

EST **SALIDA** 1880
Creative District



Strategic Plan
2013

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Section 1

Introduction

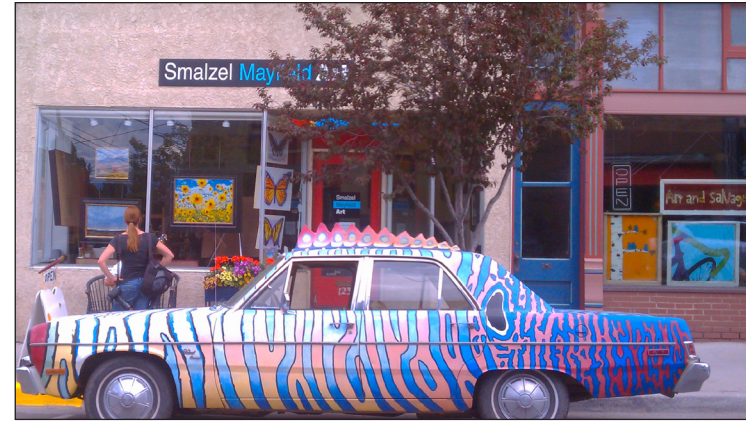


Introduction

The Salida Creative District was formed to support the ongoing economic growth in Salida and to create a climate in which creatives and creative enterprises can thrive.

The Creative District Strategic Plan is intended to guide the actions of the district and be used to inform decision making by administrators and City Council. The plan is intended to be nimble enough to allow for new opportunities as they arise, while continuing to support growth and retention of existing businesses and individuals within the community. Strategic planning determines where an organization is going, how it's going to get there and measures for success over time. It ensures the most effective use of the organization's resources by focusing on key priorities.

Salida's application for the creative district designation was built upon the existing creative industries located in the downtown area, the Historic Downtown Improvement and Economic Sustainability Plan and the City of Salida Comprehensive Plan. Salida's art district was created organically over decades and the Creative District Plan is an attempt to organize, encourage and assist with its future.



Process & Background

The process began by identifying key stakeholders to serve as guides in the process and preparation of the application for certification by Colorado Creative Industries (CCI). CCI is a state agency within the Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT). CCI was formed in 2010 when the Colorado Council on the Arts, Office of Film, Television and Media and the Art in Public Places merged to capitalize on the immense potential for Colorado's creative sector to drive economic growth in Colorado. The application was submitted to CCI in January 2012. The City of Salida's Creative District was announced as a Certified Creative District on March 30, 2012. Governor John Hickenlooper paid a visit to Salida and the Creative District hired Marci Erion, a consultant with CCI, to facilitate the creation of a strategic action plan for the community.

The City of Salida and creative district stakeholders worked with Marci Erion, a consultant with CCI, to facilitate the creation of a strategic plan for the Salida creative district. A series of interviews, site-visits, and public meetings were conducted in order to involve the many stakeholders in the district and community.

An initial public meeting was held at the SteamPlant Event Center on October 24, 2012 to introduce the creative district concept to the community, explain the grant and designation and receive community input.

A working group representing the different creative sectors in the new district met with Erion on three occasions, starting on October 25, 2012, to develop goals and priorities for furthering the creative district. Additional meetings were held on November 8 and November 15, 2012. Objectives, strategies and action plans were developed for each of the goals. Partnering organizations were identified to assist in guiding implementation of the strategic plan.

Creative placemaking can significantly contribute to economic growth and ongoing revitalization efforts. Based on research by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), as described in a recent publication entitled, *Creative Placemaking*, by Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, there are six components of successful creative placemaking initiatives:

1. Creative initiators
2. Designing around distinctiveness
3. Mobilizing public will
4. Garnering private sector support
5. Securing arts community engagement
6. Building partnerships



All of these aspects have been incorporated into the Salida Creative District strategic plan. The NEA also indicated that these initiatives are successful through the completion of short-term, mid-term and long-term accomplishments over a period of years, which is addressed in the strategic plan matrix.

The plan includes a Vision and Mission Statement along with specific Goals and Actions that are intended to be both actionable and measurable. While the plan proposes to build off of the existing reputation of the City as a premier creative community, it also seeks to address critical business issues including infrastructure and the speed and ease with which businesses interact with the City. Most importantly, the Plan seeks to enhance the existing local partnerships to create a long-term culture of success in Salida.

Vision & Mission



Creative District Vision

In five years, Salida will see measurable impact in retention and attraction of creative enterprises and jobs, improved retail, dining and gallery sales and continued revitalization within the Creative District.

The vision statement for the Salida Creative District was developed from input during the Creative District Public Meeting, working group sessions and input from the community. The statement reflects input from those that acknowledge the existing organically grown creative environment and the development of what is currently in place into an affordable, sustainable and prosperous district.



Creative District Mission

The state distinction of “Creative District” will allow Salida to fully implement its goal of promoting, supporting, and expanding its existing creative industries with the purpose of driving economic growth and enhancing the quality of life.

The mission statement for the Salida Creative District was developed to describe the way the district will work towards its vision.

Section 2

Creative District Core Values



Creative District Core Values

The planning meeting on November 15, 2012 included a discussion on core values. Five core values were identified as most descriptive of Salida's character.

The list includes:

Character

- o Salida is a community of diverse character. Salida is described as real, genuine, inclusive, authentic, fun and classy.

Sustainability

- o A major goal of a successful creative district is sustainability. This will include future funding sources such as grants and financial support from outside sources to continue economic development efforts in the district. Grant opportunities are available through Colorado Creative Industries and the National Endowment for the Arts.
- o Recruitment of new and young leadership is deemed necessary for long term growth in the district. Creative industries are continually evolving.
- o Awareness of gentrification is a concern as economic development moves forward. Programs for assisting current district businesses and creatives work to grow with the district should be implemented.

Creative District Core Values

Preservation of the historic character and feel of the Creative District

- o The Creative District includes the Salida Downtown Historic District. The historic district has developed a special feel and reputation, as well as community character. Creative District planning includes the goals of the historic district.

Culture as an economic driver

- o Cultural events play a significant role in attracting visitors, businesses and residents to a community. Culture has worked to brand Salida as a fun, educated and creative community. Further development of the Creative District will increase our economic vibrancy.

Education

- o Salida continues to expand its educational offerings. Private and public efforts are ongoing to upgrade public school facilities and bring higher education to the community.

Core values are used as a guide providing the framework for strategic planning, implementation and district branding.

Section 3

Goals & Objectives



Goals

Based on the information gathered at the community meeting, work group sessions and the initial Creative District application research, four goals were identified.

Goal #1:

Retain and attract creative enterprises and jobs

Goal #2:

Improve retail, dining and creative sector revenues

Goal #3:

Continued revitalization of the Creative District

Goal #4:

Develop and implement organizational structure of the Creative District

GOAL 1: *Retain and attract creative enterprises and jobs*

Success will be measured by the following metrics:

- Sales tax revenues
- Number of creative enterprises/jobs
- Occupancy of commercial spaces in the Creative District
- Livable average wage
- Perception of creative sector and its growth/sustainability
- Availability of educational opportunities

GOAL 1: *Retain and attract creative enterprises and jobs*

Objective

1.1 **Financial sustainability for the District**

Financial sustainability is the result of long-term planning. It is a means for creating success. Salida's creative district has grown organically over the past 20 years. This growth has led to success of its creative industries. With continued success, financial barriers may arise such as increased competition for real estate and creating an environment which is not affordable for current businesses. For this reason a long-term plan of action is necessary to manage growth in a way that allows current and new businesses to build on their strengths and grow as the district grows.

Action Items

1.1.1. Use the Creative District strategic plan to foster economic sustainability for district businesses.

1.1.2. Develop a revenue stream for maintaining the infrastructure and continued improvements to the Creative District. Ticket fees at public arts facilities and/or district membership fees could be implemented to assist with district needs. Creation of revenue generating creative events and festivals, ticket fees and district memberships fees could be a way of helping maintain the district.

1.1.3. Research affordable live/work and artist co-op space concept. This concept is growing across the country. Arts organizations and artists are a driving force in the revitalization of communities. Salida has benefited from this concept in the past and may be dependent on it for the future as the definition of creative enterprises continues to diversify. Working with local and national economic development agencies to recruit creative companies and entrepreneurs and providing affordable live/work space is means to district success. The Salida Council for the Arts has indicated they will research public grant funding for this project.

GOAL 1: *Retain and attract creative enterprises and jobs*

Objective

1.2 **Increased Visibility for the District**

As those outside of Salida become more aware of the creativity of the community a plan needs to be developed to guide the marketing efforts of the Creative District. A brand that conveys the community's core values and identity should be established. This brand will be used in all marketing materials and in the development of wayfinding.

Action Items

1.2.1 Develop a branding campaign for the Salida Creative District. Using funds from the Creative District and Boettcher grants a branding initiative was undertaken to garner public input to create a brand. This brand will be used in marketing and publicity materials and to increase awareness of Salida.

1.2.2 Create a marketing plan for the Salida Creative District. An evaluation of current marketing efforts by the district and other marketing partners will be conducted to determine the best and most economical way to market. The Creative District marketing plan should include a website, print and online ad campaigns, social media, newsletters and email blasts. The wayfinding project currently underway by the Salida Community Development Department will work as a part of marketing for the City and District. Marketing efforts should include continued input from the creative community.

Potential partners: Chaffee County Visitors Bureau, Small Business Alliance, Salida Chamber of Commerce, CCI/OEDIT, CDOT, Regional Economic Development agencies, Regional Community Colleges, local school district and non-profit organizations.

GOAL 1: *Retain and attract creative enterprises and jobs*

Objective

1.3 **Improve City Policy as it relates to the Creative District**

City policies should encourage creative industries success in the district and should be flexible to allow for continued business development.

Action Items

1.3.1 Evaluate the implementation of a business permit process to allow for ease and efficiency in helping track and analyze data for the district. It would also create a way to communicate information to the district creatives.

1.3.2 Develop a model to measure the success of business development in the district. Grants require periodic reporting of projects in the district. Benchmarking and tracking is useful in the reporting and when applying for future grants.

1.3.3 Evaluate City standards allowing for mixed use spaces and flexibility to embrace new commercial use models. This is addressed in the Salida Comprehensive Plan – Land Use and Growth Principle, Sustainable Development. Salida has worked to foster well maintained and fully utilized structures in the downtown area. This should continue as additional creative industries locate to the district.

1.3.4 Develop a recruitment plan for the district. The plan should be developed with the assistance of the Chaffee County Economic Development Corporation, Salida Chamber of Commerce and the Salida Small Business Alliance. The plan should assist with retaining, growing and recruiting creative businesses in the district. This plan could include business incentives for relocating or assisting current businesses to stay in the district.

Potential partners: City of Salida, City Planning Commission, City Council, Regional Economic Development Agencies, Business Community

Goal 2: *Improve retail, dining and creative sector revenues*

Success will be measured by the following metrics:

- Sales tax revenue in the City of Salida
- The number of attractions and amenities within the Creative District
- Expanded hours of operation of retail businesses located in the Creative District
- Increase in occupancy numbers in district properties
- Increase in occupancy number for lodging properties
- Increase in number of local events in the Creative District
- Establishment of informational partnerships and programs

GOAL 2: *Improve retail, dining and creative sector revenues*

Objective

2.1 Maintain and grow special event programming in the Creative District.

Special events bring people to Salida and provide entertainment opportunities to residents. Encouraging and assisting event promoters to grow and expand events in the district will assist in the financial sustainability of the district.

Action Items

2.1.1 Assess current programming efforts and partnerships. The number and theme of new events as well as timing should also be considered. Festivals and events bring many consumers to Salida throughout the summer months. Expansion of events in the shoulder seasons would help bring additional customers to the community and district. Many special event attendees return to Salida at other times or the year.

2.1.2 Create marketing partnerships to broaden the scope of those attending festivals and events. Cooperative advertising with local and regional marketing partners should be encouraged. Packaging local lodging properties with special events should be explored.

GOAL 2: *Improve retail, dining and creative sector revenues*

Objective

2.2 Provide professional development and educational opportunities to businesses in the Creative District.

Providing professional development opportunities is a way to invest in our community. It can instill pride and improve the customer experience. Providing educational opportunities will ensure that the history of our community continues to be passed from generation to generation.

Action Items

2.2.1 Provide professional development opportunities for creatives in the district to strengthen business skills.

2.2.2 Educate frontline employees on the history of Salida to allow accurate information dissemination. Create an educational pamphlet with information about Salida and its history for frontline employees. Host concierge tours for frontline staff on a regular basis.

2.2.3 Mentorship programs and creative opportunities with the local school district should be explored to encourage participation and ongoing support of the creative sector in Salida. Additional opportunities are available in developing partnerships with regional colleges to develop accredited creative sector programs.

2.2.4 Create of a communication plan to provide ongoing information and updates to the community. The communication plan will foster awareness of the Creative District's assets, events and highlight opportunities for participation in the Creative District plan implementation.

Potential Partners- City of Salida, Hoteliers and Recreation Companies, local arts and events organizations, Downtown Business Alliance, Chaffee County Visitors Bureau, CDOT, CCI, CTO, Denver Symphony Orchestra, Aspen Music Festival, Salida Chamber of Commerce, Monarch Ski Area

GOAL 3: *Continued Revitalization*

Success will be measured by the following metrics:

- Increase in number of new assets
- Improvements made in the Creative District
- Renovations and improvements to properties in the Creative District

GOAL 3: *Continued Revitalization*

Objective

3.1 **Promote walkability and safety for pedestrians and cyclists inside the district.**

Action Items

3.1.1 Work with other City departments and businesses to promote the district efficient use of sidewalk space. Develop placement of signs, bike racks, trash and recycling receptacles to ensure safety for pedestrians. An environment should be created that encourages pedestrians to walk to their destination from parking areas and explore more of the district.

3.1.2 Implement a plan for sidewalk repair and replacement throughout the district.

GOAL 3: *Continued Revitalization*

Objective

3.2 **Improve City services, amenities and planning for the district**

Providing services and amenities to visitors of the Creative District is important in providing a safe and positive experience. The district should be accessible and meet the needs of visitors. A plan for improving amenities in the district should be developed. The plan should address concerns of bike and pedestrian access, shuttle availability, restrooms and other amenities.

Action Items

3.2.1 Create a gift guide to keep the design of the donations such as of benches and other amenities made to the City are aligned with district improvement efforts.

3.2.2 Research efficient trash and recycling receptacles. A standard should be developed for uniformity of receptacles in the district. This is an opportunity for functional art by involving artists and craftsmen.

3.2.3 Work with the City of Salida to maximize bike parking in the Creative District. Bike racks in the district are in increased demand as more people opt to ride their bikes and leave their cars at home. Local artists and creatives should be involved in the design and construction of additional bike racks.

3.2.4 Monitor parking lots and spaces to determine if adequate parking exists. Parking demands continue to increase as people are drawn to the downtown and the festivals held in the parks.

3.2.5 Work with Chaffee Shuttle for increased service throughout the City. A more consistent schedule throughout the year would provide for increased use. Increased shuttle service will ensure that safe transportation is provided to visitors of festivals and special events.

GOAL 3: *Continued Revitalization*

Objective

3.3 Improve the urban design and streetscape of the Creative District.

Salida's Creative District has a unique feel that is influenced by the combination of a historic downtown and a creative arts community. Downtown is the heart of special events and cultural activities and should be developed in a way that promotes the creativity of the district.

Action Items

3.3.1 Encourage functional art including trash cans, bike racks and signage in the Creative District. A public art committee should be created to guide the increase of public art in the community. Public art could include sculptures, murals, architecture and landscaping.

3.3.2 Establish a beautification committee to create a plan including guidelines for trees, flowers and other greenery. This committee would work with The City of Salida Public Works Department, Tree Board and Small Business Alliance.

3.3.3 Implement the City's wayfinding plan.

GOAL 3: *Continued Revitalization*

Objective

3.4 **Educational opportunities for Creative Industries**

Discussion continues in the community regarding the creation of an art school. This ranges from local artists providing art opportunities in their studios to a free standing art school.

Action Items

3.4.1 Partner with existing art instructors to create a virtual art school. Classes would be located in existing artist galleries and studios. Create a catalog of art and creative education classes offered in the District to provide information to the public.

3.4.2 Investigate the possibility of developing a facility for offering classes. Explore grant or private funding opportunities to create and maintain a free standing facility.

3.4.3 Partner with higher education institutions to establish a creative arts school in Salida.

GOAL 4: *Organizational Structure*

Objective

4. Develop and implement an organizational structure for the Creative District

As the Salida Creative District grows it will be necessary to develop an organizational structure for management of the district. Currently City of Salida staff work to manage the district and implement planning.

Action Items

4.1.1 Explore the development of a board or other committee structure to assist with management of the district.

Potential Partners: City of Salida, local organizations and businesses, grant opportunities

Section 4:

Goal Detail Matrix



Goal Detail Matrix

Project	Related Goal	Action	Dept.	Metrics	Partnership	Completion	Progress
Funding stream for Creative District	1.1.2	Investigate grant opportunities	City Staff, Salida Arts Council	Success of grant applications	TBD		Research stage
Affordable live-work & artist co-op space	1.1.3	Provide more affordable spaces for creatives	Creative District	New jobs, new businesses, increase in sustainability for both	Salida Council for the Arts	TBD	Research to begin in 2014
Branding process to establish logo, tagline.	1.2.1	Farrah Fine Design, LLC	City of Salida Staff and Salida Council for the Arts	Positive impact in marketing efforts	Farrah Fine, LLC	Fall 2013	Contract awarded June 2013
Kiosk at Monarch Mtn w/info about Creative District & Salida	1.2.2	Increase traffic to Salida in winter	Creative District	Increase in Salida economy	Monarch Mountain, State Parks, Creative District	Installed before 2013-2014 ski season	Planning phase

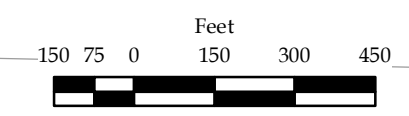
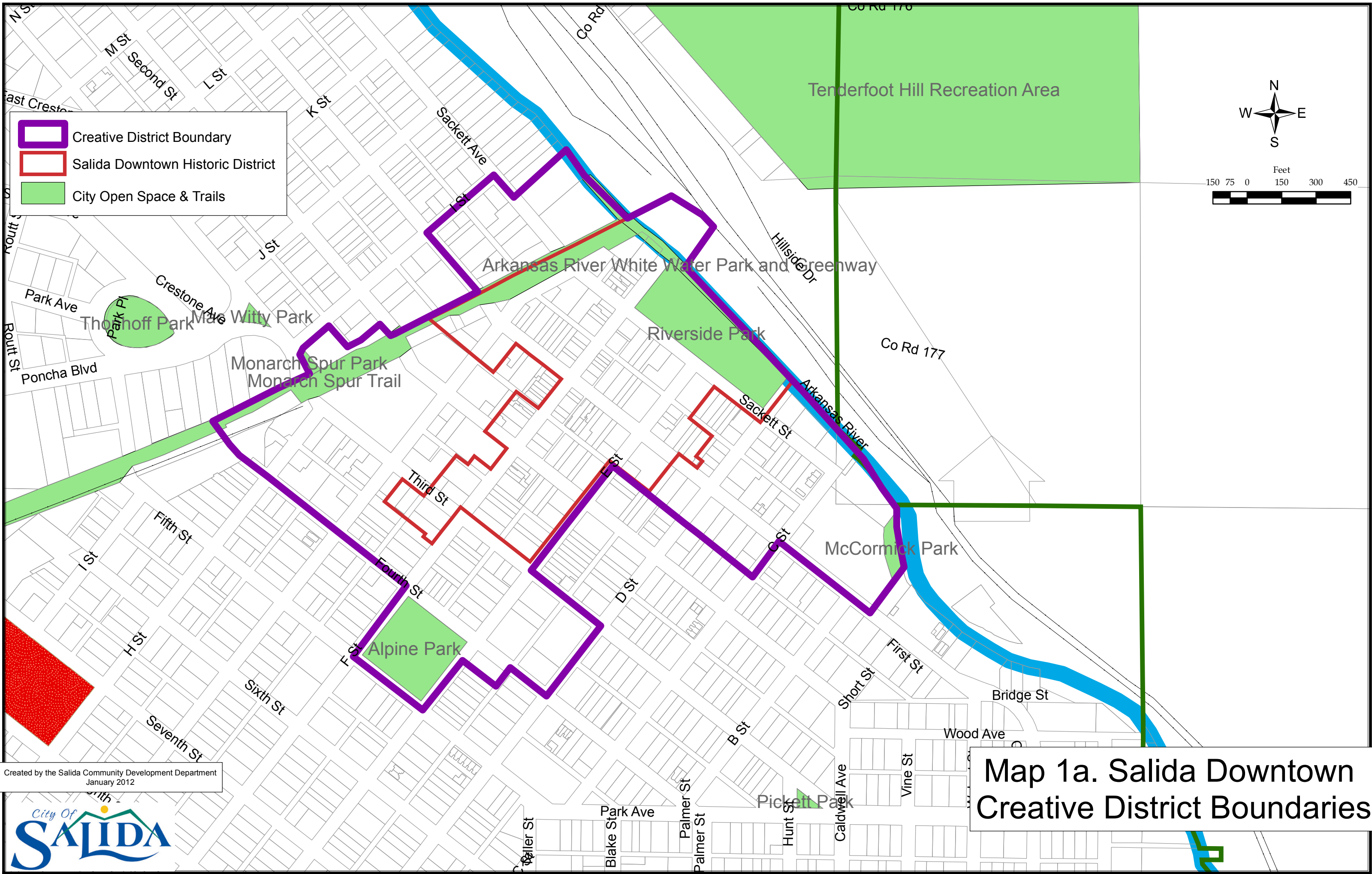
Project	Related Goal	Action	Dept.	Metrics	Partnership	Completion	Progress
Create video of Creative District & events in Salida	1.2.2	For use on solidacreates.com and when applying for grants and awards	Salida Artists to shoot footage	See more awards, grants for Salida, increased web traffic	Salida Artists	Spring 2014	In progress
Evaluate development of business permit process	1.3.1	A business permit process would allow for ease in tracking & analyzing data	Planning Dept, Creative District	Better communication with creatives	Chamber, SBA	Research into this idea to begin in 2014	Research phase
Public-private partnership to create financial assistance program	1.3.2	Develop micro loan program for creatives	Creative District	Sustainability of creatives	Salida Council for the Arts	Ongoing	Research Phase
Continued partnership with Colorado Symphony	2.1.1	Relationship established	SteamPlant	Continue series	KHEN, Colorado Symphony	Completed; plan for future	2nd season starts October 24. 2013

Project	Related Goal	Action	Dept.	Metrics	Partnership	Completion	Progress
Public-private partnership to run tours in the District	2.1.2	Increase the exposure & offerings to tourists	Creative District	Increase in number of tourists and sales	Local groups	Establishment of tours by Spring 2014	Planning Phase
New events in District established	2.1.2	Promotion of Creative District through added events	Creative District, SteamPlant, Salida Rec, Local Groups	Increase in number of visitors and sales	Community groups, private businesses	Ongoing	Started
Business education classes for creative entrepreneurs and artists	2.2.1	Classes will increase knowledge of local business owners, will help to retain current businesses	Creative District	Increase sustainability of businesses, see new creative businesses	Small Business Development Center; Metro State Univ Center for Innovation	Ongoing	First class October 7, 2013; currently in planning stage

Project	Related Goal	Action	Dept.	Metrics	Partnership	Completion	Progress
Formal partnership with other Creative Districts	2.2.3	Partnerships to strengthen the District	Creative District	Increase in visitors, number of events (gallery & artist exchanges, etc)	Colorado Creative Districts	Ongoing	Staff has initiated discussions to establish formal partnerships
Improve City Sidewalks	3.1.2	Repair sidewalks in the Creative District	Public Works	Improved walkability in the District	Public Works	Ongoing	underway
Functional Art	3.2.2	Ex: artist designed bike racks, benches, parking meters	Creative District	Money for the creative district Local artists from parking meters (donation-based)	Local Artists	Ongoing	Planning phase
Regular shuttle service in the District	3.2.5	Provide a safe way to shuttle visitors from lodging on Hwy 50 to Creative District	Planning Department	Visitors safely transported around town	Businesses	Ongoing	Research phase

Project	Related Goal	Action	Dept.	Metrics	Partnership	Completion	Progress
Public Art Policy	3.3.1	Develop Public Art Policy	Creative District	Perception of Creative District	CCI, Arts Council, other artist group	Spring 2014	In research stage
Beautification Committee	3.3.2	Formation of committee	Planning Department, Creative District	Visible improvement in look of District (more plants, trees, flowers, public art, etc) and eventual increase in # of visitors	SBA, Chamber of Commerce, Tree Board, Public, other Creative District businesses	Ongoing	Research & Planning Stage
Wayfinding Signage; Signage on streets and sidewalks identifying Creative District	3.3.3	Will help visitors and citizens to identify the Creative District	Planning Dept, Creative District	Number of visitors, increased sales tax revenues	Community Development	TBD	TBD
Creation of 'Communiversities'	3.4.1	Provide educational opportunities for community, creatives	Creative District	Establishment of school so that community and those that teach classes benefit	SBDC, Chamber, CCEDC, local artists and creatives	Establish partnerships in 2013	Staff has initiated discussions to establish formal partnerships

Project	Goal	Action	Dept.	Metrics	Partnership	Completion	Progress
Community Art Center for Salida	3.4.2	Art Center will serve as a hub for the Creative District	TBD	Increase in community pride, opportunities in Creative District	Art groups, creative community		Research & Planning to begin in 2014



Created by the Salida Community Development Department
January 2012



Map 1a. Salida Downtown Creative District Boundaries