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Executive Summary
North Main & Camino Del Rio Character District Plans

These are the questions we started with in the Character District planning process for North Main and Camino Del Rio. Citizens of Durango regularly interact with these primary corridors and these are often the first places visitors encounter when they arrive in Durango. Due to their prominence in the community, it is all the more urgent to maximize their potential benefit to Durango’s unique sense of place. For this reason, North Main and Camino Del Rio are the first in a series of planning processes which will be completed through the Durango District Initiative framework.

As we considered the questions above, we realized there were others that needed to be asked. What are the existing conditions in these areas…both positive and negative? What is the history that shaped these corridors? What are the unique attributes which can be leveraged to move towards a brighter future for these key places in Durango?

These questions were not asked in a silo and the answers presented in this plan did not come from a single source. We planned and hosted community conversations to hear what citizens, property owners and business owners had to say in response to this question. The following summaries capture the key assets and challenges identified for each of these corridors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Camino Del Rio</th>
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**Figure 0-1, North Main Character Districts Assets & Challenges**

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**Figure 0-2, Camino Del Rio Character Districts Assets & Challenges**
As we began to understand what these places currently are, we then transitioned to another question…

This is where the conversations got really fun. Opening up the door to possibilities led to many exciting ideas. As part of the planning process we are trying to anticipate and shape change as growth pressures continue to push the community in challenging ways. As we heard about the community’s desires for the future of these places, it became apparent that there is so much potential for them to become great contributors to Durango’s high quality of life.

We then took all this input and began evaluating the things that would need to happen to realize this ambitious new vision. Established transportation-oriented plans for Camino Del Rio and North Main (Camino Del Rio Access Control Plan and the North Main Mobility Study) provided a starting point as we thought about how people and vehicles move through this area. We then thought about how the physical space and the built environment can contribute to creating safe, functional, and exciting places in these corridors.

This District Plan presents an overview of these in-depth studies. The 1st Chapter, Engage & Understand, introduces the settings and existing conditions. This section presents some summary statistics to capture the current state of these areas. There is also a summary of the current guidelines and regulations which govern land use and development in these areas. Lastly, the Engage & Understand Chapter elaborates on the assets, challenges, and character-defining attributes of the areas.

The 2nd Chapter is entitled Inspire. This title was chosen deliberately because it is intended to present a compelling and clear vision of what the community wants for the future of these key areas. It is not regulatory in nature, but is rather meant to open up possibilities by giving visual depictions of current best practices, the community vision and future prospects for redevelopment in these aging, underutilized areas.

Invest & Incentivize, the 3rd Chapter, is a toolbox of more pragmatic, tangible strategies to move in the direction presented in the preceding two chapters.

Finally, Evaluate & Adapt, is the concluding chapter. This chapter is a way to measure and track success as the inspiration for the future takes root and the identified strategies are implemented. This also proposes ways that the suggested strategies can flex and adjust as we collectively learn from implementation.

A variety of supporting documents are included for reference in the Appendices.

Thank you for your interest in this important initiative! If you have questions or suggestions we welcome you to contribute those to the ongoing dialogue via the Durango Districts Initiative website: http://districts.durangogov.org or by contacting the City of Durango Community Development Department.
Chapter 1

ENGAGE & UNDERSTAND

This Chapter is entitled ‘Engage & Understand’ because any planning process and vision for the future must understand the history of the area and the communities most affected by the plan must be engaged in determining the best path forward.

“Democracy is a daring concept - A hope that we’ll be best governed if all of us participate in the act of government. It is meant to be a conversation, a place where the intelligence and local knowledge of the electorate sums together to arrive at actions that reflect the participation of the largest possible number of people.”

Brian Eno (1948 - Present)
Durango Districts Initiative and City Council Goals

This project is part of the Durango Districts Initiative which is creating a framework of coordinated district plans to define the unique character of each of the ten districts and provide a vision for their future. This effort is an extension of the Durango Comprehensive Plan and builds on related efforts. Furthermore, the Durango City Council has made it one of their four overarching goals to “Envision Durango’s Sense of Place by creating character districts, promoting responsible land use planning, and maintaining the community’s unique character and sense of identity.” The Durango Districts Initiative is designed to help accomplish this goal.

For more information on this Initiative, please visit: https://districts.durangogov.org/.

Glossary of Terms

- **Redevelopment** - Any new construction on a site that has a pre-existing uses.
  
  Local Example - Purgatory retail and office location on North Main

- **Adaptive Re-Use** - The process of reusing an old site or building for a purpose other than which it was built or designed for. Adaptive reuse is seen by many as a key factor in land conservation and the reduction of urban sprawl.

  Local Example - Ernie’s 31 Street Station, the owners converted an old gas station into a bar, coffee shop and food truck court.

- **Placemaking** - A community-based process to collectively reimagine spaces used by the public in order to increase quality of life and reflect local culture. This can be done through art, parks, community gathering spaces, trails, transportation and more. Your imagination is the limit.

  Local Examples - Public art or the murals on College Drive.

- **Tactical Urbanism** - Low cost, temporary changes to the built environment, intended to improve local neighborhoods and city gathering spaces. These efforts are often community led.

  Local Example - Replacing parking spots with bike racks in Downtown Durango.

- **Missing Middle Housing** - A range of multi-unit or clustered housing, which is in scale with single family homes. This housing helps meet the demand for walkable urban living, while fitting in with existing neighborhood aesthetics.

  Local Example - The neighbor down the street who converted their house into a fourplex. From the outside it is hard to tell that the house is more than one unit.

- **Walkable** - Development, which is close enough to be reached by walking at a normal pace. A ¼ miles is about 5 minutes, a ½ a mile is about 10 minutes and 1 mile is about 20 minutes. However, walkability also accounts for how friendly and safe an area is to walk through.

  Local Example - Walking on Main Avenue in Downtown Durango vs 2 blocks over on Camino Del Rio.

- **Infill** - The use of vacant land and underutilized property within a built-up area for further construction or development.

  Local Example - Louisa’s Electronics.

- **Auto-Oriented/Auto-Dominated** - This refers to transportation and development patterns that favor automobiles and provide relatively insufficient transportation alternatives.

  Local Example - Camino Del Rio corridor.

- **Multi-Family Residential** - Multiple, separate housing units contained within one building or complex.

  Local Example - Lumien Apartments

- **Neighborhood Center** - A common, centrally located destination for residents

that provides a mix of needed services and facilities for people, ideally in a walking distance of population areas.

Local Example - East Animas Village, at the intersection of Florida Road and CR 250. These businesses provide convenient, walkable services for the surrounding residential areas as well as a destination for others.

- **Mixed-Use** - A cohesive development in which a combination of residential and commercial uses (e.g. residential-over retail) are located on the parcel proposed for development.

  Local Example - The Crossroads building at 11th St. and Main Ave. or majority of the buildings in Historic Downtown Durango.

Planning Areas

This Plan is a consolidated document covering two distinct, yet closely related, Districts. Overlap exists in the issues being addressed, opportunities available, and recommended implementation strategies, but there are also unique elements that only apply to one or the other District. The maps of the planning areas below help to frame the suggestions made in this Plan.
This Plan covers both the North Main and Camino Del Rio corridors. There have been multiple planning efforts in the past intending to help guide the renewal and future of these areas. This Plan builds on these past efforts and tries to consolidate information to achieve more clarity and consensus.

The primary documents related to this effort are listed below with a short description of how each document relates to this current planning effort.

**City of Durango 2017 Comprehensive Plan**

The City of Durango updated the Comprehensive Plan in 2017. This Plan update included an extensive series of public involvement activities and includes an updated Vision for the City of Durango. The Vision, created and agreed to, by the community, states, “Durango is an authentic, diverse and creative community living in harmony with its natural environment, pursuing economic, environmental and social sustainability.”

There is also a wide-ranging set of strategies to accomplish this Vision. The Durango Districts Initiative approach of creating character district planning tools for the diverse areas throughout the City is integrated into the Comprehensive Plan. While the Comprehensive Plan looks in broad terms at the entire City, the District plans are designed to drill in on more specific areas.

The Comprehensive Plan can be found online at: [http://www.durangogov.org/](http://www.durangogov.org/).

**Commercial Design Guidelines**

The City of Durango Commercial Design Guidelines were adopted in 2004 and have had a series of subsequent revisions. These Guidelines have been instrumental in shaping new development and redevelopment in Durango and have made sure that recent development activities have been generally consistent with community goals and unique character. The Guidelines contain sections specific to corridors throughout the City.

The Guidelines can currently be found online at [http://www.durangogov.org/](http://www.durangogov.org/).

This Plan recommends keeping the general framework of the Design Guidelines, integrating them into a more usable, web-based format, and completing another round of updates.

**Design Guidelines for the Downtown Overlay District**

The City of Durango Design Guidelines for the Downtown Overlay District were also adopted in 2004. They state, “The guidelines provide direction to property owners and their design professionals when they plan improvements to properties in the Central Business District, such that alterations, repairs and new construction will help to achieve the design objectives for the area. The guidelines also provide a basis for the city to determine the appropriateness of such improvements when they are proposed.” These Guidelines have also been successful in encouraging enhancement of existing buildings and appropriate redevelopment while also preserving downtown Durango as the economic and cultural hub of southwest Colorado. The Guidelines can be found online at [http://www.durangogov.org/](http://www.durangogov.org/).

In addition to providing guidance for the central business district along Main Avenue and Second Avenue, there are also Guidelines for infill construction along Camino Del Rio corridor. The stated design goals for Camino Del Rio are:

- To define the sidewalk edge with elements that are amenities for pedestrians.
- To establish a sense of scale in buildings and streetscape design that can be understood by pedestrians.
- To minimize the visual impacts of automobiles.
- To strengthen the pedestrian network of sidewalks, plazas and paths, including connections to the Animas River.

This Plan builds on the guidance laid out in the Downtown Design Guidelines for the Camino corridor.

**Downtown Vision Plan**

The Downtown Durango Vision and Strategic Plan was adopted in March 2006. While the focus of the Plan was primarily historic downtown area located along Main Avenue, the Plan did cover a big portion of the Camino Del Rio corridor as well. The Plan lists Principles and Objectives for how the entire downtown area can “continue to build on its diverse, mixed-use consisting of a rich blend of civic and professional services, support businesses, niche retail stores for both locals and tourists, housing, cultural and entertainment uses.” There are a number of recommendations made about actions that should be taken to accomplish this goal. Many of these recommendations have been pursued and implemented in the past 12 years. Some of the recommendations specific to Camino Del Rio are proposed to be revisited as a result of the changing nature of the corridor and the type of input received during public engagement for the character district planning process. Overall, the Plan provides some helpful insight into how the Camino Del Rio corridor and the Animas River can be better integrated into the success and vibrancy of historic downtown Durango.

**The North Main Corridor Mobility Study**

The North Main Corridor Mobility Study was completed in 2016. The desired outcomes identified by the Mobility Study include:

- Improved connectivity
- Safer bike and pedestrian access
- Traffic calming recommendations
- A setting that supports high quality redevelopment
- District gateways, identify and cohesiveness.

Key recommendations include addition of bike lanes, pedestrian ramps, wider walkways, safer crossings at key intersections, and improved way-finding signage. The Mobility Study will guide transportation-related improvements in the North Main area while this District Plan primarily seeks to shape the surrounding built environment and land uses. The Plan can be found online at [http://www.durangogov.org/](http://www.durangogov.org/).
City of Durango Land Use and Development Code
The Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) is the set of regulations adopted by City Council to govern development activities within the City of Durango and adjacent areas. Generally, the purpose of the LUDC is “promoting the health, safety, convenience, order, prosperity, and general welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the City of Durango, Colorado, by using the City’s home rule, constitutional, and statutory powers…”

Many of the recommendations in this Plan relate to updating and/or revising standards currently found in the LUDC. This Plan desires to give direction on how these regulations can be customized to the Camino and North Main corridors.

Other related plans, reports, and documents can be found on the City planning document library online: http://www.durangogov.org/.

Recent External Studies
In Fall 2015, a group of local organizations, with support from the American Booksellers Association, funded a study entitled “Durango: The Dollars and Sense of Downtown Development.” This study measured revenue production of varying development types in Downtown Durango and across La Plata County. The study also sought to determine where municipalities receive the most “bang for their buck” in sales tax production. The study used ‘value per acre’ to demonstrate that support of infill development yields the greatest return to local jurisdictions as opposed to a sprawling growth pattern. The conclusions states, “From Property Tax per Acre, Retail Tax per Acre, to the number of Jobs per Acre, Downtown Durango brings a potency of around 10 times the South Durango commercial-strip district.” This study provides tangible financial reasons for why the community should support strategies to further enable redevelopment in these key areas. More detail on the results of this study can be found at https://districts.durangogov.org/resources/.

In April 2016, the La Plata Economic Development Alliance retained Gruen Gruen + Associates to study the need for and feasibility of developing a new business park in La Plata County. The study is entitled, “The Demand for Office and Industrial Space in La Plata County and Strategies for Facilitating Office and Industrial Space Development to Serve Obtainable Demands.” Overall, the study found that new office space would be more successful if it was located in close proximity to Durango’s retail, lodging, cultural, and support services. It states, “Redevelopment of existing low-density uses along Camino Del Rio, a few blocks west of the core of Downtown Durango, could also provide opportunities to expand the office space supply in the preferred office space location in the market.” This is further support for the recommendations listed in this Plan for the Camino Del Rio corridor.

Corridor History
North Main
The North Main District is situated around one of the most heavily-traveled corridors on Colorado’s Western Slope. Primarily developed in the 1950s and 1960s, the area is currently experiencing a renewal due to its easy access, high visibility, proximity to the river and parks, connectivity to great neighborhoods, and unique building stock. The northern portion of the corridor was originally Animas City. When Animas City was annexed into the City of Durango in 1954, the corridor fell solely under the jurisdiction of the City of Durango.

North Main was originally the primary route through the town of Animas City, which was founded in 1876. It connected to a toll road operated by Otto Mears to Silverton. The State of Colorado took control of the toll roads through the San Juan Mountains in 1887. In 1910 the state designated the route as State Highway 13. In 1920, the State began improvements and modifications to the route, naming it the Durango-Silverton-Duray Highway. The project was so expensive, the DSO Highway was more commonly called the Million Dollar Highway. In 1930, the route appears on maps as US 550. In 1935, the state expanded the route from Durango to the New Mexico border. During the Manhattan Project, US 550 was instrumental in transporting uranium ore processed at the smelter in Durango for further processing in Grand Junction. In 1955, CDOT completed improvements on US 550 due to the increase in automotive tourists traveling the route. Many of the Mid-Century motels on North Main date to the tourism boom of the 1950s.

Camino Del Rio
The land uses along Camino Del Rio were originally industrial-type uses. These land uses often took advantage of the river as a waste conduit, not as an attractive amenity. Also, as this area had a variety of less than desirable land uses, the connections between the central downtown district and the Camino corridor are not fully developed. The current layout of the area still suffers from this history of not being fully connected to downtown and not taking full advantage of the river corridor.

The state highway bypass around downtown Durango uses Camino Del Rio and now it is primarily seen as a ‘pass-through’ area. However, due to its convenient access and high traffic volume, a number of very important businesses and institutions are located on the corridor. These establishments provide a good base of resources to build on in the effort to make Camino area a more attractive destination.

Existing Conditions
Instead of writing an extensive narrative regarding the existing conditions in these Districts, this Plan presents a summary of existing conditions in visual format. The following sections include a few key summary statements about the assets and challenges which were identified and considered through this planning process. Following affirmation of these assets and challenges through the public input process, these items were used to develop the recommendations in subsequent chapters.
North Main
The corridor is challenged because it consists of primarily smaller lots and a significant number of buildings are reaching the later stages of their lifespan. Many lots were developed in a layout that is vehicle-oriented and underutilized. Pedestrian infrastructure and the pedestrian experience due to high traffic speeds and relatively little buffer between vehicles and pedestrians is substandard. With future redevelopment opportunities exist to better serve the travel corridor and adjacent neighborhoods as well as improving architectural quality and character.

The North Main District is currently zoned Mixed-Use Arterial (MU-A). Current land uses include motels, restaurants, retail, commercial, offices, single and multi-family residential, civic and public uses. Currently, walkways along Main Avenue are varied with some significant gaps. Growth in traffic volume has made the many curb cuts problematic and pedestrian/bicycle safety is a primary concern. Parking is highly visible in front of older buildings and tight vehicle circulation contributes to safety hazards. The North Main portion of the corridor also hosts public uses including Durango High School, the Community Recreation Center, ballfields, park space and the County Fairgrounds. Immediately adjacent to the North Main corridor are very attractive residential neighborhoods of medium and high densities. Current building heights in the North Main area are mostly one story with some two-story structures.

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Figure 1-6, North Main Assets and Challenges

The County Fairgrounds property, which includes the baseball fields, rodeo arena, Community Recreation Center and the Boys & Girls Club, represents over 35 acres of publicly-owned property immediately adjacent to the North Main corridor. La Plata County is currently in the midst of evaluating alternative sites for a relocated and expanded Fairgrounds facility. If the Fairgrounds were to be relocated, this would represent a major opportunity for enhancement of the North Main corridor. Since the timeline for potentially relocating the Fairgrounds has not been set, this Plan does not attempt to set a vision for any changes to the Fairgrounds property. The planning and public process for any re-use of the Fairgrounds property will be its own significant process. That process will be led by La Plata County in partnership with the City of Durango and will include extensive public outreach. The guiding principles laid out in this Plan should be incorporated into that process.
Camino Del Rio

The Camino Del Rio District is the logical westward extension of the successful, vibrant downtown district. The downtown district is zoned Central Business (CB). The Camino Del Rio District is ideally situated between the Animas River and downtown Durango. The land in this District is vastly underutilized. Adequate utility service is available and, while some significant public improvements such as sidewalks and road improvements, are needed it holds tremendous potential for commercial and residential growth.

The current conditions include larger scale one-story retail and expanses of surface parking that extends to the roadway edge, affecting views. The Animas River corridor and adjacent park space is within the Public (PB) zone district and hosts segments of the Animal River Trail. Along the eastern edge of this District runs the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad line.

The corridor is dominated by views of parking. Walkways are inconsistent and unsafe. Landscaping, including street trees and parking lot buffers, are severely lacking. Lighting is varied and includes older highway-scale overhead lights. Some overhead utilities exists, and views of building service areas and dumpsters exist in primary sight corridors.

Where Camino and Main Street converge is a confusing intersection and a train crossing. Currently, this is an underutilized gateway opportunity. Land use revisions should be considered along with transportation solutions to create more of a landmark impact on the north end of downtown. With these challenges comes a great opportunity to reshape this highly visible corridor.

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Figure 1-8, Camino Del Rio Assets and Challenges

Figure 1-9, Camino Del Rio Existing Conditions Infographic
Existing Land Use Regulations

The current zoning for both areas is Mixed Use-Arterial (MU-A). There are some pockets of Public (PB) zoning where properties are publicly-owned and put to public use.

Within the MU-A Zone District:
* Minimum lot area is 14,000 SF.
* Minimum lot width is 100’.
* Minimum lot frontage is 100 ft.
* Building heights may go up to 40 feet height except 35 feet for properties abutting the Animas River; and buildings along Main Avenue that adjoin a residential zone shall not exceed 35 ft. within the rear 1/3 of the lot.

Through this public process, it has become clear that treating the entire corridor from the Highway 550/160 intersection up to northern City Limits as the same will not result in the desired conditions expressed by the community. It is imperative that the zoning and land use regulations be modified to reflect the unique character of these areas and allow for greater opportunities.
Public Involvement

In late 2016, a series of public meetings were held to present options and ask for input on the future of these areas. Additionally, a survey was released to gauge community agreement with some of the overarching principles guiding the planning effort.

Over 500 people participated in these efforts! The input received was surprisingly consistent and indicates high levels of support for allowing increased opportunities in these areas. The results, summarized and depicted below, have helped to set the stage for crafting a community-based vision.

North Main
The overwhelming majority of comments emphasized a desire to improve safety, especially for pedestrians, and an interest in improvements targeting vacant, underutilized, and rundown structures. A majority of responses centered on a sense of neglect and decay for the corridor. The automobile-centric nature of the corridor was noted as dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists regarding speeds and access. Key assets in this corridor that were identified include the Recreation Center and Library along with several favorite existing restaurants, shops, and dense residential areas. Participants expressed interest in higher density mixed use infill with residential opportunities, restaurants, shopping, hotels, and public spaces that serve residents and visitors. Visual interest, incorporation of historic elements, and variety were key recommendations.

Given a range of choices, attendees strongly favored a scenario featuring “Neighborhood Center” type infill and redevelopment that settled between a higher density “Urban Corridor” scenario and “Auto-Oriented Strip” development. The images below show the options presented to the public and the responses received. Green dots indicated support for that type of built environment while red dots indicated dislike.

Camino Del Rio
Attendees at the Camino Del Rio public meetings expressed a desire to change the character of the Camino Del Rio corridor. They noted a desire for complete redevelopment of the area with a mix of uses and marked increase in density, cultural opportunities, art, and enhanced landscaping. Comments noted that the area has outgrown several uses. Views to the river are blocked, and the “strip mall look” is outdated and underutilized. Assets in this area were noted as the opportunity to gain better connection to downtown, reveal views of the river, increase the variety of uses, emphasize walking, and add trees and public spaces. This area was viewed as appropriate for hosting higher density urban patterns with parking accommodated within structures to support greater building height and walkability. Creating safe walking connections across Camino to the river was also frequently requested. The images below show the options presented to the public and the responses received. Green dots indicated support for that option while red dots indicated dislike.
Surveys

In addition to in-person meetings, City staff organized two different online surveys to support this planning process. The first survey included comprehensive questions about the principles guiding the Character District planning effort. The summary of results below shows that there are high levels of support for the direction suggested by this Plan.

In summary, the community indicated through the survey that they support:

- Enhancing attractiveness and walkability in Durango’s commercial and mixed-use areas.
- Adding more and improving public spaces in the community.
- Encouraging high-density residential development in areas located near workplaces, retail stores, services and community facilities.
- Focusing new development within commercial and mixed-use corridors.
- Advancing strategies which will accommodate future population growth within or close to existing City Limits.
- Taking steps to improve safety and convenience of walking & riding bikes throughout the community.

Survey Results

As shown in the summary of results below, there are high levels of support for the direction suggested by this Plan.

In summary, the community indicated through the survey that they support:
- Enhancing attractiveness and walkability in Durango’s commercial and mixed-use areas.
- Adding more and improving public spaces in the community.
- Encouraging high-density residential development in areas located near workplaces, retail stores, services and community facilities.
- Focusing new development within commercial and mixed-use corridors.
- Advancing strategies which will accommodate future population growth within or close to existing City Limits.
- Taking steps to improve safety and convenience of walking & riding bikes throughout the community.

The second survey was more narrowly focused on naming and branding options for the North Main corridor. This survey saw a large amount of community interest, which demonstrates how the community is excited to embrace this area as an up-and-coming gathering place. The results of this survey are still being processed and the Durango Business Improvement District (BID) will be the entity leading the branding effort for the North Main area. For now, this Plan refers to the area as North Main because it is most recognizable to the community.

Summary

Overall, the design of recent redevelopment projects has complied with the City’s adopted documents, such as the Design Guidelines, and they generally appear to be accomplishing the aesthetic goals of the community. However, the documents governing land uses, parking, building form, and other dimensional aspects of development are not providing adequate opportunities for unique and context-sensitive solutions. City staff has been implementing the Land Use and Development Code (LUDC) for nearly four years and now has a good idea of which amendments can be made to better align the LUDC with property owner and community desires. This experience with the LUDC coupled with the public comments received during this process and the analysis of existing conditions have helped to shape a robust set of recommendations for enhancing these important community hubs. Many of the recommended implementation strategies in this Plan relate to LUDC amendments that would better reflect the changing nature of this corridor and would provide better prospects for successful redevelopment. Many of the recommended regulatory changes are combined with incentives to successfully enable appropriate redevelopment and adaptive re-use.
Infill & Redevelopment Opportunities
The following map depicts areas of interest which have been deemed potential opportunities for future infill and redevelopment. Those areas are highlighted in yellow along both the Camino Del Rio and North Main Character Districts.

Figure 1-24, Infill & Opportunity Area Plan
Chapter 2

**INSPIRE**

This Chapter is entitled ‘Inspire’ because this planning process is intended to capture the community’s vision and present it in a compelling, exciting way to inspire action at all levels of the community in shaping the future. This chapter presents an inspirational vision of how these Districts may transform over the coming years into vibrant, prosperous components of the broader community.

“If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up people to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupery (1900 - 1944)
Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate a vision for future redevelopment, infill, and adaptive re-use along North Main and Camino Del Rio Corridor. The focus of this plan is on the built environment, architectural forms, building massing, streetscape, land uses, and general character. This chapter aims to provide example solutions that are not actual development proposals, but instead provide illustrative concepts that aim toward attracting and guiding new development to strengthen the overall quality of the built environment, improve safety and respond to community interests.

This primary north-south corridor, captured within both the North Main and Camino Districts, presents an opportunity to transform into an authentic and thriving mountain town spine, rich with interesting buildings hosting a variety of uses that serve visitors and residents in a way that expresses the unique qualities of Durango’s setting and leaves a lasting memory of a quality experience.

North Main and Camino Del Rio are supported by exceptional residential neighborhoods, parks, schools, and public amenities. With high visibility, the redevelopment sites are attractive for investment and contain multiple qualities which can support new development types. A growing opportunity exists for developers, investors and businesses to participate in the growing momentum.

A variety of building styles can positively contribute to the larger experience which can support new development types. A growing opportunity exists for redevelopment sites are attractive for investment and contain multiple qualities which can support new development types. A growing opportunity exists for developers, investors and businesses to participate in the growing momentum.

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North Main Vision

North Main is the local's corridor with walkable, eclectic neighborhood centers providing convenient, diverse services to the community. The entire corridor is connected by many transportation options and capitalizes on its prime location next to the Animas River, parks, recreation facilities, and open space. The built environment consists of a variety of building types with some completely new developments and others adopting existing buildings to new uses. North Main is a gateway. There is a sense of arrival into the City of Durango as traffic slows down and the streetscape, landscaping, and more substantial buildings present an attractive, vibrant community setting.

The North Main corridor is ripe for infill and redevelopment. With this opportunity comes the chance to shape this area in a way that strengthens the quality of the area by offering a greater number of services, business opportunities, gathering places, and housing to the community. Smaller lots and existing buildings in various conditions pose a challenge. As redevelopment occurs, the community vision supports an overall increase in massing and density to meet identified community needs such as increased housing options. Infill that consolidates smaller parcels, limits curb cuts and aims for larger scaled, yet well-designed, buildings is favorable. Larger clusters that reach up to entire blocks while emphasizing welcoming entrances and street level transparency are desirable. Three and four story buildings with parking located at the back of lots is preferred. Mixed use, with commercial and retail below and housing above, is appropriate.

In addition to redevelopment, the North Main corridor holds opportunities to apply incremental streetscape improvements or building enhancements that can contribute to the visual quality and safety. Within the streetscape, low railings that screen parking, walkway improvements, street trees, furnishings and artwork would enhance the corridor. Programs or incentives for building façade, signing, and landscaping improvements could help raise the visual quality of aging buildings.

Individual aging buildings hold an opportunity to apply renovations that update building styles and overall quality. Many examples exist of successful adaptive re-use of existing structures to respond to changes by offering a greater variety of land uses and higher density. Site access and parking should be thought of in terms of safety for pedestrian access, cyclists, and vehicle circulation.

Character-Defining Goals:

• Create nodes of “neighborhood center” type developments which offer a variety of services and amenities with convenient access to and from the surrounding neighborhoods.
• New development and public projects should emphasize multimodal access and safe pedestrian connectivity throughout the corridor.
• Allow for a range of infill housing and commercial opportunities on currently underutilized and vacant parcels.
• Improve the architectural quality of the entire corridor.
• Consolidate lots to increase opportunities along North Main.
• Provide attractive frontages along North Main and locate parking on sides and back of buildings to reduce curb cuts on North Main.

Camino Del Rio Vision

Camino Del Rio is a natural expansion of the thriving downtown core serving as a gateway into the heart of Durango. In conjunction with historic downtown Durango, it serves as the most desirable lifestyle center in southwest Colorado with plentiful business, cultural, meeting, and entertainment options. The corridor is designed to be accessible by the entire population and has multiple connections to the river corridor. The built environment reflects regional architectural styles and materials with well-designed indoor/outdoor spaces incorporating natural landscaping and retaining views to the surrounding landscape.

The position of these potential redevelopment areas, situated parallel to Main Street and Camino Del Rio, provide an opportunity to expand and compliment the vibrancy of Durango’s downtown core.

This corridor also presents the opportunity to build river-oriented development which achieves greater connection to the river corridor, featuring it through intentional design and providing attractive public spaces adjacent to the river. With this approach, riparian habitat can extend laterally, be preserved, and should be enhanced as redevelopment occurs.

The redevelopment scenarios studied in this report focus on two primary areas along the Camino Del Rio corridor: Town Plaza and the area between 13th and 15th Street from Main Street to Second Avenue (Animas Crossing). The illustrated examples are for visualization purpose only, and represent only some potential solutions out of many possibilities that also apply to other locations all along the corridor.

Character-Defining Goals:

• Extend the vibrant mixed use downtown core.
• Provide higher density infill compatible with Main Street Central Business District uses and character.
• Achieve a walkable, pedestrian-oriented public environment and slow traffic speeds.
• Contribute quality architecture to the downtown core that is distinct, yet complimentary.
• Achieve connectivity from Main Street and adjacent neighborhoods throughout the Camino Del Rio district to the Animas River.
• Create attractive views along the roadway corridor.
• Provide more attainable housing in this convenient location.
• Create variation and visual interest.
Camino Del Rio Character District

Existing Conditions
These figure ground diagrams illustrate the existing building locations, size and patterns. The blue buildings were studied for redevelopment based on structure age, type, size and contribution to downtown.

Potential Future Conditions
The yellow buildings study potential redevelopment massing that would be scaled and organized to support a mixed use, walkable downtown core.
Illustrative Concept Rendering
This concept rendering looks north-eastward along the Camino Del Rio corridor. Three to four story buildings sit at the corner of Camino and 10th Street, and features land-uses on 10th Street that take advantage of high visibility and access from the streetscape.

Figure 2-3, Illustrative Concept Rendering Along Camino Del Rio
TOWN PLAZA
Camino Del Rio Character District

Restoring the Grid
Similar to many western towns, the growth of downtown Durango included increased traffic on the Highway 550 corridor and the impact of the rail corridor that resulted in delineation of a commercial zone that spans several blocks. The presence of the “super block” that hosts Town Plaza occurred at a time where the shopping mall layout served to centralize retail services in an auto-dominated format. Over time, Main Street has filled in and greatly increased in density. Now, the success realized by downtown on Main Avenue can spill over to Camino Del Rio.

With the potential redevelopment of the Town Plaza site comes an opportunity to re-establish a walkable connection from Main street west into the redevelopment area, and link visually to the Animas River corridor. The growth of the Central Business District aspect of Main Street points to opportunities to extend perpendicular with connectivity. Enticing pedestrian traffic into side streets is challenging, and providing continuous, welcoming first floor retail and commercial frontage helps support success. Consistent streetscape with street trees, standard pedestrian lights and furnishings, will also support the extension of the downtown core.

Existing Conditions
The existing buildings, noted in blue are single story. The parking lot is tight and lacks an attractive streetscape, walkways and landscaping.

Potential Redevelopment
The potential massing scenario explores a concept that accommodates parking within block interiors and lower levels of multistory buildings behind retail, restaurants, and commercial with upper floors with residential and commercial uses.
Parking
Parking is a significant driver of community building patterns. The central spine quality of this corridor, along with the increased density, points to the necessity of providing multimodal options and emphasizing safe walking and cycling access to all infill areas as a primary consideration. Given the rural location of the City, adequate vehicle access is also important, especially to help serve commercial uses.

Parking requirements are provided by the Land Use and Development Code. Along this corridor, and especially within the Camino Del Rio area, structured parking will be an important component of development to support higher densities. A mix of structured parking, surface parking, on street parking and sharing is contemplated along with multimodal access to support the scale of redevelopment anticipated. Structured parking within Durango’s downtown core is important for its continued success. Increasing the density of downtown with proposed redevelopment along Camino Del Rio, will increase overall parking needs, and merits increased emphasis on the multimodal options per the Multimodal Master Plan, to maintain a high quality, pedestrian oriented downtown environment. Parking should generally be located on the backside of buildings, underground, or well-screened from thoroughfares. Structured parking can be incorporated in lower and basement floors of buildings and may have a retail or commercial frontage to the street to buffer the parking. On-street parallel parking with time limits helps support convenient public access and turn over within these areas and contributes to traffic calming.

Developments in autonomous vehicles will affect overall parking and vehicle circulation needs serving Durango’s downtown. Standards may be adjusted in the future to address changes in circulation and parking habits. The City supports accommodating technologies which emphasize sustainability, successful downtown businesses and walkable neighborhoods.
Potential 10th and 11th Street Extensions

The following two concept renderings look along the potential extension of 10th & 11th street and their intersection at Camino Del Rio. Cutting through vibrant mixed-use developments, the streetscape provides pedestrians with ample public space, walkable streets, and a link between the current downtown and Animas River.
Figure 2-11, Ground Level View of potential Camino Del Río Intersection. Key aspects include orienting buildings to the street front with parking located interior to the blocks and in structures. Active uses line the street level. Generous streetscape supports a walking environment. On street parking serves businesses and aids with traffic calming.
ANIMAS CROSSING
Camino Del Rio Character District

Overview
The Animas Crossing area studied describes several blocks along Main Street from 13th Street north to the Animas River. The area hosts a mix of aging commercial buildings, services and homes in various conditions. The location has great potential to host higher density. As redevelopment has stretched northward along Main Street, this area has greater connectivity to downtown. Walkways, lighting, streetscape and public infrastructure upgrades in this area would raise the quality of the pedestrian environment as properties redevelop. Access to and from the Animas River Trail supports multimodal access and greenway views into this area.

Larger scale redevelopment in this area offers an opportunity to anchor the north end of Main Street and create a gateway character statement. The railroad crossing at Camino is a unique feature worthy of further design exploration. The triangular strips of land may be more conducive to decorative improvements and could be improved to draw attention to the change to a pedestrian oriented environment envisioned throughout these areas.

Redevelopment of this area would also ideally orient buildings toward walkable streets, increase building heights, offer housing, and locate parking within block interiors and difficult structures.

The rail crossing creates an opportunity to highlight triangular/diagonal spaces and a unique feature. These odd shaped locations are inefficient to develop and have historically become locations for storage and “back of house” neglect. With redevelopment, these triangular spaces offer locations to apply basic improvements that emphasize the importance of the corridor as viewed from the train and apply artful and creative solutions including upgrades to materials, special pavements, railings, murals, screening of dumpsters and basic landscape enhancements that are compatible with the train corridor safety requirements.
Existing Conditions
The existing buildings, noted in blue, are mostly single story. Parking lots are difficult to maneuver and streets are difficult to navigate on foot.

Potential Redevelopment
The potential massing scenario condenses the sprawled single story existing massing into dense mixed use developments with improved walkable streetscapes and parking tucked in along alleys.
Overview
The intersection of College and Camino Del Rio acts as a gateway to Durango and the Camino District. Currently this intersection has a variety of commercial uses including a hotel, retail space, and a gas station. In addition, there are two undeveloped lots currently used as parking. The undeveloped lots could be a prime location for infill in the future. For many tourists visiting Historic Downtown Durango and the Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, this is the first area they experience in Durango. Based on the community vision for Camino, these visual concepts depict what the massing for a future mixed-use building could look like. A parking garage was also included to address current, highly important parking needs. Like other renderings, these massing studies are concepts to help the community visualize what future development could look like.

Existing Conditions
The existing site, which rests on the southeast corner of College Avenue and Camino Del Rio, is noted in blue. It is currently utilized as a large parking lot, lacking streetscape, landscaping, and walkways.

Potential Redevelopment
The potential massing on this site, noted in white, is a four story building accompanied by parking garage to the south. The potential urban center is complimented by an improved streetscape and plaza, lined with street trees, wide sidewalks, and ample lighting.
Figure 2-22, Refined Potential Massing and Streetscape

EXISTING BUILDING

POTENTIAL NEW MASSING

Figure 2-23, Refined Potential Massing and Streetscape

EXISTING BUILDING

POTENTIAL NEW MASSING
**North Main Character District**

**Existing Conditions**
These figure ground diagrams illustrate the building locations, size and patterns. The blue buildings were studied for redevelopment based on structure age, type, size and contribution to the area.

**Potential Future Conditions**
The yellow buildings study potential redevelopment massing that would allow for a range of infill housing and commercial opportunities while supporting local neighborhood centers and an improved architectural quality of the corridor.

**Neighborhood Centers**

**Overview**
One of the most prominent and important recommendations in this Plan, especially for the North Main corridor, is to facilitate the development of Neighborhood Centers to create nodes of expanded activity and convenience up and down the corridor. Currently the corridor is very linear. More dense centers of activity with a more substantial concentration of diverse uses would break up the corridor and provide destinations for adjacent residents and visitors.

During the public process, the community indicated great support for creating greater opportunities in the corridor through taller buildings, mixed use development, better utilizing space that is now used for surface parking, and creating a more active streetscape. However, the community did not want to create a ‘canyon’ of tall buildings through the entire corridor. The solution to this conundrum of allowing larger-scaled developments, but not overwhelming the area was to identify Neighborhood Centers which concentrate development intensity and naturally create breaks in the intensity of development, retaining views to the surrounding landscape and allowing existing smaller-scale, unique properties to remain where desired.

To support these neighborhood centers and the entire corridor, it is important to have a greater concentration of residents within walking distance to patronize the new businesses and community spaces that will be created in the corridor. In support of this concept, some existing residents expressed a desire to allow a greater variety of housing types in the areas immediately adjacent to the primarily commercial areas of North Main. For this reason, the Neighborhood Center map in this section also identifies areas as ‘Missing Middle Residential Transition Areas’ and ‘Expanded Multi-Family Opportunity Areas’. These two neighborhood types need further definition and refinement before being ready to fully implement, but this Plan begins to lay the foundation for allowing a variety of residential neighborhoods in the vicinity of North Main and Camino Del Rio corridors. While supporting the goals of this Plan, this recommendation also supports goals identified in the City’s recently-adopted Housing Plan.

**Neighborhood and Gateway Centers**
This Plan defines Neighborhood Center as “A common, centrally located mixed-use destination primarily for residents which provides needed services generally in a convenient walking distance.” A local example of this concept is East Animas Village, at the intersection of Florida and CR 250. These businesses provide convenient, walkable services for the surrounding residential neighborhoods and also provides a unique destination for the broader community.

**Expanded Multi-Family Residential Opportunity Areas**
This Plan defines Multi-Family Residential as “Multiple separate housing units used contained within one building or complex of buildings.” A local existing example of this type of development is the recently-constructed Lumien Apartments on 32nd Street (CR 251) near the intersection of E. Animas Drive (CR 250).
**Missing Middle Residential Transition Areas**

This Plan defines Missing Middle Housing as “A range of multi-unit or clustered housing generally in scale with single-family homes and duplexes. This housing is usually located in desirable, walkable neighborhoods in close proximity to commercial or mixed-use centers. More information on this type of housing can be found at [www.missingmiddlehousing.com](http://www.missingmiddlehousing.com).

There are many local examples of this housing type. As demand for housing has grown in Durango over the decades, this has happened informally, often illegally, as your neighbor down the street has converted their house into multiple units, up to and including fourplexes. From the outside it is hard to tell that the house is more than one unit, but it provides needed housing options in convenient areas.

---

**Figure 2-26, North Main Neighborhood Centers**

Legend:
- North Main Character District
- Neighborhood & Gateway Centers
- Expanded Multi-Family Residential Opportunity Areas
- Missing Middle Residential Transition Areas

SCALE IN FEET

0' 1000' 2000'
29th Street & North Main Avenue
North Main Character District

Overview
Many sites on North Main are underutilized compared to their potential.

This site illustrates a redevelopment scenario that increases density and addresses the street more prominently, similar to the mixed use development across the street. Parking is accessed from the alley or sides primarily. Housing could be added above Retail and quality public spaces serving the surrounding neighborhood could be accommodated.

Existing Conditions
The existing massing is noted in blue. Large vacant parking lots and under-developed sidewalks make this site a difficult area to maneuver as a pedestrian.

Potential Redevelopment
Potential massing, noted in white, fills the existing site with more dense, multi-story buildings. Parking is located behind the buildings to the east and streetscape is improved through detached walks.
Figure 2-31, Existing Massing

Figure 2-32, Reined Potential Massing

EXISTING BUILDING

BUILDINGS FOR POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

EXISTING BUILDING

POTENTIAL NEW MASSING
30th Street & North Main Avenue
North Main Character District

Overview
This example illustrates the potential to add some head-in, on-street parking to serve higher density hubs in a safe and deliberate way on lower traffic side streets along North Main. As redevelopment occurs in identified Neighborhood Centers, this street design can be used to mitigate impacts to adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Existing Conditions
The existing site is noted in blue. It currently sits as a vacant lot.

Potential Redevelopment
Potential Redevelopment, noted in white brings massing closer to the streetscape, allowing parking to be accessed off its side-street. Both parallel and perpendicular on-street parking accompany the improved site along 30th Street on the East and West side of Main Avenue.
Chapter 3

INVEST & INCENTIVIZE

This Chapter is entitled ‘Invest & Incentivize’ because it contains the key strategies and actions which will be used to move towards the vision laid out in the previous chapters for the North Main and Camino corridors.

“Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.”

Peter Deucker (1909-2005)
Introduction

Based on the analysis completed, community input received and review of best practices, this Chapter summarizes the key implementation strategies needed to further the success of these key corridors in Durango.

Strategy Tools

The proposed strategies fit into one of the following five categories:

- Policy/Administration
- Financial Tool
- Social Enhancement
- Physical Improvement
- Marketing and Communications

Figure 3-5 on the following page is a District Tools Matrix summarizing the different actions which will be taken to enhance the unique character and sense of place in these areas. Appendix A includes more detailed descriptions of each of the tools.

Examples of Success

Figures 3-1 through 3-4, as seen below, are recent examples of successful redevelopment within the North Main and Camino Del Rio Corridors.

- Figure 3-1, Home Slice Pizza on Main Avenue
- Figure 3-2, Wendy Most on 19th Street and Main Avenue
- Figure 3-3, Purgatory Sports on Main Avenue
- Figure 3-4, Louisa’s Electronics on 22nd Street and Main Avenue
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Priority (High/Medium/Low)</th>
<th>Impact (High/Medium/Low)</th>
<th>Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parking Code Review and Update</td>
<td>Revise the Enhanced Multimodal Area Parking standards and include North Main and Camino in that area. Research other codes and recommend updates.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Transportation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building Height Standards Review</td>
<td>Adopt minimum height requirements.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Planning Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Projects of Community Significance &amp; Dedicated Development Review Team</td>
<td>Create criteria for an expedited review process for ‘Projects of Community Significance’ and establish North Main and Camino project review teams.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Engineering and City Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed Use-Urban Zone District with Neighborhood Center Overlays</td>
<td>Identify key intersections, or nodes, where development intensity may be allowed to increase and where the ‘business district’ street section is appropriate. Use this mapping effort to establish a new zone district which contains form-based controls for these two corridors.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Planning Commission, Design Review Board, Developers, Property Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative Compliance Program for Commercial &amp; Mixed-Use Projects</td>
<td>Alternative Compliance allows for administrative review and approval of certain variances if the proposal meets the intent of the adopted Design Guidelines for the area. The City currently has Alternative Compliance for residential areas and would like to explore expanding that program to certain commercial/mixed use situations.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Design Review Board, Planning Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel2Housing Conversion Program</td>
<td>In partnership with the DFPD and Building Division, investigate how to create a program to enable adaptive re-use of hotels in a way that is safe and cost-effective.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>DFPD, Engineering and City Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage ‘Missing Middle’ housing types in adjacent residential areas</td>
<td>Evaluate the potential and discuss with residents how much support exists to modify the zoning for residential areas directly adjacent to the mixed-use corridors. Allowing new options for these property owners may help them more fully realize the benefits of being located close to a vibrant mixed-use corridor.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Neighborhood Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Update Road Cross-Sections</td>
<td>Create updated road cross-sections for Camino Del Rio, North Main Avenue and adjacent streets which accurately reflect the desire for better pedestrian connectivity and accommodation of parking.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Planning Commission, CDOT, Transportation Department</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3-5, District Tools Matrix
## Re:New Matching Grant Program
- **Summary**: Implement a matching grant for improvements that are visible from the public right of way.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: High
- **Partners**: Design Review Board, BID, Chamber and Region 9

## Urban Renewal Authority (URA) Formation
- **Summary**: Establish an Urban Renewal Authority in order to create a variety of incentives and partnership opportunities for redevelopment.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: High
- **Partners**: La Plata County, 9R School District, BID, Alliance, Chamber and Region 9

## Business Resource Directory
- **Summary**: Create a guide to connect local businesses to existing rebate and other available incentive programs.
- **Priority**: Low
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: BID and Chamber

## North Main ‘Pink Zone’ & Public Improvement Phasing
- **Summary**: Investigate options for phasing in required public improvements for specific types of projects in these corridors to ease upfront financial burden.
- **Priority**: Medium
- **Impact**: High
- **Partners**: Engineering and City Operations

## Durango CREATES! Placemaking Program
- **Summary**: Create a grant for creative, community based, placemaking projects.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: Public Art Commission, community non-profits and local artist

## Pop-Up Uses and Events Program
- **Summary**: Revise permitting processes and options for temporary uses, events, etc. which comply with criteria.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: Parks and Recreation and Planning Department

## District Events
- **Summary**: Hold 2-3 district-specific events annually (North Main Block Party, Artisan Corridor Crawl, etc.)
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: BID, non-profits, Parks and Recreation and Planning

## Access Control Plan & CDOT Coordination
- **Summary**: Access Control Plan for the entire corridor involving updates to the existing Camino plan and creating a new plan for North Main. Continue coordination on signals and other traffic projects. Pursue the creation of a signalized intersection between 32nd and 27th and potentially between 17th and 24th Streets.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: High
- **Partners**: CDOT and City Operations

## Lighting Upgrades
- **Summary**: Explore replacement of light poles, relocation, and undergrounding utilities in the corridors.
- **Priority**: Low
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: LPEA and City Operations

## River Trail Connections
- **Summary**: Plan for and build more connections to river trail (Mobility Study implementation). Pursue greater connectivity across the corridor especially from downtown across Camino Del Rio to the Animas River.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: Transportation and Parks and Recreation

## Signage Upgrades
- **Summary**: Following branding effort, create distinct wayfinding sign program for North Main corridor. Add more wayfinding signage through the Camino corridor.
- **Priority**: Medium
- **Impact**: High
- **Partners**: BID, City Operations and CDOT

## Accessibility & Connectivity
- **Summary**: The potential for grade-separated crossings should continue to be explored, but safe at-grade crossings should also be added. Investigate options for greater connectivity across the corridors and with the adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: City Operations, CDOT, Multimodal Advisory Board, Parks & Rec

## District Branding
- **Summary**: Launch branding campaigns to create distinct place brands for North Main, Animas Crossing, and Camino.
- **Priority**: Medium
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: BID and FLC

## District Improvement Teams
- **Summary**: Establish North Main subcommittee with BID which includes business/property owner/citizen representation.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: BID

## District Communications
- **Summary**: Build property owner and business owner database/e-mail listservs.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Low
- **Partners**: BID

## District Promotion
- **Summary**: Following branding effort, establish District specific websites with business directories, etc.
- **Priority**: Medium
- **Impact**: Medium
- **Partners**: BID

## Land Use and Development Opportunity Summaries
- **Summary**: Create Zoning and Land Use Summary Sheets by District highlighting incentives and opportunities.
- **Priority**: High
- **Impact**: Medium
Chapter 4

EVALUATE & ADAPT

This Chapter is entitled ‘Evaluate & Adapt’ because it addresses how the City of Durango and cooperating organizations will monitor and track the progress of the strategies recommended in this Plan. Establishing measurable results creates transparency and accountability and enables stakeholders to continue to stay informed and involved during the process.

“When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don’t adjust the goals, adjust the actions steps.”
Confucius (551-479 BC)
Introduction

The City of Durango and its partners will track progress towards realizing the success of this Plan with a variety of quantitative and qualitative metrics. Specifically, the success and effectiveness of each tool will be tracked as laid out in the Toolbox Evaluation Matrix in this Chapter. This will enable the City to adapt and adjust initiatives and programs based on real time feedback from businesses and the community. This will also be a tool to inform stakeholders about the progress of each strategy.

Stakeholders will get periodic updates about the progress of each strategy; Policy & Administration, Financial Resources, Social Enhancements, Physical Improvements, and Marketing & Communications. In addition, they will be able to find out details about the corresponding implementation tools such as number of permits issued, amount of funding awarded, code changes and more. This enables stakeholders to evaluate the progress on a higher strategy level or on focused program level. Additionally, other key metrics will be tracked to measure the overall health of the district. These include the number of registered businesses, the amount invested in permitted improvements, the amount of pedestrian and vehicle activity, and more.

North Main

Another essential evaluation technique will be utilizing the North Main Improvement Team as representatives of the North Main District. This team will be comprised of business owners, property owners and residents. The purpose of this group is to help the City and the Downtown Durango Business Improvement Board (BID) stay connected to key stakeholders in the district. This group will provide feedback about what tools are effective and what tools need modification. In addition, these individuals will help promote the implementation tools and programs, while serving as a sounding board when adjustments are made. This group will become the voice of the District and will work to engage all stakeholders in improving the overall health of the District.

Camino Del Rio

Camino Del Rio comprises a smaller portion of the district and is currently represented by the Downtown Durango Business Improvement Board (BID) as a part of the Central Business District. BID will continue to act as a voice for this portion of the district. Similar to the North Main Improvement Team, this group will provide feedback about the success of the strategies.

Summary

Overall, clearly identified outcomes and measurements will be tracked throughout the implementation phase of the North Main and Camino District Plans. These measurement tools will be updated regularly and available to the public at the Durango Districts website - https://districts.durangogov.org. Through an open, transparent evaluation process, the community will stay informed and involved throughout the execution of the district plans. By measuring and evaluating various data points, the City will be able to adapt programs and strategies in real time to improve the effectiveness of these tools.

Figure 4.1, Toolbox Progress Charts
Phasing

Overview
Some of the concepts presented in the Plan are very ambitious models of redevelopment options. It is clear that redevelopment at this scale will need to be phased to minimize impacts to the public, business owners, and others. For that reason, a key component of this Plan is indicating that phased improvements for both large and small projects should be supported. Well-conceived phasing programs are beneficial for the City because large vacant spaces are avoided. It is beneficial for the existing businesses because they can continue to operate while new spaces are being created. For smaller projects, phasing of improvements would also allow business owners to open and begin generating income before having to expend large amounts of capital for improvements.

For the reasons stated above, a recommendation of this Plan is to have City staff explore ways to allow phased improvements especially as it relates to existing nonconforming properties.

Town Plaza Redevelopment Phasing
For larger projects, such as is depicted in the models for Town Plaza along Camino Del Rio, staff received feedback that phasing a project of this magnitude will be crucial to making it possible. The phasing diagrams in this section display how a large scale redevelopment of this area could be broken into smaller components. This phasing program would allow anchor tenants to continue to operate while redevelopment in the vicinity takes place. The phasing diagram provided here is meant to be illustrative and not prescriptive. It is meant to convey that the City and cooperating agencies are open to exploring phasing scenarios which accomplish the goals of this Plan while also facilitating continued business operations.
EXISTING BUILDING

BUILDINGS FOR POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT

POTENTIAL NEW MASSING

Figure 4-5, Potential Town Plaza Redevelopment - Phase 3

Figure 4-6, Potential Town Plaza Redevelopment - Phase 4

Figure 4-7, Potential Town Plaza Redevelopment - Phase 5

DHM Design
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Evaluation Measure</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.3 Building Height Standards Review</td>
<td>Revisions made to the LUDC and adopted by City Council by end of 2019.</td>
<td>Revisions made to the LUDC and adopted by City Council by end of 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 Mixed Use-Urban Zone District with Neighborhood Center Overlays</td>
<td>Identify key intersections for application of Mixed Use-Urban Zone District with Neighborhood Center Overlays. Updated zoning standards adopted by City Council by mid-2019.</td>
<td>Identify key intersections for application of Mixed Use-Urban Zone District with Neighborhood Center Overlays. Updated zoning standards adopted by City Council by mid-2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.6 Dedicated Development Review Team &amp; Alternative Compliance Program for Commercial &amp; Mixed-Use Projects</td>
<td>Updated zoning standards to establish administrative alternative compliance program. Review Team selected. Number of alternative compliance applications approved.</td>
<td>Updated zoning standards to establish administrative alternative compliance program. Review Team selected. Number of alternative compliance applications approved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7 Hotel2Housing Conversion Program</td>
<td>Create a manual outlining process, procedures and guidelines for conversion of hotels to housing. Number of residential units created via conversion of hotels.</td>
<td>Create a manual outlining process, procedures and guidelines for conversion of hotels to housing. Number of residential units created via conversion of hotels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.8 Encourage 'Missing Middle' housing types in adjacent residential areas</td>
<td>Public process undertaken to gauge support for proposal. Zoning updates adopted by City Council by 2020. Create Handout providing an overview of &quot;Missing Middle&quot; and examples of the different types of &quot;Missing Middle&quot; housing. Number of permits issued.</td>
<td>Public process undertaken to gauge support for proposal. Zoning updates adopted by City Council by 2020. Create Handout providing an overview of &quot;Missing Middle&quot; and examples of the different types of &quot;Missing Middle&quot; housing. Number of permits issued.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4-8, Toolbox Evaluation Matrix*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Evaluation Measure</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Re:New Matching Grant Program</td>
<td>Amount of funding awarded. Total amount of investment leveraged through program. Before and After images of updated properties.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Urban Renewal Authority (URA) Formation</td>
<td>URA formation complete in 2019.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Business Resource Directory</td>
<td>Number of Resource Directory flyers distributed. Number of businesses taking advantage of programs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>North Main 'Pink Zone' &amp; Public Improvement Phasing</td>
<td>Utilize information gathered through workshops and an action plan to create a Pink Zone in 2018.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Enhancement</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Durango CREATES! Placemaking Program</td>
<td>Amount of funding awarded. Total amount of investment leveraged through program. Number of events held with program support. Images of completed projects.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Pop-Up Uses and Events Program</td>
<td>Create a manual to provide goals, process and procedures for pop-up uses and events. Number of permits issued.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>District Events</td>
<td>Create a manual to provide goals, process and procedures for district events. Number of events held. Number of attendees and participants in the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Improvement</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Access Control Plan &amp; CDOT Coordination</td>
<td>Number of monthly CDOT meetings attended by City Staff. Total CDOT investment in corridors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Lighting Upgrades</td>
<td>Create a budget and timeline for replacing lights.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>River Trail Connections</td>
<td>Create a timeline for future river trail connection projects in 2018.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Signage Upgrades</td>
<td>Create a budget and timeline for replacing or updating signs. Number of wayfinding signs added or updated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Accessibility &amp; Connectivity</td>
<td>Number of multimodal projects completed in the district.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing &amp; Communications</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>District Branding</td>
<td>Branding campaign launched in 2018.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>District Improvement Teams</td>
<td>A North Main Improvement Team comprised of a variety of stakeholders is created.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>District Communications</td>
<td>Number of businesses and property owners in database.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>District Promotion</td>
<td>Create a website and directory in 2019.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Land Use and Development Opportunities</td>
<td>Create and distribute summary sheets in 2018.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion & Next Steps
The Districts Plan is a substantial milestone in an ongoing process which has been underway for a long time and extends well into the future. These primary corridors in the Durango community have been analyzed and changes have been proposed in the past which have resulted in positive change. This most recent iteration of the community vision for these areas provides a path for the next 10-20 years as the community grows.

Through the in-depth public process described in Chapter 1: Engage and Understand, it became clear that there is broad agreement that North Main and Camino Del Rio should develop into walkable, safe and vibrant community centers. The North Main preference scenarios indicated strong support for a ‘Neighborhood Center’ development pattern, encouraging walkable, convenient town centers at intersections and encouraging mixed-use development. The Camino Del Rio preference scenarios strongly encouraged a transition of the corridor into a better connected, mixed use urban area which takes advantage of the beautiful riverfront.

Conceptual renderings were developed based on the public input received. Chapter 2: Inspire provides inspiration and vision for future development. These renderings are intended to act as a road map for what is possible. Their intention is not to be taken in the literal sense, but to be used as stimulus to build excitement for what is possible with the implementation of the Districts Plan.

The implementation toolbox is a call to action for the community to be involved in shaping the future of these areas! The Implementation Toolbox with thirty-six (36) strategies and tools was outlined in Chapter 3: Invest & Incentivize. The tools help guide and inform future development to make sure it will meet the preferences expressed through the public process. These tools can be used by government agencies, business owners, property owners, community groups, and residents. Implementation is already beginning!

Finally, this is a plan that is meant to be used and grow with the community as it continues to evolve. Chapter 4: Evaluate & Adapt addresses how the City of Durango and its partners will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the tools in the Implementation Toolbox. The North Main and Camino Del Rio Districts Plan is intended to be used. It is a ‘living’ process that continues to grow. It invites the public and the City of Durango to use the tools provided to make the Plan reality. These can be small changes; a new sign or landscaping, and they can be major new developments. The scope and scale of the Plan is all-encompassing.

The City of Durango and cooperating organizations, along with residents, business owners, and property owners, are now working to apply the strategies listed in this Plan. We invite you to get involved and lend your unique perspective and talents towards a achieving this community vision.

Figure 4-9, View From Smelter Looking North