



WORKBOOK

Guiding Principles and Map Questions

The C3 Vision Plan

Commerce City is preparing a citywide Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan—the plan is called “C3 Vision.” Background work for the plan started in fall 2008, and the planning team will work with the community through fall 2009. The C3 Vision Plan will help the city to become an even better community by providing solutions to address pressing issues and identifying how the city should grow in the future. To date, community members have weighed-in at meetings and public workshops to help refine the list of issues for the plan to address.



Citizen Advisory Committee members at work.

Draft work products are available on the project website: www.CCCvision.com, including:

- ✓ Issues Summary
- ✓ Notes from meetings
- ✓ City profile and maps

Ready in Feb. '09: Economic and Fiscal Profile.

How To Use This Workbook

Please use this workbook to help the planning team focus and refine the vision, guiding principles (the organizing elements of the comprehensive plan), and growth choices for Commerce City. It is for use at the community meetings in January/February 2009 (at work stations), or independently. It is also available on-line with an accompanying survey (see: www.cccvision.com).

This workbook includes the following sections and questions:

1. Draft Vision (page 2),
2. Economic Development and Redevelopment (page 3),
3. Land Use and Growth, Appearance, and Open Space (page 4),
4. Transportation (page 7), and
5. Community Facilities, Health, and Well-Being (page 8).

Your Participation is Important!

Your participation throughout the process is extremely important, and your responses to questions in this workbook will help define the vision and overall principles for the plan, as well as refining concepts for the land use plan.

Please use the separate **answer key** to note your answers and comments and return it by February 27, 2009 to:

Steve Timms
 Commerce City Community Development Department
 7887 E. 60th Avenue
 Commerce City, CO 80022
 FAX: 303-289-3731

Feel free to keep this Workbook for future reference.

1. DRAFT Vision

The vision for the Comprehensive Plan sets the stage for the plan and asserts the community's values. The draft vision statement below is a starting-point for discussion.

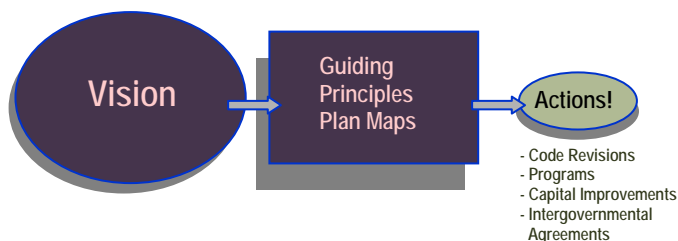


Welcome to Commerce City! A city gateway.

Draft Plan Vision

This draft vision statement is far from finished. We've included some key words. Help refine the vision by reading this statement and answering the questions. What is your vision for the future?

Commerce City will be a welcoming city that is united and focused on a sustainable future with economic opportunity and services and facilities for all businesses and residents.



A City Committed to a Sustainable Community Future...

A sustainable community establishes goals that it can achieve and measure over time for topics, such as in the list that follows.

The plan will address:

- ✓ Compact development pattern, balanced jobs and housing,
- ✓ Fiscal well-being; vital sustainable businesses,
- ✓ Housing choices and variety,
- ✓ Adequate public facilities,
- ✓ Community health (livability, food production),
- ✓ Air and water quality,
- ✓ Water conservation
- ✓ Alternative energy production and conservation,
- ✓ Green infrastructure, open space, and trees,
- ✓ Waste management and recycling,
- ✓ Mobility, multiple transit modes, and reducing miles traveled,
- ✓ Public safety and hazard planning,
- ✓ Greenhouse gas emission reduction, and
- ✓ Other topics.

What is Your Vision for Commerce City's Future?

(Please provide your answers on the SEPARATE ANSWER KEY.)

- 1A. *Do you agree with the draft vision statement and the approach for a sustainable community?*
- 1B. *What key words would you add or change?*

2. Economic Development and Redevelopment

Commerce City's sustainability is tied to economic and fiscal well-being. The city is working to develop an economic plan as part of this effort to help drive land use and planning choices. It is also developing a fiscal model to determine how future development and land uses will affect the city's bottom line and ability to provide quality services.



An Economic Development strategy will address industry and jobs.

Guiding Principles

Please read the following guiding principles and help refine them.

Economic Development

1. **Develop an Integrated Economic Development Strategy**

Create a clear economic development plan to help Commerce City chart its economic future in a unique way, increase our prosperity, and provide workforce opportunities.

2. **Identify Economic Growth and Diversification Opportunities**

Identify diverse economic development opportunities near Denver International Airport, along E-470 and I-76, as well as in and around the established industrial areas. Leverage community assets to attract and grow diverse businesses.

Fiscal Sustainability

3. **Balance Future Needs with the City's Financing Capacity**

Develop a long-term financial strategy for the city to balance and prioritize current and future needs and services with a backlog of unfunded infrastructure deficiencies. Minimize the amount of public investment in capital expenditures for infrastructure for private development.

Redevelopment

4. **Promote Reinvestment in Existing Industrial Areas**

Strategically redevelop identified older industrial areas to help accommodate current and future employment and residential needs, as well as help reduce conflicts between residential and industrial uses.

5. **Reinvest in Older Neighborhoods**

Reinvest in our older neighborhoods to help them gain a competitive edge in the Denver Metro area, given their desirable locations near many of the community's assets and employment areas.



Some redevelopment has occurred in the Derby area.

Cultural Facilities and Tourism

6. **Promote Commerce City as a Destination**

Explore opportunities to promote Commerce City as a destination for specialized tourism or businesses.

What Do You Think?

- 2A. *Do you agree with these guiding principles?*
- 2B. *What would you add or change?*

3. Land Use and Growth, Appearance, and Open Space

How Commerce City grows and plans future land uses affects quality of neighborhoods, commercial development, jobs, fiscal condition of the city, the environment, and transportation systems, and other quality of life factors. The guiding principles and map questions in this section serve as the foundation on which to start addressing issues, and developing plan goals, policies and maps.

Guiding Principles

Please read the following guiding principles and give your input.

Land Use

1. Plan for Growth that Supports a Sustainable Future

Plan for balanced growth that will be beneficial to the city and provide for a sustainable future.

2. Enhance Commerce City's Neighborhoods

Identify neighborhoods and their "edges" and establish buffers to reduce conflicts between neighborhoods and industrial areas in the Historic City and Irondale areas.

3. Enhance Commerce Development Jobs and Retail Centers

Identify potential locations for a "downtown" or multiple "mixed-use centers," targeted redevelopment areas, and employment centers.

4. Link Commerce City's North and South Geographic Areas

Physically and culturally link the city's established neighborhoods and industrial areas in the southern portion of Commerce City with newer neighborhoods and future growth areas in the northern areas.

5. Coordinate Utilities and Infrastructure with Planned Future Growth

Coordinate with providers to deliver and maintain streets, water, sewer, stormwater, energy, garbage collection, and technology services in an efficient manner.

See the larger map showing centers, redevelopment areas, corridors, and future growth areas

6. Ensure that Future Land Uses are Compatible with Denver International Airport

Recognize the established airport noise contours and height obstruction areas that extend into the city and incorporated them in future land use plans and decisions.

Community Appearance and Design

7. Continue to Improve the City's Image and Appearance

Help define and establish a positive image of Commerce City that builds on the city's assets, including the National Wildlife Refuge, proximity to downtown Denver, Denver International Airport, major transit routes, existing industrial areas, and new growth potential. Improve gateways, corridors, and way-finding in public areas. Continue to ensure high quality new development and redevelopment and improve code enforcement.

Open Space and Recreation

8. Continue to Build a System of Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Maintain current parks which are a major asset to our community and identify areas for future parks, recreation and connected open space to serve the city as growth occurs.

Natural Resources

9. Protect and Restore Natural Resources

Protect and restore rivers and streams (South Platte River and its tributaries) and work to provide connected open space and natural areas around the National Wildlife Refuge.

10. Support Energy Efficiency and Conservation

Support alternative energy production, efficiency, and conservation in city programs and private developments.

What Do You Think?

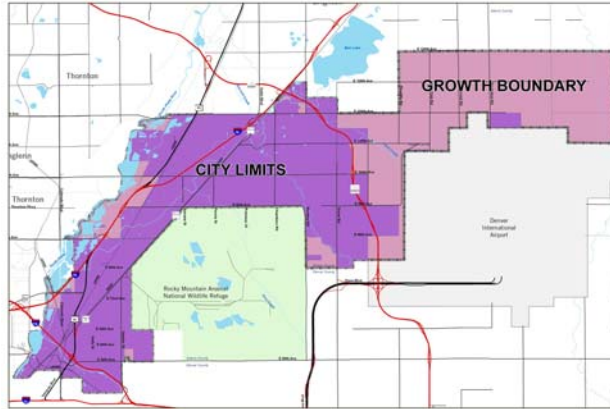
3A. Do you agree with these guiding principles?

3B. What would you add or change?

Also: Complete the separate **City Image Exercise** to tell us how you would like the city to look!

Why Plan for Growth?

Commerce City covers 41 square miles, with a total of 68 square miles in the city's future growth boundary.



With a current population near 38,000, the city is expected to grow by another 23,000 people by 2030. The city also expects the number of jobs and its industry base to grow during that period. The city has ample land to grow, with 22 square miles of vacant land in the growth boundary. Another 10 square miles of land is vacant but is entitled (approved for development).

In addition to growth in new areas, some of the city's neighborhoods and industrial areas are prime for redevelopment, because they are in ideal locations and because the value of the land may exceed the value of the homes or structures on the land. Help us identify the neighborhoods and businesses that are established and stable, versus areas that have redevelopment potential. To be fiscally secure, the city needs to grow with a balance of jobs and housing, with a focus on major employment to balance future residential. The questions in this section address where and how you think future growth should occur.

What is a "Center"?

Centers are locations for jobs, retail, and public facilities (designed as a mix of uses), generally designed to serve neighborhoods or a larger region. Commercial centers are an alternative to linear commercial development along roads (such as Hwy. 85).

What does "Infill" and "Redevelopment" mean?

Infill is development of vacant land within an already established area that makes use of existing utilities and infrastructure. Redevelopment is the reuse of land and/or an existing structure instead of building on previously undeveloped areas. Infill and redevelopment promote growth in the core of the city in contrast to developing on the outskirts of the city.

What are "Major Future Growth Areas"?

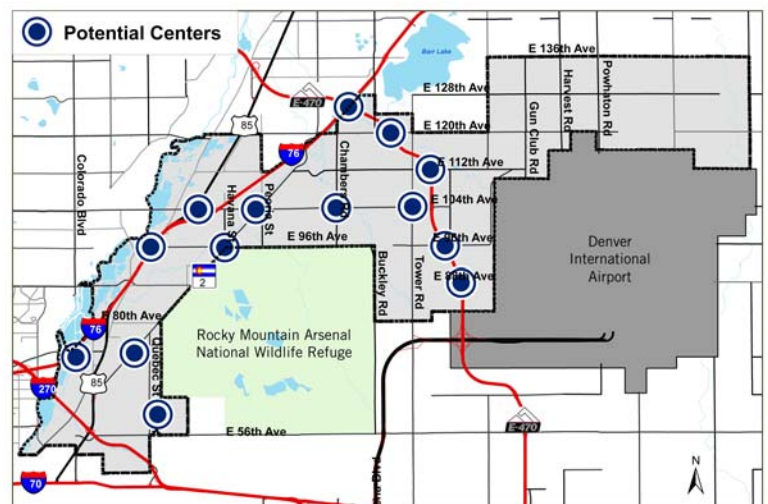
Future growth areas are portions of the city's growth boundary that are currently undeveloped or used primarily for agriculture and rural housing. These areas have potential for significant future employment, commercial and/or housing growth (such as the interchanges along E-470).

What Future Growth Concepts Should the Plan Explore?

Part of this effort will result in a Future Land Use Plan that will help identify how the city should grow in the future and where it should focus on revitalization. The following maps show several different concepts, described below.

Should Commerce City be a City of "Centers"?

Possible locations for mixed-use jobs and retail centers are along major roads (such as E-470, 104th Avenue, and in the Core City). Please examine the map at right and answer the following questions on your answer key.

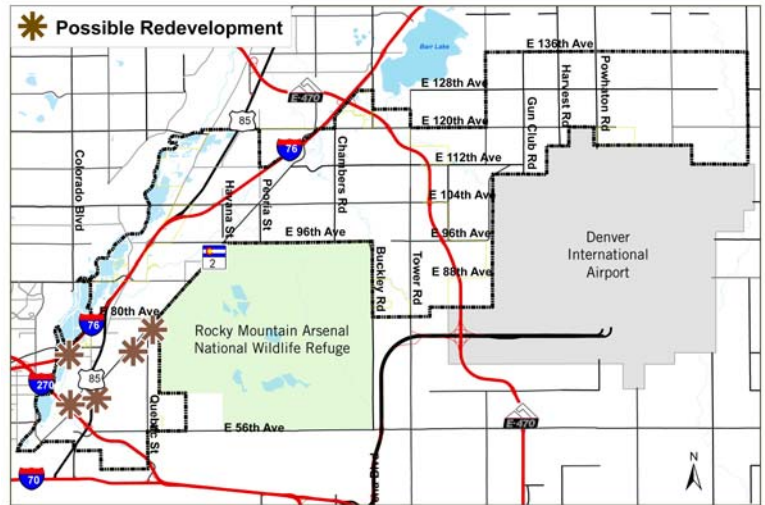


3C. **Centers:** Should Commerce City's future jobs and retail be located in "centers" as indicated in the map to the right?

3D. **Downtown?** Do you envision Commerce City with a "Downtown" in the future? If so, where?

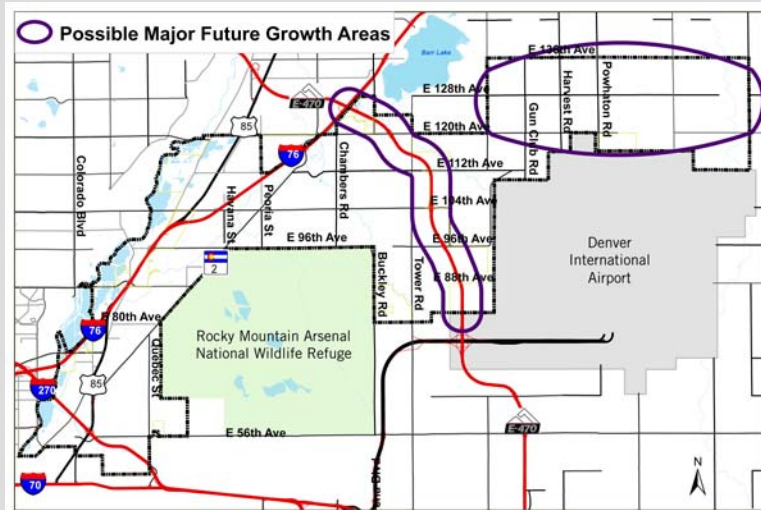
Should Commerce City Promote Redevelopment in Targeted Locations?

Possible locations for focusing on redevelopment include the future FasTracks Station along the north metro line, the Urban Renewal Area, the Enterprise Zone, the Derby Area and Prairie Gateway (see Map at right).



- 3E. **Redevelopment:** Do you agree with these locations? Can you think of others?
- 3F. **Residential Revitalization:** What residential areas need revitalization or redevelopment?

Where are the Major Future Growth Areas?



Two such areas are along E-470 and North of DIA (see Map at left). Parts of E-470 could develop as (a) a major employment center, or (b) the corridor could develop as neighborhoods with minor retail and employment centers.

- 3G. **E-470:** Do you agree with these options? What do you prefer? Are there other options this plan should explore?

North of DIA could be designated as: (a) a “future development reserve” area, or (b) continue to develop for low density development (in the county), or (c) employment related to DIA and residential uses.

- 3H. **North of DIA:** Do you agree with these options? What do you prefer? Are there other options this plan should explore?

Should the City Promote Improving the Appearance and Function of Road and Highway Corridors?

Corridors that might need long-term focus include:

- ✓ Hwy. 2,
- ✓ Hwy. 85,
- ✓ Tower Road
- ✓ Interstate 76
- ✓ Interstate 270, and
- ✓ The major east/west corridors.

- 3I. **Corridors:** Do you agree these corridors need long-term focus? Can you think of others?

Where Should Connections to Trails and Open Space Occur?

- 3J. **Open Space:** Provide your comments on your answer sheet.

4. Transportation

Transportation and mobility are a key component of a sustainable and livable city. As a growing and dynamic community, Commerce City needs a transportation system that encourages all modes of travel throughout the local area and region. Existing locations that are congested or unsafe should to be improved. In addition, future transportation improvements should anticipate and guide growth patterns but be flexible enough to respond to the location and rate that it actually occurs.

Guiding Principles

Please read the following guiding principles and answer the questions below on your answer key.

Transportation

1. Plan for Comprehensive Transportation and Multiple Modes

Incorporate all future modes of travel – vehicles, transit, railroads, bicycles, and pedestrians – in the Transportation Plan and develop priorities for providing Commerce City residents and businesses with the greatest number of transportation options.

2. Coordinate Regionally on the Transportation System

The numerous regional transportation entities including RTD, DIA, E-470, Colorado Department of Transportation, and the railroads all help to form the transportation framework within Commerce City and throughout the metro area. Continue coordination among all of these entities to provide sufficient infrastructure and funding for current needs and future growth and improve the image of road corridors and safety.

3. Improve Local Connections and Safety

Establish and improve connections (both road and bicycle/pedestrian) through the Transportation Plan, as well as clearly identify local and truck routes, and look at ways to reduce traffic and increase safety in congested areas.

4. Develop a Comprehensive Transit Strategy

Develop a long-term transit strategy to address the future light rail line and ensure that the light-rail transit station is built in a suitable location that will tie in with other modes of transit.

See the transportation maps:
Barriers, Transit, Trails, Street Classifications

5. Expand a Connected System of Trails

Expand the existing trail network and provide linkages in the Northern Range area and to the National Wildlife Refuge to reduce congestion and to promote regular physical activity and recreation.

What Do You Think?

- 4A. Do you agree with these guiding principles?
4B. What would you add or change?

What Transportation Options Should the Plan Explore?

- 4C. Rank the following **Transportation System Elements** in their Order of Importance (which could help determine City funding priorities). (1 – 4 with 1 being most important)
- ____ Vehicles and roads
____ Transit – buses and light rail
____ Walking – sidewalks and trails
____ Bicycling – paths and bike lanes
- 4D. **Bus Service:** Bus service improvements are needed as follows (indicate yes or no on Answer Sheet)
- ____ More frequent buses on existing routes
____ Bus routes that serve the Northern Range
____ Bus routes between the Historic City and Northern Range
____ More regional express buses
- Locations:** Specific ones to consider are: (on the Answer Sheet)
Are there other ways to improve transit service?
- 4E. **Walkability:** Would the following improvements help you walk more around Commerce City? (indicate yes or no)
- ____ Off-street walking trails
____ Wider sidewalks
____ Improved safety crossing busy street
____ Slower traffic – particularly in neighborhoods
- Locations:** Specific ones to consider are: (on the Answer Sheet)
- 4F. **Bicycles:** What locations should be connected with bike trails or on-street bike lanes?
- 4G. **Traffic:** Congestion is well known on Hwy 85 and Tower Road. Are there other corridors or intersections where you regularly encounter congestion?

5. Community Facilities, Health, and Well-Being

The health, safety, and well-being of Commerce City's people are important for a sustainable future. This section addresses housing, history and culture, police, health, and education.



Police services contribute to the quality of life and safety and well-being of Commerce City residents and businesses.

Guiding Principles

Please review the following guiding principles and answer the questions below.

Housing

1. Provide Housing for a Diverse Population

Continue to provide a wide range of housing types throughout Commerce City for life-long living. Explore opportunities to provide affordable rental housing for residents and integrate it into the existing and future community framework.

Cultural Facilities and Tourism

2. Preserve Commerce City's History and Culture

Preserve the remaining elements and characteristics of Commerce City's original communities, in addition to other historic attributes such as the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and the historic cemeteries to develop and project a unique identity for the city.

Healthy and Safe Community

3. Promote a Healthy, Sustainable Community

Coordinate to explore additional opportunities for health care facilities, especially in the Irondale, Northern Range and DIA North areas. Continue to

improve access to recreation and walkability in the city to improve residents' health.

4. Increase Educational Levels and Decrease Poverty

Identify and provide resources to assist lower income households to increase education and decrease poverty.

5. Provide a High Level of Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Improve response times and community safety, especially as the Northern Range and DIA North areas develop in the future.

6. Improve Air Quality and Limit Noise Impacts

Utilize existing partnerships like the Northeast Metro Pollution Prevention Alliance to address odor and air quality concerns to improve air quality. Identify areas with significant noise impacts related to the airport, industry and rail lines and avoid or reduce these impacts with future development.

What Do You Think?

- 5A. *Do you agree with these guiding principles?*
- 5B. *What would you add or change?*

