



---

## **One Region Northwest Indiana Benchmark Report**

---

In Partnership with

**Center for Workforce Innovations**

**Indiana University Northwest**

**Purdue University Northwest**

**Valparaiso University**

**Authors:**

Leah Konrady, One Region  
Stefan Barkow, Center for Workforce Innovations  
SurekhaRao, Indiana University Northwest  
Micah Pollak, Indiana University Northwest  
Tony Sindone, Purdue University Northwest  
Dan Saros, Valparaiso University

**601 W. 45th Avenue  
Munster, IN 46321  
(219) 933-3300  
<http://www.oneregionnwi.org/>**

## Preface and Letter from the President

One Region, Inc. partnered with Purdue University Northwest, Valparaiso University, Indiana University Northwest, and Center for Workforce Innovations to benchmark Northwest Indiana (Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties) to other regions in the country. The initiative will culminate in tours to a few select regions. The first tour will be to New Jersey followed by either Denver or Pittsburgh.

The initiative began with two goals:

1. Learn from other regions, and
2. Build relationships internally on our inter-region visit.

The purpose of this initiative is to identify other metropolitan regions in the United States similar in various ways to Northwest Indiana and assess how these regions have leveraged and built assets to its benefit economically and qualitatively. In understanding what other regions have done successfully, we can look to replicate the economic and qualitative successes.

In effort to ensure that this initiative is applicable and relevant to business leaders and community leaders, we solicited feedback to understand challenges in attracting and retaining talent. Overall, we found the primary reasons were perception issues and lifestyle. Thus, the assessment began to look at other regions that have experienced similar challenges and how those regions overcame those challenges.

We recognize that there is no one identical place to our three-county region, yet we found commonalities among a variety of regions. We selected regions that were either similar to Northwest Indiana historically or places that we strive to be in relation to population growth and attraction and retention of talent. We collected data from the following regions: Salt Lake City, UT; Austin, TX; Albany, NY; Hoboken/Hudson County, NJ; Seattle, WA; Pittsburgh, PA; Denver, CO; and Minneapolis, MN.

Places that there are similar: Albany, Hudson County, Pittsburgh, and Minneapolis. Places where we want to be: Denver, Salt Lake City, Austin, and Seattle. Based on our findings we narrowed in on researching New Jersey, Pittsburgh, and Denver. New Jersey serves as One Region's Inaugural Benchmark Tour.

We hope you will find the report insightful as our region works to make investments in infrastructure and leverage our assets in effort to attract and retain talent.

Sincerely,



Leah Konrady  
President & CEO  
One Region, Inc.

**Data of Nine Regions \*Baseline 2015**

	<b>Albany County, NY</b>	<b>Hudson County, NJ</b>	<b>Pittsburgh /Alleghen y County, PA</b>	<b>Hennepin County/Mi neapolis, MN</b>	<b>Denver County, CO</b>	<b>Salt Lake County, UT</b>	<b>Austin/ Travis County, TX</b>	<b>Seattle/Ki ng County, WA</b>	<b>NWI Lake and Porter Counties</b>
Less Than 9th Grade	3.5%	10.4%	2.4%	4.3%	8.7%	4.8%	8.6%	4.7%	4.2%
9th Grade to 12th Grade	4.4%	8.0%	4.5%	3.7%	6.2%	5.9%	4.2%	3.8%	7.8%
High School Diploma	27.3%	26.2%	30.7%	18.6%	18.6%	23.4%	17.6%	16.6%	35.5%
Some College	16.5%	14.7%	16.4%	19.8%	18.1%	26.3%	19.4%	19.9%	22.5%
Associate's Degree	10.0%	4.2%	8.9%	8.2%	5.1%	8.6%	5.2%	8.1%	8.3%
Bachelor's Degree	19.9%	23.2%	21.8%	29.7%	26.6%	20.0%	28.7%	29.4%	14.4%
Graduate Degree and Higher	18.4%	13.3%	15.3%	15.7%	16.7%	11.0%	16.2%	17.5%	7.4%
Cost of Living (Living Wage, 1 adult)	\$23,941	\$28,496	\$20,613	\$23,691	\$25,459	\$23,067	\$23,754	\$27,664	\$21,570
Net Migration	270	-2039	-2342	4539	7731	5802	13787	24011	-2563
Old Age Dependency (over 65)	14.90%	10.90%	17.70%	12.80%	11%	9.90%	8.70%	12.40%	15%
Population 20-64	190,241	454,967	745,571	768,933	459,695	663,998	787,500	1,382,402	383,315
Millennial (25-34)	40,443	142,223	189,063	210,233	155,113	182,170	236,247	373,100	80,227
Total Jobs	442,510	1,158,030	1,133,760	1,910,250	1,415,570	679,430	965,100	1,588,590	266,180
Knowledge Jobs	16.6%	16.1%	16.2%	16.0%	16.8%	14.1%	13.9%	15.4%	13.2%
Creative Jobs	8.7%	7.6%	7.3%	8.9%	10.0%	8.5%	11.3%	13.9%	3.7%
Unemployment	4.30%	5.40%	5.00%	3.30%	3.70%	3.40%	3.30%	4.30%	6.40%
Metropolitan GDP	\$30B	\$40.5B	\$89B	\$125.5B	\$68B	\$75.5B	\$103.5B	\$215B	\$30B
Average Temperature (degrees F)	48.2	54.9	37.8	46.15	50.7	54.8	69.4	52.65	49.7
Poverty Level	12.60%	17.70%	12.20%	10.90%	15.70%	10.80%	13.20%	9.80%	14.6%
Annual Weekly Wage	\$1,048	\$1,355	\$1,098	\$1,277	\$1,248	\$993	\$1,174	\$1,582	\$877

Annual Average Wage	\$54,496	\$70,460	\$57,096	\$66,404	\$64,896	\$51,636	\$61,048	\$82,264	\$45,604
Median Household Income	\$57,312	\$60,053	\$54,412	\$68,902	\$57,886	\$65,549	\$65,244	\$81,816	\$54,695

### Amenities & Infrastructure

Northwest Indiana	Hudson Co., NJ (Hoboken)	Pittsburgh, PA	Denver, CO (Aurora)
<b>1. Proximity to major U.S. city/urban center</b>			
30-60 miles to Chicago (3 <sup>rd</sup> largest U.S. city)	0-10 miles to New York (largest U.S. city)	63 <sup>rd</sup> largest city	10-20 miles to Denver (19 <sup>th</sup> largest U.S. city)
<b>2. Major Interstates</b>			
Four: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I65, I80, I90, I94</li> </ul>	Four: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I78, I80, I87, I95</li> </ul>	Two: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I79, I76</li> </ul>	Three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I25, I70, I76</li> </ul>
<b>3. Major Airports</b>			
Three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Hare (ORD)</li> <li>Midway (MDW)</li> <li>Gary (GYY)</li> </ul>	Four: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newark (EWR)</li> <li>LaGuardia (LGA)</li> <li>Teterboro (TEB)</li> <li>JFK (JFK)</li> </ul>	Two: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pittsburgh (PIT)</li> <li>Allegheny Co. (AGC)</li> </ul>	Two: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Denver (DEN)</li> <li>Centennial (APA)</li> </ul>
<b>4. Public Transportation</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Shore Commuter Line (90mi, 19 stations), <i>connects to CTA/Metra</i></li> <li>Gary Public Transportation Corporation (Bus)</li> <li>Limited Amtrak</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (17 mi., 24 stations)</li> <li>NJ TRANSIT Commuter Rail (11 lines, 164 stations), <i>connects to MTA</i></li> </ul>	Port Authority of Allegheny County includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Airport bus</li> <li>Light rail (26.2mi, 53 stations)</li> <li>Extensive bus system</li> <li>Two inclines</li> </ul> Major Amtrak station	Denver RTD includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Airport Rail</li> <li>Light rail (34.8 mi, 36 stations)</li> <li>Extensive bus system</li> <li>MallRide (free busses &amp; hybrid bicycle taxis)</li> </ul> Major Amtrak station

Northwest Indiana	Hudson Co., NJ (Hoboken)	Pittsburgh, PA	Denver, CO (Aurora)
<b>5. Class 1 Railroads</b>			
Three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian National</li> <li>• CSX</li> <li>• Norfolk Southern</li> <li>• <i>(BNSF, Canadian Pacific &amp; Union Pacific in Chicago)</i></li> </ul>	Two: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSX</li> <li>• Norfolk Southern</li> </ul>	Three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian National</li> <li>• CSX</li> <li>• Norfolk Southern</li> </ul>	Two: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BNSF</li> <li>• Union Pacific</li> </ul>
<b>6. Major Waterways</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lake Michigan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hudson River</li> <li>• Hackensack River</li> <li>• Passaic River</li> <li>• New York Bay</li> <li>• Atlantic Ocean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ohio River</li> <li>• Allegheny River</li> </ul>	N/A
<b>7. Ports</b>			
Burns Harbor (43 <sup>rd</sup> largest U.S. port)	Port of New York and New Jersey & Port Newark (3 <sup>rd</sup> largest U.S. port)	Port of Pittsburgh (20 <sup>th</sup> largest U.S. port)	N/A
<b>8. National &amp; Major Parks</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rocky Mountain National Park</li> <li>• Arapaho National Forest</li> </ul>
<b>9. Establishment Concentrations per 100,000 people</b> (based on 2015 Census CBP & 2015 QCEW)			
Full-Service Restaurants (NAICS 722511)			
62.1	66.7	77.6	81.4
Snack & Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars (NAICS 722515)			
14.4	19.3	20.5	21.2
Breweries, Wineries & Distilleries (NAICS 31212, 31213 & 31214)			
19.6	3.0	14.9	35.5
Specialty Food Stores (NAICS 4452) <i>Includes meat, fish, fruit, bakery, confectionary and other specialty stores.</i>			
4.83	11.85	6.46	6.08

<b>Northwest Indiana</b>	<b>Hudson Co., NJ (Hoboken)</b>	<b>Pittsburgh, PA</b>	<b>Denver, CO (Aurora)</b>
Food (Health) & Supplement Stores (NAICS 446191)			
2.74	2.22	3.78	3.38
Museums, historical sites, zoos and parks (NAICS 712)			
0.78	0.74	2.12	1.31

# Denver

## Denver – Aurora – Lakewood, Colorado

### Why Denver

Denver is a city that has invested tremendously in infrastructure and quality of place, as a result, the city’s population boomed. It was once a city people drove through on I-70 or I-25 to get to the mountains. It was not a destination city, and today it is.

While nicknamed “The Mile High City” and its elevation is a mile high, the city is not in the mountains. Denver was founded in the mid-1800’s from mining, the Gold Rush, and it evolved into a Wild West town dependent on the rail lines passing through.

What is most interesting about Denver is the amount of millennials it attracts each year. “According to a Brookings Institution analysis of population movement from 2009-14, the city had a net annual migration gain of 12,682 people ages 25 to 34, the highest of any metropolitan area in the United States. That means an average of 12,682 more millennials per year moved here than left, for each of the five years measured.”<sup>1</sup> Today, millennials make up more than 20 percent of Denver’s population.<sup>2</sup>

### Proximity to major US City

The Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA lies in the heart of Colorado, with the city of Boulder less than 30 miles to the northwest of Denver proper while Fort Collins is 70 miles north and Colorado Springs 70 miles to the south. Within the Denver MSA there are several prominent inter-city relationships. There are four metropolitan statistical areas near Denver: Denver, Boulder, Fort Collins, and Colorado Springs.

The next largest cities outside of Denver and Colorado are:

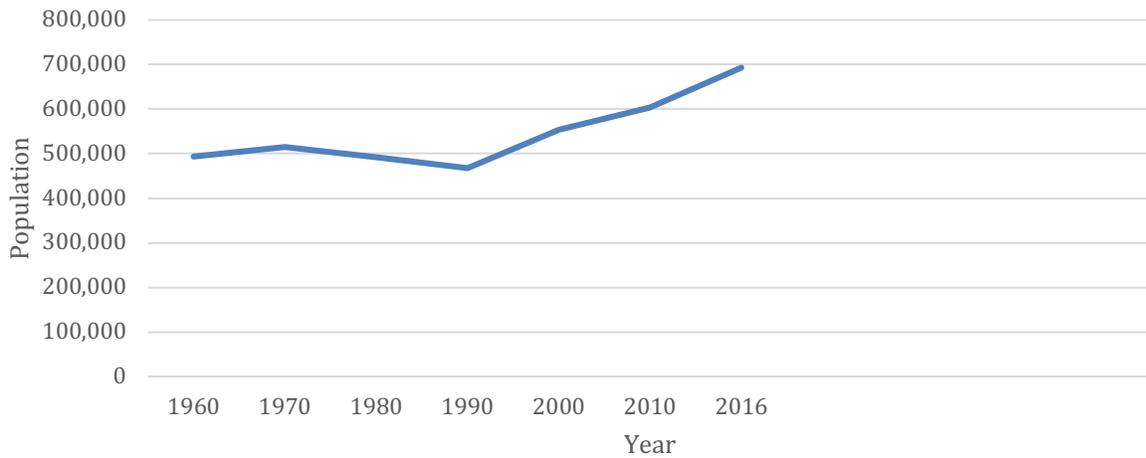
- Salt Lake City, UT – 520 miles with population 193,744 (2016 Census)
- Omaha, NE – 536 miles with population 446,970 (2016 Census)

### Examples of Population Growth

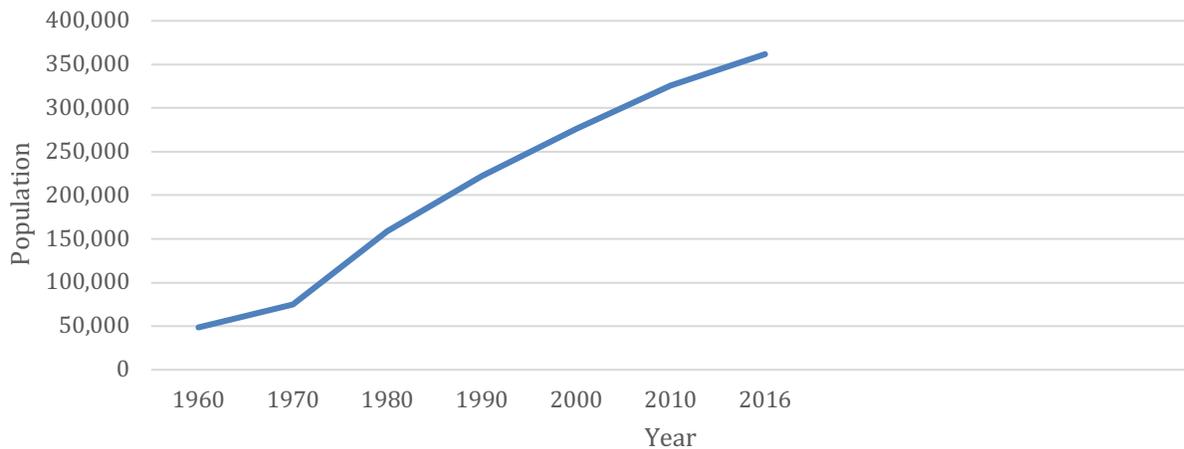
<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/21/us/denvers-appeal-to-millennials-jobs-mountains-and-yes-weed.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/21/us/denvers-appeal-to-millennials-jobs-mountains-and-yes-weed.html?_r=0)

<sup>2</sup> <https://realestate.usnews.com/places/colorado/denver>

City of Denver Population: 1960-2016



Aurora city Population: 1960-2016



City Population Data by Decade: 1960-2010 and 2016

Year	Denver	Lakewood	Aurora	Golden	Castle Rock	Fort Collins	Boulder
1960	493,887	-	48,548	7,118	1,152	25,027	37,718
1970	514,678	92,743	74,974	9,817	1,531	43,337	66,870
1980	492,365	112,860	158,588	11,314	3,921	65,092	76,677
1990	467,610	126,475	222,103	12,312	7,138	87,664	83,292
2000	553,693	144,126	275,921	16,312	13,765	116,538	94,337
2010	603,329	143,193	326,079	19,251	48,594	145,091	98,808
2016	693,060	154,393	361,710	20,696	57,666	164,207	108,090

## **Infrastructure**

Denver's transportation infrastructure is impressive and has played an important role in attracting millennials to the region.

- The Denver-Aurora area is a major transportation hub for Colorado and has three major interstates: (I-25, I-70, I-76), two international airports (DEN-Denver and APA-Centennial) and two class-1 rail lines (BNSF and Union Pacific). Denver is also home to a major Amtrak station on the California Zephyr line.
- Denver has an impressive public transportation network that includes a light rail system extending 34.8 miles with 36 stations connecting the airport to the downtown and the suburbs. In addition to the rail system, Denver has an extensive bus system that includes free buses and hybrid bicycle taxis.

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) first established Denver's light rail system in 1994 with several extensions since that time.

Denver's light rail system is widely recognized as a major success. It has added new rail lines recently to what was already the eighth largest light rail system in the nation with 77,000 people riding it each day (Woodward 2016). The benefits of the latest expansion have been nothing short of amazing. It has helped reduce traffic congestion, combated a problem the city has had with brown smog, revitalized neighborhoods in decline, and created entirely new communities in areas that previously showed few signs of development (Woodward 2016).

The latest expansion of the rail system has been part of the FasTracks project, which was approved in 2004 and parts of it are still in progress. According to Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, FasTracks has helped transform Denver into a top destination for millennials (Woodward 2016). The \$7.6 billion FasTracks project has been funded by a combination of federal grants, local taxes, and private investment dollars (Woodward 2016). It involves the creation of 122 miles of new light rail and commuter rail as well as 18 miles of bus rapid transit (Whaley 2015). Part of the project includes rail extensions to Denver International Airport and rail from Union Station through Adams County. The project has encountered problems with costs exceeding projections, lower ridership than predicted, and the cancelation of some rail extensions much to the disappointment of potential riders (Whaley 2015). With the creation of 13,000 full-time jobs, however, the project has given the economy a major boost (Whaley 2015).

One of the great benefits of the light rail system is its ability to transport passengers to major Denver tourist attractions. "According to the Regional Transportation District (RTD), more than 100 million passengers traveled on the light rail and bus system in 2013. Light rail ridership grew by 15% alone in 2013" (Snyder 2017).

Despite the benefits of the light rail system, Denver still has many transit problems. The core of the city struggles with significant transit gaps stemming from a bus network that is incomplete (Murray, 2016). Frustrated riders point to a lack of direct access to Cherry Creek, which is a major employment

center, the need for more frequent service, lower fares, the need for more routes designed on a grid, and better connections between common destinations in neighborhoods (Murray 2016).

Another transportation project of interest is the Transportation Expansion (T-REX) Project, which involves sections of I-25 and I-225, which are the most heavily traveled roads in Colorado. The highways connect downtown Denver and the Southeast Business District, which are the two largest employment centers in the region (U.S. Department of Transportation 2017).

The \$1.67 billion T-REX Project began in June 2001 and ended during the summer of 2006. The project involved the addition of 19 miles of double-track light rail extending along the west side of I-25 and in the median of I-225 along sections of those highways as well as the construction of 13 new light rail stations (Chartock 2006). The project also added new lanes with three lanes in each direction and five lanes in each direction throughout certain sections of the roadway (Chartock 2006). Some parts even have as many as seven lanes in each direction.

The project was motivated by a study of the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) about traffic congestion in the 1990s (U.S. Department of Transportation 2017). The main goal of the project was to improve travel time and increase safety for travelers on I-25 and I-225 (U.S. Department of Transportation 2017).

Another major change to Denver's transportation infrastructure occurred in 1995 when the Stapleton International Airport was replaced by the Denver International Airport. The Stapleton International Airport was unable "to keep up with the ever-increasing demand for international air traffic, the size of jet aircraft, [and] the land necessary to support continuous expansion" (Colorado Encyclopedia 2017). The Denver International Airport is better equipped to handle the massive demand for air travel. At twice the size of Manhattan, it is the largest airport in the United States based on its land area and one of the largest airports in the world (Schilling 2013). The project cost \$5.2 billion and at its high point, it required 11,000 workers for its construction (Schilling 2013).

Although the city of Denver continues to face challenges with respect to its mass transit system, these improvements have played an important role in reducing traffic congestion, creating greater access to public transportation, and facilitating the movement of people throughout the nation, all of which have encouraged the relocation of millennials to Denver.

### **Amenities, Recreation and Lifestyle –Downtown Denver's Revitalization**

A common misconception of Denver is that it is in the mountains when in fact the mountains are at least an hour drive. For example, skiing in Summit County one of the nearest places with ski resorts takes about an hour and half.

That being said, one of the primary attractions to the Denver region is the Rocky Mountains with plentiful opportunities for skiing, hiking, rock climbing, mountain biking, kayaking, white water river rafting, camping – overall outdoor activities.

**Lower Downtown (LoDo):** Denver began to turnaround through investments in Lower Downtown (referred to as LoDo). In 1860 the population of Denver was roughly 4,700 people and by 1880 the population rose to approximately 35,600 people (LoDo 2006). Denver became a bustling city and took off even more once the railroad connection was built to meet the Transcontinental Railroad in

Cheyenne, Wyoming. When people arrived in Denver at Union Station the first place they would see and visit was LoDo. Denver boomed and declined and finally hitting a stride during World War II but not enough to revitalize LoDo. In the 1960's and 70's about 20% of LoDo's buildings were destroyed, and LoDo continued as Skid Row (LoDo 2006). The city of Denver recognized that protection for the remaining 127 original buildings was much needed, and in 1988 the city established the Lower Downtown Historic District.

**Wynkoop Brewery in LoDo:** This brewery is located in the J.S. Brown Mercantile Building built in 1899. This establishment helped make a former geologist into a person known today as Governor John Hickenlooper. Hickenlooper states in an interview that once Coors Field opened in 1995, "The Wynkoop's sales went up 50%. I went from being successful to affluent in the space of six months" (Kim 2005). But another astonishing fact is that even when the baseball season ended the sales continuously stayed high, showing a new steady interest in LoDo. The revitalization took what were once factories and skid row and transformed them into art galleries, brewpubs, restaurants, office space and lofts.

**Coors Field:** August 16, 1990, voters from six surrounding counties of Denver approved a 0.1% sales tax increase that would be used to build a baseball stadium at a cost of \$215 million dollars. Coors Field opened on April 26, 1995. The building of Coors Field just next to LoDo, with the hopes of reviving this part of town, was based off the construction of Camden Yards in Inner Harbor Baltimore. Both of these cities were looking to revamp certain parts of downtown and decided that a baseball stadium would help spark the revival. The construction of Coors Field in fact did more than what many had expected. According to Governor [then Mayor] John Hickenlooper, "What happened was that Coors Field became the gasoline poured on the fire -- it became a huge accelerant (Kim 2005)." The games played at Coors Field during 1995 sold out every game 50,000 seats. With over 4,000,000 people coming into the city just for baseball games, LoDo's establishments that saw the most growth were brewery pubs.

**Breweries:** The craft brewery culture has taken off. Colorado has the second most breweries in the nation with 348 breweries, behind California with 687 breweries. Boulder has more breweries per capita than any of other city in the US with 13.3 breweries for everyone 100,000 people, Fort Collins is No. 3 per capita and Denver is No. 8. <sup>3</sup>

Brewing has been a significant part of the culture of the greater Denver region with Coors brewery in Golden, CO and with Wynkoop Brewery playing such a significant role in shaping Denver's downtown. The brewing culture is also attractive to millennials and Gen X'ers as it fosters a culture of authenticity, community and sustainability.<sup>4</sup> Not surprisingly, breweries have served as a gathering place for communities, but the impacts today lead to creating a sense of place and spurring economic development.

Wynkoop Brewery is a nationally recognized example of revitalizing an area. Other examples include Great Lakes Brewing Company in Cleveland, and in Jacksonville, FL there is a string of breweries on King Street, which the city helped facilitate through an infrastructure program to bring new life to a formerly abandoned commercial corridor.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.bizjournals.com/denver/news/2017/05/12/how-many-craft-breweries-colorados-near-the-top.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.brewersassociation.org/communicating-craft/understanding-todays-craft-beer-lovers-millennials-women-hispanics/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.curbed.com/2017/6/13/15788960/brewing-economic-development-craft-beer>

**Union Station:** The transformation of Union Station is a real success story. In 2004 when Denver voters approved FasTracks for light rail the goal was for Union Station to become the center for light rail, commuter and intercity rail, regional and local buses, downtown shuttle buses, and taxis. In 2012 a collaborative development alliance (RTD leased to Sage Hospitality, Larimer Associates and others) came together to make the renovations possible and in 2014 the new Union Station opened.<sup>6</sup> Dana Crawford a developer was the visionary behind the project. The station now holds the Crawford Hotel, several shops, restaurants and bars including the Terminal Bar, which is a restored ticket station that serves Colorado spirits and craft beers. Union Station has become the hub, a gathering place, and a landmark giving a positive sense of place.<sup>7</sup>

**Arts and Culture:** Denver has a strong arts and culture presence. “The Denver Performing Arts Complex is the second-largest arts campus of its kind in the nation, and it’s home to the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Opera Colorado, Denver Center Theater Company, and the Colorado Ballet.<sup>8</sup> The public art in Denver is spectacular and has become iconic for the city; such as “Dancers” six-story white figures dancing outside the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and “I See What You Mean” a 40-foot tall blue bear looking into the Denver Convention Center.<sup>9</sup>

**Education:** Colorado ranks as one of the lowest education funded states. According to Education Week Quality Counts Report, in 2017, Colorado spent \$2,685 less than the US average, ranking 41<sup>st</sup> of 51. In the same report, Colorado’s Report Card was a C- for K-12 achievement and B for Chance for Success; whereas, Indiana was slightly better with C for K-12 achievement and C+ for Chance for Success. While Colorado’s economy is booming and growing with population, the schools are suffering due to the financing structure of education.<sup>10</sup> See the tax section below related to TABOR and Property Tax.

Colorado has several excellent institutions of the higher education including: University of Colorado, Colorado State University, University of Denver, and Colorado College.

### **Affordability and Taxes - The Gallagher Amendment and TABOR**

The Gallagher Amendment became part of Colorado’s state constitution in 1982. The amendment restricts residential property taxes to 45% of all property taxes that the state collects. In fact, the property taxes are collected at the county level and then distributed to local, county, and state entities.<sup>11</sup> The 55% remainder of state property tax revenues are derived from nonresidential and commercial property taxes.<sup>12</sup>

The measure has been forcing cuts in the residential assessment rate as home values increase at a faster pace than the values of commercial and other nonresidential properties.<sup>13</sup> Specifically, the residential property assessment rate has fallen by about 2/3 since 1982 due to increases in residential home values

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.denverpost.com/2014/06/19/union-station-gets-a-major-makeover-133-years-after-trains-first-ran/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.colorado.com/articles/union-station-things-see-do>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.colorado.com/arts-culture>

<sup>9</sup> <http://denver.cbslocal.com/top-lists/top-bizarre-statues-or-public-art-in-denver/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.edweek.org/ew/qc/2016/2016-state-report-cards-map.html?intc=EW-QC16-LFTNAV>

<sup>11</sup> Wyrick 2017

<sup>12</sup> CSBJ Editorial 2017

<sup>13</sup> Eason 2017

and population growth.<sup>14</sup> The reductions are continuing. The residential assessment rate has already fallen from 7.96% to 7.2% in 2017 and is projected to fall again to 6.11% in 2019.<sup>15</sup>

**TABOR:** The Taxpayer Bill of Rights in Colorado, known as TABOR, also prevents the residential property tax rate from increasing without a vote of the public.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, while cuts to residential property tax rates are automatic under the Gallagher Amendment, increases are much more difficult to implement. Furthermore, if revenue is collected that exceeds TABOR's limits, then the amount must be refunded to the taxpayers, which has an impact on all levels of government including school districts.<sup>17</sup> "Under TABOR, the state has returned \$2 billion to taxpayers rather than using these funds to pay for K-12 education, higher education, transportation, public health services, public safety and other services."<sup>18</sup>

The problem for local governments in Colorado is that home values change very unevenly throughout the state. In rural areas where home values rise very slowly or are stagnant, homeowners will enjoy a cut in their residential property taxes, which will have a negative impact on the budgets of local governments.<sup>19</sup>

The *Colorado Springs Business Journal* declares that the Gallagher Amendment is harmful to economic development in Colorado because the state is constitutionally required to make up for cuts to school funding by taking from other areas that then go unfunded.<sup>20</sup> The burden of school funding has thus shifted from local residential property taxes to the State General Fund.<sup>21</sup> For example, "[in] the early 1980s, local property taxes paid 54 percent of the state education budget; the state paid 46 percent. By 2015, the state was providing 66 percent of the state's education budget, while property taxes paid 34%."<sup>22</sup>

In addition to school districts and the state, fire districts, library districts, and counties all experience the negative impact of falling residential property tax rates.<sup>23</sup>

**Income Tax:** The Colorado state income tax is 4.63%<sup>24</sup>

**Property Tax:** Colorado has one of the lowest property tax rates in the country. In 2017 single-family homes averaged 0.52 percent compared to the national average of 1.15 percent. Only Hawaii and Alabama have lower rates; whereas, New Jersey and Illinois are four times higher. The reason the state is so low is due to the 1982 Gallagher Amendment and TABOR. The Gallagher Amendment limits the share of property tax base attributable to residential to 45 percent of the total.<sup>25</sup> Colorado property taxes vary per county due to mill levies (see below).

- **Mill Levy Override:** is a ballot measure for additional "mills" on property tax. A mill levy is the tax rate applied to the assessed value of a property. One mill is one dollar per \$1,000 dollars of

---

<sup>14</sup> Greater Education Colorado 2017

<sup>15</sup> Eason 2017

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Greater Education Colorado 2017

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/treasury/constitutional-provisions-0>

<sup>19</sup> Eason 2017

<sup>20</sup> CSBJ Editorial 2017

<sup>21</sup> Greater Education Colorado 2017

<sup>22</sup> Wyrick 2017

<sup>23</sup> CSBJ Editorial 2017

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.bankrate.com/finance/taxes/state-taxes-colorado.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.denverpost.com/2017/04/06/colorado-property-tax-rates/>

assessed value. In Colorado this is a common practice to fund a school district for operation.<sup>26</sup> Out of 178 school districts in Colorado, 119 receive additional funding through a mill levy override.<sup>27</sup>

**Sales Tax:** Colorado’s sales tax is 2.9%. Counties and cities have special tax districts.

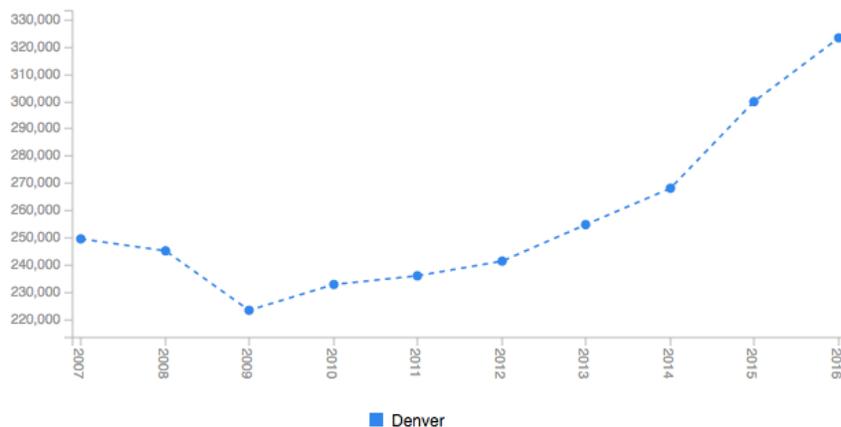
- Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD): Created in 1989 the funds support cultural facilities across seven counties (Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties). The funds are from a 1/10 of 1 percent sales tax. The seven county area has about \$50 million budget annually. SCFD is governed by a board of directors and staff works closely with County Cultural Councils to implement operations and distribution of funds.<sup>28</sup>

**Marijuana and Taxes:** From 2014 through mid-2017, cannabis related taxed totaled over half a billion. This is substantially more than experts predicted in 2012 when Colorado voters approved Amendment 64 where predictions were between \$5 million and \$22 million per year in taxes.<sup>29</sup> Amendment 64 required the first \$40 million in tax revenue to go toward school construction and the remaining funding has gone toward financing health care, health education, law enforcement and substance abuse programs.

From January-August 2017 Colorado exceeded over \$1 billion in both medical and recreational sales. Previous year sales totals: 2014: \$699,198,805; 2015: \$996,184,788; 2016: \$1,313,156,545.<sup>30</sup>

**Cost of Living:** As May 2017, “the average price of a single family home sold in metro Denver reached a new high of \$487,974, up 4.2 percent from March and 10.3 percent from a year ago.”<sup>31</sup> As of 2017, home prices in Colorado are up 76 percent over the past five years and median price increased 56 percent.<sup>32</sup> The median price house in Northwest Indiana is \$142,400 according to Trulia.

#### Housing Costs Over Time



Data sourced from Zillow median home sale price data series. Additional data provided by the Austin Board of Realtors, Houston Association of Realtors, Intermountain MLS, Omaha Area Board of Realtors, San Antonio Board of Realtors, and the Salt Lake Board of Realtors.

Source: *US News 2017 Best Cities*

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.bucoks.com/DocumentCenter/View/46>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.greeleyschools.org/Page/21492>

<sup>28</sup> <http://scfd.org/p/about-scf.html>

<sup>29</sup> [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/colorado-marijuana-pot-tax-revenue\\_us\\_596f7911e4b01696c6a1fb06](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/colorado-marijuana-pot-tax-revenue_us_596f7911e4b01696c6a1fb06)

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.thecannabist.co/2017/10/11/colorado-marijuana-sales-august-2017-tax-data/89751/>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.denverpost.com/2017/05/04/metro-denvers-average-home-sale-price-april-2017/>

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.denverpost.com/2017/04/06/colorado-property-tax-rates/>

## Economy

- According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2015 the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA generated \$193.2 billion in GDP, making it the 18<sup>th</sup> largest MSA in the United States.
- Between 2001 and 2015, GDP per capita for the Denver MSA has been 20-25% higher on average than the average for all metropolitan areas in the United States (see figure 1). Over this same period, real GDP for the Denver MSA grew on average by 2.2% per year compared to 1.7% nationally (see figure 2).
- Since 2006, the unemployment rate for the Denver MSA has been significantly lower than the national average. In June of 2017, the unemployment rate for the Denver MSA was just 2.2% or half the national average of 4.4% (see figure 3).
- The Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA has a population of 2.85 million people, accounts for more than half the population of the state of Colorado and is the 19<sup>th</sup> most populated MSA in the United States.
- Since 2010, the population of the Denver MSA has grown on average by 1.86% per year, more than double the national growth rate of 0.87% per year (see figure 4).

## Perception

A *New York Times* article “Denver’s Appeal to Millennials? Jobs, Mountains and, Yes, Weed” found that Denver attracts millennials because of the transit connectivity across the city, walkability, entrepreneurialism, recreational factor, and a sense of openness and forward thinking. Through the legalization of marijuana, millennials view Denver and Colorado, in general, as a place that is open to change and new ideas.

In 2017, Denver was ranked #2 in US News Best Places to Live, which was the same year Austin, TX was ranked #1. Denver scored highly on the US News Rankings in the following categories: Desirability, Value (comparing housing costs to median household income), Job Market, Quality of Life, and Net Migration. Denver has one of the highest net migration in the country, in 2015 it was ranked #4 in the country with a net 103,785 domestic migrants from 2010-2014.<sup>33</sup>

## Regional Coordination

### Metropolitan Mayors Caucus

**The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)** has served as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Denver region since 1977, and is one of the nation’s three oldest councils of governments. The council is guided by the Metro Vision for regional growth and development plan. More than 50 local governments participate in a cooperative to establish guidelines and allocate funding for: transportation and personal mobility, growth development, and aging and disability resources. (<https://www.drcog.org/about-drcog/about-drcog>)

**Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation** is the nation’s first regional economic development entity. It brings together over 70 cities, counties, and economic development agencies from the nine-county Metro Denver and Colorado area. The Metro Denver EDC is an affiliate of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce.

Its mission is to enhance the regional economy through the retention and expansion of primary jobs and capital investment. The Metro Denver EDC focuses on six key areas: traffic and congestion issues,

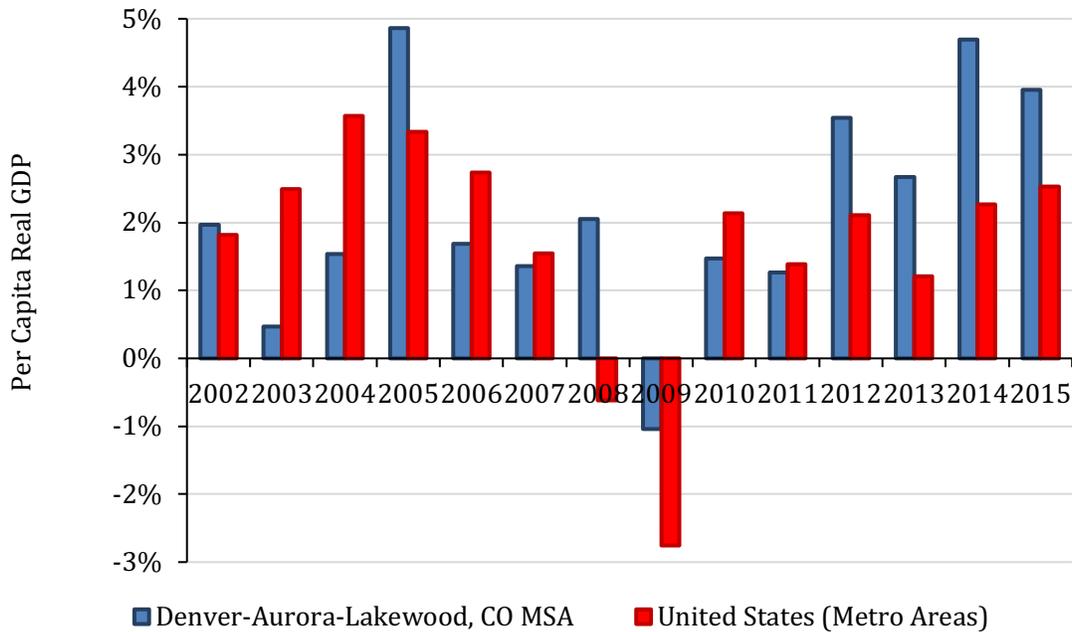
---

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joelkotkin/2015/10/06/the-cities-americans-are-thronging-to-and-fleeing/#47d579a35fd3>

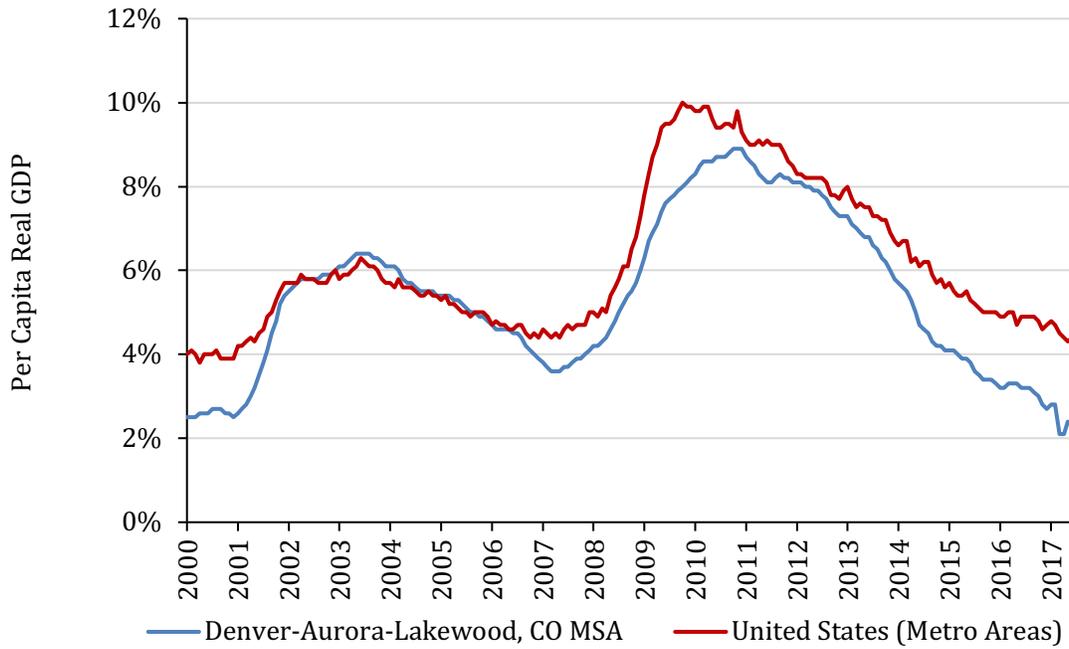
tax and regulatory reform to encourage business development, promoting new and existing businesses, national marketing of Metro Denver’s business assets and top industries, the development of international flights to advance global business, and capitalizing on opportunities as they arise to promote the region’s business interests (metrodenver.org).

**Aurora Economic Development Council (EDC)** is a public/private partnership that aims to recruit new primary employers, retain existing primary employers, and assist with the expansion of current primary employers. The Aurora EDC focuses on the leading growth industries in the city, which aerospace and defense (Raytheon Company, Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, and the Boeing Company), bioscience (the Anschutz Medical Campus and Fitzsimons Life Science District), transportation logistics (the airport, interstate highways, major rail lines, mass transit), and renewable energy (auroraedc.com).

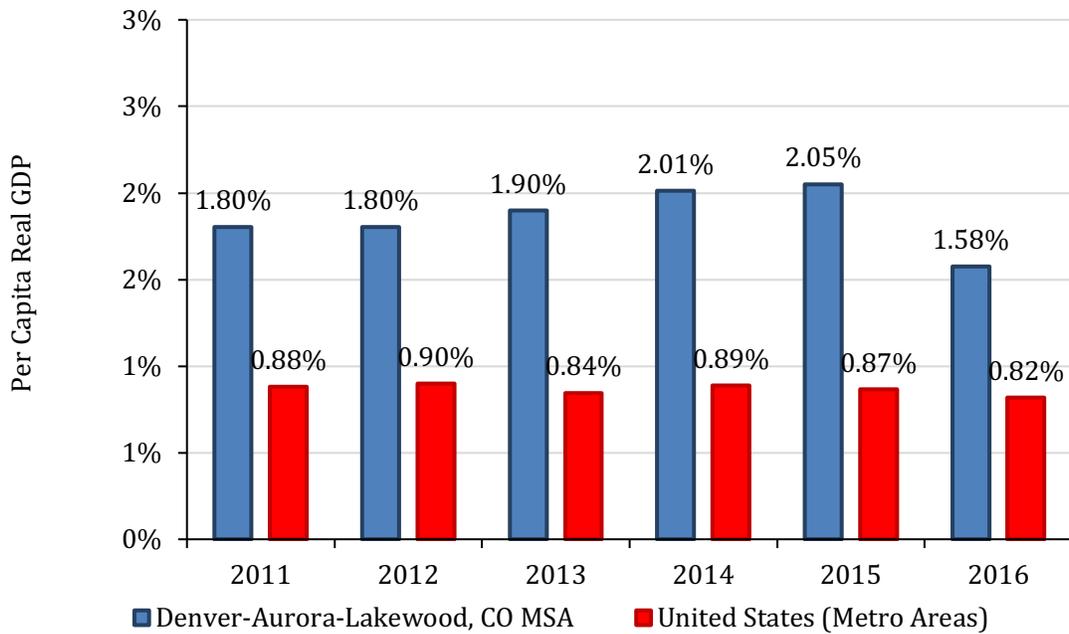
**Figure 1: Real GDP Growth Rates, U.S. and Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA, 2001-2015**  
(chained 2009 dollars; source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis)



**Figure 2:** Unemployment Rates for the U.S. and the Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA, 2000-2017 (seasonally adjusted figures; source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)



**Figure 3:** Annual Population Growth Rates, U.S. and Denver-Aurora-Lakewood MSA, 2011-2016 (source: U.S. Census Bureau)



## Articles

[nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com)

# Denver's Appeal to Millennials? Jobs, Mountains and, Yes, Weed

9-11 minutes

---

Avanti Food & Beverage, housed in a former factory and auto repair shop in the Lower Highlands section of Denver, features local start-up restaurants. Credit Jamie Schwaberow for The New York Times

Avanti Food & Beverage, housed in a former factory and auto repair shop in the Lower Highlands section of Denver, features local start-up restaurants. Credit Jamie Schwaberow for The New York Times

DENVER — On Pecos Street in the Lower Highlands section, known as LoHi, [Avanti Food & Beverage](#) has transformed an old 11,000-square-foot factory and auto repair shop into a sort of food court for the Uber generation.

Seated cafeteria-style in the main dining area one recent night, a young crowd, many in hoodies and yoga pants, were sampling dishes from seven local start-up restaurants. Udon noodles, tortas (Mexican sandwiches) and Venezuelan-style flatbreads were among the choices offered by entrepreneurial restaurateurs, most of them food-truck vendors hoping to make the leap to brick and mortar.

Nothing cost more than \$15.

“It’s good, solid cuisine at affordable prices,” said Avanti’s co-owner, Patrick O’Neill. “That goes a long way with millennials.”

The youthful party continues on many nights around the renovated Union Station in the trendy Lower Downtown district, known locally as LoDo, and along Larimer Street in River North, or RiNo. It was unclear on a recent evening whether there were more bars than signs supporting Bernie Sanders, but both were plentiful. Scruffy Murphy’s Irish Pub, Los Chingones’ rooftop bar and the Wynkoop Brewing Company (one of 65 microbreweries here, according to the Colorado Brewers Guild) were all doing a brisk business.

As for the Vermont senator, so popular with millennials, he was depicted on a two-story painted wall mural — like something you’d see in Los Angeles or Belfast celebrating heroes — with a fist raised and the slogan “Rise Together!”

This is also an apt slogan for [this city](#), which has risen from economic stagnation and urban irrelevance to become a millennial magnet.

According to a Brookings Institution analysis of population movement from 2009-14, the city had a net annual migration gain of 12,682 people ages 25 to 34, the highest of any metropolitan area in the United States. That means an average of 12,682 more millennials per year moved here than left, for each of the five years measured.

Similarly, an analysis of census data by Zillow, the real estate website, found that 18- to 34-year-olds accounted for 35 percent of the city's population growth from 2010 to 2014, up from 26 percent in the first 10 years of the century.

While definitions of a millennial vary (a widely used one is someone born from 1981 to 1997), it's clear that many of this generation are attracted to this city. One obvious reason is the economy: the city's is healthy — and hiring. Development Research Partners, a local research firm, found that of the 1.6 million jobs in metropolitan Denver, about 33.2 percent were held by 19- to 34-year-olds.

Adam Frank; his wife, Kathleen; and their son, Quincy, at their Denver home. Mr. Frank, a lawyer and Brooklyn native, arrived in 2011 in Denver, where he met Kathleen, from California. "Best decision I ever made," he said of his move. Credit: Jamie Schwaberow for The New York Times

Image

Adam Frank; his wife, Kathleen; and their son, Quincy, at their Denver home. Mr. Frank, a lawyer and Brooklyn native, arrived in 2011 in Denver, where he met Kathleen, from California. "Best decision I ever made," he said of his move. Credit: Jamie Schwaberow for The New York Times

The city scores highly in qualitative surveys as well. U.S. News and World Report's 2016 Best Places to Live study ranked the city No. 1. Its proximity to outdoor recreation, a progressive mind-set and its walkability were all [cited as factors](#).

Those were some of the attractions for Adam Frank, 35, a Brooklyn native and lawyer who moved here in 2011.

"Best decision I ever made," Mr. Frank said. "It has a lot of old homes with character and doesn't look like a prefab community."

He also cited the brewpubs and restaurants, as well as access to skiing and hiking, which he loves and could do only rarely while living in New York.

Mr. Frank and his wife, Kathleen, a California native, met here and live in the Baker section in an 1886 two-story, mansard-style house. A partner in a civil rights law firm, he said he appreciated the entrepreneurship here that helped give him and his law partner the impetus to put up their shingle in 2015.

"It is definitely a friendly place for people looking to start a business or throw new ideas out there," he said.

One new idea, of course, was Colorado's [legalization of marijuana sales](#) in 2014.

How much impact does that have on the city's coolness factor among millennials? "Some have speculated that it helped put Denver on the map," said Carrie Makarewicz, an assistant professor in the College of Architecture and Planning at the University of Colorado Denver. "It got national news coverage and made people think of Denver as this more progressive place."

But other, more significant developments have also made the city attractive to a young generation. "Denver was in a major recession in the '80s," said Professor Makarewicz, an urban planner. "The main industry was gas and oil, so when the energy sector bombed, the business community and government got together and decided they needed to diversify and make some major investments."

Among the changes over the next two decades were a growth boundary to limit urban sprawl, better air-quality controls, a new airport and a downtown baseball stadium (Coors Field, where the Colorado Rockies play).

The efforts of local preservationists kept many historic buildings from destruction, while new zoning laws changed neighborhoods to accommodate mixed-use buildings and what urban planners call a form-based code. That means, Professor Makarewicz said, that "buildings are approved more by how they look than what's in them."

A mural in Denver depicting Senator Bernie Sanders. Credit Jamie Schwaberow for The New York Times

Image

A mural in Denver depicting Senator Bernie Sanders. Credit Jamie Schwaberow for The New York Times

One result was the distinctive neighborhoods that are part of the city's appeal to young people. They were made accessible by new mass transit lines after voters approved, in 2004, a sales tax increase to fund the so-called [FasTracks](#) program. Its latest addition is a 22.8-mile light-rail train from Denver International Airport to Union Station that opened with much fanfare in April. (Yet another new line, this one connecting the northern suburb of Westminster with Denver, is scheduled to open on July 25.)

Matt Prosser, a vice president of Economic and Planning Systems, a California-based consulting firm, said the transit system was a "central component" in the area's ability to draw millennials.

"It makes living here a lot easier for younger folks," he said. "You don't necessarily have to own a car."

Gov. John Hickenlooper, a former mayor of this city, is often cited as an important political force in the city's evolution. "People are flocking here," he said in an email, citing the U.S. News ranking and a study showing that 16 percent of the population were young adults. "We have worked hard to ensure that Denver creates the things that millennials are looking for."

As mayor, Mr. Hickenlooper led the effort behind the FasTracks referendum. He is also a founder and former owner of the Wynkoop Brewing Company.

Underlying it all — the beer, the trains, the mountains and, yes, the legal weed — is a sense of identity for this city that millennials find appealing.

Mr. Prosser’s firm, Economic and Planning Systems, is working with the city on the latest version of its 30-year comprehensive plan, Blueprint Denver.

“As we started talking about what made Denver successful over the last 10 years, particularly with millennials, one theme kept coming up: the openness,” Mr. Prosser said. “It’s a community that you can move into and feel like you’re accepted and find your way.”

For young people, that is a powerful reason to live here and to stay, despite [rising housing costs](#) that raise questions about how long the millennial boom can continue and recent reports suggesting that the legalization of marijuana may have added to the [homeless population](#).

Still, the allure of the city remains powerful.

“There’s definitely a culture of, ‘Hey, that’s cool, let’s support each other,’ whether it’s in business, or the arts or in politics,” said Mr. Frank, the transplanted New Yorker. Notwithstanding what he says is a lack of good pizza — the city’s one detriment, in his view — he is firm on his views of his adopted, youthful city.

“We’re never leaving,” he said.

[curbed.com](http://curbed.com)

## Craft beer's big impact on small towns and forgotten neighborhoods

Patrick Sisson  
9-12 minutes

---

When Neil Gurnsey grabs a drink at his favorite bar, he’s delighted when nobody knows his name.

Gurnsey loves to see his new watering hole, the taproom at [Hand of Fate Brewing](#), packed with people from outside Petersburg, Illinois, a small bedroom community of roughly 2,200 near the capital, Springfield. Started last May by Mike Allison, a former funeral director who turned his homebrewing hobby into a thriving small business in his hometown, Hand of Fate took its name from the town’s origin story (during a card game between two early settlers, Peter Lukins and George Warburton, Warburton drew the losing hand).

After just a year, the small brewery has brought good fortune to the town. After taking over an old Dollar General discount store in the sparsely occupied town square, the brewery-and-taproom has become a community hub and a catalyst keeping businesses open later. It’s encouraged others—including two new boutiques—to open shop, and drawn visitors from across the region. This year’s [“Drinkin’ with Lincoln”](#) street festival was a big hit.

“Once Mike got the brewery going,” says Gurnsey, an assistant vice president at the National Bank of Petersburg, “life was just injected into the square. If I go inside the bar and see that I know just 10 people out of 100, that’s great.”

Breweries, taprooms, and bars have always been about more than beer, serving as community hubs, gathering places, and sources of local identity and pride. But as Hand of Fate shows, they’re also increasingly serving as engines of economic development and catalysts for cities and towns, especially in [rural areas](#).

Allison’s business—which churns out a variety of IPAs, cream ales, and saisons—may directly employ 10 people, but the ancillary benefits of the brewery and taproom, like others in the country, radiate into the community in different ways.

As the booming craft-beer industry, which contributed [\\$55.7 billion](#) to the U.S. economy in 2014, continues to expand, more and more municipalities and states have tried to turn this industry into a means to spur growth. According to Bart Watson, chief economist at the Brewers Association, about 80 percent of Americans live within 10 miles of a brewery.

Small towns and abandoned industrial areas are prime candidates for regeneration-by-brewery. Portland-based beer writer [Jeff Alworth](#) has seen the industry revive towns across Oregon and the U.S. Amid talk of hops and flavor profiles, drinkers sometimes forget the impressive industrial scale of brewing operations—and the jobs it can provide. A typical taproom makes 300-gallon batches multiple times a day, employing men and women to haul fully loaded, 165-pound kegs across a factory floor, and retrofitting spaces and installing brewery equipment requires skilled craftsmen and laborers.

That requires lots of space, says Watson, which is why brewing, a capital-intensive industry, is perfect for depressed areas with lots of excess and abandoned industrial real estate. That large footprint, however, is part of the reason for an oversize community impact; taprooms and bars are magnets that draw people in, and with traditional bars and VFW halls (Veterans of Foreign Wars) closing, these new spaces become community hubs and event spaces, not just another place to grab a drink. And, according to research by Julie Wartell, a lecturer at University of California at San Diego, bars attached to breweries result in much less crime than regular bars.

Margo Metzger, director of the [North Carolina Craft Brewers Guild](#), has seen craft brewing explode in her state, generating \$1.2 billion and 10,000 jobs in 2014. At that time, North Carolina had a little over 100 breweries; a few years later, after big names such as Sierra Nevada, New Belgium, and Oskar Blues all opened facilities near Asheville, the state boasts 215 breweries.

The dramatic increase in overall business comes from those bigger names, she says. But when it comes to real economic impact people can feel, it’s the small towns, when someone makes a bet on a little-known street, where it matters.

“I’ve spent my whole life here, and suddenly, you see breweries in forgotten Eastern North Carolina towns such as [Rocky Mount](#) and [Tarboro](#),” she says. “It gives people a public house and a reason to want to live there. But more importantly, it makes people feel like they’re in a relevant place. It’s something new, beyond the old story of a fading town they’ve heard for decades. It’s a powerful, kickstarting force, a spark that I’ve seen time and again in this state.”

It's not just small towns; urban neighborhoods have thrived and been reborn with the help of pioneering breweries. [Great Lakes Brewing Company](#) helped resuscitate Cleveland's Ohio City neighborhood after opening in 1988, and has been so successful that locals now worry about a [beer glut](#). [Wynkoop Brewing Company in Denver](#), which also opened in 1988, was a [pioneer in re-establishing the now-hip LoDo neighborhood](#). And in [Jacksonville, Florida](#), a string of breweries on King Street, in tandem with a city infrastructure program, brought new life to a former abandoned commercial corridor.

In addition to immediate economic benefits and establishing a sense of place, successful breweries are a huge draw for the increasingly lucrative world of craft-beer tourism. According to Watson, recent Brewers Association data shows that 1.6 percent of craft-beer drinkers take 10-plus trips annually to brewers more than two hours from their home.

A study in Kent County, Michigan, which includes Grand Rapids and breweries like Brewery Vivant and Mitten Brewing Company, showed that these businesses generated \$7.05 million in direct spending from 42,426 visitors, who racked up more than 14,000 hotel nights. The [latest data](#) from New York state found that beer tourism in 2013 attracted 3.66 million visitors and \$450 million in business exclusive of beer sales, supporting more than 3,000 jobs.

Breweries have taken advantage of the trend and created special events, such as Goose Island's release of [Bourbon County Stout](#) and the [Three Floyds' Dark Lord Day](#), that draw massive crowds and bring drinkers and dollars to town. Professor Jeff Dense of Eastern Oregon University [calculated](#) that the annual Oregon Brewers Festival generated \$32.6 million for the local Portland economy. Perhaps the granddaddy of these festivals, [Pliny the Younger Day](#), sees Russian River Brewing in Sonoma County release its famed Pliny the Elder, an imperial India Pale Ale. [Last year's event](#) in February drew 16,000 customers and created an total economic impact of nearly \$5 million.

"Pliny has been to Sonoma County what Robert Mondavi was for Napa," Ben Stone, executive director of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board, told the local [Press Democrat](#).

Local governments are increasingly working to attract breweries and the craft-brew industry in the name of economic development and growth. Watson says that [Virginia](#), Ohio, and North Carolina have all been aggressive in offering incentives to brewers (at the same time the Asheville area landed the trio of big name brewery facilities, the city of Roanoke, Virginia, was courting companies with a [\\$13 million incentive package](#)). New York state has used brewing as a means to grow local agriculture: The state's [farm brewing licenses](#), for instance, provide new companies with certain retail privileges in exchange for using a certain percentage of crops from in-state. The new license has [helped spur](#) the development of local hops and barley crops.

Cities have also pushed to bring more beer into city limits. Chicago turned to tax-increment financing to create a [brewery district](#) in the Motor Row District, an industrial area once known for car dealerships. [Duquesne, Pennsylvania](#), a town downriver from Pittsburgh, revised their zoning plan a few years ago to make it easier to attract microbreweries, and even bought up old abandoned buildings to sell to potential brewers. Mesa, Arizona, promoted its downtown specifically as a magnet for local brewers.

One of the more striking example was [Zoiglhaus](#) in Portland, a city known as a mecca for beer geeks. The city’s economic development council [invested \\$1 million](#) to help the brewery as long as it agreed to locate in the Lents District, a far eastern area that’s been underinvested for decades.

Back in Petersburg, Hand of Fate’s success in building up the town square has meant new opportunities for the company. Allison has already purchased another 2,500-square-foot facility, and he plans to expand into packaging cans and kegs and selling off-site. As far as the brewery’s impact on the community, the tap is far from running dry.

“The name of the brewery does come from the town’s name,” says Allison. “But it’s also because everything just really fell into place for us.”

## Sources

Denver Regional Transportation District (RTD). August 20, 2017. <http://www.rtd-denver.com>

Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce. August 20, 2017. <https://denverchamber.org/>

Amtrak. August 19, 2017. <https://www.amtrak.com/>

## References – Infrastructure Section

Chartock, David. “Denver Rail Evolves with Massive T-REX Project.” *Construction Equipment Guide*. West Edition. July 14, 2006.

<https://www.constructionequipmentguide.com/denver-rail-evolves-with-massive-t-rex-project/7197>

Colorado Encyclopedia. “Stapleton International Airport.” Accessed on 9/30/2017.

<https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/stapleton-international-airport>

Kim, June. 2 Feb. 2005. Stadiums “Can Only Do So Much.” *Business Week Online*.

LoDo District Organization. “History and Background.” <<http://www.lodo.org/ld-history.htm>> 19 February 2008.

Murray, Jon. “RTD’s rail system is having its biggest year, but Denver is still a city with many transit gaps.” *The Denver Post*. July 31, 2016.

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/07/31/rtd-rail-system-denver-gaps/>

Schilling, David Russell. “Denver Airport 2<sup>nd</sup> Largest in The World, Twice the Size of Manhattan.” *industry tap into news*. August 26, 2013.

<http://www.industrytap.com/denver-airport-2nd-largest-in-the-world-twice-the-size-of-manhattan/7982>

Snyder, Nina. “12 Denver Tourist Attractions on Light Rail.” *tripsavvy*. May 8, 2017.

[www.tripsavvy.com/attractions-on-light-rail-line-1062117](http://www.tripsavvy.com/attractions-on-light-rail-line-1062117).

U.S. Department of Transportation. Federal Highway Administration. “Transportation Expansion (T-REX) Multi-Modal Transportation Project.” Accessed 9/30/2017.

<https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/casestudies/co.asp>

Whaley, Monte. "Denver is being transformed by FasTracks, 10 years after key vote." *The Denver Post*. Published: January 30, 2015. Updated: April 26, 2016.  
<http://www.denverpost.com/2015/01/30/denver-is-being-transformed-by-fastracks-10-years-after-key-vote/>

Woodward, Colin. "The Train that Saved Denver." *Politico Magazine*. May 19, 2016.

### **Sources Taxes:**

CSBJ Editorial. "Gallagher Amendment creates unfriendly climate." *The Colorado Springs Business Journal*. March 17, 2017. Web. Accessed on December 22, 2017.  
<https://www.csbj.com/2017/03/17/gallagher-amendment-creates-unfriendly-climate/>

Eason, Brian. "Rural Colorado government services could retreat further because of forecasts pointing to more property tax cuts in 2019." *The Denver Post*. December 21, 2017. Web. Accessed December 22, 2017. <https://www.denverpost.com/2017/12/21/rural-colorado-government-services-could-retreat-further-because-of-forecasts-pointing-to-more-property-tax-cuts-in-2019/>

Greater Education Colorado. "One-Page Description of the Impact of Constitutional Amendments on Education." March 8, 2010. Web. Accessed December 22, 2017. <https://www.greateducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Descriptions-Impact-of-Constitutional-Amendments-on-Education1.pdf>

Wyrick, Randy. "Colorado's Constitutional conundrum: Gallagher vs. TABOR amendments, and what it means for us." *VailDaily*. March 6, 2017. Web. Accessed December 22, 2017.  
<https://www.vaildaily.com/news/regional/colorados-constitutional-conundrum-gallagher-vs-tabor-amendments-and-what-it-means-for-us/>