



City Council Communication

AGENDA DATE: July 16, 2026

LEGISTAR ITEM #: Pres 26-416

SUBMITTED BY: Milo Hay, PA I
Office

DEPARTMENT: City Manager's

☐ Ordinance	☐ Resolution	☒ Presentation
☐ Admin Business	☐ Public Hearing	☐ Other

REQUEST

To provide City Council with an overview of the Commerce City Community Gardens project, including the site selection process, community engagement, and the current recommended garden locations.

BACKGROUND

The **ACT Program** is a **\$7.5 million initiative** investing ARPA funds into seven topic areas: Workforce Development, Community Well-Being, Housing Assistance, Infrastructure, Livability Assistance, Food Equity, and Environment. The Community Gardens project is part of the **Environment** category.

The project has completed the design of **two new community gardens**—one in North Commerce City and one in South Commerce City—to advance food equity, environmental health, and neighborhood livability.

A multi-phase project schedule began in **Q4 2024** with consultant selection, followed by kickoff, site evaluations, community engagement, concept development, and final design through **Q3 2026**.

SITE SELECTION PROCESS OVERVIEW

A data driven, community informed process included:

- **Walkshed analysis** to eliminate parcels outside accessible walking ranges.
- **Public transit access scoring** (1–5 scale).

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- **Secondary attributes** scoring based on proximity to key uses such as churches, groceries, civic centers, recreation centers, schools, and stakeholder sites.
- **Population distribution scoring** within ¼ mile of each parcel.

Additional physical site considerations included:

- Adequate space
- Slope
- Sun exposure
- Parking availability
- Restrooms
- Irrigation access

FINAL SITE OPTIONS – NORTH

Sites evaluated:

- Villages East Park
- Fronterra Park
- Bison Ridge Recreation Center
- Turnberry Park

FINAL SITE OPTIONS – SOUTH

Sites evaluated:

- Lester Arnold High School
- SWAP / Hope Center
- Freedom Park

SITE CONCEPT HIGHLIGHTS

Bison Ridge Recreation Center (North)

- Approx. **23,500 sq ft garden area**
- 39 raised beds, 8 accessible beds, 6 fruit trees
- Includes outdoor classroom, produce share box, shed, shade structures, composting areas, and new canopy trees

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Freedom Park (South)

- Approx. **7,100 sq ft garden area**
- 34 raised beds, 7 accessible beds, 9 fruit trees
- Includes pergola, ADA garden beds, compost boxes, informational signage, and transplant ready existing trees

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Multiple community meetings were held for site scoring, evaluation, and voting.
- Community feedback directly shaped the final site recommendations.

JUSTIFICATION

☐ Council Goal	☒ Strategic Plan	☐ Work Plan	☐ Legal
Citation	The Community Gardens project is part of the Environment category of the City's Strategic Plan.		

NEXT STEPS

- Council receives this presentation for informational purposes.
- Staff will continue refining designs, incorporating community input, and preparing implementation steps following the ACT Program funding.