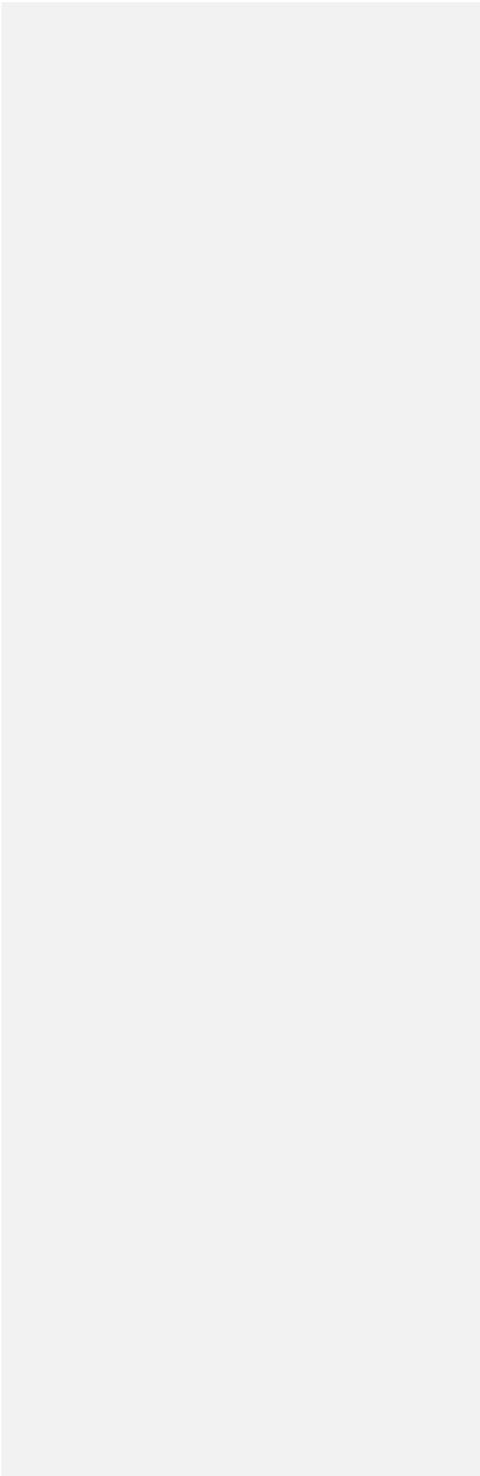


**OLD COLORADO CITY PARTNERSHIP**

**Strategic Approach  
February 2020**

**PREPARED BY**

**DOWNTOWN  
COLORADO**  
**inc.**



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## Old Colorado City Partnership Board Strategic Planning Retreat

### PURPOSE

The Old Colorado City Partnership (OCCP) Board met to assess progress and establish buy in for the next steps in implementing the district strategy and action plan. The discussion considered the past accomplishments, input from stakeholders, current projects and events lists, and for 2020 projects, events, and priorities. The abbreviated process intended to take stock of where the Board sees the effort moving next and identifying some strategic goals to direct the future action.

### MISSION + VISION

The OCCP vision statement should be how you envision your organization. The vision statement should be reviewed continuously to ensure it is still aligned with the Board.

*"A unified, activated community. "*

The OCCP mission statement should describe what your organization does. As you focus on your mission each day, it can assist to reach the vision.

*"Facilitate a cooperative relationship among OCC partners and the City of Colorado Springs to implement recommendations in order to improve and promote community and visitor experiences in OCC. "*

### OCCP REPORT FORMAT

The OCCP is now a recognized Colorado Main Street Affiliate Community. An important component of the program is the Main Street Four Point Approach, which rests upon organizing activity into the following areas<sup>1</sup> which is the structure used for the report:

- **ECONOMIC VITALITY** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.
- **DESIGN** supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.
- **PROMOTION** positions the downtown or commercial district as the center of the community and hub of economic activity, while creating a positive image that showcases a community's unique characteristics.
- **ORGANIZATION** involves creating a strong foundation for a sustainable revitalization effort, including cultivating partnerships, community involvement, and resources for the district.

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<sup>1</sup> Language taken from that National Trust Main Street Program website.

## 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The OCCP has shown exceptional ability to move projects forward in the first year since creation. The leadership on the OCCP Board is demonstrating longevity. The partnership organizations are demonstrating commitment. The accomplishments and drive toward consistent improvement are something to recognize and to celebrate.

ORGANIZATION	PROMOTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated the Historic Society into the OCCP leadership and planning.</li> <li>• Strengthened the partnership with shared goals.</li> <li>• OCC has focused on growing relationships with City with both staff, elected officials, and the Downtown Partnership.</li> <li>• Old Colorado City Partnership (OCCP) was recognized as a stakeholder and important part of Colorado Springs.</li> <li>• OCCP became a Colorado Main Street Affiliate.</li> <li>• Increase OCCP Board cohesion.</li> <li>• Team-building around communications and the website.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong connection to merchants.</li> <li>• Created the first Partnership event with the 4th of July picnic</li> <li>• Established a great Community table event for residents.</li> <li>• A more positive image based on coverage and responses from media and partners.</li> <li>• Won the Best Neighborhood Award</li> </ul>
ECONOMIC VITALITY	DESIGN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collected sales tax numbers from the City.</li> <li>• Held training to understand Districts: Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Downtown Development Authorities (DDA), + Urban Renewal Authorities (URAs).</li> <li>• OCCP has been able to access skills to support the cause.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) for Colbrunn Court lighting.</li> <li>• Implemented the utility box wrap pilot project.</li> <li>• Developed the plan and implementation team for the OCC Cabin improvements.</li> </ul>

## FIVE YEAR VISION

The OCCP goals should lead toward the long-term vision as expressed by the board in the following points. When reviewing the plan of action and mission, review them against the vision for the future.

- 1) The Old Colorado City Partnership will be a fully developed organization with a board and bylaws that is serving all of the constituents of OCC.
- 2) The OCCP will have a Business Improvement District (BID) that provides sustainable financing for Governance, Marketing, and Maintenance of the District.
- 3) The OCCP District Assessment objectives will be completed and OCCP will begin working on a new Master Plan.
- 4) OCCP will have clearly communicated processes for residents, locals, or visitors to get involved in the OCCP through volunteering, committee involvement, or other community involvement.
- 5) OCCP will have clearly communicated how business and property owners can
  - a. invest in their building or property,
  - b. start or expand a business,
  - c. post a plaque or sign sharing the history of a building or space,
  - d. request public art or mural assistance,
  - e. participate in marketing and events,
  - f. realize other benefits of being in the OCCP District.
- 6) The OCCP will have one unified voice that is included in decision-making with the City of Colorado Springs and will be involved in other regional initiatives.
- 7) OCC will be a clean, livable, and active commercial district where locals and visitors feel safe and inspired.

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## STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Prior to the OCCP Board Retreat, a short list of questions was distributed to local partners and stakeholders to collect input and feedback for the discussion. In attendance, Dave Brackett, Katherine Correll, Leo Knudson, Jonathan Neely, Ashley Perry, Franco Pisani, Lauren Ripko, Barb Sweat, Jim Thompson, and Sara Vass.

Some of the recurring themes explored were:

2019 WHAT WORKED	2020 PRIORITY AREAS	2020 IMPROVEMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building personal interaction through regular meetings.</li> <li>• Consistent leadership guidance from <a href="#">Chair</a> Jonathan Neely &amp; <a href="#">Secretary</a>, Sara Vaas.</li> <li>• Delegating projects to the whole team.</li> <li>• Leverage partnerships with the city and other organizations.</li> <li>• Connecting with the History Center.</li> <li>• Franco's restaurants for meetings and networking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizational Sustainability: Includes the idea of establishing a structure, processes, and a plan for growing to ensure longevity on both a financial and partnership standing.</li> <li>• Advocacy: Establishing one voice with consistent talking points and a growing number of representatives able to build the Old Colorado City mission.</li> <li>• Placemaking: More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synchronize and streamline one voice for OCCP communication.</li> <li>• Assess what each organization contributes and needs.</li> <li>• Partner more and cross promote in everything.</li> <li>• Create unified program for fundraising + attracting volunteers.</li> </ul>

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## CURRENT + FUTURE ROLE

Person	Current	Ideal
<b>Ashley</b>	<u>Executive Director of</u> OCCA, consistent face of the OCCA, not clear role with the partnership, wrangle merchants and support Franco	<b>BUSINESS SUPPORT</b> Farmers Marketing and food Shed, sustainability, ecotourism, non-profit
<b>Lauren</b>	not clear role with the partnership, attends OCCA and OCCF, produces events for OCCA + OCCF	<b>COMMITTEE + PROMOTIONS</b> Creative Committee liaison, facilitator and representative for OCCP in the community
<b>Franco</b>	Raising money, find sponsors, adding to momentum, connection to merchants	<b>ORGANIZATION</b> Connection to stakeholders
<b>Dave</b>	Driving the cabin project and working with city around park	<b>ORGANIZATION</b> Transition to OCCF to Partnership, Connection to stakeholders
<b>Jim</b>	Helping with general ideas and building the OCCP, considering how OWN fits.	<b>DESIGN</b> More engaged with construction, physical projects, identifying developers, find opportunity sites
<b>Leo + Barb</b>	Integrating, sharing the story, fun events	<b>PROMOTIONS</b> Tours of OCC, plaques on historic buildings, cabin support, 501 c 3
<b>Jonathan</b>	<u>Chair</u> , Leader, OCCP representative + voice, CEO, build relationship with City, move toward sustainability (staff, funding, one org), help id roles	<b>ORGANIZATION + ECONOMIC VITALITY</b> Lead contact, relationship with City, move toward sustainability (staff, funding, one org), build benefits of being in the partnership, build better structure and roles, DRIVER
<b>Sara</b>	Secretary, Leader, strategy, weekly meetings	<b>ORGANIZATION + PROMOTION</b> Grant writing, Strategy, Structure, connecting to stakeholder, Manage Jim

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## PROPOSED OCCP COMMITTEE ROLES

ORGANIZATION	PROMOTION	DESIGN	ECONOMIC VITALITY
<b>Jonathan Neely</b>	<b>Lauren Ripko</b>	<b>Jim Thompson</b>	<b>Jonathan Neely</b>
Sara Vaas	Barb Sweat	Jonathan Neely	Jim Thompson
Ashley Perry	Sara Vaas	Franco Pisani	Dave Brackett
Dave Brackett	Ashley Perry		
Leo Knudson	Becca Sickbert		
Franco Pisani			
<b>+ City Council</b>	<b>+ Arts Committee</b>	<b>+ Arts Committee</b>	<b>Sarah Humbarger</b>



## EVENT REVIEW

In a quick review of the largest events in OCC, the following list demonstrates the events, numbers of participants, purpose, and ideas for improvement.

EVENTS	MONTH	REVENUE	# PEOPLE	IMPROVEMENTS
Mad Hatter - Easter	April			REMOVE?
Territory Days	May	\$130	150K	
West Fest	June	\$0	2K	Maker Fair, Better Band, Vendors
Tunnel Tales - HC	June	\$2000	200	Increased promotions
4th of July - OCCP	July	\$0	400	More partnership, Pikes Peak or Bust Rodeo, Add historic content
Founders Day - HC	Aug	\$0	100	Increased promotions, live band and access to the park, book roll out from newspapers, 19th Amendment
Taste of OCC	Sept	\$17000	700	Volunteers, historic content
Community Table - OWN	Sept	\$200	300	
Haunted History - HC	Sept	\$3000	100	Increased promotion, collaborate with harvest, conflict with city
Harvest Fest	Oct	\$1000	5k	Shut down street, include History Center, include celebration of Colbrun Ct?
Craft Show - HC	Nov			Kick off Christmas Stroll
Small Business Sat	Nov			
Christmas Stroll	Nov-Dec	\$0	3k	tree, invite locals, Santa's cabin

Additional discussion included the dates of the events, with the common understanding that all of the largest events are planned between April and December. When considering new events, encourage partners to establish events in the off season to shape year round engagement rather than adding more content in the times that are already busy.

## STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTION STEPS

Strategic goals are statements that if accomplished will take you closer to your vision. The more focused actions will lead toward accomplishing the strategic goals, directly aligning with the mission and vision statements. The next step will be to set some milestones for the "how to" and "when" of implementing the actions. Include a focus on projects that might connect several goals and use the project planning template to strategically think through each project.

## 2020 ORGANIZATION NEXT STEPS

### O.1: STREAMLINE + OPTIMIZE PARTNERSHIP

- A. Consolidate OCCP functions by migrating OCCF to the OCCP. Consider if this can be as simple as electing the OCCP Board as the OCCF Board and “doing business as” the Old Colorado City Partnership.
- B. Understand how the organizations fit in a practical and governance model. Start with a deep dive inventory to understand options for collaboration and cross-promotion based on the profile of each organization: i) Assets: Revenue Streams (membership, events fees, sponsorship, advertising, grants, etc.), Physical + Virtual Space, Skills, Events, Brand, Audience, etc.; ii) Needs: Expenses, Volunteers, Outreach, Training, etc.
- C. Establish structures and processes for the Partnership to integrate all stakeholder groups for more synchronized planning, communication, and growth, especially around events and public facing activities. E.g. Consider how an event can have revenue streams for multiple organizations like the OCCA, Historic Society, and OCCP while being marketed as OCCP.
- D. Continue to build relationships and identify groups with like-minded focus for the area.
- E. Establish committees for increased focus on implementation. Have the OCCP Board members serve as committee chairs. Consider Organization, Promotion, Design, + Economic Vitality.
- F. Share the strategy broadly. Make sure that locals and partners receive a message about your strategic planning meeting and an invite to join the OCCP effort, and a regular update of projects.

### O.2: BUILD PROCESSES + MATERIALS FOR OCC ADVOCACY

- A. Create talking points about the OCCP listing each partner and the goals for Old Colorado City.
- B. Identify ways to be included in discussions and decision-making that impacts Old Colorado City, Colorado Springs, and the Creative Corridor.
- C. Work more closely and consistently with the City of Colorado Springs.
- D. Create a guest speaker slot on standing meeting agendas e.g. elected officials, Manitou Springs, Colorado Springs Downtown Partnership, Pikes Peak Creatives, etc. Invite speakers with a formal invitation a month or more in advance.
- E. Create a thank you letter for all constituents showing appreciation to them for supporting the larger OCCP partnership, share the 2019 accomplishments, include how to sign up for OCCP news, and invite them to be part of the OCC renaissance. Include list of “ways to be involved”.

### O.3: CONTINUE TO FOCUS ON LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

- F. Develop a list of roles/job descriptions by event and project.
- G. Create an invitation for volunteers based on needs of all OCC Partners.
- H. Focus on long term fundraising with larger grants and fundraising. Consider including a grant writer in job descriptions. Have a consolidated OCC focus for LART.
- I. Use the Colorado Challenge Accelerator Program to bring together a team that understands the OCC and the Creative Corridor and can build a plan for long term financing through a BID and Metro District.

## 2020 PROMOTION NEXT STEPS

### P.1: CELEBRATE OCCP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- A. Celebrate accomplishments in a more visible and consistent manner. Promote the OCCP and successes to all constituents, the City, and state-wide entities.
- B. Create a press release about the partnership and 2019 accomplishments and distribute to local media and through all organizational communication channels.
- C. Build an OCCP website, social media, and newsletter that showcases the partnership and all partner accomplishments.
- D. Post information about 2019 Accomplishments at least 1-2 times per month on diverse social media.
- E. Broaden your reach. Build a list of contact emails and groups who can further distribute and invite participation in the OCCP. Review current lists and then brainstorm other groups that will help share communication.

### P.2: ENHANCE EVENTS THROUGH INCREASED PARTNERSHIP

- A. Use the initial events review to build a strategy for increasing quality of events by including the different partners' skills/stories into each event. Dive deeper into the event review to identify areas for integrating events
- B. Cobrand OCC efforts around the OCCP. Increase OCCP marketing efforts for all partner organizations
- C. Monitor and prepare for overflow of downtown events.
- D. Invite local participation consistently. Send an invitation with a link to follow the OCCP to ALL emails available. Include a further invitation to share relevant stories, successes, or ideas that can be used for additional content and partnership building.

### P.3: TELL THE WHOLE OCC STORY

- A. Local awareness building. Expand communications to reach local audiences to increase awareness of initiatives with locals, businesses, non-profits, event planners, and other potential partners.
- B. Integrate the story (history + what's available) in OCC marketing. Establish a "cheat sheet" short list of local amenities and attractions to assist front line employees/volunteers who frequently encounter visitors (cabin hosts, historic tour leaders, restaurant staff, etc.).
- C. Increase the visibility of the OCCP through unified communications among all stakeholders.
- D. Invite locals to an event for OCCP Fans. Consider how to share and engage residents, students, or other potential volunteers by creating an OCC Celebration Day. During the event share ways to be involved and have OCC historic and district educational workshops.
- E. Celebrate successes. Create a focused approach toward self-promotion of accomplishments, sharing the good news of grant funding, focus on the economic impact of shopping in OCC and the sales tax you provide to the City.
- F. Establish a list of parameters for new events. Consider the December to April timeframe. Create an invitation to local and existing event planners, entrepreneurs, restaurants, etc. to propose ideas for off season events that fit into established parameters. Engage with the community to develop ideas rather than just creating a new event.
- G. Solicit content from locals. Create an ongoing campaign with a call for sharing "Old Colorado City Stories".

## ECONOMIC VITALITY NEXT STEPS

### E.1: UNDERSTAND YOUR DISTRICT

- Establish a contact list and an analysis of the property owners, business owners, and employees in the OCC three mile corridor.
- Use initial event review to set baseline numbers for events. Review annually to track impacts of OCCP programming.

### E.2: UNDERSTAND YOUR IMPACT

- Use sales tax and property tax data to understand the impact OCC has for the whole of Colorado Springs.
- Determine the combined contribution of all OCC partners in projects, planning, fundraising, foot traffic, etc.

### E.3: UNDERSTAND YOUR POTENTIAL

- Use the Colorado Challenge Accelerator Program to bring together team for data analysis and determining how districts, like a BID and Metro District may help to fund the needed corridor improvements.
- Use the Colorado Challenge Accelerator program to gather data on underground fuel tanks on Colorado Avenue and funds that private sector owners can access to clean up their sites.

## 2020 DESIGN NEXT STEPS

### **D.1: EXISTING PROJECTS FOR VISUAL ENHANCEMENT**

- A. Colbrunn Court. Implement lighting plan by October and additional projects for the future.
- B. Use the Pilot Utility Wrap to create communication, process, and cost estimate for other utility boxes to be wrapped.
- C. Christmas tree and lighting décor for the holidays.

### **D.2: 2020 NEW PROJECTS VISUAL ENHANCEMENT + IMAGE BUILDING**

- A. Implement pilot for trash receptacle enclosure. Create communication, process, and cost estimate for other receptacles to be enclosed.
- B. Develop an OCC and a private property/business owner role for Christmas decorations and communicate and design and costs.

### **D.2: LONG TERM PROJECTS VISUAL ENHANCEMENT + IMAGE BUILDING**

- A. Continue discussion about how to enhance three mile long streetscape on Colorado Avenue through smaller test projects.
- B. Consider engaging artists, school children, etc. to envision ideas for long-term project needs for gateways, wayfinding signage, and historical signs/markers.

## Main Street Fundamentals<sup>2</sup>

- The Main Street Approach is centered around Transformation Strategies. A Transformation Strategy articulates a focused, deliberate path to revitalizing or strengthening a downtown or commercial district's economy.
- A program's work on Transformation Strategies should be organized around the Four Points: Economic Vitality, Design, Promotion, and Organization.
- A revitalization program's work – and its Transformation Strategies – need to be informed by a solid understanding of local and regional market data, and sustained and inclusive community engagement.

Transformation Strategies are implemented through comprehensive work in four broad areas, known as the **Four Points**.

**ECONOMIC VITALITY** focuses on capital, incentives, and other economic and financial tools to assist new and existing businesses, catalyze property development, and create a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and innovators that drive local economies.

**DESIGN** supports a community's transformation by enhancing the physical and visual assets that set the commercial district apart.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.mainstreet.org/mainstreetamerica/theapproach>