Babies to Boomers: Assessment Tools to Create Livable, Sustainable Communities for All Ages

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Who We Are?

Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

- **Non-profit, public agency dedicating to serving local governments**

- **Local officials working together to address the region's challenges**

- **Each community has voice in regional decision-making**

- **Program areas:**

  - Advocacy
  - Aging Services
  - Environment
  - Regional growth and development
  - Shared services
  - Transportation and traffic operations

Who We Are?

Human Life Project (HLP)

Mission

Promote sustainable patterns in nature, family, and community by designing for the youngest to the oldest resident. Special emphasis on families with children and older adults.

Vision

Family-friendly and eco-friendly cities with long term financial stability

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Who We Are?

ThirdAge, a Division of CliftonLarsonAllen

- National senior services and housing consulting practice (30+ year history)

- Provide expertise in health care, facility and community based senior services, full continuum of senior housing

- Services include: market research, strategic planning, program development and collaborative building among others

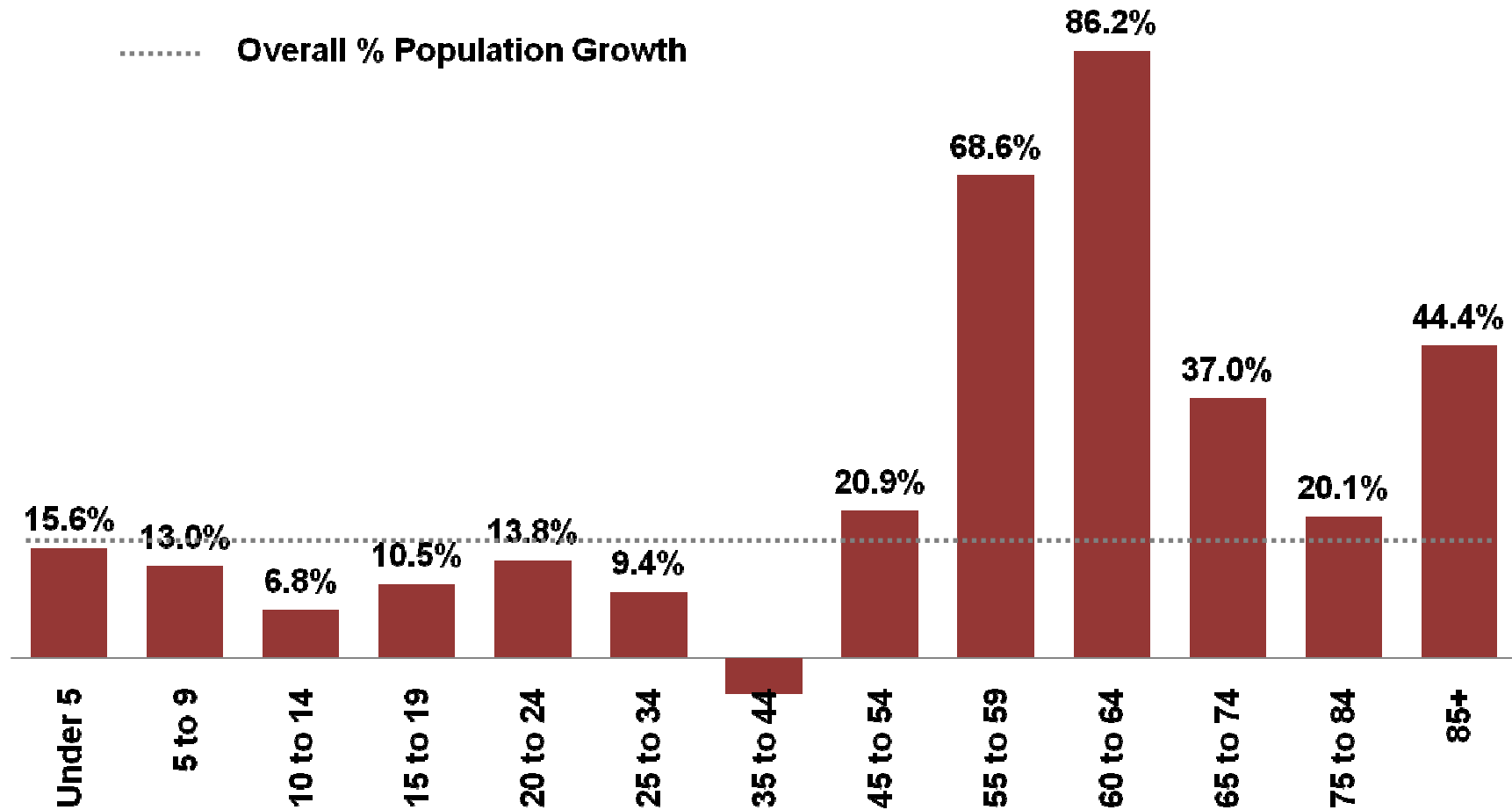# Our Motivation

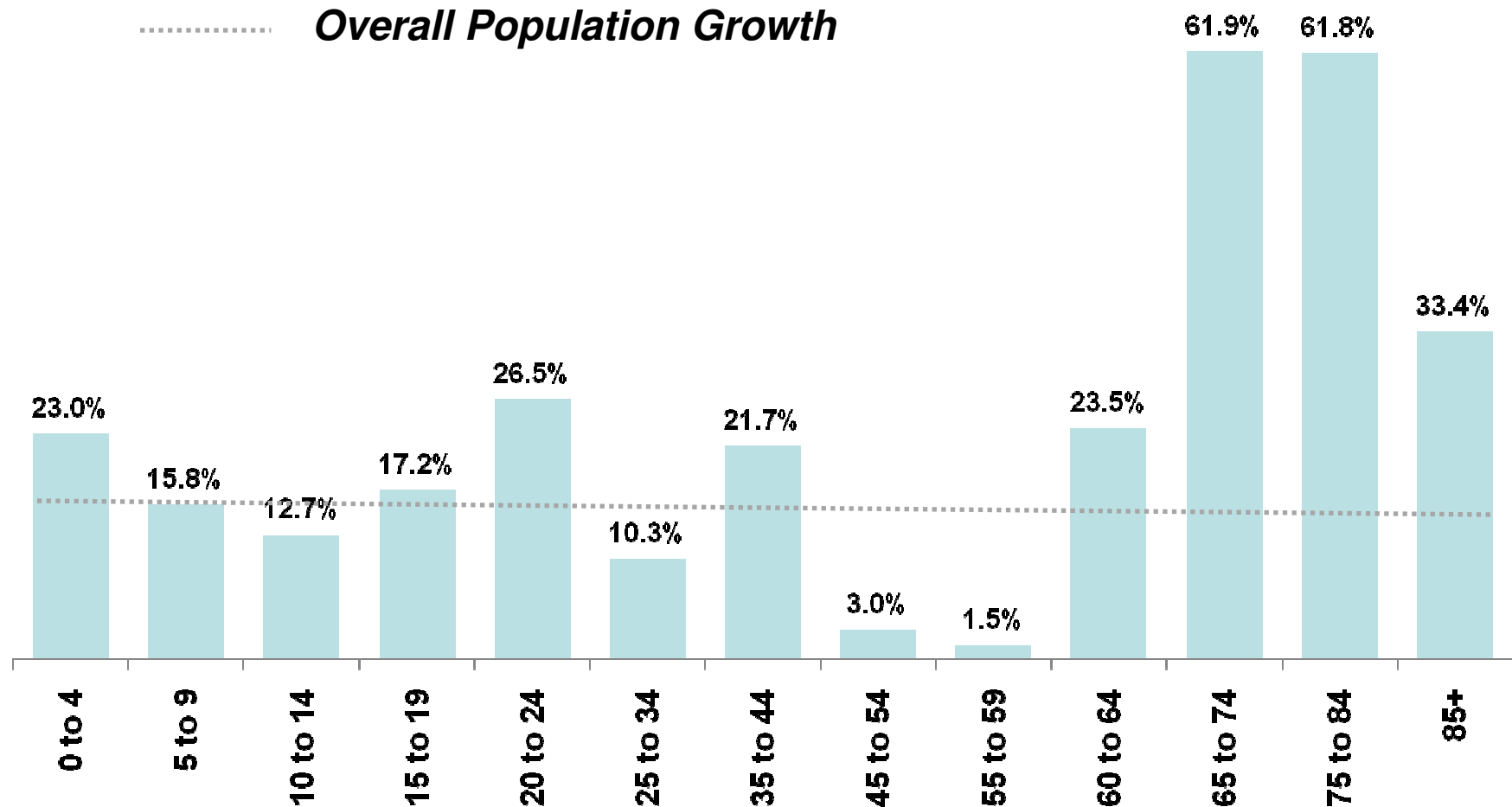## *Population Composition – Denver Region*
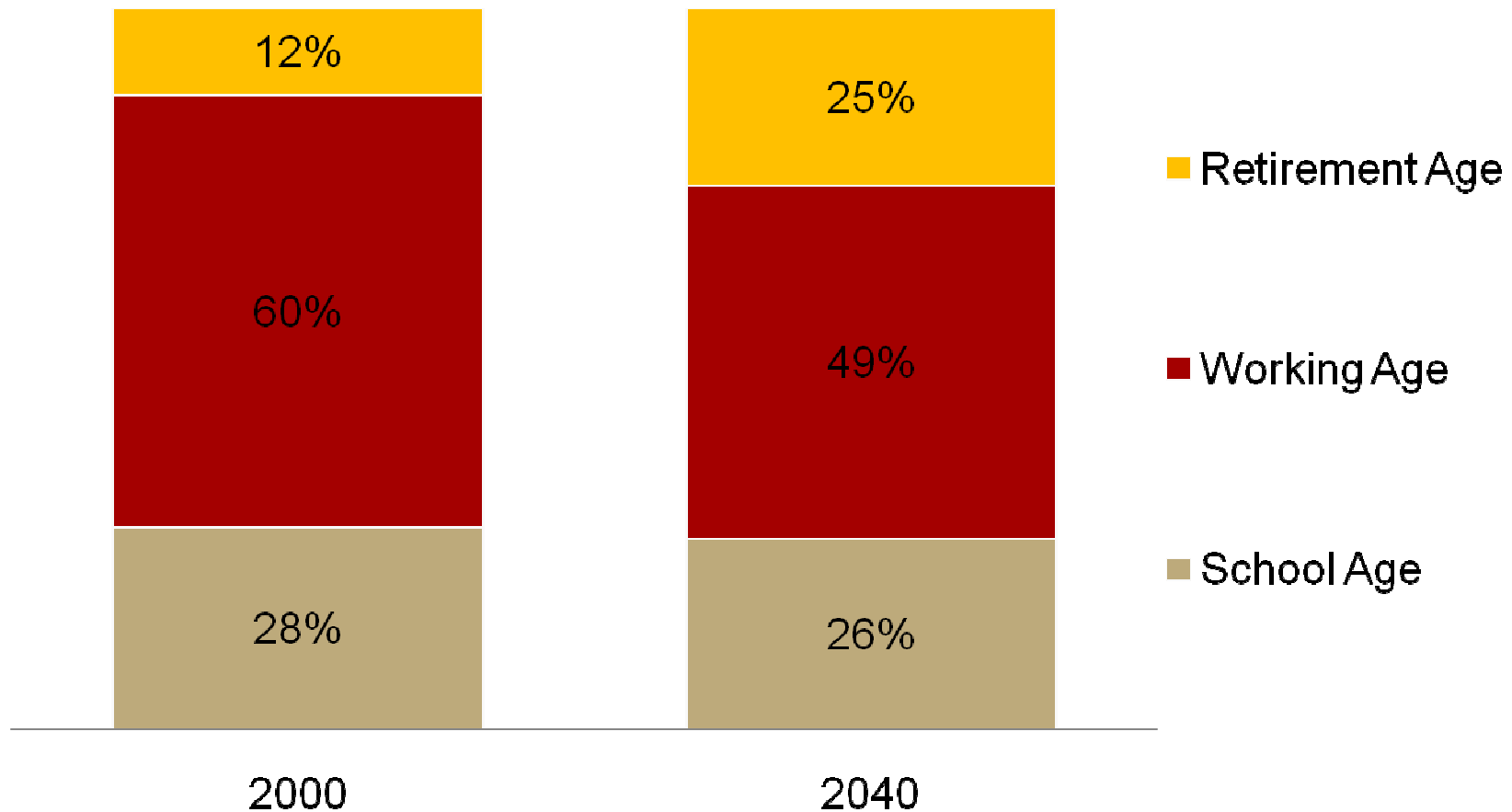
Our Motivation

Population Change (2000 – 2010) – Colorado

Our Motivation

Population Change (2012 – 2022) – Colorado

Chart legend: ·········· *Overall Population Growth*

Bar values by age group:
- 0 to 4: 23.0%
- 5 to 9: 15.8%
- 10 to 14: 12.7%
- 15 to 19: 17.2%
- 20 to 24: 26.5%
- 25 to 34: 10.3%
- 35 to 44: 21.7%
- 45 to 54: 3.0%
- 55 to 59: 1.5%
- 60 to 64: 23.5%
- 65 to 74: 61.9%
- 75 to 84: 61.8%
- 85+: 33.4%

Our Motivation

Multigenerational Planning: Using smart growth and universal design to link the needs of children and the aging population

- "By 2040, the proportion of people over the age of 65 will top 20 percent, and people under the age of 18 will make up almost 23 percent of the population. As result, **the oldest and youngest populations combined will make up almost half of all U.S. residents**."

- "Older citizens, families with young children, and the young adult population **share many common needs, interests, and concerns**…safe, walkable neighborhoods, a complete range of services nearby, an opportunity for civic engagement, affordable and mixed use housing, and adequate transportation options."

- **"Research by AARP has shown that most aging Americans do not want to live in communities separate from younger people."**

http://www.planning.org/research/family/briefingpapers/multigenerational.htm

Our Motivation

- **Aging Baby Boomers also continue a gravitation to city lifestyles**

- **Millenials "wouldn't be caught dead living at the end of a suburban cul-de-sac"**

- **Top markets tend to score high in walkability – increasingly convenience counts more**

We Want to Hear From You!

- What would motivate you and your community to more fully consider the changing needs of older adults?

- What are the greatest needs for families?

- What do you think would motivate or help planners/elected officials become interested in these challenges?

- Would the assessment and implementation process discussed today be effective in your community? Why or why not? What could we change that would make it more useful?

HLP: Design Considerations

Traditional Urban Development
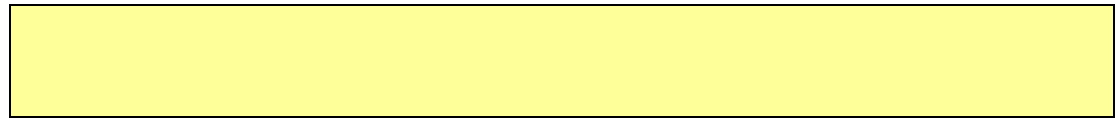
"Complete Development"

15%	65%	15%	5%
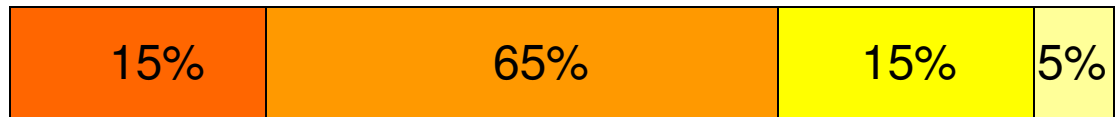
- ■ Families with Children
- ■ Older Adults-Family-Single Overlap (Common)
- ■ Older Adults
- ■ Singles and Couples with No Children

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Design Considerations:
All Ages

- **Affordable Housing and Cost of Living**

- **Affordable and Accessible Transportation**

- **Parks and Recreation**

- **Walkability**

- **Services**

- **Cultural Opportunities**

- **Medical/Health Care**

- **Safety/Low Crime**

Design Considerations: Specific to Families with Children

- **3+ Bedrooms**

- **Quality Schools**

- **Child Care**

- **Work Commute**

- Spacious Living Areas

- Usable Store Space

- Outdoor Play Areas

Design Considerations:
Specific to Older Adults

- **Accessibility**

- **Care for Older Adults**

- Covered Zero-Step Entry

- All Basic Living Spaces Main Floor or Elevator

- Kitchen and Bathroom Special Attention to Design

- Everything User-Friendly and Easy to Reach

- Low Maintenance

Design Considerations:
Specific to Singles and Couples

- **Colleges**

- Nightlife

- Smaller Living Spaces

The Approach: HLP Level I Assessment

- **12 Main Categories**

- **36 Subcategories**

  - Nominally, 0 – 10 Points per Subcategory

  - Each Subcategory is weighted 1-5

  - Bonus points possible for exceptional performance

- **Data from National Databases**

  - Quantitative, Computer program outputs results

- **Comparative Component to other Cities**

  - Ex. All cities have "bad" employment rate today

- **Normalization**

  - Examples: #/population and $/AMI

HLP Level I Assessment:
Main Categories for Family-Friendly Cities

Human Sustainability: Cities endure over time by designing for the youngest to the oldest resident, acknowledging the interdependency between families, businesses, and natural resources.

1. **Community:** Enliven social interaction with community events and public spaces
2. **Education**: Improve lifelong learning opportunities
3. **Culture**: Enhance daily living by museums, performing arts, and places of worship
4. **Recreation**: Offer recreational opportunities for people of all ages
5. **Housing**: Build a diversity of housing that includes 3 bedrooms and accessible units
6. **Employment**: Offer a diversity of employment opportunities close to housing
7. **Cost of Living**: Expand availability of cost effective housing and basic services
8. **Services**: Provide convenient services for daily living
9. **Transportation**: Expand modes of transportation
10. **Safety**: Ensure personal safety of residents and maintain low crime rates
11. **Health:** Encourage active living and quality health care
12. **Resources**: Increase local access to food, water, energy, land, and materials

# HLP Level I Assessment: Unique Example Subcategories

- **Balance of Ages**

- **Change in Child Population**

- **Average Household Size**

- **Family Support Structure**

- **Housing for Families (3+ Bedrooms)**

- **Housing for Older Adults (Accessibility)**

- **Child Care**

- **Care for Older Adults (Home Care/Assisted Living)**

- **Live and Work in City**

HLP Level I Assessment:
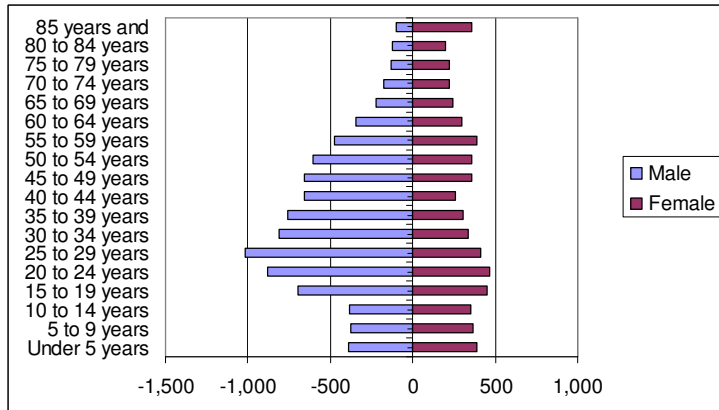# Age Structure Pyramid Diagrams
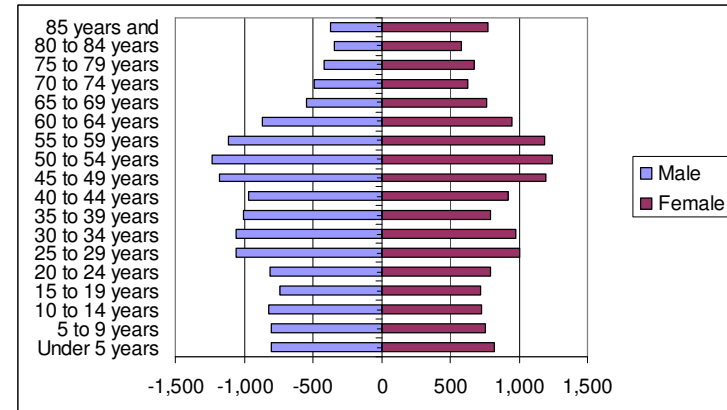
Balance of Ages - Greeley
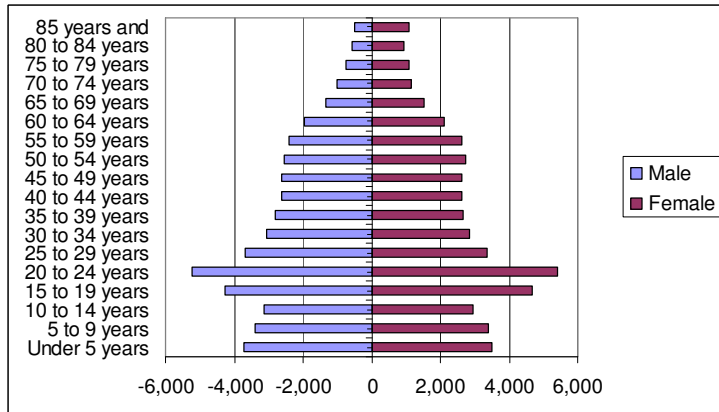
High Child Population - Commerce City
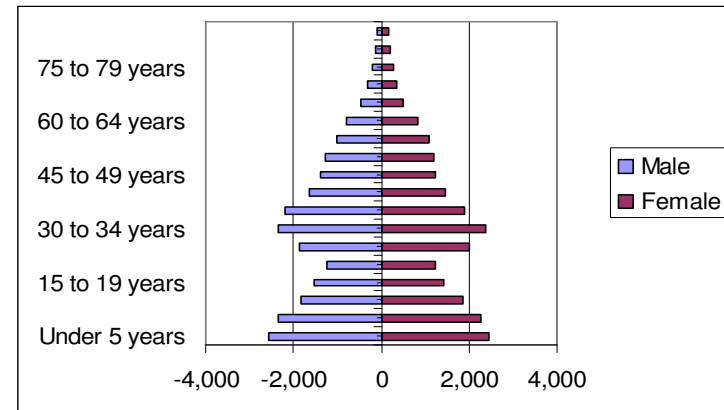
High Male Population - Sterling

High Older Adult Population - Wheat Ridge

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HLP Level I Assessment Results: Colorado City Rankings

1) Highlands Ranch
2) Montrose
3) Grand Junction
4) Durango
5) Alamosa
6) Fort Collins
7) Sterling
8) Littleton
9) Burlington
10) Commerce City
11) Colorado Springs
12) Boulder
13) Greeley
14) Salida
15) Aspen
16) Vail
17) Golden
18) Telluride
19) Pueblo
20) Denver
21) Wheat Ridge

HLP Level I Assessment Results: City Ranking Results

Community
1) Highlands Ranch
2) Commerce City (10th overall)
3) Greeley (13th overall)

Education
1) Boulder
2) Highlands Ranch
3) Aspen

Recreation
1) Aspen
1) Durango
1) Salida
1) Telluride

HLP Level I Assessment Results: City Ranking Results

Housing

    1)   Highlands Ranch

    2)   Commerce City

    3)   Montrose

Employment

    1)   Fort Collins

    2)   Colorado Springs

    3)   Burlington

Cost of Living

    1)   Highlands Ranch

    2)   Colorado Springs

    3)   Burlington

HLP Level I Assessment Results: City Ranking Results

Services

1) Alamosa, Aspen, and Boulder
1) Burlington, Durango, and Littleton
1) Salida and Telluride

Transportation

1) Telluride
2) Alamosa
3) Salida & Vail

Safety

1) Highlands Ranch
2) Aspen
3) Telluride

Culture

1) Alamosa, Aspen, and Burlington

1) Durango, Golden, and Littleton

1) Pueblo, Salida, and Telluride

Health

1) Aspen

1) Durango

3) Vail

Resources

1) Aspen

1) Salida

3) Pueblo

HLP Level I Assessment: Data Analysis Example

Family Housing Utilization Rate =

%3+ Bedrooms / % Child Population

Best Utilized Family Housing

1) Alamosa & Vail

3) Denver

4) Telluride

5) Commerce City

Underutilized Family Housing

17) Golden

18) Aspen

19) Durango

20) Burlington

21) Boulder

Case Study: City of Littleton
HLP Level I Assessment: Overall Results

Assessment Results

▲ ▲	Transportation
▲ ▲ ▲	Community
▲ ▲ ▲	Education
▲ ▲ ▲	Cost of Living
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Housing
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Employment
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Safety
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Culture
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Recreation
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Services
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Health
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Resources
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Overall

▲	Poor
▲ ▲ ▲	Average
▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲	Excellent

Case Study: City of Littleton
HLP Level I Assessment: City Strengths

- People living in poverty (low)

- Percent of high school grads

- School quality

- Number of places of worship

- Number of parks

- Unemployment rate (low)

- Median household income

- Number of child care providers

- Number of home care/assisted living providers

- Crime index (low)

- Number of hospitals

- Water quality

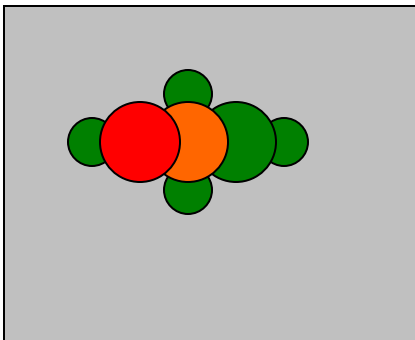# Case Study: City of Littleton
HLP Level I Assessment - Weaknesses

- Average age (high)

- Average household size (low)

- Number trade schools

- Number of grocery stores

- Work commute time

- People that live and work in city

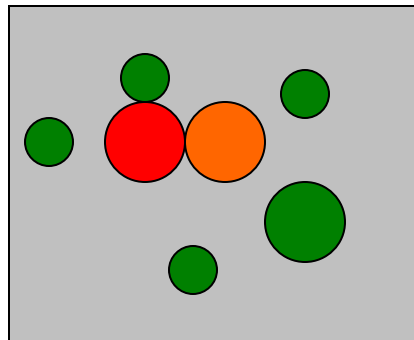- Transportation to work other than in car by self

HLP Level II Assessment

🟠 **Family Center: Hub of Daily Living Activity**

🔴 **Business Center: Hub of Economic Activity**
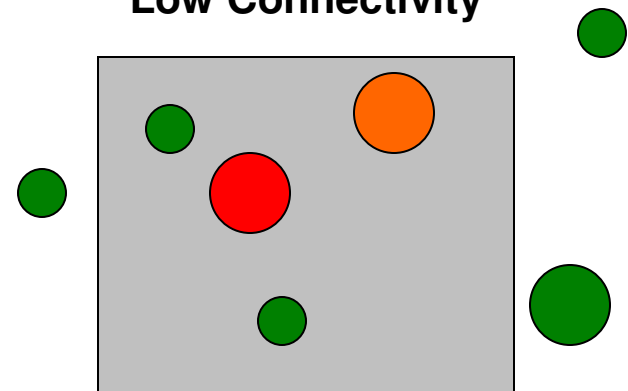
🟢 **Resource Centers: Hub of Supply Activity**
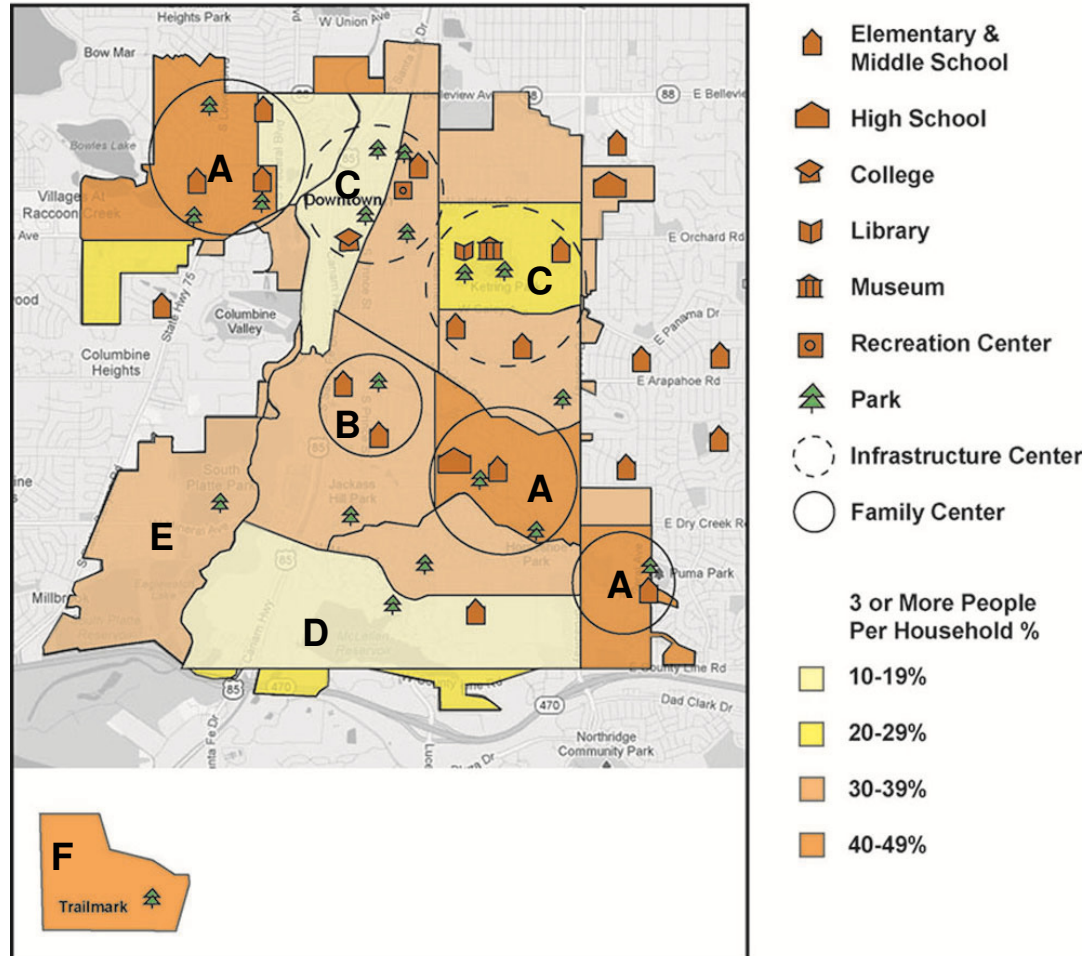
High Connectivity

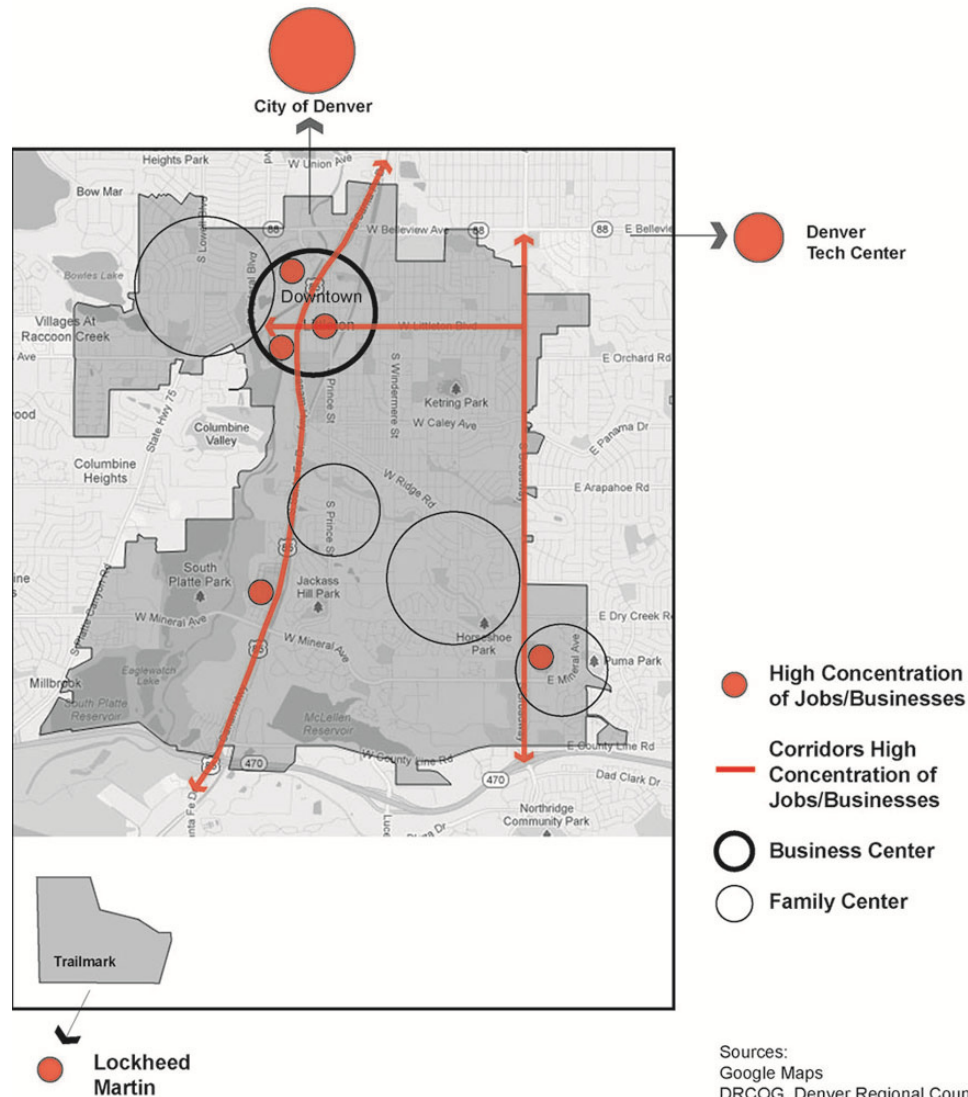**Medium Connectivity**

Low Connectivity
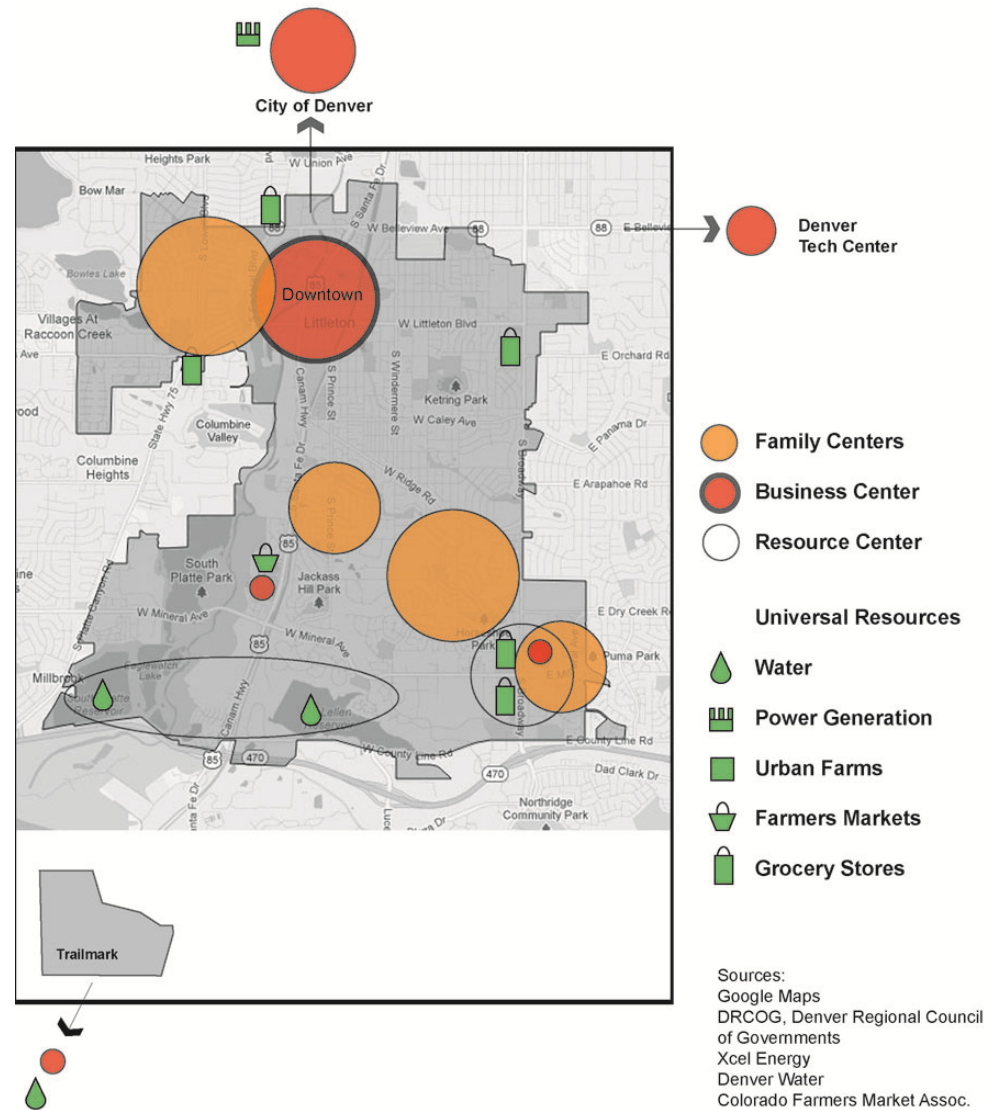
Case Study: Denver
HLP Regional Assessment: Family Centers
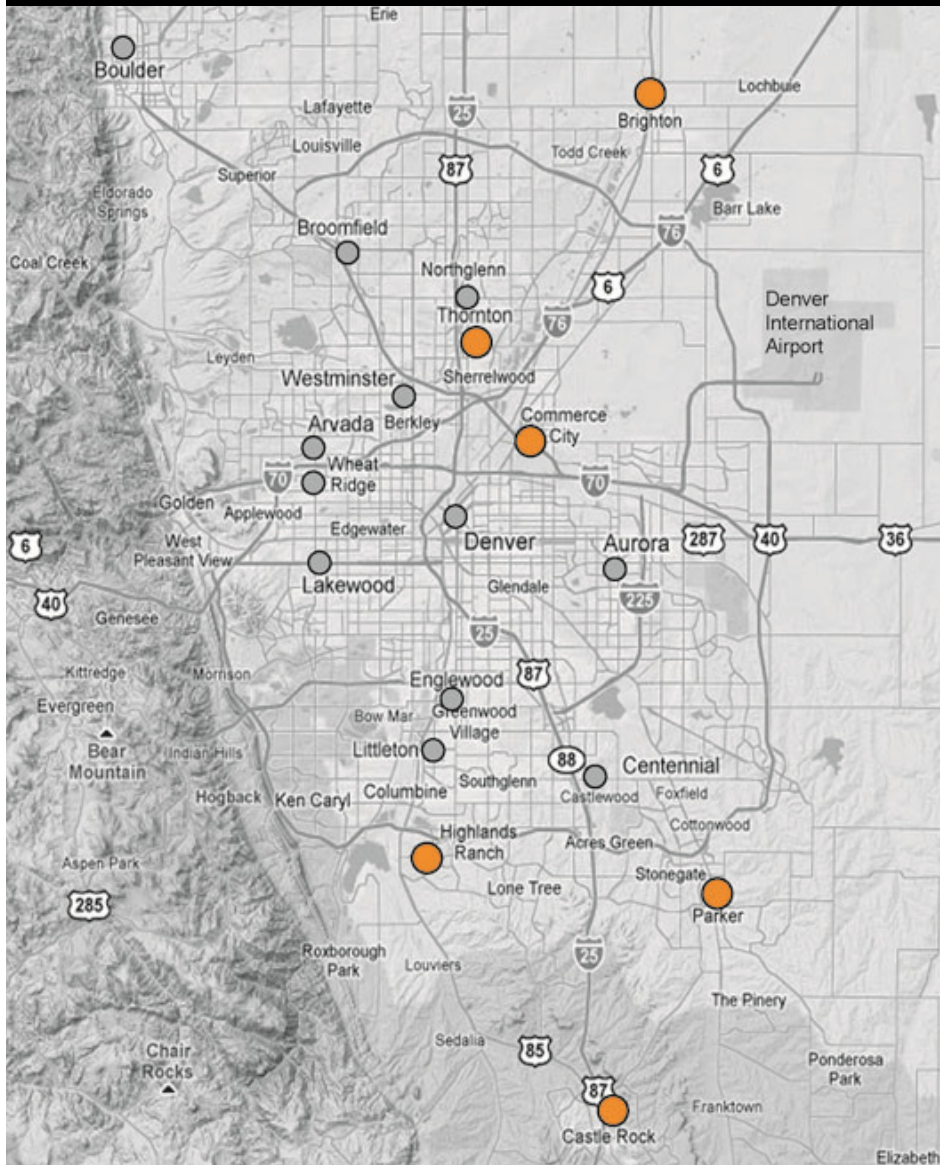
3 or More People
Per Household %

● 50 % +

Case Study: Denver
Regional Assessment: Transit Connections
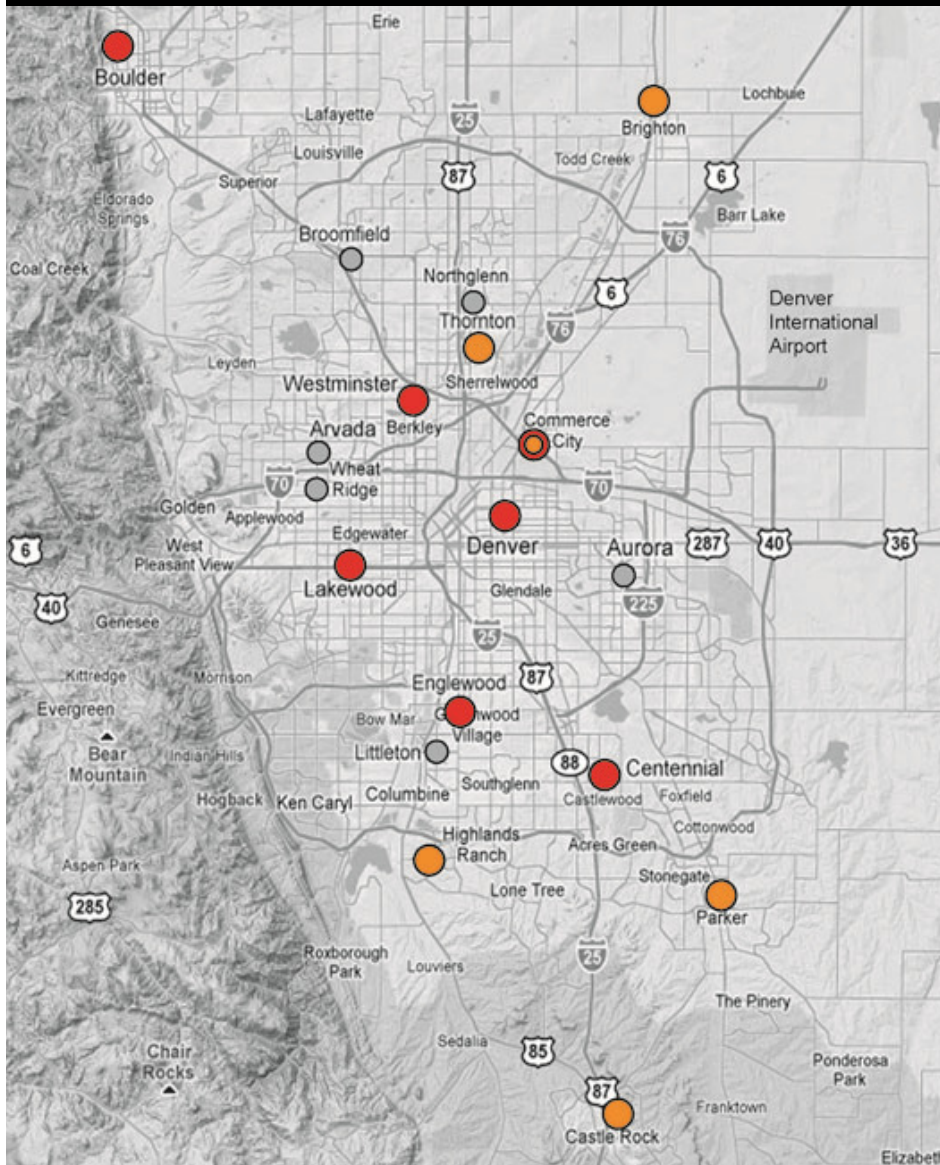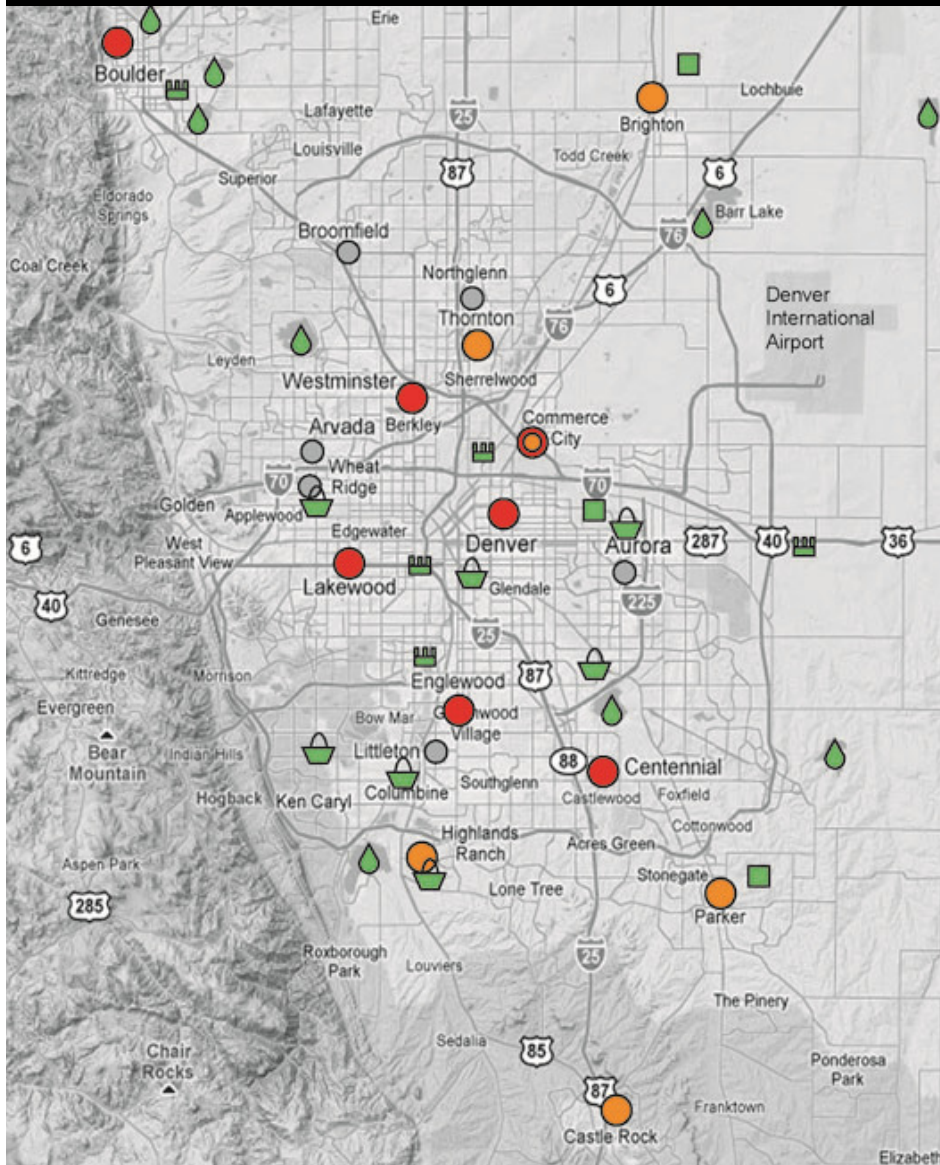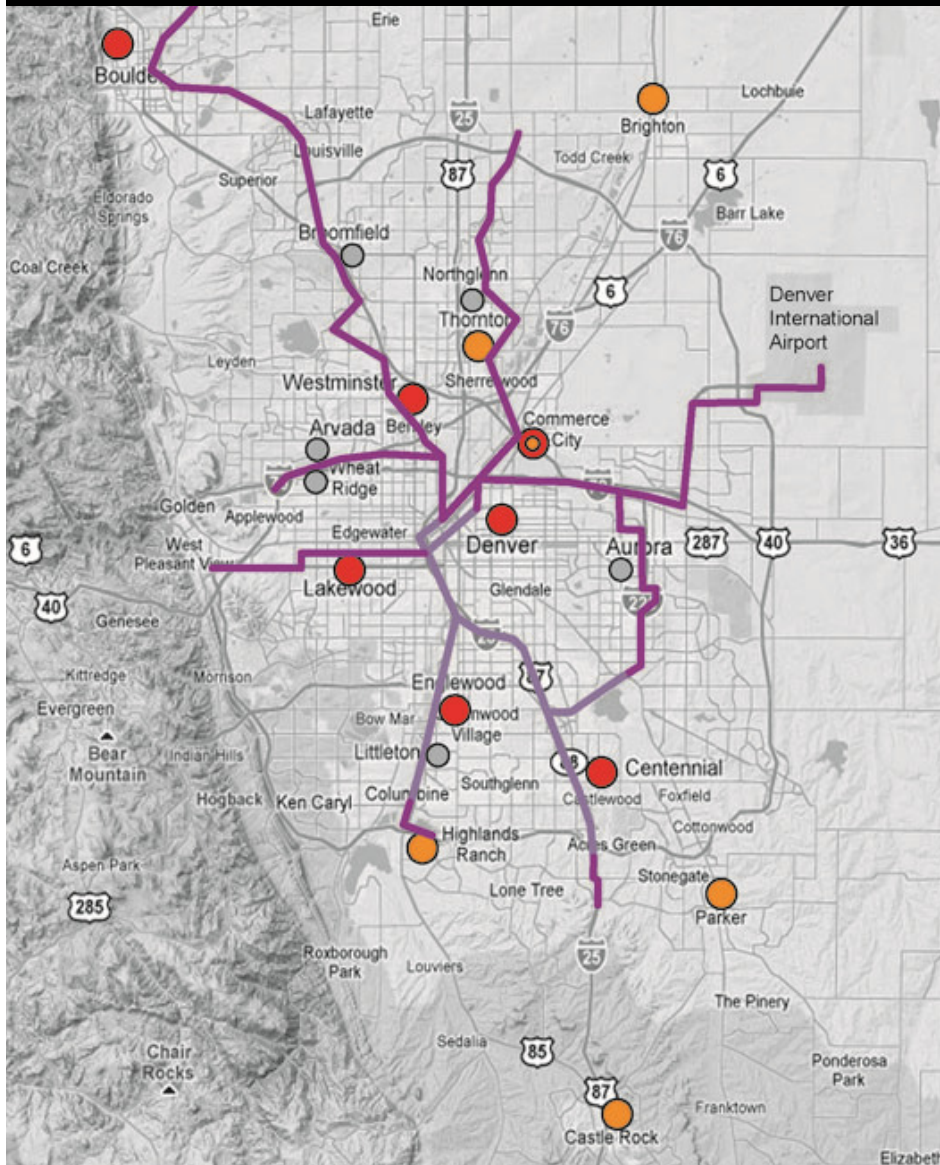
3 or More People Per Household %

○ 50 % +

Jobs Per Square Mile

● More than 3,000

Public Transporation

— Existing Light Rail

— FasTracks Light Rail & Commuter Rail

Colorado Cities – Trends

- Cities with newer 3+ bedroom homes = younger population

- Cities with higher older adult population more options available for home care and assisted living

- Rural agricultural towns lowest unemployment

- Cities with higher median income = higher performing K-12 schools

- Cities in metro area either favorable for family size housing or jobs, but not both

The Approach: Boomer Bond
Key Deliverables

1. A community assessment tool to facilitate local dialogue and identify priorities (Complete)

2. A comprehensive set of policies, strategies and tools for local governments to consider (In process)

3. A voluntary recognition program to highlight local efforts

4. A voluntary regional agreement to meet the growing needs of an older adult population

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Recent activities

- Significant outreach to community leaders

- Community Assessment Tool

  - 25+ meetings with multi-disciplinary teams to develop and review

  - Working "professional" version

- Local coordination activities

  - Pilot communities "testing" assessment tool and process

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

- Purpose: Provide a tool for local governments to carefully consider each of the elements of a supportive community
  - Ultimately it's a conversation starter
- Questions highlight the elements needed to support an aging population
  - Inventory of supportive elements (overall, not just government programs)
  - Needs and opportunities

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Supportive Elements – Age-Friendly Communities

Topic Area	Brief Description
Mobility and access	Ensure older adults have safe and convenient transportation options
Housing	Develop strategies to assist communities in providing affordable, accessible housing options
Support systems	Maximize capacity of local governments and partners to support independent aging
Community engagement and education	Identify opportunities that embrace the potential contributions of older adults
Safety and security	Document strategies to make older adults comfortable in navigating their surroundings
Community design for active aging	Promote local strategies that integrate physical activity into daily routines

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Example: Food Access

- Question: Are there home delivered meal programs in your County? Yes/No
- Answering this question will lead the respondent to consider the extent of meal delivery, who is served, how people access the service, types of meals, congregate meal programs? etc.
- So, what happens once we have all this information?

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Turning Questions into Action

- Define the issue: Increasing numbers of older adults on fixed incomes with limited access to healthy food options (fresh vegetables, special diet meals, lack of transportation)

- Define the geographic area: A county? Group of zip codes? neighborhood?

- Define the magnitude: demographic analysis (age cohorts, income groups, homeowners/renters, adult children etc.)

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

You're not in this alone…

- Identify existing resources:
  - Prepare inventory of food related programs (Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, meal delivery services, community gardens, food trucks) gathering information on sponsoring organization, geographic focus, delivery methods, funding sources, fees, program capacity, actual number served etc.
- Talk to the experts: program staff; producers; senior centers; care managers; seniors etc.
  - What is the actual need? Is there excess capacity? If so, why? Barriers to providing service? Opportunities for improvement of existing system?

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Gathering the Resources

- Convene group of leaders involved with some aspect of the issue: providers, social services, planners, funders, academics, local government, developers, youth and senior organizations, housing, volunteer organizations, community organizations
  - Develop understanding of each organization's role; resources; capacity; interests etc.
  - Identify opportunities to leverage resources (human, financial, built etc.)
- Create an opportunity for collaborative community response
  - Example: A community Charette provides an opportunity for a hands on workshop in which residents and area professionals can bring together the research, best practices from other communities and develop a strategy for the community
  - Integrate solutions to all issues identified through the Assessment

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Don't Reinvent the Wheel

- Utilize Toolkit and other resources available through DRCOG

- These aren't new issues, solutions are place based but we can learn a lot from other programs and apply those lessons to our communities

- Challenge yourself to think creatively: consider pieces of various strategies, your communities strengths and weaknesses

- Don't hesitate to bring in outside expertise, someone with an objective viewpoint and broader experience

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

The Financial Picture

- Do your homework:
  - Prepare a financial feasibility study;
  - Understand policy changes and identify any potential new funding sources
    - The Affordable Care Act is creating a myriad of new funding opportunities, many of which are focused on the community—gain an understanding of how your community could become part of a larger health care network through housing, community support services etc.
  - Develop a business plan
    - Clearly define each partner's roles and responsibilities
    - Fiduciary commitment/investment
  - Prioritize issues and develop realistic implementation plan with resources and champions clearly defined

The Approach: Boomer Bond Assessment

Challenges

- Finding a common language
- Making aging a priority
- Going beyond silos and territoriality
- Consistent participation
- Finding flexible funding sources
- Understanding other's limitations

Opportunities

- Leveraging resources in new ways across organizations
- Developing more extensive community resources
- Creating space to integrate silos
- Develop creative solutions to chronic issues

We Want to Hear From You!

- What would motivate you and your community to more fully consider the changing needs of older adults?

- What are the greatest needs for families?

- What do you think would motivate or help planners/elected officials become interested in these challenges?

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