

The Economics of Land Use



Summary Report

Gold Line Corridor Market Readiness Study

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Gold Line Corridor Working Group and
Denver Regional Council of Governments

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Table of Contents

1.	INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
	Introduction	1
	Corridor Vision and Goals	1
	Scope of Work	2
2.	CORRIDOR-WIDE FINDINGS	3
	Complete Transit Corridor	3
	Gold Line Corridor Strengths and Weaknesses	7
	Corridor Market Potentials	8
	Corridor-wide Strategies	11
3.	STATION AREA FINDINGS	15
	41 st and Fox Station Area	16
	Pecos Junction	18
	Clear Creek/Federal.....	20
	Gold Strike.....	22
	Olde Town.....	24
	Arvada Ridge.....	26
	Ward Road	28

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

The purpose of the Gold Line Corridor Market Readiness Study is to develop an implementation plan to help Gold Line Corridor communities maximize the benefit of the transit investments by attracting new transit oriented development (TOD) and businesses to the Corridor and connecting through transit area residents to these jobs and community services. The Gold Line passes through five governmental jurisdictions: the City and County of Denver, Adams County, Jefferson County, the City of Arvada and the City of Wheat Ridge. The station areas along the Gold Line represent major, and in Arvada and Wheat Ridge the only, opportunities to leverage the FasTracks system investments to better their communities. The implementation plan generated by this effort needed to be informed by market and economic conditions in order to help prioritize actions and investments.

Corridor Vision and Goals

The Gold Line Corridor Working Group drafted a Corridor “Blueprint” that describes the vision and goals for the Corridor. This blueprint is provided below. The strategies considered for the Corridor were evaluated based on their ability to achieve the goals laid out by the group.

Vision

The Gold Rail Line Corridor connects unique and historic transit centered communities with a range of housing choices and easy access to job centers, recreation, educational, and development opportunities. Served by diverse transportation modes for a wide range of socio-economic populations, the Gold Line Corridor supports active, healthy and sustainable lifestyles.

Goals

- Improve connectivity to the stations and between transit service lines to provide safe, easy multi-modal access for people of all ages and abilities.
- Create and preserve a range of quality housing choices throughout the Corridor for new and existing neighborhoods and residents of all incomes, age groups and abilities.
- Identify, attract, sustain and expand a diverse and unique economic base of jobs along the Corridor.
- Leverage public investment to attract private development along the Corridor and create unique places.
- Attract and enhance access to amenities and services such as education, family and health services, and healthy food options.
- Provide and enhance access to parks, open space, recreation and community building opportunities along the Corridor.
- Promote denser development near the stations to conserve resources and reduce the combined costs of transportation and housing.

Scope of Work

The project was completed in four reports, as described below.

Corridor Case Studies – This report included the identification and analysis of commuter rail and light rail lines and the stations along them with similar conditions to the Gold Line. Specific station area types were identified to inform the implementation strategies for the stations along the Corridor. Topics considered included Industrial TOD, Corridor Collaborative Programs, Town Center Stations, Education and Transit, and Health Care and Transit.

Gold Line Outreach Summary – For the project, interviews with key real estate developers and brokers, property owners, employers, community service providers, and involved stakeholders along the Corridor were held to gauge development interest and the Corridor’s strengths and weaknesses. The findings from these interviews are summarized within this report but the knowledge and information gathered were also integral components of the *Corridor Market and Community Services Analysis* and the *Economic Development and Community Services Strategy*.

Market and Community Services Analysis – This report includes a comprehensive analysis of Corridor and station area market and development trends, current conditions, and forecasts of future potential for capturing activity leading up to and following the line being completed in 2016. It also includes a detailed analysis of the existing industrial base in the Corridor and targeted industries with future potential as well as an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps of community services. This report is the product for this analysis and identifies development potentials and business/industry prospect types for each station as well as community service assets, opportunities, and needs.

Economic Development and Community Services Strategy – The previous three reports provided the basis for the recommended *Economic Development and Community Services Strategy* including policies, actions, and investments needed to remove barriers to development and increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of station areas for employment development. It also includes the community services needs and opportunities along the Corridor and recommendations for how Corridor communities can work collectively to provide all needed services along a complete corridor. Finally, the report contains a reference Appendix that includes funding sources and national approaches related to the strategies provided.

2. CORRIDOR-WIDE FINDINGS

The analysis for the project was completed at two geographies: the Gold Line Corridor, which includes a half-mile area parallel to the rail line, and the half-mile station influence area. The Corridor was evaluated to identify assets that can be leveraged by all stations and communities, and by market and services gaps that can be addressed. The overall goal is to ensure that the Gold Line Corridor provides all the needed amenities to make it a “complete corridor.”

Complete Transit Corridor

The completeness of the Gold Line Corridor was evaluated based on a set of general TOD principles, the station areas’ typology, and a qualitative analysis of the presence of complete corridor attributes.

General TOD Principals

The major principals of TOD planning and implementation should continue to be applied to the Gold Line Corridor. *Transit Oriented Denver, 2014*, Denver’s strategic plan for TOD, provides a detailed definition of TOD and the implementation measures needed for success in creating economic opportunity and expanding housing choice. Key strategies are summarized below:

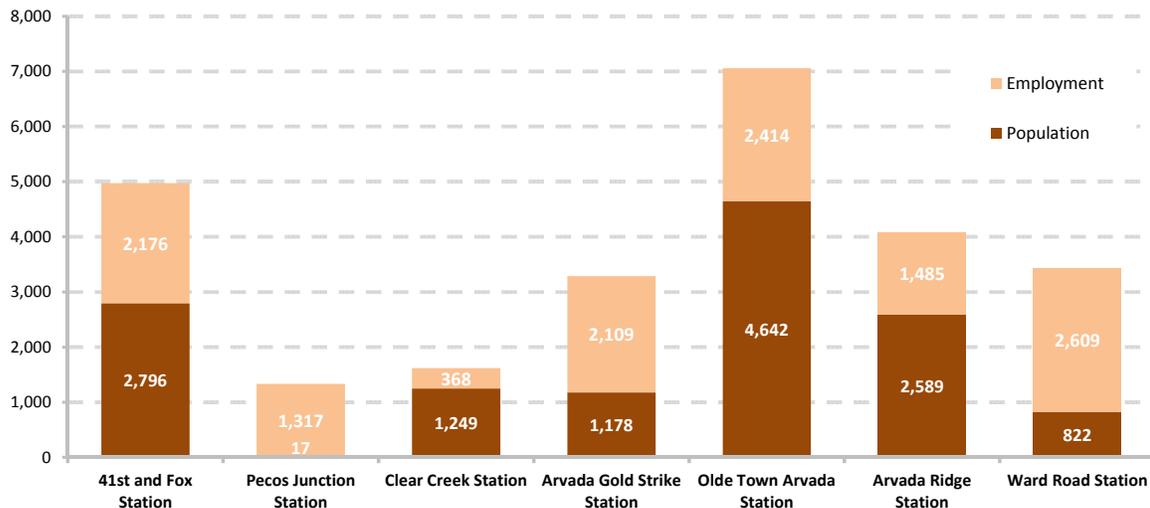
- **Employment density** – The overall jobs strategy for the Gold Line Corridor is to attract businesses that house more employees per unit of building or land area.
- **Connectivity and access** – The better the access and connectivity at a station, the larger its reach is to businesses and residents.
- **Highest densities at the stations** – The highest density buildings should be placed closest to the stations.
- **Mix of uses where appropriate** – Businesses and housing that have nearby services and amenities such as dining, shopping, childcare, and other daily services are increasingly appealing.
- **Land assemblage** – The public sector may need to be an active participant to facilitate land assemblage in order to facilitate TOD.
- **Public investment, partnerships, and incentives** – Partnerships and collaborations are needed in many cases to make some of the corridor opportunities a reality.

Station Area Typology

The greater the amount of activity occurring within a station area the more likely transit use and TOD can be supported. The station areas along the Corridor were analyzed to determine their mixture of existing land uses to identify future opportunities as well to gauge the current transit supportiveness of the station areas. Total population (resident population plus employment) was used to gauge how transit supportive station areas are and their predominate function (e.g., residential or employment).

The total populations within the half-mile station areas vary greatly along the Corridor. Olde Town Arvada has the highest population with a total of 7,056 residents and workers within the station area. The Wheat Ridge Ward Road Station has the highest employment population with 2,609 jobs. The 41st and Fox Station has the second highest total population and the most evenly mixed population, which is split with 44 percent employment and 56 percent residents.

Figure 1
Station Area Population and Employment



The mix of population and employment is largely indicative of the potential future station area typology for each station, as shown in **Figure 2**. The future development within these station areas will likely continue to reinforce the current land use mix at each station location. The only outlier is the Ward Road station area, as its land use plan identifies a mixture of housing (north of the railroad tracks) and employment (south of the railroad tracks). **Figure 2** illustrates that the Gold Line Corridor has a good mixture of residential and employment oriented stations. The strategies developed for the station areas are intended to reinforce their existing role but also to identify opportunities for expanding the mixture of uses.

Figure 2
Station Area Total Population Mix



Complete Corridor Attributes

To measure the “completeness” of the Corridor, it was evaluated based on the presence of 12 corridor attributes that are needed for a corridor to provide the needed attributes to support transit ridership and TOD. These attributes are shown in **Figure 3** along the left side of the matrix. The presence of each was ranked in the station areas with a score of 0 to 3. The goal is not necessarily to have each station area score a 3 for each attribute but to ensure that there is a good to superior presence of each attribute in a number of station areas that can adequately serve all Corridor residents. The scores are used to provide a relative ranking of the attributes in each station area and the overall presence of each attribute along the Corridor.

Figure 3
Gold Line Corridor Completeness Ranking

	41st and Fox	Pecos Junction	Clear Creek/Federal	Gold Strike	Olde Town	Arvada Ridge	Ward Rd	SERVICE SCORE	RANK
Child Care	1				2	1		4	#10
Senior Housing	1		1				1	3	#11
Senior Services	1		1		2	2	1	7	#3
Community Gathering	1				3	1	1	6	#6
Social Safety Net Services	1		1					2	#12
Higher Ed/Job Training	1		2			2		5	#9
Traditional Food Access	1			2	1	2	1	7	#3
Community-Based Food Access	1		2	1	2			6	#6
Health Care	1		1		1	1	2	6	#6
TOD Employment	2	1		2	2	1	2	10	#1
Retail	1				3	2	1	7	#3
TOD Housing	2		1	1	3	2	1	10	#1
STATION SCORE	14	1	9	6	19	14	10		
RANK	#2	#7	#5	#6	#1	#2	#4		

LEGEND

Available services:	None	Limited	Adequate/Good	Superior
Score:		1	2	3

Gold Line Corridor Strengths and Weaknesses

The major strengths and weaknesses from a transit-oriented development perspective were identified in the *Market and Community Services Analysis* and are summarized below.

Corridor Strengths

Existing Demand for Transit-Oriented Housing – Multifamily housing projects have already been developed along the Corridor in some stations areas including projects in the 41st and Fox and Arvada Ridge Station Area. The Olde Town station area already has existing for-sale and for-rent multifamily housing development projects that greatly enhance the transit orientation of this area, and there are at least three additional multifamily projects under construction or planned within it. The success of these projects will help substantiate the market for additional housing development at all station areas along the Gold Line Corridor.

Land Availability and Development Opportunities – The majority of the stations along the Gold Line Corridor have vacant or redevelopment opportunities sites at or near the Gold Line stations. The availability of TOD sites within the station area is a constraint at only the Gold Strike and Pecos Junction stations.

Access to Major Transportation Routes – The I-70 corridor is attractive to construction, trades, professional/technical services, building services, distribution, and manufacturing businesses. I-70, I-76, and I-25 provide directional automobile and trucking access enabling businesses to easily access customers and suppliers anywhere in Metro Denver. In addition, there are some business parks with freight rail service for moving large goods long distances.

Corridor Weaknesses

Connectivity – There are multi-modal connectivity constraints at the Corridor level and at each station. The rail alignment cuts off bike and pedestrian access to stations for large portions of the half-mile station areas. In addition, major arterial roads (Pecos, Federal, Sheridan, Wadsworth, Kipling, Ward) are located near most stations and are largely not pedestrian or bike friendly, and in some cases stations have poor vehicular access to the arterials. Another connectivity issue is the isolation of station areas. The Pecos Junction and Clear Creek/Federal stations are located in areas with minimal surrounding development with a significant distance from the station to established neighborhoods or commercial areas. The eastern half of the 41st and Fox station area can only be accessed from two points and is largely cut off from the surrounding neighborhoods by rail and interstate highways.

Industrial Development Pattern – The existing land use pattern for much of the Corridor is predominately industrial with larger building footprints and sites, uses that are not compatible with TOD due to inadequate street and sidewalk connections. This development pattern does not currently support TOD or safe and convenient connections between the stations' nearby jobs and housing. In some station areas this development pattern may be adapted to become more transit friendly and supportive of a mixture of uses, but in some areas the industrial pattern will remain for the foreseeable future.

Corridor Market Potentials

This section provides a summary of the findings from the *Market and Community Services Analysis* for five main categories: jobs, housing, retail, community services, and food access. Please refer to the *Market and Community Services Analysis* report for a detailed exploration of market potentials and opportunities at each station area.

Jobs

The employment concentrations along the Gold Line Corridor are changing, which may present the opportunity for future transit-oriented employment uses. The three largest industries (Manufacturing, Construction, and Wholesale Trade) along the Gold Line Corridor decreased in employment significantly by 1,178 jobs between 2005 and 2013. The industries with the largest increases in employment (including Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, and Health Care) represent the best opportunities to target for future employment. The Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry increased in employment by 401 jobs since 2005 and contains the most transit friendly businesses with a significant presence along the Corridor.

Industrial and flex development is the most prevalent employment oriented land use along the Corridor and the types of jobs that are in demand along the Corridor prefer this building type, which may be a barrier to creating employment oriented TOD and station areas. Approximately 55 percent of the jobs along the Corridor are located within industrial and flex-industrial space. Industrial space was also the fastest growing non-residential building type over the past 14 years. Gold Line Corridor businesses, even in industries that are transit friendly, prefer this type of development due to the low cost of rent/ownership, the flexibility provided within these spaces for both total size and uses, and the more industrial nature of most of the employment in the Corridor. The demand for traditional office space, especially mid to high rise office buildings, is limited and largely non-existent. To create employment oriented TOD in the Corridor will require creative approaches to land use controls and building forms to create a transit friendly environment.

Housing

Demand for residential TOD within the Corridor is forecast to be substantial. Multifamily apartments are the most marketable housing type. The Gold Line Corridor is forecast to increase in households by over 7,000 units by 2030. Of these 7,000 units more than 5,000 are estimated to be apartment units. The current demand for apartments in the Denver metro area has generated a large pipeline for new projects. Nearly 2,500 apartment units are currently proposed or under construction in the Gold Line Corridor. There is also demand for for-sale condo and townhome development that is transit oriented, but the demand is substantially less than the apartment demand, with 550 units forecast to be within these housing types. Demand for market rate transit oriented housing was identified at all the stations with the exception of Pecos Junction, which is due to the industrial nature of station area and environmental constraints, and Gold Strike, which is largely due to the lack of development sites near the station.

Retail

Retail trade, accommodations, and restaurants are primarily found at Olde Town Arvada and Arvada Ridge Station. The 41st and Fox station has seen relatively recent retail development, while Olde Town Arvada near the station has seen ongoing changes in its retail mix. The market analysis estimates 300,000 square feet of future retail Corridor demand by 2030, with the potential for a portion of this demand to be captured in station areas. Station areas with potential for convenience retail, food services, as well as personal services include Clear Creek/Federal, Arvada Ridge, and Ward Road. At 41st and Fox there is also a desire for a small grocery store, although the market is currently challenging. There is a Super Target at the Arvada Ridge station; it provides groceries within walking distance to station area residents. There are also a few vacant pad sites appropriate for retail at the Arvada Ridge Market Place. At Olde Town, there is demand for a grocery store and preliminary interest from two potential tenants.

Community Services

Child Care

The stations at Arvada Ridge, Olde Town Arvada, Gold Strike, and 41st and Fox have licensed child care centers and preschool programs within one mile, while Ward Road is lacking facilities despite a large jobs presence. Pecos Junction has a large jobs presence, but a child care center in the station area may not be suitable given the environmental constraints. While there may be opportunities to offer market-rate child care services, particularly at stations such as Olde Town, the biggest demand and challenge is providing affordable child care services, which is also a wider metro-wide challenge. Potential tools to support the establishment of affordable child care facilities would include: leverage the Denver TOD fund for child care development, co-locate child care services at new development along the Corridor, and explore the use of a financing intermediary to bridge the developer/operator gap.

Senior Services

The Olde Town, Arvada Ridge, and Ward Road stations are near residential areas where a significant percentage (at least 20 percent) of the population is over the age of 65. As this population is growing, there are gaps and potential opportunities to better serve the senior population including better coordination among senior-serving organizations, identifying senior living opportunities close to stations, expanding food bank services, incorporating community gardens and farmers' markets into senior housing sites, and working with RTD on making services more senior friendly.

Community Gathering Places

Community gathering places include community centers, schools, and park and recreation facilities. Currently there is a wide range of community activity centers along the Corridor, although there are gaps and very few such centers in the immediate station areas. Residents in South Arvada (including the Olde Town area) remain potentially underserved from a parks and recreation perspective. While a future East Arvada facility may help serve the area, a public-private partnership to provide these services to the neighborhood could be examined. The area near the 41st and Fox station area could incorporate additional community gathering space. The Hyland Hills Park and Recreation District is developing a regional destination park near the Gold Strike and Clear Creek/Federal stations although unforeseen drainage issues has delayed the timing of its development.

Health Care Services

The corridor has a variety of health care service providers including Kaiser Permanente, Lutheran Medical Center, Centura Health Care, and Federally Qualified Health Centers. Additionally, Regis University and Red Rocks Community College have strong health care professional programs. Different station areas have different degrees of service accessibility; however, Corridor-wide there is additional education and outreach needed (potentially at stations), and a need for greater coordination and alignment of resources.

Higher Education and Job Training

There are two institutions of higher learning along the Gold Line Corridor, as well as job training services at the Adams County Center for Career and Community Enrichment, youth employment, and a variety of miscellaneous job training and assistance programs. There is a need to better connect students at the two institutions with job training opportunities and to better market the existing Adams County Center.

Social Safety Net Services

There is a variety of service providers for supportive services such as emergency housing and utility assistance, mental health services, food and clothing banks, and domestic violence assistance. On the other hand, there is a lack of resources as well as a significant gap in services, particularly around the Olde Town, Arvada Ridge, and the Ward Road stations. A primary identified need is an emergency shelter in Jefferson County.

Food Access

Grocery Stores

Station areas analyzed for potential grocery store demand included 41st and Fox, Clear Creek/Federal, and Olde Town Arvada. Because of the transportation infrastructure and limited accessibility at 41st and Fox, there are insufficient households to support a small grocery store and no sites with the accessibility and visibility typically desired by a grocer. Therefore additional residential development in this station area would help bolster the demand. There is a market gap near the Clear Creek/Federal station, but as a result of this project, a Hispanic grocery store has begun conversations with the Aria developer for a location about a mile south of the station. At Olde Town, Trammell Crow is investigating the possibility of including a grocery store in its 9.0-acre site P-3 (public-private partnership) development. The challenge will be to make a new store a reality, ensure that it is accessible from the transit station, and provide the needed food services for residents and surrounding neighborhoods.

Community-Based Food Access

With the exception of the neighborhoods adjacent to the Arvada Ridge station, all residential neighborhoods within the half-mile radius of the station areas are considered food deserts. There are numerous community-based food projects along the Corridor, as well as several producers in the outlying areas of Jefferson County and three additional urban food production projects planned for development. Although few are located within the immediate station areas, there is a desire among many of these partners to collaborate across the Corridor to improve access to healthy food for all residents. There is a need to expand the reach of these projects and support additional community-based food access strategies, particularly near the 41st and Fox, Pecos Junction, Clear Creek/Federal, and Olde Town station areas.

Corridor-wide Strategies

The comparable corridors analysis summarized in the Gold Line *Corridor Case Studies* report identified two overriding findings with respect to Corridor-wide collaboration. These findings, as shown below, helped shape the recommended approach to ongoing Corridor-wide collaboration.

1. *Where corridor coordination has been successful, a specific group was established with responsibility of monitoring ongoing progress towards implementation of the identified goals and objectives.*

The continual interaction of the Gold Line Corridor Working Group (GLCWG) will ensure the collaboration continues. Success in the collaborative efforts was more easily found in the initial stages of the process and with initial projects. Once the initial focus or objectives were achieved, the collaboration efforts sometimes struggled due to lack of next steps or resources, political issues, and other reasons. The inclusion of decision-makers, whether elected officials or city/county department heads, was needed; they should be part of the group that is created.

2. *In many instances, the concept of promoting TOD has proved to be less effective as a "rallying cry" among interested stakeholders than focusing on the creation of better transit-oriented places or communities, which can allow for greater contribution by a broader group of stakeholders.*

Competition for development and jobs between stations often make collaboration around TOD difficult, especially since each jurisdiction typically has varying development goals and objectives. Collaboration for creating transit-oriented places shifts the focus towards improvements (roads, paths) and services (recreation, community, health) that are typically provided by municipalities and/or non-profit entities. The case studies also demonstrate that limited time and resources often drive policy prioritization, which means that focusing on issues not already prioritized by the individual cities is an effective way to aid the Corridor. Lastly, identifying a collective pot of resources or an approach to funding early in the process will result in more effective policy decisions.

Corridor-wide Collaboration Opportunities

The consultant team has engaged a variety of other stakeholders in the process, primarily through interviews, including those in the private and non-profit sectors. Many of the interviewees expressed interest in further discussions and collaboration/coordination across agency and jurisdictional boundaries. The following discussion provides the GLCWG with guidance on Corridor-wide priorities where it could potentially lead to future collaborative activities, as well as partner with other organizations.

Address Last Mile Connections

Nearly all of those interviewed during the public outreach process voiced concerns regarding safe and adequate access to the station areas. Addressing last mile connections is central in determining whether or not residents will utilize commuter rail in order to access other resources and services along the Corridor. Senior organizations in particular mentioned barriers to future transit usage at stations, such as a lack of adequate sidewalk connectivity from the surrounding neighborhoods to the stations, a lack of sheltered seating, and the lack of adequate lighting. Also, while stations are currently ADA-compliant, additional measures could be taken to ensure that stations are easy to use by residents with mobility and other physical challenges. Multiple stakeholders expressed the desire to connect the regional trail system, such as the Van Bibber, Clear Creek, and Ralston Creek trails to the stations to both increase bicycle and pedestrian access, as well as create awareness and utilization of trail amenities. Strategies to address last mile connections that could be worked on collaboratively include:

- Conduct a Corridor-wide trail assessment in order to identify barriers to creating complete connections between the regional trail systems, routes, and infrastructure improvements that would be necessary to connect trail systems to station areas, and wayfinding to create greater awareness of regional trails.
- Identify station areas most suitable for a bike-sharing program and explore feasibility of implementing one.
- Identify funding sources and grants to help provide bike amenities such as bike racks and bike lockers at all station areas. Align efforts to create a unified and branded design approach to amenities.
- Explore the expansion of car-sharing programs such as Car-2-Go into Gold Line station areas.
- Create safe and adequate access to all station areas for all residents, including improved sidewalk connections that accommodate wheel chairs, walkers, canes and strollers; adequate shelters and seating for seniors and others with mobility needs; and adequate lighting for safety and visibility.

Identify Opportunities to Co-locate Services

Co-locating services such as childcare, health care services, Federal assistance application support, job training, etc., at transit station areas through private development and program-enriched housing provides an opportunity to address needs of specific populations along the Gold Line Corridor. One of the challenges to inclusion of these services at station area developments is financial. While the Denver Housing Authority often includes daycare, health clinics, economic self-sufficiency and homeownership opportunities on-site for its residents, providing support services more broadly should also be explored. For example, the provision of affordable child care has been a metro-wide challenge and is directly relevant to station area development. While a range of services should be incorporated into new affordable or mixed income housing development sites identified through the *Gold Line Corridor Affordable Housing Creation and Preservation Strategy*, further study of potential financial tools to overcome barriers to the provision of services should be explored. In order to further the effort on providing affordable housing and community services at the stations, the housing authorities along the Corridor should be incorporated into the GLCWG.

Convene Gold Line Corridor Healthy Living Coalition

Through the public outreach process, stakeholders repeatedly voiced the need for creating a coalition or network that could reduce barriers to healthy living by addressing healthy eating strategies, increasing access to healthy and affordable food, increasing opportunities for physical activity, increasing access to community health and health care services, and addressing last mile connections through a coordinated, cohesive and comprehensive approach. A backbone or facilitating agency can thus support partners in collecting data, identifying priorities, and working toward comprehensive policy and programmatic solutions for measurable change. Priority coalition actions identified in this study include:

- **Community health and health care needs assessment:** Convene health care providers and public health and community health advocates to conduct a health care and community health needs assessment; this assessment can then be used to ascertain barriers to accessing medical services, identify additional services needed, and determine appropriate locations for those services. This assessment should pay particular attention to access to Federally Qualified Health Centers, senior services, specialized health care, and mental health services. Explore a variety of financing options to support the location of community health and health care services on or near transit.
- **Grocery store access:** Promote the use of financing tools such as the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F) to ensure that grocery stores built within station areas not only fill a market gap, but also provide affordably priced food options to surrounding neighborhoods as well as residents in the broader Gold Line Corridor. See Appendix for further details on funding sources such as the CO4F.
- **Coordinated education and outreach around healthy eating and active living:**
 - Work with RTD to install multilingual information kiosks that direct residents to nearby resources such as community gardens, food banks, farmers’ markets, parks and trails, recreation centers, health clinics, and other medical services.
 - Work with a variety of partners such as Urbiculture, Regis, Hyland Hills Parks and Recreation District, CSU Extension, Denver Botanic Gardens, neighborhood recreation centers, and others on programmatic opportunities such as nutrition education, cooking classes, gardening workshops, bike safety, etc.
- **Healthy food access:** Convene healthy food access partners along the Corridor in order to leverage resources, collaborate on produce distribution, expand impact of existing programs, identify barriers, and determine additional strategies to increase access to healthy foods for all Gold Line Corridor residents.
 - Convene a variety of sectors that include food producers, grocery store and convenience store owners, local food systems advocates, public health, etc. to conduct an in-depth healthy food access assessment.
 - Explore utilizing innovative distribution pathways, such as the commuter rail infrastructure, for distributing produce from urban farms and exurban areas of Jefferson County, outside the Gold Line Corridor, to food hubs, farm stands, food banks, and other healthy food access points along the Corridor.

- Promote consistent land use policies across jurisdictions to support protections of community agriculture, farmers' markets and farm stands, and a mix of retail to support access to healthy and affordable food.
- Affordable Child Care access:
 - Partner with organizations like Head Start to address barriers to affordable child care. The financial barrier to providing affordable child care is particularly high. Organizations like Head Start, for example, have no money for capital investment or rent, making it wholly dependent on funding sources such as Community Development Block Grants. However, lower income families with children who are dependent on transit have a particularly pressing need for affordable child care. Child care is also tied to food access as it provides some children with their only meal of the day.

3. STATION AREA FINDINGS

This section provides a summary of the opportunities present at each station area and focuses on four main topics: market opportunities, constraints to TOD, development opportunity sites, and recommended implementation actions. The findings for these topics were developed within the *Market and Community Services Analysis* and the *Economic Development and Community Services Strategies* reports; please refer to these for additional detail and background.

The comparable corridors report identified findings that helped to shape the recommendations for each station area. The findings identified within that analysis are summarized below.

- In some station areas it is appropriate to limit the types of industrial uses allowed. More flexibility can be allowed between stations or outside the half mile station area walking distance.
- Connectivity is a critical factor in establishing innovation districts and more broadly for improving access to industrial jobs.
- Successful projects have occurred most often due to a proactive planning and investment approach made by the city.
- Multiple funding sources and partners are often necessary to make projects feasible and provide necessary amenities.
- The use of alternative funding sources aimed at community services, and not specifically development or TOD, are often needed to make health care projects feasible.
- Students are typically one of the most transit supportive and also transit dependent rider groups.
- Clustering a variety of education and health and community services at one station area can lead to efficiencies in development and make the access to these services more convenient and effective.

41st and Fox Station Area

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
Market rate apartments	Eating and drinking establishments	Entrepreneurial ventures and start-up companies
Rehabilitation of existing buildings for residential uses	Personal services	Small business and professional services firms
Student Housing	Small market and/or convenience retail	Small, value added manufacturing and wholesale trade firms

Constraints

The station area's greatest TOD constraint is access. From the west, the only access is off West 38th Avenue. There are no through streets across the rail ROW to the north until I-70. From the east and north the only access is via West 44th Avenue, which connects to West 46th along the I-70 frontage. The quality and condition of the local street and sidewalk grid is also poor. Fox Street and Inca Street are in poor condition and both lack sidewalks.

Opportunity Sites



1. The former Denver Post Printing site – The current owner of the site has split the property into three separate development sites.
2. Redevelopment Site – Two parcels totaling 4.6 acres have been planned for redevelopment into mixed use residential buildings with ground floor retail. There is currently a small medical office building on Site A and outdoor storage on Site B.
3. Vacant Parcel – This 1-acre site is owned by the Hainey Family Limited Partnership and has the potential for infill attached housing.

Recommended Actions

1. Encourage multigenerational residential development within half-mile station influence area to create the critical mass of households necessary to support community services and retail.
2. Identify strategies to land bank properties for future affordable housing in critical locations and attract low income housing developers.
3. Explore potential ways to work with the owners of the former Denver Post Printing Site to facilitate redevelopment.
4. Improve Fox Street and Inca Street and upgrade the larger station area street network in order to serve existing residential and to encourage additional TOD.
5. Market existing industrial and flex buildings in the station area for adaptive reuse for more employment intensive uses.
6. Work with Denver Department of Environmental Health Food Access Program to identify a viable site for a Healthy Corner Store in the Sunnyside neighborhood.
7. Encourage the existing Highlands Farmers' Market to accept food stamp transactions.
8. Collaborate with existing community gardens to create a collective farm stand at or near the station area.
9. Continue to pursue additional grocery services and explore the potential of locating a Walgreens "food oasis" or similar store in conjunction with new commercial development at or near the station.
10. Convene medical services and partners across the corridor to conduct an assessment of community health care needs; this will help to ascertain barriers to health care services and identify which additional ones are needed and where they should be located.

Pecos Junction

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
None	None	Heavy industrial users
		Distribution and wholesale trade

Constraints

The existing heaving industrial and distribution development pattern is incompatible with TOD residential and employment uses. The station site's isolation from a neighborhood context also makes it difficult to anticipate a transition of land uses without a wholesale urban renewal effort. However, Adams County's lack of urban renewal power to do so within an unincorporated area is also a constraint.

Opportunity Sites



1. Vacant Site – This 6.3-acre site consists of two parcels (4.2 acres and 2.1 acres) with a former nightclub that has been demolished. The site is well suited for industrial needing highway access or visibility.

Recommended Actions

1. Increase the ease of access to the station for automobiles through wayfinding signs and enhanced station parking lot access points.
2. Invest in Park-n-Ride amenities at the station to increase the desirability of the station to potential users.
3. Improve sidewalk and bus stop connections to nearby residential neighborhoods.
4. Attract additional industrial uses to the station area on parcels that are currently underutilized or vacant.
5. Encourage RTD to allow the Northwest Rail to make a stop at Pecos Junction to allow for transfers to the Gold Line.

Clear Creek/Federal

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
Market rate apartments	Convenience retail	Limited to no demand for non-retail related employment
Affordable Apartments	Eating and drinking establishments	

Constraints

The larger area lacks adequate trunk infrastructure to support large development projects at the station, which is the main barrier to development. Specifically, adequate water service infrastructure needs to be built and extended to development sites. The roadway network and access points to Federal are also needed. Individual development projects will likely struggle to provide needed infrastructure.

Opportunity Sites



1. Clear Creek Transit Village – This 21-acre proposed TOD has zoning approvals for 770 housing units, 42,000 square feet of retail, and 203,000 square feet of office development. The developer has formed a metro district but is still addressing infrastructure needs and costs including water through the Clear Creek Water District.
2. Vacant site – These three parcels total 17.8 acres and have the potential to be multifamily apartment sites.
3. Redevelopment site – 12.4-acre site near the station.
4. Redevelopment site – Two potential development sites needing property assemblage.

Recommended Actions

1. Focus on creating a transit oriented residential neighborhood at the station and create a station area public improvement district to provide a funding source for station area wide infrastructure needs.
2. Prioritize improvements to Federal Boulevard such as complete sidewalks, increased lighting, enhanced medians, and bike and pedestrian safety measures beginning with the 1-mile segment between the station and Regis University.
3. Improve the attractiveness and ease of transit connections between the station and Regis University by building enhanced bus stops on Federal Boulevard.
4. Improve access from the station to the Hyland Hills Regional Park.
5. Explore creating a bike sharing program.
6. Encourage additional student housing on Federal Boulevard at either Aria or on Regis-owned land to catalyze redevelopment along Federal.
7. Support a community service hub at Regis/Aria.
8. Support Health Education Programming in partnership with Hyland Hills Baker and Perl Mack Community Centers, Regis University, and Aria.
9. Encourage greater visibility of the Adams County Center for Community Enrichment on Federal Boulevard and targeted outreach to mobile home communities near the station area.
10. Work with RTD to install information kiosks at the station area to promote nearby services and resources such as the farm stand, Hyland Hills Regional Park, the Adams County Center for Community Enrichment, trails, and health services.
11. Attract a grocery store to the Federal Boulevard corridor.
12. Support the development of a food hub educational and market site in partnership with Regis, Aria, and Urbiculture.
13. Support a farm stand at or near the station area run by Urbiculture.

Gold Strike

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
Affordable Apartments	Convenience retail	Employment intensive manufacturing
	Eating and drinking establishments	Professional, scientific and technical services firms
		Transportation, warehousing and wholesale trade (south of rail tracks)

Constraints

Access to the station area is a major constraint to this station area. Existing access is primarily from 60th Avenue with the station tucked behind (south) of the commercial frontage. The rail tracks are a major barrier to access from the south side of tracks, which essentially cuts the walkable station area in half. There is a lack of development sites in the area which limits the TOD potential. Sheridan Boulevard is also a substantial barrier with a major bridge and grade change south of 60th Avenue and the lack of pedestrian amenities along and crossings of Sheridan.

Opportunity Sites



1. Simpson United Methodist Church (SUMC) – Any future development on this 3.2-acre site would likely need to include a rebuilt church, which limits its development potential. There would also be the need to vet any redevelopment ideas by the congregation before moving forward. However, the City has begun preliminary conversations with the church. Potentials could include affordable housing or a community facility.
2. Partially vacant parcel – This parcel is located adjacent to the future station area parking. The western portion is vacant and totals 5.2 acres. The eastern portion has a one-story office building. The site has poor access and visibility but is suitable for low density office or industrial flex development.
3. Vacant Site – This 10.3-acre site is within the floodplain and cannot be developed unless major mitigation efforts are made. It is used occasionally for temporary outdoor sales including food and firework stands. The Army Corps of Engineers has expressed some interest in aiding or leading mitigation efforts for the creek area and thus make the site developable. The site is well suited for transportation and wholesale distribution as well as other industrial uses.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue conversations with the SUMC regarding the potentials for affordable housing or a community service facility on its property.
2. Increase the employment base within the station area by targeting employment intensive uses seeking industrial and flex spaces that are compatible with transit.
3. Prioritize better access to neighborhoods on the north as well as the Hyland Hills Parks and Recreation District.
4. Explore creating a bike sharing program.
5. Explore the potential for locating a food hub distribution site in the warehouse industrial area south of the station.

Olde Town

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
Market rate apartments	Grocery store	Professional and financial services
Infill, small-scale for-sale residential	Entertainment uses, eating and drinking	
For-sale multifamily (long term)	Regional retail uses	

Constraints

The City of Arvada has been actively working to enhance the station environment for TOD for a number of years by financing a joint use parking structure, building an enhanced station plaza, and pursuing a joint development project on the RTD/City opportunity site. The remaining constraints include lack of a pedestrian crossing of the Wadsworth Bypass at West 56th and the lack of available sites for redevelopment. As Wadsworth is a state highway, it would need approval by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for a pedestrian crossing.

Opportunity Sites



1. RTD Joint Development Site – This 9.0-acre site is comprised of land owned by AURA, the City of Arvada, and RTD, and includes the former RTD Park-n-Ride and additional property purchased for Gold Line parking. Trammell Crow was selected as the master developer and is working to complete its development plan for a mixed use project.
2. Landmark Theater – This 9.9-acre site includes the Landmark theaters on a ground lease that expires in 2016. The property's location adjacent to the station parking garage and across from the Trammell Crow project would likely indicate its marketability for higher density TOD.
3. Brooklyn's – The 3.0-acre former Brooklyn's bar and restaurant site and owned by AURA and is located just west of Olde Wadsworth. It has significant potential for redevelopment and is under negotiations with AURA to become a hotel. The site is surrounded by several multifamily residential buildings at Water Tower Village. If the hotel deal does not materialize, the site is also well suited for residential uses.
4. Mini-Storage – This 2.9-acre site with mini-storage units is an underutilized parcel, given its prime location near the station. The reported asking price of \$5 million or \$40 per square foot is more than can be supported by potential uses.
5. MKS Property – This 15-acre site has been optioned by MKS with plans for 350 apartment units.

Recommended Actions

1. Provide economic development incentives to attract a hotel to the station area.
2. Create a master plan for redevelopment of the Landmark Theatre site for TOD uses.
3. Attract a grocery store to the station area and explore financing options to make a project feasible.
4. Ensure that there are affordable healthy, fresh foods available within a new grocery located in Olde Town.
5. Work with the Arvada Community Food Bank to expand its mobile food pantry to include additional sites.
6. Explore a partnership between mobile food pantry and future grocery store to provide affordable produce.
7. Continue to explore Parks and Recreation options for the Olde Town/South Arvada neighborhoods.
8. Encourage the location of additional community services and affordable housing in the Olde Town Area.

Arvada Ridge

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
Market rate apartments, For-sale multifamily (long term)	Convenience and eating and drinking at station	Education
Medium density attached and single family housing Senior-oriented housing	Regional and community retail uses within Arvada Market Place	Health care

Constraints

The lack of direct access to the station makes any uses other than residential difficult. Potential development sites on the east side of Kipling Street may be limited by poor pedestrian access across it. Another potential constraint is that the station area is split between Wheat Ridge and Arvada, including opportunity sites owned by the State of Colorado Human Services. Conflicting land use plans, design standards, and infrastructure investment priorities may potentially complicate development projects and implementation.

Opportunity Sites



1. Vacant parcel – This 11.2-acre vacant parcel is owned by the Arvada Ridge Market Ridge LLC. It is well suited for residential and mixed use TOD, including local services.
2. Redevelopment site – This 13.8-acre site is owned by the State of Colorado Department of Human Services. It is two-thirds developed with low density office and social services buildings. The state has no immediate plans to move any uses on the site or sell the property. This site is in the City of Wheat Ridge and is well suited for multifamily TOD and attached townhomes.
3. Redevelopment site – This 9.1-acre site is also owned by the State of Colorado Department of Human Services. It is partially developed and used by the state. This site is in the City of Arvada and is well suited for multifamily and mixed use TOD.

Recommended Actions

1. Relocate the State of Colorado Human Services Ridge Home facilities and develop a plan for redevelopment of the site.
2. Identify a location(s) for affordable/senior housing near the station area.
3. Improve pedestrian access to the Arvada Ridge Marketplace from the station.
4. Support Red Rocks Community College in the development of the Arvada Campus as a “Health Hub.”
5. Develop affordable child care on-site as part of the Red Rocks Community College expansion.
6. Encourage Red Rocks Community College to connect students with nearby employment opportunities in the health care industry.

Ward Road

Market Opportunities

Residential	Retail/Commercial	Target Industries
Market rate apartments	Convenience retail	Professional, scientific, technical services firms
Medium density attached and single family housing	Eating and drinking establishments	Light and employment intensive manufacturing
For-sale multifamily (long term)	Personal and business support services	New business incubation
Senior-oriented housing		Scientific research and development

Constraints

The mixture of uses within the station area is one of its greatest assets but also one of its biggest constraints. The varied and inconsistent land use pattern has resulted in a lack of clarity regarding the future uses in the area. The introduction of residential uses at the station area may lead to some of the adjacent employment uses to relocate, but will not drastically change the uses in the area unless a significant amount of housing is developed, especially outside the immediate area north of the station. A clear direction and vision for the station area may provide the development market the direction needed to attract additional development.

The lack of coherent street network in all parts and the quality of the street network in some places is a barrier to attracting TOD. Increased circulation and access in the area would make the area more transit friendly and attractive. Connections south of the tracks from the station at Ward Road, Tabor, and potentially a pedestrian bridge would help make the south side of the tracks more attractive. The improvement of Ward Road to create a more urban streetscape and pedestrian amenities is also needed.

Lastly, the station area is under three different controlling jurisdictions. Wheat Ridge is the only one to have generated a plan for TOD, but parcels in both Arvada and Jefferson County can have a large impact of the success of the area from a development stand point. Coordination is needed to align planning efforts and ultimately development plan approvals, and may also generate joint funding opportunities.

Opportunity Sites



1. Former Jolly Rancher factory site – Owned by IBC Denver II LLC, the site is 13.7 acres. It is well suited for mixed use residential development and commercial development along Ward Road. The owner has attempted to develop the site for both industrial uses and also residential uses. The owner is also interested in selling the site if the opportunity arises.
2. Vacant site used for outdoor storage – Owned by Ward Road Storage, this 2.3-acre site is vacant but is currently used for outdoor storage. The site is well suited for residential TOD or flex-office space similar to the adjacent properties along 52nd Avenue. The owner is interested in selling the site.
3. Vacant farm land with single family home – Three parcels owned by the Hance Family Trust total 6.7 acres. The property is occupied by the owner and used for minimal farming uses. The owner does not have any immediate plans to sell or move.
4. Vacant site – This large site consists of two parcels totaling 55 acres. It is well suited for a mixed for-sale housing products. There is likely demand for compact single family detached and attached housing.
5. RTD Park-n-Ride – This 10.1-acre site is owned by RTD and the transit uses are planned to be relocated to the station area. RTD will likely sell the property once this occurs. The site is well suited for highway, regionally oriented retail, and potential a limited service hotel.

6. Outdoor storage – This 5.5-acre site is also owned by Ward Road Storage LLC and is used for outdoor storage of RVs and other similar vehicles. The site is well suited for office and flex-industrial development.
7. Undeveloped Industrial land – This 13.2-acre area consists of several parcels that are vacant, industrial zoned pad sites. These sites are well suited for industrial, flex and office development.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop a strategic action plan to generate TOD on the major opportunity sites adjacent to the station.
2. Improve connectivity from the station to the Kaiser Permanente’s health clinic.
3. Improve accessibility to the station for residents south of I-70.
4. Create complete connections between the regional trail systems, routes, and infrastructure improvements necessary to connect trail systems to station areas, and wayfinding to create greater awareness of regional trails.
5. Brand the employment areas within the station area as an innovation and business incubator district.
6. Explore the creation of a business incubation and co-working innovation hub aimed at start-up professional, technical, and scientific services and technology businesses that desire flexible spaces which allow for industrial type space due to more industrial type activities.
7. Establish a street network within the station area to generate a more transit friendly public realm around the existing industrial and flex uses.
8. Encourage residential development at the 55-acre vacant site within Arvada and ensure that it is built in a compact, walkable manner.
9. Maintain control of the RTD Park-n-Ride site and begin to plan for redevelopment.