



Urban Land Institute (ULI) Colorado

# A Vision for New Town Arvada

A Technical Advisory Panel Report



A Report from the Wadsworth Boulevard Technical Advisory Panel (TAP)

By ULI Colorado

May 2-3, 2019



CITY OF ARVADA

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**Supported by:**

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ULI volunteers speak with local city council members during the Technical Advisory Panel.

### Overview of ULI Advisory Services

Since 1947, the national ULI Advisory Services program has assembled 400+ ULI-member teams to help sponsors find solutions for issues including downtown redevelopment, community revitalization, and affordable housing, among other matters. In Colorado, ULI Advisory Services have provided solutions for such key sites as the Colorado Convention Center, Coors Field, Fitzsimons, and the Denver Justice Center.

### Technical Advisory Panels (TAPs)

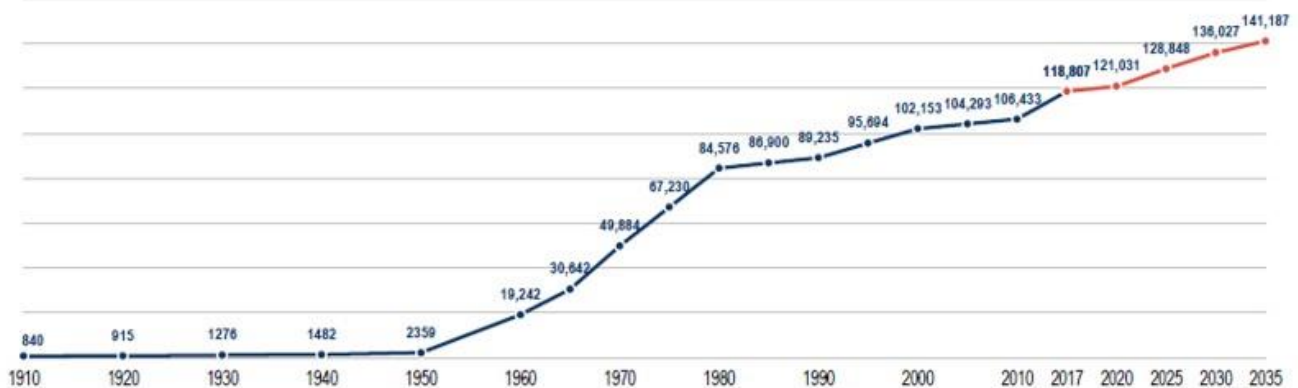
ULI Colorado’s Technical Advisory Panels (TAPs) offer the same expertise at the local level. Each panel is composed of qualified and unbiased professionals who volunteer their time. Panel chairs are respected ULI members with previous panel experience. Since 2003, ULI Colorado has completed more than 60 TAPs leading to positive policy changes and built projects.

## I. Introduction

The City of Arvada, with a population of 118,807, is the seventh largest city in Colorado and the fifth largest in the Denver metro region. Founded in 1870 and incorporated in 1904, Arvada has a distinct character with its quaint and historic Olde Town, rolling hills and residential areas sprinkled with parks and horse pastures, and new neighborhoods in the western part of the community. Arvada residents are proud of its “small-town feel.”

Considered a first-ring suburb of Denver due to growth in the region, Arvada’s population has grown in tandem with growth in the whole region. Between 2010 and 2017, Arvada’s population grew by 11.6 percent to about 118,807, placing it as one of the fastest growing cities in the region. As the city’s population growth continues, it can be expected that an increasing share of new development will occur on infill sites.

## ARVADA POPULATION AND PROJECTIONS



The area around Wadsworth Corridor between I-70 and Grandview Avenue has become a major shopping center of auto-oriented and big box retail, generating over 25 percent of Arvada’s sales tax revenue. **However, the landscape of retail is changing globally as consumers increasingly shop online, and concerns center on the long-term viability of shopping centers like this one.**

In 2018, the City of Arvada commissioned the Wadsworth Boulevard Retail Corridor Study, which concluded:

“Collectively, this area encompasses almost all of the necessary elements for a regionally focused mixed-use area: extensive retailing offerings, historic Olde Town Arvada, a high-profile rapid transit stop, hotel and entertainment concepts.

A master plan should be developed that transitions this area into a truly mixed-use area with all of the facets accountable to each other. That master plan could achieve:

- A phasing and implementation schedule and identify priorities for action.
- Act as a framework for regeneration and attract private sector investment.
- Conceptualize and shape the three-dimensional urban environment, which is the missing link.
- Define public, semi-private, and private spaces and public amenities.
- Determine the mix of additional uses, density and their physical relationship to each other.
- Engage the local community and act as builder of consensus.

Arvada has a unique opportunity to establish a regionally focused, dynamic multi-use area by elevating the existing elements and thoughtful

### THE SHIFTING RETAIL LANDSCAPE

“As e-commerce takes a larger piece of the retail pie—as much as one-third of total retail sales will be online by 2030, according to new A.T. Kearney research—the leading traditional brands are rethinking how they arrange their stores. Landlords are reconsidering their tenant mixes, bringing in more food and entertainment options. And digital start-ups are setting up a physical presence of their own, albeit more cautiously and with a different approach than the industry’s precedent would suggest.

Tomorrow’s success will belong to those shopping center owner/operators and tenants willing to break from yesterday’s patterns and practices and fully embrace a consumer-driven future.”

- From the “Wadsworth Boulevard Retail Corridor Study” by KP & Associates in August 2018 summarizing this [AT Kearney report](#).



redevelopment. If successful, the City could expect to see unique retail, restaurant and entertainment concepts enter the area, replacing some of the more mundane offerings of the corridor which in turn will establish it as a significant regional area.”

As the City is going through its Land Development Code update, they engaged ULI Colorado to provide recommendations on ways to move forward on this plan. This report covers the findings and recommendations that came out of the ULI Colorado Technical Advisory Panel that studied this area and its future potential.

Given the fractured land ownership and current auto-centric development in this area, pivoting the Wadsworth Corridor toward a healthier built environment that supports the community’s economic, environmental, and social goals will take time. The ULI panel laid out a plan that begins with rezoning the area to encourage the addition of a greater mix of uses, such as housing, hospitality, diverse retail, office and flex space, and medical uses. Such a mix of uses with a pedestrian- and bike-friendly public realm will support the viability of this area in the long term. The panel identified key sites where this transformation can begin and addressed ways to immediately begin enhancing the connectivity and walkability of the area.

**“The future of retail is at a juncture and we need to be proactive. I would like to see more residential, which would help all of the businesses in the area.”**  
**- Maro Dimmer, Owner, Rheinlander Bakery**

*With careful planning, strategic investments, and public-private partnerships, Arvada has the opportunity to transform this big box retail center into a “New Town” that over time will become as treasured as Olde Town.*

While it is important to preserve the city’s tax base as part of this transformation, the panelists believe that if no meaningful strategic action is taken, this area’s retail performance and sales tax generation are expected to decline over time.



ULI volunteers tour the study area with local stakeholders during the TAP.

## II. Overview

On May 2-3, 2019, ULI Colorado convened a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) to provide guidance on the vision for the I-70 – Grandview Avenue corridor along Wadsworth Boulevard. For this two-day TAP, ULI Colorado assembled six land use experts (see panelist bios on page 24) who volunteered to offer objective, third-party advice. The panel reviewed a detailed advance packet of prior studies, toured the study area, and interviewed local stakeholders, including City staff, elected officials, longtime property and business owners, and local residents and organizational leaders (for a list of stakeholders interviewed, see page 23).

The City of Arvada gave the panelists the following problem statement and questions to address during the TAP:

### Problem Statement

The Arvada Economic Development Association (AEDA) has been working on a Wadsworth Corridor Study to analyze and assess the health of retail along the corridor located between I-70 and Grandview Avenue. The purpose of this study is to evaluate opportunities and challenges as retail begins to dramatically evolve. It is no surprise that the nature of retail is changing as more shopping centers struggle to stay relevant. The information in the study will support the property owners, developers, and the City of Arvada to rethink the uses and design of existing centers. As the City is going through the Land Development Code update, it is a good opportunity to recreate a vision for the I-70 – Grandview Avenue corridor along Wadsworth Boulevard while keeping in mind that this corridor generates over 25 percent of Arvada’s sales tax revenue.

Collectively, this area encompasses almost all of the necessary elements for a regionally focused mixed-use area, including extensive retailing offerings, historic Olde Town Arvada, a high-profile rail transit stop, and hotel and entertainment concepts. Lacking throughout this region is the “physically integrated” connection for the elements to work together. There is no sense that the elements are interwoven and working together as one. With so many “building block” elements already established in the area, the missing link is creating connections, public spaces and amenities that could tie the areas together and make it a gateway.

The City of Arvada envisions this area as an "urban mixed-use environment" that encompasses office, high density residential, retail, and community elements. Given the existing key locational advantages of access to I-70, I-76, Wadsworth Boulevard, and the G Line as well as proximity to historic Olde Town, does this area have the redevelopment potential to become a significant "western urban focus" for the metro area, rivaling the urban areas of Denver? The essence of the threshold question is: what level and intensity of "urban mixed-use" can the area support?

**“We’re lacking a cohesive vision for the area. This TAP can help us determine what’s realistic for the area--office, hospitality, retail, housing, connectivity?”**  
**- Katy Press, KP Consulting & Associates, City of Arvada Retail Consultant**

**The City seeks the panel’s insight and recommendations in answer to the following questions:**

1. What would be a realistic and appropriate mix of land uses for redevelopment in this area? What would be the challenges for higher density, more intense uses in this area, including mixed-use?
2. If higher density residential is feasible, what would be the benefits of introducing housing into this existing commercial area?
3. What is the feasibility of a larger scaled hotel/conference facility and are there potential locations in the area?
4. What are the potential sites for redevelopment and what would be a catalytic site that would spur interest and redevelopment in the area?
5. What improvements to connectivity and infrastructure for pedestrians and motorists could be made to help connect the area and accommodate future development? How can the barrier that Wadsworth Boulevard poses for pedestrian connectivity be overcome?
6. What specific actions/steps should the City undertake to develop/realize the vision for this area? What mechanisms would help to attract developer interest to this area? What fiscal tools or financial structures could be used to facilitate redevelopment?
7. How can the area’s amenities (Olde Town, Olde Town Station, the pond, etc.) and the benefit of access to the Olde Town Station, I-70 and I-76 be leveraged for redevelopment?



## About the Study Area



Map of the study area, which includes around 258.5 acres, is surrounded by the red dotted line. Map courtesy the City of Arvada.

The study area is located five miles from downtown Denver, as the crow flies, and includes 258.5 acres. It is the retail center of Arvada with a significant portion of sales tax revenue generated by the area's businesses, most notably Costco, which is a regional destination importing sales from surrounding communities. With excellent access to I-70 and I-76, the area became a setting for big box retail and a major shopping center with assistance from Arvada Urban

Renewal Authority. Wadsworth Boulevard and Wadsworth Bypass bisect the area and due to traffic and the roadway width, provide a barrier to east-west pedestrian movement.

Major retailers include Costco, Home Depot, and Lowe's on the west side of Wadsworth Boulevard, and the Arvada Marketplace anchored by Sam's Club, as well as many smaller retailers and restaurants on the east side. There are a limited number of east-west streets crossing Wadsworth Boulevard, which impacts and limits access to the commercial properties.

To the north of the study area is Olde Town Arvada, the city's historic downtown and a designated historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. Olde Town is bounded by Ralston Road, Yukon Street on the west and Wadsworth Bypass on the east. It is now a vibrant specialty retail district with restaurants, breweries, taverns, and shops. It is also a civic and cultural activity center with three churches, a Jefferson County library, commuter rail station, as well as the Olde Town Square, a central gathering space with an interactive water feature.

The area directly south of Olde Town and the RTD commuter rail G Line is referred to by many as "New Town." The vision for New Town is for development with higher densities, including residential that could support the businesses in Olde Town. The elevation drops significantly from Olde Town to the general area where the Lowe's is located.

To the east of the study area is the Columbine neighborhood, which is made up of several separate subdivisions dating from the 1950s. Foster Elementary School serves this neighborhood as well as two parks—Foster Park and Columbine Park.

On the west is a low- to medium-density residential area adjacent to Allison Street that is experiencing some infill development, primarily with for-sale townhomes.

The current configuration and building form of retail uses in New Town presents a traditional suburban shopping center character at the entrance to the city. Several "Gateway" improvements such as the landscaped medians in Wadsworth Boulevard have been made to define this entrance to Arvada and create an identity for the area.





Image of the Lowe's parking lot  
courtesy Google Maps.

### III. Findings

During the workshop, the panelists toured the study area, spoke with local stakeholders, and reviewed materials from the City of Arvada about the area and its surrounding community. Before diving into recommendations, the panelists came up with the following findings for the study area.

#### Community Assets:

Panelists agreed that Arvada is a strong community with a historic urban core that is fairly unique for suburban cities in Metro Denver. Another unique strength is the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority, which has allowed Arvada to make strategic investments around Olde Town Station. The goal should be to build upon these community assets to enhance connectivity, walkability, synergistic infill development, and an attractive public realm. Some of the specific assets serving the area include:

- Strong surrounding community
- Charming Olde Town
- New G Line transit access
- Access to highways and RTD bus lines
- Olde Town Station Urban Renewal Area
- Hilton Garden Inn success
- Some stores in the study area are doing well financially
- Sales tax revenues in the area
- Columbine Lake

## Opportunities:

As market demands shift, Arvada has the opportunity to not only encourage the right kind of development by setting the rules (e.g. zone districts and plans) for the area, but it can also act proactively to acquire parcels of strategic importance to the area as they become available. Some of the big box retail will likely leave the area in coming years due to shifting retail trends. These properties may actually present opportunities to promote new uses and a healthier built environment, fostering an incremental and steady transformation of the 258.5-acre study area, while retaining the core retail uses and tax generators. Some of the specific potential opportunities include:

- Possibility of future availability of land
- City seems ready for change in this area
- Demand for more housing units and types
- Demand for hospitality demonstrated by the success of the new hotel
- Potential for an event center
- Connectivity improvements can start right away with landscaping and wayfinding for pedestrians and bicyclists

## Challenges:

Arvada is wise to examine this study area before its challenges worsen. While the retail success of this area is currently dependent on cars, many local stakeholders noted their concerns about the amount of traffic running through this area, which makes it unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists. Also, current trends illustrate that consumer preferences have been turning away from big box retail and toward online retail and compact, walkable, mixed-use areas where they can live, work, and play. Panelists predict that these trends will remain steady for the foreseeable future. Transforming this auto-oriented corridor into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area will take time and expense, and must be accomplished without sacrificing the city's tax base. Some of the identified potential challenges include:

- Traffic and safety along Wadsworth Boulevard
- The long-term viability of big box retail is uncertain
- There may not be strong enough demand for office in the near term
- Current difficulty and unpredictability of City development review process
- Distance and connectivity to transit from the study area
- City reliance on existing sales tax from the study area
- Unusually high parking ratio requirements
- Low height limit
- Fractured land ownership
- Crime
- Homeless population
- Lack of density
- Aging population
- Poor gateway presence at I-70 and Wadsworth

**“We lack affordable housing in TOD area – this is key now that the rail is open.”**

**- Jessica Prosser,  
Assistant to the City  
Manager, City of  
Arvada**

**“It feels unsafe and unfriendly along the streets. The area needs pedestrian connectivity that doesn't put liability on property owners.”**

**- Ann Sperling, Senior  
Director, Trammell  
Crow Company**



ULI volunteers discuss options for the study area during the Technical Advisory Panel.

## IV. Workshop Recommendations

In answer to the questions posed to them, the panelists divided their recommendations into the following categories:

1. Master Plan
2. Land Uses
3. Mobility
4. Financial Tools & Incentives
5. Regulatory Tools

For all of their recommendations, they suggested the following overarching guiding principles for redevelopment:

- **Diversity:** promote diversity of uses and users
- **Flexibility:** allow for flexibility of uses, especially since market factors change over time
- **Connectivity:** enhance connectivity across the study area for pedestrians and bicyclists
- **Market-Driven:** plan for future development to happen as opportunities arise and as sectors can take advantage of them

**“Don’t build for specific tenants – allow the spaces to be flexible.”**  
- Katy Press, KP Consulting & Associates, City of Arvada Retail Consultant



## Master Plan

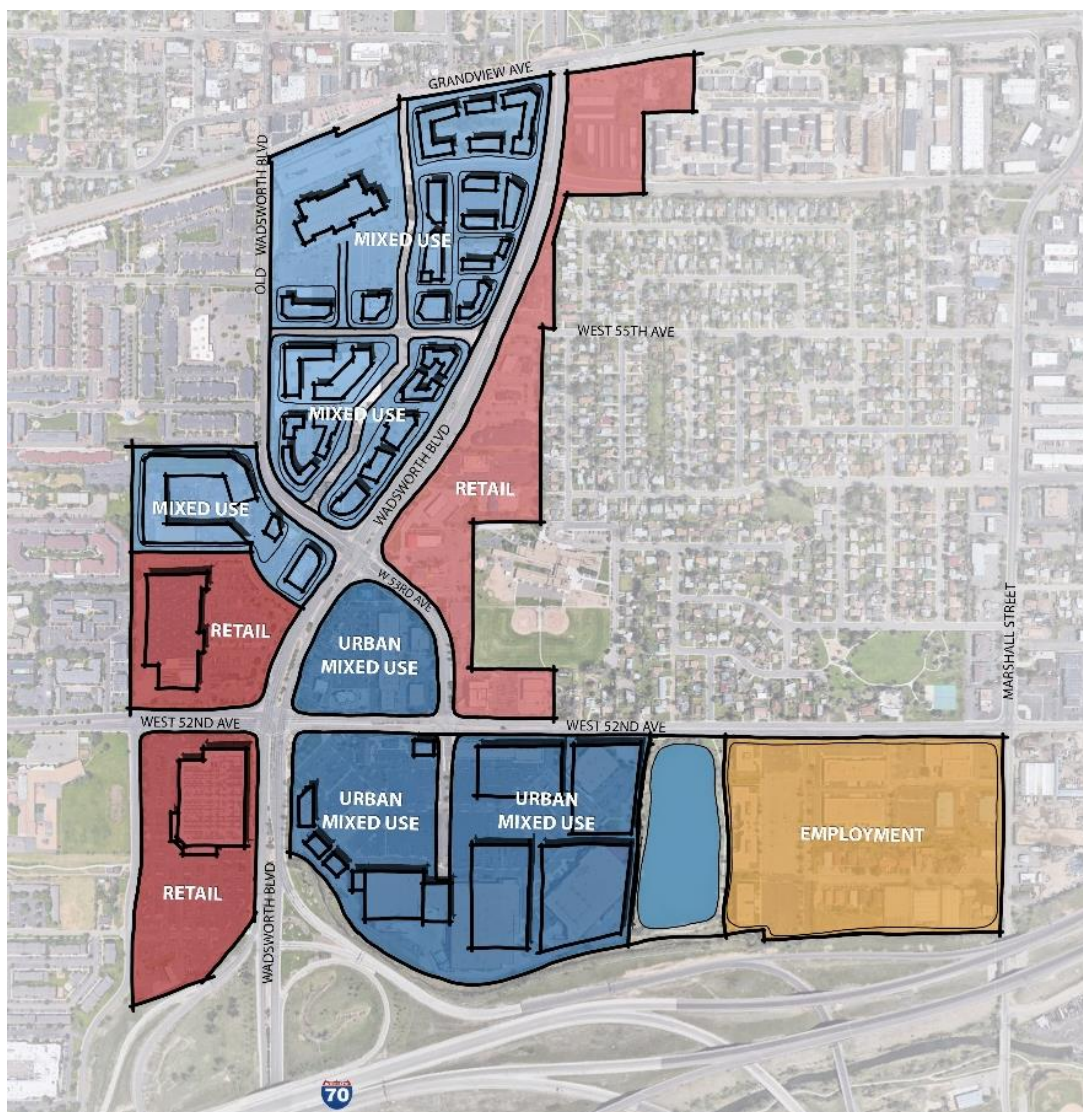
Wise planning can incentivize new investment. While the City cannot always lead redevelopment efforts, it can point the way with its Land Development Code update.

When coming up with a plan for the 258.5 acres, the panelists recommended starting by changing the zoning of the study area from PUD-BPR to a zoning designation that encourages and facilitates mixed-use. A mix of uses can be both vertical (like retail on the ground level and housing or office above) and horizontal (like an office building next to retail). **Mixed-use zoning should support the flexibility and diversity of uses that will allow this area to thrive over time, while making the development review process more predictable and consistent.**

The panel also suggested amplifying the brand of the area as “New Town” with signage and gateways.

**“Land development code is single biggest thing we can do to shape the economics of the area.”**

**- Ryan Stachelski,  
Director of Community  
and Economic  
Development, City of  
Arvada**



Map of the panelists' recommendations for sub-areas within the study area. Map by panelist Greg Straub.

When thinking about land use planning, the panelists came up with sub-areas (highlighted in the map on page 12) that could include the following uses.

**Mixed-Use (blue):**

- **Transit-oriented mixed-use** with greater height, density, and walkability near the G Line station (light blue; MX-T zone district). The panelists recommended extending Vance Street through the Lowe’s parcel to create a “woonerf” (multi-modal street with slowed traffic) surrounded by a dense mix of uses, including multi-family housing.
- **Urban mixed-use** with retail (dark blue; MX-U zone district). Panelists recommended adding height and density to these shopping areas.

**Retail (red):**

- **Highway-oriented retail** in alignment with existing uses in this area (light red)
- **Regional commercial retail** in alignment with existing uses in this area (dark red)

**Employment (orange):**

- **Office, flex, light industrial, and makerspace** uses could work well in this area. This area currently has significant office space as well as underutilized industrial and residential properties and is near open space around Columbine Lake. With additional paths and connectivity, workers in this area could walk to restaurants in the mixed-use and retail areas.

Panelists identified key development site opportunities (identified by red stars). One or more of these sites, due to both national and local retail changes, could become redevelopment sites in the near future. Their location and site characteristics make each an opportunity to attract new uses that could catalyze change throughout the district.



Map of key opportunity sites within the study area. Map by panelist Greg Straub.

**“The best thing for the future of this area will be mixed-use. We could always use more housing.”**

**- Tim Steinhaus,  
Executive Director,  
Arvada Urban Renewal  
Authority**



Starred sites include:

- The vacant city and RTD property under contract to Trammell Crow
- Lowe’s Home Improvement
- OfficeMax/PetSmart
- East portion of Arvada Marketplace
- Vacant greenhouses

Over time, as sites become available, the City can work with private sector partners to advance its goals for the area.

## Land Uses

### Residential

During the stakeholder interviews, the panelists both heard and offered nearly unanimous support for additional residential development at higher densities in the study area, such as:

- Apartments:
  - Market-Rate
  - Affordable (with Low Income Housing Tax Credits)
- For-Sale Housing:
  - Townhomes
  - Condos
- Senior Housing
  - Independent living
  - Assisted living



Townhomes in Denver’s Stapleton neighborhood.  
Image courtesy Kentwood Real Estate.

**“Keep housing closer to  
the Olde Town.”  
- David Jones, Arvada  
City Council**

### Hospitality

The Hilton Garden Inn’s success is indicative of potential demand for additional hospitality uses in this area.

- Second Hotel: Be open to another hotel, but remain flexible/patient
- Civic/Events Center: Hotel could be associated with this use



Maureen Phair, Executive Director of the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority, discusses the success of the Hilton Garden Inn.



## Retail

Since this area is already a retail destination, the goal should be to add diversity and complementary uses. Rather than just “Stop and Shop,” the Wadsworth Corridor could become more of a “Stay and Play” destination.

- Lifestyle & Entertainment
  - Particularly near the Station Area
- Smaller scale/pedestrian friendly
  - Boutique & Local
  - Complementary to Olde Town
- Food & Beverage
- Auto-Oriented
  - Big Box (elements will – and should – remain)
  - Service-Oriented (east side of CO-121)



Outdoor restaurant seating. Image courtesy WFAA.com.

**“We want more restaurants.”**  
- Paul Heller, Board of  
Directors, Arvada Economic  
Development Association

## Office/Flex

Panelists recommended introducing more uses that generate middle- and high-skill jobs into area, which would support all the other uses.

- Co-Working/Collaborative Space
  - Most appropriate near transit station/Olde Town
- Flex/Maker spaces (e.g. small-scale manufacturing, specialty foods, and crafts)
  - Build on available sites near Columbine Lake
  - Be open to flexible and non-traditional forms/uses
- “Traditional” Office
  - Not likely in near term, but don’t rule out
  - Potential for owner-occupied developments



Image of makerspace courtesy Facebook.

**“There’s demand here for about  
2,000-10,000 square feet of flex  
space.”** - Scott Marcum, Marcum  
Commercial Advisors

## Medical

The area is currently underserved by medical uses, which provide a good mix of employment and service opportunities for the surrounding community.

- Medical & Wellness
  - Medical office buildings
  - Outpatient centers and acute care clinics
  - Services/retail
- Hospital
  - Employees and visitors support surrounding retail and food businesses

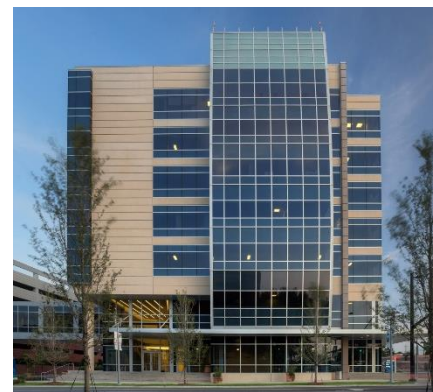


Image of medical offices courtesy Hunton  
Brady Architects.

## Public Realm

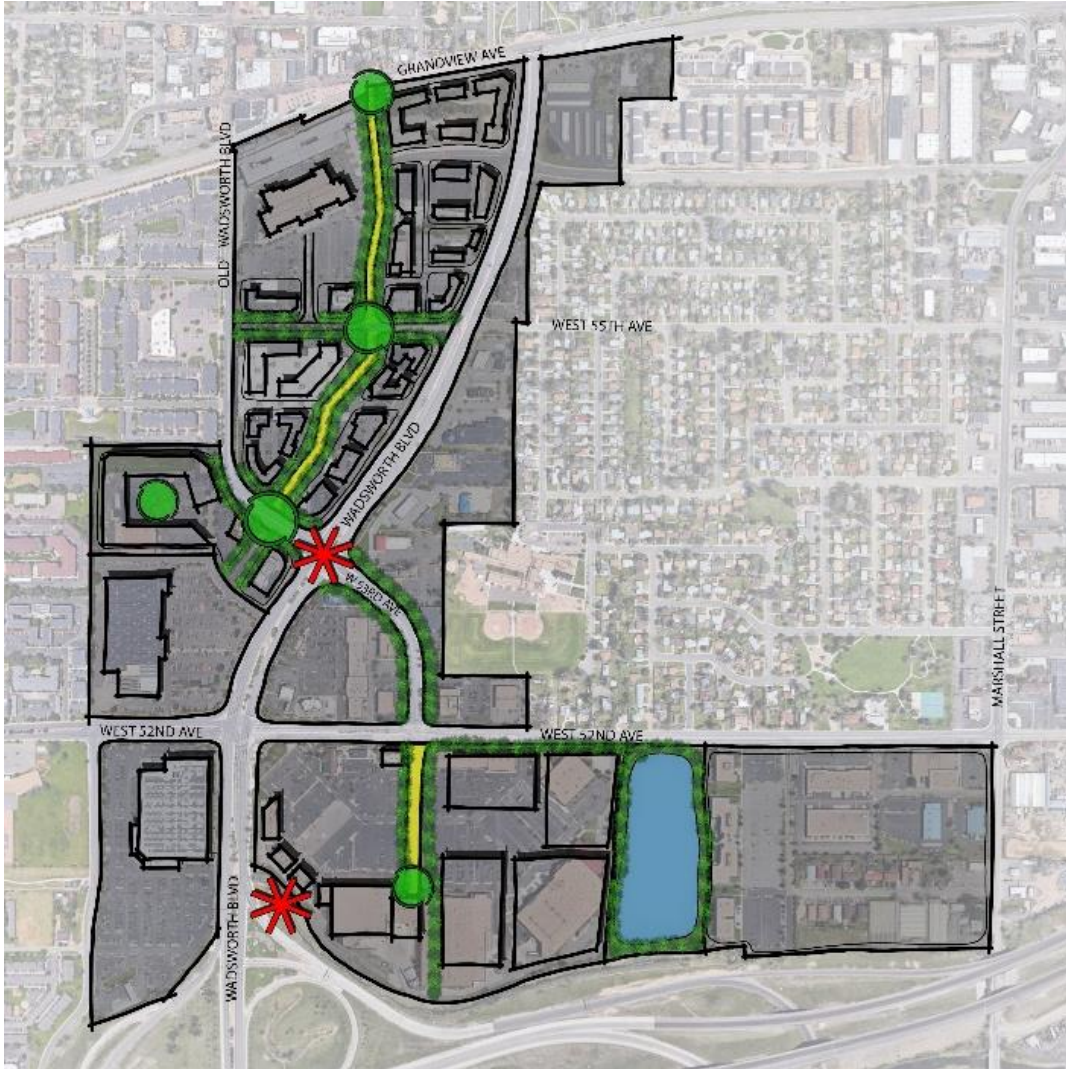


From top left: Farmer's Market photo courtesy Pinterest. Aurora Southlands plaza courtesy AurorainSky. Street landscaping courtesy Hyde Park, VT. Kids enjoying green space by the lake.

The panelists noted that the public realm is the glue that binds everything together. Investment by the City will be necessary and important for public realm enhancements, which can be leveraged to attract quality development.

- Plazas/Gathering Areas
  - Focus near transit station
  - Columbine Lake
- Complete Streets (Vance Street & Olde Wadsworth Boulevard)
  - Enhanced Landscaping
  - Traffic Calming/On-Street Parking
  - Flexible/Festival Street (Vance?)
- Connectivity
  - Transit Station
  - Stitch to existing neighborhoods, particularly to West
  - Regional trail network
  - Grade-separation at CO-121 (Long-Term)

**“I think of this as being a people center as we move ahead. We can attract people, cater to people with amenities and open space, and give people a place to live.”**  
**- Mark McGoff, Arvada City Council**



Map of recommendations for public realm improvements within the study area. Map by panelist Greg Straub.

Public realm recommendations on the map above:

- Green: public realm (activity nodes, complete streets, green space)
- Red: infrastructure (wayfinding signage, gateway element, grade separation between pedestrian/bike path and street)
- Black: new streets

**“Parks and trails are an important asset to the city and attract residents.”**

**- Sarah Washburn,  
Manager of Parks and  
Urban Design, City of  
Arvada**



## Mobility



Panelists recommending extending Vance Street through the Lowe's site, if and when it becomes available, and making it into a multi-modal "Woonerf" surrounded by a mix of uses. Image courtesy Pinterest.

Panelists recommended a mixed and incremental approach to adding mobility options to the study area. As opposed to trying to make Wadsworth Boulevard something other than what it is, the panel suggested focusing on side streets for enhanced bike and pedestrian amenities, as well as new street standards, safe street crossings and pedestrian refuges. Starting conversations with agencies like RTD and CDOT to improve transit routes and access to sites will be a critical first step. If and when some of the larger parcels become available, they can be recast in smaller blocks with multi-modal streets.

Short term steps:

- Examine and implement low-cost pedestrian and bike crossing improvements (upgraded signals, refuges) at key locations (52nd, 53rd, 55th)
- Develop "complete streets" requirements/design guidelines for all new streets
- Work with RTD on its comprehensive operations analysis to maximize bus coverage and headways
- Establish mobility hub at rail station (enhanced wayfinding/user info, shared ride areas, bike/scooter hubs, bike station)
- Implement comprehensive wayfinding program around station
- Implement City's bike and trail plans (move forward with design and funding; move into City's capital improvement program)
- Work with CDOT to examine access improvements on Wadsworth, especially at Costco
- Work with RTD to study and implement potential short-term bus mobility improvements including queue jumps, pullouts where appropriate, and upgraded shelters (including real-time info)

**"We want the Wadsworth intersections to be safer. This is one of the biggest crash areas."**  
- Ed Brady, Deputy Chief of Police, City of Arvada

**"I would love pedestrian walkways with wayfinding signage."**  
- Charise Canales, Neighborhood Engagement Coordinator, City of Arvada

**"The City owns RTD parking and is looking at shared parking opportunities."**  
- Shelley Cook, Board of Directors, RTD



The City of Boulder has focused on grade separate bike and pedestrian paths (left), enhanced pedestrian crosswalks and medians (center) and circulator buses (right). Images courtesy City of Boulder.

Longer term steps:

- Implement grade-separated pedestrian/bike crossing (bridge or underpass) at key location(s) on Wadsworth – 53rd and/or 55th to facilitate safe north-south ped/bike movements
- Work with RTD to study and implement bus-only lanes on Wadsworth
- Work with local businesses to fund and implement comprehensive local circulator bus system (buy up service from RTD or develop separate City-run service) to connect both sides of Wadsworth with station (potential future extensions to other parts of the City as demand warrants)
- Implement “complete streets” on all new streets as they are constructed in redevelopment areas

**“We want to give people mobility options.”**  
**- John Firouzi,**  
**Transportation Planning Engineer,**  
**City of Arvada**

## Financial Tools & Incentives

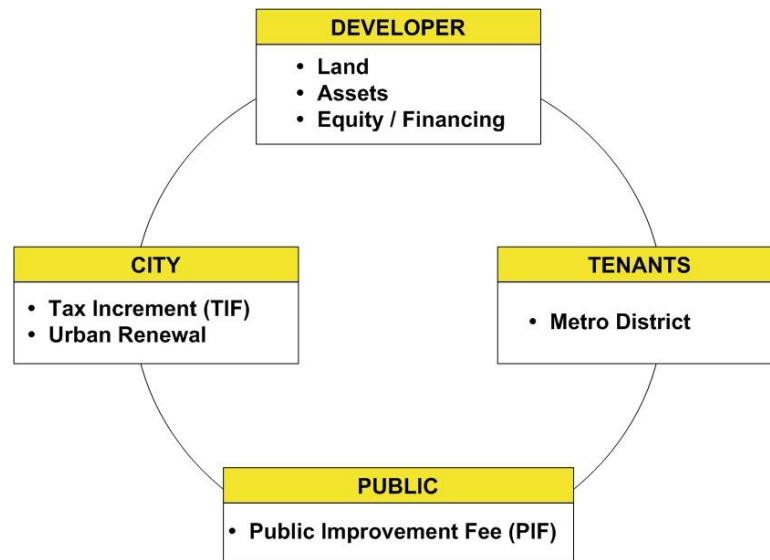
Arvada has been at the forefront of redevelopment since the creation of the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority (AURA) in 1992. AURA has the power to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for redevelopment in its Urban Renewal Areas. The Olde Town Station Urban Renewal Area is in the northern portion of the study area, which will help with redevelopment within walking distance of Olde Town. While TIF is the most advantageous financial tool because it doesn’t require additional taxes, potential changes to state law (HB 1348) and the need to establish blight may limit the future use of TIF in this area unless one or more of the big boxes leave the area.

Since New Town was largely built out in the 1980s, the existing development is reaching the end of its real estate life cycle. With global shifts in the retail marketplace, panelists recommend undertaking a proactive economic development approach to accelerate reinvestment including the following strategies:

- Support regional retail at its strongest locations
- Invest in the public realm to create an environment that supports mixed use development
  - Infrastructure
  - Urban design
  - Green space
- Promote the reuse of outmoded big boxes and retail centers
  - Partner with the development community for redevelopment
  - Incentivize desired uses
  - Selective property acquisition

- Provide for the strategic use of development incentives and partnerships
  - TIF, where applicable
  - Special districts (including general improvement and metro districts)
  - Sales tax revenue sharing

The financing of desired retail development and redevelopment projects often requires the participation of all parties to achieve a successful project. As shown in the example below, the financing package can include contributions by the city, tenants, the general public, as well as the developer.



Graphic of financial tools by sector provided by panelist Dan Guimond with EPS.

The above illustration is one example of how the sectors can work together to address extraordinary redevelopment costs and support desired projects. The types of incentives can generally be grouped in three categories:

- Value Capture techniques that allow the enhanced value from public investments such as TOD to be “captured” through assessments on benefitting properties
  - Special Districts (e.g., GIDs, LIDs, and Metro Districts)
  - Area specific impact fees
  - Applies to station TOD zone
- Retail Incentives that capture a portion of the additional sales tax generated by a new project
  - Public improvement fees (PIFs)
  - Sales tax sharing agreements (ESTIPs)
- Grants that are specifically applicable to study area needs
  - CDOT FASTER grants (\$15m per year) for safety improvements
  - DRCOG CMP+I grants (\$4.5m per year in 2020-2023) for community mobility planning

**“We have FASTER grants for safety improvements, like pedestrian crosswalks at intersections.”**  
**- Jessica Myklebust,**  
**Region 1**  
**Environmental**  
**Manager, CDOT**



## Regulatory Tools



Maureen Phair, Executive Director of the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority, discusses the transit station area.

City staff has indicated they plan to rework the Land Development Code. The ULI panel believes this is a crucial component to rethinking the regulatory process to support quality development in the study area.

### Overall Process:

- Eliminate unpredictable and discretion-heavy process
- Build broad community consensus
- Empower staff to administratively approve as much as possible
- Streamline decision-making timeline, milestones and cost for developers going through process
- Develop a brand identity for “New Town” to enhance recognition and relationship to Olde Town

**“The current city process around entitlements is broken, undermining the ability to do best-in-class work.”**  
- Ann Sperling, Senior Director, Trammell Crow Company

### Zone Districts:

- Eliminate PUDs altogether
- Focus on simplicity (e.g., number of districts, restrictions, etc.)
- Maximize range of allowable uses for all districts (including hotel, residential, office, medical, retail)

### Design Standards:

- Focus on building form, urban design, and engineering standards—not architectural standards
- Height limits should be based on building forms the City wants to encourage and view sheds to be preserved
- Encourage buildings of 6-7 stories; Height limits of at least 65’; 80’- 90’ is better

**“We need to allow additional height as an incentive for affordable housing development, especially near the transit station.”**  
- Julianne Stern,

## Parking Requirements:

- Aim to optimize amount of parking throughout the district (less is actually more for encouraging alternative modes of transportation in the area)
- Standards should align to encourage developers to build compatible projects with the district vision
- Look at parking comprehensively in the district wherever possible (i.e., shared parking, etc.)
- Provide low parking minimums (e.g., 1.0 per DU)
- Provide parking maximums (increasable with staff approval)
- Provide lower parking requirements for MU-TOD sub-area
- Benchmark with other innovative communities, including planning for future technological changes



Map of the panel's recommendations for the study area. Map by panelist Greg Straub.

## V. Conclusion

The panelists concluded that the study area has great potential for a mix of uses that will support the community in the long-term. A diversity of uses and users will allow this area to thrive over time. By adding housing options, community gathering spaces, and connectivity throughout the study area, the City can support local retail and commercial uses that contribute to the City's financial sustainability.

The panelists urged the City to embrace the changes coming and to engage in a proactive economic development strategy, including the appropriate use of incentives and partnerships to address financing gaps and to promote desirable redevelopment opportunities.

Regarding process, the City can be opportunistic as parcels become available and can make the development review process more predictable and consistent to allow the private sector to help fulfill the City's goals. The market will inevitably change over time, but flexibility can allow this area to respond accordingly.

Overall, this is the perfect opportunity for the City of Arvada to create a great place!

## VI. Stakeholders

### Stakeholders Who Participated in the Workshop

#### Elected Officials:

- Mark McGoff, Arvada City Council
- David Jones, Arvada City Council
- Nancy Ford, Arvada City Council
- Paul Heller, Arvada Economic Development Association Board of Directors
- Tim Steinhaus, Arvada Urban Renewal Authority

#### City & Transportation Staff:

- Lorie Gillis, Deputy City Manager, City of Arvada
- Loretta Daniel, Senior Planner, City of Arvada
- Rob Smetana, Manager of City Planning and Development, City of Arvada
- Jessica Prosser, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Arvada
- Ryan Stachelski, Director of Community and Economic Development, City of Arvada
- Sarah Washburn, Manager of Parks and Urban Design, City of Arvada
- John Firouzi, Transportation Planning Engineer, City of Arvada
- Melissa Marmitt, Senior Economic Development Specialist, Arvada Economic Development Association
- Daniel Riley, Executive Director, Arvada Economic Development Association
- Julianne Stern, Director of Development, Jefferson County Housing Authority
- Maureen Phair, , Executive Director, Arvada Urban Renewal Authority
- Ed Brady, Deputy Chief of Police, City of Arvada
- Shelley Cook, Board of Directors, RTD
- Jessica Myklebust, Region 1 Environmental Manager, CDOT

#### Business and Property Owners:

- Laurie Hullinger, AGM, Costco Wholesale
- Alex Verkruijsse, Alcohol Service Area Manager, Harkins Theatres
- Maro Dimmer, Owner, Rheinlander Bakery
- Julie Witecki, Regional Marketing Director, Swinerton

#### Community Organizations & Schools:

- Charise Canales, Neighborhood Engagement Coordinator, City of Arvada
- Joe Hengstler, Executive Director, Olde Town Arvada Business Improvement District



Real Estate:

- Ann Sperling, Senior Director, Trammell Crow Company
- Katy Press, Owner, KP Consulting & Associates
- Esther Kettering, Managing Director, Cushman and Wakefield
- Scott Marcum, Commercial Broker & Owner, Marcum Commercial Advisors

## VII. ULI Volunteer Panelists



**Panel Chair Pat McHenry** is one of the founders and principals of City Street Investors and has been involved in placemaking and infill real estate project through-out Colorado for 30 years. Their projects have won awards from Historic Denver, Denver’s Mayor’s Design Awards, Downtown Denver Partnership, Westword, and 5280 Magazine. While their collection of investments emphasizes retail, it also includes office in conjunction with mixed-use properties, multi-family residential, self-storage, hotel and numerous restaurant investments. Pat takes on the primary responsibility for the leasing of all City Street Investors projects and often takes the lead on new acquisitions and sourcing on new partnerships. Pat is also a partner in Larimer Associates, where her responsibilities include the retail programming for Larimer Square. Previously, Pat was a Senior Vice President with Catellus in charge of retail strategy and implementation for Catellus’ retail developments across the country. Pat’s experience also includes 20 years of retail brokerage with Trammell Crow Company and CB Richard Ellis where she concentrated on specialty and urban centers, new developments, major redevelopments and national initiatives. As a broker, Pat was consistently recognized by the Denver Business Journal, Denver Metro Commercial Area Realtors and NAIOP as a top performer in the Denver marketplace. Pat holds a Chemical Engineering degree from Iowa State University and a Masters in Business from Stanford University.



**Tim Baldwin**, AICP, is the Owner/ Principal of Rocky Mountain West Transit & Urban. With more than 35 years in transportation, transit, and community planning and public policy, he has focused his career on helping communities find the best paths forward in sustainable planning practices. His specialties are neighborhood-focused station area planning and transit-oriented development planning, urban circulator and transit facilities planning, transit system and corridor options development and evaluation, and policy and funding development and analysis – all with a focus on linking land use and transportation. He formerly led TOD and station area planning projects for passenger rail in Fort Worth and Denton, TX, for the RTD Gold Line (Arvada & Wheat Ridge, CO), the RTD North Metro line (Thornton & Northglenn, CO), and the Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (Aspen/Glenwood Springs, CO).



**Dan Cohen** is the Principal of Urban Investment Group, a real estate investment and development firm. Dan has over 25 years of experience in real estate, specializing in complex urban and mixed-use development. He previously served as the Senior Vice President of Mixed-Use Development at McWhinney, where he focused on urban infill, TOD, and large-scale land development opportunities throughout the western U.S. Prior to that, he was a Vice President at Catellus, the mixed-use, retail, and land development division of Prologis, a Fortune 500 company. Dan has two undergraduate degrees from U.C. Berkeley and a Master of City Planning degree from M.I.T.





**Dan Guimond** is the Principal of Economic & Planning Systems. He is an economist and planner with over 30 years' experience in market and financial analysis for the public and private sectors. He joined EPS in 1999 to open the firm's Denver office. He has specialized in commercial feasibility analysis for major shopping center and store chains, and citywide and district specific retail development strategies for public sector clients. Dan has extensive revitalization and redevelopment experience including in downtowns, outmoded malls and commercial corridors; military bases and other infill sites; and on evaluating and negotiating public-private financing agreements and other partnerships. He has also focused on the economic aspects of transit systems throughout the western US including numerous TOD and joint development projects. He has a master's degree in Urban Geography from the University of Colorado. He is a member of the Urban Land Institute, American Planning Association, International Council of Shopping Centers, and Lambda Alpha International.



**Greg Straub** is the Director of Design for Farnsworth Group. As the Director of Design, he oversees the design process for five architectural studios to ensure that clients are satisfied. He is a licensed architect and lead designer with extensive experience in commercial, residential, retail, mixed-use, hospitality, and urban planning projects. Previously, he was the owner and senior design architect for CX-1 Architects, a small international Architecture and Interior design firm with a sustainable focus. Prior to that, he was a Senior Design Architect for Cubellis.



**Brad Weinig** is the Development Director for Herman and Kittle Properties. In his role as a Development Director, he is responsible for advancing development opportunities in Colorado through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. He leads the development process, which includes market analysis, site selection, contract negotiation, deal structuring, applications for financing, and managing the closing process. Prior to joining HKP, Brad worked at Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., a national nonprofit organization specializing in financing and policy solutions for affordable housing. While at Enterprise, Brad oversaw the organization's Denver programs, including the expansion of the Denver Regional Transit Oriented Development Fund. Brad also has experience in underwriting and closing loans for affordable housing through his prior work as an Assistant Vice President with Citi Community Capital. Brad earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business and Finance from the University of Colorado in Boulder. He also earned his Master's degree in Business with a focus in Real Estate from the University of Colorado's Real Estate Center. He remains an active member of the CU Real Estate Center as well as Housing Colorado and ULI Colorado.



### ULI Colorado Leadership in Responsible Land Use

ULI Colorado is the 1,400-member District Council of the global Urban Land Institute. ULI Colorado consists of a four-person staff, 25-member executive committee, and 15 committees with more than 250 volunteers. More than 40 programs a year include advisory panels, leadership and mentoring programs, panels, project tours, publications, and community service. ULI is a non-lobbying educational and research institute supported by its members, sponsors, and foundations. Key issues include affordable housing, healthy communities, transit-oriented development, and sustainable design and planning.

Chair: Mike Zoellner, Managing Partner, ZF Capital

Treasurer: Mark Tompkins, Principal, Strae Advisory Services

Chair of Mission Advancement: Marilee Utter, President, Citiventure Associates

Governance Chair: Bruce O'Donnell, Principal, Starboard Realty

Chairs emeriti: Amy Cara, Kirk Monroe, Chris Achenbach, Bill Mosher, V. Michael Komppa, Marilee Utter, Julie Underdahl, James DeFrancia, Buz Koelbel, Byron Koste

Executive Director: Michael Leccese  
 Director: Sarah Franklin  
 Manager: Marianne Eppig  
 Senior Associate: Jack Tiebout

