



DOWNTOWN'S NEXT STEP

Vivid Past, Resilient Future

BEST PRACTICES MEMO

This memo summarizes best practices and examples from similar communities relating to streetscape design to showcase key takeaways as they relate to and could inform conceptual design for Durango's downtown Main Avenue. As a result of community feedback to date, this memo also includes an analysis of pedestrian malls and comparison to flexible festival streets to evaluate pros and cons of permanent and temporary street closures. Parking strategies and implementation recommendations will be assessed under separate cover in the Compiled Final Report.

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Best Practices

Based on initial input from the community, staff and key stakeholders, there are many potential elements that have been identified for consideration as part of a new streetscape design for Main Avenue. The most frequently cited of those potential elements are listed below along with best practices and lessons learned from other communities.

Plazas and Patios

- Provide unprogrammed patio space in the public right-of-way for adjacent business use through a permit system. Have a contingency plan to program the space with other public uses if needed.
- Consider incorporation of plaza/patio space that is not assigned to a specific business or property.
- Utilize bulbouts and curb extensions to create opportunities for plazas and patios.
- Identify small spaces that feel protected and intimate in addition to larger, open spaces.
- Consider the optimal number of patios and bumpouts in order to provide reprieve for pedestrians, rather than fitting in as many patios as possible.

Pedestrian Spaces and Crossings

- Utilize tactile and visual changes in materials to delineate amenity zones and street crossings.
- Provide mid-block crossings and pedestrian refuge at the mid-point of street crossings when possible and where there is pedestrian activity and destinations on either side of the street.
- Ensure safety for patios/plazas from cars through vertical elements such as railing and planters.
- Ensure curb cuts are wide enough and gradually sloped enough for wheelchairs, strollers, and side-by-side passing of multiple people.

Landscaping

- Use fixtures and street furniture of consistent materials and/or appearance that contribute to an overarching character or identity of the street.
- Use seat walls and raised planters to define space.
- Utilize bulbouts and extended sidewalk areas large tree grates or raised planters to sustain trees and provide shade.
- Movable planters allow for flexibility if the streetscape may change for events or seasons.
- Provide vertical elements for visual interest such as hanging flowerpots and trees.
- Consider snow storage and clearance within the streetscape and/or on cross streets.

Programming

- Allow for creative and varying business use and design of patios and spaces in the right-of-way but provide a consistent design standard or edge/boundary element to contribute to a cohesive, high-quality streetscape character.
- Provide different types of public spaces with varied elements such as public art, children's play areas, cultural/historic/interpretative signage, and unprogrammed public seating areas.
- Consider and leverage seasonality and variety throughout the year and for special occasions/holidays.
- Encourage art, color, texture, overhead lighting, and variety as much as appropriate.

Special Events

- Design priority blocks for optimal ease of event setup, vendor functions, and emergency access.
- Ensure blocks designed for temporary street closure are also safe and well-performing when open to cars.

- Use movable furniture and amenities as much as possible in blocks prioritized for hosting special events.

Bike Facilities

- Clearly and frequently delineate bicycle zones from pedestrian zones.
- Provide secure bike parking on every block with occasional covered facilities.
- Consider bike facility treatments at intersections such as colored striping, bike boxes, and dedicated signal timing.
- Consider maintenance requirements for dedicated bike facilities such as material upkeep and snow removal.

Snow Removal and Storage

- Develop a snow removal/storage plan specific to Downtown that prioritizes primary streets and includes guidelines for sidewalks, bike facilities, transit stops, ADA parking, customizations per streetscape design, required labor, budget/cost of various approaches, and off-site storage opportunities.
- Require adjacent businesses, or preferably a contractor funded by the BID, to clear snow from the sidewalk clear zone. Snow from sidewalks should be stored in the bistro zone or amenity zone and adjacent businesses should collect/stack bistro zone furniture in a protected area prior to a forecasted snow event.
- Ensure snow is shoveled from transit stops, pedestrian routes to transit stops, and bike facilities by City staff or contractors. Ensure ADA accessible parking spaces are kept clear. Ensure snow piles do not block site triangles so that pedestrians and crossing zones are visible to oncoming traffic.
- Plow snow into dedicated zones such as a center lane or parking lane. If the latter, ideally push all snow to the side of the street receiving the most sun. Locate snow piles in locations that drain to infiltration basins or vegetated depressions. Utilize “No Parking After 2” Snowfall” signage to keep parking zones clear for snow storage along snow routes.
- If possible, plow or haul snow off primary corridors to remove the need for snow storage along the corridor. Plow or haul snow into on-street parking along cross streets, side streets, surface parking lots or vacant lots. Ensure ADA accessible parking spaces are kept clear. Do not store snow in public parks or near waterways due to contaminants picked up from the street.
- If possible, use high-quality, durable, heated, fade-resistant permeable pavers in high priority designated snow storage zones to expedite snow melting. Where pavers are used, ensure proper snow removal protocol to ensure long-term integrity of the material and utilize a specific maintenance protocol to protect pavers from salt disintegration.

Deliveries and Loading/Unloading

- Analyze potential strategies to better facilitate business deliveries from grade-separated alleys and from private parking or access areas between buildings. Consider opportunities for the BID and the City to support business owners in implementing private property improvements to facilitate off-street deliveries.
- Allow free, short-term parking for delivery vehicles in any on-street parking space. If possible, designate loading/unloading zones in a center lane or within on-street parking and communicate about these to businesses and local delivery providers. Consider the sharing of dedicated loading/unloading zones at certain times of day or with short-term public parking. Provide clear loading and short-term parking signage.

- Encourage off-hours deliveries and utilize no-public-parking times to allow for late night and early morning delivery parking in on-street parking spaces and to minimize overlap between public parking and deliveries.
- Encourage consolidated deliveries per recipient in Downtown through coordinated delivery technology.
- Encourage use of smaller delivery vehicles downtown as possible, such as cargo vans and box trucks.
- Provide curb cuts and ramps wide enough to allow access for hand trucks and pallet jacks.
- Utilize off-site or side-street lockers for smaller deliveries when possible.

Pedestrian Malls vs. Flexible Streets

Based on this analysis and the project team's professional expertise, a permanent pedestrian mall that is always closed to vehicles is not recommended for Downtown Durango's Main Avenue. Instead, other streetscape design enhancements to achieve the same benefits and reach the same goals are recommended. These may include curb extensions, plaza spaces, safety and crossing improvements, and flexible festival streetscape improvements where appropriate. If any flexible festival street blocks are included in the final preferred design concept, they could be designed as to not preclude future permanent closure. If permanent closure or longer-term closures are considered in the future, additional studies outside the scope of this effort are highly recommended before implementation (traffic study, economic impact study, business survey, etc.).

Downtown Streetscapes Case Studies

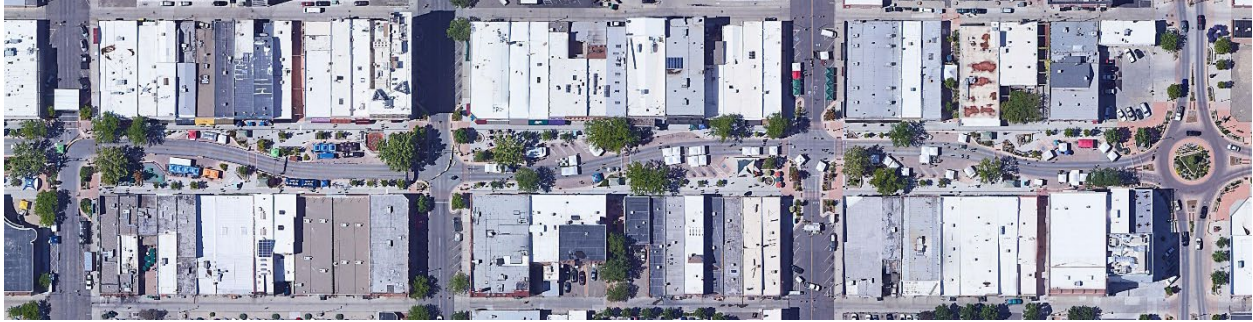
The following presents five different case studies from across Colorado, as well as Michigan and California, that highlight downtown corridors of similar characteristics to that of Durango's Downtown Main Avenue. Generally, each case study evaluates right-of-way design, streetscape elements, programming, and unique characteristics. For the purposes of comparison, the existing characteristics of Main Avenue in Durango are listed below.



- **Typical Block Length:** 350'
- **ROW Allocation:** 80' total
 - 56' curb to curb
 - 16'-34' parking (8'-17' either side)
 - 24' pedestrian realm (12' either side)
- **Vehicle Lanes:** two lanes, two-way
- **On-Street Parking:** typically parallel, angled on one block
- **Streetscape Elements:** Bumpouts, transit stops, center turn lane, occasional street trees



Grand Junction, CO – Main Street



- **Typical Block Length:** 450'
- **ROW Allocation:** 90' - 100' total
 - 20'-60' curb to curb
 - 32' parking (10'-22' either side)
 - 38'-80' pedestrian realm (8'-55' either side)
- **Vehicle Lanes:** two lanes, two-way
- **On-Street Parking:** angled and parallel
- **Streetscape Elements:** Bulbouts, mid-block crossings, transit stops, varied paving materials/colors, raised planters, large street trees, frequent plazas and patios



Overview: Grand Junction's Main Street is an example of a chicane, or an asymmetrical streetscape design where the vehicle travel lanes shift mid-block from one side of the street to the other, as opposed to running straight down the middle. This configuration results in a dynamic streetscape block to block that prioritizes larger pedestrian spaces, slow traffic speeds, and increased walkability.

Plazas and Patios: The shifting roadway creates larger pedestrian amenity areas on alternating sides of the street, up to around 50' deep. These large amenity zones are designed as small plazas and parklets that feature flexible seating, public art or historic monuments, event space, small play areas for children, and more.

Pedestrian Spaces and Crossings: The ROW configuration allows for more dedicated patio space while maintaining ample clear space on the sidewalk for people walking. Sidewalks range in size but are typically about 12' wide. In addition to crossings at each intersection, each block has a mid-block crossing. All intersections have bulbouts with at-grade or raised planters, colored paving, and striping.

Landscape Elements: The deep amenity zones allow for larger than typical planters that support tall, wide street trees. Small to medium trees are also regularly spaced along the roadway creating good

shade coverage along the corridor. A winding brick seat wall curves through the trees creating fixed seating opportunities. Most planting and landscape furnishings are located along the bulbout amenity zones. The use of brick and consistent style landscape furnishings contribute to a cohesive character along the corridor.



Programming: The amenity zones along the corridor have a range of both fixed and flexible programming. Most fixed areas are for uses such as seating, public art, signage, and children’s play areas. Flexible areas are left open and are primarily used for outdoor dining.

Special Events: Aside from the day-to-day programming of spaces along the corridor, Grand Junction’s Main Street frequently closes to cars for events. Most notable is the weekly Farmers’ Market. Tents and vendors fill in the parking and amenity zones, giving pedestrians most of the roadway and sidewalk to walk through.

Bike Facilities: Dedicated bike lanes run along Main Street outside of the downtown core, but as the road narrows to two vehicle travel lanes, the bike facility becomes a shared lane.

Takeaways: Grand Junction’s Downtown Main Street presents a unique and high-quality streetscape. Its asymmetrical configuration results in reduced vehicular focus and slower vehicle speeds and instead places a clear emphasis on walkability, public space, safety, aesthetics, character and memorable identity. Lastly, it allows for flexibility when transforming into a semi-closed or fully-closed street temporarily for special events.



Frisco, CO – Main Street



- **Typical Block Length:** 320'
- **ROW Allocation:** 80' total
 - 60' curb to curb
 - 26'-36' parking (8'-18' either side)
 - 24'-44' pedestrian realm (12'-22' either side)
- **Vehicle Lanes:** two lanes, two-way
- **On-Street Parking:** parallel parking on the north, angled parking on the south
- **Streetscape Elements:** Bulbouts, transit stops, large curb cuts, sharrows, overhead lighting, movable planters, enhanced paving



Overview: Frisco's downtown Main Street has a modern feel, both in its architecture and streetscape. Frisco's streetscape configuration is simple, yet elegant and updated.

Plazas and Patios: Main Street's allocation of space results in few plazas and patios. The pedestrian realm infrequently expands to accommodate small patio spaces mid-block. This streetscape provides enough space for small plazas or patios to be focused primarily at intersections.

Pedestrian Spaces and Crossings: As mentioned above, the focus is largely to keep the streetscape open and fluid. Sidewalks are unobstructed and consistently 10' wide, with a clearly designated brick paved amenity zones for streetscape furnishings. All intersections have large bulbouts for maximum visibility and shortened crossing distances.

Landscape Elements: Landscaping is minimal along the corridor. Despite the provided amenity zone, street trees are absent from the right-of-way, and located only at the edges of private lots. While there are no fixed or raised planters, high quality movable planters are frequently utilized and provide visual interest. These planters are complemented with high-quality street furnishings of the same design (from benches to lamp posts). This consistency creates a unique brand or character for the corridor.

Programming: The open design of the ROW leaves most of the programming to happen within private property. However, as with the other cases, the city has implemented parklets within the on-street parking zone to bring in more outdoor dining and shopping to the area.

Special Events: Special events and closures of Main occur occasionally in addition to within other spaces in downtown Frisco.

Bike Facilities: Main Street doesn't have dedicated bike facilities but does have a clearly marked sharrows facility along it, as part of the city's larger network. This eventually connects into the regional bike trail at the west end of Downtown Main.

Takeaways: Frisco's Downtown Main Street has a consistent, sleek design. It is kept open for efficient travel and isn't overly programmed. The high quality, efficient streetscape design and cohesive landscape elements and street furniture are well done. The absence of programming, dedicated gathering spaces, trees, cultural/historical landmarks, and/or public art installations unique to the area ultimately leave the corridor feeling like it lacks representation of Frisco's unique identity. However, it should be noted that the parklet program does help remedy this condition.



Telluride, CO - Colorado Avenue



- **Typical Block Length:** 250'
- **ROW Allocation:** 80' total
 - 60' curb to curb
 - 16' parking (8' either side)
 - 24'-32' pedestrian realm (12'-20' either side)
- **Vehicle Lanes:** three lanes, 2-way
- **On-Street Parking:** parallel
- **Streetscape Elements:** Center lane with short-term parking/loading zone, transit stops, overhead lighting



Overview: Colorado Avenue, while lined with engaging storefronts, lacks many features that contribute to walkability, safety, and comfort. Pocket plazas/patios and bumpouts currently provide additional space for businesses and pedestrians.

Plazas and Patios: While the south side of Colorado Avenue is too constrained for patios, the north side does accommodate narrow patio spaces. The western-most block fits larger patios than other blocks of the street. Several small pocket plazas and parks are located along the street and within closed cross streets that intersect Colorado Avenue.

Pedestrian Spaces and Crossings: Overall Colorado Avenue is lacking in space and amenities for pedestrians. Amenity zones are scarce, especially on the south side where there is just six feet of sidewalk. Crossings at intersections are lacking in that they do not have bulbouts (except one block along the north side), no stop signs or signals for traffic traveling down Colorado Avenue, poor curb cuts for ADA access (many without detectable strips), and no pedestrian refuge. The cross streets that have been closed and turned into parks/plaza open up to provide pedestrian reprieve.

Landscape Elements: Landscaping along the corridor is virtually absent and limited only to movable planters in the center lane and the adjacent plazas and park spaces. No fixed planters or street trees

are present. Landscape furnishings and seating are primarily located along the north end of the corridor where more space allows for them.

Programming: In the past, very little programming occurred along the streetscape itself, and instead occurred in adjacent parks and plazas. The cities recent parklets program set up in summer months seeks to increase activity in the streetscape with increased outdoor patio space.

Special Events: Outside the summer parklets program, Colorado Avenue is closed to vehicles completely for several festivals and events throughout the year.

Bike Facilities: Colorado Avenue has no dedicated or shared bike facilities.

Takeaways: Telluride’s Colorado Avenue is very similar to Durango’s Downtown Main Avenue in both its physical configuration and in the challenges it faces. While it could use additional pedestrian amenities and safety enhancements, Colorado Avenue provides pedestrian refuge through plazas and parks in closed-off cross-streets. Lastly, the use of the center turn lane for permit parking, deliveries, and snow storage is convenient and functional.



Ann Arbor, MI - Main Street



- **Typical Block Length:** 300'
- **ROW Allocation:** 80' total
 - 52' curb to curb
 - 16' parking (8' either side)
 - 30'-48' pedestrian realm (15'-24' either side)
- **Vehicle Lanes:** three lanes, two-way
- **On-Street Parking:** parallel parking
- **Streetscape Elements:** Bulbouts, raised planters, midblock intersections, enhanced/colored paving



Overview: Ann Arbor's Downtown Main Street features a streetscape much like Durango's but ramped up in scale/density. While Main Street has many elements that make up a typical downtown streetscape, it has strongly integrated patio seating and parklets.

Plazas and Patios: While Main Street has little to no public plaza space, there is significant area allocated for private patio space. Patios are located along all portions of the streetscape, with larger patio spaces in bulbouts where the sidewalk is extended out to 24'. Little to no consistency exists between the patio spaces, with each one having its own unique character.

Pedestrian Spaces and Crossings: Pedestrian walking space is constrained in some areas due to the conversion to patio space for outdoor dining. Bulbouts offer additional pedestrian space and opportunities for furnishings and raised planters. Some intersections have murals painted on the pavement, which contributes to a unique sense of place and ties in with the other murals in the area.

Landscape Elements: Raised planters and street trees are located at intersection bulbouts and along the street edge. Near intersections, planters are significantly larger. In addition to business patios and furnishings, Main Street has regular street furnishings located in amenity zones.

Programming: Parklets are numerous along Main, and each have their own unique identity and appearance. Minimal public gathering space limits non-restaurant programming.

Special Events: Beyond the parklets program, Main Street took part in a larger array of street and block closures in summer months for the downtown area. This allowed the densely packed patio spaces to spread out into the street itself.



Bike Facilities: Main Street doesn't have any dedicated bike facilities, but it does have a clearly marked and signed shared facility along it as part of the city's larger network. A dedicated protected bike lane does cross Main Street, and there are bike boxes at this intersection.

Takeaways: While Ann Arbor's Main Street isn't cutting edge, it still presents a very active pedestrian realm. The strategy on this streetscape has been to fit as many patios and parklets as possible within the pedestrian realm above the curb and with parklets. While a bit crowded when the road is open to cars, it becomes more spread out and breathable when closed to cars. This is an example where a better balance may be possible of pedestrian realm uses.



San Luis Obispo, CA – Monterey Street and Higuera Street



- **Typical Block Length:** 300'
- **ROW Allocation:** 60' - 65' total each
 - Monterey: 20' curb to curb/barrier
 - Higuera: 46' curb to curb
 - 16-32' pedestrian realm (8'-16' either side)
 - 8'-16' parking (8' either side)
 - 5'-6' buffered bike lanes (one lane each)
- **Vehicle Lanes:**
 - Monterey Street: one lane, one-way
 - Higuera Street: two lane, one-way
- **On-Street Parking:** parallel
- **Streetscape Elements:** bulbouts, colored paving, buffered bike lanes, street trees



Overview: This case study looks at two different parallel streets (a one-way couplet). Both Monterey Street and Higuera Street serve as prominent downtown streets in San Luis Obispo. Both streets feature dedicated bike lanes but interface with their surroundings a bit differently. These streets are narrower than Durango's Main Avenue.

Plazas and Patios: These streets do not allow much space for plazas and patios except within the 16' widened bulbout zones. Because of a lack in space in the existing pedestrian realm, parklets are quite large and appear frequently along these roadways.

Pedestrian Spaces and Crossings: Pedestrian clear spaces are tight in many places, but mid-block crossings are frequent. Bulbouts are present primarily at mid-block crossings rather than at intersections.

Landscape Elements: Trees are irregularly planted in a 3' amenity zone. Small, fixed planters are found along the streets. Other furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles are infrequent.

Programming: The biggest shift to these streets was the changes that came with the programming of parklets to the area. Along Monterey, an entire lane and parking on the south side of the street was removed for a large parklet buffered by protected bike lane. Along Higuera a similar condition appeared with a protected bike lane replacing one of the drive lanes. Overall, many parklets have been established along these roads. They provide various amenities such as bike parking, dining areas, outdoor shopping, and more.

Special Events: These two streets have yet to be fully closed off for special events, but Higuera Street was closed to expand outdoor public space during part of the pandemic.

Bike Facilities: Both streets have a single buffered bike lane. Both bike lanes run between the on-street parking and the vehicle travel lane. Along Higuera, the buffer is a couple feet of space with pavement markings. The bike lane along Monterey is buffered by brighter striping, truncated domes, and flexible bollards. The bike lanes weave around the new parklet areas, acting as a buffer between traffic and the bump outs.

Takeaways: These two streets utilize an interesting configuration as a one-way couplet. They place priority on dedicated bike facilities over public space or an expanded public realm. Parklets help to expand the public realm.



Summary Table

Location	Typical Block Length	Total ROW	Vehicle Parking	Bike Facility	Transit Stops	Pedestrian Realm <i>(per side, behind curb)</i>	Plazas and Patios
Durango, CO Main Avenue (Existing)	350'	80'	Parallel and angled, both sides	Sharrow	Yes	12'	Primarily within bumpouts (parklets).
Grand Junction, CO Main Street	450'	90'-100'	Parallel and angled, both sides	Sharrow	Yes	8'-55'	Occur frequently within chicane design.
Frisco, CO Main Street	320'	80'	Parallel and angled, both sides	Sharrow	Yes	12'-22'	Primarily within bulbouts and parklets.
Telluride, CO Colorado Avenue	250'	80'	Parallel, both sides	None	Yes	12'-20'	Along north side and within pocket plazas, parklets, and closed cross-streets.
Ann Arbor, MI Main Street	300'	80'	Parallel, both sides	Sharrow	No	15'-24'	Throughout streetscape and in parklets.
San Luis Obispo, CA Monterey Street and Higuera Street	300'	60'-65'	Parallel, one to both sides	Buffered Bike Lane	No	8'-16'	Primarily within bulbouts and parklets.

Pedestrian Malls vs. Flexible Streets

The term pedestrian mall primarily refers to streets permanently closed to vehicular traffic in exchange for pedestrian priority, outdoor gathering space, and outdoor business expansion opportunities. Some pedestrian malls allow for emergency access, deliveries, and transit service, whether always or certain times of day/as needed.

History of Pedestrian Malls

The design and construction of pedestrian malls started in the post-World War II era, but primarily occurred during the 1960's-1980's to compete with new, car-oriented suburban shopping centers that were pulling customers away from downtowns. In this circumstance, most pedestrian malls were used by cities as an attempted solution to fix suffering downtowns. By the 1980's, over 200 pedestrian malls were created across the United States. While comprehensive up-to-date data is not readily available, a few reports indicate that around 65 permanent pedestrian malls (of various sizes) still currently exist in the United States. That means about two-thirds of streets previously closed to cars have reopened. Additionally, very few pedestrian malls have been built since the 1980's. The most recently built are typically in extraordinary circumstances, including in some of the most prominent international tourist destinations in the United States such as Fremont Street in Las Vegas and Times Square in New York City. Temporary street closures have skyrocketed in frequency and popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are significant differences between temporary and permanent street closures that are discussed in more detail below.

Closures/Reopening to Cars

The most prominent stated reasons for reopening pedestrian malls to vehicles include severe negative economic impacts and derelict and unsafe conditions due to maintenance costs and lack of activity. While other countries and continents (especially Europe) have several successful pedestrian malls, the United States has a significantly stronger auto-oriented development pattern and engrained culture. For hundreds of years, downtowns have been developed at the most prominent intersections in a city due to experienced business success. By removing the convenience of vehicle access to the heart of a city in the United States, many cities have experienced unintended consequences of a pedestrian-only idealism.

Pros and Cons

Pedestrian malls do have several potential benefits including social, environmental, economic, and safety. They allow ample space for outdoor community gathering, which is of increased desire amidst studies reporting of increased rates of social isolation in recent years (even before the COVID-19 pandemic). Restaurants do particularly well in these settings due to expanded opportunities for outdoor patio seating. Outdoor gathering space, both public and private, can be increased through other design solutions as well. A critical mass of restaurants and bars are considered essential to the success of a pedestrian mall, bringing vital activity and eyes on the street to the mall after dark. Reaching and maintaining this critical mass can be challenging without economic support.

With urbanization continuing to increase and an ever-changing climate, cities everywhere are looking for ways to get people out of their cars and onto active modes of transportation. While this is an extremely important cause, many people still drive to pedestrian malls before walking around upon arrival. This is similar to the current transportation choices to get to/move along Durango's Downtown Main Avenue. A pedestrian mall does establish pedestrians as the primary mode of transportation, which leads to a significantly safer environment (as it relates to transportation), with fewer crashes between all modes, due to the lack of potential conflict points. There are also other tried and true methods to achieve

pedestrian modal priority and to increase safety/reduce crashes between different modes of transportation. Micromobility options have been increasing in many cities, which can help people navigate a longer distance without a car, but pedestrian malls frequently restrict these modes of transportation.

Of the approximately 65 existing pedestrian malls, they are considered of mixed “success”. These are certainly the special circumstance, rather than the norm. In Colorado, we have three well-known pedestrian/transit malls- Pearl Street in Boulder, 16th Street in Denver, and Hyman Avenue in Aspen. While their level of success is debatable depending on one’s perspective, they often prioritize the visitor experience and thus tend to skew perceptions as to how successful pedestrian malls are nationwide. Even amongst those considered successful, they do not come without controversy. In addition to catering primarily to visitors, real estate and property value along successful pedestrian malls tends to skyrocket, driving out the local businesses that make up the very character of a downtown. In this environment, national chain stores are often the only ones that can survive the challenging economic environment. The 16th Street Mall in Denver struggles with a significant population of people experiencing homelessness, and this tends to be the case in many car-free public spaces that are not active enough at all times of day. The design of the transit mall also leads to some significant accessibility and safety issues.

Pros:

- Provide additional public gathering space
- Ease of pedestrian navigation
- Reduction in crashes between all modes, but particularly between pedestrians/bikes and cars
- May help cities reach climate-related goals through promoting non-vehicular spaces
- Unique and memorable design may attract increased tourism
- Potential for business success (primarily for chain stores)

Cons:

- Unlikely to significantly change travel patterns
- Significant economic risk related to business sales
- Potential for local businesses to be priced out due to raised property values
- Reliance on nighttime activation for safety or risk of prominent transient presence
- Potential traffic impacts on surrounding street network from rerouted traffic
- Limits mobility options along closed blocks
- Inconvenient for deliveries and short-term loading/unloading
- High construction and maintenance costs
- Probability of failure/likelihood of ultimately reopening to cars

Temporary Street Closures and Flexible Festival Streets

As an alternative to a permanent street closure, many cities in the United States have seen remarkable success through temporary street closures. These streets are often designed in a format conducive to convenient closure and streamlined event setup through elements such as a curbside right-of-way, regular electric access, clustered vertical elements (such as trees and street furniture), and retractable or removable safety bollards and other safety barriers. They also often use similar high-end materials in

patterns to delineate different spaces therein as needed. Festival streets are typically open to vehicles but close off for special events or on certain days or months of the year.

Flexible festival streets are still a significant construction investment and require increased maintenance compared to a typical street. If designed as curbless, an alternative stormwater drainage solution must be included in lieu of a traditional curb and gutter. For this reason, they are often most successful when the most-high end finish and curbless design is prioritized for a few central blocks. Adjacent blocks can still be closed off through conventional means for especially large events.

These types of streets are distinct from pedestrian malls in their flexibility and do not result in the same prolonged effects, such as negative economic impacts and ongoing traffic congestion on surrounding streets. In fact, occasional closures and events of festival streets often lead to spikes in business revenue, if the event is designed to support both temporary vendors and adjacent permanent businesses.

Sometimes temporary street closures are considered experimental or as an interim step towards a pedestrian mall. It is important to remember that temporary street closures don't experience the test of time and therefore don't serve as an accurate representation of the long-term and potentially significant impacts a pedestrian mall can have on the local economy, transportation network, tourism draw, and safety impacts.

