

Town of New Castle Downtown Plan



Adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission

2019

TOWN OF NEW CASTLE, COLORADO

The following people have served during the preparation of the Downtown Plan:

Town Council

Art Riddile, Mayor
Grady Hazleton, Mayor Pro Tem
Bruce Leland
Scott Owens
Crystal Mariscal
Graham Riddile
Brandy Copeland
Greg Russi
Mary Metzger

Planning and Zoning Commission

Chuck Apostolik – Chair
Alison Bourquin
Susan Ruggles
Beth Sass
Warren Lucio
Oli Johannsson
Grady Hazelton
Scott Owens
Bruce Leland
Brandy Copeland

Downtown Alliance

Susan Ruggles
Charles Englebert
Bronwyn Ritner
Kathy Roper
Bruce Leland
Tim Cain

Community Branding and Marketing Committee

Jerry Touslee
Mandy Gauldin
Susan Ruggles
Lauren Roper
Bronwyn Ritner

Town Administrator

Tom Baker
David Reynolds

Table of Contents

Consultant: Doug Dodson

<u>Section</u>		<u>Page</u>
I.	Introduction	4
II.	A Vision for New Castle	7
III.	The Role of Downtown	8
IV.	Improvement and Action Plan	
V.	Implementation	11
VI.	Appendices	58



Introduction

A. THE PROCESS

The New Castle Town Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission held a joint meeting on January 23, 2017. They agreed that, in general, the future vision for the community contained in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan was still accurate. Rather than spend time revising that Plan, they decided to focus on writing this plan improve and strengthen Downtown New Castle.

This New Castle Downtown Plan was developed over a period of two years. Planner Doug Dodson worked with the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Town Council and various community volunteer organizations to develop a 117-page draft. The process included a SWOT analysis as a basis for defining necessary improvements. The SWOT analysis is contained in Appendix 1.

The completed draft contained several sections offering choices among various options the Town could chose to follow. The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council considered these options and selected the most appropriate among them. This final version of the Plan incorporates those choices and removes the alternatives. There were additional items the Commission eliminated as extraneous and others they added to in course of revision.

B. KEY PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The New Castle Downtown Comprehensive Plan is a blueprint for reinvigorating Downtown into a vital, active, mixed-use and pedestrian-friendly environment. Often, such improvement plans take place over a 20 or even 30-year time frame. In this case, many of the key elements are already in place. A shorter timeframe should be possible.

This Downtown Plan has several goals. First and foremost, it intends to chart specific short and long-term physical improvements for Downtown New Castle. It will delve into connections with other parts of the community when essential to the success of Downtown. Finally, this Plan intends to build on everything that is good about Downtown and make recommendations for eliminating or minimizing weaknesses.

This Plan will offer a conceptual framework for Downtown. It intends to illustrate the kind of solutions the community should strive for, summarizes development and redevelopment opportunities, and proposes projects to jumpstart investment. These concepts are not set in stone and actual projects will depend on specific development/investor goals. However this plan will set up the key guiding principles for development and change Downtown.

Nothing in this plan for Downtown New Castle shall be construed to impede or impair in any way the vested rights of property owners existing as of the adoption of this Downtown Plan in any region of

town nor shall this plan be applied to any development application within any area to which such vested rights are applicable until such vested rights have expired.

B. GOALS FOR DOWNTOWN NEW CASTLE

Through a sustained and interactive public process in 2008 and 2009, the community identified a vision and a set of desired outcomes for the future of Downtown New Castle:

Building upon an historical main street environment, where the town's past, present and future become intertwined, redevelopment opportunities will be maximized in ways that are compatible with the historic character while expressive of a vibrant future and Downtown will have a successful and quaint complementary mix of retail, civic, entertainment, cultural, office and residential uses, showcasing its pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and public art, and where there are spaces for the community to gather and connect with one another.

To achieve this broad vision, Downtown New Castle must attain the following characteristics, or desired outcomes:

1. It will be easy to find Downtown New Castle, because of attractive, effective wayfaring signs and improved connections between neighborhoods.
2. Downtown New Castle will be a source of pride and strong community spirit for all residents and businesses of the community.
3. Downtown will be a center of life in the community – a place where residents gather, foster meaningful connections, shop, work, find entertainment and play in a vibrant setting that is consistent with the scale and traditions of the community.
4. Downtown will be a traditional commercial center of the community, with an appropriate mix of commercial and economic activities on a scale suitable for New Castle. It will have a balance of specialty retail, dining, entertainment, professional services, galleries and studios.
5. Downtown will host community events, celebrations, festivals and recreational and artistic opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages to enjoy.
6. Downtown New Castle will be known for its connection to its history, ambiance, vitality, quality and unique size and character.
7. Downtown will have a strong sense of identity for both residents and visitors and its gathering places will foster meaningful connections.
8. Downtown and the surrounding Old Town neighborhood will allow increased population density when appropriate and offer a broad range of places to live. (Because of changing retail trends, increasing the population in and near Downtown

- will be necessary to help energize local business and promote the desired environment, as well as provide housing types not generally found elsewhere in the community.)
9. Downtown will preserve its rich architectural heritage, which has contributed to New Castle's existing character. Historic structures should be preserved and restored when possible and new building styles will respect and demonstrate compatibility with the historic character of Downtown. Downtown design guidelines will accommodate new complimentary design.
 10. Downtown must be accessible to all residents and visitors, whether walking, biking, driving or using alternative transportation. There will be sufficient parking to accommodate short and long-term growth if there is a balanced approach for access.
 11. Mt. Medaris, which has often been viewed as a detriment and an obstacle to connecting residents to Downtown, will be recognized as a valuable asset.
 12. Downtown will be people-oriented with attractive, comfortable, and functional amenities or public uses on the sidewalk or within the right-of-way.
 13. Residents of New Castle and the surrounding area and regional visitors will be kept informed continually about activities, events and businesses Downtown.
 14. Mutually beneficial partnerships and strong relations between the Downtown merchants, property owners, potential real estate developers, the Town of New Castle, Chamber of Commerce and other institutions and community-serving organizations will help make Downtown successful.
 15. Development in other commercial and mixed use areas of town will occur in harmony with the vision and goals of Downtown. The pursuit of this goal shall not be construed to impede or impair the vested rights of property owners existing as of the adoption of this Downtown Plan in any region of town, nor shall this goal be applied in a limiting manner to any development application within any area of Town to which such existing vested rights apply until such vested rights have expired.

C. STRATEGY FOR ACTION

The Downtown Plan, along with the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, is adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission and is to be used by the Commission in evaluating development applications. It is the responsibility of the Commission and the Town Planner to assure that the Plan is followed as much as possible. The Downtown Plan shall not be construed to impede or impair in any way the vested rights of property owners existing as of the adoption of this Downtown Plan in any region of Town, nor shall the Downtown Plan be applied to any development application within any area to which such existing vested rights are applicable until such vested rights have expired.

On the other hand, there are several development proposals contained herein that require proactive implementation. The Town Council and the Town staff must work together to choose projects they wish to undertake and to assign responsibility for action. This proactive implementation will, of course, happen gradually as opportunities and funds become available. An overly ambitious timetable for implementation was a part of the draft of this plan. It has been preserved in Appendix Three.

A Vision for New Castle

A. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2009 Town of New Castle Comprehensive Plan (to which the Downtown Plan is a supplement) states that “the real measure of success of the New Castle Comprehensive Plan will be regular use and application of the principles, goals and policies that it espouses.” The stage is set in New Castle to grow and prosper as the local economy improves. The resulting changes, however, must not harm, but rather support and improve its small-town character and values. The State of Colorado, Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), projects there will be another 20,000 people living in Garfield County over the next 15 years. It is reasonable to expect that a significant amount of that growth could occur in or near New Castle. If this happens, future growth and development must adhere to the desires of the community.

Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2009, the national and local economies were strong. As a result, New Castle started to experience significant change. The intent of the Comprehensive Plan was to show a path for community growth that, while accommodating new housing, businesses, services, jobs, parks/open spaces, non-motorized access systems, transportation, environmental protection and community infrastructure, will not adversely impact the small-town character and community values that residents want to preserve. As the community planning process neared its conclusion, the National economy experienced a slow-down, which over time became significant. Growth and development in the Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys were affected. This economic downturn fundamentally stopped new development activity in New Castle. More recently, while the upper valley resort economy has experienced improvement, the effect of the up-turn is only now being felt in New Castle’s economy.

The New Castle Planning and Zoning Commission, after conducting a review of the Community Plan in 2017, determined that the Comprehensive Community Plan continues to offer a suitable vision for the community’s future. Generally, the New Castle community of 2050 portrayed in the Plan remains the kind of community citizens and local government officials desire.

B. THE COMMUNITY VISION

Distilling all the goals of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan and later public input, it is possible to define what New Castle is and, most importantly, what it wants – the Vision for New Castle. That Vision is of a place:

1. that is respectful of its past but embraces an exciting future;

2. where there is an affordable, wholesome, healthy and vibrant lifestyle;
3. where gathering spaces, events and activities, for all ages, connect the community and support this vibrant lifestyle;
4. where a range of housing options exists for people and families of all ages that want to be part of the New Castle experience;
5. where it is safe to raise a family and where great schools and **churches** in support these families;
6. where outstanding recreation, education, cultural and nature experiences and healthy lifestyle opportunities exist for people of all ages;
7. where an entrepreneurial spirit (new business, jobs and economic investment) is not only welcome but sought after and opportunities for growing a business abound; and
8. where people can pursue and achieve their own vision of an abundant life, whatever it may be.
9. where diversity is embraced and all ethnicities fully participate in the economic and cultural life of the town.

The Community vision states a stable economy is needed. It will be important to strive for economic vitality locally, with support from local businesses and opportunities for local employment for many of the residents. This will be a challenge. According to DOLA (in 2017), less than 10% of the local labor force actually works in New Castle, meaning that 90% more travel to work elsewhere, confirming that there are not enough jobs in town for residents. DOLA also projects that job growth in Garfield County will not keep pace with population growth over the next 15 years. While the population will increase by about 20,000 people, DOLA forecasts about 12,000 new jobs during the same time. The discrepancy suggests that a significant amount of the growth will be in the older age ranges. New Castle is well-suited to attract its share of this growth. However, the Town needs to set in motion strategies and actions for attracting businesses that can offer primary (living wage) jobs for current and future residents. It must offer a range of amenities that enhance the quality of life for all ages. The Town must also generate more community retail/service space, thereby increasing needed sales tax revenues to pay for those community improvements, services and amenities. The Town must be proactive to be successful.

THE ROLE OF DOWNTOWN

A. ITS PURPOSE

A downtown typically serves some key functions in a community. It is often the center for commercial, arts, social, cultural and entertainment activities. A healthy downtown typically provides the social life in the community for people of all ages. As the central gathering place, the functions, commercial enterprises, events and other activities found in a downtown should bring residents of the community together, allowing personal connections and participation in the community fabric to occur. When there is a thriving downtown it is usually considered a good recruitment tool for growth and economic development.

A successful downtown stimulates the local economy and everyone in the community usually benefits from a healthy downtown. In addition, a downtown is often considered a barometer of the community's overall quality of life. Shopping, entertainment, arts, culture and recreational choices, diverse housing types and ranges of affordability and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods are crucial to a community's success. Therefore, while a downtown is often considered the heart and soul of the community, there are many things that need to go right to build a highly desirable and successful community.

The traditional role of a downtown is, however, threatened by the rise of internet shopping. The Town must factor the effects of this trend into its Downtown improvement strategy. It must also understand the type of retailers that can survive and thrive Downtown given this trend.

This Plan will focus on actions that New Castle can take to improve its Downtown, accounting for where it is today, how it can take advantage of new opportunities and how recent trends may affect its future. In addition to working on Downtown, corresponding actions are needed elsewhere in the community to help Downtown.

B. WHERE SHOULD DOWNTOWN BE LOCATED

Where is the best place for a downtown? Most of the time, there is a place that has historically served this function. In general terms, the downtown was often centrally located and near the transportation modes at the time of its establishment. Over-time, growth patterns, new interstate highways, suburban shopping centers and other factors have affected the economic health of downtowns.

New Castle has an interesting dilemma. The site of its downtown developed over 100 years ago, at a time it was served by passenger rail and U.S. Highway 6 and 24. However, circumstances changed. Rail passenger transport service to the community stopped. The role of U.S. Highway 6 and 24 diminished, replaced by Interstate 70 that bypassed the community. A new community access interchange from I-70 was built about one mile east of Downtown. More recently, the community's residential growth moved away from Downtown into the Castle Valley and Lakota. The Town's land use regulations promoted commercial growth immediately north of the interchange in a typical suburban/auto-oriented format.

There does not seem to have been a concerted and sustained effort, as the community grew over the last 20 years, to connect the community and its Downtown. The best attempt occurred when the Town recently retained the library downtown. However, there are no directions to Downtown in the I-70 interchange area, which is now the main pathway for coming to and leaving the community.

C. ANSWERING THE QUESTION

The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Council unanimously decided that the only realistic site for the Town's downtown is the historic location on Main Street. It must be noted, however, that current zoning and development agreements include some commercial development north of Mt Mederis. Furthermore the 2009 Comprehensive Plan anticipates that annexation to the east will provide opportunity for new office space, shops, parks and public services along US 6 and 24 east of the town borders. The Comprehensive Plan notes, however, that before new development occurs in annexed land, proactive measures should be taken to further develop Main Street.

The decision to maintain downtown along Main Street was based on the following analysis:

- Main Street is the historic downtown.
- There has been significant new public and private investment there. The town hall, library (2013), post office and community center are all public investments made in recent years.
- Unlike other possible locations for downtown, infrastructure and many of the buildings and support spaces are in place to support not only existing but also future development.
- Given the limited amount of private and public funds available to support and enhance development elsewhere, it makes sense to enhance the existing town center.

There are, of course, challenges facing Main Street, challenges which have so far slowed fuller development. These challenges must be faced and overcome:

- it is constrained by the Old Town residential development to the north and the railroad tracks to the south
- Mt. Medaris is considered an obstacle between the residential neighborhoods and Downtown.
- Downtown is a mile from the I-70 intersection and may be hard for visitors to find.
- Residences in the business district occupy potential commercial space.
- It will take imagination, commitment and a concerted effort, more than the effort and attention given to it in the past.

Finally, the 2009 Comprehensive Plan states:

- In 2050, historic downtown New Castle retains its traditional architectural character and supports a variety of small businesses that employ residents and attract many visitors to town. Downtown remains the community focal point for events, parades and local government services including town hall, the post office, the library and the community center.
- New Castle desires to enhance its community sales tax revenues to pay for community service. Downtown New Castle is an important and historic community focal point and must be supported as a key part of the community's economic base.

- The historic downtown gives New Castle a sense of "place," recognized by the community as an important asset.
- The Town will continue to protect and enhance the historic downtown and keep it as a community focal point.

IMPROVEMENT AND ACTION PLAN

Great downtowns do not come about by accident. Rather, they are created, nurtured and improved by the investments and intentional actions of many. The New Castle Planning and Zoning Commission, Town Council and Downtown Alliance drew on the SWOT analysis and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan to develop this Plan for Downtown. It includes both elements which will need substantial effort and funding to bring to fruition and others which are less expensive.

Of course the Plan should be a living document, updated and revised as time and circumstances make necessary. This Plan is about the big picture.

A. GOALS FOR DOWNTOWN

1. Downtown will be an attractive center of public life in the community – a place where residents gather, visit and foster meaningful connections, shop, work and play in a vibrant, inviting, and fun setting that is consistent with the scale and traditions of the community. It is attractive to visitors and residents as well because it is the center of community life.
2. Downtown will be “people-oriented” with attractive, comfortable, and functional amenities and public uses and it will showcase its pedestrian-friendly streetscapes with public art and nature that reflects the local character, values and the environment.
3. Preserve the rich architectural character of historically important buildings, reflective of its history spanning over one-hundred years, while the desire for an exciting future will be expressed as well. Historic structures should be preserved and restored when possible. New styles that are expressive of the community today and its future will be allowed, provided those designs respect and complement the historic character of Downtown.
4. Downtown will have a quaint and yet successful mix of commercial and economic activities:
 - a) on a suitable scale and capable of both retaining existing customers and attracting new customers to improve economic activity locally,
 - b) that promote an exciting ambiance and

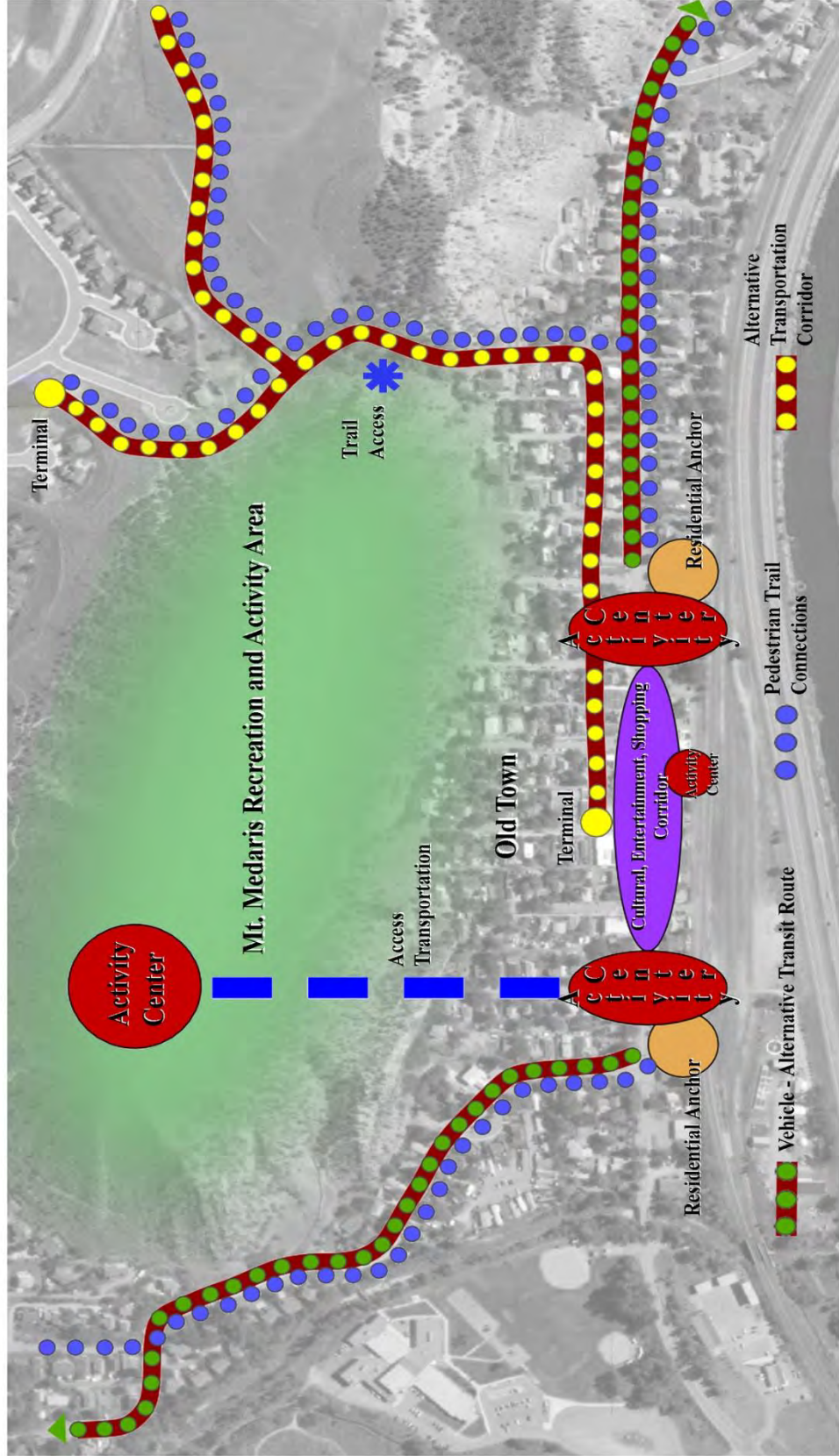
- vitality and c) that show the community’s branding position. To help advance the brand, those recreational qualities and opportunities that exist and that need to be expanded for the community’s future should be infused into Downtown. To achieve these objectives, Downtown should be the focal point for specialty retail, professional services, governmental services and facilities. It should also be a “trailhead” of sorts, where the community comes to play and for enjoyment. Mt. Medaris, which has often been viewed as a detriment and an obstacle to connecting residents to Downtown, must be turned into a community asset, one that helps boost economic activity Downtown and promotes the important elements of the community’s brand.
5. Downtown shall be an entertainment, social and cultural focal point of the community. It should be a “hub” for community gatherings and engagement. To meet these objectives, make Downtown the focal point for full-service restaurant and bars, breweries and distilleries, and galleries and studios and host community events, celebrations, festivals and the arts. There should be recreational activity spaces for residents and visitors of all ages to enjoy. Downtown New Castle will be known for its connection to the community’s history, engaging citizens and visitors in celebrating the colorful history and cultural heritage of New Castle and the surrounding area.
 6. Downtown and the surrounding Old Town neighborhood should allow increased residential density, when appropriate, to increase the range of housing options available in the community and help energize business and promote the desired environment Downtown.
 7. Downtown should be accessible to all residents and visitors, encouraged by adequate parking, improved day and night-time connectivity with residential neighborhoods so more people can walk, bike and use alternative modes of transportation to get there. It will be easy to find and navigate to Downtown because of attractive, effective signage
 8. Downtown will be recognized and valued for its connection to the Town’s rich history.
 9. Downtown should benefit from New Castle’s strong community spirit and volunteerism for programming and carrying out such activities and events. Residents of New Castle and the surrounding area and regional visitors will be kept informed continually about activities, events and businesses Downtown through effective marketing and communication.

B. FUTURE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Future Framework Plan is a conceptual depiction of the vision for Downtown New Castle. It sets out the primary organizing features of Downtown and the general development and physical design approach to guide the changes over the next two decades. The Framework Plan is intended to be a

high-level planning tool to coordinate, guide and inform decisions about public investment, the preparation and consideration of future, more detailed public and private development and redevelopment proposals – in other words, change and improvement.

Downtown New Castle Future Framework Plan



The major features of the Framework Plan include:

- Cultural and Shopping Corridor
- Activity Centers
- Residential Anchors
- Old Town Residential
- Mt. Medaris Recreation and Activity Area
- Community Connectivity - Alternative Transportation Corridor and Terminals
- Community Connectivity - Transit Route

The distance between activity centers on the east and west ends of Downtown, as illustrated in the plan, is about 1,200 feet. The average person will walk about one-quarter to one-half of a mile in this environment. Therefore, there illustrated concepts should be realistic and enjoyable for most people.

1. Cultural and Shopping Corridor

Downtown New Castle is a community activity center today. As pointed out in the SWOT assessment, however, it lacks the critical mass necessary to both attract residents Downtown routinely and, when they are there, persuade them to walk from one end of Downtown to the other. First and foremost, the goal for the cultural and shopping corridor, (see Framework Plan map on page 15), must be to attract those businesses, in sufficient numbers, that will promote the flow from one end to the other. This core area also should be a celebratory place and the site of key institutions of the community, including town hall, the community center and library. Museums should be located here, not elsewhere in the community. Community parades and celebrations are and should continue to be held here. As in a shopping mall, where in-line stores are the connective tissue between major anchor stores, Downtown New Castle's culture and shopping corridor must fill a similar role. Finally, it is here that the community should promote activities and experiences that nurture a sustainable cultural community.

Consistent with the goals for Downtown, then, the desired ground floor uses in this corridor should be those listed below. Residential uses above the ground floor also should be promoted. The ideal target is fifty percent of the ground floor space for commerce and up to fifty percent for civic and office uses. This does not mean that only these uses are permitted, but that targeting and attracting these uses are the priority.

- a. Dining and restaurant;
- b. Sidewalk cafes;
- c. Specialty retail;
- d. Coffee shop;
- e. Ice cream/yogurt;
- f. Deli and Bakery;
- g. Professional offices;
- h. Commercial Services;
- i. Galleries, studio space, outdoor performing arts;

- j. Bodegas
- k. Civic facilities and museums; and
- l. Community events

One sign of a community's health is often its cultural life. Public art and community history presentations, connecting the community today with its history, can help residents associate with and become more involved in their community. It has been proven nationwide that public art is a cost-effective way of promoting economic revitalization of downtowns. According to the Urban Land Institute, "good art is good business," and it should be good for Downtown New Castle. Here, there is a public art program. However, it is in its infancy. The community also has started a Museum on the Street program for telling some of the community's history. It is within this cultural and shopping corridor that the community must develop a quality public art and cultural heritage presentation, done in a manner that is attractive, interesting and that pulls people along the street, from one activity center to the other. Essentially, the idea is to leave a trail of breadcrumbs guiding residents and guests throughout Downtown.

2. Activity Centers

Steps must be taken to promote and create strong activity centers at each end of Downtown Main Street, at about 2nd Street and 6th Street (see Framework Plan map on page 46). These activity centers must complement and reinforce each other; they are not intended to be matching bookends. One activity center should be a [mixed-use](#) area where commercial and other land uses that attract people for shopping, working, entertainment, recreation and socializing is concentrated. The other, while allowing similar uses, should be focused on an energized outdoor entertainment venue. Within these activity centers, single story buildings may, in certain instances, be proper, particularly if those buildings are designed to be expanded over time. For the most part, however, buildings and development that allow for ground floor commercial and entertainment opportunities with above-ground floor residential uses, including ownership and either long and/or short-term stay opportunities are desired. They should contain uses/places where people go to meet friends and family. They should be of interest and attractive to people of all ages.

Why are these activity centers important? As pointed out in the SWOT Assessment, attractions capable of pulling people from one end of Downtown to the other do not exist. Without such attractions, many people will not walk from one end to the other. It is more likely that they will drive Downtown, go to their intended destination (e.g., a restaurant, the library or other single use), and then get back in the car and leave. In the future, by their very nature, these activity centers must help create a critical mass that attracts and retains people downtown. They must also provide enough energy and interest that they can cause people to "want" to walk from one end to the other. So, what might these activity centers be in the future?

- a. East End of Main Activity Center

Burning Mountain Park functions, to some extent, as an activity center on the east end of Downtown. There are a number of events held each year in the park. Unfortunately, the east end of Downtown is lacking the kind of activity and interest needed to be a

significant attraction. The park itself is not designed effectively for large events. Moreover, the park is primarily for day-time activities. There is a gazebo, but its site hinders good use of the park and it is not the kind of improvement that promotes real activity. The Miner Memorial is a nice feature and crucial to preserving the community's history. Unfortunately, it too is in a place that makes the park function poorly. There is a basketball court and horseshoe pit that, while nice features, may not be in the best location. To the south are the railroad tracks and I-70, both of which generate significant noise, affecting the ambiance of the park. Next to the park on one side is Jasper Ward Avenue. On the opposite side is the old school building, which impacts the use of the park in other ways. Other nearby land uses are a taxidermy, hair salon, post office, real estate and martial arts studio. There are very few land uses nearby that will attract significant numbers of people to this end of Downtown.

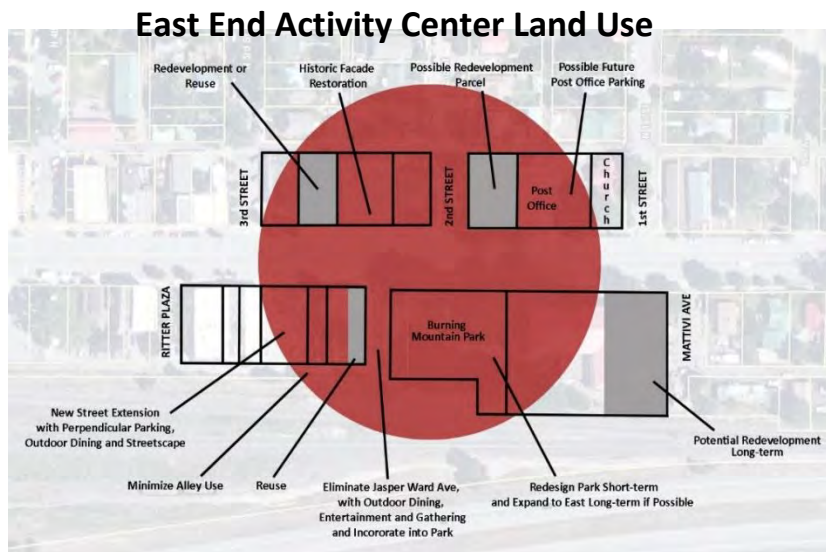
It is recommended that the Town pursue the redesign of Burning Mountain Park and promote the reuse and/or redevelopment of certain properties near the park. Short-term and long-term improvement concepts are needed. Short-term, the Town should look for ways to improve the use of the existing park. Long-term, the goal should be to expand the park. It must be the the community's "festival parks." While the redesign of the park is an important step, this alone may not be enough to activate the east end of Downtown. It is important to keep in mind that the goal is to promote a cluster of activity that will be attractive and interesting to people of all ages during daytime and evening hours, during the week or on weekend and throughout the year. The Town of New Castle must take a proactive role to create this new east end activity center. The following improvements might be considered:

- i. The Town should pursue a GOCO or DOLA planning grant to prepare a short and long-term reuse and expansion plan for Burning Mountain Park. The plan should consider relocating the Miner Memorial and removing the existing gazebo. The plan might consider a park theme that is consistent with the Downtown and community brand. Connecting with the brand, it might be possible to design part of the park, whether short or long-term, in a way that blends an extensive story of history with interactive and visual arts, possibly including new technology, as an attraction. The Miner Memorial could be relocated to become a feature in this presentation. Similarly, the history of the old school should be included. The plan should consider other features that will draw people of all ages into the park.
- ii. Short-term, consider a performance/concert stage and venue that are suitable for a variety of performing arts.
- iii. Provide a modern children's adventure playground.
- iv. Public Restrooms.
- v. Consider incorporating appropriate night-time lighting, fire pit and similar features to activate the park during the evening hours.

- vi. The plan should show those activities/or seasonal improvements that can attract people downtown during the winter (e.g., a portable youth hockey rink for winter installation), allowing for multiple use opportunities and activities year-round.
- vii. The redesign plan should incorporate a sound barrier (solid fence) into a landscaped berm on the south side of the park to diminish the noise produced from the railroad and I-70.



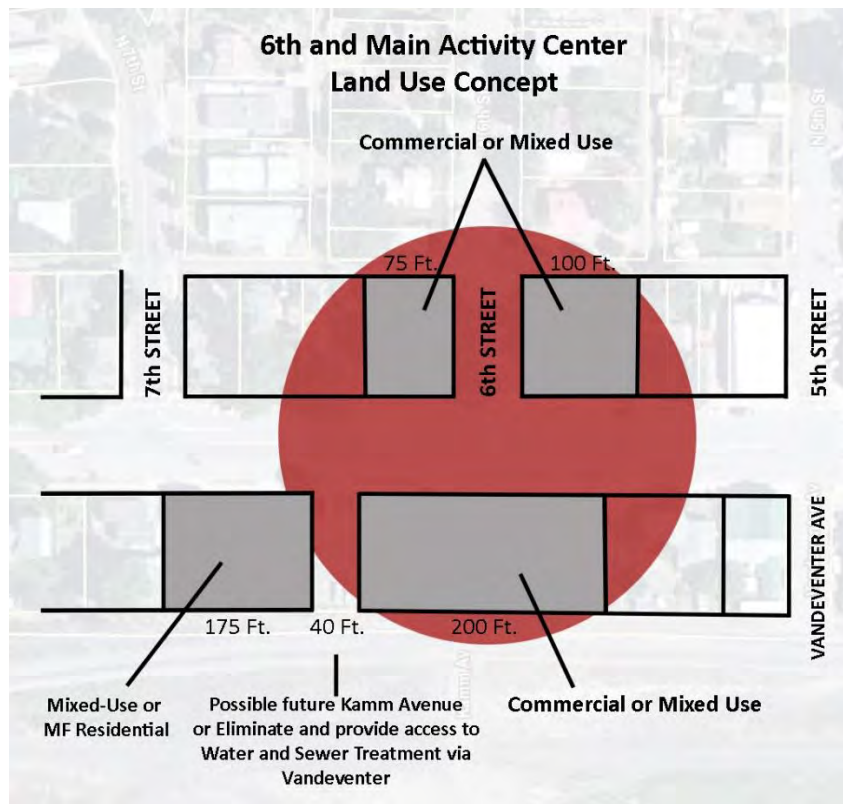
- viii. Consider redesigning the surface and width of Jasper Ward Avenue so that the road can be used, on an as-needed basis, for park events and activities.
- xi. Determine whether the parking on the west side of the post office building could be consolidated with parking on the east side of the building, thereby opening up a key development parcel at the Main Street – 2nd Street intersection, immediately across from the park.



b. West End of Main

Today, there is very little reason to walk beyond the 5th Street intersection. Beyond this point, there is little to no commercial, entertainment, or cultural value. The old Livery Stable building is a testimony of the community’s past, but it is used only for storage. It is unlikely that a developer will attempt mixed-use development west of the Texaco property now, as those properties are now too detached from Downtown. Standalone residential project is possible beyond 6th Street today, but commercial or mixed-use might be problematic without a specific strategy for addressing the future of the Texaco property. This may be the one property that the Town should consider acquiring to promote the type of redevelopment activity described in this Plan.

There are significant opportunities to bolster economic activity and interest in the west end of Downtown long-term. At 6th Street and Main, there is the equivalent of about 16 standard-size properties on the south side of the street, from the Texaco property to the west edge of the Kamm/Machine shop properties, which are currently underutilized or vacant. This amounts to roughly 415 feet of Main Street frontage; just over 40,000 gross square feet of developable/re-developable property. On the north side of the street, underutilized and vacant properties create 175 feet of frontage, or about 17,500 gross square feet of additional development potential.



It is recommended that the Town of New Castle work with private property owners and potential developers toward the creation of the 6th Street Activity Center. The sketches

below intend to show the concepts that should be pursued in this area. Mixed-use buildings that are at least two stories are desired. The goal should be to promote ground floor commercial and above-ground floor residential uses in this area. The residential density will likely be needed for two reasons. First, it will help add life to Downtown, particularly after 5 PM and on weekends. Second, the residential use will likely be needed to make the commercial space financially feasible until a strong commercial market develops and commercial space is rented at a better rate. While one-story buildings might be acceptable in some instances, the Town should promote buildings of at least two-stories here.

In terms of general design concepts, buildings should frame this important intersection with indoor and outdoor gathering spaces. Public art and entertainment should be present. The intersection should be animated with lights, banners, and window transparency and nature should be infused into the activity center.



Development primarily two-stories preferred framing the intersection

Consistent with the goals for Downtown, the most desirable uses in this activity center are those listed below. This does not mean that only these uses should be permitted, but that targeting and attracting the desired uses should be a priority for the Town.

- i. Dining, restaurant and bar, with or without outdoor dining/beer garden;
- ii. Sidewalk cafes;
- iii. Brewery, Distillery and tasting room;
- iv. Niche/specialty retail;
- v. Bicycle shop;
- vi. Coffee shop;
- vii. Ice cream/yogurt;
- viii. Deli and Bakery;
- ix. Galleries, performing arts (indoor and outdoor);
- x. Entertainment clubs, including music, teen, comedy and similar activities;
- xi. Theater;
- xii. Community events;
- xiii. Child play area and discovery center;
- xiv. Short-Term rental accommodations;
- xv. Above ground-floor residential;

xvi. Professional offices



Public gathering, entertainment and commercial activity

3. Residential Anchors

A healthy downtown must attract people to live, work and play. Housing plays a key role in this formula for success. Nationally, market-rate residential development has been a powerful force in bringing new life and economic support to downtowns. Attracting more people to live in and near Downtown will improve the base of support for those businesses, retailers and other shops located there. Furthermore, more people living Downtown will help to generate activity and life during the evening hours.

Today, Downtown New Castle includes a limited amount of housing. To the extent that the Town can promote and incentivize market-rate housing Downtown and in the Old Town neighborhood, the better off will be the community's heart and soul.



Long-term option for standalone market-rate multiple family housing west of the Relocated Kamm Avenue

While it is recommended that the Town actively promote the idea of a west end activity center, composed of at least two-story mixed-use buildings, a standalone housing development at the westerly edge of this activity center is also acceptable (see Framework Plan map on page 46). For example, Kamm Avenue could be relocated to the west, allowing a larger commercial/mixed-use development assemblage on the south side of the 6th Street intersection. Depending on the precise relocation of Kamm, another parcel created immediately west of the new Kamm Avenue alignment (in the C-1 zone district) makes an ideal place for a standalone market-rate, multi-family housing project. The Town should be prepared to promote this idea. Furthermore, the Town of New Castle should check the permitted and conditional uses of the C-1 zone district to make sure that these development options are possible, with a simplified process for a developer, should the right opportunity arise.

Similarly, the Town should promote a similar concept for the East End Activity Center. As noted above, there are two long-term options for developing market-rate housing on the east end, those being the rehabilitation of the existing school housing building or the redevelopment of that property to expand Burning Mountain Park and promote a standalone market-rate multi-family housing on the far east end of the property. The latter is the recommended approach is believed to produce the best long-term outcome for Downtown.

4. Old Town

More than half of the respondents to the Comprehensive Plan survey reported that affordable housing is needed in New Castle. In general, it seems that respondents supported private sector affordable housing, as opposed to the Town developing such projects.

The Comprehensive Plan establishes various densities for the potential annexation areas to the east of Town.

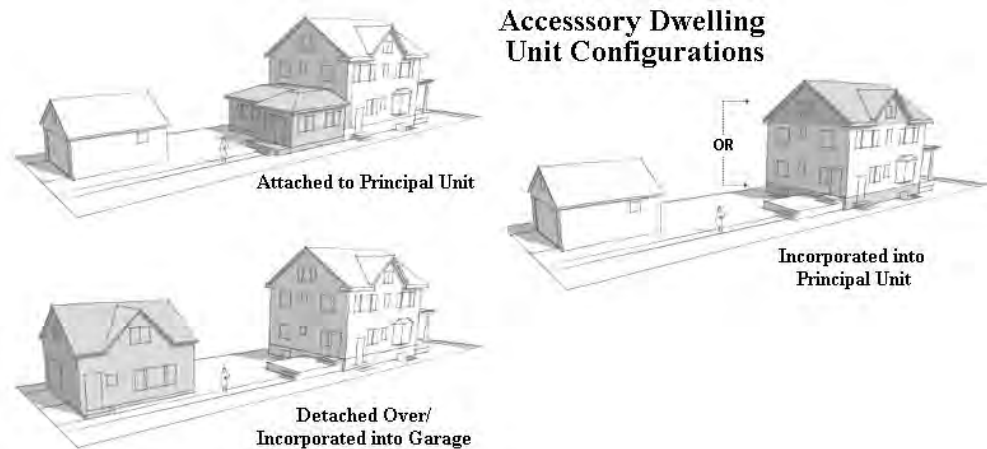
Planned Urban Center	15 to 25 units per net acre
Mixed Use – Residential Focus	Up to 10 units per net acre
Low Density Residential	4 units per net acre

By comparison, there are now about 125 dwelling units in that part of the Old Town that is north of Main Street and between Elk Creek and North “B” Avenue. This is about 4.7 units per net acre. While the Comprehensive Plan did not give specific recommendations about areas like Old Town, this neighborhood’s density falls into the lower density ranges identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Old Town is now one of the more affordable neighborhoods in the community. However, it is relatively low density and Downtown needs more residential support. Increasing density in the Old Town neighborhood, within reason and where appropriate, might be a proper step for several reasons. The Town Code allows Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a conditional use in Downtown. These can allow residents to care and support for aging family members or provide rental space creating extra income. ADUs also serve renters with

affordable housing. Finally, additional housing units will add vibrancy Downtown, as there will be more people living nearby that will likely visit those businesses regularly.

An accessory dwelling unit is a separate living space within a house or on the same property as an existing house. Tiny houses, a recent housing trend, would be considered an ADU if they are placed on a permanent foundation on a lot containing a principal dwelling.



It is recommended that the Town of New Castle sponsor information to the Old Town residents about this existing opportunity. The information should illustrate how such housing could be accommodated within the neighborhood, how provisions could be developed to make sure that it does not infringe upon the existing quality of life in the neighborhood and the effect it could have on efforts to improve Downtown.

The Town should also review the process for approving ADUs, in order to assure that the conditional use application and review process are not overly burdensome.

5. Mt. Medaris Recreation and Activity Center

Activating Mt. Medaris as a community asset and to help improve economic activity Downtown should be an important long-term goal of the community. Efforts have already started by constructing hiking and biking trails on the mountain. This is a great first step. However, this feature holds much more potential. If developed properly, it could: a) become a major part of New Castle's branding and marketing effort and b) it could add significant energy Downtown.

The views from the top of Mt. Medaris are spectacular. Seeing New Castle from the top gives one a positive feeling about the community. Unfortunately, it is likely that many of the community's residents have not experienced this part of their community. That should change in the future. Mt. Medaris should be turned into an asset for the entire community and visitors to enjoy.



Outstanding Views from atop Mt. Meraris

The Town must Step that should be taken in order to activate Mt. Meraris:

- 1) Improve signage by place wayfaring signs pointing to the trailhead and improve the trailhead sign at the end of C Avenue.
- 2) Improve the C Avenue trail, which is the point of access to the trailhead from Downtown
- 3) Enter an agreement with the owners of Castle Valley property north of the mountain to identify the permanent trail connection from the trailhead to Castle Valley Boulevard.
- 4) Encourage New Castle Recreation, New Castle Trails and other organization to sponsor races, hikes, wellness programs and other activities on Mt. Meraris
- 5) Create and place interpretive signs, comparable to the signs in Grand River Park, identifying and explaining the historic sites which are visible from the mountain trail.
- 6) Consider mountain bike rentals downtown.
- 7) Identify Mt. Meraris as an attraction in Town's promotional material.

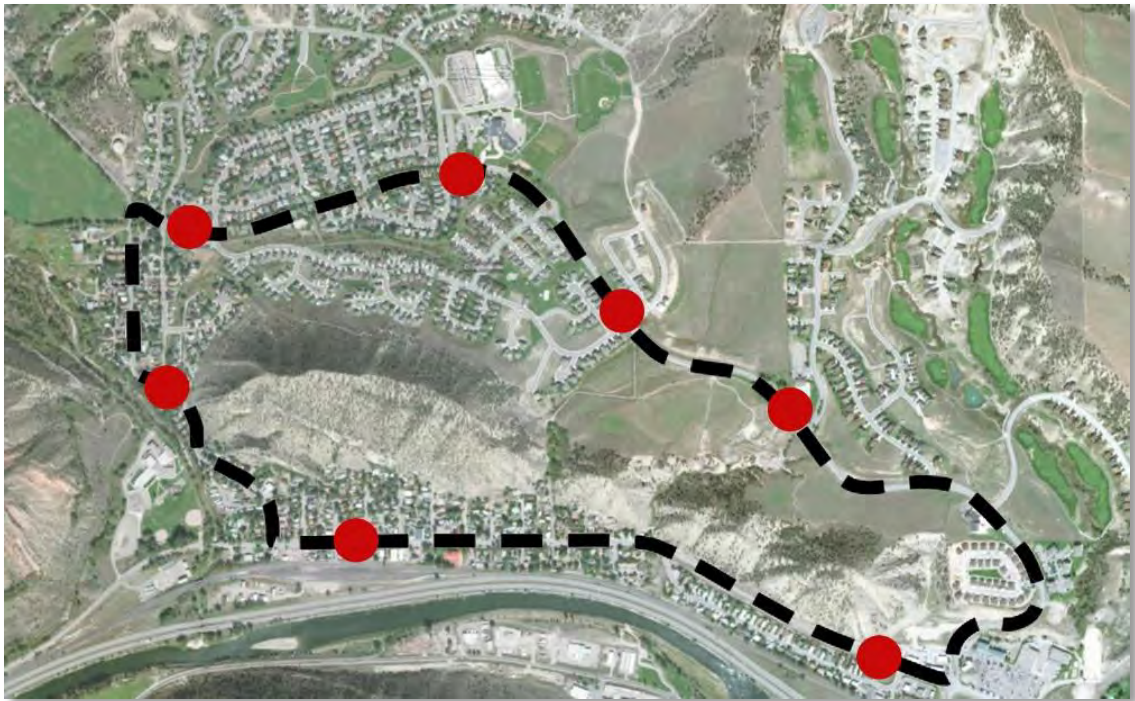
6. Community Connectivity – Vehicle Transit Route

The Town should consider improving community connectivity with a town shuttle loop. The operation of a local shuttle bus system could link Castle Valley Ranch, Lakota Canyon Ranch and Downtown. As the community grows, the shuttle system could link those neighborhoods with Downtown. The logical route would be a circulator, Main Street, the Highway 6 and 24 - Castle Valley Boulevard intersection, along Castle Valley Boulevard to Midland Avenue and return to Main Street (see map on page 25).

The Town of New Castle is not in the transit business and it may not want to venture into that service in the future. Moreover, it is not predictable now when such a service might become feasible. Therefore, the first step might be for the Town Council, through a community survey, to seek input from residents about this service and, with the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA) prepare an operating cost assessment. While there may be other questions to ask, some basic information would be helpful:

- a. Would residents use an in-town transit circulator if provided this service, and what age groups might use this system;
- b. What pick up and destinations must be covered for residents to use a circulator/shuttle system;

- d. How much would people be willing to pay to use this system and at what point would the cost of the service deter people from using the system;
- e. How much would it cost to offer a basic service (operations, maintenance and capital) to meet resident needs; and
- f. Should the Town decide to provide such a service on an ongoing basis what revenue options would be available to provide the service (general fund requirements, potential advertising revenue, grants, etc.)



Possible In-Town Shuttle Circulator Route and Stops

7. Community Connectivity - Alternative Transportation Corridor and Terminals

An alternative transportation corridor could improve non-vehicular access to Downtown. Moreover, it might be an affordable solution for connecting Downtown and both Castle Valley and Lakota neighborhoods. The corridor could follow the “C” Avenue trail from Castle Valley to the alley north of Main Street and west to 4th Street, where the Downtown terminal would be located (see Framework Plan map on page 46). The existing pedestrian trail between Castle Valley Ranch and Downtown can be expanded and/or striped to designate a corridor for specific electric powered modes of transportation. Currently, the use of three modes of motorized transportation may be appropriate in this corridor (not necessarily on other trails), including electric bicycles, Segways, golf carts and similar electric-powered vehicles.



Improving Accessibility for All Ages



Increased Bike Parking & Bike Rental Station

First, electric bicycles and Segways should be encouraged here. They can make it easy for all ages to navigate the steeper section of this corridor. However, their value is even greater. For example, these modes increase mobility for senior citizens. Old Town residents, who now have to drive to any other part of the community, can walk to the south rental station and, from there, have access to the entire community. Signage along Main Street Downtown can tell visitors and others about the availability of e-bikes nearby and travel sites and routes around the community. This will make Downtown an attraction.



A second mode to consider is golf carts. Lakota Canyon Ranch is a golf-oriented neighborhood. They are designed to travel hills, which would be ideal in this corridor. The golf course operator, which already manages many carts, could expand its business by becoming a rental agent for residents. Thus, the infrastructure for making this mode of transportation available to residents may be in place.



Alternative Transportation Corridor



Golf Cart Parking – N. 4th Street Downtown

A related option that might be considered in the future is a higher capacity electric vehicle operating within this alternative transit corridor, particularly if the local shuttle concept is not viable. There are higher capacity golf carts and similar electric vehicles that might meet the community's need in the future. These vehicles could run efficiently between the neighborhoods and Downtown terminals described in this section. They are a relatively low cost to buy, maintain and run.



Higher Capacity Vehicles for the Alternative Transit Corridor

Town Council should set up a plan and budget for improving the corridor. Improvements should include:

- a. Basic trail improvements
 - i. Pave the trail between “C” Avenue and Hot Short Park and, at the same time, reduce the steepness of the trail to the extent practical.
 - ii. Determine the cost of adding lights along the trail and including this improvement in a 5-year capital improvement plan and budget.



Pathway lighting added to encourage evening and night use and for safety

b. Longer-term alternative transit

- i. Make reasonable surface improvement to the north side alley between “C” Avenue and 4th Street to complete the alternative transportation corridor.
- ii. Identify any issues related to the use of golf carts, Segways and electric bikes on public streets and/or on alternative transit corridors.
- iii. Install recharging stations and parking for golf carts and Segways and rental stations for electric bikes.
- iv. Secure funding to go ahead with project implementation.

If there is a balanced approach, there should be a proper amount of parking Downtown, at reasonable costs to the community. Establishing this corridor may be an affordable option.

C. PLACEMAKING AND GATHERING

***WHAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE MOST, IT WOULD APPEAR,
IS OTHER PEOPLE***

William H. Whyte

A simple definition of placemaking is the process of creating a quality place where people want to live, work, connect with each other, play and learn. People and businesses want to be in these places. They are active, unique locations, interesting and visually animated; they are full of interest and vitality.

The core principle is important - offering a variety of things to do in one spot and making a place more than the sum of its parts. (For example, a park is good. A park with a fountain, playground, and food vendor is better. If there is a library across the street that is even better, even more so if they feature storytelling hours for kids and exhibits on local history. If there is a sidewalk café nearby, a bike path and an ice cream stand, then it is what most people would consider very desirable.) This is the community’s goal Downtown.

To create a quality gathering place Downtown, it is recommended that New Castle continues to promote the idea of “Third Place,” joining planning, design, redevelopment and improvements to produce *a sense of* culture, warmth and belonging, where everyone feels welcome. Downtown New Castle must deliver on a promise to become the 3rd place in the life of residents, of all ages, and visitors.

The key elements of “quality places” are:

- Mixed-use;
- Appropriate scale and mass;
- Welcoming, safe, comfortable and walkable throughout;
- Physically designed to encourage interaction, where people can connect with one another;
- Available for events, activities and multiple things to do;

- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly; and
- Interesting character and charm (expressed through public art, heritage, architecture or similar features).

It is necessary that New Castle remember that it cannot do everything right away or, for that matter, everything right the first time. The best places usually evolve by experimenting with short-term improvements, tested and refined over time. If one thing does not work, try something else. When you have a success, build on it.

1. Mixed-Use

Mixed-use development is stressed above in this Plan and it must not be overlooked. Over time, it will be important for New Castle to create a quality mixed-use environment Downtown. This Plan has provided a number of recommendations related to the long-term development and creation of activity centers Downtown. While each activity center should have a unique character, they need to add significant energy by combining a variety of uses in close proximity. Equally important, more residential development Downtown is needed. While residential development will likely be critical to the success of future development projects there, residential development as part of mixed-use projects puts people on Main Street both during the day and in the night-time hours. Downtown requires this kind of energy and vibrancy.

In the meantime, until there is a practical market for new development, the Town should aggressively pursue the near-term activation strategies recommended below in this Plan. While these interim uses might become part of a longer-term development strategy, they may not as standalone uses generate the energy and vibrancy that will come from proper mixed-use development.

2. Scale and Massing - Relate Buildings to the Street

General urban design theory suggests that a comfort “public realm,” the public space between buildings, is often defined by the relationship between building height compared to the width of the opening between those buildings. There is comfort when the ratio between the height of buildings to the width of the street and sidewalk opening is neither too high nor too low. Very low ratios begin to feel like an urban wasteland, while one that is too high begins to feel claustrophobic. As a general rule, the tighter the ratio, the stronger the sense of place and, often, the higher the real estate value. Spatial enclosure is particularly important for shopping streets. A disciplined street tree planting in the transition between parking and the sidewalk is an alternative in the absence of spatial definition by building facades.

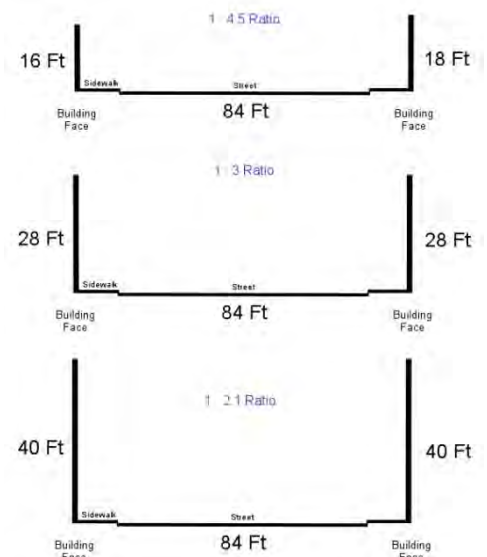
While there are a number of other factors that affect the pedestrian environment, this ratio can help New Castle better understand zoning height regulations and development and redevelopment potential that will make a quality pedestrian environment Downtown.

The ratio of one (1) foot of height to three (3) feet of width is the effective minimum relationship if a sense of enclosure is to result. A ratio of 1:1.5 is often considered the most for pedestrian comfort.

	Main Street	
Ratio	Right-of-way Width	Resulting Building Height
1:3	84'	28'
1:2.1	84'	40'
1:1.5	84'	56'

Based on this information, several design ideas should be considered for Downtown. First, there are a number of buildings Downtown that are substantially lower than 28-feet, including several mobile homes and out-of-character one-story commercial buildings. This, along with other reasons, suggests that these properties might be candidates for redevelopment. Removing these structures and replacing them with more appropriately scaled buildings will enhance the pedestrian environment Downtown.

Second, the current height limit in the C-1 zone district is 40-feet. The following illustration suggests that 40-feet is the most that should be considered Downtown. Given that buildings will likely vary in height, given the existing right-of-way a 40-foot building face will add to the pedestrian environment.



3. Encouraging Interaction - Gathering Spaces

As noted in the SWOT assessment, the lack of strong gathering places is a concern Downtown. Some restaurants and taverns offer a foundation, but there must be a reason for people to come Downtown consistently. When they get there, there must be an exuberant environment – a place where they can meet, mingle, interact and connect.

Downtown could benefit from more functional open spaces, plazas and courtyards that can be used and enjoyed day and night by residents, visitors, and workers. However, it is not simply about providing space. These spaces must seem to the observer to be inviting and comfortable.

The Town can begin today, with low-cost solutions and trial runs to see decide what will work. At first, consider flexible amenities like providing comfortable seating with book or game kiosks or vendor carts, tables with colorful umbrellas as a low-cost temporary means to quickly inject a new layer of activity.

Liberty Park is a good first step. It will be an activated space that can draw people off the sidewalk. It includes a stage and other features that will be attractive to people of various ages. The action of the Downtown Alliance is making this space valuable - a wonderful formal and informal gathering space. There will be educational and artistic expressions there

The Downtown Alliance is also working diligently to activate Ritter Plaza as a gathering place. The inclusion of public art and concerts in the plaza are steps in the right direction. The Town should investigate other possibilities, such as reorienting outdoor dining into the edge of the plaza, internet access and recharging points and so on. There needs to be low-cost, festive lighting in the plaza to make sure that it is both a “day and night-time” activity space. Consideration might be given, in the near-term, to include festive banner signs that announce the upcoming events in the park. Too many residents do not know about activities Downtown and special steps are needed to improve this situation.

Long-term, “active” gathering spaces, courtyards and plazas are a priority in new development or in redevelopment projects. The potential redevelopment areas in Downtown are generally illustrated in Land Use and Development Plan (see page 88).

4. Interesting Character, Charm and Comfort

a. Streetscape

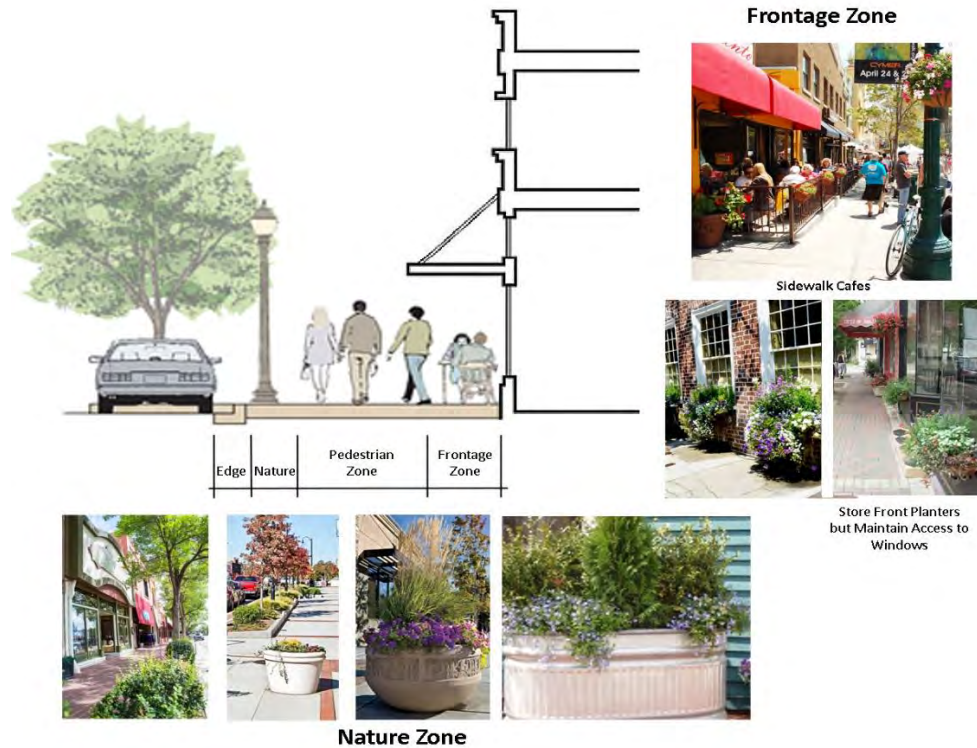
The Town of New Castle has made a number of improvements to the streetscape Downtown. The sidewalks, particularly in the Cultural and Shopping Corridor, is the space in which people move, socialize, and do business. When this area is improved, more exciting and interesting, it will show to citizens, potential business operators, investors and developers and others that the Town is committed to positive change. The Town should continue to undertake improvements to this area. Street trees would have been ideal. However, it may be quite expensive to make this improvement now. The aim now is to animate the space to give the walking corridor life and vitality. The Town can provide public informational signs (e.g., the locations of businesses, parks, trailhead and so on) and banners that reflect Downtown and the community brand. Additionally, the Downtown Alliance might be the appropriate group to help Downtown merchants and property owners see a long-term vision and encourage those merchants and property owners to further animate the walking corridor Downtown. Such improvements will contribute to the quality of life and experience for all who live, work, and visit Downtown.

In particular, the key areas of the sidewalk are the frontage zone and the nature zone. In the **frontage zone**, elements such as sidewalk cafes, street furniture, flower pots and similar private additions to the streetscape should continue to be encouraged. It is important to keep in mind that unobstructed access to retail display windows is needed.

In the **nature zone**, the Town should consider different ways to enliven the space. Simple improvements might be attempted initially. This could be in the form of

temporary/removable planters. Over time, permanent installations might be appropriate. A landscape that is consistent with the native environment is most appropriate.

As New Castle begins tackling the critical mass problem, making investments in public art and its community history presentation and more permanent streetscape improvements is a show of commitment that will foster the desired private investment. The Town already has invested in landscaped bump-outs, themed street lights at intersections, colored pedestrian cross-walks and banners. As funding permits, this corridor should have a special pedestrian-oriented streetscape environment. It should feature special wayfinding signage, public art distributed throughout the corridor to signify a unique identity and offer an interesting, a well-lighted corridor the entire length.



b. Parking Lots along Main Street

Parking lot design is important, particularly Downtown. When little or no attention is given to parking lots along pedestrian corridors, they can detract from the kind of vibrancy desired. Two parking lots along Main Street offer very little interest to the Cultural and Shopping Corridor. There is no landscaping or aesthetic lighting in these parking lots. Nor is it clear to those not familiar with Downtown if these are public or private parking lots.

The Town recently took over management of the parking lot next to 2 Coronas restaurant. If this arrangement continues, the parking lot should be improved aesthetically. Aesthetic improvement also is needed in the parking lot next to the community center. Public parking lots should be designated for such purposes.

The Town of New Castle should set up a nominal annual budget for the Downtown Alliance. With suitable funding, that committee could work with private property owners and businesses to leverage a number of aesthetic improvements Downtown.

c. Railroad Noise

It was explained in the SWOT assessment that the noise from the railroad, specifically its engine horn, can have a negative effect on Downtown. Under the Federal Railroad Administration's train horn rule, locomotive engineers must begin to sound the horn 15 to 20 seconds in advance of all public grade crossings. Train horns must sound in a standardized pattern of 2 long, 1 short and 1 long blast. The pattern must be repeated or prolonged until the lead locomotive or car occupies the grade crossing. The volume level of the train horn is between 96 and 110 decibels, which is significant when people are enjoying dinner or sleeping. There are over 20 trains per day passing Downtown, although this number can vary. The Town should consider its effect on the community's desire to advance the improvement of Downtown and decide if a simple, cost-effective solution is available.

The Kamm Avenue railroad crossing is uncontrolled. Problems of this nature are not issues for the railroad, but for the affected department of transportation (DOT) or community. DOTs usually consider factors such as the volume of train and vehicular traffic, accident history, visibility and others to decide the proper solutions for crossings. In this case, however, the Kamm Avenue crossing experiences very little vehicle traffic over the course of a day. It is the point of access to the Town wastewater facilities. While a full, signalized and controlled intersection would be cost-prohibitive, the Town should investigate vacating the public access and constructing a simple access control gate. It could be a remote-controlled access, which could be available to Town employees and police. This might allow the Town to apply for a "quiet zone" under the Federal Railroad Administration's train horn rule. The rule provides an opportunity for communities like New Castle to mitigate the effects of train horn noise by establishing new quiet zones. In a quiet zone, railroads can stop the routine sounding their horns when approaching public grade crossings, other than in emergency situations. The Town needs to investigate a quiet zone designation and ascertain the cost of meeting the necessary mitigation requirements.

d. Arts, Culture and Heritage

As noted in the Framework Plan, public art and the community's cultural heritage should be put on display prominently Downtown. The community should continue to build on the work done to date, advancing a program that truly reflects its character and identity. It is recommended that, with the support of the Town, the Downtown Alliance

work with the Community Branding and Marketing Committee to advance this objective.

These groups should propose a public art acquisition budget to the Town Council annually. The funds could be spent each year, or pooled for several years, to acquire substantial art pieces, with a variety of mediums. In time, the Town should acquire art for its signature installations/locations special to the community, such as a redesigned Burning Mountain Park, Ritter Plaza, and the east and west end activity centers recommended in this Plan. These two committees should work together to find and recommend these locations to the Town Council.

The concept of an “art walk,” with temporary and permanent installations, should be pursued throughout the cultural corridor. Over time, it should be expanded along the alternative transportation corridor described in the Framework Plan, into public parks, Main Street plazas and courtyards and at the community entryway. A guided brochure and website tours should be created to inform and guide residents and visitors. To support the program, an annual call-to-artist loan program should be developed. For this purpose, the committees need to recommend a budget for annual artist stipends (a nominal amount paid to artist to secure the loan of desired art pieces) to the Town Council. While the Town Council may not be able to immediately fund such a program at a high level, efforts should be made to move forward soon.

The Downtown Alliance and the Branding and Marketing Committee should seek help from artists living in New Castle and the surrounding area (Roaring Fork and Colorado River Valleys) to advance this effort. By doing so, a public art champion may come forward, someone who will aid the committees and help build momentum. There should be competitions and collaborative projects offered to these artists. The Town needs to engage the local arts community in planning arts-related events in Downtown. As this effort moves forward, these committees and the Town should make a concerted effort to recruit galleries to Downtown locations.

The Town should review the existing sign code to assure that it sufficiently distinguishes between signs and graphic art (murals, interactive displays for public gathering, public information banners etc.). The Downtown Improvement Plan recommends a number of graphic devices that help enhance and improve Downtown. The Code should make such allowances.

Similarly, efforts should be made to advance the “Museum on the Street” program. Its intent is to create a heritage discovery trail for the benefit of a community's residents and visitors. When possible, this program should be expanded. First, the Downtown Alliance, the Museum and Town should develop program elements that are both static and fresh. While the underlying history of the community may be presented in a way that does not change over time, there are stories, events, traditions and photographs that should be added or changed periodically to keep the presentation fresh and interesting for both residents and visitors. Second, the Museum and Town should work with History Colorado to find some of the best community history and cultural presentations in the state or the nation. The “best of the best” can help find the best approach for Main Street and understand how elements of those programs can be

carried out here in a reasonable and affordable manner. Finally, if the Museum continues to have limited hours of operations, as it does today, the Downtown Improvement Committee and Town should investigate options for developing technology (e.g., audio/video presentations or kiosks) at key locations to expand its reach. The Town should determine if grants might be possible from History Colorado, DOLA or other sources to make these improvements.

5. Events and Activities

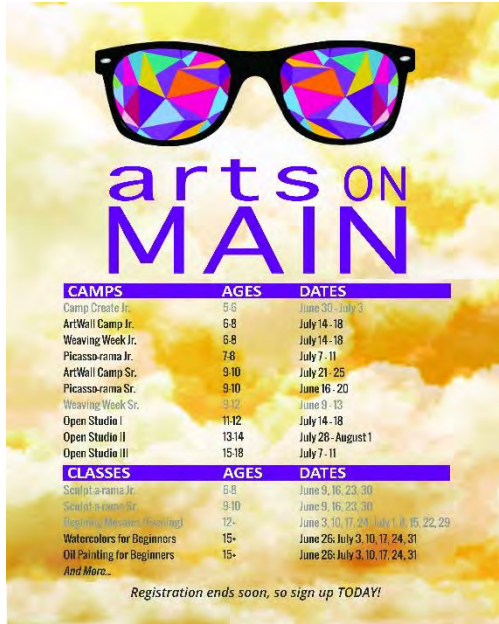
Activating Downtown with a variety of events and activities is crucial to its success. Events are a critical element to a vibrant and exciting downtown and add an important part to the overall sense of place in New Castle. It is recommended that New Castle use a focused and proactive approach for its events Downtown. There must be a predictable series of events and activities. The following steps should serve to guide Downtown event and activity planning:

- a. The Town and the Downtown Alliance should, as soon as possible, ask the community about their ideas for Downtown activities and events. The best events and activities are those in which the community takes ownership and in which residents have pride.

- b. Involve the community by periodically asking what talents and creativity they can lend to the “place”. It is important to involve community resident for a variety of reasons. First, it broadens the number of people who will organize events. Otherwise, this effort will continually fall back onto the same people, who over time will lose interest. Second, it broadens the pool of ideas, from which the best ideas can be used. Third, people are the best way to attract other people. Getting local participation in both event planning and in performance (school-age children, churches and organizations, etc.) will create word of mouth advertising and secure and grow event participation. To the extent possible, efforts should be made to gain the participation of merchants, restaurants and others, but secure their involvement and when they are least busy. It is often difficult to get businesses to focus on participating in such events when they are in their busiest period or at the last minute. To this end, a series of well planned, predictable activities that are specifically designed to bring the talents of the community Downtown and, in doing so, attract the family, friends and those that want to experience the community at its best, should be pursued.



- c. The Town must pursue quality over quantity and set up a core of top-notch activities that both reach broad demographics of the community and that meet community objectives and interests. Quality is what excites people and consistency is what makes them confident to return.



Whatever events and activities are developed for Downtown, they should be published well in advance. As noted in the SWOT assessment, it seems many residents are not aware of what is available or happening Downtown. Some may not feel the need to go Downtown because the activity is not focused on them or their family. Focusing some of the events on children, for example, will attract parents, family members and friends. Once people begin to engage in quality events and activities Downtown, the probability of their return increases. To help residents understand Downtown it is recommended that the Town:

- 1) Increase information about Downtown events along Castle Valley Boulevard, immediately north of Highway 6 and 24.
2. Improve social media and website communication. When appropriate, use print for sharing with your local groups (e.g., churches, service groups and others.), but clarify and improve the Downtown presence on the Internet. Consider developing a mobile app for marketing Downtown, including information, a business directory and a schedule of events and activities. The Downtown Alliance and the Branding and Marketing Committee should work together to develop the marketing approaches and technology applications that will be best for New Castle.
- 3 Pursue, as soon as possible, the community information and event signs included in the wayfinding plan for New Castle (see page 96 for more information).

6. Design and Image

- a. Building Character

Preserving the historic character of any downtown can be an important part of its revitalization. In Downtown New Castle, there are a number of buildings that have a 1890s to 1930s character. Some are relatively well preserved. However, some older properties have been substantially altered to the point of compromising any historical

value or interest. As illustrated in the Land Use and Redevelopment Plan map (see page 86) there are also several infill and redevelopment opportunities Downtown. Over time, as the market for commercial and mixed-use development improves, there will likely be pressure to improve or redevelop existing and build new buildings. How will these buildings fit Downtown?

One approach might be to respect the historic design character of existing buildings, preserving, maintaining and restoring them when possible, but allow creativity in new development that adds interest and vibrancy and allows the character of Downtown to continue to evolve over time. Historic replication would not be discouraged. In this instance, however, the aim is not to “require” a style that makes a new building look old, but to infuse some design cues from the past into modern expressions – respecting the past and embracing the future. Such cues might include the use of wood, historical brick, a false front, recessed entries or other characteristics noted above on a building that otherwise has a more contemporary appearance. Some elements of building design have started down this path. The library design is a prime example. This policy approach is recommended for Downtown New Castle.

If there is agreement on this policy, the Town should consider the following actions:

- i. There should be a joint meeting of the Town Council, Planning and Zoning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission to secure an understanding and agreement on the desired design direction for Downtown.
- ii. With respect to new development and older structures that have been subject to substantial alteration over time to the point there is little historical significance, the Town should amend Section 17.36.120 of the Municipal Code, to clarify the intent of this policy. Currently the Code stipulates that the “exterior visible appearance of any building or structure, including new buildings or structures, or the alteration or repair of existing buildings or structures, shall be of such a design and employment of materials so as to appear similar to existing district historic buildings or structures constructed before 1930, or to maintain the historic character and appearance of the existing building or structure.” The code also stipulates that “windows shall be of appearance and design similar to nearby historic buildings and structures.” (These requirements, for example, likely do not permit the library design, which is clearly a modern design expression.) Moreover, the current design guidelines may not allow the introduction of materials outside of the limits of those that exist Downtown. For example, is metal siding (galvanized or weathered) or architectural siding panels allowed? They are not found in historical facades Downtown. If the community agrees with this design and image policy for Downtown, then this section of the Code should be amended.



Use of historical material with some modern design expression



Blending historic design with modern design elements



Historic buildings with modern material and window expressions



Existing modern design expressions Downtown

- iii. The Town, with the aid of History Colorado and the Historic Preservation Commission, should start a grant and technical assistance program to help existing property owners with potentially significant historical structures understand the need and value of restoration and reasonable options for their property. The Town, in conjunction with the Historic Preservation Commission, should establish a proactive program for communicating and working with the owners of these older properties to advance restoration Downtown.
 - iv. The Town should establish a budget line item for historic restoration assistance and, over five years, establish an assistance program for Downtown properties. The purpose of this program should not be to undertake renovations for property owners, but to aid and help where appropriate as an incentive to advance facade improvements and restoration to qualifying structures.
- b. I-70 Corridor Image

The community image, as perceived from the I-70 corridor, has been a community concern for some time. The Downtown Alliance, as part of this planning process, studied this visual quality issue. After doing so, the Committee presented a three-pronged approach for addressing this problem.

First, the Committee recommended that the Town allocate funds in the budget to begin a basic clean-up program. Second, the Committee recommended that the Town take a more active role in code enforcement. It should start with proactive communication with residents along the interstate corridor east of Downtown to initiate property clean up. Where cooperative strategies are not possible, reasonable but more active code enforcement is appropriate. Finally, the Downtown Alliance recommended a long-term plan for correcting visual problems that require a more capital-intensive solution. The Committee recommended that the Town set up and maintain a 5-year plan and capital budget for the purposes of:

- i. Constructing a screening fence or a combination of fence and landscape along the back side of Downtown buildings, between the alley and railroad property. Landscaping, of course, would need to be watered until it is established. It is likely that a screen will need to be about 8-foot in height to be effective. (Ideally, a 6-foot fence could be placed on 3-foot piers. This would effectively create an 8-foot screening fence, as viewed from I-70, but allow snow to be pushed under the fence, making alley maintenance possible.) The screen should extend from about Jasper Ward Avenue to the community center building.
- ii. Screen the visual clutter on the back of old School House and eliminate the private off-site advertising signs. The initial screening might be temporary in nature until there is a better understanding about the long-term use or redevelopment of the old School Building. Redevelopment may not need such screening.



Current Conditions



Improved View and Opportunity for Community Brand Statement

- iii. There are several areas along the I-70 corridor east of the old schoolhouse that will require significant investment to correct the visual problems. Typically, they include steep hillside scars. Due to both the steepness of the hillsides and quality of soil, it will be difficult to get vegetation to cover the scars. In all likelihood, weeds would have taken over by now if any kind of vegetation would grow there. To correct these visual scars will require a higher level of investment by the Town. The Town should initiate discussions with property owners to, where possible and within reason, gain participation or approval to reduce the slope, amend the soil and establish an appropriate revegetation program. It will probably be necessary to reduce the slope to about 2:1 to allow vegetation to get a foothold there.



Current Conditions



Possible Future Hillside Repair

iv. Work with property owners farther east, toward the interchange, to establish a uniform, maintained screening fence.

v. Establish a forestry and screening plan for the Town's wastewater facility.

Area to be Screened



Uniform Screening Fence



c. Downtown Identity

The SWOT assessment identified issues with Downtown identity and a branding and marketing message. To address this matter, the Town might consider creating an iconic identifier for Downtown and the community in general. The images below suggest constructing a feature that is consistent with the Town's history to create this image. It is simply one idea of many that could be used to carry out this objective.

There are two possible locations for such an icon. One is in the West End as part of the redevelopment plan for that area. A second option might be south end of what is now Jasper Ward Avenue, particularly if that street is vacated and that area is incorporated in Burning Mountain Park. It will be important to obtain community opinion and buy-in as the town designs this feature.

Should the Town move forward with this kind of improvement someday, it is recommended that the Community Branding and Marketing Committee be involved in its design. Whatever feature is created, it should be consistent with and advance the community brand. It should be pointed out that this is not crucial to the success of Downtown, but might be something the Town considers in the future, after there is growth in Town revenues.

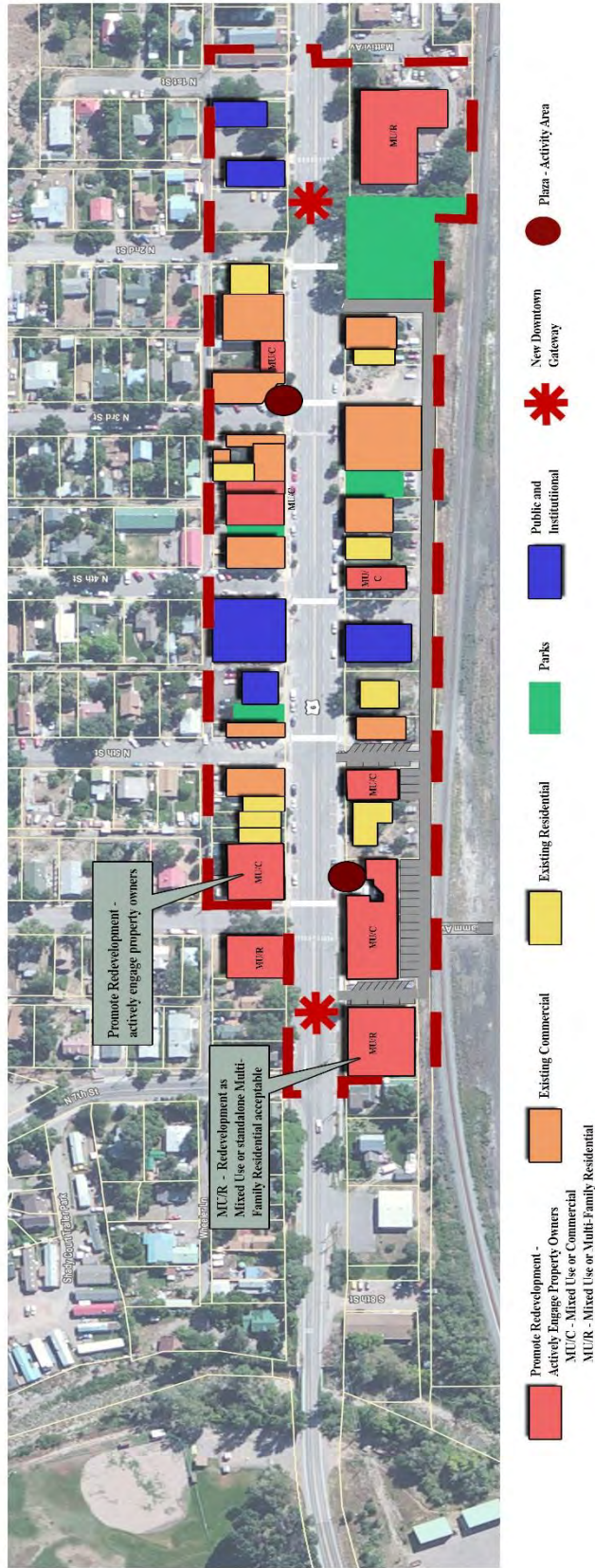


E. DOWNTOWN PARKING

In assessing the need for Downtown parking, it is clear that going forward there must be a balance struck between providing the necessary parking to support improvements described in this Plan and maintaining the quaint character of Downtown. There is limited space for parking. Therefore, there are two options that the Town can consider. First, the Town Council could implement a capital-intensive solution such as acquiring property and constructing more parking or building more parking on property it already owns. (With respect to the latter option, this Plan has already pointed out that the property currently owned by the Town should be used to attract, as an incentive or otherwise, new economic and residential development Downtown.)

A second option might be to limit the amount of parking based on the infrastructure that is already in place. This means that alternative transportation and access to Downtown must be provided in the future. This Plan recommends the latter option as the “best fit” for Downtown and the community. The matter of accessibility and providing alternatives to using the automobile for trips to Downtown has been presented. So, how can the Town provide adequate parking given the limited space available? As noted in the SWOT Assessment there are only 68 public parking spaces on Main Street between 2nd and 6th Streets. (There is, of course, additional parking on side streets, the Community Center and the rented parking lot.)

DOWNTOWN NEW CASTLE LAND USE AND REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



1. Short-Term

The Town, in cooperation with CDOT, has established a lane diet plan for Main Street. The lane diet, consistent with CDOT policy, does not reduce the amount of pavement nor does it alter or increase the amount of parking Downtown. It cuts the number of travel lanes from four to three, with one lane in each direction and a center turn lane. Most importantly, it allows bicycle lanes to be added through Downtown. This is important because the bike lanes improve accessibility and, in doing so, they can help to relieve the pressure for adding parking. When Downtown achieves the level of success contemplated in this Plan, however, it is likely that more parking will be required.

2. Long-Term Parking Solutions

The Town has possible long-term parking solutions available.

1. Long-term it is recommended that the Town pursue an agreement with CDOT that allows the Town to rearrange parking spaces and bicycle lanes on Main Street as generally depicted in the long-term parking plan illustrated below.

The simple striping of diagonal spaces on the north (sunny) side of the street can add a significant number of parking spaces. Diagonal parking on only the north side of the street would result in about 109 parking space along Main Street, a 60 percent increase in the number of parking spaces. This will be the simplest way to add a significant number of parking spaces without altering the existing character of Downtown. These spaces will be in the most convenient and visible place, which is good for residents, visitors and Downtown businesses. This solution would, however, require elimination of the bicycle lane. The Town would need to survey residents about bicycle lane importance, and also do an extended traffic count to determine actual usage. Furthermore, the Town would need to take possession of Main Street from CDOT, since current CDOT policy does not allow diagonal parking on a state-owned highway. Taking possession would require a long-term financial commitment from the Town.

2. The Town could pursue reconfiguration/expansion of side streets to allow diagonal parking. Diagonal parking has been constructed on some streets, adding several parking spaces. This

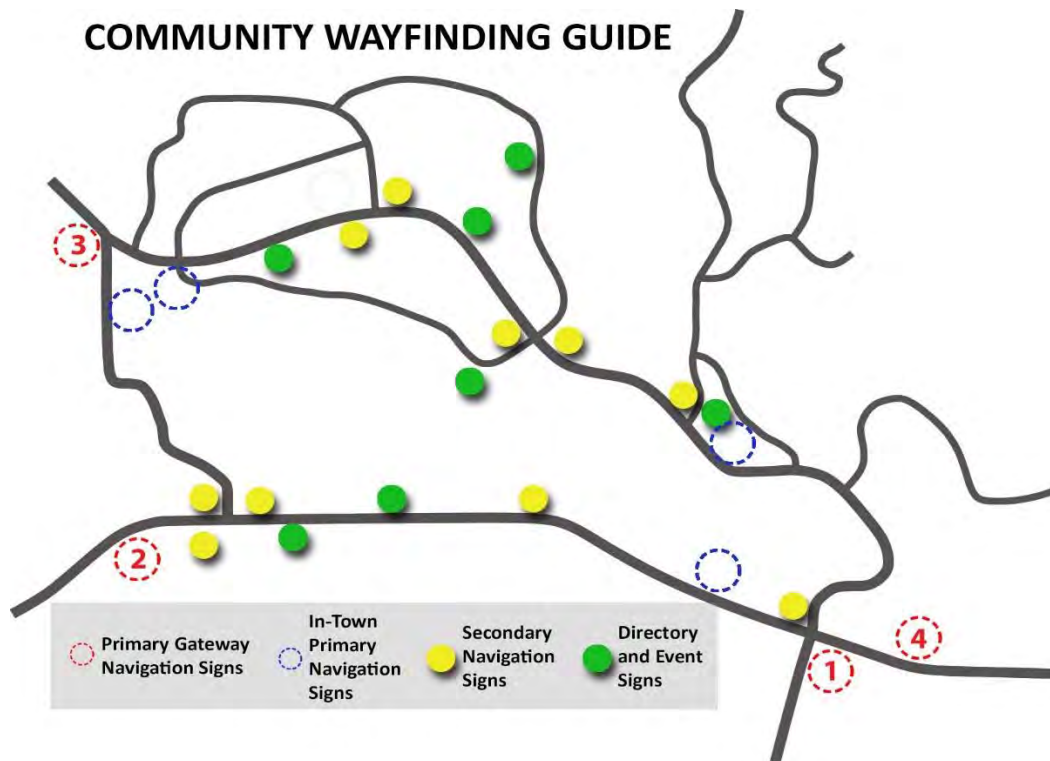
How much parking should there be Downtown? The long-term parking plan described here should be the extent of parking Downtown. Attempts to add parking beyond this will have a negative impact on the character of Downtown. Should the success of Downtown generate more activity in the future, creating on-going parking problems, the Town Council must expand alternative transportation options identified in this Plan to address that problem. The in-town shuttle circulator or higher capacity alternative transit vehicles operating in the "C" Avenue transportation corridor are the likely options to consider.

ENTRYWAY, WAYFARING AND INFORMATION

As noted in the SWOT Assessment, navigating within New Castle is not easy, particularly for those that do not know their way around the community. For example, there are no direction signs at the Highway 6 and 24 - Castle Valley Boulevard intersection to steer people Downtown. For those people who are not familiar with the community, how does one know that it has outstanding parks and trails and where they are located? It also was pointed out in the SWOT assessment that too many residents of the community do not know enough about the community's events and activities, particularly those occurring Downtown. The purpose of this Entryway, Wayfinding and Information Plan is to help the community take a step toward overcoming these and other related issues. The purpose of this wayfinding system is to:

- Welcome people to New Castle;
- Provide a coordinated hierarchy of public signage to tell people about important sites/destinations within the community and how to navigate to those places efficiently. (It is not necessary for each sign provides all of the information about the community. One sign should provide enough information to get the motorist to the next sign, where additional details are provided. It is important, however, that the system of signs is of similar design. They also should have a quality appearance.)
- Keep the message very simple along roadways and show only what is needed; do not make the person in the car think about the message.
- Announce the arrival at key destinations or landmarks, including Downtown.
- When and where appropriate, inform residents and visitors about events and activities that occur in New Castle throughout the year, including Downtown.
- It is important, nonetheless, that wayfaring signs do not contain more information than can be easily read by motorists.

The design for the wayfinding system provided below is something that the Town can implement soon. It should be viewed as Phase 1. It is intended to be a low-cost, initial effort to resolve the direction/navigation problems and begin to address some of the community information concerns. Even though it is low-cost, it is still important that these Phase 1 signs are consistent with the community character and image. The precedent for the initial plan is the community's mining and western heritage, with the use of heavy timbers, metal fasteners and corrugated metal. It is recommended that, over time, the Town advances a design that is consistent with a new community brand. Once the brand advances sufficiently and funding is available, it is recommended that the Branding and Marketing Committee work with local artists to develop a gateway statement that is emblematic of the community's past, present and future. Once the Branding and Marketing Committee has established a brand direction, the Phase 2 effort should be carried out possibly with help from local artists, in the form of a call-to-artists, or with the aid of a marketing consultant.

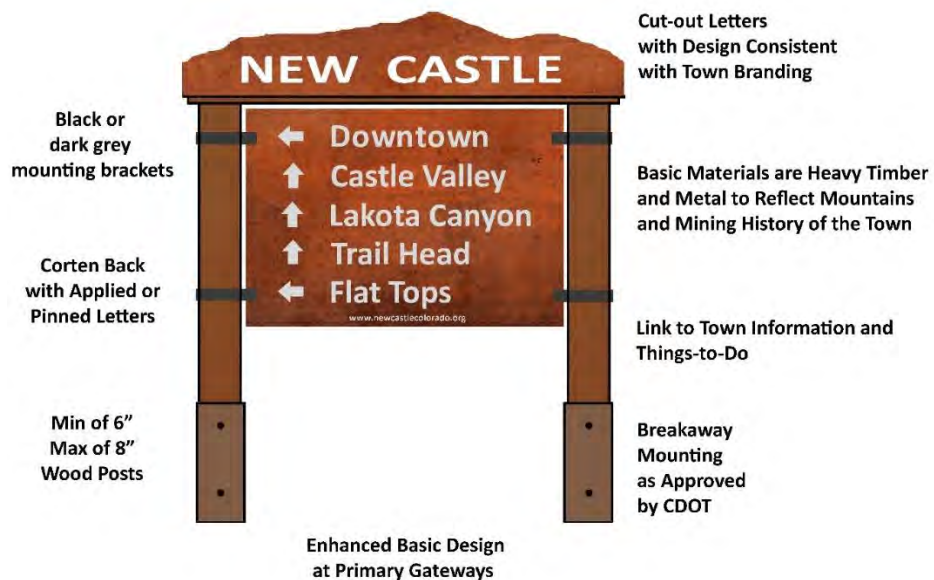


1. Primary Gateways – Welcoming and Navigation

In the system hierarchy, the Gateway and Primary Navigation Signs are key. These signs should not only announce that one has arrived at New Castle, but they must be designed in a simple way that quickly conveys a message about primary destinations within the community and how the motorist can navigate to those locations. With respect to Downtown, the gateway signs must make it a more legible, identifiable and an easily accessible destination.

These signs should be at each of the four community gateways. They should be placed either along the edge of the road, preferably in a landscaped area or safe zone approved by CDOT and before the intersection where decisions must be made about the direction of travel. CDOT approval of the specific wording on the wayfinding signs at the intersection with Castle Valley Boulevard and at the west entrance to the community (Highway 6 and 24) will be required. To comply with CDOT requirements, the actual design may be somewhat different from that shown. However, the Town should strive for a design and quality that is representative of the community. The Town should initiate the CDOT approval process and gain its approval as soon as possible and move forward soon with the gateway signs, particularly one at the Highway 6 and 24 – Castle Valley Boulevard intersection. As noted above, the Town should use these signs to direct people to the in-town navigation signs, where the Town, having more flexibility, can allow signs that offer more detail about the community.

Typical Gateway Sign



2. In-Town Navigation

Next, within the wayfinding sign hierarchy, is the in-town navigation sign. While the gateway signs should introduce the motorist to the community and give basic directional information, the in-town navigation signs should be located in a manner that both reinforces directions offered at the gateway and provide more information before key decision points. Most of the in-town signs fall within the Town's jurisdiction, allowing it more flexibility in the type of information disseminated.

Typical In-Town Navigation Sign



3. Secondary Navigation Signs

Secondary Navigation Signs



Secondary navigation signs should be located in areas of slower traffic and for bicyclists and pedestrians. These signs, providing the most detailed information, tell how far a certain destination is and in what direction one should travel to get there. These signs should be placed at the entry to Downtown and at key intersections where they are highly visible

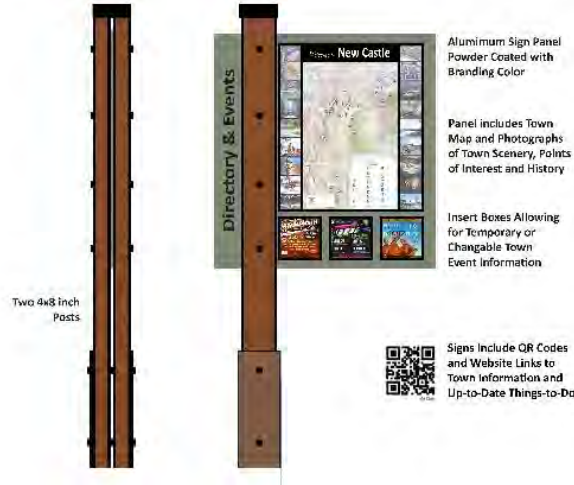
4. Community Information and Event Signs

Community information and event signs are not always part of a community wayfinding plan.

However, in the case of New Castle, it is strongly recommended. The signs should contain a town map with a “you are here” icon to orient the reader. While this may not be important to the resident, it is crucial to help educate the visitor about the community. These signs also should provide information about Downtown and community businesses and community lifestyle, activities and events. This intends to serve two purposes. First, it can educate the visitor about New Castle and what the community has to offer. Second and possibly more important, it is a way to inform the community’s own residents about their community. The SWOT assessment noted there is a lack of knowledge and understanding about Downtown and community events. Signage can help advertise events and gathering opportunities.

These signs should be located throughout the community, in places where there are people, where people pass regularly and where people congregate. As shown in the guide above, they should be provided in parks, along trails and at trailheads, near schools, Downtown and other similar locations. These signs should also be a priority and it is recommended that the Town move forward with these signs as soon as funding is available.

Community Directory Map and Event Sign



5. Downtown Arrival

From the perspective of Downtown, the final sign in the wayfinding hierarchy is the arrival sign. This type of sign signals the arrival at a special place in the community. Two signs are contemplated, one at the east arrival near Burning Mountain Park and one at the west end arrival. The west end arrival sign will likely near the new activity center and its specific location should be incorporated into that planning and design effort. Along with a sign, arrival indicators expressed through the design of landscape, streetscape schemes or public art might be appropriate. The goal should be to send a signal to residents and visitors that they are approaching/entering a special place with a unique identity - one in which the community takes pride.



The community will need to decide how Downtown will be identified in the overall community brand. Will it simply be Downtown, will it be Historical Downtown, will it be Old Town, or will it be some other name that announces it is “the place” for specialty shopping, gathering and play. It is recommended that, at the appropriate time, the Branding and Marketing Committee, along with consulting expertise, make this determination and recommend a branding and signing approach for Town Council consideration.

This is not a critical action now. It is a step that the Town should take in the future as the Branding Plan evolves and the identity is

determined. Once that occurs, this arrival feature should be incorporated into a 5-year capital improvement/community investment plan.

G. NEAR-TERM ACTIVATION STRATEGIES

It will likely take some time for Downtown to achieve the goals in the Framework Plan. The Town should not wait for something to happen. Rather, it should be proactive and it should begin to work toward the desired goals now. Given funding and other limitations to this effort, the Town should pursue those steps that are low risk and low-cost and that capitalize on the creative energy of the community to move toward success. There are steps that the Town might consider now, or within a few years, to promote more activity Downtown.

1. Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper Placemaking

This Plan has set forth an extensive array of placemaking strategies. New Castle should pursue such improvements, events and activities over-time. However, actions for improving the sense of place should begin immediately. This lighter, quicker, cheaper strategy should be the approach for Downtown over the next two to three years.

- a. Re-start the public art loan or purchase program. The Town Council should appropriate a reasonable amount to go toward artist stipends to secure public art on loan to the community for the purposes of energizing Downtown. Alternatively, the Town could purchase public art.
- b. Promote the People's Stage as a way to immediately increase local entertainment Downtown. Create a scheduled and advertise the entertainment in advance. At the same time, allow unscheduled entertainment at this venue.
- c. Advertise and hold a once-a-month community cruiser bicycle ride, possibly originating near Hot Shot Park, to Downtown, a park activity and return via 7th Street. Recruit the members of the community trails committee and other to spread the word and take part in the events.
- d. Continue to develop and promote regularly scheduled activities and events Downtown. These could include events like, First Friday, homemade ice cream socials, a community date night, a children's choir, and similar events that are low-cost and attractive to a variety of ages. Work with Downtown businesses during winter or early spring month (slower period for business) to gain participation and sponsorships for the various activities and events. The Town might consider partnering with local churches or similar organizations and get their help marketing the events and activities to their membership.
- f. The Town should gain CDOT approval and build a gateway sign at the Highway 6 and 24 – Castle Valley Boulevard as soon as possible.

- g. Move forward with low-cost ways to inform community residents about community events, particularly those Downtown, including festive banners at Ritter Plaza and near the Highway 6 and 24 – Castle Valley Boulevard. As soon as funding permits, begin construction of the community information and events signs.
- h. Provide aesthetic lighting in Downtown parks, plazas and courtyard to encourage public gathering not only during the daytime hours but also in the evening and nighttime.
- i. As soon as possible, ask the community about their ideas for Downtown activities and events and discover and engage the talents and creativity they can lend to add new energy Downtown. In addition to soliciting ideas, however, volunteer organizers must be identified.

2. Professional Office Incubator Program

The Town should work with property owners to develop an innovative shared office environment to attract business startups and entrepreneurs Downtown. This type of activity might be an ideal reuse of an existing building or in a new development where it is important to grow tenants for such projects. (For example, this approach might be a short or long-term solution to the reuse of the old School Building, depending on the goal for that building and Burning Mountain Park.) Entrepreneurs typically want to be around other entrepreneurs. Co-working spaces can become an incubator for new energy Downtown. It can also become an important element of the community's developing brand (the entrepreneurial spirit) and something that will attract new residents to the community. This type of use work well with the developing activity centers, comprised of restaurants, entertainment, and new housing options, along with the easy access to the community's many recreational opportunities.

H. LAND USE POLICY

The SWOT Assessment points out that a clear role for Downtown is lacking. If Downtown is to thrive and the vision described above is realized, its purpose must be clear. Its purpose is different from other community and neighborhood commercial centers. While the Comprehensive Plan provides some policy direction for Downtown, this Plan intends to refine those policies and set forth detailed recommendations for advancing the Downtown Vision. To this end, the following land uses policy should be considered by the Town of New Castle.

The Municipal Code should be amended to show a clear intent and direction for Downtown, better describe the purpose and intent of all other commercial zone districts, and distinguish the purpose of Downtown from those other commercial and industrially zoned areas. The aim behind this step is to make sure that Downtown is promoted and preserved as the heart and soul of New Castle. The following statements of purpose and intent for each commercial zone are recommended:

- a. The purpose and intent of the **C-1 (Downtown) commercial zone district** is to keep the original historic commercial center of the community, ensuring that Downtown is both unique and offers an exceptional experience within the community and the region. It offers a lively environment with a character based on a mix of specialty retail, cultural, entertainment, professional offices and services, restaurants and entertainment uses. It is a source of community identity and pride. The desired uses and intensity and scale of use are smaller-scale and promote a pedestrian-oriented marketplace and community gatherings and functions that reflect New Castle's chosen identity and brand. A mix of commercial and residential uses that promotes a strong and sustainable local and visitor economy and cultural and social vitality both within this zone district and the community as a whole is desirable. Development is intended to be oriented toward sidewalks to promote a pedestrian-oriented environment.
- b. The purpose and intent of the **C2 commercial zone district** is to offer a transition between residential and more intense commercial uses in such a manner that safeguards pedestrian environments, optimizes the aesthetic appearance to the public and provides for those retail and service commercial uses that rely on pass-through and highway resident and visitor/tourists traffic; typically, they are automobile-oriented. These uses are those that have a mutually beneficial relationship to one another and can be concentrated in a group or cluster to reduce traffic congestion.
- c. The purpose and intent of the **C-R (Burning Mountain PUD) commercial zone district** is to provide for those retail and service commercial uses that rely on pass-through and highway resident and visitor/tourists traffic. It allows for those uses that are convenience and automobile-oriented and typically larger in scale than those uses located Downtown. The uses allowed in this zone district are those that have a mutually beneficial relationship to one another and can be concentrated in a group or cluster to minimize traffic congestion.
- d. The purpose and intent of the **HB (Highway Business) commercial zone district** is to provide an area for limited to moderately scale highway and tourist commercial services for the traveling public and non-pedestrian oriented retail in specially designated highway-service centers, where access, traffic-turning movements and off-street parking is provided in a safe, convenient, and attractive way, the impact to traffic flows will be reduced, pedestrian movement will be safeguarded, and optimize the aesthetic appearance to passing motorists and where size, spacing, layout, and design of such uses shall make sure the view from the highway and the mountain environment of the community is not impaired.
- e. The purpose of the **CG (General) commercial zone district** is to allow for a community employment center, allowing a concentration of commercial and business uses that generate "primary" employment opportunities for area residents, thereby promoting a strong and stable local economy and vitality. Appropriate uses and intensity of use in this zone should allow and incentivize opportunities for residents to live and work in the same neighborhood. Appropriate uses in this zone district are those that are of a medium and larger scale than found Downtown.

- f. The purpose of the **CT (Transitional) commercial zone district** is to allow low-intensity office, retail and service uses that are characterized by low vehicular traffic generation, that are accessible by pedestrians from surrounding residential and commercial areas, that are sympathetic and compatible, in both design and impact, to adjacent and nearby residential uses and that protect, preserve and enhance residential areas while allowing commercial uses. In addition to allowing a limited number of commercial uses, the size and hours of operation of certain uses may be restricted to ensure compatibility.
- g. In addition, the Mixed Use zoning districts should be reviewed, in consultation with the landowners who hold vested rights in these districts. The ideal goal is to assure the other zoning districts do not detract from Downtown while at the same time preserving landowners' vested rights.

I. REGULATORY CHANGES

Several regulatory challenges to Downtown success have been identified. Each of these must be addressed and when possible the Town of New Castle should remove any unnecessary hindrances to desirable development that may exist under current regulations.

1. Residential Parking Mitigation Downtown

- a. Amend the Municipal Code:
 - 1. In the absence of on-site parking, the developer may provide equivalent parking elsewhere
 - ii. The developer may give cash-in-lieu to the Town, which shall be used by the Town to expand the number of parking spaces along Main Street or the alleys immediately north or south of Main Street between "A" Avenue and 7th Street.

2. Short-term Accommodations

- a. Amend the Municipal Code to include short-term visitor accommodations in second or third story locations (stays of two weeks or less) as permitted use in the C1 zone district or as a conditional use on the ground floor in this zone district.

3. Permitted and Conditional Uses

Amend the Municipal Code to eliminate the provision stipulating that "any use" not specifically identified as a permitted or non-permitted use shall be a "conditional use."

J. FUNDING, ORGANIZATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Plan includes an ambitious list of projects and investments that exceed current funding levels. The successful implementation of the Plan will need a commitment of organizational and financial resources. It will also require creative (out-of-the-box) thinking and partnerships to carry out some of the bold objectives leading to success.

1. Funding

a. Town General Fund

For some time, it is likely that the Town of New Castle will need to appropriate nominal amounts each year in its General Fund to support the placemaking, branding, marketing and organization related to the implementation of this Plan. Initially, the Town Council should allocate the funding necessary to carry out the low-cost steps identified in the Plan, starting in 2018 if possible. As General Fund revenues grow or if dedicated revenue streams can be created, the Town should set up a 5-year investment plan for Downtown and annual budget for following through on that plan.

b. Downtown Membership Association

An association of Downtown merchants and property owners might be assembled. Such an organization, usually a non-profit corporation, might be organized to promote Downtown businesses and activities. Small towns like New Castle almost always benefit from an organized effort towards downtown improvement. Too often, communities suffer from disorganized efforts, which spread limited human and capital resources thin. Pooling these resources, in a unified direction, should occur in New Castle. A downtown organization, whether freestanding or attached to an existing organization such as the Chamber of Commerce, is extremely helpful in this regard. An organized group has the power of collective action, can be an effective lobby, and can help raise the profile and visibility of the downtown area. The Downtown Alliance appears to be filling this role now. For success, however, all businesses and property owners should be committed to the effort. They must be educated and made aware. To show their commitment, a nominal annual fee might be paid by each merchant to support the activities of the association and/or the Downtown Alliance and the related work of the Community Branding and Marketing Committee.

c. Business Improvement District (BID)

Colorado Revised Statute Section 31-25-1201 allows the creation of a business improvement district for the purposes of improving conditions for businesses and economic activity. While it will likely not be the first step, the Town should eventually investigate the possibility of creating a Downtown Business Improvement District (BID). A BID is a public organization that can be formed to offer a variety of services and improvements Downtown, including maintenance, special events, aesthetic lighting and landscape, marketing and promotions, economic development and business retention, expansion and attraction, and capital improvements. The benefit of a BID is that it can be a mechanism to generate a consistent revenue stream dedicated to improving Downtown. When properly approved and structured, a BID can levy a tax or an assessment on properties within a designated area. Assessments to area property

owners are calculated based on benefits, determined by a variety of factors such as square feet of building, square feet of land, or front footage. A number of BIDs in smaller communities have used a more straightforward funding approach levying a property tax of up to 5 mills, instead of using an assessment method.

d. Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

A downtown development authority (DDA) or an urban renewal authority (URA), once created and properly structured, has the potential to use tax increment financing to redirect incremental increases in property and/or sales tax revenues, resulting directly from improvements or new or redevelopment activity within a designated area, to be used for public improvements. Under TIF, the tax base of a district (e.g., Downtown) is frozen at the level being produced in the initial (base) year. Any increase in taxes over this base amount can be used for redevelopment or improvement purposes. This annual tax increment can be leveraged and used as a payment stream for bonds or other sources of financing for eligible improvements.

It is likely that tax increment revenues Downtown would grow slowly. They may not be adequate to fund capital improvements for some time, depending on the level of infill development and redevelopment activity. Further, the Town already uses sales tax revenues to pay for capital improvements. While this approach might not generate substantial new revenues, the benefit is that the incremental increase in revenue generated Downtown will be spent Downtown, with the goal of making improvements that continue to expand the tax base (an economic development strategy).

e. Grants

Clearly, it will be necessary for the Town to pursue grants when possible to carry out this Plan. Grants will be necessary for economic development, capital improvements, park planning, design and improvement, transportation improvements and other matters to move this Plan forward. The Town should develop a specific list of actions to be carried out over the next 5-year to move this Plan forward. At the same time, it should find all of those grants that should be targeted every year. The Town Council should then appropriate matching funds annually in the General Fund to make sure the required local match will be available to leverage maximum grant dollars.

2. Public - Private Partnerships

Attracting new development can be a challenge. In an effort to do this, the Town must be prepared to organize public-private partnerships (PPP) for the benefit of the community. The Town does not have enough funds on its own to carry out the vision in this Plan. Therefore, it must **strategically target** partners and leverage their funds for mutual benefit.

The PPP intends to a “creative alliance” formed between the Town and private property owners/developers to achieve a common purpose. From the public perspective, a PPP can help the Town accomplish objectives that it cannot do on its own. Development projects build a better downtown by including community amenities such as plazas, fountains, improved streetscapes, attractive retail facades and ultimately increase in sales tax revenues

that sustain services for the entire community. From the private sector perspective, a PPP can incentivize and help private property owners/developers produce the kind and quality development that can meet the community's needs and help mitigate risks associated with project approvals, funding, and political barriers. PPPs can enable projects that would not otherwise be built or accelerate private investment timelines. In the future, the Town may engage other partners in this process. (For example, a BID or a Downtown Association, could one day be players in a successful PPP. A partnership does not mean there is only one private sector partner. To achieve success Downtown, it may require the participation of existing private property owners and one or more interested private real estate developers.) With all parties working together, these PPPs can help to minimize each party's risk and, by doing so, produce mutually beneficial improvements Downtown. This approach must be explored, particularly for catalyst developments.

It is likely that the Town will one-day need a part or full-time position, as lead, to promote and organize PPPs, engaging property owners and potential developers. Outreach and marketing to this stakeholder group by the Town will be necessary to build interest. The Town should not wait for someone to come knocking on its door. It must be proactive. This position will likely be needed to help build momentum towards a signature development, particularly in the West End Activity Center.

3. Capacity Building - Volunteerism and Ownership

Capacity is a different type of partnership that refers to the ability of people in the community to effect change over an extended period. Successful downtowns are a reflection of the capacity of people and organizations that take action to improve the situation. The Downtown Alliance is a perfect example of volunteers striving to make things better. Going forward, Downtown needs a champion, well-positioned with proper resources, to coordinate events, actions, branding and marketing and fundraising. Equally important, the champion and volunteers must get the community to take notice and ownership of their Downtown.

It is recommended that the Town appoint or hire a staff person to aid this effort. This should be done soon. The person in this position must be capable of proactive leadership and must be action-oriented. This person must understand and be committed to advancing the vision and big ideas for Downtown. Relying solely on volunteers to do this will be difficult at best. Even with the best of intentions, volunteers do not completely focus on the many intertwined goals of this Plan - they are usually task-oriented. The staff person must help them focus, achieve and keep momentum.

4. Branding, Marketing and Public Awareness

As noted in many places in this Plan, the Town must begin to create an effective branding identity for the community and its Downtown. If the Town desires to move forward with this idea, a branding leadership team is needed. To this end, the Town recently created a Community Branding and Marketing Committee. The purpose of this committee is as follows:

- a. Develop and decide on the New Castle brand position.

- b. Develop a marketing/communications action plan using a “bang for the buck” targeting strategy and using the right technology to: a) promote better communication with and dissemination of information to residents to secure a higher level of local engagement in the community and Downtown and b) attract outside interest (i.e., visitors, people interested in New Castle as a place to live and those that might like to start or move their business) in both the community and its Downtown.
- c. Assign responsibilities and track successes and report to the community.
- d. Develop and recommend both annual funding needs and a 3 to 5-year communications strategy to the Town Council and carry out the approved strategy.

As noted above, the Branding and Marketing Committee is a volunteer group. It, too, should have the ongoing support of a staff person, which might be a Town employee or a hired consultant. It will need professional branding and marketing expertise periodically. The staff person and/or the consulting expertise must help the Marketing and Branding Team champion this cause. Marketing to the target groups and consistently pushing the New Castle brand will take more than a voluntary effort, though the backing of champion volunteers will be crucial.

Once established, the Town should consider an application to the Colorado Tourism Office marketing matching grant program. This grant program provides funding to not-for-profit organizations in the State of Colorado for the purpose of promoting the state or a region as a tourism destination.

5. Downtown / Community Improvement Coordinator

The Town should consider a single point of contact for property owners and developers for any issue pertaining to business start-up, retention and expansion, real estate development and redevelopment, developer interaction and partnership structures, and other similar matters. This coordinator position, which could be incorporated into a current staff position or a new hire, should have a clear understating of the Downtown and community improvement plans and needs and help link all the pieces of the puzzle together, making it as easy as possible for a developer and property or business owner. It also should be the responsibility of the Coordinator to improve communication to strengthen and enhance the work taking place by existing groups and people and, when possible, recruit new participants into the effort.

6. Downtown / Community Coordination Meetings

There are many dedicated groups working now to improve the community and Downtown. In some cases, these partners work together and, at other times, one group is unaware of what others are doing. It is recommended that **annually**, or on some approved schedule,

there be a joint meeting(s) with all the players. This should be the opportunity for each group or interested party to report on their efforts, coordinate with others performing related work, and become educated on the variety of activities occurring in the community and Downtown (everyone on the same page to the extent possible). Another focus of this effort should be to make sure action is taken, not simply groups holding meetings, to keep the enthusiasm and make sure the process moves forward with full community support.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Downtown Plan, as a supplement to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, is a guide for the Planning and Zoning Commission for use when considering development applications. In addition, it is a guide for proactive action by the Town and its associated agencies. The Town Council, Downtown Alliance, Chamber of Commerce, Town staff and any future civic organizations should use the Plan to initiate improvements. If the Plan is to have value, agencies and individuals must take responsibility for improvements within their purview. They should review the plan at least annually in order to chart their accomplishments and schedule next steps. The easier and less expensive recommendations can be implemented immediately. Long-term improvements should be prioritized and undertaken when funds (or grants) become available.

The early draft of this Downtown plan includes a very optimistic implementation schedule. That schedule has been moved to Appendix Three for reference. The implementation Schedule is valuable in the way it breaks down projects into manageable steps. It should be used as projects are undertaken.

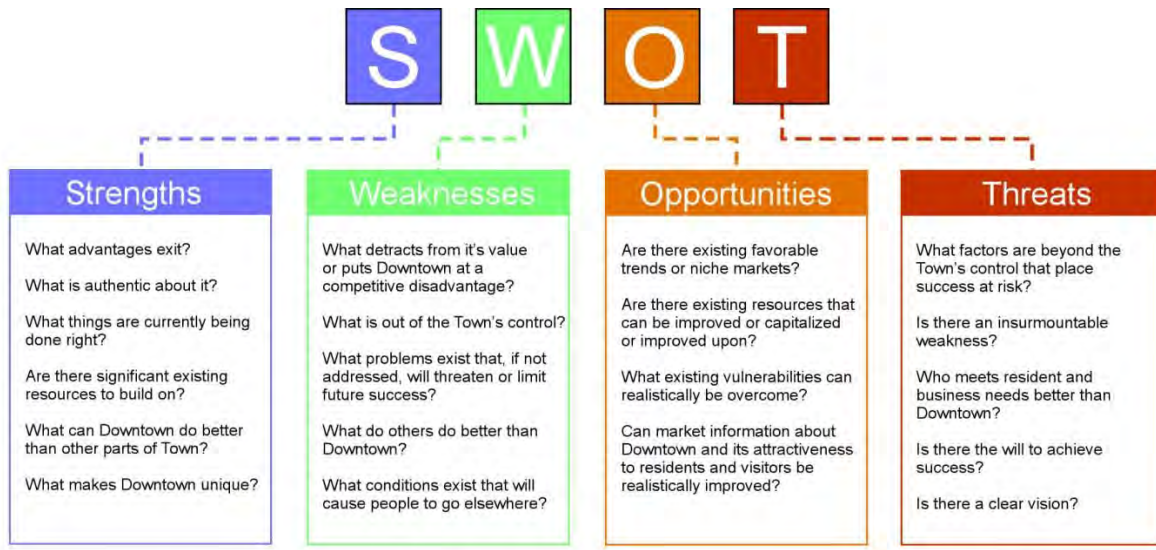
APPENDICES

The three items in this appendix were removed from the original draft of the Downtown Plan. There are contained here for reference.

Appendix One

The Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) Assessment intends identify and evaluate those internal and external factors, both favorable and unfavorable, that affect Downtown New Castle's

ability, in its current/historical place, to fulfill its role in the “Big Idea,” something necessary for the entire community. This analysis must be used to: a) identify Downtown’s competitive advantages, building on strengths and taking advantage of new opportunities, b) pinpoint barriers or limitations that adversely affect or limit success, and c) explore possible solutions to problems. An important goal must be to establish tactics for converting weaknesses or threats, to the extent possible, into strengths and opportunities. This SWOT analysis is not a strategic plan. Rather, from it will come a series of strategies and recommendations that will form the action plan for improving Downtown New Castle.



Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission offered input on the current strengths and weaknesses of Downtown, noted opportunities that the Town can pursue to advance Downtown and identified some threats that could cause Downtown New Castle to fall short of its desired potential.

A. STRENGTHS

1. Incredible History and Heritage

There are some fine architectural examples of the late 1800s and early 1900s building architecture. Several of these buildings continue to have historical significance, while others have been substantially altered over time. Immediately north of Downtown is the historic Old Town neighborhood that reflects a mining-era residential development, also with a number of homes characteristic of the community’s early railroad and mining history. This sense of history is unique to this part of the community and cannot be realized elsewhere in New Castle.

Heritage tourism attraction, built around this history, can have a positive economic effect on the community and help to build its branding and marketing story. Heritage tourism is, as defined by the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#), "traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that genuinely represent the stories of the past, including stories about people, culture, history and natural resources." New Castle can excel in this area. There are few communities in the area that make a strong presentation of their story. New Castle has started this effort, with display boards along Main Street (Museum on the Street). The New Castle Historical Museum is Downtown, just a few steps from Main Street. (Unfortunately, there is very little information to direct people to the museum.) When presented properly, the town's history can be a strong attraction and one of the fundamental building-block of a growth and development strategy. Any growth or changes in the community that erodes this key element of the community is not be appropriate.



2. Small Intimate Town Character

New Castle is home to about 4,700 people and retains the charm of a small town. There is a sense of comfort. People know and help each other. Downtown also symbolizes this small-town friendly attitude. When a person walks into a store it is not long before business owner knows their name. This is a major selling point, both about the community and Downtown. It must be a focus in the revitalization strategy. This attitude can be presented to each visitor and customer whenever contact is made in the Downtown area. That will make an impression.

3. Walkability

Downtown is a walkable experience — one that will ultimately sell Downtown to locals and visitors alike. Stores and existing and future amenities are concentrated in a relatively confined area. People tend to walk up to one-half mile for shopping and similar experiences. Downtown fits well within this range. Excellent systems of sidewalks and features exist to accommodate people of all ages and abilities. The Main Street streetscape has been substantially upgraded, involving significant community investment that sets the stage for further improvement and interest in Downtown. Downtown also is accessible from the immediately adjacent Old Town neighborhood. However, it is important to understand that the ability to walk from place to place is not enough for success. The pedestrian environment must be animated and lively, filled with shops, restaurants, and engaging activities that capture people's attention and interest.

4. Established Businesses

There are already a number of good businesses Downtown, particularly restaurants and bars and service commercial. In 2018 these include:

a. Restaurants and bars (6)

As of December 2018 there are six Restaurants and Bars in Downtown

b. Service Commercial

- Dentist
- Hair Salons
- Accounting Office
- Taxidermy Shop
- Real Estate Sales
- Martial Arts Studio
- Architectural Office
- Auto Repair

c. Retail

- Thrift Shop
- Liquor Store
- Floral Shop
- Dress Shop
- General Market
- Furniture Restoration and sale
- Beauty Supplies

Additionally, there other business already located elsewhere in New Castle that could be a strong contributor if recruited to a Downtown location.

5. Public Facilities

The town hall, library, community center and post office are Downtown. Each facility is relatively new, with the library being substantially upgraded in 2013. Each of these facilities has enough capacity to serve the community for many years. Each facility serves as a draw Downtown.

6. Events and Activities

There are many special events hosted Downtown throughout the year, with a particular concentration of these events occurring during the summer months. While events occur in various locations in the community, most occur Downtown. The fact that there are so many interesting events adds vitality to Downtown. It is important that this continues in the future. However, do these events attract a significant part of the local population? Can they be made attractive to, and known by, a broader population base in a way that contributes to the economic success of Downtown?

The New Hope Church has the potential to bring new art and cultural events to the community. As the performance center grows in use, it too can have a positive impact on Downtown. However, this will take work and coordination. The Town should work with New Hope to make sure that the facility is used to its full potential that is acceptable to New Hope. This will need organization, scheduling and marketing. To benefit Downtown, the Town must work with Downtown businesses, gain their cooperation, and leverage activity at the performance center and elsewhere in the community into spinoff activity, events and added business Downtown.

7. Outdoor Hangout Atmosphere

There is already quality sidewalk infrastructure to stroll Downtown. Numerous buildings already line the sidewalks on both sides of Main Street. While there are concerns about the level and type of occupancy of property and buildings at this time, there is a good foundation in place for a vibrant outdoor atmosphere. Furthermore, Burning Mountain Park, Ritter Plaza and, in the future, Liberty Park offers significant public gathering spaces on which to build. Many of the ingredients are in place for a future vibrant Downtown.

B. WEAKNESS

1. Incongruous Land Use

Today, there are eight single-family residential dwellings, including three mobile homes, and three vacant lots in key locations where commercial activity is needed. This is problematic. Ground floor residential dwellings take away from the commercial, gathering and entertainment experience. Too many of these uses diminish people's experience. They will not return if their perception or experience is poor.

In spite of significant recent improvements, there are still some downtown properties that need clean-up or screening.

2. Inconsistent Architecture

Historic building materials and designs typically included wood, brick and native stone, with larger repetitive display windows on the ground floor of buildings. As originally constructed, two-story structures often contained above-ground guest decks, supported by posts, that covered the sidewalk below. A number of buildings contained shed roofs on posts, also creating a sidewalk cover. False facades were common on pitched roof structures, allowing for dramatic commercial effect. Older two-story buildings usually contained a strong cornice feature.



Typical Architectural Design of the Early 1900s



False Front - Historical Wood and Brick and Stone Design - Victorian Era

Today, there are new architectural styles that do not match the historical character. While slavish conformity with 1890's architectural style is not desired, new construction and remodeling should fit seamlessly with existing buildings.

3. Inconsistent Zoning Practices

Section 17.36.030 of the Town zoning regulations state:

The Town's goals within the C-1 district is to retain historical characteristics of the downtown business area by preserving existing structures constructed prior to the year 1930. Remodeling and construction are encouraged to reflect the goals of the zone district; to enhance the town's attraction to residents, tourists, and visitors; to serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry; to reflect a pedestrian orientation; and to enhance property values.

These goals have not been consistently applied and, indeed, are not clear enough. The C-1 zoning codes need to be reviewed and updated;

Most commonly, zoning regulations allow only those uses defined as "permitted" in the zone district. Conditional or special review uses are typically "specified" uses that can advance the purpose of the zone district (in this case the C-1 downtown zone district) under certain circumstances. In general, they are allowed only after a proper review and conditions of approval established to make sure that they will, in fact, advance the objectives of the zone district. A permit is needed from the governing authority

specifying conditions that the use must adhere to make sure it is in the best interest of the zoned area. There is no reason to list non-permitted uses in a code.

The permitted and conditional use lists and conditional use criteria have not been evaluated since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted. It seems that the current zoning regulations are not consistent with the desired direction of the community and this Plan and they must be brought into alignment as soon as possible.

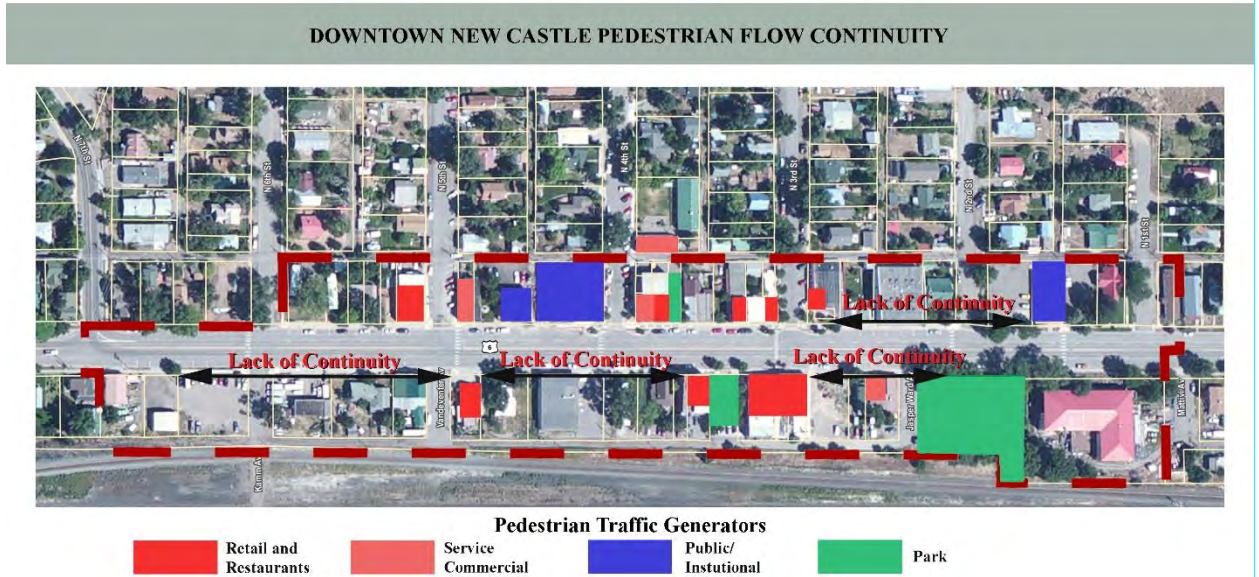
4. Lack of Critical Mass, Underutilization and Need for Rehabilitation

Currently there are periodic events and activities Downtown, primarily in Burning Mountain Park. The larger crowds are about 200 people. Occasionally, several businesses offer weekend entertainment. It appears that many residents do not know about Downtown events and activities. With respect to building space, some of the existing store space is simply underutilized, lacking uses that are open before 8:00 AM or after 5:00 PM when residents return from working elsewhere, or on the weekend. All things considered, there is not enough life/activity Downtown.

There is an interesting quandary that needs to be solved Downtown. First, while there is an existing mix of commercial businesses, that mix, particularly with respect to the retail sector, is not strong enough to attract significant numbers of people/shoppers routinely and generate return shopper interest. On the other hand, without sufficient numbers of people, there is not enough customer base to support interesting and niche retail uses.

Due to the number of factors, including vacant lots, lots used for inappropriate uses (e.g., single family dwellings), underutilized commercial space, and inappropriate building design that adds little or no interest for the pedestrian, there is a problem with pedestrian flow along Main Street. If, functionally, Downtown is compared to a shopping center, complete with anchor stores and inline retail creating a link between anchors, Downtown is lacking strong anchors on either end of Main Street. It also is missing some of the connective tissue (inline stores) that promote the flow of pedestrians over the entire course of Main Street. Without strong connections from one end of Main Street to the other and without a strong attraction at each end, many pedestrians will not walk the length of Main Street Downtown. People reach a gap in the experience and return in the direction from which they came. Such gaps also produce poor perceptions.

Most of the commercial land use Downtown is in the form of a service commercial uses and restaurants and bars. Niche retail is lacking. The absence of such retail is one of the reasons pedestrian flow is lacking. There is not enough shopping to cause pedestrian to investigate Main Street from one end to the other. This is a problem must be addressed in a redevelopment and improvement strategy.



5. Visibility/Curb Appeal/Image From I-70 is an Eyesore

This issue is raised by many in the community. The view of the New Castle from the I-70 corridor often amounts to people’s first and sometimes only impression of the community. There are extensive areas of unkempt and sluffing hillsides, deteriorating fences, property owner/tenant junk and debris, vehicles and dumpsters visible from the I-70 corridor, and Town-owned buildings painted colors that clash with the surrounding environment. One property includes large private advertising signs on the side of a building that, if done properly, could be a community amenity. Now, it is comparable to billboard advertising for private business.

Unfortunately, this problem affects more than just Downtown. Failure to solve it will negatively affect Downtown and the community. Much of this problem occurs on private property. The solution will need public involvement and capital for improvements, resident cooperation and regulatory enforcement (which is sometimes unpopular).



Hillside cuts and scars



Public buildings colors contrasting to vegetation and little visual screening

6. Lack of Retail Draw Downtown

Many of New Castle’s residents now leave the community each day for work. Leaving or returning, many residents make convenient shopping stops at businesses or the bank in the New Castle Plaza. For various reasons, too few residents of Castle Valley Ranch and Lakota Canyon Ranch visit Downtown regularly. As noted above, a critical mass necessary to support retail shopping and entertainment destination does not exist Downtown. There are not enough suitable evening or weekend events. Events for the sake of events is not the goal. Events that promote and build the community brand and significant events that are known and attractive to many residents should be the goal. For a variety of reasons, then, the demand for new shopping and other amenities Downtown is probably not supportable until the Town begins to deal effectively with this problem.

It seems that today, the New Castle Plaza serves as the de facto downtown of the community. However, by the very nature of the shopping plaza, it cannot fill the “heart” function that a successful community needs.

7. Lack of Downtown Identity and Direction at U.S. Highway 6 And 24 and Castle Valley Boulevard

Downtown is not on the direct path of many residents coming and going in the community. The main traffic intersection is about one-mile from Downtown. At this intersection, which is the primary entrance to the community, there is no indication that there is in fact a downtown. Until recently, there was a small sign on the north side of the intersection, although it was not effective or visible. Residents and visitors alike were not aware of the directional sign. Furthermore, the view of it was often blocked by garage sale and other similar signs. There is no Downtown directional signage at the intersection now.



Ineffective Entryway Sign for visibility and no connection to town brand

9. Lack of Branding and Marketing Presence

There is a lack of knowledge and understanding about Downtown. Too often, it seems that residents are not fully aware of what is available or happening Downtown. When visitors arrive, they are not given good information about Downtown or the community as a whole. There is very little public information – what to do in New Castle – at U.S. Highway 6 and 24 and Castle Valley Boulevard, the community’s primary access intersection. Furthermore, it appears that too few people residing in nearby communities are aware of Downtown New Castle. The few that do visit Downtown are usually “surprised” at how good the restaurants are and that it is a nice place.

The Town of New Castle hired Hill Aevium Marketing to complete a branding and marketing plan for the community in 2016. What is a community branding and marketing plan? A community brand is something that distinguishes or differentiates New Castle and its downtown from other nearby, regional and state-wide communities. Why should somebody want to visit Downtown New Castle; why should they want to return? If New Castle wants to attract new business investment, real estate developers, and new and returning customers Downtown, it must get potential “customers” to know about it, be moved by it and then want to experience it. It must take steps to advance that brand through public relations and marketing. As Downtown improves, a marketing effort will tell its potential customers (residents and visitors) and advance its position in the eyes of those customers. Once Downtown does this, customers will not only come Downtown, they will return.

Follow through and more funding is needed to advance this effort. Moreover, there must be local people (champions) that are committed to the idea, are enthusiastic and will carry it forward. The Town of New Castle, with a limited staff size now, cannot be expected to do it all and citizen volunteers and paid staff to this cause will likely be required in the future. To this end, the town recently appointed a citizen Branding and Marketing Committee, which will need support and resources to carry out this important task.

9. Lack of a Strong Gathering Place

It was noted above that there is some hangout atmosphere Downtown in restaurants and taverns. Burning Mountain Park is a place for events and activities, as is the community center. In 2017, there will be about 20 events in this park or nearby in Downtown, with the larger events typically attended by about 200 people.

As a society, we are moving into an age of “third places.” The first place is the home, the second place is work, and the third is place is where we go to hang out and connect with other people. (For example, Starbuck’s has built its entire operation on being a “third place.”) New Castle must offer this same sense of connection and gathering Downtown and it must be attractive to all age groups. It needs to create dependable and recognizable activities and events, known to many, and attractive to a broad segment of the community.

10. Railroad

Some people have listened for years to the train horn at all hours of the day. Many become accustomed to the sound the train makes as it passes through the uncontrolled public road crossing at Kamm Avenue. The fact that it is an uncontrolled, public road crossing may be the only reason for the disturbance of the horn. There are very few vehicle or pedestrian trips through this intersection, as it provides access to the Town's Wastewater Treatment Facility. While it is not known for sure, an assessment is needed to determine what impact this disruption has on potential residential development Downtown. If it proves to be a concern, the Town needs to find a cost-efficient way to control this intersection to end the need for the train horn, particularly during the nighttime hours when there is no need to cross the railroad at this intersection, other than in emergencies with the wastewater system.

11. Disconnection from The Community

Downtown core is disconnected from the rest of the community. As noted before, Downtown is off the main travel way in the community, that being 1-70 to Castle Valley Boulevard. Downtown is not easily accessible, particularly by pedestrians, from the community's largest residential neighborhoods. Mt. Medaris is clearly a barrier now. There is one trail from Castle Valley Boulevard, connecting Hot Shot Park and South Wildhorse Drive with C Avenue immediately east of Downtown. While this helps, the trail has steep sections. For some, the trail grade is not a problem. However, it is problematic for many, particularly those in the younger or older age ranges. Keep in mind that growth in Garfield County over the next 15-years will include many of those moving into retirement ages. Moreover, the trail is only useful during daylight hours.

As Downtown improves, connectivity with the community will become increasingly important. The Town must find a way to connect its neighborhoods with Downtown. Options that will get people to Downtown without overloading the available parking must be carried out.

12. Lack of formal organization or meaningful capital improvement plan/financial mechanisms

The Town's annual operating revenue is enough to meet the basic operating needs of the community. Unfortunately, it is not enough to allow the Town the luxury of pursuing a larger community investment strategy, including all the action steps that will be necessary to improve Downtown. The community needs economic development to increase the revenue so the Town Council can carry out a community investment strategy.

For example, shopping centers of the 1960s, 70s, 80s, and 90s and now successful Downtowns (e.g., the Denver Partnership) offer many benefits to retailers, including planned marketing, maintenance, recruitment of businesses and managed redevelopment and improvement strategies. For the most part, these are absent or limited Downtown New Castle. The Town has constructed streetscape improvements and does basic maintenance of streets, sidewalks and alleys. Citizen volunteers (Downtown Alliance) are trying to make improvements. However, it is difficult for volunteers, without proper financial resources and full-time staff help, to make significant and sustained improvements like those needed

Downtown. For success, there partnerships must be created. Community involvement is needed. Proper resources (human and financial) must be aimed at the improvement and sustained success of Downtown.

14. Parking is Problematic

The number of publicly owned parking spaces on Main Street between the Post Office and 6th Street is 86 spaces. This is not a large number of spaces for a successful downtown. Today, there are only a few instances when this number of parking spaces is insufficient. It is more than enough most of the time for the current uses Downtown. In the future, as use improves Downtown, the amount of parking may be inadequate.

The following analysis of parking available in 2018 is limited to Main Street. Note that there is additional parking available on side streets.

Current Number of Spaces – 2nd Street to 6th/Kamm

North Side	29 Spaces
South Side	26 Spaces
Community Center Lot	<u>13 Spaces</u>
TOTAL	68 Spaces

Downtown needs both a short and long-term parking improvement plan. The short-term plan must address the need to stimulate commercial and residential development and the conflicting parking regulations in the Town’s Code. Eventually, the number of parking spaces must expand as the amount of commercial and residential tenant floor area increases.

It is difficult to increase the number of parking space along Main Street today. The State of Colorado owns the right-of-way and CDOT controls the maintenance and use of the street, including parking. CDOT’s policy is to keep parallel parking. Before CDOT will alter this policy to allow an increase in the number of parking spaces, the Town must accept the maintenance and improvement responsibility for the street, including the financial obligation.

The Town is not in the position to accept this responsibility. Increases in the Town’s revenue through economic development and tax base expansion or other means is needed before this can happen. With more revenue, the Town might be in a position someday to accept this responsibility. The Town will likely want to arrange for CDOT to repair the bridge at the west end of Main Street and complete the installation of a roundabout at the U.S. Highway 6 and 24 – Castle Valley Boulevard before taking this step. (The roundabout is not schedule for construction 2019 or 2020 as part of a larger Exit 105 interchange improvement plan.) Once the Town begins to experience sustained revenue increases, it will be able to take on Main Street maintenance, allowing it to carry out a long-term parking plan that increases the number of public parking spaces Downtown.

C. OPPORTUNITIES

1. Cultural Heritage

Successful revitalization themes should be a reflection of the unique character of the local market and it must be engaging and it must be presented in the best possible light. This is one of the potential strengths of New Castle and it can be developed and symbolized Downtown. New Castle must take advantage of its cultural heritage. The Town can engage History Colorado and other organizations to identify the best examples of heritage tourism presentations and learn how it can be done in New Castle.

2. Appropriate Commercial and Support Mix Downtown

The specialty or niche retail store trend argues for greater attention to downtown area design issues such as building appearance and pedestrian environments.

Specialty retail stores often act as strong anchors, particularly in smaller communities, and especially when they target specific audiences. In enhanced downtowns, no longer are department stores or other large retail businesses essential. Instead, non-traditional anchors are effectively drawing new patrons. These include uses such as movie theaters, the arts and music, art galleries, brew pubs, coffee houses, museums, community theaters, community and recreation centers, community colleges, farmers' markets, and specialty businesses. What Downtown New Castle can offer that a traditional shopping mall cannot is the "environment and experience."

3. Mixed-Use and Lifestyle Potential

Downtown living can offer unique amenities and lifestyle choices. One of the values of this lifestyle option is it expands the market that is within walking distance of Downtown businesses.

Several national and local trends point to increasing opportunities for Downtown housing. The number of households potentially interested in downtown residences is growing as more young professionals are waiting to start families and older age groups are looking to downsize their housing— Given the convenience of so many activities and amenities, the lifestyle option may become more significant as the costs associated with transportation increase.

There are opportunities for second and third story residential use in new construction and redevelopment Downtown. There may be significant redevelopment potential and opportunities for other housing types such as accessory dwellings. Additionally, creating opportunities to transition to a higher density redevelopment into the immediate edge of the Old Town neighborhood might be considered.

Identifying vacant and underutilized properties and actively promoting their redevelopment might encourage developers to tackle more complex projects. The public sector's role is to promote an environment in which in-fill housing and redevelopment can flourish. The Town can create such an environment through political support, initiating regulatory changes, promoting partnerships when right and providing economic incentives and leadership. Improvement Downtown must rely on the funds and ability of the private sector to develop, own and maintain mixed-use housing. Creative solutions and cooperative efforts by developers, lenders, and Town officials will be necessary to offset the extra constraints of developing downtown housing, but the right efforts can result in a vibrant downtown area.

4. Reserve of Local Artists, Writers, and Business Owners/Executives to Draw Expertise

The community has local artists, writers, business resources and executives that might have time and capacity to help develop the amenities and programs that together will create the environment and experience necessary for success Downtown. The value of local expertise cannot be overstated. Art in public places, music and concert series downtown, galleries and storytelling events, fairs and markets must be developed to the extent possible and within reason. Local business executives can be consulted about the needs of the business community and specific actions that could be taken to attract businesses Downtown. A number of the community's residents own or run business in nearby communities. Tapping into this group of people to find businesses that might be interested in relocating to New Castle is one of the first steps in an economic development plan - the "low hanging fruit." The expertise of all these people must be pulled together through task force work aimed at developing specific solutions and programs. Engaging these locals also creates interest and commitment to success and builds social capital.

5. Stronger Social and Entertainment Center

It is possible to attract more residents Downtown by improving gathering spaces. Once they are there, it is likely that those people will come to understand and support businesses there. It also might be possible to increase or improve local events that attract people from outside the community. Events based around a well-crafted and marketed community brand are needed (e.g., Mountain Bike Festival and festivals based around a recreation theme and a recreation-oriented brand). Burning Mountain Park is a sizable space. However, there are features of the park and its surroundings that limit its usability. It might be possible to expand the park and redesign it to increase the use and benefits to Downtown.

6. Opportunity for Pop-Up/Incubator Entrepreneurs, Entertainers and Businesses

New Castle can build on its strength and overcome some of the weakness of Downtown by recruiting and nurturing start-up businesses, including business ventures in a formative phase that are not ready for more expensive rents in other nearby communities. Some of

these might be users of office space. Others might be seedling retailers who could eventually grow into larger spaces. Others might be successful businesses now operating in Glenwood Springs or in the Roaring Fork Valley that would like a small presence elsewhere, provided it is low cost and easy to maintain. The Town might offer incentives to attract these businesses, or even offer inexpensive space to operate. The Town also might consider the idea of pop-up venues for entertainment if they advance the overall goal of bring life and vitality Downtown.

Today, some pop-up stores run without paid personnel. They are regularly stocked and customers enter with the swipe of a credit card and make purchase from the stocked items. There are opportunities to work with solid businesses throughout the area that would like to have a pop-up outlet, staffed or unstaffed, in New Castle. There are opportunities to add on-line shopping into an exciting entertainment and cultural activity center or to take advantage of cooperative retail arrangements that bring together small retails throughout the area under one roof Downtown.

Some existing structures in downtown can be adapted to offer smaller merchant spaces within a building. In other cases, the Town can allow and promote pop-up space outside of existing buildings in a cost-effective manner. This approach can help until a commercial market matures Downtown, thereby prompting permanent redevelopment solutions. The idea would be to help small businesses get a foothold and grow Downtown. As they mature, they become future tenants for new redevelopment projects, which want established tenants.

Of course the use of pop-up structures has the potential of being inconsistent with the historic nature of Main Street. A change in Zoning to allow pop-ups must be approached with care.

7. Long-Term Parking

Normally, limited parking is problematic because it is costly to expand the number of parking spaced in a downtown area. However, this is not the case in New Castle. The Town is not able to change this parking arrangement until such time as it agrees to take over management responsibilities for the roadway. If and when the Town decides to do this, it would be simple and low-cost for the Town to alter the current parking arrangement. By switching the parallel parking on only one side of the street to a diagonal parking arrangement the Town can increase the number of public parking spaces on Main Street between the Post Office and 6th Street from 68 to 109. This is a 60% increase in the number of parking space long-term at very little cost.

Changes are also possible on several side streets Downtown. For example:

Kamm	40' R-O-W allows 2 parallel parking lanes and two 9' travel lanes; one 5-foot sidewalk
	40' R-O-W allows 1 diagonal and one parallel parking lane and two 8' drive lanes; narrow but workable; no sidewalk.

Vandeventer

50' R-O-W allows 1 diagonal and one parallel parking lane and two 10-foot driving lanes' one 5-foot sidewalk.

8. Mt. Medaris

For some time, Mt. Medaris has been an obstacle and a barrier to the success of the community. This will have to change. As the community desires responsible growth and improvement, it must decide what it can do with this prominent feature. Either it can continue to be a detriment and a barrier to the community or the community will have to look at this feature in a whole new light, where it becomes a community asset. The Town Council, at its 2017 retreat, stated that "Mt. Medaris must be activated as a gathering place for the benefit of Downtown and the community."

9. Town Trail System -

Continue efforts to improve the Town's network of Trails as well as the associated Trail events.

10. Provide allowances for small infill homes in the R-1 Zoning District.

11. Carefully planned signage can help people find downtown and other New Castle assets.

D. THREATS

1. Unwilling to Accept Change

Attempts to hold on to the "old" quiet small-town image also will be problematic. The community is going to change and it is going to grow. Progress is hindered when there is an unwillingness to accept the realities of growth or the kind of change that will be necessary to achieve a successful Downtown and community. It is not a question of growth versus no growth. As pointed out above, growth and development and a corresponding increase in the community tax base is needed. However, success is achieved when it is guided/directed and consistent with the community's vision and desires.

2. Failure to Support the Role of Downtown

The purpose of Downtown must be well-defined. It must differ and stay a special place within the community, while also recognizing that other mixed-use areas do exist throughout Town.

3. Lack of Appropriate Economic Development Community-Wide

The lack of economic development that leads to sustained increases in public revenues to support a comprehensive community investment strategy, including implementing the needed actions to improve/strengthen Downtown, will be problematic. Investment and improvements are not only necessary Downtown, by there must be a community

development strategy that promotes appropriate types and amounts of commercial and industrial development elsewhere in New Castle so the Town Council can, someday, advance a comprehensive community investment and improvement strategy for the benefit of the community.

Appendix Three

IMPLEMENTATION

This implementation schedule aims to give the Town a starting point for moving forward. It should first be viewed as an **organizational tool**. It aims to sequence the various implementation tasks in a common-sense, prompt and cost-effective ways to improve Downtown. It also assigns responsibilities for completing those tasks. In reality, it will likely take more time than outlined here to complete the many tasks identified to carry out the Plan due to resource limitations and other factors, sometimes beyond the control of the Town. The Town may find that opportunities and priorities change over time, necessitating changes in task implementation schedule. The periodic status and progress review set out in this implementation schedule is intended to allow for and accommodate just this sort of flexibility. Therefore, the Town should not be tied to adhering to this timeline. However, it should be committed to continuous forward movement. Second, then, this implementation schedule should be used routinely by all parties, including the Town Council, as a **tool to monitor and evaluate progress, make sure follow through on assigned responsibilities happens and that the objectives of the Plan are accomplished and momentum does not diminish**.

TASK	Action YR	Responsible
Plan Review and Update		
1. Adopt Downtown Improvement and Action Plan	2018	TP / PC / TC
2. Biennial review and status report on Plan	2020 2021	TP / PC / TC
3. 2nd Biennial review and status report on Plan	2022 2022	TP / PC / TC
4. Comprehensive review of the Downtown Improvement Plan	2024 2025	TP / PC / TC
Organization		
1. Determine the feasibility and interest in a Membership Association	2019	DIC / TA / TC
2. Create a non-profit association if interest	2019	DIC / TA / TC
3. Determine the feasibility and interest in a Business Improvement District	2019-2020	DIC / TA / TC

4. Create a BID if interest	2020-2021	DIC / TA / TC
5. Appoint or hire an improvement coordinator (IC)	2018-2019	TA / TC
6. Communication with Downtown property owners and business	2018 - 2023	TP / DIC

Land Use Policy

1. Amend Zoning Regulations to incorporate new land use policy	2018	TP / PC / TC
--	------	--------------

Zoning Regulations Amendments

1. Amend Zone District purpose and intent	2018	TP / PC / TC
2. Conduct an audit of permitted and conditional uses to endure consistency with new district purpose and intent	2019	TP / PC / TC
3. Downtown height limit	2018	TP / PC / TC
4. Downtown residential parking requirements and mitigation	2018	TP / PC / TC
5. Downtown short-term accommodations	2018	TP / PC / TC
6. Downtown Permitted and conditional uses	2018	TP / PC / TC
7. Eliminate prohibited use lists	2018	TP / PC / TC
8. Amend non-conforming use damage and discontinuance provisions	2018	TP / PC / TC
9. Clarify and improve conditional use approval criteria	2018	TP / PC / TC
10. Distinguish between signs and public art, murals, interpretative displays and public information banners	2018	TP / PC / TC
11. C- 1 architectural design and building appearance	2018	TP / PC / TC
12. Ground floor residential dwellings	2018	TP / PC / TC
13. Old Town accessory dwelling unit	2019	TP / PC / TC

Regulatory Enforcement and Clean up

1. Storage of materials within a building or obscured by a fence of at least 6-feet in height	2018	TP / TC
2. Storage areas shall be restricted to the rear twenty-five (25) feet of a lot	2018	TP / TC
3. Debris removal and stored vehicles	2018	TP / TC
4. Non-conforming off-premises signs	2018	TP / TC
5. Dilapidated fences	2018	TP / TC

I-70 Corridor Visual Improvement

1. Town budget for community and I-70 corridor clean up	2018-2022	IC / DIC / TA / TC
2. Clean up day	2018	IC / DIC / TA / TC
3. Budget for screening fence	2019	IC / DIC / TA / TC
4. Construct fence along south alley	2019	PW
5. Meet with owners for access and improvement approval	2018	IC / DIC / TA / TC

6. Construct iconic identifier for Downtown	2024	IC / DIC / TA / TC
7. Develop capital improvement plan for visual improvement	2018	IC / PW / TC
8. Construct slope, revegetation, forestry and fencing improvements in corridor	2019 - 2023	PW / TC
9. Screen / fence impound area at the wastewater treatment facility	2019-2023	PW
10. Paint Town wastewater treatment buildings	2024-2025	PW

Burning Mountain Park Design

1. Remove the gazebo and construct temporary performance stage	2018	PW
2. Town budget for matching planning grant funds	2019	IC / TA / TC
3. Make Planning Grant Application to GOCO	2019	IC
4. Contract for short and long-term park improvement plan	2019	IC / TC / DIC
5. Approve master plan and improvement schedule	2019	PC / TC / DIC
6. Long-term lease of acquisition of 2 Coronas parking lot		TA / TC
7. Incorporate Jasper Ward Avenue into park	2020	PW / TC
8. Town budget for matching construction grant	2019	IC / TA / TC
9. Make Construction Grant Application to GOCO	2019	IC
10. Initiate Phase 1 improvements	2020-2021	PW / TC
11. Initiate Long-Term Improvements	TBD	PW / TC

Wayfinding Sign Plan Implementation

1. Gain concept approval of sign plan by CDOT	2018	TP
2. Construct and install Phase 1 gateway directional sign at main entry	2018	PW
3. Budget other gateway and in-town navigation signs	2019	IC / TA / TC
4. Construct and install Phase 1 other gateway and in-town navigation signs	2019	PW
5. Budget Secondary Navigation Signs	2020	IC / TA / TC
6. Construct and install Phase 1 secondary navigation signs	2020	PW
7. Budget community directory and event signs	2021	IC / TA / TC
8. Construct and install Phase 1 community directory and event signs	2021	PW
9. Design branded Downtown arrival signs	TBD	BMC / Consultant
10. Budget branded Downtown arrival signs	TBD	IC / TA / TC
11. Construct Downtown arrival signs	TBD	PW
12. Final Phase 2 branded wayfinding system design and approval	TBD	TP / BMC / CDOT
13. Budget Phase 2 wayfinding signing system	TBD	BMC / TA / TC
14. Construct Phase 2 wayfinding signing system	TBD	PW

Branding and Marketing		
1. Develop a community/Downtown branding strategy concept	2018-2019	BMC
2. Approve a community and Downtown branding and marketing concept	2018-2019	BMC / TC
3. Budget	2018	TA / BMC / TC
4. Hire consultant expertise	2018-2019	BMC / TA / TC
5. Refine and initiate strategy	2018 - 2022	BMC / Consultant
6. Identify potential grants and other funding sources	2019-2024	BMC / Consultant
7. Develop with local artist and consultant a gateway/roundabout brand identity statement plan	2019	BMC / PW / CDOT
8. Budget gateway brand improvement	2020	TA / BMC / TC
9. Construct gateway brand improvement	2020	PW / CDOT
10. Install Downtown event communication banner at Castle Valley Boulevard	2018-2024	DIC / BMC / PW

Placemaking		
1. Conduct community survey for input	2019	IC / TA/ TC
2. Budget public art signature piece acquisitions	2019 - 2024	DIC/ TA/ TC
3. Identify signature installation locations	2018	DIC
4. Acquisition of signature installation pieces	2019-2024	DIC / TC
5. Budget artist stipends	2018-2024	DIC / TA / TC
6. Call-to-artist public art loan program	2018-2024	DIC
7. Budget for aesthetic improvement	2018-2024	TA / DIC / TC
8. Install festive lighting and banners in Ritter Plaza and street trees	2018-2019	PW
9. Develop a schedule of events for Downtown	2018-2024	DIC / BMC
10. Budget annual events and activities	2018-2024	TA / DIC / TC
11. Remove planter from Mattivi Plaza	2019	PW
12. Work with property owners to determine if fencing along Main Street sidewalk can be removed	2019	TP / PW
13. Identify best Community Cultural History Programs in State	2019	Hist. CO
14. Budget or fund raiser for Cultural History presentation expansion on Main Street	2019-2024	DIC/ TA /TC
15. Expand Museum on the Street Program - apply the best examples	2019-2024	DIC
16. Technology assessment to expand Museum on the Street program	2019	IC / DIC
17. Grant application for Cultural History presentation expansion	2020	IC
18. Landscape community center parking lot frontage	2019	PW
19. Landscape 2 Coronas parking lot frontage	2019	PW
20. Determine the feasibility of Downtown rail quiet zone	2018	TP / PW
21. Quiet zone application if feasible	2018 - 2019	TP / PW
22. Abandon Kamm Avenue "public" crossing if feasible	2019	TA / TC

23. Construct crossing control device if feasible 2019 PW

Historical Preservation and Restoration

1. Meeting to develop C-1 zone design guidelines 2018 TP / PC/ HPC
 2. Town line item budget for historic restoration planning and assistance 2019-2024 HPC / TA / TC
 3. Carry out property owner information program 2018-2019 TP / Hist. CO/ HPC
 4. Initiation discussions with Martial Arts Building property owner 2018-2019 HPC
 5. Offer grant and technical assistance to property owners for restoration 2019-2024 HPC

Downtown Housing

1. Prepare ADU educational material and session with Old Town owners 2018-2019 TP / PC
 2. Hold information and discussion session with Old Town owners 2019 TP / PC
 3. Accessory Dwelling Unit zoning amendment 2019 TP / PC / TC

Near-Term Activity

1. Appoint a committee to evaluate the feasibility of a kitchen incubator program 2018 TC
 2. Pursue grant for kitchen incubator if feasible 2019 IC / TA / TC
 3. Construct community kitchen if feasible 2019 PW / contract
 4. Improve Kamm restroom for internal / external access 2019 PW / contract
 4. Determine feasibility of pop-up retail, restaurant and similar activity generating uses for Kamm Property 2018 IC / TA
 5. If feasible, develop a pop-up site plan for the Kamm property 2018 IC / PW / consultant
 6. Acquire pop-up containers and design to standards 2019 IC / TA / TC
 7. If feasible, construct pop-up retail, restaurants, and entertainment on Kamm property 2019 PW / contract

East End Activity Center

1. Complete and approve master plan and improvement schedule for Burning Mt. Park 2019 PC / TC / DIC
 2. Initiate discussion with key property owners and determine interest 2019-2020 IC / DIC / TA/ TC
 3. Initiate negotiations/partnership agreement on School House TBD IC / DIC / TA/ TC
 4. Determine is parking on the west side of the post office building could be a redevelopment site 2019-2020 IC / DIC
 5. Jasper Ward Avenue - incorporate into park 2020 PW / TC
 6. Conduct a development opportunity study to determine feasibility of various longer-term development scenarios for redevelopment sites Downtown 2019-2020 IC / DIC / TA/ TC

West End Activity Center

1. Initiate discussion with key property owners and determine interest	2018-2019	IC / DIC / TA/ TC
2. Determine the feasibility of land banking the Texaco and Kamm Property and relocating Kamm Avenue	2019	IC / DIC / TA/ TC
3. Conduct a development opportunity study to determine feasibility of various longer-term development scenarios for redevelopment sites Downtown	2019-2020	IC / DIC / TA/ TC
4. Develop a property acquisition fund	2019 - 2024	TA / TC

Mt. Medaris Activity Center

1. Determine feasibility of the Mt. Medaris Activity Center and Recreation Plan	2019	TA / TC /Contract
2. Approve the Mt. Medaris Activity Center and Recreation Plan if feasible	2019	PC / TC
3. Conduct a lift alignment and cost study if feasible	2020	PW / Lift Comp
4. Construct lift if feasible	2021-2022	Lift Comp
5. Develop mountain top programming and improvement leasing options	2021-2022	Rec / TA / TC
6. Budget mountain top capital improvements	2022-2027	TA / TC
7. Construct mountain top improvements	2022-2027	PW

Transportation Improvements

1. Complete Main Street lane diet plan	2018	PW / CDOT
2. Construction entryway roundabout	2019-2020	PW / CDOT
3. Develop a "C" Avenue transportation corridor improvement plan	2019	IC / PW
4. Identify any requirements for allowing electric bikes and carts in corridor	2018-2019	IC / PW
5. Pave "C" Avenue transportation trail	2019	PW
6. Install lighting along "C" Avenue trail	2019-2022	PW
7. Improve north side alley between Avenue C and 4th Street as part of the Alt. Transportation Corridor	2019-2022	PW
8. Install recharging and rental stations at terminals	2019-2022	PW / Contract
9. Conduct community survey for input	2019	TA/ TC
10. Conduct feasibility assessment for an in-town transit circulator	2019-2020	TA / TC / RFTA
11. Jasper Ward Avenue - incorporate into park	2020	PW / TC
12. Improve alley drive by 2 Coronas	2020	PW
13. Identify potential alleyway parking improvement	2019	IC / PW
14. Budget for alley parking acquisition and improvements if feasible	2020-2023	PW / TA / TC
15. Agreements with CDOT on west end bridge and Main Street improvements	TBD	PW / TA / TC

- | | | |
|---|-----|--------------|
| 16. Determine feasibility of accepting Main Street maintenance responsibility | TBD | PW / TA / TC |
| 17. Make long-term parking and bike lane improvements on Main Street | TBD | PW / TA / TC |

- | | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| TA | Town Manager |
| TC | Town Council |
| PC | Planning and Zoning Commission |
| PW | Public Works |
| TP | Town Planner |
| IC | Improvement Coordinator |
| DIC | Downtown Improvement Committee |
| BMC | Branding and Marketing Committee |
| Hist CO | History Colorado |
| CDOT | Colorado Department of Transportation |