Existing conditions review

Executive summary

This report summarizes existing conditions findings for the Commerce City Microtransit Study, which will be referred to as “the Study”. This report includes summaries of relevant plans, analysis of transit propensity, and research on existing travel patterns. The Study will include mobility solutions for people living in Commerce City, with particular emphasis on essential trips for underserved populations.

The focus area of the Study is Core Commerce City (“Core City” - south of 96th Avenue), which was identified in previous city planning efforts as the area within Commerce City with the highest number of unmet transportation needs. Most of the existing transit services in Commerce City are provided by RTD and concentrated in the Core City, but access to these transit routes in many parts of the Core City are limited by a missing or substandard sidewalk and crossing network that often does not meet ADA standards.

The existing condition analysis revealed that the Core City has the highest concentration of disconnected street networks, people with mobility barriers, and low-income populations, as well as the highest population density, land use diversity, and transit propensity. An analysis of existing travel patterns using StreetLight shows that most trips within Commerce City are less than five miles. The data also indicate that most trips originating in the Core City stay within the Core City and do not extend north of 96th Avenue. This may reflect the limited connections between the Core City and northern Commerce City. It should be noted that StreetLight relies on connected vehicle data to estimate the number of trips occurring between and within zones, but the platform processes this information to represent all travel modes, not just connected vehicles. While valuable, the StreetLight Analysis should be combined with other data sources and community input to create a more complete picture of how residents prefer to travel within their community. Previous community engagement efforts in the Commerce City Comprehensive Plan 2045 revealed that residents would like more north-south connections across the city. The Study will identify transportation improvements to better connect the north and south, increase access to the existing transit network, and provide safe mobility options.

Project background and purpose

This Microtransit Study aims to address the mobility needs of residents living in Commerce City. Commerce City spans 36.4 square miles and is made up of two distinct activity areas: the Core City, south of 88th Avenue and originally developed in the 1950s, and northern Commerce City, which has been developing since the early 2000s. These areas are physically separated by the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, a geographic barrier that limits connectivity and contributes to transportation challenges in and around the city.

Over 40% of Core City residents live under the federal poverty line, and many face mobility barriers related to limited vehicle access, disability status, and age. In fact, most of the Census tracts within the Core City rate in the highest 75% of tracts in the DRCOG region for mobility barriers. Commerce City's population has grown at a faster rate (267% between 1990 and 2019) than the state and region, with growth projected to continue. New residential development is concentrated in northern Commerce City, where former agricultural lands are zoned for residential use. This growth increases pressure on the current transportation system and demand for increased connectivity across neighborhoods.

The Commerce City Microtransit Study will identify and evaluate potential microtransit and transit solutions that improve mobility of Commerce City residents. This includes identifying first and last mile connections to key destinations such as regional transit stations, employment centers, essential services, and recreational facilities.

The Study will define potential microtransit zones tailored to the transportation needs of the Core City, while also considering practical connections to the industrial areas and community destinations in northern Commerce City. The goal is to develop alternatives that support essential daily trips and improve overall access across Commerce City.

Ultimately, the Study will produce a plan for microtransit with actionable strategies to reduce transportation barriers and enhance connectivity for all who live and work in Commerce City, with particular emphasis on essential trips for underserved populations.

Study area

The study area encompasses all of Commerce City as well as portions of unincorporated Adams County, with a particular focus on the Core City located south of 96th Avenue. Because Commerce City's municipal boundaries are complex, a simplified boundary was developed for this Study to provide comprehensive coverage and ensure the inclusion of relevant communities and services.

As shown in **Figure 1**, the study area extends from the southernmost edge of Commerce City up to 112th Avenue, and from I-76 on the west to Tower Road on the east. Within this boundary, the primary focus area is defined as the portion between I-270 to the south, 96th Avenue to the north, I-76 to the west, and Quebec Parkway to the east.

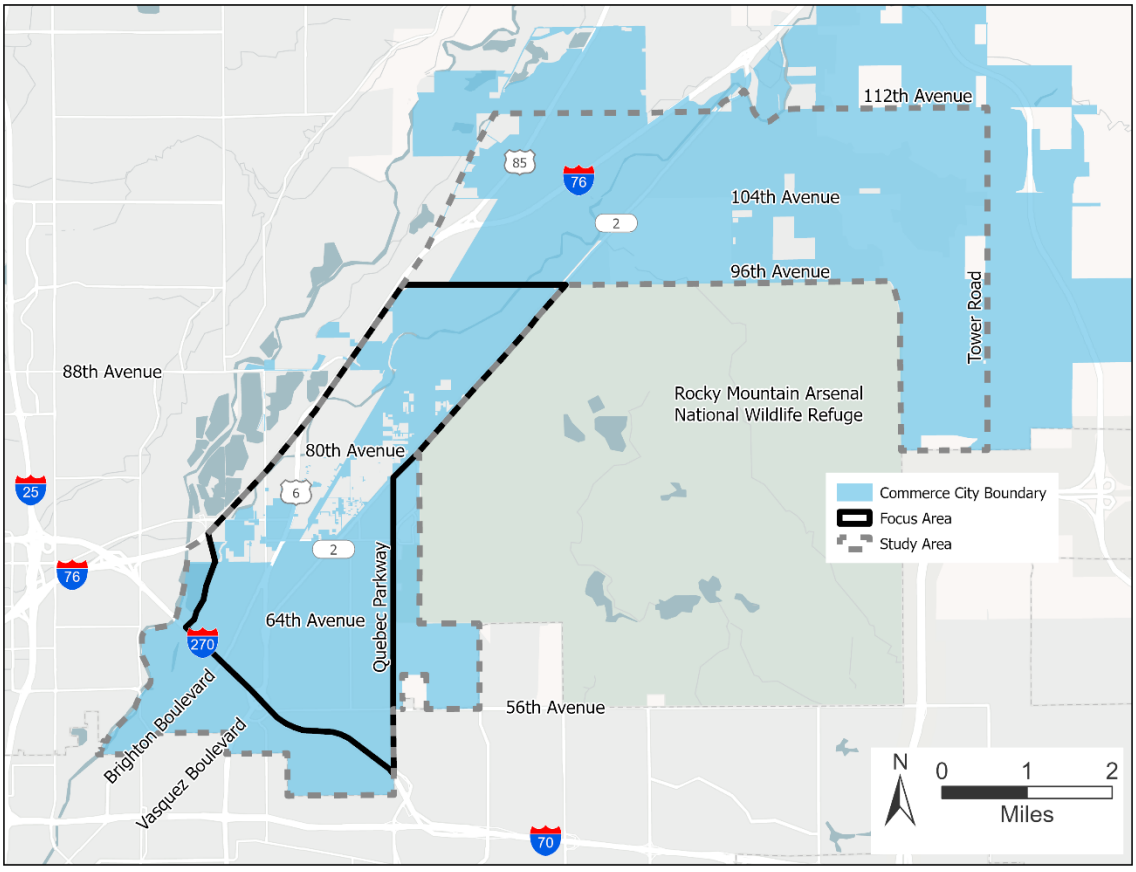


Figure 1: Study area

Previous and concurrent planning efforts

This section summarizes previous and ongoing planning efforts relevant to the Commerce City Microtransit Study, including the Comprehensive Plan 2045 and Safety Action Plan. When this report was written, the Commerce City Transportation Plan update was underway, and a draft was available for public comment. A cursory review of the plan draft is included below.

Commerce City Transportation Plan– September 2025 Draft

The Commerce City Transportation Plan updates and builds on the 2010 Transportation Plan to reflect the demographic, economic, and technological changes of the last decade and a half. The drafted Transportation Plan identifies microtransit as a flexible transportation option for areas that are difficult to serve with fixed-route transit. Microtransit can support the fixed route system by offering coverage where there are gaps in service. It is best suited for areas that are hard to reach or low-density where a fixed route is not cost effective. Mobility as a Service, or the integration of all transportation options on one digital platform, is also identified by the plan as a tool to make transportation options accessible to the community and support the fixed route system. The Transportation Plan indicates that microtransit is an opportunity for the community to address the unique and immediate transportation needs of Commerce City. This Microtransit Study represents a continuation of the ideas outlined in the Transportation Plan.

Commerce City Comprehensive Plan 2045 – September 2023

The Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan (“Commerce City 2045”) presents a unified vision for existing and future development of land use, transportation, and parks and open space for the next 25 years. A key function of Commerce City 2045 is to establish the foundation for future studies, such as this Microtransit Study.

Community engagement takeaways

The Comprehensive Plan resulted from a two-year community engagement process, beginning in 2021. A recurring theme from the outreach process was the need to

respond to northern Commerce City growth with concurrent infrastructure upgrades. Community members expressed the need to increase connectivity across all modes of transportation through increased transit frequency, better access to RTD stations, and safe routes for walking and biking. The community identified railroad crossings as a major barrier to traffic flow, compounded by a lack of alternate routes.

Transportation and mobility goals

As a result of community input, Commerce City established six transportation and mobility goals. Although all six goals will be considered, the Microtransit Study most directly speaks to goals 1, 2 and 3:

1. Create and maintain a well-connected and safe transportation network that includes auto, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit options, including maximizing mobility and supporting the city's growth.
2. Ensure that transportation options are inclusive for people of all ages and abilities throughout the city.
3. Expand and improve transit services and related options throughout the community.
4. Coordinate with federal, state, and local governments as well as other transportation agencies on efforts to enhance transportation in the area.
5. Encourage and support efforts to increase bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the city.
6. Minimize conflicts with freight and the railroads in the city.

Approach to transportation and mobility

Commerce City 2045 recommends a series of policies and projects that improve safety and encourage people living and working in the city to shift from driving alone to other transportation modes, including transit. At the time of the Comprehensive Plan publication, 74% of Commerce City residents drove alone to work and just 2% used public transportation (US Census ACS, 2020). Between 2014 and 2018, pedestrians and cyclists made up just 0.8% of commuters, but over 8% of those seriously injured or killed in traffic crashes.

Comprehensive Plan recommendations relevant to the Commerce City Microtransit Study are as follows:

- **Connect central neighborhoods to regional transit hubs.** Provide a safe connection from Core Commerce City to 72nd Avenue RTD Station and other high-ridership bus stops.

- **Connect the north and south.** Improve the multimodal connectivity between northern Commerce City and the Core, a desire that the community identified during outreach.
- **Increase access to the airport.** Denver International Airport is the state's largest employer and one of the busiest hubs in the world. The city's proximity to this asset can be leveraged to improve economic opportunity.

Commerce City Safety Action Plan – July 2025

Commerce City is committed to a 50% reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes by 2050. The Commerce City Safety Action Plan is a roadmap to safe travel for all ages and abilities, complemented by a set of performance metrics to track progress. The City's pledge to safety is defined by a commitment to the Safe Systems Approach from the Federal Highway Administration. The Safe Systems Approach has six principles:

1. Death and series injuries are unacceptable.
2. Humans make mistakes.
3. Humans are vulnerable.
4. Responsibility is shared.
5. Safety is proactive.
6. Redundancy is crucial.

The Commerce City Microtransit Study will build off the Safety Action Plan by identifying how existing travel patterns can be made safer and more accessible. The Planning Oversight Committee from the Safety Action Plan conducted community outreach to understand top transportation safety priorities. Various outreach methods were employed, including an online survey tool that gathered data from 220 participants. The themes relevant to this Microtransit Study are listed below:

- Difficulty entering or exiting neighborhoods.
- Destinations are too far.
- Absence of/gaps in bike paths, lanes, or routes.
- Poor biking/walking connections to transit.

Community outreach was paired with an analysis of roadways with the highest risk for crashes. Safe microtransit planning considers passenger and driver safety, particularly when determining pick-up or drop-off zones. High risk areas that fall within a microtransit zone require careful consideration.

The DRCOG Index

This Study incorporates the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Index. The DRCOG index uses census tract level demographic data from the American Community Survey (ACS) to identify areas with higher concentrations of historically marginalized populations. Key indicators include race, age, disability status, national origin, language proficiency, income level, and vehicle ownership. Higher index scores represent a greater presence of populations that may face systematic barriers to mobility and access. The data are compiled from a five-year period (2018-2022) of the ongoing ACS. The ACS is an ongoing nationwide survey conducted by the US Census Bureau. It collects detailed demographic, social, economic, and housing information from a sample of households every year. By combining the data over a five-year period, the dataset provides more reliable estimates.

DRCOG organizes these indicators into three domains: (1) economic status, (2) mobility barriers, and (3) race and national origin. **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** show how the demographic indicators are scored and combined to produce a final index for each census tract in the region.

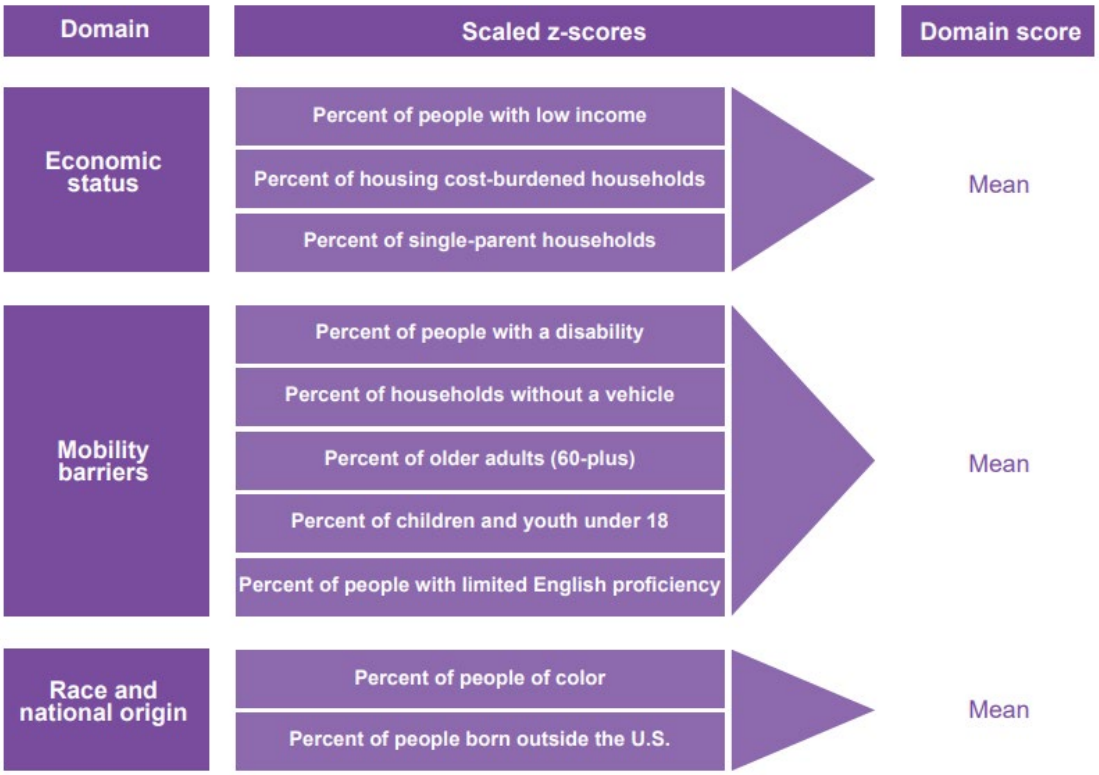


Figure 2: DRCOG Index domain scores

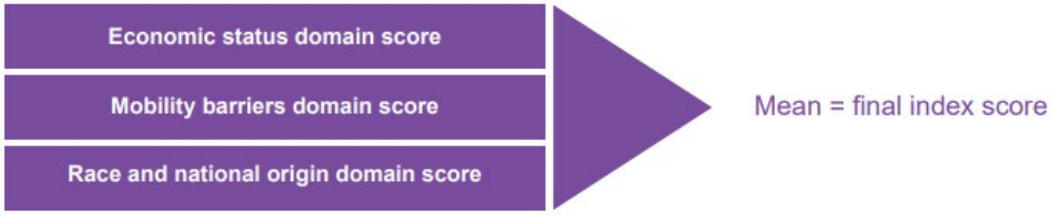


Figure 3: DRCOG Index final index score calculation

Figure 4 shows the DRCOG Index scores within the Commerce City study area. Several census tracts fall within the highest 25% of scores regionwide, indicating a significant concentration of marginalized populations relative to other parts of the DRCOG region. The highest index scores are mostly found south of 96th Avenue, which aligns with the study's focus on the Core City and reinforces the need to improve mobility options in this area.

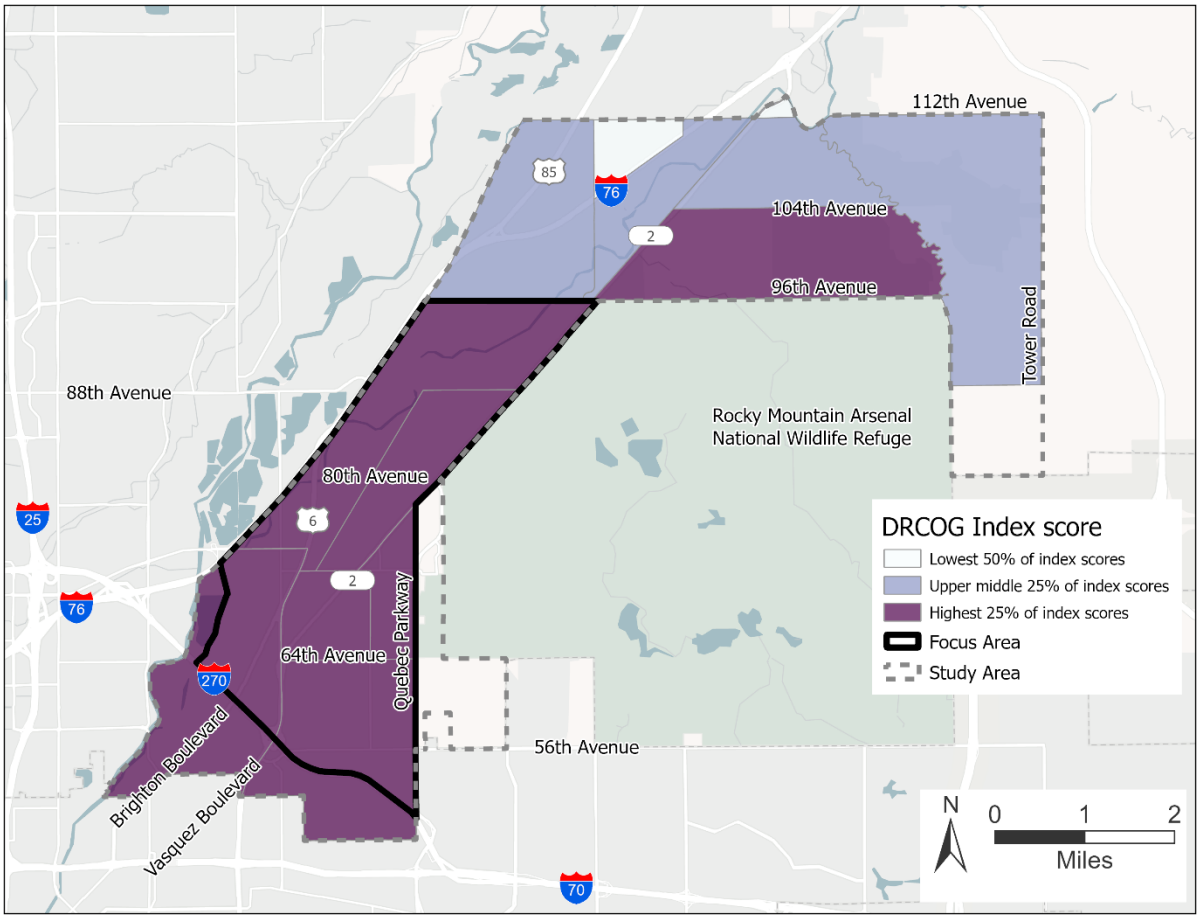


Figure 4: DRCOG Index composite score. *Source: DRCOG*.

The DRCOG Index includes an indicator for mobility barriers, based on vehicle access, disability status, and age of residents within each tract. Figure 5 shows that most of the Core City has higher barriers to mobility than in 75% of tracts across the DRCOG region. Low economic status, measured in terms of income, housing cost burden, and single-parent households, is also higher than 75% of the DRCOG region across much of the study area and particularly within the Core City (Figure 6).

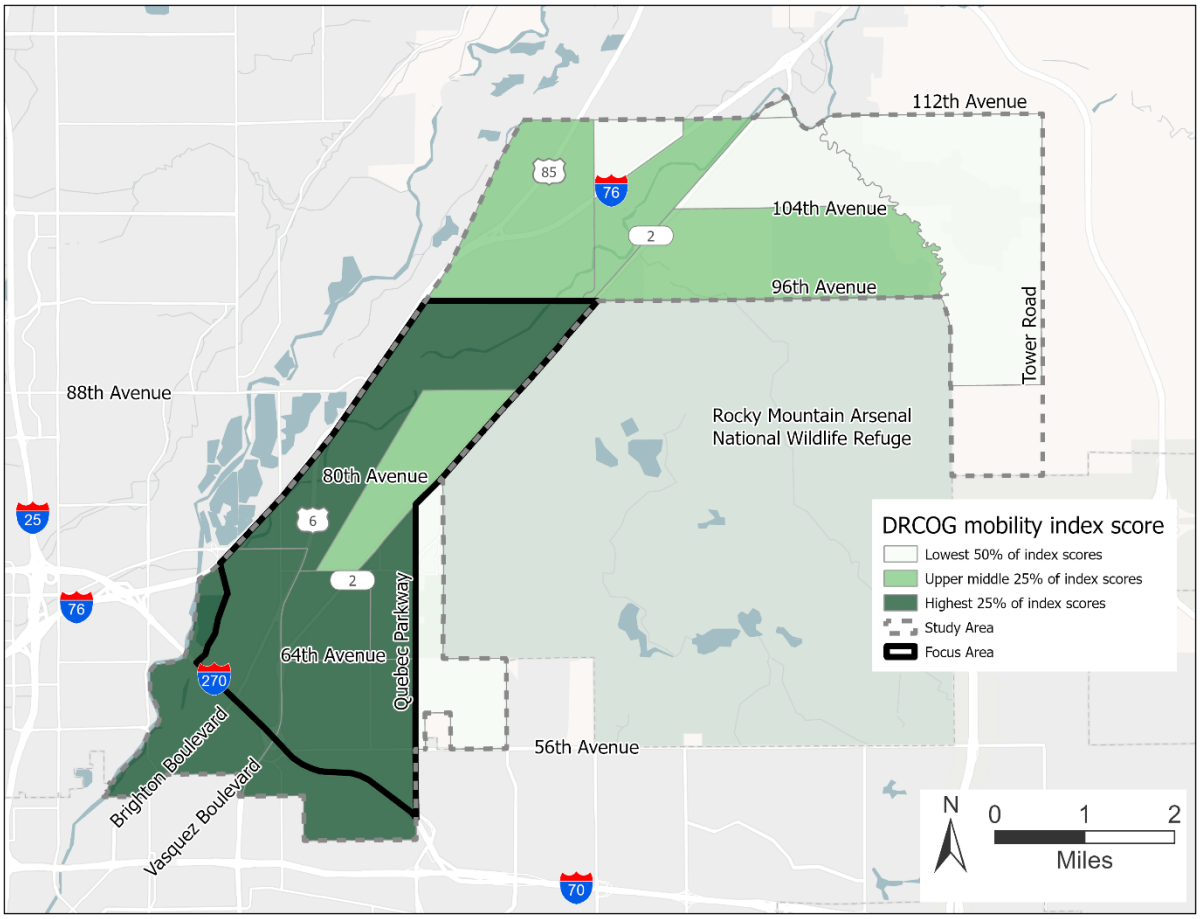


Figure 5: DRCOG mobility barriers index score. *Source: DRCOG.*

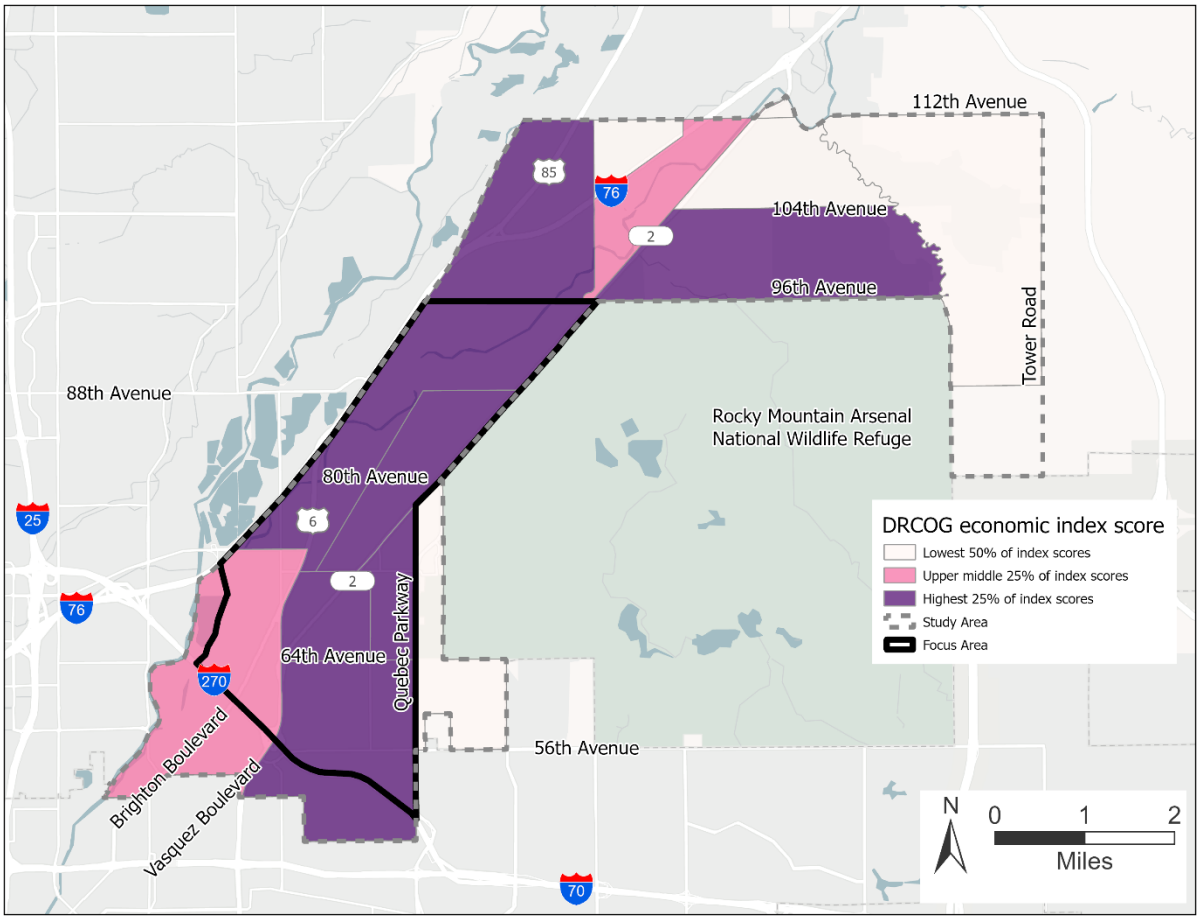


Figure 6: DRCOG economic status index score. *Source: DRCOG.*

By integrating the DRCOG Index into the planning process, this Study ensures that proposed microtransit solutions are designed to meet the needs of historically underserved communities and actively work to reduce transportation barriers.

Transit propensity analysis

To better understand where a microtransit service could have the greatest impact, a transit propensity analysis was conducted for the Commerce City study area. This analysis identifies census block groups where residents are more likely to use transit based on demographic and land use characteristics that correlate with higher transit ridership. The following factors were used to assess transit propensity:

1. Percentage of the population with low income.
2. Percentage of households with no access to a vehicle.
3. Percentage of the population who commute to work by transit.
4. Percentage of the population who are 60 and older.
5. Percentage of the population who are under 18.
6. Population density.
7. Land use patterns.

Each transit propensity factor is described in more detail in the following sections. In addition to demographic characteristics, the analysis incorporates the existing transportation and transit networks, providing a comprehensive view of where a microtransit service could be most effective.

Percent of the population with low income

As shown in **Figure 7**, the share of low-income households in Commerce City is highest south of 96th Avenue. In northern Commerce City, fewer than 25% of residents fall into this category, with some block groups reporting rates below 10%. By contrast, in the Core City, the percentage of low-income households is significantly higher, reaching up to 67% in some areas.

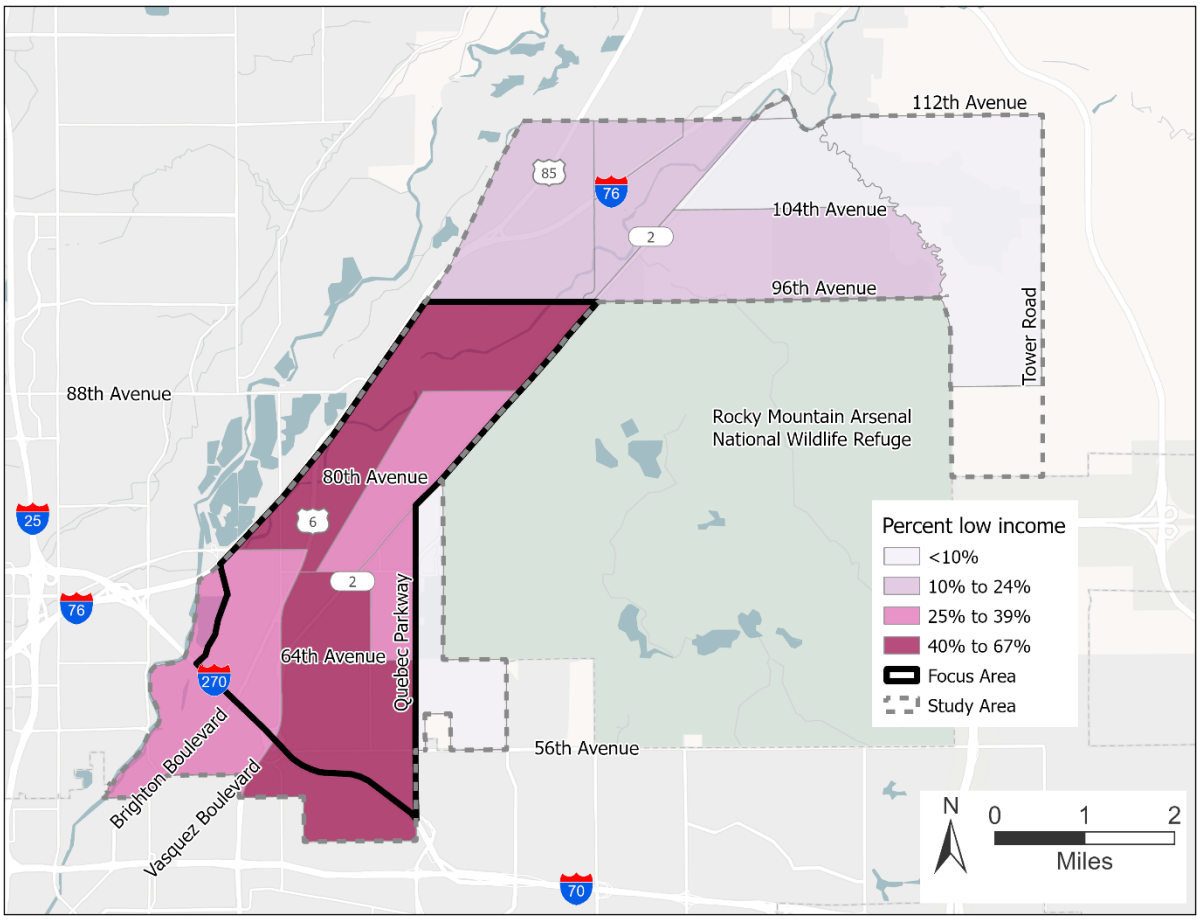


Figure 7: Percentage of the population with low income. *Source: DRCOG Index*.

Percent of households with no access to a vehicle

As shown in **Figure 8**, the percentage of households without vehicle access is highest in the southernmost part of Commerce City, south of 64th Avenue, where up to 16% of households don't have access to a car. By contrast, the central and northeastern parts of the city have the lowest levels of households without a vehicle.

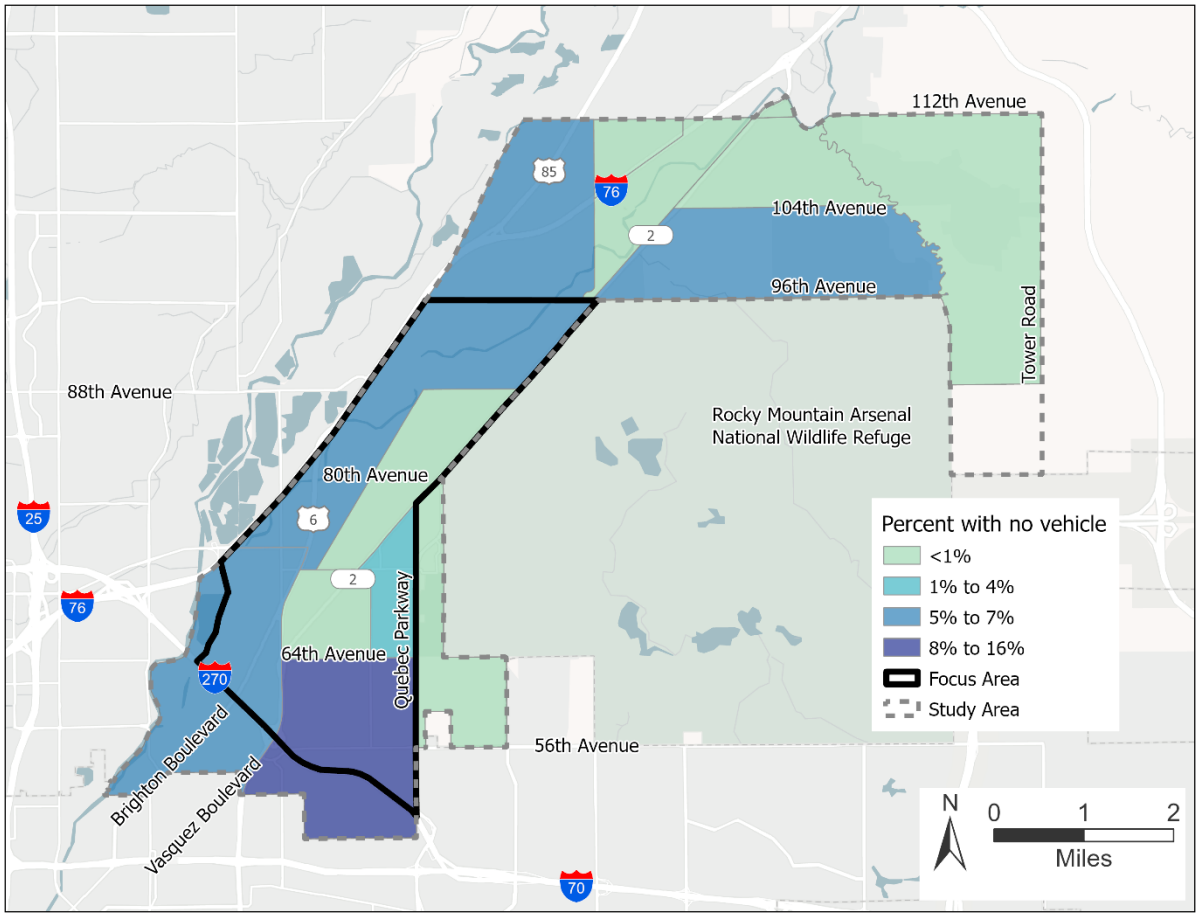


Figure 8: Percentage of households with no access to a vehicle. *Source: DRCOG Index*.

Percentage of the population that uses transit to get to work

The share of residents who currently commute by transit is an important measure of existing demand and familiarity with transit services. Areas with higher percentages of transit commuters often indicate stronger potential for microtransit to complement or connect to established transit use.

As shown in **Figure 9** and **Figure 10,** most (69%) Commerce City residents drive to work alone, and fewer than 4% of workers rely on transit to commute. The highest rate of transit commuting is found in the block group that includes the bus and rail Commerce City / 72nd Avenue Station, where up to 5% of residents commute by transit. While the percentage of commuters who use transit is low compared to the percentage who drive alone, these findings suggest that targeted microtransit service could help strengthen first- and last-mile access to transit hubs and support expanded use of regional transit. It is important to note that mode share to work reflects only how people travel to their jobs, not the full range of trips they make for other purposes such as school, shopping, or recreation. This distinction means that overall transit use in the community may differ from what is shown in the work commute data alone.

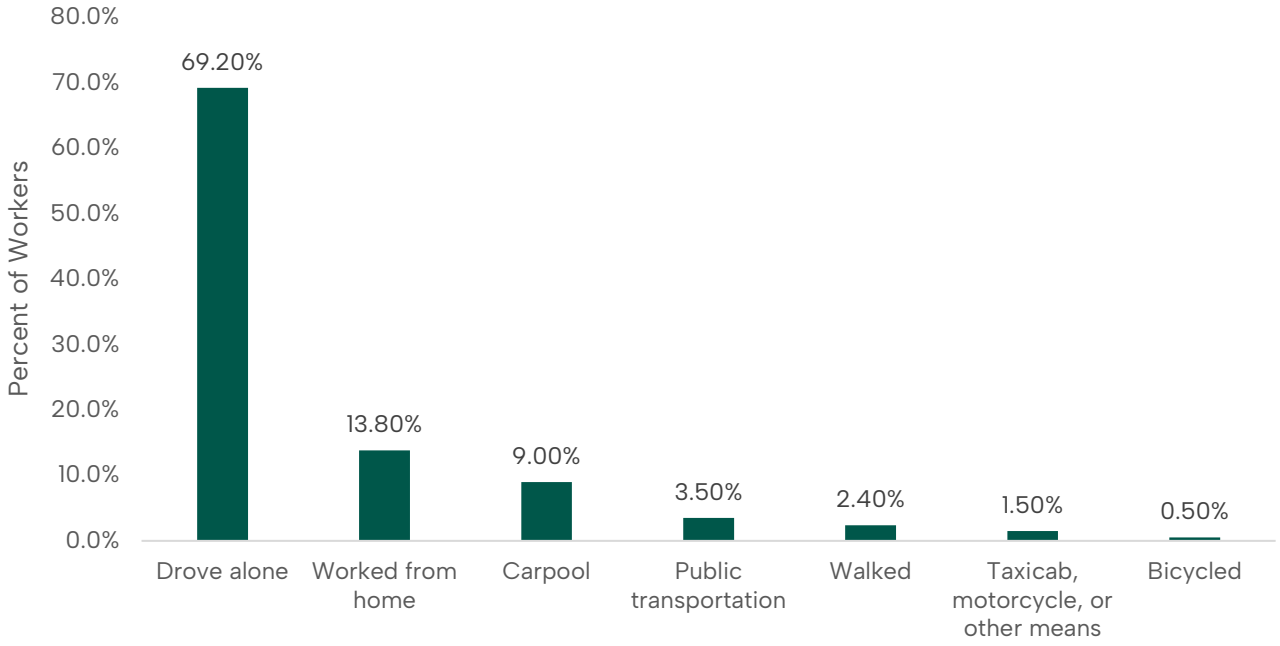


Figure 9: Means of transportation to work, among workers 16 years and over. *Source: ACS 1-Year Estimates, 2023*.

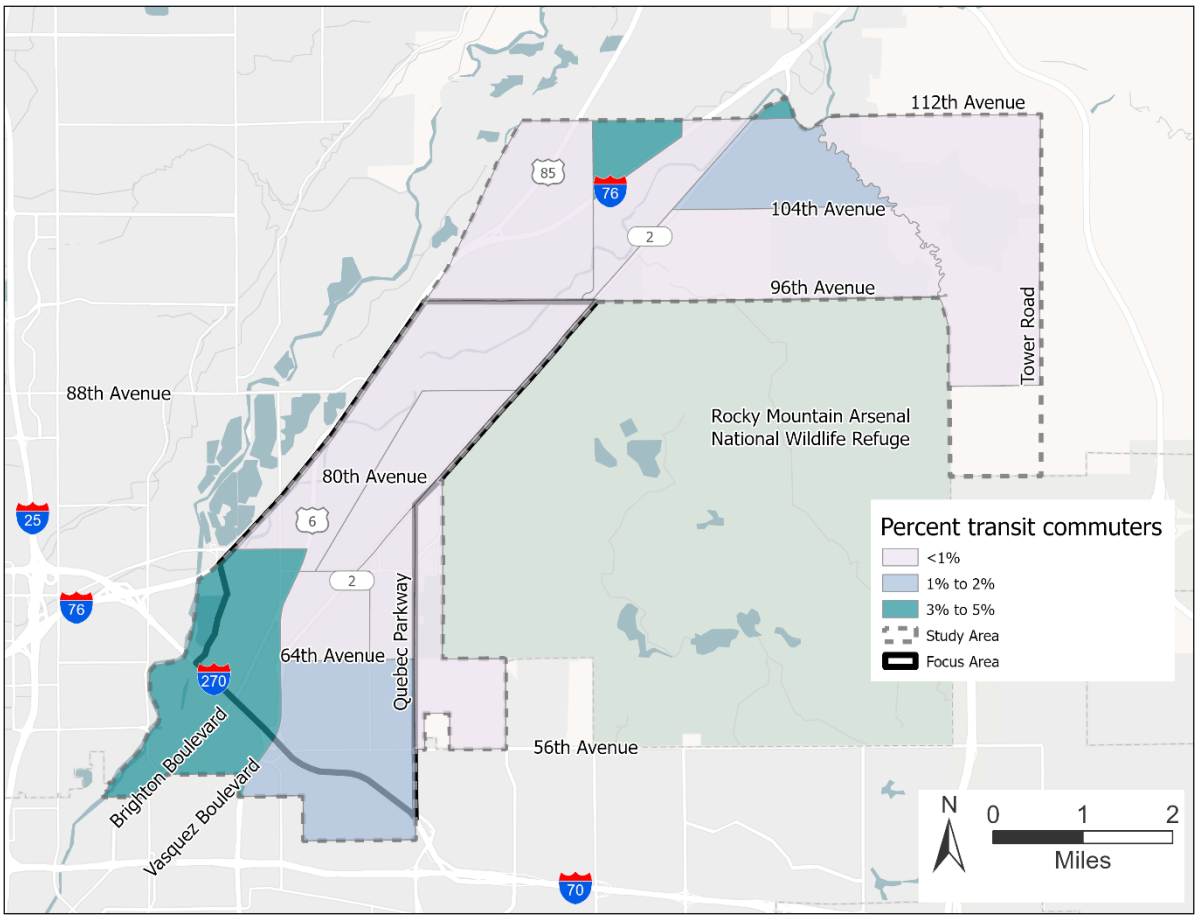


Figure 10: Percentage of the population who commute to work by transit. *Source: DRCOG Index*.

Population density per square mile

Population density is a key factor in assessing transit propensity because areas with more residents typically generate higher demand for shared mobility services. Dense neighborhoods are more likely to sustain consistent transit or microtransit ridership. While it is important to have consistent ridership, it should be noted that less dense areas would also benefit from a microtransit service because they are less likely to be served by fixed route transit service and may rely more heavily on microtransit.

In Commerce City, population density varies significantly due to the presence of highways and industrial areas. The highest concentration of residents is found in the Core City, particularly between 88th Avenue and 64th Avenue. In contrast, areas northwest of Vasquez Boulevard tend to have much lower population densities. **Figure 11** shows the population density per square mile across the study area.

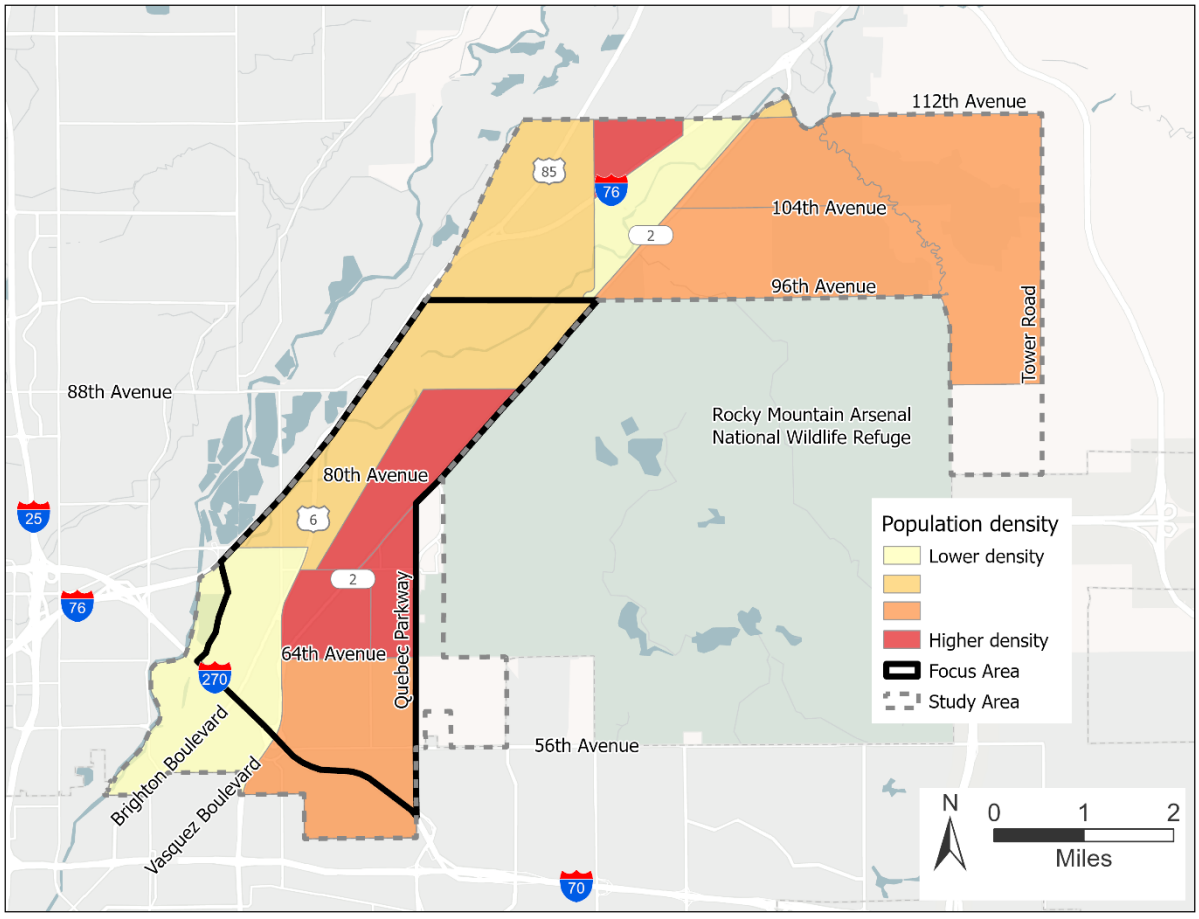


Figure 11. Population density per square mile. *Source: DRCOG Index*.

Percentage of the population 60 and older

Older adults often face greater mobility challenges, including reduced ability to drive, limited access to vehicles, and increased need for reliable transportation to medical services, shopping, and social activities. As a result, areas with higher concentrations of residents aged 60 and over are more likely to benefit from enhanced transit and microtransit options.

As shown in **Figure 12**, the southwestern part of Commerce City contains the highest share of residents aged 60 and over. In contrast, Derby and areas north and northeast of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge report the lowest percentage of older adults.

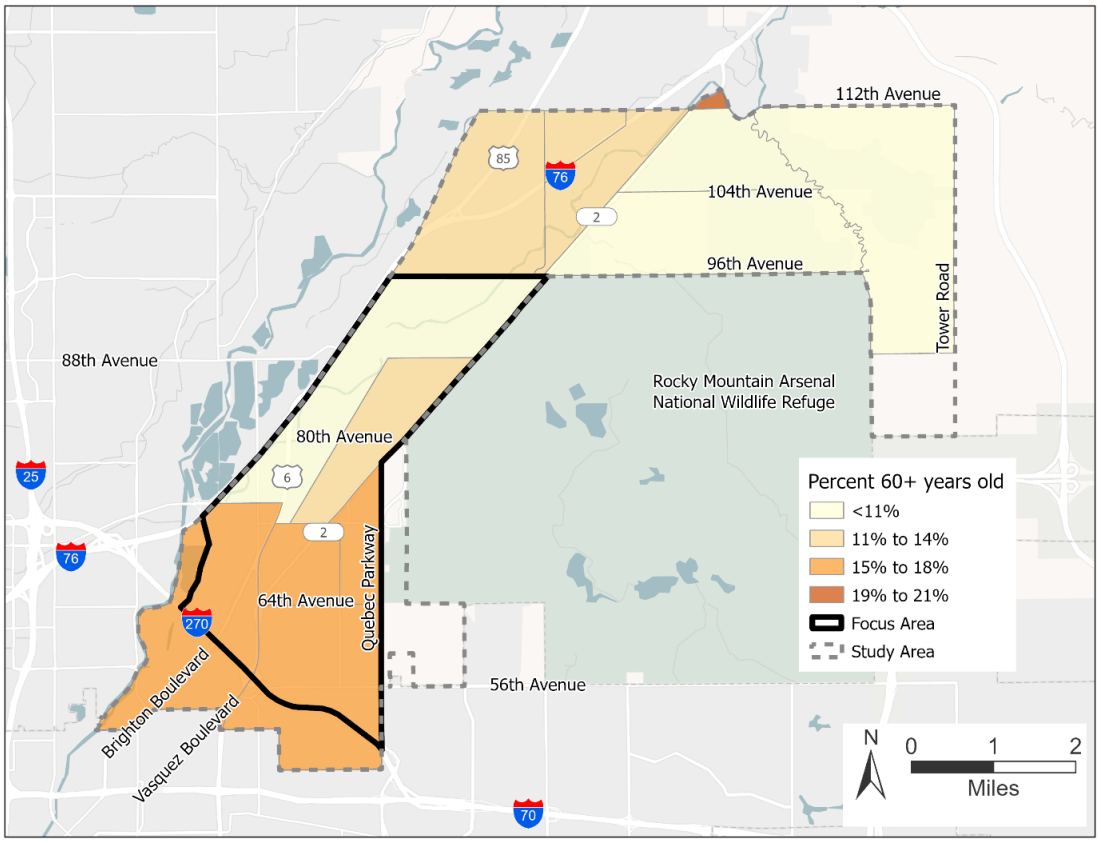


Figure 12. Percentage of the population aged 60 and older. *Source: DRCOG Index*.

Percentage of the population under 18

Residents under age 18 often bike, walk or rely on family, friends, or public transportation to access schools, recreational facilities, and community services. Areas with higher concentrations of young people may have a greater need for more mobility options.

As shown in **Figure 13,** the youth population in Commerce City is highest in the southernmost part of the city, where over 32% of the population is under 18. This area also has the highest share of older adults. This part of Commerce City comprises long-established neighborhoods with both aging populations and families with children. Across most of the study area, youth make up between 27% and 32% of the population.

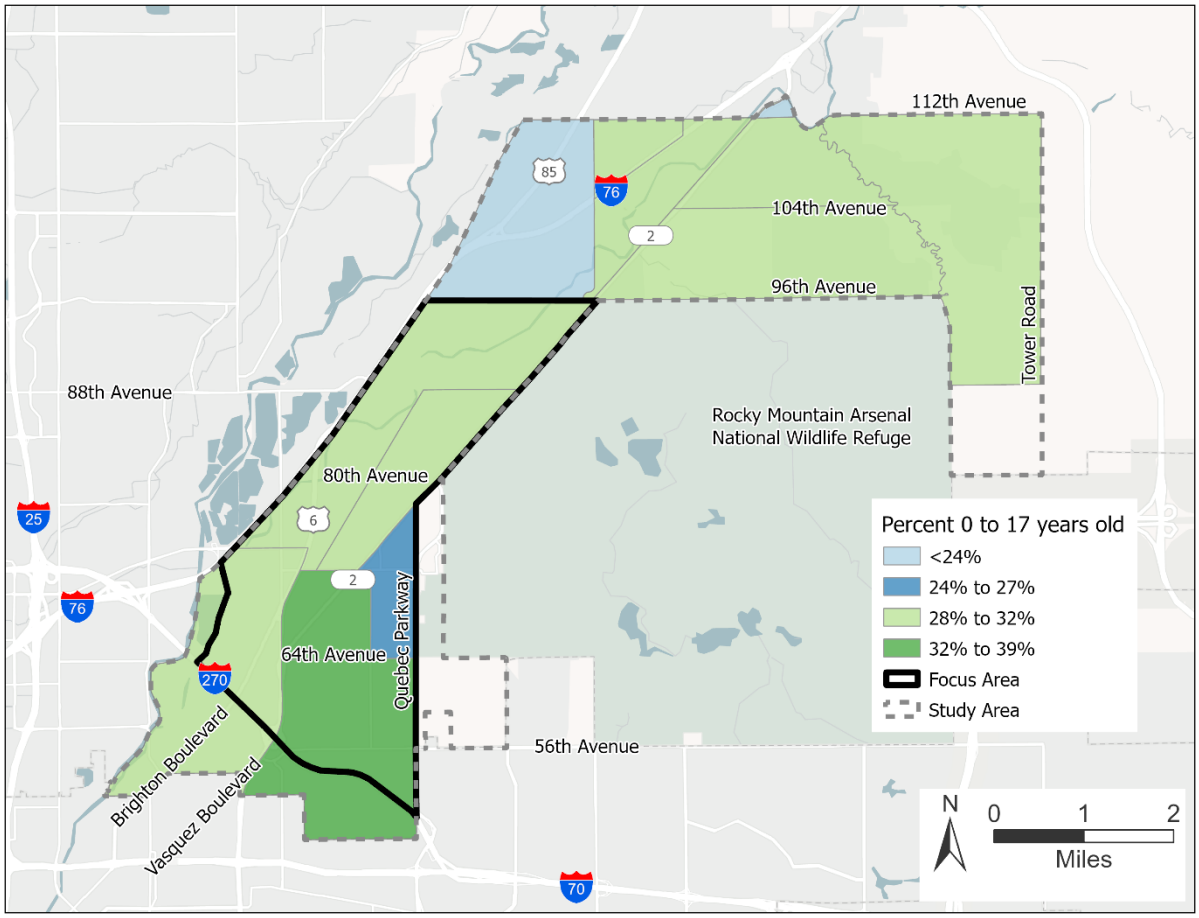


Figure 13. Percentage of the population under 18. Source: DRCOG Index.

Land use

Land use patterns are closely tied to transit propensity because residential areas generate demand, and commercial and industrial areas are where those trips are

directed. Areas with a mixture of land uses are generally better suited for supporting transit and microtransit services.

In Commerce City, more than half of the land is zoned for industrial use, and many Core City neighborhoods are surrounded by industrial activity. By contrast, northern Commerce City has more residential development, with many parcels designated for future housing growth. Commercial activity is concentrated along Highway 2, 64th Avenue, and 104th Avenue, providing key destinations for both the Core City and northern Commerce City.

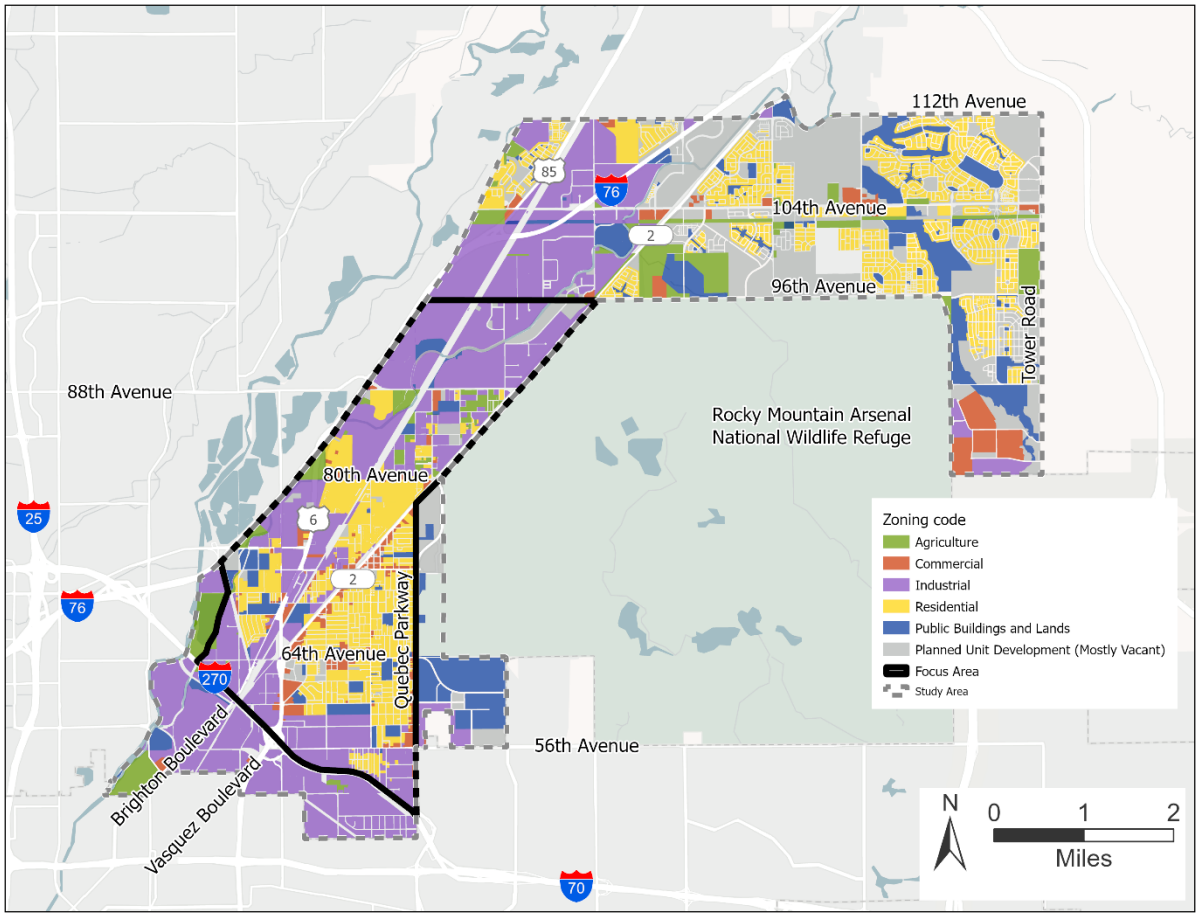


Figure 14: Land uses in Commerce City

Existing transportation network

The existing transportation network in Commerce City is made up of four main components, which include the street network, sidewalk network, bike network, and transit network. This analysis also evaluates how residents access transit throughout the study area, providing a comprehensive understanding of current mobility conditions and potential barriers.

Street network

Commerce City's street network varies significantly across the community. As shown in **Figure 15,** pockets of the Core City have an urban grid that provides relatively high connectivity. However, the major highways can act as barriers between neighborhoods. In contrast, northern Commerce City has a more suburban street pattern, with curvilinear streets shaped by subdivision and the surrounding landscape. Connectivity between the Core City and northern Commerce City is limited, with Highway 2 and I-76 being the only roads that directly connect the two areas. Local and collector roads are primarily accessed via major arterials such as Quebec Street, 96th Avenue, 104th Avenue, Chambers Road, Tower Road, and Highway 2.

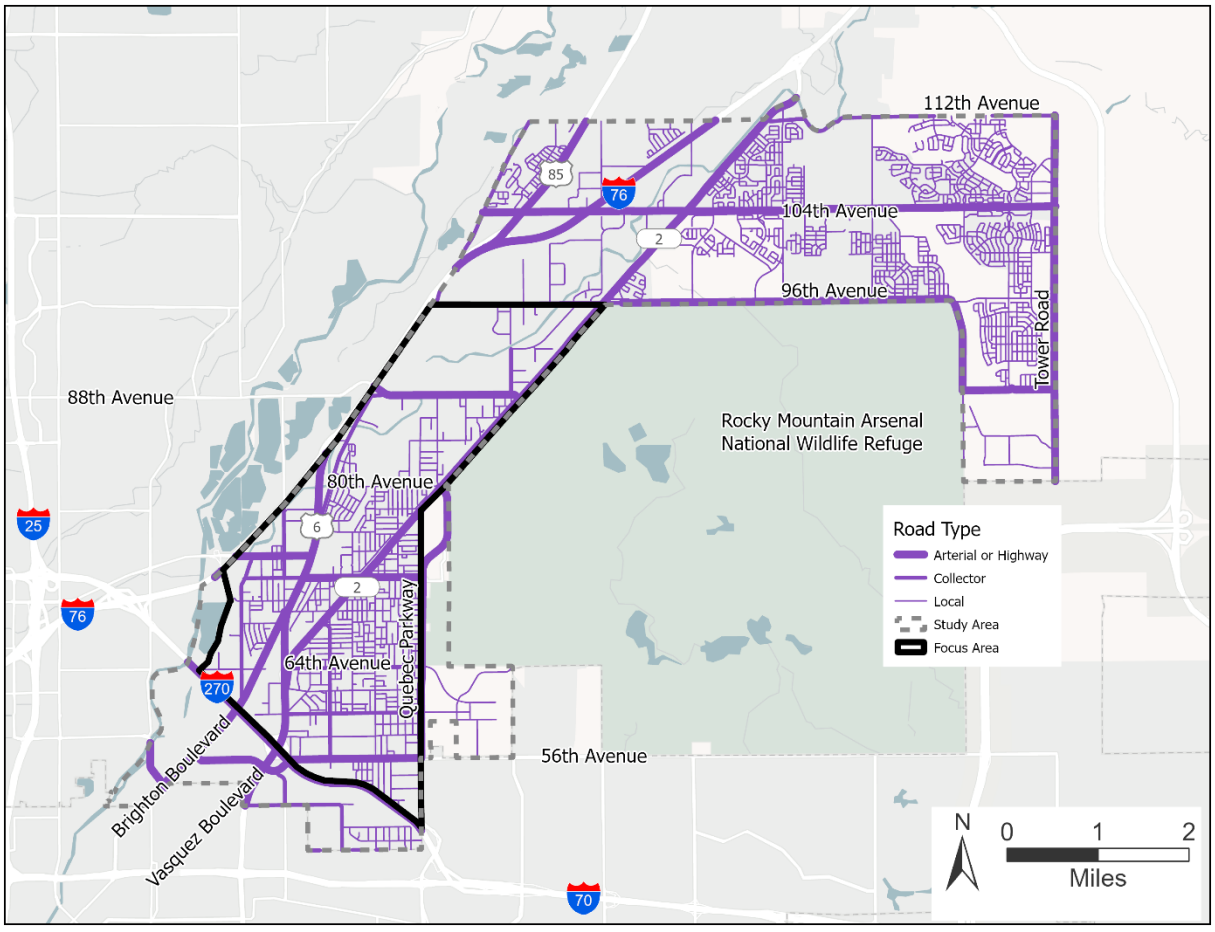


Figure 15: Street network. *Source: CDOT*.

Sidewalk network

Figure 16 shows Commerce City's sidewalk network. Commerce City is served by roughly 430 miles of sidewalk. Residents engaged in the comprehensive plan cited the

extensive sidewalk network as a community strength. However, sidewalk conditions vary considerably across the city. In the Core City, where much of the development dates back to the 1950s, many sidewalks are narrow and do not meet current ADA standards. It should also be noted that there are gaps in the sidewalk network on or near key corridors such as Brighton Boulevard. In contrast, newer neighborhoods in northern Commerce City generally feature wider sidewalks and tree lawns that provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicles. Sidewalk coverage is much more limited in industrial areas, where many streets lack pedestrian facilities altogether. Another aspect of the sidewalk network is the presence of safe crossings. There are very limited safe crossing locations across some of the major roads and highways that go through the study area. A good example of this is along Highway 2 where there are only three

controlled crossings across the street and railroad between 64th Avenue and 96th Avenue. This acts as a barrier for pedestrians traveling east/west.

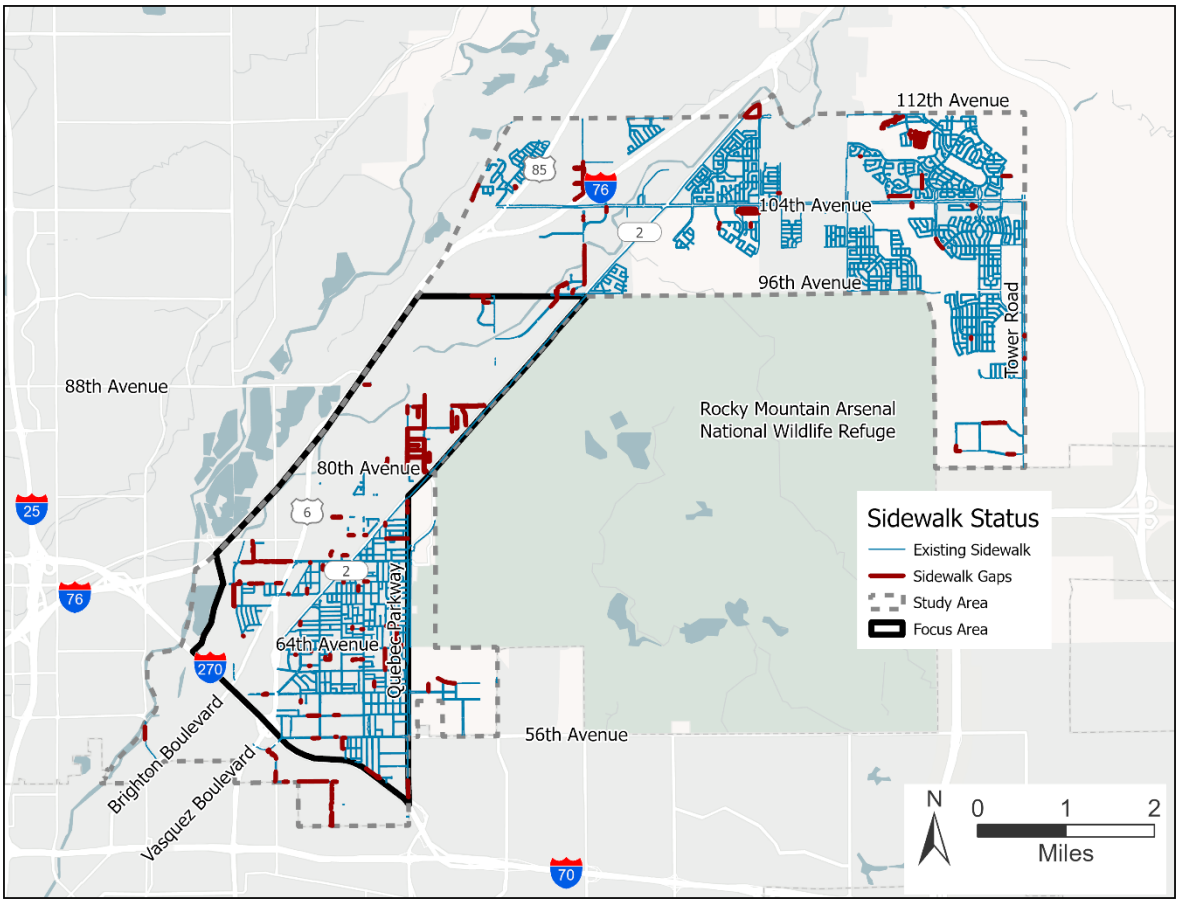


Figure 16. Sidewalk network. *Source: DRCOG*.

Bike network

Figure 17 shows Commerce City's bike network. While off-street facilities run parallel to most of the length of Highway 2, facilities are extremely limited within the city itself. These facilities primarily fall within the northeastern portion of study area. Within the focus area, bicycle facilities provide few connections, with most facilities spanning a few blocks at most.

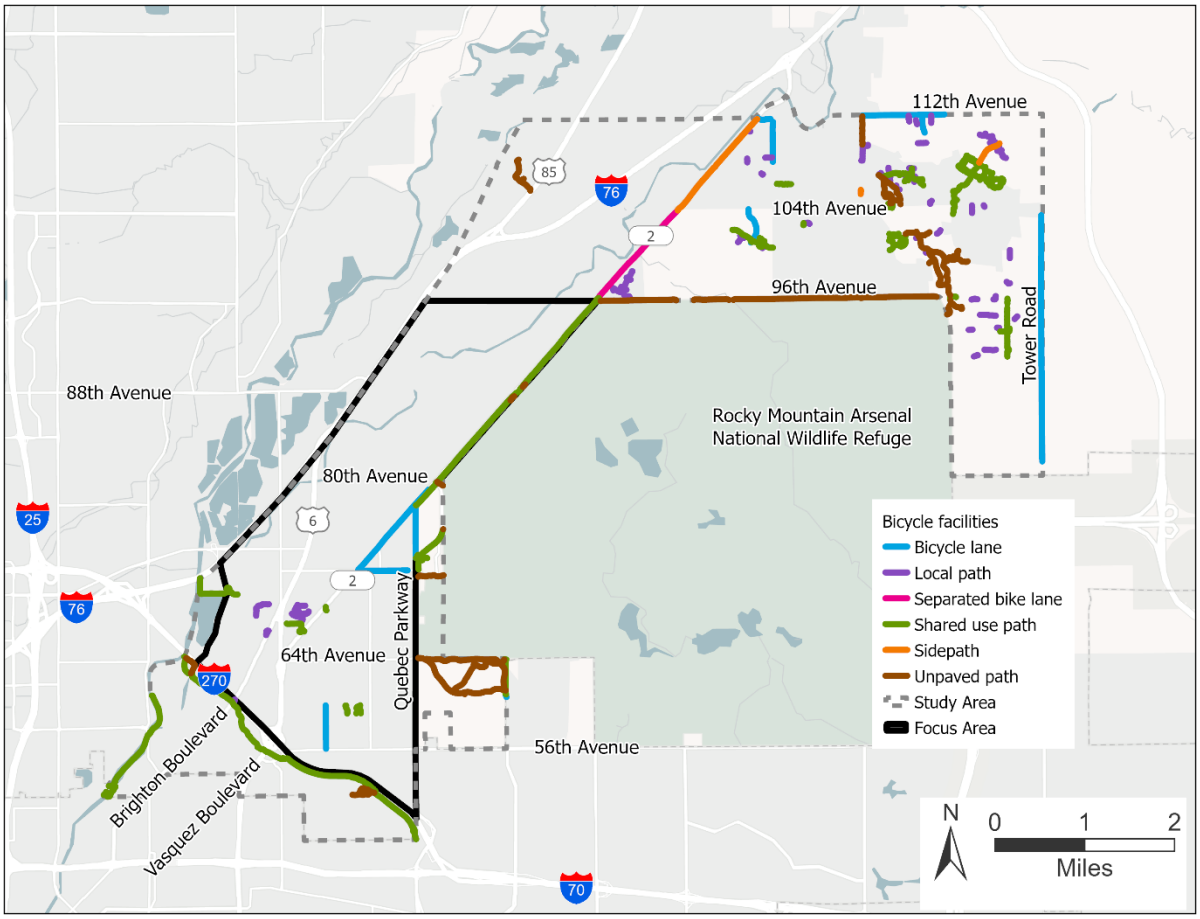


Figure 17: Commerce City's bike network. *Source: DRCOG.*

Transit network

Commerce City is served by a mix of bus and rail routes operated by RTD, as summarized in and shown in **Figure 19.** The study area includes eight bus routes and the N Line commuter rail, providing connections to Denver, Thornton, Denver International Airport and Brighton. Service includes five local routes, two airport routes and two regional routes. In addition to the RTD services, the Denver Connector microtransit service extends into Commerce City, linking residents of the Globeville-Elyria Swansea (GES) neighborhood to Walmart in Commerce City. **Figure 18** shows the GES microtransit service area. Residents of Commerce City could take the Denver Connector from Walmart at 60th Avenue and Dahlia Street to a key destination within the GES service area, such as the 38th and Blake RTD station.

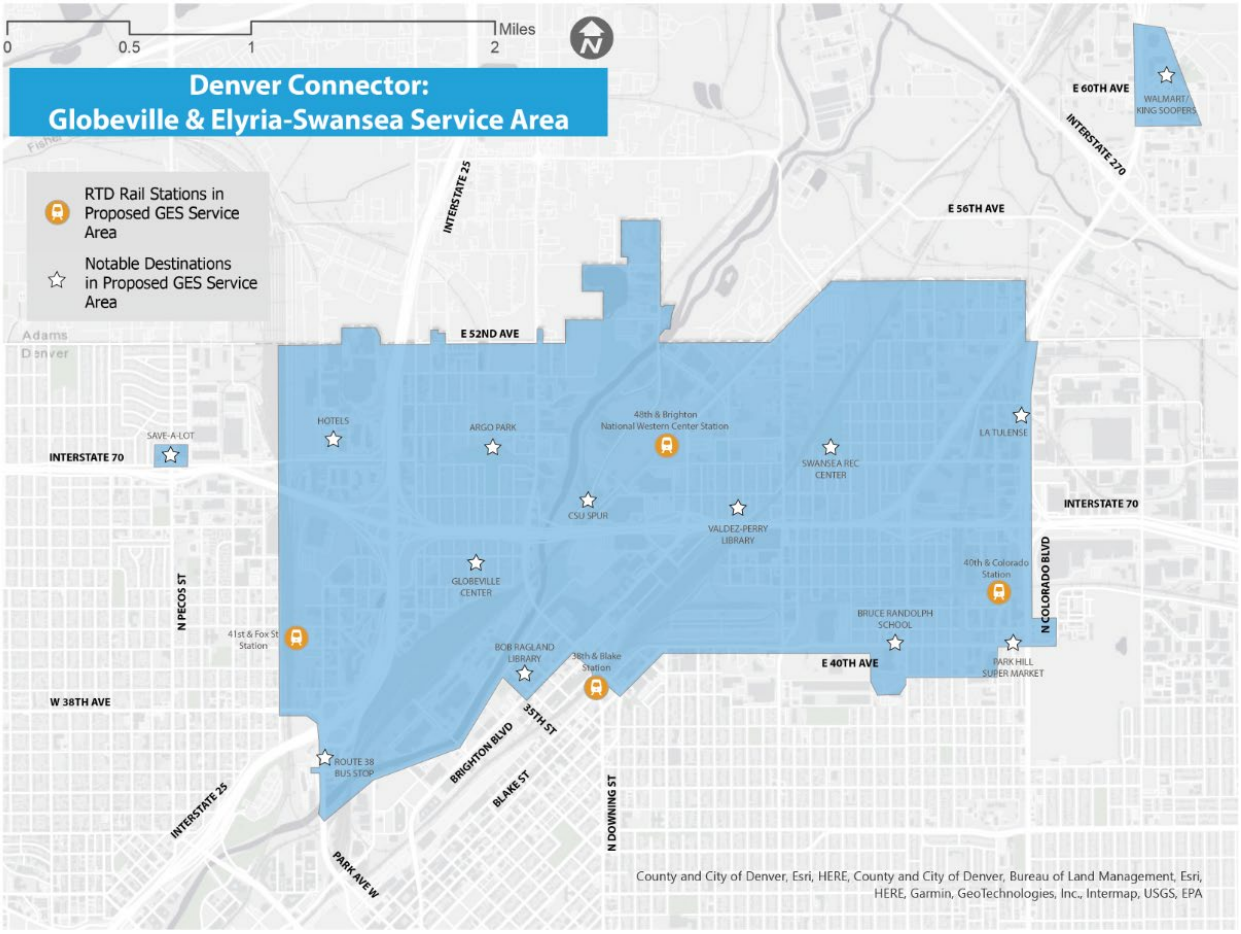


Figure 18. GES Microtransit Service Area. *Source: Denver Connector Microtransit Program.*

The three most frequent routes, all operating every 30 minutes throughout the day, include:

- The N Line (5:30 AM to 11 PM)
- Route 48 (5:30 AM to 10 PM)
- Route 49 (4:45 AM to 10:45 PM, operates every 60 minutes after 8 PM)

However, transit coverage is uneven across the city. In particular, the northeast area has limited service, and there are notable gaps in the northern neighborhoods where no north-south bus routes currently operate.

It is also worth noting that the A Line commuter rail between Union Station and Denver Airport operates just south of the study area. The 40th & Colorado Station is about two miles south of the study area. This is the busiest transit line in the Denver region, with

15-minute frequencies all day, and will be an important connection point to consider in the Microtransit Study.

Route	Type	Direction	Start and End Point	Weekday Frequency	Weekday Hours	Round Trips per Weekday
48	Local	NB/SB	60th Ave & Dahlia - Street/Civic Center Station	30 minutes	5:27 AM - 10:01 PM	34
49	Local	NB/SB	Commerce City & 72nd Station/40th - Colorado Station	30-60 minutes	4:43 AM - 10:44 PM	34
88	Local	NB/SB	Commerce City & 72nd Station - Central Park Station	30-60 minutes	5:43 AM - 11:43 PM	27
88L	Local	NB/SB	Thornton & 88th Station/Commerce City - 72nd Station	60 minutes	6:20 AM - 8:19 PM	15
104L	Airport	EB/WB	Wagon Road Park-n-Ride - Denver Airport Station	30-90 minutes	3:50 AM - 10:15 PM	21
145X	Airport	NB/SB	US 85 & Bridge St Park-n-Ride - Denver Airport Station	70-100 minutes	4:01 AM - 3:17 PM	2
120L	Local	NEB/SWB	Eastlake & 124th Station - US 85 & Bridge St Park-n-Ride	60 minutes	6:20 AM - 11:20 PM	18
RX	Regional	NB/SB	US 85 & Bridge St Park-n-Ride/Civic Center Station	30-60 minutes	5:41 AM - 6:45 PM	6
N Line	Regional	NB/SB	Denver Union Station	30 minutes	5:26 AM – 10:56 PM	36

Table 1: RTD transit routes. *Source: RTD*

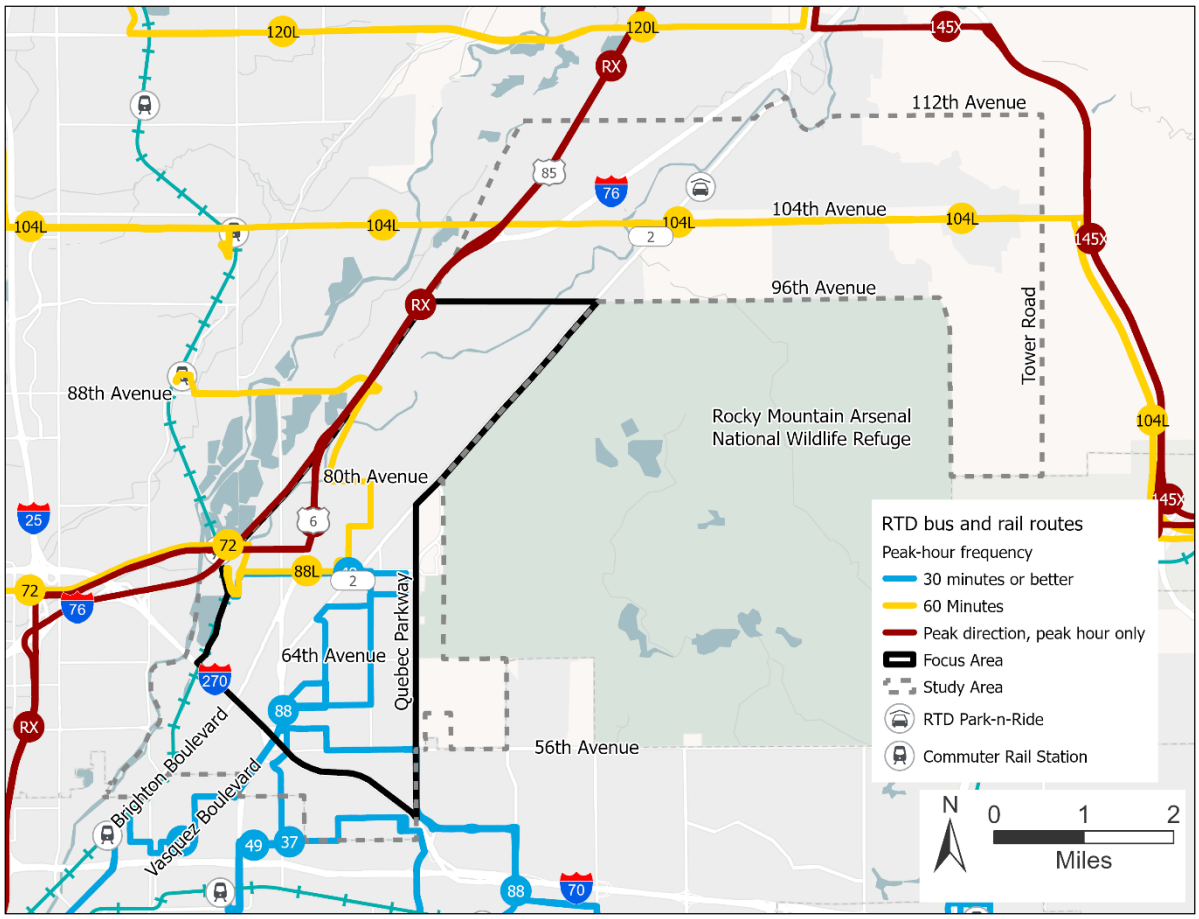


Figure 19: Transit network. *Source: RTD*.

Ridership patterns reflect both service frequency and destinations served. As shown in **Figure 20**, local routes and the 104L airport route carry the highest ridership of the routes that pass-through Commerce City. The figure shows average weekday ridership on each route in Commerce City during September-December 2024 RTD operations.

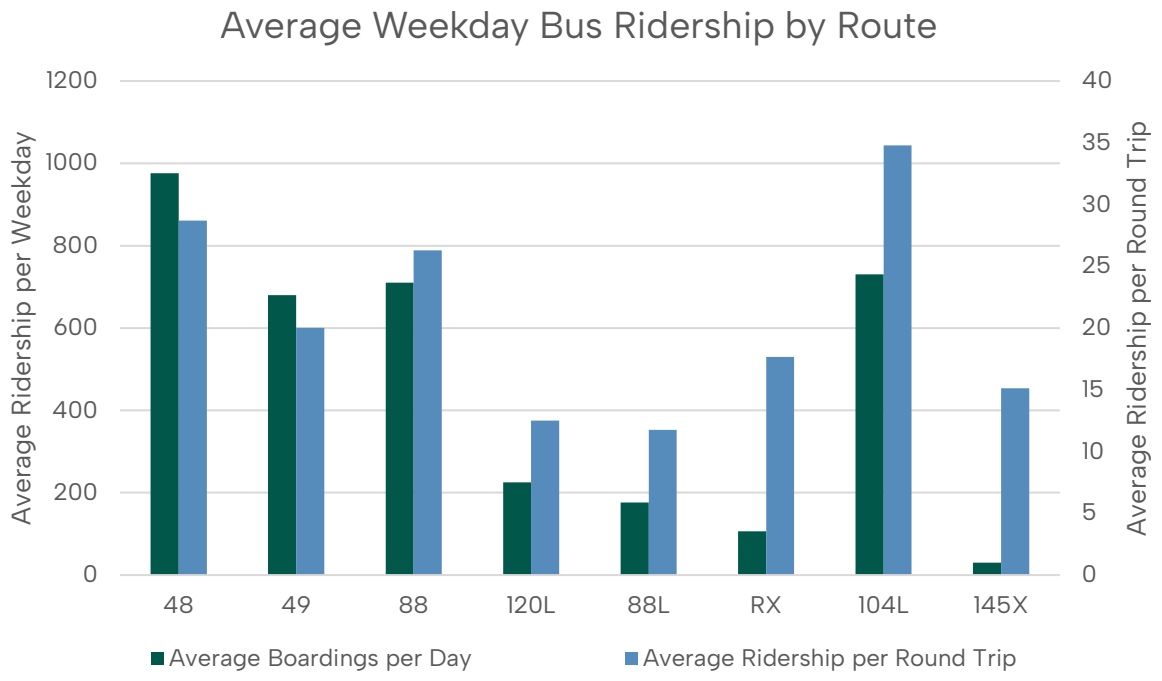


Figure 20: Ridership by Route, Sep. to Dec. 2024. *Source: RTD.*

Figure 21 shows weekday ridership at bus stops throughout Commerce City. The number of boardings and alightings at bus stops is a good indicator of key destinations by transit users. Two stop locations in Commerce City have particularly high ridership. These include 60th Avenue & Dahlia Street, near Walmart and Eagle Pointe Recreation Center, and Commerce City/72nd Avenue Station, served by the N-line commuter rail as well as several other bus routes.

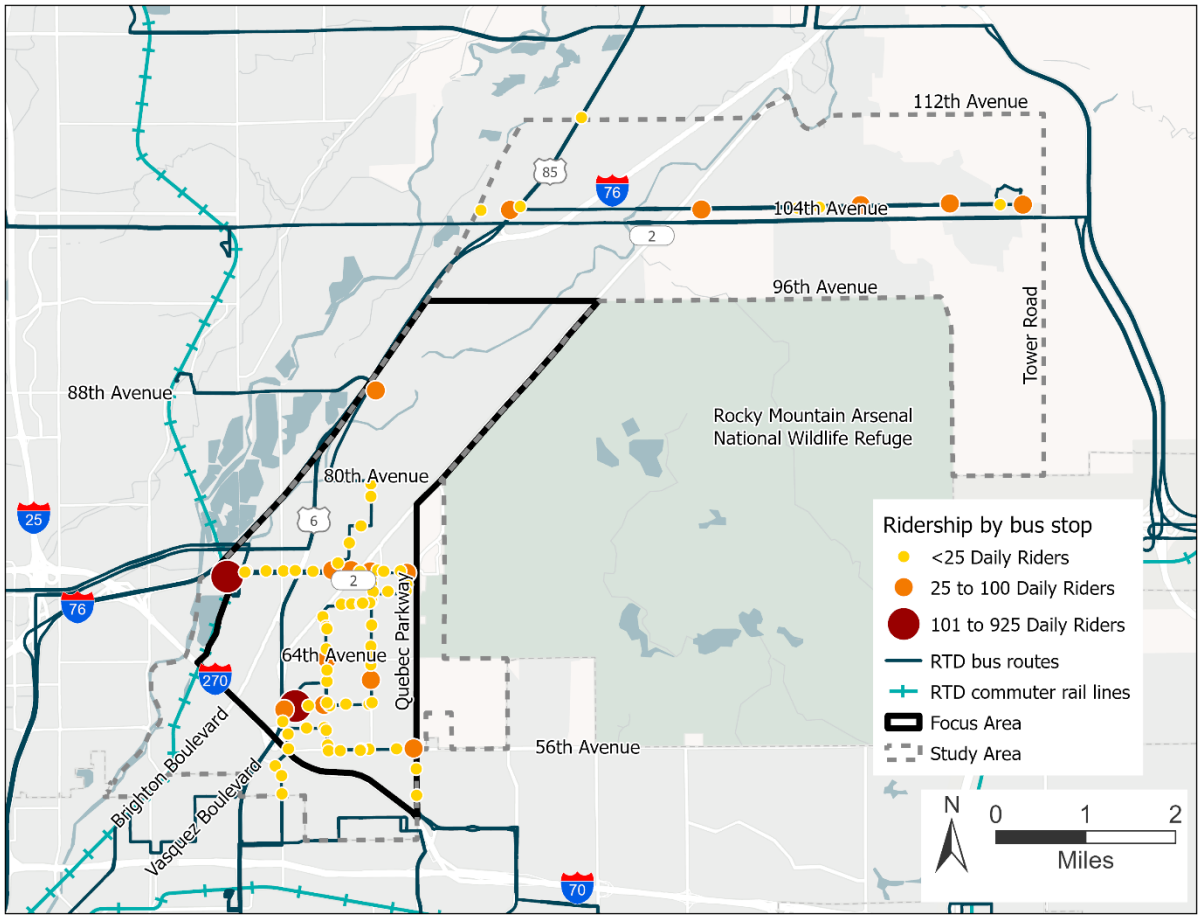


Figure 21: Weekday bus ridership by stop. *Source: RTD*.

Reliability is another important measure of transit performance. As shown in **Figure 22**, most routes that service Commerce City operate on time more than 80% of the time, with the N-Line performing the best. The RX regional route has the worst on-time performance, with almost 30% of trips arriving late.

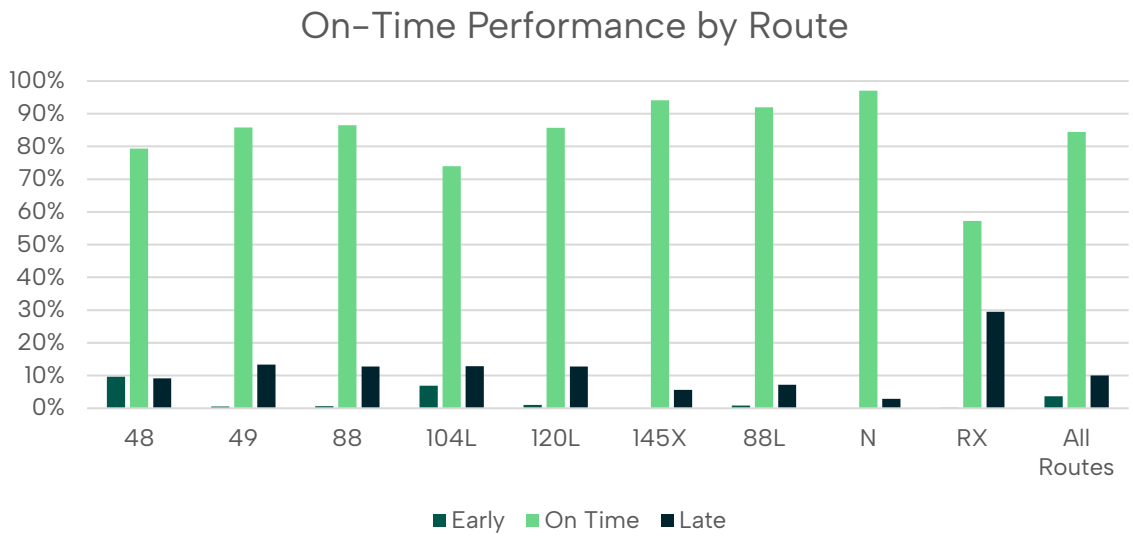


Figure 22: Transit On-Time Performance by Route. Source: RTD.

Accessibility to transit is measured through the walkshed analysis shown in **Figure 23**. This figure shows the areas in Commerce City that are accessible via a 5-, 10-, and 15-minute walk from a bus stop or rail station. The Commerce City Core is relatively well connected, but access in the north is limited, particularly north of 104th Avenue.

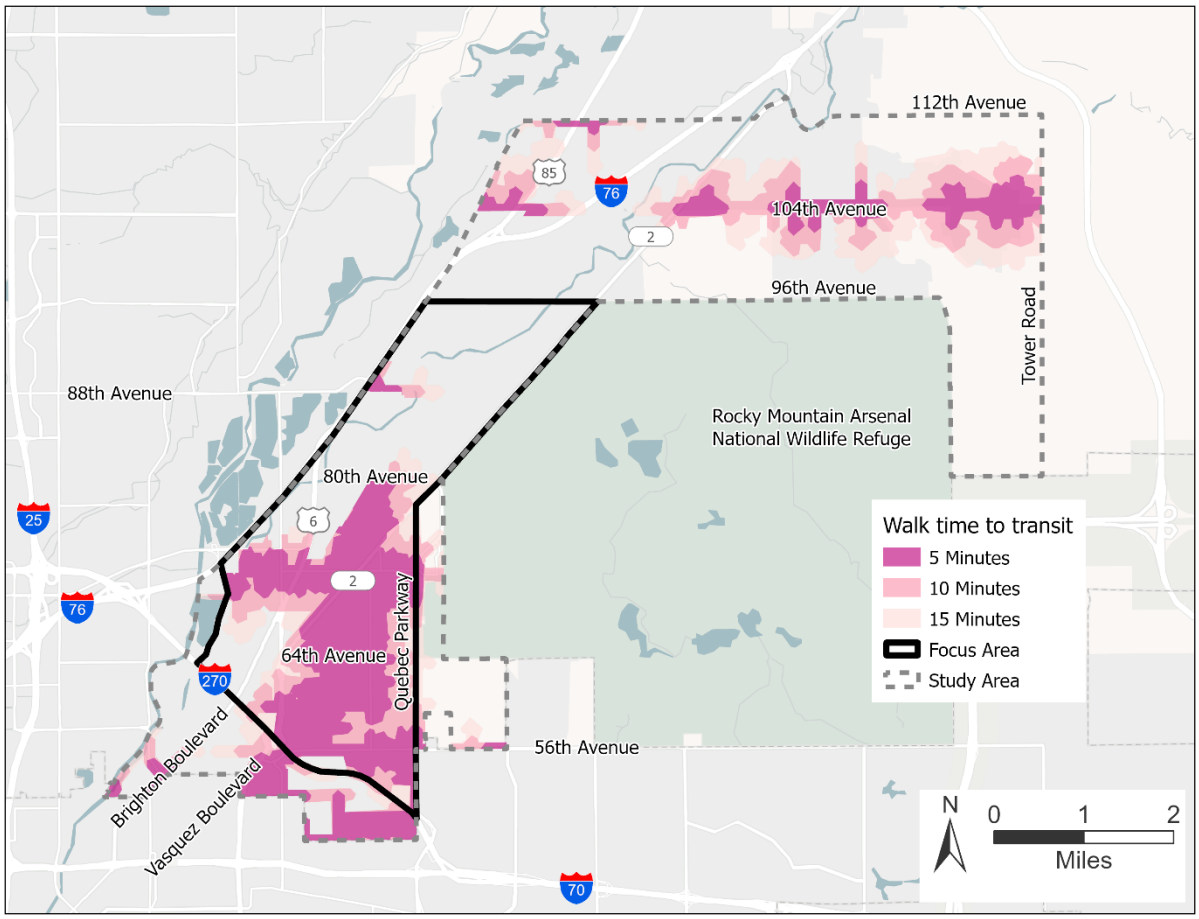


Figure 23: 15-Minute walkshed from transit stations

Travel patterns

This section summarizes available data on the predominant travel patterns of Commerce City residents, which will be supplemented by community outreach when defining potential microtransit zones. Understanding these patterns is helpful in identifying where microtransit would best serve existing travel demand.

Travel patterns were analyzed using multiple data sources, including the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) dataset from the United States Census Bureau and StreetLight Data.

LEHD commute patterns

The LEHD data is derived from 2022 Census data, including employer and housing data. It provides insight into where Commerce City residents work and where workers commuting into the city live. This data builds a general understanding of commuter travel patterns and the potential role of microtransit.

Commute flow

Figure 24 shows the commute flow within the study area. According to the LEHD data set, a total of 38,946 people were employed within the study area in 2022 and 28,116 people lived within the study area. Of the people employed within the study area, 92% live elsewhere. Of the people living in the study area, 89% are employed outside of the study area. Only 3,273 people both live and work in the study area. This indicates an opportunity for a microtransit service to connect the high volume of inbound and outbound commuters to regional transit services to access jobs.

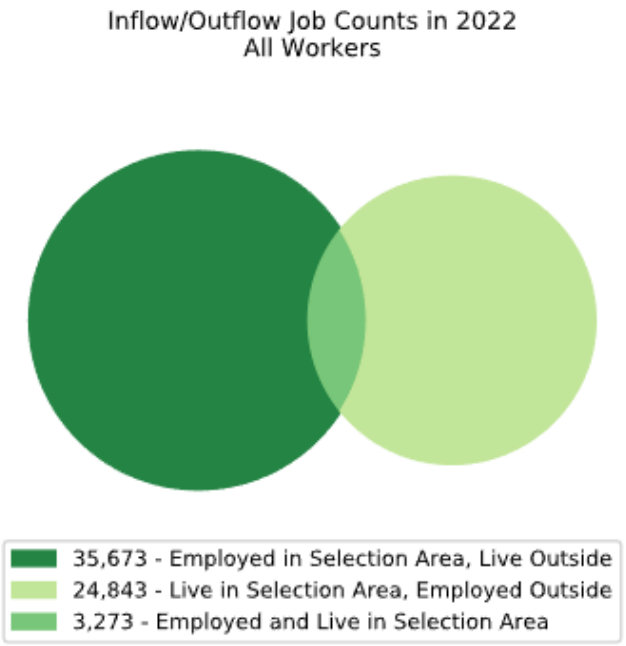


Figure 24: Inflow/Outflow Job Counts, 2021. Source: LEHD On the Map, 2022.

Where residents work

Figure 25 shows where residents within the study area work. Most residents work south and southwest of the study area, with 44% of the population working within 10 miles of the study area. The figure shows that key employment destinations for people living within the study area include downtown Denver, Denver International Airport, Anschutz Medical Campus, and the industrial and commercial area of southern Commerce City. A microtransit service could help connect residents to RTD bus and rail lines that provide regional service to these destinations as well as better connect people to jobs within Commerce City.

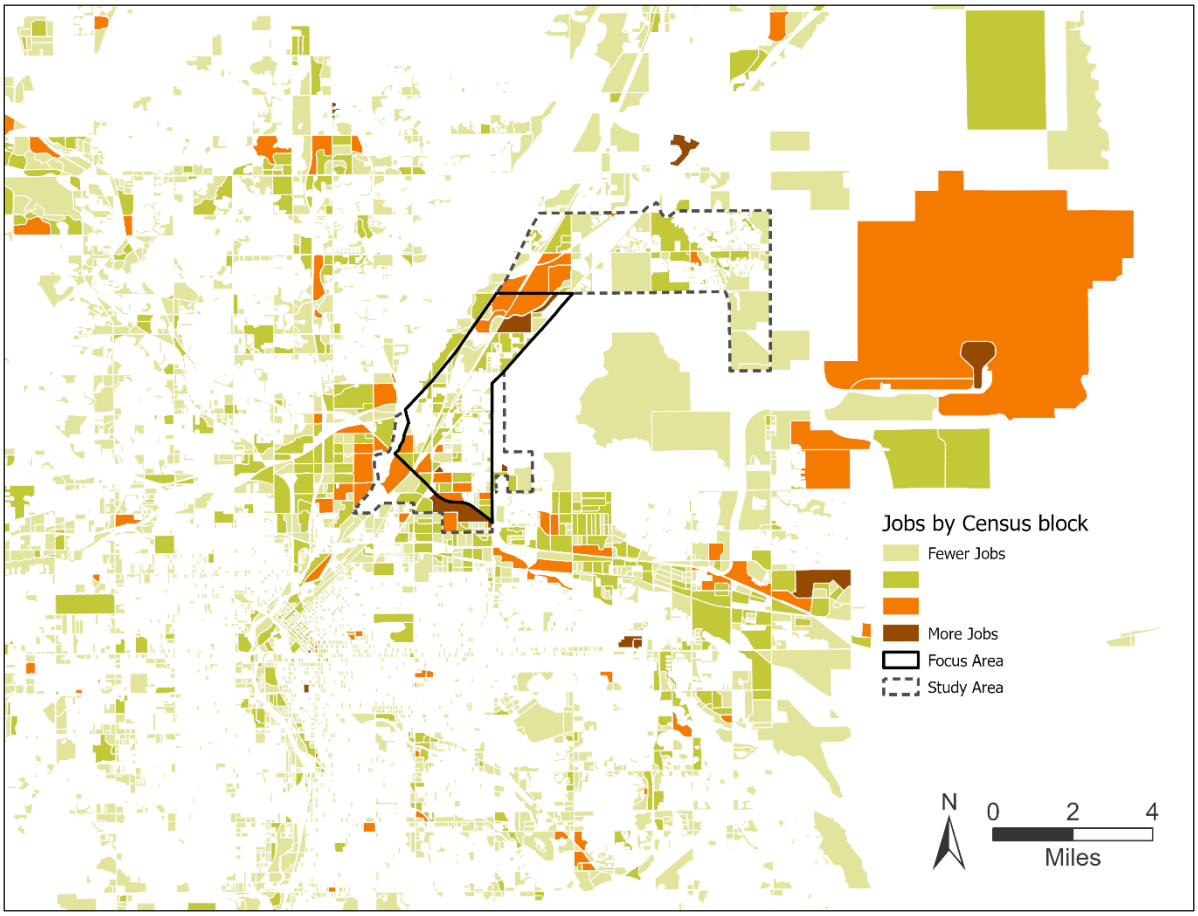


Figure 25. Commute destinations from study area. *Source: LEHD On the Map, 2022*.

StreetLight data analysis

Data from StreetLight was used to analyze travel patterns by car for all trip types within the study area and identify areas within Commerce City that could benefit from connections through microtransit. StreetLight is a mobility analytics platform that compiles data from connected vehicle data (CVD) to measure how people move through communities. Because this data set uses vehicle data exclusively, it does not provide information about non-vehicle travel patterns. This data set does not define the trip purpose.

This Study used StreetLight's origin-destination analysis to look at vehicle travel patterns between nineteen zones within the Commerce City study area. The data set covers the period from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. The results presented in this section use average vehicle trips for all days and all times. Because the StreetLight dataset is derived from connected-vehicle data, it likely underestimates trips in areas

with fewer new cars and where more residents rely on walking, biking, and transit to get around.

Zones

To study vehicle travel patterns in Commerce City, nineteen analysis zones were created. These zones were drawn around areas with similar land uses and street networks to capture distinct travel behavior across different parts of the city. The zones help show where vehicle trips within the study area typically start and end and how residents move between neighborhoods, employment centers, transit stations, and other destinations. The analysis zones are listed in **Table 2** and shown in **Figure 26.**

Zone ID	Zone Description
1	Transit - 40th & Colorado Station
2	Industrial – Core City south of I-270
3	Industrial-Commercial – Core City north of I-270
4	Recreational – Core City east of Quebec Pkwy
5	Residential – Core City south of 64th
6	Commercial – Core City between 62nd and 65th
7	Residential – Core City north of 64th
8	Residential – Core City north of 72nd
9	Transit - Commerce City & 72nd Station
10	Residential – Core City west of Highway 6
11	Residential – Core City west of Highway 2
12	Industrial – Core City north of 80th
13	Residential – Northern Commerce City north of 104th
14	Residential – Northern Commerce City north of 96th
15	Commercial – Northern Commerce City around 104th and Chambers
16	Residential – Northern Commerce City east of Chambers
17	Industrial-Commercial – Northern Commerce City south of 88th
18	Recreational – Northern Commerce City north of 112th
19	Residential – Northern Commerce City north of 112th

Table 2: StreetLight Analysis Zones

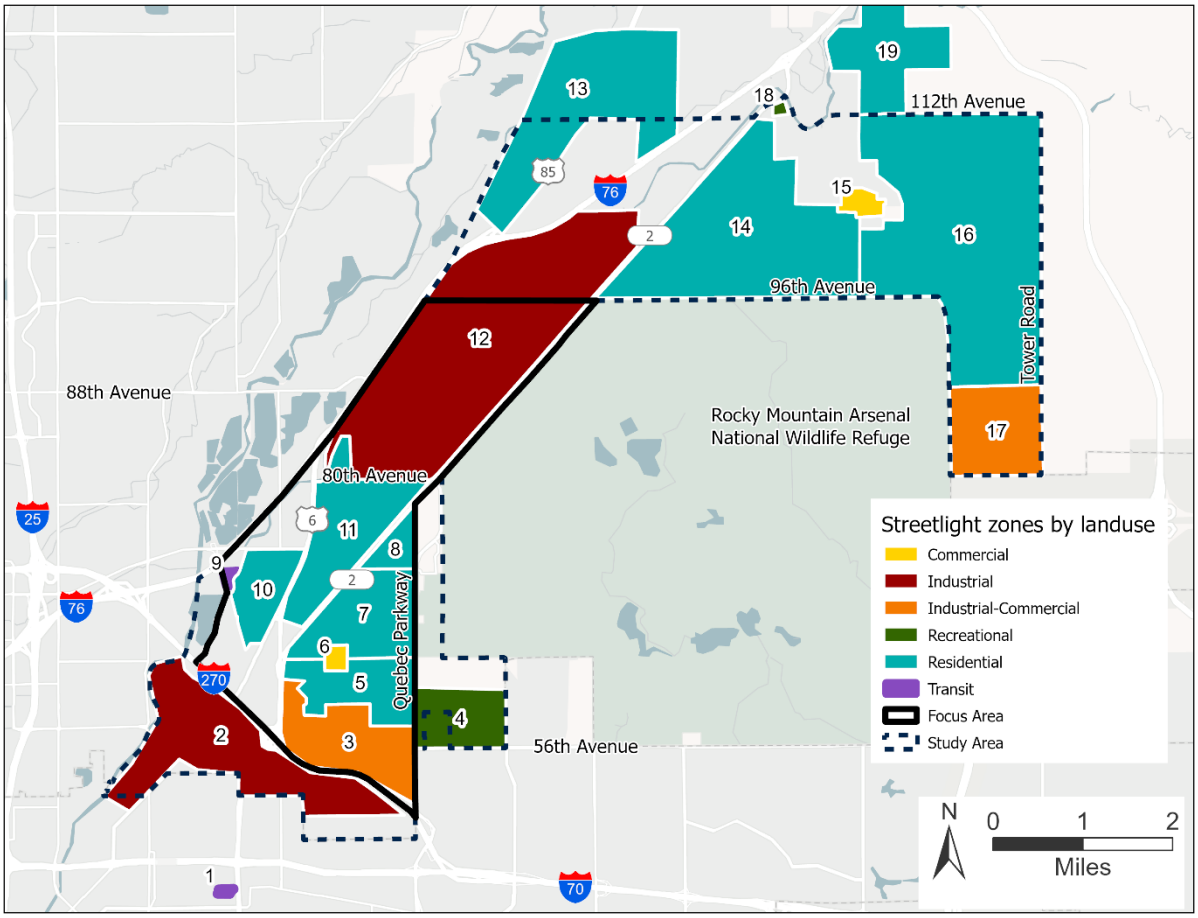


Figure 26: StreetLight analysis zones by predominant land use

Analysis results

The StreetLight analysis was conducted to better understand how people in cars travel within and around Commerce City. Specifically, it explored the following five key questions:

1. Where do vehicle trips start and end?
2. How far are typical vehicle trips?
3. What are the top origin-destination pairs?
4. Where do vehicle trips that start in the focus area end?
5. Where do vehicle trips that end in commercial or commercial/industrial areas start?

These findings provide insight into current vehicle travel demand and will help identify where a potential microtransit zone could provide the greatest benefit to residents.

Where do trips start and end?

Trip origins are where a trip starts, and trip destinations are where a trip ends. For the origin analysis, all vehicle trip starts that remained in the study area were considered. Because intrazonal travel is common, the destination analysis only included vehicle trips that end outside of the origin zone. Top vehicle trip origins and destinations indicate where there is high vehicle travel demand. This is a separate question from origin-destination pairs, which is looked at later in the analysis.

Trip origins are spread throughout Commerce City, though certain areas generate more travel than others. It should be noted that the residential zones in northern Commerce City may generate a high percentage of trips because the zones cover a large area. The top five zone origins are listed below.

1. Zone 16 – 18.1% of trip origins (northern Commerce City residential zone east of Chambers)
2. Zone 3 – 10.4% of trip origins (Core City industrial-commercial zone north of I-270)
3. Zone 15 – 10% of trip origins (northern Commerce City commercial zone)
4. Zone 7 – 8.5% of trip origins (Core City residential zone north of 64th Avenue)
5. Zone 14 – 7.9% of trip origins (northern Commerce City residential zone north of 96th Avenue)

Figure 27 shows the percentage of average daily trips originating in each zone.

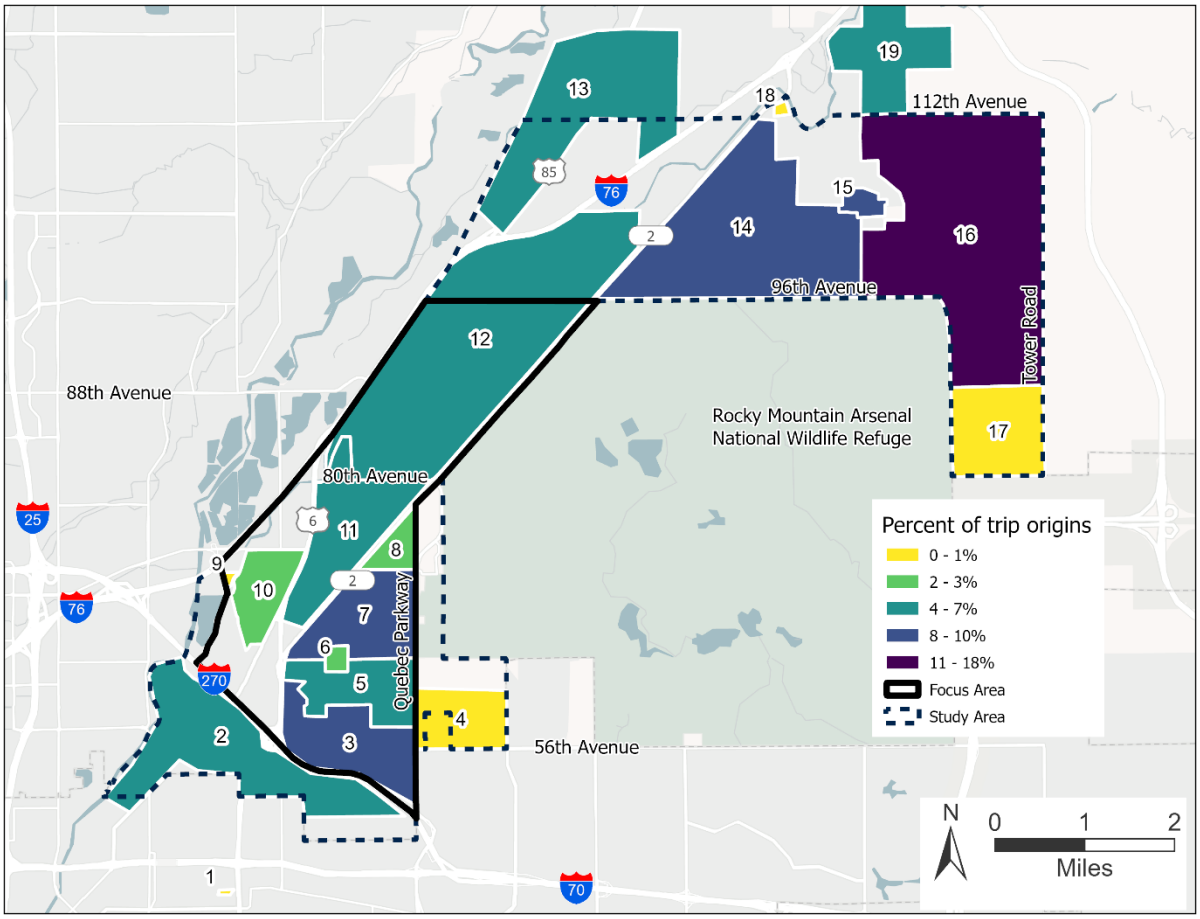


Figure 27: Percentage of average daily vehicle trips originating in each analysis zone

The top five destination zones (excluding intrazonal trips) are the same as the top five origin zones, as follows:

1. Zone 16 – 15.3% of trip destinations (northern Commerce City residential zone east of Chambers)
2. Zone 15 – 13.2% of trip destinations (northern Commerce City commercial zone)
3. Zone 3 – 11.3% of trip destinations (Core City industrial-commercial zone north of I-270)
4. Zone 7 – 9.0% of trip destinations (Core City residential zone north of 64th Avenue)
5. Zone 14 – 8.2% of trip destinations (northern Commerce City residential zone north of 96th Avenue)

Figure 28 shows the percentage of daily trips ending in each of the 19 analysis zones.

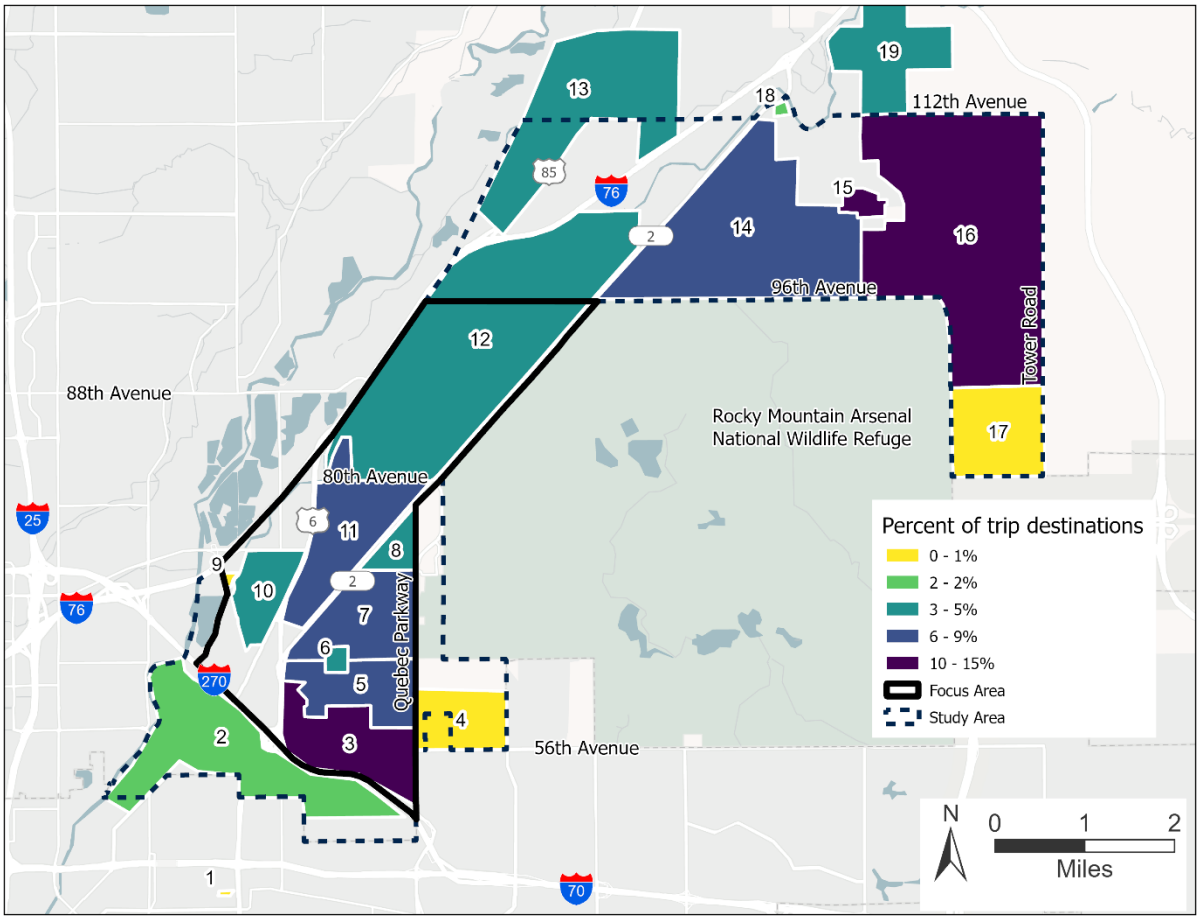


Figure 28. Percentage of average daily trips ending in each analysis zone, excluding within-zone trips

How far are typical vehicle trips?

Microtransit is typically used for first and last mile connections and short trips within a community. Understanding average trip length helps determine demand for microtransit.

Figure 29 shows the average vehicle trip length of trips within the study area across all analysis zones. About 80% of daily vehicle trips are less than five miles, indicating that most vehicle travel in Commerce City is a short distance. This suggests that, in addition to longer commute trips outside the study area, many residents are making trips within the same neighborhood or to nearby destinations within Commerce City. Microtransit, or improved active transportation infrastructure, could help residents meet their travel needs for many of these trips.

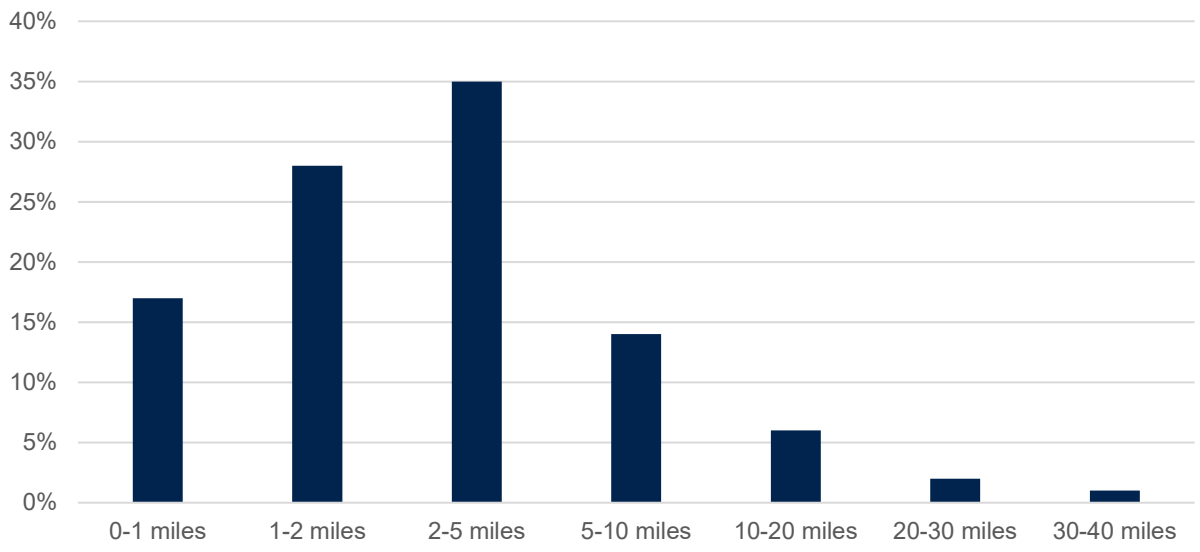


Figure 29: Percent of Vehicle Trips by Trip Length

What are the top origin-destination pairs?

Origin-destination pairs identify how trip starts and ends are connected. Understanding how frequently vehicle trips start and end in the same location helps identify demand for travel between these two places.

The frequency of short trips noted above is reflected in the origin-destination pairs. Of the 10 most common origin-destination pairs within the study area, nine result from travel that remains within a particular zone (**Table 3**).

Origin-Destination Pair	Approximate Number of Daily Trips
Zone 16 - Zone 16	14,446
Zone 16 - Zone 15	7,077
Zone 2 - Zone 2	5,880
Zone 13 - Zone 13	5,550
Zone 14 - Zone 14	4,860
Zone 7 - Zone 7	4,816
Zone 3 - Zone 3	4,764
Zone 12 - Zone 12	4,522
Zone 11 - Zone 11	3,778
Zone 5 - Zone 5	3,022

Table 3: Top 10 origin-destination pairs in the study area

Figure 30 shows the zones by number of trips that both start and end within that zone. Zone 2 has by far the largest number of intrazonal trips. This zone also has the most trip origins.

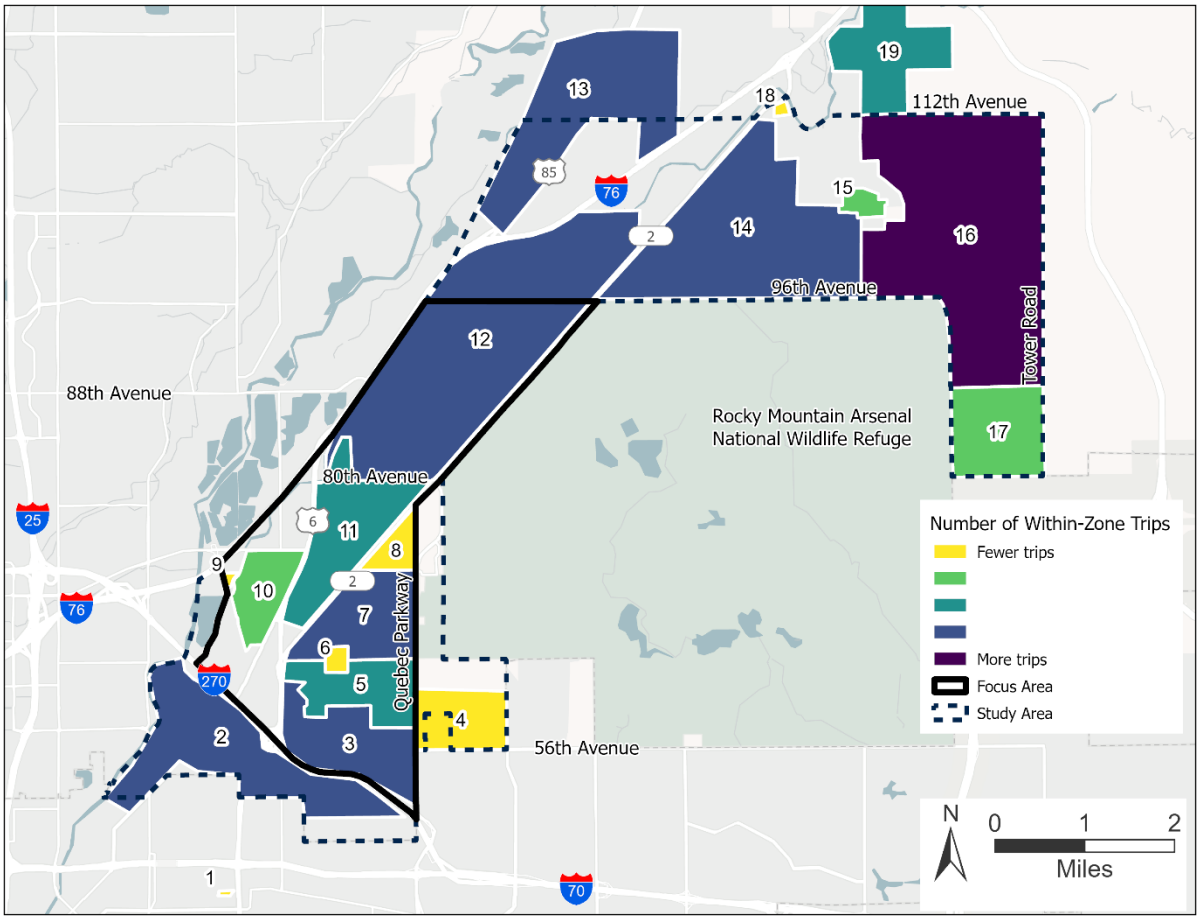


Figure 30: Number of vehicle trips that both start and end within each zone

When intrazonal trips are excluded, trips to and from the northern Commerce City commercial area in Zone 14 and the Core City commercial/industrial area in Zone 11 are the most common origin-destination pairs. **Table 4** shows the top 10 origin-destination pairs across the study area; the top five pairs are mapped in **Figure 31**.

Origin-Destination Pair	Approximate Number of Daily Trips
Zone 16 - Zone 15	7,077
Zone 14 - Zone 15	2,598
Zone 7 - Zone 3	2,537
Zone 5 - Zone 3	2,358
Zone 19 - Zone 15	1,610
Zone 11 - Zone 3	1,543
Zone 16 - Zone 14	1,501
Zone 16 - Zone 19	1,223
Zone 5 - Zone 7	1,131
Zone 11 - Zone 7	1,048

Table 4: Top 10 origin-destination pairs in the study area, excluding within-zone travel

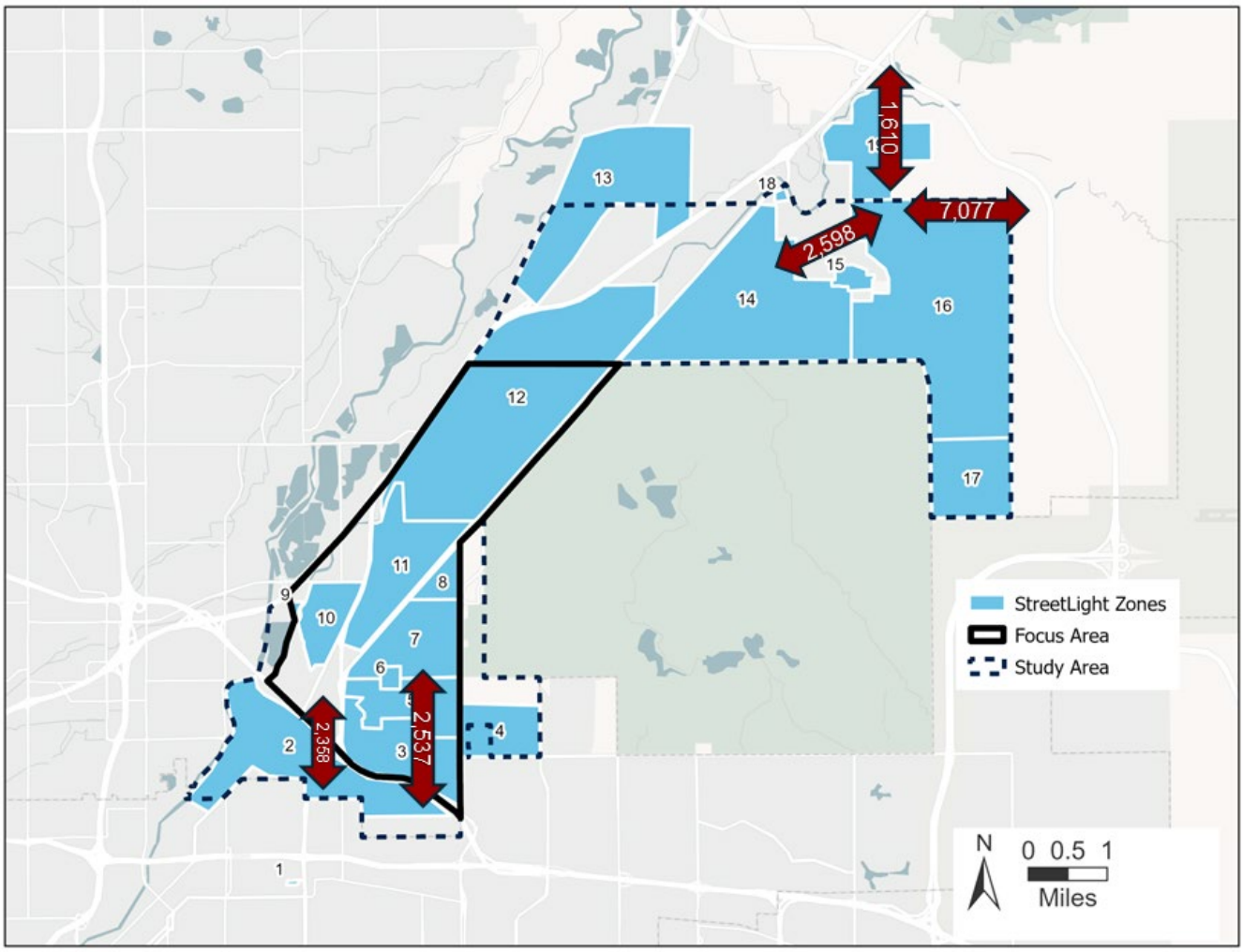


Figure 31: Top 5 origin-destination pairs in the study area

Within the focus area, the strongest origin-destination pairs are between the Core City industrial-commercial area north of I-270 (Zone 3) and the residential areas to the north (Zone 7) and south (Zone 5) of East 64th Avenue Trips between Zone 3 and the residential area west of Highway 2 (Zone 11) are also common, as are trips between Zone 11 and Zone 5. **Table 5** and **Figure 32** show the top origin-destination pairs within the focus area.

Origin-Destination Pair	Approximate Number of Daily Trips
Zone 7 - Zone 3	2,537
Zone 5 - Zone 3	2,358
Zone 11 - Zone 3	1,543
Zone 5 - Zone 7	1,131
Zone 11 - Zone 7	1,048
Zone 11 - Zone 12	948
Zone 10 - Zone 14	888
Zone 7 - Zone 6	857
Zone 7 - Zone 8	745
Zone 16 - Zone 12	682

Table 5: Top origin-destination pairs that begin or end in the focus area, excluding within-zone travel

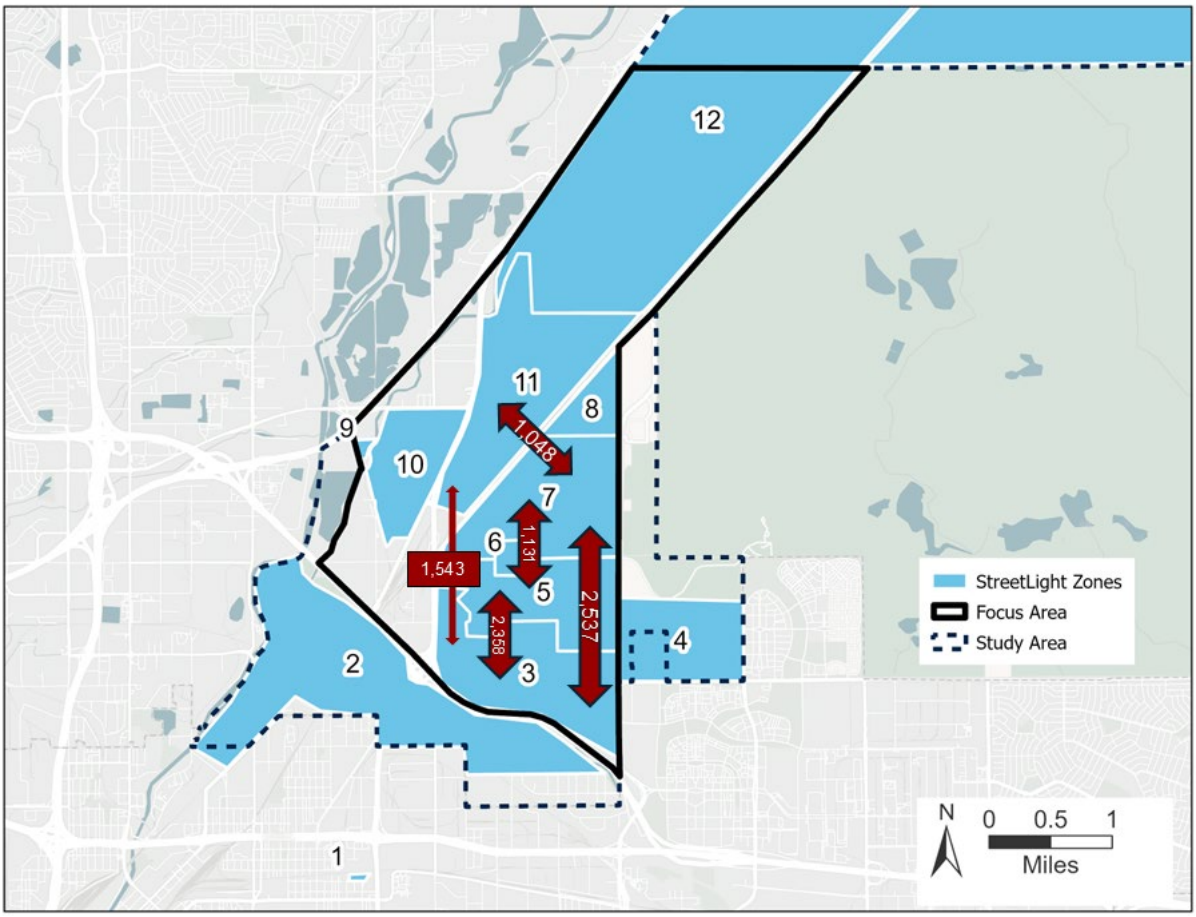


Figure 32: Top origin-destination pairs that begin or end in the focus area, excluding within-zone travel

Most of the origin-destination pairs including the transit station zones pair combinations had zero vehicle trips; the pair with the most vehicle trips (between Zone 15 and Zone 10) only has an estimated four daily trips. Ridership data suggests that many trips start and end at these two stations.

Where do vehicle trips from zones in the focus area end?

To define potential microtransit zones tailored to the transportation needs of the Core City, it is important to understand where vehicle trips starting in the Core City end up.

The following figures show roughly how many daily trips that start in a particular zone within the focus area end within each zone in the full study area. In general, these maps show that most vehicle trips starting within the focus area stay within the focus area, and in many cases within the origin zone itself. While the tendency for vehicle trips to remain within the focus area may be due in part to limited connectivity between the Core City and northern Commerce City, these maps demonstrate existing vehicle travel demand within and among the focus area zones.

Figure 33 shows approximately how many vehicle trips that began in Zone 11 end in each zone on a typical day. Most trips that begin in Zone 11 remain within the zone. Common destinations outside the zone include the industrial-commercial area north of I-270 (Zone 3), the residential area north of E. 64th Ave (Zone 7), and the industrial area north of E. 80th Ave (Zone 12).

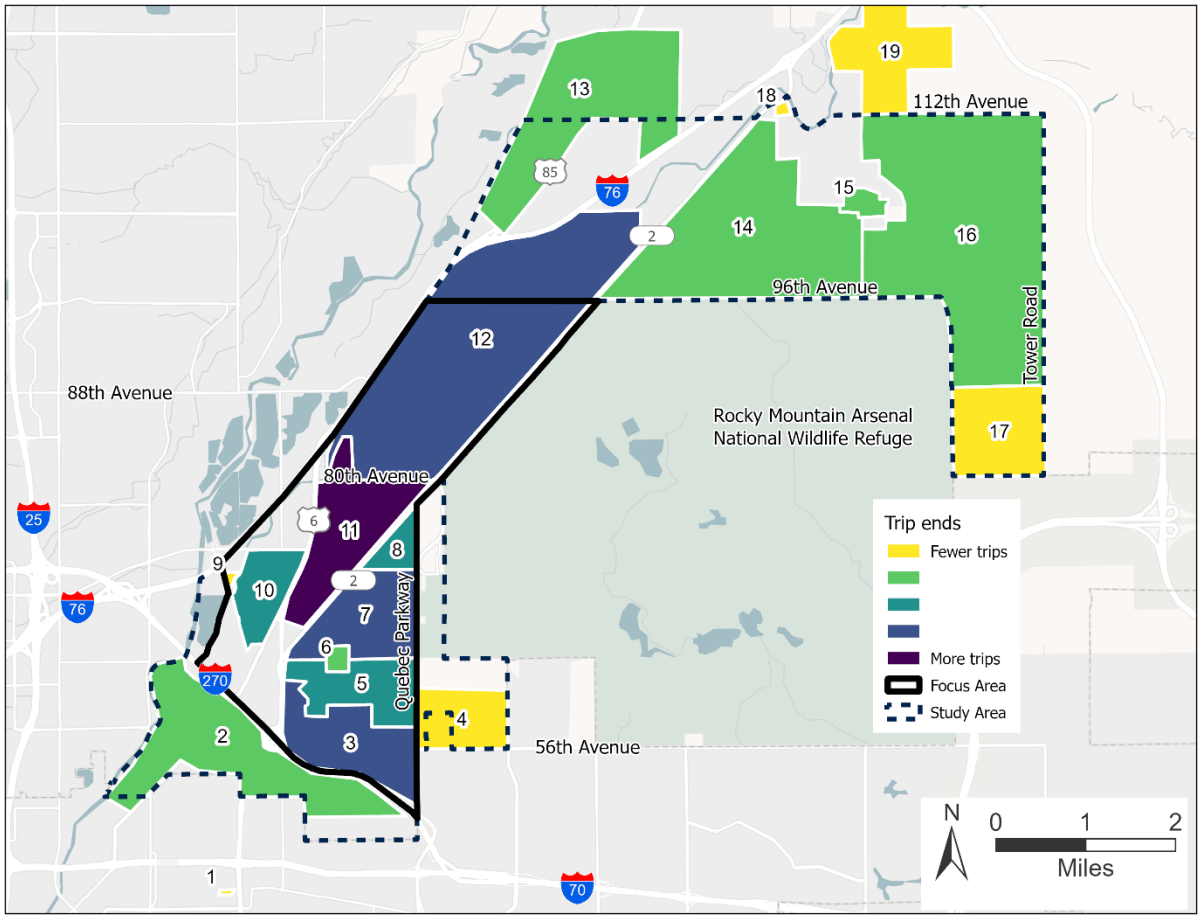


Figure 33: Destinations of trips originating in zone 11

Figure 34 shows approximately how many vehicle trips that began in Zone 5 end in each zone on a typical day. Most commonly, trips that start in this residential neighborhood remain within the zone or end in the industrial-commercial zone just to the south (Zone 3). The residential zone to the north (Zone 7) is also a common destination.

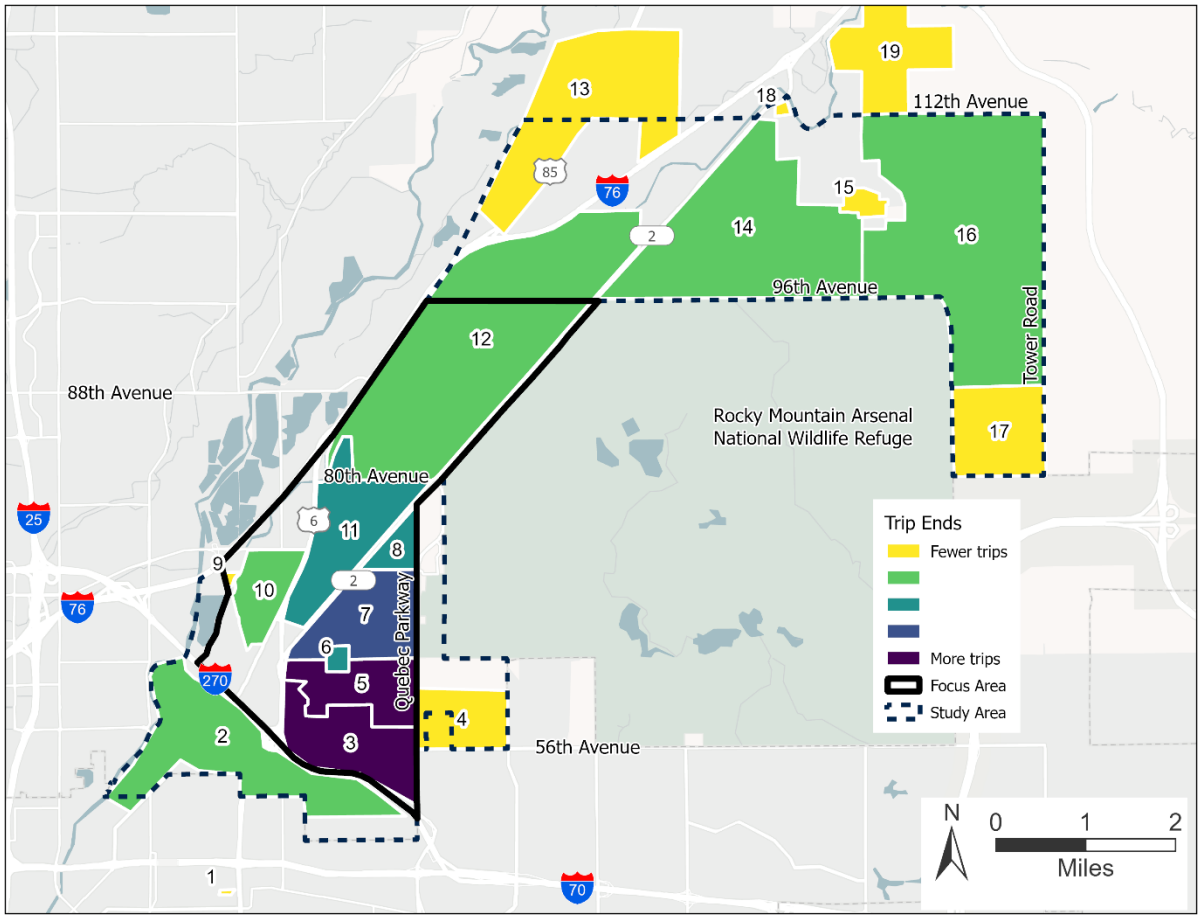


Figure 34: Destinations of trips originating in zone 5

Figure 35 shows common destination zones of vehicle trips that began in Zone 10. Trips from this residential zone most commonly remain within the zone. Trips from this zone also frequently end in the industrial-commercial zone north of I-270 (Zone 3).

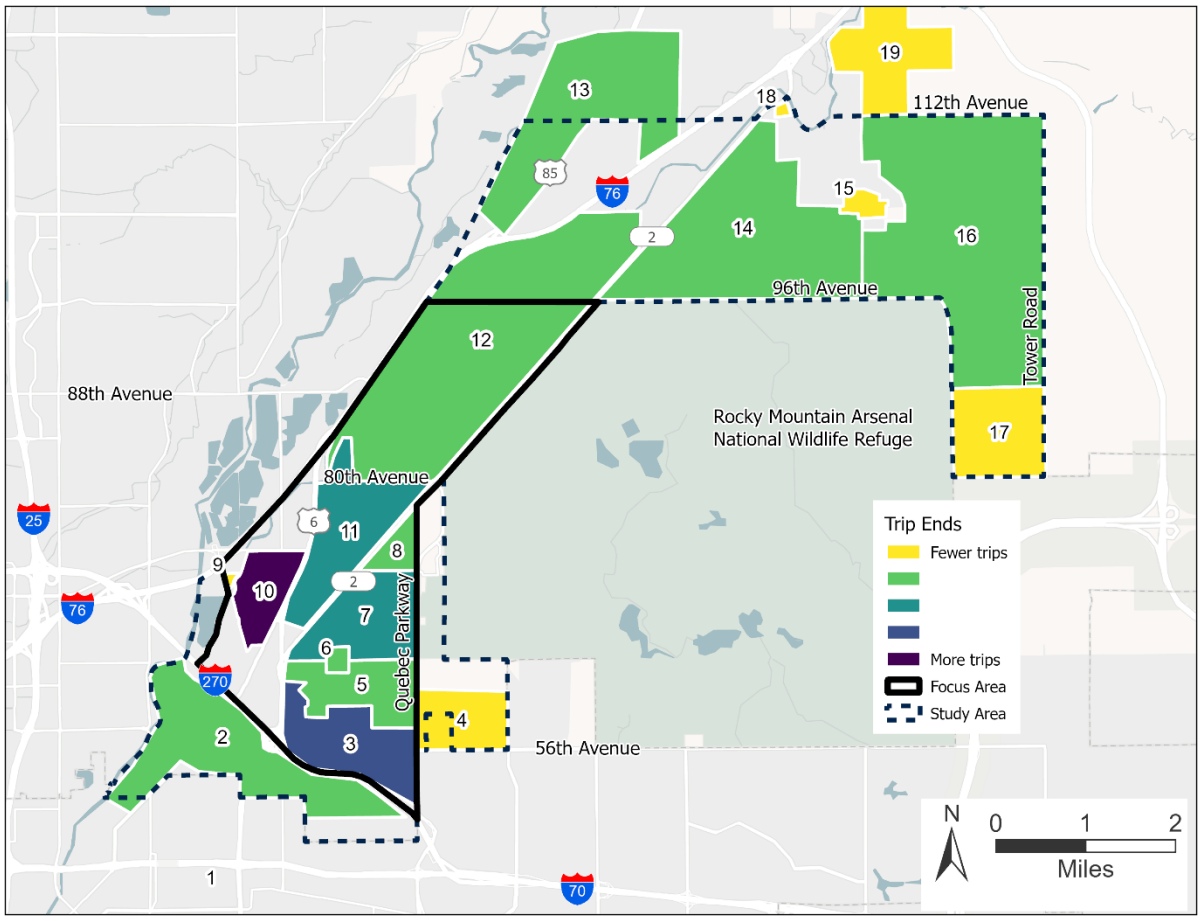


Figure 35: Destinations of trips originating in zone 10

Figure 36 shows common destination zones of vehicle trips that began in Zone 7. Trips from this residential zone most commonly remain within the zone. Trips from this zone also frequently end in the industrial-commercial zone north of I-270 (Zone 3).

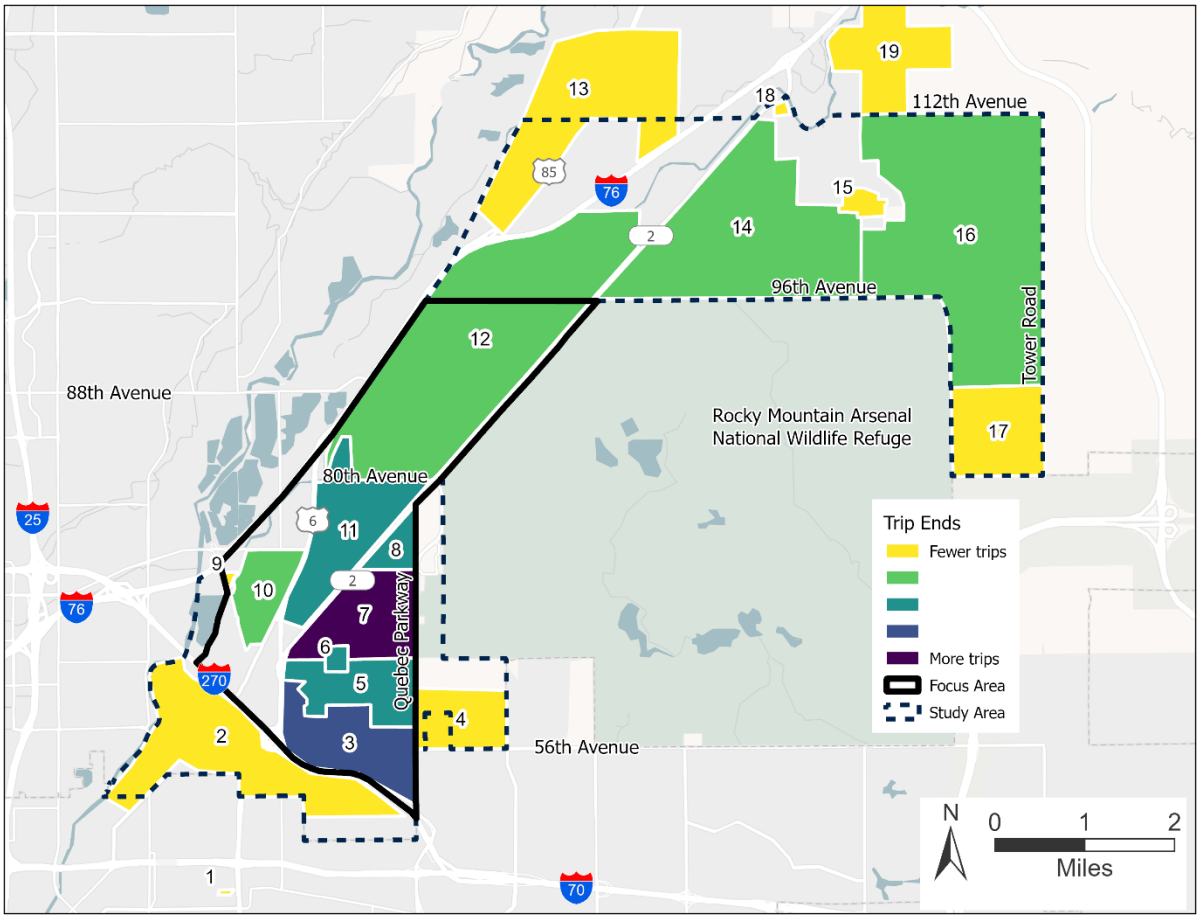


Figure 36: Destinations of trips originating in zone 7

Figure 37 shows common destination zones of vehicle trips that began in Zone 8. This residential neighborhood is largely cut off from adjacent neighborhoods by Highway 2 and major arterials (E. 72nd Ave and Quebec Parkway). Despite its relative isolation, trips from this zone commonly end in residential Zones 11 and 7. Many vehicle trips also remain within the zone.

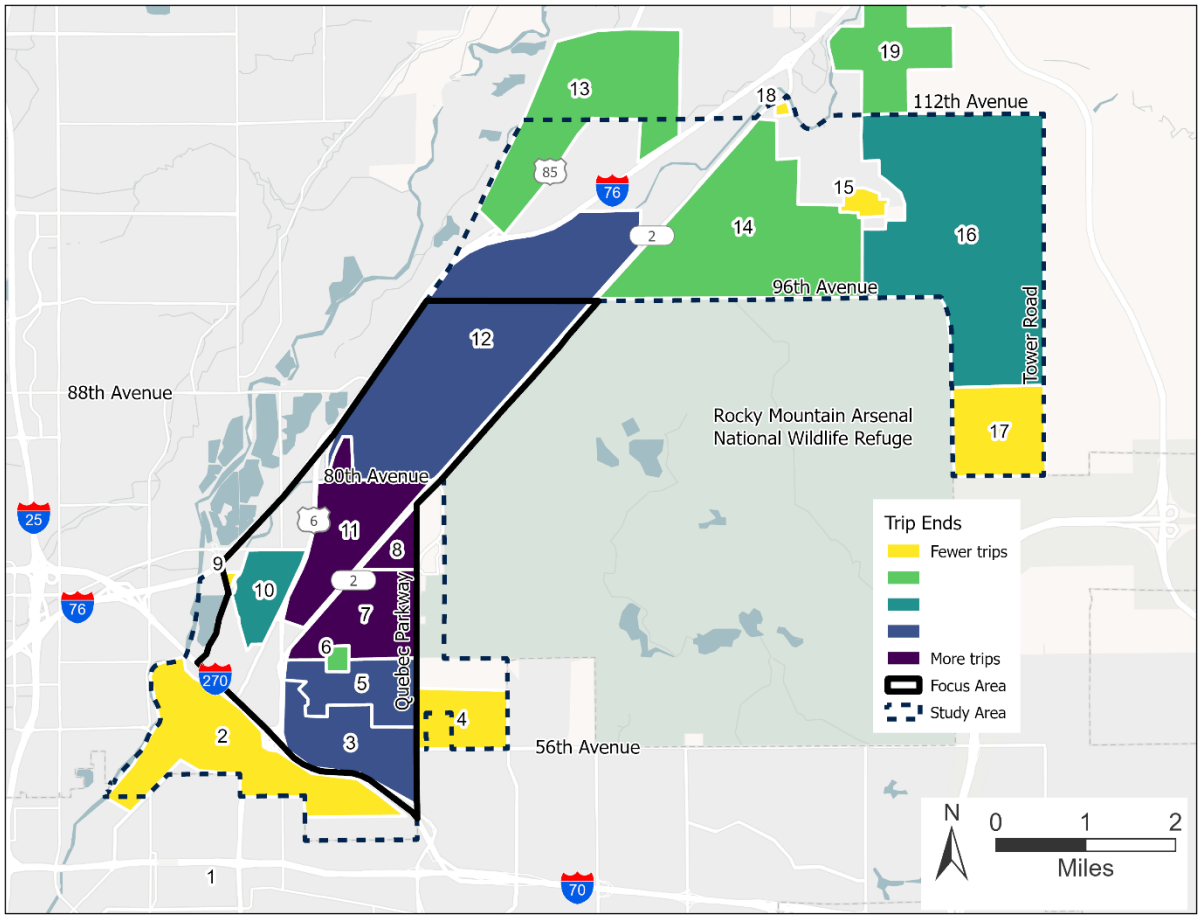


Figure 37: Destinations of vehicle trips originating in zone 8

Figure 38 shows common destination zones of vehicle trips that began in Zone 3. Trips most commonly remain within this mixed industrial-commercial area. Many trips that begin within this zone end in nearby residential zones (Zones 11, 5, and 7).

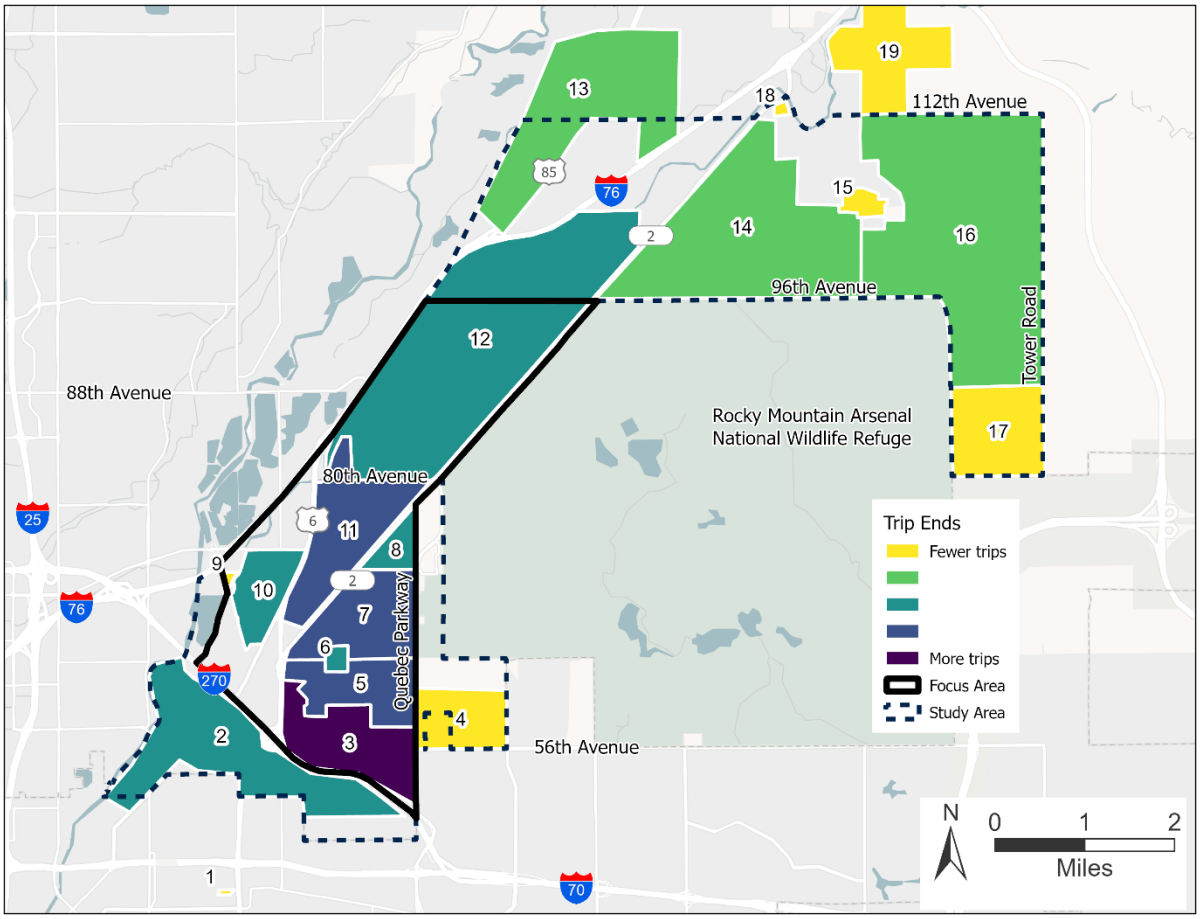


Figure 38: Destinations of trips originating in zone 3

Figure 39 shows vehicle travel from Zone 12. Trips beginning in this industrial zone most commonly remain within the zone. The residential neighborhoods west of Highway 2 in the Core City (Zone 11) and east of Chambers in northern Commerce City (Zone 16) are also common destinations. Zone 12 is the only zone located in the focus area that shows significant travel across the full study area.

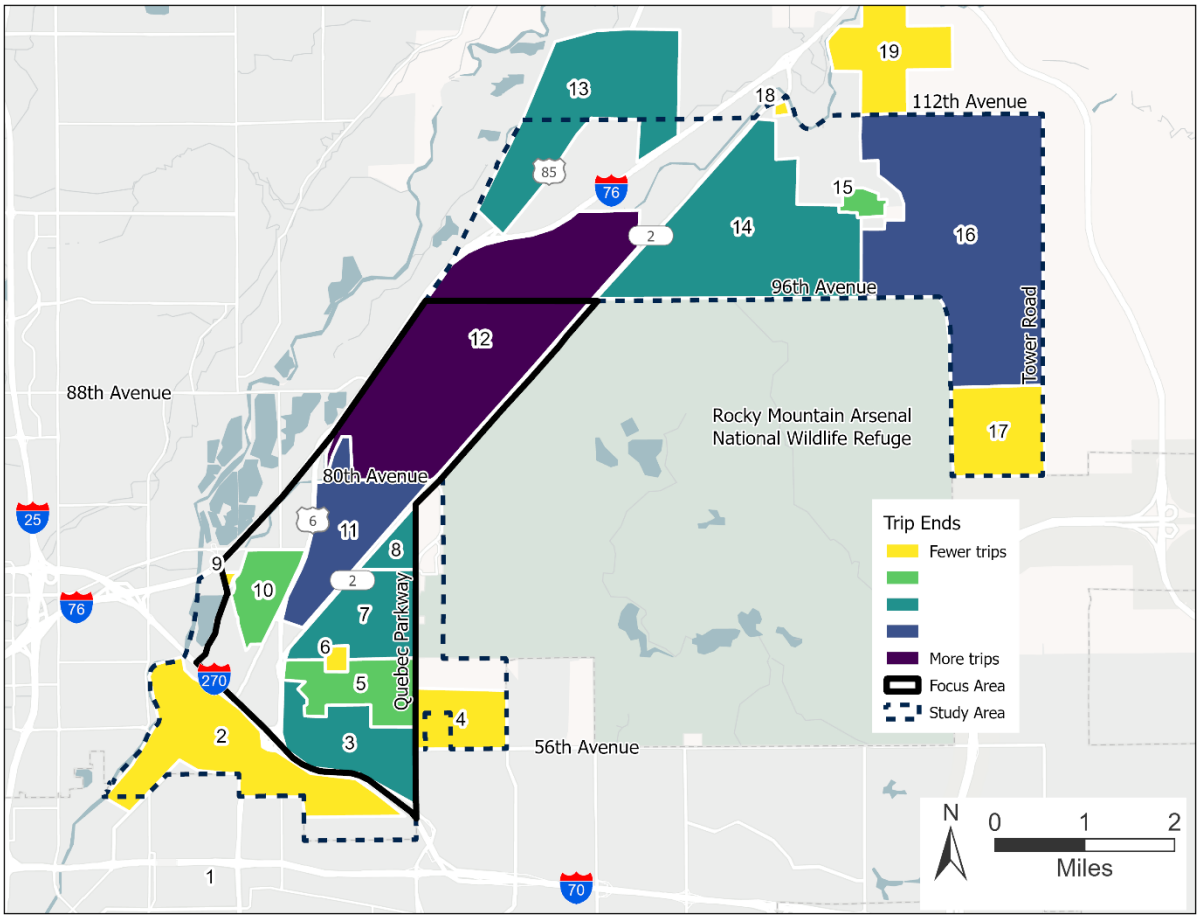


Figure 39: Destinations of trips originating in zone 12

Figure 40 shows common destinations of vehicle trips starting in Zone 6. Within-zone trips are relatively uncommon for the Core City commercial area. Instead, most trips end in the adjacent residential areas (Zones 5 and 7) and in the industrial-commercial area just north of I-270 (Zone 3).

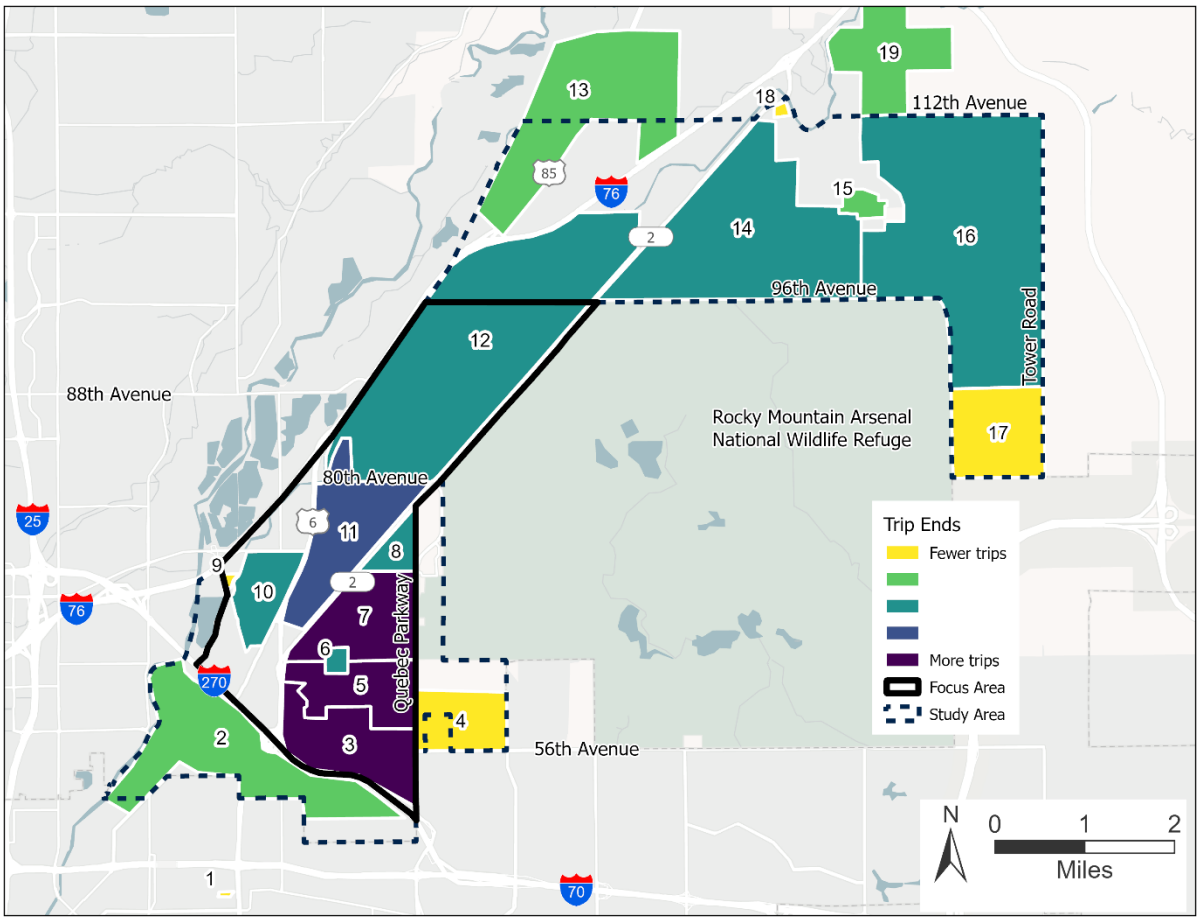


Figure 40: Destinations of trips originating in zone 6

Where do trips to commercial and commercia/industrial areas start?

The next set of maps illustrate common origin zones of vehicle trips to commercial and commercial/industrial areas within the study area. This analysis sought to understand where microtransit may provide an important connection to commercial areas.

Figure 41 shows the most common origin zones of vehicle trips to Zone 3. This area generates a substantial number of trips, many of which originate within the zone. Nearby residential areas (Zones 11, 5, and 7) are also common starting points of trips to this zone.

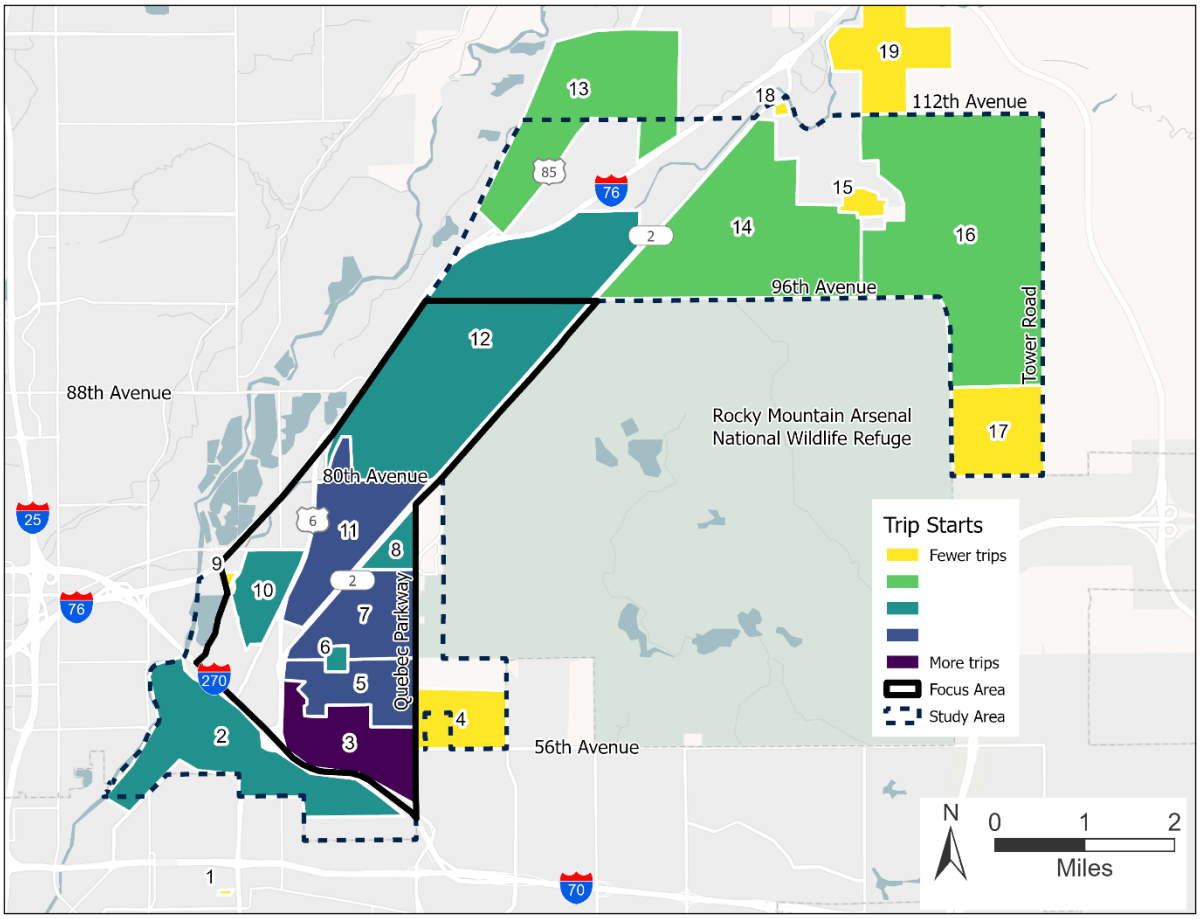


Figure 41: Origin zones of trips to zone 3

Figure 42 shows common origin zones of vehicle trips to Zone 6. This zone is a key destination for residents in neighboring residential areas, particularly Zones 5 and 7, and Zone 11 to a lesser degree. Trips to this zone also commonly originate in Zone 3.

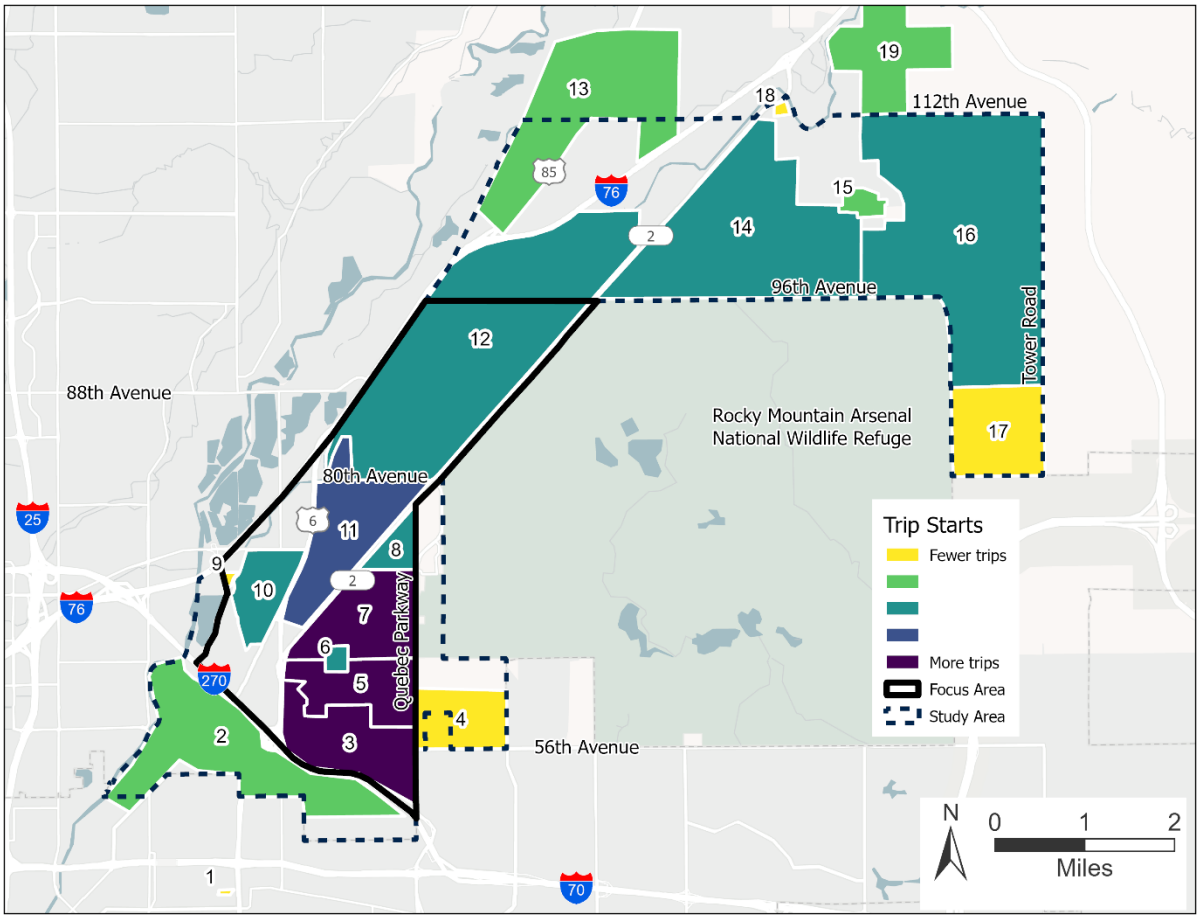


Figure 42: Origin zones of trips to zone 6

Figure 43 shows the common origin zones of vehicle trips to Zone 15. This map most starkly shows the limited connections between the Core City and northern Commerce City. The Zone 15 commercial area appears to almost exclusively serve residents in Zones 16 and 14.

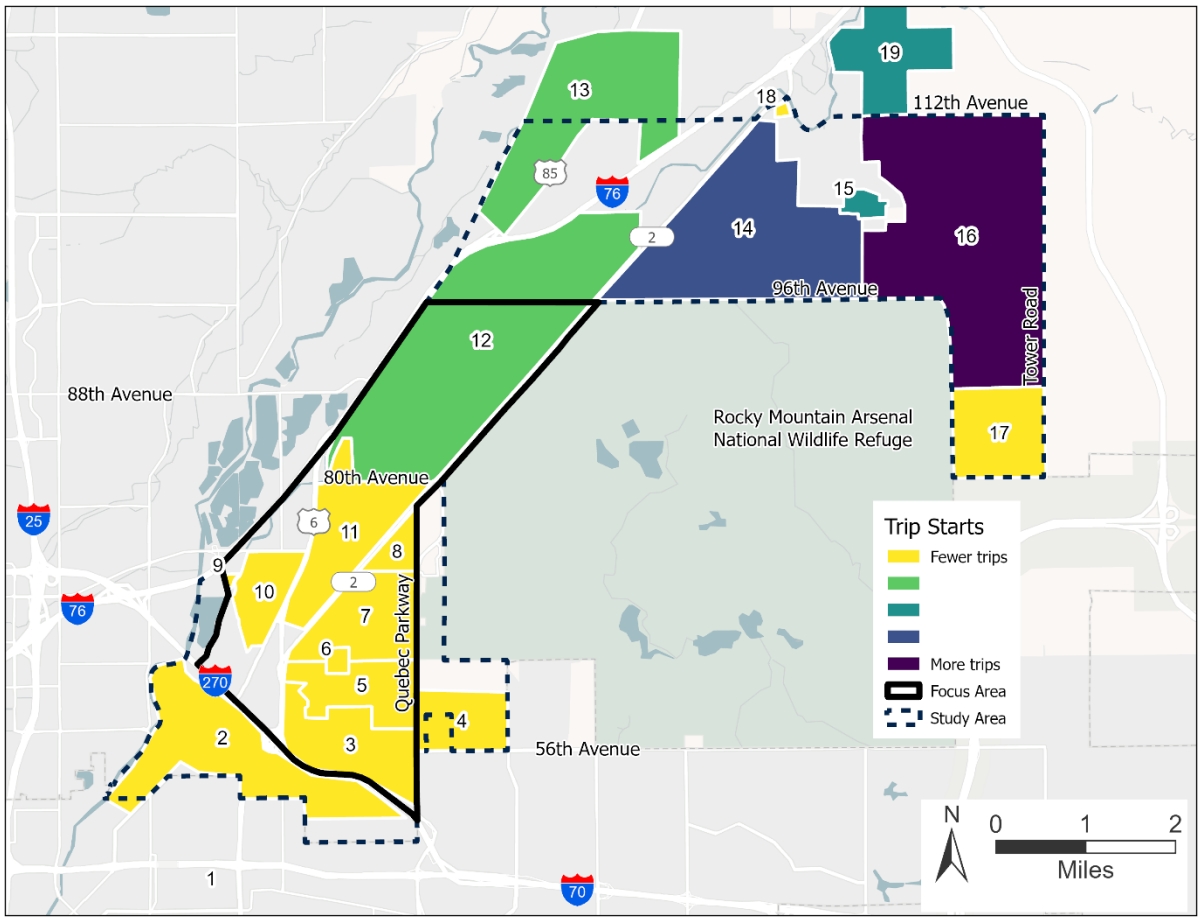


Figure 43: Origin zones of trips to zone 15

Figure 44 shows the common origin zones of vehicle trips to Zone 17, which includes distribution centers for Amazon and other companies. 75% of trips ending in this zone also start here. The adjacent residential area (Zone 16) is the most common staring point of trips originating outside the zone.

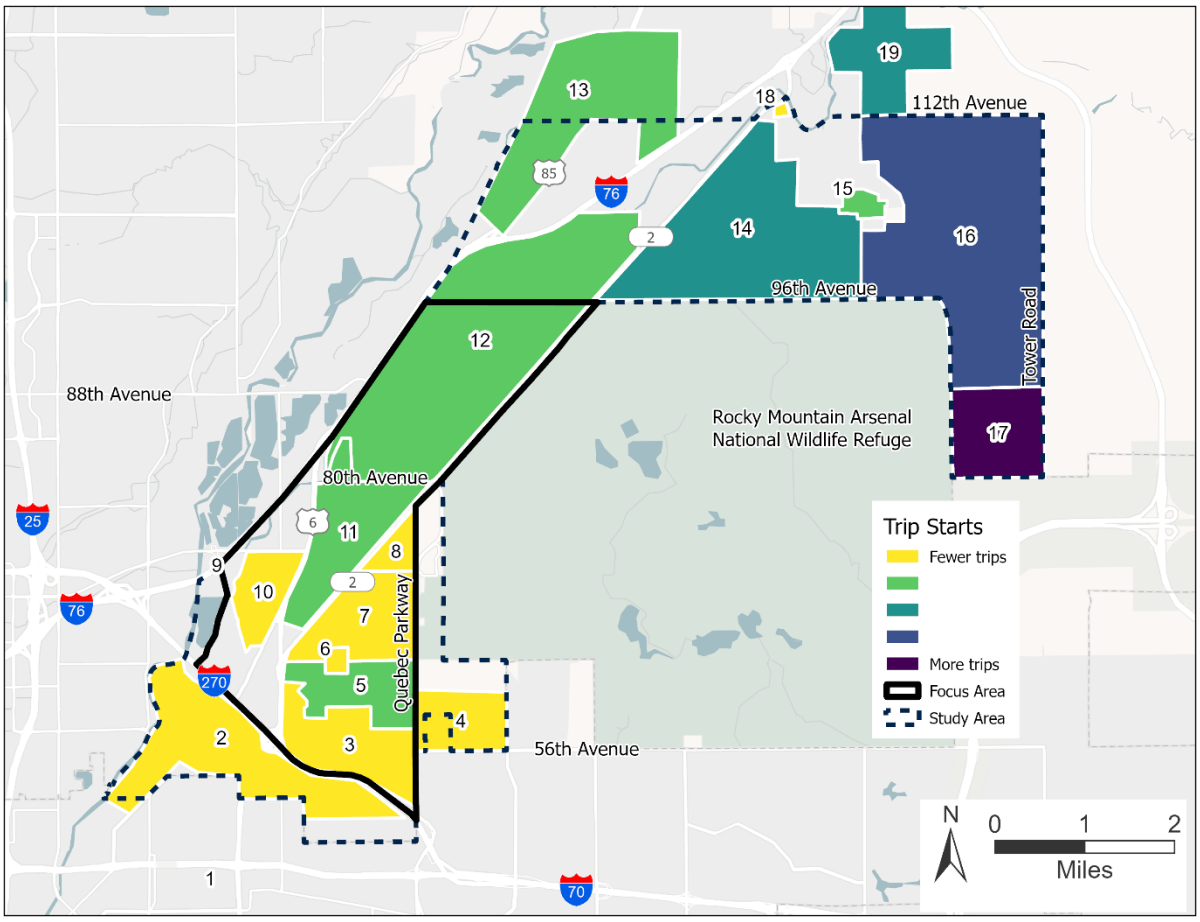


Figure 44: Origin zones of trips to zone 17

Key takeaways

The key takeaways from the background and existing conditions are:

- Commerce City faces unique transportation challenges due to existing land use and infrastructure. Much of the city's land is devoted to industrial uses, creating physical barriers and limiting street connectivity between neighborhoods. Railroads and highways further divide the community, making travel difficult. These conditions create gaps in the multimodal network and limit convenient access to jobs, services, and transit.
- Community input from the Commerce City Comprehensive Plan 2045 planning process indicated that there is a need for improved multimodal connections, especially north-south and to RTD transit stops.
- The DRCOG Index shows census tracts within the Focus Area have some of the highest concentrations of marginalized populations in the region. Most of the focus census tracts are in the top quartile for populations facing mobility barriers and having low economic status.
- Commerce City has a large youth population, especially in the Core City, where over 28% of the population is under age 18.
- Over half of the land is zoned industrial, with the Core City neighborhoods surrounded by industry, while northern Commerce City has mostly residential land uses and vacant land.
- Commercial areas are concentrated along major corridors (Highway 2, 64th Avenue, and 104th Avenue).
- The Core City has a dense but disconnected street network. Highways and arterials act as barriers, making local travel difficult without using major roads.
- The city is served by eight bus routes and the N Line. Most transit service is concentrated in the Core City.
- Transit ridership is highest at the 72nd Avenue Station and the 60th & Dahlia stop.
- Only 11% of residents live and work in Commerce City with most people commuting to jobs in downtown Denver, DEN, and Anschutz Medical Campus.
- Zones 16, 3, and 15 account for roughly 40% of vehicle trip starts and ends within the study area.

- Most vehicle trips within the study area are under 5 miles and many stay within the neighborhood they start in.
- The most common vehicle trip pairs connect northern Commerce City commercial area in Zone 15 to the surrounding residential zones (16, 14, and 19) or the Core City commercial/industrial area in Zone 3 to nearby residential zones (5 and 7).
- Most vehicle trips that begin within the focus area remain in the focus area. The limited number of trips from the Core City to northern Commerce City may be due in part to the limited connectivity between these two areas of Commerce City.
- Vehicle trips to commercial and commercial/industrial areas typically originate in nearby residential areas. Residents in the Core City typically travel to the commercial areas in Zone 3 and 6, while the commercial areas in northern Commerce City (15 and 17) are frequented by northern Commerce City residents.

The information in this report will be used to inform the development of potential microtransit zones in Commerce City. These zones will be shaped by the DRCOG Index, transit propensity factors, and travel patterns outlined in this analysis. Community input and identified key destinations will also guide the design to ensure that the microtransit zones meet resident needs and improve multimodal connections.