READY, SET, ACTION!

An Urban Design Action Plan for the Englewood Downtown & Medical Districts

Finalized October, 2009
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SUMMARY

The Urban Design Action Plan for the Englewood Downtown and Medical Districts began with the desire to better understand the possibilities, processes and implications for growth and development within the two districts. Prior to the Action Plan, the City of Englewood had accomplished several important planning steps: the development of a new Comprehensive Plan, the establishment of a small area planning process for the Downtown and Medical Districts, and the development of new Medical Zone and Overlay District regulations. In order to build on the momentum of these efforts, the City wanted to understand what additional planning steps were needed to achieve a more vibrant pedestrian-oriented streetscape within the Downtown and Medical Districts. Having worked extensively with the public to understand the preferred vision and goals for the area, the City was left with two important questions:

1. How can the vision for the two Districts be reflected in the design of improvements to the public realm?

2. What additional planning studies are needed to better understand the implications of revitalization, redevelopment and renovation decisions that affect public realm improvements (such as streetscapes, traffic flows, pedestrian connections, utility upgrades, public art and financing opportunities)?
In order to better understand the answers to these questions, the City hired the Britina Design Group Team, a collaboration of professionals focused on the planning, design and construction of downtown projects. Working closely with the City and each other, the team outlined a project scope that included two separate, but related, processes:

**Downtown and Medical District Conceptual Streetscape Design Planning Process**

- Translate vision for each district and the public’s visual preferences for specific streetscape elements into potential design themes
- Develop conceptual streetscape designs for segments of Broadway and Old Hampden Avenue based on the developed potential design themes
- Fully expand upon and finalize the preferred conceptual streetscape designs for segments of Broadway and Old Hampden Avenue

**District-Wide Action Plan Development Process**

- Identification of Critical Issues
- Discipline Specific Analysis and Recommendations for Next Steps
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Design Team

As a team whose focus is rehabilitating downtown districts, the Englewood Downtown & Medical District design team offers an innovative and proven approach to the planning and design of Englewood's downtown areas. The Britina Team understands the importance of downtown districts as the heart of a community, and excels at bringing cities, community members and stakeholders together to create great places.

Britina Design Group

Project Lead – Planning, Visioning & Landscape Architecture

Britina Design Group led the Downtown and Medical Center District planning and design team. As the principal project managers, Britina was the fulcrum around which the ideas, visions and needs of project took shape to form the final plan.
**Fehr & Peers**  
*Transportation Consultants*  
Understanding the need to develop an awareness of transportation and traffic impacts of the Downtown and Medical Center District plan, Fehr & Peers worked with the team to document and project the traffic impacts of design choices.

**V3**  
*Civil and Hydrological Engineering*  
V3 helped the design team work with the Englewood City Staff and engineering representatives to understand and document the existing infrastructure conditions within the district, and determine the impacts of the plan on projected future engineering systems.

**Leland Consulting Group**  
*Economic Consultation*  
Leland worked with the consultant team to outline the future economic needs of the districts, and determine the most successful means of funding future district-wide improvements.

**McGrath & Braun**  
*Art Consultants*  
McGrath and Braun is a corporate art consulting firm with expertise in art and art design. They worked with the consultant team to analyze the existing public art within the district, and make recommendations for how to incorporate art into the final Action Plan.
INTRODUCTION

Englewood’s Story

Downtown Englewood has a rich and deep history that parallels the modern growth and development of the Denver, Colorado region. Growing alongside Denver as a first-ring suburb, Englewood's early history was shaped by its connection to Denver via Broadway, and its famous entertainment venues including Fiske Gardens and Tuileries Amusement Park. Paralleling Denver’s growth, Englewood continued to grow in size and sophistication, and soon had two established retail cores - Broadway and Hampden. In 1968, the auto and neighborhood retail of the major streetscape shopping districts was supplemented with the creation of Cinderella City, the 'largest shopping mall west of the Mississippi'. Built on the site of the former City Park, the new mall spurred an influx of new commercial development within the immediate area.

A thriving center throughout the 1970's and early 1980's, Englewood continued to steadily increase in size, reflecting the growth of the Denver metro region. In the late 1980's, Englewood began to feel the effects of a struggling economy, and saw a reduction in the growth and retail development of both its downtown core and the Mall. Cinderella City, in particular, began to lose its retail base, so that by 1995, the formerly vibrant shopping mall was virtually unoccupied, and in 1997, the last store closed its doors. While Denver saw a resurgence in growth and development in the late 90’s, Englewood was passed over by most developers and new homebuyers.

Inspired by the City's commitment to reinventing the old Cinderella City site into a vibrant Transit Oriented Development (TOD) with access to light rail and new mixed-used development, Englewood began its comeback in the early 2000's. Today, with the new CityCenter Englewood strongly established as a vibrant TOD and civic 'heart' of the community, both the residents and planning staff have begun to look again at revitalizing Englewood's historic cores - the Downtown and Medical Districts.
The existence of three vibrant and unique core areas within the community presents opportunities as well as challenges for revitalizing the heart of the City. CityCenter Englewood, with its municipal focus and connection to the light rail system, connects Englewood to a desirable transportation network, and 'freshens' the image of the City though the new development, the vibrant public art program, and the very successful mixed-uses contained within the Englewood Civic Center building. In addition to the CityCenter Englewood core, Englewood has also retained its historic auto and neighborhood-focused retail and entertainment districts - the Downtown District and the Medical District. As outlined in the City’s planning documents, the Downtown District is Englewood's nightlife and entertainment district, while the Medical District serves the retail and dining needs of the local residents and the Swedish Medical Center and Craig Hospital users and employees.

Today, Englewood looks forward to a bright future. Capitalizing on the momentum of new residents and businesses seeing the value and convenience of living so close to Downtown Denver (but without the costs, congestion and density), Englewood has taken the first steps towards capturing the vision for both the Downtown and Medical Districts, through planning and regulatory reform. This Action Plan builds and enriches these efforts - helping the City understand how public improvements can reinforce the character and function of the Downtown and Medical Districts.
Building on the Vision

The Downtown District and the Medical District have strong agreed-upon visions for their character and preferred growth. The Downtown District - Englewood’s historic auto and streetcar connection to Denver, and the site of its earliest and most long-standing regional retail and entertainment venues - is envisioned to be a vibrant nightlife and entertainment venue with a regional draw, compelling character and bustling streetlife. The Medical District, another important community historical activity center, is envisioned to redevelop into a more complete and diverse mixed-use neighborhood center, where residents and medical center employees/visitors can walk to pedestrian-oriented shops and restaurants. Not as grand or regionally-focused as the Downtown District, the Medical District serves more local needs, and reflects a more casual and quiet feel. In the Medical District, the experience of walking and connection forms the basis for its future redevelopment.

In order to build on the visions for the Downtown and Medical Districts, the Action Plan provides a roadmap for achieving the goals of each district, outlining how the vision for each can be realized through additional planning and infrastructure improvements. Much work has already been done, and this Action Plan fills in the gaps regarding what additional studies and plans will enable the City to achieve the public improvements vision for each district, while also providing conceptual designs for the public improvements within each district. Moving forward, the Action Plan will ensure that future public improvements retain the preferred look and feel of the conceptual designs for each district, and that future funding is used to its maximum benefit. Finally, the Action Plan will help attract redevelopment interest within the Downtown and Medical Districts, giving developers the tools and assurances they need to make decisions regarding the potential profitability of investing in Englewood’s Downtown & Medical Districts.

Implementing the Vision

The objective of the Action Plan is to set a clear path for the implementation of the community’s vision for the Downtown and Medical Districts. In order to understand this path, the Downtown and Medical Districts were studied at two levels:

1. The comprehensive district wide study area covering both districts
2. The Downtown District and the Medical District separately from the other
By analyzing the districts at both levels, the Action Plan provides solutions and direction to the individual districts, while also outlining an inclusive multi-district overview of the ideas, strategies and ‘next steps’ needed to plan for further growth and development.

The Downtown District, as the historic and social heart of Englewood, and the Medical District, as the primary economic force, will each be designed with their specific character in mind, yet will be unified by District wide Streetscape Improvement Concepts that will result in complementary and cohesive districts.
PLANNING ACTIVITY TIMELINE

Englewood Downtown and Medical District Small Area Plan

Building on Roadmap Englewood: The 2003 Englewood Comprehensive Plan, the city began charting the course for community directed change in the Downtown and Medical Districts in the fall of 2006. Through several meetings, the community captured the planning vision through the lens of the three R’s – Revitalization, Redevelopment, Reinvention, as well as the concepts of Areas of Stability and Areas of Change, as found in Roadmap Englewood.

The result was a Small Area Plan that established a vision for the area through a well-polished, comprehensive set of goals and objectives that form the foundation for future planning strategy and implementation efforts.

Medical Zone and Overlay District Regulations

The Small Area Plan led to creation of City-initiated Medical Zone and Overlay District regulations to encourage private development in keeping with the vision set in the Small Area Plan. The regulations govern land uses, as well as building character and form, for the purpose of establishing a more urban, pedestrian-oriented scale of development.

Urban Design Action Plan

With the development of the vision and code in place, the question turned to “what’s next?” A threefold need was identified – 1) Further explore what the vision for each district meant from a design character perspective, 2) prepare a conceptual streetscape design for Broadway and Old Hampden, and 3) identify the next steps on the pathway to district implementation.
To accomplish these tasks, the Britina Design Group Team was hired. Working together with City staff, and the public, the Britina Design Group Team helped facilitate the development of an Action Plan for the two districts. This Action Plan was designed to establish a pathway for implementing the Downtown and Medical District vision.

The Urban Design Action Plan was created through a process that included a discipline-specific analysis of the current conditions within the two districts, the identification of the needs of the two districts based on the vision contained in the Small Area Plan, and the subsequent development of a series of detailed steps contained within an identified pathway to district implementation.

**Identification of Critical Issues and District Wide Analysis: February 18th, 2009**

An important cornerstone of the Downtown and Medical Center District study was determining the concerns of each district – those important issues that are obstacles to the successful growth and redevelopment of each core area. The project team referred to these elements as ‘Critical Issues’. Throughout the process, these critical issues not only provided structure and direction for the project team, they were also used to shape the final plan. In short, ‘solving’ these critical issues was critical to the success of the final plan.

To kick off the Urban Design Action Plan, the Design Team met with City Staff to discuss background information, discipline-specific analysis, and prioritizing of the identified critical issues. Each member of the Design Team discussed its critique of the existing conditions and outlined the suggested “best practices” approach to filling in the gaps to complete the district.

The Design Team and City Staff grouped analyzed each critical issue, and then assigned a priority ranking to each category:

1. District Wide Financing Plan
2. Establishing a Vision & Brand
3. Understanding Movements
4. Managing Parking
5. Designing the Environment
6. Programming the Public Spaces
Interactive Open House Charette #1: April 15th, 2009

*Creating the design vocabulary* and *capturing the design preferences* for the Downtown and Medical Districts was the focus of this first public charette. After an introduction and presentation, the public participants completed a visual preference exercise.

The participants were asked general questions regarding their favorite places, where they go in the district and what icons should be preserved. Building on these initial responses, the participants were asked to select their ideal preference to define the design character for the Downtown District and the Medical District.

Interactive Open House Charette #2: April 29th, 2009

The second charette brought the scale to the ‘street level’. Participants were asked to choose the preferred streetscape theme for a section of Broadway and Old Hampden, and to select the preferred solutions to the identified critical issues of each street.
Final Urban Design Action Plan Presentation:
June 10, 2009

The final Urban Design Action Plan and final Conceptual Designs for sections of Broadway and Old Hampden Avenue were presented to the public at the final open house meeting. The Design Team led a discussion on “next steps” with public participants and City Staff.
DOWNTOWN DISTRICT CONCEPTUAL STREETSCAPE DESIGN PROCESS

Downtown Englewood is currently at a critical point in its development history. The City has made a number of incremental investments in new street furniture, while the business community has recently organized itself to finance additional improvements and promotional banners. This current momentum presents the community with an opportunity to transition the district to become a premier historical yet trendy Main Street district within the Denver Metropolitan Area. The Downtown conceptual design process was developed to identify design preferences for critical improvements necessary to effectively transition the district toward the achievement of a truly vibrant entertainment district.

Character Definition

The goal of the first public open house was to define the character of Downtown Englewood. The previous planning documents envision this area as an Entertainment District, but what did that mean from a design perspective? It was time to dig deeper into the characteristics of what an “Entertainment District” meant to the people of Englewood. The Design Team set the participants to task: Vote on your Design Preferences and note important icons to be preserved.

Design Topics:

- Pedestrian Theme
- Public Spaces & Plazas
- Seating Type
- Median Design
- Nighttime Lighting
- Special Event Type
- Integration of Public Art
- Traffic Calming
Themes of the Preferred Imagery:

Overall, the top visual preference images choices reflected the desire to create a contemporary, lively, modern nightlife center within the Downtown District. Rather than choosing imagery with rough or organic structures, the participants strongly preferred those images with bold colors, graphic patterns and playful elements. Throughout all the images ran a thread of modern, playful stylized spaces that looked like pieces of contemporary art. However, these places were not envisioned as static, empty ‘art objects’, but rather, as an elaborate and engaging stage that would support both daytime gathering and nighttime activities.

What We Heard:

"Landscaping should be done responsibly with regards to water usage and maybe combined with Art."

"Parking lot at King Soopers ruins the street frontage (because there are) no trees."

"Traffic should be slowed on Broadway."

"Need a place to hold special events."

"The pocket parks and mid block crossings are nice."

"Include conversation seating areas."

"Clean up the parking lots and (expand) parking."
Selecting a Streetscape Design Theme

With the character of the Downtown District defined from a design perspective, the Design Team began the process of creating a conceptual streetscape design to reflect this character. Pulling from public feedback, as well as the established overall vision and the vibrant history of the area, the Design Team created two design options for the Broadway Streetscape: Vintage Entertainment and Urban Green.

The design process began with a review of the visual preference choices established during the first public meeting, as well as a look into the historic elements that contribute to the history and architecture of venues such as the Gothic Theater. Extrapolating from these touchpoints, the design team then incorporated the review of past studies and plans related to the growth and redevelopment of the district as a vibrant, regionally relevant nightlife and entertainment center. Using the chosen visual preference imagery as a starting point, the design team supplemented the preferred imagery with additional examples that elaborated on the look, feel and character of the preferred choices. As the number of images grew, patterns and relationships began to emerge and crystallize into two distinct themes: the first grounded in the film, movie and entertainment history of the district, and the other drawing from a contemporary ‘green’ urban landscape, in which bold palettes and clean plant combinations create sculptural forms with organic elements.

After the two design themes were generally sketched out, the preliminary thematic images were refined and supplemented until a clear visual narrative was created for each. Using this storyboard of chosen imagery, the design team then created conceptual streetscape designs that drew from and elaborated upon the two themes. Beginning with conceptual sketches which reflected the underlying geometry of each theme, the layers of design grew into flushed-out streetscape designs.

Once each preliminary streetscape design was drafted, the plan, theme and supporting images were presented to the public for review and preference voting. For each streetscape (Broadway and Hampden), a final preferred conceptual design was chosen.
**The Theme: ‘Here’s Looking at You!’**

Drawing from both the film and movie history of the district, as well as the current momentum of the Gothic Theater and existing nightlife venues along the corridor, the ‘Vintage Entertainment’ theme focuses on creating a strong graphic presence to the hardscape elements along the street. Drawing inspiration from the art, entertainment and architecture of the 20’s and 30’s, the theme creates a vivid district presence.
The Design:

At the street level, the design creates a vibrant pedestrian experience through deco-like pavement treatments, and signage, lighting and furnishings that reflect the smooth, rounded edges and materials of early 20th century industrial design.
The Urban Green

The Theme: The Urban Green

For the ‘Urban Green’ streetscape, the focus is on creating layers of green that punctuate the streetscape and create a series of planted spaces that both define and refine the experience of being on the street.
The Design:

Beginning with the groundplane, shifting panels of planted areas build up to raised planters that create flexible seating and protection from the sounds and presence of traffic. In keeping with the clean modernism of the design, the details of pavements and furnishings will reflect an artistic and contemporary feel that is both fresh and lush. In order to create smaller plaza-like niches along the street, some parking stalls are removed to allow for wider sidewalks and linear plaza-like gathering spaces.
At the second public open house, the participants were asked to choose a streetscape theme as well as solutions to the Design Team identified street critical issues. While the streetscape theme would guide the overall look of the street design, the preferred solutions to critical issues would guide the design of street-centric issues such as location of bike lanes and street narrowing.

**Critical Issue Topics:**
- Gateways
- Intersection
- Iconic Elements
- Room for Pedestrians
- Soften Exposure
- Sidewalk Organization
- Materiality
- Lighting Effects
- Site Furnishings

**Conclusions:**
- Gateways should be both signage and arches
- Intersection pavement should be both decorative in the intersection and at cross walks
- Iconic elements should be place markers to identify location
- Room for pedestrians should be accommodated at intersection bulb-outs
- Softening exposure for pedestrians should be through the use of awnings.
- Sidewalk Organization should be a blend of defined walking and dining spaces while allowing landscaping and seating to float
- Materiality for sidewalks should be stone pavers
- Lighting should reflect a contemporary style
- Site Furnishing should be traditional in character
Finalizing the Streetscape Design

Vintage Entertainment

The conceptual Broadway streetscape design reflects the community desire to create a vibrant and dynamic core to the Downtown District, in which a strong graphic streetscape palette reinforces not only the glamour and excitement of entertainment, but also the importance of understanding that greater space for pedestrians will increase both the image and usability of the Broadway Streetscape.

Typical Block: Vintage Entertainment

The concept design focuses on the creation of more significant end-block and mid-block bulb-outs, allowing space for pedestrian gathering areas, seating and enhanced landscape treatment. Gateway features located within the planting beds at either end of the street will provide a strong sense of identity and arrival to the downtown area. The mid-block gathering areas also serve as a pedestrian crossing zone. The festive nature of the design is reinforced by the extensive use of specialty paving at the intersections, crosswalks and mid-block crossing. Additional specialty paving bands located within the sidewalk areas establish a strong sense of rhythm and movement.
between the end and mid-block gathering spaces. Street trees in grates are clustered to create a unifying pattern of green and shade along the sidewalk, and flowering trees further enhance the raised median planting beds. Streetscape details such as urban oriented site furnishings and specialty lighting, including indirect overhead lighting and feature lighting, will ensure a vibrant and unique pedestrian experience.
The Medical District contains Swedish Medical Center, Craig Hospital, and the mixed use neighborhood to the south, and is poised for significant infill redevelopment based on new pedestrian-oriented design regulations. The goal for the Medical District streetscape design is to encourage revitalization at a pedestrian scale.

**Character Definition**

The goal of the first public workshop was to define the character of the Medical District. The previous planning documents envision this area as a mixture of a medical center and urban neighborhood, but what did that mean from a design perspective? It was time to dig deeper into the characteristics of what a “Medical and Urban Neighborhood” meant to the people of Englewood. The Design Team set the participants to task: Vote on your Design Preferences and note important icons to be preserved.

**Design Topics:**

- Pedestrian Theme
- Public Spaces & Plazas
- Seating Type
- Median Design
- Nighttime Lighting
- Special Event Type
- Integration of Public Art
- Traffic Calming
Themes of the Preferred Imagery:

The preferred visual image choices for the Medical Center District reflected a warm, textured, informal, organic and relaxed palette. A strong theme of a ‘friendly, neighborhood & local’ place is evidenced in the type of materials chosen (organic, natural rough-cut stone, warm & muted colors), as well as the casual informality of the preferred spaces. Another important design theme that emerged in the preferred visual imagery was a more traditional ‘Main Street’ look in the lighting, site furnishings and other streetscape amenities within the district. If the preferred imagery for the Downtown District reflected the public face of Englewood’s vibrant and lively entertainment scene, the Medical Center District imagery choices felt more local, casual and quiet.

What We Heard:

“Please consider smooth pedestrian areas. Pavers... are often difficult to maneuver wheelchairs, walkers & strollers.”

“New elements should compliment historic elements of Swedish...”

“...[Campus] directory kiosks in key areas...”

“Areas of accessible shelter”

“Snow removal priorities”

“Include conversation seating areas”

“[Avoid] ‘over-retail’ and empty storefronts”

“...shared parking”

“Preserve historic character [like] Golden, Steamboat & Littleton”
Selecting a Streetscape Design Theme

The public selected design images with a strong ‘green’ and pedestrian oriented feeling for the Medical District. Armed with this further character definition, the Design Team began the process of creating a streetscape to reflect this character. Pulling from the feedback of the public, the established overall vision and the existing uses of the area, the Design Team created two design options for the Old Hampden Streetscape: Art of Wellness and Neighborhood Campus.

The Art of Wellness

The Theme: The Art of Wellness

Centering on the theme of healing and all it embodies, the ‘Art of Wellness’ creates a quiet, green, soft and welcoming neighborhood thoroughfare.
The Design:

Reinforcing the Swedish Medical Center’s focus on health and rehabilitation, the redesigned streetscape replaces the current hard south edge with a swath of planted grasses and trees that soften the sidewalk while also controlling access across Hampden.

The ‘Art of Wellness’ theme feels casual and residential, and although it creates space for outdoor seating, these gathering areas share sidewalk space with the larger planted edge. Building on the theme of wellness, future public art acquisitions along the corridor having a tie to healing and health are recommended.
Neighborhood Campus

The Theme: Neighborhood Campus

Building on the campus-like feel of the medical center complex, the ‘Neighborhood Campus’ theme reinforces the activities that help build a neighborly, relaxed public environment. Generous spaces for people to gather along the street, the addition of a bicycle lane, and redesigned crosswalk areas all create a setting for casual, neighborly street use that can grow as new businesses or storefronts come into the district.
The Design: Neighborhood Campus

With an emphasis on hardscape outdoor spaces, the ‘Neighborhood Campus’ looks to a future for the district in which the Hampden streetscape is home to a lively mix of cafes, restaurants and retail that serve the local neighbors and residents.
At the second public open house, the participants were asked to choose a streetscape theme as well as solutions to the Design Team identified street critical issues. While the streetscape theme would guide the overall look of the street design, the preferred solutions to critical issues would guide the design of street-centric issues such as location of bike lanes and street narrowing.

**Critical Issue Topics:**
- Make Room for Pedestrians
- Safety
- Sidewalk Organization
- Bike Circulation
- Bike Storage
- Art Shuttle
- Materiality
- Lighting Effect
- Site Furnishings

**Conclusions**
- Room for Pedestrians should be accommodated at intersection bulb outs
- Pedestrian Safety should be accommodated by blinking crosswalks and decorative materials
- Sidewalk Organization should be a blend of defined walking and dining spaces while allowing landscaping and seating to float
- Bike lanes should be integrated within the district
- Bike storage should be artistic
- The art shuttle route should be improved by enhancing the experience of each stop
- Pavement should consist of banded concrete
- Lighting should consist of a traditional pole light
- Site furnishing should be modern and artistic
Finalizing the Streetscape Design

Neighborhood Campus

In keeping with the desire to create a relaxed, quiet, friendly (for pedestrians and bicyclists, in particular), eclectic environment, the Old Hampden conceptual streetscape design helps to create the spaces and alignments that allow for safer movements, greater sidewalk space for outdoor dining and seating, and space for the possibility of a dedicated bike lane.

The concept design focuses on creating a more dynamic pedestrian experience, particularly along the south side of East Hampden. This is accomplished by increasing the usable sidewalk area while embracing opportunities for outdoor seating and gathering near current and future businesses. The use of enhanced paving and the implementation of street trees in tree grates further enhance the campus feel of the street. Although parallel parking is maintained along the south side of the street, the roadway is reduced to accommodate bike lanes in both directions of East Hampden. The intersection...
crosswalks and mid-block pedestrian crossing features the use of specialty paving. Additional plantings and flowering trees line the south side of the street, creating a less organized and more eclectic feel to the street. The bus stops have been more clearly defined with specialty paving and enhanced seating opportunities. Streetscape details such as campus oriented site furnishings, planter pots and more traditional pole lighting will ensure a neighborly, pedestrian friendly experience.
**District Wide Action Plan Development Process**

**Introduction**

The key to the success of the district wide analysis was to understand how to realize the goals and vision of both the Downtown and Medical Districts from a comprehensive, large-scale perspective. In order to structure this analysis, the consultant team created the following district-wide themes:

- **Valuing History** (identifying local landmarks, documenting historic character, determining buildings and spaces essential to the function and image of the downtown)
- **Collecting the Vision** (reviewing past planning documents, plans and designs)
- **Creating Connections** (pedestrian linkages, movement patterns, multi-modal transportation)
- **Regulating Movement** (existing parking systems, best practice recommendations)
- **Reinforcing the Center** (gateways, land use patterns, places for public events, and special places)
- **Making a Memorable Experience** (incorporating public art, telling the ‘story’ of Englewood, existing downtown events and what additional events could be added)
- **Focusing on the Pedestrian** (streetscape standards, what makes a great streetscape experience)
- **Leveraging Opportunities** (funding, economics, and methodologies needed to capitalize on the need for district-level improvements)
- **Setting Organizational Structure** (understanding of the organizational structure options that would most benefit the district)
**Background Research and Identification of Critical Issues**

In order to understand the district-wide critical issues, the consultant team began the district-wide analysis with a comprehensive review of the existing and on-going planning, research and development efforts within the study area. The goal of this research was two-fold. First, it allowed the team to understand the work done to date, so new efforts and products would not overlap past work. Secondly, it created a working set of district-wide ‘critical issues’ that form the basis of the finalized District-Wide Action Plan.

**Review of Historical Resources and Recent City Planning Efforts**

- Comprehensive Plan
- Downtown and Medical District Small Area Plan
- New Medical Zone and Overlay District Regulations
- 2008 ULI Conference Panel Summary
- Englewood Historic Summaries and Historic Photos
- New Designs for Broadway Paseo ‘Pocket Parks’

**District Wide Critical Issues**

**Streets/Gateways**

- Hierarchy is the key to the design – Broadway and Hampden
- Pedestrian experience is a place not a corridor
- Need Merchant support
- Neighborhood gateways tied to circulation
- Make sure the pedestrian district adjacent to the hospitals is developed.
- Improve connections to CityCenter Englewood
- Ensure flow of traffic to the Medical District is not impeded
- Need study that quantifies traffic volumes and speeds moving north and south on Broadway, as well as feeder streets
- Understanding Art Shuttle ridership patterns, as well as unmet demands
✓ Broadway and US Highway 285 are not identified on the Regional Transportation Plan for future federal transportation funds

✓ How can Little Dry Creek Trail connections be improved in the vicinity of Englewood Marketplace?

✓ Need a streetscape design manual.

✓ Need a theme that captures the history of the district

✓ Paseo Pocket Parks – need to make improvements to the east side – benches, lights, shade structure

✓ Outdoor seats for restaurants? – some restaurants are approved for outdoor spaces

Financing

✓ Need to think of all levels of funding – from district wide down to building level

✓ Commercial catalyst for façade improvements – this already exists, but it could be better promoted through marketing.

✓ TE – Transportation Enhancement Funds – maybe for the historic trolley turn around

✓ CDBG – Block grants

✓ CDOT – might be part of the matching

✓ Historic Funds – Gothic theater or other streets may be up for these types of grants

✓ South Broadway Business Improvement District

Parking

✓ Disparity of parking throughout the district

✓ Need signage and wayfinding to parking lots

✓ Key demand issues (Gothic Theatre)

✓ Broadway and Medical District – what are the impacts of parking in this area?

✓ Need to manage on-street parking demand around hospitals, as well as increasing the awareness of parking options
Marketing – Programming

✓ Need to increase number of events
✓ One big event is Englewood Days – located on the 3400 block of Lincoln
✓ Bid has created a “sale today” banner to be flown during the 2 sidewalk sales a year
✓ Great visibility for larger-scale events

Public Art

✓ Art on the Bridge – art as an example of a gateway
✓ Partnership with the Museum of Outdoor Arts
✓ Green grass sculpture serves as an icon
✓ Monumental free-standing pieces – where do they go and they support the program for each piece.
✓ Functional – make piece that serves a purpose
✓ Art shuttle - Needs to be a better tie between districts. Great opportunity they have – a stop could be an adventure – for instance benches that are art, themes etc
✓ Tagging of electrical boxes – Fort Collins has a program where artists cover electrical boxes to prevent tagging
✓ A district wide approach would offer a community exposure to art.
✓ ‘Art About’ – for the past 3 years – it has taken a long time to get started – one weekend a year

Discipline Specific Analysis & Recommendations for Next Steps

During the first step of the district wide analysis, the consultant team developed a set of draft critical issues, based on the review of completed plans, studies, visions and projects. In the second phase, the initial critical issues were addressed through each consultant team member's discipline specific analysis and subsequent recommendations. For example, after understanding that one of the initial district wide critical issues was "Streets/Gateways", the Transportation Planning team member (Fehr & Peers) looked at how existing conditions related to this critical issue could be addressed through their professional knowledge of the important elements of a successful transportation and movement plan. Through analysis of the district wide critical issues, the design team developed a sequence of next steps needed to complete the district.
**District Wide Financing Plan**

Great Urban Designs are only realized when they are grounded in economic reality. The eternal question of “how do we pay for it?” needs to be answered prior to embarking down the path of design implementation so that momentum of renovation can be effectively captured.

**Next Steps:**

**Public Improvements Financing Study**

A comprehensive public improvements financing study process should be developed in order to create a set of public improvements financing options that can be evaluated by City Council, the South Broadway BID, Swedish and Craig Hospitals, and various property and tenant stakeholders:

- Survey of Colorado Business District Public Improvements Projects
- Assessment of Potential Sources of Public Funds
- Identification and Assessment of Potential Public and Private Financing Options
- Detailed Analysis of Preferred Financing Options
- Development of Three Public Improvements Package Options

**Establishing a Vision & Brand**

Capturing a sense of place and translating it into a marketable brand is a key step in selling the Englewood experience. With the vision of both the Downtown and Medical District established in the streetscape design of Broadway and Old Hampden, the task is how to extend that design vision into the gateways, signage and iconic details of the district.

**Next Steps:**

**Community Branding, Wayfinding & Signage Study**

Through a series of community input methods, create a ‘visual look-book’ which may include the following:

- Analysis of the existing and historic signage conditions in Englewood, neighboring communities,
- Analysis of regional and national ‘best practice’ signage ideas
- Develop alternatives for new logo design based on conceptual streetscape design, historic and current signage standards and community feedback.
- Develop alternatives for gateway and wayfinding signage themes and standards.
- Identify, define and classify gateways located in Englewood. This may include, but is not limited to, major entry gateways, minor entry gateways, commercial district gateways, and sub area gateways.

**Understanding Movements**

A review of existing transportation conditions in the study area was completed to assess transportation for all modes of travel within the district. A windshield survey was supplemented with available traffic data from the city and the Colorado Department of Transportation. While extensive data for all streets and all modes were not readily available, the project team found the following:

- **A Connected Grid** of streets serves the district well with signalized crossings of major streets, and street oriented land uses in many locations.

- **Hampden and Broadway** serve as the primary vehicular through and access streets for the district. Both operate with good traffic signal progression. According to staff, Hampden operates at or near capacity for many of the left turn movements that serve the district. Higher traffic volumes and higher speeds on both streets create challenging crossing environments for pedestrians.

- **Trail Connections** are present in the district but not well connected to on-street bicycle routes and pedestrian destinations. Many connections require crossing of large parking lots and out of direction travel.

- **Sidewalks** are present along most streets and conditions vary widely from wide hardscaped sidewalks in the CityCenter area to narrow (2 feet) attached sidewalks in the medical district.

- **Pedestrian Destinations** are dispersed throughout the district and functional connections exist between most locations. Gaps in land use, inhospitable parking lots, and a lack of visual connection or wayfinding between Broadway and CityCenter and the Medical District require people to “know where they are headed.”

- **The Art Shuttle** provides excellent connectivity for work trips, access to shopping and dining, and a free travel choice for employees, residents and visitor on weekdays, but not weekends or evenings.
**Next Steps:**

**District-Wide Traffic, Transit and Pedestrian Assessment**

Both City staff and participants in the Charette identified the need for additional information on destinations that generate high pedestrian demand, operational and capacity issues for motorists, and better connectivity for bicyclists to better understand how changes to key roadways might influence overall mobility in the district. Options that could be further explored include changing roadway cross sections to better serve all modes of travel or reallocate space in the right of way, developing new trail and pedestrian connections across parking lots, and creating better visual connections between destinations.

A District-Wide Traffic, Transit and Pedestrian Assessment is needed to systematically evaluate these options. This effort would include a district wide look at traffic, transit and pedestrian networks. A current set of existing conditions data would support a complete multi-modal analysis, including roadway geometries, adjacent land uses, driveway locations, bus stops, and any existing deficiencies for each mode of travel. With these data, the potential effects of design alternatives on all roadway users can then be evaluated in terms of tradeoffs and synergies, and recommendations for transportation system improvements needed to support the streetscape designs can be developed.

**Managing Parking**

Public parking is both a real and perceived issue in the Downtown and Medical Districts. The reality is that on-street parking is nearing capacity, and creative and innovative solutions for parking are needed. There is also a lack of public awareness of the options available for parking.

In our review of the district, both on and off-street parking are at a premium in the Medical District and generally oversupplied in the retail area between Broadway and CityCenter. Constructed during an era of fewer cars, shopping districts like Englewood’s historic downtown along Broadway typically struggle with limited on-street parking spaces, which can create a feeling that there is not adequate parking. Event parking was also identified as an issue along Broadway.

Both City staff and participants in the Charette identified these challenges as a high priority for the district. On-street parking is not the only option available to motorists wishing to park, and we have found that an aggressive and thorough community parking awareness program is the first step in creating community orientation to downtown parking.
pockets. Our review of conditions in the district also suggests that the timing of parking demands, availability of large parking supplies and shuttle service in the district also points to opportunities for shared parking.

**Next Steps:**

**Parking Management Plan**

A Parking Management Plan is needed to provide a thorough look at the parking and infrastructure needs of the District, document existing conditions, and recommend management strategies. This information will be critical to discussions with property and parking managers in the district and will serve as the foundation for recommendations that further support the streetscape design process.

**Designing the Environment**

In order to capture the momentum of the district improvements, we recommend that the conceptual streetscape themes be realized through a formal set of Design Development Construction Drawings, first for Broadway, and then for the Old Hampden corridor. Working with the community, stakeholders and City staff, the conceptual design will be solidified and final drawings depicting the vision for a newly constructed streetscape completed. From these drawings, formal cost estimates for the streetscape can be prepared, and the final improvements constructed – either as one project, or as phased improvements installed over time.

Due to the larger size of the Medical District and the long length of Old Hampden Avenue, a Streetscape Design Manual is recommended prior to undertaking the Design Development Construction Drawings. The Design Manual will build upon the conceptual streetscape design, taking it a step further to include a basic palette of materials, amenities and locations for streetscape improvements. As incremental improvements occur along the corridor, the Design Manual will provide direction regarding the extent and detailing of improvements to the streetscape.

**Next Steps: Broadway**

**Broadway Streetscape and Downtown Gateway Design Development and Construction Drawings**

- Finalize the conceptual design for the Broadway streetscape, including specific engineering solutions for the Final Design and Construction Drawings.
Work with the property owners to identify needs of construction phasing.

**Downtown District Public Art Improvement Plan**

- Conduct a detailed Downtown District site evaluation on continuity, placement, materiality, and overall effectiveness of existing art pieces.
- Create proposal with recommendations for additional or alternative locations for art pieces considering:
  - Accessibility and visibility to the public
  - Goals within the Downtown District for vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns
  - Themes/goals for Downtown District identity
  - Themes/goals for Englewood identity

**Maintenance Plan**

In our experience, maintenance of a redeveloped streetscape is critical to the overall longevity and success of the project. For the Broadway streetscape, we propose developing a plan for maintaining the streetscape based on the implementation of the proposed designs. This process includes designing a strategy for maintaining such items as site furnishings, pavement, lighting, transit stops, signage, public art, water features, specialty elements and landscape areas. We will work closely with the various Englewood departments charged with maintenance of the streetscape to develop and document a viable maintenance plan.

**Next Steps: Medical District**

**Streetscape Design Manual**

- Complete a Streetscape Design Manual that includes art, streetscape design details, and signage and gateways. This manual will set a palette and hierarchy of design and connections for the Medical District and Old Hampden Avenue.
- Identify streetscape designs for transition areas, how they are funded and phased.
- Create typical gateway concepts into the districts and a signage theme for the district.
- Meet with the public and City officials to determine the preferred plan.
Old Hampden Streetscape and Medical District Gateway Design Development and Construction Drawings

✓ Finalize the conceptual design for the Old Hampden Avenue streetscape, including specific engineering solutions for the Final Design and Construction Drawings.
✓ Work with the property owners to identify needs of construction phasing.

Medical District Public Art Improvement Plan

✓ Conduct a detailed Medical District site evaluation on continuity, placement, materiality, and overall effectiveness of existing art pieces
✓ Create proposal with recommendations for additional or alternative locations for art pieces considering:
  o Accessibility and visibility to the public
  o Goals within the Medical District for vehicular and pedestrian traffic patterns
  o Themes/goals for Medical District identity
  o Themes/goals for Englewood identity

Maintenance Plan

In our experience, maintenance of a redeveloped streetscape is critical to the overall longevity and success of the project. For the Broadway streetscape, we propose developing a plan for maintaining the streetscape based on the implementation of the proposed designs. This process includes designing a strategy for maintaining such items as site furnishings, pavement, lighting, transit stops, signage, public art, water features, specialty elements and landscape areas. We will work closely with the various Englewood departments charged with maintenance of the streetscape to develop and document a viable maintenance plan.

Next Steps: District Wide Design

Art Shuttle Transit Stop Improvement Plan

✓ Examine existing stops and art pieces along the Art Shuttle route
✓ Create comprehensive Art Shuttle improvement plan including:
  o Advisement on art programs along the route considering timeline, function, form and theme.
Recommendations for artistic embellishments or functional art features at each stop or along key points in the route

Programming the Public Spaces

The need for programming public spaces goes beyond organizing events. Instead, district programming must apply the vision for the two districts to the most tangible user experience: creating opportunities for public interaction. Whether it’s Friday after Five, a Farmers Market or Englewood Days, great public spaces create a fantastic stage for vibrant civic events.

Next Steps:

In conjunction with a Marketing Plan, develop an understanding of the types of experiences that would add vibrancy and energy into the Downtown and Medical Center Districts. From large-scale events like performances and outdoor festivals, to smaller farmers markets and impromptu gatherings, having a well-defined space in which these events can occur will ensure both their marketability and prominence.

- Work with the existing Business Improvement District, City Staff and interested stakeholders (historic preservation specialists, event promoters, representatives from local theater and performance venues, hospital marketing managers, etc) to develop a comprehensive marketing plan that builds on the vision of each district. Creating district branding, logos and themes, the marketing plan should also include a comprehensive ‘wish list’ of events for each district. Once this ‘wish list’ is established, determine what types of spaces are needed for these events, and create a location map that graphically illustrates potential areas for marketing and event development. Currently, there are several prime event areas, including:
  - The small paseo areas along Broadway
  - The open parking lots to the east and west of Broadway
  - The green space adjacent to the bike path
  - Large private parking lots
  - The outdoor and indoor spaces surrounding the Medical Center complex

- Once the areas for potential events are identified, support the creation of an event committee for each of the top five or ten key events (including monthly recurring events, such as sidewalk sales, art walks or restaurant promotional nights).
Partnering with the BID, create budgets for each event that combine private/public resources.

✓ Each event committee will be responsible for the marketing and promotional development of their event, including designing advertisements, radio spots, social media marketing and support during the event.

✓ During the first few years of the program (and longer if desired), each individual event committee will meet after the event to discuss the positives/negatives, and how they can continue to improve and promote their event. Each event committee will assign a chair who is responsible for meeting quarterly with the other event chairs to share information, ideas and resources.

✓ As money becomes available, work with the City of Englewood to make improvements to the most heavily used and desirable event locations. Begin to incorporate public art and public realm improvements in these areas.

✓ As events and public space programming is developed and refined, ensure the event committee members continually strive to create partnerships with schools, libraries, foundations, special interest groups, media resources and other potential event supporters to build momentum and support for their programs. Have each event committee representative share their outreach efforts as part of the quarterly representative meeting.

✓ Establish a method for the public and interested parties to bring ideas for additional events to each event committee. A great way of doing this would be to have an 'idea booth' in place at events where people can write additional event ideas on a banner or other fun graphic. Utilize social networking sites already in place to market events (Facebook, Twitter, MySpace) to gather feedback from events and generate new event ideas.

CONCLUSION

This Urban Design Action Plan identifies the pathway to realize a bright future for Englewood’s Downtown and Medical District. With the next steps identified and the conceptual streetscape determined, the time is ripe to capitalize on the momentum established in the Small Area Plan process and set a course towards fully reaching the potential of each district.

At the root of each of the conceptual street designs, is the need to enhance the pedestrian experience. Enhancements range from improving connections between the districts to offering conversation areas along the street. Each enhancement will contribute to the
development of a comprehensive pedestrian atmosphere that harnesses Englewood’s sense of place into great public spaces.