ORDINANCE NO. 09- 46

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2020 LAND USE MAP OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS RELATING TO THE PORTION OF SOUTH CIRCLE DRIVE FROM AIRPORT ROAD ON THE NORTH TO MONTEREY ROAD ON THE SOUTH AS A MATURE/REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS:

Section 1. The Comprehensive Plan – 2020 Land Use Map of the City of Colorado Springs is hereby amended by the property showed in Exhibit A, attached hereto and made a part hereof by reference, from General Residential, Community Activity Center and Employment Center to Mature/Redevelopment Corridor located along South Circle Drive from Airport Road on the north to Monterey Road on the south.

Section 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as provided by Charter.

Section 3. Council deems it appropriate that this ordinance be published by title and summary prepared by the City Clerk and that this ordinance shall be available for inspection and acquisition in the Office of the City Clerk.

Introduced, read and passed on first reading and ordered published this 14 th day of April, 2009.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

CPC LUM 09-00018 / mh

Finally passed, adopted and approved this 28th day of April, 2009.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

I HEREBY CERTIFY, that the foregoing ordinance entitled **"AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN - 2020 LAND USE MAP OF THE CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS RELATING TO THE PORTION OF SOUTH CIRCLE DRIVE FROM AIRPORT ROAD ON THE NORTH OF MONTEREY ROAD ON THE SOUTH AS A MATURE/REDEVELOPMENT CORRIDOR"** was introduced and read at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Colorado Springs, held on April 14, 2009; that said ordinance was passed at a regular meeting of the City Council of said City, held on the 28th day of April, 2009, and that the same was published by title and summary, in accordance with Section 3-80 of Article III of the Charter, in the Daily Transcript, a newspaper published and in general circulation in said City, at least ten days before its passage.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the City, this 28th day of April, 2009.

City Clerk

SOUTH CIRCLE DRIVE CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

February 2009

City of Colorado Springs
Comprehensive Planning Division

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this analysis is to assess conditions along the South Circle Drive Corridor to determine whether the corridor should be designated as a Mature/ Redevelopment Corridor in the City's Comprehensive Plan 2020 Land Use Map.

In 2005, the City conducted a five-year assessment of the Comprehensive Plan. As part of this assessment, a recommendation was made to monitor the existing commercial corridors for signs of deterioration and disinvestment resulting from the relocation of businesses to developing corridors and activity centers. This analysis of the South Circle Drive Corridor is an attempt to take a closer look at a corridor that is showing signs of deterioration and to determine the extent of this deterioration. This analysis also furthers the goals of the 2008 Colorado Springs Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan includes several strategies and initiatives that address redevelopment. These include:

- *The City will identify and proactively support redevelopment of areas of the City that are at risk.*
- *The City will take a leadership role in identifying target areas of the City for economic development efforts including retail revitalization.*
- *The City will develop strategies and implement a program to encourage, retain, and revitalize retail development within the City.*

This detailed look at the South Circle Drive Corridor serves as an aid in the identification of the need for future comprehensive planning efforts and to focus economic development strategies and incentives on areas that will benefit from redevelopment.

II. DEFINING THE CORRIDOR

For the purposes of this document, the South Circle Corridor is defined as the segment of South Circle Drive from Airport Road on the north to Monterey Road on the south. The east and west boundaries are defined by commercial and industrial properties along US Highway 24 Bypass that access South Circle Drive either directly or via local roads to South Circle. In either case, South Circle Drive is the main artery when accessing the properties included in the analysis. The corridor as defined for this report includes commercial, office, institutional, industrial and multifamily residential uses only (refer to Figure 1). The single family residential properties along South Circle Drive were not included in the Corridor because this analysis focuses on commercial disinvestment.

The City Comprehensive Plan defines Mature/Redevelopment Corridors as:

Corridors that line older arterial streets and state highways with retail uses and auto-oriented services developed in a typical strip commercial pattern, with multiple curb cuts, individual parking lots, cluttered signage, and small lots. These corridors also include significant infill and redevelopment opportunities.

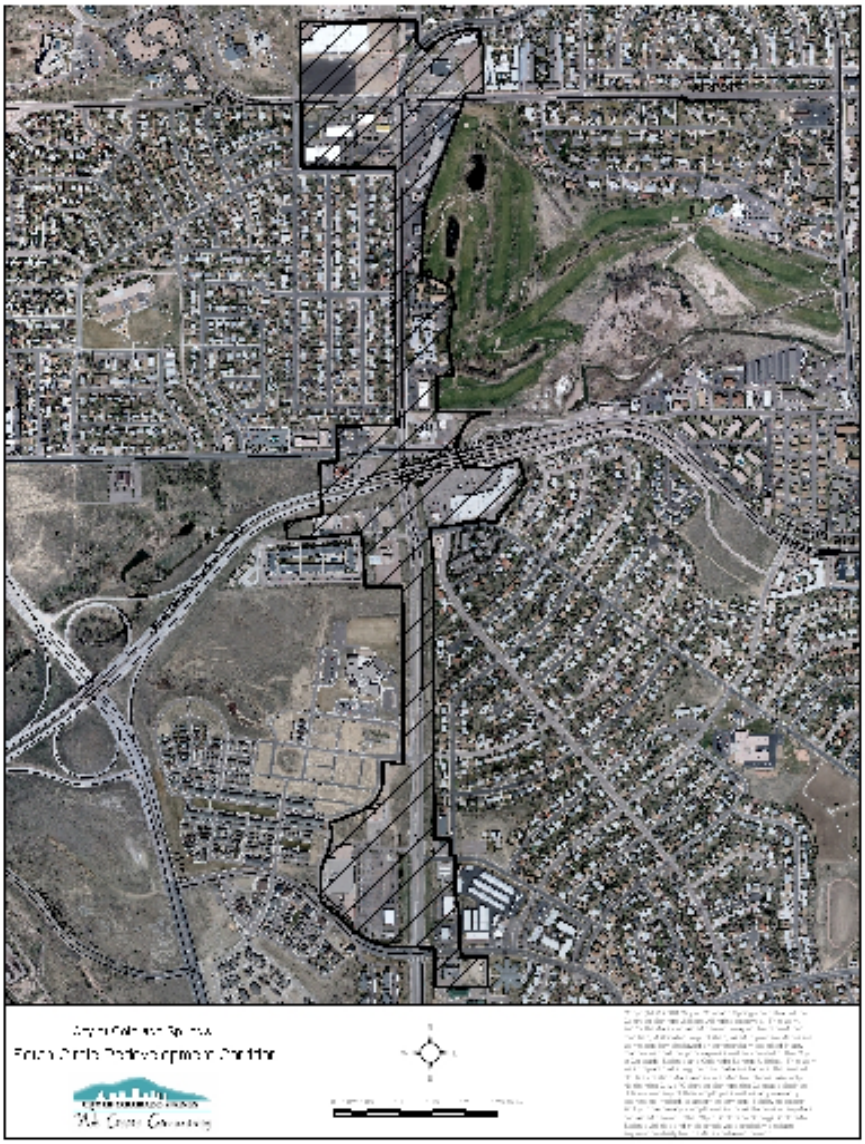

Figure 1: 2007 Aerial Photo of the Proposed South Circle Corridor

Currently nine corridors are designated as Mature/Redevelopment Corridors in the City Comprehensive Plan (refer to Figure 2). These corridors exhibit differences in development patterns with similar themes. Disinvestment has occurred as businesses in these areas close, the mix of tenants in commercial centers change and larger retailers relocate to developing areas of the City.

Occupancy rates for commercial, office and industrial land uses, quality and characteristics of the built environment and the mix of land use types are the three established criteria for determining Mature/Redevelopment Corridors. The analysis also considers demographics, economics, crime rates, transit services and existing land use. These are all indicators of the health of the corridor and are further discussed in the following sections of this document.

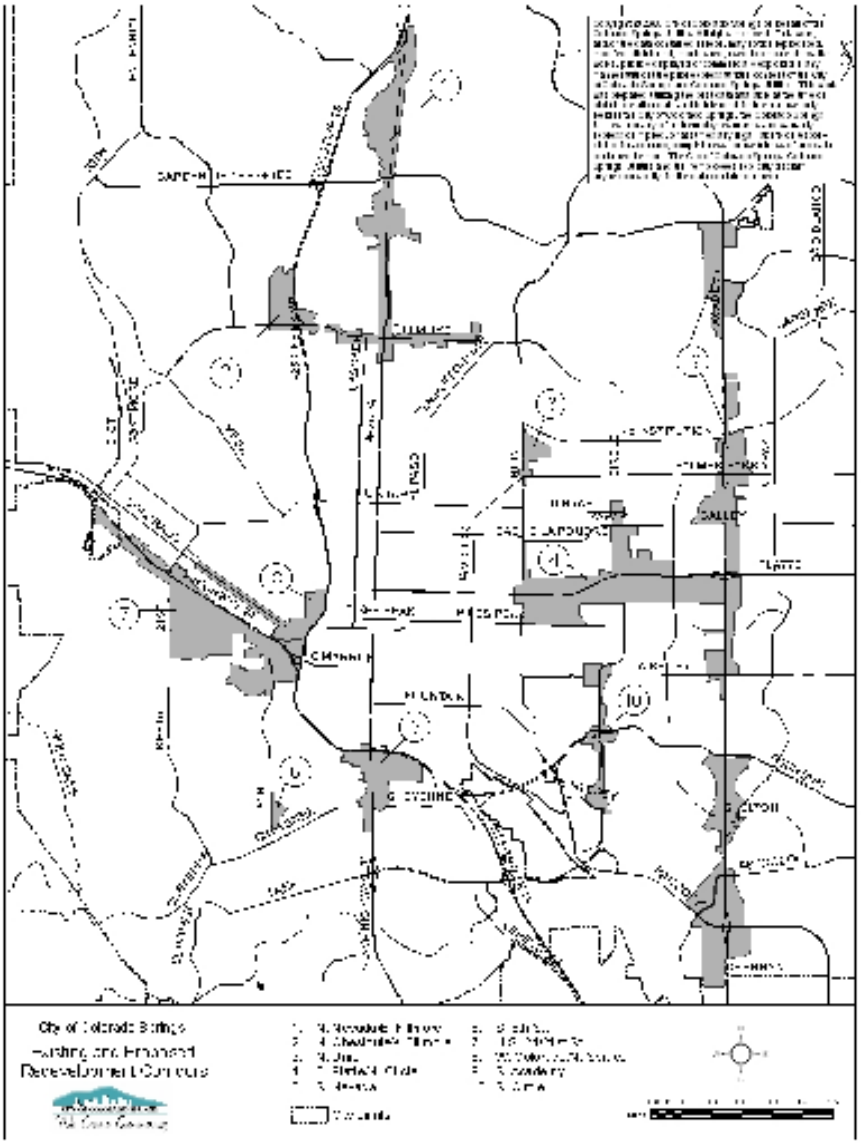

Figure 2: Approved and Proposed Redevelopment Corridors

III. PROFILE OF THE SOUTH CIRCLE CORRIDOR

Census tract data was used to measure demographic and economic trends in and around the Corridor. A census tract is defined as:

> *Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county. Census tracts usually have between 2,500 and 8,000 persons and, when first delineated, are designed to be homogeneous with respect to population characteristics, economic status, and living conditions. Census tract boundaries are delineated with the intention of being maintained over a long time so that statistical comparisons can be made from census to census. (U.S. Census website)*

Five census tracts overlap with the South Circle Corridor and are used as a tool to assess socioeconomic conditions and forecast population (refer to Figure 3 and Figure 4). The Census-based data used for the comparisons within this analysis are compiled for 2008 by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), a company specializing in GIS (Geographic Information Systems) and mapping. This data is an estimate of trends for 2008 and is the most up to date for census tract geography. Using the 2008 estimates gives a more accurate picture of the current status of the area in comparison to the 2000 Census data. According to ESRI, the population of these five tracts in 2008 was 22,826. This is approximately 5.5 percent of the total population of the City of Colorado Springs.

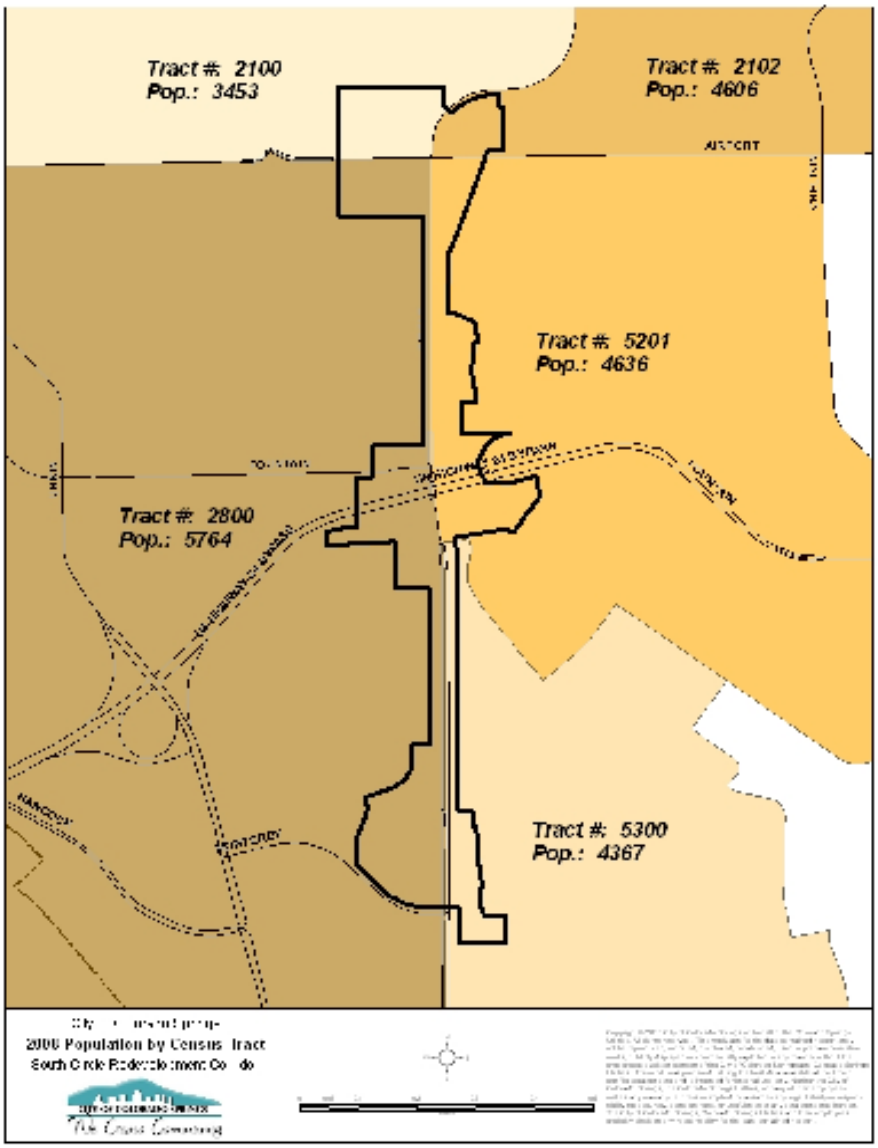

Figure 3: 2008 Population by Census Tract (Data taken from ESRI 2008 population estimates)

	Tract 2101	Tract 2102	Tract 2800	Tract 5201	Tract 5300	Tracts Total	City Boundary
2000 Total Population	3,403	4,763	5,144	3,945	3,807	21,062	365,569
2008 Total Population	3,453	4,606	5,764	4,636	4,367	22,826	411,554
2013 Total Population	3,583	4,663	6,452	5,208	4,759	24,665	441,200

Figure 4: Census Tract Population Comparison Years 2000, 2008, 2013 (ESRI)

A. Demographic and Economic Analysis

In the analysis of this corridor, it is important to look at the property values and income levels as well as the ethnic diversity of the area in order to identify the impact of disinvestment in the South Circle Corridor.

A comparison of the median household income of the five census tracts overlapping the South Circle Corridor and the median household income of the City of Colorado Springs illustrates a disparity between the two. Across the City of Colorado Springs, median household income in 2008 is estimated at $59,767. For the five census tracts adjacent to South Circle Drive, it is estimated at $40,842. This local median income is 32 percent less than the citywide median. Similarly, median home values in the area are also lower. In 2008 the median home value reported for the City of Colorado Springs was $214,995 compared to $151,348 for the five census tracts of the Corridor (refer to Figure 5).

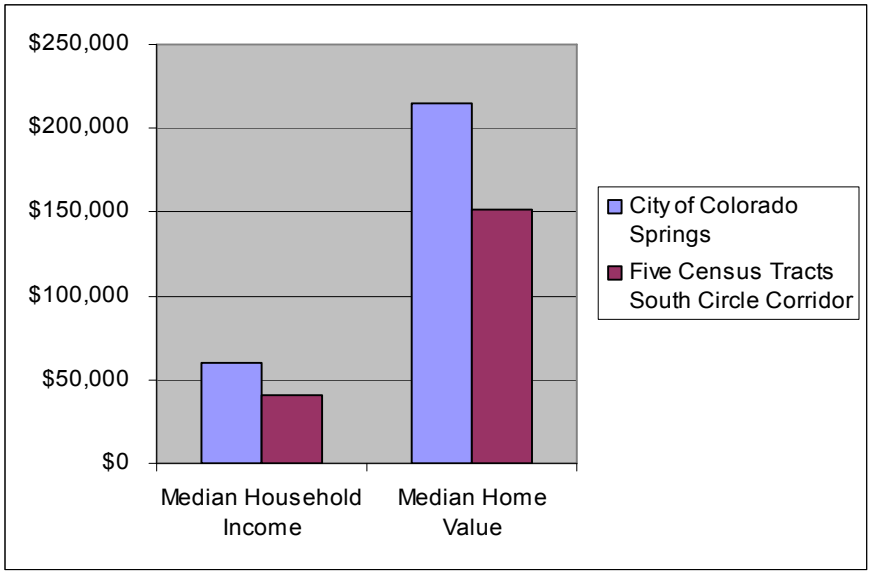

Figure 5: Citywide vs. Corridor Comparison of Median Household Income and Median Home Value (ESRI 2008)

The five census tracts used to assess the South Circle Corridor exhibit a more diverse population than the City as a whole. Figure 6 shows ethnic diversity of the South Circle Corridor in relationship to the City. Approximately 78 percent of residents of the City of Colorado Springs are reported to be an ethnicity of white alone, while the same demographic for the five adjacent census tracts is reported at 59 percent.

The percentage of black or African Americans is proportionately higher citywide. Fourteen percent of the population surrounding the corridor is reported as African American compared to seven percent of the overall City population. Asians were a respective two percent of the area population, compared to three percent of the City population. Hispanic origin is considered a separate comparison in this dataset. Hispanic origin can be considered of any background and is therefore not a part of the total racial population mix. Citywide, those of Hispanic origin are reported at 14 percent, while the comparable demographic of the Corridor is 31 percent (refer to Figure 6).

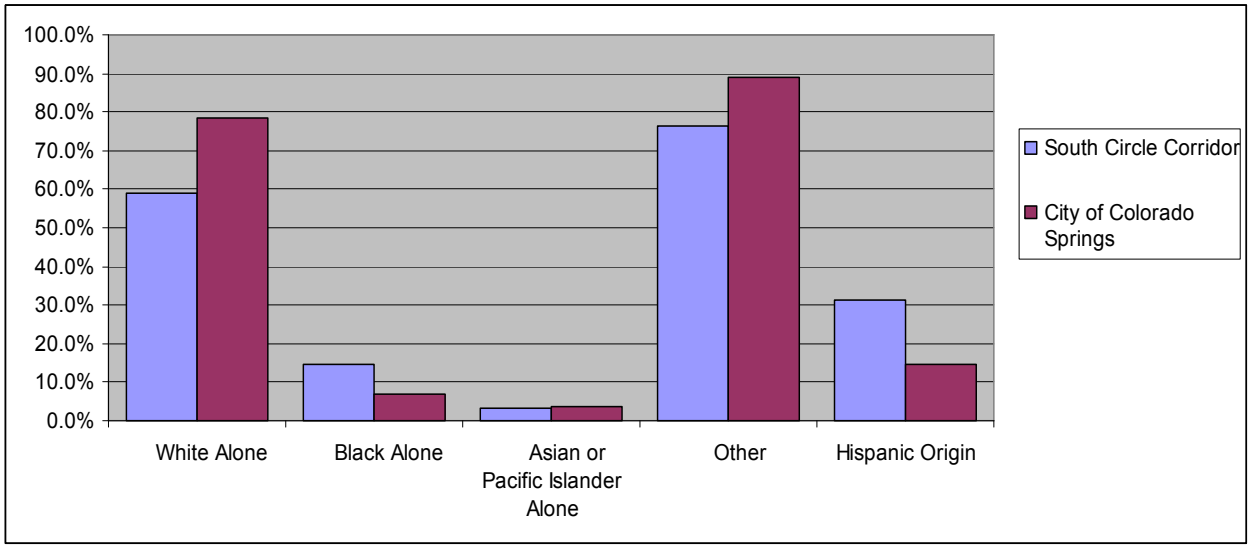

Figure 6: Ethnicity Profile City of Colorado Springs in Comparison to the South Circle Corridor (ESRI 2008)

This analysis is not intended to focus on differences between racial and ethnic groups, but to recognize and identify the diverse population residing in proximity to the South Circle Corridor. This diversity is reflected in the land uses along the Corridor (refer to Figure 7 and Figure 8).

Figure 7: Hispanic Grocery in the Shopping Plaza at the Northwest Corner of Monterey and South Circle

Figure 8: Shopping Center at the Southeast Corner of Airport Drive and South Circle

B. Crime Data

The Analytical Services Division of the Colorado Springs Police Department keeps records of violent crimes based on location. Figure 9 depicts the proposed Corridor with a 100-foot buffer and the reported violent crimes occurring in this area during 2008. The map shows that there were numerous crimes within the study area as well as within the neighboring residential areas.

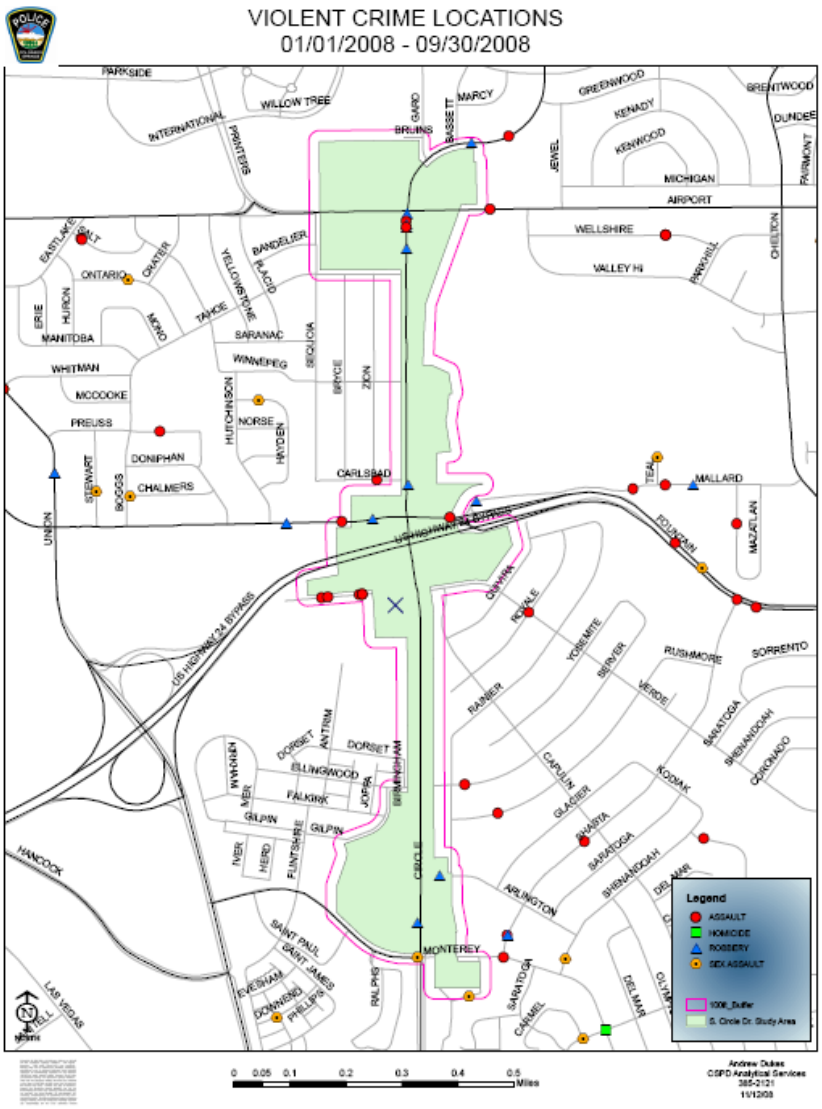

Figure 9: 2008 Violent Crime Statistics for the South Circle Corridor (CSPD-Analytical Services)

C. Transit

The availability of transit service is an important criterion in evaluating the access to the Corridor and the ability of residents to access the area from neighboring residential areas. Public transit gives those without vehicles the opportunity to utilize services. If transit service is not available in the area, those that are dependent on public transit will go elsewhere, perhaps even farther than needed.

Mountain Metropolitan Transit routes #1, #2 and #15 serve the South Circle Corridor. Route #1 serves the largest portion of the Corridor. It runs between the downtown terminal and the Astrozon Transfer Station serving the Corridor via a portion of Airport Road between Printers Parkway and South Circle, and South Circle from Airport Road to Fountain Boulevard. Annual ridership for the entire route was 119,795 riders in 2006. Route #1 is also ranked as one of the top four most productive fixed routes. Route productivity is a key to determining route effectiveness.

Route #2 serves a portion of Airport Road within the Corridor, and Route #15 serves Fountain Boulevard to the west of South Circle Drive and a small portion of South Circle Drive south of Fountain Boulevard, before it transverses a neighboring residential area. The 2006 annual ridership for Route #2 was 71,956 and Route #15 was 111,060. The southern half of the corridor from Route #15 to Monterey Road does not have fixed route service. Along this portion of South Circle Drive is a large commercial center with a grocery anchor as well as several ethnic specialty stores that are not being served by transit. This makes it difficult to utilize these services if a car is not available (refer to Figure 10).

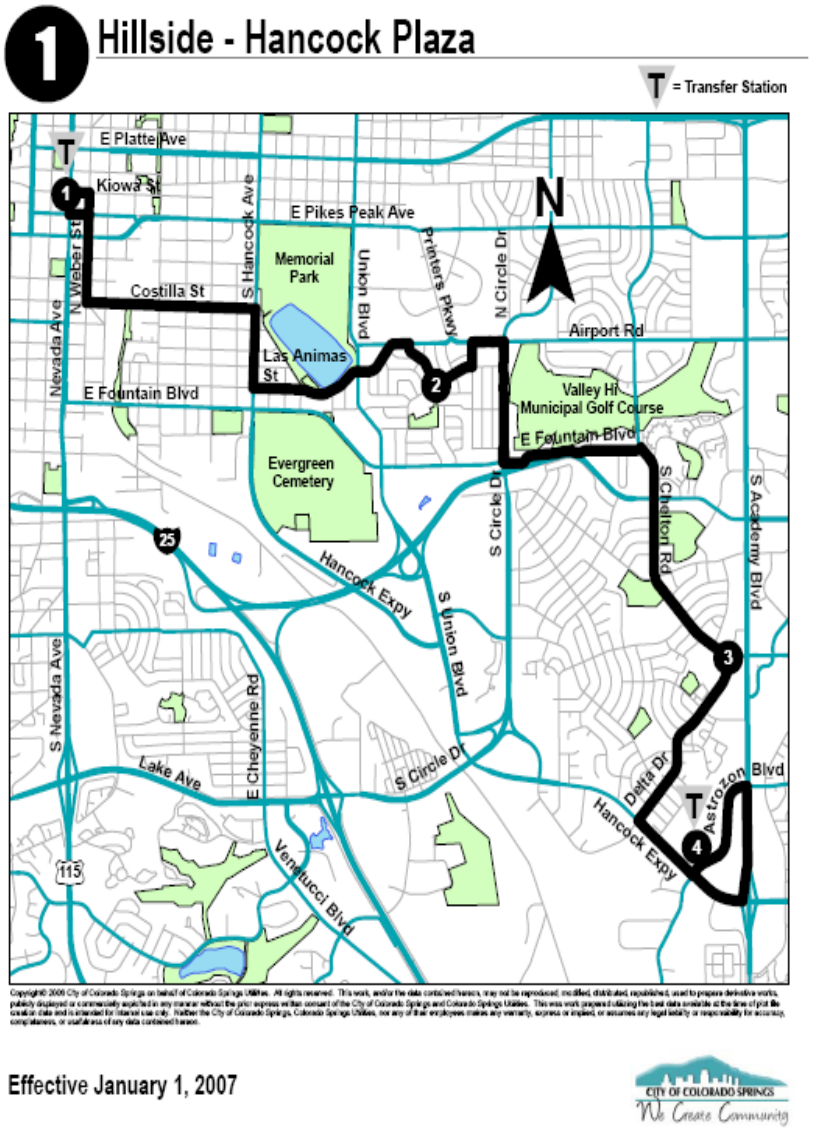

Figure 10: Mountain Metropolitan Route One Map

D. Corridor Description and Use Statistics

The South Circle Corridor encompasses 80.79 net acres. Figure 11 illustrates a breakdown of land use types in the Corridor. A map depicting 2008 land use patterns for the Corridor is included as Figure 12.

	Acres by Use	% of Total Net Acres	Improved Square Footage	% Total SF	Vacant Improved SF	Vacancy Rate
Commercial	54.63	67.67%	509,362	70.67%	235,778.05	46%
Office	1.97	2.44%	33,506	4.65%	7,916.80	24%
Industrial	0.84	1.04%	7,997	1.10%	0.00	0%
Residential	6.43	7.96%	141,726	19.70%	42,472.00	30%
Institutional	3.77	4.67%	28,169	3.91%	0.00	0%
Vacant Parcels	13.15	16.28%	0	0.00%	0.00	100%
Total	80.79		720,760		286,166.85	

Figure 11: Land Use Breakdown and Vacancy Rate

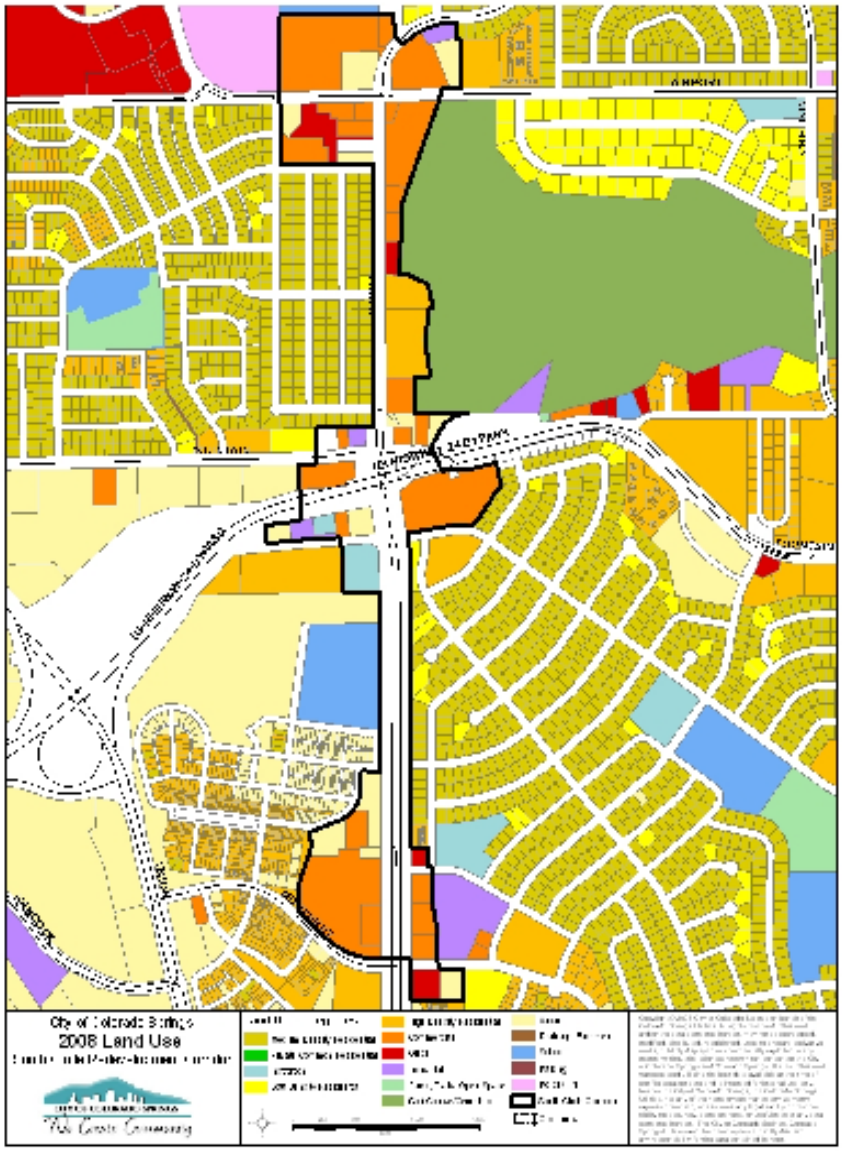

Figure 12: 2008 Existing Land Use – South Circle Corridor

As illustrated in Figure 11, 67.67 percent of the land use in the Corridor is commercial. This equates to 54 acres of commercial out of the 80 acres that comprise the Corridor. These commercially designated properties range in size from a 9.49 acre shopping center at the northwest corner of South Circle Drive and Monterey Road to the quarter acre service station at the southeast corner of Airport Drive and South Circle. The 54 acres of commercial property within the Corridor support 509,362 square feet of commercial improvements. A visual assessment of the Corridor was initially conducted on July 2, 2008. A follow-up was conducted on January 21, 2009. In the six months between the two assessments, several businesses have closed while a few others have opened in existing shopping centers. Figure 11 is based on the land uses as observed on January 21. The difference did not equate to a very large change. Based on this most recent visual assessment conducted on January 21, 2009, approximately 46 percent of the commercial uses are vacant. Some of the commercial properties currently in business, as well as commercial properties for sale and vacant could benefit from renovation and on-site improvements (refer to Figure 13 and Figure 14).

Figure 13: Vacant Property at the Southwest Corner of Fountain and South Circle

Figure 14: Commercial Strip Center at the North End of the Corridor Area along South Circle

Vacant parcels as a land use category was the second largest land use in the Corridor, accounting for 13 acres or 16 percent of the total land use in the Corridor. The vacant category includes land only. These are parcels that have no improvements on the land. These parcels are spread throughout the Corridor. A few vacant parcels are still to be developed as part of the Spring Creek

Development. These total approximately four acres and are located near the corner of South Circle Drive and Monterey Road. According to the visual assessments performed on July 2, 2008 and January 21, 2009, the Spring Creek parcels are for sale to be developed as commercial pad sites. Other vacant parcels are infill properties as part of existing shopping centers or stand alone vacant properties that, at this time, have no known future use (refer to Figure 15).

Figure 15: Vacant Parcel Currently Being Used as Vehicle Storage

There are two multifamily residential properties in the Corridor (refer to Figure 16 and Figure 17). These properties are located on the east side of South Circle Drive, north of Fountain Boulevard. The properties were included in the analysis because of their location and access on South Circle. Single-family properties were not included in the study area, but are considered as part of the impacted area from disinvestment occurring along the Corridor. These multifamily residential properties are large apartment complexes and business suites. From looking at the square footage and the vacancy rate reported by these properties, there is approximately a 30 percent vacancy rate for multifamily residential land use in the Corridor. Contacts for these two properties reported no decrease in vacancy, but that the vacancy rate was a running average.

Figure 16: Apollo Park Apartments

Figure 17: South Circle Arms Apartments

Office and industrial uses come in as a low percentage of the total land use, with two percent and one percent of the total Corridor respectively. Approximately eight percent of office structures are vacant, while there are no vacant industrial properties. Office uses range from single use office buildings to multi-tenant buildings, to office space in strip centers (refer to Figure 18 and Figure 19).

Figure 18: USA Volleyball Office Building on South Circle

Figure 19: Industrial Property Located on Verde Drive between Verde and Highway 24

The Corridor also exhibits a large amount of institutional or religious uses. Approximately 4.67 percent of the total Corridor, or 3.77 acres, are dedicated to institutional uses. However, based on the windshield survey conducted, several shopping centers are home to churches and worship centers (refer to Figure 20).

Figure 20: Church as part of a Shopping Center at the Corner of Airport Drive and South Circle Drive

IV. Analysis Summary

Currently the Corridor is not defined as one single land use designation on the 2020 Land Use Map. Instead, the area is split between several different uses. The portion of the Corridor from Airport Road and west of South Circle Drive is designated as an Employment Center. A large portion of South Circle between Airport Road and Monterey Road is designated as General Residential. The northwest corner of Monterey and South Circle is designated a Community Activity Center. This analysis recommends that a corridor be specifically defined and the land use of Mature/Redevelopment Corridor be assigned to the defined geographic area, as shown in Figure 1.

As outlined in the above sections of this analysis, occupancy rates are low in about half of the land use categories. The vacancy rate for commercial land uses, which comprises the majority of the properties, is approximately 46 percent. This represents a very high vacancy rate for a commercial corridor. The citywide overall vacancy rate for commercial uses is estimated to be approximately eight percent, as reported by the *Southern Colorado Economic Forum Quarterly Updates and Estimates* dated July 2008.

There is a mix of quality in the built environment. It is evident that some of the businesses in the area maintain their properties while others do not. This is even more evident when looking at vacant parcels or commercial parcels that are currently for sale or in transition. These types of properties make up a large portion of the Corridor and tend to be in disrepair.

There is also a lack of mix of use. The majority of the Corridor is commercial. Due to the amount of vacant commercial property, it can be concluded that there is too much commercially designated property in the area relative to market demand. The commercial centers are vacant, with some being converted from multi-tenant storefronts to single religious uses. The Corridor would benefit from a mix of uses and zoning and available development incentives.

Based on the three corridor indicators and other data as it relates to the Corridor, it is evident that the South Circle Corridor as defined by this analysis should be designated a Mature/Redevelopment Corridor. The Mature/Redevelopment Corridor is defined by the policies and strategies as outlined in the City of Colorado Springs Comprehensive Plan. Those policies and strategies for development as they apply to this land use designation are:

Mature/Redevelopment Corridors:
Utilize the Mature/Redevelopment Corridor designation for existing, smaller, mature, retail corridors that offer opportunities to transform from exclusively auto-oriented places to more mixed-use centers through infill and redevelopment. As existing uses expand, they often migrate to new corridors, thus creating opportunities for redevelopment and redesign in these corridors. Integrate mobility choices by providing transit, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the center as well as adjoining areas.

LUM 206a: Mature/Redevelopment Corridor Characteristics
Designate areas having generally smaller lotting patterns, frequent mixing of residential uses, and incremental, lot-by-lot development pattern. Include areas annexed or developed in the more mature parts of the City.

LUM 206b: Mature/Redevelopment Corridor Primary Uses
Identify primary uses as mixed-use development, particularly as these corridors redevelop. Encourage proposed development adding to the mix of uses.

LUM 206c: Mature/Redevelopment Corridor Secondary Uses
Include supporting uses such as those that encourage transit-oriented development with safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access and facilities.

V. Possible Future Actions

As a designated Mature/Redevelopment Corridor, it is recommended that the South Circle Corridor be among the target areas for economic revitalization, including retail revitalization efforts. In addition, further planning efforts could be conducted to assess the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of the area as well as the threats to the area as a basis for a revitalization plan. That plan would create a vision for the Corridor and guide future redevelopment activities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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