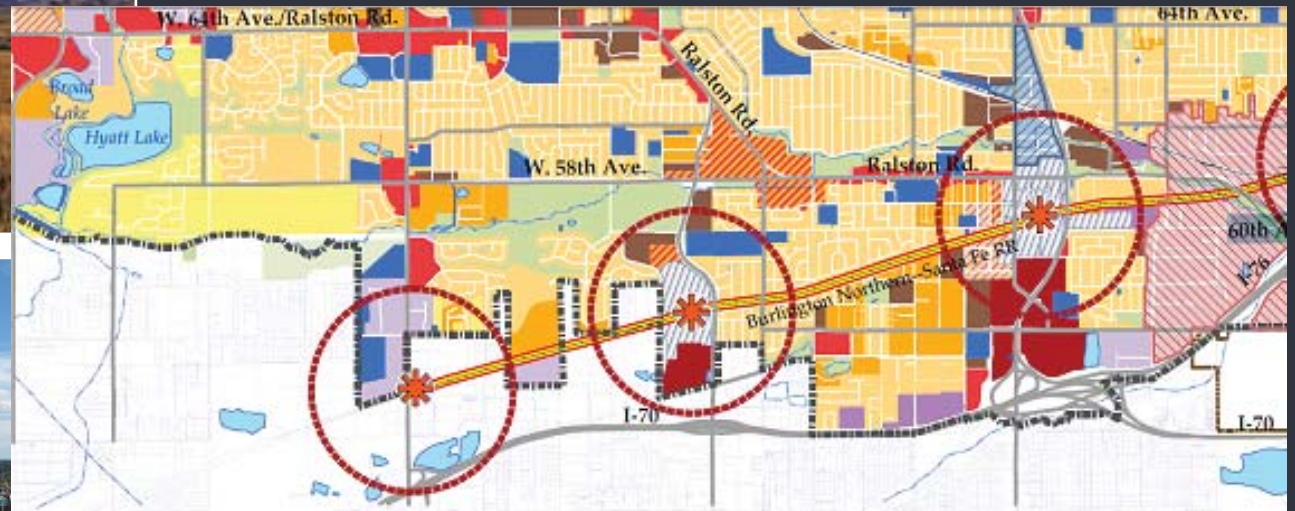
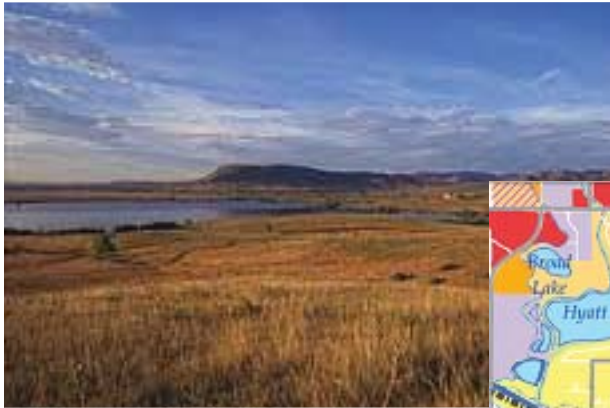


# Arvada Ridge Station Existing Conditions - Fall 2011



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**Presented by Five Peaks Consulting**

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## Introduction - Executive Summary

In an effort to better understand the existing conditions of the proposed Arvada Ridge Station and guide future development decisions, Five Peaks Consulting has compiled this comprehensive report. The purpose of this study is to provide information on the existing conditions found in our area, primarily focusing on: Historical context, environmental conditions, demographic indicators, as well as housing and economic characteristics. This report will pay particular attention to the current transportation systems existing in the surrounding community and how a new transit oriented development (TOD) will affect the area in the future.

The area of study is defined by: 58th Avenue to the North, Interstate 70 to the South; Ward Road to the West and Allison Street to the East. The area is also represented by two United States Census Tracts: 103.08 and 104.02 which supplied the majority of our data.

It is our hope that this report provides the groundwork for future policy prescriptions in the area.

### Planning Team

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## Introduction - Regional Context

Arvada is a pro-business environment with a nationally recognized business retention program. It is home to one of Colorado's wealthiest zip codes. The quality of living is high because of the access to an extraordinary trail system, 77 parks, 3 golf courses, and 35 multi-purpose sports fields.

The Arvada Ridge site is in the center of it all. It is located just off I-70 and Kipling, and just north of the Super Target shopping center, and just south of Red Rocks Community College. This station is part of the future Gold Line, which is an eleven-mile electrically-powered commuter rail transit line that will travel from Denver Union Station to Ward Road. There will be a total of seven stations along the corridor, including three in the City of Arvada. The Gold Line will provide a new transit option between Downtown Denver and Arvada. I-70 is expected to experience severe congestion in the future during the peak travel periods and the Gold Line will give commuters a viable alternative.

The three Arvada stations will be located near:

1. Sheridan Boulevard and 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue
2. Olde Town Arvada
3. Arvada Ridge, near Kipling Parkway.

The end of line will be at the Ward Road Station in Wheat-Ridge.



## Introduction - History



**1870**

**Arvada** became  
named and platted as a town of  
nine square blocks.

The roots of Arvada, Colorado go back to June 22, 1850, when Lewis Ralston made the first documented discovery of gold in Colorado. In the 1860's Arvada began as a mining town and a small independent farming community. Benjamin Franklin Wadsworth purchased a land claim in 1863 and by 1869 had moved his family into a primitive log cabin. After the Wadsworth family had settled into their log cabin, Benjamin Wadsworth began to make plans for a school located on his property. He also realized that the Colorado Central railroad, laid from Denver to Golden in 1870, would make a post office possible if a town could be platted and named. Wadsworth developed a plat for a town of nine square blocks on his 160 acres. The formal notice of the new town, population 100, was posted on December 1, 1870. Wadsworth applied for a post office and became the first postmaster. Wadsworth worked tirelessly to attract storekeepers and homeowners to the town. Stores were centered around streets called Railroad (later Grand View) and Centre (later Wadsworth Blvd.) and included a bank, doctors, real estate agents, restaurants, grocery stores, a pharmacy, a hardware store, a blacksmith shop, a livery stable and more.

## History

World War I brought an upsurge in prices paid for crops, but the population fell to 840 as most eligible men joined the forces overseas. A.L. Davis built a two-storied brick building to house his Ford Automobile Agency in 1916, and the same year Clemency McIlvoy gave land and money to establish Arvada's first park. World War II ended August 14, 1945, and Arvada, population 1,500, felt the excitement of the housing boom. In November of 1947, Lloyd King opened his first King Soopers store in the Ralph E. Ashton Building on West 57th Avenue and Webster Street.

Until 1950 less than 3,000 people resided in Arvada. A vibrant agricultural community, Arvada claimed the title "Celery Capital of the World." The City has grown substantially in the past 50 years mainly as a suburban residential community.

Arvada today is known for its high quality of life, residential neighborhoods with a family atmosphere, easy access to the metropolitan area, and its setting near the mountains. It is home to almost 104,000 people. In recent years, Arvada has also been further developing its economic base by encouraging commercial and industrial development. The commercial development is mainly at the major intersections of Wadsworth Boulevard, Kipling Street, 64th Avenue, Ward Road, and in Olde Town Arvada. Industrial development is located in the southeast along the I-76 corridor and in the west at Indiana Street and West 64th Avenue. With new opportunities presented by the future Gold Line and access to the proposed Jefferson Parkway, Arvada seeks to further expand its economic base and become a more balanced community.

# 1945

**King Soopers**  
opens its first  
store in Arvada.



# 1950

**Arvada** is known  
as the Celery Capital of the  
World.

# Regional and Community Plans

## 2005 Arvada Comprehensive Plan

This a guide to help make decisions and establish its future direction. The plan contains land use maps, as well as goals and policies that address:

- Land Use and Future Development Patterns.
- Provision of Facilities and Services (i.e., schools, police protection, fire protection, etc).
- Provision of Parks and Recreation Facilities.
- Open Space Conservation.
- Housing/Neighborhoods.
- Transportation System.
- Community Character.
- Economic Development.



## 2010 Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan

Used to guide land use decisions made by staff, the Jefferson County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners.

- The plan, in conjunction with the appropriate community plans, comprehensive development plans and special plans, will be used to evaluate proposals for a change in land use.

- It should be used by the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners for guidance concerning broader land use planning issues, including compatibility, land use equity, and property rights. Proposed changes in land use should conform to the Plan’s policies and maps.
- Although the recommendations do not apply to existing development, it should be used as a guide for redevelopment that requires a change of land use.

## Land Use Plan

Identifies future land uses for the entire Arvada Planning Area. It shows the distribution of residential, non-residential, mixed-use, and civic or public land uses.



## Transportation Plan

Describes the components of Arvada’s transportation system, comprised of a network of streets, bicycle lanes and paths, transit services, and pedestrian facilities. These facilities support the existing and planned land uses in the City.

## 2001 Arvada Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan

The Master Plan is intended to guide development of the parks, trails, and the open space system

through the next decade. The mission is to “provide a high quality parks, trails, and open space system for citizens of the Arvada area.” The Master Plan defines policies and projects for the next ten years.

## 2003-2007 Arvada Police Department Strategic Plan

The Arvada Police Department Strategic Plan assists the Police Department with accomplishing its mission, which is: “to provide high quality police service in an objective and professional manner.” The Strategic Plan is for police service for the entire Arvada community. It includes a vision statement and a series of goals and targets.

## 2009 Arvada TOD Access Plan

The City of Arvada began this planning effort to further look at access needs within one half mile of each of the station sites. The objectives are to promote walkability, provide intermodal linkages by bicycle, and to minimize parking requirements by increasing use of nonmotorized modes to access transit. This plan intends to address both specific infrastructure needs and broad policy recommendations that merge land use, urban design, traffic , pedestrian and bicycle circulation.



## Regional and Community Plans

### 2010-2015 Arvada Fire Protection District Strategic Plan

The Arvada Fire Protection District Strategic Plan is developed to provide the guidance and vision for the current and future delivery of essential emergency services to the Fire District's coverage area. This responsibility is accomplished through an aggressive program of diverse training and a continual commitment to customer care.

### 2004 Arvada Economic Development Association Strategic Plan

The mission of the Arvada Economic Development Association (AEDA) in 2004 is to sustain a planned and balanced community served by a supportive government that provides quality, cost effective service by facilitating industrial, business and retail development that enhances the community and creates new, well paying jobs; helps existing businesses prosper and expand; and generates additional revenue to the City.

### 2002 Arvada Cultural Master Plan

The City developed the Cultural Master Plan in 2002 to establish a mission and goals to promote arts, culture, and heritage in Arvada.

## Specific area plans

### Clear Creek/I-76 Community Plan

The purpose of the plan is to provide a coherent set of land use policies to facilitate industrial development in the area. Such development supports the economic growth, creates jobs, and funds amenities in the community. The City of Arvada and Jefferson County cooperated to produce the Clear Creek/I-76 Community Plan jointly to provide consistent policies for the area.

### 1981 Arvada Urban Renewal Plan

The plan was designed to foster revitalization of the area between I-70 and Olde Town. The Arvada Urban Renewal Plan has met its objectives and it expires in 2006.

### Olde Town Renaissance Action Plan

The Citizens of Arvada, Project for Public Spaces, Urban Neighborhoods, Inc. prepared the Olde Town Renaissance Action Plan in 1999. The purpose of the plan is to save the community's physical roots—Olde Town. It pulls together the various initiatives underway at the time for Olde Town, and is the culmination of direction given by Arvada citizens.

### Ralston Fields Urban Renewal Plan

The Ralston Fields Urban Renewal Plan was adopted in 2003 to provide an overall planning and implementation guide for the Ralston Fields area.



### Wadsworth Neighborhood Study

In 1987, the City worked with a Citizens Advisory Committee to identify, examine, and propose land use and zoning alternatives for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance as part of the Wadsworth Neighborhood Study.

## Community Groups

### Ralston Complex Group:

This citizen group meets monthly to discuss development plans along the Ralston Corridor. They review city plans, development proposals, and K-8 issues. As a group they attend public meetings regarding development, discuss and prepare information to give to city council members, and offer suggestions and recommendations on projects.

## Regional and Community Plans

### Intergovernmental Agreements

#### Golden Intergovernmental Agreement

The City of Arvada has a governmental agreement with Golden, regarding its urban growth boundaries.

#### Jefferson County Intergovernmental Agreement

Arvada has an agreement with Jefferson County regarding development standards for the Clear Creek/I-76 area.

#### Metro Vision 2020 and Mile High Compact

The Mile High Compact is a voluntary agreement among Denver metro area cities and counties to manage growth. Participants made a legally binding agreement to work with each other to plan for growth by agreeing to update master plans, coordinate development with neighboring jurisdictions, and keep development within specified growth boundaries. Twenty-seven cities, including Arvada, and five counties, signed the Compact on August 11, 2000. More specifically, the cities and counties that signed the Compact agreed that their local comprehensive plans will be consistent with the regional vision provided by Metro Vision 2020—the Denver Regional Council of Government’s (DRCOG’s) long-term plan for growth—and will incorporate its core elements to ensure orderly growth at the regional level.

### Significant Developments on the Horizon

**Jefferson County C-470** -This plan, if approved, will create a ring road around Arvada. See [http://co.jefferson.co.us/jeffco/planning\\_uploads/plans/c\\_470\\_f.pdf](http://co.jefferson.co.us/jeffco/planning_uploads/plans/c_470_f.pdf)

**Candelas Community** - Located at the old Rocky Flats area at 96th and Indiana. 750 acres with a project 1500 homes ranging in price from \$300,000 to over a million. The project has a 10-year timeline for completion. For more information see <http://www.candelasco.com/home.php>

**Geos Community** - 72nd and Indiana. A net-zero community with 25.3 acres, and 282 homes. Pricing not available. For more information <http://www.michaeltavelarchitects.com/GEOS%20Presentation.pdf>

## Existing Conditions - Zoning

Within the boundaries of our project the following zoning districts can be found. They are listed in order of amount highest to lowest:

**R-L**, Residential Low Density District

**PUD-BPR**, Planned Unit Development Business

**PUD-R** Professional Residential District

**C-1**, Conservation District

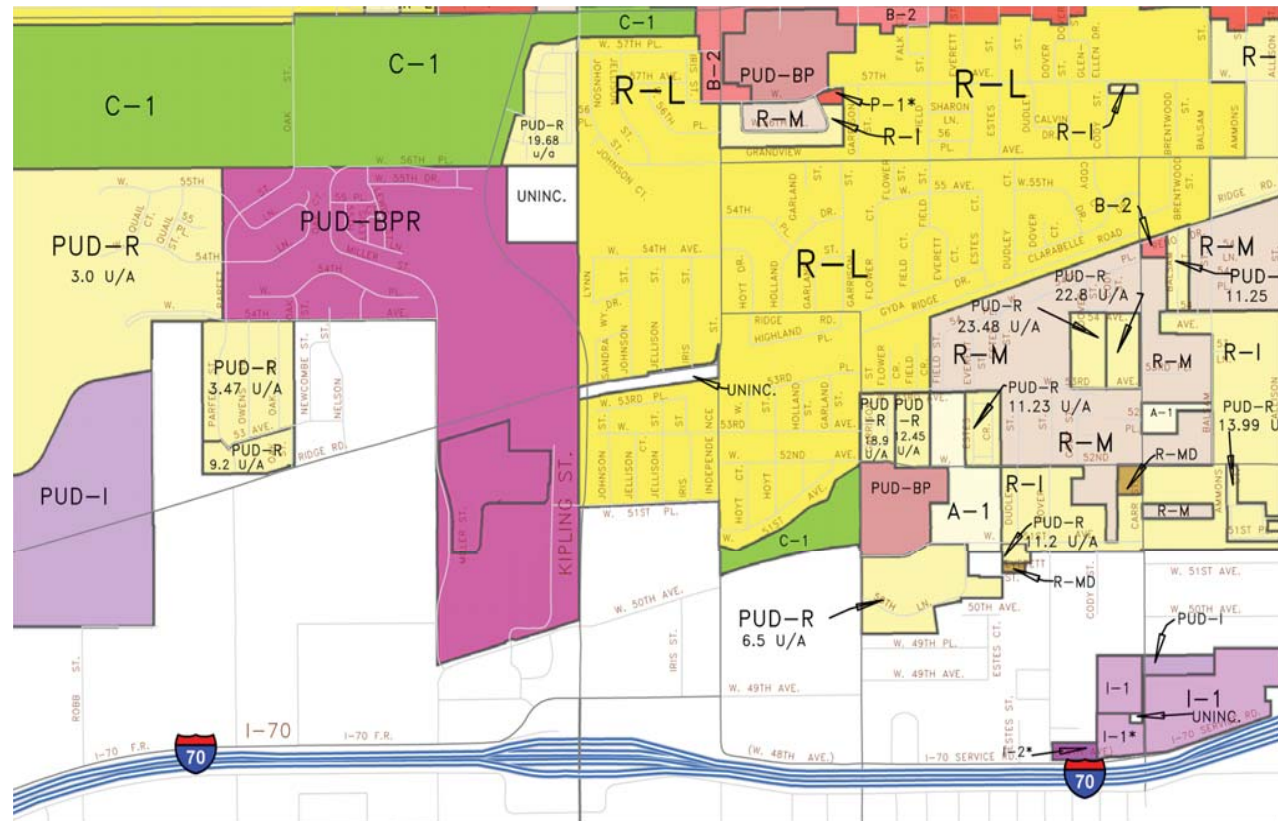
**PUD-R**, Planned Unit Development Residential

**PUD-I**, Planned Unit Development Industrial District

**R-M**, Residential Multi-Family District

Unincorporated

**R-MD**, Residential Medium Density District (tiny area).



## Existing Conditions - Land Use

The goal of the land use plan is to balance residential, commercial, community, recreational, and open land uses, in order to protect and maintain the quality of the mountain and plains environment, provides economic vitality for current and future generations, and maintain Jefferson County as a place of choice to live, work, and recreate. Elements of the plan include housing, economic development, and urban space, open land, and parks and trails.

The land uses within our boundaries include:

Medium-density residential



Open space and parks



Large format commercial



Suburban residential



Neighborhood/Community Commercial - Primary Uses: General retail and office to serve neighborhoods and the community.



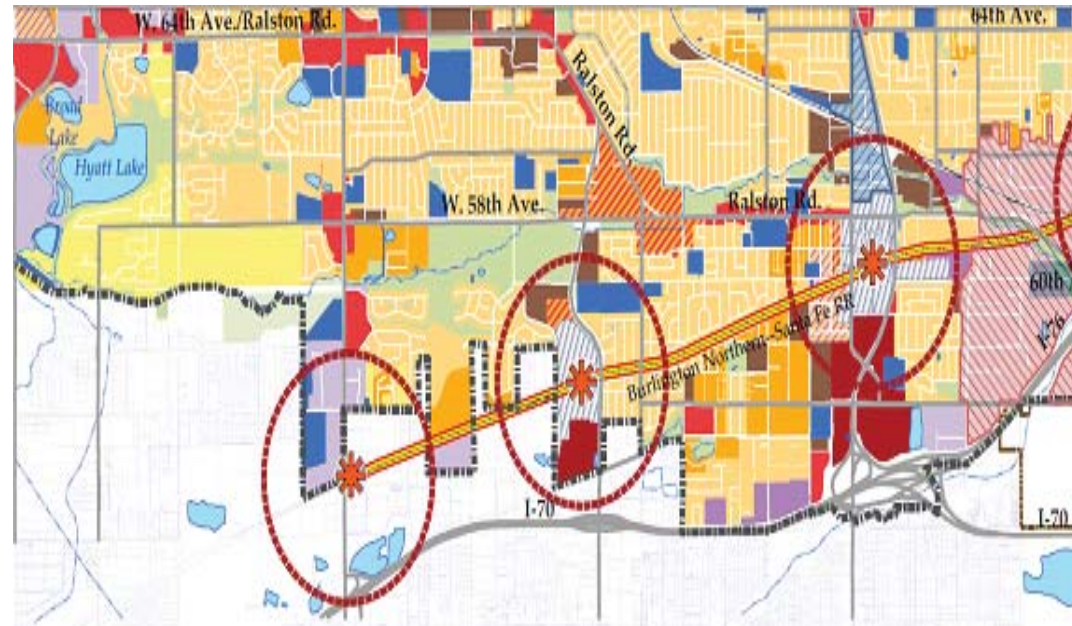
Industrial/Office



Mixed Use



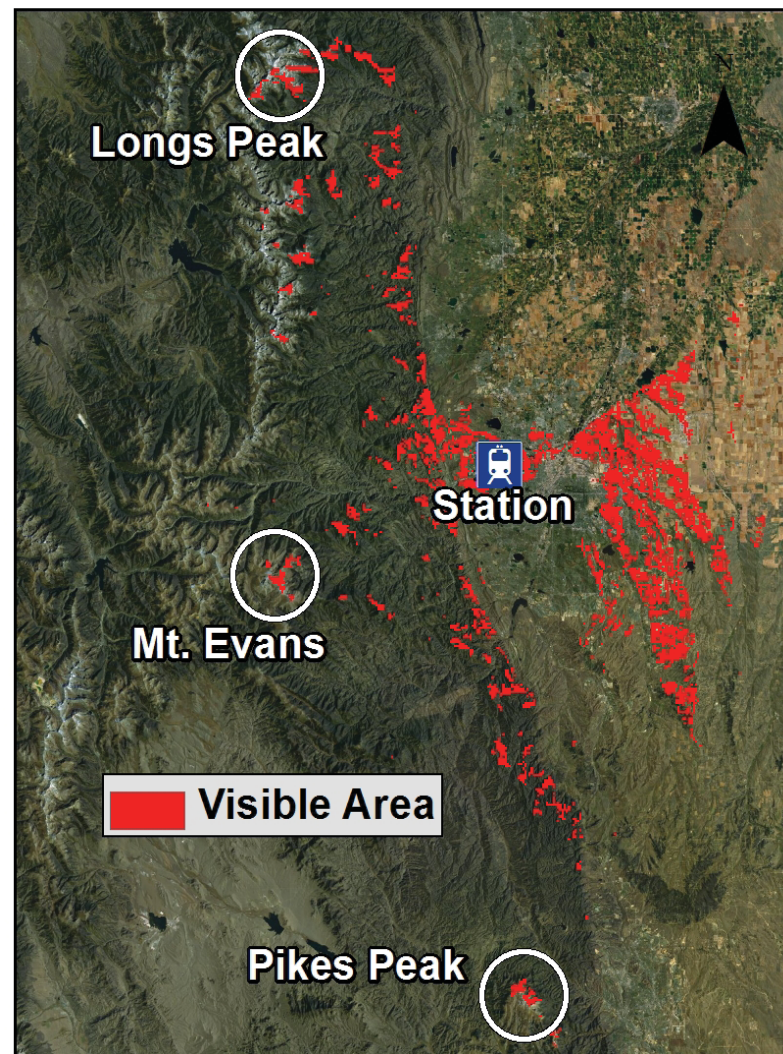
Public/Quasi-public



## Existing Conditions - Bulk

The view to the front range mountains is important to maintain and regulations are in place to do this. Kipling divides the area from east to west . To the east is the majority of single-family housing. It is organized in a typical grid pattern, and the homes are low scale or single story. Front-yard setbacks allow for landscaping. Parking is accommodated by side-yard parking, on-street parking, and some back-yard garage areas.

To the west and south is the industrial area which consists of large, irregularly-shaped parcels. Found here are Rocky Mountain Glass Recycling, Samuel and Sons, and the shopping center Arvada Plaza. To the north west is Red Rocks Community College, a planned neighborhood development, and a conservation area. Similar to Olde Town Arvada, a water tower dominates the skyline.



## Public Land

Public land in this area is primarily concentrated around Clear Creek and includes bike paths and parks. There are four recreation areas including Stenger Sports Complex, Jack B. Tomlinson Park, Four Acre Lake Park and Terrace Park.



## Private Land

The majority of the land within our boundaries is privately owned. There is a high concentration of industrial use here. The major businesses are Wheat Ridge Regional Center (at the former Ridge Home site), Red Rocks Community College and Rocky Mountain Bottle Company.



## Special Restrictions

Overlay districts exist within our boundaries. These include a floodplain overlay district, a conservation district, and a historic district.



# Existing Conditions - Architectural Character



## PATTERN & DESIGN IDEA BOOK *for Post-War Homes*



FEATURING HOMES IN THE ALTA VISTA & ALLENDALE SUBDIVISIONS OF ARVADA, COLORADO

Arvada has a mixture of old and new homes. You can find pre-war homes, post-WWII homes, and homes built within the last few years. You will find the hipped cottage type, minimal traditional type, simplified Queen Anne, and bungalow. Historic preservation is very important in this community as a means to preserve its character. You will find good examples of these housing types throughout the area. A significant historical site is Ridge Home, Colorado State Home for Mental Defectives, (now Wheat Ridge Regional offices). It was built in the cottage style, similar to the surrounding homes. The dairy is one of the only remaining structures. Modern homes and apartments are abundant and have come in growth spurts, one in the 1960s as people flocked to suburbia, and more recently.



# Existing Conditions - Population and Housing Characteristics

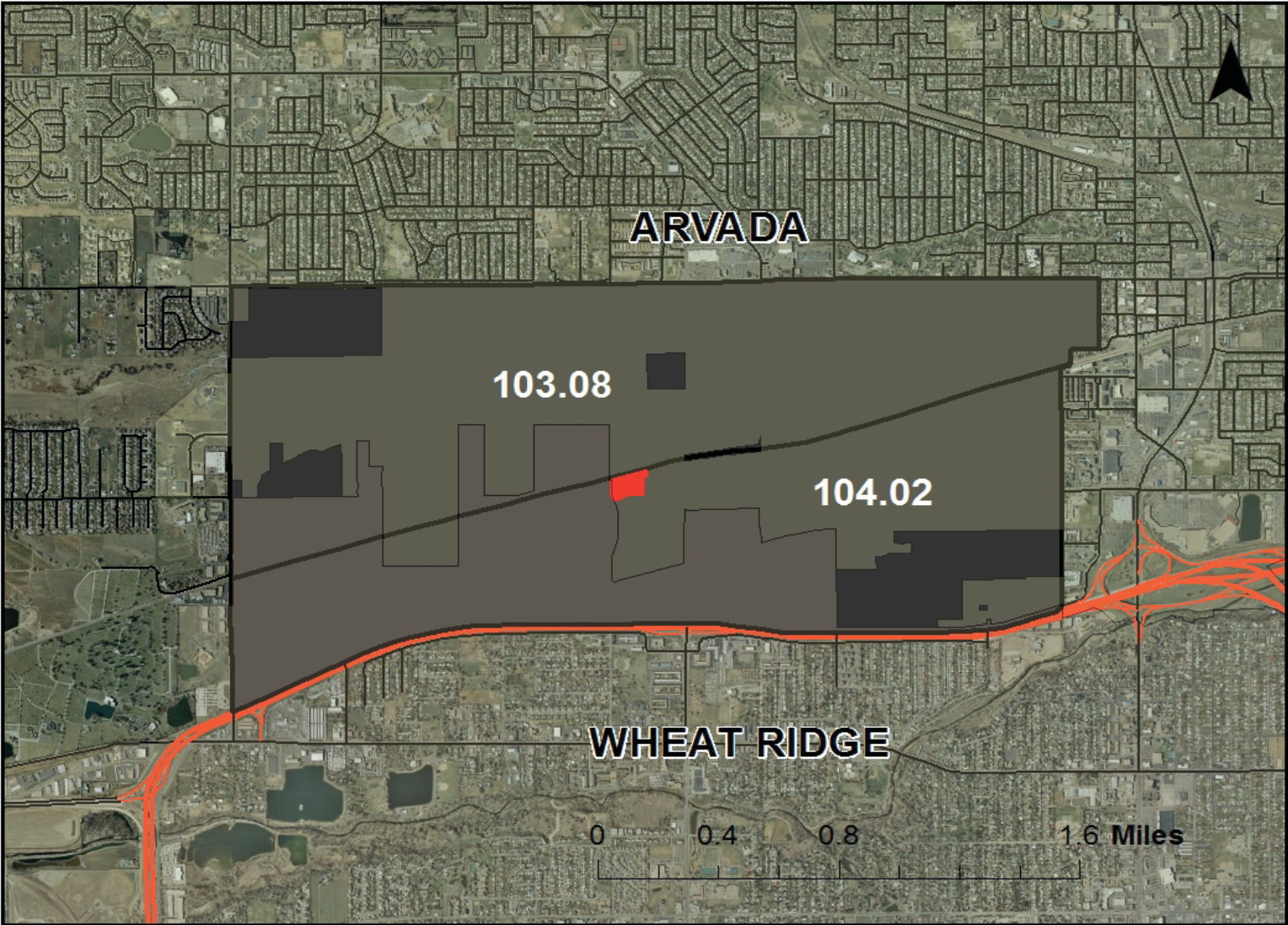
According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, there are 5024 total housing units with a population of 10,506 residents in the two Census Tracts surrounding the Arvada Ridge Station. Housing in Census Tract 103.08 and the city of Arvada are primarily owner-occupied single-family detached housing. Census Tract 104.02 has a wide range of housing types and is primarily renter-occupied. The total residential vacancy rate in the station area is higher than the surrounding city of Arvada.

Population and Housing Table				
	Station Area		Arvada	Denver
	103.08	104.02		
Total Housing Units	2,391	2,633	44,427	285,797
# of Persons Per Household	2.4	2.0	2.5	2.2
Total Residential Vacancy Rate	5	8.5	3.9	7.9
Percent owner Occupied	62.7	42.9	73.3	50

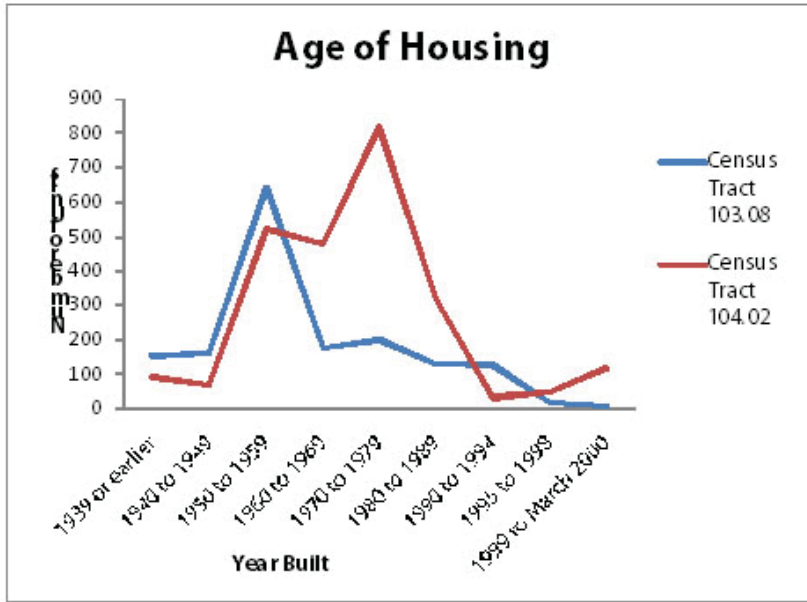
Source: US Census Bureau (2010)



# Existing Conditions - Housing



# Existing Conditions - Housing

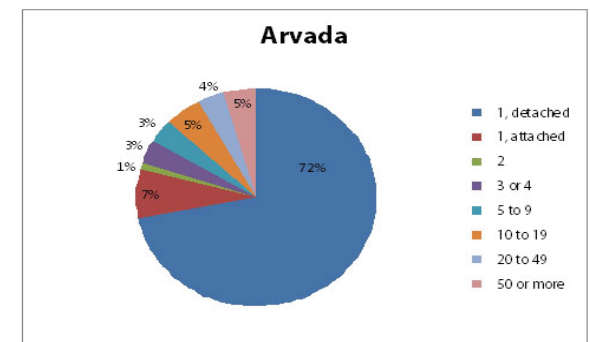
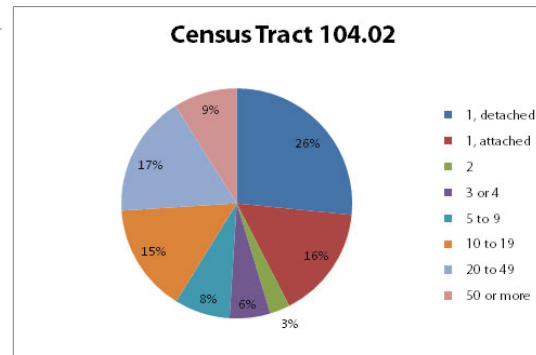
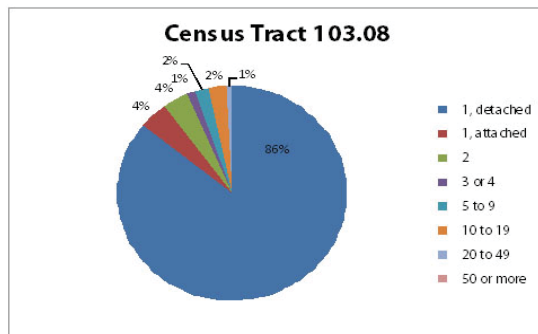


Few housing units in our station area were built prior to 1950. The first development boom occurred between 1950 and 1960. The majority of housing units were constructed between 1970 and 1990.

Census Tract 103.08 is dominated by single-family detached housing. This is in stark contrast to Census Tract 104.02 with a wide-range of housing types.

Source: US Census Bureau (2000)

Housing Distribution by Type



Source: US Census Bureau 2000

## Existing Conditions - Housing

The median gross rent in Arvada is \$967 which is higher than Denver at \$828. The rental vacancy rates in the city of Arvada and in Census Tract 103.08 are extremely low at 1.6 and 1.9 respectively. The rental vacancy rate in Census Tract 104.02 is 6.1 percent. The higher rental vacancy rate may be attributed to significantly more rental units to begin with in this area.

The median home price in Arvada is \$241,800. This has increased by 40% in the last decade, in spite of the housing bubble burst.



Median Home Price					
Arvada			Denver		
2000	2009	Increase	2000	2009	Increase
\$173,200	\$241,800	40%	\$160,100	\$244,600	53%

Source: City-Data.com



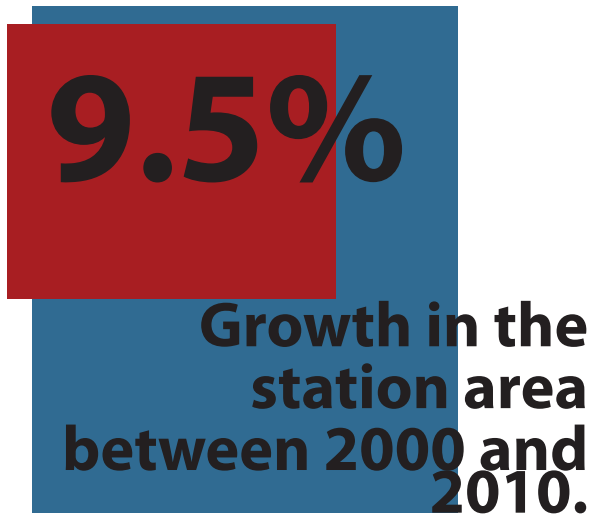
Rental Housing Table				
	Station Area		Arvada	Denver
	103.08	104.02		
% Renter Occupied (2010)	27.3	57.1	26.7	50
Median Gross Rent (2009)	x	x	\$967	\$828
Rental Vacancy Rate (2010)	1.9	6.1	1.6	3.6
Poverty Rate (2000)	1.7	18.6	4.4	12.5

Sources: US Census Bureau (2000) (2010); City-Data.com (2009)

# Existing Conditions - Housing

The population around the Arvada Ridge Station grew 9.5% in the last decade. The area exceeded Denver’s growth rate and doubled the City of Arvada’s.

As of this August, building permits were issued for a total of 399 new residential units in the city of Arvada. This is up from 192 in 2010. Of these, 378 are within a half-mile of a proposed transportation center.

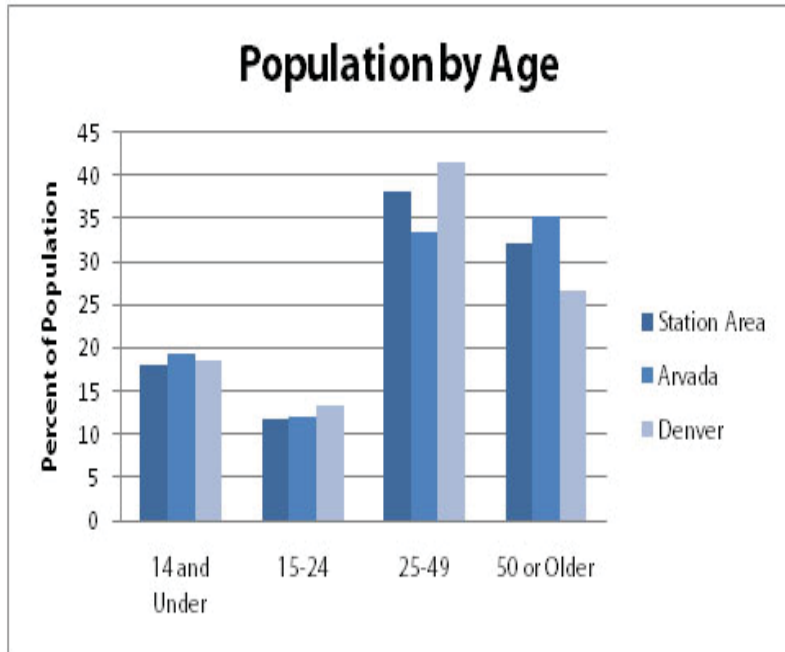


Demographics

Total Population								
Station Area			Arvada			Denver		
2000	2010	Growth	2000	2010	Growth	2000	2010	Growth
9,592	10,506	9.5%	102,153	106,433	4.2%	554,636	600,158	8.2%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000) (2010)

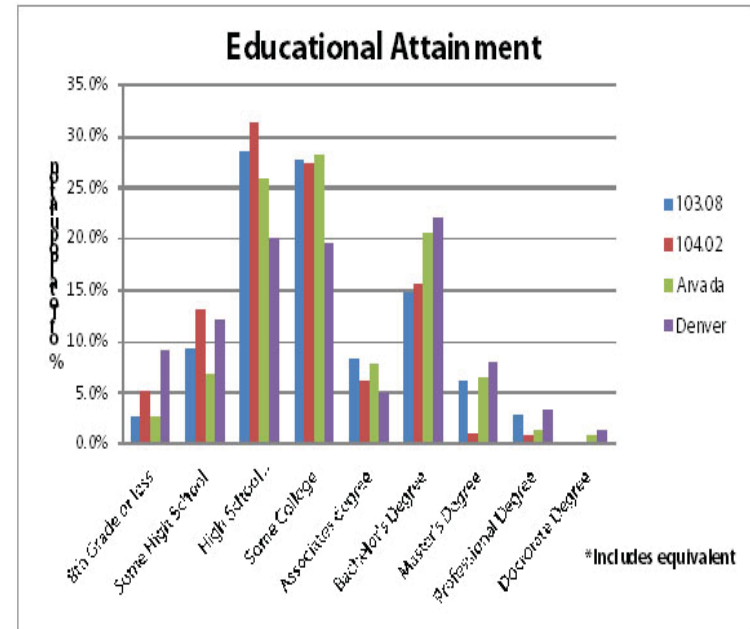
## Demographics - Age and Education



Source: US Census Bureau 2000

Arvada is an aging community. The majority of the population is older than age 25. The median age in Arvada is 40.5. This is much higher than Denver at 33.7 and slightly higher than our station area at 38.1.

**38.1**  
**Median age in station area.**

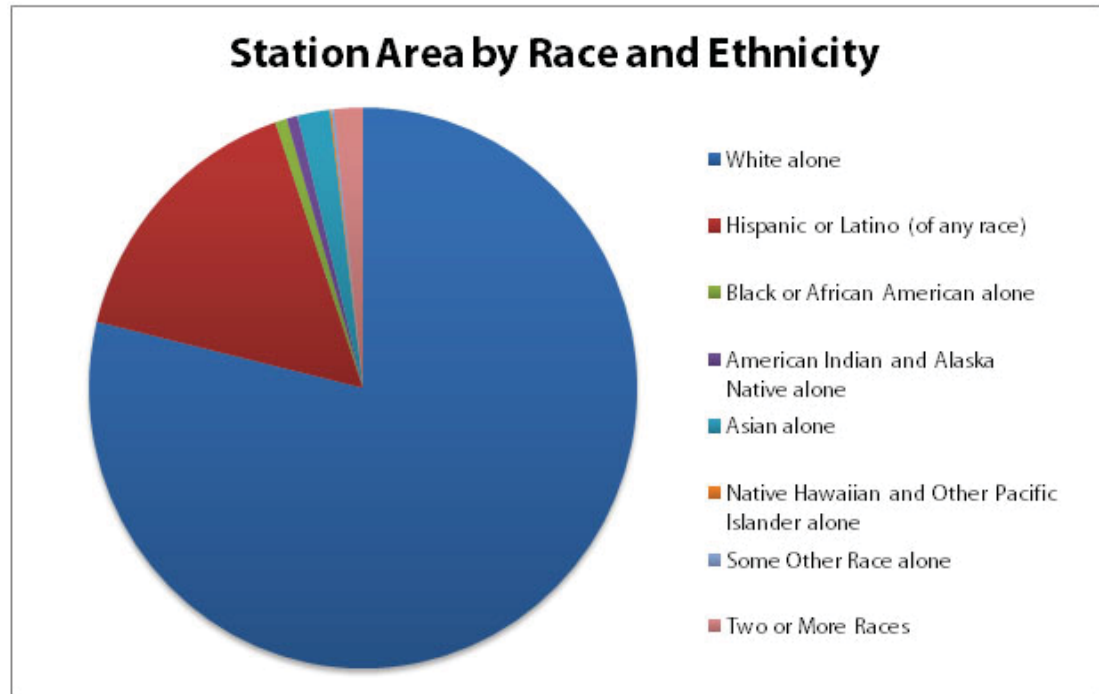


Source: US Census Bureau 2000

Of those over age 25, most residents in both the station area and Arvada have a High School diploma or equivalent or have completed some college. In Census Tract 104.02, nearly twenty percent of the population has less than a high-school education.

## Demographics - Race and Ethnicity

At 78.8%, the vast majority of the population in our station area is white alone. Sixteen percent of the population is of Hispanic or Latino origin. The remaining 15% of the population is split amongst six different categories with no more than 2% in any category.



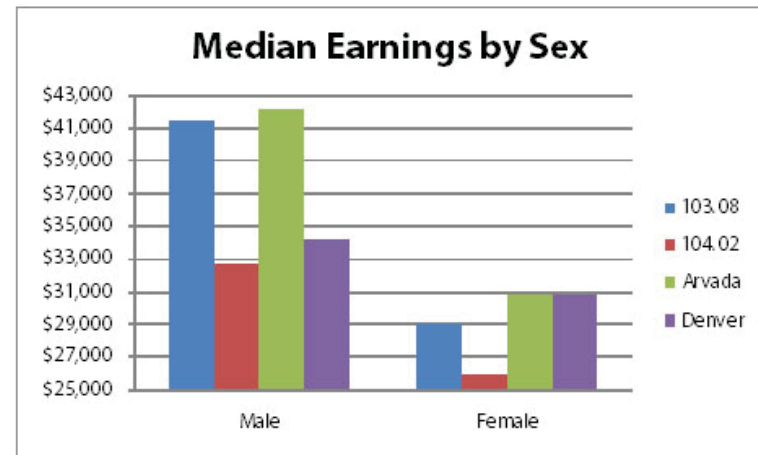
Station Area by Race and Ethnicity	
White Alone	78.8%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	16.0%
Black or African American	0.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.7%
Asian	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Some Other Race	0.2%
Two or More Races	1.7%

Source: US Census Bureau 2010

## Demographics - Income, Unemployment and Poverty

The median household income in Census Tract 103.08 is 84% greater than Census Tract 104.02 at \$52,775 and \$28,701 respectively. The unemployment rate in Census Tract 103.08 was also strikingly lower than its neighbor to the south.

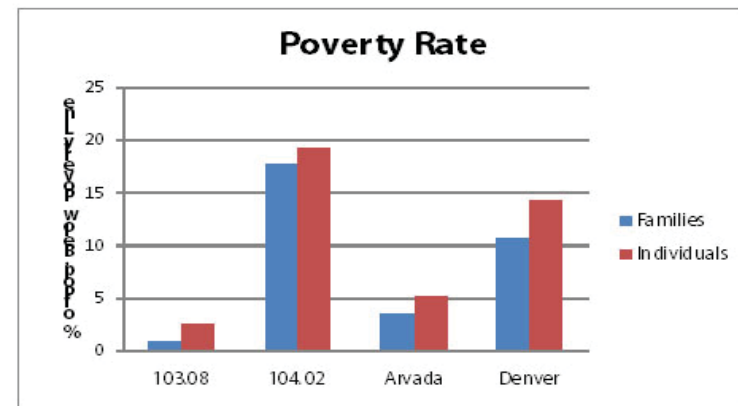
Census Tract 104.02 experienced very high poverty rates for both individuals and families in comparison to very low rates in 103.08. The rate of poverty in 104.02 is more than triple the rate within the City of Arvada.



Source: US Census Bureau 2000

Income and Unemployment				
	Station Area		Arvada	Denver
	103.08	104.02		
Median Household Income	\$52,775	\$28,701	\$55,541	\$39,500
Unemployment Rate	1	6.2	2.6	3.8

Source: US Census Bureau 2000



Source: US Census Bureau 2000

## Demographics - SWOC Analysis

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### Strengths:

The city is experiencing growth, especially near transit stations. The Arvada Ridge Station Area is currently zoned to be primarily residential, with more residential density immediately surrounding the station area. Vacancy rates in Arvada are very low. The undeveloped parcels in our station are in Census Tract 103.08, which has extremely low vacancy rates. The neighborhood is in close proximity to parks, open space, and retail.

### Weaknesses:

Census Tract 103.08 does not offer a variety of housing types or tenures. This area is dominated by single-family owner-occupied units. Although Census Tract 104.02 employs a variety of housing type and tenure, poverty is concentrated in this neighborhood. The poverty rate in Census Tract 104.02 is more than triple that of Arvada.

### Opportunities:

The Arvada Ridge station is unique because there are large undeveloped parcels with a single owner near the station area. These parcels are easier to acquire for developers than many small sites owned by dozens of different owners. Development could provide increased diversity in both Census Tracts for both housing and social conditions. The community is aging, and many families have become empty-nesters. Aging populations across the country are experiencing a trend to down-size from single-family homes to increased density with association services.

### Constraints:

The steep slope surrounding site may pose a mobility issue for pedestrians, especially for an aging community. In addition to environmental conditions, there are constraints in financing on both the supply and demand side of housing. On the supply-side, financing for new development projects is difficult to secure and highly competitive. Home sales are still recovering from the housing bubble and foreclosure crisis providing additional demand-side constraints.

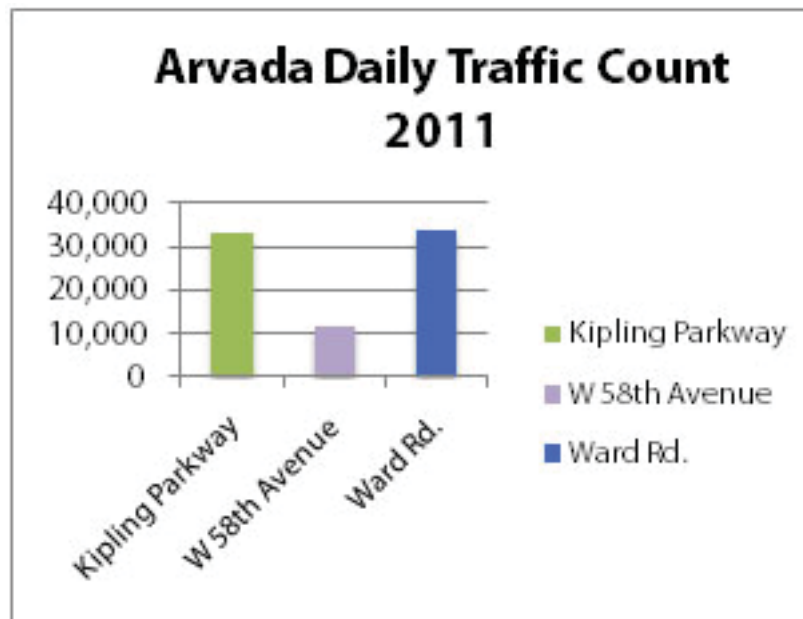
## Transportation

### Streets:

The proposed location of the Arvada Ridge Gold-Line station is along Ridge Road between Kipling Street and Miller Street. Our study area is bound by I-70 in the south, Kipling Street in the East, Miller Street in the West, and W 58th Avenue in the North. The domestic roads are all two-way streets including Ridge Road. Most of the roads are in good condition and have sufficient traffic signs. The station area can be accessed from downtown Denver using I-70 and Kipling.

### Daily Traffic Counts (2011)

Kipling Parkway and Ward Road the main North to South roads surrounding the station area experience higher daily traffic counts than 58th Avenue, an East to West route. The Gold Line will potentially create more east to west movement along Ridge Road.



## Transportation

### Traffic Circulation:

In the 2003 Arvada Citizen Survey, residents ranked growth and congestion as the biggest problems facing their city. Past surveys have indicated similar concerns. The connection between Arvada and the Denver region presented the largest concern. The City of Arvada is serviced by two freeways Intersections (I-70) and (I-76) to the South and East respectively. Another freeway, US 36 linking Boulder and Denver, lies northeast of the city and provides additional regional highway access. These freeways are augmented by a series of state highways including State Highway(SH) 72, Ward Road, 64th Avenue, Indiana Street, SH93, Wadsworth Boulevard, and Sheridan Boulevard.

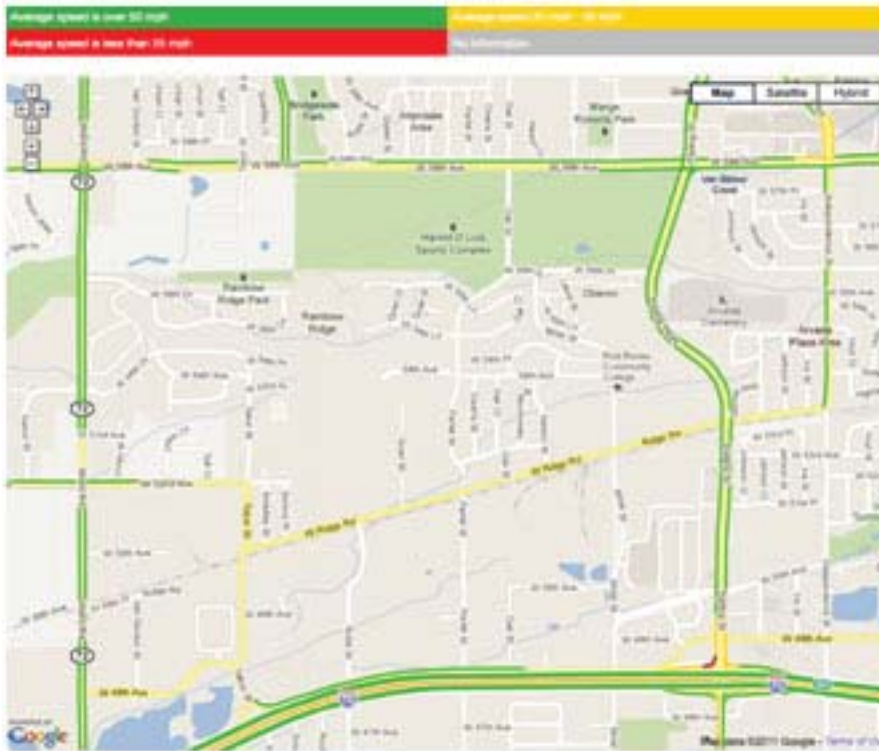
There are three classifications for roads around our station area. Principal arterial roads are Kipling Parkway, Ward Road, and W 58th Ave. Ridge Road is classified as a collector. All other streets in the station area are classified as local streets. The closest freeway to the station area is I-70 to the South.

Streets by Type and Usage			
Lane-Miles	Centerline Miles	Daily Vehicle	Miles of Travel
Freeways	21.9	7.3	328,000
Major Regional Arterials	30.7	5.1	246,000
Major Arterials	108.1	34.9	861,900
Minor Arterials	59.7	26.8	211,600
Collector Streets	158.8	79.5	181,800
Total	379.2	153.6	1,829,300

## Transportation

### Level of Service and Speed:

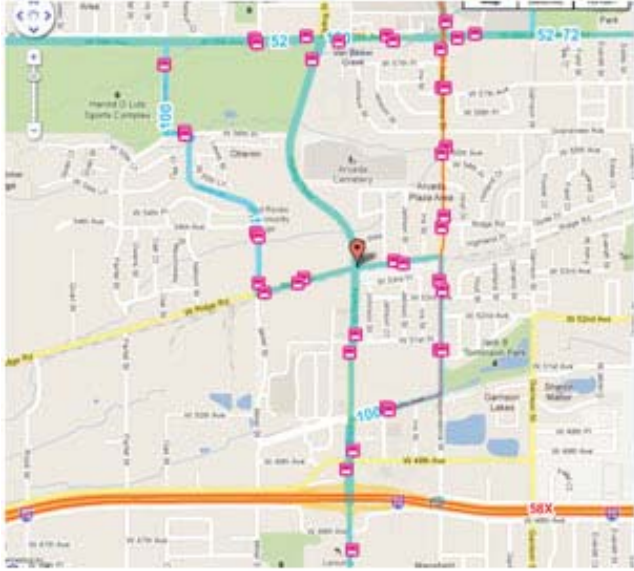
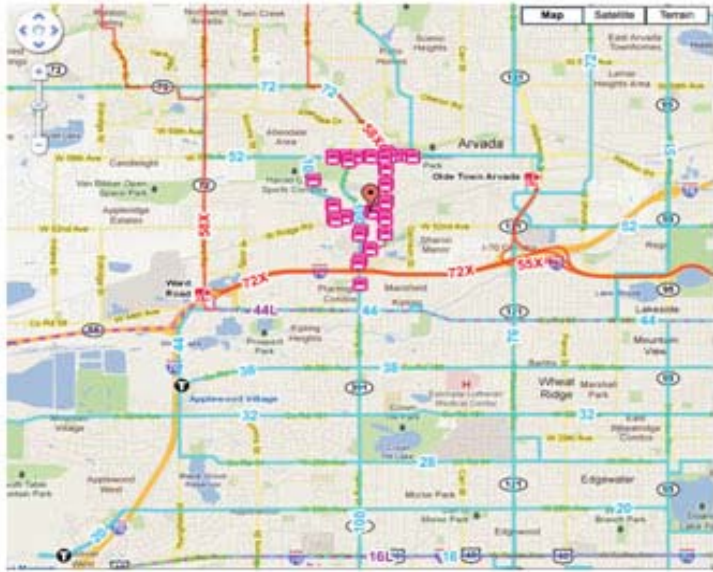
Ward Road, W 58th Avenue, and Ridge Road experienced minimal congestion and received a Level of Service grade A-C in 2001. Kipling Parkway was congested and received two level of service grades. The segment from I-70 to Ridge Road was highly congested and received a grade of E-F. The next segment from Ridge Road to W 58th was also congested and received a D rating for the level of service. The average speed of the four roads surrounding the station area is 50 mph.



# Transportation

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) provides Arvada with a comprehensive bus route system that connects the Denver Metropolitan area. A call-n-ride service that provides curb-to-curb transportation is also operated by RTD to serve the southeast Arvada area. In addition to these services the City has partnered with Ride Provide Inc. to provide the A-Line non-stop shuttle service between the Olde Town Arvada park-n-Ride and the Denver International Airport (DIA). The planned Gold Line Light Rail line will provide additional transportation options for all when it is completed in 2016.” Public transportation in the city of Arvada is provided by Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD). The city is currently serviced by 16 local bus routes, 7 express routes, and 2 regional routes.

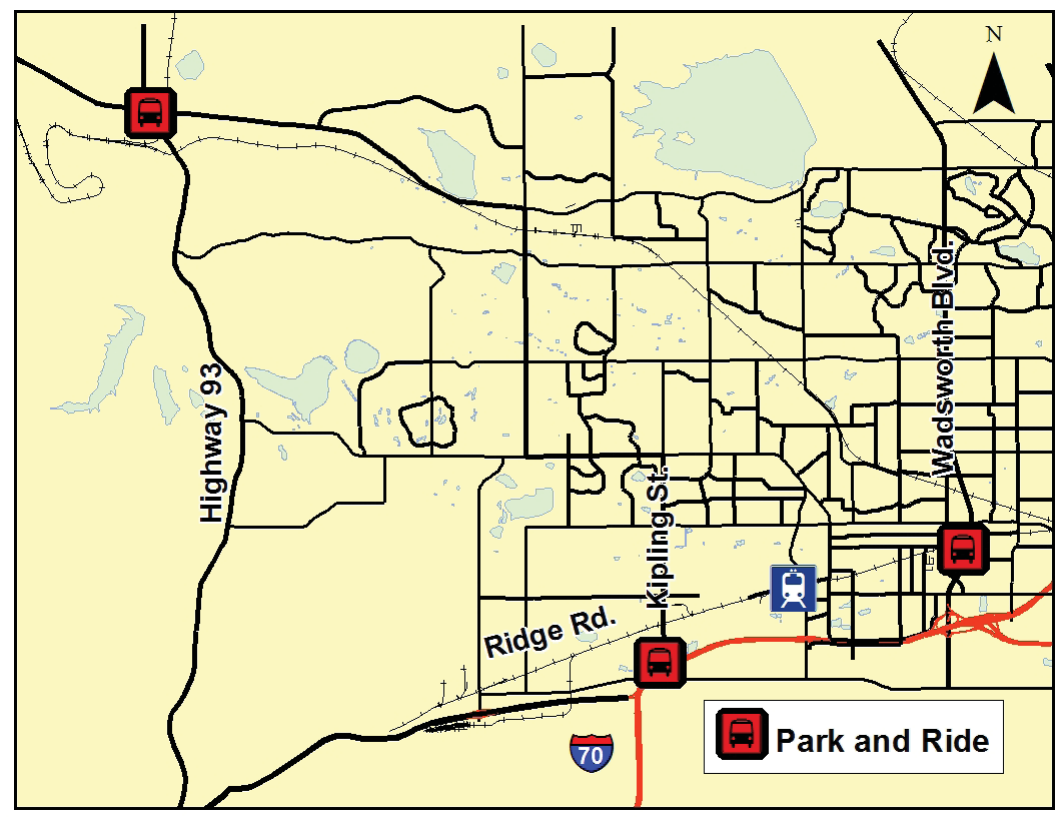
The RTD provides also a great service for the city of Arvada which is Shuttle service from Arvada to Denver International Airport in cooperation with the City of Arvada, the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority (AURA), and the Arvada Economic Development Authority (AEDA) in 2003 when they developed a direct shuttle service between the Olde Town Arvada Park-n-Ride and DIA. The shuttle has continued to be operated by the Arvada-based non-profit organization, with ongoing funding by RTD and, after 2005, in-kind support from the City of Arvada.”



# Transportation

## Park-n-ride:

The city of Arvada currently has three park-n-ride facilities located in Olde Town, Ward Road at I-70, and Coal Creek lot at state Highway 93. Unfortunately, Ridge Road at Kipling Station currently does not have park-n-ride service.



# Transportation

## Commuter and Light Rail:

The Gold Line Corridor is an 11.2 mile commuter rail project with 7 stops. The Gold Line is part of FasTracks, RTD's voter-approved program to expand rail and bus service across the greater Denver metro area. The Gold Line connects Union Station in downtown Denver to Wheat Ridge by way of the BNSF/Union Pacific Railroad corridor. Three stations are located in Arvada. The station immediately East of Arvada Ridge

is part of a Transit-Oriented Development Pilot Program through RTD. The Gold Line is fully-funded and expected to begin service mid-2016. There is currently not any light-rail service in the city of Arvada. The nearest light-rail station, Union Station, is 10 miles from Arvada Ridge Station. The trip takes around 15 minutes by car and around 60 minutes using RTD buses. The expected travel time by the Gold-Line Commuter Rail to Union Station is 20 minutes.



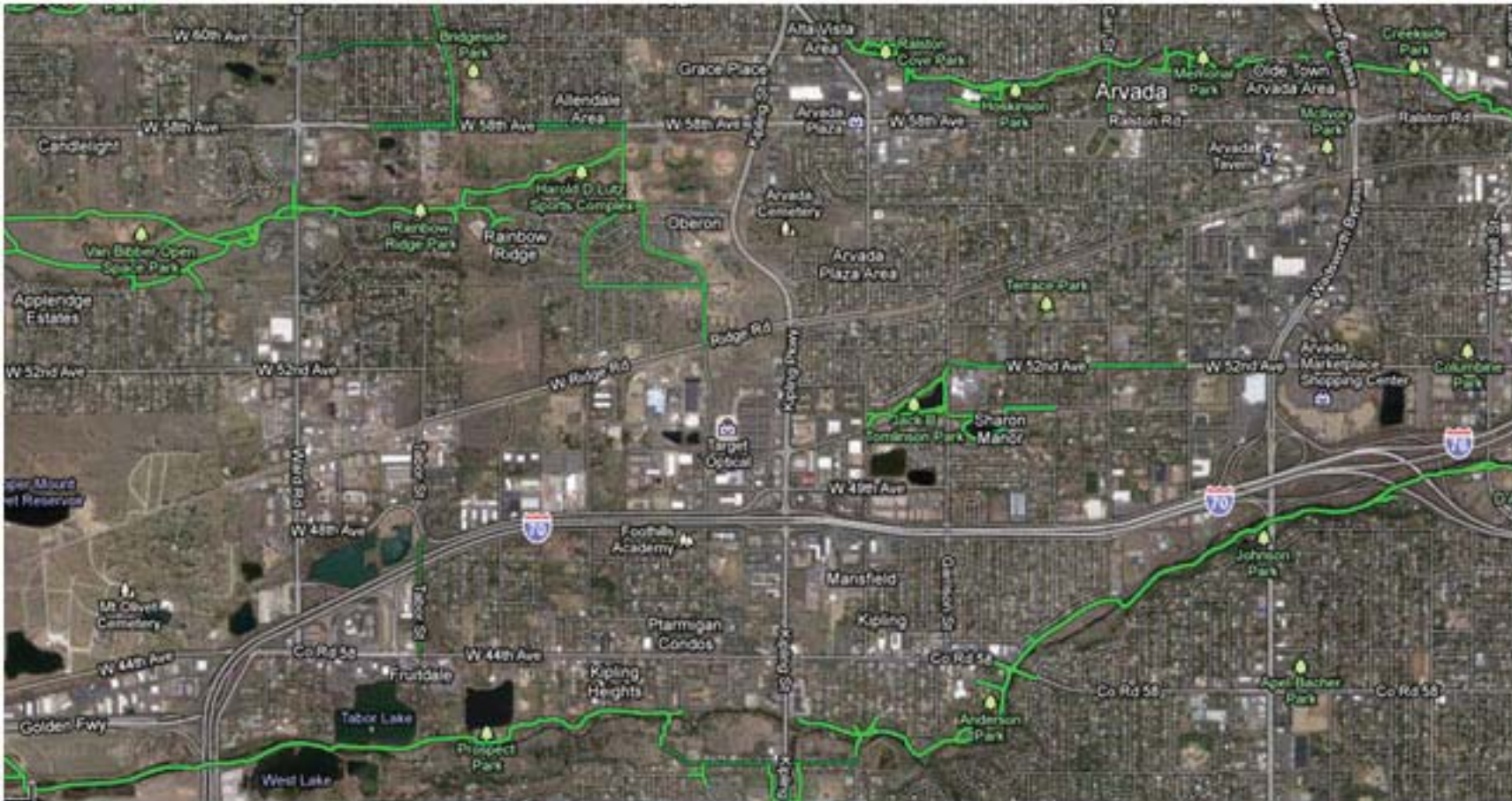
Distance and Travel Time to Union Station by Mode of Transportation					
	Vehicle	Bus	Bicycle	Walking	Commuter Rail
<b>Distance to Union Station</b>	10 miles	10 miles	9.6 miles	8.2 miles	<b>10 miles</b>
<b>Time to Union Station</b>	15 minutes	1 hour 5 minutes	57 minutes	2 hours 46 minutes	<b>20 minutes</b>
<b>Route/Road</b>	I-70 W	Route 44	Tejon St.	W 44th Ave	<b>Gold Line</b>

**20**  
 minute commute  
 by commuter rail  
 from Arvada to  
 Union Station

## Transportation

### Biking:

Bicycle paths in the City of Arvada mostly serve a regional purpose, linking Adams and Jefferson counties. The Arvada Ridge Station area is linked to Red Rocks Community College by way of Miller Street and 54th Avenue. This bike line links the station area to the community college and nearby residential, business facilities, although a significant slope between the station area and the school may discourage casual bike riders.



## Transportation

### Trends

The full-funding of the Gold-Line corridor has drastically changed the land-use and transportation plans in Arvada. With support from RTD, Arvada is concentrating development near the rail corridor. Arvada's Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan supports development of multi-modal, connected transportation systems, and medium to dense land-use in areas within a half mile of proposed transit stations.

### Strengths

The Gold-Line Commuter Rail service, scheduled to service Arvada, will facilitate growth in the near future, especially along the corridor. Undeveloped land in close proximity to the Arvada Ridge Station Area is ideal for development. The Arvada Ridge Station is one stop West of Olde Town Arvada, an attractive, historic, and soon to be TOD community.

### Weaknesses

The post-global recession effect on the Colorado economy may have a negative impact on funds for development project. This in turn, could delay development.

### Constraints

Execution of a connected, multi-modal transit station must incorporate pedestrian and bicycle users. The steep slope around the station area may be a physical barrier to mobility, especially because Arvada has a large proportion of aging residents.

### Opportunities

This station provides an opportunity to connect Red Rocks Community College and residents of the community to the greater Denver metro area by way of a short commute to Union Station. The large lots of undeveloped land have enormous potential for sustainable development.

## Environment

The city of Arvada is located in the front range of Colorado's Rocky Mountains. It has a unique weather environment where the sun shines approximately 300 days a year, while powerful storms come and go within single days. The front range is a semi-arid climate, which provides only about 60 inches of precipitation each year. For the City of Arvada, precipitation comes in the form of rain, sleet, snow, and hail. Temperatures are mostly moderate year round with highs reaching the mid ninety's in the summer and lows reaching the low teens in winter.

Arvada is part of the front range fans sub-region of the high plains Eco-region. These regions are characterized by expansive, mostly dry grasslands. Common grass species found in this Eco-region include; Buffalo Wheatgrass, Blue Gramma, Prairie Dropseed, and Switchgrass. Some mammals that may be found in this Eco-region include; Coyote, Deer, Kit Fox, Beaver, Black-Tailed Prairie Dog, Prebble's Mouse, Raccoon, and Ground Squirrel. Within the grassland plains are many wetland corridors which transport water from the rocky mountains into the great plains. These wetlands provide important habitat for migrating water fowl as well as many mammal species and a variety of vegetation. The list of birds that these wetlands provide habitat for is very large. Some of the most interesting species include; Bald Eagle, Red Tailed Hawk, Great Heron, Pelican, Burrowing Owl, and Great Horned Owl.

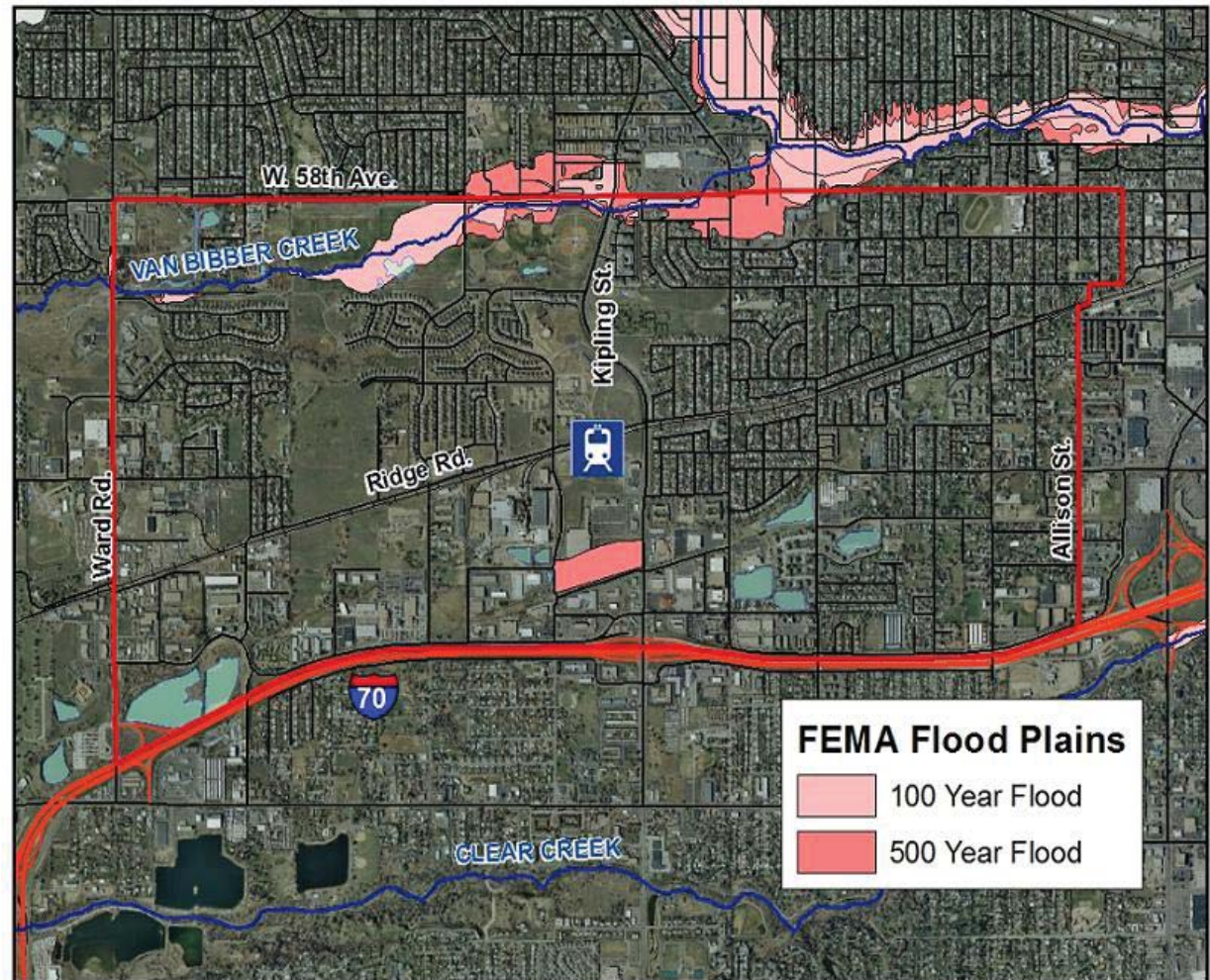


The proposed Arvada Ridge station development site is located near two important wetland areas. Van Bibber Creek runs West to East and is located about one-half mile to the North of the station site. Running adjacent to this creek is Van Bibber Creek Trail which connects neighborhoods West of the Van Bibber Open Space Park to Lutz SportsComplex that is located directly north of the proposed Arvada Ridge station development site. Van Bibber Open Space Park contains about 5 acres of preserved wetlands area and is connected to Arvada Ridge by a network of sidewalks and bike trails. Approximately one mile to the South of the proposed site is another important wetland corridor surrounding Clear Creek. This area has been identified by Colorado State University's Colorado Natural Heritage Program as having "Very High Biodiversity Significance". Prospect Park has been established to provide opportunities for recreation as well as to protect this habitat.

## Environment

### Flood Plains

Van Bibber Creek, which lies approximately 1/2 mile to the North of Arvada Ridge creates some flood plain area. The northern portion of the study area contains approximately 100 acres of flood plain area. This flood plain area is composed of about 50 acres within the 100 year flood plain and 50 acres within the 500 year flood plain. The combination of wetland habitat and flood plain area presents both an opportunity and a threat to the area surrounding the proposed Arvada Ridge station. Wetland habitat has crucial environmental benefits and provides good opportunity for passive recreation. However, the flood plain presents some risks to residents and commercial developments in this area.

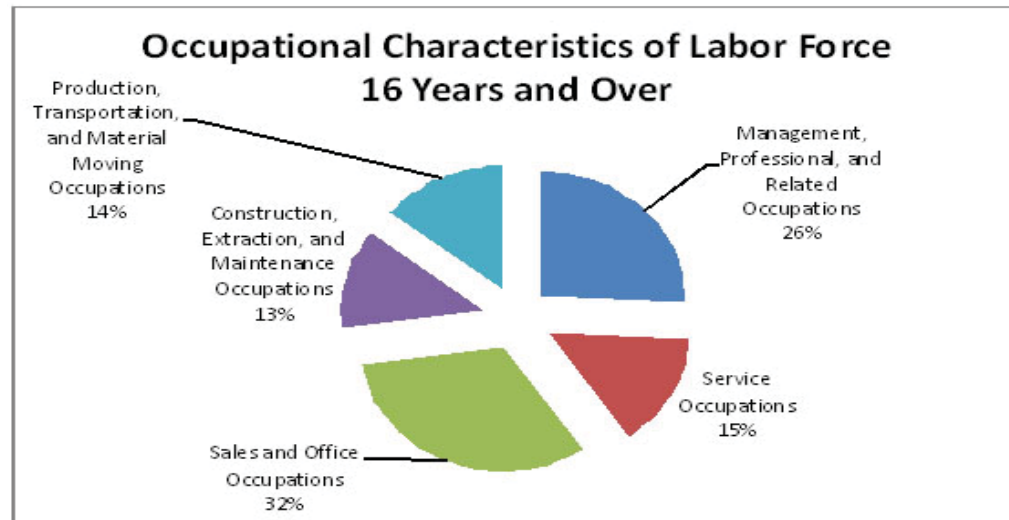


## Economics - Employment

According to the United States Census Bureau, the employment rate for our area of study is well over fifty percent of those in the labor force (See Table 1 below). With such high percentages, it is easy to see why the city of Arvada as a whole is highly regarded as a “bed-room” community in which workers commute to nearby Denver and Boulder for their professions. The data suggests that our area is a good representation of this trend in that working individuals reside in the surrounding neighborhoods and commute to regional employment centers on a daily basis.

Occupational data suggests that the majority of those in the labor force possess occupations that require some sort of higher educational attainment. The largest representations found professionals in management positions (26%) as well as sales and office occupations (32%). Our site visit generated findings that our area of study can be characterized as heavy residential with a strong influence of heavy industrial uses as well as a strong factory and manufacturing presence. This widow survey furthers the trend that the majority of the residents in our area of study hold positions in dense employment regions in other communities (like Denver and Boulder).

Chart 1: Occupational Characteristics of Labor Force 16 Years and Over, 2000 (Census Tracts 103.08 and 14.02 Combined)



Source: United States Census, 2000

Table 1: Employed Persons per Eligible Population

	Census Tract 103.08	Census Tract 104.02	State of Colorado
Employed Persons	2,229	2,633	2,205,194
Eligible Population	3,133	4,390	3,325,197
Percent	71.10%	60.00%	66.00%

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2000

# Employment

In addition, it is essential to research the number of jobs in each industry throughout our area of study to have a better understanding of how these residents make their living (Table 2 below).

Table 2: Jobs by Industry Type, 2000 (Census Tracts 103.08 and 104.02)

Industry Type	Census Tract 103.08		Census Tract 104.02	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	29	1.3%	16	0.6%
Construction	190	8.5%	344	13.1%
Manufacturing	311	14%	168	6.4%
Wholesale Trade	105	4.7%	101	3.8%
Retail Trade	226	10.1%	426	16.2%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	140	6.3%	133	5.1%
Information	103	4.6%	50	1.9%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Real and Leasing	124	5.6%	277	10.5%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management Services	271	12.2%	329	12.5%
Educational, Health and Social Services	325	14.5%	335	12.7%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	193	8.7%	222	8.4%
Public Administration	101	4.5%	80	3.0%
Other Services	112	5.0%	152	5.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,230</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,633</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: United States Census, 2000



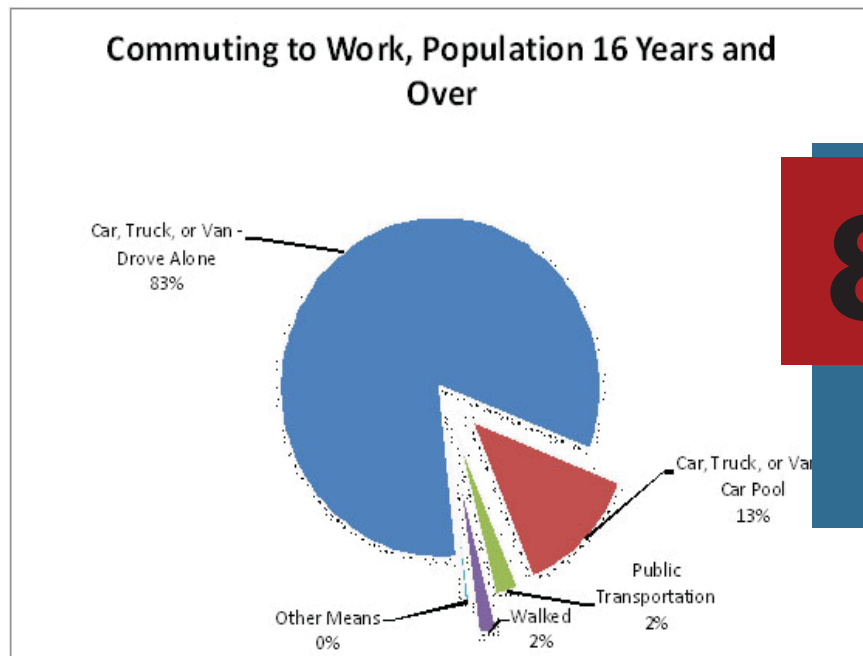
What is interesting are the discrepancies found in the types of jobs within each census tract. Looking at census tract 103.08, we find that the main employers are: Manufacturing, retail/trade, professional and education. Whereas in census tract 104.02 we see that the main employers are: construction, retail/trade, finance, professional and education. The main employers in each tract were manufacturing (14%) and retail/trade (16.2%) respectively. These discrepancies may be due in large part to the land uses which have been described in a previous section. Furthermore, one of our census tracks near our area of study houses a small community college which helps to explain the heavy influence of educational positions.

## Economics- Commuting

It has been previously uncovered that our area of study contains a large number of individuals that commute to other, larger regional centers of employment. The 2000 Census Data supports these assumptions and reports that the two census tracts in our area of study showed high instances of individuals using some personal mode of transportation in order to get to their professions. As Chart 2 demonstrates, the majority of these individuals use their own method of travel and opt out of public transportation, carpooling, walking or other means.

There are many important findings that jump out when reviewing this data. Again, it is plausible to conclude that those living within the area of influence do not work in the neighborhood which they reside. This conclusion is in agreement with the conclusions drawn above regarding employment and occupational characteristics. Although this data is from 2000, one can only assume that this trend has continued into more recent years. This data only further necessitates the promotion for public transit in the area - an issue that will be addressed with the proposed addition of the commuter rail on the Gold Line. With this new addition, one can expect to see a change in commuting habits after successful completion of the project.

Chart 2: Commuting to Work, Population 16 Years and Over, 2000 (Census Tracts 103.08 and 14.02 Combined)



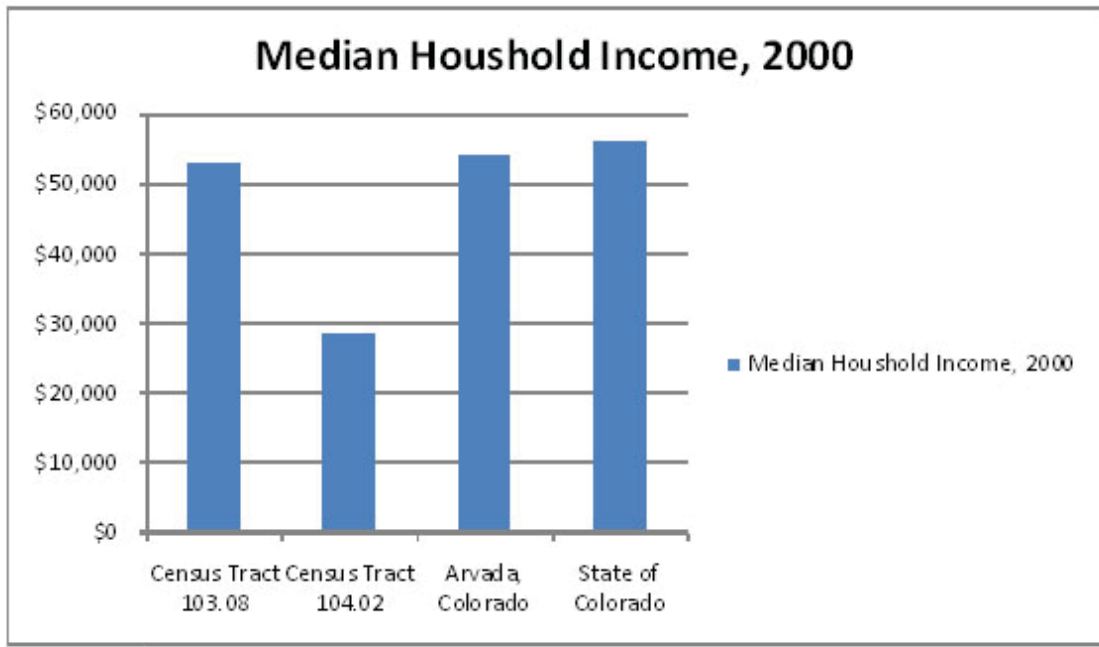
Source: United States Census, 2000

**83%**  
Of Arvada commuters drive alone.

## Economics - Income

The median family income of the two census tracts near our area of study is documented below. These statistics are significantly lower than the reported median household income for the City of Arvada and the State of Colorado, and may also be contributing to the relatively high poverty rate (47.1%) in the area.

Chart 3: Median Household Income



Source: United States Census, 2000

# Economics - Public Expenditures

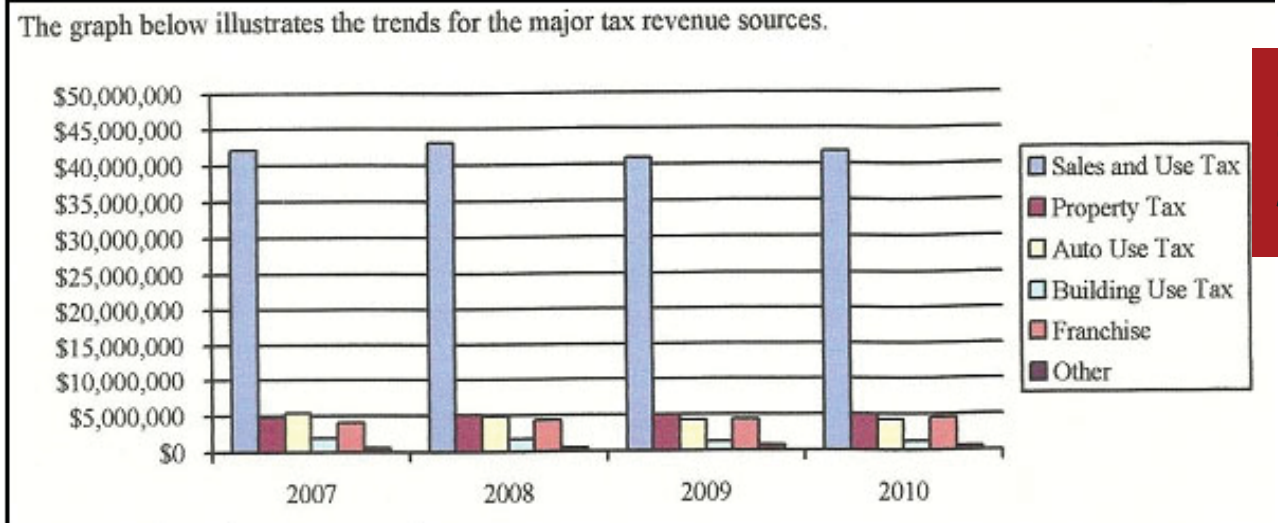
The City of Arvada utilizes long range planning for each of the City’s major operating funds. Specifically, the City prepares a two-year budget based on a five-year financial model. This method of budgeting is used to determine if future impacts of the current proposed budget are fiscally sound. Using this five-year model, the City is able to test the effects of current financial decisions on future year’s financial conditions when approving funding requests throughout the organization.

The Arvada City council adopted the Revised 2009-2010 Operating and Capital Budget for the City of Arvada in October of 2009. The total for all funds budgeted for 2009 and 2010 is \$187,160,271 and \$165,274,678, respectively.

The majority of the City’s revenue comes in the form of sales tax as seen in chart 4 below. This has been the overwhelming trend for the past couple of years and one can expect that such a trend will continue into the future.

The addition of TOD along our area of study will help Arvada maintain its’ reliance on sales tax revenue and further encourage the economic viability of the area.

Chart 4: Tax Revenue Sources



Source: City of Arvada Operating Budget

**Sales tax**  
**Is the major revenue in Arvada.**



## Economics - Potential Markets

Existing in both census tracts of our study area are numerous underutilized and vacant properties. Although they may not be currently zoned for commercial, office and retail, the locations are vital for transit oriented development and should be expected to be utilized as so in the near future. Many of these spaces could serve as small retail or office space, both of which would not only support the new transit system, but also further the overall economic health of the area by keeping the tax dollars in the neighborhood. During our window survey of the area we noticed very few commercial and retail areas that were actually supporting the surrounding community. Thus, there seems to be obvious necessity for these types of potential markets and new economic activity centers. Furthermore, with an increase in the influx of individuals utilizing the new transit services, the community will generate more revenue via sales tax. Above all, there needs to be a broad and diverse set of businesses and restaurants that migrate to the area in order to compensate for the current dilapidated and industrial conditions.



## Economics - SWOC analysis

### Weaknesses

Economically speaking, there are a couple of weaknesses that exist in the proposed location. Currently there is very little diversity when it comes to the types of commercial, retail and office space that is found in the area. Therefore, the city must work hard in order to break this trend and incorporate new, sometimes “out of the box” ideas. Finally, the area is on a pretty substantial slope which may restrict the types or amounts of business that can be incorporated into the surrounding areas. In order to combat this issue, the city may be inclined to spend more money in development which may hurt an already ailing economic base.

### Constraints

Our area of study contains many strengths and opportunities. However, economically speaking there may be some constraints that may limit the growth of the area. First, both census tracts contain heavy industrial plants that are still functioning and still prosperous. These facilities take up large quantities of land and may hinder future mixed use development and residential placement. Second, the City of Arvada does contain numerous big-box retailers in the area which may discourage competition from smaller retail services.

## Economics - SWOC analysis

### Trends

The trends that we can expect to see into the future are in increase in populations, housing costs (especially near the TOD sites), rates of employment and increases in income. In order to meet these demands, the City of Arvada is expected to pour money into these areas to secure completion of these specific projects. In return, these areas are expected to be able to support said increases in demographic indicators as well as grow in overall size and capacity. Placing TOD around this area is a great means of revitalizing the neighborhood. With a larger selection of goods and services comes a more diverse and self-sufficient population.

### Strengths

One of the greatest strengths involving our area of study is its proposed location. The transit area is in very close proximity to Red Rocks Community College to the North and an undeveloped area to the South. By connecting these two areas together with the construction of a TOD, the area has the potential to become very popular and act as a small economic hub for the entire City of Arvada.

An additional strength is the amount of land that can be developed. This area has numerous vacant parcels that can be developed to fit the needs of the stop and the community. What's even more important is that this strength gives planners and developers an opportunity to work with the community and incorporate the ideas of the general public.

## Economics - SWOC analysis

### Opportunities

Many opportunities exist for both census tracts in our area. In order to promote sustainable economic development the City of Arvada must continue to encourage a balanced and dynamic mix of business opportunities and assist with the creation of jobs in the area. In order to promote the economic vitality of this area the city must work to keep the tax base close to the transit stop.

Another large opportunity is the incorporation of more mixed use development. The land use and zoning regulations of the city afford many options for mixed use possibilities.



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Urban Planning Studio 1

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