

# COS Creek Plan

— RESTORE | PLAY | THRIVE —

Fountain Creek Watershed Vision & Implementation Plan



November 27, 2023



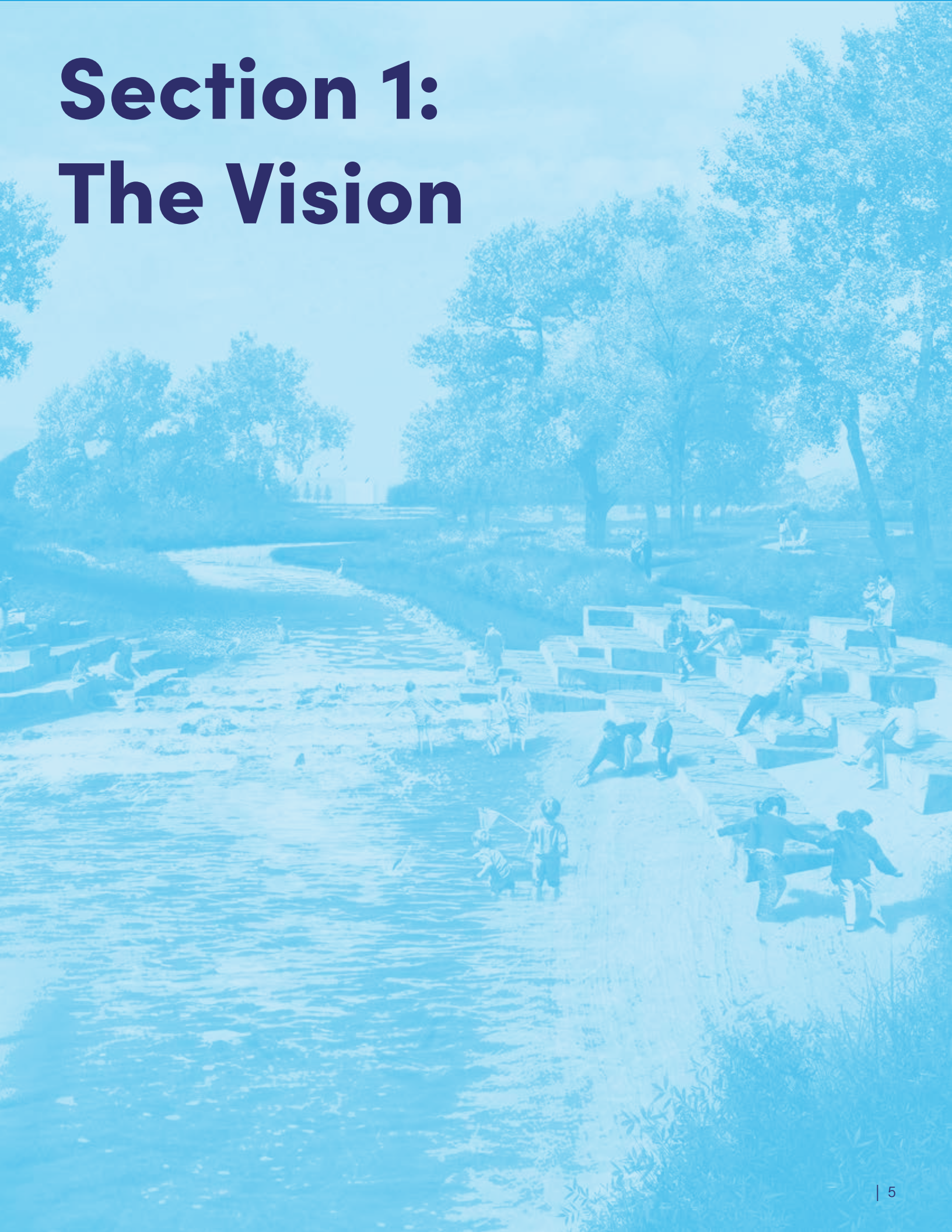
# CONTENTS

<b>SECTION 1: THE VISION</b>	<b>5</b>
Fountain Creek Watershed Vision	6
A Holistic Vision	8
A Watershed Approach	10
Primary Plan Recommendations	12
<b>SECTION 2: A MULTI-PURPOSE CORRIDOR</b>	<b>15</b>
Restore the Natural Functions of the Creek Channel	16
Water Quality and Sediment Management	17
Selectively Remove and Relocate Levees	18
Trail Connections	19
Expanded Park Network	20
Redevelopment Opportunities	21
Connected Corridors   North	22
Connected Corridors   Monument Valley	23
Connected Corridors   South	24
A Restored Floodplain	26
<b>SECTION 3: EIGHT NEW AND REVITALIZED PARKS</b>	<b>29</b>
Eight New and Revitalized Parks   Overview	30
North Nevada Promenade and Pikeview Reservoir Park	32
Gossage Park Adventure Playground	34
Roswell Place	36
Monument Valley Park and Centennial Neighborhood	38
College Landing at Uintah	42
America The Beautiful Park	46
Drake Waterfront Reimagined	50
Gateway Park South	54
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>58</b>





# Section 1: The Vision





# FOUNTAIN CREEK WATERSHED VISION







The Fountain and Monument Creek corridor always has been the lifeblood of Colorado Springs. The corridor's rich natural resources sustained Native American tribes and attracted European settlers. General Palmer, the founder of Colorado Springs, realized the scenic and recreational value of the area and created a network of parkways that have been a defining element of Colorado Springs' identity. Over time, the natural character and functions of the corridor have been altered and disconnected, the richness diminished, and the creek access made inaccessible.

Informed by multiple planning efforts completed in the recent past, this plan lays out a comprehensive vision and strategy to restore the creek's environmental qualities, promote economic vitality, create a sense of place, and greatly enhance and expand the recreational opportunities that were so important to General Palmer's original vision.



# A HOLISTIC VISION

## A Vision for Restoring the Fountain and Monument Creek Corridor with Implications for the Watershed

The principles that guide this vision for the corridor, including Monument and Fountain Creeks, are based on the belief that storm water and flood risk management can be an integral part of a larger goal to maintain and restore natural functions of the creeks throughout the watershed. Moreover, it provides opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and enhancement of the economic value and quality of life for citizens and visitors of Colorado Springs. These principles include the following:

### » **Restore the Natural Functions of the Corridor**

Reestablish natural functions of the Monument and Fountain Creek floodplains as a part of a larger plan where all stream courses within the watershed are multi-use, multi-functional community assets.

*Restored natural functions, which include increased channel sinuosity and working floodplain terraces, can improve water quality, enhance wildlife habitat, and increase groundwater recharge.*

### » **Create a Premiere Destination for Outdoor Recreation and Leisure**

Expand recreation opportunities to take advantage of the corridor's natural scenic and recreational qualities to unlock its full potential.

*Provide opportunities for water access, water recreation, and environmental education.*

### » **Support Economic Vitality and Revitalization**

Capitalize on corridor and waterway enhancements to encourage economic development and revitalization through traditional private development as well as public/private partnerships.

*Orient and link new development towards an enhanced creek to encourage revitalization and redevelopment along the corridor.*

### » **Build a Strong Sense of Place Unique to Colorado Springs**

Enhance the corridor's natural qualities and recreational potential integrated within the City of Colorado Springs to strengthen its sense of place, distinct identity, improve the quality of life for residents, and provide memorable experiences for visitors.

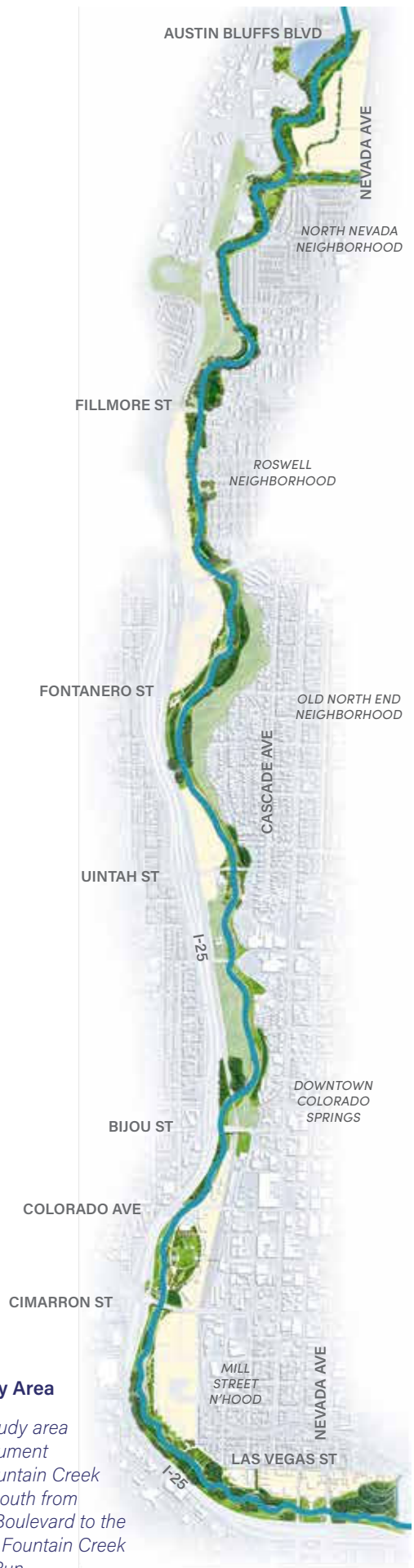
*Placemaking and public art installations act as a beacon along the trail while creating moments of delight and fostering local identity.*





**Project Study Area**

*The project study area includes Monument Creek and Fountain Creek and extends south from Austin Bluffs Boulevard to the confluence of Fountain Creek and Shook's Run.*





# A WATERSHED APPROACH

Aligned with the important local value of “complete creeks,” this vision recommends a number of opportunities throughout the Colorado Springs area. This plan’s primary recommendations are fully compatible with the City’s objectives for improving stormwater quality, reducing sediment, and managing flood risk as found in reports such as the municipal stormwater and construction guidelines as well as master planning documents approved by the City.

## » Reestablish Functioning Floodplains throughout the watershed

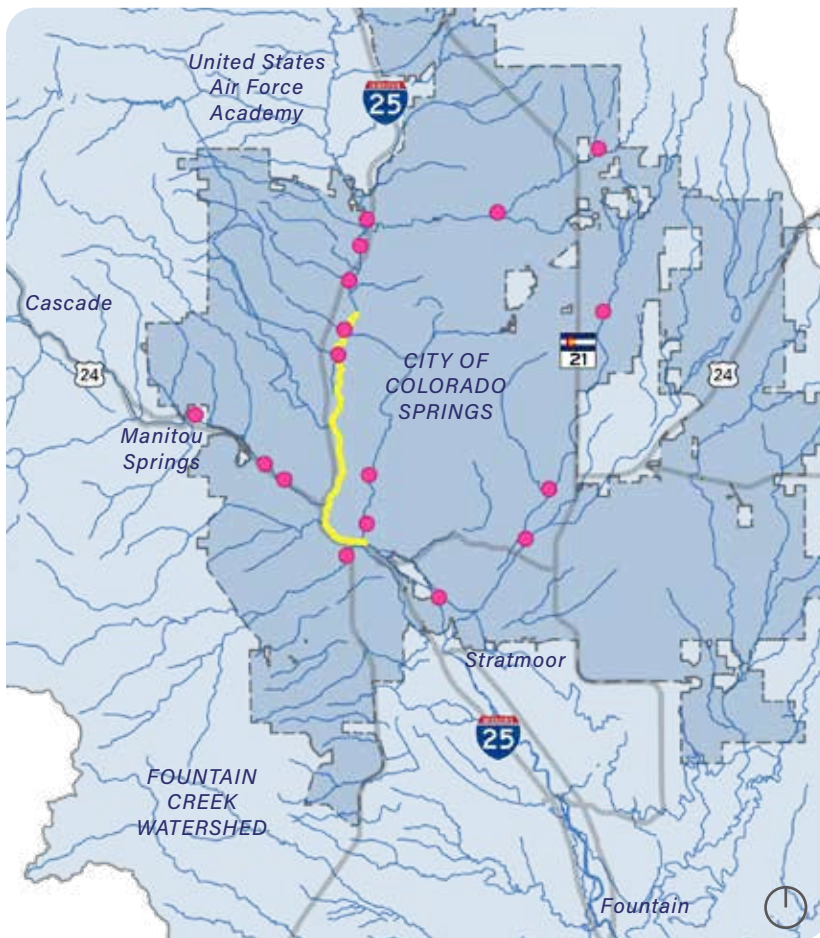
Restore the original sinuosity of the stream channel and reestablish floodplain terraces to the degree possible to enhance water quality, wildlife habitat, and scenic natural qualities.

## » Improve Neighborhood Connections and expand the trail network

Create an expanded, interconnected, continuous network of recreational trails that improve creek and neighborhood access. Establish a hierarchy of trails to increase the quality and diversity of recreational experiences and complement the existing regional trail system.

## » Encourage Redevelopment oriented towards the creek

Catalyze redevelopment of underutilized lands adjacent to the corridor. Promote land uses that capitalize on the corridor’s scenic and recreational values. Encourage public/private partnerships that incentivize private development to partner with the City of Colorado Springs in the development of joint-use stormwater treatment areas, trails, and other public amenities that benefit both public and private sectors.



### POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT AREAS

- Wolf Ranch
- Cottonwood Creek Park
- Cottonwood Confluence
- Monument Creek North
- University Village
- Templeton Gap Confluence
- Coleman Park
- Goose Gossage Park
- Manitou Ball Park
- 21st Street
- Gold Hill Mesa
- Shooks Run
- Cheyenne Creek
- El Pomar Sports Complex
- Wildflower Park
- Sand Creek Confluence

### LEGEND

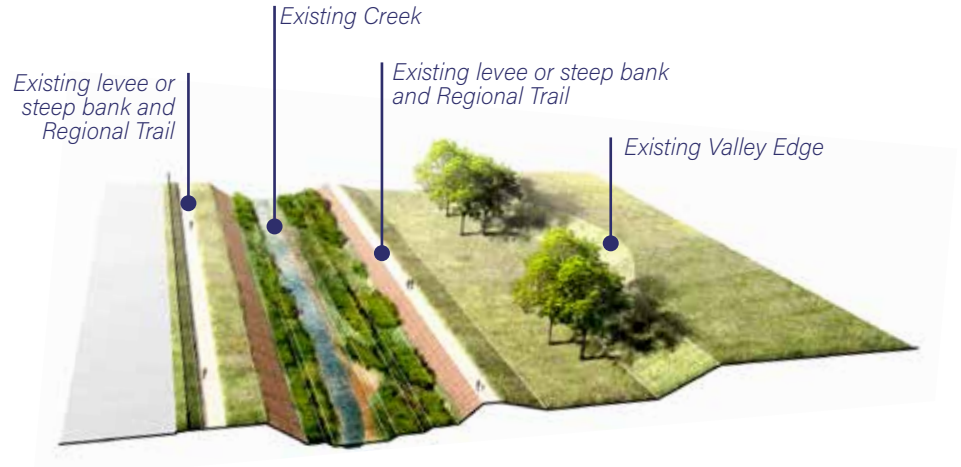
- Future Community / Creek Connections
- Colorado Springs City Limits
- Watershed Boundary
- ~ Streams and Waterways
- Project Study Area

Maintain and restore functioning floodplains along all streams within the watershed. Potential improvement areas indicate opportunities to connect the community to the creeks using the prototypes on the following page.



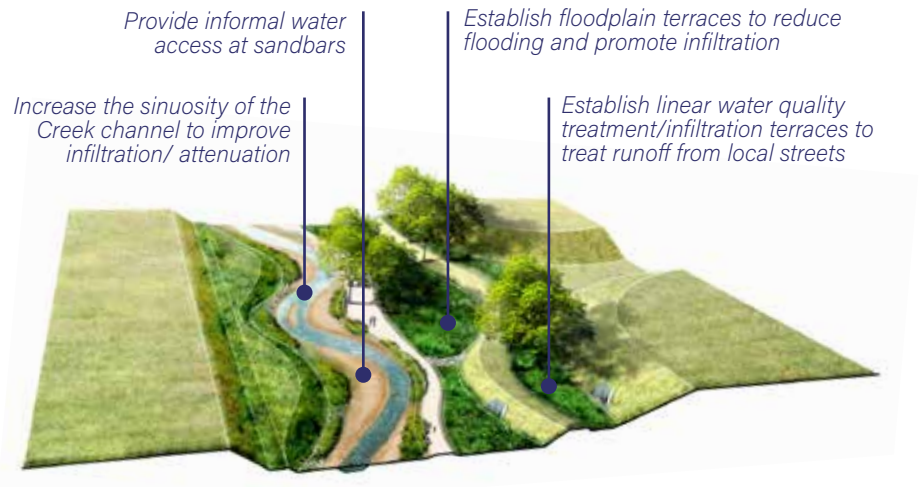
## Existing Channel Conditions

Both Monument and Fountain Creeks have been channelized or confined between levees. They no longer have functioning floodplains which limits their natural flood storage and water quality treatment potential.



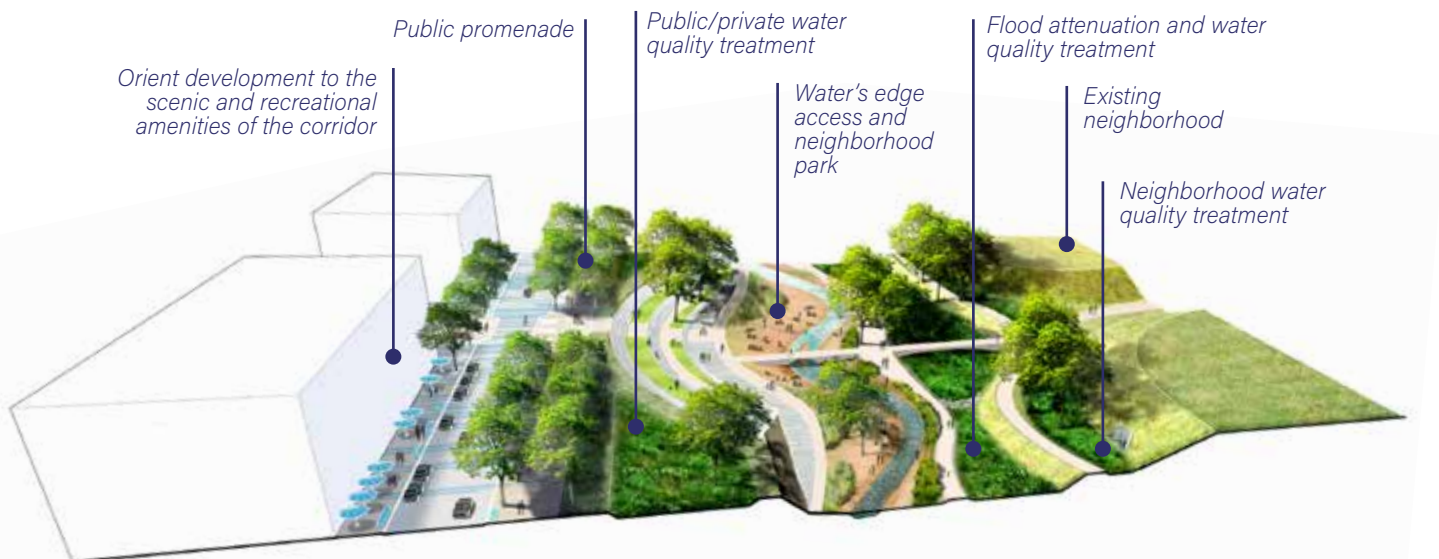
## Reestablish Functioning Floodplains

To the degree possible, restore the sinuosity of the creek channel and reestablish floodplain terraces that improve the multiple natural functions lost when the streams were channelized.



## Improve Neighborhood Connections and Encourage Redevelopment

Provide for and encourage multiple opportunities to access the water's edge for nature and water-based recreation. Promote existing and new development orientation towards the corridor to take advantage of scenic and recreational access.





# PRIMARY PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

## A Continuous Linear Greenway

The Monument and Fountain Creeks corridor would become a continuous multi-functional, multi-beneficial greenway leveraging foundational aspects of the Legacy Loop and Pikes Peak Greenway. The natural functions of the creek would be restored, while maintaining the corridor's important role as one of the city's primary storm water conveyances. A seamless network of trails would support multiple options for access to the waterways and to the natural qualities of the corridor. Both existing and new neighborhoods would orient toward the corridor and connect directly to its natural and recreational assets.

## Eight New and Revitalized Parks

The greenway corridor would be punctuated by eight major parks with naturalized riparian areas in between. Pikeview Reservoir anchors the north end of the project area bordered by Austin Bluffs Boulevard and Nevada Avenue. Monument Valley Park serves as the central project area with plans to revitalize, restore, and supplement existing neighborhood parks. The southern end of the visioning corridor is defined by a new linear park with multiple recreational opportunities for the existing Mill Street and adjacent neighborhoods, plus a formalized new gateway entry into downtown from the south.

## Implementation

Colorado Springs expects continued and substantial population growth over the next twenty (20) years which makes sustainable waterway development critical. Final design, funding, and implementation of this vision would rely on community leadership through coordinated efforts between landowners and municipal agencies – all timed alongside funding opportunities via local, state, federal, and philanthropic sources. This vision seeks to align various planning efforts and impacts upon creeks. As a result of the new infusion of federal dollars across the country, previously unavailable funds may accelerate projects in the first five (5) years for vision implementation.

### Immediate Steps

Priority actions for the include alignment with the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Utilities and partners, engaging the community, developing financial strategies, preparing grant application materials, establishing a 501(c)3, as well as forming techniques and timelines for final engineering, design, and permitting of short-term projects.

### Short-Term Projects

Within five (5) years, the short-term projects will be constructed. This vision identifies two (2) short-term projects that would redefine the southwestern corner of downtown Colorado Springs: America The Beautiful Park (ATB) and Gateway Park South. The projects will leverage current and near-term Community Development, Stormwater Enterprise, and Parks initiatives in coordination with economic renewal/development opportunities.

### Mid-Term Projects

Projects with a mid-term horizon will be completed in coordination with planned development and creek related projects throughout the corridor. The mid-term projects identified are East Bluff Promenade and Pikeview Reservoir Park, Gossage Park Adventure Playground, Pikes Peak Greenway Stormwater Promenade, Monument Valley Park and Centennial Neighborhood, and College Landing at Uintah. Pikeview Reservoir Park, Gossage Park Adventure Playground and Pikes Peak Greenway Stormwater Promenade represent an extension of the entire project area. These three portions have been incorporated into City of Colorado Springs stormwater management improvements and ongoing planning. The northern most section exemplifies a strategic, intentional redevelopment effort of the North Nevada Avenue commercial district. Planning for the Monument Valley Park and Centennial Neighborhood will be underway with potential land preparation activities and development planning in process. College Landing at Uintah is anticipated to be a multi-phase effort as there is private landownership, including Colorado College, which must function within the College's existing master plan.

### Long-Term Projects

Projects like Drake Waterfront Reimagined with a longer horizon (20 years) will rely heavily on major community planning and development activities in Colorado Springs. The decommissioning of the Drake Power Plant will require substantial planning and permitting efforts, as well as redevelopment planning. This vision assumes that the site will ultimately be developed to serve a variety of residential and commercial needs. This vision calls for engaged creekside land use regardless of the intensity of redevelopment efforts.



## Eight New and Revitalized Parks

connected by an enhanced creek with improved natural function and neighborhood creek access

### North Nevada Bluff Promenade and Pikeview Reservoir Park

Improved Park Amenities and Creek Access for Future North Nevada Redevelopment

### Gossage Park Adventure Playground

A Re-envisioned Playground for Discovery and Nature Play Connects the Park to the Creek

### Roswell Place

A Stormwater Meadows Promenade and Mini Park form a Continuous Edge along the Creek

### Monument Valley Park and Centennial Neighborhood

A Restored Park Design and a New Neighborhood

### College Landing at Uintah

A Gateway to the Old North End and a Connected Colorado College Campus

### America the Beautiful Park

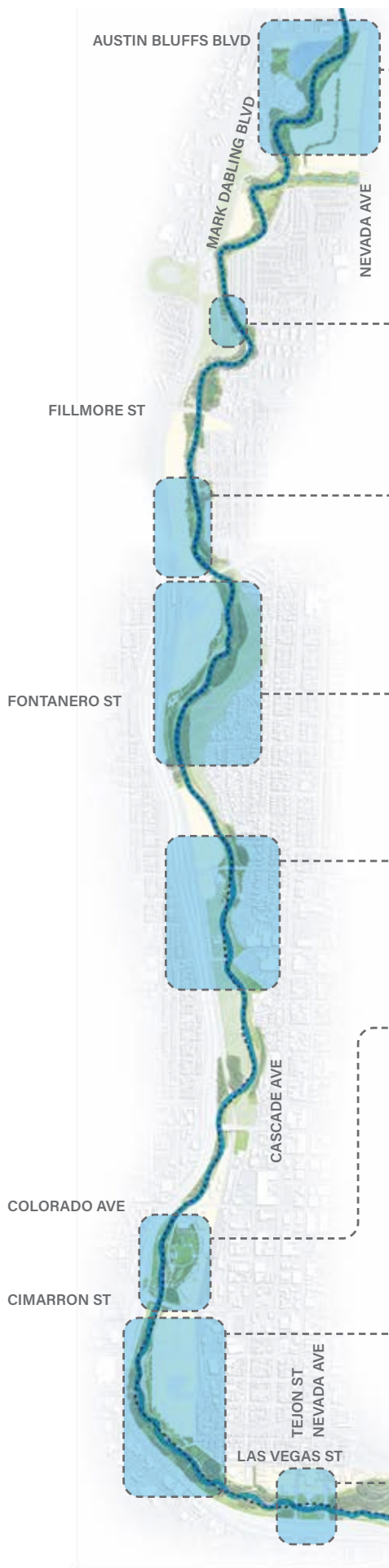
A Celebration of the Confluence of Fountain and Monument Creeks

### Drake Waterfront Reimagined

A Catalyst for Redevelopment and Neighborhood Connections to the Waterway

### Gateway Park South

A New Nature-based Park for the Existing Mill Street and Surrounding Neighborhoods

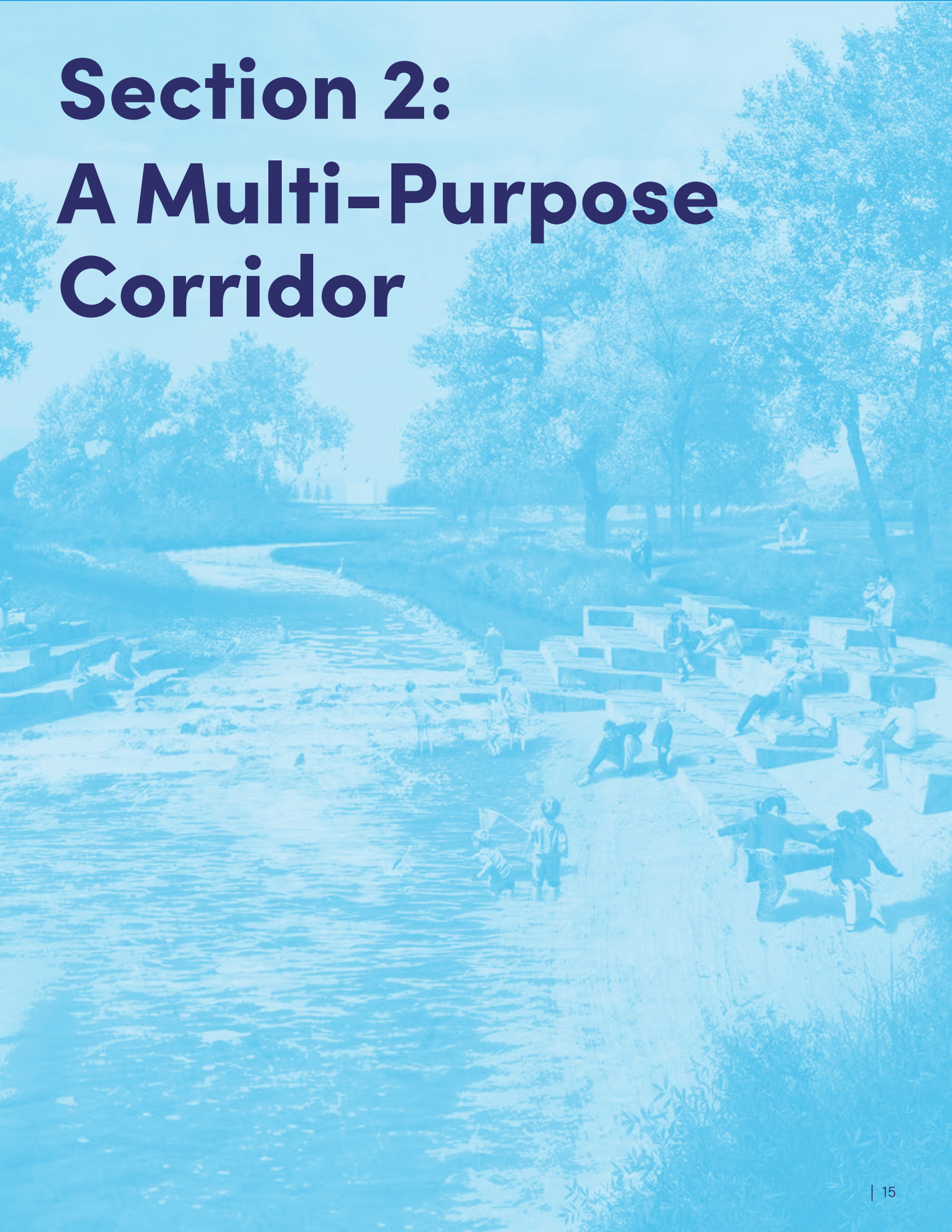


Primary Plan





# Section 2: A Multi-Purpose Corridor



# RESTORE THE NATURAL FUNCTIONS OF THE CREEK CHANNEL

As highways and railroads were constructed for a booming population, creeks were altered to accommodate the growth. The watershed features and natural characteristics of Fountain and Monument Creeks were straightened and narrowed. As a result, stream flows, storm runoff, and base follows increased, destabilizing streambeds and diminishing their ability to infiltrate rainfall, replenish groundwater, store sediment, and remove pollutants from stormwater. Moreover, their ability to support diverse and abundant wildlife was greatly diminished.

The restoration of the creek's natural functions would include widening stream channels and improving sinuosity. This serpentine shape would reverse decades of change to: restore floodplain terraces; slow runoff rates to promote infiltration; reduce channel erosion; and remove urban pollutants from storm runoff. Highly sedimented streams with steep slopes, such as Monument and Fountain Creeks, naturally develop multiple channel threads that encourage sediment drop in a characteristic braided pattern. These braiding deposit patterns encourage small areas of ponding that support ecological diversity. A full range of aquatic, subaquatic riparian, and upland areas would be restored to create diverse wildlife habitat and a more resilient landscape.

An indicator of success will be the restoration of natural braiding and observation of biological resurgence. It is expected this success will coincide with the widening of the channel and modification of the levees. The vision anticipates that this would be observable in areas of new creek alignment as creek beds widen and water slows through floodplain terraces.



### Historic Creek Alignments

The historic creek alignment changes over time illustrating the sinuous natural qualities of the creek prior to the construction of the levees in the Monument Valley and South corridor creek stretches.

-  1895 Creek Channel
-  1903 Creek Channel
-  1947 Creek Channel

### LEGEND

-  Proposed Creek Alignment
-  Existing Creek Alignment

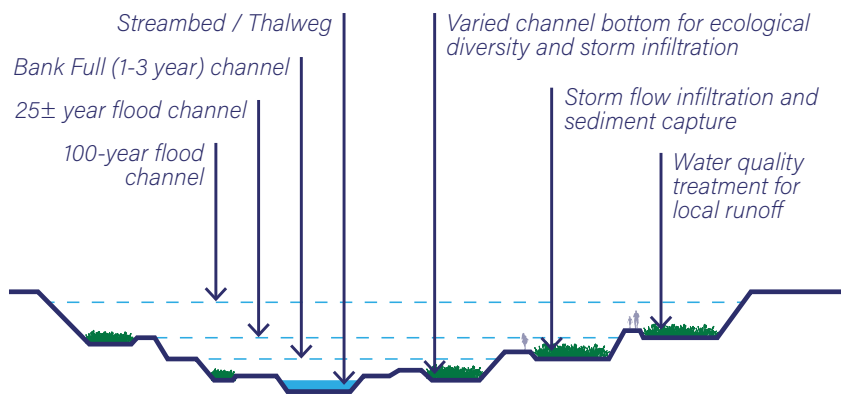


# WATER QUALITY AND SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT

The City of Colorado Springs has identified nonpoint source pollution as a significant problem. This pollution consists of contaminants from streets and developments that are carried to urban rivers and streams, including Monument and Fountain Creeks. Nonpoint source pollution negatively impacts the quality of stream flows. It is a municipal priority, and a federal mandate, to improve the quality of storm runoff. An effective way to reduce nonpoint source pollution is to mimic natural stream processes through biofiltration and other natural, more passive, means of water quality quality treatment before it enters rivers or streams.



An important aspect of this vision, and an integral part of restoring the natural floodplain functions, is the integration of an extensive system of water quality treatment areas. To minimize the potential for regular maintenance due to sedimentation, local water quality treatment areas from adjacent neighborhoods and districts would be located at an elevation that rarely experiences flooding, and other water quality treatment areas intended to attenuate and infiltrate storm flows from the creek would be located at an elevation that would be inundated only during large flood events. Sediment basins would be strategically located to allow regular sediment removal at points where the channel widens and deposition occurs.

This vision plan proposes approximately thirty seven (37) acres of new floodplain and water quality improvement areas.



**Prototype Stormwater Section**  
Channel terracing can cohesively manage stormwater, water quality, sediment capture, and recreation

## LEGEND

-  Proposed Water Quality Areas
-  Proposed Creek Alignment







# SELECTIVELY REMOVE AND RELOCATE LEVEES

The original plan for the City of Colorado Springs was organized around a network of parks and parkways, including the development of Monument Valley Park, located along Monument Creek. The park's plan recommended extensive landscape improvements, trails, and multiple crossings of the creek, making the creek one of the park's central features. The concepts are illustrated in a park master plan prepared by Charles Levitt in 1903. Monument Creek flooded on a regular basis, causing minor damage to park improvements. In 1935, a much larger flood caused extensive damage, and in response, to protect the park and adjacent neighborhood developments from further damage, levees lining the creek were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Although the levees have been effective at containing flood events, they create a significant barrier between the creek and the park and compromise the original park plan which integrated the sinuous creek channel into the park as a central feature.

The National Park System (NPS) conferred recognition of Monument Valley Park on the National Register of Historic Places. There are various types of historic stone used, including Manitou Green Stone and concrete slabs from the 1960's. It is expected that formal evaluation by a historic preservation specialist will be required to determine not only what is historic, but what sections of the walls and levees contribute to the NPS Historic Register.

As part of this proposed vision and strategy for Monument Valley Park, selected portions of the levees would be removed or relocated to reestablish the park's original relationship to the creek. Removal would be strategic, without damaging or compromising other historically significant park elements, while continuing to protect historic park areas and adjacent development from flooding. The most significant removal and relocation would be at the northern, most rural portion of the park. The pastoral qualities of the original creek would be mimicked and the original relationship of trails, stream access and crossings, and passive uses restored. Downstream, at key channel crossings and at points where the levees create a barrier between existing historic park uses, small portions of the wall would be removed or modified to provide direct channel access and enhance pedestrian crossings.

## LEGEND

-  Existing Levee
-  Proposed Levee Removal
-  Proposed Levee Alignment
-  Existing Creek Alignment












# TRAIL CONNECTIONS

The vision for the Monument and Fountain Creek corridor includes approximately fourteen (14) miles of regional trail, twenty-seven (27) neighborhood connections, and thirteen (13) pedestrian creek crossings. The trails provide opportunities for short meanders and long treks to connect important destinations such as the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Museum, Monument Valley Park, Sonderman Park, Downtown Stadium, Colorado College, and neighborhoods such as Old North End, Indian Heights, Westside, Downtown, Mill Street, Shooks Run, Goose Gossage Park, and UCCS.

The existing and proposed trails and connections leverage the Legacy Loop and Pikes Peak Greenway. Critical east-west trail connections are incorporated into the vision. Enhancements for commuting cyclists include better sight lines and separation from recreational users. The trail system consists of a hierarchy of promenades, boardwalks, primary trails, and secondary trails.

The trail system of Fountain and Monument Creeks improves stewardship opportunities for our creeks and adjoining lands, bridging them into the public mainstream, promoting sustainable quality of life, and fostering environmental renewal.

## LEGEND

-  Primary Trails
-  Neighborhood Trail Connections
-  River Promenade
-  Multi-modal Access
-  Neighborhood Access
-  Pedestrian Crossings
-  Proposed Creek Alignment






# EXPANDED PARK NETWORK

Protecting and enhancing the waterway increases natural and parkland opportunities. Curated parks would provide recreational space for local residents and tourists. Increasing outdoor recreational opportunities within Colorado Springs adds value to the already robust tourism industry by encouraging visitors to experience the intrinsic qualities of the great Colorado Front Range, right in the heart of the city.

The vision proposes a new park network, made possible because much of the corridor is publicly owned. Ongoing management and maintenance will be provided by a single entity, such as the Parks Department. Funding for ongoing maintenance will be generated through the economic development activities and captured through special districts or other agreements established through the development process. The development community will be a partner to the City of Colorado Springs in managing the waterfront amenities.

Funding to establish the creekside parkway will be generated through economic investment opportunities including special districts, private investment, and philanthropic funding, as well as state and federal funding.

## LEGEND

-  Existing Parkland
-  Proposed Parkland
-  Proposed Creek Alignment





# REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Throughout the corridor visioning process, land use and related development implications emerged as future alternatives that could add vitality to Fountain and Monument Creeks. Redevelopment areas throughout the corridor are designed to support recommendations of the revitalization as well as the Plan Colorado Springs' (PlanCOS) objectives: Vibrant Neighborhoods, Unique Places, Thriving Economy, Strong Connections, Renowned Culture, and Majestic Landscapes.

Development of these areas is instrumental to the success of this vision's key principles for a holistic greenway and are vital to the success of the larger PlanCOS goals. Opportunities for redevelopment will:

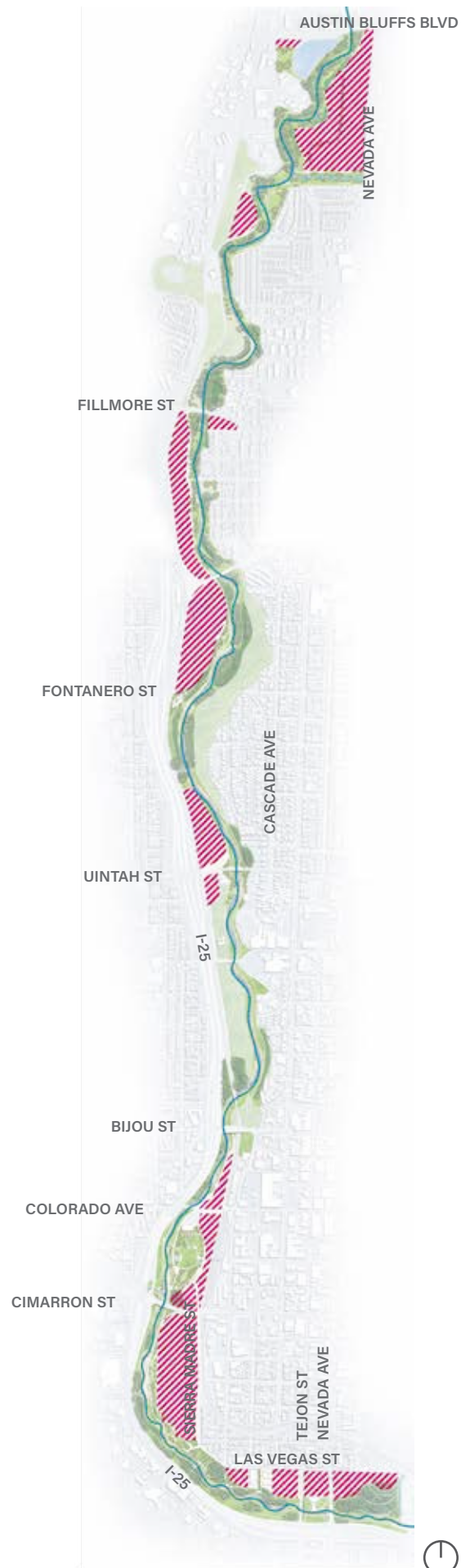
- Improve connectivity to neighborhoods both within and across the watershed;
- Enhance accessibility to green infrastructure improvements not seen in the corridor;
- Facilitate access to downtown in support of key City for Champions projects and other economic vitality projects;
- Reflect the cultural and artistic interests of Colorado Springs; and
- Add options for multi-modal connections to downtown and historic neighborhoods.

These redevelopment opportunities foster economic support by creating investment in both the existing neighborhoods and future development in order to generate forward thinking, sustainable growth, housing needs, and economic progress.

The vision estimates approximately one hundred seventy-four (174) acres of redevelopment opportunities.

## LEGEND

-  Proposed Redevelopment Area
-  Proposed Creek Alignment



# CONNECTED CORRIDORS | NORTH



## CONNECTED CORRIDORS

Key corridor investment would create large-scale connective improvements that are watershed-wide, to smaller, more site-specific connective improvements which bind revitalized parks together for increased access and opportunity. These connections not only strengthen the greenway recommendations for sustainable growth, but also support the framework for a regional context that can extend beyond the corridor.

The Connected Corridor map diagrams illustrate the areas between the park sites and highlight the significance of trail connections, riparian habitat, water quality floodplain terraces, and creek activation for outdoor education and stewardship.

### 1 Northern Reach

- The original stream alignment in the north section is largely intact with extensive floodplain terraces and mature cottonwood groves. This section of the channel should be preserved as natural corridor with extensive habitat and restoration of eroded stream banks and limited recreational access.
- The adjacency of Goose Gossage Park and relocating non-compatible uses provides opportunities to enhance the corridor's natural floodplain functions and repair damage caused by bank erosion.

### 2 The Narrows

- Deeply incised and limited floodplain natural functions with the exception of the SE corner where it transitions into the floodplain terraces of Monument Valley Park.
- The stream channel steepens as the landscape transitions to the uplands to the south of the Black Forest.
- The banks of the channel are extremely steep, with minimal or no stream channel access, and limited wetland landscape.
- Significant opportunity for redevelopment on the western edge and improving access to the corridor for the neighborhood to the east.



# CONNECTED CORRIDORS | MONUMENT VALLEY



### 3 Monument Valley Park North

- Western levee realigned closer to the highway to restore a functioning floodplain, creek sinuosity, and add water quality terraces
- Informal trails within valley edges increase interaction with the creek and respect riparian habitat
- Improved connections to the Old North End Neighborhood and corridor

### 4 Monument Valley Park South

- Historic elements are highlighted and enhanced while continuing to establish a functioning floodplain
- Realigned pedestrian bridge over Monument Creek to strengthen the connection between Formal Gardens and Tahoma Springs as historic landmarks
- Expanded railroad bridge allows for improved pedestrian connectivity
- Underused land near the railway is reclaimed as a large water quality treatment area for highway run-off
- Linear water quality along the eastern edge treats run-off from adjacent neighborhoods

## CORRIDOR MAPS LEGEND

- Proposed New and Revitalized Park Areas (See Section 3)
- Creek Channels
- Water Quality / Passive Recreation
- River Edge / Riparian Planting
- Proposed Greenspace
- Existing Greenspace
- Redevelopment Opportunity
- Neighborhood Access
- Trail Connection



# CONNECTED CORRIDORS | SOUTH



## 5 Old Depot Triangle

- Industrial area between the Old Depot and the Creek repurposed as a development with new vehicular access, expanded parking, and outdoor gathering area for arts festival or beer garden
- Pedestrian promenade cantilevers over Monument creek under Colorado Ave, connecting to America the Beautiful Park

## 6 Tejon Wetlands

- Creek sinuosity is dramatically improved between the new Drake Waterfront and Gateway South Park
- Floodplain terraces create large water quality treatment areas for adjacent neighborhoods, expand trail networks, and provide water access and outdoor education opportunities

## 7 Shook's Run

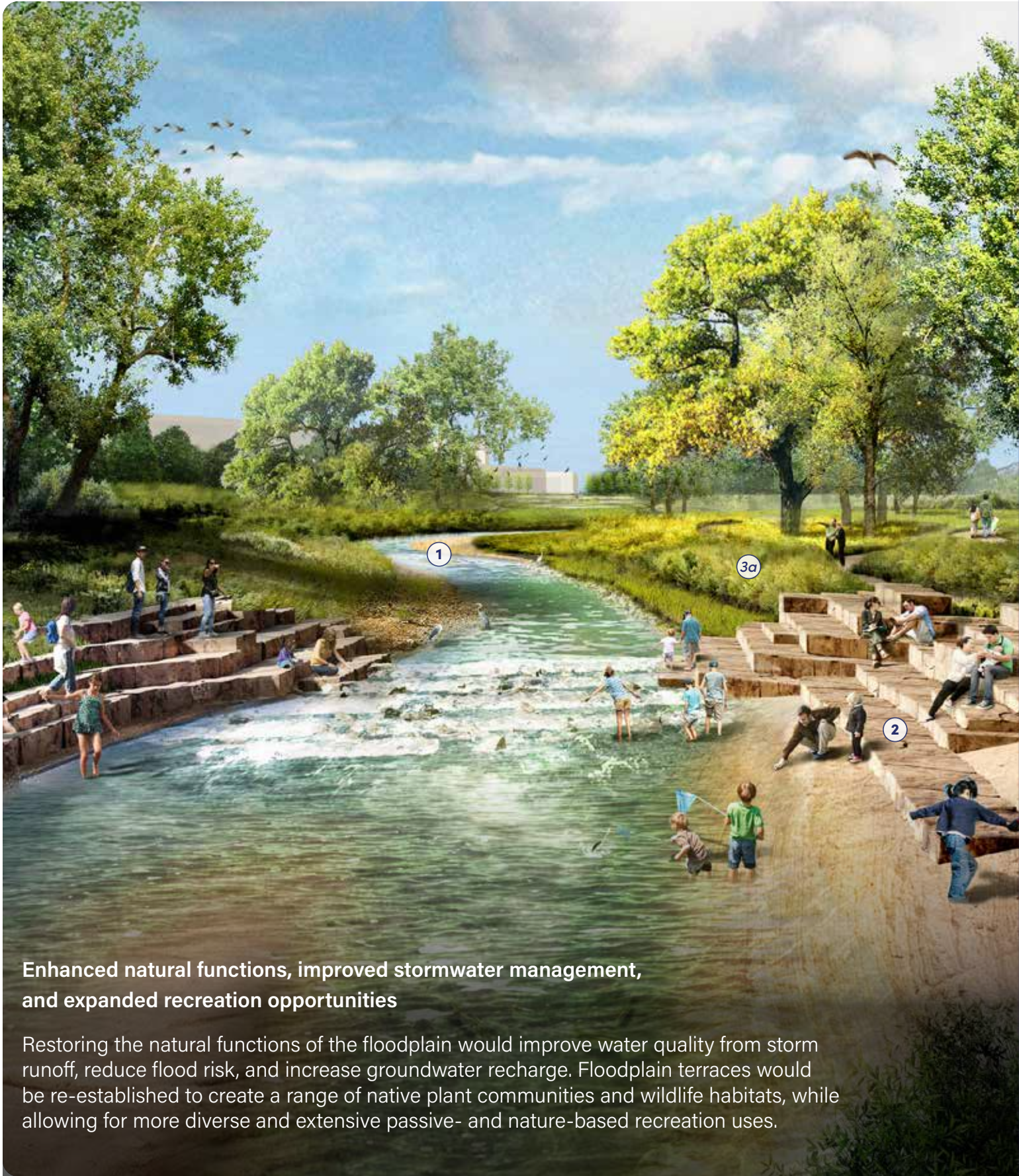
- Eleven (11) acre parcel at the confluence of Fountain Creek and Shook's run is transformed into a water quality treatment park where terraces and elevated trails pull water from the creeks and adjacent developments to be cleaned before re-entering the waterway
- Emphasis on riparian habitat, passive recreation, and outdoor education create a terminus for the urban greenway corridor







# A RESTORED FLOODPLAIN



## Enhanced natural functions, improved stormwater management, and expanded recreation opportunities

Restoring the natural functions of the floodplain would improve water quality from storm runoff, reduce flood risk, and increase groundwater recharge. Floodplain terraces would be re-established to create a range of native plant communities and wildlife habitats, while allowing for more diverse and extensive passive- and nature-based recreation uses.





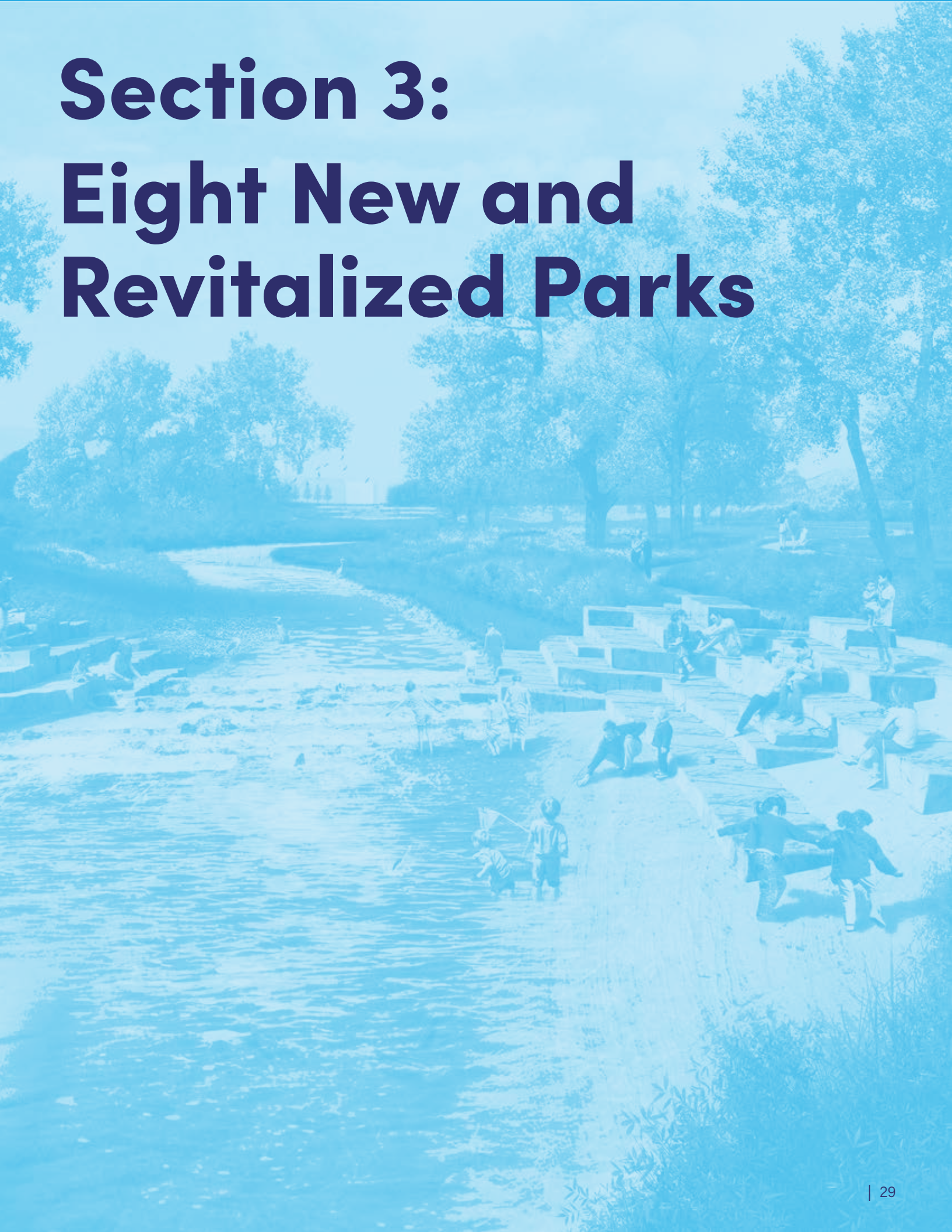
- 1** Restore creek sinuosity to improve aquatic habitat and groundwater recharge.
- 2** Design erosion control structures to encourage safe access to the water.
- 3** Restore floodplain terraces to increase ecological diversity and support a broader range of stream risk management goals.
  - 3a** Low terraces contain smaller storm events and support diverse riparian plant communities.
  - 3b** Intermediate terraces capture and infiltrate flows from larger storms and store sediment.
  - 3c** Upper terraces capture and infiltrate runoff from neighborhoods to improve water quality.
- 4** Trails: water-based and nature-based recreation uses extend throughout the corridor.
  - 4a** Lower terrace recreation uses are limited to rustic trails and multi-functional channel structures.
  - 4b** Intermediate terraces include a variety of trails, passive recreation uses, and adventure sports.
  - 4c** Upper terraces allow for traditional neighborhood and urban parks, and passive uses.







# Section 3: Eight New and Revitalized Parks



# EIGHT NEW AND REVITALIZED PARKS | OVERVIEW

*This park area study is currently underway.*

## North Nevada Promenade and Pikeview Reservoir Park

**Improved Park Amenities and Creek Access for Future North Nevada Redevelopment**

*Mid-Term Project*

A series of new parks serving existing and proposed neighborhoods lining the east edge of Monument Creek and a new park providing greater access to Pikeview Reservoir will bring much needed recreation opportunities to the existing and proposed communities along the creek and be a catalyst for redevelopment of the North Nevada Corridor.

*This park area study is currently underway.*

## Gossage Park Adventure Playground

**A Re-Envisioned Playground for Discovery and Nature Play Connects the Park to the Creek**

*Short-Term Project*

Modifications and enhancements to the existing playground in Goose Gossage Park will transform the existing playground into an adventure and nature play experience and provide extensive opportunities to access the water's edge.

*This park area study is currently underway.*

## Roswell Place

**A Stormwater Meadows Promenade and Mini Park form a Continuous Edge along the Creek**

*Mid-Term Project*

The potential for redevelopment of the west side of the valley, combined with selective acquisition of underutilized lots on the east side of the channel, allows for bank restoration and stabilization, integration of stormwater meadows, and a rustic pedestrian promenade and passive park.

## Monument Valley Park and Centennial Neighborhood

**A Restored Park Design and a New Neighborhood**

*Long-Term Project*

General Palmer's original concept for a pastoral, natural park along a free-flowing stream will be restored on the north end of Monument Valley Park while a new park and neighborhood is defined west of the creek at the existing Fontanero Maintenance Yard.







## College Landing at Uintah

### A Gateway to the Old North End and a Connected Colorado College Campus

#### *Mid-Term Project*

Modifying existing walls that confine Monument Creek creates a defining entrance for both the Colorado College Campus and Downtown. Moreover, this establishes a gathering place along the creek that unifies Monument Creek Park and the campus.



## America the Beautiful Park

### A Celebration of the Confluence of Fountain and Monument Creeks

#### *Short-Term Project*

The original vision for America The Beautiful Park will be realized by restoring Monument Creek's primary access for paddle sports, tubing, and enjoyment of its natural qualities.



## Drake Waterfront Reimagined

### A Catalyst for Redevelopment and Neighborhood Connections to the Waterway

#### *Long-Term Project*

Fountain Creek's fifty (50) feet of elevation change between Cimarron Street and Mill Street will be utilized for paddle sports, tubing, and informal water play. A series of riffles, small drops, and pools framed by terraces and groves, form an urban edge to the new Drake neighborhood.



## Gateway Park South

### A New Nature-based Park for the Existing Mill Street and Surrounding Neighborhoods

#### *Short-Term Project*

The Fountain Creek corridor creates a new linear park celebrating the natural qualities of the creek and the potential for nature- and water-based recreation. A revitalized Dorchester Park is a central neighborhood gathering place and gateway to the Downtown from the south.

# NORTH NEVADA PROMENADE AND PIKEVIEW RESERVOIR PARK

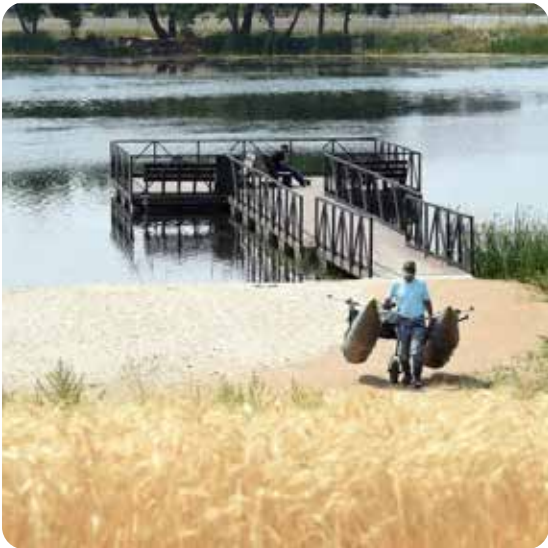
- ① **Pikes View Reservoir Neighborhood Park** provides improved access to the reservoir and neighborhood amenities
- ② **Stream and Bank Stabilization** using a combination of traditional materials and riparian plants
- ③ **East Bluff Promenade** provides fire access that also serves as pedestrian walkway and integrates stormwater treatment from adjacent future development areas
- ④ **Stormwater Parkway** within the proposed redevelopment would provide local access and would capture, convey and treat stormwater runoff
- ⑤ **Future Redevelopment**
- ⑥ **Mountain View Parklet** provides a small neighborhood park for informal play with panoramic views
- ⑦ **Templeton Gap Parkway** removal of the existing concrete channel to create a series of stilling basins that also treat runoff to improve water quality
- ⑧ **Small Neighborhood Park** on existing landfill
- ⑨ **Three Pedestrian Bridges** provide neighborhood access to the regional trail and Goose Gossage Park amenities, and across Templeton Gap.
- ⑩ **Restore the Pinyon/Juniper Plant Communities** native to the local area







*Bluff promenade*



*Improved fishing access*



*A series of stilling basins to treat stormwater runoff*

## OVERVIEW

A series of new parks serving existing and proposed neighborhoods lining the east edge of Monument Creek and a new park providing greater access to Pikeview Reservoir will bring much needed recreation opportunities to the existing and proposed communities along the creek and catalyze redevelopment of the North Nevada corridor. The expansive and mature groves of cottonwoods and natural qualities of the valley bottom will be preserved and enhanced with improved access to the creek provided at strategic locations. The existing regional trail will be complemented by local trails and bridges that will improve connections to the adjacent campus and neighborhoods.

Two proposed “stormwater parkways” that will become the centerpiece of the proposed redevelopment area to the west of Nevada Street. The Templeton Gap channel will be rebuilt and the proposed parkway within the redevelopment area will be designed to extend the natural qualities of the creek valley into the community. A series of terraced “stormwater meadows” will improve water quality of flows in the existing Templeton Gap channel and runoff from redevelopment areas while minimizing the need for subsurface piped stormwater infrastructure.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Public funding will include municipal funding, state agency opportunities and federal agencies programs focused on environmental restoration of the creek
- Public funding associated with the redevelopment of the confluence of Monument Creek and the T-Gap Floodway
- Private funding sources will leverage public planned investments to support creek edge improvements and the redevelopment of the North Nevada corridor

## FUNDING

- Environmental and Riparian Restoration
- Commercial and multifamily redevelopment opportunities
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities

# GOSSAGE PARK ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

- ① **Re-imagined Adventure Playground** provides an opportunity for Goose Gossage Park to link more strongly to the creek and provide opportunities for adventure play.
- ② **Water Quality Terraces** frequent storms sustain wet meadows with storm runoff
- ③ **Existing City Maintenance Facility Site** is relocated and a floodplain terrace is developed as a wet meadow that functions to treat stormwater from the adjacent neighborhood
- ④ **Stream and Bank Stabilization** using a combination of traditional materials and riparian plants
- ⑤ **Restore the Pinyon/Juniper Plant Communities** native to the local area







*Discovery playground connects the park to the creek*



*Stormwater meadow*



*Pinyon Pine / Juniper landscape*

## OVERVIEW

The use of riparian vegetation as part of stabilizing the banks of Monument Creek and development of multiple stormwater meadows along the east edge of the valley will greatly enhance the valley’s ecological diversity and natural qualities. Non-compatible land uses on the eastern edge of the valley would be relocated to allow significant expansion of open space and creation of extensive stormwater meadows that would treat contaminated runoff from surrounding areas. Modifications and enhancements to the existing playground in Goose Gossage Park will transform the existing playground into an adventure and nature play experience and provide extensive opportunities to access the water’s edge.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Public funding will include municipal funding, state agency opportunities and federal agencies programs focused on environmental restoration of the creek
- Philanthropic funding for nature play, health, and wellness
- Public funding for adventure play and creek access

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Nature based play experiences
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities

# ROSWELL PLACE

- ① **Roswell Park Creek Access** modify stream edge in the park to connect directly to the creek and provide access to the water's edge
- ② **Partial Acquisition of vacant lots** for bank stabilization
- ③ **Stream and Bank Stabilization** using a combination of traditional materials and riparian plants
- ④ **Neighborhood Scale Water Quality and Treatment** a floodplain terrace is developed as a wet meadow that functions to treat stormwater from the adjacent neighborhood
- ⑤ **Potential Redevelopment**
- ⑥ **Pikes Peak Greenway Stormwater Promenade** local park amenities and trails integrated with stormwater treatment for adjacent proposed development
- ⑦ **Restore the Pinyon/Juniper Plant Communities** native to the local area







*Creek access*



*Stream and bank stabilization*



*Stormwater promenade*

## OVERVIEW

The potential for redevelopment of the west side of the valley, combined with selective acquisition of underutilized lots on the east side of the channel, allows for restoration and stabilization of the extensive bank erosion in this area and reestablishment of riparian habitat. Integration of stormwater meadows and a rustic pedestrian promenade and passive park along the west side of the channel would greatly expand creek access and natural qualities of the west bank of the channel. The creek bank along Roswell Park would be laid back, and a series of lawn and meadow terraces extended to the creek's edge to enhance the parks recreation opportunities.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Public funding will include municipal funding, state agency opportunities and federal agencies programs focused on environmental restoration of the creek
- Public funding to provide renovation of the park and connection to the creek
- Philanthropic funding to improve neighborhood health, wellness and access to the creek

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

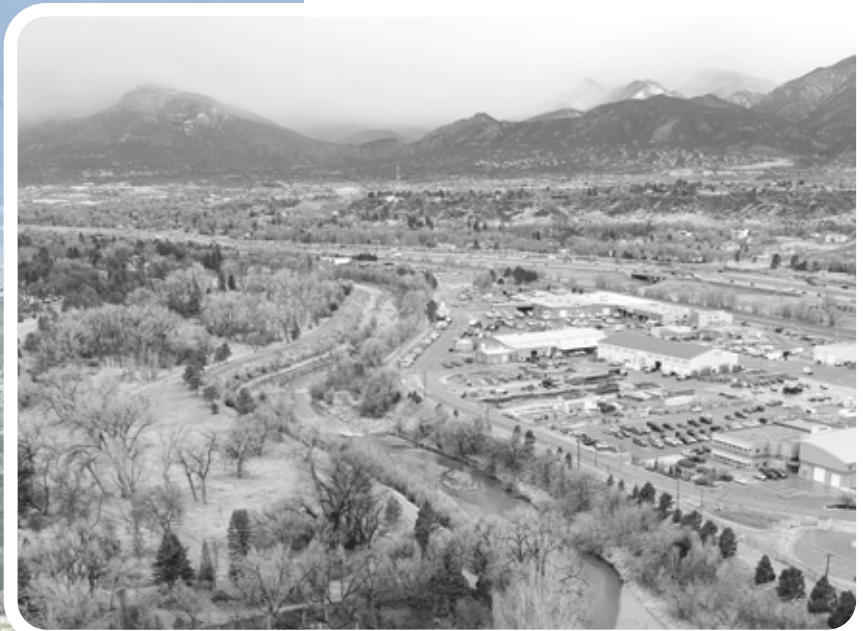
- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Nature based play experiences
- Neighborhood enhancements and connections to nature
- Recreational opportunities



# MONUMENT VALLEY PARK (MVP) AND CENTENNIAL NEIGHBORHOOD







Existing conditions

- 1 **River Beach** provides access and direct interaction with the creek
- 2 **River Access Sloped Lawn Terraces** define additional recreational spaces
- 3 **Low Flow Crossing** connects Old North End and western neighborhoods
- 4 **River Plaza** is a multi-purpose space near the creek for residents
- 5 **Pedestrian Promenade** integrates new areas to existing trails and open spaces
- 6 **Water Quality Open Space** developed as a public-private partnership

# MVP AND CENTENNIAL NEIGHBORHOOD

- ① **River Beach** provides access and direct interaction with the creek
- ② **River Access Sloped Lawn Terraces** define recreational spaces
- ③ **Low Flow Crossing** connects Old North End and western neighborhoods
- ④ **River Plaza** is a multi-purpose space near the creek for residents
- ⑤ **Pedestrian Promenade** integrates new areas to existing trails and open spaces
- ⑥ **Water Quality Areas and Boardwalks** establish natural riparian areas
- ⑦ **Flexible Plaza and Open Lawn** offer passive use and open space
- ⑧ **Lower Trail** enables seasonal access to lower creek areas
- ⑨ **Future Development Areas** fosters residential and commercial opportunities
- ⑩ **Existing Electrical Substation to Remain**
- ⑪ **Levee Removal / Relocation** in selective locations for floodplain management
- ⑫ **New Pedestrian Bridge** creates critical east-west connection for all
- ⑬ **Reshaped Trailhead and Creek Access** improves mobility and use of trail system







*Restored floodplain terraces*



*Development oriented towards the creek*



*Public pedestrian promenade edge*

## OVERVIEW

Land use, waterways, and park space are re-envisioned to pay homage to the values of public space in Colorado Springs as pioneered by General Palmer. This project site celebrates the creek areas around Monument Valley Park, restoring the creekside pastoral qualities imagined over a century ago. New opportunities include reclaimed land for development and restored natural corridor for active and passive recreation. The design explores opportunities for multi-purpose infrastructure that benefits the creek ecosystem, stormwater, and community. Geographically, this section follows the Monument Creek corridor from Popcycle Bridge south to Fontanero Street including the Fontanero Service Yard and a portion of Monument Valley Park.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Public funding will include municipal funding, state agency opportunities, and federal agency programs focused on specific outcomes
- Philanthropic funding and granting organizations will be critical partners in the visioning and specific elements
- Private funding sources will leverage the planned public investment to create new neighborhoods and supporting development

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Residential / commercial development opportunities
- Artistic and cultural interests
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities





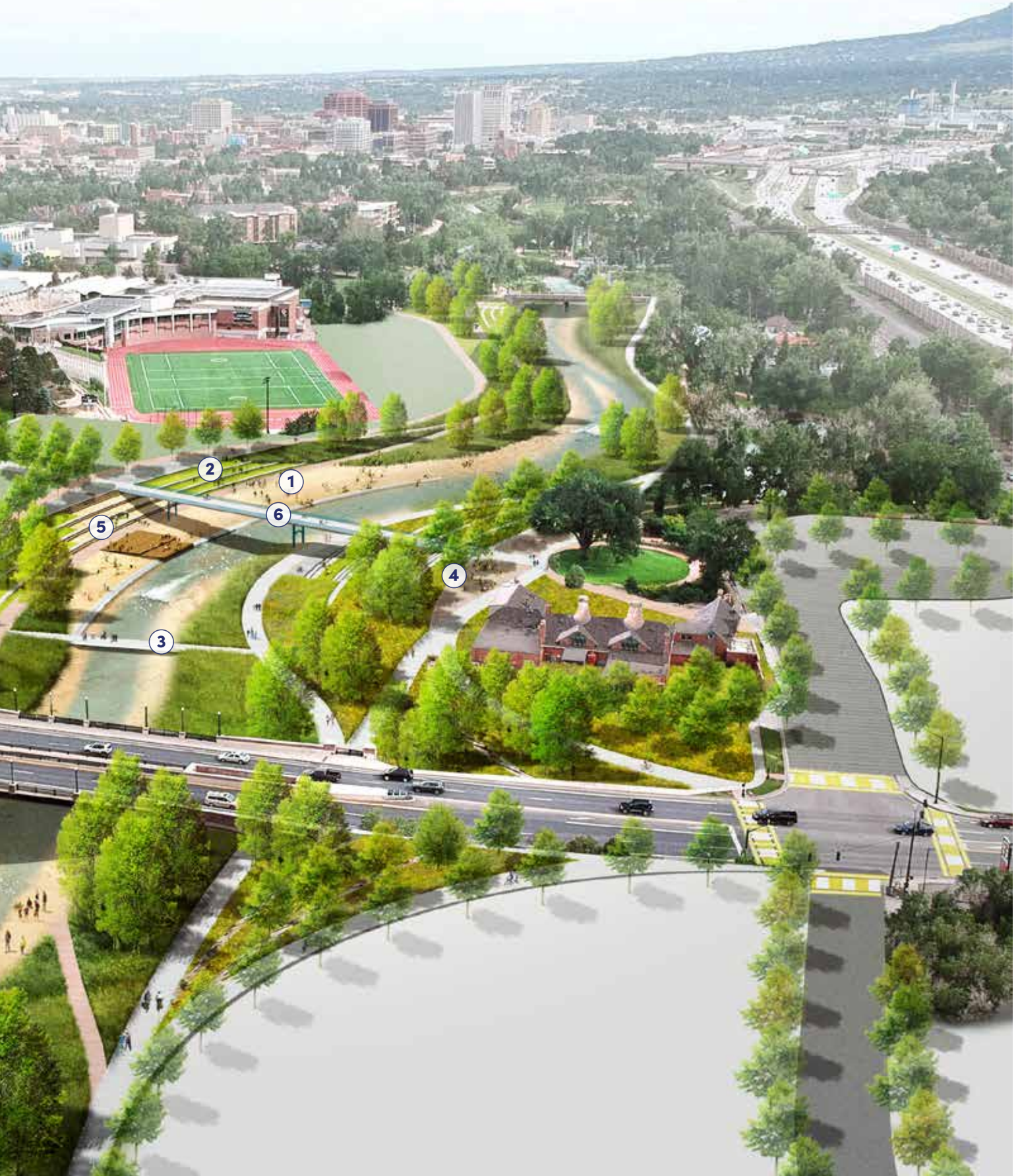
Existing conditions



- ① **River Beach** invites access and direct interaction with the creek
- ② **River Access Sloped Lawn Terraces** create study and social spaces
- ③ **Low Flow Crossing** emphasizes cross-creek connection and exploration
- ④ **Upper Plaza** connects students to corridor and provides views
- ⑤ **River Amphitheater and Stage Deck** promotes performance and education
- ⑥ **New Pedestrian Bridge** unites campus areas across the creek



# COLLEGE LANDING AT UINTAH





# COLLEGE LANDING AT UINTAH

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- ④ **Upper Plaza** connects students to the corridor and provides views
- ⑤ **River Amphitheater and Stage Deck** promotes performance and education
- ⑥ **New Pedestrian Bridge** unites campus areas across the creek
- ⑦ **Water Quality Areas** treat stormwater from adjacent neighborhoods
- ⑧ **Lower Trail** provides seasonal access to lower creek areas
- ⑨ **Future Development** utilizes park and creek
- ⑩ **Van Briggle Building to Remain** with future use
- ⑪ **Pikes Peak Greenway Trail** with enhanced trail connectivity
- ⑫ **Existing Lawn to Remain** for continued recreational use
- ⑬ **Enhanced Connection to College** brings students and faculty efficiently through campus







*River amphitheater and stage*



*Lawn terraces*



*Interconnected pathways for cyclists & pedestrians*

## OVERVIEW

As the primary entry to Colorado College's campus and Old North End Neighborhood, this area should celebrate the educational and historical heart of Colorado Springs. The creek brings together the campus and southern end of Monument Valley Park to provide a destination for leisure activities and campus ceremonies along the creek, while maintaining the continuity of natural systems.

This focus area section roughly follows Monument Creek corridor from north of Uintah Street south to Mesa Avenue including portions of Monument Valley Park and Colorado College.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Colorado College, philanthropic funding, and granting organizations will be critical partners in the visioning and specific elements
- Public funding will include municipal funding, state agency opportunities, and federal agency programs focused on specific outcomes
- Private funding sources will be keenly interested in the opportunities for Colorado College students and Old North End Neighborhood residents

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Residential / commercial development opportunities
- Artistic and cultural interests
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities



Existing conditions



- ① **River Beach** offers access and direct interaction with the creek
- ② **River Access Terraces** create creekside seating to view watersports
- ③ **Water Quality Area and Boardwalk** provide dynamic wildlife viewing
- ④ **Restroom, Changing Area, and Plaza** used by families and downtown tourism
- ⑤ **Existing Lawn** enhanced by robust programming of festival and events
- ⑥ **Existing Julie Penrose Fountain with Terraced Expansion**
- ⑦ **New Pedestrian Bridges** unites east and west while opening visual corridor



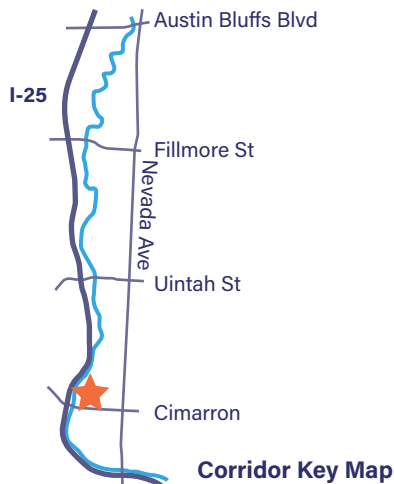
# AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL PARK





# AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL PARK

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- ⑥ **Existing Julie Penrose Fountain with Terraced Expansion**
- ⑦ **New Pedestrian Bridges** unite east and west while opening visual corridor
- ⑧ **Permeable Parking / Festival Court** treats stormwater and expands programs
- ⑨ **Future Development** by private investment utilizes park and creek
- ⑩ **Existing U.S. Olympic Building** will flourish as development of area continues
- ⑪ **Cantilevered Promenade under Colorado Avenue** connects to Downtown
- ⑫ **Terraced Lawn and Confluence Access** invites visitors with signature canopy
- ⑬ **Relocated Turnaround** (roadway alignment TBD with parcel development)
- ⑭ **Existing Pedestrian Bridge leads to U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum**







*River beach creek access*



*Water quality boardwalks*



*Recreational water access and put-in*

## OVERVIEW

America the Beautiful Park is honored as a premier downtown amenity space established with its inception almost thirty (30) years ago in the 1992 Downtown Action Plan.

The confluence of Monument and Fountain Creeks has strong potential to stimulate further investment and create a more cohesive urban fabric from the downtown core to creekside. This will be the entry point for water activities such as fishing, tubing and stand-up paddle boarding. This will become a central recreation point for downtown residents and tourists visiting the Pikes Peak Region.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Public funding including municipal, state agency, and federal agency programs
- Philanthropic funding and granting organizations
- Private funding sources

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

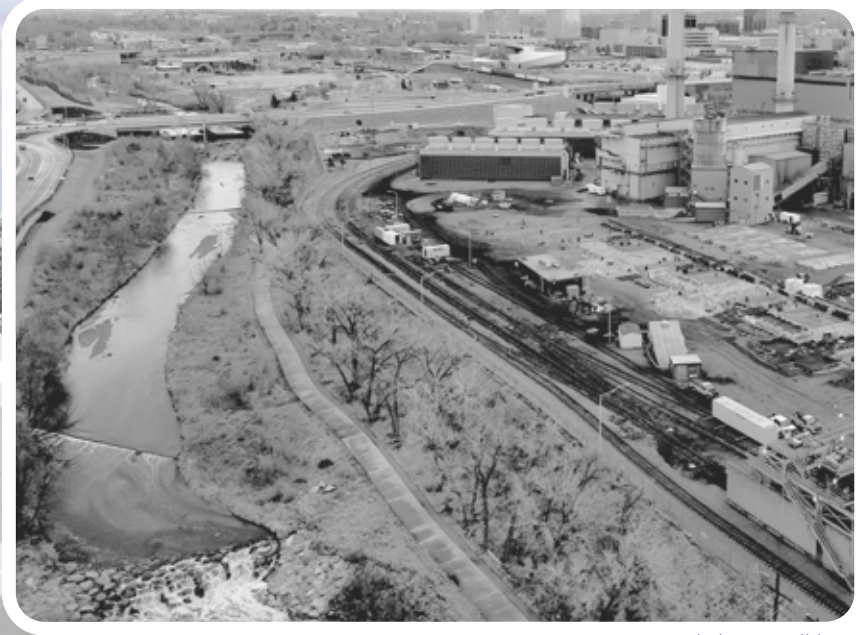
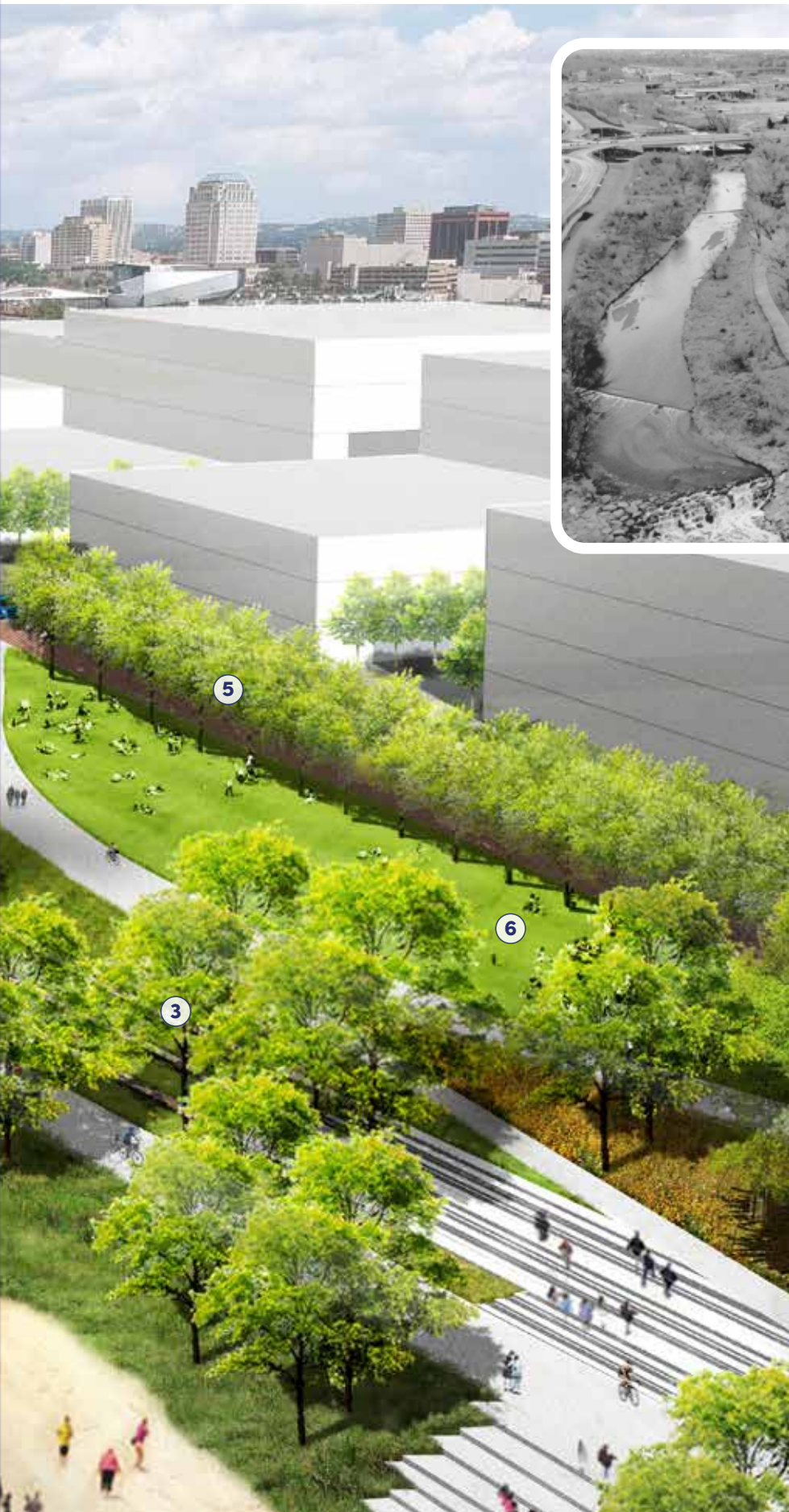
- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Residential / commercial development opportunities
- Artistic and cultural interests
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities



# DRAKE WATERFRONT REIMAGINED







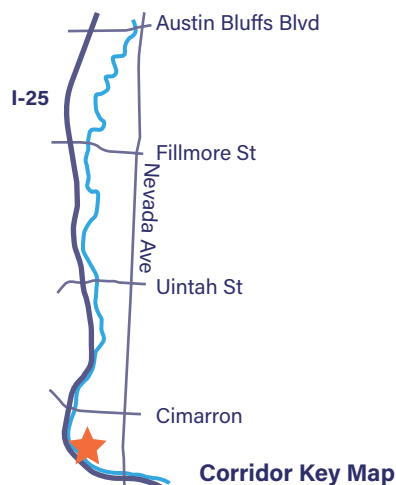
Existing conditions

- ① **River Beach** builds access and direct interaction with the creek
- ② **Creek Access Terraces at Drop Structures** create river access for all
- ③ **Stepped Seating and Lawn Terraces** dedicates space to socialize and recreate
- ④ **Water Quality Areas and Boardwalks** receive and treat stormwater
- ⑤ **Pedestrian Promenade** connects new areas to existing trails
- ⑥ **Flexible Sloped Lawn** forms a new creekside space to interact and relax



# DRAKE WATERFRONT REIMAGINED

- ① **River Beach** builds access and direct interaction with the creek
- ② **Creek Access Terraces at Drop Structures** create river access for all
- ③ **Stepped Seating and Lawn Terraces** dedicates space to socialize and recreate
- ④ **Water Quality Areas and Boardwalks** receive and treat stormwater
- ⑤ **Pedestrian Promenade** connects new areas to existing trails
- ⑥ **Flexible Sloped Lawn** provides new creekside space to socialize and relax
- ⑦ **Primary Tubing / Watersports Takeout at River Beach**
- ⑧ **Pikes Peak Greenway Trail** provides safe access for pedestrians and cyclists
- ⑨ **New Roadway with Development Access** connects neighborhoods
- ⑩ **Future Development** determined through separate visioning process
- ⑪ **Existing Electrical Substation to Remain**
- ⑫ **New Pedestrian Bridge** spans creek banks and gives access to new areas
- ⑬ **Restroom, Plaza, and Loading Zone** located at secondary water takeout point







*Safe creekside access and water play*



*One mile water adventure zone*



*New community development with public edge*

## OVERVIEW

As the historic Drake site undergoes an extensive planning process, new possibilities must be considered for recreation, development, water quality, and habitat along the approximate one-mile of neglected and forgotten creek frontage. This project calls for engaged creekside land use and the reconnection of the Mill Street Neighborhood, following Fountain Creek from Cimarron Street south and east to Las Vegas Street.

The creek's fifty (50) feet of vertical elevation change in this section will be utilized for paddle sports, tubing, and informal water-play. A series of riffles, small drops, and pools framed by terraces and groves form an urban edge to the new neighborhood.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Public funding will include municipal, state agency opportunities, and federal agency programs focused on specific outcomes
- Philanthropic and granting organizations are critical partners in the visioning and specific element
- Private funding will leverage public investment in site clean up

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Residential / commercial development opportunities
- Artistic and cultural interests
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities



# GATEWAY PARK SOUTH





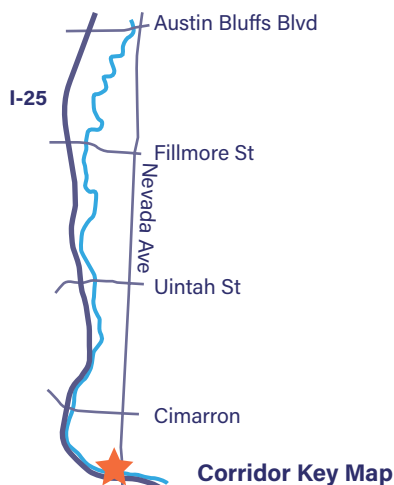


Existing conditions

- 1 **River Beach** offers a final one-mile float take-out
- 2 **River Access Terraces** dedicate space for programmed activities and events
- 3 **Existing Historic Shade Structure** retains historical community significance
- 4 **Sloped Lawn** provides creekside opportunities to socialize and relax
- 5 **Flexible Plaza with Shaded Seating Edge** extends terrace programming
- 6 **New Signature Pedestrian Bridge** connects creek and park to Ivywild area
- 7 **New South Pikes Peak Greenway Trail** transfers commuters to westerly trails

# GATEWAY PARK SOUTH

- ① **River Beach** offers a final one-mile float take-out
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- ⑤ **Flexible Plaza with Shaded Seating Edge** extends terrace programming
- ⑥ **New Signature Pedestrian Bridge** connects creek and park to Ivywild area
- ⑦ **New South Pikes Peak Greenway Trail** transfers commuters to westerly trails
- ⑧ **Terraced Lawn Seating** adds additional recreational and social spaces
- ⑨ **New Roadway with Parking and Drop-Off** creates access into site
- ⑩ **Future Development** utilizes park and creek
- ⑪ **Water Quality Areas** enhance riparian zones and treat stormwater
- ⑫ **Pikes Peak Greenway Trail** provides safe means of walking and biking
- ⑬ **New Low Flow Crossing** extends south trail connections
- ⑭ **Riparian Planting** provides critical ecological habitat







*Creekside sunning and programmatic area*



*Signature pedestrian bridge*



*Flexible plaza with shaded seating*

## OVERVIEW

This is a vital renewal effort for the southern gateway into Downtown Colorado Springs. Designed around the existing historic structure, a revitalized and reconstructed park provides a central gathering place for the south-end as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the park. The site functions as the final takeout along the one-mile instream water course. Significant social issues are integral to the overall planning effort for this site and the adjacent creek.

This site follows the Fountain Creek corridor between Tejon Street and Nevada Avenue. The space is activated through re-imagined seating, creek access, and circulation. New connections to the creek, trails, and community reinvigorate one of Colorado Springs' oldest parks.

## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE

- Public funding will include municipal funding, state agency opportunities, and federal agency programs focused on specific outcomes
- Philanthropic funding and granting organizations will be critical partners in the visioning and specific elements
- Private funding sources will support public initiatives and investment

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Environmental and riparian restoration
- Residential / commercial development opportunities
- Artistic and cultural interests
- Stormwater and floodplain management
- Recreational opportunities

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**This vision has been made possible exclusively by a Lyda Hill Philanthropies grant. The significance of re-envisioning the Fountain and Monument Creek corridors in Colorado Springs cannot not be overstated as Colorado Springs continues to evolve and grow. The leadership of Lyda Hill Philanthropies to develop an approach that reconsiders natural creek function, creekside recreation, economic vitality and placemaking has provided the opportunity for a robust community discussion about the future of all of our communities' creeks.**

## Consultant Team

### The Greenway Foundation

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## Critical Stakeholders Interviewed During Development of this Vision

Fountain Creek Watershed District	Lane Foundation	Pikes Peak Community Foundation
Colorado College	Bloom Foundation	Aiken Audubon
Norwood Development Group	Downtown Partnership and Downtown Development Authority	Pikes Peak Outdoor Recreation Alliance
Colorado Water Trust	Park Union Metro District	Historic Preservation Alliance
Innovative Conservation Solutions	Colorado Springs Chamber and Economic Development	Trout Unlimited
Nature Conservancy	Visit Colorado Springs	Palmer Land Conservancy
Great Outdoors Colorado	Pikes Peak Real Estate Foundation	Past Greenway Fund Board members including Gary Barber, Andrea Barker, David Lord, Shawn Holveck
Trails and Open Space Coalition	Rocky Mountain Field Institute	Various Community Organizations
Legacy Institute		

*Special Acknowledgment: The project team built upon decades of initiative, studies, implementation projects made possible by "watershed warriors" that included countless City of Colorado Springs staff, Colorado Springs Utilities staff, Fountain Creek Watershed District, volunteers, and philanthropists.*



## **This vision builds upon the work of the following previous studies:**

A Master Plan for the Pikes Peak Greenway (1994)

Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in El Paso & Pueblo Counties (2001)

Monument Valley Park Master Plan (2005)

Strategic Plan for the Fountain Creek Watershed (2009)

Streamside Design Guidelines (2009)

Remediation Scenarios for Attenuating Peak Floods & Reducing Sediment Transport in Fountain Creek, Colorado (2013)

Colorado Springs Parks Master Plan (2014)

Colorado Springs Drainage Criteria Manual Vol. 2 Stormwater Quality Policies, Procedures & BMPs (2014)

Experience Downtown Colorado Springs (2016)

Envision Shooks Run Corridor Facilities Master Plan (2017)

Colorado Springs & The Pikes Peak Region Destination Master Plan (2018)

Natural Solutions for a Communally Vibrant, Ecologically Resilient Fountain Creek – A Strategic Framework and Opportunities Analysis (2018)

The 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2019)

Mill Street Neighborhood Plan (2019)

Plan COS Comprehensive Plan (2019)

El Paso County Parks Master Plan (2013)

Monument Creek Watershed Restoration Master Plan (2016)

City Of Colorado Springs Water Resources Engineering Division Annual Report Of Activities (2016)

Colorado Springs Stormwater Program – Implementation Plan (2016)

Changes In Biological Communities of the Fountain Creek Basin, Colorado, 2003-2016, In Relation to Antecedent Streamflow, Water Quality, and Habitat (2017)

The 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2019)

Renew North Nevada Avenue Master Plan (2017)









# **COS Creek Plan**

— **RESTORE** | **PLAY** | **THRIVE** —

**Fountain Creek Watershed Vision & Implementation Plan**

*Learn more and stay engaged through the process at  
<https://COSCreekPlan.org/>*