

Housing Advisory Committee
Special Meeting: Transit-Oriented Communities Study
February 9th, 2026

1. Roll Call:

- Committee members present: Pat Noonan (Chair), Mindy Mohr (Vice Chair), Alicia Duncan, Peter Kazura, Tim Rogers, and Harrison Wilterdink.
- Quorum: Yes
- Committee member(s) absent: Andrew Heesaker and Jake Victor.
- City staff present: Jessica Garner, Community and Economic Development Director; Carrie Espinosa, Housing Manager; Samantha Bradley, Affordable Housing Development Specialist; Megan McCall, Assistant City Attorney II; Justine Eighmy, Administrative Specialist; Rob Smetana, Manager of City Planning and Development; Paul Donegan, City Senior Planner; Chris Sandine, City Senior Planner.
- Special Guest Presentations: Rebbeca Leonard, Lionheart Consultant; Christine Shine, Lionheart Consultant; Jainami Shah, Lionheart Consultant; Mollie Fitzpatrick, Managing Director, Root Policy Research; Max Monk, DRCOG Team; Logan Cinimo, DRCOG Team.
- Public in attendance: No.

2. DRCOG Arvada Livable Centers Presentation by DRCOG's Max Monk, and Logan Cinimo, Lionheart's Rebbeca Leonard, Christine Shine, Jainami Shah, and Root Policy's Mollie Fitzpatrick:

- Max Monk introduced himself as part of the DRCOG Regional Planning Team and noted that this project, under DRCOG's Livable Centers Program, integrates land use, housing, and transportation strategies. The initiative aims to increase housing and employment, create connected centers, improve transit and multi-modal access, encourage reinvestment in existing communities, and expand diverse housing and transportation options. For Arvada, the focus is on the City's substation areas, with Lionheart leading much of the work.
- Rebecca Leonard introduced Lionheart and gave an estimated project timeline; kick-off was in December 2025 and the project is expected to conclude in August 2026.
 - Project Process: The Lionheart Project follows a structured process over several phases:
 - Think Phase (3–4 weeks): (Complete) Goals and key metrics are identified and measured, as well as the development of the Project Management Plan and the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.
 - Investigate Phase (4–5 weeks): (Current) Analyze benchmarks and baselines to assess current performance. This phase includes conducting a Housing Market Study and Economic Analysis, as well as hosting Community Dialogue #1.
 - Create/Build Phase (4–5 weeks): Involves developing and testing prototypes. During this phase, the team builds and implements the finalized solution,

including creating the Land Use & Housing Strategy Report, reviewing DOLA Menu Strategy documentation, developing the Implementation Action Plan, and hosting Community Dialogue #2.

- Share/Review Findings Phase (2–3 weeks): In this final phase, findings from the prototypes and testing are compiled and presented. The completed Study Report is shared, and the Executive Summary is delivered to evaluate outcomes and overall performance.

- Project Draft Vision and Goals:
 - The Lionheart Project will evaluate existing and future housing needs, land use patterns, and housing diversity in key transit-oriented areas. It aims to advance diverse, affordable, and sustainable housing options that are accessible to all residents. It will also develop strategic land use and housing recommendations, propose policy updates, and provide data-driven guidance to support the City’s goals for affordability, anti-displacement, sustainable growth, and integrated housing and transportation planning.

- Study Areas are located at the following intersections and/or stations. (Please see slide deck for maps)
 - 60th and Sheridan – Arvada Gold Strike Station
 - Sheridan Blvd. and W. 64th Ave.
 - Olde Town Arvada Station
 - Wadsworth Blvd. and 80th Ave.
 - Arvada Ridge Station
 - Independence St. and Ralston Rd.
 - Wheat Ridge and Ward Road Station

- Mollie Fitzpatrick, Managing Director of Root Policy Research, is serving as a subconsultant on the project, and is aligning citywide housing goals and value statements with identified needs and station area opportunities to ensure the Lionheart team’s work reflects the City’s established priorities.
 - Past and Current Planning Efforts:
 - The project builds on past and ongoing planning efforts and foundational studies, including the Arvada Housing Needs Assessment (2024), DRCOG Regional Housing Needs Assessment (2024), Arvada Housing Strategic Plan (2024), Arvada Housing Authority Annual Report (2024), the Residential Anti-Displacement Plan, Comprehensive Plan (2014), City Council Strategic Plan – Housing Section, Wheat Ridge Affordable Housing Strategy (2023), and relevant subarea and corridor plans. Supporting analyses of housing production, affordability, developer perspectives, and housing strategies provide essential context and data to inform the project’s evaluation and recommendations.

 - Comprehensive Plan
 - The City intends to use the results of this Study to help inform its creation of the Comprehensive plan.

- Leveraging Livable Centers to Address Citywide Needs: (Please see slide deck for graphs)

- The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) identifies a need for additional rental units that are affordable below 50% AMI, for-sale homes priced under \$350,000, and greater housing diversity.
 - The DRCOG HNA Dashboard projects a 10-year housing production need of nearly 5,000 units, with a significant share required at or below 50% AMI.
- Existing Conditions Mapping Parameters of Study Areas – (Please see slide deck for all mapping parameters)
 - Olde Town Arvada Station
 - Gold Strike Station
 - Sheridan Blvd. & W. 64th Ave.
 - Wadsworth Blvd. & 80th Ave.
 - Arvada Ridge Station
 - W. 58th Ave. & Independence St.
 - Wheat Ridge / Ward Road Station
- “Go-to-them” Events – (Please see slide deck)
 - The Lionheart team conducted in-person engagement events at Olde Town Arvada Station, Gold Strike Station, Sheridan Blvd. & W. 64th Ave., Wadsworth Blvd. & 80th Ave., Arvada Ridge Station, W. 58th Ave. & Independence ST., and Wheat Ridge/ Ward Road Station, where they solicited opinions and sentiments from commuters. This feedback will help inform some of the recommended strategies.
- Next Steps-
 - Task 2: Investigate –
 - Community Dialogue #1 Outreach Summary
 - Finalize Housing Market Study and Economic Conditions Analysis Report, including:
 - Determining the scale and type of housing most needed in each transit area.
 - Pairing housing demand projections with displacement risk analysis.
 - Identifying preliminary opportunities to increase housing diversity, preserve naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), and support long-term affordability through policy, incentives, and programs.
 - Task 3: Create –
 - Land Use and Housing Strategy Report
 - DOLA Menu Strategy Documentation (Affordability + Displacement)
 - Implementation Action Plan
 - Community Dialogue #2 Outreach Content, Presentation Materials, and Summary
- Questions & Answers:
 - Question: (HAC) What AMI threshold was used to identify low-income populations?

- Answer: 80% for low-income and 50% for very-low-income. Additionally, mapped data reflects the broader neighborhoods, not just the identified walkshed.
- Question: (HAC) 5 of the 7 station areas would require walkability improvements. How will the recommendations address this?
 - Answer: This is a recurring theme and the final report will include practical suggestions to improve connectivity.
- Question: (HAC) Please clarify what the displacement risk analysis entails.
 - Answer: Examination of diversity of housing stock, densification, and risk for renters over a 10-year horizon. Lionheart notes that homeowners face less risk overall.
- Question: (HAC) Asked for an explanation of the metrics used in the displacement risk maps.
 - Answer: Displacement risk was measured by census tract and is an amalgamation of low-income populations, higher concentrations of people of color, and housing costs. This aligns with the new State guidance and the metrics used by DRCOG in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment
- Question: (HAC) What are the next steps in terms of what is needed from the HAC, and what coordination with other parties is needed?
 - Answer: Each recommendation will include clear implementation steps, identify responsible partners such as agencies or private landowners, and outline actions like capital improvements, business or chamber initiatives, or strategies to enhance neighborhood services and walkability.
 - Answer: (City) This presents a strong opportunity to align the effort with updates to the Comprehensive Plan, especially if the study reveals new information that supports change. It may be valuable to engage directly with the City Council and the Planning Commission, as that is how broader strategies can ultimately be translated into regulations, funding decisions, and meaningful partnerships.
- Question: (HAC) Will this unlock any funding opportunities for Arvada from DRCOG?
 - Answer: (DRCOG) As of right now, no, but they will explore further.
- Question: (Lionheart) Is the Livable Centers program new for DRCOG? She has seen similar programs with funding opportunities attached.
 - Answer: (DRCOG) Currently, the purpose of the program is simply to lighten the load on local municipal staff.
- Question: (HAC) Will anticipated further transit locations (specifically the Colorado Mountain Rail in West Arvada) be considered?
 - Answer: (City) No. It's also unknown as to whether or not that station will become a major transit hub. New stations are unlikely to significantly change infrastructure or create a new transportation networks at this point.

- Question: (City) Will the study identify which areas/parcels are better suited for development?
 - Answer: There is a preliminary map, but the study will add a filter for viability.

- Question: (HAC) What does Lionheart need from the HAC?
 - Answer: At this stage, they are checking to see if there is any information or studies they have missed and should consider, or if there are any ideas related to the stations. Lionheart will return in a few months to solicit feedback on their recommendations before the study is finalized.