Denver, 1850s
Sometimes it feels like it’s a losing battle, but there are signs of good things on the horizon
Denver’s development followed a typical path in the 20th century. During a period of intense sprawl and transit failure, between 1950 and 1990, the city's population density shrank from 4,741 people per square mile to 3,309. Since reversing course in the mid-'90s, however, density is back around 4,000 people per square mile. (Citylab 3-26-13)
Why does sprawl happen?

- Drive till you qualify
- Pressure on municipalities to expand and create new sales tax sources
- Zoning and pushback to density
- Lack of regional regulation
- The market, cheaper to park on the surface
Regional Economic Engines
What we’re doing right:
Density near transit
Denver has created some 18,000 residential units, 5.3 million square feet of retail, and 5.4 million square feet of office space within a half mile of transit. (Figure from K.A. Ratner and A.R. Goetz. (2013.) The reshaping of land use and urban form in Denver through transit-oriented development. Cities 30, pp. 31-46.)
• As a result, the transit zones have much greater population and household densities than they did just a decade back. The average population density within a half-mile of transit stations is now six times greater than the density in the rest of the region (with density downtown doing even better and doubling the average). Household density near transit stations, meanwhile, is nearly nine times greater than the regional average (with downtown again more than twice as dense still). (Figure from K.A. Ratner and A.R. Goetz. (2013.) The reshaping of land use and urban form in Denver through transit-oriented development. Cities 30, pp. 31-46.)
Its not just about creating smart density around transit, its about protecting open space and natural resources. Two sides of the same coin.
Development Supported Agriculture
DSA

www.Agriburbia.com
But......

- While 43 percent of downtown commuters now take transit, far exceeding national averages, three-quarters of people in the metro area at large still commute by driving alone, which is no better than the national pace. (Citylab 3-26-13)

- And half of the people who are downtown everyday commute in from outside Denver City limits.
So, is the plan working in Denver?
Population and Employment trends

Data sources: DRCOG, US Census, CO Dept Labor & Employment
DENVER IS GROWING
TOTAL POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>467,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>554,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>634,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2030</td>
<td>753,720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COLORADO IS DENSIFYING
COLORADO URBAN POPULATION

- 1950: 62.7%
- 2010: 86.2%

DENVER IS THE #1 CITY FOR MILLENNIALS
TOP 7 Gainers of Population Aged 25-34 from 2000-2010

- Seattle
- Portland
- Denver
- Washington D.C.
- Dallas
- Austin
- Houston

PEOPLE ARE DRIVING LESS
DENVER REGION PER CAPITA VMT

[Graph showing decreased per capita VMT from 2000 to 2008]
Areas of Stability/Change

- Areas of Change
- Areas of Stability
Goal 4:1 Areas of Change vs. Areas of Stability

- 2013: 6:1
- 2014: 5:1
- 2015: 11:1

Goal: 6:1 Areas with Small Area Plans vs. Areas without Small Area Plans

- 2013: 10:1
- 2014: 6:1
- 2015: 9:1

Goal: 1:1 Designated Historic Properties vs. Undesignated Properties

- 2013: 5:1
- 2014: 2:1
- 2015: 2:1