Citywide Plan

2014

a section of the
City of Littleton Comprehensive Plan

Adopted January 21, 2014

Littleton

Littleton

March 14, 2014

On behalf of Littleton City Council, I am pleased to present the *Citywide Plan.* The culmination of a rigorous public process, the *Citywide Plan* was inspired by the people of Littleton and written by the city's planning board. This board of citizen volunteers devoted untold hours over a two-year period, listening to people, analyzing information, debating how best to respond, writing, meeting with city council, editing, and then editing again.

The planning board wrote the following paragraph as a summary of its collective perception of Littleton and its hopes for the city's future. The paragraph serves as a snapshot of the plan and provides a preview of the passion and commitment reflected in the plan.

> *Littleton must rebel against becoming suburbia. We are the kind of place where people with talent are attracted to live. We have a unique identity, sense of place, and a flavor unto ourselves. We want our city to always be something elegant. It is naturally beautiful with ample outdoor recreation. We are a community that values the beauty of a diverse, free thinking, intelligent people, willing to work together to resolve complex issues. We strongly support our arts, athletics, schools, and our heritage. Littleton has an entrepreneurial spirit that wishes to be none other than ourselves. We have a positive outlook for our future. Littleton is the kind of place you rarely find, and we appreciate how special that is.*

With the adoption of the *Citywide Plan,* the city is moving forward with its commitment to update our Comprehensive Plan. This is just the beginning of a larger planning process that will provide more detailed direction for how the city's evolution will proceed. Now that the *Citywide Plan* is in place, the board and city council's focus will shift to developing plans for small areas within the city, including our neighborhoods and transportation corridors. We encourage you to get involved in these planning processes and let the planning board and city council hear your issues and vision.

Whether you are a current resident or business owner, or if you are considering Littleton for your new home or business location, we hope that you will find the plan useful and that you will join us as we shape our collective future.

Sincerely,

Phil Cernanec, on behalf of Littleton City Council
Mayor, District III

Bruce Beckman
Mayor Pro-Tem, At-Large

Randy Stein
District I

Jerry Valdes
District II

Debbie Brinkman
District IV

Peggy Cole
At-Large

Bruce Stahlman
At-Large

Our Littleton: Planning Tomorrow Together

The illustration on the opposite page was created during a three-month visioning process undertaken by the mayor and city council in 2012. Entitled *Our Littleton, Planning Tomorrow Together*, the illustration captures and sets forth the mayor's and council's vision for Littleton. The map-like drawing shows familiar Littleton landmarks set in a series of three concentric areas corresponding to the three parts of the vision.

The center of the illustration defines Littleton's warm, hometown feel and great neighborhoods and schools. It represents the heart of the city and much of what the council loves and wants to protect and maintain for the city. It shows a high quality of life with many families and parks, and an inclusive community comprised of people who care for each other.

The area "across the road" from the center of the illustration generally represents the existing commercial corridors, showing both existing activity as well as some of what is desired for Littleton's future. Many of Littleton's commercial corridors have great potential and are ripe for change. The illustration shows a welcoming Littleton, with a well-maintained infrastructure that has access to transportation and a thriving business community with a mix of shopping and dining options that are accessible by bike, car, or public transportation.

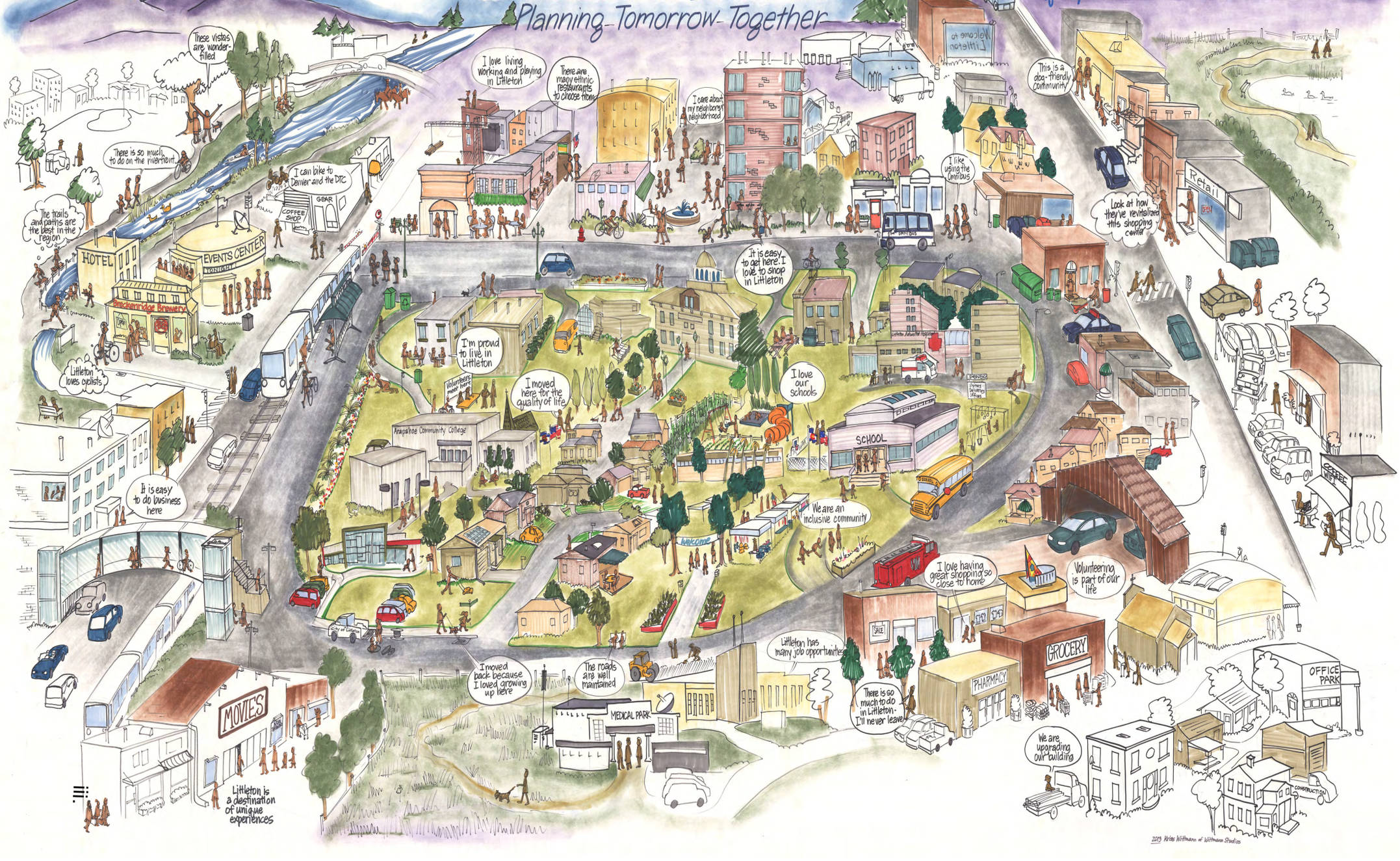
The outermost area of the map, much of which is not colored in, symbolizes possibility in Littleton's future. There is an emphasis on creating great vibrancy along its wonderful natural amenity, the South Platte River. In it, residents and visitors can be seen enjoying the riverfront — some through the tranquil enjoyment of the outdoors—and many also through dining, strolling, or catching a game or event at a shared community space at the river's edge. The river is connected to the city both physically and in spirit. In this outermost area, there are buildings and other structures that do not currently exist, such as a bridge connecting downtown to the river and new paths and entertainment venues at the river. All around the perimeter there is a clear opportunity for development and redevelopment of existing buildings, lots, housing, public, and commercial corridors.

Note that, unlike a typical map that is designed to be an exact representation of the current landscape, this illustration is more symbolic than representational. It is intended to capture the spirit and essence of Littleton as it is now and how it will hopefully grow over time.

Our Littleton

Planning Tomorrow Together

To preserve a family-oriented & economically vibrant community that encourages citizen involvement, respects diversity, values community character, & enhances the quality of life of Littleton residents and visitors.



2019 Kristen Wittmann of Wittmann Studios

Littleton

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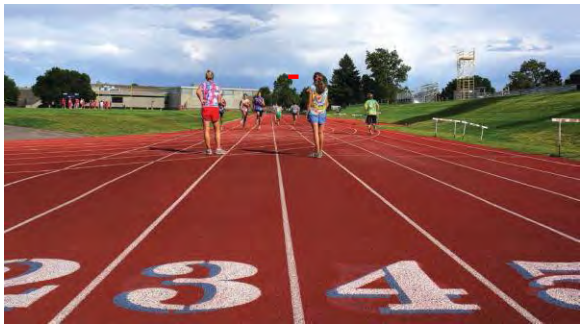


Heritage High School is one of three high schools in the highly acclaimed Littleton Public Schools.

Introduction

PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Plan provides a broad vision for the city's future. It offers a framework for decisions affecting private and public development. It is the mission statement and guide for the city's land use-related regulatory tools and programs, including zoning and the capital improvements program. The Comprehensive Plan includes both the *Citywide Plan,* provided herein, and more detailed small area plans for neighborhoods, transportation-based corridors, and identified activity areas, provided separately. While the *Citywide Plan* addresses larger issues, the small area plans address more detailed issues and provide more detailed recommendations. All small area plans are consistent with and help advance the implementation of, the *Citywide Plan*.

See Figure D on page 7 of the Introduction for a list and status of all small area plans, existing and proposed.

USE

Citizens, property owners, developers, city staff, and appointed and elected city officials use the Comprehensive Plan according to their respective roles in the decision-making process.

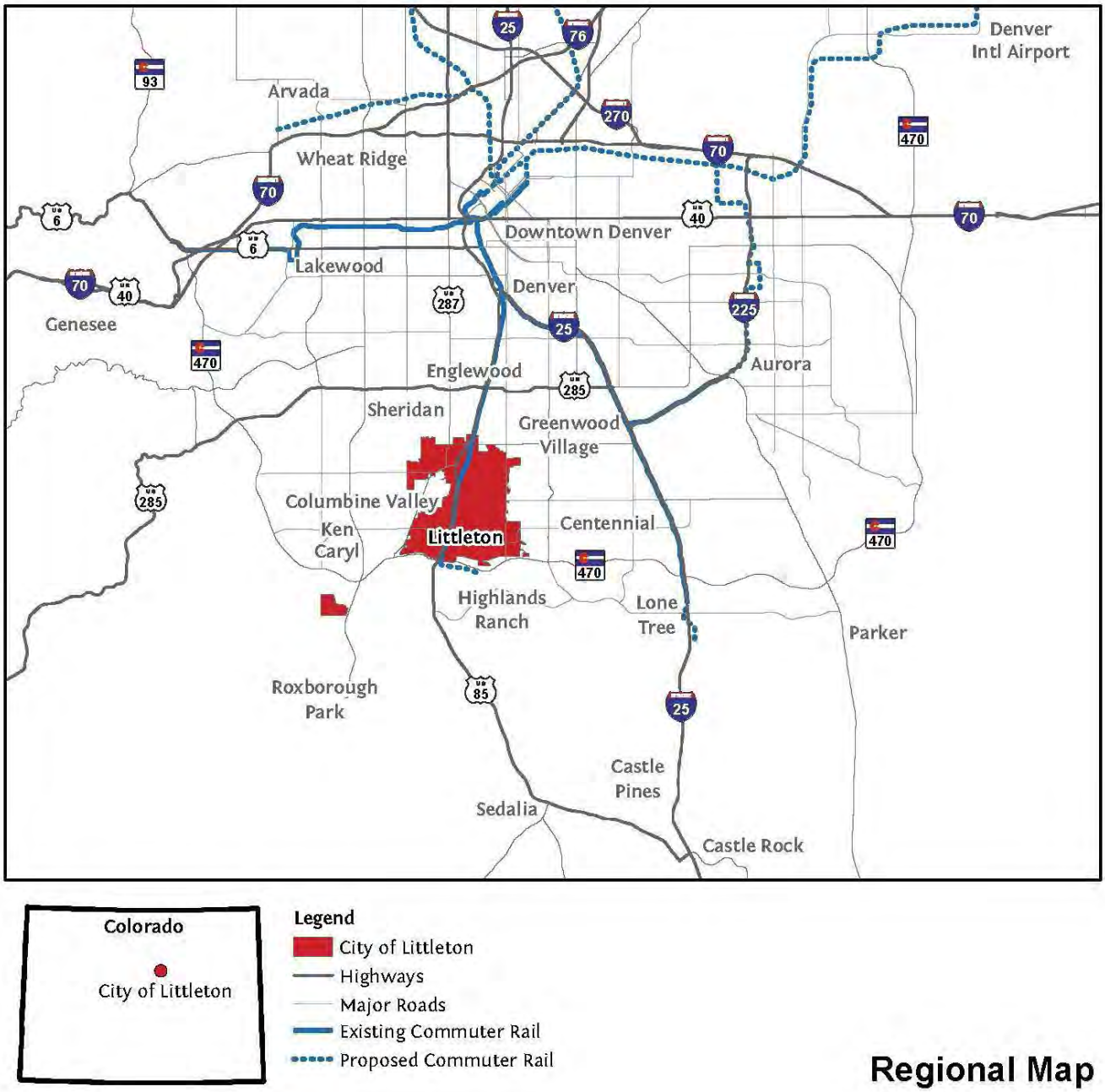
Because the plan cannot anticipate all issues and questions, it does not include policies that will address every situation. In those cases where it does not address a situation or issue, but the issue has citywide ramifications and needs a citywide perspective, users should base their interpretation on the Vision, Goals, Policies, and Transformative Actions. In these cases, users should also rely on more specific direction provided in the relevant small area plans. Similarly, the complexity of land use-related issues may result in a conflict between policies. Again, users should base their analysis and interpretation on other elements of the plan.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

The plan applies to all areas within the current city limits of the City of Littleton. Areas beyond the city limits are shown on Figure A, Regional Map, to provide context and illuminate connections. The regional map is the only citywide map in the plan that represents the true location of the TrailMark Neighborhood, which is on the west side of Chatfield Reservoir and far enough south and west that it is beyond the boundaries of the other maps. Elsewhere, the TrailMark Neighborhood is included as an inset.

The Comprehensive Plan provides guidelines for development decisions through the Vision, Goals, and Policies in the Citywide Plan and the more specific goals and policies in small area plans for neighborhoods, corridors, and activity areas.

Figure A



Regional Map

Figure A highlights the location of the City of Littleton in the southwest section of metropolitan Denver. While most of Littleton is in Arapahoe County, the city extends west into Jefferson County and south into Douglas County. Littleton is bordered generally by the City of Englewood to the north, the cities of Greenwood Village and Centennial to the east, unincorporated Highlands Ranch to the south, and the City of Bow Mar, the City of Columbine Valley, and unincorporated Jefferson County to the west. The TrailMark Neighborhood is bordered on all sides by unincorporated Jefferson County.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Vision, Goals, Policies, and Actions in the Comprehensive Plan reflect the city's demographic trends. Figures B and C on the following page represent two of the most significant changes in Littleton's population between 1980 and 2010. The average household size, as represented by Figure B, has decreased from 2.65 persons per household to 2.25. That reduction is paralleled by the trend illustrated in Figure C, which demonstrates that both the largest and the second largest population groups have progressively shifted to older age categories, as residents who were parents of young children, and their children, have both aged. The land use implications of these two trends include a reduction in school-age populations, a resulting decline in school enrollments, and a reprogramming of schools in order to maximize efficiencies and reduce costs. As a result, there is a desire to attract young residents to enjoy the city's family-friendly neighborhoods and amenities and to help the school district retain its high standards. The same trends have resulted in an increasing desire for housing, services, and infrastructure that meet the needs of older residents.

These and other demographic trends were presented in the public forums and discussed at length by the planning board. It is the intent of this plan to take advantage of the opportunities and meet the challenges presented by these trends.

Included in the Appendix to this document is the Statistical Dashboard, which provides key data that illustrate the point in time during which this plan was developed. As this data ages, current data can be found on the websites of both the city, littletongov.org, and the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), drcog.org.

IMPLEMENTATION

Strategic implementation of the Comprehensive Plan will occur over time. The plan will guide the majority of implementation through its use as a framework for development-related decisions and capital improvements. Business cycles, competing needs, unanticipated opportunities, and available resources will influence implementation schedules. Detailed work programs will reflect those factors and facilitate implementation.

Littleton Public Schools repurposed the former Littleton High School for its administrative offices. Although Littleton's aging population has resulted in declining enrollments, the excellent reputation of the Littleton and Jefferson County school districts helps the city meet its goal of attracting families of all ages.

One of the most common responses to the question "What would make Littleton an even better place to live?" was a low maintenance home, with a small yard, in my neighborhood.

Figure B: Average Household Size

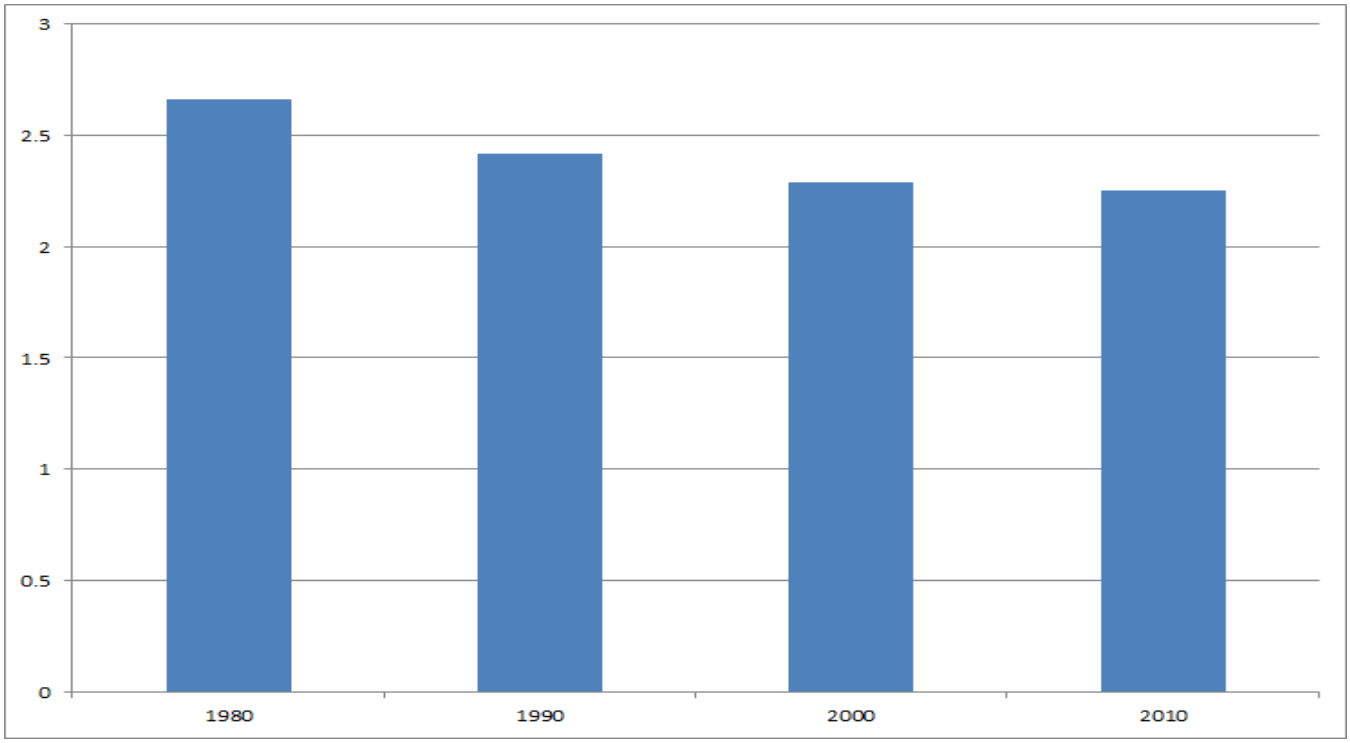
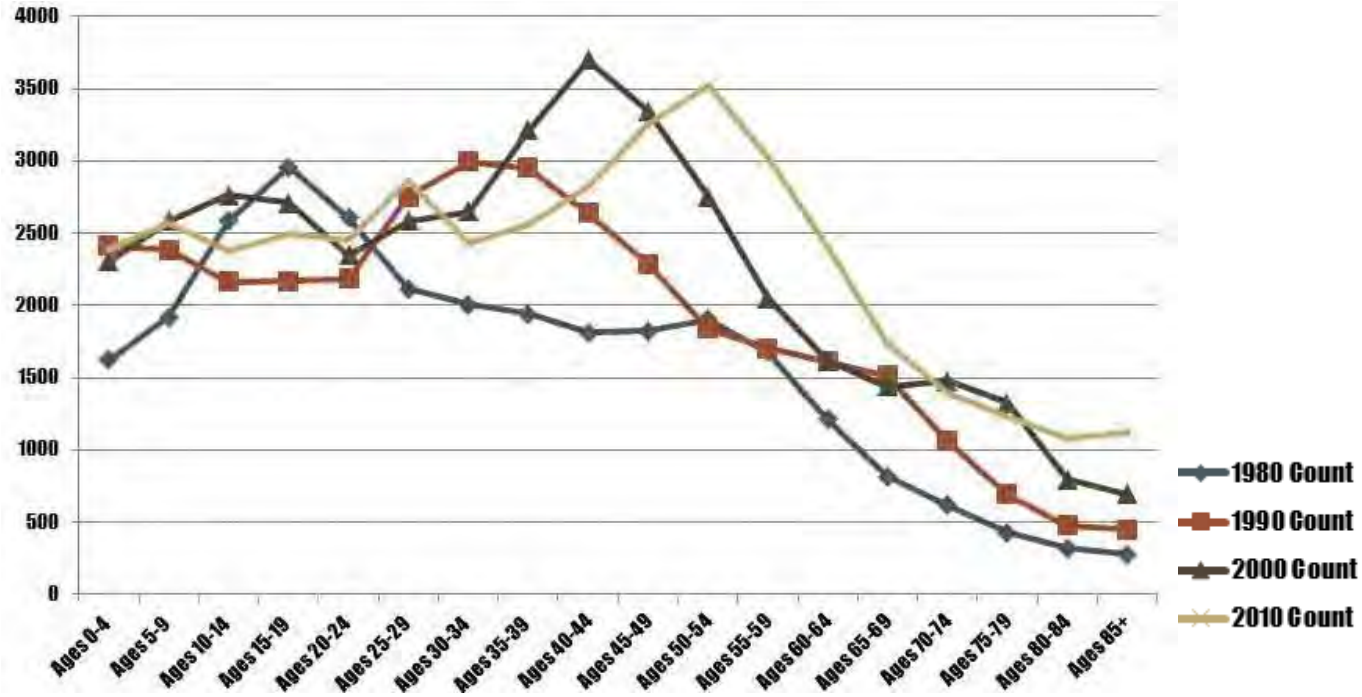


Figure C: Median Age



PLANNING PROCESS

Following its launch in May 2012, Inspire Littleton, the city's public outreach element of the comprehensive planning process, generated great enthusiasm, garnered an enviable rate of public participation, and did an excellent job marketing the process and the plan. Early in the process, more than 100 people participated in planning forums across the city. InspireLittleton.org, the city's interactive website, ran throughout the planning and review process and welcomed more than 600 individuals as they registered and participated in the ongoing community discussion. As part of the outreach at public forums, parades, and other community events, nearly 1,000 people wrote ideas on sticky notes and posted them on the Inspire Littleton idea boards. Some drew pictures representing what they love about Littleton or what they think would make Littleton an even better place to live. As of November 2013, the 608 active participants on the website, 7,106 visitors, and 51,752 page views generated 557 ideas and provided 857 comments on those ideas.

The planning board and staff listened carefully to the public's ideas and comments and absorbed and incorporated them into the planning process. The board repeatedly checked in with city council and revised the draft plan to reflect council's direction. This, the resulting plan, is a reflection of both what was heard from the public and the council and the expertise of the board and staff. Comments and ideas heard online and at the public hearings were discussed and are reflected in the adopted plan.

!nspireLITTLETON

The planning process included presentations and discussions at public meetings, outreach at public events, interaction on a designated website, InspireLittleton.org, articles in local newspapers, and detailed discussions by the planning board and city council. The idea board (shown above) was a particularly popular tool for gathering ideas from citizens who might not otherwise have participated in the process.

UPDATING

A snapshot in time, the Comprehensive Plan should be monitored for its effectiveness and regularly updated to better reflect current conditions, issues, and opportunities. At a minimum, the planning board should initiate a Comprehensive Plan review every five years and, if deemed necessary, update the plan.

RELATED PLANS

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan has two sections: the *Citywide Plan* and the small area plans. Whereas the *Citywide Plan* provides the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan, the small area plans provide specific objectives, strategies, and metrics for each of the targeted small areas. The small area plans are divided into three categories: neighborhood plans, corridor plans, and activity area plans, as shown on the following page in Figure D.

- Neighborhood plans address a specific residential area within the city. There are nine neighborhoods defined within the city boundaries. Each neighborhood plan will be updated as deemed necessary by the planning board and city council. A list of all neighborhood plans is listed in Figure D. As neighborhood plans are updated or created (where no plan exists currently), public outreach will be conducted to solicit input from residents in the neighborhood. As plans are updated, neighborhood boundaries may be revised to better represent current and anticipated conditions.

- Corridors generally represent linear areas along major arterial streets and in commercial districts. Figure E illustrates the preliminary configuration of the corridors. The boundaries of neighborhood plans and corridor plans will not overlap in order to avoid conflicting objectives. Each corridor plan will define specific objectives, strategies, guidelines, and metrics for achieving its goals and policies.

- Activity Areas are parts of town that have potential for new development or redevelopment and that are usually within the study area of a corridor plan or neighborhood plan. These can serve as catalyst areas for economic development efforts, public/private joint ventures, or special districts to encourage innovative development. Each activity area plan will define specific objectives, strategies, guidelines, and metrics for encouraging, designing, and implementing development that stimulates the area and complements the underlying corridor plan and/or neighborhood plan(s). Preliminary activity areas have been identified in Figure D, but the planning board and city council may add or delete activity areas as market conditions change. Activity area plans may be contained within corridor plans or neighborhood plans.

Other reports and documents used to draft the 2014 Citywide Plan are regional land use plans; state, regional, and city transportation plans; and park plans. These documents complement the comprehensive plan and are considered advisory to it, even though they may not be referenced individually by the plan or adopted as elements of the plan.

With the help of historic preservation funds from the State of Colorado, the city renovated the old Arapahoe County Courthouse as the Littleton Municipal Courthouse.

Figure D

STATUS OF SMALL AREA PLANS			
	YEAR COMPLETED OR YEARUPDATED	UPDATE OR CREATE	PRIORITY FOR UPDATEORCREATION
NEIGHBORHOODS			
Centennial	2000	Update	Low
Downtown	2012	-------	Low
Goddard	2000	Update	Low
Heritage	2000	Update	Low
Ketring Park	2000	Update	Low
Progress Park	2000	Update	HIGH
South	2000	Update	Low
Southwest	-------	Create	Low
Sterne Park	2000	Update	Low
Trailmark	2000	Update	Medium
CORRIDORS			
Broadway	1989	Update	HIGH
County Line	-------	Create	Low
Littleton Boulevard	2002	Update	HIGH
Mineral	-------	Create	Low
South Santa Fe Drive	2000	Update	HIGH
ACTIVITY AREAS			
Dry Creek / South Broadway	-------	Create	Medium
Littleton Blvd / South Broadway	-------	Create	High
Littleton Blvd/Woodlawn	-------	Create	High
Littleton Downtown Light Rail Station Area, extending east along Littleton Blvd	-------	Create	High
Mineral Light Rail Station Area, extending north along the South Santa Fe Corridor	-------	Create	High
Mineral Ave / South Broadway	-------	Create	Medium
Ridge Road / South Broadway	-------	Create	Medium

Status of Small Area Plans

Figure D provides a list of all existing and proposed neighborhood, corridor, and activity area plans along with the status and a recommended program of action for each. It identifies three categories of recommended actions: 1) dashes for plans that are considered current and need no major attention, 2) "Update" for plans that are out of date and should be revised, and 3) "Create" for areas for which a plan is recommended, but not yet been developed.

Figure E

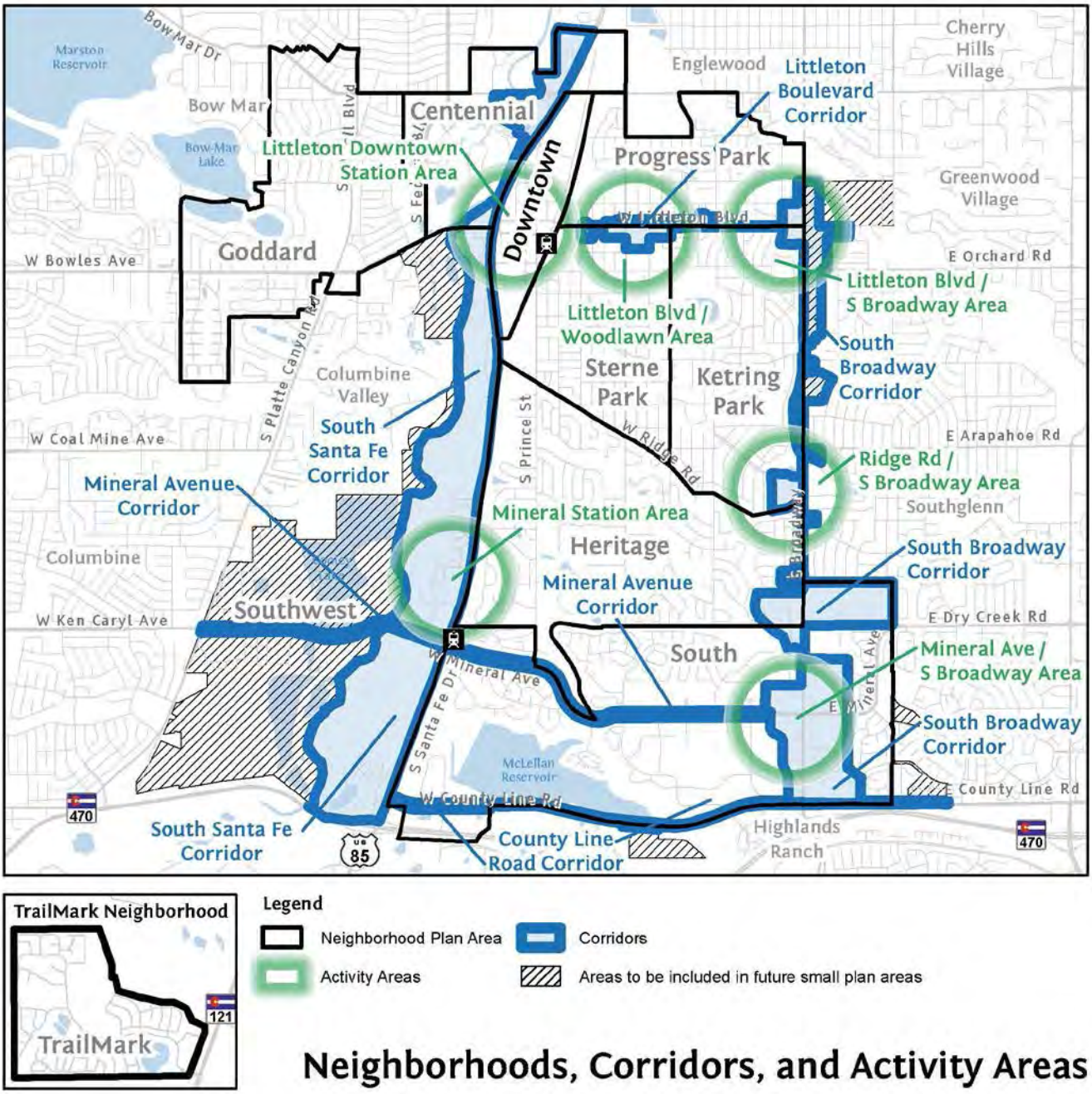
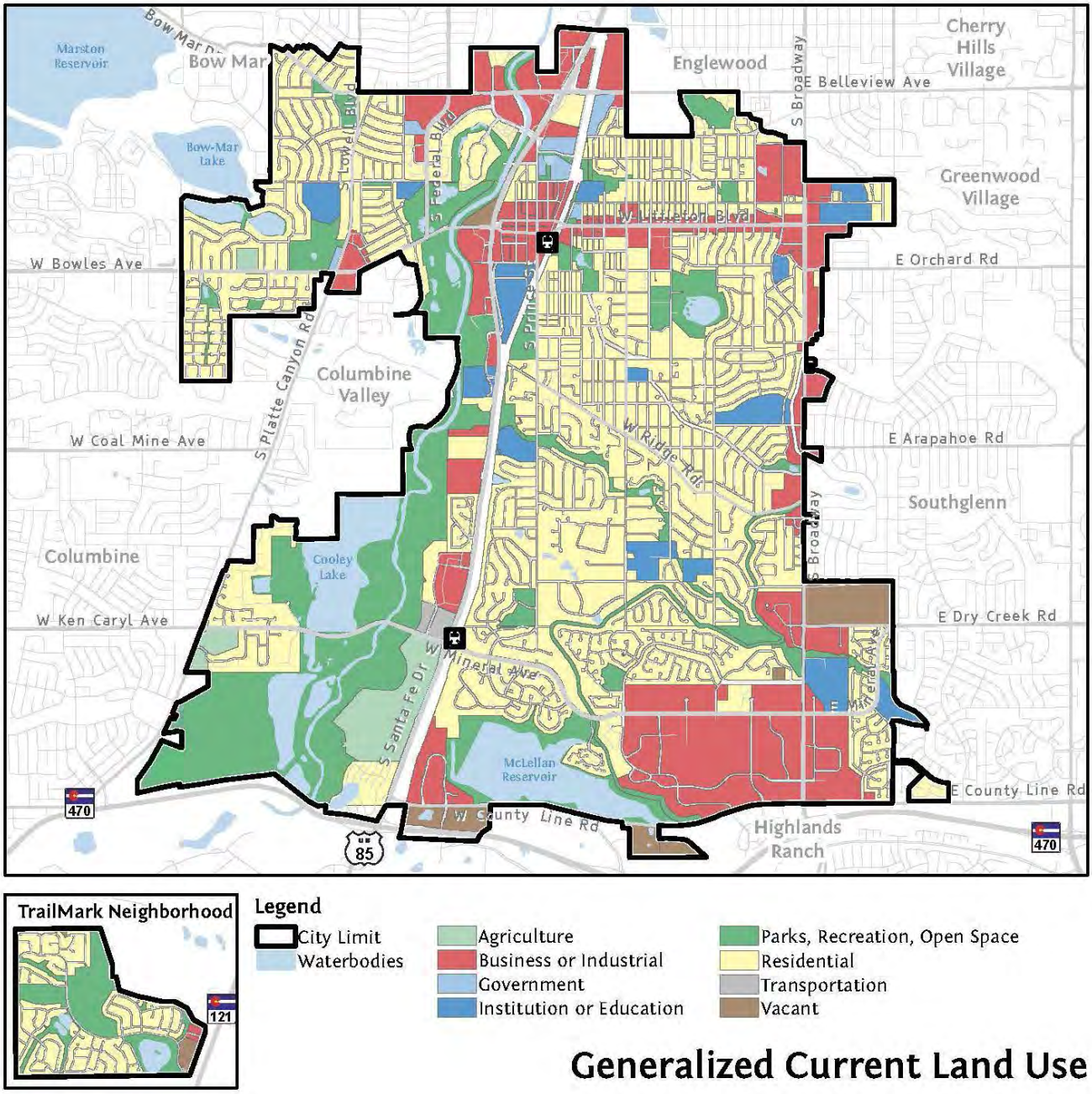


Figure E illustrates the relative location of identified small areas. Neighborhoods are the only small areas that have strictly defined boundaries. Corridors run along the edge of and overlap multiple neighborhoods. Activity Areas are centers of significant activity and may overlap boundaries of both neighborhoods and corridors. Crosshatched areas have not yet been addressed by a small area plan. As planning processes are initiated for a small area, more specific boundaries will be set for that area and this map will be updated to reflect those and any other changes.

Figure F



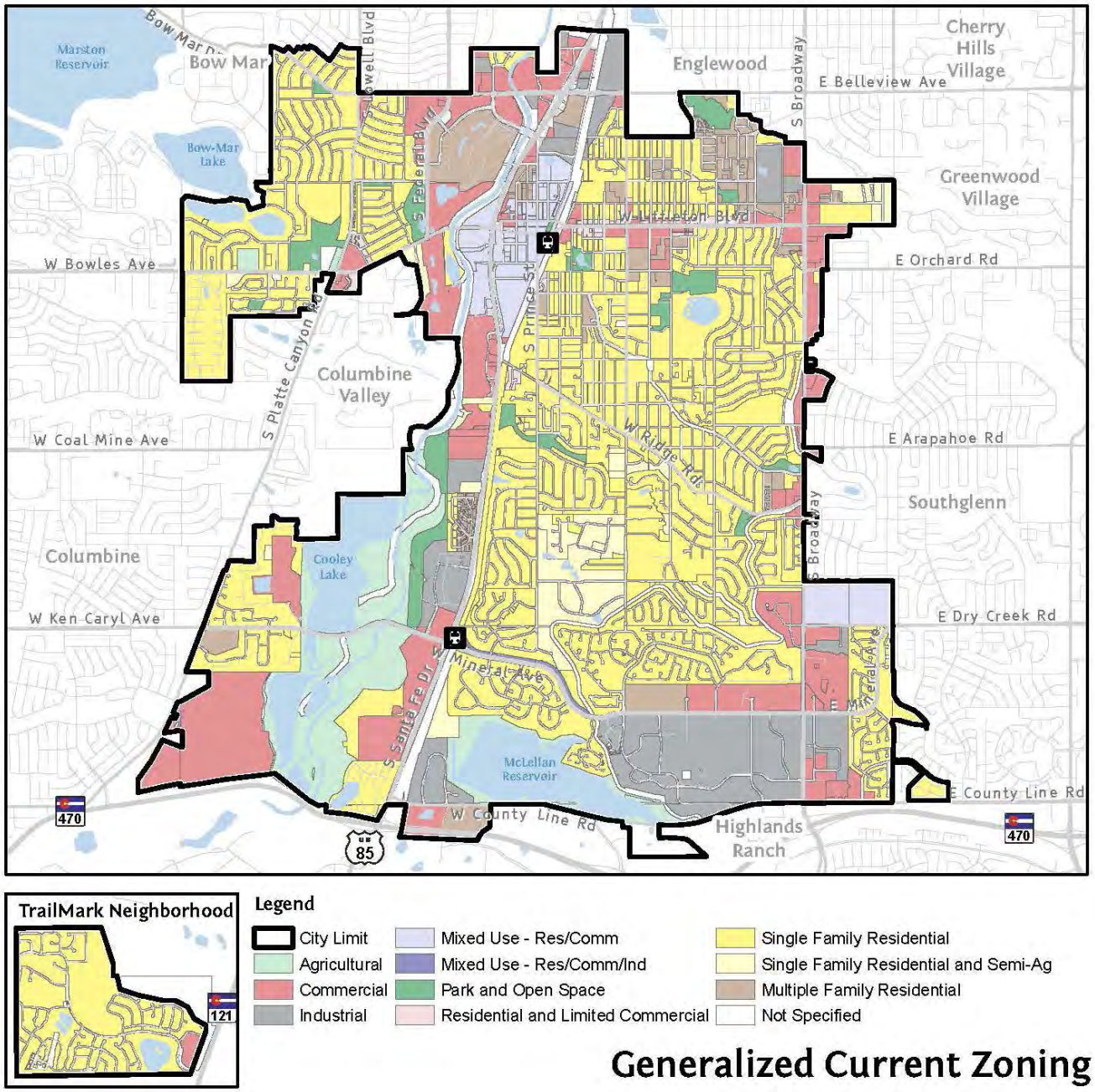
Legend

- City Limit
- Waterbodies
- Agriculture
- Business or Industrial
- Government
- Institution or Education
- Parks, Recreation, Open Space
- Residential
- Transportation
- Vacant

Generalized Current Land Use

Figure F displays a simplified pattern of land use activities and character. Typically, retail and office uses are concentrated along or close to major streets, particularly Broadway, Littleton Boulevard, Mineral Avenue, Belleview Avenue, and South Santa Fe Drive. Residential uses are located between the commercial streets. Most open space and parks adjoin natural bodies of water and drainage ways, including the South Platte River.

Figure G



Generalized Current Zoning

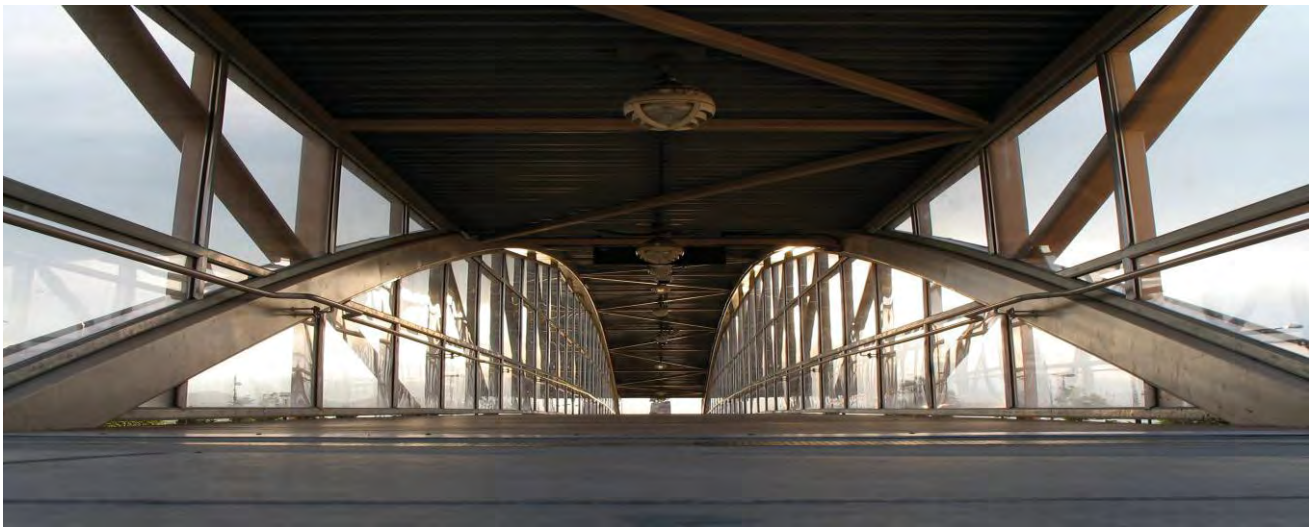
Figure G illustrates how closely Littleton's land uses and zone districts are aligned. The prevalence of mixed-use zone districts makes both the zoning and land use patterns more complex. Several areas, such as portions of SouthPark, have zone districts that may allow land uses with a range of intensities, including park, residential, commercial, and even light industrial uses. In order to determine the overriding character of those areas, it is important to focus on the generalized land uses in those areas rather than relying only on the generalized zoning.

A. Citywide Plan

The *Citywide Plan* is comprised of two sections that guide the city's future land-use-related actions. The first – Part I: Goals and Policies – is based on values that were articulated through Inspire Littleton's two-year process of gathering community ideas and feedback. These values reflect themes that resonated throughout citizen comments on why this community is special and what they would like Littleton to become. These core values form the foundation for the neighborhood, corridor, and activity area plans that will guide development and decision-making. In this combination, future planning, development, land use, and zoning decisions should reflect the overarching Vision and Goals outlined here.

The second section – Part II: Transformative Actions – describes strategic actions necessary to achieve the citywide Goals and Policies, which were outlined in Part I. These actions will guide all underlying plan and policy documents, as well as zoning code changes, budget decisions, and capital investments. To achieve the citizens' vision for Littleton, there must be a collaborative, long-term commitment to these strategic actions.

After the city administration moved to its new offices on West Berry Avenue in the 1970s, citizens raised funds to restore the former Town Hall as a performing arts center and art gallery. It is now home to the Town Hall Arts Center, a professional nonprofit theater company. The center has been producing comedies, musicals, and plays for more than 20 years and going to the theater has become a local institution.



VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF LITTLETON

Littleton is a community that embraces its authentic small town qualities while enjoying the advantages of a metropolitan area. The city should continue to exemplify and promote a sustainable economy, environment, and society.

Littleton will:

- Respect and build upon its history
- Foster its small-town, family-friendly character
- Be home to people of all ages and backgrounds
- Value livability, diversity, and progress
- Promote a vibrant economy for individuals, businesses, and the city as a whole
- Value the importance of its citizens and its natural resources
- Manage and direct change
- Strive for sustainability in economic, environmental, and social decisions
- Raise the bar to increase the quality of community and economic development

PART I: GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 1: A Dynamic Littleton

Foster a vibrant and evolving community.

New residents are attracted to Littleton by housing that has ready access to the city's extensive trail and park systems.

The popularity of outdoor events reflects Littleton residents' appreciation of the outdoors and a strong sense of community.

A new brewery facility, with a restaurant and beer garden, has been approved for the Breckenridge Brewery. On the west side of the site, at 6775 South Santa Fe Drive, is a new headquarters facility for Designs by Sundown. Both are scheduled to open in late 2014 or early 2015. The design is rural vernacular, as called for by design guidelines for the South Santa Fe Corridor.

A Dynamic Littleton - Policies

1.1 Generate more opportunities for residents to live, shop, and play where they work and to work, shop, and play where they live.

1.2 Create the circumstances that will encourage dynamic, innovative employers to locate within the city.

1.3 Draw retail that will provide the goods needed and desired by residents while capturing retail sales from both residents and non-residents.

1.4 As part of the small-area planning process, identify districts within activity areas that are appropriate for, and should be designed for, evening commercial and entertainment uses (see Figure E on page Introduction - 8 for the general locations of the activity areas).

1.5 Identify the activity areas, such as those around the light rail stations, that might benefit from public/private investment. Partner with private-sector individuals and entities to explore, promote, and follow-through with the best prospects.

Littleton Station is a mixed-use development that takes advantage of its proximity to Sterne Park, downtown, the Buck Recreation Center, the shops at Woodlawn, and the Littleton Downtown light rail station.

1.6 Encourage housing that responds to changing demands in the local housing market, allows every generation and income group to call Littleton home, and is otherwise consistent with this plan.

1.7 Evaluate the redevelopment potential of blighted properties. Work with owners throughout the redevelopment process to encourage sustainable uses and structures. Design the redevelopment so that it mitigates its negative effects, if any, on adjacent uses and structures.

1.8 Require that new commercial development be appropriately buffered from adjacent uses.

1.9 Strengthen downtown by:

a. supporting a pedestrian-active street that connects Main Street and Arapahoe Community College and helps activate the area south of Little's Creek.

b. increasing housing diversity and densities to help enliven the streets and support the stores and restaurants.

c. encouraging a diversity of businesses that serve a larger market and provide support services for the needs of downtown residents and employees.

Goal 2: An Outdoor Littleton

Capitalize and expand upon Littleton's most valuable outdoor resources, including the South Platte River and its tributaries; the High Line Canal; and the city's parks, open space, trails, panoramic views, landscape, wildlife, recreational facilities, and public gathering places. Make theser resources as available to the public as possible while protecting and enhancing them.

Soccer in Gallup Park, part of an extensive system of parks throughout Littleton that are managed by South Suburban Park and Recreation.

Biking on the Mary Carter Greenway Trail, which is along the South Platte River and connects to the regional trail system.

The High Line Canal winds through Littleton's neighborhoods and, like the Greenway Trail, connects to the regional trail system.

An Outdoor Littleton - Policies

2.1 Treat the South Platte River and its tributaries as one of the city's most important assets.

a. Inventory, protect, and enhance the river's primary natural areas and wildlife habitat.

b. Beyond the areas categorized as the most important natural areas and wildlife habitats, identify locations adjacent to the river that are appropriate for enlivening urban land uses. For example, consider restaurants with outside dining, multiple-unit housing, outdoor-related retailers, bicycle and rollerblade rentals, and other activities for people of all ages and with a diversity of interests.

c. Expand active river-related recreational opportunities such as rafting, bicycling, walking, kayaking, and fishing.

d. Increase the connections between Downtown Littleton and the river corridor, improve them, and make them more appealing.

2.2 Improve the trail and walkway network throughout the city, expanding the network to become a viable transportation, as well as recreation, alternative.

2.3 Encourage inviting outdoor activity and gathering places in new developments.

2.4 Expand recreational opportunities and attractions in parks with new facilities for residents of all ages. Consider facilities such as a skate park, paddle boat rental, downtown amphitheater, community gardens, and water features.

2.5 When possible, locate parks and improve access to them so that every residence is within a half-mile radius of a park and has a comfortable and inviting walk or bicycle ride to that park.

2.6 In addition to the river and its tributaries, identify, safeguard, and enrich the city's other outdoor resources, including the High Line Canal.

2.7 Maintain the relationship with South Suburban Park and Recreation for the management of parks and recreation facilities and programs.

2.8 Make the healthy choice the easy choice.

An interactive water fountain, like this one at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, would be a great addition to an activity area.

Littleton's parks and recreation facilities, public and private, provide recreational opportunities throughout the year. This is a private pond in the Coventry neighborhood.

Goal 3: A Connected Littleton

Enhance local, regional, and global linkages - physical, social, and technological.

Littleton's and Pedestrian Master Plan proposes expanding and improving the city's bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

RTD's Downtown (above) and Mineral light rail stations are increasingly important as regional connections.

Littleton residents enjoy outdoor concerts and the social connections they foster through events such as this one at Hudson Gardens.

A Connected Littleton - Policies

3.1 Incorporate the concept of complete streets into the city's efforts to better accommodate and reduce conflicts among multiple modes of traffic and to help make the city more pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle-friendly.

3.2 Increase the walkability of neighborhoods and develop an inviting citywide pedestrian network.

3.3 Upgrade and augment the citywide pedestrian and bicycle connections into downtown and RTD's light rail stations.

3.4 Provide inviting connections between commercial development and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

3.5 Provide public gathering places and support public enjoyment of these spaces through activities such as parades, fairs, bazaars, sitting, talking, eating, and playing.

3.6 Generate a creative and comprehensive way-finding system that reinforces Littleton's sense of place, while providing directions within the city.

3.7 Remain technologically current while integrating information and communication technology throughout the city.

3.8 Endorse Metro Vision 2035[1] and its subsequent updates, as approved by the Denver Regtional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and accepted by the City of Littleton.

A coffee shop on Main Street is a perfect community gathering spot. Its outside seating helps activate the street.

A residential/office mixed-use project on Littleton Boulevard takes advantage of great connections to downtown and the light rail station.

[1] Metro Vision 2035 is the region's plan to guide growth, transportation, and environmental quality. The current and any subsequent regional plans can be seen on the Denver Regional Council of Governments' website: DRCOG.org

Goal 4: A Distinctive Littleton

Maintain and expand upon the characteristics that make Littleton an authentic and distinctive community.

The Littleton Museum was the first collecting museum in Colorado to be accepted as a Smithsonian Affiliate.

Littleton is proud of its history as a small agricultural community that has attracted highly desired employers while maintaining its small-town feel and traditions.

The Carnegie Library was designed by Littleton architect Jacques Benedict, who also designed Town Hall, the Carmelite Monastery, and the First Presbyterian Church.

Littleton is blessed with panoramic views of the mountains; this one is from Writer's Vista Park.

A Distinctive Littleton - Policies

4.1. Build upon the assets that are unique to Littleton, such as the Platte River and its adjoining natural areas and Littleton's history, schools, neighborhoods, cultural facilities, and public image.

4.2. Encourage preservation of historic structures, districts, and places that are significant to Littleton history.

4.3. Encourage high quality design, architecture, landscape architecture, and public art throughout Littleton.

4.4. Encourage "architecture of place" and small, independent businesses that differentiate Littleton from nearby municipalities.

4.5. Create distinctive gateways to the city, its downtown, and other points of interest.

4.6 Encourage and support a diversity of community events that are to neighborhood, city, and regional participation by residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Littleton is consistently ranked as one of the best communities in which to raise a family.

Littleton is unique because of its extensive trail system and its ready access to the resources along the South Platte River.

Bemis Library was regularly mentioned when residents were asked "What do you like best about Littleton?"

The growth of Littleton Adventist Hospital has been mirrored by the growth of medical-related businesses, making the health-related industry one of Littleton's most important economic sectors.

PART II: TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIONS

The three actions described below are the most critical steps for achieving the city's Vision, Goals, and Policies. Successful completion of these actions requires a comprehensive and long-term commitment; concerted effort; collaboration between local, regional, and governing agencies; and private-sector investment.

Transformative Action 1: Highlight the River

1.1 Ensure that the river and its riparian areas remain healthy and vibrant.

1.2 Identify the best locations along the river for conservation and those for new development.

1.3 Preserve and protect areas identified for conservation. Apply methods such as purchase, easements, and management to achieve this.

1.4 Set the stage for new development or redevelopment at the identified locations. Use tools such as zoning and capital improvements to accomplish this.

1.5 Attract the best possible development and redevelopment to the identified areas. Employ economic and procedural devices to realize this.

1.6 Focus public and private investments along the river.

1.7 Locate and design public investments so that they optimize their potential to leverage private investments.

South Platte Park has more than 880 acres of open space and 300 species of wildlife.

A few areas along the river close to Downtown Littleton are appropriate for housing, retail, and entertainment uses. Development in appropriate locations along the river might look something like this.

While some areas along the river are appropriate for housing and other development, the majority of the length of the river is more appropriate as a conservation area.

Transformative Action 2: Focus on Activity Areas and Corridors

2.1 Identify and designate as activity areas or corridors those locations or street corridors, respectively, where additional new development or redevelopment is desired and either occurring or anticipated. Designated areas should be those that will have the most transformative impacts on achieving the city's Vision.

See Figure E: Neighborhoods, Corridors, and Activity Areas Map on page 8 of the Introduction.

2.2 Use tools such as small area plans, zoning, capital improvements, and other incentives to set the stage for redevelopment and new development in designated activity areas and corridors.

2.3 Attract desired development and encourage redevelopment in designated activity areas and corridors.

One of several new residences under construction in Downtown Littleton, as of November 2013. This one is a duplex that has replaced a single-family house on South Sycamore Street.

SouthPark is a vibrant office, retail, and residential neighborhood that continues to see new development.

The Ensor property lies just to the south of the Mineral Light Rail Station, between South Platte Park and South Santa Fe Drive.

Transformative Action 3: Direct Littleton's Growth

3.1 Implement the Vision and Goals of this plan by reviewing all of the city's land-related regulations and programs for their ability to implement the plan, and revise the regulations and programs to that end.

3.2 Use this plan as a basis for land-use-related decisions.

3.3 Review and revise this plan necessary in order to remain current.

3.4 Update existing small area plans and develop new ones to address current issues and opportunities

3.5 Implement the city's economic plan; review and revise it as necessary in order to remain current. See the city's website, littletongov.org, for a link to the plan.

3.6 Identify opportunities for municipal annexations that will help the city achieve its Vision and Goals.

The comprehensive plan is the foundation of both quasi-judicial land-use decisions and administrative decision-making. The Citywide Plan provides an overall decision-making framework and the neighborhood, corridor and activity area plans provide more detailed guidance.

Appendix

A. DEFINITIONS

The definitions of terms that are not included here are generally those that can be found by looking in a standard dictionary or by searching on-line.

ACTIVITY AREA

A generalized location that currently is the center of significant activity and/or that may be subject to significant change.

ACTIVITY CORRIDOR

A generalized linear area or stretch of land, identified by a common characteristic or purpose, located adjacent to a transportation facility or waterway, functioning as a center of significant activity, and/or subject to significant change.

ADOPTION

The act of accepting formally and putting into effect.

ARCHITECTURE OF PLACE

Also known as vernacular architecture, the way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques, and materials and adjusting to local conditions.

BUFFER

Something that lessens potentially adverse impacts of a particular land use. Buffers can take many forms, including but not limited to physical separation, construction, or landscaping.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

A permanent construction project or the restoration of some aspect of a property that will either enhance the property's overall value or increase its useful life. Examples include public buildings, roads, street improvements, lighting, parks, and their improvement or rehabilitation.

CITY OF LITTLETON

The area within the boundaries of, and administered by, the municipal government, as opposed to the larger area within the Littleton mailing area, much of which is governed by other jurisdictions.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A city department that is responsible for building safety, code compliance, historic preservation, neighborhood coordination, planning, zoning and development review.

COMPLAN

The name given to the City of Littleton's comprehensive plan as it was first adopted in 1981 and then revised and updated in 2000.

COMPLETE STREET

A street designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists are able to safely move along and across a complete street. See smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The primary long-range master planning document for city planning. Comprehensive plans are broad-based and contain policy-level directives to guide the community's future.

CONNECTION

A link, a channel of communication, an association, or a relationship.

DENSITY

In the case of residential development, a measurement of the number of dwelling units per acre.

DESIGN GUIDELINE

A planning tool that provides direction on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practices. It is often produced with a view to retaining local distinctiveness.

DIVERSITY

Variety. For planning purposes, diversity often refers to a mix of building types, including a variety of housing styles and prices; a mix of land uses; a mix of people, including a mix of ages and backgrounds; and a mix of employment opportunities.

DYNAMIC EMPLOYERS

Employers that are capable of changing or being changed as market dynamics evolve.

ECONOMIC AND PROCEDURAL TOOLS

A combination of technological, regulatory, financial, and other mechanisms that can assist the city, property owners, and developers in achieving the city's Vision and Goals.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Generally refers to the sustained, concerted actions of policy makers and communities to promote the standard of living and economic health of a specific area.

GATEWAY

Something that serves as a boundary, entrance, or means of access; may be marked or framed by a structure, landform, lighting. or landscaping.

GOAL

Broad statement of ideal future conditions as they are defined by the community. Goals set the direction for actions, resource allocation, and planning decisions.

INFILL

Development within the boundaries of an already-developed area.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Basic facilities and services necessary for development to take place, including streets, electricity, sewer, water, lighting, communication, drainage, parks, and public buildings.

INNOVATIVE EMPLOYERS

Employers with information, imagination, and initiative that derive greater or different values from resources to create a new market need or deliver products in a new way for their customers.

LEVERAGE INVESTMENT

To realize a larger amount of private investment through a smaller expenditure of public funds or incentives.

LIVABILITY

A determination of the relative desirability of a location based on criteria in categories such as the availability of amenities, cost of living, crime rates, education, employment, housing, and weather.

MASSING

The overall composition of the exterior of the major volumes of a building, especially when the structure has major and minor elements.

MULTIPLE-UNIT HOUSING

A classification of housing in which multiple separate housing units for residential (i.e. non-commercial) inhabitants are contained within one building or several buildings within one complex. The term distinguishes a type of structure, not a type of ownership. Separate housing units may be individually owned (condominiums) or may be part of a larger complex with a single ownership that rents individual units (apartments).

MUNICIPAL ANNEXATION

The permanent acquisition and incorporation of a territorial entity into another geo-political entity. Usually, it is implied that the territory and population being annexed is the smaller, more peripheral, and weaker of the two merging entities, barring physical size.

NEIGHBORHOOD

A geographic area that has unique characteristics that are recognized by its residents and the community at large.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

One type of small area plan and an element of a citywide comprehensive plan. Consistent with and helps implement the goals of the *Citywide Plan*, but is more specifically directed to one particular neighborhood.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Altering the landscape in any number of ways, encompassing activities ranging from renovation to the purchase of raw land and the subdivision of that land into smaller portions for sale or further development.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE PLAN

A specialized transportation plan that focuses on pedestrian and bicycle movement and the facilities necessary to facilitate it.

PLANNING BOARD

A citizen board established by the City Charter and consisting of seven regular members and two alternate members. The powers and duties of the board address the General Zoning Regulations, other specific zoning decisions such as conditional use applications, floodplain management regulations, recommendations on comprehensive plans, and adoption of development guidelines.

POLICY

A general rule for action focused on a specific issue, derived from more general goals.

REDEVELOPMENT

Any new construction on a site that has pre-existing uses.

RIPARIAN AREA

The interface between land and a river or stream. Of, on, or relating to the banks of a natural course of water.

SCALE

Relative size, based on height, volume, width, and other measurements.

SMALL-TOWN QUALITY/CHARACTER

Defined by pedestrian scale, a strong sense of community, intact neighborhoods, historic structures and sites, diverse land uses, and an enjoyable pedestrian environment.

SUSTAINABLE

Meeting the needs of the present while enhancing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION

Action that will result in marked change for the better.

VISION

A description of the future of the city as imagined if the policies are implemented and the goals met.

WALKABILITY

A measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Influencing factors include the presence and quality of footpaths, sidewalks, or other pedestrian rights-of-way, traffic and road conditions, land-use patterns, building accessibility, and safety.

WAYFINDING

Encompasses all of the ways in which people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place.

WORK PROGRAM

A detailed accounting of how an individual or group proposes accomplishing a specific task, approaching a project, or pitching a new business concept. Sometimes referred to as a "statement of work," a work plan generally includes an introduction or overview of a project or job, a breakdown of how individual project-related tasks will be accomplished, a timeline for completion, and cost projections for implementation. People use work plans for different purposes, each carrying a slightly different definition of content depending on the circumstances.

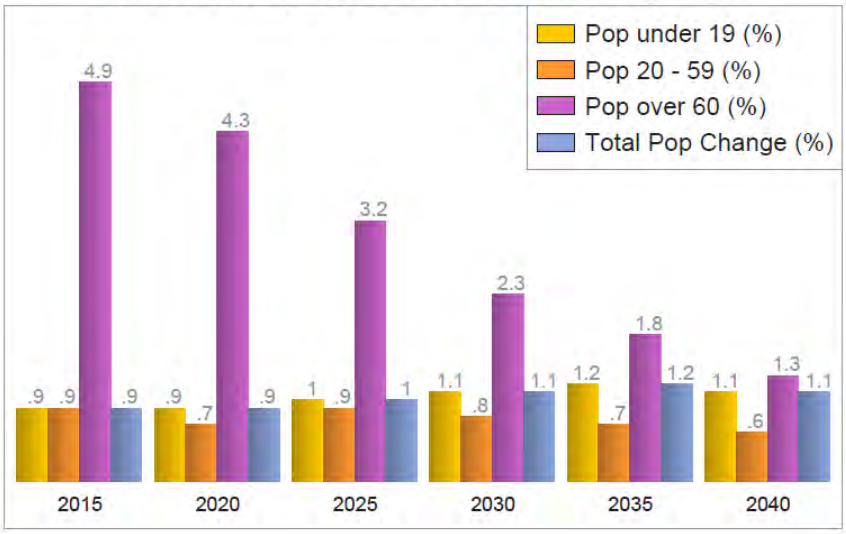
ZONING

The regulation of land uses, the location of those uses, site configurations, and size of structures.

B. STATISTICAL DASHBOARD

Demographics

Forecasted Population Growth by Age[1]



Demographic/Economic Snapshot

	Littleton	Region
Population[1]	41,683	2,763,317
Employment[1]	20,820	1,433,095
Median Age[1]	41	38
Percent of Housing Built Prior to 1980[1]	53%	48%
Average Annual Wage[1]	$79,901	$82,986
Median Household Income[1]	$57,329	$56,360
Poverty Rate[1*]	7%	19%
Percent of Population Over Age 25 with Bachelor's Degree or Higher[1]	43%	41%
Percent of Population with High School Diploma only[1]	18%	21%

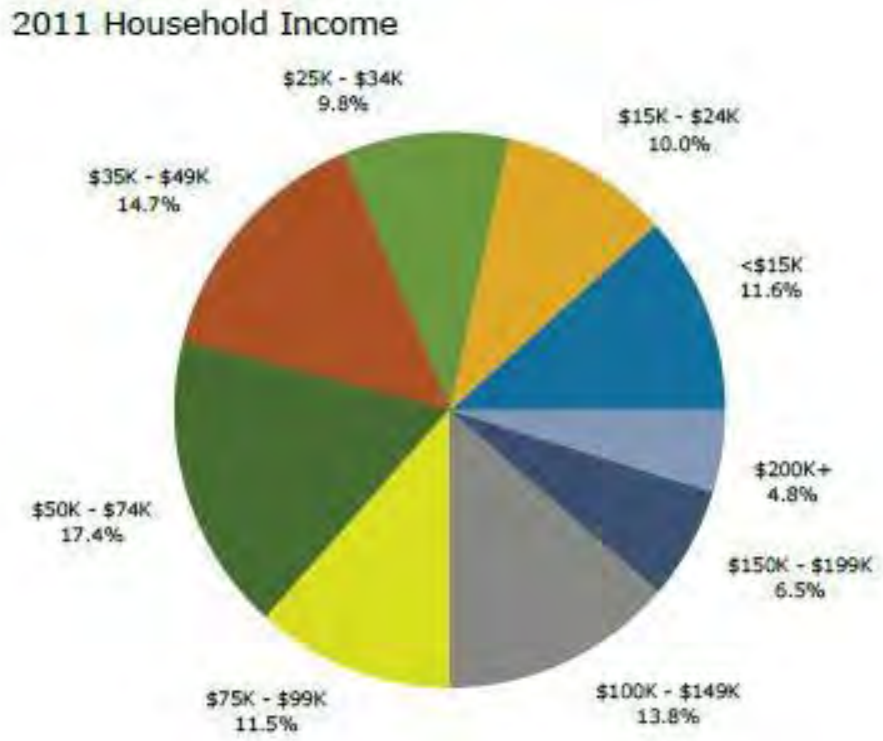
[1]American Community Survey
Five Year Estimates 2007-2011

Population by Age Group, 2011

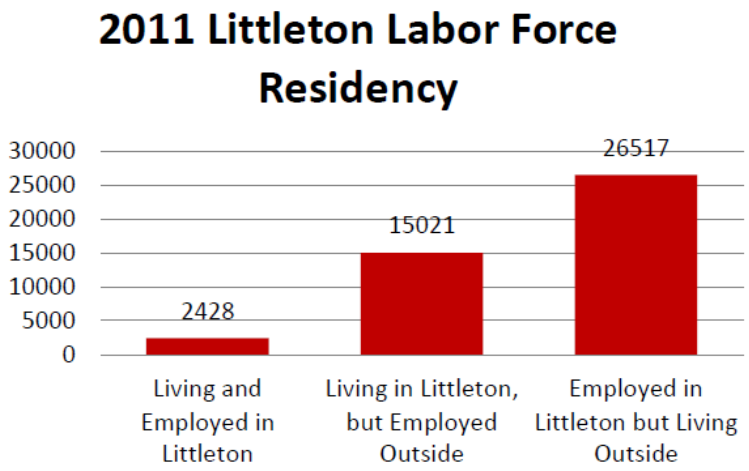
	Littleton	Arapahoe	Douglas	Metro Denver
Total Population	42,557	584,703	292,305	2,847,212
0 to 14	18.6%	21.0%	24.9%	20.5%
15 to 24	11.7%	12.8%	11.2%	13.1%
25 to 34	11.6%	14.7%	10.9%	15.3%
35 to 44	13.2%	14.3%	17.4%	14.6%
45 to 54	15.7%	14.6%	16.7%	14.4%
55 to 64	13.2%	12.1%	11.2%	11.8%
65 +	16.0%	10.4%	7.7%	10.4%
Median Age	41.7	36.0	37.1	36.1

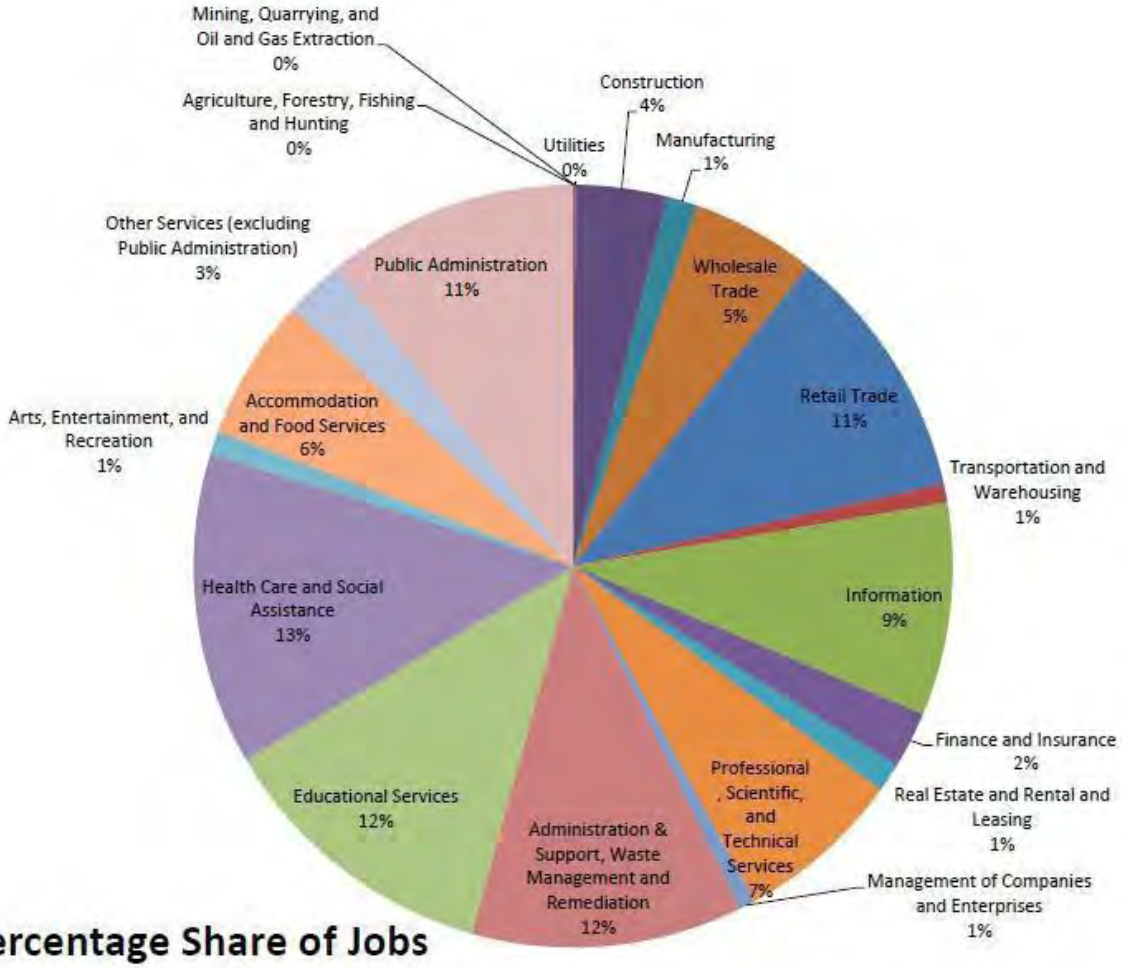
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey, 3-year estimates; Colorado State Demography Office, 2011 Population Estimates.

Household Income



Employment

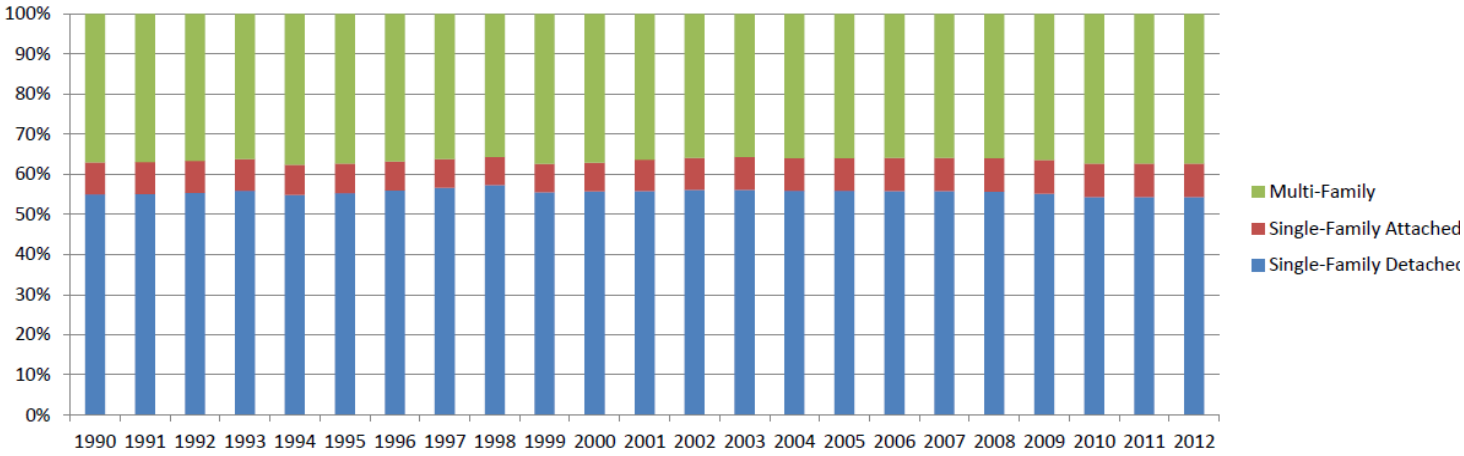


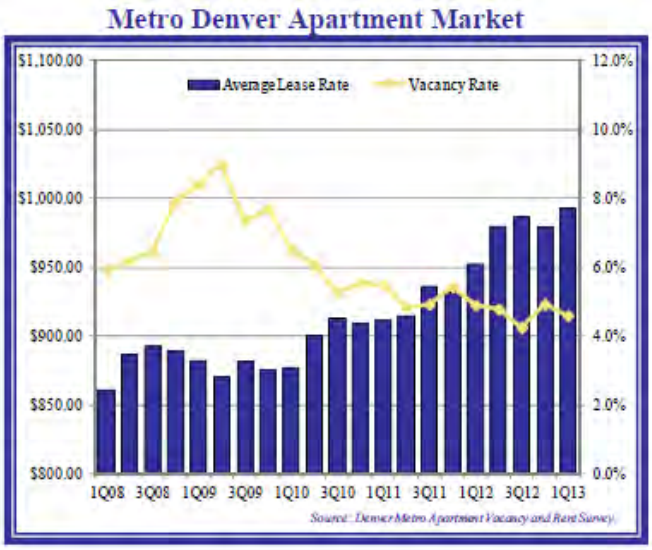


Percentage Share of Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector Littleton, 2011

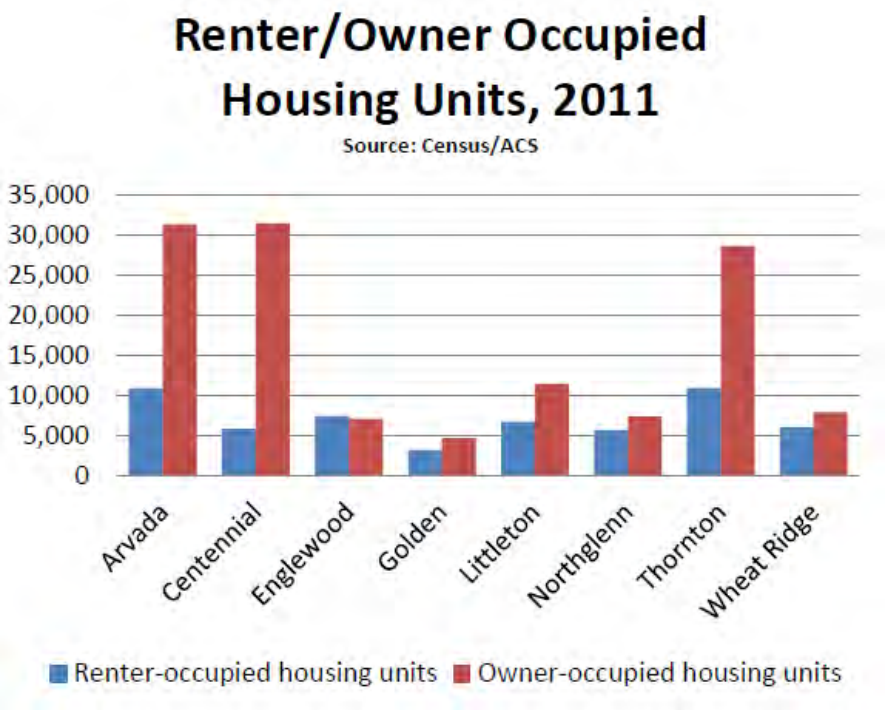
Housing

Littleton: Ratio of total units by type (source: 1990 Census/Home Builders Association of Metro Denver)

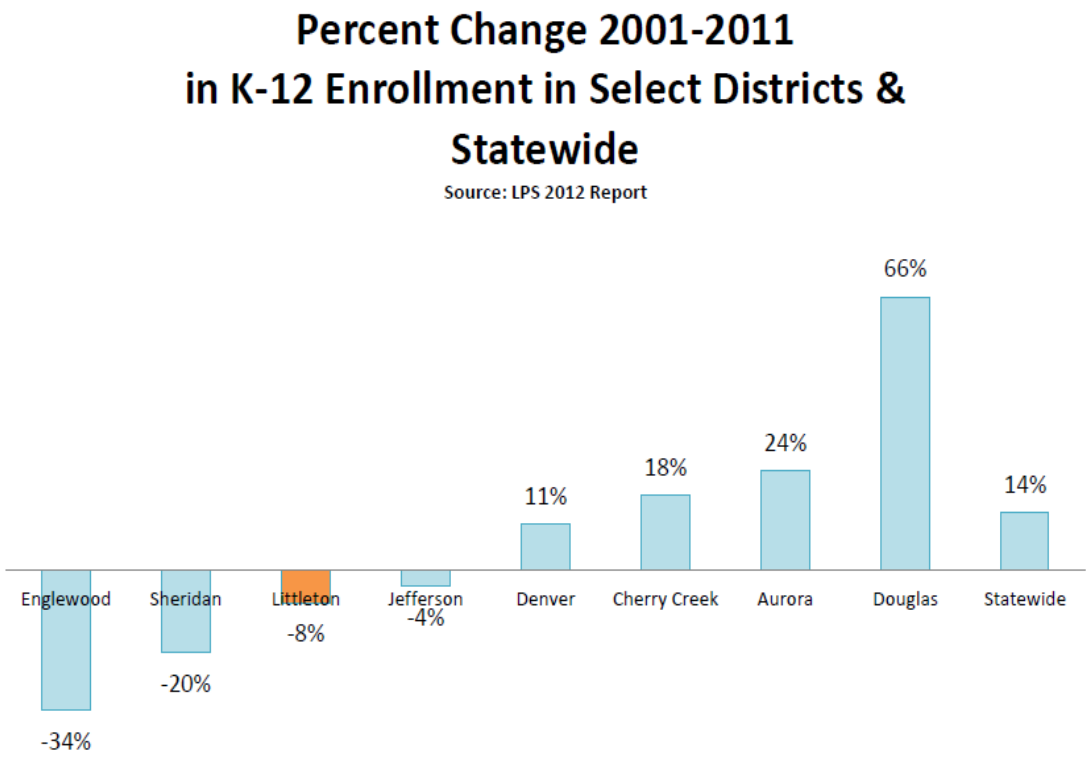




From: Littleton Housing Overview,
Development Research Partners, July 2013


Renter/Owner Occupied Housing Units, 2011
Source: Census/ACS
35,000
30,000
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
Arvada
Centennial
Englewood
Golden
Littleton
Northglenn
Thornton
Wheat Ridge
Renter-occupied housing units
Owner-occupied housing units

Education


Percent Change 2001-2011 in K-12 Enrollment in Select Districts & Statewide
Source: LPS 2012 Report
Englewood -34%
Sheridan -20%
Littleton -8%
Jefferson -4%
Denver 11%
Cherry Creek 18%
Aurora 24%
Douglas 66%
Statewide 14%

C. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Littleton City Council

- Phil Cernanec, Mayor, District III
- Bruce Beckman, Mayor Pro Tem, At-Large
- Randy Stein, District I
- Jerry Valdes, District II
- Debbie Brinkman, District IV
- Peggy Cole, At-Large
- Bruce Stahlman, At-Large

Littleton Planning Board

- Randy Duzan, Chair
- Karina Elrod, Chair Pro Tem
- David Bolt
- Andrew Graham
- Carrie Moore
- Mark Rudnicki
- Curt Samuelson
- LaDonna Baertlein, Alternate 1
- Ed Schroeder, Alternate 2

Contributing Former City Council Member

- James Taylor, District I

Contributing Former Planning Board Members

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- Jennifer Ranville
- Scott Ranville

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- Cathy Weaver, Webmaster

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Graphic design and mapping services

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- Tom Neer, Digital Data Services