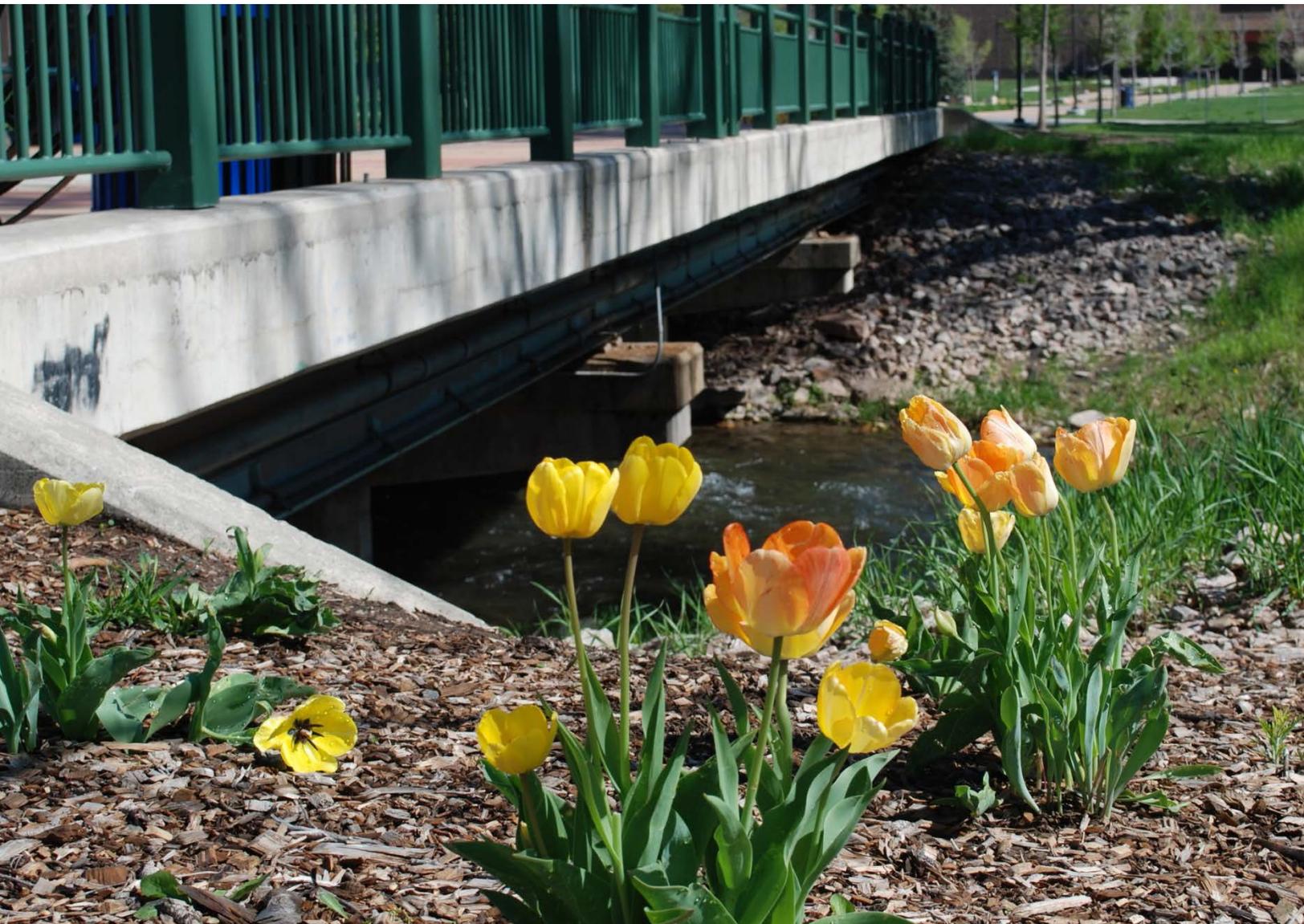




# 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade Conceptual Plan

*Forming a Community Vision - June, 2019*



# |Introduction|

The 6th Street Promenade is an approximately three quarter mile corridor forming a north/south spine in downtown Rapid City. The corridor is anchored by two prominent community cultural institutions, the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center on the north and the Rapid City High School/Performing Arts Center on the south. The corridor supports a variety of uses and activities including parkland and outdoor recreation, employment offices, housing units, hospitality and services, retail, dining, all-ages entertainment, and civic facilities.

An important characteristic of the corridor is its contrasting but mutually supporting land uses of natural outdoor open space and urban fabric. A stronger sense of continuity within the corridor can be achieved by spreading the park-like elements onto 6<sup>th</sup> Street, and expanding the presence of people and activities from downtown into Memorial Park.

The purpose of this conceptual plan is to envision improvements that will support a more vibrant and purposefully used pedestrian corridor in the future. This planning process aims to identify principles, projects, and community partnerships that will create

stronger physical and programmatic connections along 6<sup>th</sup> Street, between the Civic Center and Performing Arts Center. This conceptual plan is meant to be a guide and resource for governmental agencies and decision makers, the private and non-profit sectors, and the general public.

The graphical elements are not intended to imply a fully designed or vetted project, they are intended to spark conversation and inspire a grand community vision to carry forward. This plan represents a starting point for a longer term planning process that should continue to engage the public and prioritize an inclusive planning and design process.

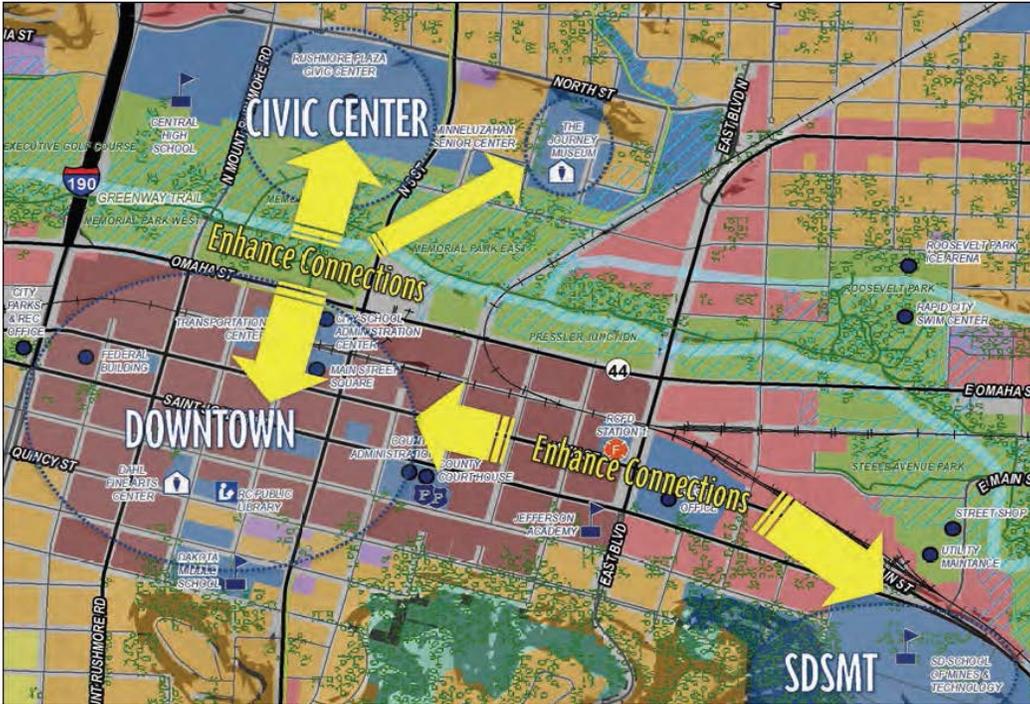
The ideas and suggestions in this plan are aimed to encourage collaboration among diverse groups to expand community development opportunities and quality of life in Rapid City.



*View of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade from the intersection at Omaha Street.*

# |Planning Context|

This conceptual plan was developed to build upon policy recommendations in several of Rapid City’s long range plans focusing on this area of need.



*This graphic from “Plan Rapid City” illustrates the desire for enhanced connections, between Downtown and the Civic Center.*

“Incorporate art into public projects such as buildings, parks, recreation facilities, as well as at bus stops, in parking garages, inside buses, within medians, at City gateways, and at other transportation facilities. Develop incentives that encourage the incorporation of art amenities in private projects and the involvement of artists early in the design process.”

“Reinforce the role of Downtown as a Regional Activity Center through a diverse mix of uses, public art, programming and events, neighborhood transitions, and an effective parking strategy. Promote increased synergy between the Downtown Core and nearby centers of activity.”

**2014**

**Comprehensive Plan  
LC-4.1-4.2 and RC-  
3.1A**

# |Planning Context|

“Identify additional signage, public art, and other placemaking improvements that can embellish 6<sup>th</sup> Street as a corridor that connects Downtown’s cultural destinations between Columbus Street and North Street.

**Downtown Master Plan, 2016  
Arts and Culture Goal 4d.**

“Continue developing public art and landscape design to improve pedestrian experience. Increase foot traffic and develop a more walkable, bike friendly urban environment that is in high demand by young creative talent.”

**Cultural Plan, 2016  
Creative Economic Development  
Goal 10g**

Goal G: “As opportunities arise, encourage the development of land uses along 6th Street which cater to and depend on pedestrian traffic. Improve the level of comfort of 6th Street by installing streetscape elements.

**Downtown Plan, 1991  
Urban Design/Streetscape**

Goal F: “Improve pedestrian crossings of Omaha Street at Fifth and 6th Streets. Investment in an overpass should be deferred until such time as is warranted by an overwhelming demand. Such a scenario might occur with development of a large mixed-use project south of Omaha Street which might benefit from a direct connection to Memorial Park.”

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## *What is placemaking?*

*Project for Public Spaces describes placemaking “as both an overarching ideas and hands on approach for improving a neighborhood” and “a collaborative process by which we shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value.”*

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# |Beginning to Form A Community Vision|

## Community Engagement

This plan document was developed by the Rapid City Community Development Department, with graphic assistance from Wyss Associates. The ideas and recommendations in this plan originate from within the community and an array of stakeholders.

## Stakeholder Visioning Sessions

Throughout 2018, Community Development staff met with small groups of stakeholders to discuss issues, opportunities, and ideas for the corridor. The following table at the right lists groups who provided input on the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade concepts.

## Community Information Meetings and other Outreach

In addition to small group discussions, Community Development staff organized other public events to hear from the community about the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade including a “Coffee with Planners” event, a booth at Main Street Square during Summer Nights activities, a brainstorming session with local artists, and a Public Information meeting/visioning session at City Hall.

## On-going community dialogue

The summary above represents a snapshot of community input and visioning. There should be a continued focus on hearing community voices as project planning continues.

## Stakeholder Visioning Sessions

City Staff:  
Community Development, Public Works, Police, Fire, Library, Transit, Parks and Recreation

Civic Center Board/Staff

Destination Rapid City/Main Street Square

SD Department of Transportation (SD DOT)

Arts Organizations and local artists

Downtown Businesses

Business Improvement District

Chamber of Commerce

RC School District

Historic Preservation Commission

Black Hills Energy

Friends of Rapid City Parks



Community Visioning Workshop at City Hall



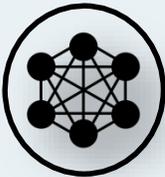
Talking with community members at downtown “Business Buzz”



Describing concepts and gathering input at Main Street Square

# |Planning Framework|

Five main themes emerged in the process of imagining 6<sup>th</sup> Street as a pedestrian promenade. These aspirations are applicable to the corridor as a whole and set the tone for the 6th Street Promenade vision. The five principles are Connectivity, Arts and Creativity, Pedestrian Amenities, Events/Activities, and Promotion/Identity.

Principles	Description
<p><b>Connectivity</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate or reduce barriers to the free flow of people between Memorial Park and downtown.</li> <li>• Make it safer, easier and more enticing to move throughout the 6<sup>th</sup> Street corridor.</li> <li>• Encourage the mixing of people and ideas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Arts and Creativity</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the arts to build community, sense of place, and express cultural identity.</li> <li>• Incorporate art into public infrastructure.</li> <li>• Encourage opportunities for art of all kinds: permanent and temporary – formal and informal.</li> <li>• Work with local artists to help shape the future of public space.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pedestrian Amenities</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create environments for people that are inclusive, safe, comfortable, and interesting.</li> <li>• Encourage multi-modal transportation and an active lifestyle.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Events and Activities</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate the corridor with crowds of people through regular events, programs, and activities that are suitable for downtown and appeal to a wide array of residents and visitors alike.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promotion and Identity</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the distinct character and programmatic offerings of the Promenade through consistent marketing and branding.</li> </ul>

# |Plan Areas|

There are generally three types of places within the corridor, each with their own characteristics and opportunities for improvement. The presentation of ideas in this conceptual plan are organized around these areas which are the Civic Center and Memorial Park, the Pedestrian Crossing over Omaha to 6th Street, and 6th Street itself.

If the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade is a “spine” forming a north/south connection in downtown, then there are several important “ribs” that connect east and west to other key destinations downtown, shown by the orange arrows. While these areas are not the primary focus of this plan, they too play vital a role and contribute to the vibrancy of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade and overall downtown ecosystem.

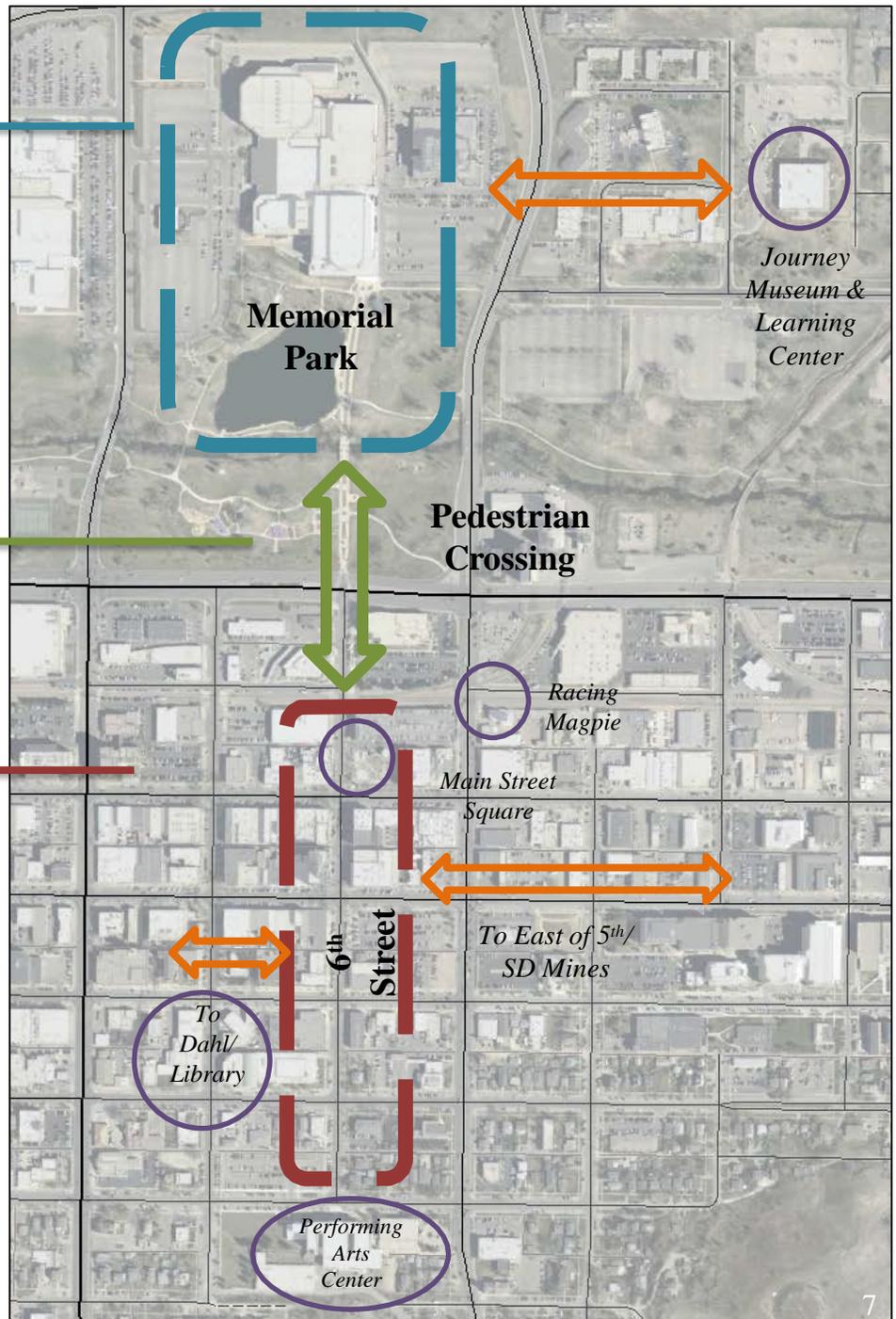
## Civic Center/ Memorial Park



## Pedestrian Crossing



## 6th Street



# |Civic Center/Memorial Park|



Conceptual illustration showing a variety of possible improvements to Memorial Park. Illustration by Wyss Associates, 2018.

## Memorial Park History

Memorial Park is a space that means many things to many people. This 28 acre park as we know it today was acquired in 1972 after the devastating Flood of 1972. Prior to its life as a public park, this area was the location of people’s homes. For many generations prior to that, this place has had significance to the areas first peoples, the Oglala Lakota and other Native American tribes and communities.

The Park is memorialized to honor and remember the 238 people who lost their lives in the flood. It is also a symbol of Rapid City’s commitment to improving the quality of life for its present and future residents through recreational opportunities, greenway preservation, and responsible development policy in flood-prone areas.

The Park contains Memorial Lake, the Rapid City Flood Memorial Fountain, picnic areas, exercise

course, Rose Garden, Legacy statue, bike path, Berlin Wall Display, Band Shell, Veteran’s Memorial, and Legacy Commons Playground.

The park is one of Rapid City’s most significant cultural and recreational assets . Situated between the Civic Center and the bustling downtown, people come together for festivals and events, to play, to exercise, to take in the beauty of the natural setting, and more.



Looking south into downtown from Memorial Park, 2018.

# |Civic Center/Memorial Park|

Many ideas for improvements to Memorial Park were identified by community members throughout the visioning process. A summary of these ideas is presented below, categorized around four theme areas: programs and activities; comfort amenities; cultural expression; and healthy living.



races | remote control  
toy events | noon  
weekday educational  
programs | outdoor  
movies | farmers  
markets | Chautauqua  
| other community  
programs



lighting | seating |  
tables | wayfinding |  
information kiosks |  
dog stations | paved  
food truck areas |  
gazebo | picnic shelters  
| sunscreen dispensers |



art (in/formal,  
temporary,  
permanent)  
| festivals |  
performance areas  
for theater | music  
| dance | expanded  
band shell |  
historic  
interpretation |  
memorials



natural play-scapes | community  
vegetable/flower gardens | fruit  
trees | bicycle repair station |  
fitness areas |  
kayak/paddle boat rental |

# |Civic Center/Memorial Park|

## **Ferris Wheel Idea Prompts Community Discussion**

One idea posed in the visioning process was for a Ferris Wheel at the edge of Memorial Park as a visual landmark and all-ages attraction that would pique interest and draw people to the park from downtown. The intent of this idea was to suggest that a leisurely Ferris Wheel ride would be a memorable experience for a downtown visit, offering unique elevated views of downtown and the forested hogback ridge to the west. Many cities have Ferris Wheels accenting their skyline.

This idea was quickly met with thoughtful critique and sparked important community input and dialogue centered on the character and purpose of Memorial Park.

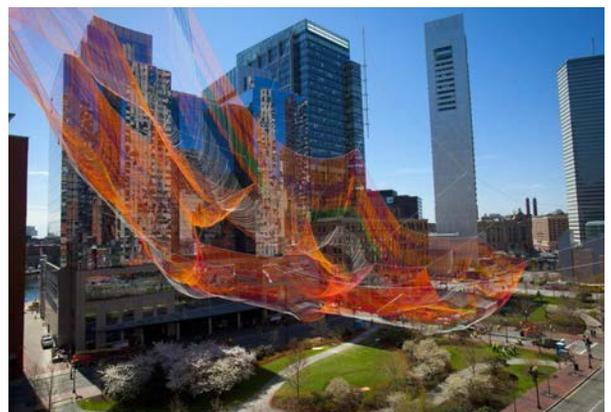
Future community discussion on this topic is necessary to develop this idea further should it take hold. Furthermore, a Ferris Wheel is by no means the only type of experiential visual attractor possible. Other ideas that arose during the visioning process included fixed hot air balloon rides, or an art installation with visual grabbing power.



*Paris, France*



*Atlanta, Georgia*



*Janet Echelman's "Light As Air" sculpture was installed temporarily over the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway in Boston, Massachusetts.*

# |Civic Center/Memorial Park|



*Memorial Lake and the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, Photo courtesy of Visit Rapid City.*

## Focus on the Civic Center

The Rushmore Plaza Civic Center was originally constructed in 1977 and is the region's primary public-assembly venue and event space. On June 5, 2018 Rapid City voted yes to allow the City to begin plans to build a new arena and address physical issues such as non-compliance with the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). An official groundbreaking is expected to occur in the fall of 2019.

With change comes numerous opportunities for the Civic Center and its grounds to better interface with Memorial Park, and support a vibrant pedestrian corridor connecting to the downtown area. These are a few ideas generated by the Civic Center Board and the community at large during the visioning efforts to date:

- Create a mural or other public art elements, along with landscaping, on the large expanse of blank brick walls.
- Develop an outdoor concession stand or dedicated food truck pad.
- Utilize the outdoors for concerts and other events.
- Expand the band shell to accommodate larger performance groups.
- Promote events happening at the Civic Center to increase synergy between the Civic Center and downtown through appropriate signage, or a marquee.
- Extend the pedestrian corridor from 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Memorial Park into the Civic Center..

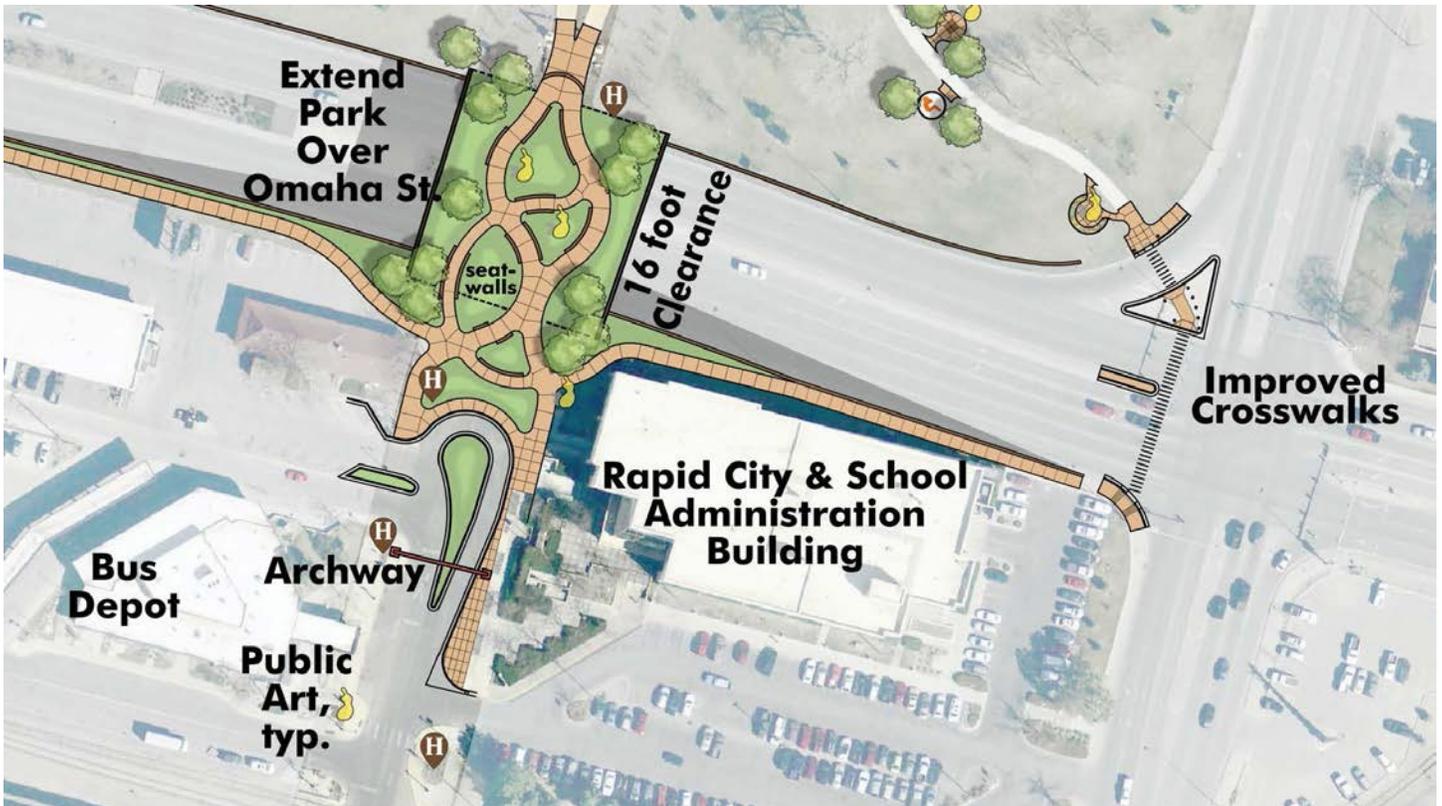


*This blank brick wall could become an inviting destination by introducing a sculpture garden, mural, or other public art elements.*



*Stimulate the live music scene in Rapid City through upgrades and expansion of the band shell. A larger stage should accommodate the BH Symphony Orchestra, and other artists.*

# |Pedestrian Crossing|



Conceptual illustration showing the extension of Memorial Park across Omaha Street for pedestrian use. This concept requires that traffic be diverted underneath of the pedestrian crossing. Illustration by Wyss Associates, 2018.

## Omaha Street

Omaha Street/State Highway 44 is a Principal Arterial on the City's Street network. It is an essential east-west thoroughfare in Rapid City, where few exist due to topography. According to the 2017 Traffic Report, the stretch of Omaha Street between Mt. Rushmore Road and 5<sup>th</sup> Street moved 28,464 vehicles, not counting tourist traffic. It is one of the busiest streets in Rapid City.

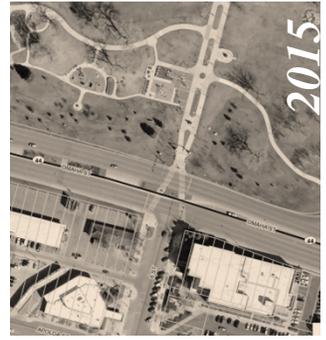
Omaha Street's close proximity to downtown paired with the high volume of traffic that it moves poses a challenge. This challenge has been addressed different ways over time. The series of aerial imagery on the next page show four different pedestrian crossings over Omaha Street that have been implemented from 2000 to present day.

The current design is by far the most effective yet for creating a direct connection between the Civic Center and downtown. However, it remains problematic: traffic often backs up to the 5<sup>th</sup> Street/Omaha intersection, and many people are still not comfortable crossing, particularly with children in tow.

To address this connectivity barrier, this conceptual plan proposes to completely separate the movement of people and bicycles from the movement of vehicles through construction of a pedestrian land bridge.



# |Pedestrian Crossing|



As improvement projects to Memorial Park have occurred over the last couple of decades, several iterations of a pedestrian crossing have attempted to mitigate conflicts with people and cars.

The Omaha Street bed would be lowered, and the land bridge would rise at an easily navigable grade between Memorial Park and Apolda Street to ensure access for all types of mobility. Though no formal design has yet occurred, the concepts presented here identify the need for a land bridge that is nearly as wide as 6th Street. In addition to improving safety and pedestrian comfort, the land bridge would create additional greenspace and a public gathering area. The character of this infrastructure is imagined to be aesthetically appealing, incorporating both landscaping and art elements to reflect local culture and contribute to a strong sense of place.

Examples of pedestrian land bridges, also called deck parks, can be found across the U.S. In recent years, this type of infrastructure project has experienced an upsurge as communities aim to improve pedestrian mobility and connectivity within urban areas. The scale of such a project would be drastically smaller in size and scope in Rapid City than the examples listed below. Further study, planning, and coordination is necessary to better understand the feasibility of this project.

Project	Location	Characteristics
Klyde Warren Park	Dallas, Texas	Completed in 2012. This five acre project aimed to re-link neighborhoods divided by Interstate 35.
Freeway Park	Seattle, Washington	Completed in 1976, this project spurred copies in Phoenix, San Diego, Duluth, Trenton, and Boston.
The Stitch	Atlanta, Georgia	Planning is underway for this 11 acre park proposed to create greenspace over the I-75/85 Connector.

This table spotlights some land bridge projects that have been completed across the U.S.

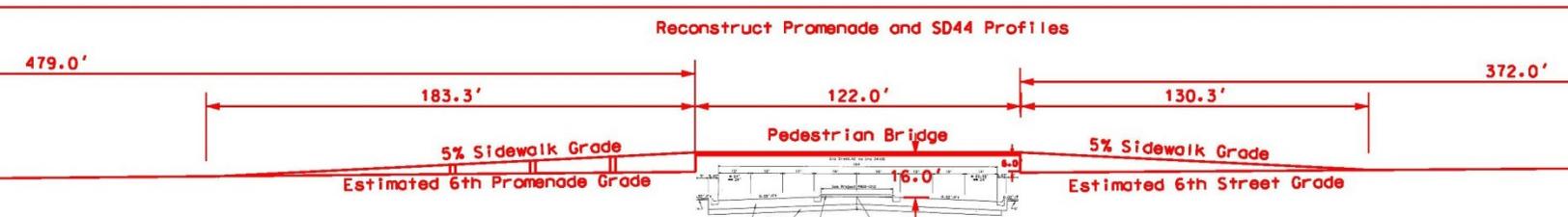
# |Pedestrian Crossing|



The image to the left depicts the existing conditions at the intersection of Omaha and 6th Street.



This conceptual rendering shows a pedestrian land bridge. Omaha Street is recessed below its current grade to completely separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian movement. The pedestrian land bridge forms a wide path that seamlessly connects Memorial Park to 6th Street granting access to all ability levels and mobility types. Hard surface travel paths are well-integrated with landscaping, public art, and safety features such as the decorative railing. Graphic created by Wyss Associates, 2018.



The year of visioning for this project involved consultation with the SD DOT, who supports the pedestrian land bridge in concept. A highly preliminary profile sketch by SD DOT engineers illustrate a project alternative with the following characteristics: 1) Omaha Street is lowered by 10' and 2) a 5% sidewalk grade over an approximate 1,000 foot stretch between Memorial Park and Apolda Street results in an additional 6' clearance above the Omaha Street section. This creates the minimum required 16' clearance for flow of traffic underneath the pedestrian land bridge.

# |Pedestrian Crossing|

## Scoping Issues for a Pedestrian Land Bridge

The vision for the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade and a pedestrian land bridge to link Memorial Park to the downtown is no doubt grand. At this time it is unknown what the cost, feasibility, and timeline for a project of this nature would entail. The following issues have been identified as needing further study and analysis as next steps in considering such a project for the future.

### Technical Design Factors

- Proximity to the flood plain
- Engineered elements to mitigate storm events including heavy rainfall and snow storms

### Street Network Impacts

- As proposed, the northern terminus of 6<sup>th</sup> Street would be closed to through traffic and the transit system would need to adjust its bus routes. Continue to evaluate impacts and options with future space needs of the bus depot in mind.
- Ensure that emergency service vehicles retain adequate access to the Park.

### Cost/Benefit Analysis

- Evaluate the probable costs of the project weighed against qualitative and quantitative benefits the project would create.

### Funding Sources and Planning Horizons

- Consider a variety of funding sources and how they can be leveraged with one another. For example, combining with DOT funding for road maintenance where it may be available. Investigate other grant opportunities for planning, design, and construction.

*Klyde-Warren Park in Dallas, Texas is a 5.2 acre deck park built over the Woodall Rodgers Freeway. It connects uptown, downtown, and the Arts District.*



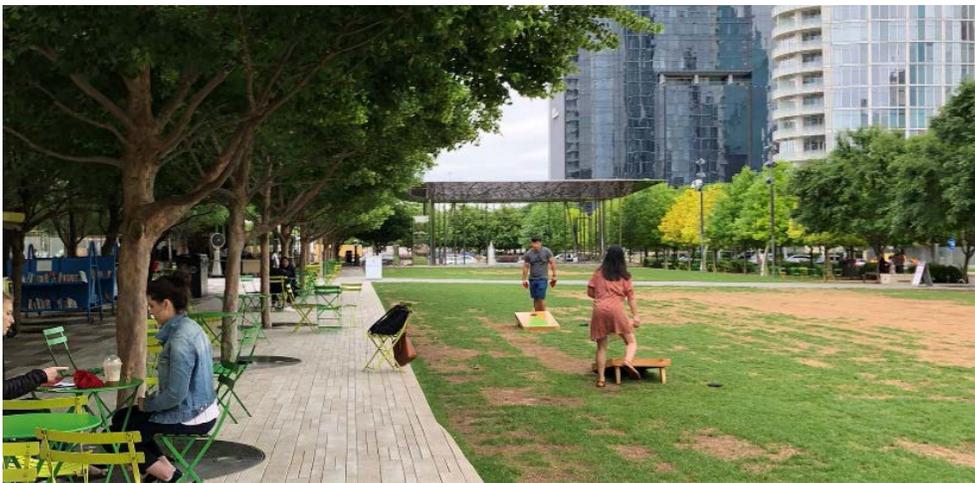
Photo obtained from <http://network.thehighline.org>

# |Pedestrian Crossing|

Photographs of Klyde Warren Park in Dallas, Texas illustrate the positive impact of separating vehicular traffic from pedestrian movement in conjunction with an activated outdoor space.



*Freeway traffic is diverted underground and an urban parkland is built over top creating a safer pedestrian environment, and a refuge from noise and congestion.*



*The park features seating areas, open space, water features, playgrounds, moveable kiosks for games and activities, and a food truck lane.*

*The space is also activated with synergy from the surrounding downtown shops and businesses, and a covered performance area.*

# |6th Street|

## 6<sup>th</sup> Street

6<sup>th</sup> Street extends for about three quarters of a mile between Omaha and Columbus Streets. It is a two way street, one lane in each direction with angled parking on each side. The roadway is dedicated for shared use with bicycles, as indicated to the travelling public by sharrows painted on the pavement. Sidewalk widths along 6<sup>th</sup> Street vary from about 7 to 15 feet.

Landscaped nodes are provided at some, but not all of the intersections Columbus and Quincy Street are void of landscaped nodes.

An assorted mix of activities and environments occur along 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The northern portion of 6<sup>th</sup> Street has a higher concentration of activity, and the most historic urban fabric in the vicinity of Main and Saint Joseph Streets. In this area, the buildings are generally multiple stories, with active first floor uses that stimulate a high degree of pedestrian interest. This area also has the widest sidewalks, landscaped nodes, and street trees.

As one travels south towards Rapid City High School and the Performing Arts Center, building density becomes more sparse and there is generally a lower level of activity and pedestrian movement. This area has relatively less green features, and narrower sidewalks.

A majority of 6<sup>th</sup> Street has a zoning designation of Central Business District, which allows the highest density of development. At present, the Central Business District zoning regulations lack urban design criteria.



*View of 6th Street looking south towards the Performing Arts Center*



*One example of sidewalk and business frontage conditions along 6<sup>th</sup> Street.*



*Landscape nodes and seating areas at the intersection of 6<sup>th</sup> and Main Street.*

## 6th STREET: A DIVERSE, MIXED USE ENVIRONMENT



# |6th Street|

The following strategies were suggested during the visioning process and should be further explored to improve the vibrancy of 6th Street. These components will contribute to the success of a cohesive pedestrian promenade between Memorial Park and the Performing Arts Center. Some of these concepts are illustrated further in this conceptual plan.

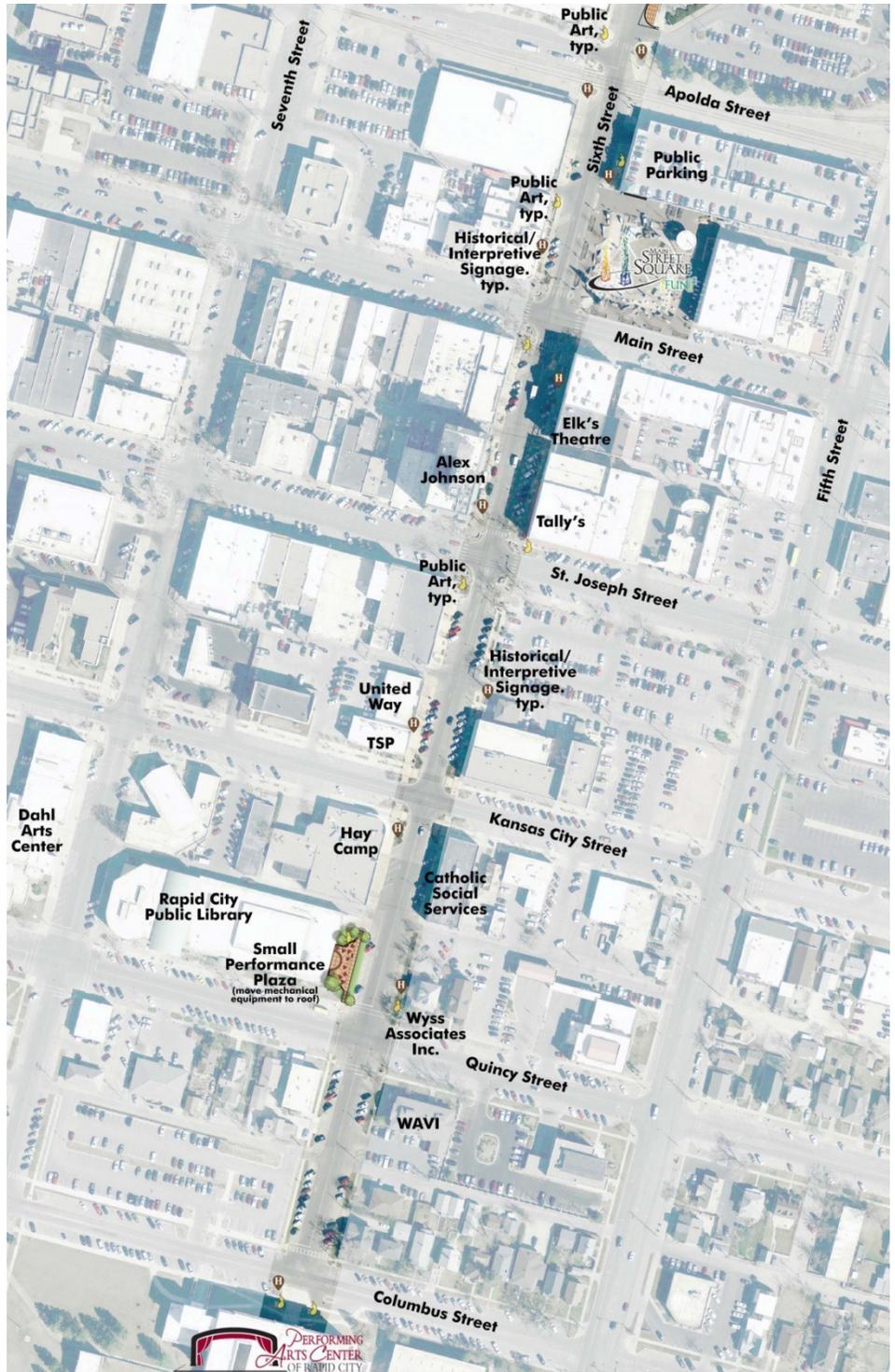
## Pedestrian Amenities

- Light sources at pedestrian scale.
- Public restrooms
- Interpretive signage that is engaging and informative
- Wider sidewalks
- Activity generating businesses and uses at the street level.
- Seating/mingling areas
- Improved crosswalks
- Public art
- Creative wayfinding signage

## Redevelopment Strategies

- Ensure that future development on the City owned lot at 6<sup>th</sup> and Saint Joseph Street enhances the Promenade through superior urban design and active uses.
- Adopt design guidelines and/or zoning code revisions to ensure a more pedestrian oriented and mixed use environment as re/development occurs.

Street lighting/way finding signage in Seattle, Washington. Photo courtesy of Kathryn Fitzgerald.



Conceptual illustration showing a variety of improvements to enhance the 6<sup>th</sup> Street pedestrian corridor. illustration by Wyss Associates, 2018.

# |6th Street|

The following graphics and descriptions illustrate improvement projects to enhance 6th Street’s role as a Promenade connecting Memorial Park to Rapid City High School and the Performing Arts Center. These ideas are conceptual in nature have not been fully vetted or designed to comply with development standards, nor has funding been dedicated to implement these projects.



This photograph of the southern terminus of the 6th Street Promenade shows existing conditions. This space can be activated with the improvements similar to those shown on the rendering to the right.

- 1) Archway to match the northern terminus of 6<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 2) Temporary markets/activities in underutilized parking lot.
- 3) Landscape enhancements



*Rendering of physical and programmatic improvements to the southern terminus of the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade. Graphics by Wyss Associates, 2018.*



*Strategically placed lighting creates a fun and welcoming environment. This photo shows the 17<sup>th</sup> Street lighting project in downtown Cheyenne, Wyoming. Photo courtesy of Lauren Reiman, Reiman Corp.*

# |6th Street|



The Public Library is an important community asset, and a hub for the exchange of information and ideas among community members. The eastern façade of the Library abutting 6th Street currently houses utilities and equipment and is generally underutilized.



*This graphic shows the conceptual transformation of the Library’s eastern façade into a gathering space that is activated by people, additional landscaping, and the potential to host a wide variety of events and activities. Rendering by Wyss Associates, 2018.*



The City owned surface parking lot at 6<sup>th</sup> and St. Joseph Street is a prime location for private sector redevelopment. Future development on the site should support pedestrian activity along 6<sup>th</sup> Street by incorporating design elements and land uses that promote pedestrian interest and increased activity at the street level.



*This graphic shows private development that enhances the public realm through a multitude of features such as landscaping, gathering areas, public art, and water elements. The building compliments an active pedestrian corridor through intentional placement of building entrances that face the street, first floor transparency, and building materials that are compatible to the historic district and offer architectural interest.*

# |Focus on the Arts|

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Art and culture play a significant role in building a healthy, happy community. The vision for the concepts in this plan to form a 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade are essentially endeavors in creative placemaking. This page identifies technical resources for integrating art into the community development process, when planning and implementing the concepts imagined for the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Promenade.

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*“In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, city, or regional around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.”*

From Creative Placemaking, a white paper for the Mayor’s  
Institute on City Design,  
National Endowment for the Arts.



## Guidance for future planning endeavors:

- Enlist the professional assistance of artists to conduct meaningful public engagement in service to inclusive planning.
- Allow art to create an interesting environment. Infrastructure can be art.
- Promote positive community change with the arts through connection, expression, inquiry, inspiration, learning, and healing.
- Mobilize artists and creative thinkers to help solve problems at a neighborhood scale. Let the arts be a microphone for civic dialogue that can help us tackle our thorny issues.

## Technical Resources:

- Arts and Planning Toolkit from [www.artsandplanning.org](http://www.artsandplanning.org)
- Springboard for the Arts
  - “Find an Artist” toolkit
  - “Irrigate” toolkit for mobilizing artists to solve challenges in your community
  - Guide of Business Districts to work with local artists
- Arts and Culture Planning: A toolkit for communities by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning