



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2017

# THE ARVADA REPORT

NEWS AND INFORMATION

[www.arvada.org](http://www.arvada.org)

## Arvada Urban Renewal: From the Arvada Plaza to Ralston Creek



The Arvada Plaza Shopping Center opened in 1963 at the intersection of Ralston Road and Independence St. Over the years, it was home to a variety of businesses, and represented a quintessential retail hub during a time when people drove to the nearest major intersection for all of life's necessities including groceries, restaurants, auto repair, dry cleaning, clothing, and shoes.

Today, what was the Arvada Plaza is now the Ralston Creek development. Turn to **page 4** to take a walk back in time and remember the heydays of the Plaza and its slow demise.

### City Establishing Severe Weather Shelter

The August/September issue of *The Arvada Report* highlighted the growing problem of homelessness in our community. This winter, the City of Arvada is partnering with the Severe Weather Shelter Network to establish overnight shelters at churches during extreme cold events. This program requires a robust volunteer network, as well as donations, to be successful. If you are interested in becoming involved, please visit [arvada.org/shelter](http://arvada.org/shelter). 

**Tuesday, November 7**  
is Election Day! Exercise your  
right as a citizen:  
**Don't forget to vote!**

### Candidates for Arvada City Council

**COUNCILMEMBER DISTRICT 1**  
**TWO YEAR TERM – VOTE FOR ONE**

- Nancy Ford

**COUNCILMEMBER DISTRICT 3**  
**FOUR YEAR TERM – VOTE FOR ONE**

- John Marriott

**COUNCILMEMBER-AT-LARGE**  
**FOUR YEAR TERM – VOTE FOR ONE**

- Dot Miller
- Jordan Hohenstein
- Dave Palm
- Jim Whitfield
- John Malito

For more information on  
voting locations and other  
elections, visit:

[jeffco.us/elections](http://jeffco.us/elections)

[www.co.adams.co.us](http://www.co.adams.co.us)

# Remembering the Arvada Plaza

## The 1960s

In 1961, the City of Arvada annexed 600 acres, including 40 acres earmarked for a shopping center as well as residential development. The cost to develop the shopping center, named the Arvada Plaza, was approximately two million dollars. The Plaza was built at the southeast corner of Independence St. and Ralston Road, adjacent to the existing Arvada Triangle and Arvada Square Shopping Centers.

The grand opening of the Arvada Plaza was held on August 8, 1963 and included three popular stores: Howell’s Department Store, Arvada Hobbies ‘N Toys, and Arvada Plaza Music, TV, Inc. The Plaza continued to expand, adding another 31,000 square feet including Furr’s Cafeteria. Arvada’s second indoor movie theater opened in the Plaza in 1965; the first film aired was *“How the West was Won.”* The theater was a huge draw for teenagers and young adults, who lined up around the block for the opening weekend of the Beatles’ movie *“HELP”* in the fall of 1965.

## The 1970s

In 1971, Lehrer’s Flowers of Denver opened in the Plaza with its own building. Also in 1971, all activities for the Arvada Harvest Festival were held in the Plaza’s parking lot—one of just two years

when the Harvest Festival was not centered in Olde Town Arvada.

In 1972, construction began on the expansion of the Arvada State Bank, including four drive-up windows and one walk-up window for customers.

On November 16, 1973, country music star Johnny Cash made a personal appearance at the Arvada Plaza Theater to promote *“The Gospel Road,”* a movie he narrated. His wife June and daughter Roseanne accompanied him on stage.

In 1974, major road construction eliminated the hypotenuse of the Arvada Triangle.

## The 1980s and Beyond

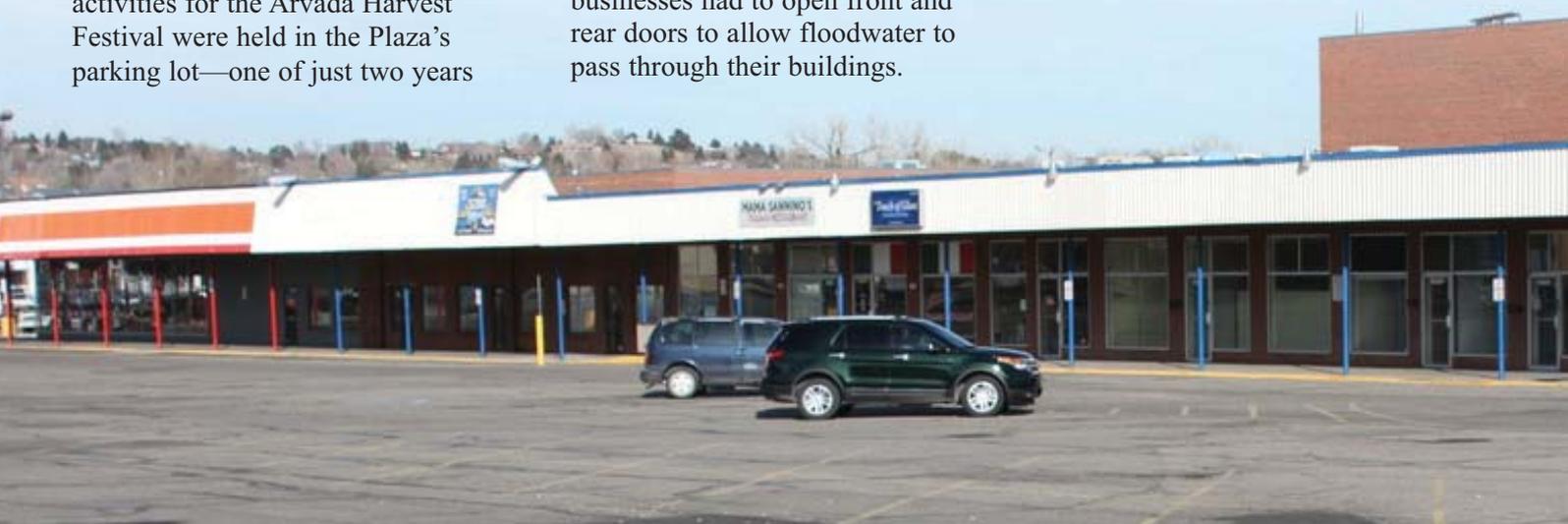
As is the case with most retail developments, over time, the Arvada Plaza began to show its age. Major anchors including Albertsons and Howell’s moved out. Vacancy rates climbed and the buildings and parking lots deteriorated.

Unfortunately, in addition to age, the Plaza faced an even more significant challenge—poor drainage and a tendency to flood during heavy rain storms. Manhole covers in the area were known to blow off and businesses had to open front and rear doors to allow floodwater to pass through their buildings.



In 1985, the City and the Chamber of Commerce created the Triangle Improvement Project (TIP) committee which included members of Council, City staff, Chamber members, and business leaders. They were tasked with creating a plan to revitalize the Triangle area. Unfortunately, there was not enough financial support from either the City or the property owners to implement the plan.

## **BEFORE**

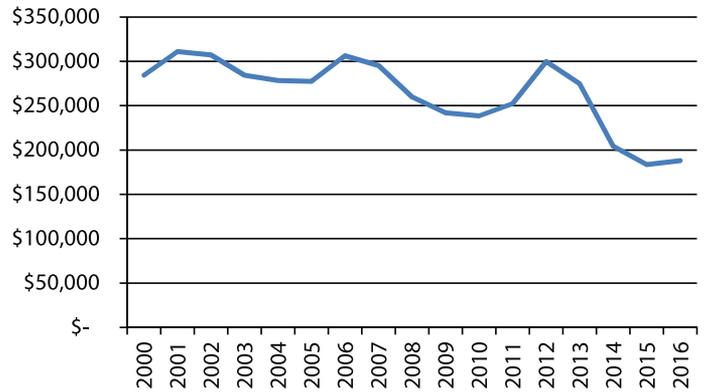


The Plaza continued to deteriorate over the next 25 years before a plan could be implemented. In 2003, the Arvada Urban Renewal Authority (AURA) created a new urban renewal area to address the deteriorating center, and in 2008, the Triangle Advisory Committee, consisting of citizens, property owners, retail tenants, and other stakeholders devised the plan that was ultimately implemented in 2013. Demolition and redevelopment of the Plaza began in 2016 – over 30 years after the City had prioritized the remediation of this blighted shopping center.

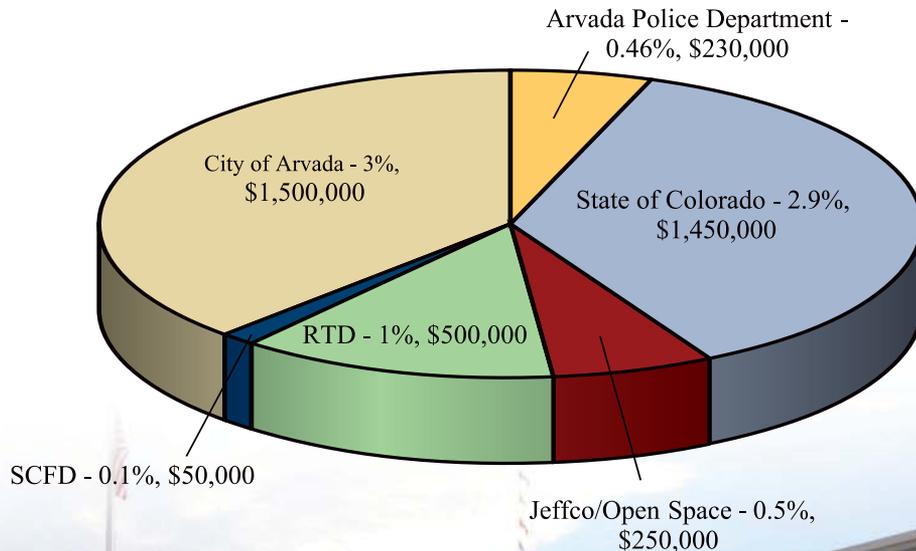
**Today**

What once was the Arvada Plaza Shopping Center is now a redeveloped site. Years of decaying pavement and hazardous materials were removed to make room for the 135,000 square foot Super Walmart, which held its grand opening on August 9, 2017. 🏠

**Historic City Sales Tax Data from Arvada Plaza**



**Projected Annual Sales Tax Nearly \$4,000,000**



**AFTER**

