



connectivity and mobility
urban design equity and access
thriving region
competitive landscape

MAY 19, 2017

Denveright.

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community profile



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DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

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SECTION 1

Introduction

Overview

This document is a first step in helping to identify areas where the Blueprint effort and coordinating Denverright plans can help continue to shape Denver's future. The document serves as a community profile, identifying Denver's current vision, as well as assessing its performance and highlighting its assets and areas of opportunity.

DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

The Community Profile is organized into eight sections and is accompanied by an appendix. The sections of the document include:

- **Section 1: Introduction** – Background on the Blueprint Denver effort and the larger Denverright planning initiative;
- **Section 2: Denver Today** – City and County of Denver demographics and neighborhood structure;
- **Section 3: The Competitive Landscape** – Compares U.S. cities as benchmarks to gauge Denver's progress;
- **Section 4: The Center of a Thriving Region** – Explores Denver's place in the larger metropolitan area and looks at its evolution over time;
- **Section 5: Built Form and Urban Design** – Indicators and characteristics of Denver's built form, how that form has changed over time, and what patterns have emerged as a result of various factors;
- **Section 6: Connectivity and Mobility** – How residents, employees and visitors get around in Denver and what infrastructure exists to support those choices;
- **Section 7: Equity and Access within Denver** – Denver's neighborhoods across a variety of demographic, transportation, park and neighborhood amenity indicators;
- **Section 8: Next Steps** – Next steps in the Blueprint Denver process; and
- **Appendix** – The appendix includes a brief history of Denver, summaries of several relevant plans and studies that were considered in the creation of the Community Profile and that will be used as a foundation moving forward in the planning process, and a sample list of Denver rankings.

Background

In 2000, Denver developed a Comprehensive Plan with a specific vision, goals and objectives to lead Denver into 2020. A core component of that plan was the call for a separate document, Blueprint Denver, that identified in detail how Denver would grow. In response to increased growth and what was perceived as threats to the character of existing neighborhoods, Blueprint was intended to address and integrate planning for land use and transportation at a citywide scale while establishing the tools for small area planning. Prior to the creation of Blueprint, Denver never had a document that specified an overarching growth approach, identified compatible future land uses, or a desired transportation system that moved people and not just cars.

Blueprint Denver was adopted by the Denver City Council in 2002 as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan. With the adoption of Blueprint, Denver was able to identify and direct growth to Areas of Change, preserve community character in Areas of Stability, prioritize the development of multi-modal streets and mixed-use developments, and develop building blocks to characterize and support appropriate land use.

Project Overview

Blueprint Denver is an update of our city's 15-year-old guide for land use and transportation. It will direct how our city evolves, ensuring that our communities feel and function in ways that make life better and more enjoyable for those who live and work in Denver. With the nearly complete build-out of FasTracks, Stapleton and Lowry, as well as significant population growth, now is the time to look to the future and think about what we want our communities and the entire city to be like in the next 20 years. As part of Denverright, the update of Blueprint Denver will convene community conversations to shape how certain areas of our city will change and how other areas can remain stable and vibrant. It will also help us decide how our city's road, bus, rail, bicycle and pedestrian systems should evolve to meet the needs of the Denver of tomorrow.

Why Update Blueprint Denver?

Now is the time

Denver has changed considerably since 2002. More transportation options, thriving neighborhoods and improved planning tools position us well to address our continued population and employment growth.

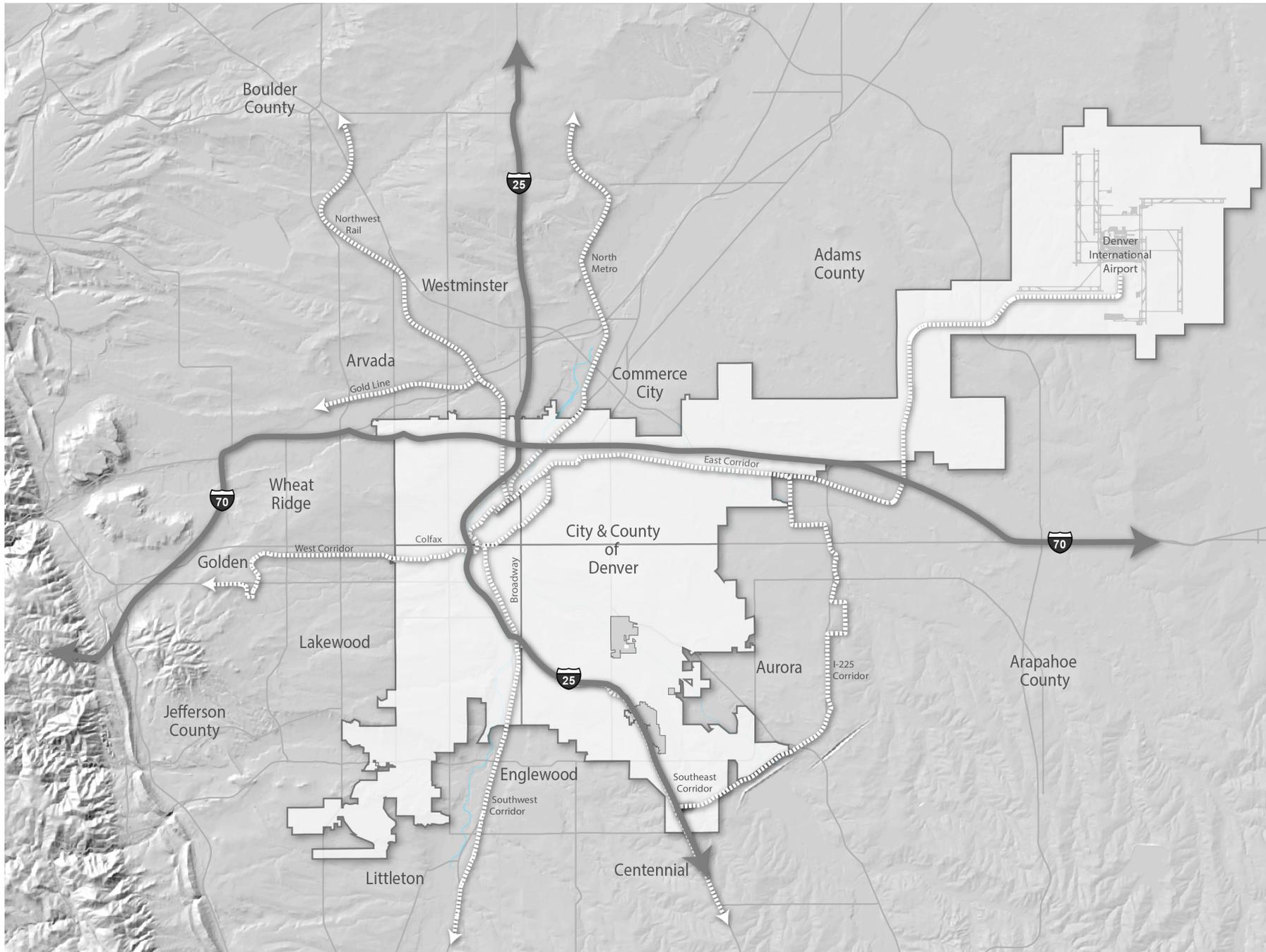
A people-driven plan

It will take all of us to get this right. Blueprint Denver is by, for, and about the people. It will give everyone in Denver a voice in what we want our city to be like.

Making a difference in daily life

Blueprint Denver will shape the future of our communities in ways that make them unique and enjoyable places to live and work.

Figure 1: Denver Region



Denverright Effort (Blueprint Denver, Game Plan, Denver Moves: Transit, Denver Moves: Ped and Trails)

Our community is undertaking an effort that builds upon our successes and proud traditions to shape the future of Denver. Encompassing four distinct citywide plans and guided by input from the community, Denverright will establish a vision for Denver for the next 20 years.

Denverright will shape Denver's future in the areas of land use, mobility, parks and recreational resources, by coordinating, for the first time, the planning processes for:

- The update of Blueprint Denver;
- The update of The Game Plan, the 2003 citywide parks and recreation master plan;
- The development of Denver Moves: Transit, a new mobility plan for transit in Denver; and
- The development of Denver Moves: Pedestrians and Trails, a new mobility plan for sidewalks, crossings and trails.

Existing Plans, Policies and Goals

Blueprint Denver builds upon and references numerous previous successful Denver planning efforts. Land use, multimodal connectivity, parks and greenways, parking, street categories, and housing diversity and choice are all important aspects of the update process. The following citywide plans inform all four Denverright plans:

- Denver Comprehensive Plan (2000)
- Blueprint Denver (2002)
- Parks Game Plan (2003)
- Pedestrian Master Plan (2004)
- Moving People: Denver Strategic Transportation Plan (2008)
- Denver Moves: Making Bicycle and Multi-Use Connections (2011)
- Denver Moves: Enhanced Bikeways (2016)
- Denver Strategic Parking Plan (2010)
- Living Streets Initiative (2014)
- Transit Oriented Denver (2014)
- The Climate Adaptation Plan (2014)
- The Climate Action Plan (2015)
- Housing Denver – A Five-year Plan (2015-2019)
- Small Area Plans/Next Step Studies/Neighborhood Plans/Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plans
- Denver Community Health Improvement Plan (2013-2018)

Each of these plans is addressed more fully in the Appendix of this document.

SECTION 2

Denver Today

Overview

Denver is a great place to live and work – it boasts an active outdoor lifestyle, proximity to the mountains, phenomenal restaurants, and diverse neighborhoods and cultural experiences. The city is experiencing unprecedented growth. Denver's population in 2015 was 682,545 (US Census Population Estimates). The resurgence of growth in Denver in the 1990s spurred the city to update its comprehensive plan and develop the original Blueprint Denver. Denver is now on pace to grow by 150,000 new residents in a ten-year period. This rate of growth in Denver is again spurring the city to reconsider its plan for growth.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Denver has grown steadily since its inception in 1858, and has increased in population every decade since with the exception of the 1970s and 80s;
- The population growth through 2020 projected by DRCOG at the time of 2002 Blueprint Denver was for an additional 109,000 residents;
- Since the 2002 Blueprint Denver, the city has grown by 121,000 residents. 65 percent of this population growth (78,000 people) occurred in the last five years (2010 to 2015);
- Denver was the fifth fastest-growing large city (population > 250,000) in the nation in 2014 and the third fastest city in the U.S. from 2005-2014;
- Despite significant population growth, Denver was denser in 1950 than it is today;
- Denver is nearly evenly split between owner-occupied and renter-occupied units but renter households accounted for over 75 percent of the new households since 2000;
- Denver has permitted at least 5,500 housing units annually since 2012, which is 30 percent more annually than from 2000 to 2008;
- Denver is not very racially diverse as the population is predominately white (78%);
- 31 percent of the residents are Hispanic or of Latino origin;
- Denver is a young and educated city with a median age of 34 and 44 percent of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher; and
- Total employment in Denver was approximately 473,000 in 2014, according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Industries with significant employment growth since 2002 include: accommodations and food service, professional services, health care, management of companies, and oil and gas.

KEY FINDINGS

- While Denver has had periods of significant growth, the amount of population growth in Denver over the past five years is more than the city has ever experienced in that amount of time and is expected to continue;
- The new housing development since 2010 has shifted to become primarily multifamily as opposed to single family (4:1 ratio). This trend is likely to continue as Denver's larger areas for single family home development (Green Valley Ranch, Lowry, and Stapleton) are mostly built out;
- Denver's economy is growing and has become more diverse; and
- Denver's distinct set of neighborhoods attracts a wide range of residents. The regionally-centered location of the neighborhoods and resurgence of small neighborhood business districts have increased the city's desirability.

Denver by the Numbers

Population

Denver is experiencing unprecedented growth. Denver's population in 2015 was 682,545 (US Census Population Estimates). The city has grown steadily since its inception in 1858, with the exception of two decades (See Figure 2). The population decreased in the 1970s and 1980s by 47,000 residents. The resurgence of growth in Denver in the 1990s spurred the city's update to its comprehensive plan and the development of the original Blueprint Denver. Since the 2002 Denver Blueprint, Denver has grown by 121,000 residents at an annual rate of 1.5 percent. Two-thirds of this population growth (78,000 people) occurred in the last five years (2010 to 2015). The largest population increase in a decade was 93,374 people in the 1940s. Denver is now on pace to grow by 150,000 new residents in a ten-year period.

Denver was the fifth fastest-growing large city (population greater than 250,000) in the nation in 2014 and the third fastest city in the U.S. from 2005-2014.

Population Density

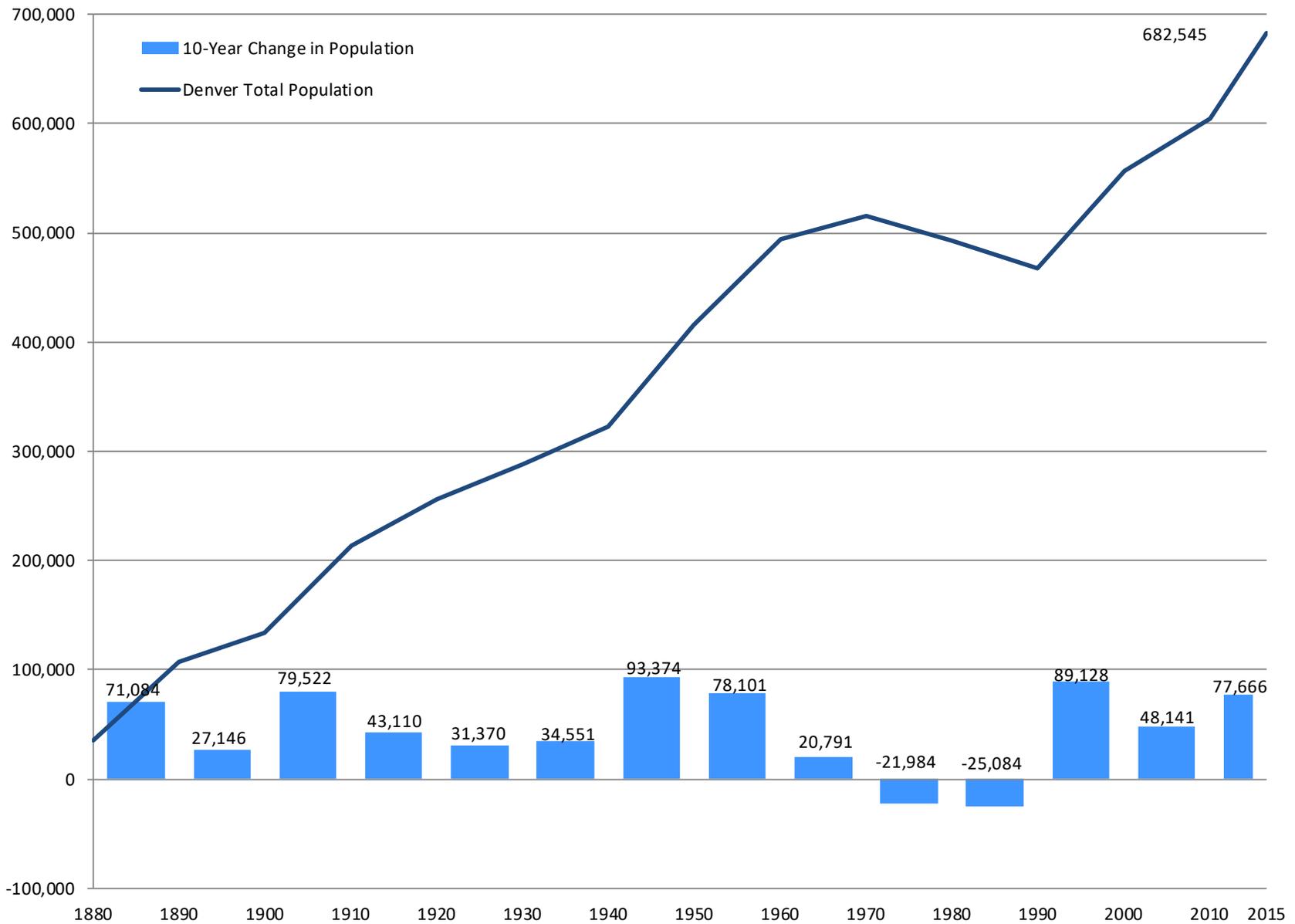
While Denver's population has increased steadily since the mid-1800s, save for a twenty-year period in the late 1900s when Denver saw a population loss, the city was denser in 1950 than it is today (See Figures 3-6). This in part is due to the expansive outward growth occurring post 1950s that redistributed our population from the traditional core to the newly acquired land in the southeast.

Households and Housing

There were 281,928 households (occupied housing units) in Denver in 2014 (ACS). Denver increased in households by an annual rate of 1.2 percent from 2000 to 2014, which equates to 42,693 new households in the city (See Table 1). Despite an almost even split of owner-occupied versus renter-occupied units for the city as a whole, the recent growth was predominately in renter occupied households. In that time frame, there were over 32,000 renter households added to the city compared to 9,976 owner occupied households. Renter households accounted for over 75 percent of the new households, resulting in a shift in the tenant mix towards renters.

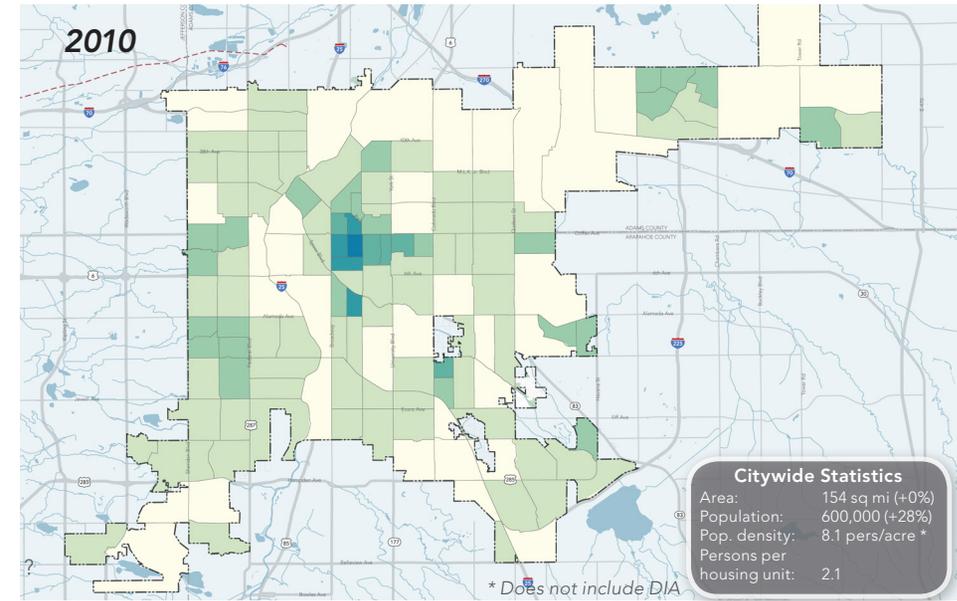
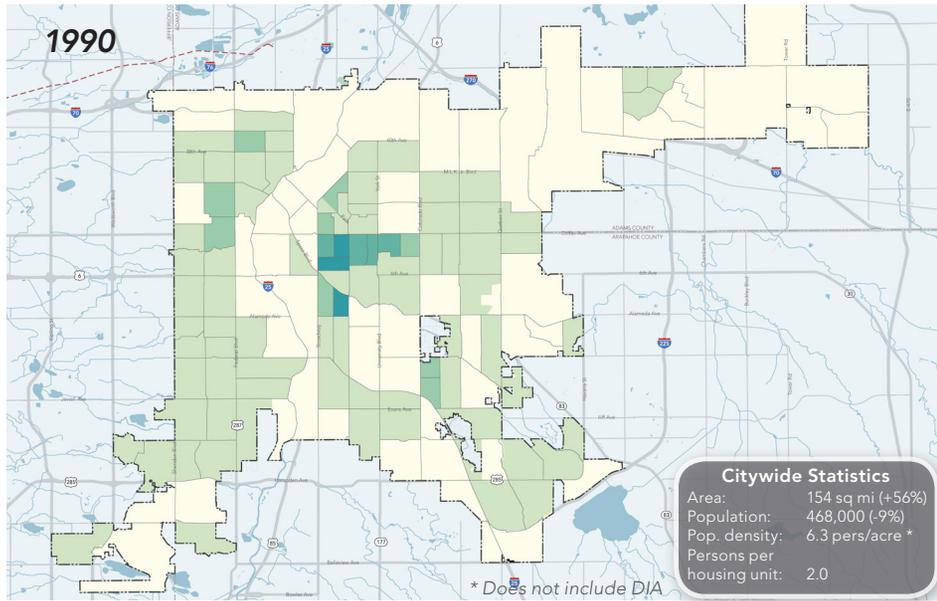
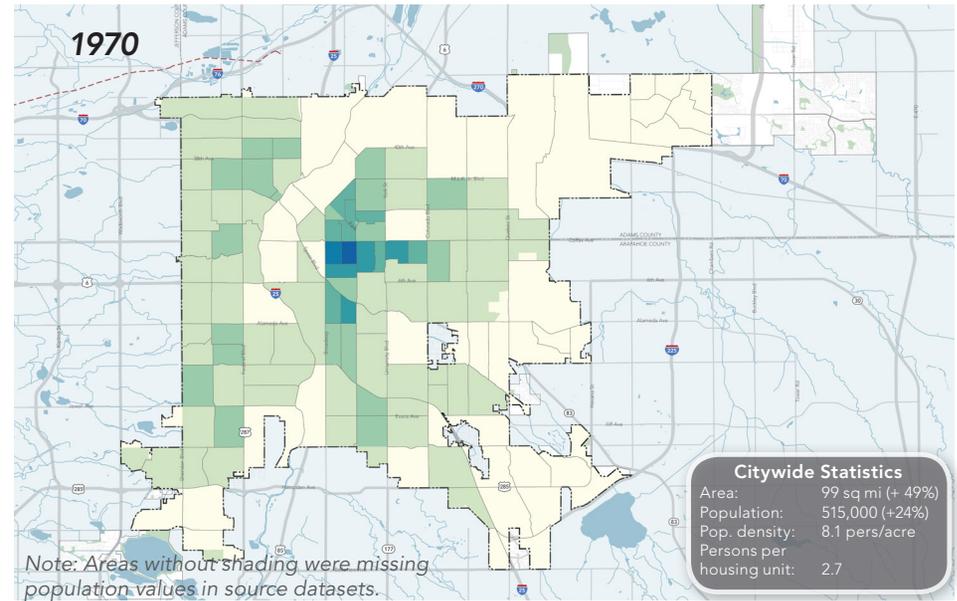
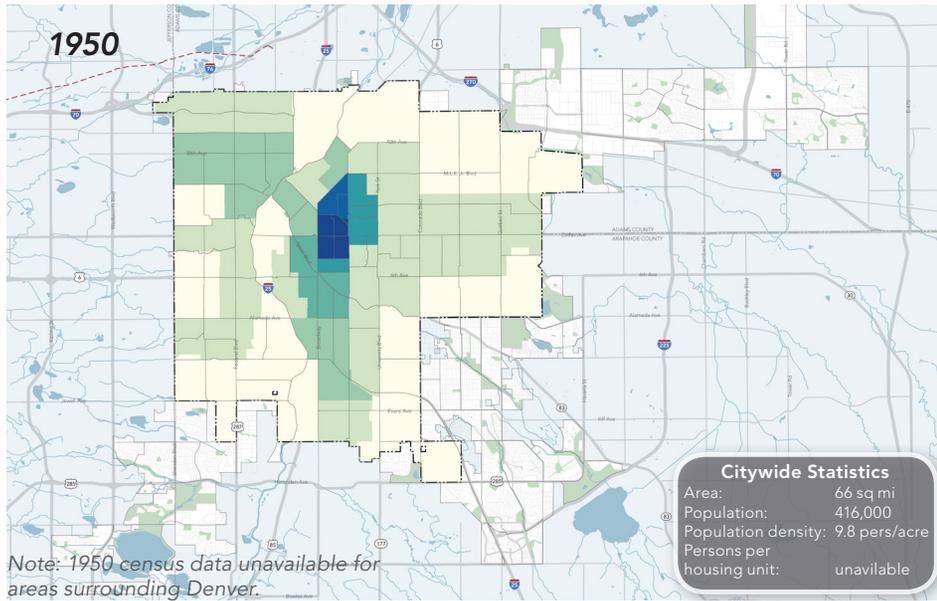
The City of Denver permitted approximately 6,000 residential units in 2014. Between 2002 and 2008, the city permitted between 3,000 and 4,000 annually. From 2009 to 2011, permit activity reduced as the city and the nation felt the impacts of the economic recession. As housing development has returned, the number of units permitted has increased year over year and is permitting units at a higher rate than during the early part of the 2000s. The City of Denver has permitted over 5,500 units annually since 2012, with over 6,000 units permitted in 2013 and 2014 (See Figure 7). In total, the City of Denver permitted 48,408 units from 2002 to 2014 with 32 percent of these units in single family dwellings and 68 percent in multi-family dwellings.

Figure 2: Denver Population Change by Decade, 1880 to 2015



Source: US Census; Colorado Department of Local Affairs

Figures 3-6: Denver's Population Density 1950; 1970; 1990; and 2010



Source: City and County of Denver; University of Minnesota-Minnesota Population Center NHGIS; U.S. Census Bureau

LEGEND

- Roadways
- Denver County Limits*
- Parks / Open Space
- Bodies of Water
- County Boundary

Population by Census Tract (Persons Per Acre)

0.0 - 6.9	20.6 - 27.5	41.3 - 48.1
6.9 - 13.8	27.5 - 34.4	48.1 - 55.0
13.8 - 20.6	34.4 - 41.3	

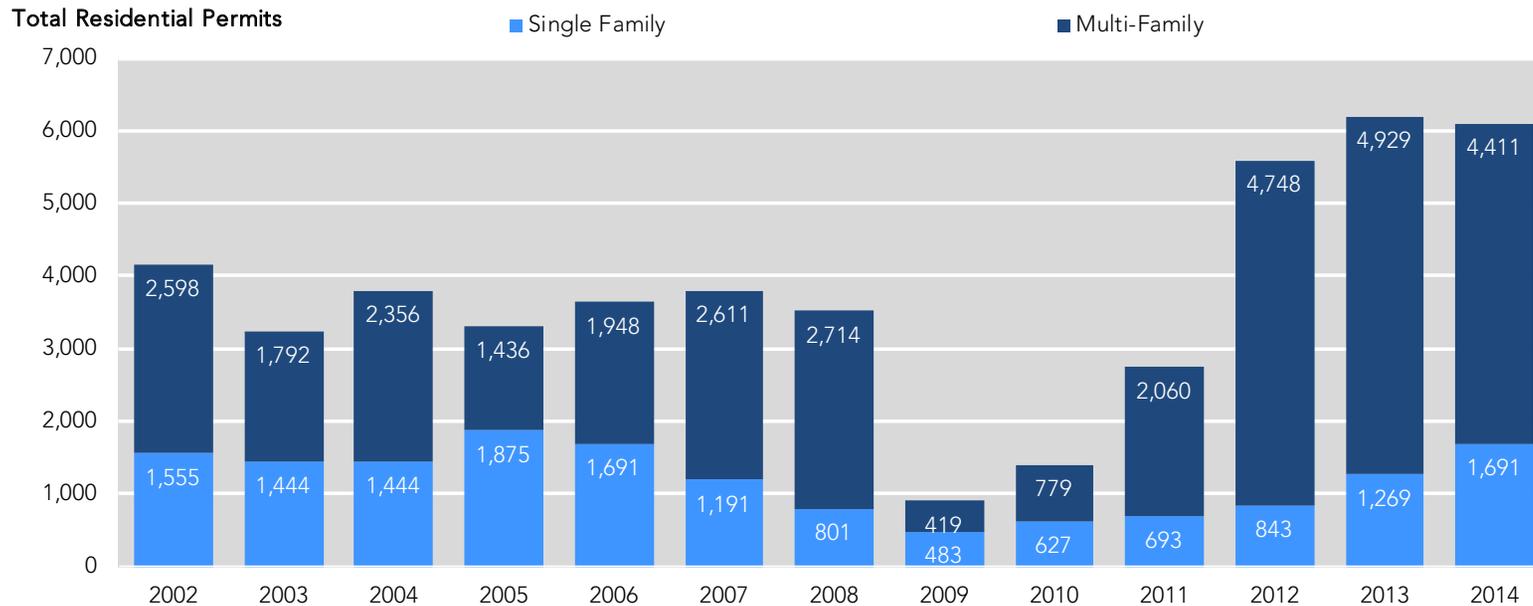
*Denver County Limits drawn according to the population data year

Table 1: Denver Households and Tenure, 2000 to 2014

	2000		2014	
	#	%	#	%
Housing Units	251,435		298,880	
Occupied Housing Units (Households)	239,235	95%	281,928	94%
Owner Occupied Households	125,631	53%	135,607	48%
Renter Occupied Households	113,604	47%	146,321	52%
Vacant Housing Units	12,200	5%	16,952	6%

Source: US Census 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Figure 7: Denver Permitted Residential Units, 2002 to 2014



Source: Denver County Assessor; U.S. Census Bureau; Economic & Planning Systems

Race and Ethnicity

The population of Denver is predominately white (78%) (See Table 2). Nine percent of the residents are African American, four percent Asian, and one percent American Indian. The remaining seven percent are another race or two or more races. Approximately 31 percent of the residents are Hispanic or of Latino origin.

Table 2: Denver Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2014

Race/Ethnicity	Number	%
White	520,398	78%
Black or African American	62,757	9%
Asian	24,784	4%
American Indian	7,326	1%
Some Other Race	25,896	4%
Two or More Races	22,701	3%
Hispanic or Latino Origin	204,375	31%

Source: US Census 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Age

The median age of residents in Denver is 34 (See Table 3). The largest age group is 25 to 34 years old, with 22 percent of the residents. The second largest age group is 35 to 44 years old, with 15.5 percent of residents. 11 percent of residents are 65 years old or older, and 18 percent are under 15 years old.

Table 3: Denver Population by Age, 2014

Age	%
Under 5 years	6.8%
5 to 14 years	11.4%
15 to 24 years	11.3%
25 to 34 years	22.1%
35 to 44 years	15.5%
45 to 54 years	11.7%
55 to 64 years	10.5%
65 to 74 years	6.3%
75 to 84 years	3.0%
85 years and over	1.6%
Median Age	34.2

Source: US Census 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Education

Over 85 percent of residents age 25 or older have a high school degree (See Table 4). Forty-four percent of residents have a bachelor's degree.

Table 4: Denver Population by Educational Attainment, 2014

Educational Attainment	%
Less than high school graduate	14.5%
High school graduate	17.6%
Some college or associates degree	23.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	44.3%

Source: US Census 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Income

The average household income in Denver is \$81,880 (See Table 5). The median household income is \$54,941 and the per capita income is \$35,967.

Table 5: Denver Household and Per Capita Income, 2014

Income	2014
Average Household Income	\$81,880
Median Household Income	\$54,941
Per Capita Income	\$35,967

Source: US Census 2014 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Employment

Total employment in Denver is 600,900 (BEA 2014), which includes both sole proprietors and wage and salary jobs. Wage and salary employment accounts for 77 percent of employment and sole-proprietors account for 23 percent. Wage and salary employment grew by 22,456 jobs since 2002 at an annual rate of 0.4 percent. Over 47 percent of employed Denver residents work in Denver. As a major employment hub attracting workers from throughout the Denver Metro Area and Front Range of Colorado, nearly 70 percent of people employed in Denver live outside the city.

Growing Industries

There were five employment sectors that increased by over 5,000 jobs from 2002 to 2014. Accommodation and Food Services added 11,625 jobs at an annual rate of 2.4 percent. This represents the most jobs added out of all sectors and the fifth fastest annual growth rate. Health Care and Social Assistance, another industry that primarily serves the local economy, added the fourth most number of jobs at 7,032 and grew at the eighth fastest annual rate at 1.1 percent.

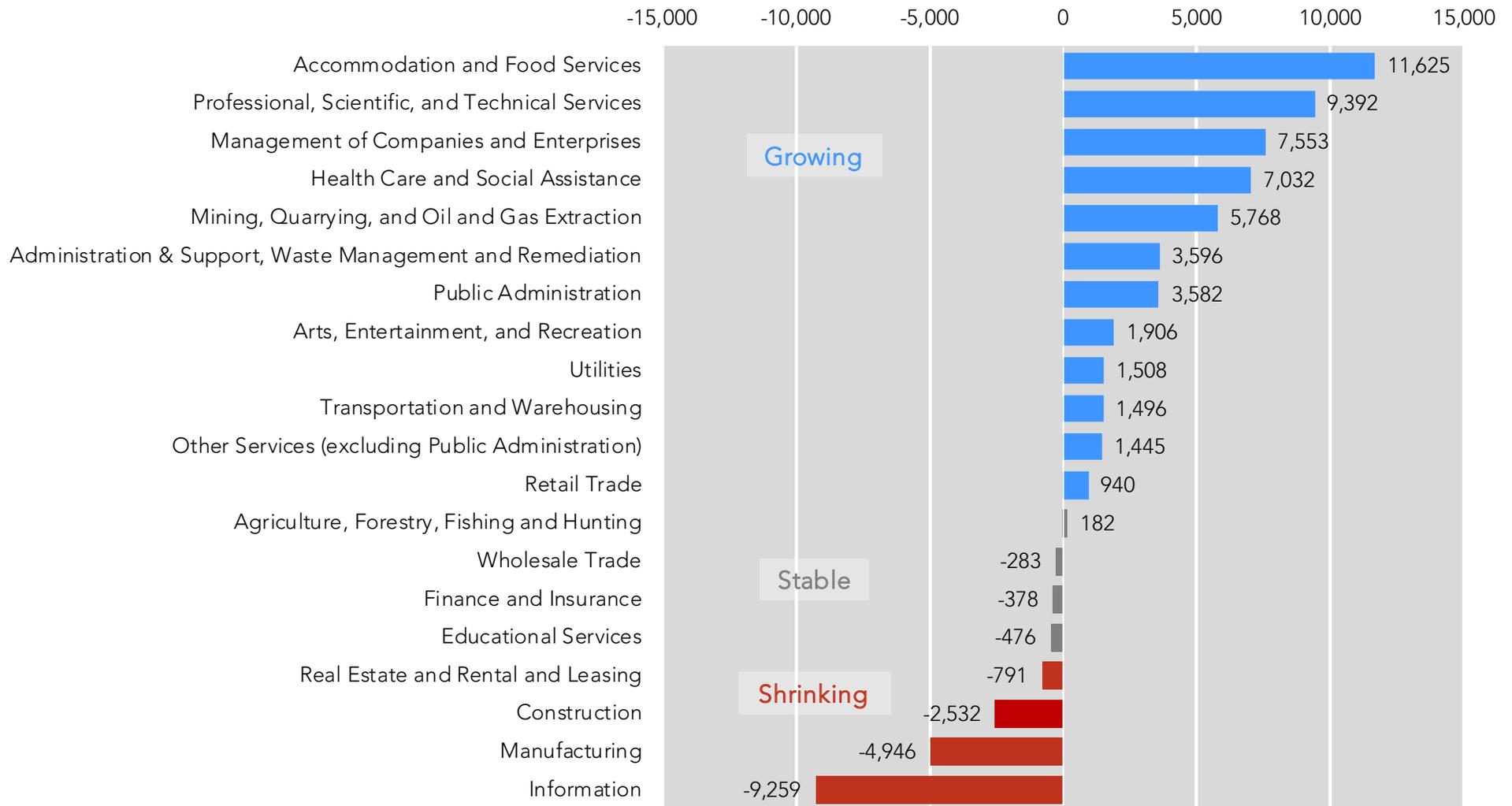
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Management of Companies and Enterprises; and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction are three sectors that primarily represent export or traded industries and, thus, are key to driving Denver's overall economic growth. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services added 9,392 jobs and grew at an annual rate of 1.8 percent, the seventh fastest rate. Management of Companies and Enterprises added 7,553 jobs and grew at an annual rate of 7.8 percent, the second fastest rate. Finally, Mining Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction added 5,768 jobs at an annual rate of 8.2 percent, the fastest rate out of all industries during the period 2002 to 2014.

There were also six other sectors that increased by over 1,000 jobs or more. These sectors include: Administration and Support; Waste Management and Remediation; Public Administration; Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Utilities; and Transportation and Warehousing.

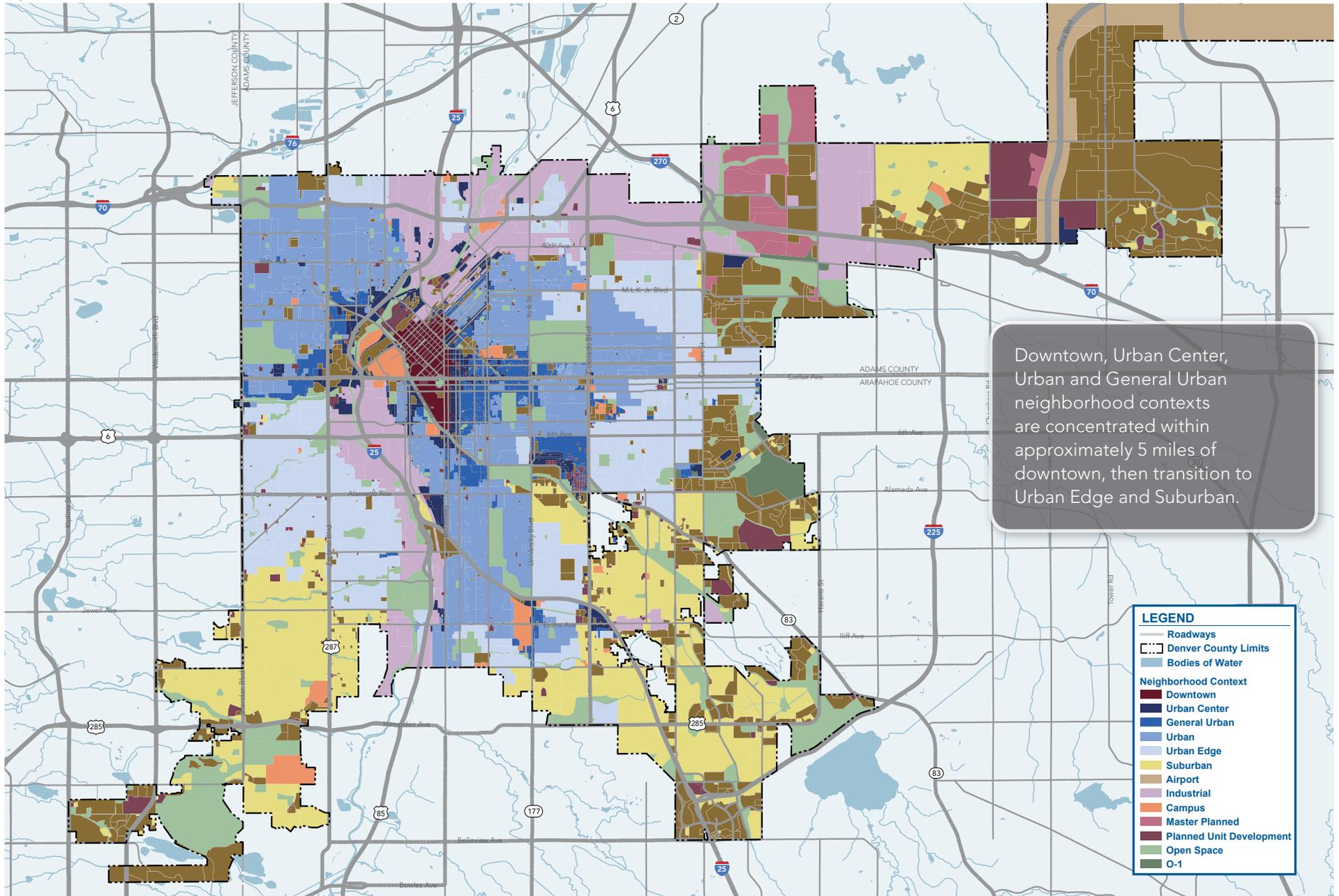
Shrinking Industries

Three sectors lost more than 1,000 jobs (See Figure 8). Information lost 9,259 jobs at an annual rate of -4.1 percent. Manufacturing lost 4,946 jobs at an annual rate of -1.7 percent, and Construction lost 2,532 jobs at an annual rate of -1.1 percent during the period 2002 to 2014.

Figure 8: Change in Employment (2002-2014)



Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics; Economic & Planning Systems



Downtown, Urban Center, Urban and General Urban neighborhood contexts are concentrated within approximately 5 miles of downtown, then transition to Urban Edge and Suburban.

History and Organization of Neighborhoods

Part of Denver's appeal and reputation as a desirable city rests upon its great neighborhoods. The city has 78 statistical neighborhoods that were established along census tract lines in the 1970s. The data and comparisons presented in this profile are based on these neighborhoods. In addition, we have a robust culture of Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs) formed by residents and property owners that play an active role in the ongoing effort to make Denver a great place to work and live.

Denver's diverse variety of neighborhoods includes historic districts, more contemporary infill, apartment and condominium areas, quiet residential streets with more traditional single family homes, and, in some cases, neighborhoods that combine several of these qualities as they evolve and change.

While suburban-style neighborhoods comprise many areas of the city, Denver also has the unique advantage of numerous established neighborhoods very close to the downtown core. In many cases these areas developed around Denver's early streetcar system that had, at its peak, approximately 260 miles of tracks throughout the city with 31 lines of service. Although the streetcar lines were completely discontinued by the mid 1950s, the small business districts that formed around them at key nodes are still visible today. Indeed, several of these areas are at the core of our city's most popular neighborhoods.

Denver's Neighborhood Contexts

Neighborhoods and residential areas are a key building block of Blueprint and were utilized as an organizing factor in the 2010 form-based update to Denver's zoning code which identifies six neighborhood contexts and other special contexts and districts (See Figure 9). The context-based approach helps set standards for compatible development throughout the city. The neighborhood contexts are distinguished from one another by their physical and functional characteristics including but not limited to: street, alley and block patterns; building placement and height; diversity, distribution and intensity of land uses; and diversity of mobility options.

Denver's neighborhood contexts and typical characteristics are:

- The *Suburban Neighborhood Context* consists of curving streets with varied block shapes and sizes. It is predominantly single-family residential with commercial uses accommodated in shopping centers.
- The *Urban Edge Neighborhood Context* is characterized by a mix of elements from both the Suburban and Urban contexts, including curving and grid street patterns, single family residential uses and commercial shopettes.
- The *Urban Neighborhood Context* is primarily characterized by a regular street grid, single-unit and two-unit residential uses, small-scale multi-unit residential uses and embedded commercial areas including main streets and corner stores.
- The *General Urban Neighborhood Context* consists of primarily multi-family residential in a variety of building forms (e.g. urban houses, rowhouses, and apartment buildings), as well as single-family and two-family residential uses. A grid and alley block pattern predominates; these areas offer better multi-modal options, and commercial areas are both embedded in the neighborhood and located along busier, mixed-use arterials.

- The *Urban Center Neighborhood Context* consists primarily of mixed-use areas, containing both multi-family residential and commercial uses, often within the same building or same block. Urban Centers are found along major corridors, at transit station areas, or near and around downtown, and support high pedestrian activity, multi-modal transportation.
- The *Downtown Neighborhood Context* consists of mixed-use residential, office, commercial and retail uses in large buildings, including the area's historic districts. The Downtown context functions as a transit hub and supports high pedestrian activity.
- *Special Contexts and Districts* are areas that typically serve a principal purpose such as industrial, open space, campus, or master planned areas.

The most prominent neighborhood contexts in Denver today are Urban, Urban Edge, Suburban and Special Industrial. Not surprisingly, the Downtown neighborhood context is concentrated in the central city and is largely surrounded by General Urban and Special Industrial contexts. The I-70 and I-25 corridors traverse Special Industrial and Urban Edge contexts through the core of Denver, but then move through Urban to the west and Suburban context to the south, respectively. Of the six primary neighborhood contexts, Urban Center is the least prevalent and is largely concentrated along historical commercial corridors and at emerging RTD rail station areas.

SECTION 3

The Competitive Landscape

Overview

Denver, like many other large cities in the U.S., is experiencing an urban renaissance as more people are choosing to live and work in the primary city of a region. The primary cities in the U.S.'s largest metro areas grew by a faster rate in recent years than their surrounding suburbs, which is the first time this has happened since the 1920s. To understand how Denver compares to its peer cities in the U.S., an analysis of a variety of measures was completed to understand Denver's strengths and what trends Denver may need to address within the Blueprint Denver. Denver's comparable U.S. cities include Austin, Minneapolis, Portland, Salt Lake City, and Seattle.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- The annual rate of population growth in Denver, (2.2%) was higher than the Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (1.9%) from 2005 to 2014;
- Denver was the fifth fastest-growing large city (population > 250,000) in the nation in 2014 and the third fastest city in the U.S. from 2005-2014;
- The distribution of residents by age in Denver is almost identical to the comparison cities;
- Residents' age 25 to 34 years is the largest age group in all comparison cities and accounts for over 20 percent of residents in all those cities but one, Salt Lake City;
- Denver increased by approximately 60,000 residents' age 25 to 34 years old, which is over half the total amount of population growth in the city;
- Denver permitted the third most residential units amongst its peer cities with 7,900 units in Denver in 2015;
- Unlike recent population growth, employment growth in the comparable cities, including Denver, has been slower in these cities than their surrounding MSA;
- Employment in Denver grew at the fifth slowest rate of the six cities;
- The average housing price in the Denver metro area has increased by the highest percent (60%) since 2010 of all cities and their MSAs;
- The average rental rate in Denver has grown by the highest percentage than any of the comparable cities; and
- Despite the large increase in housing costs in Denver, the median home value in Denver is 40 percent lower than it is in Seattle.

KEY FINDINGS

- Denver has very similar attributes to its peer cities as all have seen a recent resurgence in desirability as a place to live, especially for younger people;
- Despite the recent growth in residents in central cities, employment growth is faster in the surrounding suburbs in each city's MSA. This is true for Denver as the rate of employment growth is slower than the metro area and slower than all but one of the comparison cities. However, employment growth in Denver in the past two to three years has accelerated; and
- Denver was previously relatively low cost compared to some of its peer cities, but the rapid growth in housing costs for both for-sale homes and for-rent homes, faster than all peer cities, has begun to turn Denver into one of the more expensive cities.

Comparable City Snapshot

Population

The rate of population growth in Denver (2.2%) was higher than the Denver Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (1.9%) from 2005 to 2014. Four of the cities, including Denver, grew at a faster rate than their metro areas in terms of population. Austin and Salt Lake City grew at a slower rate. However, Austin was the fastest growing city by total population and rate of growth, despite growing slightly slower than its surrounding communities. Denver was the third fastest-growing city from 2005 to 2014 (See Table 6).

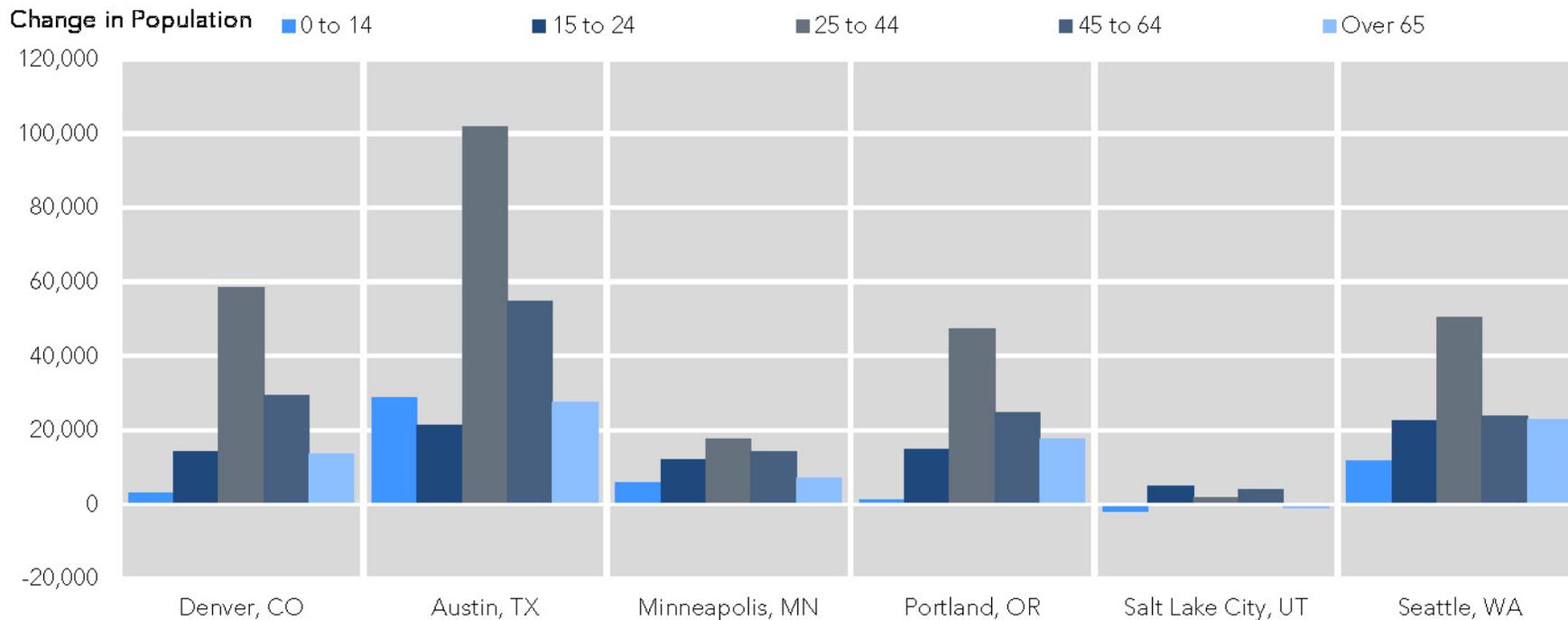
Table 6: Peer City Population, 2005 to 2014

Description	2005	2014	2005-2014		
			Total	Ann. #	Ann. %
Cities					
Austin, TX	678,457	912,798	234,341	26,038	3.4%
Seattle, WA	536,946	668,337	131,391	14,599	2.5%
Denver, CO	545,198	663,862	118,664	13,185	2.2%
Portland, OR	513,627	619,445	105,818	11,758	2.1%
Minneapolis, MN	350,260	407,181	56,921	6,325	1.7%
Salt Lake City, UT	182,670	190,873	8,203	911	0.5%
MSAs					
Austin-Round Rock, TX Metro Area	1,406,364	1,943,299	536,935	59,659	3.7%
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA Metro Area	3,133,715	3,671,478	537,763	59,751	1.8%
Denver-Aurora, CO Metro Area*	2,327,901	2,754,258	426,357	47,373	1.9%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA Metro Area*	2,063,277	2,347,127	283,850	31,539	1.4%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI Metro Area	3,076,239	3,495,176	418,937	46,549	1.4%
Salt Lake City, UT Metro Area	1,017,572	1,153,340	135,768	15,085	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Economic & Planning Systems

Denver’s distribution of residents by age is almost identical to the comparison cities. Residents 25 to 44 years-old is the largest age group in all cities and accounts for over 20 percent of residents in all cities except Salt Lake City. The 25 to 44 age group also grew by the largest amount between 2005 and 2014 - approximately 60,000 residents (See Figure 10) - which is over half the total amount of the city’s population growth. Only Austin increased in population in this age group more due to its millennial population increase.

Figure 10: Peer City Change in Population by Age, 2005 to 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Economic & Planning Systems

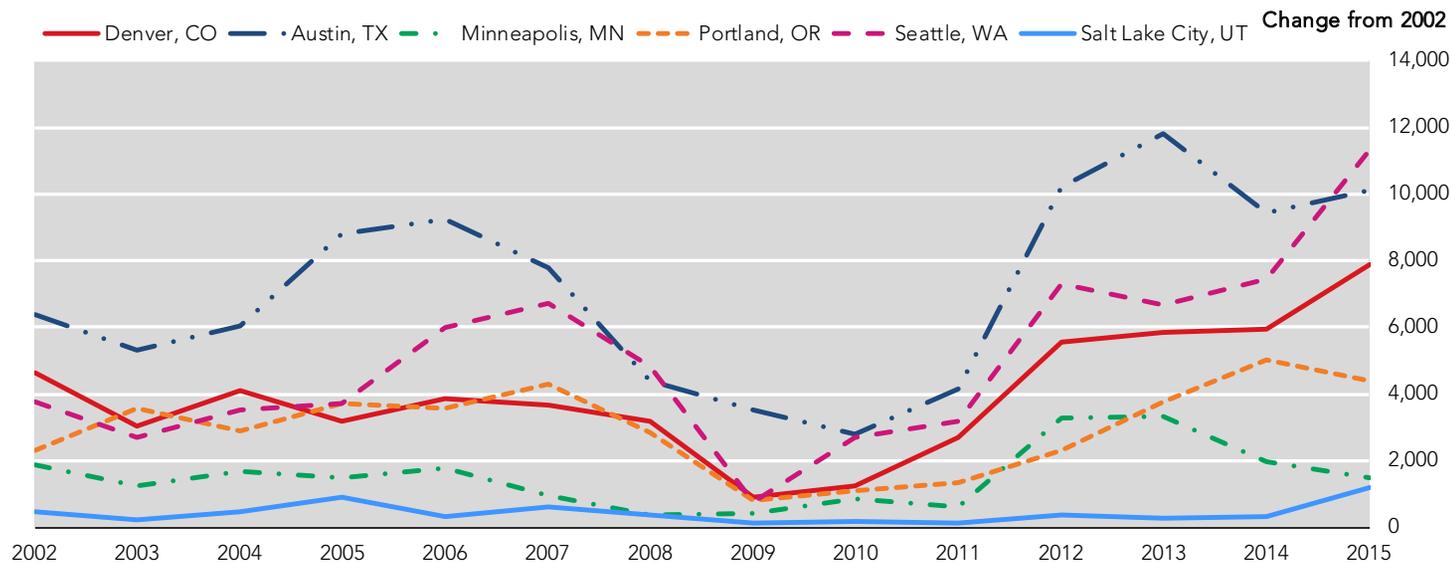
Housing

Denver’s annual number of residential permits matched closely with most of the comparison cities from 2002 to 2011. Between 2002 and 2015, Austin and Seattle had the highest permit rate (See Figure 11). Denver’s permit rate began to catch up with the rates in these cities in 2012 to 2015, but is still lower. Denver permitted approximately 7,900 units in Denver in 2015. Austin permitted 10,000 units and Seattle permitted 11,300.

Population growth in these cities has increased housing demand and, therefore, housing costs. The average housing price in the Denver metro area has increased by the highest percent (60%) since 2010 of all cities and their MSA’s (See Figure 12). Prior to 2010, Denver lagged behind its comparable cities in the rate of price increases prior to the recession. Denver also had a lower rate of price decreases due to the recession.

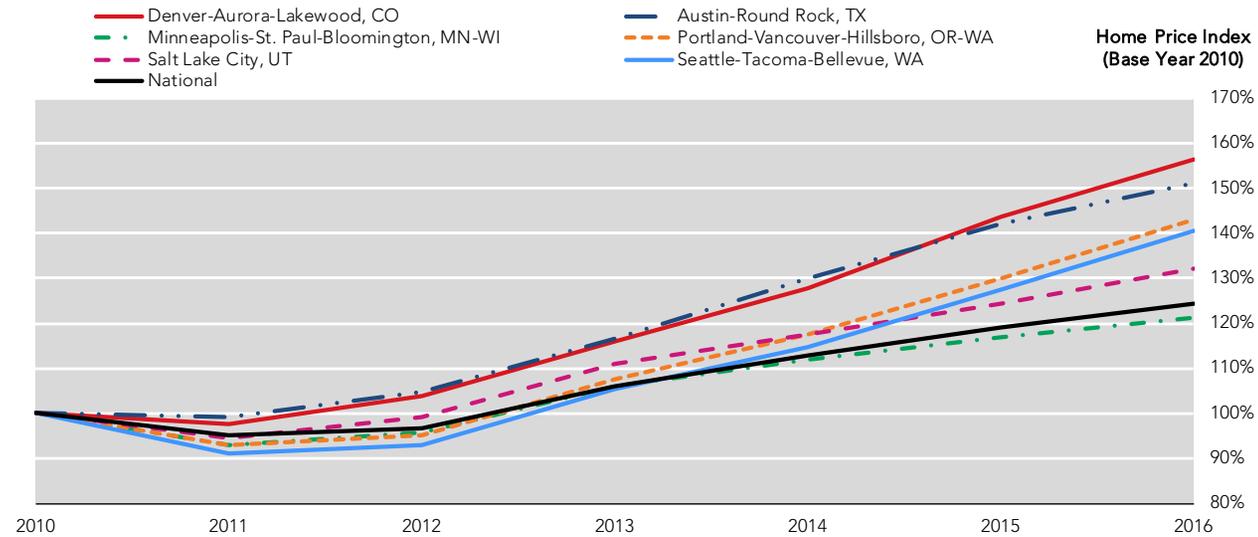
The average rental rate in Denver has increased the greatest compared to the other six cities. Rental rates have increased by over 50 percent since 2010, slightly lower than the increase of home prices (See Figure 13).

Figure 11: Peer City Housing Units Permitted, 2002 to 2015



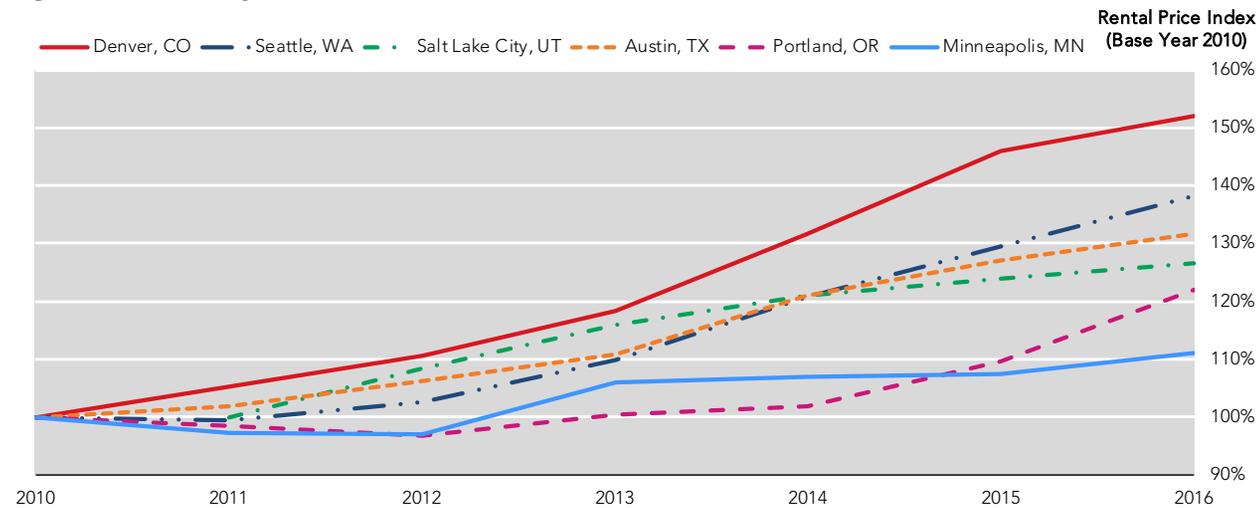
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Economic & Planning Systems

Figure 12: Peer City Freddie Mac Housing Price Index, 2010 to 2016



Source: Freddie Mac; Economic & Planning Systems

Figure 13: Peer City Zillow Rent Rate Index, 2010 to 2016



Source: Zillow; Economic & Planning Systems

The comparison of housing costs in a community to income is one measurement of housing affordability in a city. In 2014, Denver’s median home value was \$283,100 and its median income was \$54,941; the ratio of median home value to median income was 5.15, down from a 2005 value of 5.47. Using this metric, Denver is more expensive than Minneapolis with a ratio of 4.02 and Austin with a ratio of 4.38 and has similar level of affordability to Salt Lake City with a ratio of 5.11. Denver is less expensive than Portland with a ratio of 5.7 and Seattle, the most expensive peer city, with a ratio of 6.67 (See Table 7).

Table 7: Peer City Median Home Value to Income, 2005-2014

Description	2005	2014	2005-2014		
			Total	Ann. #	Ann. %
Cities					
Austin, TX	3.91	4.38	0.47	0.05	1.3%
Portland, OR	5.34	5.71	0.37	0.04	0.7%
Salt Lake City, UT	4.84	5.11	0.27	0.03	0.6%
Denver, CO	5.47	5.15	-0.32	-0.04	-0.7%
Seattle, WA	7.81	6.67	-1.14	-0.13	-1.7%
Minneapolis, MN	5.42	4.03	-1.40	-0.16	-3.3%
MSAs					
Austin-Round Rock, TX Metro Area	3.19	3.43	0.24	0.03	0.8%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA Metro Area*	4.64	4.60	-0.04	0.00	-0.1%
Salt Lake City, UT Metro Area	3.63	3.80	0.17	0.02	0.5%
Denver-Aurora, CO Metro Area*	4.36	4.14	-0.22	-0.02	-0.6%
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA Metro Area	5.28	4.70	-0.58	-0.06	-1.3%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI Metro Area	3.95	3.13	-0.82	-0.09	-2.6%

Source: US Census; Economic & Planning Systems

Income

From 2005, Denver’s median household income grew by an annual rate 2.9 percent; a growth rate only surpassed by Austin at 3.3 percent and Seattle at 2.9 percent. In 2014, Denver’s median household income was \$54,941, again only behind Austin and Seattle, with Seattle having a significantly higher median income of \$70,975. While city median income still lags behind the median income of their corresponding MSA, income growth in all peer cities - except Salt Lake City - outpaced the MSA. The Denver MSA grew at an annual rate of 2.2 percent (See Table 8).

Table 8: Peer City Median Household Income Change, 2005-2014

Description	2005	2014	2005-2014		
			Total	Ann. #	Ann. %
Cities					
Seattle, WA	\$49,297	\$70,975	\$21,678	2,409	4.1%
Austin, TX	\$43,731	\$58,458	\$14,727	1,636	3.3%
Denver, CO	\$42,370	\$54,941	\$12,571	1,397	2.9%
Portland, OR	\$42,287	\$54,624	\$12,337	1,371	2.9%
Salt Lake City, UT	\$37,287	\$46,711	\$9,424	1,047	2.5%
Minneapolis, MN	\$41,829	\$50,791	\$8,962	996	2.2%
MSAs					
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA Metro Area	\$54,962	\$71,273	\$16,311	1,812	2.9%
Austin-Round Rock, TX Metro Area	\$50,484	\$63,603	\$13,119	1,458	2.6%
Denver-Aurora, CO Metro Area*	\$54,896	\$66,870	\$11,974	1,330	2.2%
Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton, OR-WA Metro Area*	\$49,227	\$60,248	\$11,021	1,225	2.3%
Salt Lake City, UT Metro Area	\$48,993	\$62,642	\$13,649	1,517	2.8%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI Metro Area	\$59,691	\$69,111	\$9,420	1,047	1.6%

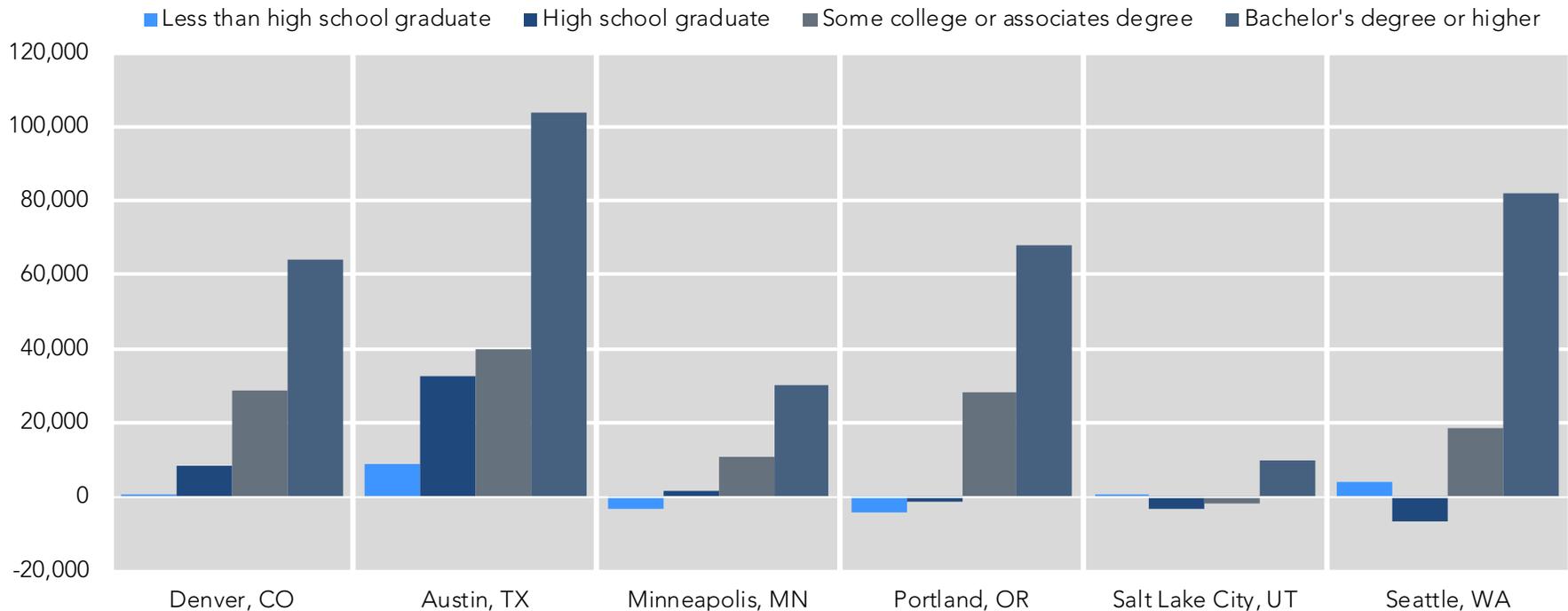
Source: US Census; Economic & Planning Systems

Education

Denver has similar educational attainment as its peers, with the percent of residents 25 or older with a bachelor’s degree or higher in the mid-40s. Seattle represents an outlier with 58.9 percent of its residents over 25 having a bachelor’s degree or higher. Since 2005, the population of residents with at least a bachelor’s degree has increased by 40 percent or by over 60,000; only Austin and Portland had a larger percentage increase. While Denver’s education levels are comparable to its peers, it does have the highest percentage of residents with less than a high school education at 14.5 percent (See Figure 14)

Figure 14: Peer Cities Educational Attainment 25+, 2005-2015

Change in Population



Source: U.S. Census; Economic & Planning Systems

Employment

Unlike recent population growth, employment growth in the comparable cities, including Denver, has been slower in these cities than the surrounding MSA. All but one of the cities grew at a slower rate in terms of employment (See Table 9). Employment in Denver grew by 0.7 percent annually from 2002 and 2014, while the MSA grew by an annual rate of 1.1 percent. Employment in Denver grew at the fifth slowest rate of the six cities.

Table 9: Peer City Employment Change, 2002 to 2014

Description	2002	2014	2002-2014		
			Total	Ann. #	Ann. %
City					
Austin, TX	516,159	617,963	101,804	8,484	1.5%
Minneapolis, MN	279,614	327,525	47,911	3,993	1.3%
Seattle, WA	472,923	544,250	71,327	5,944	1.2%
Portland, OR	369,935	422,284	52,349	4,362	1.1%
Denver, CO	435,809	473,169	37,360	3,113	0.7%
Salt Lake City, UT	216,316	222,619	6,303	525	0.2%
MSA					
Austin, TX MSA	675,178	894,524	219,346	18,279	2.4%
Minneapolis, MN MSA	1,671,633	1,815,073	143,440	11,953	0.7%
Seattle, WA MSA	1,474,741	1,774,753	300,012	25,001	1.6%
Portland, OR MSA	917,477	1,071,652	154,175	12,848	1.3%
Denver, CO MSA	1,171,534	1,342,839	171,305	14,275	1.1%
Salt Lake City, UT MSA	528,620	636,635	108,015	9,001	1.6%

Source: LEHD; Economic & Planning Systems

Housing and Transportation

The housing plus transportation costs for an average household in Denver accounted for 45 percent of household income (See Table 10). The objective is to have households spend less than 30 percent on housing and 15 percent on transportation. All of the comparable cities had housing costs accounting for less than 30 percent of income but transportation costs were higher than 15 percent. Portland had the highest housing plus transportation percent at 48 percent.

Table 10: Peer City Housing and Transportation, 2010 to 2014

Description	Housing	Transportation	H+T
Cities			
Portland, OR	28%	20%	48%
Austin, TX	28%	19%	47%
Salt Lake City, UT	27%	19%	46%
Denver, CO	28%	18%	45%
Seattle, WA	29%	17%	45%
Minneapolis, MN	27%	16%	44%
MSAs			
Portland-Vancouver-Hillsboro, OR-WA	29%	22%	51%
Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos, TX	28%	21%	49%
Salt Lake City, UT	27%	19%	46%
Denver-Aurora-Broomfield, CO	29%	20%	49%
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	29%	20%	48%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	29%	20%	49%

Source: Census Location Affordability Index; Economic & Planning Systems

SECTION 4

The Center of a Thriving Region

Overview

Denver is at the heart of a vibrant and growing region and is part of the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The region has gradually diversified its economy away from a dependence on oil and gas (and the cycle of boom and bust that accompany those industries) and aerospace and military contractors. Today it attracts a wide range of technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and financial services companies.

The strong economy, a high quality of life, a friendly business environment, and the area's natural beauty and amenities have positioned the region as one of the most desirable destinations. Bold investments in the regional transit system and our city's cultural and arts institutions over the past two decades also create assets that attract skilled workers from around the country.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- In 2014, the MSA population was 2,754,258 - 21st largest in the U.S.;
- Denver accounts for 24 percent of the population in the MSA;
- From 2007 to 2014, Denver captured a greater share of population growth - over 30 percent;
- Denver is permitting residential units at a greater rate than prior to the recession, 2008 to 2009;
- Denver is also capturing a greater share of housing development, having recently permitted 40-60 percent of the units in the MSA;
- In July, 2016, the MSA's unemployment rate was lower than the national average - 3.4 percent compared to 5.1;
- Denver accounts for 35 percent of employment in the MSA, however has only captured 23 percent employment growth since 2002. More recently from 2012 to 2015, Denver captured a greater share of metro area employment growth - 44 percent of new jobs in that period;
- Downtown Denver, the South I-25 Corridor, and the Anschutz-Fitzsimons campus in Aurora have captured half the employment growth in the past 10 years;
- Average rental rates for office, retail and industrial space are growing faster than the Denver MSA, but Denver is capturing a smaller share of new development; and
- Industrial average rental rates since 2013 have increased by 50 percent as marijuana-related operations have increased demand for industrial spaces.

KEY FINDINGS

- The high desirability of Denver is driving significant housing development, resulting in capturing a greater share of the housing development in the region. Much of the growth has been within multifamily residential units as single family home production is down throughout the metro area. The lack of housing production and employment growth outpacing housing production has increased housing prices;
- Despite the increase in housing development, employment growth and non-residential development in Denver is occurring at a slower pace than the MSA. However, growing rental rates and higher employment rates in Denver in the past few years indicate that there is a growing demand for employment and employment spaces; and
- The Denver metro area economic geography is dominated by three main areas: Downtown Denver, the South I-25 Corridor, and the Anschutz-Fitzsimons campus.

Overview of the Metropolitan Area

Denver is at the heart of a vibrant and growing region and is part of the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The 2014 population of the MSA was 2,754,258, the 21st largest in the United States. Per capita personal income in 2014 was \$53,983, 120 percent higher than the state average and 117 percent higher than the national average of \$46,049.

The region has gradually diversified its economy away from a dependence on oil and gas (and the cycle of boom and bust that accompany those industries) and aerospace and military contractors. Now it attracts a wide range of technology, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and financial services companies. In July, 2016, the MSA's unemployment rate was 3.4 percent compared to the national average of 5.1 percent. Nearby Boulder and Fort Collins both have unemployment rates of 3.0 percent, showcasing the strength of the Front Range economy.

The strong economy, a conducive business environment, and the area's natural beauty and amenities have positioned the region as one of the most desirable destinations for those relocating from different parts of the country. Bold investments in the regional transit system and our city's cultural and arts institutions over the past two decades also create assets that attract skilled workers from around the country.

DRCOG's Metro Vision Plan and Other Regional Planning Efforts

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) works with local municipalities to create and regularly update Metro Vision, which serves as a framework to guide the region's growth and development in a way that protects our quality of life and meets our collective goals for sustainability. The Metro Vision Guiding vision, first adopted in 1992, acknowledges the economic, cultural and geographic significance of downtown Denver and supports the development of mixed-use urban centers throughout the region, connected by a balanced transportation system.

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) provides public transportation for an eight county service area that serves 2.87 million people. FasTracks is the agency's voter-approved plan to build 122 miles of commuter and light rail across the region, along with 18 miles of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and 57 new stations. Since 2004, FasTracks has opened three new rail lines (including the University of Colorado A Line connecting Denver Union Station to Denver International Airport), with two more on the way by the end of 2016.

Comparison of Denver to the Region Now

Figures 15 through 21 illustrate the city's share of the total MSA. Figures 15 through 18 show (illustrated with a dashed red line) the city's capture of annual change of new people, permitted housing units, and employment within the MSA.

Population

The City of Denver accounts for 24 percent of the population in the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA. In recent years (2007 to 2014), Denver has captured a greater share of population growth as the city has captured over 30 percent of population growth. From 2012 to 2014, Denver has captured over 40 percent of population growth in the MSA (See Figure 15).

Housing

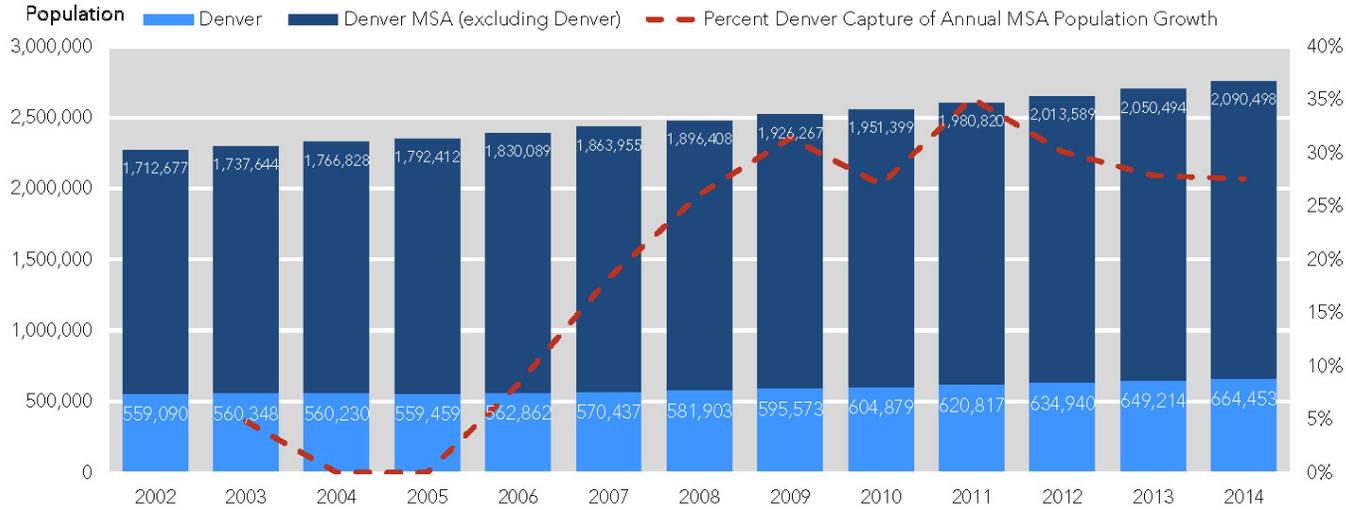
Housing production has matched the population growth trends and illustrates how Denver has been capturing a larger share of residential development. Prior to the economic recession in 2008 and 2009, the metro area permitted between 14,500 and 22,000 permits annually, with Denver only accounting for approximately 21 percent of permits annually (See Figure 16). Since the recession, Denver has accounted for a greater share of permits, with 40 percent of permits since 2011. The metro area as a whole has permitted less than 16,000 units annually, as the surrounding areas have permitted fewer units as they have permitted less than 10,000 annually since 2008, while permitting more than 10,000 each year from 2002 to 2007.

The City of Denver has also accounted for the majority of multifamily units. Denver has permitted more than half the multifamily units in the metro area in all but four of the past 12 years (See Figure 17). From 2012 to 2014, Denver has permitted more than 4,000 multifamily units each year while not permitting more than 2,714 units in any of the years before 2012.

Employment

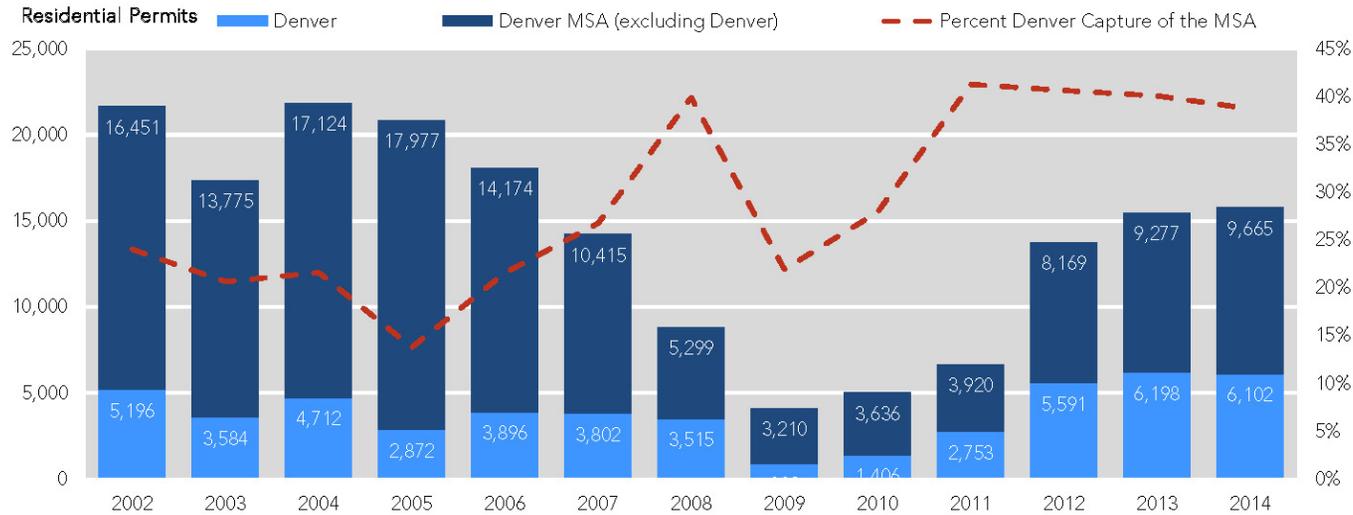
The City of Denver accounts for 35 percent of the wage and salary employment in the metro area. Employment growth from 2002 to 2015 in Denver accounted for only 23 percent (See Figure 18). Employment trends are starting to follow the population and housing trends, as the city is starting to capture a greater share of employment growth. From 2012 to 2015, the city has captured 44 percent of employment growth.

Figure 15: City of Denver and Denver MSA Population Change, 2002 to 2014



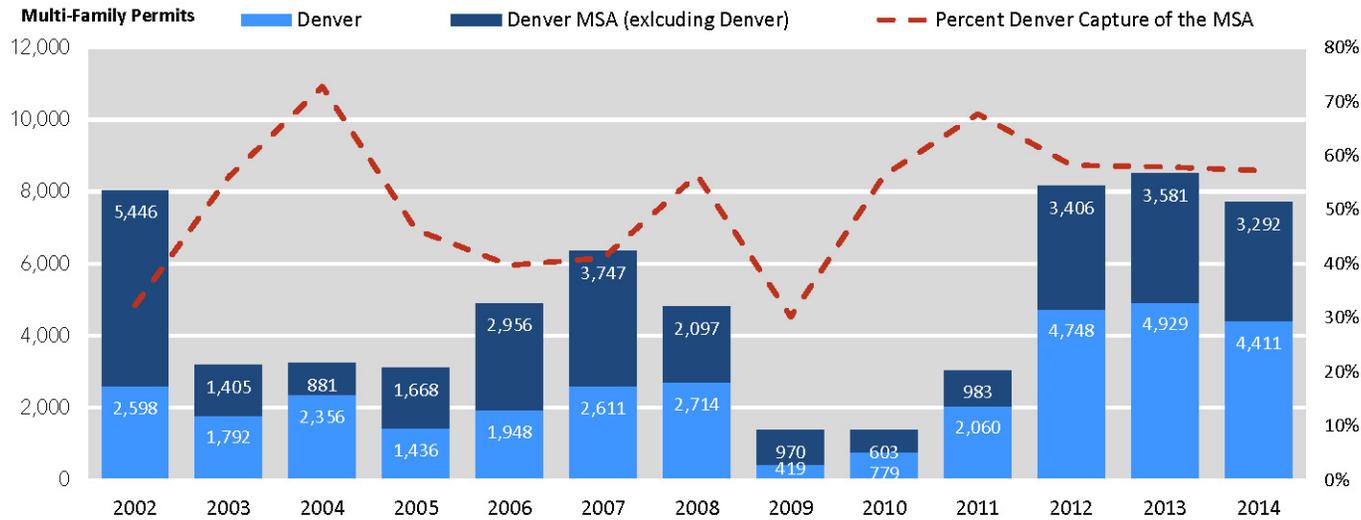
Source: Department of Local Affairs; Economic & Planning Systems

Figure 16: City of Denver and Denver MSA Permitted Residential Units, 2002 to 2014



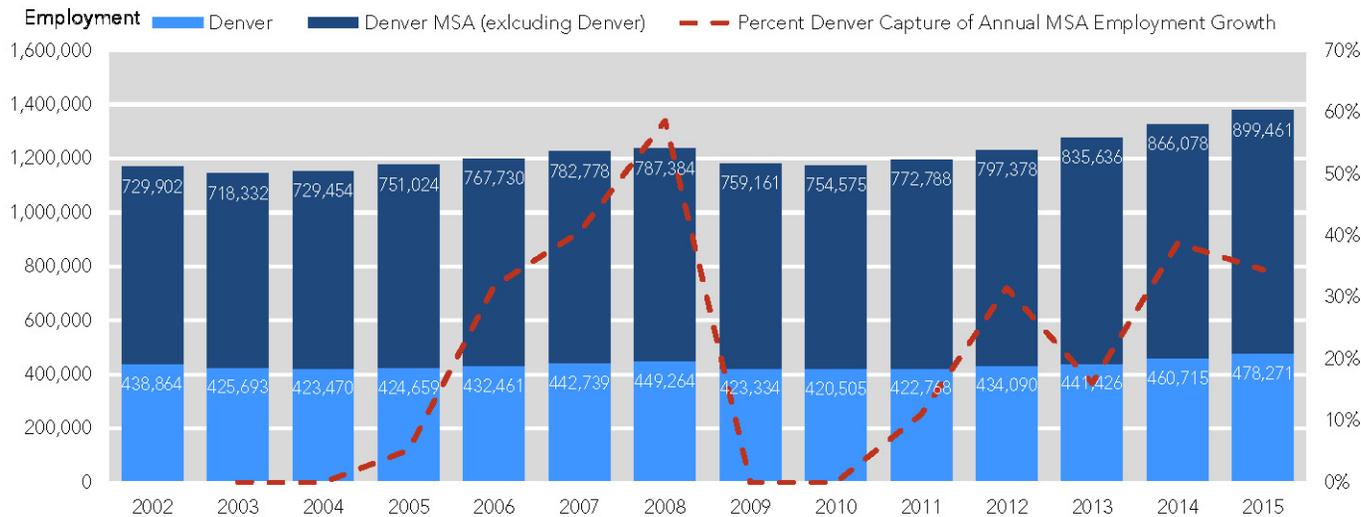
Source: Denver County Assessor; U.S. Census Bureau; Economic & Planning Systems

Figure 17: City of Denver and Denver MSA Permitted Multifamily Housing, 2002 to 2014



Source: Denver County Assessor; U.S. Census Bureau; Economic & Planning Systems

Figure 18: City of Denver and Denver MSA Wage and Salary Employment Change, 2002 to 2015



Source: Bureau of Labor and Statistics; Economic & Planning Systems

The geography of employment growth in the metro area is heavily focused around three major employment centers. From 2005 to 2013, half of the employment growth was within either Downtown Denver, the South I-25 Corridor (I-225 to RidgeGate), and the Anshutz-Fitzsimons campus in Aurora (See Figure 19). These centers, especially Downtown Denver and the South I-25 Corridor, captured the majority of employment within office developments. The concentration of employment in these centers makes these centers more attractive and competitive nationally for employment attraction. The centers are also all located along Denver’s major transit lines. However, the concentration of employment puts strain on the roadway systems that connect to these job centers. Transit and other alternative modes of transportation are needed to make sure these centers are able to accommodate growth, which requires a built environment that supports these modes. The somewhat mono-centric pattern of employment growth also reduces opportunities for more residents to live close to where they work. Downtown is the only major center completely in the City of Denver. A portion of the South I-25 Corridor is within the city.

There are approximately 70 million square feet of office space in the City and County of Denver, which accounts for 42 percent of the metro area office space inventory. Since 2002, Denver has captured 26 percent of the office development in the metro area. Office rental rates in Denver have increased at a faster rate than the metro area. The average rental rate in Denver is \$28.96 (gross) and \$24.70 (gross) in the metro area as a whole (See Figure 20). The average rate in both was approximately \$18.00 in 2002.

The City of Denver accounts for 22 percent of retail space in the metro area. The inventory within Denver decreased slightly from 2006 to 2012, while the metro area grew by 7.5 million square feet. However, the inventory in the MSA has contracted since 2011 as the market has reacted to an oversupply of retail in the metro area. Retail rents have grown in Denver from \$16.14 in 2006 to \$19.20 to 2015 (See Figure 21). Rents in the metro area have decreased since 2006.

Figure 19: Denver MSA Employment Capture by Major Center, 2005 to 2013

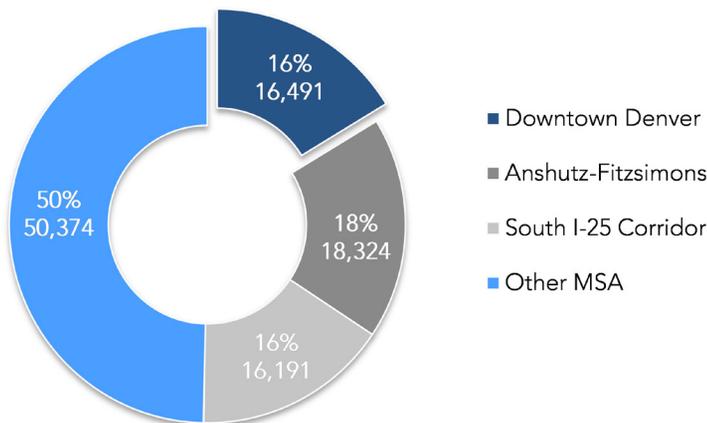
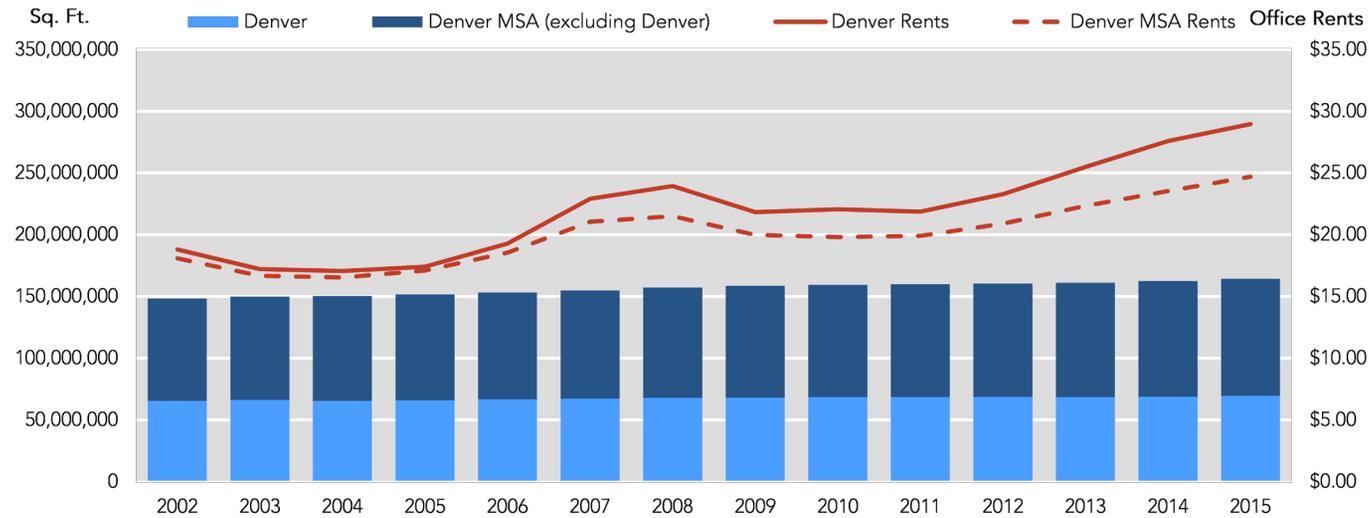
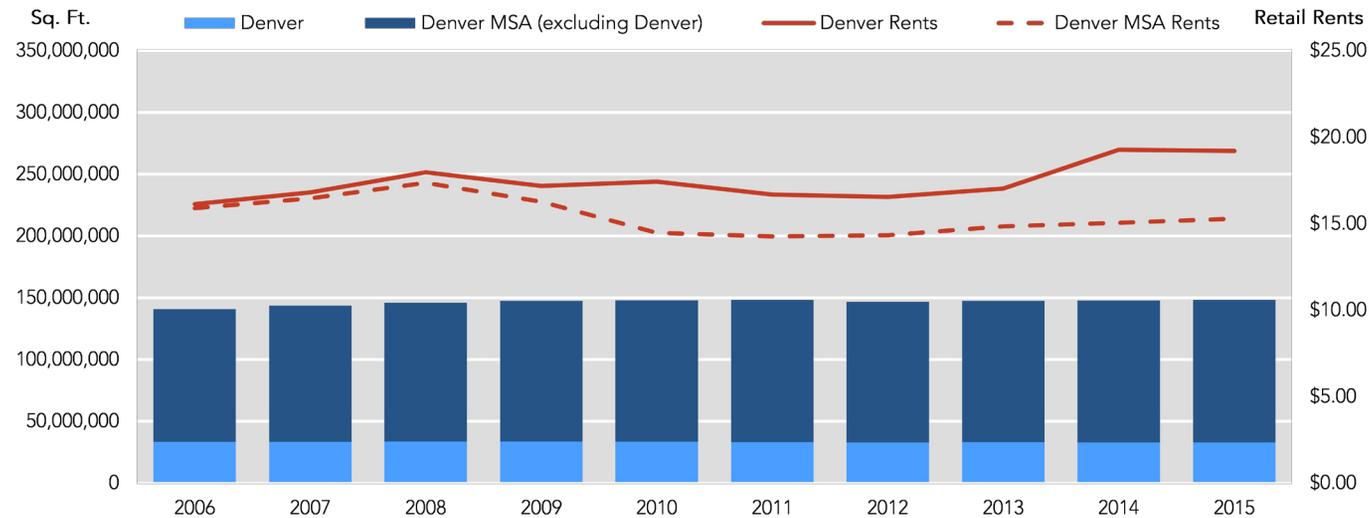


Figure 20: City of Denver and Denver MSA Office Inventory and Rental Rates, 2002 to 2015



Source: CoStar; Economic & Planning Systems

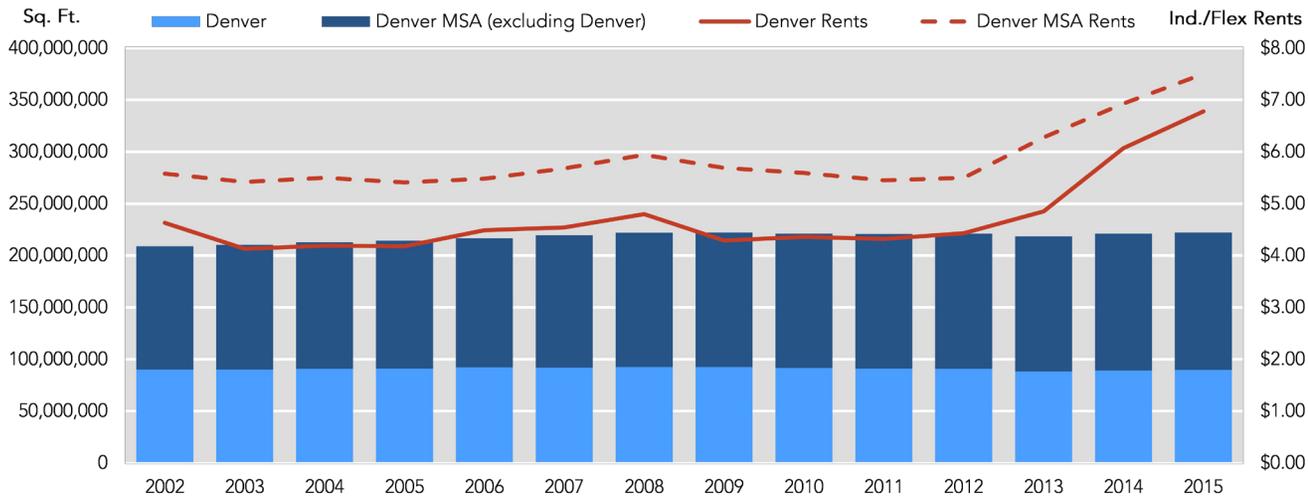
Figure 21: City of Denver and Denver MSA Retail Inventory and Rental Rates, 2002 to 2015



Source: CoStar; Economic & Planning Systems

Like retail, the inventory of industrial space has decreased in the City of Denver slightly since 2002 (See Figure 22). The metro area increased in space by 13.4 million square feet during the same period. Denver’s total inventory decreased by 300,697 despite the addition of 7,925,764 square feet of new industrial development since 2002 as older, out of date industrial space was redeveloped to other uses. The industrial space inventory in the metro area and in Denver is heavily concentrated in the northeastern portion of the metro area along I-70, as this submarket accounts for 40 percent of industrial space in the metro area. The passage of legal recreational marijuana in the State of Colorado and Denver has had a major impact on industrial rents, as the average rental rates have grown by 50 percent in the past three years. The impact is largely seen in existing, older spaces that have been leased for marijuana growing operations, raising the effective average rent for older spaces, not necessarily the newer spaces.

Figure 22: City of Denver and Denver MSA Industrial Inventory and Rental Rates, 2002 to 2015



Source: CoStar; Economic & Planning Systems

SECTION 5

Built Form and Urban Design

Overview

The 2000 Comprehensive Plan stated that “Denver desires to pro-actively determine the type, quality and amount of development it wishes to foster, and develop a decisive set of policies and programs to achieve its land use” and transportation goals.

Denver has become one of the most attractive cities in the country because of the quality of life it provides for most of its residents and relatively good access to a variety of amenities. The quality of the built and natural environments has helped elevate Denver across a myriad of rankings and measures, but growth has had both positive and negative impacts on the design of our city.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Building footprints are largest in the Central Business District (CBD) and in industrial areas along I-25 and I-70;
- Close-in neighborhoods like Five Points, North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill, Civic Center and Auraria have more impervious surfaces than the CBD and Union Station neighborhoods;
- A new form-based code was adopted in 2010 and significantly changed how zoning is approached for the majority of the City and County of Denver;
- The 2010 zoning code is organized by several Neighborhood Contexts derived from existing and desired characteristics of Denver's neighborhoods;
- The citywide tree canopy has grown significantly from 2006 (10.4% tree canopy coverage) to 2013 (19.7% coverage), but some neighborhoods have little coverage;
- The acres of park and green space per resident has been decreasing with the northern half of the city having the lowest amount;
- Larger mixed use centers (i.e., CBD and Cherry Creek) tend to have large amounts of occupied restaurant and retail space that activate ground floors while some neighborhoods have access to commercial corridors varying dramatically in connectivity and walkability;
- More than 10 percent of parcels have been improved in 20 neighborhoods that have seen the most dramatic changes, including DIA and Stapleton, Jefferson Park and Lowery Field and Gateway-Green Valley Ranch and City Park; and
- The majority of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities are located along or near existing highway and freight rail corridors.

KEY FINDINGS

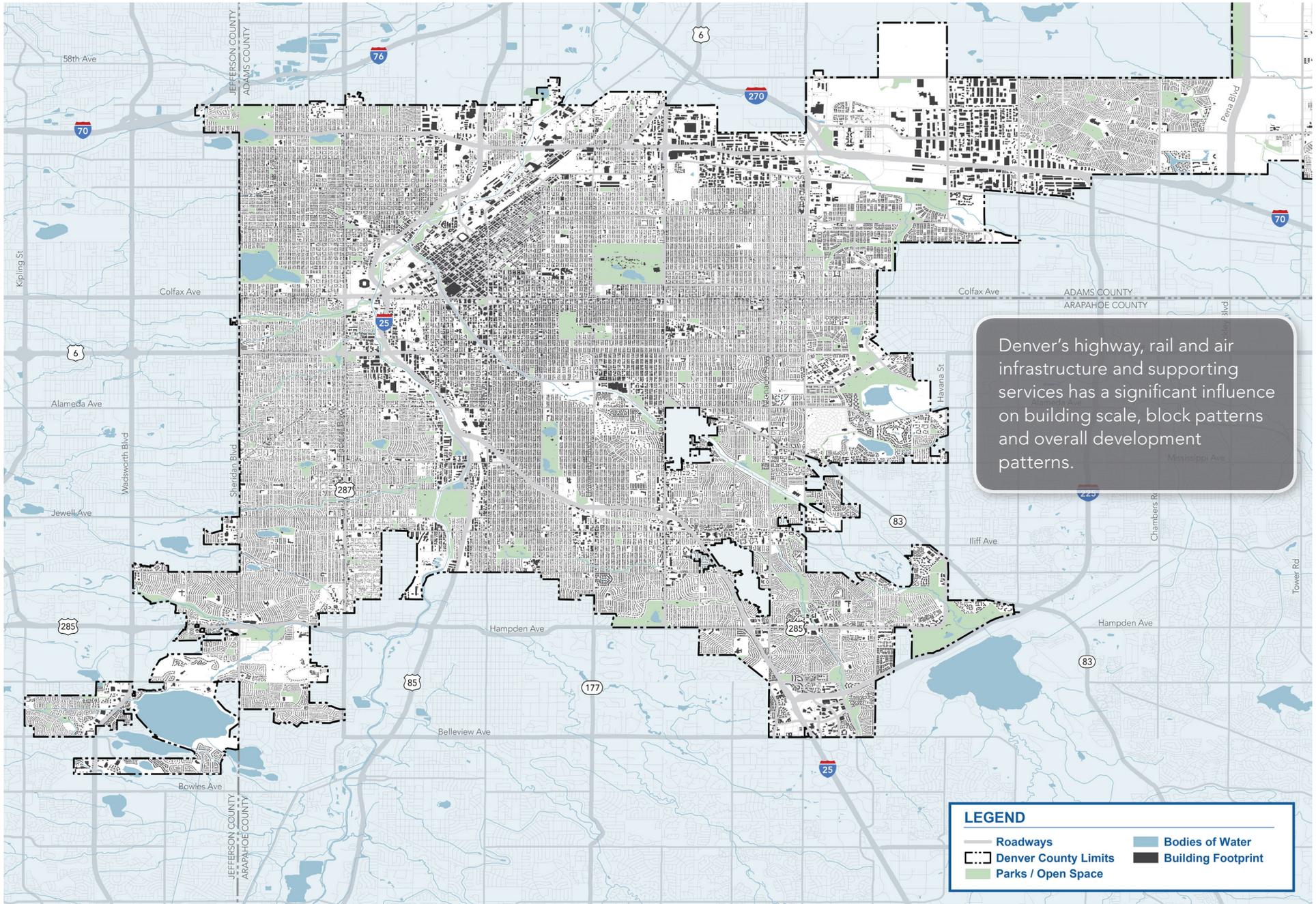
- In addition to basic street and block layout, neighborhood context areas vary dramatically in terms of building size, impervious surfaces and tree canopy;
- Denver's urban amenities are largely concentrated in and around the CBD, with small walkable pockets in close-in neighborhoods;
- The amount of parks and open spaces is not keeping pace with population growth; and
- Many neighborhoods lack a park, commercial node, transit station or other walkable destination.

Overview

Denver's 2000 Comprehensive Plan stated that "Denver desires to pro-actively determine the type, quality and amount of development it wishes to foster, and develop a decisive set of policies and programs to achieve its land use" and transportation goals. Denver has become one of the most attractive cities in the country because of the quality of life it provides for most residents and relatively good access to a variety of amenities. The quality of the built and natural environments has helped elevate Denver across a myriad of rankings and measures, but growth has had both positive and negative impacts on the design of our city. This section explores how several aspects of built form and urban design have evolved with historic and more recent growth.

Overall Built Form

A city's built form is comprised of buildings, parking, parks, open spaces, plazas, and streets. The manner in which these various elements of a city come together begin to define the places that we identify with, including neighborhoods, districts, centers and corridors. The building blocks of our city are influenced by street layout, block shapes and sizes, the types of land uses that occupy spaces and structures, setbacks and lot coverage, building height and massing, the proportions of streets and open spaces to surrounding development, and the amount and types of parking provided. Major infrastructure can have strong influences on the building blocks and how they come together to form the built environment of our city (See Figure 23).



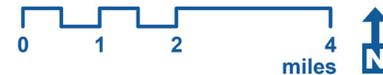
Denver's highway, rail and air infrastructure and supporting services has a significant influence on building scale, block patterns and overall development patterns.

LEGEND

- Roadways
- Denver County Limits
- Bodies of Water
- Building Footprint
- Parks / Open Space

Figure 23: Built Structures

*Source: City and County of Denver; 2014



Historic Development Patterns

The vast majority of inner Denver was developed between 1873 and 1945 and was stimulated by the proliferation of a relatively extensive streetcar network (See Figure 24). In fact, the first public transportation in Denver was via horse drawn streetcars starting in December 1871. The cars were pulled by horses along two miles of track from 7th and Larimer Street to 27th and Champa Street. By 1884, the system had 15.5 miles of track. In 1888, the horse-drawn cars were replaced by cable cars. By 1890, Denver had a very complete and extensive cable car system and attention was being turned to electrifying the system. The first overhead electric line was a segment on South Broadway that opened on Christmas Day, 1889. By 1899, the system had been expanded to a total of 156 miles, and by the turn of the century, the basic city electric trolley transit system was complete. The Denver Tramway system eventually had 260 miles of tracks in the city and 31 lines of service.

Beginning in 1924, motor coaches began replacing electric trolleys. In 1948, Denver Tramway had 131 streetcars in service, 138 trolley coaches (which were buses powered by electricity that were hooked to the trolley line above and used between 1940 and 1955) and 116 gasoline powered buses. By the end of 1949, there were only 85 trolleys left in service and June 3, 1950 marked the last runs of Denver's trolleys.

Many of the neighborhood main streets that still exist in Denver today were originally built around streetcar stations and helped to anchor new single family neighborhoods. The focus on inter-neighborhood transit along the more major streets and walking within neighborhoods is still evident today. Similarly, the legacy of the streetcar development is still evident in the very regular and relatively fine grain block pattern that defines most of the close-in neighborhoods in Denver.

(Source: Historic Denver, Inc.; denvergov.org)

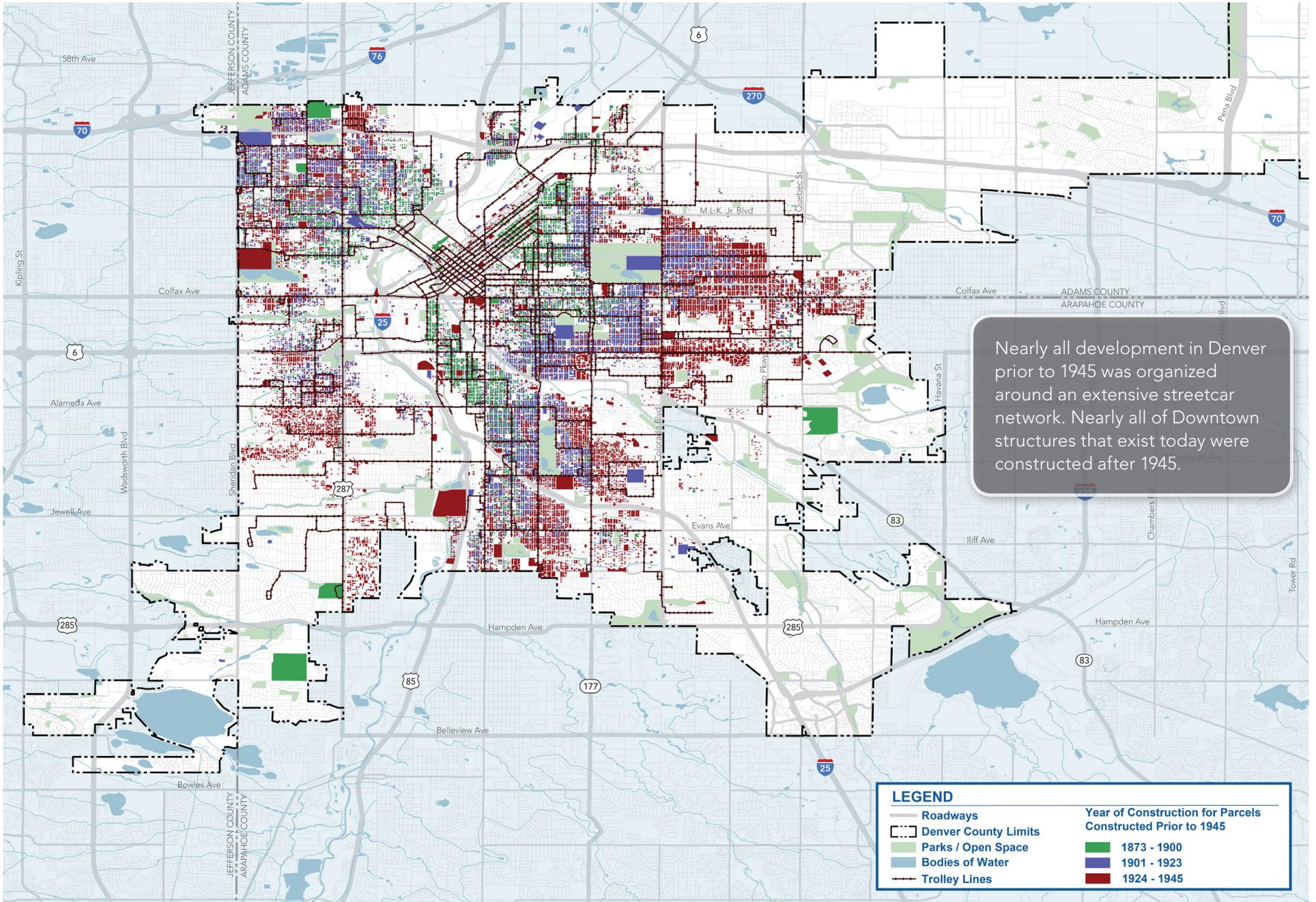


Figure 24: Street Car Development

*Source: Abandoned Trolley Tracks: City and County of Denver, Public Works - Policy and Planning, 2016

Existing Built Environment

When looking at all built structures existing in Denver, variation from the more regular block pattern is especially evident in the southwest, southeast and northeast portions of the city (See Figure 25). Building footprints are largest in the CBD and in industrial areas along I-25 and I-70. The size of building footprints tend to decrease when moving away from downtown and the freeways into what are typically single family neighborhoods. Pockets of larger footprint structures with unbuilt areas - typically parking lots - surrounding them are present along major corridors like Alameda, University, Colorado and Monaco. The size of the building footprints has direct and indirect effects on the walkability and scale of the surrounding neighborhood. A variety of building footprint sizes is necessary due to building type and use, but a lack of consideration about the variety of scales of building footprints has contributed to some neighborhoods suffering from an unwalkable environment.

One might assume that the amount of area covered by structures (building coverage) would largely mirror the pattern of building footprints. While there are similarities, the neighborhoods with the greatest building coverage include Union Station, CBD, North Capitol Hill, Civic Center, Capitol Hill, Cheesman Park and Cherry Creek (27-45%). Building coverage is less in Regis, Globeville, Elyria Swansea, Stapleton, Jefferson Park, Auraria and Sun Valley (12-17%), but not as low as might be expected along the interstate corridors. In fact, the majority of neighborhoods adjacent to I-25 and I-70 have building coverage between 18 to 21 percent. The lowest building coverage (less than 12%) is at DIA and in Gateway-Green Valley Ranch, Fort Logan and Marston neighborhoods.

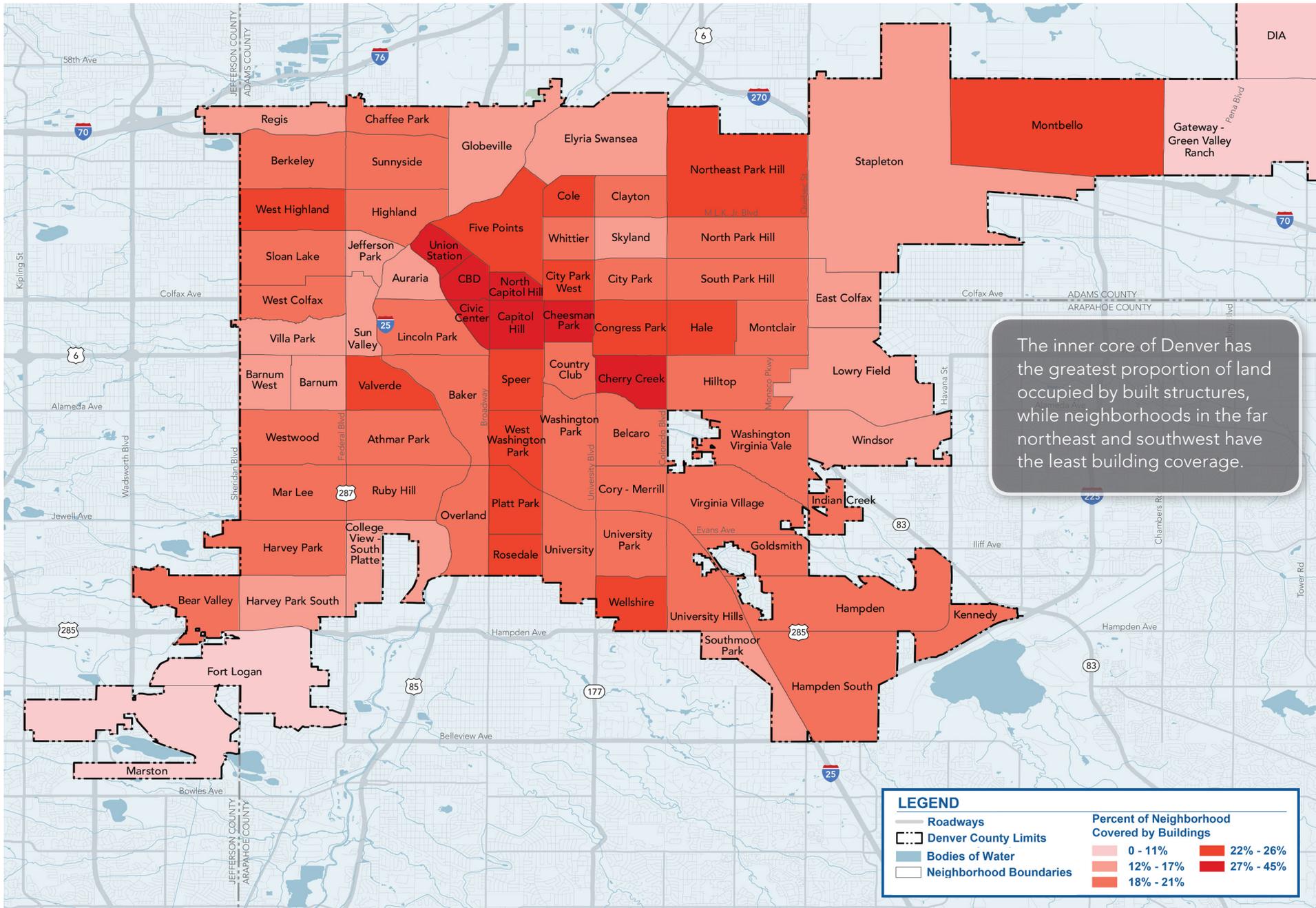


Figure 25: Building Coverage

*Source: City and County of Denver, 2014; Denver Community Renewal Program, 1970

Impervious surfaces in Denver tend to be concentrated in neighborhoods that are higher density and/or industrial in nature. Close-in neighborhoods like Five Points, North Capitol Hill, Capitol Hill, Civic Center and Auraria are more impervious than the CBD and Union Station neighborhoods (See Figure 26). Neighborhoods that are largely single family residential and/or have larger parks and open spaces tend to be most pervious (12-30% impervious cover).

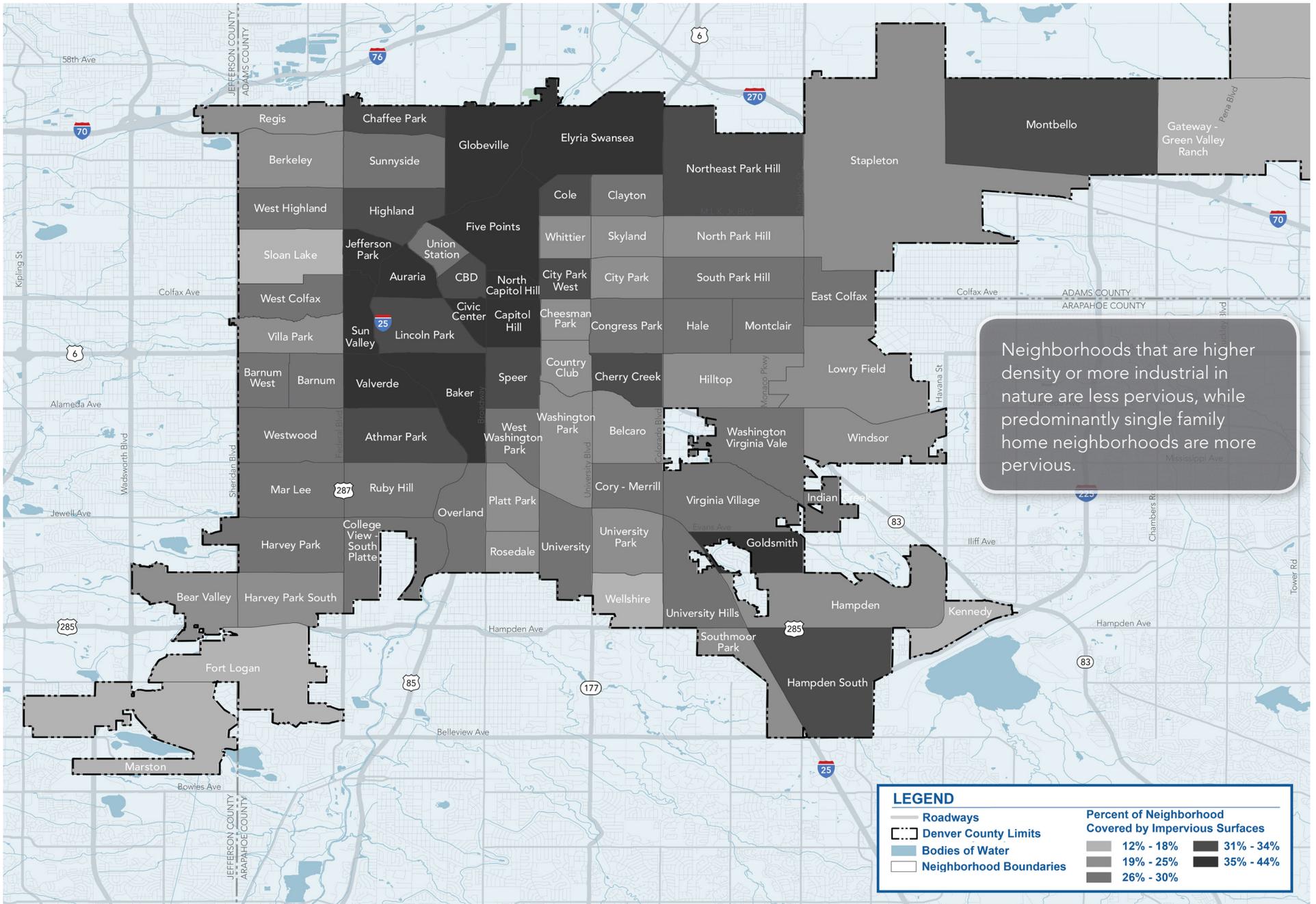
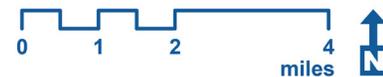


Figure 26: Impervious Surfaces

*Source: City and County of Denver, 2014; Denver Community Renewal Program, 1970



Tree Canopy

A major character-defining element of our neighborhoods in Denver is the number, type and size of trees in public rights-of-way, in public parks and spaces, and on private property. The result of the collective contributions of trees planted in all of these locations is the tree canopy. As Denver has grown, so has its tree canopy (See Figure 27). In fact, the citywide tree canopy has grown significantly from 2006 (10.41% tree canopy coverage) to 2013 (19.7% coverage). In 2013, the city had 2.2 million existing trees or 3.7 trees per person, slightly below the 4.8 trees per person of the Metro Denver area, and 29.2 trees per acre, 5 more trees per acre than Metro Denver.

When looking neighborhood by neighborhood, the areas with the greatest tree canopy by percent of overall area covered are concentrated in the inner eastern neighborhoods and anchored by Country Club (36% coverage), Cheesman Park (25% coverage) and Washington Park (25% coverage). The large park and park-like spaces in these neighborhoods contribute to tree lined streets, resulting in large tree canopies. Neighborhoods largely in the Urban Edge neighborhood context in the eastern portions of the city (e.g. Montclair, Hilltop, Belcaro and University Park) tend to have a relatively extensive tree canopy as well (20-26% coverage).

Neighborhoods north of Alameda and east of Pecos along I-25 and I-70 tend to have the least coverage by trees. Stapleton, Lowry Field and Gateway-Green Valley Ranch have contributed significantly to the citywide tree canopy in recent years, but still have relatively low overall tree coverage due to age and size of trees planted and areas that remain to be improved.

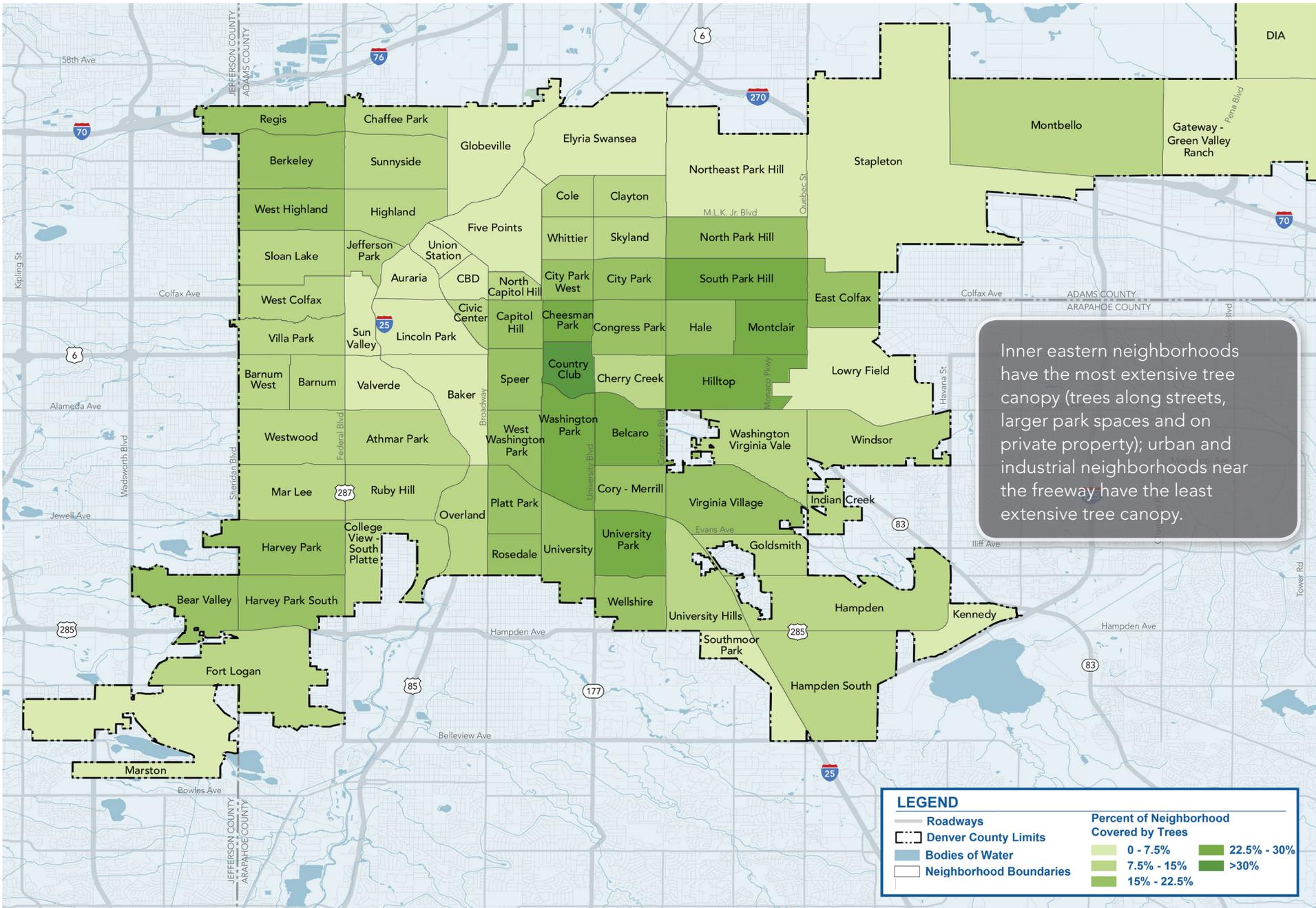


Figure 27: Tree Canopy Coverage

*Source: City and County of Denver, Parks and Recreation, 2013; Denver Community Renewal Program, 1970

Park and Open Spaces

Another key feature of Denver's neighborhoods and a unifying feature for the entire city is its parks and open spaces. While the tree canopy citywide has been increasing, the acres of park and green space per resident has actually been decreasing. In 2010, the City and County of Denver had 9.2 acres of park and open space per 1,000 residents. In 2016, there is only 8.9 acres of park and open space land per 1,000 residents (See Figure 28).

Unlike tree canopy, mapping the acres of park and open space per 1,000 resident reveals less of a distinct pattern. Neighborhoods with the highest provision of parks and open space per resident are scattered throughout Denver. Not surprisingly, neighborhoods with the highest provision of parks per resident have some of the city's largest parks as their namesakes (City Park, Cheesman Park, Washington Park, and Sloan Lake). Other neighborhoods with high provision of parks and open space per resident tend to have larger linear parks or several smaller parks within their boundaries. It should be noted that neighborhoods with a low population and/or population density may have a high provision of parks and open space per capita, but relatively limited park and recreation opportunities.

Neighborhoods with the lowest provision of parks and open space per resident tend to be in the northern half of the city and include the Sunnyvale, CBD, North Capitol Hill and Speer. Somewhat surprisingly, neighborhoods with the lowest provision of parks and open space per resident also include West Highland, Highland, City Park West, Country Club and University. Other neighborhoods with poor provision of parks and open space include Westwood, Harvey Park South, Platt Park, Hale, Hampden and Southmoor Park.

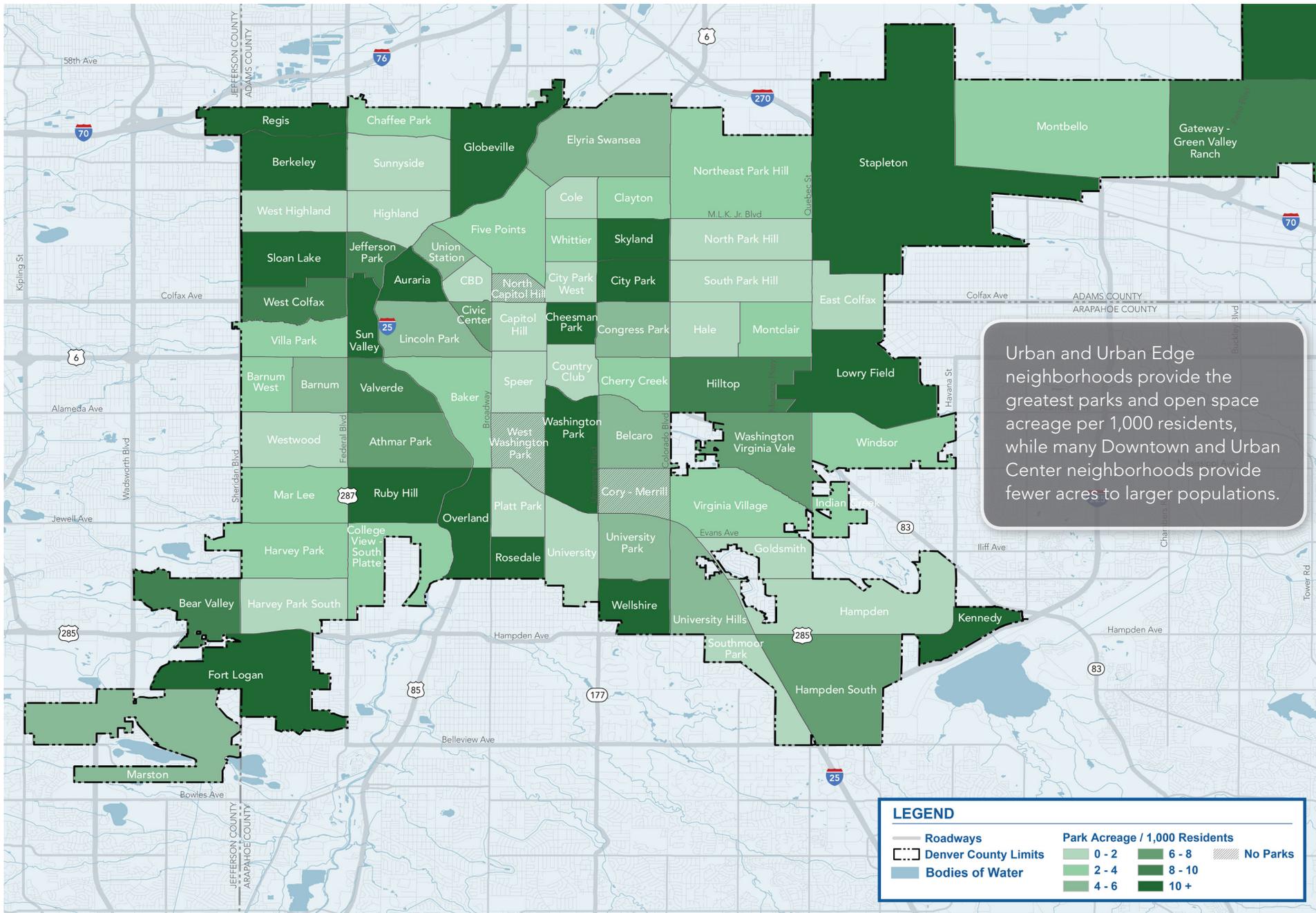
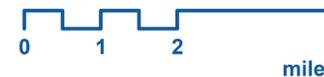


Figure 28: Park Acreage

*Source: City and County of Denver, Parks and Recreation, 2013; Denver Community Renewal Program, 1970



Ground Floor Activation: Restaurant and Retail

An attribute that makes many neighborhoods and areas of Denver attractive is the presence of shops and restaurants. Larger mixed use centers (e.g., CBD and Cherry Creek) tend to have large amounts of occupied restaurant and retail space that activate ground floors and contribute to a more walkable pedestrian environment. Some neighborhoods benefit from commercial corridors that can also provide a large amount of occupied shops and restaurants. Those in a more traditional main street configuration tend to offer similar walkability benefits as mixed use centers while large commercial corridors tend to be auto-oriented and provide less hospitable walking environments.

The neighborhoods with the most occupied restaurant and retail space include:

- Cherry Creek: 2,460,701 occupied square feet
- Stapleton: 2,023,222 occupied square feet
- Baker: 1,632,554 occupied square feet
- Marston: 1,534,805 occupied square feet
- CBD: 1,082,235 occupied square feet

Neighborhoods with the least occupied restaurant and retail space include:

- Barnum West: 30,058 occupied square feet
- Skyland: 29,144 occupied square feet
- Wellshire: 24,361 occupied square feet
- Clayton: 22,826 occupied square feet
- Auraria: 3,000 occupied square feet

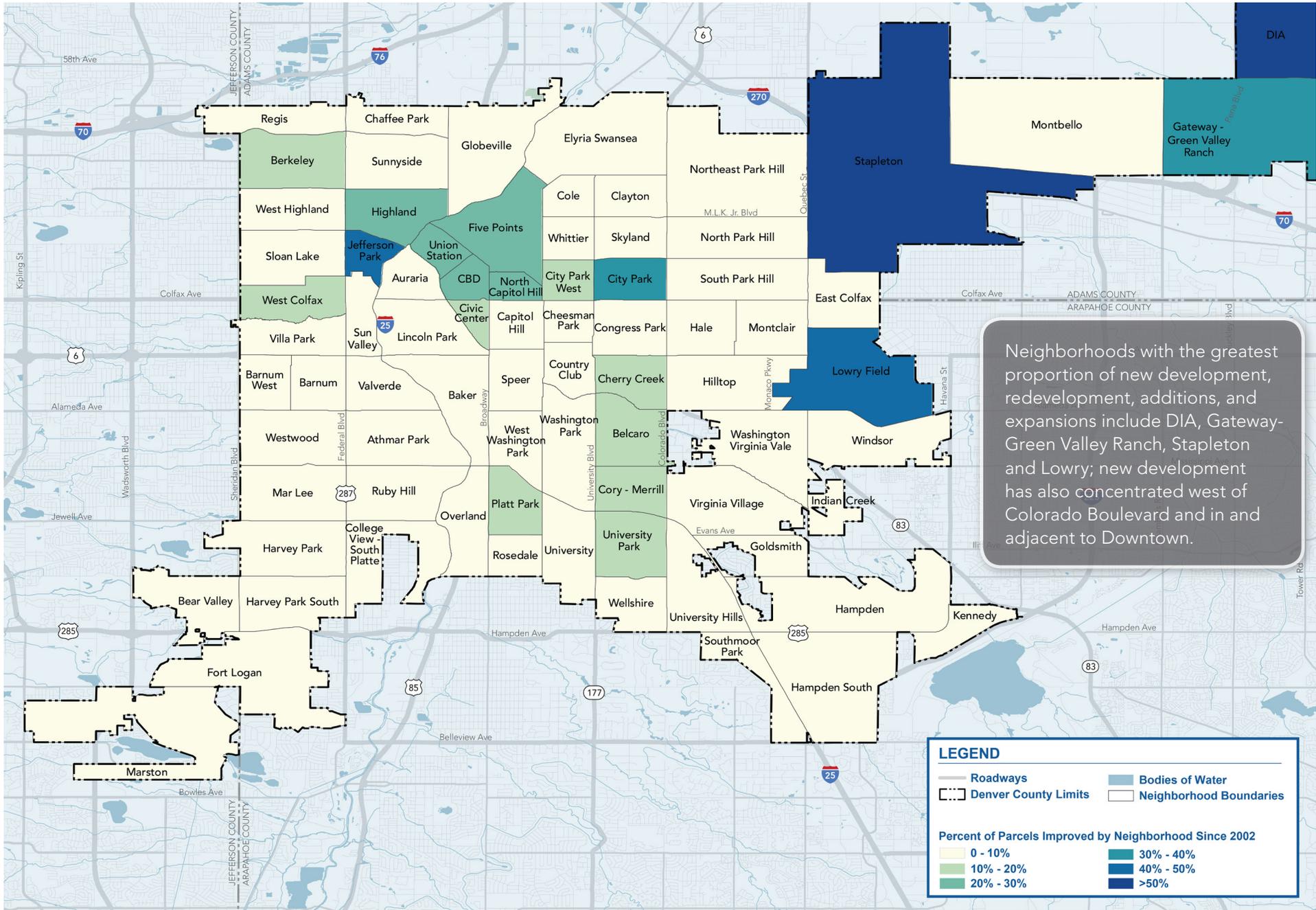
Improvement by Neighborhood

When examining neighborhood character, the speed and magnitude of change are important considerations. When looking at the percent of parcels within each neighborhood that have been improved in some way (new development, redevelopment, additions and expansions), 58 of Denver's 78 neighborhoods have seen improvements to 10 percent or fewer parcels (See Figure 29). Of the 20 neighborhoods that have seen more than 10 percent of parcels improved over that period, the areas with the most dramatic changes include DIA and Stapleton (greater than 50%), as well as Jefferson Park and Lowery Field (40-50%) and Gateway-Green Valley Ranch and City Park (30-40%). The remaining neighborhoods with between 10 and 30 percent of parcels being improved are generally concentrated in and around the CBD, along West Colfax and along the west side of Colorado Boulevard.

Transit Oriented Development

As mentioned previously, the Transit Oriented Denver Strategic Plan lays out a vision and overarching implementation strategy for transit oriented development (TOD) in Denver with an emphasis on existing and planned rail transit. Based on the existing and planned alignment of rail and the stations punctuating those transit lines, the majority of TOD opportunities are located along or near existing highway and freight rail corridors (See Figure 30).

As recommended in the Moving People: Denver Strategic Transportation Plan (2008), future transit alignments in Denver should be chosen to balance 1) connecting existing population and employment centers to each and to the regional transit network, and 2) stimulating additional medium to high-density TOD development in vacant and underutilized areas.



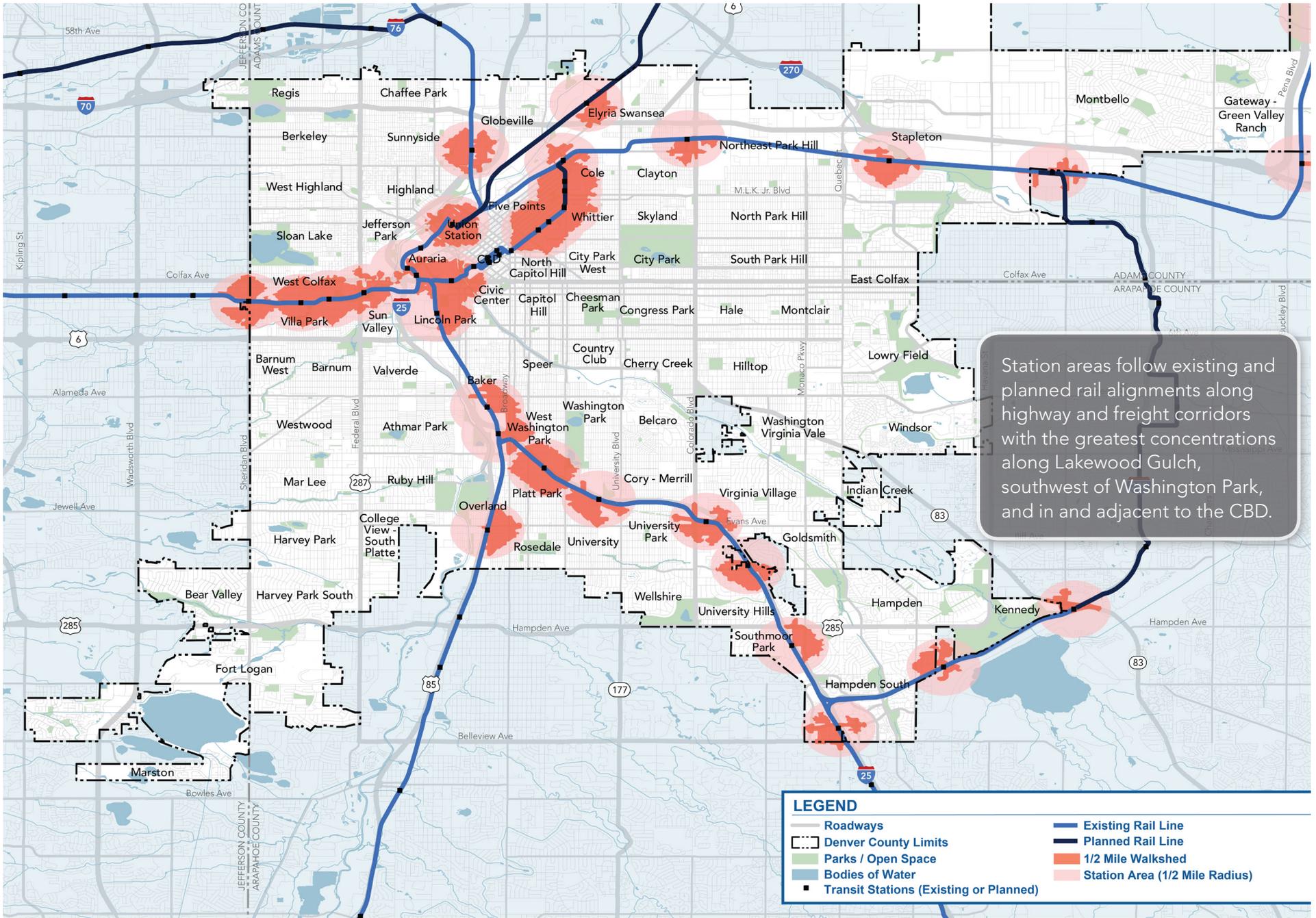


Figure 30: Rail Station Walksheds

*Source: Regional Transportation District, 2009; City and County of Denver, 2016

SECTION 6

Connectivity and Mobility

Overview

The 2002 Blueprint Denver provided a foundation for street planning and design to support multimodal travel. The City's 2008 Strategic Transportation Plan shifted the city's transportation paradigm to increase street capacity via multimodal travel options as opposed to widening streets. Since 2002, the Denver region has invested significantly in some areas of the transportation system, particularly in rail transit. The City has also implemented a variety of on-street bikeways. Despite these investments, mode share within Denver has changed very little since 2000. Portions of the city lack easy-to-use bikeways, frequent transit and comfortable walkways. Shared mobility, including car share, bike share and ride hailing services, is impacting travel patterns in the city and will have future implications for transportation planning.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- About 80 percent of all trips and commute trips in Denver are made by driving;
- About 14 percent of all trips in Denver are made by walking and in many neighborhoods the walk mode share is 25 percent or more;
- Intersection density is high across the city, but low density areas exist in certain neighborhoods and around the existing rail corridors;
- Transit ridership region-wide has increased by about 30 percent since 2002, with about 75 percent of ridership growth occurring on the rail network;
- About 68 percent of households in Denver are within a ¼-mile of a transit stop, but only 17 percent are within a ¼-mile of a high-frequency transit stop (10- minute frequencies or less during peak periods) and only 3 percent are within a ¼-mile of a rail stop;
- 23 percent of all streets in Denver have no sidewalks;
- Since 2010 the city has doubled the mileage of on-street bike facilities and the percent of households within a ¼-mile of a "high ease-of-use" bike facility has increased from 49 percent to 54 percent;
- Within Denver, per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has declined by 6 percent since 2005; however, because of population growth total VMT has increased by 3 percent; and
- Auto ownership in Denver has increased from 1.44 vehicles per household in 2000 to 1.55 in 2014.

KEY FINDINGS

- Despite high intersection density across much of the city, many of the rail stations in Denver are located in areas with the low intersection density, creating challenges for walk, bike and bus transit accessibility;
- Despite a 30 percent increase in transit service and the addition of 23 rail stations in Denver since 2002, the resident transit commute mode share in Denver remains about the same as it was in 2000;
- Denver has doubled the miles of bike facilities since 2010 and has seen a doubling of the bike commute mode share since 2000; and
- The emergence and rapid growth of ride sharing companies, bike share and ride hailing services in Denver since 2009 are beginning to impact travel patterns, including transit use, parking demand, VMT and car ownership among others.

Overview

This section provides a high-level overview of recent trends and existing conditions related to connectivity and mobility in Denver.

Mode Share

Mode share represents the percent of trips by different modes of transportation. Table 11 shows citywide mode share as of 2010 for all trip purposes. Close to 80 percent of trips in Denver are made by driving. Of trips made by car, 45 percent are single-occupancy vehicle trips, and approximately one third include the driver and at least one passenger (carpool). However, this number is much lower in certain neighborhoods (See Figure 31). A high percent of trips in and around the downtown area are made by walking and transit, and relatively high walk mode shares extend through a large part of the city.

While bike trips represent only about 1 percent of all trips in the city, the neighborhoods with higher than average bike mode shares are just east of Broadway and just north of East Colfax Avenue.

Table 11: Mode Share (All Trip Types)

Mode	2010
Bike	1%
Carpool	33%
Drive Alone	45%
Transit	5%
Walk	14%
Other	1%

Source: DRCOG Front Range Travel Counts, 2009-2010

Table 12 illustrates mode share of commute trips and change since 2000. Compared to all trips, a much higher percent of commute trips are made by driving alone and transit and a lower percent are made by walking and carpooling. Since 2000, the commute mode share has changed very little. The most significant changes are an increase in biking to work and working from home and a decline in carpooling to work.

Table 12: Commuter Mode Share Change, 2000 to 2014

Mode	2000	2014
Bike	1%	2%
Carpool	14%	9%
Drive Alone	68%	70%
Transit	8%	7%
Walk	4%	4%
Work From Home	4%	7%
Other	1%	1%

Source: U.S. Census; American Community Survey

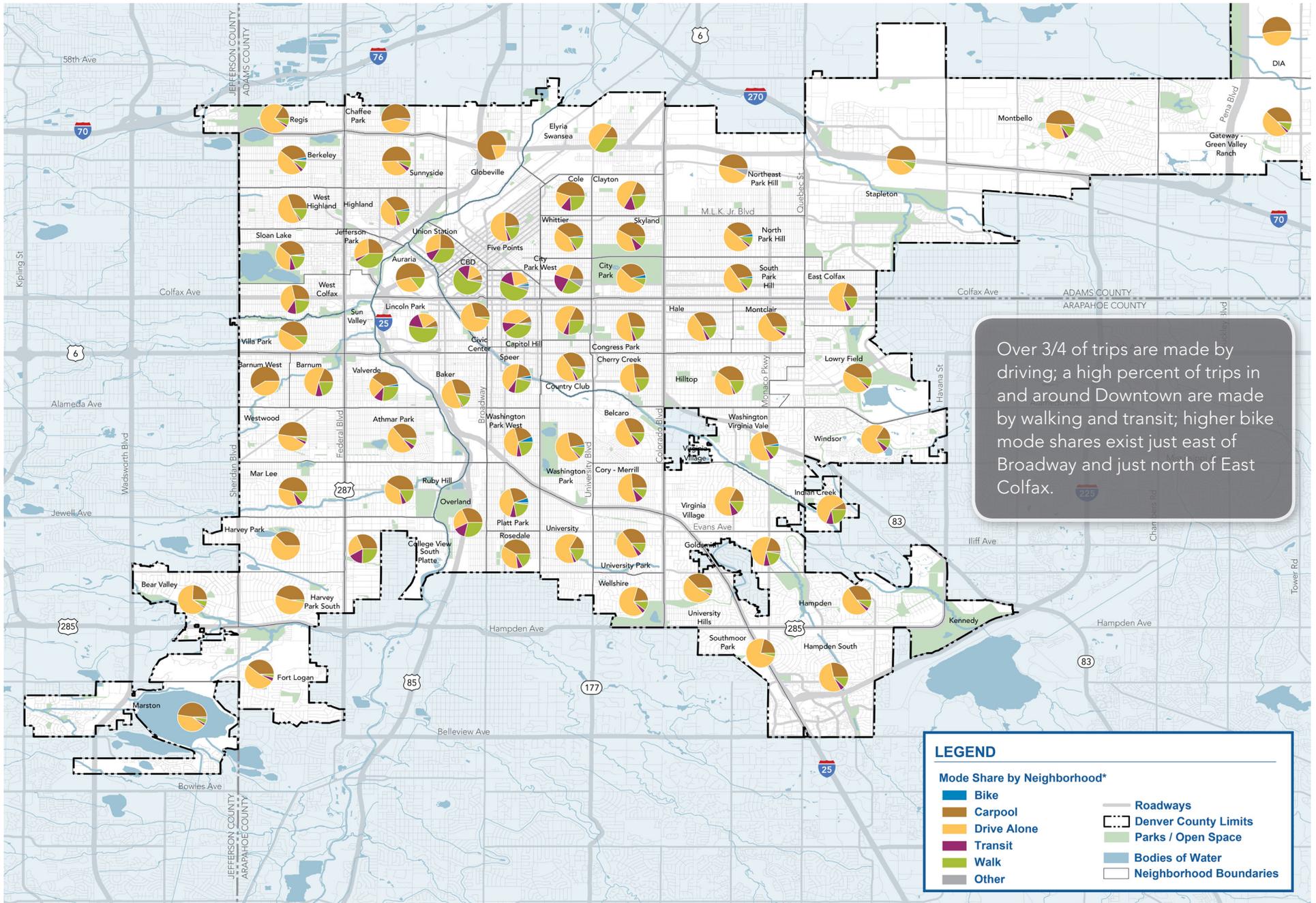
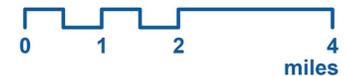


Figure 31: Mode Share by Neighborhood

*Source: DRCOG, Front Range Travel Counts, 2009 - 2010



Intersection Density

When controlling for all other factors intersection density (the number of intersections per square mile) has a direct correlation to mode share. Areas with higher levels of intersection densities support more walking, biking, transit use and transit circulation. Intersection density is relatively high through much of the city (See Figure 32), likely indicating that other factors besides the street network itself are contributing to the variations in mode share by neighborhood (as shown in Figure 31).

Excluding parks, the most notable areas of the city with lower intersection densities are in outlying neighborhoods (particularly in southwest Denver), still developing neighborhoods (including Stapleton and Gateway-Green Valley Ranch) and along the historic rail corridors, the latter of which pose significant challenges to the city in providing connectivity and accessibility to most of the rail transit stations in Denver.

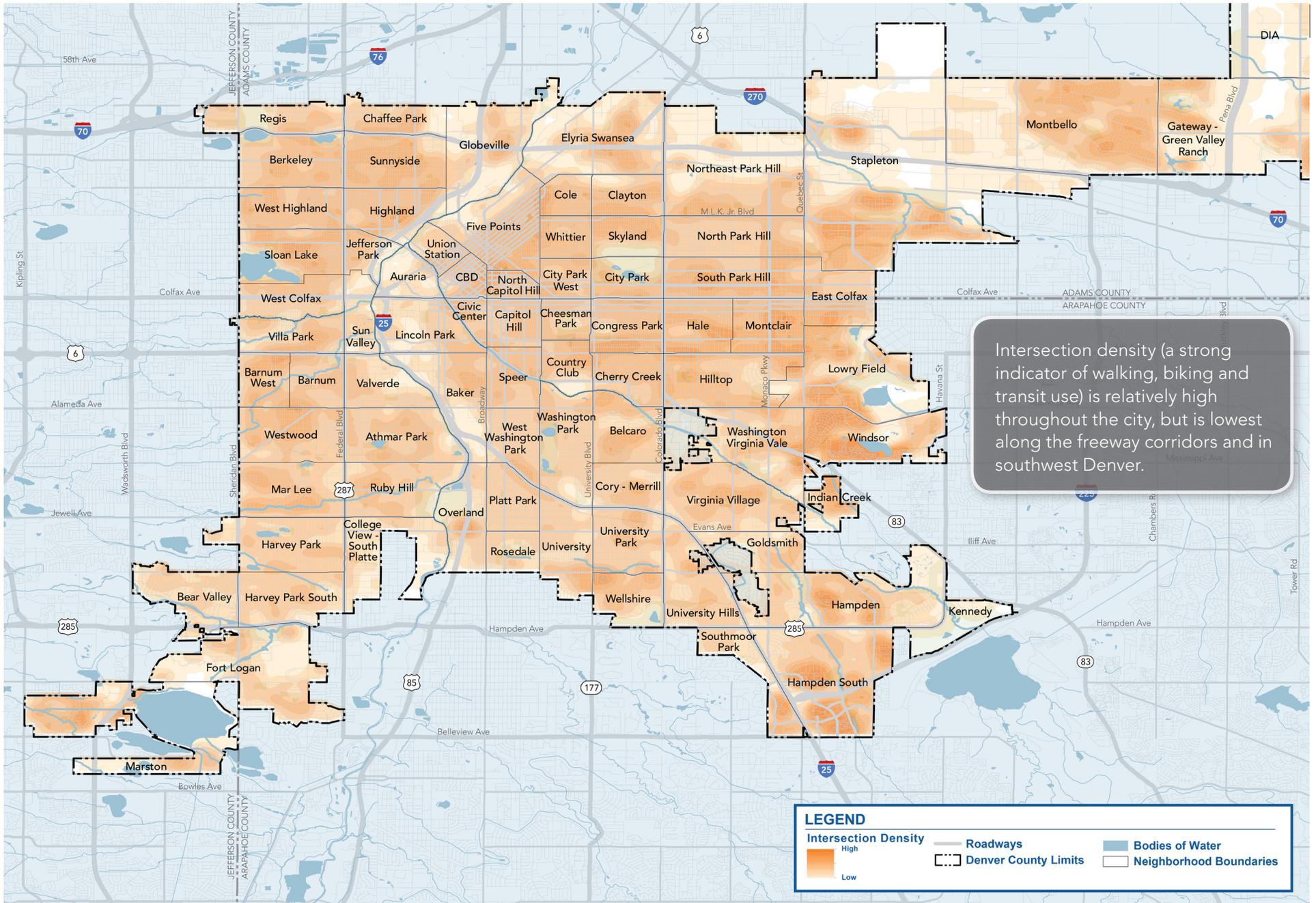


Figure 32: Intersection Density

*Source: City and County of Denver, 2016

People Riding Transit

Existing and Planned Transit Service

Since 2002, RTD has significantly expanded the Denver region’s rail transit system. By the end of 2016, 83 miles of new rail line and 49 new rail stations will have been added system-wide since the 2002 Blueprint Denver, including 23 new rail stations within (or directly adjacent to) the City of Denver. By 2019, RTD is planning to add an additional 15 miles of rail line and nine new stations, including one more in Denver (at the National Western Center).

Population Served by Transit

Table 13 shows households and employees in Denver within a ½ mile (about 10 minute walk) of rail transit and ¼ mile (about 5 minute walk) of bus transit of various frequencies. High-frequency transit is defined as ≤15 minute frequencies throughout the day (6 AM – 6 PM), which includes all rail and some bus service. About 78 percent of households in Denver are within a walking distance of a transit route (½ mile from rail and ¼ mile from bus), and only 32 percent are within a short walk of high frequency transit service. In addition, despite growth in rail transit in Denver over the last 15 years, only about 8 percent of households and 24 percent of employees are within a ½ mile of a rail station (See Figure 30 in previous section).

Table 13: Percent of Households, Employees and Parcels within ¼ mile of Transit

	Rail (1/2 mile)	High- frequency bus (1/4 mile)	High-frequency bus and rail	Any transit
Households	8%	29%	32%	78%
Employees	24%	44%	47%	79%

Source: 2016 GTFS, RTD, Nelson Nygaard, Fehr & Peers, DRCOG Focus Model, 2015
Note: High frequency transit is defined as ≤15 minute frequencies throughout the day (6 AM - 6 PM)

Transit Ridership Region-wide

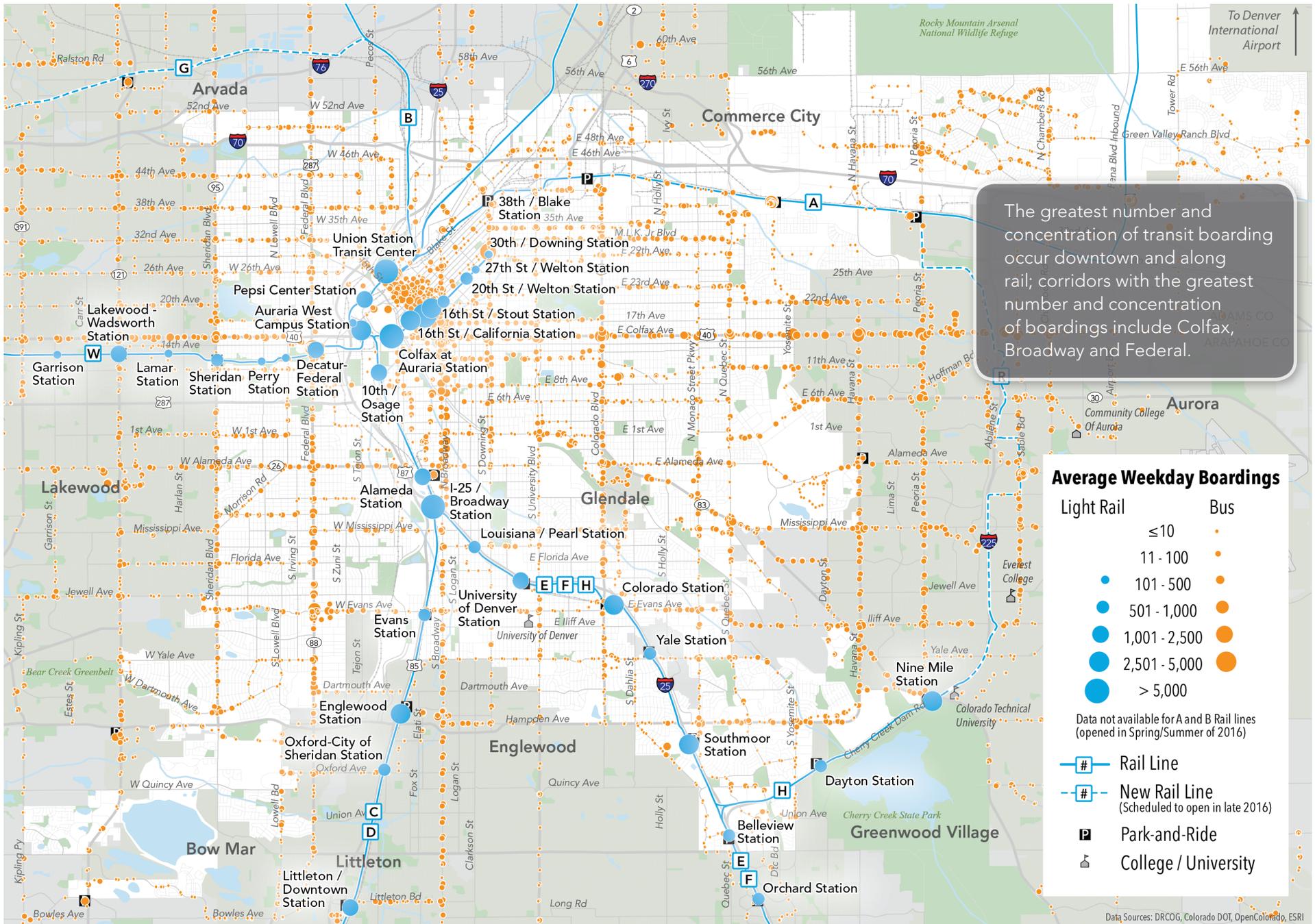
From 2002 through 2015 total revenue service hours in the Denver region has increased by 30 percent. During that time ridership increased by 27 percent (from 81 million to 102 million annually by 2015). About 75 percent of ridership growth since 2002 has been from the rail network, despite the fact that half of the growth in annual revenue hours of service since 2002 has been on the bus network.

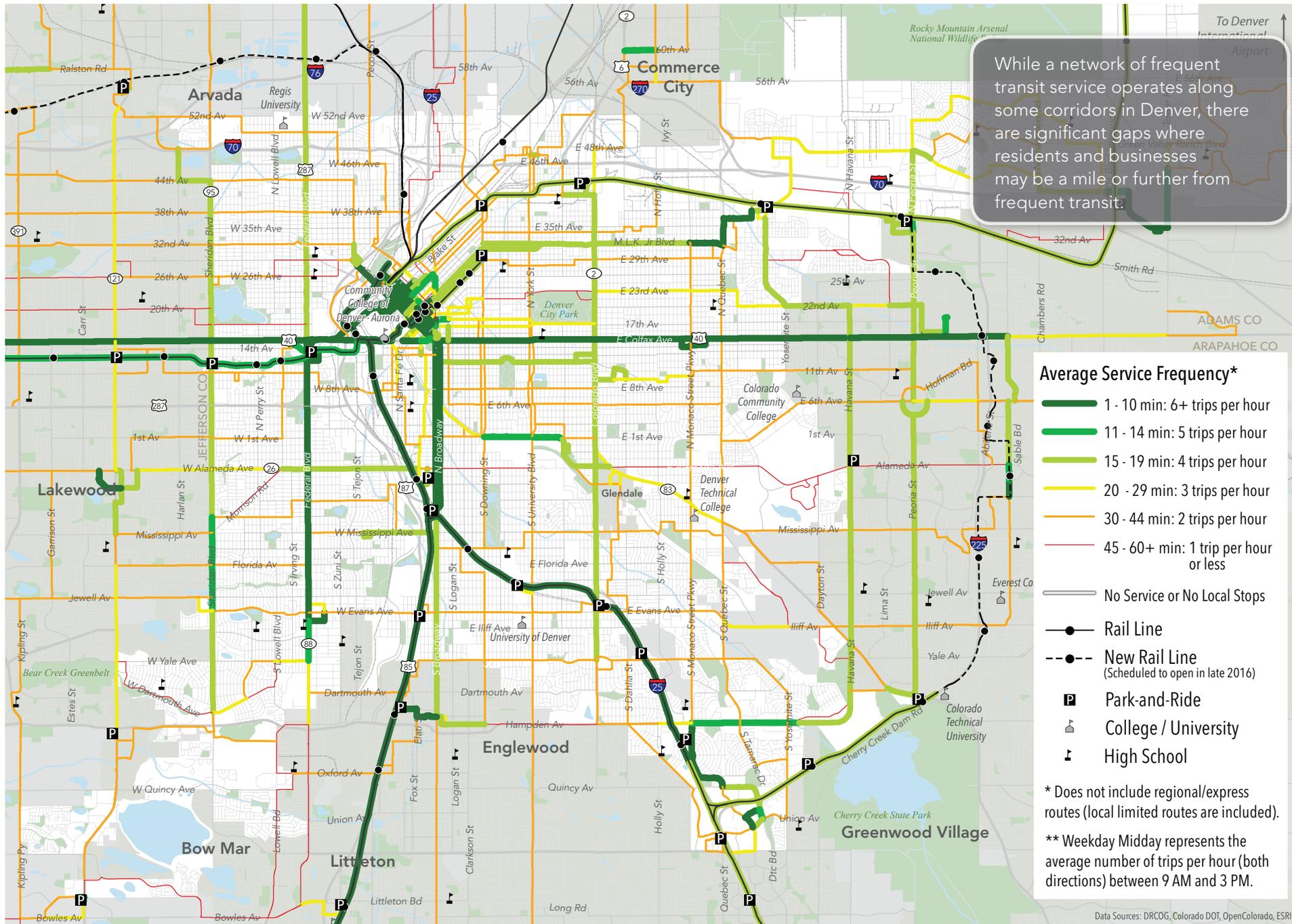
Transit Ridership in Denver

As of January 2016, about 215,000 people per weekday boarded an RTD bus or train in Denver representing about 61 percent of the region’s 352,000 average weekday transit riders. About 27 percent of boardings in Denver were by rail. The geographical distribution of transit boardings by stop within Denver is shown in Figure 33.

Transit Service Frequency

Figure 34 provides a map of transit service in Denver by frequency during mid-day. While several corridors in Denver offer high-frequency transit service throughout the day (15 minutes or less – including Sheridan Boulevard, Federal Boulevard, Broadway, Colorado Boulevard, Havana Street/Central Park Boulevard, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Colfax Avenue, East 12th Avenue, and some streets near the Denver Tech Center), significant gaps exist throughout the city where the nearest transit service operates at frequencies of 30 minutes or more for parts of or throughout the day.





People Walking

Existing Infrastructure

There are numerous factors that influence walking (many of which are covered in other sections of this report, including intersection density, population density, adjacent land uses, street and building design, etc.). However, the most basic and critical need for pedestrians from an infrastructure standpoint is the existence of sidewalks and crossings. As of 2017 about 90 percent of streets in Denver have sidewalks, but only 60 percent includes sidewalks of ADA compliant width – equal to or greater than 4 feet (see Table 14). Denver currently has about 2,935 miles of sidewalk (including 975 miles of sidewalk of deficient width) and is missing about 355 miles of sidewalk.

Pedestrian Investments by City

Under the City of Denver’s current policy landowners are responsible for building and maintaining sidewalks adjacent to their property. Thus, the city’s primary investments in the pedestrian network over the last several years have been related to other projects that are not as easy to quantify. These include:

- Intersection improvements (such as curb extensions, crosswalks, and pedestrian signalized crossings);
- Off-street multiuse trail improvements;
- Pedestrian bridges (over highways and railroad tracks); and
- Sidewalks that have been added or improved as part of a larger street reconstruction project.

Table 14: Percent of Sidewalk Network by Street Classification

	Arterial	Collector	Local	All Streets
Sufficient Width (4' or greater)	80%	65%	54%	60%
Deficient Width (less than 4')	8%	21%	36%	30%
Missing	12%	14%	10%	10%

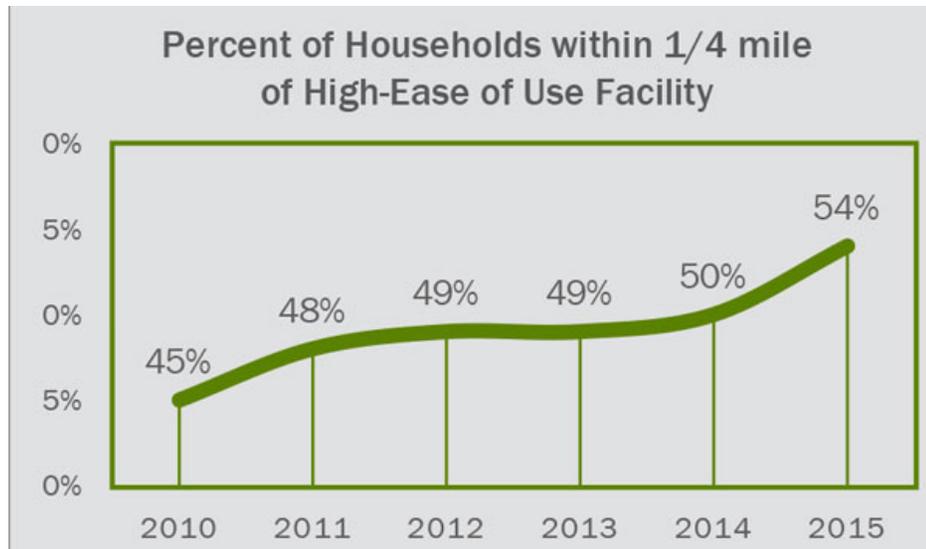
Source: City and County of Denver; Fehr & Peers

People Biking

Access to Bike Facilities

One of the core goals of Denver Moves: Bicycles is that every household in the City of Denver be within ¼-mile of a “high-ease-of-use bike facility.” High-ease-of-use bike facilities are defined as off-street trails, neighborhood bikeways and protected bike lanes, and are intended to serve riders with a variety of comfort levels. While the percent of households within ¼-mile of high-ease-of-use bike facilities has grown since 2010, significant investments in the street network are still needed to achieve the city’s bike accessibility goal (See Figure 35).

Figure 35: Percent of Households within ¼ mile of High Ease of Use Facility



Existing and Proposed Bike Facilities

As of early 2016 Denver has 128 miles of on-street bike facilities and 107 miles of off-street multi-use trail. One of the goals in the city-wide bike plan, Denver Moves: Bicycles, is to add an additional 183 miles of on-street bike facilities and 24 miles of multi-use trail to fill in the gaps of the current network (See Figure 36). The updated plan includes significant additions of protected on-street bike lanes as well as neighborhood bikeways, several of which are currently in the process of being implemented.

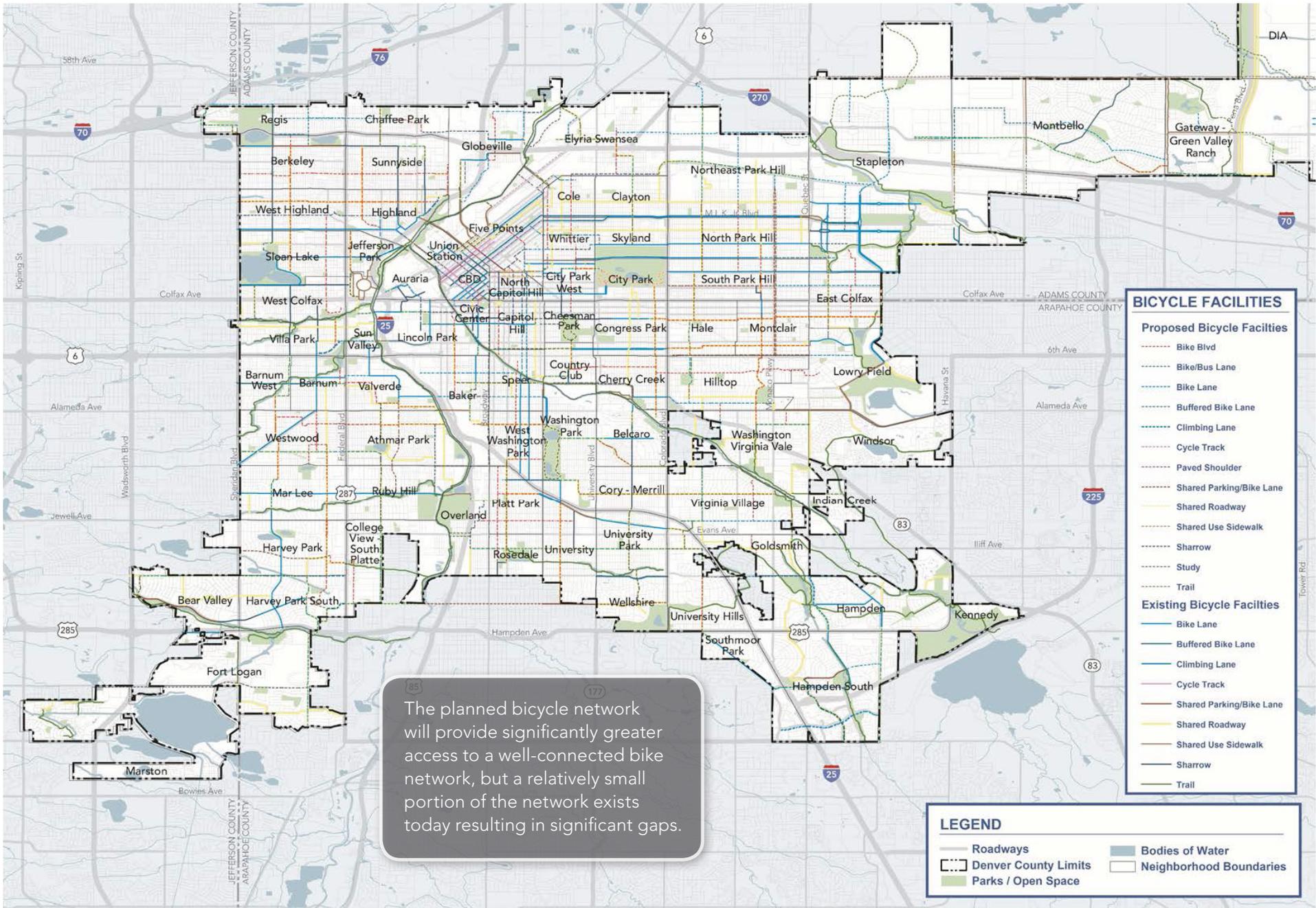


Figure 36: Existing and Proposed Bicycle Facilities

*Source: City and County of Denver, 2016

Bike Share

Since its inception in 2010 as the country’s first major bike share program, Denver B-Cycle has grown from 50 stations with 227 bikes to 87 stations with 719 bikes in 2015. During this time, the number of trips by B-Cycle increased from 102,000 to 363,000. Table 15 illustrates the neighborhoods currently served by Denver B-Cycle. Stations are primarily concentrated in and around downtown.

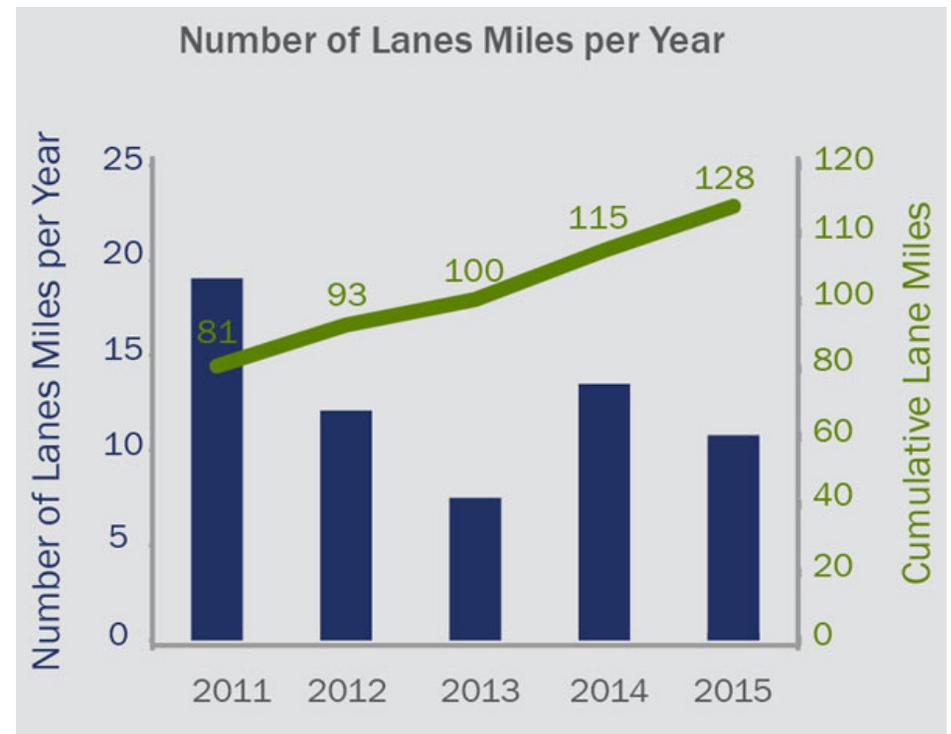
Table 15: B-Cycle Stations by Neighborhood

Neighborhood	Number of B-Cycle Stations
Auraria	3
Baker	1
Capitol Hill	7
Union Station	12
Five Points	11
CBD	8
Highland	7
City Park	5
City Park West	5
Cheesman Park	4
Civic Center	4
Lincoln Park	4
North Capitol Hill	4
Cherry Creek	3
Speer	3
Congress Park	1
Globeville	1
Jefferson Park	1
Sun Valley	1
Washington Park	1
West Highland	1

Bike Investments by City

Since 2010 the city has doubled the miles of on-street bike facilities from 65 in 2010 to 128 in 2015 (See Figure 37), adding an average of 13 miles of bike lanes, protected bike lanes and enhanced shared roadways per year.

Figure 37: Bike Lane Miles per Year



People Driving

Existing and Future Street Network

There are about 2,300 miles of streets and highways in Denver (See Table 16), of which about 10 percent are owned and maintained by CDOT, including about 90 percent of the centerline miles of freeways and 25 percent of the arterials streets.

Table 16: Centerline Street Miles in Denver

	City Owned	CDOT Owned	Total
Freeway	10	70	80
Arterial Street	328	79	407
Collector Street	286	1	287
Local Street	1,456	65	1,521
Total	2,080	215	2,295

Except for the far northeast Denver neighborhoods (including Stapleton, Gateway-Green Valley Ranch and DIA), most of Denver’s street network is built out. Denver’s Strategic Transportation Plan (2008) guides future increases in street capacity to be measured based on person trips as opposed to vehicle trips, and to be achieved by improving multimodal travel options as opposed to widening streets.

Vehicle Miles Traveled

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is useful for measuring of the amount of driving in a given area. From 2005-2014 VMT per capita in Denver has steadily been declining (See Table 17), a trend that has also occurred across the Denver region and nationwide. Despite this decline, total VMT in Denver has actually increased by about three percent since 2005 due to population growth.

Table 17: Change in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), 2005 to 2014

	City of Denver	Denver Region	U.S.
VMT Change	3%	-1%	0%
VMT Per Capita Change	-6%	-19%	-7%

Source: CDOT; Texas Transportation Institute; Bureau of Transportation Statistics

The average person in Denver drives about 17 miles per day. However, VMT per capita varies quite significantly by neighborhood (See Figure 38). Downtown and some of the neighborhoods around downtown have the lowest VMT per capita in the city due in large part to the high density of development, availability of non-driving transportation options, and proximity to downtown. Other factors influencing VMT per capita in Denver include the presence of regional destinations (such as large shopping centers or distribution centers), household income, access to highways and street connectivity among others.

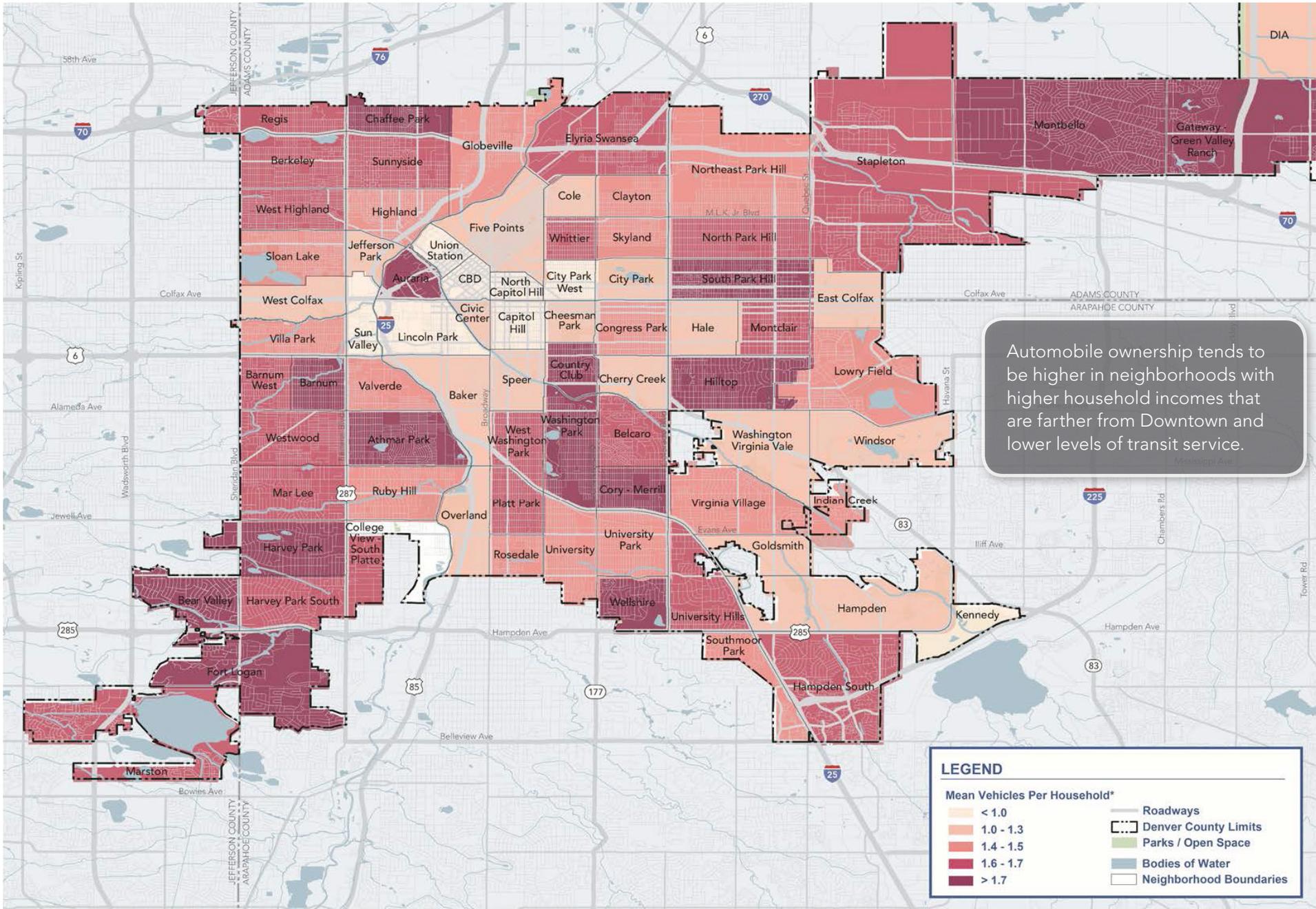


Figure 38: Vehicles per Household by Neighborhood

*Source: American Community Survey, 2014

Traffic Congestion

Table 18 illustrates that about 85 percent of major roadway miles in Denver (including highways, most arterial roads and some collector streets) experience little (less than an hour) or no congestion on an average weekday. Of the 15 percent of roadway miles with at least an hour of congestion a weekday, only seven percent experience high congested conditions for an hour or more.

Table 18: Percent of Major Roadways Congested by Hours per Day

Hours per Weekday	Congested (<50% free-flow travel speed)	Highly Congested (<40% free-flow travel speed)
0 hrs	85%	93%
1 hr	5%	3%
2 hrs	4%	2%
3 hrs	2%	1%
4 hrs	2%	<1%
5+ hrs	2%	<1%

Source: Intrix Link Speed Data (Average of Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday during October 2015)

Note: Congestion thresholds are based on HCM 2010, which defines average travel speeds of 40-50 percent of free-flow speed as LOS D, 30-40 percent as LOS E, and <30 percent of LOS F.

Automobile Ownership

Despite a decrease in per capita VMT since 2004, car ownership in Denver has actually increased from an average of 1.44 vehicles in 2000 to 1.55 vehicles per household in 2014. Similar to VMT, car ownership levels vary by neighborhood (See Figure 39).

Car ownership rates are generally lower in and around downtown (where there is an average of less than 1 car per household) and along the Colfax Avenue and Broadway corridors where transit service is high. In general, car ownership rates tend to be higher in neighborhoods with higher incomes that are farther from downtown and have lower levels of transit service.

Car Share

The emergence and rapid growth of car share services (such as Ego Car and Car2Go) and ride hailing services (such as Lyft and Uber) in Denver in the last several years has been significant. Since 2009 five different private car share services (offering over 450 shared vehicles), one bike-share company (offering over 700 bicycles), and two ride hailing services have emerged in Denver (See Table 19). The implications of these services are numerous, including the potential for reduced parking demand and a shift in transit ridership and route structure away from feeder services and into high-frequency trunk line services, as well as implications for VMT and car ownership.

Table 19: Shared Transportation Economy

Type	Company	Year Started	Stations	Vehicles
Bike Sharing	Denver B-Cycle	2010	88	719
	Enterprise (formerly Occasional Car)	2009	26	26
Ride Sharing	Ego Car	2009	17	17
	Car2Go	2013	n/a	333
	Zip Car	2013	43	70
	Hertz	2013	no data	no data
Ride Hailing	Lyft	2013	no data	no data
	Uber	2013	no data	no data

Source: Varies

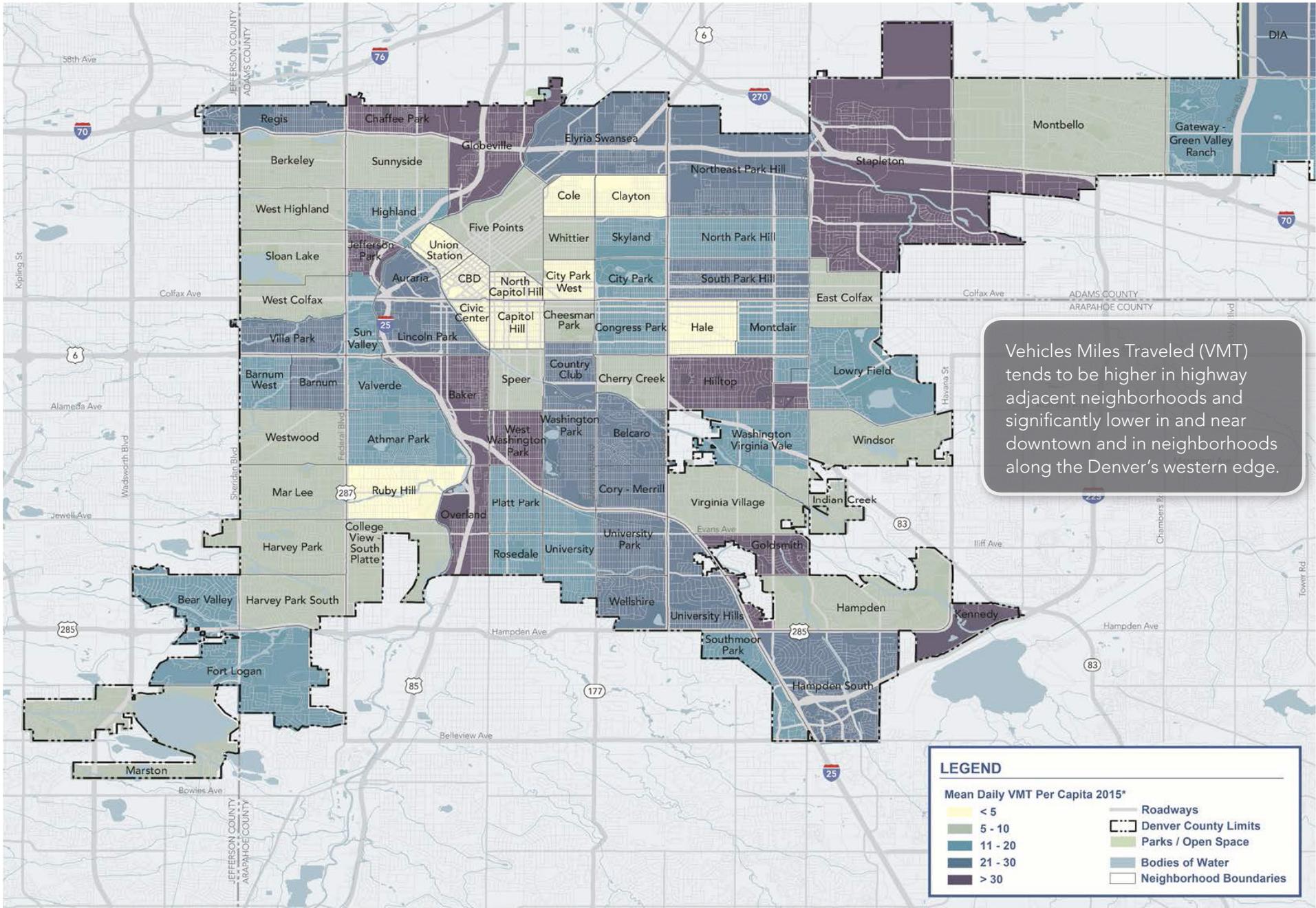


Figure 39: Daily Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) Per Capita by Neighborhood

*Source: DRCOG Focus Model

SECTION 7

Equity and Access within Denver

Overview

Through early community outreach and the first two Blueprint Denver Task Force meetings, equity and access across Denver have been highlighted as important topics to consider in throughout Blueprint Denver. In particular, Task Force members have suggested that there are growing disparities across Denver's neighborhoods. This section of the Community Profile is intended to provide a snapshot of neighborhoods in three distinct categories, including population and housing; transportation; and parks and neighborhood amenities.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- Denver's largest neighborhoods in terms of number of residents – Gateway-Green Valley Ranch (37,546 residents) and Montbello (32,688 residents) – are also among the largest in terms of number of households and among the highest average persons per household;
- Neighborhoods with the lowest and highest population density include DIA, Auraria, Stapleton and Globeville and Cheesman Park, North Capitol Hill and Capitol Hill, respectively;
- Median household income by neighborhood ranges from \$11,036 (Sun Valley) to \$134,276 (Belcaro) with an average of nearly \$58,000 per household;
- The combined cost of housing and transportation across all Denver neighborhoods is as low as 38 percent (Capitol Hill) and as high as 53 percent (Hilltop);
- Denver neighborhoods vary greatly when compared via Walk Score (6 to 92), Bike Score (33 to 97) and Transit Score (24 to 83);
- With the exception of DIA, all neighborhoods have at least 11 percent of households located with ¼-mile of a transit station or stop;
- Neighborhoods vary significantly when comparing park acreage per 1,000 residents (0.0 acres to 170.1 acres per 1,000 residents) and percent of tree canopy coverage (0% to 36%); and
- Educational attainment ranges from a low of 3 percent (Sun Valley) to a high of 50 percent (City Park).

KEY FINDINGS

- While many neighborhoods with high combined costs for housing and transportation (H+T) also have high average household income, several neighborhoods with low average household incomes have relatively high H+T costs (e.g., Globeville has a median household income of just over \$25,000 and a combined H+T cost of 42 percent of household income);
- Households in neighborhoods with great Walk, Bike and Transit Scores (many walkable destinations, access to bike infrastructure and access to a number of frequent service transit routes) tend to have fewer cars; and
- Neighborhoods with higher median household income and higher levels of educational attainment tend to have a higher number/level of amenities.

Neighborhood Snapshot

Denver has an eclectic variety of neighborhoods, each offering its own personality and character. Figure 40 allows for a comparison of Denver's neighborhoods in more detail across 18 indicators. Indicators are organized into three categories and were selected to help describe the existing neighborhood condition, including levels of accessibility, affordability, and amenities, as well as provide a snapshot of household demographics. The three categories of indicators are:

- Population and Housing;
- Transportation; and
- Parks and Neighborhood Amenities.

Population and Housing

This category provides a snapshot of each neighborhood's housing and demographic character. Indicators include population, number of households, average household size, population density, median household income, and home ownership rates. An analysis of the data included in this category yielded the following highlights:

- Home ownership rates across Denver neighborhoods varies dramatically from 1 percent in Kennedy to 86 percent in Wellshire. The average home ownership rate across all neighborhoods is approximately 48 percent;
- Denver's neighborhoods vary greatly in degree of population density, Capitol Hill is the densest with 34.0 people per acre; excluding DIA, Stapleton is the least dense with 2.4 people per acre, but it should be noted that Stapleton is not built out and will continue to add households and residents; and
- Median income is highest in Belcaro (\$134,276) and lowest in Sun Valley (\$11,036).

Transportation

This category provides a snapshot of each neighborhood's level of accessibility and connectivity, as well as associated expenses. Indicators used include Housing + Transportation (H+T) Index, automobile ownership, walk score, bike score, transit score, and percent of households within ¼-mile of a transit station (bus and rail). The H+T Index is a calculation that illustrates the cost burden of housing and transportation expenses on a household. An area is typically deemed affordable when its H+T costs do not exceed 45 percent of the median household income.

Walk score is a measure of walkability that ranges from 0 to 100 and is largely based upon the number of destinations (shops, restaurants, services, etc.) within a walkable distance of each address. Bike score measures whether a location is good for biking on a scale from 0 to 100 based on four equally weighted components: bike lanes, hills, destinations and road connectivity, and bike commuting mode share. Transit Score is a measure of how well a location is served by public transit on a scale from 0 to 100 based on the "usefulness" of nearby routes. Usefulness is calculated based on the distance to the nearest stop on the route, the frequency of the route, and type of route.

An analysis of the data presented in this category yielded the following high level insights:

- The neighborhoods with the greatest level of walkability (as indicated by walk score) include:
 - Capitol Hill - 92
 - CBD - 89
 - Cherry Creek - 86
 - Speer - 85
 - Baker - 84
- The neighborhoods with the lowest level of walkability (as indicated by walk score) include:
 - Marston - 33
 - Bear Valley - 30
 - Fort Logan - 25
 - Gateway-Green Valley Ranch - 23
 - DIA - 6
- Denver's centrally located neighborhoods tend to have the highest percentage of households within ¼-mile of a transit station (e.g. Capitol Hill - 100%, City Park - 100%, Speer - 95%). In contrast, many outer neighborhoods have the lowest percentage of households within ¼-mile of a station (e.g. Kennedy - 11%, Fort Logan - 16%).

Parks and Neighborhood Amenities

This category provides a snapshot of each neighborhood's amenities as well as resident wellness and education levels. Indicators used include the City and County of Denver Department of Environmental Health's (DEH) Neighborhood Equity Index, park acreage per 1,000 residents, tree canopy coverage, neighborhood recreation center, educational attainment, and access to libraries and recreation centers. The DEH Equity Index measures families in poverty, education levels, access to full service grocery stores and parks, access to prenatal health care, and child obesity rates. The DEH Equity index aggregates these measures into a score of 1-5 to assess the overall health of a neighborhood. A score of 1 indicates a low level of overall socioeconomic, environmental and health equity, and a score of 5 indicates a high level of overall equity. Tree canopy is defined as the area covered by the leaves and branches of trees therein and is expressed as a percentage of the overall neighborhood area. Educational attainment is measured by the percent of residents 25 years and older with a bachelor's degree. An analysis of the data presented in this section yielded the following high level insights:

- Denver's neighborhood health, as measured by the DEH Index, ranges from 1.4 - 4.5. Globeville has the lowest DEH Index score at 1.4, Belcaro has the highest DEH Index score at 4.5;
- Denver has 26 public libraries distributed amongst its neighborhoods; no neighborhood has multiple libraries; and
- Only 10 of Denver's neighborhoods offer both a library and a recreation center: Barnum, Berkeley, Elyria Swansea, Five Points, Northeast Park Hill, Platt Park, Stapleton, University Hills, and Virginia Village.

Figure 40: Neighborhood Matrix (1/3)

		Min	Average	Max	Athmar Park	Auraria	Baker	Barnum	Barnum West	Bear Valley	Belcaro	Berkeley	Capitol Hill	North Capitol Hill	CBD	Chaffee Park	Cheesman Park	Cherry Creek	City Park	City Park West	Civic Center	Clayton	Cole	College View - South Platte	Congress Park	Cory - Merrill	Country Club	DIA	
Population and Housing	Population (2016)	713	8,563	37,546	9,647	713	5,548	6,502	5,740	9,296	4,625	8,758	15,510	6,552	4,379	4,066	8,518	6,402	3,151	5,258	1,722	4,683	4,993	7,134	10,987	4,283	3,105	1,625	
	Number of Households (2016)	60	3,746	11,498	2,981	60	2,750	1,886	1,810	3,774	2,358	4,363	11,412	4,373	2,892	1,483	5,692	4,054	1,787	2,830	1,240	1,569	1,706	2,217	6,143	1,906	1,329	693	
	Average Persons per Household (2016)	1.3	2.3	3.9	3.2	1.4	2.0	3.5	3.2	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.3	1.4	1.3	2.6	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.4	2.9	2.9	3.2	1.8	2.2	2.3	2.3	
	People per Square Mile	0.4	9.8	34.0	9.0	1.7	5.1	12.4	11.6	10.3	5.6	8.5	34.0	25.8	13.2	7.7	23.7	10.4	5.9	14.4	8.1	8.8	14.2	7.0	15.5	7.2	7.2	0.4	
	Median Household Income (2016)	11,036	57,684	134,276	42,434	129,300	45,782	37,263	40,845	50,717	134,276	56,309	40,876	47,780	51,600	52,612	48,444	78,898	59,960	41,295	59,943	41,750	37,843	31,254	62,441	88,304	126,050	40,804	
	Percent Households Owned ¹	1%	48%	86%	59%	62%	41%	52%	64%	52%	76%	60%	18%	13%	16%	70%	25%	43%	30%	25%	22%	49%	43%	39%	38%	75%	78%	74%	
	H+T Index	38%	46%	53%	44%	40%	42%	46%	46%	49%	51%	47%	38%	43%	42%	48%	40%	51%	43%	45%	39%	45%	44%	43%	46%	50%	48%	47%	
Transportation	Automobile per Household ²	0.6	1.4	2.0	1.8	2.0	1.1	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.5	0.9	0.9	0.6	1.8	1.1	1.3	1.2	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.5	1.3	1.8	1.8	1.2	
	Walk Score	6	61	92	68	43	84	69	56	30	68	77	92	---	89	61	81	86	79	73	---	64	77	62	80	60	77	6	
	Bike Score	33	73	97	62	75	88	70	70	49	69	77	90	---	93	74	96	77	96	97	---	85	88	63	86	55	93	33	
	Transit Score	24	48	83	47	79	60	43	39	34	42	40	65	---	83	38	53	49	55	55	---	47	50	44	52	45	46	24	
	Percent of Households within 1/4-mile Transit Station ³	0%	69%	100%	83%	68%	68%	78%	62%	57%	50%	69%	99%	100%	99%	67%	93%	96%	100%	100%	100%	83%	90%	66%	98%	47%	93%	0%	
	DEH Index ⁴	1.4	3.0	4.6	2.1	3.6	2.1	1.9	1.5	2.6	4.5	3.8	3.1	2.9	3.7	2.4	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.0	3.9	2.4	2.1	2.0	4.1	3.8	4.6	2.4	
Parks and Neighborhood Amenities	Park Acreage per 1,000 Residents	0.0	13.9	170.1	7.7	23.5	2.6	5.6	3.8	9.1	5.9	17.6	0.3	0.0	1.5	3.3	10.1	3.7	109.2	0.6	6.7	2.9	1.0	3.7	4.8	0.0	0.9	170.1	
	Percent of Tree Canopy Coverage	0%	13%	36%	10%	4%	6%	12%	13%	19%	23%	19%	15%	8%	2%	13%	25%	11%	18%	16%	8%	11%	12%	8%	22%	17%	36%	0%	
	Neighborhood Recreation Center	No	--	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
	Educational Attainment ⁵	3%	27%	50%	12%	47%	31%	6%	7%	17%	34%	32%	42%	43%	39%	17%	46%	38%	50%	34%	38%	19%	12%	7%	39%	39%	39%	12%	
	Neighborhood Library	No	--	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

¹ Owned without mortgage, 2010

² Ownership average per household, ACS 2014

³ Transit includes rail and bus service

⁴ Score on scale of 1-5: 1 indicates area of greatest inequity, 5 indicates area with least inequity

⁵ Percent aged 25 years and older with bachelors degree, 2016

Key:

White: Minimum (Min)

Lighter color: Average

Darker color: Maximum (Max)

Source: ESRI; MIG; Fehr & Peers

Figure 40: Neighborhood Matrix (2/3)

		East Colfax	Elyria Swansea	Five Points	Fort Logan	Gateway - Green Valley Ranch	Globeville	Goldsmith	Hale	Hampden	Hampden South	Harvey Park	Harvey Park South	Highland	Hilltop	Indian Creek	Jefferson Park	Kennedy	Lincoln Park	Lowry Field	Mar Lee	Marston	Montbello	Montclair	Overland	Park Hill	North Park Hill	Northeast Park Hill	South Park Hill		
Indicators	Population and Housing	Population (2016)	11,132	6,681	15,731	9,022	37,546	4,312	6,275	7,550	19,190	15,927	11,606	9,291	10,311	8,448	3,265	3,337	4,729	6,867	9,442	13,284	13,593	32,688	5,918	2,480	---	10,181	8,689	9,328	
		Number of Households (2016)	4,618	1,762	8,227	3,467	11,498	1,258	2,986	4,214	10,094	8,015	3,977	3,413	5,090	3,447	1,877	1,542	2,342	3,049	4,431	4,193	6,480	8,405	2,915	1,172	---	4,169	3,032	3,741	
		Average Persons per Household (2016)	2.4	3.8	1.7	2.5	3.3	3.0	2.0	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.9	2.7	2.0	2.4	1.7	2.2	2.0	2.2	2.1	3.1	2.1	3.9	2.0	2.1	---	2.0	3.0	2.0	
		People per Square Mile	14.9	3.9	11.2	5.0	6.2	2.8	11.7	11.1	9.7	7.7	10.7	9.6	11.4	7.4	9.9	8.1	9.9	7.5	4.9	12.9	5.5	9.4	8.4	---	---	3.7	9.0	3.1	
		Median Household Income (2016)	38,836	36,702	61,577	64,773	66,776	25,281	40,058	54,652	44,410	59,028	53,783	53,480	52,420	116,850	59,205	42,012	30,378	30,603	70,948	46,497	62,281	44,966	81,487	47,660	---	65,004	33,009	101,574	
		Percent Households Owned ¹	30%	44%	24%	70%	66%	40%	26%	45%	46%	52%	67%	58%	40%	72%	71%	28%	1%	25%	46%	59%	58%	60%	65%	38%	---	79%	43%	77%	
	Transportation	H+T Index	47%	45%	42%	52%	49%	42%	44%	45%	45%	48%	47%	48%	45%	53%	46%	43%	41%	39%	45%	46%	51%	48%	48%	45%	---	48%	46%	51%	
		Automobile per Household ²	1.3	1.5	1.2	1.8	1.9	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.8	1.3	1.1	1.0	1.0	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.6	1.2	1.6	1.7	1.3	1.8	
		Walk Score	62	57	82	25	23	52	61	74	52	48	48	37	80	58	40	77	47	81	47	61	33	40	67	66	60	---	---	---	
		Bike Score	74	68	94	51	60	71	73	76	70	59	54	52	84	70	56	88	65	93	70	71	50	57	71	76	78	---	---	---	
		Transit Score	52	38	70	29	33	37	45	50	41	49	41	38	58	43	37	55	51	75	39	40	27	40	47	64	49	---	---	---	
		Percent of Households within 1/4-mile Transit Station ³	79%	67%	84%	16%	37%	64%	56%	89%	55%	62%	59%	64%	86%	57%	33%	80%	11%	89%	44%	54%	16%	56%	89%	52%	79%	94%	70%	74%	
	Parks and Neighborhood Amenities	DEH Index ⁴	2.1	1.9	2.8	2.4	2.9	1.4	2.4	3.8	2.9	3.8	1.9	2.6	3.0	4.3	3.1	2.6	2.5	2.4	3.5	2.0	4.0	1.6	3.9	2.4	3.4	1.9	4.0	2.4	
		Park Acreage per 1,000 Residents	1.5	4.2	3.4	14.7	9.9	19.2	0.1	1.0	31.3	7.5	2.1	1.6	1.8	9.8	2.5	8.5	21.5	5.2	37.4	2.9	4.5	3.7	2.2	78.5	---	3.1	0.0	78.5	
		Percent of Tree Canopy Coverage	20%	5%	6%	15%	2%	4%	11%	18%	10%	8%	17%	18%	12%	23%	8%	9%	4%	6%	2%	14%	5%	9%	26%	8%	17%	5%	27%	8%	
		Neighborhood Recreation Center	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	---	No	Yes	No
		Educational Attainment ⁵	21%	6%	35%	22%	16%	10%	21%	35%	28%	32%	12%	12%	38%	37%	32%	24%	24%	19%	39%	12%	29%	7%	40%	21%	---	34%	16%	31%	
		Neighborhood Library	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	---	No	Yes	No

¹ Owned without mortgage, 2010

² Ownership average per household, ACS 2014

³ Transit includes rail and bus service

⁴ Score on scale of 1-5: 1 indicates area of greatest inequity, 5 indicates area with least inequity

⁵ Percent aged 25 years and older with bachelors degree, 2016

Key:

White: Minimum (Min)

Lighter color: Average

Darker color: Maximum (Max)

Figure 40: Neighborhood Matrix (3/3)

		Platt Park	Regis	Rosedale	Ruby Hill	Skyland	Sloan Lake	Southmoor Park	Speer	Stapleton	Sun Valley	Sunnyside	Union Station	University	University Hills	University Park	Valverde	Villa Park	Virginia Village	Washington Park	Washington Park West	Washington Virginia Vale	Welshire	West Colfax	West Highland	Westwood	Whittier	Windsor		
Indicators	Population and Housing	Population (2016)	5,968	4,136	2,766	10,523	3,275	7,860	4,800	11,735	21,735	1,498	10,455	5,162	9,599	5,989	8,521	4,168	9,442	13,836	7,368	7,035	14,146	3,387	10,807	9,064	16,752	5,208	13,761	
		Number of Households (2016)	2,951	1,669	1,395	3,536	1,451	3,794	2,719	7,799	6,563	465	4,045	3,616	3,861	2,817	4,146	1,240	3,041	6,502	3,494	3,698	7,213	1,429	4,090	4,508	4,659	2,138	7,853	
		Average Persons per Household (2016)	2.0	2.1	2.0	3.0	2.2	2.1	1.8	1.5	2.8	3.1	2.6	1.4	1.9	2.1	2.0	3.4	3.1	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9	2.4	2.6	2.0	3.6	2.4	1.8	
		People per Square Mile	10.3	6.0	7.1	10.6	6.4	8.1	6.4	20.0	2.4	3.5	10.7	15.5	11.7	5.7	10.1	6.4	13.8	10.3	7.1	11.4	11.1	5.3	15.2	11.9	16.2	13.4	11.5	
		Median Household Income (2016)	71,910	54,856	71,736	32,416	52,281	53,938	63,138	52,253	110,173	11,036	45,717	82,972	40,320	58,447	74,164	32,291	35,028	49,604	109,437	82,827	41,889	98,329	32,339	70,992	34,593	52,095	38,258	
		Percent Households Owned ¹	61%	65%	46%	47%	57%	50%	31%	26%	73%	4%	54%	37%	39%	62%	37%	42%	39%	43%	75%	54%	35%	86%	23%	59%	40%	53%	42%	
	Transportation	H+T Index	47%	49%	47%	45%	46%	46%	48%	44%	47%	42%	45%	43%	47%	48%	48%	42%	41%	46%	49%	47%	47%	50%	42%	47%	45%	45%	43%	
		Automobile per Household ²	1.5	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.7	0.8	1.5	0.9	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.7	1.6	1.3	1.9	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.1	
		Walk Score	80	50	73	65	63	64	33	85	37	65	72	---	63	58	68	70	54	62	64	71	64	48	68	75	60	71	40	
		Bike Score	74	59	83	67	89	78	42	92	73	76	80	---	76	66	82	63	67	62	78	84	76	63	75	74	68	96	57	
		Transit Score	60	37	54	42	48	43	53	55	38	64	43	---	45	52	48	44	52	44	43	61	42	38	60	41	40	55	38	
		Percent of Households within 1/4-mile Transit Station ³	81%	73%	32%	98%	66%	71%	69%	95%	49%	70%	88%	83%	79%	63%	49%	71%	64%	59%	69%	61%	87%	47%	87%	86%	83%	90%	49%	
	Parks and Neighborhood Amenities	DEH Index ⁴	4.3	2.9	4.1	2.6	2.8	3.3	3.6	3.5	4.4	2.0	2.6	4.4	3.4	3.8	4.0	2.1	1.5	2.6	4.3	4.0	3.3	4.1	2.1	3.8	1.5	2.9	2.4	
		Park Acreage per 1,000 Residents	0.7	38.6	29.7	0.5	46.3	39.9	1.2	0.6	33.1	16.0	1.9	5.1	0.6	4.5	4.9	8.2	3.3	3.9	25.2	0.0	6.2	42.7	8.8	1.2	1.7	2.4	2.7	
		Percent of Tree Canopy Coverage	20%	18%	17%	11%	9%	13%	6%	18%	1%	3%	15%	2%	20%	10%	23%	6%	12%	17%	25%	20%	13%	17%	11%	18%	10%	15%	10%	
		Neighborhood Recreation Center	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
		Educational Attainment ⁵	42%	24%	40%	9%	33%	34%	47%	47%	29%	3%	21%	41%	35%	35%	40%	6%	11%	28%	40%	41%	29%	35%	17%	36%	4%	29%	22%	
		Neighborhood Library	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	

¹ Owned without mortgage, 2010

² Ownership average per household, ACS 2014

³ Transit includes rail and bus service

⁴ Score on scale of 1-5: 1 indicates area of greatest inequity, 5 indicates area with least inequity

⁵ Percent aged 25 years and older with bachelors degree, 2016

Key:

White: Minimum (Min)

Lighter color: Average

Darker color: Maximum (Max)

SECTION 8

Next Steps

The Blueprint Denver team is focusing its attention to the future of the community. The community is being engaged in a variety of activities to ascertain the vision and values that will guide growth over the next 25 years. The vision, values and a set of guiding principles will be parlayed into big picture strategies for maintaining community character while accommodating projected growth.

Planning Process



Denverright.

Blueprint Denver

Appendix Community Profile

February 3, 2017



Existing Plans, Policies and Goals

As discussed in Section 1 of the Community Profile, the update of Blueprint Denver builds upon and references numerous previous successful Denver planning efforts. Land use, multimodal connectivity, parks and greenways, parking, street categories, and housing diversity and choice are all important aspects of the update process. The following are summaries of key concepts and goals from other citywide plans that inform all four Denverright plans.

Denver Comprehensive Plan (2000)

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000 established a vision for Denver as a city that is livable for its residents, now and in the future. The plan reflects the efforts and input of hundreds of participants in the plan process from different backgrounds and perspectives, who agreed on a long-term vision for the city and suggested 11 goals to create a city that supports a great quality of life for all its people.

The Comprehensive Plan called for the development of a land use and transportation plan that would identify and map our city's desired future land uses, a desired transportation system, and an overarching strategy for how the city should grow. It also called for an update to Denver's 1950's era zoning code, which was inconsistent with the city's vision for the future.

Blueprint Denver (2002)

Blueprint Denver was adopted by Denver City Council in 2002 as a supplement to the Comprehensive Plan. It was developed to address several key objectives identified in the 2000 Comprehensive Plan including the need for an integrated future land use and transportation strategy. Blueprint identified several important principles including directing growth to Areas of Change while preserving the character of Areas of Stability; establishing that streets are a means to move people

and not just cars; and emphasizing multi-modal streets and mixed-use development. Blueprint was widely viewed as being on the forefront of re-establishing the primacy of planning for land use and transportation together.

Another major accomplishment of Blueprint Denver was to identify, through the Blueprint Denver map, explicitly what Denver should be like in the future. This explicit depiction of Denver in 2020 was a critical ingredient in subsequently updating Denver's zoning to a context- and form-based code. Other accomplishments of the original Blueprint Denver include:

- Establishing a new way of looking at Denver as Areas of Change where most new growth was directed and Areas of Stability where the preservation of its existing character was the focus;
- The establishment of a robust street classification system that not only uses the typical functional street system (arterials, collectors and local streets) but also includes land uses in the descriptions that together help establish the appropriate role of the streets and how their characteristics should be enhanced to better play their designated role (the lack of implementation of this system is an item to address);
- Establishing building blocks to characterize land uses; and
- Identifying many areas of the city that should include a mix of uses and the alternative forms of transportation (walking and biking) that become viable to reach a variety of land uses that are in close proximity. Blueprint's emphasis on multi-modal streets and mixed-use development has kept Denver focused on strategies to move more people in different ways, and to allow more people to work, live, shop, and play (and more) in their own neighborhood.

Parks Game Plan (2003)

As a supplement to the Denver Comprehensive Plan 2000, the Game Plan is the parks strategic plan and guides the Department of Parks and Recreation budget, capital development, and policy decisions, as well as providing a planning framework for collaboration with other city agencies, organizations, and businesses. The Game Plan filled a critical void with a plan for the future to protect and extend the legacy of the last citywide parks plan completed in 1986.

The vision of the Game Plan is of a “City in a Park” that envisions continuous, safe, and accessible sidewalks and other pedestrian connections among Denver neighborhoods for people of all ages and abilities, using a range of transportation options.

As a city in a park, Denver itself becomes a large park, with streets, buildings, and people as integral elements of a rich and varied landscape. It begins at our front doors and extends to the mountains and prairie parks and embraces the public realm in its entirety. Game Plan expanded the range of public spaces that function as parks and broadened the definition of parks and public spaces across a range of scales.

The plan articulated a vision for a system of Green Street connections that provide continuous, safe, and accessible sidewalks and other pedestrian connections among Denver neighborhoods for people of all ages and abilities, using a range of transportation options. Plans for a system of green connections also included a recommendation to revise the city’s streetscape and median design manuals in a pedestrian master plan.

Pedestrian Master Plan (2004)

Denver’s Pedestrian Master Plan was developed in response to goals and recommendations in both the Comprehensive Plan and the 2002 Blueprint to address mobility in multiple ways in Denver. The plan serves as a framework for implementation of new city policies that include the importance of pedestrian planning.

The plan identifies seven goals for improving pedestrian conditions and increasing pedestrian activity: safety, accessibility, education, connectivity, streetscape, land use and public health. In support of these goals, the master plan recommends pedestrian friendly policies, creates a citywide pedestrian network, and identifies key projects to enhance walkability in Denver.

Moving People: Denver Strategic Transportation Plan (2008)

The Strategic Transportation Plan (STP) is a multimodal transportation plan that was initiated by Denver's Department of Public Works, with support from other city agencies and interested stakeholders, to understand and address the current and future transportation needs of the City and County of Denver. The STP also employs a unique and innovative approach to identifying future system needs and community values, and provides a method to incorporate them into future transportation decisions and solutions.

The STP builds upon the vision that a great city is livable for all its citizens now and in the future. It developed a transformative approach to creating a multimodal transportation system that supports a livable, connected and sustainable city. This approach plans for travel sheds, not just travel corridors. The fundamental concept at the heart of the STP is to move people, not just vehicles. The concept of travel sheds is based on measuring capacity from a person-trip perspective (as opposed to vehicle miles travelled (VMT) and looking at transportation system gaps by comparing person trip demand to person trip capacity.

Importantly, the plan does not suggest growing Denver's road footprint and explicitly recognizes the limitations inherent in widening streets. Instead, it looks holistically at physical, operational, and behavioral aspects of transportation which together interact to encourage people to walk, bike, drive, and use transit.

Denver Moves: Making Bicycle and Multi-Use Connections (2011)

Denver Moves expands the vision for the non-motorized transportation and recreation system in Denver, identifying the next phase of priorities for making bicycle and multi-use connections. The plan focuses on integrating the existing off-street and on-street networks to create safe, comfortable corridors that link neighborhoods, parks, employment centers, business districts, transit hubs, and other destinations in all parts of Denver. Denver Moves is intended to be dynamic; able to respond to changing land-use and transportation needs. It serves as a guide for City staff, stakeholders, and the public interested in the development of the non-motorized network.

The plan establishes "ease of use" categories with a goal of 80 percent of facilities having a high-to-moderate ease of use – defined as degree of separation from motorized traffic and perceived level of comfort. In addition, it calls for a biking and walking network, made up of multi-use, separated in roadway, enhanced shared roadway, and bike boulevards - where every household is within a quarter mile (5-minute walk or 2-minute bicycle ride) of a high "ease of use" facility.

Denver Moves presents a toolbox of bicycle and multi-use facility types and their consideration for use in Denver's non-motorized network with a goal of achieving a 15 percent bicycling and walking commute mode share by 2020. It examines the feasibility of these facility types, incorporates them into a comprehensive multi-use and bicycle network, and develops an implementation strategy for the future.

Denver Moves: Enhanced Bikeways (2016)

In 2016, Denver Public Works finalized an update to the original 2011 Denver Moves to plan for enhanced on-street bicycle facilities (e.g., protected bike lanes, neighborhood bikeways) in the downtown area and throughout Denver. This includes:

- Developing a detailed plan for a network of enhanced on-street bicycle facilities in Downtown Denver;
- Identifying key corridors that link from adjacent neighborhoods to either downtown or off-street trails; and
- Establishing design standards for enhanced on-street bicycle facilities.

The purpose of the update is to enhance the citywide bicycle network to be more attractive to cyclists of all abilities (i.e., the 60% who identify themselves as “interested, but concerned”). The recommended network of enhanced on-street bicycle facilities incorporates the Denver Moves plan (2011) and complements the existing Denver Moves bicycle facility network.

Denver Strategic Parking Plan (2010)

The Strategic Parking Plan (SPP) is a comprehensive, city-wide framework that helps articulate and clarify the vision and approach for parking management in the City and County of Denver. It does not focus on parking management in one area or neighborhood but serves to align policy-makers, city staff, residents, business and property owners, and all other stakeholders so that parking goals outlined in the plan are shared and reflect a common vision for the city as a whole. The SPP explores innovative strategies and parking values from a variety of user perspectives so that the implementation tools set forth can achieve the best balance possible.

The SPP has three vision elements:

- Vision #1: Acknowledge a variety of land use patterns and contexts;
- Vision #2: Manage parking as an asset; and
- Vision #3: Encourage an integrated approach to parking management.

Parking strategies should be developed using a five step process, starting with the least management intensive tools and building to the most intensive, as follows:

- Demand – mitigate or reduce demand for parking;
- Location – move demand from the core and direct to areas with excess supply;
- Time – use time restrictions;
- Pricing – charge for parking to help reduce occupancy in high demand areas and create a market for off-street parking; and
- Supply – Optimize its use before adding additional parking.

Living Streets Initiative (2014)

Denver Living Streets Initiative (LSI) is a multi-sector partnership initiated in 2007 to support the creation of great places with transportation options that work for everyone. This partnership was created as a forum to explore and discuss new opportunities for building a multimodal street network; determine which opportunities were relevant and appropriate for Denver; evaluate the benefits and trade-offs associated with the opportunities; and, finally, to understand the best path towards implementation.

Living Streets is a city-building philosophy of working together to provide a network of streets, combined with adjacent land uses and buildings, that accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit while creating great spaces and places. Living Streets consider many aspects of livability including public health, active living, economic development, diversity, and the environment.

Living Streets address all components of the street: (1) The Private Realm, which contains the buildings and other uses that line a street; (2) the Pedestrian Realm, which is the area between the building and curb; and (3) The Roadway, or the area between the curbs. The framework establishes three functional categories of streets that, in combination, are critical to the success of the overall transportation network: Connecting, Multimodal, and Destination streets.

Transit Oriented Denver (2014)

The Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Strategic Plan is intended to guide the critical City-led actions needed for successful TOD in Denver. Well-planned TOD connects, is innovative, is efficient, creates places, provides a balanced mix of uses and activities, and creates a new way of thinking about personal mobility. This strategic plan does not revise station area plans or alter long-standing TOD policies; rather, it focuses these multiple efforts into a concise work program for the city. Denver's TOD Strategic Plan provides a foundation to guide public and private investment at rail stations.

The TOD Strategic Plan contains both citywide, high-level policy recommendations and on the ground, station-level action items with the intent to foster implementation of TOD at rail stations and support the development of transit communities in Denver. The plan creates a typology for all stations throughout the city in order to provide a snapshot of aspirational character; set expectations for development; and establish a level of magnitude for possible investments.

The Climate Adaptation Plan (2014)

Supplementing Denver’s Climate Action Plan, the Climate Adaptation Plan offers collaborative strategies to adapt to a future climate with higher temperatures, more extreme weather events, and changes to annual snowpack. The Plan provides a collaborative path forward to prepare for these climate changes. The focus of this Plan is to identify adaptation strategies within city agencies and community organizations that will lead to future adaptation efforts Denver can implement. The plan explores climate adaptation strategies including:

- Health and Human Services Strategies;
- Land Use and Transportation Strategies;
- Urban Natural Resources Strategies;
- Water Consumption Strategies; and
- Food and Agriculture Strategies.

Housing Denver – A Five-year Plan (2015-2019)

Housing Denver is a comprehensive and collaborative five-year plan that will harness public and private-sector resources to deliver accessible housing opportunities for individuals and families of all income levels throughout the City and County of Denver. It states the community’s principles, priorities, goals, and initiatives as they concern Denver’s housing needs.

The key guiding principle of Housing Denver is that access to decent affordable housing is a fundamental need. In addition, the city asserts that people should have the ability to live in the community in which they work and serve, and should have a range of housing options across income levels and neighborhoods.

The Climate Action Plan (2015)

When Denver released its original Climate Action Plan in 2007, the city became among the first large American cities to recognize the potential threats and broad-reaching impacts of climate change. The plan integrates the most recent climate science, an updated greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory, GHG reduction strategies to meet the goal to reach 1990 levels of GHG by 2020. It also sets a new long-term goal to reduce emissions 80 percent by 2050.

The Climate Action Plan identifies strategies in three sectors: (1) improving energy efficiency in buildings; (2) lowering the Electricity Emissions Factor; and (3) strategic land use and transportation development. Land use and transportation choices contribute 32 percent toward GHG in Denver. Plan recommendations for this sector include:

- Supporting multi-modal and transit options;
- Implementing the Strategic Transportation Plan, promoting complete streets program and TOD;
- Continue and expand partnerships with car sharing companies;
- Implementing and updating Blueprint Denver to continue developing neighborhoods with multi-modal streets and a mix of uses that make walking, biking, and taking public transit more accessible and attractive for riders, further reducing the need for a vehicle.

Small Area Plans Plans

Denver has completed over 20 small area plans that build from and reflect the concepts and strategies of the citywide plans summarized above since the adoption of Blueprint 2002. These plans include: transit oriented development station area plans, neighborhood and corridor plans, and general development plans. Areas for small area planning are prioritized base on a number of criteria, several of which address the goals of Blueprint:

- Creating opportunity for appropriate development in areas of change;
- Stabilizing conditions that threaten areas of stability; and
- Promoting public investment that increases transportation choice.

The Blueprint Denver integrates lessons learned from these small area planning efforts and anticipates how rethinking concepts like Areas of Change and Areas of Stability, enhanced transit corridors, and the land use building blocks will impact future small area plans.

Denver Community Health Improvement Plan (2013-2018)

Denver's Community Health Improvement Plan (2013-2018) identifies the top public health priorities for the City and County of Denver over the next five years in order to ensure a healthy future for all Denver residents, including healthy eating and active living in the built environment.

- Many differences in the health status of Denver residents are shaped by the built environment, including land use and transportation patterns that can differ dramatically by neighborhood. These patterns (factors) affect the ability to achieve health and wellbeing by enhancing or limiting residents' access to transportation, affordable housing, essential services including health care, healthy food, physical activity, and parks and recreation.
- Limited physical access in some neighborhoods is associated with health disparities including higher rates of childhood obesity, heart disease, diabetes, asthma-related incidents and lower overall life expectancy. Such differences lead to 'health inequity', or differences in health that are systemic, avoidable and unjust.
- Childhood obesity is a major cause for concern because of the strong linkage between childhood and adult obesity, and the correlations between obesity and heart disease, cancer and stroke. As many as 22% of children and youth in some Denver neighborhoods are obese, a condition related to diet and exercise. Physical activity is an essential component of a healthy lifestyle and a best practice to reduce or reverse certain chronic diseases.

The Community Health Improvement Plan includes strategies related to land use and transportation that can reduce health disparities and improve health equity in Denver neighborhoods, including:

- Increasing access to multimodal transportation options, particularly in neighborhoods with low incomes and limited access to personal vehicles
- Increasing access to safe and active environments that support physical activity, particularly for children and youth, such as Safe Routes to School and parks
- Increasing access to affordable, nutritious foods and beverages in ‘food deserts’
- Increasing availability of mixed-use areas to improve access to basic daily needs, goods and services.
- Such strategies can increase opportunities for health and wellbeing and ensure a healthy future for all Denver residents.

In the Press: Best and Worst Lists

Denver is a great place to live and work – boasting an active outdoor lifestyle, proximity to the mountains, phenomenal restaurants, is dog-friendly, and offers diverse neighborhoods and cultural experiences. Over the last few years Denver has been recognized on the following lists:

- America’s Smartest Cities (CNN Money, 2010, #8)
- 10 Best Cities for Public Transportation (Brookings Institute, #6)
- Top 10 Best Beer Cities in the World (USA Today, 2012, #2)
- Best Places for Business and Careers (Forbes, 2015, #1)
- Best Place to Work for a Small Business (WalletHub, 2015, #12)
- Most Active Cities in America (Men’s Health, 2011, #9)
- 10 Best Biking Cities in America (Bike Score, 2013, #3)
- Most Dog Friendly Cities (Men’s Health, 2012, #5)
- Best and Worst Places to Raise a Family (WalletHub, 2016, #15)

Denver has also ranked high on these lists:

- Worst US Cities for Air Quality (American Lung Association, 2015, #13)
- Top 10 Cities with Largest Rent Increases (SmartAsset, 2015, #8)
- Least Affordable Housing Market for Millennials (RealtyTrac, 2014, #12)
- Cities where Rent is Rising the Fastest (Forbes, 2015, #3)