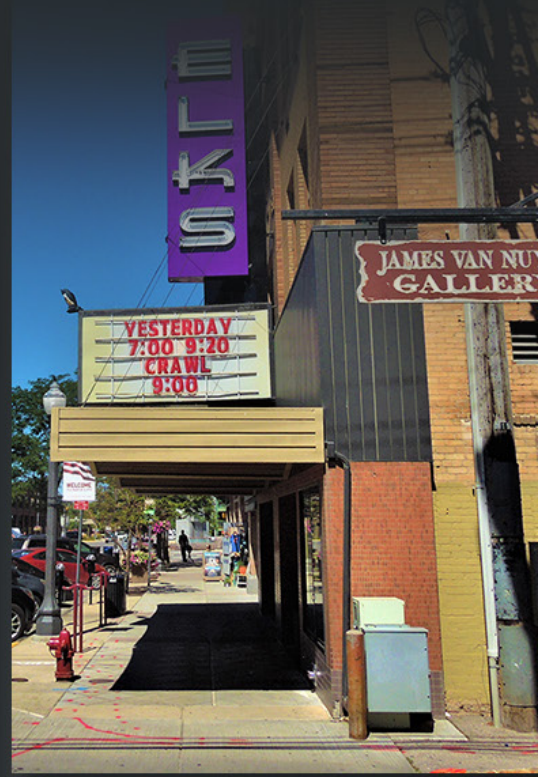


SIXTH STREET STUDY

OCTOBER 2020

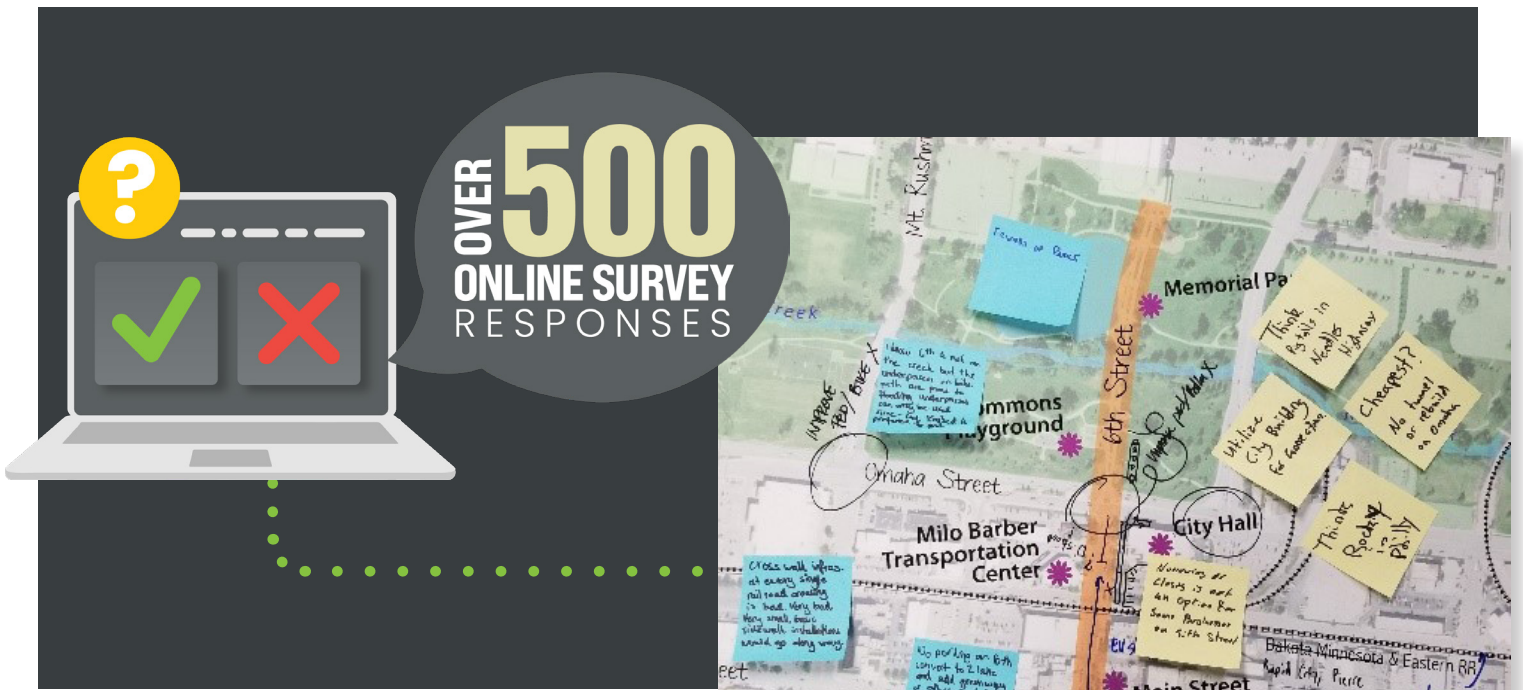


RAPID CITY'S CORE IS EVOLVING

VISION:

A safe, vibrant, and connected Sixth Street corridor with a unified character that supports mobility and community vitality.

The Rushmore Plaza Civic Center is expanding, new developments are in the works downtown, and the desire for walkable, bikeable, and livable streets is growing. A safe and connected multimodal transportation system is essential to supporting the continued vibrancy of the area through these changes; the streets and sidewalks must be functional and accessible to provide a positive experience for every resident and visitor, regardless of their mode of travel. Sixth Street is a particularly vital corridor for movement and activity, both downtown and in Memorial Park. The primary purpose of the Sixth Street Study is to envision how the corridor can be improved to help sustain the continued growth and vitality of Rapid City.

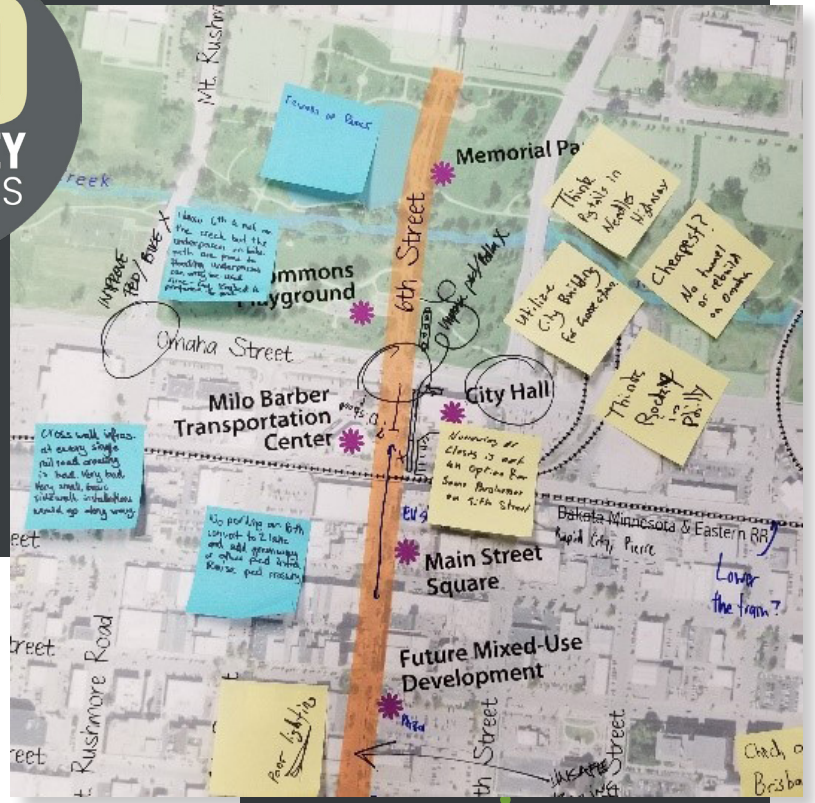


COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The people who live, work, and play along Sixth Street have the most direct knowledge of what is and is not working well with the corridor today; understanding their likes, dislikes, concerns, and ideas helped focus the development and evaluation of potential improvements. Throughout the planning process for the Sixth Street Corridor Plan, numerous in-person and online opportunities were available for community members and stakeholders to interact with the project team and provide their input.

Robust digital engagement via a project website, online commenting map, and an online survey – which over 500 members of the community took – was utilized throughout the planning process to maximize public exposure to the project and to give as large and diverse a portion of the public as possible the opportunity to be involved.

Two public meetings were held to introduce the project and capture initial input. To supplement the meetings, members of the project team also visited many local businesses along Sixth Street to discuss their thoughts, concerns, and ideas; as the owners and employees of these businesses have more direct experience with the corridor than almost anybody else, their input was critical towards understanding what is and is not working well with Sixth Street today. Numerous City departments, the Rapid City Police Department, Rapid City Area Schools were engaged as well.



"A permanent crossing is definitely needed. Keep up the good work!"

"Everything I've seen so far has my support 100%. This project is exactly what Rapid City needs"

"I like all the landscaping, art, better crosswalks, seating..." great plan!"

COMMUNITY INPUT

"This looks amazing and would be a great addition to downtown Rapid City."

THE COMMUNITY'S INPUT WAS ESSENTIAL IN DEVELOPING THE CORRIDOR PLAN.

"These would be huge improvements!"

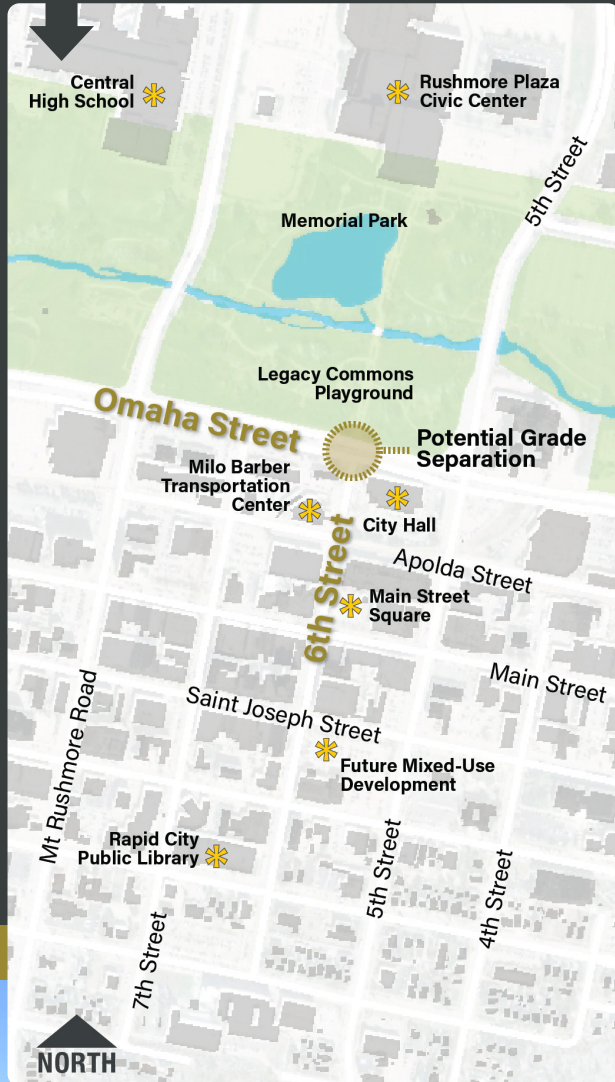
During the first phase of public outreach, the project team solicited input on both opportunities and challenges that currently existing along the corridor. Comments were received through several platforms, including the public meetings, the public commenting map, and open-ended commenting opportunities. Once the project team developed a draft corridor concept based on initial public and stakeholder input and an assessment of existing conditions along Sixth Street, an online survey was conducted to get feedback on both the draft recommendations and community priorities for the corridor.

"The area around City Hall looks AMAZING!"

Average Corridor Concept Rating
7 OUT OF 10

SIXTH & OMAHA CROSSING FEASIBILITY STUDY

The first component of the Sixth Street Study was an assessment of the feasibility – related to impacts on the transportation system – of a grade-separated crossing at Omaha Street for bicyclists and pedestrians.



WHY CONSIDER A GRADE-SEPARATED CROSSING?

- Omaha Street represents a barrier between downtown and Memorial Park – some residents and visitors do not feel comfortable crossing at-grade
- The current crossing, through an agreement between local and state officials, is a temporary solution– its configuration is in conflict with eventual intersection improvements planned for the intersection of Fifth Street and Omaha Street

THREE MAIN COMPONENTS WERE ASSESSED:



• Bicycle & Pedestrian Network Connections



• Traffic Operations



• Transit Operations



PRIMARY OUTCOMES OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY



Enhancement to Bicycle & Pedestrian Connectivity

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK CONNECTIONS

Sixth Street is a particularly critical link for active travel through downtown – many of the major destinations are directly adjacent to the corridor, and it ties into the existing Omaha Street pedestrian crossing. As such, ensuring the potential grade-separated crossing at Sixth Street and Omaha Street does not disrupt the flow of bicyclists and pedestrians into and out of downtown is of paramount importance.

The analysis revealed that Sixth Street is largely a comfortable corridor for walking and biking today, with the Omaha Street crossing being the only major point of concern. A grade-separated crossing would enhance connectivity for Rapid City's active transportation network.



No Degradation in Traffic Flow

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS

Actions taken to remove and reconfigure the current Sixth Street at-grade pedestrian crossing would result in the closure of the Sixth Street and Omaha Street intersection. This closure would force vehicular traffic onto alternate routes to reach Omaha Street. To assess the impacts of the proposed changes, traffic operations were assessed for existing and future conditions at four intersections.

Traffic analyses of the study intersections demonstrate that, while some substandard movements and intersections are found during peak hours, actions taken to remove and reconfigure the current Sixth Street at-grade pedestrian crossing would not degrade the quality of traffic flow.



Preservation of Transit Functionality

- Schedule Impacts to Lincoln Route

TRANSIT OPERATIONS

Four RapidRide transit patterns currently utilize the intersection of Sixth Street and Omaha Street for accessing and leaving the transit center. A grade-separated crossing at Sixth Street and Omaha Street would require rerouting these four bus patterns away from that intersection, which introduces potential cost and schedule implications.

Analysis of alternative routing changes revealed three of the patterns would not have their schedules significantly impacted. Proposed modifications to the Lincoln North route pattern would have enough of an impact on scheduling to necessitate new schedule brochures and bus stop signage – RapidRide will need to plan for this expense once a definitive timeline for reconfiguration of the Sixth Street and Omaha Street crossing is known.

SIXTH STREET CORRIDOR PLAN

The second component of the Sixth Street Study was development of a comprehensive set of recommended streetscape and landscape improvements along the entire corridor – from the Performing Arts Center to the Civic Center – to support the many key roles Sixth Street plays for Rapid City.

VISION

A safe, vibrant, and connected Sixth Street corridor with a unified character that supports mobility and community vitality.

CORRIDOR CONTEXT

The Sixth Street corridor connects many of Rapid City’s most prominent and well-known destinations. Memorial Park on the north end is one of the City’s key recreational assets; the downtown half is home to many local businesses and community destinations.



Better tying these two distinct yet closely integrated portions of the corridor together with a cohesive character has long been a desire for the City. Sixth Street also provides access to jobs, residences, and critical city functions like the library and public transportation. Pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists all rely on it.

GOALS



Safety

To establish an environment where users feel secure throughout the day.



Accessibility

To ensure safe, comfortable, and convenient access along the corridor for all modes of transportation.



Connection

To develop a thoroughfare that supports movement between the civic center and the Performing Arts Center.



Character/Identity

To develop a unifying theme that is consistent along the corridor.



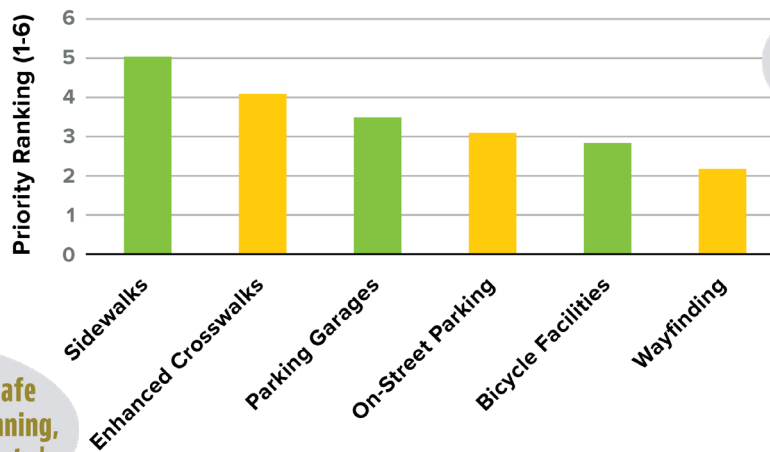
CORRIDOR EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

In developing a recommended concept for the transformation of Sixth Street into a vibrant, safe, and connected corridor for everyone, the project team drew on numerous resources to identify potential improvements for evaluation – and ultimately recommendation –including:

- Public and stakeholder input
- Advisory team collaboration
- Industry best practices

When asked to prioritize various possible elements along the corridor in the online survey, community members showed a clear preference on elements that would improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

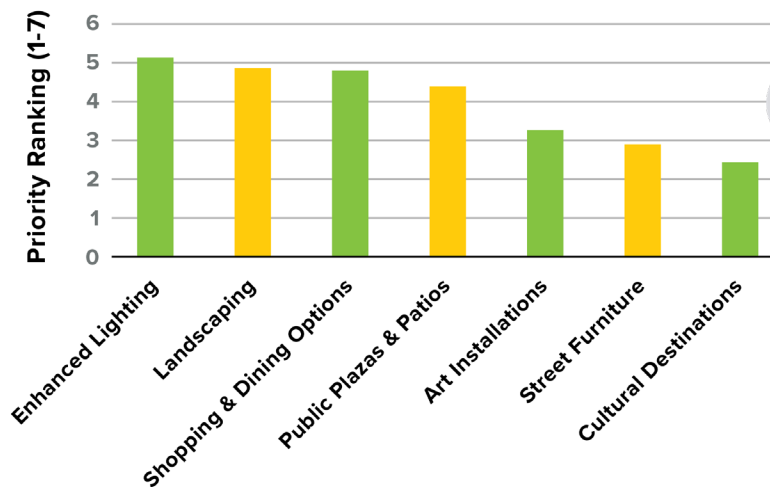
Priority of Transportation Elements



"I want to feel safe crossing the road"

'I would appreciate a safe corridor for walking, running, bicycling, wheelchairs, etc.'

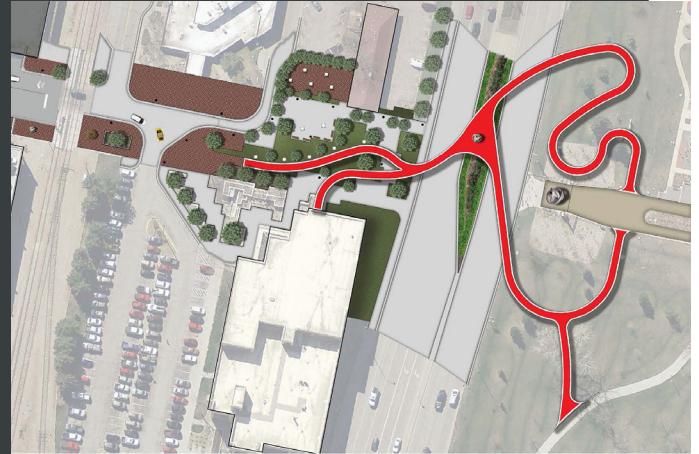
Priority of Community Amenities



"Safety has to be the driving force"

PARK COVER CONCEPT

RIBBON WALKWAY CONCEPT



Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents preferred the **Park Cover Concept** for a grade-separated crossing at Omaha Street

CORRIDOR ELEMENTS

• ENHANCED LIGHTING:

Maintaining a high degree of visibility when natural light is limited or absent is critical to supporting local businesses along the corridor that operate outside of daylight hours.

• ENHANCED CROSSWALKS AND SIDEWALKS:

Replacing sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the corridor with paving treatments that mimic Main Street Square would clearly signify that pedestrian traffic is the priority along Sixth Street.

• ART INSTALLATIONS:

Rapid City has a rich cultural and artistic history to build off. Additional artwork would make for a more engaging environment.

• BIKE BOXES AND BICYCLE PARKING:

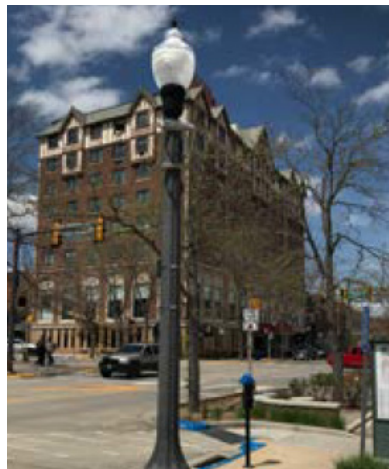
Sixth Street is comfortable for most bicyclists, but some of the intersections are challenging and there are few places to park - these amenities would enhance the biking experience.

• PLAZAS AND PARKLETS:

Activation of outdoor spaces throughout the corridor would establish Sixth Street as a destination in itself, rather than just a means to accessing other destinations.

• MEMORIAL PARK IMPROVEMENTS:

Extending improvements envisioned along the downtown side of the corridor into Memorial Park will help to better unify the two sides.



CORRIDOR CONCEPT



COLUMBUS STREET TO KANSAS CITY STREET

- Enhanced Lighting
- Widened Sidewalks
- Enhanced Crosswalks
- Bike Racks
- Library Plaza
- Landscaping & Art



KANSAS CITY STREET TO MAIN STREET

- Enhanced Lighting
- Enhanced Crosswalks
- Bike Boxes & Bike Racks
- Pedestrian Plaza
- Landscaping & Art



MAIN STREET TO OMAHA STREET

- Enhanced Lighting
- Grade-separated Crossing
- City Hall Plaza
- Landscaping & Art

Improvement recommendations through Memorial Park can be found in the Recommendations chapter of the Sixth Street Corridor Plan.

NEXT STEPS

The recommended corridor concept following several previous planning efforts and improvements already made to the corridor in recent years, represents a critical next step in bringing to fruition the vision of Sixth Street as a vibrant, safe, and connected regional destination. The efforts throughout the planning process to establish community and stakeholder consensus around the corridor concept are also valuable for building momentum towards implementation.



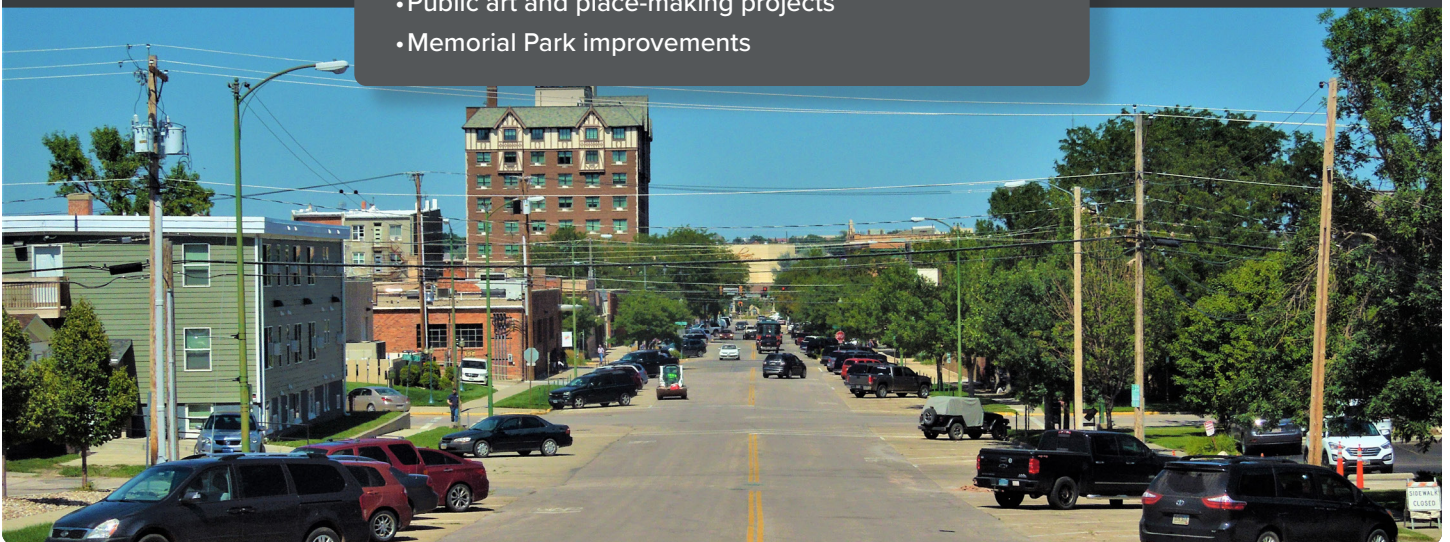
To continue progress towards implementing the recommendations for Sixth Street, there are a number of important next steps for Rapid City and key stakeholders to take. This plan is also intended as a living concept, with the flexibility to evolve over time as opportunities to further enhance active transportation and placemaking along the corridor arise. More information on potential funding and partnership opportunities may be found in the Next Steps chapter of the Sixth Street Corridor Plan.

Engineering feasibility study of the grade-separated crossing

- Crossing design alternatives
- Drainage analysis
- Accessibility
- Vehicle circulation

Phased approach to pursuing funding and partnership opportunities for components of the recommendations

- Streetscape improvements
- Sidewalk amenities
- Public art and place-making projects
- Memorial Park improvements



Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Rapid City, SD 57701

WWW.RAPIDCITYAREAMPO.ORG

