



Comprehensive Plan Update

City Council Date: September 16, 2024

GENERAL INFORMATION

PROJECT NAME	2045 Comprehensive Plan
ORDINANCE	Ordinance No. 2616
PLANNER	Heather Vidlock, AICP, Interim Planning Manager

Ordinance

Ordinance No. 2616 adopts the new Comprehensive Plan with the Planning Commission's recommended changes.

Background:

The City's Comprehensive Plan is a long-range land use plan that determines community goals and objectives in terms of community development. It is a guiding document and sets forth the community's vision for how the City should ideally develop over the next 20-25 years. The Plan includes the City's Growth Boundary and identifies future Annexation Areas. The City's current Comprehensive Plan was adopted by City Council in 2010. The process of updating the City's Comprehensive Plan has been an on-going process since 2020. The City engaged Housel Lavigne an urban planning consultant firm to lead the Comprehensive Plan update project.

Vision Statement:

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

Comprehensive Plan Outline:

The Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan takes a modern approach to master planning the City by utilizing the concept of Character Areas as unique geographic areas rather than more typical land use categories (see attached draft plan). The Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan includes the following elements to create a complete guide for the future of Commerce City:

1. Introduction-Introduces the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan, how the Plan will be used, a review of the planning process and the Plan chapters.
2. Outreach and Engagement-Provides an overview of the community engagement process and key issues identified by the community that is addressed by the Plan.
3. Community Profile-Presents the existing context of the community, including an overview of the planning area, past plans and studies, demographics, existing land use and current zoning.

4. Vision, Core Principles, Goals and Objectives-Presents the Comprehensive Plan's vision and core principles that were used to guide the goals and recommendations of the Plan.
5. Character Areas-Breaks the City into 13 geographic areas based upon the unique attributes of different parts of the City. The Character Areas reflect established land use patterns in some areas and new/planned land uses and development in other areas, to accommodate and guide new growth and development moving forward.
6. Connected Corridors-Includes a focused planning approach for the Quebec Parkway, 72nd Avenue, 104th Avenue, Highway 2, Tower Road, I-270 and US-85 corridors, identifying specific issues, improvements and development opportunities.
7. Commerce and Employment-Includes recommendations for building the City's assets to strengthen the local economy, job opportunities, and quality development.
8. Housing and Neighborhoods-Includes recommendations for guiding new residential growth and revitalizing the City's existing residential areas to support inclusive, thriving and diverse neighborhoods.
9. Community Character-Includes recommendations for strengthening local identity and image; enhancing gateways and placemaking; supporting arts, history and culture; and leveraging community destinations for tourism opportunities.
10. Transportation and Mobility-Includes recommendations for improving multimodal connectivity and safety and increasing mobility through the City.
11. Parks, Open Space, and the Environment-Includes recommendations to enhance the park and trail system and protect and enhance Commerce City's natural assets.
12. Public Facilities and Infrastructure-Includes recommendations for future infrastructure and community facility improvements and fiscal sustainability to ensure current and future residents are adequately served by public facilities and infrastructure.
13. Implementation-Presents how the Plan should be implemented and updated over time, potential funding sources, and an action matrix that identifies the key recommendations contained within the Plan.

Outreach:

Outreach for the City's Comprehensive Plan update has spanned four years, beginning in early 2020 with virtual meetings and Facebook live events during Covid, and continuing through summer 2024 at the City's Summer Shindig events. Guiding the plan's vision and direction for this update, the Citizens Advisory Committee met regularly over the course of three years to ensure this was a citizen led process that incorporated the voices of the community. The Comprehensive Plan update has included technical experts, regional partners, students, the development community, local businesses, appointed and elected officials, and most importantly the residents of this community. Staff representatives have passed out fliers, answered questions, done giveaways, talked to local school students, gathered feedback, presented at regional events, gathered surveys, and posted on social media about this exciting project. The Comprehensive Plan update was presented in the Connected newsletter seventeen times, potentially reaching over twenty-seven thousand households with each mailing. The City's website has also served as an important venue for access to the draft plan and components thereof throughout the process, with over six thousand views. Pop-up engagement events at both recreation centers proved especially productive for engaging residents in meaningful conversations and feedback about the future of Commerce City.

Comprehensive Plan Recommended Changes:

One of the responsibilities of the Planning Commission is to make recommendations to the Comprehensive Plan. The Commissioners reviewed the plan on October 3, 2023 and again at the July 17, 2024 Planning Commission Study Session. On August 6, 2024, the Planning Commission made a recommendation to the City Council for adoption of the Commerce City 2045 Comprehensive Plan with the Commission's suggested revisions outlined below.

Modification of the graphics/maps:

Throughout the document, the graphics/maps would benefit from cross-referencing and complete legends to improve readability and user friendliness.

1. The Connected Corridors section needs to show the existing trails along the South Platte River.
2. Pg. 98/99 Connected Corridors, add 120th Avenue as a connected corridor.
3. Pg. 102, pg. 106, pg. 108 and pg. 109 address gaps between the north and south for trail connections and bike routes, and emphasize connections to light rail. Refer to connection to bike lanes on Hwy. 2.
4. Pg. 173 Active Transportation Framework add missing trails in the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.
5. Pg. 110 show the 72nd intersection connection. Show buffering for bikes/peds along Hwy. 2.
6. Pg. 112 label underpass connections, the 112th Avenue connection needs to be made a priority, note the new trail connection, trails need to be shown as connecting with arrows.
7. Pg. 114 emphasize connection on 104th Avenue west for bikes and peds.
8. Pg. 116 the trail on Tower Rd. does not connect to anything currently.
9. Pg. 154 104th and E-470 should be shown as a gateway.
10. Pg. 175 112th as a multi modal arterial should be shown as a future connection.
11. Pg. 194 Show Riverside cemetery on Parks, Open Space and the Environment map.

Text Changes:

1. Pg. 61, add to Goal 2 Objective 1 to ensure the availability of water and resiliency of the water supply.
2. Pg. 64 add Goal 7 Objective 3 to emphasize the importance of the northern range to provide more retail and service options for residents.
3. Pg. 66 add to Goal 5 Objective 2, code enforcement should be emphasized to upkeep properties.
4. Pg. 66 add to Goal 4 Objective 6, advocate for different housing types to serve all residents.
5. Pg. 67 add to Goal 3 Objective 5, create an arts district in the southern portion of the City.
6. Pg. 69 add Goal 5, Objective 4, improve connection to existing regional trails throughout the City.
7. pg. 72 add Goal 7, Objective 2, ensure adequate water supply prior to development occurring.
8. Pg. 78 A Vision for Commerce City's Places, replace equitable investment efforts with investments in public infrastructure in the southern and northern parts of the City.
9. Pg. 101 Enhanced Rail Crossing add, rail corridors are an impediment to pedestrians.
10. pg. 132 Derby Recommendations add, support an art gallery and creation of an arts district.
11. Pg. 146 Code Enforcement Recommendations, add allow deviation from parking minimums at transit-oriented development.
12. Pg. 147 Neighborhood Reinvestment, change to reinvest in traditionally disinvested neighborhoods to increase the standard of living.

13. Pg. 179 Traffic Management Intersection Control, and pg. 181 East West Connections, add rail crossings cause delays at major intersections of 72nd, 88th, 96th and 104th.
14. Pg. 182 Tower Road, add the Intergovernmental Agreement with Denver and DIA notes the connection of Tower Road to the south.
15. Pg. 200 Preserving Tree Canopy Recommendations, add require trees along the right of way in subdivisions with enough space and soil in streetscape landscape areas to allow trees to flourish.
16. Pg. 201 Public Access to Parks Recommendations, add require preservation of public easements and tracts in PUDs and subdivisions.
17. Pg. 202 Sustainability, add encourage use of bioswales in parking areas at parks and recreation centers.
18. Pg. 214 Water and Wastewater, add ensure the availability of water and resilience of the water supply.
19. Pg. 217 Efficient Strategic Investments Recommendations, add development should pay its own way.
20. Pg. 222 Reference the Plan Regularly, add Planning Commission should be involved in the use of the Plan.

Organization and Structure of the document:

1. Pg. 46, People Experiencing Homelessness by Age graphs, update that data.
2. Pg. 162 top paragraph top right correct "Downstream water treatment plant" is "upstream".
3. Pg. 162 correct "ground water water" typo.
4. Pg. 171 correct street graphic has typo "Bike Lane"
5. Pg. 183 Roadway Widening reference in the Connected Corridors.
6. Pg. 185 Key Connections to the Airport Recommendations first bullet reference in the Connected Corridors.
7. Pg. 199 Recommendations reference in Connected Corridors about prioritizing low income areas for greater trail and sidewalk access.
8. Pg. 230 Restate Core Principles: Welcoming and Equitable City, Safe, Healthy and Livable City, Economically Thriving City, Environmentally Responsible City.

POTENTIAL MOTIONS

1. Approval with Planning Commission's conditions
I move that the City Council concur with the Planning Commission's recommended changes and adopt Ordinance 2616 which includes the following conditions:
 - a. Permit staff to make the Planning Commission changes as identified in the attached Exhibit A to Ordinance 2616.
 - b. Permit staff to make minor corrections to the language and formatting of the document that do not change the meaning or substance of the language or document in order to correct any remaining formatting or grammatical errors that may be identified. All staff identified changes must be reviewed and approved by the City Attorney.
2. Approval with additional or different Council conditions
I move that the City Council find additional or different conditions for revisions to the Comprehensive Plan and adopt Ordinance 2616 with the following conditions for revisions:
Proposed conditions

3. Continuance

I move that the City Council delay adoption of Ordinance 2616 until the Planning Commission, staff and Council changes are made to the document.

4. Denial

I move that the City Council disapprove Ordinance 2616 and not adopt the Comprehensive Plan 2045.