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16—Plan Implementation

Introduction

This *C3 Vision Plan* is a vision plan and a policy document that will guide decision-making within the city. While it contains many long-term and seeming far-reaching goals and ideals, it also needs to be achievable. This chapter explains how Commerce City will begin to implement this Plan, once adopted, through:

1. Specific Actions, identified in a Priority Action Plan,
2. A Monitoring Program, measuring progress towards achievement of plan goals (i.e., the *Community Score Card*), and
3. Plan Amendments and Updates, described as five-year updates and a clear process for more frequent changes.



This chapter addresses actions, amendments and monitoring to carry out this Plan and reach its high aiming goals.

Actions

Necessary Types of Actions

Commerce City will implement this Plan using several different approaches, as briefly described below, including:

- Policy Decisions;
- Land Development Code Amendments;
- Partnerships and Intergovernmental Agreements;
- Programs; and
- Infrastructure Assessment/Improvements.

Policy Decisions

The city will carry out most of the policies in this Plan during day-to-day decisions—those made by the Planning Commission and City Council and sometimes planning staff. These groups will continually make decisions regarding development proposals and *C3 Vision Plan* amendments. Using the Future Land Use Plan and plan policies to guide decisions will ensure consistency. Two examples of meeting the intent of this Plan's policies would be restricting rezoning of industrial lands for residential uses, unless consistent with the Future Land Use Plan, or phasing development at the eastern edge of the city to avoid leapfrog development.

Note: This chapter is preliminary (for review with staff and committees). The planning team will finalize action prioritization after further discussion.



Land Development Code (LDC) amendments will be necessary to implement this Plan, including standards to allow and encourage regional commercial, as shown above.



The city will develop new programs and facilities, based on needs and available resources.



Programs, such as neighborhood planning or planning for FasTracks, will also be important to implement this Plan.

Land Development Code Amendments

While Commerce City just undertook a major code overhaul, the city will need to make several development regulations consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan. The city will review its Land Development Code (LDC), including zoning, development standards, and subdivision regulations for consistency with this Plan. The strategies within plan element address particular aspects of the code that will need to be updated, including (but not limited to):

- updating certain residential, industrial/employment, and commercial zoning districts and standards to be consistent with the land use categories in Chapter 3;
- amending dimensional standards for infill areas;
- coordinating rezonings to make zoning consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (e.g., Tiffany and Industrial Enclave area);
- adding new design standards for commercial centers; and
- updating the LDC with contemporary sustainable development, approaches, for example allowing solar panels and small agriculture.

Partnerships and Intergovernmental Agreements

A number of this Plan's recommendations will best be achieved through cooperation and partnerships and (more formally) Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) between the city and other governmental entities, such as Adams County, the Regional Transportation District (RTD), South Adams County Water and Sanitation District, or other special districts. The city already has some IGAs in place, some of which may require amendments to remain current. Once established, the agreements continue to be operative for as long as they intend.

Programs

This Plan establishes a foundation for new or on-going programs. For example, some policies recommend participating in planning efforts, such as planning for FasTracks, continued neighborhood planning, volunteer stewardship programs to maintain open space and parks, and others addressed in the plan strategies. Programs have varying levels of priority, depending on the issues involved and available resources. Consequently, the city will initiate them at different times.

Infrastructure Assessment/Improvements

In some cases, the Plan will require that the city take a proactive role to assess current and future needs and plan for expansion and improvement to services and facilities, such as police substation or recreation center development. Commerce City will need to coordinate with districts on other infrastructure needs, including

schools, water/sewer, and energy/electricity, to more closely align with the goals of efficiently providing services and for development to pay its way.

The Priority Action Plan

Priority Action Plan Priorities

The Action Plan identifies the highest priority strategies from the previous chapters. It also identifies responsible parties or city departments and timing upon adoption of this Plan.

How the Highest Priority Strategies Have Been Selected

Generally the action plan carries forward three to five of the top strategies from each chapter to achieve a balance in meeting this Plan's objectives, with strategies selected based on the following criteria. The strategies in the table:

- Have the greatest effect in implementing the goals of a particular chapter and multiple other chapters of this Plan (e.g., they will accomplish "a lot of bang for the buck" and will bleed over various disciplines.);
- Are the most efficient to implement—based on the city's available resources and staff; and
- Are most important to begin immediately or within two to three years of plan adoption to avoid missing the opportunity to achieve Plan goals.

The table does not include many of the important on-going strategies (e.g., consistency with the Future Land Use Plan or partnerships), to avoid creating an especially lengthy list. Please see the plan elements (chapters 4 through 15)

Priority Action Plan as Guide to Work Plan

After adoption of this Plan, the City will continue its work on specific actions to carry out this Plan's goals and policies. The Priority Action Plan will help guide the city's work plan, by using this table as a preliminary annual work program. The city's departments will need to administratively update its work plan on a periodic basis—every one to two years. Once the actions listed in this Priority Action Plan are complete, some of the additional strategies listed within the plan chapters can be brought forward—until all are complete.

Timing of Actions

The table below includes the highest priority strategies. The city will begin them:

- **Within one-year,** immediately following plan adoption; or
- **Within two to three years.**

Certain actions will also be on-going after the city initiates them.

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan




No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-Year	2-3 Years	On-going
 Chapter 4: Land Use and Growth					
LU 1b	Land Development Code (LDC) Amendments Update the LDC and zone districts to be consistent with the FLUP and categories in Chapter 3. (See Chapter 4.)	Community Development	■		
LU 1d	Coordinated Rezoning Coordinate rezoning of multiple parcels together in key locations to implement the coordinated pattern on the FLUP (e.g., Tiffany, Irondale).	To be added for all		■	
LU 2b	LDC Amendments/Focus Areas Consider code amendments in Focus Areas that address infill development potential, including dimensional standards, and flexibility for parking. (See Chapter 4.)	TBA...	■		
LU 2c	Annexation Criteria Develop annexation criteria for Adams County enclaves. Different criteria may be needed for Historic City, Irondale, Northern Range, and E-470.			■	
	Others				
 Chapter 5: Economic Development					
ED 1a	Economic Development Strategic Plan Implement strategies of the <i>Economic Development Strategic Plan</i> .		■		✓
ED 2a	Industry Program Establish partnerships with outside agencies and establish communications mechanisms to ensure that the business community is informed of city policies that may affect their operations.		■		
ED 4a	Retail Program Establish partnerships and communication mechanisms to inform the retail community of policies that may affect their operations.		■		
	Others				
 Chapter 6: Fiscal Stability					
FS 1a	Infill Development Incentives through LDC Provide incentives for infill development (e.g., waived or reduced fees, expedited review times, or relaxed standards).		■		
FS 1b	Prioritize Needs Prioritize needs in Capital Improvement Program (aligning with this Plan).			■	✓
FS 1c	Pursue Grants Leverage city resources to utilize state and federal funding sources, and grants (including sustainability-related funding).		■		✓
FS 3a	Fiscal Impact Analysis Require fiscal impact analysis of new development.		■		
	Others				



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No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-Year	2-3 Years	On-going
 Chapter 7: Housing and Neighborhoods					
HN 1a	Citywide Housing Plan Develop a citywide Housing Plan to help refine needs and targets.		■		
HN 1d	Proactive Property Maintenance Explore ways to make code enforcement more proactive to ensure property maintenance and prevent further zoning and municipal code violations.		■		✓
HN 2a	LDC Amendments: Accessory Dwelling Units Revise LDC to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in new and existing neighborhoods where lot sizes would permit them.		■		
HN 2b	Household Energy Programs Programs to reduce household energy costs (costs associated with energy consumption, transportation, and utilities).			■	
	Others				
 Chapter 8: Redevelopment and Reinvestment					
RR 2a	Urban Renewal Area (URA) Tools Expand application of Urban Renewal Areas (URAs) tools (including financing) to achieve redevelopment goals, including existing URAs (Prairie Gateway, Derby, and US 85), and potential new URAs (e.g. FasTracks area).		■		✓
RR 2b	Quasi-Public Urban Renewal Entity Explore feasibility of a non-profit, quasi-public entity to oversee infill and redevelopment in neighborhoods that could purchase and rehabilitate structures or consolidate and sell properties.			■	
RR 3a	Funding and Grants for Redevelopment/Brownfields Explore grants, low-interest loans and redevelopment corporations to address redevelopment goals and to reduce industrial/residential conflicts.		■		✓
RR 2g	Code Enforcement See proactive property maintenance, above.		■		
	Others				
 Chapter 9: Transportation					
	Implement the <i>Transportation Plan</i> strategies.				✓
T 1b	Road Impact Fees Review road impact fees.		■		
T 1c	Street Fees Review possibility of implementing city street fees.		■		
	Others				

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No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-Year	2-3 Years	On-going
 Chapter 10: Safety and Wellness					
SW 1a	Police Strategic Plan Guides Use <i>Police Strategic Plan</i> to address needs and response times.				✓
SW 1b	Shared Public Safety Facilities Explore sharing facilities/sub-stations to serve citizens (e.g., 103 rd Avenue /Walden Fire Station, 60 th Avenue/Monaco, and 112th Avenue and Chambers).			■	
SW 2a	Pedestrian Improvements Pursue strategies to create a visually-appealing and safe pedestrian experience, prioritized areas.		■		
SW 3b	Health Care Needs Assessment Conduct a Needs Assessment to determine the extent to which vulnerable Commerce City populations lack access to health care facilities and other basic services.		■		
SW 4b	LDC Amendments for Small-Scale Urban Agriculture Evaluate and consider removing from the land use code barriers to small-scale urban agriculture.			■	
	Others?				
 Chapter 11: Parks, Open Space and Recreation					
P 1a	Prioritize Recommendations Prioritize implementation recommendations of the <i>Strategic Plan for Recreation Programs, Services, and Facilities (2007)</i> including new park development, facilities, and recreation.		■		
P 1c	Parkland Impact Fee Reassess parkland impact fee annually.		■		
P 4a	Boost Volunteer Programs Boost volunteer programs focusing on land restoration and stewardship.			■	
	Others?				
 Chapter 12: Public Facilities and Infrastructure					
PF 1a	Annual Capital Improvements Plan Annually update the Capital Improvements Plan, considering priorities set forth in this plan and the annual Action Plan.		■		✓
PF 1c	Standards for Adequate Public Facilities Develop standards in LDC for development to pay its own way and for services to be available concurrent with development.		■		
PF 2a	School District Coordination Continue to coordinate with school districts to plan for future facilities to serve growth, location within neighborhoods, and co-location with parks.			■	✓



Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan




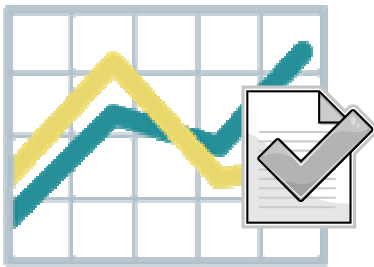
No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-Year	2-3 Years	On-going
PF 2b	School Fee-in-Lieu Re-evaluate and annually update fee-in-lieu for schools, to ensure that development pays its way for school impacts.			■	✓
PF 3b	Task Force/Committees Creation Explore creation of task forces and advisory committees to help further the aims of local government and this Plan.			■	
	Others?				
 Chapter 13: Appearance and Design					
AD 1a	Prioritize Gateways and Corridors Identify gateway and corridor priority areas—south and north city areas.		■		
AD 1b	Overlay Districts – Gateways and Corridors Develop overlay districts for gateways and corridors (e.g., E-470, Highway 2) to address corridor improvements and future development.			■	
AD 2a	Small Grant Funding Evaluate and potentially provide small grant funding for façade improvements in commercial districts, small neighborhood improvement projects, and way-finding signage.		■		✓
AD 3b	Update Design Standards Update design standards in LDC to address residential infill and compatibility, commercial landscaping and cohesive site planning, employment areas, and multi-family design.		■		
AD 4a	Identify Viewsheds Develop a viewshed plan/program to identify views and protection measures.			■	
AD 4b	Evaluate Outdoor Lighting Standards Address outdoor lighting standards to control amount and glare through LDC standards.		■		
	Others?				
 Chapter 14: Cultural Facilities and Tourism					
CF 1a	Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan Prepare an Arts and Culture Plan that identifies potential funding sources to increase awareness regarding the city’s assets, arts and culture, and tourism.			■	
CF 2a	Prioritize Historic Resources Evaluate and prioritize historic resources.			■	
CF 3c	LDC Amendments Modify appropriate zoning districts to allow and encourage hotels.		■		
	Others?				

Table 16.1: Priority Action Plan

No.	Strategy	Who is Responsible?	Time-Frame		
			1-Year	2-3 Years	On-going
 Chapter 15: Environmental Conservation and Stewardship					
EC 1a	Sustainability Plan/Climate Action Plan Develop a Sustainability Plan and/or Climate Action Plan (with incentives, targets for reduction, strategies, and regulations).		■		
EC 1b	Municipal Code Audit/Amendments Perform an audit of the Municipal Code, including LDC and Engineering Standards, to see what barriers to sustainability exist; amend accordingly.			■	
EC 1c	Prioritize Indicators – Score Cards Prioritize and adapt indicators for a <i>Community Score Card</i> and <i>Project Review Score Card</i> and begin monitoring program.			■	✓
EC 5a	Municipal Solid Waste Reduction Plan Develop a Municipal Solid Waste Reduction Plan and revisit existing landfills and their function.			■	
EC 5b	Recycling Promote city recycling program (city facilities and events) and possibly yard waste composting.		■		
EC 6a	Tree Preservation Standards Expand tree preservation standards that exist in LDC.		■		
	Others?				



A *Community Score Card* will be a system of monitoring of ongoing trends. It will enable the city to assess progress towards achieving the goals of this Plan, provide justification for amending the plan periodically as-needed, and assess the need for course corrections and changes in implementation measures.

Plan Monitoring

Hundreds of people collaborated to produce this *C3 Vision Plan* for more than a year. The result is a consensus statement of Commerce City’s vision, core values, goals, policies, and needed actions. This Plan represents is a comprehensive summary of where the city is today, where it wants to be tomorrow, and what the community and city needs to do to get there.

But how will the city track its progress? Throughout this Plan, the goals and policies lead the city toward making changes in its current policies—looking out 20 years and beyond. Many of the actions discussed in this Plan may take years to develop, fund, and implement. Some short-term impacts are likely to be subtle. Some will be more noticeable. Over time, however, smart decisions and the cumulative effects of city and community actions will result in achieving the future that this Plan envisions.

A system of regular monitoring and evaluation of ongoing trends will enable decision makers and the public to assess the city's progress towards achieving the goals of this Plan, provide justification for amending the plan periodically as-needed, and assess the need for course corrections and changes in implementation measures. This monitoring approach will help ensure that the city is moving along the path that this Plan recommends, and will provide needed information to adjust to changing needs and conditions within an informed framework.

The C3 Vision Plan Monitoring Program

Performance indicators can become the basis for developing a *Community Score Card* process to monitor Commerce City trends and how well the community is achieving its goals. They can also become the basis for a *Project Review Score Card* to assess how well a specific proposed development project fits the intent of this Plan.

Performance Indicators

A Performance Indicator is an index used to monitor or measure community progress against goals. For example, the measure of park land acreage per 1,000 residents is a common indicator of whether the community is meeting its park land goal. In establishing a performance indicator, a primary prerequisite is that it must be based on data that is available, consistent, and reliable. A broad range of suggested indicators are included in each of the 12 elements of the *C3 Vision Plan* (Chapters 4 through 15). These are intended serve as a basis for discussion about indicators that the city can use in establishing a Monitoring Program. The city will need to further refine and prioritize them as indicators are selected and the program is established (see sidebar on *Criteria for Selecting Performance Indicators*).

Establishing a Baseline

A first step in the Monitoring Program is to establish a baseline of information against which the city can measure trends over time. For example, if the indicator above for measuring acres of park land per 1,000 residents is to be used to track progress, the city must first establish a baseline of reliable information on how many acres of park land exists today. The availability of baseline information as well as the ability to obtain trend information over time should be important criteria in selecting the performance indicators to be used.

Setting Targets

A Target is a defined standard by which something can be measured or judged, relating to the goals in this Plan. For example, using the indicator above for measuring acres of park land per 1,000 residents, the city has already established a target

Criteria for Selecting Performance Indicators

For the Plan Monitoring Program to be successful, it must be based on a set of performance indicators that will serve the city over the long-term. This Plan recommends that the program start with one or two indicators for each of the twelve plan element topics, in order to keep initial efforts manageable. The following criteria should be used when evaluating and selecting the indicators to be included:

1. **Policy Relevance** – is the indicator directly linked to one or several key issues around which key policies are formulated? Unless linked to critical decisions and policies, it is unlikely to motivate action.
2. **Simplicity** – can the information be presented in an easily understandable yet appealing way, that the public can readily understand?
3. **Validity** – is the indicator a true reflection of conditions in the city, and is the data verifiable? Can the city affect the outcome? The data must be credible and reliable for both experts and laypeople.
4. **Time Series** – is time series data available, reflecting a trend of the indicator over time? This is important of the indicator is to reflect trends over time.
5. **Availability and Affordability** – is good quality data available at a reasonable cost or is it likely to become so in the future? Costs can include both actual dollar expenditures as well as staff time.
6. **Serve Multiple Objectives** – is the indicator about a very narrow or broader issue? The list of potential indicators is endless. For this reason, indicators that reflect or aggregate information on broader topics should be preferred.

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(of 6 acres/1,000 people) for a specified amount of park land. In general, this Plan does not recommend specific targets but instead includes relative targets (e.g., to maintain, increase or decrease a certain indicator). Over time, the city may choose to adopt specific targets as the monitoring process evolves, or as part of a Community Sustainability Plan developed subsequent to the Comprehensive Plan.

Reporting Progress – Community Score Card Report

This Plan recommends that the city issue a *Community Score Card* Monitoring Report periodically to report on progress made towards achieving the city's goals. While information on some indicators will likely be collected annually, others may only be available on a less frequent basis. Therefore, the city should issue a report every two years, documenting areas showing positive progress and recommending changes in areas in need of continued work.

To provide a comprehensive, inclusive snapshot of the city's progress, it is important that the monitoring program include indicators for each of the 12 plan elements. It is equally important that the monitoring program be manageable, succinct, and useful; thus indicators should be limited in number for each element. This Plan recommends that the monitoring program initially be limited to one or two indicators for each of the elements. Over time, as the program gets underway and is established, the city can add more indicators if needed to track additional aspects of the city's progress.

Plan Amendments and Updates

For this Plan to function over time, the city must be able to periodically review it and amend it to respond to trends or changes in the economic, physical, social, or political conditions of the city or region. The city will conduct revisions to this Plan according to two distinct and different procedures:

- (1) Five-Year Plan Update, and
- (2) Plan Amendments.

Five-Year Plan Update Process

The purpose of a Plan Update is to re-evaluate the goals, policies, and strategies contained within this Plan (noting those to change and those to remove), and to develop new policies if necessary—to make sure that this Plan is effective. Plan updates should occur at intervals of approximately every five years, unless otherwise directed by the City Council or Planning Commission.

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The city's prime consideration in making a determination of when an update should be initiated should include what changes have occurred since the Plan was last updated. These changes may be in areas such as the economy, the environment, housing affordability, traffic congestion, local priorities, projected growth, or others. A Plan Update will include a thorough re-evaluation of the vision, goals, and policies contained within this Plan. A Plan Update will also include a thorough review of the validity of all information contained within the Plan and should include extensive opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, city staff, and other affected interests.

Plan Amendment Process

The city will follow a separate process for Plan Amendments—to be performed on a yearly or periodic basis, up to four times a year. Plan Amendments may include periodic substantive revisions to one or more sections of this Plan. Amendments may be necessary as a result of adoption of a subarea plan or a specific issue/policy plan, because of monitoring (addressed in previous section) and course correction, or by directive from City Council or Planning Commission at any time. Substantive amendment may also occur upon request by a landowner and reviewed as part of the periodic amendment schedule.

Plan Amendments may also involve minor changes to the *Future Land Use Plan* map or text to correct errors, which may occur administratively.

The process for making the substantive amendments is described below.

- All Plan Amendments shall be considered by the Planning Commission.
- Based on its consideration of the recommendations from staff, relevant boards and commissions, and evidence from public hearings, the Planning Commission could then adopt the Plan Amendment (with or without further revisions) or reject it.

Criteria for Plan Amendments

When considering a plan amendment (other than minor correction), the city shall consider the following criteria and make a finding that the amendment meets the following:

1. The existing Plan and/or any related element thereof is in need of the proposed amendment;
2. The proposed amendment is compatible with the surrounding area, and the goals and policies of this Plan;

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3. The proposed amendment will have no major negative impacts on transportation, services, and facilities;
4. The proposed amendment will have minimal effect on service provision, including adequacy or availability of urban facilities and services, and is compatible with existing and planned service provision;
5. The proposed amendment, if for an area that is outside of the city's current municipal boundaries, is consistent with the city's ability to annex the property;
6. Strict adherence to this Plan would result in a situation neither intended nor in keeping with other key elements and policies of this Plan; and
7. The proposed Plan amendment will promote the public welfare and will be consistent with the goals and policies of this Plan and the elements thereof.