

# Derby Downton District

December 4, 2024



Commerce  
**CITY**



DERBY DISTRICT:  
*REDISCOVERING  
A DESTINATION*

MASTER PLAN  
For the  
REVITALIZATION  
of the  
DERBY SUB-AREA

# Revitalization

Since 2005, the city has implemented several programs to support redevelopment in Derby in order to strengthen the business community with new shops, restaurants and other services while also supporting the growth of existing businesses. A combination of grant funding and private investment has contributed to these efforts.

## Resource Documents:

- [Derby Sub-Area Master Plan](#) (adopted 2007)
- [Derby Planned Unit Development Document](#) (adopted 2007, amended 2009 and 2014)
- [Derby Business District Urban Renewal Plan](#) (adopted 2009)



# Derby Downtown District

The historic [Derby Downtown District](#) is an important part of Commerce City's identity – both past and future. Longtime residents recall its heyday as a bustling activity center during the 1950s and 1960s, while current residents and business owners see its vast potential to once again become an important community hub. Revitalizing the district, re-establishing it as a destination and enhancing its visibility are just some of the goals of the Derby Master Plan as envisioned by the [Commerce City Urban Renewal Authority](#).

## Lighting and Signage Plan

In 2018, the city approved a plan to upgrade both street lighting and signage elements in the Derby Downtown District. Improved lighting will make the district safer and more welcoming, wayfinding signage will help direct visitors to destinations in Derby, and both will contribute to the area's unique identity within Commerce City. The city is currently exploring various funding opportunities in order to implement recommendations in the plan, which will likely take place in phases as funding becomes available.



### GOAL ONE

**Respond to the Needs and Findings of the Community and the City** - as expressed in numerous meetings with business and landowners and the Derby Community in general, and as expressed in the 2006 Community Needs Survey.

### GOAL TWO

**Re-establish Derby as a Destination**, through:

- Elegant and cohesive landscaping, appealing to all the senses
- A friendlier pedestrian environment
- 24/7 activity

### GOAL THREE

**To Give Derby Greater Visibility and Identity:**

- Build on existing strengths of infrastructure and Derby's community
- Entrance icons
- Better definition of edge
- Better definition of core, as the center and focus of Derby, and an event focus for markets, fairs, stages etc.. The existing mature trees, planted with foresight are to be kept
- Consistent and compatible signage, lighting and landscaping

### GOAL FOUR

**Use the 1950s Era as a Unifying Architectural Foundation**, for greater identity, while still encouraging buildings to be an expression of time, user, and function.

### GOAL FIVE

**Revitalize Derby:**

- Re-establish its social, economic, environmental well-being,
- Greater building density
- Increased building heights
- Greater variety of land use
- Stimulation of a greater business market, and variety of uses and users 24/7
- Encourage greater environmental awareness in planning and design.

- Encourage multi-functional use of individual spaces to ensure a variety of uses at different times.

### GOAL SIX

**Become an Environmental Model:**

- Derby is part of an ecological, economic, and cultural system at all scales.
- Derby needs more flow, dynamism, connections, variety, and opportunities for cross-pollination throughout.
- Environmental design will be strongly encouraged to allow long term benefits and economic efficiencies.

### GOAL SEVEN

**Transform Derby into a more Healthy and Multi-Modal Traffic Environment**, while continuing to support the importance of the automobile:

- Elegant and cohesive landscaping, lighting, and way-finding signage
- Wider sidewalks near buildings
- Better pedestrian connections to community assets ( such as Library, Rancho Liborio, Prairie Gateway, Hanson Elementary School and future schools, Community Center, daytime employment, Highway #2 traffic from Northern Range)
- Human scale facades with eyes on the street
- Street furniture
- Places to sit and meet
- Traffic calming
- Planning for public transportation
- Pedestrian and bike friendly environment
- Greater sense of safety and community.

### GOAL EIGHT

**Develop models for change:**

- Construct early phases of revitalization to establish pattern for long-term evolution.

# Catalyst Program (add statistics on program)

The *Commercial Catalyst Program* is designed to encourage business and property owners to update building facades, signage and landscaping within the Derby District.

## Program Eligibility

- The program is open to property owners, business owners and/or tenants

## Eligible Activities

- Exterior painting
- Awnings
- Exterior lighting
- Window replacements and treatments



The City requires all new signage in the Derby Sub-Area to conform to the signage regulations and; that landscaping adhere to the approved landscape regulations and materials within the Derby District PUD and Design Standards.

# City Council Comments

Study Session held July 22, 2024

The following feedback was provided:

- Update the Derby Design Guidelines
- Update the Master Plan
- Move away from the midcentury modern motif
- Host a joint study session with the Derby Review Board (DRB)
- Transform the Derby Diamond intersection into a green gathering space
- Underground utility lines
- Foster entertainment in the sub-area
- Bring back Derby Days and hold farmers market
- Work with business owners to prevent displacement.
- Expand Joe Reilly Park
- Host a joint study session with the Derby Review Board



# Derby Review Board Comments

Study Session held September 17, 2024

Ideas included:

- Update the Derby Master Plan
- Move away from the Derby Design Guidelines, specifically, the midcentury modern design motif.
- Consolidate the Master Plan, Urban Renewal District, and Planned Unit Development boundaries.
- How to restructure the commercial catalyst program
- Explore utilizing funds for interior project to assist businesses
- Create a list of existing businesses in the area
- Create pamphlets to better advertise the commercial catalyst program
- Enhance security through increased lighting
- Maintenance and trash pick-up
- Repave or rethink how the Derby Diamond is utilized
- Host Music at the Park in Derby
- Encourage improvements for ADA accessibility
- The police substation and security presence
- The status of a historic preservation ordinance and district



# Council & DRB Overlap

Major ideas which were consistent between the City Council and DRB comments include:

- Updating the Master Plan and Design Guidelines
- Reconsider the mid-century modern design theme
- Increase the variety of activities, festivals and entertainment options
- Improve the public infrastructure and public spaces
- Increase safety, access and mobility

# Staff Actions & Recommendations

## Current/Short-term [0-6 months]

- Complete business survey
- Complete market study
- Host events & festivals\*\*
- Evaluate opportunities for strategic investments (land acquisition, public improvements)\*\*
- Continue marketing and improvement efforts in cooperation w/business owners\*\*
- Launched Hispanic Heritage Celebration with community partners
- Partnered with Adelante Community Development to use the Small Business Resource Center (SBRC) for entrepreneurship and small business training
- Small Business Needs Assessment Survey
- Partnered with the Police Department to launch the Derby Cop Shop inside the Small Business Resource Center (SBRC)

## Mid-term [6 – 24 months]

- Refresh/update the Derby Sub-area Plan & Design Guidelines
- Construct necessary public infrastructure repair & replacement
- Identify/assist in attracting a diverse mix of businesses and private investment
- Explore a distinct zoning category for Derby in the Updated Land Development Code

## Long-term [24 months +]

- Evaluate and adjust Master Plan elements for effectiveness
- Construct necessary public infrastructure improvements

# Assumptions

- Land development is primarily dependent upon private initiative and private investment.

*The role of government is essentially to provide the framework of policy ground rules and regulations that help guide development in the public interest and to provide and maintain the basic infrastructure and services.*



# Discussion

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