



The Southwest Adams County Framework Plan

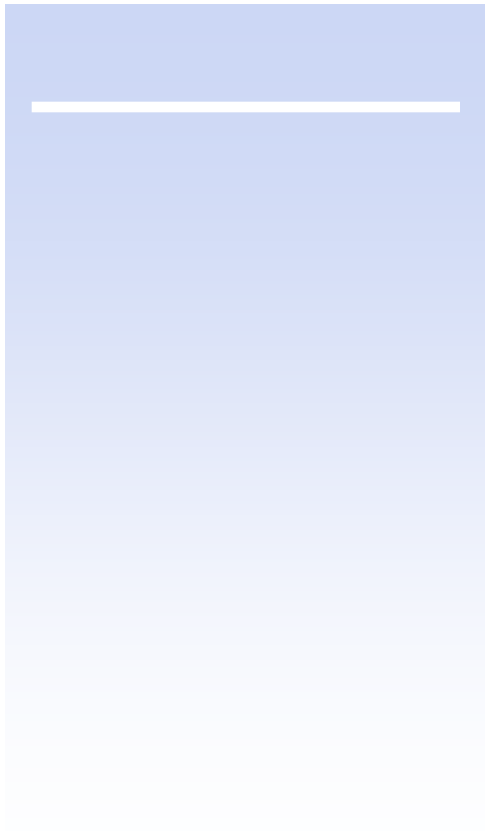


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Introduction

The Framework Plan provides a roadmap for all future planning efforts.

Southwest Adams County contains part of the “first ring” suburbs developed around Denver during the post-WWII era. This diverse area is showing its age and the fact that more investment dollars have been spent elsewhere in past decades. Various land use types can be found in southwest Adams County, including most varieties of residential housing, commercial districts, and industrial areas. Many neighborhoods have evolved to contain a mix of land uses. Each area has its own unique set of circumstances, issues and needs, and stakeholders. This calls for many different approaches to the planning process. The Southwest Adams County Framework Plan was created to guide and organize the multiple planning efforts needed in this area.

Utilizing existing data, surveys and assessments as well as information gleaned from public meetings and outreach, the County has and will continue to identify strengths, weaknesses and needs throughout the area. This information is utilized to develop a rational manner of allocating resources. Since the County cannot address all needs and concerns of all neighborhoods simultaneously, a priority timeline has been developed to guide funding improvements in the southwest part of the county.

THE FRAMEWORK PLAN APPROACH

This Framework Plan is an outline for future planning, and redevelopment efforts in southwest Adams County. The plan provides an inventory of current conditions and needed improvements in the area. It is intended to serve as a guiding document throughout the many years it will take to complete the neighborhood plans, corridor plans, and other redevelopment efforts needed to improve southwestern Adams County. It will also serve to document the process and players involved in revitalizing and redeveloping this part of the County.

*The Framework Plan
will present a
holistic view of the
area.*

Adopted as an amendment to the Adams County Comprehensive Plan, the Framework Plan contains a number of items central to the sub-area planning process. They include:

- Background and demographic information;
- An inventory of existing conditions, constraints, and opportunities;
- A summary of the vision and goals of the County and other area stakeholders;
- A map showing the breakdown of the entire area into potential sub-areas or neighborhoods. More detailed plans may be created for these areas in the future. These plans could include neighborhood plans, and small area plans, redevelopment areas, and economic development plans;
- A process for formation of Organized Citizen Groups for the above identified areas;
- An element calling out planned and needed transportation improvements;
- An assessment of existing and needed infrastructure;
- A market analysis and assessment of economic conditions;
- Prioritization for completion of future planning efforts;
- Identification of parties that have participated in the planning process and those whom will be responsible for future planning and implementation.

Just as important, the Framework Plan will present a holistic view of the area. Since the planning and implementation tasks will be delegated to various groups and individuals, it will be crucial to have an overarching vision of all aspects of the revitalization plan.

Background

The Southwest portion of Adams County contains 74.2% of the residents living in unincorporated areas.

Adams County contains approximately 1,182 square miles, ranging from intensive urban uses in the western portions of the County, to crop and grazing land in the central and eastern portions of the County. Agricultural activities are the single largest land use throughout the County, accounting for more than three quarters of the land area. The central portion of the County primarily produces wheat, while the eastern area is primarily pasture. An extensive network of canals in the northwest supports most of the irrigated farmland in the County. The western section of the County contains a number of urbanized communities, including Brighton, Commerce City, Northglenn, Federal Heights, Thornton, and portions of Aurora, Arvada, and Westminster.

While much of the recent growth in Adams County has occurred within the incorporated cities, a significant amount of new residential and commercial growth has occurred in the unincorporated areas as well. From 1990 to 2000, the population of the southwest part of the county grew by 30%. This is in contrast to the 38.4% growth rate for the entire county. In 2000, a total of 59,443 persons resided in the fifteen Census Tracts considered as the southwestern part of the County for this study. Of these, 11,143 persons lived within the municipalities of Arvada (8)(most of the Adams County portion of Arvada is not included in the study area), Westminster (9,613) and Thornton (1,522). The remaining 48,300 lived in unincorporated Adams County. This comprised 62% of the total population of unincorporated Adams and 13.2% of the total population of the County. All of unincorporated Adams County contained 78,328 residents, or 22.5% of the total County population.

The southwest area contains a significant portion of the commerce and industry in the unincorporated portion of Adams County, as well as parts of the industrialized areas of Commerce City, Thornton, and Westminster. Much of this area is characterized as First Ring suburban development, those areas that sprang up in the 1950's and 1960's. It is relatively old when compared to the newer, more modern

The southwest portion of the County contains most of the older, more urbanized unincorporated areas...

Second Ring and Urban Fringe developments. The leapfrog pattern of growth that has been so prevalent in America during the last half century has resulted in most new development occurring at the outer edge of the region or beyond, leaving much of the older parts of the community neglected. Several major transportation arteries, including three interstate highways, join or cross in southwest Adams County as well. Combined with the presence of the South Platte River, this has left parts of southwestern Adams County underdeveloped or undeveloped.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Adams County Comprehensive Plan covers the entire county geographically. It addresses county-wide and some smaller sub-area issues in a broad, policy minded manner. The Comprehensive Plan is an advisory document with a long range focus. It contains a collection of statements about goals and policies that address important issues such as growth, land use, open space, transportation, and economic development.

The Comprehensive Plan has a section dedicated to the southwestern part of the County. It describes the area like this:

The southwest portion of the County contains most of the older, more urbanized unincorporated areas, and contains a wide range and mix of land uses. As such, the southwest area is subject to a diverse range of issues and challenges. These are briefly summarized below.

Industrial Development Issues

The southwest area of the County contains the largest concentration of industrial land uses, and suffers to some degree from an "industrial wasteland" image. Other issues

*The southwest area
is the gateway to
Adams County.*

include health considerations related to older industrial development, such as failing septic systems, contamination from prior activities, and air quality issues.

Mixed Use Areas

Many portions of the southwest area contain a range of uses within neighborhoods, such as Welby, which includes a diverse mix of residential, industrial, and commercial activities. These areas have the potential for conflicts associated with this mixed land use pattern, particularly as new development occurs.

Commercial Development Patterns

The southwest area contains a considerable amount of older commercial development, typically located in a strip development pattern along the major arterial roadways located south of 88th Avenue and west of I-25. The stabilization and potential redevelopment of these areas will be an ongoing challenge. These areas also serve as potential gateways into the County, placing emphasis on their image.

Municipal/County Coordination

The southwest area adjoins a number of municipalities, including Arvada, Commerce City, Denver, Federal Heights, Thornton, and Westminster. A high degree of coordination will be required between the County and these municipalities if the goals of this Plan are to be realized. One of the particular challenges of this area involves the enclaves of County development in various locations within municipalities.

Maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Plan also provides direction and guidance as to actions to be taken to address these issues. This guidance comes in the form of the Policies and Strategies outlined in the document for the area.

Policy: Maintain and enhance the quality of existing residential neighborhoods.

Strategies: Undertake a more detailed sub-area plan for the Southwest Area in order to gain a greater understanding of land use issues and challenges, and to pinpoint more specific strategies to address those issues.

Continue to make infrastructure improvements to improve health and image, such as installing curbs and gutters, improving roadways, pedestrian/trail connections, and park facilities.

Make service delivery patterns more efficient through intergovernmental agreements with adjacent municipalities or service districts in the area.

Policy: Enhance the quality of existing commercial corridors along Federal Boulevard, Lowell Boulevard, Pecos Street, and Washington Street.

Strategies: Add commercial development standards to the zoning and subdivision regulations to improve the visual appearance and quality of future development along major corridors in the southwest area, including landscaping, streetscape requirements, sign controls, and access management standards.

Revitalize older commercial and industrial areas to preserve jobs and take advantage of existing infrastructure.

Conduct an investigation into alternative financing mechanisms along major corridors and sub-areas (e.g. business improvement districts) as a means of financing recommended improvements.

Policy: Enhance the area's role as an important county gateway.

Strategies: Initiate landscaping, streetscaping, and buffering programs to improve the entryway image of the county as viewed from I-70, I-25, and I-76 and key highway exits into the county.

Require improved buffering for new development along the I-70, I-25, and I-76 corridors, and require screening for new outdoor storage and activities visible from I-70, I-25, and I-76.

Review and update sign regulation provisions, including control of off-premises signs, applicable to private lands visible from I-70, I-25, and I-76 and key highway exits into the county.

Policy: Revitalize older commercial and industrial areas to preserve jobs and take advantage of existing infrastructure.

Strategies: Invest in infrastructure improvements required to attract and support new industrial and commercial developments when the economic advantages are greater than the costs of investment.

Investigate applicability of the federal EPA's Brownfields programs and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment programs to enable industrial and commercial reuse of

Encourage development and redevelopment of clean industry on lands planned for "industrial" uses within the Southwest Area as set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

environmentally contaminated properties in the county.

Adopt performance standards (noise, odor, vibrations, air quality, landscape buffering) for nonresidential uses to avoid negative impacts on surrounding residential uses.

Policy: Encourage development and redevelopment of clean industry on lands planned for "industrial" uses within the Southwest Area as set forth in this Comprehensive Plan.

Strategies: Review and revise industrial land uses allowed by the zoning provisions to permit clean and/or light industrial uses by-right, while either prohibiting specific heavy industrial uses with the potential for significant environmental impacts, or permitting them only after review pursuant to detailed criteria/standards and final approval by the County Commissioners.

As an adopted amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, the Southwest Adams County Framework Plan addresses issues specific to this unique area of the County. This plan is designed to analyze the needs of the community, then organize and coordinate planning, redevelopment, and service efforts in the area between multiple organizations to address these issues in a holistic manner. Its policies and implementation strategies will serve as a guidebook for many years to come.

Planning Process

*One of the purposes
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neighborhoods...*

PROCESS

After meeting with the Planning Commission, the process for the Southwest Adams County Framework Plan began in January 2003. Staff from Adams County Planning and Development began the process of identifying stakeholders, plan participants and partners, and identifying community needs. The Adams County Office of Community Development was also undertaking an intensive Community Needs Assessment at that time. Corona Research was hired as the Assessment consultant in August of 2003 and worked closely with Adams County Planning and OCD staff to undertake the assessment. The Assessment was undertaken countywide in 2004, with special emphasis given to the southwest part of the county.

The Community Needs Assessment involved an extensive citizen survey and a series of meetings with the public, civic groups, and non-profit organizations in the area. Results from the Assessment were published in May, 2004, and are summarized in the Community Needs section of this document.

PLANNING MEETINGS

Neighborhood meetings were held by Adams County staff as part of the survey process for the needs assessment during 2004. One of the purposes of the public meetings was to allow residents to give input and self-identify their neighborhoods, business nodes or corridors, and other unique identifying features. This aided in defining what actually constitutes a neighborhood in this part of the County, rather than the imposition of artificial borders by the government. It also was intended to give residents more up-front input into the planning process and, thereby, a vested interest in the success of future planning efforts. Results from these meetings are integrated into the information gathered during the Community Needs Assessment process. These meetings were also the initial step for residents to create Organized Citizen Groups.

A key element in fostering neighborhood growth is having the involvement of the residents.

ORGANIZED CITIZEN GROUPS

A key element in fostering neighborhood growth is the involvement of residents. Probably the most important aspect of cooperation between local government and residents is the existence of Organized Citizen Groups. Adams County, through the creation of this plan, has established a process for county residents to create their own Organized Citizen Groups to represent them in official business with the County. Organized Citizen Groups organized under the provisions provided here will receive notice of proposed development projects and policy changes and have the right to represent residents in land-use cases. These Organized Citizen Groups will also be the point of contact for Adams County staff when creating neighborhood plans, particularly in the southwest portion of the County.

Other Organized Citizen Group activities may include expressing neighborhood views on land-use issues, providing input on County policies and programs, establishing neighborhood watch programs, coordinating with the Sheriff's Office on crime and safety projects, neighborhood clean-up and beautification, and organizing social or cultural functions such as neighborhood picnics and block parties. Organized Citizen Groups may also apply for funds through the Community Development Block Grant program, if their project meets HUD criteria and is in an area eligible to receive funds.

The next section of the plan outlines the process residents need to follow to establish an Organized Citizen Group. The Senior Long Range Planner will provide assistance to neighborhoods when going through this process.

*...provide for
communication
between the County
and the
neighborhood
associations.*

Purpose

The purpose of these policies is to establish a means for formally recognizing Organized Citizen Groups and to provide for communication between the County and these groups. This is intended to be an additional form of communication between the County and its residents and is not intended to inhibit other citizens or groups from communicating with the County in another manner.

Definition

Organized Citizen Group means any group of people organized within a geographical area for the purpose of acting on issues affecting neighborhood and community livability. An Organized Citizen Group is one that satisfies the following standards.

Standards

In order to be recognized by the County, Organized Citizen Groups must satisfy these standards. The Planning Commission is authorized to determine when an association has met these standards.

1. Membership The membership of a Organized Citizen Group shall not be limited by race, creed, color, sex, age, heritage, national origin, or income. Any resident, business owner or owner's representative, nonprofit organization's representative, or property owner who resides, owns property, or maintains a business within the recognized boundary of an Organized Citizen Group shall be eligible for membership.
2. Boundaries The boundaries of an Organized Citizen Group shall be defined by the association membership. These boundaries must be mutually exclusive of other formally recognized Groups and must remain wholly within unincorporated Adams County. The Planning Commission is authorized to make adjustments to boundaries if necessary to avoid creation of an area that is excluded from any Organized Citizen Group representation.

***Organized Citizen
Group meetings
shall be conducted
in conformance with
public open
meetings law***

3. Bylaws To gain recognition by the County, an Organized Citizen Group must first adopt written bylaws providing:
 - A) Officers be elected on a regular schedule at least bi-annually.
 - B) Meetings shall be conducted in conformance with public open meetings law when the Group meets to act in an advisory capacity to the County. Advisory capacity exists when the County requests or the Group on its own accord seeks to act in an advisory capacity to the County. Written minutes are required according to the open meetings law and those minutes should show minority opinions and a list of voting members. Copies of approved minutes and sign-in lists should be available to the County for public review.
 - C) A description of the OCG boundaries and a current list of the Group's officers and their addresses must be provided to the County annually.
 - D) A minimum of one general meeting shall be held each calendar year and the time, place, and purpose of each meeting be well publicized throughout the area at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
 - E) Neighborhood meetings should be held in a handicap accessible location, with child care available and translation provided for non-English speaking residents.
 - F) The County shall be informed of any changes to the Citizen Group's bylaws.
 - G) Procedures shall be in place describing the number of members required for a quorum, how votes are taken and recorded, and the action necessary to file an appeal.

The County will provide support for activities contained within an adopted neighborhood plan.

County Responsibilities

Adams County shall provide recognized Organized Citizen Groups with the following:

1. Provide support to neighborhood residents when forming an Organized Citizen Group (such as facilitating public meetings and creating bylaws).
2. Written notification to the Organized Citizen Group's Board about meetings of the Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners, and any advisory board or commission on projects which may affect the Group.
3. General information regarding County services and activities available to residents of the neighborhood.
4. Assistance with creating a neighborhood plan. This should include but not be limited to technical assistance with neighborhood mapping, research, plan layout and structure, and printing.
5. Support for implementing designated activities contained in an adopted neighborhood plan.

The Goat Hill neighborhood will be the first sub-area to go through the neighborhood planning process.

During the planning process for the Framework plan, some areas of the county were identified as prospects for future sub-area planning efforts. The remaining areas will be the subject of future plans.

GOAT HILL

This area, defined roughly as Lowell Boulevard to the Colorado Southern Railroad line and 64th Avenue north to Westminster, will be the first sub-area to go through the neighborhood planning process. Several community meetings were held in early 2005 and a Neighborhood Committee was formed.

BERKELEY

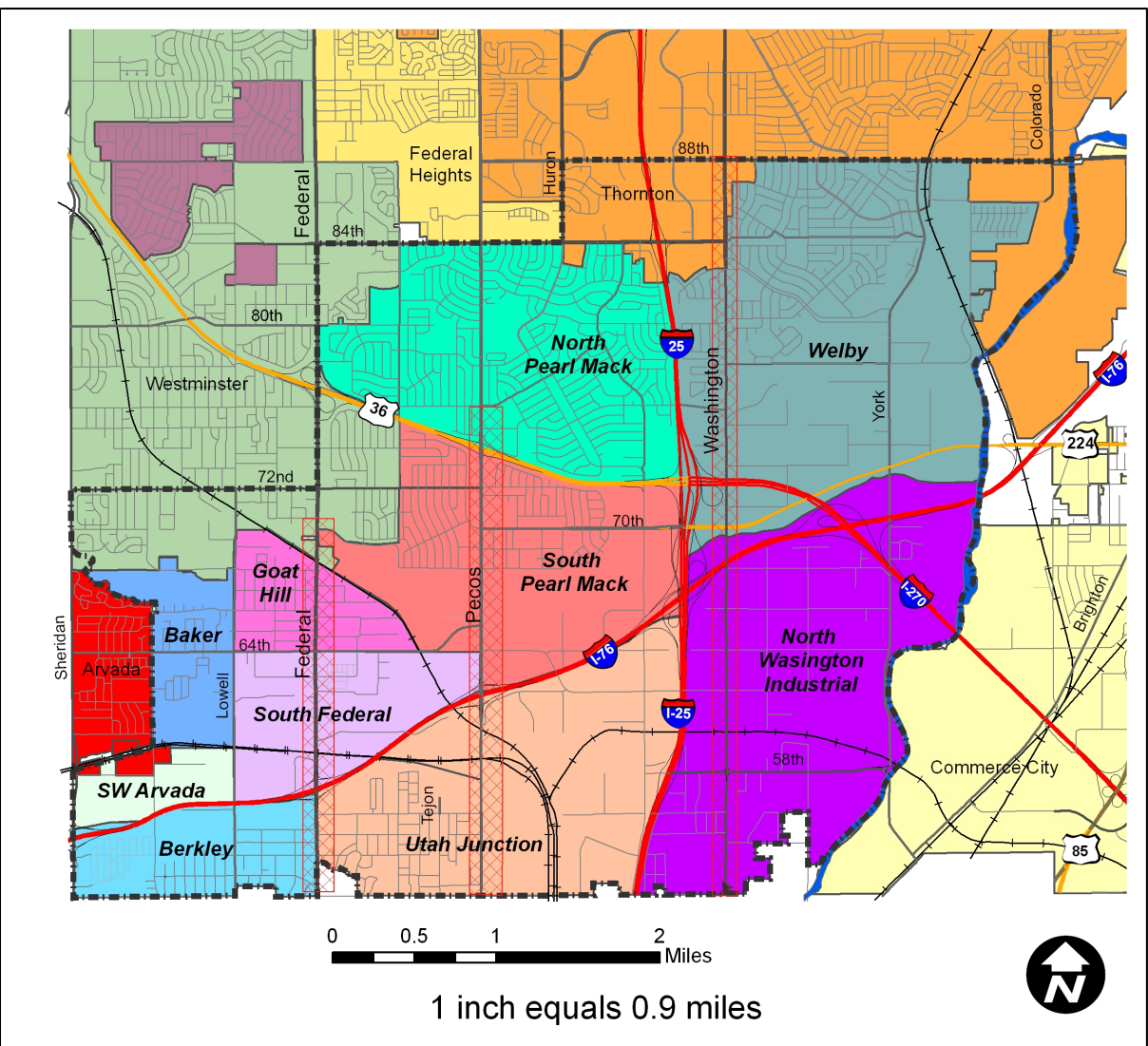
The Berkeley Neighborhood, south of I-76 between Federal and Sheridan Boulevards, has an existing neighborhood plan done jointly with Denver. Adams County Planning is proposing revising the Adams County portion of the plan in cooperation with the Berkeley Neighborhood Association.

SOUTHEAST ARVADA

A plan has been completed by the City of Arvada for the southeastern portion of the community, including a portion of unincorporated Adams County from Lowell Boulevard to Sheridan Boulevard and from the BNSF rail line south to I-76. This plan will be recognized by Adams County, as planning staff have participated in that planning process.

OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS

The remaining portions of the study area have been divided as shown in Figure A on the following page. Outreach will be done to residents of these areas to finalize sub-area boundaries and initiate neighborhood plans according to need and interest.



Legend

- South West Boundary
- South Platte River
- Commercial Corridor

Cities

- Westminster
- Thornton
- Federal Heights
- Commerce City
- Arvada

Neighborhoods

- SE Arvada
- Berkeley
- North Washington Industrial
- Utah Junction
- Welby
- North Perlmack
- South Perlmack
- Shaw Heights
- Goat Hill
- South Federal
- Baker

Potential Future Planning Areas



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Figure A

Existing Conditions

*Fifteen Census
Tracts are included
within the
boundaries of this
Framework Plan.*

DEMOGRAPHICS

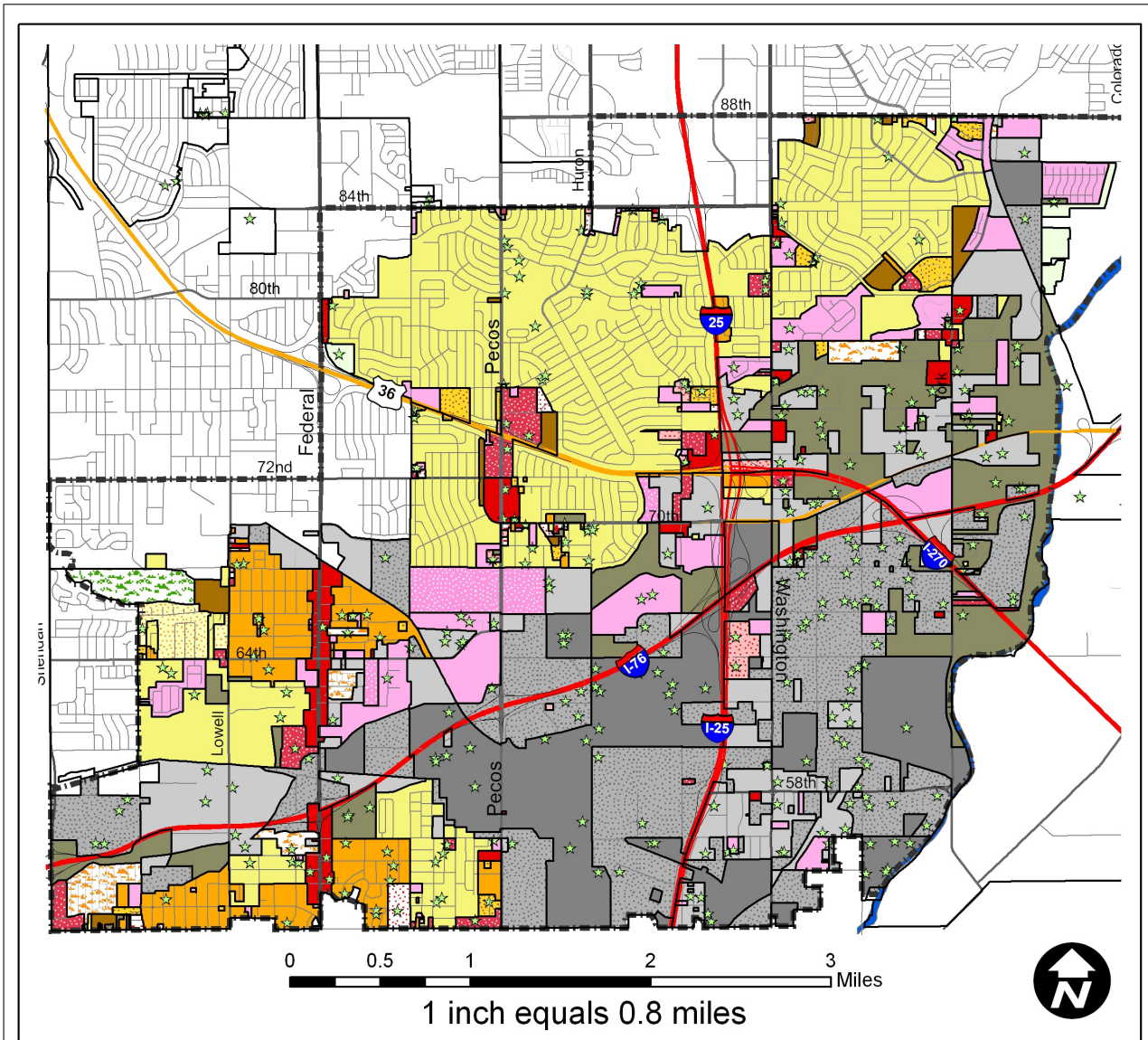
There are fifteen Census Tracts in the southwestern part of the County that comprise this study. A map of these Census Tracts is shown in Figure B on the next page. Some basic demographic information from Census 2000 is provided in the table on page 20. This table compares these southwestern Census Tracts with the whole of Adams County. Small portions of the cities of Westminster and Thornton are contained within these census tracts and are included in this data.

These demographic statistics provide a snapshot of this part of the County. As compared to the County in general, there are a higher proportion of Hispanic residents, incomes are lower, poverty rates are higher, homes are older and have a higher percentage of renters.

The Census Bureau also breaks down some unincorporated areas of the County into Census Designated Places (CDP) for easier statistical management. A profile of social, economic, and housing conditions is tabulated for each CDP. The five CDP defined in southwestern Adams County are Berkeley, North Washington, Sherrelwood, Twin Lakes and Welby. Each of these detailed profiles is included in **Appendix 1** of this document along with a map depicting the CDP boundaries.

Figure B

Category	Southwest		Adams County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population	59,443	16.3%	363,857	100%
Race				
White	42,949	72.3%	281,231	77.3%
Black	779	1.3%	10,818	3.0%
Native American	806	1.4%	4,321	1.2%
Asian	2,734	4.6%	11,662	3.2%
Hawaiian or	92	0.2%	434	0.1%
Other	9,689	16.3%	42,698	11.7%
2 or More Races	2,394	4.0%	12,693	3.5%
Hispanic	23,982	40.3%	102,585	28.2%
Median Household Income in 1999	\$29,335	n/a	\$47,323	n/a
1999 Per Capita Income	\$12,695	n/a	\$19,944	n/a
Families Below Poverty	1,079	6.9%	5,989	6.5%
Housing Units	21,647	16.3%	132,594	100%
Occupied	21,090	97.4%	128,156	96.7%
Vacant	557	2.6%	4,438	3.3%
Owner occupied	13,960	66.2%	90,436	70.6
Renter occupied	7,130	33.8%	37,720	29.4%
Median Year Structure Built	1968	n/a	1976	n/a



Legend

- Zoning Line
- ☆ Special Zoning Conditions
- South Platte River
- South West Boundary

Adams Co. Zoning District

	A-1		C-0		P-U-D
	A-2		C-1		P-U-D(P)
	A-3		C-2		M-H
	CO		C-3		R-1-A
			C-4		R-1-C
			C-5		R-2
			I-1		R-3
			I-2		R-4
			I-3		R-E

Current Zoning Map



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Figure D

*Southwest Adams
County is a
patchwork of
various zoning
designations.*

LAND USE

The unincorporated areas of southwest Adams County are sandwiched between the cities of Arvada, Commerce City, Denver, Federal Heights, Thornton, and Westminster. Some unincorporated enclaves also exist within these cities. The area in consideration for the Framework Plan includes fifteen census tracts encompassing 12,791 acres. Ranging from the lowland valley of the South Platte River on the east, to the hills of Federal Heights on the west, the study area is quite varied. The northern portion of these census tracts is dominated by incorporated residential areas. On the south are the primary industrial districts and commercial nodes.

ZONING

Southwest Adams County is a patchwork of various zoning designations. Figure C on page 21 shows 2005 zoning of the area. Many of the Industrial zones of the County are in this area. There is also Commercial zoning along major road corridors and other areas with older, established Residential zones.

Flammable Gas Overlay District

Adams County Zone District Regulations identify areas falling within the Flammable Gas Overlay.

It is the purpose of the Flammable Gas Overlay District to establish reasonable and uniform limitations, safeguards, and controls over uses of land designated as and/or adjacent to an operating or former solid waste disposal site. Any building, excavation, construction, or other use proposed in this zone district shall require testing and/or mitigation related to flammable gas, as specified in this section, prior to obtaining a building permit and after receiving a certificate of occupancy. The requirements of this section are intended to assure the protection of life and property from such related hazards as flammable gas, gas migration, asphyxiation, and explosion.

There are 87 known landfills located within the study area of this project.

Mineral Conservation Overlay District

Map E also shows areas designated as Mineral Conservation Overlay. The Zone District Regulations define the purpose of this district as such:

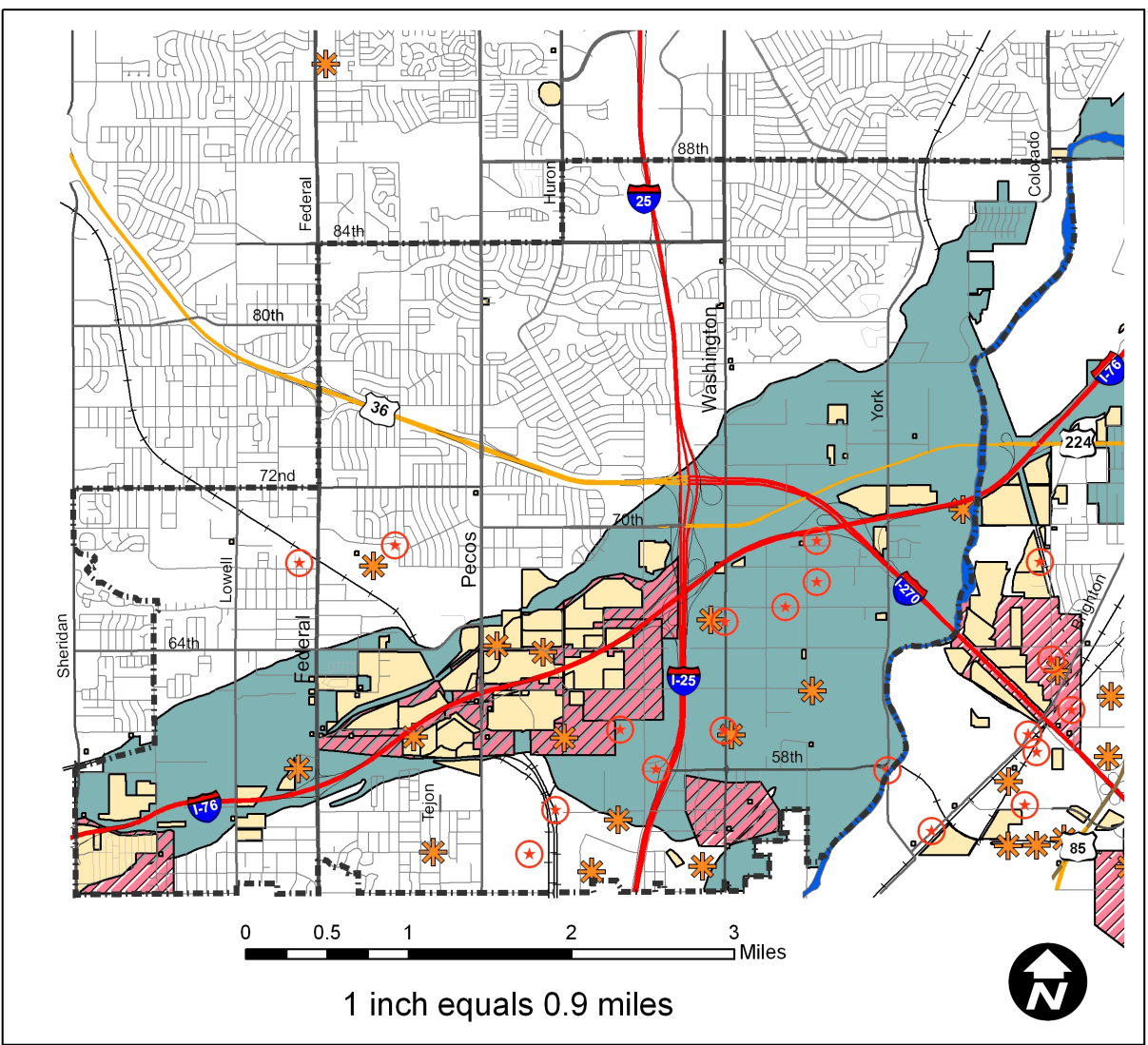
The purpose of this district is to establish reasonable and uniform limitations, safeguards, and controls for the conservation and wise utilization of natural resources and for rehabilitation of excavated land. Land within this classification is designated as containing commercial mineral deposits in sufficient size parcels and in areas where extraction and rehabilitation can be undertaken while still protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the area and the County. In cases where the location of the district or use abuts other zoning or use of land, structures, excavation, and rehabilitation may be restricted to be compatible with and protect the adjoining area.

ENVIRONMENT

The following section outlines where and to what extent development in this part of the County is restricted by environmental conditions. Unincorporated Adams County contains much of the industry in the area. Along with the products and jobs industry produces usually comes waste and pollution. There are several categories of these environmental hazards found in this part of the County, including landfills, superfund sites, and ground or groundwater pollution.

Landfills

There are 87 known landfills located within the study area of this project. Figure D on the following page shows the general location of these landfills. Most lay in or near the floodplains of the major watersheds. There are other landfills further along the South Platte River and along Sand Creek outside the study area.



Legend

- South West Boundary
- South Platte River

Environmental Constraints

- Toxic Contamination
- Superfund Sites
- Landfills
- Gas Overlay
- Mineral Conservation

Environmental Hazard Map



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Figure D

Contaminated Sites

Within the general study area, there have been twelve sites identified as contaminated with toxic materials. There are also seventeen Federally designated Superfund sites. There are also other contaminated sites nearby outside of the study area as shown on the map on the following page.

Floodplains

Two major watersheds run through the study area, Clear Creek and the South Platte River. Construction of structures is highly restricted in floodplains. And simply raising the elevation of a structure above projected flood levels does not protect against surges, debris carried by flood waters, and erosion and scour. A map of the area's floodplains is provided in Figure E below.

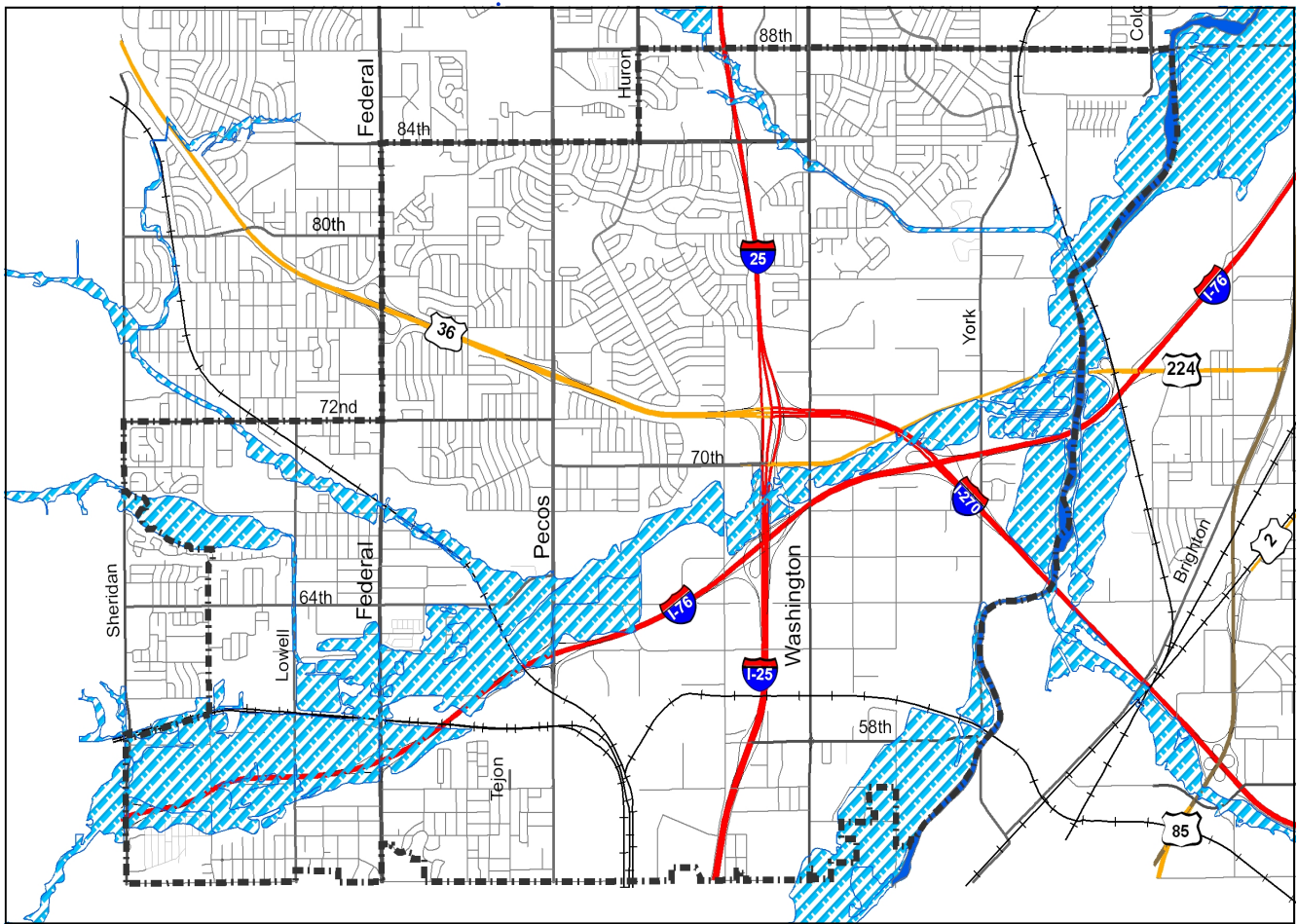


Figure E

Some of the older developed areas of the county were developed without much regard for drainage.

Some of the older developed areas of the county were developed without much regard for drainage. Consequently, many of the neighborhoods in the study area have drainage problems. A number of drainage master plans have been prepared to identify areas of concern and solutions to those problems, and to guide new development in such a way that new problems are not created. A number of 100-year floodplains have also been mapped in order to guide new development and redevelopment away from hazardous areas. A list of Flood Hazard Area Delineation (FHAD) and Master Plan reports located within the study area is provided below.

1. "Major Drainageway Planning, South Platte River in Adams County, Colorado," April 2002
2. "Flood hazard Area Delineation, South Platte River, Adams County, Colorado," April, 2005
3. "Flood hazard Area Delineation, Clear Creek, Adams County & Jefferson County," November, 1979
4. "Major Drainageway Planning, Lower Clear Creek," October, 1981
5. "Major Drainageway Planning, Lower Clear Creek, Phase B Update," June 1988
6. "Utah Junction Stormwater Outfall Systems Plan, Adams County, Colorado," March, 1991
7. "Major Drainageway Planning, Hidden Lake-Bates Lake," November, 1975
8. "Flood hazard Area Delineation, Little Dry Creek (ADCO)," June, 1978
9. "Major Drainageway Planning, Little Dry Creek (ADCO)," April, 1979
10. "Niver Creek Watershed, Major Drainageway Planning Study, Preliminary Design Report," September, 1997

11. "Outfall Systems Planning, Western Hills Area," December, 1992
12. "54th and Pecos, Outfall Systems Planning Study, Preliminary Design," February, 1989
13. "Globeville-Utah Junction Watershed, Outfall Systems Planning Study, Preliminary Design Report," February, 2000

Please note that a new FHAD for Clear Creek will be published in late 2005 and a master plan update study will begin later this year. Parts of some of these studies are outdated due to development or implementation of the plan, but they are always a good starting point for any development project inquiry.

Capital Needs

*Southwest Adams
County contains the
confluence of
several major
regional
transportation
routes.*

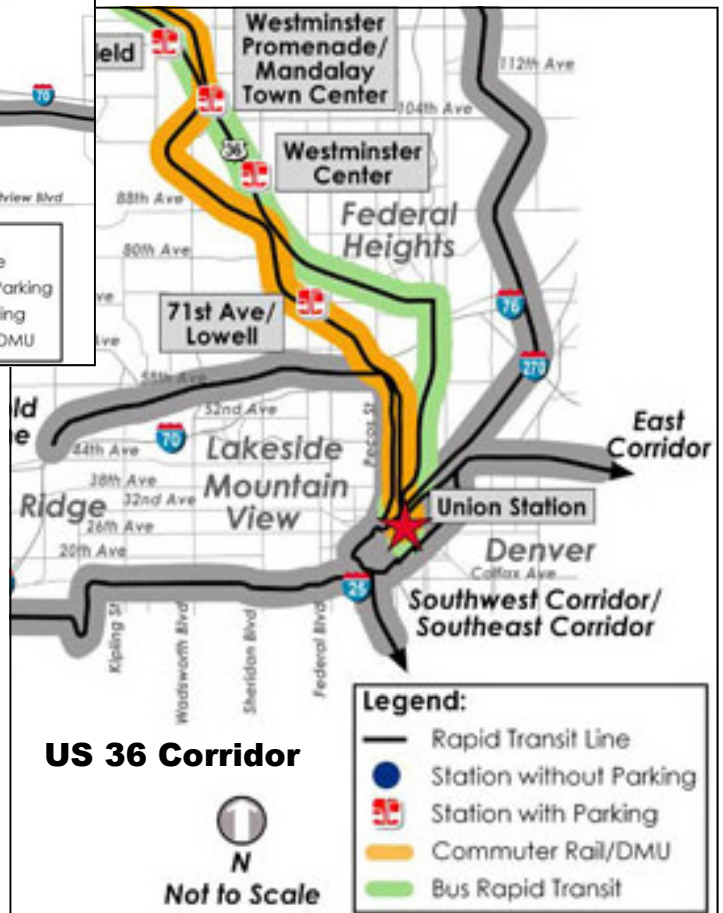
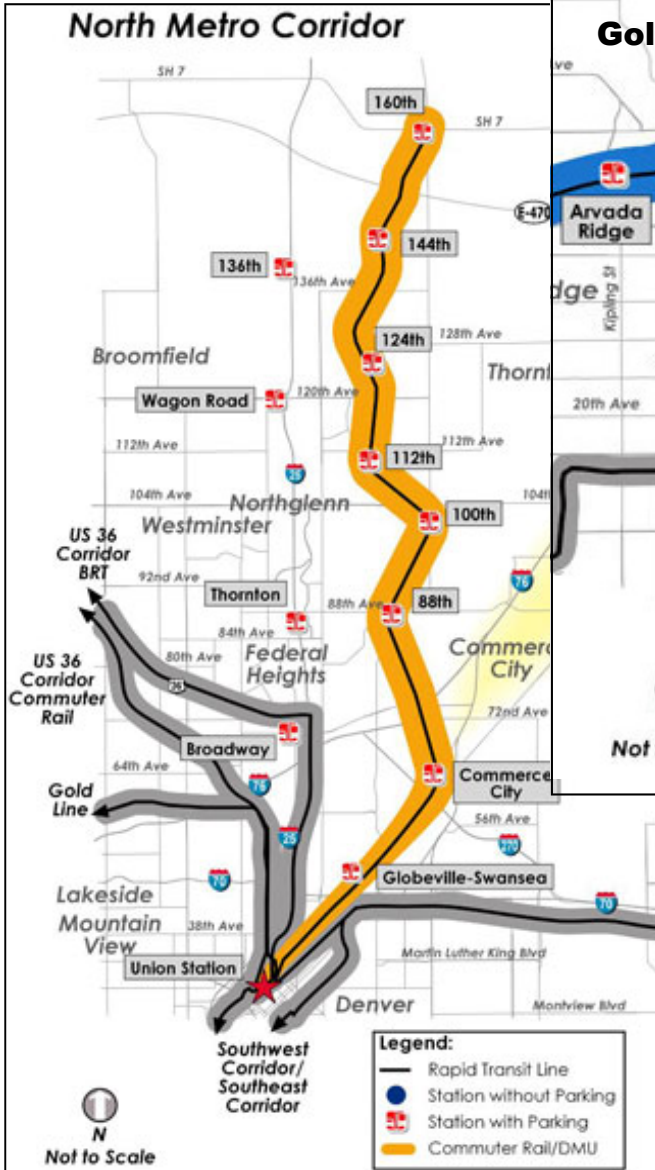
This section provides information on planned capital improvements and further infrastructure needs in southwest Adams County. The intent of providing this information is to assist in the efficient coordination of future projects in the area amongst the various agencies involved.

TRANSPORTATION

Southwest Adams County contains the confluence of several major regional transportation routes. Interstates I-25, I-76, and I-270 and Highway 36 all intersect here. These limited access freeways, several creeks, freight rail tracks and the South Platte River, create multiple barriers to convenient transportation. Figure E on page 25 demonstrates this graphically.

The most influential factor affecting transportation in this area of the county during upcoming years will be the FasTracks project. Approved by metro voters in 2004, FasTracks will expand mass transit through the plan area. Improvements will include expanded bus service, a light rail line across southwestern Adams County through Arvada, expansion of the Highway 36 corridor including a commuter rail line, and another light rail line through the east side of the study area traveling north into Thornton. These projects will greatly influence land use patterns due to transit oriented development and redevelopment around the stations.

There are thirteen light-rail stations currently slated for construction in Adams County under FasTracks. Five stations are planned for the Framework Plan area in or near unincorporated Adams County. They are on the Gold Line at Pecos Street, Federal Boulevard, and Sheridan Boulevard; on the US 36 commuter rail line at Irving Street and 71st Avenue; and on the North Line at 88th and Welby Road. Conceptual maps of these three lines are shown on the next page. County staff is currently working with the Regional Transportation District in their efforts to obtain the needed rights-of-way and finalize the design of each project. Construction on all three lines will begin by 2011 and finish by 2015.



...alleviate many automobile traffic congestion problems in the area and make for more efficient rail freight operations...

Freight Rail

Another key transportation project involving railways is the Utah Junction Re-Alignment. The main focus of this project is to realign tracks north of Union Pacific Railroad's (UPRR) North Yard, located east of Pecos Street between 48th and 58th Avenues. The North Yard is a key point for railroad operations in this area. UPRR will construct east-west mainlines so that both eastbound and westbound trains can proceed through Denver without entering the North Yard and reversing directions. This will alleviate many automobile traffic congestion problems in the area and make for more efficient rail freight operations, both of which will have the effect of reducing emissions for cleaner air. This project is underway and will be completed in several phases.

The new railroad line will cross four Superfund sites; sites that are the highest priority for hazardous waste remediation. Construction of the line will either not impact contamination cleanup activities or will serve to enhance and continue them. This project has involved the cooperation of multiple parties including UPRR, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, RTD, CDOT, Adams County, and the City and County of Denver

City of Thornton Roadway Plan

Part of the southwest study area falls within the planning area for the City of Thornton. Lane and functional class designations from the City of Thornton 2030 Roadway Plan are shown in Figure F on the next page. Areas within the city limits will also be subject to the Future Land Use Plan in the City of Thornton Comprehensive Plan.

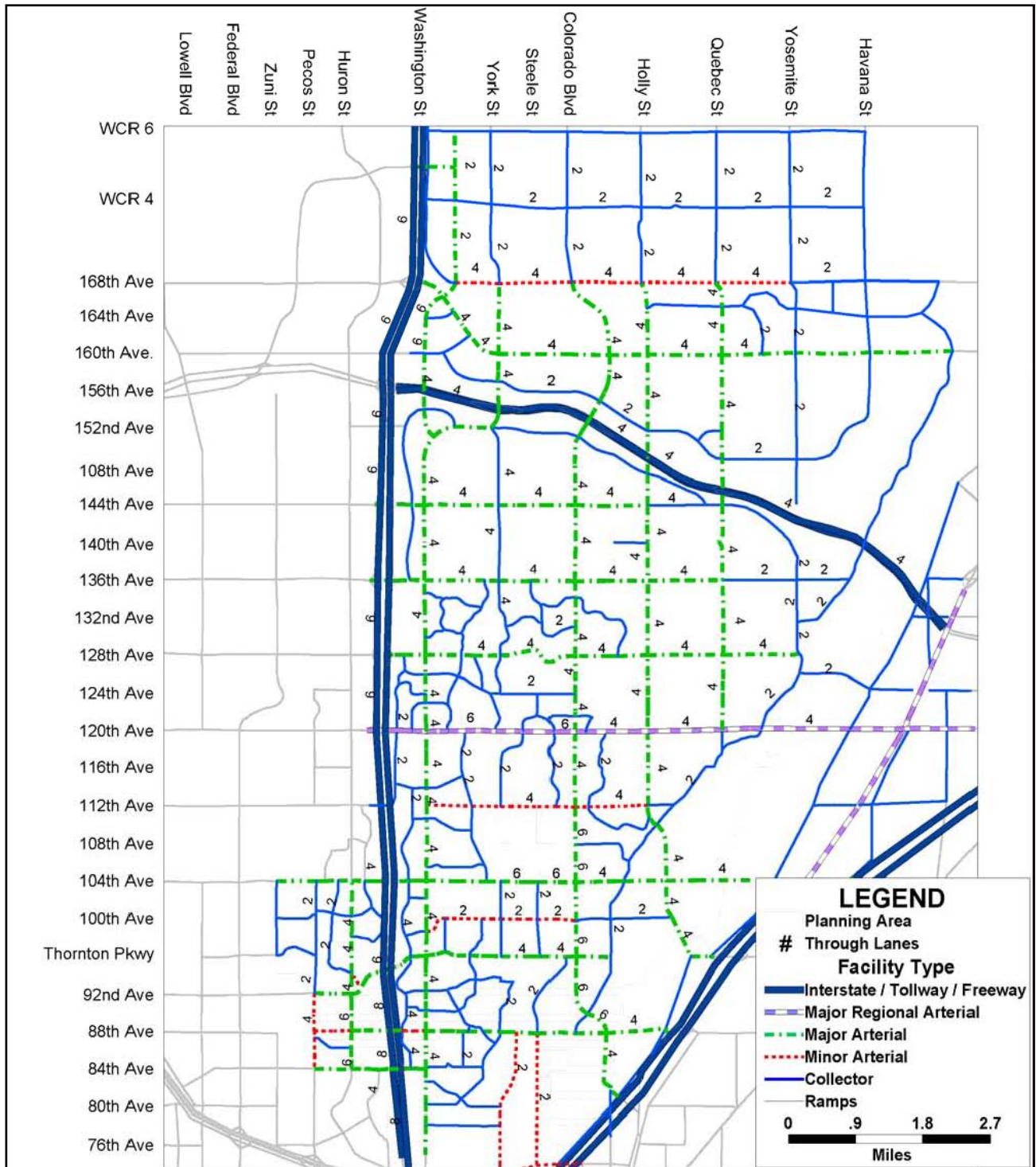


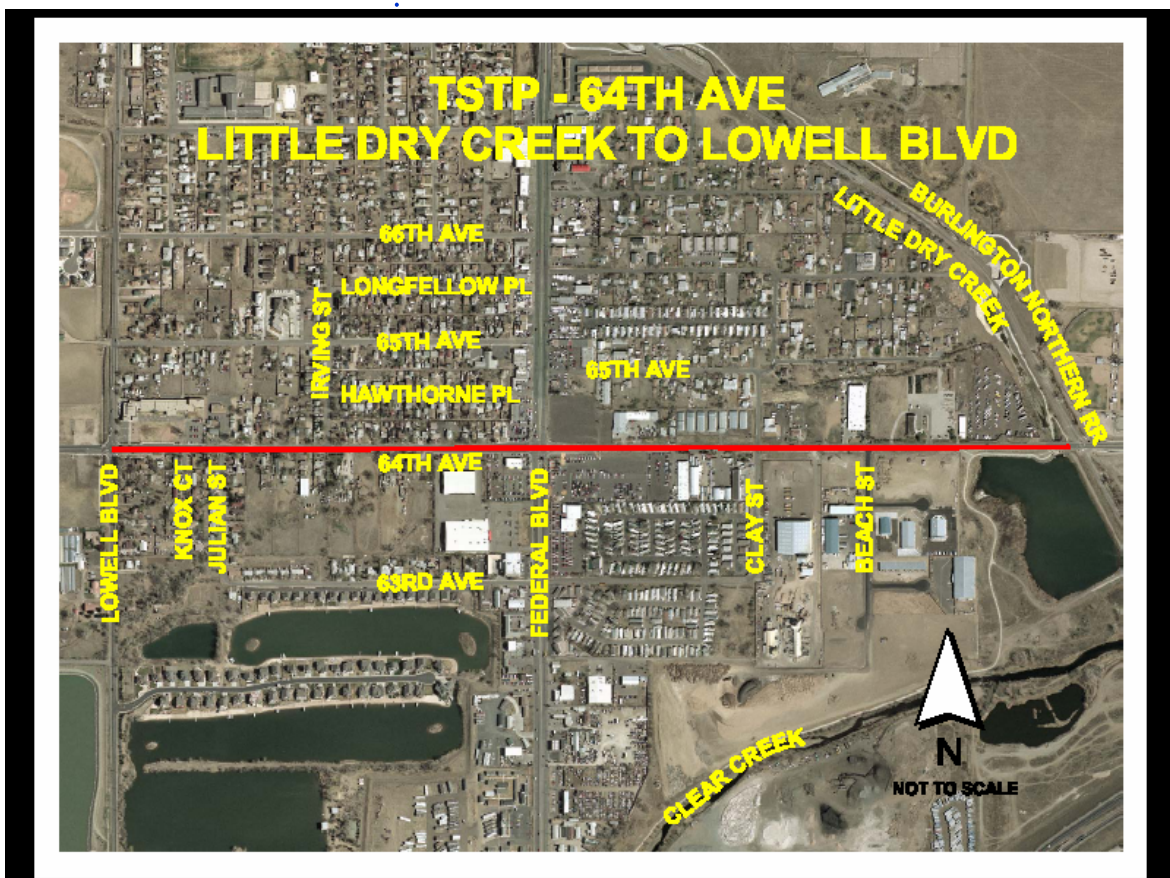
Figure F
City of Thornton 2030 Roadway Plan

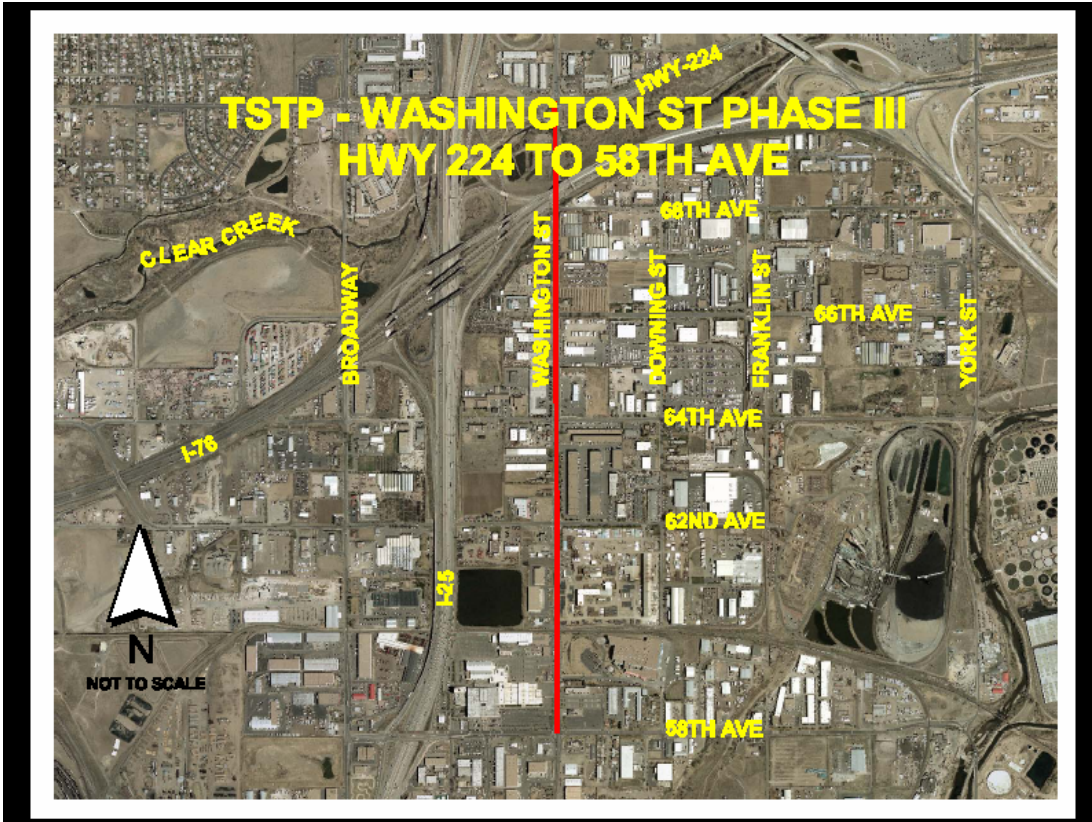
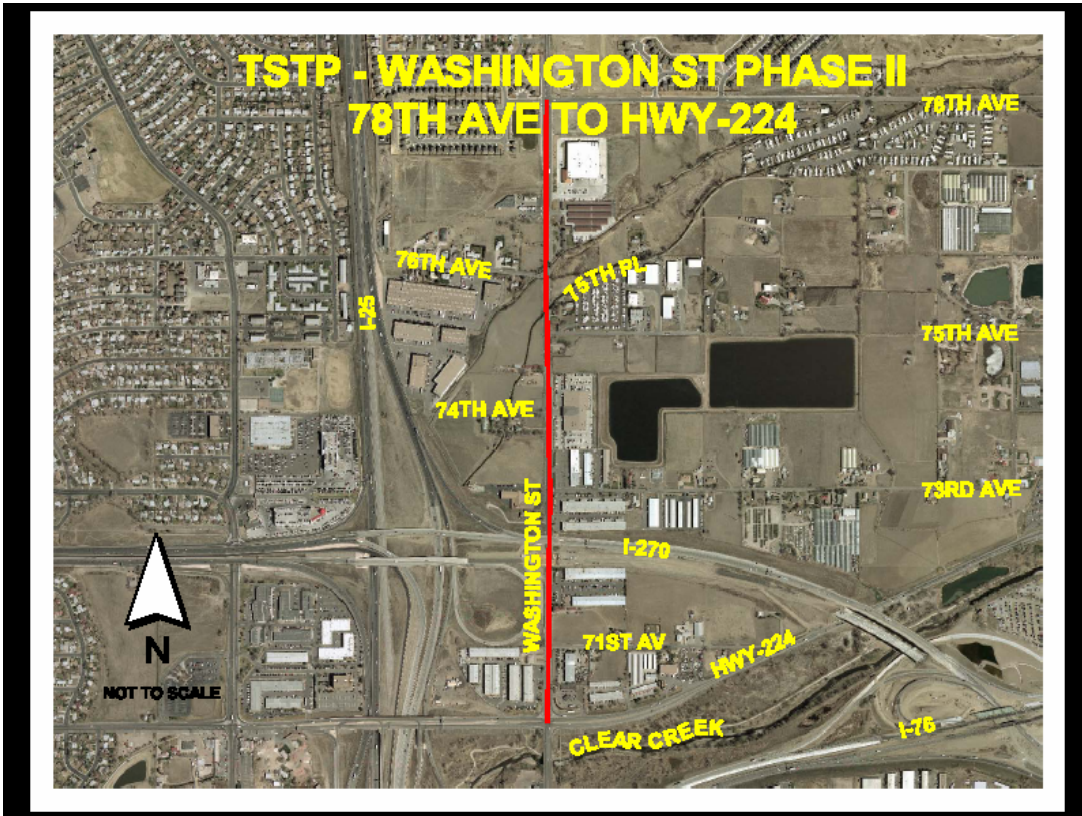
**Currently
Funded
Adams County
Transportation
Projects**

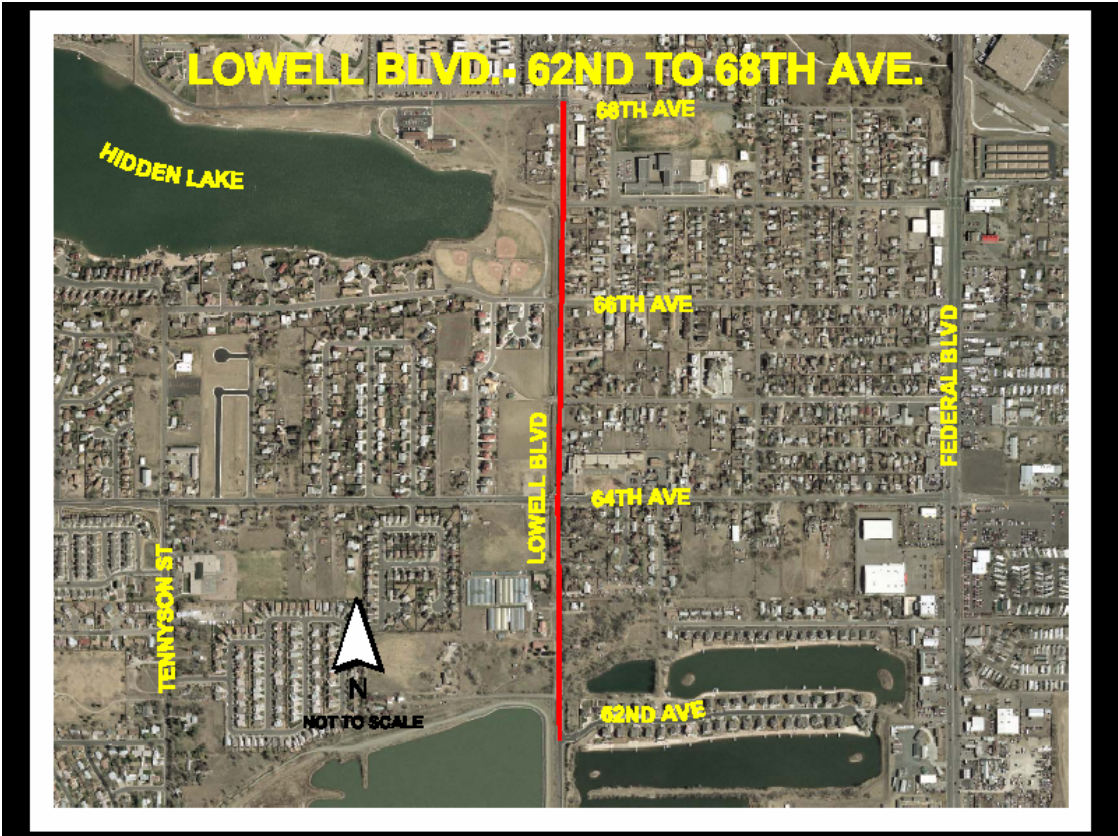
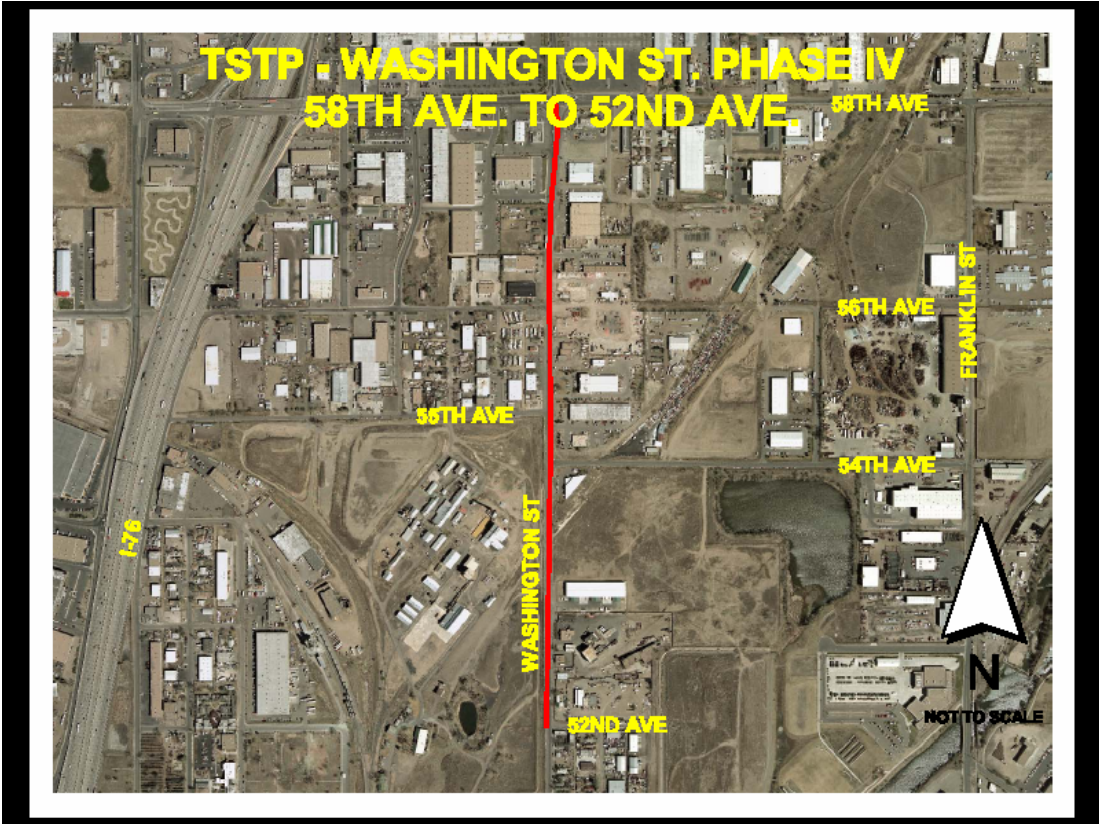
There are many local street improvements that are needed or underway in the area. These include:

- A grade separation for the Niver Creek Trail at York Street is in the design phase;
- Intersection improvements at Federal Boulevard and 80th Avenue are underway by the City of Westminster and CDOT;
- Grade separation for the Utah Junction railroad tracks at Pecos Street;
- Widening of Pecos St. from 52nd Avenue to I-76;
- Widening of York Street from 68th to 88th Avenue is budgeted for design in 2006.

Other projects funded in the 2005-2009 Road and Bridge Project involve street widening to accommodate a center turn lane, drainage improvements, and the installation or replacement of sidewalks where necessary are shown on the following pages.







*...there have been
some major
changes in this
area, some good
and some not so
good.*

INFRASTRUCTURE

South West Adams County Fire District

The Southwest Adams County Fire District welcomes the opportunity to be part of the Southwest Adams County Framework Plan. Since the I-76 corridor was completed some time ago, there have been some major changes in this area, some good and some not so good. Some parts of the area have deteriorated to the point that they have become ridden with crime, drugs, shootings, stolen cars, arson, etc. Still other parts have improved the overall climate of the area.

Some of the businesses that have attempted to come into this area have found that these areas don't meet today's fire codes for water supply, fire access etc. Some of the areas have undersized lines, limited fire hydrants, and one way access in many locations. Most of the mobile homes (over 1000) were built back in the 1950's and do not come close to today's fire standards. We encourage businesses and new developments but the fire code must be met to insure the safety of not only the citizenry, but firefighters as well. This has in some cases stopped growth or limited what could be added in some locations.

Specific needs

One area of concern is **Hooker Street, from 58th Avenue south to approximately 57th Avenue.**

1. There are no fire hydrants located in this. The closest fire hydrant is located on 58th and Federal. Water lines need to be installed to provide hydrants for fire protection. A water line should be installed from 58th and Federal, running west to Hooker and south on Hooker Street to 57th Avenue. A second line should be installed at approximately 57th and Federal running west to Hooker Street to complete the loop. This second line may have to cross State D.O.T. property to be completed.

businesses do not meet today's fire code requirements for emergency access or water supply for fire protection.

2. The roadway is undersized and needs to be widened from 57th to 58th. There is no turn-around provided for fire apparatus on the south end of the street where Hooker dead ends. A cul-de-sac or other approved turn around should be provided.

3. Illegal dumping of hazardous materials has taken place in this area. Additional street lighting should be installed throughout the area to discourage this activity and provide lighting for the residents in this area.

4. In addition, commercial businesses are located in this area and have installed office trailers or erected some type of structures to operate auto shops, storage areas or other types of industrial businesses. These businesses do not meet today's fire code requirements for emergency access or water supply for fire protection. There are approximately five separate businesses in this area with a residence located at 5720 Hooker Street. All of the area appears to be in the flood plain. No sewer or domestic water is onsite of businesses on Hooker. It is unknown the type of water and sewer to residences.

Another area of concern is **62nd Avenue East of Federal Blvd.**

1. No fire hydrants are present on this roadway for at least 600 feet. A water line needs to be run from Federal, east to the dead end hydrant to create a loop connection. Additional hydrants need to be added to provide proper coverage for industrial park.

2. The roadway is undersized and too narrow to serve an industrial park. Large trucks are common in this area and the roadway needs to be widened.

At the present time... there are no sewer systems, domestic water, or fire hydrants for fire protection.

A third area of concern is **60th Avenue east from Federal Blvd.** to a dead end close to Pecos Street. 60th Avenue travels parallel to I-76 for about one mile. Clear Creek runs along the north side of 60th Avenue. This area is in the flood plain to some extent and it is also in the Flammable Gas Overlay Zone. From Federal to where I-76 crosses over, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, there is no water or sewer supply. The closest fire hydrants are at 58th and Federal and I-76 at 60th Avenue. Approximately six parcels of land are along this area.

Concerns for 60th Avenue include:

- Only one access available for emergency response
- No water supply or roadways on properties.
- Combustibles being brought on site (railroad ties)
- Trash from dumpsters on site
- Many construction trailers are being used it offices
- Fuel tanks and dispensing fuels
- Waste chemicals and products
- 60th Avenue has been used for illegal dumping of trash and chemicals in drums.
- It does not appear leased property has gone through the process of conditional use permitting.

A water line is proposed by a developer to extend the water line from I-76 and 60th Avenue to the west property line of Parcel 0052. At the present time from I-76 west to Federal on 60th Avenue, there are no sewer systems, domestic water, or fire hydrants for fire protection.

In the event the developer installs the water line, it will dead end approximately 600 feet east of Federal Blvd. This water line should be looped from 60th Avenue to Federal and south to 56th Avenue. It is a concern of SWAC Fire that the water line will not be looped from this developer's dead end due to cost and no future plans for development.

a hodge-podge of private water and sewer lines still exist today.

A final concern is the 100+/- new homes to be constructed in the Villages at Clear Creek on **56th Avenue and Lowell Blvd.**

Lowell Blvd. has a 12-inch water line from 56th Avenue that ends at 5880 Lowell Blvd. Tennyson Street has a water line that was installed from approximately 54th Avenue to 58th Avenue. SWAC Fire Department and Berkeley Water are currently working with the developer of the Village to loop the water line from Lowell Blvd. to Tennyson Street. The Fire Department feels strongly that looping the water line is essential for the safety and welfare of the existing community as well as the new development. To date we are hoping plans for this water line will be reviewed and installed before above ground construction of the Villages at Clear Creek begins.

Maps and photos of these needed projects are available from SWAC Fire and Adams County Planning and Development.

Water and Sanitation

Berkeley Water and Sanitation District

The Berkeley Water and Sanitation District was formed in 1962 and included into its service area numerous old water and sewer lines as well as many private sewer systems. A very old Denver Wastewater transmission system meandered through the District in a southwest to northeast direction in the 1920's. That sewer main's depth was shallow. Old neighborhoods dating back to as early as 1900 began installing their own sewer systems to it as their septic tanks began to fail. Hence, a hodge-podge of private lines still exists today.

A list of needs the district is currently aware of follows. Maps of these needed projects are available from the District or Adams County Planning and Development. Due to the TABOR amendment's effect of lower mil levies, replacement and new construction of lines in the district has halted.

Seven families are on a private sewer which is failing. The line backs up frequently. Cleaning is costly to the individuals..

Sanitary Sewer Needs:

1. Seven families living on Meade to Newton Street block, 53rd Avenue to 54th Avenue, are on a private sewer system (in the alley) which is failing. The line backs up frequently. Cleaning is costly to the individuals who suffer sewage backup into their homes. The alley sewer line has backed up several times in the past year, but cannot be replaced due to lack of utility easements and buildings covering it.

The District's sewer main in Meade Street between 53rd and 54th Avenue needs to be replaced and lowered to accommodate gravity sewer taps rather than lift stations to assist these properties with necessary improvements. These six customers need financial assistance in order to disconnect from the back yard line and tap into Meade Street. One property on Newton Street needs funds to tap downstream (a long service cut) to the District's Newton Street main.

2. A private line system, north of 53rd Avenue and east of Irving Street, connects to Irving Street at its mid-point without a manhole. This short private line needs replacement since it has failed. The two parties tapped into the shared section (in a private easement) have replaced their lines to the shared part, but the "shared" section is old and in poor condition. Property owners state they lack funding to replace that shared section.

There are frequent sewage backups in this "shared line" and there is sewage leaching or spilling onto properties adjoining the "shared line". The District's sewer main on Irving Street between 53rd Avenue and 54th Avenue, needs replacement as well, due to age and condition. A sewer manhole at the point of the "shared line" needs to be installed to accommodate cleaning.

3. District's sewer mains on Beach Court between 55th Avenue and 54th Avenue, and on Tejon Street between 53rd Avenue and 54th Place need replacement due to poor conditions.

The District needs a water main .. to improve water quality, increase fire protection and open vacant lands for development.

Water Needs:

1. A customer at 52nd and Quitman Street has been living in his home by borrowing water from a neighbor. His well has gone dry. He needs to tap into Berkeley's water system, but he cannot afford the Denver Water Department development fee. He is an "in-need" individual both physically and financially.
2. The District's 4-inch water line on 59th Place needs to be upgraded to 5-inch due to increase fire protection capacity.
3. The District needs a water line on Zuni Street to loop the area between 57th Avenue to 59th Avenue to provide fire protection and increase water quality.
4. The District's looping / installing water main in 53rd Avenue, Zuni Street to Wyandot, and on Wyandot Street, from 53rd Avenue to 54th Avenue, would provide water quality, fire protection to existing residents and would open up vacant lots for development.
5. The District needs a water main on Federal Boulevard from 56th Avenue to 60th Avenue to improve water quality, increase fire protection and open vacant lands for development.

Crestview Water and Sanitation District

This district provides water and sanitary sewer service to a portion of unincorporated southwest Adams County included in the Framework Plan, specifically, North Perl Mack, South Perl Mack, South Federal and Goat Hill. Crestview maintains and operates approximately 265,000 feet of water distribution system piping and 290,000 feet of sanitary sewer wastewater collection system piping.

Water system piping ranges in diameter from 4 inch to 20 inch, with approximately 55,000 feet of piping considered to be in sub-standard condition.

..much of the area was built within a few years in the 1950's and 1960's, and other sections are even older..

Crestview currently replaces 2,000 feet to 5,000 feet of piping each year.

Sanitary sewer system piping ranges in diameter from 8 inch to 18 inch with approximately 74,000 feet of piping considered to be in sub-standard condition. Crestview is currently rehabilitating 5,000 - 10,000 feet of piping each year by replacement, repair and lining using Cured-In-Place-Pipe technology and other methods.

It is the Crestview Board of Directors' intent to continue to evaluate both systems annually and provide funding to repair and replace aging infrastructure. The Board has established a replacement fund for this purpose.

The fact that so much of the area was built within a few years in the 1950's and 1960's, and other sections are even older, redevelopment of attractive housing and well planned communities will be important to bring quality commerce to the Framework area. Additional funding will be needed to provide assistance to investors and developers who wish to invest in the area. This will require assistance and cooperation from all government entities in the area.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Adams County Parks

Adams County Parks will be involved as a partner in connecting and expanding the trail system in the area. More detailed analysis and plans will be addressed at the individual neighborhood level.

Trails

- Existing - Clear Creek Trail, Little Dry Creek Trail
- Needed trails - See Lowell above, Little Dry Creek Trail from Grove Street to Knox Court, east-west connection from Jim Baker Reservoir to the Clear Creek Trail.

This Corridor has great potential for restoration to a more natural state.

Other areas of concern or interest

Preserve the wetlands adjacent to Clear Creek north of I-76 to the Railroad line on the North. They provide very good habitat and urban filtering.

All of the irrigation canals in the area should be preserved when ever possible in an open ditch configuration, providing development set-backs to allow for the maintenance of the ditch as well as preservation of any associated habitat. These irrigation canals will often provide linear off street trail connections as well as the potential for creation of urban wildlife habitat. Some of these canal alignments include the Fisher Ditch, Lower Clear Creek Ditch and the Colorado Agricultural Ditch.

Niver Canal from Steel Street to Washington— Currently most of this drainage resides in a concrete lined channel. Much of the drainage channel below York Street utilizes concrete structures to remove the energy from the flowing water during a storm event. It would be preferred if future re-development would remove the concrete lined channel for something softer, more natural, and utilize other types of in channel structures to remove the channel energy. Also, below York Street, the Colorado Agricultural ditch and the Lower Clear Creek Ditch cross the Canal in a siphon (not the most attractive or safest alternative). Since the County has responsibility to repair and replace the siphons, it seems desirable to modify the infrastructure at some point in the future.

The Clear Creek floodplain corridor transects the study area. Much of adjacent development consists of industrial type uses with the natural character of the corridor in a fairly degraded state. This corridor has great potential for restoration to a more natural state. The Clear Creek corridor also is home to the Adams County reach of the Clear Creek trail. Standards for street crossings of the Clear Creek Trail are separated grades with at grade access points from both sides of the street. One street that does not cross at a separated grade is Tennyson Street. Future redevelopment of the area should include the separation of grade.

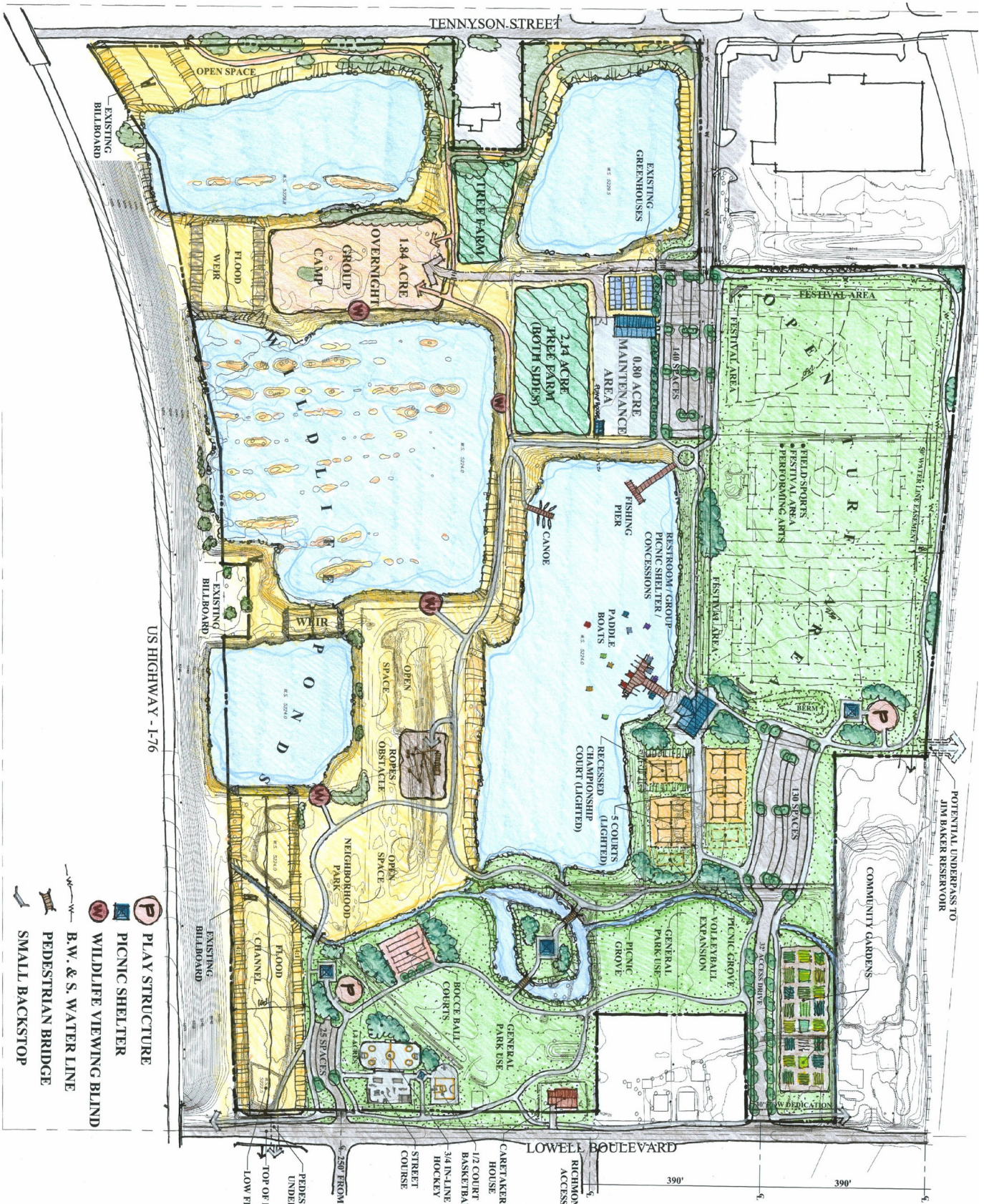
...this facility should go along way to meet the needs of the residential development in the area.

Hyland Hills

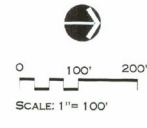
Most of the populated areas in the southwest plan are part of the Hyland Hills Recreation District. The District's Master Plan will guide most of the improvements in the area for years to come.

Of notable significance to the District and the area is the planned creation of a large regional park spanning from Lowell Boulevard to Tennyson Street south of 60th Avenue. From the stand point of recreational services and open space, this area has been underserved by both Adams County and Hyland Hills Recreation District. Adams County Parks feels that this facility should go along way to meet the needs of the residential development in the area. The project will also, in part, facilitate the long needed detached pedestrian trail along Lowell Boulevard from the Berkeley neighborhood to 68th Avenue, a long needed pedestrian corridor improvement needed to access the schools and facilities to the North.

A preferred alternative for this park is included on the next page. **This is only an initial draft concept of the park and is subject to change.**



- P** PLAY STRUCTURE
- PS** PICNIC SHELTER
- WV** WILDLIFE VIEWING BLIND
- B.W. & S.** WATER LINE
- PB** PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
- SB** SMALL BACKSTOP



HYLAND HILLS CLEAR CREEK VALLEY PARK

WINSTON ASSOCIATES
4696 Broadway
Boulder, CO 80304
Tel: 303-440-9200
Fax: 303-440-8001
winstona.com

HYLAND HILLS
Park & Recreation District

14 JULY 2005

**PREFERRED
OPTION**

Economics

Four industries are key to Adams County's economic health: air transportation, bio and life sciences, telecommunication and broadcasting, and software.

General Business Data

The Metro Denver EDC funded research regarding the key industries that comprise the economy of the metro area and determine the overall wealth, employment, business expansion and retention industries for the area. The nine that provide the foundation for the area are: energy, bio and life sciences, telecommunication and broadcasting, air transportation, software, finance, computer storage, beverages, and aerospace. Of those nine, four are key to Adams County's economic health: air transportation, bio and life sciences, telecommunication and broadcasting, and software. Effort is under way to make this information available to business and education in order to ensure an adequate workforce to fill these needs.

In addition to the metro industry targets, Adams County demographic information prepared by the Leeds School of Business also recognizes that construction and building trades, transportation, trucking and distribution, and manufacturing are also key industries for the county.

SW Adams County Business Health

(Based on 2004 ACED Primary Employer/ Business Issue Survey)

Overview

In 2004 Adams County Economic Development (ACED) sent nearly 4000 questionnaires to local businesses and received 460 completed evaluations covering topics such as business growth, industry assessment, and sales. From these survey results nearly 30% of respondents were located in the area defined by Adams County Planning as Southwest Adams County. This shows that a significant portion of Adams County businesses are located in this area with an industry make up similar to the county as a whole. In both the County as a whole and the Southwest portion the most frequent industries were services, construction and manufacturing.

very few significant economic differences exist between the southwest portion of the county and the county as a whole

SW Adams vs. Adams

The statistics below show that very few significant differences exist between the southwest portion of the county and the county as a whole. Overall, sales seem to be slightly weaker and slightly fewer companies plan to expand their business in the next three years in southwest Adams County.

72% of respondents reported **sales** to be either **increasing or remaining stable** in comparison to **78%** for the entire county.

62% of respondents indicated they have **introduced new products and services** within the past 5 years. The exact same percentage as the entire county.

62% anticipate **introducing new products and services** in the next 2 years, compared with **59%** for the entire county.

In both Southwest Adams and Adams County there was an average of **35 employees per firm** and a **median of 9 employees per firm**.

In 2004 the **average firm** had been in **business** in Adams County **16 years** vs **17 years** for **Southwest Adams**.

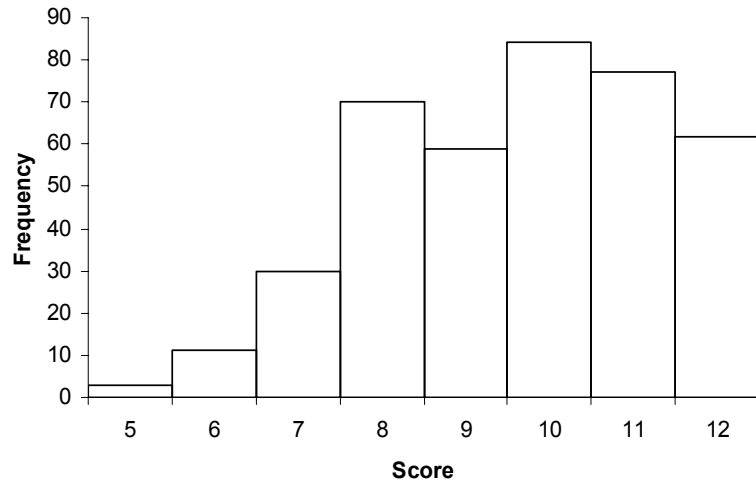
87% of total respondents indicated their **headquarters or single location** is located **inside Adams County** vs. **90%** of **SW firms**.

40% of respondents for the entire county indicated they **plan to expand** their facilities within the next three years while **54%** **plan to remain stable**. In the Southwest portion of the county, **34%** indicated they plan to expand while **61%** **plan to remain stable**.

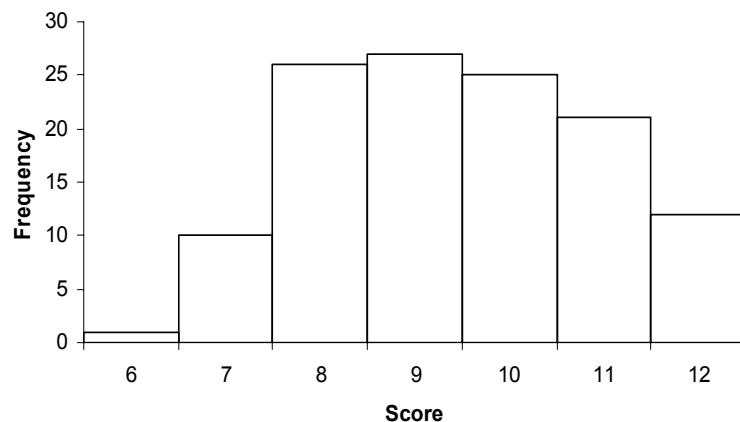
The five key indicators used to score overall health of a company are:

1. Whether sales are increasing or stable;
2. If the company introduced a new product in the last five years;
3. If the company plans to introduce a new product in the next 2 years;
4. If the company intends to expand, remain stable, or downsize in the next 3 years; and
5. If their facility in Adams County is their home office.

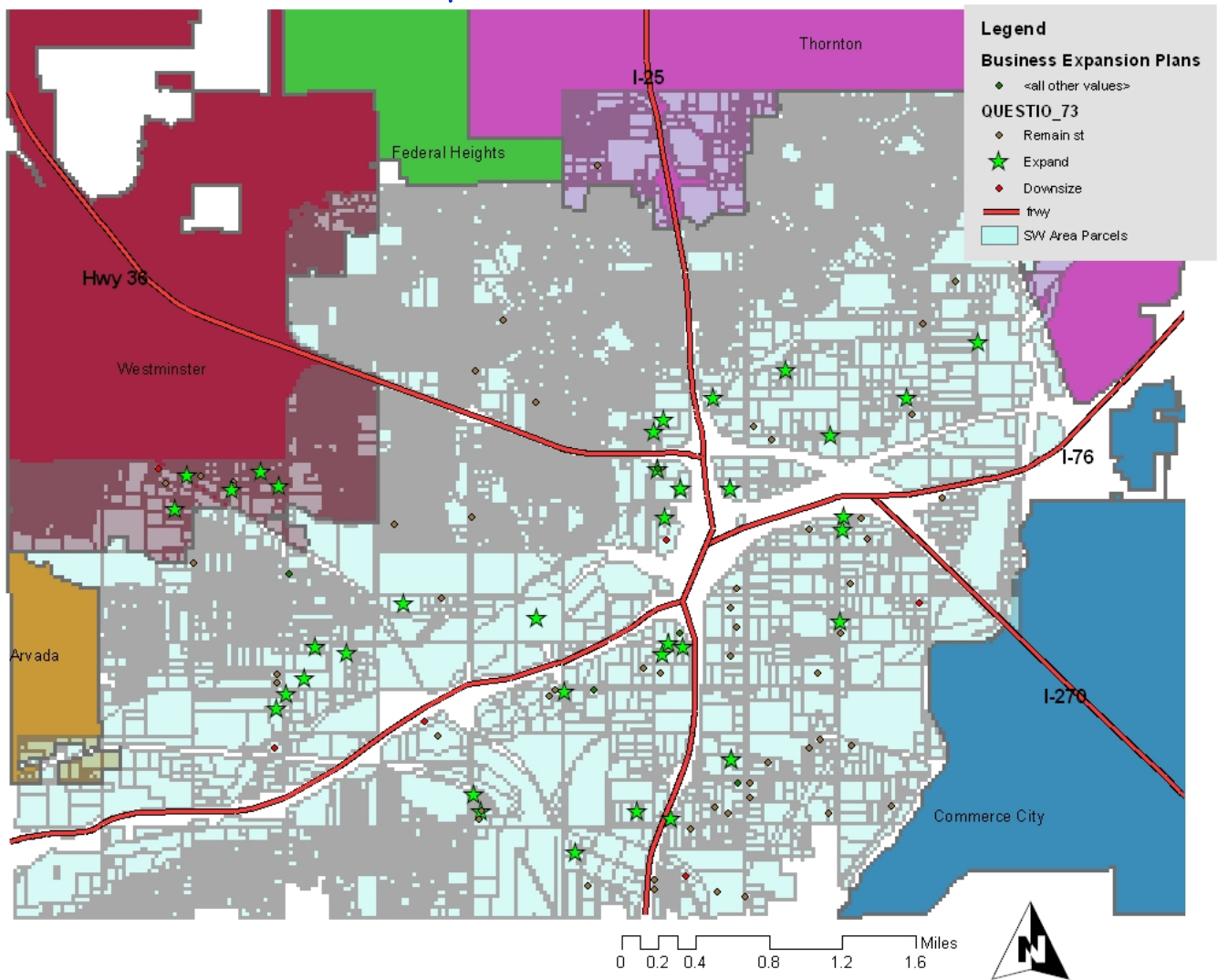
Adams County Business Health



Southwest Adams County Business Health



Scores of 8 and above indicate good overall business health. The preceding charts show that business health scores in the Southwest portion of the county are most frequently 8 or 9, while the overall county receives scores of either 10 or 11 most frequently.



The above map shows the location of business planning to expand within the next three years according to Adams County Economic Development's 2004 Primary Employer/ Business Issues Survey. Businesses planning to expand are marked with green stars.

Expanding knowledge of enterprise zone tax credits within the area will assist the area in meeting economic development goals of job and wealth creation.

Southwest Adams County and the Enterprise Zone

A majority of the study area identified as Southwest Adams County lies within the Adams County Enterprise Zone. The enterprise zone gives firms located within its boundaries tax credits for capital investment, job creation, research and development, providing health care and building rehabilitation among others. The Enterprise Zone gives a significant advantage to companies already located in or planning to locate in Southwest Adams County. Expanding knowledge of enterprise zone tax credits within the area will assist the area in meeting economic development goals of job and wealth creation.

Recent Announcements

Since 2000, ACED has reported the following activity in the Southwest Corridor:

New Jobs: 967

Total Acres purchased for development: 181

SF absorbed: 942,716

Capital Investment: \$132,235,000

Strategies

Teaming up with Adams County

Part of the business retention efforts of ACED is teaming up with various agencies and departments within the Adams County government. With resource representation for business and residential supplementing and co-constructing the goals of the Southwest Adams County Framework, it enhances the overall transformation possible in the area. Joint discussion of the best ways to proceed also ensures a more effective strategy in accomplishing the goals outlined.

..partner with the public and private sector to help create an environment in which primary businesses can thrive and grow.

Workforce Development

In order to guarantee the available workforce for current and future employer needs, greater connectedness is being orchestrated through the efforts of the Adams County Education Consortium. This group of Adams County K-12 Superintendents, Community College Presidents, Adams County business community and Adams County One Stop are working to create programs that will enhance the overall skills and training of the population to better suit the needs of business. The primary directive of the Business Retention Taskforce is to partner with the public and private sector to help create an environment in which primary businesses can thrive and grow, increasing jobs and capital investment in Adams County. The taskforce has undertaken a limited number of visits in the southwest geographic area in the past year. The visits include discussions with business owners or officials to determine business health and what individual challenges each business faces within its immediate area.

Keeping in mind that only a limited number of visits have been carried out in the specified southwest region, and the names of the organizations providing the information is protected by ACED confidentiality agreements, the aggregate results of their issues are as follows (in order of importance):

Southwest Specific Issues

- Utah Junction rail road crossing (Blocking of intersection for extended periods of time.)
- Lack of Commercial Services (Restaurants, Cleaners, Respected Dealerships)
- General Perception of Safety and Security in the area. While most of the companies reported few actual incidents their employees have voiced concern over this issue on several occasions. A major relocation project recently dismissed the area as a possibility due to this perception.

ACED is a willing partner of the Adams County Planning and Development Department in helping to develop the economic activity of the business community in the southwest

General Business Issues

- Business Personal Property Tax
- Health Care Costs
- Increased Property Assessment
- Traffic Congestion / Infrastructure Issues

The issues stated provide a solid “jumping off point” for ACED and the Business Retention Taskforce. ACED is a willing partner of the Adams County Planning and Development Department in helping to develop the economic activity of the business community in the southwest .

Brownfield Redevelopment

In conjunction with Adams County Planning, the Colorado Brownfield Foundation and ACED, effort is underway to make contact with the property holders of Brownfield sites in the county to connect them with resources that assist with clean-up. The pending National Brownfield Conference in November 2005 and its Transaction Forum event is the largest motivation for this research since it enables the county to feature these properties to global developers, funding sources and clean-up resources that can be directly aligned to the toxins found at each location. The hope is to make contact with the Brownfield property owners in southwest Adams County and feature as many of these properties as possible at the event. In addition, further appropriate resources and follow up will be made available to each of these property holders.

Opportunities in the southwest

- Real Estate
- 107 acres of vacant industrial zoned land
- Over 1 million square feet of industrial space (distribution, flex, light and heavy industrial uses)

Community Needs

*Education,
Economic
Development,
Housing, and Public
Safety were survey
respondents' areas
of greatest need.*

INTRODUCTION

As one of the older parts of the County, the southwest area has a unique set of needs. To gain a better understanding of these needs, several measures were taken. A summary of these actions is provided on the following pages and includes the results of a community survey, neighborhood focus groups, and planning meetings.

The survey and focus groups were performed by Corona Research under contract with the Adams County Office of Community Development. This effort took place in late 2003 and early 2004. The full Community Needs Assessment report may be obtained from the Office of Community Development.

SURVEY RESULTS

Although the southwest has its own unique needs, it is still useful to look at the needs of County residents as a whole. These results can then be compared with needs specific to the southwest to gain a deeper understanding of the differences.

When asked to select one area for improvement out of nine options, residents' opinions were as follows (in descending order of magnitude): Education (33%), Economic Development (21%), and Housing (13%), Public Safety (8%), Public Services, Infrastructure, Recreation, Government Communication, and Bilingual Communication.

Education

Education was selected as the top priority for improvement by the most Adams County residents. The level of dissatisfaction with the public education system serving a particular municipality or unincorporated area of the county ranged from 12 to 31 percent rating it "bad" or "very bad". Although Adams County Government does not directly provide public education, there are other areas of need

Eleven percent of County residents reported being at immediate risk of losing their home during the past 12 months because they couldn't afford their rent or mortgage.

identified in which County assistance can be instrumental. Other areas of improvement included early childhood education, adult education, educational opportunities for youth aged 16-20, and after-school programs. The County can also form new partnerships with school districts and private providers, or strengthen existing ones, to help address educational needs.

Economic Development

The second most frequently identified need in the survey was economic development. Needs identified here included assistance with finding a job (adults and youth), services for starting a business, career counseling, placement, referrals, and low-interest loans or credit for businesses. This is an area where the County can have a big impact as a direct provider of employment services.

A significant impact could also be made by the County through planning and redevelopment efforts. While attraction of major new employers is important, support and preservation of existing small businesses is even more critical given that the vast majority (82.5%) of businesses in Adams County employ nineteen or fewer people.

Housing

Named third most frequently as the number one need in the County was housing. Although the availability of quality affordable housing was a disproportionately strong concern among households with incomes under \$30,000, it was still a major concern of households earning up to 127% of the \$47,323 median income in the County. A shocking 11% of county residents reported being **at immediate risk of losing their home** during the past 12 months because they couldn't afford their rent or mortgage. Over one-half of Adams County citizens reported a need for more housing for the homeless, retirement housing, and small starter homes.

Over one-half of Adams County citizens reported a need for more housing for the homeless, retirement housing, and small starter

The need for emergency assistance and affordable housing (rental units and for purchase) greatly exceeds the available supply and warrants attention from the County. The need for other types of housing, such as homeless housing and senior housing, warrants attention as well. Although the private market dominates the single family housing sector, there are many actions the County can take to address housing needs. They include:

- Create a comprehensive housing plan for the county in partnership with other agencies.
- Increase the supply of emergency, transitional, and senior housing.
- Support programs for low- and moderate-income home buyers.
- Streamline the regulatory process for the provision of affordable housing.
- Work to create high paying jobs in Adams County to increase the home buying power of residents.
- Consider regulatory and administrative techniques to remove barriers to the development of attainable housing and to promote the location of such housing proximate to jobsites.
- Allow developers more room for innovation in creating mixed-use and mixed-income communities.
- Assist financing for the acquisition, rehabilitation, preservation, or construction of attainable and special needs housing.
- Stimulate public- and private-sector cooperation in the development of attainable housing, and the creation of incentives, including tax abatement for the private sector to construct or rehabilitate attainable housing;

The most commonly indicated top-of-mind neighborhood needs were related to safety and cleanliness

Public Safety

The fourth most frequently identified need in the survey was public safety. While overall 88% of Adams County residents stated they feel safe in their neighborhood, the perception of safety declined in lower-income areas. Public safety was also a more significant priority for improvement for Adams County residents aged 65 and over than it was for younger residents. However, younger people were less likely to state that they feel safe in their neighborhoods.

Residents' feelings of safety were a determinant of whether they were likely to live in a neighborhood. Ideally, residents would like to feel that kids can go out and play in the area without their parents having to worry about them. Residents also desired to feel that crime was not a problem in their neighborhood, or, if it was, that there would be adequate enforcement. Residents mentioned their desire for increased safety controls such as reducing speeding traffic, increased street lighting and more police or sheriff presence.

The surge in Adams County's population since 1990 has resulted in increasing pressure on community facilities and infrastructure. In many instances, demand is outstripping the County's ability to pay for expansion of existing services and facilities, on top of maintaining what is in place today. There appears to be a larger need for increased community policing in low-income areas and those neighborhoods that house seniors. While the County could influence public safety in unincorporated areas, it must rely on communication and cooperation with municipal police departments to address safety concerns of the bulk of County residents.

Residents widely expressed a desire for clean and well-maintained public areas.

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

In an effort to gain more insight into needs specific to the lower-income areas of the County, thirteen focus groups were held during the Community Needs Assessment process. All but two of these panels were comprised of residents from low-income areas in the southwest part of the County. Portions of the Executive Summary on focus group results as they relate to neighborhood redevelopment efforts are included on the following pages.

One can better understand the findings below by considering the processes used to solicit residents' priority needs. During the focus group discussion, participants were asked to share the top-of-mind needs in their neighborhoods. This un-aided question was designed to solicit those needs that were truly top-of-mind for residents. In other words, residents could have listed anything from "slower traffic" to "better sheriff protection" to "public transportation" and various subjects in-between.

While the specific needs identified by the focus groups are summarized in detail in each of the specific focus group reports, the research team analyzed the findings and synthesized them according to the nine categories of need examined in this study. A synthesis of the top-of-mind needs identified by participants indicates that the majority of needs fall into four categories:

Public Services and Infrastructure - each of which received a majority of the votes

**Economic
Development
emerged as the top
vote once
participants had a
list to refer to.**

Public Safety related needs were the next most common top-of-mind needs mentioned in groups

Economic Development needs were not as common among the top-of-mind needs as they were in the Top Three voting exercise presented later in the report.

The most commonly indicated top-of-mind neighborhood needs were related to safety and cleanliness and included increased police/sheriff presence, deterrence of speeders, more residential street lighting, increased code enforcement, and increased cleanup of trash on public and private property.

Focus group participants were also asked to rank their Top Three needs from the list of nine need categories. This exercise allowed the participants to study the list of categories, and as such, provided them with an aid as they identified their priorities. In each group, participants were asked to vote for their top three choices from the nine needs categories. This exercise revealed the following key findings.


Economic Development was the category most often chosen by groups in the top three needs categories (nine out of 13 groups).

Public Services was chosen as a “top three” need the second-most often (eight out of 13 groups).

Infrastructure and Public Safety were both chosen as “top three” needs in more than one-half of groups (seven out of 13 groups).

Residents emphasized their own need for stable employment with reasonable wages. Some residents believed there are fewer of these jobs now than in the past. Others mentioned having to find jobs outside the city or county due to a lack of jobs that match their skills. Job training, especially affordable job training, was highly favored.

Public services did not have one or two specific needs that came to the fore. Rather, residents in

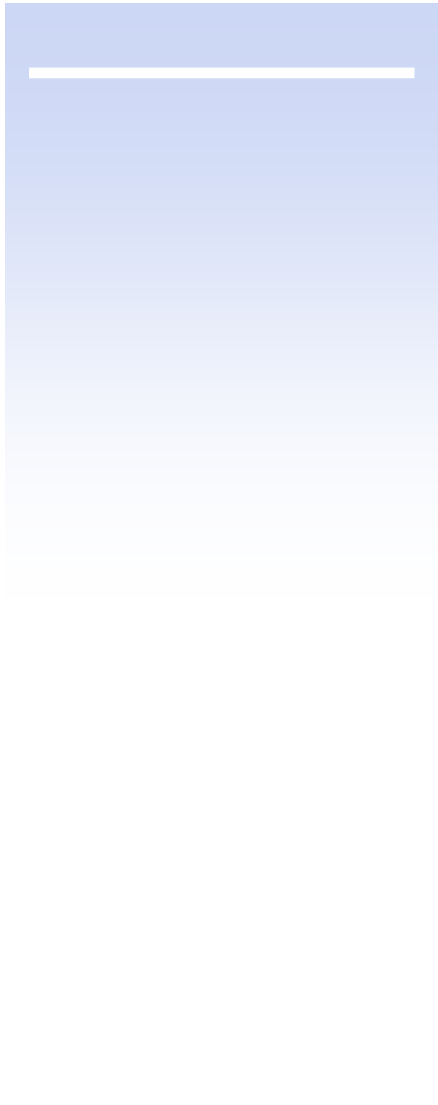


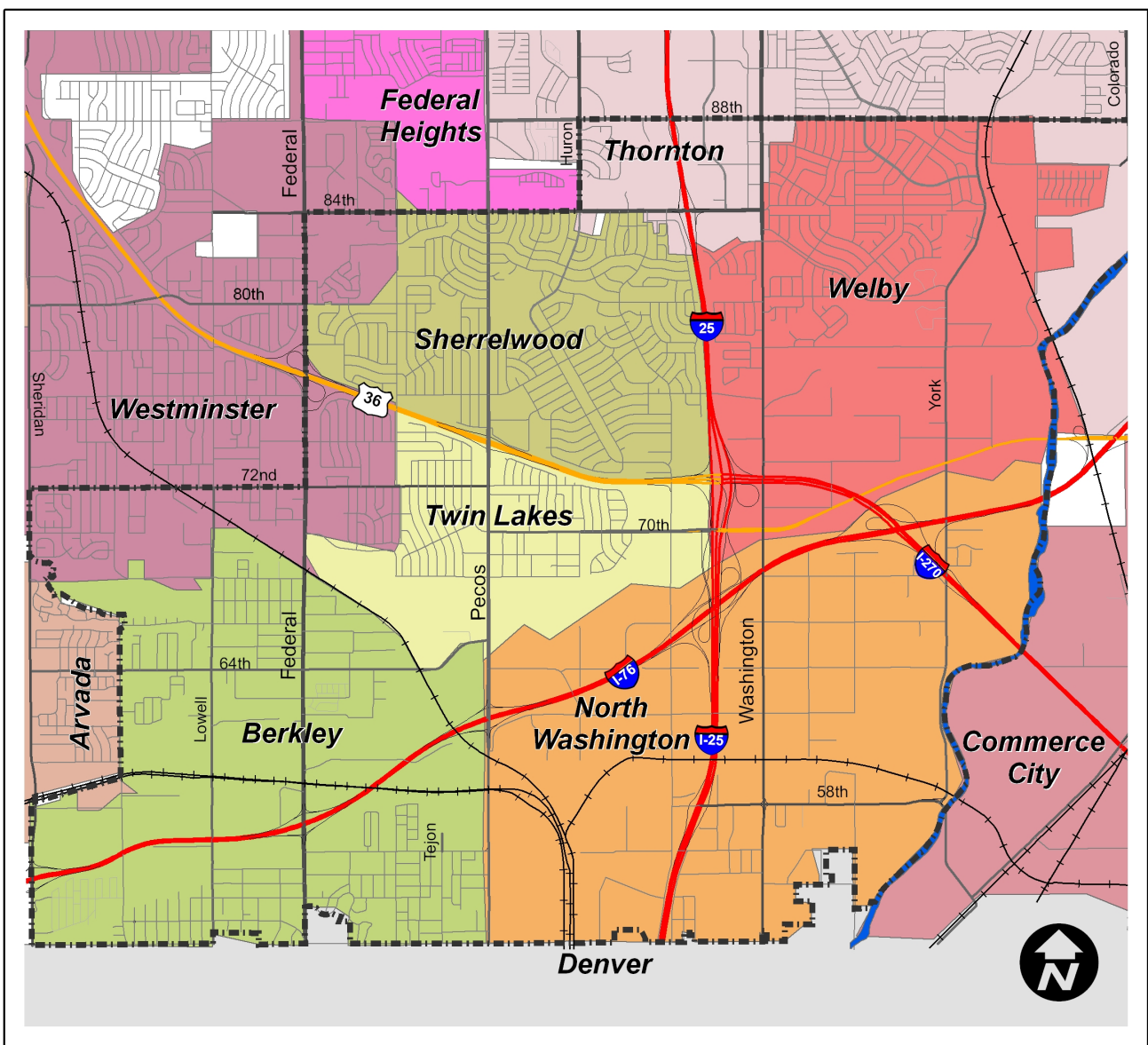
different groups mentioned most of the services in this category (i.e. services for seniors, disabled, retarded, victims, children, mentally ill, etc.) about equally. Residents widely expressed a desire for clean and well-maintained public areas. Trash pickup and street cleanup and maintenance were mentioned most often in this category. Sidewalks and sewer system maintenance were also commonly identified in this category. In contrast to others, Spanish-speaking and Hmong residents generally placed a lower emphasis on Infrastructure needs when they compared this need category to others explored in the group discussions.

In addition to better education for children in their communities, residents also favored additional activities and programs for children. Residents believe that more recreation and youth centers would keep youth from engaging risky behaviors. Children in their early teens were most commonly identified as being in need of programs. Before- and after-school programs, as well as low-cost activities for children were especially favored.

It is interesting to compare the results of the top-of-mind exercise and the “top 3” votes exercise. While the same four need categories emerged in both exercises – Economic Development, Infrastructure, Public Safety and Public Services – the total votes shifted fairly significantly. While Public Safety and Public Services were the clear priorities in the top-of-mind ranking, the votes were more evenly divided once participants had a list to refer to, and a little more time to think about the priorities. While Economic Development emerged as the top vote getter in the second exercise, it was closely followed by the other three categories.

**Appendix One:
Census Designated Places
Demographics**

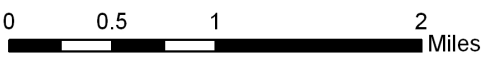




Legend

South West Boundary	Federal Heights
South Platte River	North Washington
Census Designated Places	Sherrelwood
Arvada	Thornton
Berkley	Twin Lakes
Commerce City	Welby
Denver	Westminster

Census Designated Places



1 inch equals 0.8 miles



Disclaimer:
Although every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided on this map, Adams County cannot be responsible for consequences resulting from omissions or errors in the information and graphic representations made herein. Users should consult with the Adams County Planning Department to ascertain whether any modifications have been made since the publication of this material.