

APPENDIX:

A. Existing Conditions

The U.S. 24 West Corridor is a major regional gateway west to the Rocky Mountains. Other mountain access gateways are in entirely different regions: U.S. 50, 60 miles south in Pueblo, and U.S. 285, 60 miles north in Lakewood. Due to this fact, U.S. 24 West is a major portal for tourism, commerce and commuter traffic.

In addition to the highway, key features of the Corridor include: Old Colorado City, a restored historic commercial district; Gold Hill Mesa, a historic ore processing site; being redeveloped with multi-use planned development, Red Rock Canyon Open Space, an 800-acre tract with outstanding geologic features; and Manitou Springs, an historic spa and tourist-oriented community at the foot of the mountains. Fountain Creek runs the entire length of the corridor and weaves together its many features.

Today, the Corridor faces a turning point. While Manitou Springs and Old Colorado City represent exciting revitalization, the corridor still faces many challenges. The eastern 2 mile segment of U.S. 24 has a utilitarian appearance degraded by billboards, power lines and disheveled properties. The western segment, while still attractive, is succumbing to a growing proliferation of signs, industrial architecture and scarred landforms. Yet, the corridor remains an outstanding place in which to work, visit and live. It also has one other very vital attribute, the staunch commitment and creative energies of its residents and business people.

