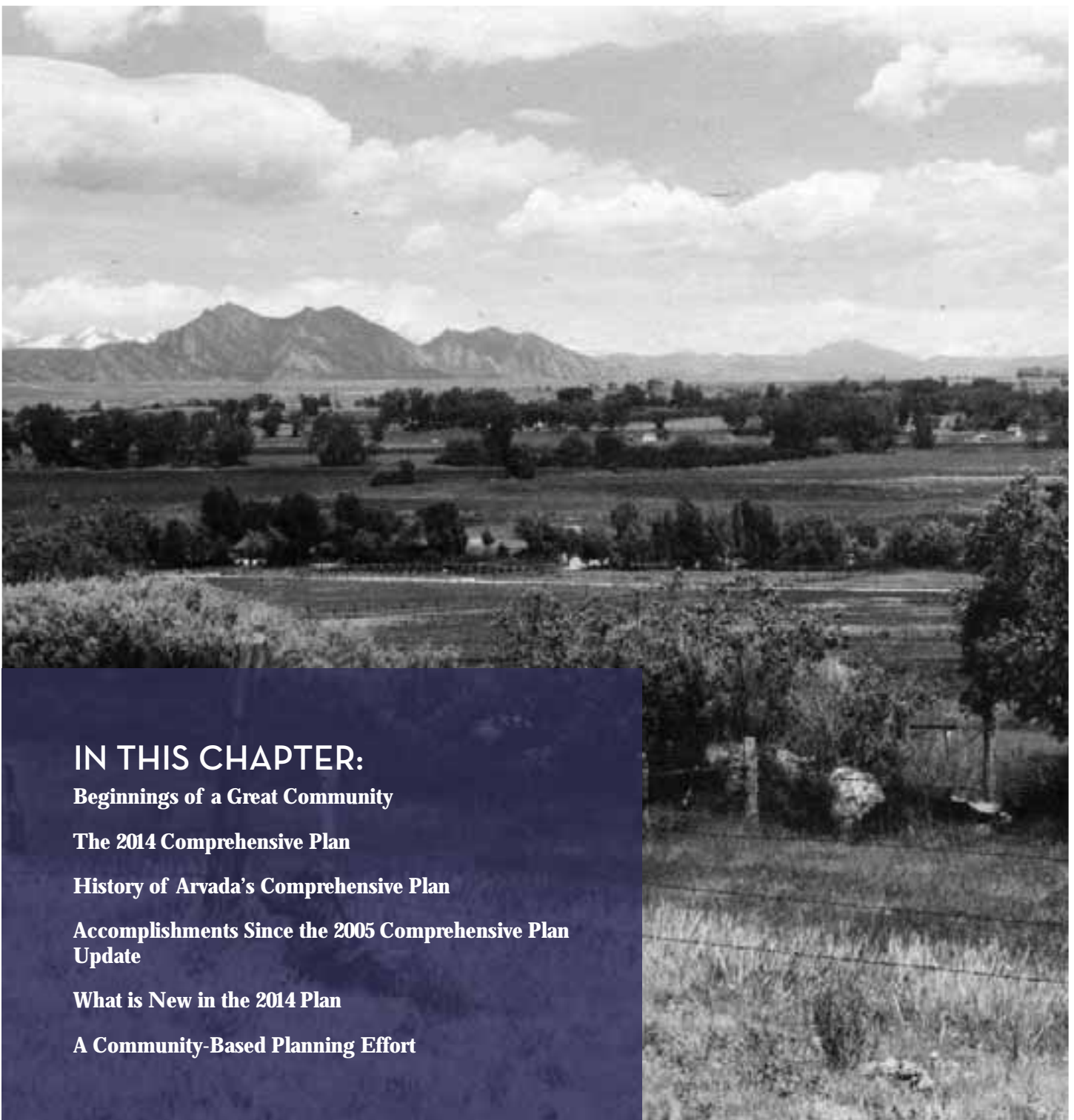


CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



IN THIS CHAPTER:

Beginnings of a Great Community

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan

History of Arvada's Comprehensive Plan

Accomplishments Since the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Update

What is New in the 2014 Plan

A Community-Based Planning Effort



CITY MOTTO

“Continuing to Build a Great Community”

BEGINNINGS OF A GREAT COMMUNITY

In the 1860s 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, Olde Town, Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities, historic residential neighborhoods, easy access to the Denver metropolitan area, and its setting near the mountains. As the eighth largest city in Colorado, it is home to nearly 110,000 people, yet it maintains a small-town feel¹.

In recent years, Arvada has also been further developing its economic base by encouraging commercial and industrial development, transit-oriented redevelopment along the Gold Line, and positioning itself for the Jefferson Parkway. Today, Arvada is maturing into a complete community by offering the full range of land uses, fully-connected transportation modes, and employment opportunities.

The City’s incorporated limits cover 40 square miles. The Planning Area covers over 50 square miles; this area includes all the lands within the City’s growth area but outside the incorporated area.

¹ Based on the Colorado State Demography Office’s 2012 estimates

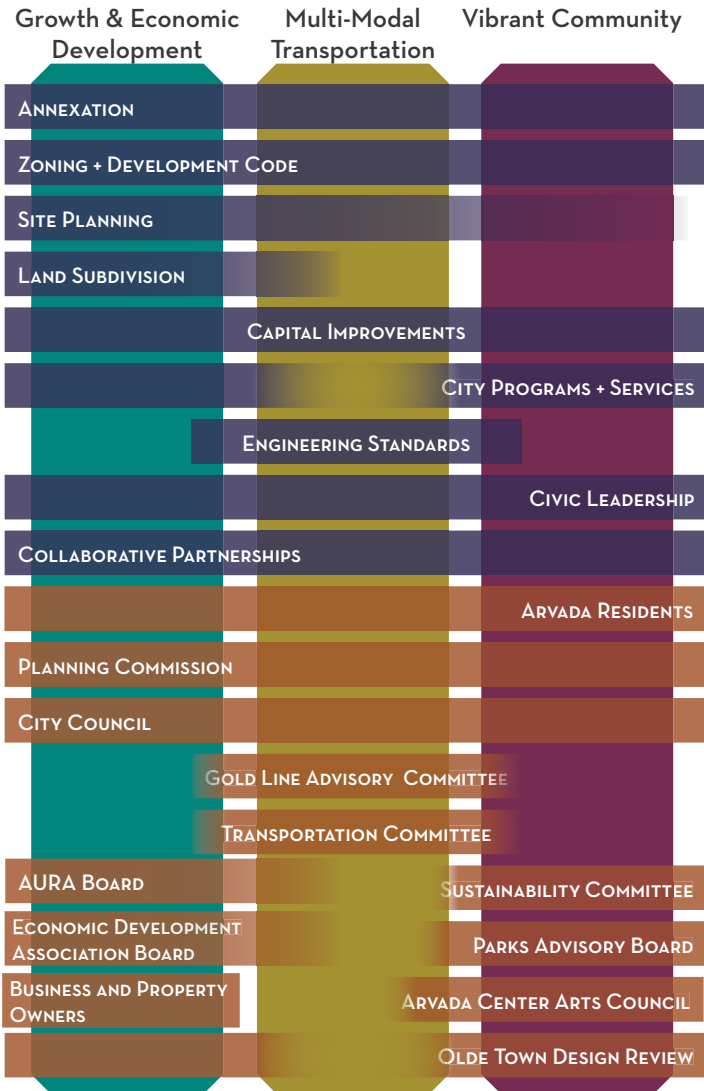
THE 2014 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan articulates the community's shared values and vision. Goals and policies help guide development and investment decisions that have a direct bearing on the quality of life in Arvada. The plan establishes the City's land use pattern, sets the stage for development regulations and standards, and guides the City in funding programs and capital investments by anticipating future tax revenue. The Plan was prepared to conform to the requirements in the Colorado Revised Statutes.

WHO USES THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

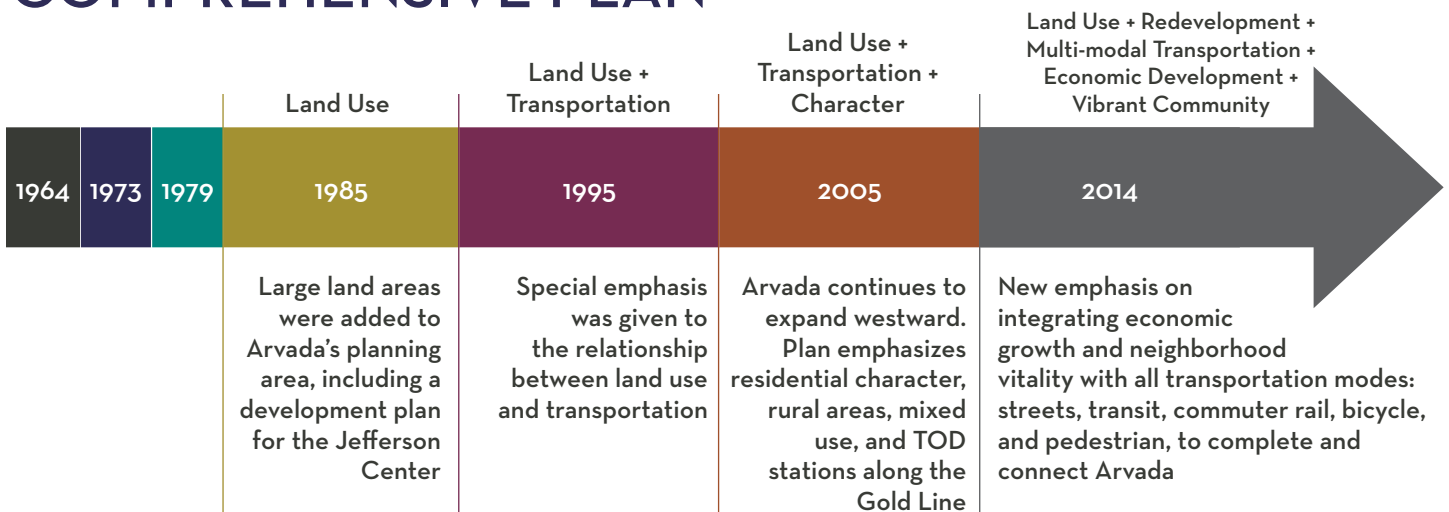
The Comprehensive Plan is designed to be used by anyone interested in the future of Arvada:

- Residents may be interested in the location of new neighborhoods, trails, employment, and shopping areas;
- Business and property owners may be interested in land use recommendations or development policies for their properties;
- As an adopted city document, all decision-makers, boards, commissions, and agencies look to the Comprehensive Plan to inform their strategic plans, budgets, timing for capital improvements, in evaluating development proposals, as well as in preparation of zoning and subdivision regulations. The graphic to the left illustrates which pieces of the plan are most pertinent to each group.



HISTORY OF ARVADA'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Arvada has a long tradition of planning for growth and citizen needs. The City's first Comprehensive Plan dates back to the 1960s, and on average has been updated every decade.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE ADOPTION OF 2005 PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is updated periodically to better leverage new opportunities and strengthen Arvada's economy, respond to shifting demographics and new citizen concerns, and manage growth to achieve the community's vision. Since 2005, Arvada's Comprehensive Plan has helped the City position for new opportunities and is largely still relevant to today's challenges. Accomplishments include:

Land Use

- Greater mix of housing
- Planning for TOD
- New urban renewal area in Olde Town
- Progress on other urban renewal areas
- Candelas area Urban Center designation by DRCOG

Commercial and Economic Development

- Revitalized shopping centers
- Reduction in commercial vacancy rates
- Expanded retail shopping opportunities
- A newly thriving Olde Town
- Expansion of primary job employment opportunities
- Significant investment in private sector capital
- Three Gold Line stations under construction

Historic Preservation

- New Olde Town zoning and design guidelines
- Educational workshops for historic neighborhoods

Community Design and Character

- Preserving low density character in western Arvada
- High quality street corridors on 72nd and 80th Avenue

Transportation

- Millions invested in new bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Ralston Road Corridor Plan
- Conceptual design and engineering of roadway connections/widening projects along Ward Road, W. 72nd Ave, W. 80th Ave, and Quaker Street
- Active parking management implemented
- High accident location improvements
- Pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit (multi-modal) planning
- Traffic signal coordination and upgrade plans
- Conduit and fiber interconnect plans developed
- Roadway bicycle-pedestrian retrofit projects
- Traffic calming program

Neighborhoods and Housing

- Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance adopted
- Preparation of the Consolidated Strategy and Plan Submission for Housing and Community Development Programs for 2010 – 2014
- Preparation of Findings and Recommendations for a Housing Investment Fund
- Pro-active code enforcement and sector policing
- Rehabilitation of homes
- Assistance with affordable housing projects
- Cooperated with partners to purchase and renovate foreclosed homes

Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space

- Many new parks
- Land acquired for eastern and south central parks

Education, Culture and Human Resources

- Work with R-1 School District to keep schools open
- Expansion of Arvada Center facilities
- Many new festivals held

City Services and Facilities

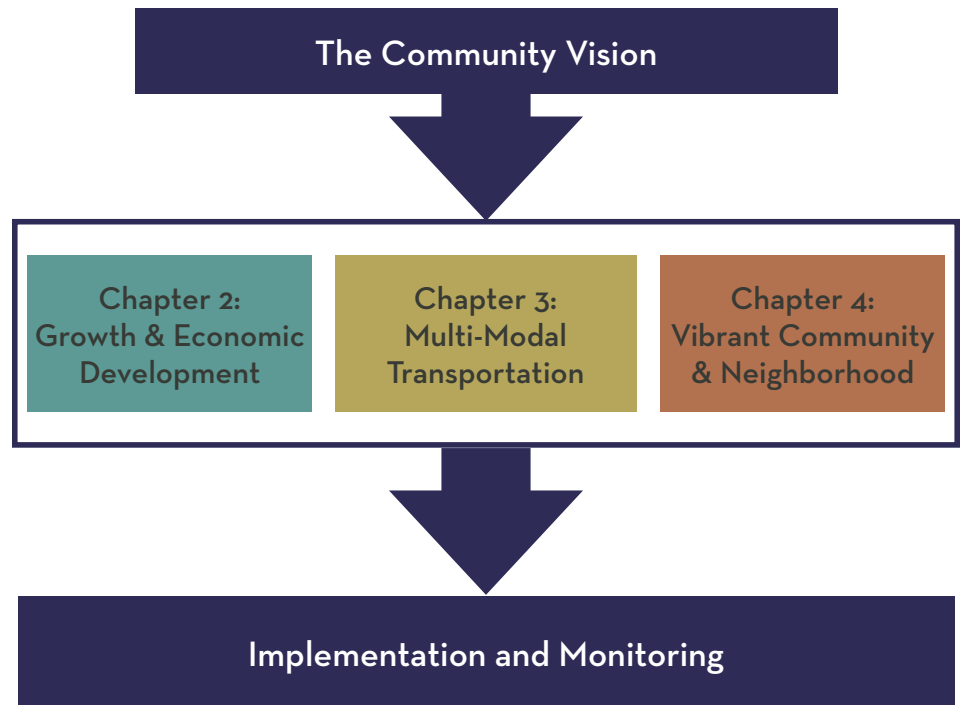
- More police officers and plan for branch facilities
- Collaboration with a variety of public and non-profit service providers to improve essential services to special needs families and persons in the community
- Investment in roads and utilities
- Digital services
- Investment in future water supply
- Long-term financial planning

Resource Conservation and Environment

- Water conservation efforts
- Sustainability Plan and implementation
- Energy conservation efforts
- Community supported agriculture

WHAT IS NEW IN THE 2014 PLAN?

Since 2005, the City has resiliently endured and recovered from the Great Recession which altered the trajectory of market trends and customer expectations. Demographic shifts – in age, income, ethnicity – have occurred over the past decade. And ambitious physical changes are on the horizon with the opening of three Gold Line stations and the Jefferson Parkway, an accelerating renaissance in Olde Town, the development of Candelas, and an exciting new direction for the Arvada Center and the Ralston Creek Urban Renewal Area (Triangle area). This Plan brings greater focus to reflect today’s trends and future needs to guide the City for the next 5 to 10 years, looking toward a vision of Arvada 20 to 30 years from now.



AN INTEGRATED LAND USE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This plan takes a holistic view on Arvada’s quality of life and sense of community. It reflects Arvada’s vision for and the cyclical nature of land use and infrastructure planning: land use generates travel demand and the need for improved public facilities and those public facilities help to shape development. Developed concurrently, the Land Use Plan (Chapter 2) and Transportation Plan (Chapter 3) propose a strategic framework for smart growth through 2035. Chapter 4 helps to represent Arvadans’ commitment to parks and recreation; education, arts, and culture; and engagement with the community to encourage community pride. The plan comes together in Chapter 5, by outlining the systems in place for implementation.

A COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING EFFORT

In initiating an update to the 2005 Plan, the planning team met early with the public, elected officials, advisory board members, and interested stakeholders to get all issues on the table. Multiple opportunities, from in-person to online methods were used to engage members of the public, stakeholders, and elected officials in the Comprehensive Plan process. A record of the meetings, surveys and public input can be found at www.ArvidaPlans.org.

Feedback received from the public, advisory boards and commissions, and Planning Commission and City Council helped define the community values, needs, and vision, and determine the key policy choices facing the community in the future. Interdepartmental coordination was also critical to the plan's development. Staff from City Manager's Office, Community Development; Economic Development, Public Works; Public Safety; Arvida Urban Renewal Authority; Arvida Center for the Arts and Humanities; Arvida Housing Authority; and Parks, Golf, and Hospitality worked together to align policies with programs for holistic community planning.

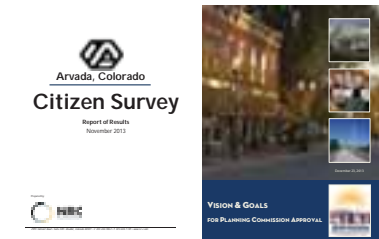
With feedback from Arvida residents and city advisory committees, the City carefully evaluated policy direction and community choices. A summary of the overarching themes, issues, and ideas from the listening process to date is found at the beginning of Chapters 2-4, followed by Goals, Policies, and Planning Principles in each chapter.



Summer 2013

Foundation

- Plan, Priorities, Online Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews



Fall 2013

Visioning

- Values, Vision & Goals, Online Survey
- 2013 Citizen Survey (Random Sample)
- Community Kick-Off Event
- Planning Commission Work Session



Fall 2013

Opportunities Analysis

- Advisory Committee Summit
- Festival of Scarecrows Outreach
- Joint City Council/ Planning Commission Work Session
- Opportunity Area Online Survey



Winter 2013-2014

Community Choices

- Advisory Committee Summit
- High School Community Choices Presentations
- Community Choices Workshops & Plan Van Tours
- Joint Planning Commission/ Transportation Committee Work Session on Preliminary Land Use and Transportation Plans



Winter 2014

Strategies & Plan Development

- City Council Work Session
- Planning Commission Worksession on Active Living



Spring 2014

Draft & Final Plan Preparation

- Draft Plan Published
- Sustain Arvida Festival Outreach
- Draft Plan Open Houses
- Joint Planning Commission/ Transportation Committee Work Session and City Council Work Session on Public Comment



Summer 2014

Plan Adoption

- Planning Commission Hearings
- City Council Hearings

A COMMUNITY-BASED VISION

Visioning was a critical step to ensure that the values and goals of Arvada residents were accurately reflected in the plan, and a variety of approaches were employed to collect ideas from as many diverse interests as possible. Beginning with the City's existing plans and policies, followed by personal interviews and focus groups, public events, online comments, and conversations with the City's eight advisory committees and commissions, the Community Vision was the result of an open, transparent, and ongoing community dialogue.

The Community Vision answers the question: "Where do we want to go?" which turned into "How do we get there?" during the Community Choices phase. This involved re-evaluating the 2005 Comprehensive Plan's direction with both technical data and public input to refine priorities and policies to better achieve the Vision.



Scarecrow Festival 2013

The City uses the vision, goals and policies to: (1) set priorities for capital improvements, (2) encourage desired development patterns, and (3) establish parameters for private development that will take place in the community. **Specific requirements for private development are implemented through the City's Land Development Code.**

The Vision is a general statement that describes the desired future for the community.

Goals provide general direction to help guide the community's decisions about public and private investment and development to achieve this vision. Goals are supported by more specific policy statements.

Policies are the course of action to achieve the goals. The policies provide guidance for daily decisions about capital investment and development. It is the decision-makers' responsibility to weigh and balance seemingly divergent policies (such as economic development and resource protection) to set an appropriate direction for the City.

THE COMMUNITY VISION

In 20 years, Arvada will be a great community, honoring its unique history and small town feeling **while directing appropriate changes to create a distinctive, forward-looking future. We will be a great community by:**

- **Being a community of strong and vibrant neighborhoods;**
- **Providing a range of distinctive living environments, from semi-rural to urban lifestyles;**
- **Conserving resources and acting as a wise steward of our environment to foster economic prosperity and community vitality;**
- **Completing a well-balanced and connected multi-modal transportation system;**
- **Retaining existing businesses, and expanding and diversifying our economic base.**
- **Making healthy living a way of life with well-distributed recreational facilities, open space, and trails, and community partnerships;**
- **Preserving our historical resources in Olde Town and other areas where feasible, and enhancing Arvada's small town feel and history;**
- **Being a leader in fostering the arts and culture, and valuing education for youth and adults alike;**
- **Embracing the diversity of income, racial, ethnic, and generational groups that make up our community;**
- **Promoting community pride, engagement, and volunteerism in all that we do.**