



**Downtown
General Improvement District #1
Capital Improvements Plan**



General Improvement District #1 Capital Improvements Plan

October 25, 2011

For GID Board Hearing, November 1, 2011:

This item was postponed from the October 18, 2011 Hearing. Minor edits have been made to this document since then, and they are shown in redline and strikeout format on pages 4,7,9, and 10.



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BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS HISTORY

The GID was formed by City Council adoption of Ordinance No. 77, 1976. It was formed specifically to fund the 1977 package of capital improvements that included the original set of College Avenue corner plazas, medians, and landscaping, along with the Oak/Remington parking lot and Oak Street Plaza. The GID provided the largest share of financing for that package, with a \$1.1 million, 15-year bond issue. Secondly, a special assessment on specified properties provided additional funding.

In 1992, the bonds that financed the initial package were paid off. A public process affirmed support for continuation of the GID, and the GID was reauthorized and reaffirmed by City Council Resolution 92-37 in 1992. A new capital improvements plan -- consisting of a list of potential projects -- was developed. That list was updated in 1994, and then it served well as a working framework for about 15 years' worth of projects. The projects involved renovations and extensions of College Avenue streetscape improvements, and a customized Downtown sign system. Most of the streetscape projects were completed by 2004, and work is underway on a sign system.

One project not completed from the 1994 list is a streetscape enhancement project at the northwest corner of the Mulberry Street/College Avenue intersection, to help mark the intersection as the main south entry to Downtown. This project is being carried forward as a potential future project, and is related to concepts for future redevelopment of the block.

Several of the completed projects, involving corner plazas, were done as a package with a \$1.1 million bond issue providing financing. That bond debt committed most of the GID Fund revenues for a ten-year period from 1999-2009.

Also, a number of projects have been completed on a pay-as-you-go basis, using available reserves and revenues. Staff formulated these projects in response to urgent needs, leverage opportunities, and partnership opportunities. These include some additional projects that were not on the 1994 list:

- ▶ Oak Street Plaza renovation, done in a funding partnership with City and DDA funds.
- ▶ A package of sidewalk, curb, and gutter replacements, largely completed over the past two years, with another phase of replacements scheduled for later in 2011.
- ▶ On a much smaller scale, a package of bicycle dismount signs and sidewalk decals.

The intent of this capital improvement plan is to allow flexibility for staff to pursue these kinds of opportunistic projects, in addition to projects on the list.



Thanks to Downtown leaders in the 1970s, the GID has transformed the face of Downtown with streetscape and parking enhancements on College Avenue and Linden Street. Features include paving, trees, planters, seating ...irrigation and drainage... bike dismount decals...

...College Ave. medians and crosswalk islands... Oak Street Plaza...and the Oak/Remington Parking Lot. Most projects have partnered with and leveraged other funding sources.



Linden Streetscape, done in a partnership that saved the Linden Hotel and reconstructed Linden Street.

GID REVENUES

The GID receives revenues primarily from a property tax mil levy set by City Council members acting as the Board of Directors. The mil levy has remained at 4.94 mils since 1992. Secondly, the GID receives other revenues from a share of vehicle registration tax, and interest on the fund balance. The general magnitude of the GID Fund can be demonstrated, using 2012 budget figures, as follows:

Property tax revenues:	\$249,000
Other revenues:	\$ 54,000
Total revenues:	\$303,000
Fixed and Administrative Costs:	\$ 56,000
Revenues available for projects:	\$247,000
15-year projected revenues:	\$5-6 million
15-year projected revenues available for projects:	\$4.5-5.5 million

Fund balance <u>in 2012:</u> <u>(separate from 2011 revenues):</u> <u>(in addition to revenues):</u>	\$818,000
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Annual revenues are projected to continue growing slowly, from approximately \$300,000 in 2012, to approximately \$500,000 over 15 years to 2026, depending on property values.

The Board approves spending in the City's overall budget process, and in any other funding appropriation requests that may occur between budget cycles. Approximately \$36,000 is committed annually for ongoing, routine disbursements including residential rebates, Larimer County Treasurer's Services, and small water and electric bills for irrigation and lighting. Starting in 2011, the budget also included funding for staff administration in the amount of \$38,000, partly to conduct the public process to develop this capital improvement plan. The budget item for staffing drops to \$20,000 in 2012, and after 2012 it will be determined in future budgeting processes.

\$500,000 of the \$818,000 fund balance has been earmarked to build the Wayfinding Sign System, which is a project from the 1994 list. The remaining fund balance remains available for projects. Whenever any budget or appropriation item is requested, the Board will have the opportunity to provide direction on the project involved.

GID ADMINISTRATION

The GID is managed collaboratively by City staff in several departments, without any formal organizational structure. A general outline of the informal organization of staff work is as follows:

The City Manager's Office provides executive leadership. The Finance and Budget offices administer finances and prepare budget statements. Advance Planning develops and oversees a capital improvements plan with a list of projects, formulates projects, prepares budget offers, monitors expenditures, and serves as a primary point of contact for project-related ideas, questions, and issues. Parks provides comprehensive, crucial maintenance of GID improvements, and also formulates projects. Engineering assists with design and provides construction supervision. Parking Services operates the GID-built Oak/Remington parking lot, and collaborates on all projects and ideas that affect parking.

Besides these primary roles, staff in all departments and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) coordinate and collaborate in many other ways. A few examples are identifying project ideas, vetting ideas, formulating projects, seeking opportunities to leverage resources, and resolving technical questions and issues.

In addition to City staff, the DDA staff coordinates and collaborates with City staff in matters of mutual overlapping interest. The DDA formulates and executes capital projects that overlap with the purposes of the GID, and it manages property tax revenues that are interrelated with the GID's revenues. Three important projects on the potential projects list are DDA projects; the top priority project, Old Town Square Renovations, involves the DDA-owned Old Town Square.

Capital Improvements Plan

This capital improvements plan is a key aspect of the GID. City Council Resolution 92-37 requires staff to prepare and maintain a plan, in consultation with property owners, with a list of projects to guide the use of the GID's revenues.

Accordingly, this plan is essentially a list of potential projects to be pursued by staff using GID funding. The list is intended to represent about a 15-year time frame.

USE OF THE PLAN

This plan is a guide and framework for staff work, and for Board decisions. It does not represent a specific commitment or obligation to fund any given project. Staff uses the plan to formulate projects, assemble funding packages, and move projects forward to execution. The Board uses the plan to provide context for annual budgeting, other funding requests, and any other governance issues.

Besides the projects on the list, the intent of this plan is to continue to allow flexibility for staff to respond to other new opportunities or urgent needs that may arise, as has been the practice in the past. Also, the plan should be updated as needed to remain useful as new information emerges and conditions change.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS LIST

The crux of this plan is the Potential Projects List. The list was developed in an open planning process in 2011, which sought all thoughts and ideas for projects, starting with ideas from other previous planning efforts. The overall pool of ideas was then refined in staff discussion and analysis, public outreach, and review by City Council sitting as the GID Board at a worksession.

Two primary considerations in evaluation of any project ideas are:

- ▶ The appropriateness of GID funding relative to other funding sources. The GID is for enhancements that would not otherwise be done -- GID funds should not be used as a substitute for City funding of items the City is normally obligated to do, and would do if the GID did not exist.
- ▶ The importance to downtown as a business and commercial area, in terms of the original purposes of the GID-- identity and image, pedestrian use, and parking.

Another significant consideration is the potential to leverage or partner with other funding sources to maximize the effects of GID funding.

Priorities

Table 1 (opposite) shows three levels of priority that emerged in the planning process, with groups of projects in each level. Projects within each level are also listed in general order of priority. Priorities are based on rankings by property owners and the public, discussion with the GID Board, and staff evaluation of projects considering all input and other factors.

Priority refers to priority for staff work and funding commitments. The intent is to guide the allocation of staff work to get projects formulated, funded, and executed; and to guide the allocation of revenues to projects. Priorities do not necessarily refer to priority for timing of execution -- some smaller projects could be completed while larger, higher-priority projects are still being planned, designed, and financed.

Priorities are not meant to prevent efforts or actions on any projects if opportunities arise to initiate action at any time on any project, regardless of priority shown.

Hypothetical Scenario for GID Funding, 15-year total

Table 1 shows a hypothetical funding scenario for how the GID's projected funding capacity could be allocated among the projects on the list. Revenues available for project funding are projected in the range of \$4.5-5.5 million. This scenario is shown only to illustrate the general magnitude of what might be possible.

The figures are hypothetical GID funding contributions to each project over a 15-year period starting in 2012. They reflect educated guesses of funding amounts that would be realistic and substantial enough to make the projects financially feasible. Most of the projects are expected to involve funding packages that include other funding sources.

Some projects may involve an initial, one-time cost for construction; others may involve an initial cost and a subsequent annual line item commitment for maintenance; and others may only involve an annual line item commitment for an ongoing program.

To develop actual funding scenarios, each project will require further planning, design, cost estimating, and financing work to define a scope and funding package. All projects will be formulated to account for long term maintenance and operations, whether that funding is to be sourced from the GID or elsewhere.

Potential Funding Partners

Conceptual ideas for potential funding partners are shown for each project. These are suggestions for funding sources that appear appropriate to the project, and worth pursuing with further staff work. Some projects will only be feasible as envisioned with participation by funding partners. Others could be feasible without partners, at least at some level, but partnerships would still be highly advantageous for the extent and quality of execution, the efficiency of joint efforts, and the maximum effect of GID funds.

Table 1. Potential Projects

	GID FUNDING, 15 YEAR TOTAL	POTENTIAL FUNDING PARTNERS
Priority Level 1		
▶ Old Town Square Renovations	\$1,000,000	DDA, 2015 Citywide CIP
▶ Jefferson/Mountain Gateway and Streetscape Improvements	\$200,000	City, DDA, Federal and State Funds
▶ Reserve Fund -- for Opportunities and Needs	\$750,000	NA
▶ Additional Pedestrian-Enhanced Alleys	\$1,000,000	DDA
Priority Level 2		
▶ Enhanced Crosswalks	\$500,000	City
▶ Old Town Square Plaza Lighting Renovation	\$25,000	DDA
▶ Jefferson Streetscape	\$200,000	DDA, CDOT
▶ Mulberry/Mason Gateway and Streetscape Improvements	\$100,000	Mason Corridor Project
▶ Public Restrooms Funding	\$100,000	City, DDA
▶ Holiday Lights and Electricity Funding	\$150,000	DDA, City
▶ Sidewalks, Curbs and Gutters Replacement	\$150,000	City, Owners
Priority Level 3		
▶ Linden Street Pedestrian Lights Augmentation	\$25,000	DDA
▶ Mulberry/College Gateway and Streetscape Improvements	\$200,000	Developer, City
▶ Parking Facilities Improvements and Renovations	\$500,000	City
	\$4,900,000	

Capital Improvements Plan Implementation

NEEDED ACTIONS

Needed actions include the following:

- ▶ Meet to review and discuss this capital improvements plan with all affected City departments, following adoption.
- ▶ Maintain contacts among staff to monitor and coordinate with all related non-GID projects and efforts. Examples include Jefferson Street planning and Parking Plan projects, Mason Corridor, private development projects, budget discussions involving holiday lights and other projects, ongoing conversations about public restrooms, pavement management programs, and other efforts to maintain and enhance streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks.
- ▶ Flesh out specific project needs based on project descriptions, including timing for actions by staff, and incorporate the needs into departmental work plans and budgets for appropriate years.
- ▶ Develop and maintain funding and timing scenarios for the overall project list, to determine financing options that may include debt financing.
- ▶ Explore funding scenarios with the DDA.
- ▶ Explore feasibility of including top projects the next citywide capital improvement package for voters in 2015, with the City Manager's Office.
- ▶ Examine suggestions for private sector participation in funding, by owner and business interests.
- ▶ Develop scope, conceptual design, and cost estimates for projects.

FINANCING

As staff proceeds with work on the project list, financing approaches will be explored. For some smaller projects, available revenues may be adequate to proceed on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Some larger projects, or groups of projects, may need up-front debt financing such as bonding or borrowing against the revenue stream, in order to allow timely completion, or timely participation with other funding sources.

The annual revenue stream available to fund projects, after fixed and administrative costs, is projected to grow from about \$2407,000 in 2012, to about \$440,000 over 15 years. This projection depends on assumptions for increasing property values and stable administrative costs. If this projection proves to be generally valid, then this revenue stream could support debt financing in the general magnitude of about \$3-4 ~~\$2-2.5~~ million over 15 years. Actual debt financing capacity depends on numerous factors including internal (City) versus external (private market) financing, interest rates, and structure of financing packages, in addition to property values and administrative costs.

For up-front debt financing of projects, borrowing from City reserves may be a possibility to consider and explore, along with private market bonds or loans. While borrowing from City reserve funds may be possible, in 2011 the amount of reserves available for loans has declined considerably, and prioritization for the amount remaining is becoming increasingly competitive.

If bonding or borrowing is to be part of project financing, lead time is a major issue not to be overlooked by staff. Debt financing can take a year or more to execute. Time requirements include:

- ▶ The political approval process.
- ▶ Incorporation into City budgets if borrowing from City reserves.
- ▶ An election of GID electors as defined by State law.
- ▶ Technical work to structure loan or bond packages and sell any bonds.

Any of these steps can typically involve 3-6 months or more.

Packaging of debt financing is an issue, particularly if external markets, rather than the City, are considered. ~~External markets are not as interested in small packages, and~~ It is a more efficient use of the revenue stream to finance a larger package all at once, versus multiple smaller packages, because of the fixed costs for each loan or bond issue. These factors would also apply to borrowing from City reserves, although perhaps to a lesser degree.

Timing of financing is a current issue in 2011. Interest rates are at 50-60-year lows and are forecasted to remain low for the near future. Staff should consider whether a funding scenario with debt financing in the near future could be worthwhile in this regard. The limitation on this idea is that borrowing years in advance of project construction can have tax implications that negate the benefit of the borrowing at low rates. While advance borrowing could be advantageous, it should only be considered if projects are well-defined and ready to proceed to construction on a timely schedule.

Project Descriptions

OLD TOWN SQUARE RENOVATIONS

This potential project would enable the GID to assist the DDA with funding of portions of Old Town Square renovations. Specific components would be determined through additional planning and design work.

Some example needs include: reconfiguration of the fountain, stage, and kiosk/restroom building to make room for larger performances and enhance the connection with Linden Street; electric infrastructure for performance sound and lighting; plaza lighting renovation; renovation of the fountain equipment; and updating of finishes, plantings, and irrigation.

Old Town Square is now over 25 years old, and draws more, bigger crowds than ever. Numerous needs and ideas for renovations have come up over the years. While it is highly successful as the #1 focal point of Downtown, it has been described as “tired” and renovations emerges as the most important project for GID funding. It is owned and maintained by the DDA, but DDA funding is now sharply reduced to a level where it has lost the ability to cover renovation costs in the near future.

There is a conceptual cost estimate of \$2.5 million in 2010 dollars. Other recommended funding sources include the DDA, and the next Citywide Capital Improvements Program package (e.g., 1997 BCC, 2005 BOB), which is expected to be presented to City voters in 2015.

A hypothetical funding scenario of approximately \$1 million each from the GID, DDA, and the next citywide package should be a starting point for staff work in formulating a financing package. Staff should continue to explore other funding sources as well.

Origin: Old Town Square Needs Assessment Study, 2009.



North end of Old Town Square at its junction with Linden Street.

JEFFERSON/MOUNTAIN GATEWAY URBAN DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING

This potential project is dependent on the outcome of a *Jefferson Street Alternatives Analysis Study* currently underway by the City, DDA, and CDOT. That study is scheduled for completion in Fall 2011. It includes funding for construction of its recommendations. However, the funding is not expected to adequately address the community's need and desire to mark this Downtown gateway with pedestrian and beautification enhancements.

This project is to capture the opportunity to partner in design enhancements to fully realize the community's desires to enhance this intersection, if such enhancements exceed the scope of the committed funding as expected. Any GID funding would be used to augment and partner with, and not to replace, the committed funding.

Origin: Downtown Plan



Existing conditions at the southwest corner of this key Downtown entry.

RESERVE FUND TO RESPOND TO EMERGING PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND URGENT NEEDS

This is a general idea for the GID to be able to respond opportunistically to projects that may arise as new priorities. A number of possible examples have been noted:

- ▶ Repairs and Renovations to Existing GID Improvements
- ▶ Enhanced linkages to Mason Corridor
- ▶ Additional Bike Parking
- ▶ Bike Parking Maintenance and Operations
- ▶ Additional Enhanced Interpretive/Wayfinding Signage
- ▶ Enhanced Linkages to New Museum, Possibly with Expansion of GID Boundary
- ▶ Pedestrian Lighting, Mountain South Side, College to Remington
- ▶ Pedestrian Lighting, Other Locations
- ▶ Canyon Art Walk
- ▶ West Oak Street Parking - Design to Close for Events
- ▶ Linden Street Paver Renovation
- ▶ Pine Street Streetscape Enhancements
- ▶ Amphitheatre Participation
- ▶ Special Events Facility Participation
- ▶ Community Marketplace Participation
- ▶ Parks Maintenance Shop Participation
- ▶ Ice Rink, Full Size, Multi-Use, All-Season Outdoor
- ▶ Redevelopment Projects - Streetscape or Parking Partnerships
- ▶ Another Parking Structure - Funding Participation
- ▶ College Avenue Mid-Block Pedestrian Crossing, Civic Center Garage to Old Town Square via Opera Galleria and Trimble Court per Downtown Strategic Plan
- ▶ Expand Planting Program for Corner Noses at Street Corners
- ▶ Annual Maintenance of Existing GID Improvements, If City Funding Becomes Unavailable

ADDITIONAL PEDESTRIAN-ENHANCED ALLEYS

This potential project is to enable the GID to assist in funding additional enhanced alleys.

A *Downtown Alleys Master Plan Report* by the DDA identifies a system of alley makeover projects to enhance pedestrian connectivity and interest. A number of these projects have been executed by the DDA, but more remain. Candidate alley projects are: Linden to Chestnut, behind Armadillo and the Wright Life; Mountain to Olive on the west side of College, behind Old Chicago and Ace Hardware; Laporte to Tenney Court between the Civic Center garage and Tenney Court; and Oak to Olive at the Oak/Remington Lot, behind the Aggie Theater and Tony's Lounge. Long-term, specialized maintenance is a key component to include in the formulation of any more alley enhancements project.

Origin: Downtown Plan



Existing alley on extending south from Mountain Avenue, across Oak Street to Olive Street, on the west side of College Avenue. (Behind Old Chicago and Ace Hardware.)



A pedestrian-enhanced alley (Trimble Court).

ENHANCED CROSSWALKS

This project would enhance key street crossings to more visibly support pedestrian use. The project would begin with identification of the key crossings that warrant enhancements.

One prime example location would be the crossing of Mulberry Street along College Avenue, to better tie Downtown to CSU. That location, which is considered the southern entry into Downtown, could also potentially be related to a larger gateway streetscape project, and also be related to similar enhancements at the crossing of Mulberry Street one block to the west where the Mason Corridor enters Downtown.

Origin: Downtown Plan, Downtown Strategic Plan



Hypothetical example of crosswalk enhancement concept with colored, textured paving.



Actual Downtown example of an enhanced crosswalk with colored, textured paving, a median refuge, and corner plaza pavers.

ENHANCED CROSSWALKS CONTINUED:

SHORTEN EAST/WEST PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS LEADING INTO THE CORE AREA

At key street corners, crosswalk enhancements could include the extension of curb lines to shorten the pedestrian crossing and provide additional landscaping and seating areas.

The *Downtown Strategic Plan* recommends orienting redevelopment in the near West Side and East Side areas to east/west streets leading into the core area, and recommends this kind of enhancement. For example, crossing Mason and Howes at Mountain, Oak, and Magnolia are mentioned. Those crossings of Mason could also include exploration of smoother rail crossings for bicycles.

Some east side locations may be similar, e.g., Olive at Remington and Mathews.

Origin: Downtown Strategic Plan



Example of Olive Street crossing Remington

OLD TOWN SQUARE LIGHTING RENOVATION

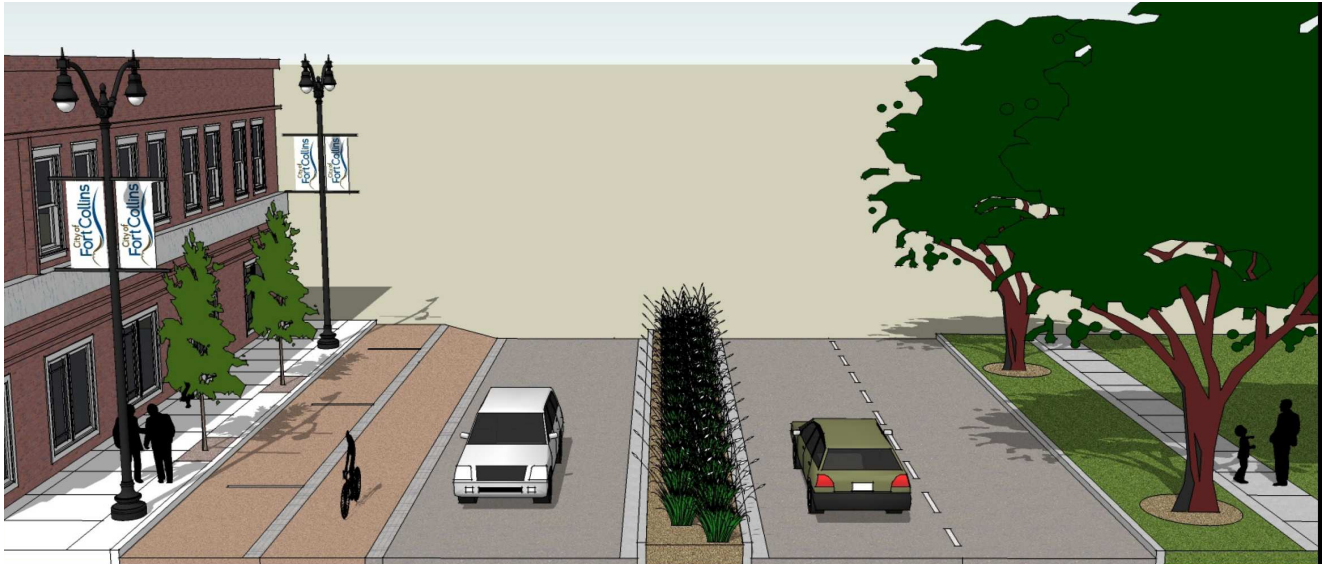
This project would be included as part of any larger Old Town Square renovation package, but it was also suggested as a special, smaller project to highlight separately as a possible first step. The idea is to update lighting with more historic-styled fixtures that offer today's better performance in terms of energy efficiency, aesthetics, and functionality in lighting the plaza.



The predominant existing lighting type in Old Town Square.

JEFFERSON STREETScape

This project idea is dependent on outcome of a Jefferson Street Alternatives Analysis Study currently underway by the City and CDOT. That study is scheduled for completion in Fall 2011. It includes a funding allocation for subsequent construction of its recommendations. This project idea is to help meet a need or opportunity for additional streetscape enhancement funding that the GID could add to committed funding, assuming that the committed funding will not adequately cover the full streetscape recommendations that may result from the study. Any GID funding would be used to augment and partner with, and not to replace, the committed State funding.



Concept sketch of one early alternative being examined, with three traffic lanes, median segments, a bike lane, and improvements to parking and sidewalks.

MULBERRY/MASON GATEWAY AND STREETScape

This potential project would augment the Mason Corridor bus rapid transit improvements. This intersection will become a significant south entry to Downtown, with a role similar and related to the role of the Mulberry/College intersection.

Conceptual graphics from discussions a few years ago suggest enhanced crosswalks and corner ramps; improvements could also include urban design features, such as the low planters/seat walls and corner plazas found at other downtown corners.



Existing conditions.



Conceptual illustration of street improvements and future redevelopment.



Example gateway streetscape improvements.

PUBLIC RESTROOMS FUNDING

This project is a general idea for staff to assist ongoing efforts to provide appropriate public restroom facilities Downtown. This may involve defining specific needs, evaluating options and technologies, seeking additional locations for public facilities, improving existing facilities, seeking partnerships, and using GID funding if necessary to leverage other funding.

The recommendation is for any GID funding to be used for permanent physical facilities; and to be used to leverage other funding sources.

Restroom issues are a continual, multi-faceted topic for Downtown property and business owners, the DDA, Police District 1, City facilities managers and maintenance crews, and other interests.



Example of a “have2p” restroom locator for smart phones from another city that has restroom options.

PUBLIC RESTROOMS FUNDING, CONTINUED

Part of the general idea to provide appropriate public restroom facilities, includes transforming the nondescript, anonymous appearance of the facility at the Oak/Remington parking lot with an architectural makeover or replacement.

The concept is that the character of the facility may be contributing to lack of awareness that it exists, and also to undesirable/illicit activity, both of which are problems; and that enhancing the appearance and identity of the facility could affect behavior and use of the facility. Possible enhancements are a roof, fascias for signage, opaque glass block inserts, and other architectural enhancements. Also, the current door/entry arrangement, which is based on occupying the facility behind a closed door, could be reconsidered with different entry arrangement. Other ideas, such as adding classical music, could be tried.



Existing public restroom in the Oak/Remington lot.



An example from another city.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS AND ELECTRICITY FUNDING

This potential project would enable the GID to assist with funding of a share of the annual holiday lighting installation. The recommendation is for any GID funding to be limited to capital investment in equipment or permanent infrastructure; to be used to leverage other funding sources more appropriate for event installations; and to be considered only if necessary to prevent the loss of the program.

This annual installation is currently funded by the DDA under a contract set to expire after 2011. The DDA, DBA, and City have been parties to a three-way partnership in the contract, but all three have had revenue cuts that place the program in question.

This potential project is not the type of capital project envisioned in the original creation of the GID, and has raised particular questions and mixed reviews regarding appropriate use of GID revenues. However, it is of top importance to the public and the Downtown business community and thus is included as a potential project to support with GID funding.



Holiday lights in trees along East Mountain Avenue.

SIDEWALKS, CURBS, AND GUTTERS REPLACEMENT

This potential project is an ongoing program to repair and replace damaged sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. A large, one-time project is currently fixing the extra-wide, core-area sidewalks in 2011. This project would fund smaller scale replacements, throughout the GID, as an ongoing program.

Modest funding amounts could be useful, e.g., as little as \$10,000 in a given year. There is currently no effective program for this concrete work. Municipal Code places responsibility on property owners to maintain sidewalks, curbs, and gutters so they do not endanger the public; but that is difficult to implement, and does not require consistent quality of finish. A GID program could provide a more practical, organized, quality approach for Downtown.



New sidewalk, curb, and gutter fitted in among older existing portions of sidewalk that were in good condition.



Example showing cracks and heaving in concrete sidewalk and tree grate curb.

LINDEN STREET PEDESTRIAN LIGHTS AUGMENTATION

This project would design and install additional lighting consistent with other similar areas. Linden Street lighting between Walnut and Jefferson is not consistent with lighting levels in other high-activity areas, due to long distances between the current pedestrian fixtures, creating darker areas.

This project should be considered in relation to Old Town Square lighting renovation. A goal for overall Old Town Square renovations is to strengthen the visual linkage to this block. Replacement of lighting to continue the same matching fixtures throughout Linden Street and Old Town Square should be considered as a way to achieve the goal.



A stretch of Linden Street sidewalk that would benefit from more street/sidewalk lighting.

MULBERRY/COLLEGE STREETScape/GATEWAY

This project was on the previous 1994 project list. It would upgrade the west side of College Avenue at current Sports Authority frontage, reinforcing the theme set by landscaping on the east side. The goal is to enhance the image at this key south entry to Downtown. Street trees, low screen walls, plantings, irrigation, and a seating area are recommended. Also, a median planter could reinforce the Downtown theme, and new enhanced crosswalks could aid pedestrian crossings and highlight the link between Downtown and CSU.

Origin: *Downtown Plan*



Existing Conditions



Landscaping on the east side of College Avenue at Mulberry



Existing median



Downtown median planter

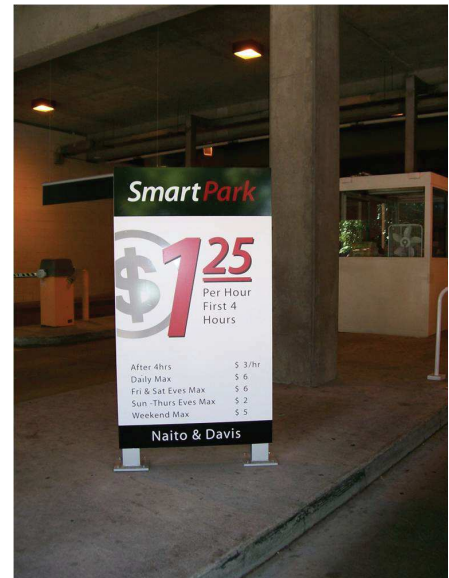


Existing crosswalk Enhanced crosswalk



PARKING FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS AND RENOVATIONS

This project idea is dependent on outcome of a Parking Plan for Downtown scheduled for completion in 2012. That plan is expected to recommend improvements to public garages and lots to create a more positive brand, and improve the everyday experience for users. Example features may include better-designed, coordinated signage and paint. It may also recommend additional parking, considering shared parking and partnerships in new lots or garages.



Successful examples of user-friendly finishes and signage transforming garages in other cities.

Other Ideas

During the process, some ideas were suggested that fall outside the scope of this capital improvements plan, but are recorded here for future reference and further consideration by appropriate entities.

Expansion of the GID's Boundary: The question of possible expansion of the GID's boundaries was raised, related to ideas for potential projects outside of the GID. Three areas in particular were noted:

- ▶ The north edge -- the two blocks bounded by Maple Street, Cherry Street, College Avenue, and Howes Street, with Mason Street separating the two blocks.
- ▶ The River District area - the area bounded by Jefferson/Riverside, the Poudre River, Lincoln Avenue, and College Avenue.
- ▶ The south edge -- the commercial areas between Mulberry and Laurel.

Any of these ideas would involve outreach and complex discussion of issues, pros, cons, and logistics. Boundary expansion is allowed by State law, and would require initiation by a petition of property owners, then City Council approval, and an election by electors in the expansion area.

Ice Rink Funding: This suggestion was for the GID to assist with funding of the annual holiday ice rink installation and removal, if no other funding is available to continue the program after 2011. The installation has been funded by the DDA, but major revenue reductions in 2011 have led the DDA to discontinue its funding. The cost is about \$40,000 in 2011. This was rated very highly as being important to Downtown in the 2011 planning process. However, as a temporary attraction, it was not widely supported as being appropriate for GID funding, in light of the needs for other, permanent capital improvements that are more consistent with the purposes of the GID.

Other Ideas:

- ▶ Shuttles from/to hotels and other south Fort Collins locations.
- ▶ Shuttle to Lincoln Center.
- ▶ Portable security cameras.
- ▶ Downtown circulator shuttle along key routes within and around Downtown.
- ▶ Trolley expansion to the Trolley Barn.
- ▶ Surcharge on certain criminal citations to help pay for restrooms and maintenance.
- ▶ Noise abatement, especially train noise.
- ▶ Development and maintenance of an email list of property owners.

Conclusion

This plan will guide discussions and efforts over years, with updates as needed. New information and changes have been constant, and that is expected to continue. The project information will evolve and change as progress is made and new information is available. Still, this plan is important in determining a basis for staff work to pursue projects, funding, and coordination efforts by various stakeholders.