CITY OF
COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

Comprehensive Plan

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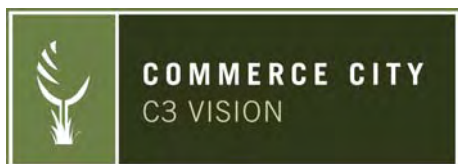## Consultants

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Plan Contents

Common Acronyms Used in this Plan (alphabetical)

ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
C3	City of Commerce City
CAC	Citizen Advisory Committee
CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
DIA	Denver International Airport
DOLA	Department of Local Affairs
DRCOG	Denver Regional Council of Governments
FAR	Floor-to-Area Ratio
FLUP	Future Land Use Plan
HOA	Homeowner Association
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
LDC	Land Development Code
LDN	Day-night equivalent noise levels (a noise pollution descriptor)
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LOS	Level of Service
NATE	Northeast Area Transit Extension
PUD	Planned Unit Development
RMANWR	Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge
RTD	Regional Transportation District
SWG	Staff Working Group
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TOD	Transit-Oriented Development
URA	Urban Renewal Area

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★
= A plan map illustrating the desired future.

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Where to Find: Best Practices for Design

1—Plan Introduction

Community Overview

Commerce City Location and Context

The City of Commerce City, Colorado (C3) is located in the rapidly growing Denver-metro area, northeast of Denver in Adams County. The city is surrounded by the communities of Brighton, Denver, Aurora, and Thornton, several wildlife parks (Barr Lake State Park to the north and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge to the east), and the Denver International Airport (DIA). After a period of rapid growth over this past decade, Commerce City is home to more than 42,473 people (estimated 2008 population from the U.S. Census Bureau) and occupies nearly 41-square miles. Additional land for growth, contained within the Growth Boundary (i.e., the area for future urban growth expansion, shown in Figure 1.1 below) will bring the city to a long-range total of almost 62-square miles. A key feature of the city is its location along major regional travel routes (roadways (I-76, I-270, and E-470), railways (Burlington Northern/Santa Fe and Union Pacific), and air (Denver International Airport)), which has helped to retain a strong industrial base for the city's economy.
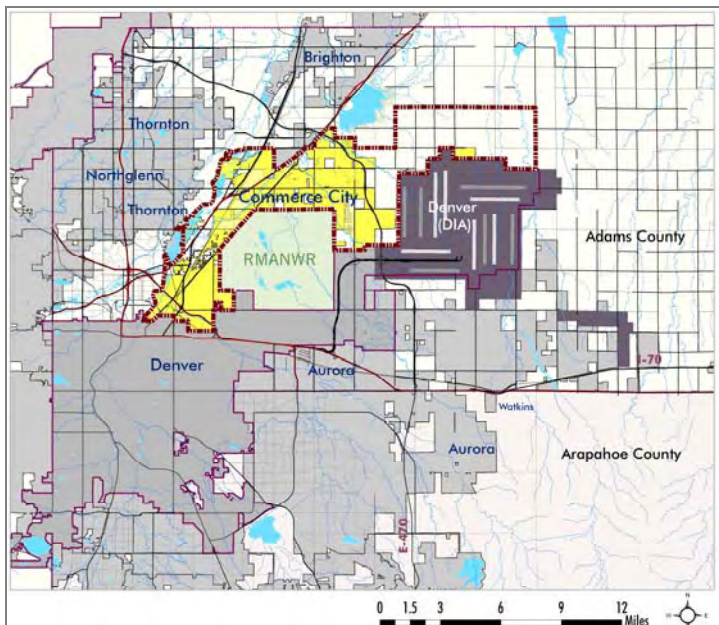
Figure 1.1: Commerce City Location and Context

Demographic Facts at a Glance

✓ **2008 Population:** 42,473.

✓ **2007 Household Composition:** Married couples make up a slight majority (51%).

✓ **2007 Average Household Size:** 3.1 people.

✓ **2007 Age:** The city has a young population. Adults in prime working years (25 to 49) account for 40% of the population.

✓ **2008 Median Household Income (estimated):** $44,503.

✓ **2006 Jobs-housing Ratio:** 1.85 (DRCOG estimate).

✓ **2006 Jobs:** 23,676. Transportation and Warehousing provide almost a third of total jobs.

✓ **Largest Employer:** United Parcel Service (UPS).

Commerce City: People and Industry

The appendix provides a compendium of detailed information about demographics, economy, housing, land use, and other topics. This section provides a brief summary of trends. More information is available in Appendix A, Appendix B, and Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan.

Population and Households

✓ **Commerce City Population:** In 2008, the estimated population was 42,473 (U.S. Census), more than four times the 1960 population of 8,970.

✓ **Growth Rate (2000-2007):** The city experienced a period of rapid growth from 2000 to 2007—at an average compound annual growth rate of between 9 and 10%. This was higher than other Adams County communities.

✓ **Household Composition:** Married couples made up the majority of households (51%) in Commerce City in 2007.

✓ **Average Household Size:** The average household size is 3.1 people (according to the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) in 2007), the highest in Adams County.

Population Composition (Age, Ethnicity)

✓ **Age:** Commerce City's residents are younger than in Adams County as a whole. Adults in their prime working years (25-49) make up almost 40 percent of the city's population. Commerce City has a lower proportion of seniors than other communities in the Denver-metro area and state and national averages.

✓ **Race and Ethnicity:** Recent estimates of the U.S. Census estimate a majority of the city's population is of Hispanic origin. However, contrary to other trends nationwide, Commerce City has experienced equal amounts of Hispanic and non-Hispanic growth since 2000.

✓ **Educational Attainment:** Residents have become more highly educated since 2000, with a dramatic increase in the number of college graduates. In the north, almost 26% of the population has attained a post-secondary degree, compared to 9.6% in the south part of the city.

Housing

✓ **Housing Types:** The majority of housing in Commerce City are single-family detached units (66%).

✓ **Housing Affordability:** Compared with other cities in Adams County, Commerce City offers affordable homeownership options, but has more limited affordable rental options.

✓ **Housing Vacancy Rate:** Housing vacancy in 2006 was about 10% in the city.

✓ **Homeownership Rate:** Homeownership has grown from 60% in 2000 to 72.5% in 2007, based on U.S. Census estimates.

Single-family homes account for 66% of the city's housing. In 2007, over 70% of residents owned their homes.

Employment and Income

✓ **Jobs-housing Ratio:** The jobs to housing ratio is 1.85 (2006 DRCOG estimate), compared to a countywide ratio of 1.05, which reflects the higher proportion of industry than most Denver-metro communities.

✓ **Income:** In 2008, the median household income was estimated at $44,503, with great disparities between the median household incomes of the northern city (over $73,000) and the south (less than $42,000).

✓ **Poverty:** In 2007, an estimated 14% of Commerce City's families (1,100) lived below the federally-defined poverty threshold for the area ($20,000 in annual wages).

✓ **Industry Jobs in Commerce City:** In 2006, Transportation and Warehousing (30%), Construction (15%), Manufacturing (11%), and Wholesale Trade (10%) accounted for two-thirds of the 23,000 jobs in the city, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

✓ **Largest Employers:** The three largest employers are United Parcel Service (UPS), Adams County School District 14, and Federal Express (FedEx), respectively.

UPS is the largest employer in Commerce City.

C3 History

Commerce City is a relatively new city that incorporated in 1952, although its past can be traced to a number of historic smaller communities that emerged nearly 100 years ago.

The first settlements in the area were Fort Convenience (1832), established by Louis Vasquez as a trading post for the lucrative beaver pelts in the area. Henderson Island (1859) along the South Platte River was developed as a trading post to provide supplies during the Pike's Peak Gold Rush. Years later, in the late 1880s, the Burlington Northern and Union Pacific Railroads constructed rail lines through the area to connect Denver with the rapid development of the great plains. The railroads brought population and industry that helped support the original communities. Some, like Dupont, Commerce Town, and Irondale (1889), were established as a result of industry. Others, like Rose Hill, Derby, and Adams City (1903), started as agricultural communities, benefiting from their proximity to the railroad.

Original Communities

1. Commerce Town
2. Adams City
3. Irondale
4. Derby
5. Dupont
6. Rose Hill

Figure 1.2: Original Communities

During the 1930s and 1940s, burgeoning industrial uses emerged along the railroad, as Denver's industrial development began to spread north from Denver along Brighton Boulevard. Heavy industries such as refineries, grain elevators, and flour mills found the Sand Creek area most suitable for their growing business needs.

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal factory in the 1940s helped spur residential development in the nearby communities.

World War II brought massive changes to the area, as the Rocky Mountain Arsenal was established and relocated hundreds of families from the surrounding area. The U.S. Army established a chemical weapons facility in 1942, which operated well into the 1960s, when it was converted into a chemical facility for Shell Petroleum. As a result of the Arsenal, the expansion of Stapleton Airport, and the surrounding industry, substantial residential growth in the area ensued. The Adams City and Derby areas redeveloped in the late 1940s, as new residents and new jobs filled the area.

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal factory in the 1940s.

In 1952, faced with potential annexation from Denver, which was anxious to capture additional industrial revenue, the area voted to incorporate Adams City, Rose Hill, and Commerce Town neighborhoods into Commerce Town. With the annexation of Derby in 1962, the name became Commerce City. The Irondale area began its annexation into Commerce City beginning in the 1970s. The Dupont area remains in unincorporated Adams County to this day.

The Hi-Lo Market in the Derby area has been a community gathering place since the 1950s.

The City remained fairly small and contained until the last decade of the 20th Century when several major events transpired. Undeveloped land east of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal was selected as a site for the new Denver International Airport (DIA), and the previously used Stapleton Airport was closed and redeveloped. A perimeter beltway, E-470, opened for public use in 1998. It provided a quick route to the airport and to the northeast quadrant of the Denver-metro area. Even the previously contaminated Rocky Mountain Arsenal changed for the better with the passage of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Act in 1992, stipulating that the site become a national wildlife refuge under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Remediation began in 1997 and is expected to be completed by 2011. The new Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge is a source of pride for the community and the largest urban wildlife refuge in the country.

Denver International Airport opened in 1995 east of Commerce City.

C3: A City of Growth

After the development of both DIA and E-470, Commerce City found itself ready for development and expansion. Few could predict how quickly the city would grow. Between its year of incorporation in 1952, until 2000, the city grew to 21,000 residents. From 2000 to 2008, the population more than doubled, with an additional 21,470 new residents to amount to an estimate of 42,470 people in 2008. In fact, the city grew so quickly that it was listed in Forbes Magazine as one of the top 20 fastest growing cities in America. This rapid growth brought about significant opportunities and challenges for Commerce City, some of which are referenced throughout this document.

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge property has transformed from a chemical weapons factory to a wildlife refuge. The introduction of bison occurred in 2008.
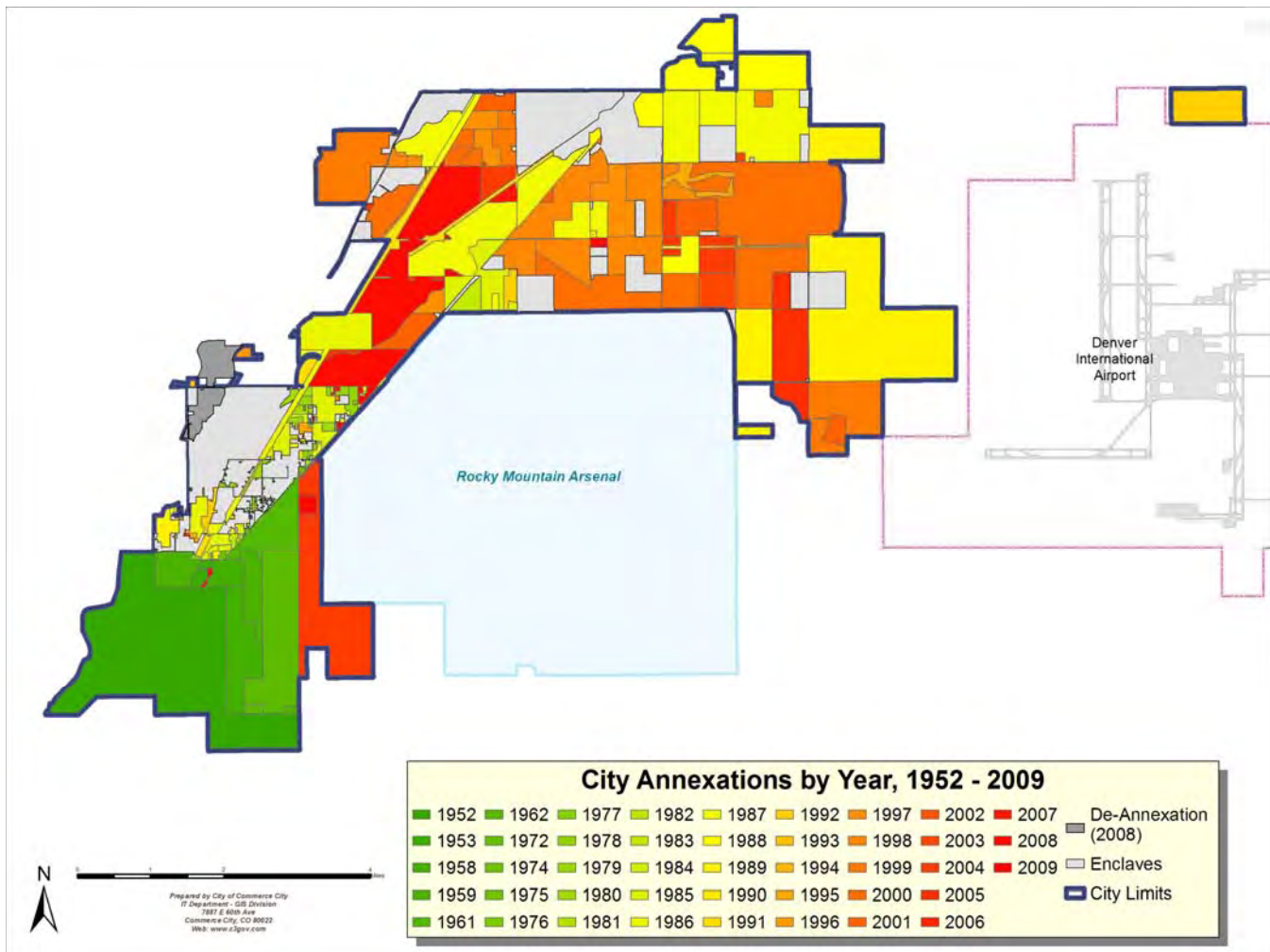
Figure 1.3: Growth of Commerce City (1952 to 2009)
Figure shows annexation and growth of Commerce City from 1952 to 2009.

While lands around E-470 are currently vacant, growth is expected to occur in the area.

Why Plan for the Future?

The Commerce City community wants the city to be a great place—one that will be desirable in which to live, work, and recreate; now and for future generations. Achieving a thriving, livable place will take very deliberate goals and strategies to address emerging issues, needs, and future growth.

It is likely Commerce City will continue to grow, so addressing how and where growth should occur is an important aspect of this Plan. The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) projects that the city may grow to 71,600 people and supply over 35,200 jobs by the year 2035 (from approximately 38,000 and 23,000 in 2007, respectively). The city's growth area contains enough land to support a buildout population of more than 180,000 people—more than quadrupling its size. (See Appendix D, Future Land Use Plan Buildout.)

Planning for the future allows the community to anticipate future needs—to be more prepared for future growth perhaps than the city has been in the past. It can address a growing population and how to position the community for new jobs and retail opportunities, as well as improve the quality of neighborhoods and commercial areas, to conserve resources, and provide a quality community for a lifetime.

This Plan establishes the community's broad vision and goals to help guide choices about development and investment, building on diverse economic, cultural, and resource assets. It also establishes a foundation for the city to become a greener and more sustainable community.

Key Issues—in a Nutshell

To help guide the city into the future, this Plan needs to address a number of pressing issues identified during the planning effort. Those key issues, identified below, establish needs and are the foundation for the policy direction of this Plan. These issues are also addressed more fully in each Plan Element chapter and in Appendix A, the Community Profile. Early in the planning effort, the community, committees, staff, elected officials, and others helped identify these issues.

Land Use and City Structure Issues

The land use and city structure issues are:

1. Building on the community's multiple assets;
2. Addressing long-range growth—amount, location, and coordination with utilities and infrastructure—to avoid sprawl and foster Smart Growth;
3. Better linking the city's north and south geographic areas;
4. Continuing to improve the city's image and appearance;
5. Maintaining a jobs/housing balance that is fiscally positive and that creates great neighborhoods, services, jobs, and a compatible mix of land uses;
6. Improving physical buffers between residential neighborhoods and industrial areas;
7. Addressing where commercial centers should be located;
8. Encouraging future development that is compatible with Denver International Airport; and
9. Maintaining the existing level-of-service for parks and recreation, and continuing to connect open space.

Many of the land use issues are addressed in Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan. See also Chapters 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, and 14 for goals and policy direction related to these issues.

Planning ensures all Commerce City residents enjoy a high quality of life by helping to address the needs of children and seniors in the community.

Issue: Determining what type of growth should occur on the vacant lands to the east.

Issue: Continuing to improve the city's image and design.

Issue: Establishing a comprehensive transportation framework.

Issues: Celebrating diverse culture and history.

Economic and Fiscal Issues

The economic and fiscal issues are:

10. Developing a clear, bold *Economic Development Strategic Plan*—including identifying economic clusters and locations;
11. Addressing opportunities for economic diversification;
12. Stimulating reinvestment in existing city areas; and
13. Developing a long-term sustainable fiscal strategy.

See Chapters 3, 5, 6, and 8.

Transportation Issues

The transportation issues are:

14. Establishing a comprehensive transportation framework (through the Transportation Plan) to address all modes of travel—vehicles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians—as well as freight needs (truck and/or rail);
15. Improving way-finding and safety; and
16. Coordinating regionally on transportation.

See Chapters 3 and 9, primarily.

Community and Social Issues

The community and social issues are:

17. Providing housing to accommodate a diverse population and life-long living in the city;
18. Addressing police protection and possible decentralization or substations to serve all parts of the community;
19. Possible decentralizing of other public or quasi-public facilities;
20. Coordinating utilities with regional providers;
21. Addressing poverty and opportunities to increase middle- and higher-income households;
22. Addressing sustainability;
23. Addressing increasing diversity, especially Hispanic culture;
24. Preserving culture and history; and
25. Coordinating with school districts on educational objectives.

See Chapters 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, and 14, primarily.

C3 Vision Plan's Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to set forth the vision, goals, and policies of the community to help guide development and investment decisions. It sets the stage for development regulations, ongoing decision-making, and guides Commerce City in funding programs and capital investments.

C3 Vision Plan is Comprehensive and Advisory

The *C3 Vision Plan* is the city's long-range Comprehensive Plan. It lays the foundation for Commerce City to become a greener and more sustainable community—building on and enhancing its diverse economic, cultural, and natural resource assets. The Plan showcases where the city wants to be in the future.

In accordance with Colorado Statutes, the *C3 Vision Plan* is an advisory document that sets the policy foundation for the city's decision-making process and regulatory framework. It anticipates long-term future needs (for the year 2035 and beyond), but it also addresses immediate needs. It is designed to guide the growth and development of the city and recommend programs for services and infrastructure. In addition, it establishes a policy framework to help evaluate choices, guide decisions on development proposals, and consider plan amendments.

C3 Vision Plan Builds on Previous Plans

This *C3 Vision Plan* builds on the city's previous comprehensive and sub-area plans, as noted to the right. It is the intent of this Plan to consolidate the work of the three previous land use plans (i.e., the 1985 *City Wide Comprehensive Plan*, the *New Lands Plan*, and the *Irondale Comprehensive Plan*).

State Authorization

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Colorado Revised Statutes § 31-23-201 through § 31-23-213, which states that "…it is the duty of the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the territory within the municipal boundaries." It also states that the Planning Commission is authorized to plan for areas outside of the boundaries of the municipality that bear relation to the areas within the municipal boundaries.

History of Comprehensive Plans in Commerce City

This Plan builds on the Comprehensive Plan tradition and prior Commerce City plans, including:

✓ The *1975-2000 Comprehensive Plan* (adopted in 1977) was the city's first plan.

✓ The *1985-2010 Plan* (adopted in 1985) built upon the 1977 Plan.

✓ Newer sub-area plans to update areas in the city that were not contemplated in 1985 include:

▫ The *New Lands Comprehensive Plan* (1992),

▫ *Irondale Comprehensive Plan and Land Use* (1998),

▫ *Prairie Gateway Land Use Plan* (2006), and

▫ *The Master Plan for the Revitalization of the Derby Sub-Area* (2006).

Community-Driven Plan Process

Neighborhood outreach event in Summer 2009.

Public and Citizen Advisory Committee at work.

This *C3 Vision Plan* is community-driven. It is vitally important that residents, property owners, and stakeholders shape the future of the community. Because of this philosophy, this Plan has had the most public participation and outreach of any plan ever produced within Commerce City.

Over 600 people in the community actively participated in creating this Plan through multiple venues and activities, including:

- Website activity and on-line polls and materials at www.CCCvision.com;
- Public community workshops (multiple sets held at various locations throughout the north and south parts of the city);
- Published newsletters and articles;
- Neighborhood Outreach events surveys, where over 500 people provided comments on this Plan;
- "Roadshow" meetings with business and professional organizations, and seniors and citizen groups;
- Developer/landowner meetings;
- A Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) that met every six to eight weeks throughout the effort;
- A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that met almost as frequently as the CAC;
- Staff Working Group (SWG) meetings, comprised of staff from different departments, including the city manager's office, economic development, housing, parks and

recreation, community development, police, public works, and finance; and

▪ Joint and separate sessions with the Planning Commission and City Council.

A Public meeting at Second Creek Elementary in February of 2009.

Additional detail about public outreach activities, including meeting summaries, is located in Appendix F.

Plan Organization

This Plan is organized as follows:

Community Vision: **Chapter 2** contains the Community Vision and Guiding Principles and introduces sustainability.

Future Land Use: **Chapter 3** includes the Future Land Use Plan.

Plan Elements: **Chapters 4 to 15** are the Plan's Elements— the basis for this Plan's Guiding Principles to implement the C3 Community Vision. (See Figure 1.4 below.) Each element has implementation strategies and plan monitoring indicators. Chapter 4 includes the Strategic Planning Areas.

Implementation: **Chapter 16** contains the actions required to implement the Plan, Plan monitoring, and Plan amendment procedures.
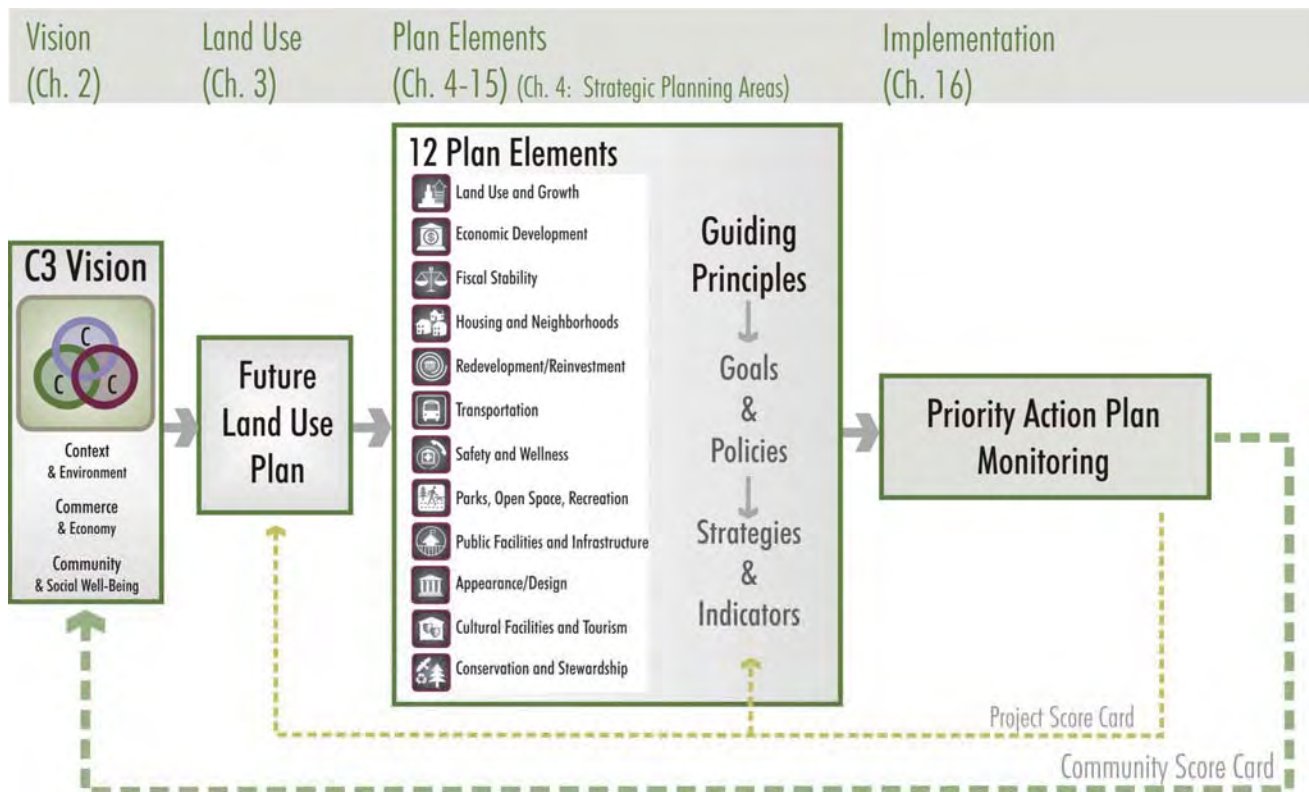
Figure 1.4: Plan Organization

2—The C3 Community Vision

The C3 Community Vision...

The C3 Community Vision represents values and ideals of the community. The vision has grown out of public discussions and exercises where the community has described the ideal future for Commerce City.

The C3 Community Vision sets the stage for the *C3 Vision Plan* and affirms the community's strengths, desires, and ability to become a more sustainable city. It links all of the topics of this Plan together as the overarching set of ideals to guide the city into its future.

C3 Vision Statement:

Commerce City will have a robust economy, drawing on its strength as a business-friendly city. It will have a quality natural and built environment with great neighborhoods, parks, and places in which to live, work, and play safely. The community will celebrate its culture and history, and promote conservation and stewardship of resources for present and future generations.

The C3 *Community Vision* weaves together the topics of this Plan to address the social, economic, and environment needs of present and future generations.

C3 Vision Plan and City Council Goals

This Plan supports the 2009 City Council Retreat Goals. They have helped shape this document and filter through the following guiding principles and plan elements:

✓ Become a balanced city;

✓ Development appropriate;

✓ City name with marketing value;

✓ Become a Green city where viable;

✓ Home to major corporations;

✓ Be a self-sustaining city;

✓ Be a place where people want to live;

✓ Provide additional reasons for people to come to the city;

✓ Establish global partnerships;

✓ Develop a strong educational base.
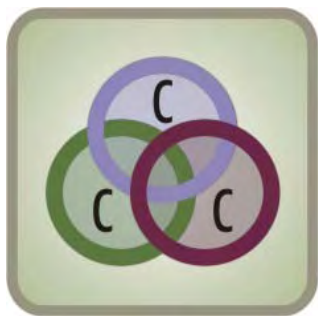
C3 Vision for a Sustainable Community

What is a Sustainable Community?

A sustainable community is one in which the economic, social, and environmental systems provide a productive, healthy, meaningful life for its residents as well as affording the opportunity for prosperity. It is a community working toward the betterment of local conditions, linking the local economy, community, and environment with the region and the world. In the long-term, it means meeting the needs of the present and planning for the future, by striving for the three Cs of sustainability:

✓ **Commerce and Economy:** Vital economic development and fiscal stability, focusing on retaining existing businesses and attracting new businesses that fit with the goals of the community.

✓ **Context and Environment:** Orderly growth and development that leads to a balanced city with great neighborhoods and commerce, sufficient infrastructure, connected parks and open space, and a positive appearance and image.

✓ **Community and Social Well-Being:** Community and social facilities that provide for the safety, health, and well-being of its residents and promote efficient and wise use of resources, ensuring that future generations have opportunities for meaningful livelihoods.

This C3 Vision Plan is Comprehensive and Sustainable

This C3 Vision Plan addresses community sustainability by linking the City's goals to the three Cs of Sustainability:

✓ Commerce and Economy;
✓ Context and Environment; and
✓ Community and Social Well-Being.

The 12 Guiding Principles, introduced in Chapter 1 and found throughout the Plan, help achieve overall community goal alignment and address the sustainability triad.

Figure 2.1: Symbol of the Three Cs of a Sustainable Commerce City

Why is Sustainability Important to Commerce City?

Commerce City, like many local governments across the nation, is addressing the charge of sustainability. The city recognizes that actions at the local level matter for the immediate and long-term success of the community, and can make a difference in the region and the world. In this rapidly changing world with concerns about economic growth and equity, energy use, climate change, social well-being and health, and waste reduction and recycling, it is important for Commerce City to address these contemporary challenges as the city grows. The industrial history of the city has made the community even more aware of the environment and the consequences of unsustainable practices related to pollution, waste, transportation, and land use.

This C3 Vision Plan is an ideal platform for introducing ideas of sustainability, because this Plan is encompassing and addresses a myriad of community goals. It establishes specific goals that align and focus on the Three Cs: commerce and economy, context and environment, and community well-being. The Plan provides a comprehensive approach to addressing interdependent trends rather than isolated issues, and establishes the means to monitor city trends and accomplishments over time.

The Three Cs of Sustainability

Commerce and Economy

Commerce City's sustainability is tied to economic prosperity and fiscal well-being. The city is developing an *Economic Development Strategic Plan* that will contribute to land use, planning choices, and strategies to attract and retain appropriate and thriving businesses. A fiscal model also will help the city determine how future development and land uses will affect the city's ability to provide quality services in the future.

Context and Environment

How Commerce City grows and plans future land uses affects the quality of neighborhoods, parks and open space, commercial development and jobs, the fiscal condition of the city, and the natural environment. Resources, energy use, and conservation are important components to ensure valuable resources (such as water and energy) are available for current, as well as future, generations. In addition, as a growing and dynamic community, Commerce City needs a transportation system that encourages all modes of travel throughout the city and region and focuses on improving congested conditions, as well as safety.

Commerce City's Sustainability Commitment

Sustainability initiatives include:

- ✓ A Resolution Regarding Sustainability, June 2009;

- ✓ Energy efficiency in city facilities and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from city operations;

- ✓ LEED Silver designated Civic Center (definition on page 196);

- ✓ Recycling at Civic Center;

- ✓ Water-wise landscaping and water efficiency for parks and city sites;

- ✓ Household trash recycling for residences except mobile home parks and apartments;

- ✓ Promoting protective stewardship of environment; and

- ✓ Programs to address improving walkability.

Community and Social Well-Being

The health, safety, and welfare of Commerce City's residents are important for a vibrant and harmonious community social structure. Residents and business owners will have opportunities to be involved in city government and thrive in a positive living, working, and recreational environment, enabling all to achieve productive and meaningful lives.

Opportunities for involvement in city government is one of the aspects of a sustainable community. This image shows planners and community members discussing transportation at a meeting at Reunion Recreation Center in August, 2009.

The Community Vision is carried through by the Guiding Principles linked through the 12 Plan Elements. The Guiding Principles and Plan Elements help accomplish the three Cs of this Plan: commerce and economy, context and environment, and community and social well-being. The 12 Guiding Principles are described on the next page.

C3 Sustainable Community

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

- Commerce & Economy
- Context & Environment
- Community & Social Well-Being

12 Plan Elements

- Land Use and Growth
- Economic Development
- Fiscal Stability
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Redevelopment/Reinvestment
- Transportation
- Safety and Wellness
- Parks, Open Space, Recreation
- Public Facilities and Infrastructure
- Appearance/Design
- Cultural Facilities and Tourism
- Conservation and Stewardship

Figure 2.2: The Three Cs of Sustainability and the 12 Plan Elements

Guiding Principles

The following set of Guiding Principles further supports and reinforces the C3 Plan Vision, and sets the stage for each of the Plan Elements in Chapters 4 through 15.

1 LAND USE AND GROWTH

Grow Commerce City in a balanced and compact pattern of neighborhoods and commerce centers, where residents have access to employment, services, and shopping. Promote infill and phase new growth to avoid inefficient and costly leapfrog development.

2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Maintain a strong employment base; help create a jobs/housing balance; define appropriate locations for a range of industry and businesses (including green businesses); and be a home for major corporations.

3 FISCAL STABILITY

Continue as a fiscally stable city by fortifying revenues while efficiently maintaining and providing services and infrastructure.

4 HOUSING/ NEIGHBORHOODS

Provide multiple types of housing serving a range of current and future residents and incomes in vibrant neighborhoods where people want to live.

5 REDEVELOPMENT/ REINVESTMENT

Promote new centers while maintaining the integrity of existing districts by continually renewing and reinvesting.

6 TRANSPORTATION

Ensure a quality community by providing efficient, effective, and varied modes of transportation that integrate and connect neighborhoods, the community, and the region.

7 SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Increase the health and well-being of residents through healthy living, access to medical facilities, and public safety and hazard planning.

8 PARKS, OPEN SPACE/ RECREATION

Provide ample and well-distributed parks and recreation facilities, and a connected system of trails and open space, to provide for outdoor recreation, relaxation, and rejuvenation and to protect views.

9 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure adequate and efficient public facilities and infrastructure for current and future residents and businesses.

10 APPEARANCE AND DESIGN

Enhance the positive image of the city at all gateways, along corridors, and in neighborhoods and commercial districts .

11 CULTURAL/ TOURISM

Become a destination for tourism and visitors, drawing people and businesses to arts, history, culture, sports, commerce, and other attractions.

12 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION/ STEWARDSHIP

Increase recycling, conservation, and the use of renewable energy sources, while reducing energy and resource use overall.

3—Future Land Use Plan

Chapter Contents

This chapter contains two major parts:

Part A: Land Use in Commerce City
> This part describes land use planning, the context and history of land use, and influencing factors.

Part B: The Citywide Future Land Use Plan
> This part describes the *Future Land Use Plan* map:

- Purpose and Big Ideas, and Using the Plan,
- Citywide *Future Land Use Plan* map and Description,
- Land Use Categories, and
- Commercial Centers Best Practices and Description.

Part B of this chapter describes centers as the future focus of commercial and community activity.

Part A: Land Use in Commerce City

What is Land Use Planning?

Definition

Land use refers to the use of land for rural and agricultural purposes and for residential, commercial, and employment areas within a city. Land use patterns arise naturally in a community through its customs and practices. Commerce City's patterns are dictated by a variety of factors, including its agricultural roots, its original settlements, location of railroads and major transportation corridors, natural features (e.g., South Platte River) and regulations and policies governing land use. The Plan Introduction (Chapter 1) and the Context and History section, below, both describe Commerce City's history more fully.

Why is Planning Important?

Planning for future land use ensures efficient use of land for economic and community benefit and protection of the environment for current and future generations. It helps to shape the community by giving guidance to what areas should be developed residentially, commercially, and industrially. It is critical that community and environmental needs are balanced, and that incompatible development patterns, such as residential development near the airport or any industrial/residential mix, are

Maintaining a balanced mix of land uses overall; allowing for distinct, vibrant, and mixed-use places, economic prosperity, and city fiscal stability are major plan goals.

mitigated. Planning also is important, because a great community will not just happen by itself—it needs shaping, direction, and ongoing monitoring.
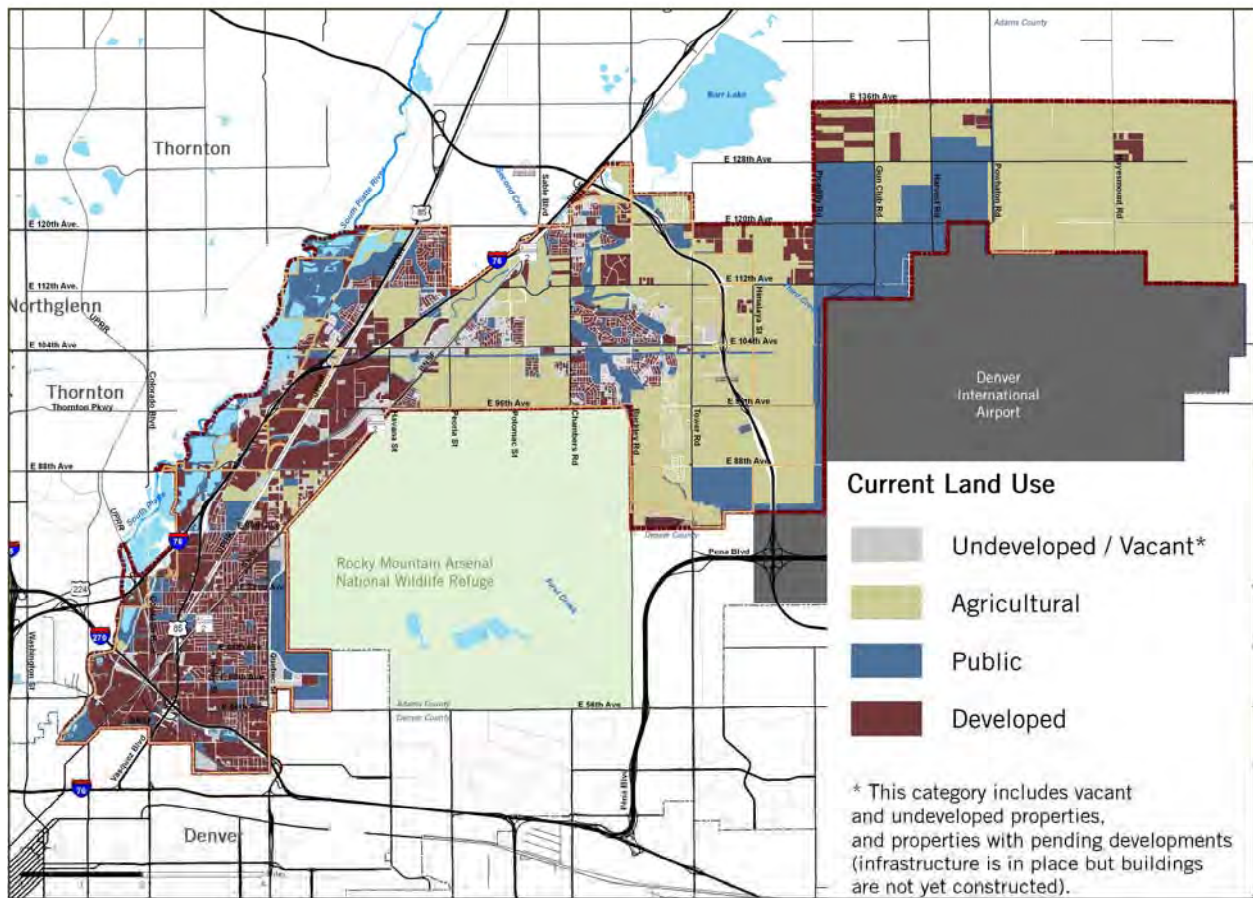
Figure 3.1: Current Development Status

Current Land Uses:

Within the city's 43,600 acre growth boundary, land use is:

- Agricultural – 17,000 ac. (39%),

- Developed – 10,500 ac. (24%),

- Public land – 7,800 ac. (18%),

- Vacant – 4,200 ac. (10%), and

- Other (right-of-way) (9%).

(See Figure 3.1: Current Development Status. A larger map is provided in Appendix A.)

How Does Land Use Differ from Zoning?

Commerce City formally regulates land use through zoning. The *Future Land Use Plan* map (Figure 3.2) is not zoning; the future land use designations are a basic tool of land use planning—and is the precursor to zoning. The *Future Land Use Plan* map and this chapter provide guidance on topics such as types of structures and activities, density and intensity, access, circulation, and relationship to transportation, and compatibility of uses. It does not carry the force of law, as does a zoning ordinance. It is intended to be a guide for city development and for possible zoning changes.

Context and History

Chapter 1 of this Plan provided a brief description of Commerce City's history. As a supplement to the overall history, it is important to note that the land use pattern that exists in the city today is linked to its history. Some of the pertinent historical events include the following:

- Railroads arrived in the late 1800s, connecting Denver with the plains and Transcontinental Routes.
- Original land uses in the Commerce City area were agricultural and residential homesteads, with farming focused along the South Platte River and Sand Creek.
- By the 1930s and 1940s, the area saw the beginning of heavy industry (such as refineries and grain elevators), with industrial land uses spreading north from Denver, along the railroad, into Adams County.
- Substantial residential growth began in the late 1940s and early 1950s—post World War II—providing housing for newly constructed industrial growth, Denver Stapleton Airport, and for the growing Rocky Mountain Arsenal.
- During this time, Adams County had limited regulations and planning for growth, thereby contributing to the residential/industrial proximity that exists throughout the Historic City.
- In the Post-World War II era, the Northern Range remained agricultural (i.e., winter wheat farming and dry land farming). It was envisioned for continued industrial growth along the railroad.
- In the 1980s, two things changed land uses in the Northern Range: (1) Denver International Airport (DIA) and (2) E-470. These changes brought about the transformation of the Northern Range from agricultural to numerous residential developments starting in the late 1990s to the present. Plentiful land helped to increase the newly-established growth momentum in this area.

Ongoing Land Use Influencing Factors

A variety of factors continue to influence land use for Commerce City and will shape future development. Many of these factors were identified in the Context and History sections. In summary, influencing factors include:

- Railroads attracted industrial development.
- Water sustained agricultural operations (i.e., the South Platte River, creeks and irrigation ditches, including the Burlington Ditch, O'Brian Canal, and Fulton Ditch).

Railroads facilitated industrial development in the 1930s and 1940s and are still important today. Highways also influence land use.

Factors and Conditions Influencing Land Use:

- Railroads,
- Rivers and creeks,
- Airport location (DIA) and noise,
- Roads and interstates location and when they were built,
- Industry—its influence on neighborhoods and past environmental impacts,
- Available vacant lands. The city has over 21,200 acres (33+ square miles) of vacant and agricultural lands within the Growth Boundary, some of which are approved for development.

More information is available in Appendix A, *Community Profile*.

- Denver's Stapleton Airport (1929-1995) drove nearby residential and industrial development, but also brought noise and pollution concerns.
- Interstate completions (I-76 in the late 1960s and I-270 in 1970) shifted industrial operations toward more transportation and trucking-oriented businesses, which operate to this day.
- Employment at Rocky Mountain Arsenal encouraged additional nearby residential development, but also brought contamination and image issues.
- DIA and E-470 spurred new growth (residential, commercial, and airport-related uses) and will continue to do so. Growth in the airport area has increased noise concerns from residences.
- The E-470 area, including the northeast quadrant of the Denver-metro Region, has plenty of land and opportunity for development not found elsewhere in the metro region near downtown Denver.

Denver International Airport has spurred growth in the northeastern part of Commerce City.

City Council Goals are Consistent with the Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan relates to certain 2009 City Council Retreat Goals, including:

✓ Become a balanced city;

✓ Encourage development that is appropriate;

✓ Be a place where people want to live;

See Chapter 2, (page 14) and Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth Goals and Policies and Strategies.

Part B: Citywide Future Land Use Plan

Future Land Use Plan Purpose

The Future Land Use Plan (which is a combination of the *Future Land Use Plan* (*FLUP*) map and description provided in this chapter) provides a guide for all future development in Commerce City, including those areas yet to be annexed into the city. It builds on and replaces recent and currently used land use plans (e.g., the *New Lands Plan*, *Irondale Comprehensive Plan*, and the *1985 Plan*, described in Chapter 1).

While the Future Land Use Plan is specific enough to help guide development and assist city leaders with future development decisions, it also provides flexibility for sub-area or corridor plans to address more detail. The Future Land Use Plan's main focus is on areas where new development (infill or redevelopment) will occur. It recognizes that some existing uses may not be expressly noted but will remain (e.g., mobile home parks). Finally, it provides flexibility to respond to unforeseen opportunities, without having to amend the entire Plan.

Future Land Use Plan Big Ideas

1. **Maintain a balanced mix of land uses** overall to maintain the city's high quality of life, economic prosperity, and fiscal stability.
2. **Design new neighborhoods** so that they are compact, walkable, and transit-supportive.
3. **Establish centers** as the primary locations for jobs, retail uses, and civic activity.
4. **Retain lands for industry** so the city will continue to have jobs and a fiscally-balanced future.
5. **Coordinate land use and transportation** to provide efficient and safe mobility and viable options for multiple modes of transportation.
6. **Provide an overall connected recreational system** of parks, trails, and open space to enhance the livability of the community.
7. **Phase growth in an orderly, compact manner** that is coordinated with the availability and funding for infrastructure and community services.

Using the Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan will be a guide for both the city and developers to help shape future neighborhoods, centers, open space, civic uses, and employment areas over the long-term. It designates strategic commercial centers (e.g., regional and community commercial), but also provides flexibility by including criteria for neighborhood or embedded commercial areas. It also allows for a variety of mixed-uses to develop in the Northern Range and along E-470, in accordance with specific detailed master plans, as long as this Plan's objectives are met. Finally, it presents the opportunity for key redevelopment areas and corridors in the city.

The Future Land Use Plan is comprised of the following parts:

- *Future Land Use Plan* map. (See Figure 3.2 on page 25.)
- Land Use Categories. (See Table 3.1, beginning on page 27.)
- A description for other Future Land Use Plan map features begins on page 32.
- The commercial centers description starts on page 38.

Future Land Use Plan
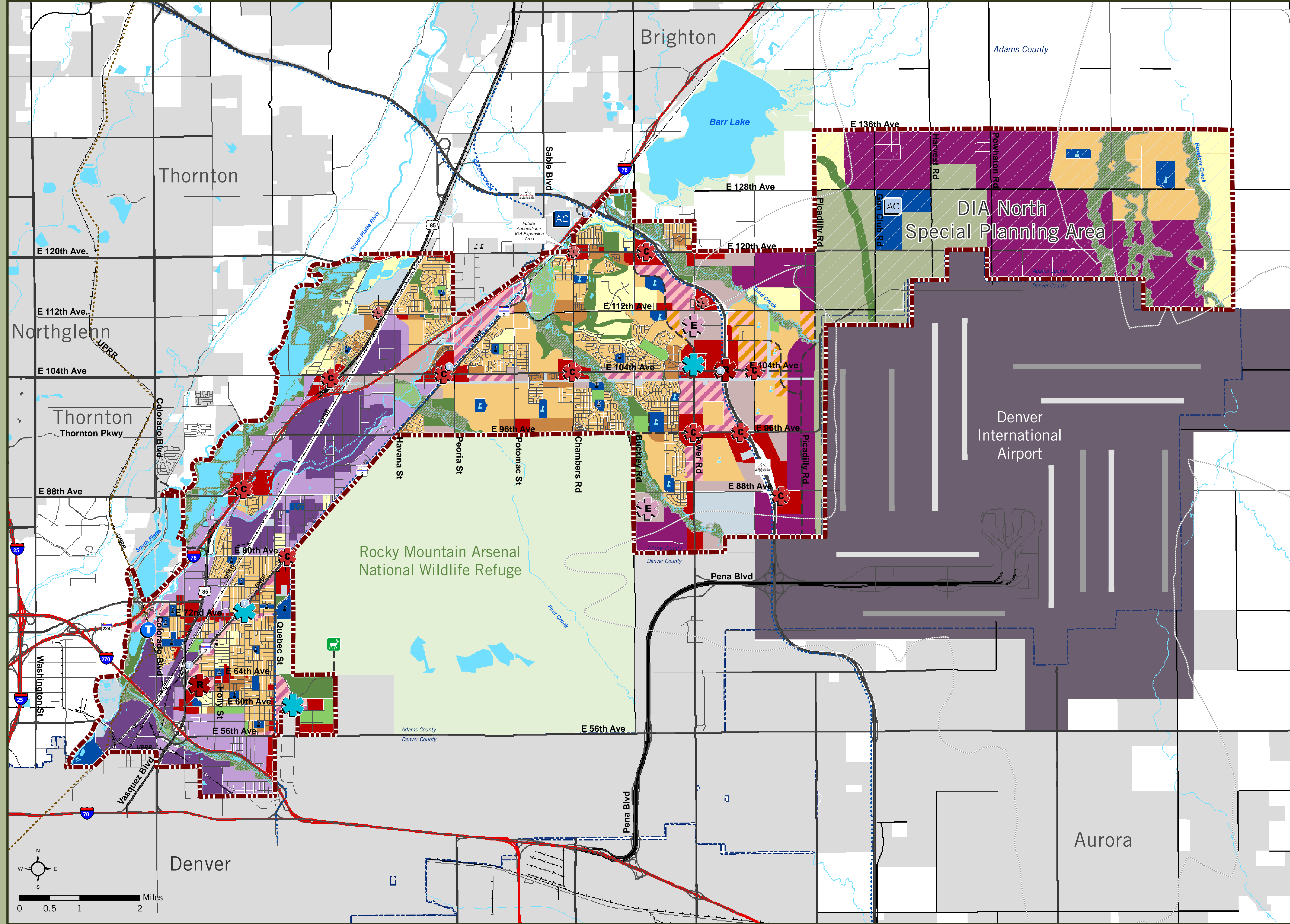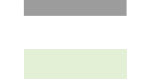
Figure 3.2

Source: Adams County Tax Assessor, Adams County GIS, Commerce City GIS, U.S. Census TIGER files, Clarion Associates, 2008

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

Legend

- ▭ IGA Growth Bounrdary
- ▭ County Boundary
- ▪ Denver International Airport
- ▫ DIA Noise Contours - 60 LDN
- ▪ Current Runway
- ▪ Future Runway
- ▪ National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- ▪ Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center
- ▪ 100 Year Floodplain
- - - Future Roads
- Ⓣ Planned Transit Station
- ● Possible Transit Station
- ⋯ Future Transit Line
- ⋯ Future Light Rail Line
- AC Future Adams County Government Administrative Complex
- AC Future Adams County Regional Public Safety Training Center
- Existing School
- Future School Site

Centers

- ✳ Activity Center
- Ⓔ Employment Campus / Business Center
- ✳ Regional Commercial Center
- Ⓒ Community Commercial Center
- ✳ Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use - E-470
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Office / Flex
- DIA Technology
- Industrial / Distribution
- General Industrial
- DIA Reserve
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

9/27/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

Land Use Categories

The Land Use Categories are designed to encourage a compatible mix of primary and secondary uses in neighborhoods, and promote a vibrant mix of uses within commercial centers around the city. All future city development will be served by water and sewer utilities, and will have paved streets and sidewalks.

Table 3.1: Land Use Categories

Table 3.1: Land Use Categories			
Land Use Category	**Characteristics and Uses (primary and secondary)**	**Density/ Intensity**	**Related Zoning**
RESIDENTIAL FOCUS			
Residential – Low	**Characteristics**: Appropriate for locations away from commercial centers and arterial streets where characteristics are traditional larger-lot city residential (in Historic City and Irondale), or larger-lot suburban residential. Low-density residential areas serve as a transition between urban residential neighborhoods and lower-density residential or agricultural areas. Generally, these neighborhoods are accessed by collector or local streets. **Primary uses**: Single-family detached residences. **Secondary uses**: Schools, open space, libraries, and other public uses and facilities.	1 to 4 units/acre	AG, R-1, and PUD
Residential – Medium	**Characteristics**: This category allows a wider range of residential types and is appropriate near commercial and activity centers where characteristics are suburban to urban neighborhoods at moderate density. Generally, neighborhoods are accessed by collector streets that connect to arterial streets and should be transit-supportive. **Primary uses**: Single-family detached residences, single-family attached, and some townhomes and patio homes. **Secondary uses**: Schools, open space, libraries, and other public uses and facilities. Small neighborhood commercial/embedded commercial (single lot to several lots) may be appropriate, if it is located along a collector street.	Minimum of 4 and up to 8 units/acre	R-1, R-2, and PUD
Residential – High	**Characteristics**: This category allows for higher-density multi-family residential and is appropriate near commercial centers and along major corridors or arterial streets. It also should be located near supporting non-residential uses or within mixed-use developments. *Continued, next page…*	Minimum of 8 units/acre and up to 40 units/acre	R-3, R-4, PUD, and MU-1

Table 3.1: Land Use Categories			
Land Use Category	**Characteristics and Uses (primary and secondary)**	**Density/ Intensity**	**Related Zoning**
Residential – High, cont.	Generally, this type of residential is accessed directly off arterial streets or collectors, and should be convenient to transit access. **Primary uses**: Townhomes, patio homes, condominiums, lofts, apartment buildings, and senior housing facilities. This category allows vertical mixed-use within buildings (e.g., loft apartments). **Secondary uses**: Schools, open space, libraries, and other public uses and facilities. Small commercial centers (up to 40,000 sf of building space) at the location of an arterial and collector may be appropriate or as part of a vertical mixed-use development.		
Mixed-Use E-470	**Characteristics**: This category allows for a mix of commercial and office uses and medium- and high-density residential types including small lot, single-family residential, and is appropriate near major corridors in the E-470 influence area. Generally, this type of mixed-use development is accessed directly from collectors and should be convenient to transit access. Because of potential noise from the airport, noise mitigation and disclosure noticing is necessary for residential development. **Mix of uses**: Horizontal and mixed-use development, including retail/commercial, offices and employment, and medium- and high-density residential uses. This category allows vertical mixed-use within buildings (e.g., loft apartments). **Secondary uses**: Schools/education, open space, libraries, and other public uses and facilities.	Minimum of 4 units/ acre with a maximum of 40 units/acre (maximum of 75% residential) inclusive of the entire PUD	PUD
COMMERCIAL FOCUS			
Commercial	**Characteristics**: This category allows for retail, commercial, office, and other services and is appropriate in commercial centers, and commercial areas designated along arterial streets or within mixed-use developments. Generally, it is accessed from arterial streets; it should be convenient to transit routes and stops. **Primary uses**: Retail at different scales to serve neighborhoods or the community.	1.0 FAR	C-1, C-2, C-3, and PUD

Table 3.1: Land Use Categories			
Land Use Category	**Characteristics and Uses (primary and secondary)**	**Density/ Intensity**	**Related Zoning**
Commercial, cont.	*(Different scales and design will be compatible with surrounding uses, as defined by centers criteria later in this chapter.)* Uses can generally include the following: restaurants; shops; financial services; medical, dental, and veterinary offices; day care; senior housing; gas stations (including outdoor sales); and hotels. **Secondary uses**: Schools, open space, libraries, and other public uses and facilities, and limited high-density residential. High-density residential may be allowed in some but not all, as part of a horizontal or vertical mixed-use project.		
Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)	**Characteristics**: This category allows for a mix of residential, retail, commercial, office, and other services. It is appropriate in commercial centers and commercial areas designated along arterial streets. Generally, it is accessed off arterial streets and should be convenient to transit access. The designation is also intended to facilitate areas transitioning from strip commercial corridors to mixed-use places with greater intensity and/or a vertical mix of uses. **Primary uses**: Retail and office at different scales—either to serve neighborhoods or the community at large. *(Different scales and design will be compatible with surrounding uses as defined by centers criteria later in this chapter.)* Residential, retail, and other uses may be allowed as part of a horizontal or vertical mixed-use project. Uses should be appropriate in a pedestrian-oriented setting and can generally include the following: restaurants, shops, financial services, day care, places of worship, senior housing, sales (including outdoor sales), hotels, and the like, and multi-family (high-density) housing integrated with ground-floor retail uses. **Secondary uses**: Schools/education, open space, libraries, and other public uses and facilities.	Up to 40 units/acre and 2.0 FAR with high-quality design, horizontal or vertical mixed-use. Density is inclusive of a master plan and not administered on a parcel-by-parcel basis.	PUD, and MU-1

Table 3.1: Land Use Categories			
Land Use Category	**Characteristics and Uses (primary and secondary)**	**Density/ Intensity**	**Related Zoning**
EMPLOYMENT FOCUS			
Industrial / Distribution	**Characteristics**: This category allows for a mix of light-industrial and industrial distribution uses and is appropriate where designated in the Historic City and Irondale areas. Generally, it is accessed off arterial streets or highways or collectors via truck routes. **Primary uses**: Warehouse, flex space, light manufacturing, office, and distribution facilities. **Secondary uses**: Open space and other public uses and facilities. Small retail services to support the warehouses and light manufacturing uses, such as small convenience commercial (e.g., restaurants, delis, gas, etc.).	Up to 0.50 FAR	I-1
General Industrial	**Characteristics**: This category allows for a mix of medium- and heavy-industrial uses and production, and is appropriate where designated on the Plan, primarily in the southwest sections of the Historic City and in Irondale along I-76. General industry is generally accessed off collector or arterial streets or highways and may have railroad access. **Primary uses**: Medium intensive and heavy-industrial uses. **Secondary uses**: Flex space, warehousing, outdoor storage, open space, and other public uses and facilities.	Up to 1.0 FAR	I-2, and I-3
Office/Flex	**Characteristics**: This category allows for a mix of flex, high-tech space, and production uses. Generally, it is accessed off collector streets near highways; it should be convenient to transit access when feasible. Ideally, this use will be designed in a campus-like, integrated style where local transportation (streets and sidewalks), landscaping, and signage are coordinated in a master plan. **Primary uses**: Offices and flex space. **Secondary uses**: Corporate headquarters, open space and other public uses and facilities, including educational campus uses. Retail to support the office uses, including restaurants, hotels, and conference facilities.	Up to 1.0 FAR (In certain locations, higher FAR may be allowed.)	I-1, I-2, C-3, and PUD

Table 3.1: Land Use Categories			
Land Use Category	**Characteristics and Uses (primary and secondary)**	**Density/ Intensity**	**Related Zoning**
DIA Technology	**Characteristics**: This category allows for a mix of light industrial, industrial distribution, offices, flex space, research and development, and production uses. It is appropriate where designated on the plan in the E-470 Influence Area and DIA North areas. No residential is allowed. Uses entail a high level of architecture, screening of storage and loading areas, high attention to landscaping and attractive signage. Generally, it is accessed off arterial streets or highways. Production uses will mitigate impacts such as noise, odors, and truck traffic. **Primary uses**: Warehouses, production, employment, research and development, offices, green technologies. **Secondary uses**: Open space and other public uses and facilities. Retail and hotels to support the warehouses and light manufacturing uses, including restaurants and service uses. (No schools, libraries, hospitals, or outdoor uses should occur within this category.)	Up to 1.0 FAR (In certain locations, higher FAR may be allowed.)	PUD
OTHER ACTIVITIES			
DIA Reserve	This category applies to the lands owned by DIA within Adams County, where potential conflicts from the airport are the highest. This land is currently set aside for open space, agricultural activities, and oil and gas wells.	n/a	AG
Utility	Land used for utilities, such as waste water facilities, electricity, and active and future landfills. May include water storage.	n/a	Public, PUD, and AG
Public/State	State or federal lands, and other public or quasi-public lands such as parks, cemeteries, and schools.	n/a	Public
Park	Land currently used for a public or private park (city-owned or HOA). Also includes land currently identified as a joint school park site.	n/a	Public and PUD
Open Space	Existing open space land and drainageways, including public (city-owned) and semi-private (HOA) owned land and future open space connections. The category includes gravel mining and may include some water storage/reservoir areas which may or may not have public access.	n/a	Public, PUD, and AG

Commerce City will plan for land use realities of retail in surrounding jurisdictions.

The South Platte River and floodplain is an opportunity for future open space, recreation, and habitat conservation.

DIA influences the area along E-470.

Other Future Land Use Plan Map Features

In addition to the main land use categories described in this chapter, the Future Land Use Plan map contains other features related to future growth and development of the community, including boundaries, future roadways, infrastructure, and environmental features described below.

Boundaries

Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA) Growth Boundary

The Future Land Use Plan map shows the current Commerce City Growth Boundary addressed through Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) with Adams County and the neighboring jurisdictions of Brighton and Thornton. These IGAs identify boundaries for the eventual growth of these cities. The boundaries were put into place to prevent disagreements and disputes among jurisdictions for developable land. (Note: The Future Land Use Plan map does not show the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) boundary, which designates lands for future urban service allocation. The DRCOG boundary is addressed in Chapter 4: Land Use and Growth, in the tiered or phased growth policies.)

Surrounding Jurisdictional Boundaries

The Future Land Use Plan map identifies the boundary for both Adams County and the City and County of Denver. It also shows to the current municipal boundaries of Aurora, Brighton, Northglenn, and Thornton.

Environmental or Other Features

100-Year Floodplain

The 100-year floodplain covers more than ten percent of the land within the IGA Growth Boundary, occurring mostly along the South Platte River. In addition to along the South Platte River, the existing floodplain is located along First, Second, and Third Creeks, Sand Creek, Box Elder Creek, Beebe Draw, and several other minor drainage tributaries. These floodplain corridors provide an opportunity for future open space, recreation, and habitat conservation.

Denver International Airport (DIA) and DIA Noise Contours

The Future Land Use Plan map shows the boundaries of the airport, including lands owned by the airport, but located in Adams County. The current and future runways are shown to highlight the locations and proximity to future development in the area. In addition to the runways, the 60 LDN (which means day-night equivalent noise level) contour (and higher) is shown, which

corresponds to flight paths for landings and take-offs occurring at the airport. Noise contours reflect noise impacts that may be expected from full development of DIA, based on current modeling. Future residential development is restricted within the 60 LDN Contour. The E-470 area is impacted by the noise contours in two areas—in the proximity of 120th and Himalaya and south of East 84th Avenue. Most of the DIA North area is impacted by the noise contour, shown in the Figure 3.3 below. As a result, a majority of future land uses in this area will be non-residential in nature.

The 60 LDN Contour extends north and west of the airport into Commerce City. This is the area where noise impacts, which are not suitable for residential development, may be expected.
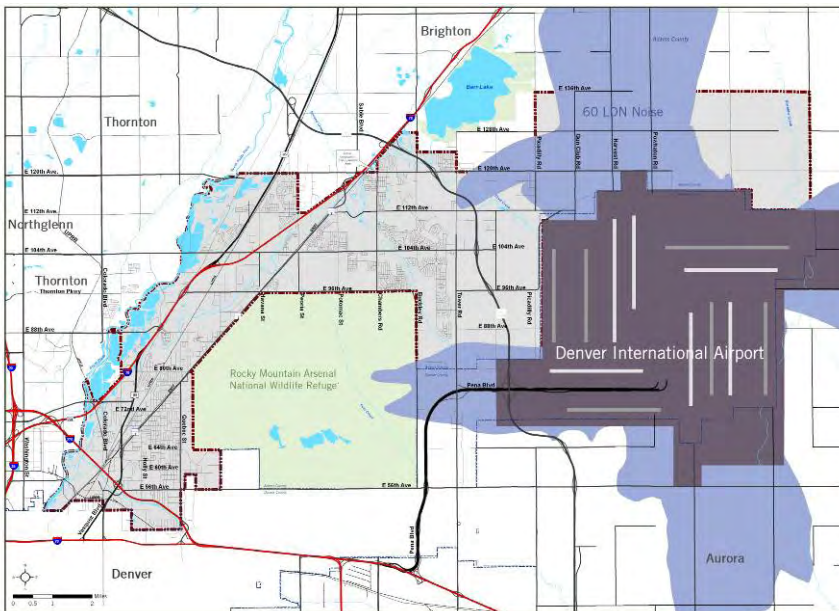
Figure 3.3: 60 LDN Airport Noise Contour

An additional unmarked externality associated with the airport operations is the concept of ground rumble. Ground rumble is noise associated with planes on the runways or taxiways, before or after a take-off or landing. While it is not measured empirically, it can interfere with certain land use activities. DIA anticipates future ground rumble within 3,300 feet of the centerline of the future outer runway, or within 2,000 feet from the DIA property line. Therefore, this land is also inappropriate for residential development.

Original Community Nodes

Five original communities (Commerce Town, Rose Hill, Irondale, Derby, and Adams City) were incorporated and formed Commerce City. Dupont, located near Brighton Road and East 83rd Avenue, is a sixth original community that is not annexed into the City. The approximate locations of these communities are shown on the Future Land Use Plan maps for the Historic City and Irondale. The intent is to highlight and acknowledge the locations of the original communities, to honor their heritage and legacy,

Original Communities

They are:

- Commerce Town
- Rose Hill
- Irondale
- Derby
- Adams City
- Dupont

and to allow for local neighborhood commercial and smaller-scale embedded mixed-use opportunities. The city aims to help maintain, support, and promote these unique neighborhoods. These targeted locations may allow a greater intensity of development, on a pedestrian scale, than what is found in the immediately surrounding areas.

Adams County Government Centers

The Future Land Use Plan map shows the locations of the Adams County Government Administration Complex in the E-470/I-76 vicinity (currently under construction), and the planned Regional Public Safety Training Center, north of DIA. The Government Administration Complex is located within Brighton city limits, while the training center will be located within an area that may be annexed by Commerce City. Both of these county developments will benefit Commerce City through their close-in, consolidated government services.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake State Park

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake are wildlife, cultural, and recreation resources at the edge of the community. Both are fairly new; Barr Lake State Park was established in 1977, and the refuge was established in 1992. The city should work with the management agencies to help build upon these assets that are important resources for residents of the area. The location of the future National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center near Prairie Gateway is shown on the *FLUP* map and is described later under Other Features.

Future Roads and Transportation

Future Road Connections

Although the Future Land Use Plan map primarily shows existing roads and transportation networks, it also highlights several planned roads, yet to be constructed, including but not limited to:

- Landmark Drive Extension (to East 96th Avenue by the future high school site);
- "C" Street (from Gateway Road to the future Visitor's Center located on the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge);
- Prairieway Parkway (from East 120th Avenue to East 128th Avenue located in the DIA North area);
- East 96th Avenue Connection (from McKay Road to Riverdale Road to connect with Thornton Parkway);
- Colorado Boulevard/I-76 Interchange (from Colorado Boulevard to US 85 to connect Thornton with the city);
- East 104th Avenue Extension (from E-470 east to future Picadilly Road);
- Picadilly Road Extension (from East 120th Avenue to south of East 88th Avenue);

Barr Lake State Park is an important resource for city residents.

The Future Land Use Plan map shows existing and future roads.

- Himalaya Extension (from East 112th Avenue to East 120th Avenue across Third Creek);
- Yosemite Street (from East 88th Avenue to East 96th Avenue across the O'Brian Canal);
- East 56th Avenue Connection (from Brighton Boulevard to York Street);
- Interchanges on Highway 85 with grade separations of the UPRR tracks at East 104th, East 112th, and East 120th Avenues; and
- Grade separations of the UPRR tracks at East 88th and 96th Avenues.

These future roadways will be examined more completely within the Citywide Transportation Plan.

Transit Stations

The Future Land Use Plan map shows the location of the planned future FasTracks North Metro Corridor commuter rail station, along the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks on the west side of Commerce City. The station will be in the vicinity of East 68th to 72nd Avenues near Colorado Boulevard. The immediate surrounding area could have potential for transit-oriented development and redevelopment. This station may be constructed as early as 2015.

Future transit (North Metro Corridor) will provide opportunities for transit-oriented development and redevelopment.

Commerce City is well positioned for future generations of light and commuter rail. The plan shows Highway 2 and E-470 as future routes for this type of rail service, although it may take more than 30 years to develop. Along the proposed Highway 2 line, stops would be envisioned at Wembley, Derby, and East 104th Avenue, before continuing on to the new Adams County Government Complex. The E-470 route would join the East Line to the airport and travel north along E-470, with a stop at East 104th Avenue before continuing to the future Adams County Government Complex.

Other Features

🦌 *Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center*

The Future Land Use Plan map shows the approximate location of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center near Prairie Gateway. The Visitor Center is scheduled to open in the fall of 2010. The 14,000-square-foot Visitor Center will feature an observation deck, an aviary, an auditorium, and exhibits chronicling the Rocky Mountain Arsenal's history. Visits are expected to jump from 35,000 to 200,000 a year, once the Visitor Center opens. This will result in increased traffic and business flows throughout the Prairie Gateway area.

R *Redevelopment Focus Areas*

The Future Land Use Plan map also shows future redevelopment locations. These are places where current uses vary, where lands are underutilized or abandoned, and where the city has been making targeted investments. They are distinct from greenfield sites such as Prairie Gateway. Redevelopment focus areas include the following:

- Derby,
- FasTracks Station / TOD site,
- Clermont (60th and Vasquez),
- Wembley, and
- East 104th Avenue between Brighton Road and I-76.

The Wembley site (former greyhound racing track) is a redevelopment focus area addressed in this Plan.

Existing and Future Schools

The Future Land Use Plan map also indicates current and future school sites (i.e., black flag for existing and blue for future).

Schools depicted in the E-470 Influence Area have approximate locations and sizes based on Adams County School District 27J requirements. Exact locations and configurations of the proposed school sites will be finalized for this area as it develops. Elementary and middle school sites should be placed in locations to promote safe and convenient pedestrian access (walking / biking) from surrounding residential areas. Serving students from the east and west sides of E-470, the high school site should be located with adequate regional vehicular access as well as with safe and convenient pedestrian access options.

Anticipated Schools in the E-470 Influence Area are:

- One Elementary School Site requiring 10 acres.
- Two Elementary School Sites (together with public parks) requiring 25 acres each.
- One Middle School Site (together with public parks) requiring 35 acres.
- One High School Site (with no public park) requiring 50 acres.

New elementary schools should be located within the core of neighborhoods and integrated with parks, whenever possible.

The new Adams City High School, located in Prairie Gateway, is a state-of-the-art facility offering an academy structure to suit different students' learning needs. Academies include Arts, Early College, International Baccalaureate, and Science and Technology.

Best Practices

Types of Centers include:

- ✓ Employment Campus/Business
- ✓ Regional Commercial
- ✓ Community Commercial
- ✓ Local Commercial
- ✓ Activity Center

Each Center type is described in the pages that follow.

DRCOG Center Concept

It is the intent of Commerce City to plan its key centers acknowledging criteria established by Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG). DRCOG defines centers as mixed-use places (with mixed-use employment and high density residential), based on a hierarchy of classifications, compatible with transit and enhanced regional transportation, and pedestrian-oriented. Over time, it is envisioned that Commerce City will have more of these places, and will work to develop its key centers according to city and DRCOG goals.

Centers should be designed for pedestrians.

Centers

This *C3 Vision Plan* recommends "centers" as places of focused economic and social activity for the community, developed at different scales according to their location and focus. Planning and design of centers should generally be designed according to the following principles:

High-Quality Design

Overall, centers should be high-quality design. They should incorporate design elements that provide for visual appeal, pedestrian safety, interesting architecture, and appropriate landscaping. Building construction should use high-quality materials so that buildings are long-lasting, attractive, and durable (*e.g.,* sandstone, brick). Parking areas should provide safe, attractive, and clearly-defined pedestrian routes. Site lighting should be designed to provide uniform, safe, and efficient lighting while preventing glare from reaching adjacent properties.

Mix of Complementary Uses

Centers should contain a mix of complementary uses, such as retail, offices, and higher-density housing (e.g., lofts, townhomes, condominiums, and apartments). Centers will serve different types of needs (from local convenience to regional retail), depending on their location and intended market trade area.

High-Quality Pedestrian and Bicycle Environment

Centers of all scales should be designed to meet the needs of pedestrians at all levels, through a fine-grained network of sidewalks and walkways that allow for continuous and safe access. They should also include public spaces, such as plazas, outdoor seating associated with restaurants, parks, or open space areas, which encourage and invite pedestrian and bicycle activity and gathering and are designed to take advantage of (and protect from) the Colorado sun and winter conditions.

Connected Transportation Network

Centers also need to be properly placed within and well-served by the city's street, sidewalk, trail, and transit network, as defined in the criteria for each center, starting on the next page.

Transition from and Connected to Surrounding Areas

Centers should be designed to provide transitions from neighborhoods (from single-family homes to higher-density). They should provide direct connections for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles between centers, adjoining neighborhoods, and other surrounding uses.

Employment Campus/Business Center

An Employment Campus or Business Center contains primarily employment with supporting retail and potentially some very high-density housing.

Table 3.2: Locational and Design Criteria for an Employment Campus/Employment Center

Factor	Criteria
Access	Frontage on a highway and arterial street or at the intersection of two highways. Should also provide local street and transit connections to allow access from adjacent developments.
Size	Varies (based on Economic Development Strategic Plan).
Trade area	Varies (based on Economic Development Strategic Plan).
Site planning and design	An employment center should be designed in a cohesive way—providing great attention to detail and design, especially in high-visibility locations, such as along highways. It should incorporate a high level of landscaping, include high-quality building materials, include attractive fencing and gateways, provide screening for service areas, provide pedestrian access, use low-level lighting, and maximize views of the mountains and refuge.
Other considerations	Must consider the compatibility and impact on adjacent areas, and be well connected through the transportation network. The DIA Airport Navigable Airspace restricts height (generally to between 200 to 1,250 feet above ground level, depending on the location), which should not impede development.

Example of employment use, campus-style.

Employment Campus/Business Center Design Criteria

1. Include a mix of uses for round-the-clock activity.
2. Incorporate gateway features and landscaping at high visibility locations along highways and major roads.
3. Screen maintenance and service areas with materials consistent with buildings.
4. Incorporate landscaping to screen parking.
5. Use shared parking where possible.

An Employment Campus/Business Center should include a coordinated site plan and attractive architecture and landscaping.

Regional commercial center example with one or more large anchor stores and mixed-use.

Regional Commercial Center Design Criteria

1. Include a mix of uses, with most intense activity at the center and along major roadways, transitioning to neighborhoods.
2. Orient building fronts to the street.
3. Cluster buildings around shared plazas or a "main street" for outdoor public gathering.
4. Distribute parking to sides and rear of buildings or development.
5. Screen maintenance and service areas and utilities.
6. Incorporate features, such as towers or arbors, for visual interest and use 4-sided architecture.
7. Incorporate transit stops and access, where appropriate.

Regional Commercial Center

Regional Commercial Centers provide the opportunity for commercial shopping that serves the community and region. They typically contain at least two major anchors, such as a large format retail store, department store, or home improvement store. They may be configured as an outdoor mall or lifestyle center. Ideally, a regional center also will contain a mix of uses within or nearby, including high-density housing.

Table 3.3: Locational and Design Criteria for a Regional Commercial Center

Factor	Criteria
Location/access	Frontage on an arterial or at the intersection of two highways or arterials. Should also provide local road and transit connections, to allow access from adjacent developments.
Size	Minimum of 40 acres, up to 150 acres with a minimum of 350,000 square feet of total gross floor area. Should be located on one or two quadrants of an interchange, or one quadrant at the intersection of two arterials.
Trade area	Five miles or more (serving a population of 50,000+ people).
Site planning and design	Must have cohesive architectural design with high-quality building materials, landscaping, and attractive coordinated signs. Most parking should be screened and oriented to the interior of the site. Ideally, contains a mix of uses, including employment and housing.
Amenities	Pedestrian plazas or other outdoor gathering space and public art.
Other considerations	Must consider the compatibility and impact on adjacent areas, and be well connected through the transportation network.
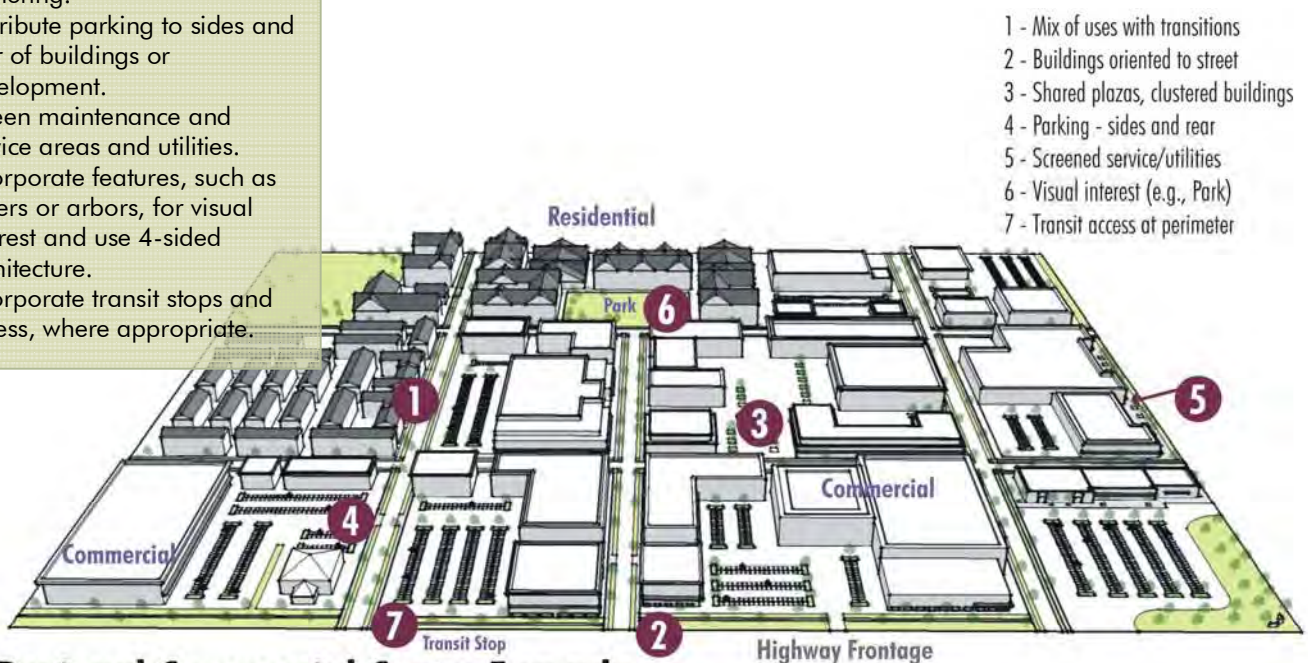
1 - Mix of uses with transitions
2 - Buildings oriented to street
3 - Shared plazas, clustered buildings
4 - Parking - sides and rear
5 - Screened service/utilities
6 - Visual interest (e.g., Park)
7 - Transit access at perimeter

Regional Commercial Center Example

Community Commercial Center

Community Commercial Centers provide the opportunity for retail and services that serve multiple nearby neighborhoods and day-to-day needs. They typically contain an anchor, such as a grocery store. Some, but not all, will include a mix of uses within or nearby, including high-density housing.

A community commercial center will be smaller than a regional commercial center and designed to serve surrounding neighborhoods, usually with a grocery store anchor.

Table 3.4: Locational and Design Criteria for a Community Commercial Center

Factor	Criteria
Location/access	Frontage on two arterial streets or an arterial and a collector. Should also provide local roadway and pedestrian connections to allow access from neighborhoods, adjacent businesses, and transit stations.
Size	Up to 20 acres; gross floor area up to 200,000 square feet.
Trade area	One to two miles (population of 10,000 to 20,000 people).
Site planning and design	Most of parking screened or to the rear, with smaller buildings near the streets; storage and service areas screened; must have cohesive landscaping, architecture, and design and attractive coordinated signs, and high-quality building materials. Variation from franchise-specific architecture may be necessary.
Amenities	Pedestrian plaza or outdoor space.
Other considerations	Must consider the compatibility and impact on adjacent residential development and ensure it is integrated with and enhances the neighborhood.

Community Commercial Center Design Criteria

1. Include a mix of uses.
2. Orient building fronts to the street.
3. Cluster buildings around shared plazas or a "main street" for public gathering.
4. Distribute parking to the sides and rear where possible.
5. Screen maintenance and service areas and utilities.
6. Incorporate features such as towers or arbors for visual interest, and use 4-sided architecture.
7. Incorporate transit stops and access, where appropriate.

1 - Mix of uses, integrated, connected
2 - Buildings oriented to street
3 - Shared plazas, clustered buildings ("Main Street")
4 - Parking interior
5 - Screened service/utilities
6 - Visual interest
7 - Transit access

Residential toward rear

Arterial Street Frontage

Community Commercial Center Example

A local commercial center will be smaller-scale than community commercial—generally encompassing two to five acres.

Local Commercial Center Design Criteria

1. Cluster buildings and orient retail to the street.
2. Integrate live/work units where applicable.
3. Use shared parking where possible.
4. Provide direct pedestrian and bicycle connections within commercial area, to and from neighborhoods, and to transit.
5. Provide landscaping along the right-of-way and street frontage.
6. Screen utilities, maintenance, and service areas.
7. Incorporate signage with buildings.

Local Commercial Center

Local commercial centers provide opportunities for convenience shopping and service needs of a small trade area within, or directly adjacent to, a neighborhood. The Future Land Use Plan does not designate all potential Local Commercial Centers, because there may be opportunities for additional Local Centers within the city, if the proposed center meets the criteria below.

Table 3.5: Locational and Design Criteria for Local Commercial

Factor	Criteria
Location/access	Frontage on two collector streets or on an arterial and collector street, with walk-in access from neighborhoods. Should provide access to transit.
Size	Generally two to five acres.
Trade area	Up to three-quarters of a mile.
Site planning and design	Cohesive building design, landscaping, low-scale attractive signs, and high-quality building materials.
Amenities	Ideally will contain an outdoor space or plaza.
Other considerations	Must consider the compatibility and impact on adjacent residential development and ensure it is integrated with and enhances the neighborhood.

Embedded Commercial

Smaller scale (single lot or several lots) traditional commercial may occur within the Historic City, Irondale, and Original Communities within select locations of the Medium and High-Density Residential categories to serve the neighborhood. Small-scale commercial uses are appropriate where they exist (and will expand), or where they are adjacent to existing commercial uses. These types of uses have little, if any, negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods (no drive-in, drive-thru, large-scale uses, etc.)

1 - Buildings oriented to street
2 - Residential integrated (live/work)
3 - Shared parking
4 - Pedestrian connections
5 - Streetscape along perimeter
6 - Screened service/utilities

Arterial or Collector Street

Arterial Street Frontage

Local Commercial Center Example

Activity Centers

The Future Land Use Plan map includes three Activity Centers, which are places that attract community gathering and activity. Each one varies in size, function, and intensity. They all have, or will have, a mix of educational, residential, retail, office, government, cultural, and entertainment activity to contribute to the vitality of the area. It is envisioned that these locations would have day and night activities occurring throughout the week. The city's three activity centers include:

- **Reunion** (in the Northern Range at Tower Road and East 104th Avenue),
- **Derby** (in the Historic City near East 72nd and Monaco Street), and
- **Prairie Gateway** (in the Historic City on East 60th Avenue just east of Quebec Parkway).

These are centers within which people often choose to walk and bicycle, rather than drive to meet their daily needs. They are also centers for socializing, civic events, and community life. Innovative land use and urban design should help create a lively network, with features such as a Main Street or central plaza. These public places are celebrated as vibrant, memorable, and identifiable.

Derby, an original community, is designated as an activity center in this Plan.

Reunion is one of the activity centers (Photos: Clarion, Reunion website).

4—Land Use and Growth

Guiding Principle

Grow Commerce City in a balanced and compact pattern of neighborhoods and commerce centers, where residents have access to employment, services, and shopping. Promote infill and phase new growth to avoid inefficient and costly leapfrog development.

Part A: Introduction and Organization

Commerce City is a diverse place—ranging from inner-ring neighborhoods with heavy industry to newly developing edge suburbs containing master planned communities. Land within the urban growth boundary provides ample room for the city to grow through 2035 and beyond. Commerce City encompasses a large geographic area and shares its boundaries with six different municipalities, a major international airport, and the largest urban wildlife refuge in the United States. Furthermore, the city's location along major regional and interstate travel routes, as well as its proximity to Denver International Airport, has helped to retain a strong industrial base and will help the city remain a prosperous and desirable place in which to live, work, and play.

This chapter contains two major sections:

Part A: **Land Use and Growth Plan Element**, which includes:

- Introduction, overview, and sustainability,
- Land Use and Growth Goals and Policies,
- Land Use Strategies, and
- Monitoring Land Use and Growth.

Part B: **Five Strategic Planning Areas** (and Focus Areas):

1. Historic City
2. Irondale
3. Northern Range
4. E-470 Influence Area
5. DIA North

This chapter provides policies related to land use and growth, and describes five strategic planning areas and focus areas within them.
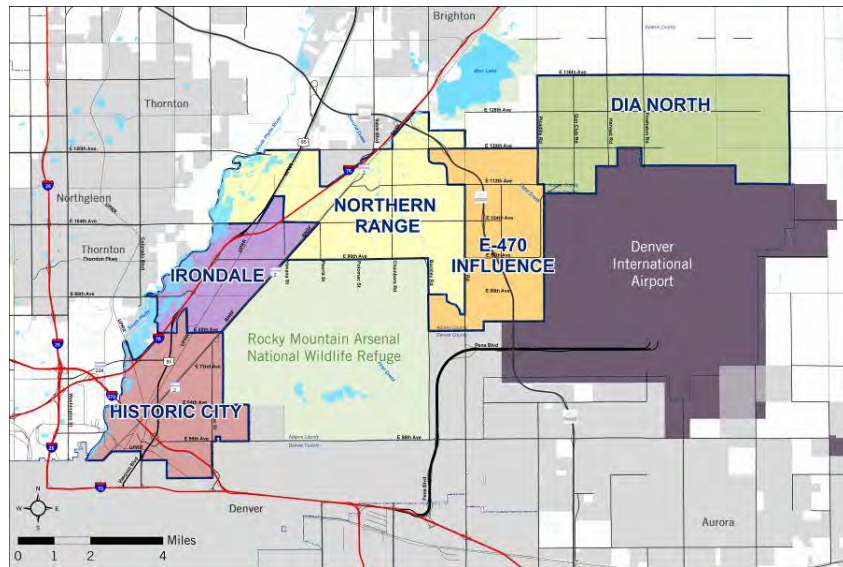
Figure 4.1: Strategic Planning Areas

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the Land Use and Growth goals contained in this chapter of the Plan. Many of these land use influencing factors have been previously identified in Chapter 3. This section attempts to provide more context and highlights why they are important for the future of the city.

Projected Population and Employment Growth

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) estimates that the Denver-metro region will grow to a population of nearly 3.9 million by 2035. Most of this growth will occur in the Northeast Corridor of the Denver-metro area. Because of this, Commerce City is projected to grow faster than the region, from approximately 42,473 (2008 U.S. Census Bureau estimate) to an estimated 71,600 by 2035. Commerce City employment projections are estimated to grow from 23,676 (2006) to 35,200 jobs by 2035.

Amount and Location of Potential Growth Areas

The city has an abundant supply of land available for this new growth and development. More than 68-square miles of land are contained within its Growth Boundary area, of which 41-square miles (26,000 acres) are currently within the current city limits. Only about 24% of all land within the Growth Boundary is developed, with nearly 50% of land currently in agriculture use or vacant. This large supply of land is considerably more than is needed to accommodate the city's projected growth over the next 20 years, creating the need to define priorities in this Plan. Appendix D outlines potential buildout of the city and assumptions used to generate buildout calculations.

C3 Projected Growth

	2008	2035
People	42,473	71,600
*Jobs**	23,676	35,200

*2006
Source: U.S. Census, DRCOG.

Expanding Boundaries and Varied Growth Areas

From 2000 through 2008, Commerce City experienced rapid growth to the north and east into the Northern Range. This doubled the city's population and created a broader array of land use challenges and opportunities because of the population shift. In the future, growth will take the form of infill in the Historic City and Irondale areas, as well as new greenfield development on large properties within the Northern Range, along E-470, and north of DIA.

Development Constraints

A number of physical factors in the city may impact where and what type of development will occur. These constraints have been highlighted in previous chapters, but include noise and safety impacts from DIA (particularly in the E-470 area); floodplains along the South Platte River Corridor and its tributaries; and wetland areas that are restricted from development and should be conserved.

Housing/Jobs Balance

Commerce City currently has a very strong balance of jobs and housing overall, compared with other cities in the Denver-metro area. It currently has a jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.85, meaning that the city has more jobs than households, by almost two to one. By comparison, Adams County overall has a jobs-to-housing ratio of 1.05, with many suburban communities in the region at a ratio of less than 1.0. However, newer growth over the past decade, which focused primarily on residential development, has been less balanced. As the city continues to grow, it will be important to maintain and sustain a balance of jobs and housing citywide, while providing commercial centers and jobs near neighborhoods.

2006 Jobs-to-Housing Ratio

C3 Employment: 23,676

C3 Households: 12,826

C3 Ratio: 1.85

Adams County Ratio: 1.05

Neighborhood Units

Currently, the city has policies regarding neighborhood units, particularly in the *New Lands Plan*. That plan describes how housing should be located in villages that are easy to serve and organized as cohesive units. Villages should have civic and other functions in the center, relate to the connected modified grid transportation network, and have higher-density housing, services, and jobs near the arterial roads. This Plan continues and carries forward the concept of neighborhood units.

See Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods.

Directions and Goals

Based on the influencing factors outlined above and in previous chapters, the land use and growth goals are based on the following considerations:

Balanced Development

A balanced mix of land uses is important to quality of life, so that multiple generations of people are able to live, work, and play in the community—meeting their daily needs. Maintaining a healthy land use balance also is critical to retaining a strong fiscal position, so the city can continue to fund essential services (e.g., street paving and snow removal), as well as quality of life services (e.g., recreation centers, parks, etc.).

Development Phasing

Because of the city's large supply of non-developed land, it is important that the location and timing of growth be phased to ensure that infrastructure and services can be in place at the time that they are needed. Moreover, growth should occur in a logical fashion, where it can be served by urban facilities and infrastructure (e.g., water, sewer, police, fire, paved streets, parks, schools, and sidewalks). This Plan guides growth through phased areas (or tiers), so it can be served efficiently and not add increasingly burdensome costs to taxpayers.

Centers and Strong Neighborhoods

A physical city structure that is based on centers and strong neighborhoods is a community-supported direction for this Plan. Such a structure will strengthen established and new development areas and neighborhoods within the city, build on the entire transportation network, and conserve natural resources. The direction complements goals and policies in other chapters of this Plan, including Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhoods.

Land Use and Growth goals address:

1. Balanced mix of land uses,

2. Orderly, phased growth with urban services,

3. Strong neighborhoods,

4. Industrial areas and land for jobs retained,

5. Centers as locations for jobs, services, commercial goods, and housing,

6. DIA-compatible future growth, and

7. Regional growth coordination.

How Do Land Use and Growth Relate to Sustainability?

Benefits of a compact and orderly land use pattern include:

- ✓ efficient use of land and ability to conserve land,

- ✓ efficient infrastructure (streets, water and sewer, police services, fire protection, etc.),

- ✓ land reserved for employment uses,

- ✓ reduction in vehicle use and emissions,

- ✓ improved scenic and community character,

- ✓ increased housing options near jobs, services, schools, and other community infrastructure, and

- ✓ ability to be an active, healthy community.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

The land use and growth goals permeate many of the other chapters of this Plan and are important to achieving sustainability, as described below. They:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Designate and reserve locations for services, commercial development, jobs, and industry.
✓ Ensure a balance of land uses and long-term city fiscal stability.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Promote compact development, which is one of the most important concepts of sustainability. Compact, efficient development affects not only the community's structure, but also transportation mobility, community health, and environmental quality.
✓ Designate appropriate locations and transitions for different land uses and conserve land for open space.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Ensure that growth does not outpace the city's ability to provide services, including police protection.
✓ Place neighborhoods and services and goods in proximity to each other (e.g., health facilities and grocery stores).
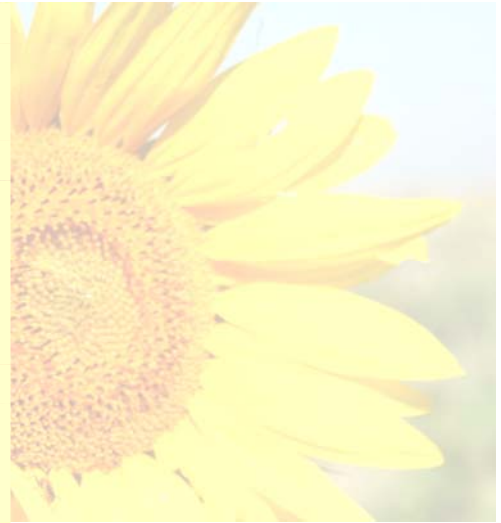
These Goals in Related Chapters

The land use and growth goals relate closely to other elements and chapters of this Plan. The table below identifies where goals link with other plan elements, and where to find them.

Table 4.1: Land Use and Growth Goals and Related Chapter

Plan Element/Ch. #:	4 Land Use, Growth	5 Economic Dev.	6 Fiscal Stability	7 Housing/Neighbor	8 Redevelopment	9 Transportation	10 Safety, Wellness	11 Parks, Open Space	12 Public Facilities	13 Appearance	14 Cultural Facilities	15 Environmental
Goals												
1. Balanced mix of land uses	✖		✖			✖						
2. Orderly, phased growth	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖		✖	✖			✖
3. Strong neighborhoods	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖		✖		
4. Industrial land retained	✖	✖	✖									
5. Commercial Centers	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖				✖	✖	
6. DIA-compatible	✖	✖		✖								✖
7. Regional coordination	✖					✖	✖	✖	✖			✖

Three-Tiered Expansion of the City

Tier 1 is the area generally appropriate for urban development where the city can use existing or programmed capital improvements and where water, sewer, and other urban utilities are most efficient to provide. It is generally tied to city limits, where the city, utility, and other districts will provide urban services in the short-term. The city should consider enclave annexations in this area in accordance with annexation criteria and state laws.

Tier 2 is the area where the city will expand through 2035, working with the private sector and districts ahead of development to approve extension of development (and/or proposed annexation) **if** development:

- ✓ has funding for capital improvements and services necessary to serve the area;

- ✓ will generate revenues to provide the required levels of services;

- ✓ will contribute to a citywide, balanced mix of housing and jobs and contributes positively to the fiscal state of the city;

- ✓ is generally consistent with the Future Land Use Plan;

- ✓ will enhance the community's image and opportunity to become a destination;

- ✓ provides exceptional benefits to the city—meeting and exceeding city requirements; and

- ✓ meets this Plan's goals.

Tier 3 is the long-term Intergovernmental Growth Boundary, which includes land for growth beyond 2035.

Land Use and Growth Goals and Policies

Goal LU 1—Maintain a balanced mix of land uses citywide and within Strategic Planning Areas

Commerce City growth will occur in a manner that maintains a citywide balanced mix of jobs and housing, and that achieves additional jobs, retail, and services.

Citywide Policies:

LU 1.1—Growth and Future Land Use Plan Consistency

To implement this Plan, ensure future development is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and map. The map provides a guide for 2035-projected growth, builds on previous plans, and reserves land for commercial and employment uses to ensure a future balanced mix of uses.

LU 1.2—Jobs-to-Housing Ratio Maintained

As growth occurs, maintain the citywide ratio of jobs to housing at or above a range of 1.5 jobs per 1.0 housing units.

LU 1.3—Positive Benefit of Annexation

The city will consider annexation of areas on a case-by-case basis, ensuring positive social, economic, fiscal, and environmental benefits associated with the potential annexation. Prior to annexations, a detailed public facilities and financing plan shall be completed, as described in the strategies.

Goal LU 2—Phase growth in an orderly, compact manner

The city will phase future growth in tiers so it is contiguous with existing urban areas or infill locations that can be efficiently served; avoids leapfrog development; and is generally beneficial to the city overall.

Citywide Policies:

LU 2.1—Infill Development Promoted

Promote infill development and redevelopment to use utilities and services efficiency, to support multi-modal transportation, to revitalize neighborhoods, and to maintain prosperous businesses. Infill means development on vacant unplatted parcels scattered throughout the city, or in county enclave areas.

See Chapter 8, Redevelopment and Reinvestment, for definitions and policies related to infill and redevelopment.

LU 2.2—New Development Contiguous, Tiered

Use a tiered planning system to manage city expansion and ensure that new development is contiguous with existing development, to the extent possible. The system also should provide flexibility to respond to the market. Do not allow leapfrog development, where new development is far from existing infrastructure and services. (See Tiered Expansion Areas Figure 4.2, and the text box explanation on the previous page.)
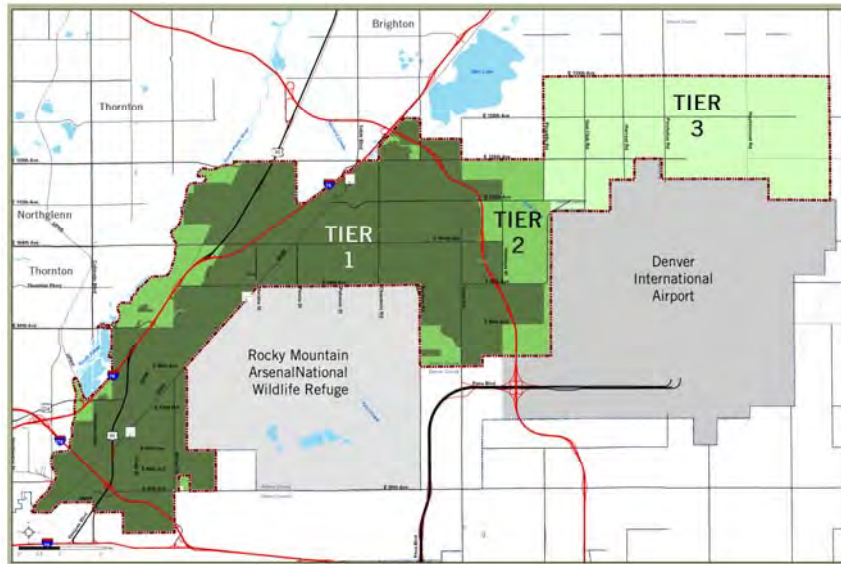
Figure 4.2: Commerce City Tiered Expansion Areas

LU 2.3—Development Paced with Utilities

Within Tier 1 and Tier 2, ensure that the timing and rate of new development occurs in locations that are efficient for providing services and are coordinated with utilities. Development will not outpace the city or other districts' ability to provide services.

See Chapter 12, Public Facilities and Infrastructure.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

LU 2.4—North of DIA Long-Term Planning

Land to the north of DIA is classified on the Future Land Use Plan, but it also will require continued and future planning as the city continues to develop. The area north of DIA is considered a Special Planning Area for future planning, and is meant to be more general in approach and application, since development in this area will probably occur at a distant time in the future (2035+). In the meanwhile, the city should work to annex these unincorporated lands in preparation for long-term development, and to avoid any type of large lot (greater than 1 acre) residential pattern of development that is incompatible with airport operations and inefficient to serve.

Stable Neighborhoods

Stable neighborhoods tend to have the following factors:

✓ Housing stock that is in at least good condition and that is continually maintained.

✓ Nearby facilities and assets (e.g., existing or planned schools, parks, open space, churches, neighborhood commercial centers, and other features).

✓ A high rate of homeownership (e.g., more than 70%).

✓ Low vacancy rates (e.g., less than 20%).

✓ Some neighborhoods may have Associations that organize block watches, programs for civic involvement, and make improvements.

Our Lady Mother of the Church in the Derby neighborhood.

Goal LU 3—Strengthen city neighborhoods as attractive, livable places

Commerce City's neighborhoods will continue to be its residential building blocks where people are proud to live. The city will ensure that all neighborhoods are attractive, livable places, with a mix of housing types and convenient services and transportation. The city will provide assistance to existing neighborhoods for revitalization, improvements, and to reduce industrial conflicts.

Citywide Policies:

LU 3.1—Quality Design for Neighborhoods

Ensure new neighborhoods are well designed; pedestrian-oriented; can be served by transit; and contain a mix of housing types, amenities, and centers. New neighborhoods should connect with surrounding areas through streets, parks, and bicycle routes. Infill development in existing neighborhoods also should contribute to quality design and work to achieve increased connectivity.

LU 3.2—Traditional Mix of Uses in Neighborhoods

Encourage neighborhoods that include a traditional mix of housing types, retail services, and public uses.

LU 3.3—Compatible Uses in all Neighborhoods

Protect neighborhoods from incompatible development. Infill development must consider and be sensitive to the character of stable neighborhoods. Developments should be planned so that building scale, placement, size, height transitions, mature landscaping, and other design measures ensure compatibility. For established neighborhoods in the Historic City and Irondale, continue programs to reduce conflicts with industrial neighbors.

LU 3.4—Neighborhood Village Concept

Continue to emphasize the neighborhood village concept previously established in the *New Lands Plan* and described in the Housing and Neighborhoods chapter.

See Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods, goals to promote variety of housing types, to reinvest in neighborhoods, and design best practices. See Chapter 8, Redevelopment and Reinvestment.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

LU 3.5—Historic City Neighborhoods Preserved/Revitalized

Identify neighborhoods in need of preservation, revitalization, and/or buffering from industrial activities. Particular residential areas that should be strengthened through code enforcement, infill, and redevelopment are:

- Adams Heights
- Fairfax/North Monaco

- Southern Core/Rose Hill, and
- Northern Core/Derby/Tichy

LU 3.6—Northern Range Neighborhoods Strengthened

Strengthen existing and future Northern Range neighborhoods by promoting nearby commercial centers, strong architectural design, connections from neighborhoods to commercial and recreation areas, and compatible and complementary uses along the E-470 corridor.

Goal LU 4—Retain existing industrial areas and land for future jobs

Commerce City will retain its existing industrial areas and will plan land for future high-quality, and additional living wage jobs.

Citywide Policies:

LU 4.1—Plan Adequate Land for Employment

New development should develop in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan, which includes land to be reserved for employment and commercial development.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

LU 4.2—Historic City and Irondale Industrial Areas Strengthened

Promote and strengthen industry and jobs where they are currently located in the Historic City and Irondale, particularly in the following locations:

- Southern Industrial Area,
- Clermont,
- South of East 56th Avenue/Tiffany,
- Irondale, and
- South Platte River Valley.

LU 4.3—Irondale New Employment/Business Center

Promote and strengthen land for employment in the area (Northern Industrial Enclave Area), with special attention to the area around East 104th Avenue/US 85/I-76 (for future jobs, light industry, office/flex, commercial, and similar mixed-use development). Explore feasibility of, and address numerous physical challenges, within this area, including a future separated interchange (over US 85), the South Platte River crossing, and railroad crossings (both UP and BNSF).

LU 4.4—E-470 Influence Area New Employment/Business Center

Promote and strengthen land for employment along E-470 (future employment and DIA related business) and office/flex areas.

What is a Living Wage?

A living wage Is the hourly rate that an individual must earn to support a family, working full-time (2,080 hours per year).

In 2009, in Adams County, Colorado, the estimated hourly wage for one adult is $9.25/hour, and for one adult supporting a child it is $18.09/hour. (See www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu, for an up-to-date calculator.)

Occupations that provide living wages (for an adult supporting a child) tend to be in the professional and manufacturing sectors such as management, business and financial operations, computer-related, engineering, sciences, social services, legal, education, healthcare, and other professions.

Jobs with wages below the living wage threshold tend to be service-based, such as food preparation, retail sales, building maintenance, office administrative support, personal care, farming, some production jobs, and transportation-related.

Commercial Centers

See Chapter 3: Future Land Use Plan, Criteria for "Centers":

- ✓ General "best practices" (p. 38),
- ✓ Employment Campus/ Business Center (p. 39),
- ✓ Regional Commercial Center (p. 40),
- ✓ Community Commercial Center (p. 41), and
- ✓ Local Commercial Center (p. 42).

Certain restaurants and businesses are embedded in neighborhoods.

Goal LU 5—Establish mixed-use centers as a primary location for jobs, retail, civic activity, and high-density housing

Commerce City will have a hierarchy of mixed-use centers for jobs, retail, and civic activities that serve the community and region, and that will be pedestrian-friendly and linked to transit, as well as being convenient for vehicles. The Future Land Use Plan designates a variety of commercial and activity centers. In addition, neighborhood or embedded commercial may occur in specific neighborhoods, if they fit criteria in the Future Land Use Plan.

Citywide Policies:

LU 5.1—Commercial Centers

Guide commercial development to occur in a variety of planned mixed-use centers. Discourage strip commercial development that is randomly dispersed along arterials and highways. The Future Land Use Plan and related criteria designates locations for new or infill/redevelopment centers, as described below:

New Regional Commercial Centers include:

- East 104th Avenue at E-470.

New Community Commercial Centers include:

- Quebec Parkway at Highway 2 (Northern Prairie Gateway),
- East 104th Avenue at Highway 2,
- East 104th Avenue at Chambers Road,
- East 120th Avenue between Buckley and E-470,
- East 96th Avenue at Tower Road, and
- East 96th Avenue at E-470.

Local Commercial Centers include:

- East 112th Avenue at Tower Road,
- East 112th Avenue at US 85,
- East 120th Avenue at Chambers Road, and
- Other local centers to be designed, if they meet criteria.

Infill or Redevelopment Centers include:

- Wembley (at East 64th Avenue and Highway 2) (Regional Commercial Center),
- East 88th Avenue at I-76 (Community Commercial Center),
- East 104th Avenue between US 85 and I-76 (Community Commercial Center), and
- The T.O.D. FasTracks Station Area (Colorado Boulevard between East 68th and 72nd Avenues).

👓 *See Chapters 3 and 8.*

LU 5.2—Activity Centers

Enhance the mix of uses, in addition to civic and public activities near neighborhoods, within the city at three primary activity centers or hubs that serve the entire community. These include the following:

- Reunion Town Center (East 104th Avenue and Tower Road),
- Prairie Gateway (Quebec Parkway and East 60th Avenue), and
- Derby (Highway 2 and East 72nd Avenue).

Derby is one of the three activity centers.

Goal LU 6—Ensure compatible and mutually-beneficial development near Denver International Airport (DIA)

Recognize the established airport 60 LDN noise contours, impacts from runways (ground rumble), and height obstruction areas that extend into the city, and incorporate them in the Future Land Use Plan and decisions. Recognize DIA as a major employment and business opportunity.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

LU 6.1—DIA Economic Development Uses

New development near DIA should be based on complementary uses, including non-residential development near DIA, with a mix of employment uses that are positive for the city, nearby neighborhoods, and the airport. Development should be planned for a mix of non-residential uses within the DIA 60 LDN noise contours and within three-quarters of a mile of any existing or planned runway where ground rumble may occur. Additional lands in the area should be designated for future jobs and employment.

LU 6.2—Buffer Residential Development from DIA

New residential development should not occur within ¾ mile of any existing or planned runway. All future residential development east of E-470 should include disclosure statements; mandatory deed restrictions; and additional noise mitigation features, such as air conditioning, increased insulation, and additional panes of windows. As well, the developer shall file an aviation easement with DIA, if a proposed development or expansion of an existing use is located in an area subject to a designated noise overlay district.

Denver International Airport.

LU 6.3—Coordinate with DIA

Continue coordination with DIA to plan for land uses, growth, and transportation in the E-470 and north of DIA areas.

Regional coordination is necessary for transportation improvements.

Goal LU 7—Coordinate growth regionally

Coordinate with other jurisdictions and agencies to address issues and needs that do not stop at jurisdictional boundaries, including transportation, water, open space, utilities, growth allocation, development, schools, and other topics.

Citywide Policies:

LU 7.1—Growth Boundary Coordinated

Coordinate future revisions to the Growth Boundary with Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Metro 2035 Vision Plan and Adams County.

LU 7.2—Other Regional Coordination

Coordinate with neighboring jurisdiction and relevant agencies to address Barr Lake, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, DIA, E-470, and Adams County Parks and Open Space.

LU 7.3—DRCOG Metro Vision Plan Coordination

Coordinate future revisions with Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) Metro 2035 Vision Plans and subsequent metro vision plans, including concepts such as growth boundary, urban centers, and senior-friendly development.

Commerce City will coordinate with its regional partners, including the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

Land Use Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the land use and growth goals. The table below generally coincides with the seven goals of this chapter and is intended to identify specific actions to achieve them.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 4.2: Land Use and Growth Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal LU 1	**Maintain a Balanced Mix of Land Uses**
LU 1a	**Future Land Use Plan as Guide**
	Use the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) (in Chapter 3) to guide development patterns and mix of uses and amendments to the Land Development Code (LDC).
LU 1b	**Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments**
	Update the LDC and zone districts to be consistent with the FLUP and categories in Chapter 3. Changes might include: (a) Update Residential (R-3 and R-4) to allow embedded commercial; (b) Change industrial categories (I-1) to allow flex office space; (c) Develop new zoning districts to implement the mixed-use categories and the DIA Technology and Office/Flex categories; (d) Make straight zoning categories more flexible to lessen dependence on PUDs; and (e) Prohibit industrial lots to be used solely for outdoor storage.
LU 1c	**Monitor Jobs-to-Housing**
	Monitor the jobs-to-housing ratio as development occurs, maintaining the ratio at or above 1.5 jobs per 1.0 housing units. Adjust the FLUP in the future, or consider other actions, if the balance is not being maintained.
LU 1d	**Coordinated Rezoning**
	Coordinate rezoning of multiple parcels together in key locations to implement the coordinated pattern on the FLUP (e.g., Tiffany and other focused locations within Irondale).
Goal LU 2	**Phase Growth in an Orderly, Compact Manner**
LU 2a	**Infill Incentives**
	Provide incentives for infill development and redevelopment (e.g., streamlined review process, rebates, or reduced fees) and an efficient and predictable development review process.
LU 2b	**LDC Amendments/Focus Areas**
	Consider code amendments in Focus Areas that address infill development potential, including: (a) Change dimensional standards to promote contextually-based infill development (e.g., to fit traditional lot sizes and current setbacks, and building massing); (b) Provide flexibility for infill development (e.g., parking requirements, open space set asides, and setbacks). Current standards may not be appropriate for infill in traditional neighborhoods or mixed-use projects.
LU 2c	**Annexation Criteria**
	Develop annexation criteria. Different criteria may be needed for Historic City, Irondale, Northern Range, and E-470.
LU 2d	**Facilities and Financing Plan/Annexation**
	Prior to annexations, require completion of a detailed public facilities and financing plan that considers ongoing costs. Amend LDC to include this requirement.
LU 2e	**Intergovernmental Agreements**
	Update IGAs with Adams County to address growth and annexation.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
LU 2f	**Tiered Planning System**
	Adopt a Tiered Planning System with phasing criteria (as suggested in Policy 2.2), so the city can monitor development in the Northern Range and E-470 to ensure a proper balance of jobs and housing and to ensure that development does not outpace infrastructure and services. The system should trigger new actions if residential development begins to outpace other types of development.
Goal LU 3	**Strengthen City Neighborhoods as Attractive, Livable Places**
LU 3a	**Neighborhood Design Standards**
	Adopt neighborhood design standards to address infill and residential development, realizing that different neighborhoods or parts of the city may require different standards.
LU 3b	**Neighborhood Plans**
	Develop neighborhood plans for residential or mixed-use areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., Adams City/FasTracks station site, Wembley, et al.)
	(See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan, and Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods.)
Goal LU 4	**Retain Existing Industrial Areas and Land for Future Jobs**
LU 4a	**Future Land Use Plan as a Guide for Employment**
	Use the FLUP to guide industrial and employment land patterns.
LU 4b	**Incentives for Industrial**
	Provide Incentives for Irondale and Historic City new centers, potentially including rebates or reduced fees for efficient and desirable infill development, or city-financed infrastructure to spur private investment. (See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)
Goal LU 5	**Establish Mixed-Use Centers for Jobs, Retail, Civic Activity, and High-Density Housing**
LU 5a	**Sub-area Plans**
	Develop sub-area plans for areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., FasTracks station site, Wembley, identified redevelopment areas, Hwy. 2, U.S. 85 Corridor, etc.).
LU 5b	**Design Standards for Centers**
	Update commercial and mixed use design standards in the LDC if necessary, including incentives, with site planning requirements that are consistent with the intent for centers. (See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan.)
LU 5c	**Sub-area Plan for FasTracks Station Site**
	Prepare a Transit-Oriented Development (T.O.D.) Sub-area plan for the FasTracks site.
LU 5d	**Strip Commercial**
	Discourage strip commercial development that is randomly dispersed along roads with extensive curb cuts and an uncoordinated appearance.
Goal LU 6	**Ensure Compatible Development and Mutually-Beneficial Development Near DIA**
LU 6a	**Airport-Related Incentives**
	Develop incentives for employment related to the airport.
LU 6b	**Sub-area Plan – DIA North**
	Develop a sub-area plan for the DIA North area that addresses future land use and coordinates with the airport and Adams County.
LU 6c	**Housing Compatibility Near the Airport**
	Avoid placing residential in noise and height-restricted areas near the airport and within the ground rumble area within 2,000 feet from the DIA property line.
Goal LU 7	**Coordinate Growth Regionally**
LU 7a	**Coordination Ongoing**
	Continue coordination with regional partners, as identified through this Plan, revisiting current IGAs from time-to-time, as necessary, to implement this Plan (e.g., Brighton, Denver, and Adams County).

Monitoring Land Use and Growth

Commerce City will continue to experience growth and expand in future decades, and the city will need to monitor progress related to land use and growth goals over time. This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress toward achieving the land use and growth goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring, which describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators, and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 4.3: Land Use and Growth Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
LU 1A—Balance mix of land uses	Maintain citywide balance at or above 1.5 jobs per households (increasing commercial and jobs in northern part of city)	▪ Ratio of jobs to housing (counting new building permits). ▪ Number of new jobs. ▪ Number of new housing units.
LU1B—Balance mix of land uses	Zoning Cases Concurrent with FLUP	▪ Number of new projects that are consistent with FLUP.
LU 2—Phase growth	Increase infill or contiguous development	▪ % new development in Historic City and Irondale. ▪ Acres of enclave land annexed.
LU 3—Strengthen neighborhoods	Increase quality and mix of housing	▪ Average neighborhood *Walk Score* and distance from services. ▪ *See Chapter 7 (Housing And Neighborhoods).*
LU 4—Industrial areas	Retaining existing lands in Historic City and Irondale	▪ Number of acres newly developed for industrial in Historic City and Irondale.
LU 5—Establish centers	Increase new commercial in centers, avoiding strip commercial	▪ Number of acres developed for commercial in identified centers. ▪ Number of new businesses in centers. ▪ Vacancy rate, commercial. ▪ *See Chapter 5 (Economic Development).*
LU 6—Ensure Airport compatibility	Maintain housing away from airport noise	▪ Housing units east of E-470 out of noise contours of airport. ▪ Housing units within three-quarters of a mile of DIA future runway.
LU 7—Coordinate regionally	Ongoing coordination	

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Part B: Strategic Planning Areas

The *C3 Vision Plan* addresses Commerce City's physical structure and layout through five Strategic Planning Areas. These five areas include:

1. Historic City,
2. Irondale,
3. Northern Range,
4. E-470 Influence Area, and
5. DIA North.

This Plan includes the five Strategic Planning Areas, because of the expansive size of the city and diversity of planning issues within each area—ranging from older established neighborhoods with heavy industrial, to new residential neighborhoods with vacant lands and proximity to DIA. These sub-areas are an attempt to understand some of the specific needs that are occurring within the community, realizing that one land use approach will not work for the entire city. The five Strategic Planning Areas are illustrated in Figure 4.3, and described on the following pages. Detailed polices are addressed later in the Plan Element chapters.
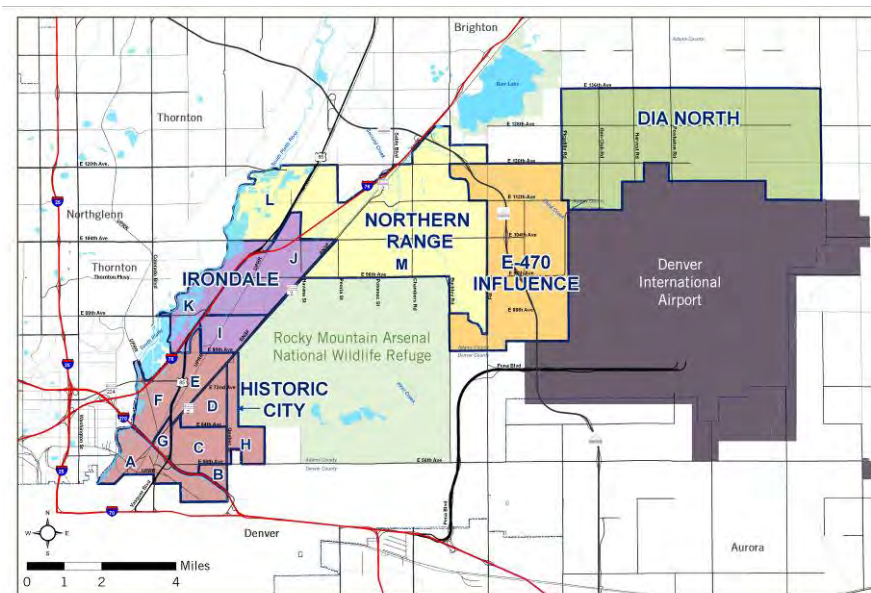
Figure 4.3: Five Strategic Planning Areas and Focus Areas

Historic City Focus Areas

This Planning Area includes eight Focus Areas:

- A. Southern Industrial,
- B. Tiffany,
- C. Southern Core/Rose Hill,
- D. Northern Core/Derby/Tichy,
- E. Fairfax/Dupont,
- F. Adams City,
- G. Clermont, and
- H. Prairie Gateway.

Irondale Focus Areas

This Planning Area includes three Focus Areas:

- I. Irondale,
- J. Industrial Enclave, and
- K. South Platte Valley.

Northern Range Focus Areas

This Planning Area includes three Focus Areas:

- L. Old Brighton Road/Hazeltine, and
- M. Northern Range.

The Historic City is the oldest, in terms of growth and development.

Historic City

The Historic City is located in the southernmost part of the city and contains eight distinct focus areas. This part of the community is the oldest, in terms of growth and development, and also contains the greatest concentration of original industry and residences within the community. Its boundaries are from the South Platte River to the Wildlife Refuge and from approximately East 80th Avenue south to the border with Denver.

Irondale has been transforming to newer industrial uses.

Irondale

Irondale is located in the middle of the city, northwest of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. It contains three distinct focus areas. This area, which encompasses more than just the original Irondale community, began mostly as farming and has been transforming into newer industrial activities along the railroads and highway. Its boundaries are from approximately East 80th Avenue to the south to approximately East 104th Avenue to the north, and from the South Platte River to the west to Highway 2 to the east.

The Northern Range and areas to the east have the most growth potential.

Northern Range

The Northern Range is generally located north of the Wildlife Refuge and contains two distinct focus areas. This sub-area highlights the new growth within the city, primarily in the form of residential subdivisions. The vast majority of the city's population growth over the past decade has been in this area. Its boundaries are generally from the South Platte River to the west, to Tower Road to the east, and the city limit boundary with Brighton to the north to the Wildlife Refuge boundary to the south.

E-470

The E-470 Planning Area is generally located along E-470, from the north boundary with Brighton to the southern boundary with Denver. While most of this land is vacant today, the area will provide city expansion and future development opportunities for many years to come.

DIA North.

DIA North

The DIA North Planning Area is north of the airport and generally east of Picadilly Road all the way to Watkins Road to the east. This area is primarily vacant, with scattered large-lot residential and agricultural activities. Due to the lack of services and infrastructure at this time, this will probably be the last area of the city to develop.

Historic City Planning Area

The Historic City is generally located south of East 80th Avenue. It pre-dates the city's incorporation with industrial activity beginning in the 1930s, and farming before then.   Most of the area developed decades ago, with moderate infill occurring since the 1950s with the rise of Stapleton Airport and the former Rocky Mountain Arsenal.   The Historic City blends heavy industry, residential neighborhoods, and vacant and redeveloping lands along Quebec Street near the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. Because of the Historic City's diversity, this section addresses several focus areas. The Future Land Use Plan for the Historic City is on the next page.

An advertisement for Commerce Town in the early 1950s showcases the city's industrial lands for development.

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Future Land Use Plan - Historic City

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

Legend

- **IGA Growth Boundary**
- **County Boundary**
- National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Future Roads
- **T** Planned Transit Station
- Possible Transit Station
- Future Transit Line
- Future Light Rail Line
- Existing School
- Future School Site
- ★ Original Community
- **R** Redevelopment Location

Centers

- Activity Center
- **R** Regional Commercial Center
- **R** Community Commercial Center
- Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Industrial / Distribution
- General Industrial
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

Irondale
Planning Area

Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge

Derby

Civic Center

Denver

Adams County
Denver County

Original Communities

1. Commerce Town
2. Adams City
3. Irondale
4. Derby
5. Dupont
6. Rose Hill

Figure 4.4

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

03/31/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

E 88th Ave
E 80TH AVE
E 76TH AVE
E 72ND AVE
E 69TH AVE
E 68TH AVE
E 64TH AVE
E 62ND AVE
E 60TH AVE
E 58TH AVE
E 56TH AVE
E 50TH AVE

BRIGHTON RD
MONACO ST
QUEBEC ST
QUEBEC PKWY
DAHLIA ST
COLORADO BLVD
CLERMONT ST
HOLLY ST
IVY ST
WASHINGTON ST
Vasquez Blvd
GATEWAY RD
PRAIRIE PKWY
VALENTIA ST
PARKWAY DR

South Platte
UPRR

N
W   E
S

Miles
0   0.25   0.5   1

A. Southern Industrial Focus Area

The Southern Industrial area is at the core of city's industry located south of I-270. The industrial operations here began in the 1930s with refining operations, but intensified when Stapleton Airport expanded after WWII. This area houses some of the city's heaviest industrial activities and most-recognized businesses and largest employers, including Suncor Refinery, Conoco Tank Farm, UPS, and Shamrock Foods. It also includes the Stapleton Industrial Park, developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s (including Sapp Bros Truck stop built in 1969). One of the city's hidden gems is located in the Southern Industrial area: Riverside Cemetery (1876), which is Denver's Pioneer Cemetery, a burial place of governors, senators, and dignitaries. The award-winning Sand Creek Regional Greenway snakes through the area, connecting the South Platte River to Denver and Aurora.

This area faces several challenges. First, the lack of infrastructure (especially along East 56th Avenue) should be addressed. The area has poor connectivity, contributing to difficulty getting around (i.e., few roads connect and travel over I-270). In addition, several EPA superfund sites dot the area, many of which have been cleaned up, but other sites are potentially polluted. Finally, the lack of commercial establishments and poor image are cited as issues.
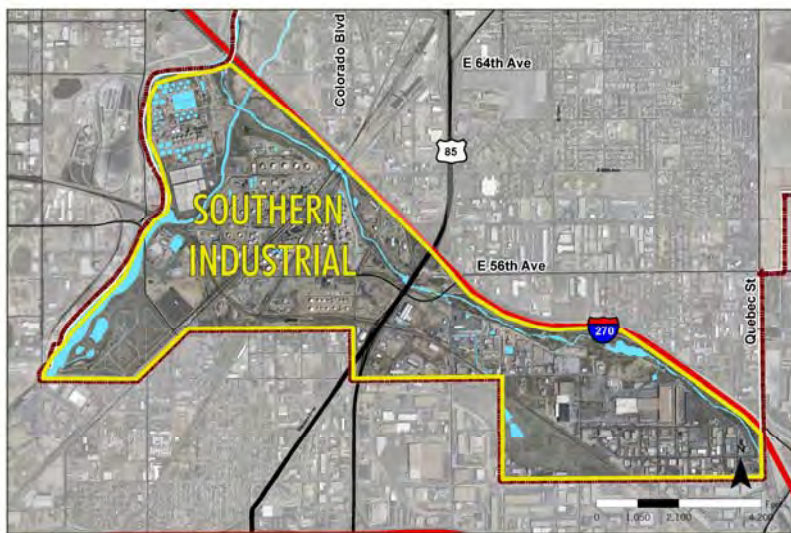
Figure 4.5: Southern Industrial Focus Area

Southern Industrial Future policies:

- ✓ Retain the general industrial use of the area;
- ✓ Improve image along I-270;
- ✓ Improve access and connectivity (including along Sand Creek trail) and infrastructure and roadways;
- ✓ Extend Holly Street across I-270 between East 52nd and 56th Avenues; and
- ✓ Encourage environmental clean up of some properties.

Suncor at night.

Issues include:

- ▫ **Lack of infrastructure.** The area lacks road improvements (e.g., curb, gutter, sidewalk, drainage, lighting), especially along 56th Avenue west of I-270;

- ▫ **Lack of connectivity.** This area has poor transportation connections and few connections north over I-270;

- ▫ **Brownfields.** This area contains previous EPA superfund sites, which have been cleaned up, but other sites are potentially polluted;

- ▫ **Image.** It is highly visible from I-270 and has contributed to the poor image issues of the city; and

- ▫ **Lack of commercial establishments.** Because the area is primarily industrial, commercial uses have been limited (e.g., restaurants or retail) for workers.

Riverside Cemetery.

The Tiffany area contains a mix of residential and industrial activities.

The 1975 Comprehensive Plan described Tiffany (the 56th Avenue Residential District) as a difficult area, because of the mix of industrial and residential land uses. A sub-area plan for this area has never been funded.

Issues include:

▫ **Lack of public amenities.** The area has few public amenities (e.g., schools or parks) for residents to enjoy or utilize;

▫ **Small lot size.** This area was platted with small lots (e.g., the Tiffany Subdivision platted out at 25' x 120', and current I-2 setbacks are 20' front, 20' side, and 25' rear), making industrial development difficult;

▫ **Image.** It has several abandoned properties in close proximity to I-270, which highlights the image issues of the city; and

▫ **Land use conflicts.** The residential and industrial uses are randomly interspersed within this area and have developed in a haphazard way.

B. Tiffany Focus Area

The Tiffany area, located south of East 56th Avenue, is a mix of industrial and residential activities, and is named for the Tiffany Subdivision (1952). Other platted subdivisions in this area are Value (1951) and Kemp (1948). The housing was built before the city's incorporation and before construction of I-270, and is of generally lesser quality due to lax enforcement of Adams County building codes at the time. The area incorporated in 1962.

Construction of I-270 in 1970 resulted in properties along I-270 being zoned for industrial use. Over time, industry began to displace residential, and zone changes occurred from residential to industrial and vice versa throughout the 1980s and 1990s, adding to the confusion and uncertainty of the area. The area has long-standing challenges, including lack of public amenities (e.g., schools, large parks), small lots, image issues, and conflicts between industrial and residential uses.

Figure 4.6: Tiffany Focus Area

Tiffany policy direction:
✓ Focus primarily on jobs and business opportunities;
✓ Improve the quality of development and the appearance of the area through design and landscaping standards, property upkeep, and code enforcement;
✓ Work with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and private owners to improve the appearance of the I-270 corridor near this area;
✓ Extend Holly Street across I-270 between East 52nd and 56th Avenues; and
✓ Improve the appearance from I-270.

C. Southern Core/Rose Hill Focus Area

The Southern Core/Rose Hill area encompasses some of the original communities of Commerce City: Commerce Town and Rose Hill (1888). Rose Hill Cemetery, a historical Jewish cemetery, began interments in 1892, and is still open today. This area began primarily as agriculture. After World War II, the area began to develop residentially to support industry (e.g., the former Arsenal and Stapleton Airport). Early residential subdivisions included: Town and Country (1949), Monaco Park (1949), and Rose Gardens (1955). In 1965, the Ivy-K Shopping Center (with a King Soopers anchor store), opened for business. King Soopers later moved to a new store along Parkway Drive.

Beginning in 1970, residential density increased with the arrival of multi-family and senior housing. Beginning in the mid 1980s and continuing to the present, the commercial heart of Commerce City moved to the East 60th Avenue/US 85 interchange with the establishment of Parkway Center Shopping Center (1985), Wal-Mart (1999), and various fast-food restaurants. Schools in this area include: Kearney Middle and Rose Hill Elementary. Pioneer and Monaco Parks provide a range of amenities. The Commerce City Recreation Center and former city hall (now Adams County School District 14 Administration) provide neighborhood stability.

Figure 4.7: Southern Core/Rose Hill Focus Area

Southern Core/Rose Hill policy direction:

✓ Redevelop Wembley (former greyhound racing site) to a mixed-use project, well integrated with adjacent commercial and residential, potentially including senior housing;
✓ Assist with refurbishment and revitalization of housing stock;
✓ Improve property maintenance and appearance of multi-family and mobile home parks; and
✓ Increase commercial and job opportunities.

The Mile High Kennel Club was built in 1949. During its height of popularity in the late 1960s and 1970s, as many as 10,000 people would arrive daily to watch and take part in live greyhound racing. During the 1970s, it was identified as the nation's most beautiful greyhound racing facility. This potential redevelopment could include senior housing (including market rate and affordable).

Multi-family and senior housing developments include: Rose Hill Townhomes (1970), Kearney Plaza (1979), Madonna Plaza (1989), Village Crest Apartments, (1999), and Conter Estates (2003).

Issues include:

▫ **Aging Neighborhoods:** The housing stock is aging and, in some cases, needs refurbishment. Some multi-family and mobile home parks need upgrades;

▫ **Vacant Commercial:** The former greyhound racing track offers opportunity for redevelopment; and

▫ **Traffic Congestion/ Transportation:** Traffic and transportation connections to and across Highway 85 are challenging.

Derby business.

Tichy

Tichy Subdivision (1954), served as an early model residential subdivision, with brick homes, manicured lawns, and the city's first paved streets. It was hailed by many as the finest residential subdivision in Commerce City.

Our Lady Mother of the Church

This is the city's largest church, originally known as Saint Catherine's when it opened in 1946. The church has been instrumental in helping with local issues, such as the Derby Fair and Citizens Against Contamination concerning the Arsenal cleanup.

Issues include:

▫ **Historic value.** Notable and historic sites in need of maintenance and recognition;

▫ **Highway 2.** The highway corridor has long been in need of coordinated access and higher quality development; and

▫ **Property maintenance issues.** Motels and mobile homes in the area generally need to be upgraded.

D. Northern Core/Derby/Tichy Focus Area

The Northern Core/Derby/Tichy area began as agricultural farms and homesteads, of which Derby was one of the original settlements (1889). Derby grew with its proximity to the railroad and continued as a railroad stop and community gathering point. After World War II, residential development began to spring up in the area, with new subdivisions such as Black Hawk Derby (1946), North Park (1949), Tichy (1954), and Holly Heights (1956). The absence of and distance from industrial properties made this the Historic City's most stable residential area. Highway 2 developed as a transportation route from Brighton to Denver in the 1940s. Numerous motels and trailer courts opened during that time.

The first redevelopment study of the Derby area was produced in the 1970s, as Derby began to succumb to other economic pressures from new commercial developments in the area. A second redevelopment study was produced in the 1980s.

Notable facilities in this area include Lester and Mary Arnold High School, Central Elementary, Kemp Elementary, Hanson Elementary, and the Rangeview Public Library. Notable parks in this area include Los Valientes Park and Derby Park.
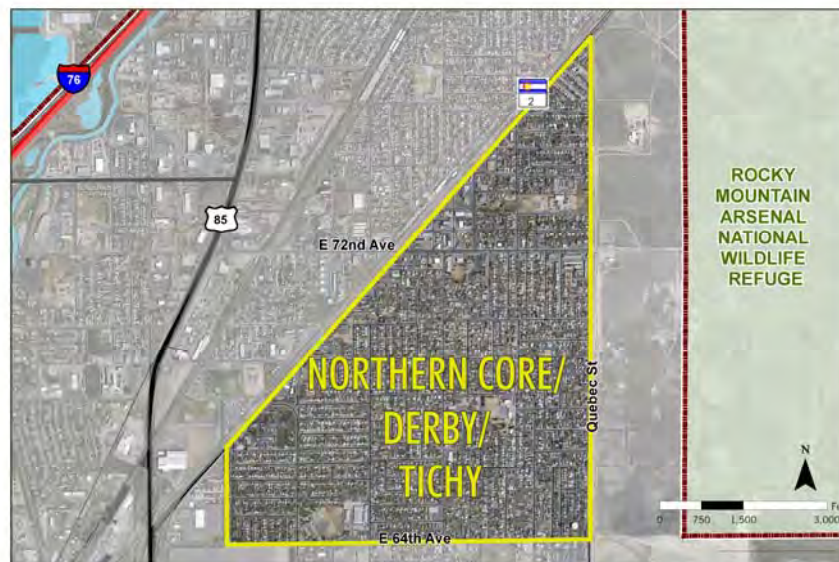
Figure 4.8: Northern Core/Derby/Tichy Focus Area

Northern Core/Derby/Tichy policy direction:

✓ Continue to focus on Derby as a primary redevelopment site and activity center for surrounding neighborhoods (See the *Master Plan for…Derby Sub-Area*);

✓ Improve the Highway 2 appearance, encouraging it to become a higher-quality, mixed-use corridor (both residential and commercial), and enhancing commercial uses upon future road widening;

✓ Encourage and require increased property management for motels and mobile home parks in the area; and

✓ Improve pedestrian connections and walkability as part of redevelopment efforts for the area.

E. Fairfax/Dupont Focus Area

The Fairfax/Dupont area developed along the Union Pacific (UP) railroad. It contains one of the city's oldest communities, Dupont (1925), which was named for the E.I. Du Pont de Nemours & Company, which operated a storage plant at that time.

Old Brighton Road followed the train route from Denver to Brighton and promoted residential and industrial growth into the area. The area now contains a mixture of residential and industrial uses. Most properties have yet to be annexed into Commerce City.

Fairfax Park, Dupont Elementary, and Monaco Elementary are highlights of the area. Beginning in the 1990s, Adams County Public Works installed curb, gutter, sidewalk, and other infrastructure improvements for many of the streets in the area.

This Post Office is located in historic Dupont.

Issues include:

▫ **Land use conflicts.** Mix of industry and residential uses sometimes creates conflicts;

▫ **Reinvestment.** Historic Dupont re-investment;

▫ **Image.** US 85 image; and

▫ **Enclaves.** Unincorporated enclaves create an inconsistent appearance and quality in the area.
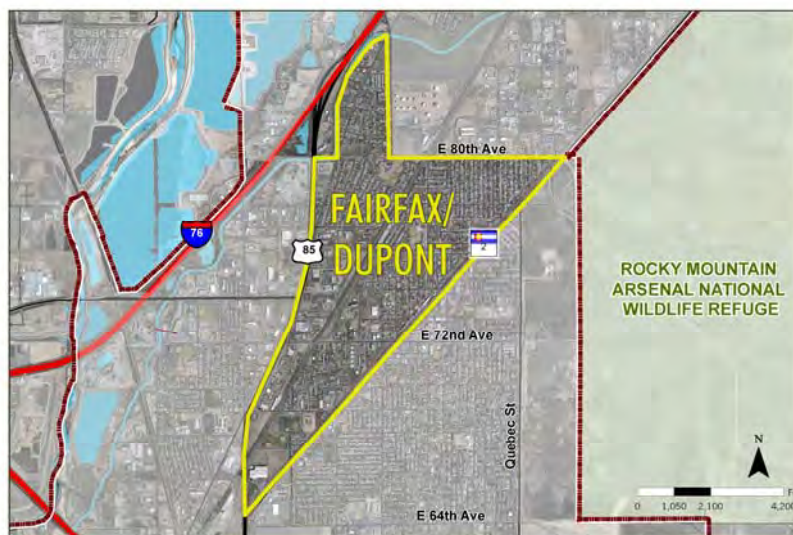
Figure 4.9: Fairfax/Dupont Focus Area

Fairfax/Dupont policy direction:

✓ Plan for a future cohesive mix of uses along the US 85 corridor—transitioning to higher-quality employment uses;

✓ Protect the historic neighborhood of Dupont;

✓ Determine annexation policies for unincorporated enclaves in the area; and

✓ Maintain the viability of area jobs and industry.

Adams City contains a mix of residential neighborhoods and businesses.

Adams City was laid out with developers hoping the county seat would be established there; however, Brighton was elected county seat in 1904 and Adams City was vacated in 1922.

Important sites in this area include: Adams City Middle and High School (former), Alsup Elementary, Adams County government buildings, and the South Platte Regional Trail.

Issues include:

- □ **Reinvestment.** Adams City re-investment (original community);

- □ **Landfills.** Former unregulated landfills operated;

- □ **FasTracks.** Future FasTracks station site (is under review) and offers opportunities for future Transit-Oriented Development;

- □ **Residential Buffering.** Residential areas need buffering from industrial uses and railroad infrastructure improvements; and

- □ **Image.** Image from I-76 and I-270 need improvement.

F. Adams City Focus Area

Similarly to other communities in Commerce City, the Adams City area developed along the Union Pacific Railroad and contains one of the original Commerce City communities, Adams City (1903). The former Adams City High School (1871), located in the immediate area, began as a one-room schoolhouse, with other additions occurring in 1899 and later in 1907. This latter school is now part of the North Building at the former Adams City High School, which just closed its doors in 2009, when a new east-side high school was constructed. The city continues to partner with the school district to evaluate future development/redevelopment of the old Adams City High School site.

Until the late 1920s, the Adams City area was devoted to agriculture, including wheat fields, dairies, and pig farms. After 1920, the arrival of industry, especially near the railroads, brought urban services to the area. In 1946 and 1947, Adams County School District 14 was formed from surrounding districts, and Adams City was redeveloped at about that time, including the construction of the administration building for the school district. In 1954, the single largest residential subdivision in the area, Adams Heights, was platted. In addition to residential growth, many unregulated landfills were used in this area, especially west of Colorado Boulevard and south of East 66th Avenue, in the decades following World War II. In the late 1960s, I-76 was completed to serve transportation needs from Denver to Nebraska. In 1970, I-270 was completed near the southern boundary of the city. In 2004, voters approved FasTracks, allowing a commuter rail line to traverse this area. An anticipated stop in Commerce City is still under review, with an eventual stop between East 68th and 72nd Avenues along Colorado Boulevard.
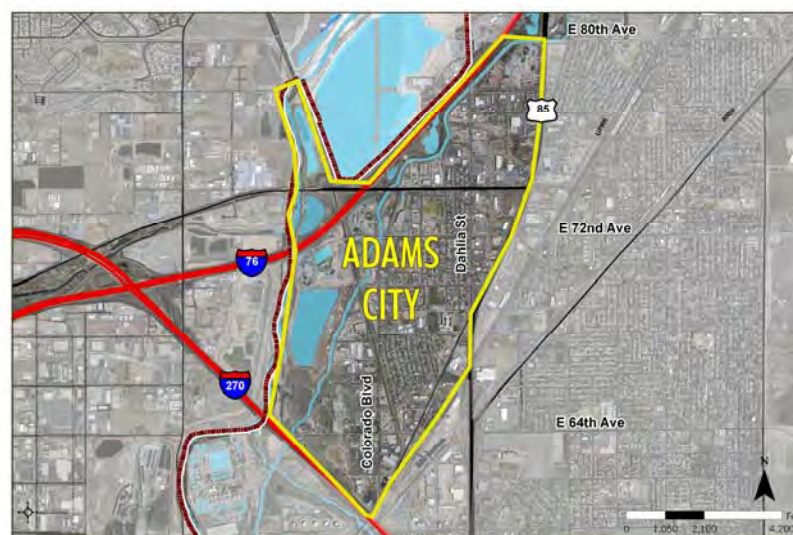
Figure 4.10: Adams City Focus Area

Adams City policy direction:

- ✓ Increase investment and focus on improving the residential neighborhoods;
- ✓ Improve the image of the area seen from I-270;
- ✓ Improve the pedestrian network (e.g., sidewalks and crosswalks) within neighborhoods;
- ✓ Plan for the future FasTracks light rail station area redevelopment, to improve the desirability of the area with a mix of uses;
- ✓ Work with the service districts to upgrade water and sewer utilities; and
- ✓ Develop an annexation policy for unincorporated enclaves.

G. Clermont Focus Area

Clermont is host to one of the original communities, Commerce Town (1920s). Railroads first converged at this site (Sand Creek Junction) and helped to transport goods and services from the plains west to Denver. The area mostly developed in the 1930s with the advent of heavy industry, including the Continental Oil Company (1930) and the Hungarian Flour Mills in 1938.

A major transportation change occurred when I-270 was constructed in 1970, but it caused drainage and road alignment issues in this area that still are challenges today. Redevelopment of marginal industrial properties began with the construction of Wendy's (1983) and Good Times (1998), to take advantage of the visibility and traffic counts along US 85. An Urban Renewal Area was established for this part of the city in 1998, to help revitalize the area and encourage additional commercial uses.

Clermont is comprised of industrial and commercial uses.

Figure 4.11: Clermont Focus Area

Issues include:

- ▫ **Urban Renewal Area.** The area includes an Urban Renewal Area (established in 1998) for the purpose of helping revitalization;

- ▫ **Image.** The image from I-270 needs improvements;

- ▫ **Infrastructure.** Quality of infrastructure and vacant buildings; and

- ▫ **Connections.** Traffic and transportation connections are

Clermont policy direction:

- ✓ Focus on redevelopment around I-270 and US 85, improving the image and viability of business and industry in the area; and
- ✓ Improve transportation connectivity, infrastructure, and drainage in this area.

Prairie Gateway is the home for Dick's Sporting Goods Park and city hall.

H. Prairie Gateway Focus Area

Prairie Gateway is the vast stretch of land (917 acres) east of the Quebec corridor, which contains the new Commerce City Civic Center, Dick's Sporting Goods Park, and conservation lands. The area offers potential for infill development within the Historic City, as well as new development tapping into the potential 200,000 visitors per year projected to attend the National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center. Development patterns will help shape and influence surrounding areas west of Quebec Street. The new Adams City High School opened in the Fall of 2009.

Initial plan for Prairie Gateway, showing the U.S. Postal Office, Dick's Sporting Goods Park, and the Civic Center in the foreground
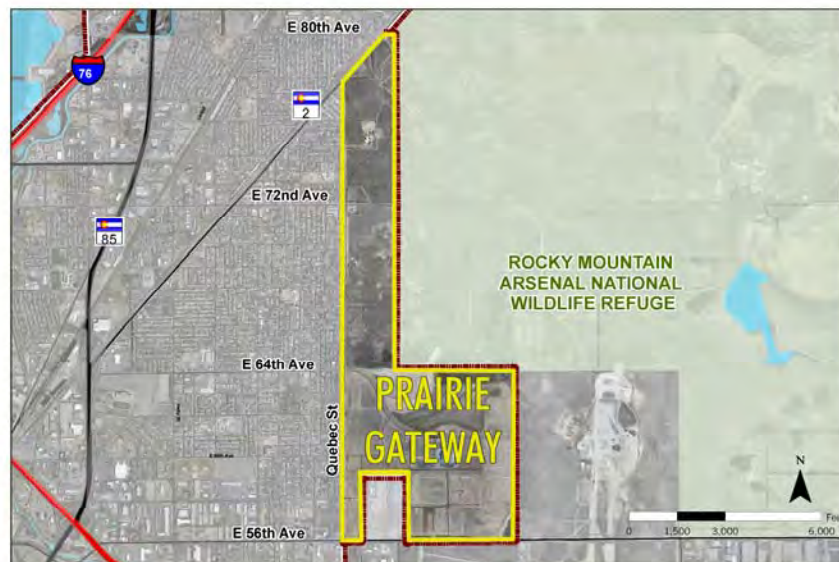
Figure 4.12: Prairie Gateway Focus Area

Prairie Gateway policy direction:

- ✓ Plan for a mix of uses in the future that are mutually beneficial with Dick's Sporting Goods Park, the Civic Center, and the National Wildlife Refuge (including entertainment and recreation activities); and
- ✓ Explore whether multi-family housing (e.g., lofts above retail) could be a future development component, if physical conditions in the area are suitable.

Issues include:

- ▫ **Development Potential.** Potential for development to help shape the future of the Historic City area;

- ▫ **Visitor Center.** The city has opportunities to tap into RMANWR Visitor Center activity; and

- ▫ **Housing Restrictions.** Restrictions exist on development of housing.

Irondale Planning Area

Irondale is the part of Commerce City generally located north of East 80th Avenue and South of East 104th Avenue that is a mix of Commerce City and Adams County enclaves. The 1998 Irondale Sub-area Plan addressed land uses in part of this area, which is characterized by mostly industrial uses but also some neighborhoods. The Irondale Planning Area contains several focus areas that extend beyond the boundaries of the original Irondale community. These planning areas are described below. The Future Land Use Plan follows on the next page.
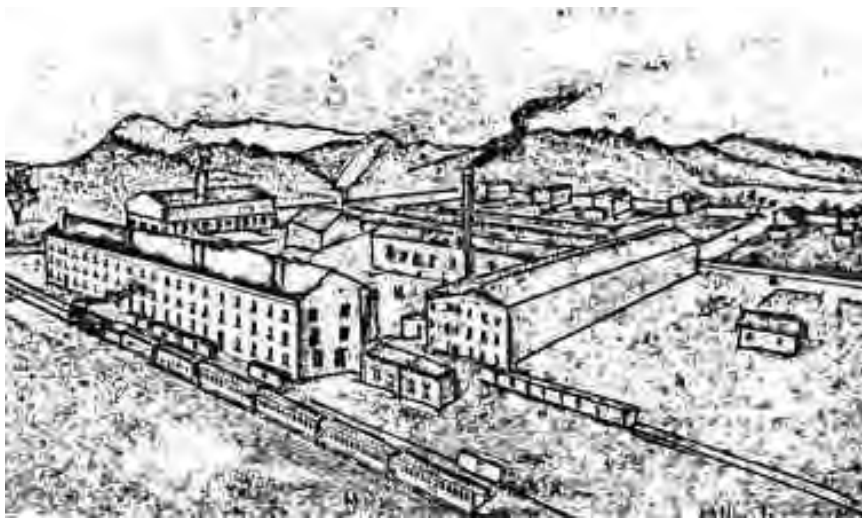
Kibler Stove Works foundry opened in 1889 and closed in 1893.
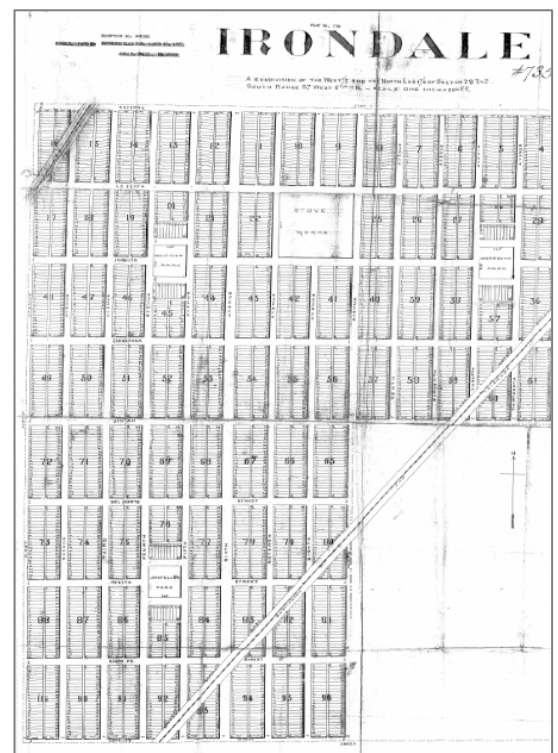
The original Irondale Plat had linear rows of homes and streets and was Commerce City's first planned community

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Future Land Use Plan - Irondale
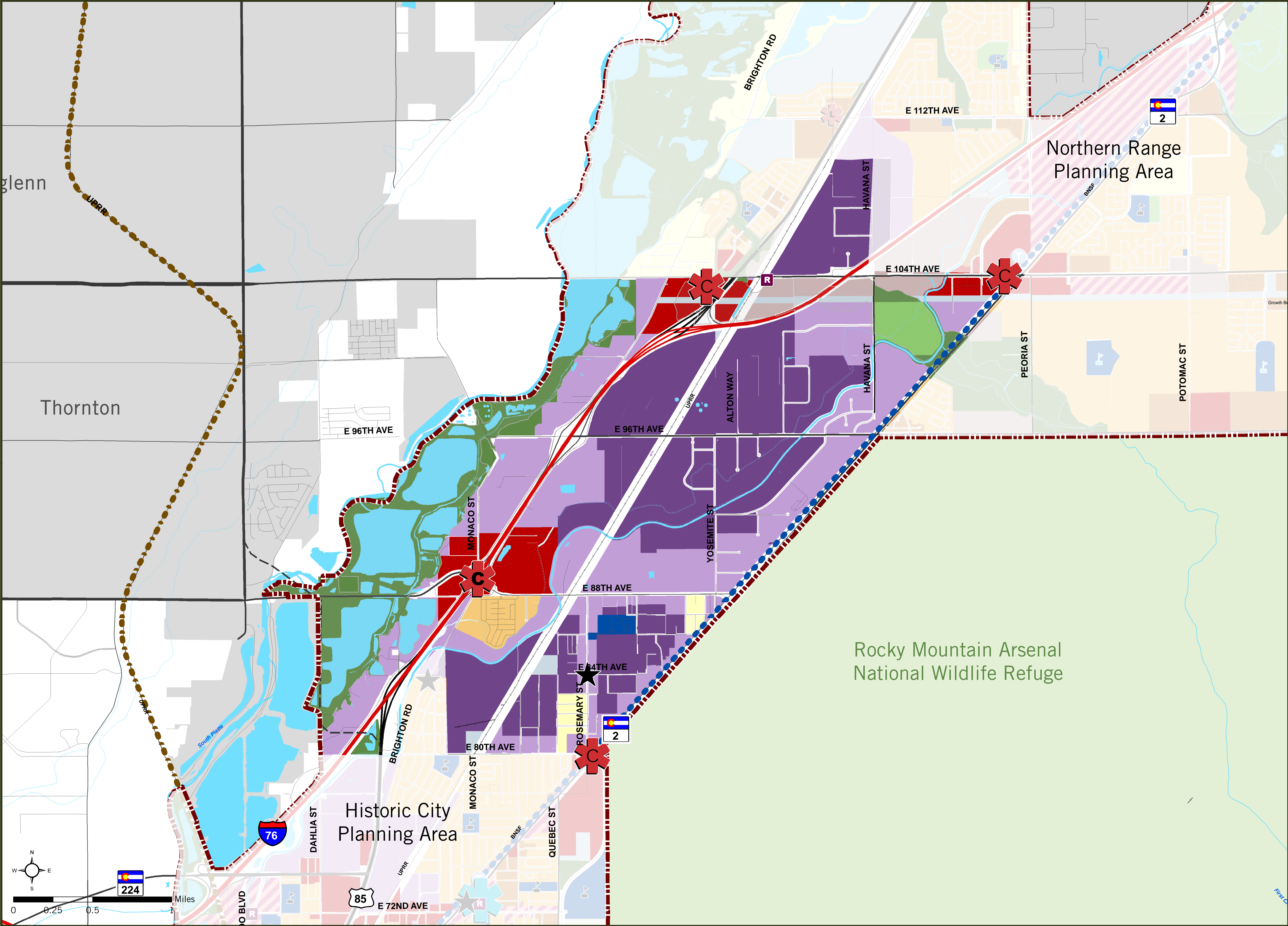
COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

Legend

- ▨ IGA Growth Boundary
- ⬚ County Boundary
- National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- ▨ 100 Year Floodplain
- – – Future Roads
- ···· Future Transit Line
- ···· Future Light Rail Line
- ⚑ Existing School
- ⚑ Future School Site
- ★ Original Community
- Ⓡ Redevelopment Location

Centers

- ✴ Activity Center
- ✴ Community Commercial Center
- ✴ Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Industrial / Distribution
- General Industrial
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

Northern Range
Planning Area

Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge

Historic City
Planning Area

Thornton

glenn

E 112TH AVE
E 104TH AVE
E 96TH AVE
E 88TH AVE
E 84TH AVE
E 80TH AVE
E 72ND AVE

BRIGHTON RD
HAVANA ST
PEORIA ST
POTOMAC ST
MONACO ST
YOSEMITE ST
ALTON WAY
ROSEMARY ST
QUEBEC ST
DAHLIA ST

Growth B

Figure 4.13

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

03/31/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

I. Irondale Focus Area

Irondale was first settled in 1889, named for a foundry (Kibler Stove Works) which opened that year. It employed 200 people and the plant closed in 1893. The town incorporated as the Town of Irondale in 1924, but unincorporated in the 1930s due to increasing vacancy. During this time, it was known as *The City of Homes*. Until the 1970s, there was little development in the area. Most of the land was used as agricultural fields. However, beginning in the 1970s, with increasing industrial pressure from the south and the close proximity to the railroads, the agricultural land began to be converted to industrial uses. The area was annexed into Commerce City around 1985, as a way for Commerce City to continue its expansion to the north.

Notable locations in Irondale include industry, above, and the 88 Drive In (1947), below. The drive-in is the only such remaining drive-in theater in the Denver-metro area.

Figure 4.14: Irondale Focus Area

Irondale policy direction:

✓ Rezone for industrial or commercial to be consistent with the past Irondale Comprehensive Plan, but allow for a few residential pockets to remain;

✓ Continue the mix of light and medium intensity industrial activity, avoiding up-zonings to I-3 (heavy industry);

✓ Do not use industrial lots solely for outdoor storage or truck parking;

✓ Improve street connections;

✓ Improve the image of the area (especially through coordinated zoning, property maintenance, and code enforcement);

✓ Develop an annexation policy for unincorporated enclaves;

✓ Recognize the construction of stormwater conveyance systems and retention ponds prescribed in plans by the city and Urban Drainage; and

✓ Address railroad connections and crossings in the Transportation Plan.

Issues include:

▫ **Land Use Inconsistencies.** Uncoordinated land uses that are inconsistent with the Sub-area Plan and zoning;

▫ **Image.** Image issues related to outdoor storage lots, property maintenance issues, and agricultural uses;

▫ **Enclaves.** Unincorporated enclaves with uncertain future development;

▫ **Stormwater.** Stormwater conveyance is needed; and

▫ **Connections.** Street connections are needed.

Along 104th Avenue, between Highway 85 and Interstate 76, is one area proposed for long-term infrastructure improvements, infill, and redevelopment.

Industrial enclave business.

Issues include:

- □ **Transitions.** Transitions between light- and heavy-industrial uses are abrupt;

- □ **Infrastructure.** Other infrastructure improvements (e.g., stormwater and street connectivity) are necessary;

- □ **Image.** Image issues from I-76 exist.

J. Industrial Enclave Focus Area

The Industrial Enclave is an infill and new development focus area for industry that currently contains a mix of low- and high-intensity business uses. The area began as agricultural and remained that way for many years. I-76 was completed in the late 1960s, expanding industrial and transportation uses north from Denver. The area continued to grow industrially in the county, until the Industrial Enclave was annexed into Commerce City in 2007.
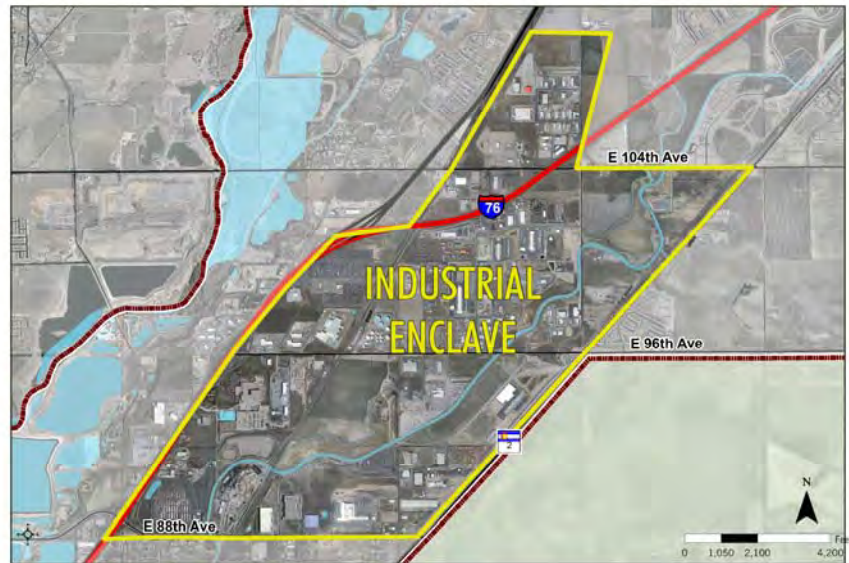
Figure 4.15: Industrial Enclave Focus Area

Industrial Enclave policy direction:

- ✓ Retain the industrial uses and jobs focus, with heavier industrial uses buffered in the interior by lighter industrial uses near residential areas and high-visibility corridors;
- ✓ Identify and address needs for stormwater improvements; and
- ✓ Improve street connectivity by extending Yosemite Street from East 88th Avenue to East 96th Avenue and building overpass over the UPRR on East 88th and East 96th Avenues.

K. South Platte Valley Focus Area

South Platte Valley, west of I-76 and east of the South Platte River, also began as agricultural land. It currently is a mix of residential uses in the valley east of the river and many industrial uses above the valley wall near the interstate. I-76 was completed in the 1960s, expanding transportation north from Denver. Much industrial development has occurred in this unincorporated area, particularly along the interstate. Gravel pits and water storage reservoirs began to be constructed in the 1980s, as the Denver-metro area began to look for ways to preserve water for future growth. Today, most of the land in this area remains in unincorporated Adams County.

Above: The South Platte River Valley is a mix of residential, agricultural, and some industrial uses.
Below: The A-Frame Lodge, built in the 1950s, was the last chance to get gas, food, coffee, and a martini, before heading east out of town.
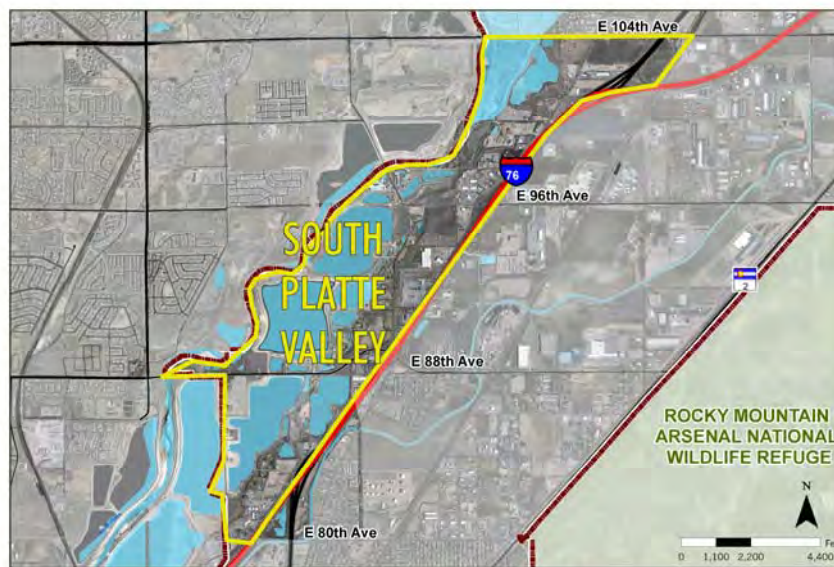
Figure 4.16: South Platte Valley Focus Area

South Platte Valley policy direction:

✓ Strengthen the industrial areas and jobs;
✓ Improve the area's image from I-76;
✓ Focus on commercial development at interchanges (and improving the I-76/88th intersection);
✓ Improve streets and connections to the west by extending Highway 85 to Colorado Boulevard and East 96th Avenue to Riverdale Road using new bridges over the South Platte River;
✓ Enhance trails and visual connections to the river in conjunction with the South Platte River Heritage Plan; and
✓ Develop an annexation policy for unincorporated enclaves.

Notable facilities in this area include the first state fish hatchery in Colorado (88th Avenue). Today, this site is used for ongoing training and education for hearing dogs.

Issues include:

▫ **Land Use Mix.** Area is a mix of industrial and rural uses;

▫ **Infrastructure.** It is in need of infrastructure improvements (e.g., street connections, trails); and

▫ **Image.** The image from I-76 needs to be improved.

Northern Range Planning Area

The Northern Range is the part of Commerce City generally located north of the National Wildlife Refuge and east of the South Platte River. Until the 1990s, it was utilized for agricultural and farming operations. After the development of DIA and E-470, this area became attractive for development. In the past decade, this is where most of the residential development in Commerce City has occurred. The Northern Range showcases some of the newest neighborhoods of the city including:

- Reunion (East 104th Avenue and Tower Road),
- Fronterra Village (East 96th Avenue and Chambers Road),
- Buffalo Run (Chambers Road and East 112h Avenue),
- Outlook (Chambers Road and East 120th Avenue),
- Belle Creek (East 104th Avenue and US 85),
- River Run (East 112th Avenue and Peoria Street),
- Aberdeen (East 104th Avenue and Peoria Street), and
- Turnberry (East 104th Avenue and Highway 2).

Bison on the National Wildlife Refuge, as seen from the Northern Range.

It also includes some employers such as Wells Fargo Bank, Primrose and Peachtree Academy Daycares, and the award winning Buffalo Run Golf Course. The area has a number of parks (River Run, Stampede, Reunion, and numerous HOA/Metro District pocket parks); schools (Turnberry, Thimmig, Second Creek, Landmark Academy, Belle Creek Learning Center, and Stuart Middle School); and open space along the creeks (First and Second) that anchor the neighborhoods.

The Northern Range contains two focus areas to address particular needs, which are described below. The Future Land Use Plan is on the next page.

Buffalo Run golf course and homes in the Northern Range.

Future Land Use Plan - Northern Range
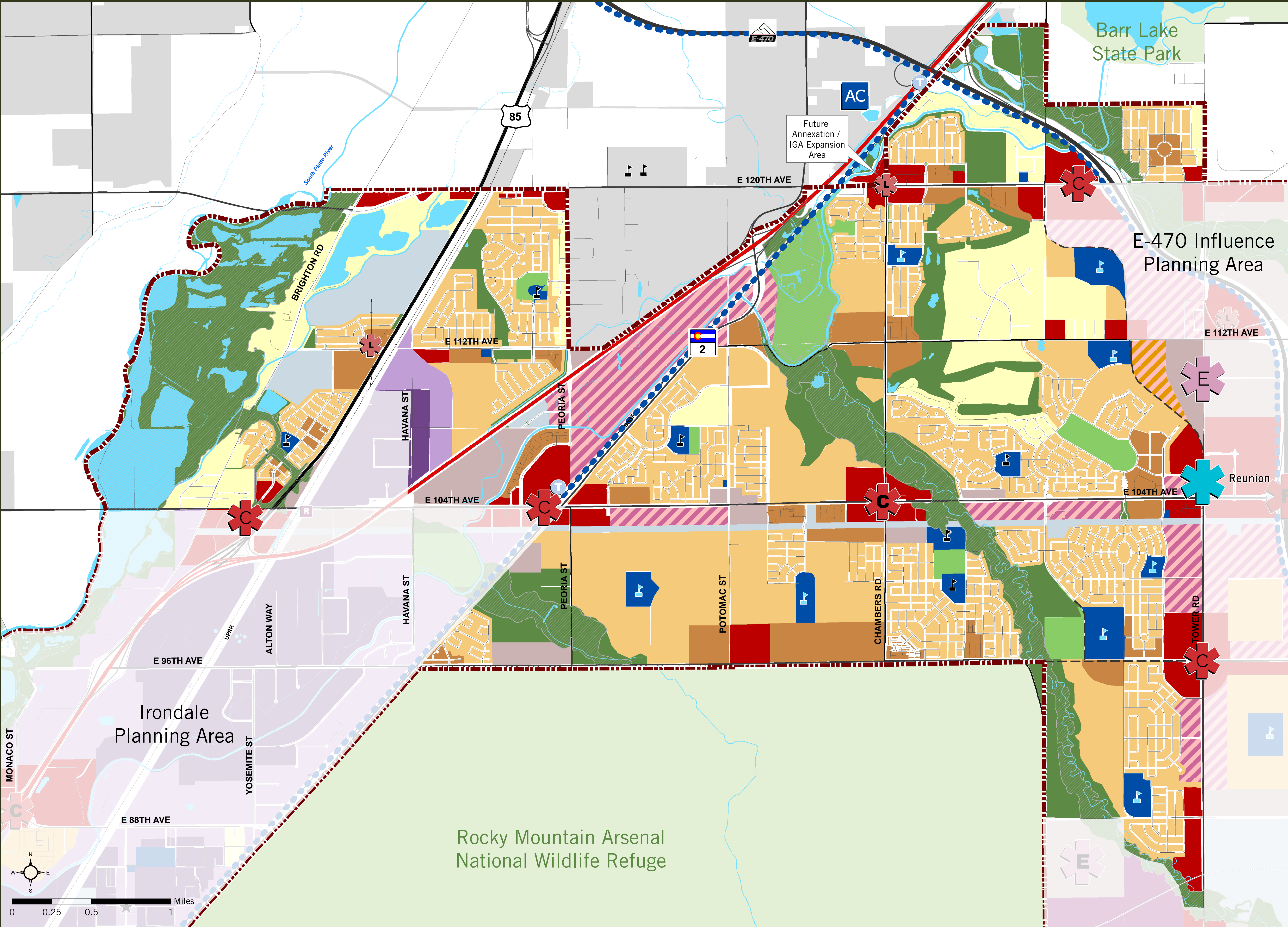
COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

Legend

- **IGA Growth Boundary**
- **County Boundary**
- National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Future Roads
- Possible Transit Station
- Future Light Rail Line
- **AC** Future Adams County Government Administrative Complex
- Existing School
- Future School Site

Centers

- **Activity Center**
- **E** Employment Campus / Business Center
- **C** Regional Commercial Center
- **C** Community Commercial Center
- **L** Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Office / Flex
- Industrial / Distribution
- General Industrial
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

Barr Lake State Park

E-470 Influence Planning Area

Future Annexation / IGA Expansion Area

Reunion

Irondale Planning Area

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

South Platte River

BRIGHTON RD

HAVANA ST

PEORIA ST

POTOMAC ST

CHAMBERS RD

TOWER RD

MONACO ST

YOSEMITE ST

ALTON WAY

E 120TH AVE
E 112TH AVE
E 104TH AVE
E 96TH AVE
E 88TH AVE

85

E-470

2

Figure 4.17

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

03/31/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

Miles
0   0.25   0.5   1

L. Old Brighton Road/Hazeltine Focus Area

The Old Brighton Road/Hazeltine area is located west of the Union Pacific Railroad and US 85, just south of the Henderson community. It contains the South Platte River floodplains and a mix of aggregate mining, residential, and some commercial uses. Development began in this area with the platting of the Hazeltine Heights Subdivision (1952), and it has its own water district. The Hazeltine School is a historical site that was once part of the 27J School District and is now a private residence.

Old Hazeltine School, now a residence.

Belle Creek Subdivision.

Figure 4.18: Old Brighton Road/Hazeltine Focus Area

Old Brighton Road/Hazeltine policy direction:
- ✓ Improve connections and access to the South Platte River, and improve streets, transit, and pedestrian amenities, especially connections to the west;
- ✓ Build interchanges on Highway 85 and overpasses at the UPRR at East 104th, East 112th, and East 120th Avenues to improve connections and access to the east;
- ✓ Develop an annexation policy for unincorporated areas;
- ✓ Retain trees and natural features as growth occurs and as streets are widened;
- ✓ Improve transit connections (linking with planned North Metro station at East 112th Avenue); and
- ✓ Improve water and sewer utilities, and address targeted stormwater issues.

Issues include:

- ▫ **Natural Areas.** Natural area opportunities and barriers created by the South Platte River;

- ▫ **Enclaves.** Unincorporated enclaves; and

- ▫ **Vacant Lands.** Large vacant pockets of land.

The Northern Range contains residential neighborhoods with pockets of vacant lands.

M. Northern Range Focus Area

The rest of the Northern Range contains residential neighborhoods with pockets of existing and planned commercial development and interspersed agricultural lands (some in Adams County). The Northern Range has potential for (and need of) commercial centers to serve the neighborhoods, and it also needs a better connected transportation system. The former 27J Cactus Ridge school house at approximately East 100th Avenue and Potomac Street, is a historical site.
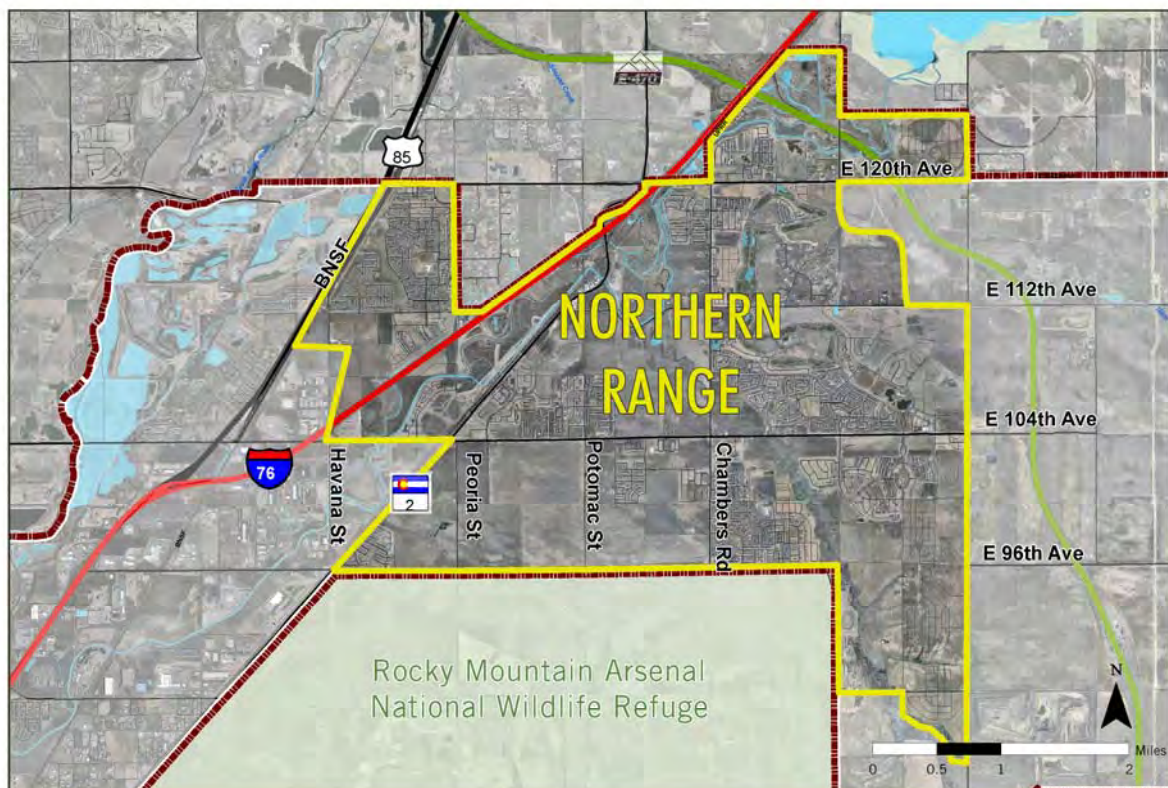
Figure 4.19: Northern Range Focus Area

Issues include:

- ▫ **Commercial.** Need for commercial to serve neighborhoods and jobs to help balance land uses;

- ▫ **Connections.** Need to connect the transportation system (roads, trails, bicycle lanes, etc.); and

- ▫ **Growth.** Need to plan for future facilities to serve growth.

Northern Range policy direction:

- ✓ Encourage additional commercial development to serve neighborhoods, including community commercial centers with grocery store(s);
- ✓ Provide community focus area(s) and public recreation center(s);
- ✓ Develop a multi-modal, connected transportation system (for vehicles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians);
- ✓ Expand the network of open space along the creeks;
- ✓ Establish an annexation policy for the enclaves; and
- ✓ Plan for parks, schools, and other infrastructure within neighborhoods to support growth.

E-470 Influence Planning Area

E-470 Influence Planning Area is located mostly east of Tower Road and west of Picadilly Road following the E-470 corridor. It generally consists of vast undeveloped lands, although a few properties have entitlements for mixed-use development. This is the area of potential long-term growth for Commerce City (up to 30+ years), due to its proximity to E-470, Denver International Airport, and vast vacant lands.

E-470 in the early days with little traffic.

E-470 Influence Area policy direction:

- ✓ **Cohesive Mix of Uses:** Plan for a cohesive mix of uses to maintain the city's jobs-to-housing balance and provide a more balanced total community. The mix should be a compatible extension of existing residential areas in the Northern Range and provide civic uses, master planned development, and round-the-clock activity;
- ✓ **Phased Development/Infrastructure/Utilities:** Phase development as utilities and services can be provided;
- ✓ **Land Use Patterns/Airport Compatibility:** Ensure that all land use patterns are compatible with present and future airport operations, including noise, safety, and access. Require that residential properties have extra protections in place to mitigate noise from the airport;
- ✓ **Economic Development:** Reserve appropriate land in strategic locations for economic development and jobs;
- ✓ **Transition of Employment Uses:** Transition land uses in the area, with technology and employment uses near the DIA boundary, and residential uses away from E-470, the airport boundary, and noise contours;
- ✓ **Flexibility/Mix of Uses:** Allow some flexibility for future development to meet market demands, while still accomplishing the goals of this Plan;
- ✓ **Connected Roads:** Plan a connected system of arterial and collector roads (including bicycle and pedestrian facilities and opportunities for future transit), and reserve future right-of-way.
- ✓ **Facilities:** Plan for future public facilities, such as schools and parks, to serve new growth;
- ✓ **Open Space/Conservation:** Conserve land along creeks/floodplains and utility corridors for open space, as part of a connected system;
- ✓ **E-470 Views:** Provide landscaping along E-470 to maintain views of the mountains and plains, and retain some of the area in its natural state with opening and closing of the viewshed to provide interest.

Issues include:

- ▫ **Infrastructure for Growth.** Extension of utilities is necessary to serve new development;
- ▫ **Transmission Lines.** Large transmission lines divide parcels;
- ▫ **Airport Noise.** Airport noise (restricts residential development within the 60 LDN and higher noise contours); and
- ▫ **Ground Rumble.** Ground rumble areas near future runways (are within 2,000 feet of the airport property line).

The E-470 influence area has 12-square miles of vacant land.

✓ **Quality:** Promote high-quality design for all structures, including residential and employment; and

✓ **Landfill Buffering:** Provide buffering of Tower Road landfill from residential development.

Hotels are one desirable type of future development along E-470.

Future Land Use Plan - E-470 Influence
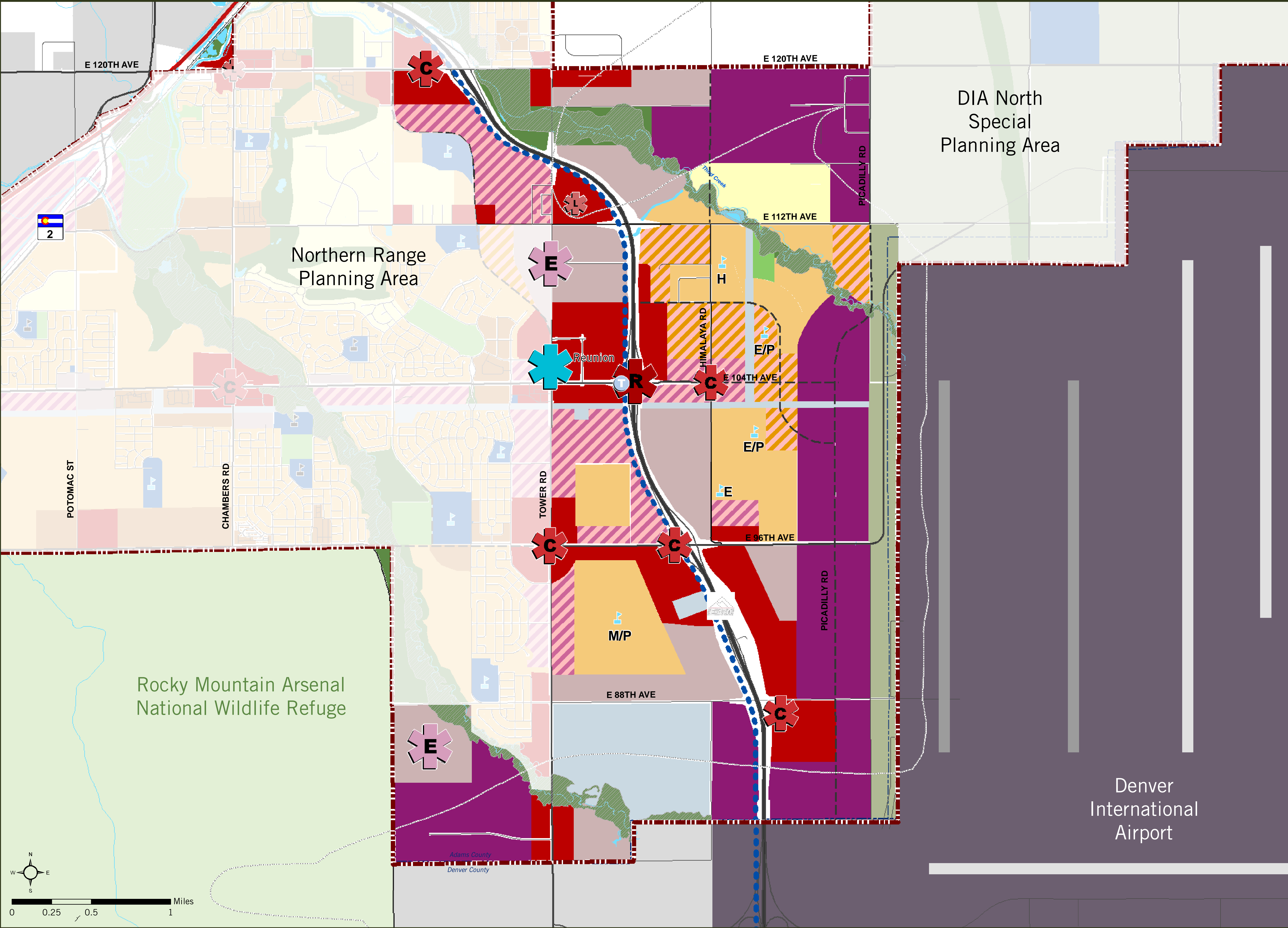
COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

DIA North
Special
Planning Area

Northern Range
Planning Area

Reunion

Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge

Denver
International
Airport

E 120TH AVE
E 120TH AVE
E 112TH AVE
E 104TH AVE
E 96TH AVE
E 88TH AVE

POTOMAC ST
CHAMBERS RD
TOWER RD
HIMALAYA RD
PICADILLY RD
PICADILLY RD

Adams County
Denver County

2

N
W   E
S

Miles
0   0.25   0.5   1

Legend

- IGA Growth Bounrdary
- County Boundary
- Denver International Airport
- DIA Noise Contours - 60 LDN
- Current Runway
- Future Runway
- National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Future Roads
- Possible Transit Station
- Future Light Rail Line
- Existing School
- Future School Site
  E - Elementary School
  M - Middle School
  H - High School
  /P - combination School/Park

Centers

- Activity Center
- Employment Campus / Business Center
- Regional Commercial Center
- Community Commercial Center
- Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use - E-470
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Office / Flex
- DIA Technology
- DIA Reserve
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

Figure 4.20

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

09/27/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

DIA North Special Planning Area

DIA North is generally located east of Picadilly Road to Watkins Road, and north of DIA. The area is heavily constrained by DIA noise and height contours, and is unlikely to see major development in the near future due to its remoteness and resulting road access and infrastructure limitations. While development likely will occur over the long-term (30+ years), this area is important because of its relationship to the north side of DIA and as the current eastern edge of Commerce City. Further refinement of plans for this area will be necessary in the future. The exact location, boundaries, and acreages may change, with additional refinements expected as development moves toward DIA North.

DIA North policy direction:

- ✓ Designate as a special planning area and continue to refine land uses for the area;
- ✓ Coordinate with Adams County to ensure that city and county plans for the area are consistent;
- ✓ Coordinate with DIA to make sure land uses reflect, and are consistent with, the DIA Master Plan;
- ✓ Avoid subdivision of the area into large residential lots (i.e., homes on one acre or larger);
- ✓ Develop annexation policies for the area;
- ✓ Plan for future infrastructure to coincide with growth; and
- ✓ Coordinate with State Parks on matters that would affect Barr Lake.

Issues include:

- ▫ The area is affected by DIA noise.
- ▫ It is unlikely to fully develop for many years (30+ years).

DIA North is heavily influenced by the airport.

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Future Land Use Plan - DIA North Special Planning Area

COMMERCE CITY
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Adams County

E 136TH AVE

Barr Lake
State Park

E 128TH AVE

POWHATON RD

DIA North
Special Planning Area

HAYESMOUNT RD

WATKINS RD

GUN CLUB RD

AC

HARVEST RD

E 120TH AVE

TRUSSVILLE RD

Adams County

PICADILLY RD

E 114TH AVE

Denver County

E 112TH AVE

Denver
International
Airport

E-470
Influence
Planning
Area

W CARGO RD

N
W   E
S

Miles
0   0.25   0.5   1

Legend

- ⬚ IGA Growth Bounrdary
- ⬚ County Boundary
- ▪ Denver International Airport
- ⬚ DIA Noise Contours - 60 LDN
- ⬚ Current Runway
- ▪ Future Runway
- ⬚ National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- ⬚ 100 Year Floodplain
- – Future Roads
- AC Future Adams County Regional Public Safety Training Center
- ⚑ Existing School
- ⚑ Future School Site

Future Land Use

- ⬚ Residential - Low
- ⬚ Residential - Medium
- ⬚ DIA Technology
- ⬚ DIA Reserve
- ⬚ Utility
- ⬚ Public/State
- ⬚ Park
- ⬚ Open Space

Figure 4.21

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

09/27/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

5—Economic Development

Guiding Principle

Maintain a strong employment base; help create a jobs/housing balance; define appropriate locations for a range of industry and businesses (including green businesses); and be a home for major corporations.

Introduction

Economic Development is the expansion of economic wealth for the city and the prosperity of residents. Beneficial and sustainable economic development can elevate the economic, political, and social position of the city. Economic progress should occur in conjunction with other environmental and social factors. Commerce City aims to maintain its strong employment base, while expanding and diversifying appropriate jobs, commercial activity, housing, and neighborhoods.

The information in this chapter is supplemented by the Commerce City Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Commerce City Economic Development Strategic Plan is a companion document to this Comprehensive Plan. The goals and policies outlined in this chapter are more general in nature, while the Economic Development Strategic Plan outlines the specific strategies, business sectors, and implementation policies that Commerce City will pursue in the future.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the economic development goals in this chapter.

Clear Economic Strategies

Before this process began, Commerce City did not have a clear, bold strategy to guide future economic development. The city determined it needed a strategy to address issues related to economic development such as retaining and recruiting businesses; appropriate locations for employment development; targeted industries; and economic clusters, infrastructure, strategic marketing, and diversification.

Locational advantages of Commerce City

✓ Proximity and access to major highways.

✓ Access to railroads.

✓ Proximity to Denver International Airport.

✓ Location near downtown Denver.

✓ Existing industrial and employment clusters.

✓ Availability of ample housing and quality neighborhoods with parks and schools.

✓ Vacant lands along major transportation corridors, particularly E-470.

✓ World-class amenities such as Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake.

✓ Further examples are included within the Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Strong Existing Industrial Base

One of the city's great strengths and unique attributes is its strong industrial and manufacturing base, particularly in the Historic City and Irondale. This base is supported by two of the city's biggest economic development competitive advantages which are its locational assets, including its geographic position along multiple interstates/highways and railroads, and the availability of industrial land and multiple industrial zoning classifications.

Land Availability

The city has opportunities for future commercial and employment development in the Northern Range and along E-470. This effort aims to plan for future commercial development and employment, reserving land to ensure future economic balance and to provide accessible goods, services, and jobs within the community.

Community Need

In a 2006 Community Needs Assessment, the community at-large identified grocery stores and sit-down restaurants as two of the city's greatest retail needs. Furthermore, a recent retail gap analysis, performed in 2009, showed that nearly $58 million in annual grocery sales and over $88 million in annual eating place sales are taking place outside of the city limits. This challenge presents a huge opportunity for specific retailers to locate within Commerce City and to provide these necessary goods and services for its residents and businesses.

Directions and Goals

Economic Diversification

A separate Economic Development Strategic Plan will be one of the primary means for city decisions about locations, types, and strategies for future employment and commercial development. A holistic strategy for economic development also relies on other goals in this Plan that address a well-balanced community, including cultural and educational facilities, and parks and open space (e.g., Barr Lake State Park and Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge).

Retaining/Increasing Strong Employment Base

The city believes that a strong and vibrant economy depends first and foremost on the well-being of Commerce City's existing industry and job base. Studies indicate that existing businesses account for 85% of new job growth; small businesses typically account for 75% of those new jobs. To this end, an integral part of the city's economic development strategy is to build on effective relationships, with existing businesses, that focus on partnerships with the business community to address obstacles to expansion in Commerce City.

Reserving Land for Commercial Development

Commerce City's next employment frontier is near DIA and along the E-470 corridor. Preserving land in those locations for appropriate businesses and industries will be important for the economic future of Commerce City. Moreover, the city will actively promote and support commercial and employment development throughout the city, particularly in the commercial and employment centers designed on the Future Land Use Plan map.

Attracting Quality Retailers

In order to create a truly sustainable community, the city needs a healthy mix of retail businesses. The city plans to identify specific retail needs and to attract quality retailers to provide these necessary goods and services. Having an aggressive retail attraction and retention strategy also will help to prevent retail leakage and curtail retail surplus.

This chapter's goals address:

1. Economic diversification;
2. Retaining and increasing a strong employment base;
3. Reserving land for commercial development and employment; and
4. Attracting quality retailers.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

Economic development is important for the city's future welfare. The goals in this chapter permeate many other chapters of this Plan and contribute to the sustainability triad, because they help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

- ✓ Retain, recruit, and attract businesses.
- ✓ Contribute to fiscal stability.
- ✓ Generate wealth within the community.
- ✓ Maintain a tax base to allow the city to provide services and build and maintain infrastructure

A Quality Environmental Context:

- ✓ Encourage green businesses that fit the community and its neighborhoods.
- ✓ Limit environmental impacts of industrial land uses.
- ✓ Encourage the business community to adopt green practices.

A Resilient Community:

- ✓ Diversify the local economy to provide employment options and opportunities for existing residents to be prosperous and lead meaningful lives.
- ✓ Provide key factors to achieve balance of live, work, and play.
- ✓ Create a sustainable economic base.

How Does the Economic Development Element Relate to Sustainability?

Economy and commerce itself is one of the major categories of sustainability. A healthy economy is what keeps a city alive. Retaining and attracting green businesses, as well as encouraging the business community to use green development/business practices, will contribute to the long term viability of our city.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The economic development goals relate closely to other Plan elements and chapters. Table 5.1 below identifies where goals link with other Plan elements.

Table 5.1: Economic Development Goals and Related Chapters

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth	Economic Dev.	Fiscal Stability	Housing	Redevelopment	Transportation	Safety, Wellness	Parks, Open Space	Public Facilities	Appearance	Cultural Facilities	Environmental
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Goals												
1. Economic diversification	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖			✖	✖	✖	✖
2. Strong employment base	✖	✖	✖			✖				✖		✖
3. Reserve land (commercial/employment)	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖
4. Attract quality retailers	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖			✖		✖

The *Economic Development Strategic Plan* addresses industry and jobs.

Economic Development Goals and Policies

Goal ED 1—Increase economic diversification and opportunities for clean, prosperous business

The *Economic Development Strategic Plan* will allow Commerce City to chart its economic future, increase prosperity, and provide workforce opportunities. The city will recruit and retain new businesses and major corporations in the targeted industry sector/clusters, as a part of the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*.

Citywide Policies:

ED 1.1—Economic Development Strategic Plan

Policies in this section reflect the *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and should be updated, as needed, in accordance with it.

ED 1.2—Recruitment of Businesses

The city will aggressively recruit businesses within identified targeted industries (as identified through the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*). They are currently identified as the following:

- Advanced Manufacturing

- Logistics and Distribution

- Business and Professional Services

- Retail/Hospitality/Leisure

- DIA Technology

ED 1.3—Business-Friendly Climate

Identify and provide services and incentives that spur development and the growth of Commerce City's economy.

A successful economic development strategy also overlaps with other plan elements such as land use, fiscal stability, housing, redevelopment, transportation, parks and open space, appearance, education, culture and tourism, and other quality of life aspects. All these aspects contribute to attracting knowledge-based workers that are a driving force for economic development. See Chapters 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, respectively.

Goal ED 2—Retain and increase a strong employment base

The city will retain and expand its existing industrial base, and attract and recruit new businesses that contribute positively to city revenues.

Citywide Policies:

ED 2.1—Further Develop Business Retention

Protect and support the retail sector of the economy, which adds to overall economic diversity and provides goods and services to city residents. Continue to foster the development of the Business Retention and Expansion Program of the city.

ED 2.2—Educated Workforce

Retain and continue to develop a highly-educated workforce. Establish partnerships with K-12 and higher educational organizations to develop facilities and programs within the city that could provide industry-specific training for students, residents, and existing businesses.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

ED 2.3—Strengthen Employment Land Base

Retain and strengthen the industrial base in the Historic City and Irondale Areas.

ED 2.4—Housing and Jobs Balance/Revenue Producing Uses

Ensure a balance of housing and jobs as new growth occurs in the Northern Range and E-470 areas, by reserving land for employment uses in the Office/Flex and DIA Technology designated areas.

Development Opportunities

✓ Prairie Gateway (National Wildlife Refuge),

✓ The Northern Range,

✓ Along E-470 and locations near DIA,

✓ Along I-76,

✓ Established industrial areas,

✓ Redevelopment areas, (identified in this Plan), and

✓ In commercial and employment centers designated on the Future Land Use Plan map.

Retaining and strengthening existing industry is a city goal.

Goal ED 3—Recruit new employment and commercial development

Attract and promote new commercial and employment uses to the Historic City that will provide jobs and services for residents and revenues for city operations. The city will reserve undeveloped lands for future commercial and employment activities, as designated on the Future Land Use Plan.

Citywide Policies:

ED 3.1—New Centers with Emphasis on Commercial

Focus new commercial and retail into the designated centers shown on the FLUP. The types of centers at different scales will provide for retail and other needs ranging from neighborhood to regional markets. The city is focused on enhancing the image, quality, and diversity of retail that contributes positively to the community.

See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan (land use categories and centers criteria) and Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth.

ED 3.2—Reinvestment/Redevelopment of Targeted Areas

This Plan identifies targeted areas for reinvestment and redevelopment, including Clermont, Wembley, the FasTracks Station Site, Derby, and East 104th Avenue infill.

ED 3.3—Ensure Availability of Industrial Land and Buildings

In accordance with the Future Land Use Plan, monitor and maintain the amount of land zoned for office/flex, technology, and industrial uses, and limit or restrict rezoning of industrial land to residential, to preserve these areas for existing or new business and industry.

Goal ED 4—Attract and support quality retailers to become a more balanced city

The city will actively recruit retailers to locate in growth areas and the Historic City, while retaining and supporting existing retailers.

Citywide Policies:

ED 4.1—Support Retail Development

Protect and support the retail sector of the economy, which adds to overall economic diversity and provides identified goods and services to city residents, such as grocery stores, sit-down restaurants, and the like.

ED 4.2—Enhance Existing Commercial Developments

Encourage improvements to upgrade landscaping, facades, parking areas, undergrounding utilities, and other upgrades for retail centers.

Commercial centers can include civic space, such as fountains or plazas that serve as community gathering places.

Other quality of life factors, such as parks, schools, and housing, contribute to a healthy business environment.

ED 4.3—Retain Space for Retail Development

Monitor the supply of land zoned for commercial development and retain an adequate supply of land for future retail needs.

ED 4.4—Develop Retail Retention/Expansion Program

Develop a program to involve and inform existing and potential retailers about city policies and incentives. Continually monitor the retail needs of the community, and strive to attract and establish retail to meet those needs.

The Future Land Use Plan retains space for future retail development.

Economic Development Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the economic development goals. Table 5.2 coincides with the goals of this chapter and identifies specific actions to achieve the goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 5.2: Economic Development Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal ED 1	**Increase economic diversification**
ED 1a	**Economic Development Strategic Plan**
	Implement strategies of the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*.
ED 1b	**Business Incentives**
	Examine policy that would provide incentives for beneficial city economic development projects.
Goal ED 2	**Retain and increase strong employment base**
ED 2a	**BRE Program**
	Continue to expand the business retention and expansion programs of the city.
ED 2b	**Educational Partnerships and Workforce Training**
	Expand existing programs and implement workforce training.
ED 2c	**Monitor Jobs to housing**
	Similar to strategy LU1c.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal ED 3	**Recruit new employment and commercial development**
ED 3a	**Future Land Use Plan to Guide Decisions**
	Use the Future Land Use Plan to guide land use decisions.
Goal ED 4	**Attract and support quality retailers**
ED 4a	**Community Retail Needs**
	Identify surpluses and leakages to direct community needs.
ED 4b	**Incentives**
	Examine policy that would provide incentives for beneficial retail, which is directly targeted to community needs (grocery store, sit-down restaurants, etc.).
ED 4c	**Retail retention and expansion**
	Develop a comprehensive retail retention and expansion program.

Monitoring Economic Development

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress over time toward achieving the economic development goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring, which describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 5.3: Economic Development Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
ED 1—Economic diversification	Increase diversity of businesses and jobs in the city	▪ New business starts (yearly). ▪ Number of business establishments (ongoing, new). ▪ Employment/unemployment rates. ▪ Average wages and salaries for new jobs. ▪ Number of school and business partnerships.
ED 2—Retain and increase employment	Increase per capita employment	▪ Industrial, commercial, and office vacancy rate. ▪ Number of new jobs (office, retail, industrial). ▪ Manufacturing jobs.
ED 3—Recruit new employment	Increase commercial and employment	▪ Number of permits issued for industry and employment uses. ▪ Total valuation of commercial building permits.
ED 4—Attract quality retailers	Increase retail development	▪ Annual increase in sales and use tax. ▪ Variety and balance of retail goods and services offered, citywide and in sub-areas. ▪ Decrease in retail leakage for specific retail sectors and net leakage. ▪ Increase and/or net zero change in surplus retail sectors. ▪ Number of jobs created by retail sectors.

6—Fiscal Stability

Guiding Principle

Continue as a fiscally stable city by fortifying revenues and efficiently maintaining and providing services and infrastructure.

Introduction

Commerce City administers most municipal services, including city administration, community development, police, public works (streets, highways, and snow removal), refuse collection, and parks and recreation (parks, swimming pools, and recreation programs) through its general fund and several other ancillary funds. Sales and use taxes are the major source of revenue support for general fund operations, which is common in Colorado. Additional fiscal influencing factors are addressed below.

Commerce City benefits fiscally from its traditional industrial land uses, which contribute to revenues.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the Fiscal Stability goals contained in this chapter.

Industrial Tax Base Benefits

The city benefits from its traditional industrial tax base, which contributes heavily to use tax, sales tax, and property tax revenue, while demanding only modest government services.

City Geographic Challenges

Historically, Commerce City has been able to balance its revenues with service expenditures, and invest in capital improvements. However, capital efficiency has become more challenging as the city has grown, because of the physical layout of the city and the adjacent Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge that creates two distinct areas of the city with few direct road connections.

Sales and Use Tax Generation by Land Use in Commerce City (BBC, 2008).

From I-270- to E-470, the distance is over 12 miles. The elongated shape of Commerce City makes providing services more expensive than in other cities with a similar population size.
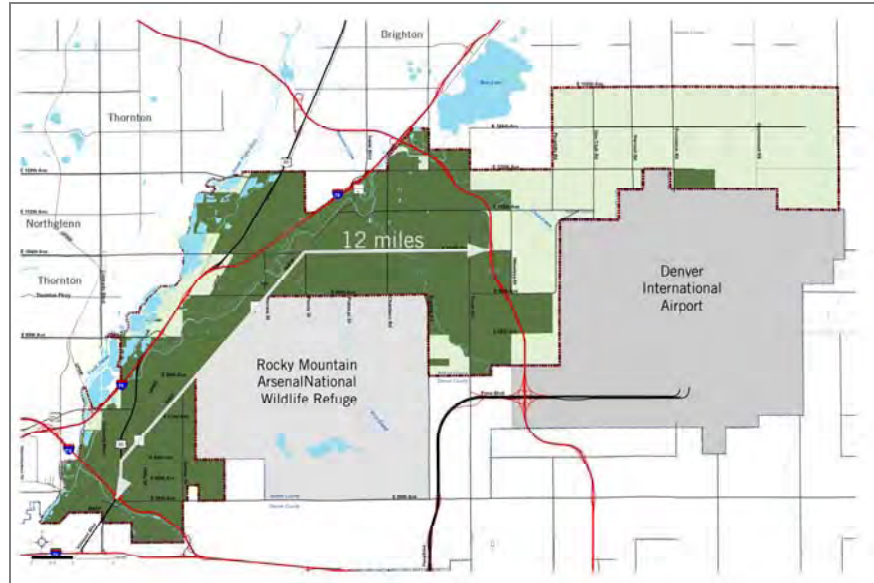
Why Does a Balanced Growth Pattern Matter?

Industrial and commercial land uses produce about 85% of the city's sales and use tax revenues, while residential uses produce only 15%.

How Does Fiscal Stability Relate to Sustainability?

Benefits of fiscal stability include the continued ability for the city to provide services and infrastructure that support jobs and contribute to quality of life for current and future generations.

Recent Growth Imbalances

While growth historically in Commerce City has contained a healthy mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses, recent growth in the Northern Range has been primarily residential, which challenges the city's ability to fund needed services.

Directions and Goals

Considering the influencing factors outlined above, the fiscal stability goals address the following considerations:

Maximize Efficiency in Infrastructure and Service Delivery

The city can realize significant benefits if infrastructure investment efficiency is pursued. This means incremental phasing, so that capital investment does not greatly precede demand, requiring close coordination between location and timing of development, infrastructure, and other services.

Maintain a Balanced Growth Pattern

Different land uses have different revenue generation characteristics, city service demands, and capital infrastructure requirements. As the city plans for the future, it should manage land use and growth to minimize financial challenges in providing services and infrastructure. This Plan ensures that adequate land is available to achieve this balance.

Fiscal stability goals address:

1. Efficient infrastructure and services provision;

2. Retaining and increasing revenue-producing land uses;

3. Consideration of fiscal costs and benefits of development; and

4. Revenue diversification.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

The fiscal stability goals, including efficient services and capital investments, are extremely important to the city's sustainability, as identified below. The goals in this chapter help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Maintain a fiscally-healthy mix of uses (including revenue-producing) that enable the city to provide services.

✓ Ensure maintenance of a low tax structure for businesses and residents.

✓ Enable the city to provide services that make it competitive and attractive for business recruitment and retention.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Improve parks, recreation, transportation systems, garbage collection, quality community development, snow removal, and other functions important for a strong and vital city.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Provide the services and infrastructure that people depend on.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The fiscal stability goals relate closely to other plan elements and chapters of this Plan. The table below identifies where they link with other Plan elements.

Table 6.1: Fiscal Stability Goals and Related Chapters

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth	Economic Dev.	Fiscal Stability	Housing/Neighbor	Redevelopment	Transportation	Safety, Wellness	Parks, Open Space	Public Facilities	Appearance	Cultural Facilities	Environmental
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Goals												
1. Infrastructure investments	✖		✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖			
2. Retain, increase revenue-producing	✖	✖	✖									
3. Fiscal costs, benefits	✖	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖			
4. Diversify revenue	✖	✖	✖								✖	

Fiscal Stability Goals and Policies

Goal FS 1—Efficiently invest in infrastructure and services over the long-term

Develop a long-term city financial strategy to balance and prioritize current and future needs and services to make service provision equitable and efficient. Minimize the amount of public investment in capital expenditures for infrastructure for private development, and ensure that private development provides the infrastructure needed to support it.

Citywide Policies:

FS 1.1—Long-Term Capital Planning

Ensure the city is able to fund existing and future service commitments by developing and periodically updating a financial plan that outlines a long-term approach for how to fund capital investments as growth occurs. The approach should consider replacement and maintenance of facilities as a priority over new facilities.

FS 1.2—Low Government Operation Costs

Avoid unnecessary government costs and ensure efficiency of government operations.

FS 1.3—Effective Finance Tools

Periodically review development finance tools and practices (i.e., impact fees, exactions, tax increment financing, and other development cost-recovery means) and update them as necessary to ensure that development continues to pay its own way. Fees should be tied to the cost of providing services and efficiency of the development.

FS 1.4—Leverage State and Federal Grants

Increasingly, federal dollars are being tied not only to sustainability, but to integrated sustainability approaches. Local governments that do multi-sectoral planning will likely be better positioned to attract funds. Commerce City should position itself for grant awards to leverage its ability to accomplish a spectrum of goals.

FS 1.5—Prioritized Services and Capital improvements

Focus resources where concentrations of people are (i.e., where the greatest need and public support exists). Determine if satellite operations are necessary for some services, such as police, to make service provision as efficient and effective as possible.

See Chapter 10, Safety and Wellness.

Historically, Commerce City has been able to balance revenues with service expenditures for services such as police protection.

Fiscal Stability Goals and Policies

Goal FS 1—Efficiently invest in infrastructure and services over the long-term

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See Chapter 10, Safety and Wellness.

Historically, Commerce City has been able to balance revenues with service expenditures for services such as police protection.

FS 1.6—Equitable and Distributed Services as Revenues Allow

Aim to distribute services and provide them as equitably as possible.

FS 1.7—Partner with Water District/Utilities

Coordinate with the utility districts to align goals and plan for future development and growth that is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan, avoiding restrictions on desirable development patterns, such as infill.

See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth, goals related to balanced mix of land uses and phasing growth in an efficient manner, and Chapter 12, Public Facilities and Infrastructure.

FS 1.8—Identify multi-modal capital impacts

Update traffic study guidelines to account for residential and non-residential development impacts and use of bicycle facilities, sidewalks, trails, transit services, and the road network.

Goal FS 2—Retain and increase revenue-producing land uses

The city will retain its industrial and employment base, and attract and recruit new businesses (including commercial), that contribute positively to city revenues.

Citywide Policies:

FS 2.1—Future Housing/Jobs Balance and Revenue-Producing Uses

Ensure a balance of housing and jobs as new growth occurs. Reserve land for employment and commercial uses, and require a mix of uses including revenue-producing uses.

FS 2.2—Core Employment Uses

Retain and strengthen the industrial and employment land base by ensuring that new employment is consistent with the designations on the *Future Land Use Plan* map.

See Chapters 4 and 5, Land Use and Growth and Economic Development, respectively.

The Future Land Use Plan map designates locations for future employment uses, especially along E-470 near DIA, to maintain future balanced land uses and revenue-producing land uses.

Goal FS 3—Consider fiscal costs and benefits of development

The city will evaluate fiscal sustainability of new developments to ensure that all new development will have either neutral or beneficial impacts.

Citywide Policies:

FS 3.1—Fiscal Analysis

Require that new master planned developments provide fiscal impact analysis as part of the development application.

FS 3.2—Development Pays its Own Way/Competitiveness

Create financial mechanism to fund development in the E-470 corridor, but ensure these policies are balanced with the objective of remaining competitive in the region for development. Explore whether the city should continue to finance large-scale improvements through General Improvement Districts (GID), or restrict their use for E-470 or Tower Road improvements.

Goal FS 4—Diversify revenue

The city will explore diversifying revenue sources, such as through user fees, fee in lieu (development exactions), or sales tax.

Citywide Policies:

FS 4.1—Fees for Revenues

Increase appropriate fees (i.e., fee in lieu programs, etc.) as needed to finance improvements while remaining competitive in the Denver-metro region.

FS 4.2—Broadened Sales Tax Base

Increase retail and commercial uses throughout the city, particularly in the Northern Range and E-470 areas, but also in the Historic City redevelopment sites.

Future increased retail will help broaden the sales tax base.

Fiscal Sustainability Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the fiscal stability goals. Table 6.2, below, coincides with the goals of this chapter. It identifies specific actions to achieve the goals.

Many potential strategies have been addressed in previous chapters: Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth, and Chapter 5, Economic Development. See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies

Table 6.2: Fiscal Stability Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal FS 1	**Efficient Investment Infrastructure and Services**
FS 1a	**Infill Development Incentives (Land Development Code)**
	Provide incentives for infill development, which is the most efficient type of development. Incentives might include rebates, reduced fees, expedited review times, or contemporary standards (e.g., for parking).
FS 1b	**Prioritize Needs**
	Acknowledge challenges in maintaining current service levels over the long-term; prioritize needs and funding through the Capital Improvements Program to align with the goals of this Plan.
FS 1c	**Pursue Grants**
	Leverage city resources to utilize state and federal funding sources, and grants (including but not limited to funding for sustainability-related and integrated multi-sectoral planning).
FS 1d	**Development-Related Impacts**
	Identify development-related impacts to the multi-modal network and recommend appropriate measures to be constructed as part of the development project to address impacts.
	(See Chapter 12, Public Facilities and Infrastructure.)
Goal FS 2	**Retain/Increase Employment Base**
FS 2a	**FLUP Consistency**
	Retain, support, and expand the community's industrial base by approving development that is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and modifying the LDC to reflect the FLUP.
FS 2b	**Reserve Land for Commercial Uses**
	Ensure adequate land for commercial uses through the Future Land Use Plan; preserve the opportunity for future retail development by designating locations.
FS 2c	**Criteria/Incentives**
	Develop criteria for new business incentives (i.e., to achieve the kinds of businesses desired), as defined through the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*.
	(See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)
Goal FS 3	**Fiscal Costs/Benefits of Development Considered**
FS 3a	**Fiscal Impact Analysis**
	Require fiscal impact analysis of new development.
Goal FS 4	**Revenue Diversified**
FS 4a	***Buy Local* Program**
	Develop program to persuade Commerce City residents to *Buy C3* or *Buy Local* (i.e., support local businesses).
	(See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)

Monitoring Fiscal Sustainability

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress over time toward achieving the fiscal stability goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring and how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and set targets.

Table FS 3: Fiscal Stability Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
FS 1—Infrastructure investment	Maintain or reduce costs per capita	▪ City expenditures on new infrastructure and maintenance per capita. ▪ Number of federal and state grants received and monetary value.
FS 2—Employment base	Maintain a jobs to housing ratio of at least 1.5	▪ See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth, indicators (ratio of jobs-to-housing, and acres developed for commerce and industry).
FS 3—Fiscal costs and benefits	Minimal expenses to finance new development	▪ Number of General Improvement Districts to finance new developments. ▪ Fiscal impact analyses performed and mitigation measures adopted.
FS 4—Diversify revenue	Greater percentage of revenue from retail or other sources	▪ Revenue split (sales/use tax).

7—Housing and Neighborhoods

Guiding Principle

Provide multiple types of housing serving a range of people and incomes in vibrant neighborhoods where people want to live.

Introduction

Commerce City grew very rapidly from 2000 to 2008, doubling the size of its 2000 population and expanding its housing supply through new neighborhoods largely in the Northern Range. In 2007, Commerce City had an estimated 14,037 housing units—more than double the 6,907 housing units in 2000. In general, residents and prospective residents find many quality options for neighborhoods within the city, ranging from traditional neighborhoods in the Historic City to new planned subdivisions in the Northern Range. However, some opportunities exist to further broaden the city's range of housing.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the housing and neighborhoods goals contained in this chapter.

Housing Market Gaps

Compared with other cities in Adams County, Commerce City offers many affordable homeownership options, but has limited affordable rental options. In addition, the city has few options for high-income households seeking to move into the community, or existing homeowners who want to upgrade to larger, or more expensive, homes within the city.

Changing Demographics

Currently, married couples make up a slight majority of city households. The city also has a younger population than in neighboring communities. However, while the proportion of seniors is lower than other communities in the Metro area, the population is aging, meaning that housing needs will change.

Commerce City's future and existing neighborhoods are important for quality of life and a well balanced community where workers can live near jobs.

Two-thirds of housing is single-family.

City Housing Mix

Single-Family – 66%

Multi-family – 25%

Mobile homes – 8%

How Does Housing Relate to Sustainability?

Benefits of strong neighborhoods with a mix of housing include:

✓ increased housing options near jobs, services, schools, parks and open space, and other community infrastructure,

✓ vibrant, safe neighborhoods where people want to live,

✓ reduction in travel miles and vehicle use when housing is near schools, jobs, and services,

✓ ability for residents to comfortably and safely age in place,

✓ potential cost savings on energy, transportation, and utilities in well-located and energy-efficient homes,

✓ potential reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (for homes with energy upgrades) and from reduced commute times.

City's Housing Stock

The age, type, and availability of housing varies considerable from south to north in the city. In the Historic City, most of the housing was built when that part of the community developed in the 1950s and 1960s. The Historic City has a higher percentage of rental units (25% to 50% in 2000) than in the north. In the Northern Range, most of the housing was built after 1999. Housing is predominantly single-family and owner-occupied.

Directions and Goals

Based on the Influencing Factors outlined above, the housing and neighborhoods goals contained in this chapter are based on the following considerations:

Expanded Mix of Housing

As families and the population ages and grows, a greater variety of housing types and price ranges will be increasingly important. This Plan promotes quality neighborhoods near schools and services with all types of housing and price ranges available for a diverse community in order to support residents through their entire life (from birth to old-age).

Housing Affordability

Housing that is affordable, not only to buy or rent but also that is cost-efficient and healthy to live in, is important to enable more residents to live near where they work to allow them to become economically self-sufficient. Affordable housing should be accessible to transit.

Senior Housing and Universal Design

While Commerce City has a lower proportion of seniors than surrounding communities, its population is aging like the Denver-metro area as a whole. Currently, the community has very limited senior housing available. For seniors to be able to stay in the community, new senior housing will be necessary.

Housing and Neighborhoods goals address:

1. Reinvesting in existing neighborhoods and housing stock;
2. Increasing housing choices and variety;
3. Increasing the price range of housing; and
4. Neighborhood accessibility to all modes of travel.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

Expanding the variety and viability of housing and neighborhoods is a key component of a sustainable community. The goals in this chapter help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

- ✓ Ensure a mix of housing types for workers located near primary jobs and to support retail and other revenue-producing businesses in the city, although this will take some time to achieve.
- ✓ Balance revenues with service expenditures required for different housing types. Higher-income housing types tend to be fiscally neutral or positive for the city.

A Quality Environmental Context:

- ✓ Provide quality neighborhoods that contain amenities such as open space and parks that are located near schools, services, and jobs.
- ✓ Revitalize existing housing to strengthen neighborhoods.
- ✓ Create neighborhoods that are walkable, with access to transit and bicycle facilities.
- ✓ Reduce inefficient vehicle energy use by clustering housing in neighborhoods near services and by providing transportation options.

A Resilient Community:

- ✓ Allow people to live in Commerce City for their whole life—from youth, through employment, and into retirement. A mix of housing allows residents to age in place.
- ✓ Provide cost-efficient housing.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The housing goals relate closely to other Plan elements and chapters of this Plan, as identified in Table 7.1, below.

Table 7.1: Housing and Neighborhoods Goals and Related Chapters

Plan Element/Ch. #:	4 Land Use, Growth	5 Economic Dev.	6 Fiscal Stability	7 Housing/Neighbor	8 Redevelopment	9 Transportation	10 Safety, Wellness	11 Parks, Open Space	12 Public Facilities	13 Appearance	14 Cultural Facilities	15 Environmental
Goals												
1. Rehabilitate aging housing stock	✖			✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖		✖
2. Increase housing types	✖			✖		✖	✖			✖		✖
3. Expand housing price range		✖	✖	✖				✖	✖	✖		
4. Neighborhood accessibility	✖			✖		✖	✖					✖

Why Reinvest in Housing?

Reinvesting in older housing stock contributes to neighborhood vitality and strength, making existing neighborhoods more appealing for all types of residents. In addition, reinvestment is the most important factor for aging seniors who want to stay in Commerce City.

Rehabilitation means…

…the repair of existing housing stock, to make improvements to safety and livability for elderly and low-income persons (e.g., replacing roofs, improving handicap accessibility, replacing appliances and heaters, and repairing broken floors and walls). Typically, projects are funded by Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and other local partners.

Housing and Neighborhoods Goals and Policies

Goal HN 1—Reinvest in and rehabilitate aging housing stock

The city will reinvest in existing, aging housing stock to stabilize neighborhoods for current resident occupants, especially seniors aging in place. Reinvesting contributes to neighborhood vitality and strength.

Citywide Policies:

HN 1.1—Rehabilitated Homes

The preservation of existing housing stock (rental and ownership housing) and its rehabilitation helps prevent loss due to deterioration. It ensures that it will remain available to working families. Rehabilitated homes should be evaluated for environmental hazards. Identified hazards (e.g., lead-based paint, friable asbestos) will be mitigated before houses are re-occupied.

HN 1.2—Neighborhood Infrastructure Investment

To support private investment in housing and neighborhoods, the city will focus on reducing blight factors in neighborhoods (such as deteriorating infrastructure), preserving and building upon the character of tree-lined streets, and identifying priority reinvestment areas. As funds are available, the city will invest in infrastructure, spurring private investment in housing stock and neighborhoods. In addition, the city can provide incentives for, and provide standards to ensure appropriate types of infill through its development code.

HN 1.3—Property Maintenance

Increase property maintenance requirements to improve safety, appearance, and function of housing and neighborhoods and to consistently apply code enforcement.

Rehabilitating and maintaining existing housing increases available housing and improves quality of neighborhoods and housing stock, such as the well-maintained home to the right.

Goal HN 2—Increase housing types to meet current and future needs

Commerce City will expand the variety of housing types throughout quality neighborhoods for life-long living. Housing should accommodate students, families, singles, aging seniors, and people with disabilities, all at multiple-income levels.

Citywide Policies:

HN 2.1—Variety of Housing Types and Mixed-Uses within Neighborhoods

Encourage new neighborhoods that contain a mix of housing types, ranging from single-family detached, attached, townhomes, apartments, lofts, and housing for special needs (e.g., seniors). Site plans should include a mix of lot sizes, development densities, as well as housing types and styles, with high-density and multi-family housing near collector and arterial streets, transit, and services.

HN 2.2—Energy-Efficient and Healthy Homes

Promote programs to reduce costs associated with energy, transportation, and utilities by focusing on environmentally-friendly materials, construction methods, and design to improve efficiency. Green homes promote better health by improving ventilation and air quality, and reducing toxins. They also help decrease greenhouse gas emissions and transportation-related air pollution.

HN 2.3—Housing with Transportation Options

New housing should offer residents a variety of transportation options that are energy-efficient and affordable, including transit. It should also be located near jobs and services. Neighborhoods should be walkable to support a healthier lifestyle.

See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth, related to strengthening city neighborhoods.

HN 2.4—Housing for Seniors and Special Needs Population

Promote senior housing and housing for individuals with special needs, including physical or mental disabilities. Senior housing types should range from affordable to higher-end retirement housing. Higher densities may be appropriate targeted locations to accommodate these needs. The city should modify regulations to allow senior housing and facilitate new housing practices that specifically accommodate seniors and people with disabilities. This type of housing should be highly accessible to transit.

Best Practices

Neighborhood Village Design

The *New Lands Plan* provides principles for new neighborhood development. This Plan continues those principles, including:

- ✓ Locating housing in villages that are easy to serve, fiscally sound, and that attract and retain residents.

- ✓ Organizing neighborhoods as cohesive "units" defined by streets, natural landforms, and open space with parks and schools at the center.

- ✓ Following a grid street pattern where possible, with connected streets and sidewalks.

- ✓ Mixing housing types (single-family, multi-family) within neighborhoods.

- ✓ Locating higher-density housing, services, and offices near arterial roads.

Commerce City aims to increase the range of housing prices, including additional executive housing options.

Goal HN 3—Increase the range of housing prices

Commerce City will continue to focus on expanding housing price ranges, so that people of all incomes are able to live in the community.

Citywide Policies:

HN 3.1—Neighborhoods for Mixed Incomes

New neighborhoods should contain a range of housing priced at different points for mixed incomes, including high-end homes, to achieve overall diversity.

HN 3.2—Executive Housing

To aid in attracting additional executive housing and opportunities for residents to move up to higher-end housing, provide incentives for and require developers to provide amenities in neighborhoods such as additional open space, recreational facilities, and commercial services.

HN 3.3—Affordable Housing Options Maintained

Continue to support existing affordable housing options, partnerships, and programs to address the continued maintenance of the city's affordable stock, including existing maintained mobile home parks in the Historic City; multi-family housing; and affordable, small, single-family homes. Future affordable housing will be located throughout the community near jobs and services, so that pockets of low-income housing do not occur.

The city's housing goals focus on maintaining existing affordable housing stock, as well as providing new alternatives, such as townhomes.

Goal HN 4—Ensure neighborhood accessibility to all modes of travel

Commerce City will encourage development of convenient access to transit routes, sidewalks, trails and bicycle facilities from neighborhoods and employment centers.

Citywide Policies:

HN 4.1—Multi-modal Level-of-Service Criteria

Establish multi-modal Level-of-Service criteria to be achieved in new and redeveloping areas.

HN 4.2—Pedestrian/Bicycle Connectivity Guidelines

Establish guidelines for development to assure convenient pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to transit routes.

HN 4.3—Guidelines for Residential Development

Establish guidelines for residential development to assure efficient internal transit circulation by minimizing cul-de-sacs and linking roadways in adjacent development tracts.

HN 4.4—Contiguous Network of Collector Streets

Provide a contiguous network of collector streets within the arterial grid to promote efficient circulation of all modes of travel.

Housing and Neighborhoods Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the housing and neighborhood goals. Table 7.2, below, coincides with the goals of this chapter. It identifies specific actions to take to achieve the goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 7.2: Housing and Neighborhoods Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal HN 1	**Reinvestment and Rehabilitation of Aging Housing Stock**
HN 1a	**Citywide Housing Plan**
	Develop a citywide Housing Plan to help refine needs and targets.
HN 1b	**Housing Program**
	Establish programs to preserve and recycle housing stock (e.g., acquire, redevelop, and resell single-family homes at affordable prices, and provide accessibility improvements), particularly in the Historic City.
HN 1c	**Improvement Plans for Historic City Focus Areas**
	Determine Neighborhood Focus Areas within Historic City (e.g., Southern Core/Rose Hill, Northern Core/Derby/Tichy, Fairfax/Dupont, and Adams City) where the city will develop improvement plans and seek funding to stabilize and improve conditions. Invest to the extent funds are available.
HN 1d	**Proactive Property Maintenance**
	Explore ways to make code enforcement more proactive, to ensure property maintenance and prevent further zoning and municipal code violations.
NH 1e	**Zoning Amendments for Compatible Infill**
	Evaluate/explore downzoning certain residential areas of the Historic City from R-2 to R-1, to ensure compatible neighborhood infill that strengthens neighborhoods.
HN 1f	**Neighborhood Planning/Support**
	Support a neighborhood planning program, particularly for neighborhoods identified above (see HN 1c).
HN 1g	**Education about Development Permitting**
	Provide educational materials regarding the development permitting process and where it applies.
	(See also Chapter 13, Appearance and Design, and Chapter 15, Environmental Conservation and Stewardship for strategies related to tree planting, energy efficiency, community gardens, and other neighborhood-related topics.)
Goal HN 2	**Variety of Housing Types to Meet Needs**
HN 2a	**LDC Amendments: Accessory Dwelling Units**
	Explore concept to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in new and existing neighborhoods where lot sizes would permit them.
HN 2b	**Household Energy Programs**
	Provide programs to reduce household energy costs (costs associated with energy consumption, transportation, and utilities).
HN 2c	**Foreclosure Prevention Programs**
	Work with all housing agencies to ensure that Commerce City residents are aware of and have access to the foreclosure prevention and assistance programs administered by Adams County.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
HN 2d	**Senior Housing Programs**
	Pursue federal, state, and local programs to build senior housing, such as Section 202 developments (affordable housing with supportive services) and senior housing for all income levels.
HN 2e	**Senior Housing LDC Amendments**
	Revise the LDC to allow higher density senior housing in mixed-use centers. Promote a visitability ordinance (to accommodate people in wheelchairs or with frailties).
Goal HN 3	**Increased Range of Housing Prices**
HN 3a	**Education and Counseling**
	Inform renters and homeowners about options (education and counseling, foreclosure prevention strategies).
HN 3b	**Affordable Rental Options**
	Continue support for all housing agency efforts to provide quality, affordable rental properties dispersed in different parts of the community (including subsidized housing).
HN 3c	**Mixed-Income Projects**
	Require new development to include a mix of price ranges, potentially combining market-rate housing with affordable housing.
HN 3d	**Housing Authority**
	Evaluate increased responsibilities and scope for both the Housing Division and Housing Authority.
	(See Chapter 5, Economic Development, and Chapter 13, Appearance and Design, for strategies that will help encourage the construction of high-end homes in the community.)
Goal HN 4	**Neighborhood Accessibility to all Modes of Travel**
	(See Chapter 9, Transportation.)

Monitoring Housing and Neighborhoods

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress over time toward achieving the housing and neighborhood goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators, and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 7.3: Housing and Neighborhoods Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
HN 1—Housing diversity	Increase housing diversity	▪ % mix of single-family, multi-family, mobile homes, and other types. ▪ Location of single-family and multi-family homes. ▪ Number of newly permitted Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). ▪ Number of senior residential units.
HN 2—Existing housing stock	Rehabilitate/ retain existing stock	▪ Private and public funds invested in housing rehabilitation projects.
HN 3—Increase price range	Greater variety in price range (upper end)	▪ % of housing in higher price ranges.
HN 4—Neighborhood accessibility, all modes of travel	Increased pedestrian, bicycle, transit access	▪ See Chapter 9, Transportation.

8—Redevelopment and Reinvestment

Guiding Principle

Promote new centers while maintaining the integrity of existing districts by continually renewing and reinvesting in them.

Introduction

One of the city's goals is to achieve a more compact land use pattern in the future that maximizes efficiency of services and infrastructure. Redeveloping and renewing certain areas of the city, reusing and adapting older buildings that are still operational, and promoting infill are all key to achieving economic strength and continual renewal of the city's residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

Adaptive reuse, along with Brownfield reclamation (of abandoned or underused industrial and commercial facilities) also are factors in land conservation and reducing sprawl. Typically, it is more efficient to redevelop older buildings closer to urban cores than to build new construction on greenfield sites.

Influencing Factors

The following factors inform and define the redevelopment and reinvestment goals contained in this chapter.

Areas for Infill Investment and Redevelopment

While the vast majority of the city's developable lands in the Northern Range and E-470 corridor are most suited for greenfield development, the city has a significant amount of land in established areas of the city (Irondale, Historic City, along the Highway 2 corridor) available for infill and redevelopment. This chapter's recommendations are based on public input regarding neighborhood revitalization and targeted redevelopment areas.

(i) What Do these Terms Mean?

Redevelopment and Infill

Redevelopment means replacement or reconstruction of physically substandard buildings and/or infrastructure. The city (or public or quasi-public entities), can help promote revitalization by identifying and making targeted investments in infrastructure. Such public actions can often spur private investment in redevelopment.

Redevelopment is different from "greenfield development." Greenfield development occurs on vacant lands, typically as expansion at the edge of the city. It requires new systems or extensions to support it.

Reinvestment means city actions toward revitalizing existing neighborhoods and business areas through roads, sidewalks, targeted industries, and other improvements to spur private investment and continued improvements.

Infill means development of new housing, retail, or businesses on vacant parcels that are scattered throughout and completely surrounded by developed areas of the city.

Adaptive Reuse is the process of adapting older structures for purposes other than their original use.

Benefits of promoting redevelopment and infill in areas near existing infrastructure and streets include:

✓ Creating jobs and increasing revenues for the city;

✓ Maximizing efficiency of existing services and infrastructure;

✓ Strengthening neighborhoods where people want to live;

✓ Providing potential cost savings on energy, transportation, and utilities;

✓ Conserving and rehabilitating buildings;

✓ Reducing the city's footprint;

✓ Improving community image;

✓ Providing attractive, inviting centers with essential services; and

✓ Guiding appropriate infill (mixed-use) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with vehicle use.

Needs of Established Neighborhoods

The city's established neighborhoods need continual reinvestment because of their age. The city has been investing in its established neighborhoods, and should continue to do so if they are to remain viable, attractive places to live.

Directions and Goals

Infill Investment and Redevelopment

This chapter recognizes the benefits of inill and redevelopment for the city's sustainble future. Infill and redevelopment are efficent kinds of development, but need to be sensitive to the neighborhood context. This Plan identifies targeted redevelopment locations and includes best practices to guide appropriate infill.

Established Neighborhoods

The previous chapters identified neighborhoods that could benefit from infrastructure improvements and nearby redevelopment. This chapter reinforces those policies.

Redevelopment and Reinvestment goals address:

1. Increasing focus on infill and redevelopment;

2. Strengthening viability of targeted areas through redevelopment; and

3. Strengthening existing neighborhoods with renewal efforts.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

Redevelopment and infill contribute to achieving the sustainability triad. The goals in this chapter help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Support revenue-producing businesses in the city.
✓ Balance revenues with service expenditures by maintaining a strong industrial and revenue-producing base.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Create vibrant new and revitalized mixed-use centers for shopping, services, and civic activities.
✓ Strengthen neighborhoods, walkability, and their connections with open space, parks, schools, and services.
✓ Increase transportation and energy efficiency by clustering activities.
✓ Conserve land by promoting higher densities and recycling underutilized properties.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Add opportunities for jobs, housing, and social activity.
✓ Increase opportunities for healthy outdoor living and walkability.
✓ Conserve resources for future generations.
✓ Preserve a sense of place/history.
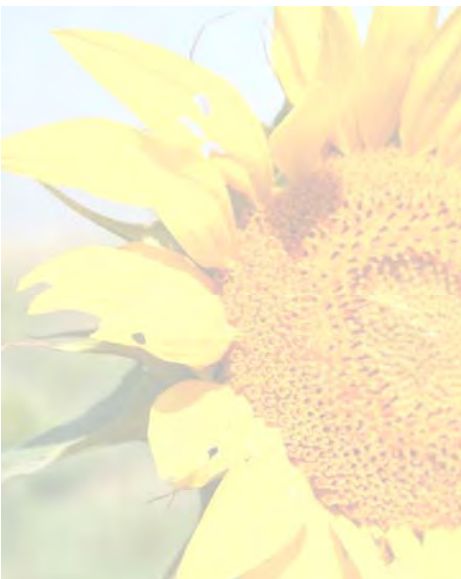
These Goals in Related Chapters

The redevelopment and reinvestment goals relate closely to other Plan elements, as indicated in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Redevelopment/Reinvestment Goals and Related Chapters

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth	Economic Dev.	Fiscal Stability	Housing/Neighbor	Redevelopment	Transportation	Safety, Wellness	Parks, Open Space	Public Facilities	Appearance	Cultural Facilities	Environmental
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Goals												
1. Increase infill development	✖		✖	✖	✖				✖	✖		✖
2. Strengthen viability, redevelopment (targeted areas)	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖		
3. Strengthen existing neighborhoods	✖			✖	✖	✖	✖			✖		✖

Targeted Redevelopment Areas

This chapter identities five areas for future redevelopment focus over the long-term, as shown in Figure 8.1
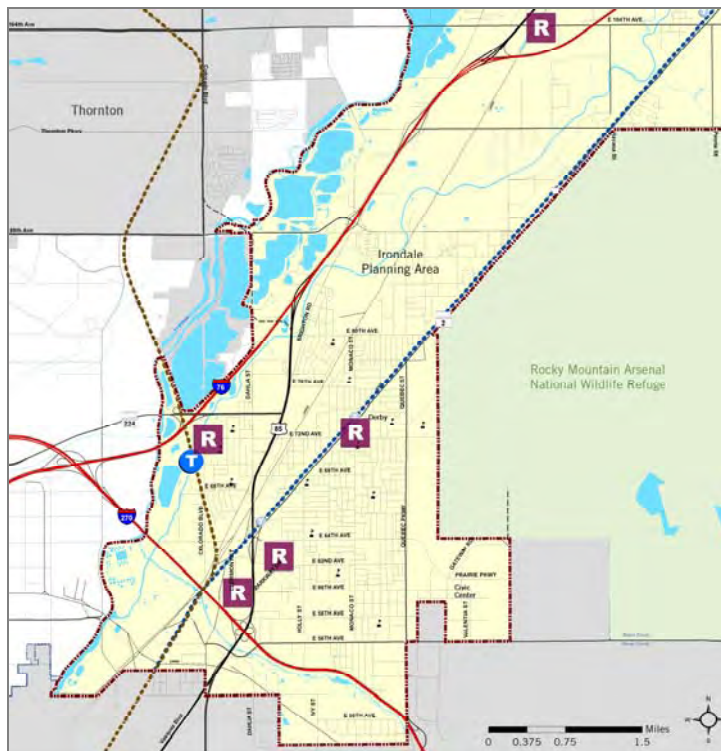
Figure 8.1: Redevelopment Areas

Redevelopment Areas

This Plan identifies five redevelopment locations and opportunities, from south to north (not in order of importance):

1. **Clermont**
    (between I-270 and US 85 near 60th Avenue),

2. **Wembley**
    (along 64th Avenue near Highway 2),

3. **FasTracks Station site**
    (near 68th or 72nd Avenues at Colorado Boulevard,

4. **Derby**
    (near Highway 2 and 72nd Avenue), and

5. **104th Avenue**
    (between Brighton Road and I-76).

⭐ Best Practices

Infill and Redevelopment

All new projects should follow these guidelines:

✓ Provide quality buildings with characteristics that exceed the level of quality and detail of nearby structures.

✓ Make the scale and size of buildings generally consistent with those found on adjacent properties—unless adjacent properties also will redevelop (i.e., a new building should provide step-backs).

✓ Preserve healthy, mature trees and landscaping to the extent possible.

Additionally, for multi-family and commercial projects:

✓ Maintain or create a connected street and sidewalk network.

✓ Provide mature new landscaping to help visually integrate with older development.

✓ Incorporate parks, trails, and open space.

✓ Incorporate public gathering spaces.

Redevelopment/Reinvestment Goals and Policies

Goal RR 1—Increase focus on infill development

The city recognizes the benefits of infill to balance and retain the character of stable neighborhoods with increasing economic development opportunities.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

RR 1.1—Historic City and Irondale Infill

The city will promote high-quality infill through incentives and infrastructure improvements on vacant properties in the Historic City and Irondale.

RR 1.2—Northern Range Infill Development Promoted

The city will promote high-quality infill in the Northern Range through tiered phasing of growth.

👓 *See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth, goals and policies.*

Goal RR 2—Focus on redevelopment to strengthen viability and mixed-use in targeted areas

Commerce City will strategically contribute to redeveloping targeted areas to accommodate current and future employment and residential needs, and reduce conflicts between residential and industrial uses.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

RR 2.1—Historic City Industry Retained

Allow light industry, warehousing, flex, office, and community-serving retail; support but do not expand residential uses in existing industrial areas including:

- Historic City (Southern Industrial Focus Area, Tiffany, areas of Adams City, areas of Fairfax/Dupont, and Clermont).
- Irondale (Irondale Focus Area, with few exceptions, Industrial Enclave, and South Platte Valley).

👓 *See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth, goals and policies.*

RR 2.2—Historic City Derby Revitalization

Derby is one of the original communities. Today, it serves as a mixed-use neighborhood center for civic and commercial activity. Some redevelopment planning and funding is underway for the area,

as guided by the Derby *Master Plan*. The city will continue efforts to revitalize Derby and encourage additional and continued communication and marketing of the Vision.

RR 2.3—Historic City FasTracks Station Site Redevelopment

The future FasTrack station site is a priority Transit-Oriented Development (T.O.D.), mixed-use redevelopment area. The city will prepare a plan and encourage an appropriate mix of transit-oriented uses, density, and design to support transit and revitalization in the station area. The mix should consist of vibrant commercial development near the public station area, with higher-density housing radiating out to lower-density housing at the edge of the development near existing neighborhoods.

Transit Oriented Development tends to be higher density with a mix of uses, walkable, and provides height transitions from highest buildings to single-family neighborhoods.

RR 2.4—Wembley Site and East 64th Avenue

Establish Wembley as a future redevelopment site. Future development should include a mix of commercial and residential uses that are well-integrated and that mesh with the areas surrounding the site. A sub-area plan may be necessary to explore feasibility of future activities (e.g., senior housing, commercial uses), as well as partners and funding strategies for the area.

RR 2.5—Clermont/East 60th Avenue/Vasquez Boulevard

Establish Clermont as a future redevelopment site for commercial and employment uses. The Clermont redevelopment site may need a sub-area plan to address transportation connections, infrastructure improvement needs, and to improve the overall image of the areas for viable business.

RR 2.6—East 104th Avenue Site in Irondale Infill/ Redevelopment

Establish the East 104th Avenue (I-76 to Brighton Road) site as a longer-term future infill site for commercial and employment uses. As an initial step, the city should study road and bridge improvements, and may want to consider incentivizing infill in the area, which could potentially provide a central destination for shopping, services, and jobs that are beneficial to both northern and southern Commerce City.

★ Best Practices

Transit-Oriented Development (T.O.D.):

As the city's FasTracks area is planned and built, these principles should apply:

- ✓ Develop as an inviting and vibrant, high-density, mixed-use area.
- ✓ Be designed for multiple modes of transportation, with an emphasis on pedestrians.
- ✓ Have a public center focused around the transit station.
- ✓ Have a core of high-density uses: commercial, office, and possibly housing—with the lowest densities radiating out at the edge.
- ✓ Incorporate thoughtful, creative design, and architectural quality and inviting public spaces.
- ✓ Follow other infill and redevelopment guidelines.

Goal RR 3—Strengthen existing neighborhoods through reinvestment and assistance with renewal efforts

The city will reinvest in aging neighborhood infrastructure (e.g., streets, sidewalks, lighting, energy efficiency, and other public works) to spur private investment. Existing neighborhoods have desirable central locations in the Denver-metro area near many regional assets and jobs. Incentives and enhanced code enforcement can help improve the neighborhoods' competitive edge.

Citywide Policies:

RR 3.1—Property Maintenance

Increase and enforce current property maintenance requirements to improve safety, appearance, and function of neighborhoods.

See Chapters 4, Land Use and Growth: Strategic Planning Areas, and 7, Housing and Neighborhoods.

RR 3.2—Resource Efficiency of Homes and Businesses

Explore incentives and programs to increase energy and water efficiency of homes and businesses.

RR 3.3—Appropriate Scale of Residential Redevelopment

Ensure that residential redevelopment in neighborhoods occurs at a scale that is appropriate for established, stable neighborhoods.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

RR 3.4—Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Improvements

Continue to provide traffic calming and sidewalk improvements, and reduce residential/industrial conflicts in the Historic City neighborhoods with an emphasis on the Derby area, along East 72nd Avenue; and also along East 60th Avenue, east of Highway 2, where justified.

RR 3.5—Historic City Neighborhood Buffers and Traffic Calming

Provide direct connecting streets and traffic diversions between industrial areas to route heavy truck traffic around and away from residential neighborhoods. Distinguish clear locations for residential and industrial areas on the Future Land Use Plan. Use traffic calming measures to reduce noise and traffic in Historic City neighborhoods, such as along East 56th Avenue.

Traffic calming at East 60th Avenue and Olive Street. (Photo: FHU)

Redevelopment/Reinvestment Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the redevelopment and reinvestment goals. Table 8.2, below, coincides with the three goals of this chapter. It identifies specific actions to achieve the goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 8.2: Redevelopment and Reinvestment Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal RR 1	**Increase Infill Development**
RR 1a	**Infill Incentives and Standards**
	Examine policy that would provide incentives for beneficial city infill projects, because they are typically more expensive than greenfield projects. (See Fiscal Stability strategies and RR 3b, below.)
RR 1b	**Façade Program**
	Implement a Derby enhancement program (catalyst funds) to improve existing businesses.
Goal RR 2	**Targeted Redevelopment to Strengthen Viability, Mixed-Use**
RR 2a	**Urban Renewal Area (URA) Tools**
	Expand application of Urban Renewal Areas (URAs) to achieve redevelopment goals, including existing URAs (Prairie Gateway, Derby, and US 85), and potential new URAs (e.g., FasTracks area). Explore creative funding applications for redevelopment, such as Tax Increment Financing, expanding on funding tools permitted through URAs. Consider establishing a separate URA board to oversee/develop additional policies, guidelines, and plans for each area.
RR 2b	**Quasi-Public Urban Renewal Entity**
	Explore feasibility of a non-profit, quasi-public entity to oversee infill and redevelopment in neighborhoods that could purchase and rehabilitate structures, or consolidate and sell properties.
RR 2c	**FasTracks Station Sub-Area Plan/Zoning Amendments**
	Develop FasTracks station sub-area plan. Modify zoning to achieve an appropriate mix of uses (especially for the T.O.D. site), using a blend of regulations, guidelines, and incentives.
RR 2d	**Minimum Density**
	Modify the Land Development Code (LDC), to establish a minimum-density range (at least 8 units/acre, the minimum threshold necessary to support transit), along corridors and at transit station locations.
RR 2e	**LDC Assessment/Amendment**
	Assess effectiveness of parking and other standards for this Plan's goals. Amend as necessary.
RR 2f	**Monitor Redevelopment Sites**
	Monitor economic strength of redevelopment sites. Develop plans for public improvements needed to support each area. Prioritize investment (streets, sidewalks, lighting, signage, and infrastructure) for priority redevelopment sites.
RR 2g	**Code Enforcement**
	Explore how to make code enforcement more proactive to enforce property maintenance requirements and improve image.
Goal RR 3	**Strengthen Existing Neighborhoods**
RR 3a	**Funding and Grants for Redevelopment/Brownfields**
	Explore grants, low-interest loans, and redevelopment corporations to address redevelopment goals and to reduce industrial/residential conflicts.
RR 3b	**Infill Standards**
	Review infill standards to ensure contextually-sensitive infill development in residential focus areas.
	(See Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods)

Monitoring Redevelopment/Reinvestment

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring long-term progress toward achieving the goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 8.3: Redevelopment and Reinvestment Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
RR 1—Infill	Increase percent of infill projects	▪ Number of building permits in Historic City and Irondale planning areas. ▪ Valuations on reinvestment projects.
RR 2—Mixed-use, targeted areas	Redevelopment projects – focus in targeted areas	▪ Number of new businesses in redevelopment locations. ▪ Number of new building permits for redevelopment sites. ▪ Average density of development (new) ▪ Density along arterials. ▪ Density of new residential subdivisions.
RR 3—Existing neighborhoods	Strengthen neighborhoods	▪ Number of new homes or renovated homes in Historic City neighborhoods. (See Chapter 7.) ▪ Number of code violations in specific neighborhoods. ▪ Money spent on public infrastructure improvements. ▪ Monitor building permits for key neighborhoods. ▪ Number of new neighborhood (private and public) parks.

9—Transportation

Guiding Principle

Ensure a quality community by providing efficient and effective modes of transportation that integrate and connect neighborhoods, the community, and the region.

Introduction

Commerce City has grown around a network of major travel routes including freeways and the E-470 toll-way, several state highways, local streets, and railroads. Other important elements of the transportation system serving the city include transit service provided by the Regional Transportation District (RTD); a bicycle and pedestrian network that currently features 18 miles of regional trails, as well as sidewalks; and the nearby Denver International Airport. The *Community Profile* contained in the Appendix of this Plan describes the entire transportation network and where current challenges exist.

The information in this chapter is supplemented by a more extensive Transportation Plan, which accompanies this Plan. The goals, policies, and strategies in this chapter are more general than the Transportation Plan.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the transportation goals contained in this chapter:

Transportation Barriers

Commerce City's transportation network includes a number of freeways and main line railroad tracks (i.e., chief route between destinations versus spur lines) that are positive assets to the community. The community also has barriers to free movement, including:

- The highways and rail lines, since crossings and interchanges are generally limited to major highways.

What Do these Terms Mean?

Multi-Modal Transportation

A multi-modal transportation system means a system that is designed with the availability of more than one mode of transportation, and operated to enable safe access for all users (bikes, pedestrians, transit riders, vehicles) of all ages and abilities.

A multi-modal transportation system is designed for all types of travel.

- The South Platte River and Sand Creek that create natural barriers, since expensive bridges must be provided for all crossings.
- Major public land holdings that cannot be traversed: DIA, Barr Lake, and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

The geography of Commerce City also results in the Irondale area being a relatively narrow connection between the Historic City and the Northern Range. DIA further restricts movement east of the city; East 120th Avenue is the only route in Commerce City that has future continuity east of the airport.

Local Way-Finding and Safety

Because of the numerous transportation barriers identified above, residents and visitors often have a difficult time navigating throughout the community. There currently exist few, if any, way-finding signs to help travelers within the city.

Multiple Transportation Entities

Numerous regional transportation entities form the transportation framework within Commerce City and throughout the Denver-metro area (i.e., including Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), Regional Transportation District (RTD), Denver International Airport (DIA), E-470 Public Highway Authority, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and the railroads). Coordination among these entities is critical to providing sufficient infrastructure for current needs and future growth, as well as improving the image of road corridors and overall safety.

Incomplete Multi-modal System

The lack of a complete multi-modal travel network is a challenge for a city with a mature core and newly-developing areas, because funding and timing of necessary improvements to complete portions of the system to connect areas of the city is uncertain.

Directions and Goals

Based on the Influencing Factors above, the transportation goals contained below are based on the following considerations:

Land use/Transportation Coordination

Other chapters of this Plan promote land use patterns that support a variety of transportation alternatives and mobility. Transportation-land use interdependency is often studied, and it is well understood that plans and development of each system have great implications on the other. For example, mixed-use areas with jobs and housing, adequate densities, and environments that are

Navigating through established parts of Commerce City can be difficult because of the barriers and lack of way-finding signs.

Multiple Modes, Walkability, and Sustainability

✓ Walkability increases property values and health by promoting physical exercise.

✓ Transit and walkability attract businesses and visitors and increase access to services.

✓ A well designed system and walkable place can increase safety by providing "eyes on the street," while improving the appeal and image of the area.

inviting and safe for pedestrians will likely support transit use and pedestrian activity.

Prioritizing Transportation Improvements

The community has indicated that it supports prioritizing transportation-related investments for streets with traffic congestion issues. Traffic safety, calming, pedestrian improvements, and walkability also are important community priorities.

Bus transit is an important part of a complete multi-modal transportation system.

Plan for a Complete Multi-modal Transportation System

Overall, a robust multi-modal transportation system should consist of interconnected:

- ✓ Streets that are designed to address the needs of all modes of travel;
- ✓ Bicycle system (on- and off-street);
- ✓ Pedestrian system (trails, sidewalks, and crossings); and
- ✓ Transit, including future FasTracks, enhancements to the RTD bus route system, shuttles for the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, or other forms of public transportation.

Commerce City is planning for all future modes of travel, including future rail service up Highway 2 and along E-470; bus transit; and trail connections. Trails serve as recreation corridors, but they also provide alternative travel routes for some commuters.

This chapter's goals address:

1. Improving the multi-modal system;
2. Connecting destinations;
3. Improving transit service;
4. Improving local bicycle and pedestrian connections and safety;
5. Expanding a connected system of trails; and
6. Coordinating regionally.

How Does Transportation Relate to Sustainability?

Transportation is one of the major infrastructure elements of a community that greatly affects its economy, environment, health, and well-being.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

How this element contributes to sustainability…

An effective transportation system contributes to sustainability. The goals in this chapter help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:
- ✓ Provide economic stimulus that flow through the local economy from dollars invested in infrastructure.
- ✓ Create economic benefits for households, businesses, and governments—as much as $6 for every $1 invested in improving transit. (American Public Transportation Association, 2009.)
- ✓ Attract and concentrate new development and promote increased economic activity—bolstering fiscal health and a thriving economy.

A Quality Environmental Context:
- ✓ Protect environmental quality (clean environment) by reducing dependency on automobile travel.
- ✓ Reduce land consumption by roads, affecting water quality.
- ✓ Positively affect air quality through vehicle use and miles traveled.

A Resilient Community:
- ✓ Provide personal mobility and choice, while providing access to jobs and neighborhoods.
- ✓ Allow people to live in walkable communities with associated health and social benefits.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The Transportation goals relate to other elements in this Plan, as noted in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Transportation Goals and Related Chapters

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth	Economic Dev.	Fiscal Stability	Housing/Neighbor	Redevelopment	Transportation	Safety, Wellness	Parks, Open Space	Public Facilities	Appearance	Cultural Facilities	Environmental
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Goals												
1. Improve multi-modal system	✖			✖	✖	✖	✖					✖
2. Street connections and improvements	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖						
3. Improve bicycle and pedestrian	✖			✖		✖	✖	✖		✖		✖
4. Improve transit service	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖					✖
5. Expand connected multi-use trails		✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖
6. Coordinate regionally	✖					✖		✖				

Transportation Plan Maps

The Transportation Plan addresses roadway classification and connections, bicycle/pedestrian needs, and the transit system. This section includes a brief description of each transportation mode with the summary maps following.

Roadway Classification Map

Figure 9.1 illustrates the roadway classifications. The map illustrates how new and existing roads can be connected in a hierarchal grid pattern that serves the existing and planned land uses. The classification of roads throughout the city has been modified and enhanced to meet the multi-modal transportation goals identified in this Plan.

In the past, very few streets were classified in the Historic City. This plan designates select existing streets in the Historic City as Residential Collectors, a new designation. Residential Collectors denote streets which have somewhat higher volumes, often have bus routes and provide more continuity. No changes to the existing street cross section or disturbance to adjacent properties are anticipated.

A more formalized system of collector streets has been identified in the Northern Range and E-470 Influence planning areas. These roads connect the local street network to the arterials streets that are at mile increments. A connected collector network can relieve vehicular demand on the arterial system and also provide more comfortable, convenient and efficient routes for transit routes, walking, and biking. An arterial network of transportation facilities has also been defined north of DIA. In addition, the plan calls for interchanges and/or grade-separated railroad crossings at five locations along the UPRR between East 120th and East 88th Avenues. Several long-term (after 2035) connections (such as 96th Avenue across the South Platte River, Highway 85/Colorado Boulevard, East 56th Avenue from Brighton Boulevard to York Street, and Holly Street from East 52nd Avenue to East 56th Avenue) are included to overcome natural or freeway barriers.

104th Avenue is an arterial street.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Map

Figure 9.2 illustrates the bicycle and pedestrian plan. The goal of this plan is to increase the number of people that have access to bike and pedestrian facilities and who chose to use them. This is consistent with Commerce City's goals to encourage the use of alternate travel modes and sustainability. The recommended system is an interconnected network of regional trails, multiuse paths and on-street bike routes. The system connects residents and employees to commercial centers, activity centers, schools and recreation areas such as Barr Lake and Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. The Historic City is served by a network

The Bicycle/Pedestrian map illustrates future connections and improvements.

The Transit map addresses future bus and rail transit.

of on-street bike lanes that enable travel through the area and provide connections to the planned FasTracks rail station near Colorado Boulevard. Virtually all arterial and collector streets in the Northern Range area accommodate on-street bike lanes or multi-use paths. The Historic City and the Northern Range are connected by a trail generally paralleling Highway 2. Separated bike facilities for recreational use are provided along canals and creeks throughout the area.

Transit and Right-of-Way Preservation Map

Figure 9.3 illustrates the future transit routes in Commerce City. There are currently eight routes that serve the city. They are primarily focused in the Historic City and provide service throughout the metro area. The suggested future transit routes include modifications to the existing routes to connect users to the two planned FasTracks rail lines in the vicinity of Commerce City; the North Metro Corridor and the East Corridor. RTD's North Metro commuter rail corridor will run north and south between East 162nd Avenue and downtown Denver. It will include a commuter rail station in Commerce City near East 72nd Avenue and Colorado Boulevard. The East Corridor rail line will connect DIA to downtown Denver. The future transit plan includes six new bus transit routes. These routes are primarily designed to connect the Northern Range and E-470 Corridor residents and employees efficiently to the Historic City and to stations along the North Metro and East Corridor planned rail lines. The goal of this Plan is to increase the number of people that have access to transit and chose to use transit. This enhanced service will require close coordination with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) which provides these services for the Denver-metro area.

The transit plans also include long-range (after 2035) consideration of E-470 as a future rail corridor and the Northeastern Area Transit Evaluation (NATE). During its development and construction the E-470 alignment included right of way for a potential rail corridor. NATE is a right of way preservation project between Highway 2 and US 85 from Commerce City to Brighton. This right-of-way preservation is part of the FasTracks plan.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATION PLAN

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION
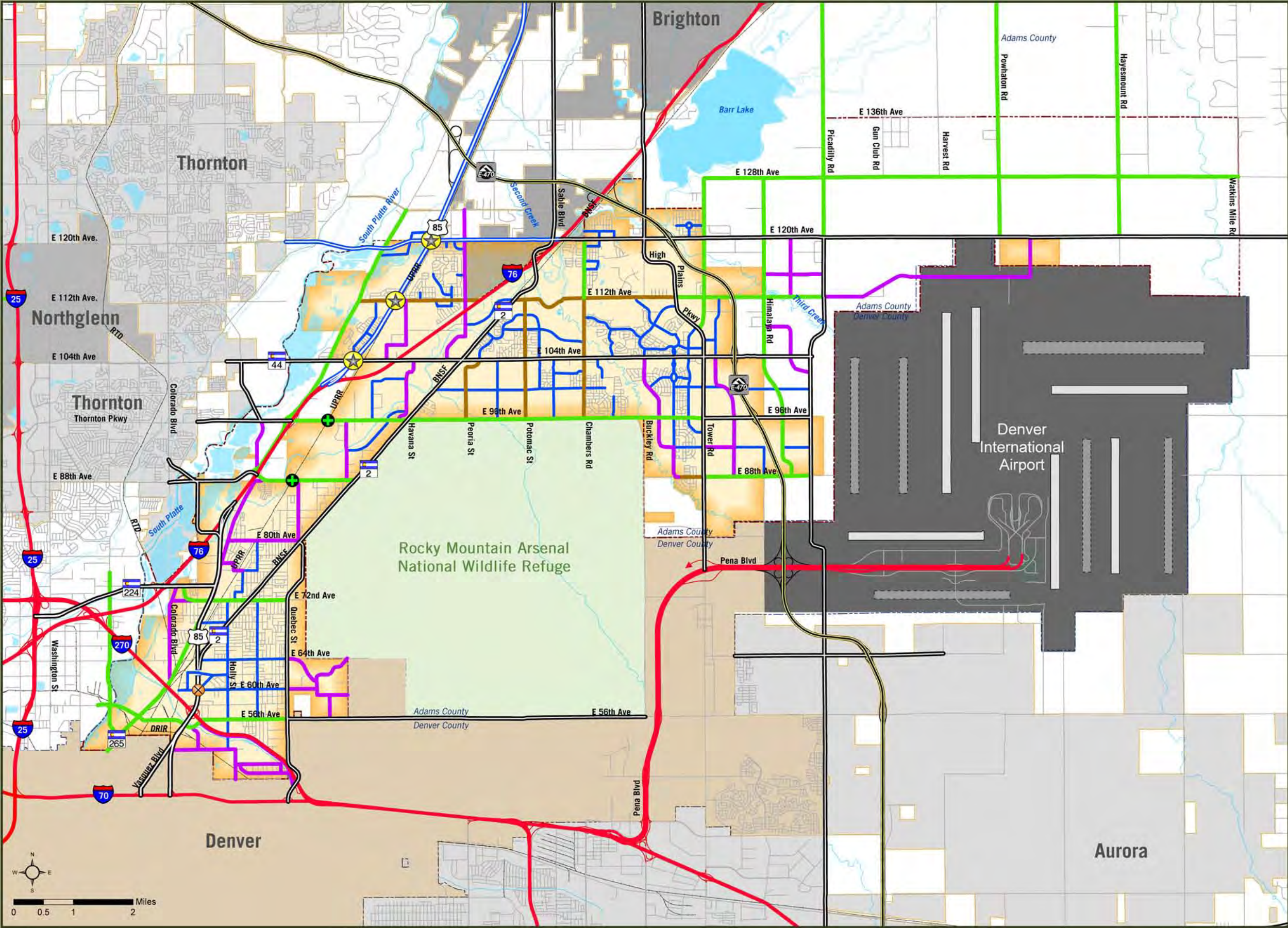
Legend
Roadway Classification

- Freeway
- Tollway
- Major Regional Arterial
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Multimodal Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor/Residential Collector
- Future Interchange & Railroad Grade Separation
- Future Railroad Grade Separation
- New Interchange
- Local
- Railroad
- Streams
- Lakes
- DIA Existing Runways
- DIA Future Runways
- Current Commerce City Limits
- County Boundary
- IGA Growth Boundary

Figure 9.1

03.31.10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN TRAIL PLAN

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION
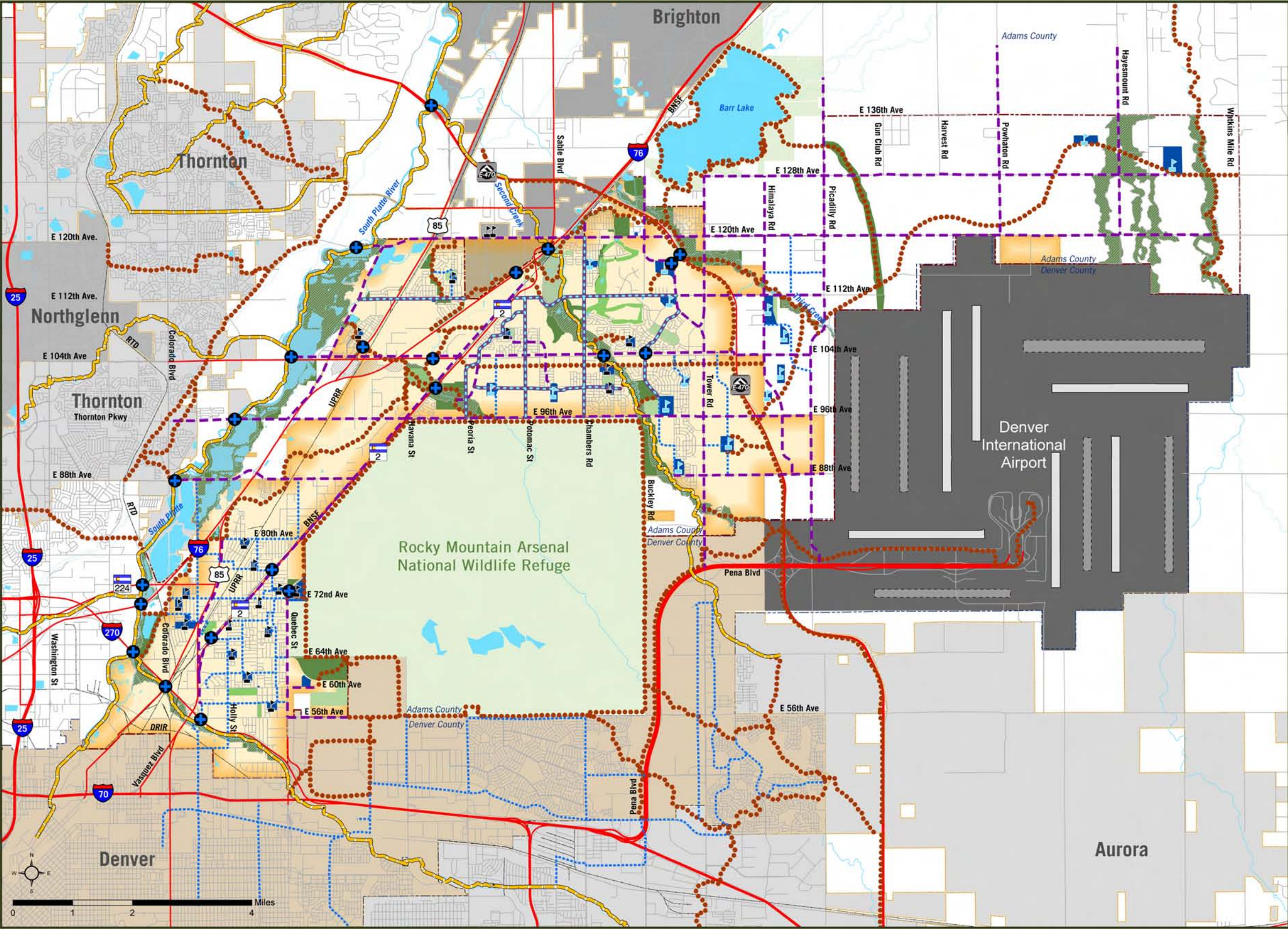
Legend

Trails

- ••••• Trails & Separated Bike Lanes
- – – – Multi-Use Paths
- – – – On-Street Bike Routes
- – – – Combined Multi-Use & On-Street Bike Routes
- ——— Regional Trails
- – – – Future Greenway
- ——— State Highways
- ——— Arterial Roads
- ——— Local Roads
- ⊕ Underpasses
- ┼┼┼ Railroad
- ——— Streams
- Lakes
- ▸ Existing Schools
- ▸ Future Schools
- Schools & Public Land
- Parks
- Open Space / Recreation
- Golf Course & City Park
- State Park & National Refuge
- 100 Year Floodplain
- DIA Existing Runways
- DIA Future Runways
- Current Commerce City Limits
- County Boundary
- IGA Growth Boundary

Brighton

Adams County

Thornton

Northglenn

Thornton
Thornton Pkwy

Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge

Denver
International
Airport

Denver

Aurora

Barr Lake

South Platte River

Second Creek

E 136th Ave
E 128th Ave
E 120th Ave
E 112th Ave
E 104th Ave
E 96th Ave
E 88th Ave
E 80th Ave
E 72nd Ave
E 64th Ave
E 60th Ave
E 56th Ave

E 120th Ave.
E 112th Ave.
E 104th Ave
E 88th Ave

Gun Club Rd
Harvest Rd
Powhaton Rd
Hayesmount Rd
Watkins Mile Rd
Himalaya Rd
Picadilly Rd

Havana St
Peoria St
Potomac St
Chambers Rd
Tower Rd
Buckley Rd

Pena Blvd

Colorado Blvd
Washington St
Holly St
Quebec St
Vasquez Blvd
Sable Blvd

RTD
UPRR
BNSF
DRIR

Adams County
Denver County

Figure 9.2

03.31.10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

Miles
0   1   2   4

Future Transit Routes & ROW Preservation

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION
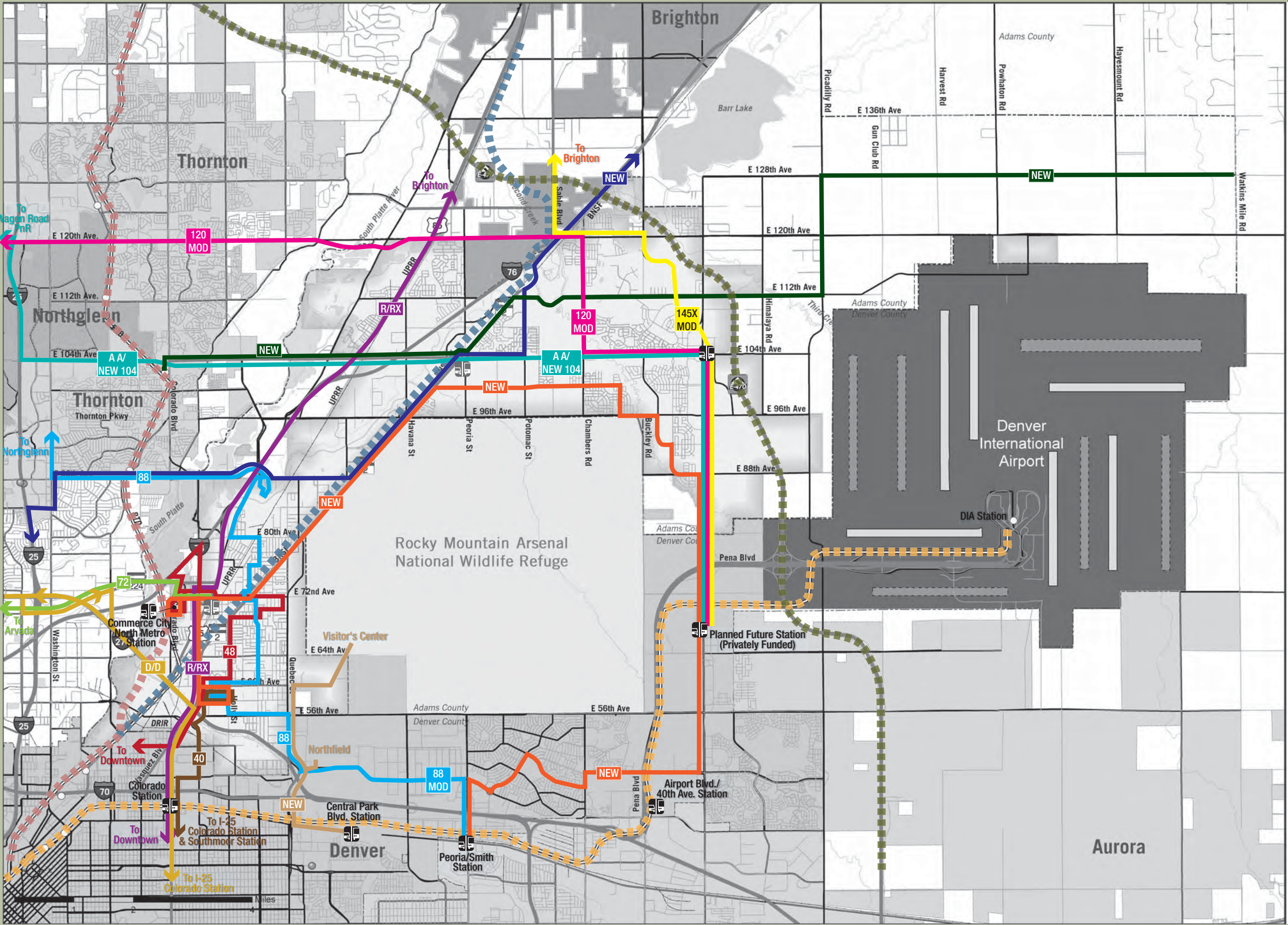
Legend

X X	Existing Bus Route
XXX MOD	Existing Bus Route Modified
NEW	New Bus Route
	Existing park-n-Ride
	New park-n-Ride
○ ▪▪▪▪	FasTracks East Corridor and Stations
○ ▪▪▪▪	FasTracks North Metro Line and Stations
▪▪▪▪	FasTracks Northeastern Area Transit Evaluation Rail Preservation (locally agreed upon alignment)
▪▪▪▪	E-470 Rail Preservation

Brighton

Adams County

Barr Lake

Thornton

Northglenn

Thornton
Thornton Pkwy

To Wagon Road PnR

To Brighton

To Brighton

To Brighton

NEW

120 MOD

120 MOD

145X MOD

A A/ NEW 104

A A/ NEW 104

NEW

R/RX

88

72 224

To Arvada

To Northglenn

Commerce City North Metro Station

D/D

R/RX

48

40

DRIR

To Downtown

Colorado Station

To Downtown

To I-25 Colorado Station & Southmoor Station

NEW

Central Park Blvd. Station

To I-25 Colorado Station

Denver

Visitor's Center

Northfield

88

88 MOD

Peoria/Smith Station

NEW

Airport Blvd./ 40th Ave. Station

Planned Future Station (Privately Funded)

Pena Blvd

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Denver International Airport

DIA Station

Aurora

E 136th Ave

E 128th Ave

E 120th Ave

E 112th Ave

E 104th Ave

E 96th Ave

E 88th Ave

E 56th Ave

Adams County
Denver County

Picadilly Rd

Gun Club Rd

Harvest Rd

Powhaton Rd

Hayesmount Rd

Watkins Mile Rd

Havana St

Peoria St

Potomac St

Chambers Rd

Buckley Rd

Himalaya Rd

Third Creek

Colorado Blvd

Washington St

E 120th Ave

E 112th Ave

E 104th Ave

E 80th Ave

E 72nd Ave

E 64th Ave

E 56th Ave

South Platte River

UPRR

I-76

I-25

I-70

E-470

Pena Blvd

Figure 9.3

3.31.10

CLARION, BBC, FHU

Transportation Goals and Policies

Goal T 1—Improve the balanced, comprehensive transportation system to maximize mobility

The city will strive to provide access to all modes of travel and will develop priorities for providing residents and businesses with the most efficient multi-modal transportation network possible.

Citywide Policies:

T 1.1—Multiple-Mode Transportation System

Provide residents and employees with transportation options to increase the share of trips using alternative travel modes.

T 1.2—Coordinated Land Use/Transportation Planning

Future land use patterns will consist of a balance mix of uses with higher density in centers and along corridors, which also will increase potential for transit use, bicycling, and walkability. Such a pattern will lower vehicle miles traveled, reduce congestion on the road network, and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

T 1.3—Interconnected Transportation Modes

Streets, pedestrian paths, and bike paths will contribute to a system of connected routes between origins and destinations that facilitate transfer from one transportation mode to another (e.g., park-n-Ride, and bicycle facilities near transit).

Goal T 2—Connect origins/destinations, relieve traffic congestion, and improve safety on streets

Additional streets, sidewalks, and trails to serve as an effective grid network will connect origins and destinations in all directions, provide safe and accessible access for multiple modes, clearly identify truck routes, and focus on reducing traffic congestion.

Citywide Policies:

T 2.1—Connected Street Network

Identify and reserve rights-of-way for connected streets in future development areas, to balance resident and non-resident use of the street system. The Transportation Plan will identify street connections and address barriers (e.g., East 96th Avenue across the South Platte River, Colorado Boulevard/Highway 85, and Yosemite Street at East 88th/96th Avenues).

★ Best Practices

Multi-Modal Street Design

Streets should be designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age or abilities. Streets may include:

- ✓ Sidewalks,
- ✓ Bike lanes (or wide, paved shoulders),
- ✓ Safe bus stops,
- ✓ Crosswalks with medians and signals for pedestrians and cars (especially near schools, bus stops, and in commercial areas),
- ✓ Curb extensions and other features to slow traffic; and
- ✓ Truck travel in industrial areas.

A multi-modal transportation policy means that planners and engineers design and operate a transportation system for all users—including, where appropriate, vehicles, bicyclists, public transportation and riders, and pedestrians.

T 2.2—Modified Grid Street Network

The city will plan for a modified, connected grid street network and will not promote cul-de-sacs due to their restrictions on connectivity.

T 2.3—Relieve Traffic and Improve Safety

The city will use the Transportation Plan to identify solutions to reduce traffic congestion and make improvements to improve traffic flow and safety, including shifting regional traffic away from local roads. The Transportation Plan will address solutions such as using a grid system, widening streets, constructing missing segments, grade-separated crossings for railroads, intersection improvements, traffic signal timing, grade separation, mode shift, and trip reduction through increased land use mix. Adequate systems will be provided for the appropriate use (i.e., regional traffic on arterial roadways).

T 2.4—Multi-Modal Transportation Corridors

In general, future development and street improvements will extend and connect a transportation system that provides safe access for vehicles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. Streets should be attractive and protect visual character. However, streets in industrial areas will not necessarily be fully multi-modal, if their primary purpose is industrial truck traffic, where it is better to separate trucks from bikes and pedestrians.

T 2.5—Traffic Calming Measures

Provide traffic calming measures in business areas and neighborhoods to reduce vehicle speeds on streets with high potential for pedestrian and bicycle activity, when justified.

T 2.6—Designated Truck Routes

The Transportation Plan will identify problem locations in the collector and local street systems where truck traffic is impacting neighborhoods, and to identify locations for designated truck routes and other solutions to improve safety.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

T 2.7—Irondale and Historic City Railroad Crossings

To ensure safety and promote an increased quality of life, the city will expand and continue quiet zones at railroad crossings.
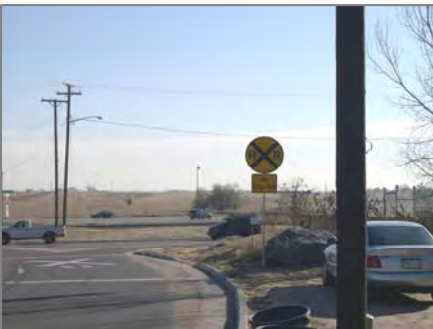
Commerce City has been working on implementing quiet zones (e.g., no train horns) at railroad crossings.

Goal T 3—Improve local bicycle and pedestrian connections and safety

The city will establish and improve bicycle and pedestrian connections.

Citywide Policies:

T 3.1—Bicycle, Pedestrian Facility Improvements and Maintenance

Develop a list and prioritize public and private bicycle and pedestrian improvements to increase safety, comfort, and connectedness. Improvements include curb and gutter repairs and additions, railroads and busy street crossings, and provision of dedicated walking paths. The city will strive to clear bike and pedestrian facilities of debris, gravel, sand, and snow.

T 3.2—Land Uses Supportive of Bicycling and Walking

Plan for a mix of land uses and street design in neighborhoods that generally support bicycling and walking.

Goal T 4—Improve transit service

Commerce City will work with partners to develop a long-term transit strategy to address the future FasTracks rail, identify better transit service and park-n-Ride locations, and ensure that future development is coordinated with transit.

Citywide Policies:

T 4.1—Long-term FasTracks Strategy

Work with partners, including RTD, to ensure that a FasTracks station is built to serve Commerce City, and that the station area development is well-integrated.

T 4.2—Transit Funding

Continue to plan for and explore local funding for RTD bus routes and better transit service.

T 4.3—Bus Stop Improvements

Improve bus stops throughout the city in areas that receive high bus transit use (e.g., shelters, seating, and trash collection).

T 4.4—Transit Planning

Work with RTD to provide transit service throughout Commerce City in both the Historic City and the Northern Range as development occurs.

Pedestrian Improvements

Some initial areas identified for pedestrian improvements include:

- ✓ 72ⁿᵈ Avenue between Highway 2 and Quebec Street,

- ✓ At major intersections around schools, recreation center(s), and other public facilities with high potential for pedestrian and bicycle activity.

Cross-walks, landscaping, and curbs are some of the measures that help slow traffic and increase safety for pedestrians.

Transit Should be Designed to:

- ✓ Create livable communities,

- ✓ Contribute toward community sustainability,

- ✓ Provide for personal mobility and give residents and employees an alternative to "Single-Occupancy Vehicles,"

- ✓ Enhance and support reinvestment and redevelopment, and

- ✓ Encourage shifting away from vehicular use (to transit and other forms of travel) and trip reduction.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

T 4.4—Northeast Area Transit Extension (NATE), Highway 2

Plan for the NATE Highway 2 transit corridor with potential stations at Wembley, Derby, and East 104th Avenue.
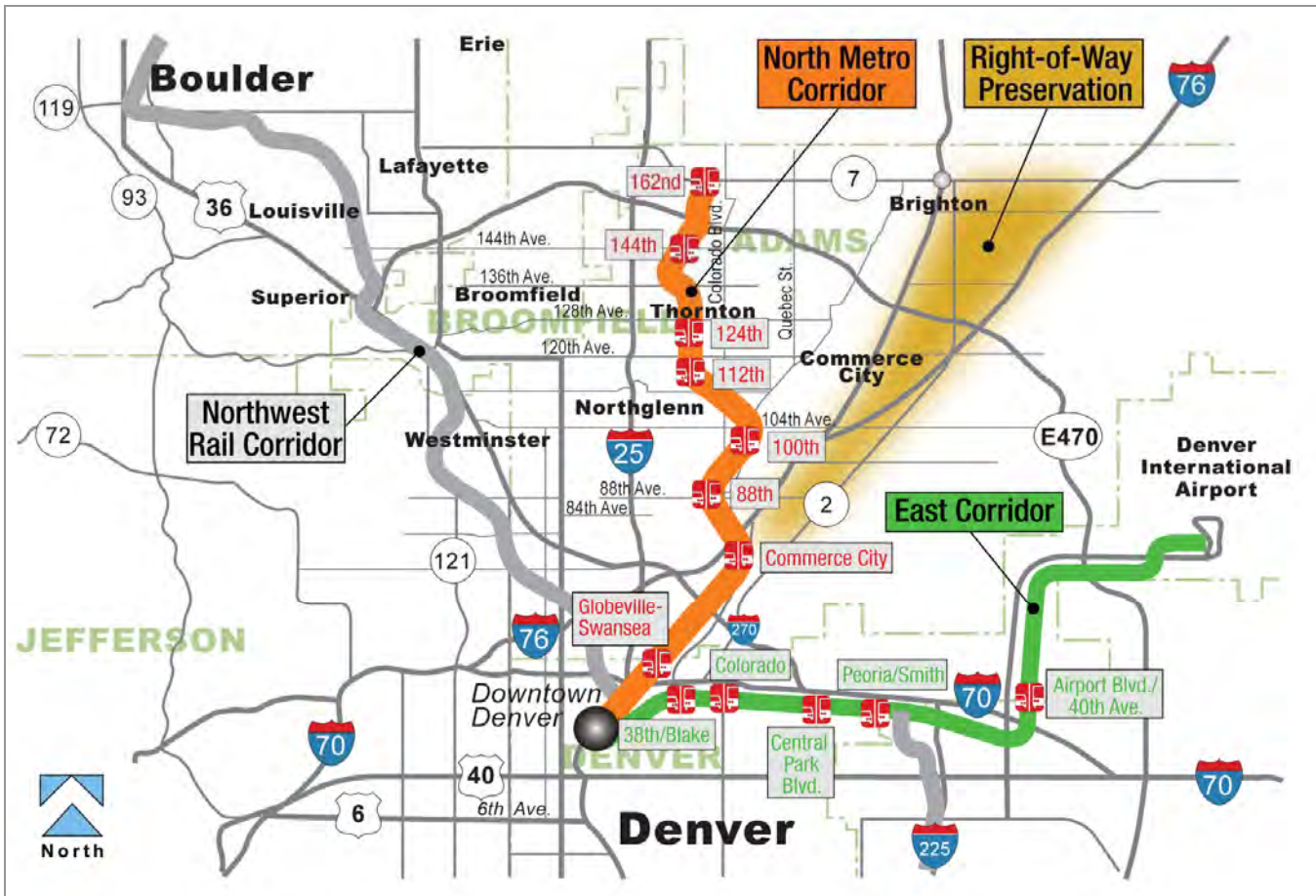
North Metro Corridor and Right-of-way Preservation

Improved RTD service in Northern Range area is an aim of this Plan. (Photo: FHU)

T 4.5—Northern Range Park-n-Ride Bus Routes

Explore strategic locations for park-n-Ride and transit stations. Identify local funding to enhance RTD service for Northern Range area and along E-470.

T 4.6—E-470 Future Transit Corridor

Continue to plan for future rail along E-470 (from DIA to Adams County Government Center), including a potential stop at East 104th Avenue. Work with DRCOG and the E-470 Authority on this corridor.

Goal T 5—Expand a connected system of multi-use trails

The city will expand the existing multi-use trail network and provide linkages. The system will enable regular physical activity and recreation, and provide an opportunity for alternative transportation modes (e.g., bicycling and walking).

Citywide Policies:

T 5.1—Implement Trails Plans

This Plan supports the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services and Facilities*, which addresses the trails and multi-use path network. Some future trails may allow equestrian uses. Its priorities address connectivity, completing loops, and expanding the current trails, including:

- Trails connecting the Northern Range area to the Historic City and to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge,
- Trails connecting to the South Platte River trailheads, and
- Multi-use trails connecting parks and schools with neighborhoods.

T 5.2—Trails in New Growth Areas

New development will provide trails to further connect the system and link destinations in the Northern Range, the E-470 area, and DIA North.

See Chapter 11, Parks, Open Space, and Recreation.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

T 5.3—Historic City Bike Routes and Trails

Provide further bike and pedestrian connections to link destinations in the Historic City, including the following:

- East/west bicycle connections in Historic City (possibly as part of the bicycle/pedestrian circulation system through existing parks, and school properties),
- Along the South Platte River and other trail networks connected to the South Platte River, and
- Enhancements to the Sand Creek Regional Greenway.
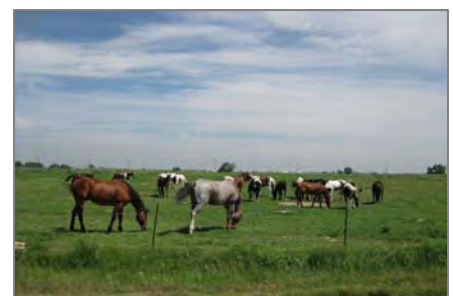
Trails should be designed for multiple purposes including bikes, pedestrians, and equestrians in some locations. (Top photo: FHU)

Goal T 6—Coordinate transportation regionally

The city will work with the numerous regional transportation entities, including RTD, Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), Denver International Airport (DIA), E-470 Public Highway Authority, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and the railroads that contribute to the transportation framework within Commerce City and throughout neighboring cities, communities, and the Denver-metro area.

Citywide Policies:

T 6.1—Coordinated Efforts to Address Traffic

Continue coordination among the regional entities to provide sufficient infrastructure for current needs, improve traffic flow and safety, provide north/south and east/west connections, recognize impact of traffic outside the community, address street connections across boundaries, and address future growth.

T 6.2—Regional Investment Share

Continue planning and coordination to promote Commerce City for regional investments (e.g., FasTracks).

T 6.3—Coordinated Efforts for Roadway Appearance

Continue coordination and identify funding to improve the appearance of public roadways, especially at city gateways, including streetscaping and signage. Investigate/implement Adopt-a-Highway and Adopt-a-Trail programs for continued maintenance.

T 6.4—Coordinated Efforts for Trails

Continue coordination among regional entities and adjacent jurisdictions to work toward transportation network and trail connectivity across jurisdictional boundaries.

Continue to coordinate regional efforts on trails.

Transportation Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the transportation goals. Table 9.2, on the next page, coincides with the six goals of this chapter. It identifies specific actions to achieve the goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 9.2: Transportation Strategies

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal T 1	**Balanced, Comprehensive Transportation System**
T 1a	**Road Network**
	Implement improvements to roadway network, signals, and intersections, based on a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with priorities as determined by the Transportation Plan. Priorities will be based on safety, congestion relief, connectivity, multi-modal, and implementability.
T 1b	**Fees**
	Determine potential new sources of funding for transportation improvements (e.g., road impact fees, street fees, etc.).
T 1c	**Transportation for Special Needs (and all demographic groups)**
	Research best practices for design elements to accommodate the aging and disabled (e.g., lighting, materials, other visual and auditory cues, traffic control measures and crosswalks, traffic calming, etc.).
Goal T 2	**Connected Transportation System**
T 2a	**Right of Way Reserved**
	Reserve right-of-way for future roads identified (especially the Northern Range and E-470 Influence Area) based on road classifications and standard cross sections.
Goal T 3	**Improved Bicycle, Pedestrian System**
T 3a	**Traffic Calming**
	Implement traffic calming measures, as addressed in the Transportation Plan.
T 3b	**Bicycle/Pedestrian Components**
	Include bicycle and pedestrian components in the Transportation Plan. Research best practices for bicycle and pedestrian system design criteria to be used for new construction and possible improvements to the existing transportation network.
T 3c	**Prioritize Pedestrian Improvements**
	Coordinate high-priority pedestrian improvement areas with the Transportation Plan Capital Improvements Plan.
T 3d	**Prioritize Traffic Safety Improvements**
	Monitor (vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle) traffic accident data to prioritize areas for traffic safety improvements.
T 3e	**Bicycle Plan**
	Prepare a Citywide Bicycle Plan (that might include component such as *Adopt-a-Bikeway* program to allow residents to adopt a bikeway route, report obstructions, and keep it clean; bicycle racks, lockers, and structures; Bike to Work Day – City promotes bicycling, working with businesses to provide free breakfast; *C3 Bikes* – City sponsors bicycling and program to promote safety, so students will use alternative transportation to/from school.
Goal T 4	**Improved Transit**
T 4a	**Alternative Modes – City Employees**
	Promote employee use of alternative modes, including bicycle commuting and transit.
T 4b	**FasTracks North Metro Corridor**
	Work with partners, including RTD, to ensure that Commerce City's FasTracks' North Metro Corridor station is built to serve Commerce City and that the station is well connected to the entire community through sidewalks, bikeways and local transit service.
T 4c	**FasTracks East Corridor**
	Work with partners, including RTD, to ensure that stations on FasTracks' East Corridor are built to serve and are well connected to Commerce City through sidewalks, bikeways and local transit service.
T 4d	**Future Commuter Rail**
	Work with RTD to develop an alignment and station locations along the NATE rail corridor that best serve Commerce City.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
T 4e	**Bus Transit Corridors**
	Include provision for bus transit priority features along congested transit corridors. These could include queue jump lanes or transit signal priority equipment. Ensure land use and design standards support future transit goals; design for pedestrian connectivity.
T 4f	**Northern Range Bus Routes**
	Identify transit services that connect the Northern Range developments to their primary destinations such as the Historic City, downtown Denver and DIA through the use of local bus services and planned commuter rail routes.
T 4g	**E-470 Future Rail Transit Corridor**
	Work with partners, including E-470 Authority, RTD, and Rocky Mountain Rail Authority to develop an alignment and station locations along the E-470 corridor that best serve Commerce City.
Goal T 5	**Multi-Use Trails Connected**
T 5a	**Trails Plans**
	Implement Trails Plans.
Goal T 6	**Regional Coordination of Transportation**
T 6a	**Intergovernmental Agreements/Joint Funding**
	Explore/develop intergovernmental agreements with adjacent jurisdictions to apply for joint project funding, to promote seamless connectivity, and to negotiate complementary standards for the transportation network.

Monitoring Transportation

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress over time toward achieving the transportation goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 9.3: Transportation Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
T 1—Improving multi-modal system	Additional transportation options; shift modes away from single occupancy vehicle to other modes	▪ Percentage mix of mode types. ▪ Funds spent on transit, bike, and pedestrian improvements.
T 2—Street connections and improvements	Improved traffic flow in hot spots and a connected street system	▪ Number of road and intersection improvements. ▪ Traffic volumes on certain streets. ▪ Number of traffic calming projects. ▪ Traffic accidents (by type and at certain intersections). ▪ Traffic projects complete.
T 3—Improving bicycle and pedestrian	Increased bicycle and sidewalk connections and safety	▪ Linear feet of sidewalks built and repaired. ▪ Number of new crosswalk improvements. ▪ Linear feet of bicycle trails built, repaired. ▪ Other bicycle facilities built. ▪ Number and rate of other accidents (auto, bicycle, and pedestrian). ▪ Number of local streets with 25 or 30 mph speed limit.
T 4—Transit service	Increased availability of transit for all residents	▪ Transit ridership numbers per capita. ▪ New transit routes. ▪ Number of households (or percentage) that are within a quarter mile of a bus stop. ▪ Number of RTD stops. ▪ Commuter transit mode share. ▪ Number of park-n-Ride facilities.
T 5—Expanding connected trails	Increased trail system and availability to households	▪ Number of households (or percentage) that are within half-mile of a multi-purpose trail. ▪ Miles of new trails built.
T 6—Coordinating regionally	Additional regional coordination	

10—Safety and Wellness

Guiding Principle

Increase the health and well-being of residents through healthy living, access to medical facilities, and public safety and hazard planning.

Introduction

Commerce City aims to be a healthy and safe community, enabling its residents to pursue meaningful and prosperous lives. The Commerce City Police Department works to ensure that residents have a safe environment in which to live and work. The city's Parks and Recreation Department provides an excellent variety of parks, open space, and recreation facilities for residents. Additionally, other public and private agencies that provide fire protection, schools, health care, and address human services facilitate the safety and wellness of the community. These agencies provide services for city residents, especially the elderly and youth populations, and the workforce. Planning for growth, as well as coordinating between agencies, will be necessary to contribute to and improve community well-being.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define safety and wellness goals contained in this chapter.

Community Socioeconomic Challenges

Commerce City has traditionally had less affluent citizens, lower levels of educational attainment (compared to other communities in the Denver-metro region), and a lack of affordable rental housing. Typically, lower-income residents have more health challenges. However, with the development of the Northern Range and increased educational opportunities in both school districts, the socioeconomic trends are improving. In order to continue positive trends, this Plan examines ways to help improve the economic well-being of all households. Addressing these issues also will reduce chronic diseases, for which lower-income individuals are at higher risk.

Improving Health by Promoting Active Living

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have been documenting the costs associated with obesity. Americans do not get enough physical activity in daily routines.

Active living can be greatly improved through "walkability," opportunities for bicycling, and urban design. A city can contribute to active and healthy living if it provides opportunities for human-powered travel and recreation; if it creates a feeling of safety through design and adequate police patrol; if schools are located nearby neighborhoods; and if neighborhoods have safe walkways and parks.

Public Safety Service Levels

The dispersed geographic nature of the community creates difficulty in providing equal service levels in all areas. Moreover, there are three fire districts serving the city and its growth area, with varying levels of service ranging from volunteer to paid staffing.

Unhealthy Community Trends

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have been documenting the escalating costs associated with obesity. One contributing factor is that Americans do not get enough physical activity in their daily routine. Commerce City, like many American cities, is dispersed and auto-oriented, and some areas are not as safe or accessible for pedestrians as they could be.

Limited Health-Care Facilities

The majority of health-care facilities are located in the Historic City, although these are not currently found in a high quantity. Very few facilities are available now to serve the Northern Range.

Directions and Goals

Following the influencing factors above, the safety and wellness goals are based on the following considerations:

Integration of Emergency Services

With a centralized police facility, and a number of dispersed fire and emergency medical service facilities, opportunities may exist for integration of some services to improve response times and community safety, especially as the Northern Range, E-470 Influence, and DIA North areas develop in the future.

Continued Safety Enhancements

Commerce City's residents appreciate the emergency service provided by the city's police force, rating it as "very good," in 2008 (Community Survey). However, northern residents would like faster response times and assurances that equipment and manpower will keep pace with growth demands. Southern residents would like to see improved safety in schools and public places. Goals in this section address response times for police and fire to protect life and property, and for hazard planning.

Healthy Lifestyle Choices

A city can contribute to active and healthy living in a variety of ways. First, it can provide facilities for human-powered travel and recreation. Second, it can reduce travel distances between neighborhoods and places of interest, such as schools. Third, a city also can greatly improve opportunities for walking and bicycling through urban design. Commerce City residents would like improved access to convenient affordable health-care facilities; more places for safe, physical exercise, and to tip the balance from

Opportunities for walking and acquiring fresh foods can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

fast-food restaurants to grocery stores and healthier food options to promote healthy living.

Safety and Wellness goals address:

1. Police, fire, and emergency services effectiveness;
2. Safe, convenient places for physical activity;
3. Access to health-care facilities and programs; and
4. Increased opportunities for the availability of healthy foods.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

The safety and wellness goals are important to achieving the Three Cs of sustainability. They help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

- ✓ Reduce individual and community health costs, due to obesity and other diseases related to lack of physical activity and unhealthy eating.
- ✓ Maintain property values and safety (with adequate police and fire protection).
- ✓ Improve desirability of community for businesses, residents, and visitors through safety.

A Quality Environmental Context:

- ✓ Provide a safe residential environmental away from noise and hazards.

A Resilient Community:

- ✓ Improve overall safety, health, and well-being of people—a fundamental basis of community planning.

> ### How Does this Chapter Relate to Sustainability?
>
> Health and safety are core aspects of becoming a sustainable community and keeping economic, social, and environmental systems in balance.
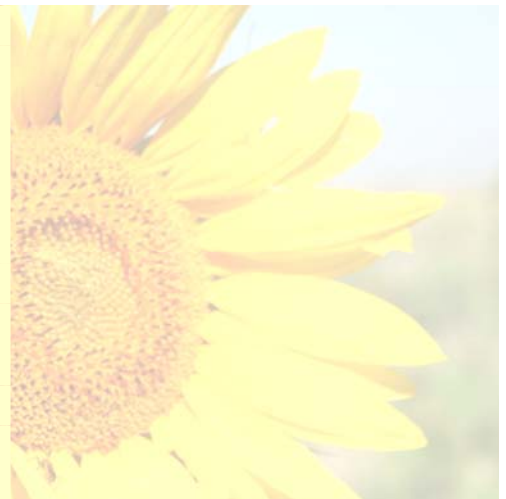
Farmer's markets and grocery stores that offer fresh produce contribute to community health and well-being.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The safety and wellness goals relate closely to other plan elements and chapters of this Plan. The table below identifies where goals link with other Plan elements.

Table 10.1: Related Chapters for the Safety and Wellness Goals

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth	Economic Dev.	Fiscal Stability	Housing/Neighbor	Redevelopment	Transportation	Safety, Wellness	Parks, Open Space	Public Facilities	Appearance	Cultural Facilities	Environmental
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Goals												
1. Public safety effectiveness						✖	✖		✖	✖		
2. Safe, physical activity	✖			✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖			✖
3. Health-care facilities and programs		✖				✖	✖		✖			
4. Access to healthy foods		✖					✖	✖				✖

Safety and Wellness Goals and Policies

Goal SW 1—Maintain efficient, effective police, fire, and emergency services

Commerce City, through a Clean and Safe Initiative, will maintain its responsive community safety programs, encourage crime prevention through environmental design, maintain response times for the Historic City and Irondale, and improve response times as future development occurs.

Citywide Policies:

SW 1.1—Strategic Plan for Police Services

Use the Strategic Plan to address response times, special needs (such as high-crime areas, gangs, and graffiti) and high-quality police services. Continue to re-evaluate the plan and encourage public involvement and support.

SW 1.2—Emergency Preparedness

Ensure that emergency management plans, services, and equipment are sufficient for potential disaster response.

SW 1.3—Efficiency of Services/Coordination

Improve efficiency of services and expenditures, explore feasibility of sharing facilities, space, and staff time with fire districts.

Police services contribute to the quality of life and safety of Commerce City residents and businesses. Commerce City Police operate out of the Civic Center.

SW 1.4—Safety and Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behavior through environmental design. This approach also increases outdoor physical activity and opportunities for socialization. Strategies rely on the ability to:

- provide natural surveillance by increasing the perception that people can be seen by fostering visibility and social interaction;
- provide natural access control by clearly differentiating public entrances and discouraging access to private spaces with design elements;
- provide territorial reinforcement through fencing, pavement, signs, lighting, and landscaping;
- harden targets through features that prohibit entry, such as locks and dead bolts; and
- ensure property maintenance.

See Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Chapter 13, Appearance and Design for related property maintenance policies.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas

SW 1.5—Historic City Targeted Safety Focus

In the Historic City, continue to address crime rates, service calls, and gang activity. Include a new field station at the Holly Park apartments at East 60th Avenue and Holly Street.

SW 1.6—Northern Range Satellite Services

In the Northern Range, pursue a sub-station to improve response times and service (e.g., use the existing fire station at East 103rd Avenue and Walden Street, and add a future sub-station near East 112th Avenue and Chambers Road.)

See Chapter 12, Public Facilities, Fire Protection.

Goal SW 2—Promote regular physical activity by providing safe, convenient opportunities for recreation and human-powered travel

The city will continue to improve the transportation network to facilitate non-vehicular use by people of all ages and abilities. The focus will be on connecting streets, sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails to ensure that residents can walk and bicycle safely and comfortably.

Citywide Policies:

SW 2.1—Walkability Focus

Focus walkability improvements in traditional neighborhoods and new developments around schools, commercial areas, senior housing, high-density housing, transit stops, parks, and other public facilities.

SW 2.2—Safe Routes to Schools

Provide pedestrian improvements on streets, sidewalks, and crosswalks adjacent to schools to provide safe routes for students.

SW 2.3—Bicycling Focus

Use the Transportation Plan Bicycling Element to identify priorities and design standards for the bicycle system. Develop a bicycle circulation system that interconnects streets and trails, and that links residential areas with a variety of destinations and transit locations.

Walking and bicycling is human-powered travel. Opportunities for safe walking and bicycling are important in promoting physical activity.

SW 2.4—Year-Round Recreation Opportunities

Provide year-round opportunities for indoor recreation for all residents.

See Chapters 9 and 11, Transportation and Parks, Open Space, and Recreation.

Goal SW 3—Improve access to health-care facilities, programs, and human services

Commerce City will coordinate with the community to explore additional opportunities for health-care facilities and programs.

Citywide Policies:

SW 3.1—Collaborative Work with Community

Work collaboratively with the community to develop and achieve this Plan's vision for all residents' health and well-being.

SW 3.2—Clinics and Health-Care Facilities

Recruit clinics, health care facilities, and physicians to locate throughout Commerce City and to increase healthcare programs and services for all residents.

See Chapter 5, Economic Development (diversification).

SW 3.3—Health and Human Services

Work with partners (such as private and faith-based organizations that provide services) to facilitate health and human services, including preventative care programs and clinics, senior services, transitional housing, homeless shelters, teen and youth activities, and hospice and day-care facilities.

SW 3.4—Transit access for Health-Care Facilities

Coordinate strategies so that the elderly, the disabled, and people without vehicles have access to health-care facilities and other basic services.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas

SW 3.5—Clinics and Programs in Irondale and Northern Range

Encourage clinics and health-care facilities to locate in Irondale and Northern Range areas, to provide for the needs of northern area city residents.

This Plan suggests improving transit access.

Belle Creek Community Garden.

Farmer's markets can provide healthy food options.

Goal SW 4—Encourage increased access to healthy foods for all residents

The city will retain and attract community grocery stores, so that residents will have convenient access to a variety of foods. The city will support measures to educate and encourage local food access in the community, including community gardens, farmers' markets, and small-scale food production.

Citywide Policies:

SW 4.1—Encourage Supermarkets in Neighborhoods

Support development of supermarkets or local markets near neighborhoods, so residents can conveniently obtain food and other day-to-day goods.

SW 4.2—Local Food Production and Sale

The city will encourage small-scale urban agriculture such as community-supported agriculture, community gardens, and accessory greenhouses. The city will encourage farmer's markets by identifying parks, plazas, and other appropriate public properties to accommodate them.

SW 4.3—Limit Fast-Food Restaurant Intensification

Encourage a variety of restaurants in the community, including sit-down full-service restaurants. Consider limiting the density of fast-food restaurants in the city, and limit drive-through businesses in pedestrian-oriented centers (such as Derby) and city activity centers.

Safety and Wellness Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the safety and wellness goals. Table 10.2 coincides with the goals of this chapter, identifying specific actions.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 10.2: Safety and Wellness Strategies

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal SW 1	**Efficient, effective police, fire, and emergency services**
SW 1a	*Police Strategic Plan* **Guides**
	Use *Police Strategic Plan* to address needs and response times.
SW 1b	**Shared Public Safety Facilities**
	Explore sharing facilities/sub-stations to serve citizens (e.g., East 103rd Avenue /Walden Fire Station, East 60th Avenue/Monaco Street, and East 112th Avenue and Chambers Road).
SW 1c	**Current Emergency Disaster Planning**
	Keep emergency disaster planning up to date.
SW 1d	**Fire District Coordination**
	Coordinate with fire districts to address provision of land for fire stations within growth areas.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
SW 1e	**Safety through Design / Property Maintenance**
	Review development projects using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles described in this chapter. (See also Chapter 7 and 13 for related property maintenance strategies, as property maintenance, which reduce crime and increasing residents' sense of security.)
Goal SW 2	**Promote regular physical activity for a healthy community**
SW 2a	**Pedestrian Improvements**
	Pursue strategies to create a visually-appealing and safe pedestrian experience. Prioritize pedestrian improvements in areas that will have the greatest benefit (e.g., near schools or commercial areas). (See strategies in Chapter 9: Transportation and Chapter 11: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation.)
SW 2b	**School Coordination**
	Work with school districts to develop a proximity standard to study and improve access to schools.
SW 2c	**Neighborhood Assessments**
	Perform Neighborhood Walkability and Bikeability Assessments for areas with high accident rates or expected high rates of pedestrian and bicycle activity.
SW 2d	**Transit Access**
	Adopt practices to locate new and redeveloped housing in areas with access to transit. Work to relocate existing routes to maximize ridership and access.
SW 2e	**Bus Stop Improvements**
	Develop a program (possibly public/private) to improve bus stops for safe access and comfort (e.g., shelters at key stops, shade, benches), directional information (bus schedules), and personal safety (lighting, locations where there are "eyes on the street"). Consider Adopt-a-Stop programs.
Goal SW 3	**Access to health-care facilities**
SW 3a	**Health and Wellness Advisory Committee**
	Work with partners to create a Health and Wellness Advisory Committee to establish procedures to track community health information.
SW 3b	**Health-Care Needs Assessment**
	Work with partners to conduct a Needs Assessment to determine the extent to which vulnerable Commerce City populations lack access to health-care facilities and other basic services (e.g., the city commissioned the *Rose Foundation Health Care Needs Assessment* in 2002-2003). A current needs assessment could be a less comprehensive evaluation to determine if the data/recommendations on health-care access are still valid. An update may only need to address other basic services (e.g., food, transportation, etc.).
SW 3c	**Adams County Coordination**
	Coordinate with Adams County as they relocate their facilities (to coordinate ideas and services).
SW 3d	**Senior Ridership**
	Coordinate with other public/private agencies to assist with senior ridership to transit.
Goal SW 4	**Increased access to healthy foods for community residents**
SW 4a	**Fast-Food Restaurant Density**
	Consider incentives to attract new healthy restaurants and to limit the density of fast-food restaurants in neighborhoods (e.g., Derby Master Plan recommendation).
SW 4b	**LDC Amendments for Small-Scale Urban Agriculture**
	Evaluate and consider removing from the Land Development Code barriers to small-scale urban agriculture (e.g., permit farmer's markets in all commercial areas, allow front yard vegetable gardens, permit a wide range of small agricultural uses in residential areas, as appropriate).
SW 4c	**Promotions for Trees, Urban Agriculture**
	Provide incentives, such as rebates for fruit trees, green roofs, urban agriculture, and greenhouses.
SW 4d	**Community Gardens**
	Explore feasibility, costs, and benefits of allowing community gardens in some public and private parks, along with incentives to encourage them in private developments.

Monitoring Safety and Wellness

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress over time toward achieving the safety and wellness goals within this chapter.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table SW 3: Safety and Wellness Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
SW 1—Public safety effectiveness	Reduced crime/increased public safety.	▪ Number of times developments reviewed with CPTED comments. ▪ Top ten locations for calls for service. ▪ Number of property crimes citywide and within Strategic Planning Areas.
SW 2—Safe, physical activity	Provide additional facilities for physical exercise (sidewalks, bicycle routes, trails, and recreation centers).	▪ (See Transportation chapter indicators for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements, and street interconnectedness and grid pattern.) ▪ Average measure of block length for new blocks (to encourage pedestrian activity). ▪ Recreation center facilities. (See Chapter 11.) ▪ Number of residential units within half a mile of schools and parks (e.g., schools/parks co-located). (See Chapter 11.)
SW 3—Health care and programs	Increase proximity to health-care facilities and programs.	▪ Number of public health facilities. ▪ Number of public health programs. ▪ Public health-care facilities within a mile of a bus stop.
SW 4—Opportunity for healthy foods	Encourage increased access to healthy foods for residents	▪ Number of fast-food restaurants and drive-through clustered within a quarter mile area. ▪ Number of community gardens and farmer's markets. ▪ Number of new sit-down/table service (non fast-food restaurants)

11—Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

Guiding Principle

Provide ample and well-distributed parks and recreation facilities, and a connected system of trails and open space, to provide for outdoor recreation, relaxation, and rejuvenation, and to protect views.

Introduction

Commerce City's setting on the eastern plains along the South Platte River affords it vast views of the mountains and Denver skyline. The city has long planned for a connected system of open space mainly along the South Platte River and First, Second, and Third Creeks. Parks and recreational facilities are also critical to the quality of neighborhoods and the city overall, in maintaining views, clean air and water, and spaces for people to recreate and live healthy, active lifestyles.

In 2009, Commerce City maintained 18 parks, 19 miles of trails, and 760 acres of dedicated open space. Each park contains a number of facilities, ranging from playgrounds to playing fields to shelters for active recreation use and interactive use and enjoyment. The city also operates and maintains the Buffalo Run municipal 18-hole golf course. Finally, the city maintains a 68,000-square foot recreation center that offers a wide variety of programs and services for all ages and segments of the population.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the parks, open space, and recreation goals contained in this chapter:

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

At approximately 17,000 acres, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge is one of the largest urban open space areas in the United States. It has enormous potential for recreation, tourism, and wildlife viewing opportunities. A Visitor's

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Maps and Plans...

The Park, Trail & Open Space System Map & Guide (2007) illustrates the current system and some of the planned future additions to the system. Commerce City has several other plans actively used to guide development of parks, recreation, and open space, including:

- ✓ *The Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (1994),
- ✓ *Prairieways Action Plan, Guidelines for Parks, Trails and Open Space* (1999),
- ✓ *South Platte River Corridor Heritage Plan* (1999) Adams County Plan, and
- ✓ *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities* (2007).

Center for the facility will be completed by the end of 2010, greatly increasing visitor traffic to the refuge and the city.

Funding for Parks, Trails, and Open Space Projects

Because of the city's rapid growth and geographic expansion, the city has a number of ongoing development and acquisition needs for recreation. Adequate funding for park and recreation improvements remains a major challenge.

Future Park Needs

As the city grows, there will be continuing needs for new parks to serve its residents. Current estimates from the city's *Strategic Recreation Plan* are that an additional four or five neighborhood parks and one additional community park will be needed in the next decade. The Strategic Recreation Plan describes existing conditions of parks, and current plans and policies.

Recreation Center

This Plan addresses increased year-round recreational opportunities for everyone, including the potential for a recreation center in the Northern Range.

National Wildlife Refuge/Barr Lake

As mentioned before in this Plan, the National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake are both tremendous assets and resources that benefit the city and help shape the open space system.

Directions and Goals

Based on the influencing factors outlined above, the parks, open space, and recreation goals contained below consider the following:

Parks, Open Space Conservation, and Recreation

Conserving open spaces as growth occurs is important to achieving the *C3 Community Vision* and becoming a sustainable community. This *C3 Vision Plan* advances the community and city parks, open space, and recreation goals. Focused park plans, identified on the previous page, help guide the city's choices for future facility improvements.

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation goals address:
1. Parks to enhance neighborhoods and meet citywide recreation needs,
2. Year-round, active recreational opportunities,
3. Connected open space,
4. Natural resources, and
5. Trail network.

Open space offers refuge for wildlife.

How Do Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Relate to Sustainability?

Parks and open space are one of the key components of a strong and sustainable community. They contribute to the following:

- ✓ Health, active living;
- ✓ Help maintain a strong local economy by increasing adjacent property values, and improving the city's attractiveness to clean and green businesses;
- ✓ Create a clean environment and wildlife habitat; and
- ✓ Increase the level of community pride and people's physical and mental health.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability…

Parks, open space, and recreation areas affect how people view community desirability; they contribute to sustainability in many ways. The goals help to:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Improve adjacent property values and tourism.
✓ Attract and retain desirable technology and businesses.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Provide a clean environment by providing green space within the city.
✓ Improve environmental quality through groundwater recharge areas, natural sound buffers, stormwater protection for wetlands, natural cooling (reducing urban heat effect), and carbon uptake from trees and vegetation.
✓ Preserve wildlife habitat through a connected system of open spaces (corridors for wildlife and places for birds).

A Resilient Community:

✓ Create spaces for community members to develop social ties and share experiences.
✓ Maintain and improve community pride.
✓ Provide opportunities to be physically active—an essential part of staying healthy and prevent chronic health problems related to lack of physical activity. Relaxation can also reduce stress.
✓ Provide a place of refuge for at-risk youth through community recreation and neighborhood programs.
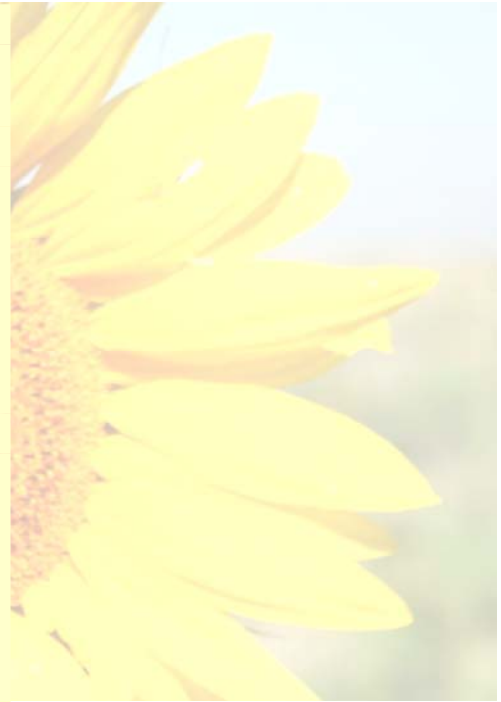
These Goals in Related Chapters

The parks, open space, and recreation goals relate to other Plan elements and chapters, as identified in the Table 11.1.

Table 11.1: Related Chapters for Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Goals

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth (4)	Economic Dev. (5)	Fiscal Stability (6)	Housing/Neighbor (7)	Redevelopment (8)	Transportation (9)	Safety, Wellness (10)	Parks, Open Space (11)	Public Facilities (12)	Appearance (13)	Cultural Facilities (14)	Environmental (15)
Goals												
1. Parks to meet needs	✖	✖		✖	✖		✖	✖		✖	✖	✖
2. Year-round recreation				✖			✖	✖				
3. Connect open space	✖	✖				✖	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖
4. Protect natural resources	✖							✖		✖		✖

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Goals and Policies

Goal P 1—Build and maintain parks to enhance neighborhoods and meet current and future generation needs

The city will maintain current parks, which are a major community asset, and use the current plans to identify and prioritize future park locations and serve the city's active recreation needs as growth occurs.

Citywide Policies:

P 1.1—Consistent Park Level-of-Service

Build new parks and recreation facilities to maintain the established goals for parks, as prioritized and guided by the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* (as updated periodically), and through the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services and Facilities*. Implement the recommendations of the *Strategic Plan* to meet the needs of current and future generations, as funds are available.

P 1.2—Neighborhood and Community Parks for Future Growth

As new development occurs, the city will strive to ensure that developers dedicate adequate park and recreation land and fees, to meet established level-of-service goals and provide adequate neighborhood and community parks in accordance with the *Master Plan*.

P 1.3—Neighborhood Parks/Schools Coordination

Locate parks within neighborhoods on collector streets so they are easily accessible for pedestrians and bicycles. Generally, they also should be located adjacent to schools to enable sharing of space and facilities. (See *Best Practices for Park Location and Design*.)

P 1.4—Pocket Parks for Neighborhood Gathering

As part of its neighborhood concept, the city promotes pocket parks where deemed appropriate. Developers will provide additional small, privately maintained parks in neighborhoods to provide for neighborhood recreation and community gathering.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

P 1.5—Historic City Parks

To enhance distribution of land and facilities throughout the city, evaluate needs for new parks for Adams City, Derby, and Dupont (as identified in the 1994 *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*).

Goal P 2—Increase year-round active recreation opportunities

The city will explore opportunities to increase year-round active recreation opportunities citywide for all ages and segments of the population. Commerce City will maximize existing agreements and cooperation with other entities and service providers.

Citywide Policies:

P 2.1—Recreation Center Level-of-Service

Establish and maintain a Level-of-Service for community recreation centers in accordance with the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities*.

P 2.2—Outdoor recreation, year-round

Enhance opportunities for year-round activity in city parks, trails, open spaces, and recreational facilities for all ages (children to seniors). Outdoor recreation should include active play and use (e.g., ballfields, seasonal swimming, golf), and passive uses (e.g., picnicking and bird watching).

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

P 2.3—Northern Range Recreation Center

Based on Level-of-Service for community recreation centers, noted in P 2.1 above, identify when and where it would be appropriate to build a public recreation center in the Northern Range.

The city maintains and operates the Buffalo Run Golf Course. It is open to the public and businesses.

The Recreation Center allows for year-round active recreation.

Goal P 3—Enhance and connect open space land

The city will continue to expand a greenway system to further enhance and connect the Sand Creek Regional Greenway and South Platte River corridors. In addition, the open space system should connect with the National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake. Open space should generally protect views and provide passive recreation and learning opportunities.

Citywide Policies:

P3.1—Expanded Greenway System

Implement existing plans to expand the greenway and open space network along rivers, creeks, canals, drainage, and utility corridors. Provide trail-oriented recreation and connections between neighborhoods, parks, and other origins and destinations, including to the National Wildlife Refuge. The *Emerald Strands Plan* (1990) and more recent plans—*South Platte River Corridor Heritage Plan* (1999), *Adams County Open Space Plan* (1998), and *Prairieways Action Plan* (1999), provide guidance and implementation strategies.

Trails are addressed in Chapter 9: Transportation.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge perimeter trail

Barr Lake State Park and city open space resources offer places for recreation, relaxation, and rejuvenation.

Open space areas conserve natural resources.

P3.2—Open Space in New Developments

New development will contribute to the open space system by dedicating land to protect drainageways, wetlands, utilities corridors, wildlife habitat, historic sites, or other features and lands identified on city plans, and it will provide appropriate open space buffers.

P 3.3—Open Space Lands Stewardship

The primary focus of open space resources is stewardship of resources, including the rivers, streams, trees, and natural areas.

P 3.4—National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake Linkages

The city will work with the National Wildlife Refuge to increase awareness of the Visitors Center and other refuge resources, including bison and other wildlife and recreation opportunities. Provide open space linkages to Barr Lake.

P 3.5—Mineral Properties Integrated with Open Space System

The sequencing of mineral resource properties for community use before, during, and after mining will be encouraged, while measures will be taken to avoid development of lands with known mineral deposits before mining occurs. The city will encourage trails and passive uses along the South Platte River where possible after mining.

P 3.6—Open Space and Parks Linked to Arts, Culture, and History

Pursue the integration of arts, culture, history, and other learning and interpretive opportunities in parks and open space areas, including the area around the South Platte River and the National Wildlife Refuge.

See Chapter 9, Transportation, for goals and policies related to trails.

Goal P 4—Protect and restore natural resources

The city will aim to protect and restore rivers and streams (South Platte River and related tributaries, including Sand Creek; First, Second, and Third Creeks; Box Elder Creek; and Barr Lake). It also will maintain urban trees and provide natural area connections.

Citywide Policies:

P 4.1—Protection of Resources

The city and private developers will locate trail and other improvements in open space areas to minimize impacts on natural systems and keep greenways and tributaries in a natural state.

P 4.2—National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake

Develop partnerships with the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and Barr Lake to work on common goals related to stewardship as well as for adjacent city open space lands.

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the parks, open space, and recreation goals. Table 11.2 corresponds with the goals of this chapter, identifying specific actions for each.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 11.2: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal P 1	**Parks built and maintained to meet needs**
P 1a	**Prioritize Recommendations**
	Prioritize implementation recommendations of the Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities (2007) including new park development, facilities, and recreation.
P 1b	**Re-evaluate Schedule – Master Plans**
	Re-evaluate 5-Year Master Planning Schedule (updates for the Strategic and/or Master Plan).
P 1c	**Parkland Impact Fee**
	Reassess parkland impact fee annually.
P 1d	**Dedication Standards**
	Assess parkland dedication standards in the LDC to confirm the city is achieving its 6 ac/1,000 target.
P 1e	**Stable Funding**
	Identify stable funding source for parks development, operations, and maintenance.
P 1f	**Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)**
	Maximize existing IGAs and cooperation with other entities for recreation opportunities (e.g., School District 27J and Adams County School District 14, Belle Creek Family Center/Metro District, Reunion Recreation Center/Metro District, other possible metro districts, and outside or alternative recreation providers) (as identified in Goal 2).
P 1g	**Partnerships**
	Form partnerships and coordinate with metro districts (including but not limited to Belle Creek Metro District and Reunion Metro District).
P 1h	**Golf Course Monitoring**
	Develop and monitor a Golf Course Plan for expansion.
P 1i	**Private/Public Partnerships**
	Explore other private/public partnerships (e.g., with businesses) to build and maintain recreation facilities.
Goal P 2	**Year-round active recreation opportunities provided**
P 2a	**Recreation LOS**
	Establish Recreation Level-of-Service (LOS) goal in accordance with the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs*.
P 2b	**Stable Funding**
	Identify stable funding sources for recreation development, operations, and maintenance.
P 2c	**Private/Public Partnerships**
	Explore other public/private partnerships (e.g., with businesses) to build and maintain recreation facilities.
Goal P 3	**Connected open space**
P 3a	**Sand Creek Greenway Appearance**
	Improve appearance of properties bordering the Sand Creek Greenway through the development review process.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
P 3b	**Regional Partnerships**
	Form partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions to implement the *South Platte River Corridor Heritage Plan* (including Adams County).
P 3c	**USFW Coordination**
	Work with US Fish and Wildlife to provide stewardship for the National Wildlife Refuge.
P 3d	**Barr Lake Coordination**
	Work with the state and Adams County to achieve common goals related to Barr Lake protection.
P 3d	**Work Cooperatively**
	Work cooperatively with the North East Greenway partners to implement and achieve common goals.
Goal P 4	**Natural resources protected**
P 4a	**Boost Volunteer Programs**
	Boost volunteer programs that focus on land restoration and stewardship.
P 4b	**Natural Resource Stewardship Programs**
	Support *Adopt-an-Open Space* and *Master Naturalist* volunteer programs to maintain natural resources and open spaces.

Monitoring Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress toward achieving the parks, open space, and recreation goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 11.3: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
P 1—Parks	Park Level-of-Service goal (6 acres/1,000 residents)	▪ Parkland (acres per 1,000 residents). ▪ Developed facilities and ballfields (per capita, per standards in Master Plan). ▪ Location of parks and facilities to serve population.
P 2—Year-round recreation	Recreation (in accordance with *Strategic Plan for Recreation*...)	▪ Recreation center facility(s) (locations, expenditures, amenities).
P 3—Connected open space	Increase connections along waterways	▪ Open space acres (in accordance with *Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan, Prairieways Action Plan*). ▪ Open space connections along rivers and creeks (new acres).
P 4—Natural resources	Increase stewardship and restoration	▪ Acres of natural areas protected or restored.

12—Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Guiding Principle

Ensure adequate and efficient public facilities and infrastructure for current and future residents and businesses.

Introduction

Commerce City residences and businesses rely on the underlying basic facilities and infrastructure that support their needs and enable community growth. Commerce City oversees and manages stormwater management, trash removal, and general government services related to community development, but the city does not provide a full-range of municipal facilities. Other providers supply water and wastewater collection (South Adams County Water and Sanitation District), energy (United Power and Xcel Energy), and other needs, such as irrigation and communication technology.

This chapter addresses infrastructure (such as water, wastewater, and power supply) and education and library facilities.

Transportation is addressed in Chapter 9. Public safety and health (such as police, fire, and health care) are addressed in Chapter 10. Parks, Open Space, and Recreation are in Chapter 11.

Influencing Factors

The following is a summary of infrastructure considerations that helped inform and define the public facilities and infrastructure goals:

Water Supply and Wastewater Treatment

The majority of the City's water supply is supplied by South Adams County Water and Sanitation District, which is an independent entity. The District also serves the majority of the city and its growth area with wastewater collection and treatment. The District is growing rapidly and because of high demand and limited resources, has instituted a mandatory irrigation schedule and irrigation shutdown to achieve water conservation. All new

What is Infrastructure?

Infrastructure is the basic underlying facilities and technical structures that support the community and allow us to function and grow, including:

- ✓ Water supply,
- ✓ Wastewater,
- ✓ Stormwater drainage,
- ✓ Irrigation systems,
- ✓ Electric supply/power grid, and
- ✓ Communications and information technology.

Reunion fire station.

Turnberry Elementary School.

How do Public Facilities and Infrastructure Relate to Sustainability?

Infrastructure can help a community grow its economic systems, provide places for housing and businesses, and contribute to community livability by ensuring clean drinking water and removal of waste. Investing in infrastructure has long been seen as key to economic growth in cities and regions.

developments seeking water and wastewater service must acquire and dedicate sufficient water resources to serve their development. Several water supply projects are planned to accommodate the significant growth within the District's service area.

Fire Protection

Unlike most cities in the Denver-metro region, fire protection and emergency services are provided by several independent fire protection districts (i.e., South Adams County, Sable-Altura, and Brighton), rather than by a Commerce City municipal department. Fire districts have struggled to keep pace with development, particularly in the Northern Range.

Life-long Learning

Two school districts provide K through 12 education—Adams County School District 14 in the south and School District 27J in the north. Residents would like to see additional higher education options (e.g., community college campus or other) to expand local Continuing Education options. This chapter includes a map of existing and planned schools. (See Figure 12.1: Existing and Planned Public Schools.)

Directions and Goals

Commerce City is unique in that many of its services are provided by independent districts rather than by the city directly. Even though Commerce City is not the provider in some cases, the city influences land use and growth, which in turn affects how infrastructure and service systems are built. Further coordination and partnerships will be necessary to ensure that growth does not outpace the existing systems or stretch resources too thin.

Public Facilities and Infrastructure goals address:

1. Utilities and growth coordination;
2. Life-long learning and education; and
3. Access to local government.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

Public facilities and infrastructure are fundamental to a community's sustainability. The goals in this chapter help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Spur economic development with modern, efficient utilities and infrastructure (including water, sewer, and communications).
✓ Protect tax and rate payers with efficient growth and expansion of systems.
✓ Provide an educated workforce for businesses and industries.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Prevent water and air pollution.
✓ Prevent flooding in developed areas.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Contribute to necessary infrastructure for livable, healthy communities (e.g., clean water, waste removal).
✓ Give opportunity for life-long learning.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The public facilities and infrastructure goals relate closely to other plan elements and chapters, as noted in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1: Related Chapters for the Public Facilities and Infrastructure Goals

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth	Economic Dev.	Fiscal Stability	Housing/Neighbor	Redevelopment	Transportation	Safety, Wellness	Parks, Open Space	Public Facilities	Appearance	Cultural Facilities	Environmental
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Goals												
1. Utilities and growth coordination	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖			
2. Education	✖	✖		✖			✖		✖			✖
3. Access to government									✖			

Public Facilities and Infrastructure Goals and Policies

Goal PF 1—Coordinate utilities and infrastructure with future growth

The city will coordinate with developers, providers of infrastructure and services, and districts to deliver and maintain water, sewer, stormwater, energy, refuse collection and recycling, schools, streets, and technology services in an efficient manner that balances the pace of growth with the ability to provide quality services and improvements.

Citywide Policies:

PF 1.1—Infrastructure Assessments

Continue to assess and maintain services and infrastructure, and work with districts to improve services and utilities in areas that have deficient infrastructure.

PF 1.2—Transportation Coordination

Work with developers, Regional Transportation District (RTD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and other transportation entities to meet the travel needs of the community as growth occurs.

See Chapter 9, Transportation, for goals and policies related to transportation infrastructure improvements and needs.

PF 1.3—Location and Timing of Growth

Ensure that location and timing of new development does not outpace services and infrastructure (e.g., schools, transportation, parks and open space, water and sewer, fire protection, police, and other services). Ensure that future development pays its fair share of growth, and that new facilities are provided to serve new growth areas.

PF 1.4—Water and Wastewater Utilities Coordination

Coordinate with South Adams County Water and Sanitation District to ensure adequate supply of water and wastewater treatment capacity for future development before development occurs.

PF 1.5—Stormwater Facilities

Work with regional partners to ensure adequate regional drainage and stormwater facilities, and management for existing and new growth.

Development should not outpace services, such as fire protection.

PF 1.6—Fire Protection Coordination

Coordinate with South Adams County, Sable-Altura, and Brighton Fire Protection Districts to ensure development does not outpace adequate fire protection.

See Chapter 10, Safety and Wellness, for Police policies.

PF 1.7—Library Services Coordination

Work with the Rangeview Library District to expand library services to meet the educational, informational, and cultural needs of all community residents.

PF 1.8—Electric Providers

Coordinate with electric providers (United Power and Xcel Energy) to provide service as growth occurs.

PF 1.9—Post Office Coordination

Coordinate with United States Postal Service in siting and maintaining additional or expanded Post Offices to serve the community.

PF 1.10—Telecommunication

Work with telecommunication providers to ensure that all residents and businesses have access to telecommunication services, encouraging marketplace competition.

PF 1.11—Landfill Coordination and Buffer

Promote the provision of adequate buffers for the Tower Road Landfill to prevent the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth; Chapter 9, Transportation; Chapter 10, Safety and Wellness (for police, health care, etc.); Chapter 11, Parks, Open Space, and Recreation; Chapter 14, Cultural Facilities and Tourism; and, Chapter 15, Environmental Conservation and Stewardship (for stormwater).

Three fire districts provide fire protection throughout Commerce City.

As development occurs around the Tower Road landfill (seen in the background), adequate buffers will be necessary.

Goal PF 2—Increase educational options for life-long learning

The city will work with regional partners (e.g., school districts, the business community, and other organizations) to identify and provide resources for education, to assist lower-income households to increase educational levels, and to provide life-long learning prospects for all residents.

Citywide Policies:

PF 2.1—Coordinated K-12 Schools and Growth

Coordinate and plan with Adams County School District 14 and School District 27J for location of new schools, or expansion of existing facilities. Coordinate their timing within future

neighborhoods, so that residential development does not outpace school capacities. Once developed, continue to coordinate with private or parochial schools located in Commerce City neighborhoods.

School Type

- Pre-School
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Charter School
- Future School
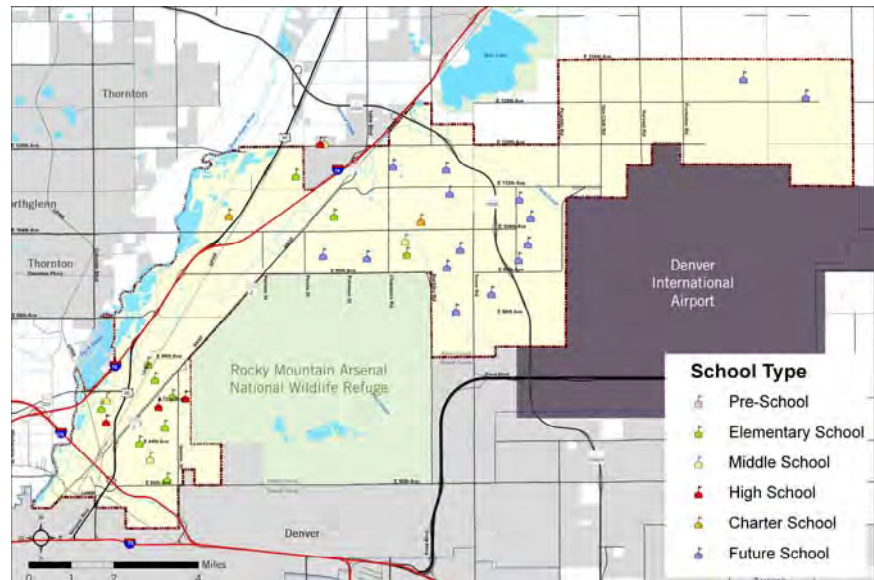
Figure 12.1: Existing and Future Public Schools

PF 2.2—Life-long Learning

Support existing and new school growth and campus development to encourage life-long learning opportunities (including colleges and universities, community colleges, trade and vocational schools, joint programs with high schools, Internet-based accredited programs, training and retraining programs, and other related facilities and programs).

See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth.

Goal PF 3—Increase access to local government

The city will continually increase access and transparency of government to contribute to a productive and harmonious political and social culture that fosters thoughtful decision-making and allows citizens and businesses to be involved in the community.

Citywide Policies:

PF 3.1—Government Functions and Citizen Participation

Continue to explore methods to make government functions transparent, to make it convenient for citizens to get information from the city, and to provide input to staff and leadership, for example through satellite offices, neighborhood meetings, etc.

The city's website (www.c3gov.com) is a portal of information for departments, events, policies, and other information.

PF 3.2—Communication Technologies

Expand opportunities for citizen participation for all residents through the use of communication technologies, such as the *c3gov* website, cable T.V. channels, public service/educational programs, and other emerging technologies.

PF 3.3—Active Volunteerism

Encourage residents and businesses to become involved in the community and assist with boards and commissions, social and educational programs, and land stewardship. For example, promote the use of volunteer and educational programs to assist police and parks personnel.

Commerce City values its volunteers.

Public Facilities and Infrastructure Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the public facilities and infrastructure goals. Table 12.2 coincides with the goals of this chapter and it identifies specific actions.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 12.2: Public Facilities and Infrastructure Strategies

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal PF 1	**Coordinated utilities and infrastructure/future growth**
PF 1a	**Annual Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)**
	Annually update the Capital Improvements Plan, considering priorities set forth in this plan and the annual Action Plan. Coordinate with South Adams County Water and Sanitation District's CIP.
PF 1b	**Coordinate with Water/Sanitation District**
	Coordinate with South Adams County Water and Sanitation district to ensure that adequate water and sewer can be provided at the time of new development.
PF 1c	**Standards for Adequate Public Facilities**
	Develop standards in the Land Development Code for development to pay its own way and for services to be available concurrent with development.
PF 1d	**Coordinate with Other Districts**
	Coordinate with other districts to ensure that adequate schools, power, and other infrastructure can be provided at the time of new development.
PF 1e	**Transportation Coordination**
	Work with developers, Regional Transportation District (RTD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and other transportation entities to meet the travel needs of the community as growth occurs.
PF 1f	**Impact Fees Reassessment**
	Reassess impact fees and developer assessments to ensure that development covers its costs.
PF 1g	**Public/Private Partnerships**
	Develop public/private partnerships to address facilities and services.
PF 1h	**GID to Finance New Development**
	Continue current General Improvement District (GID); look at separate GIDs for the E-470 and DIA North areas.
PF 1i	**Post Office Coordination**
	Coordinate with Post Office to ensure appropriate location of facilities in the Northern Range.
PF 1j	**Re-evaluate Drainage Fees**
	Explore whether drainage fees need to be evaluated as infrastructure costs increase.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
PF 1k	**Electric Providers**
	Work with energy providers to ensure adequate coverage as growth occurs.
PF 1l	**Telecommunication**
	Work with telecommunication providers to promote a "wired city" (e.g., fiber optics and wireless framework/foundation) with facilities in the Northern Range and along E-470.
	(See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth strategies related to phased growth.)
Goal PF 2	**Increased educational options**
PF 2a	**School District Coordination**
	Continue to coordinate with school districts to plan for future facilities to serve growth, location within neighborhoods, and co-location with parks.
PF 2b	**School Fee-in-Lieu**
	Re-evaluate and annually update fee-in-lieu for schools, to ensure that development pays it way for school impacts.
Goal PF 3	**Increased access to local government**
PF 3a	**Public Participation**
	Promote ongoing public participation/community engagement meetings to continue the visions/ideas/principles of this Plan and future sub-area plans.
PF 3b	**Task Force/Committees Creation**
	Explore creation of task forces and advisory committees to help further the aims of local government and this Plan.
PF 3c	**Volunteer Organizations**
	Support and cooperate with volunteer organizations and groups that provide recreational activities for young people.

Monitoring Public Facilities and Infrastructure

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress toward achieving the public facilities and infrastructure goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 12.3: Public Facilities and Infrastructure Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
PF 1—Utilities and growth coordination	Improve Level-of-Service for city facilities	▪ Fire protection average response time. ▪ Number of residents built within a half mile of the Tower Road landfill. ▪ Libraries per capita.
PF 2—Education	Increase opportunities for life-long learning	▪ Number of new schools within neighborhoods.
PF 3—Access to government	Increase citizen involvement in local government and access to leadership	▪ Website hits and number of other tools used to increase availability of C3 information. ▪ Number of volunteers for city programs (e.g., parks and open space). ▪ Number of city boards and commissions, and applicants to these boards.

13—Appearance and Design

Guiding Principle

Enhance the positive image of the city at gateways, along corridors, and in neighborhoods and commercial districts.

Introduction

Commerce City residents and business people alike repeatedly identify "attractive image" as an important goal for the city. A distinctive attractive image projects community pride. It can be exhibited through public places—gateways, road corridors, City Hall, parks and open space. It can also be conveyed in neighborhoods, and in industrial and commercial development and districts (e.g., architecture and design, landscaping, and new construction). Design affects the city's appeal and its ability to attract new businesses, as well as community identity. Well-designed public and private spaces will not only improve the city's image, but also provide places to gather, help people with way-finding, and increase property values.

In Commerce City, planning effort participants have continually identified image and appearance as important to Commerce City's reputation and ability to have strong, livable neighborhoods, and to retain and attract businesses. The influencing factors are described below.

The Civic Center and Reunion are two examples of public and private high-quality design in Commerce City.

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the appearance and design goals contained in this chapter:

Development Pre-Dating City Standards

Because the majority of Commerce City developed in Adams County before city incorporation and evolved from an agricultural past, city standards governing streets, site planning, building architecture, and landscaping were not in place. As the city's neighborhoods and commercial areas have become more urban, residents and businesses are recognizing the importance of ensuring a consistent quality of development, property maintenance for older areas, and reliable quality of new development.

Design of Civic Facilities

The city places a high value on quality design of its new parks, streets, public buildings, open spaces, and new developments. The new Civic Center is just one way the city is able to lead by example through quality design. The Civic Center is the gateway to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge that also maintains accessibility and connection with the entire city.

Heavy Industrial Uses

The city has a heavy industrial base. These areas are not aesthetically pleasing in the traditional sense. Nonetheless, they are vital to the city's economic and financial strength. Therefore, they will remain a key city component. The city has implemented design standards to help ensure quality design for development and redevelopment of industrial areas. As new business areas develop, the city aims to balance quality appearance with industrial business practicalities. Because of the heavy industry and industrial past that has tended to somewhat tarnish its image to outsiders, future development image is important.

Neighborhood Design and Property Maintenance Quality

Design quality is varied among the neighborhoods and districts around the city. Parts of the Historic City and Irondale have a traditional pattern of development with mature trees, smaller lots, and a variety of styles, contributing to certain neighborhoods' charm and uniqueness. However, some neighborhoods also face property maintenance challenges and infill that does not fit the surrounding neighborhood character.

Directions and Goals

The appearance and design goals focus on several things:

Neighborhood Design and Quality

As future neighborhoods develop and as infill development in older neighborhoods occurs, the city will increase emphasis on greater variety in site planning and mix of uses, integrated parks and schools, pedestrian and transit-orientation, and appearance.

Enhancement of City Gateways and Corridors

The gateways and highway corridors (the rights-of-way and lands adjacent to them) are key considerations for improving image in the city. Over the past decade, the city has worked hard to begin to address them. However, improving their appearance over the long-term will take perseverance; prioritization; coordination with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) and other property owners; and outside sources of funding.

What Factors Contribute to Community Appearance?

A community's design and image is affected by land use patterns; architecture; public spaces and their design; appearance and function of streets, landscaping, trees, signage, public art; and maintenance of public and private buildings and lots.

Appearance and Design goals address:

1. Image of gateways and corridors,
2. Appearance of established neighborhoods and districts,
3. New development quality (all types),
4. View shed protection, and
5. Public spaces.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

Appearance and design goals are fundamental to Commerce City's sustainability in many ways. The goals in this chapter help:

How Does Appearance and Design Relate to Sustainability?

Improving a city's image affects its economic vitality and desirability, its aesthetic environment and quality, and the community's sense of pride.

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Increase the city's ability to attract businesses.
✓ Make the city desirable for people to live in and visit.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Improve the city's gateways, corridors, commercial centers, and overall design and function.
✓ Improve new development site planning and design, providing durability, function, and value for the entire life-cycle of the neighborhood, rather than for any one specific use.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Contribute to a sense of community pride.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The appearance and design goals relate closely to other plan elements and chapters of this Plan, as noted in Table 13.1.

Table 13.1: Related Chapters for the Appearance and Design Goals

Plan Element/Ch. #:	Land Use, Growth (4)	Economic Dev. (5)	Fiscal Stability (6)	Housing/Neighbor (7)	Redevelopment (8)	Transportation (9)	Safety, Wellness (10)	Parks, Open Space (11)	Public Facilities (12)	Appearance (13)	Cultural Facilities (14)	Environmental (15)
Goals												
1. Gateways and corridors	✖	✖			✖	✖				✖		
2. Existing neighborhoods and districts		✖	✖	✖			✖	✖		✖		✖
3. New development quality		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖		✖	✖	✖		✖
4. Viewshed protection	✖							✖		✖		
5. Public gathering spaces		✖		✖	✖		✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	

Gateways and Corridors

Gateways and street corridors are akin to the "front doors" and public "entries" of the city's business districts and neighborhoods. They are extremely vital to the city's image and appearance. Improving gateways and corridors is not just about signage but also the overall appearance of the public right-of-way, quality of development, and adjacent landscaping.

- ✓ Gateways should provide a welcoming feeling and sense of arrival.

- ✓ They should incorporate appropriately-sized city signage and themed features such as bridges, sculpture, walls, or other features that fit the scale of the gateway (e.g., highway, arterial, or local street).

- ✓ Landscaping and lighting should be integrated with signs, so they are not "lost" background clutter.

- ✓ Local gateways should include site furnishings, public art, and signage reflecting the area's character (e.g., Reunion).

- ✓ Development along a corridor, or in the vicinity of a gateway, should be consistent with a certain theme if appropriate (e.g., medical district, or campus), be of high quality (e.g., four-sided with durable materials, interesting character), and contain landscaping.

Appearance and Design Goals and Policies

Goal AD 1—Improve the image of gateways and corridors

The city will continually improve the appearance of gateways and corridors, and improve way-finding into and throughout the community as funding permits.

Citywide Policies:

AD 1.1—Gateways

Gateways should provide a sense of arrival when coming into Commerce City and offer a consistent thematic image for the city. Enhance landscaping and signage at key gateways, as identified through Entryway Sign Plans (approved by the city).

Bridges often serve as gateways, or public entries, to the community.

AD 1.2—Corridor Enhancement Plans

Develop plans to address cost-effective streetscaping enhancements (including tree-planting and xeriscape), support clean-up and adopt-a-highway programs in public right-of-way, and encourage beautification outside of the right-of-way. The community has identified the following priority corridors, which would require joint efforts with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT):

- ▪ Highway 2,
- ▪ US-85,
- ▪ I-270, and
- ▪ I-76.

Develop design elements that will allow a consistent theme for signage, landscaping, lighting, and streetscape within the total community.

AD 1.3—Aesthetics and Local Way-finding Signs

In public rights-of-way, enhance public streetscaping, historical markers, way-finding signs, and other features of the city, concentrating improvement in the areas of highest visibility (gateways and high-travel corridors), or locations with the potential to convey a positive image.

AD 1.4—Highway Signage Updates

Work with CDOT and E-470 to update and change Commerce City entry and identification signs, as needed (e.g., I-76).

Goal AD 2—Improve appearance of established neighborhoods and districts

Commerce City will continue to identify neighborhoods and commercial districts in need of upgrades, rehabilitation/revitalization, targeted redevelopment, property maintenance, and compliance with existing appearance codes.

Citywide Policies:

AD 2.1—Clean up and Beautification Programs

Encourage programs such as coordination of volunteers for neighborhood clean ups. In addition, make improvements to sidewalks, streetscape, building facades, landscaping, and infrastructure to bring about beautification in identified neighborhoods.

AD 2.2—Property Maintenance

Encourage property maintenance through education, outreach, and proactive code enforcement to address zoning violations as well as weeds, junk vehicles, and other concerns.

See Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Chapter 8, Redevelopment and Reinvestment.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

AD 2.3—Historic City and Irondale Cohesive Appearance

Reduce patchwork of land uses and zoning to improve cohesiveness of neighborhoods and industrial districts in Historic City and Irondale areas, including improving appearance from I-270 and other highways (Hwy 85, I-76, etc.). Require property upkeep, improve quality of existing and future development and appearance of landscaping, acknowledge the location of original communities, and retain historic sites and character where historic elements remain.

See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan, Strategic Planning Areas, future policy direction for Historic City and Irondale.

The city will work with partners to update entry signs as needed.

Property maintenance helps improve appearance of established neighborhoods and districts.

Goal AD 3—Improve development quality for neighborhoods, commercial centers, and industrial uses

Commerce City will ensure high-quality design, development, and redevelopment for new residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

Citywide Policies:

AD 3.1—Design Best Practices

Update design standards to provide regulations for new residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas to reflect this Plan. Design standards should help achieve excellence in site planning, building architecture, landscaping, signage, and lighting communitywide, while balancing design with sustainability, affordability, and other community goals.

Design Best Practices

The star icon signifies Best Practice design ideas. Table 13.2, below, notes where to locate the best practices ideas throughout this Plan.

Table 13.2: Key to "Best Practice Design" Ideas in this Plan

Best Practice Topic	Chapter
Commercial Centers Location and Design	Ch. 3. Future Land Use Plan
Stable Neighborhoods	Ch. 4. Land Use and Growth
Neighborhood Village Design	Ch. 7. Housing and Neighborhoods
Infill and Redevelopment	Ch. 8. Redevelopment and Reinvestment
Transit-Oriented Development (T.O.D)	Ch. 8. Redevelopment and Reinvestment
Multi-Modal Street Design	Ch. 9. Transportation
Park Location and Design	Ch. 11. Parks, Open Space, and Recreation
Gateways and Corridors	Ch. 13. Appearance and Design
Inviting Public Gathering Spaces	Ch. 13. Appearance and Design

AD 3.2—Innovative Design

Encourage flexibility and innovation in design, through the use of contemporary zone districts and mixed-use. Encourage cutting-edge and alternative designs that emphasize energy efficiencies and sustainability trends in architecture and design.

Where are Design "Best Practices" in this Plan?

"Best practices" to guide the design of neighborhoods, urban centers, and other types of development within the community are located throughout this plan, as noted in the table to the right. The table identifies where to find design suggestions for particular topics.

Design standards would apply to commercial, employment, mixed-use, and certain residential development types.

AD 3.3—Unifying Site Design Elements

Promote (as part of master plan developments) unifying design elements, such as landscaping, fencing, and signage, and low-glare lighting. Streetscapes in the Northern Range are a good example of this.

AD 3.4—Design with the Natural Environment

New development should minimize heat and reflection from buildings and paved surfaces. In addition, it should be designed to mitigate dust and wind for all development. Parks and open spaces should be centrally placed in highly-visible parts of the development.

AD 3.5—Undergrounding Utilities

Require undergrounding of utilities in new development, except where it is not feasible due to the electrical transmission load or other operational issues as confirmed by the utility.

Goal AD 4—Protect important views from public sites and corridors

As growth occurs, the city will protect important viewsheds such as views of the mountains along major corridors, and viewpoints such as DIA and the Denver skyline.

Citywide Policies:

AD 4.1—Viewsheds Identified

Identify critical viewsheds throughout the city (e.g., views of DIA, Denver skyline, mountains, the wildlife refuge, certain structures such as tall refinery towers as seen from public sites and corridors), and develop measures to protect these viewsheds appropriately.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

AD 4.2—E-470 Views

Protect the views west from E-470 to the mountains by identifying particular viewsheds, potentially requiring development setbacks, buffering, and landscaping. Balance view protection with development quality and economic development benefits.

Goal AD 5—Increase public gathering spaces

The city will encourage inclusion of public gathering spaces as part of new private and public development.

Citywide Policies:

AD 5.1—People-Friendly Gathering Places

Encourage design of outdoor spaces in commercial, mixed-use, and civic areas to encourage people-gathering and interaction to build a stronger community; instill civic pride and provide a sense of place for residents, workers, and visitors to the city.

⭐ Best Practices

Inviting Public Gathering Spaces

Public spaces should be designed with these principles to make them "people-friendly":

✓ Focus activity in and around spaces by including shade amenities; flowers and trees; and walls and stairs designed as seating.

✓ Provide places for play (e.g., fountains or play equipment).

✓ Provide architectural variety and interest, and places to sit and eat.

✓ Include public art and places for concerts and performances.

✓ Use appropriate scale for people in signs and scale of plazas.

✓ Respect neighbors by using buffers and screening.

✓ Create connections to/from adjoining areas.

✓ Design for safety with appropriate levels of lighting and visibility from well-traveled areas.

✓ Screen or hide storage and service areas.

Appearance and Design Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the appearance and design goals. Table 13.3 coincides with the goals of this chapter. It identifies specific actions.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 13.3: Appearance and Design Strategies

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal AD 1	**Image of gateways and corridors improved**
AD 1a	**Prioritize Gateways and Corridors**
	Identify gateway and corridor areas to prioritize for Historic City and Northern Range enhancements.
AD 1b	**Overlay Districts – Gateways and Corridors**
	Develop overlay districts for gateways and corridors (e.g., E-470, Highway 2) to address corridor improvements and future development.
AD 1c	**Beautification Programs**
	Develop *Adopt-a*...(highway, street, trail, open space, etc.) programs with businesses and community organizations (for trails, highways, roads). Sponsor volunteer clean-up days and events for public roads and open space areas.
Goal AD 2	**Appearance of established neighborhoods and districts**
AD 2a	**Small Grant Funding Façade Improvements**
	Evaluate the opportunity to provide small grant funding for façade improvements in commercial districts, for home improvements in targeted neighborhoods and small neighborhood improvement projects, and for way-finding signage.
AD 2b	**Consolidate Properties**
	Acquire and consolidate properties in redevelopment areas. (See Chapter 8: Redevelopment and Reinvestment.)
AD 2c	**Coordination/CDOT Maintenance**
	Coordinate with CDOT and railroads to provide maintenance of small parcels along rights-of-way to improve the appearance along highways (e.g., Highway 2).
Goal AD 3	**Development quality for new neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial uses improved**
AD 3a	**LDC/Design Standards and Zoning**
	Address code/zoning amendments to implement the Future Land Use Plan and best practices for design. (See Chapter 4 strategies.)
AD 3b	**Design Standards Updated**
	Update design standards to address residential infill and compatibility, commercial landscaping and cohesive site planning, employment areas, and multi-family design.
AD 3c	**Revised Environmental Quality Standards**
	Require new development to provide proper dust and erosion control. Develop stormwater Best Management Practice standards to ensure environmental quality and low impact development.
AD 3d	**Education**
	Provide community education about quality design and its benefits.
AD 3e	**Exemplary Design Tools**
	Support zoning districts, developer agreements, specific plans, landscaping agreements for streetscaping, and other measures that provide flexibility to achieve exemplary design.
AD 3f	**Building Codes**
	Keep building codes up-to-date.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal AD 4	**Important viewsheds improved/protected**
AD 4a	**Identify Viewsheds**
	Develop a viewshed plan/program to identify certain view corridors for protection.
AD 4b	**Evaluate Outdoor Lighting Standards**
	Address outdoor lighting standards to control amount and glare. Require that outdoor fixtures (street lighting, externally illuminated signs, and advertising displays) are low-energy, shielded light fixtures.
Goal AD 5	**Public gathering spaces**
AD 5a	**Commercial Area Standards**
	Develop standards in LDC for commercial areas to require provision of outdoor spaces for dining and seating, and to provide public spaces as part of activity centers.

Monitoring Appearance and Design

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress toward achieving the appearance and design goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring, which describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 13.4: Appearance and Design Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
AD 1—Gateways and corridors	Improve appearance of gateways and corridors	▪ Number of volunteer hours for city clean-up effort. ▪ Number of trees planted in public places and along public streets. ▪ Funds for enhancement (i.e., matching grants received from state or federal sources). ▪ Community survey – image rating.
AD 2—Established neighborhoods and districts appearance	Improve appearance of established districts	▪ Small grants issued by the city for neighborhood or district improvement projects. ▪ Enhancement projects completed in neighborhoods. ▪ Number of code violations/types of specific violations.
AD 3—New development quality	Improve quality	▪ Community survey – image rating.
AD 4—Viewshed protection	Protect views from public sites/corridors	▪ Community survey – image rating.
AD 5—Public spaces	Increase public gathering spaces.	▪ Number of new outdoor public spaces in Commerce City.

14—Cultural Facilities and Tourism

Guiding Principle

Become a destination for tourism and visitors, drawing people and businesses to city arts, history, culture, sports, commerce, and other attractions.

Introduction

Commerce City is continually working to increase its arts and culture by building on its historic past and current assets. Its past can be traced to historic smaller communities that started in the mid- to late-1800s. Historic remnants of these places and their history are still evident.

See the appendix for Commerce City's Timeline of Historic Events, starting in 1859. The appendix also lists historic properties and a history of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal/National Wildlife Refuge.
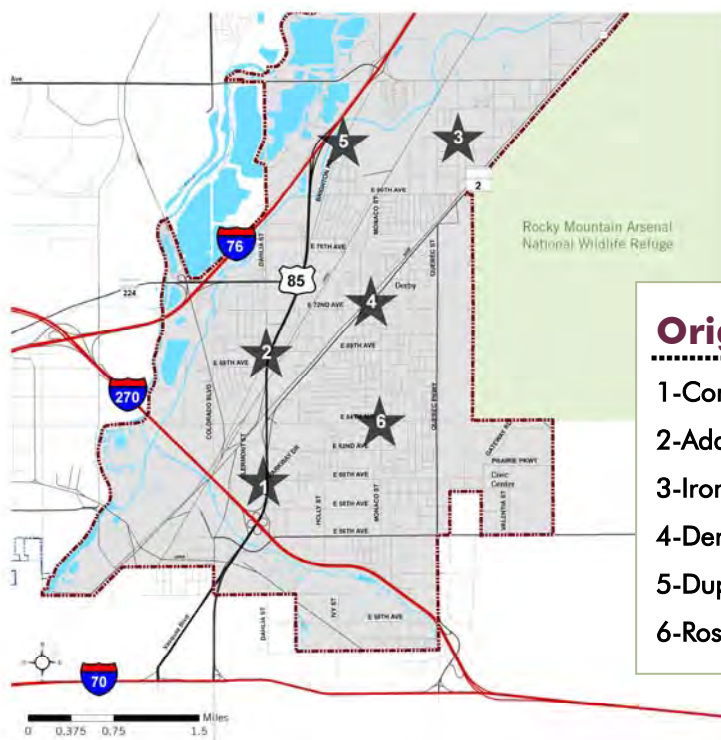
Original Communities

1-Commerce Town
2-Adams City
3-Irondale
4-Derby
5-Dupont
6-Rose Hill

Figure 14.1: Original Communities

Influencing Factors

The following factors helped inform and define the cultural facilities and tourism goals contained in this chapter of the plan:

Diverse Population

The rapid socioeconomic diversification of the city's population presents challenges in finding common values. However, tremendous opportunities exist to incorporate various cultures into the existing cultural facilities and offerings, such as has been occurring through the various citywide neighborhood outreach events.

Neighborhood outreach events present community culture and diversity. Commerce City has experienced Hispanic and non-Hispanic growth since 2000.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Established in the 1940s, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal brought industry to the area until the 1970s. While the Arsenal was previously off-limits to the community, its transition to a National Wildlife Refuge now affords excellent prospects for the city as the gateway to people visiting the wildlife and open space. At 17,000 acres, the site is now the largest contiguous open space for wildlife in the Denver-metro region and among the largest in the country, which will make it a major destination for visitors wishing to learn about its past and present activities.

Other Tourism Opportunities

The city's close proximity to Denver International Airport, with E-470 as a major corridor, provide an opportunity to attract business and recreational visitors from the region, nation, and even internationally. Prairie Gateway, Dick's Sporting Goods Park, and Barr Lake State Park are other opportunities for regional tourism, because they draw people from a much larger area. In addition, the city's history and cemeteries offer some opportunities for heritage tourism.

Directions and Goals

This chapter focuses on education and awareness about history, arts, and culture, and ideas and strategies to market the city's assets to make it an outstanding, livable, and attractive city.

Cultural Facilities and Tourism goals address:

1. Elevating awareness of city assets.

2. History, arts, and cultural development and preservation.

3. Destination sites and tourism.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

The culture and tourism goals contribute to the city's vitality by promoting arts, culture, history, and events, and improving the city as a destination, as addressed below. Cultural facilities and tourism goals help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Benefit the city economically through arts, culture, and events that attract visitors and tourism.

✓ Strengthen the economic climate by supporting cultural and historical aspects of the community. Industries that plan expansion oftentimes look for a healthy cultural climate.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Highlight the history revolving around the natural environment (e.g., historic flooding along the South Platte River), and enliven parks and public spaces with historical and cultural elements.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Promote access to residents to a broad variety of arts, cultural, and heritage events.

✓ Increase civic pride.

✓ Provide learning opportunities and strengthen social and generational ties within the community.

✓ Bridge with schools and youth (to help children and youth become creative, critical thinkers, and the workforce of tomorrow).

These Goals in Related Chapters

The cultural facilities and tourism goals in this chapter relate closely to other Plan elements, as identified in Table 14.1.

How Does this Element Relate to Sustainability?

A great city has a strong arts and cultural component. Benefits of culture, arts, and tourism include:

✓ Making a first rate city for livability and a destination for visitors and business.

✓ Improving the appearance and interest of the city and its parks and public places.

✓ Promoting pride, learning, and creativity (critical to an educated workforce and the vitality of neighborhoods).

Museums and facilities are popular with travelers and visitors, as well as theater, galleries, heritage or ethnic festivals, and music concerts.

Table 14.1: Related Chapters for the Cultural Facilities and Tourism Goals

Plan Element/Ch. #:	4 Land Use, Growth	5 Economic Dev.	6 Fiscal Stability	7 Housing/Neighbor	8 Redevelopment	9 Transportation	10 Safety, Wellness	11 Parks, Open Space	12 Public Facilities	13 Appearance	14 Cultural Facilities	15 Environmental
Goals												
1. Elevate awareness of assets	✖	✖		✖		✖		✖			✖	✖
2. Arts, history, and cultural goals	✖				✖			✖	✖	✖	✖	
3. Tourism destination sites		✖									✖	✖

Commerce City features great neighborhoods and housing choices with amenities, such as Buffalo Run Golf Course.

Commerce City features established business and industry (i.e., Sutrak).

Cultural Facilities and Tourism Goals and Policies

Goal CF 1—Elevate awareness of Commerce City's assets

The city will define and establish a positive image of Commerce City that builds on city and regional assets, its cultural traditions, and history.

Citywide Policies:

CF 1.1—Positive Assets Showcased/Marketed

Perform ongoing education and marketing of the community to the region, state, and nation, showcasing the positive and strong qualities of the city, including:

- Gateway to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge,
- Dick's Sporting Goods Park,
- Access to major travel routes through the city,
- Proximity to Denver International Airport,
- Access to future fixed-rail transit,
- Great neighborhoods and housing choices,
- Established industrial areas,
- Proximity to downtown Denver, and
- New growth potential.

Goal CF 2—Preserve and broaden history, arts, and culture

Commerce City will plan and provide for a broad range of art and cultural facilities and events (e.g., museums, arts centers, theater, sports venues) and preserve remaining elements and characteristics of the original communities to project a unique identity. The city will promote display of local arts in public places to add energy, imagination, interest, and variety to places.

Citywide Policies:

CF 2.1—Original Communities Recognition

Recognize and celebrate the original communities, as shown on the Future Land Use Plan—Commerce Town, Adams City, Irondale, Derby, Dupont, and Rose Hill. Improve preservation and character of historic communities and historic structures that are significant in raising awareness and understanding of the community's history and cultural diversity (e.g., through cultural events, signage, architectural treatments).

CF 2.2—Regular Celebrations and Events

Continue to encourage private and public participation in neighborhood outreach events, parades (e.g., Memorial Day), holiday celebrations, art appreciation events, music festivals, and other fairs and festivals that bring community members together and increase tourism.

CF 2.3—Cultural Facilities

Plan for and support cultural facilities (e.g., museums, performing arts, and community facilities) that aim to locate throughout the city.

Commerce City's Historical Features

Historic attributes include:

- ✓ Original communities,
- ✓ Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge,
- ✓ Commerce and industry,
- ✓ Railroads, and
- ✓ Historic cemeteries.
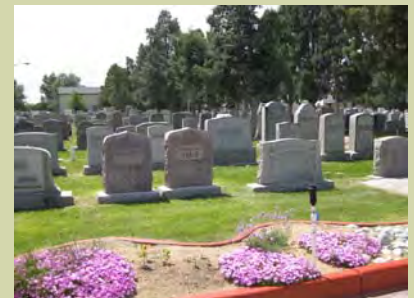
Rose Hill and Riverside Cemeteries.

Public art at Buffalo Run golf course.

Belle Creek Movie Night Out.

Civic Center as the Community's "front porch"

Civic spaces should be settings where celebrations are held, where exchanges (social and economic) happen, and where generations and cultures mix—like a front porch of a home. Civic centers work best when they function as part of a larger district.

Dick's Sporting Goods Park is an excellent location for events and festivals.

CF 2.4—Local Art Integrated into Public Places

To enrich residents' and visitors' experiences and give artists a venue, support integration of art into local public settings such as parks, streets, bridges, libraries, community centers, Civic Center, and other public venues.

CF 2.5—Awareness of City's Historic Cemeteries

Inventory the city's historic cemeteries; encourage their ongoing maintenance and increase awareness of them.

CF 2.6—Historic Preservation, Evaluation

Using appropriate state and federal standards, evaluate the significance of historic resources, including potential structures and potential districts. Should significant resources exist, prioritize them for preservation and/or adaptive reuse.

Goal CF 3—Increase destination sites for tourism and visitors

Commerce City will expand on and promote its facilities as a destination for specialized tourism and business niches, when determined to be a beneficial use of resources.

Policies for Strategic Planning Areas:

CF3.1—Prairie Gateway to the National Wildlife Refuge

Promote appropriate gateway tourism uses near the entrance and Visitor Center of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge and along its edge, which will entice visitors and economic activity (e.g., buffalo viewing).

CF 3.2—Civic Center/Sports and Entertainment District

Expand the role of the Civic Center as the community's *front porch*. Work with Dick's Sporting Goods Park to connect with surrounding spaces and include a mix of retail and active uses. Promote entertainment uses in Prairie Gateway, including the stadium.

CF 3.3—E-470 Hotel/Visitor Lodging

Encourage development of lodging for visitors, especially near DIA/ E-470 and in the Tower Road area.

CF 3.4—Conference/Convention Facilities

Explore feasibility of conference/convention facilities In the E-470 Influence area, to take advantage of the proximity to the airport.

CF3.4—Barr Lake State Park

Work with the state to expand awareness of and access to Barr Lake State Park.

See Chapter 11, Parks, Open Space, and Recreation, for policies related to parks and recreation as magnets for visitors and events.

The proximity of DIA and E-470 provide opportunities to expand hotel and visitor lodging in Commerce City.

Cultural Facilities and Tourism Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the cultural facilities and tourism goals. Table 14.2 coincides with the goals of this chapter, and it identifies specific actions.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 14.2: Cultural Facilities and Tourism Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal CF 1	**Elevated awareness of assets**
CF 1a	**Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan**
	Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan that identifies potential funding sources to increase awareness regarding the city's assets, arts and culture, and tourism.
CF 1b	**Promote Golf Course**
	Continue to promote the Buffalo Run Golf Course.
Goal CF 2	**Preserved history/broadened arts and culture**
CF 2a	**Prioritize Historic Resources**
	Evaluate and prioritize historic resources.
CF 2b	**Public/Private Partnerships – Historic Resources**
	Engage in public/private partnerships to preserve and rehabilitate significant resources.
CF 2c	**Historic Preservation Board**
	Consider whether a Historic Preservation Board could advance the aims of this Plan to elevate awareness of historical sites and features, and preserve historic resources.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
CF 2d	**Art work Placement Process**
	Establish a process for selection and approval of art work and placement.
CF 2e	**Art and Culture Funding**
	Consider dedicated art funding source (e.g., 1% of development cost for Art and Culture as part of public projects).
CF 2f	**Partnerships – Arts and Culture**
	Partner with artists and cultural organizations (e.g., Cultural Council) to organize arts, festivals, and events, including performing arts. Partner with schools (youth art programs).
CF 2g	**Cultural Events**
	Increase multi-cultural events citywide through partnerships.
CF 2h	**Inventory Cemeteries**
	Inventory the historic cemeteries in the city and work with ownership to ensure their on going maintenance while increasing awareness about them.
Goal CF 3	**Destination sites**
CF 3a	**Coordinated Transit for National Wildlife Refuge**
	Work with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the National Wildlife Refuge to implement the planned transit shuttle connecting Stapleton to the National Wildlife Refuge visitor center.
CF 3b	**Restaurant Diversity**
	Increase diversity of restaurants and stores to help draw people to the city. (See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)
CF 3c	**Feasibility Study for Convention Center**
	Explore feasibility of convention center, performing arts center, and other facilities.
CF 3d	**LDC Amendments**
	Modify appropriate zoning districts to allow and encourage hotels.

Monitoring Cultural Facilities and Tourism

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress toward achieving the cultural facilities and tourism goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That section describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 14.3: Cultural Facilities and Tourism Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
CF 1—Awareness of assets	Increase outside awareness of city offerings	▪ Programs to advertise. ▪ Attendance at city offerings.
CF 2—Arts, history, and cultural goals	Increase events, celebrations, and local art	▪ Cultural, musical, sport, or other events (number held annually). ▪ Amount of funds contributed publicly toward cultural facilities and events. ▪ Number of public art installations.
CF 3—Destination sites	Increase visits	▪ Number of hotel beds. ▪ Number of new lodging facilities. ▪ Number of visitors to Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

15—Environmental Conservation and Stewardship

Guiding Principle

Increase recycling, conservation, and the use of renewable energy sources, while reducing energy and resource use overall.

Introduction

Local governments are on the forefront of dealing with the volatile cost of energy, the diminishing finite resources, and the effects of climate change. Commerce City aims to become a balanced and green city, in part through this Plan's policies. This chapter also addresses natural resources and environment.

Influencing Factors

Sustainability, Energy and Climate

Local mayors and councils nationwide have initiated Climate Action plans and other sustainability measures. Commerce City is doing its part as a leader in maximizing the efficiency of operations and minimizing resource use. The development of a LEED-certified green Civic Center and focusing on city operations are examples. (See description of LEED on page 196.)

Natural Resources and Environment

Commerce City also recognizes the need to address resource use and conservation (e.g., for water, solid waste reduction, and air quality). The city also recognizes the need to avoid placing future development in hazardous areas, such as in airport noise zones, near landfills, and in floodplains.

See Chapters 3, Future Land Use Plan and 11, Parks, Open Space, and Recreation.

Some "green" ways to address energy

- ✓ **Land Use Patterns:** A focus on infill development is one of the best approaches to reduce future energy use. A compact pattern with mixed-uses that support walking, bicycling, and transit use with open space conservation helps reduce energy consumption.

- ✓ **Buildings:** New and retrofit housing, industries, offices, and commercial developments should be energy-efficient to reduce electricity use, primarily for heating and cooling, but also for other appliances.

- ✓ **Site Planning:** Street-orientation, placement of buildings, and use of shading should contribute to energy-efficiency and the ability to use renewable resources (e.g., solar and wind).

- ✓ **Development Code:** The code should remove barriers, incentivize use of renewable sources and water conservation, and implement the Future Land Use Plan.

Directions and Goals

Commerce City can do much to promote wise energy and water use and reduce waste internally, but the community will need to share the responsibility. Planning and policy direction aimed at the various topics in earlier chapters of this Plan, coupled with efficient use and conservation of resources, can make a big difference in how well a community achieves its goal of becoming sustainable. In addition, how a city grows (land use patterns, site planning, and buildings) can also have positive (or negative) effects on energy use, automobile dependence and miles traveled, and the need for the expansion of public services and streets. This Plan can help shape conservation and stewardship in the future through recommending incentives and regulatory programs.

This chapter's goals address:

1. A Sustainability Plan with targets;
2. Energy efficiency and use of renewable sources;
3. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
4. Increasing water conservation and protection of water resources;
5. Solid waste reduction and recycling;
6. Air pollutant reduction;
7. Noise impacts; and
8. Hazardous areas.

Sustainability/Related Chapters

This Element Contributes to Sustainability...

Finally, the environmental conservation and stewardship goals are focal to city sustainability and linking other goals in this Plan. This chapter's goals help:

A Robust Economy and Commerce:

✓ Reduce costs of providing services, energy, transportation, and utilities.
✓ Reduce the need for new landfills (waste reduction).
✓ Increase household and business savings through reduced energy costs.

A Quality Environmental Context:

✓ Reduce water pollution, air pollution and waste, making air and water cleaner.
✓ Curb need for landfill expansion or relocation.

A Resilient Community:

✓ Safeguard resources for future generation use (i.e., our children and their children).
✓ Improve community health through cleaner air and water.

How Does this Element Relate to Sustainability?

....

This element contributes to sustainability because reducing energy use, reducing waste, improving water conservation, increasing renewable energy use, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions are vital for environmental quality, economic prosperity, longevity, and community health.

These Goals in Related Chapters

The environmental conservation and stewardship goals relate to other Plan elements as noted in Table 15.1.

Table 15.1: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Goals and Related Chapters

Plan Element/Ch. #:	4 Land Use, Growth	5 Economic Dev.	6 Fiscal Stability	7 Housing/Neighbor	8 Redevelopment	9 Transportation	10 Safety, Wellness	11 Parks, Open Space	12 Public Facilities	13 Appearance	14 Cultural Facilities	15 Environmental
Goals												
1. Prepare Sustainability Plan	✖	✖	✖			✖		✖	✖			✖
2. Energy efficiency, renewable energy	✖			✖	✖	✖			✖			✖
3. Greenhouse gas emission reduction	✖	✖		✖		✖						✖
4. Water conservation and protection								✖	✖			✖
5. Reduce solid waste disposal												✖
6. Reduce air pollutants						✖						✖
7. Limit noise impacts	✖			✖			✖					✖
8. Avoid hazards	✖			✖								✖

The acronym LEED stands for "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design." The certification program, run by the U.S. Green Building Council, concentrates on improving building performance in five areas:

1. health,
2. energy efficiency,
3. indoor quality and materials,
4. sustainable site development, and
5. water savings.

Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Goals and Policies

Goal EC 1—Develop a Sustainability Plan that balances economic, environmental, and community needs

The city will develop a Sustainability Plan that considers and monitor this Plan's goals, and implements the concept of sustainability to balance interdependent trends and needs.

Citywide Policies:

EC 1.1—Sustainable Community Score Card (Plan Monitoring)

Use indicators and a *Community Score Card* to consider interdependent trends rather than isolated strengths and weaknesses, for on going assessment of progress toward plan goals.

EC 1.2—Project Review and Green Business Score Card

Adapt indicators for use as a *Project Review Score Card* to evaluate how well large projects (e.g., Master Planned Developments), city facilities, or businesses meet this Plan's sustainability goals and achieve the community's vision.

Goal EC 2—Improve communitywide energy efficiency and increase renewable energy use

Commerce City will support renewable energy production, efficiency, and energy conservation in city programs and private developments. Measures should be cost-effective and meet other community goals.

Citywide Policies:

EC 2.1—Energy Efficiency—City Enterprise

Lead by example in city buildings, programs, and operations to reduce waste and energy use, improve indoor air quality and environmental quality.

EC 2.2—Land Use Patterns to Reduce Energy Requirements

Support land use patterns and buildings in Commerce City and its neighborhoods that conserve resources and minimize waste and avoid sprawl.

See Chapters 3 and 4, Future Land Use Plan and Land Use and Growth.

EC 2.3—Communitywide Energy Efficiency

Support "green" buildings (LEED buildings), LEED-ND (Neighborhood Design), and Star Community Initiatives to promote energy efficiency throughout Commerce City.

EC 2.4—Renewable Energy—Green Building Techniques

Support local and community use of renewable energy sources in residential, commercial, and industrial operations (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, bio-based, and other emerging technologies).

Goal EC 3—Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

The city will support internal practices and community growth aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the future.

Citywide Policies:

EC 3.1—Develop a Sustainability Plan and Targets

To address greenhouse gas emissions, develop a Sustainability Plan to address Climate Action. Include consideration of local government practices, regulations, incentives, and programs to assist the community in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and its carbon footprint.

EC 3.2—Energy-Efficient Development

Promote energy-efficiency in new development of homes and businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

EC 3.3—Transportation Alternatives

Promote transportation alternatives in new and developed areas to reduce vehicle trips and overall use.

See Chapters 4, 7, and 9: Land Use and Growth, Housing and Neighborhoods, and Transportation, for policies related to land patterns, transportation and energy use, and energy-efficiency in homes.

What are Greenhouse Gases?

Rising concentrations of greenhouse gases produce an increase in the average surface temperature of the earth, producing changes in precipitation patterns, storms, and sea level. This is known as "climate change."

In the U.S., greenhouse gas emissions come primarily from burning fossil fuels in energy use. Energy-related **carbon dioxide** emissions, resulting from combustion of gas, coal, and natural gas represented 82% of U.S. man-made greenhouse gas emissions in 2006. **Methane** is another gas that comes from landfills, coal mines, oil and gas operations, and agriculture, which represented 9% of emissions. Other gases account for the remainder. (U.S. Energy Information Administration, U.S., 2009)

Cities can help by reducing fossil fuel use, reducing electricity and other energy use, and reducing waste that goes into landfills.

Solar, a form of renewable energy, is becoming increasingly affordable.

Long-Term Water Predicament

The outlook of Western U.S. long-term water scarcity means that communities will need to be creative and conserve. The long-term prediction of water scarcity is due to many factors, including population growth and development in the Rocky Mountain region, climate change, limited storage sites, lack of distribution facilities, diminishing snow pack, and competition for water from other states and communities. (Natural Resources Conservation Service)

(i) What Do these Terms Mean?

Solid Waste

✓ "**Source reduction:** Altering the design, manufacture, or use of products and materials to reduce the amount and toxicity of what gets thrown away.

✓ **Recycling:** Sorting, collecting, and processing materials to manufacture and sell them as new products.

✓ **Composting:** Decomposing organic waste, such as food scraps and yard trimmings, with microorganisms (mainly bacteria and fungi) to produce compost. Compost is organic material that can be used as a soil amendment or as a medium to grow plants."
(U.S. EPA, 2009)

Goal EC 4—Increase water conservation and protection of water resources

Commerce City is not the lead agency that provides water to customers. However, the city will encourage water conservation by promoting drought-tolerant landscaping, exploring other water recycling and dual-system use, and sponsoring other measures.

Citywide Policies:

EC 4.1—Community Water Use Reduction

Focus on programs and partnerships to highlight the value of water conservation by reducing water use in homes, businesses, and for landscaping. Promote low-water xeric landscaping for new or retrofit projects. Partner with South Adams County Water and Sanitation District in programs that encourage conservation, dual system supply (to irrigate parks, the golf course, and other city facilities, with non-potable water supply).

EC 4.2—Stormwater Best Management Practices

Promote stormwater Best Management Practices for site design to reduce impervious surfaces (increasing porous pavement), emphasize natural filtration for stormwater, and reduce run-off of pollutants in rivers, streams, and wetlands.

EC 4.3—Former Arsenal Water Protection Monitoring

Preserve and protect groundwater throughout the city. Collaborate with involved agencies to continue the groundwater monitoring program at the former Rocky Mountain Arsenal until all treatment goals have been met.

EC 4.4—Safe Drinking Water

Ensure that all potable water meets the requirements of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

Goal EC 5—Reduce solid waste disposal

The city will promote programs to reduce per capita solid waste disposal through waste recycling, reduction, and re-use.

Citywide Policies:

EC 5.1—Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Re-use

Support programs for city and community facilities (in key locations) that focus on source reduction, recycling, composting, and construction materials waste diversion for reuse and exchange of materials. The city, within its operations and buildings, will encourage recycling.

This Plan promotes recycling and reducing solid waste.

EC 5.2—Partnerships with Private Companies to Reduce Waste

Support partnerships with private companies to promote waste reduction, recycling, re-use, composting, and the overall goal of reducing solid waste disposal.

Goal EC 6—Reduce generation of air pollutants and promote non-polluting activities

The city will promote reducing air pollution and non-polluting activities to minimize impacts to human health, sustain or improve the economy of the city, and improve air quality.

Citywide Policies:

EC 6.1—Tree Planting and Preservation

Encourage tree planting to achieve a widespread urban canopy on private and public properties and along streets. Planting trees improves air quality, contributes to a positive image, and provides shade and cooling.

EC 6.2—Indoor Air Quality

Encourage the use of green products in construction or renovations and ensure that buildings slated for renovation are evaluated for lead-related risks and mitigated as appropriate.

EC 6.3—Transportation and Air Quality

Explore programs to reduce vehicle trips and miles driven, including better connectivity in street system, compact development patterns, transit, alternative transportation modes, Transportation Demand Management Programs, and the like. Work with public entities and private businesses to sponsor alternative transportation and carpooling.

EC 6.4—Industry Air Emissions

Strive to make improvements in air quality by coordinating with existing businesses to improve air emissions. The city will emphasize attraction of clean, non-polluting businesses and work to retain clean industries in the city.

See Chapter 9, Transportation.

Trees throughout the city provide shade, improve air quality, and mitigate stormwater flooding and water quality.

Residential development should not occur in airport noise impact zones.

Goal EC 7—Limit noise impacts

Commerce City will identify areas with significant noise impacts related to the airport, industry, and rail lines, and will avoid or reduce these impacts through the location and design of future development.

Citywide Policies:

EC 7.1—DIA Noise Impacts Limited and Mitigated

Avoid placing residential development in noise impact zones near DIA.

EC 7.2—Railroad Noise Impacts Mitigated

Mitigate railroad and industrial noise near residential development.

EC 7.3—Highway Noise Impacts Mitigated

Avoid placing residential development near high-volume highways.

Goal EC 8—Decrease future development near hazards

New development will be located in places other than floodplains and other hazardous areas, such as airport zones and landfills. The city will promote the remediation and redevelopment of Brownfield sites to eliminate or reduce the number of sites with potential environmental hazards.

Citywide Policies:

EC 8.1—Airport Hazards

Require that development around DIA is consistent with the safety policies and land use compatibility guidelines contained in the adopted DIA Master Plan. All development shall comply with federal regulations regarding approach and departure zones. No residential development shall be constructed within three-quarters of a mile of any existing or planned runway. New development will be required to provide disclosure statements and additional architectural/energy/noise buffering.

EC 8.2—Flood Hazard Risks Minimized

Retain flood map information and prohibit future residential development in flood hazard areas. Maintain and enforce development standards related to the flood zone, to minimize financial and property loss due to flooding.

EC 8.3—Brownfield Locations

Pursue an active program to identify Brownfield locations that may be opportunities for infill development, if remediated.

EC 8.4—Landfills

Avoid developing residential uses near existing or former landfill sites to protect residents from methane gas and other negative landfill externalities. Non-residential developments also should include measures to protect workers from methane gas.

EC 8.5—Hazardous Materials Routes and Disposal

Require use of designated routes for transporting hazardous materials within the city to prevent contamination in developed areas. Business and household hazardous waste shall be disposed of properly to prevent contamination.

EC 8.6—Former Arsenal Pollution Plumes Avoidance

Keep residential development out of contaminated pollution plumes associated with former Rocky Mountain Arsenal activities.

Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Strategies

This section contains a list of strategies to implement the environmental conservation and stewardship goals. Table 15.2 coincides with the goals of this chapter and identifies specific actions.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for the Priority Action Plan summarizing key strategies for the city to accomplish in the next several years. Appendix E contains a full list of all the chapters' strategies.

Table 15.2: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal EC 1	**Sustainability Plan**
EC 1a	**Sustainability Plan/Climate Action Plan**
	Develop a Sustainability Plan and/or Climate Action Plan (with incentives, targets for reduction, strategies, and regulations).
EC 1b	**Municipal Code Audit/Amendments**
	Perform an audit of the Municipal Code, including LDC and Engineering Standards; determine barriers to sustainability; amend accordingly.
EC 1c	**Prioritize Indicators – Score Cards**
	Prioritize and adapt indicators for *a Community Score Card* and *Project Review Score Card* and begin monitoring program.
EC 1d	**Regional Collaboration**
	Collaborate regionally to share information and avoid duplicative efforts on Sustainability Planning.
Goal EC 2	**Improved energy efficiency/renewable energy use**
EC 2a	**Energy Conservation Awareness Program**
	Programs to promote energy conservation awareness (coordination with local utility providers and in-state programs to reduce energy consumption).
EC 2b	**Point System – New Building Energy Conservation**
	Provide an incentive or point system for new buildings.
EC 2c	**Transportation Demand Management**
	Support Transportation Demand Management, encouraging public and private businesses to implement employee use of carpooling programs, public transportation, and/or alternatives to motorized transportation.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal EC 3	**Greenhouse gas emissions reduced**
	(See strategies for Goals 1 and 2, above.)
Goal EC 4	**Water conservation and protection of water resources**
EC 4a	**Water Quality**
	South Adams County Water and Sanitation District provides water quality testing and ensures safety and quality of drinking water.
EC 4b	**Low-Impact Stormwater Standards**
	Develop standards for low-impact development stormwater practices. (See Public Facilities and Infrastructure strategies.)
Goal EC 5	**Solid waste disposal reduced**
EC 5a	**Municipal Solid Waste Reduction Plan**
	Develop a Municipal Solid Waste Reduction Plan and revisit existing landfills and their function.
EC 5b	**Recycling**
	Promote city recycling program (city facilities and events) and possibly yard waste composting.
Goal EC 6	**Air pollutants/activities reduced**
EC 6a	**Tree Preservation Standards**
	Expand tree preservation standards that exist in LDC.
EC 6b	**Street Tree Planting and Maintenance**
	Promote street tree planting and maintenance program.
EC 6c	**Regional Air Quality Planning**
	Cooperate with local and regional agencies to develop an effective approach to regional air-quality planning and management and pollution prevention. Solicit and consider comments from agencies on proposed projects that affect air quality.
Goal EC 7	**Noise impacts limited**
EC 7a	**Residential Buffering**
	Require buffers between industrial and residential, and between residential and the airport. (See Future Land Use Plan.)
EC 7b	**Residential Noise Mitigation**
	Require residential noise mitigation for all residential development east of E-470.
Goal EC 8	**Future development near hazards reduced**
EC 8a	**Building Codes**
	Administer building codes related to abandoned structures and hazardous materials.
EC 8b	**Standards for Sand and Gravel**
	Develop standards for sand and gravel mining operations.
EC 8c	**Flammable Gas Overlay District**
	Develop a flammable gas overlay district to protect against methane gas buildup in structures.
EC 8d	**Protect Groundwater**
	As warranted, work with responsible entities and agencies to evaluate potential groundwater pollution from historic activities or current practices. Ensure remediation is required.

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Monitoring Environmental Conservation and Stewardship

This section identifies possible performance indicators for monitoring progress toward achieving the environmental conservation and stewardship goals.

See Chapter 16, Implementation, for a description of Plan Monitoring. That chapter describes how to narrow down and select appropriate performance indicators, and how to fine-tune and set targets.

Table 15.3: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Indicators

Related Goal	Target	Possible Indicators
EC 1—Sustainability Plan	Develop and follow plan with targets for topics below	▪ (Note: Indicators related to carbon emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, city energy use, etc., to be developed in the Sustainability Plan.)
EC 2—Energy efficiency	Reduced communitywide energy use per capita	▪ Communitywide energy use (measured by utilities). ▪ Permits issued for renewable energy projects (e.g., wind, solar panels).
EC 3—Greenhouse gas emission reduction	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time	▪ See indicators for EC 2, above.
EC 4—Water	a. Reduce water use per capita b. Improve quality of stormwater runoff	▪ Water use per capita. ▪ Number of new xeriscape projects. ▪ Amount of impervious surface in new development and redevelopment; projects with low impact stormwater treatment.
EC 5—Solid waste disposal	Reduce waste per capita	▪ Solid waste quantity (i.e., solid waste, recyclables, compost material) per capita.
EC 6—Air pollution	Contribute to better air quality in the region	▪ See transportation indicators and indicators for EC 2, above. ▪ Number of street trees planted.
EC 7—Noise impacts	Avoid placing residences within noise restricted areas of DIA; limit residences near DIA	▪ Number of residences built within 60 DNL noise contour and within three-quarter of a mile of future runways.
EC 8—Hazards/ Avoidance	Development avoids hazards	▪ Number of structures in floodplain.

16—Plan Implementation

Introduction

This *C3 Vision Plan* is a vision plan and a policy document that will guide decision-making within the city. While it contains many long-term and seemingly far-reaching goals and ideals, it also needs to be achievable. This chapter explains how Commerce City will begin to implement this Plan, once adopted, through:

1. Specific Actions, identified in a Priority Action Plan,
2. A Monitoring Program, measuring progress towards achievement of plan goals (i.e., the *Community Score Card*), and
3. Plan Amendments and Updates, described as five-year updates and a clear process for more frequent changes.

This chapter addresses actions, amendments, and monitoring to carry out this Plan and reach its high aiming goals.

Actions

Necessary Types of Actions

Commerce City will implement this Plan using several different approaches, as briefly described below, including:

- Policy Decisions;
- Land Development Code Amendments;
- Partnerships and Intergovernmental Agreements;
- Programs; and
- Infrastructure Assessment/Improvements.

Policy Decisions

The city will carry out most of the policies in this Plan during day-to-day decisions—those made by the Planning Commission and City Council, and sometimes planning staff. These groups will continually make decisions regarding development proposals and *C3 Vision Plan* amendments, using the Future Land Use Plan and plan policies to guide decisions will ensure consistency. Two examples of meeting the intent of this Plan's policies would be restricting rezoning of industrial lands for residential uses, unless consistent with the Future Land Use Plan, or phasing development at the eastern edge of the city to avoid leapfrog development.

Land Development Code (LDC) amendments will be necessary to implement this Plan, including standards to allow and encourage regional commercial, as shown above.

The city will develop new programs and facilities, based on needs and available resources.

Programs, such as neighborhood planning or planning for FasTracks, will also be important to implement this Plan.

Land Development Code Amendments

While Commerce City just undertook a major code overhaul, the city will need to make several development regulations consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan. The city will review its Land Development Code (LDC), including zoning, development standards, and subdivision regulations, for consistency with this Plan. The strategies within plan elements address particular aspects of the LDC that will need to be updated including but not limited to:

- updating certain residential, industrial/employment, and commercial zoning districts and standards to be consistent with the land use categories in Chapter 3;
- amending dimensional standards for infill areas;
- coordinating rezonings to make zoning consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (e.g., Tiffany and Industrial Enclave area);
- adding new design standards for commercial centers; and
- updating the LDC with contemporary sustainable development, approaches, for example allowing solar panels and small agriculture.

Partnerships and Intergovernmental Agreements

A number of this Plan's recommendations will best be achieved through cooperation and partnerships and (more formally) Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) between the city and other governmental entities, such as Adams County, the Regional Transportation District (RTD), South Adams County Water and Sanitation District, or other special districts. The city already has various IGAs in place, some of which may require amendments to remain current.

Programs

This Plan establishes a foundation for new or ongoing programs, which are a major way to accomplish many of the goals of this Plan. For example, some policies recommend participating in planning efforts, such as planning for FasTracks, enforcement of infill/phased growth, enforcement of future growth and relationship to infrastructure, continued neighborhood planning, volunteer stewardship programs to maintain open space and parks, and others addressed in the strategies. Programs have varying levels of priority, depending on the issues involved and available resources. Consequently, the city will initiate them at different times.

Infrastructure Assessment/Improvements

In some cases, the Plan will require that the city take a proactive role to assess current and future needs and plan for expansion and improvement to services and facilities, such as a police substation or recreation center development. Commerce City will need to

coordinate with districts on other infrastructure needs, including schools, water/sewer, and energy/electricity, to more closely align with the goals of efficiently providing services and for development to pay its way.

The Priority Action Plan

Priority Action Plan Priorities

The Action Plan identifies the highest priority strategies from the previous chapters. It also identifies responsible parties or city departments and timing upon adoption of this Plan.

How the Highest Priority Strategies Have Been Selected

Generally the action plan carries forward several of the top strategies from each chapter to achieve a balance in meeting this Plan's objectives, with strategies selected based on input from advisory committees, staff, elected and appointed officials, and the following criteria. The strategies in the table:

- Have the greatest effect in implementing the goals of a particular chapter and multiple other chapters of this Plan (e.g., they will accomplish "a lot of bang for the buck" and will encompass various disciplines.);
- Are the most efficient to implement—based on the city's available resources and staff;
- Will leverage city revenues and funds; and
- Are most important to begin immediately or within four to six years of plan adoption, to avoid missing the opportunity to achieve Plan goals.

The table does not include many of the important ongoing strategies (e.g., consistency with the Future Land Use Plan or partnerships), to avoid creating an especially lengthy list. (See Chapters 4 through 15 for additional strategies.)

Priority Action Plan as Guide to Work Plan

After adoption of this Plan, the city will continue its work on specific actions to carry out this Plan's goals and policies. The Priority Action Plan will help guide the city's work plan, by using this table as a preliminary annual work program. The city's departments will need to administratively update the work plan on a periodic basis—every one to two years. Once the actions listed in this Priority Action Plan are complete, some of the additional strategies listed within the plan chapters can be brought forward—until all are complete.

Timing of Actions

The table below includes the highest priority strategies. The city will begin them:

- **Within one to three years**; or
- **Within four to six years**.

Certain actions will also be ongoing after the city initiates them.

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame 1-3 Years	Time-Frame 4-6 Years	Time-Frame Ongoing
Chapter 4: Land Use and Growth					
LU 1a / 1b	**Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments / Plan Guides Development** Update the LDC and zone districts to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) and categories in Chapter 3. Use the FLUP to guide development patterns and mix of uses.	**Planning Division**	■		✔
LU 2a	**Infill Incentives** Provide incentives for infill development and redevelopment (e.g., streamlined review process, rebated or reduced fees, or relaxed standards to allow for infill).	**Community Development Department/ Economic Development**	■		
LU 2c	**Annexation Criteria** Develop annexation criteria for Adams County enclaves. Different criteria may be needed for Historic City, Irondale, Northern Range, and E-470.	**Planning Division**	■		
LU 2f / 1c	**Tiered Growth / Jobs-to-Housing Ratio** Adopt a Tiered Planning System and phasing criteria, as suggested in Policy 2.2. Monitor jobs-to-housing goals in new growth areas.	**Planning Division**	■		✔
LU 3b	**Neighborhood and Sub-area Plans** Develop neighborhood plans for residential or mixed-use areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., Adams City/FasTracks station site and Wembley).	**Planning Division**	■		
Chapter 5: Economic Development					
ED 1a	**Economic Development Strategic Plan** Implement strategies of the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*.	**Economic Development**	■		✔
ED 2a	**Higher Education/Workforce Training** Develop a strategy to attract and enhance opportunities for higher education and post-secondary educational training programs.	**Economic Development/ Community Development**		■	
Chapter 6: Fiscal Stability					
FS 1b	**Prioritize Needs** Prioritize needs in Capital Improvement Program (aligning with this Plan).	**City Manager/ Finance/ Public Works - Engineering**	■		✔
FS 1c	**Pursue Grants** Leverage city resources to utilize state and federal funding sources, and grants (including sustainability-related and healthy communities funding).	**City Manager**			✔
Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhoods					
HN 1d	**Proactive Property Maintenance** Explore ways to make code enforcement more proactive to ensure property maintenance and prevent further zoning and municipal code violations.	**Building Division / Neighborhood Services**	■		✔

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame 1-3 Years	Time-Frame 4-6 Years	Time-Frame Ongoing
HN 2c	**Foreclosure Prevention Programs** Work with all housing agencies to ensure that Commerce City residents are aware of and have access to the foreclosure prevention and assistance programs administered by Adams County.	**Housing Division**			✔
HN 2b	**Household Energy Conservation Funding** Explore options to assist households with reducing household energy costs (costs associated with energy consumption, transportation, and utilities).	**Housing Division**		■	
HN 2d	**Senior Housing** Pursue federal programs to build senior housing, including affordable housing with supportive services and senior housing for all income levels. Revise the LDC to allow senior housing in districts consistent with Chapter 4.	**Housing Division/ Planning Division**	■		
	Chapter 8: Redevelopment and Reinvestment				
RR 2a	**Urban Renewal Area (URA) Tools** Expand application of Urban Renewal Areas (URAs) tools (including financing) to achieve redevelopment goals, including existing URAS (Prairie Gateway, Derby, and US 85), and potential new URAs (e.g. FasTracks area).	**Finance/ Planning Division/ Economic Development**	■		✔
RR 2b	**Quasi-Public Urban Renewal Entity** Explore feasibility of a non-profit, quasi-public entity to oversee infill and redevelopment in neighborhoods that could purchase and rehabilitate structures, or consolidate and sell properties.	**Finance/ Planning Division/ Economic Development**		■	
RR 2c	**FasTracks Station Sub-Area Plan** Develop FasTracks station sub-area plan. Modify zoning to achieve an appropriate mix of uses (especially for the T.O.D. site), using a blend of regulations, guidelines, and incentives.	**Planning Division/ Engineering Division**	■		
RR 3a	**Funding and Grants for Redevelopment/Brownfields** Explore grants, low-interest loans, and redevelopment corporations to address redevelopment goals and to reduce industrial/residential conflicts.	**City Manager/ Planning Division/ Economic Development**	■		✔
	Chapter 9: Transportation				
T 1a	**Road Network Planning** Implement improvements to the roadway network based on the 5-year CIP with priorities as determined by the Transportation Plan.	**Engineering Division/ Planning Division**	■		✔
T 1b	**Transportation Fees** Determine potential new sources of funding for transportation improvements (e.g., road impact fees, street fees)	**Engineering Division**		■	
T 3c	**Prioritize Pedestrian Improvements** Coordinate high priority pedestrian improvement areas with the Capital Improvements Plan in the Transportation Plan. Create a visually-appealing and safe pedestrian experience in prioritized areas.	**Engineering Division/ Planning Division**	■		

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame 1-3 Years	4-6 Years	Ongoing
T 4e	**Bus Transit Corridors / Access** Include provision for bus transit priority features along congested transit corridors.	**Engineering Division**	■		
	Chapter 10: Safety and Wellness				
SW 1a	*Police Strategic Plan* Guides Use *Police Strategic Plan* to address needs and response times.	**Police Department**			✔
SW 1b	**Shared Public Safety Facilities** Explore sharing facilities/sub-stations to serve citizens (e.g., East 103rd Avenue /Walden Fire Station, East 60th Avenue/Monaco Street, and East 112th Avenue and Chambers Road).	**Police Department with Fire Districts**		■	
SW 2a	**Pedestrian Improvements** *See T 3c, above.*	**Engineering Division/ Planning Division**	■		
SW 2d	**Transit Access** Adopt practices to locate new and redeveloped housing in areas with access to transit. Work to relocate existing bus routes to maximize ridership and access.	**Engineering Division / Planning Division**		■	
	Chapter 11: Parks, Open Space and Recreation				
P 1a	**Prioritize Recommendations** Prioritize implementation recommendations of the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities* (2007) including new park development, facilities, and recreation.	**Parks and Recreation**	■		
P 4a	**Boost Volunteer Programs** Boost volunteer programs focusing on land restoration and stewardship.	**Parks and Recreation**		■	
	Chapter 12: Public Facilities and Infrastructure				
PF 1a	**Annual Capital Improvements Plan** Annually update the Capital Improvements Plan, considering priorities set forth in this plan and the annual Action Plan.	**Finance (with input from other departments)**	■		✔
PF 1d	**Coordinate with Other Districts** Coordinate with other districts to ensure adequate schools, power, and other infrastructure can be provided at the time of new development.	**Engineering Division/ Planning Division**	■		✔
PF 3b	**Task Force/Committees Creation** Explore creation of task forces and advisory committees to help further the aims of local government and this Plan.	**City Manager's Office**		■	
	Chapter 13: Appearance and Design				
AD 1a	**Prioritize Gateways and Corridors** Identify gateway and corridor priority areas—south and north city areas.	**Planning Division/ Engineering Division**	■		

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame 1-3 Years	4-6 Years	Ongoing
AD 1b	**Overlay Districts – Gateways and Corridors** Develop overlay districts for gateways and corridors (e.g., E-470, Highway 2) to address corridor improvements, design and appearance, and future development.	**Planning Division/ Engineering Division**		■	
AD 2a	**Small Grant Funding** Evaluate and potentially provide small grant funding for enhancements in commercial districts, small neighborhood improvement projects, and way-finding signage.	**City Manager/ Planning Division**	■		✔
	Chapter 14: Cultural Facilities and Tourism				
CF 1a	**Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan** Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan that identifies potential funding sources to increase awareness regarding the city's assets, arts and culture, and tourism.	**City Manager's Office/ Planning Division**		■	
CF 2a	**Prioritize Historic Resources** Evaluate and prioritize historic resources.	**Planning Division**		■	
	Chapter 15: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship				
EC 1a	**Sustainability Plan/Climate Action Plan** Pursue funding; develop a Sustainability Plan and/or Climate Action Plan (with incentives, targets for reduction, strategies, and regulations).	**City Manager's Office/ Planning Division**	■		
EC 1b	**Municipal Code Audit/Amendments** Perform an audit of the Municipal Code, including LDC and Engineering Standards, to determine barriers to sustainability; amend accordingly.	**City Manager's Office/ Planning Division**		■	✔
EC 1c	**Prioritize Indicators – Score Cards** Prioritize and adapt indicators for a *Community Score Card* and *Project Review Score Card* and begin monitoring program.	**Planning Division**	■		✔
EC 6a	**Tree Preservation Standards** Expand tree preservation standards that exist in LDC.	**Planning Division / Parks and Recreation**		■	
EC 7a	**Buffer Residential Uses** Require buffers between industrial and residential between residential and the airport; and between housing and high traffic roadways.	**Planning Division**			✔
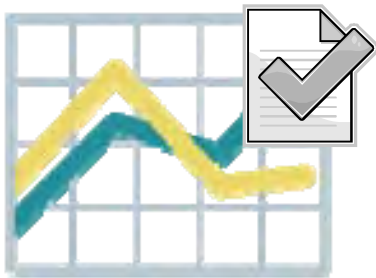
A *Community Score Card* will be a system of monitoring ongoing trends. It will enable the city to assess progress towards achieving the goals of this Plan, provide justification for amending the plan periodically as-needed, and assess the need for course corrections and changes in implementation measures.

Plan Monitoring

Hundreds of people collaborated to produce this *C3 Vision Plan* for more than a year. The result is a consensus statement of Commerce City's vision, core values, goals, policies, and needed actions. This Plan represents a comprehensive summary of where the city is today, where it wants to be tomorrow, and what the community and city need to do to get there.

But how will the city track its progress? Throughout this Plan, the goals and policies lead the city toward making changes in its current policies—looking out 20 years and beyond. Many of the actions discussed in this Plan may take years to develop, fund, and implement. Some short-term impacts are likely to be subtle. Some will be more noticeable. Over time, however, smart decisions and the cumulative effects of city and community actions will result in achieving the future that this Plan envisions.

A system of regular monitoring and evaluation of ongoing trends will enable decision makers and the public to assess the city's progress towards achieving the goals of this Plan, provide justification for amending the Plan periodically as-needed, and assess the need for course corrections and changes in implementation measures. This monitoring approach will help ensure that the city is moving along the path that this Plan recommends, and will provide needed information to adjust to changing needs and conditions within an informed framework.

The C3 Vision Plan Monitoring Program

Performance indicators can become the basis for developing a *Community Score Card* process to monitor Commerce City trends and determine how well the community is achieving its goals. They can also become the basis for a *Project Review Score Card* to assess how well a specific proposed development project fits the intent of this Plan.

Performance Indicators

A Performance Indicator is an index used to monitor or measure community progress against goals. For example, the measure of parkland acreage per 1,000 residents is a common indicator of whether the community is meeting its parkland goal.   In establishing a performance indicator, a primary prerequisite is that it must be based on data that is available, consistent, and reliable. A broad range of suggested indicators are included in each of the 12 elements of the *C3 Vision Plan* (Chapters 4 through 15). These are intended to serve as a basis for discussion about indicators that the city can use in establishing a Monitoring Program. The city will need to further refine and prioritize them, as indicators are selected and the program is established (see sidebar on *Criteria for Selecting Performance Indicators*).

Establishing a Baseline

A first step in the Monitoring Program is to establish a baseline of information against which the city can measure trends over time. For example, if the indicator above for measuring acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is to be used to track progress, the city must first establish a baseline of reliable information on how many acres of parkland exists today. The availability of baseline information, as well as the ability to obtain trend information over time, should be important criteria in selecting the performance indicators to be used.

Setting Targets

A Target is a defined standard by which something can be measured or judged, relating to the goals in this Plan. For example, using the indicator above for measuring acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, the city has already established a target (of 6 acres/1,000 people) for a specified amount of parkland.   In general, this Plan does not recommend specific targets but instead includes relative targets (e.g., to maintain, increase or decrease a certain indicator). Over time, the city may choose to adopt specific targets as the monitoring process evolves, or as part of a Community Sustainability Plan developed subsequent to the Comprehensive Plan.

Criteria for Selecting Performance Indicators

For the Plan Monitoring Program to be successful, it must be based on a set of performance indicators that will serve the city over the long-term. This Plan recommends that the program start with one or two indicators for each of the twelve plan element topics, in order to keep initial efforts manageable. The following criteria should be used when evaluating and selecting the indicators to be included:

1. *Policy Relevance* – is the indicator directly linked to one or several key issues around which key policies are formulated? Unless linked to critical decisions and policies, it is unlikely to motivate action.
2. *Simplicity* – can the information be presented in an easily understandable, yet appealing, way that the public can readily understand?
3. *Validity* – is the indicator a true reflection of conditions in the city, and is the data verifiable? Can the city affect the outcome? The data must be credible and reliable for both experts and laypeople.
4. *Time Series* – is time series data available, reflecting a trend of the indicator over time? This is important if the indicator is to reflect trends over time.
5. *Availability and Affordability* – is good quality data available at a reasonable cost, or is it likely to become so in the future? Costs can include both actual dollar expenditures as well as staff time.
6. *Serve Multiple Objectives* – is the indicator about a very narrow or broader issue? The list of potential indicators is endless. For this reason, indicators that reflect or aggregate information on broader topics should be preferred.

Reporting Progress – *Community Score Card Report*

This Plan recommends that the city issue a *Community Score Card* Monitoring Report periodically to report on progress made towards achieving the city's goals. While information on some indicators would likely be collected annually, others may only be available on a less frequent basis. Therefore, the city should issue a report every year, documenting areas showing positive progress and recommending changes in areas in need of continued work.

To provide a comprehensive, inclusive snapshot of the city's progress, it is important that the monitoring program include indicators for each of the 12 Plan Elements. It is equally important that the monitoring program be manageable, succinct, and useful; thus indicators should be limited in number for each element. This Plan recommends that the monitoring program initially be limited to one or two indicators for each of the elements. Over time, as the program gets underway and is established, the city can add more indicators if needed to track additional aspects of the city's progress.

Plan Amendments and Updates

This plan is meant to be a living document. For this Plan to function over time, the city must be able to periodically review it and make amendments to respond to trends or changes in the economic, physical, social, or political conditions of the city or region. The city will conduct revisions to this Plan according to two distinct and different procedures:

> (1) Five-Year Plan Update, and
> (2) Plan Amendments.

Five-Year Plan Update Process

The purpose of a Plan Update is to re-evaluate the goals, policies, and strategies contained within this Plan (noting those to change and those to remove), and to develop new policies if necessary—to make sure that this Plan is effective. Plan updates should occur at intervals of approximately every five to seven years, unless otherwise directed by the City Council or Planning Commission.

The city's prime consideration in determining when an update should be initiated should include assessing changes that have occurred since the Plan was last updated. These changes may be in areas such as the economy, the environment, housing affordability, traffic congestion, local priorities, projected growth, or others. A Plan Update will include a thorough re-evaluation of the vision, goals, and policies contained within this Plan. A Plan Update will also include a thorough review of the validity of all

information contained within the Plan, and it should include extensive opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, city staff, and other affected interests.

Plan Amendment Process

The city will follow a separate process for Plan Amendments—to be performed on a periodic basis (up to three times a year). Plan Amendments may include periodic substantive revisions to one or more sections of this Plan. Amendments may be necessary as a result of adoption of a sub-area plan or a specific issue/policy plan, because of monitoring (addressed in previous section) and course correction, or by directive from City Council at any time. Substantive amendment may also occur upon request by a landowner and reviewed as part of the periodic amendment schedule.

Plan Amendments may also involve minor changes to the *Future Land Use Plan* map or text to correct errors, which may occur administratively. Minor administrative plan amendments apply to properties that are less than 8-acres in size, including small minor changes to the map.

The process for making the substantive amendments is described below.

- All Plan Amendments shall be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council.
- Based on its consideration of the recommendations from staff, Planning Commission, and evidence from public hearings, the City Council could then adopt the Plan Amendment (with or without further revisions), or reject it.

Criteria for Plan Amendments

When considering a plan amendment (other than minor correction), the city shall consider the following criteria and make a finding that the amendment meets the following:

1. It is consistent with the overall intent of the Comprehensive Plan;
2. The existing Plan and/or any related element thereof is in need of the proposed amendment;
3. It is necessary or desirable because of changing social values, new planning concepts, or other social or economic conditions and strict adherence to this Plan will result in a situation neither intended nor in keeping with other key elements and policies of this Plan;

4. The proposed amendment will not have a negative effect on the immediate areas or on transportation, services, and facilities;

5. The proposed amendment will have minimal effect on service provision, including adequacy or availability of urban facilities and services, and is compatible with existing and planned service provision and future development of the area;

6. The proposed amendment, if for an area that is outside of the city's current municipal boundaries, is consistent with the city's ability to annex the property; and

7. The proposed Plan amendment will promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of the people of the city and will be consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan and the elements thereof.

Appendix A: Community Profile and Inventory Maps

March 2009

INTRODUCTION

This profile presents background information and trends in Commerce City, Colorado. This information serves as the back drop to the city's *C3 Vision* comprehensive planning effort. The plan is an update to the city's 1985 Comprehensive Plan. Commerce City has changed dramatically since then. To plan for the future the city wants, it is important to understand what conditions and trends exist today. This profile is divided into four key sections: Community, Land Use and Environment, Economic Development, and Transportation. Each section provides a snapshot of the current conditions and trends in Commerce City, followed by a discussion of the relationship between the current conditions and the important issues facing the community, which were identified at the public and committee meetings.

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COMMUNITY

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Commerce City incorporated in 1952. It is both an inner-ring and outer-ring Denver-metro area suburban community, located northeast of Denver in Adams County. Today, the city is home to approximately 38,000 people and occupies an area of nearly 41-square miles. The Growth Boundary contains a total of almost 62-square miles (see Map 1: Location and Context).

A key feature of the city is its location along major travel routes, a position that has helped to retain a strong industrial base to the city's economy. The city is widely accessible via airport (via adjacent Denver International Airport) rail and interstate, state, and regional highway routes (For more information, see the Transportation section.)

PEOPLE AND GROWTH

Since 2000, Commerce City has experienced very rapid growth. Between its year of incorporation in 1952 and 2000, the city grew to 21,000 residents. Since 2000, the population has almost doubled, with an additional 19,000 residents. Almost half of the city's growth has taken place in the past seven years.

Commerce City, part of the Denver-metro area, is set against the scenic Rocky Mountain backdrop of Colorado's front fange.

Most residents live in married-couple households, with about half having children. Commerce City has many young residents and, like Adams County overall, a relatively lower proportion of seniors than other areas in metro Denver. Consistent with trends nationwide, Commerce City has experienced substantial growth in Hispanic/Latino residents since 2000.

(Note: the *Community and Housing Profile* (BBC, 2009) provides far greater detail on population growth, households, poverty, educational attainment, and employment.)

REGIONAL INFLUENCES AND GROWTH PROJECTIONS

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) estimates that the metro-Denver region will grow at a rate of 43% to a population of nearly 3.9 million by 2030. Commerce City is projected to grow faster than the region, at a rate of 59%, to an estimated 63,000 people by 2030.

Regional employment is projected to grow 49% to 2.4 million jobs by 2030, while Commerce City employment projections are less, with growth estimated at 22% providing 31,424 jobs by 2030.

Sources: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, US Census Bureau, Denver Regional Council of Governments

NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Commerce City has a variety of housing options in both older and newer neighborhoods. Compared to other cities in Adams County, Commerce City offers its residents many affordable homeownership options, and limited affordable rental options. In 2007, Commerce City provided more than a third of affordable detached units to the lowest income residents in Adams County, despite having about eight percent of the county's households. This means that the city provided a disproportionate share of affordable units to Adams County residents overall. In contrast, the ownership market provides few options for very high-income households or households who want to upgrade to more expensive homes.

Most rental housing in Commerce City is priced to serve households earning between $35,000 and $50,000, with an oversupply of rental units in this price range and an undersupply in the lower price range.

More information regarding housing affordability and availability can be found in the *Community and Housing Profile* (BBC, 2008).

Commerce City features a variety of housing options from single-family homes in new neighborhoods to apartments in established neighborhoods.

HISTORY, ARTS, AND CULTURE

Commerce City is a relatively new city that incorporated in 1952, although its past can be traced to a number of historic smaller communities that emerged nearly 100 years earlier. The first settlement in the area was Henderson Island along the South Platte River, which was developed in 1859 as a trading post to provide supplies during the Pike's Peak Gold Rush. Years later in the late 1880s the Burlington Railroad constructed a rail line through the area, establishing a station and associated town of Derby. A foundry brought settlement to the Irondale area in 1889, which incorporated the Town of Irondale in 1924. In 1903 Adams City was established, although it was vacated in 1922.

The Adams City area redeveloped in the late 1940s, after the Rocky Mountain Arsenal opened earlier that decade bringing industry to the area. Faced with the potential annexation into Denver, the area voted to incorporate the South Adams City and Rose Hill neighborhoods into Commerce Town in 1952. The annexation of Derby in 1962 increased the population of Commerce Town so much that its name was duly changed to Commerce City. Recently in 2007, voters overwhelmingly supported retention of the name "Commerce City."

Sources: City of Commerce City, Adams County COGenWebProject

Historic Events:

1859 — Gold is found in the South Platte River, migration to the area increased.

1871 — First homesteaders establish plots on land later claimed by the U.S. Army.

1876 — Riverside Cemetery established.

1881 — The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad (CBQ) completes rail construction along the South Platte River from Cheyenne; first state fish hatchery built.

1889 — Derby established along the CBQ rail line.

1890 — Irondale established as a factory town for the Kibler Stone Works.

1903 — Adams City established.

1930's — Continental Oil establishes refinery in Derby (acquired by Suncor in 2003).

1942 — Rocky Mountain Arsenal founded.

1952 — Adams City and Rose Hill incorporated as Commerce Town.

1962 — Annexation of the larger Derby area caused the municipality to change its name to the more appropriate Commerce City.

1966 — Interstate 70 opens as the major east-west route through Denver.

1970 — Commerce City's home rule charter passed; Interstate 270 opens.

1973 — Formation of the South Adams County Fire Protection District.

1980s — Annual Derby Daze and Memorial Day Parade are established.

1992 — Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Act passed by Congress.

1995 — Denver International Airport opened east of Commerce City.

1996 — Buffalo Run Golf Course opened.

2007 — New Commerce City Civic Center and Dick's Sporting Goods Park opened.
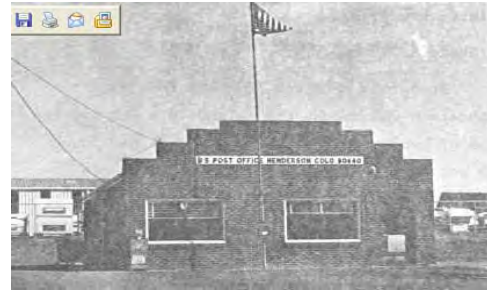
The Henderson Island settlement was one of the first in the area.

The Hi-Lo Market in the Derby area has been a community gathering place since the 1950s.

Denver International Airport opened in 1995, east of Commerce City.

Historic Properties and Areas:

- Fort Vasquez (1832)
- State Fish Hatchery #1 (1881)
- Riverside Cemetery (1876)
- Adams City High School (1910)
- Rosehill Cemetery (1892)
- Henderson Island (1859)
- Trappers Trail/Overland Stagecoach Route (1820-1870)
- Derby Area (1950s era)

Sources: 1985 Comp Plan, Rocky Mountain Arsenal, City of Commerce City

Many famous people from Colorado's history are buried at Riverside Cemetery.

History of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal/National Wildlife Refuge

In 1942, the U.S. Army bought 30-square miles of farm land to establish the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, a chemical weapons factory. The factory produced chemical weapons during World War II and the Cold War of the 1950s, and the land was intermittently leased to private companies that produced pesticides up until 1982. The chemical production at the Arsenal resulted in contamination of soils and groundwater throughout the site.

In 1984, the federal government began a thorough evaluation of the environmental contamination on the property, and placed the site on the National Priorities List of Superfund sites. Remediation of the property became a top priority, and in 1985 discovery of bald eagles on the site led the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to look at the vast array of wildlife inhabiting the site. In 1996, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Act was passed, stipulating that the site would become a national wildlife refuge under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as remediation efforts are completed.

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal property has been transformed from a chemical weapons factory to a wildlife refuge.

Historically, the Arsenal was cordoned off from the Commerce City community with fences and federal no-trespassing warnings. The transition to a wildlife refuge and open-space area and trail with a new visitor center in Commerce City presents the city with tremendous opportunities to enjoy the site as a regional asset. The refuge is now home to one of the most successful shortgrass prairie restoration programs in the nation, and is the largest contiguous open space area in the metro-Denver region.

Sources: US Army, Rocky Mountain Arsenal, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Community and Cultural Facilities:

The Commerce City Cultural Council hosts a number of annual events that aim to advance charity and education for preservation of art, music, theatre, and dance in Commerce City. Other community resources and cultural facilities include:

- Adams County Historical Society and Museum in Brighton
- Derby Resource Center
- Conter Community Center

Arts and Events:

The following events are a sampling of the many community events throughout the city:

- Neighborhood Outreach events each summer.
- Memorial Day Parade (one of the largest in the state).
- Creepy Hallows Halloween (event for children at the Dick's Sporting Goods Park).
- Fourth of July Celebration.
- Fishing Frenzy (children's fishing derby at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge).
- Hometown Holiday (holiday lighting ceremony of the Civic Center).
- An Evening of Art (appreciation event for the arts at the Derby Resource Center).
- Thanks-for-Giving Tea (celebration for women at the Commerce City Recreation Center).
- Community 9News Health Fair at Dick's Sporting Goods Park.
- Mile High Music Festival (first annual held in July 2008).

Events at Dick's Sporting Goods Stadium and Pioneer Park attract a regional audience.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY

Police Protection

The **Commerce City Police Department** operates three divisions from the Commerce City Civic Center: Patrol Operations, Support Operations, and Administration and Information Operations. The department's mission is to establish and maintain ongoing community partnerships, and is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all people in Commerce City. In 2008, the Police Department employed 90 sworn officers.

In 2007, the Commerce City Police Department responded to 39,410 calls for police service. Based on a population of approximately 38,000 residents in 2007, there was approximately one call for service per Commerce City resident. Roughly 30% of the annual calls were from north of East 76th Avenue, while the remaining 70% were south of East 76th Avenue.

The Police Department operates from the new Commerce City Civic Center.

In 2007, there were a total of 1,435 traffic accidents, 65% of which were south of East 76th Avenue (940 accidents). The top accident sites identified at (1) Highway 85 at East 56th Avenue; (2) I-270 at Highway 85 (on I-270); and (3) East 60th Avenue and Highway 85.

The **Office of Emergency Management**, based in the Police Department, works with numerous departments in planning for emergency preparedness. The office is responsible for planning, training, equipment, interagency cooperation and coordination, and public education to deal with significant natural or man-made disasters.

Source: City of Commerce City Police Department

Fire Protection and Emergency Response

There are three fire protection districts that provide service to residents in the Commerce City growth boundary. Please refer to Map 2: Community Safety Facilities for locations of fire and police stations, and fire protection district service areas.

South Adams County Fire Protection District serves the Historic City, Irondale and most of the Northern Range areas. The District operates six stations and one training center at Station 5. Two new stations are under development at 11200 East 112th Street and 10326 Waldon Street to serve the Northern Range area.

In 2008, the District featured eight paid staff members and approximately 72 volunteers. The Fire District is governed by five elected board members. The District has a Mutual Aid agreement with the Greater Brighton Fire Protection District, a paid fire department. Funding for the District is provided by a mil levy of 4.3 mils. Adequate service levels are an increasing issue, due to community's growth and lack of funding.

Ambulance Service in the District is contracted with Northglenn Ambulance, Inc., which consists of four paramedic ambulances, located at South Adams County Fire Protection District Stations 2, 3, 5, and 6.

Sable-Altura Fire Protection District provides fire protection services to properties in the Commerce City Growth Boundary that are located between the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge and Denver International Airport. The District currently has one station, administrative offices, and a training facility. Plans are underway for a second station which will be built to serve the northern half of the District. There are two tentative locations identified for the new station, although those locations have not been disclosed to the public. The Sable-Altura Fire Protection District maintains a mix of paid and volunteer staffing.

Brighton Fire Protection District serves properties in the Commerce City Growth Boundary in the DIA North and upper Northern Range areas.   The District operates five stations, one of which is located on the south side of the District's boundary near the northern edge of Commerce City Growth Boundary.   All stations are staffed with paid firefighters and supplemented with volunteers.

Volunteers and paid staff members provide fire protection services to Commerce City residents.

Sources: South Adams County Fire Protection District, Sable-Altura Fire Protection District, Brighton Fire Protection District, City of Commerce City Website

Health Care

Commerce City is served by four medical centers, one health department, and a number of community health programs. Please refer to Map 3: Community and Health Facilities, for locations of health care and community facilities in the Commerce City area. The majority of such facilities are located in the Historic Core area, with larger medical centers serving a greater region, rather than one individual community

Salud Family Health Center in Commerce City provides primary medical and dental care, including obstetrics and out-patient care. Salud provides health care services without regard to age, sex, or disease process, reducing barriers to healthcare including payments, transportation, and language. A new 46,000-square foot clinic is under construction in 2009 that will be located at East 62nd Avenue and Quebec Street.

Salud Family Health Center provides affordable health care options to Commerce City residents.

Platte Valley Medical Center, in nearby Brighton, is a new state-of-the-art facility that offers a wide range of general and specialty health services, from emergency care to specialized medical imaging and a Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory. For nearly 50 years, Platte Valley Medical Center has strived to be a leader in providing personal health services to the community.

North Suburban Medical Center, located in nearby Thornton, offers cardiovascular, rehabilitation, surgical, and therapy services. Their mission is commitment to patient safety and continuously understanding, and responding to patient and community expectations.

Adams County School District 14 Community Health Services offers during the school year low-cost health care for children and teenagers at the main clinic in Commerce City, and in several school-based health centers within the District. Services are provided by Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, with a pediatric doctor on staff for consultation.

Community Health Services provides affordable care for children and teenagers.

Tri-County Health Department (TCHD) provides public health services including immunizations, disease prevention, family planning and prenatal care, improving nutrition, environmental health services, and emergency preparedness. The Commerce City Health Office is located in the Adams County Service Center Building. TCHD is a partner in LiveWell Commerce City program. Through a community coalition coordinated by Partnerships for Healthy Communities, LiveWell promotes healthy eating and active living among historic Commerce City residents through programs, policies, and changes to the environment.

Sources: www.pvmc.org , Tri County Health Department, LiveWell Colorado, www.saludclinic.org, Adams County School District 14.

Community Health

In 2006, a Health Survey of Commerce City residents assessed the health conditions and risk behaviors among residents. Some of the key findings of the survey included:

- Nearly 20% of Commerce City residents are obese (having a body mass index greater than or equal to 30).

- Approximately 42% of residents engage in regular physical activity, and conversely approximately 31% engage in no leisure-time physical activity.

- Nearly 20% of residents self-report fair or poor health status.

Sources: Derby Redevelopment Health Impact Assessment, Tri-County Health Department

Specialized Services

In addition to health care facilities, a variety of specialized services and programs ranging from social services to neighborhood services are available to residents.

Assistance Services: Adams County Social Services provides a broad range of community services and programs including adoption, foster parenting, children and family services, child support, Medicaid programs, aging and adult services, and financial assistance programs. A centralized Community Resource Office provides free information and referrals regarding these Adams County services and other community assistance programs and resources.

Senior Care: The Senior Center at the Commerce City Recreation Center provides a variety of senior services, programs, classes and recreational opportunities. Events include volleyball, fitness classes, golf, and scrap-booking to promote a healthy mind and body. Other senior services available include free A-Lift Transportation Services for seniors and/or those with disabilities, and basic health services by the Visiting Nurses Association. The center coordinates services with the Adams County Senior Hub to enhance the quality of life for senior residents.

Accessible, affordable transportation is available to seniors and disabled residents.

Youth and Family Services: The Children and Family Services Center within the Adams County Social Services Department is dedicated to ensuring the safety of children and achieving permanency as quickly as possible for every child.

Neighborhood Services: The Commerce City Neighborhood Services Division works with residents to promote voluntary compliance with all code, zoning, and property maintenance issues, and to keep a safe and desirable community.

Sources: Adams County, DRCOG, Commerce City

The Commerce City Neighborhood Services Department works with property owners to resolve code compliance issues.

KEY COMMUNITY ISSUES

The following challenges and opportunities were identified by community and committee members, elected officials, and staff. The current community conditions are driving forces behind many of these key issues, presenting varying opportunities and challenges for the comprehensive plan to address.

Diverse Population and Housing

The rapid socioeconomic diversification of the population presents challenges in finding common values, although tremendous opportunities exist to incorporate the various cultures into the existing cultural facilities and offerings. Because of the rapid population growth Commerce City faces, and the relatively low-incomes compared to other cities in Adams County, the Plan will need to explore opportunities to provide affordable rental housing for residents and integrate it into the existing and future community framework.

Poverty

Commerce City has high poverty levels, lower levels of educational attainment, and lacks affordable rental housing in the community. In order to help reduce poverty levels, the Plan should examine ways to provide resources to assist lower income households. Addressing poverty also will reduce chronic diseases, for which low-income individuals are at higher risk.

Preserving History and Culture

While Commerce City is a relatively new city, it has a rich history tied to a number of smaller, historic areas. Preservation of the remaining elements and characteristics of these original communities, in addition to other historic attributes such as the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and the Rosehill Cemetery, provide opportunities for the community to develop and project a unique identity.

Public Safety

The dispersed geographic nature of the community creates difficulty in providing equal service levels in all areas. Moreover, the three fire districts continue to work on funding and varying levels of service, ranging from volunteer to paid staffing. With a centralized police facility, and a number of dispersed fire and emergency medical service facilities, opportunities may exist for integration of some services to improve response times and community safety, especially as the Northern Range, E-470 Influence, and DIA North areas develop in the future. The Plan also should examine the viability of volunteer staffing as the community grows, and identify the city's role in providing adequate levels of public safety resources.

Healthy Community

Community health statistics indicate that a significant proportion of the population is obese, has fair or poor health status, and gets little physical activity. The Plan should identify ways for residents to become more active and promote recreation, walkability, and bikability in the City. Data also show that lack of access to adequate health care and food are issues for a significant percentage of families. The development of the new Salud Family Health Center will expand access to affordable, local health care facilities. Opportunities may exist for additional health care facilities, especially in the Irondale, Northern Range, and DIA North areas. The Plan should explore options for making adequate, nutritious food available to those in need.

LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT

CURRENT CONDITIONS

The City of Commerce City encompasses nearly 41-square miles (26,000 acres), while the entire Commerce City's Growth Boundary area covers approximately 68-square miles (43,600 acres).   Map 4: City Limits and Growth Boundary Areas, shows the Commerce City limits in the context of the larger Growth Boundary area.   Per Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA), the Growth Boundary does not have an eastern boundary; however, for planning purposes, the IGA Growth Boundary is defined with Watkins Road as the eastern limit.   Since the community encompasses a wide geographic region, this profile identifies five sub-regions within the IGA Growth Boundary for reference.   Figure 2.1 below depicts the focus areas referenced throughout this profile. The information contained in this section specifies the quantity of lands currently dedicated to each land use type, and identifies the amount of land available for future development.

Figure 2.1: Areas of Focus
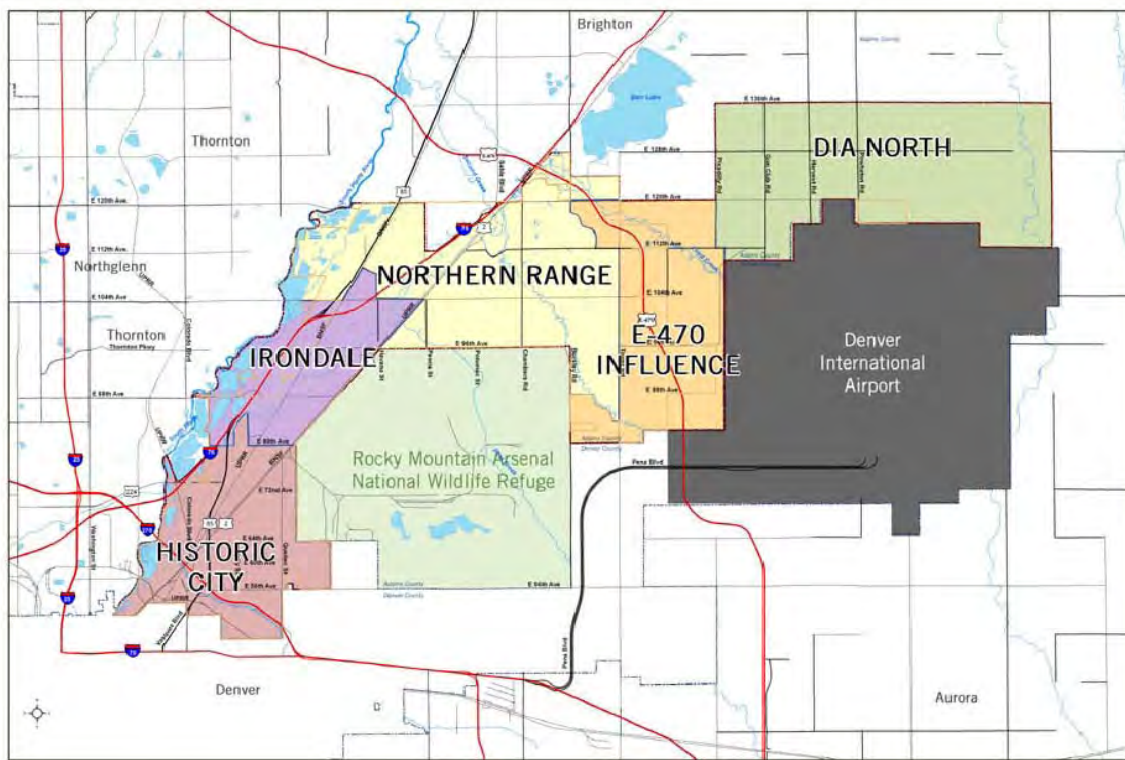
CURRENT DEVELOPMENT STATUS AND LAND USE PATTERNS

Current Development Status

Map 5: Current Development Status, illustrates the development status of land within the Growth Boundary. The map and following figure show that about 10,700 acres (24% of the total land) are developed for residential and commercial purposes; nearly 17,000 acres (39%) are used for agricultural purposes; almost 8,000 acres are public (including parks/open space, schools and community facilities, and utilities); and approximately 4,200 acres (10%) is undeveloped/vacant land (containing no structures, per Adams County Assessor data, and no evidence of agricultural activity).

Figure 2.2: Development Status within the Commerce City Growth Boundary
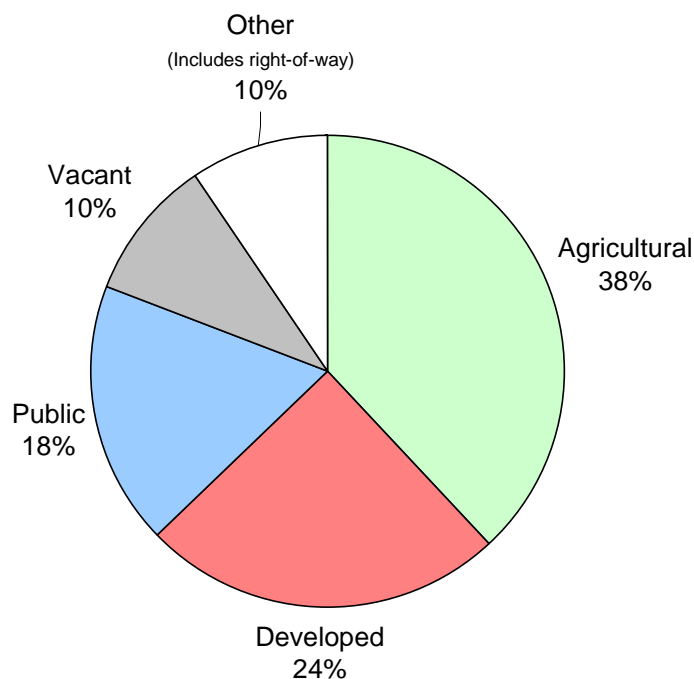
Sources: City of Commerce City, Adams County Assessor Data, Clarion, 2008.

The majority of developed land in the Growth Boundary area is within Commerce City limits, while a significant portion of agricultural and vacant lands are located in unincorporated areas within the Growth Boundary. The current development status of land in the five focus areas can be summarized as follows:

- **Historic City:** Nearly 54% of land is developed, with a significant portion (about 21%) of land categorized as "other" (which includes rights-of-way and water features).

- **Irondale:** Nearly 48% of land is developed, and approximately 17% of land is undeveloped or vacant.

- **Northern Range:** Roughly 29% of land is currently agricultural, and approximately 22% is developed.

- **E-470 Influence:** Nearly 71% of land is currently agricultural and 15% is developed..

- **DIA North:** Approximately 60% of land is agricultural, with almost 31% of land classified as public (the public category in this area includes the airport buffer zone north of DIA).

Current Land Use

Current land use within the city's Growth Boundary is illustrated in the figure below, and in Map 6: Current Land Use. Currently, the largest categories of land uses in the Growth Boundary include agricultural (16,700 acres, or 37%) parks and open space (7,780 acres, or 18%), and undeveloped/vacant (4,150 acres, or 10%).

Figure 2.3: Current Land Use in the Growth Boundary
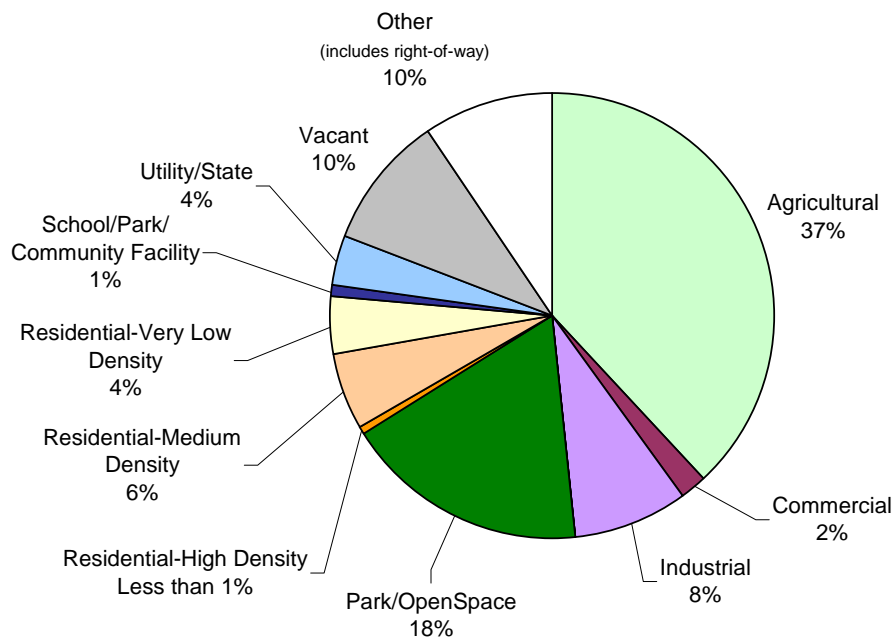
Sources: City of Commerce City, Adams County Assessor Data, Clarion, 2008

The development status in each of the focus areas varies tremendously. Similarly, the breakdown of current land uses also is unique to each area. Table 2.3 below highlights the principal current land use category in each focus area.

Industrial and agricultural uses are predominant land uses in Commerce City.

Table 2.3: Principal Current Land Use per Focus Area

Focus Area	Predominant Current Land Use	Acres	% of Focus Area
Historic City	Industrial	1,780	25%
Irondale	Industrial	1,574	31%
Northern Range	Agricultural	3,882	29%
E-470 Influence	Agricultural	5,426	71%
DIA North	Agricultural	7,578	60%

Sources: City of Commerce City, Adams County Assessor Data, Clarion, 2008

Current Development Proposals

Approximately 12% of the lands within the Growth Boundary contain pending development proposals. One of the largest pending developments is the Prairie Gateway, located on the west edge of the Rocky Mountain Refuge. The Prairie Gateway will offer a new visitor center for the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, space for new commercial/retail development and the new Adams City High School and community college campus near the new Civic Center, and Dick's Sporting Goods Park.

The Prairie Gateway development is well underway with the Civic Center and Dick's Sporting Goods Park complete.

Zoning and Entitled Land

The city has revised its land development code. Map 7: Zoning Map, shows the current zoning districts. The revised zoning districts include:

- 6 Residential Districts
- 3 Commercial Districts
- 6 Industrial Districts
- 1 Mixed-Use District
- 4 Miscellaneous Districts – Planned Unit Development, Agricultural, Public Zone and Flood Overlay Zone

Map 8: Entitled Land Use depicts the entitled land uses predominantly within city limits in the Growth Boundary area. The largest category of entitled land is industrial, with approximately 11%, or 4,682 acres. Entitled land use for properties in each focus area is shown in Maps 9.1 – 9.4, and can be summarized as follows:

- **Historic City:** mostly industrial, with large core of low to medium density residential;
- **Irondale:** predominantly industrial;
- **Northern Range:** mostly low– to medium-density residential;
- **E-470 Influence:** predominantly mixed-use; and
- **DIA North:** mostly without entitlements, but with industrial area north of DIA.

Agricultural and vacant lands make up a significant portion (nearly 50%) of the Growth Boundary. However, some of that land is entitled, or has approved master plans for certain types of development to occur. Table 2.4 below shows the amount of agricultural and vacant land in the Growth Boundary that is currently entitled for future development. Approximately 8,250 acres (nearly 13-square miles) or 19% of the total Growth Boundary area is comprised of entitled agricultural, or vacant lands.

Table 2.4: Entitled Land within the Commerce City IGA

Land Use Status	Approx. Acres	% of Total
Agricultural (Entitled for future development)	5,087	12%
Vacant (Entitled for future development)	3,166	7%
TOTAL	8,253	19%

Source: City of Commerce City, Adams County Assessor Data, Clarion, 2008

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS

Map 10: Potential Development Constraints shows a number of factors that may impact future development. These identified constraints include:

- **Airport Contours:** Some eastern portions of Northern Range area are impacted by 60 and 65 LDN noise contours, which limit development types and heights. A Significant portion (over 50%) of DIA North area is encumbered by the 60 and 65 LDN noise contours. The majority of the Northern Range and DIA North areas also are impacted by the DIA height contours, which limit the heights of structures in these areas.

- **Floodplains (100 year):**
  - Nearly 11% (48,000 acres) of land in the Growth Boundary falls within a designated 100 year floodplain. The South Platte 100 year floodplain is the largest in the area. Significant flooding has historically occurred along the South Platte north of East 80th Avenue.
  - Flood Overlay Zone District: Floodplains are determined by maps from FEMA or Urban Drainage and Flood Control District. The Flood Overlay Zone District corresponds with floodplain maps, and all residential uses are excluded from the zone district. A Floodplain Administrator oversees the development permit process required for construction, or development, in a flood hazard area.

- **Wetlands:** A number of wetlands are found in the area, particularly in the National Wildlife Refuge and along the South Platte River. The wetland areas generally fall within the identified 100-year floodplain.

- **Future Tri-State Transmission Line:** A future transmission line is proposed near E-470 in the Northern Range area served by United Power (the future line is not shown on the Development Constraints Map). Presently, the exact route of this line, in addition to whether or not the line will be above or below ground, has yet to be determined and therefore cannot be

Future transmission lines will serve the area, but may impact development patterns and potential.

mapped at this time. While this transmission line is a critical element in order for development to occur in the Northern Range and DIA North areas, the ultimate location of such transmission line will inevitably have impacts on adjacent properties and potential development patterns.

- **Adams County Enclaves and Unincorporated Lands:** Nearly 4.5 square miles (3,000 acres) of enclaves exist in the Growth Boundary area. Most of these enclaves are developed and it is uncertain whether or not they will ever annex into Commerce City. The majority of the land in the DIA North area is still within unincorporated Adams County (see Map 4: City Limits and Growth Boundary areas) and may develop per county regulations if not annexed into Commerce City.

- **Oil/Gas Wells:** As of early 2009, there are 3 active permits and 189 identified wells within the Commerce City Growth Boundary Area. The vast majority of these wells are located in the DIA North and E-470 Influence areas, although several wells are scattered around the Northern Range and Irondale Areas. Future development within close proximity to these oil and gas wells may be limited or impacted.

LAND CAPACITY

Commerce City has an abundance of land to grow into, which may potentially double, or triple, its developed land area. Table 2.5 below illustrates the amount of land available in the Commerce City Growth Boundary for new development. Over 12,000 acres (nearly 19-square miles), or 30% of the vacant and agricultural lands within the Commerce City Growth Boundary, are not entitled. Nearly 94% of the vacant and agricultural lands without entitlements for future development are located in the DIA North, E-470 Influence, and Northern Range areas (see Map 11: Development Opportunities).

Table 2.5: Developable Land within the Commerce City IGA

Land Use Status	Approx. Acres	% of Total
Agricultural (no entitlements for future development)	11,582	27%
Vacant (no entitlements for future development)	1,159	3%
TOTAL	*12,741*	30%

Source: City of Commerce City, Adams County Assessor Data, Clarion, 2008

While the vast majority of land available for development is agricultural, there are some remaining opportunities for infill development of vacant properties. The amount of vacant land without entitlements in each focus area is listed below:

- **Historic City:** approximately 132 acres;

- **Irondale:** approximately 360 acres;

- **Northern Range:** approximately 271 acres;

- **E-470 Influence:** approximately 18 acres; and

- **DIA North:** approximately 377 acres.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Commerce City has myriad environmental amenities and resources locally and regionally, but also has some areas that present environmental challenges. These environmental features and areas of consideration include:

Barr Lake State Park

- ⬧ Development is limited in the Barr Lake Buffer Zone and Natural Resource Conservation Overlay areas east of Barr Lake. These areas are identified as sending areas of development rights for the Adams County Transfer of Development Rights Program.

- ⬧ More than 350 species of birds have been spotted in the park. Numerous bald eagles winter at Barr Lake, and one pair stays to nest and raise young every year.

Water

Water is a limited resource that requires preservation and protection to ensure the city a sustainable, long-term supply. Federal and state regulatory programs are in place to protect water quality. In addition, the city should evaluate adoption of a range of integrated water conservation and water-quality policies. Examples include buffering and operational practices to protect surface and alluvial water sources, low-impact development stormwater management, wellhead protection, reducing demand, and water reuse and reclamation.

Surface Water

- ⬧ Commerce City has a number of river and stream corridors within the area:
  - o South Platte River and its tributaries: First Creek, Second Creek, Third Creek, Sand Creek, Box Elder Creek, and Beebe Draw.
- ⬧ Major water bodies and reservoirs include Barr Lake, Derby Lake, and Ladora Lake (both Derby and Ladora Lakes are within the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge).
- ⬧ Primary irrigation ditches include the O'Brian Canal and Burlington Ditch.

Groundwater

- ⬧ Shallow alluvial groundwater is a tributary to the South Platte River.
- ⬧ Deep wells tap into the Denver, Arapahoe, and Laramie Fox Hill aquifers.

Brownfields Properties

Commerce City has many Brownfields sites, which are properties whose redevelopment, reuse, or expansion may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of contaminants. Development on and around these former waste disposal and industrial sites requires environmental assessment and possible remediation. However, cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties takes development pressures off undeveloped land, while improving the environment and protecting health. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Voluntary Cleanup and Redevelopment Program provides for expedited remediation and property transfers at the state level. At the federal level, EPA's Brownfields Program offers federal assistance in the form of grants, technical assistance, job training, and revolving loans to spur revitalization of Brownfields properties.

After cleanup, some Brownfields are available for unrestricted use, while others are subject to some development restrictions. Commerce City has both types. The city's implementation of standard due diligence procedures will help to safely bring Brownfield sites back to productive economic, or open space, use.

Air Quality

Pollutants of both regional and local origin affect Commerce City's air quality. Motor vehicles are a major source of air emissions, because the city is located along regional transportation corridors, and transportation and warehousing is the city's largest employment industry. Another source of air emissions is industrial and commercial operations, which are regulated by the state permit system. Commerce City is part of the Central Front Range Area, which does not comply with the federal health-based air quality standard for ozone. Measures to achieve the standard will include additional restrictions on vehicle and industrial emissions, including those from oil and gas operations. In addition, the state of Colorado's Climate Action Plan commits the state to reduce greenhouse gases by 20% from 2005 levels by 2020. Development strategies can collectively improve city- and regional-air quality: provide non-vehicular or lower emission travel choices, prevent pollution, and promote energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy use.

Odors from industry, agriculture, and air pollution inversions also have impacted Commerce City over the years. In the 1990s, many Commerce City industries, sensitive to citizen concerns about odors, formed what is now the Northeast Metro Pollution Prevention Alliance. Members regularly meet with regulatory agencies to discuss citizen concerns and to find solutions that will minimize local odor impacts.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

City Parks and Trails

Commerce City has 18 existing local parks, and maintains 15 miles of trails. In addition to city parks, there are a number of joint park facilities planned and shared with the area's school districts. Please refer to Map 12: Park, Trail & Open Space System, for the locations of these facilities and to Table 2.6 on the following page, for a listing of the amenities offered at each location.

Table 2.6: Existing Commerce City Park and Recreation Amenities

		Skate Park	Sprayground	BMX Track	Inline Rink	Tennis Court	Volleyball	Basketball	Multipurpose	Soccer Field	Football Field	Softball Field	Baseball Field	Playground	Picnic Area	BBQ Grill	Restroom	Shelter
Community Parks	City Park													o	o	o	o	o
	Fairfax Park				o	o		o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
	Monaco Park						o	o						o	o	o	o	o
	Pioneer Park	o	o	o				o				o	o	o	o	o	o	o
Neighborhood Parks	Freedom Park													o	o	o	o	o
	Los Valientes Park													o	o	o		o
	River Run Park					o		o				o	o	o	o	o	o	o
	Stampede Park							o						o	o	o	o	o
	Veteran's Memorial Park														o	o	o	o
Pocket Parks	Derby Park																	
	Gifford Park													o	o			o
	Joe Reilly Park														o			
	Leyden Park													o	o			o
	Monaco Vista						o							o				
	Olive Park													o	o	o		o
	Rose Hill Grange Park														o	o		o

Source: City of Commerce City

One of the most noteworthy developments, with tremendous parks and recreation amenities, is the planned Prairie Gateway featuring the Dick's Sporting Goods Park, with the major-league soccer stadium and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center.

The city has one municipal golf course, Buffalo Run, which opened in 1996. The golf course is operated by Commerce City Parks and Recreation Department. It is an eighteen-hole, championship course that has hosted a number of noteworthy tournaments.

The Sand Creek Regional Greenway connects the High Line Canal in Aurora with the South Platte River Greenway in Commerce City. The greenway trail completes a 50-mile loop of trails in the northwest Denver-metro area. Future trails and linkages are planned along Highway 2; along First, Second, and Third Creeks; along the O'Brian Canal; along E-470; around the Arsenal perimeter; a Stapleton link; and a connection to Barr Lake State Park.

A number of parks-related capital improvement projects are underway through the Parks and Recreation Department. The basic design of Second Creek Neighborhood Park is complete, with construction not yet scheduled. The city's off-leash dog park was completed in 2008, as well as projects at Joe Reilly, Monaco Vista, Leyden Parks and the installation of several ADA ramps in playgrounds. In 2009, work will continue in Stampede Park, Monaco Park, River Run Park, and Fairfax Park – all irrigation and drainage projects. Other capital improvement projects for 2009 include additional

seating, shade structures, lighting, restrooms and drinking fountains in existing parks and development of the Prairie Gateway Open Space (a 2-mile loop trail, shelters, a restroom and an overlook).

The *Prairieways Action Plan* (1999) recommended a number of development goals and land acquisitions to provide for the development of parks, trails and open space in the City's Northern Range area. The majority of those recommendations and acquisitions have been implemented; however, adequate funding for park and recreation improvements remains a major challenge. A status summary of these acquisitions and recommendations follow:

The city's first off-leash dog park was completed in August 2008.

Land has been acquired and reserved for a number of future parks.

Land Acquisitions

- Community Parks
    - Prairie Gateway Open Space (formerly considered a community park) consists of 190 acres adjacent to the Civic Center. Work is underway to build a trail, and add shelters and an overlook to the area.
    - First Creek Community Park – 71 acres acquired.
    - Second Creek Community Park (Buffalo Run Community Park) – 35 acres acquired; 102 acres to acquire.
    - Buckley Community Park – 25 acres acquired; 40 acres to be dedicated.
- Neighborhood Parks
    - River Run Park – 10 acres acquired.
    - Potomac Farms/Turnberry Park – 15 acres acquired.
    - Second Creek Park – 20 acres acquired.
    - Stampede Park – 9.5 acres acquired.
    - Buckley Crossing Park – 20 acres acquired.

Trail/Greenway/Open Space

- O'Brian Canal and Burlington Ditch – 18 adjacent acres acquired.
- Second Creek Flood Plain – 146 acres acquired.
- First Creek Flood Plain – 14.5 acres acquired.
- Ragweed Draw – 47 acres acquired.

Remaining Acquisitions

- 4 or 5 additional neighborhood parks – to be dedicated by developers.
- Box Elder Community Park and open space– to be dedicated by developer.
- Additional floodplain along First, Second and Third Creeks.

Source: City of Commerce City; Commerce City Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services and Facilities

Recreation

The Commerce City Recreation Center offers hundreds of fitness and recreation opportunities for every age group.

Additional non-city community recreation facilities and nearby opportunities are available through:

- Adams County School District #14,
- School District 27J,
- Dick's Sporting Goods Park ,
- Rocky Mountain Wildlife Refuge,
- Belle Creek Family Center, and
- Reunion Recreation Center.

Source: City of Commerce City

Open Space

- The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge is an area of 25-square miles of open space on the southeast edge of the Commerce City and is the largest area of contiguous open space in the Denver-metro region. The Refuge currently contains 8.7 miles of trails, a visitor center, and a number of wildlife viewing areas. Nine miles of the Refuge perimeter trail are already open, with an additional two miles of trail expected to open soon. Protected wildlife species at Rocky Mountain Arsenal Refuge include bald eagles and burrowing owls.

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge offers miles of trails to explore the outdoors.

Other noteworthy Open Space areas include the Sand Creek Greenway, O'Brian Canal, Ragweed Draw, Second Creek, Prairie Gateway and the nearby Barr Lake State Park. Sand Creek and Ragweed Draw have amenities and the City is currently building a trail in the Prairie Gateway Open Space. There is a master plan for the Second Creek corridor and construction is slated to begin in 2009 (providing a trail with benches, etc., in a portion of the corridor).

Sources: Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Refuge, City of Commerce City

KEY LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The following opportunities and challenges will be important to consider when evaluating decisions regarding land use and the environment.

Linking Community North/South Geographic Areas

As the community continues to grow in the Northern Range, E-470 Influence, and DIA North areas, linking the new development to the Historic City and Irondale areas in the south will be challenging given the distance between and unique qualities of each area. The Plan should find ways to physically and culturally link the established residential and industrial areas in the southern portion of the community, with newer and future growth areas in the northern areas.

City Image/Community Assets

Historically, Commerce City was seen as a predominantly industrial area, with its primary assets relating to industry and commerce. The city's image has changed considerably with recent growth, and there are now a balance of land uses and many assets to promote including the National Wildlife Refuge, proximity to downtown Denver, major transit routes (including Denver International Airport), existing industrial areas, and new growth potential. The Plan should help the city define and establish an overall image that builds on these assets, in order to continue to improve the perception of Commerce City.

Neighborhood/Industrial Conflicts

The proximity of residential and industrial areas, especially in the Historic City and Irondale areas, can create conflicts. The Plan should identify "edges" between differing land uses and aim to reduce such conflicts with future infill development and redevelopment.

Community Structure

A community structure consisting of a "downtown" area or multiple community "centers" may help link geographic areas and provide a sustainable mix of land uses. The Plan should help identify potential locations for such downtown/centers, if desired, to serve the existing community and future growth areas.

Amount and Location of Growth

While abundant opportunities for future growth exist in the community, the Plan should determine whether the long-term rate, amount, type, and location of growth occurring and planned will be beneficial to the community. For instance, nearly 94% of the community's developable land is located in the Northern Range, E-470 Influence, and DIA North areas. It will be important to make sure that these areas have adequate infrastructure at the time of their development, and that the growth builds on identified community assets.

Airport Compatibility

The proximity of DIA is both an asset and a challenge for the community. The airport will grow over time, which may result in more air traffic and associated noise. The identified airport noise contours and height obstruction areas extend into the Commerce City area, and must be taken into consideration for future land use decisions.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space

The Commerce City parks and recreation system is major asset to the community and the Plan should help the city maintain the current parks level of service. The Plan also should identify areas for future parks, recreation, and open space to serve the Northern Range, E-470 Influence, and DIA North areas as growth occurs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT CONDITIONS

BBC prepared a more detailed Economic Development Analysis and Forecasts, under separate cover.

CURRENT ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

According to the city's economic development office, the industry providing the most jobs in Commerce City was transportation and warehousing in 2006, at 50% of total jobs. According to data collected by the North Metro Chamber of Commerce, the largest employers in the city include United Parcel Service (UPS), followed by the Adams County School District, and then Federal Express (FedEx). The city's top ten business employers are:

- United Parcel Service (2,600 employees)
- Shamrock Foods (588)
- FedEx Freight East, Inc (475)
- Sara Lee Bakery Group (421)
- Brannan Sand & Gravel (350)
- Northern Pipeline Construction (300)
- Suncor Energy (282)
- Tri-County Health Department (275)
- Beco Inc. (250)
- Douglass Roofing Co. (250)

Suncor Energy is one of the larger employers in Commerce City.

Maps 9.1 through 9.4 illustrate where these employers are located. Most are in the Historic City area.

JOBS/HOUSING BALANCE

Jobs/housing balance is a measure of the amount of employment relative to the amount of dwelling units in a specific area. The jobs/housing ratio is used to measure the balance of homes to adjacent employment opportunities, and is simply the number of jobs in a community divided by the number of housing units in that community. A low jobs/housing ratio indicates a community rich with housing, while a high jobs/housing ratio indicates that a community is a center of employment. In 2006, Commerce City had 23,676 jobs and 12,826 households. DRCOG estimated the jobs/housing ratio for Commerce City at 1.85, which is higher than most other Adams County and metro-area cities, and indicates that residents of other communities commute into Commerce City for work.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Commerce City Economic Development (C3ED) provides economic development services to the city's business community and businesses relocating to the city. These services include, but are not limited to: site selection assistance; financing resources; incentives; job training resources; and liaison with city departments, developers, and brokers. C3ED markets the city to businesses and site selectors using advertisements and other marketing materials. Customized maps, demographics, and workforce and labor data are

also provided to current or prospective businesses. Economic Development resources available to C3ED are listed in Table 3.1. Additional organizations offering specific resources, such as financing, are also utilized on an as-needed basis.

Table 3.1: Economic Development Resources in Commerce City

Agency	Services
Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (MDEDC)	• Prospect Generation • Site Selector Contacts • Workforce Profiles and Data • Marketing • Economic Profile of Metro Denver Region
Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (COEDIT)	• Prospect Generation • Financing Assistance • Job Training Programs • Site Selector Contacts • Marketing • Data/Reports • Business Retention and Expansion Support
International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)	• Retail Industry Conferences & Networking Opportunities • Retail & Hospitality Industry Updates and Trends • Retail & Hospitality Industry Data and Research Resources • Training
Adams County Economic Development (ACED)	• Prospect Generation • Data/Reports • Enterprise Zone Administration • ED and Industry Updates and Trends
Front Range Community College – Small Business Development Center	• Small Business Resource Programs • Start Up and Small Business Financing Resources
Economic Developers Council of Colorado (EDCC)	• Training • ED and Industry Updates and Trends • Networking Opportunities
International Economic Development Council (IEDC)	• Training • Networking Opportunities

Source: Commerce City Economic Development

Map 11: Potential Development Opportunities identifies vacant and agricultural lands available for development in addition to several key opportunity areas for economic development in Commerce City. These opportunity areas include:

- **E-470 Influence Area:** E-470 continues to emerge as a major travel route to Denver International Airport and throughout the region. Opportunities for travel-associated development are available within a nearby proximity to the toll way, especially near major interchanges. This area is shown on the Areas of Focus map.

- **Enterprise Zone:** Almost the entire Historic City and Irondale areas, plus the western portion of the Northern Range area, are within the state Enterprise Zone. This area is categorized by the state as economically distressed, and special tax

incentives are offered to businesses that expand or locate in the zone. The purpose of the tax incentives is to create new jobs and investments in the zone.

- **Urban Renewal Authority:** Commerce City has identified Urban Renewal Areas (URA) that cover the southern portion of the Historic City area and the Prairie Gateway. The purpose of the URA is to provide a mechanism to redevelop these areas. A variety of tools are available to facilitate this goal.

- **National Wildlife Refuge Entrances:** The National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's center anticipates 200,000 annual visitors. Properties near the entrances to the Refuge may be able to benefit from the increased visitation to the area.

Source: Colorado Department of Revenue, City of Commerce City

UTILITIES AND SERVICES

Water Supply and Distribution

The majority of the City's drinking water is supplied by South Adams County Water and Sanitation District. The water supply comes from a mix of: groundwater and treated surface water from Denver Water. The city's water is treated at Klein Water Treatment Facility.

The South Adams County Water and Sanitation District is growing rapidly. Because of high demand on limited resources, the District has instituted a mandatory irrigation schedule and irrigation shutdown to achieve water conservation. All new developments seeking water and wastewater services must acquire and dedicate sufficient water supply resources to serve their development. Several water supply projects are underway and planned to accommodate the significant growth in the District's service area including drilling additional alluvial wells (projected to serve approximately 5,000 new households), a major surface water supply and treatment project (approximately 21,000 new households served), and a separate irrigation system for the District's northern area (projected irrigation system for approximately 31,000 households). Completion of these projects is anticipated over the next 20 years, with the alluvial well expansion underway and the surface water supply project expected to occur within the next 10 to 15 years, depending on the rate of development.

The Northern Commerce City General Improvement District (GID) was established to provide the water and sewer infrastructure for all development in the Northern Range. Properties north of East 88th Avenue and east of Highway 2 must belong to the GID in order to develop.

Sources: South Adams County Water and Sanitation District, Commerce City Economic Development

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

- **South Adams County Water and Sanitation District** provides the majority of the area with wastewater collection and treatment. The South Adams County Water and Sanitation District's Williams Monaco Wastewater Treatment Plant collects and treats the wastewater from over 200 miles of sewer lines throughout the District before discharging the treated wastewater into the South Platte River. The majority of the collection system operates by gravity, but there are twelve pump stations in operation where flows must be lifted.

In 2004 a plant expansion project increased the treatment capacity of the plant to 7.0-million gallons per day, and allowed the facility to meet strict state and federal regulations. Planning is constantly underway to determine future needs of the District.

Pursuant to Intergovernmental Agreements between Commerce City and South Adams County Water and Sanitation District, developing properties in the District's service that are to be served by the district must annex to Commerce City, and provide sufficient water resources and infrastructure to serve the development.

Source: South Adams County Water and Sanitation District

- **Industrial Park Sanitation District** provides wastewater collection to approximately 90 commercial customers in the area between Quebec and Ivy Streets from East 48th Avenue to East 52nd Avenue. The wastewater is treated by Metro Wastewater Reclamation District. Water service is provided to Industrial Park Sanitation District customers by South Adams County Water and Sanitation District. All of the property covered by the Industrial Park Sanitation District is developed, and the District does not anticipate any future growth.

Source: Industrial Park Sanitation District

Stormwater Management

Any grading or adaptation to site drainage requires a grading permit from the City of Commerce City. For development sites over one acre in size, the **Commerce City Public Works** requires a grading permit, in combination with a discharge permit issued by the **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)**. The CDPHE permit program covers stormwater discharges and wastewater discharges to surface water and groundwater from industrial, domestic, and animal feeding operations. Stormwater facilities must be built according to specifications from the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, and they are inspected by the Commerce City Stormwater Coordinator for compliance with erosion and sediment control standards.

Source: City of Commerce City

Energy and Natural Gas

Electric service is provided to Commerce City by United Power for residents north of East 96th Avenue, or Excel Energy for residents south of East 96th Avenue. Natural gas service is provided by Excel Energy.

- **United Power** is a rural electric cooperative with electric franchise agreements to serve all of the new growth areas. By the end of 2006, the cooperative served more than 60,000 meters in the Denver metropolitan area. Customers have the option to purchase clean renewable electric power for an additional monthly charge. Rebates are offered to customers who invest in select solar technologies.

Source: www.unitedpower.com

- **Excel Energy** provides electric service to portions of Commerce City, and natural gas service to all of Commerce City. The voluntary windsource program offered by Excel Energy allows customers to purchase wind-generated electricity for a small additional monthly charge. Other renewable energy programs include

SolarRewards for installation of solar-photovoltaic systems and use of other renewable technologies for service delivery.

Source: www.excelenergy.com

Trash and Recycling Services

Waste removal is provided to Commerce City residents, except those who live in apartment and mobile home park units. The service includes "single stream," no-sorting-required curbside recycling. Additionally, households may drop off recyclables at a number of designated facilities throughout the community.

EDUCATION

Educational Attainment

Commerce City is served by two school districts: Adams County School District 14 in the south and School District 27J in the north (see Map 13: Schools and School Districts). On the following pages, Table 3.2 outlines the proficiency of students in each district Table 3.3 identifies estimated enrollment in Commerce City schools for the current school year.

⬩ **Adams County School District #14:** The District has a total of fourteen schools: 6 elementary, 2 middle, 2 high, 2 preschools, 1 preK-8, and 1 charter. Enrollment in recent years has seen little growth and the District does not anticipate significant growth in the near future. The District has a new high school/community learning center campus which opened in 2009. This new campus replaced the old Adams City High School and is located at East 72nd Avenue and

Adams City Middle School in the Adams 14 District.

Quebec Parkway as part of the Prairie Gateway. Based on the small schools-within-a-school concept, the new school offers students the choice of four academies: early college, science and technology, the arts, and an international baccalaureate academy. The high school will also offer a community college component through partnerships with Front Range, Community College of Aurora, and Community College of Denver.

Student assessment scores continue to improve in the Adams #14 District annually. Per federal No Child Left Behind legislation, the District was in its second year of corrective action for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status for both reading and math in 2007. Adams #14 implements the following programs to help schools succeed in meeting AYP: additional tutoring for identified students; additional professional development for teachers in reading, math, and language acquisition; intensive intervention methods for students who are not at grade level; and regular meetings with school staff to examine student data and individual student plans.

‣ **School District 27J:**   The school district serves Brighton and portions of the Thornton, Broomfield, Aurora, Adams County, Weld County and Commerce City communities.   The district has seven schools that serve Commerce City residents: 3 elementary, 1 middle, 1 high, and 2 charters.   District enrollment over the past five years has increased steadily at an average near 12% per year, putting tremendous pressure on school facilities due to overcrowding.   In 2006 voters

Turnberry Elementary in the 27J District.

approved a bond issue for the construction and renovation of many school facilities.   As a result, Turnberry Elementary opened in 2008, and Stuart Middle School opened in 2009, both of which serve Commerce City residents.

A District Build Out Study conducted in 2008 identified area where future schools are likely to be needed by 2033.   The study concluded that 28 future elementary schools, 7 future middle schools, and 4 future high schools are likely needed district-wide by 2033 due to current growth projections.

Student assessment levels are a major priority in the district and a number of schools are performing on par with statewide averages.   The District was in its second year of corrective action for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2007.   Major goals identified by the District in 2007 include improving student achievement; improving graduation rate; aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment; assuring a safe, respectful, welcoming learning environment; increasing parent and community involvement; and improving customer satisfaction.

Table 3.2: 2007 Student Assessment – Percentage of Students Proficient/Advanced

	Adams County School District #14	School District 27J	Colorado State Average
Reading			
3rd Grade	56%	70%	71%
10th Grade	39%	55%	69%
Math			
3rd Grade	45%	63%	68%
10th Grade	9%	13%	30%

Source: Adams County School District #14 2006-2007 Annual Report, School District 27J 2006-2007 Annual Report

Table 3.3: Commerce City Schools

Adams County School District #14	Grade Levels	'07-'08 Enrollment
Preschool		
3 C's	PK-K	115
Sanville	PK-K	92
Elementary Schools		
Alsup	K-5	537
Central	K-5	563
Hanson	PK-8	425
Dupont	PK-5	551
Kemp	K-5	365
Monaco	PK-5	435
Rose Hill	K-5	418
Middle Schools		
Adams City	6-8	611
Kearney Middle	6-8	543
High Schools		
Adams City High	9-12	1428
Lester Arnold High	9-12	159
Charter Schools		
Community Leadership Academy	K-8	440
Brighton School District 27J	Grade Levels	'08-'09 Enrollment
Elementary Schools		
Second Creek	K-5	631
Thimmig	K-6	669
Turnberry	PK - 5	627
Middle Schools		
Prairie View	6-8	797
Stuart	6-8	Opens August 2009
High Schools		
Prairie View	9-12	1318
Charter Schools		
Belle Creek	K-8	681
Landmark Academy at Reunion	K-8	535

Sources: Adams County School District #14, School District 27J.

Higher and Continuing Education

Regionally, there are an assortment of higher education opportunities including numerous community colleges, trade schools, online education programs, and state and private universities. Commerce City features the following centers for higher and/or continuing education:

Intergenerational Learning Center, located at Kearney Middle School in Adams County School District #14 provides the community with numerous adult-educational opportunities including adult basic literacy classes, GED classes in English and Spanish, pre-GED test services, English as a second language classes, computer classes in English and Spanish, Spanish and German language classes, advising, job readiness classes, career assessment, and higher education information.

- **Adams City High School campus** on the Prairie Gateway, which opened in the fall of 2009, replaces the existing Adams City High School and features a partnership of community colleges to provide high school students and adults with career and technical education opportunities.

- **Adams County Workforce and Business Center** provides Commerce City residents career development, training, and employment services.

Source: Adams County School District 14

Libraries

Rangeview Library District consists of six branches with Commerce City having its own location. The Library District provides internet service at all branches, exchange of library materials between the branches, a Bookmobile traveling service, and a home library service to distribute library materials to homebound residents. In 2008, the Rangeview Library District became an independent entity, funded separately from the county by an earmarked property mill levy of 1.386 mills levied on all properties in the district service area.

Source: Rangeview Library District

KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

In order to successfully promote economic development, the following opportunities and challenges must be acknowledged, given the city's economic climate and reliance on utilities, services, and education providers.

Economic Development Plan

A variety of resources are available to assist the businesses community, and the creation of an Economic Development Strategic Plan is underway. Opportunity exists to integrate planning efforts with a clear economic development plan to help the city chart its future in a unique way.

City Financing Strategy

Balancing current needs and services with unfunded infrastructure deficiencies remains a challenge. Awareness of the current financial situation will help put future development scenarios into perspective, and underlines the importance of developing a long-term financial strategy for the city.

Growth and Diversification Opportunities/Industrial Cluster Strategies and Locations

There are a number of areas throughout the community where diverse economic development opportunities exist, including near Denver International Airport, along E-470 and I-76, as well in and around the established industrial areas. Leveraging community assets will be critical in order to attract and grow diverse businesses.

Adapting Redevelopment

Redevelopment of older industrial areas may help accommodate current and future employment and residential needs, as well as help reduce conflicts between residential and industrial uses. Opportunities such as Enterprise Zone tax credits and Urban Renewal Authority financing may be key contributors in redevelopment efforts.

Reinvestment in Older Neighborhoods

The existing older neighborhoods are in close proximity to many of the community's assets and employment areas. Reinvestment in these neighborhoods may help them gain a competitive edge as a place for residents to live.

Coordinated Utilities

A number of utility service providers, service districts, and the recent rapid growth have resulted in a somewhat fragmented foundation of infrastructure. The formation of the General Improvement District in the Northern Range area is an example of how the city has developed a coordinated approach to address infrastructure needs. As the community continues to grow, providers will need to coordinate to offer and maintain water, sewer, stormwater, energy, trash, and technology services in an efficient manner.

TRANSPORTATION

CURRENT CONDITIONS

STREETS AND HIGHWAYS/TRAFFIC

A number of major travel routes serve the residents and businesses of Commerce City. A number of major highways provide local, regional, and state-wide connections to jobs and commercial opportunities. Three railroads (two national and one local) provide rail spur access for local businesses and industries, while also providing nation-wide connections. Commerce City lies just west of Denver International Airport (DIA), a major transportation hub and employment center.

Current Roadway Network

Three figures showing existing roadway classifications, laneage, and daily volumes have been developed that illustrate the current status of the roadway network in Commerce City and its immediate environs (see Maps 14, 15 and 16). An overview of this inventory information is provided in the following discussion. In addition, the Department of Public Works has recently completed an inventory of pavement conditions on streets maintained by Commerce City. Specific information is available through the Pavement Management System.

Freeways and Tollway

There are four limited-access highways that are located within Commerce City or nearby.

- **I-76** lies on the west side of the city and provides direct access to I-25 and I-70 in a southwesterly direction. It serves Brighton and northeastern Colorado in the other direction. This freeway generally has four lanes, although the section where Hwy 85 coincides with it has six lanes. Most of the six interchanges that serve Commerce City were built when I-76 was originally constructed. However, the interchange at State Highway (SH) 2 and East 120th Avenue was reconstructed within the last 15 years. The traffic volumes range from a high of 67,100 vehicles per day (vpd) where I-76 and Hwy 85 coincide, to 38,000 vpd on the southwest, and 26,000 north of SH 2.

- **I-270** is located in the southern part of the city and generally parallels Sand Creek. This freeway has four lanes, and there are two interchanges that serve Commerce City at Highway 85 (in the industrial heart of the city) and at Quebec Street (at the southeast corner of the Historic City). Traffic volumes range from 68,500 vpd between Quebec Street and Highway 85 to 91,100 vpd to the northwest towards I-76.

- **E-470** is a tollway located on the northeast side of the city. Commerce City is one of eight jurisdictions that are members of the E-470 Public Highway Authority. The first segment of E-470 was completed in 1991. The segment
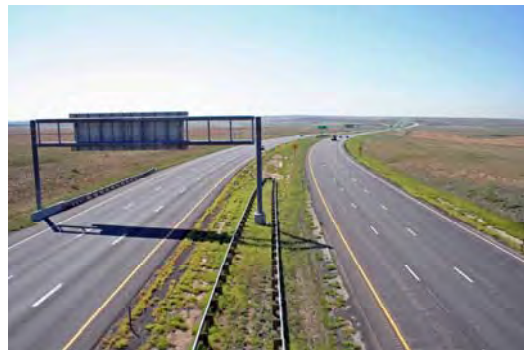
This segment of E-470 was completed in 1998.

of E-470 south of East 120th Avenue to East 56th Avenue was completed in 1998. The entire tollway was completed in early 2003 when the segment northwest of East 120th Avenue to I-25 was opened to traffic. The bonds to build E-470 are anticipated to be retired in approximately 2039, at which time E-470 will be turned over to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). E-470 currently has four lanes throughout its length with daily traffic volumes up to 23,000 vpd on segments in Commerce City.

- **Pena Boulevard** is a four-lane freeway that primarily serves Denver International Airport. It is owned and maintained by DIA. In addition to using Pena Boulevard to access DIA, Commerce City residents and businesses in the Northern Range can get off of northbound Pena Boulevard at the Tower Road interchange to return to the city. Traffic volumes on Pena Boulevard range from 73,000 vpd southwest of Tower Road to over 90,000 east of E-470.

Other State Highways

There are five state highways in Commerce City that provide a vital mobility function to the community. These include:

- **Hwy 85** (also SH 2 and US 6) primarily serves industrial and commercial businesses on the western side of the Historic City area and also serves newer residential areas in the northern part of the city west of I-76. It is a four-lane arterial facility, and direct access has been limited to three interchanges (I-76, I-270 and SH 2) and nine signalized intersections (56th, 60th, 69th, 72nd, 74th, 77th, 104th, 112th, and 120th Avenues). In addition to serving local residents and businesses, it is an important regional route for commuters and trucks serving northern Colorado. Traffic volumes in the Historic City range from almost 49,000 vpd south of I-270 to approximately 30,000 vpd south of East 72nd Avenue. North of I-76, the daily traffic volumes are up to 33,000 vpd.

- **SH 2** coincides with Hwy 85 south of East 64th Avenue and then diverges to parallel the BNSF mainline tracks in a northeasterly direction. It leaves Commerce City in the vicinity of the I-76 interchange near East 120th Avenue. It has four through lanes south of East 72nd Avenue, and then tapers to two lanes to the north. Access from the west is limited to at-grade crossings of the BNSF tracks which occur at five signalized intersections (East 72nd, 80th, 88th, 96th, and 104th Avenues). A grade separation of the BNSF tracks was included in the I-76 interchange reconstruction. Daily traffic volumes range from approximately 25,000 vpd south of Quebec Street to 6,800 vpd north of East 104th Avenue.

- **SH 44** involves the section of East 104th Avenue between Colorado Boulevard in Thornton and SH 2. With the exception of a short segment west of SH 2, SH 44 is a two-lane arterial. Volumes range from 13,000 vpd to 15,000 vpd within Commerce City.

- **SH 224** is also a short arterial on the west side of the Historic City. It coincides with East 74th Avenue and ends at Hwy 85. It has four through lanes and an interchange with I-76. Traffic volumes range from 17,900 vpd to 28,100 vpd between I-76 and Hwy 85.

- **SH 265** is better known as Brighton Boulevard. It begins at I-70, enters the city south of East 56th Avenue, and ends at the Hwy 85/East 69th Avenue intersection.

It is a two-lane road that parallels the UPRR mainline tracks and has a daily volume up to 8,700 vpd in the city.

Major Local Streets

In addition to the regional facilities that serve the city, there are a number of local streets and highways that are under the jurisdiction of Commerce City. Many of these roadways provide connections to adjacent communities, while one is contained within the city's boundaries. These principal arterials include:

- **East 56th Avenue** provides continuity from Brighton Boulevard to east of Quebec Street, where it continues as a Denver arterial. It has four through-lanes between Hwy 85 and Quebec Street. Denver is currently conducting an environmental study to widen their portion to four lanes east to Pena Boulevard. Daily volumes are 12,200 vpd west of Hwy 85 and up to 11,400 vpd just west of Quebec Street.

- **East 72nd Avenue** is a major local street that is bounded within the Historic City. It begins at Colorado Boulevard on the west and ends just east of Quebec Parkway at the new Adams City High School. East 72nd Avenue has two lanes west of Hwy 85. The cross-section east of Hwy 85 includes four through lanes, with left-turn lanes at major cross streets and some on-street parking. Since SH 224 (East 74th Avenue) ends at Hwy 85, there appears to be a significant amount of truck traffic that makes the jog south to East 72nd Avenue to access destinations to the east. Daily volumes range from a low of 6,600 vpd near Quebec Parkway to 10,800 vpd near SH 2.

- **East 88th Avenue** provides east-west connectivity from SH 2 west through Thornton and Westminster.   It is a two-lane arterial that primarily serves commercial activity within Commerce City. It has at-grade crossings with both the UPRR and BNSF mainline tracks and an interchange with I-76. Volumes in Commerce City are as high as 11,500 vpd.

- **East 96th Avenue** is primarily a Commerce City arterial. It does not cross the South Platte River and begins at McKay Road. It has an interchange with I-76 and crosses both mainline railroad tracks. It forms the northern boundary of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). A future connection is planned between Buckley and Tower Roads which will provide continuity to the western boundary of DIA. It has an interchange with E-470. Daily volumes are up to 11,000 vpd between I-70 and SH 2 and 7,000 vpd in the vicinity of Potomac Street.

- **East 104th Avenue** (along with Tower Road) is an important connection to DIA for Commerce City residents and drivers in the north Denver-metropolitan area. As previously noted, the section west of SH 2 is under the jurisdiction of CDOT and designated SH 44. This principal arterial has recently been widened to four through lanes between Peoria Street (just west of SH 2) to Reunion Parkway. It then widens to six through lanes east to the interchange with E-470. Daily volumes are between approximately 10,000 vpd and 15,000 vpd through Commerce City.

- **East 120th Avenue** also provides continuity across the northern metro area due to the recent completion of the bridges across the South Platte River. It is a two-

lane road through Commerce City, with important connections at Hwy 85, I-76, and E-470. Daily volumes are up to 11,000 vpd, but can be expect to increase due to the completion of the South Platte River segment.

- **Quebec Parkway** provides regional continuity from East 80th Avenue south across the Denver-metro area. It was recently widened to four lanes north of East 64th Avenue and six lanes south to I-270. The new roadway was realigned eastward from East 63rd Avenue north, and the previous road became a frontage road primarily serving residences on the west side of Quebec Street, south of East 72nd Avenue. Daily volumes range from 12,200 vpd south of East 80th Avenue to 20,300 vpd between East 60th and 64th Avenues.

Recent construction along QuebecParkway.

- **Tower Road** lies on the eastern side of the Northern Range. Along with East 104th Avenue, it is an important regional connection to DIA for Commerce City residents, as well as other north metro residents. It is a two-lane arterial with volumes up to 19,500 vpd north of Pena Boulevard. A future alignment is planned north of 104th Avenue to tie with Buckley Road at 120th Avenue. This will improve connectivity with Brighton.

Traffic Operations

The combination of roadway classifications, laneage, and daily volumes can be analyzed to determine the general status of traffic operations on the major street and highway facilities in Commerce City. A figure showing traffic operations has been developed to highlight segments of the network that are currently congested or nearing congestion (see Map 17). Roadway segments where volume to capacity (v/c) ratios exceed 1.0 are shown in red and include:

- I-270 – Hwy 85 to I-76
- Hwy 85 – SH 2 to East 69th Avenue and I-76 to East 112th Avenue
- Tower Road – Pena Boulevard to 96th Avenue

Segments that are nearing capacity (v/c ratio between 0.8 and 1.0) are shown in yellow and include:

- I-270 – I-70 to Hwy 85
- Pena Boulevard – I-70 to E-470
- SH 2 – 72nd Avenue to 96th Avenue
- Hwy 85 – East 69th Avenue to I-76 and East 112th Avenue to East 120th Avenue
- SH 224 – Dahlia Street to I-76
- East 104th Avenue – west of Peoria Street to Brighton Boulevard
- Tower Road – East 96th Avenue to East 104th Avenue

Currently, the remainder of the local street system generally provides adequate levels of service (v/c less than 0.8). Future roadway needs in relation to anticipate growth will be explored in more detail in the upcoming Transportation Plan effort.

RAILROADS

Both the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) and Burlington Northern – Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) have mainline tracks that run basically north-south through the Historic City. In addition to numerous spur tracks from the UPRR and BNSF that serve local industries and other business, the Denver and Rock Island Railroad (DRIR) serves businesses in the southern part of Commerce City. The UPRR track generally parallels Hwy 85 and averages 15 trains per day. The BNSF track is adjacent to SH 2 and then I-76 north of their interchange, and averages 40 trains per day.

Rail is a major mode of transportation for Commerce City industry.

(This information is displayed on Map 18.) In addition to the through trains (of which coal trains represent a large proportion), there are local switching trains that serve Commerce City businesses along the lines. There are five overpasses: bridges on I-270 and Hwy 85 serve both railroads, I-76 spans over the UPRR, and SH 2 and 120th Avenue have bridges over the BNSF. All of the rest of the crossing are at-grade, including nine on the UPRR tracks (East 69th, 72nd, 76th, 80th, 88th, 96th, 104th, 112th, and 120th Avenues) and five on the BNSF tracks (East 72nd, 80th, 88th, 96th, and 104th Avenues). Commerce City and both railroads recently completed a "Quiet Zone" study to reduce noise at at-grade crossings. Improvements have been completed at the BNSF crossings at East 80th and 104th Avenues, East 88th Avenue is nearing completion, and East 96th Avenue is planned.

TRANSIT

Bus

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) provides all public bus services in Commerce City (see Map 18: Existing and Future Transit Routes). There are four local routes (40, 48, 72, and 88) that serve the Historic City, and the "R" regional route runs along I-76 and Hwy 85. There is a park-n-Ride lot located on the southeast corner of Hwy 85 and East 72nd Avenue. An express bus route (145X) provides services between Brighton and DIA and has a stop at 12th Avenue and Chambers Road. The AA skyRide route serving DIA route uses East 104th Avenue between DIA and Thornton and has stops at Reunion, Blackhawk, SH 2 (where there is a park-n-Ride lot), and Hwy 85.

RTD provides transit service throughout Commerce City.

Future Light Rail

As an element of RTD's FasTracks program, the North Metro Corridor is planned along the UPRR Dent Branch tracks on the west side of the Historic City. There will be one station on this line in Commerce City, in the vicinity of East 68th or 72nd Avenues.   The immediate surrounding area could have the potential for significant transit oriented development (TOD).

BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

There are a total of 15 miles of trails in Commerce City (see Map 19). There are regional trails along Sand Creek and the South Platte River. The most significant addition to the system is the path along the west and north perimeters of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR. There are short trail segments within recent developments in the Northern Range, but these will not be connected into a system until there is further development.

Commerce City's standards for new principal and minor arterials include a 12-foot multi-use path (bike and walk) on one side and a six-foot sidewalk on the other. These are separated from traffic by a 12-foot tree lawn, except at intersections. These have been included in new construction along 96th Avenue, East 104th Avenue, and Chambers Road. Cross-section standards for collector streets (major and minor) and local streets within industrial areas include six-foot sidewalks and six-foot tree lawns on each side. Standards for local streets include six-foot attached sidewalk, or 4.5-foot sidewalks if they are detached (6.2-foot tree lawn). Local commercial streets have five-foot detached sidewalks with six-foot tree lawns. All of the new streets in the Northern Range have been built to these standards.

Generally the streets in the Historic City were not built to current standards. Most, but not all, of the residential streets have sidewalks, but these tend to be narrower – approximately three-feet wide. There are very few sidewalks that are separated from the street by tree lawns. Industrial and commercial developments generally do not have sidewalks on their local streets. Several of the wider streets in residential areas have bike routes that are signed, but there are no striped on-street bike lanes. A recent study of pedestrian movements in the Historic City area identified a number of barriers to walking.

AIRPORTS

Denver International Airport

Denver International Airport is a commercial service airport located immediately adjacent to the city on the east.   DIA encompasses 53-square miles, with 6 runways, 3 concourses, and 95 aircraft gates. Owned and operated by the City and County of Denver, the airport is ranked as the firth busiest passenger airport in North America, and the tenth busiest in the world.

Currently DIA employs approximately 30,000 people and has an estimated economic impact of 217,459 jobs (direct and indirect), 47.1 billion in annual wages, and $22.3 billion in total economic activity.

DIA was designed to be expanded to meet the Denver metro area's commercial air transportation needs through at least 2050, with planned ultimate development of 12 runways, 5 concourses, and 300 aircraft gates. At full build out, DIA is projected to accommodate 110 million annual air passengers.

Pena Boulevard is the primary access route to DIA, and the airport's transportation opportunities have been discussed previously. The City and County of Denver has purchased a significant amount of property north of the airport, within the Commerce City Urban Growth Boundary. This area is reserved as an airport buffer zone, in which the development is very limited. Permitted development in this area might include roads, trails, detention, and fill.

Source: Denver International Airport Master Plan, 1989 and DIA Airport Layout Plan Update, 2004.

Front Range Airport

Front Range Airport is a general aviation regional airport that is located further to the southeast, north of I-70 between Watkins and Bennett, with I-70 as the primary access route.

BARRIERS TO TRANSPORTATION

Commerce City's transportation network includes a number of freeways and mainline railroad tracks. These are positive assets to the community in that they provide regional mobility for residents, business, and commodities. However, these systems also present barriers to free movement, since crossing and interchanges are generally limited to major highways. The amount of mainline railroad traffic on the UPRR and BNSF is significant. The South Platte River and Sand Creek create natural barriers, since expensive bridges must be provided for all crossings. Barr Lake, north of the city, also presents a natural barrier. The Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR represents a significant barrier to free movement within the community. There are no east-west through streets between East 56th and 96th Avenues, a distance of five miles. These barriers, and the geography of Commerce City, result in the Irondale area being a relatively narrow connection between the Historic City and the Northern Range. DIA further restricts east-west movement, and East 120th Avenue is the only route in Commerce City that has future continuity. These barriers are illustrated on Map 20.

KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

The following opportunities and challenges are important to recognize in order to improve and build upon the existing transportation system.

Regional Coordination

The numerous regional transportation entities including Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), RTD, DIA, E-470, Colorado Department of Transportation, and the railroads all help to form the transportation framework within Commerce City and throughout the metro area. Continued coordination among all of these entities is critical in order to provide sufficient infrastructure for current needs and future growth, as well as to improve the image of road corridors and overall safety.

Improved Local Way-finding and Safety

Because of many of the transportation barriers identified above, residents and visitors often have a difficult time navigating throughout the community. The Transportation Plan should help establish and improve connections (both road and bicycle/pedestrian), clearly identify local and truck routes, and look at ways to reduce traffic and increase safety in congested areas.

Comprehensive Transportation/Multiple Modes

Lack of a complete multi-modal travel network is a challenge, as funding and timing of necessary improvements is uncertain. However, the plan should consider all future modes of travel – vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians; ;develop priorities for providing such framework; and to provide the community with the greatest number of transportation options.

Transit Strategy

The future light rail line is an exciting opportunity for the community to enhance its transit offerings. A long-term transit strategy will help ensure that the light-rail transit station is built in a suitable location and ties in with other modes of transit.

Trails

Expansion of the existing trail network and providing linkages in the Northern Range area and National Wildlife Refuge, are opportunities to reduce congestion and promote regular physical activity and recreation.

Appendix B: Socioeconomic and Housing Profile Commerce City

This section provides a demographic, economic, and housing market overview of Commerce City, including information on household characteristics; income and poverty; employment trends; and the quality and pricing of housing stock.

It is important to note that because Commerce City has grown so rapidly since 2000, data on how the city has been affected by that growth vary, sometimes considerably. Commercial data estimates, such as Claritas, likely underestimate some of the growth that has occurred, because they can be slow to track extreme changes. These estimates are used in this report for several reasons:

1. They remain the best estimates of demographic characteristics at small geographic levels;
2. They allow comparison of Commerce City with peer communities using the same data source; and
3. They are widely used by larger firms to make economic development decisions.

Data estimates have been supplemented with very recent data from the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), which reports average characteristics from 2005 through 2007. This is a new data source that will be available to Commerce City annually in 2008. The ACS provides a middle ground between Claritas and the city's 2006 survey ("Census") of residents.

Summary

Since 2000, Commerce City has experienced very rapid growth. Between its year of incorporation in 1952 and 2000, the city grew to 21,000 residents. Population in the city has almost doubled, with an addition of 19,000 residents. Almost half of the city's growth has taken place in the past seven years.

Most residents in Commerce City live in married-couple households, with about half having children. The city has many young residents and, like Adams County overall, it has a relatively lower proportion of seniors than other areas in metro Denver.

Compared to other cities in Adams County, Commerce City offers its residents many affordable homeownership options, but limited rental options. Households earning $35,000 and less in Commerce City have many opportunities to buy in the city; such options are more limited in other communities. Commerce City provided more than one third of affordable for-sale units to the lowest income homeowners and 15 % of units affordable to the lowest income renters in Adams County, despite having about 8 % of the county's households overall. This means that Commerce City provided a disproportionate share of such affordable units to Adams County residents.

In contrast, the ownership market in Commerce City offers limited options for very high-income households and/or households who want to upgrade to more expensive homes. During 2007, there were fewer than 50 units priced at more than $475,000.

Most rental housing in Commerce City is priced to serve households earning between $35,000 and $50,000. An oversupply of rental units exists in this price range, and most of the city's lowest-income

renters must pay more for rent than they can afford because there are very few affordable units in their price range.

Population Growth

The Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) estimated the population of Commerce City at 37,874 in 2007, up from 35,462 as of 2006. The city's own Census conducted in 2006 estimated a similar population at 36,049 residents. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the city's population to be higher at 40,929 as of July 2007, and 38,543 as of July 2006.

Both estimates show that the city's rate of growth as been outstanding since 2000, at a compound annual rate of between 9 and 10 %. On average, Commerce City has added about 2,600 residents to the city every year since 2000.

Comparative growth. Compared to other communities in Adams County, Commerce City has grown much more rapidly. As shown in Exhibit 1, only Brighton had a growth rate even remotely close to Commerce City's, although it was only two-thirds as high.

Exhibit 1.
Population Growth by Municipality, Adams County, 2000-2006

	Commerce City	Arvada	Aurora	Bennett	Brighton
Total Municipal Population:					
2000	20,991	102,153	276,393	2,021	20,905
2006	35,462	104,981	308,285	2,350	30,197
Growth	*14,471*	*2,828*	*31,892*	*329*	*9,292*
Average Annual Growth Rate	*9.13%*	*0.46%*	*1.84%*	*2.55%*	*6.32%*
Municipal Population in Adams County:					
2000	20,991	2,847	40,249	2,021	20,751
2006	35,462	2,799	42,592	2,031	29,968
Growth	*14,471*	*-48*	*2,343*	*10*	*9,217*
Average Annual Growth Rate	*9.13%*	*-0.28%*	*0.95%*	*0.08%*	*6.32%*

Continued...	Federal Heights	Northglenn	Thornton	Westminster	Unincorporated Adams
Total Municipal Population:					
2000	12,065	31,575	82,384	100,940	78,328
2006	11,797	35,666	109,561	106,765	84,257
Growth	*-268*	*4,091*	*27,177*	*5,825*	*5,527*
Average Annual Growth Rate	*-0.37%*	*2.05%*	*4.87%*	*0.94%*	*1.22%*
Municipal Population in Adams County:					
2000	12,065	31,563	82,384	57,419	78,328
2006	11,797	35,654	109,561	60,889	84,257
Growth	*-268*	*4,091*	*27,177*	*3,470*	*5,527*
Average Annual Growth Rate	*-0.37%*	*2.05%*	*4.87%*	*0.98%*	*1.22%*

Note: The aggregation of the growth experienced by individual municipalities appears larger than the overall growth experienced by Adams County between 2000 and 2006. This is because 15,239 residents were lost when Broomfield County was incorporated and Broomfield is not presented in these tables.

Unincorporated Adams County estimate includes Watkins, which recently unincorporated.

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

Historic growth. Commerce City was incorporated in 1952. In 1960, the city reported a population of 8,970. Growth was strong between 1960 and 1970, and then, reflective of economic conditions, slowed to the point that the city lost population between 1970 and 1980. The city's growth was stagnant between 1980 and 1990, when growth began to resume.

By 2000, the City had more than doubled in size with a population of 20,991. The real growth has occurred since 2000, however, as Commerce City has almost doubled again in the past 7 years. The city added 12,000 residents in the 40-year period between 1960 and 2000—and almost 17,000 in the seven years between 2000 and 2007!

Exhibit 2 shows the historical growth of Commerce City since 1960. Exhibit 3 shows the average annual growth rate for the city.

Exhibit 2.
Historical Population Growth, Commerce City, 1960 to 2007

Source:
Colorado Department of Local Affairs and U.S. Census Bureau.
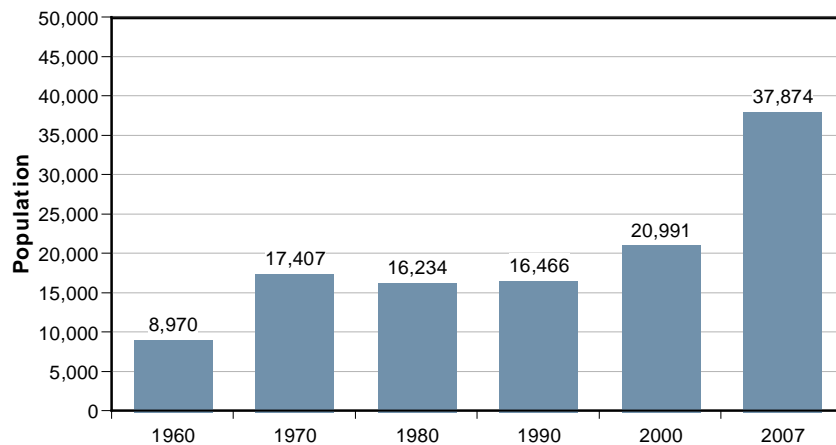
Exhibit 3.
Average Annual Population Growth, Commerce City, 1960 to 2007

Source:
Colorado Department of Local Affairs and U.S. Census Bureau.
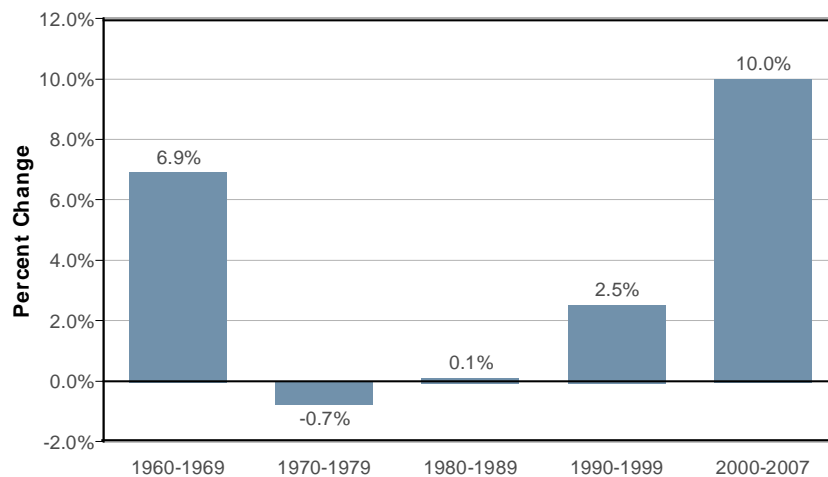
Exhibit 4 shows the overall share of Adams County's population among its municipalities, including Commerce City. Despite its strong growth, Commerce City still makes up a relatively small portion of Adams County's total population at 8.5 %.

Exhibit 4.
Population by Municipality,
Adams County, 2006

Source:
Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

Arvada (0.7%)
Aurora (10.3%)
Bennett (0.5%)
Brighton (7.2%)
Commerce City (8.5%)
Federal Heights (2.8%)
Northglenn (8.6%)
Thornton (26.4%)
Westminster (20.3%)
Unincorporated Adams (14.7%)
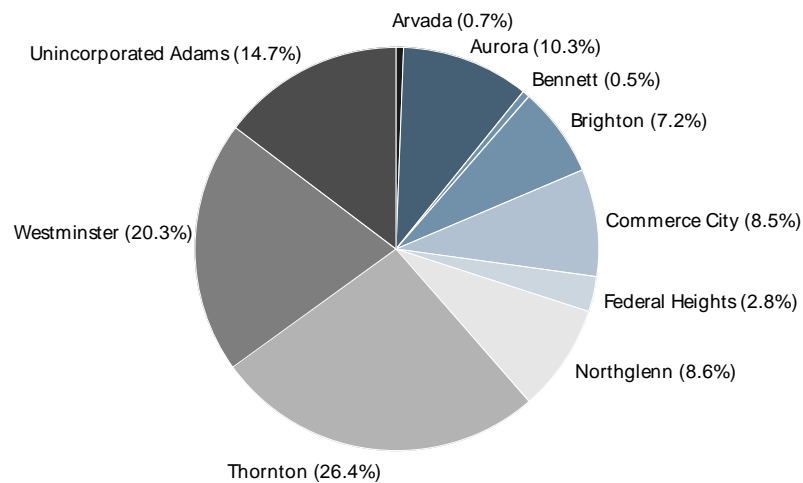
Characteristics of Commerce City Residents

This section describes key characteristics of Commerce City's residents. The city's residents are mostly married couples and single persons, living in households that are slightly larger than those of other communities in Adams County. The city has a lower proportion of seniors than other Colorado cities and the state overall and, as such, will age more slowly than other cities.

Household composition. Married couples make up the majority of households in Commerce City at 51 % of all households. Half of the married couples have children; half do not.

Single persons make up 18 % of all households, and single parents with children make up 13 %. Exhibit 5 shows the breakdown of Commerce City's residential households, by type.

Exhibit 5.
Household Type,
Commerce City, 2007

Source:
Claritas, 2007.

Other households (17%)
Single persons (18%)
Single parents (13%)
Married couples without children (25%)
Married couples with children (26%)
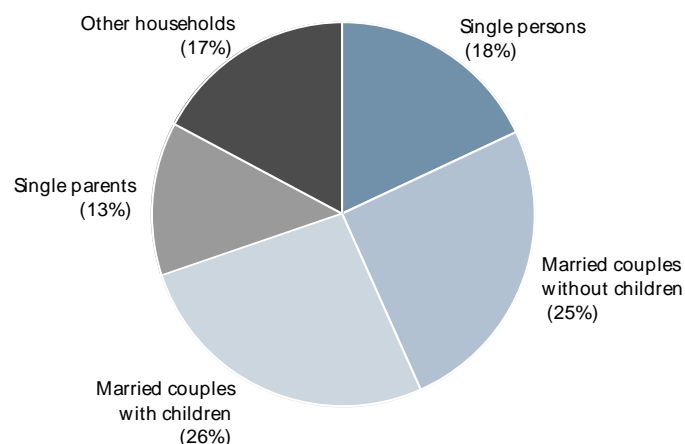
Average household size. The Colorado Department of Local Affairs estimates that there is an average of 3.1 persons per household in Commerce City as of 2007. This is the highest of any community in Adams County (Aurora is next at 3.06), as shown in Exhibit 6.

Exhibit 6.
Average Household Size,
Adams County Cities,
2007

Source:
Colorado Department of Local Affairs..
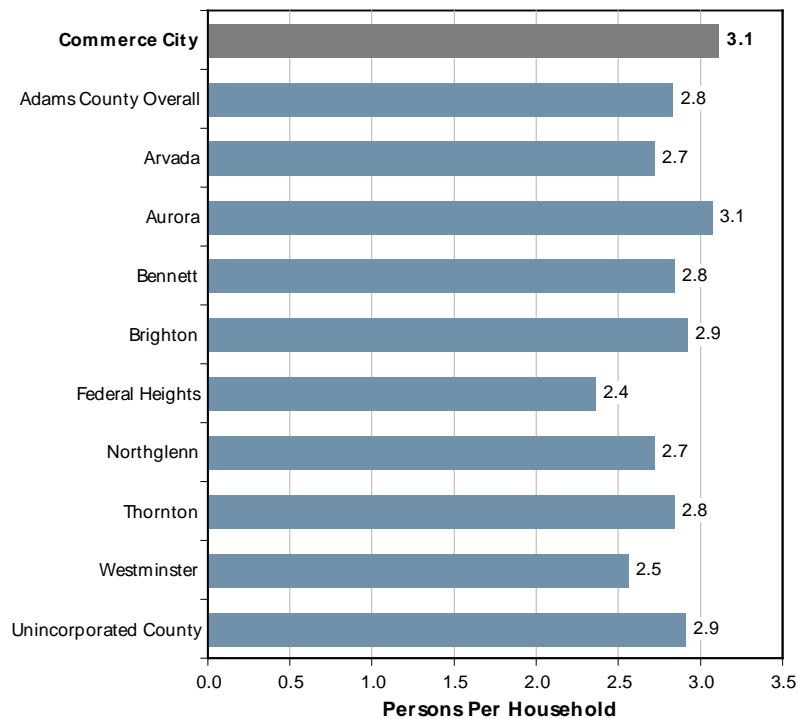
Age. In 2000, the median age in Commerce City was 29.8 years. In 2007, the median age was estimated at 30.2, indicating an aging of the city's population. This is partially reflective of the aging baby boomer population. The growth of older residents will increase demand for senior services, senior-friendly housing options, and a workforce to fill jobs vacated by retiring employees.

However, Commerce City, similar to Adams County overall, has a lower proportion of seniors than other communities in the metro area and the state overall. About 8 % of the city's population is over age 65, compared to about 10 % for the state of Colorado.

Exhibit 7 shows the percentage of Commerce City's population for selected age groups, as of 2007. As shown in the exhibit, children (residents under age 18) comprise almost one-third of the city's population. College-age residents and/or young adults are about 10 %; adults in their prime working years make up almost 40 % of the city's population overall.

Exhibit 7.
Percentage of Residents
in Commerce City by Age
Category, 2007

Source:
Claritas, 2007.
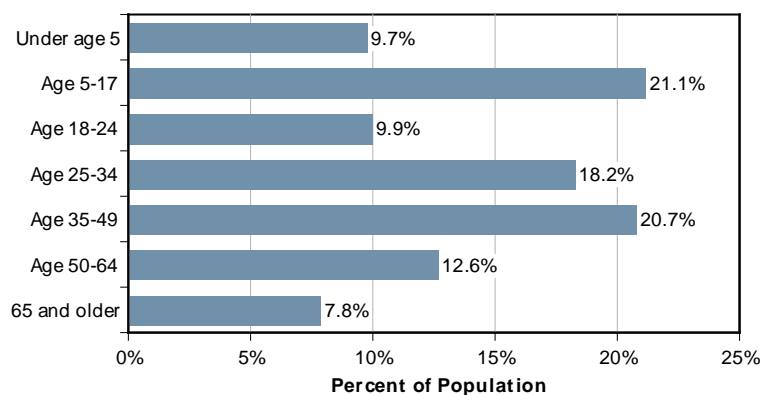
Based on demographic growth estimates by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Adams County and Commerce City will feel the effects of an aging population later than some communities. For example, by 2012, Jefferson County's population will shift from 11.3 % seniors in 2007 to 13.5 %. Adams County and Commerce City will not experience a similar distributional shift until much later, about 2020.

Race and ethnicity. As of the 2000 Census, about 53 % of Commerce City's population was of Hispanic descent; 43 % was non-Hispanic White. This compares to 28 % Hispanic/Latino and 63 % non-Hispanic White for Adams County overall. The state of Colorado was 17 % Hispanic/Latino and 75 % non-Hispanic White as of 2000.

Consistent with trends nationwide, Commerce City has experienced substantial growth in Hispanic/Latino residents since 2000. Contrary to other cities, however, is the non-Hispanic growth that has occurred in Commerce City. Non-Hispanic growth has contributed an equal amount to growth as has Hispanic growth. Recent estimates from the U.S. Census estimates that 61 % of the City's population is of Hispanic origin. However, the proportions vary geographically: in the Core City, 63 % of residents are Hispanic, compared to 34 % in the Northern Range.

Income. The median household income of Commerce City residents in 2007 was estimated by Claritas as $41,087. This means that in 2007, exactly half of households in Commerce City earned less than $41,087, and exactly half earned more.

Exhibit 8 presents the overall household income distribution for Commerce City households based on the Census' ACS (the Census does not report a median income for Commerce City for 2007). Forty-nine % of the city's households earn less than $50,000 per year, and 75 % earn less than $75,000[1]. The highest proportion of households is in the $60,000 to $75,000 range (about 16 %).

Exhibit 8.
Household Income as a Percent of Total Households, Commerce City, 2007

Source:
Census American Community Survey, 2005-2007 estimates.

Percent of Total Households

Less than $15,000 — 11.7%
$15,000 to $24,999 — 10.7%
$25,000 to $34,999 — 9.0%
$35,000 to $49,999 — 17.5%
$50,000 to $74,999 — 25.8%
$75,000 to $99,999 — 11.0%
$100,000 to $149,999 — 10.9%
$150,000 to $249,999 — 1.7%
$250,000 to $499,999 — 0.8%
$500,000 or more — 0.8%

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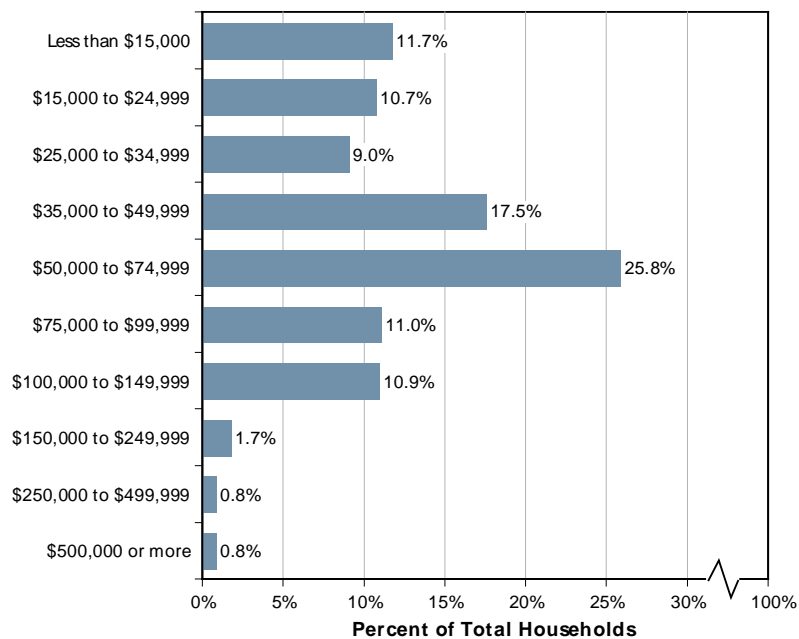
[1] The city's 2006 census based on resident surveys estimates that 41 percent of households earn more than $75,000 per year.

Compared to other cities in Adams County, Commerce City households have relatively low incomes. At $41,087, Commerce City has the second lowest median household of municipalities in the county (only Federal Heights is lower at $35,717). Exhibit 9 compares the median household income of Adams County's municipalities for 2007, based on Claritas data.

Exhibit 9.
Median Household Income, by Municipality, 2007
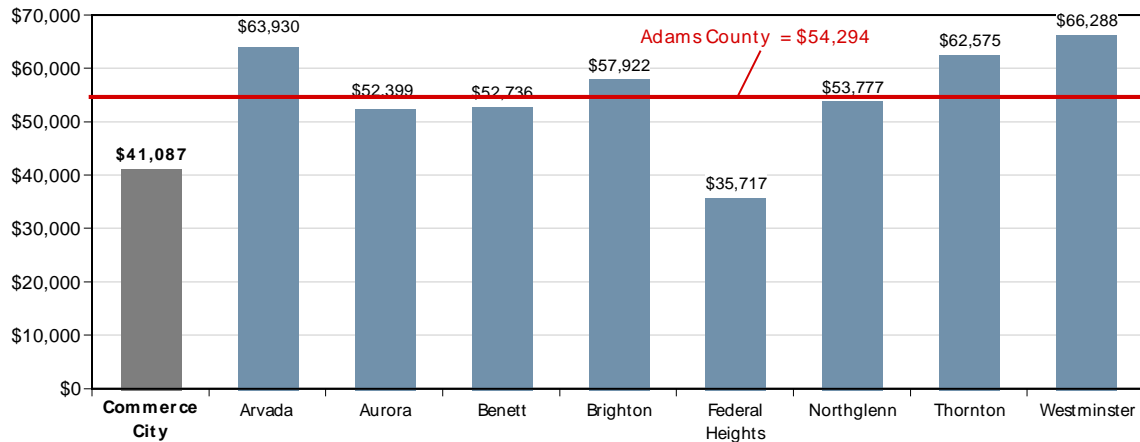
Source: Claritas.

Exhibit 10 on page 7 displays where households, with household incomes less than $20,000, reside in Adams County and Commerce City by Census Tract. The map shows the percentage of households earning less than $20,000 by area. Lower-income households are most likely to live in the southern portion of Commerce City.

Living in poverty. The poverty threshold is established at the federal level and is updated annually. It is adjusted for household size but not by geographic area, except for Alaska and Hawaii[2]. In 2006, the poverty threshold for a family of four was about $20,000 in annual wages.

In 2007, an estimated 14 % of Commerce City's *families*—1,100 families—lived below poverty. About half of the families living in poverty were married couples, and 40 % were single parents with children, mostly single mothers.

The types of families with the highest poverty levels include single mothers with children (30 % live in poverty) and unmarried men without children (21 %). Married couples live in poverty about 11 % of the time.

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[2] Therefore, the poverty threshold in Manhattan, New York is the same as in Minot, North Dakota.

Exhibit 10.
Distribution of Low income Households with Household incomes Less than $20,000, Adam County, 2007
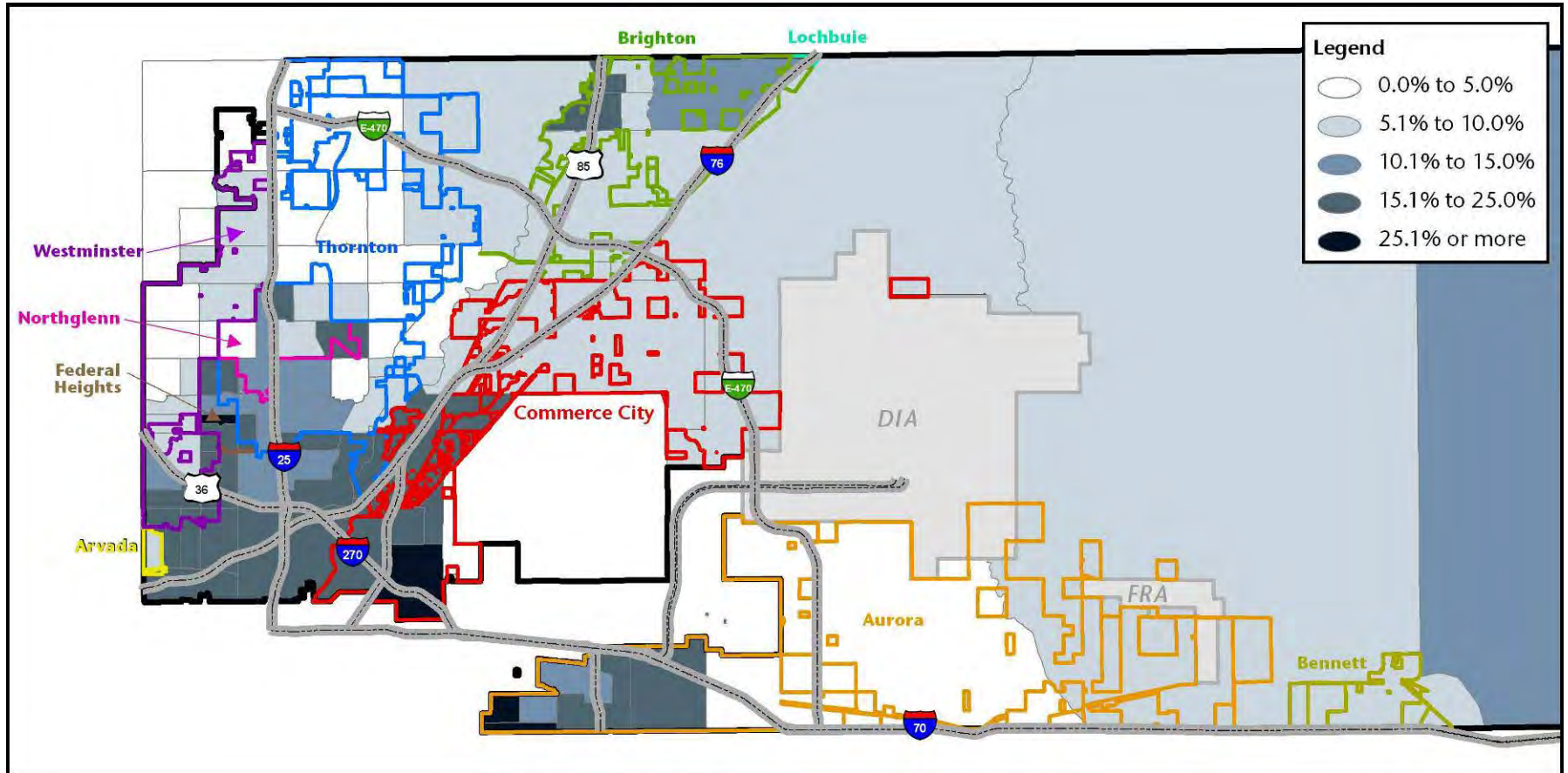
Source: Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), 2035 forecasts.

Poverty for the population overall (not just families) is only available for 2000. In 2000, 19 % of Commerce City's population lived in poverty. This was much higher than other communities in Adams County—the next highest poverty level was in Federal Heights at 11.2 %.

In 2000, seniors made up 28 % of the city's lowest-income households. This is much different than in Adams County overall, where seniors made up 72 % of the county's low-income households. Adults of prime working age—those between 25 and 55—made up almost half of Commerce City's low income households at 46 %. Young adults (25 to 34) alone made up almost 20 %.

Educational attainment. Exhibit 11 shows the highest level of educational attainment that Commerce City residents over the age of 25 have reached based on Angelou Economics Economic Scan. For one third of residents, high school is the highest level of educational attainment. Forty percent have less than a high school degree. One fourth of the city's residents over age 25 have had some college and/or obtained an Associate's degree; 6 % have a college or graduate degree. Compared to 2000, residents have become more highly educated, particularly those who have graduated from college.

Exhibit 11.
Educational Attainment for the Population Over the Age of 25, Commerce City, 2008

Source:
Angelou Economics Economic Scan.
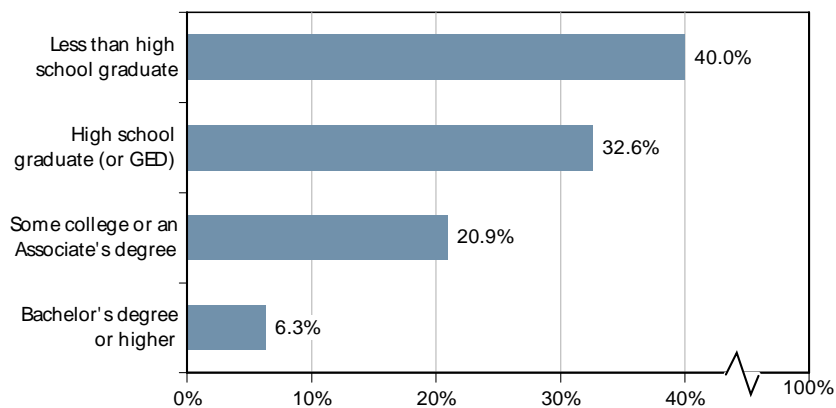
Exhibit 12 maps out, by Census Tract, the percentage of the population that have earned at least a Bachelor's degree, according to Claritas. These residents mostly live on the Northern Range.

Exhibit 12.
Percentage of Population with a Bachelor's Degree, Adams, 2000

Source:
U.S. Census, 2000.
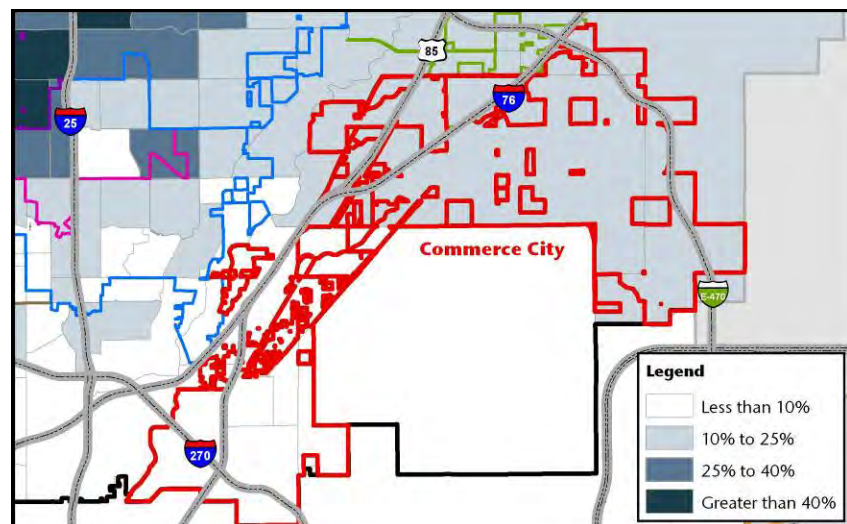
Commerce City's Economy

Employment data in Colorado are mostly produced at the regional or county level. City-specific data are available to the extent that cities collect and maintain such information. This section begins with a brief overview of Adams County's employment composition, and then discusses Commerce City in particular.

Current employment. DRCOG estimated there to be 156,318 wage and salary jobs in Adams County in 2006, which equates to 12 % of the seven-county region's wage and salary jobs. Exhibit 13 displays the seven-county Denver area employment distribution, based on DRCOG's 2006 estimates.

Exhibit 13.
Employment by County, 2006

Source:
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), 2006 Employment Estimates.

County	2006 Employment	Percentage of Seven-County Total
Adams	156,318	12%
Arapahoe	270,295	20%
Boulder	151,492	11%
Broomfield	30,500	2%
Denver	420,380	32%
Douglas	90,916	7%
Jefferson	209,099	16%

In its current role, Adams County provides the Denver metro region with a large number of jobs in trade, transportation, manufacturing, and warehousing. Exhibit 14 provides the employment distribution in Adams County. As shown by the exhibit, the largest industries in Adams County include trade, transportation, and utilities; construction and manufacturing; and government.

Exhibit 14.
Adams County Employment by Industry, 2006

Note:
To simplify the pie chart, similar industry categories were grouped together to create fewer categories. All groupings have maintained their original industrial names, except FIRE, which stands for Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

Source:
Colorado Department of Labor & Employment, QCEW data.
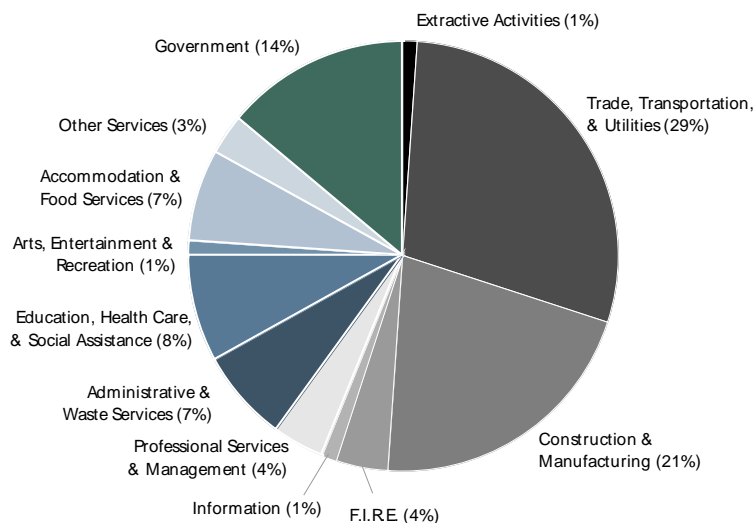
The primary industries of Adams County have experienced minimal job growth in the last 5 years, thereby creating more unemployment in Adams County than in Colorado and the U.S. early in the decade. For example, the manufacturing and construction sectors lost jobs between 2002 and 2003, and neither industry has regained those job losses. Although there has been some industry fluctuation in recent years within the county, the overall employment composition in Adams County has remained relatively stable.

Exhibit 15 shows how Adams County's employment contributes overall to each employment sector. The cities in Adams County are major contributors to the Denver-metro region's employment in

agriculture, transportation and warehousing, and, to a lesser extent, construction and wholesale trade. On the flip side, Adams has a relatively small presence in the high-paying industries of professional and technical services, information, and mining. These industries have grown minimally in the last 5 years in Adams County. Commerce City, in addition to other communities within the county, hopes to capture more of these industries in the future.

Exhibit 15.
Adams County Employment by Industry as a
Percentage of the Seven-County Denver Region Total, 2006

Industry	Adams County	Denver Metro
Agriculture	35%	65%
Mining	3%	97%
Utilities	14%	86%
Construction	17%	83%
Manufacturing	13%	87%
Wholesale Trade	17%	83%
Retail Trade	10%	90%
Transportation & Warehousing	23%	77%
Information	4%	96%
Finance and Insurance	4%	96%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	9%	91%
Professional & Technical Services	3%	97%
Management	7%	93%
Administrative & Waste Services	11%	89%
Education	8%	92%
Health Care & Social Assistance	8%	92%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	5%	95%
Accommodation & Food Services	9%	91%
Other Services	11%	89%
Unclassified	14%	86%

Source: Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, 2006. Denver region defined as aggregation of the following counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Boulder, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson.

Commerce City industries. The city's economic development office recently completed an analysis of employment in the city for 2006. The analysis showed that the industry providing the most jobs in Commerce City was transportation and warehousing, at 50 % of total jobs. The next largest industry employment sectors were services at 19 % and construction at 18 %.

According to data collected by the North Metro Chamber of Commerce, the largest employers in the city include United Parcel Service (UPS), followed by the Adams County School District #14 and then Federal Express (FedEx).

Although the city is in very close proximity to Denver International Airport (DIA), just 3 % of DIA's employees live in Commerce City, according to a recent survey conducted by the airport.

Jobs and housing balance. Many communities desire to have a balance of jobs and housing, enabling residents to live near where they work. This is growing increasingly important as fuel costs continue to stay high. One way to measure how well a community is able to house its workers—or, conversely, offer jobs to its residents—is to examine a jobs-to-housing ratio.

As of 2006, DRCOG estimated the jobs/housing ratio for Commerce City at 1.85. This means that the city has more jobs than housing. Specifically, there were 23,676 jobs in Commerce City and 12,826 households[3].

Most communities in Adams County have jobs/housing ratios that are less than one, suggesting that that residents leave their place of residence for work. Arvada, Aurora, Bennett, Federal Heights, Northglenn, Thornton, and Westminster all have jobs-to-household ratios of less than 1. Commerce City, Brighton, and the unincorporated portion of Adams County have ratios higher than 1, meaning that residents of other communities commute in for work.

Exhibit 16 shows the jobs housing ratio for Commerce City compared to other communities in Adams County.

Exhibit 16.
Jobs-to-Household Relationship by Place, 2006

Source:
Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), 2006 Household and Employment Estimates

	Households	Employment	Ratio of Jobs per Household
Adams County	149,215	156,318	1.05
Arvada	40,807	27,163	0.67
Aurora	118,871	97,445	0.82
Bennett	818	431	0.53
Brighton	9,215	10,875	1.18
Commerce City	**12,826**	**23,676**	**1.85**
Federal Heights	5,147	3,890	0.76
Northglenn	13,801	10,959	0.79
Thornton	37,805	23,571	0.62
Westminster	41,553	35,110	0.84
Unincorporated Adams	29,378	42,163	1.44

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[3] This is a higher household number than estimated by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs.

Commuting patterns. In 2000 (the latest data available), 28 % of Commerce City's residents stayed in the city for work. Thirty-three percent commuted to Denver for work. Eleven percent worked in the unincorporated part of Adams County. Exhibit 17 shows where workers in Commerce City commute for work, according to the Census.

Commerce City, along with Arvada, Aurora and Brighton, provide jobs to more than 25 % of their residents. In most Adams County communities, less than 25 % of residents work in their home city.

Exhibit 17.
Municipal Commuting Patterns, Commerce City, 2000

Source:

2000 CTPP and DRCOG. This table includes the entire portion of the jurisdiction and not just the portion within Adams County.

Out of Region (2.0%)
Westminster (2.0%)
Thornton (3.0%)
Northglenn (1.0%)
Lakewood (1.0%)
Federal Heights (0.1%)
Unincorporated Adams (11.0%)
Commerce City (28.0%)
Denver (33.0%)
Boulder (0.1%)
Brighton (1.0%)
Aurora (6.0%)
Arvada (0.1%)
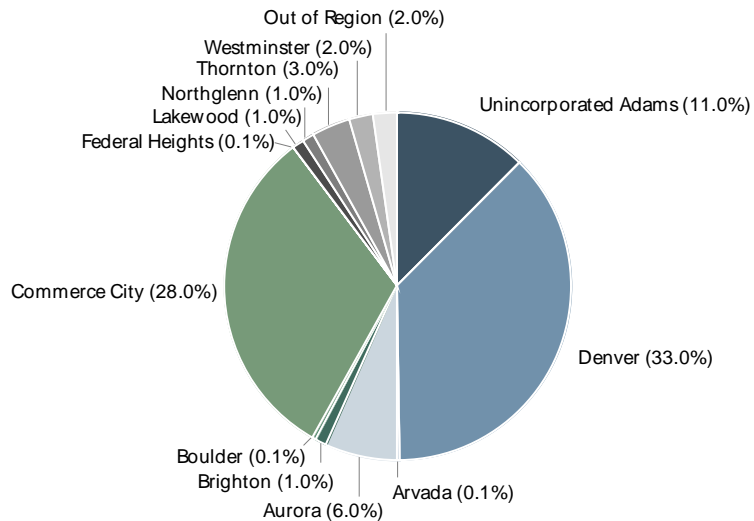
Housing Profile

As of 2007, Commerce City had an estimated 14,000 housing units—more than double the 6,900 housing units in 2000.

Vacancy rates. About 12,780 of the city's housing units were occupied in 2007 and 1,270 were vacant. This puts the city's vacancy rate at about 10 %. By comparison, the vacancy rate in Adams County was 7 % in 2006.

In 2000, the Census estimated that just 125 of the city's housing units were vacant, for a vacancy rate of less than 3 %. Since 2000, the rapid growth of the housing stock in the city has contributed to a dramatic increase in vacancies. Rental vacancies in the city remain fairly low at 3.7 % at the end of 2007, suggesting that the rise in vacancies is largely attributable to unoccupied homes for sale. In contrast, in 2000, most of the vacant housing units were vacant rentals.

Housing type. The majority of housing units in Commerce City are single family detached units. In 2000, 66 % of all housing units in the city were single-family detached units. About one quarter of units in the city were attached units, such as apartments or townhomes. The third largest category of units were mobile homes at just 8 %.

Since 2000, the city has issued more than 7,500 certificates of occupancy, the vast majority of which have been for detached, single-family units. The Census estimates that 78 % of the units were single-family detached, or mobile homes, in 2007.

Homeownership. In 2000, 60 % of residents owned their homes and 40 % rented. In 2007, it is estimated by the Census that the city's homeownership rate was 72.5 %—a large increase from 2000. However, this is lower than the estimate in the city's own 2006 Census, which predicted a 87 % homeownership rate based on a resident survey.

Renters in the city mostly occupy attached housing units (apartments, townhomes), although a significant percentage—about 38 %—rent single-family homes.

Although renters are more likely to live in the southern part of Commerce City, the city does not have strong concentrations of renter housing in any one area. In comparison, Aurora, Federal Heights, Thornton and Westminster have areas in their communities where more than 50 % of the Census Tracts are renter-occupied.

Exhibit 18 displays the spatial distribution of renter occupied housing units in Commerce City.

Exhibit 18.
Distribution of Renter-Occupied Housing Units, Adams County, 2000

Source:
2000 U.S. Census.
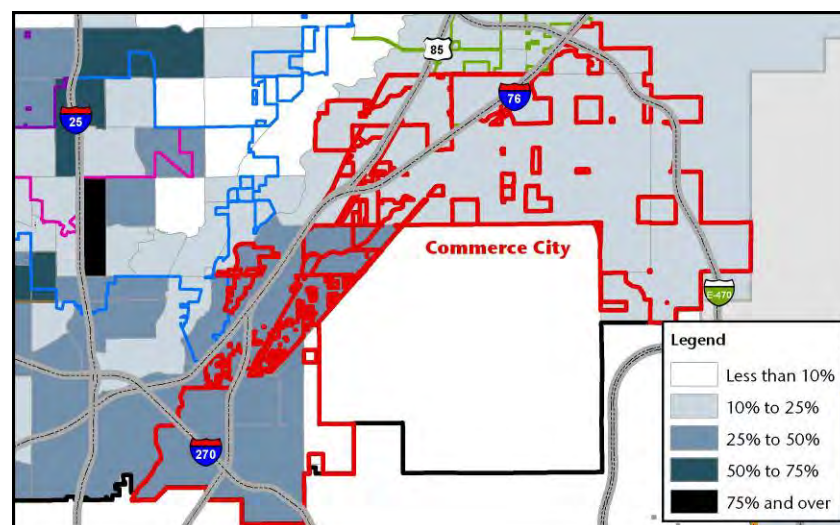
Age of housing. Much of the city's housing units were built after 1998. According to data estimates, 45 % of the city's residential units were built between 1999 and 2007. The next most significant building period was in the 1950s, when 24 % of the city's units were constructed.

Exhibit 19 shows when the city's housing units were built.

**Exhibit 19.
Years Housing Units
Were Built, Commerce
City, 2007**

Source:
Claritas, 2007.
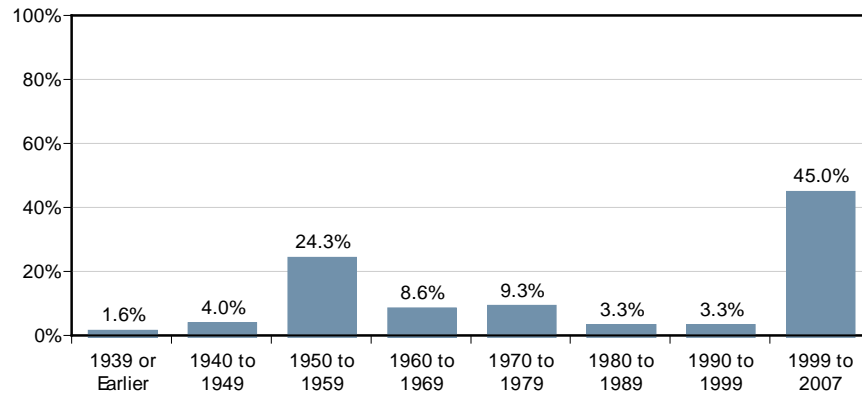
Affordability

This section discusses the affordability of housing in Commerce City. It begins by examining rental prices, and determines how easy it is to buy in Commerce City. The end of this section concludes with an analysis showing where gaps exist in the city's housing market.

Renters. The best source of rental data in the metro-Denver area is the Apartment Association of Metro Denver survey. This survey is conducted quarterly and contains vacancy, pricing, and apartment type information for certain markets in the Denver area. Commerce City's rental data are combined with Brighton's in the apartment survey.

Apartment vacancies in the Commerce City/Brighton area have gone from a very high 20 % in 2003 to 3.7 % in 2007. Vacancies in 2007 were down to very low levels after peaking in 2003 and 2004, likely a result of overbuilding in response to very low vacancies in the earlier part of the decade.

Exhibit 20 summarizes the apartment vacancy trends for the Commerce City/Brighton market area.

**Exhibit 20.
Apartment Vacancy
Rates by Area, 2007**

Source:
Metro Denver Apartment
Association.
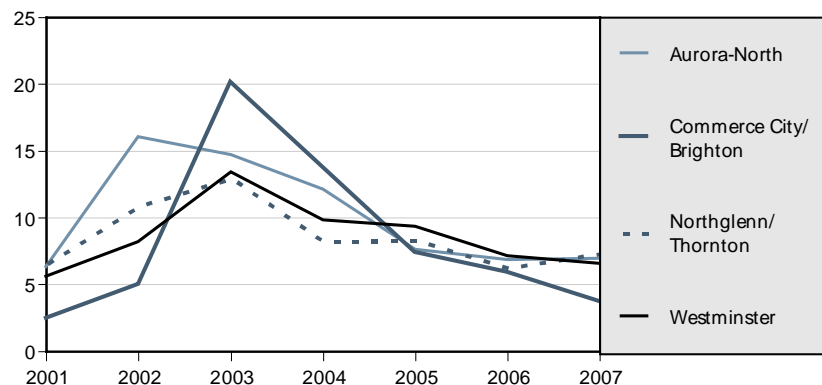
In 2000, the median rent in Commerce City was $626/month. Most renters paid some utilities in addition to their monthly rental costs.

As of 4th quarter 2007, the median rent in the Commerce City/Brighton area, according to the Metro Denver Apartment Association survey, was $896/month—the highest of any market area in Adams County and for the County overall. The Census ACS estimates the median rent in Commerce City at $807.

Exhibit 21 shows median rents, by unit, for the Commerce City/Brighton market area.

Exhibit 21.
Rental Unit Pricing by Type, 2007

Source:
Metro Denver Apartment Association..

Type of Unit	Adams County Median Rent	Commerce City Median Rent
Efficiency	$687	N/A
1 Bed	$709	$807
2 Bed,1 Bath	$771	$893
2 Bed, 2 Bath	$939	$1,013
3 Bed	$1,207	$1,256
All	$819	$896

In 2007, about two-thirds of households in Commerce City could afford the median priced rental unit. Studios and 1-bedroom units were very affordable; 3 bedrooms less so.

Owners. In 2007, the median-home price of homes on the market in Commerce City was $185,000. This was the same as for Adams County overall.

The median price for attached homes in Commerce City was slightly higher than the median in other communities, at $160,919. The median price of detached homes was slightly lower at $189,000.

Exhibit 22 compares the median home price in Commerce City with other municipalities in Adams County.

Exhibit 22.
Median Re-sales, Attached and Detached Housing by Municipality, Adams County, 2007

	Total Median Price	Difference from Adams County	Median Price Attached	Difference from Adams County	Median Price Detached	Difference from Adams County
Commerce City	$ 185,000	$ -	$ 160,919	$ 16,019	$ 189,900	$ (10,000)
Arvada	$ 209,000	$ 24,000	$ 154,950	$ 10,050	$ 219,900	$ 20,000
Aurora	$ 129,900	$ (55,100)	$ 105,500	$ (39,400)	$ 133,200	$ (66,700)
Bennett	$ 244,900	$ 59,900	$ 93,000	$ (51,900)	$ 252,500	$ 52,600
Brighton	$ 223,000	$ 38,000	$ 141,950	$ (2,950)	$ 234,900	$ 35,000
Federal Heights	$ 150,000	$ (35,000)	$ 125,000	$ (19,900)	$ 158,100	$ (41,800)
Northglenn	$ 179,000	$ (6,000)	$ 164,900	$ 20,000	$ 180,000	$ (19,900)
Thornton	$ 199,900	$ 14,900	$ 144,500	$ (400)	$ 224,000	$ 24,100
Westminster	$ 215,000	$ 30,000	$ 164,400	$ 19,500	$ 242,500	$ 42,600

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

To buy the median priced home on the market in Commerce City in 2007, a household needed to earn $56,000 per year. The median-detached home required a $57,000 per year income, compared to a $49,000 income for the median-attached home. Attached homes that were part of homeowners' associations with maintenance fees required a slightly higher income.

Based on 2007 income projections, an estimated 34 % of Commerce City's residents could buy the median-priced home in the city. Forty-percent could afford the median-priced attached home.

In many communities, attached housing is priced much lower than detached housing. This is not the case in Commerce City. The attached housing in the city is slightly newer and there are far fewer units, which partially explains the small price differential between detached and attached homes in the city. The attached homes also might be marketed to a specific niche and have enhanced amenities—for example, targeted to seniors who want to downsize, have less maintenance responsibilities, and are looking for housing with a community pool, recreation center, etc.

Exhibit 23 summarizes the affordability data.

Exhibit 23.
Affordability of Single-Family Housing Stock, Commerce City, 2007

Affordability	Single Family, Detached	Single Family, Attached	Both Attached and Detached
Median Price, 2007	$189,900	$160,919	$185,000
Number of households who could afford to buy	3,600	4,500	3,900
Percent of households who could afford to buy	*32.0%*	*40.0%*	*34.0%*

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Most of the homes for sale in Commerce City in 2007 were priced between about $150,000 and $240,000, affordable to households earning between $50,000 and $75,000. The second largest category of for-sale homes was in the $240,000 to $320,000 range, followed by $115,000 to $160,000.

Households earning very low incomes—less than $20,000 per year—had 64 affordable units to choose from in Commerce City in 2007. This is 18 units more than the inventory of for sale units for households earning more than $150,000. In 2007, these high income households had 46 units for sale in the city in their affordability range.

The distribution of for-sale homes by income range is shown in Exhibit 24 below.

Exhibit 24.
Availability of Single-Family Homes by Income Range, Commerce City, 2007
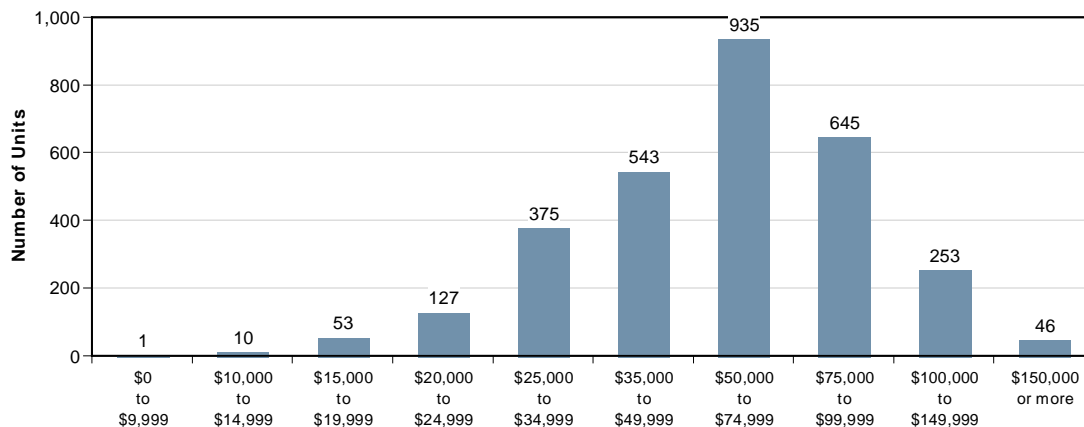
Source: The Genesis Group and BBC Research and Consulting.

Exhibit 25 compares the distribution of Commerce City homes for sale by affordability range with the distribution for Adams County overall. Compared to the county, Commerce City has a higher proportion of for-sale, affordable units at lower income ranges, and fewer at higher-income ranges.

Exhibit 25.
Distribution of Housing Units Available to Buy
by Income Range, Commerce City and Adams County, 2007
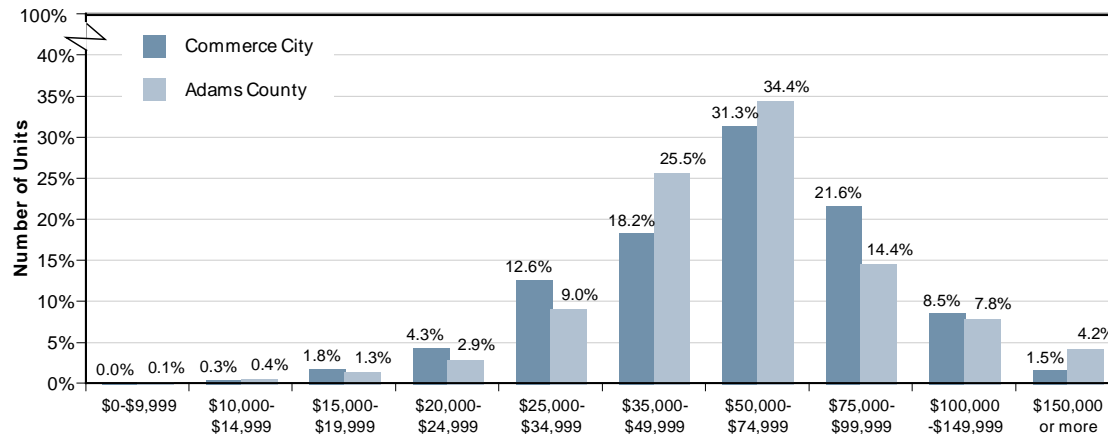
Source: The Genesis Group and BBC Research and Consulting.

Location of housing by affordability. Compared to other cities in Adams County and the county overall, Commerce City's niche is in providing affordable detached housing to residents earning between $57,000 and $85,000 per year, along with residents earning less than $57,000.

In fact, in 2007, as shown in Exhibit 26 on the following page, Commerce City provided more than one third of affordable detached units to the lowest-income residents in Adams County, despite having about 8 % of the county's households overall. This means that Commerce City provided a disproportionate share of affordable units to Adams County residents overall.

Commerce City was a much smaller player in housing provision of moderate-income households, providing just 5 % of detached homes targeted to such households. Thornton and Westminster were much bigger players in the moderate income market.

Exhibit 27 through Exhibit 34 shows the location of housing that is affordable for households falling into several income ranges. The maps show the location of attached and detached housing separately, and show the density of housing by affordability range. The darker areas show where the supply of housing is the greatest.

Exhibit 26.
Location of Attached and Detached Affordable Units, Adams County, 2007

	Affordable to 50% AMI		Affordable to 80% AMI	
	Number of Units	Percent of Total Affordable	Number of Units	Percent of Total Affordable
Detached Units				
Commerce City	419	36%	36	5%
Arvada	1	0%	3	0%
Aurora	422	36%	121	17%
Bennett	24	2%	5	1%
Brighton	62	5%	28	4%
Federal Heights	32	3%	7	1%
Northglenn	7	1%	27	4%
Thornton	152	13%	264	37%
Westminster	43	4%	214	30%
	Affordable to 50% AMI		Affordable to 80% AMI	
	Number of Units	Percent of Total Affordable	Number of Units	Percent of Total Affordable
Attached Units				
Commerce City	907	19%	177	8%
Arvada	24	1%	32	1%
Aurora	1083	23%	180	8%
Bennett	84	2%	5	0%
Brighton	497	11%	181	8%
Federal Heights	80	2%	18	1%
Northglenn	445	9%	177	8%
Thornton	1081	23%	919	43%
Westminster	523	11%	471	22%

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

Exhibit 27.
Location of _Detached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning $35,701 to $57,120, Adams County, 2007
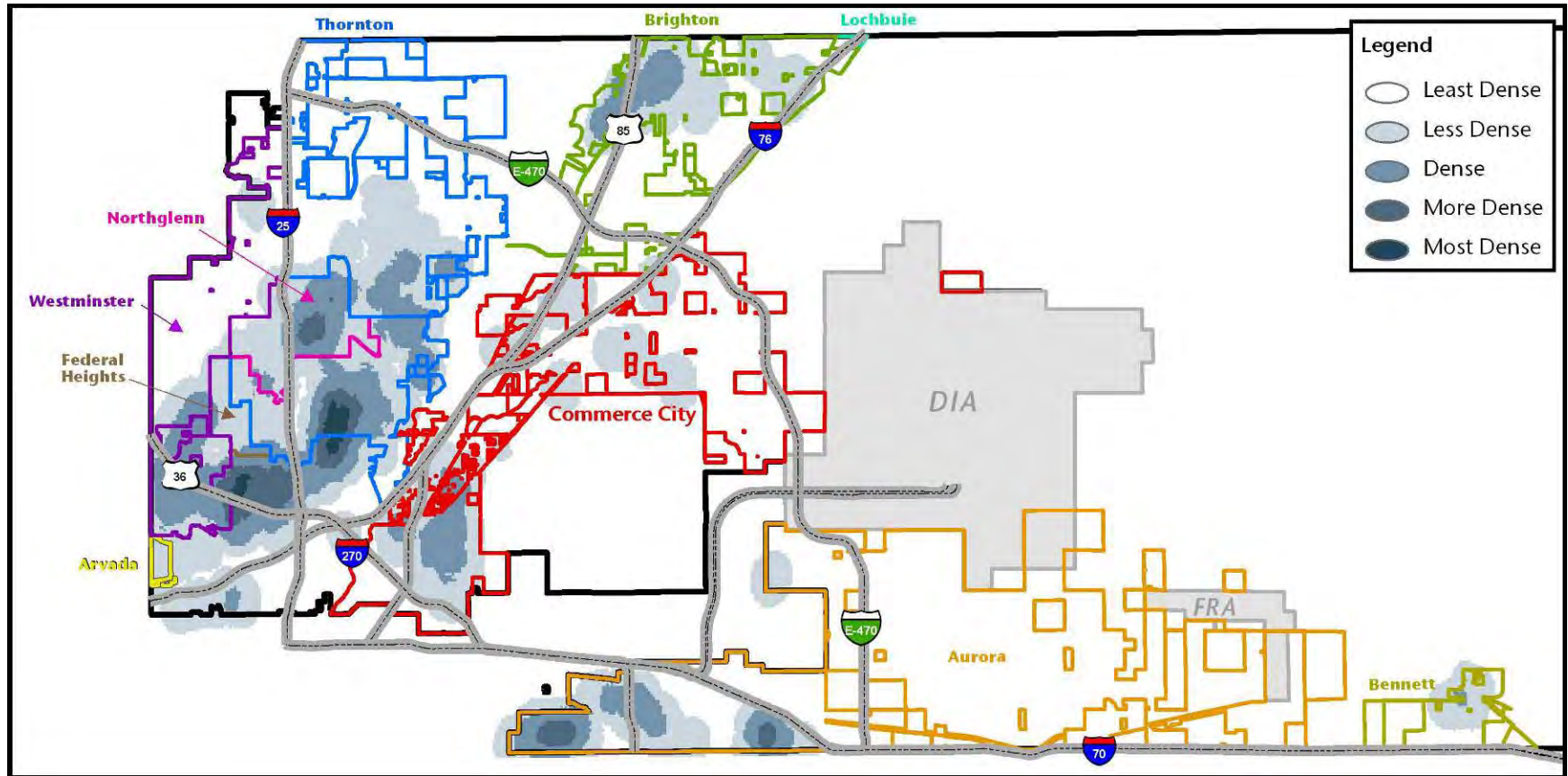
Note: Units are $115,000 to $185,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 28.
Location of _Detached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning $57,121 to $85,680, Adams County, 2007
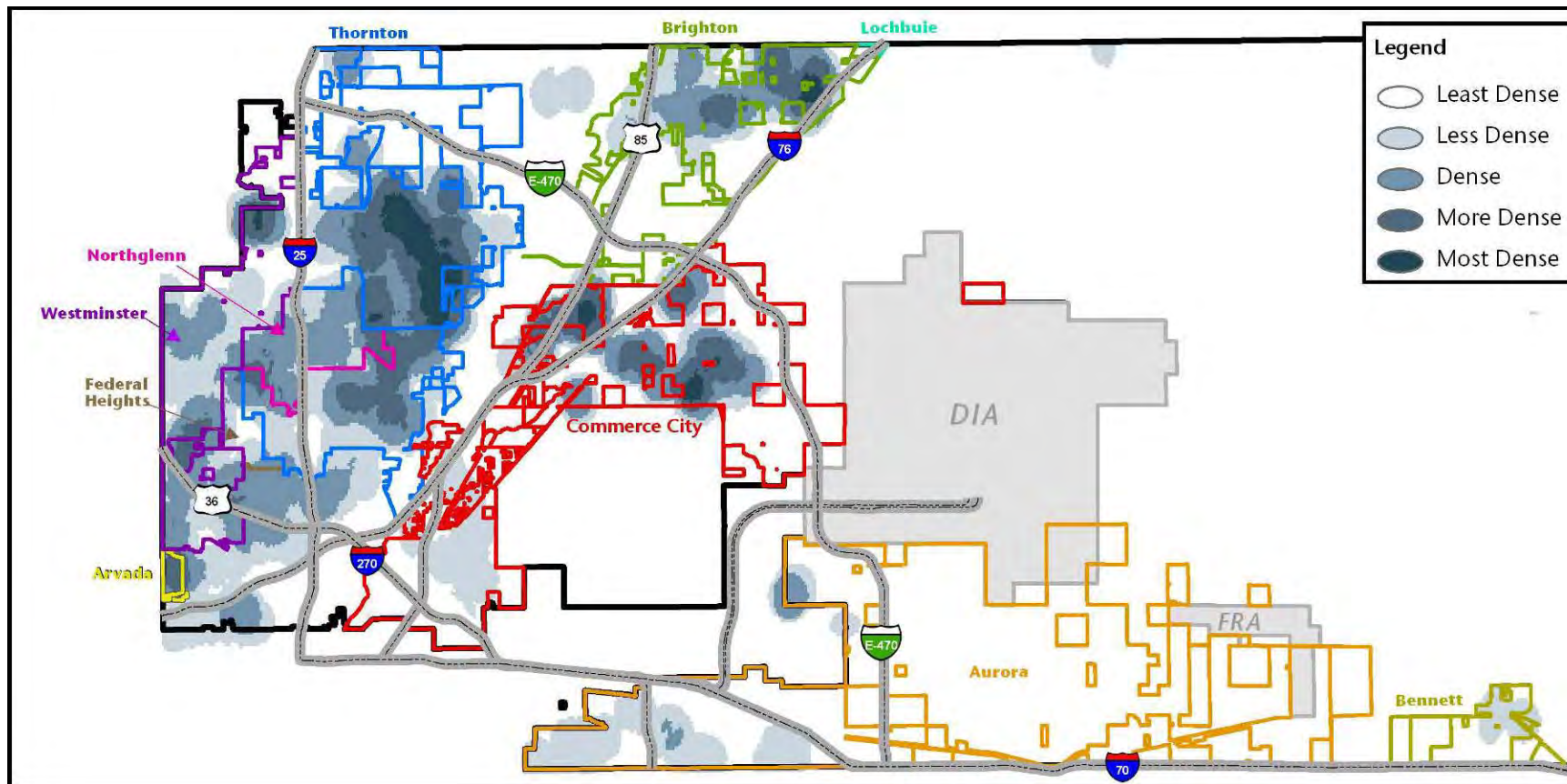
Note: Units are $185,001 to $280,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 29.
Location of _Detached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning $85,681 to $107,100, Adams County, 2007
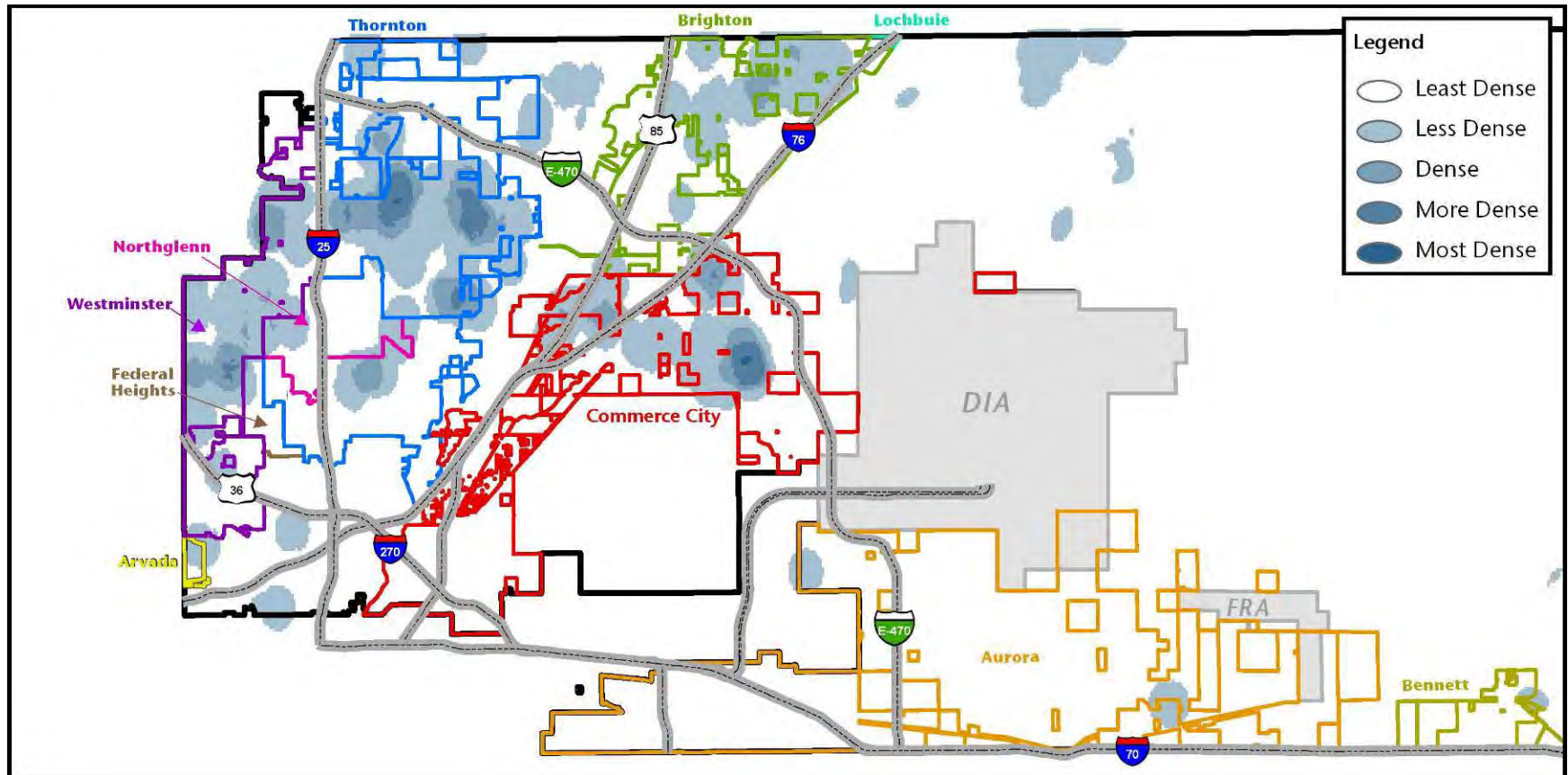
Note: Units are $280,001 to $350,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 30.
Location of _Detached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning more than $107,101, Adams County, 2007
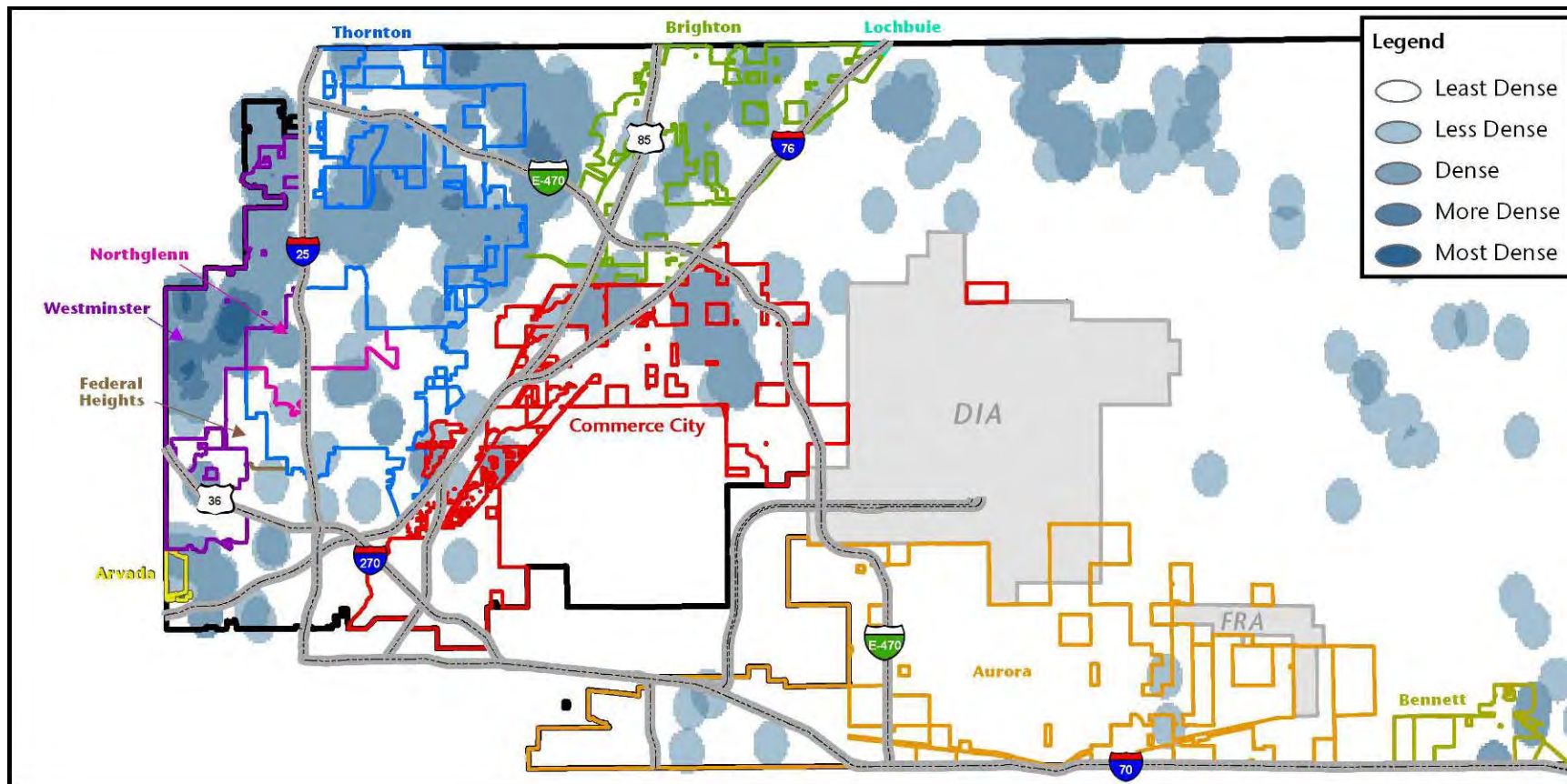
Note: Units are greater than $350,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 31.
Location of _Attached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning $35,701 to $57,120, Adams County, 2007
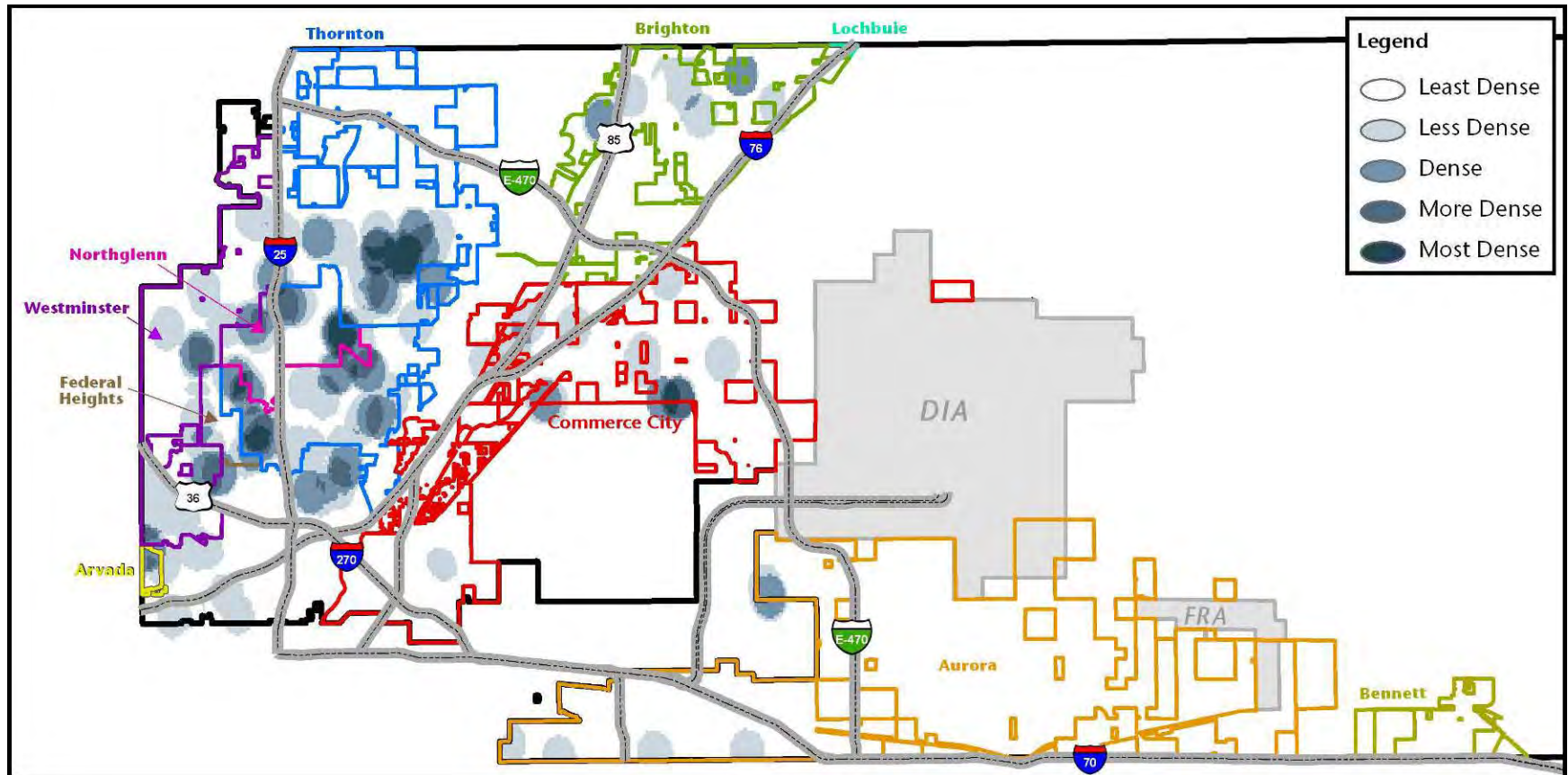
Note: Units are $115,000 to $185,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 32.
Location of _Attached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning $57,121 to $85,680, Adams County, 2007
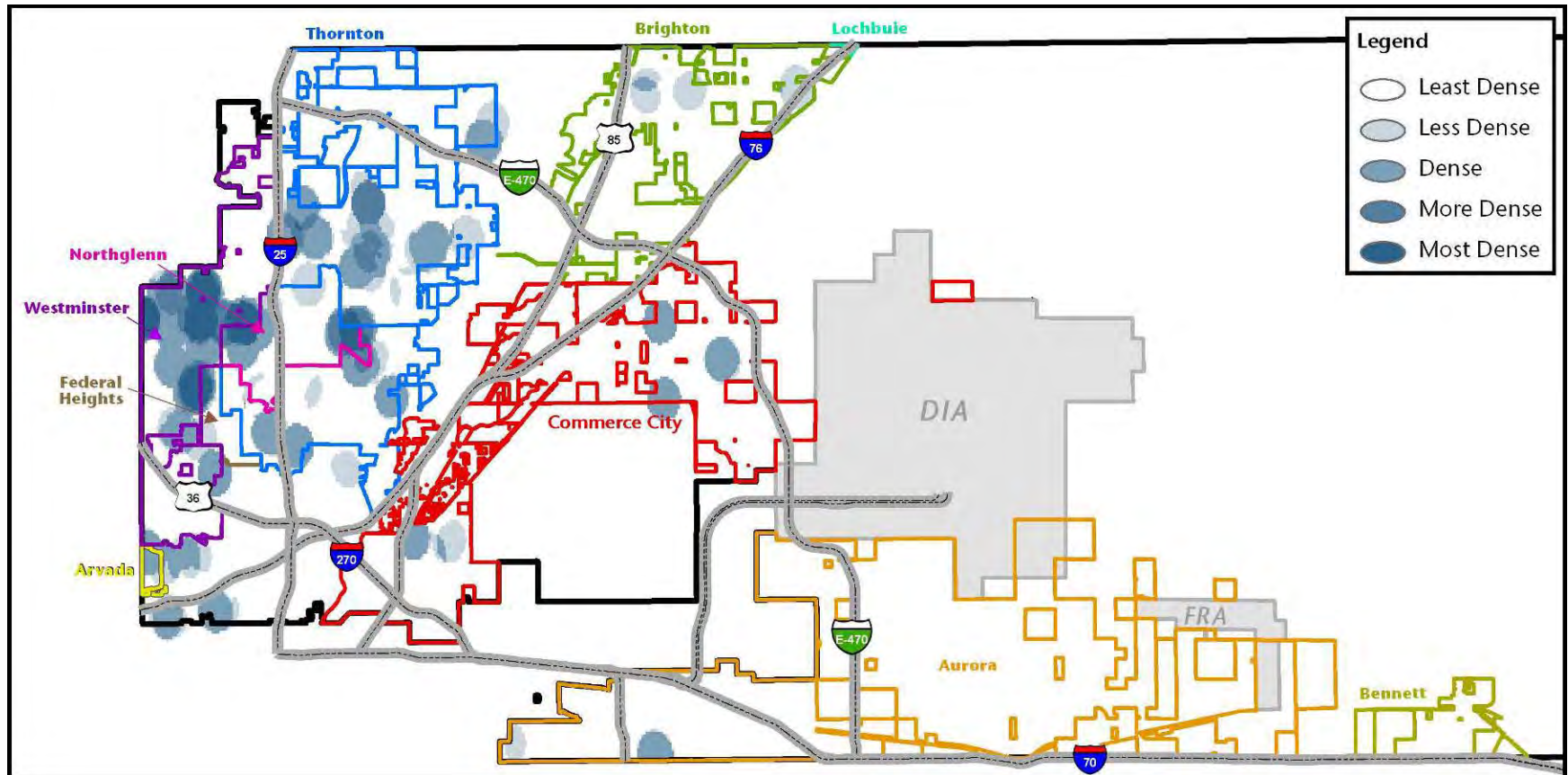
Note: Units are $185,001 to $280,000.

          There are also a handful of units in Montbello and Green Valley Ranch (not shown at this projection).

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 33.
Location of _Attached_ Units Affordable to Households Earning $85,681 to $107,100, Adams County, 2007.
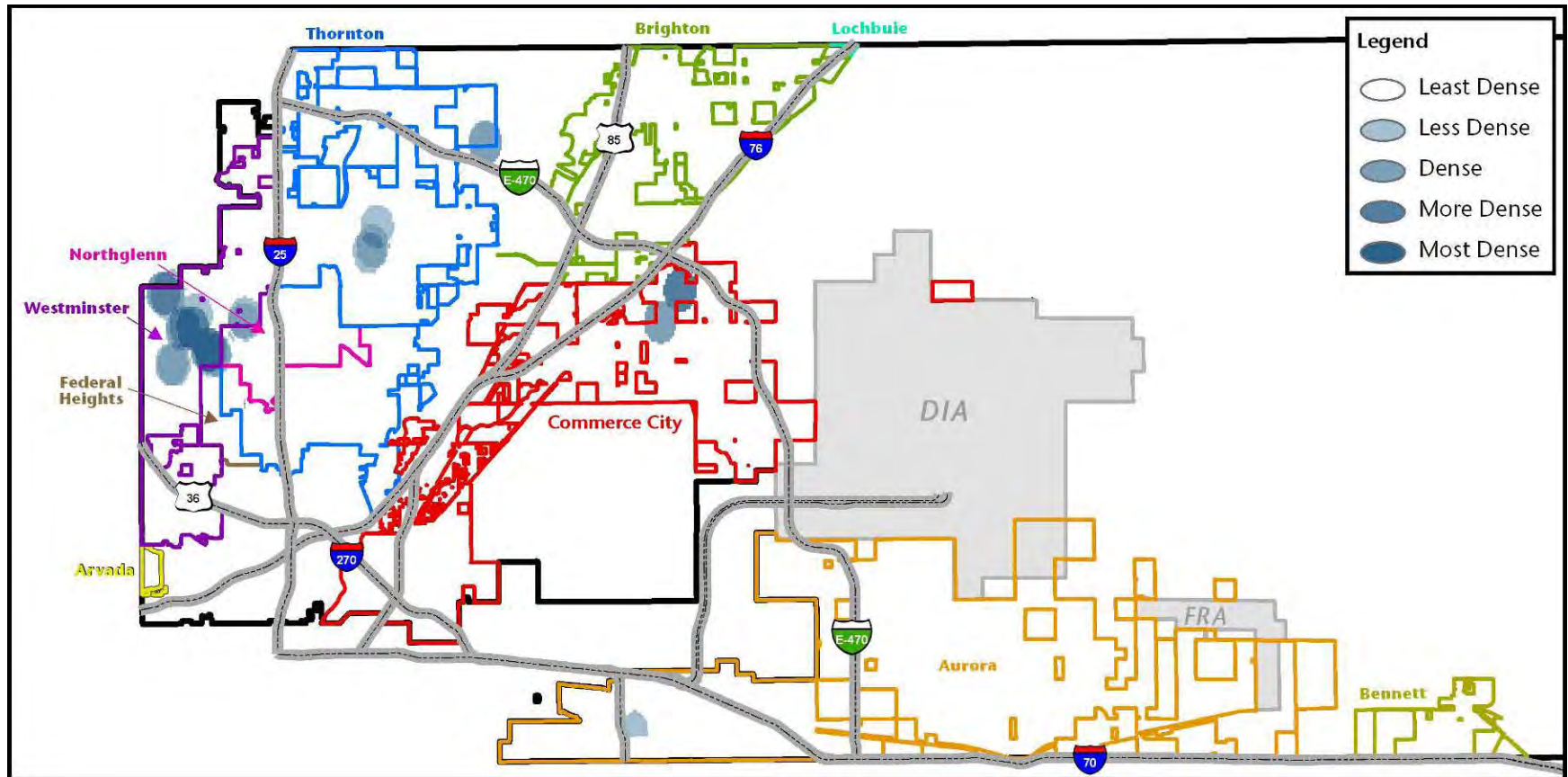
Note: Units are $280,001 to $350,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Exhibit 34.
Location of *Attached* Units Affordable to Households Earning more than $107,101, Adams County, 2007
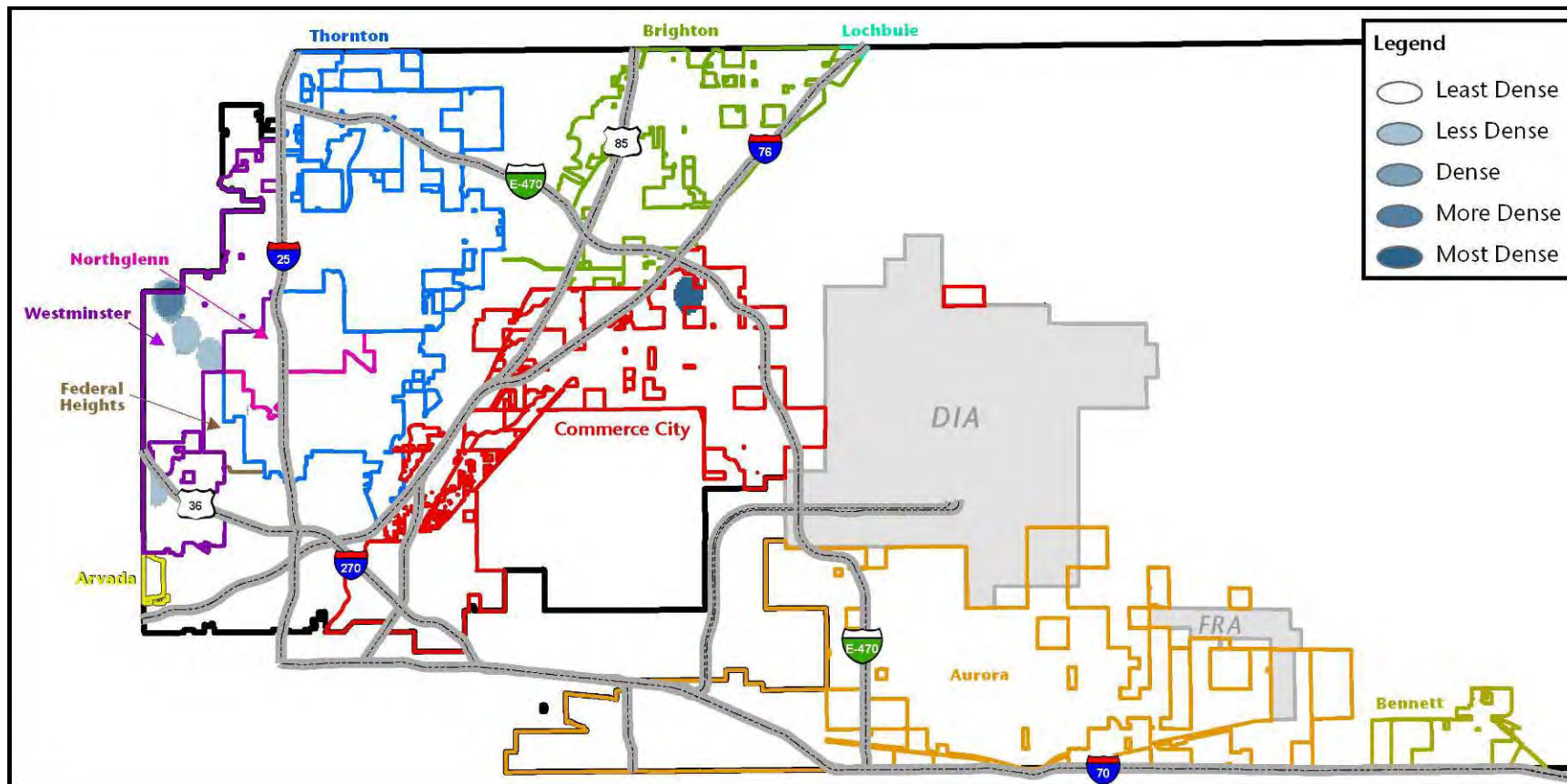
Note: Units are greater than $350,000.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting and The Genesis Group.

Foreclosures. Exhibit 35 displays prevalence of foreclosures by Census Tract in Adams County. As shown by the map, Commerce City has some of the highest foreclosure rates and numbers of foreclosures in the county.

Related to the rise in foreclosures is the concern about predatory and subprime lending. Subprime loans are—as the name would suggest—mortgage loans that carry higher interest rates than those priced for "prime," or less risky borrowers. Initially, subprime loans were marketed and sold to customers with blemished or limited credit histories who would not typically qualify for prime loans. In theory, the higher rate of interest charged for subprime loans reflected increased credit risk of subprime borrowers.

We now know that subprime lending was targeted to many low-income and minority communities, and that subprime loans had a higher risk of foreclosure. Neighborhoods with high subprime lending activity also faced a higher risk of decline.

A recent analysis of subprime lending in Adams County found that in 2006, according to a public dataset on home mortgage transactions, there were 6,819 subprime loans made to residents of Adams County[4]. These loans were all for home purchases or refinances on owner-occupied properties (i.e., no second homes or investment properties). Almost 6 % of the loans (390 loans) had very high interest rates, with annual percentage rates (APRs) exceeding 11 %.

The subprime loans represented 33 % of the 20,837 mortgage loans made to Adams County residents in 2006. This proportion is much higher than the statewide average of 24 %.

Exhibit 36 shows where subprime lending occurred in Adams County and Commerce City during 2006. Commerce City has some of the highest rates of subprime lending in the county in the southern portion of the city.

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[4] Subprime loans are defined as loans with Annual Percentage Rates (APRs) of more than 3 percentage points above comparable Treasury securities priced at the time the loan is made. This is consistent with the Federal Reserve definition when they began requiring APRs as part of HMDA reporting.

Exhibit 35.
Percent Foreclosures by Adams County Census Tract
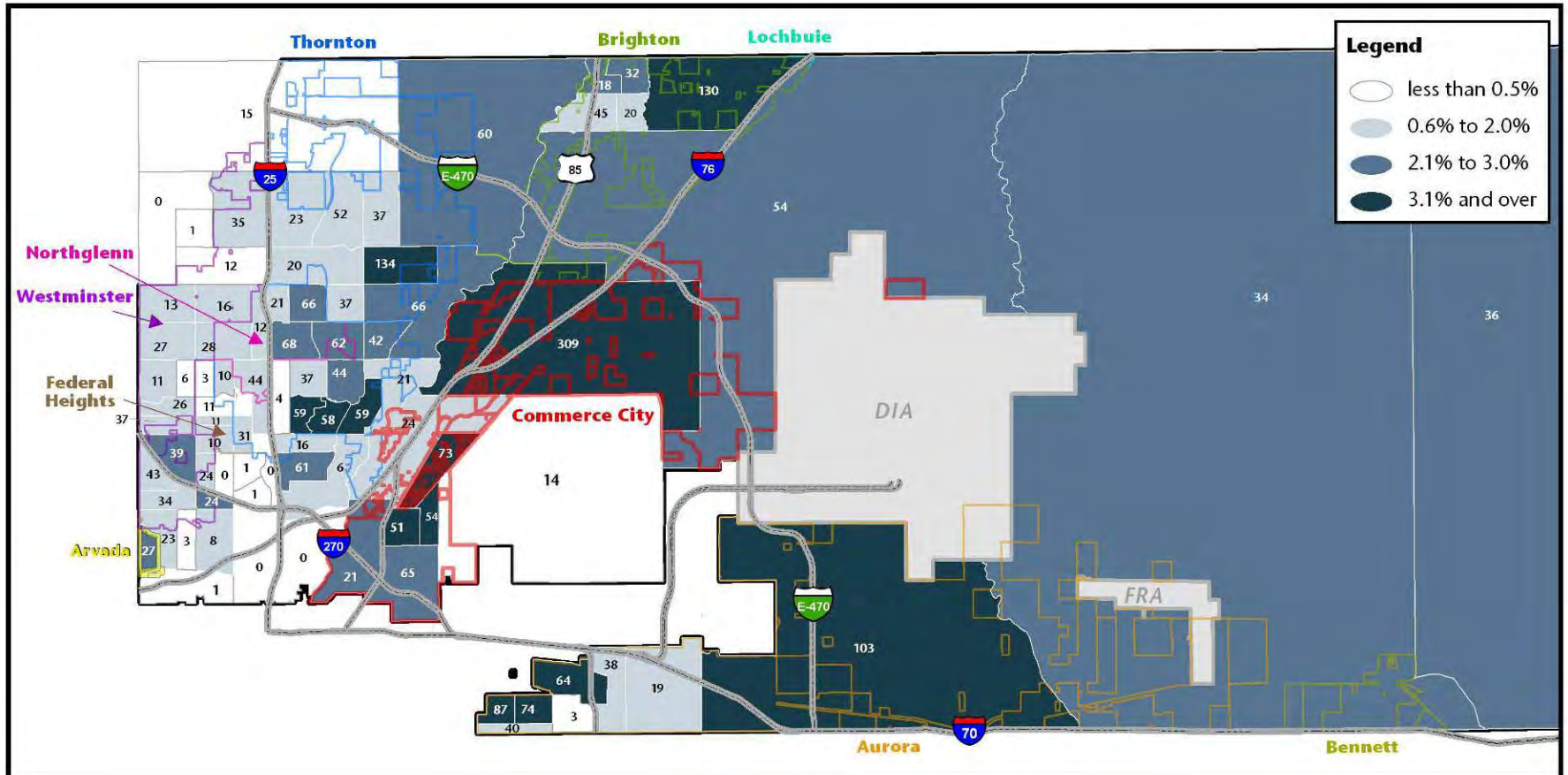
Note: The number of foreclosures is labeled for each Census Tract.

Exhibit 36.
Adams County Subprime Lending, 2006
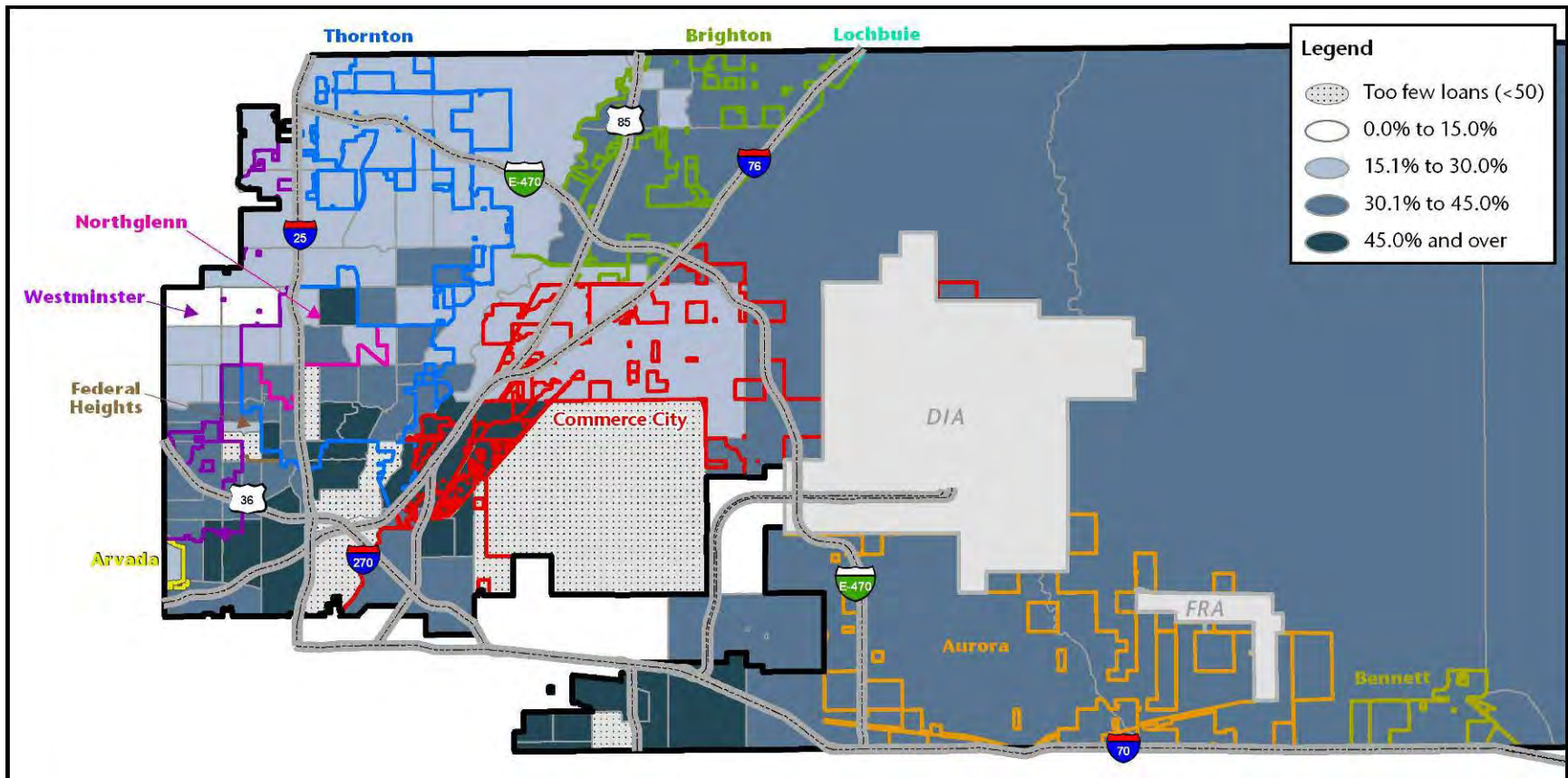
Source: BBC Research & Consulting, 2008.

Market Mismatches

To examine how well Commerce City's current housing market meets the needs of its residents—and to determine how likely it is to accommodate demand of future residents and workers—an exercise called a "gaps analysis" was performed The gaps exercise compared the supply of housing at various price points to the number of households who could afford such housing. If there were more housing units than households, the market was "over-supplying" housing at that price range. Conversely, if there were too few units, the market was "under-supplying" housing. The gaps analysis for Commerce City was completed for rental and homeownership housing.

This section presents the results of the gaps analysis. Specifically, it answers the following questions:

■ How easy was it for renters to find units in their affordability range?

■ How easy was it for renters who wanted to be homeowners to buy in Commerce City?

■ Could current owners afford to move within the city, if they wanted to "buy up" or downsize?

Renters. The rental market in Commerce City is quite limited at both the lower and higher price ranges. According to a sample of rental units surveyed by the Apartment Association of Metro Denver at year-end 2007, the vast majority of rental units in the city—about 75 %—rented for between $800 and $1,050 per month.

Households earning more than $35,000 per year have many options in Commerce City's rental market. Those earning less than that have limited options. Although Commerce City is home to almost 1,000 affordable rental units and subsidies managed by the Adams County Housing Authority, they are not enough to meet demand. On the other hand, renters looking for higher priced, luxury units are unlikely to find many of them in Commerce City.

The rental market has shifted upwards since 2000, when almost half of the rental units rented between $500 and $800 per month. About one-quarter rented for more than $800 per month.

This shift is expected given the city's very low vacancy rates in the earlier part of the decade. Even with the rapid building and softening market during the mid-part of the decade, the rental market has remained strong—and therefore, pricey for lower-income households.

Exhibit 37 compares the number of Commerce City households at various income ranges, with the supply of rental units. As demonstrated by the exhibit, there is an ample supply of units for households earning between $35,000 and $49,999. In fact, there are more than 2,000 "excess" units for households in this income range.

Households earning less than $35,000 have a shortage of units to choose from, and are therefore living in rental units that are too expensive for them.

Exhibit 37.
Mismatch in Rental Market, Commerce City, 2007

| Income Ranges | | Maximum Affordable Rent | Number of Renters | | Renter-Occupied Units | | Rental Gap |
Low	High		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
$0	$14,999	$ 325	960	28%	264	7%	-697
$15,000	$24,999	$ 575	627	18%	264	7%	-364
$25,000	$34,999	$ 800	562	16%	262	7%	-300
$35,000	$49,999	$ 1,175	560	16%	2,679	72%	2,119
$50,000	$74,999	$ 1,800	413	12%	234	6%	-180
$75,000	$149,999	$ 2,400	314	9%	0	0%	-151
$150,000	$249,999	$ 3,650	27	5%	0	0%	-161
$250,000	$499,999	3,650	17	1%	0	0%	-17
$500,000 or more		3,650	5	0%	0	0%	-5

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

Renters wanting to buy in Commerce City have many options, even at lower income levels. In 2007, there were about 200 units for sale in Commerce City that were priced low enough that households earning less than $25,000 could afford to buy them.

Once households earn $35,000, they have more than one-third of the for sale market to choose from. Once they are earning $50,000 and more, almost 70 % of the for sale market is affordable. With the bulk of the city's for-sale housing priced between $150,000 and $300,000, Commerce City offers many alternatives for moderate- and some lower-income households.

Exhibit 38 demonstrates the affordability of the city's for sale market to its renter population.

Exhibit 38.
Market Options for Renters Wanting to Buy, Commerce City, 2007

| Income Ranges | | Renters | | Maximum Affordable Home Price | Units For Sale 2007 | Percent of All Units | Cumulative Percentage Available |
Low	High	Number	Percent				
$0	$14,999	960	28%	$ 47,462	11	0%	0%
$15,000	$24,999	627	18%	$ 79,106	183	6%	6%
$25,000	$34,999	562	16%	$ 110,750	367	12%	19%
$35,000	$49,999	560	16%	$ 158,215	548	18%	37%
$50,000	$74,999	151	12%	$ 237,325	935	31%	68%
$75,000	$99,999	163	4%	$ 316,434	645	22%	90%
$100,000	$149,999	151	5%	$ 474,652	253	8%	98%
$150,000	$249,999	163	1%	$ 791,089	26	1%	99%
$250,000	$499,999	17	0%	$ 1,582,182	11	0%	100%
$500,000	$500,000	5	0%	$ 1,582,185	9	0%	100%

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

Owners. Commerce City's affordability benefits owners who want to downsize, or find a less expensive home in which to live. All but the very lowest income owners—those earning less than $15,000—probably could afford a replacement home for the one they occupy in the city if they desired to sell.

The ownership market in Commerce City offers limited options to very high-income households and/or households who want to upgrade to more expensive homes. During 2007, there were less than 50 units priced at more than $475,000. High-income homeowners who desire to live in neighborhoods with higher-end homes would find more options in surrounding communities, such as Westminster or Thornton.

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

E-470 Future Land Use Options Packet

07/29/09

INTRODUCTION

This packet contains a summary and analysis of Future Land Use Options for land within Commerce City's E-470 Influence Planning Area. It looks at the wide range of future land use options in the E-470 area, and discusses the potential community impacts and benefits associated with each choice.   This packet is organized into the following components:

Why Plan for Growth?

Since 2000, the population in Commerce City has almost doubled to nearly 40,000 residents, growing at a rate of approximately 2,600 residents per year. Long-term growth forecasts by Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) project that Commerce City will grow at a faster rate than the regional average, and by 2035 the city will be home to approximately 71,600 people.   DRCOG estimated that there were 23,600 jobs in Commerce City in 2006 and projects 35,200 jobs in Commerce City by 2035.

While the established parts of Commerce City may accommodate some infill growth and redevelopment, most of the city's projected growth will likely occur in newly developing areas, such as the E-470 Influence Planning Area. Estimates for the build-out of the Historic City and Irondale areas indicate that they could accommodate an additional 1,200 dwelling units, 3,800 people, and 4,000 jobs. In contrast, at build-out the E-470 area alone could accommodate 4,000 to 19,300 dwelling units, 12,200 to 59,900 people, and 28,700 to 67,200 jobs. Growth projections for the remainder of the Northern Range Area are estimated at an additional 12,100 dwelling units, 38,000 people, and 4,800 jobs. Because of the large amount of land in the E-470 and Northern Range areas, total build-out of these areas is likely to extend beyond the 2035 time frame.

Because the community has experienced tremendous growth pressure in the last decade – a trend which is projected to continue for the next several decades – it is important to understand the opportunities and challenges associated with growth, including:

- ✓ City's ability to fund services and infrastructure;
- ✓ Ability to achieve balanced mix of housing/jobs;
- ✓ Ability to meet economic development objectives and provide jobs and tax base;
- ✓ Quality of the natural environment;
- ✓ Transportation system operation (transit, trip generation, travel miles); and
- ✓ Community/neighborhood vitality.

Preliminary Recommendations

While there are many ideas about how the city should grow, the committees and public have been finding common ground on many broad topics. These emerging themes and preliminary recommendations are outlined in greater detail in the *Policy Framework* document, provided under separate cover. Key elements of these themes and recommendations include:

1. **Prioritize Resources**: In general, the city needs to prioritize its efforts and resources geographically (i.e., the community may need to focus efforts and improvements in certain areas).
2. **Phasing Growth**: The city should be phasing growth in an orderly and logical manner (i.e., short-range in Historic City, Irondale, and Northern Range infill areas; mid-range along E-470; mid-to very long-range for DIA North).
3. **Multiple "Centers"**: The city should promote mixed-use centers as an organizing principle for future growth. Centers are concentrated nodes of development that provide community services such as retail, services, and employment in convenient locations and a "sense of place" throughout the community.
4. **Mix of Land Uses:** The city should promote a mix of land uses that provide "around the clock" activity in new development areas, and provide fiscal stability and a balance of jobs and housing citywide.
5. **Neighborhood Focus:** The city should continue to focus on its neighborhoods. New neighborhoods should be located in areas near services and outside of areas impacted by airport noise.
6. **Retention of Industrial Lands:** The city should focus on retaining existing industrially zoned lands for business growth and expansion, and should plan additional employment areas for the development of future employment opportunities.
7. **Multi-Modal Transportation**: The city needs to address vehicle traffic as a key priority, but also needs to focus on providing sidewalks and trails for pedestrians and bicyclists and transit service in new development areas.

E-470 FUTURE LAND USE OPTIONS

The Future Land Use Plan will be a guide to future development and will provide vision and structure to guide future land use decisions. The draft Future Land Use Plan is based on existing conditions, along with other the planned and entitled land uses. E-470 is the primary remaining area that needs refinement and specificity in the Future Land Use Plan. The range options for future land uses within the E-470 Influence Planning Area are on the following page. The E-470 Future Land Use Options are based on ideas received at public and committee meetings and were refined with staff feedback.

The E-470 Influence Planning Area

There are vast opportunities for new development in the area surrounding E-470. The E-470 Influence Planning Area is nearly 12 square miles in size (7,600 acres) and is generally located between Tower Road to the west, Denver International Airport (DIA) to the east, E. 120th Ave. to the north, and just north of Peña Blvd. to the south. The vast majority of the E-470 Influence Planning Area is undeveloped, although many parcels are entitled for future mixed-use development. Because the general mixed-use category does not provide clear guidance for future land uses or development patterns, possible options for future development are explored in this packet.

With help from committee members and community members, the planning team identified and refined three Future Land Use Options to demonstrate the broad range of development possibilities in the E-470 Influence Planning Area. These options are not intended to be parcel-specific or development plans for future growth – instead they represent a spectrum of possible concepts for the area's future. The analysis of these wide-ranging options shows the general effects that land use choices could have on the planning area and the Commerce City community as a whole. The ultimate preferred option may be a combination of several of these options, and the Future Land Use Plan will be refined and more specific with respect to existing entitlements, market opportunities, and development constraints.

Option A: Employment Emphasis

OVERVIEW OF LAND USES

Option A emphasizes employment and commerce that gradually transitions from a high-tech or campus-like setting in the areas near E-470, to increased intensity of airport-related commerce along the DIA boundary (to correspond with DIA's possible future cargo area). Areas within and adjacent to airport noise contours (west of the landfill and north of 112th Ave.) are also designated as office employment areas.

This option also includes mixed-use commercial centers at two major intersections: Tower Road and E. 104th Ave. (the Reunion development), and Tower Road at 112th Ave. and E-470.

Residential development is limited to areas west of E-470, away from airport noise contours. Residential development would include a variety of housing types and densities.

Greenways/open spaces are provided along Second and Third Creeks.

It is recognized that Option A may take longer to build out than other options due to market factors.
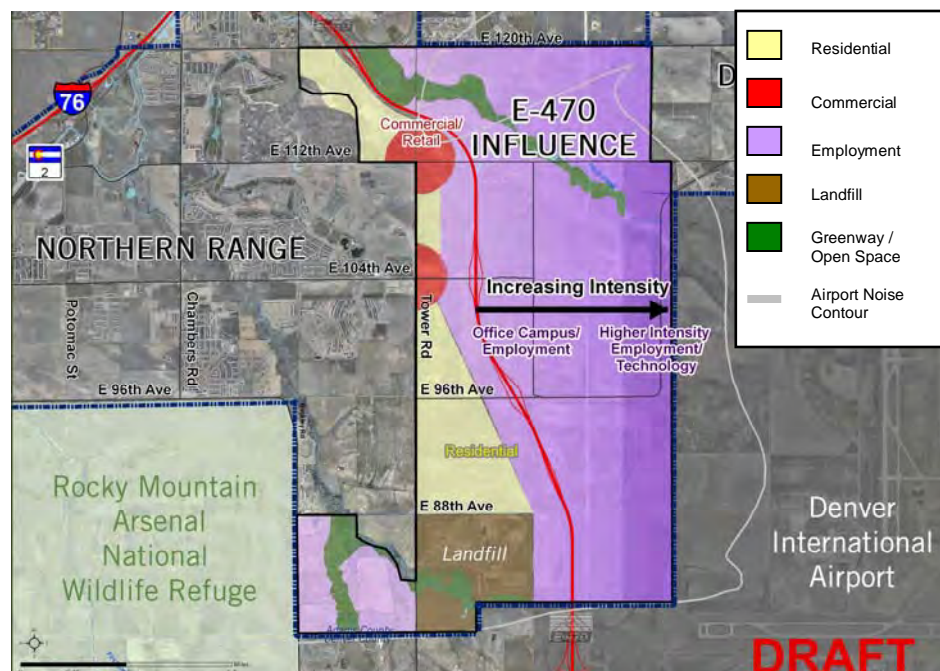
Above: Option A emphasizes employment along both sides of E-470 in a campus-style setting. *(Note: Actual build-out may not occur for 30 or more years.)*

Option B: Mix of Uses

OVERVIEW OF LAND USES

Option B emphasizes a mix of uses that includes mixed-use commercial centers located at the major intersections along E-470 including 88th Ave., 96th Ave., 112th Ave., and 120th Ave, in addition to the planned commercial center at Tower Road and 104th Ave. Reunion development).

This option also includes residential development east and west of E-470, outside of airport noise contour areas. Residential development would include a variety of housing types and densities, and would generally feature higher-intensity and multi-family uses in close proximity to mixed-use commercial centers, with office and a greater mix of uses than Option A or C.

Employment is located adjacent to DIA and in and near airport noise contour areas. It transitions from a campus-like office setting near residential areas to higher intensity development, and airport-related commerce adjacent to the airport boundary. Areas that fall within or adjacent to airport noise contours are also designated as employment.

Greenways/ open spaces are provided along Second and Third Creeks, and both sides of E-470 near residential areas.
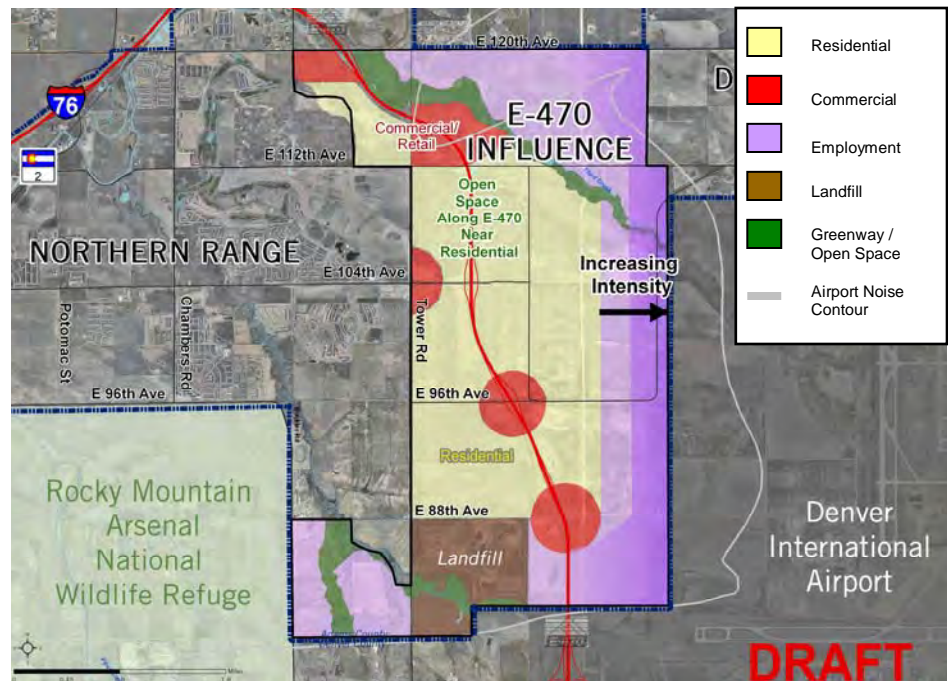
Above: Option B emphasizes mixed-use commercial centers, employment west of E-470, and a mix of housing types. *(Note: Actual build-out may not occur for 30 or more years.)*

Option C: Residential Emphasis

Option C emphasizes residential development in areas not restricted by airport noise contours. Residential development would include a variety of housing types and densities, and would generally feature higher-intensity and multi-family products in close proximity to mixed-use commercial centers.

This option also includes mixed-use commercial centers located at the major intersections along E-470 including 88th Ave., 96th Ave., 112th Ave., and 120th Ave, in addition to the planned commercial center at Tower Road and E. 104th Ave. Reunion development).

Employment is provided in and near airport noise contour areas. Employment would be lower-intensity compared to the other options, and situated in a campus-like setting.

Like Options A and B, greenways/open spaces are provided along Second and Third Creeks, and both sides of E-470.

	Residential
	Commercial
	Employment
	Landfill
	Greenway / Open Space
	Airport Noise Contour
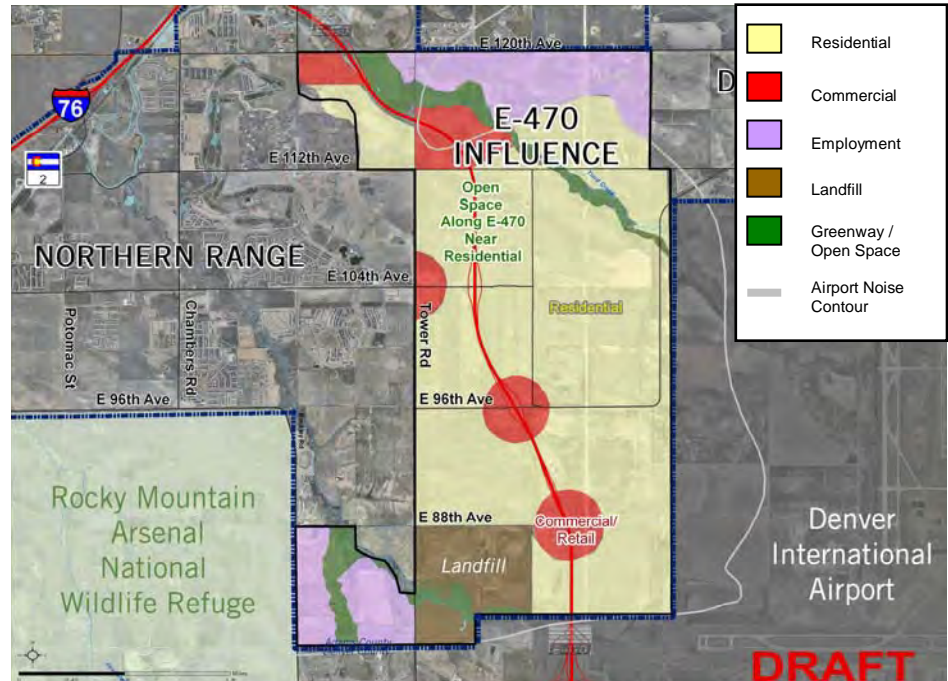
Above: Option C emphasizes a mix of residential housing types surrounding mixed-use commercial centers.

ANALYSIS OF FUTURE LAND USE OPTIONS

Indicators

It is important to look at the "big picture" with land use choices, because these choices affect the community in many ways such as community services, economic health, and the environment. To evaluate land use options, a number of indicators are used to demonstrate specific quantifiable outcomes and impacts.   Indicators are tools that can be used to evaluate future land use decisions and their relationship to and effects on the community's desired vision. The vision for Commerce City is to become a sustainable community – one that is socially, environmentally, and fiscally balanced and responsible. For this analysis the indicators are organized into the following categories (which correspond with the three elements of a sustainable community identified in the Draft Policy Framework):

- ✓ **Community and Social Indicators** address population and job growth and the associated facilities and social infrastructure needed to ensure the safety of and education for the community.
- ✓ **Commerce and Economy Indicators** address job creation, economic development, and fiscal stability for the city.
- ✓ **Context and Environmental Indicators** address the context of future development, and examine the impacts of the built environment on existing infrastructure and regional transportation trends.

Discussion and evaluation of specific indicators for each of these categories is provided on the following pages. These indicators primarily provide quantitative analysis; other qualitative factors such as quality of life and neighborhood livability should also be considered and factored into the development of a preferred direction. The indicators discussed are presented in no particular rank, and are considered equally important for purposes of this evaluation.

Methodology

In order to evaluate each of the future land use options in the E-470 Influence Planning Area, the planning team calculated land use data from each of the future land use option maps. Then a series of basic assumptions were applied to estimate build-out forecasts for each option. Details about specific assumptions are available in the Appendix. The build-out forecasts include population and household projections for residential areas and employment forecasts for mixed-use commercial and employment areas. Models to evaluate fiscal and transportation impacts utilize the land use data and forecasts associated with each option.

Because of the enormous amount of land in the E-470 area, the ultimate build-out forecasts greatly exceed 2035 forecasts from DRCOG. For that reason, the indicators presented in the following sections are scaled back to reflect a more realistic level of development by 2035. The scaling factor used is one-third (or 33%) of projected build-out conditions.

Fiscal Model

The fiscal analysis provides a relative comparison of the land use options, and highlights the general relationship between potential land uses and government finances. The options were evaluated by estimating impacts on key municipal revenue sources and service expenditures obtained from Commerce City's 2009-2010 Biennial Budget. Information on the general relationship between land use and government finances was obtained from the Baseline Fiscal Conditions memorandum (provided by BBC, in the appendix). Additional information on service expenditure and land use was obtained through a series of interviews with Commerce City staff. The comparative fiscal evaluation focuses on operational costs and revenue under the city general fund. It does not consider capital costs.

In order to examine multiple scenarios of development, BBC devised a fiscal model that evaluates future land use options for the Northern Range and the E-470 Influence area options, and how they relatively compare with the other options. The model accommodates assumptions about varying development scenarios, as well as assumptions about fixed and variable service delivery costs, fixed and variable city revenues, and the differing service requirements of different land uses. The model is calibrated to replicate revenue patterns and expenditure requirements documented in the city's 2009 budget. Additional information about the Fiscal Analysis methodology is provided in the Baseline Fiscal Conditions memorandum prepared by BBC Research and Consulting (in the Appendix).

Transportation Model

The travel modeling process utilized the latest 2035 DRCOG regional travel model which was recently updated in March 2009 to compare the three E-470 area land use options. Changes to the employment and household levels were only made to traffic analysis zones (TAZs) within the E-470 Influence Planning Area, and the summary statistics were calculated to include just the Commerce City Transportation Plan area. Again, these summary statistics were scaled to reflect 33% of projected build-out conditions. Additional information about the Transportation Evaluation methodology is available in the Transportation Evaluation memorandum prepared by FHU (in the Appendix).

Community and Social Indicators

The following indicators demonstrate additional households and population added to the community with each of the E-470 Influence Planning Area options. They also examine the service impacts on community services and facilities, such as the need for additional schools and police officers.

Additional Dwelling Units: Option C would provide land for an estimated 6,400 dwelling units, while Option A could accommodate approximately 1,300 dwelling units.

Population: Based on the current average household size of 3.1 persons per household, Option C equates to 19,900 additional people, while Option A equates to 4,000 additional people.

Additional Police Officers: Many communities strive to maintain a police level of service based on the community's population. A common level of service communities strive for is 2 police officers per 1,000 residents (in 2008, Commerce City's level of service was slightly more than 2 officers per 1,000 residents). However, additional officers may also be necessary in order to serve employment and commercial areas, as residential and non-residential land uses generally demand similar levels of police services. Based on these observations, all three options will likely require similar amounts of police officers.

Additional Elementary Schools: Additional school facilities will be necessary in order to serve a growing population. Using data from School District 27J to project the student yield per household (0.251 elementary students per households), the number of additional elementary schools to serve residents in the E-470 can be estimated. Assuming 600 students per elementary school, Option A may require one additional area elementary school, whereas Option C would require three.

Additional Dwelling Units

Option A
1,300

Option B
4,000

Option C
6,400

Within the E-470 Influence Planning Area

Additional Population

Option A
4,000

Option B
12,300

Option C
19,900

Within the E-470 Influence Planning Area

Additional Elementary Schools

Option A
1

Option B
2x

Option C
3x

Within the E-470 Influence Planning Area
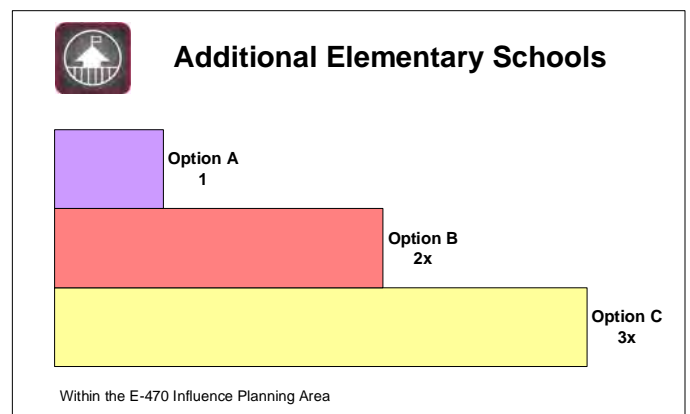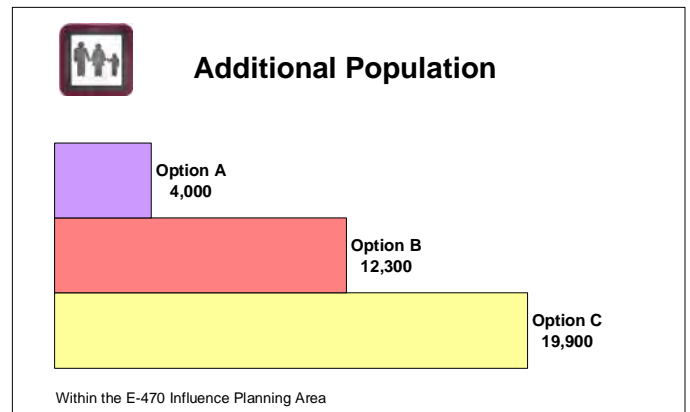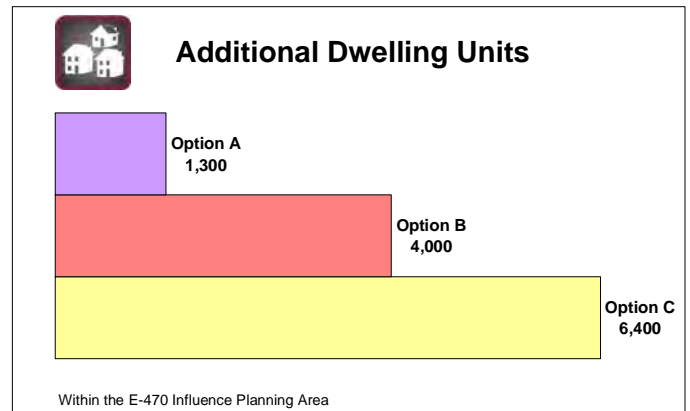
Commerce and Economy Indicators

The following indicators represent the additional jobs and fiscal impacts associated with each of the E-470 Influence Planning Area options. They also provide a snapshot of each option's impact on the community's overall jobs to housing balance: an indicator which is commonly used to measure the number of homes in relation to the number of employment opportunities.

Additional Jobs: Option A would provide the most land area for the development of employment opportunities (estimated to accommodate 22,400 jobs), while Option C could accommodate approximately 9,600 jobs.

Jobs to Housing Balance: Currently Commerce City's jobs to housing ratio is approximately 1.85 jobs per household. This ratio is higher than most other Adams County and metro area communities, and indicates that Commerce City is a major regional employment center. Ratios of less than 1 job per household indicate communities rich with housing, often called "bedroom communities." With the build-out of the Northern Range Planning Area west of E-470, projections indicate that the citywide ratio of jobs to housing will decrease to approximately 1.14 jobs per household due to the large amount of future residential development in that area.

Evaluation of the jobs to housing balance ratio in the E-470 Influence Planning Area options factored in the current ratio, along with the projected ratio for the build out of the Northern Range Planning Area. In sum, Option A would provide land to accommodate approximately 1.94 jobs per household, while Option C would provide a ratio of 1.22 jobs per household.

Net Fiscal Impact: The net fiscal impact is calculated by estimating general fund revenue and expenditure by land use. New residential units in Commerce City are estimated to produce approximately a $725 general fund deficit per unit. Retail/office development is estimated to produce a modest general fund surplus ($140) per 1,000 square feet. Employment/industry development is the most
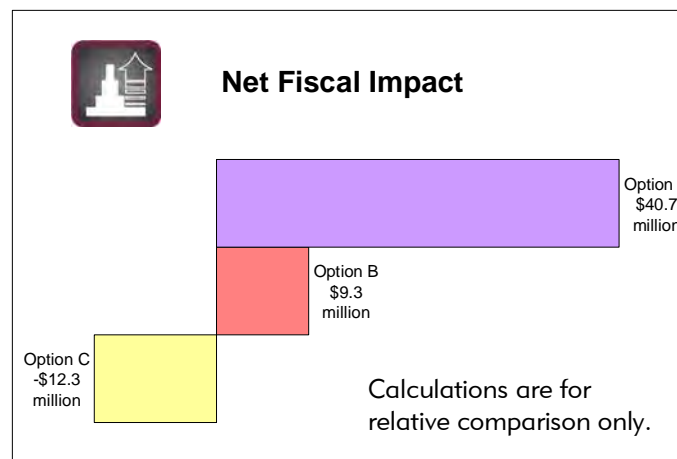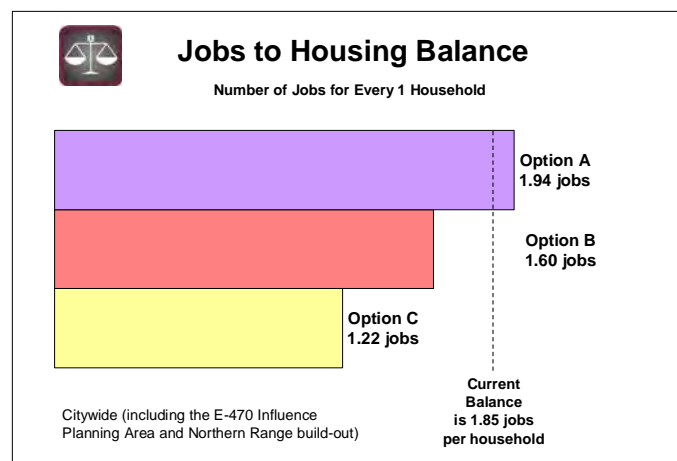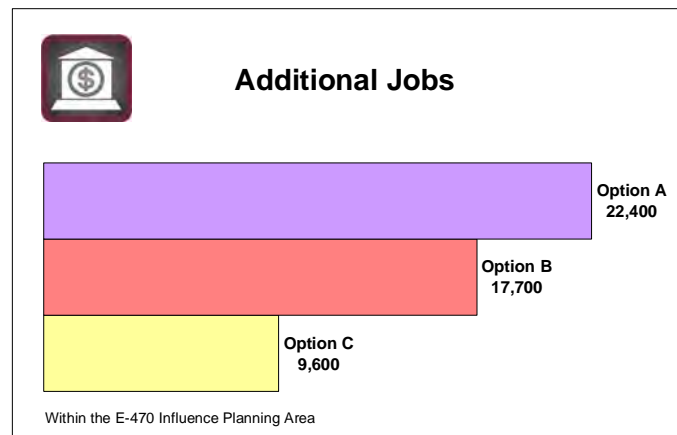
Additional Jobs

Option A 22,400
Option B 17,700
Option C 9,600

Within the E-470 Influence Planning Area

Jobs to Housing Balance

Number of Jobs for Every 1 Household

Option A 1.94 jobs
Option B 1.60 jobs
Option C 1.22 jobs

Current Balance is 1.85 jobs per household

Citywide (including the E-470 Influence Planning Area and Northern Range build-out)

Net Fiscal Impact

Option A $40.7 million
Option B $9.3 million
Option C -$12.3 million

Calculations are for relative comparison only.

fiscally beneficial land use to Commerce City, producing a near $3,000 general fund surplus per 1,000 square feet of development. The most fiscally beneficial option to Commerce City would produce higher revenues and require lower service expenditures (e.g. police, road maintenance, park maintenance). The net fiscal impact indicates that Option A is the most fiscally beneficial future land use, although Option B also results in a positive net fiscal impact.

Context and Environment Indicators

The following indicators show future land uses and their impacts on the regional transportation network and transportation patterns. They also portray the level of potential conflicts between residential uses and airport noise impacts.

Proximity to Airport Noise Contours: Established noise contours delineate areas where significant airport noise impacts are likely to occur. No residential development is included in the noise contour areas. Development outside of the defined noise contour areas may also be affected by airport noise, especially as flight patterns and runway configuration change over time. In order to evaluate residential areas with potential airport noise conflicts, a distance of one mile from airport noise contours is utilized. This distance is representative of the distance between noise contours and the eastern portion of the Reunion development. Based on this measurement, Option C provides the greatest potential for noise impacts due the proportion of households (82% at build-out) within one mile of the airport noise contours.

Total Vehicle Hours of Travel (Average Trip Time): The length of average home-based work trips staying in the planning area was evaluated to determine the average length of internal trips in the planning area. All three options have a similar average trip length. These results indicate that a mix of employment, commercial, and housing will result in the shortest average internal trip.

Over-Capacity Vehicle Miles and Lane Miles Over-Capacity: The amount of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) occurring during over-capacity conditions were evaluated as compared to the 2035 DRCOG travel model. Additionally, the lane-miles over-capacity for 3+ hours, representing severe congestions, was evaluated. The results show that Option B performed the best for the VMT and had the least amount of congested lane miles, suggesting that a mix of employment, commercial, and housing will result in the least congestion.

Proximity to Airport Noise Contours
Percentage of Households (at Build-Out) within 1 mile of Airport Noise Contours

Option A 47%
Option B 47%
Option C 82%

Within the E-470 Influence Planning Area

Total Vehicle Hours of Travel
Average Trip Time (minutes)

Option A 13
Option B 13
Option C 13

Citywide based on 2035 DRCOG Travel Model

Over-Capacity Vehicle Miles of Travel
Percent change from Base 2035 DRCOG Model

Option A 0.10%
Option B -0.20%
Option C 2.20%

Citywide based on 2035 DRCOG Travel Model

Lane Miles Over-Capacity for 3+ Hours

Option A 3
Option B 2
Option C 6

Citywide based on 2035 DRCOG Travel Model

Context and Environment Indicators (continued)

Transit Use: Transit use largely depends on the availability and frequency of services provided to the user. In determining where transit facilities are located and with what frequency services are provider, the transit provider must determine what areas provide the greatest concentrations of users and thus where placing a transit line will provide the best service to the most users. Transit service in Commerce City is provided by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) which serves the Denver metropolitan area. The analysis at right, shows which traffic analysis zones (TAZ) are likely to support transit, based on projected population and employment densities. The results suggest that within the E-470 Influence Planning Area, the greatest opportunity for transit occurs with Option B.

Bicycling and Walkability: The DRCOG model does not analyze walking and bicycling as an alternative mode of transportation. However, planning literature provides indications of the factors that can influence the use of these alternative modes in the E-470 Corridor. Research has shown that having plentiful retail and service activities within three miles of residences induces walk and bicycle travel. This relationship is particularly strong within one mile to a destination. The design of the built environment and social environment characteristics may also lead to increases in walking and bicycling. On a broad level Option B provides the greatest potential for bicycle and pedestrian activity, based on the proximity of employment and commercial services near residential areas. However, the detailed design of all new developments in the E-470 area (including Options A, B, and C) should locate services and employment opportunities near residential areas, and incorporate and interconnected network of paths and trails to supplement the street network and make non-motorized travel as short and efficient as possible.

OPTION A
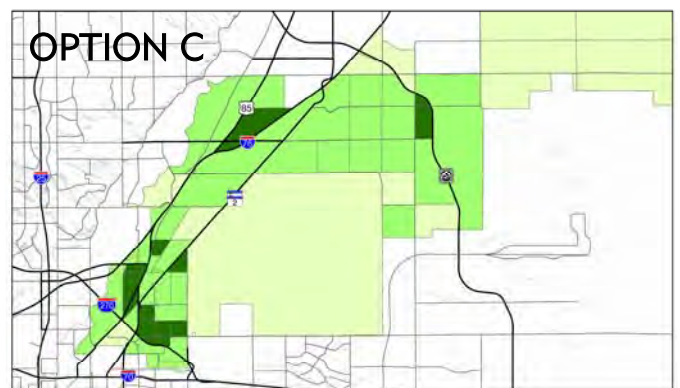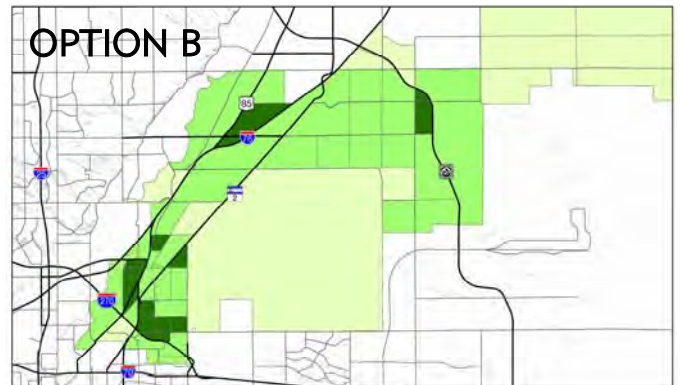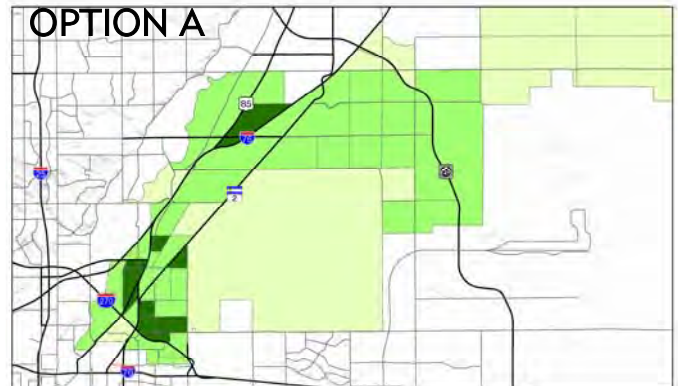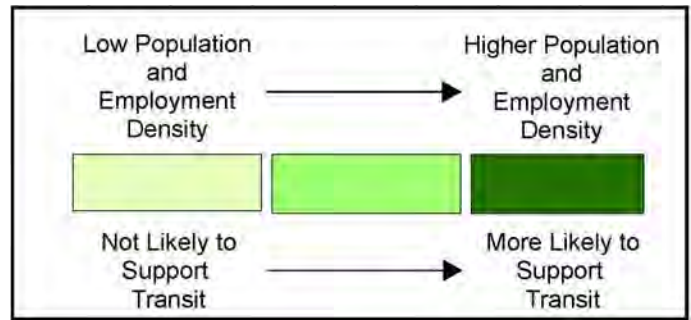
OPTION B

OPTION C

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary Analysis

OPTION	A	B	C
Title:	E-470: EMPLOYMENT EMPHASIS	E-470: MIX OF USES	E-470: RESIDENTIAL EMPHASIS
Quantitative Summary	Would provide an additional: Population: 4,000 people Residential: 1,300 units Jobs: 22,400 jobs	Would provide an additional: Population: 12,300 people Residential: 4,000 units Jobs: 17,700 jobs	Would provide an additional: Population: 19,900 people Residential: 6,400 units Jobs: 9,600 jobs
Summary Analysis	Maintains a high ratio of jobs to housing, and provides opportunities for commerce and industry related to the airport. Residential neighborhoods are located away from DIA noise impacts.	Residential development is conveniently located around commercial centers. Employment areas are compatible with airport development, and a healthy ratio of jobs to housing is maintained.	Residential development is conveniently located around commercial centers. Conflicts between residential and airport uses are likely to occur, and households will be reliant on employment in the larger region.
INDICATOR			
Additional Police Officers Required	◐	◐	◐
Additional Elementary Schools Needed	●	◐	○
Impact on Citywide Jobs/Housing Balance	●	◐	○
Net Fiscal Impact	●	◐	○
Number of Households within 1 mile of Airport Noise Contours	●	◐	○
Over-Capacity Vehicle Miles of Travel (% Change from 2035 DRCOG)	◐	●	○
Total Vehicle Hours of Travel (Average Trip Time)	◐	◐	◐
Lane Miles Over Capacity for 3+ Hours	◐	●	○
Most Likely to Support Future Transit	◐	●	◐
Most Likely to Encourage Walking and Bicycling	◐	●	◐

Comparative Scale:

● Most Beneficial/Least Amount of Community Impact

◐ Neutral/Some Community Impact

○ Least Beneficial/Most Amount of Community Impact

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the options presented for the E-470, the planning team finds that that Options A and B are likely to be the most beneficial and positive for the city and its residents, while Option C is likely to be the lest beneficial, with increased need for additional schools and police officers, higher potential for airport noise related conflicts, higher costs of providing services, and greater transportation congestion. In contrast, Options A and B, or a combination of the two options, would provide a jobs to housing balance ratio similar to the current ratio, along with a net fiscal benefit (higher revenues with lower service expenditures), reduced road congestion, and greatest potential for alternative transportation (transit, bicycling, and/or walking). The planning team recognizes that Option A may take longer to build out than Option C, and the preferred option must incorporate market realities.

The next step in the planning process is the development of a preferred draft Future Land Use plan. In addition to the analysis and recommendations from this packet, the Future Land Use Plan will also incorporate findings from the Economic Development Strategic Plan and market analysis, existing entitlements, and other input and feedback from property owners and key stakeholders.

APPENDIX: DATA AND ASSUMPTIONS

Land use data is based on draft land use maps dated March 2009. The data and indicators are intended to show the relative impacts of land use choices, in relationship to one another, and are not absolute calculations. The land use data and assumptions will be refined for more detailed analysis and modeling of the preferred alternative. Please refer to the attached technical memorandums for detailed discussion of the transportation evaluation results and fiscal conditions and analysis.

E-470 Influence Area

Full Build-Out Data

	OPTION A	OPTION B	OPTION C
Residential (acres)	656	1985	3220
Population (people)	12,198	36,930	59,893
Residential (households)	3,935	11,913	19,320
Commercial (acres)	148	480	480
Office Employment (acres)	2,983	1,925	668
General Industrial (acres)	655	0	0
Total Employees – Production/Distribution	16,949	8,176	2,837
Total Employees – Retail	1,612	5,227	5,227
Total Employees – Service/Office	48,702	39,803	20,639
Total Employees (all categories)	67,263	53,206	28,703

33% of Build-Out Data

	OPTION A	OPTION B	OPTION C
Residential (households)	1,312	3,971	6,439
Total Employees – Production/Distribution	5,649	2,725	946
Total Employees – Retail	537	1,742	1,742
Total Employees – Service/Office	16,232	13,266	6,879
Total Employees (all categories)	22,419	17,734	9,567

Assumptions:

LAND USE COVERAGE RATIO	0.667
USE PROPORTIONS BY EMPLOYEE CATEGORY	
Commercial -Retail	0.5
Commercial – Service/Office	0.5
Employment – Production/Distribution	0.65
Employment – Service/Office	0.35
SQUARE FEET PER EMPLOYEE	
Office	300
Retail	500
General Industrial	1,000
FLOOR AREA RATIO	
Office	0.3
Retail	0.25
General Industrial	0.15
RESIDENTIAL	
Residential Average Density (units per acre)	6
Average Household Size	3.1

Transportation Model Summary Statistics

33% of Build Out

	2035 DRCOG	Option A	Option B	Option C
Total Number of Households	41,000	38,000	41,000	43,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	-7%	0%	5%
Total Number of Employees	50,000	61,000	56,000	48,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	22%	12%	-4%
Total Vehicle Trip Generation	550,000	581,000	572,000	544,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	6%	4%	-1%
Total Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)	3,721,000	3,792,000	3,781,000	3,731,000
Average Trip Length (mi)	6.77	6.53	6.61	6.86
Total Vehicle Hours of Travel (VHT)	113,000	114,000	114,000	114,000
Average Trip Time (min)	12	12	12	13
Internally Captured Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips	12,000	14,000	14,000	12,000
Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips Attracted to C3	75,000	90,000	83,000	73,000
% Internal HBW Trips Attracted to C3	16%	16%	17%	16%
Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips Produced from C3	81,000	75,000	81,000	85,000
% Internal HBW Trips Produced from C3	15%	19%	17%	14%
Length of Average Internal Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips (mi)	4.61	4.58	4.55	4.67
Over-Capacity Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)	805,000	806,000	803,000	823,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	0.1%	-0.2%	2.2%
Over-Capacity Vehicle Hours of Travel (VHT)	40,000	40,000	40,000	42,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	0%	0%	5%
Lane Miles Over-Capacity for 3+ Hours (of 580 total lane miles in C3)	120	123	122	126
Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	3	2	6

67% of Build Out

	2035 DRCOG	Option A	Option B	Option C
Total Number of Households	41,000	39,000	45,000	49,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	-5%	10%	20%
Total Number of Employees	50,000	83,000	72,000	58,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	66%	44%	16%
Total Vehicle Trip Generation	550,000	667,000	675,000	627,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	21%	23%	14%
Total Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)	3,721,000	4,001,000	4,040,000	3,936,000
Average Trip Length (mi)	6.77	6.00	5.99	6.28
Total Vehicle Hours of Travel (VHT)	113,000	128,000	124,000	122,000
Average Trip Time (min)	12	12	11	12
Internally Captured Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips	12,000	20,000	20,000	18,000
Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips Attracted to C3	75,000	122,000	108,000	88,000
% Internal HBW Trips Attracted to C3	16%	16%	19%	20%
Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips Produced from C3	81,000	78,000	89,000	98,000
% Internal HBW Trips Produced from C3	15%	26%	22%	18%
Length of Average Internal Home-Based Work (HBW) Person Trips (mi)	4.61	4.55	4.32	4.47
Over-Capacity Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT)	805,000	907,000	886,000	885,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	13%	10%	10%
Over-Capacity Vehicle Hours of Travel (VHT)	40,000	49,000	44,000	45,000
% Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	23%	10%	13%
Lane Miles Over-Capacity for 3+ Hours (of 580 total lane miles in C3)	120	144	143	137
Change from 2035 DRCOG	—	24	23	17

Northern Range Build-Out Projections

The projected citywide Jobs to Housing Ratio after the build-out of Northern Range is 1.14

Current City Data

Total Jobs	23,676
Total Households	12,826
Jobs to Housing Ratio	1.85

Northern Range Build-Out Data

Total Households	12,109
Total Population	37,538
Total Commercial Square Footage	2,654,202
Total Jobs	4,864
Jobs to Housing Ratio	0.40

Assumptions

LAND USE COVERAGE RATIO	0.667
FLOOR AREA RATIO	
Mixed Use	0.2
Commercial	0.2
Employment	0.25
SQUARE FEET PER EMPLOYEE	
Commercial	500
Mixed-Use	400
Employment	1000
Portion of Entitled Commercial-Mixed Use areas Used for Commercial	0.5
RESIDENTIAL	
Residential Medium Density (average)	6
Residential Low Density	4
Residential High Density	8
Average Household Size	3.1
Portion of Entitled Commercial-Mixed Use areas Used for Residential	0.25

MEMORANDUM

To:	Lesli Ellis and Ben Herman, Clarion Associates
From:	BBC Research & Consulting
Re:	Commerce City Comprehensive Plan, Baseline Fiscal Conditions
Date:	July 15, 2009

This memorandum, prepared by BBC Research & Consulting (BBC), provides an overview of city budgetary systems, capital and special funds, as well as cost and revenue trends. General comments are offered on the nature of these funds and how their respective revenue sources and cost structures react to growth and urbanization. In addition, this memo discusses treatment of capital expenditures and the process by which local sales and use taxes are derived and allocated to various land uses.

Following the fiscal overview, the memo presents a fiscal evaluation of three land use alternatives for the Northern Range[1] as part of the Commerce City Comprehensive Planning process. This document presents the three alternatives in terms of residential, commercial and industrial land uses and provides a comparative fiscal evaluation of each alternative.

This analysis is prepared as part of the comprehensive plan update process. A comprehensive plan provides the framework and policy direction for future land use decisions. In Colorado, different land uses have different revenue generation characteristics, city service demands and capital infrastructure requirements. This document highlights the relationship between land use and government finances specific to Commerce City and serves as one of many inputs to the comprehensive planning process.

Commerce City Financial Structure

Commerce City administers most municipal services, including municipal administration, police, public works and parks and recreation, through its general fund. Water, sewer and firefighting services are provided by separate districts, which are not under city control. Sales tax collections are the major source of revenue support for general fund operations. In addition to the general fund, Commerce City maintains several capital, debt service, special revenue, and enterprise funds. These funds are used for capital projects, special governmental purposes and debt maintenance.

General fund. The city provides a full range of services including police, public works (highways, streets and snow removal), general recreation (parks, swimming pools and recreation programs), community development, and general administrative services. These services are maintained through the city's general fund. Total general fund revenue in the fiscal year 2009 budget is $41.5 million. The city's general fund is largely supported by sales and use tax as shown in Exhibit 1.

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[1] The Northern Range includes the region of Commerce City north and east of the Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge. It is roughly bounded by Havana Street to the west, 96th Avenue and 80th Avenue to the south, Picadilly Road to the east and 120th Avenue to the north.

Exhibit 1.
City of Commerce City
Sources of General Fund
Revenue, 2009 Budget

Source:
City of Commerce City.

Other Revenue (1%)
Investment & Interest (5%)
Fines & Forfeitures (3%)
Charges for Services (5%)
Licenses & Permits (3%)
HUTF, County Road and Bridge (3%)
Franchise Tax (5%)
Gaming, Cigarette Taxes (1%)
MV Reg, Ownership, Veh Trans Taxes (1%)
Property Tax (5%)
Sales and Use Tax (68%)

Total Revenue: $41.5 million
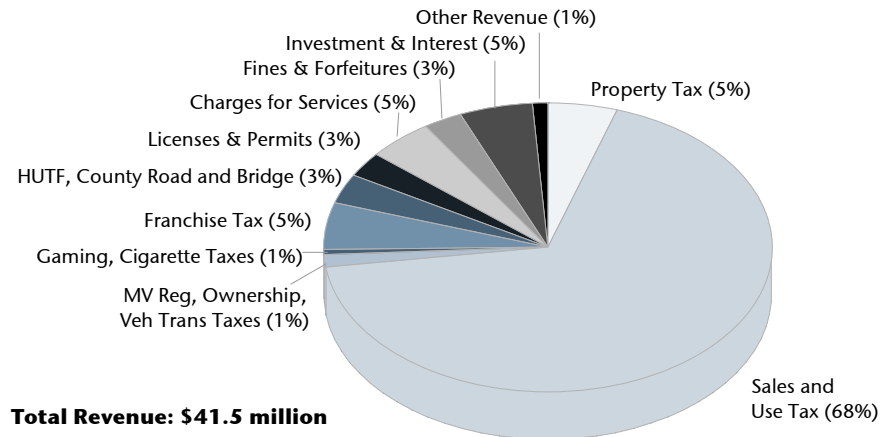
Commerce City also raises a modest amount of revenue through its 3.28-mill property tax levy, although it is far less reliant on property tax than sales tax. Other major sources of revenue include licenses, permits, fees, fines and charges for services. The city also receives revenue not tied to local land uses such as interest on investments, cigarette taxes and highway users' tax. These funds are subject to state policies or external economic conditions. The city's reliance on sales tax is common among municipalities in Colorado; however, Commerce City is unusual in that it derives a large share of sales tax revenue from sales of industrial goods. Sources of sales tax revenue are discussed later in this memorandum.

On the expenditure side, the city spends roughly 30 percent of its annual operating revenue on police functions, which is near the average for cities roughly the size of Commerce City. According to the latest *Municipal Financial Compendium* published by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), an average of 28 percent of general funds is spent on police services in cities between 5,000 and 20,000 households. Exhibit 2 shows budgeted general fund expenditure for fiscal year 2009.

Exhibit 2.
City of Commerce City General
Fund Expenditure, 2009 Budget

Source:
City of Commerce City.

Refuse Collection (4%)
Administration (9%)
Human Resources (2%)
Parks & Recreation (13%)
Public Works (11%)
Finance (24%)
Public Safety (29%)
Community Development (8%)

Total Expenditure: $41.2 million
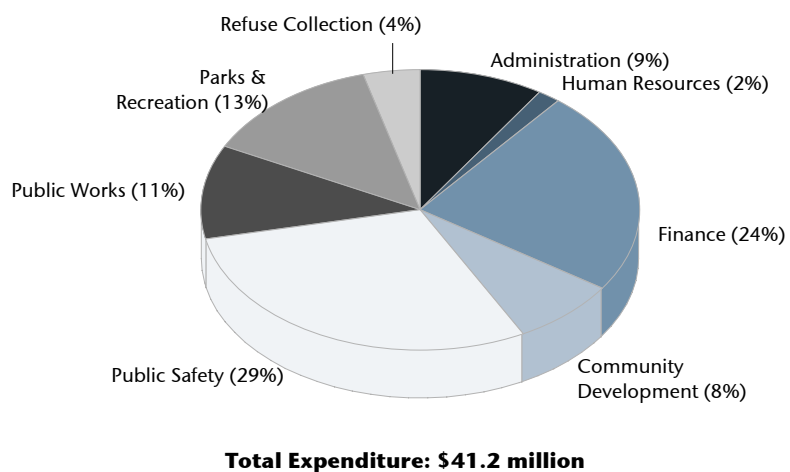
Other significant elements of general fund spending include finance, community development, public works, parks and recreation and administration. General fund expenditures are budgeted at $41.2 million for fiscal year 2009. Most city expenditures go towards employee salaries, benefits, supplies, and materials for providing city services. The relatively large amount of expenditures allocated to the finance department includes expenditures for "internal services," which include general city employee benefits, insurance and other related expenses. Despite the large resource apportionment to finance, police, parks and road maintenance are the

city's most expensive direct services. According to the DOLA Municipal Financial Compendium, Commerce City's percent of expenditure allocated to parks and public works are slightly below average in cities between 5,000 and 20,000 households. Parks and recreation expenditures averaged 19 percent of general fund expenditure and public works expenditure averaged 15 percent.

The following exhibit shows Commerce City's general fund revenue and expenditure over the last 10 years. It is important to note that the exhibit shows annual revenue generated and service expenditure. It does not show the actual fund balance, as each year a certain portion of revenue is held in reserve.

**Exhibit 3.
Commerce City General
Fund Revenue and
Expenditure, 2000 to 2009**

Source:
City of Commerce City.
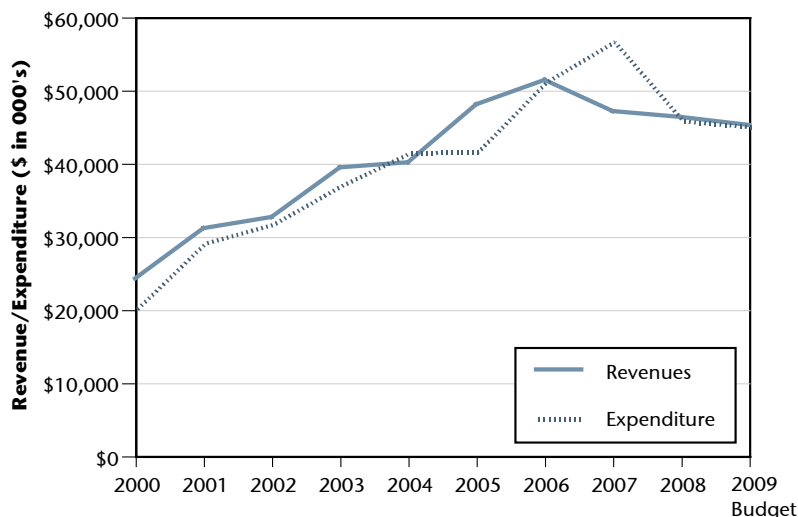
Commerce City's general fund revenue has grown at an average annual rate of 8.6 percent between 2000 and 2009. General fund expenditure has a similar growth path, as generally cities spend what revenue they take in on service expenditures or transfer the revenue out to other funds to support capital projects. In 2007, general fund expenditure exceeded general fund revenue by nearly $8 million. A general fund reserve balance drawdown was used in that year to finance the $8 million funding gap.

Capital project funds. Commerce City uses its capital funds to finance the acquisition and construction of major city facilities, roads and parks.[2] The city has nine capital funds. The largest capital fund is the capital improvement and preservation plan (CIPP) fund, which was formed in 2009 by merging the parks and recreation capital fund with the capital expenditures fund. The CIPP fund accrues revenue from transfers from Adams County and other municipal accounts for targeted capital projects. The CIPP fund includes most city capital improvement expenditures. In 2009, the capital fund is budgeted to accrue about $2.2 million in revenue and to spend about $5.5 million on various capital projects and transfers, including a $2.1 million transfer to the water rights acquisition fund, a $1.4 million transfer to the general fund, and a $2.0 million expenditure on various directly funded capital projects. The beginning balance of the CIPP fund in 2009 is approximately $18.4 million and the budgeted expenditure in 2009 represents a balance drawdown of $3.3 million.

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[2] City facilities includes roads, parks, trails, heavy equipment and buildings. Commerce City does not own or maintain its water, sewer or fire infrastructure.

Other capital funds include: several storm drainage funds; the city's impact fee fund, which accrues revenue for parks, transportation, drainage and the voluntary road landscape impact fees[3]; and the future growth fund, which accrues 2 cents of the city's 3.5-cent use tax for the construction of municipal infrastructure in the Northern Range. In 2005, Commerce City Council diverted future growth fund revenue for debt service payments for city hall and other capital purchases. The city also has a water rights acquisition fund for the purchase of water for parks to serve future growth.

Other funds. These functions and revenues are kept separate from general government expenditure. Their purposes include:

- **Special Purpose Funds** — Special purpose funds are used to account for the proceeds of revenue sources that are restricted for expenditure for specified purposes. These funds include special revenue, debt service and pension funds. Commerce City has several special purpose funds that include: the conservation trust fund, chemical roundup fund, police donation fund, police pension fund, urban renewal authority fund, housing authority fund, elected officials retirement fund, and sales tax bond issues fund.

- **Internal Service Funds** — Internal service funds are used to account for services provided to one department by another on a cost reimbursement basis. Commerce City has three internal service funds: the information technology fund, facility services fund and fleet management fund.

- **Enterprise Funds** — Enterprise funds are established to account for services operated in a manner similar to a private business enterprise. The intent is that the full costs of providing services be financed primarily through charges and fees. The golf course fund is Commerce City's sole enterprise fund.

The budgeted revenue for all government and enterprise funds in 2009 is $47.4 million. The general fund accounts for 87 percent of all city revenue.

Land Use and Public Service Costs

As part of the comprehensive plan process, BBC addressed the following questions:

- What happens to government costs when Commerce City grows? Why?
- Can long term government operations costs be influenced by good land use planning?
- Are there any economies of scale in government service provision?

In order to address these issues, BBC interviewed Commerce City service providers, reviewed budgetary trends and analyzed per household government service costs of similar Colorado municipalities. The latter investigation was aimed at uncovering any demonstrable economies of scale for municipalities as they grow in size. Data were obtained from the DOLA's *Municipal Financial Compendium*. After removing much larger communities, resort communities and certain statistical outliers, the sample contained about 80 municipalities with data from fiscal year 2004.

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[3] Road impact fees are not imposed for areas of the city south of 80th avenue. Up until March 2009 there were 2 parks impact fee schedules, where the core city had a lower rate than the Northern Range. In some cases the city has collected a landscape impact fee for future landscape installation along arterial roadways. This is a voluntary impact fee and not an ordinance requirement. (Commerce City 2009-2010 Biennial Budget).

The following exhibit shows data arrays for municipal general fund expenditures. Each dot on the array in Exhibit 4 represents a Colorado city, the horizontal axis shows city size in households and the vertical axis shows per household general fund expenditure. The trend line shows the general relationship between the selected municipal cost and city size.

Commerce City is shown to slightly above average general fund expenditure on a per household basis, although this is likely due to the presence of a larger than average concentration of commercial and industrial land uses, which are not accounted for in the exhibit on the following page.

Exhibit 4.
Operating Expenditures per Household
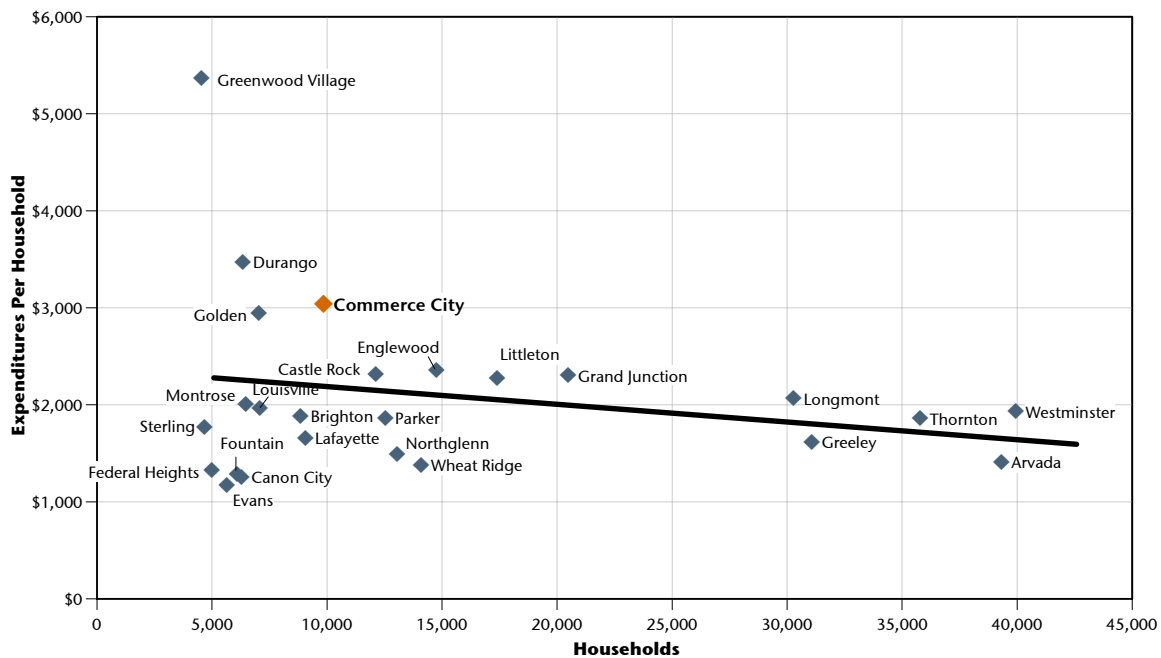
Source: State of Colorado, Department of Local Affairs; BBC Research & Consulting, 2008. Data are for 2004.

As noted in Exhibit 4, within the size ranges tested, there is a very wide spread of costs per household, which suggests that there are other variables that influence city service costs in addition to the number of households. However, the trend line does show an apparent cost relationship between overall community size (number of households) and per unit service delivery costs. Interviews with city service providers confirmed this evidence anecdotally. The evidence indicates the presence of fixed costs in government service provision. This fixed cost is borne over more households as the city grows, creating economies of scale.

In sum, the evidence from other Colorado communities suggests that Commerce City has experienced, and will likely experience economies of scale as it grows in number of households. In practice, other factors will affect service costs. These factors include a variety of demographic and related influences, such as household age, income levels and overall city geographic size.

Land Use and Capital Costs

The data presented in prior Exhibit 4 relate to government operational costs only. The same data source provides some comparative information on per household capital investment standards. A comparison of Commerce City per household capital expenditures with similar data from all other communities in Colorado (Exhibit 5) suggests that Commerce City is above average in municipal capital investment.

Exhibit 5.
Annual Average Per Household
Expenditure for Capital Investment

Source: Colorado Department of Local Affairs/BBC
Data are from 2004

	$ Value per Household
All Colorado Municipalities:	
Average	$723/unit
Commerce City	$1,781/unit

Per unit capital costs are very closely tied to development form and location of growth, and capital investment efficiency should be a foundational concept for long term planning. Annual capital investment can vary broadly and thus statistical comparisons among communities are not always revealing. In any given year, communities may have very low or high costs, but capital investment and capital maintenance are, over time, a large share of a community's budget. Significant savings can be achieved if infrastructure investment efficiency is pursued. This typically means incremental phasing of infrastructure expansion so that capital investment is not way ahead of demand, and management of development location to ensure transportation network efficiency and maximization of the number of users that can be served by the infrastructure system.

Capital costs that are sensitive to the location and the capital efficiency of new development include the cost of new streets, drainage systems and city facilities. Efficient development patterns will slow the need for roadway expansion, satellite police stations, libraries and other municipal facilities.

Capital efficiency is particularly challenging in Commerce City, where the physical layout of the city and the adjacent Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge create two distinct city regions. In interviews, city service providers, particularly police and public works, identified current inefficiencies in providing services to the Northern Range from facilities located in the core city. They noted an eventual need for additional substations or maintenance facilities in the Northern Range in order to maintain service levels. The need for additional facilities is exacerbated in Commerce City by the long distance between the eastern end of the Northern Range and the core city, and the absence of a direct road connection due to the National Wildlife Refuge. The higher than average capital cost shown in prior Exhibit 5 is likely a manifestation of the difficult physical conditions that exist in the city.

Capital expansion costs, particularly street and highway expenses, are often among a community's largest expenses and, when recovered through impact fees or developer exactions, are a significant contributor to the cost of new housing. The relationship between public sector capital costs and growth is complex:

■ Capital expenditures are often designed to increase facility size in anticipation of growth, but virtually all expenditures have some components that are unrelated to growth, these include:

➤ **Repair and replacement of existing facilities** (often spurred by long standing deferral of facility repair needs);

➤ **Improvement of infrastructure standards,** such as the installation of a multi-purpose trail network that never used to exist, or incorporation of advanced technology into new buildings.

Other points worth noting are:

- In physical terms, capital needs can arise at considerable distances from new growth, and the linkage is often unclear. For example, costly drainage improvements in an old neighborhood may be the result of new development many miles away, or conversely, simply a remedy of long standing, inadequate drainage systems in the older community—or both.

- A large share of capital costs are successfully recovered from new growth through impact fees, exactions or development negotiations. For instance, Commerce City has impact fees intended to recover the arterial street, parks and drainage expansion costs associated with new development, but fee levels are admittedly below the full cost recovery amount.

- Capital budgeting is further complicated by the inherently "lumpy" character of capital investment expenditures, which implies that any one year capital budget may not be reflective of typical local needs. In some cases capital expenditure may occur when the city is able to finance the infrastructure, which may happen independent of the time of local need. There are not reliable standards for capital expenses that can be applied to smooth out annual cost data.

Ultimately, planning for and expanding capital infrastructure in Commerce City is challenging when compared with other municipalities. The physical layout of the city will eventually cause the inevitable replication of existing city facilities in new growth areas. Tightening cost recovery methods (e.g., raising impact fees or establishing improvement districts) is a means of ensuring funds for capital expansion, but there are consequences to raising fees.

Commerce City currently charges $1,181 per single family unit for road impact fees and $900 per single family unit for parks impact fees. This compares with average road ($2,052) and parks ($2,634) impact fees obtained from an informal internet survey of Colorado municipalities.[4] Commerce City and other municipalities impose impact fees for most forms of development. The single family residential fees are used for comparative purposes.

The city has instituted a practice of dedicating 2 cents of its 3.5-cent use tax to infrastructure in growth areas, which is prudent, although recently these funds have been rededicated to support debt service of a bond issue that financed the construction of new city facilities. Regardless of its current dedication, using use tax to finance capital infrastructure rather than city operations is a responsible financial practice.

Land Use and Sales and Use Tax Revenue

Sales tax receipts dominate all other governmental revenue sources, typically providing 55 to 70 percent of annual city financial resources. As a result, it is important for the comprehensive plan to acknowledge the importance of sales tax revenue and its relationship with land use in the city.

Rates. Commerce City's 3.5 percent sales tax is similar to most municipal sales tax rates in the state.

Exhibit 6. Sales and Use Tax Rates Commerce City, 2009

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

Taxing Jurisdiction	Tax Rate
State of Colorado	2.90%
Commerce City	3.50%
Adams County	0.75%
RTD	1.00%
Cultural Council	0.10%
Stadium District	0.10%
Total	**8.35%**

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[4] Cities include: Boulder, Basalt (roads only), Colorado Springs (parks only), Durango, Loveland, Fort Collins, Windsor and Greeley.

Most municipalities have sales tax rates between 3 percent and 4 percent.

Tax incidence. In Colorado, there is substantial variation between communities in what items are legally subject to sales and use tax charges. In this instance:

- The state's 2.9 percent retail sales tax is applied uniformly throughout the state and is levied on retail trade goods, prescription drugs, utilities at home, automobile purchases and sale of unprepared food (groceries);

- Commerce City's sales tax does not apply to groceries, prescription drugs, medical devices, heavy construction equipment or machinery or products sold wholesale;

- City sales tax does apply to short term lodging, cable television and gas, electric and telephone utilities; and

- Use tax is charged on building materials and commercial and industrial equipment on a one-time basis at the time of first use within the city.

Commerce City's sales and use tax growth has been remarkably strong in recent years, averaging about 10.0 percent annual growth over the last decade, peaking in 2006 at $35.6 million. Exhibit 7 on the following page shows Commerce City's sales and use tax revenue from 1999 to 2008.

Exhibit 7. Commerce City Sales and Use Tax, 1999 to 2008

Source:
City of Commerce City.
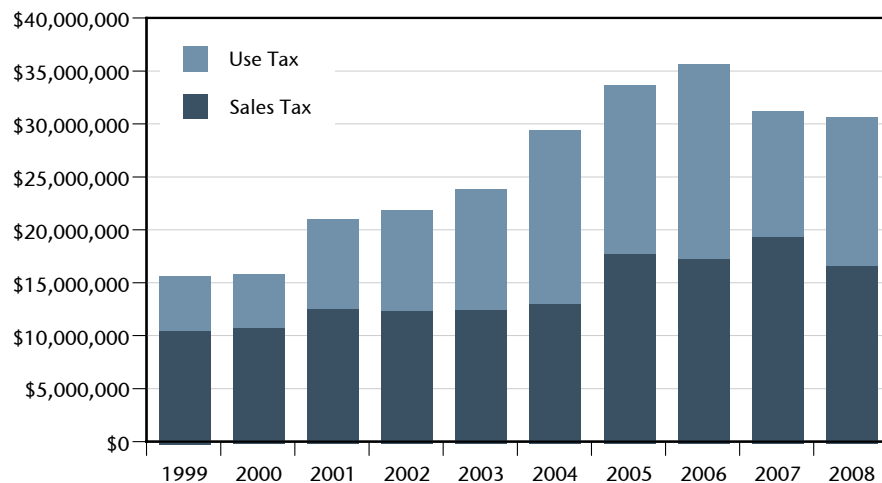
The growth trend has reversed in each of the last two years; the city reported $31.2 million and $30.6 million in sales and use tax revenue in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Most of the revenue losses in the past few years are in construction use tax, which has been in steady decline since 2004.

Of the city's $30.6 million in sales and use tax collections in 2008, approximately $13.8 million or 45 percent is use tax revenue and $16.9 million or 55 percent is sales tax revenue. This distribution between sales and use tax is very unusual among metro area communities. Typically, municipal sales tax revenue is far greater than use tax revenue. Commerce City's near even distribution of sales and use tax revenue is an indication of the importance of industrial and non-retail commercial land uses in the city's financial position. The following section describes sales and use tax origin by land use.

Sales tax origins by land use. Commerce City provided data on sales and use tax revenue attributed to industry sectors. The sector allocations followed the 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). BBC made some reasoned attributions of the NAICS categories to different land use categories, including residential, commercial and industrial. The exhibit below shows the land use allocation process.

Exhibit 8.
Land Use Classifications
by NAICS 2007

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.

NAICS Code	Sector Description	Land Use Classification
21	Mining	Industrial
23	Construction	Industrial
31-33	Manufacturing	Industrial
42	Wholesale Trade	Commercial
44-45	Retail Trade	Res/Comm
48-49	Transport & Warehousing	Industrial
51	Information	Commercial
52	Finance & Insurance	Commercial
53	Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	Industrial
54	Professional, Scientific, Technical Services	Commercial
55	Mgmt of Companies & Enterprises	Commercial
56	Admin, Support & Waste Mgmt	Industrial
61	Educational Svcs	Res/Comm
62	Healthcare and Social Assistance	Res/Comm
71	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	Res/Comm
72	Accomodation and Food Svcs	Res/Comm
81	Other Services	Res/Comm

The allocation of sectors to residential land uses reflect household retail demand. Residences in Commerce City are most likely to patronize establishments in retail, real estate, educational, healthcare, entertainment, accommodation and food service and other service sectors. Allocation to commercial and industrial sectors reflects affiliated land uses. These sectors generally provide their goods and services to other businesses in an area wider than Commerce City and are likely net importers of sales tax revenue.

Sales and use tax revenue is allocated according to the categories in Exhibit 8, with an additional step, the calculation of resident supported sales and use tax.

Household sales. Exhibit 9 demonstrates the derivation of per household retail sales estimates, which are based on household income, the allocation of income to retail sales and the percent of household retail purchases captured by Commerce City. The US Census American Community Survey reports that median household income in Commerce City is about $51,000. BBC used the US Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey to estimate that roughly 30 percent of that household income (about $15,300) is spent on taxable retail sales (groceries excluded)[5]. Additionally, BBC estimated that 70 percent of household taxable retail sales are spent locally in Commerce City.[6]

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[5] Taxable retail sales includes all goods purchased through retailers in Commerce City with the exception of food purchased for home consumption. Retail goods include all "taxable transactions, commodities and services" described in Section 20-4 of the Commerce City Sales and Use Tax Code and Regulations.

[6] BBC used a 70 percent capture rate as a rule of thumb we have observed in other communities with mature retail offerings. It is an estimate. Commerce City's capture is likely lower considering the limited number and variety of retail establishments in the city. The city's retail capture will approach 70 percent as more retail develops in the Northern Range and elsewhere.

As shown in the following exhibit, total household retail trade sales average about $10,700 per household. DOLA estimated about 12,200 households in 2007.[7]

Exhibit 9.
Retail Sales Tax Generation by Households Located Within Commerce City

Note: Figures may not calculate exactly due to rounding.

Source:
US Census; US Bureau of Labor Statistics; BBC Research & Consulting

Category	Value
Average Household Income	$ 51,043
All Retail Trade Sales (30% of Income)	$ 15,313
Commerce City Capture (70% of sales)	$ 10,719
Commerce City Households (2007)	12,217
Total Household Retail Trade Sales	$ 130,954,390
Commerce City Sales Tax Rate	3.5%
Residentially Produced Sales Tax Revenue	$ 4,583,404

Total household retail trade sales ($131.0 million) are derived by multiplying Commerce City's capture of per household retail sales ($10,717) by the number of households in Commerce City (12,217). Commerce City's 3.5 percent sales tax rate is then applied to total retail trade sales to calculate the amount of sales tax supported by residential land uses, about $4.6 million.

Sales and use tax by land use. After residentially supported sales tax is calculated, the amount is netted out of the residential/commercial sectors presented in Exhibit 8. The remainder of revenue in residential/commercial sectors is allocated to commercial land uses, as these businesses are likely selling their goods and services to other businesses and patrons from outside the area. Industrial sales and use tax is apportioned as presented in Exhibit 8. The results of this process are shown in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 10.
Sales and Use Tax Generation by Land Use, Commerce City, 2008

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.

Residential (15%)

Industrial (49%)

Commerical (36%)
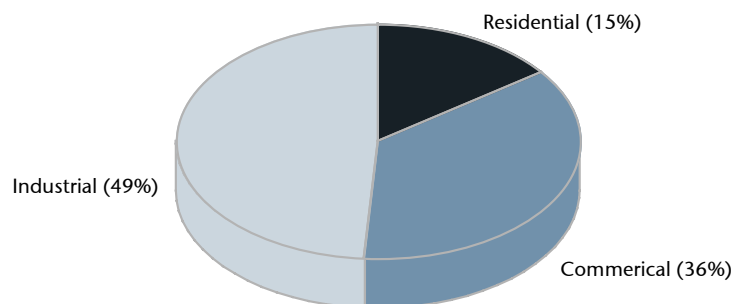
Sales Tax Total: $30,655,278

By these estimates, residential land uses in Commerce City account for just 15 percent of sales and use tax production, mainly through the production of retail sales tax. This figure is low compared to other Denver Metro Area communities, although not surprising given the concentration of industrial and commercial establishments and the relative lack of consumer-oriented retailers in Commerce City. The remainder of sales and use tax revenue is produced by commercial and industrial land uses, demonstrating the importance of these land uses to the community's fiscal position.

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[7] A "household" for the purposes of this study is defined as an average 3.1 persons. Data obtained from DOLA.

Northern Range Land Use Alternatives Fiscal Analysis

The following presents a fiscal evaluation of three land use alternatives for the Northern Range as part of the Commerce City Comprehensive Plan process. This document presents the three land use scenarios in terms of residential, commercial and industrial land uses and provides a comparative fiscal evaluation of the alternatives.

This document highlights the general relationship between potential land uses and government finances specific to the Northern Range alternatives and serves as one of many inputs to the comprehensive planning process. The evaluation of the alternatives is only from a fiscal perspective. There are other important issues that the community must weigh when selecting an appropriate mix of future land uses including transportation impacts, contiguous land use compatibility, job creation potential, desired community character and others.

Land Use Alternatives—Northern Range

The alternatives shown in Exhibit 1 were developed by Clarion Associates (Clarion) and Felsburg, Holt & Ullevig (FHU). The residential unit and commercial and industrial square footage figures are developed using residential densities, coverage ratios and floor-area ratios defined by Clarion and FHU for the Comprehensive Plan and the transportation evaluation for the Northern Range (including the E-470 Influence Area). Commercial and industrial space represent the expected built square footage of each land use. The scenarios project land uses when the area is built out, which is estimated to be 2035.

**Exhibit 11.
Northern Range
Land Use Scenarios**

Source:
Denver Regional Council of Governments;
Clarion Associates; Felsburg, Holt and Ullevig.

Land Use	Alternative		
	A	B	C
Residential (Units)	21,913	29,891	37,298
Commercial (Sq Ft)	16,140,400	15,278,200	9,529,000
Industrial (Sq Ft)	18,707,000	9,934,000	4,595,000

Alternative A emphasizes commercial and industrial development, specifically office, light and heavy industrial and retail development. It contains the least residential development of the three options. Alternative B is moderate in residential, commercial and industrial development when compared to the other alternatives. Alternative C has more residential development and less commercial and industrial development than the other alternatives.

Comparative Fiscal Evaluation

The above scenarios were evaluated by estimating impacts on key municipal revenue sources and service expenditures obtained from Commerce City's 2009-2010 Biennial Budget. Information on the general relationship between land use and government finances was obtained from the baseline fiscal conditions analysis presented previously in this memorandum.

Additional information on service expenditure and land use was obtained through a series of interviews with Commerce City staff, including the finance director, police chief, director of public works and director of parks and recreation. These interviews occurred between December 2008 and April 2009. The comparative fiscal evaluation focuses on operational costs and revenue under the city general fund. It does not consider

capital costs. For a discussion on land use and capital expenditure, please refer to BBC's Baseline Fiscal Conditions analysis. The following describes the methodology used to perform the comparative analysis of the Northern Range land use alternatives.

Methodology. The primary objective of this analysis is to inform city officials, as well as the general public, about the financial consequences of land development. In order to examine multiple scenarios of development, BBC devised a fiscal model that accommodates assumptions about varying development scenarios, as well assumptions about:

- Fixed and variable service delivery costs;
- Fixed and variable city revenues; and
- The differing service requirements of residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

The model is calibrated to replicate revenue patterns and expenditure requirements documented in the city's 2009 budget.

In order to calculate marginal costs, i.e. those costs that rise inline with growth as opposed to fixed costs, which are largely unaffected by changes in community size, BBC followed a two-step research approach.

- **Budget analysis.** First, BBC conducted an in-depth analysis of the city's budget to identify costs and revenues that would change as the city grows. BBC reviewed expenditure data in each department's budget and developed estimates of the likely marginal costs and revenues.

- **Departmental interviews.** To augment the budget analysis, BBC conducted interviews with representatives from select general fund departments, including planning, public works, finance, police and parks and recreation. These interviews explored which departmental costs and revenues would change with new development, and how different types of development, or density of development, would influence departmental costs and revenues.

After completion of these two steps, BBC prepared a fiscal model to test future land use scenarios in the Northern Range. The calculations in the BBC fiscal model are based on assumptions about the size and type of projected development to be analyzed by the model (see Exhibit 11); and assumptions about the service delivery patterns of city departments, including identifying the expenditures that are variable in regards to growth and the types of development that cause increases in service delivery expenditures.

City expenditure assumptions. Fiscal impacts of proposed development are calculated by developing per unit and per square foot revenue and expenditure values and applying these estimates to a projected land use scenario. It is important to note that default estimated expenditure values are based upon the current cost of services, and do not account for any current "deficits" or the need to "catch up" in certain areas.

Three steps were involved in calculating general fund expenditure values (expanded proportionately with new growth) in Commerce City.

Step 1. Estimating Fixed and Variable Expenditures. For every general fund department, budgeted 2009 expenditures were split between fixed and variable costs based on interviews with department staff and past BBC and city staff experience. BBC staff interviewed representatives of general fund departments to estimate the proportion of costs in each of their budgets that were largely variable costs, and the proportion that were largely fixed costs. In addition to interview responses, BBC and city staff depended on past experience in estimating fixed and variable expenditures.

Step 2. Estimating Residential/Commercial/Industrial Expenditures. A second step involved splitting the total variable costs for each department into four groups: those most sensitive to residential growth in the city, those most sensitive to commercial growth in the city and those sensitive to industrial growth. As with Step 1, these estimates were obtained through interviews with department staff, an analysis of the budget and BBC experience.

Step 3. Per Unit/Square Foot Allocation. After allocating variable residential, commercial and industrial expenditures for each department, these values were divided by the number of current residential units and non-residential square feet in the city. These calculations generated current marginal costs for each land use type in each city department.

Steps 1 through 3 are illustrated in Exhibit 12 on the following pages for the city's general fund. To complete the fiscal analysis, these per unit and per square foot costs are multiplied by the previously described land use scenarios to generate the annual general fund service cost of projected development. The projected service costs are then evaluated against projected revenue to calculate a net fiscal impact.

Exhibit 12.
General Fund Expenditure Allocations

	2009 Budget	Percent Fixed	Percent Variable	Fixed Expenditure	Variable Expenditure	Percent Residential	Percent Comm/Retail	Percent Ind	Residential Variable	Comm/Retail Variable	Comm/Ind Variable
Administration											
Legislative	$ 449,451	20%	80%	$ 89,890	$ 359,561	70%	20%	10%	$ 251,693	$ 71,912	$ 35,956
Legal	805,274	20%	80%	161,055	644,219	70%	20%	10%	450,953	128,844	64,422
City Manager	905,841	20%	80%	181,168	724,673	70%	20%	10%	507,271	144,935	72,467
City Clerk	283,202	20%	80%	56,640	226,562	70%	20%	10%	158,593	45,312	22,656
Community Events	175,267	20%	80%	35,053	140,214	70%	20%	10%	98,150	28,043	14,021
Economic Development	450,318	20%	80%	90,064	360,254	70%	20%	10%	252,178	72,051	36,025
Marketing and Public Relations	654,155	20%	80%	130,831	523,324	70%	20%	10%	366,327	104,665	52,332
Human Resources	638,927	20%	80%	127,785	511,142	70%	20%	10%	357,799	102,228	51,114
Organizational Development	50,000	20%	80%	10,000	40,000	70%	20%	10%	28,000	8,000	4,000
Administration Total	$ 4,412,435			$ 882,487	$ 3,529,948				$ 2,470,964	$ 705,990	$ 352,995
Finance											
Financial Planning & Budgeting	$ 354,955	20%	80%	$ 70,991	$ 283,964	70%	20%	10%	$ 198,775	$ 56,793	$ 28,396
Financial Services	872,528	20%	80%	174,506	698,022	70%	20%	10%	488,616	139,604	69,802
Tax	948,181	20%	80%	189,636	758,545	70%	20%	10%	530,981	151,709	75,854
Judicial	536,249	20%	80%	107,250	428,999	70%	20%	10%	300,299	85,800	42,900
Resource Development	58,156	20%	80%	11,631	46,525	70%	20%	10%	32,567	9,305	4,652
Internal Services	7,020,674	20%	80%	1,404,135	5,616,539	70%	20%	10%	3,931,577	1,123,308	561,654
Finance Total	$ 9,790,743			$ 1,958,149	$ 7,832,594				$ 5,482,816	$ 1,566,519	$ 783,259
Community Development											
Administration	$ 348,059	30%	70%	$ 104,418	$ 243,641	70%	20%	10%	$ 170,549	$ 48,728	$ 24,364
Planning	493,142	20%	80%	98,628	394,514	70%	20%	10%	276,160	78,903	39,451
Building Safety	934,600	20%	80%	186,920	747,680	70%	20%	10%	523,376	149,536	74,768
Neighborhood Services	1,378,098	20%	80%	275,620	1,102,478	70%	20%	10%	771,735	220,496	110,248
Housing	71,440	20%	80%	14,288	57,152	70%	20%	10%	40,006	11,430	5,715
Community Development Total	$ 3,225,339			$ 679,874	$ 2,545,465				$ 1,781,826	$ 509,093	$ 254,547
Public Safety											
Administration	$ 1,233,032	30%	70%	$ 369,910	$ 863,122	40%	50%	10%	$ 345,249	$ 431,561	$ 86,312
Support Operations	2,920,290	10%	90%	292,029	2,628,261	40%	50%	10%	1,051,304	1,314,131	262,826
Patrol Operations	7,148,695	10%	90%	714,870	6,433,826	40%	50%	10%	2,573,530	3,216,913	643,383
Community Justice	175,335	10%	90%	17,534	157,802	40%	50%	10%	63,121	78,901	15,780
Special Investigations Unit	469,866	10%	90%	46,987	422,879	40%	50%	10%	169,152	211,440	42,288
Emergency Management	149,349	10%	90%	14,935	134,414	40%	50%	10%	53,766	67,207	13,441
Public Safety Total	$ 12,096,567			$ 1,456,263	$ 10,640,304				$ 4,256,122	$ 5,320,152	$ 1,064,030

City of Commerce City; BBC Research & Consulting.

Exhibit 12. (CONTINUED)
General Fund Expenditure Allocations

CONTINUED	2009 Budget	Percent Fixed	Percent Variable	Fixed Expenditure	Variable Expenditure	Percent Residential	Percent Comm/Retail	Percent Ind	Residential Variable	Comm/Retail Variable	Comm/Ind Variable
Public Works											
Administration	$ 395,961	30%	70%	$ 118,788	$ 277,173	40%	35%	25%	$ 110,869	$ 97,010	$ 69,293
Street & Traffic Maintenance	1,738,746	10%	90%	173,875	1,564,871	40%	35%	25%	625,949	547,705	391,218
Snow & Ice Control	268,558	10%	90%	26,856	241,702	40%	35%	25%	96,681	84,596	60,426
Engineering	1,726,732	10%	90%	172,673	1,554,059	40%	35%	25%	621,624	543,921	388,515
Street Cleaning	328,996	10%	90%	32,900	296,096	40%	35%	25%	118,439	103,634	74,024
Refuse Collection	1,750,000	10%	90%	175,000	1,575,000	40%	35%	25%	630,000	551,250	393,750
Public Works Total	**$ 6,208,993**			**$ 700,092**	**$ 5,508,902**				**$ 2,203,561**	**$ 1,928,116**	**$ 1,377,225**
Parks & Recreation											
Administration	$ 900,221	30%	70%	$ 270,066	$ 630,155	100%	0%	0%	$ 630,155	$ -	$ -
Parks Maintenance	2,433,838	10%	90%	243,384	2,190,454	100%	0%	0%	2,190,454	-	-
Program Activities	2,133,902	10%	90%	213,390	1,920,512	100%	0%	0%	1,920,512	-	-
Parks & Recreation Total	**$ 5,467,961**			**$ 726,840**	**$ 4,741,121**				**$ 4,741,121**	**$ -**	**$ -**
General Fund Total	**$ 41,202,038**	**16%**	**84%**	**$ 6,403,704**	**$ 34,798,334**	**60%**	**29%**	**11%**	**$ 20,936,408**	**$ 10,029,869**	**$ 3,832,057**

Current Residential Units	12,217
Current Comm/Retail Sq Ft	13,515,412
Current Industrial Sq Ft	3,915,078
GF Expenditure per Res Unit	$ 1,714
GF Expenditure per Comm Sq Ft	$ 0.74
GF Expenditure per Ind Sq Ft	$ 0.98

Source: City of Commerce City; BBC Research & Consulting.

City revenue assumptions. Revenues were calculated in a manner similar to expenditures, with per residential unit, and per non-residential square foot revenues estimated and then applied to the projected land use scenarios. Sales tax revenue is apportioned among land uses according to the allocations presented in Exhibit 10. Property tax is apportioned to land uses according to their share of assessed value as reported in the DOLA Division of Property Taxation 2008 Annual Report. The allocations are shown below in Exhibit 13.

**Exhibit 13.
Commerce City Assessed
Value by Land Use, 2008**

Note:
"Other" land uses include agricultural, natural resources and oil & gas land uses.

Source:
DOLA Division of Property Taxation.

Land Use	Assessed Value	Percent of Total
Residential	$ 212,523,330	33%
Commercial	218,578,430	34%
Industrial	148,100,140	23%
Other	68,681,410	11%
Total	**$ 647,883,310**	**100%**

In the fiscal model, Commerce City 2009 budgeted property tax revenue is allocated to the above land uses[8] and then divided by existing residential units, and non-residential square footage to calculate average property tax by residential unit and commercial or industrial square footage.

All other revenues were calculated in a fashion similar to expenditures. Total current "other" revenues were split among those that are fixed and those that are variable. Variable revenues were then split based on sensitivity to commercial, industrial or residential development. Finally, variable residential, commercial and industrial revenues were divided by total residential unit or non-residential square feet to estimate marginal revenues. Exhibit 14 on the following page illustrates the calculations for Commerce City general fund revenue.

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[8] The fiscal model only takes into account residential, commercial and industrial land uses and only projects forward the 89 percent of property tax revenue attributable to those three types of land use. The remaining 11 percent of property tax is assumed to not grow with the mix of land uses described in the alternatives.

Exhibit 14.
General Fund Revenue Allocations

	2009 Budget	Percent Fixed	Percent Variable	Fixed Revenue	Variable Revenue	Percent Residential	Percent Comm/Retail	Percent Ind	Residential Variable	Comm/Retail Variable	Industrial Variable
Property Tax	$ 2,113,396	0%	100%	-	$ 2,113,396	33%	34%	23%	$ 693,251	$ 713,003	$ 483,103
Sales and Use Tax	28,155,839	0%	100%	-	28,155,839	15%	36%	49%	4,223,376	10,136,102	13,796,361
MV Reg, Ownership, Veh Trans Taxes	539,685	0%	100%	-	539,685	80%	10%	10%	431,748	53,969	53,969
Gaming, Cigarette Taxes	210,000	95%	5%	199,500	10,500	80%	10%	10%	8,400	1,050	1,050
Franchise Tax	2,228,102	0%	100%	-	2,228,102	80%	10%	10%	1,782,482	222,810	222,810
HUTF, County Road and Bridge	1,339,000	50%	50%	669,500	669,500	56%	34%	10%	374,920	227,630	66,950
Licenses & Permits	1,230,123	0%	100%	-	1,230,123	80%	10%	10%	984,098	123,012	123,012
Charges for Services	1,935,137	0%	100%	-	1,935,137	80%	10%	10%	1,548,110	193,514	193,514
Fines & Forfeitures	1,066,800	0%	100%	-	1,066,800	80%	10%	10%	853,440	106,680	106,680
Investment & Interest	2,241,379	50%	50%	1,120,690	1,120,690	80%	10%	10%	896,552	112,069	112,069
Other Revenue	467,195	20%	80%	93,439	373,756	80%	10%	10%	299,005	37,376	37,376
Total	**$ 41,526,656**	**5%**	**95%**	**$ 2,083,129**	**$ 39,443,528**	**31%**	**30%**	**39%**	**$ 12,095,381**	**$ 11,927,214**	**$ 15,196,893**

Current Residential Units	12,217
Current Comm/Retail Sq Ft	13,515,412
Current Ind Sq Ft	3,915,078
GF Revenue per Res Unit	$990.05
GF Revenue per Comm Sq Ft	$0.88
GF Revenue per Ind Sq Ft	$3.88

Source: City of Commerce City; BBC Research & Consulting.

Net revenue. General fund revenue by land use is netted against general fund expenditure by land use to calculate net fiscal impact by residential unit and non-residential square foot. Exhibit 15 shows net fiscal impact by land use.

Exhibit 15.
Net Fiscal Impact by Land Use

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.

Land Use	Net Fiscal Impact
Residential (per Unit)	$ (724)
Commercial (Per 1,000 SqFt)	140
Industrial (Per 1,000 SqFt)	2,903

New residential units in Commerce City are estimated to produce approximately a $725 general fund deficit per unit. Retail/office development is estimated to produce a modest general fund surplus ($140) per 1,000 square feet. Industrial development is by far the most fiscally beneficial land use to Commerce City, producing a near $3,000 general fund surplus per 1,000 square feet of development. As discussed previously, industrial development produces near half of the city's sales tax revenue, while requiring modest services.

Net fiscal impact. Exhibit 16 presents the net fiscal impact of the three land use alternatives for the Northern Range. The most fiscally beneficial alternative to Commerce City would produce higher revenues and require lower service expenditures (e.g., police, road maintenance, park maintenance, etc.).

Exhibit 16.
Net Fiscal Impact, Northern Range Land Use Alternatives

Source:
BBC Research & Consulting.

Land Use	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Residential	$ (15,857,692)	$ (21,631,099)	$ (26,991,293)
Commercial	2,265,851	2,144,812	1,337,718
Industrial	54,303,388	28,836,791	13,338,540
Net Fiscal Impact	**$ 40,711,547**	**$ 9,350,504**	**$ (12,315,036)**

The fiscal modeling exercise indicates that Alternative A is the most fiscally beneficial future land use scenario in the Northern Range, however it is important to note that the figures shown in the above exhibit should be interpreted acknowledging the limitations of applying fiscal impact analysis in a comprehensive plan setting. Specifically, fiscal impact analysis applies the current relationships between land use and government finances to a land use scenario that may occur 25 years in the future. The observed relationships between land uses and governmental costs and revenues will likely change during the next 25 years. As an acknowledgment of these limitations, it is best to interpret the figures shown above in a relative sense.

Exhibit 17 on the following page presents the relative fiscal impact of the three land use alternatives for the Northern Range. The evaluation compares sales and use tax revenue, property tax revenue and service expenditures among the three land use alternatives. The following is a discussion of the relative fiscal impacts of each land use alternative.

Alternative A. Alternative A is more beneficial to Commerce City fiscally than the other two alternatives. The higher concentrations of industrial and commercial land uses offer the city ample sales, use and property tax revenue while requiring fewer services than residential units. Commerce City currently generates well over half its General Fund revenue through sales and use tax from commercial and industrial land uses and this alternative provides the most opportunity for those land uses.

Exhibit 17. Northern Range Comparative Fiscal Evaluation

Source: BBC Research & Consulting.

Land Use Alternative	Evaluation Criteria			
	Sales and Use Tax Revenue	Property Tax Revenue	Service Expenditures	Net Fiscal Benefit
Alternative A	High	High	Low	**High**
Alternative B	Medium	Medium	Medium	**Medium**
Alternative C	Low	Low	High	**Low**

Alternative B. Alternative B offers nearly the same commercial land uses and about half the industrial land use as Alternative A. Alternative B also provides for more land for residential uses, which require more city services than commercial or industrial land. This alternative is the "middle road" alternative that offers the greatest mix of land uses but does not offer the focus on revenue producing land uses presented in Alternative A. Nevertheless, Alternative B provides ample opportunity for retail, office and light industrial uses that have traditionally generated more revenue for the city than have required in services.

Alternative C. Alternative C is less fiscally beneficial to Commerce City than Alternatives A and B. The vast majority of land area under this alternative is dedicated to residential land uses, which generally require more service expenditure than commercial or industrial development.

Implications for the Comprehensive Plan

The following observations that emerged from our fiscal analysis have implications on the comprehensive plan:

- Commerce City has enjoyed a long period of financial success—with it has come associated robust government service levels.

- The city benefits from its traditional industrial base, which contributes heavily to use tax, property tax and sales tax revenue, while demanding only modest government services.

- Commerce City relies on use tax as heavily as it relies on sales tax for revenue production. This situation further reinforces the importance of industrial land uses. In general, industrial establishments produce a great deal of use tax through the purchase of heavy machinery used in production processes. This is a valuable revenue source for the city.

- Industrial and commercial land uses are estimated to produce about 85 percent of sales and use tax revenue, while residential land uses produce about 15 percent.

- Commerce City's relatively low mill levy has benefits and consequences.[9] The low property tax rate is an asset in attracting and retaining commercial and industrial business establishments, but it causes the city to rely heavily on sales and use tax revenue, which leaves the city more exposed to regional and national economic forces.

- Current city geography presents challenges, especially in a difficult retail market:

  - ➤ Commerce City occupies a large, dispersed area, with associated service delivery inefficiencies.

  - ➤ The Arsenal Wildlife Refuge occupies a large portion of the retail trade area.

  - ➤ There is strong and entrenched retail competition in the immediate area.

- It is likely to be several years before the Northern Range supports a large amount of new retail due to the presence of retailers in neighboring communities and national and regional adverse economic conditions, yet in the meantime demand for city services will grow.

- Recent growth in the Northern Range has been primarily residential; industrial and commercial development opportunities should be preserved in the growth area for future revenue production capability.

A fiscally beneficial plan would emphasize the following strategies:

- Encourage infill clustering and "capital efficient" development;

- Retain, support and expand the community's industrial base;

- Ensure adequate land for residential, commercial and industrial uses;

- Acknowledge long term challenges in maintaining current service levels; and

- Preserve the opportunity for future retail development.

These observations are intended to inform the comprehensive planning process. It is important to note that fiscal implications are but one consideration among many that the community must weigh when evaluating future land uses in Commerce City.

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[9] Commerce City's 3.28 mill levy is considered relatively low when compared to other Adams County municipalities: Aurora-10.664, Arvada-4.31, Brighton-6.65, Thornton-10.21, Northglenn-11.597, Westminster-3.65, Bennett-11.95, Lochbuie-11.624.

Appendix D: Future Land Use Plan Buildout

This appendix provides an analysis of the Future Land Use Plan and what it means for Commerce City at buildout (i.e., when all vacant lands and targeted redevelopment sites are built out over an undefined period of time).

See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan.

Large vacant land parcels in the north and east part of Commerce City and Adams County will build out over an undefined period of time.

Housing, Population, and Jobs (2007)

For the purposes of the model, the planning team calibrated to 2007 Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) data. This was the most consistently available data that could also be spatially calibrated to the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping data, existing land use, and Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs).   For the model, the existing estimates are approximately:

- ✓ 13,100 housing units,
- ✓ 38,000 people, and
- ✓ 24,000 jobs.

See Appendix A, Community Profile, and Appendix B, Socioeconomic and Housing Profile, for more information and description of existing development, land use, and socioeconomic factors in Commerce City.

The transportation model accounts for 2007 housing and jobs, including developments since 2000 in the Northern Range.

Potential New Development

The estimate of potential new development is based on the categories shown on the Future Land Use Plan, calculated for undeveloped, agricultural, and platted vacant lands and for targeted redevelopment locations within Commerce City.

New Residential Development Potential

New residential development could occupy a total of approximately 9,100 undeveloped acres and 170 acres for mixed-use redevelopment. This future residential development (including redeveloped housing units) could amount to approximately:

✓ 49,280 new housing units, and
✓ 142,900 new people.

These new residential units represent a mix of housing types ranging from Residential Low (at 1 to 4 units per acre) to Mixed-Use E-470 and Residential High (with densities up to 40 units per acre). For purposes of this analysis, we assumed an average future housing occupancy rate of 2.9 people per household.

Most of the development potential is in the northern part of the city. DIA North alone accounts for over 20,000 housing units, which will likely develop over a very long term. The Northern Range and E-470 areas have potential for almost 26,000 new housing units, twice the amount estimated by the year 2035.

By planning area, new residential development could occupy approximately:

The Future Land Use Plan could accommodate a total of over 62,000 housing units and over180,000 people when fully built out.

Table D-1: New Residential Development Potential by Planning Area

Planning Area[1]	Potential Residential Acreage[2]	Potential New Housing Units	Potential New Population
Historic City	39	861	2,496
Irondale	121	822	2,385
Northern Range	3,525	18,759	54,402
E-470 Influence Area	1,316	7,135	20,691
DIA North	4,066	21,698	62,923
Total	9,067	49,275	142,898

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[1] Calculations are based on TAZs, which generally (but not perfectly) align with planning area boundaries.
[2] Mixed-use land use categories assume 50% of the land used for residential use and 50% for non-residential use.

Non-Residential Development Potential

According to the Future Land Use Plan, new retail, office, and employment land uses could occupy a total of approximately 13,900 undeveloped acres plus the mixed-use redevelopment sites. This is a potential for approximately:

- ✓ 122,250 new jobs.

As with the residential development, most of the non-residential development potential occurs in the northern half of the city where vast amounts of vacant land exist. The Northern Range has potential for over 20,000 new jobs. E-470 has potential for over 50,000 new jobs. These two planning areas alone account for almost twice the 2035 jobs estimate. Table D-2 itemizes the potential for new jobs by planning area.

Table D-2: New Non-Residential Development Potential by Planning Area

Planning Area[3]	Potential Business and Industry Acreage[4]	Potential New Jobs
Historic City	462 ac.	7,301 jobs
Irondale	1,037 ac.	8,321 jobs
Northern Range	1,396 ac.	21,258 jobs
E-470 Influence Area	3,818 ac.	52,181 jobs
DIA North	7,142 ac.	33,193 jobs
Total	13,855 ac.	122,254 jobs

How Many Total People and Jobs Can the Plan Accommodate?

Commerce City's total buildout potential is determined by combining the existing and potential new development. Using this approach, **the Future Land Use Plan, at buildout, could result in approximately:**

- ✓ 62,380 housing units total,
- ✓ 180,900 people total, and
- ✓ 146,250 jobs total.

This buildout potential vastly exceeds the growth projections through 2035 (noted on the following page), emphasizing the fact that Commerce City has plenty of room to grow and land for a variety of future housing and employment choices.

The Future Land Use Plan could accommodate a total of over146,000 new jobs when fully built out.

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[3] Calculations are based on TAZs, which generally (but not perfectly) align with planning area boundaries.
[4] Mixed-use land use categories assume 50% of the land used for residential use and 50% for non-residential use.

What are the 2035 Projections?

By 2035, Commerce City could have up to 33,900 new residents needing housing (with an annual compound growth rate of just over 2.3%) or a total of 71,900 people (DRCOG, 2009). The city could see 17,900 new jobs for a total of 41,900 jobs (adjusted from DRCOG's estimates of 12,200 new jobs to account for more land set aside in the E-470 and Northern Range areas and to achieve the community's 1.5 jobs-to-housing goal for new growth.

Why Consider Implications of Buildout?

Depending on how much growth occurs in Commerce City over the next 25+ years, the city's population could grow significantly. How much growth and where it occurs will have considerable implications on services like police, transportation, parks, and utilities. It is important to consider the Future Land Use Plan's ability to accommodate potential future growth, to monitor growth over time, and adjust the plan accordingly.

Appendix E—Implementation Strategies Summary

Table of Strategies

This section contains a summary of strategies from all of the Plan element chapters (4 though 15). It can be updated from time to time, as the city carries out actions to implement this Plan.

Chapter 4—Land Use and Growth Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal LU 1	**Maintain a Balanced Mix of Land Uses**
LU 1a	**Future Land Use Plan as Guide**
	Use the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) (in Chapter 3) to guide development patterns and mix of uses and amendments to the Land Development Code (LDC).
LU 1b	**Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments**
	Update the LDC and zone districts to be consistent with the FLUP and categories in Chapter 3. Changes might include: (a) Update Residential (R-3 and R-4) to allow embedded commercial; (b) Change industrial categories (I-1) to allow flex office space; (c) Develop new zoning districts to implement the mixed-use categories and the DIA Technology and Office/Flex categories; (d) Make straight zoning categories more flexible to lessen dependence on PUDs; and (e) Prohibit industrial lots to be used solely for outdoor storage.
LU 1c	**Monitor Jobs-to-Housing**
	Monitor the jobs-to-housing ratio as development occurs, maintaining the ratio at or above 1.5 jobs per 1.0 housing units. Adjust the FLUP in the future or consider other actions, if the balance is not being maintained.
LU 1d	**Coordinated Rezoning**
	Coordinate rezoning of multiple parcels together in key locations to implement the coordinated pattern on the FLUP (e.g., Tiffany and other focused locations within Irondale).
Goal LU 2	**Phase Growth in an Orderly, Compact Manner**
LU 2a	**Infill Incentives**
	Provide incentives for infill development and redevelopment (e.g., streamlined review process, rebates, or reduced fees) and an efficient and predictable development review process.
LU 2b	**LDC Amendments/Focus Areas**
	Consider code amendments in Focus Areas that address infill development potential, including: (a) Change dimensional standards to promote contextually-based infill development (e.g., to fit traditional lot sizes and current setbacks, and building massing); (b) Provide flexibility for infill development (e.g., parking requirements, open space set asides, and setbacks). Current standards may not be appropriate for infill in traditional neighborhoods or mixed-use projects.
LU 2c	**Annexation Criteria**
	Develop annexation criteria. Different criteria may be needed for Historic City, Irondale, Northern Range, and E-470.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
LU 2d	**Facilities and Financing Plan/Annexation**
	Prior to annexations, the city will require a completion of a detailed public facilities and financing plan to be completed that considers ongoing costs. Amend LDC to include this requirement.
LU 2e	**Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)**
	Update IGAs with Adams County to address growth and annexation.
LU 2f	**Tiered Planning System**
	Adopt a Tiered Planning System with phasing criteria (as suggested in Policy 2.2), so the city can monitor development in the Northern Range and E-470 to ensure a proper balance of jobs and housing and to ensure that development does not outpace infrastructure and services. The system should trigger new actions if residential development begins to outpace other types of development.
Goal LU 3	**Strengthen City Neighborhoods as Attractive, Livable Places**
LU 3a	**Neighborhood Design Standards**
	Adopt neighborhood design standards to address infill and residential development, realizing that different neighborhoods or parts of the city may require different standards.
LU 3b	**Neighborhood Plans**
	Develop neighborhood plans for residential or mixed-use areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., Adams City/FasTracks station site, Wembley, et al.)
	(See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan, and Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods.)
Goal LU 4	**Retain Existing Industrial Areas and Land for Future Jobs**
LU 4a	**Future Land Use Plan as a Guide for Employment**
	Use the FLUP to guide industrial and employment land patterns.
LU 4b	**Incentives for Industrial**
	Provide Incentives for Irondale and Historic City new centers, potentially including rebates or reduced fees for efficient and desirable infill development or city-financed infrastructure to spur private investment. (See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)
Goal LU 5	**Establish Mixed-Use Centers for Jobs, Retail, Civic Activity, and High-Density Housing**
LU 5a	**Sub-Area Plans**
	Develop sub-area plans for areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., FasTracks station site, Wembley, identified redevelopment areas, Hwy. 2, U.S. 85 Corridor, etc.).
LU 5b	**Design Standards for Centers**
	Update commercial and mixed use design standards in the LDC if necessary, including incentives, with site planning requirements that are consistent with the intent for centers. (See Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan.)
LU 5c	**Sub-area Plan for FasTracks Station Site**
	Prepare a Transit-Oriented Development (T.O.D.) Sub-area plan for the FasTracks site.
LU 5d	**Strip Commercial**
	Discourage strip commercial development that is randomly dispersed along roads with extensive curb cuts and an uncoordinated appearance.
Goal LU 6	**Ensure Compatible Development and Mutually-Beneficial Development Near DIA**
LU 6a	**Airport-Related Incentives**
	Develop incentives for employment related to airport and employment development.
LU 6b	**Sub-Area Plan – DIA North**
	Develop a sub area plan for DIA North addressing future land use and coordination with the airport and Adams County.
LU 6c	**Housing Compatibility Near Airport**
	Avoid placing residential in noise and height-restricted areas near the airport and within the ground rumble area within 2,000 feet from the DIA property line.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal LU 7	**Coordinate Growth Regionally**
LU 7a	Coordination Ongoing
	Continue coordination with regional partners, as identified through this Plan, revisiting current IGAs from time-to-time, as necessary, to implement this Plan (e.g., Brighton, Denver and Adams County).

Chapter 5—Economic Development Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal ED 1	**Increase economic diversification**
ED 1a	Economic Development Strategic Plan
	Implement strategies of the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*.
ED 1b	Business Incentives
	Examine policy that would provide incentives for beneficial city economic development projects.
Goal ED 2	**Retail and increase strong employment base**
ED 2a	BRE Program
	Continue to expand the business retention and expansion programs of the city.
ED 2b	Educational Partnerships and Workforce Training
	Expand existing programs and implement workforce training.
ED 2c	Monitor Jobs to housing
	Similar to strategy LU1c.
Goal ED 3	**Recruit new employment and commercial development**
ED 3a	Future Land Use Plan to Guide Decisions
	Use the Future Land Use Plan to guide land use decisions.
Goal ED 4	**Attract and support quality retailers**
ED 4a	Community Retail Needs
	Identify surpluses and leakages to direct community needs.
ED 4b	Incentives
	Examine policy that would provide incentives for beneficial retail, which is directly targeted to community needs (grocery store, sit-down restaurants, etc.).
ED 4c	Retail retention and expansion
	Develop a comprehensive retail retention and expansion program.

Chapter 6—Fiscal Stability Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal FS 1	**Efficient Investment Infrastructure and Services**
FS 1a	Infill Development Incentives (Land Development Code)
	Provide incentives for infill development, which is the most efficient type of development. Incentives might include rebates, reduced fees, expedited review times, or contemporary standards (e.g., for parking).
FS 1b	Prioritize Needs
	Acknowledge challenges in maintaining current service levels over the long-term; prioritize needs and funding through the Capital Improvements Program to align with the goals of this Plan.
FS 1c	Pursue Grants
	Leverage city resources to utilize state and federal funding sources, and grants (including but not limited to funding for sustainability-related and integrated multi-sectoral planning).
FS 1d	Development-Related Impacts
	Identify development-related impacts to the multi-modal network and recommend appropriate measures to be constructed as part of the development project to address impacts.

		(See Chapter 12, Public Facilities and Infrastructure.)
Goal FS 2	**Retain/Increase Employment Base**	
FS 2a	FLUP Consistency	
	Retain, support, and expand the community's industrial base by approving development that is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and *Economic Development Strategic Plan* and modifying the LDC to reflect the FLUP.	
FS 2b	Reserve Land for Commercial Uses	
	Ensure adequate land for commercial uses through the Future Land Use Plan; preserve the opportunity for future retail development by designating locations.	
FS 2c	Criteria/Incentives	
	Develop criteria for new business incentives (i.e., to achieve the kinds of businesses desired), as defined through the *Economic Development Strategic Plan*.	
	(See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)	
Goal FS 3	**Fiscal Costs/Benefits of Development Considered**	
FS 3a	Fiscal Impact Analysis	
	Require fiscal impact analysis of new development.	
Goal FS 4	**Revenue Diversified**	
FS 4a	*Buy Local* Program	
	Develop program to persuade Commerce City residents to *Buy C3* or *Buy Local* (i.e., support local businesses).	
	(See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)	

Chapter 7—Housing and Neighborhoods Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies	
Goal HN 1	**Reinvestment and Rehabilitation of Aging Housing Stock**	
HN 1a	Citywide Housing Plan	
	Develop a citywide Housing Plan to help refine needs and targets.	
HN 1b	Housing Program	
	Establish programs to preserve and recycle housing stock (e.g., acquire, redevelop, resell single-family homes at affordable prices; and provide accessibility improvements), particularly in the Historic City.	
HN 1c	Improvement Plans for Historic City Focus Areas	
	Determine Neighborhood Focus Areas within Historic City (e.g., Southern Core/Rose Hill, Northern Core/Derby/Tichy, Fairfax/Dupont, and Adams City) where the city will develop improvement plans and seek funding to stabilize and improve conditions. Invest to the extent funds are available.	
HN 1d	Proactive Property Maintenance	
	Explore ways to make code enforcement more proactive, to ensure property maintenance and prevent further zoning and municipal code violations.	
NH 1e	Zoning Amendments for Compatible Infill	
	Evaluate/explore downzoning certain residential areas of the Historic City from R-2 to R-1, to ensure compatible neighborhood infill that strengthens neighborhoods.	
HN 1f	Neighborhood Planning/Support	
	Support a neighborhood planning program, particularly for neighborhoods identified above (see HN 1c).	
HN 1g	Education about Development Permitting	
	Provide educational materials regarding the development permitting process and where it applies.	
	(See also *Chapter 13, Appearance and Design*, and *Chapter 15, Environmental Conservation and Stewardship* for strategies related to tree planting, energy efficiency, community gardens, and other neighborhood-related topics.)	

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal HN 2	**Variety of Housing Types to Meet Needs**
HN 2a	LDC Amendments: Accessory Dwelling Units
	Explore concept to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in new and existing neighborhoods where lot sizes would permit them.
HN 2b	Household Energy Programs
	Provide programs to reduce household energy costs (costs associated with energy consumption, transportation, and utilities).
HN 2c	Foreclosure Prevention Programs
	Work with all housing agencies to ensure that Commerce City residents are aware of and have access to the foreclosure prevention and assistance programs administered by Adams County.
HN 2d	Senior Housing Programs
	Pursue federal, state, and local programs to build senior housing, such as Section 202 developments (affordable housing with supportive services) and senior housing for all income levels.
HN 2e	Senior Housing LDC Amendments
	Revise the LDC to allow higher–density, senior housing in mixed-use centers. Promote a visitability ordinance (to accommodate people in wheelchairs, or with frailties).
Goal HN 3	**Increased Range of Housing Prices**
HN 3a	Education and Counseling
	Inform renters and homeowners about options (education and counseling, foreclosure prevention strategies).
HN 3b	Affordable Rental Options
	Continue support for all housing agency efforts to provide quality, affordable rental properties dispersed in different parts of the community (including subsidized housing).
HN 3c	Mixed-Income Projects
	Require new development to include a mix of price ranges, potentially combining market-rate housing with affordable housing.
HN 3d	Housing Authority
	Evaluate increased responsibilities and scope for both the Housing Division and Housing Authority.
	(See Chapter 5, Economic Development, and Chapter 13, Appearance and Design, for strategies that will help encourage the construction of high-end homes in the community.)

Chapter 8—Redevelopment and Reinvestment Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal RR 1	**Increase Infill Development**
RR 1a	Infill Incentives and Standards
	Examine policy that would provide incentives for beneficial city infill projects, because they are typically more expensive than greenfield projects. (See Fiscal Stability strategies and RR 3b, below.)
RR 1b	Façade Program
	Implement a Derby enhancement program (catalyst funds) to improve existing businesses.
Goal RR 2	**Targeted Redevelopment to Strengthen Viability, Mixed-Use**
RR 2a	Urban Renewal Area (URA) Tools
	Expand application of Urban Renewal Areas (URAs) to achieve redevelopment goals, including existing URAs (Prairie Gateway, Derby, and US 85), and potential new URAs (e.g., FasTracks area). Explore creative funding applications for redevelopment, such as Tax Increment Financing, expanding on funding tools permitted through URAs. Consider establishing a separate URA board to oversee/develop additional policies, guidelines, and plans for each area.
RR 2b	Quasi-Public Urban Renewal Entity
	Explore feasibility of a non-profit, quasi-public entity to oversee infill and redevelopment in neighborhoods that could purchase and rehabilitate structures, or consolidate and sell properties.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
RR 2c	**FasTracks Station Sub-Area Plan/Zoning Amendments**
	Develop FasTracks station sub-area plan. Modify zoning to achieve an appropriate mix of uses (especially for the T.O.D. site), using a blend of regulations, guidelines, and incentives.
RR 2d	**Minimum Density**
	Modify the Land Development Code (LDC), to establish a minimum-density range (at least 8 units/acre, the minimum threshold necessary to support transit) along corridors and at transit station locations.
RR 2e	**LDC Assessment/Amendment**
	Assess effectiveness of parking and other standards for this Plan's goals. Amend as necessary.
RR 2f	**Monitor Redevelopment Sites**
	Monitor economic strength of redevelopment sites. Develop plans for public improvements needed to support each area. Prioritize investment (streets, sidewalks, lighting, signage, and infrastructure) for priority redevelopment sites.
RR 2g	**Code Enforcement**
	Explore how to make code enforcement more proactive to enforce property maintenance requirements and improve image.
Goal RR 3	**Strengthen Existing Neighborhoods**
RR 3a	**Funding and Grants for Redevelopment/Brownfields**
	Explore grants, low-interest loans, and redevelopment corporations to address redevelopment goals and to reduce industrial/residential conflicts.
RR 3b	**Infill Standards**
	Review infill standards to ensure contextually-sensitive infill development in residential focus areas.
	(See Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods)

Chapter 9—Transportation Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal T 1	**Balanced, Comprehensive Transportation System**
T 1a	**Road Network**
	Implement improvements to roadway network, signals, and intersections based on a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with priorities as determined by the Transportation Plan. Priorities will be based on safety, congestion relief, connectivity, multi-modal, and implementability.
T 1b	**Fees**
	Determine potential new sources of funding for transportation improvements (e.g., road impact fees, street fees, etc.).
T 1c	**Transportation for Special Needs (and all demographic groups)**
	Research best practices for design elements to accommodate the aging and disabled (e.g., lighting, materials, other visual and auditory cues, traffic control measures and crosswalks, traffic calming, etc.).
Goal T 2	**Connected Transportation System**
T 2a	**Right of Way Reserved**
	Reserve future right-of-way for future roads identified (especially the Northern Range and E-470 Influence Area) based on road classifications and standard cross sections.
Goal T 3	**Improved Bicycle, Pedestrian System**
T 3a	**Traffic Calming**
	Implement traffic calming measures, as addressed in the Transportation Plan.
T 3b	**Bicycle/Pedestrian Components**
	Include bicycle and pedestrian components in the Transportation Plan. Research best practices for bicycle and pedestrian system design criteria, to be used for new construction and possible improvements to the existing transportation network.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
T 3c	**Prioritize Pedestrian Improvements**
	Coordinate high-priority pedestrian improvement areas with the Transportation Plan Capital Improvements Plan.
T 3d	**Prioritize Traffic Safety Improvements**
	Monitor (vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle) traffic accident data to prioritize areas for traffic safety improvements.
T 3e	**Bicycle Plan**
	Prepare a citywide bicycle plan (that might include components such as *Adopt-a-Bikeway* program to allow residents to adopt a bikeway route, report obstructions, and keep it clean; bicycle racks, lockers, and structures; Bike to Work Day – city promotes bicycling, working with businesses to provide free breakfast; *C3 Bikes* – city sponsors bicycling and program to promote safety, so students will use alternative transportation to/from school.
Goal T 4	**Improved Transit**
T 4a	**Alternative Modes – City Employees**
	Promote employee use of alternative modes, including bicycle commuting and transit.
T 4b	**FasTracks North Metro Corridor**
	Work with partners, including RTD, to ensure that Commerce City's FasTracks' North Metro Corridor station is built to serve Commerce City and that the station is well connected to the entire community through sidewalks, bikeways and local transit service.
T 4c	**FasTracks East Corridor**
	Work with partners, including RTD, to ensure that stations on FasTracks' East Corridor are built to serve and are well connected to Commerce City through sidewalks, bikeways and local transit service.
T 4d	**Future Commuter Rail**
	Work with RTD to develop an alignment and station locations along the NATE rail corridor that best serve Commerce City.
T 4e	**Bus Transit Corridors**
	Include provision for bus transit priority features along congested transit corridors. These could include queue jump lanes or transit signal priority equipment. Ensure land use and design standards support future transit goals; design for pedestrian connectivity.
T 4f	**Northern Range Bus Routes**
	Identify transit services that connect the Northern Range developments to their primary destinations such as the Historic City, downtown Denver and DIA through the use of local bus services and planned commuter rail routes.
T 4g	**E-470 Future Rail Transit Corridor**
	Work with partners, including E-470 Authority, RTD, and Rocky Mountain Rail Authority to develop an alignment and station locations along the E-470 corridor that best serve Commerce City.
Goal T 5	**Multi-Use Trails Connected**
T 5a	**Trails Plans**
	Implement Trails Plans.
Goal T 6	**Regional Coordination of Transportation**
T 6a	**Intergovernmental Agreements/Joint Funding**
	Explore/develop intergovernmental agreements with adjacent jurisdictions to apply for joint project funding, to promote seamless connectivity, and to negotiate complementary standards for the transportation network.

Chapter 10—Safety and Wellness Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal SW 1	**Efficient, effective police, fire, and emergency services**
SW 1a	*Police Strategic Plan* Guides
	Use *Police Strategic Plan* to address needs and response times.
SW 1b	Shared Public Safety Facilities
	Explore sharing facilities/sub-stations to serve citizens (e.g., East 103rd Avenue /Walden Fire Station; East 60th Avenue/Monaco Street; and East 112th Avenue and Chambers Road).
SW 1c	Current Emergency Disaster Planning
	Keep emergency disaster planning up to date.
SW 1d	Fire District Coordination
	Coordinate with fire districts to address provision of land for fire stations within growth areas.
SW 1e	Safety through Design / Property Maintenance
	Review development projects using Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles described in this chapter. (See also Chapter 7 and 13 for related property maintenance strategies, as property maintenance, which reduce crime and increasing residents' sense of security.)
Goal SW 2	**Promote regular physical activity for a healthy community**
SW 2a	Pedestrian Improvements
	Pursue strategies to create a visually-appealing and safe pedestrian experience. Prioritize pedestrian improvements in areas that will have the greatest benefit (e.g., near schools or commercial areas). (See strategies in Chapter 9: Transportation and Chapter 11: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation.)
SW 2b	School Coordination
	Work with school districts to develop a proximity standard to study and improve access to schools.
SW 2c	Neighborhood Assessments
	Perform Neighborhood Walkability and Bikeability Assessments for areas with high accident rates or expected high rates of pedestrian and bicycle activity.
SW 2d	Transit Access
	Adopt practices to locate new and redeveloped housing in areas with access to transit. Work to relocate existing routes to maximize ridership and access.
SW 2e	Bus Stop Improvements
	Develop a program (possibly public/private) to improve bus stops for safe access and comfort (e.g., shelters at key stops, shade, benches), directional information (bus schedules), and personal safety (lighting, locations where there are "eyes on the street"). Consider Adopt-a-Stop programs.
Goal SW 3	**Access to health-care facilities**
SW 3a	Health and Wellness Advisory Committee
	Work with partners to create a Health and Wellness Advisory Committee to establish procedures to track community health information.
SW 3b	Health-Care Needs Assessment
	Work with partners to conduct a Needs Assessment to determine the extent to which vulnerable Commerce City populations lack access to health-care facilities and other basic services. (e.g., the city commissioned the *Rose Foundation Health Care Needs Assessment* in 2002-2003). A current needs assessment could be a less comprehensive evaluation to determine if the data/recommendations on health-care access are still valid. An update may only need to address other basic services (e.g., food, transportation, etc.).
SW 3c	Adams County Coordination
	Coordinate with Adams County as they relocate their facilities (to coordinate ideas and services).
SW 3d	Senior Ridership
	Coordinate with other public/private agencies to assist with senior ridership to transit.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal SW 4	**Increased access to healthy foods for community residents**
SW 4a	Fast-Food Restaurant Density
	Consider incentives to attract new, healthy restaurants and to limit the density of fast-food restaurants within neighborhoods (e.g., Derby Master Plan recommendation).
SW 4b	LDC Amendments for Small-Scale Urban Agriculture
	Evaluate and consider removing from the Land Development Code barriers to small-scale urban agriculture (e.g., permit farmer's markets in all commercial areas; allow front yard vegetable gardens; permit a wide range of small agricultural uses in residential areas, as appropriate).
SW 4c	Promotions for Trees, Urban Agriculture
	Provide incentives, such as rebates, for fruit trees, green roofs, urban agriculture, and greenhouses.
SW 4d	Community Gardens
	Explore feasibility, costs, and benefits of allowing community gardens in some public and private parks along with incentives to encourage them in private developments.

Chapter 11—Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal P 1	**Parks built and maintained to meet needs**
P 1a	Prioritize Recommendations
	Prioritize implementation recommendations of the Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities (2007) including new park development, facilities, and recreation.
P 1b	Re-evaluate Schedule – Master Plans
	Re-evaluate Five-Year Master Planning Schedule (updates for the Strategic and/or Master Plan).
P 1c	Parkland Impact Fee
	Reassess parkland impact fee annually.
P 1d	Dedication Standards
	Assess parkland dedication standards in the LDC, to confirm the city is achieving its 6 ac/1,000 target.
P 1e	Stable Funding
	Identify stable funding source for parks development, operations, and maintenance.
P 1f	Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)
	Maximize existing IGAs and cooperation with other entities for recreation opportunities (e.g., School District 27J and Adams County School District 14, Belle Creek Family Center/Metro District, Reunion Recreation Center/Metro District, other possible metro districts, and outside or alternative recreation providers) (as identified in Goal 2).
P 1g	Partnerships
	Form partnerships and coordinate with metro districts (including but not limited to Belle Creek Metro District and Reunion Metro District).
P 1h	Golf Course Monitoring
	Develop and monitor a Golf Course Plan for expansion.
P 1i	Private/Public Partnerships
	Explore other private/public partnerships (e.g., with businesses) to build and maintain recreation facilities.
Goal P 2	**Year-round active recreation opportunities provided**
P 2a	Recreation LOS
	Establish Recreation Level-of-Service (LOS) goal in accordance with the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs.*
P 2b	Stable Funding
	Identify stable funding sources for recreation development and operations and maintenance.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
P 2c	**Private/Public Partnerships**
	Explore other public/private partnerships (e.g., with businesses) to build and maintain recreation facilities.
Goal P 3	**Connected open space**
P 3a	**Sand Creek Greenway Appearance**
	Improve appearance of properties bordering the Sand Creek Greenway, through the development review process.
P 3b	**Regional Partnerships**
	Form partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions to implement the *South Platte River Corridor Heritage Plan* (including Adams County).
P 3c	**USFW Coordination**
	Work with US Fish and Wildlife to provide stewardship for the National Wildlife Refuge.
P 3d	**Barr Lake Coordination**
	Work with the state and Adams County to achieve common goals related to Barr Lake protection.
P 3d	**Work Cooperatively**
	Work cooperatively with the North East Greenway partners to implement and achieve common goals.
Goal P 4	**Natural resources protected**
P 4a	**Boost Volunteer Programs**
	Boost volunteer programs that focus on land restoration and stewardship.
P 4b	**Natural Resource Stewardship Programs**
	Support *Adopt-an-Open Space* and *Master Naturalist* volunteer programs to maintain natural resources and open spaces.

Chapter 12—Public Facilities and Infrastructure Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal PF 1	**Coordinated utilities and infrastructure/future growth**
PF 1a	**Annual Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)**
	Annually update the Capital Improvements Plan, considering priorities set forth in this Plan and the annual Action Plan. Coordinate with South Adams County Water and Sanitation District's CIP.
PF 1b	**Coordinate with Water/Sanitation District**
	Coordinate with South Adams County Water and Sanitation District to ensure that adequate water and sewer can be provided at the time of new development.
PF 1c	**Standards for Adequate Public Facilities**
	Develop standards in the Land Development Code for development to pay its own way, and for services to be available concurrent with development.
PF 1d	**Coordinate with Other Districts**
	Coordinate with other districts to ensure that adequate schools, power, and other infrastructure can be provided at the time of new development.
PF 1e	**Transportation Coordination**
	Work with developers, Regional Transportation District (RTD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and other transportation entities to meet the travel needs of the community as growth occurs.
PF 1f	**Impact Fees Reassessment**
	Reassess impact fees and developer assessments, to ensure that development covers its costs.
PF 1g	**Public/Private Partnerships**
	Develop public/private partnerships to address facilities and services.
PF 1h	**GID to Finance New Development**
	Continue current General Improvement District (GID); look at separate GIDs for the E-470 and DIA North areas.

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
PF 1i	Post Office Coordination
	Coordinate with post office to ensure appropriate location of facilities in the Northern Range.
PF 1j	Re-evaluate Drainage Fees
	Explore whether drainage fees need to be evaluated as infrastructure costs increase.
PF 1k	Electric Providers
	Work with energy providers to ensure adequate coverage as growth occurs.
PF 1l	Telecommunication
	Work with telecommunication providers to promote a "wired city" (e.g., fiber optics and wireless framework/foundation) with facilities in the Northern Range and along E-470.
	(See Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth strategies related to phased growth.)
Goal PF 2	**Increased educational options**
PF 2a	School District Coordination
	Continue to coordinate with school districts to plan for future facilities to serve growth, location within neighborhoods, and co-location with parks.
PF 2b	School Fee-in-Lieu
	Re-evaluate and annually update fee-in-lieu for schools, to ensure that development pays it way for school impacts.
Goal PF 3	**Increased access to local government**
PF 3a	Public Participation
	Promote ongoing public participation/community engagement meetings to continue the visions/ideas/principles of this Plan and future sub-area plans.
PF 3b	Task Force/Committees Creation
	Explore creation of task forces and advisory committees to help further the aims of local government and this Plan.
PF 3c	Volunteer Organizations
	Support and cooperate with volunteer organizations and groups that provide recreational activities for young people.

Chapter 13—Appearance and Design Strategies

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal AD 1	**Image of gateways and corridors improved**
AD 1a	Prioritize Gateways and Corridors
	Identify gateway and corridor areas to prioritize for Historic City and Northern Range enhancements.
AD 1b	Overlay Districts – Gateways and Corridors
	Develop overlay districts for gateways and corridors (e.g., E-470, Highway 2) to address corridor improvements and future development.
AD 1c	Beautification Programs
	Develop *Adopt-a*…(highway, street, trail, open space, etc.) programs with businesses and community organizations (for trails, highways, roads). Sponsor volunteer clean-up days and events for public roads and open space areas.
Goal AD 2	**Appearance of established neighborhoods and districts**
AD 2a	Small Grant Funding Façade Improvements
	Evaluate the opportunity to provide small grant funding for façade improvements in commercial districts, for home improvements in targeted neighborhoods and small neighborhood improvement projects, and for way-finding signage.
AD 2b	Consolidate Properties
	Acquire and consolidate properties in redevelopment areas. (See Chapter 8: Redevelopment and Reinvestment.)

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
AD 2c	Coordination/CDOT Maintenance
	Coordinate with CDOT and railroads to provide maintenance of small parcels along rights-of-way, to improve the appearance along highways (e.g., Highway 2).
Goal AD 3	**Development quality for new neighborhoods, commercial areas, and industrial uses improved**
AD 3a	LDC/Design Standards and Zoning
	Address code/zoning amendments to implement the Future Land Use Plan and best practices for design. (See Chapter 4 strategies.)
AD 3b	Design Standards Updated
	Update design standards to address residential infill and compatibility, commercial landscaping and cohesive site planning, employment areas, and multi-family design.
AD 3c	Revised Environmental Quality Standards
	Require new development to provide proper dust and erosion control. Develop stormwater Best Management Practice standards to ensure environmental quality and low-impact development.
AD 3d	Education
	Provide community education about quality design and its benefits.
AD 3e	Exemplary Design Tools
	Support zoning districts, developer agreements, specific plans, landscaping agreements for streetscaping, and other measures that provide flexibility to achieve exemplary design.
AD 3f	Building Codes
	Keep building codes up to date.
Goal AD 4	**Important viewsheds improved/protected**
AD 4a	Identify Viewsheds
	Develop a viewshed plan/program to identify certain view corridors for protection.
AD 4b	Evaluate Outdoor Lighting Standards
	Address outdoor lighting standards to control amount and glare. Require that outdoor fixtures (street lighting, externally illuminated signs, and advertising displays) are low-energy, shielded light fixtures.
Goal AD 5	**Public gathering spaces**
AD 5a	Commercial Area Standards
	Develop standards in LDC for commercial areas to require provision of outdoor spaces for dining and seating, and to provide public spaces as part of activity centers.

Chapter 14—Cultural Facilities and Tourism Strategies

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal CF 1	**Elevated awareness of assets**
CF 1a	Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan
	Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan that identifies potential funding sources to increase awareness regarding the city's assets, arts and culture, and tourism.
CF 1b	Promote Golf Course
	Continue to promote the Buffalo Run Golf Course.
Goal CF 2	**Preserved history/broadened arts and culture**
CF 2a	Prioritize Historic Resources
	Evaluate and prioritize historic resources.
CF 2b	Public/Private Partnerships – Historic Resources
	Engage in public/private partnerships to preserve and rehabilitate significant resources.
CF 2c	Historic Preservation Board
	Consider whether a Historic Preservation Board could advance the aims of this Plan to elevate awareness of historical sites and features, and preserve historic resources.

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
CF 2d	**Art work Placement Process**
	Establish a process for selection, approval, and placement of art work.
CF 2e	**Art and Culture Funding**
	Consider dedicated art funding source (e.g., 1% of development cost for art and culture as part of public projects).
CF 2f	**Partnerships – Arts and Culture**
	Partner with artists and cultural organizations (e.g., Cultural Council) to organize arts, festivals, and events, including performing arts. Partner with schools (youth art programs).
CF 2g	**Cultural Events**
	Increase multi-cultural events citywide through partnerships.
CF 2h	**Inventory Cemeteries**
	Inventory the historic cemeteries in the city, and work with ownership to ensure on-going maintenance while increasing awareness about them.
Goal CF 3	**Destination sites**
CF 3a	**Coordinated Transit for National Wildlife Refuge**
	Work with the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the National Wildlife Refuge to implement the planned transit shuttle connecting Stapleton to the National Wildlife Refuge visitor center.
CF 3b	**Restaurant Diversity**
	Increase diversity of restaurants and stores to help draw people to the city. (See Chapter 5, Economic Development.)
CF 3c	**Feasibility Study for Convention Center**
	Explore feasibility of convention center, performing arts center, and other facilities.
CF 3d	**LDC Amendments**
	Modify appropriate zoning districts, to allow and encourage hotels.

Chapter 15—Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Strategies

Goal/Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal EC 1	**Sustainability Plan**
EC 1a	**Sustainability Plan/Climate Action Plan**
	Develop a Sustainability Plan and/or Climate Action Plan (with incentives, targets for reduction, strategies, and regulations).
EC 1b	**Municipal Code Audit/Amendments**
	Perform an audit of the Municipal Code, including LDC and engineering standards to determine barriers to sustainability, and amend accordingly.
EC 1c	**Prioritize Indicators – Score Cards**
	Prioritize and adapt indicators for a *Community Score Card* and *Project Review Score Card* and begin monitoring program.
EC 1d	**Regional Collaboration**
	Collaborate regionally to share information and avoid duplicative efforts on Sustainability Planning.
Goal EC 2	**Improved energy efficiency/renewable energy use**
EC 2a	**Energy Conservation Awareness Program**
	Programs to promote energy conservation awareness (coordination with local utility providers and in-state programs to reduce energy consumption).
EC 2b	**Point System – New Building Energy Conservation**
	Provide an incentive, or point system, for new buildings.
EC 2c	**Transportation Demand Management**
	Support Transportation Demand Management, encouraging public and private businesses to implement employee use of carpooling programs, public transportation, and/or alternatives to motorized transportation.

Goal/ Strategies	Related Goal/Strategies
Goal EC 3	**Greenhouse gas emissions reduced**
	(See strategies for Goals 1 and 2, above.)
Goal EC 4	**Water conservation and protection of water resources**
EC 4a	Water Quality
	South Adams County Water and Sanitation District provides water quality testing and ensures safety and quality of drinking water.
EC 4b	Low-Impact Stormwater Standards
	Develop standards for low-impact development stormwater practices. (See Public Facilities and Infrastructure strategies.)
Goal EC 5	**Solid waste disposal reduced**
EC 5a	Municipal Solid Waste Reduction Plan
	Develop a municipal solid waste reduction plan and revisit existing landfills and their function.
EC 5b	Recycling
	Promote city recycling program (city facilities and events), and possibly yard waste composting.
Goal EC 6	**Air pollutants/activities reduced**
EC 6a	Tree Preservation Standards
	Expand tree preservation standards that exist in LDC.
EC 6b	Street Tree Planting and Maintenance
	Promote street tree planting and maintenance program.
EC 6c	Regional Air Quality Planning
	Cooperate with local and regional agencies to develop an effective approach to regional air-quality planning, management, and pollution prevention. Solicit and consider comments from agencies on proposed projects that affect air quality.
Goal EC 7	**Noise impacts limited**
EC 7a	Residential Buffering
	Require buffers between industrial and residential, and between residential and the airport. (See Future Land Use Plan.)
EC 7b	Residential Noise Mitigation
	Require residential noise mitigation for all residential development east of E-470.
Goal EC 8	**Future development near hazards reduced**
EC 8a	Building Codes
	Administer building codes related to abandoned structures and hazardous materials.
EC 8b	Standards for Sand and Gravel
	Develop standards for sand and gravel mining operations.
EC 8c	Flammable Gas Overlay District
	Develop a flammable gas overlay district to protect against methane gas buildup in structures.
EC 8d	Protect Groundwater
	As warranted, work with responsible entities and agencies to evaluate potential groundwater pollution from historic activities or current practices. Ensure remediation is required.

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Executive Summary

Introduction

C3 Vision Plan is Comprehensive

Planning for the future allows Commerce City to anticipate future needs—to be better prepared than perhaps in the past—to address a growing population, position the community for new jobs and retail, improve the quality of neighborhoods and commercial areas, conserve resources, and provide a quality community for a lifetime.

This *C3 Vision Plan* is the comprehensive plan for the City of Commerce City. In accordance with Colorado Statutes, the *C3 Vision Plan* is an advisory document that sets the policy foundation for the city's decision-making process and regulatory framework. It anticipates long-term future needs (for the year 2035 and beyond), but it also addresses immediate needs. It is designed to guide the growth and development of the city and recommend programs for services and infrastructure. It also establishes a policy framework to help evaluate choices, guide decisions on development proposals, and consider plan amendments.

The Plan lays the foundation for the city to become a more sustainable community—building on and enhancing its diverse economic, cultural, and natural resource assets.

C3 Vision Plan Builds on Previous Plans

This *C3 Vision Plan* builds on the city's previous comprehensive and consolidates sub-area plans (i.e., the 1985 *City Wide Comprehensive Plan*, the *New Lands Plan*, and the *Irondale Comprehensive Plan*).

This *C3 Vision Plan* is community-driven, meaning that residents, property owners, and stakeholders helped shape it. The Plan had the most public participation and outreach of any plan ever produced within Commerce City. Some of the methods and activities are described on pages 10 through 11.

Planning ensures all Commerce City residents enjoy a high quality of life by helping to address the needs of children and seniors in the community.

The 12 Plan Elements

The Plan's Parts

The Plan is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 2, the C3 Community Vision**, contains the vision and guiding principles, and introduces the concept of sustainability.
- **Chapter 3, Future Land Use Plan**, describes land use in Commerce City, the citywide Future Land Use Plan (purpose, big ideas, and map), the land use categories, and centers.

Chapters 4 to 15 are the Plan's Elements. Each chapter relates to the vision and has goals and policies, implementation strategies, and plan monitoring indicators.

- **Chapter 4, Land Use and Growth**, contains the land use and growth goals and policies to phase growth in an orderly manner, and ensures the desired land use patterns citywide. It also contains detailed descriptions of the five strategic planning areas and their focus areas.
- **Chapter 5, Economic Development**, addresses economic development, employment, and commercial goals.
- **Chapter 6, Fiscal Stability**, focuses on efficient investments, revenue-producing land uses, and balancing revenues and costs.
- **Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhoods**, concentrates on retaining existing housing stock, mix of housing, and neighborhoods.
- **Chapter 8, Redevelopment and Reinvestment**, addresses infill, renewal, and targeted redevelopment areas.
- **Chapter 9, Transportation**, provides an abbreviated *Transportation Plan*, addressing roadways, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, transit, and the connected network.
- **Chapter 10, Safety and Wellness**, attends to police and fire services, physical activity, and access to health care facilities and healthy foods.
- **Chapter 11, Parks, Open Space, and Recreation**, focuses on needs for current and future generations related to these topics.
- **Chapter 12, Public Facilities and Infrastructure**, addresses coordinating utilities and infrastructure with growth.   It also addresses education.
- **Chapter 13, Appearance and Design**, focuses on gateways, commercial and residential design, views, and public gathering spaces.
- **Chapter 14, Cultural Facilities and Tourism**, addresses the city's assets, history, arts, culture, and destination sites.
- **Chapter 15, Environmental Conservation and Stewardship**, discusses sustainability, energy, emissions, waste management, water, air, noise, and hazardous areas.
- **Chapter 16** contains the actions required to implement the Plan, Plan monitoring, and Plan amendment procedures.

The C3 Community Vision...

The C3 Community Vision sets the stage for the *C3 Vision Plan* and affirms the community's strengths, desires, and ability to become a more sustainable city. It links all of the topics of the Plan together as the overarching set of ideals to guide the city into its future. The Community Vision is carried through by the Guiding Principles linked through the 12 Plan Elements.

C3 Vision Statement:

Commerce City will have a robust economy, drawing on its strength as a business-friendly city. It will have a quality natural and built environment with great neighborhoods, parks, and places in which to live, work, and play safely. The community will celebrate its culture and history, and promote conservation and stewardship of resources for present and future generations.
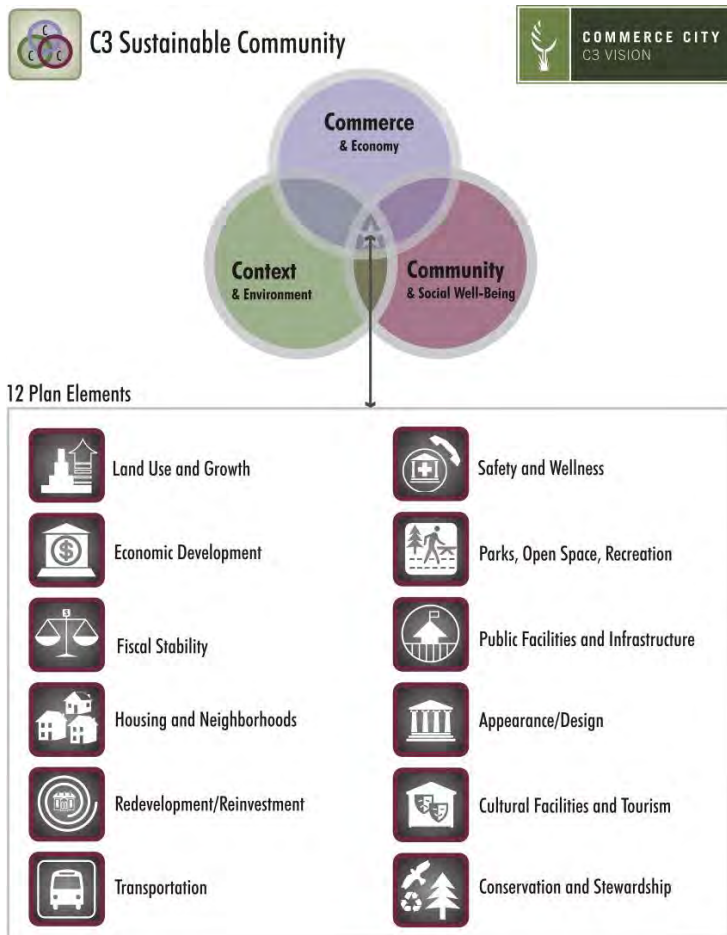
The Three Cs of Sustainability and the 12 Plan Elements

How does the Plan define Sustainable Community?

A sustainable community is one in which the economic, social, and environmental systems provide a productive, healthy, meaningful life for its residents, as well as affording the opportunity for prosperity. In the long-term, it means meeting the needs of the present, without limiting future opportunities, and addressing:

✓ Commerce and Economy

✓ Context and Environment

✓ Community and Social Well-Being

This concept is further described on pages14 through 16.

Guiding Principles

The following set of Guiding Principles further supports and reinforces the vision, and sets the stage for each of the Plan Elements in Chapters 4 through 15.

1 LAND USE AND GROWTH

Grow Commerce City in a balanced and compact pattern of neighborhoods and commerce centers, where residents have access to employment, services, and shopping. Promote infill and phase new growth to avoid inefficient and costly leapfrog development.

2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Maintain a strong employment base; help create a jobs/housing balance; define appropriate locations for a range of industry and businesses (including green businesses); and be a home for major corporations.

3 FISCAL STABILITY

Continue as a fiscally stable city by fortifying revenues, while efficiently maintaining and providing services and infrastructure.

4 HOUSING/ NEIGHBORHOODS

Provide multiple types of housing serving a range of current and future residents and incomes in vibrant neighborhoods where people want to live.

5 REDEVELOPMENT/ REINVESTMENT

Promote new centers, while maintaining the integrity of existing districts by continually renewing and reinvesting.

6 TRANSPORTATION

Ensure a quality community by providing efficient, effective, and varied modes of transportation that integrate and connect neighborhoods, the community, and the region.

7 SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Increase the health and well-being of residents through healthy living, access to medical facilities, and public safety and hazard planning.

8 PARKS, OPEN SPACE/ RECREATION

Provide ample and well-distributed parks and recreation facilities, and a connected system of trails and open space, to provide for outdoor recreation, relaxation, and rejuvenation and to protect views.

9 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Ensure adequate and efficient public facilities and infrastructure for current and future residents and businesses.

10 APPEARANCE AND DESIGN

Enhance the positive image of the city at all gateways, along corridors, and in neighborhoods and commercial districts.

11 CULTURAL/ TOURISM

Become a destination for tourism and visitors, drawing people and businesses to arts, history, culture, sports, commerce, and other attractions.

12 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION/ STEWARDSHIP

Increase recycling, conservation, and the use of renewable energy sources, while reducing energy and resource use overall.

The Future Land Use Plan

Future Land Use Plan Purpose

The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) guides all future development (infill, redevelopment, or greenfields) in Commerce City, including those areas yet to be annexed into the city. Some existing uses may not be expressly noted but will remain (e.g., mobile home parks). The FLUP provides flexibility to respond to unforeseen opportunities, without having to amend the entire Plan.

Future Land Use Plan Big Ideas

The Future Land Use chapter supports the vision and goals and policies throughout the *C3 Vision Plan*. It mainly promotes the following ideas:
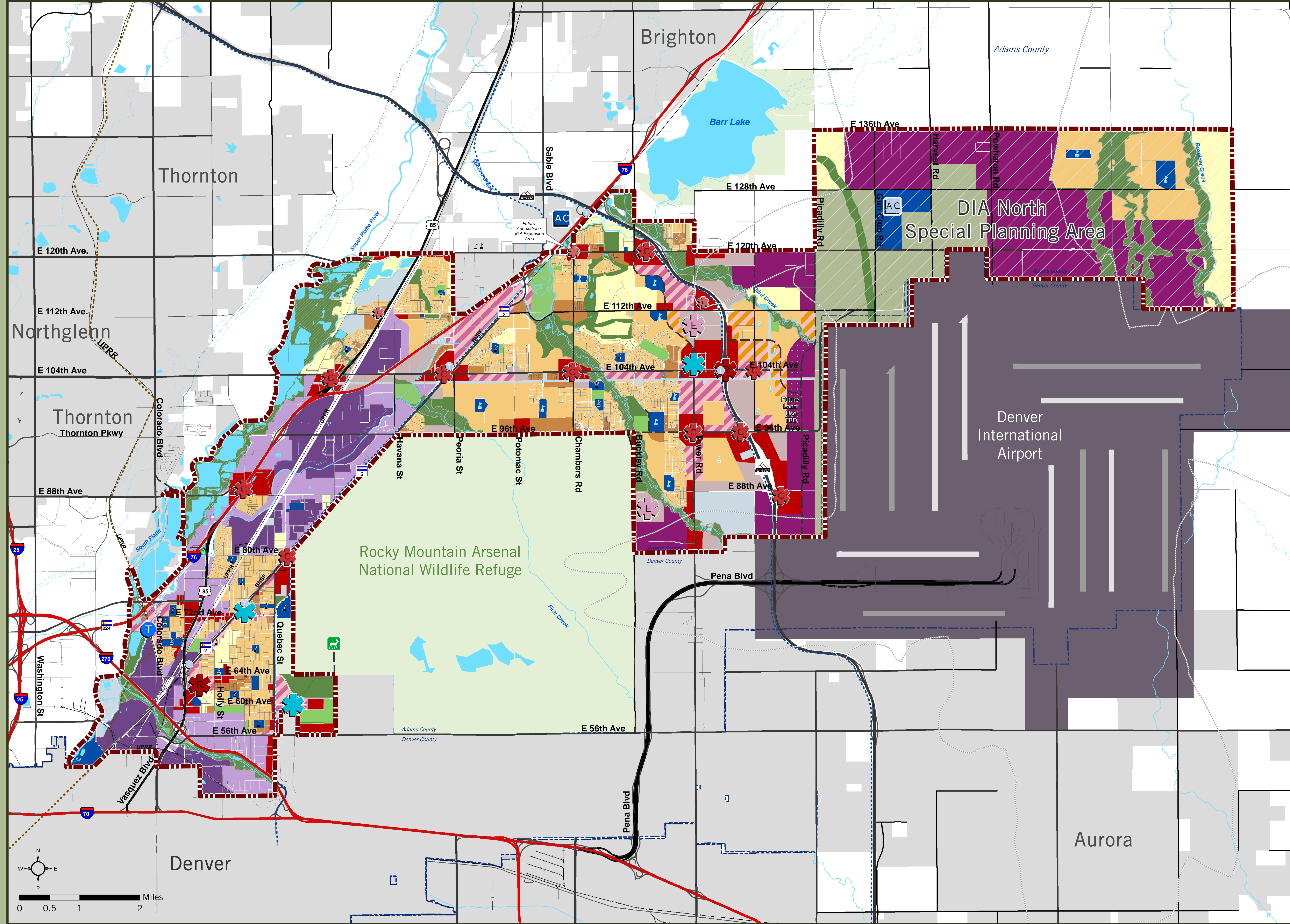
1. **Maintain a balanced mix of land uses** overall (i.e., residential, employment, and commercial uses) to maintain the city's high quality of life, economic prosperity, and fiscal stability.
2. **Design new neighborhoods** so that they are compact, accessible to pedestrians, and transit-supportive.
3. **Establish centers** as the primary locations for jobs, retail uses, and civic activity. (Note: The Plan describes commercial and employment centers beginning on page 38.)
4. **Retain lands for industry** so the city will continue to have jobs and a fiscally-balanced future. The Plan designates a variety of employment and industrial uses throughout the city.
5. **Coordinate land use and transportation** to provide efficient and safe mobility and viable options for multiple modes of transportation.
6. **Provide an overall connected recreational system** of parks, trails, and open space to enhance the livability of the community.
7. **Phase growth in an orderly, compact manner** that is coordinated with the availability and funding for infrastructure and community services.

Using the Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan will be a guide for both the city and developers to help shape future neighborhoods, centers, open space, civic uses, and employment areas over the long-term. It designates strategic commercial centers (e.g., regional and community commercial), but also provides flexibility by including criteria for neighborhood or embedded commercial areas. It also allows for a variety of mixed-uses to develop in the Northern Range and along E-470, in accordance with specific detailed master plans, as long as the Plan's objectives are met. Finally, it presents the key redevelopment areas and corridors. For more information, see:

- Land Use Categories addressing Residential Focus, Commercial Focus, Employment Focus, and Other Activities (pages 27 to 31),
- Other map features description (page 32),
- The commercial centers description (page 38).

Future Land Use Plan

Figure 3.2

Brighton

Adams County

Thornton

Barr Lake

E 136th Ave

DIA North Special Planning Area

E 128th Ave

E 120th Ave.

Northglenn

E 112th Ave.

E 112th Ave

E 104th Ave

E 104th Ave

E 104th Ave

Thornton

Thornton Pkwy

E 96th Ave

E 96th Ave

E 96th Ave

E 88th Ave

E 88th Ave

Denver International Airport

E 80th Ave

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge

Pena Blvd

E 72nd Ave.

E 64th Ave

E 60th Ave

E 56th Ave

E 56th Ave

Pena Blvd

Denver

Aurora

Havana St, Peoria St, Potomac St, Chambers Rd, Buckley Rd, Tower Rd, Picadilly Rd, Colorado Blvd, Quebec St, Holly St, Washington St, Vasquez Blvd, Sable Blvd, Harvest Rd, Gun Club Rd, Powhaton Rd

Adams County / Denver County

South Platte River

First Creek

Sand Creek

N W E S

Miles
0 0.5 1 2

Legend

- IGA Growth Boundary
- County Boundary
- Denver International Airport
- DIA Noise Contours - 60 LDN
- Current Runway
- Future Runway
- National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Future Roads
- **T** Planned Transit Station
- Possible Transit Station
- Future Transit Line
- Future Light Rail Line
- **A C** Future Adams County Government Administrative Complex
- **A C** Future Adams County Regional Public Safety Training Center
- Existing School
- Future School Site

Centers

- Activity Center
- **E** Employment Campus / Business Center
- Regional Commercial Center
- Community Commercial Center
- Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use - E-470
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Office / Flex
- DIA Technology
- Industrial / Distribution
- General Industrial
- DIA Reserve
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

COMMERCE CITY C3 VISION

Figure 3.2

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

04/29/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU

Historic City Focus Areas

This Planning Area includes eight Focus Areas:

A. Southern Industrial,
B. Tiffany,
C. Southern Core/Rose Hill,
D. Northern Core/Derby/Tichy,
E. Fairfax/Dupont,
F. Adams City,
G. Clermont, and
H. Prairie Gateway.

Irondale Focus Areas

This Planning Area includes three Focus Areas:

I. Irondale,
J. Industrial Enclave, and
K. South Platte Valley.

Northern Range Focus Areas

This Planning Area includes three Focus Areas:

L. Old Brighton Road/Hazeltine, and
M. Northern Range.

Strategic Planning Areas

The C3 *Vision Plan* addresses Commerce City's physical structure and layout through five Strategic Planning Areas. These five areas include:

1. Historic City,
2. Irondale,
3. Northern Range,
4. E-470 Influence Area, and
5. DIA North.

The Plan includes the five Strategic Planning Areas, because of the expansive size of the city and different needs within each area, and to avoid a "one-size-fits all" approach to planning the city. The vastly diverse city contains it all: older established neighborhoods, heavy industrial areas, new residential neighborhoods, and vacant lands near DIA. The five Strategic Planning Areas are illustrated below and are described on pages 61 through 94 of the Plan.
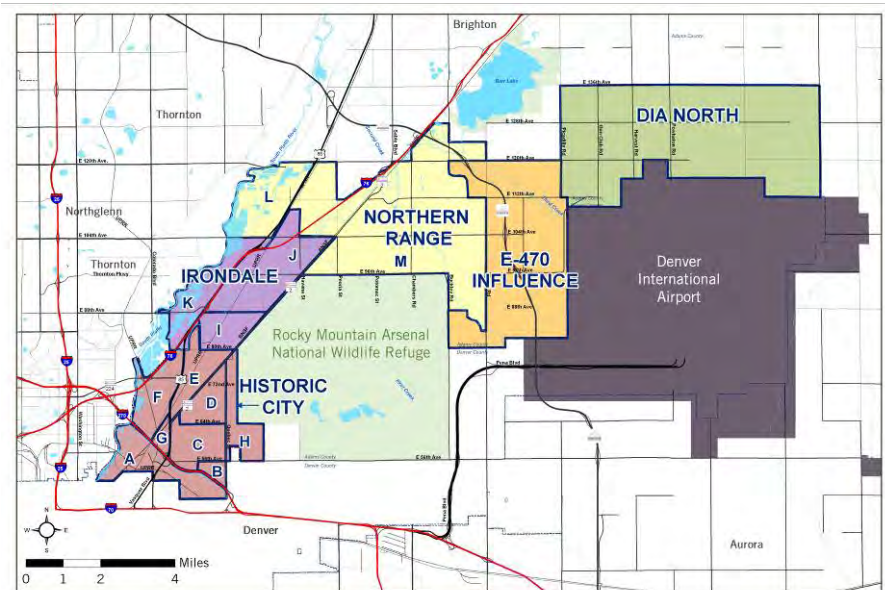
Five Strategic Planning Areas and Focus Areas

Implementation of the Plan

The Mechanisms to Implement

Chapter 16 addresses implementation of the *C3 Vision Plan*. It includes:

1. Specific Actions, identified in a Priority Action Plan,
2. A Monitoring Program, measuring progress towards achievement of plan goals (i.e., the *Community Score Card*), and
3. Plan Amendments and Updates, described as five-year updates and a clear process for more frequent changes.

While the vision plan contains many long-term and seemingly far-reaching goals and ideals, it also needs to be achievable. The city will implement the Plan using several different approaches:

- Through day-to-day policy decisions;
- With Land Development Code (LDC) amendments;
- Through partnerships and intergovernmental agreements;
- By beginning or carrying on programs; and
- With assessment or improvements to infrastructure and services, such as streets, sidewalks, or parks.

The Priority Actions

Pages 208-211 of the Plan identify the following actions to be completed within six years:

Chapter 4: Land Use and Growth

- Update the LDC and zone districts to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) and categories in Chapter 3. Use the FLUP to guide development patterns and mix of uses.
- Provide incentives for infill development and redevelopment (e.g., streamlined review process, rebated or reduced fees, or relaxed standards to allow for infill).
- Develop annexation criteria for Adams County enclaves. Different criteria may be needed for Historic City, Irondale, Northern Range, and E-470.
- Adopt a Tiered Planning System and phasing criteria, as suggested in Policy 2.2. Monitor jobs-to-housing goals in new growth areas.
- Develop neighborhood plans for residential or mixed-use areas in need of more detailed planning (e.g., Adams City/FasTracks station site and Wembley).

The public process helped determine priority actions for the plan.

The Land Use and Growth chapter provides policies related to land use and growth, and describes five strategic planning areas and focus areas within them.

Chapter 5: Economic Development

- Implement strategies of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Develop a strategy to attract and enhance opportunities for higher education and post-secondary educational training programs.

Chapter 6: Fiscal Stability

- Prioritize needs in Capital Improvement Program (aligning with the Plan).
- Leverage city resources to utilize state and federal funding sources and grants (including sustainability-related and healthy communities funding).

Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhoods

- Explore ways to make code enforcement more proactive to ensure property maintenance and prevent further zoning and municipal code violations.
- Work with all housing agencies to ensure that Commerce City residents are aware of, and have access to, the foreclosure prevention and assistance programs administered by Adams County.
- Explore options to assist households with reducing household energy costs (costs associated with energy consumption, transportation, and utilities).
- Pursue federal programs to build senior housing, including affordable housing with supportive services and senior housing for all income levels. Revise the LDC to allow senior housing in districts consistent with Chapter 4.

Chapter 8: Redevelopment and Reinvestment

- Expand application of Urban Renewal Areas (URAs) tools (including financing) to achieve redevelopment goals, including existing URAs (Prairie Gateway, Derby, and US 85), and potential new URAs (e.g., FasTracks area).
- Explore feasibility of a non-profit, quasi-public entity to oversee infill and redevelopment in neighborhoods that could purchase and rehabilitate structures, or consolidate and sell properties.
- Develop FasTracks station sub-area plan. Modify zoning to achieve an appropriate mix of uses (especially for the T.O.D. site), using a blend of regulations, guidelines, and incentives.
- Explore grants, low-interest loans, and redevelopment corporations to address redevelopment goals and to reduce industrial/residential conflicts.

Rehabilitating and maintaining existing housing increases available housing and improves quality of neighborhoods and housing stock.

Chapter 9: Transportation

- Implement improvements to the roadway network based on the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) with priorities as determined by the Transportation Plan.
- Determine potential new sources of funding for transportation improvements (e.g., road impact fees, street fees).
- Coordinate high-priority pedestrian improvement areas with the Transportation Plan CIP. Create a visually-appealing and safe pedestrian experience in prioritized areas.
- Include provision for bus transit priority features along congested transit corridors.

This Plan suggests improving transit access.

Chapter 10: Safety and Wellness

- Use the *Police Strategic Plan* to address needs and response times.
- Explore sharing facilities/sub-stations to serve citizens (e.g., East 103rd Avenue /Walden Fire Station, East 60th Avenue/Monaco Street, and East 112th Avenue and Chambers Road).
- Adopt practices to locate new and redeveloped housing in areas with access to transit. Work to relocate existing bus routes to maximize ridership and access.

Chapter 11: Parks, Open Space and Recreation

- Prioritize implementation recommendations of the *Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities* (2007) including new park development, facilities, and recreation.
- Boost volunteer programs focusing on land restoration and stewardship.

Commerce City surrounds the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge on three sides. The refuge is the largest urban wildlife refuge in the country.

Chapter 12: Public Facilities and Infrastructure

- Annually update the Capital Improvements Plan, considering priorities set forth in the Plan and the annual Action Plan.
- Coordinate with other districts to ensure that adequate schools, power, and other infrastructure can be provided at the time of new development.
- Explore creation of task forces and advisory committees to help further the aims of local government and the Plan.

Reunion fire station.

Commerce City entrance sign.

Chapter 13: Appearance and Design

- Identify gateway and corridor priority areas—south and north city areas.
- Develop overlay districts for gateways and corridors (e.g., E-470, Highway 2) to address corridor improvements, design and appearance, and future development.
- Evaluate and potentially provide small-grant funding for enhancements in commercial districts, small neighborhood improvement projects, and way-finding signage.

Chapter 14: Cultural Facilities and Tourism

- Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan that identifies potential funding sources to increase awareness regarding the city's assets, arts and culture, and tourism.
- Evaluate and prioritize historic resources.

Chapter 15: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship

- Pursue funding; develop a Sustainability Plan and/or Climate Action Plan (with incentives, targets for reduction, strategies, and regulations).
- Perform an audit of the Municipal Code, including LDC and Engineering Standards, to determine barriers to sustainability; amend accordingly.
- Prioritize and adapt indicators for a Community Score Card and Project Review Score Card and begin monitoring program.
- Expand tree preservation standards that exist in the LDC.
- Require buffers between industrial and residential; between residential and the airport; and between housing and high-traffic roadways.

Appendix F—Public Outreach Meeting Summary

Overview

This appendix provides an overview of the public process to prepare the C3 Vision Plan. The city worked with the public, a Citizen Advisory Committee, a Technical Advisory Group, Staff Working Group, the Planning Commission, City Council, mayor, and many other groups. The planning team provided draft materials at each step of the way and worked with the public and committees to prepare the Plan's maps and policies incrementally. This appendix provides a detailed summary of all the events and outreach that occurred during the process, the topics, and the locations.

The C3Vision website provided information throughout the planning effort.

Website

The project website (www.cccvision.com) has been the on-going source of up-to-date information about the project, place to send comments, and polling.

Summary of Events

Public Meetings

Throughout the process, Commerce City held public meetings in multiple locations (north and south) to allow for participation in diverse geographic locations. The planning team also provided materials in Spanish, had translators at the first few meetings, and translated written comments received. Press releases, newspaper articles, and email notifications preceded each meeting. The meeting dates and topics are listed in Table F-1.

Neighborhood outreach at Pioneer Park in August 2009. Over 200 surveys were completed at this event.

February workshop at Second Creek Elementary School.

Table F-1: Public Meeting Event Schedule

#	Date	Location	Topic
1	November 13, 2008	Turnberry Elementary	Kick-Off / Issues
2	November 20, 2008	Hanson Elementary	Kick Off / Issues
3	January 29, 2009	Kearny Middle School	Guiding Principles / Workbook
4	February 4, 2009	Second Creek Elementary	Guiding Principles / Workbook
5	April 15, 2009	Central Elementary	Key Choices
6	April 23, 2009	Thimmig Elementary	Key Choices
7	August 18, 2009	Reunion Rec. Center	Future Land Use Plan
8	August 27, 2009	Derby Resource Center	Future Land Use Plan
9	January 6, 2010	Civic Center	Draft Plan Open House

Table F-2: Other Public Events and Notification

Date	Type/Location	Topic
August 2008	Banner, bookmark, and posters at neighborhood outreach at Civic Center	Awareness of the project; Survey of Issues (on-line and hard copy)
November 2008	Posters at Civic Center	Awareness of the project and website
January 2009	*City Lights* article and press releases	Description of planning effort; notification of January and February workshops
March 2009	Flyer	Preliminary directions and key choices
April 2009	Town Hall handouts and press release	Notification of April workshops and "key choices"
May 2009	Web survey	Questions about key choices on-line
June 11, 2009	Neighborhood Outreach at River Run Park	Poster and survey of Key Choices (240 surveys received)
August 2009	Poster at Civic Center, ads	Notification for August meetings (Future Land Use and plan directions)
August 14 2009	Neighborhood Outreach at Pioneer Park	Poster and survey of Key Choices (206 surveys received)
Fall 2009	Poster	Awareness of Draft Plan
October 2009	*City Lights* article	Awareness of Draft Plan

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) had a role in providing guidance for the Plan, and represented a wide variety of interests and backgrounds. The CAC met approximately every six to eight weeks, beginning in October 2008, through the time of adoption of this Plan. Meetings were open to the public. The meetings and topics are listed in Table F-3.

Table F-3: Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting Schedule

#	Date	Location	Topic
1	October 28, 2008	Civic Center	Kick-Off/Issues
2	January 14, 2009	Civic Center	Photo Vision/Profile
3	February 12, 2009	City Recreation Center	Guiding Principles/Growth Concepts
4	April 1, 2009	Civic Center	Key Choices and Analysis
5	June 18, 2009	Civic Center	Preliminary Future Land Use (with E-470 Analysis) and Policy Framework
6	June 24, 2009	Civic Center	(Joint with Planning Commission and Council) Guiding Principles/Policy Framework
7	July 14, 2009	Civic Center	Special meeting to review Goals and Policies
8	August 6, 2009	Civic Center	Future Land Use Plan and Transportation
9	September 16, 2009	Civic Center	Special meeting to review Future Land Use Maps and categories
10	November 18, 2009	Civic Center	C3 Draft Vision Plan and Implementation Strategies
11	December 15, 2009	Civic Center	C3 Draft Vision Plan
12	January 20, 2010	Civic Center	Public Hearing Process

Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) assisted the planning team with gathering data and reviewing technical aspects of the Plan. This group represented city departments and also agencies that had a role in reviewing projects in the city, overseeing land use and development, managing adjacent land holdings, or providing services. Agencies involved included but were not limited to:

- ✓ Colorado Department of Transportation,
- ✓ Regional Transportation District,
- ✓ Tri-County Health District,
- ✓ Denver International Airport,

- ✓ Denver Regional Council of Governments,
- ✓ Adjacent cities (i.e., Thornton, Brighton, Denver),
- ✓ School Districts (Adams County #14 and Brighton 27J),
- ✓ Adams County (planning and economic development),
- ✓ Fire Districts (South Adams County, Sable/Altura, Brighton Fire, etc.),
- ✓ South Adams County Water and Sanitation District,
- ✓ U.S. Fish & Wildlife (Rocky Mountain Arsenal/National Wildlife Refuge).

Meetings and topics are listed in Table F-4.

Table F-4: Technical Advisory Group Meetings

#	Date	Location	Topic
1	November 6, 2008	Civic Center	Kick-Off/ Issues/ Community Profile
2	January 14, 2009	Civic Center	Community Profile
3	March 9, 2009	Civic Center	Growth Concepts/Key Choices
4	June 2, 2009	Civic Center	Preliminary Land Use/Policy Framework
5	August 6, 2009	Civic Center	Transportation and Future Land Use Plan
6	November 18, 2009	Civic Center	Draft Plan

Staff Working Group (SWG)

The Staff Working Group (SWG), comprised of interdepartmental Commerce City staff and city management, assisted the planning team with providing ideas and reviewing the plan. Meetings, held at the Civic Center, are listed in Table F-5.

Table F-5: Staff Working Group Meetings

#	Date	Topic
1	September 17, 2008	Public Involvement, Issues, and Vision
2	November 6, 2008	Community Profile and Public Meetings
3	January 6, 2009	Update (Public Involvement, Community Profile, Vision)
4	March 3, 2009	Vision and Guiding Principles, Focus Areas
5	June 11, 1009	Preliminary Future Land Use Plan and Draft Policy Framework
6	Summer 2009	Multiple meetings to review individual proposed plan chapters.
7	December 1	C3 Vision Draft Plan review and Implementation Strategies.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission met periodically, occasionally with the City Council, to hear updates, discuss public outreach, and discuss plan direction. Table F-6 identifies dates and topics.

Table F-6: Planning Commission Update Meetings

#	Date	Topic
1	October 4, 2008	Kick Off/Issues
2	January 6, 2008	Profile and Growth Concepts
3	March 3, 2009	Plan Directions and Key Questions
4	May 5, 2009	Areas with Key Choices
5	June 24, 2009	(Joint with CAC and Council) Guiding Principles/Policy Framework
6	September 1, 2009	Preliminary Future Land Use Plan
7	December 1, 2009	Draft C3 Vision Plan and Implementation Strategies

City Council

The City Council also met with the planning team and with the Planning Commission periodically, to hear updates and discuss the planning effort and plan directions. Table F-7 summarizes meetings and topics.

Table F-7: City Council Update Meetings

#	Date	Topic
1	October 13, 2009	Kick Off/Issues
2	January 12, 2009	Profile and Growth Concepts
3	March 9, 2009	Preliminary Plan Directions
4	June 24, 2009	(Joint with CAC and Planning Commission) Guiding Principles/Policy Framework
5	September 14, 2009	Preliminary Future Land Use Plan
6	December 14, 2009	Draft C3 Vision Plan and Implementation Strategies

Focused Events

Finally, the planning team met with special groups in the community to ensure widespread and diverse input. The events are listed in Table F-8.
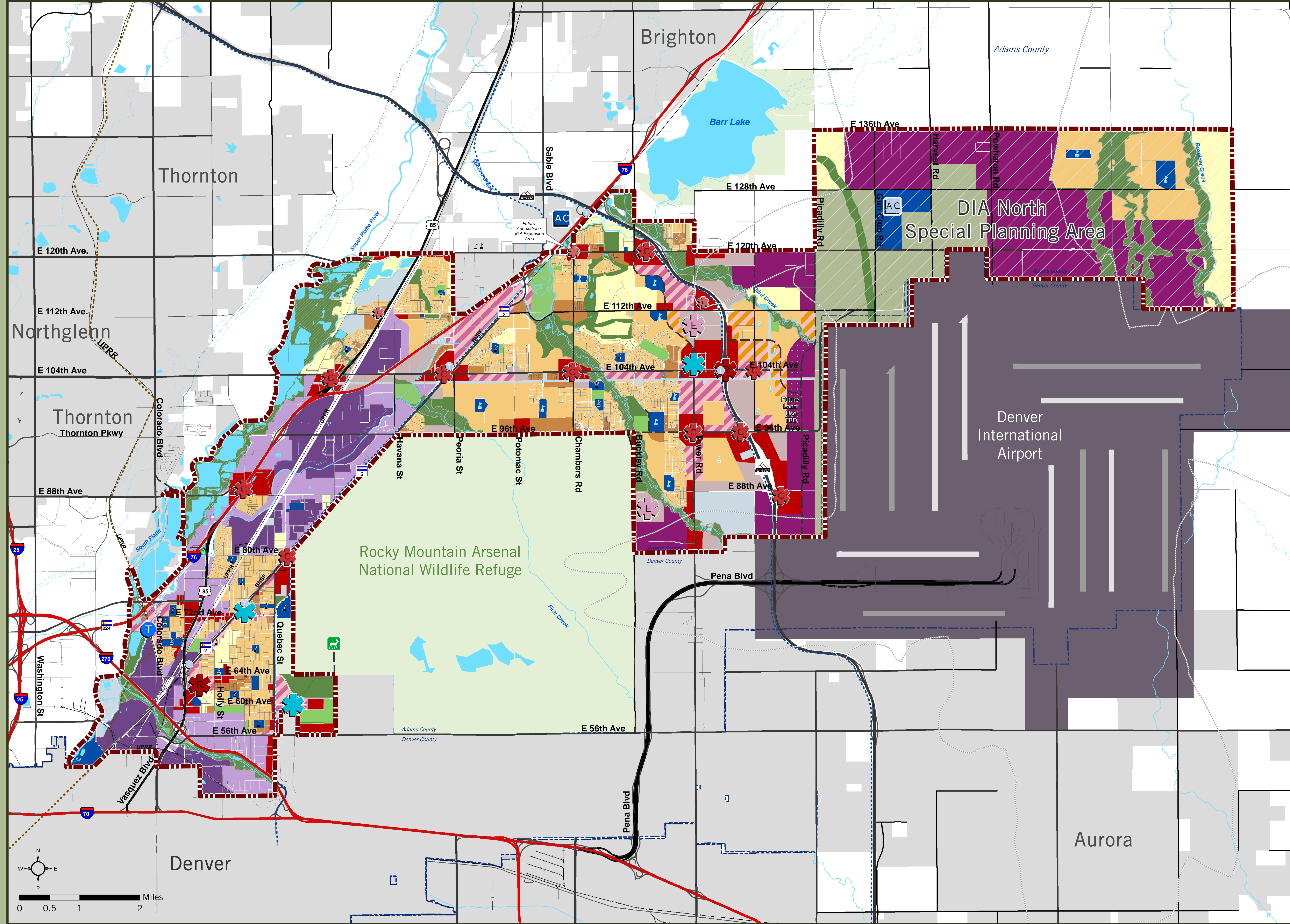
Table F-8: Other Events and Meetings

Date	Group	Location	Topic
August 2008	Individual interview	Civic Center or by Phone	Issues, Project Start-Up
January 7 2009	Live Well Event	Werth Manor	Walkability in Derby Area
March 2009	Neighbors to Neighbors/ Northern Range HOAs	Civic Center	Update and Key Choices
March 2009	CC Business and Professionals Association	Werth Manor	Update and Key Choices
March 2009	Northern Industrial Business Advisory Committee	Off-site business	Update and Key Choices
April 1, 2009	Rotary Club	Werth Manor	Update and Key Choices
June 2009	Housing Authority	Civic Center	Update and Key Choices
June 2009	Special Senior Meeting	Recreation Center	
June 3, 2009	Senior Lunch	Recreation Center	Key Choices, including senior housing and health facilities
July 8, 2009	Developers and Builders	Civic Center	Update on Effort, Guiding Principles and Preliminary Future Land Use
October 5, 2009	Developers and Builders	Civic Center	Update on C3 Draft Plan

Meeting Summary Notes

Meeting notes for the Citizen Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Group, and public meetings are on the following pages.

Future Land Use Plan

Figure 3.2

Brighton

Thornton

Northglenn

Thornton

Thornton Pkwy

Denver

Aurora

Rocky Mountain Arsenal
National Wildlife Refuge

Denver
International
Airport

DIA North
Special Planning Area

Adams County

Barr Lake

COMMERCE CITY
C3 VISION

Legend

- IGA Growth Bounrdary
- County Boundary
- Denver International Airport
- DIA Noise Contours - 60 LDN
- Current Runway
- Future Runway
- National Wildlife Refuge, Barr Lake State Park
- Wildlife Refuge Visitors Center
- 100 Year Floodplain
- Future Roads
- T Planned Transit Station
- Possible Transit Station
- Future Transit Line
- Future Light Rail Line
- AC Future Adams County Government Administrative Complex
- AC Future Adams County Regional Public Safety Training Center
- Existing School
- Future School Site

Centers

- Activity Center
- E Employment Campus / Business Center
- Regional Commercial Center
- Community Commercial Center
- Local Commercial Center

Future Land Use

- Residential - Low
- Residential - Medium
- Residential - High
- Mixed-Use - E-470
- Mixed-Use (Corridor and Commercial)
- Commercial
- Office / Flex
- DIA Technology
- Industrial / Distribution
- General Industrial
- DIA Reserve
- Utility
- Public/State
- Park
- Open Space

Source: Adams County
Tax Assessor, Adams County
GIS, Commerce City GIS,
U.S. Census TIGER files,
Clarion Associates, 2008

04/29/10   CLARION, BBC, FHU