Rifle
Community Revitalization Partnership
Team Visit

January 26 and 27, 2005

Team Members:

Kim Grant, City of Arvada
Michael Hussey, Nolte Associates, Colorado Springs
Mark Leese, URS Corporation, Denver
Jon Schler, CCCD, UC-D, Grand Junction
Barbara Silverman, CCRA, Denver
Michael Warren, CCRA, Boulder
Thank you, for welcoming the CRP Team so graciously to your wonderful community!

The Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) and CCRA have teamed up for a one-year pilot program to provide one to three day downtown revitalization assistance visits to non-Main Street communities under 20,000 population on a variety of subjects. The CRP goal is to enable towns to “break through” a troublesome issue or question thereby moving forward with their downtown revitalization.

The CRP team’s mission in Rifle was to create a starting point and focus for comprehensive downtown revitalization plan to include public visioning, need for market-based planning (for business expansion and recruitment, and using big-box development as an asset downtown), understanding organizational development, and assessment of readiness for Main Street program participation.

WHAT IMPRESSED THE TEAM ABOUT RIFLE

- Great People
- Tightness and compactness of the downtown
- Authenticity
- Locally-owned businesses
- Great building stock
- Its natural setting: river, creek, mountains, railroad, hills
- Sense of enclosure
- The City’s willingness to offer incentives as a catalyst to change. This is progressive.
- Outstanding recreational opportunities.
- Expressions of care and concern for each other
YOUR DESIRES FOR DOWNTOWN RIFLE

Quality of Life Amenities

Gateways to downtown
- North (Hwy 13)
- South (from I-70)
- West (3rd)

Wayfinding and interpretive signs
- To parking
- To downtown
- To businesses
- To public facilities and amenities
- To significant features

More trees

Public Gathering Place, Plaza

More inviting environment for businesses
- Streetscaping
- Bike path
- Fill the gaps on Railroad Avenue

Traffic calming on Railroad Avenue

Want more retail mix

Long-term sustainability – level out the peaks and valleys/boom and bust.
RECOMMENDED GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Over the course of the two days several “guiding” principles were mentioned. These are important considerations for all projects and should serve as a sieve through which all projects are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

1. Projects should promote a sense of meandering, i.e. circulation by pedestrians, cars, and bikes.
2. Make connections wherever possible. Connections to bikeways, river, creek, downtown, historic railroad bridge, viewsheds.....
3. You have a strong identity:
   a. YOU ARE A REAL, AUTHENTIC TOWN
   b. YOU HAVE REAL, AUTHENTIC PEOPLE
   c. YOU HAVE A REAL, AUTHENTIC DOWNTOWN
   d. “WELCOME HOME!”
4. RIFLE is a HUB, up-valley, hinterland, transit, social.

Note: When you develop an urban design framework it will be important to test it against these guiding principles.
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

DDA Role—Clarify and define
- Downtown Advocate
- Data/information gathering (building/inventory, business inventory, leasable space, sq/ft. etc)
- Market analysis/study
- Business recruitment, retention & expansion
- Marketing and promotion of downtown (locally and to wider world)
- Design guidelines
- Parking management plan

Lack of reinvestment in downtown
- Public (infrastructure)
- Private (buildings, facades, new businesses)
- Need to understand financial tools and incentives including tax credits

Need to develop expertise/capacity in development of public-private partnerships
Clear definition of maintenance responsibilities
Parking Management
Business Improvement District (BID); special districts
Lack of enforcement of parking and signage.
Historic building survey
Historic district(s) – residential and downtown
Need to articulate and develop your identity:
- Character
- Image
- Heritage/history
- What is the draw to the downtown?
- Authentic

Opportunity to leverage R.A.I.D. money
How to deal with huge number of development projects and opportunities:
- Bob Regulski property/development of
- Louis Koutzoubous properties
- Downtown theater renovation
- Possible new theater
- Centennial Park/Linkages to downtown
- Civic center:
  - Plaza/gathering place
  - City hall
  - Library expansion
  - Preserve Post Office/expansion
- Recreation Center
- Rifle Creek and 3rd Street Bridge
- Parking Structure
- Housing, affordable
- Gateways
- Public Safety Complex/City and County
CATEGORIZATION OF ISSUES & RECOMMENDATIONS

In looking at the issues and opportunities the team developed four categories they feel are of prime importance and within which all of the identified issues fall.

1. Maintenance and Enforcement Issues
2. Urban Design Issues and Potential Development Projects
3. Role of the DDA

At the end of each of these four sections are the team’s recommendations and next steps for short term (less than 2 years) and long term (if any).

1. MAINTENANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

MAINTENANCE ISSUES

- Who maintains downtown?
- Public Maintenance
  - Streets
  - Sidewalks
  - Street furniture
  - Landscaping
  - Lighting
- Private Maintenance
  - Facades including paint and general clean-up
  - Awnings
  - Building entryways
  - Signs
    - Business signs
    - Window displays
  - Sidewalk sweeping
  - Lighting of building and windows
  - Maintenance and general upkeep of buildings

ENFORCEMENT ISSUES

- Safety and security
- Sign code – upkeep, clarify if code addresses maintenance.
- Design guidelines – none beyond a color palette
- Parking – 2 hour parking not being enforced. Many employees parking in prime customer locations

**Recommendations and Next Steps**

**Short Term:**
- Define roles of DDA, City and Parks and Private sectors in downtown maintenance. Clearly identify who does what. This will become even more important as town works to improve connections into and out of downtown.
- Review sign ordinance, to address all the issues including maintenance.
- Purchase new luminaires for downtown street lamps to direct lighting downward.
- Have an annual downtown clean-up day. Wash the sidewalks and buildings, fire department might assist, pick up trash, involve schools, repaint fire hydrants, wash windows, clean up and redo window displays, etc. Have a downtown picnic at the end of the day to thank everyone.
- The City is willing to offer incentives to building owners. This needs to be expanded beyond paint and sign assistance to include façade renovations. Adherence to design guidelines in order to be eligible for a grant, loan, or combination.
- Have local architect provide design files of ideas for awnings and signage.
- Conduct window display and merchandising workshop for local merchants (CCRA can assist or direct you to providers).
- Emphasize simple improvements first:
  - Wash windows
  - Wash building and make minor repairs
  - Light windows and building
  - Repair store sign
  - Sweep sidewalk and pick up litter.
- Enforce 2 hour parking
- Create a public/private parking management plan that explores all types of parking solutions, i.e. business owner incentives, park and ride lots, parking validation in outer lots, design back entrances of stores for employee and customer parking and entryways.
- Repair sidewalks downtown. Develop an incentive program for property owners to assist in paying for sidewalk repairs.
- Downtown maintenance: explore opportunities to use court system that gives sentences of community service to providing maintenance for downtown. Juvenile judge in Canon City sentences young people to
community service of watering downtown flower pots. Silver City, New Mexico contracts with developmentally disabled adults to sweep, empty trash receptacles, water flowers, etc. It is a great fundraiser for the adults and gives them good job skills.

- **Plants**
  - Shrubs - need to remove and replace most of the existing shrubs in the downtown area. (After 20 years of growth, most of the plant material has gotten too big for the streetscape) These should be replaced with a smaller scale plants with more color and texture. This will give you more space for sitting, walking and viewing into the area from cars.
  - Trees - need to be trimmed and the metal tree cages around the trees need to be enlarged so that the trees have the ability to grow without being damaged.

- **Streetscape seating**
  - The existing seating in the downtown area is worn out and needs to be replaced with the a more commercial grade material. (Uniformity of the seating elements needs to be developed as a visual continuity to the area.)
2. URBAN DESIGN ISSUES AND POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The basic concepts:

1. “Meandering” to get to destinations that are dispersed about the grid. The idea is that one of the things we like about downtown Rife is that we have the ability to come downtown on Saturday morning and park once, then walk to nearly every place we need to go to run our weekly errands.
2. Rifle Creek access to downtown. Maximize!
3. Gateways and enclosure. Reinforce the space of the downtown by the creation of gateways and improvements that terminate views, for example, landscaped median on 3rd Street west of Rifle Creek.
4. Hard/soft analysis to identify opportunities for redevelopment.
   a. “low hanging fruit”
5. East-west pedestrian circulation across Railroad. Pedestrian safety is a must for a vital downtown.
7. Rifle is a hub in many ways: to the up-valley workforce, hinterland workforces, transit users, a social center. Downtown Rifle is a host to many audiences.

When you develop an urban design framework it will be important to test it against these guiding principles.

Recommendations:
- Recommend a “downtown first” ordinance or policy.
- Conduct an historic survey with end goal being to develop a downtown historic district.
- Preserver the historic theater and turn it into a venue for live music, martial arts classes, ballet classes, art films.
- Designate the property east of the Post Office as area for Post Office expansion as a hedge against losing the Post Office in the downtown.
- Redevelop the block west of the Post Office as a multiplex theater complex with a public plaza directly across Railroad from the Post Office.
- Consider redevelopment of the block bounded by 4th, 3rd, West and Rifle Creek as housing.
- Plan on expanding the City Hall on its current site.
- Plan on expanding the Library at its current location, expanding to the east.
- Place small traffic islands in the center of the intersections at East and 3rd and 5th Streets. The purpose is to terminate views up 3rd and 5th Streets and to enclose the space of the downtown.
- Allow service uses to move into residential properties within the transition zone along 5th and East as an adaptive reuse buffer zone in which the character of the homes is preserved while allowing services uses to encroach as they relocate from the CBD. This creates a receiving area to receive service uses as retail moves back into the CBD and rents go up.
- Consider relocating the park n ride at the SW corner of Centennial Parkway and Railroad to the west end of Bob R.’s property.
- Encourage a gateway statement to be developed at current park-n-ride location to terminate views south on Railroad Ave.
- Encourage to south half of the block west of City Hall to redevelop as mixed use, i.e. retail on the ground floor with residential above.
- Encourage redevelopment of the block bounded by Railroad, West, 2nd and Centennial Parkway as retail and offices.
- Allow homes on 5th between Rifle Creek and Railroad to convert to retail uses that cater to young people, i.e. ice cream, music, skateboards, toys, bicycle repair, etc.
- Extend Centennial Park to the south to 3rd Street.
- Develop a gateway at the bridge over Rifle Creek north of the school.
- Have a Parking Management Study done that includes a utilization study and feasibility analysis for a parking structure.
- Develop a west gateway at the 3rd Street bridge over Rifle Creek.
- Install a landscaped median in 3rd Street between the bridge and Fravert Ave.
- When the Rifle Creek pedestrian path is designed, have it cross the Creek south of 4th Street and continue from there south under the 3rd Street bridge and also ramp up to street grade onto 3rd Street.
- Study the redevelopment of the lumber store site for the proposed joint use County and City Safety Complex.
- As part of the Safety Complex site plan, plan for a pedestrian path from Rifle Creek just south of 3rd Street to the southeast to the corner of West Ave and Centennial Parkway.
- Renovate the 3rd Street bridge and be as sensitive as possible to retain as much of the charm as possible.
- Create pedestrian refuges in medians in Railroad Ave to facilitate pedestrian crossings across Railroad Ave at 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets
3. ROLE OF THE DDA OR OTHER DOWNTOWN ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION

DDA Role—Clarify and define
- Need for a Downtown Advocate
- Lack of Data/information gathering (building/inventory, business inventory, leasable space, sq/ft. etc)
- Need for Market analysis/study
- Who is doing Business recruitment, retention & expansion
- Marketing and promotion of downtown (locally and to wider world)
- Develop design guidelines

Lack of reinvestment in downtown
- Public (infrastructure)
- Private (buildings, facades, new businesses)
- Need to understand financial tools and incentives including tax credits
- Investigate special district options that may work for Rifle including a BID.

Need to develop expertise/capacity in development of public-private partnerships
Explore opportunities to leverage the RAID funds.

Recommendations and Next Steps

Short Term:
- There is a strong need for a downtown advocate, whether this is the DDA fulfilling an expanded role or a new organization. Greeley DDA is a combination DDA and Main Street organization. Strongly recommend a full-time staff person for the organization.
  - Regularly make recommendations to the city council regarding downtown
  - Take on more active role of marketing and promoting the downtown.
  - Investigate options for RAID funds to be used in a way that would leverage them for the downtown.
  - Work with planning department to gather information about downtown:
    - Business and building inventory
    - Consumer and business surveys
    - Inventory of vacant space
  - Develop business retention and expansion program for your existing businesses. Arvada and Greeley are both good models.
    - Introduce new businesses at city council meetings (televised on Channel 13)
- Look for financial partners to conduct a market analysis (target beginning in 2006)
- Conduct market analysis (RFP process) Complete by August 2006

**Long Term:**
- Develop a community foundation
- Find private investors to pool resources for private development projects.
RESOURCES
(Information, Technical assistance, Funding)

American Institute of Architects (AIA), publications, architects, etc.
American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA), Landscape Architecture
   magazine)
Colorado Brownfields Association – environmental assessments, grants.
Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA), technical assistance,
   Colorado Main Street program
Colorado Historical Society (historic surveys, preservation, tax credits, etc.)
Colorado Preservation Inc. (advocacy, state preservation awards, etc.)
Department of Local Affairs (technical assistance, Energy Impacts Assistance
   grants, Community Development Block grants, etc.)
Downtown Idea Exchange/Downtown Promotion Reporter publications
Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund (parks, trails, recreation, open space
   grants)
US Department of Housing & Urban Development (Housing development, HUD
   Economic Development Initiative grants, etc.)
Historic Georgetown, Historic Boulder, Historic Denver, Inc. (organizational
   development for advocacy, building restoration projects)
International Downtown Association (IDA)
League of Historic American Theaters (successful preservation, adaptive re-use
   projects, national conferences & workshops)
Main Street 101 Training (Salida, CO April 6-8, 2005)
Market Analysis (many good private consultants)
National Main Street Center (National Town Meeting on Main Street-Baltimore;
   publications on Organization, Design, Promotions, & Economic Restructuring)
National Trust for Historic Preservation (small grants, Preservation magazine)
State Historical Fund (grants for surveys and historic preservation)
TEA-21 Enhancements (grants for trails, transportation corridors, adaptive re-use of
   bridges, rail corridors, etc.)
Traditional Building magazine
Urban Land Institute (ULI)
Visit: Littleton (gateways, maintenance of civic functions downtown, facade loans, signage, maintenance & cleanliness, etc.); Loveland (historic theater, public art, compact similar-size downtown); Lamar (authentic prairie downtown, new businesses serving emerging Hispanic markets, etc.); Gunnison (arts center, retail mix, Main Street as highway, etc.); Montrose (special events, bookstores, restaurants, etc.); Grand Junction (wayfinding signage, parking solutions, theater(s), public art, DDA, etc.); Longmont (wayfinding signage, streetscaping, etc.); Greeley (building restorations, civic uses, design guidelines); Durango (heritage tourism, design guidelines, riverfront uses); Arvada (design guidelines, special events, streetscape, etc.)
AGENDA

RIFLE DOWNTOWN CCRA EVALUATION

DAY 1 – January 26, 2005

1:00 – 2:00 pm  Information and Identification with key stakeholders and staff
2:00 – 3:20 pm  Central Business Walking Tour
3:30 – 4:15 pm  Interview DDA Board
4:15 – 5:00 pm  Interview City staff (Police Chief, Public Works, Planning)
5:00 – 6:15 pm  “OPEN”
6:15 – 8:30 pm  Dinner w/ DDA, City Council, Chamber of Commerce Board, Local Lenders, and key stakeholders

DAY 2 – January 27, 2005

8:00 – 8:45 am  Interview
9:00 – 9:45 am  Interview
10:00 – 12:00 am  “Brain Dump” of observations
12:00 – 1:30  Lunch
1:30 – 4:00  Analyze Observations and Develop Recommendations
4:00 – 5:00  Dry Run
5:00 – 6:30  “OPEN/DINNER”
6:30 – 9:00  Formal Presentation and Q & A (meeting starts at 7:00)
1. The following is a list of topics that we would like the team to evaluate:
   a. Central Business District Zoning: Should housing in Central Business District be zoned for commercial/office uses, thus expanding commercial core?
   b. Should two story commercial structures be required to have retail and specified services on street level? Residential and office uses upstairs?
   c. Impacts of poorly kept structures and lots on downtown?
   d. Evaluation of parking and pedestrian circulation – BECAREFUL! This could take over discussions. I would evaluate and offer 3rd party observation and not ask for opinions. You’ll get unsolicited opinions from DDA and Police Chief. Keep them on track and move on to other topics.
   e. Mix of land use. More restaurants, fewer restaurants, suggestions for retail strategy (developing one).
   f. How important is uniform signage?
   g. Thoughts on aesthetics of downtown?
   h. Proactively moving/changing land uses?

2. The following is a list of “hot topics” that should be avoided:

3. What we plan to take from this workshop.

**Dinner w/ DDA, City Council, Chamber of Commerce Board, Local Lenders, key stakeholders**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>January 26 from 6:15 – 8:30 pm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:30 – 6:30</td>
<td>Setup (staff)</td>
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<td>6:30 – 7:15</td>
<td>Table Talk</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:15 – 8:30</td>
<td>Room Discussion Q &amp;A</td>
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Move team to front table to lead a discussion with the attendees on the state and future of the Rifle Central Business District.
Rifle CRP Team – Bios

Kim Grant serves as Grants Administrator for the City of Arvada, where he is responsible for developing, obtaining, and coordinating supplementary funding to support city initiatives as part of a comprehensive grants program for a municipality of 102,153 residents. This involves coordinating project development, prospect research, proposal writing, and grant implementation and reporting responsibilities across departments. Since 1999, Mr. Grant has helped secure over $7.5 million in new funding for the city, with particular emphasis on parks, trails, and open space; planning and historic preservation; environmental remediation and protection; and arts, culture and humanities programming. Grant previously served as Director of Development for Historic Denver, Inc. and as Executive Director of the Lower Downtown District, Inc. (LoDo). He also wrote and helped secure most of the private grants that supported the new Central Library project in Denver. Prior to relocating to Colorado in 1991, Grant served as the Assistant State Coordinator for the Kansas Main Street Program and also taught high school for 8 years. He is married and lives in Denver with his wife and two sons.

Michael Hussey is the manager of planning and landscape architecture for the Colorado Springs office of Nolte Associates, Inc. Michael has over 30 years of experience in a wide variety of urban design, landscape, planning, environmental engineering, and architectural projects. He has worked on urban development and renewal, and downtown streetscape improvement projects in Billings, Montana (downtown), Colorado Springs (Downtown BID), Avon (Town Center), Broomfield (US287), Fountain (US85), and Manitou Springs (US Bus 24/Manitou Avenue). Project responsibilities have included grant opportunity identification and application, master planning, urban and site design, and construction observation and management. Michael is also the co-author of “Grow Native,” one of the earliest Colorado xeriscape landscape guides, and has worked on a number of award winning projects – including the Colorado Springs Downtown Business Improvement District.

Mark Leese’s redevelopment planning experience started with a plan for Old Original Aurora in 1979 and was followed by downtown plans for Golden and Frisco in 1980. In 1981, he developed a plan for the redevelopment of the Town of Rangely. While with the City and County of Denver Planning and Public Works offices, Mr. Leese worked on, and in most cases directed, all redevelopment projects in Lower Downtown and Cherry Creek North. He also provided the urban design component for the neighborhood plans for all of Denver’s “close-in” neighborhoods. He served as a task force member on the staff teams for the redevelopment of the Lowry Air Force Base and Stapleton International Airport. Since returning to the private sector, he has developed redevelopment plans for Parker, Monument and Fountain, and the Shattuck Superfund Site in Denver. He currently is working on the transit-oriented development plans for bus rapid transit and commuter rail station areas along US 36 from Denver to Boulder and Longmont, an urban design/neighborhood plan for the Euclid Neighborhood in Salt Lake City, and a redevelopment plan for site of the existing St. George Municipal Airport, slated to be moved to another location in 2009.
Jon Schler is the western slope director of the Colorado Center for Community Development – University of Colorado at Denver and provides technical and community development assistance to more than 40 western Colorado rural communities. Jon has worked on hundreds of community-based projects in the past 22 years.

He presently serves on Colorado Community Revitalization Association and Colorado Historical Society’s boards of directors, is past president of Colorado Preservation, Inc., and was an advisor for the National Trust for Historic Preservation for a decade. Jon holds a bachelor’s degree in environmental design and double master’s degrees in urban design and architecture from the University of Colorado.

Barbara Silverman is the executive director of Colorado Community Revitalization Association (CCRA). Established in 1982, CCRA is a nonprofit, membership organization dedicated to building better communities through cultural and historic preservation; economic vitality; sustainability; quality; and respect for community identity. CCRA works with downtown development authorities, urban renewal authorities, business improvement districts and other downtown organizations throughout the state and administers the Colorado Main Street program. Barbara has over 25 years experience in the nonprofit and public sectors creating and directing a wide variety of programs including downtown revitalization and Main Street programs, economic and community development, housing, and land conservation. Barbara worked with the Trust for Public Land in New York and Minnesota, and started TPL’s 12-state regional office in Minneapolis. In addition to Colorado, she has worked with state Main Street programs in Minnesota and New Mexico.

Michael Warren is the contract staff Architect for the CCRA. He has had 20 years experience in Architecture including adaptive reuse of existing buildings as well as rehabilitation and restoration of historic structures. His specialty is his strong background in drawing and sketching skills to communicate ideas and details effectively.
Historic Preservation-Restoration Opportunities

Rifle Colorado has a quality building stock of architectural examples of the late 1800’s, early 1900’s buildings. Colorado as a whole was going through boom times on many fronts. Much of the original architectural elements of the city were burned during a fire in the early 1900’s. There are some great examples of the older stock that survived the fire.

The importance of maintaining buildings of such early influence on the character of Rifle is what this sketch documentation is illustrating. Much of the buildings have original façade treatments that have been well maintained. There are, however, been new façade treatments and demolition of original details. These are the items of most concern in restoring and old town.

This sketch documentation represents a broad stroke presentation of opportunities available architecturally for the restoration of historic facades. They are intended to present some ways to approach giving some of the original elements of Rifle renewed character.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation Guidelines represents rules by which architectural elements can be restored on older buildings and must be followed stringently. With Rifle’s unique heritage and characteristics specific recommendations and implementations by a licensed Architect can give a long lasting impression for generations to come.

Rifle
Community Revitalization Partnership
Team Visit
The Post Office
- The center of town
Historic Documentation
Example
- 3rd Street 1940’s
- Blade (extended from building face) signage
Entrance to the City

- Main Drive at the Highway intersection into Rifle
- The Elk as an identifiable device
Gateway to the City—Example
- Familiar Gateway at Fairground

Gateway to the City—After
- New gateway similar to Fair Grounds gateway
- Located beyond the Gas Stations
Historic Preservation
Restorations-Before
- Remove wood window coverings
- Open up front door

Restorations-After
- Repair old window lettering
- Repair stone
Historic Preservation
Restorations-Before
- Remove built-on overhangs
- Repair existing stone

Restorations-After
- Install historic operable awnings
Historic Preservation
Restorations-Before
- Remove built-on overhangs
- Uncover transom windows

Restorations-After
- Install historic operable awnings
- Replace historic glass with solar glass in transom locations
Historic Preservation
Restorations-Before
- Remove built-on overhangs
- Remove siding

Restorations-After
- Rebuild glass transom
- Install new signage
Centennial Park
Before
- Walkways and overgrown planting

After
- New lighting
- New benches and secondary walkways
Centennial Park

Before
- Walkways and overgrown planting

After
- New lighting
- New kids play equipment
New Cultural Center
- Looking west on 4th Street
- New Theatre Marquee and theatre use
- New Museum Marquee
New Cultural Center
- Looking toward Post office and southwest
- New Civic Park on Railroad Ave.
- New Multi-plex theatres
- Move the clock to the Civic Park