



# Urban Growth Boundary/ Area (UGB/A)

*Presented by:*

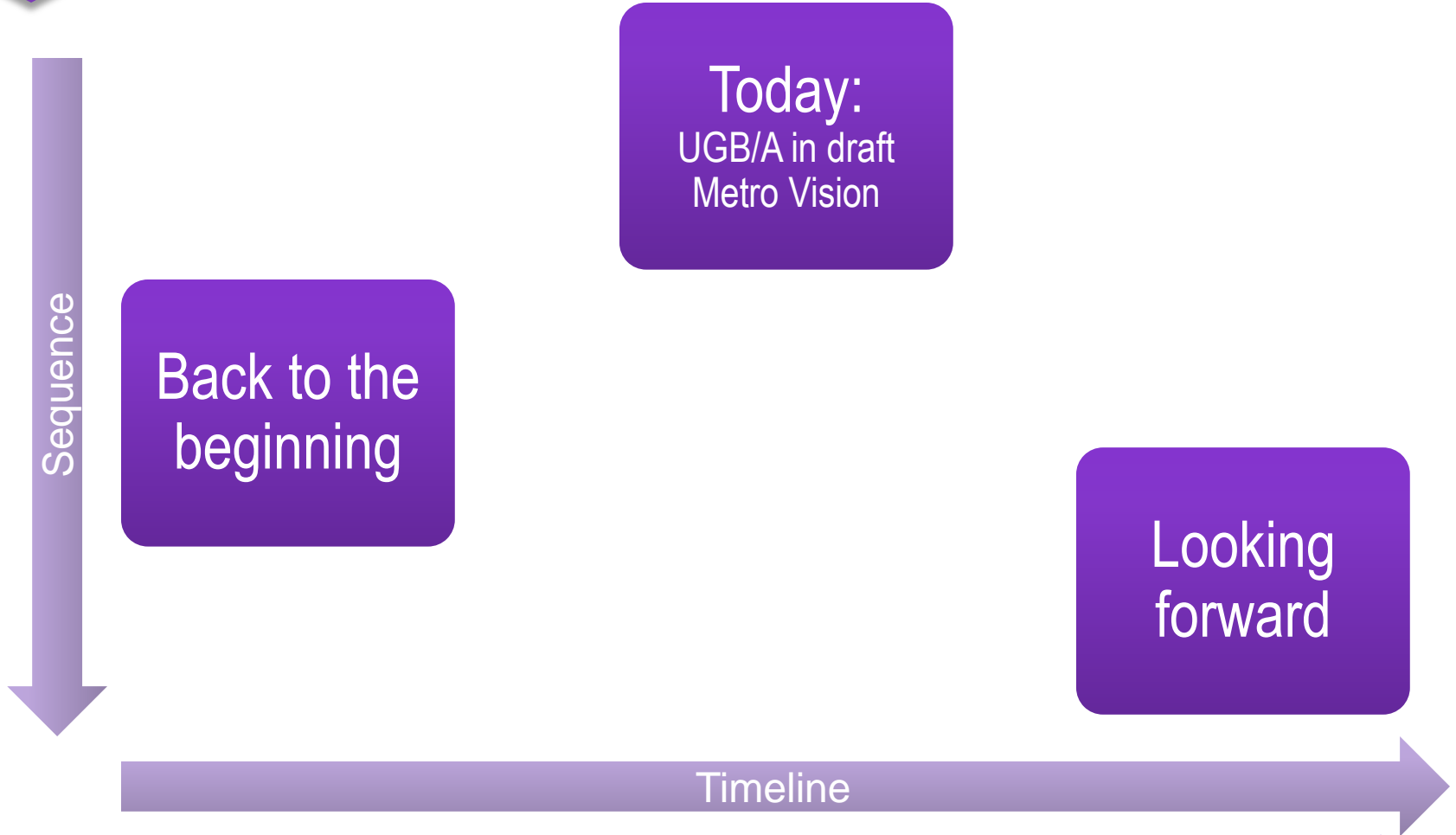
**Brad Calvert**

August 6, 2016





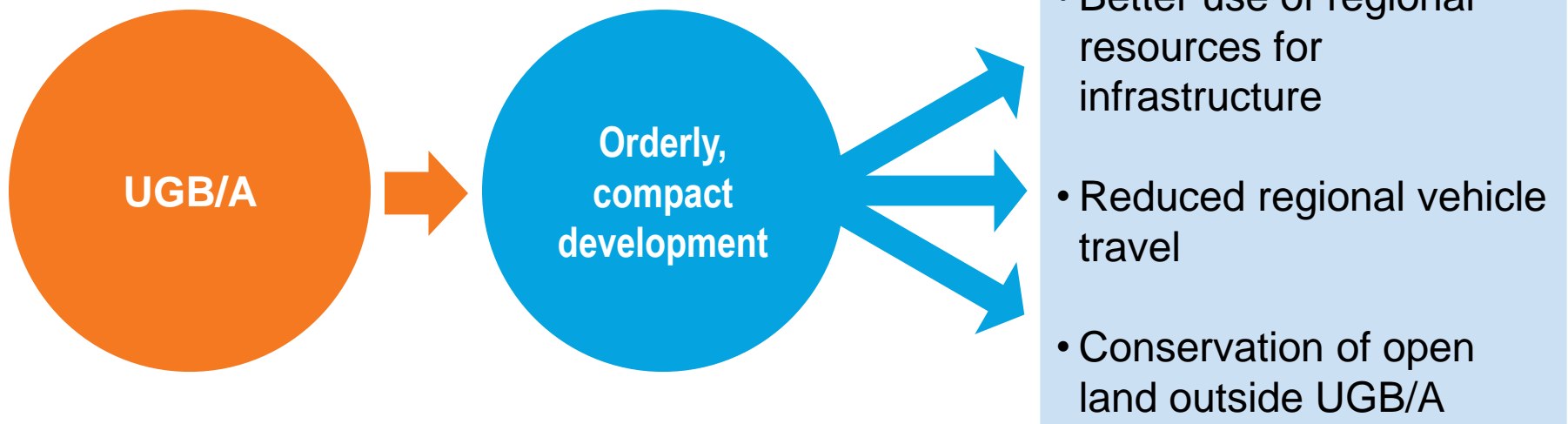
# Today's presentation and discussion





# Starting point: Draft Metro Vision outcome

New urban development occurs within the contiguous and designated areas identified in the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A).

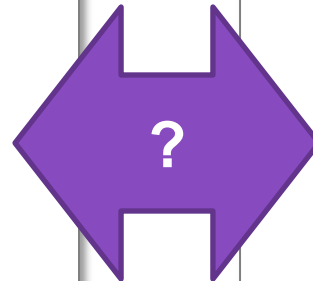




# Does what's "on the books" match?

Most recent input from the Board (via MVIC and work session) in 2015 and 2016

Draft Metro Vision Outcome



Metro Vision Growth and Development Supplement

Adopted January 18, 2012

Represents three rounds of work by the Board and committees in 2007, 2008 and 2009

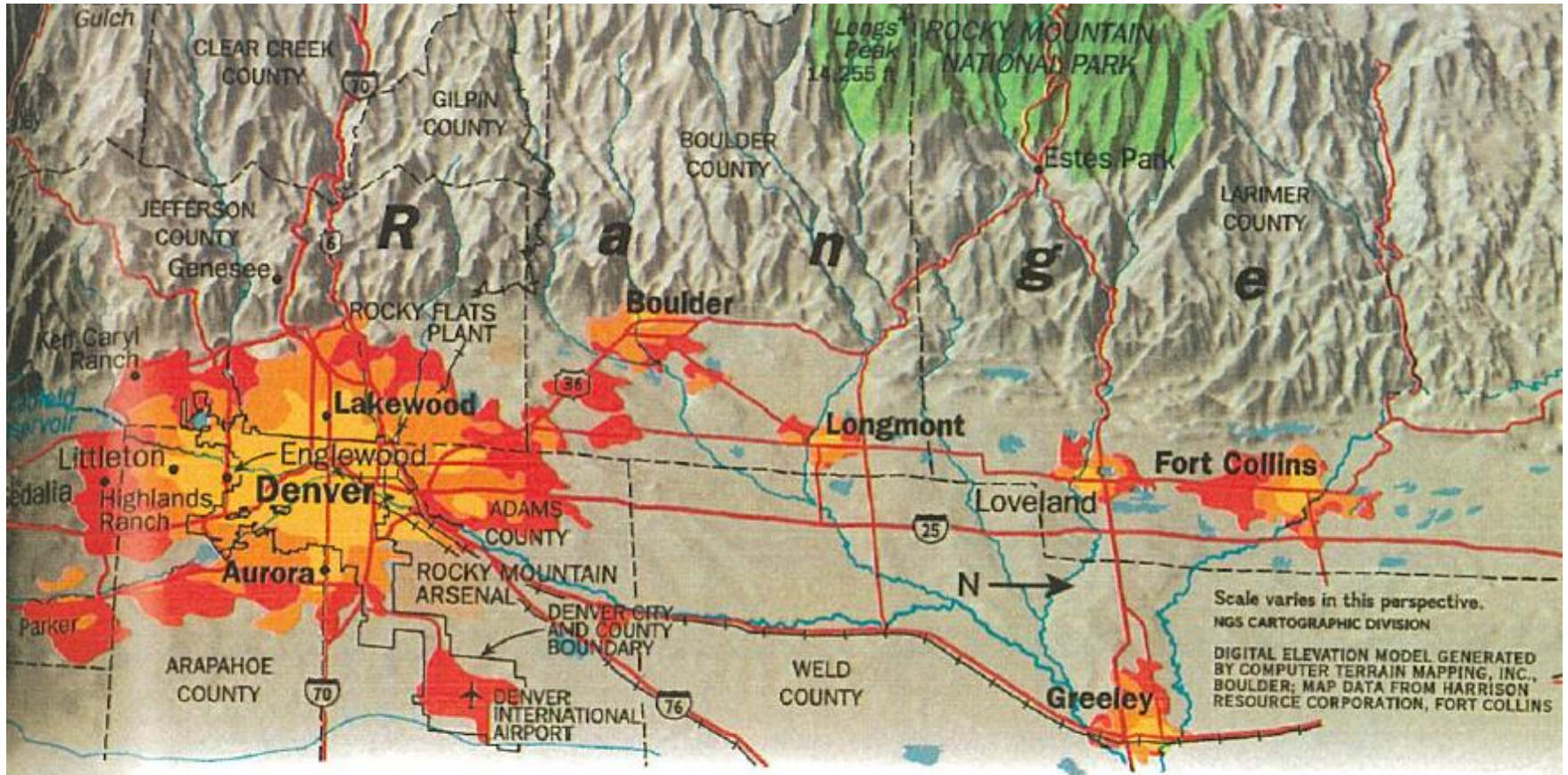
An aerial photograph of a suburban residential area, showing rows of houses, streets, and green spaces. A large purple semi-transparent overlay covers the bottom half of the image, containing white text. The background shows a vast landscape with trees, fields, and distant buildings under a clear sky.

Back to the beginning:

# PURPOSE AND ORIGIN OF UGB/A



# National Geographic, November 1996



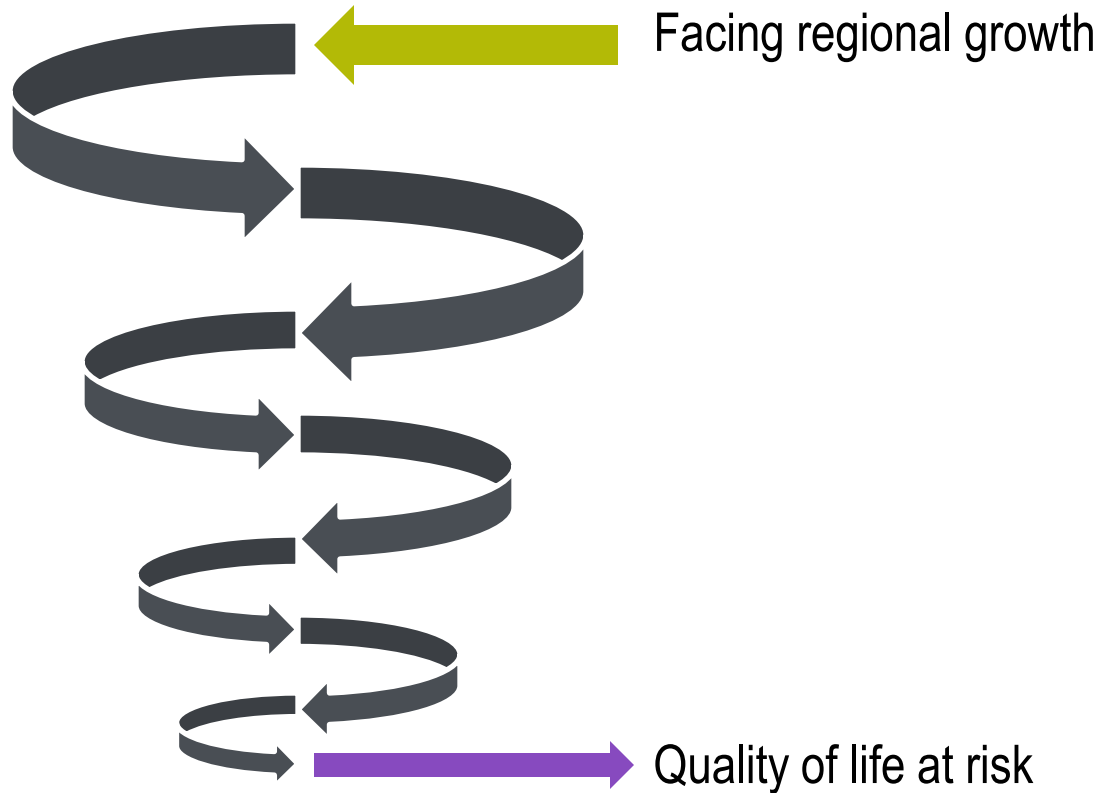
Like blots in a geographic Rorschach test, Front Range cities ooze toward one another.



# To maintain and improve quality of life

## Negative effects

- Increased traffic congestion
- Degraded air quality
- Loss of open space
- Demands on water supply
- Increased infrastructure costs
- Increased competition for funding



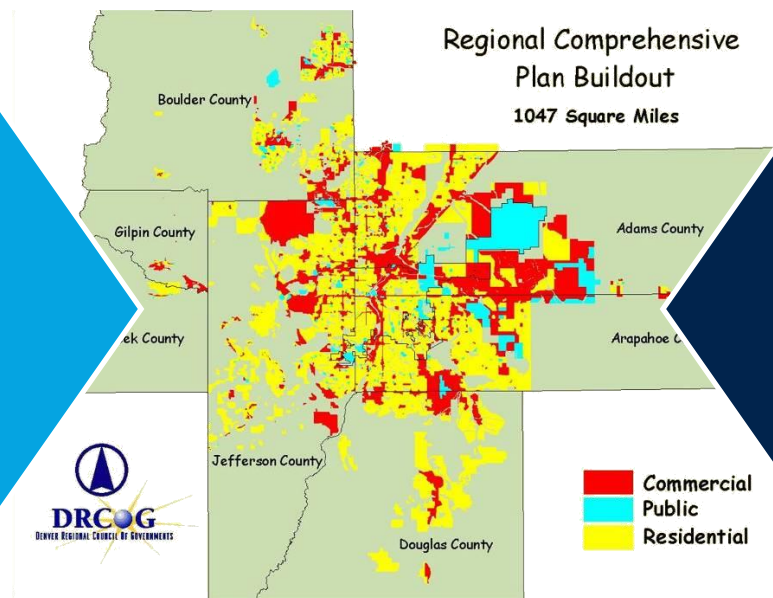


# Understanding growth aspirations

*Better awareness of local growth plans*

Overlapping,  
contradictory local  
plans

**1,000-plus  
square mile  
buildout**



Need better ability  
to understand local  
growth priorities





# Simplified regional growth strategy



Manage urban extent

Urban intensification



# Summary: Purpose and origin of UGB/A

- To maintain and improve quality of life
- To understand 20-year growth aspirations
- To maintain local control (vs. state)

An aerial photograph of a suburban residential area, showing rows of houses, streets, and green spaces. A large purple semi-transparent overlay covers the bottom half of the image, containing text. The background shows a mix of developed areas and open fields under a clear sky.

How it works, a very brief tutorial:

# ROLES UNDER UGB/A



# Learning metaphor: Current roles

## “Budgeter”

### DRCOG Board

- Sets UGB/A policy for members and staff
- Awards allocation amounts to local governments

## “Owner”

### DRCOG local governments

- Commit and update allocations locally
- Work together and notify DRCOG staff of changes

## “Accountant”

### DRCOG staff

- Tracks changes from development and annexation
- Compiles local UGB/A commitments for forecasting and planning



# The Board's changes in UGB/A 1997-2007

“Budgeter”

Horizon	When	UGB/A (mi <sup>2</sup> )	Expansion Notes
2020	Mar. 1997	700	Board target +165 mi <sup>2</sup> over 1995 extent
	Dec. 1997	730	Compromise through two mapping efforts
	1997 – 2000	735	Minor changes made by Board
	Jan. 2002	750	Review of 2020 forecast

Horizon	When	UGB/A	Bank	Expansion Notes
2030	Jan. 2005	750	20	20 mi <sup>2</sup> “bank”
	Jan. 2006	755	15	Bank requests
	April 2007	775	15	Account for growth into Weld Co.



# The Board's changes in UGB/A 2007-2016

"Budgeter"

Horizon	When	UGB/A (mi <sup>2</sup> )	Expansion Notes
2035	Early 2007	899	New starting point
	July 2007	921	200-plus square miles over 2006 extent
	August 2009	980	Fully account for southwest Weld County
Horizon	When	UGB/A (mi <sup>2</sup> )	Expansion Notes
2040	After Metro Vision adoption	?	?

New mapping rules change base calculation for extent of urban development



# Metro Vision 2035 Appendix A

## Appendix A Extent of Urban Development (Square Miles)

	2006 <sup>1</sup>	2035 <sup>1</sup>	2006 – 2035 Change
Adams County <sup>2</sup>	22.4	29.5	7.1
Arapahoe County <sup>3</sup>	18.9	30.8	11.9
Arvada	27.0	34.5	7.5
Aurora <sup>2</sup>	67.5	89.6	22.1
Bennett	0.8	6.4	5.6
Black Hawk	0.2	1.9	1.7
Boulder	22.2	24.1	1.9
...	...	...	...
<b>Total member 2006 urbanized area and 2035 UGB/A allocation</b>	<b>727.1</b>	<b>980.1</b>	<b>253.0</b>
<b>Total non-member urbanization<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Total member plus non-member</b>	<b>732.3</b>	<b>992.8</b>	<b>260.5</b>

“Owner”

“Budgeter”





Urban  
DevType

Total  
UGB/A

Future  
urban  
growth

“Accountant”

**Appendix A**  
**Extent of Urban Development (Square Miles)**

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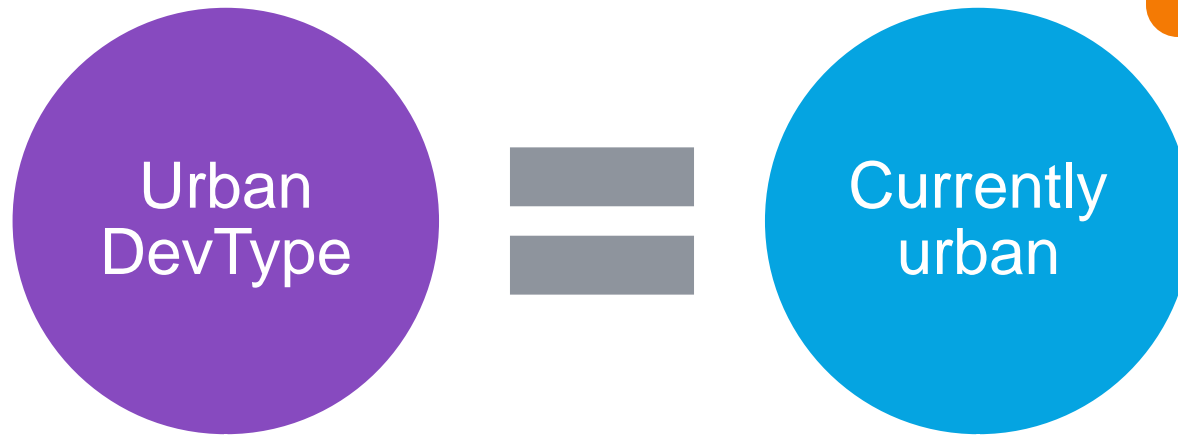
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# Urban DevType

“Accountant”

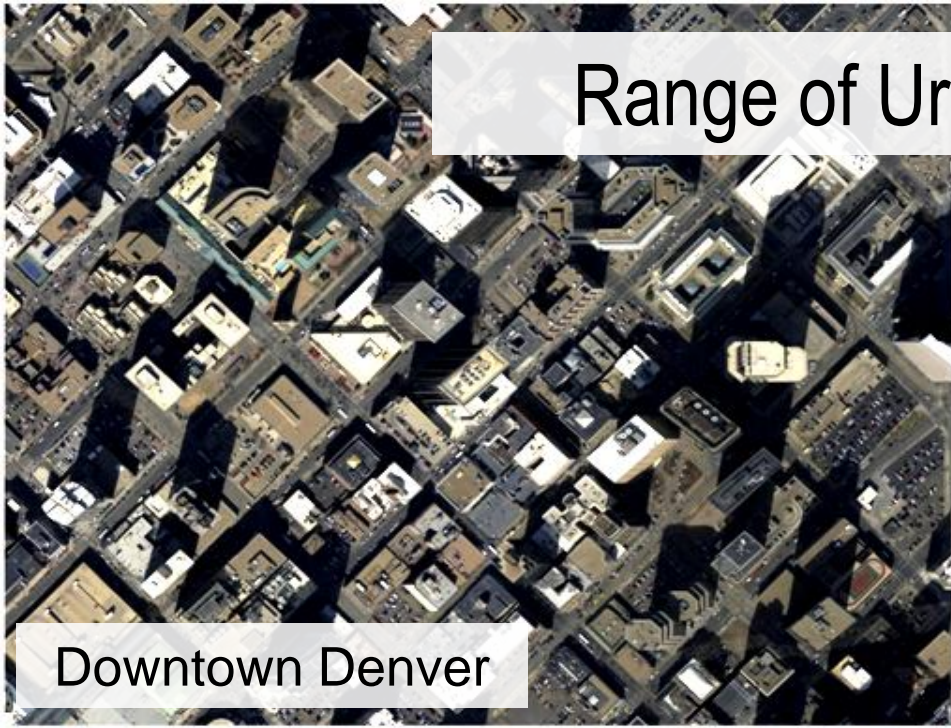


In general, this covers:

- Residential subdivisions with average lot size **less than one acre**
- Commercial or industrial subdivisions
- Isolated parcels with more than 50 employees

*Metro Vision 2035 Growth and Development Supplement, Extent of Urban Development – Development classification system (pages 4-5)*

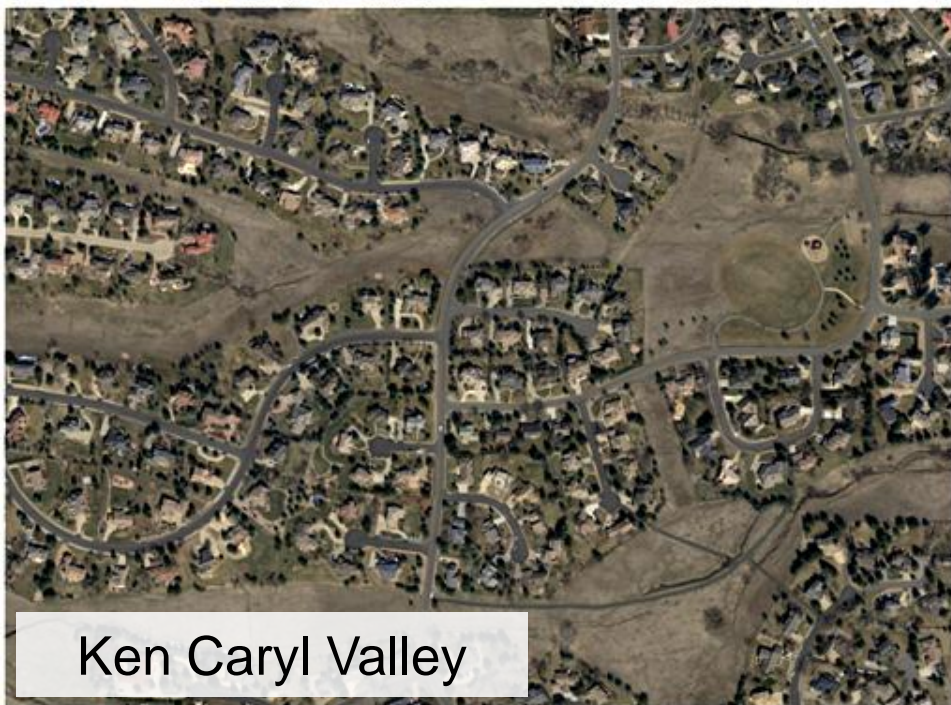
# Range of Urban DevType



Downtown Denver



Highlands Ranch



Ken Caryl Valley



Thornton



# Future urban growth



## **Future urban growth flexibility and local control:**

- DRCOG Board cares about size of overall regional urban footprint
- As allocation owners, local governments determine where



QUESTIONS SO FAR ...

An aerial photograph of a suburban residential area, showing rows of houses, streets, and green spaces. The image is partially obscured by a large purple overlay at the bottom, which contains white text. The background shows a vast landscape with trees and distant hills under a clear sky.

Looking forward:

# EARLY GUIDANCE AND UPCOMING UGB/A DECISIONS



## Punt...and return

**2013:** Board voted to delay UGB/A allocation until after *Metro Vision* adoption

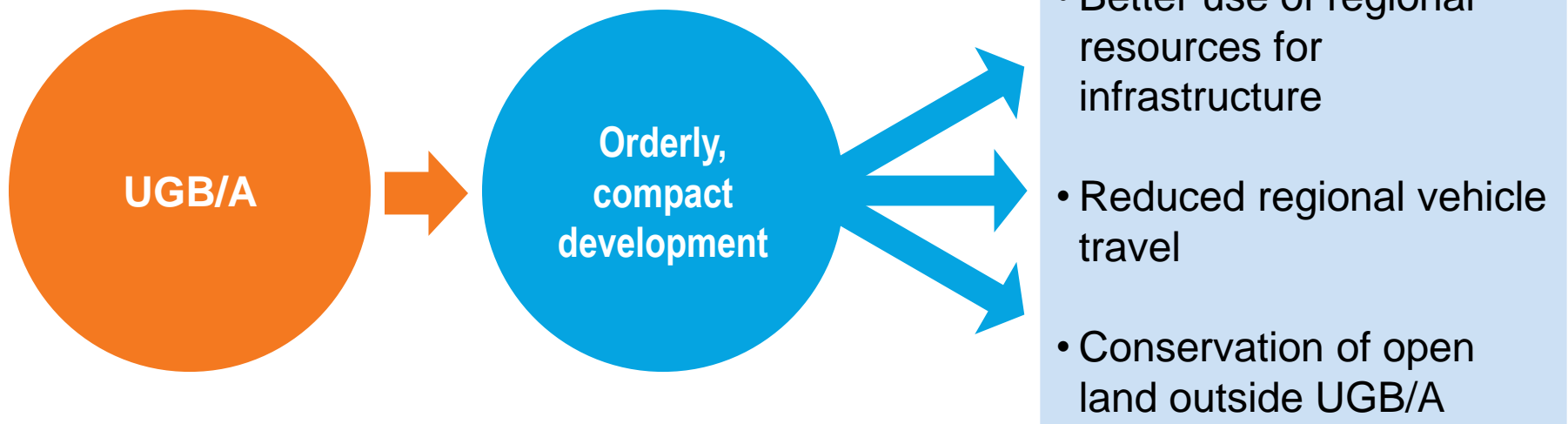
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**2016–17:** What are your initial thoughts on the Board's role in UGB/A efforts now that you are closing in on *Metro Vision* adoption?



# Draft Metro Vision outcome

New urban development occurs within the contiguous and designated areas identified in the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A).





# Draft Metro Vision outcome (continued)

## Overarching Theme: An Efficient and Predictable Development Pattern

**Outcome 2: New urban development occurs within the contiguous and designated areas identified in the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A).**

A defined UGB/A leads to an orderly and more compact pattern of future development. While locally adopted policies and market demand determine the location of urban development, commitment to the UGB/A leads to better use of regional resources for infrastructure, reduced regional vehicle travel and conservation of open land outside the boundary/area.

### Regional Objective:

Contain urban development within the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A).

Metro Vision will help focus and facilitate future urban growth in locations where urban-level infrastructure already exists or areas where plans for infrastructure and service expansion are in place. DRCOG will work with member communities to maintain the UGB/A and update the growth allocations for each community in the region annually or as needed.

### Supporting Objectives:

- Identify and monitor the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A).
- Increase and prioritize funding to serve areas within the Urban Growth Boundary/Area (UGB/A).

### Related Measure

Performance Measure	2040 Target	Baseline
Housing density within the urban growth boundary/area (UGB/A)	25 percent increase from 2014	1,200 units per square mile (2014)





## A few global staff observations

- Significant lull in UGB/A activity at the local and regional level (during approximately the past decade – most notably in past 5 years)
- Great Recession changed growth assumptions – will they remain?
  - No one is lining up to “give back” UGB/A
  - Disconnect between UGB/A and best local growth assumptions
- DRCOG’s unwritten philosophy: Stay out of conflicts between members over future urban growth territory



## A few global staff observations (continued)

- DRCOG relinquished 208 role (wastewater) – missing pieces of information to “check” growth assumptions across infrastructure types
- Program maintenance is a significant lift (regionally and locally)
- Program disconnect: DRCOG is “making us” participate in the UGB/A program
- 2017: It’s not 1997 or 2007



# Evaluating / fixing the current process

## Metro Vision Growth and Development Supplement

Adopted January 18, 2012

### Development classification system

- Guidance for technical model
- Unable to fix model without Board action

### Allocation request process

- Attempts to introduce more flexibility
- Remains untested

### UGB/A maintenance

- Annexation issues
- Process streamlining?
- Improve engagement?



# Setting the course: Initial questions

**Q:** What do you want the UGB/A to do?

- Do you want it to:
  - Provide or compile specific information (if so, what types?)
  - Address specific concerns about growth and land consumption?
  - Provide a forum for discussions about growth and local/regional impacts?
  - Encourage/discourage certain types of local action?
  - Do something else entirely?

**Q:** Does the current UGB/A program, and supportive policies, do any/all of this?



## Clarifying questions

- What value do you see in the UGB/A program, as a local elected official?
- What value do you see in the UGB/A program, as a DRCOG Director?
- What value do you think other regional stakeholders/partners see in the UGB/A?
- How do we maximize the value across these perspectives?



## Next-level questions

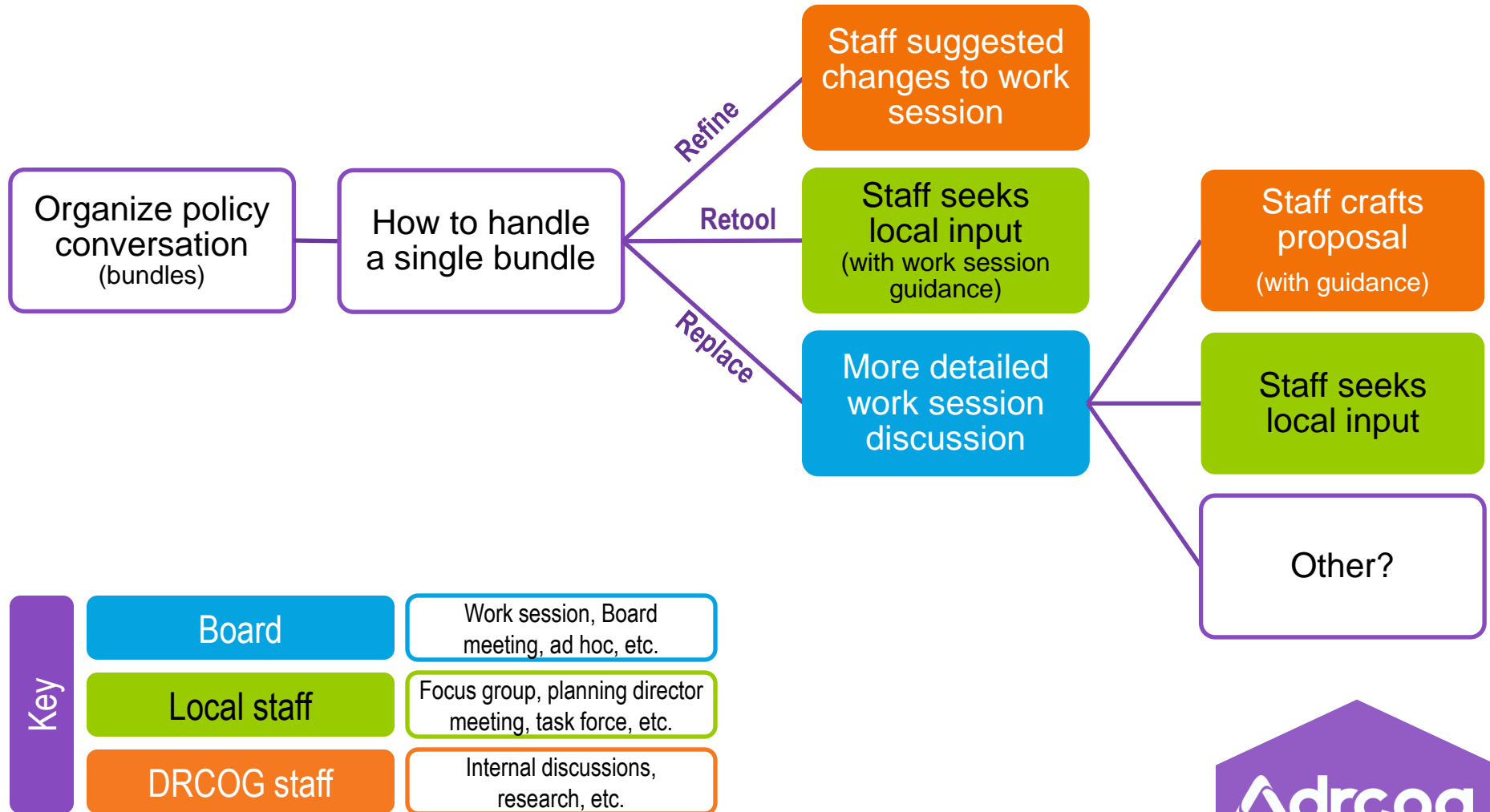
**Q:** From what you've heard so far, are we:

- Refining,
  - Retooling, or
  - Replacing
- ▶ current UGB/A program/policy?

**Q:** How, and to what degree, should the Board be involved these improvements?



# Potential process to identify improvements





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