

Commerce City Colorado

February 11–16, 2018



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Implementing Wellness in the Built Environment

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About the Urban Land Institute

THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is a global, member-driven organisation comprising more than 40,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of providing leadership in the responsible use of land and creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions, with members in 80 countries.

The extraordinary impact that ULI makes on land use decision making is based on its members sharing expertise on

a variety of factors affecting the built environment, including urbanization, demographic and population changes, new economic drivers, technology advancements, and environmental concerns.

Peer-to-peer learning is achieved through the knowledge shared by members at thousands of convenings each year that reinforce ULI's position as a global authority on land use and real estate. In 2017 alone, more than 1,900 events were held in about 290 cities around the world.

Drawing on the work of its members, the Institute recognises and shares best practices in urban design and development for the benefit of communities around the globe.

More information is available at uli.org. Follow ULI on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.

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About the Colorado Health Foundation's Healthy Places Initiative

HEALTHY PLACES IS A FOUR-YEAR, \$5.3 million initiative through the Colorado Health Foundation to inspire and support the development of healthy communities in Colorado. Through a community-led approach, Healthy Places helps Colorado communities become healthier by creating opportunities to increase physical activity. The initiative aims to transform the places where we live, work, and play—to make our cities, towns, and neighborhoods safer and more appealing to walking, bicycling, and other daily activities that encourage movement, connection, and fun. The Foundation originally launched the initiative in 2012, in three communities—the Westwood neighborhood of Denver, the suburban city of Arvada, and the rural city of Lamar—with the goal to increase opportunities for safe, physical activities through improvements to the built environment of the community.

The current iteration of Healthy Places is focused on four additional Colorado communities—the South Memorial neighborhood of the city of Greeley, the historic Commerce City, the Montbello neighborhood of Denver, and Southeast

Colorado Springs. Much has changed since 2012. Most significantly, Healthy Places has evolved to better address the Foundation's efforts to advance health equity in all Colorado communities. This reflects not only the Foundation's values, belief, and vision, but more importantly direct feedback from the three prior Healthy Places communities regarding obstacles and challenges their residents face that extend beyond needed physical improvements. Healthy Places supports community-identified solutions to increasing physical activity by targeting health where it matters most, with the individual, and the community in which she lives.

About ULI Advisory Services

THE GOAL OF THE ULI ADVISORY SERVICES program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 600 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consider-

ation, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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The panel would not have been possible without the sponsors and agency partners, including the Colorado Health Foundation, Commerce City, P.U.M.A., and Cultivando, who invited the panel to examine health and equity within historic Commerce City. Special appreciation goes to Traci Ferguson, Carolyn Keith, Caitlin Hasenbalg Long, Tricia Mason, Leigh Ann Noell, and Andrew Pihaly from Commerce City and Erin Mooney at Cultivando for helping

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Thank you to JJ Folsom, Amanda Kannard, and Erin Lyng at P.U.M.A. for developing the briefing materials. Finally, the panel thanks Christopher Smith and Rose Green at the Colorado Health Foundation for their leadership and desire to improve the lives of all Coloradoans. The panel felt welcomed and at home at all times.

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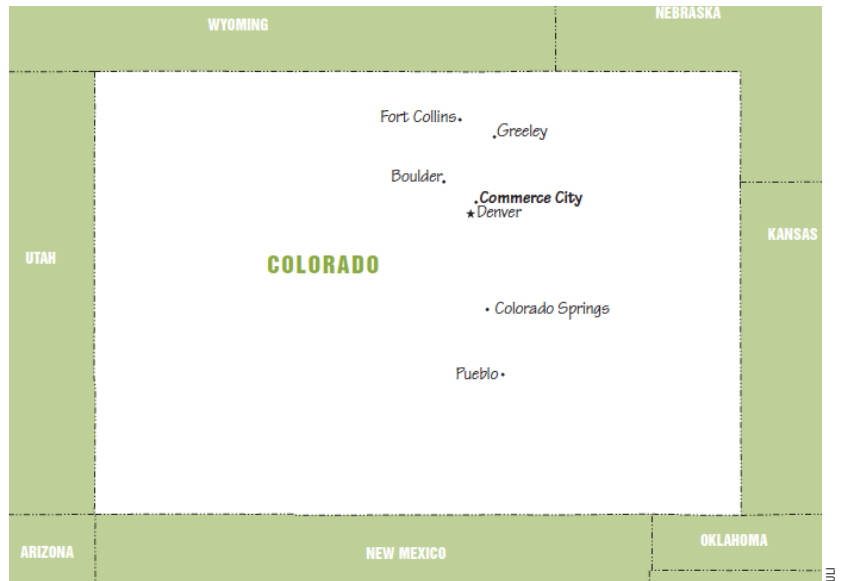
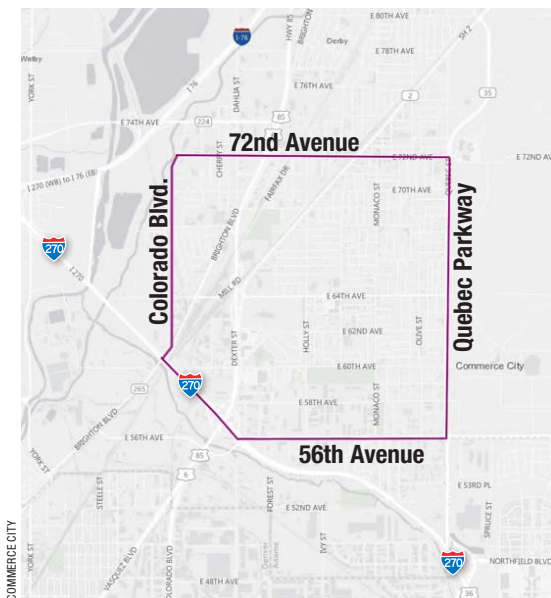
Background and Key Recommendations

COMMERCE CITY, COLORADO (2016 population 54,869), 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 as well as unincorporated Adams County and several wildlife parks (Barr Lake State Park to the north and Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge adjacent to the eastern boundary of the study area). Once a chemical weapons factory, Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge is now one of the largest urban wildlife sanctuaries in the country, covering over 15,000 acres.

The Study Area and the Panel's Assignment

The targeted area that is being studied is located in historic Commerce City, south of 72nd Avenue, east of Colorado Boulevard, west of Quebec Parkway, and north of 56th

Approximate boundaries of the panel's study area.



Location map.



Denver metropolitan region.

Avenue. These study area boundaries are approximate and not strictly defined. This is important since the study area includes unincorporated Adams County enclaves, surrounded by Commerce City, which complicates consistent implementation.

As a whole, Commerce City is 49 percent Latino and one of the most diverse cities in Colorado. The study area is closer to 70 percent Latino, with a very high concentration of low-income, mixed-documentation-status families. According to statistics from the school district that serves this part of the city, Adams County School District 14 (Adams 14), 83 percent of students are Latino, and 84 percent qualify for free or reduced lunches. Moreover, Adams 14 reports that over half the parents in the district have limited English proficiency and that families speak more than 24 languages. The need for equitable access to Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) opportunities in this part of the city is pronounced, with higher than average rates of obesity and food insecurity (and accompanying health problems) and many barriers to accessing HEAL.

To address these concerns, Commerce City asked the panel to consider the following questions:

- What can the Commerce City Healthy Places Coalition do to connect underserved community members with existing facilities and resources? Do solutions exist in the Walk.Bike.Fit plan that community members are excited about?
- What are the existing barriers to HEAL opportunities—real and perceived?
- Can any community safety concerns (real or perceived) be addressed through projects and programming that evolves from the Commerce City Healthy Places Initiative?
- What operational and policy changes should Commerce City consider making to continue efforts to enhance connectivity, access, and safety after the grant cycle has ended?

Key Recommendations

The panel's recommendations are phased for the near, medium, and longer terms with the goal of enhancing social and health equity. The following key recommendations are intended to support one another and ensure Commerce City's future development as a strong, healthy, and equitable community.

- *Use economic development as an anti-displacement strategy by better matching the local population to locally available jobs.* Collaborate with local employers, Adams 14 (e.g., Lester Arnold High School and Adams City High School), and funders to create training programs for local residents through a modern industrial manufacturing strategy to serve the following needs:
 - Enhance the level of housing affordability by raising incomes for current residents;
 - Increase the number of people living and working within the study area; and
 - Drive more intensive use of alternative transportation.
- *Implement "tactical urbanism" to address physical, social, environmental, cultural, institutional, and other barriers.* Tactical urbanism is an inexpensive way to make strategic interventions to test ideas that will make safer and more engaging spaces. Examples include farmers markets, pop-up plazas, festivals, and better street design.
- *Normalize active transportation by making walking safer and more comfortable.* This can be accomplished by better timing and automating crossing signals, improving crosswalk design, and using art to enhance feelings of pedestrian/cyclist safety and place.

- *Strengthen Historic Commerce City's brand and sense of community.* This can be accomplished by taking the following steps:
 - Developing a shared language throughout the community to describe certain features and to foster ownership;
 - Labeling districts with wayfinding signage, as identified in the Walk.Bike.Fit plan; and
 - Responding to rapidly changing community landscape through traditional and nontraditional outlets.
- *Evaluate all development decisions, infrastructure improvements, and program investments, large or small, in terms of how they support or detract from creating a healthy, connected community.*

Market Context and Economic Development

THE POPULATION OF THE STUDY AREA has been increasing at a moderate rate. Since 2000, the area has increased by 2,600 residents, and by 2022 the study area is projected to have more than 20,500 residents. The ethnicity of the study area is shifting toward a higher ratio of people with Hispanic origin. This ratio was 68 percent Hispanic in 2016, 70 percent in 2017, and projected to be 72 percent in 2022.

About 66 percent of commercial development within the study area is industrial based, and about 20,000 people work within the study area. The average industrial building contains about 19,000 square feet. The average office building contains about 13,000 square feet. The average retail facility contains 8,800 square feet.

Household income levels within the study area are below those of Commerce City. In 2017, the median household income for the study area was \$43,802 and average income was \$55,259, compared with median income of \$74,442 and average income of \$83,611 for Commerce City as a whole.

The study area has a higher density than Commerce City as a whole, and density drives consumer demand for goods and services. However, because of some of the physical barriers, location of nearby retail clusters in Northfield and Stapleton, and lower household incomes

A Note on Use of Cultural Terminology

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* refer to persons of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish cultural origin regardless of race. The panel discussed use of these terms, including the fact that many interviewees preferred being called Mexican American because Mexico is the predominant nation of origin for study-area immigrants. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this report, the term *Hispanic* is used when referencing U.S. census data specifically, and *Latino* is used elsewhere in the report because the latter word encapsulates Latin American cultural heritage more than just being of Spanish origin.



Branding in historic Derby retail area.

Commerce City Study Area Population and Households

	2000	2010	2017	2022
Population	17,154	18,442	19,782	20,524
Households	5,474	5,726	6,130	6,359
People of Hispanic origin	n.a.	68.0%	70.2%	72.5%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Esri.

Note: n.a. = not applicable.

Commerce City Market Trends

Space	Inventory (sq ft)	Number of buildings	Vacancy rate	Asking rent	One-year percentage change	Five-year percentage change
Industrial	4,247,224	217	2.4%	\$10.39	2.5%	61.3%
Office	195,252	15	35.8%	\$10.85	-43.7%	-33.9%
Retail	809,881	92	4.9%	\$16.00	6.6%	-10.2%
Multifamily	915,705	40	4.4%	\$1.27	4.9%	28.3%

Source: CoStar.

within the study area, developing significant retail is not a viable solution at this time. More localized neighborhood retail may be viable on a case-by-case basis. Any retail focus should be on improving the businesses within Derby.

In the multifamily sector, the average unit size is 765 square feet, and the study area has 1,197 units. Current retail and office rental rates do not suggest that new development could be feasibly undertaken without public subsidy. This observation was supported by the panel's interview process. In addition, the rental rates and demand characteristics suggest that construction of market-rate, multifamily housing remains of questionable feasibility.

Housing and Development

The median year in which a dwelling was constructed is 1959 in the study area, whereas it is 2001 in the Denver metro area market as a whole. Although income levels and home values are lower in the study area than in the market as a whole, the data suggest the median home is affordable to the median income household at a 3.5 multiplier. On a national level, the multiplier is 3.69, and the Denver

Study Area Housing Market

	2000	2010	2017	2022
Housing units	5,634	6,167	6,423	6,748
Owner occupied	58.9%	46.1%	42.3%	41.8%
Renter occupied	38.3%	46.7%	53.2%	52.4%
Vacant	2.8%	7.2%	4.6%	5.8%
Median value	n.a.	n.a.	\$153,395	\$164,037
Average value	n.a.	n.a.	\$198,702	\$222,395

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Esri.

Note: n.a. = not applicable.

metro area multiplier is 4.5. The data suggest an above-average level of housing affordability. According to Zillow, four homes are listed for sale in the study area whose asking prices range from \$219,000 to \$375,000. Eight properties are in pre-foreclosure. Although affordability is above average, housing affordability is becoming increasingly difficult for portions of the study area population, which was a concern of those the panel interviewed.

For-Sale Housing Affordability Comparison

	Study area	Commerce City	Denver metro	United States
Median household income	\$43,802	\$71,442	\$70,077	\$56,124
Median home value	\$153,395	\$258,623	\$315,661	\$258,344
Multiplier	3.50	3.62	4.50	3.69

Sources: Esri Business Analyst; ULI.

Adams County Area Median Income Limits to Qualify for an Affordable Unit, 2017

Percentage of AMI	Household size				
	1 person	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons
120%	\$70,560	\$80,640	\$90,720	\$100,680	\$108,840
100%	\$58,800	\$67,200	\$75,600	\$83,900	\$90,700
80%	\$47,040	\$53,760	\$60,480	\$67,120	\$72,560
65%	\$38,220	\$43,680	\$49,140	\$54,535	\$58,955
60%	\$35,280	\$40,320	\$45,360	\$50,340	\$54,420
55%	\$32,340	\$36,960	\$41,580	\$46,145	\$49,885
50%	\$29,400	\$33,600	\$37,800	\$41,950	\$45,350
45%	\$26,460	\$30,240	\$34,020	\$37,755	\$40,815
40%	\$23,520	\$26,880	\$30,240	\$33,560	\$36,280
30%	\$17,640	\$20,160	\$22,680	\$25,170	\$27,210

Sources: Colorado Housing and Finance Authority; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

A more in-depth housing market study is needed to better understand the disconnect between real affordability challenges and more abstract fears of gentrification or displacement. This would allow initiatives to be developed (either by the public or nonprofit sectors) that provide individual assistance in those cases where missed rent might mean eviction, displacement occurs because of inability to pay property taxes, or water is turned off due to missed payments.

Housing Affordability

One of the primary means of constructing affordable housing in the United States is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Created by the 1986 tax reform law, the LIHTC is a ten-year tax credit awarded to developers to incentivize the construction of affordable housing. The developer sells the credits to investors who use the tax credit over a ten-year period.

The LIHTC is split into two categories designed to subsidize projects (either new construction or renovated) with or without federal subsidies. As identified by Novogradac & Company's Affordable Housing Resource Center, the 4 percent tax credit generally is used in combination with

volume cap tax-exempt bonds and can be used with additional federal subsidies and for the acquisition cost of existing buildings. The 9 percent tax credit often supports developments without additional federal subsidies. Qualified residential rental projects must meet a minimum set-aside requirement, electing to meet either the 20-50 test or the 40-60 test. The 20-50 test means that 20 percent or more of the units in the project are occupied by tenants whose income is 50 percent or less of the area median income (AMI), whereas the 40-60 test means that 40 percent or more of the units in the project are occupied by tenants whose income is 60 percent or less of the AMI. The 4 and 9 percent credits (and either set-aside election) can be used for both mixed-income (both market- and non-market-rate housing) and fully affordable (only non-market-rate housing) development projects.

According to the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA), the average two-bedroom rent is \$1,098 per month where the maximum 60 percent AMI rent in Adams County is \$1,134 per month (including utilities). Using the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development allowance for tenant-paid utilities for Adams County and assuming the renter in the average apartment pays for

Beyond LIHTC

LIHTC is not the only program that supports the production and preservation of affordable housing. Additional approaches that may work in the study area include:

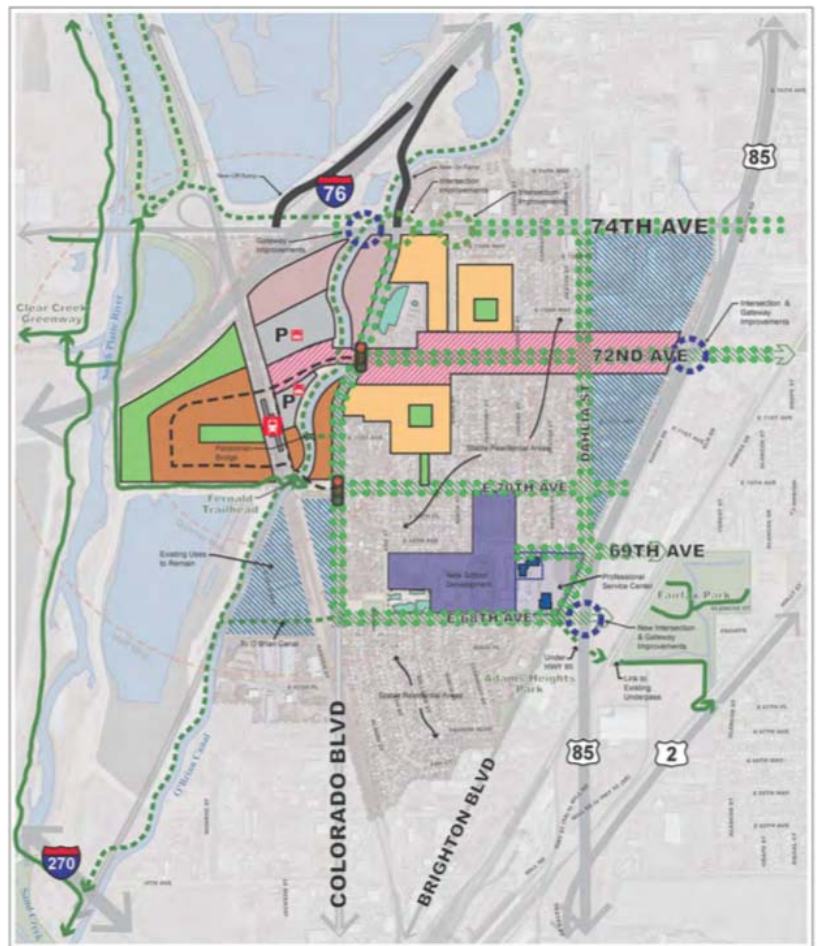
Community Land Trusts

Community land trusts are nonprofit organizations that have the advantage of ensuring low- and moderate-income housing, protecting residents from the effects of economic downturns, and preventing foreclosures, and they promote resident involvement in the community. Land trusts gain control or ownership of parcels through land banking as well as develop properties. This tool is often closely aligned with Community Development Corporations, Community Development Financial Institutions, government-based programs (e.g., Housing Trust fund, Home Investment Partnership Program [HOME], or Community Development Block Grants), and other nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity. Land trusts are also used to preserve open and agricultural lands.

Opportunity Zones

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 established Opportunity Zones to encourage investment into low-income communities by reducing and deferring federal taxes. This program is still being designed and written by the U.S. Treasury Department, but it is expected have an impact. Census tract 89.01 received Opportunity Zone designation. Unfortunately, the primary historic core of Commerce City (census tract 87.09), including the development site at Mile High Greyhound Park, was not designated despite being eligible. Although it remains uncertain whether a second round of Opportunity Zone designations will occur, the panel recommends that Commerce City continue to track developments and assess what steps need to take place to secure a future Opportunity Zone designation for the study area.

Additional programs can be found on the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's website: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/policy-areas/#affordable-housing-development-and-preservation>.



Legend



heat, hot water, power, and cooking, the tenant-paid rent would be \$1,081.

On the basis of average rents, the 60 percent AMI rent appears consistent with the average market rent. The variation suggests that 4 percent credit housing development is, at the current time, not likely feasible. This observation was supported by interviewees active in affordable housing development in the area. Development of affordable

Station Area Master Plan of project buildout, slated to take more than 20 years.

housing using 9 percent credits is possible, but panel interviews suggest that CHFA is not currently supporting the development of senior housing within the market area. In CHFA's opinion, the level of demand is insufficient, given the isolated nature of the market area.

Ultimately, the opportunity to construct affordable housing through the LIHTC program will likely be limited in the near term.

Mile High Greyhound Park Site

Development of the Mile High Greyhound Park site will likely increase the demand for alternative or active transportation modes. The market is experiencing price appreciation, but development of new market-rate housing

is only marginally feasible. Moreover, it will have limited impact on maintaining housing affordability.

Other than the Mile High Greyhound Park site, few sites would allow significant development of new housing. Earlier iterations of the plan called for construction of 104 townhouse units and 216 multifamily units. The 2013 comprehensive market analysis that was conducted for the city suggested a 16 percent feasibility gap associated with this development. The consultant team conducted a series of small group discussions with representatives of local agencies, boards, departments, property owners, developers, community leaders, lenders, business owners, real estate professionals, and other stakeholders familiar with the site. The city has signed a developer's agreement with REGen, a real estate development company, to undertake the project. Reportedly, property developer Delwest will undertake the residential construction phase.

No physical work has been undertaken to date despite the continued growth of the Denver metropolitan region since 2013 and the fact that residential development has been seen as viable and consistent with demand in the northern part of Commerce City. The perceived negative quality of the school district will likely increase the challenges of marketing homes to families.

Paying the Bills

The panel heard throughout the week that many residents of northern Commerce City believe they subsidize the study area. This is likely not the case. The reliance by Commerce City on sales and use tax (industrial and manufacturing) plus a density of fewer than six units per acre outside the study area suggests that development within the study area subsidizes development that is occurring in the north.

Ultimately, low-density suburban residential growth does not pay the bills. Arlington County, Virginia—bordering Washington, D.C.—presents an example of how suburban communities can become more urban and how this creates a more financially sustainable community. Walkable urban places make up only about 11 percent of Arlington County but generate more than 55 percent of the county's tax revenue; whereas the other areas of the county are lower

Ten Principles of Smart Growth

The Smart Growth Network is a network of private, public, and nongovernmental partner organizations seeking to improve development practices in neighborhoods, communities, and regions across the United States. The Urban Land Institute is a member of this network, which established the following ten principles of smart growth:

1. Mix land uses.
2. Take advantage of compact design.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Create walkable neighborhoods.
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
7. Direct development toward existing communities.
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective.
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

Additional information about these principles and smart growth can be found here: <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/our-vision/what-is-smart-growth/>.

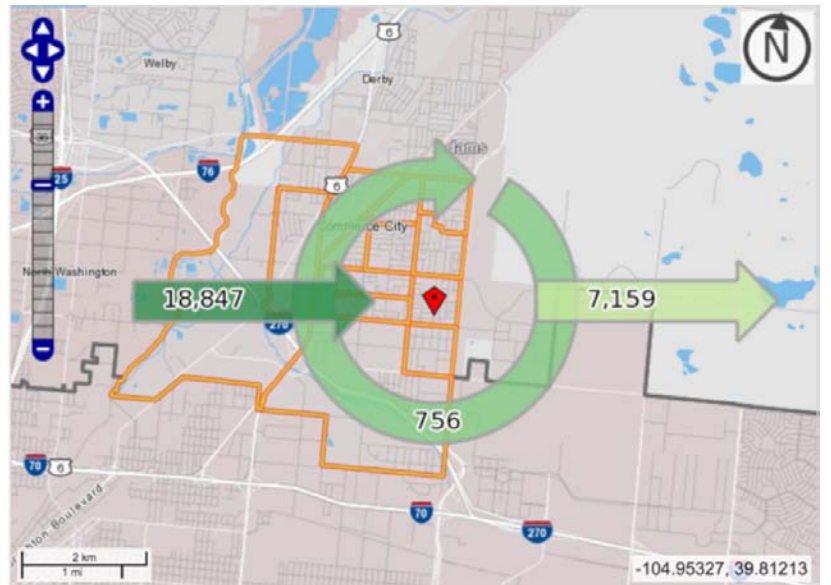
density, more spread out, and auto-centric. Future growth within Commerce City should follow smart growth principles that attempt to curb urban sprawl and worsening environmental conditions. This will not only lead to a more healthy and active community but also be more financially secure.

Using Employment to Stabilize the Existing Population

Currently an industry-focused economic development agenda exists. While developing affordable housing is one strategy to stabilize the existing population base, in the longer term, matching the existing population with better-paying local jobs will help the existing population more fully take advantage of the improving market. Moreover, current market conditions suggest that development of affordable housing would be challenging.

Study Area Employment

Better matching the local population to the locally available jobs would enhance the level of affordability, stabilize the current population base (residents living, working, and spending money within Commerce City), and reduce the



U.S. CENSUS BUREAU'S LONGITUDINAL EMPLOYER-HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS PROGRAM/ULI

commute times. Working with local employers, Adams 14, and the Lester Arnold High School to create training programs for local residents will provide opportunities to stabilize the neighborhood and ensure that current residents benefit from efforts undertaken. The increase in the number

Many of the study area's 7,915 working residents leave the area for work: 2,304 work in Denver, 1,129 work in Commerce City, and 629 work in Aurora. Others come into the study area: 19,603 people work in the study area. The image illustrates the inflow and outflow of these workers.

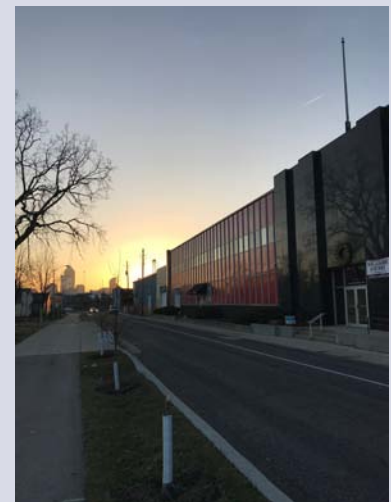
Small-Scale Manufacturing

Commerce City boasts an incredible manufacturing and industrial history. It has benefited from railroads and Interstate 70 and has served as the home base for oil refineries, two grain elevators, other major manufacturing, and freight-hauling businesses. But as innovations in automation, robotics, and advanced manufacturing have transformed the manufacturing sector, plans for industrial land use must also evolve. With over two-thirds of its commercial inventory dedicated to industrial uses as of 2017, Commerce City has a great opportunity to reduce barriers to entry to advanced manufacturing and to promote maker spaces, tech incubators, and other early-stage companies and entrepreneurs that manufacture small-batch, high-value, customized products. In doing so, Commerce City can grow small businesses—the engines of job creation—and strengthen its tax base.

A number of ways exist to ensure that Commerce City residents are able to benefit from these investments.

For example, the city can develop programs like the Portland, Oregon, Development Commission's Startup PDX Challenge. The annual competition is designed to connect entrepreneurs from underrepresented demographics in the tech and manufacturing industries with early-stage growth support and funding. In Indianapolis, the city engaged the help of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to complete a two-year community planning process for revitalizing the Massachusetts Avenue/Brookside Industrial Corridor. The LISC worked with the city to set equity goals along the corridor, such as prioritizing local workforce development partnerships that improved access to better-quality jobs for low-income residents and people of color in neighboring communities.

The Circle City Industrial Complex is part of the Massachusetts Avenue/Brookside Industrial Corridor in Indianapolis.



PAUL ANGELO/ULI

of people living and working within the study area would support additional demand for alternative transportation routes.

Of workers within the study area, 24.1 percent make less than \$15,000 annually and 45.6 percent make between \$15,000 and \$40,000 annually. Nearly 70 percent of the workforce living in the study area makes less than \$40,000 per year. Within the population of workers in the study area, 15.3 percent make less than \$15,000 per year, and 31.4 percent make less than \$40,000 per year (53.3 percent of the workforce working in the study area makes more than \$40,000 per year).

According to the Origin-Destination Employment Statistics of the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics Program, in 2005 about 18.8 percent of the population lived and worked in the study area. By 2014 that figure had declined to 13.5 percent. Although that percentage has since increased to 14.3 percent, room for increased growth appears to exist. Panel interviews revealed that some companies see the need for at least 100 workers, but they face a skills mismatch.

Currently, workers in the 15 to 29 age group are employed at a rate of 15.8 percent in retail, 16.4 percent in food services, and 7.4 percent in manufacturing. Workers in the 30 to 54 age group are employed at a rate of 9.6 percent in retail, 7.5 percent in food service, and 10.7 percent in manufacturing. Given that the bulk of employment in the study area is manufacturing related, this gap presents an opportunity for workforce training. Returning to an 18 percent ratio would increase the number of people living and working in the market area by about 823 people and raise the annual wage in the study area.

Commerce City has several attributes that lend themselves to a local industrial employment strategy targeting small-scale and artisanal manufacturing, and high-tech goods-producing activities. First, the city has a proud industrial heritage as well as significant zoned and built commercial space to house manufacturing. Second, Commerce City's centrality in the region—and soon, within a 15- to 20-minute transit ride to downtown Denver—allows

it to serve as a regional manufacturing center. As more of this type of use is either zoned out or priced out of Denver, Commerce City has an opportunity to grow this type of employment in 21st-century industrial use. This includes developing and fostering maker spaces, computer-assisted manufacturing, artisanal manufacturing, and other small-scale manufacturing.

Maker Spaces

The ability to find employment near one's home greatly reduces the need for automobile travel and increases the likelihood of transit and nonmotorized transportation. Thus, a strategy to bolster residents' employment prospects within the study area addresses the issues of healthy living.

This strategy would involve creating a brand (often a "made in" campaign) for locally produced goods. It would also involve close partnership with local schools, non-profits, and existing businesses. Using a framework from the Pratt Center's *From Making to Manufacturing: A New Model for Economic Development in Cities and Towns*, the panel recommends the following action items:



More detailed information about using urban manufacturing as an economic development tool can be found at <http://prattcenter.net/research/policy-brief-making-manufacturing-new-model-economic-development-cities-and-towns>.

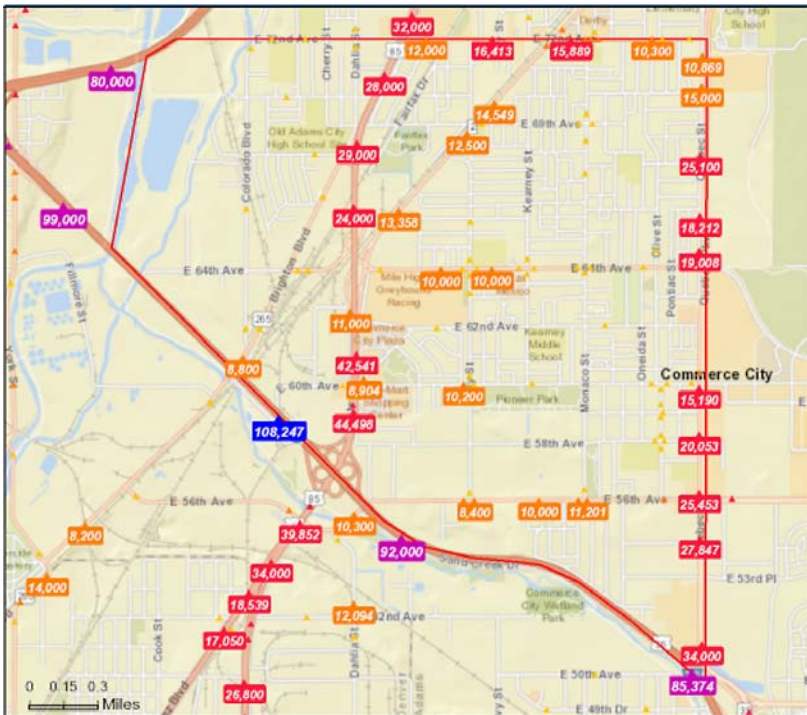
- *Branding*: Develop a local “made in” place-based campaign that highlights Commerce City’s industrial and multiethnic heritage, as well as its position in the Denver region. Such a campaign would stress goods made in Commerce City and promotion throughout the region, nationally, and internationally. This campaign should also lay the foundation for prioritizing a certain segment of manufacturing, such as maker spaces and artisanal goods.
- *Zoning*: Conduct a comprehensive review of current zoning laws and consider zoning reform to permit artisanal manufacturing and small-scale retail sales in residential properties and in certain retail spaces. In addition, consider permitting small-scale retail sale at industrial sites if not presently permitted.
- *Culturally relevant manufacturing*: Foster culturally relevant manufacturing that builds on the area’s proud Mexican American heritage and Commerce City’s increasingly diverse population. Such manufacturing could include small-scale artisanal goods, home goods, food products, and clothing items that local residents have existing skills in creating.
- *Business development*: Create financial incentives for small-scale manufacturing, as defined by size of establishment and annual sales. These may include direct preferential capital financing, property tax abatement, use tax abatement, deferred taxation agreements, and targeting small manufacturing businesses for relocation into the study area. Furthermore, the city could establish opportunities to sell these items through industrial fairs, craft fairs, and the plazas and street fairs that appear in other recommendations in this report.
- *Nonprofit manufacturing*: Enable and support local nonprofit agencies to purchase, lease, and manage manufacturing spaces, and create mission-oriented employment opportunities for the local community, certain types of businesses (women-owned, immigrant-owned, etc.). Provide opportunities for small capital loans such as microfinancing.
- *Partnerships*: Leveraging on the broader campaign, establish formal and regular partnerships with anchor employers, the local school system, and nonprofits. Partnerships with local schools and colleges are especially key for creating workforce training opportunities and apprenticeship programs with these businesses. The city could also partner with nonprofits and the government in Denver, and through the Denver Regional Council of Governments, to establish regional coordination in manufacturing. For example, students in Denver could find apprenticeship opportunities in Commerce City, and nonprofit funds could benefit Denver students and Commerce City residents at the same time.

Transportation and Mobility

TRANSPORTATION IS ESSENTIAL to the economic, physical, and social health of a city as well as a powerful tool to improve health and social equity. Although it is a small city, Commerce City's regional position and industrial base require it to manage high traffic volumes and enhance residents' and workers' ability to move around the city.

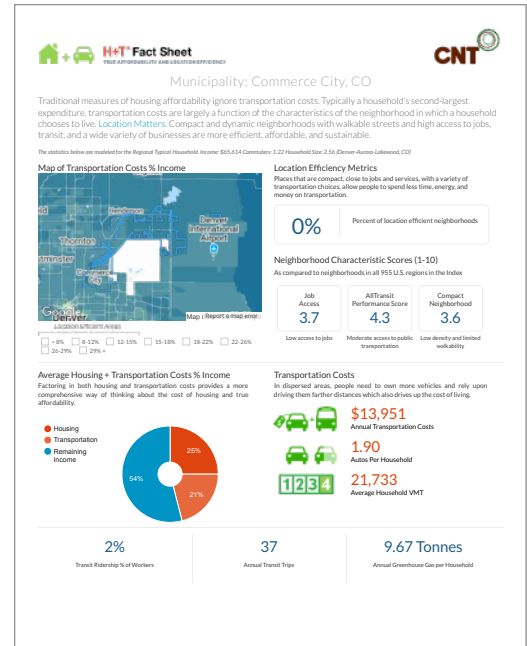
Nationally, transportation is the second-largest cost for most American households. In Commerce City, transportation and housing for most families use 46 percent of household income. According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology's (CNT) Housing + Transportation

Colorado Department of Transportation figures for 2016 indicated an average daily traffic count of 36,000 at the intersection of Route 6/Highway 85 and 72nd Avenue. Of those vehicles, 2,100 were single-unit trucks and 1,100 were combination trucks.



Average daily traffic volume (vehicles per day)

- Up to 6,000 vehicles
- 6,001–15,000
- 15,001–30,000
- 30,001–50,000
- 50,001–100,000
- More than 100,000



Commerce City Housing and Transportation Affordability Index.

calculator, Commerce City families own an average of 2.1 vehicles per household and spend an average of \$13,951 per year on transportation. Taking into account the median household income of the study area (\$43,802, which is 41 percent below the median household income of Commerce City as a whole), the panel can estimate that many families within the study area may be spending even more than the average Commerce City resident (32 percent of household income compared with 21 percent) on transportation.

By making deliberate changes to its transportation system that support HEAL goals, Commerce City can support active transportation into the future as the Denver metro area continues to grow. The traffic counts along the major roadways illustrate the need to make improvements to the infrastructure that support alternative transportation routes to insure the safety of users.

Commerce City can also take advantage of devolution of transportation control from the state and county to the city. This means that Commerce City can work to slow traffic to create safer streets and more multimodal usability. This will also encourage through traffic to stay on Interstates 76, 270, and 25.

Implement the Walk.Bike.Fit Plan

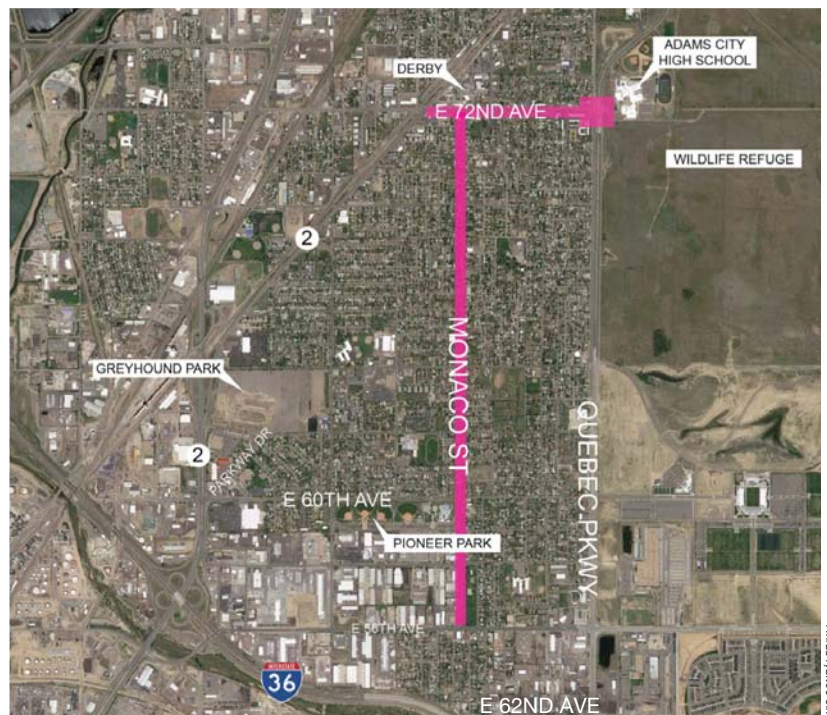
Commerce City developed the Walk.Bike.Fit Commerce City plan in 2012 to encourage a multimodal active transportation plan. This plan was to address the key problems of air pollution and fuel consumption and promote better availability of active transportation opportunities. It was funded by the 2009 federal stimulus program, but little of the plan has been implemented despite the community's desire for safer, more friendly transportation options.

The panel sees implementation of the following recommendations as a near-term win for the study area:

- Make 72nd Avenue improvements to enhance bicycle and pedestrian friendliness toward the high school.
- Extend as far west as possible toward the future transit link building on best practices identified by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) standards.
- Create a bicycle entry to the wildlife refuge next to the school and connect with the current perimeter trail. The longer-term goal is to connect a bicycle/pedestrian route from the new transit stop all the way to the wildlife refuge for those coming from outside Commerce City.
- Provide easy access to Derby and nearby retail establishments to entice commercial spending by nonresidents.
- Consider protected bike lanes and traffic calming.
- Enforce traffic laws and speed limits on both 72nd Avenue and Quebec Parkway.
- Implement road diets and increase pedestrian islands.

- Implement placemaking along the 72nd Avenue corridor close to the high school and strengthen the feedback loop from the community (i.e., electronic survey instrument to solicit feedback from students, staff, and parents).
- Tactical urbanism could also include all appropriate bike and roadway signs proposed in the report (pages 37–39, 102–105, 114–115 of the plan).
- Improve connection to Southside Greenway (Sand Creek) to serve established users along that bike trail.
- Install lighting and water station at Dahlia Trailhead.
- Collaborate with organizations such as Bike Colorado, and leverage city and institutional capacity to market the Greenway and the new Arsenal Refuge Trail.
- Perform placemaking at Dahlia Trailhead to incentivize resting and stopping by Commerce City.
- Enhance wayfinding to and from Greenway (connection to Walmart and future connection with Derby).

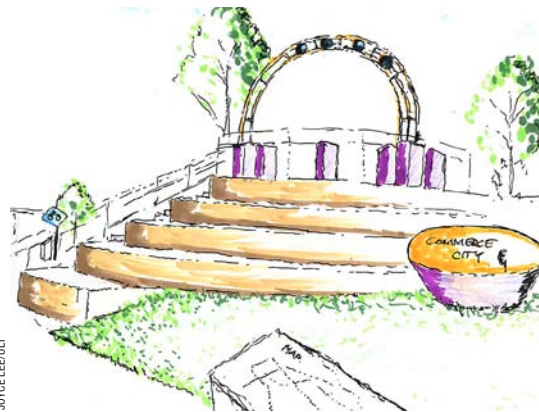
Traffic calming should occur and bicycle lanes be added at the 72nd Avenue and Quebec Parkway intersection, as well as along the length of Monaco Street, 72nd Avenue, and 62nd Avenue.



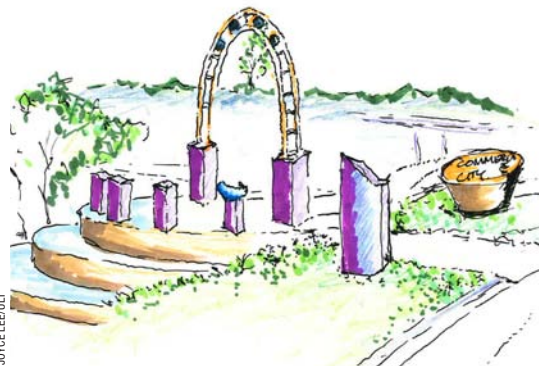
- Prioritize connections between Sand Creek Greenway, Commerce City Wetland Park, and Arsenal Refuge Trail to create a regional draw.

Potential low-cost solutions include the following:

- Ground marking along four-way intersection of 72nd Avenue and Quebec Parkway across from the high school to encourage safe crossing; temporary traffic island;
- Use of recommended Commerce City Bicycle Pedestrian signage in the plan to inform motorists and pedestrians at same crossing to promote safety; and
- Create lighting, pop-up signage, and interpretive material and branded Commerce City signage at Dahlia Trailhead to signal the entrance to Commerce City, creating branding and sense of place.



JOYCE LEE/ULI



JOYCE LEE/ULI

Illustrated perspectives of an improved Dahlia Trailhead. Space could be used for multiple events as well as provide an active transportation gateway to historic Commerce City from the regional trail network.

Identifying Barriers and Creating Connections

The panel learned that Commerce City's transportation and community needs do not necessarily align with the broader Denver regional transportation system managed by the Regional Transportation District (RTD), as illustrated by the threat of closure for the 62 bus (Central Park Station to stadium, then west past commercial center to Walmart area) due to low ridership numbers despite being the primary source for the study area's public transit. In addition, the panel learned that substantial physical, emotional, and psychological connection barriers exist in the study area, such as the east–west connections blocked by a dangerous highway and railroad tracks plus real safety concerns and the poor north–south connections.

Good transportation that enables mobility can enhance social cohesion and community. To the extent that transportation can be inclusive of multiple communities and uses, it can facilitate social interaction, which can lead to better communication and understanding among residents. A well-conceived local public transit system—even a rudimentary one—can signal to residents that the city is invested in overcoming existing barriers.

COMMUTE SATISFACTION

Arlington residents with active commutes are the most satisfied

Satisfaction rates for driving alone have fallen every year since 2009.



A Mobility Lab survey of Arlington County, Virginia, residents about their commute satisfaction. Those who walk, bike, or take the bus have the highest commute satisfaction. The low satisfaction with trains is likely attributable to problems with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's Metro service.



LUIS GONZALEZ/ULI

Crosswalk near Pioneer Park at 60th Avenue and Kearney Street.

Normalize Active Transportation

Community members emphasized their desire for safe pedestrian crossings and other pedestrian-supportive infrastructure. They were interested in bike lanes, and some residents said they would use bike lanes if lanes were available, but crossings and sidewalks were of more interest.

One metric that residents used to describe the width of sidewalks was the ease with which one could push a stroller and simultaneously walk with an older child. Many said that current sidewalks were insufficient for these activities. Additional improved crosswalks are needed in more places, with design deliberately scoped to match the width and speed of the street. Current crosswalks (such as the crosswalk on the north side of Pioneer Park at 60th Avenue and Kearney Street) are an improvement but may not be sufficient.

This community concern has merit. Since 2005, four pedestrian-vehicle incidents resulting in deaths have occurred, according to Smart Growth America's FARS/NHTSA database. Although the numbers are relatively small, these deaths disproportionately affect the Latino community and may have contributed to a sense that pedestrian or bike travel is not safe. Commerce City should take traffic-calming measures to remove some of the fear of walking and biking alongside car and truck traffic. These actions will both improve the appearance of the streetscape and simultaneously improve safety. Additional information is included in this report's section "Physical Design and Placemaking."

Reported Pedestrian/Vehicle Incidents Resulting in Death since 2005

Date	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	Location
October 2007	58	Male	Hispanic	Route 2 at 2nd
November 2009	60	Male	Hispanic	Route 85 at 69th
November 2012	27	Male	White non-Hispanic	Route 2 at 66th
January 2013	47	Male	Hispanic	Brighton at 64th

Sources: Smart Growth America FARS database; National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



JOYCE LEE/ULI

Panelists, ULI staff, and sponsors mimicking a walking school bus, which is a more active way to get to school with adult supervision.

In addition to making the physical space safer, the city can conduct educational campaigns and bike giveaways. Involving the police, which is common in communities across the nation, is a good way to continue to increase trust and communication between citizens and institutions. Another step would be to organize or encourage "walking school buses"—groups of students walking together with adult supervision—to make parents more comfortable about their children walking to school. This could be a good way to involve neighborhood groups and collaboration with Adams District 14.

Pedestrian Bridges

Community members think that bridges are the solution to street-crossing problems. However, a lack of understanding of the pros and cons exists, and the city needs to facilitate more public conversations about crossings. Data indicate that people do not like to go up to cross the street, and use of these facilities may be questionable.

Old school buses could be used to pilot a Commerce City–run public transit system. In Detroit, the Detroit Bus Company paints each of its vehicles with different aerosol art. In Commerce City, a similar program could reflect the diverse community.



Pilot an Internal Public Transportation System

The panel heard that Commerce City is investigating running a limited localized shuttle within the community. Instead of conceiving this shuttle with limited purposes, it could be a broader effort, providing citywide services. The shuttle could initially be developed as a summer pilot with Adams County School District 14 school buses that receives corporate sponsorship from local employers and major retailers such as Walmart as well as philanthropic support. Alternatively, Commerce City could work with churches to use their vans, which often are unused during the week, or negotiate a favorable rate from a commercial provider.

A local, simple, and reliable transportation system would provide a means to cross barriers such as Highways 2 and 85 or the railroad tracks and provide north–south connections. In addition, local transport could provide service within Commerce City to major destinations such as the Derby commercial district, major employment drop-off points, recreation centers, certain schools (assuming facilities are open during the summer), the Boys and Girls Club, Pioneer Park/water park, and recreation centers. In the near term, a few simple routes should be developed with short headways of a 30-minute maximum. The system should be easy to understand, with simple and reliable routes. Consider a free introductory period, with low fares thereafter. (Los Angeles Department of Transportation

Fears of Deportation

To make transportation more accessible to mixed-documentation-status families, make sure that biking and walking infrastructure supports safe behaviors, which reduce the likelihood of undesirable interactions with law enforcement and other systems (e.g., tickets for jaywalking, visits to the emergency room for collisions). Groups such as Cultivando, in close collaboration with immigration lawyers, should work with the Commerce City Police Department to develop norms and procedures regarding law enforcement of bike and pedestrian behavior as well as ensure that the community—particularly those in fear of deportation—understand what is occurring (e.g., Idaho Stop). A locally run public transportation system could become a trusted partner to all residents within the study area, in contrast to the RTD, which has complied with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) requests to enter RTD facilities.

charges 50 cents on its DASH buses, and the District of Columbia Department of Transportation charges \$1 per ride on its Circulator buses.)

Fitting buses or vans with bike racks to encourage multimodal transportation would be ideal. The initial pilot period would help provide data to justify longer-term funding and assistance for expansion from the Federal Transit Administration. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service might be a potential source of funding if access is provided to the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

Make Art Installations Work for the City

Art can be used as way to draw people to places and city facilities they would not otherwise experience. In particular, art could be a focus on the Sand Creek Greenway, tunnel crossings, and within parks. In the age of social media, such installations can create an opportunity to show the character and culture of Commerce City as visitors have a participatory experience and share with their friends.

Art also has the benefit of communicating to others that a place is visited and is the subject of attention. Art—



PAUL ANGELO/70U

A mural along the Metropolitan Branch Trail in Washington, D.C., celebrates the workers who built the Lincoln Memorial.

especially when maintained by being kept in good condition and free of vandalism—communicates that “eyes are on the street” and can provide comfort. A local example to follow is Denver’s Blue Bear (also known as a mandatory selfie stop), or art could be more hidden, a surprise, or participatory. Perhaps art walls could come with chalk or paint so that passersby can add to the art, or passersby could search out and follow a trail (possibly through the Derby commercial district) to pieces of a “hidden” art installation.



VISIT EL PASO/ELICKR

Murals in Lincoln Park underneath Interstate 10 in El Paso, Texas.

Health Equity and Development Decisions

IN ADDITION TO MARKET CONDITIONS, urban development decisions should reflect health equity in their design. The panel learned that Adams County has health challenges that include high obesity rates, poor physical and mental health, and lack of health insurance. The study area is on the low end of health outcomes for the Denver region, which points to an imbalance linked to social and community issues.

Of the 60 counties in Colorado, Adams County ranked 36th in 2017 and 37th in 2016 with respect to health. There is room for improvement. Given its focus on heavy industry and its location for the state's only oil refinery, Commerce City will need to make intentional efforts to strike a health equity balance and implement broad educational steps to catch up with health outcomes in the rest of

Mixed-Documentation Status and Health

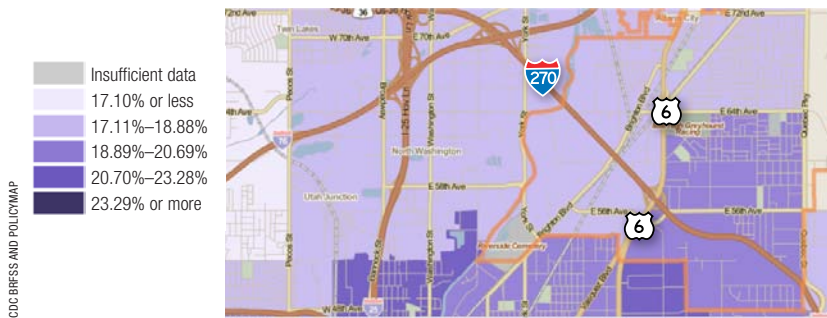
In Colorado, more than 140,000 U.S. citizens live with at least one family member who is undocumented. Between 2010 and 2014, one in 11 children in the state shared their home with at least one undocumented family member, according to the American Immigration Council. With mixed-documentation status, families change their behavior to reduce risks of deportation. Often, they are reticent to take advantage of public resources and are distrustful of state actors and police. Many avoid hospital visits, anxious that they may be asked to provide proof of legal residency.

This fear also discourages parents from seeking services for their children, even if their offspring are U.S. citizens. Many remain close to home, avoiding everyday activities like grocery shopping or going to the park. The fear of deportation creates additional barriers to health resources for an already vulnerable population, further exacerbating preexisting health conditions.

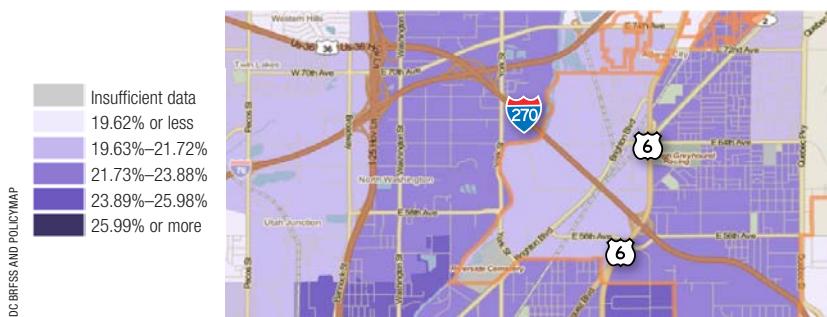
Adams County. And as the city grows, population density will create an impetus for health care entities to invest in providing services in this area.

A more holistic approach to health needs to be incorporated into evaluating community health, which can be done through health benchmarking. The panel recommends that Commerce City join with the Tri-County Health Department in this effort. Benchmarking would be a useful tool to give Commerce City a better understanding of where it stands with respect to the rest of the state and could build from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's work on economic and environmental factors that help determine health.

Percentage of adults reporting seven or more days of poor mental health during a 30-day period.



Percentage of adults reporting seven or more days of poor physical health during a 30-day period.



Relationships between Traffic and Health

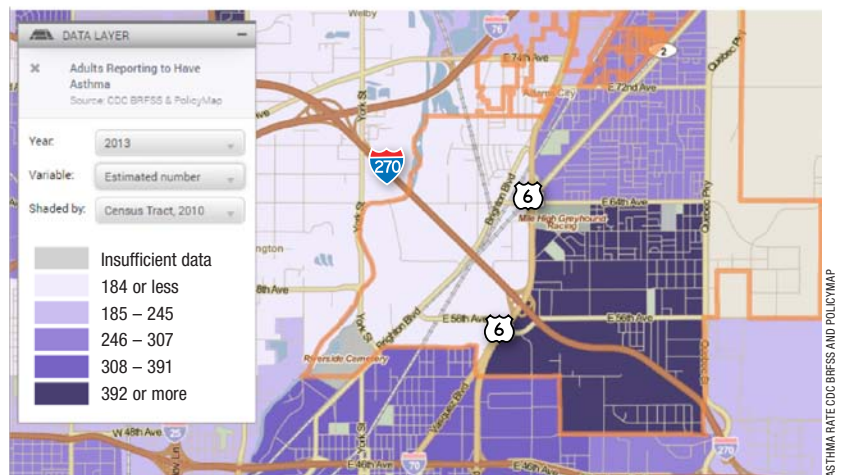
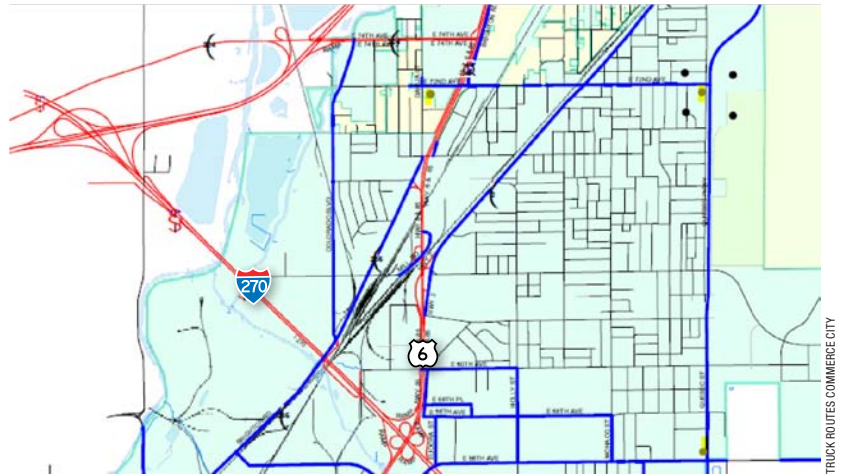
With the industry and trucking focus of Commerce City, specific consideration should be given to the number of trucks passing through Commerce City streets and their emissions. Diesel exhaust and emissions have been linked to multiple health concerns. Residential proximity to heavy traffic has been associated with adverse health effects, including asthma, reduced lung function, cardiac and pulmonary mortality, and adverse birth outcomes.

The panel recommends the city monitor truck traffic and compare data with intended truck routes. Consideration could be given to long-term air monitoring (for example, for carbon monoxide, particulate matter pollution or PM 2.5 and PM 10, and ozone), limiting truck routes, and enforcing prohibitions on truck idling. In addition, some of these adverse effects could be mitigated by planting trees and other vegetation.

Tree canopies in neighborhoods can improve health outcomes and asthma rates. One method to reduce exposure to these harmful air pollutants is to plant trees and other vegetation along roadways. Trees and plants can reduce particle concentrations by acting as a physical barrier between roadways and homes and by filtering particles as they pass through and accumulate on leaf surfaces. In Baltimore, researchers found that trees remove roughly 14 tons of pollution annually, helping reduce the number of asthma attacks by 140 and the cases of labored breathing by 240. Trees also help beautify areas, thereby creating an invitation for recreation and engagement in social interactions.

Effectiveness of vegetation as physical barriers depends on leaf size and density, pollutant type density, height of the vegetation, and location with respect to air flow. In determining the vegetation and appropriate location, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recommends the following:

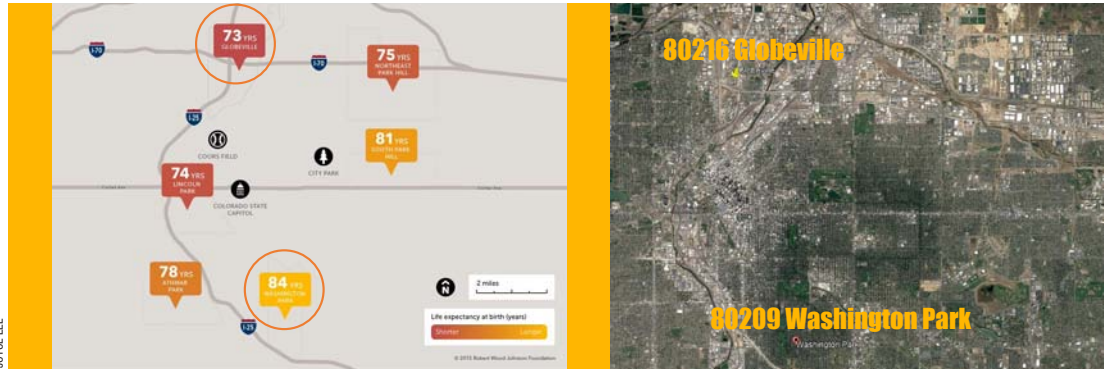
- Planting evergreen species and vegetation with needle-like greenery, which maintain their structure during all seasons;



Higher incidence of asthma correlates with truck routes through Commerce City. Top: truck routes (in dark blue); above: locations where adults have reported having asthma during a 30-day period.

- Planting vegetation that does not emit air pollution or high levels of pollen;
- Planting noninvasive species;
- Locating vegetation close to the pollutant source;
- Considering water requirements of vegetation; and
- Creating a thick vegetation barrier of 20 feet or more with full leaf and branch coverage from the ground to the top of the canopy along the entire length.

The Denver neighborhoods of Globeville and Washington Park have significant differences in life expectancy despite being relatively near each other. Health outcomes are linked to the built environment.



Street view of Globeville, which has a life expectancy of 73 years.



Street view of Washington Park, which has a life expectancy of 84 years.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s i-Tree software provides useful tools for communities beginning the process of choosing appropriate vegetation. Communities should also seek consultation from plant nursery experts, local cooperative extensions, and the U.S. Forest Service, which can help design vegetation barriers in a manner that maximizes their benefits.

The Greyhound Urban Development Site

This is a large-scale development that could significantly change the quality of the area’s housing stock. With the growth of Denver, Commerce City can leverage this opportunity to set higher standards to address sustainability, health, and wellness of the real estate product. The latest

energy and water efficiency standards could be adopted, beyond code standards such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) buildings.

Continued communication in this community is key to future success. Foundation funding could be a likely source to provide an assessment to reach these higher standards, including WELL Community and LEED standards when new development takes place. A charrette, if designed well in advance, could also be an opportunity to build trust among different stakeholders over the daylong or multiday event. The charrette will further benefit Commerce City if the development team designs and plans giving consideration to recent resiliency events, such as forest fires, prolonged drought, and dwindling water rights. These considerations will lessen the stress levels on public works and emergency response departments should such large-scale events occur. The initial charrette or workshop in sustainable development will inform future development such as technical school construction. This engagement could create a body of experts and citizen advisory bodies to guide the design standards or permitting during the review process. Development incentives may be required to enhance the quality of the development and match the community’s and the city’s desires identified by the charrette.

Additional consideration should identify the costs to create open space within the first phase of the project. Designated open space will enable the celebration of public space, which is much needed within Commerce City, plus create value and marketability for the developer. Even without specific designs, an area could be identified by temporary



ULI's Building Healthy Places Initiative highlights 21 tasks to improve the physical activity, food, water, environment, and social health of a community.

material such as all-weather outdoor carpet, movable furniture, seating, and planters. This concept is intended to provide near-term solutions and an opportunity to test how the community uses the space, incorporating the data to inform permanent design. Finally, joint use facilities within walking distance of the site should be planned. They could be multigenerational facilities that include health centers, a library, and recreation that is open to the public.

Brownfields

Commerce City's former Mile High Greyhound Park site is an excellent example of brownfield redevelopment. A brownfield is underused, abandoned, or contaminated land. Brownfields take a variety of forms, from decommissioned factories to former gas stations. They are also common—the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates at least 450,000 brownfields nationwide—and tend to be concentrated in low-income areas and communities of color. Left alone, brownfields pollute air, water, and soil and threaten the health of local communities. With environmental cleanup and redevelopment, however, they can be transformed from eyesores to assets. Numerous examples of former brownfield sites that have been redeveloped include housing, parks, retail, office, and industrial space.

Examples of successful industrial redevelopment in the Denver metro area include the following:

Consult WELL Community Standard

Use the opportunities presented in the International WELL Building Institute's WELL Community Standard in design, operation, and policy for the built environment to create a more holistic approach toward health. The developers and other community stakeholders could be incentivized to help own these wellness features at little cost to the overall urban development projects. Selected features can be further developed, such as an improved lighting master plan, pedestrian-scale design, community wayfinding, physical spaces designed for active living, better access to food, healthy building materials, restorative green and blue spaces, and design to reduce noise levels and improve acoustics.

- A 77-acre former ASARCO smelting plant in Denver that has been redeveloped into Crossroads Commerce Park, 750,000 to 1,000,000 square feet of commercial and office space;
- A 30-acre site formerly used for mineral and chemical processing that has been redeveloped as office space for the city of Denver;
- A 0.59-acre former gas station and bowling alley redeveloped into commercial space in Westminster; and
- A 4.1-acre former brick company redeveloped into lofts in Denver.

Healthy Communities and Conservation

Contaminated with chemicals from previous munitions manufacturing, the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge was once listed as a Superfund National Priorities site. Today, it stands as one of the largest urban refuges in the country, with 15,000 acres of high prairie, wetland, and woodland habitats. For many Commerce City residents, however, it is a yet untapped resource in promoting healthy and active living.

To build Commerce City residents' connectivity with the outdoors and nature and to increase access and use of the refuge, Rocky Mountain Arsenal should embrace the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program's *Standards of Excellence for Urban National Wildlife Refuges*. Developed to assist urban refuges build stewards of the environment, the standards include guideposts such as knowing and relating to community, providing equitable access, building partnerships, and being an asset. Rocky Mountain Arsenal, already recognized as a model of community-centered wildlife conservation through its Regional Priority National Wildlife Refuge designation, has an opportunity to deepen its commitment to engaging communities. In doing so, it can cultivate an engaged and inspired urban conservation constituency and build support for its conservation mission.



Bison at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge.

Communities are seeing the benefits of brownfield redevelopment, and the data are clear: these programs are a nonoptional part of a healthy future. Some key points identified by the EPA's 2011 *Air and Water Quality Impacts of Brownfields Redevelopment* and the Northeast-Midwest Institute's 2008 "The Environmental and Economic Im-

pacts of Brownfields Redevelopment, a Working Draft for Distribution," reports include the following:

- Compared to sprawl, brownfield redevelopment projects lower vehicle-miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions by 32 to 57 percent.
- Brownfields cleanup can increase property values in surrounding areas by up to 5 to 15 percent for properties that are up to three-quarter miles from a remediated site.
- EPA estimates that every one acre of redeveloped brownfield saves 4.5 acres of greenfields—that is 4.5 acres of habitat, forest, or agricultural land.
- Relative to greenfields development, brownfields redevelopment produces an estimated 47 to 62 percent reduction in stormwater runoff.
- Brownfields redevelopment is a powerful investment in our shared future. EPA's brownfields funding has leveraged \$18.29 in funding from other sources for every \$1 of EPA funding. Across eight diverse studies, public investments in brownfield redevelopment are estimated to leverage \$8 in investment for every \$1 of public investment.

Redeveloping a brownfield requires time, funding, creativity, and a local champion. The process can be long and complex, but it generates jobs and tax revenue while cleaning up the environment. Resources are available to help local governments and community groups reclaim these properties and put them to a higher and better use. Through the U.S. EPA, communities such as Commerce City can access the Technical Assistance to Brownfields Communities program, which provides free technical assistance, workshops, webinars, and online tools to help make brownfields redevelopment possible at any step of the process. More information is available from EPA Region 8 offices in Denver, the Center for Creative Land Recycling, and the Center for Hazardous Substance Research at Kansas State University.

Physical Design and Placemaking

AS PART OF THE IMMERSION PROCESS, the panel conducted both formal and informal interviews with community members, city staff, and others that helped the panel better understand the community’s wants and

needs, which do not necessarily align with some of the Commerce City priorities laid out in the Walk.Bike.Fit plan and the HEAL goals. An alignment between the explicit desires of Commerce City and the community needs to occur.

What the Panel Heard from the Community

Issue	Specifics	Further detail
Air pollution	Orange cloud	
	Bad smells	
	Residue	
Drinking water contamination	Taste	
	Residue on dishes	
	Soil contamination	Historical Ongoing issues at schools
Noise pollution	Train horns	
	Trucks	
Dangerous streets	Poor lighting	
	Speeding	
	Difficult road crossings	Intersections Poorly lit tunnels Tunnels placed in isolated locations Increased presence of homelessness
Parks dangerous at night	Lack of lighting or no control over lighting (lights off)	
	Homeless people present	
	Used needles found	
	Lack of or unsecured bathrooms	
Sense of neighborhood neglect	Trash in yards	
	Trash in streets	
No real third place or gathering space		
Perceived lack of inclusion	Some city cultural activities are in English only or not representative of Latino community in Old Commerce City	
	Lack of bike/pedestrian connectivity to Northfield	

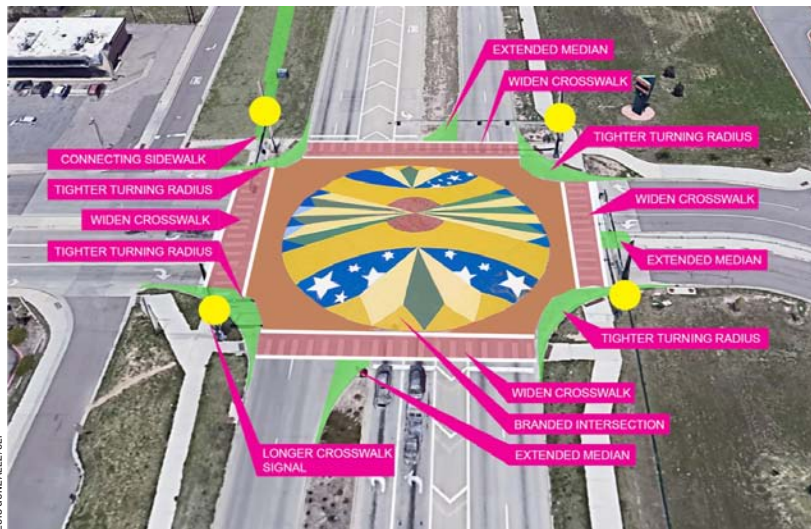
Source: ULI interviews.

The panel has developed temporary and permanent implementation recommendations that may lead to a better alignment of values between the community and Commerce City government. These recommendations use placemaking principles for longer-term solutions and tactical urbanism to test and pilot ideas within the near term.

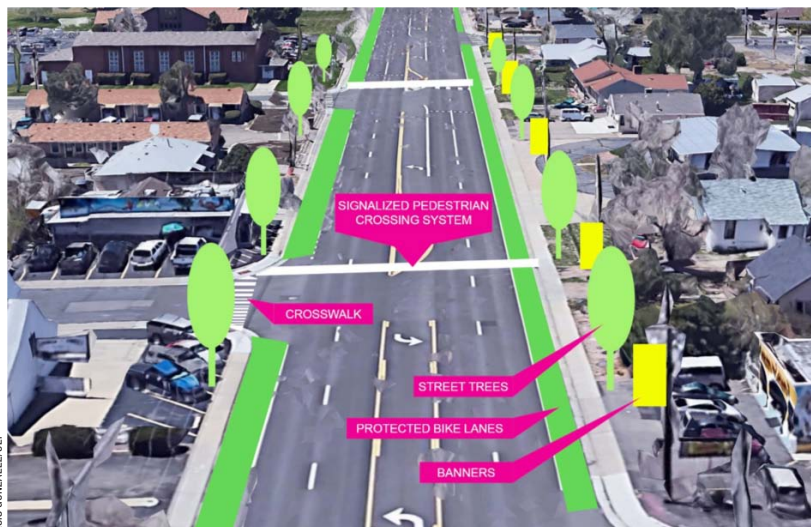
Placemaking

Placemaking is the collective reimagining and reinventing of public space to strengthen the connection between people

An improved street crossing at 72nd Avenue and Quebec Parkway with placemaking/traffic-calming mural.



Improved 72nd Avenue with enhanced streetscape and safer design.



and the places they share. According to the Project for Public Spaces, placemaking uses a multifaceted approach that incorporates planning, design, and management of public space with an emphasis on community-inspired design.

The following recommendations are being made to ensure this empathy for community needs:

- Identify streets to use place-enhanced streetscapes (Quebec Parkway, 60th, 64th, 72nd avenues). Place-specific streetscape is an opportunity to celebrate a neighborhood or inform visitors that they are entering a special place. Entering a special place also subconsciously encourages drivers to slow down.
- Create a safe pedestrian environment by implementing traffic-calming measures.
- Increase community events.
- Install branded and easy-to-understand wayfinding.
- Install street trees and provide properly lit or pedestrian-activated lights at public spaces.
- Install street furniture and bus shelters at strategic locations.
- Maintain a clean appearance by implementing community cleanups for neighborhoods, streets, and streams.
- Diversify existing community programs. An example would be to include music that might be more relatable to the surrounding community for Jazz in the Park/Summer Concert series programming.
- Use public art to create a sense of place. A diversified art panel composed of members from different generations, genders, socioeconomic status, and geographical locations for the public art program is encouraged.
- Curate strategic locations. Curating a space with pots, planters, landscape, hardscape, street furniture, lighting, architecture, and art can identify a special or distinct area.
- Enforce existing traffic, littering, graffiti, and encampment codes, laws, and regulations.



Pop-up protected bike lanes in Washington, D.C.

Tactical Urbanism

Understanding a problem is the first step toward solving it. Tactical urbanism is an inexpensive way to make strategic interventions in the built environment to test ideas that will make safer and more engaging spaces. Commerce City can use tactical urbanism to test and assess ideas and recommendations made by this panel, the community, and the Walk.Bike.Fit plan. Because the interventions are temporary in nature, applications can be installed and removed within hours and relocated to a new location with ease.

Opportunities to apply tactical urbanism include creating a pop-up plaza at Greyhound Racing Park, Pioneer Park, Veteran's Memorial Park/Eagle Pointe Recreation Center, or Derby (72nd Place road closure). Because the city does not currently have a third place, it can use this approach to evaluate where such a place could be located, examine how routes could be made safer, or encourage alternative methods of mobility, and use the opportunity for community building. Potential programming includes a community fair. A community fair can be used to advertise activities, programs, and services available to the community and provide an opportunity for city agencies to interact with the community and address perceptions and distrust.

The following agencies and organizations are encouraged to participate:

- Adams 14;

- Adelante Community Development;
- Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge;
- Bike Colorado;
- Boys and Girls Club;
- Colorado Rapids;
- Cultivando;
- Economic Development (housing opportunities/assistance);
- Economic Development (internships);
- Free clinic;
- Immigration legal services;
- Library;
- Local and regional nonprofits;
- Local food banks;
- Local grocery stores;
- Local trade schools;
- Parks and Recreation; and
- RTD.

Other programming opportunities that can provide a platform for social interaction and community building to consider are as follows:

- *Farmers market* would allow access to fresh and healthy food.
- *Night market* is an opportunity to take back the night through a celebration of food, music, artisan crafts, and community that could help ease community apprehension about the sense of danger currently present at night.
- *Art festival* can be a day or night event that combines food, music, art to promote and celebrate local artists and performers while making art accessible to the community.
- *Food festival* such as "Taste of Commerce City" would allow local restaurants to showcase their menus and

make the community aware of options it might not have known about. It can also help bring in surrounding communities.

- *Bike-to-work day* is an opportunity to encourage the community to bike and celebrate bike culture.
- *September 16th festival* would be an opportunity for persons of Mexican heritage to celebrate their heritage while teaching others about their culture. National Hispanic Heritage Month runs from September 15 to October 15. September 16 is Mexican Independence Day.
- *Food truck festival* is an opportunity for local restaurants and entrepreneurs to activate a festive area.
- *Oktoberfest* is an annual German folk festival that occurs in mid or late September until the first weekend in October that includes tastings of wine and beer as well as games.
- *Job and trades fair* could be used for local businesses, colleges, and trade schools to recruit.
- *Community health fair* is an opportunity for Commerce City to promote Walk.Bike.Fit and HEAL principles and goals by educating the community on nutrition, food banks, community gardening, available health services, and alternative modes of transportation as well as invite mobile clinics to offer services.
- *Community talent show* is a way for both north and south Commerce City neighborhoods to celebrate and share their talents as one community.



Mile High Flea Market.

PAUL ANGELO/ULI

Ciclovía

The first Ciclovía, the Spanish word for “bike path,” was held in Bogotá, Colombia, in 1974. Today, hundreds of cities across the world have embraced the Ciclovía and are temporarily closing off streets to motorized traffic and opening them up for people to walk, bike, and skate. Created as a way to get people to envision and advocate for a built environment in which people are first and livability is prioritized, Ciclovías provide a unique opportunity to bring together people of all ages, incomes, occupations, religions, and races. Because the events are temporary and do not require significant infrastructure investments, this placemaking approach is manageable for communities of varying sizes. Communities interested in hosting Ciclovías should budget funds to cover road closure permitting fees, marketing costs, and expenses associated with traffic management. But these investments are worthwhile.

Health researchers have found that car-free events can provide direct savings in medical costs. The Bogotá Ciclovía, which covers nearly 100 kilometers of street, provides a 3.23 to 4.26 cost-to-benefit ratio, meaning that for every dollar spent, \$3.23 to \$4.26 in direct medical costs were saved by increasing overall fitness rates. In San Francisco, which hosts the Sunday Streets event across 50 kilometers of streets, the cost-to-benefit ratio is 2.32. In planning an equitable Ciclovía, cities should seek to understand negative images of walking and biking in different communities and work with existing community-based organizations that can help develop culturally appropriate design and promotion for the event.



Signage for a Ciclovía in Salinas, California.

- *Street festivals/block parties* are great mechanisms for community celebration and engagement in urban areas, as can be seen in cities across the United States and Europe. Street festivals are also something very familiar to Latinos.

- *Holiday market* similar to Denver’s Christkindl Market, Commerce City could have its own community-centric version.

Implement the bike lane recommendations from the Walk. Bike.Fit plan using paint, planters, and cones to test and refine applications before fully investing in capital costs. This strategy will give the community a chance to understand and get accustomed to the city’s plan as well as illustrate the city’s intent to move forward with its healthy city initiative. Traffic control measures such as temporary bump-outs and striped crosswalks can also be tested.

Implement a Mexico City–style *Ciclovía* event every Sunday for a period of time. The event should take place on a readily understood schedule and at a consistent location so everyone can plan, particularly community members with busy lives. *Ciclovía* involves closing a segment of a street and programming with food, music, activities, and informational resources. Encourage biking and walking, and encourage people to bike or walk to the event.

Install pop-up parks and play spaces on vacant lots, transitional spaces, or empty parking lots to encourage physical activity, increase neighborhood vibrancy, and test demand. This will also help minimize illegal dumping on and vandalization of vacant property.

Immediate Implementation Opportunities

The panel identified potential safety measures that could be addressed within the next year. Those measures include the following:

- Add additional light to streets and other public spaces. Before implementation, the panel recommends that low light levels be verified. Methods such as conducting a lighting audit that measures the photometrics, examines luminaire type, and verifies if lights are working will lead to a proper and expedited solution to the community’s perception of dark streets. This will also provide the community with a sense that the city does care for



LUIS GONZALEZ/OLI

residents’ needs and help eliminate any potential public safety risks.

Improved Quebec Parkway tunnel near Adams City High School.

- Repair or replace missing or broken lights within the pedestrian crossing tunnels. During the community engagement phase, it was brought to the panel’s attention that the tunnels were dark, placed in inconvenient locations, and felt unsafe. Upon inspection of the tunnel at the Adams City High School, the panel was able to visually confirm that lights were either missing or broken. Longer term, the panel recommends that the city consider adding additional lighting, emergency blue-light phones, and trash cans at the tunnels. These tunnels also present opportunities to have decorative lighting, city branding, and public art.
- Explore adding speed humps on neighborhood streets (e.g., Monaco Street and East 64th Avenue).
 - Explore adding traffic speed cameras near schools (e.g., Quebec Parkway).
 - Explore adding additional electrical pedestrian crossing warning systems at parks, schools, and commercial districts.

Fostering Ownership and Pride in Commerce City

"I am proud of our community. I like living here; it is tranquil."

"My dream is for young people to have a great education, then come back and make a living here and contribute to the city."

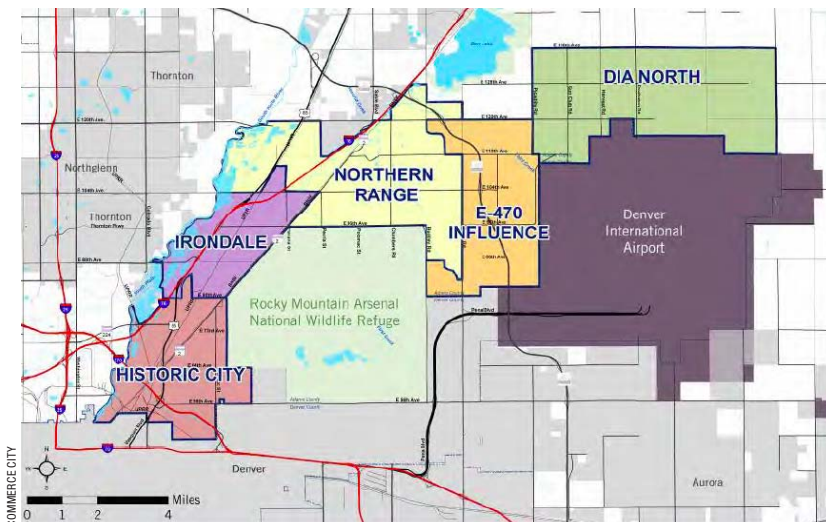
A KEY ASSET OF COMMERCE CITY is its constituents. Many are deeply invested in creating a multigenerational legacy in Commerce City and improving life in their neighborhoods for their families and friends. The more city initiatives align with this momentum, the more successful the initiatives will be.

Harness Existing Resources and Momentum

"There's no center of Commerce City. I guess the center is Walmart."

Commerce City can leverage both public and private sector partnerships to increase access to resources and build community. Simple communication efforts and alignment

Strategic planning areas identified in Commerce City's comprehensive plan.



of programs are fundamental to this goal. Key institutional partners include Adams District 14, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Adams County Parks and Open Space Department, transit agencies, and others. They can facilitate

History is a brand! Invest in telling your story.

The following stories seem unacknowledged despite their cultural significance to Commerce City and the Denver region:

- Among the first establishments in modern Commerce City were cemeteries. Riverside Cemetery, founded in 1876, is located in the city's southwest corner at East 52nd Avenue and Brighton Boulevard. Rose Hill Cemetery, in the heart of historic Commerce City, was established in 1892 by the United Hebrew Cemetery Association.
- The mechanical lures for dog racing, called rabbits, each had names. Rusty was the Mile High Kennel Club greyhound racing park's (1949). Rusty could be a mascot for the city.
- The Major League Soccer (MLS) home of the Colorado Rockies draws thousands of visitors to Commerce City from throughout the state. The closest two MLS teams are in Kansas City, Missouri, and Salt Lake City, Utah.



conduits of communication, provide access to recreation and active transportation, and advance HEAL goals.

One way to begin this effort is to better brand Commerce City. A brand is the essence of one's own unique story and can be expressed in both physical environmental cues and communication. Branding of Commerce City should be as consistent as possible through all city and stakeholder efforts, including the creation of marketing, signage, printed and web materials, presentations, and so on. It includes a shared, local understanding of the history and future of Commerce City and a shared language throughout the community when describing certain features. This can be done through labeled wayfinding signage for the districts identified in the Walk.Bike.Fit plan. For example, the panel heard the study area described as the Core, Historic City, Old Commerce City (vs. New), South Commerce City (vs. North), the Derby, and more. The signs installed in the Derby district are a great start toward cementing a sense of place.

Empower the Neighborhood

First and foremost, neighborhood groups and residents should be empowered. This can create better service and responsiveness to communities as well as generate new ideas. A neighborhood association/block captain program should be fostered that aligns with the original boundaries of communities or school service areas.

Seniors should be connected with opportunities for service and participation in the community through programs such as the Senior Corps to further initiatives that are important to the community. This national program implemented through the Corporation for National and Community Service connects today's residents 55 and older with the people and organizations that need them most as mentors, coaches, or companions to people in need or lets them contribute their job skills and expertise to community projects and organizations.

Additional recommendations of culturally responsive operational improvements that help empower neighborhoods include the following:



COMMERCE CITY

The six original neighborhoods of Commerce City.

- Make the permitting process for neighborhood block parties more streamlined and easier to understand.
- Increase the public use of public facilities by opening school and park fields to pickup football and soccer games rather than regulate or restrict spaces to formal league play only; school yards should not be gated during off hours.
- Encourage small-scale DIY food security efforts. Adopt an urban chicken ordinance similar to that of Denver and other communities.
- Facilitate multigenerational housing. Through the interview process, the panel found instances of parents moving in with adult children and adult children moving in with parents who were homeowners. Audit ordinances for culturally sensitive interpretations of residential use, including more broadly defined occupancy of single-family dwelling units to accommodate multigenerational trends. Streamlining development permits for accessory dwelling, in-law, or granny units would enhance housing

affordability, neighborhood stability, and ability to age in place.

As noted in the most recent Parks Strategic Plan, find consistent customer service satisfaction survey techniques to monitor response to park offerings.

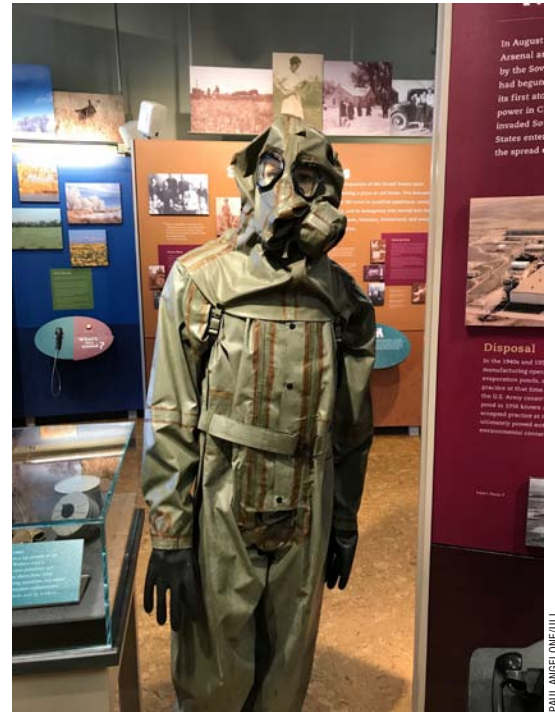
Align Institutional Partnerships

“A group of neighborhood kids began playing pickup informal soccer games after school at their neighborhood school grounds. In an attempt to deter wear and tear on landscaping, the school installed a fence to prevent this use.”

Better alignment by the institutional partners within the study area is needed. In particular, the school district is the largest untapped resource, both as physical infrastructure to serve the surrounding community and as conduit for information, particularly for immigrant families where children are first-generation students. Students are often relied on to serve as translators and interpreters for non-English-speaking families. Schools should be cognizant of their neighborhood-serving role and empowered to be communication conduits.

The panel heard that facility rental at the Eagle Pointe Recreation Center and local church reception halls is too pricey to host activity classes taught by volunteers. When a group of mothers requested to use the empty gym on a Saturday at their local junior high school campus, they were turned down by school administrators.

Every effort should be made to take advantage of existing infrastructure and school grounds as year-round assets. Existing facilities should expand their usefulness by extending hours, developing multiuse agreements with schools, churches, nonprofit organizations. This could be as simple as having a 1,000 soccer ball giveaway and allowing community groups to use open fields after hours for community use. Commerce City and the school district should act as an enabler—not a deterrent—for community-organized activities (even informal ones).



Protective suit from the former Rocky Mountain Arsenal facility.

Another disconnect appears to exist between the community and the adoption of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge as a local asset, which can be improved with both physical connections and communication. With new entrances to the wildlife refuge coming online, organize biking and walking trips to the refuge. Partner with schools to demonstrate how bikes and walking intersect with the refuge's shuttle service. Encourage Denver's regional bike group to lead a ride through Commerce City to the wildlife refuge. The panel heard many concerns about the site's historic uses, contamination, and inaccessibility. This site could be a major education and recreation asset if the community begins to embrace and promote it as such among their friends, family, and peers. One suggestion is to locally identify the site as the "Wildlife Refuge" until the negative connotations associated with the "Arsenal" dissipate locally. Future access to the "Wildlife Refuge" should also be promoted broadly to all populations living in Commerce City.

Develop Additional Partnerships

Partnerships should be developed that build stronger communities. These can be from the public and private sectors as well as a variety of institutional partners. There is receptiveness from business owners to hire local workers. For instance, local residents and students should be better connected to the private sector through internship programs. These relationships can be leveraged to establish training programs, potentially using existing educational facilities for requisite training and certification programs. Commerce City has employment opportunities, and business owners are interested in hiring locally. If residents of Commerce City work in Commerce City, commuting time is reduced, families spend more time together, traffic is reduced, and fewer locally earned dollars are spent in other communities.

Commerce City should partner with artists to improve public spaces and trails with art installations. These groups are interested in being more involved in the community and are excited to invite and train local youth to help. This kind of activity could build a sense of ownership and reinvigorate a public mural campaign. Regarding land use, colocation of services should occur within facilities, such as daycare and senior care within the same location. These services could be located with recreational facilities to ensure that all ages are engaged and see each other in daily life. Currently, these uses are separated by recreation center minimum age participation requirements.

Leverage Financing

“The recreation center isn’t for me—my family can’t afford to use it.”

A healthy number of resources in Commerce City can be aligned for greater success. If goals are clear, Commerce City can pursue specific grants or philanthropic contributions from Suncor or other large employers. While attempts are being made to bring community organizations and resources together through efforts like the Community Resource Network of Adams County, current funding and planning efforts seem to suffer from potential duplication and overlap. Existing funding opportunities the panel heard

about during the week include federal Community Development Block Grant, the Quality Community Foundation, Adams 14 Foundation, and the Colorado Health Foundation.

Communication and Responsiveness

“We spend too much on bottled water—the tap water is unsafe to drink.”

Communication is a core function of cities to deliver basic information about services, utilities, public safety, and programs. The panel recognizes that with such a diverse population, Commerce City and its stakeholders have challenges ahead of them to develop appropriate communication strategies for diverse language, age, and socioeconomic populations. Seniors, struggling families, and non-English speakers have different barriers to information and will require a multifaceted approach to communication and promotion of opportunities.

The interview process made apparent that a general distrust of the government exists throughout the local Latino community, which is likely exacerbating the disconnect between the community and use of facilities, resources, and projects. For example, regular access to recreational opportunities is limited because of a reluctance to add personal information on official registration paperwork. One way to build trust is to make information readily accessible to this population through trusted sources, such as local churches and the Cultivando organization. The panel heard from local residents that they are spending their limited resources on bottled water for cooking and drinking, because they believe drinking water is contaminated from past arsenal activities.

Remaining aware of the demographic changes within the community is important to ensure resources are allocated correctly and that community leadership and stakeholders can remain responsive to community needs. Staying in touch with cultural shifts will allow improvements to become owned, propagated by, amplified by the community. This will help keep efforts relevant and inclusive of the multiple cultures that make up the study area.

The panel had the following recommendations to overcome barriers of changing social fabric and culture:

- Be culturally aware—now and into the future—to keep efforts relevant and inclusive of the multiple cultures that make up the Historic Commerce City study area.
- Offer formal programming, classes, and activities responsive to community, such as English, Zumba, and bike repair.
- To encourage the development of culturally appropriate programming throughout the area, identify opportunities for local and regional residents to program existing spaces. This will increase accessibility, reduce cultural barriers, and reduce the burden on city staff (Cultivando is an excellent partner in this effort).
- Always be looking ahead to be nimble and responsive.
- Develop sister-city relationships with parks and recreation departments in other historically Latino and diverse communities to have annual discussions about trends and constituent requests.

Culturally Competent Communications Strategy

“I heard you need a pass to get into the wildlife refuge.”

Promoting opportunities in City Hall is important but may reach limited populations because of its location at the southeastern-most edge of Commerce City. In addition, social media is an effective source to reach the residents of the developing areas of Commerce City but may not reach the population of the study area because they have limited access to the Internet, computers, and smart-phones. Providing information with water bills has been well received.

A broader communications strategy is needed to ensure active work is done to communicate events and success. This communications strategy should also engage in general education. For example, one interviewee shared the story of a local woman who used a large bill for bus fare and did not receive change because a Spanish “no change given” sign was not present. This not only ruined her experience with public transit, but it also deterred those in her social network from using public transit. If it has not been attempted, this is a great way to engage an action

Building Trust

Communities seeking to support families with mixed documentation status and help them lead healthy lives must be aware of this challenge and work to build trust. Trust building will include both developing inclusive public engagement strategies and establishing protections. Demos and Latino Justice identified some of the following recommendations in their *Sanctuary, Safety, and Community: Tools for Welcoming and Protecting Immigrants through Local Democracy* report:

- Policies prohibiting immigration enforcement in public schools, where constitutional equal protection guarantees safeguard undocumented students;
- Policies prohibiting immigration enforcement in other sensitive locations, such as churches and hospitals;
- Inclusive programs that provide benefits to

undocumented immigrants and their families, such as provisions that expand access to identification cards or health care, extend professional licenses to immigrants, and/or strengthen workers’ rights in areas that predominantly affect low-wage immigrant workers (including farmworkers’ and domestic workers’ rights);

- Policies shielding information about immigration status from federal authorities;
- Policies or practices of declining to honor federal civil immigration detainers, which are requests issued by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that local law enforcement continue to detain individuals already in custody; and
- Policies limiting use of community resources for enforcement of federal immigration law (or the civil provisions thereof).

committee to prepare a “cultural sensitivity audit” through community and transportation exploration.

Working with partners such as the Salud Clinic is a great way to reach culturally diverse populations. They are eager to display and distribute parks and activity resources in lobby; their on-site caseworkers have direct contact with individual families in various stages of need and can be a trusted source of information. Additional strategies include the following:

- Local church newsletters reach multiple cultures on a weekly basis.
- Word of mouth in a community the size of the study area can be quite effective as a communication tool.
- Continue using inserts in water bills. This strategy has been effective at providing information.
- Transit system and bus stop message boards can be used to reach multiple populations.
- Ensure bilingual staff is present at important public sites and events.

English/Spanish and Other Language Divides

“I end up standing in line at Paradise Island Pool while others passed because they do not have Spanish-speaking staff.”

The panel feels strongly that Commerce City cannot be successful without enhancing the well-being of all its residents. The study area is 70 percent Latino, so the panel focused on gathering information from many citizens and groups within this community; however, it should be noted that 24 languages are spoken within Adams 14. After

a week of intensive research and discussion, the panel still does not have a good understanding of these other groups. The absence of this information makes the panel believe that a divide exists between the parts of Commerce City that speak English and Spanish and these 22 other languages. Additional outreach and engagement needs to occur with these non-English or Spanish-speaking groups.

Moving Commerce City forward and enhancing the well-being of the community will require attention to all the city’s residents. Residents and staff should be encouraged, and perhaps incentivized, to take language classes in the languages spoken within the study area.



ALETHA DUNSTON

Everyone is welcome in Commerce City.

Conclusion

AS THE PANEL'S RECOMMENDATIONS were formed, particular attention was paid to contextual issues surrounding historic Commerce City. These included health disparities; local concerns about water and soil conditions, rapid growth, and fear of displacement; mixed-documentation families concerned about deportation; a lack of communication resulting in distrust between business, institutions, and among institutions; and a great deal of effort going into many projects that will benefit the community but have an overall lack of focus. The panel also saw many assets in Commerce City and a strong sense of civic pride. It has a major wildlife refuge, it has strong parks infrastructure, but most important, people want to live and be in the community. Residents feel a sense of belonging and are committed to building a better future for everyone.

Agradecimiento

Gracias a todos por su ayuda durante la visita del panel de asistencia. Nuestro trabajo no habría sido posible sin su colaboración. Somos conscientes del momento de gran ansiedad que vivimos por la situación migratoria y en este contexto es particularmente difícil tener conversaciones sinceras. Nos gustaría reiterar que por favor continúen considerando al ULI y a los socios en este informe sus amigos y que estamos con ustedes para escucharles y apoyarles.

This success should be celebrated to further build support for government action as well as increase the pride and feeling of ownership of Commerce City. The panel looks forward to returning to Commerce City and sharing in its success.

Panel-Recommended Near-Term Action Items

Project	Cost	Notes
Crosswalk timing/automation	\$15,000	
Crosswalks (20)	\$300,000	Near schools and recreation centers
Speed monitors	\$5,000	
Outreach	\$30,000	
72nd at Quebec crossing	\$15,000	
Trailhead improvements	\$30,000	Water, electricity
Ciclovia	\$150,000	Three events, \$50,000 each
Zoning code review	\$15,000	To support manufacturing
Insurance	\$20,000	Every Saturday, one year
Wayfinding	\$200,000	Historic core/Derby
Other costs/administrative	\$220,000	
Total	\$1,000,000	

Source: ULI.

About the Panel

Sarah Sieloff

Panel Chair
Oakland, California

As executive director of the Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR), Sieloff leads the development and implementation of the organization's mission and goals in collaboration with CCLR's board of directors. CCLR helps those who have the biggest stake in revitalizing their neighborhoods—including nonprofit housing developers, community-based organizations, and municipalities with limited resources—with their brownfield redevelopment efforts. Although the obstacles to creating livable and vibrant communities involve complex economic and social issues that cannot be quickly or easily remedied, CCLR's approach to revitalizing communities is unique in that it includes both project-specific and policy-level programs, each informing the other for change.

Before joining CCLR, Sieloff served as the Memphis team lead for the White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities, working with 25 federal agencies to connect Memphis mayor A.C. Wharton Jr.'s administration with federal resources and technical assistance.

Sieloff has a background in international development and has worked in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the South Pacific. She is a Truman Scholar and earned her master in public affairs from Princeton University and her BA from Eckerd College.

Aletha Dunston

Lawrence, Indiana

Dunston is the executive director of the Fort Harrison Reuse Authority in Lawrence, Indiana, which works to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Lawrence by

facilitating the economic redevelopment of the former Fort Benjamin Harrison Army Base.

A certified planner with experience in planning, zoning, and community development, Dunston has served as the program manager for Indiana's \$28 million dollar Community Development Block Grant program, as a community liaison for the state, and as the planning and community development director for the city of Marion, Indiana. There, she wrote the first comprehensive plan for the city since 1961 using in-house resources. She also contributed to several large-scale site redevelopment and residential clearance programs.

She has served with Indiana Main Street, the American Planning Association, and the Broad Ripple Village Association. Dunston specializes in helping communities build capacity, identify strengths, and build upon the characteristics that make them unique.

Dunston is a proud graduate of the College of Architecture and Planning at Ball State University and is currently enrolled in the Butler University MBA program. She continues to serve on the APA-IN State Planning Association board and strives to support programs that move Indiana and the Midwest forward.

Tom Fairchild

Arlington, Virginia

Fairchild is a visionary transportation consultant, who launched City Version 3 to provide expert guidance to cities that are seeking to implement plans for dynamic urbanism. City Version 3 specializes in advising clients for achieving plans for successful transit and transit-oriented development—essential building blocks of healthy entrepreneurial cities.

After 20-plus years in the field, Fairchild understands that transportation is much more than simply moving people and goods from place to place. Rather, transportation intersects with some of the most relevant issues of the day: health, aging populations, affordable housing, business vitality, and environmental sustainability. Fairchild is passionate about bringing positive change to all of these areas through successful team-building, active engagement, innovative programming, and technology.

Realizing the importance of teamwork, he is always on the lookout for new strategic alliances to further this cause. In his previous role as director of Mobility Lab, Fairchild assembled a team of professionals to further the client's goals of increasing transit use and decreasing single-occupant motor vehicles. He advocated compellingly for the importance of transportation demand management. By focusing on communications, special events, media relations, and technology, Mobility Lab fostered a sense for how transit programming benefited broad public interests such as health, business, and the environment.

Fairchild's grassroots community work leading Clarendon Alliance public/private partnership pushed the envelope toward the phenomenally successful urban space surrounding the Clarendon Metro Station in Arlington. Working with the existing Clarendon Sector Plan, his efforts included recruiting developers with expertise to build to the plan, producing programs to garner community input and support, and developing events to build a unique sense of community and civic pride. Subsequent work in commercial real estate development and as a small business owner/developer gives him broad perspectives on building livable communities.

A longtime resident of metro Washington, D.C., Fairchild holds a BS in Industrial engineering from Purdue University.

Luis González

Largo, Maryland

A senior planner and landscape architect with Rodgers Consulting, González focuses on urban planning,

placemaking, and creating vibrant public spaces. He has contributed to the creation of some of the most interesting places and communities in the Washington, D.C., metro area since 2002, working on institutional, mixed-use, transit-oriented, rooftop, green infrastructure, and public sector projects. His interest lies in creating livable communities that provide a platform for social interaction within the urban condition.

González started his involvement with ULI through the Mentorship Program, which led him to participating in the inaugural ULI Next Washington Initiative Council Flight. He has also served as a facilitator for ULI's UrbanPlan program since 2009. His pro bono experience includes design/implementation of an outdoor classroom for Coolidge High School in Washington, D.C., with the American Society of Landscape Architects' (ASLA) Potomac Chapter Legacy Project team, and assisting with Charles County, Maryland's affordable housing initiative as a member of the American Planning Association's (APA) Community Planning Assistance Team.

He has been an adjunct professor and guest lecturer at the University of Maryland and Monteverde Institute in Costa Rica. He has taught and lectured about regional planning, green infrastructure design, sustainable development, urban design, and community engagement. He has presented at local and national ASLA and AIA conferences about experience-based design and increasing diversity within the design profession.

González holds a bachelor of landscape architecture degree from the University of Maryland. He is a licensed landscape architect in Maryland and Virginia and is a certified planner in the American Institute of Certified Planners. He is a committee member for the ASLA Honors and Awards Committee and has been a juror for professional design awards. He has also served as a Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards exam writer for the design section of the Landscape Architect Registration Exam.

Savlan Hauser

Oakland, California

Hauser brings 12 years of experience in urban design and development in Mexico City and the San Francisco Bay Area to her role as executive director of the Jack London PBID—Oakland's largest and newest BID, encompassing 1,400 parcels, 500 businesses, 3,500 residents, and 83 city blocks, with stakeholders ranging from regional transit agencies to individual homeowners. She also serves as chair of the Oakland BID Alliance, an advocacy group representing the 11 Business Improvement and Community Benefit Districts in Oakland.

Before her role in Oakland, Hauser worked in Mexico City, focusing on urban design and green building with Javier Sanchez Arquitectos in Mexico City from 2007 to 2008, where she led the renovation of a historic city park and design of various bus rapid-transit station area projects. From 2009 to 2011, Hauser worked as architectural studio director for artist Jan Hendrix, implementing large-scale artworks for public and private sector clients internationally. Returning to the Bay Area in 2012, Hauser worked on two major multifaceted Area Specific Plans as member of a consultant team to the city of Oakland, then worked with institutional public sector and religious clients in site disposition and development feasibility studies as an independent consultant. She has also served as a Berkeley City Council appointed member of the Zoning Adjustments Board, a quasi-judicial body responsible for approving development projects of all scales within the city of Berkeley.

She holds a degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, is a LEED AP, and Urban Land Institute's Chamberlin Public Sector Leader Fellow 2017–2019.

Joyce Lee

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

A Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and LEED Fellow, Lee is president of IndigoJLD, providing green health, design, and planning services on exemplary

projects and communities. She is also on the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, focusing on building healthy places.

Lee has been a Fellow at the National Leadership Academy for Public Health and was one of the first LEED-accredited professionals in New York City. She served under Mayors Giuliani and Bloomberg as chief architect for New York City's Office of Management and Budget. The Active Design Guidelines, a publication she coauthored, won recognition from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as well as the Sustainable Building Industry Council.

Lee is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Platinum Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies, the President's Award from the AIA New York State, and the Aga Khan Award from Harvard/MIT. She received dual master's degrees from MIT.

Michael Rodriguez

Washington, D.C.

Rodriguez, a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, is director of research for Smart Growth America (SGA) in joint appointment with the George Washington University (GWU) Center for Real Estate and Urban Analysis. He conducts and oversees quantitative and qualitative research through SGA and GWU's many research initiatives. His expertise is in fiscal and economic impacts of transportation and infrastructure projects, especially with regard to smart growth and walkability.

He is coauthor of *Foot Traffic Ahead 2016*, a statistical survey of walkable urbanism in the United States; econometric research on the economic and fiscal impacts of catalytic development in Downtown Detroit; and *WalkUP, Wake-Up: NY Metro*, a study of walkability in metropolitan New York and part of the Fourth Regional Plan.

Before joining SGA, Rodriguez had extensive private sector experience in transportation and economics consulting with various leading national firms, having written reports on major projects such as California High Speed Rail,

pedestrian station access impacts for WMATA, and several successful TIGER grants. He also was key in developing industry-leading software tools for transportation economic analysis.

As a resident of Tysons Corner, Virginia, Rodriguez promotes smart growth in one of the fastest-growing regions in the country and serves on the Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Metropolitan Washington Transportation Planning Board. He holds a master of public affairs and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and is pursuing a PhD in public policy at GWU.

John Watt

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Watt has 12 years' experience with a wide variety of properties but specializes in residential land development in the Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Eastern Kentucky, and Western Maryland area. Other areas of concentration include market analysis and valuation of market-rate and affordable multifamily housing and valuation of industrial properties. He is in the process of completing the requirements necessary for Appraisal Institute candidacy. Before employment with Valbridge Property Advisors, Watt had over ten years of experience in residential construction.

He holds a master's of public policy and management from the University of Pittsburgh and a bachelor's degree from Bethany College. He is very active in the ULI Pittsburgh District Council and has served as the treasurer, district council chair, and governance chair.

A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report



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