Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan Adoption
(Ordinance No. 2616)

City Council
Public Hearing

September 16, 2024

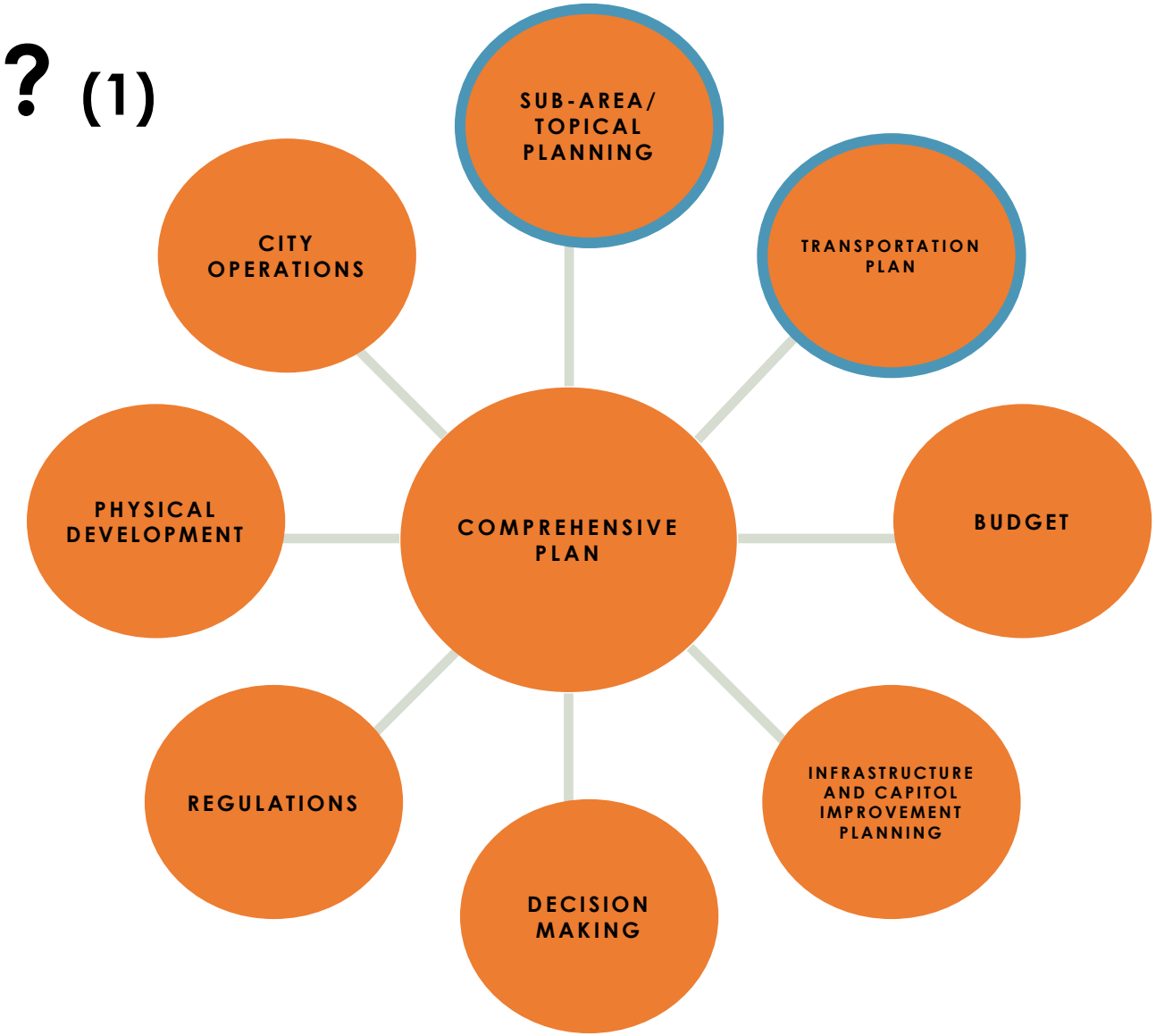
Presentation Overview

- What is the Comprehensive Plan
- Plan Development and Outreach
- Overview of the Plan
- Planning Commission Recommendation

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

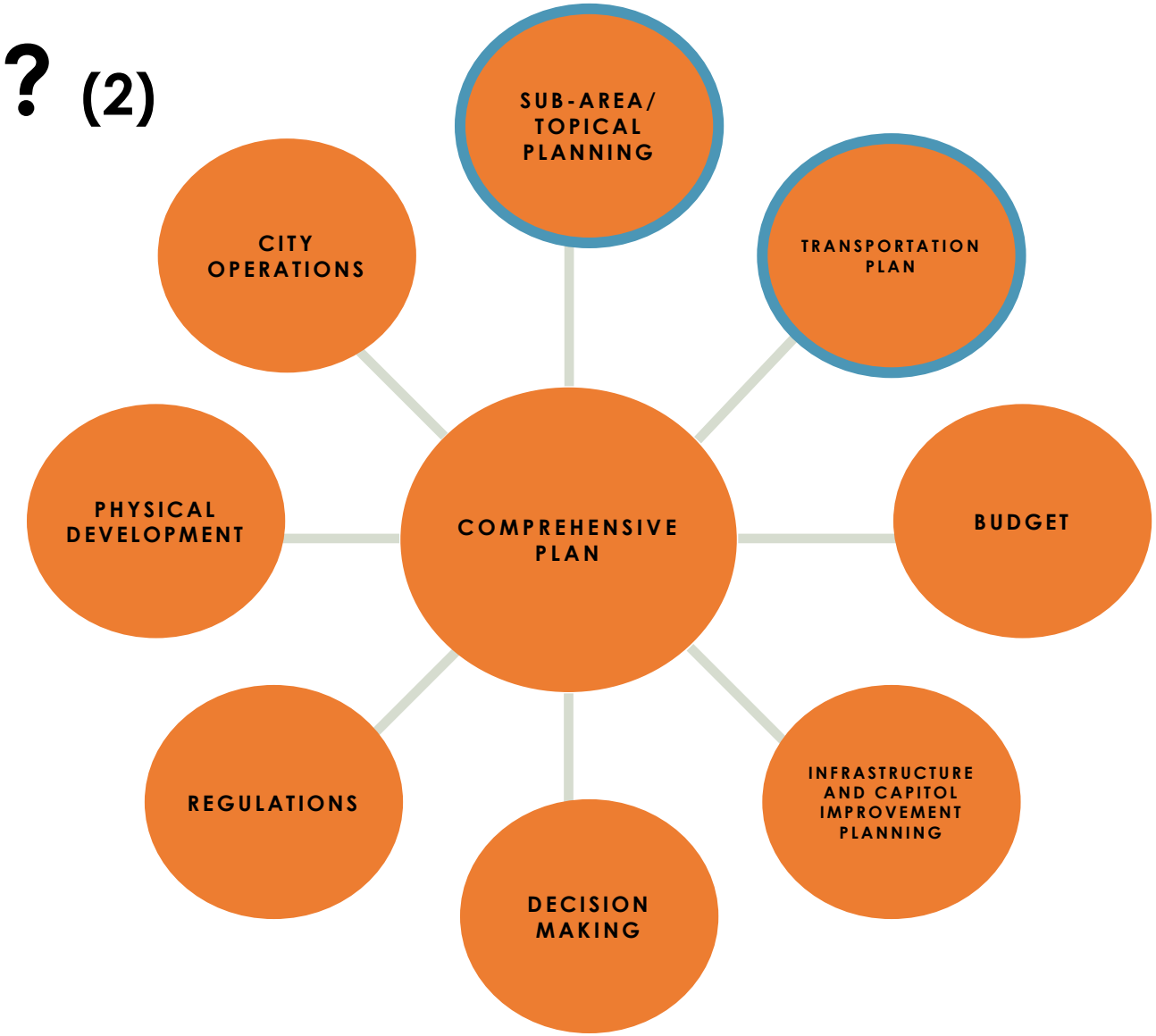
What is the Comprehensive Plan? (1)

- 20 Year Plan reflective of the Community's desires
- Advisory Document
- Roadmap for the physical development of the city.
  - Land Use
  - Mobility
  - Infrastructure Planning
  - Parks, Open Space and Public Spaces



What is the Comprehensive Plan? (2)

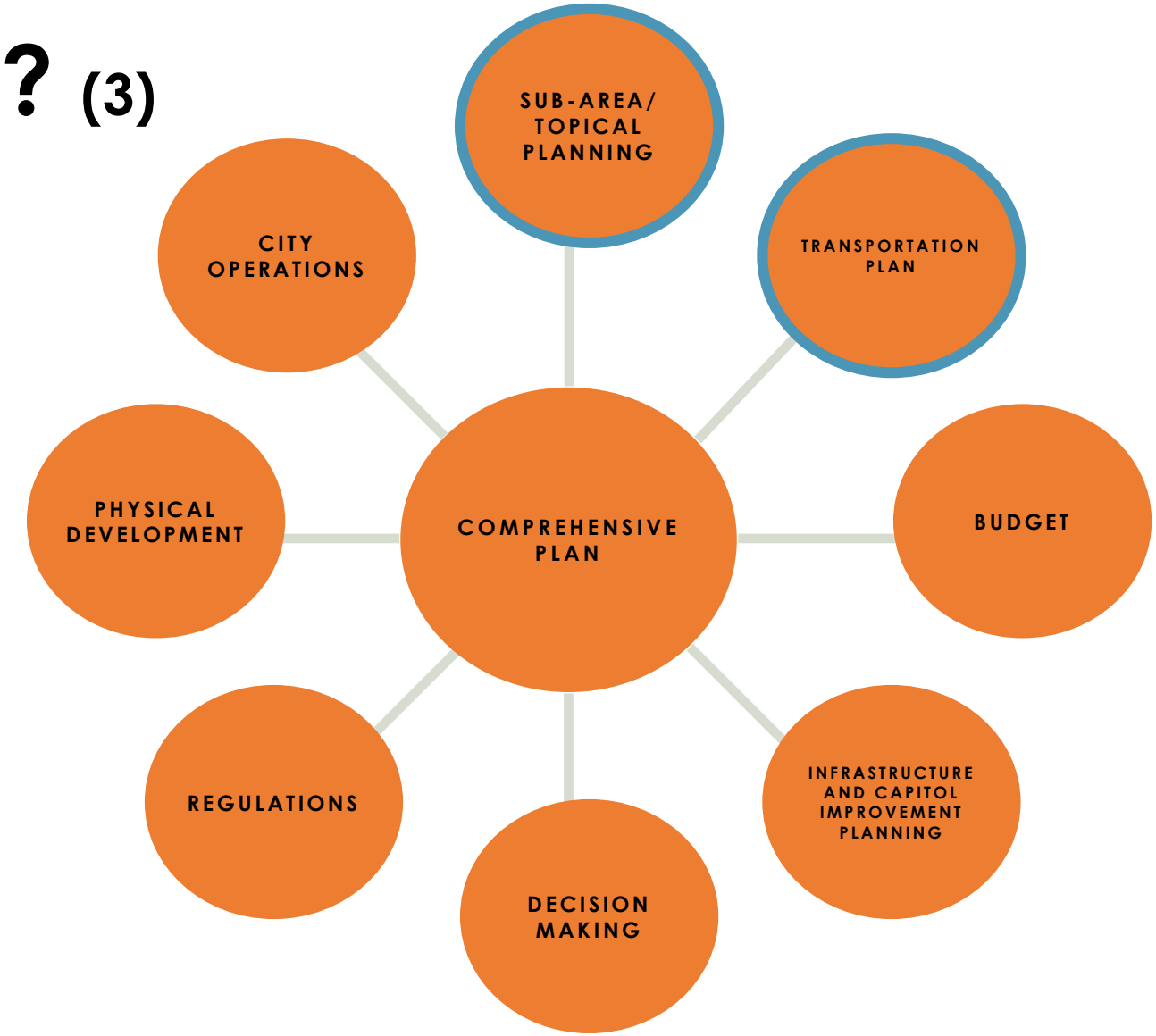
- A Document that influences:
  - City operations
  - Decision making
  - Budget, operations and programming
  - **Future and Topical Plans**
  - Regulatory actions
  - **Land Development Code/Zoning**
  - Inform the work of Boards and Commissions



What is the Comprehensive Plan? (3)

The Plan is not:

- Law or Regulatory/Zoning
- A detailed blueprint for how to achieve specific outcomes
- All encompassing
- A static document



Plan Development and Public Outreach

Planning Process

2020

Step 1 — Project Initiation

Step 2 — Community Engagement

Step 3 — Market and Demographic Analysis

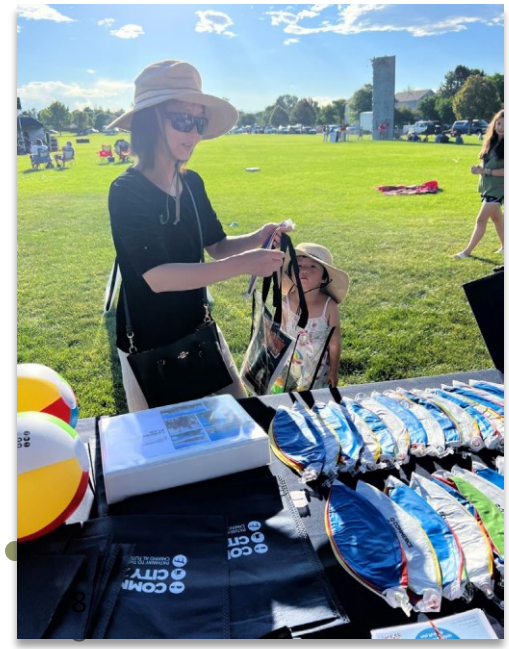
Step 4 — Existing Conditions

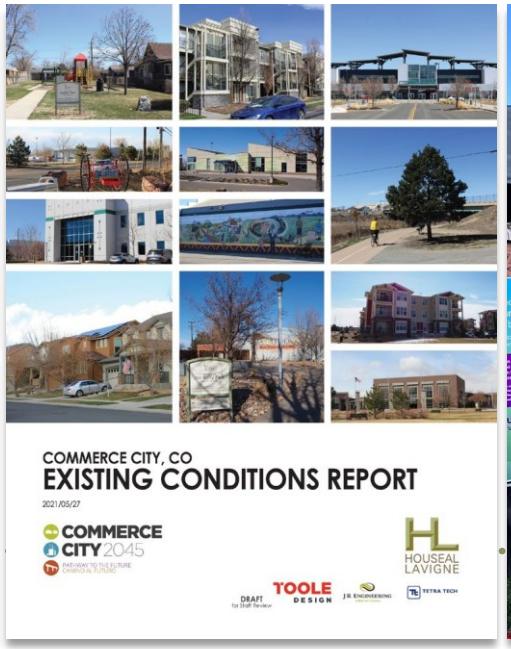
Step 5 — Vision, Goals, Core Principles

Step 6 — Corridor Frameworks

Step 7 — Citywide Plans and Policies

Step 8 — Plan Document and Adoption





Who has been involved?

- Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Staff Working Group (SWG)
- Planning Commission / City Council
- City Staff
- Professional Consultants
- The Community

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan is founded on an inclusive and engaging community outreach process. This process gathered input from a wide range of community members, including residents, business owners and operators, developers and property owners, and service providers. Through collecting input and facilitating discussion, outreach helped to identify issues, opportunities, potential actions, strengths and assets, and overall public opinion and a vision for what the Plan should address. **There were more than 36,300 "points of engagement" across all forms of virtual, in-person, and immersive "pop-up/pop-in" outreach.**

IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS
1,505

- **23** KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS
- **48** TOTAL WORKSHOPS
- **1,495** TOTAL WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

FACILITATED OUTREACH AND WORKSHOPS

- **18** TOTAL WORKSHOPS
- **343** TOTAL POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT

TOTAL MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED (ALL FORMATS)
48

TOTAL POINTS OF OVERALL ENGAGEMENT (ALL FORMATS)
36,300

CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

- **18** TOTAL MEETINGS
- **176** TOTAL POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT

POP-UP/POP-IN ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS
174

6,247 WEBSITE ENGAGEMENT (UNIQUE CLICKS)

HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING CONNECTED NEWSLETTERS
27,083

- **611** POSTERS, FLYERS, AND POSTCARDS
- **700** BEACH BALLS AND TOTE BAGS DISTRIBUTED
- **503** OUTREACH IN THE PARKS

OUTREACH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic presented a challenge for outreach efforts, but staff and the project team adapted by using virtual meetings, workshops, and online tools to engage community members from home. This allowed the community to view presentations, ask questions, provide input, and remain actively engaged throughout the process. As social distancing requirements lifted, the project team worked with staff to publicize the process widely in person at community events throughout the City.

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPANTS
6,232

- **184** COMMUNITY SURVEYS TAKEN
- **15** DIY KIT WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS
- **95** OUTREACH IN SCHOOLS

COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

- **5** TOTAL WORKSHOPS
- **45** TOTAL POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT

AGENCY AND PARTNER ORGANIZATION MEETINGS

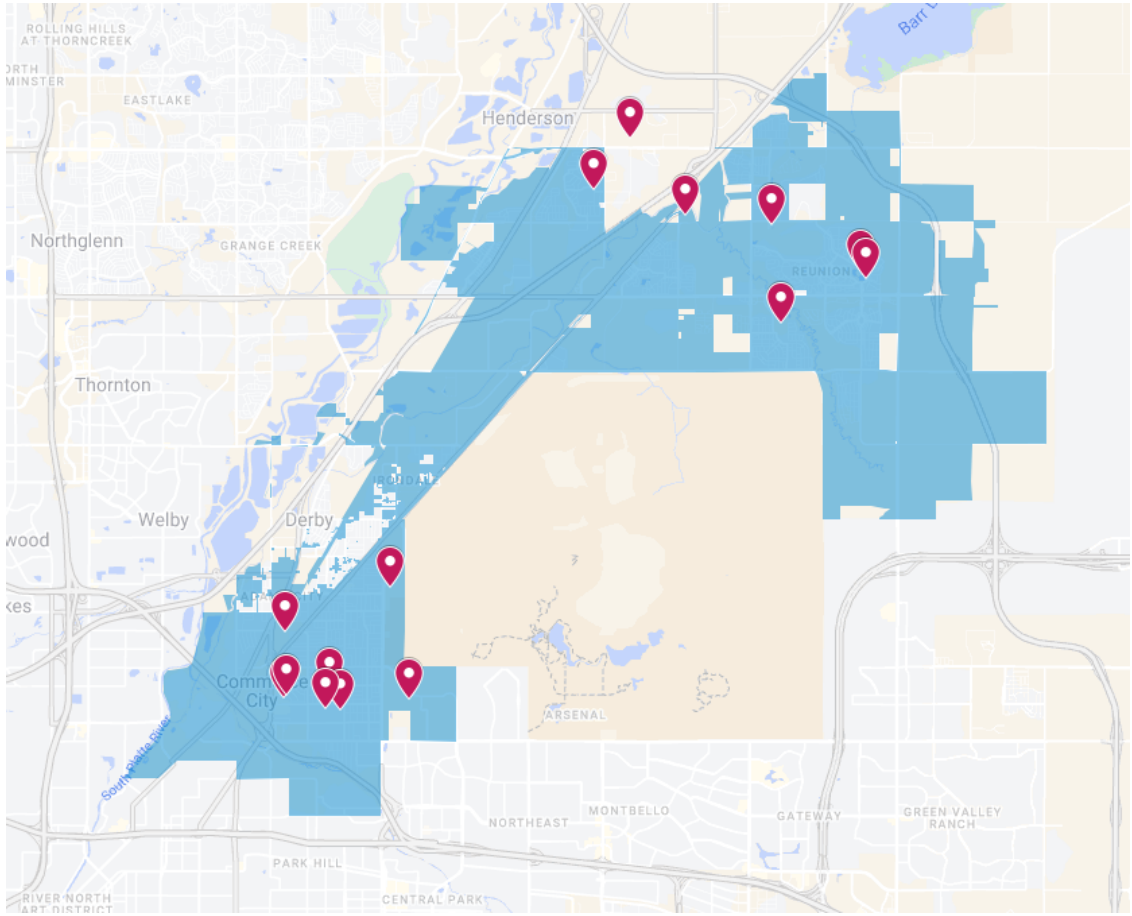
- **5** TOTAL WORKSHOPS
- **87** TOTAL POINTS OF ENGAGEMENT

51 SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

MAP.SOCIAL POINTS CREATED
72

Map of Engagement

- Civic Center
- Adams City High School
- Bison Ridge Rec Center
- Buffalo Run Golf Course
- Eagle Point Rec Center
- Fairfax Park
- Fronterra Park
- Reunion Rec Center
- Reunion Coffee Shop
- Kearney Middle School
- Paradise Island
- Prairie View High School
- River Run Park
- Pioneer Park
- Veterans Memorial Park



Key Outreach Takeaways

- Uniting Commerce City
- Balanced Growth & Investment
- Desire for more local commercial businesses
- Reinvestment in the Core City
- Promoting Housing Variety
- Ensuring compatible development
- Homeless Support
- Public Spaces/Downtown
- Fiscal Sustainability
- Diversifying Industry
- Workforce Development
- Regional Partnerships
- Access and Connectivity
- Improving the City's Image
- Environmental Sustainability

Plan Adoption Timeline

- Comp Plan Draft available – June 2023
- Joint CAC / Planning Commission Meeting – June 20, 2023
- Planning Commission Public Hearing – August 01, 2023
    - Presentation by Consultant
    - 5-0 Recommendation for Approval
- Planning Commission – October 03, 2023
    - Decision tabled until the Commission could obtain more training around their responsibilities
- Planning Commission Study Session – July 17, 2024
- Planning Commission Public Hearing – August 6, 2024
- City Council Public Hearing – Scheduled for September 16, 2024

*legal concerns about notice as a public hearing

Plan Overview

Plan Organization

1. Introduction
2. Outreach and Engagement
3. Community Profile
4. Vision, Core Principles, Goals, and Objectives
5. Character Areas

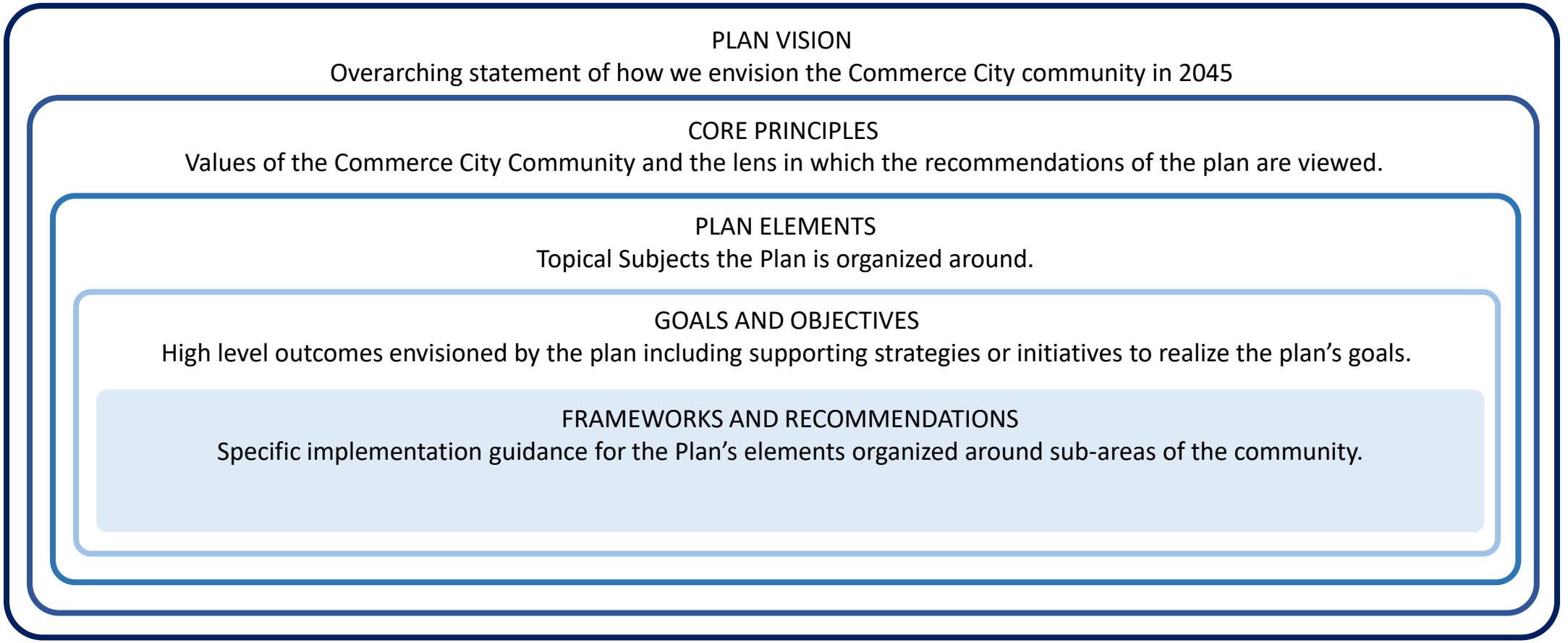
Plan Framework

6. Connected Corridors
7. Commerce and Employment
8. Housing and Neighborhoods
9. Community Character, Culture, and Tourism
10. Transportation and Mobility
11. Parks, Open Space, Environment
12. Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Core Elements

13. Implementation

Plan Concepts & Relationships



Plan Vision Statement

Commerce City is a thriving community: economically strong, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable. Commerce City is a healthy and safe city where fresh air, clean water, public health, and the preservation of natural open space are paramount. Commerce City is a financially sound city where businesses flourish through collaboration and innovation. Commerce City is a diverse community that celebrates its unique history, identity, and culture, where families and individuals of all ages can live, work, and play.

Core Principles

Welcoming and Equitable City

Commerce City is already known for its diversity, with nearly half of the population identifying as Hispanic. As a welcoming city, Commerce City will continue on its trajectory of embracing residents from all backgrounds and walks of life. As an equitable city, Commerce City will be known for fairness and inclusion – a place where anyone can succeed regardless of their starting point.

Safe, Healthy, and Livable City

Whether choosing a place to live, finding opportunities to be active, or simply going about a daily routine, Commerce City residents will know their community is safe, healthy, and livable. Citizens will enjoy easy access to the essential services and amenities that make a place home, including healthcare and wellness benefits, fresh foods, and an abundance of active recreational opportunities – making Commerce City a place to put down roots, not just stay for a while.

Economically Thriving City

Commerce City will build a resilient tax base by supporting its businesses, from the smallest startup helmed by a first-time entrepreneur to its oldest, well-established industries. Commerce City will live up to its name, known as a place of thriving commerce and a well-rounded, sustainable local economy.

Environmentally Responsible City

Open space is an integral part of Commerce City's identity, nestled between the expansive Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and the South Platte River in the Rocky Mountain Front Range. Commerce City will take social equity and environmental responsibility to heart with sustainable and prudent efforts to preserve air quality, water resources, and natural areas for future generations.

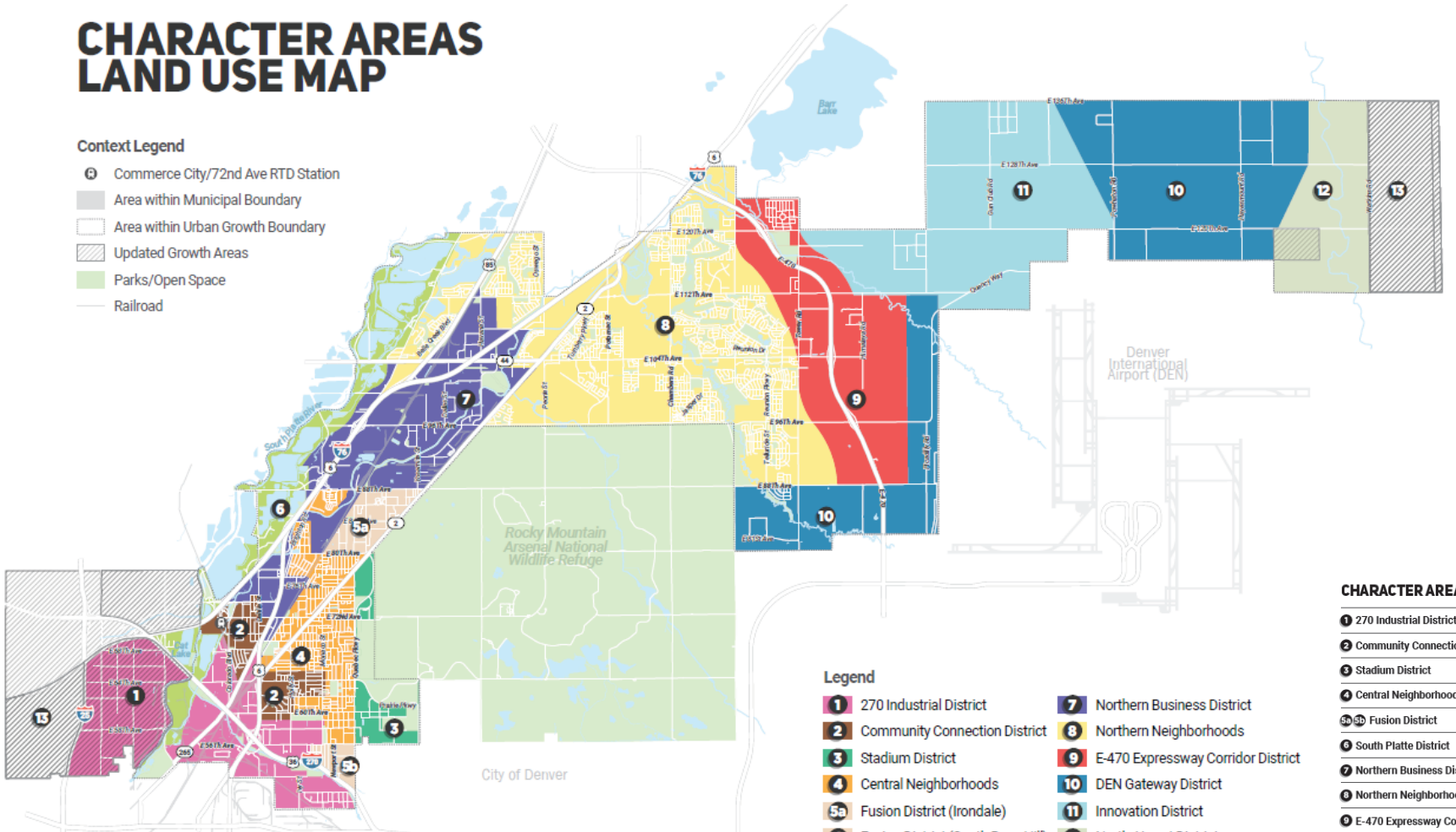
Plan Elements

- Character Areas
- Connected Corridors
- Commerce and Employment
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Arts, Culture, and Tourism
- Transportation and Mobility
- Parks, Open Space, and the Environment
- Public Facilities and Infrastructure

The core elements of the Comprehensive Plan build on the Character Areas Plan and provide policies and recommendations for each contributing land use and key development area within Commerce City. While the character areas provide a broad, community-wide view of how land use should be dispersed across the City, the core elements detail the steps required for Commerce City to grow these unique places over time. The framework maps add more specific detail to the broader Character Areas Land Map.

Character Areas & Land Use

CHARACTER AREAS LAND USE MAP



Commerce City 2045 defines character areas – neighborhoods, districts, and corridors – based on the desired character, form, and function. There are 13 character areas throughout Commerce City. These character areas address common land uses, including housing and residential areas, commercial areas, and industrial areas. The map depicts the general location of each character area rather than the land use designation of each parcel, focusing on the mix of uses that function together to establish an identifiable place within the community.

LAND USES

Corresponding land use descriptions are defined on page 80.

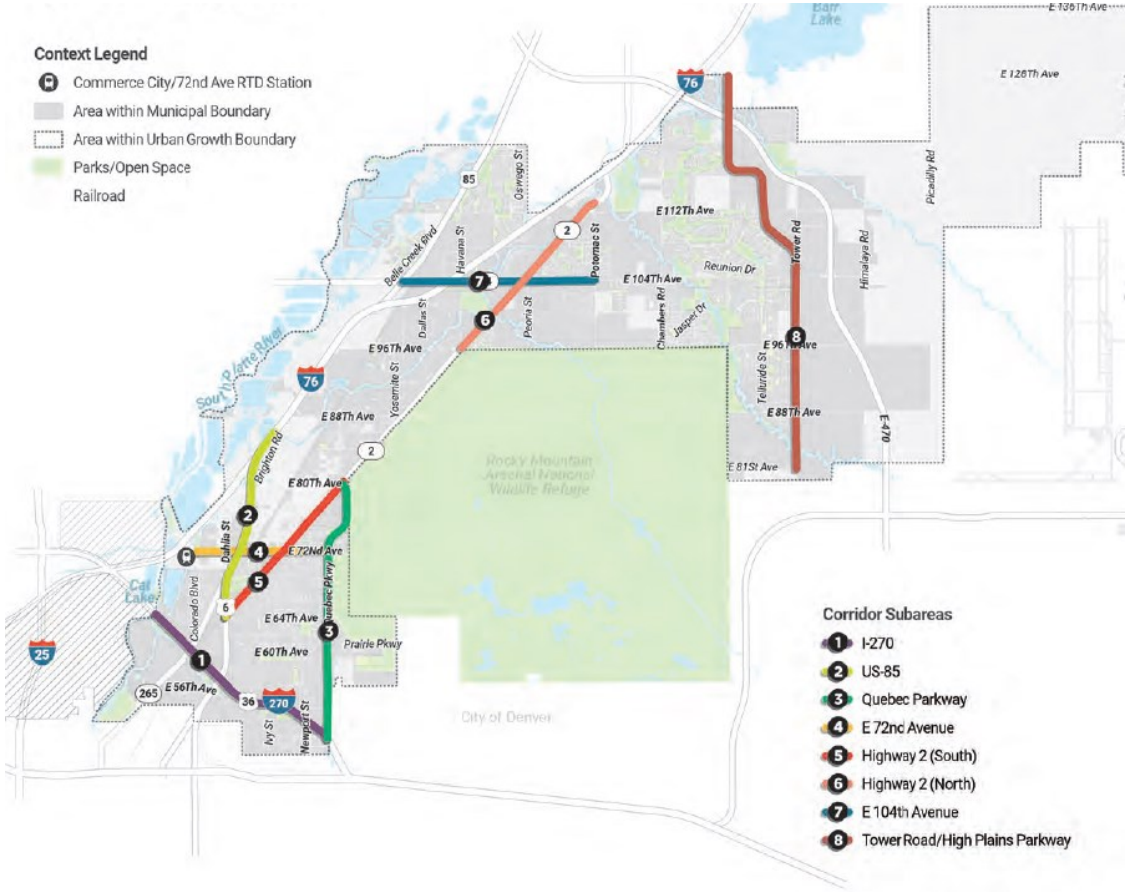
CHARACTER AREA	Agricultural Uses	Attached Homes/Duplexes/Townhomes	Single-Family Homes	Multifamily Homes	Large Lot Residential	Commercial (Retail, Entertainment and Services)	Primary Employment Areas	Office	Flex Spaces	Technology and Research	Airport Logistics	Industrial	Warehousing and Distribution/Logistics	Utility	Public Gathering Spaces	Parks and Open Spaces
1 270 Industrial District					◇	◆	◆	◇	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
2 Community Connection District		◆	◆	◆	◇		◇						◆	◆	◆	◆
3 Stadium District				◇	◆		◆	◆					◆	◆	◆	◆
4 Central Neighborhoods		◆	◆	◇	◇		◇						◆	◆	◆	◆
5a 5b Fusion District		◇	◇	◇		◇		◆			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
6 South Platte District					◆	◇		◇	◆				◆	◆	◆	◆
7 Northern Business District						◇	◆	◆			◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
8 Northern Neighborhoods		◆	◆	◇		◇		◇					◆	◆	◆	◆
9 E-470 Expressway Corridor District		◇	◆	◇		◆	◆	◆		◆			◆	◆	◆	◆
10 DEN Gateway District						◆		◆		◆	◆		◆	◆	◆	◆
11 Innovation District	◆				◇	◇			◆	◆		◆		◆	◆	◆
12 North Airport District	◇				◆	◇		◇						◆	◆	◆

◆ *Primary Land Uses are more prominent and play a pivotal role in characterizing that placetype.*

◇ *Secondary Land Uses are less prevalent and serve to support the primary land use.*

Connected Corridors

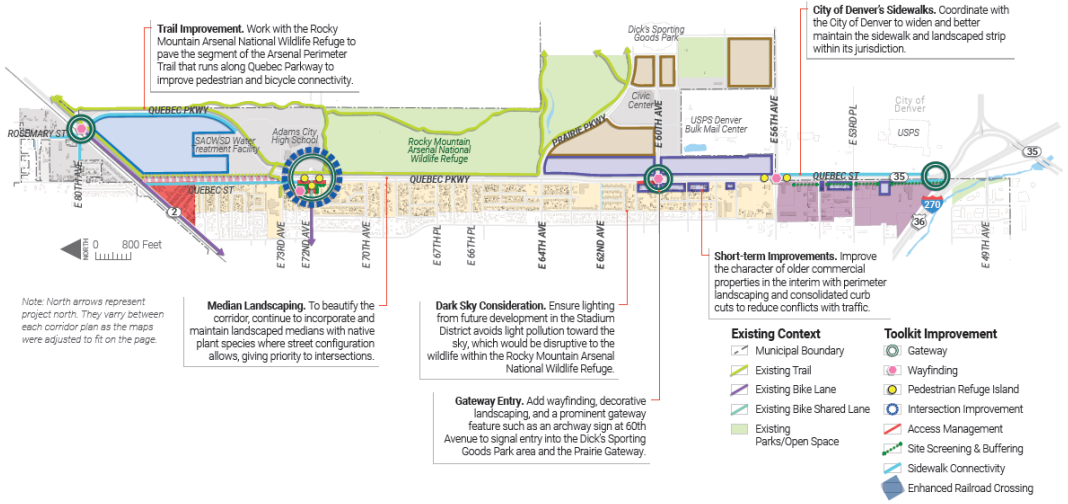
The Connect Corridor element is a series of more detailed corridor plans within the broader Comprehensive Plan. The framework plans to provide specific recommendations for development, multimodal connectivity, beautification, and placemaking to enhance the function, character, and vitality of each corridor.



Connected Corridor

QUEBEC PARKWAY

Quebec Parkway is a prominent corridor on the eastern edge of the Core City. The road runs alongside the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge—nowhere else in the City is its relationship to the vast open space it surrounds more apparent. Dick's Sporting Goods Park and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge catalyze the opportunity to enhance this area as a tourism and recreation hub, and a key gateway into the City off Highway 2. While the parkway will function as a major vehicular corridor, the City should continue its efforts to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections in the area and attract quality development that highlights the community's identity. Expansive undeveloped properties present opportunities to attract a mix of uses that support this vision, while respecting the established residential neighborhoods to the west.



Each corridor plan includes specific recommendations for land use, infrastructure, and connectivity enhancements.

LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENT

The following local area improvements apply to the Quebec Parkway corridor subarea.

Quebec Street. This street runs parallel to the Parkway after the curve. It should be improved particularly in the preparation for the future development of the undeveloped site to the east. Strong pedestrian and bike infrastructure should be provided, such as sidewalks and bike paths on both sides of the street and ADA-accessible curb ramps. This would also provide a safer route between residential neighborhoods to the west and Adams City High School.

Lot Assembly. Consider acquiring properties for lot assembly along the diagonal blocks north of E 75th Place as opportunities arise to accommodate more unified commercial development with improved circulation.

Undeveloped Area (West). This large undeveloped site should be developed for local-serving commercial uses that serve both Core City and Northern Range residents to draw the community together. This includes restaurants, entertainment options, and community gathering spaces that emphasize quality of place. The scale of development should respect the residential neighborhood to the west and offer businesses that help increase access to day-to-day amenities. Higher density residential (townhomes or low-density multifamily) is also appropriate where the site faces existing single-family neighborhoods. A pedestrian- and bike-friendly environment should be supported. The northern point of the site at E 80th Avenue should be enhanced with a gateway feature or public art to enhance the appearance of the intersection.

Undeveloped Area (Dick's Sporting Goods Park Frontage). Undeveloped properties fronting the parkway should provide a mix of commercial and entertainment options that serve both stadium attendees and nearby residents. As the properties are located along a principal arterial, they may be auto-oriented, however, they should provide internal and external pedestrian connections and quality architecture to improve the corridor's character.

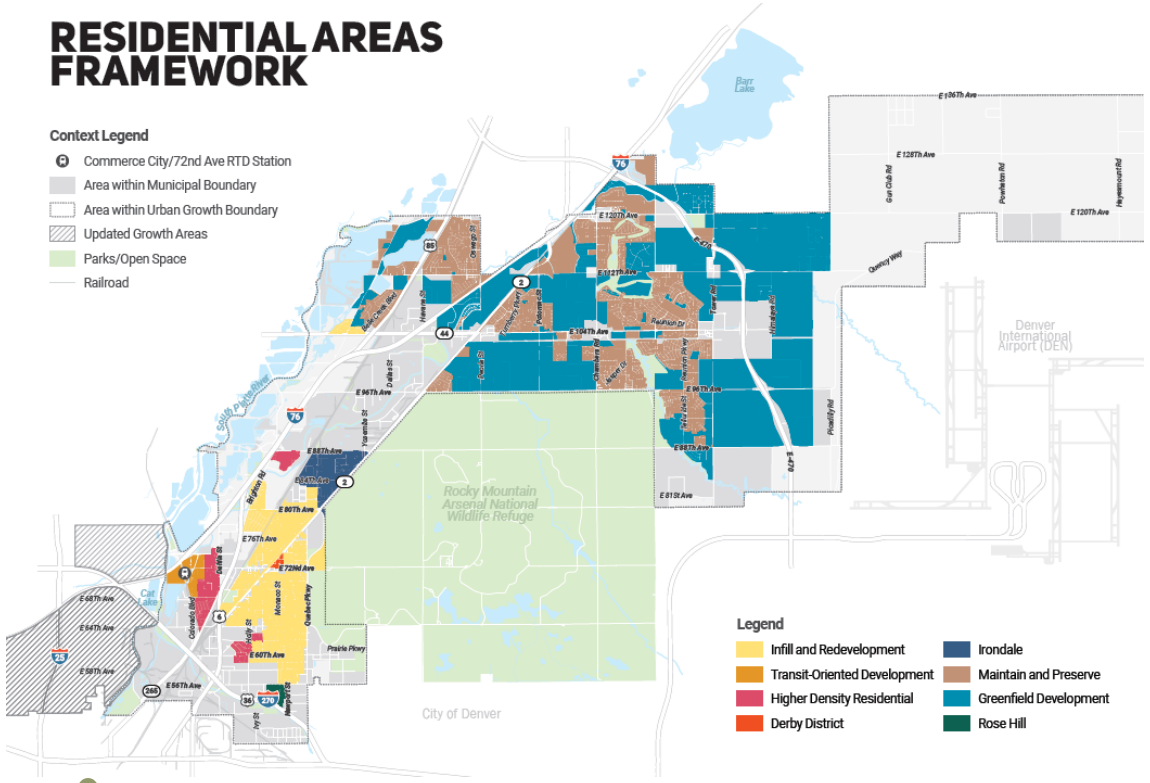
Neighborhood Reinvestment. Continue to reinvest in existing residential neighborhoods. Improvements should include widened sidewalks, curb and gutter, ADA-accessible sidewalk ramps, and lighting.

Undeveloped Area (Around Dick's Sporting Goods Park area). Undeveloped properties around Dick's Sporting Goods Park should support a unique, active, mixed-use district that builds on the stadium's tourism draw. These uses should concentrate around the stadium to provide attendees with a variety of attractive hospitality, food, drink, and entertainment options within walking distance. As development fills in over the long term, surface parking lots may be condensed to garages to allow for more developable space. Offices and municipal facilities may be appropriate further west from the stadium, building on the existing state-of-the-art Civic Center.

Industrial to Commercial Shift. As redevelopment occurs, commercial uses should be encouraged in the southern end of Quebec Street, shifting away from existing industrial uses. Uses should serve employees of the industrial area to the west as well as travelers exiting off Highway 2. Development should be high quality in design to provide a positive first impression of the City, including perimeter landscaping, sidewalk connectivity, and access management for cars and trucks. Cross access should be encouraged to reduce excessive curb cuts along Quebec Street. Dispensaries should be either minimized or integrated within well-designed developments.

Element Frameworks (Chapters 7-12)

Each element has an associated framework plan. The frameworks add more specific detail to the broader Character Areas Land Map for the particular plan element subject. Each element also includes goals and recommendations around related topics to the element (such as housing choice).



Infill and Redevelopment

Promote infill development and redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties in established neighborhoods. Context-sensitive higher density residential should be encouraged to diversify housing choices. Encourage adaptive reuse of commercial or industrial uses into unique residential options.

Transit-Oriented Development

Support transit-oriented housing surrounding the 72nd Street RTD Station that provides high density housing like multifamily housing, townhomes, and a mix of ground floor commercial and upper floor residential. TOD should also be encouraged in other areas with high access to transit.

Higher Density Residential

Target single-family attached and multifamily housing to this area to leverage access to nearby commercial uses, jobs, and/or community facilities. Higher density residential development should serve as a transition from higher intensity industrial uses to lower density residential areas.

Derby District

Build on Derby District's special environment and access to local businesses by promoting the adaptive reuse of existing industrial or commercial buildings into lofts and other unique housing choices. Multifamily or townhomes should be encouraged surrounding Derby District to increase housing near the community destination.

Irondale

As redevelopment occurs, phase out existing residential and ranch housing and transition the area into an industrial and business area to separate incompatible uses. In the interim, industrial development should provide sufficient buffering and screening to mitigate adverse impacts on adjacent residential properties.

Maintain and Preserve

Continue to maintain and preserve the new residential development in the Northern Range and invest in public infrastructure as it ages over time. This includes upgrades to public parks, roadway conditions, pedestrian and bike amenities, and streetscaping.

Greenfield Development

As new development in the Northern Range has developed as PUDs, establish zoning regulations for northern neighborhoods that formalize the high quality building and site design standards. Ensure future neighborhoods' roads connect to existing neighborhoods. Promote higher density residential near commercial corridors and nodes for a desirable transition. Within these areas, the City should work with DEN to consider noise contours, aviation easements, and the 55, 60, and 65 day-night average sound level (DNL).

Rose Hill

Continue to protect and reinvest in this neighborhood, enhancing public infrastructure like curb and gutter, ADA-accessible sidewalks, crosswalks, streetlights, and integrated parks and open space. Industrial uses should be discouraged and phased out over time, eliminating truck activity within the residential neighborhood (see the I-270 Corridors Framework for further discussion).

HOUSING AUTHORITY'S BALANCED HOUSING PLAN AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Created in 2019, the Housing Authority Balanced Housing Plan and Affordable Housing Implementation Plan provides Commerce City with comprehensive strategies and recommendations for expanding housing options and addressing housing affordability. This is especially for low- to moderate-income residents, seniors, veterans, and people experiencing homelessness. It is based on the 2018 Housing Authority Housing Needs Assessment, which identified the need for more options in multifamily units, senior housing, affordable housing, disability-accessible units, high-income housing, desirable rental properties, and housing solutions for people experiencing homelessness.

The following Commerce City 2045 Housing and Neighborhoods Chapter carries forward and builds on the recommendations of the plan. These plans should work cohesively to help address housing issues and increase housing choices for all residents.

Plan Implementation

- Reference the plan regularly
- Update the Land Development Code
- Inform the City's Capital Improvement and Preservation Plan (CIPP)
- Schedule regular updates
- Action Matrix

Plan Implementation

- Action Item
- Timeframe
- Implementation Grade
- Tieback to Core Principals

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

ACTION MATRIX							
#	Action	Timeframe	Ease (A,B,C,D,F)	Core Principles			
7	COMMERCE AND EMPLOYMENT						
	Northern Range Commercial						
7-1.1	Enhance the image, quality, and diversity of retail that provides unique pedestrian experiences.	Ongoing	C				
7-1.2	Update the zoning code to focus on commercial uses in areas designated as Community Commercial and Regional Commercial in the Commerce City 2045 Character Areas framework.	Short-term	A				
7-1.3	Promote large-scale commercial with a regional customer draw in the Regional Community character area along E-470 to increase access to key retail and services in the Northern Range.	Long-term	B				
7-1.4	Provide incentives to attract desirable commercial businesses that are currently lacking in the community, such as grocery stores, sit-down restaurants, and large-scale retail.	Mid-term	D				
7-1.5	Encourage shopping and entertainment options that are attractive to all ages.	Ongoing	D				
7-1.6	Promote outparcel/outlot development to improve the character along primary roadways and break up views of large parking lots.	Ongoing	C				
7-1.7	Continue to encourage development within the Prairie Gateway area.	Ongoing	B				
7-1.8	Continue to work with the master developer to develop Reunion Center.	Mid-term	B				
7-1.9	Encourage a second post office location in the Northern Range.	Long-term	D				

Planning Commission Recommendation

Planning Commission Recommendation

- Planning Commission Workshop – July 17, 2024
- Public Hearing – August
- Requested language and graphical changes
- Documented in Exhibit A to Ordinance 2616
- If accepted by City Council as a condition of approval, staff will work with the consultant team to make the recommended changes.
- Separately, the current Planning Commission expressed the desire to do deeper editing of the document after/if adopted by City Council.

Ordinance No. 2616

- If approved by City Council as drafted:
  - Adopts the Comprehensive Plan with Planning Commission recommended changes
  - Allows staff to make minor corrections to the language and formatting of the plan that do not change the meaning or substance of the language or document to correct any remaining formatting or grammatical errors that may be identified.
    - All staff-identified changes must be reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.

City Council Options

- Approve Ordinance No. 2616 on first reading as drafted
- Approve Ordinance No. 2616 on first reading with additional conditions
- Not approve Ordinance No. 2616

Questions