



**DIVERSITY,  
EQUITY, AND  
INCLUSION  
COMMUNITY  
NEEDS  
ASSESSMENT**

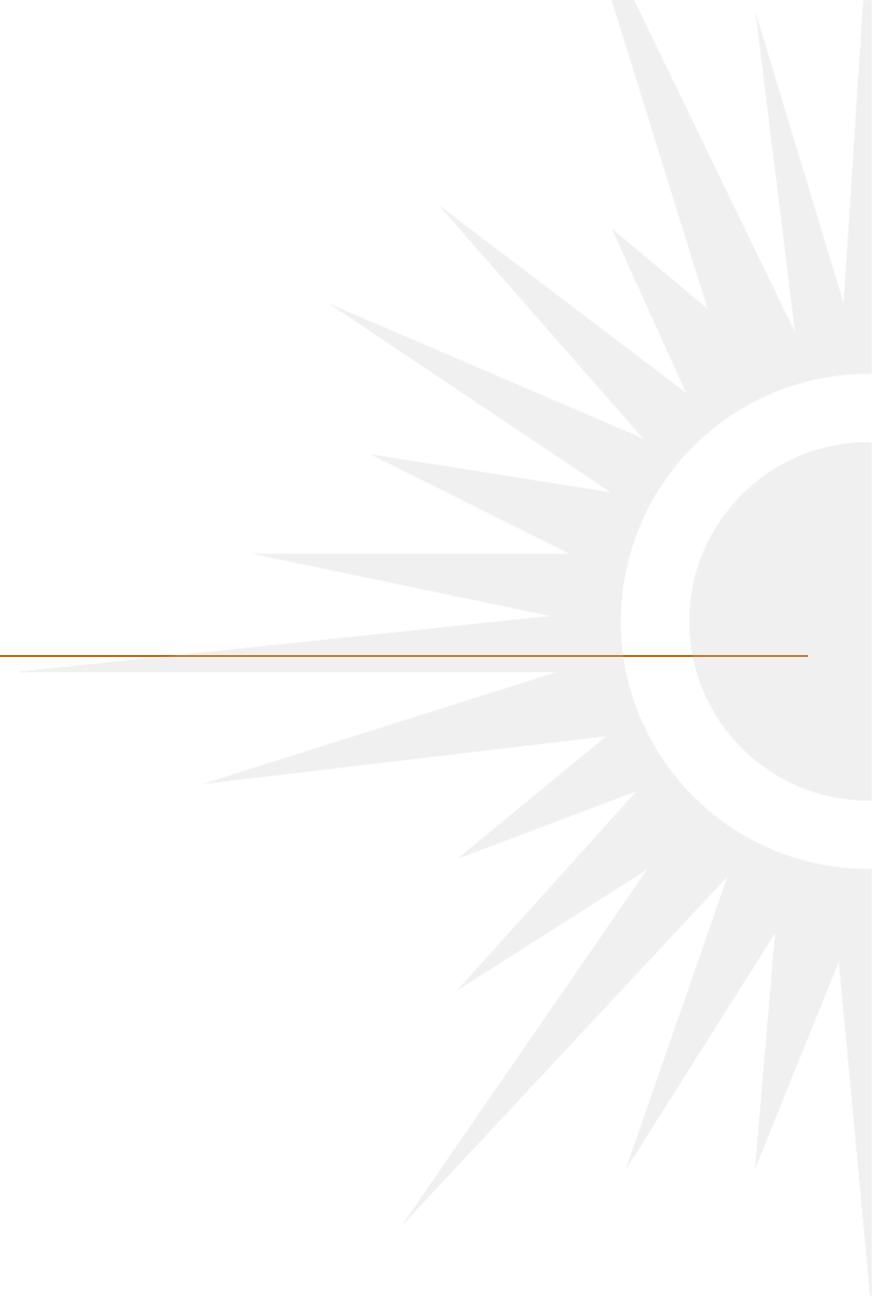


*Prepared by:*



# INTRODUCTION

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Our mission is to illuminate pathways to greater impact for our clients.

**MARKET RESEARCH**

**EVALUATION & LEARNING**

**STRATEGY & FACILITATION**



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## Purpose of this Study

Corona Insights was retained in December 2022 to conduct a diversity, equity, and inclusion needs assessment for Commerce City to help provide input and guidance for the City's DEI Commission. We began the work by forming a needs assessment advisory subcommittee of the Commission and meeting with each City Councilmember to gather their perspective, ensuring that our research process provided plenty of opportunity for participation and feedback.

We arrived at a work plan that contained two research elements to support the work of the DEI Commission:

- > Research focused on illuminating the diversity of the Commerce City community and disparities within the community.
- > Research focused on what the DEI Commission needs in order to expand the impact of the Commission's work.

## Approach





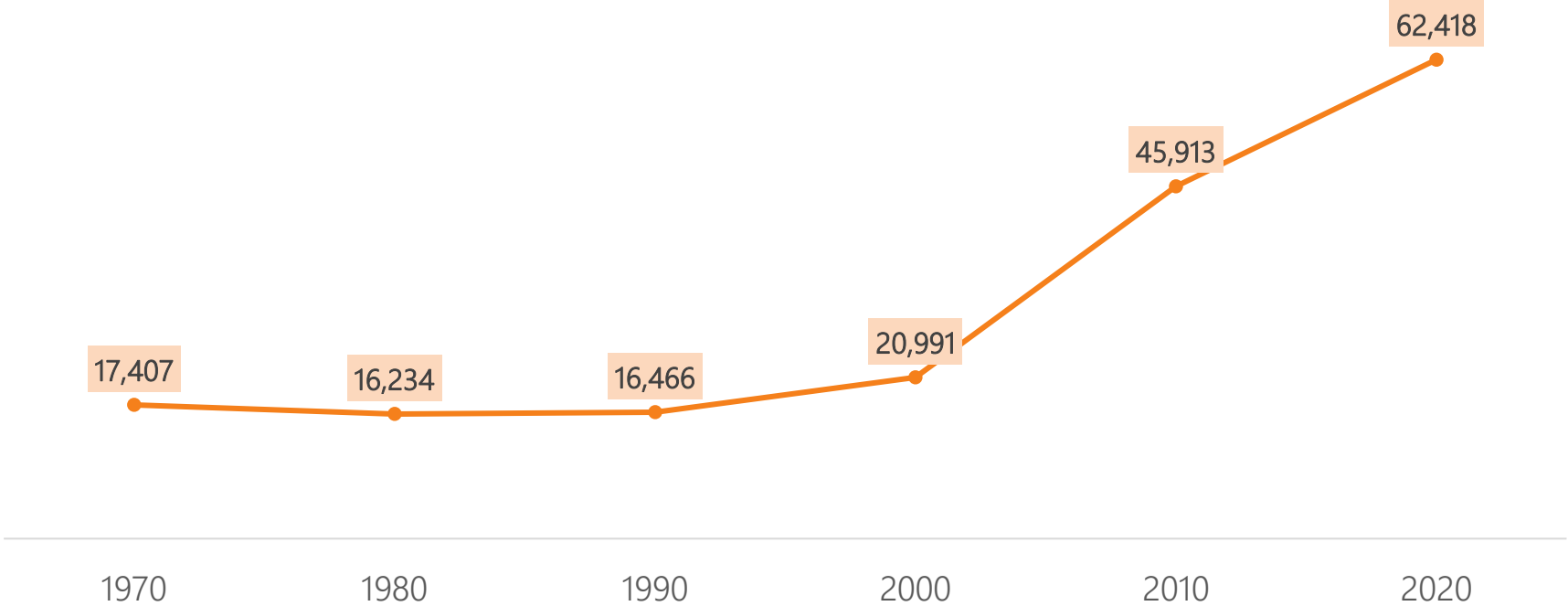
SECTION 1  
**COMMERCE CITY PROFILE**

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How the City has grown  
Where people live  
What disparities exist



# Population Change from 1970 to 2020





A disparity is a particular type of difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage.

Disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles based on characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion.

Characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion

*Racial or ethnic group*

*Socioeconomic status*

*Gender*

*Age*

*Mental health*

*Ability*

*Religion*

*Sexual orientation*

*Where one lives*





Commerce City is a diverse community with people from every race/ethnicity living throughout the city.



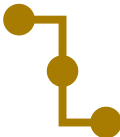
But most residents are either Hispanic or White. Northern Commerce City is predominately White while southern Commerce City is predominately Hispanic.



Economic, health, education, and housing disparities exist by geography. These disparities are notable considering comparison communities are almost always in between the north and south.



These disparities reveal that the residents in southern Commerce City may need very different types of programs and support in order to be well and thrive in the community.



They also illustrate that disparities by race, socioeconomic status, or other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion are likely reflected in geography.

SECTION 2

# COMMERCE CITY DEI COMMISSION NEEDS

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# Purpose of the Commerce City Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission

Serve as a resource for the City government and the community by providing information, education, and communication that facilitates a better understanding and celebrates the differences of residents and businesses. The commission shall assist City staff with planning and operating inclusionary events and activities, as requested, and solicit feedback and information from the community on diversity and inclusion issues.

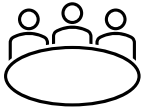
Advise the City Council and City Manager regarding:

- Opportunities to address issues of diversity, promote diversity programs, and provide guidance to create a more equitable, accessible, safe, welcoming, and inclusive government and community;
- Practices for conducting outreach, engaging the public, removing barriers, and increasing access in a diverse community; and
- Events and activities relevant to promoting inclusion in the community.

# Current State of the Commerce City DEI Commission



> Created in 2020



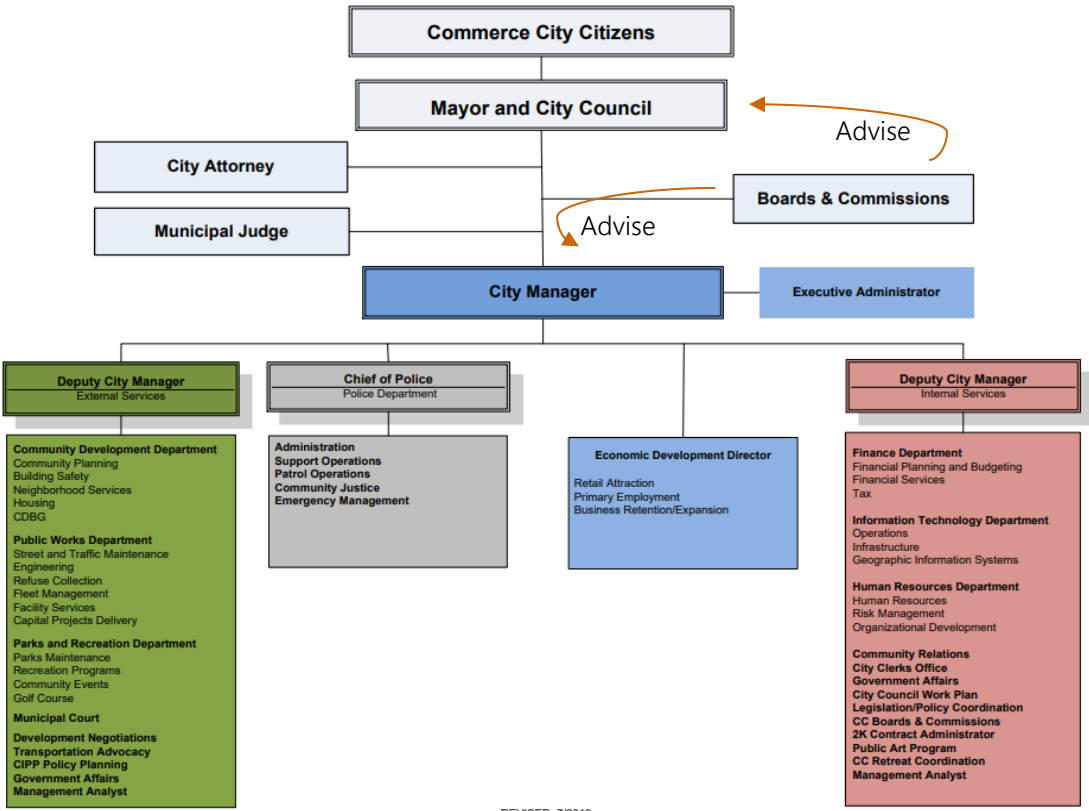
> 13 volunteer members



> Established codified bylaws

*DEI Commission Mission Statement*

*"The commission shall advise the city council and city manager regarding opportunities to address issues of diversity, promote diversity programs and provide guidance to create a more equitable, accessible, safe, welcoming, and inclusive government and community; and practices for conducting outreach, public engagement, removing barriers, and increasing access in a diverse community; events and activities relevant to promoting inclusion in the community."*



Source: [Commerce City website](#)

## Define scope and roles for the Commission

Focus actionable agenda items on how decisions made at the city level impact underrepresented populations in the community.

Avoid overlap with Cultural Council and other Boards and Commissions.

Clearly define roles for DEI Commission members, the Commission chair (as a facilitator, not gate-keeper), the Liaison (as a resource), and the City Council members who sit on the board (being a conduit between the Council and the Commission).

## Collaborate with other Boards & Commissions

The DEI Commission should be able to interact with other Commissions and inform their work. The Commission could write checklists or policy guidelines for other Commissions.

The Liaison should also be empowered to go between various Commission chairs and facilitate greater synergy.

## Advise the City Council & City Manager

The Liaison could use other cities' DEI Commissions as examples for how the DEI Commission should advise and inform decisions in city government.

The DEI Commission should receive update reports from the City Manager on what the city's internal DEI team is spearheading.

# What the Commission Would Like



## Understand Expectations from the City

- Commissioners believe that there needs to be more guidance and support from the city.
- More strategic direction and alignment with the City's priorities from the City is essential for the Commission to fully understand and fulfil its mission.

## Onboarding & Training

- Providing initial and ongoing training on DEI topics and training on how the City works would be one of the most beneficial moves going forward.

## Collaboration with other Boards & Commissions

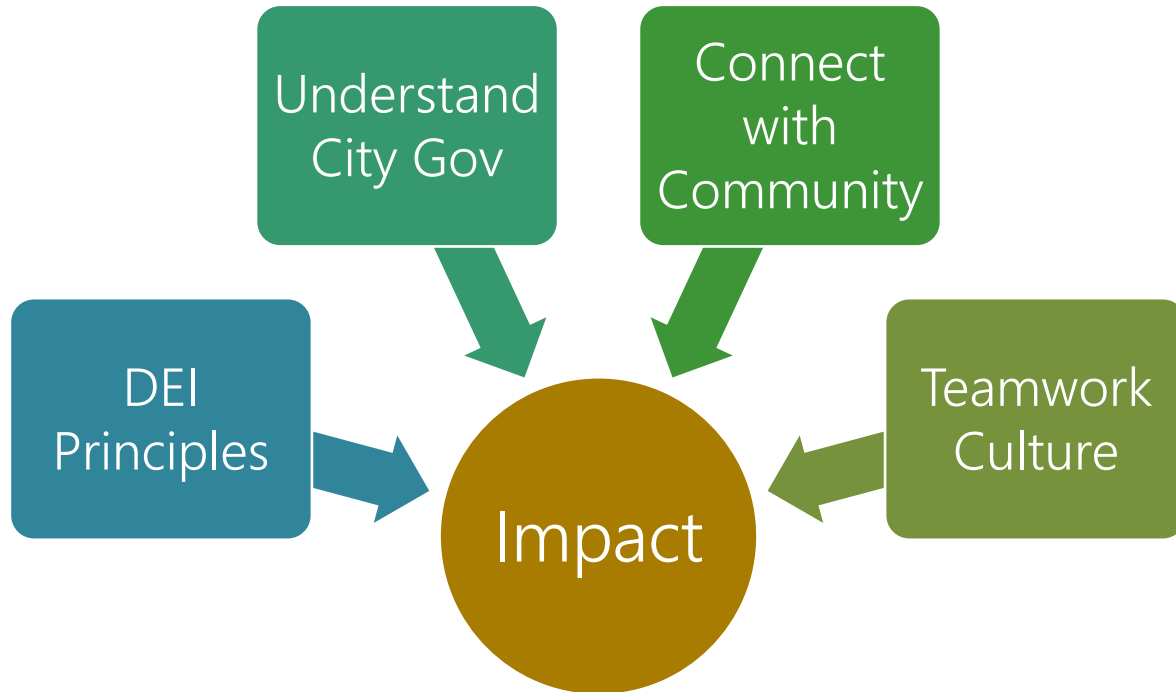
- Commission members would like to have a general overview of all the City's boards and commissions and what they each do.
- The Commission could inform the work of other boards and commissions to expand the diversity, equity, and inclusion of other efforts in the City.

## Coordination with the City Council and City Manager

- Commission members would like a process for getting info about what the City Council, City Manager, and other Boards are working on, within their existing volunteer time commitment.
- Need to leverage the liaison and the Councilmembers on the Commission to bring summary information to the Commission.

## Teambuilding

- Commission members want the Commission to have a shared mission rather than a group with individual agendas.
- There is a desire for clear expectations for attendance and general participation.



Four key themes were identified in the interviews as critical to increasing the impact of the Commission.

1. The Commission members need a deep, and shared, understanding of DEI principles to guide their work and decision making.
2. Commission members need a clear understanding of both the structure and roles in the City government (including other Boards & Commissions), and a process for staying informed of the agenda items before the City Council, and planning efforts of the City Manager.
3. The Commission needs to “keep its finger on the pulse of the community,” and couple an understanding of the community’s characteristics with pathways of open communication with the community, to be able to amplify the voices of those underrepresented when City decisions could impact them.
4. The Commission needs to develop a teamwork culture based on trust and respect for one another, and a shared mission. It cannot be zero sum, forcing competition between identity groups.





Specific and robust DEI training is necessary for a successful board. The training can happen internally or externally, but should be provided by the City Government.



Understanding the relationship between the commission and the city population is crucial to understanding the function of the board.



Cooperation and a general culture of teamwork are important for any DEI commission; board members should see themselves as working together to apply DEI principles to a variety of situations.



Understanding the city's diversity and the specific challenges that different parts of the community face is a dynamic, ongoing process. This understanding will deepen as the board becomes more established and visible.



The City Council would like the Commission to focus actionable agenda items on how decisions made at the city level impact underrepresented populations in the community, and there are many ways to achieve this.

This request came from interviews with City Council Members in 2023.

QUESTIONS?



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