

# Grand Junction, Colorado I-70B Downtown Corridor Recommendations

A New Vision for Downtown Grand Junction

Summer 2015

I-70B is the primary east-west arterial through the Grand Valley. A key portion of the corridor runs through the heart of downtown Grand Junction along 1st Street as well as Ute/Pitkin Avenues. The corridor accommodates fairly high traffic volumes generated by through-traffic and local traffic accessing commercial properties and adjacent neighborhoods. The corridor also connects to US Highway 50 at 5th Street. The intersections and pedestrian facilities along this corridor provide critical links between residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and community resources.

In 2008, an Environmental Assessment forecasted that by 2030, this corridor would need to accommodate 30,000 vehicles per day. However, updated regional modeling that occurred between 2014 and 2015 indicated much lower traffic volumes. In response, the City and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) felt this new data warranted a reevaluation of the proposed design concept for this portion of the corridor. Additionally, per the goals set out in the Comprehensive Plan and Greater Downtown Plan, the City and DDA desire to enhance mobility along this portion of 1<sup>st</sup> Street as well as the Ute/Pitkin Corridor to increase walking and biking, encourage redevelopment, and enhance the quality of life for the wide variety of people who depend on this major corridor.

To launch this process, the City received technical assistance through New Mobility West (NMW), an initiative of the Sonoran Institute; that provides communities the tools and resources necessary to become stronger, more prosperous places through building smarter transportation systems. NMW worked with Charlier Associates, a transportation planning firm, to facilitate a site visit and develop the recommendations in this document. The purpose of this report is to lay out solutions for the downtown portion of I-70B that address all stakeholder goals. The recommended improvements included in this report aim to balance throughput traffic flow with local mobility, livability and Downtown connectivity.

An intensive stakeholder design charrette process, held from April 15 to 16, 2015, provided a vision for an improved corridor that fully integrates bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The process focused on identifying the best locations along this corridor for physical pedestrian and bicycle improvements and conceptual designs. A list of participants and meetings held during this time can be found as an addendum to the report.

The vision from the stakeholder design charrette and detailed recommendations to enhance mobility along I-70B through downtown are contained in this document. It includes community goals, conceptual designs, and next steps. Detailed recommendations are included for the Grand Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Street intersection, 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Main Street intersection, the Amtrak Station Area, the Ute/Pitkin One-Way Pair, and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. Next steps to continue the process include:

- Continuing to evaluate improvements to maintain or improve traffic flow and safety,
- Completing further traffic and safety analysis of proposed mid-block crossings, 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> one-way to two-way conversions, and parking along Ute/Pitkin after reducing from 3 lanes to 2 lanes,
- Reevaluating need for turning lanes at intersections based upon lower anticipated traffic volumes, and
- Revisiting the status of the 2008 Environmental Assessment.

To begin addressing the challenges along this corridor, City staff is coordinating with the Colorado Department of Transportation to fulfill these next steps. There was also conversation around conducting a detailed evaluation of the proposed conversion of 4th and 5th Streets to two-way traffic, including lane reconfiguration and signal phasing/timing changes, however further analysis on this issue needs to be conducted independent of this project.

# I-70B

## A New Vision for Downtown Grand Junction

### EA Statement of Purpose and Need

- 1) Improve traffic flow
- 2) Improve safety
- 3) Improve multimodal opportunities
- 4) Improve access management

### Project History

**2008:** Environmental Assessment (EA) completed; forecasts over 30,000 vehicles per day by 2030

**2008 – 2013:** CDOT implements I-70B improvements from the west through Rimrock area

**2013 – 2015:** CDOT undertakes design of corridor through Grand intersection

**2014 – 2015:** updated regional modeling forecasts much lower future traffic

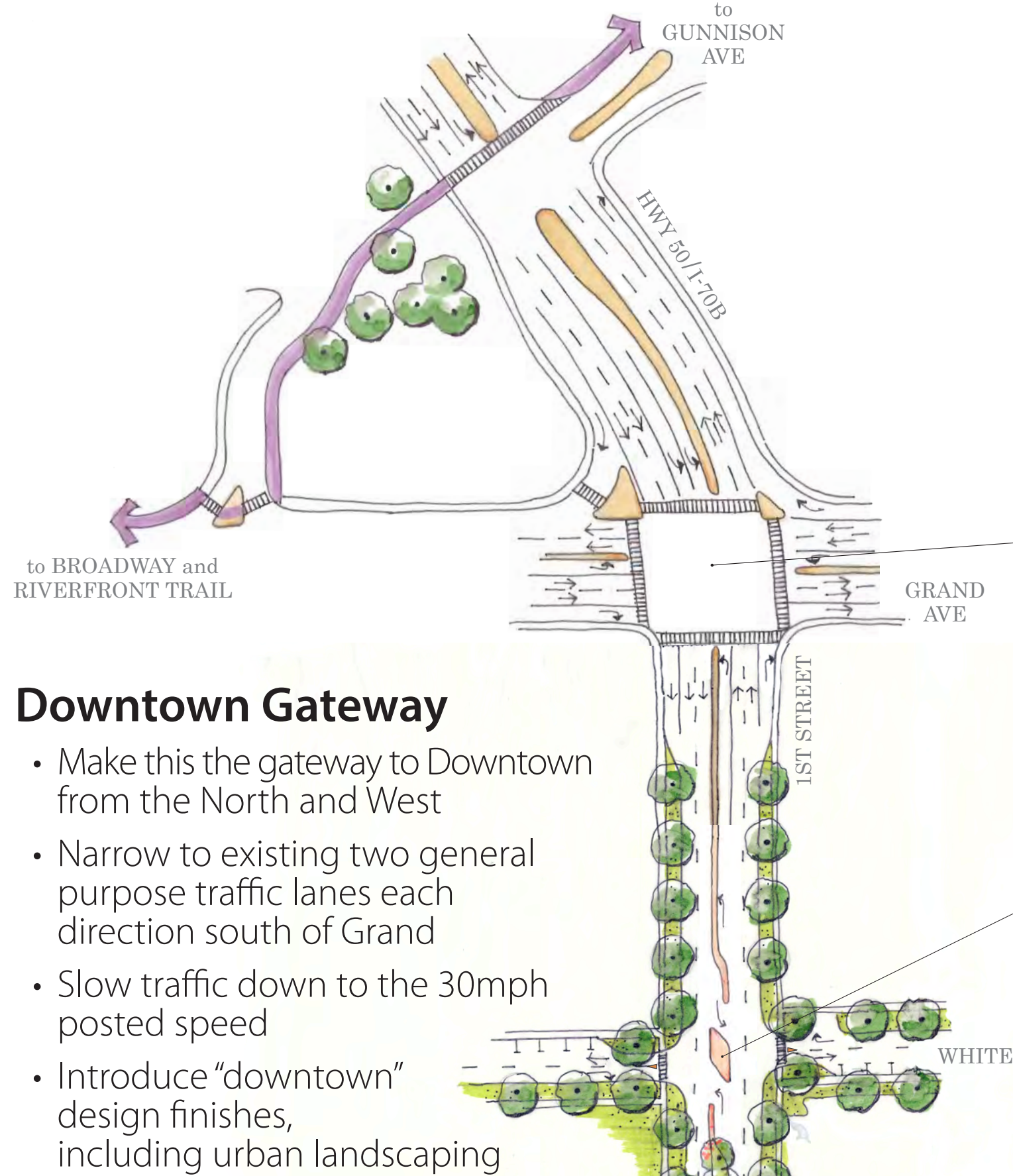
**April 2015:** CDOT/City/DDA workshop to reevaluate I-70B design concept south and east of Grand Avenue

### Next Steps

- Continue to evaluate improvements to maintain or improve traffic flow and safety
- Complete further traffic and safety analysis of proposed mid-block crossings
- Reevaluate need for turning lanes at intersections based upon lower anticipated traffic volumes
- Conduct detailed evaluation of the proposed conversion of 4th and 5th Streets to two-way traffic, including lane reconfiguration and signal phasing/timing changes
- Revisit status of 2008 Environmental Assessment

#### 1st & Grand

- Begin transition to urban design as context changes and capacity needs decrease
- Provide multi-use path connection between Broadway and Gunnison
- Remove right-turn slip lanes on south side of intersection to enhance pedestrian safety
- Implement 3/4 access at White Avenue to assist with 1st & Grand intersection capacity

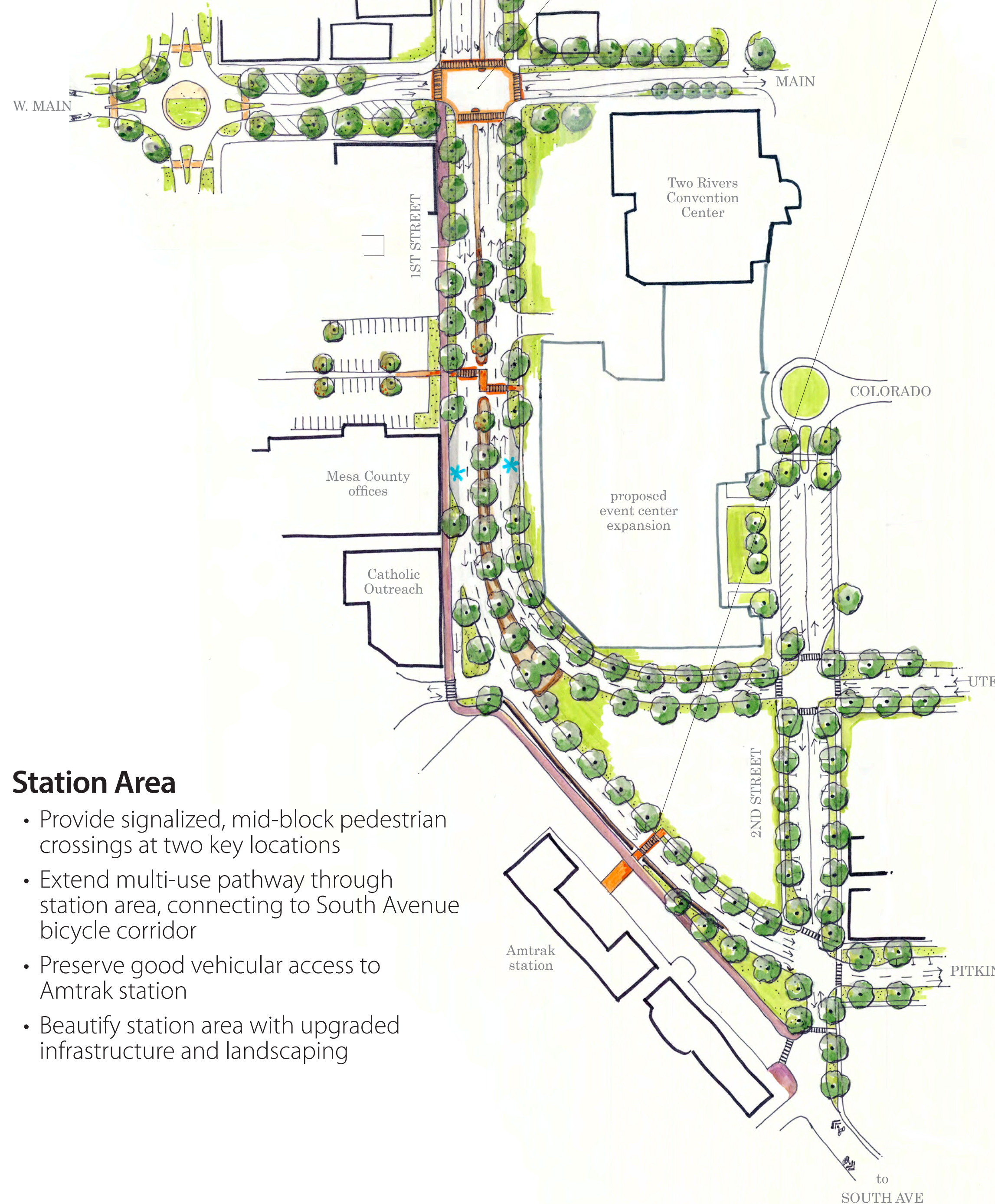


#### Downtown Gateway

- Make this the gateway to Downtown from the North and West
- Narrow to existing two general purpose traffic lanes each direction south of Grand
- Slow traffic down to the 30mph posted speed
- Introduce "downtown" design finishes, including urban landscaping

#### 1st & Main

- Provide for safe pedestrian crossings on all legs of the intersection
- Extend Main Street design to W. Main Street
- Implement roundabout at Spruce & Main

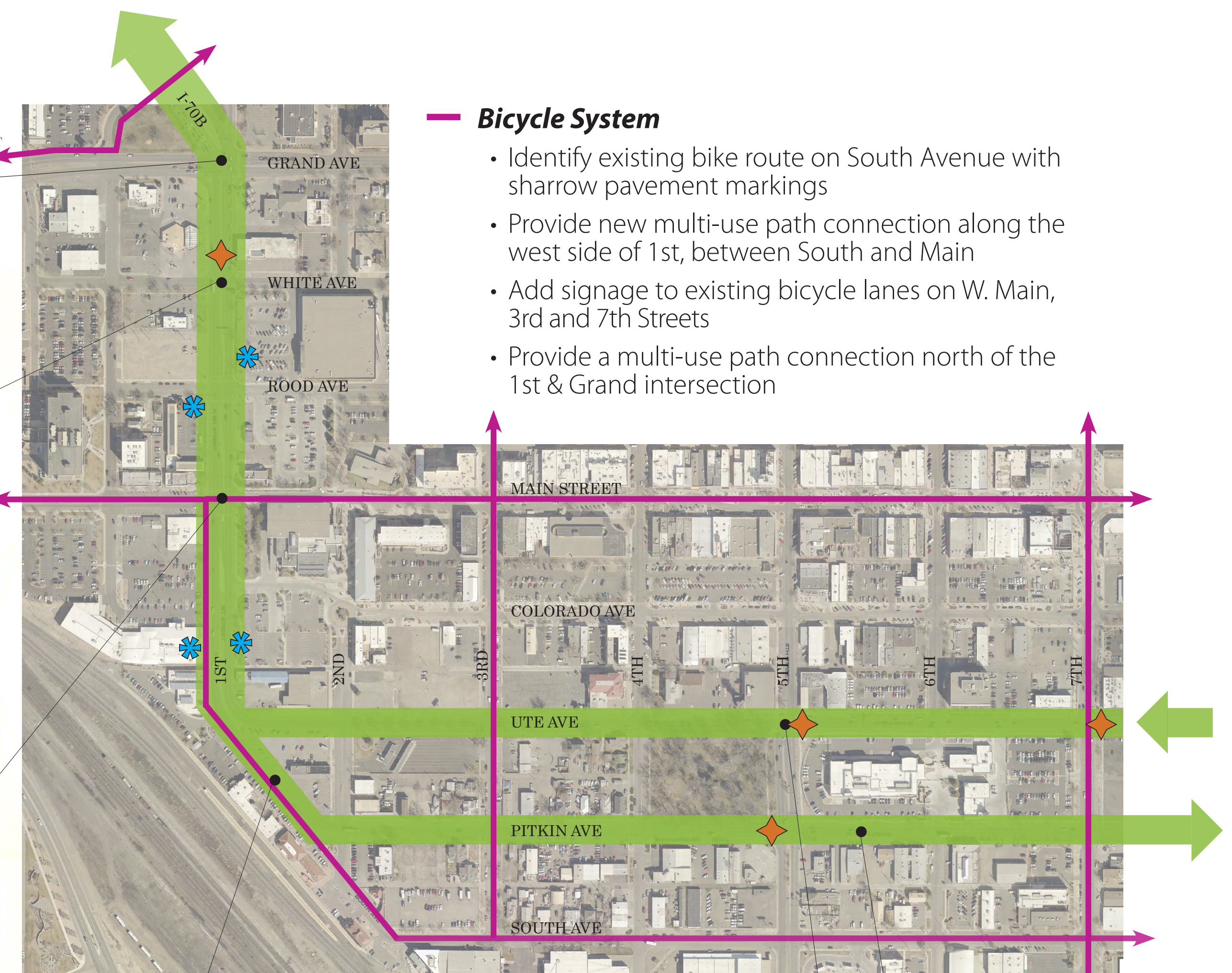


#### Station Area

- Provide signalized, mid-block pedestrian crossings at two key locations
- Extend multi-use pathway through station area, connecting to South Avenue bicycle corridor
- Preserve good vehicular access to Amtrak station
- Beautify station area with upgraded infrastructure and landscaping

### Community Goals

- Work with CDOT to update the vision and strategic plan for the I-70B corridor through Downtown Grand Junction
- Accommodate all modes safely by designing I-70B for the urban context of Downtown
- Balance throughput traffic flow with local access, livability and Downtown connectivity
- Support pedestrian-first environment in Downtown
- Enhance economic development and redevelopment opportunities in the Greater Downtown area



#### Bicycle System

- Identify existing bike route on South Avenue with sharrow pavement markings
- Provide new multi-use path connection along the west side of 1st, between South and Main
- Add signage to existing bicycle lanes on W. Main, 3rd and 7th Streets
- Provide a multi-use path connection north of the 1st & Grand intersection

#### I-70B Corridor

##### Transit

- Provide pullout bays for safety
- Provide modern bus stops

##### Downtown Gateways

- Add design features to slow traffic and announce entrance into Downtown
- Locate gateways at Grand/White, 5th, 7th, and 12th Streets

#### 4th/5th Streets

- Convert 4th and 5th to two-way operation, subject to further analysis
- Provide on-street parking for Whitman Park



#### Ute/Pitkin One-Way Pair

- Narrow Ute and Pitkin to two general purpose traffic lanes
- Allow on-street parking and add curb extensions at intersections, subject to further analysis
- Provide safe crosswalks on all legs of intersections



Revised: May 15, 2015

# I-70B



## *Downtown Grand Junction*



# outline

1. project origins
2. need for project
3. the city's vision

# project origins



- technical assistance - Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho
- Grand Junction application - awarded in January, 2015
- review design concept: I-70B downtown

# need for project



- 2008 environmental assessment
- forecasts from boom years
- per capita vehicular travel declining
- concern for future of downtown

# project history

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# environmental assessment

statement of purpose and need (2008)

- improve traffic flow
- improve safety
- improve multimodal opportunities
- improve access management

# poster plan

## I-70B

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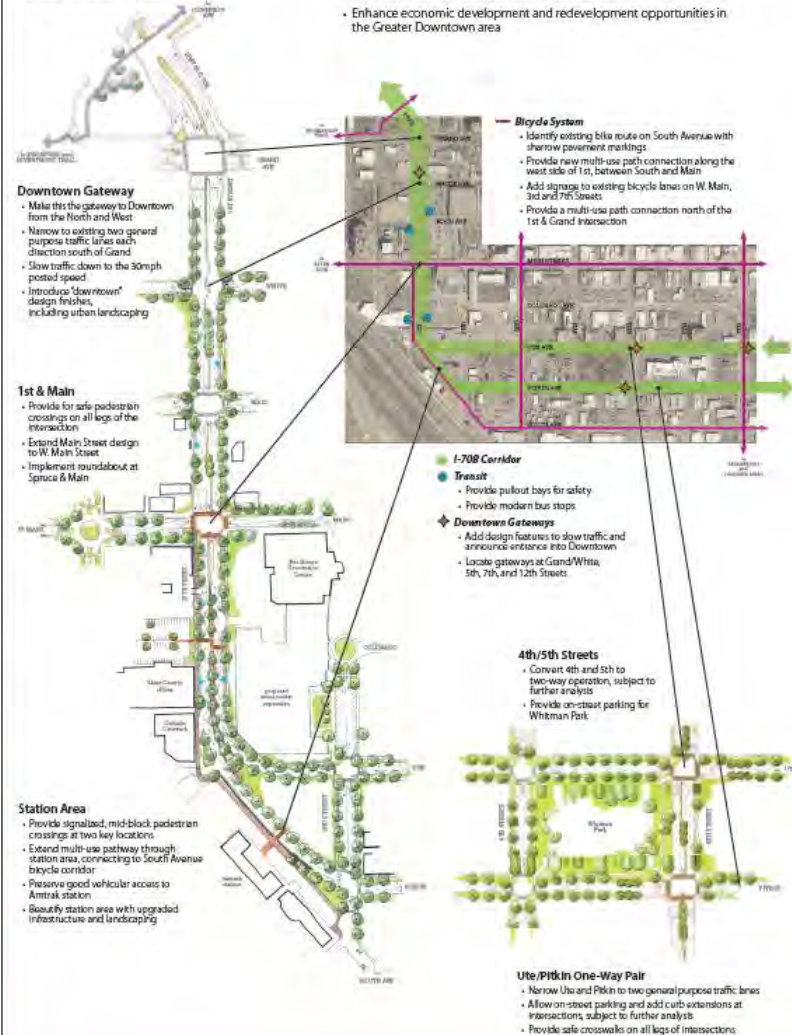
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# *project limits*



# community objectives

- work with CDOT to update the vision
- accommodate all modes safely
- design I-70B for urban context of Downtown
- balance throughput traffic flow with local access, livability and Downtown connectivity
- support pedestrian-first environment
- enhance economic development and redevelopment opportunities



US-50



US-50



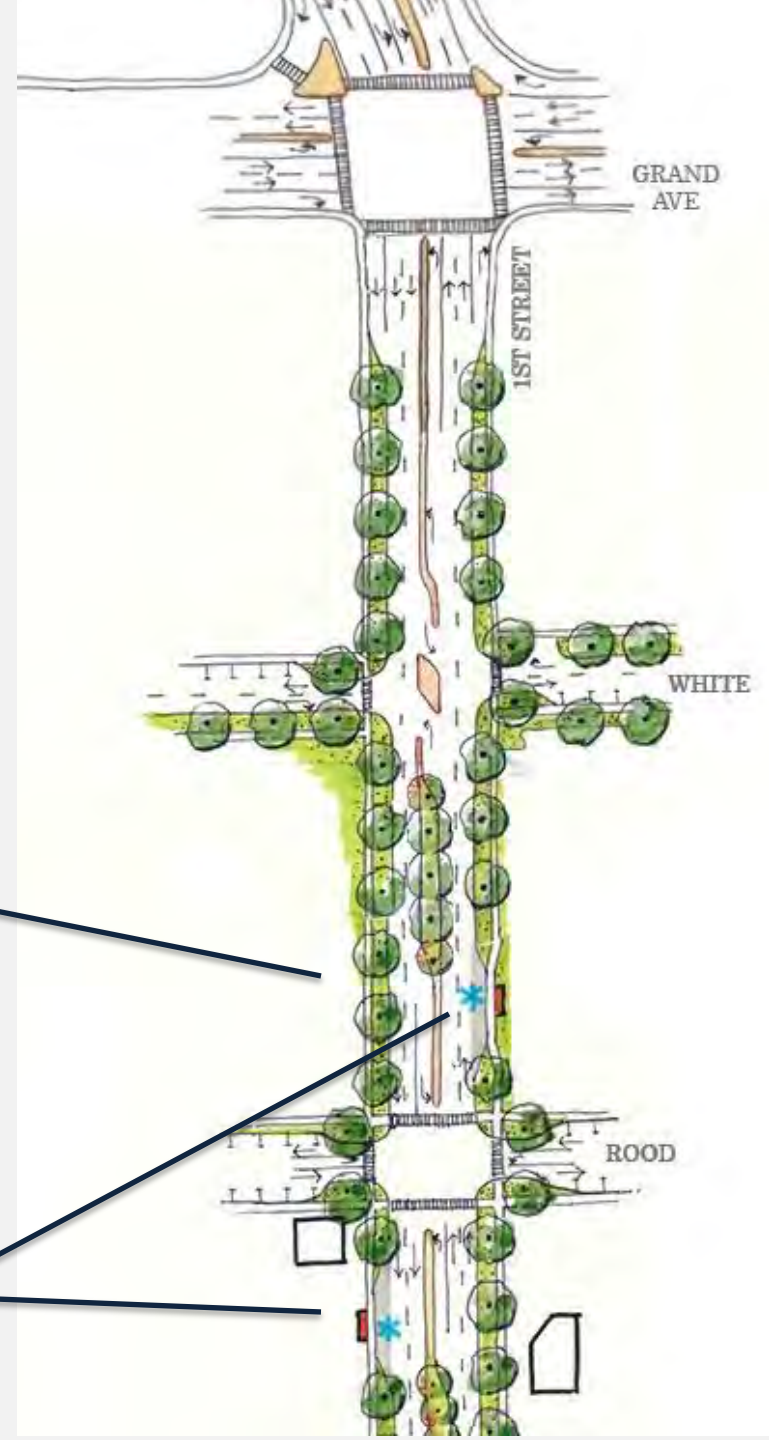
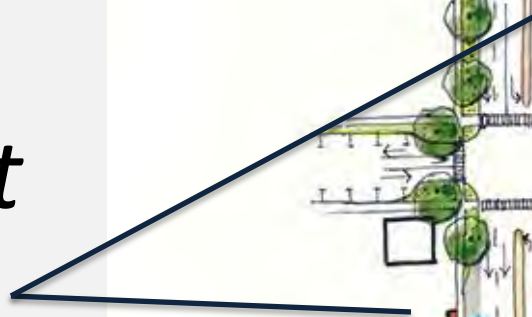
*gateway*

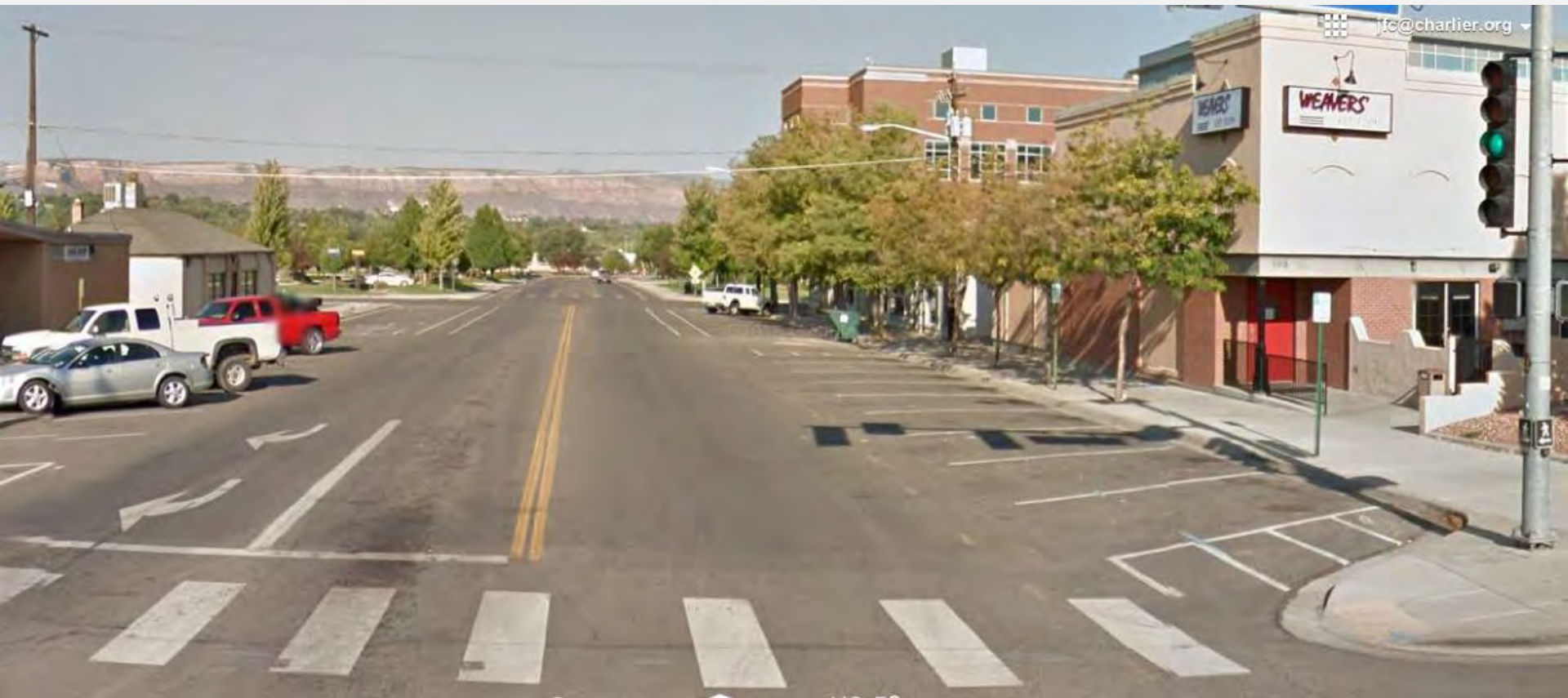


*upgrade  
streetscapes*

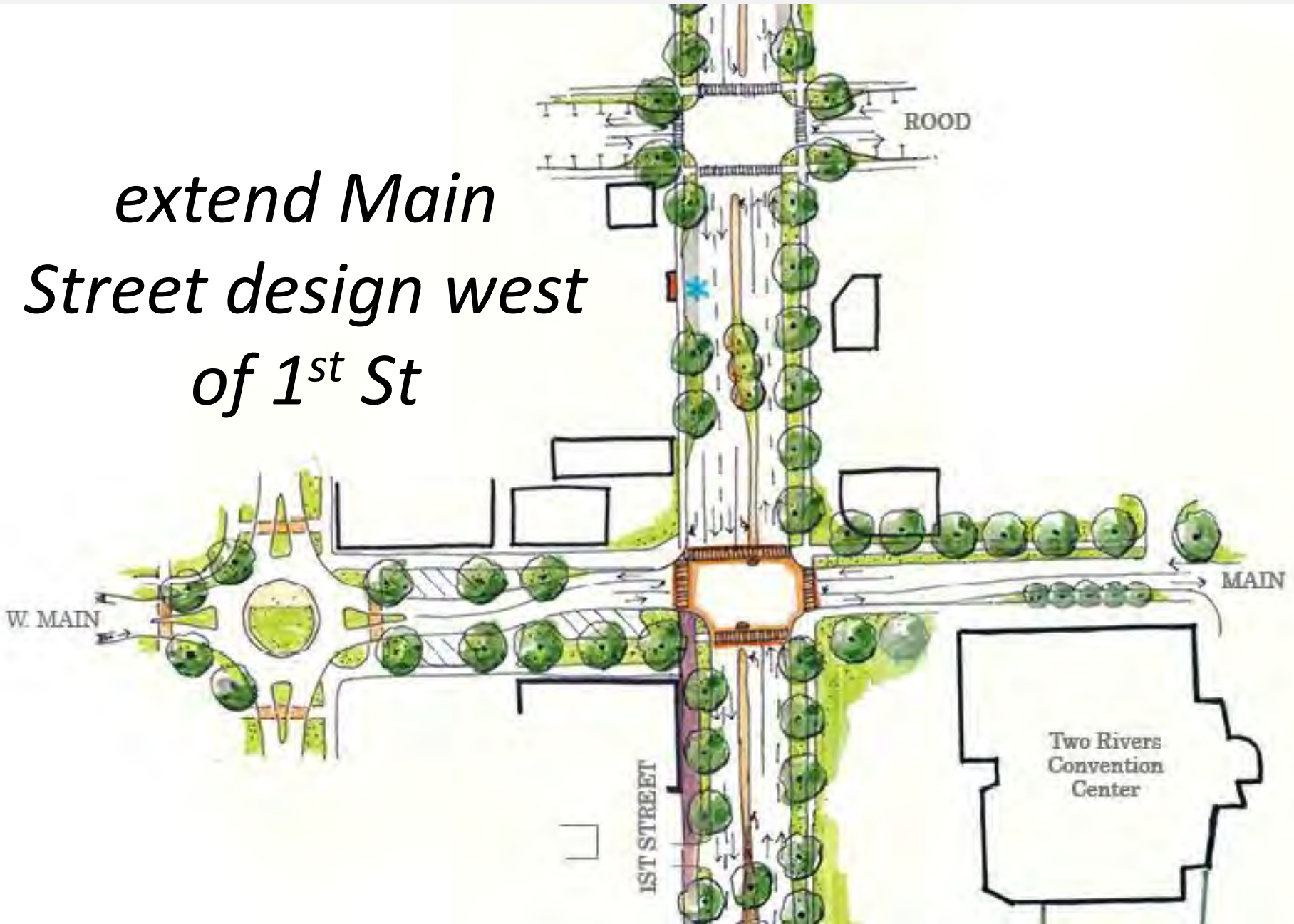


*provide transit  
access*





*extend Main  
Street design west  
of 1<sup>st</sup> St*

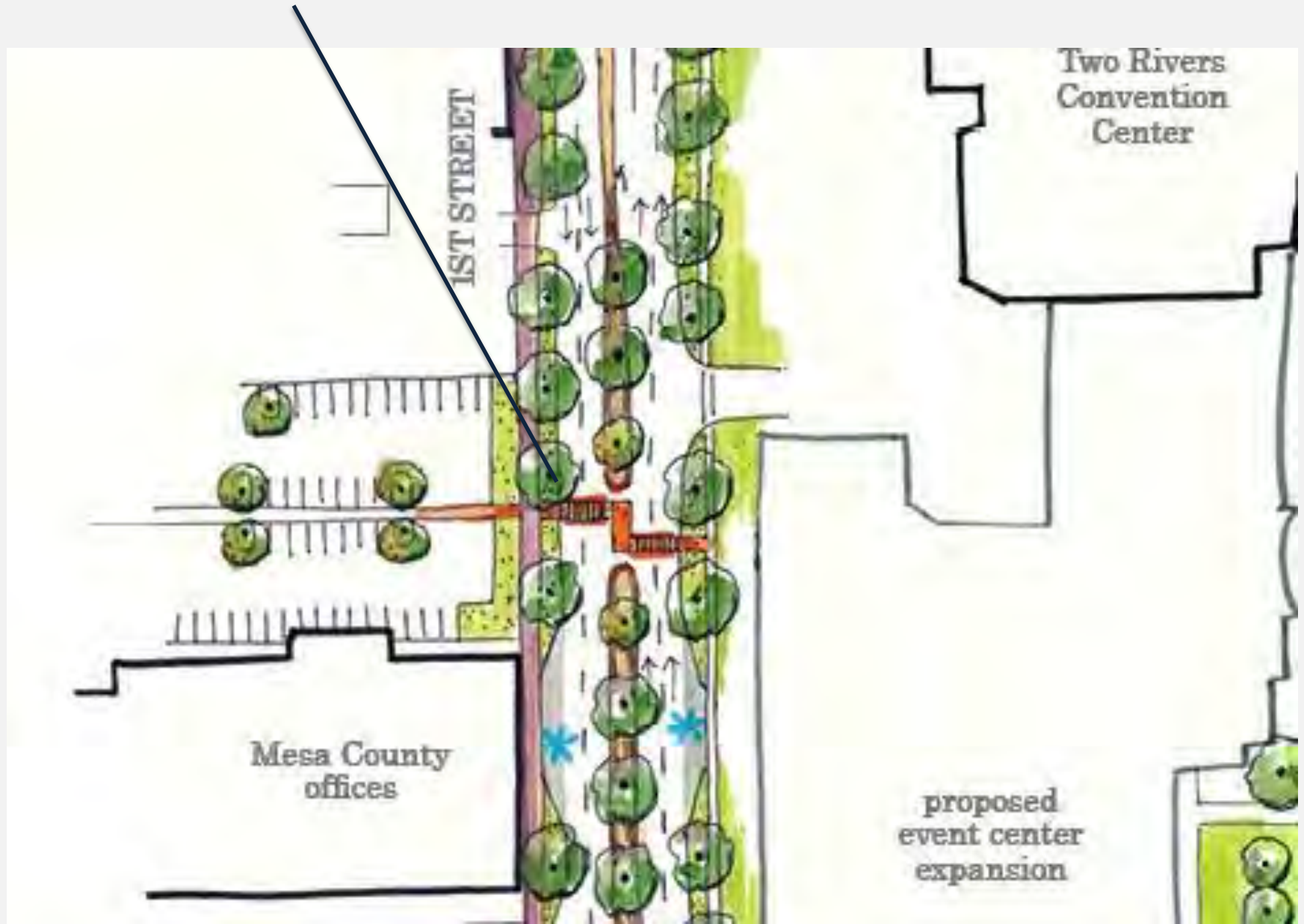




RESTAURANT

G.M.  
AUTO SERVICE  
294-1911

*provide safe pedestrian crossing*





**FOR SALE**  
COMMERCIAL  
HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT  
9,254 SQ. FT. ON 0.64 ACRES  
GEORGE DUNHAM  
REAL ESTATE  
970-248-9812

STOP



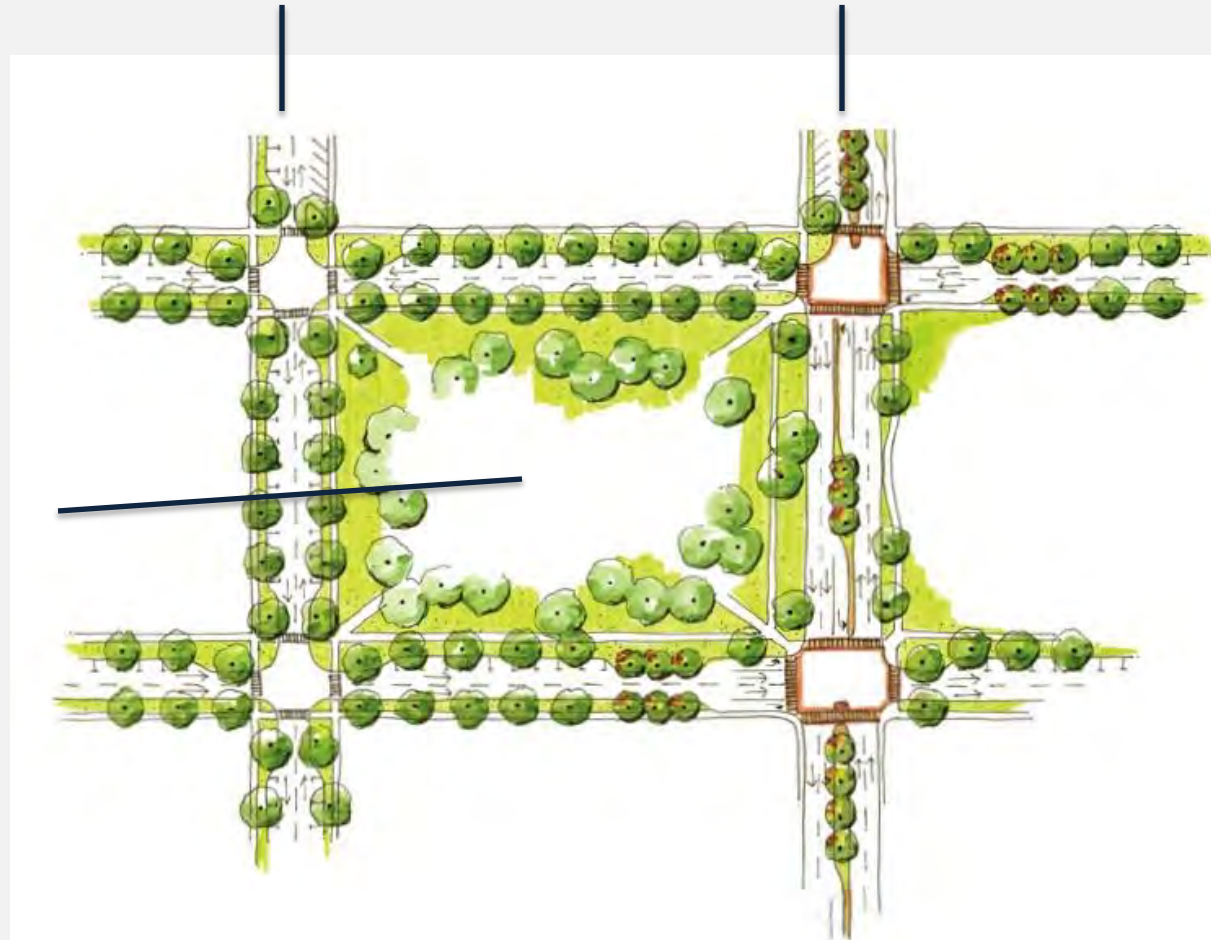
*provide transit access*

*improve access to Amtrak station*



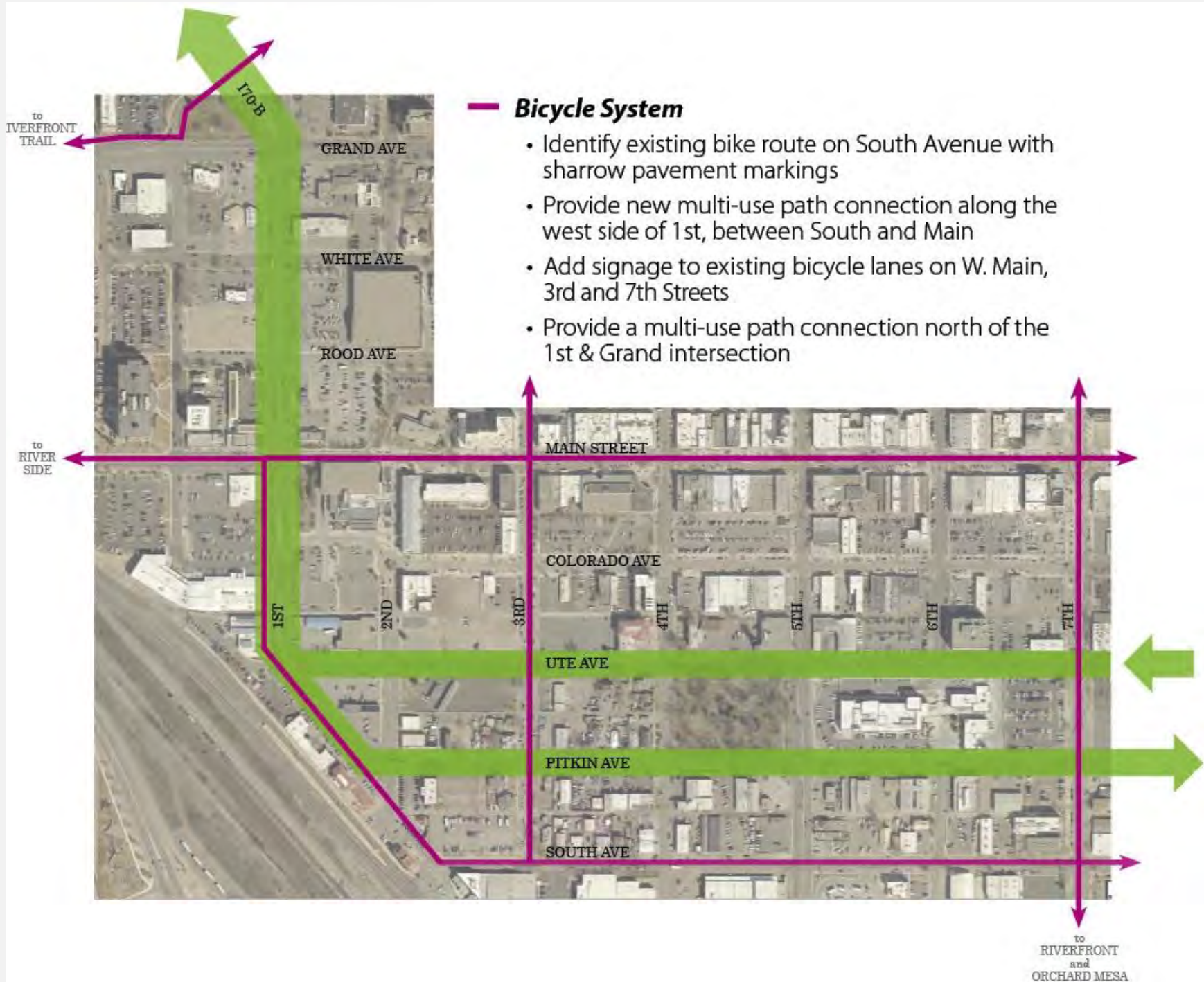


*convert 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>  
back to 2-way circulation*



*improve access  
to Whitman  
Park*





**Bicycle System**

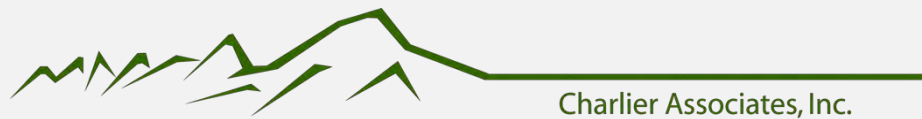
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to RIVERFRONT and ORCHARD MESA

# next steps

- continue to evaluate improvements to maintain or improve traffic flow and safety
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- reevaluate need for turning lanes at intersections based upon lower anticipated traffic volumes
- conduct detailed evaluation of proposed conversion of 4th & 5th Streets to two-way traffic, revisit status of 2008 Environmental Assessment

questions, discussion



Charlier Associates, Inc.



## Grand Junction I-70 Business Corridor Alternatives Workshop – April 15, 2015

Name	Representing	Phone/e-mail
JASON SMITH	CDOT	970-683-6208
JEAN BRESSLER	GYMPO	jean.bressler@mesacounty.org
D. Paul Jagim	City of GJ	paul.j@city.gj.org 244-1542
Rob Beck	CDOT GJRE	970-683-6351
Zane Znamencich	CDOT	970-683-6275
Jim Charlier	Sonoran Team (CAI)	
DAVID THORNTON	City of GJ	244-1450 / davidt@city.gj.org
ERIC HAHN	CITY OF GJ	244-1443 eriche@city.gj.org
HARRY WEISS	GJDDA	256-4134 harrywegjcity.org
Kathy Portner	City of GJ	244-1420 Kathy.p@city.gj.org
Julian Sutherland	SI	928-3411 jsutherland@seawallinstitute.org
Todd Hollebeck	GYMPO	255-7168 Todd.Hollebeck@gympo.org
Mike Vanderhoef	CDOT	970-683-6231 michael.vanderhoef@cdot.gov
Terri Messer	Charlier	303-517-9796 Terri@charlies.org
JJ FOLSOM	P.U.M.A	3/628-5551 jj@pumawh.com
CLANK ANDERSON	SI	
Trent Prall	CITY OF GJ	970-256-4047 / trent.p@city.gj.org
Pete Bari	Mesa County	970 244-1689





## Grand Junction I-70 Business Corridor Alternatives Neighborhood Meeting – April 15, 2015

Name	Representing	Phone/e-mail
BENNETT BOESCHENSTEIN	CITY OF G.J.	640-8153
Dinaul Q. Khan	Mesa Music	261-1841
BRIAN TAP	T2M LLC 449 Colorado Ave	270-6262
Diana Tap	T2M LLC 449 Colorado Ave	270-6263
Michael + Amber Martinez	GT Auto Sales	970 254-1411
SARAH SHRADER	BONSAI DESIGN	255 7393 ext 7
Rob von Gogh	The Shade Tree	Rob@theshadetreecom New Street Cov
DAVID WEAVER	CHARLIE DWELLINGTON	DAVIDW65@YAHOO.COM
David Van Dyke	Van Dyke Ind.	m.washer2@aol.com
Monica Atkinson	The Front Porch	atkinsonsj@gmail.com
Nathan Wallace	FOX Investments	nwallace@commwestcorp.com
CRAYONNE ROBERTS	CRAYONNE ROBERTS	cray@ciavonne.com
Julie Sabin	UTC	jsabin@bresnan.net
Dan + Kaye Carlson	Carlson Memorials, Inc	242-7264
Kaye Simonsen	MC Plans	kaye.simonsen@mesacounty.us
Elizabeth Collins	MC RTPO/public	neighbor elizabeth.collins@mesacounty.us
Stuart Tyler	City of GT	(970) 570-5575
TED CIAYONNE	CIAYONNE ROBERTS	ted@ciavonne.com
Ken Pedersen	Simmons Lock + Key	
Stephanie Marsikowefere	Public	970 208 2262