



OLDE TOWN STREET CLOSURE

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Which streets in Olde Town are closed?

Sections of Olde Wadsworth Blvd. and Grandview Ave. within the core part of Olde Town where pedestrian amenities exist are closed to through traffic and remain open to pedestrians.

Why are you closing the streets in Olde Town?

The City of Arvada has historically allowed street closures in the core part of Olde Town for special events and activities that support the vibrant destinations, make use of public spaces, and allow business activity. In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to support small businesses and increased demand on public spaces, streets with pedestrian amenities were closed for an extended period for social distancing, business activity and the creation of a neighborhood destination that has proven to be successful. As a result, the City is taking the “temporary” street closures and extending them into the economic recovery effort through a “semi-permanent” street closure that will allow drivers to use paralleling streets for circulation and parking and will support community interest and business needs.

How long will the streets be closed in Olde Town?

The current plan is to extend the “temporary” closure that would normally operate on a month-to-month basis. Given the extent of COVID-19 into 2021, the City of Arvada is proposing to move the temporary closures into a five-year “semi-permanent” closure to allow the City and Business Improvement District (BID) to collect traffic data, commerce information and survey the public. If successful, the City of Arvada would initiate an effort to plan for a permanent Pedestrian Mall type environment and to work with the public and stakeholders to arrive at an updated design for the public right-of-way changes.

Where will traffic go if Olde Wadsworth is blocked?

The City of Arvada is always mindful of traffic and parking impacts when projects are proposed. The City has ensured that paralleling streets to each of the roadway closures are open and accommodation traffic. Parallel to Olde Wadsworth Blvd., drivers can use Webster Street to the east or Yukon Street to the west to access Olde Town Arvada.

Where will people park if you take away street parking?

The City of Arvada operates approximately 360 on-street parking spaces in Olde Town and provides access to 600 garage parking spaces in the Transit Hub and 400 parking spaces in the West Lot and Webster surface parking lots. Only a fraction of the on-street parking spaces are impacted as a result of the street closures, and visitors can park on paralleling streets, in parking lots or within the Transit Hub.

How has the City analyzed other closures to plan for the closures in Olde Town?

The Olde Town Arvada BID has consulted with, and continues to consult with, other communities to discuss street closures and other features that may be incorporated into the proposed plan. Additionally, a number of planners have been consulted to learn what makes a street closure successful.

Where have closures worked well and where have they not?

Temporary street closures have been incorporated across Colorado and the nation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A number of these communities are now considering making their street closures more permanent. We need to look no further than Denver’s 16th Street Mall and the Pearl Street Mall in Boulder to see two examples of long-established street closures in Colorado.

Why is it better to close the road than to allow traffic to drive by the businesses?

Creating a pedestrian environment will support and enhance the current functionality of Olde Town as a destination in the community.

Will restaurants be open outside during the winter months?

Potentially. The City of Arvada is developing a patio design that will allow for businesses and their customers to make use of the public right-of-way during all seasons. Umbrellas and other street furniture to support these efforts will be made available to the businesses; however, enclosed structures and heating elements must meet Fire Code and Building Code requirements. The patio designs and site furnishings will have limitations.

Is there something not working in Olde Town that we are trying to fix?

The current road closures were planned and executed with the belief they would be temporary. The new proposed plan looks to improve the aesthetic of the street closure and align them more closely with the character of a historic district.

What has Arvada learned from other cities which have made a similar transition to a pedestrian model?

The City of Arvada is monitoring regional, national and international trends. The City has learned that a bold vision to establish public spaces along with investments in transit infrastructure (such as the G Line), comfortable bicycle facilities and pedestrian walkways reduces car dependency to bring more people - and not cars - to create a successful environment. At the regional level, the City and County of Denver has permanently closed Bannock Street and is working on its Outdoor Master Plan for key parts of Denver. Another example is the City of Seattle with its neighborhood routes permanently closed to motor vehicles that has promoted comfortable walking and biking connections to various neighborhood destinations. Internationally, major cities such as Berlin, Melan and Paris are eliminating car traffic from public spaces and strengthening their public transportation and shared mobility options. This formula for growth management is working, and Arvada is applying the principles of placemaking and alternative transportation within the context of a first tier suburb of Denver.

Has there been any type of parking study undertaken to determine what long-term effects there may be from permanent street closures?

Yes. The Mobility & Planning Innovations (MPI) Division of Arvada Public Works is responsible for managing parking. The City of Arvada follows a detailed guide on how to manage parking using thresholds (parking demand) for peak periods. During daily enforcement activities, the field team is collecting data to monitor parking levels and compare it against the threshold criteria. Overflow parking is currently available at the Transit Hub and side streets during peak periods and will continue to be monitored and analyzed by the MPI Division.

How many parking spaces will be lost due to the closures?

55 On-Street Parking Spaces from a total of 360 On-Street Parking Spaces in Olde Town.

Olde Wadsworth from Grant to W. 57th Ave.: 23 spaces

Olde Wadsworth from W. 57th Ave. to Grandview Ave.: 16

Grandview Ave. from Olde Wadsworth to Webster Street: 16

What will be done to keep people from parking in the private lots adjacent to the closed streets?

The driveway connections will be blocked off to prevent vehicles from driving, entering and exiting. The lots will need to be accessed from other driveway connections.

How was the survey asking the community's opinion on the closures administered?

The previous survey was an online survey administered in September of 2020. It was promoted through various social media channels, shared on Olde Town Arvada's website and promoted in Olde Town Arvada's community email newsletter. At that time, 1,200 people responded to the survey with approximately 90 percent support to continue the closures. Here is a link to a new survey, which is being administered in a similar manner.

Why are the most important factors considered related to traffic patterns and parking? Why not pedestrian safety and quality of life?

The City of Arvada reviews all traffic modes together when assessing safety, traffic operations and quality of life. This allows for considerations of all views and needs from the community and ensures that business needs, transit needs, maintenance access and emergency response are considered as part of an overall approach. Prioritizing modes within the public right-of-way is influenced by the adjacent land-uses and the overall transportation system that serves neighborhoods.

Will there be a 4-way stop put in at 57th Ave. and Yukon Street?

The City of Arvada has assessed the intersection of W. 57th Ave. and Yukon Street for a 4-way stop control conditions. Given that stop signs (and traffic signals) are installed based on Federal requirements noted in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the intersection does not qualify for an all-way stop control. It's worth noting that the primary issue at the intersection is sight distance and driver speeds. The City of Arvada has gone through a process to evaluate alternatives to a 4-way stop at 57th Ave./Yukon Street and other similar intersections along the W. 57th Ave. Corridor. The project has identified a series of traffic circles to help slow driver speeds, which will then allow for increased safety.

Have 100 percent of Olde town and surrounding businesses been surveyed by the BID about the closures?

The businesses of Olde Town have been surveyed several times about the street closures and the extensions. The BID is continuing to consult with the businesses of the Olde Town Arvada BID, both within and outside of the closures.

Are pedestrians going to have right of way when crossing 57th Avenue?

Pedestrians will need to follow Colorado state laws as noted in the Colorado Model Traffic Code related to right-of-way, including at intersections. Marked crosswalks will remain as-is, and closed streets will be enhanced with physical barriers to prevent motorists from driving into a roadway that is dedicated to pedestrians.

How will the City ensure that accessible parking spaces are available for those who need it?

The City of Arvada abides by Federal requirements for disabled parking. For an environment such as Olde Town with multiple blocks of on-street parking, these regulations require an overall number of ADA parking spaces relative to the overall number of on-street parking. The closure has resulted in 305 on-street parking spaces of which 14 are designated as ADA with extended four-hour parking compared to the two-hour spaces. The ADA requirement is four percent (12 spaces) of the total parking, thus the City exceeds the ADA parking requirement and is taking steps to accommodate disabled individuals as best as possible. Additionally, the Transit Hub is ADA accessible.

Will the current open container variance continue with the ongoing street closures?

The current open container variance is allowed through an Executive Order issued by the State of Colorado. The City will continue to allow the open container so long as the State's order remains in effect and there are no public nuisance concerns that are created by the order.

Will there be opportunities for pop-up shops/kiosks?

There are currently no formal plans for pop-up shops and kiosks on the streets. Occasionally, existing businesses within Olde Town will host a pop-up shop.

Why is the City providing the furniture?

Street furniture provided in the public-right-of-way is being designed in accordance to the characteristics of Olde Town, which is a requirement for businesses with buildings, signs and all aesthetics. The design maintains the integrity of a historic district and provides uniformity for maintenance needs. It creates an organized and well-managed image appropriate for a Pedestrian Mall. Given that the street furniture is industrial grade intended for regular use, weather, etc., the cost of the furniture is exorbitant for a small business. The City's intent is to support small businesses and respect the character of Olde Town through this effort.

What is the goal of the Olde Town Closures?

The City of Arvada is interested in supporting the Olde Town community including residents, businesses and visitors that are interested in a vibrant and safe environment. The City has experimented with temporary street closures, which have been met with support from the community, throughout the pandemic. The semi-permanent project is intended to create a more comfortable "place" for pedestrians and a space for individuals to social distance while visiting businesses and public spaces.