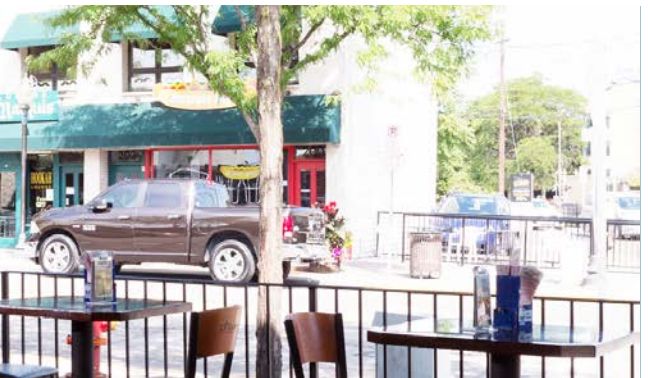
Large windows provide views into and out of restaurants, as well as provide great daylighting



Flow of customers through a space is an important thing to consider when placing products, menus and counters



Menus should be concise and always represent a restaurant's brand through typography, color, and graphics



Building articulation is important to break up large masses and improve the pedestrian's human-scaled experience



Use of color and unique signage can update the facade of a historic building



Awnings, sidewalk signage, patio seating and outdoor display of goods can extend a storefront into the public realm



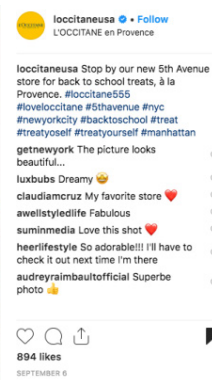
Doors serve as a crucial storefront element and should be inviting, accessible and secure



A well-lit interior feels welcoming to visitors at all times of day



Social media can be used for branding and advertisement



Window displays should use a focal piece, a consistent palette of colors, and allow for visibility into the business



Art on a storefront helps communicate a brand and can include media such as stained glass and murals



7

In this Toolkit:

Introduction

Development Opportunity Sites

Development Review & Approval Process

CHAPTER 7: DEVELOPER TOOLKIT

The Developer Toolkit is meant to serve as an appendix to the Alamosa Downtown Design Plan which can be distributed independently from the rest of the Plan document. It is intended to support private developers interested in investing in Downtown Alamosa projects. The Toolkit provides detailed information on eleven Development Opportunity Sites that have been identified through a robust public engagement process, conversations with City staff, and interviews with key stakeholders and property owners. For each site, this toolkit summarizes specific characteristics, provides information on preferred uses expressed by the community, and articulates high-level project feasibility.

The Toolkit also provides developers and investors with background on the planning and community engagement process undertaken as a part of the Downtown Design Plan effort, information about Catalytic Projects that may increase property values, local and regional market composition, and a step-by-step guide on the development and approval process within the City of Alamosa.



Alamosa Convention and Visitors Bureau



Rio Grande River



Main Street, Alamosa

Introduction

WHY ALAMOSA

The future is bright for Alamosa. As a community with a wealth of existing assets, Alamosa is well-positioned to continue to attract residents, businesses, students, outdoor enthusiasts, and tourists, with its downtown leading the way. It is poised to serve as an example – not only to the San Luis Valley, but to the greater Rocky Mountain region as a whole – of how an historic downtown can evolve to serve the changing needs of future generations without compromising its own unique identity.

Strategies that the City of Alamosa is examining to increase the desirability of Downtown Alamosa include:

- » Focusing business and investment attraction efforts on adding retailers and new businesses downtown through use of existing buildings and spaces.
- » Exploring permit and development fees that may be waived or reduced to incentivize reinvestment in existing buildings.
- » Attracting development of new housing units and hotel units within downtown.
- » Funding public improvements needed to address feasibility gaps for (re)development through use of tax increment financing.

- » Promoting the designation of Downtown Alamosa as an Opportunity Zone.
- » Promoting access and opportunities for use of Federal tax credit programs (historic, low income housing, and new market) and support applications for use of tax credit programs.

CURRENT PLANNING EFFORTS

During the Comprehensive Plan process, which was completed in January 2017, community participants overwhelmingly conveyed the message that they believe the Downtown to be a critical element in the economic growth of Alamosa. They also expressed a very strong desire for physical improvements in the Downtown that enhance the quality of life and public safety. The Downtown Design Plan was enabled by those desires and serves as the next step toward a focused revitalization and renewed energy in Alamosa's commercial core.

The Downtown Design Plan addresses ways to improve the current uses to encourage more activity and vibrancy; ensure that existing and future development is attractive and appropriate for its surroundings; create comfortable and memorable spaces for people to inhabit; and provide safe and clear ways for all modes to travel through Downtown while encouraging visitors to experience Main Street in Alamosa.

Alamosa is well-positioned to continue to attract residents, businesses, students, outdoor enthusiasts, and tourists, with its downtown leading the way.

The Plan also provides strategies for creating a downtown business organization, funding and financing projects, creating a system of signage and wayfinding, increasing public art downtown, managing the parking supply, strengthening regulatory tools, and developing opportunity sites to meet the community vision.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Authentic and inclusive community input and participation is critical for creating plans and designs that reflect the community's desires and provide guidance for redevelopment interests. The Downtown Design Plan engaged key stakeholders such as community members, local business owners, elected officials, technical experts, and students with a variety of methods to solicit a robust set of feedback to integrate into the plan and recommended design solutions.

Over an 18-month process, those methods included recurring meetings with a Project Advisory Committee; three Community Design Charrettes; three Community Open Houses; a series of Focus Group and one-on-one meetings with local business owners, including a Local Business Owner Breakfast event; tabling at Trinidad State Junior College and Adams State University; and work sessions with City Council and the Colorado Department

of Transportation (CDOT). In addition to in-person community and stakeholder touch points, a series of online surveys were conducted throughout the process so that community members could identify preferred design options and provide detailed feedback on concept design solutions. Through the surveys alone, over 580 community members participated, generating over 2,200 individual detailed comments and data points.

A preferred future use is provided for each Development Opportunity Site within this Toolkit. Possible future uses were established by the project team and City staff, depending on the nature of the site, existing buildings and infrastructure, and the existing surrounding development. These possible future uses were then ranked by the community during forms of public engagement, as mentioned previously. Some of the preferred uses are similar to previous or current uses of the sites, while some preferred uses would provide a new and desired amenity within downtown. Through this engagement, the City has enabled developers to invest in a proposal with the certainty of providing a community-desired development.



Community Meeting



Interactive Community Activity



Main Street Redesign



6th Street Redesign



Riverfront Activation

CATALYTIC PROJECTS

The Catalytic Projects are the combination of streetscape projects or the activation of under-utilized public spaces, envisioned to improve and energize the Downtown Area. They provide much needed space for events, festivals, pedestrian seating and amenities, public art, and recreational amenities.

Main and 6th Street Redesign

The redesign of Main and 6th Street should incorporate a variety of improvements. A redesign of the street layout and pedestrian infrastructure will be the cornerstone piece of the project. These changes include narrowing the roadways, slowing vehicle traffic, and creating more space for pedestrians. In addition, a wide range of placemaking strategies should be utilized to create a vibrant, active streetscape. Design features such as art, trees, decorative furnishings, and patios and parklets will contribute to a revitalized streetscape for both Main and 6th Street. Increased programming such as festivals, markets, and live music are also recommended to help activate the Downtown area.

Riverfront Activation

The Rio Grande River is one of Alamosa's most unique and underutilized assets. A variety of strategies should be implemented to increase activation of the riverfront and create a destination that is special to Alamosa. An easily implementable

first step to the river activation is the creation of a more safe, accessible, and comfortable multi-use trail along the river, extending north and south from the Highway 160 bridge. This trail should include bike and wheelchair-friendly paving, lighting, interpretive signage, a cohesive and clear system of wayfinding, and seating. A safe means of crossing major roadways, such as an underpass under Highway 160 should also be considered.

After the installation of the multi-use trail, an incremental approach to adding in pavilions, plazas and gathering areas, and art along the route can be taken. A boat launch pad or other recreational amenities along the river would allow residents and visitors to have an even more direct interaction with the Rio and add to Alamosa's rich stock of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail

The Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail will create a consistent venue for art and culture in Alamosa, while connecting people between major Downtown destinations including the Rio Grande Railroad, the San Luis Valley Museum, the Public Library and Municipal Building, Cole Park, and access to the Rio Grande multi-use trail.

The Cultural Trail will combine both culture

and mobility. A widened sidewalk as well as a sharrows will create a comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists traveling north/south through Downtown. Sculptures and signs describing Alamosa's history or showcasing local artists will provide consistent interest and activation.

Alley Activation

The alley between 6th and Main Street is unique in its visibility from 6th Street. Several parking areas and empty lots along 6th expose this alley to vehicles traveling east and bypassing Main Street. The advertisement of Downtown should be the first priority for this alley. The side or back visible buildings should be painted or decorated to draw attention to Main Street and attract visitors. If additional funding or desire is available, the alley could also become another Downtown gathering space with public art, overhead planting and tree canopy, small stalls or shopping opportunities, seating, and decorative lighting and paving.

The alley between 4th Street and Main Street offers a great location to turn underutilized urban space into an activated and attractive place that residents and visitors to Downtown Alamosa will inhabit and enjoy. This alley can safely connect visitors to shops, restaurants, and breweries on Main Street and to the San Luis Valley Museum, County Courthouse

opportunity site, churches, housing, and businesses on 4th Street. This alley should be prioritized as a space for community gathering, local art installations, and events. Seating, lighting, and paving will make the space more inviting. Local businesses should be encouraged to create or enhance back patios or entries to help enliven the alley, and Happy Hour, networking, and other small scale local events can help activate the space throughout the day.

San Juan Avenue Festival Street

The San Juan Festival Street should be designed as a community-oriented event space. While San Juan Avenue is already occasionally used for events and festivals, the addition of a larger temporary stage, removable bollards to temporarily restrict vehicle traffic, and dedicated utility hook-ups for vendors and musicians would allow for larger and more frequent events. The Festival Street design should be able to seamlessly transition between a vibrant and effective event space and an attractive, but still functional, streetscape.

**Please refer to the Catalytic Projects Implementation Matrix within Chapter 5 of the Alamosa Downtown Design Plan for more information on the details, timing, cost, key partners, and potential champions of these projects.*



Hunt Avenue Cultural Trail



Alley Activation



San Juan Avenue Festival Street



Local book store, nail salon, and barber shop



Local restaurant and specialty stores



Local brewery with outdoor seating and unique signage

MARKET COMPOSITION

Alamosa serves as the regional commercial hub for the San Luis Valley and is the primary destination for groceries and general merchandise with major retailers including Walmart, Bealls, Safeway, and City Market. Downtown traditionally has been the main commercial destination, but the expansion of retail in Alamosa to the west along US-285/Main Street has captured much of the recent retail growth. Downtown's retail mix consists largely of restaurants/bars/cafes, furniture/home furnishing/garden stores, and antique/thrift/specialty stores. The retail mix has been trending to a more entertainment and tourism focused orientation.

TARGET MARKETS

The consumer base for downtown Alamosa is made up of three main groups; residents/workers, students, and tourists. The composition of the consumer base shifts depending on the month. The area residents and workers are the most stable consumer segment and represent approximately 40% of consumer spending. However, they can represent anywhere from 25% (in summer months) to 75% (in shoulder seasons) of the consumer spending in a given month. Students at Adams State University and Trinidad State Community College are a small, but significant component of consumer spending. Tourism accounts for about half of the annual consumer base and its share can shift from as little as 10% of consumer spending to as much as 75% depending on the month.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

The retail opportunities for Downtown will be more target market or niche-oriented in the future. General merchandise and apparel retailers will have to compete with the larger, big box retailers in west Alamosa. There is potential and likely demand for more specialty retail offerings that will appeal to the residents of the larger San Luis Valley region and to tourists, as well. Retailers that provide a combination of services and retail options (i.e. bike shops, fishing stores) will work well in downtown. Destination retailers, such as the furniture stores currently in Downtown, are another example of retail that has a larger appeal.

There is market demand for uses outside of retail in Downtown. Attached, for-sale housing (i.e. townhomes) and multifamily residential uses are likely feasible if a site can be identified that has supportable land costs and the apartments can capture renters from various target markets including students, seniors, and lower income residents. Additional housing will help add vitality to the Downtown area. The Downtown area can also likely support additional hotel development. Hotel and occupancy rates for newer projects in West Alamosa indicate a growing market demand and support for new construction. A Downtown, limited service or small boutique/bed and breakfast hotel could be supportable. Rehabilitation of existing hotels in the Downtown area or new construction are feasible but may need support with public improvements and infrastructure issues through incentives, grants, or tax credit programs. New employers (office and flex-industrial users) to the Downtown area are likely best suited for reuse of existing buildings in Downtown and can help diversify retail spending.

PREFERRED DESIGN SCENARIO

The preferred scenario from the Downtown Design Plan recommends retaining the circulation pattern of Highway 160 – with Main Street one-way westbound and 6th Street one-way eastbound through Downtown Alamosa – but, incorporates design elements to help calm the flow of traffic in an effort to prioritize the safety of pedestrians. This preferred scenario and the Catalytic Projects have been developed so as not to preclude implementation of a two-way configuration in the future, should the City decide to pursue this strategy.

A Pedestrian Activation Area is identified, stretching from 4th to 6th Street, north-to-south, and just beyond Hunt and San Juan Avenue, east-to-west. This area will prioritize pedestrian safety and active street life over moving vehicles rapidly. Interventions such as activated alleys, a robust emphasis on amenities and art, a Cultural Trail, a Festival Street, and active ground-floor uses in existing buildings will signal to traffic that pedestrians are the priority.

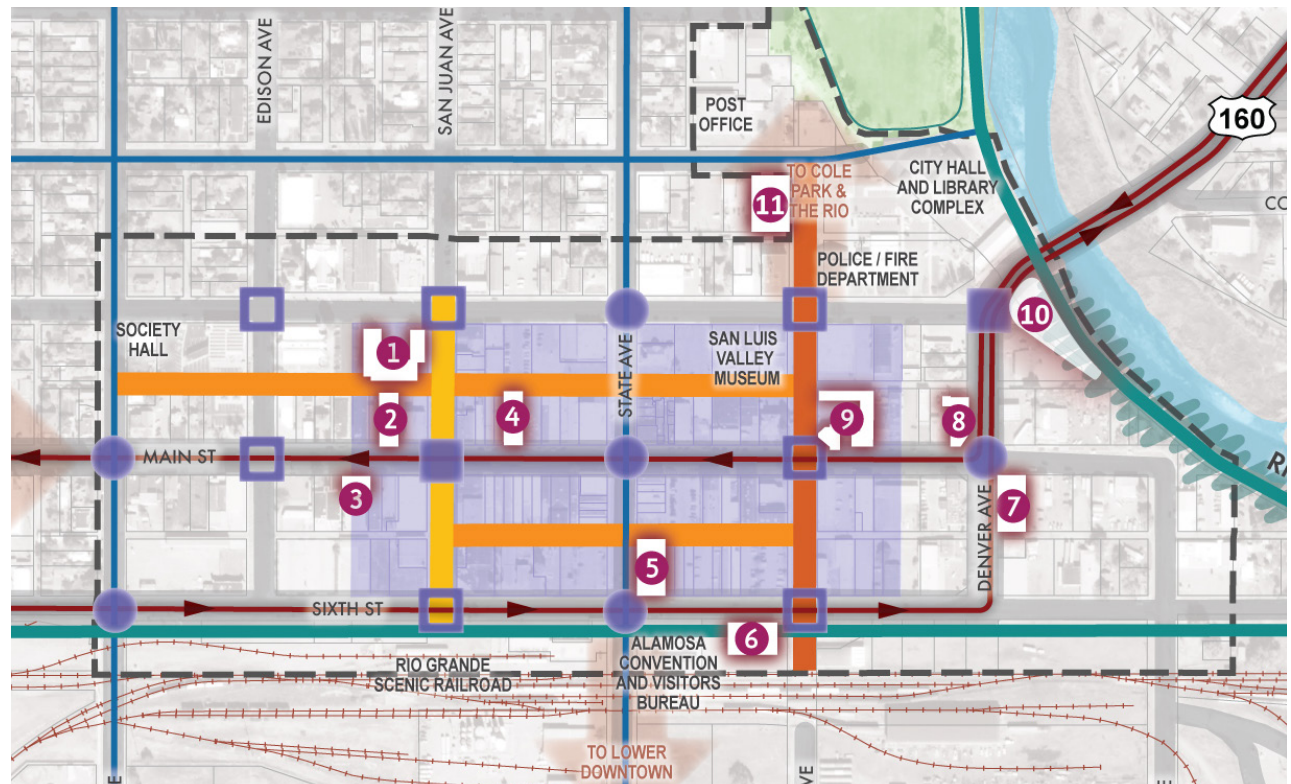
This scenario identifies eleven sites with potential to be the catalysts that drive momentum in the Downtown area. Many of the sites, such as the former County Courthouse, the former Lockhart's store, the Rialto Building, and the Lamplighter Motel, represent opportunities to adaptively reuse existing buildings and breathe new life into those assets. Others, such as surface parking, the former Pink Elephant site, and the City-owned parcel adjacent to the river, represent opportunities to allow new development to add to the character of downtown.

Preferred Scenario



Development Opportunity Sites and Community's Preferred Uses

- 1 County Courthouse => Mixed-Use Brewpub and Entertainment
- 2 Lockhart Furniture Building => Art Gallery Space
- 3 Rialto Building => Farm to Table Restaurant
- 4 JCPenney Building => Retail
- 5 Pink Elephant Parcel => Mixed-Use Residential/Hotel
- 6 Motorway Building => Interactive Play Area/Railroad Museum
- 7 SE Corner of Denver and Main => Informal Pop-up Event Space
- 8 NW Corner of Denver and Main => Outdoor Market
- 9 Lamplighter Motel Building => Boutique Hotel
- 10 Riverfront Property => Formal Park / Plaza
- 11 Century Link Parking Lot => Bike Shop or Townhomes

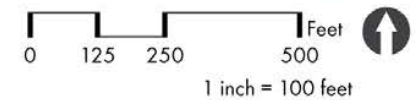


Preferred Scenario One-Way Traffic Main and Sixth



Development Opportunity Sites

Development Opportunity Sites



Development Opportunity Sites - Priority

The priority development opportunity sites are considered catalytic due to being determined as prime for redevelopment with the capacity of sparking improvements throughout the area. Feedback from the community also indicated these eight sites as the highest priority for redevelopment. All eight priority sites fall within or are adjacent to the planned pedestrian activation zone and are adjacent to other planned public realm improvements.

PRIORITY SITE ONE: COUNTY COURTHOUSE

The historic County Courthouse is located on the southwest corner of 4th Street and San Juan Avenue. In October 2018, the Alamosa County Judicial System moved south on US 285 into the new Alamosa County Justice Center, vacating the old building. The historic courthouse was built in the 1930's by the Works Progress Administration and is on the National and State Register of Historic Places. It is one of Alamosa's best examples of Mission Revival style architecture and has a unique U-shape configuration with an internal courtyard adjacent to 4th Street. While the building needs to be preserved, it is an ideal opportunity for adaptive reuse and a unique establishment.

Development Site Characteristics

- | | |
|---|---|
| » Community's Preferred Use | » Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements |
| › Mixed-Use Brewpub and Entertainment | › Activated Alley (between Main St and 4th St) |
| » Feasibility of Preferred Use | › Festival Street (San Juan Ave.) |
| › Likely Feasible | › Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing (San Juan Ave. and 4th St) |
| » Zoning | » Other Features |
| › Central Business District (CBD) | › Corner Lot |
| » Principal Building Maximum Height | › Iconic Building |
| › 50' | » Potential Financing Tools |
| » Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use? | › Historic Tax Credits |
| › No | › Opportunity Zone |
| » Special Circumstances | › TIF |
| › Protected Historic Building (Adaptive Reuse Required) | › Enterprise Zone |
| › Subject to Downtown Design Standards | |



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Mixed-Use Brewpub and Entertainment



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Art Gallery Space

PRIORITY SITE TWO: LOCKHART'S FURNITURE BUILDING

The Lockhart's Furniture building is on Main Street just west of San Juan Ave and is currently vacant. Adjacent to restaurants, shops and a spa, this space has a lot of potential. The building was built in 1938 but is not on the Historic Register and is available for redevelopment.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Art Gallery Space
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › Not Likely Without Public, Institutional or Philanthropic Support
- » **Zoning**
 - › Central Business District (CBD)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subject to Downtown Design Standards
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Main Street Redesign
 - › Activated Alley (between Main St and 4th St)
 - › Festival Street (San Juan Ave.)
 - › Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing (San Juan Ave. and Main St)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Location
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Historic Tax Credits
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF
 - › Enterprise Zone

PRIORITY SITE THREE: PINK ELEPHANT VACANT PARCEL

In 2015, four buildings on the northeast corner of 6th Street and State Avenue were demolished, including the Pink Elephant Building. The buildings had been used for a variety of residential and commercial uses over the years but became dilapidated and were contaminated with asbestos and lead. Since this posed a public safety concern, a \$200,000 EPA grant was awarded to clean up the brownfield site. It is now vacant and prime for redevelopment, located on a prominent corner in the heart of downtown Alamosa.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Mixed-Use Residential/Hotel
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › Likely Feasible
- » **Zoning**
 - › Central Business District (CBD)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subject to Downtown Design Standards
 - › Cleaned Brownfield Site
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › 6th Street Redesign
 - › Activated Alley (between Main St and 6th St)
 - › Bike Lane or Route (State Ave.)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Corner Lot
 - › Key Connection to Lower Downtown
 - › Existing Signalized Intersection (6th St. and State Ave.)
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
 - › New Market Tax Credits
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF



Existing Site



Community's Preferred Use: Mixed-Use Residential/Hotel



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Interactive Play Area/Railroad Museum

PRIORITY SITE FOUR: MOTORWAY BUILDING

The Rio Grande Motorway Building is located along the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad and on the southwest corner of 6th Street and Hunt Avenue. It has been vacant since 2006. The large brick building is adjacent to the historic Denver and Rio Grande Railway Depot, which is now home to the Colorado Welcome Center, the Rio Grande Scenic Railroad, the Alamosa County Chamber of Commerce and other economic development offices. The rail tracks are just to the south of the Motorway Building.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Interactive Play Area/Railroad Museum
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › Not Likely Without Public or Philanthropic Support
- » **Zoning**
 - › Commercial Business (CB)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › 6th Street Redesign
 - › Cultural Trail (Hunt Ave.)
 - › Off-Street Trail/Multi-Use Path (6th St.)
 - › Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing (Hunt Ave. and 6th St.)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Visibility Along Highway and Railroad
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF

PRIORITY SITE FIVE: LAMPLIGHTER MOTEL BUILDING

The Lamplighter Motel is on the northeast corner of Hunt Avenue and Main Street. It is an L-shaped motel with a smaller building on the corner of the lot. Besides a new roof in 1989, the motel has had minimal improvements and updates since it was built in 1959. Although currently outdated, the Lamplighter has potential to become a unique modernized boutique hotel and an updated landmark of Main Street.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Boutique Hotel
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › Likely Feasible
- » **Zoning**
 - › Central Business District (CBD)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subject to Downtown Design Standards
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Main Street Redesign
 - › Activated Alley (between Main St. and 4th St.)
 - › Cultural Trail (Hunt Ave.)
 - › Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing (Main St. and Hunt Ave.)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Corner Lot
 - › Same Existing Use as Preferred Future Use
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF
 - › Enterprise Zone



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Boutique Hotel



Existing Site



Community's Preferred Use: Bike Shop Expansion or Townhomes

PRIORITY SITE SIX: CENTURYLINK PARKING LOT

To the north of the CenturyLink Building is a gravel parking lot on 3rd Street and Hunt Avenue. There is about 8,000 square feet of excess parking for the CenturyLink Building, based off the City of Alamosa's office parking ratio of 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet. This lot could be subdivided and redeveloped.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Bike Shop Expansion or Townhomes
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › May Need Support
- » **Zoning**
 - › Commercial Business (CB)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50' for Retail
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No for Bike Shop Expansion
 - › Yes for Townhomes
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subdivision of Lot Required
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Cultural Trail (Hunt Ave.)
 - › Bike Lane or Route (3rd St.)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Adjacent to Public Facilities Including City Hall and Library
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF

PRIORITY SITE SEVEN: JCPENNEY BUILDING

The JCPenney in Downtown Alamosa was in business for over 100 years. Despite a petition with more than 600 signatures, the store closed its doors in July 2019 due to low sales performance. The landmark building is located in the heart of downtown on Main Street between San Juan and State Avenues.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Retail
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › Likely Feasible
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subject to Downtown Design Standards
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Main Street Redesign
 - › Activated Alleys
(between Main St and 4th St and
between Main St and 6th St)
 - › Festival Street (San Juan Ave.)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Location
 - › Already Designed for Retail
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Historic Tax Credits
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF
 - › Enterprise Zone



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Retail



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Farm-to-Table Restaurant

PRIORITY SITE EIGHT: RIALTO BUILDING

Formerly known as both the American Legion Hall and the Rialto Theater, the Rialto Building was originally home to a theater and great hall. The front section of the building had retail uses downstairs and offices upstairs. Built in 1926, this was a premier social center for the San Luis Valley for over 70 years before a fire in 2003 destroyed the entire theater portion of the structure. The front portion of the building was structurally separate and able to be saved and converted into a restaurant called Bistro Rialto. The restaurant closed in January 2019. Located on Main Street between Edison and San Juan Avenues, the building was listed on Alamosa's Historic Registry in 2005.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Farm-to-Table Restaurant
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › May Need Support
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subject to Downtown Design Standards
 - › Alamosa Historic Registry
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Main Street Redesign
 - › Festival Street (San Juan Ave.)
 - › Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing (Main St. and Edison Ave.)
- » **Other Features**
 - › Historic Sign
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Historic Tax Credits
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF
 - › Enterprise Zone

Development Opportunity Sites - Gateway Opportunities

These three sites are prominently located in Alamosa with high visibility to people entering the City. These gateway locations provide an opportunity for iconic development that is unique and memorable to Alamosa. Additionally, construction of a new bridge on Highway 160 has been discussed with CDOT as a future transportation improvement. The alignment of a new bridge could connect from across the Rio Grande more directly to Main Street. If a new bridge is constructed, these sites will become an even higher priority based on their proximity to the new bridge.

GATEWAY SITE ONE: RIVERFRONT PROPERTY NEAR BRIDGE

The riverfront property near the bridge over the Rio Grande has high visibility for people entering Alamosa from the east. Given the design elements of the proposed riverfront activation, this location is a great opportunity for commercial that would serve riverfront users. A unique design for a restaurant, cafe or beer garden could suit this location well and help it stand out from the other businesses in Alamosa.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Riverfront-Oriented Commercial Use
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › Likely Feasible
- » **Zoning**
 - › Established Neighborhood (EN)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 35'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › No
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Potential New Bridge
 - › Riverfront Activation
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Location
 - › River Adjacency
 - › Unique Site Frontages
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF



Existing Site



Community's Preferred Use: Riverfront-Oriented Commercial Use



Existing Site



Community's Preferred Use: Informal Pop-up Event Space

GATEWAY SITE TWO: SOUTHEAST CORNER OF DENVER AVE AND MAIN ST

The southeast corner of Denver Avenue and Main Street is a prominent location that is currently vacant. The gravel lot is used as a parking lot, perhaps for adjacent restaurants and bars. A park would make this otherwise industrial side of town more welcoming to the public and enhance the block for the surrounding businesses. It could also help visually strengthen the connection of Main Street to the Rio Grande. Many people pass through this intersection on their way into or out of town, making this lot a great opportunity for gateway signage or public art that would contribute to placemaking for Alamosa. If a new bridge is constructed over the Rio Grande, the visual prominence of this lot would be even greater due to the adjacent bridge alignment.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Informal Pop-up Event Space
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › N/A
- » **Zoning**
 - › Industrial (I)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › Yes
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Potential New Bridge
 - › Main Street Redesign
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Corner Lot
 - › River Adjacency
 - › Existing Signalized Intersection (Main St. and Denver Ave.)
 - › Key connection to Alamosa East
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF

GATEWAY SITE THREE: NORTHWEST CORNER OF DENVER AVE & MAIN ST

The northwest corner of Denver Avenue and Main Street is already a prominent location, but with the construction of a new bridge over the Rio Grande it would become one of the first things many visitors and residents would see when entering downtown from the east. The alignment for the new bridge could start on Denver Avenue directly in front of this property. Even with this lot's existing prominence, there is a missed opportunity for a gateway into downtown at this location. The existing building was previously used as a mechanic's garage but is no longer in business. Built in 1925, it has some interesting architectural details but would likely need to be replaced for the community's preferred use- an outdoor market. Although primarily outdoors, the market could still use a permanent structure covering/surrounding it and should include welcoming signage.

Development Site Characteristics

- » **Community's Preferred Use**
 - › Outdoor Market
- » **Feasibility of Preferred Use**
 - › N/A
- » **Zoning**
 - › Central Business District (CBD)
- » **Principal Building Maximum Height**
 - › 50'
- » **Re-Zone Required for Preferred Use?**
 - › Special Use Permit may be required
- » **Special Circumstances**
 - › Subject to Downtown Design Standards
- » **Adjacent Planned Public Realm Improvements**
 - › Potential New Bridge
 - › Main Street Redesign
- » **Other Features**
 - › Prominent Corner Lot
 - › River Adjacency
 - › Existing Signalized Intersection (Main St. and Denver Ave.)
- » **Potential Financing Tools**
 - › Opportunity Zone
 - › TIF



Existing Building



Community's Preferred Use: Outdoor Market

Development Review and Approval Process

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The development review and approval process begins with a pre-application meeting with City staff. After this meeting, staff has 21 calendar days to inform the applicant of any potential issues with the application and provide a likely timeline. Staff must also provide the applicant with a list of submittal requirements.

During the pre-processing step, applicants must submit formal applications and pay any required fees. City staff must then conduct both a completeness review and a sufficiency review. City staff must also provide referrals to other agencies if necessary. Referral agencies have 21 calendar days to respond.

The next step is the formal review of the application. Depending on the nature of a land development project, the application(s) may require different levels of review and approval. These approvals and recommendations may include:

- » Administrative
- » Planning Commission
(also acts as Zoning Board of Adjustments)
- » City Council

Within Alamosa's Unified Development Code (UDC), see Table 21-8-202B "Administrative Approvals and Permits" and Table 21-8-203B "Discretionary Approvals and Permits" for information about what level of review and approval may be needed for a land development project.

In each review period, the application may be approved (or recommended, if they are not the deciding body) with conditions that the applicant must adhere to in order for the application to proceed. If the application is denied during the final approval, the applicant may go through CRS Rule 106 to appeal the decision to the courts.

Depending on the nature of a land development project, multiple different applications may be

required before vested property rights are established. Multiple applications can be conducted concurrently when possible.

Use the flow chart on the right to see a snapshot of the development application and approval process and refer to the UDC for more information.

STANDARDS FOR REZONING

Generally, Alamosa requires that a proposed zone within an application for rezoning must:

- » Be in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan's future land use map
- » Provide a benefit to the community that cannot be provided in the existing zone
- » Be served by adequate available public facilities, or these facilities must be made available
- » Not create development rights or entitlements that reduce the level of protection for significant historical resources

One of four alternative standards for rezoning must also be met. One alternative standard that is likely the most relevant for Development Opportunity Sites is:

- » The proposed zone is more appropriate than the existing zone to implement the most recent adopted City plan.

See Article 2 Sec. 21-2-106. "Standards for Rezoning" for more information about rezoning.

MITIGATION OF DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS

Depending on the nature of a proposed development, mitigation of development impacts may be required.

Both a Fiscal and Infrastructure Impact Analysis and a Traffic Analysis are required for all proposed development that includes more than 16 dwelling units or more than 25,000 square feet of gross floor

area of nonresidential uses. These analyses must both provide an evaluation of the proposed development's impact on public systems and recommendations as stated in Chapter 21 Article VI of the UDC.

Depending upon the nature of the application, provisions of public improvements and dedications of right-of-way for public purposes may also be required.

INCENTIVES

The City of Alamosa has the discretion to provide incentives for development of the opportunity sites listed in this plan. Examples of possible development incentives for these sites could include:

- » Waived application fees
- » Expedited review process
- » Low interest or forgivable loans
- » Grants for the rehabilitation of environmentally impacted sites
- » Tax exemptions or credits including for
 - › Job creation
 - › Construction or retrofit of a building to meet LEED certification
 - › Low-income or affordable housing

FINANCING

Potential public financing tools to help address development feasibility gaps include:

- » Tax increment financing (TIF) through the Urban Renewal Authority or creation of Downtown Development Authority
- » Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- » New Market Tax Credits (NMTC)
- » Opportunity Zone Capital Gains Tax Benefits
- » Enterprise Zone Tax Incentives

*There are multiple applications that may be required for a land development project. Multiple applications can be conducted concurrently when possible. See Table 21-8-203B in the UDC for more details.

City of Alamosa Development Application & Approval Process

(See Division 8-5. - Standardized Procedures of the UDC for more detail)

KEY:
Task Obligation

Applicant (dashed box)
City Staff (solid box)

Application Approval Level

1. Administration
2. Planning Commission
3. City Council

