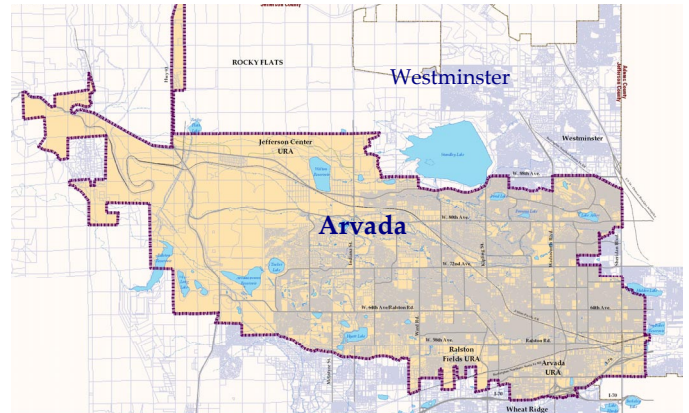


Chapter 1—Introduction

About Arvada's History

The City of Arvada is one of the larger suburban communities in the Denver metropolitan area. Located in the northwest quadrant of the metro area, the City extends from industrial areas just east of Sheridan Boulevard into the open space of the Rocky Mountain foothills. Neighboring communities include Boulder, Westminster, and Broomfield to the north, Denver to the southeast, and Wheat Ridge and Golden to the south and southwest. Incorporated Arvada covers over 30 square miles. The Planning Area covers 50 square miles; this area includes all the lands within the City's growth area but outside the incorporated area.



Arvada Planning Area.

In the 1860's Arvada began as a mining town and a small independent farming community. Until 1950 less than 3,000 people resided in Arvada. The City, with its rich agricultural history, has grown substantially in the past 50 years mainly as a suburban residential community. Arvada today is known for its high quality of life, residential neighborhoods with a family atmosphere, easy access to the metropolitan area, and its setting near the mountains. It is home to almost 104,000 people.

In recent years, Arvada has also been further developing its economic base by encouraging commercial and industrial development. The commercial development is mainly at the major intersections of Wadsworth Boulevard, Kipling Street, 64th Avenue, Ward Road, and in Olde Town Arvada. Industrial development is located in the southeast along the I-76 corridor and in the west at Indiana Street and West 64th Avenue. With new opportunities presented by the future Gold Line and access to the proposed Jefferson Parkway, Arvada seeks to further expand its economic base and become a more balanced community.



Historic Arvada: Flour Mill and Celery Fields, circa early 1900s.



Why Update the Plan?

What Is a Comprehensive Plan?

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to set forth the shared goals and policies of a community to help guide development and investment decisions. It sets the stage for development regulations and standards and guides the City in funding programs and capital investments. Such a plan generally creates and works toward a vision of what the community will look like in 20 to 30 years. As with this Plan, the vision and associated goals and policies are developed by asking residents and stakeholders what they think is important and what they cherish about the community or would like to change. The goals should accurately represent the community’s interests.

Why Update the Comprehensive Plan?

While Arvada’s 1995 Comprehensive Plan has been invaluable in helping shape the community, the City (as with all cities) changes and evolves over time. Since 1995, the City has grown by approximately 10,000 people, faced drought conditions, started to plan for the imminent Gold Line transit, succeeded in the redevelopment arena, recognized an increasingly diverse ethnic and growing senior population, realized that affordable housing has become more scarce, and faced a myriad of other issues. Because of changes such as these, it is important to update the City’s Comprehensive Plan periodically to reflect changes. In 2004, the City of Arvada started this update to address a host of new issues and to continue to shape and balance new growth in the northwest areas of the City and plan for redevelopment and neighborhood conservation needs in older areas.



Arvada Harvest Festival 2003.

With the assistance of a Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group, the City and project team carefully evaluated policy direction and land use choices—analyzing financial, design, and transportation impacts. This Plan reflects the planning team’s analysis, discussion about choices, and feedback received from the community at meetings and on the project website. It reaffirms the 1995 Plan’s vision and directions, but adds focus, reflecting on current day trends and future needs. This Plan is intended to guide the City for at least another five years.

History of Arvada's Comprehensive Plan

Arvada has a long tradition of planning for growth and citizen needs. The City first undertook a Comprehensive Plan beginning in the 1960s. The following timeline charts the course of history of planning in Arvada.

1964 Plan: The City adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1964. That very first plan began a process that has helped the City address growth in an orderly, efficient, and beneficial fashion for the past 40 years. In 1967, based on recommendations in the plan, the City established a separate Planning Department and hired a professional planner.

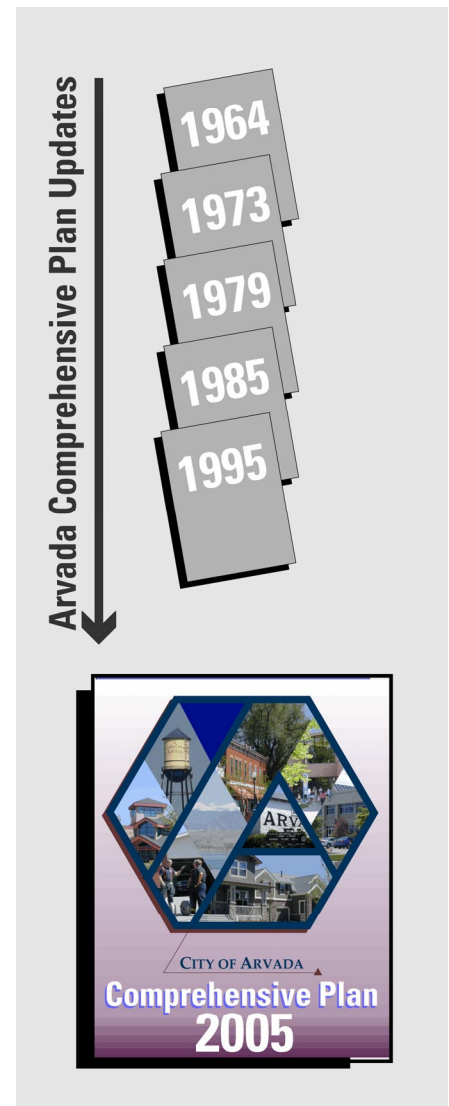
1973 Plan: In 1970, the City initiated a plan update that it adopted in 1973. The update involved an active citizen participation program.

1979 Plan: The City updated the Comprehensive Plan again in 1979.

1985 Plan: The City updated the Comprehensive Plan in 1985. The 1985 Plan served the City well for ten years but started to become outdated because of rapid growth in the 1990's. After 1985, the City made significant amendments to the plan to add large land areas, including the Jefferson Center Development Plan.

1995 Plan: In 1993, the City began another update process, and City Council directed that special emphasis be placed on the relationship between land use and transportation. A key element of the update in 1995 was the involvement of a citizen task force—the 140-member Arvada Futures Committee. The City charged this committee with reaching consensus on the City's long-range future. From 1993 to 1995, the City held extensive public meetings and events sponsored by the Arvada Futures Committee (over 40 with hundreds of participants). Ultimately, the 1995 Arvada Comprehensive Plan (adopted in early 1996) reflected the recommendations of the community.

2005 Plan: In 2004, the City began this plan update process. The City appointed a 16-member committee—the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group (CPAG), which served to advise staff and provide recommendations on plan content. Many others from the community were involved in this process, as described below.





Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAG) Meeting

Plan Public Involvement

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group

The City focused this 2005 Plan update on key issues much more than during the 1995 Plan. As mentioned above, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group (CPAG) represented a wide range of interests in the City and served to guide the plan direction. The City held seven CPAG meetings during the course of the plan to help identify, discuss, and refine key issues, goals, policies, and a land use plan.

Public Events

In addition to the advisory committee meetings, the City held three series of public events during the project to help facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between the planning staff and the community.

Website

The planning team also maintained and frequently updated a plan website (www.arvadaplan.com). This site housed minutes from past CPAG meetings, provided notices for scheduled meetings, and provided opportunities for the public to interact and provide comments on all major work products.

Hearings

The planning team also encouraged public attendance and involvement at the public presentations before the Planning Commission in May of 2005 and Arvada City Council in July of 2005.

Changes in this Plan

This Plan significantly changes the structure and content of the 1995 Plan to reorganize the goals by theme, provide straightforward policies and principles, provide clear, easy-to-read maps with text descriptions for land use categories, and add new policy direction, related to the following themes:

- Redevelopment and infill;
- Transit-oriented development;
- Mixed-use development;
- Areas with rural characteristics and clustered development;
- Locational and design standards for large format retail (“big box”); and
- Other themes

The next chapter (see Chapter 2, Issues) discusses the substantive current policy issues that this Plan addresses.

Plan Organization

The Comprehensive Plan contains the following chapters:

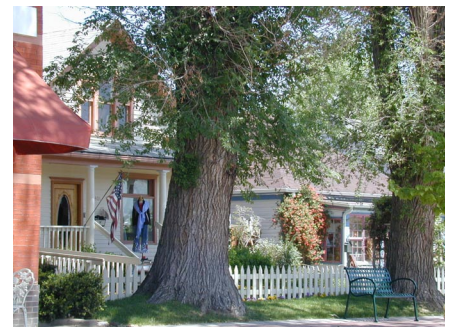
Chapter 2—Arvada Issues, describes the major issues addressed in this Plan.

Chapter 3—Vision, Goals, and Policies, describes the long-range vision and goals for the City, which are the foundation for this Plan. They are organized under broad themes, including:

- Land Use;
- Transportation;
- Neighborhoods and Housing;
- Commercial and Economic Development;
- Design and Character;
- Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space;
- Historic Resources and Districts Preservation;
- Education, Culture, and Human Resources;
- City Services and Facilities; and
- Resource Conservation and Environment.



This Plan includes new policy direction related to mixed-use and transit-oriented development, such as the Englewood Town Center.



Chapter 3 includes the Vision, Goals and Policies addressing themes such as historic preservation (Olde Town Arvada).

Chapter 4—Community Development Principles, contains the principles to guide the City in achieving the broader vision and goals.

Chapter 5—Land Use Plan, contains the physical plan to guide future development and physical changes in Arvada, and describes the land use categories.



McIlvoy Park. The Parks and Open Space Master Plan and other such functional and strategic plans are summarized in Chapter 7.

Chapter 6—Transportation Plan, contains the transportation plan and description of the various transportation systems.

Chapter 7—Related Plans, contains a summary of the functional plans and special area plans in Arvada.

Chapter 8—Plan Implementation and Amendments Procedure, describes how the City will amend and update this Plan.

This Plan also includes the following Appendices:

Appendix A—Planning Influences, describes conditions in the City in 2004 and presents the analysis prepared for this Plan. It also contains the background maps.

Appendix B—Plan Buildout, provides an analysis of the Land Use Plan and what it means for Arvada if built out.

Appendix C—Related Studies, summarizes studies that are current at the time of this Plan.

Appendix D—Transportation Existing Conditions, describes the City's existing transportation system, national and regional factors that affect its development, and other local transportation issues relevant in 2005.

Appendix E—Summary of Selected Financial Considerations, describes Arvada's current financial condition.