

Arvada Colorado

March 17–22, 2013



Arvada Colorado

Healthy Places: Designing an Active Colorado

March 17–22, 2013

About the Urban Land Institute

THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has nearly 30,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academicians, students, and librarians.

ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About ULI Advisory Services

THE GOAL OF THE ULI Advisory Services program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; hour-long interviews of key community representatives; and a day of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration,

participants in ULI's panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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The panel wishes to thank the Colorado Health Foundation for sponsoring this series of panels regarding designing healthy communities, especially Anne Warhover, Khanh Nguyen, and Hillary Fulton. The panel also thanks Progressive Urban Management Associates for helping prepare the communities for the panel's arrival, providing the background briefing materials, and coordinating so closely with ULI and the host cities for this very important work.

Finally, the panel acknowledges and thanks the more than 60 individuals who were interviewed. Representing city and county agencies, the business community, and the citizenry, these stakeholders provided valuable information and perspectives through their passion and understanding of the issues, greatly aiding the panel in its analysis.

Note to Readers

This publication contains recommendations by the Urban Land Institute Advisory Services panel that convened in Arvada, Colorado, the week of March 17 to 22, 2013. These recommendations constitute a comprehensive report of the Healthy Places: Designing an Active Colorado initiative for the community of Arvada. The Healthy Places initiative was designed to promote policies that incorporate physical activity into land development and land use.

While the Colorado Health Foundation contracted with ULI to conduct the Advisory Services panel, the complete recommendations do not signify key funding opportunities for or commitments by the Foundation. The ULI recommendations are intended to serve as an expert guide for use by the community of Arvada as it sets priorities based on local knowledge of needs and opportunities.

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Background and the Panel's Assignment

TODAY, COMMUNITIES ACROSS the United States are facing obesity and chronic disease rates of epic proportions. Emerging research indicates that built environment and community programming interventions can play a vital role in transforming communities to promote public health and increase active living. In 2012, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) was contacted by the Colorado Health Foundation to provide advice on these public health issues through the Healthy Places: Designing an Active Colorado initiative. The foundation contracted with ULI for a series of three Advisory Services panels representing three different community typologies: urban, suburban, and rural.

Through the Advisory Services program, ULI provided land use, transportation, real estate, architectural, and public health experts for these three assignments, which represent the first time ULI advisory panels have concentrated specifically on the connection between health and land use. The Colorado Health Foundation wanted a replicable program, so evaluating the three typologies produces a body of work that can be applied to other communities in Colorado.

The foundation received 26 requests for participation from communities across the state who wanted to be part of this initiative. Through a competitive request for proposals process, communities were asked to demonstrate their readiness and ability to engage stakeholders in identifying and addressing improvements to their built environments, to encourage active living, and to take part in the ULI panel program. Three communities were selected: Arvada, Lamar, and the Westwood neighborhood of Denver.

Major Concepts in Designing Healthy Communities

Neighborhood design can affect public health, but it also affects real estate value. Today ample evidence supports the idea that consumer demand for well-designed, walkable and transit-oriented development (TOD) has never been higher. Numerous studies show that demand for compact, mixed-use, transit-accessible development far outstrips current supply. In addition, walkable communities are in such high demand that they command premium prices in the marketplace. The price premium for walkable and bikable communities can range from 40 to 100 percent more than communities that require residents to drive everywhere for everything.

Once part of our normal lives, physical activity unfortunately has been designed out of daily living. Desk jobs have taken the place of manual labor, driving has replaced walking and biking, elevators and escalators have supplanted stair climbing, and televisions and computer games have displaced outdoor recreation, especially among children. The design of our buildings and neighborhoods often makes physical activity unnatural, difficult, or dangerous, especially for children and the elderly, those with disabilities, or low-income individuals. Rather than telling people to go to the gym, the Colorado Healthy Places initiative was designed to encourage Colorado communities to create opportunities for building physical activity into citizens' daily routines.

Arvada, Colorado, is already known as a leader in the creation of parks, bike trails, and other pedestrian-oriented facilities. However, Colorado and metropolitan Denver are growing rapidly, and change is coming to Arvada. Changes in demographics, technology, the economy, consumer



attitudes, and market trends are all affecting the way that Americans live, work, and move around. Many analysts predict that communities that prepare for the future will prosper. Those that do not will falter. The panel believes that Arvada is in an excellent position to respond appropriately to these changes, and this panel report provides a series of strategic and tactical recommendations to help in this regard.

Arvada

Arvada is a city of 108,000 people located six miles northwest of downtown Denver. Thirty-five square miles in area, Arvada became a Statutory City on October 31, 1951, and a Home Rule Municipality on July 23, 1963. As a first-ring suburb, it is integrally linked to the Denver metropolitan area, but Arvada has its own identity with a charming Olde Town area, older strip development, and newer big-box retail located in the southeastern portions of the city. Newer residential development is located to the north and west.

Arvada is served by Interstate 70 and Interstate 76, for which it is the western terminus. The Denver Regional Transportation District currently serves Arvada with seven local bus routes but plans to provide Arvada with a commuter-

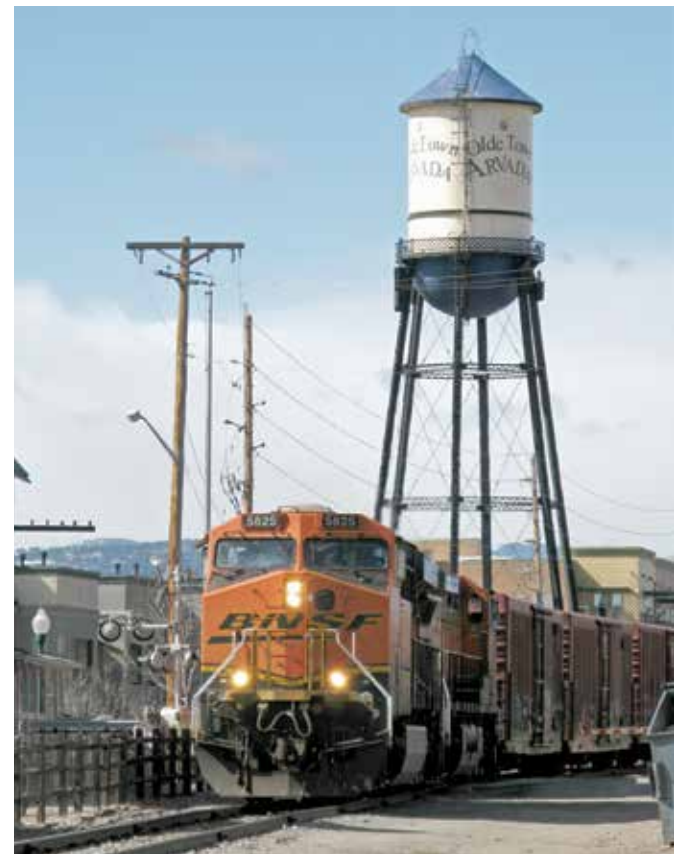
rail Gold Line along the Colorado Central Railroad, now the Burlington Northern Santa Fe, rail line by 2015. This line will link Arvada with downtown Denver.

Study Area

The study area that was the subject of this panel is a 4.8-square-mile pocket of southeastern Arvada, bounded by West 64th Avenue on the north, I-70 and I-76 on the south, Sheridan Boulevard on the east, and Kipling Parkway on the west. This area includes historic Olde Town Arvada, much of both the older strip and newer big-box retail, and middle-to-lower-income housing. It also includes three of the four new Gold Line station sites for the Regional Transportation District.

With a 21 percent Hispanic population (who in general have more limited access to good quality nutrition and recreation and therefore suffer from higher rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes), the choice of this area was intended to prompt specific recommendations to improve health equity and improve the health of this more vulnerable population.

The train station in Olde Town Arvada.



The Panel's Assignment

Arvada's Comprehensive Plan update is scheduled to begin in early 2013. This effort provides a meaningful opportunity to enhance public health through improvements to the built environment. The panel was asked to build upon the myriad planning efforts around connectivity, specifically walkability and bikability, to help the community determine how best to move those efforts forward. The assignment included the following goals:

- Framing and promoting a strong emphasis on community health issues through the upcoming Comprehensive Plan update;
- Determining whether specific opportunities are created by the new commuter-rail stations to use infrastructure and policy improvements to promote healthy lifestyles;
- Defining strategies for prioritizing and activating plans, programs, and initiatives with clearly delineated time frames, finance plans, and organizational capacity and strategies;
- Developing benchmarks that can measure behavioral, economic, and policy effects of improvements that arise from this process;
- Inspiring Arvada's policy makers and citizens to use "best practices" for achieving greater levels of walking and biking in similar communities;
- Developing strategies for community education and peer-to-peer communication; and
- Developing the building blocks for developing community champions.

Summary of Recommendations

The panel focused on several physical, programmatic, and organizational improvements that can help the city move forward with a creating a more livable and healthy place. These recommendations include the following:



The ULI advisory panel.

- Creating a vision for a healthy community;
- Understanding the economic and market realities of the city and the study area to better anticipate, plan, and resolve issues related to the junction of public health, the built environment, and public programming;
- Understanding the obesity and chronic illness epidemic, and the benefits of active living and healthy eating;
- Setting high standards for community health and new development by applying best practices for
 - Walking and biking;
 - Recreation spaces; and
 - Healthy food access;
- Designing buildings and neighborhoods to improve public health and increase real estate value;
- Creating a new healthy community chapter for the Comprehensive Plan;
- Creating healthy living programs; and
- Engaging the citizens and leaving a legacy.

The remainder of this report elaborates on these themes and recommendations.

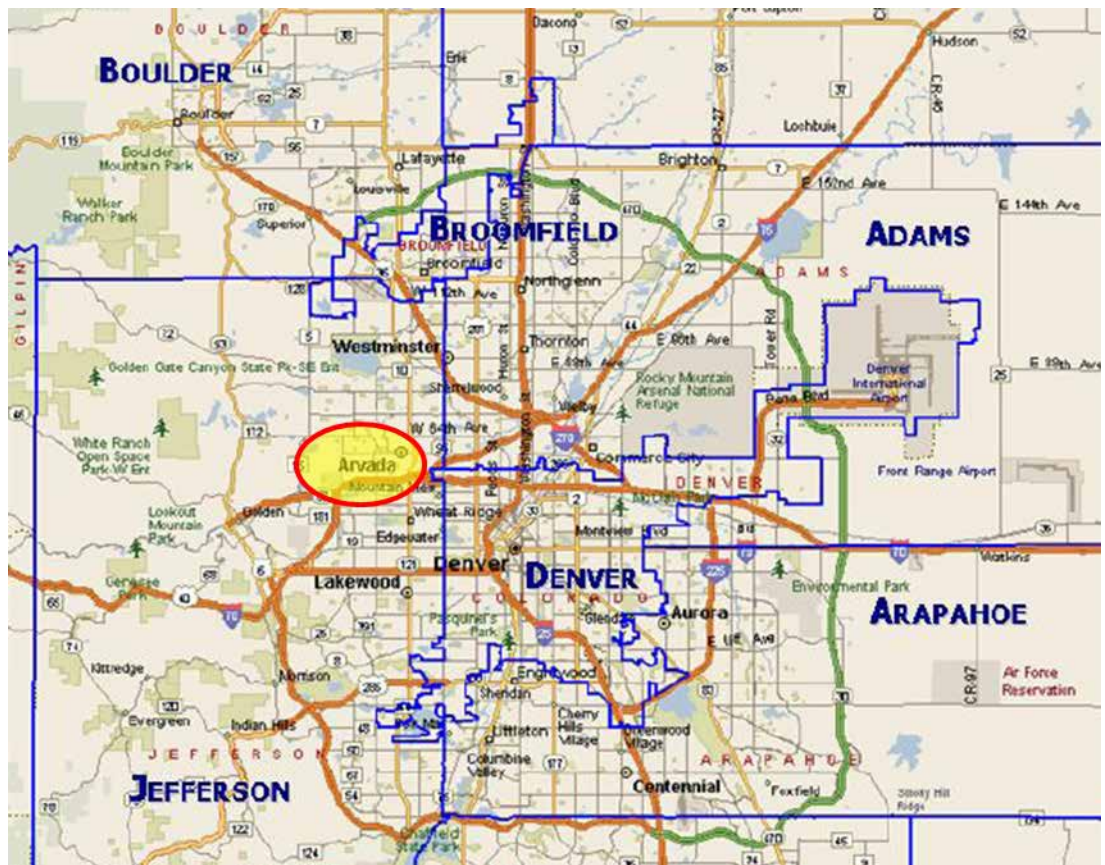
Economic and Market Overview

THE PANEL IS CONVINCED that the economic health and the physical health of a community are fundamentally intertwined. Creating a safe, healthy, and more prosperous Arvada requires decision makers, planners, and the wider community to understand some of the vital socioeconomic trends that are affecting it. ULI panels typically assess the real estate market to understand these trends. ULI believes that successful community planning, land use, and economic development policy can best be defined as public actions that generate a desirable, widespread, and sustainable private market reaction.

The city of Arvada is an integral part of metropolitan Denver and its northwest submarket. With the current nationwide economic recovery, growth in Arvada will happen. The world has changed, and many new influences significantly affect the housing and job market. The rise of the creative class and new Millennials, car ownership patterns, living space expectations, Internet shopping, family size: all of these elements are affecting land use and community development.

Metropolitan Denver in 2013 is a seven-county region that includes more than 2.9 million people in almost 1.2

Metropolitan Denver in 2013 is characterized as a seven-county region that includes more than 2.9 million people in almost 1.2 million households, of whom 1.9 million people are employed.



million households, of which 1.9 million people are employed. Since 1980, metro Denver has grown annually by almost 28,000 jobs per year, which has stimulated annual population growth of nearly 40,000 people in 17,000 households. Over the next ten years, metro Denver's economy is projected to grow by an additional 29,000 jobs per year, which will fuel annual population growth to 46,000 people in 18,000 households.

The city of Arvada is part of Jefferson County and the northwest submarket of metro Denver. Jefferson County today has 555,000 people living in 223,000 households, representing 19 percent of the metropolitan population. Since 1980, Jefferson County has captured 14 percent of metro Denver's population growth. Northwest metro Denver today has 435,000 people living in 172,000 households, or 15 percent of the metro total. The city of Arvada today has almost 110,000 people in more than 44,000 households; it represents 3.7 percent of metro Denver's population and 20 percent of Jefferson County's population. Since 1980, the city of Arvada has been growing by 730 people in 350 households per year, and since 1990, annual population growth has been at a rate of 850 people in 435 households. Over the next decade, northwest metro Denver is projected to grow annually by 4,630 people in 1,880 households, and the city of Arvada is projected to grow annually by 1,810 people in 620 households. By 2023, the city of Arvada will include 126,900 people in 50,300 households.

Office

The seven-county Denver consolidated metropolitan statistical area (CMSA) office market is profiled as nine major submarkets. Arvada is located within the northwest suburban submarket. As of the fourth quarter of 2012, the seven-county Denver CMSA had 107,748,778 square feet of office space, of which 7,727,411 square feet, or 7.2 percent, was located within the northwest suburban submarket. The city of Arvada's office market includes 1,973,036 square feet

in 153 buildings, of which 214,576 square feet is vacant (10.9 percent). The Denver CMSA is experiencing a decrease in vacancy rates, however, with the overall office vacancy rate at 15.1 percent; the northwest submarket currently has a 20.1 percent office vacancy rate.

Given the current office vacancy rate in the northwest suburban office market, two to three years will be needed to normalize before substantial new office construction can be expected. During the next decade, Arvada is estimated to capture 26 percent of the office demand projected for the northwest submarket. Annually the city of Arvada will enjoy a market for approximately 74,300 square feet, and of this Arvada total, 25 percent, or 18,600 square feet per year, could be located in the Olde Town Arvada environs if adequate vacant land is available.

Industrial/Flex

The seven-county Denver industrial market is characterized as five major industrial submarkets. The city of Arvada is located within the northwest submarket. As of the fourth quarter of 2012, the entire market had 223,887,588 square feet of industrial space, with 23,411,041 square feet (10.5 percent) within the northwest submarket. The overall Denver CMSA industrial market has a vacancy rate of 5.1 percent, with the northwest submarket slightly higher at 5.2 percent. The city of Arvada has 5,163,683 square feet of industrial space in 260 industrial buildings, of which 429,782 square feet is vacant (8.3 percent). Arvada has 2.3 percent of the metro Denver industrial inventory and 22.1 percent of the northwest submarket's.

The northwest submarket is expected to increase its average annual demand for industrial space from 286,231 square feet in 2013 to 427,435 square feet in 2023, averaging 354,954 annually over the ten-year period. The city of Arvada is projected to capture 22 percent of the estimated market for industrial space during the next decade, and annually it should enjoy a market for

Projected Demand, 2013–2023

Type of space	Projected annual demand
Office	74,300 sq. ft.
Industrial	78,300 sq. ft.
Retail	84,900 sq. ft.
Residential	620 units
Single family	340 units
Townhouse/condominium	113 units
Rental apartments	169 units

78,300 square feet, of which 15,700 square feet will be flex/research and development.

Retail

The seven-county Denver CMSA retail market is divided into 12 major submarkets. Arvada is located within the northwest suburban submarket. As of the fourth quarter of 2012, the entire Denver CMSA had 156,422,550 square feet of retail space, with 13,529,431 square feet, or 8.6 percent, located within the northwest suburban submarket. Overall, the current vacancy rate is 7.1 percent in the Denver CMSA retail market, while the northwest suburban submarket's retail vacancy rate is at 12 percent. Arvada has 5,578,367 square feet of retail space, of which 438,081 square feet is vacant (7.9 percent). The city of Arvada accounts for 3.6 percent of the metro Denver retail space and 41.2 percent of the northwest submarket.

The city of Arvada is expected to add 620 new households annually over the next decade. The city can currently support 6,038,126 square feet of retail space, which will rise to 6,886,850 square feet by 2023, and annually it is estimated that the market for retail space in the city of Arvada will grow by 84,900 square feet.

Compared with historical trends over the past ten years, these projections take into account a 20 percent drop in square footage needs, primarily because of changes in how retail product is being delivered and the siphoning of revenues from Internet retail sales. A strong likelihood exists that these trends will continue or even accelerate. The panel believes that the city needs to be cognizant of this important change, given the high reliance of municipal funding on sales tax.

Residential

Over the next decade, metro Denver will average construction of 18,480 residential units annually, of which 10,785 will be detached single-family homes, 2,723 will be townhomes and condominiums, and 4,972 will be rental apartments. The northwest submarket, which makes up the environs of the city of Arvada, will experience an annual average demand for 2,147 units, including 1,224 single-family homes, 399 townhomes and condominiums, and 524 rental apartments.

Arvada is projected annually to enjoy an average market for 620 residential units, including 340 single-family homes, 113 townhomes and condominiums (50/50 split), and 169 rental apartments. These projections are based on a variety of sources, including the annual Denver Regional Council of Governments cooperative forecast. Although they may seem low, these projections take into account the future location of TOD sites in the city. However, the panel feels that the capture rate of units for the city from the northwest submarket total could be higher, depending on the land use changes that might occur as a result of the TOD framework plan.

Understanding and Designing a Healthy, Active Community

HISTORY INDICATES THAT built-environment changes can have a tremendous impact on population health. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, many cities faced severe epidemics of infectious disease, including tuberculosis, cholera, and yellow fever. These epidemics were effectively mitigated through a variety of changes in public infrastructure and design. For example, aqueducts were built to pipe in fresh water, parks were established to allow access to fresh air and open space, rail lines offered a reliable mode of transportation that allowed people to commute to work and helped relieve urban overcrowding, and development regulations set minimum standards for what constituted a healthy living environment (e.g., New York State Tenement House Act).

Today, communities across the United States are facing obesity and chronic disease rates of epic proportions. Emerging research indicates that once again, built-environment interventions can play a role in transforming communities to promote public health. This section provides background on today's health concerns from both national and local perspectives. It also outlines a series of best practice guidelines for shaping a built environment that supports community health.

Understanding Today's Obesity and Chronic Illness Epidemic

People who are overweight or obese are at higher risk for many chronic illnesses, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. Today, approximately two-thirds of U.S. adults and one-third of U.S. youth are obese or overweight, with rates expected to continue to increase dramatically. Since 1980, obesity rates have doubled among U.S. adults and tripled among U.S. children.

The costs of this epidemic are enormous. In 2008, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that medical costs attributable to obesity were approximately \$147 billion per year. If trends continue along these lines, by 2030, 86 percent of adults will be overweight or obese, and total attributable health care costs will be \$860 billion to \$956 billion per year.

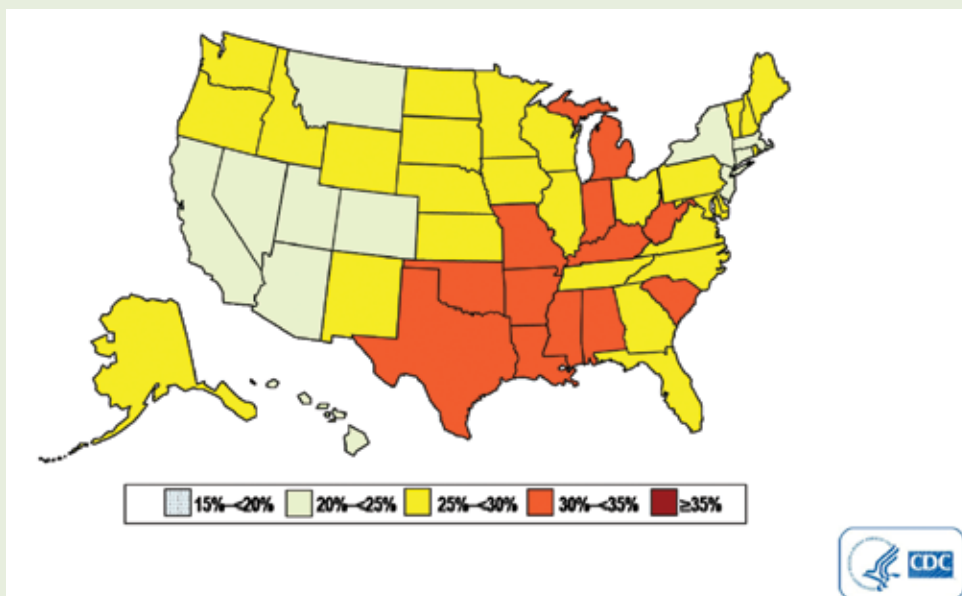
Although Colorado has long been considered a very healthy state, it is not immune to this epidemic. The Arvada Healthy Places initiative states that health data for the specific study area in Arvada are not available; however, the city feels that the data it does have correlate to higher obesity rates in comparison with the rest of the community. According to county health rankings from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the adult obesity rate for Jefferson County was approximately 15 percent in 2004, and it increased from 17 percent in 2010 to 18 percent in 2011 and 19 percent in 2012.

Colorado is experiencing even higher obesity rates in its children. In 2004, 28.4 percent of children in Colorado were overweight or obese; in 2011 that number climbed to 31.4 percent. The childhood obesity rates are even greater for Colorado's ethnic and minority children: 33 percent of Latino children were overweight or obese between 2008 and 2010. These data are important for Arvada, where approximately one-quarter (24.6 percent) of the population is under 18 years of age.

Benefits of Physical Activity

Physical activity is a critical part of weight control and chronic disease prevention, but research shows that fewer than half of U.S. adults and youth report meet recommended levels of physical activity. The U.S. Surgeon General calls for adults to have at least 150 minutes of

Prevalence of Self-Reported Obesity among U.S. Adults, 2011



Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Note: Prevalence reflects BRFSS methodological changes in 2011, and those estimates should not be compared to previous years.

moderate physical activity (or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity) every week. Children should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day. However, in Colorado, only 49 percent of Colorado children five to 14 years of age get 60 minutes of physical activity each day (2011 Community Health Survey), and only

29 percent of Colorado adolescents get 60 minutes of physical activity each day (2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey). Clearly, Colorado's children are in need of more physical activity.

The benefits of physical activity extend far beyond weight management, including the following:

- Lower risk of cardiovascular disease;
- Lower risk for type 2 diabetes;
- Lower risk for colon and breast cancers;
- Stress reduction and improved mental health;
- Improved academic performance in children;
- Stronger bones;
- Improved balance; and
- Increased life expectancy.



Health Disparities

Given these tremendous benefits, physical activity is truly the best medicine for promoting health and preventing illness. Currently, the World Health Organization has called for “health and health equity” to be at the heart of city planning and governance. Communities should strive to create environments that are supportive of healthy lifestyles and maximize the opportunities for all residents to get the daily physical activity they need to stay healthy. Although some residents may have the time and money to join a gym and visit on a regular basis, the Healthy Places initiative study area has many low-income residents who may not have this luxury. An association often exists between lower economic status and poor health outcomes. Improvements to health-supporting community infrastructure such as pedestrian paths, bikeways, recreational facilities, and accessible, healthy food options can go a long way to ensuring that all members of the community can live healthier lives.

The Arvada study area, which has a population of 22,265, is home to many low-income residents with high health needs. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Denver-Aurora-Broomfield Metropolitan Statistical Area median income of \$73,900, 57 percent of households are low income and 27 percent are very low income, making a combined percentage of 84 percent of low-income households in the Arvada study area. A large percentage of children (69.5 percent) in the study area are on free and reduced-price lunch programs, and the average minority population in the local schools is 49.4 percent. The city of Arvada would greatly benefit from taking measures to better understand the health disparities in its community. A Health Impact Assessment is a potential tool for doing so. A Health Impact Assessment is a means to consider public health in decision making. Internationally, such an assessment is defined as a combination of procedures, methods, and tools that systematically judges the potential, and sometimes unintended, effects of a policy, plan, program, or project on the health of a

population and the distribution of those effects within a population. More information can be found at the San Francisco Department of Public Health’s website for its Program on Health, Equity and Sustainability, <http://www.sfpdph.org/resources/hia-tools>.



Research shows a current trend in communities of focusing on the importance of the built environment when promoting and improving health. In the words of Aristotle, “We ought to plan the ideal of our city with an eye to four considerations. The first, as being the most indispensable, is health” (Politics, ca. 350 BC). In today’s trend of concentrating on the connection between built environment and health, communities are offering both deliberate and incidental opportunities for physical activity, with the goal of the healthier choice being the easier choice. Successes in improving health through altering the built environment are seen through Portland, Oregon’s extensive bike infrastructure system. Portland’s bike system is comprehensive, connected, and user-friendly.

A Health Impact Assessment can be a useful tool for decision makers.

Best Practices: Guidelines for Designing a Healthier Arvada

THE PANEL HAS IDENTIFIED a series of best practices to help Arvada begin addressing the issues of designing a healthier city. The ideas discussed in this section address a variety of community health issues and suggest built environment initiatives that maximize opportunities for active transportation, recreation, and access to healthy food. These guidelines represent a selection of best practices from around the country; they have been adapted from a variety of resources, including the New York City Active Design Guidelines, National Association of City Transportation Officials publications, and academic papers, among others. The panel has made several specific recommendations based on these guidelines for the Arvada study site.

For the built environment, the panel has identified best practices in three focus areas:

- Walking and biking;
- Recreation spaces; and
- Access to healthy food.

A Definition of Best Practices

Best practices are defined as a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means and that is used as a benchmark. A best practice describes a set of defined methods, processes, systems, or practices used by organizations to meet performance and efficiency standards within their industry. Best practices are guidelines that are used to obtain the most efficient and effective way of completing a task, using repeatable and proven procedures.

The panel believes these three areas offer Arvada its best practical chance to see measurable results.

Walking and Biking

Arvada has a strong foundation for encouraging walking and biking in the community. The regional and county trail systems are tremendous resources as well as a source of community pride. The Olde Town offers excellent pedestrian infrastructure and a strong sense of walkability. The city is staffed with a passionate bike and pedestrian coordinator who has worked with community members to undertake a well-considered assessment of the current gaps in the bike and pedestrian system and actively seeks out funding and support from state and federal sources. Finally, the city offers a bike-share program to its employees, which further supports the notion that Arvada is striving to be a community that is friendly to walking and biking. However, many opportunities exist for the community to further enhance this position, and more work could be done to develop complete streets that respond to the needs of all users of the road, including cyclists and pedestrians.

A biking and walking culture in the city needs to be backed up by good local transit service that connects major destinations to Arvada neighborhoods. Destinations such as the future Gold Line stations, the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities, the Apex Center recreational facility, and major shopping places need transit circulator-type service with frequent headways, bike racks, and evening service. Biking and walking will be far more acceptable if transit is a backup option in rain, after dark, or in any other circumstance that would make biking or walking unsafe or uncomfortable.

Guideline: Prioritize walking and biking as safe, viable, and enjoyable modes of transportation and recreation throughout the community. Complete gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network to create a continuous, interconnected system.

- Recommendation: Create frequent, well-marked pedestrian and bike connections to the county and regional trail systems. This will allow more residents to have safe and easy access to a critical recreation and transportation resource. It may also help draw visitors to Olde Town and other amenities and serve as a potential opportunity to enhance local tourism.
- Recommendation: Focus sidewalk paving and construction efforts on connections to major activity centers such as Olde Town, schools, city parks, and the Arvada Center. This will be particularly important to encourage safe, comfortable walking and biking opportunities that respond to the needs of Arvada's youth and families.
- Recommendation: Address wayfinding needs, and develop a system of signage for pedestrians and cyclists. Newcomers to the community as well as existing residents may be unaware of community amenities or confused about directions and routes. This situation can be mitigated with the development of improved wayfinding signage for pathways and trails and the location of key destination and points of interest. Neighborhood residents could be engaged in the design of the signage to reflect the character or history of each neighborhood. The city is also interested in providing bicycle maps that would rate the pathways or bike trails graphically as to length and difficulty.
- Recommendation: Require enhanced street connectivity in new developments. Shorter, pedestrian-scale blocks will enhance walkability and permeability to connect new developments to the surrounding community.



The panel recommends sidewalk design strategies to maximize pedestrian use of sidewalks and make walking a safe and enjoyable activity. In some locations, the city has already begun to implement superior sidewalk design.



- Recommendation: Undertake measures to complete the pedestrian and bicycle network as soon as possible. The city has already effectively mapped the gaps in its sidewalk and trails network. By rough estimates, the complete bicycle system and most of the sidewalk gaps could be filled and a network completed for under \$5 million in five years.

Guideline: Strive for excellence in sidewalk design.

Pedestrians are more likely to use sidewalks with high-quality design and amenities, including appropriate width, lighting, trees, buffers from moving vehicles (for example, in the form of trees or on-street parking), street furniture, and public art. Dynamic uses such as street cafés can also create visual interest that encourages pedestrian activity. In addition, more pedestrian activity will result in more eyes on the street, which can contribute to community safety and encourage more community interaction.

- Recommendation: Implement design strategies to maximize pedestrian use of sidewalks and make walking a safe and enjoyable activity. High standards for sidewalks should be particularly emphasized for new development sites and for road construction projects that connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, and major activity centers.
- Recommendation: Develop a place-making public art program for civic spaces and along pathways to increase use of pathways. In civic spaces, artwork must be of professional caliber. Along pathways, an opportunity exists to feature more whimsical and amateur art that is created in local studios and that can be rotated from time to time. This creates points of interest in the community to get people out and about and energizes the local arts community.
- Recommendation: Create neighborhood gateway markers, using appropriately scaled signage or public art. Many communities use this technique to help strengthen neighborhood identity: for example,

Chicago's Chinatown has a Chinese arch, Greek Town has Corinthian columns, and the Pullman neighborhood has murals of railroad cars. Such an initiative could help build neighborhood networks and instill a sense of neighborhood pride. Installation of gateway markers should coincide with intersection improvements to maximize pedestrian safety.

Guideline: Calm traffic to maximize safety for all users of the road.

Traffic-calming tools provide visual indication to cars of multiple road users and encourage drivers to travel at safer speeds. Interventions may include installing landscaped medians, pedestrian refuge islands, and curb extensions. A variety of intersection treatments can be used to enhance the design and visibility of pedestrian crossings. Ultimately, traffic calming can help ensure that Arvada is home to a network of "complete streets" that are safe and enjoyable for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users.

- Recommendation: Conduct a needs assessment, and implement traffic-calming and pedestrian improvements at major intersections. Priority should be given to crossings that connect pedestrians to major community activity centers, such as the Wadsworth Boulevard crossing between the Columbine neighborhood and Olde Town. The current Ralston Road redesign initiative may serve as a good example for how the city can transform an auto-dominated thoroughfare into a multimodal street that accommodates all users.

Guideline: Improve bicycle infrastructure and amenities.

To encourage bicycling, Arvada must reach out to residents who are not already avid riders. To make them comfortable, the city needs to think beyond quantitative measures, such as miles of bike lanes, and include qualitative considerations, such as the different types of users (older people, children) as well as different purposes (recreational use, commuting, shopping, bike messengers). Arvada needs to offer choices for all types

of riders. Bike facilities do not always mean additional space or pavement; they often have more to do with traffic management and organizing the various users of roads and sidewalks, measures that can be far more cost-effective than widening the pavement section.

- Recommendation: Implement design strategies to maximize visibility of bikeways and bike crossings at intersections. The National Association of City Transportation Officials offers an excellent guide for designing safer, highly visible bicycle facilities. Particular attention should be given to providing safe, well-marked bike paths within new development sites.
- Recommendation: Expand bicycle parking in Arvada. Ample bicycle parking should be provided at major destinations, transit stations, schools, and commercial strips. Require new developments to provide bicycle parking and storage. Encourage and incentivize existing property owners to provide bike parking and storage.

Guideline: Promote transit access with comfortable bus stops and train stops that are accessible to pedestrians and bikes.

Bus stops are often on the lowest tier of transit service priorities, and it often shows in stops with inaccessible access routes, without shelters or benches, or even a paved waiting area. Although much of this responsibility lies with the transit provider, the city of Arvada can assist in improving conditions so getting to and from a bus stop is safe and pleasant. Well-designed bus stops can be an amenity of the streetscape rather than a detraction.

- Recommendation: Require walkable and bicycle access to all transit stops.
- Recommendation: Strive for excellence in the design of new transit stations. Provide a variety of welcoming, attractive amenities, including benches, protected waiting areas, bike parking, and wayfinding systems.



Guideline: Refine the mix of land uses—people walk and bike more often when they have attractive destinations, such as shops, schools, community centers, parks, and transit. Especially consider this guideline for new developments.

The city has successfully implemented its own bike-share program.

- Recommendation: Regularly catalogue and review commercial tenants for commercial space within the study area. Determine what is in abundance and what is missing. Determine what incentives can be used to adjust the tenant mix.
- Recommendation: Incorporate an electric car charging station somewhere in Olde Town Arvada. This will encourage the “linger factor.” Electric car owners stay longer and spend more in neighborhoods where they linger while waiting for cars to charge.
- Recommendation: Consider pop-up businesses for vacant stores provided at reduced rent to draw people to commercial areas.
- Recommendation: Consider pop-up exhibits to temporarily provide interesting visual space for vacant stores.

Recreation Spaces

Proximity to parks and other recreational facilities is consistently associated in recent research with higher levels of physical activity and healthier weight status among youth and adults. Recreation spaces encourage regular physical activity, serve as community gathering spaces, and often contribute to a sense of community pride and identity.

The city of Arvada and Apex are committed to providing high-quality recreation opportunities and have undertaken a variety of investments to improve the city park system. Although the Apex recreational center on 72nd Avenue is an important and successful community health resource, many residents of the study area in southeast Arvada are disconnected from the Apex facility because of distance, cost, and transportation issues.

Guideline: Ensure walkable and bikable access to recreational facilities for all community members.

- Recommendation: If feasible, provide an additional community recreation facility within the Healthy Places study area. Evaluate accessibility gaps (such as distance, costs, and cultural barriers). Identify methods to overcome these gaps and maximize use of the facility by all residents in southeast Arvada. In the long term, an additional community recreation facility located in the study area would be desirable as a tool to enhance physical activity. However, many of the low-to-moderate-income families would be able to use such a facility only if their use fees were subsidized. The potential location adjacent to the Arvada Center would not be ideal in terms of accessibility for residents of the study area because of the change in elevation, which is an impediment to walkable or bikable access.

Even if a site could be obtained, the cost to build a new community recreation center in the study area could be prohibitive and may not benefit low-to-moderate-income residents if a fee is charged. An

alternative, less costly solution could be to provide regular transportation to the existing center and subsidized entrance fees. Additionally, selected exercise classes and programs could be brought to the residents in shared civic spaces such as a park or school gym.

Guideline: Design parks and recreational spaces for a variety of interests, cultures, and age groups.

Parks and recreational spaces should accommodate the needs of a variety of users, including active play spaces for children, athletic courts and fields for sports, and quiet, restful spaces for passive enjoyment. They should also complement the cultural preferences of the neighboring community. Such spaces respond to diverse community recreational needs for residents of all interests, ages, and abilities.

- Recommendation: Provide adult fitness equipment to complement existing recreation facilities. Adult exercise equipment and walking tracks can be located near children's playgrounds and offer an opportunity for parents and guardians to exercise while they are supervising their children. Fitness trails (also known as par course facilities) can be integrated into the existing trail system, to inspire different types of exercise among trail users. Such facilities may help support the physical activity needs of low-to-moderate-income residents who are deterred from recreation facilities that require a fee to participate.

Guideline: Provide amenities at parks and recreation facilities to encourage longer stays, including lighting, benches, shade, water fountains, and restrooms where possible.

- Recommendation: Assess opportunities in Arvada to provide enhancements that will maximize park use. Some indications exist that certain park facilities in Arvada (such as Columbine Park), would be better used by neighborhood residents if additional amenities were provided. For example, lighting would enhance the sense of safety and encourage play and



physical activity later into the evening. Additional trees or shade structures would allow more picnicking opportunities and park use by residents of all ages. Temporary, portable restrooms could be used to support special community events.

- **Recommendation:** Research, design, and implement highly amenitized public and private outdoor spaces that cater to the electronic needs of modern citizens, including abundant electrical outlets for charging electronics and the deployment of free wireless broadband (Wi-Fi, WiMAX) to encourage longer stays and public gathering. If people know they can charge their tablet or laptop or access the internet in a particular location, they are more likely to travel to this location and spend time there.

Guideline: Strive for design excellence in creating play spaces for children.

Research has linked time spent outdoors with moderate to vigorous activity in children. School yards and play facilities that incorporate colorful ground markings and murals, as well as natural terrain and landscaping, can stimulate more active play than barren play spaces.

Colorful ground markings can serve as a low-cost way to enliven a school yard and encourage more active, innovative play.

- **Recommendation:** Assess opportunities for improvements to school yards and play spaces in Arvada. Certain play spaces, such as the St. Anne's school yard in Olde Town, may be ripe for design interventions to encourage more active play. The design process could incorporate ideas from students and community members. Such public engagement can encourage a community's sense of ownership of the site and consequently lead to more frequent use.

School yards and play facilities that incorporate colorful ground markings and murals, as well as natural terrain and landscaping, can stimulate more active play than can barren play spaces.

Access to Healthy Foods

As a community, Arvada has a history of successful initiatives to promote healthy foods, including a farmers market in the center of Olde Town, zoning regulations that welcome small-scale agriculture practices, and expanding programs to instill healthy eating habits in children through school gardens. The community should build upon these successes to further enhance access to healthy foods for all of Arvada's residents.

Guideline: Encourage access to fresh, healthy foods for all members of the community.

- Recommendation: Enhance the Arvada farmers market. The current farmers market can be expanded and strengthened. It offers an important community-gathering opportunity that improves access to fresh, healthy food in a part of town that is lacking in grocery services. Farmers markets are becoming a key social gathering place and induce residents to get out and walk in their downtown area. To thrive, the farmers markets need and deserve the full support of the city. To that end, the city should work with the operator to identify the most appropriate location(s), day(s), and time(s) for the market to minimize conflict and maximize potential benefit to the community. Taking into consideration the climate and

the schedule of other farmers markets in the region, the potential for an evening market that offers fresh produce as well as booths selling prepared foods is worth evaluating.

- Recommendation: Identify those portions of the community without walkable access to healthy foods, and undertake initiatives to support better food access in these areas. Potential approaches may include the following:
 - Enhance and expand community and school gardens, as well as community-supported agriculture opportunities.
 - Work with smaller-scale convenience stores to offer attractive, healthy produce options.
 - Develop a program to support mobile produce vendors or "green carts."
 - Support community kitchen and restaurant incubator facilities.
 - Encourage entrepreneurial ethnic markets that reflect the food preferences of local cultures. These may range from permanent shops in available retail storefronts to farmers market stands, to food vendors at festivals and community gathering spaces.

The current farmers market can be expanded and strengthened. It offers an important community-gathering opportunity that improves access to fresh, healthy food in a part of town that is lacking in grocery services.



Specific Site Recommendations

SAVVY COMMUNITIES HAVE discovered that they can accomplish more and achieve multiple community goals when they set high development standards and when individual development projects are harnessed to a larger community vision. Within the study area, Arvada is currently planning and reviewing five major development projects: the three Gold Line transit stations at Olde Town, Arvada Ridge, and Sheridan; the Walmart project on Ralston Road; and the new multifamily building on the edge of Olde Town Arvada. These projects provide an unparalleled opportunity to raise the bar for new development in Arvada. They provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to set the template for a healthier and more prosperous Arvada. The city should use these projects, especially the private sector developments, to leverage community benefits and improvements that will serve the city's overall goal of differentiating itself from its regional competitors.

Going forward, Arvada also needs to think strategically and holistically about how the three new transit stations fit into its long-range vision for the future. Experience shows that cities that plan transaction by transaction do not achieve as much as those that subordinate the individual real estate transactions to a larger community vision. The panel believes that Arvada's vision for a healthier, more active, and prosperous community should be embraced by all of its development partners, and the necessary standards and controls should be established as legally binding agreements to maximize the benefits to Arvada and its citizens.

Olde Town

Arvada has engaged various consultants and experts over a ten-year public planning period for the Gold Line and has developed a station area plan and detailed



Olde Town Arvada includes a healthy mix of commercial and civic uses.





The historic nature of Olde Town Arvada, combined with restaurants and shops, represents the outward identity of the community within the Denver metropolitan region.

design guidelines. The vision anticipates a revitalized Olde Town better connected to other parts of the city and a “new town” down the hill that will offer new uses with easy access to the station. This vision sees the station serving commuters, attracting visitors, and serving as a magnet for new development, especially residential. Ridership projections indicate 2,900 boardings per day in 2030, with 600 commuter parking spaces.

The station area plan covers Olde Town, the new town area of nearly equal size south of the rail station, and a sizable area to the east along 56th Avenue. The Arvada Urban Renewal Authority has recently issued a request for quotations for a master developer for the northeast portion of the new town area.

Tension is inherent between supporting regional transit with ample park-and-ride capacity and creating a more urban, walkable place supportive of neighborhoods and businesses. Characteristics creating that tension include

- Commuter habits that have most transit riders arriving before businesses are open, and only a few who will shop downtown while on their way to and from work; and
- Limited opportunity to share commuter parking with other uses. Because commuters use parking during the day, shared opportunities exist mainly with uses such as restaurants specializing in evening dining and cinemas that attract most customers on evenings and weekends. Consequently, commuter parking tends to be underused in the evenings, leaving a large, inactive space in its neighborhood.

The panel believes that the vision for the Olde Town station area should emphasize development of a strong mixed-use neighborhood that maximizes walkable activities and minimizes park-and-ride functions. The panel recognizes that this view differs significantly from current plans and does not come to it lightly. However, in the panel’s view, Olde Town will best meet its potential if, like other successful commercial districts

hosting commuter-rail stations, it meets some, but not all demand for commuter parking. The panel recommends examining a phased approach to accommodating commuter parking by making greater use of existing surface parking in the near term and scaling back as new development occurs on those surface lots. This approach encourages park-and-ride use at other stations and increased reliance on buses, walking, and biking to the Olde Town station.

Guiding principles for shifting the priority for the future of the Olde Town redevelopment area include the following:

- Refine existing guidelines for the redevelopment area to strengthen health objectives.
- Evaluate health benefits of public investments.
- Be patient with redevelopment to achieve the best results.

Refining Existing Guidelines

Arvada's existing community development principles and station area guidelines provide excellent guidance in creating new mixed-use neighborhoods near the rail station. Yet these guidelines can be strengthened by clarifying how the redevelopment area can integrate with Olde Town and adjacent neighborhoods. To the extent possible, they also need to become legally binding so that the community's goals are realized through redevelopment.

- Use block spacing in "new town" similar to that in Olde Town (approximately 325 feet), which makes for a very walkable area and serves to distribute traffic among many streets.
- Keep street crossings to less than about 50 feet. This reduces pedestrians' exposure to traffic and allows most people to cross the street in 15 seconds or less.
- Where signals control intersections, give ample time so that people can cross streets without feeling hurried or threatened. Keep signal cycles as short as possible (preferably less than 90 seconds) so that



The plan for the Olde Town area. Arvada's existing community development principles and station area guidelines provide excellent guidance in creating new mixed-use neighborhoods near the rail station. Yet these guidelines can be strengthened by clarifying how the redevelopment area can integrate with Olde Town and adjacent neighborhoods.

people wanting to cross streets do not face long waits for the signal to change.

- Investigate improved pedestrian and bike crossings of Wadsworth Bypass to improve safety for people crossing from existing neighborhoods to Olde Town and the transit station. ULI deems multilane roads with more than 20,000 vehicles per day as barriers to pedestrians; Wadsworth Bypass carries more than 60,000 vehicles daily in its eight lanes. In short, it is too wide and busy to expect pedestrians to cross only at grade.

Increasing Accessibility

Access demands will be many: vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle. In terms of encouraging physical activity and safety, the following will be important:

- Facilitate pedestrian and bike travel through the area to other destinations, including connecting to regional trails.
- Improve local transit access to and from the station to minimize the number of transit users who must drive to the station.
- Capture the commuter park-and-ride traffic that does occur at the periphery to minimize conflict with other vehicles and pedestrians.

Arvada Ridge Station

The proposed station is located between Lee Street and Kipling Parkway along Ridge Road within walking distance of the Red Rocks Community College Arvada campus and the Stenger/Lutz Sports Complex, both located north of the station. The south side is already largely built up with apartments that advertise relatively high rents. The developer who owns remaining open space immediately to the north of Ridge Road already developed a transit village south of Ridge Road consisting of upper-market apartments. The station is expected to have over 2,000 boardings per day.

The city conducted extensive station area planning and established a host of guiding principles and goals as early as 2007 in the then published Station Area Plan. The plan follows best practices for TOD around the country and, if realized, would create the model of a transit village that combines residential, institutional, retail, and commercial uses while serving nearby residents. The guidelines and goals of the Station Area Plan require good pedestrian and bike access for bike



The plan for the Arvada Ridge transit station. High-quality design and a good layout of the transit village will be crucial for attracting new residents and businesses in the regional marketplace.

commuters and recreational riders alike, all factors supporting healthy habits.

High-quality design and a good layout of the transit village will be crucial for attracting new residents and businesses in the regional marketplace. Station area plans and goals will remain only pretty pictures and aspirations unless the critical and essential elements of the plan become part of a legally binding general

Multifamily housing near the Arvada Ridge transit station site. The next development phases should meet and exceed the design standards set by this benchmark.



development plan. Such a plan can then be used as the benchmark in the development review process under the current planned unit development (PUD) zoning. The next development phases must meet or exceed those benchmarks. As in Olde Town and in many neighborhood transit stations around the nation, parking is a critical element that creates tension between the desired walkability and the need to accommodate residents who will drive to the station. Therefore, parking needs to be carefully designed to reconcile the conflict.

Guiding Principles

The Station Area Plan's specific goals for pedestrian access and connectivity as well as recreational biking and walking need to be part of a general development plan and part of the upcoming capital improvement programs for streets and sidewalks so they are in place when the station opens. The plan goals include the following:

- Make Ridge Road a successful spine through the station area. Ridge Road must become a pedestrian-friendly street, with connections to the north and south to link the development areas.
- Create pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the station area that link the station area to surrounding land uses.
- Create bicycle and pedestrian links to existing regional trail systems, including the Van Bibber Creek Trail south of the station.

Additional Recommendations

In addition, the panel suggests the following:

- A successful transit village needs to have a recognizable identity and an urban form that creates high-quality open spaces for outdoor activities and encourages people to walk around in the village for errands or for pleasure. In the given setting with development opportunities to the north and the south of Ridge Road, making the station the hub and center

of the transit village and orienting the development on both sides toward the station would garner most success. This will enhance safety by bringing eyes to the station and provide a pleasant setting for transit riders waiting for the train. Everything to allow easy crossing of Ridge Road and the tracks should be done so that these elements become connectors instead of dividers.

- Possibly this could be achieved by separating Ridge Road from the tracks and lining the north side of the platform with development. In this scenario Ridge Road would be realigned slightly to the north, thus preventing Ridge Road and the tracks from adding up to a double barrier.
- For the benefit of easy orientation and circulation, build the at-grade crossing in the alignment of Miller Street as a visual continuation of the street, even if the crossing may be open for pedestrians and bicyclists only. This will make Miller the spine of the transit village.
- The transit village and the station will serve not only its residents but also the existing communities to the east, which have to cross Kipling Parkway. The new Ridge Road overpass provides one safe crossing, but its price is making the crossing north and south more difficult because of the depressed freeway-style roadway and the subsequent dead ends of several residential streets to the east. Improve the crosswalk across Kipling at 51st Place to the station to provide easy and direct access from the community east of Kipling Parkway. The overpass itself should be enhanced so that walking across is pleasant and comfortable and the sidewalks are well lit after dark.
- The station can also serve as a trailhead for the Kipling Trail with a connection through the north part of the village. The village should allow transit access and accommodate space near the station for shuttle or commuter feeder buses.

Sheridan Station

The panel agrees that this station area represents long-term redevelopment opportunities, primarily for employment sites. Its strength is regional road and rail access in an industrial zone. Within a half-mile of the station are Gold Strike Park, Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District, existing single-family homes, and a variety of commercial and industrial uses. Initially, this station would function almost exclusively as a park-and-ride location. Ridership projections show nearly 1,900 daily boardings in 2030, among the lowest of the Gold Line stations.

Although development potential near this station may take some years to occur, creating a framework that will support good pedestrian and bike access at the outset and that will support future development in the station's vicinity will be important. One opportunity would be to consider providing pedestrian and bike access directly from Sheridan Road (south of 60th Avenue) for those traveling to or from the regional trail. Other options to separate pedestrian and bike access

from commuter vehicles should also be examined.

Commuter parking will need to be obvious and attractive, prior to new development.



The plan for the Sheridan Road transit station. Although development potential may take some years to be fulfilled, creating a framework that will support good pedestrian and bike access at the outset is important. One opportunity is to consider providing pedestrian and bike access directly from Sheridan Road (south of 60th Avenue) for those traveling to or from the regional trail.

The Sheridan Road station area. Located in an industrial setting, this station will act primarily as an interceptor facility for those driving on I-76.



Arvada Triangle (North and South Plazas)

The biggest real estate challenge of the next generation will be the conversion of dead or dying strip commercial centers in the suburbs into walkable, mixed-use communities. The Triangle Area is located north and south of Ralston Road between Garrison and Independence Streets. In January 2011, the city developed an Outline Development Plan with various scenarios for the area that show multifamily housing and mixed use on the north side and big-box retail on the south, based on PUD zoning. For the south side a new 130,000-square-foot Walmart concept plan has now been submitted after earlier attempts to achieve mixed-use redevelopment ended without result. The city expects the Walmart development to be “high end” and linked to redeveloped and additional pad uses on the remainder of the site.

The two underperforming shopping areas on the south and north plazas present an extraordinary opportunity to rectify some of the problems that stem from the insertion of two superblocks into the fine-grained residential neighborhood fabric in this part of Arvada. The retail experience in both centers does not meet the expecta-

tions of today’s sophisticated shopper, and sales are declining while vacancies rise. The city’s redevelopment plan presents a fundamental reset to unlock the potential that these two vast land areas represent, especially in the north plaza area, which is located very close to the redesigned park along Ralston Creek.

At a minimum, the city should expect the highest-quality design standards and should leverage the new projects to help achieve other community objectives. For example, savvy communities know that when a chain store or franchise comes to town, it always has Plan A, Plan B, and Plan C, varying from off-the-shelf, corporate cookie-cutter design to place-responsive, site-specific design. What gets built depends on how much emphasis the community places on high-quality design.

National chains make an economic decision to locate on a particular tract of land in a specific community. Experience shows that they may complain about community requirements, but at the end of the day, they will do whatever they have to do to be in an economically profitable location. Arvada needs to ask this question: Do you want the character of Arvada to shape the new development, or do you want the new development to shape the character of Arvada?

The panel believes that Arvada should work with Walmart to get a site-specific urban format store that will encourage walkability and enhance the overall character of Arvada.

Guiding principles and recommendations largely included in the Outline Development Plan need to be strictly enforced:

- The proposed Walmart development needs to be designed specifically for the site and respond to the aspirations for redevelopment of the Arvada north plaza and the surrounding neighborhoods that border the south plaza on three sides. The goal should be to create a presentable street edge on both sides of Ralston Road.

A conceptual plan suggesting a change to the orientation and massing of the proposed Walmart.



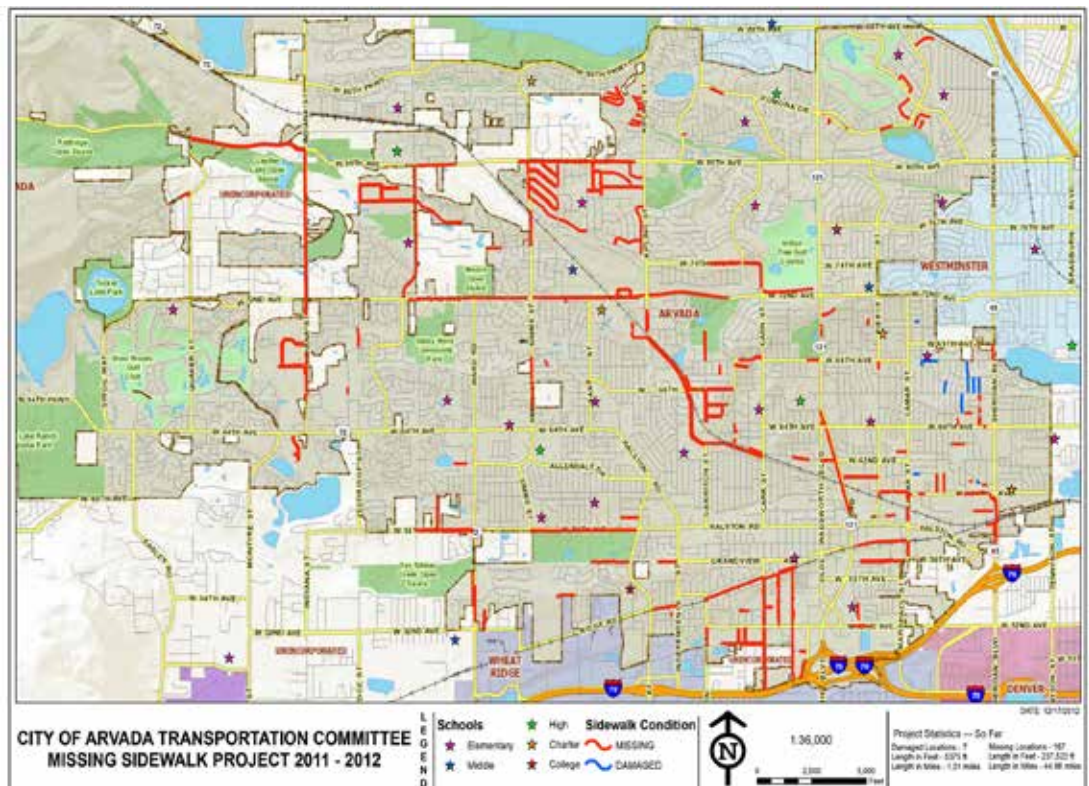
- Additional development parcels are available and need to be arranged in such a way that the entire south plaza becomes an attractive “lifestyle center” in which shoppers can walk from one store to another without using the car after parking it once.
- The shopping center needs pedestrian access points from all surrounding neighborhoods to encourage walking to the center.
- Stores and buildings should be placed on the edges of the plaza to create attractive edges toward the surrounding streets, especially Ralston Road (58th Avenue).
- Bicycle access, bike lanes, and bike parking need to be incorporated throughout the new shopping center.
- The superblock size should be broken up with a public right-of-way or easements according to the Outline Development Plan requirement for fine-grained circulation.

- Developer contributions should be negotiated for improvements in the surrounding communities, especially sidewalk improvements, connections to the nearby Ralston Creek Trail, and improved connectivity between the north and south plazas.

Bike and Pedestrian Access Plan

Many of the ideas to foster more physical activity rely on improved walking and biking facilities. As noted previously, the bike lane and path system can be completed for \$5 million. Arvada is well positioned financially to complete that system soon and in doing so to distinguish itself as a model city in supporting healthy recreation and transportation options for its citizens. “Five million in five years” could be the campaign to set Arvada at the forefront of bike- and pedestrian-friendly communities in the region. What’s more it would distinguish Arvada within the Denver metro area as a unique walkable and bikeable suburb.

Highlighted in red are those segments of the city’s sidewalk and trail system that need to be completed.



Programming for an Active Lifestyle

IMPROVING THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT is only one aspect of healthy community design. Successful implementation requires a wide range of programs that help people become familiar with the facilities and help them incorporate regular activity into their daily lives. Programs are crucial to making people comfortable and changing habits to overcome their resistance to change. Improvements to the built environment can require substantial capital investment and take many years to implement, whereas programming can be implemented relatively quickly and inexpensively—and can produce results sooner. Programming can be designed to make better use of existing facilities and infrastructure.

The city and public health officials can have a great impact with programs and events spread throughout the year designed to nurture a strong community culture based on an active, healthy lifestyle. Events

that are fun and social will stimulate participation and can become the entry points for residents to try new activities. Additionally, programs help residents develop supportive relationships with others who have similar interests, which will increase the likelihood they stick with the activity.

A wide range of activities and events are required to cater to diverse ages, abilities, and interests. Special care should be taken to ensure that events and activities appeal to newcomers and novices. Adding demanding, high-level events such as marathons or 100-mile bike rides will be less effective because they cater to people who are already committed to health. The city should be willing to experiment with trial events to test which events resonate with the residents in the study area. Trial events should be designed to reach out to new groups of residents and expose them to the recreation



CyclArvada, a take-off on the successful event Ciclovía that originated in Bogotá, Colombia, is an opportunity to introduce and promote biking to a large segment of the community in a safe and fun atmosphere.

facilities, trails, and service providers in the community. The recent “TryAthlon” held in Arvada is a great example of a trial program.

Apex currently offers many activities and programs at the center in West Arvada, but they are at some distance from the population of the study area. To get a higher level of participation and benefit residents in the study area, more programs should be offered in the Olde Town district and help establish the healthy identity for the communities in the study area.

Implementing a comprehensive and effective healthy lifestyle program is time consuming and requires leadership. The panel recommends that the city of Arvada modify the current position of sustainability director to include coordinating community health programs. Numerous private and public programs and funds exist, and more are emerging each year. A health and sustainability director can tap into these resources to obtain grants to fund programs and improvements and to accelerate the process of becoming a healthy community and addressing the increasing needs of the community. A full-time position focused on bringing these resources to Arvada can positively affect health, resulting in substantial future savings in health care expenditures.

Develop a Neighborhood-Level Action Plan

As an initial step, the panel recommends that the city of Arvada develop a Neighborhood-Level Action Plan for the study area. The objective of the program is to empower neighborhoods to define key improvements to the built environment that will most affect their neighborhood. This is a “bottom up” approach to identifying the most important needs of each neighborhood and involving residents in creating a solution.

Arvada will seek a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation to establish a neighborhood improvement fund, which could offer mini-grants to each neighborhood in

the study area. The grant could provide for a two-year staff position at the city to coordinate the organization of neighborhood residents, identification of priorities, and application process for each eligible neighborhood. Examples of appropriate projects include the following:

- Adding elements to a local park to increase activity, such as a basketball court, pickleball court, skate park, or lighting;
- Making improvements to walkability and bikability, such as adding benches along trails, improving crosswalks, installing signage, or constructing a missing piece of sidewalk;
- Installing a kitchen garden and composting at the local school; and
- Creating a neighborhood walkability plan.

Grants could range from \$50,000 to \$200,000 each, depending upon the size of the area served and the scope of the project.

This Neighborhood-Level Action Plan can be relatively easy to implement in the short term. It would stimulate community engagement, enhance neighborhood identity, and form the basis for communicating with people about the other elements of Arvada’s healthy living programs. Additionally, the plan would build leadership capacity in each neighborhood, which will reach into other aspects of the community. This bottom-up approach would ensure that improvements address the specific needs of each neighborhood and thereby be more likely to obtain participation after the project is complete.

Host Community Gatherings

Currently the city of Arvada offers a series of fairs and festivals in Olde Town, such as the St. Patrick’s Day Festival and Scarecrow Festival. These street festivals are popular and foster a strong sense of community. Yet an opportunity exists to expand upon the calendar with a series of events focused on health and sports,



A community health fair can attract underserved community members who do not regularly engage with the medical system.

which will begin to build the culture of a healthy lifestyle in Arvada. Fun sporting events can help build new community traditions and define the future identity of Arvada as a healthy community. They will attract new residents interested in an active lifestyle, and that will rub off on others to encourage them to participate and make lifestyle changes.

An expanded calendar of gatherings and outdoor athletic activities and events can include the following:

- An annual Community Health Fair held in Olde Town and coordinated with local health care providers. Apex hosts a health fair. Hosting an event in Olde Town will facilitate reaching the at-risk residents of the study area and help define the new identity as a healthy community. A Community Health Fair can attract underserved members of the community who do not regularly engage with the regular medical system. Medical facilities can be intimidating for many, so a health fair can expose residents to services and information in a less formal atmosphere.
- CyclArvada, a take-off on the successful event Ciclo-vía that originated in Bogotá, Colombia. The weekly event in Bogotá is now so popular that it includes 2 million people per weekend (30 percent of the population). It creates a festival-type atmosphere focused on physical activity. Live Well Colorado has organized similar events named Viva Streets, and numerous Ciclovías are emerging across the country. This recurring event removes cars from a length of streets for a few hours at a time, opening the street for cyclists, walkers, runners, and skaters. It gives people a break from the stress of cars for a few hours, creating a festival atmosphere that gets people outside. Shop owners and restaurants are encouraged to open their doors to serve people along the route. This event could link with neighboring municipalities to create a Front Range-wide event.
- Outdoor exercise classes offered in conjunction with Apex. Because of the distance from the community recreation center and an absence of fitness centers in the study area, a selection of outdoor exercise

Because the study area lacks fitness centers, a selection of outdoor exercise classes should be provided to serve the needs of area residents.



classes should be provided to serve the needs of area residents. Evening yoga in McIlroy Park, morning power walks starting at the Town Square, group cruiser bike rides through the neighborhoods, and Zumba on the Town Square—these do not require additional equipment or facilities and bring residents out of their homes to engage in physical activity.

Leverage Existing Social Structures to Focus on Healthy Living

Within the study area, organizations and groups are in place with which the city can partner to leverage the city's investment and build social capital. Rather than duplicating networks or systems that are already in place, the city could reach out to the following groups:

- The interfaith group, a network of faith-based groups, already has a functioning system and network for assisting residents in need, particularly senior and disabled residents. This group successfully imple-

mented a program named Building Blocks to enhance neighborhood cohesiveness. It could be assisted to expand its role to reach out to the study area population, particularly minority populations, that for cultural or language reasons may be reluctant to participate or are unaware of community health opportunities.

- Service clubs, such as the Rotary Club, can be encouraged to make healthy living a program priority, become community partners for initiatives, and provide a source of volunteers.
- Area businesses could become engaged as program or event sponsors and a source of volunteers for community events.
- Employers can be educated and encouraged to support the health of older adults by offering medical plans that include the Silver Sneakers program. The Silver Sneakers program offers a subsidy of fitness center membership to people who are eligible for Medicare or retirees.

- The city should partner with existing schools to take advantage of available indoor and outdoor facilities to offer after-school programs, adult evening fitness classes, and nutrition and healthy cooking classes.
- The CATCH Healthy Habits program operated by the Senior Resource Center could be expanded. This program pairs adult volunteers over 50 with children in grades K–5 to encourage healthier eating habits and physical activity. Research indicates that adults who volunteer have lower rates of depression and mortality and greater functional ability, and children benefit from the mentorship offered by volunteers.

Additional Program Opportunities

Many other opportunities will allow the community to highlight and emphasize a healthy community. Because walking and biking appear the most immediate and direct benefits to the populace, the panel recommends consideration of the following:

- Facilitating walking
 - Organize walking groups for seniors.
 - Create walk-to-school days every month in cooperation with the Jefferson County school system. Recruit parent volunteers to accompany children. (Many communities have “walking school bus programs.”) Support the Colorado Safe Routes to School program to encourage children to walk or bicycle to school.
 - Establish a citywide walking challenge, such as the Mayor of Boise’s Walk 150 challenge for all residents to walk 150 miles in 2013 to celebrate Boise’s 150th birthday.
- Facilitating biking
 - Expand upon the existing bike-share program at City Hall that allows employees to use a loaner bike for nearby trips rather than take a vehicle. Encourage other employers to adopt similar programs.

- Connect to regional bike-sharing programs. As the Gold Line commuter rail goes live, the goal should be to connect to a regional bike-share program, such as B-cycle in Denver, so that commuters and visitors can combine trips on bike share with rides on the rail system.
- Investigate the opportunity to provide access to bicycles recovered by the Arvada Police Department.
- Offer bicycle maintenance demonstrations at after-school events and at community fairs.
- Establish a training program for new cyclists over the summer that engages the whole family to learn safe riding habits and basic equipment maintenance, and that fosters confidence and enjoyment of biking.

The type and range of programs must be customized to the needs and preferences of the residents. A concentrated effort by the city is required to prioritize these programs and bring the benefits to the community as soon as possible. The rate of disease related to physical inactivity continues to increase, so the sooner that programs can be implemented, the more likely they are to inspire new lifestyle habits and stem the tide of illness. The city should be willing to experiment to find what programs most resonate with the study area community and not be concerned that some programs fail. Over time, the city will build a culture of healthy living and achieve significant improvements in the health of its residents, thereby deriving substantial financial savings in health care services.

Financing

AS THE AXIOM STATES, you can't get something for nothing. Many of the recommendations for leveraging development projects and creating opportunities for activity need human and capital resources for their implementation. The city of Arvada is in a situation different from many other municipalities in that it successfully controlled costs and expenditures through the recent recession. It now finds itself in the enviable position of having a strong balance sheet and fiscal outlook, unlike many other community governments across the country.

Arvada's fiscal prudence has afforded the city this opportunity to consider how to invest in its future. With strategic evaluation of how current operations are funded in alignment with growth and health goals, city officials can make a first step toward tackling the development and programming recommendations the panel has outlined. Additionally, a variety of development finance tools are available, from bonds, tax credits, and tax increment financing (TIF), to federal financing programs, grants, and access to capital lending resources. In the past, Arvada has used some of these tools to support individual project developments. To move forward, however, the critical challenge for the city is to select the right suite of financial tools to support strategic and practical investment in the priority programs it has identified as integral to attaining its goal of building a strong, sustainable, and healthy community.

Consideration of which tools should be used from what is available needs to be part of the city's strategic planning process with the city council, city manager, department of finance, city attorney, and individual programs. The city has at its disposal bonds, TIF and special district financing, public improvement and retail

sales fees, business improvement districts, real estate transfer taxes, and a limited list of other conventional financing methods.

The panel recommends that the city and community begin to think creatively about other sources of funding. The panel's research has identified a number of these creative approaches.

Health Enterprise Zones

The state of Maryland recently passed the Health Disparities and Reduction Act of 2012, whose primary focus was to implement Health Enterprise Zones (HEZs). HEZs are designed to reduce health disparities among Maryland's racial and ethnic groups and between geographic areas, improve health care access and health outcomes, and reduce health care costs by providing a variety of incentives to defined geographic areas with high rates of disparities. The legislation established a process whereby the Secretary of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in collaboration with the Community Health Resources Commission (CHRC), designates HEZs. The purpose of these zones is to reduce health disparities, improve health outcomes, and reduce health costs and hospital admissions and readmissions in specific areas of the state. The bill contains several possible incentives that can be used to address disparities within the HEZ, including

- Loan assistance repayment;
- Income tax credits;
- Priority to enter the Maryland Patient Centered Medical Home Program;
- Grant funding from CHRC; and

- Priority for receiving funds for establishing an electronic health records program.

The bill also requires the Maryland Health Care Commission to establish and incorporate a standard set of measures regarding racial and ethnic variations in quality and outcomes and to track health insurance carriers' and hospitals' efforts to combat disparities. In addition, state institutions of higher education that train health care professionals will be required to report to the Governor and General Assembly on their actions aimed at reducing health care disparities. The Maryland fiscal year 2013 budget allocated \$4 million to the CHRC to fund the HEZs.

Social Impact Bonds

Investment tools are available for catalyzing job growth, real estate development, community revitalization, and entrepreneurial development. Highly successful federal tax credit programs, such as low-income housing or new market tax credits, can be applied to development opportunities. Innovative finance mechanisms also exist, such as seed, venture, and angel funds, for encouraging local entrepreneurial growth. Access to capital such as revolving loan funds, mezzanine finance, and loan guarantee programs can bridge financing gaps and encourage development efforts.

One approach worth exploring is Social Impact Bonds (SIBs). These are a nascent investment tool but are gaining traction as a way of scaling up social programs. SIBs are a multistakeholder partnership in which philanthropic funders and impact investors—not governments—take on the financial risk of expanding preventive programs that help poor and vulnerable people. Nonprofits deliver the program to more people who need it; the government pays only if the program succeeds. New York City currently has one SIB funded, and the states of New York and Massachusetts are seeking investors for three more funds. Again, this is a new financial product, but SIBs offer major benefits to communities seeking to

scale up programs, support program performance goals, and reward efficient social investment.

Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund

This public/private partnership loan and grant fund will provide financial incentives for grocery stores and other food retailers in underserved communities throughout Colorado. Administered by the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, the goal of the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund is to

- Improve retail access to fresh and healthy foods in Colorado;
- Encourage economic development in low-to-moderate-income neighborhoods;
- Provide attainable financing to food retail outlets that will promote more and better food access;

A variety of opportunities can help fund access to healthy food, including the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund.



- Partner with local governments when possible to enhance the benefits and success; and
- Develop a Colorado model based upon national best practices.

Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade

The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade runs a number of programs that could be used for advancing community health. They include the following:

- Public infrastructure grants (financing cash): Designed to create new permanent jobs or to retain existing jobs, these grants are primarily for low- and moderate-income persons. The state, using federal funds it receives annually and with approval by the Governor's Financial Review Committee, provides funding to eligible cities or counties to construct or improve public infrastructure needed by a specific business. The business in turn commits to create or to retain the required jobs, or both. Minimum and maximum awards are generally \$100,000 and \$500,000, respectively.
- Community economic development (CED) assessment programs: The assessment program is a process of examining the social, political, economic, and environmental conditions within a community or region. The conditions are reviewed as they pertain to economic development.

This process involves economic development professionals and industry leaders from across the state along with the local community leaders, local businesses, and residents. During the process, dozens of development factors are considered and addressed. The recommendations focus on dealing with critical issues, discovering possible solutions, suggesting actions, and leveraging resources. This process has been used as an economic development tool to further development in a community, county, or region. Assessment programs include the following:

- CED assessment: The economic development assessment is a 24- to 30-hour process with a team of industry professionals who meet with community leaders and hold a public forum to learn about the community and future development. The community is provided with a draft report of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) at the conclusion of the process. The report also provides the community with recommendations to assist in planning its economic development future.
- Community action plan: The community action plan allows community stakeholders to participate in the next step following the CED assessment. This program is designed to assist the community in prioritizing the recommendations from the assessment with action steps, responsibilities, timelines, and resources needed to accomplish the top one or two recommendations. Six months later, a recap is done to document the accomplishments and benchmark successes.



Benchmarking, Communication, Engagement, and Implementation

THE PANEL RECOMMENDS establishing qualitative targets for Arvada's healthy community efforts and measuring them over time. Concrete measures and reliable monitoring are key to ensuring and communicating Arvada's role as a model for building a healthy community. Tracking and communicating successes and shortcomings will allow the community to celebrate the community's achievements and identify areas to improve health.

This is not an easy assignment. Numerous organizations, including the Colorado Health Foundation, are undertaking serious efforts to establish measures of success. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American College of Sports Medicine also identify measures of success to provide a readout of wellness gaps, including a snapshot of areas ripe for health improvement and those most underserved. To date, no single measurements have been universally adopted. Furthermore, most indicators are tracked on state, county, or metropolitan area levels rather than at a more local level that addresses the specific needs of the residents in the Arvada study area.

Benchmarking

Local benchmarks are best defined after a more detailed health assessment is conducted within the Arvada study area to better understand specific demographics, health risks, and geographic details. This baseline assessment will include published public health data plus culturally appropriate surveys of the residents that provide self-reported data on participation in activities and individual and family health condition. Once the baseline has been completed, desired outcomes intended to improve the health condition for the study area residents can be established based on community goals and benchmarking against known outcomes in peer or aspirational

communities. Finally, a set of interventions combined with indicators for each of the outcome goals would be established and tracked over time.

The panel suggests a team including the Jefferson County Public Health and School District, Arvada Department of Transportation, Jefferson County, and Apex is best suited to undertake this important process and outcome evaluation, in coordination with the Colorado Health Foundation.

The panel encourages the team to be realistic and focus on measures that, ideally, inspire and motivate Arvada residents. Focus on health outcomes, not simply efforts. For example, tracking the miles of new sidewalks is good, but what is really important is tracking how many people use the sidewalks. Well-placed trail counters can be a helpful tool. Tracking the number of children walking and biking to school, through existing programs, can also be useful.

Oklahoma City may provide a best practice example for consideration. An initiative there that encouraged and tracked residents' weight loss and miles walked resulted in more than a million pounds lost and thousands of miles walked over a multiyear period. This program also provided participants with a sense of pride, community, and fun.

However, to determine evidenced-based health outcomes, the city must go beyond the mere tracking of activities and participation (outputs) and truly evaluate the programs and interventions on the changes in health over time through quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Communication

An important aspect of successful implementation is strong communication to elected officials, partners, residents, and other key audiences. A specific communication plan should be developed to inform Arvada residents and to call them

to action. Existing communication tools that are available to the city, including but not limited to the monthly *Arvada Report*, public television, and utility bill flyers, should be used regularly for Healthy Places messages.

Additional free or low-cost information distribution channels, especially directed to employee worksites and schools, should be identified and used. A dedicated web presence and other social media communication tools can be used effectively to reach underserved segments of the Arvada population. Efforts to reach low-income and minority neighbors must be focused through trusted sources and culturally sensitive communication pieces, including translation into languages other than English. Places of worship, beauty salons, and other community gathering places offer viable opportunities for information dissemination and conversations.

Engagement

The Colorado Healthy Places initiative can position Arvada as a leader, both nationally and statewide, in building a healthy and active community. Developing a comprehensive and effective program is time consuming. Successful implementation requires strong leadership within the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors. The Arvada initiative is already spearheaded by a small and impressive team of passionate and engaged city staff, elected officials, and community advisers. This group can and should be expanded.

The initiative requires the active and visible participation of a high level of elected officials, including the mayor, City Council, and Jefferson County officials. Designated staff able to focus daily on the initiative will also help maximize the initiative's success. The panel recommends that the



city of Arvada further assess and expand the roles of the sustainability director and the part-time, temporary position of pedestrian/bike coordinator to ensure adequate capacity. A health and sustainability director, for example, can be instrumental in integrating the initiative throughout all relevant city and county departments, during the comprehensive planning process and beyond. Staff can also advance initiative priorities, engage community partners, and attract additional resources.

But the initiative will not succeed without active engagement of a wide base of Arvada residents, existing businesses, nonprofits, and specifically residents of the study area. Deliberate efforts to reach out, engage, and enlist a large number of community volunteers are required. The panel recommends that the initiative include funding to identify and train resident leaders and champions who are trusted by their fellow residents. To accomplish long-term behavior change to create improved health outcomes will require community ownership of the initiative.

Implementation

Arvada is poised to update its Comprehensive Plan and conduct a related biannual customer survey in 2013. These efforts provide an outstanding opportunity to incorporate the Healthy Places vision and goals in the update. Arvada should consider adding a healthy community chapter to its new Comprehensive Plan. The update process also encourages and will benefit from strategic integration of Arvada's redevelopment, recreation, and multimodal transportation plans, including pedestrian and bike improvements.

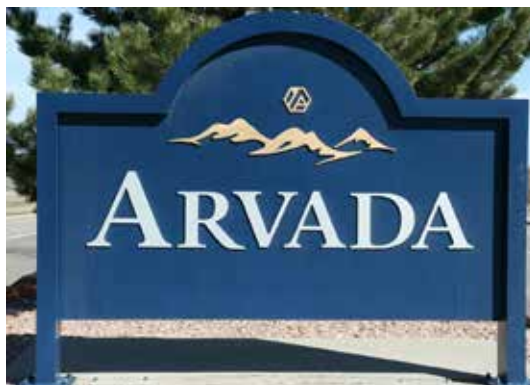
A sincere effort to engage the community to reflect resident values and priorities in the plan is key to ensure a meaningful planning process. This process is best achieved through extended and regular outreach. Encouraging neighborhoods to compete for Neighborhood-Level Action Plan mini-grants provides a tangible opportunity to engage neighborhoods in the planning process and foster confidence that the city government is responsive to community priorities.

A portion of the Colorado Health Foundation grant request should be considered for the implementation process and for benchmarking, communication, and coalition building.

Conclusion

THE UNITED STATES HAS MORE THAN 25,000 incorporated communities. The old paradigm for urban growth and economic development no longer works in a world where capital is footloose. Today, communities are in a regional and global competition to attract and retain highly educated workers. Distinctiveness is a key concept in 21st-century economic development. A community that cannot differentiate itself from other communities will have no competitive advantage. Today, amenities and quality of life are as important as industrial parks and tax rates. A physically healthy community is much more likely to be an economically successful community.

Mayor Marc Williams (right) and panel chair Ed McMahon discuss the panel's recommendations.



Arvada can be one of the healthiest communities in the Denver region. Arvada has an opportunity to set itself apart, by building on and enhancing its unique set of assets: its walkable and charming Olde Town, its three new transit stations, its network of parks and bike trails, its healthy fiscal condition, its proximity to Denver and other major employment centers, and its highly educated citizenry. But to be successful in a rapidly changing and highly competitive world, Arvada needs a vision and plan for the future that builds on its assets and that picks and chooses among development opportunities. The recommendations in this panel report will provide the city with some of strategies necessary to move the city in this direction.

About the Panel

Edward McMahon

*Panel Chair
Washington, D.C.*

McMahon holds the Charles Fraser Chair on Sustainable Development at the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C. He is an attorney, community planner, lecturer, and author. As the Senior Fellow for Sustainable Development, McMahon leads ULI's worldwide efforts to conduct research and educational activities on environmentally sensitive development policies and practices. Before joining ULI in 2004, McMahon spent 14 years as the vice president and director of land use planning for the Conservation Fund in Arlington, Virginia.

He is also the cofounder and former president of Scenic America, a national nonprofit organization devoted to protecting America's scenic landscapes. He is the author or coauthor of 15 books and more than 200 articles. His books include *Developing Sustainable Planned Communities*, *Green Infrastructure: Linking Landscapes and Communities*, *Balancing Nature and Commerce in Gateway Communities*, and *Better Models for Development in Pennsylvania*. He also writes regularly for *Urban Land* magazine, the *Planning Commissioners Journal*, and other periodicals. Over the past 20 years, McMahon has drafted numerous local land use plans and ordinances. He has organized successful efforts to acquire and protect urban parkland, wilderness areas, and other conservation properties. McMahon serves on several boards and commissions, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Preservation Maryland, the Governors Institute for Community Design, and the Orton Family Foundation.

McMahon has an MA in urban studies from the University of Alabama and a JD from Georgetown University Law School where he taught law and public policy from 1976 to 1985.

Richard Albrecht

Park City, Utah

Albrecht is a developer and management professional with more than 25 years of experience in the development and operation of successful luxury resort communities. His expertise is in creating viable development plans for resorts and communities that create long-term value by integrating top-quality development with first-class resort operations focused on personal service. Albrecht has led the successful execution of several complex projects from the conceptual stage through the design, construction, sales, and operation stages. He has extensive experience forming and operating clubs and homeowners associations, and property management programs.

As president, development, for Miraval Resort in Tucson, Arizona, Albrecht led the master planning for the renovation, expansion, and new residential development of this top-ranked destination spa. He also led the planning and created the economic model for the brand extension into several new resorts and "wellness lifestyle" communities. Albrecht assembled a new design team and project management team and directed the permitting, design, construction, sales, and club formation. These properties incorporated extensive sustainable development practices, with a focus on creating healthy living environments for guests and residents.

As chief operating officer for Talisker Deer Valley, Utah, he led the development and successful launch of an enclave of lots at the top of Deer Valley Ski Area and managed the development and successful relaunch at Tuhaye, a golf and ski-oriented community in Park City, Utah. In this role, Albrecht's leadership and expertise in project execution was instrumental in turning around a faltering community development. He reorganized the management team, repositioned the project with a new marketing and sales program, and created a new membership program.

As chief operating officer with the Hualalai Resort in Hawaii, he led a team with responsibilities for an award-winning resort community that includes a Four Seasons Hotel, Jack Nicklaus and Tom Weiskopf golf courses, a spa, and several dining facilities. In this role, Albrecht led the management of the resort operations and real estate development. He led the creation of the second-phase master plan and oversaw the development of a broad mix of single-family homes and lots, multifamily units, significant infrastructure projects, and expansion of the amenities.

Albrecht was director of development for the Lanai Company Inc., where he was responsible for the day-to-day operations of residential developments at Koele and Manele Bay. He also directed the sales and marketing program, created the membership program, and established and operated the property management services to its members.

A full member of the Urban Land Institute, Albrecht chairs the Recreational Development Council and has served as a speaker at the Institute's Golf Course Conferences. He has an MBA from the Anderson School at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a BA from the University of California, Berkeley.

Suzanne Nienaber

New York, New York

Nienaber works at the Center for Active Design, an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting health through the design of buildings, streets, and neighborhoods. With expertise in training, outreach, and facilitation, she has orchestrated over 60 presentations and workshops on the topic of active design.

As the partnerships director for the center, she is responsible for developing consultancy relationships and collaborative partnerships with a variety of communities and organizations interested in transforming the built environment to improve public health. Nienaber designs and facilitates training sessions and interdisciplinary programs to engage a range of stakeholders in discussing design, development, planning, and policy issues.

Nienaber holds a master's of urban planning from New York University and has over a decade of experience working in the field. Her past projects as a private sector planning consultant range in scope from regional, multijurisdictional visioning initiatives to neighborhood-scale urban design plans. She is an American Institute of Certified Planners–designated planner, and she is also certified by the National Charrette Institute. Prior to her planning career, Nienaber worked in the field of international public health.

Klaus Philipsen

Baltimore, Maryland

A LEED accredited professional, Philipsen is president of ArchPlan Inc., an architecture firm in downtown Baltimore specializing in community revitalization, building rehabilitation and adaptive use, historic preservation, and transportation planning since 1992. He was named an American Institute of Architects (AIA) Fellow in 2011 for being an example of what it means to be a citizen architect and using his professional skills over his entire

career to affect communities through advocacy for urban revitalization, public transportation, and managed growth. His actions have shaped Maryland's nationally recognized smart growth policies including the renaissance of Baltimore and inspired young people to become citizen architects themselves.

As president of his architecture firm, Philipsen currently works on major transportation projects, such as the \$2.5 billion Baltimore Red Line, a planned surface-subway light-rail line, and a large bus transit center in Langley Park, Maryland. He is architect of record for a catalytic urban infill project comprising a restaurant and museum complex on Baltimore's Pennsylvania Avenue, the former hub of African American culture in Baltimore. His small firm has completed many large and award-winning urban planning, housing, and commercial and preservation projects.

In addition, Philipsen is involved with several influential organizations and has worked in many advisory functions, such as the board of directors and cofounder of 1000 Friends of Maryland, a well-respected statewide growth management group; vice president of NeighborSpace, a Baltimore County urban land trust; president of the board and cofounder of D center, a nonprofit design center in Baltimore devoted to design as a problem-solving tool; cochair of the Urban Design Committee of AIA Baltimore since 1995; member of the national Regional and Urban Design Committee of AIA, appointed by the president of AIA National; past member of the Baltimore County Design Review Panel; past member of the Maryland Growth Commission, Subcommittee on Planning Techniques; past member of a blue ribbon panel to study TOD in Maryland under then transportation secretary John Porcari (2000); and ten-year member of a Borough Council in Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt (1976–1986).

Philipsen received a master's of architecture in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1975. He has worked as an architect and planner in Stuttgart, Germany, and London, England, and resides in the United States since 1986. He has taught architecture and urban design as an adjunct faculty

member at the University of Maryland and at Morgan State University. He has been an associate member of ULI for many years.

Bob Taunton

Boise, Idaho

Taunton is president of Taunton Group LLC, based in Boise, Idaho. Since mid-2007, he has provided community development consulting services to both private and public sector clients. Notable assignments include leading the research and development of a collective impact strategy to deliver safe, healthy, and environmentally responsible homes to low-income families, including the identification of interventions and outcome metrics to demonstrate changes in lives over time; directing a \$1.2 million engineering study for a planned \$300 million water delivery project; managing the planning approvals of a 1,350-acre resort and lifestyle community that was designed to preserve working farms; developing 50-year growth and future land use projections to support the preparation of a Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan; providing guidance on a bank workout assignment to reposition a failed planned community; and assisting a charter school developer with a national business strategy.

Prior to forming Taunton Group, he spent over 25 years as a public planner and residential community developer. For 16 years, he was the key principal for two public real estate entities and planned more than 25,000 home sites and other community uses, developed over 1,600 residential lots, and delivered more than 600 single-family homes. Among Taunton's many accomplishments is the creation of the \$300 million Rancho Viejo planned community in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Building upon his early design and conservation background, he brought to market a pioneering sustainable, healthy, and affordable community. Rancho Viejo has been honored for its extensive land preservation, mixed-use, and healthy walkable community design, standard-setting water conservation program, and 15 percent affordable housing integrated into the community.

Taunton is a longtime member of the Urban Land Institute, having served on the national Community Development and Sustainable Development Councils. He is a founding member of the ULI Idaho District Council and is its current past chair and eight-year member of the Management Committee. While Taunton was chair, he directed the work of the District Council to advise local and regional governments on mixed-use downtown development and sustainable agriculture.

He holds an undergraduate degree in environmental studies (architecture) and a graduate degree in environmental studies (environmental planning).

Ross Tilghman

Seattle, Washington

Tilghman heads up the Tilghman Group, which provides transportation planning services, to which he brings more than 25 years of urban planning experience, including serving as executive director of a downtown business improvement district. He provides transportation-related revenue projections, market studies, planning and development strategies to government, not-for-profit, and private sector clients facing real estate development challenges.

His recent work includes master plans detailing transportation requirements for Al Ain Wildlife Park and Resort, United Arab Emirates; Iowa's State Capitol Complex; The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington; and Gallisteo Basin Preserve, New Mexico, as well as for downtowns throughout the United States. Central to these efforts are parking studies identifying future demands and space needs from which he develops parking management plans to support planned development.

Tilghman has provided transportation planning for state capitol campuses working with Washington, Iowa, and Minnesota to improve their access and parking programs. Additionally, he has undertaken transit market studies to identify ridership potential for new services in Denver and Los Angeles. Tilghman has also completed

numerous special event and recreation area transportation plans, including those for San Diego's Balboa Park; Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami, Florida; the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines, Iowa; and Stones River National Battlefield, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Since 2000, Tilghman has been working with the city of Tacoma to address its downtown parking needs, including the parking plan for the city's new convention center. He provided the revenue forecasts used to issue parking revenue debt.

Tilghman also served three years as director of a downtown business improvement district in Illinois. He oversaw maintenance, facade improvements, parking, and upper-story redevelopment efforts in concert with Main Street redevelopment principles. Tilghman successfully authored a \$1.9 million grant to fund a streetscape construction project completed in 2002.

He frequently participates in national resource panels assisting communities with development questions, including ULI Advisory Services panels and Mayor's Institute on City Design teams. He received an undergraduate degree in history from Washington University in St. Louis and a master's in geography from the University of Washington, Seattle.

Waverly Wood

Charlottesville, Virginia

Wood is coordinator of the Center for Design and Health at the University of Virginia (UVA), which pursues and funds cross-disciplinary research to aid the design and planning of communities focused around human and environmental health. The work of the center focuses on a variety of health issues, including the design and planning of patient-centered medical facilities, housing, neighborhoods, communities, cities, and regions.

As a research associate for UVA's Institute for Environmental Negotiation and a graduate research fellow

for UVA's Center for Design and Health, Wood gained experience in the analysis and design of healthy communities. The Institute for Environmental Negotiation plans and implements projects concerning environmental justice, food systems, sustainable development, land conservation, and community engagement throughout Virginia. While working with the institute, Wood assisted in planning the Virginia Food Heritage Project and wrote and organized the executive summary report. During her fellowship with the Center for Design and Health, Wood contributed to an academic article overseen by the center that addresses the essential collaboration between public health, urban planning, and architecture when designing healthy communities. She also conducted a partial health impacts assessment to be used in the relocation process for UVA's primary care health facility.

While interning for Sustainable South Bronx, Wood was able to use her critical analysis, leadership, and community engagement skills. She analyzed complex material and communicated it through a user-friendly comprehensive community profile of the Bronx area. The community profile includes an analysis of local policies, local environmental issues, community opinion, and recommendations for future research.

Wood earned her master's in urban and environmental planning from the University of Virginia's School of Architecture in December 2012 and has a BS in psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Tamara Zahn

Indianapolis, Indiana

Zahn is president of Zahn Associates, specializing in building stronger communities. She has more than 35 years of community and urban development experience.

Zahn recently retired as founding president of Indianapolis Downtown Inc. (IDI), a not-for-profit organization strategically focused on developing, managing, and marketing Downtown Indianapolis since its forma-

tion in 1993. She was instrumental in the revitalization of Downtown Indianapolis. During her tenure, nearly \$8 billion of development was completed, and IDI designed and implemented a number of innovative economic and cultural development, security, parking, place-making, and marketing programs. She was involved in developing and managing Indianapolis's cultural districts and the Cultural Trail.

Prior to IDI, Zahn consulted in cities throughout the United States. Clients included Simon Property Group, the Rouse Company's American City Corporation, and the New York Port Authority.

Zahn serves on a number of boards, including the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, and is chair-elect of International Downtown Association (IDA). She has served on the host committees for NFL Super Bowl 2012, NCAA Final Fours, and other major events. She was recognized as one of the first "40 under 40" and Most Influential Women in Indianapolis. Zahn is the recipient of marketing and leadership awards from IDA, International Council of Shopping Centers, and numerous civic organizations. She was an Olympic torchbearer in honor of her efforts to revitalize Indianapolis Downtown and Holliday Park.

She graduated summa cum laude with a degree in real estate from Indiana University.

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