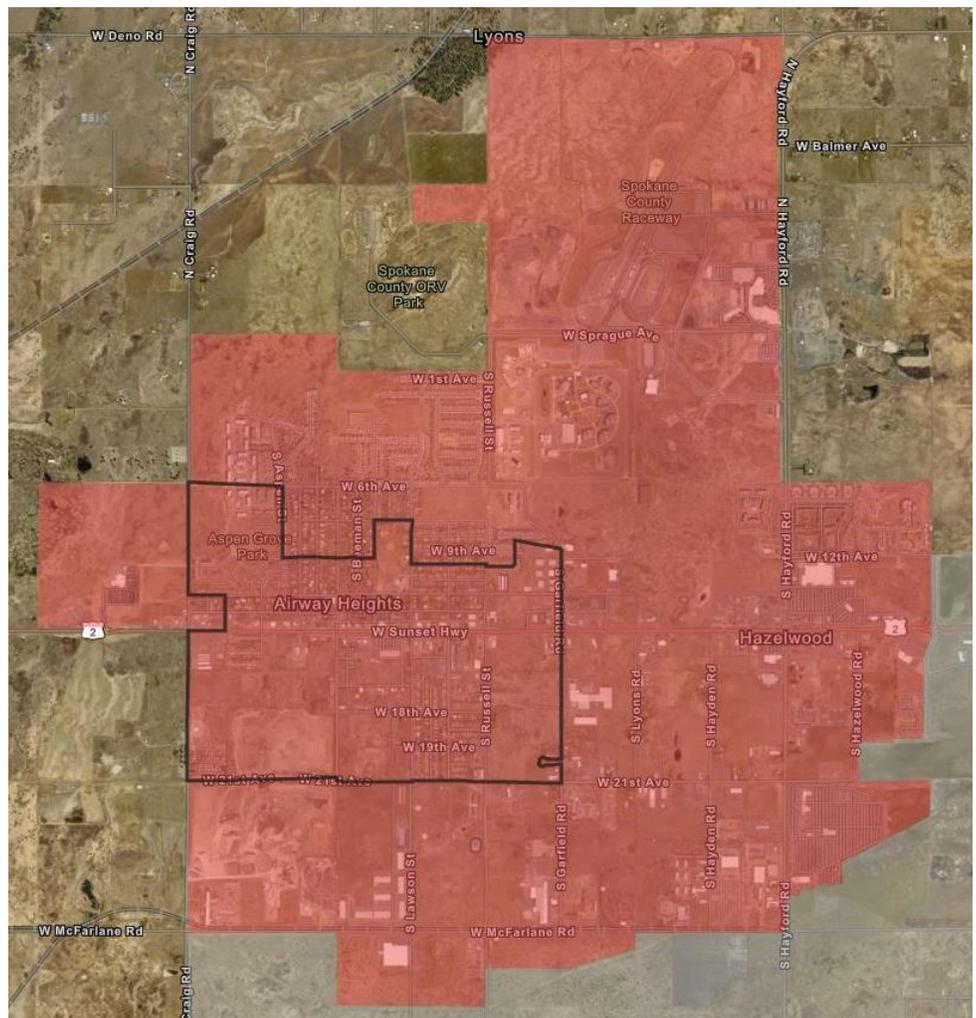


City of Airway Heights: Downtown Plan

To: Heather Trautman, Principal Planner
From: Rachel Granrath, Aren Murcar, SCJ Alliance
Date: August 3, 2020
Project: Downtown Plan
Subject: Demographics and Economic Profiles: Downtown Airway Heights

Context

The adjacent figure shows the outline of the area defined in this document as the “downtown Airway Heights area”. This planning effort will help determine the boundaries for downtown Airway Heights. So for purposes of this baseline assessment we considered a larger area than typically considered relative to the downtown. The figures, tables, and data in this document summarize data contained within this boundary to better understand the demographic, housing, and economic characteristics of the downtown area.



Population Density

The average population density for the City of Airway Heights is 1,634 residents per square mile. The downtown appears to contain areas of greater density than the city average, though most blocks fall within the range where the average density falls. Density appears to increase further north of US-2.

Population per Square Mile



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Figure 1: Population Density

Housing Unit Density

This figure shows where the concentration of existing housing exists. By looking at the density of housing units per acre we can get a better idea of where densities already exist and where they could increase. Housing unit density is fairly low along the US-2 corridor simply because there is a lack of housing on the highway in general, though pockets of higher housing density exist within a block of US-2.

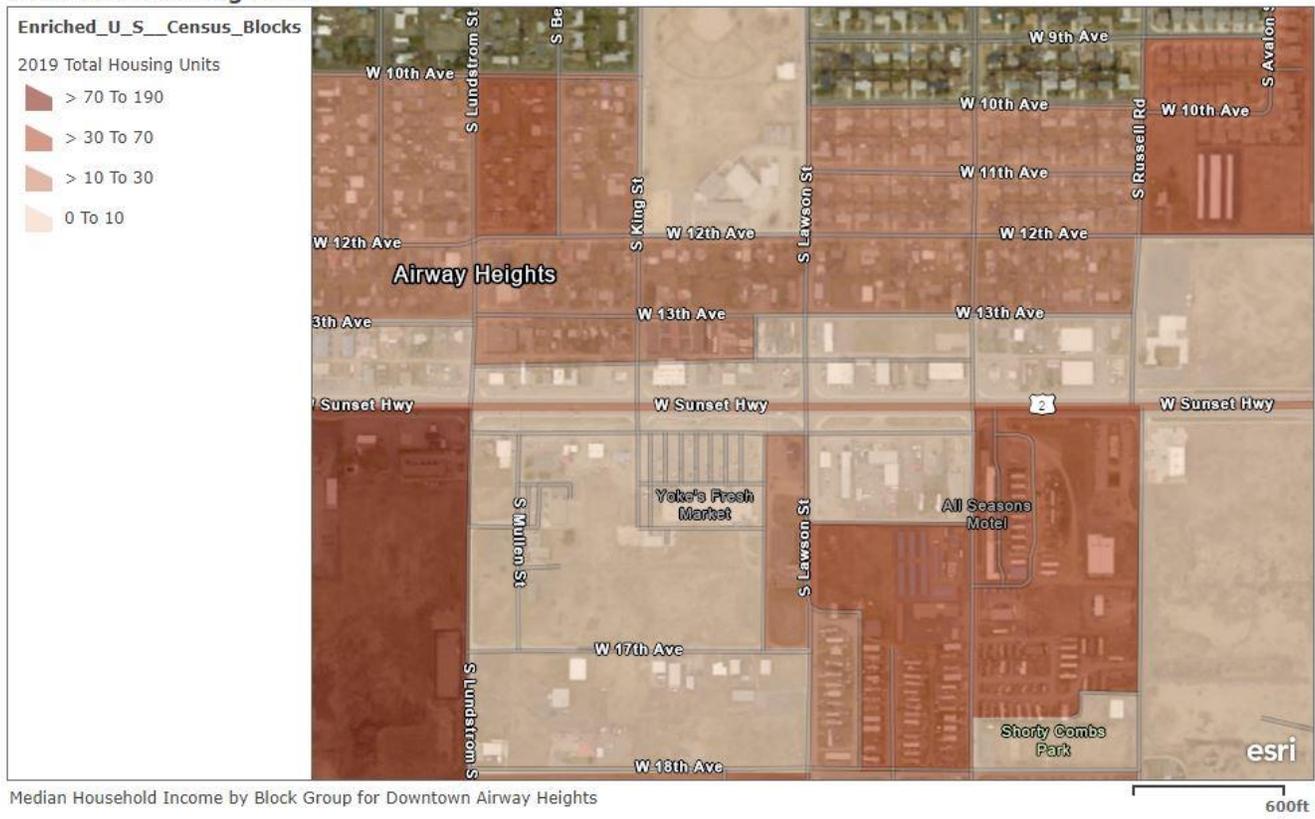
Housing Unit Density per Acre



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Figure 2: Housing Unit Density

2019 Total Housing Units



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Figure 3: Total Housing Units

Figure 3 best shows the total housing units per block, revealing the scarcity of housing along US-2. Figures 1, 2, and 3 together paint a picture of which blocks near the downtown have the highest intensity of occupied, residential development. While housing is scarce along US-2, both population density and housing density increase to the north and south of the highway.

Housing Units

The majority of occupied housing units in Airway Heights are renter-occupied (57.9% according to the 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles). However, blocks north of US-2 tend to have a majority of owner-occupied units (see Figure 4), while those south of US-2 tend to have a greater percentage of renter-occupied units (see Figure 5).

Owner-Occupied

Percentage of Owner Occupied Units, 2019

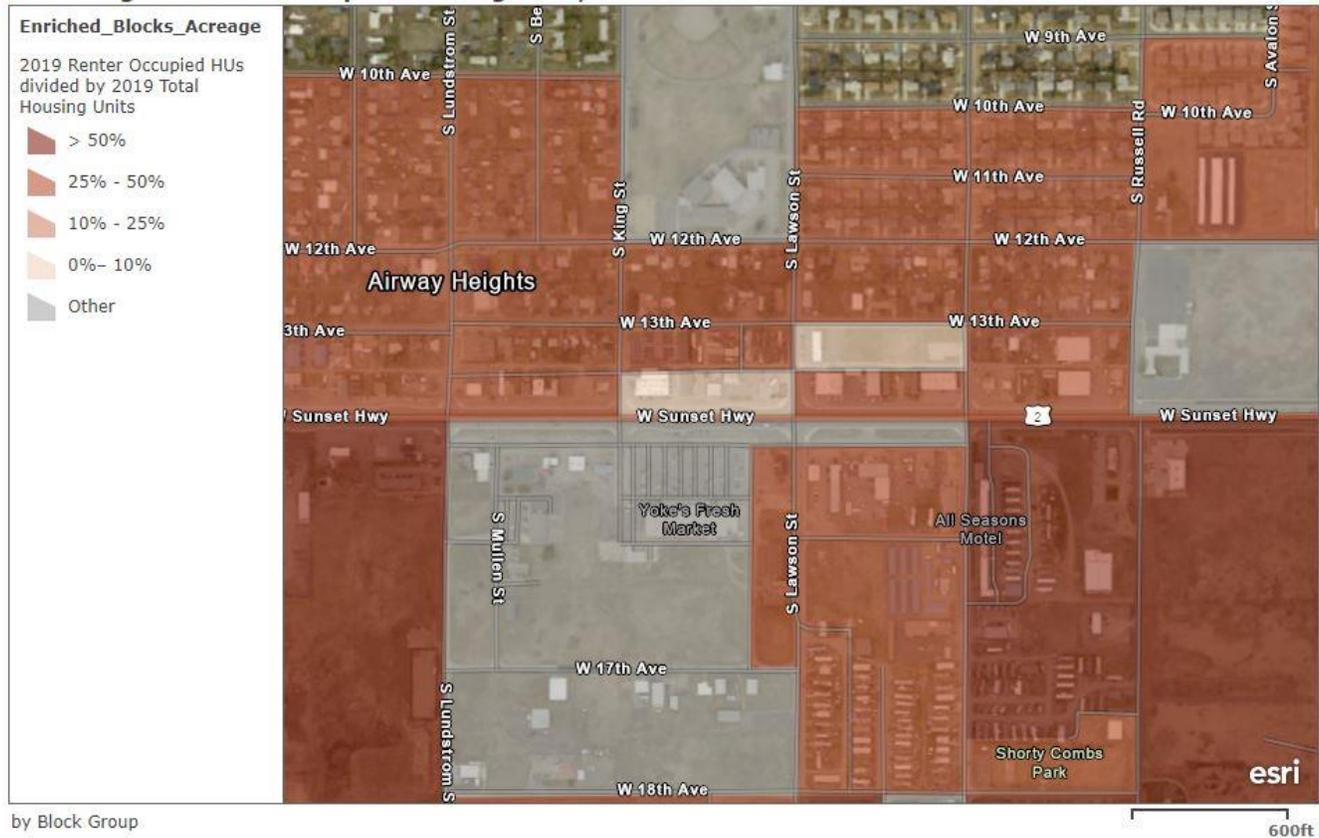


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Figure 4: Owner-Occupied Units

Renter-Occupied

Percentage of Renter Occupied Housing Units, 2019



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Figure 5: Renter-Occupied Units

Vacant Housing Units

According to the 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, 8.6% of housing units in Airway Heights are vacant. Comparing the downtown area to the city as a whole reveals locations where there are a relatively high number of vacant housing units. Blocks to the north of US-2 are generally within the range that is on-par with the city. Blocks along US-2 and to the south of US-2 tend to have higher vacancy rates than the city average. These areas also align with those that have a higher percentage of renter-occupied units.

Percentage of Vacant Housing Units, 2019



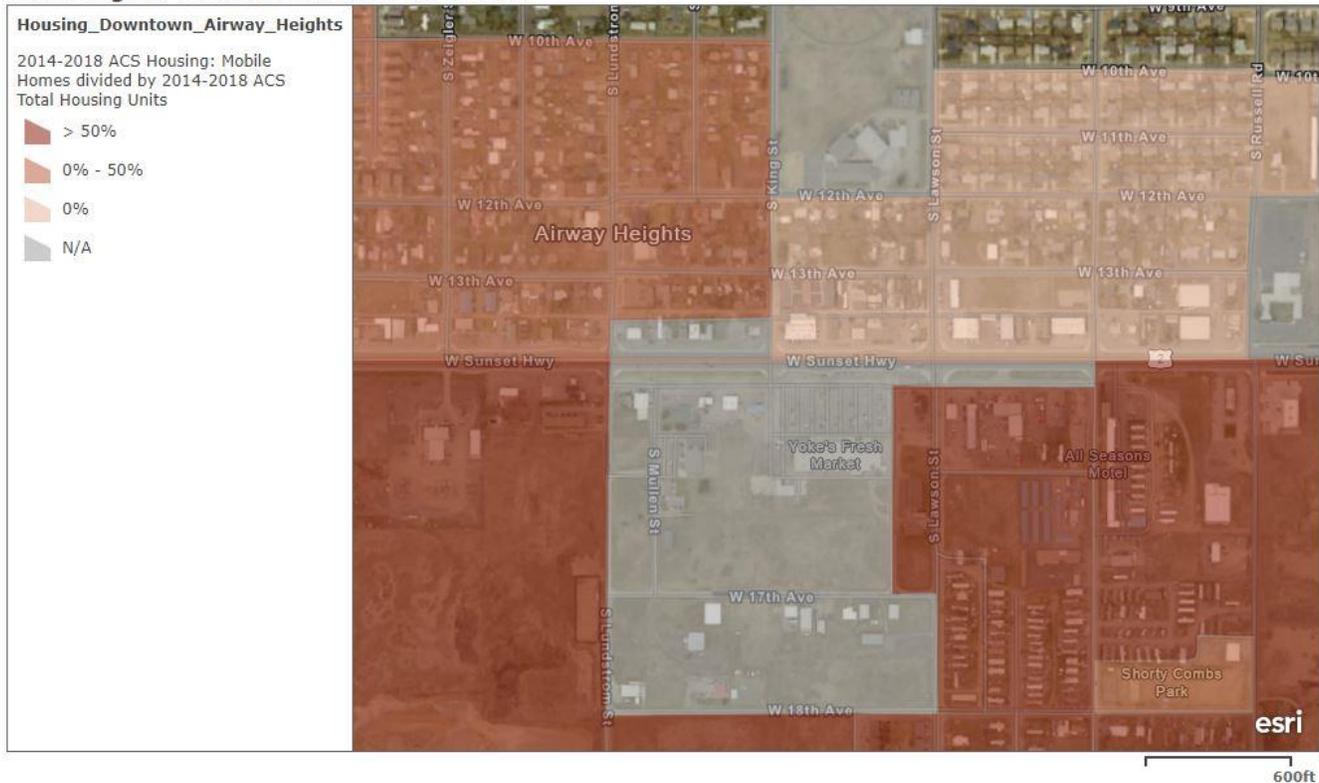
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Figure 6: Vacant Housing Units

Mobile Homes

There are also a significant number of mobile homes in Airway Heights. The census blocks south of US-2 have a higher presence of mobile home units than the blocks north of the highway. 13.6% of housing units in Airway Heights are mobile homes, but in the blocks to the south of US-2 in the downtown area mobile homes account for over 50% of housing units on those blocks, emphasizing the high presence of mobile homes in downtown Airway Heights.

Percentage of Mobile Homes to Total Homes



Source: U.S. Census Bureau | Esri Community Maps Contributors, City of Spokane, Spokane County, WA State Parks GIS, BuildingFootprintUSA, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, INCREMENT P, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA | Spokane Image Consortium, USDA FSA, GeoEye, Maxar, CNES/Airbus DS

Figure 7: Mobile Homes to Total Homes

Economic Indicators

Median Home Value

The median home value for Airway Heights is \$169,300. Figure 8 shows blocks that are over and below this median value, while also pointing out blocks with a median home value of zero and those where the median is over 125% of the city's median value.

Blocks on the north side of US-2 tend to have median value higher than the city's median, while those south of US-2 tend to have values lower than the city median. Interestingly, the blocks in the downtown area with the highest median values are those right along US-2. Though, looking at Figures 2 and 3, there aren't many housing units in these blocks, meaning trends in these high home value blocks may not be very representative of the area. Additionally, the mix of land uses throughout these block groups and the presence of mobile home parks* may skew these values.

*NOTE: *One of the high-value blocks is a mobile home park- does this seem accurate, or is the data reported in a way that misrepresents the actual values of the homes*

Median Home Value



Median Home Value by Block Group for Downtown Airway Heights

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Figure 8: Median Home Value

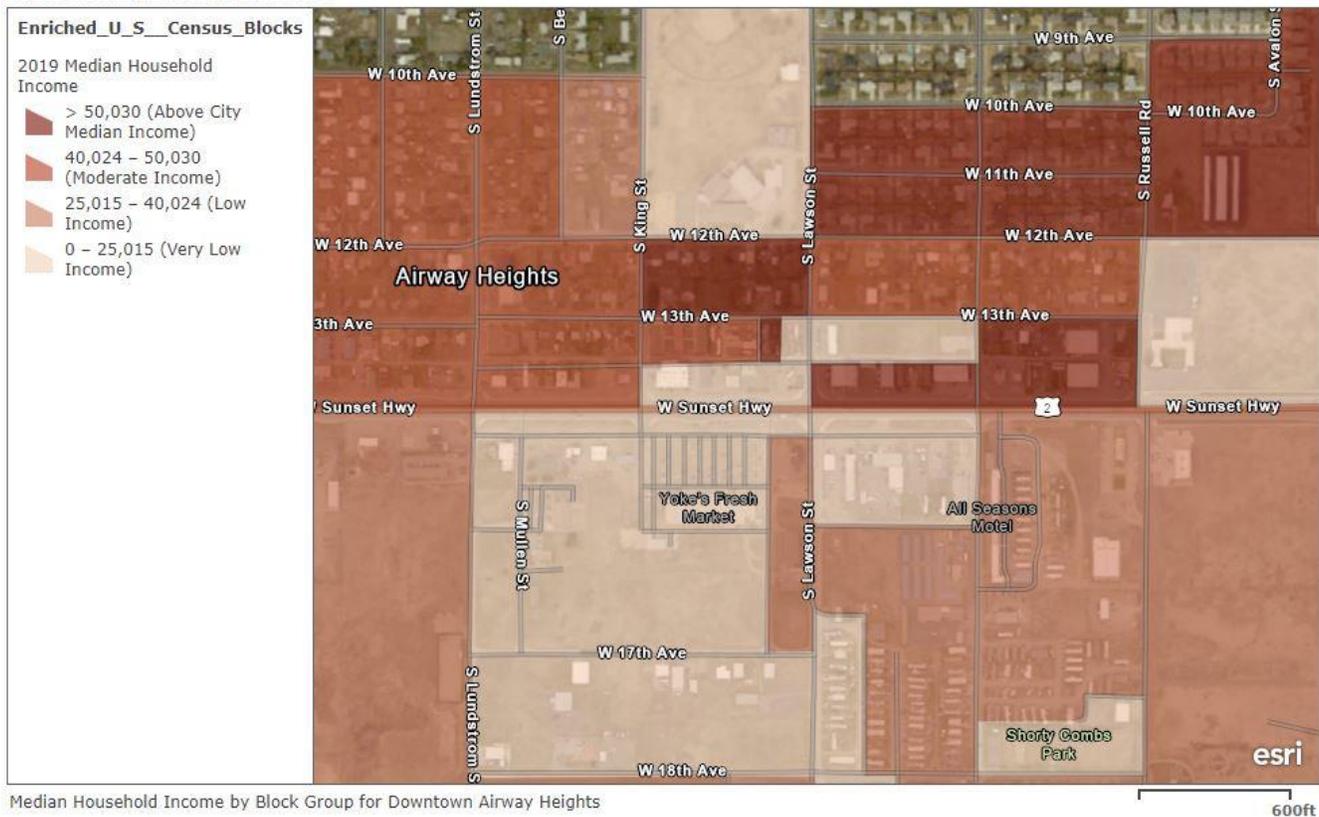
Median Household Income

The median income for Airway Heights is \$50,030. Figure 9 displays the blocks where median household incomes are above the city median, slightly below the city median (moderate income), significantly below the city median (low income), and more than 50% below the city median (very low income). Some blocks that show up as very low income are only in that category because there are no households in those blocks, and therefore there is a zero value for median income.

These values come from the affordable housing guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which designate very low income households as those with household incomes below 50% of the area’s median household income, low-income households as those with incomes between 50% and 80% of the area’s median income, and moderate income households as those between 80% and 95% of the area’s median household income.

The blocks with higher median incomes are all north of US-2, while the blocks south of US-2 tend to have low or very low median incomes. This can help determine the locations in downtown Airway Heights that are most in need of affordable housing.

Median Household Income



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Figure 9: Median Household Income

Employment of Downtown Residents

Table 1 shows the industries that residents living in or near downtown Airway Heights work in. These are not necessarily representative of the businesses that are located in the downtown, rather the working population of the downtown residents. The downtown Airway Heights labor force consists of approximately 1,086 people.

Downtown residents tend to work in the retail trade, health care, and accommodation/food services industries. There is also a significant presence (5-10%) of public administration, manufacturing, construction, admin/waste management, and unemployed workers.

Table 1: Employees per Industry

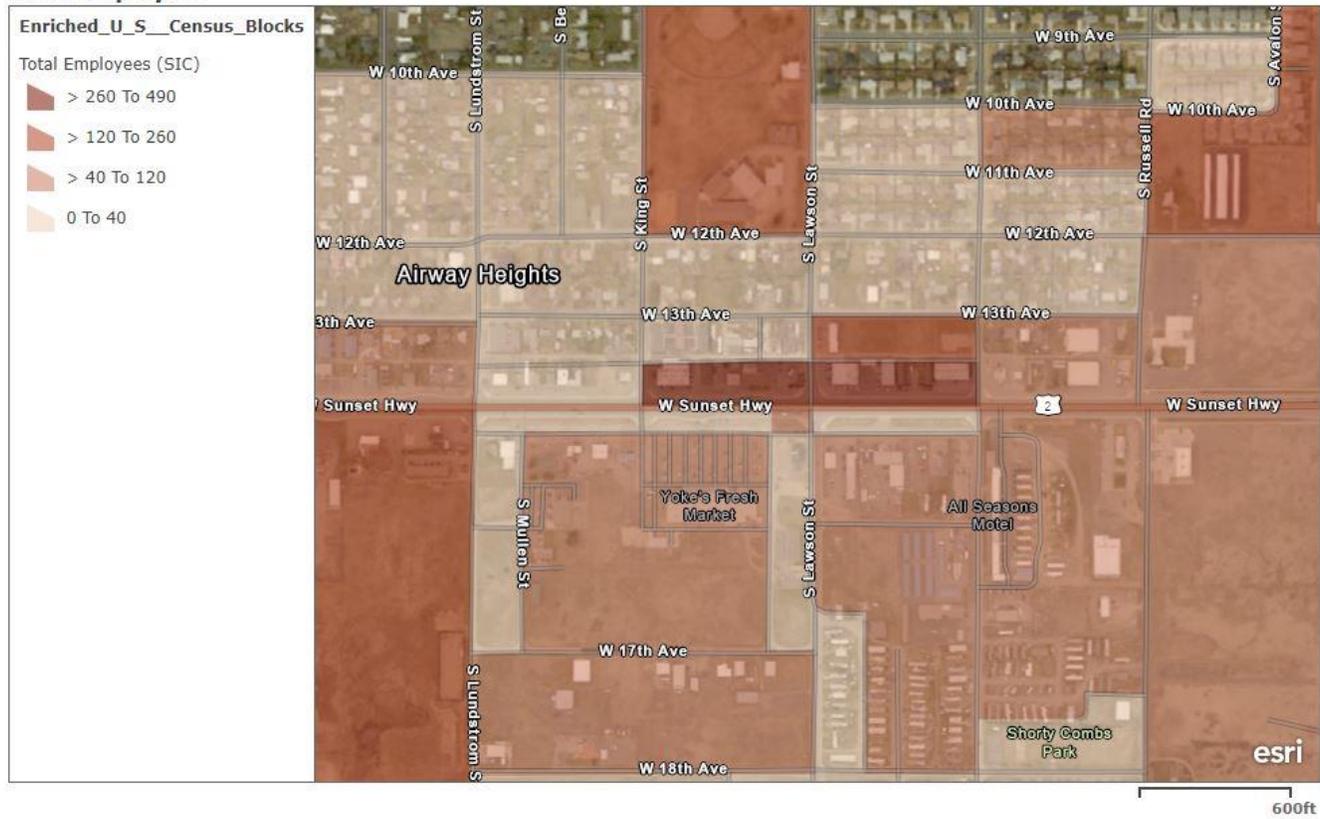
Industry (2019)	Employees	Percentage
Agriculture	0	0.0%
Mining	0	0.0%
Construction	63	5.8%
Manufacturing	71	6.5%
Wholesale Trade	10	0.9%
Retail Trade	217	20.0%
Transportation	28	2.6%
Utilities	3	0.3%
Information	0	0.0%
Finance/Insurance	43	4.0%
Real Estate	0	0.0%
Professional/Tech Svcs	37	3.4%
Management	0	0.0%
Admin/Waste Mgmt	61	5.6%
Educational Services	6	0.6%
Health Care	148	13.6%
Arts/Entertainment/Rec	7	0.6%
Accommodation/Food Svcs	195	18.0%
Other Services	26	2.4%
Public Administration	91	8.4%
2019 Unemployed Population 16+	80	7.4%
Total	1086	100.0%

Employment

According to the 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, the labor force participation rate in Airway Heights is 40.2%, and the unemployment rate is 5.6%.

As opposed to the employment of downtown residents displayed in Table 1, Figures 10 and 11 show the distribution of employment at business locations in downtown Airway Heights. Figure 10 shows the number of employees at business locations per Census block. The areas with higher numbers of employees include the retail commercial blocks along US-2 and Sunset Elementary School to the north of US-2. Additionally, larger blocks with commercial presence to the southwest and northeast of the central downtown show a high number of employees.

Total Employees



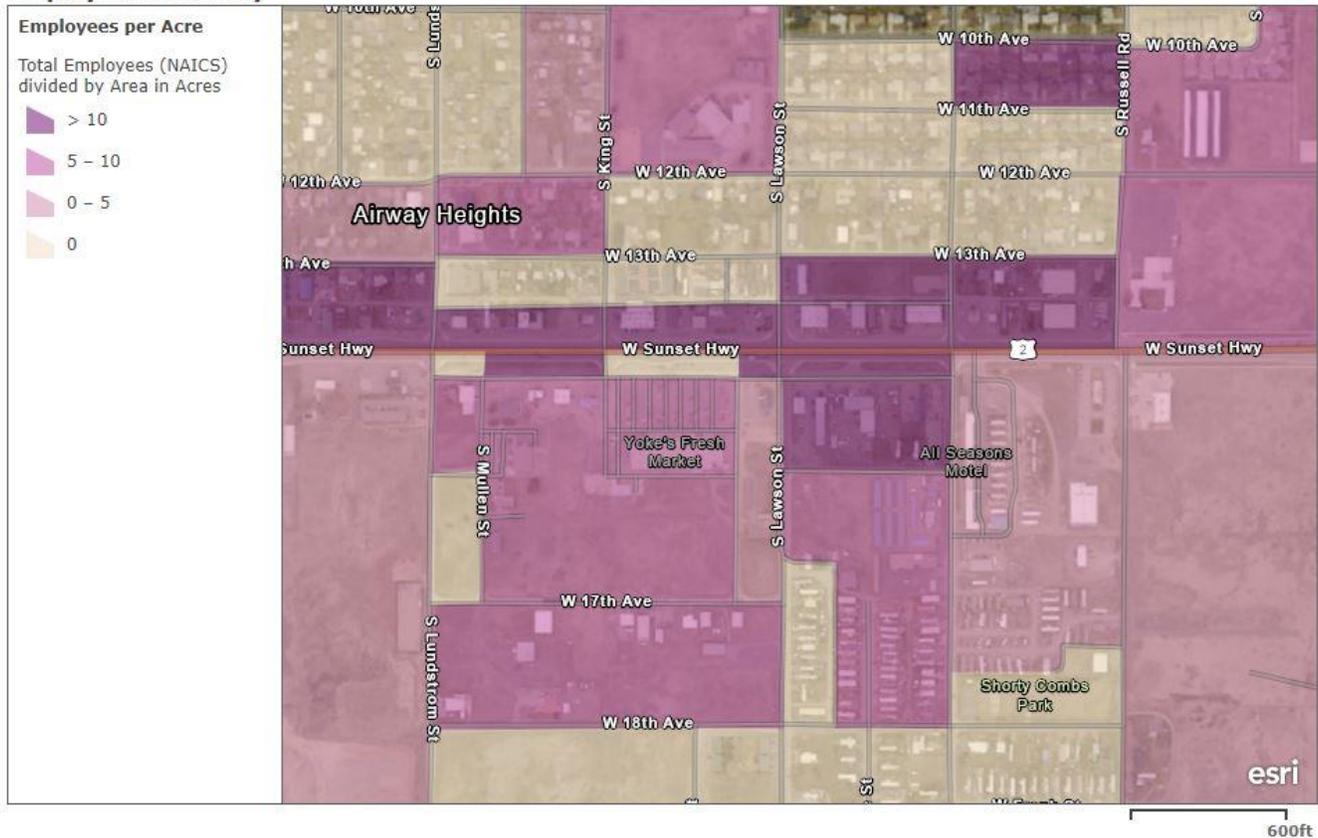
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Figure 10: Total Employees per Block

Employment Density

Employment density is highest along the US-2 corridor, which is expected due to US-2 being the main commercial corridor in the city. But there are pockets of employment density off the highway as well, such as Sunset Elementary School. Some residential blocks have higher employment densities, which may be the result of home businesses or inconsistencies in how employment data was reported. Nevertheless, this figure shows where employment centers are trending in the downtown and confirms that business frontage on US-2 is vital to downtown Airway Heights.

Employment Density



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Figure 11: Employees per Acre

Downtown Industry

Table 2 shows the share of industries located in the downtown Airway Heights area. Predominant industries include Food Service/Drinking Establishments, Retail Trade, Accommodation/Food Service, Construction, and Other Service (excluding Public Administration) businesses. Manufacturing and Public Administration businesses also have a presence in the area, while all other businesses make up less than 5% of total businesses in the area. This data doesn't say anything about the size or number of employees at these businesses, so business trends may not be fully represented in this table, but it does indicate trends about business competition and success in the downtown area.

Table 2: NAICS Businesses

NAICS Business	Number	% of Total
Construction Businesses (NAICS)	10	10.4%
Manufacturing Businesses (NAICS)	7	7.3%
Wholesale Trade Businesses (NAICS)	3	3.1%
Retail Trade Businesses (NAICS)	13	13.5%
Motor Vehicles/Parts Dealers Bus (NAICS)	1	1.0%
Finance/Insurance Businesses (NAICS)	1	1.0%
Real Estate/Rent/Leasing Bus (NAICS)	2	2.1%
Prof/Scientific/Tech Service Bus (NAICS)	1	1.0%
Educational Services - Businesses (NAICS)	1	1.0%
HealthCare/Social Assist Bus (NAICS)	1	1.0%
Arts/Entertainment/Rec Bus (NAICS)	1	1.0%
Accommodation/Food Service Bus (NAICS)	13	13.5%
Food Service/Drinking Estab Bus (NAICS)	12	12.5%
Other Service excl Pub Admin Bus (NAICS)	18	18.8%
Auto Repair/Maintenance Bus (NAICS)	4	4.2%
Public Administration Bus (NAICS)	7	7.3%
Unclassified Establishments Bus (NAICS)	1	1.0%
Total	96	100.0%