

PARKER'S ECONOMIC PLAYBOOK

MOVING PARKER TOWARDS A THRIVING ECONOMIC FUTURE

September 2023

A forward-thinking and comprehensive economic development strategy for the Town of Parker, Colorado

Parker's Economic Playbook was developed on behalf of the Town of Parker by Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.), a Denver-based planning and economic development consulting firm.

Countless individuals provided valuable feedback that made this planning effort possible, including Town staff, partner organization leaders, business stakeholders, and residents. Over 660 residents, employees, business and commercial property owners, visitors, and other local Parker stakeholders completed an online survey in February and March 2023 to help guide the planning process.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PARKER'S ECONOMIC PLAYBOOK

BACKGROUND & OBJECTIVES

In 2022, Town of Parker leaders initiated a comprehensive economic development strategy. *Parker's Economic Playbook* builds on existing plans and studies, while identifying new economic development initiatives and priorities looking forward to the next five to ten years.

Town of Parker staff and leaders sought a plan that accomplished the following key objectives:

- » Create a forward-thinking strategy to guide economic development in Parker
- » Promote economic resiliency, diversification, fortify Town's revenue base and create local job opportunities
- » Refresh the mission and structure of Parker's economic development services
- » Engage elected officials, town staff, business and civic leaders, and other community stakeholders in a participatory process to inform the plan.

Selected to facilitate the plan was Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.), a Denver-based firm with past experience working in Parker through the 2017 P3 strategic planning process.



Parker Recreation Center. Photo from the Town of Parker website.



Farmers Market in Downtown Parker. Photo courtesy of the Town of Parker.

PROCESS

Phase I: Existing Conditions Beginning in late 2022 through mid 2023, the consultant team, shepherded by a project working group consisting of key Town staff, embarked on the discovery phase of the project to understand existing conditions that would inform the plan recommendations. This phase included:

- » Orientation and review of past plans and studies
- » Community engagement, including one-on-one interviews, roundtable meetings, and an online community survey.
- » A comprehensive market assessment that identifies existing conditions and competitive advantages, considers Parker's unique position in the Denver metropolitan region, and anticipates future shifts in demographics and lifestyles.

Phase 2: Internal Assessment: A review of Town priorities and internal processes was a goal of Phase Two, which included:

- » Best practice research in municipal economic development initiatives, including interviews with four peer communities.
- » Identifies collaboration opportunities with other civic organizations, agencies, and private entities to leverage limited resources and energies.

Phase 3: Draft Plan Framework and Recommendations

MARKET ASSESSMENT: KEY FINDINGS

Parker is doing well by many conventional measures of economic development.

- » Per acre, land in Parker generates five times more assessed value than Douglas County and about 30% more than its peer community of Castle Rock.
- » Parker has a highly educated residential population, with a median household income of \$120,500 - more than \$40,000 above the statewide median.
- » Parker's retail base proved resilient in the face of the pandemic, with sales tax revenues showing a strong increase, while most communities lost revenues, and even saw its biggest growth since 2010 occurring in 2021.

Not all Parker stakeholders are beneficiaries of this economic prosperity, and more residents may experience cost of living challenges moving forward.

- » Parker's housing prices have effectively excluded lower and moderate-income homeowners and renters. Cost of living metrics suggest that existing residents are more cost burdened than the statewide average.
- » 90% of employees in Parker do not reside in the town, and the majority are earning wages that are inadequate to fit in with the town's high cost of living. 62% of jobs located in Parker make under \$40,000 annually.
- » The population over the age of 65 is Parker's fastest growing demographic cohort. The Town will need to consider the future housing and economic needs of an aging community.

A realistic and targeted primary employer recruitment strategy could help develop a more diversified job base.

- » There may be opportunities to recruit more primary employers in higher-paying, higher-growth industries, that can benefit from the town's highly educated population.
- » Due to Parker's locational challenges and limited availability of large developable parcels, it may be unrealistic to attract larger-scale manufacturing and tech companies. Instead, the focus should be on attracting second tier, small- and mid-sized firms and distribution centers.
- » Part of Parker's primary employment strategy could be attracting remote workers, especially those recently laid off in tech. This feeds into market demand for co-working spaces, and could spur new entrepreneurial energy and businesses within the community.

- » Parker's office sector is relatively untapped compared to other markets and was thus protected from being over leveraged post-pandemic. Moving forward, the Town should embrace strategies to accommodate more diverse office uses, such as different types of office or startup incubation space.

Remaining residential and commercial land should be thoughtfully planned and developed.

- » Looking to the future, Parker's low-density development patterns will be constrained by the increasingly limited availability of raw land. Consideration should be given to preserving land for employment centers such as potential satellite offices, coworking spaces for remote workers, and spaces that can incubate startup and small businesses.

Parker is strong on traditional retail, with future opportunities to diversify offerings and to create unique, walkable commercial centers.

- » There is a significant opportunity to develop Downtown Parker as the central gathering place where people live, shop, and work, and a catalyst for revenue generation, economic development, creativity, and sense of place.
- » Corridors like Parker Road with a high concentration of older retail uses have near-term redevelopment potential.
- » As new residential subdivisions are built in the southern portion of Parker, there may be opportunities for smaller commercial nodes that provide neighborhood services and retail.

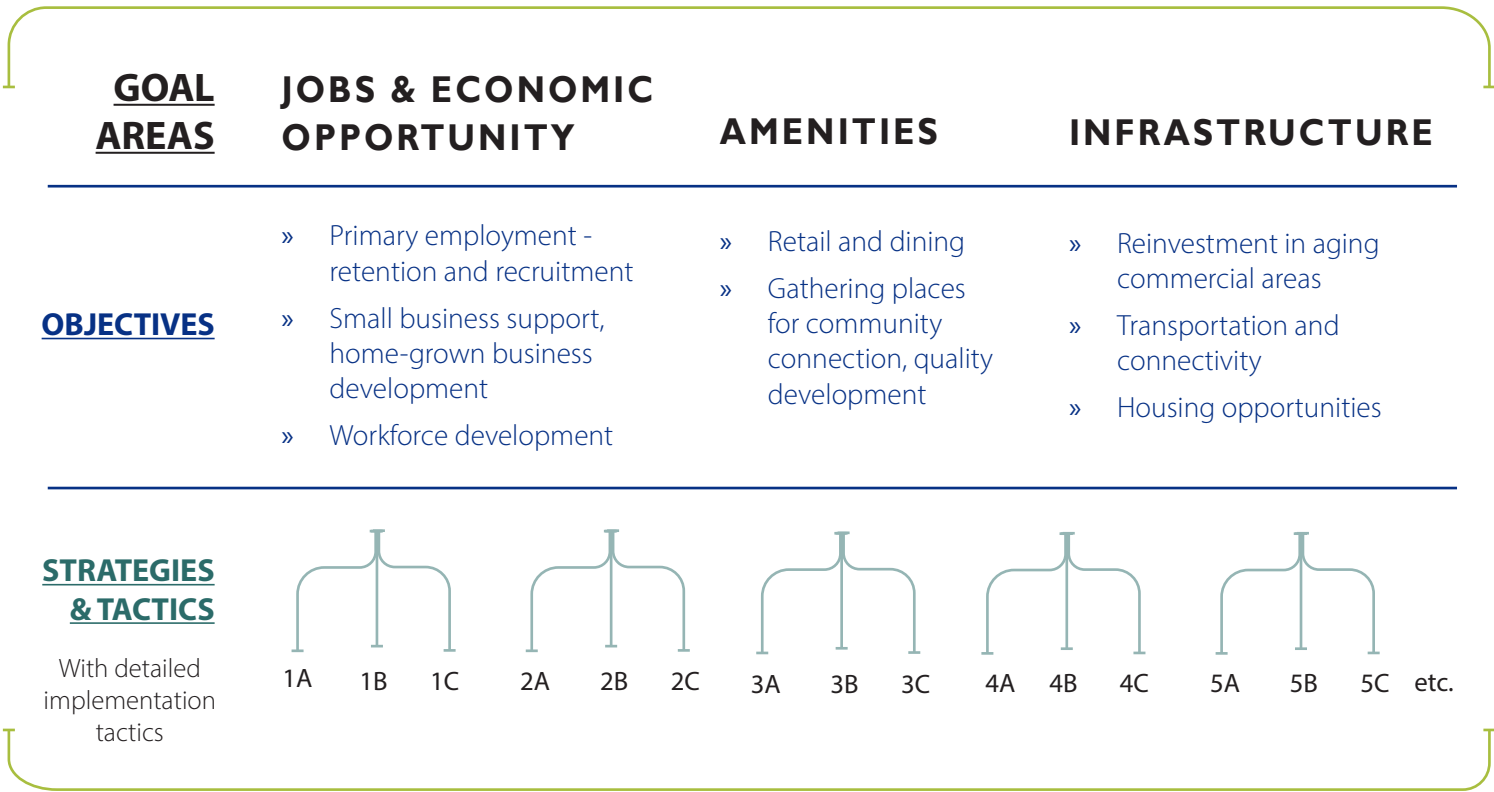


Mainstreet in Downtown Parker. Photo courtesy of P.U.M.A.

PLAN FRAMEWORK

The recommendations outlined in this plan were developed in tandem with the project working group and Town of Parker staff and elected officials. They are based on a variety of inputs including community and stakeholder feedback, market research, and economic development best practices.

The framework graphic below has two purposes: to visualize the organizational hierarchy of the plan's recommendations, and to highlight the plan's overarching goals and objectives.



Multi-family housing in Parker. Photo from apartments.com.



Holiday lighting in Downtown Parker. Photo courtesy of the Town of Parker.

PARKER'S ECONOMIC PLAYBOOK: OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

GOAL AREA: Jobs & Economic Opportunity

Objective 1: Expand primary employment

Strategies:

- » 1.1: Recruit companies and jobs in high-paying, high-growth sectors, particularly where Parker has a competitive advantage.
- » 1.2: Develop process incentives and programs to attract desired primary employers.
- » 1.3: Consider branding and a creative marketing campaign for relocating or expanding businesses to Parker.
- » 1.4: Preserve and expand commercial and industrial uses to maximize primary employment.
- » 1.5: Accommodate more remote workers and encourage value-added workplace amenities attractive to all worker types.

Objective 2: Increase support for small businesses

Strategies:

- » 2.1: Cultivate homegrown businesses and start-ups.
- » 2.2: Streamline the delivery of hands-on business assistance.
- » 2.3: Create policies and process incentives to help small, local retailers and other businesses acquire or lease appropriate space.
- » 2.4: Build a culture of collaboration for more proactive business outreach and engagement.

Objective 3: Promote workforce development, training, and economic opportunities

Strategies:

- » 3.1: Promote existing workforce development programs, particularly in technology, manufacturing, healthcare, and other opportunities that match the local workforce.
- » 3.2: Support sector partnership networks to connect students with local apprenticeship opportunities.

GOAL AREA: Amenities

Objective 4: Diversify retail, dining, and entertainment

Strategies:

- » 4.1: Support locally-owned retail and restaurant businesses.

- » Strategy 4.2: Recruit and retain retail concepts where there are market gaps.
- » 4.3: Recruit desired local/regional "chain-let" restaurants and breweries.
- » 4.4: Adjust cultural and entertainment offerings to appeal to a younger and more diverse audience.
- » 4.5: Encourage community-led events that spur interaction and creative placemaking.

Objective 5: Encourage quality development and places for community gathering

Strategies:

- » 5.1: Support the build out and activation of Downtown Parker.
- » 5.2: Enact development standards and incentives for high quality, activated, pedestrian-oriented design in designated areas.

GOAL AREA: Infrastructure

Objective 6: Reinvest in aging commercial areas

Strategies:

- » 6.1: Reimagine existing commercial centers, particularly shopping malls in areas along Parker Road, and Highway 83 corridor.

Objective 7: Improve transportation and connectivity

Strategies:

- » 7.1: Improve pedestrian and non-vehicular connectivity to Downtown Parker.
- » 7.2: Consider public transportation improvements to alleviate congestion and provide transit assistance.
- » 7.3: Ensure town-wide access to high-speed broadband internet.

Objective 8: Enhance attainable housing opportunities

Strategies:

- » 8.1: Broaden opportunities for engagement and collaboration around housing issues with neighboring municipalities.
- » 8.2: Investigate and plan for future increased demand for senior housing and services.
- » 8.3: Consider policies to add affordable living options within existing housing developments.



01

BACKGROUND

PLAN BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

PLAN BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

OBJECTIVES

In early 2022, Town of Parker leaders initiated a competitive recruitment process for consulting services to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy. Progressive Urban Management Associates (P.U.M.A.) was the firm selected to facilitate the plan.

The plan accomplishes the following key objectives:

- Create a forward-thinking strategy to guide economic development in Parker that encompasses existing conditions and competitive advantages, considers Parker’s unique position in the Denver metropolitan region, and anticipates future shifts in demographics and lifestyles;
- Promote economic resiliency, diversification, fortify the Town’s revenue base, and create local job opportunities;
- Refresh the mission and structure of Parker’s economic development services; and
- Engage elected officials, town staff, business and civic leaders, and other community stakeholders in a participatory process to inform the plan.

Parker’s Economic Playbook provides a basis for town-wide decision-making and is intended to guide the Town of Parker Economic Development department and related town departments, as well as the wide

array of economic development organizations and private sector entities that are vital to successful implementation. While some strategies will be led by Town staff, most recommendations rely on internal and external collaboration to implement.

PLAN CONTENTS

Chapters 1-4: Understanding Parker’s economic development opportunities and priorities:

- » I. Background
- » II. Market Conditions
- » III. Community Aspirations
- » IV. Internal Conditions

Chapter 5: Recommendations

- » Plan Framework high-level overview of goals and objectives
- » Strategies
- » Internal Recommendations
- » Implementation Matrix: provides detailed tactical steps and ideas for implementation, including case studies, suggested sequencing, partner roles, and high-level cost estimates (if applicable).

Appendix: Supporting Research: At the end of this document, appendices are provided:

- » A) Market Assessment
- » B) Survey Summary
- » D) Maps



PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

PHASE I: EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Existing Conditions Analysis: The consultant team gained an understanding of Parker through a variety of methods, including a review of past studies and a comprehensive market assessment that identifies the town’s comparative advantages and key economic opportunities.

- » Site visits and extensive orientation
- » Review and analysis of prior plans and studies conducted in Parker over the past ten years
- » Development of a market assessment that examines a range of demographic and economic indicators and identifies vulnerabilities and opportunities expected to impact Parker over the next five years and beyond.

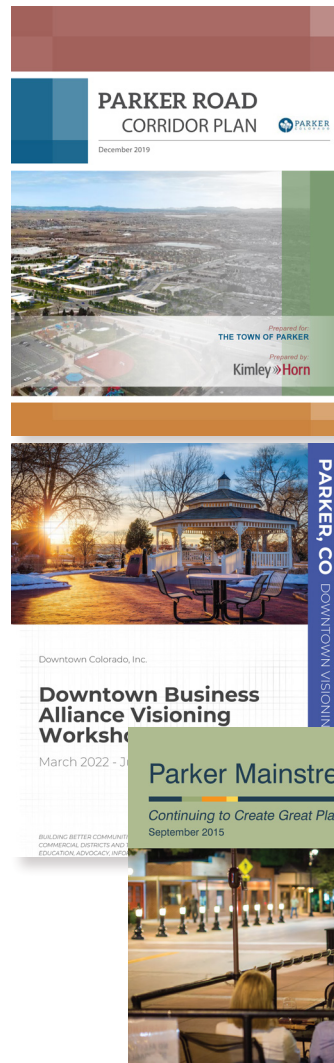
Community Engagement: More than 700 Parker community members provided opinions that shaped plan priorities. Key themes from stakeholder engagement, including findings from the online survey can be found in Chapter 3: Community Aspirations.

- » Outreach methods included: one-on-one interviews, roundtables, and an online survey that received 660 responses.

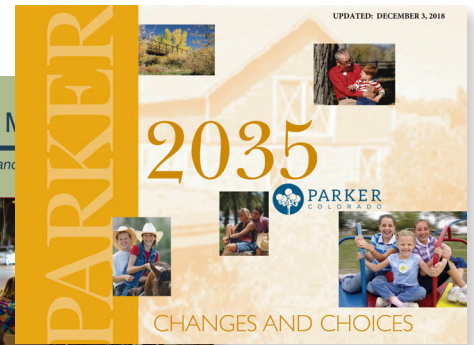
PHASE II: INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Internal Assessment: intended to evaluate the Town’s capacity to respond to economic development opportunities and challenges, the internal assessment included:

- » A review of existing program services
- » Meetings with Town staff to review priorities and internal processes
- » Best practice research in municipal economic development initiatives, including interviews with four peer communities.



To gain a deeper understanding of Parker’s existing conditions and context, and to ensure that this process would build upon past efforts, the consultant team reviewed nearly a dozen past plans and studies that have relevance to economic development in Parker. Plans reviewed include: Parker 2035 Master Plan (2012 and 2018 updates), Downtown Business Alliance Visioning Workshop Report (July 2022), Parker Arts Strategic Plan (2019-2023), Parker Road Corridor Plan (2019), and the Parker Main Street Master Plan (2015). The consultant team also reviewed results from the 2021 Town of Parker Community Survey and previous survey reports.



PHASE III: RECOMMENDATIONS

- » The findings from the market assessment, community engagement, and review of internal conditions informed the structure of the plan. The plan includes “goals framework” with goal areas, objectives, and strategies, to guide Parker’s evolution over the next five to ten years.
- » An Implementation Matrix is provided that outlines detailed tactical action steps, along with key partners, sequencing, and relative costs for each strategy.
- » Internal programmatic, policy, and staffing recommendations are also included.



02

MARKET CONDITIONS

MARKET ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW AND KEY FINDINGS

MARKET ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW & KEY FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

A comprehensive market assessment was completed in Q1 2023 to help inform the *Parker Economic Playbook*. The market assessment examines a range of demographic and economic indicators related to the town's population and employment trends, along with detailed assessments of its residential, retail, office, and industrial sectors, and tourism and visitation. It identifies the strengths and vulnerabilities expected to impact Parker over the next five years and beyond.

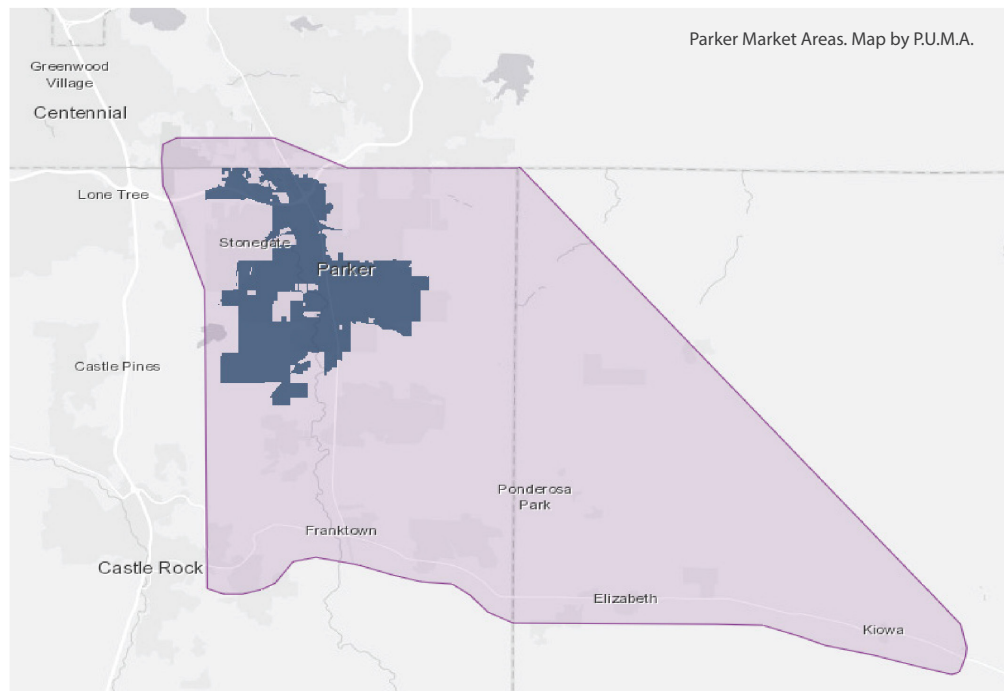
Data was compiled using primary and secondary sources, including the Town of Parker, Esri Business Analyst, the U.S. Census Bureau, real estate research, interviews with local real estate experts and Parker stakeholders, and other available sources. Pre- and post-Covid conditions are discussed when available, and then brief insights are offered into what the future may hold for various segments.



Retail development at Parker Road and Lincoln Avenue. Photo from P.U.M.A.

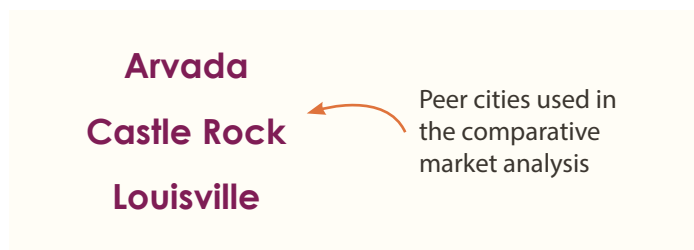
MARKET AREAS

Data was collected, when available, for the Town of Parker (Town) and a Primary Market Area (PMA). The Primary Market Area is a broader geography that is used to better understand market opportunities and demand for offerings from within the Town of Parker boundaries, is 232.4 square miles. Both areas are shown in the map below, with the darker blue representing the Town and the transparent purple representing the larger Primary Market Area. The PMA includes Elizabeth, Kiowa, Franktown, and Ponderosa Park. Data for Douglas County was also frequently analyzed where available.



PEER CITIES

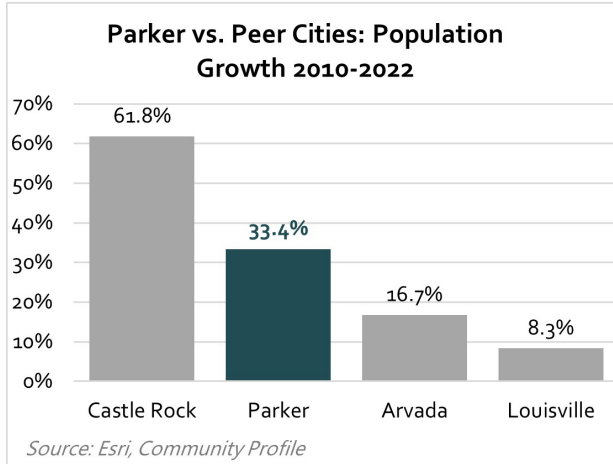
Several Front Range cities and towns were used as comparisons for Parker for the Market Assessment. They include Castle Rock, Arvada, and Louisville. These peers were selected due to their similarities in size and other characteristics. Overall, these peers share many of the same market dynamics that exist in Parker today.



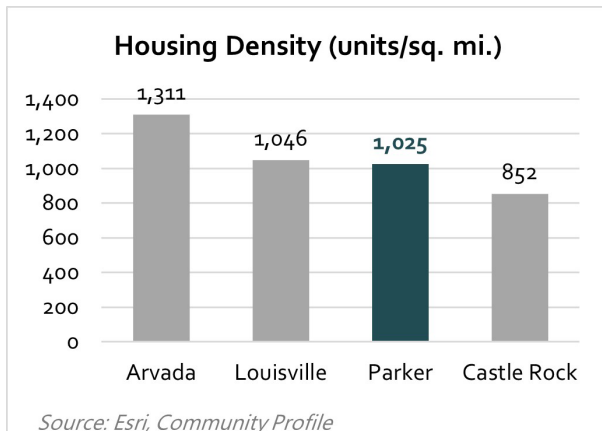
MARKET ASSESSMENT SUMMARY BY CHAPTER

The following summary of the Market Assessment provides an overview of key findings by chapter -- Residential, Employment, Retail, Office, Industrial, and Tourism and Visitation. For reference, data sources and graphs are cited and provided in the full report.

Residential



- » Between 2010 and 2022, Parker’s population grew substantially, at rate of 33%, outpacing most other Front Range communities. Parker gained more than 15,000 new residents in just twelve years.
- » Since 2010, Parker’s population has diversified, with 11% fewer people identifying as “White Alone” on the US Census. There has been an increase in the proportion of residents who identify as “Hispanic”, “Two or More Races”, “Asian”, and “Black/African American”.
- » Parker is a comparatively young community - it has the lowest median age among its peer cities. However, the population over the age of 65 is Parker’s fastest growing demographic cohort.



- » Parker’s residential development, characterized by high-end single-family subdivisions, has continued to proliferate in the last ten years. It has one of the lowest density housing patterns among its peer cities. Looking to the future, this low-density development will be constrained by the increasingly limited availability of raw land.
- » Despite the characterizations about Parker’s single-family dominated housing typology, Parker’s housing stock has been diversifying. Nearly half of Parker’s 4,869 multifamily units were built between 2000 and 2010.
- » Home prices skyrocketed during the pandemic, with Parker’s home values increasing 45% between 2019 and 2022. Prices grew statewide at nearly the same rate (43%), but Colorado’s median home value at the end of 2022 was \$575,000, compared to Parker’s median home value of \$735,000.
- » While rental rates have not increased quite as dramatically, Parker’s average rents increased 22% since the pandemic started, which is double the increases seen in Boulder and Jefferson counties.
- » Parker’s housing prices and overall cost of living have effectively excluded lower and moderate-income homeowners and renters. Cost of living indicators suggest that existing residents are more cost burdened than the statewide average.

	Zillow: Home Value Index, 2022	Zillow: Home Value Index % Change, 2019-2022
Louisville	\$853,945	40%
Parker	\$734,692	45%
Castle Rock	\$706,893	47%
Arvada	\$645,894	45%

Source: Zillow



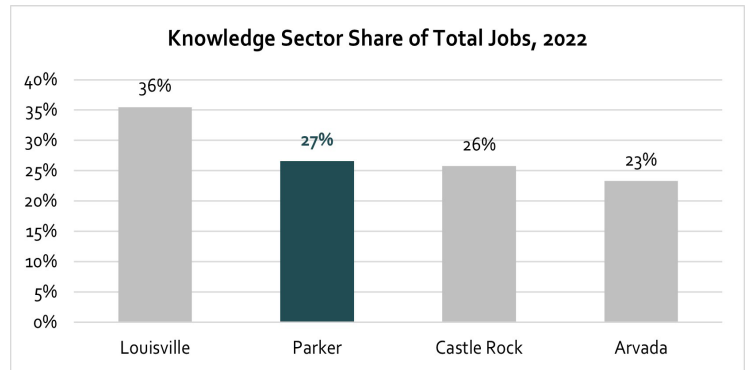
Single family home construction in Parker. Photo: P.U.M.A.

Employment

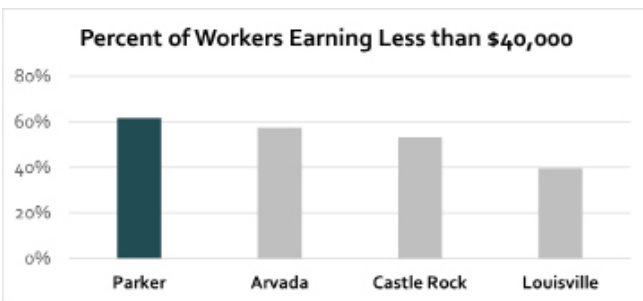
- » As of 2019 (the most recently available data), only about 10% of Parker’s workforce lives in Parker, and most residents commute outside of town for work. Roughly 1 in 5 employed Parker residents travel to the City of Denver for employment.
- » Parker’s three largest industries by employment are retail, healthcare, and food services. Jobs in these sectors tend to be lower paying. 62% of jobs located in Parker make under \$40,000 annually.
- » Data indicates a lack of primary employers in higher-paying, higher-growth industries relative to some of Parker’s peers. The town’s employment sector is somewhat dependent upon the continued success of its ten largest employers (five of which are healthcare or retail establishments) that provide nearly 40% of the town’s total jobs.
- » Nearly 60% of Parker residents hold a Bachelor’s or Graduate/Professional degree, which is a higher percentage than two of its peers as well as the Primary Market Area.
- » Most employees in Parker’s retail and services economy earning wages that are inadequate to fit in with the town’s high cost of living, coupled by limited public transportation options. Parker may struggle to retain retail and restaurant options as it may become increasingly difficult to staff these kinds of establishments. In addition to high housing costs, the town is not well served by public transit, vehicle transportation costs are high, the labor market is very tight, and thus Parker may lose service workers that find opportunities to work closer to where they live.

Where Parker Residents Work	
Denver	20%
Parker	10%
Aurora	9%
Centennial	8%
Greenwood Village	7%
Castle Rock	6%
Lone Tree	3%
Highlands Ranch	2%
Lakewood	2%
Colorado Springs	2%
All other locations	31%

Source: U.S. Census, LEHD (2019 data)



“Knowledge sector” jobs tend to be within industries that are predominately private sector-based, fast-growing, well-paying, and a magnet for talented and well-educated workers (such as Professional, Scientific & Tech Services; Health Care & Social Assistance; Finance, Insurance & Real Estate; Management of Companies; and Information). Parker’s knowledge sector share is on par with its peers, although trailing quite a bit behind Louisville, by about 10%.



- » Remaining developable land that could be used to house new primary employment in Parker is dwindling. Much of the developable land within town limits has been allocated to single-family home construction. Current zoning regulations are flexible enough to allow for a plethora of uses, such as gas stations and personal storage, that continue to be attractive as low hanging fruit opportunities.



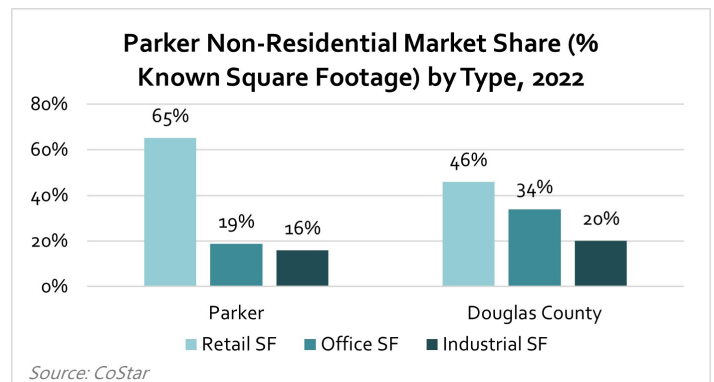
Parker Adventist Hospital. Photo courtesy of the Town of Parker.

Retail

- » Parker boasts 4.5 million retail square feet, the most retail square footage (and 1.5 times the average) among Douglas County municipalities.
- » Parker's retail base proved resilient in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, with sales tax revenues showing a strong increase while most communities lost revenues. Sales and use tax revenues in the Town of Parker have more than doubled since 2010, increasing 122%, from \$25 million to over \$58 million, and even saw its biggest growth since 2010 occurred in 2021.
- » Parker is a destination for many of those residing outside its boundaries. As sales tax revenues show, Parker draws in many non-resident patrons.
- » The anticipated downtown development projects are poised to enhance Parker's draw for residents and non-residents alike. Downtown Parker has potential to become the central gathering place where people can shop, work, and live, and a catalyst for revenue generation, economic development, creativity, sense of place.
- » Parker Road is the arterial with the highest concentration of older retail development, with potential for redevelopment to re-envision aging shopping centers.
- » While most of Parker's market sectors have experienced volatility, Parker's retail vacancy rates have consistently decreased since 2006 and are currently at 1.1% – an all-time low.
- » There are opportunities for commercial nodes within new and existing residential subdivisions to provide neighborhood services and retail.

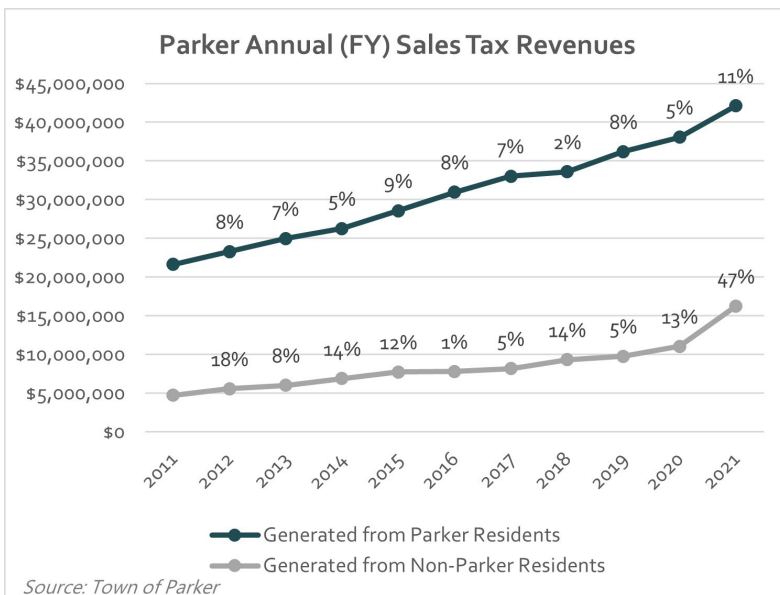


Stroh Ranch King Soopers. Image courtesy of the Town of Parker.



See Commercial Parcels by Building Age map in the appendix.

Parker's low retail vacancy has implications for the availability of affordable commercial space for prospective, existing, and emerging businesses.



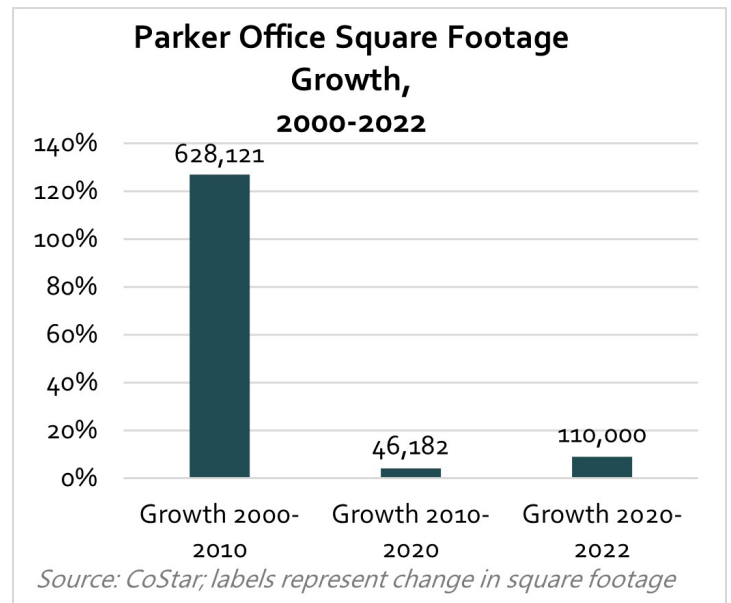
New retail development in Pine Bluffs. Image courtesy of the Town of Parker.

Office

- » Parker has 1.3 million square feet of office space (9% of Douglas County's total office space), which is in line with the average for other Douglas County municipalities but about 2 million square feet less than Lone Tree.
- » Rental prices for office spaces have steadily risen, despite relatively high vacancy rates. Office rents increased by 22% between 2012 and 2022, from \$23 per square foot to \$32 per square foot.
- » The current office vacancy rate is 10.4%, compared to 6.3% before the pandemic. Overall, Parker's office occupancy rates are higher than the southeast metro area as a whole.
- » The majority of Parker's workforce is employed in jobs that are not office-based, and those that are in office-based jobs are largely employed by small professional, medical, and business service firms that only require small spaces.
- » Parker residents are highly educated—a characteristic that is always attractive to businesses looking to relocate or open satellite offices. A highly educated population is also one that incubates entrepreneurial minds that might, with ample support, be convinced to start their own businesses and create more home-grown primary jobs for Parker.
- » Parker's office sector is relatively untapped compared to other markets and was thus protected from being over leveraged post-pandemic. More flexible work environments and post-Covid work trends are still evolving, and the long-term impact – and demand for new office real estate product -- remains to be seen. Office is the real estate sector with the most uncertainty, both globally and locally.



Office and retail uses along Parker Road. Image courtesy of Town of Parker.

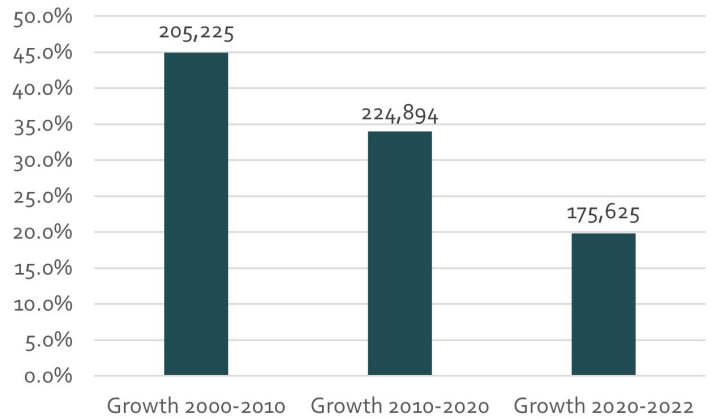


Office uses at Parker Station in Downtown Parker. Image courtesy of Town of Parker.

Industrial

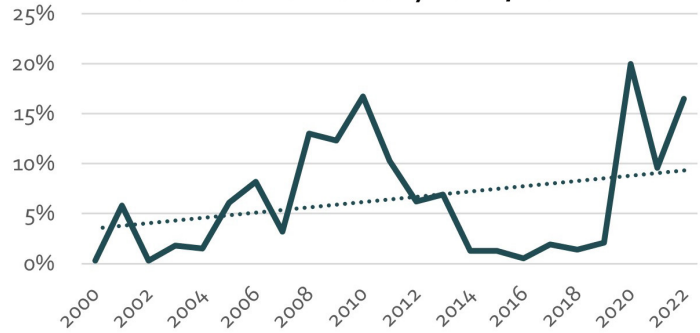
- » Parker’s industrial/flex square footage has maintained steady growth over the last two decades, but feedback from commercial real estate developers who work in Parker suggest there are significant opportunities for smaller scale and flex office and manufacturing product, as well as small distribution centers. New industrial and warehousing development should be flexible to accommodate a variety of uses and intensity.
- » Due to Parker’s competitive locational disadvantages (limited highway access and far relative distance to Denver) and limited availability of large developable parcels, it may be unrealistic for Parker to attract larger-scale manufacturing companies. Instead, the focus should be on attracting second tier, small- and mid-sized firms and distribution centers.
- » Healthcare uses are well established in Parker, with potential for growth in complementary medical, biotech, wellness industries. Healthcare is one of the fastest growing industries in the country, due in part to an aging population that needs proper care, and Parker will have ample opportunities to expand its offerings if it can find the space to accommodate them. Smaller manufacturing and warehousing spaces could be ideal.
- » There could be opportunities to nurture more home-grown small businesses and industries by tapping into the highly educated residential population. For example, there could be interest from people stepping off corporate ladder with ideas and resources to start a new venture. These individuals may benefit from temporary incubator spaces to help reduce barriers.

Parker Industrial Square Footage Growth, 2000-2022



Source: CoStar; labels represent change in square footage

Parker Industrial Vacancy Rates, 2000-2022



Source: CoStar



Small businesses in the Dransfeldt industrial area. Photo from P.U.M.A.

Tourism

- » Parker benefits from renowned arts and cultural facilities at a wide range of sizes, and has several larger-scale events throughout the year that draw in visitors from across the metro area. As the Primary Market Area grows in population, demand and attendance of events in Parker has increased.
- » Parker faces competition from performing arts venues, cultural facilities, and events in nearby communities. Notably, there is minimal draw from highly populated areas to the northwest. Moreover, as peer communities like Castle Rock continue to invest in and expand their appeal as destinations, Parker will face increased competition.
- » As recognized in the Parker Arts Strategic Plan, demographic changes and rising production costs put additional pressure on Parker to adapt its programming and increase its market capture. There is a need to adjust cultural offerings to a younger and more diverse audience. In addition, Parker’s high housing costs may contribute to difficulties in staffing lower-wage positions that are essential to operating venues, events, and lodging. In turn, this can impact the ability to provide the level of service customers and attendees expect.
- » Lodging occupancy rates are just below the optimal 70%-90% range, meaning there is adequate lodging for current needs and a bit of wiggle room as Parker attracts more visitors. There is additional capacity in the short-term rental market.



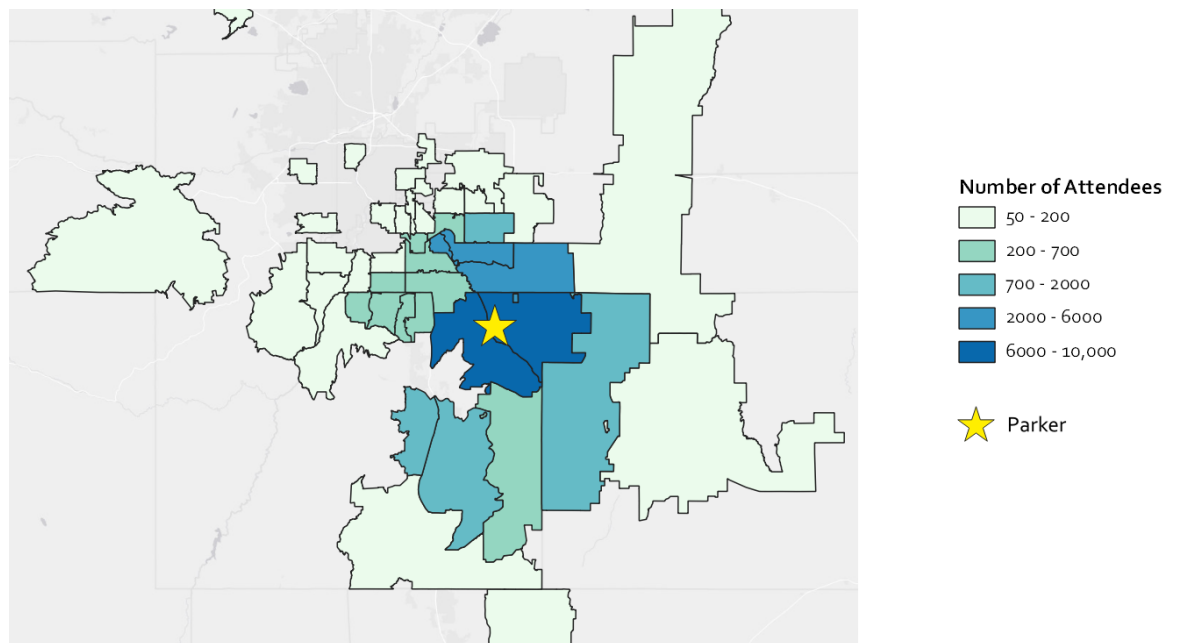
An aerial view of the annual Parker Days festivities. Photo from Town website.

- » As Parker seeks to attract larger employers to the area, there has been multiple mentions of the need for conference center (and additional lodging). The Parker Adventist Hospital has particularly called for a conference center.
- » Parker short term rentals have an average occupancy rate of 70%. However, there is considerable seasonal fluctuation in this rate: occupancy peaks in July at 92% and drops to only 42% in January. While this peak is similar to peer cities Castle Rock and Louisville, the dip is considerably lower (Castle Rock and Louisville drop to only 56% and 67% respectively). Further study is needed to understand why occupancy rates drop so much lower than peer cities in the winter.

Hospitality Real Estate Market, 2022 YTD		
	Parker	Douglas County
Inventory (rooms)	523	3446
Under Construction (rooms)	67	67
Occupancy Rate	67.8%	65.4%
Average Daily Rate (ADR)	\$123.49	\$118.00
Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)	\$83.76	\$77.00

Source: Parker Arts

Number of attendees at Parker Arts events in 2022, by home zip code. Source: Parker Arts attendance data. Map by P.U.M.A.



A photograph of an outdoor cafe or restaurant scene. In the foreground, there's a dark metal railing. Behind it, several people are seated at tables. A large tree trunk is prominent in the center. Green patio umbrellas are open over the tables. The background shows more people and the interior of the cafe.

03

COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

COMMON THEMES: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

ONLINE SURVEY FINDINGS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

In coordination with the project working group, the consultant team obtained valuable feedback from community members through several key outreach methods, which are highlighted below.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

Over the course of several months between late 2022 and Spring 2023, the consultant team facilitated virtual and in-person interviews with dozens of individuals including:

- » Town Council (all members), Mayor, and Town Manager
- » Town Departments: Public Works/Engineering and Community Development
- » Economic development partners: Parker Chamber of Commerce, Aurora South Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center (Arapahoe/Douglas Works!),
- » Private sector: Centura Parker Adventist Hospital, Rocky Vista University, Confluence Developers

ROUNDTABLES

Several virtual roundtable engagement sessions were held as part of the planning process:

- » Local developers
- » Commercial real estate brokers
- » Parker Downtown Business Association (DBA)

ONLINE SURVEY ENGAGEMENT

To gather input from a broad audience of Parker residents, employees, visitors, and other stakeholders, an online survey was created and widely distributed in February and March of 2023. Participants represented a cross-section of the community. A total of 660 responses were collected and analyzed.

- » Key survey findings can be found starting on page 15.
- » The full survey summary is located in the appendix.

COMMON THEMES: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Understanding community priorities and values is crucial for developing a unified, forward-thinking, and implementable vision. The following section highlights key themes that emerged from community and stakeholder engagement efforts. These themes and priorities form the basis for the plan recommendations. Common themes and priorities for improving Parker are outlined on the following pages.



Ice skating at Discovery Park. Photo from the Town of Parker website.

Parker's quality of life should be maintained and celebrated.

- » There is widespread satisfaction with the overall quality of life in Parker, including indoor and outdoor recreational amenities, arts and cultural opportunities, and family-friendly activities.
- » While Parker's population has grown in recent years, the town has mostly managed to retain a small hometown feel. Continuing to maintain a distinct identity that is distinguishable from surrounding towns was frequently mentioned goal.

Downtown Parker is a source of community pride, and stakeholders are enthusiastic about downtown development and activation opportunities.

- » Downtown Parker was the third most frequently visited shopping destination among eleven local and regional shopping centers listed as options in the online survey (Q2). It was the second most frequently visited destination for dining and entertainment among the eight answer choices for Question 3.

- » Stakeholders would like to see Downtown further developed into a more vital, central gathering place where people can shop, work, and live.
- » There is enthusiasm for the proposed downtown redevelopment (My Mainstreet project, led by Confluence Development),
- » Residents and business owners desire a more continuous and expanded downtown storefront experience, particularly with diverse small independent business, to attract people both within Parker, and from neighboring communities.
- » A future aspiration is to more seamlessly connect, physically and economically, the west and east ends of Mainstreet across Parker Road.

There are opportunities to diversify Parker’s restaurant and retail offerings.

- » Improving the variety of retail and restaurants was the top rated future improvement for Parker according to the online survey.
- » Clothing & shoe stores were the most frequently mentioned retail category that is missing in Parker, according to survey respondents. There is demand for both affordable and higher-end options,
- » Stakeholders indicated a preference for more multicultural cuisines and healthy food options, particularly independently owned local and regional concepts.
- » Parker needs more restaurants with outdoor dining areas and beer gardens.
- » Additional family friendly and teen entertainment experiences (e.g., bowling alley) – were common suggestions.

More distinct, walkable neighborhood centers should be developed.

- » Stakeholders would like to see more unique mixed-use developments in other areas of Parker, particularly that are walkable and well connected to residential areas.
- » Placemaking, through branding and physical interventions like gateway treatments, may be needed in certain sub-areas of town, such as key commercial districts, to help distinguish different parts of Parker.
- » Residents desire more retail and services within walking distance to residential subdivisions so they can get what they need close to where they live.

There is a strong small business community and a desire for greater support.

- » Financial support, assistance finding appropriate commercial space, and assistance navigating the

permitting process were the most commonly cited issues that prospective business owners

- » There is a need for more commercial spaces with diverse price points and sizes for existing and prospective businesses – space is expensive and it’s hard to scale up. For example, many independent businesses lack capital resources to build or rent storefronts especially in Downtown Parker.
- » Both business owners and developers expressed frustration with the complexity of starting or expanding a business.
- » There could be more focus on nurturing home-grown small businesses, including those coming online from people stepping off corporate ladder; Continue creating pathways and offering resources to encourage entrepreneurs to start businesses. 15% of online survey respondents indicated they would be interested in starting a business in Parker.

Development review and permitting processes are viewed by many developers and business owners as cumbersome.

- » Compared to other communities where developers do business, the development review process in Parker can sometimes feel unnecessarily cumbersome.
- » There is desire for making building reuse more feasible through changes that allow flexibility in the building codes.

Expanding primary job opportunities is needed in Parker.

- » Most stakeholders understand the need to increase primary employment in the community in order to sustain a well-balanced economy, and to allow more people who live in Parker to also work in town. There was also a recognition of challenges such as land availability, housing and transportation costs, and competitive disadvantages geographically, for attracting larger employers.
- » Respondents want to see more scientific and technical jobs in addition to workforce and business capacity-building opportunities. Older respondents are particularly interested in expanding healthcare and social service employment.

Housing and costs of living are growing concerns, with potentially far reaching economic implications.

- » Housing is expensive, including most that is currently under construction, and many stakeholders are concerned about the rising cost of living. A number of homeowners lamented that their adult children cannot afford to buy a home in Parker.

- » Many businesses, large and small, are struggling to recruit talent due to housing and transportation costs -- a growing challenge to expansion, retention, and quality of service delivery.

Community members has persistent concerns about connectivity, transportation, and traffic congestion.

- » There are growing concerns about traffic congestion and transit limitations. According to the online survey results, traffic congestion was the characteristic perceived to have gotten the most significantly worse in the past ten years.
- » “More accessible parks and open space” had the second highest combined “Important” and “Very Important” ranking in the online survey (Q6).
- » Improve physical connections, including adding more wayfinding signage, and increasing pedestrian lighting to improve feelings of safety and ease of multi-modal transportation.
- » There may be ways to optimize the parking experience in Downtown.

Parker’s tourism offerings have considerable potential to grow.

- » Stakeholders see Parker’s potential to expand its appeal as a regional tourism destination, building on its existing assets including concert and event series, and venues like the PACE Center, and arts and cultural facilities and programs.
- » There may be an opportunity for a facility like a conference center that can host small conventions and events, such as medical conferences associated with the hospital.

There is a desire to see the Town’s brand, image, and amenities be modernized to appeal to a broader audience.

- » There is a desire for Parker’s image to be more than that of a bedroom community
- » Revamping Parker’s brand, and offering more diverse businesses and amenities, could help attract and retain a younger and more diverse population of residents, workers, and visitors.

Environmental sustainability has emerged as an important community value.

- » “Invest in sustainability and environmental quality” had the second highest combined “Important” and “Very Important” ranking in the online survey (Q6) out of ten possible answer choices.



Shopping center in Parker. Photo from the Town of Parker.



Mainstreet, Parker. Photo from the Town of Parker.



Tallman Gulch Trail. Photo from the Town of Parker website.

ONLINE SURVEY FINDINGS

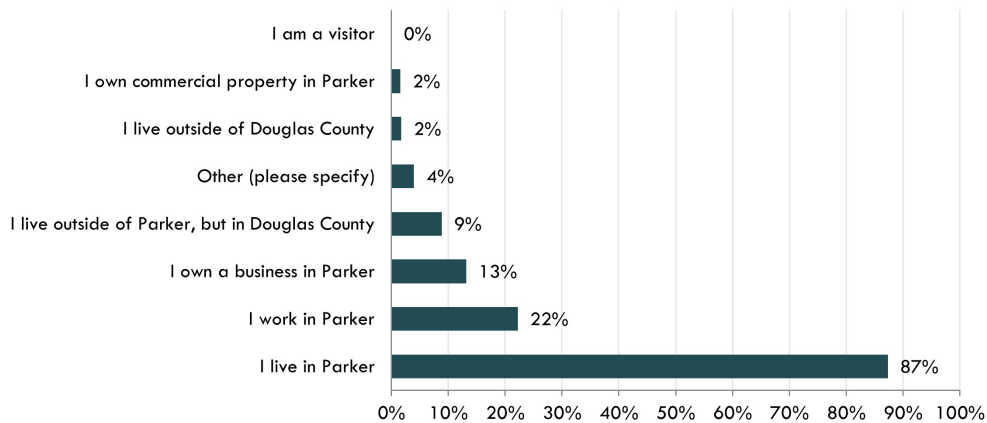
To help guide *Parker's Economic Playbook*, an online survey was distributed to the community with the goal of gathering input from a broad audience about their experiences and desires for economic vitality in Parker. The survey was available from February to March, 2023. A total of 660 responses were collected and analyzed, with key findings summarized below (full report in Appendix).

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

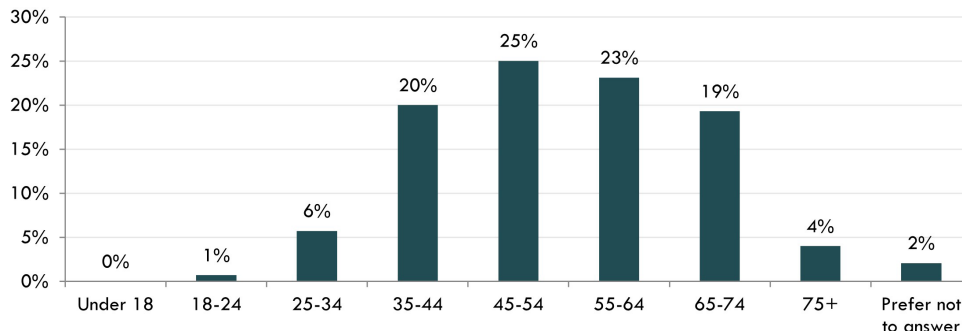
Survey participants represented a cross-section of community stakeholders. More details on respondent characteristics can be found in the full report, with a snapshot below. Key survey questions were also cross-tabulated by age and household income. A summary of findings from these cross-tabulations can be found in the full report in the appendix.

- » The majority (87%) of respondents live in Parker, with 1/3 living in Parker for 20+ years and another 20% for 6-10 years.
- » Survey participants represented a range of age groups, with roughly equal representation from ages 35-44 (20%), 45-54 (25%), 55-64 (23%) and 65-74 (19%), but only 7% were under the age of 34.
- » 79% of respondents identified as white, which mirrors the percentage of white residents in Parker based on Census data. However, only 3% of respondents identified as Hispanic/Latinx and 3% identified as Two or More races, both of which are lower than total residential estimates of 10.8% each.
- » Participants represented a range of household incomes, with \$150,000 to \$199,000 as the most common income range (22% of respondents).
- » 63% identified as female.
- » Lower income respondents tended to be older. Of respondents reporting incomes less than \$50,000, over half were from the 65+ demographic.

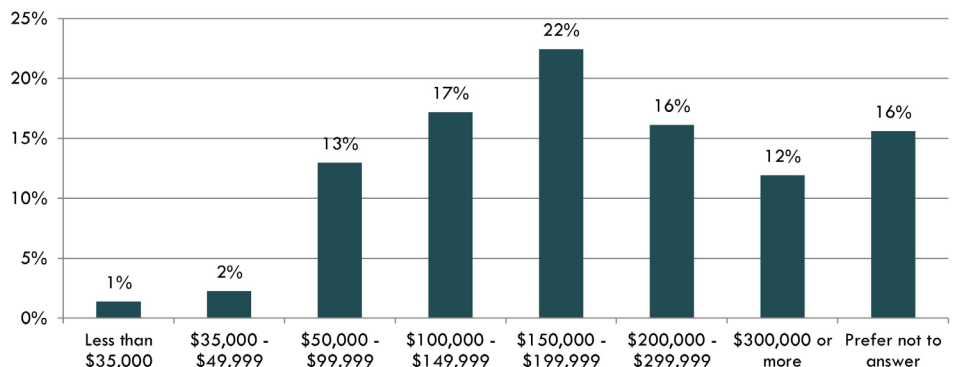
Which of the following best describes you?



Age

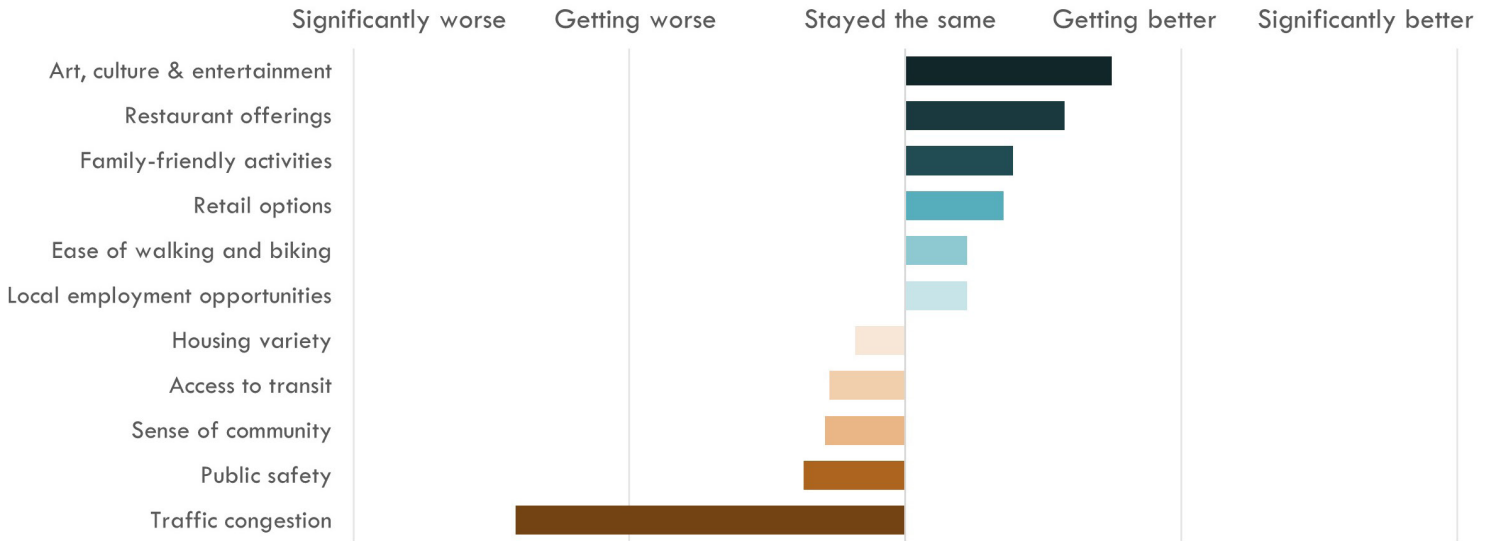


Household Income



PARKER TODAY

- » “Arts, culture, and entertainment” was the “most improved” characteristic of Parker in the past ten years, while traffic congestion was the characteristic more perceived to have gotten worse.
- » Respondents primarily conduct in-person shopping for goods and services within Parker, but there are key gaps in products and experiences that they are leaving Parker to find.
- » Downtown Parker is a highly utilized shopping destination.



Top Dining and Entertainment Destinations		
#1	Other areas in Parker	83%
#2	Downtown Parker	66%
#3	Lone Tree	52%
#4	Castle Rock	43%
#5	Denver	36%
#6	Littleton/Centennial/Highlands Ranch	36%
#7	Other (specify below)	30%
#8	Aurora	27%

When asked to indicate whether respondents visited dining or entertainment destinations frequently, occasionally, rarely, or never (Q3), the most frequently visited were Other areas in Parker and Downtown Parker. Note: score reflects cumulative “frequently” and “occasionally” ratings.

Category	Mentions	Detail	
#1	Clothes & shoes	307	Specific retailers mentioned, also both high-end and thrift
#2	Dining & Bars	201	Specific restaurants mentioned, healthy options, multicultural options
#3	Sporting Goods	80	Sports, hunting, hiking and camping supplies and attire
#4	Home goods/wares	77	Some specific retailers mentioned: Ikea, TJ Maxx, HomeGoods
#5	Entertainment	62	Movies are mentioned 22 times
#6	Auto services	55	Auto purchases and repairs
#7	Furniture	51	Particularly high-end furniture
#8	Groceries	47	Particularly specialty/high-end options and multicultural ingredients
#9	Medical services	28	Dental, medical and pharmacy services
#10	Salon services	25	Haircuts, nail services, massage
#11	Cannabis and CBD	14	Medical and recreational
#12	Electronics	18	Computers, parts, repairs, and other electronics
#13	Books	20	Particularly Barnes & Noble

The top retail items and services that survey respondents most often leave Parker to obtain (Q4, open-ended) include clothing, dining & bars, and sporting goods.

PARKER IN THE FUTURE

- » Respondents want to maintain Parker’s small town feel and parks/open space as it grows, while increasing the variety of local, unique businesses.
- » In addition to more restaurant and retail offerings, respondents want to see increased neighborhood pedestrian/bike access, greater housing variety, and a focus on sustainability and environmental quality.
- » The top three improvements with the most consensus and the highest combined rankings of “Very important” and “Important” are: Improve the variety of retail and restaurants (78% combined), More accessible parks and open space (77% combined), Increased neighborhood pedestrian/bike access (74% combined)
- » Respondents want Parker to attract more scientific and technical jobs in addition to workforce and business capacity-building opportunities. Older respondents are particularly interested in expanding healthcare and social service employment.
- » Younger respondents are the most entrepreneurial, with a third of respondents under 35 indicating interest in starting a business in Parker. The most commonly cited types of support desired included financial assistance, finding commercial space, and navigating the permitting process.

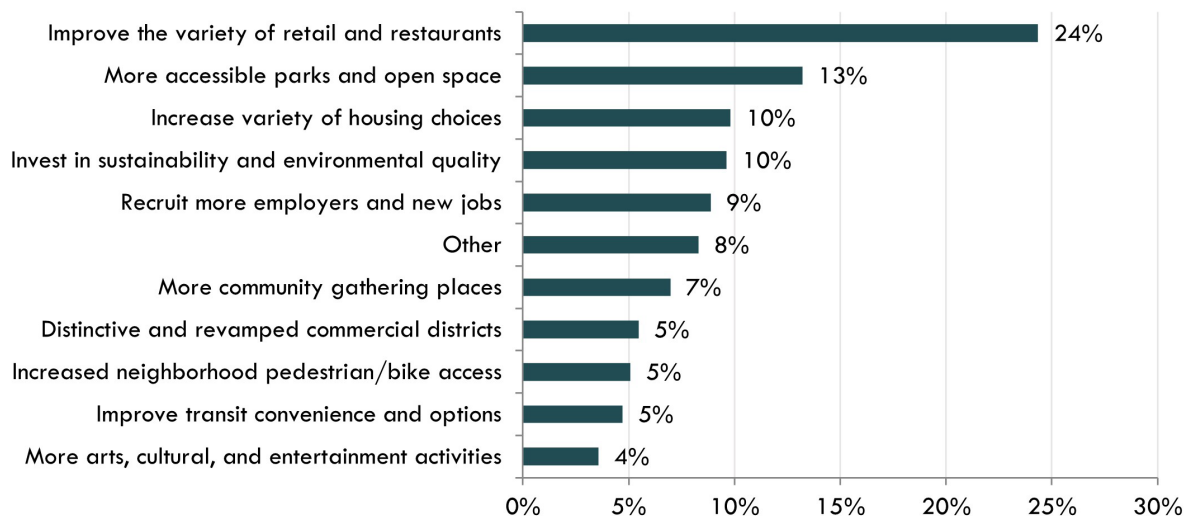
Survey respondents were asked to provide three types of stores and restaurants they’d like to see in the future in Parker. Results from the open-ended question are shown in the table below, listed by most frequently cited.

	Type of store or restaurant	Mentions
#1	Non-chain food and retail	79
#2	Upscale dining	71
#3	Culturally diverse food options	56
#4	Clothing	54
#5	Bars, breweries, and distilleries	49
#6	Home goods and décor	43
#7	Healthy food options	33
#8	Sporting and recreation supplies	29
#9	Patio/Outdoor seating options	28
#10	Art and craft	23
#11	More grocery	22
#12	Family-friendly options	20
#13	Food hall or trucks	17
#14	Live entertainment	15
#15	Furniture	14
#16	Butcher/deli	13



Respondents were asked for three words that best describe their vision for Parker in the year 2035. The word cloud at left visualizes words most commonly used by their frequency (shown by relative size).

Question 7 prompted respondents to select ONE action that would be the most important for achieving their vision of Parker. Results for question 7 are shown in the adjacent graph.



A photograph of a modern building's exterior at dusk. The building features large glass windows and a dark, metallic-looking facade. The sky is a deep blue, and the building's interior lights are visible through the glass. In the foreground, there is a concrete walkway and some landscaping with small plants and mulch.

04

INTERNAL CONDITIONS

PARKER'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

FINDINGS FROM PEER COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

PARKER'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

The Town of Parker's economic development functions were examined to better understand key opportunities for internal systems moving forward. In addition to reviewing policies and incentives, a high-level review of zoning, building codes, and the development review process was also conducted. Interviews with Town leaders, staff, external partners, and developers helped to illuminate internal strengths and challenges.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND P3

Staffing and Organization

In the recent past, the Town's **Economic Development Department** was managed by an economic development director and several staff. When P.U.M.A. was first hired to facilitate this process, the department only had the director position, which became vacant in late 2022.

Currently, most of Parker's economic development functions are overseen by the town's Urban Renewal Authority (URA), known as **Partnering for Parker's Progress**, or **P3**, which is led by an executive director and a team of two support staff. P3 offices are located in Town Hall.

The goals and functions of the P3 overlap with town-wide economic development initiatives, particularly related to promoting economic vitality in Parker's three urban renewal areas (Parker Central, Cottonwood, and Parker Road). One of the primary functions of the P3 is to administer Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and business assistance related to projects located in the urban renewal areas.

Economic Development works directly with the Town Manager and Community Development, among other internal and external agencies, to administer and promote economic development in Parker. The

department assists with site selection and provides data and marketing materials that help attract and retain businesses in Parker. The department works with key local partners including the Parker Chamber of Commerce to assist small businesses and to promote the community to prospective employers, developers, and investors.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

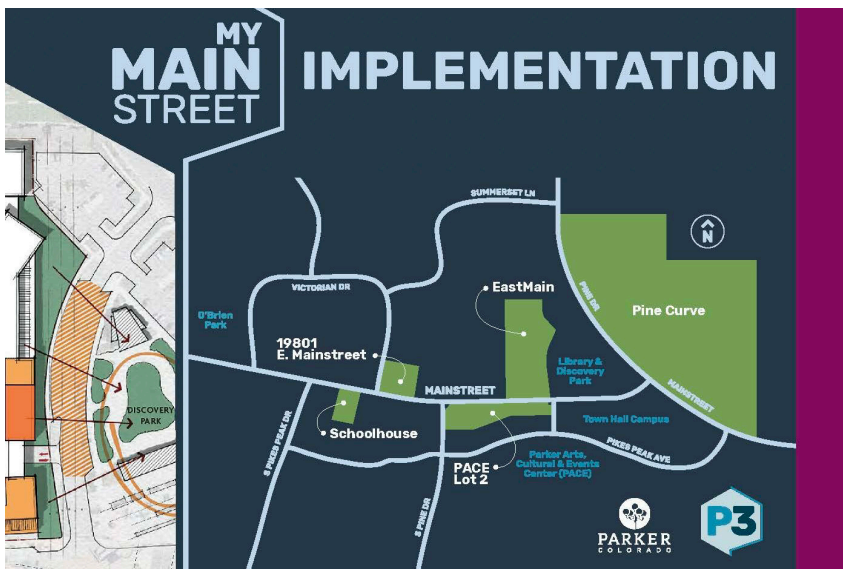
In addition to TIF, Economic Development administers several incentive programs for new development and businesses, as summarized below.

Shopping Center Assistance Program

- » For new shopping centers, a portion of fees and sales tax revenues (up to 50% for up to 10 years) is refunded by the Town of Parker to help offset cost of public improvements associated with the development of new shopping centers. Shopping centers are defined as two or more commercial buildings that are generally managed as a planned unit.

Tax and Fee Assistance Program

- » Similar to the Shopping Center Assistance Program, the Tax and Fee Assistance Program is targeted to any owner/operator of a business that wants to



Enhancing economic vitality has been identified as a key priority for the Town of Parker in many recent plans and initiatives.

With potentially transformative redevelopment projects like My Mainstreet, facilitated by the Town and P3 with private developers, Parker has an opportunity to create a distinctive, vibrant, and cohesive downtown experience for residents and visitors to live, play, and work.

locate in Parker or existing businesses that want to expand. The primary eligibility requirement is that the business would generate sales tax, permit fees, or construction use tax within the first year of operation.

Town of Parker Community Loan Fund

- » Microloans up to \$50,000 per project are available to new and existing businesses in Parker, providing financing for small businesses that aren't otherwise eligible through a traditional bank. Eligible uses of funds include start-up expenses, equipment, inventory, and operations. The program is a revolving loan fund that is administered through a partnership with the Colorado Enterprise Fund.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

The **development review process** includes an online permitting and application system for all land and building improvements, from large scale development to minor facade upgrades. For more complex projects, pre-application meetings and collaborative work sessions are available with relevant staff across departments to help applicants navigate the process and modify plans to meet building, zoning, and engineering requirements.

The **Community Development Department** is a key internal partner and includes two divisions: Building and Planning. For companies and developers looking to start or expand a business or develop property in Parker, Community Development is often their first touch-point. The Building Division is responsible for approving building permits and enforcing the building code, while the Planning Division oversees comprehensive and long-range planning efforts, zoning



code updates and enforcement, and facilitates pre-application meetings for development review.

The **Department of Engineering/Public Works** also works closely with Community Development and is responsible for reviewing construction plans for new developments, public right-of-way construction, storm drainage and environmental impacts, and other technical engineering plans required for development projects. Engineering/Public Works also oversees the development and replacement of all Town capital improvements and transportation infrastructure.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- » Despite the strong working relationship between Economic Development, Community Development, and Engineering/Public Works, Parker's development services model is somewhat siloed. Moreover, feedback from developers is that the level of requirements from different departments can feel cumbersome and lengthen the time needed for approvals. One opportunity that was identified both by town staff and external partners is to create a development liaison position within Economic Development to help applicants navigate the development review and incentive application processes, and to provide greater cohesion and communication between the departments.
- » There are opportunities to further refine and simplify certain zoning, building, and design requirements. While there is less flexibility with engineering standards compared to landscaping, Parker's zoning and design standards could be improved to allow more flexibility and to ensure requirements are as clear as possible. Community Development is in the process of modernizing Parker's Land Development Ordinance.
- » The Shopping Center and Tax & Fee Assistance programs have been fairly well utilized. However, they have largely benefited chain retailers that likely would open in Parker even without a subsidy. Modifications to these incentives may be needed to better align with economic development goals, such as targeting small, independent businesses, retail and services that fill market gaps, and development types with desirable design elements like ground floor activation or outdoor dining spaces.
- » It was also determined through this planning process that the Community Loan Fund could be better utilized and promoted -- and that a more targeted approach to eligibility based on sub-area location or business types that fill market gaps would be beneficial.

FINDINGS FROM PEER COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

The Town's economic development functions were compared with peer and aspirational communities in Colorado and beyond. The consultant team conducted interviews with economic and community development directors and managers from the following regional peer organizations:

- » *Arvada Economic Development Association (a 501c6 nonprofit funded by the City of Arvada)*
- » *City of Centennial Economic Development*
- » *City of Sheridan Community Development*
- » *Town of Superior Economic Development*

A summary of common interview themes follows:

The scope of economic development functions varied somewhat, but most treat economic development as an ecosystem and touch on housing and other quality of life matters.

- » The City of Centennial maintains some traditional functions (such as attraction/recruitment, and small business support), but has become more innovative. Examples include initiating research and public education about innovative affordable housing solutions.
- » In Sheridan, community and economic development staff wear many hats, from supporting regional workforce development initiatives, to helping manage capital improvement projects and creating affordable housing incentive packages.

More cities and towns are consolidating community development and economic development functions, resulting in more collaborative and efficient processes.

- » In Arvada, AEDA is now part of the City's "Community and Economic Work System" together with planning and engineering services.
- » Centennial merged some community development/ planning and economic development functions, and the result has been greater efficiency and ease of coordination, as well as a more holistic mind-set among staff.

Commercial retail center improvement incentives are a new tool set being used in places like Arvada and Centennial.

- » The City of Centennial's Retail Center Transformation Fund focuses on retail centers built in the late 80s/early 90s and reimburses owners for physical improvements. It can support simple improvements like façade and appearance, or new uses and redevelopment.

- » Arvada's shopping center revisioning pilot helps cover the cost of architectural designs (\$5,000 grants).

Regional collaboration can take many forms, and for many communities it is key to advancing certain projects

- » In Arvada, where there is a high concentration of economic development-related organizations, overlap of roles and responsibilities can occur but they operate within a mutually-supportive environment.
- » Centennial and Sheridan maintain relationships with workforce development (Arapahoe/Douglas Works), DRCOG, and Denver South. Sheridan is piloting a tailored workforce development program with Arapahoe/Douglas Works.

Most of the interviewed communities did not have "expedited review" per se, but they offered well-oiled internal mechanisms to ensure they can find a way to execute key projects.

- » In Arvada, one of the staff members attends weekly pre-application meetings for new commercial projects, and attends the weekly development review team meeting. While they do not have fast-tracking, AEDA often gets involved to help work through any issues that may arise.
- » Arvada, Centennial, and Sheridan each have a staff member that regularly participates with the redevelopment review team.

A photograph of an outdoor cafe or restaurant patio. Several people are seated at tables, some looking at menus. There are large umbrellas, string lights, and lush greenery in the background. The scene is bright and sunny.

05

RECOMMENDATIONS

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND INTERNAL ALIGNMENT

PLAN FRAMEWORK

STRATEGIES

INTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

HOW THIS CHAPTER IS ORGANIZED

1. Plan Framework

Shown on this page, below, the plan framework graphic illustrates the organizational structure of the goals with corresponding objectives and strategies.

2. Strategies (Pages 25-30)

This section is organized by Goal Area (Jobs & Economic Opportunity, Amenities, and Infrastructure), with corresponding Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics. Tactics are explored in greater detail in the Implementation Matrix.

3. Internal Recommendations (Pages 31-32)

This section summarizes key recommendations for Town of Parker Economic Development and partners departments and agencies, including proposed staffing and incentive policies.

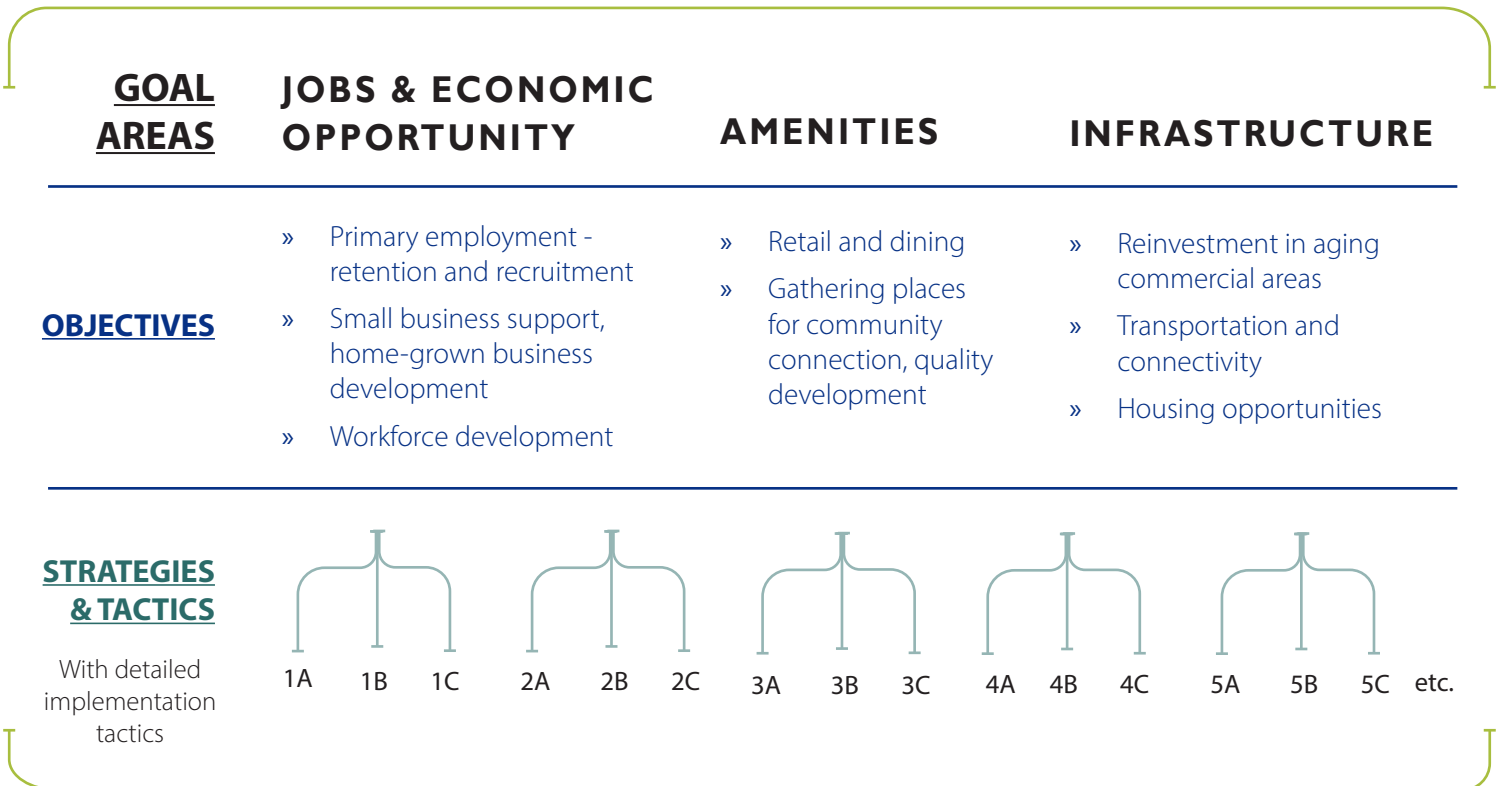
4. Implementation Matrix (Pages 33-44)

The Implementation Matrix provides detailed tactics for each strategy. It includes suggested sequencing, partner roles, and high-level cost estimates. Case study summaries are also provided for several tactics.

PLAN FRAMEWORK

The recommendations outlined in this plan were developed in tandem with the project working group and Town of Parker staff and leadership. They are based on a variety of inputs including community and stakeholder feedback, market research, and economic development best practices.

The framework graphic below has two purposes: to visualize the organizational hierarchy of the plan's recommendations, and to highlight the plan's overarching goals and objectives.



STRATEGIES

GOAL AREA: JOBS & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Objective I: Primary Employment

Strategy 1.1: Recruit companies and jobs in high-paying, high-growth sectors, particularly where Parker has a competitive advantage.

- » Recruit and nurture small-to-mid sized companies in niche manufacturing, renewable energy , and technology, including outdoor and sporting equipment manufacturing, small batch medical device manufacturing, photovoltaic and other energy technology.
- » Build on Parker’s healthcare sector to meet increasing demand for medical care while creating new, high-paying employment opportunities.

Due to Parker’s locational challenges relative to major highway corridors and limited availability of large developable parcels, it may be unrealistic for Parker to attract larger-scale companies. Instead, focus on second tier, small- and mid-sized firms or satellite offices, and remote jobs.

Strategy 1.2: Develop process incentives and programs to attract desired primary employers. Greater transparency and efficiency in the development review and incentive processes could add appeal for prospective companies to build their business in Parker.

See Process and Financial Incentives on page 32.

- » Offer a menu of tools and incentives to attract new primary employers in target sectors.

Strategy 1.3: Develop branding and a creative marketing campaign for relocating or expanding businesses to Parker.

- » Create a targeted marketing package for business recruitment that highlights Parker’s quality of life and workforce advantages.
- » Develop a brand identity for the Town of Parker, in a way that conveys its core values and the advantages of living and working in the community.

A refreshed Parker Economic Development website should relay recruitment information in a visually cohesive manner.

Parker is largely built out, and remaining land should be carefully planned for in a way that maximizes employment and revenue-generating uses.

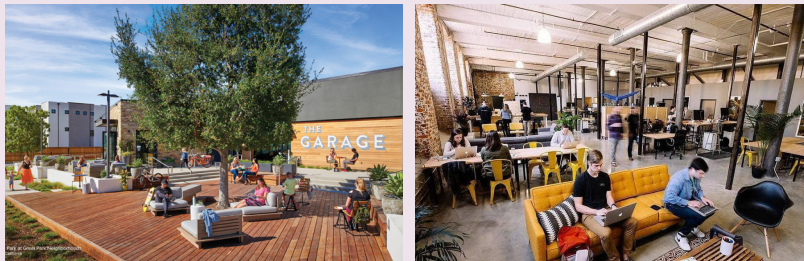
Strategy 1.4: Preserve and expand commercial and industrial uses to maximize primary employment.

- » Ensure adequate supplies of developable (and re-developable) land for new light industrial facilities and distribution centers.
- » Identify redevelopment sites and specific developable parcels, and offer expedited review and incentives, to expand Parker’s inventory of diverse office and flex space.
- » Prioritize specific commercial opportunity sites and collaborate with private and public partners.

Objective I: Primary Employment (CONTINUED)

Strategy 1.5: Accommodate more remote workers and encourage value-added workplace amenities attractive to all worker types.

- » Consider launching a public-private initiative with local perks for remote workers in Parker, such as vouchers to restaurants and coworking spaces.
- » Encourage more remote work hubs (co-working spaces) and informal “third places” (i.e., coffee shops).
- » Explore shared programs and spaces that offer value-added amenities for employees to encourage return-to-work.
- » Educate businesses about the return on investment for providing childcare and healthcare benefits to their employees, to help attract and retain a strong workforce.
- » Ensure that Parker has amenities that appeal to younger and middle-age populations, such as nighttime entertainment, bars/breweries/distilleries, outdoor eating, and more modern gathering spaces.



In response to Parker’s market and land limitations, focus on cultivating a powerful, high-tech labor force that can work remotely.

In a post-Covid era, a greater number of people have more autonomy in where they live and work, and Parker is well-positioned as an attractive workplace location. Remote workers require less in the way of conventional office space, providing a convenient solution for a town like Parker that needs more primary jobs but does not have much undeveloped land for new office spaces.

Objective 2: Small Business Support

Strategy 2.1: Cultivate homegrown businesses and start-ups.

- » Offer grants and technical assistance for innovative start-up concepts.
- » Work with key partners to engage entrepreneurial residents and to drum up interest in an entrepreneurial network.
- » Capture emerging entrepreneurial and arts-driven energy in places like the Dransfeldt industrial area to build a brand, business support services, and attract entrepreneurs.

Providing resources and inspiration to residents considering to start their own business ventures would help create more home-grown primary jobs.



Strategy 2.2: Streamline the delivery of hands-on business assistance.

- » Create a clear “one stop shop” guide and system for navigating permitting processes.
- » Play a proactive role in assisting prospective businesses find available space (retail, office, flex, industrial).
- » Create and promote environmental programs for businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.

15% of online survey respondents indicated they would be interested in starting a business in Parker. When asked what support they would need, common themes included: financial support, assistance finding affordable and appropriate space, and streamlined permitting processes.

Objective 2: Small Business Support (CONTINUED)

Strategy 2.3: Create policies and process incentives to help small, local retailers and other businesses acquire or lease space.

- » Conduct a “barriers and needs” assessment for small businesses to generate reasonable modifications to zoning, building, and permitting codes and processes that may unduly burden small businesses.
- » Work with developers to create and earmark spaces for mom-and-pop shops and restaurants within new mix-used buildings.
- » Provide incentives to businesses that meet the updated criteria (see



Parker’s low retail vacancy rate is putting pressure on retailers, and could price out existing and would-be small businesses. Moreover, feedback from local businesses suggests that code requirements for building or renovating commercial space is seen as burdensome for small businesses.

Strategy 2.4: Build a culture of collaboration for more proactive business outreach and engagement.

- » Activate a network of businesses, entrepreneurs, commercial real estate brokers, developers, economic development entities, and civic leaders, to meet periodically to share information and ideas.



Greater local and regional collaboration can help deliver a more cohesive vision for redevelopment opportunities, streamline business and developer recruitment, test new Town policies and processes, and reduce redundancies.

Objective 3: Workforce Development, Training, and Economic Opportunities

There are a variety of regional and statewide workforce development initiatives available to Parker residents and businesses, which can be tailored to meet local needs.

Participating in regional sector partnerships can create opportunities for both local businesses and students.

Strategy 3.1: Promote existing workforce development programs, particularly in technology, manufacturing, healthcare, and other opportunities that match the local workforce.

- » Stay informed and involved in regional and statewide workforce development opportunities.

Strategy 3.2: Support sector partnership networks to connect students with local apprenticeship opportunities.

- » Participate in the Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center’s regional Sector Partnership Initiative that brings together industry leaders, employers, educators, and economic development resources.
- » Partner with middle and high schools, and other educational institutions, to tailor workforce programs, create entrepreneurship pipelines, and recruit young talent.

GOAL AREA: AMENITIES

Objective 4: Retail, Dining, and Entertainment

Strategy 4.1: Support locally-owned retail and restaurant businesses.

- » Evaluate and eliminate incentives that are not delivering results aligned with Town goals, and retool incentives in alignment with this plan (see Process & Financial Incentives on page 10).
- » Remove barriers to incubating and launching retail and restaurant concepts, and help entrepreneurs test products and build brand awareness.
- » Devise a “shop local” card redeemable at Parker’s small businesses.

Reorienting incentives to be more targeted to companies that may need assistance, such as local independent retail, is a key recommendation. Existing incentives for retail development are broad and may be subsidizing concepts that can be sustained by the area’s market advantages alone.

Strategy 4.2: Recruit and retain retail concepts where there are market gaps.

- » Attract and support clothing and sporting goods retailers.
- » Cultivate and retain a niche for higher-end home furnishings, bridal, and unique artisan products.

According to online survey results, “improve the variety of retail and restaurants” was the top-rated action for improving Parker.



Regional “chain-lets” (loosely defined as having fewer than ten locations) with a market presence in other parts of the metro area could work well in Parker to help diversify the town’s dining and brewery offerings.

To help address growing competition from nearby communities, Parker’s cultural and entertainment offerings should cater to diverse audiences and income levels to the extent possible.

Strategy 4.3: Recruit desired local/regional “chain-let” restaurants and breweries.

- » Recruit chains and chain-lets that are already established in the north metro area that might be interested in additional locations.

Strategy 4.4: Adjust cultural and entertainment offerings to appeal to a younger and more diverse audience.

- » Prioritize and recruit interactive, family-friendly establishments.
- » Initiate a private-public partnership to reimagine the AMC movie theater.

Strategy 4.5: Encourage community-led events that spur interaction and creative placemaking.

- » Promote events designed to celebrate and welcome all of the cultures that make up the Town’s population.
- » Consider public-private partnerships to fund community driven projects (such as public art and creative place enhancements) that unite people across cultural backgrounds.

Objective 5: Quality Development & Community Gathering Places

Strategy 5.1: Support the build out and activation of Downtown Parker.

- » Support the creation of the Downtown Parker Business Improvement District (BID).
- » Continue to work with private sector developers to deliver the mixed-use vision for Downtown.
- » Begin planning for the transition/wind-down of the P3 Urban Renewable Authority.

Making Downtown Parker an asset and catalyst for revenue generation, economic development, creativity, sense of place, was a highly desired outcome among Parker community members.

Strategy 5.2: Enact development standards and incentives for high quality, activated, pedestrian-oriented design in designated areas.

- » Re-evaluate and implement new development standards for commercial and mixed-use areas to encourage ground floor activation, outdoor dining and activity areas, and well-designed pedestrian infrastructures.

Priority areas should include commercial/mixed-use nodes within residential developments (such as areas around Anthology and Hess Ranch), Parker Road commercial areas, and Cottonwood redevelopment area.

GOAL AREA: INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective 6: Reinvestment in Aging Commercial Areas

Strategy 6.1: Reimagine existing commercial centers, particularly shopping malls in areas along Parker Road, and Highway 83 corridor.

- » Pilot a “shopping center revisioning” incentive program to encourage redevelopment of excess space and re-invigorate aging low-density commercial areas.
- » Consider new economic opportunities and uses to maximize the potential of the Dransfeldt industrial area.
- » Encourage property assemblage in older commercial and industrial areas in order to accommodate businesses of scale and to generate a higher quality development.
- » Implement street-grid recommendations from the Parker Road Plan to open more land area to viable commercial use, relieve pressure on Parker Road, and improve connectivity.

The Parker Road corridor has a high concentration of shopping centers built in the 1980s and 90s, which means that certain properties could be due for cosmetic upgrades and/or redevelopment in the near and longer term. There are also opportunities to enhance the Dransfeldt industrial area through infrastructure upgrades and branding.

Objective 7: Transportation and Connectivity

Strategy 7.1: Improve pedestrian and non-vehicular connectivity to Downtown Parker.

- » Create additional safe pedestrian and bike routes from surrounding neighborhoods to downtown and other activity centers, particularly for kids/teens to move freely without cars.
- » Implement pedestrian infrastructure improvements across Parker Road to connect the two distinct Downtown Parker commercial districts.

Strategy 7.2: Consider public transportation improvements to alleviate congestion and provide transit assistance.

- » Increase carpooling and alternative transportation use.
- » Help implement micro transit solutions.

Multi-modal connectivity between neighborhoods was a top-rated priority identified through the online community survey as part of this planning process.

Dissatisfaction with Parker's traffic congestion issue was one of the key issues expressed by respondents in the online community survey.

Strategy 7.3: Ensure all existing and future businesses, households, and future development areas in Parker have access to high-speed broadband internet. Several areas within the town still lack broadband, such as parts of Southeast Parker.

- » Ensure that Town staff and utility providers are in alignment about future broadband investment priorities, and seek community input.



Objective 8: Housing

Housing affordability is a regional challenge that will require regional policies and solutions to address. The Town of Parker should work with other nearby communities to explore policy solutions and potential incentives with the goal of creating more housing that will address the mismatch between employment and housing.

Strategy 8.1: Broaden opportunities for engagement and collaboration around housing issues with neighboring municipalities.

- » Consider participating in a regional affordable housing strategy and fund.

Strategy 8.2: Strategize on future increased demand for senior housing and services.

- » Conduct a senior housing needs assessment.

Seniors are the fastest growing age group in Parker. More analysis is recommended to understand the needs of an aging population, such as the availability of options to downsize or age in place, and implications for the residential real estate market.

Strategy 8.3: Consider policies to add affordable living options within existing housing developments.

- » Allow and encourage innovative homeownership options, such as cooperatives, to create opportunities for the next generation of Parker residents.

INTERNAL RECOMMENDATIONS

STRUCTURE AND STAFFING

Streamlined Development Review

It is recommended that, in the near term, Economic Development remains a stand-alone department, with several adjustments made to ensure greater efficiency and collaboration with Community Development, Public Works & Engineering, and other departments and agencies involved in the development review and business permitting processes.

- » Create a **development liaison position** within Economic Development that will help guide applicants through the development review process and keep Community Development and Public Works & Engineering staff informed of new and ongoing economic development initiatives.
- » Create and circulate a concise **“one stop shop” guide** to business and development review that can be easily accessed through the Town’s website.
- » Provide targeted process incentives and expedited review for new development (and specific businesses that help fill market gaps), as described in more detail in the “Process and Financial Incentives” section.



Staffing (Proposed)

- » **Economic Development Director** – Provides department oversight, routinely meets with, and provides updates to Town leadership; primary employment and business recruitment; represents the Town in regional initiatives; large employer relationship manager. Continues to manage Parker P3 Urban Renewal Authority (URA) districts. With the Special Project Manager, helps to facilitate public-private collaborative initiatives and external organizational partnerships.
- » **Business and Development Liaison (New)**– Primary point of contact for prospective businesses and commercial developments seeking process/financial incentives; helps develop incentive packages; liaison to Community Development and Public Works & Engineering; small business relationship manager; assist businesses in finding available commercial space; assists with other special projects as needed.
- » **Special Project Manager (New)**– Provides a support role to the department with administrative, data collection/analysis, website management, research, communications, and other tasks as needed. Support special initiatives through research and project management – such as workforce development, housing, transportation, and other related topics.



Gateway to Old Town Parker. Photo from the Town of Parker.

PROCESS AND FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Pilot an expedited review process for projects that meet desired use criteria.

Based on interviews with local developers, a smoother development review process would, in many cases, be a more desirable incentive than financial incentives. The box above provides a framework for a re-prioritization of incentives to meet desired business and development types. It is recommended that this program be piloted for a one-year period, to consider implementing on a permanent basis after the one-year period.

Case studies:

- » James City County, VA – Expedited Review/ Fast Track Permitting. This policy guarantees a maximum turn-around time for County agencies to review a proposal and provide comments within 14 days of submittal.

- » Other examples include the Loudon County, Virginia Fast-Track Commercial Incentive Program and Berthoud, Colorado’s Rapid Response Team.
- » Colorado peer communities: Among the Colorado peer communities interviewed (Arvada, Centennial, Sheridan, and Superior), most did not have “expedited review” per se, but they offered well-oiled internal mechanisms to ensure a way to execute key projects, including dedicated staff and review teams

Re-tool Parker’s existing financial incentive policies to support and attract small businesses in the desired use types described above.

- » Tax and Fee incentives
- » (new) Shopping Center (Re)Envisioning
- » (new) Innovation Fund – to support home-grown business start-ups

DEVELOPMENT AND USE TYPES TO PRIORITIZE

Business Types

- » Retail and restaurant concepts that help fill the identified market gaps
- » Primary employment where the primary activity is within one of the target sectors

Development Types

- » Vertical mixed use with active ground floor retail
- » Flex space for light industrial and office uses

PROCESS INCENTIVES COULD INCLUDE:

- » Dedicated project manager (Business & Development Liaison)– main point of contact through all stages of the process
- » Special review team
- » Transparency and efficiency on timeline
- » Financial incentives could include:
 - » Waiver/deferment/rebate on application fees, personal property tax; sales tax reimbursement agreements
 - » Public infrastructure reimbursement (of a portion of the costs required on the site)
 - » Direct funding assistance: retail shopping center revisioning grant
 - » Parker Revolving Loan Fund priority

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

Sequencing: These recommendations are not meant to be initiated all at once. The matrix separates out near, mid, and long-term tactics.

Collaboration: While some tactics are designed to be led by Town of Parker Economic Development staff, most rely on internal and external collaboration. The matrix identifies potential “lead” and “support” departments and organizations.

Matrix Key:	Cost Estimate:
Timeline for Initiation:	▽ P = Policy/Initiative
▽ Near Term: Next 2 years	▽ \$ = Up to \$50,000
▽ Mid Term: 3-5 years	▽ \$\$ = \$50,000 to \$250,000
▽ Long Term: 5-10 years	▽ \$\$\$ = \$250,000 or more

GOAL AREA: Jobs and Economic Opportunity

OBJECTIVE 1: PRIMARY EMPLOYMENT

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 1.1 Recruit companies and jobs in high-paying, high-growth sectors, particularly where Parker has a competitive advantage.				
<p>Focus on small-to-mid sized companies in niche manufacturing, renewable energy, and technology sectors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▽ outdoor and sporting equipment manufacturers ▽ photovoltaic and other renewables ▽ small batch medical device manufacturing ▽ satellite offices for regional engineering and tech companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify space and facility requirements for the targeted high-growth industries. • Nurture existing businesses, entrepreneurs, and remote workers who may have an interest in starting or creating an off-shoot company. • Grow existing business clusters, such as custom auto and home refinishing, and artisanal food and beverage products in the Dransfeldt industrial area. • Specific marketing and recruitment tactics – Strat. 1.3 	Near Term; Ongoing	P	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Parker Chamber, Arapahoe/ Douglas Workforce Center, existing employers, local entrepreneurs</p>
<p>Grow Parker's healthcare sector to meet increasing demand for medical care while creating new, high-paying employment opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage partnerships between Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine and Parker’s hospitals and medical providers for collaboration on employee training and recruitment. • Anticipate growth in diagnostic laboratories and help advertise available office/manufacturing facilities, or converted retail space, for this use. 	Near – Mid Term	P	<p>Lead: Parker Adventist Hospital, Rocky Vista Univ., Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Children’s Hospital, medical offices, Parker Chamber, real estate brokers</p>

Strategy 1.2 Develop process incentives and programs to attract desired primary employers.

<p>Offer a menu of tools and incentives to attract new primary employers in target sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a policy with transparency about eligible uses, with some flexibility in terms of incentives offered. • <i>Case Study: Berthoud, CO Primary Employer Incentive Policy. This incentive policy allows a range of incentives for primary employers in desired industry sectors, on a case-by-case basis, including waiver, deferment, or reimbursement of development fees, sales & use taxes; personal property tax rebates, public infrastructure reimbursement (of a portion of the costs of public infrastructure required on the site), and expedited review.</i> 	<p>Mid Term</p>	<p>\$\$\$/P</p>	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Community Development, major employers</p>
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Strategy 1.3 Develop branding and a creative marketing campaign for relocating or expanding businesses to Parker.

<p>Create a targeted marketing package for business recruitment that highlights Parker's quality of life and workforce advantages.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing collateral could include economic metrics, such as Placer.ai data, to demonstrate consumer demand and demographics. • The website and social media should include testimonials from passionate local businesses willing to share their story. • Market Parker's outdoor recreation lifestyle and sustainability values to help attract renewable energy companies, and outdoor equipment manufacturers. • Tout the high educational attainment of the labor pool and quality-of-life benefits for commuting shorter distances. • <i>Case Studies: Superior and Berthoud Colorado have economic development websites with local business testimonials that bring authority and credibility to doing business in the community.</i> 	<p>Mid Term</p>	<p>\$\$</p>	<p>Lead: Communications, Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Community Development, Mayor and Town Council, Parker Chamber, Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center</p>
<p>Develop a brand identity for the Town of Parker.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Town's Communications department can work with stakeholders to create a brand that speaks to these advantages and reflects community values and aspirations. 	<p>Mid Term</p>	<p>\$\$</p>	<p>Lead: Communications</p> <p>Support: Parker Economic Development, Community Development, Mayor and Town Council</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A unified vision and brand can help guide decision-making regarding place enhancement and business attraction. 			
Strategy 1.4 Preserve and expand commercial and industrial uses to maximize primary employment.				
Ensure adequate supplies of developable (and re-developable) land for new light industrial facilities and distribution centers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local commercial real estate brokers to understand anticipated demand for distribution center uses, particularly along the E-470 corridor. • Identify primary locations for light industrial and distribution uses, which could include repurposed retail centers, or raw land that does not have other mixed-use potential. • Work with Community Development to determine if zoning and land use changes are needed. 	Near – Mid Term	P/\$	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Community Development, developers</p>
Identify redevelopment sites and specific developable parcels, and offer expedited review and incentives, to expand Parker's inventory of diverse office and flex space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To encourage development of more flex commercial space, including office and a range of light industrial and startup incubation spaces, offer expedited review and/or other process incentives (see Appendix). 	Near Term – Ongoing	\$\$	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development, Community Development</p> <p>Support: Developers</p>
Prioritize specific commercial opportunity sites and collaborate with private and public partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote redevelopment opportunities within the Cottonwood, Parker Road, and Parker Central urban renewal areas. • The undeveloped hospital-adjacent property is a key opportunity site for uses complementary to the medical center. Work with the property owners to understand vision/plans and any barriers. • Continue to partner in recruitment for the Compark industrial zone near the Centennial Airport which would provide indirect economic benefits to Parker. • Participate in incubation and site-finding together with the County and surrounding municipalities. 	Near Term – Ongoing	\$\$	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development and P3</p> <p>Support: Douglas County, employers, developers, Parker Chamber</p>

Strategy 1.5 Accommodate more remote workers and encourage value-added workplace amenities attractive to all worker types.

<p>Consider launching a public-private initiative with local perks for remote workers in Parker, such as vouchers to restaurants and coworking spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore examples of communities that teamed with local organizations and businesses to create relocation perks. Perks can include coworking and gym memberships, fiber internet discounts, and gift cards to local businesses. • <i>Case Study: Mattoon, Illinois created an incentive program called “Move to Mattoon” that offers vouchers to amenities such as: 1-year free coworking membership, 6 months free fiber internet, 6 months free family gym membership, and gift cards to local businesses, in addition to cash relocation assistance.</i> 	<p>Mid Term</p>	<p>\$\$</p>	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Parker Chamber, Downtown Business Alliance, local entrepreneurs</p>
<p>Encourage more remote work hubs (co-working spaces) and informal "third places" (i.e., coffee shops).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer incentives for a local entrepreneur to establish additional co-working spaces. • Alternatively, directly recruit a regional or national coworking operator with experience in suburban markets. 	<p>Mid Term</p>	<p>\$\$</p>	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Parker Chamber, Downtown Business Alliance, commercial real estate brokers, local entrepreneurs</p>
<p>Explore shared programs and spaces that offer value-added amenities for employees to encourage return-to-work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help employers understand the benefits of pooling resources to provide amenities and services, such as activity spaces, outdoor dining, childcare, dog-friendly workplaces, and health and wellness benefits. 	<p>Near – Mid Term</p>	<p>P</p>	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center, Parker Chamber, major employers</p>
<p>Educate businesses about the return on investment for providing childcare and healthcare benefits to their employees, to help attract and retain a strong workforce.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through existing business networks and resources partners (such as the Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center), educate employers in terms of return on investment and provide informational links to incentives/assistance: for example, there are federal 	<p>Near – Mid Term</p>	<p>P</p>	<p>Lead: Parker Economic Development, Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center</p>

	tax benefits to offer on-site childcare (i.e., Employer-Provided Child Care Services tax credit).			Support: Parker Chamber, major employers
Ensure that Parker has amenities that appeal to younger and middle-age populations such as nighttime entertainment, bars/breweries/distilleries, outdoor eating, and more modern gathering spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See tactics for attracting entertainment and retail in the “Amenities” goal area. • Play an active role within existing collaborative efforts to cultivate a thriving young professionals’ scene, through partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations. 	Mid – Long Term	P	Lead: Parker Economic Development Support: Parker Chamber, Commercial real estate brokers, developers, residents, local entrepreneurs

OBJECTIVE 2: SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 2.1 Cultivate homegrown businesses and start-ups.				
Offer grants and technical assistance for innovative start-up concepts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with local organizations and find creative funding mechanisms to start an innovation fund. Stipulate that awardees must be from Parker or have been in Parker for at least one year. 	Near Term; – Ongoing	\$\$	Lead: Parker Economic Development Support: Parker Chamber, crowdsourcing other community-based funding
Work with key partners to engage entrepreneurial residents and to drum up interest in an entrepreneurial network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-sponsor a series of informal gatherings for interested entrepreneurial residents to learn about opportunities and resources. These events could be hosted at existing companies willing to participate and share their space. 	Near – Mid Term	P/\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Parker Chamber, Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
<p>Capture emerging entrepreneurial and arts-driven energy in places like the Dransfeldt industrial area to build a brand, business support services, and attract entrepreneurs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract companies in target niches through cohesive branding and identity of the business park. • <i>Case Study: Derby, Kansas' West End Business Park received city funding for a brand refresh, resulting in modern signage featuring distinct colors and imagery. The town's website features a webpage dedicated to the business park, with information about existing businesses and available properties.</i> 	Mid Term	\$\$	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Parker Chamber, Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center</p>
<p>Strategy 2.2 Streamline the delivery of hands-on business assistance.</p>				
<p>Create a clear "one stop shop" guide and system for navigating permitting processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an online guide with basic process information, including up-to-date contact information for key personnel. • Promote the guide among relevant Town departments and local and regional economic development partners. 	Near – Mid Term	\$	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Community Development, Public Works & Engineering</p>
<p>Assist prospective businesses with finding available space (retail, office, flex, industrial).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene regular check-ins with real estate brokers and organizational partners including the Parker Chamber of Commerce. • Maintain an online, publicly-accessible property database to highlight available commercial properties. • Identify existing commercial spaces that could be reconfigured to accommodate additional small retailers. 	Near-Mid Term; Ongoing	\$	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Parker Chamber, local developers, commercial real estate brokers</p>
<p>Create and promote environmental programs for businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Case Study: Denver's "Certifiably Green" campaign and marketing tool that helps businesses access incentives for making environmental upgrades.</i> 	Mid Term	\$	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Other relevant Town departments</p>

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 2.3 Create policies and process incentives to help small, local retailers and other businesses acquire or lease space.				
Conduct a “barriers and needs” assessment for small businesses to generate reasonable modifications to zoning, building, and permitting codes and processes that may unduly burden small businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate change of use and expansion of use procedures. Ensure codes allow for shared facilities (bathrooms, etc.) that can reduce unit cost. Create a process for regular evaluation. 	Near – Mid Term	\$	Lead: Community Development Support: Economic Development, Public Works & Engineering
Work with developers to create and earmark spaces for mom-and-pop shops and restaurants within new mix-used buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile and share Placer.ai data and community survey findings to help demonstrate demand for certain uses and connect them with local businesses that may be interested in leasing space. 	Near – Mid Term	\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Other relevant Town departments
Provide incentives to businesses that meet the updated criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide expedited review and incentives for retailers and restaurants that help fill market gaps (see “Amenities” section for target retail sectors and “Process & Financial Incentives” for details on tools and incentives). Work with local organizational partners to better advertise the existing Parker Revolving Loan Fund. 	Near – Mid Term; ongoing	\$\$\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Community Development, Mayor and Town Council
Strategy 2.4 Build a culture of collaboration for proactive business outreach and engagement.				
Activate a network of businesses, entrepreneurs, commercial real estate brokers, developers, economic development entities, and civic leaders, to meet periodically to share information and ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This informal group could meet quarterly. Desired outcomes include stronger recruitment prospects, shared strategies for redevelopment opportunities, a more cohesive vision and voice, and ease of communicating feedback regarding Town policies and processes. 	Near – Mid Term; ongoing	\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Parker Chamber, local businesses, developers and real estate community, others

OBJECTIVE 3: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING, AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 3.1 Promote workforce development programs, particularly in technology, manufacturing, healthcare, and other opportunities that match the local workforce.				
Stay informed and involved in regional and statewide workforce development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center through funding and cross-promotion of resources. • Promote the Workforce Center’s wide array of talent pipeline and educational initiatives. • Stay up-to-date on statewide workforce initiatives (such as <i>Manufacturer’s Edge</i>) and explore specific programs that match economic development goals. 	Near Term; ongoing	P	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center</p>
Strategy 3.2 Support sector partnership networks to help connect students with local apprenticeship opportunities.				
Participate in the Arapahoe / Douglas Workforce Center’s regional Sector Partnership Initiative that brings together industry leaders, employers, educators, and economic development resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A designated Parker staff member should keep tabs on sector partnerships by regularly attending meetings. 	Near – Mid Term	P	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center</p>
Partner with middle and high schools, and other educational institutions, to tailor workforce programs, create entrepreneurship pipelines, and recruit young talent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage with the new Legacy Campus that will focus on credentialing for jobs in aviation, healthcare, and other programs. • Economic development staff could help liaise between businesses and schools to help make connections for apprenticeship opportunities. 	Near – Mid Term	P	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Arapahoe/Douglas Workforce Center, schools, local businesses, Rocky Vista University</p>

GOAL AREA: Amenities

OBJECTIVE 4: RETAIL, DINING, AND ENTERTAINMENT

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 4.1 Support locally-owned retail and restaurant businesses.				
Evaluate and eliminate incentives that are not delivering results aligned with Town goals, and retool incentives in alignment with this plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider reorienting incentives to be more targeted to companies that may need assistance, such as local independent retail. <i>Case Study: Berthoud, CO Commercial and Retail Development Incentive Policy. The purpose of Berthoud’s policy is to encourage retail projects that fill an identified retail gap and/or create a redevelopment or infill opportunity. Projects are reviewed on a case-by-case basis with possible incentives that can include: waiver, deferment, reimbursement of development fees, sales & use taxes on construction materials; grants; sales tax rebate; façade improvement funds; and public infrastructure reimbursements.</i> 	Near – Mid Term	P	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Community Development, Mayor and Town Council</p>
Devise a “shop local” card redeemable at Parker’s small businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Case Study: The City of Murrieta, California created “Murrieta Money” to support local businesses through an eGift card company called Yiftee.</i> 	Mid Term	\$\$	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support: Parker Chamber, DBA</p>
Remove barriers to incubating and launching retail and restaurant concepts, and help entrepreneurs test products and build brand awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider dedicating one of the ground-floor retail spaces in the anticipated downtown development for a temporary “pop-up” market featuring several local artisans and food sellers. Town funds could be used to subsidize this initiative. 	Mid Term	\$	<p>Lead: Economic Development</p> <p>Support:</p>

Strategy 4.2 Recruit and retain retail concepts where there are market gaps.				
Attract and support clothing and sporting goods retailers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attract and retain locally-owned clothing boutiques, including both higher-end and affordable, thrift and repurposed clothing retail. Recruit chains (and chain-lets) for clothing retailers with an existing presence in the north metro area, that may be interested in south metro area opportunities. 	Mid Term	P	Lead: Economic Development Support:
Cultivate and retain a niche for higher-end home furnishings, bridal, and unique artisanal products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of an art-related retail space. <i>Case study: “Marquee” in Asheville, North Carolina is an indoor market featuring artists and working studios, as well as food and wine stalls.</i> Capitalize on Parker’s emerging wedding accessory retail and event venue niche by adding complementary shopping and experiences – e.g., wedding dress stores, spas. 	Mid Term	\$\$	Lead: Economic Development Support:
Strategy 4.3 Recruit desired local/regional “chain-let” restaurants and breweries.				
Recruit chains and chain-lets that already have a presence in the north metro area that might be interested in additional locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a list of desired dining types and specific chain-lets that could be prospects for relocating to Parker – for example, healthy fast-casual options such as MAD greens, Chook, Meta Burger, Clean Eatx, and others. 	Near Term	P	Lead: Economic Development Support: Other relevant Town departments
Strategy 4.4 Adjust cultural and entertainment offerings to appeal to a younger and more diverse audience to help address growing competition from nearby communities.				
Prioritize and recruit interactive, family-friendly entertainment establishments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attract or help create new entertainment businesses such as game rooms or a roller-skating rink. 	Mid Term	P/\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Other relevant Town departments

Strategy 4.5 Encourage community-led events that spur interaction and creative placemaking.				
Promote events designed to celebrate and welcome all of the cultures that make up the Town’s population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer marketing assistance, resources, space, and even grants to local music, arts, and cultural organizations. • Implement recommendations from the Parker Arts Strategic Plan to continue to provide a diverse variety of programming that is accessible and inclusive to all. 		P/\$	Lead: Parker Arts Support: P Economic Development
Consider public-private partnerships to fund community driven projects, such as public art and creative place enhancements), that unite people across cultural backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Parker Arts to develop initiatives and promote them to interested organizations and resident groups. • Implement Parker Arts Strategic Plan recommendations to activate underutilized spaces through more consistent programming. 		P/\$	Lead: Parker Arts Support: P Economic Development

OBJECTIVE 5: QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 5.1 Support the build-out and activation of Downtown Parker.				
Support the creation of the Downtown Parker Business Improvement District (BID).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the potential BID on projects that enhance the Downtown consumer experience. 	Near Term	\$	Lead: Downtown Business Alliance, BID (once established) Support: Mayor and Town Council, P3
Continue to work with private sector developers to deliver the mixed-use vision for Downtown.		Near to Long Term	P/\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Mayor and Town Council, P3
Begin planning for the transition/wind-down of the P3 Urban Renewal Authority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore alternative models, such as a Downtown Development Authority (DDA). 	Mid Term	\$	Lead: P Economic Development / P3 Support:

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 5.2 Enact development standards and incentives for high quality, activated, pedestrian-oriented design in designated areas.				
Re-evaluate and implement new development standards for commercial and mixed-use areas to encourage ground floor activation, outdoor dining, and well-designed pedestrian infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority areas would include commercial and mixed-use nodes within residential developments (such as Anthology and Hess Ranch), Parker Road commercial corridor, and the Cottonwood redevelopment area. • Through zoning and/or design guidelines, encourage ground floor activation, active uses, built-to requirements, and better façade design. • Encourage and allow restaurants with patios, beer gardens, and interactive outdoor spaces. • Support the development of vacant parcels by including well-designed pedestrian and non-vehicle infrastructure to connect new residents to surrounding commercial areas and to transit. 	Mid Term	\$	Lead: Community Development Support: P Economic Development, Public Works & Engineering, Mayor and Town Council, P3

GOAL AREA: Infrastructure

OBJECTIVE 6: REINVESTMENT IN AGING COMMERCIAL AREAS

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 6.1 Reimagine existing commercial centers, particularly shopping malls in areas along Parker Road, and Highway 83 corridor.				
Pilot a “shopping center revisioning” incentive program to encourage redevelopment of excess space and re-invigorate aging low-density commercial areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on commercial shopping centers built before the 1990s (see “Commercial Areas by Age” map in the appendix). ▪ <i>Case Studies: Cities of Arvada and Centennial. The City of Centennial’s Retail Center Transformation Fund reimburses owners for physical improvements. Sales tax reimbursement agreements can also be applied. Focuses on retail centers built in the late 80s/early 90s. Recognizes that these centers are not the same amenity they used to be. Can support simple improvements like façade and appearance, or new uses and redevelopment. Arvada’s shopping center</i> 	Near – Mid Term	P/\$\$	Lead: Economic Development, P3 Support: Community Development, Mayor and Town Council

Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
	<i>revisioning pilot helps cover the cost of architectural designs (\$5,000 grants).</i>			
Consider new economic opportunities and uses to maximize the potential of the Dransfeldt industrial area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the strategies for recruitment/retention of niche manufacturing in the Dransfeldt industrial area, consider building on the family-friendly services theme, through branding and recruitment of businesses that are synergistic with existing family and kid uses. These could include gymnastics and dance studios, daycare, children’s clothing, as well as coffee shops, bakery, or restaurants. 	Mid Term	\$\$	Lead: Economic Development, P3 Support: Community Development, Mayor and Town Council
Encourage property assemblage in older commercial and industrial areas in order to accommodate businesses of scale and to generate a higher quality development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 			
Implement street-grid recommendations from the <i>Parker Road Corridor Plan</i> to open more land area to viable commercial use, relieve pressure on Parker Road, and improve connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations to improve pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure and reconfigure traffic in and around the Dransfeldt industrial area and in other parts of the Central Subarea including Main Street. 			Lead: Public Works & Engineering Support: Community Development, Economic Development

OBJECTIVE 7: TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

Strategies and Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 7.1 Improve pedestrian and non-vehicular connectivity to Downtown Parker.				
Create additional safe pedestrian and bike routes from surrounding neighborhoods to downtown and other activity centers, particularly for kids/teens to move freely without cars.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-modal connectivity between neighborhoods was a top-rated priority identified through the online community survey as part of this planning process. 	Mid Term	\$\$\$	Lead: Community Development Support: Public Works & Engineering, Parks & Recreation

Strategies and Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Implement pedestrian infrastructure improvements across Parker Road to connect the two distinct Downtown Parker commercial districts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional pedestrian/bike connectivity over Parker Road should be considered. • More visual, identity, and wayfinding investments are needed to connect the two areas. 	Mid Term	\$\$\$	Lead: Economic Development, P3 Support: Community Development, Mayor and Town Council
Strategy 7.2 Consider public transportation improvements to alleviate congestion and provide transit assistance.				
Increase carpooling and alternative transportation use within Parker.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find creative ways to partner with Douglas County Transit Solutions, and work with employers to offer commuting assistance and carpooling incentives. 	Mid Term	\$	Lead: Parker FlexRide Support: Douglas County Transit Solutions
Help implement micro transit solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with private and public partners to strategize on future alternative means of transportation to the airport. For example, a shuttle service to the South Metro area could elevate Parker’s appeal as a place to invest and relocate businesses. 	Mid – Long Term	\$	Lead: Parker FlexRide Support: Douglas County Transit Solutions
Strategy 7.3 Ensure all existing and future businesses, households, and development areas in Parker have access to high-speed broadband internet.				
Ensure that Town staff and utility providers are in alignment about future broadband investment priorities, and seek community input.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize areas in Southeast Parker that experience intermittent connectivity. • Seek community input on areas most in need of improved connectivity. • Investigate state and federal broadband infrastructure plans and incentives. 	Mid Term	\$	Lead: Community Development Support: Economic Development, broadband providers, and other relevant agencies

OBJECTIVE 8: HOUSING

Strategies and Tactics	Notes	Timeline	Cost	Partners
Strategy 8.1 Broaden opportunities for engagement and collaboration with neighboring municipalities.				
Consider participating in a regional affordable housing strategy and fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with nearby communities in Douglas and Arapahoe Counties to explore policy solutions and potential incentives with the goal of creating more housing that will address the mismatch between employment and housing. • Seek regional housing fund contributions from major employers. • Engage with the Douglas County Housing Partnership. 	Mid Term	\$\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Mayor and Town Council, Douglas County, Arapahoe County, Douglas County Housing Partnership
Strategy 8.2 Strategize on future increased demand for senior housing and services.				
Conduct a senior housing needs assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed housing study is recommended to understand the housing needs of an aging population, such as opportunities to downsize or age in place, and implications for residential real estate market. • This study could be used as an opportunity to educate town leaders and the public. 	Mid Term	\$	Lead: Economic Development Support: Mayor and Town Council, Community Development
Strategy 8.3 Consider policies to add affordable living options within existing housing developments.				
Allow and encourage innovative homeownership options, such as cooperatives, to create opportunities for the next generation of Parker residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New models for innovative homeownership can create opportunities for the next generation of Parker residents, including younger adults and families from Parker that may want to move back into the area. • <i>Case Study: The City of Centennial has recently started exploring solutions to expand housing options, such as ADUs and land banks. This entails proactive education of city leadership and community members about the link between economic vitality and housing.</i> 	Mid to Long Term	P/\$	Lead: Community Development Support: Economic Development, Mayor and Town Council